



PROTECT GROW RESTORE CONNECT

Marin County Parks and Open Space
Strategic Plan
June 2008



Acknowledgments

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Big Rock Ridge and beyond. Craig Solin.

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Introduction

The setting—a bounty of parkland and its significance to Marin County’s sense of place

Embraced by the Pacific coast to the west and San Pablo Bay to the east, Marin County is an enticing and beautiful place, made so by an abundance of parklands that reflects the county’s rich heritage of land conservation. Through decades of hard work, residents, neighborhoods, organizations, and government have protected tens of thousands of acres of open space, hundreds of acres of parks, and miles of scenic trails that have become community treasures, adding immeasurably to the quality of life enjoyed in Marin. Whether one lives, works, or simply visits Marin County, the treasure is shared by all—families and friends fishing from the pier at McNear’s Beach Park, the

Novato resident taking in the view of the Little Mountain Open Space Preserve over breakfast on the deck, the office worker in Terra Linda squeezing in a few practice strokes during lunch hour at the McInnis Park Golf Center.

The focus of this document is Marin County’s park and open space system

The County of Marin, the National Park Service, California State Parks, local water districts, community-based organizations and Marin’s cities and towns have each contributed to the creation of Marin’s parkland bounty according to their respective missions and goals. However, the focus of this strategic plan is Marin County’s own system of parks and open space preserves.



Superintendent Brian Sanford gathering feedback for the Strategic Plan, Marin County Farmers Market, May 2007. MCPOS archives.

Built over the past 40 years and managed by the Marin County Parks and Open Space Department (Department), this extensive system includes regional and community parks, neighborhood parks, and 34 open space preserves that together encompass 19,300 acres and 190 miles of unpaved public trails. County parks are developed with the facilities to accommodate recreational activities such as swimming, soccer, tennis, golf, and picnicking. You won't find such facilities in open space preserves, which are managed primarily for resource preservation. But you will find people enjoying nature observation, hiking, mountain bicycling, and horseback riding on an extensive system of trails.

A Strategic Plan—what does it accomplish?

This comprehensive, pathfinding document sets forth an exciting ten year vision for the County's park and open space system. It projects how park and recreation needs will evolve as the County's population ages and diversifies. It examines the County's existing park and open space system—its strengths and challenges—as the starting point of our journey. It describes the improvements to be made and facilities to be built so that the system remains responsive to the needs of our community. It identifies the investment we must make and the partnerships we must forge to achieve our vision. And, to encourage accountability, it offers tools to gauge our success.

Who was involved in developing this plan?

Because the County's parks and open spaces are part of the very fabric of our communities, the people of Marin are passionate about them and their future. Over 1000 individuals participated in the telephone survey, focus groups, workshops, events, and community meetings conducted in the course of developing this plan. Among them were **ranchers, public trail advocates, businesspersons, soccer players, golfers, bicyclists, equestrians,** and **bayland protection advocates.** The statistically valid telephone survey engaged even those residents who have never set foot in a County park or open space preserve—although there are surprisingly few such individuals—for their

opinions. Many who did not participate directly in meetings and workshops nonetheless kept apprised of progress through newsletters posted on web pages created specially for this project.

Representatives of the **park and recreation departments of local cities and towns** participated in focus groups. The Department also sought comments and suggestions from its own **staff** members—including **rangers, landscape architects, naturalists, volunteer coordinators, planners, resource managers, and secretaries**—and from key staff members from other **County departments** including **Fire, Public Works, Health and**

Human Services, Community Development, and the County Administrator's Office.

The first-ever joint meeting of the Department's entire staff and the **Marin County Parks and Open Space Commission** was held to consider new goals for the Department. In another historic first, the **Marin County Board of Supervisors** and the Marin County Parks and Open Space Commission met together to offer initial direction for the project. They met again near its end to review outcomes of this 18 month long effort. Finally, the Department established a 35 member **Com-**

The vocabulary of this strategic plan

In the paragraphs above, the reader has already encountered several words—"vision", "mission", "goals"—that are part of the vocabulary of most strategic plans. While commonly used in a variety of contexts, these words have concise meanings within the context of a strategic plan:

Vision — A word picture of a desired future state. In other words, what we want our park and open space system to look and feel like in ten years.

Mission — A brief statement of what an entity such as a business or public agency does, or why it exists.

Goal — A goal describes a desired result or outcome. Fulfilling goals helps a business or public agency achieve a vision. Multiple goals are often necessary to achieve a vision.

Strategy — A strategy describes how a goal will be achieved. A strategy consists of a family of related actions.

Action — Actions are activities performed to achieve a goal. They are organized according to strategies.

munity Advisory Committee, whose members included representatives of the **Marin Agricultural Land Trust, Marin Audubon Society, Marin Conservation League, Sierra Club Marin Chapter, San Rafael Chamber of Commerce, Access 4 Bikes, Marin Horse Council, City of San Rafael, City of Novato, California State Parks, and Marin Municipal Water District** among others, whose comments and insights offered over the course of several meetings enabled staff and consultants to fine-tune this document. Without a doubt, the many voices of our community speak within the pages of this document.

San Geronimo Preserve from Roy's Redwoods Preserve. Craig Solin.



How does this plan relate to the Marin County Strategic Plan, the Marin Countywide Plan, and other recent or ongoing community planning efforts?

Marin County's own *Strategic Plan* inspired the preparation of the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan. Guided by the County's mission "to provide excellent services that support healthy, safe and sustainable communities, preserve Marin's unique environmental heritage, and encourage meaningful participation in the governance of the County by all", the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan contributes to the County's fulfillment of every one of its community and organizational goals.

Implementation of the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan will touch upon many topics of current community interest in Marin—sustainability, non motorized transportation, wildland vegetation management, land use, and community health—and the plans prepared by local government agencies and community-based organizations on these subjects. In particular, the implementation of this strategic plan will contribute to the creation of sustainable communities, an overarching theme of the recently-updated Marin Countywide Plan. As a partner with these other entities in providing valuable public services, it has been the Department's intent for the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan to support and complement these other planning efforts while remaining true to its mission.

In addition, historic plans and documents related to park and open space planning in Marin were reviewed to understand their influence on the growth and development of the current park and open space system.

A comprehensive list of documents consulted in the preparation of the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan, and of current planning efforts related to this Plan, is contained in Appendix A, the 2007 Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment Report.

Key Appendices to this Plan

In addition to Appendix A, to keep the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan concise, appended to it are several documents that provide more detailed direction in three key subject areas. They are:

- **The Parks Master Plan** (Appendix B) provides the Department with renewed strategic direction to renovate existing facilities and to build a park system for the future.
- **The Land Conservation Plan** (Appendix C) identifies land conservation opportunities to complete the County's open space system.
- **The Capital Improvement Plan** (Appendix D) identifies, prioritizes, and provides cost estimates for park and open space improvements.

Each of the above is a stand-alone document that is nonetheless aligned with the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan's vision, mission, and goals.

“Take Home Messages” from this Plan

Several “big picture” themes emerged from the strategic planning process and are summarized here:

Land stewardship must be a high priority.

“Take good care of what we already have” was a statement frequently voiced in many public meetings and workshops. This statement pertains not only to swimming pools and ball fields, but to the often invisible and easily overlooked infrastructure—irrigation and water systems, drains, retaining walls, parking lots, and maintenance yards—that support park facilities and protect our investment in them. It also applies to open space preserves, where roads and trails must be kept in good repair to minimize erosion that affects water quality and fish habitat. Equally important is the protection and reclamation of native habitat, including habitat of endangered plant species, in light of the threat posed by the spread of highly invasive, non-native plant populations.

Marin residents have come to realize that the benefits of good stewardship extend beyond park boundaries. Wildfire is an ever present concern during the dry summer months, and many open space preserves abut our neighborhoods. Managing vegetation on open space lands to reduce the threat of wildfire is a relatively new expectation that residents have of the Department, and its costs are substantial. Similarly, new legal mandates related to parkland accessibility and environmental protection have raised the cost of building

new facilities and maintaining those we have. Existing funding cannot be stretched further to satisfy new needs without eliminating or reducing existing services expected and enjoyed by our community.

Substantial investment is required to implement this Plan.

Achieving the vision of the park and open space system set forth in this plan will require additional funding to meet increased land stewardship demands, sustain maintenance efforts, grow the open space system, and revitalize County parks. A total of \$226.5 million is required, with \$146 million of this amount necessary to close gaps in the system of open space and trails. A sales tax initiative is recommended to raise \$82 million. Its implementation would increase the Department's success in leveraging other funding sources, including public and private grants, existing and new assessments, and donations. The length of time required to implement the plan is directly related to the length of time required to bring new funding sources online.

Revitalize County Parks.

The County's four largest parks—Stafford Lake, Paradise Beach, McInnis Park, and McNear's Beach—were all developed in the 1970s. Their facilities are now dated and many are in serious need of repair from decades of deferred maintenance caused by insufficient funding. Many smaller County-owned parks are in a similar condition. The Parks Master Plan recommends that the Department invest \$41,400,000 over the next 20 years to renovate and improve existing facilities, and to develop new facilities.

Complete the open space system.

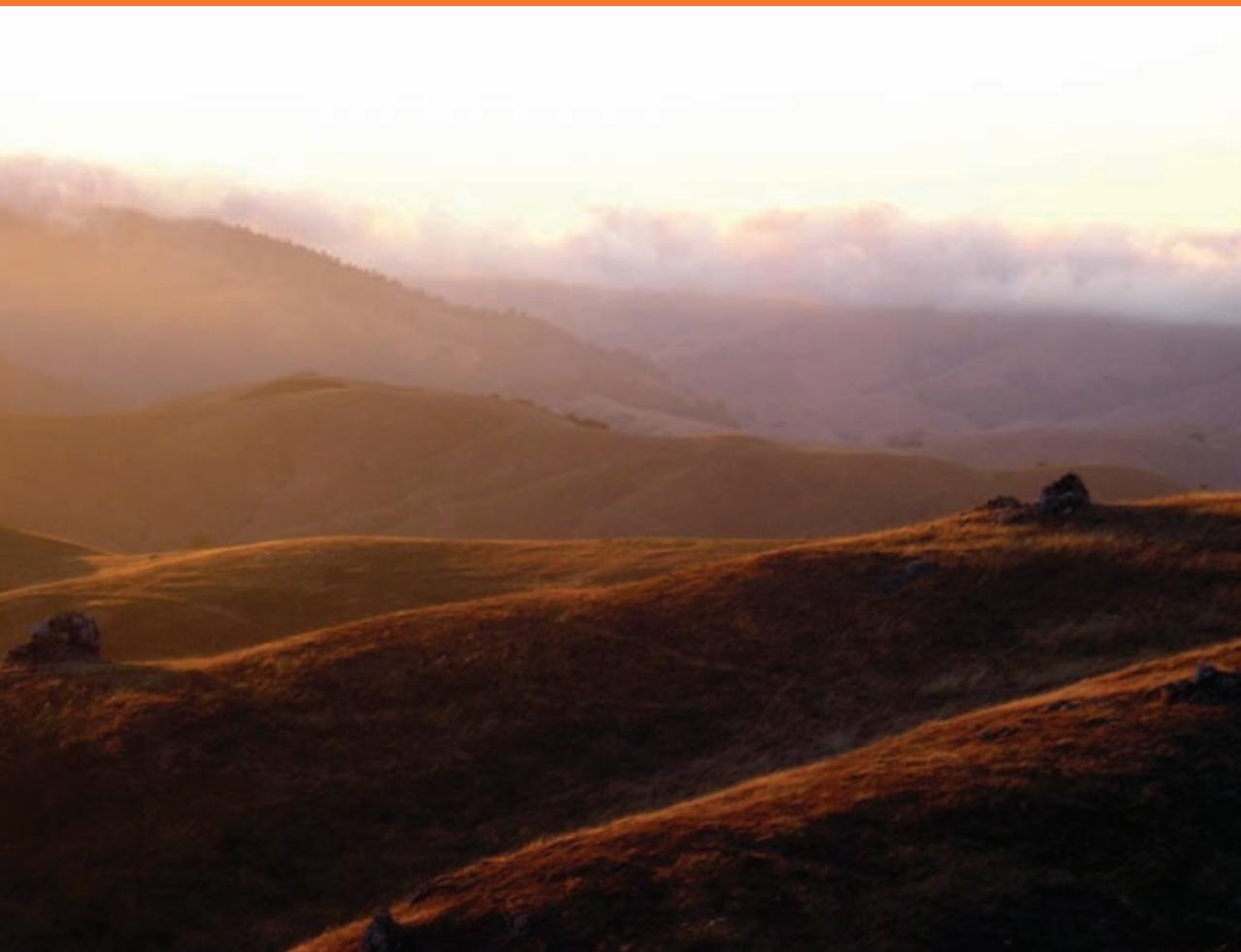
Despite the County's history of land preservation successes, its system of preserved lands will not be complete until an additional 15,000 acres are preserved. The County must actively create and pursue new land preservation opportunities using all of the land conservation tools available to it.

Partnerships are essential to success.

The Department must engage partners of all types—new and old, public and private—if it is to leverage existing resources and make the existing park and open space system even better. The high cost of land purchases makes funding partnerships with organizations such as the State Coastal Conservancy, the Trust for Public Land, and the Marin Audubon Society a necessity. The protection of endangered species populations, which do not know property boundaries, requires collaboration with other public land managers such as the National Parks Service. Volunteers, whether individuals or organizations such as the Green Gorillas and the Old St Hilary's Broom Busters, enable the Department to make headway against expanding populations of non-native plants. Reducing fire hazard while maintaining open space habitat value requires close cooperation with the Marin County Fire Department. Parks can be one of the tools by which community health agencies combat childhood obesity. In short, the intersection of public and private interests in the County's system of parks and open space requires a higher degree of community cooperation than ever before.



Fern, French Ranch Preserve. Craig Solin.



Sunset, Loma Alta Preserve. Craig Solin.

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Existing Conditions and Key Needs

To understand where the County parks and open space system is going, one needs to understand where it has been and where it is today, how it is presently serving Marin's residents, and how our community's needs will change over the life span of the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan.

This chapter summarizes the Department's history, organization and achievements, the characteristics that set it apart from other local parks agencies, Marin County's demographic trends and projections, and key community needs and desires as they relate to the County's parks and open space preserves.

Existing Conditions

History of parkland protection in Marin County and the role of County government

Partly because of its beauty, and partly because of the values and foresight of its residents, Marin County has a long and rich history of support for land conservation. It also has a history as a recreational destination, a history that existed even before the opening of the Golden Gate Bridge in 1937. At that time, the County was still predominantly rural, but with new and easy access by automobile, it became possible for people to live in

Marin and work in San Francisco. As the County's population grew in succeeding years, private lands that had been available for recreational purposes either formally or informally were gradually and forever lost to public use. Within years of the bridge's opening, concerned citizens working with County officials began planning for future growth and public recreation needs. In 1943, the County's Planning Commission published its *Master Recreation Plan*. The 1943 Plan recognized that development decreased the amount of land available for public recreation and at the same time increased the demand for recreation. The 1943 Plan advocated the creation of a system of County Parks in addition to parkways, public beaches, and other public parks and playgrounds.

In the spring of 1965, the Marin County Board of Supervisors created the Marin County Parks and Recreation Department, together with the Marin County Parks and Recreation Commission, and charged both with preserving natural areas and providing recreational opportunities. That same year the Board of Supervisors adopted the

Parks and Recreation Plan 1990: Outdoor Recreation Plan for Marin County. This comprehensive plan re-evaluated Marin's recreation needs since the 1943 Plan as Marin's population continued to grow. The 1965 Plan was the blueprint that guided development of the County park system that Marin residents enjoy today.

