

# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

COUNTY OF LAKE | SPRING 2024





# Executive Summary

**The County of Lake is filled with natural beauty that surrounds its residents and welcomes visitors. As the County is growing, it is investing in parks, recreation opportunities, and trails to better serve the community.**

**In Fall 2022, the County of Lake began developing a first-ever countywide Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan (Master Plan). The purpose of this Master Plan is to provide a roadmap for park, recreation, and trail improvements, address maintenance and operations of the system, and guide ongoing improvements and decisions. This Master Plan specifically addresses recreational trails, building and expanding on the Konocti Regional Trails Master Plan.**

**This Master Plan presents a long-term vision and goals that is informed by community input. This plan provides a framework to guide the County in making improvements, developing recreation programming, and setting priorities.**



## COMMUNITY VISION

From lakes to peaks - parks, programs, and trails that offer healthy and fun recreation experiences for all, while honoring cultural heritages and conserving natural resources for future generations.



## ACTIVATE

Develop community recreation and arts programming and events that activate the County's parks and facilities, serving all the diverse needs and interests of Lake County residents and visitors.



## COMMUNITY

Create a welcoming, safe, healthy, and inclusive parks and trails accessible for all ages and abilities, in each community.



## DESTINATION

Identify and create parks, facilities, and trails with regional destination allure to attract visitors to Lake County and bolster the local economy.



## ENVIRONMENT

Create and manage parks and facilities to foster climate resilience and sustainability, while connecting people to nature and the environment, protecting habitat and water resources.



## AWARENESS

Celebrate, honor, and build awareness of the distinct cultures and character of Lake County through the use and development of unique parks and programs, acknowledging the ancestral lands and culture of the indigenous peoples.



## PARTNERSHIPS

Build partnerships to expand collaborations, funding, services, recreation programming, and opportunities for the community.



## STEWARDSHIP

Ensure consistent stewardship of parks, facilities, and trails through high quality maintenance and operations, ensuring safe and welcoming places.



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## ***Climate and Resilience***

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Beside being places to enjoy nature, exercise, or relax, the County's parks can address and be designed to better alleviate climate risks as well as help to protect the community's assets. The County faces climate hazards such as wildfires and flooding that are likely to increase in severity as the area experiences impacts from climate change.

Nature-based solutions, often paired with "gray" or man-made solutions, can mitigate the effects of climate hazards, while also providing co-benefits to the community. Potential solutions include stream restoration and floodplains, bioswales, pervious pavement, green infrastructure, tree canopies, and regenerative landscaping practices.

## ***Policy Recommendations***

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There are many steps that lead to fulfilling the community's vision and goals for the parks, recreation, and trail system. The policy recommendations provide system wide direction and are organized by the goals that they support. While identifying applicable policy recommendations is important, the implementation of the following actions is critical.

Recommendations include new policies from creating new recreation programs that will welcome new users to the parks system, to partnering with local tribes to acknowledge and celebrate the County's indigenous history and cultural heritage. Included in the recommendations are funding-specific policies that will provide the County additional resources to achieve the desired outcomes.







## ***Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations***

The County has a range of beautiful and well maintained parks. This Plan identifies where improvements should be made to make the parks function more effectively for the community, identify where new amenities or facilities are necessary, and how to activate the parks to meet the Plan's goals.

Chapter 7 includes recommendations on park, facility, and trail enhancements and additions that will realize the vision and goals, organized into three sections:

- Existing Parks
- Trails
- New Parks and Destination Recreation Facilities

These are recommended physical improvements to the County's existing parks and recreation facilities taking into consideration the PRT vision and goals; the park or facility's function within the overall system; the park development guidelines contained in the PRT Master Plan; and needs and opportunities identified during the PRT planning process. Recommendations are organized by planning area with each park classification identified by icons.

# Implementation

Without implementation, the actions and recommendations within this Master Plan will not come to fruition. Chapter 8, Implementation, details the needed steps to ensure action. As a long-range planning document, the Master Plan addresses long range direction for all aspects of park, recreation services, and trails.

To determine what the County should focus its resources and time on first, the actions laid out in this Plan have been prioritized. While capital projects may be prioritized in a different way than recreation programming, all are informed by the Plan's vision and goals. These are the values set forth by the community that will guide the implementation of this 20-year plan. Each year, the Department will update the Master Plan implementation action plan, using the prioritization criteria below.

Table 1: Capital Projects Summary

Type of Park	Costs
Existing Parks	\$103,060,000
New Parks	\$16,800,000
Total	\$119,860,000

## Prioritization Criteria

For funding, staff capacity and logistical reasons, actions and projects need to be sequenced over time. The pace of implementation will depend on the availability of resources, not only capital and operating dollars but also the workload capacity of County staff. These criteria are intended to help County staff determine which projects to place on the annual action plan.

- **Provide equitable access and investment.** Are projects and initiatives distributed around the County? Are they addressing different recreation needs, priorities, and recreation activities?
- **Reduce lifecycle costs.** Will the project or initiative reduce operating costs or lifecycle costs for the County over the long term?
- **Operational Impact.** What is the operational impact, once the improvement or project is in place? Is it likely to require additional operating funding (staff time or direct costs)? Does the County have the necessary funding and staffing available for maintenance and operations once the project is implemented?
- **Leverage.** Are there other funders or partners to advance this project or initiative, either internal to Lake County or external? This includes in-kind donations of labor, expertise, or materials as well and outside funding.
- **Limited time opportunity.** Occasionally opportunities arise that will only be available for a limited time where the County can take advantage of a new funding source or partnership to move projects or initiatives forward.
- **Advance major efforts.** The Master Plan includes larger projects or initiatives that are complex, multi-year efforts that require significant staff time and must be broken down into manageable steps.
- **Staff capacity.** The time and availability of staff to manage the project should be taken into consideration.



## **Maintaining the Parks System**

Investing in maintenance is a critical component of a successful and safe park system. This section includes annual maintenance costs, incorporating the following maintenance cost assumptions:

- \$10,000 per acre for developed park acreage, based on Public Services' current actual costs.
- \$500 per acre for natural area maintenance, based on California State Parks assumptions.
- Given the large size of the John T. Klaus and Mt. Konocti Regional Parks, maintenance cost assumptions are based on an assumed developed area acreage.
- Maintenance costs for Highland Springs Park are based on 100 acres of developed park area.
- Recommended new destination facilities owned by Public Services will be located within County parks and are not broken out separately.

## **Recreation Programs**

Recreation is a critical component of activating a parks system and providing services to community members. This plan calls for the County to begin activating parks with programs, a new focus for the County. The Plan includes a two-to-three-year action plan to establish programming, including:

- Continue to coordinate with Lake County Recreation Authority
- Move forward on establishing programming within one year of Master Plan adoption
- Move forward on the full-time program, volunteer, and partnership coordination position
- Recruit equipment rentals for County parks
- Explore interest from food trucks in locating in County parks on a scheduled basis
- Identify potential programming locations in each County planning area
- Begin recruiting potential program providers
- Consider programs that the County should offer with its own staff



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- Work with tribal governments to develop a community cultural event to take place in a County park in partnership with indigenous communities
  - Track programming data on all programs and events
  - Explore hiring an intern or contracting with an interpretive planner or professional guide to develop self-guided walks and tour materials for County parks

## **Staffing and Operations**

The operational assessment conducted during the Master planning process indicated that Public Services is understaffed compared to parks and recreation agencies nationwide. This is true even when figures are adjusted to take into account the fewer services Lake County offers, and to exclude the population also served by cities. To build organizational capacity, the County needs to:

- Maintain or improve the current maintenance staffing levels for developed parks
- Develop a job description and budget request for the full-time program, volunteer, and partnership coordinator position
- Budget for and fill new maintenance positions
- Develop capacity for natural areas maintenance
- Develop a job description for a Park Analyst/Park Planner/Project Manager position



# Acknowledgments

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## County of Lake Public Services Department Staff

Lars Ewing, Public Services Director  
Kati Galvani, Public Service Deputy Director  
Celia Hoberg, Staff Services Specialist

## Steering Committee

Willie Sapeta, Lake County Fire  
Protection District  
Marina Deligiannis, Lake County Water  
Resources  
Barbara Clark, Lake County Arts Council  
Mireya Turner, Lake County Community  
Development  
Val Nixon, Lake County Land Trust  
Greg Giusti, UC Cooperative Extension  
advisor emeritus  
Laura McAndrews Sammel, Lake County  
Chamber of Commerce  
Scott Barnett, NorCal High School Cycling  
Rob Young, Lake County Office of Education  
Anthony Duncan, Robinson Rancheria  
Transportation Director  
Susan Parker, County of Lake  
Administration Officer  
Greg Damron, BlueZones Projects  
Nick Walker, City of Lakeport  
Tina Viramontes, City of Clearlake  
Dave Lowrie, Lake County Horse Council  
Karen Sullivan, Lake County Horse Council &  
California Native Plant Society  
Craig Wetherbee, Lake County Environmental  
Health Director  
Tracy Cline, Clear Lake Environmental  
Research Center

Grant Coleman, Clear Lake Environmental  
Research Center  
Carlos Torres, County of Lake County Counsel  
Shannon Walker-Smith, County of Lake  
Community Development

## Tribal Working Group

Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians  
Elem Indian Colony  
Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians  
of California  
Robinson Rancheria  
Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians  
Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake  
Koi Nation

## County of Lake Residents and Stakeholders

This Plan was informed heavily by the input  
received from Lake County residents, who took  
the time to share their input and improve Lake  
County's parks, recreation, and trails.

## Consultants

BluePoint Planning:  
Mindy Craig, Principal-in-Charge  
Lauren Schmitt, Project Manager  
Hayley Padden, Deputy Project Manager  
Gail Donaldson, Senior Consultant  
Esther Mandeno, Digital Mapping Solutions

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# 1. Introduction



# 1. Introduction

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## ***Connecting Lake County through Parks, Recreation, and Trails***

In Fall 2022, the County of Lake began developing a first-ever countywide Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan (Master Plan). The purpose of this Master Plan is to provide a roadmap for park, recreation, and trail improvements, address maintenance and operations of the system, and guide ongoing improvements and decisions. This Master Plan specifically addresses recreational trails, building and expanding on the Konocti Regional Trails Master Plan.

This Master Plan has been developed with input from community members, key stakeholders, and partners to ensure that the County has considered the wide range of needs and opportunities for parks, recreation, and trails. The Master Plan defines community needs, assesses the function and quality of the County's parks, recreation, and trails, and provides a clear set of recommendations for the County to meet community needs over the coming years.

This Master Plan also considers climate impacts and potential solutions that the County needs to consider, particularly related to parks and trails. Wildfire, water quality, extreme heat, limited funding, and safety concerns, among others, are all obstacles that the County must address. To improve the County's resilience, the Plan outlines the climate resiliency challenges and potential solutions.

The Master Plan provides an implementation plan that examines potential funding mechanisms, timing, and operational needs to achieve the recommendations presented in this Master Plan.

### ***About the County***

Lake County is located within the northern Coast Range of California, approximately 100 miles north of San Francisco, 90 miles northwest of Sacramento, and 35 miles east of the Pacific Ocean. Lake County is bounded by Mendocino County to the west and north, Yolo, Colusa, and Glenn Counties to the east, and Sonoma and Napa Counties to the south. The County is approximately 1,256 square miles in total.

There are two incorporated cities within the County – Lakeport and Clearlake, as well as several towns and communities shown in Figure 1.

Seven federally recognized tribes are located within Lake County: Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians, Elem Indian Colony, Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians of California, Robinson Rancheria, Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians, Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake, and Koi Nation.

Clear Lake, the largest freshwater natural lake entirely within California, is central to the County's character and identity. It is a significant tourism draw, with activities like swimming, fishing, boating, and more.

Lake County also boasts the cleanest air in California - an accolade the County has received 24 times.



Figure 1: Lake County Map





# 1. Introduction

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Additionally, due to the lack of big cities nearby, clean air, lack of fog, and high altitude, the County is known as a star-gazing destination.

The County has over 420,000 acres of public lands, making the area a hub for hiking, biking, and wildlife viewing. Much of the public lands is owned by the Federal government, State government, nonprofits, and the cities within the County. Figure 2 shows the landholders in Lake County.

The local economy is based primarily on agriculture, tourism, and the geothermal power industry. While pears and walnuts continue to be important crops, viticulture/wine grapes have become the highest production crop in recent years. There is a large presence of agri-tourism, especially around wine production and wineries.

## **Lake County Planning Areas**

Lake County's 2008 General Plan defines eight planning areas, recognizing that the County has distinct communities that are characterized by unique elements. These communities vary from agriculture-focused to resort and lakefront living, from rural mountain to more populous communities. These differences play an important role when considering the fabric of the County and what various communities desire from their parks, recreation, and trails. The eight established planning areas will be used throughout the Master Plan process to ensure

that all areas of the County have access to quality parks, recreation opportunities, and trails. Figure 3 shows the eight Planning Areas.

Below is a brief description of each planning area and some essential facts for each:

- **Shoreline Communities.** The Shoreline Communities planning area contains the City of Clearlake and the communities of Clearlake Oaks, Lucerne, Glenhaven, and Spring Valley. The planning area is one of the largest, at 201,340 acres, and is the most populated, with 24,953 people.
- **Upper Lake/Nice.** This Planning Area contains the communities of Nice, Upper Lake, Bachelor Valley, and North Lakeport. This is the largest planning area, with 302,652 acres of land, but is one of the least populated, with only 5,963 people.
- **Lakeport.** This Planning Area contains the City of Lakeport and is 52,572 acres. There are approximately 10,205 people within the planning area.
- **Kelseyville.** This Planning Area contains the community of Kelseyville and is 48,138 acres. There are approximately 6,519 people within the planning area.
- **Rivieras.** This Planning Area contains the communities of Soda Bay and Clearlake





Figure 3: Lake County Planning Areas



# 1. Introduction

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Riviera, and is 26,376 acres. There are approximately 6,329 people within the planning area.

- **Cobb Mountain.** This Planning Area contains the community of Cobb and the surrounding areas. The planning area is 47,239 acres and is one of the least populated planning areas with only 3,113 people.
- **Lower Lake.** This Planning Area contains the community of Lower Lake. The planning area is 77,364 acres and is the least populated, with only 2,833 people.
- **Middletown.** This Planning Area contains the communities of Coyote Valley and Middletown. This planning area is 94,085 acres and has approximately 8,157 people.

## Overview of Lake County's Park System Today

The County of Lake has more than 4,500 acres of parks and public recreation facilities, managed by several departments. The majority of the parks are managed and maintained by the Lake County Public Services Department, including the newly acquired 600+ acre John T. Klaus Park (currently undeveloped for public access). These parks range in size from the 0.5-acre Pioneer Park in Kelseyville to the 1,152-acre Mt. Konocti Regional Park.

In addition, the County's park inventory includes the 3,200-acre Highland Springs Recreation Area, owned by the Watershed Protection District and managed by the Water Resources Department, as well as the 117-acre Helen Mitcham Park in Spring Valley, managed by Lake County Special Districts.

## Water Access

The park system includes many opportunities associated with water access and water recreation, with a variety of physical and visual water access opportunities throughout the system. Lake or creek access is a feature at nine parks, and two additional parks have seasonal water access. Every park with water access takes advantage of its siting, whether with boat ramps, piers, or well-placed benches and picnic areas.

## Recreation Facilities

There are specialty recreation facilities sprinkled throughout the system, including a small swimming pool with separate kiddie pool, a dog park, several sports fields, a basketball half court, a single tennis court, a skate park, a labyrinth, and a disc golf course.

The Department does not have recreation programming staff and therefore does not offer traditional recreation programming, beyond a small aquatics program that consists of seasonal open swim. However, the Department does have a critical role in providing facilities that are used by other recreation providers, such as sports leagues.

The following page shows the inventory of the Lake County parks system by planning area, with size and classification shown for each park. The park system map is shown in Figure 4, after the inventory.

# 1. Introduction

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*Table 2: Park Inventory*

Park Name	Approximate Acreage	Park Classification
<b>Shoreline Communities</b>		
Alpine Park	2.5	Local Park
Clark's Island	1.5	Local Park
Clearlake Oaks Beach	1.1	Special Use Site
Clearlakes Oaks Plaza	1.0	Local Park
Davis Beach	0.5	Special Use Site
Helen Mitchum Park	117.0	Natural Area
John T. Klaus Park (Undeveloped)	584.0	Regional Park
Lucerne Creek Park	2.0	Local Park
Lucerne Harbor Park & Artist Village	4.5	Local Park
Nylander Park	1.0	Local Park
<b>Upper Lake/Nice</b>		
Black Oak Park	2.0	Natural Area
Hammond Ave. Park	12.5	Community Park
Hinman Park	1.0	Local Park
Holiday Harbor Beach	0.8	Special Use Site
Nice Community Beach	0.2	Special Use Site
Keeling Park	1.5	Local Park
Rodman Slough Park	38.0	Natural Area
Upper Lake Park	8.5	Community Park

# 1. Introduction

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Table 2: Park Inventory

Park Name	Approximate Acreage	Park Classification
<b>Lakeport</b>		
Museum Square	1.0	Special Use Site
Hamilton Boat Launch	0.2	Special Use Site
Vista Point	3.0	Special Use Site
<b>Kelseyville</b>		
Highland Springs Recreation Area	2,500.0	Regional Park
Kelseyville Community Park	3.0	Local Park
Lakeside Park	50.0	Community Park
Pioneer Park	0.5	Local Park
<b>Rivieras</b>		
Mt. Konocti Park	1,152.0	Regional Park
<b>Cobb Mountain</b>		
N/A		
<b>Lower Lake</b>		
Lower Lake Park	1.0	Local Park
<b>Middletown</b>		
Middletown Pool & Park	1.0	Special Use
Middletown Square Park	1.0	Local Park
Middletown Trailside Park	107.0	Community Park



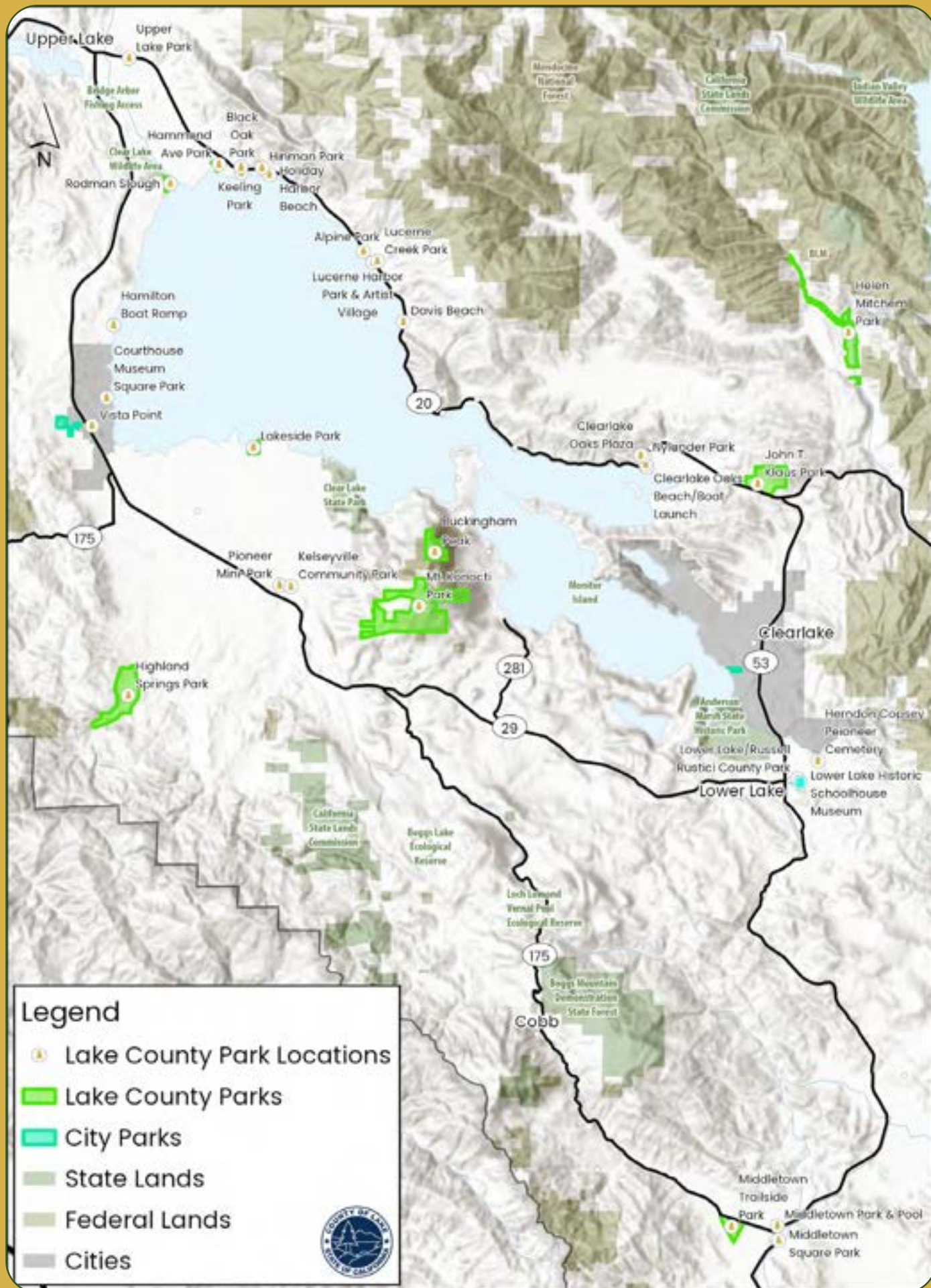


Figure 4: Existing Parks System

# 1. Introduction

## Parks, Recreation, and Trails Planning Process

The Master Plan was developed over three major phases: Existing Conditions and Visioning; Needs, Opportunities, and Strategies; and Final Master Plan Development. Each phase included a round of community engagement, meetings with a Steering Committee, Ad Hoc Tribal Government Meetings, and Ad Hoc Trails Working Group Meetings, as well as additional meetings with key stakeholders as needed. The project website, [www.lakecountypart.com](http://www.lakecountypart.com), was developed at the onset of the project to provide a one-stop information portal during the planning process, including hosting online engagement activities and maintaining a library of project reports, documents and presentations.

### Existing Conditions and Visioning

The initial phase of Master Plan development was designed to create a comprehensive overview of the current system, based on findings from community engagement, parks, recreation, and trails assessment and inventory, demographic analysis, and planning context. This work was done from Fall 2022 to March 2023.

Key Document:

- Existing Conditions

### Needs, Opportunities, and Strategies

This phase was built from the Existing Conditions document to identify key gaps and needs for the County's parks, recreation, and trails system and then develop and vet strategies for addressing those gaps and needs with the community and key stakeholders. Additionally, during this phase the Plan's vision and goals were developed based on community input.

Key Documents:

- Need Assessment
- Vision and Goals Document

### Draft and Final Master Plan

The final phase involved finalizing recommendations and developing an implementation plan. Community members weighed in on the prioritization of draft strategies. The Steering Committee, Ad Hoc Tribal Governments Working Group, and Ad Hoc Trails Working Group were given an opportunity to review and comment on the draft Master Plan before it was released to the public. The draft Master Plan was then posted online for community feedback before being presented at the County Supervisors meeting for adoption.

Key Documents:

- Draft and Final Master Plan
- Implementation Table



Master Planning Process



# 1. Introduction

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## ***Master Plan Organization***

The Master Plan is organized into the following sections:

**Chapter 1:** Introduction includes the Executive Summary, table of contents, an introduction to the planning and describes the organization of the Master Plan process.

**Chapter 2:** Community-Driven Vision provides an overview of community engagement activities, presents key engagement findings, and includes the community-driven vision and goals that form the basis of the Master Plan.

**Chapter 3:** Community Needs discusses the key findings from the community, based on several rounds of community engagement and stakeholder engagement.

**Chapter 4:** Park Development Guidelines provides the classification of the parks in the County.

**Chapter 5:** Climate and Resilience shares the climate impacts that the County is facing, as well as sharing strategies for building climate resilience.

**Chapter 6:** Policy Recommendations provides systemwide direction, with policies organized by the Master Plan goals.

**Chapter 7:** Park, Facility, and Trail Improvement Recommendations includes park development guidelines and recommended park, facility, and trail improvements.

**Chapter 8:** Implementation includes the prioritization of the strategies, including timeline, funding mechanisms, etc.

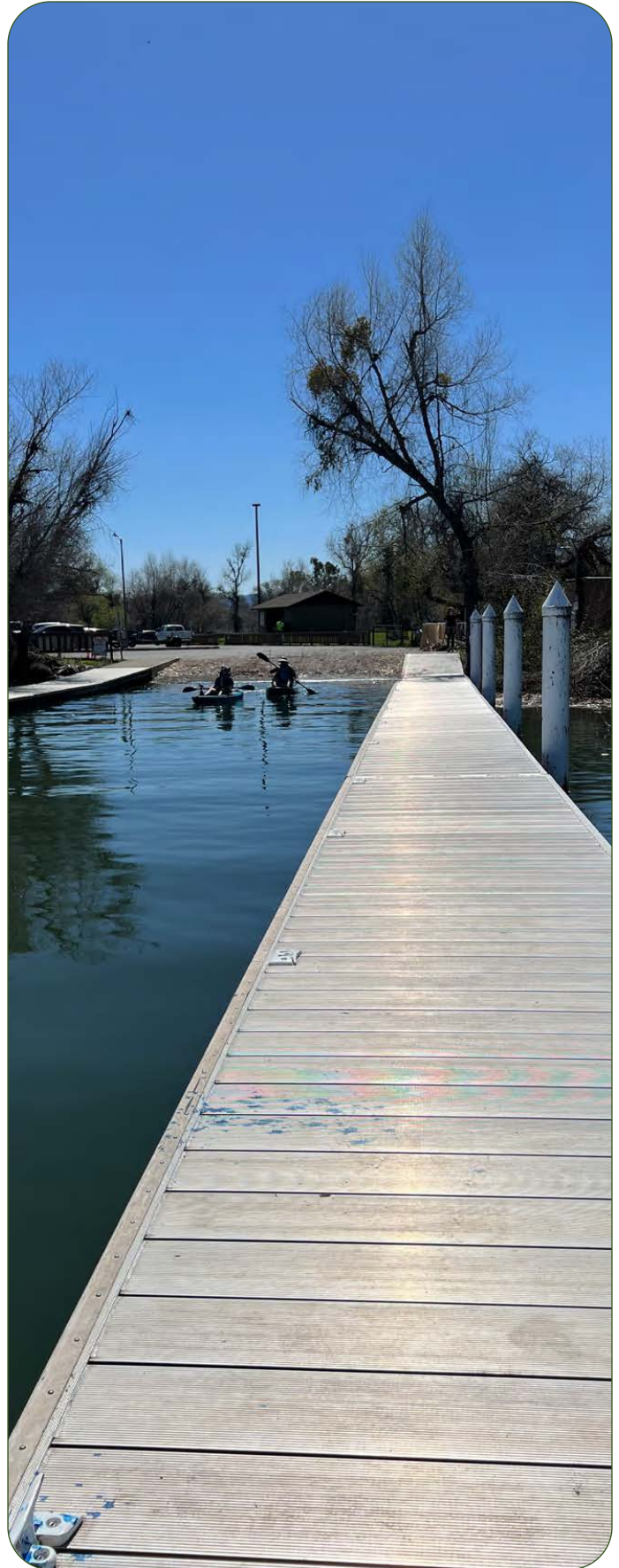
**Appendix A:** Existing Conditions Report

**Appendix B:** Park Inventory and Condition Assessment

**Appendix C:** Needs Assessment Report

**Appendix D:** Public Engagement Summaries

**Appendix E:** Capital Projects List





## 2. A Community-Driven Vision



## 2. A Community-Driven Vision

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### ***Grounding the Plan in Community Values***

A center piece of the Master Plan process was the consistent and extensive community engagement that informed the plan at each step. The process included three major rounds of engagement with multiple avenues to listen and receive feedback from residents, tribal representatives, businesses interests, visitors, and other key stakeholders.

### ***Community Engagement***

The Master Plan was developed with robust community engagement to ensure that the Plan represented the needs and desires of community members. Community engagement throughout consisted of:

- Master Plan Steering Committee Meetings
- Ad Hoc Tribal Government Working Group Meetings
- Ad Hoc Trails Representatives Working Group Meetings
- Board of Supervisors Presentations
- Small Group Meetings
- Community Needs Survey
- Community Visioning Workshop
- Community Pop-Ups
- Online Visioning Exercise
- Lake County Recreation Agency Presentation
- Online Prioritization Activity
- Project Website

The community engagement program for the Master Plan was a partnership between County staff and consultant BluePoint Planning, adjusting and tailoring the outreach approaches to ensure that the County achieved a breadth and depth of participation to incorporate perspectives of the broad range of parks, recreation, and trails stakeholders.



*Community Visioning Boards*

# Big Ideas & Themes

The following are the key themes from all three rounds of community engagement.



**Natural Beauty:** The County has immense natural beauty that residents value and tourists come to see.



**Recreation:** There is an opportunity to have increased options for recreation, including programs, additional trails, and park amenities.



**Acknowledgement:** This land has been inhabited by Pomo tribes for over 11,800 years. Acknowledging the deep history of these tribes and working with them to ensure that they have continued access to this land is paramount.



**Resilience:** The County has faced severe climate hazards and presumably will continue to do so in the future. Therefore, preparing for wildfires, drought, extreme heat, and rainstorms is key.



**Clear Lake:** The lake is a focal point for the County; however, issues with water quality can hamper the ability for it to be used.



**Safety:** Residents need to feel safe in their parks system to fully enjoy it.



**Tourism:** Lake County is experiencing increased tourism, which should be considered when imagining the future of parks, recreation, and trails.



**Connection:** Residents would like to better be connected to and around the lake, as well as throughout the County by trails and other non-motorized transportation.



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN NUMBERS

**2**

Project Surveys

**668**

Survey Responses

**4**

Steering Committee Meetings

**1**

Project Website

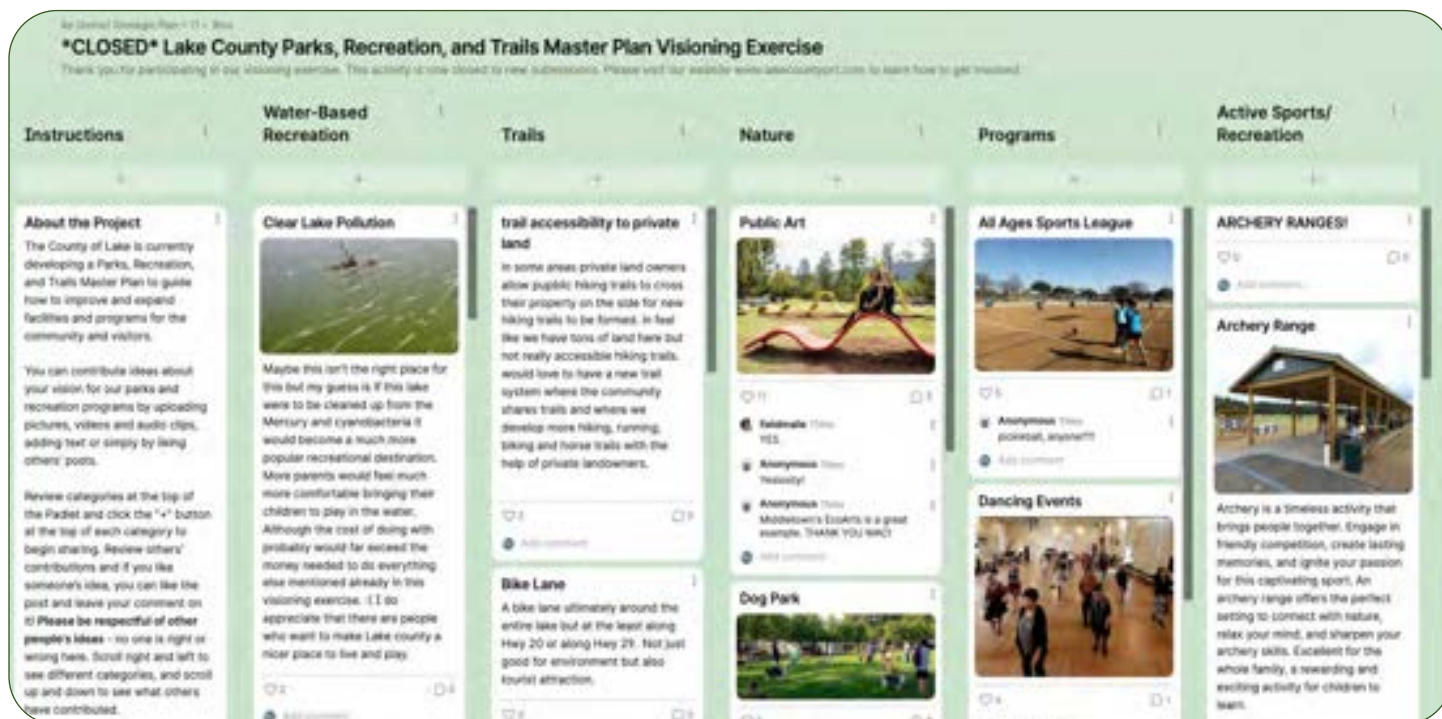
**3**

Tribal Working Group Meetings

**800+**

Community Members Reached

## 2. A Community-Driven Vision



Online Visioning Exercise

### Engagement and Planning Groups

#### Master Plan Steering Committee

A Master Plan Steering Committee was created to serve as an advisory group that met at key points in the project to provide guidance. The Steering Committee was composed of representatives of agencies, advocacy groups, and a range of recreation interests and perspectives. The Steering Committee members were selected to represent the community, both geographically and by topic. The Steering Committee met four times over the course of the Master Plan development. These meetings typically consisted of a presentation to share the work done to date and then an opportunity to provide feedback and guidance.

#### Ad Hoc Tribal Government Working Group

To ensure that the Master Plan had input from Lake County's tribes, an Ad Hoc Tribal

Government Working Group was formed. All seven tribes were invited to a series of meetings. The tribes invited were:

- Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians
- Elem Indian Colony
- Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians of California
- Robinson Rancheria
- Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians
- Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake
- Koi Nation

#### Ad Hoc Trails Working Group

To gather specific input on trails gaps and needs, recommendations, and priorities, an Ad Hoc Trails Working Group was formed. The business community, trails alliance, equestrian community, native plant society, and more were represented.

## 2. A Community-Driven Vision

### *A Community Vision and Goals*

During the planning process, community members, partners, and other stakeholders provided input and insights into what is valuable to the community and how they envision the future of their parks, recreation programs, and trails. The vision and goals on the following page will guide future planning and decisions about resource allocation, in concert with the implementation criteria presented in Chapter 8.

The following page details the community vision and plan goals, developed based on community input and vetted by the community and stakeholders. The vision and goals reflected the needs of the community and sets the context for the Master Plan.





## 2. A Community-Driven Vision

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### COMMUNITY VISION

From lakes to peaks - parks, programs, and trails that offer healthy and fun recreation experiences for all, while honoring cultural heritages and conserving natural resources for future generations.



### ACTIVATE

Develop community recreation and arts programming and events that activate the County's parks and facilities, serving all the diverse needs and interests of Lake County residents and visitors.



### COMMUNITY

Create a welcoming, safe, healthy, and inclusive parks and trails accessible for all ages and abilities, in each community.



### DESTINATION

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### ENVIRONMENT

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### AWARENESS

Celebrate, honor, and build awareness of the distinct cultures and character of Lake County through the use and development of unique parks and programs, acknowledging the ancestral lands and culture of the indigenous peoples.



### PARTNERSHIPS

Build partnerships to expand collaborations, funding, services, recreation programming, and opportunities for the community.



### STEWARDSHIP

Ensure consistent stewardship of parks, facilities, and trails through high quality maintenance and operations, ensuring safe and welcoming places.

# 3. Community Needs



# 3. Community Needs

## Understanding Needs

In order to effectively establish recommendations and create a viable vision, a deep understanding of community needs for today and in the future is essential. To do that, multiple elements that must be considered - both quantitative and qualitative. This section details that process and the needs that drive the recommendations.

### Needs Methodology

The Master Planning process had three major information gathering components. The existing conditions document was completed to evaluate the state of the current parks, trails, and recreation programs. Through workshops, pop-ups, surveys, online activities, and in-person conversations, community priorities were established. A needs assessment was developed to highlight gaps in the existing system and community needs. The following elements informed these initial documents and subsequent refinements:

- **Community input:** Engaging and listening to the community through a variety of channels at multiple points.
- **Quality of existing parks, recreation programs, and trails:** Assessing how well parks, recreation programs, and trails are currently meeting their intended purpose and serving community needs, including accessibility, usage, and function.
- **Community profile and demographics:** Understanding the community and audiences for County parks, programs, and trails, and how they may change over time.
- **Trends analysis:** Evaluating regional and national parks, recreation, and trails trends and highlighting best practices.

### Community Profile

The demographics and understanding of the community today and the future help to indicate future needs and how parks, recreation, and trails should be developed to meet those needs. Lake County has a population of 68,163 and is not expected to grow substantially in the coming years. The following are key takeaways from the demographic analysis:

- The population is significantly older than the average in California, with the median age in Lake County being 46.5, compared to 36.7 in the state as a whole. There is an apparent need to provide parks, recreation, and trails that service older adults.
- There is also a younger population, with almost 30% of the population under the age of 25, that will need amenities and services specific to their interests.
- The County has a large Hispanic/Latino population at 22.6%. The County's diversity is increasing. This diversity needs to be reflected in the services provided moving forward.
- The median income in the County is \$61,221, compared to the State's overall income of \$84,907. Nearly 13% of the population lives below the poverty level. Therefore, the County should continue to ensure that its fees are affordable and can be accessed by the entire community.



### 3. Community Needs

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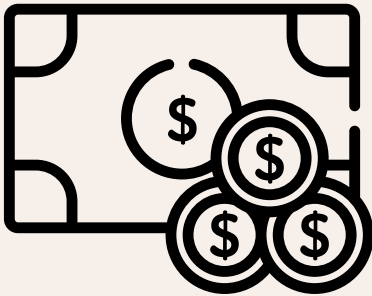
#### *Community Profile*



**68,163**  
Population



**46.5**  
Median Age



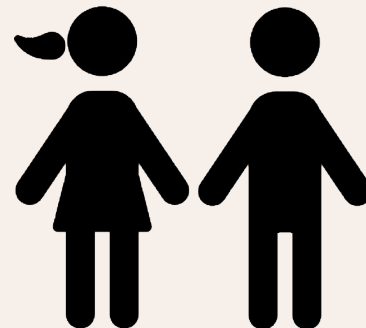
**\$61,221**  
Median Income



**13%**  
Living Below Poverty  
Level



**22.6%**  
Hispanic/Latino  
Population



**30%**  
Under Age of 25

### 3. Community Needs

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The following sections highlights trends and ideas for the County to consider meeting community needs and interests. These offer ideas about how to expand the County's programming and diversity of facilities and parks. These topics are pulled from national trends, as well as looking specifically at communities that are similar to Lake County.

#### ***Parks as a System***

A robust parks system should offer a hierarchy of spaces ranging from small neighborhood parks to destination parks; all connected by pathways, trails, bikeways, and streets. Each element plays a distinct role in the system to enhance and reflect the unique character of Lake County. Some will serve as community gathering places and bring people together, and others will offer natural, green respites. Together these elements provide a complete park system to serve residents and visitors of all ages and abilities. Due to the geography of the County, parks should be dispersed throughout to ensure that all residents have a park close to their home.

#### **Outdoor Lifestyle**

People are enjoying the outdoors more than ever and participating at a much higher level than in the last several decades. Park visits have increased by 63% nation-wide after the COVID-19 lockdown, allowing people to unite with friends and family. Surveys have shown that activities such as walking for pleasure, day hiking, running, biking, jogging, fishing, and birdwatching have increased across age groups.

People can experience a sense of wellness, stress release, stronger social interaction, and an increased connection to the outdoors when they participate in outdoor recreation. Spaces for people to participate in these activities have become essential and are needed throughout the County. The need for flexibility in recreation opportunities, as adults have less and less time, is critical.

Throughout the County, there are opportunities to engage in a variety of nature-based recreation activities. Some of these are just emerging as popular activities, while others have remained popular for some time. Due to Lake County's unique geography and more rural setting, there is room for and a desire to continue to provide amenities to encourage these

### 3. Community Needs

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activities. Examples of nature-based recreation opportunities within the County include:

- Mountain biking
- Hiking
- Fishing
- Birding
- Water-based recreation (kayaking, stand up paddleboarding, swimming, etc.)
- Horseback riding and camping

#### Health, Wellness, and Walkability

Although California is a relatively healthy state, with just over 76% of the population reporting they are physically active, 27% of the population is obese; one out of every 12 adult Californians have been diagnosed with diabetes; and physical inactivity has increased for seniors (65+) by 29%.

Parks and recreation services, programs and facilities are being seen more often as the “prescription” for prevention, good health, and wellness for communities. The State of Oregon, Oakland, CA, and Washington D.C. have programs in place that have health professionals issue parks prescriptions. Ensuring tobacco free parks, encouraging community walking programs, and creating health focused pedestrian and bike plans

are all ways that parks and recreation can fulfill the need to support community health and wellness. Further, parks and recreation departments are more frequently setting up at farmer’s markets and repositioning community centers to be community wellness hubs with exercise, nutrition, and more.

#### Parks for All

Two notable characteristics of the region are its aging population and its number of residents with disabilities.

The U.S. Census estimates 22.3% of the region’s population to be 65 years or older, a figure that is well above the statewide figure of 14% and has been trending upward. This can be attributed, in part, to the attractive nature of the region in terms of rural and affordable living for retirement age individuals. The County must consider and develop facilities and amenities for older adults with a variety of interests. Segmenting seniors into a single category is not effective. With healthier lifestyles, people live longer and have more active lives than ever before. Park and recreation providers need to consider multiple stages and interests of seniors’ diverse lives as well as their interest in developing new skills and learning new activities. Resources for those with





### 3. Community Needs

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some health issues and access concerns; for passive and more contemplative activities; for seniors looking for intergenerational interactions; and for those who want more quiet environments are essential. Some of the strongest trends include new facilities for pickleball, creation of adult recess games like kickball, and developing outdoor gyms.

The region is also made up of approximately 20% claiming some type of disability, which is nearly twice the statewide percentage of 11.2%. Relative to transportation issues, elderly and disabled residents are often less prone to driving than younger individuals and more reliant on other means of transportation such as public transit or walking. In addition, according to a 2012 report from the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, transportation difficulties negatively affect a number of disabled individuals, which can result in many becoming homebound. Based on the County's demographic makeup, a sizable segment of the population would benefit from accessible parks, recreation, and trails, in addition to transit and pedestrian facility improvements in the coming years with an emphasis on safety and accessibility.

#### Children and Teens

One of the greatest challenges to communities is how to support families. This challenge includes creating a park system that addresses child development – including physical, social, and cognitive growth – creating the opportunity to enjoy and experience nature, as well as providing safe streets and access to parks. More than the development of tot lots, considering children means looking at the entire network, from streets and plazas to trails and parks, as an interconnected support system. Each element of the system must consider children of all ages and their families.

Teenagers are perhaps the most challenging of this group. As a whole, they do not want to be categorized with children, may not want to be part of an organized group, and are often more interested in exploring a larger realm. They often indicate a desire to 'hang out,' and need safe places day and night to do this. Skateparks and teen playgrounds are two areas that have some success in satisfying this need. Evaluating how to provide safe and enjoyable experiences for this group is paramount to fully serving the needs of residents. Additional programs integrating technology and esports are also on the rise.

### 3. Community Needs

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#### Affordability

As families and individuals are facing rising costs on everyday items and necessities, having access to affordable recreation is vital. Nearly 9 in 10 adults are interested in having access to low or no cost recreation opportunities, particularly among parents, Millennials, and Gen Xers (NRPA, Pulse Study).

#### Economics and Financing

Park and recreation professionals have often had to fight for resources to build and maintain a high-quality system of parks. The need for new sources of revenue is encouraging parks and recreation professionals to become more entrepreneurial. Expanding opportunities for sponsorships, as well as looking to new potential partners for funding programs and facilities is becoming a priority. Additionally, identifying and securing long-term funding sources for maintaining and renovating existing parks is an ongoing challenge.

Connecting the growth of the outdoor recreation economy and the revitalization of the County economy is a growing trend, as seen by the EPA program - Recreation Economy for Rural Communities. Many communities are seeking

to grow their outdoor recreation and tourism economy, invest in their downtowns, and conserve natural lands. Outdoor recreation is a major potential source for growing the local economy. Activities that foster environmentally friendly recreational community development, include:

- Ensuring local residents, including young people, have connections and opportunities to access nearby outdoor assets to foster community pride, good stewardship, and local economic benefits.
- Creating or expanding trail networks to attract overnight visitors and new businesses and foster use by local residents.
- Marketing Main Street as a gateway to nearby natural lands to capture and amplify outdoor recreation dollars.
- Working with the community to develop a community consensus on the management of outdoor assets to reduce potential conflicts and ensure sustainable use of resources.
- Ensuring that all residents and visitors, particularly those who have not historically been engaged in outdoor recreation, have equitable access to and can benefit from the growing outdoor recreation economy.





### 3. Community Needs

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#### **Increased Usage of Technology**

The County may need to consider how technology impacts parks and facilities. Technology is offering parks and recreation providers with broad new opportunities as well as new challenges. It seems that nearly all sectors of the population are becoming more comfortable with and dependent on technology, desiring more high tech and “amenity” rich experiences. Examples of technology in parks include adding WIFI throughout parks, allowing drones to be used, installing benches that use solar energy to allow for device charging, using QR codes that teach park goers about the nature around them, such as tree identification. Technology can simultaneously provide a mass communication tool while improving affordability and accessibility to community members.

Opportunities for tech-aided recreation are growing while a conflicting trend for techno-free parks and environments is emerging. Finding the right balance and appropriate use for technology in parks and recreation facilities and programming will be an evolving effort. As an example, as drones become more mainstream, parks must be ready for a large desire in flying drones recreationally in public areas. Drones can be used to aid rangers and volunteers in mapping areas, plants, animals, visitors, and much more.

#### **Climate Change, Resilience, and Sustainability**

Climate change mitigation, resilience planning, and sustainability efforts are some of the most critical issues that cities and counties will be responding to now and into the future. Parks and Park managers play a central role in the ability to assist and address some of the issues related to climate change. This includes water conservation through smart irrigation technologies; sustainable planting approaches for parks and overall maintenance practices; and limiting urban heat islands. Employing better soil management practices and composting creates “carbon sinks,” an essential element to help mitigate emissions, as well as creating soil that better withstands drought conditions. Recreation programs and facilities that focus on walkability and bikeability are critical to reducing vehicle miles traveled, thus reducing greenhouse gasses. Open space, well maintained trails, and parks also can be effective buffers for potential flood zones or wildfire paths. Energy conservation efforts and the use of solar panels for recreation facilities and park lighting can help reduce the County’s carbon footprint, act as a model for businesses and residents, and save money in operations.



## 3. Community Needs

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### *Parks, Facilities, and Trails Needs*

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#### **Implementing a System-Wide Approach**

The County's park system consists of five park types, each serving a different function. These include local parks, community parks, regional parks, special use parks, and natural areas. Each park type offers something unique to those who visit. The County should ensure that the intention of each type of park is clear and ensure that residents living in each planning area have access to all types of parks. Lake County's park system is rich with natural areas, in stand-alone natural area parks as well as in parks of other types. Throughout the public engagement process, people emphasized that a primary reason for visiting parks was to experience nature.

