



Park it! Your guide to Davis parks



Community partners make the difference: Davis parks built on a foundation of partnership

The park system in Davis belongs to the community. Residents have a say in how the parks operate, what is located in the parks and even the names that parks are given. The City has many partnerships that assist with the park system.

The Recreation and Park Commission makes recommendations to the City Council on many aspects of the park system. The Commission is made up of Davis residents who contribute countless hours in the development of plans and policies for parks. Many other residents take the time to contribute to park-related issues by coming to informational meetings or providing feedback to the Commission. Lately, the Commission and a special committee have been spending time planning the Mace Ranch Neighborhood Park. The park is designed to meet the needs of the neighborhood and will include play areas for tots and older children, a picnic area, restrooms, a basketball half-court, a dog exercise area, and multi-use open fields for baseball and soccer.

The City, Davis Joint Unified School District and UC Davis are partners in providing recreational opportunities for the community. The City and DJUSD share a joint-use agreement that allows for shared-use of facilities, athletic fields and courts. UC Davis and the city of Davis coordinate field

use for sports groups, each allowing use of its pools by swim groups. Joint partnerships are common to co-host tournaments and other sporting events. Each partner creates additional resources for the others.

Community service groups, co-sponsored organizations, neighborhood associations, and others generously give their knowledge and experience to improve the parks. Rainbow City in Community Park is a unique example of community involvement. Funded and built with donations and energy from community members, the rambling wooden structure includes a castle maze, a locomotive, and a tree house. Ongoing maintenance support comes from the Kiwanis who tighten nuts and bolts and reseal the wood structure every two years.

The Adopt-a-Park program was developed to allow individuals and groups to assist in making the parks safer and more beautiful. Individuals and groups volunteer by adopting parks, greenbelt areas, flower beds or playgrounds. Adopt-a-Park volunteers plant trees, shrubs, and flowers, remove graffiti, pick up litter, pull weeds and mulch beds with wood chips. Volunteers spruce up play areas, and paint picnic tables. These projects take place only because volunteers give their time and energy to make them happen.

Even the buildings in the parks rely on the contributions of volunteers. Cen-



Docent Virginia Isaacs talks to a visitor at the Hattie Weber Museum in this 2005 file photograph. The museum is open Wednesdays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

tral Park is home to the Hattie Weber Museum. The museum building was the original Davis Free Library and Hattie Weber was the first paid librarian in Davisville. The museum is open on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 10 am to 4 pm and is the place to go to view

the City's historical artifacts. The museum operates because of the volunteers who host the exhibits, construct displays and keep the museum open to the public. For more information about volunteering in Davis parks, contact Sandy Dietrich at (530) 757-5600.



Keep it green: Water wise landscape care

Davis has five community parks, 22 neighborhood parks and three athletic field complexes totaling over 200 acres and numerous greenbelts and streetscapes totaling over 230 acres. Efficient irrigation is essential to reduce water use (and save money) and to keep the landscape healthy and attractive. While small or remote areas remain on "stand alone" controllers, the City uses a Centralized Irrigation Control System (CICS) to achieve these goals on nearly 85% of its irrigated landscape.

A central computer runs controllers at various sites, and a weather station provides evapotranspiration (ET) information to the central computer. Once basic schedules are programmed, the computer and weather station

adjust the water run times for wind, rain and temperature. The computer lets one person perform the work of many in a much shorter time. The system saves up to 40% of water use compared to old style irrigation systems.

The city has several certified Irrigation Auditors, specialists who tune up systems, perform field audits and make sure that the right amount of water is applied at the right time. Catch cans are used to determine rate and uniformity of watering. This data, paired with information on the needs of different plant and soil types, allows for maximum water conservation.

Using a less computerized approach, the City also regularly places wood chips from its tree trimming operations to cover bare ground in landscape areas to retain moisture and suppress weeds. The chips should be three to four inches deep and should be kept away from plant stems and tree trunks. Other benefits of mulching are improved soil quality, reduced erosion and improved appearance.

When taken together, these actions help the City conserve water while maintaining the green space throughout town.