Despite the growth of the County Parks system since 1965, by the late 1960s extensive development within the County had energized residents to do even more to save parklands and Marin's sense of place. In 1969, the Marin Conservation League provided the spark to create a County agency whose purpose would be to do just that. An advocacy group called People for Parks and Open Space formed to generate political support for a ballot measure that would create the Marin County Regional Park and Open Space District and its funding source. In 1971, the Marin County Planning Department prepared *Can the Last Place Last? Preserving the Environmental Quality of Marin*, which set forth a vision and compelling argument for open space preservation and its relationship to the quality of life in Marin. Marin voters passed ballot Measure A on November 7, 1972. The Regional Park and Open Space District's name was changed to the Marin County Open Space District in 1974, reflecting the agency's focus on land preservation.

Staff at an All-Department workday on the cliffs above Agate Beach. MCPOS archives.



Department Organization

The department within Marin County government charged with responsibility for the County's parks and open space system has evolved over the years in

response to community needs and priorities. At various times in its history it has been known as the Marin County Parks and Recreation Department, and the Marin County Department of Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services. Since 2005, it has been known as the Marin County Parks and Open Space Department. The Department possesses two divisions, the Parks and Landscape Division, which is also known as the Parks Division, and the Marin County Open Space District. The Open Space District is a separate legal entity from the County of Marin.

The Marin County Board of Supervisors governs the County of Marin, including the Parks and Open Space Department. Its same five members are also the Board of Directors of the Marin County Open Space District. The Open Space District requires its own governing board because of its status as a special district operating pursuant to the California Public Resources Code.

A Director, who reports directly to the Board of Supervisors, oversees the entire Department and is also the General Manager of the Marin County Open Space District. A Deputy Director of Administration supervises four of the Department's nine core programs—parks planning, open space planning, capital improvement, and administrative services. A Deputy Director of Operations supervises the resource management, parks maintenance and operations, open space maintenance and operations, volunteer and environmental education programs. At the present time, the Department employs 61 full-time staff members. It supplements full-time staff with up to 50 additional seasonal employees.

A nine-member Parks and Open Space Commission serves in an advisory capacity to the Board of Supervisors on policy matters related to acquisition, development, funding, management, and operation of county parks, open space and trail systems. The Board of Supervisors appoints commission members. Each of the County's five supervisorial districts has one representative on the Commission. The other four commissioners serve in an at-large capacity.

Department Budget and Funding Sources

The Department's total budget for fiscal year 2007-2008 is \$11,865,434. Of this amount, the Parks and Landscape Division budget accounted for \$4,477,178, (38%) and the Open Space District budget for \$7,388,256 (62%). Property taxes are the Department's principal and most stable revenue source. Property tax revenues for the Parks Division come from the County's General Fund, the source from which most County departments are funded. Property tax revenues for the Open Space District, as a separate legal entity from the County of Marin, bypass the General Fund and come directly to the District, as do revenues for other special districts and County Service Areas. Property tax revenues support the basic operation of the Department but, in general, are insufficient to enable the Department to pursue land acquisitions and to implement major park improvements. Parcel taxes, assessments, grants, and donations are sought for these purposes. For a detailed overview of the Department's funding, see the chapter six, Finance Plan.

Distinguishing Characteristics of the Department and its Lands, Programs, and Facilities

The creation of parks and recreation areas and the protection of open space lands in Marin has been a cooperative effort involving all levels of government and a mix of private partners and citizens. What sets the Department apart from other public park and land management agencies lies in what the Department provides to the community.

- ③ 34 open space preserves comprising 18,500 acres, which includes 15,500 acres owned by the Open Space District and 3,000 acres held as conservation easements. These lands define the boundaries of many of Marin's cities, towns, and communities. Compared to state and federal parklands in Marin, they are closest to where the majority of Marin residents live—the eastern third of the County—and they are easy to get to, within walking distance of many neighborhoods. Open space preserves are managed primarily for natural resource preservation and, with the exception of trails, do not contain developed recreational facilities of the types found in County parks. They offer visitors outstanding scenic vistas, redwood groves, cascading waterfalls, opportunities for wildlife viewing, and other natural amenities. One preserve, Bolinas Lagoon, is a Wetland of International Importance. Others contain habitat for rare, threatened, and endangered plants and animals. The Ring Mountain preserve is home to

a plant, the Tiburon Mariposa Lily, that is found no where else on earth.

- ③ Four regional parks and 27 other park facilities that include a swimming pool, two deep water fishing piers, two newly-renovated boat launches, tennis courts, basketball courts, volleyball courts, playgrounds, sports fields, open turf areas, an award-winning skate park, a disc golf course, a golf course and driving range, batting cages, picnic sites, and trails. Over 2 million visitors enjoy County parks annually.
- ③ Three paved multi-use paths extending over eight miles—connecting Mill Valley with Sausalito, Greenbrae with Ross, and Novato with Stafford Lake Park. These paths serve a dual function as key corridors in the County's bicycle transportation system, and as recreational facilities for hikers, skaters, and others.
- ③ A system of unpaved fire protection roads and trails accessed from over 280 trail heads and enjoyed by hikers, runners, mountain bicyclists, and equestrians. The system lies primarily within the open space preserves, but also includes public trail easements through private lands that link preserve to preserve, park to park, and both to neighborhoods. The Department's trail system is connected to other trail systems within other local, federal, and state parklands, creating a truly outstanding countywide trail system.

- ⦿ Park recreation programs include tennis and swim lessons; venues for private and public special events such as family picnics, weddings, summer camps and triathlons; and classes led by Park Rangers on fishing, photography, and natural history.
- ⦿ An Open Space Ranger Walks program covering subjects such as edible native plants, Native American history, Marin history, and the night sky. Walks are oriented toward families, and are conducted either on foot or on bicycle.
- ⦿ A popular Environmental Education Program offering over 100 outings per year throughout Marin County—not just within County parks and open space preserves—and guided by one of the Bay Area’s most highly regarded interpretive naturalists. Classroom and community lectures on subjects related to nature interpretation, such as coyotes and mountain lions, are also provided, as is a monthly nature almanac that appears in the *Marin Independent Journal*.
- ⦿ A growing Volunteer Program whose enthusiastic participants in 2007 contributed 19,795 hours of labor valued at \$403,000 toward projects that included habitat reclamation and trail maintenance. The program offers opportunities for adults and children, families, schools, and organizations to engage in land stewardship through work days, the Park Watch Program,



Easement Eagles (conservation easement monitoring), and the Volunteer Mounted Patrol. Aside from the work accomplished, the sense of respect for the environment gained by those who participate in the volunteer program, especially children, has long lasting benefits for the Department and our entire community.

Naturalist David Herlocker and friends after a day exploring open space. MCPOS archives.

Marin County Demographic Characteristics, Trends, and Projections

The Department must be aware of population changes, recreation trends, and public health trends if it is to remain responsive to the community it serves. Below is a brief summary of demographic, health, and recreation characteristics, trends, and projections that affect current and future planning for the Marin County park, open space and trail system.

Demography

- **Population Growth** – According to the State of California Department of Finance, Marin County had a population of 248,473 residents in 2000 and is projected to have 251,260 residents in 2020.¹
- **Age Distribution** – Although the County’s population will remain stable in the future, the proportion of those aged 65 and over will increase dramatically, from 13.8% in 2000 to 23.5% by 2010. Those approaching retirement age (ages 50+ years) and those above retirement age will continue to increase as a percentage of the Marin County population. Children under the age of 19 will continue to fluctuate as a group between slightly over or under 20%.
- **Ethnic Composition and Cultural Diversity** – The County’s ethnic composition will also change by 2020; the percentage of residents who identify themselves as Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian is projected to increase 8.3 percent.
- **Household Income** – Marin County’s median annual income in 1999 was \$78,919 and was estimated as \$81,761 in 2006.²
- **Home Prices** – Overall, median home sale prices in Marin County increased from \$352,000 in 1997 to \$718,000 in 2004, over a two-fold increase over a seven-year period.³

Figure 2-1: Projected Marin County Age Distribution

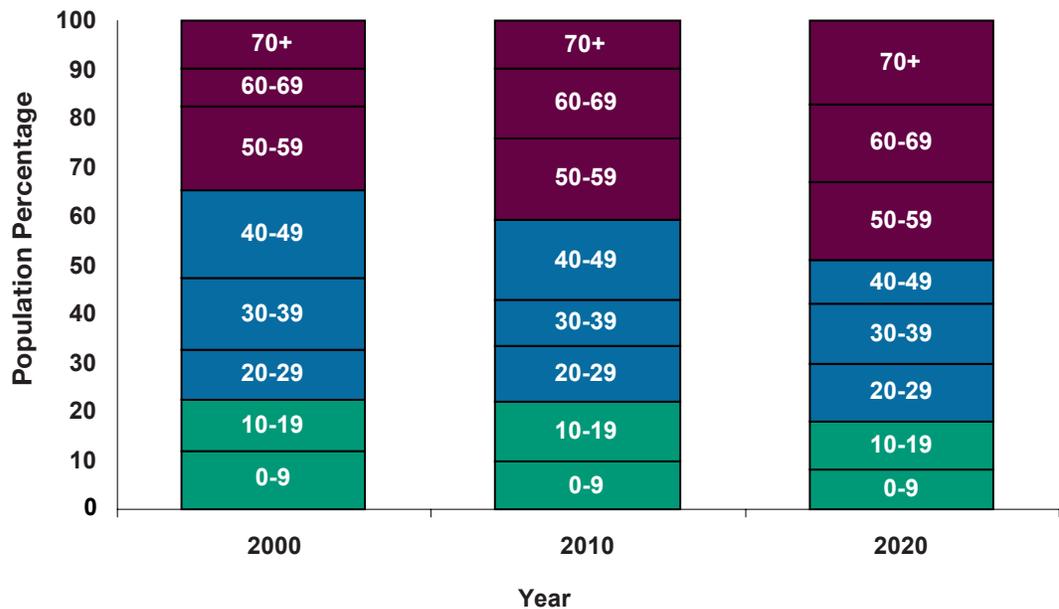
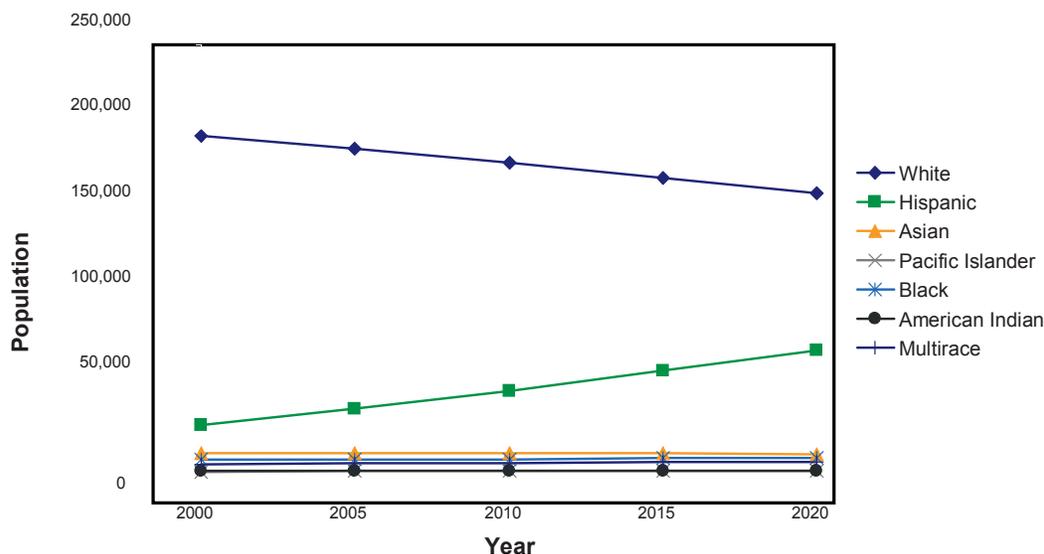


Figure 2-2: Marin County Ethnic Population Growth



Health and Wellness

- Older Adults** – *The Marin County Older Adult Community Survey* found that 39% of respondents were at high risk and another 34% were at moderate risk of malnutrition. The survey also found that 13% of Marin County's population aged 65 and over were obese and 17% were underweight. It found that more than 30% of adults 70 years and older were inactive and that 30% of Marin's elderly population has trouble exercising.⁴
- Baby Boomers** – According to the *Marin County Area Plan for Aging*, Marin County baby boomers are not expected to seek elder services for themselves during the next ten years, but more baby boomers will be providing care for their aging parents or relatives.⁵ As this segment of the population ages, it will have more leisure time, more passive recreational needs, and an increasing interest in outdoor activities.⁶
- Youth and Young Adults** – According to a 2005 *Marin County Health Needs Assessment*, 34% of young people ages two to 17 years are overweight and 30% of young adults ages 18 to 24 years are overweight.⁷ Eight-percent of Marin County children spend five or more hours a day watching TV, playing video games, and using computers, while 26% spend more than eight hours a day participating in these same activities.⁸

General Community Survey Findings

500 Marin County residents participated in a statistically valid telephone survey conducted in February and March 2007. Respondents answered questions about park and open space visitation, condition, preferred activities, facility needs, and the role of the Marin County Parks and Open Space Department. The overall margin of error for the survey results is +/- 4.4%. The following key survey findings emerged.

More than 50% of respondents strongly believe that the County should undertake the following tasks over the next few years:

- Preserve additional land to protect open space and natural areas (68%).
- Protect endangered species habitat (63%).
- Thin vegetation and build fuelbreaks to reduce the threat of wildfire (63%).
- Increase resources for land maintenance, stewardship, and conservation of the county's natural resources and historic heritage (58%).
- Provide opportunities for healthy recreation to help balance work and family responsibilities (55%).
- Increase outreach and education about county parks and open space lands to young people (55%).

More than 60% of interviewees perceive parks and open space agencies favorably.

Regardless of geographic area, age, ethnicity, or income, survey respondents shared several common outdoor activities including walking (97%), getting together

with family and friends (93%), hiking (83%), picnicking (86%), birding or wildlife observation (66%), and photography (59%). When asked what outdoor activity they will always do in the future, 41% named walking and 23% named hiking.

Additional community survey findings applicable to a specific park, open space preserve, recreation program or facility, specific geographic area, age cohorts, ethnicity, and income can be found in the 2007 Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment Report (Appendix A), which includes a detailed summary of community survey responses.

Key Needs

The Department's Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment Report identified key needs of the County's parks and open space system:

Park and Open Space Lands Needs

- Preserve additional open space.
- Preserve, enhance, and restore natural resources.
- Reduce wildland fire risk.
- Link the Department's lands with other public lands, and link both to communities.
- Control exotic plant populations.
- Inventory natural resources to support their enhancement and restoration.

Park and Open Space Recreation Facilities Needs

- Provide diverse recreation experiences.
- Provide universal access⁹ as needed.
- Replace aging facilities.
- Renovate or replace maintenance and operations and facilities.

Funding and Financing Needs

- Obtain additional, long-term revenue.
- Obtain additional funding source for open space stewardship.

Departmental Organizational Needs

- Integrate the Parks and Open Space Divisions to resolve the public's perception of two discrete agencies.
- Develop a comprehensive Communications Plan.
- Improve internal communication among all levels of Department staff.
- Increase level of intergovernmental coordination.

Population and Demographic Needs

- Address aging population needs.
- Address youth population needs.
- Address increasing cultural diversity.

Community Trends

- Address the growing significance of technology for Marin County residents.
- Examine the cause and solutions for limited use of parks and open spaces.
- Address the increasing popularity of non-traditional sports and other recreational activities.