#### **Increasing the Sense of Safety**

As noted throughout the public engagement activities, many residents do not feel safe visiting their local parks, especially after dark. Some parks are rarely used in the evening, which further discourages people from visiting. Some parks have insufficient lighting that makes people feel unsafe being there around dusk or after dark.

Many public comments mentioned observing antisocial activities such as drinking and drug use

in the parks. This not only makes parkgoers feel unsafe and less likely to visit, but it also makes park maintenance more difficult. Park staff spend a considerable amount of time dealing with this issue, which interferes with other work that needs to be done within the parks.

Increasing the sense of safety can be accomplished by design interventions, recreation programming and activation, or operational approaches such as park ambassadors/hosts.

#### **Creating a Sense of Place**

Lake County's parks provide opportunities to respond to and interpret the local landscape, people, and history (natural, cultural, indigenous). Like the Lake County Tourism Improvement District's promotional tagline "Clearly Different", each site has unique qualities. The parks and trails should show the unique characteristics of the county, incorporating local culture, history, and art. Highlighting the connections to the local tribes is one way to show respect to the indigenous people in the area, while also educating residents and tourists.



### 3. Community Needs

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#### **Preserving Resources Through Regional Parks**

Regional parks are large parks that preserve natural or cultural resources, drawing people from across the county and potentially attracting visitors. With Mt. Konocti, the newly acquired John T. Klaus Park and Highland Springs, Lake County has three geographically distributed regional parks that provide distinct settings. Expanding the County's regional parks and enhancing their use could benefit the local communities as well as the tourist economy.

#### **Prioritizing Water Access**

Clear Lake is one of the County's most precious resources and it should be accessible to all. There are other creeks and water bodies in Lake County which are also highly valued by the public as a respite during hot weather and for wildlife and bird viewing. Residents engage in both motorized and non-motorized water activities. There is a need to expand access to and affordability of water-based recreation, while ensuring the maintenance of the facilities.

There is also a desire for water safety education and interventions (such as life rings or life jacket loaner stations), as well as designated safe swimming areas. Not only did residents indicate a high need for swimming opportunities and lessons, there is a documented need for drowning prevention nationwide. Unintentional drowning is the top cause of unintentional injury and death for children aged one to four in the U.S., and the number two cause for children aged five to nine.

While boating is popular, not everyone in the county has access to a boat or interest in boating. However, public engagement results indicated that there is a high level of interest in bird and wildlife watching and interest in being near water. There is a need for additional bird and wildlife viewing points near water – benches, viewing blinds, etc. This may mean some areas of developed parks (outside of boat ramps) should be restored or incorporate more native plants to create quieter areas near the water.



### 3. Community Needs

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#### Serving Close-to-Home Recreation Needs

With a population of 68,163 and 352 acres of local, community, special use, and natural area parks, Lake County provides 5.16 acres of parks per 1,000 people across the County. While this amount of land may appear adequate based on a per capita basis, Lake County is large in land area with a dispersed population. County parks are not necessarily located near residential areas, and residential areas are sprinkled around the County. Since the County is the primary provider of local-serving parks and recreation facilities outside of the incorporated cities, the County should focus on serving close-to-home recreational needs. While the population of Lake County is not expecting to see a large increase, tourism to the area is a major push and therefore the parks system could serve as an asset to the County.

Lake County is organized into eight planning areas for planning purposes. Following the County's General Plan, these planning areas are used in the Parks, Recreation and Trails Plan to evaluate geographic distribution of parks and facilities to meet local recreation needs. Local recreation needs in Lake County were defined based on planning best practices and community input on the most valued park amenities. This "minimum standard" was used for analysis and is also included in Policy B.1.4 in Chapter 6.

#### To serve close-to-home recreation needs, each planning area should have:

**At least one local or community park**, regardless of the planning area's population size. Additional parks or more acreage should be provided in planning areas with larger populations. In two of the planning areas, the parks and recreation facilities provided by the cities of Clearlake and Lakeport should be considered, to avoid duplicating services.

#### At least one playground or play environment.

Community parks should have larger, more immersive play environments than local parks.

Facilities to support social and community gatherings.

- At least **one medium-capacity (approximately 25 people/ 2+ tables) picnic area** with a shade structure or shaded by tree canopy.
- **One large-capacity picnic area or pavilion** (capacity for a minimum of 75-100 people).
- **One event area**, suitable for community and family events (movie night, arts festival, concert, starting point for races/walks). This can be an open lawn area with nearby restroom, water, and power service suitable for events or a paved plaza area. The event area does not need to include a shelter structure or stage.

At least **one ADA-compliant walking path**, at least ½ mile in distance. There are back country and longer distance hiking, biking, and equestrian trails in the County, but people are looking for safe walking/biking paths near home for exercise. Looped routes with distance markers are preferable, but out- and back-routes can suffice if they are safe and separated from busy roads.

An **off-leash dog area**. While the County has prioritized providing fenced dog parks, an off-leash area could be a traditional fenced dog park or a designated off-leash area in a park. Areas that are used for parking for events can also be leveraged as a dog park if it can be fenced and is a natural surface.

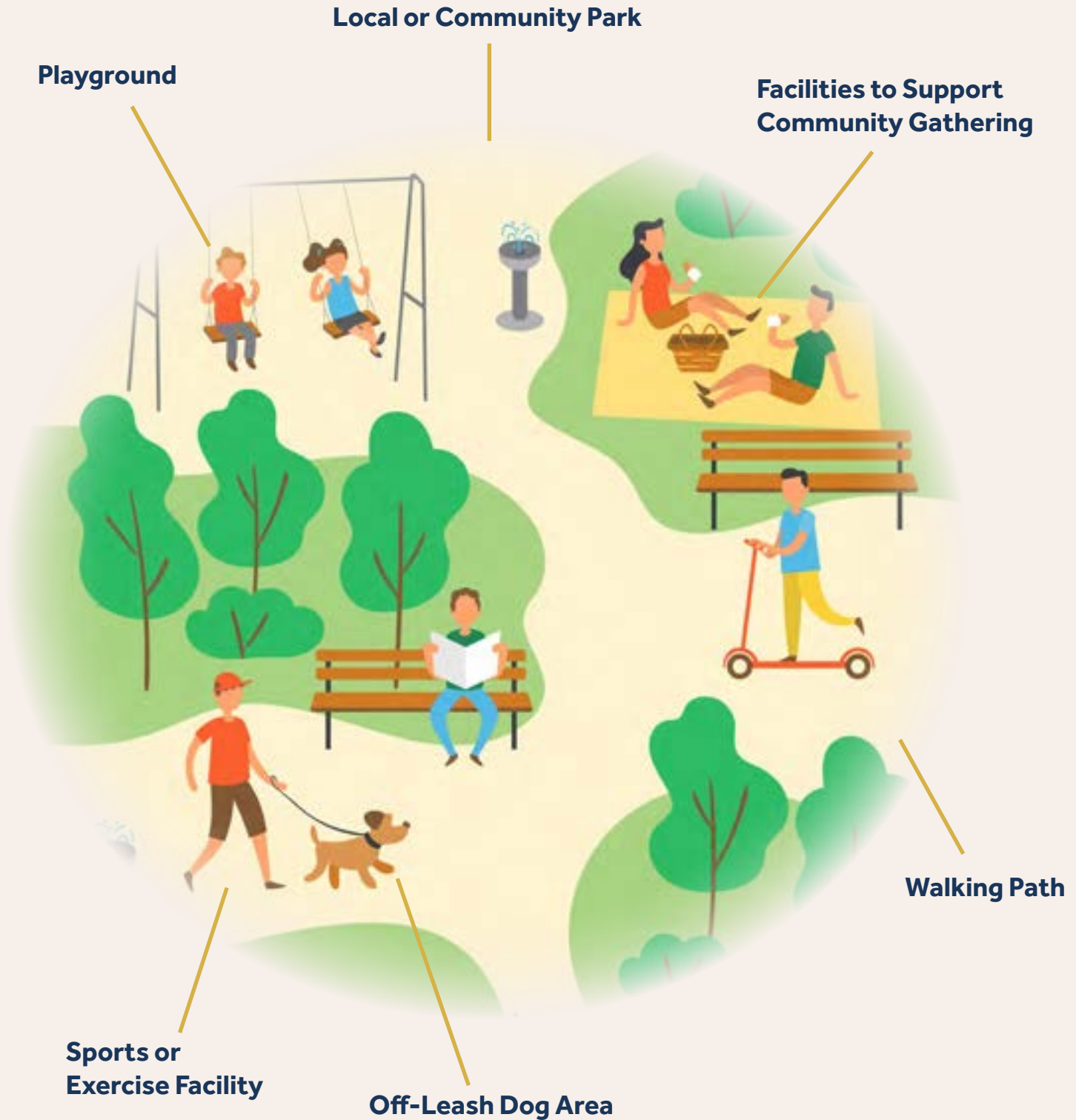
At least **one sports or exercise facility** (such as basketball court or ½ court, tennis or pickleball court, diamond or rectangular sports field, BMX track, exercise stations/outdoor gym, skatepark, climbing wall, pump track, swimming pool, disc golf course).



### 3. Community Needs

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To serve close-to-home recreation needs, each planning area should have:



### 3. Community Needs

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#### Activating Parks

In addition to recreation programming, parks can support community gathering and connection, if they are designed using placemaking principles that foster socialization and activation.

Activation, especially of underused parks, results in safer and more welcoming parks. Examples of activation through design include:

- Create gateways and defined entries.
- Integrate art and cultural elements that resonate with the community and help to share the history and richness of the place.
- Maximize pedestrian and bicyclist pathways into parks and circulation within parks.
- Create “hangout spaces” and activity hubs with seating, outdoor games, or other amenities.
- Establish park “rooms” or smaller spaces that invite conversation and connection within a larger park area.
- Add seating in different configurations and settings, including options such as seat walls and boulders. Where a gathering space is connected to a staffed community building, consider movable seating.

- Provide shade.
- Provide flexible areas that can accommodate a variety of activities such as food trucks, markets, and community events.
- Add interactive fountains or splash pads.

#### Increasing the Variety and Flexibility of Recreation Facilities

Lake County offers a variety of recreation facilities within the parks, including several softball fields, a skate park, a disc golf course, a fitness circuit, motorized boating infrastructure, a few single tennis courts, a small swimming pool, and many cornhole and horseshoe courts (including multiples at some sites).

Nationally, walking/hiking, running and biking have the highest participation overall. This is consistent with the public engagement results in Lake County, which indicated high participation in these activities. Nationally, for sports requiring special facilities, the highest participation sports are basketball and tennis. Skateboarding has had steady growth, and both skateboarding and pickleball have experienced significant growth post-COVID. Regardless of its participation level or growth in popularity, any sports activity is only pursued by a portion of the population. For



### 3. Community Needs

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example, only about 9% of the US population plays basketball, the highest participation field or court sport.

Like the rest of the US, people in Lake County participate in a wide variety of recreation activities. However, because Lake County has a relatively small population, it is challenging for the park system to provide dedicated facilities for all potential recreation pursuits.

Lake County's playgrounds lack variety. They tend to be manufactured post and platform structures and are very similar from park to park. The playgrounds in the park system should offer different types of play experiences, including options such as nature playgrounds, spraygrounds, and features such as net climbers, disc swings, and spinners in addition to traditional play structures. They should also be scaled based on the park classification, with community and regional park play areas larger and more expansive than those in local parks.

#### **Adding Destination Recreation Facilities**

Destination recreation facilities attract people to spend several hours or an entire day and are typically designed to accommodate all skill levels from beginner to expert. Destination recreation facilities serve residents from throughout the County, and they can also be attractive to visitors. According to the Lake County Economic Forecast report, due to new resorts being developed in the Guenoc Valley, tourism is expected to increase. This type of facility is often designed to be used for competitions and events and may also be designed to generate revenue. The County lacks major destination facilities. For any destination recreation facility, a feasibility study should be conducted to ensure financial viability.

#### **Aquatic Center**

The County, along with the cities of Clearlake and Lakeport, recently approved the creation of a new joint powers authority called the Lake County Recreation Agency (LCRA) that is exploring the feasibility of adding a new indoor aquatic center to serve the entire county. Based on Master Plan feedback to date, there is considerable community interest in and a need for a year-round aquatic facility, and there is also a great need for learn-to-swim programs. Based on NRPA data, 25% of agencies nationwide have



### 3. Community Needs

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indoor aquatics facilities. For aquatics facilities, the biggest question regarding feasibility is the ongoing operating cost. This Needs Assessment acknowledges the need for aquatics facilities in the County and supports the County's collaboration with the cities of Lakeport and Clearlake on the development and operations of such a facility, as the most feasible way of meeting indoor aquatics needs.

#### **Community/Recreation Center**

The Lake County Recreation Agency is also exploring the feasibility of a community/recreation center in the county. While the County offers several small indoor spaces as well as libraries and three museums, there are no larger multi-purpose indoor recreation facilities that can support events and activities of different sizes and scales. As with aquatic centers, community/recreation centers generally require ongoing operational funding beyond what can be generated through fees. As with the Aquatic Center, this Needs Assessment acknowledges the need for a larger community/recreation center in Lake County and supports collaboration through LCRA.

#### **Event Center/Pavilion**

Event centers/pavilions are facilities or areas that can accommodate large group gatherings, from weddings to family reunions to competitions. They are rental spaces and may be an enclosed building or simply be an outdoor area with upgraded utilities designed to hold tents and booths. Event center buildings are often connected to the outdoors with roll-up or sliding doors and exterior patio space. In some cases, they may be converted from other uses such as a barn or other agricultural building. For tournaments or races, temporary overnight camping is sometimes a desired feature.

As a destination facility, an event center should be located at a regional or community park or at a special use park, and access and parking (permanent or temporary) are siting considerations. The feasibility study for an event center should consider the types of events it will support. If weddings are a potential market for an event center, views and setting should be considered.



### 3. Community Needs

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#### ***Equestrian Facility***

Lake County has an active equestrian community. While there are equestrian trails at Highland Springs Preserve and the Lake County Fairgrounds is used for the rodeo, there is no dedicated public equestrian facility or center in the County. Due to the number of equestrians in Lake County, there have been discussions amongst equestrian user groups and organizations about the development of an equestrian center as a destination facility. Sites outside the park system have been considered, including near Westside Community Park in Lakeport and adjacent to the Lakeport Sewer Treatment Plant. An equestrian center could also be designed to serve as an evacuation center for horses and livestock, as part of the emergency management system in the County. An equestrian center or facility could also be considered for inclusion at a regional park or as a special use facility. A feasibility study should be conducted to determine the financial viability of an equestrian center, especially one that would support lower-cost access and use.





### 3. Community Needs

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#### ***Recreation Trail Needs***

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##### **Connecting Lake County Trails**

In 2011, Lake County adopted the Konocti Regional Trails Master Plan (KRT). This visionary plan calls for a countywide network of non-motorized trails for recreation and transportation and addresses both land-based and water trails. The network proposed in the KRT plan is comprehensive and connects communities and cities with recreation, parks, and other destinations. The KRT Plan includes a process and criteria for moving from trail concepts to constructed trails. This Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan provides additional criteria for implementing the KRT Plan, helping to prioritize projects and create a more with a focus on recreation use.

##### ***Lakefront Nature Hub & Local Trails***

There is significant resident interest in experiencing nature and getting close to the water for nature-focused activities. This is also a key driver for tourism in Lake County. There are opportunities to knit together public and non-profit properties along Rodman Slough for habitat preservation and appropriate low impact and nature-based recreation. These trails

offer the opportunity for shorter hiking paths that allow people to get into nature without a strenuous hike. There are multiple property owners, including the Land Trust and tribal lands, nearby that the County could work with to developed linkages and create a larger nature hub.

The County is also currently undergoing the Middle Creek Flood Damage Reduction and Ecosystem Restoration Project. Reconnection of this large, previously reclaimed area, near Rodman Slough, as a functional wetland is anticipated to have a significant effect on the watershed health and the water quality of Clear Lake.

##### ***Multi-Use Trails***

Trails can be used for hiking, backpacking, running, mountain biking, dog-walking, horseback riding, and more. The value of trails is unquestionable, with three in four U.S. adults saying it is important that they have access to public walking, hiking, or biking trails near their house, according to the National Recreation and Park Association. Multi-use trails can be used for several activities at once, providing activities for all. However, conflicts can arise when trails are not designed in a way that creates a safe environment



### 3. Community Needs

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for all, or trail policies are not put into place. Incorporating signage at trailheads and along trails that remind users of etiquette for multi-use trails can help alleviate conflicts before they arise.

While trails should generally be multi-purpose, there is a need for dedicated trails.

- **Hiking/running trails**, in a location that can support running and walking events, as well as everyday use and fitness.
- **Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV)** trail or area, closer to town than the trail systems on national forest lands and located away from sensitive environmental areas. This type of trail or riding area should also be located to minimize noise and dust impacts.
- **Mountain bike** course or trails, as discussed in the destination recreation facilities section.
- Additional **equestrian** trails, in a location that can support equestrian events.

#### **Mountain Bike Facilities**

Mountain bike facilities have been discussed in the County for many years, including in the Konocti Regional Trails Plan. Lake County is a center of mountain biking and mountain biking events. Boggs Mountain Demonstration Forest and Six Sigma Ranch and Winery in Lower Lake are two locations for mountain biking, but they are located at a distance from restaurants and other services. The County should consider developing a mountain bike area with a single-track trail system, or other amenities like bike skills parks, ensuring that there is something for riders of all levels. A destination mountain bike course or facility should be located in a regional or community park and is best done in partnership with a local organization that can help build, manage, and maintain the facility. Examples of this model are:

- Swan Creek Park Mountain Bike Trail loop. Tacoma, Washington. Facility located in a regional park with a Douglas fir forest and salmon-bearing creek.

- Valmont Bike Park, Valmont City Park, Boulder, Colorado. 42-acre bike park located within a larger city park that includes an asphalt pump track, a skate park, an off-leash dog area and a disc golf course.
- Lebanon Hills West, Lebanon Hills Regional Park, Dakota County, Minnesota. 12 miles of single-track trails within a larger regional park. Suitable for all levels including experts.

#### **Water Trails and Water Access**

Increased access to Clear Lake and the other water sources in the area is a community desire, especially for those residents that do not have access or desire to use motorized boats. A designated water trails for kayaks, canoes, stand-up paddleboards, and other non-motorized forms of water recreation with signage and well-marked put-in locations would offer more residents the opportunity to get on the water.



### 3. Community Needs

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#### *Recreation Programming Needs*

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Recreation programming is a critical tool to **bolster the usage** of the parks, community buildings, and trails, as well as **improve safety** by activating otherwise underutilized areas. By thoughtfully developing and operating a diverse range of programs, the County can begin to **address the needs of all residents** and help the parks function better and be fully utilized. Well-designed programs can be a cost-effective way to serve the community, provide flexible and relevant activities with the potential to become self-sustaining, improve community health and wellbeing and offer a welcoming user experience for residents who may not otherwise go to a park.

According to the 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review, 94% of park and recreation agencies nationwide provide recreation programming. Of those agencies providing programming, the most prevalent types include special events, social events, team sports and fitness and health programming, as shown in Figure 5.

Currently, Public Services provides space but does not offer any recreation programming itself. As the NRPA data shows, the County is unusual in that it is a parks and recreation agency not

offering programming as part of its services. During the initial community engagement phases, there were several questions asked about programming, and the community showed a strong desire for programming within County parks. Programming could be offered by the County (with additional staffing), through contracts or partnerships, or in collaboration with another entity like the LCRA.

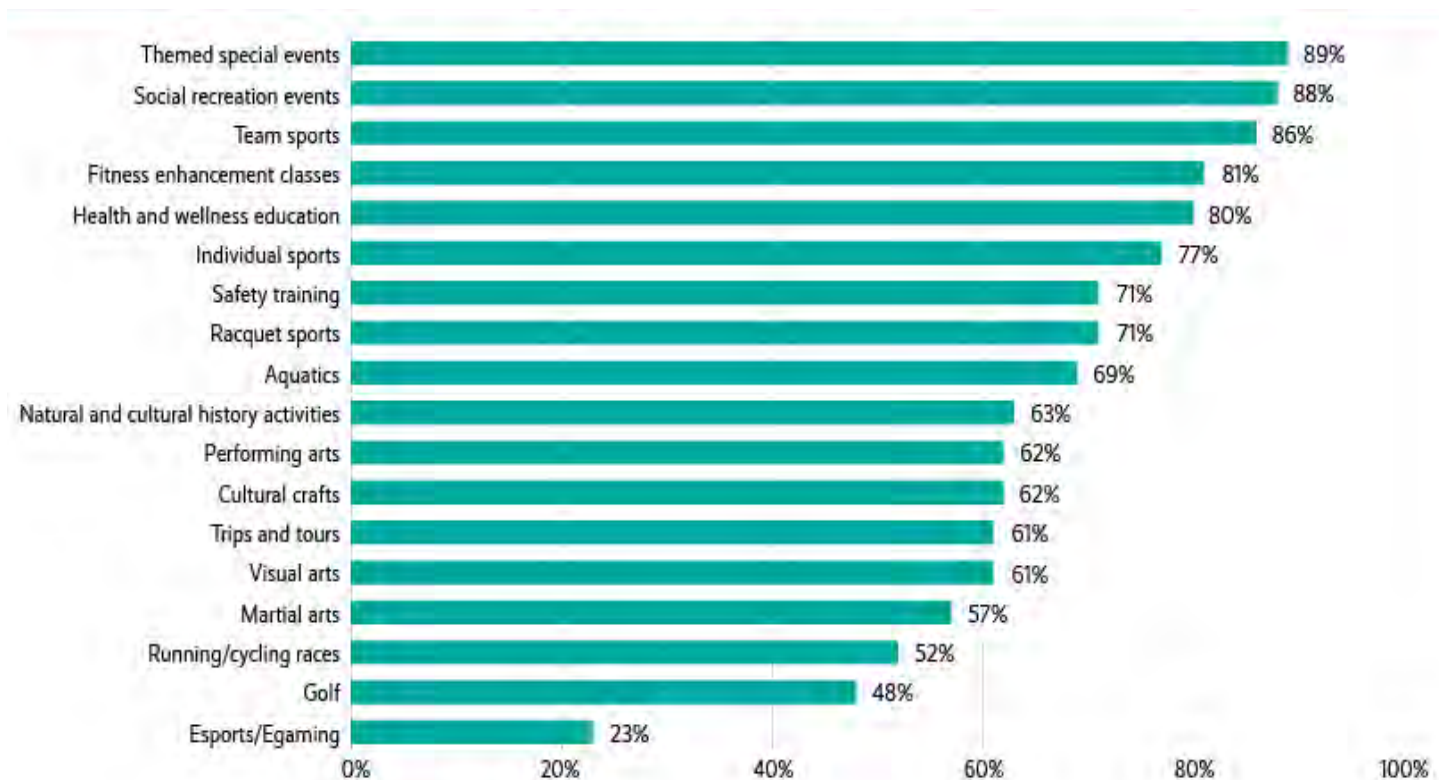
Further recreation programming can be a tool to help engage and serve two critical audiences: seniors and teens. With the large aging population in Lake County, developing programs for active seniors as well as those who are looking for community and connection is critical. For teens, programs can help redirect their energy to more positive activities, nurture new skills, create stronger ties, and improve their desire to care for parks.

#### **Recreation Program Areas**

Given the assets available in the County's parks, recreation and trails system, recreation trends, and community feedback, the following areas offer the greatest opportunity for Lake County:

### 3. Community Needs

Figure 5: Recreation Programming, Source: NRPA 2023 Agency Performance Review



- Swimming lessons and water safety training
- Outdoor and environmental programming including hiking, nature walks, fishing, mountain biking, etc.
- Special events such as movies and concerts in the park
- After-school programs
- Summer and holiday day camps
- Adult Fitness and wellness programs such as exercise classes, boot camps, yoga, and senior specific fitness classes
- Arts programs in partnership with community art groups
- Dog training and obedience
- Cultural and history programs and events, drawing from the County's three museums and in partnership with local tribes.
- General interest programs such as social dance, cooking, etc.

#### Services

In addition to recreation programs, there is a need for services to enhance the park experience including:

- Equipment rentals (kayaks, paddleboards, etc.)
- Kayak/paddleboard storage rental
- In Park Equipment Kiosks for basketballs, frisbees, corn hole bags and the like.
- Enhanced transportation (park shuttle services)
- Food/refreshments, possibly through food carts or mobile vendors
- Park Ambassadors or Hosts (volunteers or staff at parks who welcome visitors and increase the sense of safety).



### 3. Community Needs

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#### Youth Employment

Many parks and recreation departments hire a large number of young people seasonally to help run programs, particularly as lifeguards, camp counselors, and park ambassadors. These jobs help to serve a broad community need by providing well paid jobs to kids, building their interest and stewardship in parks, and contributing to their resumes. As the County expands its program offerings, it can build its workforce with a youth employment program, including developing a junior rangers/park conservation program to offer the area a new venue for young people to get work experience and learn to become better stewards of the parks and their communities. Junior rangers can help to staff parks, manage programs, and keep more eyes on the parks to reduce safety concerns.

#### Fees, Subsidies, Pricing Policies

Recreation programs are generally fee-based, though most agencies offer free and low-cost options as well as scholarship programs. Since Lake County has a lower median household income than California as a whole, its pricing policies and fee structures should take into consideration affordability and consider resident and visitor pricing.

In general, programs that are offered community-wide, such as community events, movies in the park, etc. should be free. The more specialized and hard-to-provide programs, such as equestrian lessons, typically have higher fees. When programs are added to parks, the County should determine what is the level of subsidy it is willing to support. Generally, programs are about 50% subsidized, inclusive of free and low fee programs. The addition of rentals and higher revenue events such as weddings can be used to offset some of those costs.



*Kiosk for Equipment Rentals*



*Kayak Rental Station*

### 3. Community Needs

#### Staffing and Operations Needs

The Public Services Department of Lake County is designated as the parks and recreation lead within unincorporated Lake County. The Department is responsible for not only parks and trails, but also for maintenance of all Lake County buildings, operating the County's three museums and providing solid waste and recycling services (including contracting with waste haulers and operating the County's waste facilities). The Public Services Director reports to the Board of Supervisors.

Within the Department, the Parks Division handles most parks-related functions. The operating budget is shown in Table 3. The Parks Division is tasked with stewardship of the park system. While the Director, Deputy Directors, administrative support, and facilities workers within the Public Services Department, contribute a portion of their time to parks and recreation services, these positions have many other responsibilities. Table 4 lists only those positions with the Parks Division for better comparability with other agencies. The County does not have part-time or contracted positions within the Parks Division.

Through an analysis of the staffing and operations of the Public Services Department, several key needs were identified. This analysis is included within the Needs Assessment, Appendix C of this Master Plan.

##### Solid Foundation for Park Maintenance

The Parks Division is tasked with essential functions related to park maintenance. While more capacity or specialized training may be needed (e.g., natural resource management, trails maintenance), especially as the park system evolves, today Lake County has a solid foundation for park maintenance functions. However, the County is understaffed compared to parks and recreation agencies nationwide.

Table 3: FY 2022-2023 Park Division Operation

	FY 2022-2023
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>	\$2,105,243
<b>Operating Revenues Breakdown</b>	
10-91 Transient Occupancy Tax	\$75,000
42-10 Rent/Leases from Communication Tower Customers on Mt. Konocti	\$279,708
69-02 Park and Recreation Fees from Ballfield Rentals, Pool Gate Fees, Clogging	\$7,695
81-22 Operating Transfers-In from Geothermal	\$400,000
<b>Operating Revenue Total</b>	\$762,403

Table 4: Current Staffing

Position Name	# of Positions	Type
Parks Superintendent	1	Permanent
Parks Area Supervisor	2	Permanent
Parks Maintenance Worker I/II	7	Permanent
Parks Maintenance Worker, Senior	2	Permanent
<b>Total Permanent FTEs</b>	12	

### 3. Community Needs

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#### **Maintenance Staffing Level**

The Parks Division currently focuses on developed parks maintenance, with limited attention to natural areas management and minimal demand for trails maintenance. A review of Lake County's staffing with national benchmarking data indicates that the County's maintenance staffing level is on the lower end, even for rural agencies. With this lean staffing, there is a need to increase staffing as new land comes into the park system, new facilities are added, or additional focus is needed for natural areas or trails.

#### **Staff Capacity and Needed Parks and Recreation Expertise**

The staffing assessment looked at essential functions for a park and recreation agency. This assessment found that Lake County does not currently have coverage on the following essential functions: Recreation Programs, Special Events, Park Safety and Security, and Volunteer Management. Further, there is no capacity within the existing staffing to take on these functions.

The Department has a new Capital Project Manager position budgeted in the coming year, which should provide expertise and capacity for planning and design functions, including some of the functions the Public Services Director has taken on.

To fill the needs for recreation programming identified in this planning process, there is a need for staffing with the skills and capability to establish recreation programs and events, as well as manage volunteers. There is also a need for bolstered community engagement and communications capacity, particularly with the major park developments planned and the focus on partnerships.

Staff changes could leave gaps in coverage of essential functions or reduction in capacity. The Department has been able to leverage the skills of individuals to cover more areas of expertise beyond what is standard for some positions.

There is a need for succession planning and cross-training to continue to leverage skills.

#### **Partnerships**

The County is focused on interagency and intergovernmental partnerships, such as the LCRA, Middle Creek restoration efforts, and a renewed focus on partnerships with tribal governments. The County could seek more partnerships with art and culture agencies and organizations especially for programming and the integration of art and culture into parks and park improvement projects.

There is a great opportunity for the County to further partner with local tribes to achieve common goals. There is a need for increased capacity for intergovernmental coordination to ensure that parks, recreation, and trails are adequately considered in these other planning efforts, both within the County and outside of County planning. A parks planner could potentially fulfill this role.

#### **Youth Employment and Junior Rangers**

As mentioned in the previous section, a program for junior rangers, park conservation, day camp counselors, lifeguards, or additional positions, could offer the area a new venue for young people to get work experience. Additionally, these positions can help young people learn to become better stewards of the parks and their communities, by giving them responsibility and a sense of ownership. The County could explore a partnership with the local tribes and the State Park, partnering to provide funding and expand the reach of the department throughout the County.



# 4. Park Development Guidelines



## 4. Park Development Guidelines

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### *Providing Direction*

As the system grows, and new parks are added, guidelines are needed to ensure that the distribution of park facilities and experiences is consistent with the vision and goals laid out in this Plan, as well as distributed through out the County in an equitable way.

These guidelines provide direction for the development and modification of Lake County parks. For each of the five park classifications, the guidelines describe the purpose of the park type along with the features that are appropriate to that purpose. Lake County recognizes that development must comply with local, state, and federal regulations, and that if there is any conflict, the final design of any facility must comply with the existing regulatory requirements.

The guidelines are organized by park classification. For each classification, there are five categories:

- **Definition:** Each park classification has specific functions and purposes.
- **Size and Access:** The size of a park, and particularly the developable area, determines the type of park and uses possible at the site.
- **Minimum Recommended Elements:** There is a minimum set of park elements needed for a park location to meet the objectives developed from community input and analyzed in the Needs Assessment. Items listed in this sub-heading are intended to be required elements for the given park classification.
- **Additional Elements:** The park resources identified in this sub-heading are additional resources for consideration. If site size allows, other resources can be incorporated into the park as long as the impacts of the resource do not exceed the capacity of the size and scale of the intended park site classification.
- **Incompatible Resources:** In some cases, there are park resources that conflict with the purpose and character of a particular park classification.

## 4. Park Development Guidelines

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### Local Park

Local parks are small- to medium-sized parks designed to provide public recreation and gathering space for the nearby community. A local park:

- Supports a variety of unstructured, self-directed, and structured recreation activities, depending on the needs and interests of the local community.
- Provides a community gathering place, supporting family and community social gatherings and activities (20-25 people).
- Attracts local residents from within about a 10-minute drive and 15-20 minute bike ride or walk.
- May include natural areas.
- When provided by the County, is typically located in unincorporated and rural areas.

### Size and Access

- Minimum developable park size is 1.0 acre
- Visible and accessible from surrounding public right-of-way on at least one frontage

### Minimum Recommended Elements

- Play area with either structured or natural play elements
- At least one medium-sized picnic area (approximately 25-person capacity), preferably covered
- Internal pathway system
- Informal landscaped area (could be mix of decomposed granite and plantings) or lawn suitable for gathering or informal games
- At least one sports or recreation facility (sports court, exercise stations/outdoor gym, climbing wall)
- Trees
- Park identification sign
- Site furnishings (trash receptacles, dog waste bag stations, bike racks, etc.)
- Benches



## 4. Park Development Guidelines

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### Additional Potential Elements

- Sport courts: basketball, tennis, pickleball, etc.
- Sports fields, unlighted
- Small-footprint games (ping pong tables, cornhole, horseshoe pits, bocce, etc.)
- Community garden
- Large picnic area
- Kayak launch
- Fishing pier
- Natural areas
- Off-leash dog area
- Drinking water fountain/water bottle filler
- Bike repair station
- Off-street parking
- Restrooms
- Pedestrian-scale lighting, Dark Sky compliant

### Incompatible Resources

- Community- and regional-scale facilities
- Lighted sports fields



## 4. Park Development Guidelines

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### **Community Park**

Community parks in Lake County are large parks (ideally 20 to 100 acres or more) designed to accommodate many activities and people of a wide variety of ages, abilities, and interests. They serve more than one neighborhood, include various recreation facilities, and can accommodate large groups and events. Community parks typically include natural areas or habitats. Recreation features vary by park.

- Supports a wide variety of recreation activities.
- Has infrastructure (utilities, parking, access, etc.) to support community events.
- Attracts visitors for several hours or an entire day.
- May include natural resources or habitat areas.

#### **Size and Access**

- Minimum 20 acres for new parks
- Developable park area of at least 10 acres
- Main park entry should front a street with an existing or planned bicycle route when feasible
- Secondary access to the park from a public local access street or trail is desirable

#### **Minimum Recommended Elements**

- At least one play area, medium to large-scale. A custom, larger-scale destination play area may be included
- At least one medium-sized picnic area with shade structure (approximately 25-person capacity), preferably covered
- Additional picnic tables
- Measured distance looped walking path
- Internal pathway system
- Informal landscaped area (could be mix of decomposed granite and plantings) or lawn suitable for gathering or informal games
- At least two sports or recreation facilities, lighting optional (sports fields, sports courts - e.g. pickleball, tennis, basketball -, exercise stations/outdoor gym, climbing wall, skate park, pump track, etc.)
- Permanent restrooms
- Off-street parking
- Trees
- Park identification sign
- Site furnishings (trash receptacles, bike rack, etc.)



## 4. Park Development Guidelines

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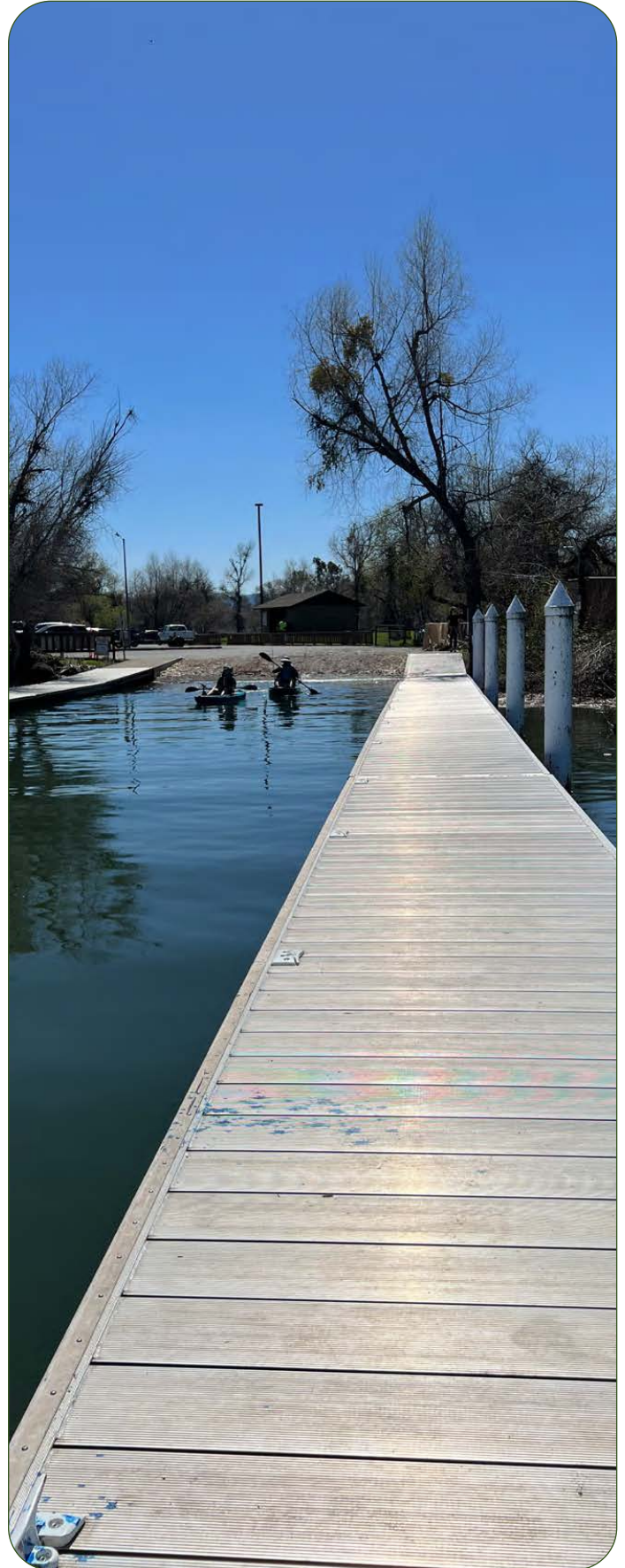
- Drinking water fountain/water bottle filler
- Benches

### Additional Potential Elements

- Sports courts (basketball, tennis, pickleball, etc.)
- Sports field, lighted
- Skate park/BMX course/pump track
- Splash pad
- Swimming pool/aquatic facilities
- Beach
- Fitness stations/outdoor gym
- Disc golf course
- Small-footprint games (ping pong tables, cornhole, horseshoe pits, bocce, etc.)
- Community garden
- Trailhead and trail wayfinding kiosk
- Bike repair station
- Stage area/performance space
- Upgraded utility service to support public events
- Natural areas
- Large picnic area
- Off-leash dog area
- Community-scale indoor facilities: community center, nature center, etc.
- Maintenance shop or yard

### Incompatible Resources

- Regional-scale facilities (e.g., botanical garden, arboretum, event center, equestrian center)





## 4. Park Development Guidelines

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### **Regional Park**

Regional parks are large parks (100+ acres) with unique natural, cultural, historic, scenic, or recreational features that attract visitors from the entire County, the broader region, or beyond. Resource preservation is the primary function of regional parks. Recreational resources may be provided if they do not conflict with resource preservation purposes. A Regional park:

- Preserves natural, cultural, or scenic resources.
- Includes trail systems.
- Includes large areas of undeveloped land.
- May attract visitors from an hour away or more.

### **Size and Access**

- Minimum 100 acres, with more acreage preferable
- Main park entry should front a street with an existing or planned bicycle route if feasible
- Secondary access to the park from a public street or trail is desirable

### **Minimum Recommended Elements**

- Depends on the regional draw of the site. Elements should support the reason for site protection and be compatible with the reason for preservation as a park.
- Off-street parking
- Restroom (permanent or vault toilet)
- Park identification sign
- Site furnishings (trash receptacles, bike rack, etc.)
- Benches
- Trails
- Drinking water fountain/water bottle filler

### **Additional Potential Elements**

- Trailhead
- Trail map/interpretation kiosk
- Interpretive signage
- Dedicated trails (hiking, equestrian, mountain biking)
- Regional-scale facilities or resources with a regional draw (event center, equestrian center, mountain bike park, wedding venue)
- Stage area/performance space

## 4. Park Development Guidelines

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- Destination playground themed to the site
- Disc golf course
- Infrastructure and upgraded utilities to support large events
- Medium-sized picnic area with shade structure (approximately 25-person capacity), preferably covered.
- Large picnic area
- If a waterfront site, water access facilities (piers, boat ramp, kayak launch, beach, etc.)
- Arboretum/demonstration garden
- Public art
- Maintenance shop or yard

### **Incompatible Resources**

Any facilities or uses that conflict with resource preservation purposes, degrade the landscape character of or are inconsistent with the management goals for the site.



## 4. Park Development Guidelines

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### **Special Use Park**

Special use areas are parks that provide a specialized facility or recreational use. Examples of special use facilities in Lake County are the stand-alone boat ramps and beaches.

- Includes the specialized facility or resource.
- Includes necessary supporting amenities and infrastructure.
- Additional facilities or amenities may be included, if they do not detract from primary specialized use of the site.

### **Size and Access**

- Size depends on the requirements of the proposed special use
- Access from a public street on at least one side for main park entry
- Main park entry should front a street with an existing or planned bicycle route if feasible

### **Minimum Recommended Elements**

- At least one special use facility
- Park identification sign
- Site furnishings (trash receptacles, bike rack, etc.)

- Internal pathway system (natural surface or paved)
- Benches

### **Additional Potential Elements**

- Trailhead
- Trail map/interpretation kiosk
- Picnic tables or shelter
- Community building/recreation center
- Event center
- If a waterfront site, water access facilities (piers, boat ramp, kayak launch, beach, etc.)
- Recreation facilities compatible with the primary special use, such as a basketball court, bocce courts, a playground or pickleball courts
- Restroom
- Drinking water fountain/water bottle filler
- Lighting
- Off-street parking
- Maintenance shop or yard

### **Incompatible Resources**

Any resource that would conflict with or detract from the intended special purpose of the park.



## 4. Park Development Guidelines

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### **Natural Area**

A Natural Area is areas acquired primarily for preservation of plant, animal, or aquatic habitat. It may include habitat for fish and wildlife species; include aquatic resources or shorelines; protect water resources or aquifers; and may or may not have developed public access. A Natural Area:

- Includes high- or medium-value natural resource areas.
- Primary purpose is protection of natural resources.
- Secondarily, may be used for low-impact recreation that does not degrade or damage natural resources.

### **Size and Access**

- Size of the natural area is variable, depending primarily on the extent of the natural resource being protected.
- Access is dependent on size of property and type of natural area. Generally natural areas should have at least one identified entrance accessible from a public street.
- Public access may be limited if the natural resource is deemed too fragile for interaction.

However, maintenance access should be provided via trail or service road.

### **Minimum Recommended Elements**

- Park identification sign
- Site furnishings (trash receptacles, bike rack, etc.)
- Internal pathway system (natural surface or paved)

### **Additional Potential Elements**

- Trailhead
- Trail map/interpretation kiosk
- Picnic tables or shelter
- Dedicated trails if compatible with resource preservation goals (hiking, equestrian, mountain biking)
- Accessible nature trail
- Kayak launch
- Fishing pier
- Nature play area
- Viewing blinds
- Nature center/interpretive center
- Native plant demonstration garden

## 4. Park Development Guidelines

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- Public art
- Restroom (permanent or vault toilet)
- Drinking water fountain/water bottle filler
- Off-street parking
- Maintenance shop or yard

### Incompatible Resources

- Lighting is generally incompatible in a natural area
- Turfgrass
- Incompatible resources will depend on the character and quality of the natural area. If there is a management plan for the site, refer to it for additional guidance on the appropriate character and uses





# 5. Climate and Resilience





## 5. Climate and Resilience

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### ***Promoting Climate Resilience***

Besides being places to enjoy nature, exercise, or relax, the County's parks can address and be designed to better alleviate climate risks as well as help to protect the community's assets.

Nature-based solutions, often paired with "gray" or man-made solutions can mitigate the effects of these climate hazards, while also providing co-benefits to the community. "Nature-based solutions" refers to the sustainable management and use of natural features and processes to tackle socio-environmental challenges. This chapter describes a number of nature-based solutions that may be considered in the County's parks.

### ***Background***

The County is located in a mid-altitude area that is above the marine layer, but below the cooler layer in the mountains, making summers very hot and winters relatively cool. These extremes are likely to increase in severity as the area experiences impacts from climate change and as California continues to experience periods of drought.

Lake County has experienced four successive years of catastrophic wildfires between 2015 and 2018, including the Rocky Fire (2015), Valley Fire (2015), Clayton Fire (2016), Sulphur Fire (2017), and Mendocino Complex Fire (2018). Most recent in 2021 was the Cache Fire. In these wildfires, hundreds of thousands of acres were burned and thousands of homes and other structures destroyed. Figure 6 shows the wildfire risk throughout the County.

Between 2013 and 2018, over 55 percent of the surface area in Lake County was burned in wildfires, as shown in Figure 7. As droughts become more severe, the land and vegetation become more fire prone. Wildfire is a major issue for the County and for consideration in the

Master Plan, including topics such as vegetation management, wildfire urban interface buffers, and parks as locations for emergency response operations/staging.

The County also faces risks of flooding during extreme rain. Flooding in Lake County can be caused by streams, such as Scotts Creek or Putah Creek, and by lakes, such as Clear Lake or Blue Lakes. Flooding can also occur from poorly designed, constructed and/or maintained drainage facilities. Prolonged storm events can cause extended periods of flooding, and flat areas with poor drainage may also stay flooded for long periods. Stream levels can increase over ten feet within hours of the storm's onset. Streams also carry debris, such as tree branches, that can cause property damage by slamming into structures, or cause a "log-jam," raising flood levels even higher. Figure 8 shows the areas that are at-risk of flooding, including many parks along the Lake.

The County has already begun planning for climate hazards and will continue to develop plans. Parks, recreation, and trails should be a component of ongoing climate planning, ensuring that the County's assets are protected from increasing climate hazards and are able to serve as a refuge during climate events.

