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California Department of Parks and Recreation Representatives Visit Perris

Representatives from the California Department of Parks and Recreation paid a visit to Perris Sept. 19, seeking input about how parks improve the well-being of community residents and listening to calls for more open spaces and recreational activities.

During a public forum at the Perris Senior Center, residents said they appreciate the facilities and programs provided by the City—from hikes and bike rides, walking classes, boot camps, and healthy cooking classes—to improve their quality of life.

Special events and ongoing programs are always well-attended in Perris, residents told state reps, and they are grateful for the many no-cost and low-cost programs the City offers.

State Parks representative Noelle Nichols said the agency is traveling throughout California soliciting resident responses on ways to improve and expand parks and recreational services. Comments will be prepared and presented to the governor, state legislature and National Parks Service by 2020.

“What you say will be heard,” Nichols told the Perris audience.

After hearing the comments from Perris residents, Nichols called the City’s efforts “amazing.”

“People love parks,” she said. “Health happens in parks.”

Perris fitness instructor Laura Sosa said many residents have limited finances and cannot afford monthly gym payments. Programs in the City attract visitors from neighboring communities and as far away as San Diego and Los Angeles County. Sosa said she is grateful the City installed workout stations at the Linear Park, allowing residents to get their exercise in an open setting without cost.

Among the suggestions aired at the Senior Center forum:

- Teaching survival skills classes in the wake of several hurricanes which struck the U.S. in recent weeks.
- Additional robotics and visual arts classes for kids
- More parks with fitness stations
- A bigger City gymnasium
- Another recreation/senior/teen center in the City
- Additional soccer fields
- Additional scholarships to reduce or eliminate the cost of youth recreational sports

The City is committed to providing quality parks, recreation and educational programs for residents young and young at heart, said Sabrina Chavez, director of Community Services and Housing.

“We want to provide more programs but space and funding is a challenge,” she said.

Recreation Coordinator Rachel Pinedo, a Perris resident, said she has seen many people improve their health and fitness by participating in City exercise and healthy eating classes. Some people have shed their walkers and canes and now move about unaided.

“That progress is very rewarding and it shows why we work so hard,” she said.



Perris residents enjoying a community hike—one of the many free fitness opportunities offered through the Live Well Perris program.

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