Recreation Programming

- Provide an integrated public information program.
- Provide for limited additional recreation programs.
- Offer more special or cultural events and programs.
- Expand interpretive and educational programs.
- Increase volunteer outreach efforts.
- Offer additional programs for older adults.



The view south from White Hill Preserve to Gary Giacomini Preserve. Craig Solin.

Marin County Parks and Open Space Vision

The welcoming natural beauty of Marin's parks and open spaces . . . great rolling headlands and deep redwood forests, solitary ridge trails, cascading waterfalls and wandering streams, white egrets rising gracefully over green marshlands, recreation areas filled with the laughter of children and families . . . links people to the land, offering our community a rich source of personal discovery, joy, renewal, and health that inspires a deep sense of belonging and stewardship for generations to come.

Discover your outdoors

Vision, Mission, Goals & Strategies

Our Vision for the Future

As in 1943, 1965, and 1972, the many voices of Marin's residents and community of park and open space supporters have once again articulated a shared vision for the future of the County's park and open space system. Their creativity, commitment, hopes, needs, desires, and dreams resonate in our vision statement.

Our Mission

If a vision is a destination, a mission is true north on a compass. Our mission is a constant; it defines the work of the Department, and why the Department exists. It is also a public promise, describing the Department's relationship and responsibilities to the community, our shared lands, and the natural resources those lands possess.

Our Goals and Strategies

Goals will help the Department to achieve the community's vision of the County's park and open space system. The more goals it is able to achieve, the more the vision becomes a reality. Strategies are ways of achieving goals. If a traveler's goal is to arrive at a destination well fed and without thirst, the strategy is to bring food and water. If another goal is not to carry the burden of supplies alone, the strategy is to find a partner. These analogies are highly applicable to the Department because resources and partners figure prominently in our goals and strategies.

Through the strategic planning process, seven new goals were identified for the Department, with multiple strategies associated with each.

Mission

We are dedicated to educating, inspiring, and engaging the people of Marin in the shared commitment of preserving, protecting, and enriching the natural beauty of Marin's parks and open spaces, and providing recreational opportunities for the enjoyment of all generations.

Goals and Strategies



Pine Gulch Creek, Bolinas Lagoon Preserve. May Chen.

Goal 1 **Protect and Restore** **Our Lands**

Protect, restore, and preserve the natural systems of the lands held in trust for current and future generations.

Strategy 1.1

Employ best land management practices that preserve natural resources, promote habitat diversity, and contribute to a reduction in greenhouse gases.

Strategy 1.2

Inventory and monitor biological resources to develop, evaluate, and redefine management protocols.

Strategy 1.3

Work at the watershed level to ensure diverse and thriving biological communities.

Strategy 1.4

Incorporate habitat preservation strategies within flood control, fire protection, and other critical land management plans.

Goal 2 **Grow and Link the** **County's Systems of** **Parks, Trails, and** **Protected Lands**

Complete the County's system of parks, open space, and trails. Support the efforts of other agencies, organizations, and communities to fulfill their land preservation and system goals.

Strategy 2.1

Manage a prioritized land and trail acquisition, preservation, and improvement plan.

Strategy 2.2

Implement the Parks Master Plan to respond to changing community needs and recreation trends.

Strategy 2.3

Incorporate data regarding resource and habitat value in land acquisition decision-making including habitat and creek connectivity.



Bahia Marsh, Rush Creek Preserve. Craig Solin.



Marin Country Day School volunteer. Kirk Schroeder.

Goal 3 Foster Discovery, Learning, and Stewardship

Engage the community by providing volunteer and educational experiences for people to discover, learn about, protect, and restore their parks and open space.

Strategy 3.1

Develop an outdoor education program that complements existing local programs.

Strategy 3.2

Outreach to Marin's increasingly diverse community to increase access to and knowledge of our lands.

Strategy 3.3

Grow the volunteer program to provide experiential learning opportunities that promote land stewardship.

Goal 4 Connect Communities with the Land for Recreation and Health

Offer all people opportunities to be active and healthy while enjoying safe and well-maintained lands and facilities.

Strategy 4.1

Provide safe, quality recreation facilities and programming to promote healthy lifestyles through physical activity and to meet community needs.

Strategy 4.2

Encourage innovative recreational programming through partnerships, including partnerships with private organizations and landowners.

Strategy 4.3

Encourage alternative transportation access to parks and open spaces.

Strategy 4.4

Encourage the use of parks and open spaces for active living and healthy lifestyles.

Strategy 4.5

Ensure that accessible and inviting trails, parks, and open spaces connect communities.



Open Space Ranger staff after clearing trees infected with Sudden Oak Death. Craig Solin.

Goal 5 Lead, Innovate, and Partner

Cultivate partnerships, explore new approaches, and adopt best practices and technologies.

Strategy 5.1

Employ innovative technologies and best practices for Departmental administration, programs, operations, and land management.

Strategy 5.2

Apply principles of green design and sustainability to our work.

Strategy 5.3

Identify key partnerships to share best practices, technical knowledge, and expertise to implement plans and projects.

Goal 6 Ensure Organizational Effectiveness

Encourage innovative Department management and employee development.

Strategy 6.1

Improve communication and coordination among all divisions and management.

Strategy 6.2

Initiate and encourage collaboration among staff and with other County departments.

Strategy 6.3

Enhance staff productivity, empowerment, and satisfaction.

Strategy 6.4

Involve all Department staff in implementing the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan.



The Arcturus play structure at Lagoon Park Playground. Nancy Peake.

Goal 7

Fulfill Financial Needs

Achieve sustainable long-term financial viability to satisfy operational needs, capital requirements, and desired programs and services.

Strategy 7.1

Secure new funding to support the preservation, enhancement, and long-term maintenance of parks and open space lands.

Strategy 7.2

Manage the five-year Capital Improvement Plan to identify priority projects and funding needs.

Strategy 7.3

Generate new revenues, maximize grant funding, and obtain funding from new sources to support park programs and services.



Inkwells Bridge. Craig Solin.

Strategic Plan Framework

Goals

1

Protect and Restore Our Lands

Protect, restore, and preserve the natural systems of the lands held in trust for current and future generations.

2

Grow and Link the County's Systems of Parks, Trails, and Protected Lands

Complete the County's system of parks, open space, and trails. Support the efforts of other agencies, organizations, and communities to fulfill their land preservation and system goals.

3

Foster Discovery, Learning, and Stewardship

Engage the community by providing volunteer and educational experiences for people to discover, learn about, protect, and restore their parks and open space.

Strategies

1. Employ best land management practices that preserve natural resources, promote habitat diversity, and contribute to a reduction in greenhouse gases.
2. Inventory and monitor biological resources to develop, evaluate, and redefine management protocols.
3. Work at the watershed level to ensure diverse and thriving biological communities.
4. Incorporate habitat preservation strategies within flood control, fire protection, and other critical land management plans.

1. Manage a prioritized land and trail acquisition, preservation, and improvement plan.
2. Implement the Parks Master Plan to respond to changing community needs and recreation trends
3. Incorporate data regarding resource and habitat value in land acquisition decision-making including habitat and creek connectivity.

1. Develop an outdoor education program that complements existing local programs.
2. Outreach to Marin's increasingly diverse community to increase access to and knowledge of our lands.
3. Grow the volunteer program to provide experiential learning opportunities that promote land stewardship.

4

Connect Communities with the Land for Recreation and Health

Offer all people opportunities to be active and healthy while enjoying safe and well-maintained lands and facilities.

1. Provide safe, quality recreation facilities and programming to promote healthy lifestyles through physical activity and to meet community needs.
2. Encourage innovative recreational programming through partnerships, including partnerships with private organizations and landowners.
3. Encourage alternative transportation access to parks and open spaces.
4. Encourage the use of parks and open spaces for active living and healthy lifestyles.
5. Ensure that accessible and inviting trails, parks, and open spaces connect communities.

5

Lead, Innovate, and Partner

Cultivate partnerships, explore new approaches, and adopt best practices and technologies.

1. Employ innovative technologies and best practices for Departmental administration, programs, operations, and land management.
2. Apply principles of green design and sustainability to our work.
3. Identify key partnerships to share best practices, technical knowledge, and expertise to implement plans and projects.

6

Ensure Organizational Effectiveness

Encourage innovative Department management and employee development.

1. Improve communication and coordination among all divisions and management.
2. Initiate and encourage collaboration among staff and with other County departments.
3. Enhance staff productivity, empowerment, and satisfaction.
4. Involve all Department staff in implementing the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan.

7

Fulfill Financial Needs

Achieve sustainable long-term financial viability to satisfy operational needs, capital requirements, and desired programs and services.

1. Secure new funding to support the preservation, enhancement, and long-term maintenance of parks and open space lands.
2. Manage the five-year Capital Improvement Plan to identify priority projects and funding needs.
3. Generate new revenues, maximize grant funding, and obtain funding from new sources to support park programs and services.



Ladybird beetle on Mule-ears. Craig Solin.

Discover your outdoors



Parks Master Plan and Land Conservation Plan

A Brief Comparison of County Parks and County Open Space Preserves

Marin County's park and open space system is actually two separate systems—a park system and an open space system—that are united within the Parks and Open Space Department by a shared vision, mission, and goals. Both offer recreational opportunities in beautiful outdoor settings, but beyond these general characteristics the similarities between the two systems become less and the differences more. Funding sources are different, as described in chapter six, the Finance Plan, and most staff members are either a member of the parks staff, landscape services staff, or the open space staff. County park lands and County open space preserves even look different, because each system fulfills community needs in a different way.

Consequently, each must have its own plan to guide its future over the life of the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan.

This chapter is a summary of two documents appended to this plan, the Parks Master Plan (Appendix B) and the Land Conservation Plan (Appendix C). The Parks Master Plan outlines the needs and issues of the parks system, identifies actions necessary to achieve each Strategic Plan goal, and recommends park facility improvements. The Land Conservation Plan provides detailed direction regarding growth of the open space system.

The County's parks are developed and managed to accommodate recreation activities of all sorts—swimming, soccer, golf, basketball, tennis, and the like. In County parks, one will hear the laughter of young children on swings, smell the aroma of hot dogs barbecuing at a family picnic, and see

teens executing all manner of incredible maneuvers on their skateboards.

The experience is different but no less enjoyable in County open space preserves, where, instead of the screech of skateboards, one will hear the screech of a Red-tailed Hawk, or the sound of a cascading waterfall. Instead of hot dogs, one will smell the fragrance of wildflowers wafting from a meadow in the late morning. One won't find picnic tables, boat launches, or barbecues but will, instead, find solitude within a redwood grove, and miles of trails on which to hike, bike, or ride a horse. The experience is different because unlike parks, open space preserves are managed primarily for natural resource preservation. You are not likely to find an endangered plant within a county park, but you can in an open space preserve—if you know where and when to look.

Parks Master Plan

The Parks and Open Space Department currently operates 27 parks and park facilities located throughout Marin, serving over 2 million visitors annually. County parks range in size from less than one-half acre to more than 100 acres, with a median size of just over five acres. They are categorized as regional, community, neighborhood, or mini depending on their size and the recreational opportunities offered. The Department's four regional parks, McInnis, McNear's Beach, Stafford Lake, and Paradise Beach receive the greatest visitation, providing facilities not available elsewhere in the County. The Department also manages two boat

launches and four paved multi-use paths. The Department's Parks Division employs 33 full-time and 30 seasonal staff members. The Parks Division's budgeted expenses for fiscal year 2007-2008 totaled \$4,477,178. The Parks Division is partially self sufficient, generating revenues through park entrance fees, reservation fees, and special events amounting to 32% of annual expenditures.

The Department's 2007 Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment Report (Appendix A) found that more than 60% of Marin's population uses Marin County park facilities at least once a month. The report also outlines 15 community needs related to parks, among which are needs related to:

- Providing diverse recreation experiences.
- Securing additional long-term revenue sources.
- Accommodating recreation preferences of Marin's youth and the increasing population of older adults, including new forms of outdoor recreation.

An inventory of the County's parks facilities found that:

- There is a shortage of park facilities in the Novato, Las Gallinas, and Lower Ross Valley planning areas.
- Parks funding has not kept pace with need, resulting in a visibly aging system.
- Overall, much of the parks infrastructure has exceeded its useful life, and is in need of replacement.
- Existing regional parks have substantial capacity to accommodate new recreational facilities.

- Linkages between parks and the communities they serve could be strengthened via trails, public transit, and improvements and enhancements to encourage pedestrian and bicycle access.
- Park maintenance yards and facilities are outdated and in need of replacement or renovation.

The Parks Master Plan identifies specific improvements for each of the County's parks and facilities. Furthermore, the Capital Improvement Plan contains an extensive, prioritized list of parks capital improvement projects. Implementation over the next 20 years will require an investment of \$41,400,000 if the County is to realize its strategic plan vision for the park system. Of this amount, \$23,456,698 alone is necessary to remedy the deferred maintenance of the last three decades.

Land Conservation Plan

The second goal of the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan is to "Grow and Link the County's Systems of Parks, Trails, and Protected Lands." A related strategy is to "Manage a prioritized land and trail acquisition, preservation and improvement plan". The Land Conservation Plan is the means by which the Department implements this strategy. Implementation of the Land Conservation Plan is essential if the Department is to achieve its vision, and enables the County to fulfill its goal of preserving Marin's unique environmental heritage.

The Department currently owns and manages over 15,500 acres of public open space, and holds conservation easements

preserving 3,000 additional acres. Public opinion polls consistently show strong support for preserving additional open space in Marin.

The Land Conservation Plan directs the Department's land conservation efforts toward ten target areas, shown in Figure 4-1. These areas represent gaps between protected open space and parklands where some form of land preservation should occur, and are consistent with land preservation priorities in the Marin Countywide Plan. Targeted lands serve as community separators and greenbelts, as defined in the Countywide Plan, as wildlife corridors, and as links to other public lands. They may contain habitat for and/or populations of special status plants and animals, riparian corridors, wetlands, or critical trail connections. In 2008, the Marin County Board of Supervisors approved a set of Real Property Acquisition Policies for the Department, which included criteria for evaluating land or trails for acquisition. These policies are contained in their entirety in the Land Conservation Plan, as are descriptions of land conservation methods available to the Department.