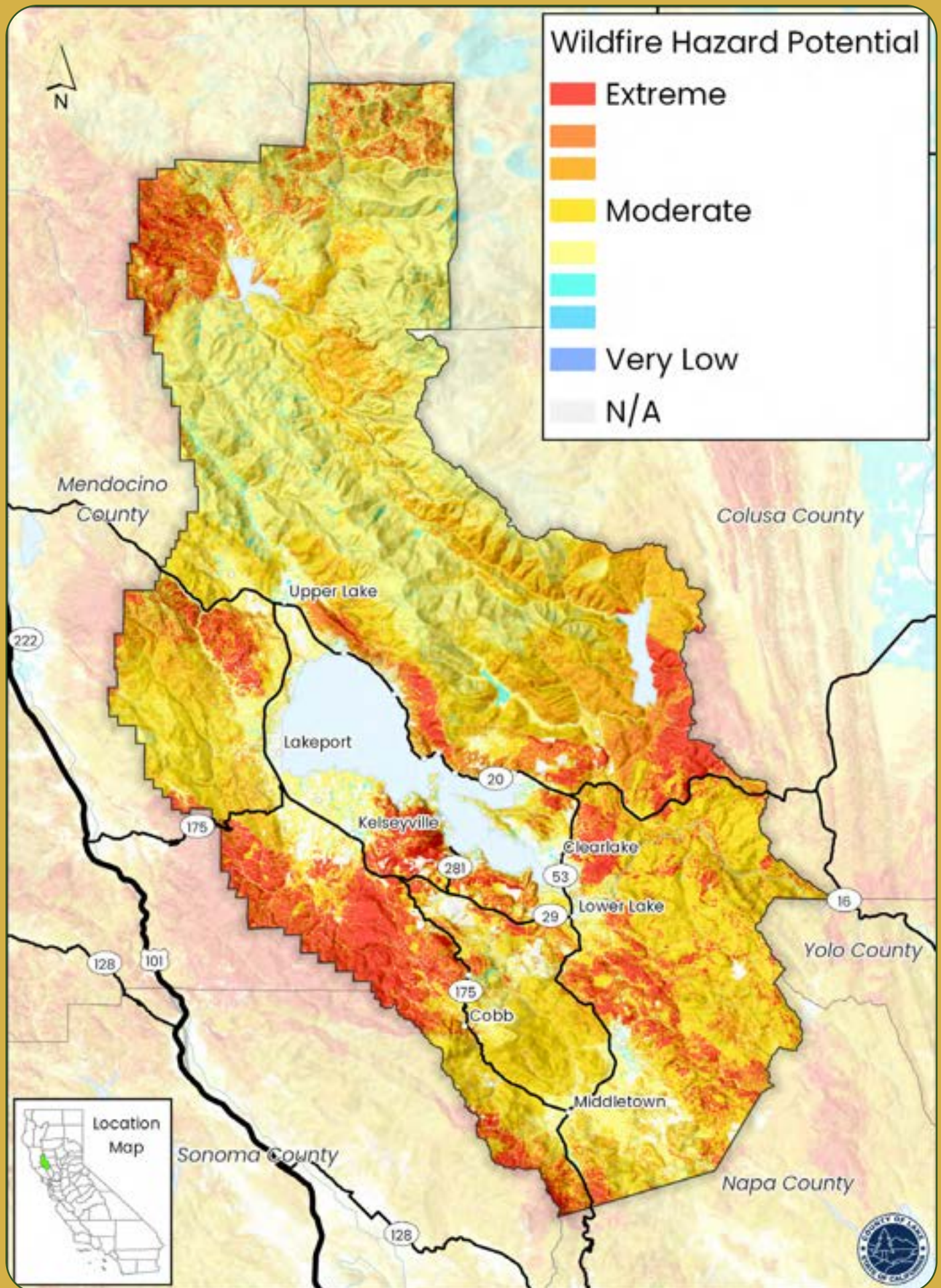


Figure 6: Wildfire Risk



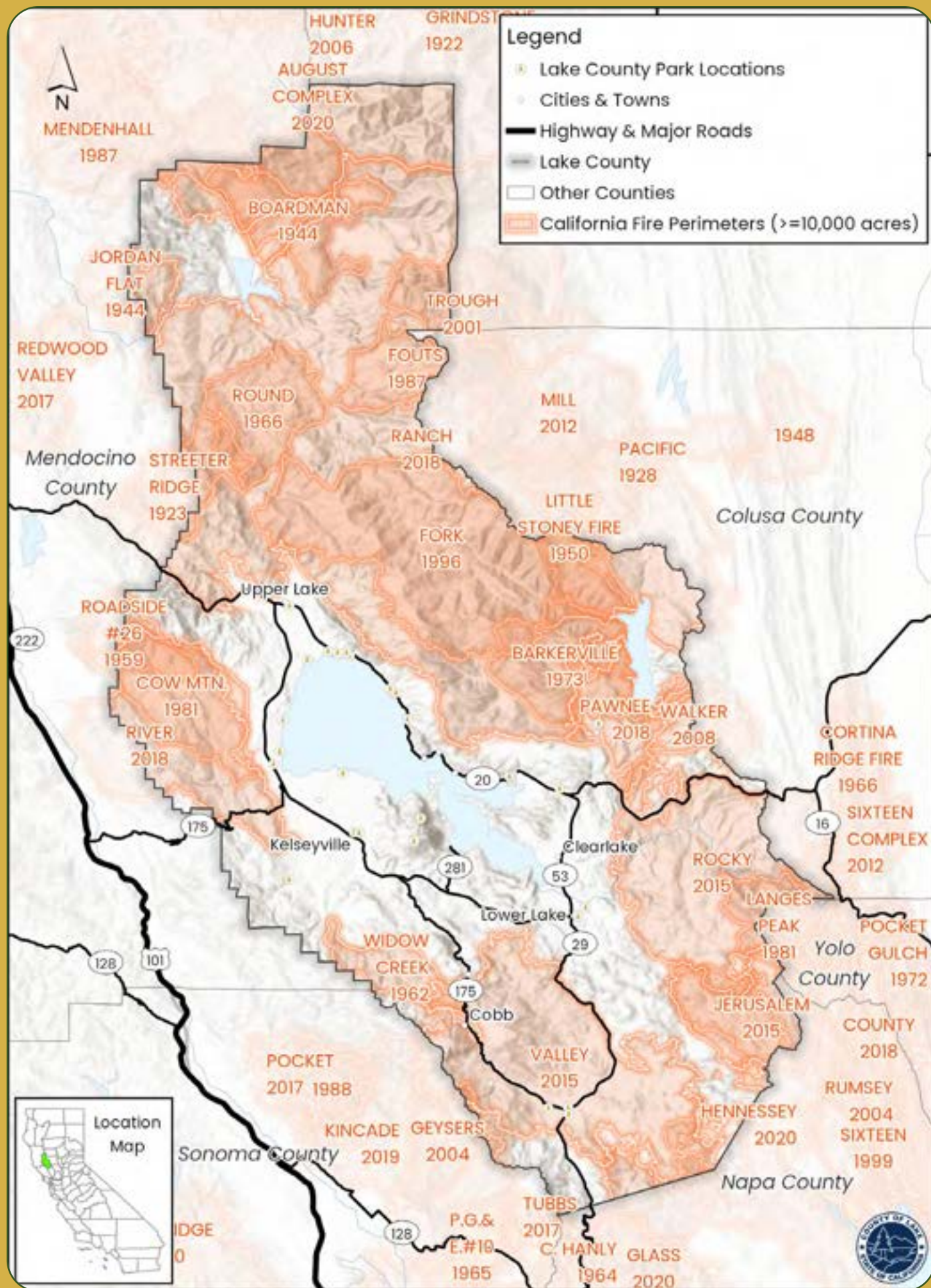


Figure 7: Wildfire Perimeters



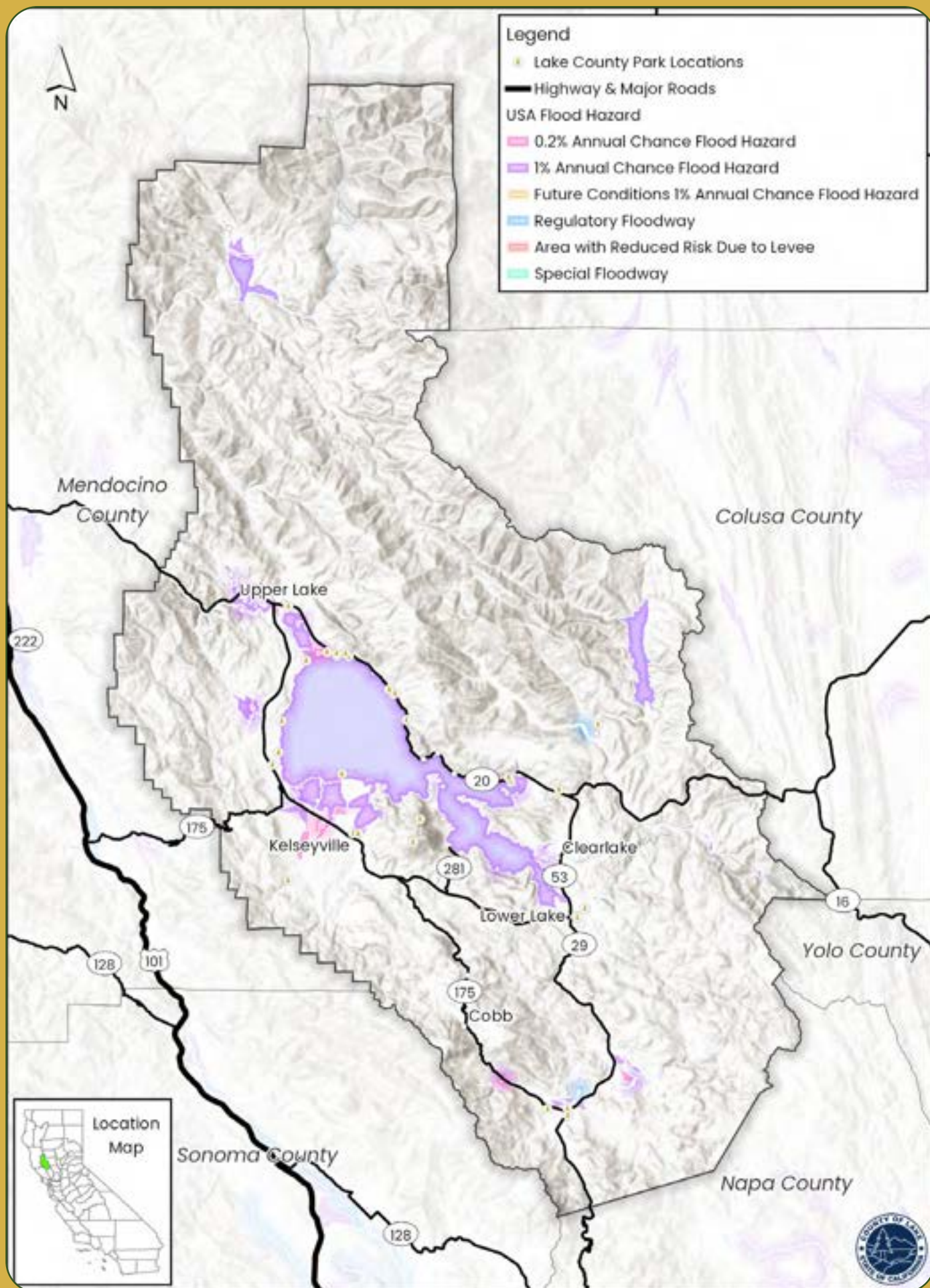


Figure 8: Flood Risk in Lake County

## 5. Climate and Resilience

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### **Potential Solutions**

Due to the County's high risk of wildfire, appropriate vegetation management, tree canopy, brush, forest, and tree management is essential. Parks can act as a buffer within the wildland urban interface (WUI), if designed and managed as such. Parks such as John Klaus and Mt. Konocti are critical locations to focus sustainable vegetation management practices that protect natural resources, while acting as a buffer to wildfires.

Open space and parks can act as carbon sinks, as well as flood mitigation areas. Considerations for green infrastructure should be included as part of park resiliency. Flooding issues may be mitigated by implementing parks with underground stormwater storage that allows the park surface to remain as a typical flat landscape.

### **Stream Restoration and Floodplains**

Increasing riverine floodplains refers to restructuring riverbanks to a more natural form in order to mitigate flooding. Industrialization and development have led to the tightening and straightening of riverbeds as well as increased use of gray levees to prevent flooding. This leads to faster moving water with less room to flood

and dissipate naturally. Floodplain restoration is essential for flood management and leads to health benefits like lowering urban heat, sequestering carbon, and increasing mindfulness within communities. With freer flowing water, sediment and nutrients will move naturally through ecosystems, replenishing resources and increasing overall well-being. Water flows will slow down, reducing erosion and flooding. Increasing floodplains/ restoring them to what they were a hundred years ago is the most effective thing we can do to mitigate flooding and increase water health. Stream restoration may also include adding deeper areas of a stream for better support of water and habitat, preventing sediment and erosion from blocking waterways, choosing vegetation that helps to stabilize stream beds and supports more intense flows. Some man-made enhancements may also be integrated.

### **Bioswales**

Bioswales are long depressed areas that allow stormwater to slow down and filter through the ground. They are usually large, long, curving areas of indented land filled with thick rooted native plants and rocks, placed near flood zones. They are best used in place of underground pipes



## 5. Climate and Resilience

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and in areas untouched by concrete. The length of the bioswale allows water to spread out and filter more efficiently. Bioswales move rain and stormwater to controlled locations and provide some filtration for pollutants. Since they require native plants and rocks, they are attractive and require little to no maintenance.

Bioswales are implementable from the individual level to a more comprehensive level. One example of how they could be implemented in the County is between parks and parking lots, increasing the safety of the park and making it more aesthetically pleasing. According to the National Recreation and Parks Association, green infrastructure such as bioswales can eliminate as much as 95 percent of major pollutants from stormwater runoff, in addition to reducing stormwater runoff by as much as 90 percent.

### **Pervious Pavement**

Pervious pavement is designed to allow slow percolation of storm runoff into the groundwater system. Impervious surfaces like concrete, asphalt and buildings intensify storm water runoff and collection of water. Pervious pavement can be used instead of concrete on low traffic areas to allow percolation and filtration of water runoff without storm drains. Pervious pavement is available in many different forms appropriate for different uses. For example, tiled pavement can be used on walkways, but finer grain material should be used on bike paths and in parking lots. Varieties of pervious material include porous asphalt, pervious concrete, permeable interlocking concrete pavers, and grid pavers.

As new parks are built, or existing parks are renovated, pervious pavement systems should be considered by the County to reduce flooding. Pervious pavement can be used in conjunction with bioswales, which would collect any rain that isn't able to penetrate the pavement.



*Bioswales*



*Pervious Pavement*



*Stream Floodplain Restoration*



## 5. Climate and Resilience



Figure 9: Reshape California 8 Principles for Regenerative Landscapes

### Green Infrastructure

Development and management of green infrastructure to manage stormwater runoff and extreme rain events can help to alleviate persistent flooding, help to clean and treat runoff and support a healthier and cooler environment in the face of extreme heat. Parks and open space areas are key elements of a successful system if designed and managed as such. Creating planted areas and park spaces as areas to absorb water and manage it can help reduce the negative impacts of extreme weather and flooding. Green infrastructure can be added into the overall stormwater management system and can be developed along roadways, trails, and built into parks.

### Tree Canopies

Communities of native or ecologically suited trees can be planted in parks and along roadways to create tree canopies that reduce urban heat and flooding risks. Trees reflect solar radiation through photosynthesis, not only creating shade but reducing average temperatures as well. Temperatures drop during the day and significantly more at night. While pavement absorbs and stores heat, which is then radiated during the night, trees reflect and use sunlight. Additionally, trees establish healthy hydrologic circulation by filtering water, transferring, and holding it in soils.

The County should prioritize keeping tree canopies in existing and future developments as much as possible. Plant shade trees in areas that are most exposed to sun. According to the National Park and Recreation Association, a park can act as a cooling oasis - as much as 17 degrees cooler than areas lacking trees and green space. In addition, the cooling benefits of parks can extend as far as a half-mile from park boundaries, helping cool neighboring areas and reducing heat stress for residents.

### Regenerative Landscaping Practices

Managing soils, plantings, and the overall landscape with regenerative practices is critical to building the health of the landscape, supporting better water management, and building resilience to drought and extreme heat. The County should evaluate and build a practice of regenerative landscape management practices for all of the parks. ReScape California offers a useful framework for local jurisdictions to develop and implement regenerative landscaping building on eight principles. Figure 9 highlights the following principles:

## 5. Climate and Resilience

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- Act Local - use and build upon local conditions, plants and processes;
- Reduce Waste - select the right plant for the right place, use natives and non-invasive plants, design with mature plant size in mind to reduce pruning, use salvaged and recycled materials in parks, and use plant debris for mulch and compost;
- Nurture Soil - healthy and well managed soil is the key to building resilience in parks, as it can filter pollution, store water, provide plant nutrients, sequester carbon and help plants resist pests naturally;
- Sequester Carbon - healthy environments will sequester more carbon and help with climate change;
- Save Water - select drought-tolerant plants, incorporate mulch and compost, and use smart irrigation systems to make more water efficient parks;
- Conserve Energy - reduce mowing, use efficient lighting, specify low embodied energy materials, buy locally;
- Protect Water & Air - maximize permeable surfaces, minimize stormwater runoff, use integrated pest management, and reduce overuse of fertilizers;
- Create Habitat - ensure that biodiversity is supported with plant choices and practices that support beneficial insects, birds, butterflies, and other creatures.

# 6. Policy Recommendations





## 6. Policy Recommendations

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### *Creating Policies*

There are many steps that lead to fulfilling the community's vision and goals for the parks, recreation, and trail system. This section outlines the policies needed to create changes that the community and visitors desire.

The policy recommendations provide system wide direction and are organized by the goals that they support. Each recommendation is given a letter and number identification code for reference. While identifying applicable policy recommendations is important, the implementation of the following actions is critical. Chapter 8 details the implementation of the following policies.

#### Goals

**Activate:** Develop community recreation and arts programming and events that activate the County's parks and facilities, serving all the diverse needs and interests of Lake County residents and visitors.

**Community:** Create welcoming, safe, healthy, and inclusive parks and trails accessible for all ages and abilities, in each community.

**Destinations:** Identify and create parks, facilities, and trails with regional destination allure to attract visitors to Lake County and bolster the local economy.

**Environment:** Create and manage parks and facilities to foster climate resilience and sustainability, while connecting people to nature and the environment, protecting habitat and water resources.

**Awareness:** Celebrate, honor, and build awareness of the distinct cultures and character of Lake County through the use and development of unique parks and programs, acknowledging the ancestral lands and culture of the indigenous peoples.

**Partnerships:** Build partnerships to expand collaborations, funding, services, recreation programming, and opportunities for the community.

**Stewardship:** Ensure consistent stewardship of parks, facilities, and trails through high quality maintenance and operations, ensuring safe and welcoming places.



# A

**Goal A. Activate: Develop community recreation and arts programming and events that activate the County's parks and facilities, serving all the diverse needs and interests of Lake County residents and visitors.**

## Programs

A.1.1 Develop and offer a balance of recreation and community programs to all age groups, abilities, and neighborhoods within Lake County. This may include tailoring programs, fees, and their delivery to best serve community members. Programs should be evaluated on a regular basis and should be updated based on trends and community demographics.

A.1.2 Create a full-time program, volunteer, and partnership coordinator position, whose responsibilities include:

- Program provider recruitment (volunteers and contractors)
- Volunteer and partner organization recruitment and management
- Interagency and interdepartmental coordination for activation, including with Lake County Library and Lake County Recreation Authority
- Contact list management

- Volunteer and partner contribution tracking
- Friends group formation, operations, and support

A.1.3 Recruit program providers or host regular activities, events, and programs at targeted sites throughout Lake County's park system, striving to provide:

- Activities that reflect a variety of recreation interests, such as outdoor exercise, guided hikes, paddle tours, markets, concerts, birding, fishing, environmental stewardship
- Options for different times of the day and week
- A variety of group sizes and activity formats
- Options in every planning area
- Activities at different parks to introduce people to a variety of sites and experiences



# A

## **Goal A. Activate: Develop community recreation and arts programming and events that activate the County's parks and facilities, serving all the diverse needs and interests of Lake County residents and visitors.**

- Activities that utilize the trail system, such as nature walks, bird watching, walking groups, etc.
  - At least one event day each year within each planning area, preferably at a local or community park
- A.1.4 Encourage events organized by community groups, nonprofits and/or businesses that support physical activity, social interactions, enjoying the outdoors, and connecting with nature.
- A.1.5 Work with tourism, business, and community groups on special events at regional and community parks that attract residents and visitors. Maintain a balance of events that focus on community inclusivity and access, as well as events that focus on cost recovery.
- A.1.6 Maintain or strengthen connections with recreation enthusiasts and advocacy groups to encourage activities and events in County parks, with initial focus on biking, equestrian and paddling sports.
- A.1.7 Work with tribal governments and indigenous community members to put on at least one major community cultural event a year at a community or regional park. Explore opportunities to expand programming and events in partnership with the County's tribes.
- A.1.8 Explore developing mobile programming, using a van or County vehicle to take programming out to different locations. Consider play, fitness, or mobile museum programming for a pilot effort.
- A.1.9 Explore opportunities to develop art and cultural recreation programming and events. Explore opportunities to partner with local organizations to provide this programming.
- A.1.10 Explore opportunities to develop health and wellness programming throughout the County. Explore opportunities to partner with local organizations to provide this programming.





# A

**Goal A. Activate: Develop community recreation and arts programming and events that activate the County's parks and facilities, serving all the diverse needs and interests of Lake County residents and visitors.**

## Communications and Awareness

A.2.1 Develop and implement an engagement and communication plan focused on recruiting and retaining individuals, partners, and nonprofits to help activate parks. For example, recruit volunteers to offer nature walks and interpretive programs at specific parks.

A.2.2 Develop and actively maintain a user-friendly Lake County parks webpage providing clear information on parks and park amenities, reservations and event planning, volunteer opportunities, and ongoing and planned projects. The website should include:

- Open parks and facilities (overview, map with ability to zoom in to each site, photos and facility information)
- Email contact link
- Water access opportunities, including boat ramps and parks with water access or that have water views
- Trails opportunities, highlighting sites with trails suitable for hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding
- Nature viewing opportunities, including birding information and information on natural areas and native habitats found in Lake County parks
- Cultural opportunities, including information on museums and offerings from Lake County's seven tribes
- "How to get involved," with information on volunteering, friends groups, donations and partnership
- Information and registration page for recreation programs as they are developed
- A Parks Planning page (capital Improvements information, information about specific planning efforts and task forces, library of adopted plans and documents)



# A

**Goal A. Activate: Develop community recreation and arts programming and events that activate the County's parks and facilities, serving all the diverse needs and interests of Lake County residents and visitors.**

A.2.3 Create and make available online self-guided activities in Lake County parks to increase awareness and community connections, such as:

- Self-guided bike tours
- Self-guided hikes and walks
- Downloadable water access map
- Nature guides for specific parks
- A parks "passport" structured like junior ranger booklets at national parks or the summer reading program at libraries. This would be similar to a scavenger hunt with participants taking pictures or finding a feature at a specific number of parks. If possible, offer a prize such as parks swag or a pass to the pool.

A.2.4 Develop a signage and wayfinding program for County parks. This should address park signs, wayfinding, and directional signs, and identify key interpretive themes and stories with guidance on the use of interpretive signs.

## Park Stewards

A.3.1 Create a youth job program, structured as a ranger-in-training program, to train youth for parks and recreation jobs.

A.3.2 Work with schools, community groups, nonprofits and/or businesses to create a youth volunteer stewardship program. This program will provide opportunities for youth to meet community service or school credit requirements by helping to keep parks clean, assist with activities, or otherwise contribute to the ongoing care of the parks.

A.3.3 Create a "Community Cares" annual day of service in parks, to provide an opportunity for people to volunteer for activities such as spreading mulch, picking up leaves and litter, or planting trees.





# B

## **Goal B. Community: Create welcoming, safe, healthy, and inclusive parks and trails accessible for all ages and abilities that serve each community.**

### **Access to Parks**

- B.1.1 Ensure that every resident has access to engaging, high-quality parks and trails, both close to home and across the County. Add parks in planning areas that lack them and renovate parks that don't fulfill their function as outlined in the park development guidelines.
- B.1.2 Apply the park development guidelines when designing new parks and renovating existing ones. Parks and facilities do not exist in isolation, and should be located, designed, or renovated with an awareness of the recreational spaces and amenities that are in the surrounding areas. Each new park or facility, or significant renovation of an existing park or facility, should contribute to satisfying the recreational needs of the area that it serves, and be integrated into a system that serves the entire community. Each improvement should complement the mix of uses in the area and in the County as a whole, as well as contribute to recreation for multiple generations and recreation interests.
- B.1.3 Provide safe routes to parks for bicyclists and pedestrians, to encourage use of active transportation modes. Incorporate and build upon the routes identified in the Konocti Regional Trails Master Plan that intersect with parks. Provide clearly marked access points to parks for pedestrians and bicyclists and include thoughtfully located bicycle racks at each park or facility. Coordinate with Caltrans and other County transportation efforts to establish safe bike infrastructure that is protected from vehicles and linked to key destinations.
- B.1.4 Provide local-serving park and recreation facilities in each planning area, including at least one community or local park, playground, off-leash area, walking path and sports or activite recreation facility and social gathering spaces that include medium and large picnic areas and an event lawn or area.





# B

## **Goal B. Community: Create welcoming, safe, healthy, and inclusive parks and trails accessible for all ages and abilities that serve each community.**

### **Universal Design**

**B.2.1** Make Lake County parks and facilities more welcoming and accessible for all people, particularly those with disabilities and with differing physical, perceptual, and cognitive abilities. Strive to exceed ADA compliance (required by law) with Universal Design, as well as improving access for parents with small children, seniors, and others with mobility concerns. Where feasible, incorporate Universal Design practices in the development or renovation of parks and facilities to reduce the physical and attitudinal barriers between people with and without disabilities.

### **Interesting and Diverse Parks**

**B.3.1** Incorporate park amenities to encourage people to linger, enjoy, spend time together and feel safe in parks. This means that design needs to be thoughtfully considered and developed to foster welcomed behaviors. Examples include well-designed plantings that provide views into parks, ambient lighting, well-placed

seating, shade and wind-shelters, art and creative park design, well-maintained restrooms, water fountains and walking paths.

**B.3.2** Increase recreation variety by incorporating new types of outdoor recreation facilities into the park system. Consider facilities such as a bicycle pump track, an additional disc golf course, mountain bike course, etc. Explore partnerships with user groups for new facility types.

**B.3.3** Diversify play structures and play experiences in Lake County parks, including universal access, challenge elements, art, music, and water and sand play opportunities. The play areas across the County should provide a range of play experiences that reflect the local ecosystem and landscape and are tailored to the scale of the park.

**B.3.4** Incorporate nature play, especially at regional parks and natural areas. These children's play areas incorporate climbing rocks, water, sand, wood, and



# B

## **Goal B. Community: Create welcoming, safe, healthy, and inclusive parks and trails accessible for all ages and abilities that serve each community.**

art to encourage exploration, creativity, imagination, and appreciation of nature.

**B.3.5** Provide different sized picnic areas in parks to accommodate a variety of group sizes and uses. Consider the character and type of picnic experience (e.g., sheltered and unsheltered, secluded and active settings), as well as opportunities to use or reserve these sites for group gatherings, activities and programs.

**B.3.6** Design or adapt sports fields and courts for multiple use. For example, diamond fields should be designed to accommodate multiple sports (softball, baseball, kickball) and with space for rectangular fields (soccer, Ultimate, rugby, lacrosse) in the outfield area. Paved courts should be designed and lined for multiple sports. For example, basketball courts can be designed with backstops that include futsal goals and tennis courts could be lined for pickleball or incorporate halfcourt basketball.

**B.3.7** Maximize lake/water access for kayaks, canoes, SUPs, and other non-motorized forms of water recreation. Increase designated and well-marked put-in locations and develop a “Blue Trail” map of water access points, building from the KRT water trail recommendations.

**B.3.8** Incorporate art into park designs to increase identity and sense of place. This can be accomplished through the incorporation of public art, the integration of artists on design teams, and the addition of art elements.

### **Diverse and Well-developed Trails System**

**B.4.1** Advocate for implementation of the Konocti Regional Trails Master Plan, working in coordination with local agencies to address barriers to implementation, such as diverse land ownership, easements, maintenance, and funding. Use the KRT Master Plan as the guiding document for trails development.





# B

## **Goal B. Community: Create welcoming, safe, healthy, and inclusive parks and trails accessible for all ages and abilities that serve each community.**

- B.4.2 Establish short and mid-range routes near the lake. Prioritize the development of trails on existing or future park lands, creating loop trails, and establishing trailheads on park land connecting to other landowners.
- B.4.2 Enhance or develop trailheads at parks throughout the system with amenities such as permanent restrooms, adequate parking, potable water, wayfinding and directional signs, shade, bike repair stations and racks, and mileage markers from key destinations.
- B.4.3 Evaluate and support development of trails through active partnerships with other landowners, including non-profits, BLM, etc., and leverage connections to these properties and existing areas such as fire access roads. Consider the feasibility of loop trails when possible.

- B.4.4 Establish policies about the use of e-bikes on trails in coordination with user groups and other agencies. These policies should differentiate between pedal-assist and throttled e-bikes and be consistent throughout Lake County.
- B.4.5 Develop multi-use trails as the primary trail type, especially for park-to-park connections. Consider developing single use trails within larger sites, when appropriate with separate equestrian, hiking and biking networks.

### **Community Engagement**

- B.5.1 Develop a process to evaluate community-generated ideas for the park system for compliance with the Master Plan. Ensure community benefits and access are addressed by any proposal, as well as funding for long-term maintenance of any new facilities. Proposed capital projects should:
  - Meet the goals and intent of this Master Plan;





# B

## **Goal B. Community: Create welcoming, safe, healthy, and inclusive parks and trails accessible for all ages and abilities that serve each community.**

- Be consistent with Lake County's park development guidelines;
- Demonstrate feasibility for implementation, including addressing support amenities and infrastructure; and
- Provide a maintenance plan to ensure funding and staffing are sufficient for its intended lifespan.
- Incorporate a range of opportunities to engage the community, in person and on-line. Ensure that the community is made aware of these opportunities in a timely manner, through multiple outlets including the County website, social media, and on-site advertising.

**B.5.2** Continue Lake County's robust and proactive outreach process by actively seeking input during planning and processes for park renovations, master plans and new parks and facilities, considering the following:

- For regional or community parks or facilities, or a major renovation to such a facility, engage in a community-wide outreach process to obtain input.
- In the case of a new local park or major renovation to a local park, engage in an outreach process to obtain input from the residents of the surrounding area.

**B.5.3** Engage with residents, tribal members, and local businesses when developing a new park or major facility. Encourage the participation of arts representatives, youth, seniors, and key users.

**B.5.4** Cultivate relationships with community-based organizations and cultural groups to facilitate engagement and dialogue about park and programming priorities.

**B.5.5** Engage with the local arts community on integration of art into parks and in park design decisions.



**Goal C. Destinations: Identify and create parks, facilities, and trails with regional destination allure to attract visitors to Lake County and bolster the local economy.**

**Encouraging Visitor Use of Parks, Facilities and Trails**

- C.1.1 Design visitor amenities and facilities at regional and community parks that emphasize and respond to the outdoor recreation character of Lake County's landscapes through site design, materials selection, and design character.
- C.1.2 Publicize the "Blue Trail" map of water access points, making it available at visitor destinations and lodging, and on visitor-focused websites.
- C.1.3 Identify and publicize permitted locations for recreation activities that make use of the physical environment but do not require permanent facilities. Examples include slacklining, hang gliding, and rock climbing. Allow these activities where feasible and when minimal impact to habitat is likely.
- C.1.4 Facilitate non-profits, outfitters and businesses providing services such as food trucks, kayak/paddle board rentals and fishing or birding tours in selected parks to expand services and increase local economic vitality. These efforts should not create net operating costs for the County.
- C.1.5 Update the reservations and permits page to include:
  - Information about reservable areas and facilities within the park system.
  - Policies around alcohol use at park events.
  - More information on when insurance is required and when it isn't.
  - Updated forms, such as fillable pdfs or a fillable form.
  - Add an online reservation option in the long-term.
- C.1.6 Institute a fee structure for large events that use County parks or facilities to ensure that County costs such as additional maintenance staff time and facility wear, and tear are covered by event fees.





## C

**Goal C. Destinations: Identify and create parks, facilities, and trails with regional destination allure to attract visitors to Lake County and bolster the local economy.**

- C.1.7 Design and develop new County-owned destination facilities based on an operations study and business plan designed to maintain and operate the facility for the long-term.
- C.1.8 Require a review process for any vendor- or partner-proposed destination facilities that will be located on Lake County park sites, using criteria to evaluate proposals, including:
  - Whether the proposal is consistent with this Master Plan and the park development guidelines.
  - Demonstrating feasibility for building the facility and necessary support amenities and infrastructure.
  - Providing a maintenance plan to ensure funding and staffing are sufficient for its intended lifespan.
  - Providing a lease agreement or memorandum of understanding that clarifies operator and County responsibilities.

### **Marketing and Promotions**

- C.2.1 Collaborate with Lake County Tourism Improvement District and Lake County Chamber of Commerce to promote visitor use of Lake County parks, facilities, and trails.
- C.2.2 Cultivate and grow relationships with local businesses, hospitality industry and private sector recreation providers, including retailers, to encourage visitor use of parks and to get feedback on visitor needs. Develop parks that will contribute to the attraction of new people to live and work in the County.
- C.2.3 Develop promotional materials and market Lake County parks and facilities to event organizers, especially for events that take advantage of the County's existing park system and facilities. Examples include events focused on fishing, the lake, birding, hiking, biking, or horseback riding; race events that occur in parks or that use parks as a base (e.g., triathlons, road cycling events, 5K or 10K runs).





# D

**Goal D. Environment: Create and manage parks and facilities to foster climate resilience and sustainability, while connecting people to nature and the environment, and protecting habitat and water resources.**

## **Celebrate and Preserve Nature in Lake County**

- D.1.1 Preserve and manage existing natural areas and mature trees in parks, limit mown turf to areas needed for recreation, and naturalize areas within parks.
- D.1.2 Preserve Lake County’s night skies and minimal light pollution. Follow Dark Sky guidance for lighting, with a particular focus on minimizing lighting within natural areas. Any lighting provided for security, pathway lighting, or courts should have cutoffs that prevent light intrusion into habitat areas to minimize impact.
- D.1.3 Collaborate with Water Resources and other departments on maintaining and enhancing Clear Lake water quality.

## **Regenerative Landscape Practices and Training**

- D.2.1 Implement sustainable and climate positive best practices for park design and maintenance to improve habitat, reduce waste, conserve water and energy,

protect water and air quality, and reduce maintenance.

- D.2.2 Update all irrigation systems to high efficiency systems including “smart” controllers. Expand use of reclaimed water for irrigation where it is available. Consider use of greywater systems and rainwater catchment systems to supplement irrigation. Continue to conserve water use by using low water use landscape elements and reducing ornamental and underused areas of turf.
- D.2.3 Enroll all park maintenance staff in regenerative landscape training programs (such as provided by Rescape.CA) to ensure that areas are developed in line with best practices.
- D.2.4 Coordinate and collaborate with other resource management agencies and tribes to share knowledge, resources, and staff to bring their resource management expertise and approaches into the park system.



# D

**Goal D. Environment: Create and manage parks and facilities to foster climate resilience and sustainability, while connecting people to nature and the environment, and protecting habitat and water resources.**

D.2.5 Increase environmental education and awareness in parks through interpretive signage, art, site design and interpretive programs, and design elements. Use creative signage and displays to describe and interpret natural habitat and sustainable features such as stormwater treatment, water conservation measures, habitat restoration, and alternative energy sources.

D.2.6 Implement carbon farming approaches in the park system as a strategy for offsetting emissions, carbon reduction and greenhouse gas emissions reduction. Integrate approaches including:

- Return leftover biomass to the soil as mulch instead of removing or burning it.
- Reduce or eliminate use of chemical fertilizers.
- Use integrated pest management.
- Restore degraded soils.

## **Green Infrastructure and Vegetation Management in Parks**

D.3.1 Improve water quality and manage stormwater by incorporating green stormwater infrastructure into all parks and facilities. Incorporate features such as bioswales, bioretention basins, rain gardens, permeable paving, and wetland restoration to cleanse and reduce stormwater and recharge groundwater. Reduce or eliminate impervious surfaces and incorporate pervious paving as a standard.

D.3.2 Implement a tree management program that includes tree care and a tree replanting program to maintain tree canopy. Consider species migration when selecting trees.





## D

**Goal D. Environment: Create and manage parks and facilities to foster climate resilience and sustainability, while connecting people to nature and the environment, and protecting habitat and water resources.**

- D.3.3 Work with tribes to incorporate indigenous land management practices into Lake County's parks. This could include contracts with tribal or indigenous organizations to conduct land management activities, provide trainings, or develop maintenance protocols.
- D.3.4 Manage County parklands for wildfire prevention. Apply vegetation management practices that reduce wildfire fuels, such as prescribed burns, targeted grazing, and plant selection.

### **Resilient Parks and Facilities**

- D.4.1 Include energy efficient features, which can not only conserve energy and create cost savings but can also be educational or artistic features. Conserve energy in indoor and outdoor lighting by incorporating motion activated lighting, dual level fixtures, self-powered lighting (e.g. integrated solar panels), and energy-efficient technologies such as LED.

- D.4.2 Identify sites where alternative energy sources (e.g. solar panels on roof structures or over parking areas, wind turbines, geothermal energy) can be incorporated into the site.
- D.4.3 Establish parks and recreation facilities as resilience hubs and manage them as part of the County's resilience strategy. For example, community recreation facilities can be used as cooling centers, provide a safe location during hazardous air quality days, and provide emergency shelter in an earthquake, fire, or other disaster.
- D.4.4 Site new parks and facilities to mitigate any current and potential future climate hazards. For example, look at park locations that can also serve as wildfire buffers or emergency management facilities, or provide other hazard mitigation functions.





# E

**Goal E. Awareness: Celebrate, honor, and build awareness of the distinct cultures and character of Lake County through the use and development of unique parks and programs, acknowledging the ancestral lands and culture of the indigenous peoples.**

## **Tribal Involvement and Culture**

- E.1.1 Acknowledge and celebrate Lake County's indigenous history and cultural heritage in the parks and recreation system with park features, interpretation, events, and programming that support and educate about the rich contemporary culture and traditional cultural practices of Lake County's seven tribes.
- E.1.2 Seek tribal advice on all aspects of the parks and recreation system, bringing a tribal government and indigenous lens for input on project, operational and programmatic decisions. This could be achieved by expanding or reconfiguring the existing Countywide Parks & Recreation Advisory Board.
- E.1.3 Provide training to staff on cultural competency. Review minimum requirements in job descriptions and the application process to reduce barriers and increase representation in the candidate pool.

- E.1.4 Review the names of Lake County's parks and consider renaming parks or naming specific facilities to reflect the tribal history of Lake County and increase representation of indigenous stories and history.
- E.1.5 Work with tribes to develop land acknowledgments specific for each County park.

## **Incorporate Arts and Culture**

- E.2.1 Design each park and facility as a unique and identifiable place, integrating the environmental qualities and the culture, history, and identity of its surrounding community.
- E.2.2 Incorporate public art throughout the park system to enliven parks, celebrate neighborhood and cultural identity, and interpret the natural and cultural environment. Prioritize local and regional artists.



# E

**Goal E. Awareness: Celebrate, honor, and build awareness of the distinct cultures and character of Lake County through the use and development of unique parks and programs, acknowledging the ancestral lands and culture of the indigenous peoples.**

- E.2.3 Provide culturally relevant programming and events that relate to the diverse cultures represented in the community, and that engages all Lake County residents. Develop programming and incorporate elements into parks and facilities that encourage cultural exchange and interaction.





# F

## **Goal F. Partnerships: Build partnerships to expand collaborations, funding, services, recreation programming, and opportunities for the community.**

### **Agency Coordination and Alignment**

- F.1.1 Designate a staff liaison/contact person from Public Services to facilitate agency coordination and collaboration (e.g., Cities of Clearlake and Lakeport, tribal governments, LCRA, Lake Transit, California State Parks, Land Trust, US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management), including representing County parks, recreation and trails interests in planning efforts led by other entities. Make participation in planning efforts part of the job description for this person.
- F.1.2 Convene a regular cross-agency forum (semi-annual or quarterly) with other public and non-profit landholders/land managers (Federal, State, non-profit).
- F.1.3 Evaluate reorganizing the management of the parks, recreation, and trails components of Highland Springs Recreation Area to be under the management of Public Services.

- F.1.4 Update the structure and purpose of the Parks and Recreation Advisory board to be a commission that incorporates a variety of perspectives. This should be a 5 to 7 member commission that advises the Public Service Director.

### **Community Partners**

- F.2.1 Cultivate and maintain community partnerships and volunteer efforts to enhance, take care of, and activate County parks.
- F.2.2 Identify and keep current a list of projects (both capital and stewardship) that can be completed or supported by volunteer groups, businesses, nonprofit groups, interns, scouts, students, and others.
- F.2.3 Collaborate with tribes on a youth career development and employment program, park and trail improvement projects, land stewardship and other areas of importance to tribal governments.





# F

## **Goal F. Partnerships: Build partnerships to expand collaborations, funding, services, recreation programming, and opportunities for the community.**

### **Funding**

- F.3.1 Encourage establishment of an independent Lake County parks and trails nonprofit with 501(c)(3) status or coordinate with a local non-profit who can serve as a fiscal sponsor. The purpose of a parks and trails nonprofit is to provide a means to accept donations (with donors receiving tax credits), apply for grants and funding not available to governmental entities, and potentially conduct campaigns.
- F.3.2 Support user-group efforts to bring additional funding resources to Lake County for implementation of Master Plan priorities.
- F.3.3 Consider establishing an Adopt-A-Park program in partnership with neighbors and community groups, especially for local and community parks, to fund improvements, programs, and events.
- F.3.4 Seek more partnerships with art and culture agencies and organizations especially for programming and the integration of art and culture into parks and park improvement projects.
- F.3.5 Explore funding and co-promotion partnerships for parks and programming with tribes, the Land Trust, and local entities.



# G

**Goal G. Stewardship: Ensure consistent stewardship of parks, facilities, and trails through high quality maintenance and operations, ensuring safe and welcoming places.**

## Total Cost Budgeting

- G.1.1 Prepare a feasibility study and business plan for any proposed new major facility development or renovation/expansion (e.g. event center, equestrian center, mountain bike course) prior to determining whether to proceed, or require one for partner-proposed facilities that will be located on Lake County sites. The study should define operating costs and determine the operating model.
- G.1.2 Ensure total cost of ownership practices are applied when developing and planning for new parks to ensure that maintenance, replacement costs, and operations are accounted for and budgeted. The purpose is to provide sufficient funding for ongoing maintenance of parks and increase the maintenance budget when new parks or facilities are added, or major renovations are made.
- G.1.3 Maximize operational efficiencies in parks and facilities. Invest in materials and construction techniques that lower operating and life-cycle costs. A new building has a typical life of over 50 years. The initial design will impact the costs of operations, and the required staffing and maintenance. Therefore, staffing costs, maintenance implications, and user functionality should be stressed in the design of new or renovated recreation buildings and parks.
- G.1.4 Include in the parks capital improvement plan regular capital replacement for major assets (e.g., buildings, restrooms, parking lots, piers, boat ramps, playgrounds, and sports facilities).
- G.1.5 Adopt a fee philosophy and determine appropriate fees and cost recovery goals. The resulting fee structure should, at minimum, include fees for facility rentals, special events, recreation programs, and boat ramp use and consider the following:
  - Since Lake County has a lower median household income than California as a whole, pricing policies





# G

## **Goal G. Stewardship: Ensure consistent stewardship of parks, facilities, and trails through high quality maintenance and operations, ensuring safe and welcoming places.**

and fee structures should take into consideration access and affordability for local residents.

- Incorporate differential pricing for residents and visitors.
- Allow for affordable access and feasible management, while setting fees to offset maintenance and operation costs.

### **Safety and Durability**

- G.2.1 Use durable, vandal resistant and low maintenance furnishings, fixtures, and planting to promote the image of a cared-for environment while minimizing maintenance costs.
- G.2.2 Conduct regular park maintenance and facility inspections, at least annually, on park buildings, playground equipment, and recreational fields to allow for their continued public use and enjoyment.
- G.2.3 Ensure that park lighting levels are sufficient to enable appropriate recreational activities and enhance

safety and security in parks, along paths, and in other outdoor spaces. Take into consideration the following:

- Provide lighting that meets safety and security needs, but that does not encourage undesired night-time use of the parks.
- Consider motion-activated lighting as a method to signal park use to observers and law enforcement and to indicate history of movement.

- G.2.4 Increase visual access into parks by designing and maintaining landscapes to provide visibility into sites. This generally means that the area between 24-inches and 72-inches above the ground is free of plant material that can obstruct views into and within a site.
- G.2.5 Consider adding residences to regional parks and larger county parks to provide an on-site presence, following the model successfully used at Highland Springs Recreation Area.





# G

**Goal G. Stewardship: Ensure consistent stewardship of parks, facilities, and trails through high quality maintenance and operations, ensuring safe and welcoming places.**

- G.2.6 Develop a park ambassadors or park hosts program to provide volunteers or paid staff regularly in parks to interact with park visitors, provide “eyes in the park” and increase the sense of safety. Prioritize those sites with known vandalism and safety issues and/or high visitation.

## **Natural Areas Stabilization and Restoration**

- G.3.1 Develop a maintenance program to manage, stabilize, and gradually enhance natural areas and native species in parks. Natural resource management is critical to maintaining ecological integrity and function. Develop management protocols that, at minimum, include controlling invasive species, removing/pruning hazardous trees, minimizing wildfire hazards, and promoting safe access.
- G.3.2 Consider contracting for trails and natural area management with organizations with specialized knowledge, such as Redwood Trails Alliance, TERA, and California Conservation Corps.

# 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Improvement Recommendations



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### ***Upgrade, Refresh and Enhance Parks***

The County has a range of beautiful and well maintained parks. However, building on needs and the overall analysis highlights where improvements should be made to make the parks function more effectively for the community, identify where new amenities or facilities are necessary, and how to activate the parks to meet the Plan's goals.

This chapter includes recommendations on park, facility, and trail enhancements and additions that will realize the vision and goals, and is organized into three sections:

- Existing Parks
- Trails
- New Parks and Destination Recreation Facilities

This section recommends physical improvements to the County's existing parks and recreation facilities taking into consideration the Master Plan vision and goals; the park or facility's function within the overall system; the park development guidelines contained in the Master Plan; and needs and opportunities identified during the Master Plan planning process. Recommendations are organized by planning area with each park classification identified by icons as identified to the right.





## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

### *Upper Lake/Nice*

**Black Oak Park**

**Hammond Ave. Park**

**Hinman Park**

**Holiday Harbor Beach**

**Nice Community Beach**

**Keeling Park**

**Rodman Slough Park**

**Upper Lake Park**



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### Black Oaks Park

Nice | 2.0 acres



Black Oaks Park is small and currently undeveloped.

- Manage this site to control invasive species.



*Control Invasive Species*



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### Hammond Avenue Park

Nice | 12.5 acres



This expansive community park has been developed in phases and includes a variety of features, with future phases to add a multi-sport court, an exercise circuit, a play area for ages 2-5, a native garden area and low water use planting areas, a multi-use lawn area, sheltered group picnic areas with BBQ's, a zipline play pocket, and additional parking.

- Complete the planned phases of the park.
- Add more looped walking paths, included measured distance loops within the park.
- Preserve the mature oaks.
- Expand the interpretive signage along paths to feature information on the oaks and other native species and local ecosystems.
- Consider connecting to the nearby undeveloped lot at the lakefront (possibly an undeveloped Hammond Avenue road end) and developing it for paddle access.



*Add Looped Walking Paths*



*Expand Interpretive Signage*



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations



### Hinman Park

Nice | 2.5 acres



This local park is a formal town square in character, with a central gazebo, shade and palm trees, and paved diagonal paths. A restroom was recently added.

- Relocate picnic tables from under the gazebo. Create picnic peninsulas off the main paths to allow multiple groups to use the park at one time.
- Consider adding new uses into the triangular quadrants based on local interests, such as a bocce court, fitness equipment, checker/chess tables, or play features with small safety surfacing footprints such as spinners, or a slide.
- Reduce mown turf areas.
- Reconfigure the park entries so that at least one or two park entrances do not require passing through a picnic spot, to make the park feel more inviting.
- Activate this park with programming to invite more regular use.
- For the longer term, plan for tree replacement with climate adapted species to maintain tree canopy.



*Outdoor Gym Equipment*



*Activate the Park with Community Activities*

## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### Nice Community Beach

Nice | 0.2 acres



Located near Holiday Harbor, this small beach spot is undeveloped, with only a single concrete bench.

- Develop for use as a paddle launch.
- Add more seating areas and shade.



*Paddle Launch*



*Seating with Shade*



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### Keeling Park

Nice | 1.5 acres



Keeling Park is a local park that provides water access for swimming, boating, and fishing. The boat ramp is currently the main attraction.

