

Primary Benefits of Hill Recreation and Arroyo Avichi Creek Area

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Regional Recreation: The City of Novato is currently in the process of undergoing a master plan process for the Hill Recreation Area, with the intent of building a state-of-the-art outdoor recreation destination facility. One of the City's primary goals is to support and enhance the athletic use of this heavily utilized facility. The Hill Recreation Area is one of the City's most frequently used outdoor athletic fields, despite its imperfect field conditions the area provides a centrally located gathering place for multiple athletic games to be played simultaneously. The Hill Recreation Area fields are constantly in use by Novato Youth Soccer and Little League teams. There is also a walking path around the perimeter of one of the fields, which allows community members to get outdoor exercise. As part of the Hill Recreation Area master plan process, the City is exploring options about how to expand the area's use and utilize the Arroyo Avichi Creek area. There is strong interest in creating a walking path that connects Rancho School to the Hill Recreation Area, and the City is enthusiastic about pursuing that idea further. This Hill Master Plan project and the incorporation of the Arroyo Avichi Creek Area would increase total acreage available for recreation opportunities and also create additional walking trails for the community. The Hill Recreation and Arroyo Avichi Creek Area unquestionably provide opportunities for increased recreation in Novato.

Urban Greening: The Arroyo Avichi Creek Area is a centrally located green space that captures carbon emissions and improves community health. This is especially important due to its close proximity to so many heavily utilized community facilities, which causes increased carbon emissions as a result of heavy car traffic. This project will improve access to neighborhood parks by creating a walking path to connect two different community parks, and simultaneously expand the total area of community accessible green space.

After several years of planning for a community garden, the City of Novato has recently decided that it will be building its community garden in the Hill Recreation Area or the Arroyo Avichi Creek Area. Development of the garden will most likely coincide with the Hill Recreation Area master plan process.

Natural Landscapes: The Hill Recreation and Arroyo Avichi Creek Area provides terrestrial ecosystems. The Conservation Land Network (CLN) has identified this area as part of the Marin Coast Range, and is classified as an Essential Area to the CLN's goals. The types of vegetation in the Hill Recreation and Arroyo Avichi Creek area primarily include Grasslands and Woodlands.

Agricultural Lands: The Arroyo Avichi Creek Area has a strong agricultural history. Long-term property owners operated a chicken farm for several decades on the land in the Arroyo Avichi Creek Area. This same property was also an active beekeeping site for several years. The City of Novato is exploring different agricultural options for this area,

but has included the possibility of beekeeping as one option in a recent white paper on the City's Healthy Eating Active Living efforts, which will be considered as part of the City's Master Plan update process.