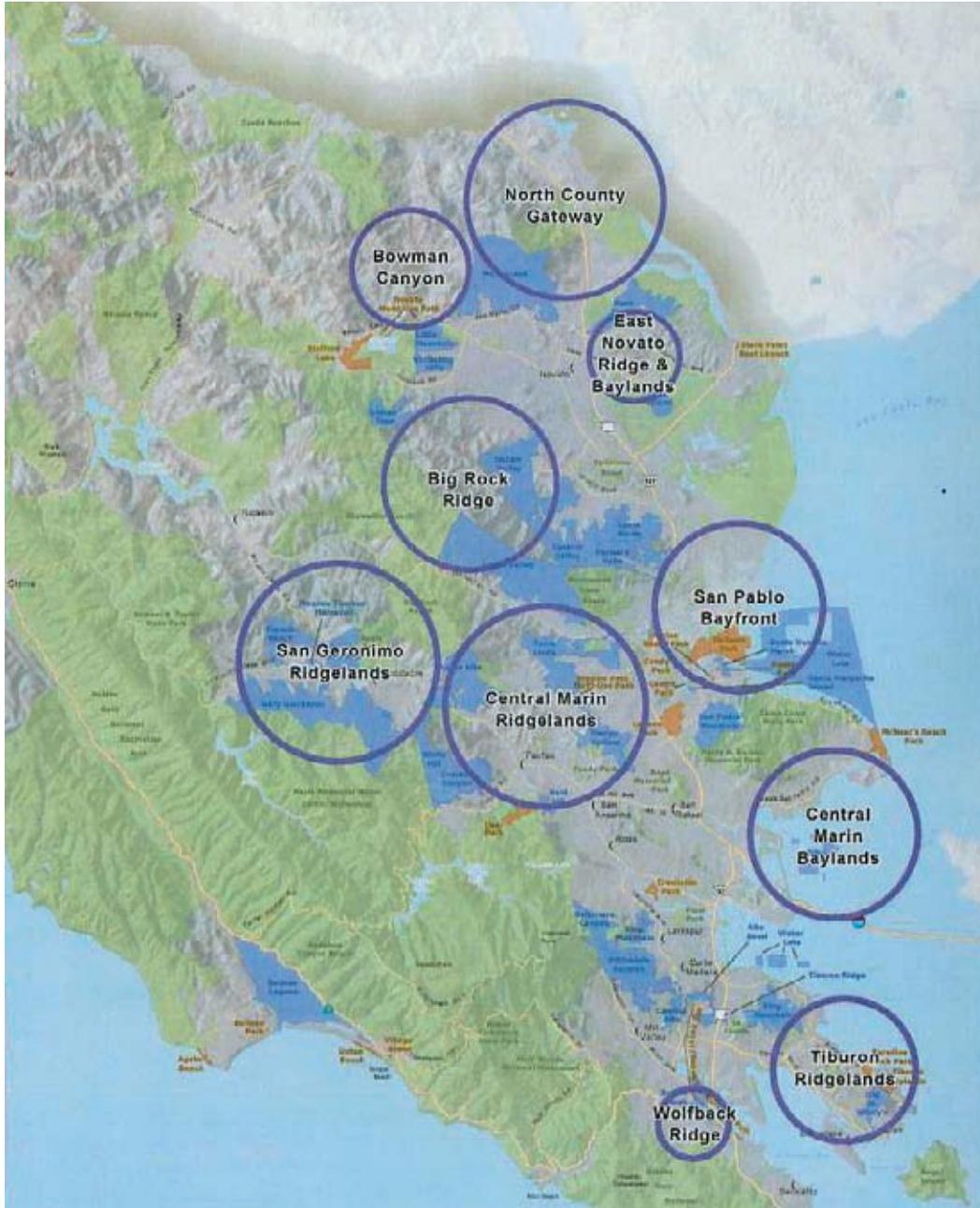
The Department's Planning and Acquisition program is primarily responsible for acquiring open space and conservation easements. To ensure the program's success in completing the County's open space system, the Land Conservation Plan contains an assessment of the program, and recommendations to address the challenges it faces. Characteristics that define the Open Space Planning and Acquisition Program include:

- Lacks funding necessary to support vigorous land acquisition efforts.
- Acquires land as opportunities arise, rather than proactively.
- Acquires primarily fee ownership, compared to conservation easements.
- Uses a wide range of land conservation tools and methods.
- Enjoys support of the Board of Supervisors.
- Possesses clear acquisition policies.
- Actively partners with other agencies and organizations to preserve land.

The Land Conservation Plan identifies the following key recommendations to improve the Department's preservation of additional lands:

- Address funding needs.
- Proactively pursue land preservation.
- Consider alternatives to fee ownership.
- Take steps to protect property interests by resolving encroachments.

Figure 4-1: Map of Land Conservation Areas





Fishing at Stafford Lake Park. Craig Solin.

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Strategic Plan Implementation

The Significance of the Strategic Plan Actions

The Strategic Plan actions transport the Parks and Open Space Department from its existing condition to the vision outlined in chapter three. Strategic Plan actions will inform the Department's annual budget development process and provide concrete direction for the work of the Department—each of its programs and every one of its staff members—over the life of the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan. The actions also set clear public expectations, and their completion becomes a measure of how well the Department is progressing toward achieving its goals.

The Pace and Scope of Implementation

Many factors will influence the pace and scope of implementation, some of which

will be outside the Department's control. The condition of the national and state economies is one example. County priorities may change based on new needs and issues. New funding that the Department seeks will be realized, hopefully, at a level and/or a time consistent with the Department's needs. The Department's and the community's expectations regarding implementation of these actions must remain flexible, and be tempered with the understanding that progress will be achieved, but in increments, and that priorities will be adjusted as needed.

This Plan Will Evolve

In the course of its 10 year lifespan, this plan will evolve in response to the above circumstances. The Department will review the plan annually, during the performance planning and budget development process, to ensure that its many components

– including goals, strategies, action plans, Parks Master Plan, Land Conservation Plan, Finance Plan, Capital Improvement Plan – remain relevant, and to gauge its progress toward implementing the plan.

Organization and Prioritization of Actions

The actions have been organized into three phases: one year, mid-term (two to five years), and long-term (five to ten years). Actions in the One Year Action Plan are either:

- Essential to laying the groundwork for implementing the mid- and long-term actions.
- Readily achievable in the short-term, with existing funding and staff levels.
- An existing high priority for the Department and the County.
- All of the above.

The number of actions in the One-Year Action Plan must also be consistent with the Department's capacity, both in staff and financial resources, to accomplish them within a single year. To facilitate budget and work plan development for the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan implementation, the Action Plan assigns implementation responsibility to one or more Department programs.

Before the list of long-term actions, a list of current practices and projects recognizes the many Department activities that are already underway, to a greater or lesser extent. Most items on this list were recommended by participants in community

outreach workshops. The Current Practices and Projects List is by far longer than the Action Plan, indicating that the Department's work has been extraordinarily consistent with the desired vision and goals outlined in Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan.

Relationship of the Strategic Plan Actions to the Parks Master Plan and the Land Conservation Plan

Certain strategies and actions related to Goal 1 "Protect and Restore Our Lands" and Goal 2 "Grow and Link the County's System of Parks, Trails, and Protected Lands" refer to the Parks Master Plan (Appendix B) and the Land Conservation Plan (Appendix C). These plans were prepared in tandem with this Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan. For the purpose of making the Strategic Plan relatively short and concise, the Parks Master Plan and the Land Conservation Plan each set forth a more comprehensive and detailed set of actions and recommendations related to the growth and stewardship of the County's park, open space, and trails system.

Action Plans

In the tables that follow, the first digit in each pair of numbers corresponds to the Goal number, and the second digit corresponds to the Strategy number. Multiple pairs of numbers indicate that an action fulfills more than one goal and/or carries out more than one strategy.

Current Practices and Projects

Strategy

Action

Goal 1

Protect and Restore Our Lands

- 1.1 Explore changes in maintenance timing and methods to minimize disturbance to natural vegetation and critical wildlife habitats.
- 1.1 Expand resource management planning and implementation to include parklands.
- 1.1 Stay apprised of the evolution of best management practices for park and open space lands. Implement best management practices.
- 1.1, 1.3, 5.3 Collaborate with local community-based organizations, other jurisdictions, and agencies to protect wildlife corridors including streamways, creekbeds, and greenways.
- 1.1, 5.1 Employ best maintenance practices to maintain park facilities.

Goal 2

Grow and Link the County's System of Parks, Trails, and Protected Lands

- 2.1, 2.2, 5.3 Explore joint land acquisition and use opportunities with partner agencies and community-based organizations when planning new parks and open spaces.
- 2.1, 4.1, 4.3 Expand the paved, multi-use path system.
- 2.1, 5.3 Nurture relationships with landowners and land agencies to create opportunities for land preservation.
- 2.1, 2.2, 4.5 Plan for a network of shared-use trails and pathways linking communities with Department lands.
- 2.1, 2.2, 7.1 Utilize a full palette of land preservation tools to expand the park and open space system.
- 2.1, 5.1, 5.3 Proactively pursue opportunities for trail easements.
- 2.1, 5.3 Coordinate implementation of the Land Conservation Plan with other regional land conservation planning efforts.

Current Practices and Projects

Strategy	Action
Goal 3	Foster Discovery, Learning, and Stewardship
3.2, 5.1	Use universal communication tools, such as symbols and icons, in outreach materials.
3.2, 5.1	Communicate the link between land stewardship and appropriate use of parks and open space through enforcement, signage, and education.
3.2, 5.1, 5.3	Address the needs of multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and diverse age groups in all planning efforts.
3.3	Develop an “Adopt-A-” program and encourage neighborhood groups and community organizations to adopt parks, open space preserves, and trails.
3.3, 5.3, 6.2	Continue collaboration with other agencies and organizations to share volunteer resources and ideas.
4.1	Provide recreational facilities promoting health and wellness targeted to youth interests.
Goal 4	Connect Communities with the Land for Recreation and Health
4.3, 4.5, 5.3, 6.2	Participate in countywide transportation and land planning efforts to support and advocate for public transit and trails linking communities and Department lands.
Goal 5	Lead, Innovate, and Partner
5.3, 1.1	Collaborate with research institutions to advance land management and research.
Goal 6	Ensure Organizational Effectiveness
6.1, 3.3	Strengthen the internal collaboration between the volunteer program and all other parks and open space programs.
6.1, 6.3, 5.1	Evaluate employment needs of the Department seasonally.
6.1, 6.4	Hold biannual all-Department staff meetings.
6.2, 5.3	Encourage staff involvement in multi-department County projects.
6.2, 5.3	Seek countywide project and program collaboration opportunities.
6.3, 5.1	Refine performance measures and promote goal achievement annually.
6.3, 5.1	Recognize meritorious work performed by staff through one or more annual awards.
6.3, 5.1	Communicate expectations for job performance consistent with maintaining work-life balance.

Current Practices and Projects

Strategy	Action
6.3, 5.1	Plan for workforce succession.
6.3, 5.1, 5.2	Consider telecommuting and flexible staff schedules to accommodate work-life balance, and seasonal needs, and to reduce energy use.
6.4, 5.1	Prepare the Department's future annual performance plans based on the medium and long term actions identified in this Strategic Plan.
6.4, 6.1, 5.1	Assess and communicate progress on achieving Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan goals annually.
6.4, 6.1, 5.1	Regularly involve staff in long-range planning for the Department.
6.4, 6.3	Encourage staff leadership in the implementation of the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan.

Goal 7

Fulfill Financial Needs

7.1, 7.2, 7.3	Compete strategically for County, State, and Federal fiscal resources.
7.1, 7.3	Proactively pursue a mix of multiple long-term and short-term funding sources that will meet ongoing operational needs and project needs.
7.2, 5.1	Update and adhere to an annual, prioritized Capital Improvement Plan.
7.2, 6.4	Assign project priorities consistent with the County and Department Strategic Plans, and Department goals.
7.3	Initiate and monitor legislation beneficial to the Department's interests and financial needs.

Volunteer installing drought tolerant plants, McInnis Park. Kirk Schroeder.



One Year Action Plan

Strategy	Action	Responsibility
Goal 1	Protect and Restore Our Lands	
1.1	Prepare a high level Resource Management Plan that includes goals, priorities, timetable for implementation, partnerships, costs, and an organizational structure for the Resource Management Program.	Resource Management, Administration
1.1	Address climate change in Resource Management Plan.	Resource Management
1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 5.3, 6.2	Develop a system-wide vegetation management plan to manage invasive weeds, reduce fuel loads, and reduce the threat of wildfire.	Resource Management
1.3	Coordinate with other jurisdictions and agencies on watershed management, and ecosystem and habitat planning.	Resource Management
1.3, 1.1	Restore or repair sediment-generating areas to protect fisheries.	Resource Management
Goal 2	Grow and Link the County's System of Parks, Trails, and Protected Lands	
2.1	Proactively pursue land and trail acquisitions with willing landowners.	Open Space Planning
2.1, 2.3, 5.3	Implement the Land Conservation Plan, and coordinate with regional and local conservation planning efforts.	Open Space Planning
2.1, 2.5	Coordinate implementation of the Land Conservation Plan with local and regional land conservation planning efforts.	Open Space Planning
2.2	Develop master plans for major park facilities.	Park Planning
2.2, 5.1, 5.3	Proactively pursue park development and improvement funding.	Park Planning, Administration
Goal 3	Foster Discovery, Learning, and Stewardship	
3.2	Upgrade Department website to encourage use and awareness of the park and open space system.	Administration
3.2	Add Spanish language access to Department website.	Administration
3.2	Enhance website interactivity to enable reporting and collection of data regarding use of Department lands, and to provide additional program information.	Administration

One Year Action Plan

Strategy	Action	Responsibility
3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.4, 5.1	<p>Develop a comprehensive plan for the outdoor education and interpretive program that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes innovative use of technology. • Serves a diverse audience in terms of culture, language, age, and ability. • Includes volunteer opportunities. • Includes an expanded Ranger Walks program. 	Environmental Education, Volunteer, Administration
3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.4	Develop a plan for the volunteer program that covers program goals, staff structure, sub-programs, outreach, communications, incentives, and material needs.	Volunteer, Administration
3.2, 5.1	Promote Department activities through regular press releases and distribution of an electronic quarterly Departmental newsletter.	Administration
3.2, 5.3	Collaborate with schools, community groups, and local recreation departments in the programming and design of parks.	Environmental Education, Volunteer, Park Planning
3.3	Expand the Park Volunteer Watch Program.	Volunteer, Park Maintenance and Operations
3.3, 5.3	Continue to coordinate with community-based organizations to undertake volunteer resource management and maintenance projects that match community interests and needs.	Volunteer
4.2	Explore innovative facilities and programming that set the Department's lands apart from other public parks.	Volunteer
Goal 4	Connect Communities with the Land for Recreation and Health	
4.2	Explore partnerships to provide specialized recreational facilities that cannot be accommodated in existing parks and open space preserves.	Park Planning Open Space Planning
4.3	Continue installation of bike racks at parks, and explore the feasibility of providing bike boxes.	Park Maintenance and Operations, Park Planning
4.3	Identify and begin implementing incentives to encourage non-motorized transportation to parks and open space preserves.	Administration, Park Planning, Open Space Planning
4.3, 5.3, 2.3	Explore expanded public transit access to parks and open space in partnership with Marin Transit.	Administration, Park Planning

One Year Action Plan

Strategy	Action	Responsibility
Goal 5	Lead, Innovate, and Partner	
5.1, 1.2	Expand use of geographic information systems and new technologies to inventory lands, document conditions, and schedule maintenance.	Resource Management, Open Space Maintenance and Operations, Park Maintenance and Operations
5.3, 1.1	Partner with Conservation Corps North Bay to expand Department's land management capacity.	Administration, Park Maintenance and Operations, Open Space Maintenance and Operations
5.3, 3.2	Partner with Marin land managers to develop a new Healthy Marin map.	Administration
Goal 6	Ensure Organizational Effectiveness	
6.1	Develop and implement an internal communication plan, including an internal staff newsletter, to share news, knowledge, and accomplishments.	Administration
6.1, 6.3	Hold an annual all-Department work day to foster team-building.	Administration
6.1, 6.4	Develop a private funding partnership with the Marin Open Space Trust.	Administration
6.3	Establish a Department creativity and innovation award.	Administration
6.3, 5.3	Develop an internship program to assist full-time staff with special projects.	All Programs
6.4, 6.2, 6.3	Create Department Strategic Plan Committee to monitor progress of Strategic Plan implementation and make recommendations to facilitate progress.	Administration
Goal 7	Fulfill Financial Needs	
7.1, 7.3	Seek new, ongoing funding required to implement strategic plan.	Administration
7.1, 7.3	Develop a private funding partnership with the Marin Open Space Trust.	Administration
7.3, 7.1	Develop one new park event as a significant fundraiser.	Administration
7.3, 6.3	Assign and train a staff member to research and apply for grants.	Administration