- Upgrade the restroom.
- Add native plants and additional plantings for visual interest and comfort, as well as to screen the utility area by the restroom.
- Consider the opportunity to expand onto nearby County-owned parcels located across Carson Street and Lakeshore Blvd. Realigning the intersection of Carson Street and Lakeshore Blvd. would allow for the park to be enlarged while better integrating the use areas by relocating the playground and expanding the picnic and lawn areas.



*Add Native Plants*



*Expand the Picnic and Lawn Areas*



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations



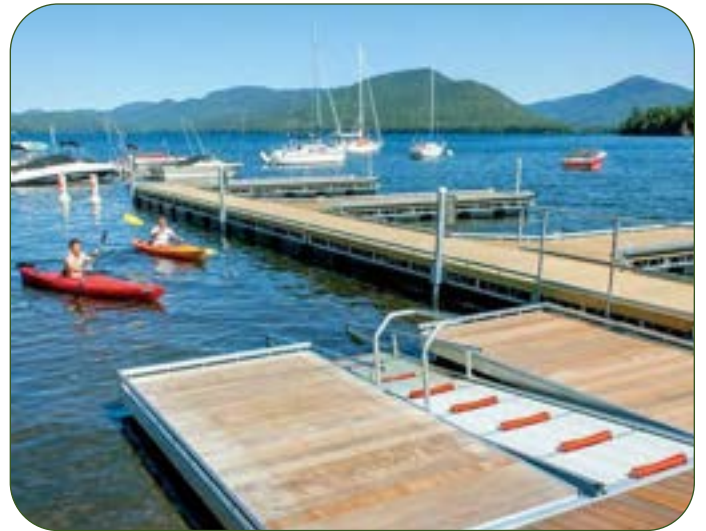
### Rodman Slough Park

Lakeport | 38.0 acres



Rodman Slough Park is a birdwatching destination in an especially ecologically rich area of the County. Located on the lake at Rodman Slough, this park is near the Lake County Land Trust's preserve and on the edge of the Middle Creek Restoration Project area.

- Formalize the existing trails, creating loops where possible.
- Develop a non-motorized launch on the park side of the Nice-Lucerne Cutoff.
- Add bird blinds or viewing decks to enhance kayaking and birdwatching experiences.
- Add bike parking.
- Add more picnic tables and seating.
- Add a picnic shelter in the area formerly planned as an off-leash area.
- Plant with native vegetation and trees.



*Non-Motorized Launch*



*Bike Parking*

## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations



### Upper Lake Park

Upper Lake | 8.5 acres



Adjacent to the Running Creek Casino, this smaller community park is located nearby Upper Lake residential enclaves. Planned improvements include an off-leash dog park, basketball court, and parking lot lighting.

- Construct the planned improvements, including dog park, basketball court, and parking lot lighting. Improved lighting would increase useable hours.
- Improve pedestrian access to the picnic area and playground.
- Add a looped perimeter path with distance markers, being careful to locate the path to preserve the open lawn and softball field.
- Improve the large lawn area to accommodate soccer practice and possibly games. Relocate picnic tables and upgrade the turf and surface. Consider reconfiguring the outfield fencing or replacing it with removable fencing for greater flexibility.
- When the tennis court needs resurfacing, add markings for pickleball and consider adding a basketball backstop and markings for a basketball half-court.
- Develop a trailhead to serve the KRT Plan trail network, in coordination with the Middle Creek project.
- Explore partnerships with Robinson Rancheria for park activation and improvements.



*Improved Lighting*



*Add Markings for Pickleball*



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

### *Shoreline Communities*

**Alpine Park**

**Clark's Island**

**Clearlake Oaks Beach**

**Clearlake Oaks Plaza**

**Davis Beach**

**Helen Mitchum Park**

**John T. Klaus Park**

**Lucerne Creek Park**

**Lucerne Harbor Park & Artist Village**

**Nylander Park**





## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### Alpine Park

Lucerne | 2.5 acres



Alpine Park is a local park that also offers significant waterfront and lake recreation access.

- Provide improved access at the northern portion of the park and add pathways to connect the different areas.
- Add a bench and fishing line receptacle at the wooden fishing pier.
- Add more tree to shade the seating area around the playground.
- Add landscaping to better buffer the impacts from Hwy. 20, and screen utility boxes.
- Consider adding lake edge vegetation that adapts to varying water levels and consider replanting lawn areas with drought-resistant lawn alternatives.
- Longer term, plan for reinvestment in dock and pier structures to sustain access.



*Example Shaded Playground*



*Install native plants that are drought tolerant.*

## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### Clark's Island

Clearlake Oaks | 1.5 acres



Clark's Island is a local park situated close to Clearlake Oaks Beach. Its primary feature is an attractive cob entry sign, leading to the pedestrian bridge into the park. This park is more natural in its setting and level of development, and this character should be enhanced.

- Design a more formal pedestrian connection to Clearlake Oaks Beach, including wayfinding signage.
- Add amenities, without duplicating what is available at nearby Nylander Park. Additional picnic tables and benches would make the park more inviting. A small nature play area would complement the character of the park.
- Provide an ADA path of travel.
- Revegetate with native species and additional native trees. Remove turf grass and replace in use areas with lawn alternatives or decomposed granite.
- Consider seasonality of water and improve the water's edge vegetation for year-round visual appeal, as well as habitat value. This could become a natural area:
- Long term, reinvest in the pedestrian bridge.



*Example Nature Play Area*



*Explore alternatives to turf grass.*



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### Clearlake Oaks Beach

Clearlake Oaks | 1.1 acres



This lake-focused park is popular for fishing, paddling, and beach activities and includes the Clearlake Oaks boat launch. The park is located near Clark's Island.

- Design a more formal pedestrian connection to Clark's Island Park, including wayfinding signage.
- Reinvest in the pier and launch to maintain these in good condition.
- Add picnic tables and seating to the beach area.
- Incorporate native plantings in the riparian and upland areas, and plant drought-tolerant trees in the beach area to maintain the shaded character.
- Consider adding water safety interventions, such as life rings or life jacket loaner stations.



*Add Picnic Area*



*Add Water Safety Interventions*



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations



### Clearlake Oaks Plaza

Clearlake Oaks | 1.0 acres



Clearlake Oaks Plaza is a local park adjacent to the Senior Center and next to Nylander Park. Surrounded by parking and vehicular circulation, its formal character does not invite active use, although its labyrinth draws some users.

- Develop an activation plan that considers Clearlake Oaks Plaza, Nylander Park, and the Senior Center.
- Add an improved pedestrian connection to the senior center and to Nylander Park.
- Add shade, which could be trees or shade sails.
- Convert the lawn to drought tolerant native plants with visual interest that also provides buffering from the road.
- Add more seating under shaded areas and in native plantings.
- Consider adding smaller-scale games and amenities such as chess tables, cornhole, and ping pong, bocce ball.
- For games, make sure to provide options for getting equipment for weekends or clear time periods.



*Pop Up Ping Pong Tables*



*Bocce Ball*

## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### Davis Beach

Lucerne | 0.5 acres



This linear beach access point has expansive views of the lake and is the longest beach in the system. There is informal gravel parking on the shoulder of Hwy 20, but limited infrastructure development.

- Explore options for a restroom - if a permanent structure is not feasible, consider an ADA accessible portable restroom.
- Add a fence or other visual delineation between the beach and road. Add drought-tolerant native planting areas along the fence.
- Plant additional trees.
- Add bicycle parking.
- Update the sign, which currently says "Davis Rest Area."
- Add water safety interventions, such as life rings or life jacket loaner stations.
- Work with Caltrans to add a crosswalk with a pedestrian flasher for safe access across Hwy. 20.



*Add Drought-Tolerant Planting Areas*



*Add a Crosswalk*



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### Helen Mitchum Park

Spring Valley | 117.0 acres



Helen Mitchum Park is linear in nature, located along a pleasant creek corridor that often has running water into the dry season. Access is managed by the neighboring Homeowners Association and is limited.

- Continue the use of this park as a natural area.
- Formalize the small gravel parking area located off Wolf Creek Road and add County park signage.
- Explore opportunities to create public access from New Long Valley Road/ Hwy 221.
- Partner with the HOA on trail maintenance and development.



*Continue Use as Natural Area*



*Create Public Access*



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### John T. Klaus Park

Clearlake Oaks | 584.0 acres



This recently acquired property has walnut groves and rolling hills with oaks. It is undeveloped. By the terms of the bequest, approximately half the site will become a nature preserve.

- Develop an interim use and management plan to open use to the site in advance of park development.
- Develop a natural resource management plan for the park, especially the nature preserve portion.
- With community input, develop a phased Master Plan for improvements using the Regional Park Development Guidelines as a starting point. Consider the following program elements:
  - Event pavilion/center
  - Dedicated trail network for hiking
  - Dedicated equestrian trail network
  - Mountain bike course/dedicated mountain bike trail network
  - Group picnic areas
  - Destination playground with nature play and interpretation
  - Off-leash area



*Develop Plan*

- Nature center
- Additional recreation facilities compatible with the park's character and nature preserve.
- Phase improvements over time, as funding allows.

## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations



### Lucerne Creek Park

Lucerne | 2.0 acres



This wooded creek channel is minimally developed but is considered a local park due to its location adjacent to Lucerne Harbor Park, directly across Hwy. 20 on the west end, and the Senior Center, across 9th street on the east end.

- Create a full, ADA accessible walking circuit around the park to connect exercise activities and seating/picnic areas and connect to Lucerne Harbor Park. Include distance markers.
- Provide picnic tables and additional benches.
- Improve crosswalks to Senior Center and to the Lucerne Harbor Park and the lake.
- Shade the path, exercise, and seating areas where possible.



*Add Exercise Activities*



*Add Shade Features*



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### Lucerne Harbor Park & Artist Park

Lucerne | 4.5 acres



Situated on the shore of the lake and nearby to Lucerne Creek Park, this park features a picnic area shaded with redwood trees, a boat launch area, and a playground. Low water levels significantly impact the park's use.

- Develop a master plan to guide reinvestment in this park and improve connections to Lucerne Creek Park. Since several features in the park are in fair condition, reinvestment will be needed during the life of this Plan.
- Explore moving the playground away from Hwy. 20, possibly to Lucerne Creek Park.
- If the playground moves from its current location, consider locating a picnic shelter in this general area with additional seating and picnic tables to take advantage of the lake frontage.
- Improve the pedestrian circulation between this park, Lucerne Creek Park, and the Artist Village, including buffering between walkways and the road.
- Revegetate the Lucerne Creek outflow to create an attractive park feature.
- Improve planting areas at the frontage to Artist Village and piers.
- As climate conditions warrant, consider stopping the watering program for the redwoods and revegetate this area with drought tolerant native plants.



*Revegetate the Lucerne Creek*



*Add a Picnic Shelter*



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### Nylander Park

Clearlake Oaks | 1.0 acres



Nylander Park is a local park, with excellent tree canopy. The park is adjacent to a County-owned storefront, which provides an exterior access restroom for the park. It is near Clearlake Oaks Plaza.

- Improve signage to the restroom and Clearlake Oaks Plaza.
- Develop stronger pedestrian connections to Clearlake Oaks Plaza.
- Consider widening the meandering path within the park to allow for the passage of strollers, or for people walking side-by-side.
- Buffer the playground from the street by adding additional planting.



*Widen Path*



*Add Additional Planting by Playground*

## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

### Lower Lake

#### Lower Lake Park





## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### Lower Lake Park

Lower Lake | 1.0 acres



Centrally located in the community, Lower Lake Park (aka Russell Rustici Park) is a small local park adjacent to the fire station. It is a shady site, focused on a large picnic shelter and barbecue pit. Facilities are aging, and parking dominates the center of the park. There is a significant need to increase the recreation amenities available in the Lower Lake planning area. Though the population is smaller than in some other planning areas, there are no other parks available.

- Develop a plan for renovation of Lower Lake Park, following the park development guidelines, incorporating amenities for close-to-home recreation, and providing for more flexible use of the park. Plan for some improvements to be implemented quickly.
- Upgrade the playground with more interactive play features. Better integrate it into the park and add a seating area. Consider a netclimber and disk swing.
- Add painted play elements such as hopscotch and foursquare on existing asphalt.
- Relocate parking from the center of the park, or limit use to picnic shelter rentals.
- To make the park more inviting, consider removing some or all chain link fencing along 2nd and Mill Street frontages or replacing with wooden fencing matching the playground fence.



*Upgrade the Play Features*

- Install County-branded signage at street entries.
- Explore park expansion opportunities, especially for adjacent parcels.
- Explore renovation of the indoor space in collaboration with County partners.
- Coordinate with Public Works to designate a safe neighborhood walking route that connects to the park and provides an exercise route along neighborhood streets.



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

### *Middletown*

**Middletown Pool and Park**

**Middletown Square Park**

**Middletown Trailside Park**



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### Middletown Park & Pool

Middletown | 1.0 acres



This special use park, adjacent to several schools, contains the County's only public swimming pool, open seasonally. It also includes one lighted tennis court and a playground.

- Install shade structures throughout the park, including over picnic tables, on the pool deck, and over seating at the playground.
- Explore feasibility of covering the pool to allow for year-round use.



*Install Shade Structures*



*Explore Pool Covering*



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### Middletown Square Park

Middletown | 1.0 acres



Located in a central area adjacent to a library and a senior center, this local park is shaded with oak trees and has a beautiful lawn that could be used for passive enjoyment, recreation, gatherings, or community events such as the popular Friday evening farmer's market.

- Reinvest in this park to maintain its excellent condition, including sustaining its tree canopy.
- Consider adding a small group picnic area that can also be used for library and senior center programming.



*Sustain the Tree Canopy*



*Add Group Picnic Area*

## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations



### Middletown Trailside Park

Middletown | 107.0 acres



This triangular park, located between 2 roads (one of which is the heavily traveled Hwy. 175), was a wooded park that was burned over by a major wildfire. The largest of Lake County's community parks, it is the least developed and was before the fire. Although very impacted by fire and tree loss, it is beginning to recover. Major replanting of trees and shrubs was undertaken by the County, partners, community members, and many volunteers. The trail system remains, and some amenities have been rebuilt.

- Continue revegetation and habitat restoration efforts.
- Develop the planned trail network, including the dedicated mountain bike course and dedicated equestrian trail loop.
- Add more recreation facilities, such as picnic shelters, destination nature play area incorporating sand and water plan, and a dog park.
- Consider this site as a potential location for a new equestrian center.
- Add a large shelter or potentially a small flexible use building sited near a restored natural area. Incorporate environmental interpretation highlighting natural succession, firesafe landscaping, and other aspects of local and fire ecology.



*Dedicated Mountain Bike Course*



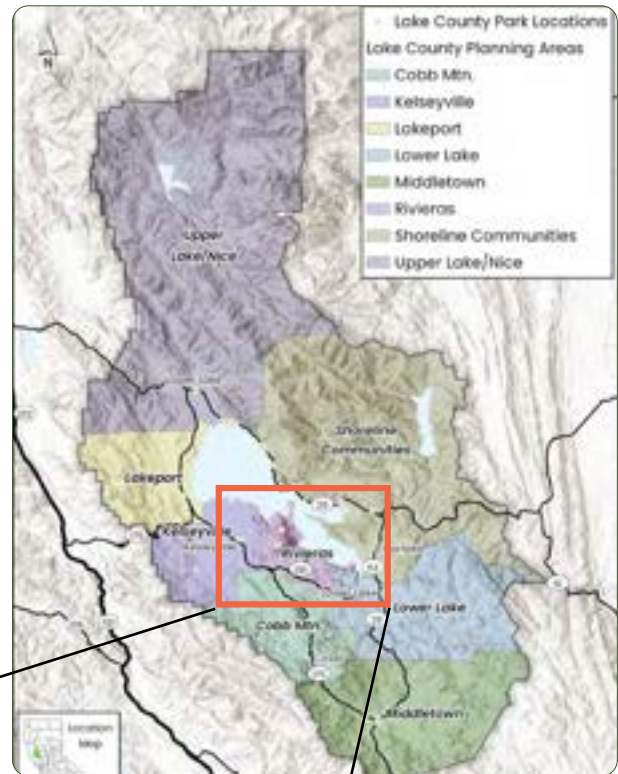
*Potential Site for New Equestrian Center*



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

### *Rivieras*

#### **Mt. Konocti Park**



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations



### Mt. Konocti Regional Park

Kelseyville | 1,152 acres



Mt. Konocti Regional Park is an expansive site with limited access. Located on a dormant volcano, this site is significant to all seven local tribes, as well as tribes located outside Lake County. This park offers hiking access only from the small parking area, mainly along a fire access road. The site has outstanding views, historic and archaeologic resources, and interpretive signs about importance to Indigenous people, historical events, and the area's geology. There is a patchwork of ownership, with trails crossing some private and BLM lands.

- Coordinate with local tribes and the community to update the master plan for Mt. Konocti to respect indigenous culture and provide appropriate recreation access, especially expanded trails.
- Designate other county-owned property on Buckingham Peak as park land.
- Develop trail access from the Rivas planning area, exploring a connection from the Ely Stage Stop and Country Museum to gain access from Hwy 281.
- Continue to develop the trail network in accordance with the master plan including trailheads and staging areas for hikers, bikers, and equestrians.



#### *Develop Trail*

- Develop a trail from Buckingham Peak to the north ridge.
- Develop and implement a natural resource management plan for the park.
- Continue to explore opportunities to expand the park if adjacent properties come up for sale.



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

### *Kelseyville*

**Highland Springs Recreation Area**

**Kelseyville Community Park**

**Lakeside Park**

**Pioneer Park**



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### Highland Springs Park

Lakeport | 2,500 acres



Highland Springs Park is heavily used and attracts many visitors. Owned and operated by the Water Resources Department, it includes a core recreation area centered on the lake, which has more consistent water quality than Clear Lake and is popular for stand-up paddling. Beyond the lakefront area, there is a large disc golf course and extensive acreage with trail networks popular for equestrians, mountain bikers and hikers. This plan recommends that Public Services and Water Resources explore Public Services taking on management of the recreation areas in the park.

- Coordinate with Water Resources on to develop a plan for reinvestment in the lakefront park improvements.
- Improve restroom access, including providing an ADA accessible restroom at the flat area near the lake.
- Continue to encourage organized volunteer efforts for trail maintenance.



*Improve Restroom Access*



*Volunteer Efforts for Trail Maintenance*



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations



### Kelseyville Community Park

Kelseyville | 3.0 acres



Located on a quiet street and featuring shade trees, Kelseyville Park is centrally located for the Kelseyville community and is walkable for surrounding residential areas.

- Develop a master plan for reinvestment with community input, as the park is aging with several facilities in fair or poor condition. Consider relocating some of the park features for better flow and increased usability.
- Rearrange the picnic tables located around the park, grouping them and making them more friendly to visitors.
- Replace or upgrade the restroom with stainless steel fixtures.
- Relocate and consider expanding the basketball court to better integrate it into the park.
- Rethink or reconfigure the open lawn/sports field to better position the picnic shelter.
- Add a looped walking path with more trees and benches.
- Add more amenities at the dog park.
- Enlarge the playground to break out of the small rectangle and create a play hub with better seating, more shade and potentially the inclusion of sand and water play or an interactive fountain.



*Add More Amenities to the Dog Park*

- Provide shade in or around the skate park.
- Explore partnerships with Kelseyville Lions Club and the Unified School District to add more pedestrian access points into the park.

## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### Lakeside Park

Kelseyville | 50.0 acres



Lakeside Park is the most heavily used County park. It includes a range of formal and informal use areas and has heavily used boat launches.

- Continue to make upgrades and reinvestments to sustain the park in its overall good condition.
- Adding a large destination playground with nature themes and interpretation.
- Relocate the dog park inland to allow for a waterfront picnic area with wonderful views.
- Add pedestrian paths throughout the site to improve access to the various use areas and viewpoints and create a looped walking path with distance markers.
- Upgrade the restroom fixtures to stainless steel.
- Reinvest in the boat launch and consider adding a separated paddle launch area.
- Explore the possibility of reconfiguring softball outfield fencing to allow seasonal use for youth soccer practices or games.
- Develop a trailhead to serve the KRT Plan trail network.



*Add Nature Playground*

- Continue to ensure that the park can function as a base for first responders during fire events by maintaining accessible open areas for response vehicles, tents, and associated equipment. Look for funding to make additional investments to support use of the park as an emergency response base.



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations



### Pioneer Park

Kelseyville | 0.5 acres



This very small local park is surrounded by a parking lot and is adjacent to the Kelseyville Justice Court building. Its restroom and prominent parking make it more of a visitor rest stop and potentially a convenient gathering spot for downtown businesses and senior center visitors.

- Reconsider the purpose of this park, and focus it more towards visitors, downtown businesses, and the senior center.
- Add small-scale activating feature, such as chess/checker table or cornhole.
- Improve accessibility, particularly on the Senior Center side. Currently, only one picnic table is connected by paved pathway.



*Add Activating Feature*



*Focus on Visitors*

## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

### Lakeport

Museum Square

Hamilton Boat Launch

Vista Point





## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations



### Courthouse Museum Square

Lakeport | 1.0 acres



This formal town green is centrally located in Lakeport across the street from the County Administration Building. The park contains the County's Historic Courthouse Museum and a Public Safety Memorial. It has an excellent canopy of mature trees, but is currently designed for walking through, not for lingering.

- Incorporate more casual seating areas throughout the park.
- Consider a seasonal food vendor and moveable seating in the central plaza at the entry to the Museum.
- Plan for tree replacement and replant to sustain the shaded character of the park.



*Seasonal Food Vendor*



*Casual Seating Areas*

## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### Vista Point

Lakeport | 3.0 acres



This park offers panoramic views of the lake as well as the surrounding mountains and hills. The Visitors Information Center building includes restrooms and serves as the office for Lake County Chamber of Commerce.

- Reinvest as required to maintain this viewpoint in good condition.
- Plant trees and/or add more structures for additional shade.



*Plant Trees*



*Seating with Shade*



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### Trails

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The KRT Plan includes a recommended comprehensive network of trails throughout the County, many of which are complex and require multiple County departments, state and federal agencies, and private parties to work together for implementation.

Drawing from public engagement, Lake County's existing park system, the planned KRT network, and trends, this section discusses priority trail improvements outside of parks that the Public Services Department can move forward on its own, to advance the KRT network from County park properties. This section does not provide new recommendations, but rather focuses on implementation of the KRT Plan.

#### Priority Trail Projects

##### Trail Type

Except for paved sidewalks and pathways in Lake County parks, the Public Services Department should primarily develop natural surface trails, developed to one of the seven unpaved trail types called out on pages 35 and 36 of the Konocti Regional Trails Plan (KRT Plan).

- The primary trail type recommended for Lake County parks are shared use trails, Unpaved Trail Types 1, 2, and 7 in the KRT Plan.
- Types 3, 4, and 5 are dedicated use trails, recommended for development within some regional parks or where use must be limited to hiking only due to environmental sensitivity. In addition to the KRT's dedicated use trails, this Plan recommends defining an additional dedicated trail type for OHVs.
- Type 6 (unimproved route) is not recommended for development within County parks.

#### Additions to the Proposed KRT Network

Several additional trail connections should be added to the KRT Master Plan network to address current conditions and opportunities.

- A trail and trailhead connecting the Cobb Mountain Planning Area to Boggs
- A connection from Clear Lake State Park to Mt. Konocti Regional Park.
- A connection from Middletown Trailside Park to Middletown.

#### Rodman Slough Park Trail

Formalize the trails already existing in Rodman Slough Park, shown in Figure 10.

- Develop as shared use natural surface trails.
- Create a connection up the hill from the sloughside trail, which currently dead ends, to create a loop.
- Develop trail signage and a kiosk with trail accessibility information (cross-slope, grade, etc.)
- Designate the parking area as a trailhead and add trailhead amenities including bike parking and a Countywide trail map.
- Develop a linking shared use trail to the Nice-Lucerne Cutoff, to connect to the Rodman Slough – Hammond Park connection.
- Explore extending a trail connection to the Land Trust property.

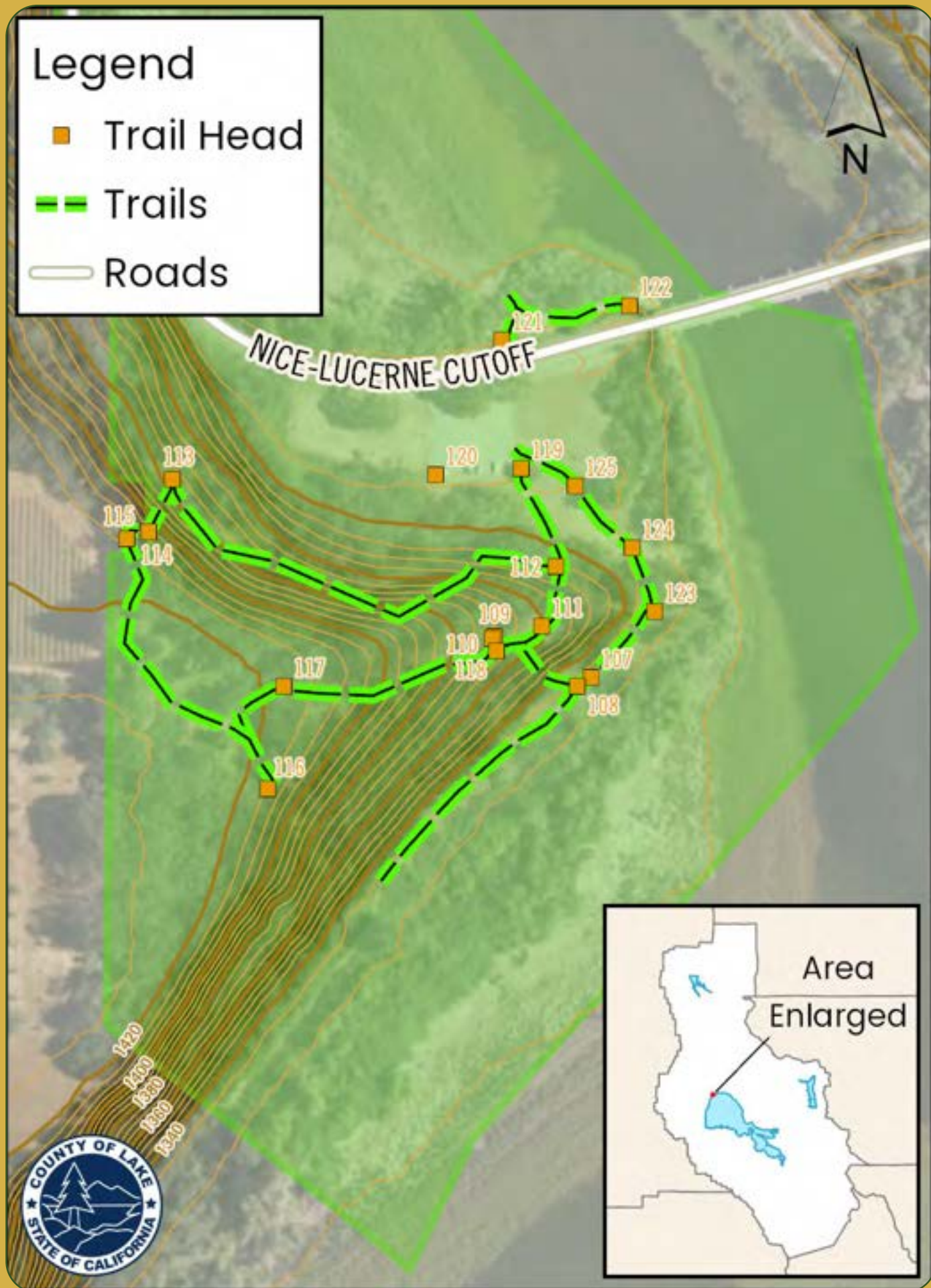


Figure 10: Rodman Slough Park Trails



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations



Figure 11: Rodman Slough - Hammond Park Connector Trail

### *Rodman Slough - Hammond Park Connector Trail*

The Rodman Slough – Hammond Park connector trail will provide a primarily off-street connection between two significant parks. This link can be completed by Public Services in collaboration with Robinson Rancheria.

- Develop a shared-use trail extending from Rodman Slough Park across the slough on the Nice-Lucerne Cutoff and onto the former roadway to connect to Hammond Park, as shown in Figure 11.
- Coordinate with Public Works to develop the segment located on the Nice-Lucerne Cutoff.
- Coordinate with property owner Robinson Rancheria to develop the segment on the former roadway and a secondary loop.
- Provide wayfinding signage on Lakeshore Blvd to connect trail users to Hammond Park.
- Complete the nature trail loop in Hammond Park.
- Provide a trailhead in Hammond Park. Add bike parking and a kiosk with a trail map showing the trail connection to Rodman Slough Park and the loop trail within the park. Provide distance information.

## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations



Figure 12: Mt. Konocti Trail Connections

### *Mt. Konocti Trail Connections*

Trails within Mt. Konocti Regional Park are discussed within the master plan for the site in the recommendations for the park. Access to Mt. Konocti Regional Park is currently from the access road connecting to the park entrance. Creating additional hiking access points from neighborhoods in the Rivas planning area would increase access to the park, even if they are only suitable for expert level hikers.

- Develop a hiking trail from Ely Stage Stop and Country Museum connecting to the park from Hwy 281.
- Develop the trails and trailheads called for in the KRT Plan, including the envisioned equestrian staging area.
- Explore feasibility of other potential hiking trail connections including from Riviera Heights/ Evergreen Drive to the main trail, near Broadview Drive to Buckingham Peak, and from near Montezuma Way to the main trail, potentially following the draw.
- Develop a trail from Buckingham Peak to the north ridge.



## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### ***Water Trails***

Lake County's park system contains many parks that front on Clear Lake. These parks provide formal or informal paddle access to the water trails called out in the KRT.

### ***Water Trail Access Points***

Public Services should provide designated water trail access points at the following sites.

- Rodman Slough Park new paddle access
- Keeling Park boat ramp
- Nice Beach Park
- Lucerne Harbor Park
- Davis Beach Park
- Clearlake Oaks Beach
- Lakeside Park boat ramp or new paddle access
- If developed, the new paddle access point near Hammond Park.

### ***Water Trail Access Amenities***

Designated water trail access points should include the following amenities:

- Access to the lake via a beach, boat ramp, or dock

- Nearby parking
- Water trail sign kiosk with the relevant water trail map from the KRT water trail brochures and in larger parks, with a park map showing the location of restrooms, parking and other amenities to orient visitors approaching from the water.
- For sites with beach access, the natural surface access should be at least 12' wide at the water's edge and preferably be 8% slope or less.
- Explore feasibility of a new floating dock to maintain paddle access for sites where low lake water levels cause boat ramps to be closed, such as Lakeside Park.
- Develop at least two accessible kayak launches, geographically dispersed in different areas of the lake.

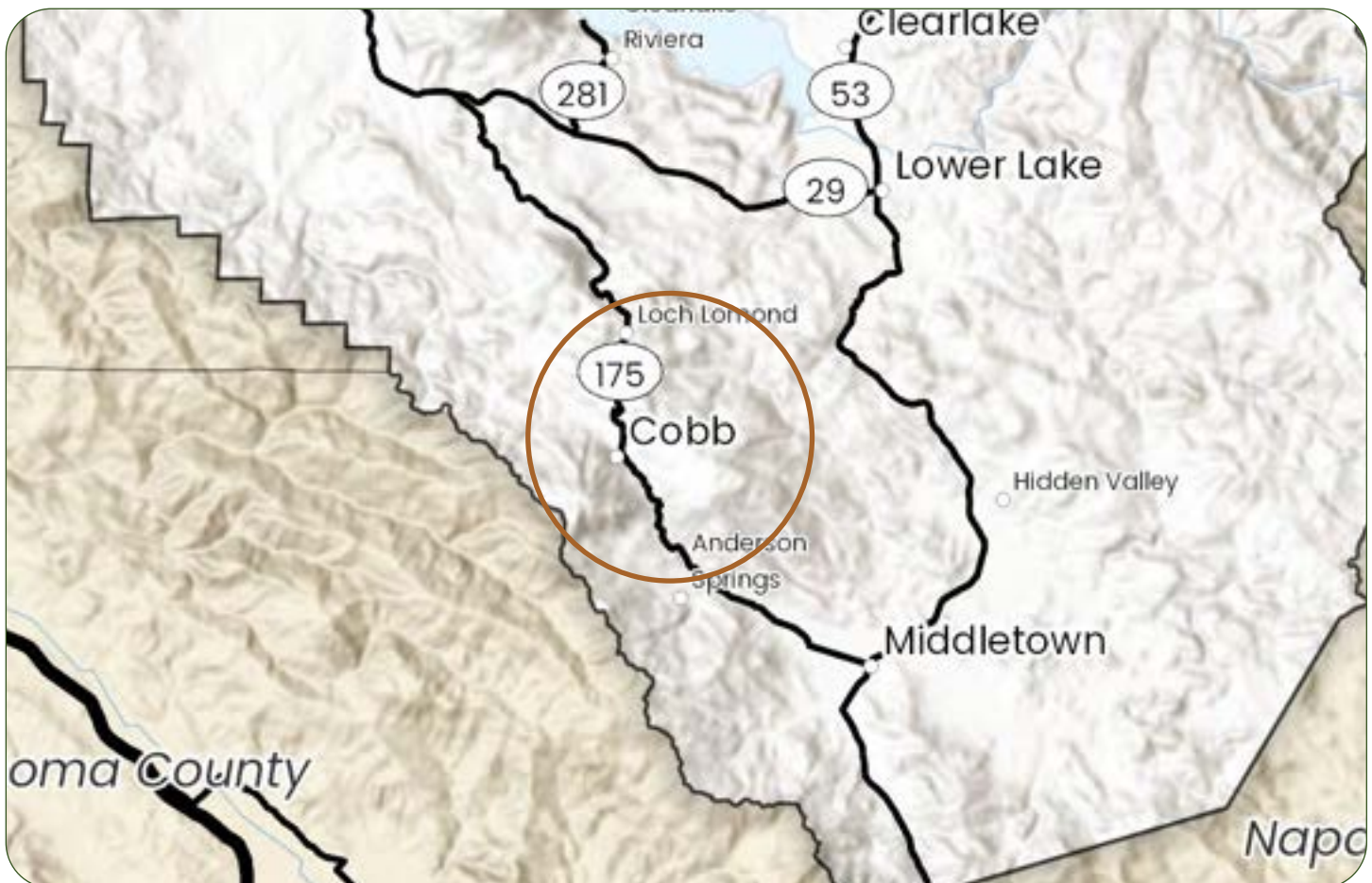
## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

### **New Parks and Destination Recreation Facilities**

#### **New Cobb Mountain Park**

The County is in the process of identifying and purchasing property for a new park in the Cobb Mountain Planning Area, the only planning area that does not have any County parks within its boundaries.

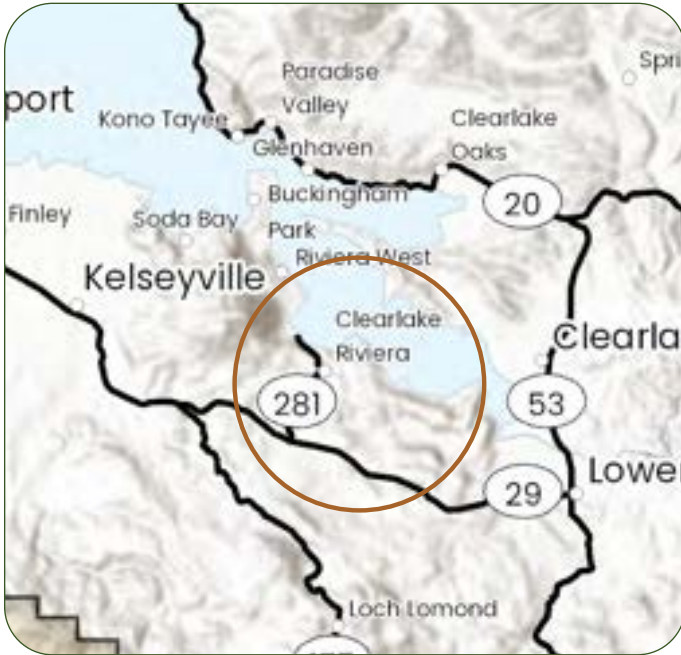
- Develop a master plan for park improvements, with facilities in accordance with the park development guidelines for local or community parks.
- Include local-serving amenities in the design for the site:
  - A play area suitable for the surrounding context
  - At least one medium-sized picnic shelter, and a large-sized one if space permits
  - A gathering area for flexible use and community events (a lawn or plaza)
  - Looped walking path at least ½ mile in length (longer if possible on the site)
  - An off-leash area
  - At least one sports or exercise facility, with additional facilities if there is neighborhood interest and the site size allows for it.
- Consider a restroom or pad for a portable restroom.
- Design the site to maintain tree canopy.
- Consider incorporating a resilience hub or emergency operations staging.





## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### ***New Rivas Local Park***

While the Rivas Planning Area has Mt. Konoti Regional Park and Clear Lake State Park within its boundaries, the community does not have access to local-serving park facilities. The County should pursue a local park to serve the Rivas Planning Area.

- Monitor the Rivas area for potential properties on the market.
- Explore the potential for development of a shared use park through partnerships with other public landowners, churches, or homeowners' associations. County park dollars should only be contributed to a shared use park if agreements are put in place to guarantee public access.
- When a site is secured, prioritize the development of local-serving amenities and community gathering spaces.



### ***New Blue Lakes Park***

While the Upper Lake/Nice area has several parks, the majority of these parks are located near the shores of Clear Lake. There is a need for a new park located in the Northern part of this planning area. One place that would be highly desirable would be Blue Lakes, which is heavily used yet has no developed public access.

- Monitor the Blue Lakes area for potential properties on the market.
- Explore the potential for development of a shared use park through partnerships with other public landowners, churches, or homeowners' associations. County park dollars should only be contributed to a shared use park if agreements are put in place to guarantee public access.
- When a site is secured, prioritize the development of local-serving amenities and community gathering spaces, including water-specific recreation opportunities.

## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### ***Destination Mountain Bike Park***

Mountain bike facilities have been discussed in the County for many years, including in the Konocti Regional Trails Plan. Lake County is a center of mountain biking and mountain biking events and has very active competitive mountain biking teams at the high schools. While Boggs Mountain Demonstration Forest and Six Sigma Ranch and Winery in Lower Lake are two locations for mountain biking, they are located at a distance from restaurants and other services.

- Identify a location for a destination mountain bike park within a County Park, with John T. Klaus Park the preferred location. Middletown Trailside Park and other regional parks are potential back-up locations.
- Collaborate with user groups and the local mountain biking community on the location and design of a facility.
- Design the facility for mountain bike races and events, as well as regular use.
- Incorporate trails and routes suitable for multiple skill levels from expert to beginner. Include a skills course and a youth/tot training area.
- Seek a formal partnership for construction and operation of the mountain bike park.

### ***Sprayground/Splash Pads***

Lake County's hot summers make spraygrounds or splash pads a very attractive facility, especially with the lack of public pools and the varying lake level and water quality. The County should develop at least one splash pad in a park setting.

- Locate the splash pad in a community or regional park, due to the destination appeal of these facilities and the need for restrooms and parking.
- Determine the preferred site, taking into account plumbing locations and proximity to restrooms and play areas.
- Design and build the splash pad.





## 7. Park, Facility, and Trail Recommendations

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### ***Equestrian Center***

Lake County has an active equestrian community. While there are equestrian trails at Highland Springs Park and the rodeo takes place at the Lake County Fairgrounds, there is no dedicated public equestrian facility or center in the County. Due to the number of equestrians in Lake County and the rural character of the county, Lake County is prime for development of a destination equestrian center. Such a facility would require the participation of user groups.

- Consider an equestrian center or facility at a regional or community park or as a special use facility. A feasibility study should be conducted to determine the financial viability of an equestrian center.
- Coordinate with efforts in the County to build equestrian facilities at locations outside the County park system to ensure equestrian needs are being addressed without creating duplications in service.
- A destination equestrian center would likely include a large indoor area, an outdoor arena, adjacent trailer parking and potentially connection to an equestrian trail system.
- Potential County park locations include John T. Klaus Park or Middletown Trailside Park.

### ***Indoor Aquatic Center***

The County, along with the cities of Clearlake and Lakeport, approved the creation of a joint powers authority called the Lake County Recreation Agency (LCRA) that is exploring the feasibility of adding a new indoor aquatic center to serve the entire county. This supports the County's collaboration with the cities of Lakeport and Clearlake on the development and operations of such a facility, as the most feasible way of meeting indoor aquatics needs.

### ***Community/Recreation Center***

The Lake County Recreation Agency is also exploring the feasibility of a community/recreation center to the entire County. As with aquatic centers, community/recreation centers generally require ongoing operational funding beyond what can be generated through fees. As with the Aquatic Center, this supports collaboration to bring a larger community/recreation center to Lake County.



# 8. Implementation





## 8. Implementation

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### ***Ensuring Results***

Without implementation, the actions and recommendations within this Master Plan will not come to fruition. The following section details the needed steps to ensure implementation of the needed improvements, additions, and changes.

As a long-range planning document, the Master Plan addresses long range direction for all aspects of parks and recreation services, including capital projects, policies, and programs. This chapter discusses the following implementation areas:

- **Action Table and Prioritization Criteria.** The action table is a one-year work plan, intended to be updated annually by the Department. The Prioritization Criteria describe considerations for prioritizing projects, initiatives, and programs each year.
- **Capital Projects List.** This Master Plan recommends many improvements to the park system. This section identifies cost assumptions, and is linked to Appendix E which includes a capital projects list intended to support the County's existing well-established capital improvement plan process.
- **Maintaining the Park System.** This section contains maintenance cost assumptions, and a table identifying maintenance costs to assist in budgeting for stewardship of the County's parks, open space and trails assets.
- **Building Organizational Capacity.** As Chapter 3 outlined, the County needs increased organizational capacity to sustain the existing park system and to keep pace with recent expansions in land and facilities, as well as to leverage and coordinate partnerships.

## 8. Implementation

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### Action Plan

This Master Plan is a 20-year plan, with recommendations that will take years to implement. Each year, the Department will update the Master Plan implementation action plan, using the prioritization criteria below.

### Prioritization Criteria

For funding, staff capacity and logistical reasons, actions and projects need to be sequenced over time. The pace of implementation will depend on the availability of resources, not only capital and operating dollars but also the workload capacity of County staff. These criteria are intended to help County staff determine which projects to place on the annual action plan.

- **Provide equitable access and investment.** Are projects and initiatives distributed around the County? Are they addressing different recreation needs, priorities, and recreation activities?
- **Reduce lifecycle costs.** Will the project or initiative reduce operating costs or lifecycle costs for the County over the long term?
- **Operational Impact.** What is the operational impact, once the improvement or project is in place? Is it likely to require additional operating funding (staff time or direct costs)? Does the County have the necessary funding and staffing available for maintenance and operations once the project is implemented?
- **Leverage.** Are there other funders or partners to advance this project or initiative, either internal to Lake County or external? This includes in-kind donations of labor, expertise, or materials as well and outside funding.
- **Limited time opportunity.** Occasionally opportunities arise that will only be available for a limited time where the County can take advantage of a new funding source or partnership to move projects or initiatives forward.
- **Advance major efforts.** The Master Plan includes larger projects or initiatives that are complex, multi-year efforts that require significant staff time and must be broken down into manageable steps.
- **Staff capacity.** The time and availability of staff to manage the project should be taken into consideration.





## 8. Implementation

### Action Table

The action table is a rolling three-year implementation plan, including park and capital projects, policies, programs, and operations. It identifies the action, the Master Plan goal implemented, the timeframe over the next three years, and the cost impact. As noted, this action table plan is intended to be updated annually, and the version here represents a snapshot in time.

Table 5: Action Table

Related Goal	Action	Timeframe	Cost Impact
A, F	Bring on new staff to establish recreation programming, with funding for program implementation and volunteer management.	Year 1	\$250,000 per year 1 FTE
B, C	Move forward with John T. Klaus park planning and implementation, with the intent of opening the site for initial public access in 2025.	Years 1-3	See Capital Projects List
B	Design and construct the new Cobb park.	Years 1-3	See Capital Projects List
A	Upgrade the Parks and Trails website.	Year 1-2	\$150,000 one time cost
D, G	Add a park steward/ambassador position.	Year 1-2	\$80,000 per year 1 FTE
E, F	Reconfigure the PRAB to better support plan implementation.	Year 1	\$5,000 per year plus staff time
B	Manage capital projects list with focus on underserved areas.	Years 1-3	See Capital Projects List
A, F	Add a shared outreach and communications position, collaborating with other departments.	Year 2	\$40,000 per year .5 FTE
D, G	Develop maintenance guidelines and implement training in alignment with increased native planting.	Year 2 to 3	\$100,000 initial cost, annual training budget
D, G	Develop park design guidelines that encompass regenerative and native landscaping and climate-friendly approaches to parks.	Year 2 to 3	\$100,000 initial cost, annual training budget
D, F, G	Contract for or bring on trails crew for trail building and maintenance.	Year 2	\$30,000 per year
G	Add parks maintenance staff timed to be in place when the new parks come on line.	Year 2 to 3	\$60,000 per year per position 2 FTE

## 8. Implementation

### Capital Projects

This plan recommends improvements across Lake County's park system over a 20-year timeframe. The capital projects list is a comprehensive table with costs by site or major new facility, with planning level costs in 2024 dollars. The County can draw from this comprehensive list to move projects forward through the County's Capital Improvement Plan process.

Costs are based on average planning level cost assumptions by improvement type, allowing room for the variability of different locations and their constraints. These cost assumptions are shown in Table 5, and based on 2024 dollars. An escalation factor should be applied periodically to adjust cost assumptions.

The capital projects list is in Appendix E, organized by existing parks and new parks and facilities.

Table 6: Cost Assumptions

Improvement Type	Description	Cost Assumption
Park and Facility Planning	Includes planning projects such as site master planning, habitat management plans and feasibility studies for major facilities.	\$150,000 per site
Park Enhancement	Smaller scale upgrades to existing parks and other smaller scale additions to expand use, improve accessibility for people with disabilities and enhance the visitor experience	\$75,000 per developed acre
Major Renovation	Larger improvement projects such as rebuilding of all or a portion of a park or adding multiple new features.	\$600,000 per developed acre
New Park Development	Development of a new park or adding a new phase of development at a partially undeveloped site.	\$750,000 per developed acre
Habitat Enhancement	Projects that remove invasive species, improve habitat, address wildfire hazards, and protect ecological function of natural area parks or habitat areas within developed parks.	\$5,000 per acre of habitat area
Resilience Projects	An allocation for a wide variety of projects to make the parks and facilities more responsive to climate change, such as replanting with climate adapted vegetation, adding solar or wind energy, reducing wildfire risk, and providing emergency response hubs.	\$50,000 per site
Capital Reinvestment	Funds minor repairs of existing features and facilities, such as benches, picnic tables, or restroom fixtures.	\$10,000 per site
Land Acquisition	Acquiring land for new parks or to expand existing sites. Cost varies depending on location and land type.	Varies
Trail Development	Cost to build 5' width natural surface shared use trail. Does not include structures.	\$100,000 per mile
New Destination Facility	Costs vary depending on facility. Costs for each are based on similar facilities in other locations	Varies



## 8. Implementation

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### ***Maintaining the Park System***

Investing in maintenance is a critical component of a successful and safe park system. The table on the following page models annual maintenance costs, incorporating the following maintenance cost assumptions:

- \$10,000 per acre for developed park acreage, based on Public Services' current actual costs.
- \$500 per acre for natural area maintenance, based on California State Parks assumptions.
- Given the large size of the John T. Klaus and Mt. Konocti Regional Parks, maintenance cost assumptions are based on an assumed developed area acreage.
- Maintenance costs for Highland Springs Park are based on 100 acres of developed park area.
- Recommended new destination facilities owned by Public Services will be located within County parks and are not broken out separately.

## 8. Implementation

Table 7: Annual Maintenance Costs

Park Name	Site Acreage	Developed Area	Natural Area	Total Maintenance Costs (annual)
<b>Local Parks</b>				
Alpine Park	2.5	2.5		\$ 25,000
Clark's Island	1.5	0.5	1.0	\$ 5,000
Clearlake Oaks Plaza	1.0	1.0		\$ 10,000
Hinman Park	1.0	1.0		\$ 10,000
Keeling Park	1.5	1.5		\$ 15,000
Kelseyville Community Park	3.0	3.0		\$ 30,000
Lower Lake Park	1.0	1.0		\$ 10,000
Lucerne Creek Park	2.0	2.0		\$ 20,000
Lucerne Harbor Park & Artist Village	4.5	4.0	0.5	\$ 40,000
Middletown Square Park	1.0	1.0		\$ 10,000
Nylander Park	1.0	1.0		\$ 10,000
Pioneer Park	0.5	0.5		\$ 5,000
<b>Community Parks</b>				
Hammond Avenue Park	12.5	12.5		\$ 125,000
Lakeside Park	50.0	45.0	5.0	\$ 450,000
Middletown Trailside Park	107.0	40.0	67.0	\$ 33,500
Upper Lake Park	8.5	8.5		\$ 85,000
<b>Regional Parks</b>				
Highland Springs Park	2500.0	100.0	-	\$ 1,000,000
John T. Klaus Park	584.0	80.0	500.0	\$ 800,000
Mt. Konocti Regional Park	1152.0	25.0	1125.0	\$ 250,000



## 8. Implementation

Table 7: Annual Maintenance Costs

Park Name	Site Acreage	Developed Area	Natural Area	Total Maintenance Costs (annual)
<b>Natural Areas</b>				
Black Oaks Park	2.0		2.0	\$ 1,000
Helen Mitcham Park	117.0	2.0	115.0	\$ 57,500
Rodman Slough Park	38.0	2.0	36.0	\$ 18,000
<b>Special Use Sites</b>				
Clearlake Oaks Beach	1.1	1.1	1.0	\$ 5,000
Courthouse Museum Square	1.0	1.0		\$ 10,000
Davis Beach	0.5	0.5	0.5	\$ 5,000
Holiday Harbor	0.8	0.8	0.8	\$ 8,000
Middletown Park and Pool	1.0	1.0		\$ 10,000
Nice Community Beach	0.2	0.2	0.2	\$ 2,000
Vista Point	3.0	3.0		\$ 30,000
Hamilton Boat Launch	0.5	0.5	0.2	\$ 2,000
<b>New Parks, Facilities, and Trails</b>				
New Cobb Mountain Planning Area Park	12.0	12.0		\$ 120,000
New Local Park (Rivieras Planning Area)	2.0	2.0		\$ 20,000

## 8. Implementation

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### Recreation Programs

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#### Activating the Park System with Programs

This plan calls for the County to begin activating parks with programs, a new focus for the County. The steps here provide a two to three year action plan to establish programming, while hiring specific programming staff.

**Continue to coordinate with Lake County Recreation Authority.** Lake County Recreation Authority (LCRA) is a young joint powers authority that has the potential to become a significant recreation provider for the entire County, as well as being the operator of a new aquatic center and community center. The County should continue to be part of LCRA, and continue discussions about how LCRA services and expertise could help activate parks throughout the park system, as well as operate recreation facilities.

**Move forward on establishing programming within one year of Master Plan adoption.** The County should move forward on programming, with the intent of testing out programming concepts over the first year of Master Plan implementation and adjusting based on

community response, including using pilot efforts to test programming approaches. The overall concept is experimentation and evaluation, with the intent that the first few years will be the pilot period, with the pilot approach used after that to try new things or do them in new ways.

**Move forward on the full-time program, volunteer, and partnership coordinator position.** This position is described in A.1.2. This position should be advanced at the same time as a current County staff person begins recruiting.

**Recruit equipment rentals for County parks.** Assign a staff person to contact local bike and kayak/stand up paddle businesses to determine if there is interest in offering rentals at one or more County parks. The County should approach equipment rental as a service for residents and visitors, not as a revenue generator, to get this started. If there is interest, the County should conduct a simple procurement process and begin rentals as soon as possible.

**Explore interest from food trucks in locating in County parks on a scheduled basis.** Assign a staff person to develop a food truck policy



## 8. Implementation

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and, if necessary, conduct a mini-procurement, identifying parks with higher regular visitorship or in a well-trafficked locations (such as Lakeside Park or in North Shore parks). The staff person should conduct outreach to local food truck operators (including coffee carts and ice cream trucks) to shape the policy and determine interest. Getting a consistent food truck service, such as during afternoons on Saturdays, at a location can help encourage regular visitors while also supporting local business.

**Identify potential programming locations in each County planning area.** Programming locations require restrooms, or portable restrooms. Identify locations, facilities at the site, and potential programming types that could be supported by the facilities at each (eg; daycamp, outdoor fitness, nature walks/hikes, kayaking/stand-up paddleboarding, movie or music in the park/community festival).

**Begin recruiting potential program providers.** Assign this role to a staff member, and plan on that person devoting at least 20% of their time weekly to program development. Document all recruitment efforts in a spreadsheet or other usable digital format, including date of contact, organization name, individual contacts, interest or disinterest in programming County parks, and notes on the discussion. Potential program providers could include current afterschool program providers, who may be able to offer daycamps or other use program; local nonprofits and arts organizations who may be able to extend their programs into County parks; and other governmental organizations including tribal governments and other County departments.

**Consider programs that the County could offer with its own staff.** Any program should be replicable in all planning areas one time over the course of a season, be feasible within the current park system and budget, and doable with County staff (from Public Services or other Departments) and/or community volunteers. Potential ideas to consider include: Emergency preparedness fair,

community picnic where County provides ice cream, local history program that involves County museum staff, a fitness walk.

**Work with tribal governments to develop a community cultural event to take place in a County park in partnership with indigenous communities.** See policy A.1.7. The first event could be a test case and smaller in scale, with the intention of scaling up. County staff should strive to hold the first event within a year of Master Plan adoption.

**Track programming data on all programs and events.** Data can help with decision-making and can also convey the impact of the community's investment in recreation. For all programs, even if they are free or don't require registration, the County should track participants (by each event/program/activity); program date, time, and location; and revenue from program fees or sponsorships.

**Explore hiring an intern or contracting with an interpretive planner or professional guide to develop self-guided walks and tour materials for County parks.** See policy A.2.3. Once developed, these should be uploaded to the County's website and shared with organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce.

## 8. Implementation

### *Building Organizational Capacity*

The operational assessment conducted during the master planning process indicated that Public Services is understaffed compared to parks and recreation agencies nationwide. This is true even when figures are adjusted to take into account the fewer services Lake County offers, and to exclude the population also served by cities.

The Department has a solid foundation in Parks Maintenance functions but does not currently provide a number of typical parks and recreation agency functions: Recreation Programs, Special Events, Park Safety and Security, and Volunteer Management. There is no capacity within the existing staffing level to take on these other functions, let alone to provide more attention to maintenance activities such as urban forestry, natural resource management, and trails maintenance.

As the assessment concluded, Lake County Public Services needs more organizational capacity to take care of what it has and to strategically add high priority services and functions called for in this plan. The following actions are high priority steps to build organizational capacity.

- **Maintain or improve the current maintenance staffing level for developed parks.** The maintenance staffing level is currently 1 FTE per 20 acres of maintained developed park area, a high workload. At minimum, the County should sustain this staffing ratio and go no lower than this.
- **Develop a job description and budget request for the full-time program, volunteer, and partnership coordinator position** (see A.1.2). To create as broad a candidate pool as possible, write the job application with a streamlined set of minimum qualifications that focus on the necessary skills to be successful in position, and that allow for life experience to be considered, including part-time and volunteer roles. Avoid requiring
- **Budget for and fill new maintenance positions** so that staff are in place by the time the first phases of John T. Klaus and the Cobb Mountain Parks come online.
- **Develop capacity for natural areas maintenance.** Public Services currently does not have staff trained in natural area management, though natural areas account for the majority of County parkland. This could be accomplished with strategic contracting with outside organizations (e.g., TERA, California Conservation Corps), through the use of staff or contracted resources in other County departments, or hiring new staff with these skill sets.
- **Develop a job description for a Park Analyst/ Park Planner/Project Manager position.** This position should be written to focus on planning and development essential functions (parks and recreation planning, Parks CIP project management), intergovernmental coordination, grant writing, and potentially managing contracts for maintenance, planning, design, and capital projects.



specific college degrees or recreation department experience. Initiate the hiring process and recruit for this position as soon as possible.



## 8. Implementation

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### **Afterword**

This Master Plan is the culmination of almost two years of work by Public Services staff, the Steering Committee, and several ad hoc advisory groups, built upon the participation of residents from across the County.

Together, these groups defined a shared vision and common goals to build from local assets and address the needs of the County's evolving communities and the realities of the local economy and planning context.

This Master Plan, the first guiding plan for the County's park system provides the guidance and tools to live up to the community's vision:

***From lakes to peaks - parks, programs, and trails that offer healthy and fun recreation experiences for all, while honoring cultural heritages and conserving natural resources for future generations.***

Working together, County staff, partners, stakeholders, other agencies, cities and volunteers can maximize the benefits of County of Lake parks from lake to peak, for current and future generations.

# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

## APPENDICES







## Appendix A

### Lake County Parks, Recreation, and Trails Existing Conditions

**Report Date: March 2023**



# Lake County Existing Conditions

## Introduction

The County of Lake is in the process of developing a first-ever countywide parks, recreation, and trails master plan. When complete, this plan will provide a roadmap for park, recreation and trail improvements, address maintenance and operations of the system, and guide ongoing improvements and decisions. The County hired BluePoint Planning, a firm with expertise in park system planning, to develop the master plan.

The Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan process kicked off in Fall 2022 and is expected to be a year-long planning process with a variety of opportunities for community engagement, as depicted in the process diagram below.



Figure 1. Process graphic.

This Existing Conditions Summary is part of the first phase of the process. It discusses the planning context, examines demographics, documents the existing system, and reviews relevant recreation trends to set a foundation for the needs assessment and recommendations that will be developed in later phases.





# Lake County Existing Conditions

## Community Profile

Lake County is located within the northern Coast Range of California, approximately 100 miles north of San Francisco, 90 miles northwest of Sacramento, and 35 miles east of the Pacific Ocean. Lake County is bounded by Mendocino County to the west, Yolo, Colusa, and Glenn Counties to the east, and Sonoma and Napa counties to the south. The major roadways that traverse the County include State Route 20, which connects to Highway 101 and Interstate 5, and State Routes 29, 53, and 175. Mendocino National Forest is located to the north.

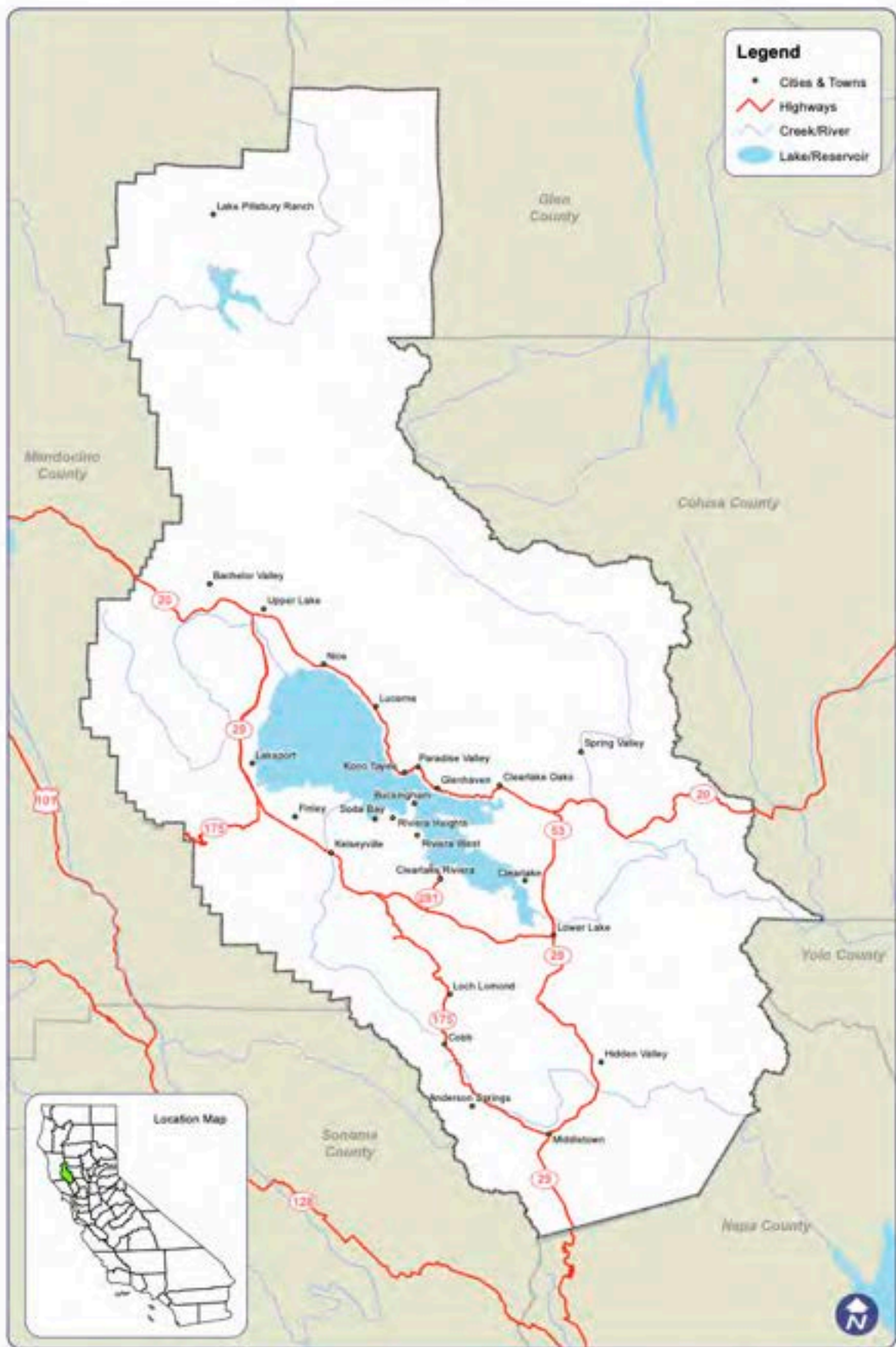
There are two incorporated cities within the County - Lakeport and Clearlake, as well as several towns and communities, including Blue Lakes, Clearlake Oaks, Clearlake Riviera, Cobb, Finley, Glenhaven, Hidden Valley Lake, Kelseyville, Loch Lomond, Lower Lake, Lucerne, Middletown, Nice, Soda Bay, and Upper Lake. The County is known for a friendly, small town atmosphere.

Clear Lake, the largest freshwater natural lake entirely within California, is central to the County's character and identity. It is a significant tourism draw, with activities like swimming, fishing, boating, and more. Beyond tourism, the Lake is home to fishing competitions, known as the Bass Capital of the West. The area is designated as an Important Bird Area by the National Audubon Society due to its location on the Pacific Flyway and the 200 to 300 species of birds that pass through annually, drawing in birdwatchers from across the region.

Lake County also boasts the cleanest air in California - an accolade the County has received 24 times. Additionally, due to the lack of big cities nearby, the County has been designated as a Dark Sky Destination, allowing residents and visitors to see 300 or more nights of clear skies. The County has over 420,000 acres of public lands, making the area a hub for hiking, biking, and wildlife viewing.

The local economy is based primarily on agriculture, tourism, and the geothermal power industry. While pears and walnuts continue to be important crops, viticulture/wine grapes have become the highest production crop in recent years. There is a large presence of agritourism, especially around wine production and wineries. Local events such as the Kelseyville Pear Festival and Lake County Wine Adventure are examples of agritourism that the County is promoting.

Six federally recognized tribes are located within Lake County: Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians, Elem Indian Colony, Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians of California, Robinson Rancheria, Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians, and Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake.



**Figure 1-1**

**Lake County Map**





# Lake County Existing Conditions

## Planning Areas

Lake County's General Plan defines eight planning areas, recognizing that the County has distinct communities that are characterized by unique characteristics. These communities vary from agriculture-focused to resort and lakefront living and rural mountain to urbanized communities. These differences play an important role when considering the fabric of the County and what various communities desire from their parks, recreation, and trails. The eight established planning areas will be used throughout the Master Plan process. Figure 3 shows the eight Planning Areas, and is followed by a brief description of each planning area and the communities that lie within.

### Planning Areas

- **Shoreline Communities.** Shoreline Communities contains the City of Clearlake and the communities of Clearlake Oaks, Lucerne, Glenhaven, and Spring Valley. The planning area is one of the largest, at 201,340 acres, and is the most populated, with 24,953 people.
- **Upper Lake/Nice.** This Planning Area contains the communities of Nice, Upper Lake, Bachelor Valley, and North Lakeport. This is the largest planning area, with 302,652 acres of land, but is one of the least populated, with only 5,963 people.
- **Lakeport.** This Planning Area contains the City of Lakeport and is 52,572 acres. There are approximately 10,205 people within the planning area.
- **Kelseyville.** This Planning Area contains the community of Kelseyville and is 48,138 acres. There are approximately 6,519 people within the planning area.
- **Rivieras.** This Planning Area contains the communities of Soda Bay and Clearlake Riviera, and is 26,376 acres. There are approximately 6,329 people within the planning area.
- **Cobb Mountain.** This Planning Area contains the community of Cobb and the surrounding areas. The planning area is 47,239 acres and is one of the least populated planning areas with only 3,113 people.
- **Lower Lake.** This Planning Area contains the community of Lower Lake. The planning area is 77,364 acres and is the least populated, with only 2,833 people.
- **Middletown.** This Planning Area contains the communities of Coyote Valley and Middletown. This planning area is 94,085 acres and has approximately 8,157 people.

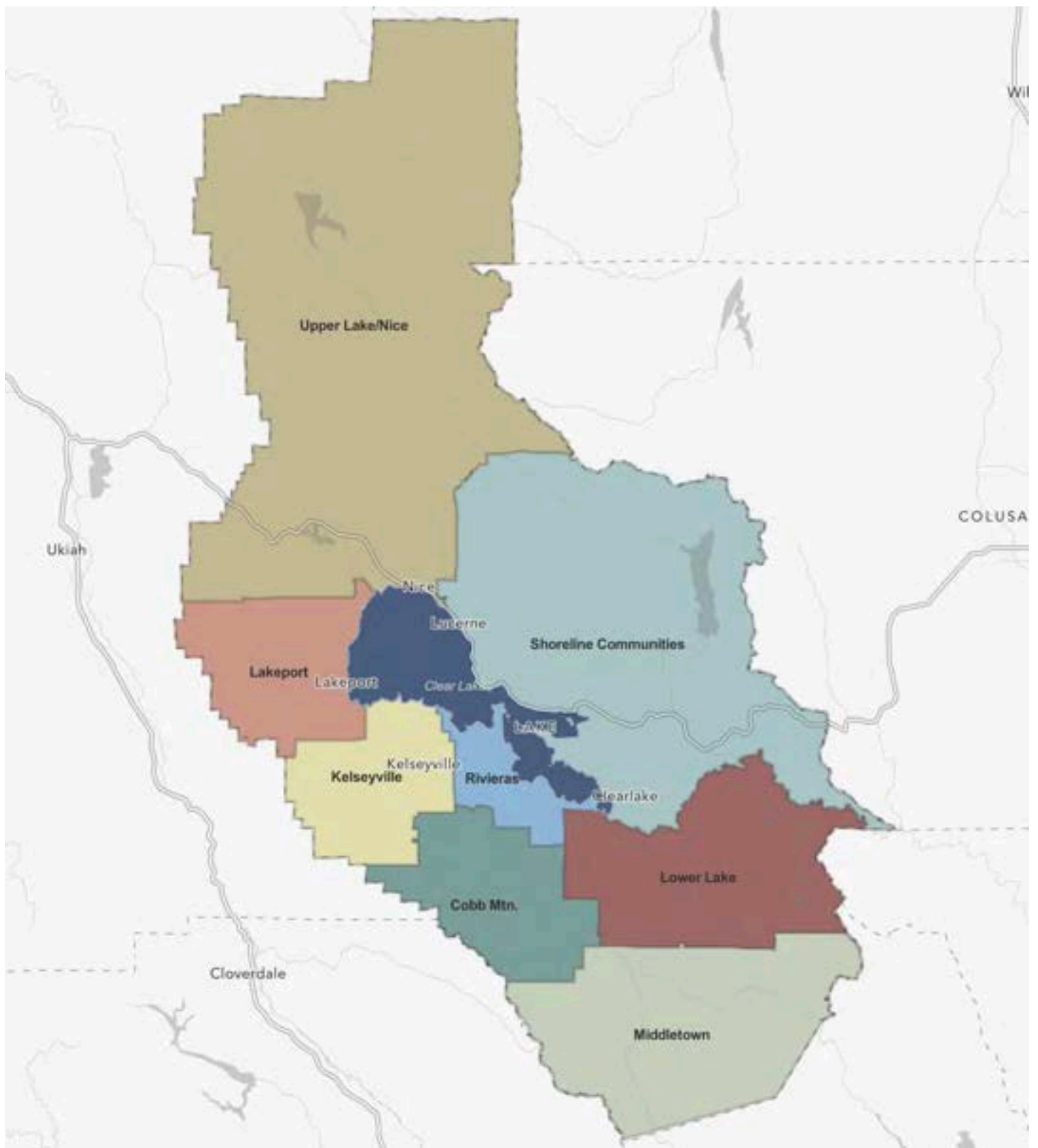


Figure 3. Lake County Planning Areas





# Lake County Existing Conditions

## Natural Landscape & Climate Change

The County is located in a mid-altitude area that is above the marine layer, but below the cooler layer in the mountains, making summers very hot and winters relatively cool. These extremes are likely to increase in severity as the area experiences impacts from climate change and as California continues to experience periods of drought.

The terrain is very hilly, and contains relatively diverse vegetation – including grasslands, oak woodlands, brush, mixed conifer forests, and hardwood forests. The County contains large tracts of State and Federal lands, including Mendocino National Forest. Cache Creek and Putah Creek are tributaries of the Sacramento River. The County also contains Clear Lake, believed to be the oldest warm water lake in North America. In addition to Clear Lake, Blue Lake, Lower Blue Lake and Highland Springs Reservoir all attract recreational use.

### Clear Lake

Clear Lake is the County's single most valuable natural resource, important for its habitat, aesthetic, and economic values. Its use and development greatly influence the development of the entire County. Clear Lake is used for water sports, swimming, fishing, bird watching, potable water, and more, making it both a community hub and a draw for tourists across the region.

The water level in Clear Lake varies throughout the year. The Lake is at its fullest in spring. During the dry summer and fall months, lake levels drop. When lake levels are too shallow to launch boats, boat ramps may need to be closed. Due to the relatively shallow average depth of the Lake, only 27 ft, and warm temperatures, it is prone to cyanobacteria (blue-green algae). Recreational use of Clear Lake is greatly influenced by water levels and the presence of blue-green algae.

### Other Notable Water Resources

Cache Creek, a tributary of the Sacramento River, is the outlet for Clear Lake. Anderson Marsh is at the head of Cache Creek and is the location of California State Parks' Anderson Marsh State Historic Park which preserves the tule marsh, archaeological sites of the Pomo people, and historic ranch structures.

Middle Creek drains through Rodman Slough into Clear Lake, providing 21% of the streamflow to the lake according to a 2010 watershed assessment. The multi-agency, multi-year Middle Creek Restoration Project is underway. This project will restore wetlands to improve water quality, reduce flooding risk and increase habitat on 1,650 acres around the confluence of Middle and Scotts creeks, Clear Lake's two largest tributaries.

Highland Springs Reservoir is located within the 3,200-acre Lake County Water Protection District property in the Adobe Creek Watershed, known as the Highland Springs Recreation Area.



# Lake County Existing Conditions

## Wildfires

Lake County experienced four successive years of catastrophic wildfires between 2015 and 2018, including the Rocky Fire (2015), Valley Fire (2015), Clayton Fire (2016), Sulphur Fire (2017), Mendocino Complex Fire (2018). Most recent in 2021 was the Cache Fire. In these wildfires, hundreds of thousands of acres were burned and thousands of homes and other structures destroyed.

Between 2013 and 2018, over 55 percent of the surface area in Lake County was burned in wildfires, as shown in Figure 4. As droughts become more severe, the land and vegetation become more fire-prone. Wildfire is a major issue for the County and for consideration in the Master Plan, including topics such as vegetation management, wildfire urban interface buffers, and parks as locations for emergency response operations/staging.

## Geologic Features

### Mount Konocti

Mount Konocti is a dormant volcano located on the south shore of Clear Lake, between the cities of Lakeport and Clearlake. Mount Konocti reaches 4,305 feet, making it a distinctive landmark of the area. The County of Lake purchased 1,500 acres on top of the mountain and opened Mt. Konocti County Park in 2011. BLM and the State of California also have land on Mt. Konocti. The site is sacred to indigenous people, especially the Pomo and Wappo people.

### Notable Geothermal Resources

Lake County has an abundance of geothermal resources. The County's General Plan contains a chapter and specific policies that address the protection and use of these areas and has a map identifying the primary geothermal resource area. This area is located along the County boundary to the northwest of the Middletown community. No County parks are located within the geothermal resource area.



## Lake County Existing Conditions

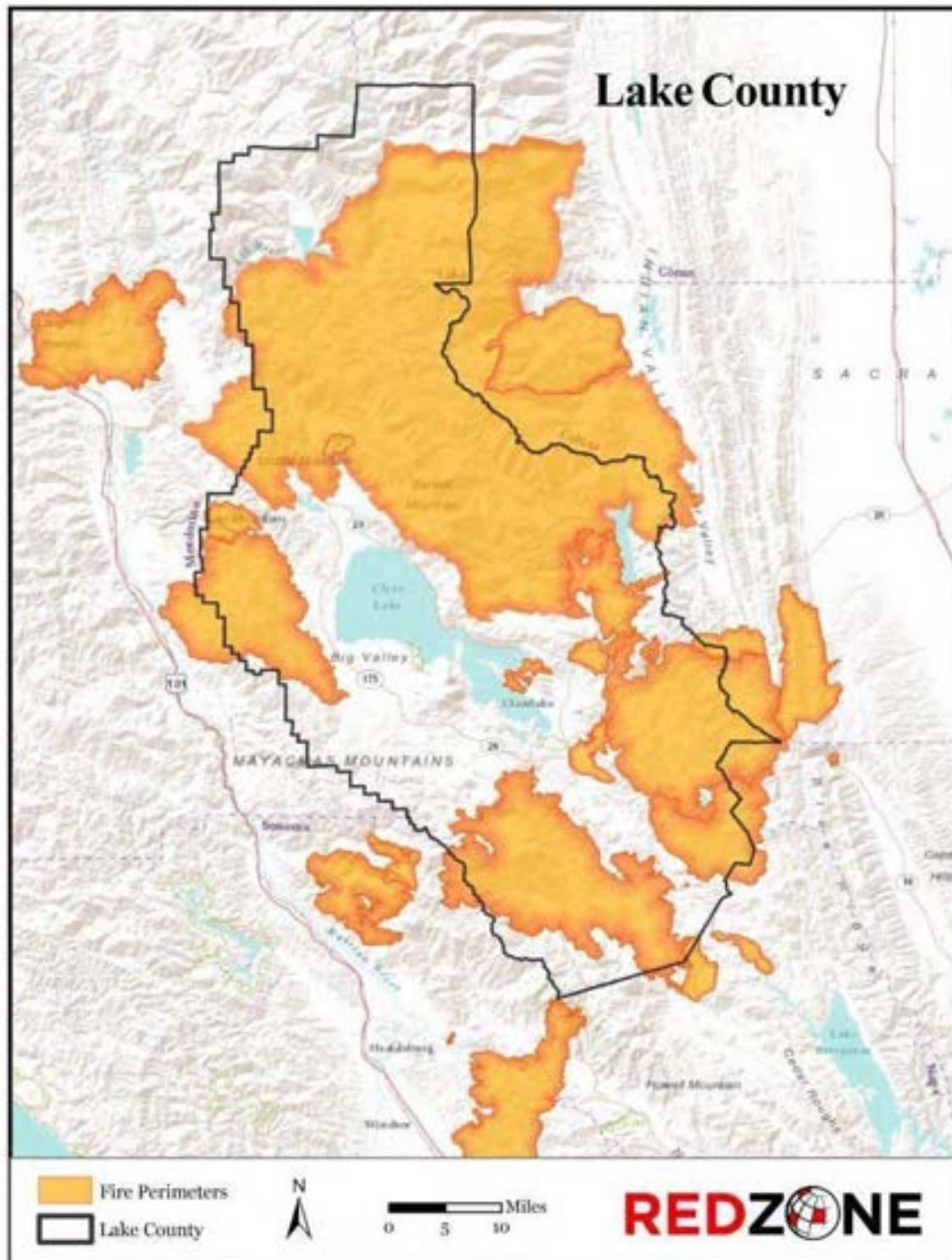


Figure 4. Burned areas in Lake County from 2014-2020 ([www.redzone.co/2018/10/04/five-years-of-wildfires-devastate-lake-county-an-insurance-risk-or-opportunity/](http://www.redzone.co/2018/10/04/five-years-of-wildfires-devastate-lake-county-an-insurance-risk-or-opportunity/))





# Lake County Existing Conditions

## Demographic Analysis

Understanding the demographics and potential trends in the County can help to indicate future needs and how parks, recreation, and trails should be developed to meet those needs. Lake County has a population of 68,163 and is not expected to grow substantially in the coming years. This includes a population of 5,026 within the City of Lakeport, and 16,685 within the City of Clearlake.

The following are some key takeaways from the demographic analysis. These demographics are based on the 2020 American Community Survey data and should be considered approximate and not absolute numbers.

- The County is relatively rural in nature, with just 51.7 people per square mile compared to California's average of 232 per square mile.
- Lake County is less well off than the average population in California. While the State's median income is \$84,907, Lake County comes in at \$61,221. In addition, 12.8% of the County population lives below the poverty level, making it one of the poorest Counties in the State.
- The population is significantly older than the average in California, with the median age in Lake County being 46.5 compared to 36.7 in the State as a whole. However, nearly 30% of the population is under the age of 25, which is comparable to the State as a whole.
- The County has a large Hispanic/Latino population (22.6%). Approximately 11.4% of the community speaks Spanish as their primary language.
- Most of the community lives in single family homes, with the median home value of \$293,600.
- Approximately 17% of the community lives in mobile homes or RVs, compared with 3.5% in the State overall.
- Commute times within Lake County are similar to statewide averages, 26.5 minutes to 28.4 minutes, respectively.

For the County, these figures point to several key takeaways:

- There is an apparent need to provide parks, recreation, and trails that service older adults.
- There is a younger population that is going to be accessing services and will need amenities specific to their interests.
- The County has a diversity of population that is increasing. This diversity needs to be reflected in the services provided moving forward.
- The County should continue to ensure that its fees are affordable and can be accessed by the entire community.



# Lake County Existing Conditions

## Parks

The County of Lake has more than 2,000 acres of parks and public recreation facilities that are managed and maintained by the Public Services Department, including the newly acquired 600+ acre John T. Klaus Park (currently undeveloped for public access). These parks range in size from the 0.5 Pioneer Park in Kelseyville to the 1,152-acre Mt. Konocti Regional Park. The parks are well-maintained and include a variety of facilities.

The park system includes many opportunities associated with water access and water recreation, with a variety of physical and visual water access opportunities throughout the system. Lake or creek access is a feature at nine parks, and two additional parks have seasonal water access. Every park with water access takes advantage of its siting, whether with boat ramps or well-placed benches.

In addition, the County's park inventory includes the 3,200-acre Highland Springs Recreation Area, owned by the Watershed Protection District and managed by the Water Resources Department, as well as the 117-acre Helen Mitcham Park in Spring Valley, managed by Lake County Special Districts.

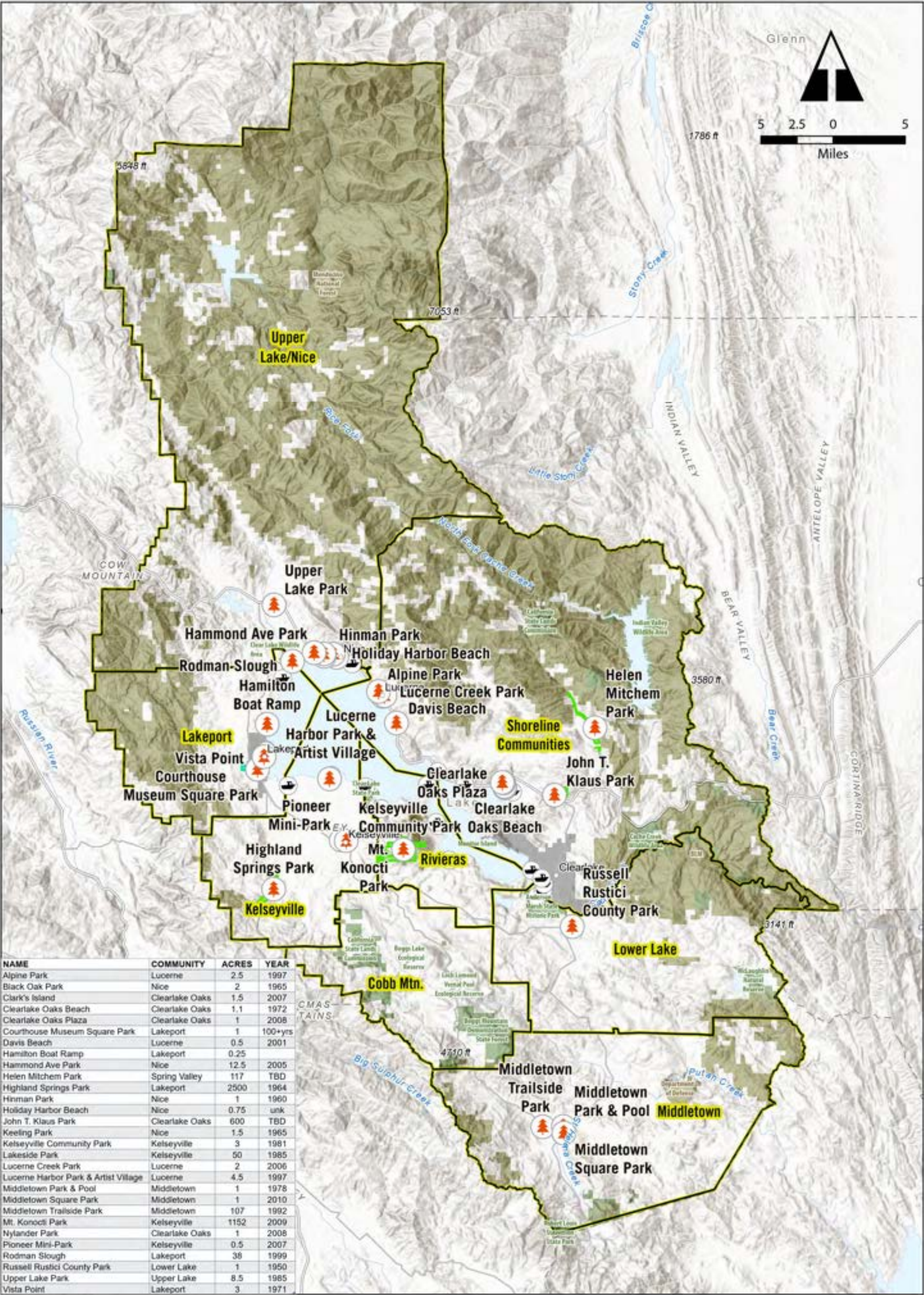
Figure 5 on the next page depicts the locations of Lake County's parks. Lake County extends further north, as Figure 1 illustrated. This northern portion of the County includes Mendocino National Forest lands and does not have any County parks.

### Park Amenities and Facilities Overview

Evaluation of the condition and capacity of Lake County's park amenities and facilities is underway by the BluePoint Planning team. This section provides an overview of the park amenities and facilities.

- **Restrooms.** There are restrooms throughout the system, including at most Local and Community Parks. These are plumbed facilities. Many developed Regional and Special Use Parks have restrooms, as do some natural areas. Some of these facilities are vault toilets.
- **Picnic Facilities.** Most Local and Community Parks have picnic areas, with the picnic areas in Community Parks larger in size with additional amenities such as barbeque pits, horseshoe pits and cornhole to support family and community gatherings. Some parks incorporate gazebos, picnic shelters, or shade structures.
- **Playgrounds.** Most Local and Community Parks have playgrounds.
- **Specialty Recreation Facilities.** As the notes column in the inventory table shows, there are other specialty recreation facilities sprinkled throughout the system, including a small swimming pool with separate kiddie pool, a dog park, several sports fields, a basketball half court, a single tennis court, a skate park, a labyrinth, and a disc golf course.





Source: CPAD, 2022, Lake County GIS, CD8W, ESRI

Existing Park Inventory - Lake County

- Lake County Park Locations
- Boat Launches (Clear Lake)
- Lake County Park Boundary
- City Parks within Lake County
- State Lands within Lake County
- Federal Lands within Lake County
- Lake County Planning Areas
- Lake County Cities







# Lake County Existing Conditions

## Park Classifications

A park classification system groups sites with similar functions and services to support acquisition, development, and management decisions. Park classifications will support County staff and the Board of Supervisors in implementing the Master Plan, which will include policies or guidelines for each park classification type on park amenities, park development, and maintenance and operating levels.

Based on Lake County's existing and planned park inventory, the classification system includes five types, with each type defined below.

### Local Park

Local parks are small- to medium-sized parks designed to provide public recreation and gathering space for the nearby community. A local park:

- Supports a variety of unstructured, self-directed, and structured recreation activities, depending on the needs and interests of the local community.
- Provides a community gathering place, supporting family and community social gatherings and activities (25-200 people).
- Attracts local residents from within about a 10-minute drive.
- May include natural areas.

When provided by the County of Lake, it is typically located in unincorporated and rural areas.

### Community Park

Community parks in Lake County are large parks (50 to 100 acres or more) designed to accommodate many activities and people of a wide variety of ages, abilities, and interests. They serve more than one community, include a variety of recreation facilities, and can accommodate large groups and events. County parks typically include natural areas or habitat. Recreation features vary by park.

- Supports a wide variety of recreation activities.
- Has infrastructure to support large events.
- Attracts visitors for several hours or an entire day.
- Typically includes natural resources or habitat areas.

### Regional Park

Regional parks are large parks (200+ acres) with unique natural, cultural, historic, scenic, or recreational features that attract visitors from the entire County, the broader region, or beyond.

- Preserves natural, cultural, or scenic resources.
- Includes trail systems.
- Includes large areas of undeveloped land.



## Lake County Existing Conditions

- Resource preservation is the primary function of regional parks. Recreational resources may be provided if they do not conflict with resource preservation purposes.
- May attract visitors from an hour away or more

### **Special Use Area**

Special use areas are parks that provide a specialized facility or recreational use. Examples of special use facilities in Lake County are the stand-alone boat ramps, museums, and Middletown Park and Pool.

- Includes the specialized facility or resource.
- Includes necessary supporting amenities and infrastructure.
- Additional facilities or amenities may be included, if they do not detract from primary specialized use of the site.

### **Natural Area**

Natural areas are areas acquired primarily for preservation of plant, animal, or aquatic habitat. It may include habitat for fish and wildlife species; include aquatic resources or shorelines; protect water resources or aquifers; and may or may not have developed public access.

- Includes high- or medium-value natural resource areas.
- Primary purpose is protection of natural resources.
- Secondly may be used for low-impact recreation that does not degrade or damage natural resources.



## Lake County Existing Conditions

Classification	Parks
<b>Local</b>	Alpine Park Clearlake Oaks Plaza Hammond Ave. Park Hinman Park Keeling Park Kelseyville Community Park Lower Lake Park (Rustici Park) Lucerne Creek Park Lucerne Harbor Park & Artist Village Middletown Square Park Nylander Park Pioneer Park Upper Lake Park
<b>Community</b>	Lakeside Park Middletown Trailside Park
<b>Regional</b>	Highland Springs Recreation Area John T. Klaus Park Mt. Konocti Park
<b>Special Use</b>	Clearlake Oaks Beach Davis Beach Middletown Park & Pool Museum Square Vista Point
<b>Natural Area</b>	Black Oak Park Clark's Island Helen Mitcham Park Rodman Slough Park

Table 1. County Parks Classifications





# Lake County Existing Conditions

## Park Inventory

Lake County's park inventory is summarized in Table 2. This table provides information on each site:

- Park name
- Street Address
- Planning Area
- Acreage
- Year Established
- Park Classification
- O&M Responsibility
- Additional Notes (unique facilities in the system, adjacencies)

Park Name	Street Address	Planning Area	Approx. Acres	Yr Est	Park Classification	O&M Responsibility	Lake or Creek Water Access	Notes
Alpine Park	5985 Hwy 20	Shoreline Communities	2.5	1997	Local	Public Services	Y	Beach. Concrete pier with shelter. Wooden fishing pier.
Black Oak Park	3000 Lakeshore Blvd.	Nice Beach	2	1965	Natural Area	Public Services	N	No public access
Clark's Island	12559 Hwy 20	Shoreline Communities	1.5	2007	Natural Area	Public Services	Seasonal	Adjacent to Clearlake Oaks Beach. Cob entry sign is a unique feature in the system.
Clearlake Oaks Beach	12684 & 12689 Island Dr.	Shoreline Communities	1.1	1972	Special Use	Public Services	Y	Adjacent to Clarks Island. Boat launch, breakwater fishing pier.
Clearlake Oaks Plaza	12483 Foothill Blvd	Shoreline Communities	1	2008	Local	Public Services	N	Adjacent to Nylander Park. Labyrinth.
Davis Beach	6881 E. Hwy 20	Shoreline Communities	0.5	2001	Special Use	Public Services	Y	Longest beach in the park system, located alongside the highway
Hammond Ave. Park	6935 Hammond Ave	Nice Beach	12.5	2005	Local	Public Services	N	Wetlands nature path, softball and soccer fields, exercise circuit, dog park
Helen Mitcham Park	2950 Wolf Creek Rd	Shoreline Communities	117	TBD	Natural Area	Public Services	Y (creek)	Access is gated and accessed through an HOA neighborhood
Highland Springs Recreation Area	3600 Highland Springs Rd	Kelseyville	3,200	1964	Regional	Water Resources	Y	Extensive trail system. Swimming and non-motorized boating on the reservoir. Disc golf course located on site and extensive trail system. This is the only park location where alcohol use is allowed.
Hinman Park	3494 E. Hwy 20	Nice Beach	1	1960	Local	Public Services	N	Formal town square. The addition of a restroom is underway.
Holiday Harbor Beach	3729 Lakeshore Blvd	Nice Beach	0.75	unk	--	Public Services	Y	Not open to public
John T. Klaus Park	15300 E. Hwy 20	Shoreline Communities	584	TBD	Regional (undeveloped)	Public Services	N	Undeveloped
Keeling Park	3000 Lakeshore Blvd.	Nice Beach	1.5	1965	Local	Public Services	Y	Boat ramp and docks. Additional County property is located across the street (undeveloped triangle used for parking, parcel with small building)
Kelseyville Community Park	5270 State St.	Kelseyville	3	1981	Local	Public Services	N	Skate Park, Basketball half court with 2 back stops and hopscotch painted on concrete, BMX course, unprogrammed sports/soccer field.
Lakeside Park	1985 Park Dr.	Kelseyville	50	1985	Community	Public Services	Y	Two boat launches, three softball fields, beach, wetlands
Lower Lake Park (also known as Rustici Park)	16375 Second St.	Lower Lake	1	1950	Local	Public Services	N	Includes a clubhouse
Lucerne Creek Park	6238 9th Avenue	Shoreline Communities	2	2006	Local	Public Services	Seasonal	Lucerne Harbor Park is across the street. Exercise circuit.
Lucerne Harbor Park & Artist Village	6225 E. Hwy 20	Shoreline Communities	4.5	1997	Local	Public Services	Y	Lucerne Creek Park is across the street. Boat launch, breakwater fishing pier. Artist village is leased and managed by another entity through a contract with the County.
Middletown Park & Pool	20962 Big Canyon Road	Middletown	1	1978	Special Use	Public Services	N	Site of the County's swimming pool and kiddie pool
Middletown Square Park	21249 Washington St	Middletown	1	2010	Local	Public Services	N	Mature tree canopy
Middletown Trailside Park	21435 Dry Creek Cutoff	Middletown	107	1992	Community	Public Services	N	Severely impacted by wildfire that resulted in tree canopy loss. Has a seasonal outdoor sculpture program. Equestrian trails.
Mt. Konocti Park	Konocti Road	Rivieras	1,152	2009	Regional	Public Services	N	Interpretive signs developed with tribal input, historic settler cabin, trail system, telecommunications towers, closed CalFire observation tower.
Museum Square	Lakeport	Lakeport	1.0	100+ yrs	Special Use	Public Services	N	Contains the Historic Courthouse Museum.
Nylander Park	12586 Acorn St.	Shoreline Communities	1	2008	Local	Public Services	N	Adjacent to Clearlake Oaks Plaza. Includes small building with storefront indoor space.
Pioneer Park	5250 Third St.	Kelseyville	0.5	2007	Local	Public Services	N	Very little recreation space
Rodman Slough Park	1005 Nice-Lucerne Cutoff	Nice Beach	38	1999	Natural Area	Public Services	Y	Unimproved non-motorized boat launch. Adjacent to Middle Creek Restoration project area.
Upper Lake Park	615 E. Hwy 20	Nice Beach	8.5	1985	Local	Public Services	N	Softball field, single tennis court
Vista Point	875 Lakeport Blvd	Lakeport	3	1971	Special Use	Public Services	N	Leased to Chamber of Commerce for office space
		Total	5,299					

Table 2. Park Inventory



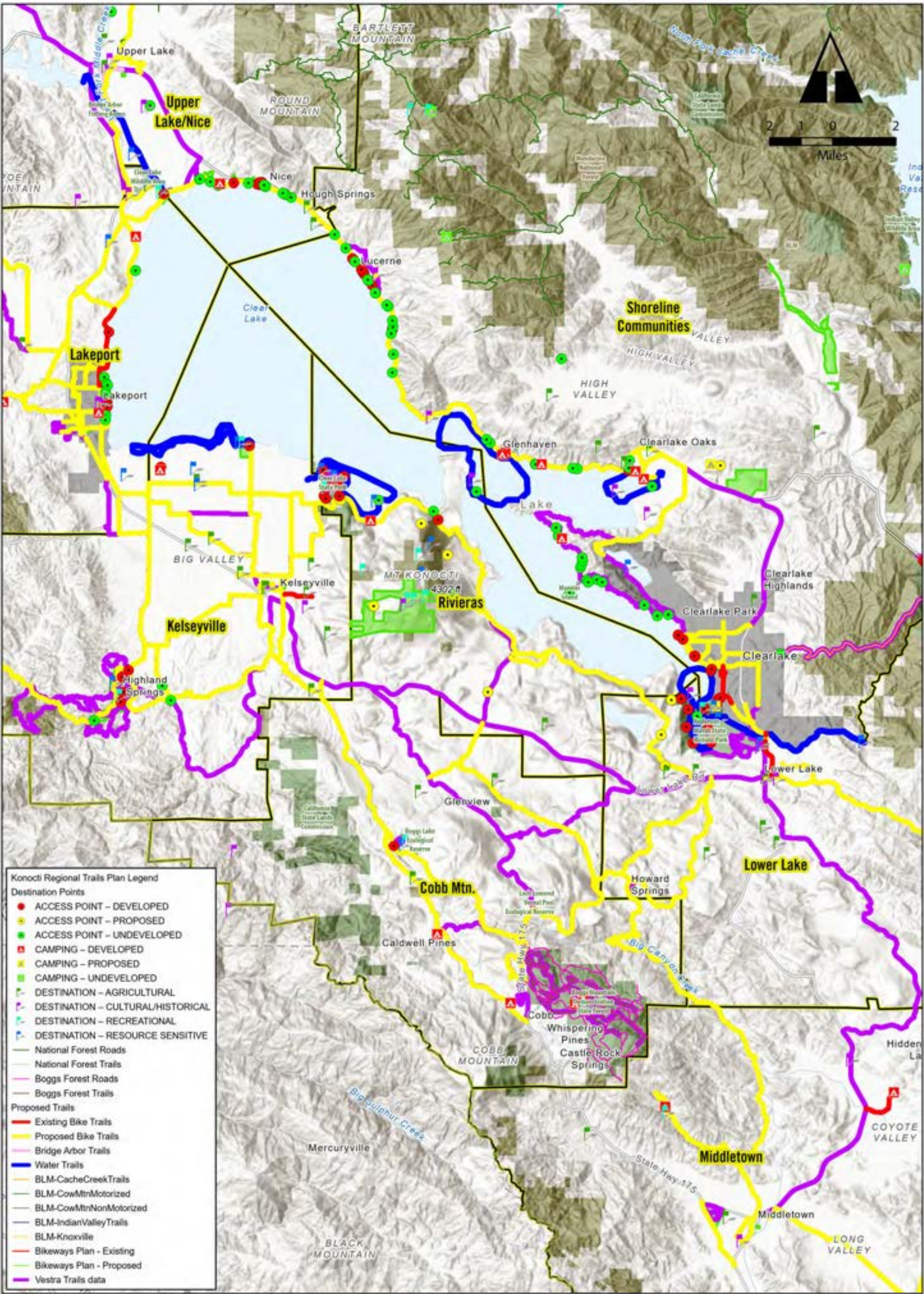
# Lake County Existing Conditions

## Trails

In 2011, Lake County adopted the *Konocti Regional Trails Master Plan*, known as the KRT Plan. This visionary plan calls for a countywide network of non-motorized trails for recreation and transportation, and addresses both land-based and water trails. The network proposed in the KRT Plan is comprehensive and connects communities and cities with recreation and other destinations. The primary focus of the KRT Plan was focused on transportation and connectivity.