Mid-Term Action Plan

Strategy	Action	Responsibility
Goal 1	Protect and Restore Our Lands	
1.1	Prepare and implement a Geologic and Cultural Resource Management Plan.	Resource Management
1.1, 1.2	Develop new conservation document based on best practices.	Administration, Open Space Planning
1.1, 1.2, 1.4	Begin Implementation of a Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Plan.	Resource Management
1.2	Continue inventory of non-native plant populations.	Resource Management
1.2	Improve baseline documentation of conservation easements.	Open Space Planning, Resource Management,
1.3	Prepare and implement a Road and Trail Management Plan.	Resource Management, Open Space Maintenance and Operations
Goal 3	Foster Discovery, Learning, and Stewardship	
3.1, 3.2	Study the feasibility of developing and sustaining an interpretive nature center.	Environmental Education, Administration
3.2, 6.1	Develop a comprehensive communications plan that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes outreach to underserved, non-English speaking, and diverse communities. • Increases outreach to seniors. • Increases outreach to schools. • Explores a new visual identity for the Department. • Promotes the health benefits of parks and open space. • Encourages use of County parks as venues for community and neighborhood events. • Includes outreach to neighborhoods through newsletters and other grassroots communications. 	Administration
3.3	Explore creation of specialized volunteer teams to perform minor maintenance.	Volunteer

Mid-Term Action Plan

Strategy	Action	Responsibility
Goal 4	Connect Communities with the Land for Recreation and Health	
3.1, 3.2, 4.4, 5.1	Develop virtual tours of parks and open spaces, and podcasts of interpretive hikes, and provide them on the Department's website.	Environmental Education, Information Services and Technology
3.2, 4.4	Develop and implement a method to communicate trail steepness and other characteristics for the benefit of trail users.	Open Space Planning
4.1	Provide outdoor venues for cultural, community, and arts events.	Park Planning
4.1, 4.2	Provide new water-related recreation facilities.	Park Planning
4.1, 4.5	Coordinate with EOC on revisions to the County Emergency Operations Plan related to park facilities.	Administration, Park Maintenance & Operations
4.2, 4.1, 5.3	Explore opportunities for recreational easements to enable public recreational use of school grounds during non-school hours.	Park Planning
4.2, 5.3	Explore and participate in local community health programs that can be implemented through programs and facilities available in County parks.	Administration
4.3	Identify and work toward removing barriers to non-motorized transportation access, such as lack of bike lanes and sidewalks, at park sites and trailheads.	Park Planning
Goal 5	Lead, Innovate, and Partner	
5.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4	Partner with the bicycle community to plan and build a bike park.	Park Planning
6.2, 5.3	Facilitate information exchanges and cross-training programs for staff with neighboring land management agencies.	All Programs
6.2, 5.3	Explore the feasibility of collaborative land management involving adjacent landowners, other county departments, and agencies managing adjoining public lands.	Administration
Goal 6	Ensure Organizational Effectiveness	
6.1, 5.1	Create goals, and an annual list of initiatives for each Department program.	Administration
6.1, 5.1	Employ "360 degree" performance evaluations.	Administration

Strategy	Action	Responsibility
6.3	Develop and implement a plan that encourages life-long professional development through sabbaticals, job exchanges, and other professional development opportunities.	Administration
6.3	Develop a comprehensive training program for all field staff based on an inventory of staff needs and training opportunities.	All Programs
6.4	Explore development of “Whole Measures,” a set of metrics that links environmental and social values, to complement traditional measures set forth in the Strategic Plan.	Administration

Long-Term Action Plan

Strategy	Action	Responsibility
Goal 1	Protect and Restore Our Lands	
1.1	Prevent further introduction or spread of invasive weed populations in open space preserves while reducing or eradicating existing populations.	Resource Management
1.1	Review and update the system-wide assessment of sediment sources at time intervals consistent with best management practices.	Resource Management
1.1	Explore creation of an easement stewardship assistance program to enable better stewardship of conservation easements by land owners.	Administration, Open Space Planning
1.1, 1.2	Update inventories of invasive weeds and special status plant populations at time intervals consistent with best management practices.	Resource Management
Goal 2	Grow and Link the County's System of Parks, Trails, and Protected Lands	
2.1, 2.3	Update the Land Conservation Plan every ten years.	Open Space Planning
2.2	Update the County's Parks Master Plan every ten years to respond to community needs, changing demographics and recreational trends.	Parks Planning
4.1	Update the Needs Assessment every ten years.	All Programs
6.3	Restore and upgrade the Department's maintenance and service facilities.	Park Maintenance and Operations, Open Space Maintenance and Operations



White Hill Trail. Craig Solin.



Indian Falls, Indian Valley Preserve. Craig Solin.

Discover your outdoors



The Finance Plan

The improvement and growth of the County's park, open space, and trails system will require substantial investment, but will yield a wide range of public recreational, environmental, and economic benefits. However, funding is not currently available for most of the proposed facilities, enhancements and improvements outlined in the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan. Similarly, increased maintenance and stewardship responsibilities associated with new park facilities, more open space, and the Department's desire to raise the level of land stewardship that it currently provides all require additional staff and financial resources. This Finance Plan comprehensively addresses all aspects of the funding necessary for the Department to achieve its strategic plan vision.

The Finance Plan includes the following components:

- ⦿ A database summary of the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), listing all projects including proposed park improvements, open space stewardship projects, and open space land acquisitions, along with phasing, priorities and funding options. The CIP is Appendix D of the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan.
- ⦿ An estimate of the ongoing maintenance and operations costs to support existing operational needs, including staff costs, and to provide increased resources associated with new capital projects, stewardship projects, and land acquisitions.
- ⦿ A finance strategy that considers funding requirements over a 20 year period for the CIP and for maintenance and operations.

- ⊙ A summary of sources from which to obtain the funds required to implement the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan.

Improved management of natural resources also contributes to a need for additional funding. Additional service costs for the full CIP and land acquisition program could grow to over \$2 million annually.

Finance Plan Summary

Table 6-1 provides a summary of the major components of the Finance Plan. The Finance Plan is summarized below and described in greater detail in subsequent sections.

1. The Parks and Open Space CIP identifies \$226.5 million in capital improvements and land acquisitions to improve Marin County's park, open space, and trails system. Planned improvements include a range of park projects to renovate existing facilities, improve accessibility, and increase the diversity of recreational amenities. Open space land acquisition will nearly double the Department's existing 15,000 acres of open space. Open space stewardship projects will improve habitat and natural resource management, address fire hazard reduction needs, provide for road and trail improvements, and address other land management concerns.
2. As capital improvements and land acquisitions occur, operating costs will rise. The addition of more than 15,000 acres of open space, plus new park and open space facilities, will require an increase in staff and maintenance expenditures.
3. Current funding sources are inadequate to fund proposed CIP improvements and related maintenance and operations costs. Existing sources, including County capital project funding, grants and private donations, and the creation of special districts, will provide approximately \$72 million of the capital funds required. An additional \$80 million are projected from various non-governmental sources, including foundations, donations, and trusts.
4. Substantial new funding sources are required to achieve the vision set forth in the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan. Anticipated public and private sources will fund only \$152 million of the \$226 million of park improvements, open space stewardship projects, and land acquisitions. In addition, funds will be required to operate and maintain the additional facilities and open space lands over the next 20 years.
5. The proposed Finance Plan requires voter-approved additional revenues to implement the CIP. An essential component of the Finance Plan is a sales tax initiative that would provide \$100 million (\$50 million of which would be available to the

Department) over a 20-year period. The sales tax, in conjunction with existing revenue sources, should be sufficient to fund high priority projects and acquisitions, which account for nearly 50 percent of the total, and their related service costs. Additional sources, such as a general obligation (G.O.) bond, may be required in the future if proposed sources do not fully materialize, or if additional improvements or services are required.

6. Action is required to secure funding for high-priority projects:

- Refine cost estimates, timing, and priorities for park improvements and open space stewardship projects and acquisitions.
- Form partnerships to identify and secure funding for specific projects.
- Explore a ballot measure related to a proposed sales tax increase.
- Conduct public outreach regarding the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan, including information regarding potential economic benefits.

7. Projects and land acquisitions will need to be phased as new funding sources become available. Even with the proposed new funding sources, revenues may not be sufficient to fully fund all proposed improvements and related service costs. Lower priority projects may need to be deferred, particularly

if additional major new sources of funding are not realized.

8. New special districts should be created where feasible to provide funding for improvements and services of local benefit. Creation of new special districts provides a mechanism for funding lower priority projects that otherwise may be deferred. The districts can also assure an adequate and stable source of funding for maintenance of lands or projects. Districts may include County Service Areas (CSAs), Community Service Districts (CSDs), assessment districts and Mello-Roos Community Facility Districts (CFDs).

McInnis Park. Craig Solin.



Table 6-1: Finance Plan Summary (Millions of Fiscal Year [FY] 2007-2008 Dollars)

	Capital Projects & Land Acquisition		Annual Increase in Maintenance
	20-Year Total	Annual Avg.	
FUNDING REQUIREMENTS			
Open Space Projects CIP	\$33,400,000	\$1,670,000	\$12,500
Open Space Acquisition	146,700,000	7,335,000	68,000
Parks Projects CIP	41,400,000	2,070,000	13,100
Trails Program	<u>5,000,000</u>	<u>250,000</u>	<u>16,800</u>
Subtotal	\$226,500,000	\$11,325,000	\$110,400
			\$23,158,000 over 20 years
FUNDING SOURCES			
<u>Public</u>			
Grants (State & Federal)	\$55,000,000		
County Capital Funds (parks)	5,000,000		
Existing CSA's (assessments)	6,000,000		
New CSA's (assessments)	<u>6,000,000</u>		<u>\$6,000,000</u>
Subtotal	\$72,000,000		\$6,000,000
<u>Private and Non-Profit</u>			
Trails Legacy Fund	5,000,000		
MOST	40,000,000		
Foundations	30,000,000		
Other Donations	<u>5,000,000</u>		
Subtotal	\$80,000,000		
<u>New Sources</u>			
Sales Tax Initiative	\$82,842,000		\$17,158,000
 TOTAL, All Sources	 \$234,842,000		 \$23,158,000
Net Funding Available (shortfall)	\$8,342,000		\$0

Table 6-2: 20 Year Total Capital Funding Needs*

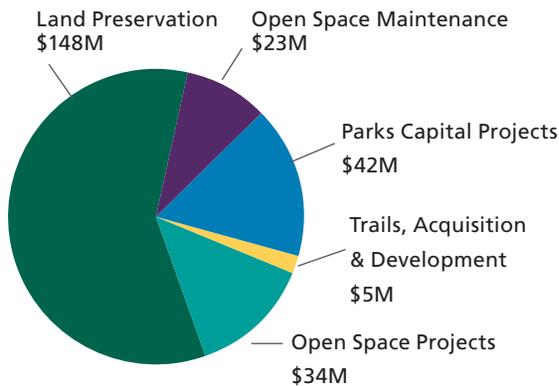
Program	Total
Open Space Projects CIP	\$ 33,400,000
Open Space Acquisition ¹	146,700,000
Parks Projects CIP	41,400,000
Trails Program ²	<u>5,000,000</u>
Total	\$226,500,000

Notes:

1. New open space acquisitions assume a total of 15,100 acres.
2. Trails costs assume acquisition of easements for 50 miles of trail at \$30,000 per mile (of the trails to be acquired, improvements built on 100% improvements at \$70,000 per mile).

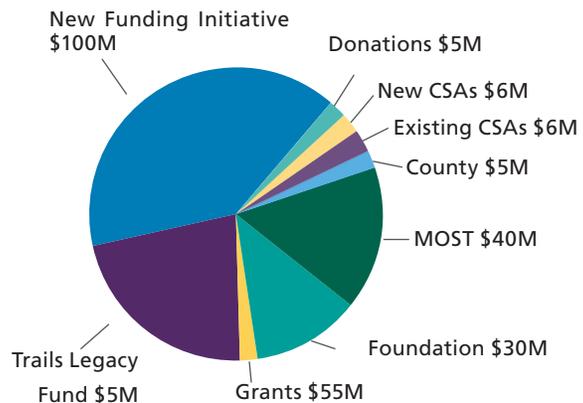
* In millions of FY 2007-2008 dollars

Figure 6-1: Funding Requirements – 20 Years*



*Millions of FY 2007-2008 Dollars, rounded

Figure 6-2: Proposed Funding Sources – 20 Years*



Projects and Land Acquisition

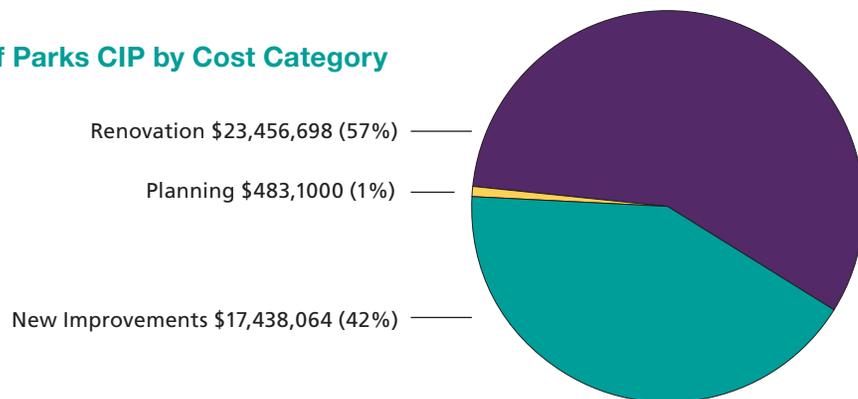
The Department has undertaken an extensive process to identify and refine stewardship and facility improvement projects and land acquisitions that further its strategic

plan goals. This section describes those projects and their funding requirements. Table 6-2 and Figure 6-2 summarize total CIP and land acquisition costs. Figure 6-2 summarizes proposed funding sources.