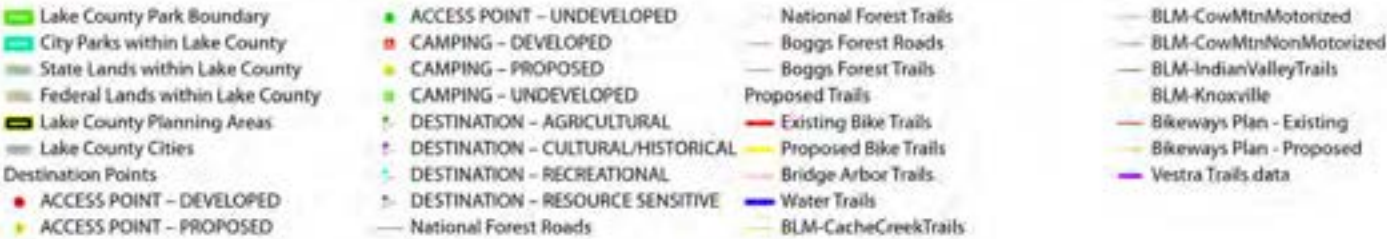
The regional trails network envisioned in the KRT Plan is depicted in Figure 6. Little of the proposed network has been built since 2011. The KRT Plan includes a process and criteria for moving from trail concepts to constructed trails. This Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan will add another layer of prioritization to the KRT network based on community feedback on recreation priorities, using the proposed KRT network as a starting point.





Source: CPAD, 2022, Lake County GIS, CDBW, ESRI

### Planned Konocti Regional Trails Plan Network



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# Lake County Existing Conditions

## Recreation Programs

Lake County Public Services Department cares for the County's parks and operates its museums. The Department does not have recreation programming staff and therefore does not offer traditional recreation programming, beyond a small aquatics program that consists of seasonal open swim. However, the Department does have a critical role in providing facilities that are used by other recreation providers, such as sports leagues.

There are other program providers, including the City of Clearlake, the Lake County Sheriffs Activities League, and a variety of community program providers. Table 2 provides a snapshot of the programming currently available in Lake County by provider, with information on program areas and populations served. This matrix will provide a baseline for programming recommendations in the Needs Assessment that will be completed in the next phase.

	Program Provider	Program	Program Type								Population Served								Area Served										
			Aquatics	Arts and Culture	Fitness and Wellness	Environmental Education and Stewardship	Lifelong Learning	Outdoor Recreation	Out of School/Summer Camps	Team Sports	Individual / Dual Sports	Preschool	K-8 Youth	Teens (Ages 13-18)	Young Adults (Ages 18-24)	Adults (Ages 25-64)	Older Adults (65+)	People with Disabilities	Multi-Generational	Upper Lake/Nice Planning Area	Shoreline Communities Planning Area	Lower Lake Planning Area	Middletown Planning Area	Cobb Mountain Planning Area	Riverside Planning Area	Kelsey Planning Area	Lakeport Planning Area	City of Lakeport	City of Clearlake
Public Agencies	County of Lake	Clogging		X															X										
	County of Lake	Open Swim	X																			X							
	Lake County Sheriffs Activities League	Boxing, Kayaking, Baseball			X			X	X		X	X																	
	Lake County Museums	Fun Fridays		X							X	X									X	X					X		
	K Corps	Search and Rescue			X			X					X																
	County of Lake	Mount Konocti Bus Tours						X									X	X								X			
	Clear Lake State Park	Junior Rangers				X																							
Other Providers	Anderson Marsh State Park	Nature Walks Ranch Tours				X		X										X			X								
	Clearlake Chamber of Commerce	Earth Month Guided Hiking																											
	Middletown Business Association	Middletown Rays		X				X										X											
	Lake County Historical Society	Ely Stage Stop		X		X												X											
	Lake County Chamber of Commerce	Splash-In Bass Tournaments		X														X									X	X	X
	Lake County Chamber of Commerce	Concerts in Park		X																							X	X	X
	Lake County Arts Council	Various Exhibits		X														X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Lake County Rodeo Association	Rodeo Competitions						X	X	X	X	X							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Lake County Sea Scouts	Survivor/Rescue Training	X				X	X	X				X	X						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Friends of Boggs Forest	Nature Hikes				X		X											X				X						
	Rotary International	Youth Literacy Program					X		X										X				X		X	X	X	X	X
	Lions International	Leo's Youth Club					X		X										X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Lake County Wine Alliance	Wine & Chocolate/ Wine Adventure		X												X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Kelseyville Business Association	Kicking Country/Beer, Wine, & Swine		X				X											X							X			
	Middletown Central Park Association	Rodeo		X				X											X				X						
	Taylor Observatory	Star Gazing - Astronomy						X											X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Konocti Youth Soccer League	Soccer			X			X	X	X			X	X															
	Clearlake Soccer League	Soccer			X			X	X	X			X	X							X								X
	Middletown/Cobb Soccer League	Soccer			X			X	X	X			X	X									X						
	West Shore Little League	Baseball			X			X	X	X			X	X														X	X
	South Shore Little League	Baseball			X			X	X	X			X	X								X							
	Kelseyville Little League	Baseball			X			X	X	X			X	X												X			
	Middletown Cobb Little League	Baseball			X			X	X	X			X	X									X						
	West Shore Youth Football	Football			X			X	X	X			X	X														X	X
	Kelseyville Youth Football	Football			X			X	X	X			X	X												X			
	Lower Lake Youth Football	Football			X			X	X	X			X	X								X							
	Middletown Youth Football	Football			X			X	X	X			X	X									X						
	Upper Lake Youth Football	Football			X			X	X	X			X	X						X									
	Westshore Youth Basketball League	Basketball			X			X	X	X			X	X														X	X
	Lake County Tennis Association	Tennis			X			X											X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Quail Run	Fitness classes, racquetball league	X		X						X								X										
	Lake County Martial Arts	Martial arts			X						X								X										
	Hidden Valley Lake Homeowners Assoc	Swim lessons	X		X						X								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Lake County High School Fishing Club	Fishing						X			X		X																
	Konocti Rod & Gun Club	Firearms						X	X										X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Boy Scouts / Girl Scouts	Scouting		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X									X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Lake County Adult Softball	Softball			X			X		X				X	X	X													
	Lake County Theater Company	Acting		X												X	X											X	X
	Lakeport Dance Company			X	X														X										
	Lake County Milers	Running/walking			X			X											X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Cole Creek Equestrian	Equestrian						X											X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Lake County Land Trust	Nature walks			X														X										
	Lake County Bassmasters	Fishing						X											X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Senior Centers	Line dancing			X												X												
	Middletown Art Center			X		X	X												X										
	Ely Stage Stop Museum	Music festival		X															X										
	Lake County Rockhounds	Geology			X			X																					
	Redbud Audubon Society	Birding						X											X										
	Lakeport Yacht Club	Sailing	X					X											X										
	Konocti Bay Sailing Club	Sailing						X																					
	Lake County 4-H	Animal Husbandry																	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Anderson Marsh Interpretive Assoc						X												X										
	Lake County FFA	Agricultural Education						X	X										X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Table 3. Program Matrix





# Lake County Existing Conditions

## Parks Recreation and Trails Projects Underway

Lake County actively invests in its park system. The most recent Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) includes improvements at a number of existing parks:

- Upper Lake Community Park (basketball court, dog park, lighting)
- Kelseyville Community Park (fitness circuit)
- Lakeside Regional Park (multiple amenities)
- Hinman Park (restroom)
- Middletown Park (restroom)
- Lucerne Harbor Park (dredging the harbor)
- Lucerne Creek Park (fitness circuit)
- Caltrans Clean CA grant-funded amenities (shade structures, touchless drinking fountains, waste/recycling bins, educational signage)

In addition, the County has three major parks and recreation initiatives underway. Work on these efforts and the CIP should continue during the PRT planning process.

### **John T. Klaus Park**

John T. Klaus Park is a new regional park received as a bequest from the John T. Klaus Trust. This 584-acre site was accepted by the County in late 2022. Additional assets that were part of the trust will help fund development of the site. The terms of the trust call for the park to be named John T. Klaus Park, for one-third of the land towards the rear of the property to be preserved as a wildlife refuge with public access determined by the County, and for areas of the park to be set aside for youth sporting and recreation activities.

### **Cobb Area Community Park Acquisition**

The Cobb planning area has no county parks within it, a recognized issue for many years. The County is in the process of acquiring a site that recently became available for the development of a community park in the Cobb area, a direction that this PRT supports

### **Aquatic and Recreation Center**

The County, City of Lakeport and City of Clearlake have jointly been studying the development of aquatic and recreation facilities that would serve the entire County. The facility feasibility study recommended:

- The three agencies should form a joint powers authority (JPA) to implement and manage the facilities. This is underway.
- The aquatic facility should be located in Lakeport at Westside Community Park, that it be an indoor facility (8-lane 25-yard pool and small teaching pool with locker rooms/bathhouse), and that there be a potential future recreation center included as a later phase.



## Lake County Existing Conditions

- The recreation center should be located in Clearlake at Burns Valley Park and include a gymnasium, smaller multi-use court, weight room/cardio area and locker rooms totaling approximately 15,000 sf.

Community polling is underway in 2023 to determine feasibility of voter-approved funding, which is needed for this project.



# Lake County Existing Conditions

## Comparables

This section provides comparisons of Lake County to other California counties with similar residential population sizes. Later in the planning process, the BluePoint team will explore comparisons based on other factors, such as amount of park acreage, tourism in the region, or particular park type. Lake County is unique in many aspects, including the lack of major cities that would provide parks, trails, and recreation.

For this snapshot comparison, information was gathered through online resources and all information reflects the year 2020. All parks included in this assessment are county-owned and operated.

County Name	# of County owned parks	Population 2020	County Size: sq. miles	Parks Acres	Annual Budget	Annual Revenue	Budget per acre	Type of parks	User Fees	Camping
Lake	11	68,163	1,522	1,800	\$ 2,208,969	\$ 1,021,968	\$ 1,221	Community, Special Field, Escapes	Rental Fees	No
Napa	10	138,019	789	4,988	\$ 1,755,193	\$ 1,802,913	\$ 352	Regional	Day Use, Rental Fees, Special Use	Yes
Sonoma	58	488,863	1,768	15,506	\$ 41,935,945	\$ 37,196,121	\$ 2,704	Regional, Community, Boat Ramps, Beaches,	Day use, Picnic, Rental Fees, Special Use Fees	Yes
Mendocino	6+3	87,000	3,878	583	\$ 220,000	\$ 21,000	\$ 377	Regional, Communi	Day use, Picnic, rental, Rental Fees	Yes
Humboldt	17-20	135,490	4,052	900	\$ 913,438	\$ 525,366	\$ 1,015	Regional, Boat Ramps, Campgrounds	Yes & Rental	Yes

Table 4. Comparables.

## Findings Summary

Lake County has 1,800 acres of county parks with an annual budget of \$2,208,969 and revenue of \$1,021,968. The budget covers 11 full time staff and an average of 6 part-time staff per year. The Parks and Recreation budget receives the majority of its revenues from the County general fund, telecommunication leases on Buckingham Peak of Mt Konocti, and geothermal royalties.

### Napa County

Napa County is located southeast of Lake County, and is a part of the Bay Area counties. The County is known for wine production and has a large tourism draw. The County is 789 square miles and has a population of approximately 138,000.

The County parks are managed by the Napa County Regional Park & Open Space District, which was established in 2006 with the passage of Measure I and is now funded by the County and program income. The District has 10 parks and open spaces, making up 4,988 acres of land. The budget is \$1,755,193 and the District has a revenue of \$1,802,913.





# Lake County Existing Conditions

## **Sonoma County**

Sonoma County is located directly north of Marin County and South of Mendocino County. Similar to Napa County, Sonoma County is known for its wine production and has a large tourism draw. The County is 1,768 square miles and has a population of 488,863.

The County has over 50 parks, beaches, and trails, including campgrounds, marinas, and an education center. The annual budget is \$41,935,945, with a revenue of \$37,196,121. Similar to Napa County, Sonoma County relies on Measure M, a one-eighth sales tax, to support the regional parks system.

## **Mendocino County**

Mendocino County has outdoor experiences for residents and visitors, including the rugged coastline to verdant inland valleys. The County is situated directly west of Lake County and has 131 miles of coastline. The County is 3,878 square miles and a population of approximately 87,000.

The County has 9 parks, making up 583 acres of parkland, including neighborhood parks, community parks, regional parks, facility rentals and recreation programs, boat ramps, and camping. Unlike many of the other Counties, Mendocino does not offer sports fields or programs that bring in revenue. The annual budget is \$220,000 and the revenue is \$21,000.

## **Humboldt County**

Humboldt County is a densely forested mountainous and rural county with approximately 110 miles of coastline. The County is situated along the coast, approximately 100 miles south of the California-Oregon border, and just north of Mendocino county. The County is 4,052 square miles and has a population of approximately 135,000.

Humboldt County has 17-20 parks which include regional parks, boat ramps, and campgrounds, and makes up 900 acres of parkland. The budget for parks and recreation is \$913,438 and has revenue of \$525,366.



# Lake County Existing Conditions

## Trends

The following section highlights trends and ideas for the County to consider meeting community needs and interests. These also offer ideas about how to expand the County's programming and diversity of facilities and parks.

### Outdoor Lifestyle

People are enjoying the outdoors more than ever and participating at a much higher level than in the last several decades. Park visits have increased by 63% nation-wide after the COVID-19 lockdown, allowing people to unite with friends and family.

The National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (*Long-term National Trends in Outdoor Recreation Activity Participation – 1980 to Now*, IRIS, May 2009, H. Ken Cordell, Gary T. Green and Carter J. Betz) had tracked recreation participation trends in people over 16 since the 1960s. It is reported that the most persistent activity throughout the years is walking for pleasure. Walking as well as many outdoor activities has seen substantial increases in participation over the last several decades. Noteworthy is the increase in day hiking, sightseeing and viewing, and photography of birds.

Another indicator is an increase in the number of days people participate in these activities. It was reported in the survey that in 2009, 20% of the population spent 25 days or more day hiking, up 12% from the 1980s, and that 10% of the population spent over 25 days backpacking in 2009, up from 6% in the same time period. The amount of time (25 days or more) spent swimming in lakes and ponds has decreased from 19% to 14%.

According to the 2012 "The Outdoor Recreation Economy" report by the Outdoor Industry Association, 140 million Americans over the age of 16 participate in outdoor activities. Americans spend approximately \$646 million dollars annually on outdoor recreation – twice as much as we spend on automobiles, gas, or utilities. People can experience a sense of wellness, stress release, stronger social interaction, and an increased connection to the outdoors when they participate in outdoor recreation. The need for flexibility in recreation programs, as adults have less and less time, is critical.



# Lake County Existing Conditions

Activity Groups	Per Capita Participation			Adult Participants (millions)			Days per Participant			Total Days (millions)		
	2008	2030	Percent	2008	2030	Percent	2008	2030	Percent	2008	2030	Percent
	Rate	Rate	Change	Number	Number	Change	Rate	Rate	Change	Number	Number	Change
<b>Visiting Developed Sites</b>												
Developed site use	0.819	0.825	0.7	192.7	245.9	27.6	11.67	11.58	-0.8	2,235	2,830	26.6
Visiting interpretive sites	0.669	0.690	3.2	157.4	205.7	30.7	7.81	8.02	2.6	1,243	1,666	34.1
<b>Viewing &amp; Photographing Nature</b>												
Birding	0.346	0.361	4.4	81.4	107.7	32.3	97.71	97.91	0.2	6,215	10,889	32.5
Viewing	0.805	0.814	1.2	189.4	242.7	28.1	169.59	163.96	-3.3	32,303	40,019	23.9
<b>Backcountry Activities</b>												
Challenge	0.107	0.111	3.6	25.1	33.0	31.3	4.77	4.74	-0.6	120	156	30.5
Equestrian	0.070	0.072	2.7	16.4	21.3	30.1	16.28	16.48	1.2	262	345	31.7
Hiking	0.333	0.343	3.1	78.3	102.2	30.5	22.89	23.41	2.3	1,826	2,437	33.5
Visiting primitive areas	0.363	0.375	-2.1	90.2	111.8	24.0	13.22	13.08	-1.1	1,233	1,512	22.6
<b>Motorized Activities</b>												
Motorized off-road use	0.204	0.194	-4.7	47.9	57.8	20.7	21.65	21.04	-2.8	1,048	1,229	17.3
Motorized water use	0.263	0.270	2.5	62.0	80.5	29.9	15.27	15.35	0.5	953	1,244	30.6
Motorized snow use	0.040	0.036	-10.4	9.4	10.7	13.6	7.25	7.16	-1.3	68	77	12.1
<b>Hunting and Fishing</b>												
Hunting	0.119	0.105	-11.6	27.9	31.3	12.0	19.13	18.17	-5.0	535	570	6.4
Fishing	0.309	0.301	-2.6	72.7	89.7	23.4	18.48	18.15	-1.8	1,363	1,651	21.1
<b>Non-motorized Winter Activities</b>												
Developed skiing	0.101	0.108	6.7	23.7	32.1	35.1	7.19	7.42	3.2	171	238	39.5
Undeveloped skiing	0.033	0.033	-0.6	7.8	9.8	25.9	6.58	6.72	2.1	51	66	28.6
<b>Non-motorized Water Activities</b>												
Swimming	0.609	0.630	3.4	143.2	187.5	31.0	23.98	24.12	0.6	3,459	4,558	31.7
Floating	0.169	0.162	-3.9	39.8	48.4	21.7	6.50	6.53	0.3	261	318	22.1

Source: "Federal Outdoor Recreation Trends: Effects on Economic Opportunities", National Center for Natural Resources Economic Research (NCNRR), NCNRR Working Paper Number 1, October 2014.

*Table 5. Popularity of Activities.*

For youth ages 6-24, running/jogging and bicycling have the highest participation and are favorite outdoor activities. Skateboarding is also a favorite activity for this young age group. Running is popular with adults, but fishing and bicycling also have high participation rates. Adults' favorite activities are running, bicycling, and birdwatching.

The table above highlights the ongoing national trends to 2030. In almost every category, participation is anticipated to grow.

## Heath, Wellness, and Walkability

Although California is a relatively healthy state, with just over 76% of the population reporting they are physically active, 27% of the population is obese; one out of every 12 adult Californians have been diagnosed with diabetes; and physical inactivity has increased for seniors (65+) by 29%.

Parks and recreation services, programs and facilities are being seen more often as the "prescription" for prevention, good health, and wellness for communities. The State of Oregon, Oakland, CA, and Washington D.C. have programs in place that have health professionals issue parks prescriptions. Ensuring tobacco free parks, encouraging





# Lake County Existing Conditions

community walking programs, and creating health focused pedestrian and bike plans are all part of the solution that parks and recreation can serve. Further, parks and recreation departments are more frequently setting up at farmer's markets and repositioning community centers to be community wellness hubs with exercise, nutrition, and more.

## Parks for All

Two notable characteristics of the region are its aging population and its number of residents with disabilities.

The U.S. Census estimates 22.3% of the region's population to be 65 years or older, a figure that is well above the statewide figure of 14% and has been trending upward. This can be attributed, in part, to the attractive nature of the region in terms of rural and affordable living for retirement age individuals. The County must consider and develop facilities and amenities for older adults with a variety of interests. Segmenting seniors into a single category is not effective. With healthier lifestyles, people live longer and have more active lives than ever before. Park and recreation providers need to consider multiple stages and interests of seniors' diverse lives as well as their interest in developing new skills and learning new activities. Resources for those with some health issues and access concerns; for passive and more contemplative activities; for seniors looking for intergenerational interactions; and for those who want more quiet environments are essential. Some of the strongest trends include new facilities for Pickleball, creation of adult recess games like kickball, and developing outdoor gyms.

The region is also made up of approximately 20% claiming some type of disability, which is nearly twice the statewide percentage of 11.2%. Relative to transportation issues, elderly and disabled residents are often less prone to driving than younger individuals and more reliant on other means of transportation such as public transit or walking. In addition, according to a 2012 report from the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, transportation difficulties negatively affect a number of disabled individuals, which can result in many becoming homebound. Based on the County's demographic makeup, a sizable segment of the population would benefit from accessible parks, recreation, and trails, in addition to transit and pedestrian facility improvements in the coming years with an emphasis on safety and accessibility.

## Children and Teens

One of the greatest challenges to communities is how to support families. This challenge includes creating a park system that addresses child development – including physical, social, and cognitive growth – creating the opportunity to enjoy and experience nature, as well as providing safe streets and access to parks. More than the development of tot lots, considering children means looking at the entire network, from streets and plazas to trails and parks, as an interconnected support system. Each element of the system must consider children of all ages and their families.



# Lake County Existing Conditions

Teenagers are perhaps the most challenging of this group. As a whole, they do not want to be categorized with children, may not want to be part of an organized group, and are often more interested in exploring a larger realm. They often indicate a desire to 'hang out,' and need safe places day and night to do this. Skateparks and teen playgrounds are two areas that have some success in satisfying this need. Evaluating how to provide safe and enjoyable experiences for this group is paramount to fully serving the needs of residents. Additional programs integrating technology and esports are also on the rise.

## Affordability

As families and individuals are facing rising costs on everyday items and necessities, having access to low- or no-cost recreation is vital. Nearly 9 in 10 adults are interested in having access to low or no cost recreation opportunities, particularly among parents, Millennials, and Gen Xers ([NRPA, Pulse Study](#)).

## Economics and Financing

Park and recreation professionals have often had to fight for resources to build and maintain a high-quality system of parks. The need for new sources of revenue is encouraging parks and recreation professionals to become more entrepreneurial. Expanding opportunities for sponsorships, as well as looking to new potential partners for funding programs and facilities is becoming a priority. Additionally, identifying and securing long-term funding sources for maintaining and renovating existing parks is an ongoing challenge.

Connecting the growth of the outdoor recreation economy and the revitalization of the County economy is a growing trend, as seen by the EPA program - Recreation Economy for Rural Communities. Many communities are seeking to grow their outdoor recreation and tourism economy, invest in their downtowns, and conserve natural lands. Outdoor recreation is a major potential source for growing the local economy. Encouraging activities that foster environmentally friendly community development, includes:

- Ensuring local residents, including young people, have connections and opportunities to nearby outdoor assets to foster community pride, good stewardship, and local economic benefits.
- Creating or expanding trail networks to attract overnight visitors and new businesses and foster use by local residents.
- Developing in-town amenities, such as broadband service; electric vehicle charging stations; housing; or shops, restaurants, or breweries, to serve residents and attract new visitors and residents with an interest in nearby outdoor assets.
- Marketing Main Street as a gateway to nearby natural lands to capture and amplify outdoor recreation dollars.



# Lake County Existing Conditions

- Working with the community to develop a community consensus on the management of outdoor assets to reduce potential conflicts and ensure sustainable use of resources.
- Ensuring that all residents and visitors, particularly those who have not historically been engaged in outdoor recreation and Main Street revitalization efforts, have equitable access to and can benefit from the growing outdoor recreation economy.

## Nature-Based Recreation and Tourism

### Mountain Biking

The ever-expanding popularity of the sport of mountain biking has exposed the need to update the way we view recreational access to public lands. As mountain biking is becoming more popular, there is a need to determine where mountain bikes may be integrated into existing trail networks and where new access opportunities are present. Policies regarding e-bikes, trail etiquette, and multi-use trails must be developed, as well.

As Lake County works to bring in more tourism, mountain biking offers a unique opportunity to bring mountain biking enthusiasts to the County. Building off of a good trail system for all abilities, the County could integrate skills parks in smaller areas.

### Fishing

Clear Lake, and some of the surrounding lakes, have garnered a reputation as a fishing destination. Clear Lake is known as the Bass Capital of the West, and has more fish per square acre than any other lake in the nation. The county is home to several high-profile tournaments. Additionally, the lake is used by recreational fishers, many of who use County-owned boat launches. These launches have been impacted by the low lake levels, causing several to be temporarily closed in summer of 2022.

### Birding

Located in the Pacific Flyway, Lake County has more than 300 species of birds that inhabit the diverse landscapes around Clear Lake. Birding is a popular pastime, especially for older adults. There are opportunities within parks to encourage bird watching, including informational signs and planting native trees and plants to encourage bird populations. Bird identification signs that feature photos and fun facts about birds in the area, with QR codes leading to more information online, can encourage bird watching for all ages.

### Water-Based Recreation

Water-based recreation such as kayaking, stand up paddleboarding, swimming, and more is popular in the area. The area has water trails that offer routes for kayakers and other non-motorized boats. However, issues with blue-green algae can be a deterrent to those looking to recreate in or around Clear Lake.





# Lake County Existing Conditions

## Increased Usage of Technology

The County may need to consider how technology impacts parks and facilities. Technology is offering parks and recreation providers with broad new opportunities as well as new challenges. It seems that nearly all sectors of the population are becoming more comfortable with and dependent on technology, desiring more high tech and “amenity” rich experiences. Examples of technology in parks include adding wifi throughout parks, allowing drones to be used, benches that use solar energy to allow for device charging, QR codes that teach park goers about the nature around them, such as tree identification. Technology can simultaneously provide a mass communication tool while improving affordability and accessibility to community members.

Opportunities for tech-aided recreation are growing while a conflicting trend for techno-free parks and environments is emerging. Finding the right balance and appropriate use for technology in parks and recreation facilities and programming will be an evolving effort. As an example, as drones become more mainstream, parks must be ready for a large desire in flying drones recreationally in public areas. Drones can be used to aid rangers and volunteers in mapping areas, plants, animals, visitors, and much more.

## Climate Change, Resilience, and Sustainability

Climate change mitigation, resilience planning, and sustainability efforts are some of the most critical issues that cities and counties will be responding to now and into the future. Parks play a central role in the ability to assist and address some of the issues related to climate change. This includes: water conservation through smart irrigation technologies; sustainable planting approaches for parks and overall maintenance practices; and limiting urban heat islands. Employing better soil management practices and composting creates “carbon sinks,” an essential element to help mitigate emissions, as well as soil that is better in drought conditions. Recreation programs and facilities that focus on walkability and bikeability are critical to reducing vehicle miles traveled, a key statewide goal to reduce greenhouse gases. Open space and parks also can be effective buffers for potential flood zones or wildfire paths. Energy conservation efforts and the use of solar panels for recreation facilities and lighting can help reduce the County’s carbon footprint, act as a model for businesses and residents, and save money in operations.



# Lake County Existing Conditions

## Community Engagement and Survey Findings

This first window of engagement for the Lake County Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan was held from October 17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022 and focused on understanding the needs and opportunities of the Lake County community through small group sessions. The project team met with four small groups that represented Arts, Culture, and Community; Youth, Sports, and Outdoors; Business, Tourism, and Economic Development; and Land Management and Trails.

In February and March 2023, an online survey was underway. This survey was designed to gauge how residents view the County parks, what activities and amenities they value and desire, and what they would like for the County to expand. The survey closed on March 13, 2023. The BluePoint team is analyzing the results and will incorporate them into the Needs Assessment.

### Preliminary Findings

The preliminary findings from the first window of engagement were:

- The beauty and biodiversity of the lake is a major strength of the County.
- There are a large number of parks in the County and a variety of different types of recreational opportunities (mountain biking, boating and fishing, sailing, etc.).
- People in Lake County are invested in the County and are eager to volunteer time and energy to improve the area.
- Low water level in Clear Lake is a huge challenge, preventing swimming on the beach and making boating access limited to those who have their own private lakeshore access.
- Lake County needs to expand and improve marketing materials.
- The County needs to expand and diversify recreational opportunities, with more biking, swimming, and disc golf.
- Areas around the lake need to be more accessible to the public, including direct boating access on the lake as well as ADA compliance throughout parks.
- Need for better active and public transportation connections across amenities on lake and between amenities and pedestrian areas.

### Key Takeaways

While the survey is underway, the information in this document will be expanded upon during the planning process. In conjunction with the Needs Assessment, this document will serve as a baseline for the Master Plan, and will provide direction to the final Master Plan.



# **Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan**

## **Appendix B: Park Inventory and Condition Assessment**



# Park Inventory

Park Name	Park Size		
<b>1. Local</b>			
Alpine Park	2.5		
Clark's Island	1.5		
Clearlake Oaks Plaza	1		
Hinman Park	1		
Keeling Park	1.5		
Lower Lake Park	1		
Lucerne Creek Park	2		
Lucerne Harbor Park & Artist Village	4.5		
Middletown Park & Pool	1.0		
Middletown Square Park	1		
Nylander Park	1		
Pioneer Park	0.5		
	<b>1. Local</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>1.6 Acres/Thousand</b>
<b>2. Community Park</b>			
Hammond Avenue Park	12.5		
Kelseyville Community Park	3		
Lakeside Park	50		
Upper Lake Park	8.5		
	<b>2. Community Park</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>6.3 Acres/Thousand</b>
<b>3. Regional Park</b>			
Highland Springs Park	2,500		
Middletown Trailside Park	107		
Mt. Konocti Park	1,152		
	<b>3. Regional Park</b>	<b>3759</b>	<b>318.6 Acres/Thousand</b>
<b>4. Special Use</b>			
Clearlake Oaks Beach	1.1		
Davis Beach	0.5		
Museum Square	1.0		
Nice Community Beach	.2		
Vista Point	3.0		
	<b>4. Special Use</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>0.5 Acres/Thousand</b>
<b>5. Natural Area</b>			
Helen Mitcham Park	117		
Rodman Slough Park	38		
	<b>5. Natural Area</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>13.1 Acres/Thousand</b>
<b>6. Potential Site/Undeveloped</b>			
John T. Klaus Park	584		
	<b>6. Potential Site/Undevelop</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>49.5 Acres/Thousand</b>

# Park Inventory

## Alpine Park

5985 Hwy 20

Lucerne

1. Local

2.5 Acres



Alpine Park is well designed, with multiple ways to interact with water. There are 2 piers, each with a different character; a beach for water access; and a level viewing lawn suitable for events. Design features in the renovated area enhance the pier and promenade. A low stone wall that reflects the character of historic walls along the lakeshore buffers the plaza's seating area from the streets.



### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Provide a connecting paved pathway for improved access at the northern portion of the park. Add a bench and fishing line receptacle at the wooden fishing pier. Additional trees could shade seating area around the playground. Additional landscaping could better buffer the impacts from Hwy. 20, and screen utility boxes.



# Park Inventory

## Alpine Park

Feature	
<b>Beach for Swimming</b> Fair	Decent swimming access when water levels are sufficient.
<b>Benches</b> Excellent	Benches located throughout the park, along the promenade and at the end of the concrete pier. Situated for viewing the lake.
<b>Concrete Pier with Shelter</b> Excellent	Attractive pier for fishing, picnicking, and enjoying viewing the lake. Has a sheltered group picnic area, multiple benches, and lighting for evening use. Has fishing line disposal receptacle as well as trash receptacles.
<b>Landscape Areas / Trees</b> Good	Mature trees provide shaded areas for much of the park. Lawns are well maintained. Landscape areas have a nice variety of planting.
<b>Lighting</b> Excellent	Recent park renovation includes historic style light standards on the concrete pier, along the promenade, and at the plaza and parking area. Similar fixtures along the sidewalk provide some illumination into the rest of the park.
<b>Parking</b> Good	On-site parking for a dozen vehicles. Additional parking along park frontage.
<b>Paths and Walkways</b> Excellent	Southern, newer end of the park has accessible, paved plaza, pier, and waterfront promenade along the seawall. Older northern portion has a paved pathway to the restroom and playground, but paths do not connect and to reach those features from the southern end requires using the Hwy. 20 sidewalk.
<b>Picnic Areas</b> Excellent	Three group areas: one sheltered at the end of the concrete pier with 4 tables, one sheltered at the plaza with 2 tables and a BBQ, and one at a shaded part of the lawn near the wooden pier with 2 tables and a BBQ. Single tables and BBQ's are at the lawn and near the playground.
<b>Playground</b> Good	Play area for ages 5-12. Playground is at the park's northern end bounded by Hwy. 20 and a private home. Cornhole pitches have been added adjacent to the playground. There are adjacent picnic tables for parent seating. Play area is mostly shaded, but picnic tables are not.
<b>Restroom</b> Good	Clean and well maintained restroom near playground and lawn area.
<b>Wood Fishing Pier</b> Fair	Narrow wooden pier, functional for fishing when water levels are adequate. Lacks seating or fishing line disposal receptacle.



# Park Inventory

## Clark's Island

12559 Hwy 20

Clearlake Oaks

1. Local

1.5 Acres



Provides only limited interest for community members, with only a few picnic tables and no BBQ's. When water levels are adequate, this pretty spot could be a pleasant, quiet stop along the road. Unappealing when water level low, it is no longer an "island," and the ramp to water is overgrown and unusable. It is located across Island Drive from Clearlake Oaks Boat Launch and near Nylander Park and Plaza.



### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Opportunity to design a more formal pedestrian connection to Clearlake Oaks and consider amenities for this site in light of nearby Nylander Park. Additional picnic tables and BBQ's would make the park more inviting. Provide an ADA path of travel. Consider seasonality of water and improve the water's edge vegetation for year-round visual appeal, as well as habitat value. This could become a natural area: revegetate with native species, plant additional trees, replace turf grass, and add nature play. Installing a County-branded park sign would identify this as a County Park.

## Park Inventory

### Clark's Island

Feature	
<b>Cob Entry Sign</b> Fair	Recently improved Cob material sign, visible and legible from Hwy. 20.
<b>Covered Pedestrian Bridge</b> Excellent	Picturesque pedestrian bridge over the seasonal channel is a popular and often photographed feature.
<b>Landscape Areas / Trees</b> Fair	Lawn areas with sporadic trees, shrubs and pampas grass.
<b>Picnic Area</b> Fair	Several wooden picnic tables are scattered around the island.

# Park Inventory

## Clearlake Oaks Plaza

12483 Foothill Blvd.

Clearlake Oaks

1. Local

1 Acres



The Plaza is intended for community events such as entertainment or farmers' markets, and is used for community music gatherings. Surrounded by parking and vehicular circulation, its formal character does not invite active use, although its labyrinth draws some users. The senior center and a church are across the street from the park. Activation is needed.



### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Consider uses with Nylander and adjacent Senior Center. Additional shade, and some visual separation from street and parking would make it feel more welcoming. With improved connection to the senior center, this plaza could provide outdoor space for senior programs and activities. Additional features such as chess tables, cornhole, and BBQ's would help to activate the park.



## Park Inventory

### Clearlake Oaks Plaza

Feature	
<b>Benches</b> Good	Benches around the paved labyrinth area face the gazebo, labyrinth and eastern lawn.
<b>Gazebo</b> Excellent	Large gazebo facing the paved plaza, functional for musical gatherings.
<b>Labyrinth</b> Excellent	The central paved portion of the plaza contains a brick/paver labyrinth with a fountain in the center. It is used by individuals, and by the church across the street for public meditations.
<b>Parking</b> Good	Park has 17 diagonal parking spaces in several bays.
<b>Picnic Area</b> Good	Five individual metal picnic tables are around the west end lawn. Young trees provide little shade at this point. Three tables have no physical/visual separation from the street and two are adjacent to the diagonal parking.

# Park Inventory

## Hinman Park

3494 E. Hwy 20

Nice

1. Local

1 Acres



This formal town square park has a central gazebo, shade and palm trees, and paved diagonal paths. Park entries are at each corner, and have a bench, picnic table BBQ, and trash receptacle. A restroom is being added. The park lacks features for general recreation, however, there is room to add small-footprint features.

### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Relocate picnic tables from under the gazebo. Create picnic peninsulas off the main paths to allow multiple groups to use the park at one time. Consider adding new uses into the triangular quadrants based on local interests, such as a bocce court, fitness equipment, checker/chess tables, or play features with small safety surfacing footprints such as spinners, or a slide.

Add a park entry or two that does not require passing through a picnic spot, to make the park feel more inviting.

# Park Inventory

## Hinman Park

Feature	
<b>Gazebo</b> Excellent	The large central gazebo is a focal point for the park, and shades several picnic tables.
<b>Landscape Areas / Trees</b> Good	There are multiple mature palm trees as well as shade trees throughout the park. Lawn is well maintained. Additional planting at park perimeter could add interest.
<b>Paths and Walkways</b> Good	Diagonal stone paved paths run from the park's four corner entries to the central gazebo. People entering the park must pass through the picnic areas at each corner.
<b>Picnic Areas</b> Fair	A group picnic area is in the gazebo, and each park entry has a picnic table with BBQ.



# Park Inventory

## Keeling Park

3000 Lakeshore Blvd.

Nice

1. Local

1.5 Acres



Small locally used park, with playground, restroom, picnic and water access for swimming, boating and fishing. The boat ramp is the main attraction. There is an opportunity to use the other County-owned parcels located across Carson Street and Lakeshore Blvd. (the triangle and the parcel with an unused building on it).



### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Improve the restroom facility. Add landscaping for visual interest and comfort, as well as to screen utility area by the restroom. Consider the opportunity to expand onto the other parcels. Realigning the intersection of Carson Street and Lakeshore Blvd. would allow for the park to be enlarged while better integrating the use areas by relocating the playground and expanding the picnic and lawn areas.

# Park Inventory

## Keeling Park

Feature	
<b>Benches</b> Fair	Several benches for parent seating or lake viewing. Some of the wooden benches show damage.
<b>Boat Ramp and Dock</b> Good	Boat ramp and dock allow for motorized and non-motorized water access when water levels are adequate.
<b>Lake Swimming Access</b> Good	Gravel beach provides swimming access.
<b>Landscape Areas /Trees</b> Good/Poor	Attractive, mature trees provide partial shade at the picnic and playground areas. The lawn is well maintained, but planting is lacking in the rest of the park, with much of the area feeling barren.
<b>Picnic Areas</b> Good	Six concrete picnic tables and several BBQ's in a mostly tree-shaded area between the playground and boat ramp. A couple of wooden tables and BBQ's are on the other side of the boat ramp, with water views but no shade.
<b>Playground</b> Good	Playground for ages 5-12, partially shaded, with parent seating. Located adjacent to lawn, restrooms and picnic area.
<b>Restrooms</b> Fair	Women's restroom has two toilets in one stall. Some damage to outside of building.

# Park Inventory

## Lower Lake Park



16375 Second St.

Lower Lake

1. Local

1 Acres

Centrally located in the community, adjacent to the fire station. It is a shady site, focused on large picnic shelter and barbecue pit. Overall, facilities are aging, and parking dominates the center of the park. Most of the park is filled up with single-use features, leaving very little space for self-directed play and recreation. The park is well used as a community gathering place.

### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Playground needs seating areas and more interactive features, and to be better integrated with the park. Consider a net-climber and disk swing. Add painted play elements such as hopscotch and four-square on existing asphalt. This park is an important amenity for the community and is worth investing in in enhancements.

To make the park more inviting, consider removing some or all chain link fencing along 2nd and Mill Street frontages or replacing with wooden fencing matching the playground fence. Install County-branded signage at street entries. Explore possibility of expanding park by purchasing adjacent lot at S/W corner to create more shaded lawn area.



# Park Inventory

## Lower Lake Park

Feature	
<b>Community Building</b> Fair	Currently leased, not a County use.
<b>Fenced Grass Area</b> Good/Poor	The lawn near the restroom is well maintained, and nicely shaded by mature trees. The slats in the property line fencing are disintegrating and in poor shape.
<b>Gazebo</b> Fair	Oddly placed gazebo. Not clear how it is used.
<b>Group Picnic Areas</b> Good	Large covered group picnic area has 20+ very tightly spaced tables, and a very large group BBQ to accommodate large community gatherings. A second covered picnic area has 4 tables, and an additional table with a small BBQ adjacent to it. Both have electrical service.
<b>Landscape Areas /Trees</b> Fair	Mature trees shade the park well, and there is some perimeter planting between the park and the street. Aside from the lawn area, there are areas within the park that are bare of any planting.
<b>Parking Lot</b> Poor	Underused asphalt area takes up the middle of the park, and could be repurposed.
<b>Playground</b> Good	This large playground area, with swings and a structure for ages 5-12, could accommodate additional play elements. It is partially shaded, lacks parent seating.
<b>Restroom</b> Poor	Restroom with stainless steel fixtures. Bathrooms lack signage and some stall doors. Existing stall doors are quite short (you can see over them).

# Park Inventory

## Lucerne Creek Park

6238 9th Avenue

Lucerne

1. Local

2 Acres



This wooded creek channel is minimally developed open space. Exercise equipment has been added, along with some seating and a partial gravel trail. More fitness stations are planned to be added in 2023. The park should be considered with Lucerne Harbor Park, which is across Hwy. 20 on the west end, and the Senior Center, across 9th Street on the east end.



### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Create a full, ADA accessible walking circuit around the park to connect exercise activities and seating/picnic areas. Provide picnic tables and additional benches. Improve crosswalks to the Senior Center and to the lake. Shade the path, exercise, and seating areas when possible.

## Park Inventory

### Lucerne Creek Park

Feature	
<b>Exercise Circuit</b>	Some pieces of exercise equipment have recently been added, and more are planned to be added in 2023.
<b>Landscape Areas / Trees</b> Good	Many mature trees follow the creek channel, and additional trees have been planted to supplement them along the parks edges.
<b>Paths and Walkways</b> Poor	There are some segments of wide gravel pathway, but they are discontinuous and incomplete. There is no pedestrian walkway at the east end of the park.
<b>Picnic Area</b>	Several benches and two small curving seatwalls are pausing places at the park.



# Park Inventory

## Lucerne Harbor Park & Artist Village

6225 E. Hwy 20

Lucerne

1. Local

4.5 Acres



Excellent lakefront location with aging infrastructure, poor pedestrian circulation, and minimal connection with the Artist Village. Redwood trees shade the picnic area along the park's frontage. Low water levels significantly impact the park's use. The boat launch area is planned to be dredged in 2023. This park should be considered with Lucerne Creek Park, which is across the street.



### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Playground should be relocated away from Hwy. 20, possibly to Lucerne Creek Park. The harbor has been silted in, but the boat ramp still functions most of the year. Pedestrian circulation could be better connected to the east side of Hwy. 20, and with a pedestrian pathway outside of the parking area. The Lucerne Creek outflow could be revegetated and enhanced as an attractive park feature. Planting areas at frontage near Artist Village need landscape improvements. Piers could use a refresh.



# Park Inventory

## Lucerne Harbor Park & Artist Village

Feature	
<b>Adjacent Artist Village</b> Good	Incubator spaces for local artists and businesses. There is expansion space on the Hwy. 20 side of the space.
<b>Benches</b> Fair	Benches along the water provide lake views, but lack separation from the parking lot. Benches at the picnic area are adjacent to parking or Hwy. 20.
<b>Boat Launch</b> Good	Launch for motorized and non-motorized watercraft, usable most of the year when water levels are adequate. Dredging is planned for 2023.
<b>Breakwater Fishing Piers</b> Fair	Two aging structures that could use upgrade/refresh. Breakwater pier has lighting and picnic tables on gravel surfacing. Shorter fishing pier is similar, but without lighting. They provide excellent views across the lake.
<b>Landscape Areas / Trees</b> Fair	Trees provide good shade canopy at the picnic area and along the lakefront. Planting areas at the northern frontage are rock covered and with minimal plants. The Lucerne Creek outfall area could be revegetated to become a focal point.
<b>Paths and Walkways</b> Poor	There is no sidewalk along most of the park frontage, or on the lake side of Hwy. 20 north of the park. Most pedestrian circulation is in the parking lot.
<b>Picnic Areas</b> Fair	Picnic tables and benches are in good shape and in a shaded area, but the location lacks separation/buffer from parking lot or Hwy. 20. Additional picnic tables on the piers provide a unique setting.
<b>Playground</b> Fair	Age 5-12 playground is adjacent to Hwy. 20. Fenced area is much larger than needed for existing play equipment.
<b>Restrooms</b> Good	Clean and functional, with stainless steel fixtures. Has a mural on the rear side, facing the Artist Village.

# Park Inventory

## Middletown Park & Pool

20962 Big Canyon Road

Middletown

1. Local

1.0 Acres



The fenced swimming area consists of a 25-yard deep water pool, a small kiddie pool, a shade structure, a pool building with lockers, restroom and showers, and a large lawn area with picnic tables. The park also has one lighted tennis court and a playground, with small lawn areas. Shade is lacking. The park is adjacent to several schools including the High School, Middle School, Elementary School, Christian School, and Community Day School.

### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Shade would be a welcome addition to this park. Provide additional shaded picnic tables outside of the fenced pool area and shaded seating at the playground.



## Park Inventory

### Middletown Park & Pool

Feature	
<b>Kiddie Pool</b> Fair	Small circular pool near the shade structure.
<b>Picnic Areas</b>	Picnic tables are within the fenced pool area.
<b>Playground</b> Good	Basic 5-12 play structure and swings. It has one bench within the play area for parent seating, and lacks shade.
<b>Rectangular Deep Water</b> Good	25-yard swimming pool with one diving board. Pool area has deck, lawn, shade structure, and picnic tables.
<b>Shade Structure</b> Fair	Open structure on the lawn between the large and small pools.
<b>Showers and Restrooms</b>	Building appears to be in good shape (not open when visited).
<b>Tennis Court</b> Excellent	Single lighted tennis court with backboard, and a small spectator bleacher.

# Park Inventory

## Middletown Square Park

21249 Washington St.

Middletown

1. Local

1 Acres



Shaded with oak trees, beautiful lawn and central location. Very inviting and very flexible in how it can be used, for passive enjoyment or recreation, gatherings, or community events, such as the popular Friday evening farmers market. It is located adjacent to the town library and senior center. A restroom is planned to be added in 2023.

### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Continue to maintain this popular park.  
Consider adding a small group picnic area.  
Add the planned restroom.

## Park Inventory

### Middletown Square Park

Feature	
<b>Benches</b> Excellent	Multiple benches around the park perimeter.
<b>Gazebo</b> Excellent	A central feature of the park, this large gazebo accommodates musical performances and events.
<b>Landscape Areas / Trees</b> Excellent	Beautiful mature oaks and conifers were preserved when this park was developed. Lawn and perimeter planting are well maintained.
<b>Picnic Areas</b> Excellent	Single picnic tables throughout the park, mostly located in shaded areas.



# Park Inventory

## Nylander Park

12586 Acorn St.

Clearlake Oaks

1. Local

1 Acres



Nice shaded park with an open lawn, suitable for casual use and small community events. Picnic tables and benches are well-located under trees. Nice use of stone materials enriches the feel of the park. The park is adjacent to a County-owned storefront, which provides an exterior access restroom for the park. The playground is on the edge of the parcel and near the main road. Paved pathways connect use areas.



### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Consider any improvements in conjunction with the adjacent Clear Lake Oaks Plaza. Improve signage to restroom. Consider widening the meandering path to allow for passage of strollers, or for people walking together. Additional planting could buffer the playground from the street.



## Park Inventory

### Nylander Park

Feature	
<b>Benches</b>	Multiple benches along the pathways and at the street edge of the park. Some benches are shaded, those along the Acorn Street/Hwy. 20 edge are not.
<b>Gazebo</b> Good	Small gazebo located near Hwy. 20.
<b>Landscape Areas / Trees</b> Excellent	Well maintained and colorful planting enhances the shaded picnic area under the tree grove. Additional planting between playground and roadway would help to buffer the playground.
<b>Picnic Areas</b> Excellent	Multiple metal picnic tables with BBQ's, mostly in shaded areas. The tree grove provides a sense of privacy.
<b>Playground</b> Good	Playground for ages 2-5. Parent seating benches lack shade, but two nearby picnic tables are will be shaded when the trees grow. Playground location near the main road and adjacent building makes it feel cramped.
<b>Restroom</b> Good	Clean and well maintained in adjacent County-owned building. Access is not obvious.
<b>Walking Paths</b>	Stone paving on meandering path is attractive but the path is too narrow for two people to walk abreast or for a stroller to bypass another user. Meandering path needlessly swerves, but provides a mow band for the lawn.

# Park Inventory

## Pioneer Park



5250 Third St.

Kelseyville

1. Local

0.5 Acres

Very small green space, surrounded by diagonal parking. Listed park acreage includes the diagonal parking on both sides, the Kelseyville Justice Court building, a restroom, and a small historic structure. Restroom and parking are well-located to serve downtown Kelseyville. The shaded picnic tables provide a convenient lunch, gathering, or pausing spot for downtown businesses and the adjacent Kelseyville Senior Center.

### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Purpose of the park should be reconsidered. This pocket park could benefit from a small scale activating feature such as a chess/checker table or a small fitness feature. Only one picnic table is connected by paved pathway - consider providing additional access to the park for mobility impaired, particularly on the Senior Center side.



## Park Inventory

### Pioneer Park

Feature	
<b>Benches</b> Good	Four shaded benches at park perimeter.
<b>Parking</b> Good	Diagonal parking runs the length of the park on both sides. Provides parking for surrounding businesses and senior center.
<b>Picnic Areas</b> Good	Four well located picnic tables in shaded areas, with BBQs.
<b>Restrooms</b> Good	Convenient restroom, in good shape and well maintained.
<b>Structures</b> Good	Small shingled historic structure and Kelseyville Justice Court buildings are included in the park.

# Park Inventory

## Hammond Avenue Park

6935 Hammond Ave

Nice

2. Community Park

12.5 Acres



Expansive park with mature oaks and a well used dog park, and recently added (within the past 10 years) playground, softball field, restroom and path along the wetlands.

Additional planned features include a multi-sport court, an exercise circuit, a 2-5 play area, a native garden area and low water use groundcover, multi-use lawn areas, sheltered group picnic areas with BBQ's, a zipline play pocket, and additional parking. An undeveloped narrow lot at the lakefront across from the park could potentially be developed to offer paddle in access.



### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Continue with development of this park. There is the opportunity to expand on the wetlands trail to provide more looped walking paths, including measured distance loops within the park. Preserve the mature oaks. Expand the interpretive signage along paths to feature information on the oaks and other native species, and the local ecosystems.



# Park Inventory

## Hammond Avenue Park

Feature	
<b>Dog Park</b> Good	Fenced off-leash dog area with some benches and agility equipment. The dog park is planned to be shifted and developed as a small dog area.
<b>Exercise Circuit</b>	Planned - not yet installed
<b>Multi-use Turf</b>	Planned - not yet installed.
<b>Parking Areas</b> Fair	Current parking is a gravel lot adjacent to the softball field, restroom and playground. This area is planned to be paved, and additional gravel parking is planned.
<b>Playground</b> Good	Play structure for ages 5-12, and swings. Benches for parent seating. One mature oak provides some shade. Addition of a 2-5 play area is planned.
<b>Restrooms</b> Excellent	New restroom with multiple stalls.
<b>Softball Field</b> Excellent	Fenced softball field with 290 foot foul line, backstop, skinned infield, warning track, players benches and metal bleachers.
<b>Wetlands Nature Path</b> Excellent	Wide gravel pathway along the edge of the wetlands, with benches and interpretive signage.



# Park Inventory

## Kelseyville Community Park

5270 State St.

Kelseyville

2. Community Park

3 Acres



Park is on a quiet street and has a stand of nice shade trees. The skate park is disconnected from the rest of the park, but accessible by a paved path that cuts diagonally across the park. The sports field is in name only, as it is cut by a concrete walkway and has an uneven surface. The parking area bifurcates the park and separates the basketball court from the rest of the park. Fitness circuit to be added in 2023.



### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Add walking paths, more trees, and more features for dogs and owners in the dog park. Rearrange the picnic tables located around the park, to make them less lonely and desolate. Renovate the restroom using stainless steel fixtures. Rethink the sports field to better position the picnic shelter. Enlarge the playground to break out of the small rectangle and create a play hub with better seating, more shade and potentially the inclusion of sand and water play or an interactive fountain. Provide shade in or around the skate park.



# Park Inventory

## Kelseyville Community Park

Feature	
<b>Dog Park</b> Fair	Large fenced dog area with one picnic table and a few shade trees. Includes agility areas.
<b>Landscape Areas / Trees</b> Good	Trees provide partial shade for the playground, parking lot, basketball court, dog park and skate park. They shade some picnic tables. They are lacking along the southern portion of the park.
<b>Multi-use/ Basketball Court</b> Good	Undersized basketball court is striped for half court play. Court is also striped for hopscotch and 4-square.
<b>Parking</b> Good	On-site parking for approximately 35 vehicles. Parking cuts off the portion of the park with a small lawn, basketball, and picnic tables from the rest of the park.
<b>Paths and Walkways</b> Fair	Paved concrete path from the parking lot/restroom makes it possible to skate or bike to the skatepark at the far end of the park. However, it cuts the sports field diagonally, making the field less usable.
<b>Picnic Areas</b> Good	Covered group picnic area has 5 tables and a large group BBQ. Individual picnic tables, most with BBQ's, are at the field perimeter, in the dog park and skate park, and near the basketball court. Several are shaded by trees.
<b>Playground</b> Good	Play structure for 5-12, and swings. Multiple benches for parent seating. Trees provide some shade.
<b>Restrooms</b> Poor	Building structure is in good shape, but significant damage to fixtures and fittings.
<b>Skate Park/BMX Course</b> Good	Large skate/BMX park with park with various features for a range of styles, skill levels and tricks.
<b>Sports Field</b> Fair	Field is sized for informal play or youth soccer. Concrete path connecting the restrooms to the skate park divides the field diagonally. Field is a bit uneven, in fair shape.

# Park Inventory

## Lakeside Park

1985 Park Dr.

Kelseyville

2. Community Park

50 Acres



This is the most heavily used County park. People call it "The County Park." There are a range of formal and informal use areas, from group picnic to passive nature areas, sports fields, and boat launches. Nice tree canopy, open lawn areas. See plans for improvements (to move dog park back from lake edge). The park has been used as a base camp for first responders during wildfires.



### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

This site would benefit from an overall refresh. Consider a large destination playground with nature themes and interpretation. Move the dog park inland to allow for a waterfront picnic area with wonderful views. Add pedestrian paths throughout the site to improve access to the various use areas and viewpoints. Upgrade all restroom fixtures to stainless steel. Continue to ensure that the park can function as a base for first responders during fire events by maintaining accessible open areas for response vehicles, tents and associated equipment.



# Park Inventory

## Lakeside Park

Feature	
<b>Benches</b> Excellent	Benches throughout the park provide seating, at wetland/nature areas, playgrounds, activity areas, and overlooking the water.
<b>Boat Launches</b> Good	Two launches accommodating motorized and non-motorized watercraft. The boat launch docks are in excellent shape, but low water can make them mostly unusable. The smaller launch area has a narrow channel and more limitations with water conditions.
<b>Corn Hole</b> Good	Multiple concrete corn hole sets are located near the large picnic area.
<b>Dog Park</b> Fair	Dog park with some agility equipment is located on a small peninsula near the water.
<b>Horseshoe Pits</b> Good	Horseshoe courts are located near the large picnic area, with benches.
<b>Large Boat Trailer Parking</b> Good	Parking for 36 vehicles with boat trailers.
<b>Multi-use Turf</b> Fair/Good	Several large lawn areas, large enough for pick-up soccer or other games. Lawn areas flood during winter, limiting use.
<b>Parking Areas</b> Good	There is a flexible (unstriped) parking area at the group picnic area near the ballfields, and approximately 35 striped parking spaces near the boat ramps and swimming beach area. Overflow parking is accommodated on heavy use days.
<b>Paths and Walkways</b> Fair	Most of the pedestrian circulation is on park roads shared by vehicles, or across lawn areas. Access to some use areas can be challenging to people with strollers, or mobility impaired visitors.
<b>Picnic Areas</b> Excellent	Well located picnic areas: one group area near the softball fields, three group areas are near the 5-12 playground, and swimming beach. Throughout the park, picnic tables on concrete pads, mostly shaded by trees, have BBQ's and trash receptacles. Group sites have recycling receptacles as well.
<b>Playgrounds</b> Good	One playground for ages 5-12 is near the beach and picnic areas, and another for ages 2-5 is near picnic areas and corn hole. Both have low, non-gated fencing, and parent seating.
<b>Restrooms</b> Fair	Clean, showing wear. One near the boat ramp has stainless steel fixtures. The larger one near the large picnic area and softball fields has older, somewhat damaged fixtures. Port-a-potties are provided at softball fields during high use periods.
<b>Softball Fields</b> Good	Softball fields with metal backstops, skinned infields, warning tracks, outfield fencing, and metal bleachers.
<b>Swimming Beach</b> Fair	The swimming beach is popular when conditions are favorable, but low water and algae can make it unappealing, and high water with reed debris can also limit use.
<b>Wetlands Nature Area</b> Excellent	Seasonal wetland with benches overlooking the area.

# Park Inventory

## Upper Lake Park

615 E. Hwy 20

Upper Lake

2. Community Park

8.5 Acres



Adjacent to Running Creek Casino. Large parking lot for the facilities in the park. Large playground, nice medium sized picnic area with shade structure, softball field in good condition. Large grass field could be appropriate for pickup soccer. Improvements planned for 2023 include an off-leash dog park, basketball court, and parking lot lighting.



### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Construct the planned improvements including dog park, basketball court, and parking lot lighting. Lighting the ballfield would increase usable hours. Improve pedestrian access to picnic area and playground. Preserve and improve area in the large lawn to accommodate soccer.



# Park Inventory

## Upper Lake Park

Feature	
<b>Maintenance Building</b> Good	Conveniently located near use areas.
<b>Paths and Walkways</b> Fair	Paved concrete walkway from the parking area to the tennis court, restroom, and maintenance building does not quite connect to picnic area, playground, or ballfield.
<b>Picnic Areas</b> Excellent	Group picnic area with 5 tables and a large group BBQ. Additional single tables with small BBQ's are located at the edge of the large open field, and near the playground. Corn hole pitches have been added.
<b>Playground</b> Good	Play structure for ages 5-12 and swings. Picnic tables for parent seating. Mature trees provide some shade. Playground is located adjacent to the group picnic area, ballfield and restrooms.
<b>Restrooms</b> Fair	This restroom is a standard design for the County. The exterior is attractive, but as with the others of this design, the interior is somewhat abused.
<b>Softball Field</b> Good	Softball field with backstop, player benches, skinned infield, outfield fence, and metal bleachers.
<b>Tennis Court</b> Fair	The tennis court is one of the few in the County inventory, and it is a single court, not a pair. It is not marked for pickleball, nor does it have markings or equipment (such as a basketball standard) for other uses. Appears lightly used.



# Park Inventory

## Highland Springs Park

3600 Highland Springs Rd

Lakeport

3. Regional Park

2,500 Acres



This is a very popular park with a lake and extensive trail network. It has excellent character, and its water quality is more consistent than at Clear Lake. The lake is popular for stand up paddling, and the disc golf course is heavily used. A police shooting range is located here. There is a caretaker residence. The park is currently managed by Water Resources Department.



### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Alcohol is allowed here, which leads to rowdy behavior according to multiple folks in stakeholder interviews and on the Steering Committee. Consider ranger presence during heavy use periods. Improve restroom access, including providing an ADA accessible restroom at the flat area near the lake. Continue to encourage organized volunteer efforts for trail maintenance.



# Park Inventory

## Highland Springs Park

Feature	
<b>Basketball Court</b> Fair	Half court basketball has cracked surfacing.
<b>Beach</b> Good	Beach with easy entry for swimming, paddle boarding or kayaking. Lake frontage is good for fishing.
<b>Boat Ramp</b> Fair	Boat launch ramp near reservoir dam, for non-motorized watercraft only.
<b>Disc Golf</b> Good	Popular 18 hole course. Built in 1980, it was one of the first courses designed by "Steady Ed" Headrick, the inventor of the Frisbee and "Father of Disc Golf."
<b>Horseshoes</b> Fair	Multiple horseshoe pitches suitable for competition, if maintained.
<b>Multi-use Turf</b> Good	Large attractive lawn, flat at the bottom, but mostly gently sloped.
<b>Picnic Areas</b> Good	There is a large group area with a large group BBQ, as well as single tables and smaller group areas with BBQ's along the lawn and the lakefront and throughout the area.
<b>Restrooms</b> Fair	Restroom building is not ADA accessible. ADA port-a-potty is provided at group picnic area.
<b>Trails</b> Excellent	Multi-use trail system accommodates equestrians as well as hikers and mountain bikers. Volunteer efforts contribute to the maintenance of the trails.

# Park Inventory

## Middletown Trailside Park

21435 Dry Creek Cutoff

Middletown

3. Regional Park

107 Acres



This triangular parcel, located between 2 roads (one of which is the heavily traveled Hwy. 175), was a wooded area that was burned over by a major wildfire. Although very impacted by fire and tree loss, it is beginning to recover. Major replanting of trees and shrubs was undertaken by the County, partners, community and many volunteers. The trail system remains and some amenities have been rebuilt.



### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Continue revegetation efforts. Additional recreation or educational uses could be incorporated on the site. This site could become an equestrian-focused park with an arena. It could become an environmental education focused park highlighting natural succession, firesafe landscaping, and other aspects of local and fire ecology.





## Park Inventory

### Middletown Trailside Park

Feature	
<b>Parking Areas</b> Good	Gravel parking area can accommodate horse trailers as well as cars.
<b>Paths and Walkways</b> Good	A well maintained nature preserve trail loops through the park's southern half, through the park's various ecosystems and drainages, as well as to the sculpture garden. Trails suitable for walking, jogging or horseback riding remain throughout the park.
<b>Picnic Areas</b> Good	Periodic picnic tables on concrete pads are scattered along the Nature Preserve Trail in the southern third of the park.
<b>Restroom</b> Good	Vault restroom located at parking area.
<b>Seasonal Outdoor Sculpture</b> Fair	Some sculptures remain from the temporary program. There is little or no wayfinding signage to the sculpture area.

# Park Inventory

## Mt. Konocti Park

Konocti Road

Kelseyville

3. Regional Park

1,152 Acres



Hiking access is only from the parking area, due to private inholding. There are outstanding views, a historic settler cabin, and interpretive signs about importance to indigenous people, historic events, and the area's geology. Trails cross some private and BLM lands. Telecommunications towers provide a revenue source. The fire observation tower is no longer used, as it is no longer needed by CalFire.



### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Continue to coordinate with local tribes and community to develop a master plan for Mt. Konocti that optimizes recreational potential while respecting indigenous cultural interests. Add land acknowledgment signage recognizing indigenous peoples' stewardship of the land, and providing information about their history.



## Park Inventory

### Mt. Konocti Park

Feature	
<b>Interpretative and Good</b>	Interpretive signage along the trails, regarding history and geology.
<b>Parking Good</b>	Two dirt parking areas at the base of the trail.
<b>Picnic Areas Good</b>	Picnic areas at Wright Peak and near the Downen Cabin.
<b>Restrooms</b>	Two vault toilets midway along the trails and one restroom at the parking area.
<b>Trails Good</b>	Well signed trail system to several peaks, including Wright, Howard, and Buckingham Peaks. Trails are restricted to hiking only, except by permit from the County. Majority of trails are dirt fire/access roads, some segments are on private or BLM property.
<b>Vista Areas Good</b>	Multiple vista points along the trails, many with benches.



# Park Inventory

## Clearlake Oaks Beach

12684 & 12689 Island Dr.

Clearlake Oaks

4. Special Use

1.1 Acres



### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Monitor the wooden pier, which will need replacement.

## Park Inventory

### Clearlake Oaks Beach

Feature	
<b>Beach</b> Fair	Shore frontage to the east of the boat launch, with two benches and a picnic table, and trees providing intermittent shade.
<b>Boat Launch</b> Good	Boat launch for motorized and non-motorized watercraft, in good shape. Use is limited when water levels are low.
<b>Breakwater, Fishing Pier</b> Good	Breakwater has four picnic tables and lighting, and a concrete ramp for accessibility. Wooden fishing pier is showing wear, and lacks any seating.
<b>Parking</b> Good	On-site parking for vehicles and boat trailers, additional street parking.
<b>Picnic Areas</b> Good	Picnic tables overlook the lake. Four tables are on the breakwater pier, and several more are along the shore, shaded by trees. A couple of benches overlook the water.
<b>Restrooms</b> Fair	Building structure in good shape, fixtures damaged.

# Park Inventory

## Davis Beach

6881 E. Hwy 20

Lucerne

4. Special Use

0.5 Acres



Linear beach access with informal gravel parking on the shoulder of Hwy. 20. There are expansive views across the lake, and this is the longest beach in the system. Abundant wildflowers bloom in the spring.

### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Consider improving the restroom - if a permanent structure is not feasible, consider an ADA accessible portable restroom. Consider a fence or other visual delineation between beach and road. Add bicycle parking. If additional beach parking is desired, consider adding a crosswalk with a pedestrian flasher for safe access across Hwy. 20. Update the sign, which currently says "Davis Rest Area."



## Park Inventory

### Davis Beach

Feature	
<b>Beach Area</b> Good	Long linear beach with good water access for swimming, non-motorized watercraft put-in, and fishing.
<b>Picnic Area</b> Good	Single picnic table shaded by tree canopy. Single bench for enjoying lake views.
<b>Portable Restrooms</b> Fair	Seasonal port-a-potty.

# Park Inventory

## Museum Square

255 North Main Street

Lakeport

4. Special Use

1.0 Acres



This formal town green contains the County's Historic Courthouse Museum, a Public Safety Memorial, paved walkways and a small plaza. It has an excellent canopy of mature trees. There are several benches, but the park is currently designed for walking through, not for lingering.



### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Incorporate more casual seating areas. Movable seating in the central plaza at the entry to the Museum could be explored, if the Museum could help manage that.

## Park Inventory

### Museum Square

Feature	
<b>Benches</b> Good	Several benches in the park area are shaded, and those at the Courthouse Museum entry are in the sun.
<b>Landscape Areas / Trees</b> Excellent	Large mature trees shade most of the park. Formal lawns and hedges are appropriate to the setting.
<b>Paths and Walkways</b> Excellent	Concrete paved walkways lead from the sidewalks to the central plaza and formal entry to the Historic Courthouse Museum.
<b>Public Safety Memorial</b>	The memorial to the county's law officers and firefighters is a major feature of the park. There are also historic military pieces and a large town clock.



# Park Inventory

## Nice Community Beach

Lakeshore Blvd. at Sayre Ave.

Nice

4. Special Use

.2 Acres

This small beach spot has a single concrete bench. It is undeveloped and has no other amenities. Located near Holiday Harbor.



### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Consider a kayak launch, additional seating, and a small shaded seating area.

# Park Inventory

## Vista Point

875 Lakeport Blvd.

Lakeport

4. Special Use

3.0 Acres



There are panoramic views of the lake as well as the surrounding mountains and hills in all directions. Many people use the space to eat lunch and enjoy the views. The Visitors Information Center building includes restrooms. There is not much opportunity for additional recreation features.

### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Continue to maintain. Plant trees and/or add more structures for additional shade.

## Park Inventory

### Vista Point

Feature	
<b>Parking</b> Excellent	Parking lot for 30+ cars and 3 trailers.
<b>Picnic Areas</b> Fair	Seven shaded picnic tables with BBQs adjacent to the Visitors Information Center. Additional benches provide expansive lake views.
<b>Restroom</b> Excellent	Restrooms at Visitors Information Center building are clean and well maintained.



# Park Inventory

## Helen Mitcham Park

2950 Wolf Creek Rd

Spring Valley

5. Natural Area

117 Acres



This park is accessed from within an HOA Community, and located along a creek behind the homes. Very pleasant creek corridor, that still had running water in the dry season. Access is limited (gated but not locked) and use is very light. Primitive camp sites were developed here, and there are other aging facilities. It appears that the residents or HOA perform DIY maintenance.



### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

This site seems best suited to be a natural area. Due to its location within the neighborhood and its linear nature, the site would not be conducive to the level of activity at a typical County Park.



## Park Inventory

### Helen Mitcham Park

Feature	
<b>Disc Golf Course</b> Fair	Appears to be a nine hole course, without markers or pads for initial throws.
<b>Old Camping Areas</b> Very Poor	Some fire rings and picnic tables remain. Sites appear unused.
<b>Paths and Walkways</b> Fair	Dirt roads and pathways provide access to the creek, use areas, and open meadow and oak woodland terrain.
<b>Picnic Areas</b> Fair	Rustic picnic areas of varying condition, including one group area and several single tables. Wind and shade protections appear to have been made by residents or HOA. There are several tables and benches along the creek.
<b>Playground</b> Poor	Simple 5-12 play structure and multiple swings. Lacks adequate safety surfacing. Mature trees provide shade.
<b>Restrooms</b> Poor	Not accessible when visited.
<b>Softball Field</b> Poor	In disrepair and disuse. Has backstop and benches, but only bare dirt where the field should be.

# Park Inventory

## Rodman Slough Park

1005 Nice-Lucerne Cutoff

Lakeport

5. Natural Area

38 Acres



This birdwatching destination has a beautiful oak canopy, and access to the lake. A trail loop to at the low ridge has broad lake views. The lakeside path is somewhat overgrown, obscuring lake views. Fenced area by the parking lot was intended as a dog park, but has not been used as such due to environmental concerns. Access to boat area is dangerous and requires walking over a busy, high speed road without markings or a crosswalk.



### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

The park would benefit from picnic improvements and creating looped walking paths. Non-motorized launch improvements and development of non-invasive viewing decks could enhance the kayaking and birdwatching experiences. Road crossing and safety improvements are needed.





# Park Inventory

## Rodman Slough Park

Feature	
<b>Kayak/Boat Launch</b> Fair	Boat launch is unimproved. it is suitable for small boats and kayaks. Access from the parking lot is across the busy Nice-Lucerne Cutoff road.
<b>Natural Setting</b> Good	This area has abundant bird life and is a destination for bird watching.
<b>Parking Area</b> Fair	Compressed gravel, short walk from water's edge.
<b>Paths and Walkways</b> Fair	A half mile hiking loop follows a dirt trail along the ridge from the parking lot, to a lower trail near the waterfront. The upper trail has views over the lake. Overgrowth obscures much of the lower trail's lake views, which are more open near the parking lot.
<b>Picnic Tables</b> Fair	Most picnic tables are near the parking area and road, with a couple of picnic tables nearer the water.
<b>Restroom</b> Fair	Pit toilet, well maintained.
<b>Signage</b> Good	Interpretive signage regarding birds and tribal cultural practices.
<b>View Areas</b> Good	There are views across the lake from the ridge trail, and from points along the waterfront, where near views of waterfowl are possible.

# Park Inventory

## John T. Klaus Park

15300 E. Hwy 20

Clearlake Oaks

6. Potential Site/Undeveloped

584 Acres



Beautiful property with walnut groves near the road and rolling hills with oaks. Numerous old buildings and trash will need to be removed to make the site useable. Access to the park is also a concern and needs to be designed. Great potential for trails, events, and other outdoor activities.



### Initial Recommendations and Assessment

With community input, develop a Master Plan for this undeveloped site.





## **Appendix C**

# **Lake County Parks, Recreation, and Trails Needs Assessment**

**Report Date: September 2023**





# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

## Introduction

The County of Lake is in the process of developing its first-ever countywide Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan. When complete, this Plan will provide a roadmap for park, recreation, and trail improvements, address maintenance and operations of the system, and guide ongoing improvements and decisions. The County hired BluePoint Planning, a firm with expertise in park system planning, to assist in development of the master plan.

The Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan process kicked off in Fall 2022 and is expected to be a year-long planning process with a variety of opportunities for community engagement, as depicted in the process diagram below.

*Figure 1. Parks, Recreation and Trails Plan Process*



The Needs Assessment is the culmination of the Needs, Opportunities, & Strategies Phase. It builds upon the Existing Conditions Summary document, incorporates all the findings of work to date, and analyzes the gaps and needs for the County's parks, recreation and trails system. This document will be integrated into the final Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan.

The findings in the needs assessment are based on a mix of inputs including existing conditions, demographics, comparisons to similar communities, GIS analysis, community input, trends analysis, assessment of local communities and their access to parks and trails, understanding of the quality of parks and ability to serve needs, and particular characteristics which may influence provision of parks (i.e. topography, demographics, land use density and uses, etc.).



# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

## Community Engagement Themes

Community participation is foundational to the Parks, Recreation, and Trails (PRT) Master Plan. The County convened a Steering Committee to provide guidance throughout the planning process. In addition, the project includes a comprehensive community engagement program, with three phases or rounds of outreach. The first two rounds of outreach led up to the Needs Assessment, and included the following activities:

- PRT Steering Committee Meetings 1 and 2, in October 2022 and April 2023;
- Meetings in October 2022 with various stakeholders, organized around the topics of Arts, Culture, and Community; Youth, Sports, and Outdoors; Business, Tourism, and Economic Development; and Land Management and Trails;
- An online survey conducted from January to March 2023;
- A Community Visioning Workshop held in April 2023;
- Community Visioning Pop-Ups, which took the visioning exercise out to the Redbud Library and the County Courthouse in April 2023 to get feedback from people visiting those County facilities;
- The Community Visioning Padlet, an online version of the visioning exercise available from late April through early June 2023;
- Meetings with tribal representatives in April and May 2023; and
- A work session with trails advocates in April 2023.

In addition, Public Services updated the Board of Supervisors in February 2023 and attended a meeting of the Lake County Recreation Agency (LCRA) in May 2023.

## Key Findings

The following key themes emerged from the community engagement process to date.

- Natural Beauty
  - People appreciate that Lake County has a great deal of natural beauty to offer and feel that the parks, trails, and open spaces should highlight this unique characteristic and provide opportunities to interact with nature.
  - Simple additions, such as viewing areas and places to sit within parks, natural areas, and around the lake would be well-used according to participants.



# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

- Connections and Accessibility
  - Respondents indicated there is a lack of safe connection to and between parks, such as bike paths, sidewalks, or pedestrian paths.
  - Participants reported a need for increased accessibility for people with disabilities.
- Park and Facility Improvements
  - People would like parks in their own community. Currently, there are communities in the county with no parks nearby.
  - Participants are interested in seeing more amenities in parks and greater variety.
  - There is interest in specialized facilities from user groups, such as mountain bike trails, OHV trails or areas, disc golf courses, etc.
  - There is significant interest in swimming areas or a swimming pool.
  - Regional parks attract visitors from around the county, including Highland Springs.
- Water Access
  - There is interest in increased water access for viewing and being near water, for swimming and wading and for paddle craft access.
  - People are concerned about seasonal low water levels in Clear Lake and would like ways to access the lake year-round.
- Sense of Safety
  - Many residents don't feel safe visiting their local parks, especially after dark.
  - People expressed concerns about abandoned vehicles, homeless encampments, antisocial behavior and vandalism.
- Recreation Programming
  - Participants are interested in recreation programming. Programming would increase the use of the parks and provide a service to the community.
  - Learn-to-swim programs are a high priority, due to the amount of water nearby and water safety concerns.
  - Participants are interested in the social aspects of parks, which can be used for formal recreation programming as well as for self-directed activities.
  - Participants are also interested in recreation as a driver for tourism and economic activity from visitors.
- Awareness
  - While the County does have many parks and trails, many people do not know what is available.
  - Participants report that many County amenities are promoted via word of mouth, which may make it harder for visitors to use the park and trail system.





# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

## Park and Facility Needs

Lake County's park inventory is summarized in the sidebar to the right, organized by park classification. A companion Existing Conditions report defines the classification system, documents, and maps the existing park inventory, provides information about the planning context, and discusses trends.

Building on that report, the consultant team, along with staff, toured, photographed, and analyzed each park and its major amenities. Each major amenity, including the trails, was geolocated with a mobile GIS survey tool, added to a database and then mapped and assessed for function and general condition. The information was compiled into a database and is presented in full in the appendix as the Park Inventory and Condition Assessment. This appendix document identifies needs and potential improvements at each site.

### Systemwide Needs

This section discusses systemwide needs based on the analysis conducted to date.

### Implementing a System-Wide Approach

The County's park system is made of five park classifications, each serving a different function. Generally, the parks tend to be developed with similar amenities regardless of classification.

Each classification fulfills a purpose and has its own service area. Instead of having each park, or each park of the same classification, offer the exact same elements, the County should ensure each park meets the guidelines of its classification in terms of amenities and features, but also ensure that each park has amenities scaled to its classification and context. For example:

<b>Local Parks</b>
Alpine Park Clark's Island Hinman Park Keeling Park Kelseyville Community Park Lower Lake Park Lucerne Creek Park Lucerne Harbor Park & Artist Village Middletown Square Park Nylander Park Pioneer Park
<b>Community Parks</b>
Hammond Avenue Park Lakeside Park Middletown Trailside Park Upper Lake Park
<b>Regional Parks</b>
Highland Springs Park John T. Klaus Park (undeveloped) Mt. Konocti Park
<b>Special Use Parks</b>
Clearlake Oaks Beach Davis Beach Holiday Harbor Beach Middletown Park & Pool Courthouse Museum Square Nice Community Beach Vista Point Hamilton Boat Launch
<b>Natural Areas</b>
Black Oaks Park (undeveloped) Helen Mitcham Park Rodman Slough Park



# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

- Playgrounds in community and regional parks should be larger and customized to the site than playgrounds in local parks.
- Local parks should offer a set of standard amenities, but each park should have its own character and offer something unique from other local parks.

## Increasing the Sense of Safety

As noted throughout the public engagement activities, many residents don't feel safe visiting their local parks, especially after dark. Some parks are rarely used in the evening, which further discourages people from visiting. Some parks have insufficient lighting that makes people feel unsafe being there around dusk or after dark.

Many public comments mentioned observing antisocial activities such as drinking and drug use in the parks. This not only makes parkgoers feel unsafe and less likely to visit, but it also makes park maintenance more difficult. Park staff spend a considerable amount of time dealing with this issue, which interferes with other work that needs to be done within the parks.

Increasing the sense of safety can be accomplished by design interventions, recreation programming and activation, or operational approaches such as park ambassadors/hosts.

## Creating a Sense of Place

Lake County's parks provide opportunities to respond to and interpret the local landscape, people, and history (natural, cultural, indigenous). Like the Lake County Tourism Improvement District's promotional tagline "Clearly Different", each site has unique qualities. The parks and trails should show the unique characteristics of the county, incorporating local culture, history, and art. Highlighting the connections to the local tribes is one way to show respect to the indigenous people in the area, while also educating residents and tourists.

As parks are renovated, each project should consider the unique stories, environmental characteristics, and qualities of the site. Materials, site furnishings and amenities, and art can then be selected to tell the story of each place. In addition, naming policies for parks and features in parks should take sense of place into consideration.

## Preserving Resources Through Regional Parks

Regional parks are large parks that preserve natural or cultural resources, drawing people from across the county and potentially attracting visitors. With Mt. Konocti, the newly acquired John T. Klaus Park and Highland Springs, Lake County has three geographically distributed regional parks that provide distinct settings.



# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

- There is a need for suitable facilities development at Mt. Konocti and John T. Klaus Park, and for reinvestment at Highland Springs.
- In addition, the County should explore opportunities to expand these parks, especially Mt. Konocti, if adjacent properties come up for sale.
- Lake County contains unique landscapes and culturally important places. If opportunities arise to acquire additional regional parks in the future, the County should prioritize sites that are geographically dispersed from the existing regional parks, ensuring that any new regional parks are consistent with regional park guidelines and that there is a plan and/or funding for maintenance.

## Managing Natural Areas

Lake County's park system is rich with natural areas, in stand-alone natural area parks as well as in parks of other types. Throughout the public engagement process, people emphasized that a primary reason for visiting parks was to experience nature.

- There is a need for increased management and stewardship of natural resources in existing parks of all classifications.
- There is a need for increased access to nature, with appropriated sited low impact features such as hiking trails, small picnic areas and tables, and benches and seating located for nature-viewing.
- If opportunities arise to acquire more natural area parks or expand existing sites, Lake County should prioritize sites that help expand the trail network, preserve rare or endangered species, or protect culturally significant landscapes.

## Prioritizing Water Access

Clear Lake is one of the County's most precious resources and it should be accessible to all. There are other creeks and waterbodies in Lake County which are also highly valued by the public as a respite during hot weather and for wildlife and bird viewing.

In addition to the qualitative feedback received through the PRT Master Plan public engagement process, the County has information on boaters collected through the Invasive Species Prevention Program, which requires residents and visitors with motorized and hand-launched watercraft to purchase annual (for residents) and monthly (for visitors) Quagga mussel stickers. This data is worthwhile to explore because it provides quantitative information that can be compared with engagement results.





# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

**Table 1: Boat Ramp Data**

	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number of Boats Screened	15,156	13,681	12,191	17,499
Resident Boats	6,284	5,398	4,150	7,727
Visitor Boats	8,872	8,283	8,041	9,772

Data Source: Department of Water Resources

Four years of data are shown in Table 1, starting in 2019 during which typical patterns occurred. In 2020, Clear Lake's boat ramps were closed from March through May due to COVID. In 2021, 9 of 11 public launch facilities were closed due to extremely low lake levels. In 2022, some ramps were closed for part or all of the year due low lake levels. As Table 1 shows, not only is Clear Lake attracting visitors, there is also a significant number of residents with boats. It should also be noted that a number of residences on the lake have moorage, meaning that a boat may be launched and then remain on the lake for the season.

The boater data also provides a snapshot of use at the public ramps that are within the monitoring program. Table 2 provides counts by location for County parks and two other public launches.

**Table 2: 2022 Boater Data By Location**

	Resident	Visitor	Hand-launched
Clearlake Oaks Park	1,224	2,594	497
Lakeside Park (aka County Park)	839	481	279
Lakeport 3 <sup>rd</sup> /5 <sup>th</sup> public boat ramp	4,328	4,551	156
Redbud (City of Clearlake)	1,269	1,729	11

Data Source: Department of Water Resources

As Table 2 shows, the 3<sup>rd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> ramp in Lakeport is the most heavily used but is less used for hand-launched craft. Visitor boats outnumber residents at Clearlake Oaks and Redbud, but at Lakeside Park, resident boats represent 60% of the launches. Clearlake Oaks Park attracted the most hand-launched watercraft, followed by Lakeside Park.

- The County should explore feasibility of enhancing one or more boat ramps to allow use during low water levels.



# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

- The County should explore whether to charge fees, particularly for out-of-County users. For example, the County could charge boat ramp fees for non-residents, but keep the ramps free for residents. Other potential options would be to offer an annual pass for residents (as the Quagga permits are structured) and a daily fee for non-residents, or to offer a daily fee that is the same rate for all users with an option for an annual pass for residents.
- There is a need for more non-motorized boating access points and docks, including access points that are functional regardless of water level, ADA-compliant launches, and more of the access points recommended in the Konocti Regional Trails Plan's water trails element.
- There is also a need for water safety education and interventions (such as life rings or life jacket loaner stations), as well as designated safe swimming areas. Not only did residents indicate a high need for swimming opportunities and lessons, there is a documented need for drowning prevention nationwide. Unintentional drowning is the top cause of unintentional injury and death for children aged one to four in the U.S., and the number two cause for children aged five to nine.
- While boating is popular, not everyone in the county has access to a boat or interest in boating. However, public engagement results indicated that there is a high level of interest in bird and wildlife watching and interest in being near water. There is a need for additional bird and wildlife viewing points near water – benches, viewing blinds, etc. This may mean some areas of developed parks (outside of boat ramps) should be restored or incorporate more native plants to create quieter areas near the water.

## Activating Parks

In addition to recreation programming, parks can support community gathering and connection, if they are designed using placemaking principles that foster socialization and activation. Examples of activation through design include:

- Create gateways and defined entries.
- Maximize pedestrian and bicyclist pathways into parks and circulation within parks.
- Create “hangout spaces” and activity hubs with seating, outdoor games, or other amenities.
- Establish park “rooms” or smaller spaces that invite conversation and connection within a larger park area.



# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

- Add seating in different configurations and settings, including options such as seat walls and boulders. Where a plaza is connected to a staffed community building, consider movable seating.
- Provide shade.
- Provide flexible areas that can accommodate a variety of activities such as food trucks, markets, and community events.
- Add interactive fountains or splash pads.

## Serving Close-to-Home Recreation Needs

With a population of 68,163 and 352 acres of local, community, special use, and natural area parks, Lake County provides 5.16 acres of parks per 1,000 people across the County. While this amount of land may appear adequate based on a per capita basis, Lake County is large in land area with a dispersed population. County parks are not necessarily located near residential areas, and residential areas are sprinkled around the County. Since the County is the only provider of local-serving parks and recreation facilities outside of the incorporated cities, the County should focus on serving close-to-home recreational needs.

Lake County is organized into eight planning areas for planning purposes. Following the County's General Plan, these planning areas are used in the Parks, Recreation and Trails Plan to evaluate geographic distribution of parks and facilities to meet local recreation needs. Figure 2 depicts the planning areas.

To serve close-to-home recreation needs, each planning area should have:

- **At least one County park**, regardless of the planning area's population size. Additional parks or more acreage should be provided in planning areas with larger populations. In two of the planning areas, the parks and recreation facilities provided by the Cities of Clearlake and Lakeport should be considered, to avoid duplicating services.
- **At least one playground or play environment.** Community parks should have larger, more immersive play environments than local parks.
- Facilities to support social and community gatherings.
  - At least one **medium-capacity (approximately 25 people/ 2+ tables) picnic area** with a shade structure or shaded by tree canopy.





# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

- One **large-capacity picnic area or pavilion** (capacity for a minimum of 75-100 people).
- **One event area**, suitable for community and family events (movie night, arts festival, concert, starting point for races/walks). This can be an open lawn area with nearby restroom, water, and power service suitable for events or a paved plaza area. The event area does not need to include a shelter structure or stage.
- At least one **ADA-compliant walking path**, at least ½ mile in distance. There are back country and longer distance hiking, biking, and equestrian trails in the County, but people are looking for safe walking/biking paths near home for exercise. Looped routes with distance markers are preferable, but out- and back-routes can suffice if they are safe and separated from busy roads.
- An **off-leash dog area**. While the County has prioritized providing fenced dog parks, an off-leash area could be a traditional fenced dog park or a designated off-leash area in a park. Areas that are used for parking for events can also be leveraged as a dog park if it can be fenced and is a natural surface.
- At least **one sports or exercise facility** (such as basketball court or ½ court, tennis or pickleball court, diamond or rectangular sports field, BMX track, exercise stations/outdoor gym, skatepark, climbing wall, pump track, swimming pool, disc golf course).

Table 3, which follows Figure 2, Planning Areas analyzes whether each planning area has the desired close-to-home facilities. This table lists the parks in each planning area, identifies other resources, and assesses available facilities. It should be noted that while close-home facilities are generally located in local and community parks, regional parks can serve close-to-home recreation needs of people living nearby if they have local recreation amenities. In Table 3, regional parks are shown in italics, since Lake County's three regional parks are expansive and generally not located near residential enclaves.



The map illustrates the Lake Tahoe region, divided into several distinct communities and surrounding areas. The regions are color-coded as follows:

- Upper Lake/Nice:** Tan region at the top.
- Shoreline Communities:** Light blue region in the center.
- Lakeport:** Orange region on the left.
- Kelseyville:** Yellow region below Lakeport.
- Cobb Mtn.:** Teal region below Kelseyville.
- Lower Lake:** Dark red region on the right.
- Middletown:** Light green region at the bottom.

Other labels on the map include Ukiah, Colusa, Cloverdale, and various smaller communities like Lakeport, Kelseyville, and Cobb Mtn. The map also shows major roads and geographical features like Lake Tahoe and surrounding mountains.



# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

**Table 3: Analysis by Planning Area**

Planning Area (Population)	County Parks <i>Regional Parks in Italics</i>	Other Providers	Facilities in County Parks						
			Picnic Area (medium)	Picnic Area (large)	Event Area	Parks w/ a Playground	Walking Path (min. ½ mi)	Off-leash area	Sports/Exercise Facilities
Shoreline Communities (24,953)	Alpine Park Clark’s Island Clearlake Oaks Beach Clearlake Oaks Plaza Davis Beach Helen Mitcham Park <i>John T. Klaus Park (undev)</i> Lucerne Creek Park Lucerne Harbor Park Nylander Park	City of Clearlake Parks	3		2	3			Fitness circuit Disc golf Additional facilities at City Redbud Park
Upper Lake/Nice (5,963)	Black Oaks Park ( <i>undev</i> ) Hammond Avenue Park Hinman Park Holiday Harbor Beach Keeling Park Rodman Slough Upper Lake Park		3	1	1	2	2	2	Softball fields Tennis court
Lakeport (10,205)	Museum Square Vista Point	City of Lakeport Parks			1				Additional facilities at City parks: Lakeside, Lakefront and Westside Parks
Kelseyville (6,519)	<i>Highland Springs</i> Kelseyville Community Park Lakeside Park Pioneer Park		2	2	2	2		2	Skate/BMX park Softball fields Basketball ½ court Disc golf
Rivieras (6,329)	<i>Mt. Konocti Park</i>	Clear Lake State Park							
Cobb Mountain (3,113)	--	Bogg Mtn Demonstratio n Forest							
Lower Lake (2,833)	Lower Lake Park	Anderson Marsh SHP		1		1			
Middletown (8,157)	Middletown Park and Pool Middletown Square Park Middletown Trailside Park				1	1	1		Swimming pool Tennis court





# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

- Based on the analysis shown in Table 3, Upper Lake/Nice is the only planning area in which Lake County parks provide the specified close-to-home recreation needs. When city facilities are taken into consideration, Shoreline Communities and Lakeport are also relatively well-served for close-to-home recreation.
- **Safe walking paths are lacking.** Many planning areas lack even one, and those planning areas that have one only have one option. There is a need for additional safe walking paths throughout the County park system.
- **Cobb Mountain** planning area does not have any County parks. Though there is Boggs Mountain State Demonstration Forest, this site doesn't provide locally focused recreation facilities. There is a need for a County park in Cobb Mountain, preferably a local or community park that can meet the community's close-to-home recreation needs. The County is currently pursuing acquisition of a park site in the Cobb area.
- **Rivieras** has Mt. Konocti Regional Park within its planning area. However, as a regional park, **Mt. Konocti does not have local-serving facilities.** In addition, access to it is limited and there is no pedestrian access from Rivieras. There is a need for a County park or for partnering with another entity to provide close-to-home recreation facilities for the Rivieras planning area. In addition, there is a need for better pedestrian/nonmotorized access from Rivieras to Mt. Konocti Regional Park, which would increase access and opportunities for walking (in a rugged, steep setting that is not accessible for many).
- There is a significant need to increase the **recreation amenities available in Lower Lake planning area.** Though the population is smaller than in some other planning areas, there are no other parks available besides the County's Lower Lake Park (aka Russell Rustici Park). This need could be met by renovating Lower Lake Park to incorporate the desired close-to-home amenities, or by acquiring additional park land that can serve the community.
- **Middletown** and **Kelseyville** planning areas each have several parks that provide some of the desired close-to-home amenities. However, there is **a need for additional amenities** at the parks in both of these planning areas.
- **Additional off-leash areas are needed.** These should be located in planning areas that don't have them available from Lake County or other providers.



# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

## Increasing the Variety and Flexibility of Recreation Facilities

Lake County offers a variety of recreation facilities within the parks, including several softball fields, a skate park, a disc golf course, a fitness circuit, motorized boating infrastructure, a few single tennis courts, a small swimming pool, and many cornhole and horseshoe courts (including multiples at some sites).

Nationally, walking/hiking, running and biking have the highest participation overall. This is consistent with the public engagement results in Lake County, which indicated high participation in these activities. Nationally, for sports requiring special facilities, the highest participation sports are basketball and tennis. Skateboarding has had steady growth, and both skateboarding and pickleball have experienced significant growth post-COVID. Regardless of its participation level or growth in popularity, any sports activity is only pursued by a portion of the population. For example, only about 9% of the US population plays basketball, the highest participation field or court sport.

Like the rest of the US, people in Lake County participate in a wide variety of recreation activities. However, because Lake County has a relatively small population, it is challenging for the park system to provide dedicated facilities for all potential recreation pursuits.