Table 6-3: Summary of Parks CIP

Park	Cost Category			TOTAL
	Renovation	New Improvements	Planning	
Black Point Boat Launch	\$0	\$783,666	\$0	\$783,666
Chicken Ranch Beach	\$1,016,400	\$0	\$0	\$1,016,400
Civic Center Campus	\$3,799,188	\$132,000	\$0	\$3,931,188
Lagoon Park	\$1,505,350	\$0	\$102,850	\$1,608,200
Creekside Park (CSA 17)	\$2,680,590	\$120,002	\$350,000	\$3,150,592
Deer Park	\$87,956	\$0	\$0	\$87,956
Eldred Preserve	\$23,925	\$0	\$0	\$23,925
Homestead Valley (CSA 14)	\$1,923,900	\$0	\$0	\$1,923,900
Inkwells II	\$0	\$528,000	\$0	\$528,000
Lucas Valley Department Field Office	\$78,650	\$0	\$0	\$78,650
McInnis	\$4,353,195	\$5,413,191	\$0	\$9,766,386
McNear's Beach	\$4,200,117	\$2,505,360	\$0	\$6,705,477
Mill Valley/Sausalito Multi-Use Path	\$1,656,356	\$0	\$0	\$1,656,356
Miller Boat Launch	\$0	\$481,800	\$0	\$481,800
Novato Bike Path	\$748,935	\$0	\$0	\$748,935
Paradise Beach	\$1,177,550	\$220,000	\$30,250	\$1,427,800
Pueblo Park	\$0	\$396,000	\$0	\$396,000
Stafford Lake	\$48,400	\$5,923,500	\$0	\$5,971,900
Multiple Park Facilities Improvements	\$494,890	\$1,426,590	\$0	\$1,921,480
Village Green Stinson Beach (CSA 33)	\$203,500	\$0	\$0	\$203,500
White House Pool	\$474,197	\$0	\$0	\$474,197
TOTAL	\$24,473,098 57%	\$17,930,108 42%	\$483,100 1%	\$42,886,306 100%

Figure 6-3: Summary of Parks CIP by Cost Category



Park Projects CIP

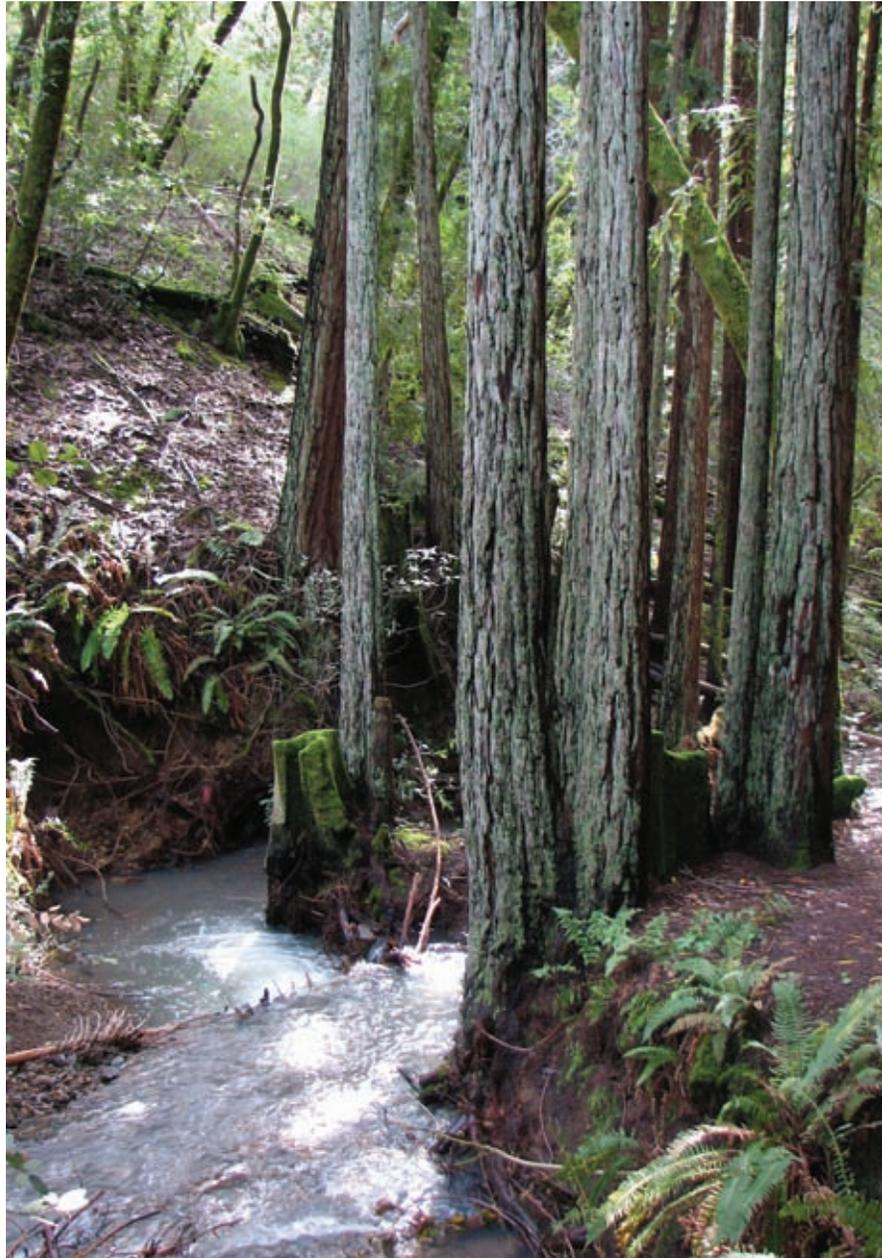
As described in the 2007 Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment Report (Appendix A), the County’s park-related needs include replacement of aging facilities, improved accessibility, and increased diversification of recreation facilities to meet community needs now and into the future.

Table 6-3 summarizes the different project types and associated costs for each County park. Figure 6-3 summarizes the Parks CIP. Estimated costs include planning, design, construction, and contingencies. The list was developed through an assessment of facilities and a community outreach process, including public workshops and meetings, and a statistically valid telephone survey of 500 Marin residents. The projects, totaling \$41.4 million, have been prioritized according to criteria including how well each project meets the County’s Strategic Plan goals, legal mandates, operational benefits, mitigation of hazards, reduction of safety threats, community support, and availability of special funding.

The Department has identified approximately \$19.4 million of high priority project expenditures. Initiation of these projects will depend on funding strategies and available funding sources, which are described in more detail later in this chapter.

Open Space Land Acquisition

Preserving additional open space in Marin County was the highest priority in the resident survey included in the 2007 Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment Report, as well as the funding poll conducted in



Redwoods along Larkspur Creek, Baltimore Canyon Preserve. May Chen.

February 2008. The 1972 Marin County-wide Plan targeted approximately 28,000 to 30,000 acres for open space preservation, and this figure was reconfirmed in the 2007 update of the Countywide Plan.¹⁰ The Department’s existing 15,500 acre open

Table 6-4: Summary of Open Space Projects

Preserve	TOTAL	Habitat and Natural Resource Inventory	Resource Management	Road and Trail Improvements	Built Features, Boundary, and Encroachments	Drains and Sediment Control	Other
Projects by Preserve							
Alto Bowl	\$1,242,600	\$180,000	\$726,000	\$158,400	\$79,200	\$99,000	\$0
Bald Hill	\$680,900	\$0	\$423,500	\$79,200	\$46,200	\$132,000	\$0
Baltimore Canyon	\$1,869,800	\$618,000	\$605,000	\$429,000	\$217,800	\$0	\$0
Blithedale Summit	\$1,010,350	\$0	\$574,750	\$415,800	\$19,800	\$0	\$0
Bolinas Lagoon	\$1,255,000	\$750,000	\$0	\$0	\$330,000	\$0	\$175,000
Bothin Marsh+Strawberry Tidelands	\$33,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$33,000	\$0	\$0
Camino Alto	\$1,112,200	\$120,000	\$484,000	\$198,000	\$0	\$310,200	\$0
Cascade Canyon	\$1,202,300	\$0	\$423,500	\$778,800	\$0	\$0	\$0
Deer Island	\$389,400	\$0	\$0	\$59,400	\$330,000	\$0	\$0
French Ranch	\$475,200	\$0	\$0	\$475,200	\$0	\$0	\$0
Gary Giacomini	\$645,000	\$0	\$0	\$495,000	\$0	\$0	\$150,000
Horse Hill	\$247,200	\$102,000	\$0	\$72,600	\$72,600	\$0	\$0
Ignacio Valley	\$105,600	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$105,600	\$0	\$0
Indian Tree	\$138,600	\$0	\$0	\$138,600	\$0	\$0	\$0
Indian Valley	\$725,400	\$210,000	\$0	\$455,400	\$0	\$0	\$60,000
King Mountain	\$184,200	\$72,000	\$0	\$112,200	\$0	\$0	\$0
Little Mountain	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Loma Alta	\$692,400	\$72,000	\$0	\$600,600	\$19,800	\$0	\$0
Loma Verde	\$66,000	\$0	\$0	\$66,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Lucas Valley	\$25,300	\$0	\$0	\$19,800	\$5,500	\$0	\$0
Maurice Thorne Memorial	\$33,000	\$0	\$0	\$26,400	\$6,600	\$0	\$0
Mount Burdell	\$904,200	\$132,000	\$0	\$343,200	\$363,000	\$66,000	\$0
Old St Hilary's	\$79,200	\$0	\$0	\$79,200	\$0	\$0	\$0
Pacheco Valle	\$213,600	\$0	\$0	\$99,000	\$0	\$39,600	\$75,000
Ring Mountain	\$630,000	\$300,000	\$0	\$39,600	\$92,400	\$198,000	\$0
Roys Redwoods	\$65,890	\$0	\$0	\$39,600	\$26,290	\$0	\$0
Rush Creek	\$667,200	\$60,000	\$0	\$257,400	\$198,000	\$151,800	\$0
San Pedro Ridge	\$112,200	\$0	\$0	\$112,200	\$0	\$0	\$0
Santa Margarita Island	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Santa Venetia Marsh	\$360,000	\$360,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Terra Linda / Sleepy Hollow	\$1,243,790	\$354,000	\$381,150	\$418,440	\$90,200	\$0	\$0
Tiburon Ridge	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Verissimo Hills	\$33,000	\$0	\$0	\$33,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
White Hill	\$211,200	\$0	\$0	\$191,400	\$19,800	\$0	\$0
SUBTOTAL	\$16,653,730	\$3,330,000	\$3,617,900	\$6,193,440	\$2,055,790	\$996,600	\$460,000
		20%	22%	37%	12%	6%	3%
Regional Projects							
Agency Projects	\$4,747,000	\$949,660	\$1,140,501	\$1,052,496	\$404,250	\$460,947	\$65,298
System Wide Projects	\$8,528,000	\$960,000	\$4,235,000	\$1,221,000	\$792,000	\$1,320,000	\$0
North Preserves	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Central Preserves	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
West Preserves	\$1,112,100	\$0	\$181,500	\$0	\$0	\$930,600	\$0
South Preserves	<u>\$2,400,000</u>	<u>\$2,400,000</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>
SUBTOTAL	\$16,787,100	\$4,309,660	\$5,557,001	\$2,273,496	\$1,196,250	\$2,711,547	\$65,298
		26%	33%	14%	7%	16%	0%
TOTAL	33,440,830	7,639,660	9,174,901	8,466,936	3,252,040	3,708,147	525,298

Source: Marin County Parks and Open Space, 3/11/08

space system would nearly double in size with the acquisition of an additional 15,100 acres, which would cost approximately \$146.7 million. Priority land conservation areas comprise approximately \$60 million of the total. Specific acquisitions will depend upon the availability of funding when purchase opportunities arise.

Open Space Projects CIP

Open space, although natural in character, requires expenditures for stewardship activities as well as to provide for use and access by the public. Expenditure categories consist of vegetation management, habitat reclamation and biodiversity, natural resource inventories, road and trail improvements, facilities and other built features, management of boundaries and encroachments, and drainage control. Table 6-4 lists \$33.4 million of expenditures for open space stewardship projects. Figure 6-4 summarized the Open Space CIP by cost categories.

Trails Program

The Countywide Plan contains a Trails Plan for the County. The Trails Plan includes

approximately 50 miles of new trails.¹¹ The majority of these trails would require the acquisition of easements, as well as construction. A portion of the new trails would be constructed on existing Open Space District land, or on County parkland.

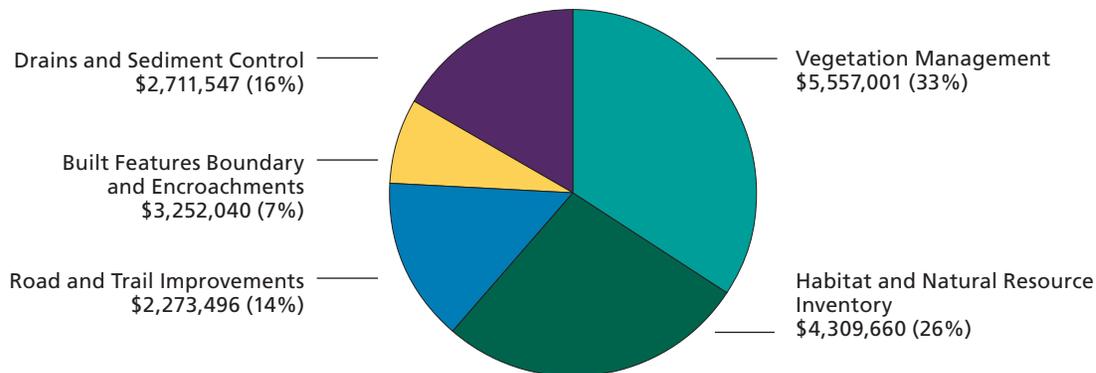
Parks and Open Space Services

The level of maintenance and stewardship provided for existing Department lands and facilities will rise with implementation of the CIP, leading to higher costs for staff, services and materials. The higher level of services would be applied to new lands and facilities. The funding necessary to raise the Department’s standard of maintenance and stewardship is not currently available, and must be sought from multiple sources.

Existing Services

The Parks and Open Space Department has 61 full-time employees and 50 seasonal employees, all of whom are directly or indirectly involved with maintenance and stewardship.

Figure 6-4: Summary of Open Space Projects by Cost Category



The Department provides services through the following core programs:

- **Maintenance and Operations**
 - The Parks Maintenance and Operations Program and Open Space Maintenance and Operations Program are responsible for maintaining park and open space facilities, managing public use of Department lands by educating visitors and enforcing the respective Parks and Open Space District Codes, and monitoring land conditions and natural resources.
- **Resource Management** – The Resource Management Program is responsible for overall resource management planning and implementation on Department lands, including preparing inventories of non-native plants, special status species, and

other resources; and developing, assembling funding for, and implementing erosion control, non-native plant control, habitat reclamation, habitat enhancement, and other resource management projects. As the Open Space District transitions from a land acquisition to a resource management role, additional staff will be required.

- **Planning** – The Open Space Planning and Acquisition Program is responsible for planning and acquiring new land, conservation easements, and trail easements; assembling funding packages for land and easement purchases; reviewing development proposals affecting Open Space District land and trail interests; planning trails and other improvements; fulfilling environmental review requirements for park and open space

Cemetery Marsh, Rush Creek Preserve. MCPOS archives.



Table 6-5: Existing Operating Revenues and Expenditures Open Space District

		FY 2007-2008
REVENUES¹		
Property Tax ²		\$4,806,700
Use of Money and Property		97,100
Intergovernmental ³		25,000
Miscellaneous ⁴		<u>1,000</u>
	Subtotal	\$4,929,800
EXPENDITURES⁵		
Salaries and Benefits		\$2,874,000
Professional Services		544,000
Administration & Finance Services		321,000
Maintenance & Repairs ⁶		719,000
Vehicles, Equipment, and Furnishings ⁷		22,000
Other Operating Expenditures ⁸		340,800
Indirect County Overhead		<u>109,000</u>
	Subtotal	\$4,929,800
	Net	\$0

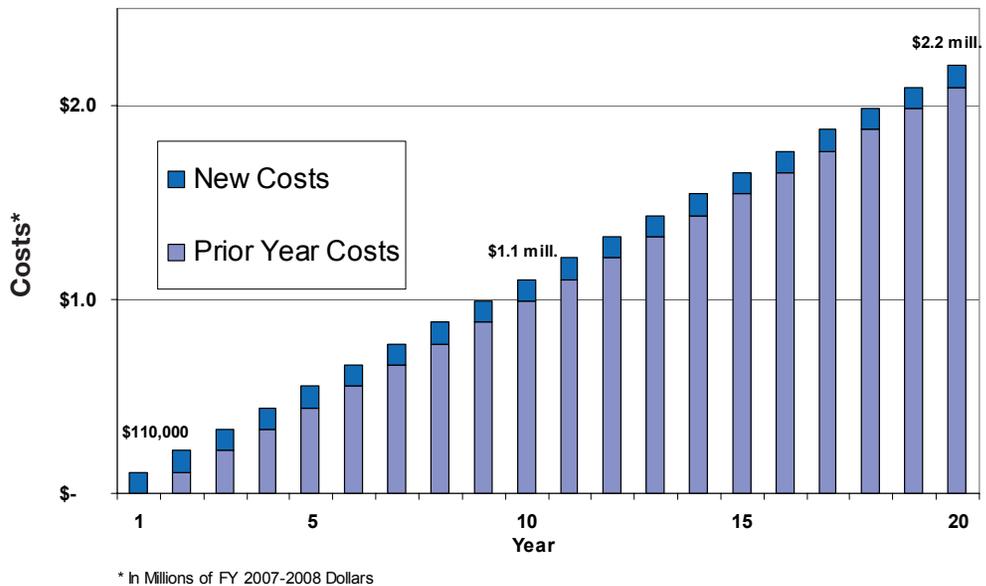
Notes:

1. Revenues exclude grants, donations, and other one-time, non-recurring revenues.
2. Includes secured, unsecured, ERAF, HOPTR, and RDA pass-throughs.
3. Includes special districts, State/Federal aid.
4. Books, donations, etc.
5. Excludes major capital (CIP) expenditures and contributions to reserves.
6. Includes maintenance and repair for equipment, land and buildings, and construction services.
7. Capital outlay for equipment.
8. Includes rent, insurance, communications, utilities, office supplies, travel, training, misc. services, MERA, and computers.