- **Lake County's playgrounds lack variety.** They tend to be manufactured post and platform structures and are very similar from park to park. The playgrounds in the park system should offer different types of play experiences, including options such as nature playgrounds, spraygrounds, and features such as net climbers, disc swings, and spinners in addition to traditional play structures. They should also be scaled based on the park classification, with community and regional park play areas larger and more expansive than those in local parks.
- Wherever possible, facilities in parks should be designed to **serve multiple functions**, to allow each facility to serve more people. For example, paved courts should be lined for tennis, pickleball, perhaps even badminton, and a basketball backstop should be included.
- **Larger footprint/higher cost facilities should be usable by as many recreation activities as possible.** Existing **sports fields** in poor condition should be renovated for use. In addition, any fields with maintained turf should be designed to be usable for multiple field sports, including both diamond and rectangular field sports. **Swimming pools** should accommodate multiple types of aquatic recreation from recreation to lessons to fitness, and preferably be usable year-round.



# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

- **Prioritize recreation facilities that can be integrated into the larger park landscape** such as disc golf courses and dedicated trails (mountain bikes, equestrian, etc.).
- Consider **smaller footprint facilities** such as outdoor gyms, fitness circuits and skateparks.

## Adding Destination Recreation Facilities

Destination recreation facilities attract people to spend several hours or an entire day and are typically designed to accommodate all skill levels from beginner to expert. Destination recreation facilities serve residents from throughout the County, and they can also be attractive to visitors. This type of facility is often designed to be used for competitions and events and may also be designed to generate revenue. For any destination recreation facility, a feasibility study should be conducted to ensure financial viability.

## Aquatic Center

The County, along with the cities of Clearlake and Lakeport, recently approved the creation of a new joint powers authority called the Lake County Recreation Agency (LCRA) that is exploring the feasibility of adding a new indoor aquatic center to serve the entire county. Based on PRT Master Plan feedback to date, there is considerable community interest in and a need for a year-round aquatic facility, and there is also a great need for learn-to-swim programs. Based on NRPA data, 25% of agencies nationwide have indoor aquatics facilities. For aquatics facilities, the biggest question regarding feasibility is the ongoing operating cost. This Needs Assessment acknowledges the need for aquatics facilities in the County and supports the County's collaboration with the cities of Lakeport and Clearlake on the development and operations of such a facility, as the most feasible way of meeting indoor aquatics needs.

## Community/Recreation Center

The Lake County Recreation Agency is also exploring the feasibility of a community/recreation center to the entire County. While Lake County's park system contains several small indoor spaces as well as libraries and three museums, there are no larger multi-purpose indoor recreation facilities that can support events and activities of different sizes and scales. As with aquatic centers, community/recreation centers generally require ongoing operational funding beyond what can be generated through fees. As with the Aquatic Center, this Needs Assessment acknowledges the need for a larger community/recreation center in Lake County and supports collaboration through LCRA.





# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

## Mountain Bike Facilities

Mountain bike facilities have been discussed in the County for many years, including in the Konocti Regional Trails Plan. Lake County is a center of mountain biking and mountain biking events. Boggs Mountain Demonstration Forest and Six Sigma Ranch and Winery in Lower Lake are two locations for mountain biking, but they are located at a distance from restaurants and other services. The County should consider developing a mountain bike area with a single-track trail system, or other amenities like bike skills parks, ensuring that there is something for riders of all levels. A destination mountain bike course or facility should be located in a regional or community park and is best done in partnership with a local organization that can help build, manage, and maintain the facility. Examples of this model are:

- [Swan Creek Park Mountain Bike Trail loop](#), Tacoma, Washington. Facility located in a regional park with a Douglas fir forest and salmon-bearing creek.
- [Valmont Bike Park](#), Valmont City Park, Boulder, Colorado. 42-acre bike park located within a larger city park that includes an asphalt pump track, a skate park, an off-leash dog area and a disc golf course.
- [Lebanon Hills West](#), Lebanon Hills Regional Park, Dakota County, Minnesota. 12 miles of single-track trails within a larger regional park. Suitable for all levels including experts.

## Event Center/Pavilion

Event centers/pavilions are facilities or areas that can accommodate large group gatherings, from weddings to family reunions to competitions. They are rental spaces and may be an enclosed building or simply be an outdoor area with upgraded utilities designed to hold tents and booths. Event center buildings are often connected to the outdoors with roll-up or sliding doors and exterior patio space. In some cases, they may be converted from other uses such as a barn or other agricultural building. For tournaments or races, temporary overnight camping is sometimes a desired feature.

As a destination facility, an event center should be located at a regional or community park or at a special use park, and access and parking (permanent or temporary) are siting considerations. The feasibility study for an event center should consider the types of events it will support. If weddings are a potential market for an event center, views and setting should be considered.



# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

## **Equestrian Facility**

Lake County has an active equestrian community. While there are equestrian trails at Hidden Springs Preserve and the Lake County Fairgrounds is used for the rodeo, there is no dedicated public equestrian facility or center in the County. Due to the number of equestrians in Lake County, there have been discussions amongst equestrian user groups and organizations about the development of an equestrian center as a destination facility. Sites outside the park system have been considered. An equestrian center or facility could also be considered for inclusion at a regional park or as a special use facility. A feasibility study should be conducted to determine the financial viability of an equestrian center.

## **Lakefront Nature Hub**

There is significant resident interest in experiencing nature and getting close to the water for nature-focused activities. This is also a key driver for tourism in Lake County. There are opportunities to knit together public and non-profit properties along Rodman Slough for habitat preservation and appropriate low impact and nature-based recreation.



# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

## Recreational Trail Needs

As discussed earlier in this document, trails and trail-related recreation are among the top priorities for Lake County residents, especially for experiencing nature. Table 4 identifies whether each planning area has three or more miles of nature trails. These trails complement the ADA-compliant loop trails discussed in Table 3. At least three miles is needed for immersion in nature, but longer distances are desirable.

**Table 4: Nature Trails by Planning Area**

Planning Area (Population)	County Parks <i>Regional Parks in Italics</i>	Other Providers	3+ mi of Nature Trails?
Shoreline Communities (24,953)	Alpine Park Clark's Island Clearlake Oaks Beach Clearlake Oaks Plaza Davis Beach Helen Mitcham Park <i>John T. Klaus Park (undev)</i> Lucerne Creek Park Lucerne Harbor Park Nylander Park	City of Clearlake Parks	No.  Helen Mitcham Park could provide an excellent nature trail. Access is currently limited to the site.  John T. Klaus Park offers extensive opportunities to develop a network of nature trails.
Upper Lake/Nice (5,963)	Black Oaks Park ( <i>undev</i> ) Hammond Avenue Park Hinman Park Holiday Harbor Beach Keeling Park Rodman Slough Upper Lake Park		Partially. Rodman Slough has a semi-developed natural trail surface trail that is approximately a mile. With minimal capital investment, the usability of this trail would be increased. There is an opportunity to add length by connecting across the slough to a new trail on the Old Nice Lucerne Cutoff route, which could be developed with a natural setting
Lakeport (10,205)	Museum Square Vista Point	City of Lakeport Parks	No.
Kelseyville (6,519)	<i>Highland Springs</i> Kelseyville Community Park Lakeside Park Pioneer Park		Yes. Highland Springs offers many miles of nature trails.
Rivieras (6,329)	<i>Mt. Konocti Park</i>	Clear Lake State Park	Yes. Mt. Konocti offers nature trails, although the primary route is a fire road.
Cobb Mountain (3,113)	--	Bogg Mtn Demonstratio n Forest	Partially. There are no Lake County parks in Cobb Mountain planning area, but Bogg Mountain Demonstration Forest has trails.
Lower Lake (2,833)	Lower Lake Park	Anderson Marsh SHP	Partially. Anderson Marsh SHP offers nature trails.
Middletown (8,157)	Middletown Park and Pool Middletown Square Park Middletown Trailside Park		Yes. Middletown Trailside Park has an extensive looping trail system. It was burned in the Valley Fire, but is being revegetated.





# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

Drawing from public engagement results on trail priorities, Lake County's existing park system, the planned KRT network and trends, the following are high priorities for the near term to improve recreational trail opportunities.

- Looped trails in parks (also discussed in Table 3), especially nature trails, such as:
  - Formalizing the trail in Rodman Slough Park
  - Creating a loop for the nature trail at Hammond Park
- Trails segments that increase access into existing parks, including trails into Mt. Konocti Regional Park from Rivas planning area.
- Trailhead facilities in parks that can serve as trailheads for the KRT network. This should include secure bike parking, restrooms, water, and trail information kiosks.
- Trail segments that connect to parks and are relatively easy to implement because they require negotiations with only one property owner, such as the Rodman Slough – Hammond Park connection via the abandoned portion of the Nice Lucerne Cutoff.
- Accessible trails, especially accessible nature trails and trails near the lake and more populated areas.
- While Lake County's recreational trails should generally be multi-purpose, there are a need for some dedicated trails, such as:
  - OHV trail or area, closer to town than the trail systems on national forest lands and located away from sensitive environmental areas. This type of trail or riding area should also be located to minimize noise and dust impacts.
  - Mountain bike course or trails, as discussed in the destination recreation facilities section.
  - Additional equestrian trails, in a location that can support equestrian events, which be an equestrian center (as discussed under Destination Facilities).
  - Hiking/running trails, in a location that can support running and walking events.
- There is a need for trail policies to address new technologies, especially regarding the use of e-bikes and scooters, which were not in common use when the KRT Plan was developed.



# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

## Recreation Programming Needs

Recreation programming can bolster the usage of the parks, community buildings, and trails, as well as improve safety by activating otherwise unused areas. By carefully developing and operating a diverse range of programs, the County can begin to address the needs of all residents and help the parks function better and be fully utilized. Well-designed programs can be a cost-effective way to serve the community, provide flexible and relevant activities with the potential to become self-sustaining and offer a welcoming user experience for residents who may not otherwise go to a park.

According to the 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review, 94% of park and recreation agencies nationwide provide recreation programming. Of those agencies providing programming, the most prevalent types include special events, social events, team sports and fitness and health programming, as shown in the graph below.

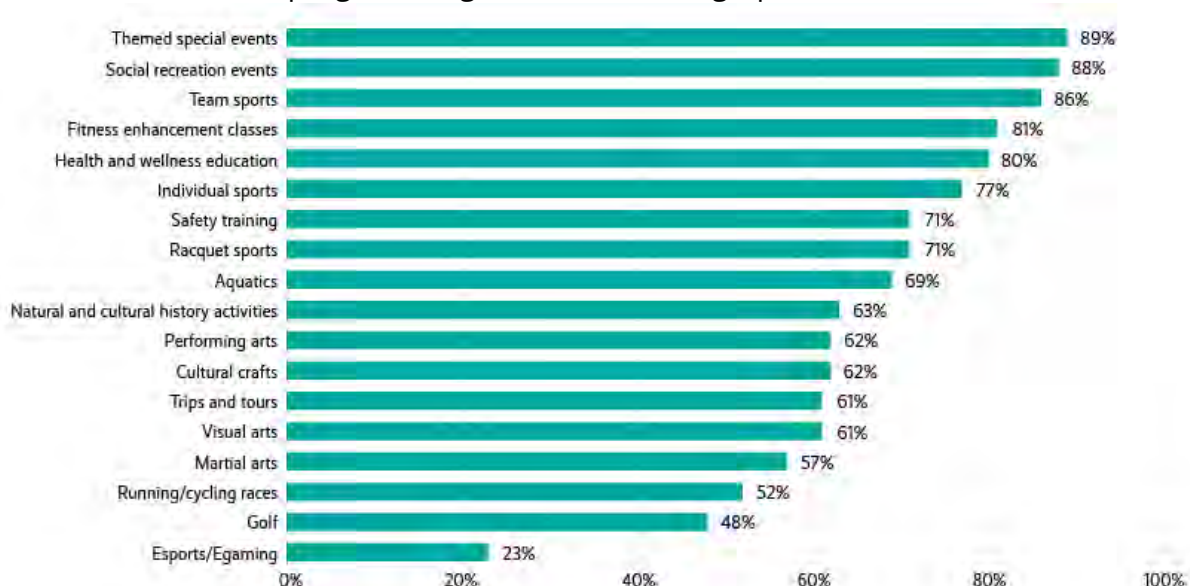


Figure 3: Source: NRPA 2023 Agency Performance Review

Currently, Public Services provides space but does not offer any recreation programming itself. As the NRPA data shows, the County is unusual in that it is a parks and recreation agency not offering programming as part of its services. During the initial community engagement phases, there were several questions asked about programming, and the community showed a strong desire for programming within County parks. Programming could be offered by the County (with additional staffing), through contracts or partnerships, or in collaboration with another entity like the LCRA.



# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

## Recreation Program Areas

Given the assets available in the County's parks, recreation and trails system, recreation trends, and community feedback, the following areas offer the greatest opportunity for Lake County:

- Swimming lessons and water safety training
- Outdoor and environmental programming including hiking, nature walks, fishing, mountain biking etc.
- Special events such as movies and concerts in the park
- After-school programs
- Summer and holiday day camps
- Fitness and wellness programs such as exercise classes, boot camps, and yoga.
- Dog training and obedience
- Cultural and history programs and events, drawing from the County's three museums and in partnership with local tribes.
- General interest programs such as social dance, cooking, etc.

## Services

In addition to recreation programs, there is a need for services to enhance the park experience including:

- Equipment Rentals (kayaks, paddleboards, etc.)
- Kayak/Paddleboard Storage Rental
- Enhanced Transportation (park shuttle services)
- Food/Refreshments, possibly through food carts or mobile vendors
- Park Ambassadors or Hosts, which volunteers or staff at parks who welcome visitors and increase the sense of safety.

Another service that could be added to the county parks is **youth employment**. A program for junior rangers, park conservation, day camp counselors, etc could offer the area a new





# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

venue for young people to get work experience and learn to become better stewards of the parks and their communities.

## **Fees, Subsidies, Pricing Policies**

Recreation programs are generally fee-based, though most agencies offer free and low-cost options as well as scholarship programs. Since Lake County has a lower median household income than California as a whole, pricing policies and fee structures should take into consideration affordability and consider resident and visitor pricing. In general, programs that are offered community-wide, such as community events, movies in the park, etc. should be free. The more specialized and hard-to-provide programs typically have higher fees. When programs are added to parks, the County should determine what is the level of subsidy it is willing to support. Generally, programs are about 50% subsidized, inclusive of free and low fee programs. The addition of rentals and higher revenue events such as weddings can be used to offset some of those costs.



# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

## Operational Assessment: Funding and Staffing

The Public Services Department of the County of Lake is designated as the parks and recreation lead within unincorporated Lake County. The Department is responsible for not only parks and trails, but also for maintenance of all Lake County buildings, operating the County's three museums and providing solid waste and recycling services (including contracting with waste haulers and operating the County's waste facilities). The Public Services Director reports to the Board of Supervisors.

The diagram in Figure 4 depicts the structure of the Public Services Department. Parks (shown in the dashed green bubble) has primary responsibility for parks maintenance. Other divisions provide support including reservations and janitorial services, but their primary responsibilities are broader than parks and recreation. The solid waste division does not have responsibilities related to parks, recreation, and trails, and for this reason is shown with a dashed outline and lighter shading.

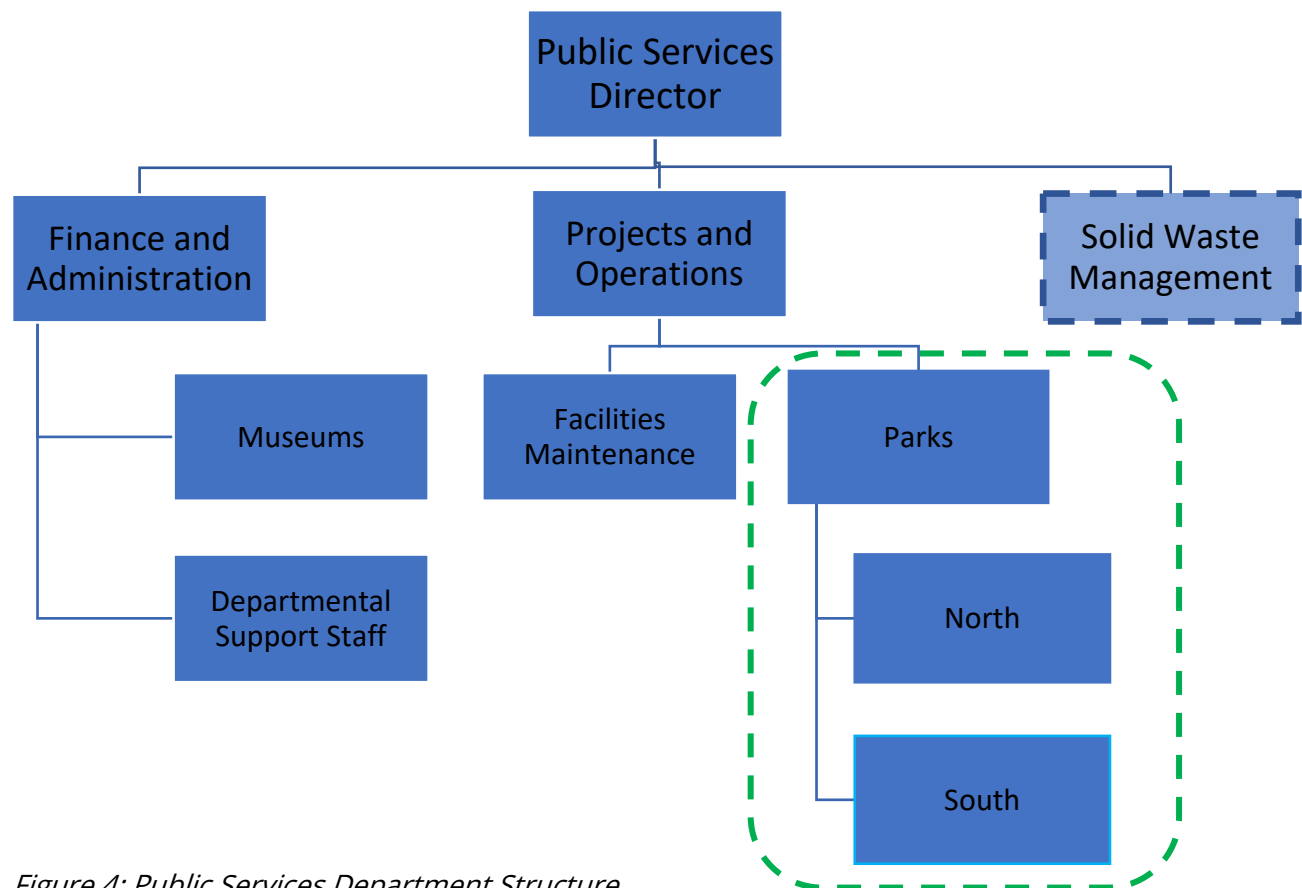


Figure 4: Public Services Department Structure



# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

## Existing Parks, Recreation, and Trails Staffing

As the organizational chart in Figure 4 shows, the Parks Division is tasked with stewardship of the park system. While the Director, Deputy Directors, administrative support, and facilities workers contribute a portion of their time to parks and recreation services, these positions have many other responsibilities. The table below lists only those positions with the Parks Division for better comparability with other agencies.

**Table 5: Current Staffing**

Position Name	# of Positions	Type
Parks Superintendent	1	Permanent
Parks Area Supervisor	2	Permanent
Parks Maintenance Worker I/II	7	Permanent
Parks Maintenance Worker, Senior	2	Permanent
<i>Total Permanent FTEs</i>	<i>12</i>	
<i>Total Part-time or Contract Positions</i>	<i>0</i>	

In assessing Lake County's park staffing level, the National Recreation and Parks Association's (NRPA's) most recent 2023 Agency Performance Review provides some useful comparisons. The NRPA's Review incorporates extensive data from over 1,000 parks and recreation agencies across the U.S. as reported between 2020 and 2022. Nonetheless, the NRPA emphasizes that the Performance Review statistics are not "standards," as every park and recreation agency is unique in its functions, responsibilities, populations served, and jurisdictional details.

This set of data represents information on parks agencies throughout the United States, with data self-reported by each agency in the categories set forth by NRPA. NRPA issues benchmarking reports each year that aggregate agency self-reported data into groups. For each group, a median figure and upper and lower quartile figures are provided to allow comparisons with an "average" agency within the grouping. This data set is best for providing a high-level perspective on agencies nationwide and is not suitable for fine-grained comparisons.





# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

Several considerations should be kept in mind when using Park Metrics data for comparison:

- Agencies are grouped by resident population size. For some metrics, NRPA breaks out agencies based on population size. With a 2020 population of about 68,000, Lake County is in the size class of agencies with a population of 50,000 to 99,000. However, Lake County also includes the cities of Lakeport and Clearlake, each with their own parks, facilities, and staffing. If the populations of these cities are excluded for better per capita comparability, Lake County's unincorporated area population is 46,360, which is in the size class of agencies serving 20,000 to 49,999 people. its population is on the lower end, with just over 101,000 residents. For this reason, comparisons are shown for both size classes.
- Data is also grouped by resident population density for a few metrics. Lake County is in NRPA's least intensely populated category of jurisdictions, which is those with less than 500 people per square mile. According to this data, a typical agency serving less than 500 people per square mile has 4 FTE's per 10,000 people.
- The County's Parks Division is more narrowly focused than most park and recreation agencies in the NRPA Review. Significantly, while 30% of NRPA's typical agency staff time goes to programming, the Parks Division is not currently responsible for offering programs or jurisdiction-wide events in its parks. Therefore, Table 6 also shows an adjustment to reduce NRPA figures by 30% for more comparability.

As Table 6 shows, Lake County has fewer staff than parks and recreation agencies typically do, based on NRPA data. This is true even when figures are adjusted to take into account the fewer services Lake County offers, and to exclude the population also served by cities. Even when compared to only very rural areas, Lake County has less staffing for parks and recreation than is typical.



# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

**Table 6: Benchmarking with NRPA Staffing Data**

Category	Population 50,000 – 99,999	Population 20,000 - 49,999	Lake County
NRPA Median	64.1	34.2	12
Adjusted: Median Minus 30%	53	24	12
NRPA Lower Quartile	38.7	18.0	12
Adjusted: Lower Minus 30%	27	13	12
NRPA Upper Quartile	117.3	70.0	12
Adjusted: Upper Minus 30%	82	49	12
Calculated FTE's based on 4 per 10,000 population for agencies with population <500 / sq. mile	27.2	18.4	12

## Parks, Recreation, and Trails Essential Functions

This section identifies essential functions needed for parks, recreation, and trails service provision in Lake County, organized by category. Each function has a description, and the table also notes whether the function is currently provided and by which division or position.

This list draws from Lake County's existing services and the needs identified through the Parks, Recreation, and Trails planning process. Departmentwide public administration and leadership functions are not included, as they serve the entire department. In addition, functions provided by other County Departments such as Finance, IT, Human Resources, Legal, etc. are assumed to be provided countywide as they currently are.



# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

**Table 7: Parks, Recreation, and Trails Essential Functions**

Essential Function	Description	Currently Provided
<b>Parks Maintenance</b>		Y or N
Grounds Maintenance	Regular maintenance of developed parks grounds, including turf maintenance, horticultural care, trash removal, irrigation repair, etc.	Y Parks
Sports Field Maintenance	Maintenance and care of sports fields, requiring more specialized activities than standard landscape maintenance.	Y Parks
Boat Ramp and Pier Maintenance	Maintenance and care of boat ramps and in-water infrastructure including piers and docks.	Y Parks
Trails Maintenance	Maintenance/repair of paved and natural surface trails, regular sweeping of paved trails.	Y Parks
Playground Inspection and Maintenance	Conduct playground safety inspections and maintain playgrounds.	Y Parks
Outdoor Recreation Facility Maintenance	Maintenance and care of sports courts, dog parks, picnic shelters, and other facilities in parks. Each may have its own maintenance protocol.	Y Parks
Natural Resources Management	Management of natural areas (including riparian areas), including invasive species management, vegetation management, restoration, etc.	Y Parks
Urban Forestry/Park Trees	Tree care and replacement of trees in parks.	Y Parks
Parking Area Maintenance	Maintenance of parking areas (sweeping, striping, ADA compliance).	Y Parks
Graffiti and Vandalism Abatement	Removal of graffiti, repair/replacement of vandalized facilities.	Y Parks
<b>Facility Maintenance</b>		
Restroom Maintenance	Regular cleaning of restrooms, minor plumbing repairs.	Y Parks
Building Maintenance	Janitorial care of buildings in parks and general building upkeep.	Y Parks/Facilities
Facility Reservations	Customer service and scheduling of facilities. Coordinates with parks, facilities, and programming staff.	Y Admin Support





# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

Essential Function	Description	Currently Provided
Pool Maintenance	Maintaining aquatics equipment and water chemistry	Y Parks
Swimming Pool Operations	Staffing the swimming pool during open hours, including lifeguarding. This is currently a seasonal activity.	Y Parks
<b>Planning and Development</b>		
Parks and Recreation Planning	Managing consultants or completing long range planning and site master planning efforts in-house.	Y Admin Support
Land and Trail Acquisition	Negotiating fee-simple and easement acquisitions.	Y Admin Support
Parks and Recreation Facility Design	Designing park improvements in-house or overseeing consultants to design parks and facilities renovations and new park development.	Y Admin Support
Parks CIP Project Management	Management of capital improvement projects. May include oversight of consultants and management of bidding processes.	Y Admin Support
<b>Communications and Marketing</b>		
Website Management	Managing the parks and recreation pages on the county website. Requires coordination internally.	Y Admin Support
Social Media Communications	Managing social media presence of Lake County Parks, Recreation, and Trails. Requires coordination internally.	Y Admin Support
Community and Partner Engagement	Ongoing communication with partners, community organizations, advocates, and community groups.	Y Admin Support
Tribal Engagement	Engagement with tribal governments and indigenous people, in collaboration with intergovernmental coordination staff.	Y Admin Support
Marketing and Promotions	Marketing and promoting Lake County's programs and facilities, across all media. Includes coordination with social media communications. Requires coordination internally and externally.	Y Admin Support
<b>Recreation Programs</b>		
Direct Program Provision	Designing and implementing a program using in-house staff (permanent, PT, or seasonal).	N
Contract Program Provision	Recruiting and managing contract instructors to provide programs at a park or recreation facility.	N



# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

Essential Function	Description	Currently Provided
Program Coordination	Providing information about programs provided by outside providers that meet County criteria (sports leagues, scouting groups, clubs and organizations).	N
Registration System Management/Reporting	Managing the recreation program registration system, including inputting programming data, managing the system, sending notifications, and exporting reports.	N
<b>Special Events</b>		
Event Permits	Customer service and scheduling of special events in parks. Requires interaction with multiple departments and customer service with community members and organizations.	Y Admin Support
Event Set-up and Support	Set up and take down for scheduled events for which County event support is being provided. Requires coordination with event permits and facility reservations.	N
Event Production	Organizing and executing a special event or series of special events, such as movies in the park. Requires coordination with multiple departments and communications staff.	N
<b>Support Functions</b>		
Intergovernmental Coordination	Coordination with other Lake County departments, other local governments, tribal governments, school districts, state agencies and federal agencies. Includes participation in the Lake County Recreation Authority.	Y Public Services Director
Grant Writing and Management	Evaluating grant opportunities, pursuing grants, and managing grant compliance for successful grants.	Y Public Services Director, Finance & Administration
Park Safety and Security	Provision of park security services, which may include patrols by in-house or contracted personnel, to welcome users to parks and facilities and to make sure users are safe and following rules.	N
Volunteer Management	Recruitment and management of volunteers	N
Contract Management	Management of concessionaire and vendor contracts. Could include landscape maintenance contracts.	N
Administrative Support	Effective administrative support extends the capacity of specialized staff.	Y



# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

Essential Function	Description	Currently Provided
		Finance and Administration
Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Support	Management of the PRAB and associated responsibilities. The PRAB in Lake County is currently not an active advisory group.	N
Youth Employment/Junior Ranger Program	A youth program has two objectives – to help provide additional staff, particularly in the summer when more part-time program staff may be needed, and to provide a service to the community by employing young people. In addition, youth programs can help reduce vandalism by creating an empowered group of youth who are stewards of the parks.	N

## Key Findings

- The Parks Division is tasked with essential functions related to park maintenance. While more capacity or specialized training may be needed (e.g., natural resource management, trails maintenance), especially as the park system evolves, today Lake County has a solid foundation for Park Maintenance functions. However, Lake County is understaffed compared to parks and recreation agencies nationwide.
- Lake County does not currently have coverage on the following essential functions: Recreation Programs, Special Events, Park Safety and Security, Volunteer Management. There is no capacity within the existing staffing to take on these functions.
- The Public Services Director, who is tasked with overall management of the Department and its four divisions, has taken on many essential functions that are critical to the success of the park system. Two specific examples are managing the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Plan project and taking the lead on intergovernmental coordination, including the LCRA and tribal government coordination. More capacity is needed for these critical functions.
- More capacity and dedicated expertise is needed for planning and design functions. The County has just acquired property through the John T. Klaus Trust for the establishment of a 600+ acre park, and is considering additional strategic acquisitions, which will require planning and design skills. The Department has requested a Capital Project Manager, a position which would provide expertise for





# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

planning and design functions. If possible, this position or additional staffing could fulfill the County's need for park planning expertise.

- There is also a need for bolstered community engagement and communications capacity, particularly with the major park developments planned (Klaus, etc.) and the focus on partnerships.
- As noted above, the County is focused on interagency and intergovernmental partnerships, such as the LCRA, Middle Creek restoration efforts, and a renewed focus on partnerships with tribal governments. There is a need for increased capacity for intergovernmental coordination to ensure that parks, recreation and trails are adequately considered in these other planning efforts. A parks planner could potentially fulfill this role.
- Looking at the NRPA comparisons and the essential functions that are not currently being provided, it is clear that the County is understaffed overall for parks and recreation. Even if the County continues to focus on developing and maintaining physical park facilities and does not expand its park and recreation services, more staffing or contracted resources are needed to adequately address maintenance functions. Further staffing or resources will be needed to increase the ability to take on additional essential functions.
- Upcoming retirements could leave gaps in coverage of essential functions or reduction in capacity. The Department has been able to leverage the skills of individuals to cover more areas of expertise beyond what is standard for some positions. There is a need for succession planning for upcoming retirements.

There are multiple possible approaches to providing essential parks and recreation functions in Lake County, including increasing capacity where needed. Updated job descriptions can be used to reallocate and reprioritize responsibilities and add new responsibilities. New positions can bring in additional staff resources. Intergovernmental agreements (such as with the LCRA or with tribal governments) can bring in specialized expertise or add capacity. Contracted services can add more capacity or bring in a specialized resource without committing to permanent staffing.



# Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Needs Assessment

## Conclusion

The Needs Assessment is the culmination of the Needs, Opportunities, & Strategies Phase. It builds upon the Existing Conditions Summary document, incorporates all the findings of work to date, and analyses the gaps and needs for the County's parks, recreation programs, trail improvements, additions, and overall enhancements. This document will be integrated into the final Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan, in combination with the Existing Conditions Summary. These plans will also accompany the Capital Improvement Plan.



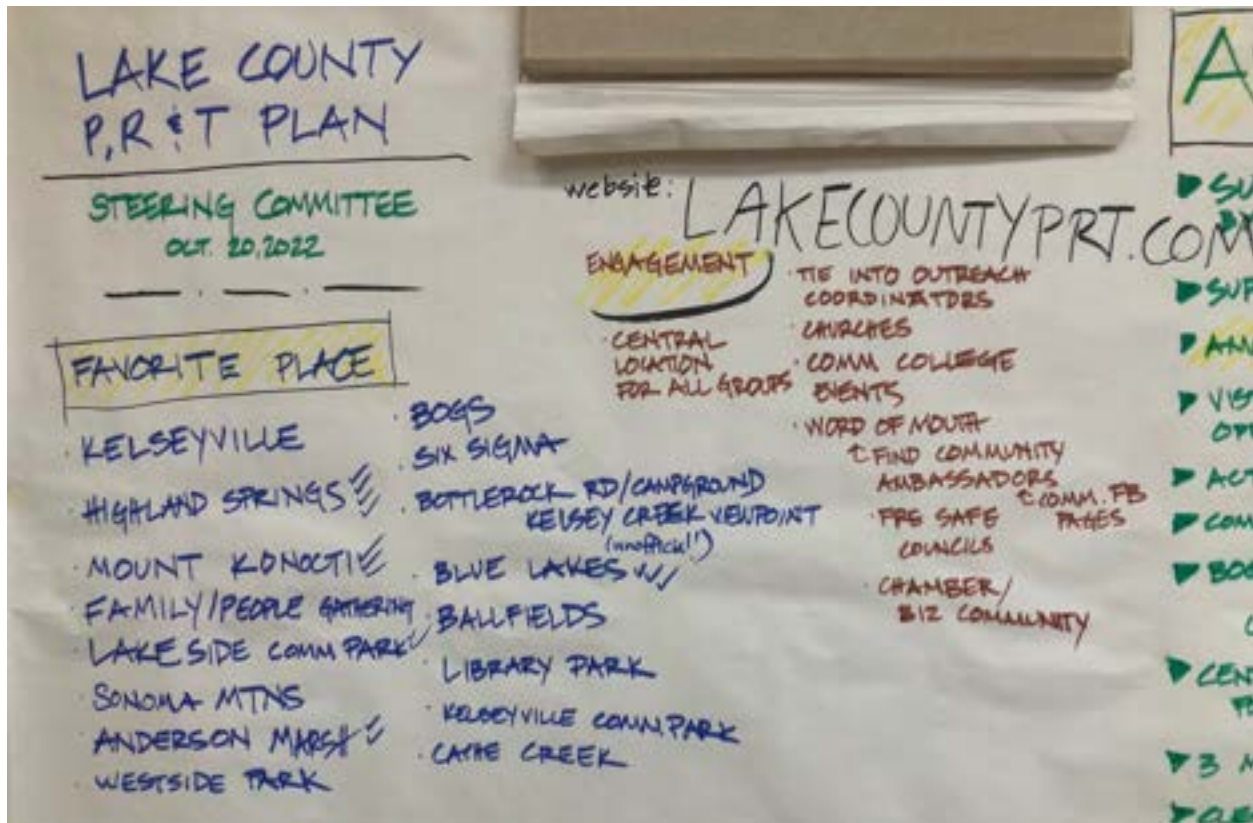
## Appendix D

### Engagement Summary





# Lake County Engagement Summary



Wallgraphic from Steering Committee Meeting

## Round 1 Outreach

The first round of engagement was aimed at gathering information about gaps and needs of the current parks system, using the following outreach methods. This engagement was held from October 2022 to March 2023.

- **Steering Committee Meeting:** The first Steering Committee meeting was held on October 20th, 2022. In the first part of the meeting, the project team reviewed the purpose of the meeting and the planning process as a whole. The meeting then focused on Committee member discussion of strengths, challenges, needs, and opportunities for parks, recreation, and trails.
- **Small Group Meetings:** Small group meetings were held to understand the needs and opportunities of the Lake County community. The project team met with four small groups that represented Arts, Culture, and Community; Youth, Sports, and Outdoors; Business, Tourism, and Economic Development; and Land Management and Trails.
- **Community Needs Survey:** An online survey was created to gather information about how residents currently use parks, what gaps the current system has, any



# Lake County Engagement Summary

barriers to using parks and trails, and any additional information that residents wanted to share. The community was invited to participate through a press release, social media posts, and an email blast. Open from January – March 2023, the survey received 571 responses.

- **Board of Supervisors:** A brief presentation was given to the County Board of Supervisors in March to share background about the Master Planning process and initial findings from the Existing Conditions Report, as well as to answer any questions from the Supervisors.

## Round 1 Key Findings:

The following are key findings from the first round of community engagement:

- The beauty and biodiversity of the lake is a major strength of the County.
- There are a large number of parks in the County and a variety of different types of recreational opportunities (mountain biking, boating and fishing, sailing, etc.).
- People in Lake County are invested in the County and are eager to volunteer time and energy to improve the area.
- Low water levels in Clear Lake is a challenge, preventing swimming from the beach and limiting boating access to those who have their own private lakeshore access.
- Marketing materials should be expanded and improved.
- Recreational opportunities should be expanded and diversified with more biking, swimming, and disc golf.
- Areas around the lake need to be more accessible to the public, including direct boating access on the lake as well as ADA compliance throughout parks.
- There is a need for better active and public transportation connections to amenities on the lake and between amenities and pedestrian areas.



# Lake County Engagement Summary



*Community Member at Pop-Up*

## Round 2 Outreach

The second round of engagement was designed to develop the vision and goals for the Master Plan, as well as for initial recommendation development. This engagement was held from April 2023 to June 2023.

- **Community Visioning Workshop:** A community workshop was held on April 11th at the Lake County Board of Supervisors Chambers. During the workshop, Bluepoint Planning gave a presentation on background information on the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan process and summarized the Existing Conditions Report. The participants were then asked to take part in a visioning exercise, putting words and images on a wall graphic to show what they want to see in their parks, recreation, and trails. There was also an opportunity for community members to provide any other feedback about the Plan.
- **Pop-Ups:** On April 11th and 12th, the County held pop-ups in the County Courthouse lobby and Redbud Library to get feedback from residents visiting those County facilities. The pop-ups included an activity where residents could share their vision for the County parks system, by placing dots on images of what they would most like to see improved or added.
- **Online Visioning Exercise:** An online version of the pop-ups was offered through a platform called Padlet. On the Padlet, people could react to the same images as on the in-person pop-up boards, add their own ideas, and react to others' suggestions. The Padlet was open from April 10th until May 31st. It was publicized during the in-person engagement, on County social media, and on the project website.





# Lake County Engagement Summary

- **Steering Committee Meeting:** The second Steering Committee meeting was held on April 13th. BluePoint Planning gave a presentation that updated information on the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan process and summarized the Existing Conditions Report. There was a discussion about needs and opportunities in the parks, potential programming opportunities, and collaboration and partnership opportunities.
- **Ad Hoc Trails Working Group:** At the first Ad Hoc Trails Working Group meeting, on April 12th, 2023, BluePoint Planning provided background information on the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan process and summarized key findings to date. The majority of the meeting was spent in facilitated discussion about the needs and opportunities in the parks, potential programming opportunities, and collaboration and partnership opportunities.
- **Ad Hoc Tribal Government Representatives Meeting:** On April 13, 2023, BluePoint Planning gave a brief background presentation on the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan process and summarized the Existing Conditions Report. Then, BluePoint facilitated a discussion about the needs and opportunities in the parks, potential programming opportunities, and collaboration and partnership opportunities. For those that couldn't attend, follow-up stakeholder interviews were held.
- **Lake County Recreation Agency:** A presentation was given to the Lake County Recreation Agency in May 2023 to update them about Master Plan development and identify potential areas of coordination and collaboration.

## Round 2 Key Findings:

The following are key findings from the second round of community engagement:

- Awareness
  - While the County does have many good parks and trails, many people do not know what is available.
  - Many of the County's amenities are promoted via word of mouth, which may make it harder for visitors to use the parks system.
  - Signage within the parks could help identify native plants, native history, demonstration areas, etc. which could better connect park users to nature and cultural history.
  - The Tribes have a large reach and could help with education and awareness of the parks, recreation, and trails opportunities within the County.
- Tourism



# Lake County Engagement Summary

- Lake County is becoming more popular as a destination, but many tourists don't know all that the County has to offer.
  - There is a need to provide services to tourists but ensure that the County balances ecological and human access.
- Safety
  - Many residents don't feel safe visiting their local parks, especially after dark.
  - There is an issue with homelessness and drug use in the parks that makes park maintenance more difficult and reduces other park use.
- Character
  - Each park should have its own character and purpose. Some parks should offer more amenities, while others should be more focused on promoting nature.
- Partnerships
  - The County should form strategic partnerships with government agencies, non-profits, and within the private sector to offer new opportunities and improve the current system.
  - The County and the Tribal governments should work together to offer new opportunities and improve the current system.
- Resilience
  - The County could promote resilience measures, like climate-friendly landscaping, regenerative systems, ecological signage, etc.
- Programming
  - There is a great opportunity for programming within the parks and on trails, increasing the use of the parks, and providing services to the community.
  - Programming can help bring more people into the parks
- Accessible
  - Everyone should be able to use and enjoy the parks.
- Acknowledgement
  - Including land acknowledgements at the parks, working with tribes to make sure that their history and culture is represented at the local parks, and using native names for some parks, is desired.







# Lake County Engagement Summary

## Round 3 Key Findings:

The following are key findings from the third round of community engagement:

- Updated Vision and Goals
  - Participants would like to see an increased focus on climate and resilience, as they are both a vulnerability and part of the solution.
  - Participants would also like more focus on public awareness of the parks.
- Outreach
  - The public has been receptive and excited about park development.
  - The County will continue to do more outreach to increase engagement.
- Workforce Development
  - It can be difficult to find Parks employees.
  - It is important to expand the recruitment pool - look to youth training, AmeriCorps programs, etc.
- Ecotourism
  - The County could be a great area for ecotourism, especially with a science focus.
- Trail Policies
  - There is a need for clear policies on bike usage on all trails, addressing e-bikes, mopeds, mountain bikes, and e-mountain bikes.
  - The Plan should include recommendations to update ordinances related to biking.
  - Clear and consistent trail signage across all parks is important for trail safety, especially with multiple activities allowed on many trails.
- Tribal Culture
  - There is a need to recognize differences in cultural perspectives and history, to build awareness of distinct cultures and character, to acknowledge ancestral lands, and to increase opportunities for cultural events.
  - There has been a consistent lack of acknowledgment and accuracy regarding tribal culture and history.
- Tribal Partnership and Collaboration
  - Tribes co-manage State Parks with state government. More opportunities for co-management exist, especially with the seven tribes in Lake County. It is important to partner with the tribes on things such as scientific research.



## Lake County Engagement Summary

- The goal is for increased access to park lands and open space, for cultural and scientific uses, such as land surveying, education, and research.
- The permitting process for tribal use should be reexamined, to allow for greater access.
- The park lands can be sensitive and easily destroyed, especially by Off-highway Vehicles. There are also many invasive species in the parks. There are opportunities for using tribal management practices to encourage growth of native plants, and to support restoration.
- There is often misunderstanding of Tribal practices, histories, and traditions.
- There is a huge opportunity for education on climate change, supporting the land, and promoting cultural events and traditional games.

## Appendix E

### Capital Project Improvements

	Site Acreage	Developed Area Acreage	Natural Area Acreage	Improvement Type										
				Park and Facility Planning	Park Enhancement	Major Renovation	Trail Development	New Park Development	Habitat Enhancement	Resilience Projects	Capital Reinvestment	Land Acquisition	Planning Level Capital Cost	Total Maintenance Costs (annual)
LOCAL PARKS														
Alpine Park	2.5	2.5			•					•	•		\$ 247,500	\$ 25,000
Clark's Island	1.5	0.5	1.0		•				•	•	•		\$ 102,500	\$ 5,000
Clearlake Oaks Plaza	1.0	1.0		•	•						•		\$ 235,000	\$ 10,000
Hinman Park	1.0	1.0			•					•			\$ 125,000	\$ 10,000
Keeling Park	1.5	1.5		•		•					•		\$ 1,060,000	\$ 15,000
Kelseyville Community Park	3.0	3.0				•				•	•		\$ 1,850,000	\$ 30,000
Lower Lake Park	1.0	1.0		•		•				•	•		\$ 800,000	\$ 10,000
Lucerne Creek Park	2.0	2.0		•						•			\$ 200,000	\$ 20,000
Lucerne Harbor Park & Artist Village	4.5	4.0	0.5	•	•				•	•	•		\$ 502,500	\$ 40,000
Middletown Square Park	1.0	1.0			•					•	•		\$ 125,000	\$ 10,000
Nylander Park	1.0	1.0		•						•	•		\$ 200,000	\$ 10,000
Pioneer Park	0.5	0.5								•	•		\$ 50,000	\$ 5,000
Total Local Parks	20.5											\$ 5,497,500		
COMMUNITY PARKS														
Hammond Avenue Park	12.5	12.5						•		•	•	•	\$ 9,435,000	\$ 125,000
Lakeside Park	50.0	45.0	5.0	•	•		•		•	•	•		\$ 3,710,000	\$ 450,000
Middletown Trailside Park	107.0	40.0	67.0		•		•		•	•			\$ 3,485,000	\$ 33,500
Upper Lake Park	8.5	8.5				•	•			•	•	•	\$ 5,260,000	\$ 85,000
Total Community Parks	178.0											\$ 21,890,000		



	Site Acreage	Developed Area Acreage	Natural Area Acreage	Improvement Type										
				Park and Facility Planning	Park Enhancement	Major Renovation	Trail Development	New Park Development	Habitat Enhancement	Resilience Projects	Capital Reinvestment	Land Acquisition	Planning Level Capital Cost	Total Maintenance Costs (annual)
REGIONAL PARKS														
Highland Springs Park	2500.0	100.0							•	•	•		\$ 7,560,000	\$ 1,000,000
John T. Klaus Park	584.0	80.0	500.0	•			•	•					\$ 60,250,000	\$ 800,000
Mt. Konocti Regional Park	1152.0	25.0	1125.0	•			•		•	•	•	•	\$ 5,935,000	\$ 250,000
Total Regional Parks	4236.0												\$ 73,745,000	
NATURAL AREAS														
Cecil Moses Memorial Park	3.0	3.0	3.0								•		\$ 10,000	\$ 1,500
Black Oaks Park	2.0		2.0	•					•				\$ 160,000	\$ 1,000
Helen Mitcham Park	117.0	2.0	115.0		•		•						\$ 250,000	\$ 57,500
Rodman Slough Park	38.0	2.0	36.0		•		•		•		•		\$ 440,000	\$ 18,000
Total Natural Areas	155.0												\$ 860,000	
SPECIAL USE SITES														
Clearlake Oaks Beach	1.1	1.1	1.0						•	•	•		\$ 65,000	\$ 5,000
Courthouse Museum Square	1.0	1.0			•						•		\$ 37,500	\$ 10,000
Davis Beach	0.5	0.5	0.5		•								\$ 634,000	\$ 5,000
Holiday Harbor	0.8	0.8	0.8	•		•			•				\$ 285,000	\$ 8,000
Middletown Park and Pool	1.0	1.0		•	•					•	•		\$ 26,000	\$ 10,000
Nice Community Beach	0.2	0.2	0.2		•				•		•		\$ 10,000	\$ 2,000
Vista Point	3.0	3.0									•		\$ 10,000	\$ 30,000
Hamilton Boat Launch	0.5	0.5	0.2								•		\$ 10,000	\$ 2,000
Total Special Use Sites	8.1												\$ 1,077,500	
Total Existing Parks												\$ 103,070,000		

	Site Acreage	Developed Area Acreage	Natural Area Acreage	Improvement Type										
				Park and Facility Planning	Park Enhancement	Major Renovation	Trail Development	New Park Development	Habitat Enhancement	Resilience Projects	Capital Reinvestment	Land Acquisition	Planning Level Capital Cost	Total Maintenance Costs (annual)
NEW PARKS, FACILITIES and TRAILS														
New Cobb Mountain Planning Area Park	12.0	12.0		●				●					\$ 9,150,000	\$ 120,000
New Local Park (Rivieras Planning Area)	2.0	2.0		●				●					\$ 1,650,000	\$ 20,000
Priority Trail Projects - 5 miles of new trail	-												\$ 500,000	-
Mountain Bike Park (in an existing park)	-												\$ 500,000	-
Priority Water Trail Projects - Nonmotorized Natural Surface Launch in an Existing Park	-												\$ 150,000	
Equestrian Center	-												\$ 5,000,000	-
Aquatic Center	-												NIC	-
Community Center	-												NIC	-
Total New Parks and Facilities													\$ 16,950,000	
Total													\$ 120,020,000	