Table 6-6: Existing Revenues and Expenditures Parks and Landscape Division

	FY 2007-2008
REVENUES	
Use of Money and Property	\$ 353,100
Charges for Current Services	1,391,000
Miscellaneous	<u>200</u>
Subtotal	1,744,300
County General Fund	<u>2,723,400</u>
TOTAL	\$4,467,700
EXPENDITURES	
Salaries and Benefits	\$3,571,100
Services and Supplies	785,300
Departmental and Other Charges	<u>111,300</u>
TOTAL	\$4,467,700

Figure 6-5: Projected Additional Service Costs*



improvement projects; and protecting real property interests. The Park Planning program is responsible for developing and implementing park master plans and facility improvement plans.

- **Volunteer** – The Parks and Open Space Volunteer Program is responsible for recruiting, training, and retaining volunteers, including individuals and organizations, to perform stewardship activities on park and open space lands. Most volunteer activities are related to habitat restoration and trail maintenance. The value of work

performed by volunteers in fiscal year 2007-2008 amounted to \$314,460, or the equivalent of four, full time entry level rangers. Anticipated growth of the volunteer program will contribute toward improving stewardship of Department lands.

- **Environmental Education** – The Open Space District provides nature interpretation services, primarily through a schedule of free, naturalist-guided walks. County parks provide similar educational and interpretive programming through its ranger staff.

Table 6-7: Future Additional Services Costs Parks and Open Space*

Program	Annual Miles or Capital Cost Added	Cost Factor	Annual Average ¹			20 Year Total
			Year 1	Year 10	Year 20	
Open Space Projects CIP ²	\$835,000	1.5%	\$12,500	\$125,250	\$250,500	\$2,630,250
Open Space Acquisitions ³	226.5 acres	\$300/acre	68,000	679,500	1,359,000	14,269,500
Parks Projects CIP ²	\$870,000	1.5%	13,100	130,500	261,000	2,740,500
Trails Program ⁴	2.5 miles	\$6700/mile	<u>16,800</u>	<u>167,500</u>	<u>335,000</u>	<u>3,517,500</u>
Subtotal			\$110,400	\$1,102,750	\$2,205,500	\$23,157,750

Notes:

1. Annual amounts will depend on timing of specific projects and acquisition.
2. Average annual maintenance 1.5% of capital cost for new projects. Expenditures for specific facilities and areas will vary. New Open Space projects are approximately 50% of total.
3. New open space acquisitions: 15,100 acres total.
Estimated acquisition goal: 60%.
Acquisition/Fee Ownership: 50% of acquisition goal.
Costs for maintenance: \$300 per acre (See Table 6-10).
4. Trails costs assume acquisition of 50 miles of trail.
Trails maintenance costs: \$6,700 per mile (See Table 6-10).

* In millions of FY 2007-2008 dollars

Parks & Open Space Strategic Plan

- **Capital Improvement** – The Capital Improvement Program is responsible for annual review and revision of the Capital Improvement Plan element of the Strategic Plan, developing and implementing the Department’s annual capital improvement plan, participating in the County of Marin’s annual capital improvement plan

development process, identifying funding sources for capital improvement projects, developing project budgets and schedules, coordinating project design and preparation of construction documents, conducting the project bidding process, and project management. Number of existing permanent staff positions: two.

Table 6-8: Projected Annual Service Costs for New Lands & Facilities (Existing Level of Service) Applicable to Additional Open Space Acres and Road/Trail Miles

Program	Current FY 2007-2008 ¹	Share of Costs Applied to Additional Acres ²	Costs Applied to Additional Acres ²
Open Space Acres			
Maintenance and Operations			
Roads and Trails	\$732,534	(separate analysis below)	
Open Space M&O	1,837,204	100%	\$1,837,200
Resource Management	425,732	100%	425,700
Planning and Acquisition	716,316	50%	358,200
Volunteers	69,485	50%	34,700
Environmental Education	129,853	50%	64,900
Administration and Overhead	<u>1,017,751</u>	50%	<u>508,900</u>
Total	\$4,928,875		\$3,229,600
Existing Acres			15,500
Cost per Acre			\$208
Road and Trail Miles			
Total³	\$732,534	100%	\$732,500
Existing Miles			175
Cost per Mile			\$4,190

Notes:

1. Budget has been adjusted to deduct capital projects and other one-time expenses and special projects.
2. Adjustment represents the portion of budget item that is expected to increase as land ownership/maintenance increases.
3. Roads and trails based on FY 2006-2007 time card allocations plus proportionate share of equipment, facilities, and management applied to FY 2007-2008 budget.

- **Administration and Overhead**
 - While not a program per se, administration and overhead must be accounted for in existing and

future budgets. Administrative functions include Department organization and direction, budget development coordination, annual

Table 6-9: Projected Service Costs for Increased Level of Service Applicable to Additional for Open Space Acres and Road/Trail Miles

Program	Costs Applied to Additional Acres ¹	%	Additional Costs ²	
			Amount	Total
Open Space Acres				
Maintenance and Operations				
Roads and Trails	\$732,534	(separate analysis below)		
Open Space M&O ³	1,837,200	50%	\$920,000	\$2,757,200
Resource Management ⁴	425,700		500,000	925,700
Planning and Acquisition	358,200			358,200
Volunteers	34,700			34,700
Environmental Education	64,900			64,900
Administration and Overhead	508,900			508,900
Total	\$3,229,600		\$1,420,000	\$4,649,600
Existing Acres				15,500
Cost per Acre (applied to new acres)				\$300
Road and Trail Miles				
Total⁵	\$732,500	60%	\$439,500	\$1,172,000
Existing Miles				175
Cost per Mile (applied to new miles)				\$6,700

Notes:

1. "Costs Applied" represents the portion of budget expected to increase as land ownership/maintenance increases (see Table 6-8).
2. "Additional Costs" represent additional future costs required to improve service levels, as noted below.
3. "Additional Costs" for Open Space represent 50% increase over existing costs to improve existing levels of maintenance.
4. "Additional Resource Management" costs include provision for additional resource management scientists and work crew to provide increased inventory, analysis, planning, and implementation.
5. "Additional Road & Trail Costs" represent an increase in current costs of 60% in order to improve service standards.

Parks & Open Space Strategic Plan

performance planning, policy development, financial management, communications, and collaboration with members of the Board of Supervisors and the Parks and Open Space Commission. Overhead includes the cost of services provided by other County departments, insurance, office-related expenses, building space, and building maintenance services.

The majority of the Department's annual budgets are spent on taking care of the lands and facilities it owns. The budgets for the Department's Resource Management, Parks Maintenance and Operations, and Open Space Maintenance and Operations Programs total nearly \$10 million annually.

Tables 6-5 and 6-6 summarize annual revenues and expenditures for the Open

Table 6-10: Summary of Projected Annual Service Costs Applicable to Additional Open Space Acres and Road/Trail Miles*

Program	Year		
	Year 1	Year 10	Year 20
<u>Open Space Acres</u>			
Cumulative Acres Added	755	7,550	15,100
Acres Requiring Maintenance ¹	227	2,265	4,530
Cost per Additional Acre ²	\$300	\$300	\$300
Additional Annual Cost	\$67,950	\$679,500	\$1,359,000
<u>Road and Trail Miles</u>			
Cumulative Miles Added	2.5	25	50
Cost per Additional Mile ²	\$6,700	\$6,700	\$6,700
Additional Annual Cost	\$16,750	\$167,500	\$335,000

Notes:

1. Estimated acquisition goal: 60%.

Acquisition/Fee Ownership: 50% of acquisition goal 50% of acquisition goal.

2. See Table 6-9.

* Costs are expressed in Dollars with Constant FY 2007-2008 Purchasing Power

Space District and the Parks and Landscape Divisions, respectively. The budgets shown do not include expenditures for land acquisition, one-time expenditures, special projects, or reserves. Both budgets are balanced, but declining growth in property tax revenues, increasing costs, and the need for improved service levels will continue to put pressure on future annual budgets.

Future Service Requirements

Table 6-7 summarizes future additional services that would add an estimated \$110,000 each year to maintenance and operations costs. Figure 6-5 illustrates the incremental growth of annual maintenance and operations expenditures, including expenditures for additional staff, at this level. In year 20, new maintenance and operations expenditures amount to over \$2 million.

Maintenance costs associated with parks and open space capital improvement projects are estimated as a percentage of the improvement cost to reflect maintenance as well as repair and replacements costs over an improvement's life. Maintenance costs for trails and roads are based on a "per mile" cost estimate.

Maintenance and operations costs are expected to grow proportionately as additional lands are acquired. Future maintenance and operations costs are increased approximately 20 percent to reflect higher service levels. In addition, \$500,000 per year is added to fund increased resource management services provided by two new staff positions and a new seasonal



Oil spill training, Bolinas Lagoon Preserve. Craig Solin.

work crew. Administration and overhead costs are assumed to be a very small component of increased service costs.

Table 6-8 shows the program operating budgets used to estimate the cost of servicing additional open space acreage, roads, and trails. A percentage of each program's budget is used to estimate the portion of the program costs anticipated to grow as open space acres are acquired, or roads and trails added.

Table 6-9 shows additional service costs required to upgrade and improve service levels, as described above. The resulting cost per acre and per road and trail mile are multiplied by new acres and road/trail miles in Table 6-10.

Table 6-10 summarizes the annual costs for maintaining additional open space

acres and miles of roads and trails, based on the costs estimated in the prior tables. The table shows an annual increase of \$68,000 to maintain newly acquired open space acres. By year ten, continued acquisitions produce additional maintenance costs of \$680,000 annually. Costs grow to \$1.4 million at the end of 20 years.

Road and trail costs add \$16,750 per year, assuming 2.5 new miles are added each year. By year ten, the additional costs for 25 new miles total \$167,500 annually. Annual costs total \$335,000 by the 20th year.

Funding Sources and Options

Achieving the vision set forth in the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan will require existing funding sources as well as new ones if the proposed capital improvements, land acquisitions, and stewardship projects are to become a reality.

As described earlier, an additional \$2 million per year would be required for maintenance and operations at the end of the 20 years. A sales tax, summarized in this section, could provide the majority of funding required for this purpose, for capital improvements, and for land acquisition as well. A sales tax could be supplemented by other sources, including new assessments and/or parcel taxes. Grants could provide a significant source of funding for one-time capital, acquisition, and stewardship projects, but are not typically available for ongoing maintenance. It will be necessary for the County

to seek additional sources of funding for lower-priority projects, as well as to assure continued funding of operations and maintenance after the expiration of the sales tax.

Funding of Maintenance and Operations

Parks and Landscape Division

The Parks and Landscape Division relies heavily on the County General Fund to fund nearly 60 percent of maintenance and operations as illustrated in Table 6-11. Unlike the Open Space District, the Parks and Landscape Division does not have a dedicated source of property tax funding, other than the property tax and other discretionary general revenues budgeted annually by the County. Consequently, the Division's budget is subject to budgetary stresses from reduced State revenues and State diversions of property tax, cyclical economic conditions, and competition with other County programs and budget priorities.

Growth in County General Funds is likely to maintain pace with inflation, although the amounts available in any given year may vary. To maintain existing service levels, it is essential that the County allocate funds in a manner that addresses inflationary increases in staffing, services, and supplies. Additional funding will be necessary to assure that adequate service levels can be provided to maintain new facilities and improvements to existing parks.

Open Space District

Property tax provides nearly all of the funding for the Open Space District. The

Table 6-11: Existing Revenues Parks and Landscape Division

	FY 2007-2008
Use of Money and Property	\$ 353,100
Charges for Current Services	1,391,000
Miscellaneous	<u>200</u>
Subtotal	1,744,300
County General Fund	<u>2,723,400</u>
TOTAL	\$4,467,700

Table 6-12: Existing Operating Revenues Open Space District

Item	FY 2007-2008	% of Total
REVENUES¹		
Property Tax ²	\$ 4,806,700	97.5%
Use of Money and Property	97,100	2.0%
Intergovernmental ³	25,000	0.5%
Miscellaneous ⁴	<u>1,000</u>	0.0%
Subtotal	\$ 4,929,800	100.0%

Notes:

1. Revenues exclude grants, donations and other one-time, non-recurring revenues.
2. Includes secured, unsecured, ERAF, HOPTR, RDA pass-throughs.
3. Includes Special Districts, State/Federal Aid.
4. Books, donations, etc.

District receives slightly less than one cent out of every tax dollar collected in Marin County. Over the past ten years, property tax growth has averaged about seven percent annually, but is projected to be only four to five percent in 2008. A four to five

percent average annual growth in property tax provides for expected inflationary increases in costs to manage existing open space lands, but does not allow for an increased level of stewardship and other services, nor does it provide for additional

land acquisition and related increased maintenance costs.

Funding of Capital Improvements and Land Acquisitions

Parks and Landscape Division

The Parks and Landscape Division has had minimal revenues available for capital projects. Funding for capital improvements comes primarily from the County's capital improvement budget, which varies annually. Allocations of capital funding to Parks and Landscape are expected to be \$220,000 out of a \$2 million total County capital improvement budget for FY 2007-2008. For planning purposes, this Finance Plan assumes that future capital funding from the County averages about \$200,000 to \$250,000 annually.

Open Space District

For at least ten years, the District has had minimal funds available from property taxes, its primary revenue source, to apply towards stewardship projects and land acquisition. These activities are largely grant-funded. Anticipated funding from grants varies from year to year, and partly depends on the ability of projects to compete for highly competitive grant funding.

When the District was created in 1972, substantially more revenue was available for land acquisition. In 1978, Proposition 13 reduced the District's property taxes by more than half. This property tax rate cannot be increased, because total combined property taxes are limited to a one percent maximum property tax rate established by Proposition 13. As the District's land

holdings increased, its maintenance and operations budget increased as well, leaving fewer funds available for acquisition.

In recent years, the District has been able to fund approximately \$1 million annually in new, one time projects, apart from basic maintenance of existing lands, through the use of reserves and annual fund balances. The District accumulated these reserves during periods of high property tax revenue growth. With their gradual expenditure, and in anticipation of declining property tax revenue growth, the District's annual property tax allocation alone will be insufficient to support one time stewardship projects, land acquisition, and a higher level of land stewardship.

Grant Funding

Grant funding is available to the Parks and Landscape Division, as well as the Open Space District. Over the past three years, the Open Space District has received approximately \$100,000 annually in grant funding for various one-time projects. For planning purposes, this Finance Plan assumes \$2 million to \$3 million available annually from a combination of sources. The actual amounts will vary, depending on the ability of projects to meet grant funding criteria and to compete successfully against other projects. Key grant programs include:

- **Park Bond Act of 2000 (Proposition 12)** – This Act provided nearly \$3 million in funds for Department projects and acquisition. The Department has used its allocation of Prop 12 per capita and block grant funding.

- **Safe Drinking Water Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)** – This Act includes \$400 million statewide for local parks, and other funds for programs related to urban forestry and the protection of groundwater, streams, bays, and coastal waters. The Department has identified \$1.6 million in projects that potentially are eligible for funding.
- **California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Act of 2002 (2002 Resources Bond, Proposition 40)** – The passage of Proposition 40 provided a level of funding to the Department similar to Prop 12 in the form of per capita and block grants. The Department has used most of these funds and committed the remainder.
- **Housing and Emergency Shelter Trust Fund Act of 2006 (Proposition 1C)** – This act established a fund of up to \$200 million for park creation, development, or rehabilitation to encourage infill housing development.
- **Habitat Conservation Fund (HCF) Grants** – Administered by the California Department of Fish and Game, HCF grants make available nearly \$2 million. To date, the Department’s priority projects have not met grant eligibility requirements.
- **Hazard Mitigation Fund Grants** – The State Office of Emergency Services administers this program,

which provides grants for the acquisition of flood-prone property, urban stream restoration, reducing flooding and erosion, restoring environmental values, and for planning. The Department’s CIP includes about \$1.3 million in projects eligible for these grants.

- **TDA and SAFTEA Grants** – TDA grants fund bicycle and pedestrian facilities, in addition to transit improvements. SAFTEA is a federal program that includes funds for trails and related facilities. Approximately 25 percent of the bicycle, trail, and path projects in the Department’s CIP meet grant eligibility criteria. These programs could yield approximately \$1 million.
- **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants** – These grants are administered by the National Park Service. Over the past two decades, a low amount of LWCF funding, relative to need, has been allocated to California. The County of Marin has only used these funds once—to purchase McInnis Park.
- **Wetlands Grants** – Federal EPA grants are available for the acquisition and protection of wetlands.

Parcel Taxes and Assessments

A parcel tax is a tax applied on a flat per-parcel basis or a rate based on the use, size, or number of units on each parcel. A parcel tax must be adopted as a special tax, requiring two-thirds voter approval. The revenues can be used to fund services

or improvements on a “pay as you go” basis, or bonds can be sold so that an agency receives the funding in a lump sum, and annual tax revenues are then used to pay debt service on bonds. A Mello-Roos Community Facilities District (CFD) is one option for creating an entity capable of issuing bonds secured by special taxes, without directly placing the sponsoring entity at financial risk. A Countywide parcel tax of \$30 per parcel could support about \$28 million in net debt proceeds.

A benefit (or “special”) assessment is a charge levied on property to pay for services or improvements that benefit the property. The amount is established by a study that calculates and apportions the benefits to properties. Assessments are frequently applied pursuant to the Landscape and Lighting Act of 1972, which enables assessments to be imposed for parks and recreation purposes. Assessments require more than 50 percent ballot approval. The Open Space District has created three assessment districts for the purpose of land acquisition in Pacheco Valle, Little Mountain, and Sleepy Hollow.

The formation of a County Service Area creates a mechanism for providing governmental services within unincorporated areas by counties, and for establishing special taxes or other benefit assessments within the area to fund these services. Currently, CSAs for parks and open space generate approximately \$1.2 million annually in Marin County. The funds are used primarily for maintenance, but can also be used for projects and land acquisition.

The Finance Plan assumes that ad-

ditional CFDs, assessment districts, and CSAs are created over the next 20 years. Specific areas and projects suitable for the creation of these entities would depend on identifying clear areas of benefit to property owners willing and able to fund some or all of the required capital and operating costs.

Private and Nonprofit Sources

The most significant source of private grants to the Department has been the Beryl Buck Open Space Fund of the Marin Community Foundation (MCF). In the 1980s and 1990s, the Open Space Fund provided over \$5 million to the Open Space District for land purchases. Changing priorities led MCF to discontinue investment in the Open Space Fund, although grants continue to be available for environmental-related purposes.

Direct, unsolicited donations to the Department from private individuals, organizations, and trusts have averaged approximately \$2,000 annually. Donors sometimes request that their contributions be allocated to specific programs, but otherwise the donations are applied to land purchases. Private individuals have also made donations indirectly to the Department, through MCF’s Parks and Open Space Fund, which MCF created on behalf of the Department in the mid-1990s.

A number of local community-based organizations historically have contributed towards park and open space projects. For example, the Bay Area Barns and Trails Trust and the Marin Horse Council have helped to fund the cost of volunteer activities and equestrian-related improvements.

Table 6-13: Funding Potential from Sales Tax Initiative*

Item	Total
Total Revenues (20 years)	\$100.0
Bond Option:	
Net Bond Proceeds	\$44.9
Coverage Revenue in excess of Debt Service	<u>26.0</u>
Subtotal, Bond and Coverage (after interest)	\$70.9

* In Millions of FY 2007-2008 Dollars

The Department has also partnered with Marin Audubon Society to purchase several bay wetland areas.

The Finance Plan assumes that grants from foundations and institutions average \$1 million to \$2 million annually, or \$30 million over a 20 year period. Donations and contributions from private individuals and other sources are assumed to average \$100,000 to \$200,000 annually, or \$5 million over a 20 year period.

New Funding Sources

This section summarizes potential major sources of new funding for additional services, stewardship projects, and land acquisition. These sources would augment existing revenue sources to provide for existing and future needs. The following section compares all additional funding sources to projected additional costs.

Countywide Sales Tax Measure

Recent poll results indicate that there exists the potential to achieve the two-thirds voter support necessary to levy an additional quarter-cent sales tax for open space preservation, wildland fire hazard reduction, and farmland protection. A Countywide sales tax could provide a reliable, annual source of funding for these purposes and would generate approximately \$10 million per year.¹² Assuming parks and open space would be allocated half of the proceeds, \$5 million would be available annually, or \$100 million over a 20-year period. The annual revenue stream could be used on a “pay as you go” basis to fund services and/or improvements.

Optionally, some or all of the annual revenues could be pledged to pay debt service on bonds that could yield approximately \$45 million to fund improvements. A lump sum of bond sale proceeds would be immediately available. Potential bond proceeds are less than the total \$100 mil-

lion revenue stream, since interest costs must be paid out of the total revenue stream, in addition to repayment of the \$45 million of net proceeds. Because the annual sales tax revenues are required to exceed the annual debt service payment (to provide a “coverage” factor to assure debt repayment, in the event sales tax revenues decline), an additional \$26 million would be available for “pay as you go” funding.

General Obligation Bonds

A Countywide G.O. bond issuance would require two-thirds voter approval, and would be repaid by an increase in property tax rates on assessed value. The proceeds can only be used for capital projects.

A bond issue generating \$50 million in net proceeds would require a tax of about \$30 annually for an average single-family residence over 20 years. Commercial property would also be assessed and generate revenues proportionate to value. These tax revenues are generated by a property tax “override” (above the constitutional 1 percent of assessed value) and is collected as a percent of assessed value, as distinguished from a special tax or assessment which are applied “per parcel” or other unit of benefit. The required tax rate would decline over time as assessed value in the County grows.

This Finance Plan does not assume the issuance of G.O. bonds. However, it may be appropriate and necessary for the County to consider this financing source in the future to fund projects and land acquisitions.

Trails Legacy Fund

In 2007, the Department initiated a Trails Legacy Fund to leverage funding for trail acquisition and construction. The Fund is intended as a source of money to acquire and build public trails to complete the countywide system of trails envisioned in the Marin Countywide Plan. The fund would grow from contributions by the Open Space District and the County of Marin, grants, and private funding, and donations from individuals, corporations, and sponsorships.

To fund the proposed 50 miles of trails envisioned by the Marin Countywide Plan, the Fund would need to generate an estimated \$5 million for acquisition and improvement. These funds would not be available for maintenance and operations costs required for additional road and trail miles, nor are they intended to secure and build paved bicycle paths.

Other Funding

The Marin Open Space Trust (MOST), a not for profit public benefit corporation dedicated to acquiring and maintaining local open space, was founded in 2007. MOST is a “land trust”, an organization that preserves open space and other ecologically significant land in perpetuity by either purchasing or acquiring through donation of land or conservation easements. MOST’s funding goal is to raise an average of \$2 million annually, or \$40 million over a 20-year period.

Table 6-14: Finance Plan Summary Marin County Parks and Open Space*

	Capital Projects and Land Acquisition		Annual Increase in Maintenance
	20 Year Total	Annual Average	
FUNDING REQUIREMENTS			
Open Space Projects CIP	\$33,400,000	\$1,670,000	\$12,500
Open Space Acquisition	146,700,000	7,335,000	68,000
Parks Projects CIP	41,400,000	2,070,000	13,100
Trails Program	<u>5,000,000</u>	<u>250,000</u>	<u>16,800</u>
Subtotal	\$226,500,000	\$11,325,000	\$110,400
			\$23,158,000 Over 20 Years
FUNDING SOURCES			
<u>Public</u>			
Grants (State and Federal)	\$55,000,000		
County Capital Funds (Parks)	5,000,000		
Existing CSA's (Assessments)	6,000,000		
New CSA's (Assessments)	<u>6,000,000</u>		<u>\$6,000,000</u>
Subtotal	\$72,000,000		\$6,000,000
<u>Private and Non-Profit</u>			
Trails Legacy Fund	5,000,000		
MOST	40,000,000		
Foundations	30,000,000		
Other Donations	<u>5,000,000</u>		
Subtotal	\$80,000,000		
<u>New Sources</u>			
Sales Tax Initiative	\$82,842,000		\$17,158,000
TOTAL: All Sources	\$234,842,000		\$23,158,000
Net Funding Available (Shortfall)	\$8,342,000		\$0

* In Millions of Fiscal Year (FY) 2007-2008 Dollars

Funding Strategies

Substantial additional financial resources are needed to achieve Marin County's park, open space, and trail system goals. Funds are required to upgrade and improve existing park facilities, enhance the management of natural resources, and preserve additional open space and trails. Voter-approved funding, supplemented by existing revenue sources, will be necessary to meet current and future needs.

Summary of Strategies

The Finance Plan indicates sufficient funds may be available for priority projects and land acquisitions, and for corresponding maintenance and operating costs, assuming successful passage of a sales tax initiative. However, all sources may not be sufficient to fully fund the complete list of desired projects and land acquisitions. If additional funds are not generated, it will be necessary to defer lower priority projects and acquisitions, and consider additional funding options.

Table 6-14 compares projected funding needs to existing and new revenue sources over a 20 year period. Over 20 years, an additional \$226 million are required for projects and land acquisition, and an additional \$2 million are necessary to maintain all new projects and newly acquired open space, as well as to improve existing levels of service. These expenditures will require new funding such as a countywide sales tax measure, increased funds from existing sources, and funding from new assessment districts, CFDs, and CSAs.

The Finance Plan assumes a sales tax

measure as a primary source of new funding for priority projects. To the extent that a sales tax measure is not approved and funding does not reach the levels shown, it will be necessary to defer projects and maintenance. The Finance Plan also assumes that sales tax revenues are used on cash, "pay as you go" basis. The Financing Plan does not assume the issuance of G.O. bonds. This funding option could be considered at a future time, if required.

It will be essential that the Department plan in advance for the expiration of the sales tax. The tax could be extended, or new funding sources will be necessary to replace the tax to assure that adequate levels of maintenance continue.

Sustain and Enhance Existing Sources

Although existing sources alone are not sufficient to fund maintenance or capital requirements, it is essential that these sources be maintained and enhanced where possible. Actions include:

- **Maintain existing levels of General Fund support** – New funding sources must augment existing General Fund revenues, not supplant existing funding, if the proposed CIP and maintenance needs are to be met. Existing funding must be adjusted to keep pace with inflation.
- **Pursue grant funding opportunities** – Grant opportunities should be monitored and aggressively pursued to maximize the amount of grant funding the Department receives.

- **Increase collaboration with public, private, and local community partners** – Continuous outreach to expand partnerships will help generate additional funding, and will also improve public awareness essential for support of needed funding measures.

Assure Adequate Allocations to Maintenance

As described in this Finance Plan, there is a need for funds to assure that existing lands and facilities can be adequately maintained. Acquisition of additional lands will require increased maintenance expenditures, as will improving the level of land stewardship.

- Develop a resource management plan that guides the allocation of staff and funding resources to ensure that the Department achieves the desired level of stewardship and maintenance. The Department is in the early stages of developing this plan.
- Refine the Department’s accounting system to better enable forecasting of future maintenance costs. As land acquisitions are planned and implemented, appropriate levels of maintenance can also be budgeted.
- Assure that new funding sources for capital include an allocation for maintenance. Maintain a budgeting system to assure that funds from new sources, such as a sales tax initiative, are appropriated and segregated for the purpose of maintenance.

Seek Voter Approval for New Funding

A sales tax will provide substantial funding to help achieve the goals of the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan. A number of actions can help to assure its success:

- **Survey of voter support and determination of priorities** – This survey has been completed.
- **Craft ballot measure to build voter support** – A ballot measure should include measures that build voter support through provisions related to financial oversight and “sunsetting” of the sales tax.
- **Conduct public outreach focusing on of potential economic benefits identified in the Finance Plan** – Voter approval will depend on the success of a program to educate the public on the need for, and the benefits of, the initiative.

Economic Benefits

Parks and open space lands confer a range of economic benefits in addition to those related to aesthetics and recreation. While Marin residents currently enjoy a high degree of benefit from their investment in the County’s park and open space system, implementation of the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan’s will substantially increase these benefits in the following ways:

Quality of Life. Parks, open space, and trails contribute to the high quality of life in Marin County and the greater San

Francisco Bay Area. While difficult to quantify, this high quality of life attracts new and retains existing businesses, sustains local and regional economic growth, and generates jobs and income. An estimated 3.5 million visitors enjoy the County's parks, open space, and trails system annually.

Property Values. Parks, open space, and trails, by increasing the quality of life, enhance property values in Marin and throughout the region. Homes adjacent and close to these community assets benefit even more because of the views and easy access to recreational opportunities.

User Utility. User utility is defined as the value park users place on the experience. The total user utility received by Marin's park users is currently estimated at about \$22 million annually, based on economic analyses of user utility elsewhere.¹³ These values are generally provided to a diverse set of park users at no cost or well below the actual cost of provision.

Ecosystem Services. The Open Space District's preservation of lands and natural resources ensures that the region enjoys multiple ecosystem services. Without ecological life support systems, including clean air, fresh water, fertile soil, and an amenable climate, communities and their economies would suffer.

Urbanization, over time, gradually reduces vital "ecosystem services" due to the loss of natural lands that provide these services. These ecosystem services include climate regulation, water supply, erosion control, nutrient recycling, waste

treatment, food production, and genetic resources, aside from the land's recreational and cultural values.

These services have an economic value. Without them, public costs may be incurred through the need for additional wastewater treatment plants, private costs may be incurred through the need for water filtration systems or property damage because of landslides, and the overall quality of life of a region may suffer because of worsening air quality, which, in turn, may reduce economic growth. Decisions concerning land development and depletion of natural resources that do not take account of these factors may damage the regional economy and reduce prosperity, despite the addition of building space and expected increases in property taxes, sales tax, and other public revenues.

The Department is a provider and custodian of lands that provide ecosystem services. The Department's stewardship, exemplified by activities such as visitor management, fire hazard reduction, and restoring native habitat, keeps these lands healthy and enhances their value to our community. Without the preservation and maintenance of these lands, the quality and value of Marin's environment would decline substantially, because associated ecosystem services would be lost forever.

Community Form and Connections. Parks and open space are integral to Marin County's landscape, spatially defining its communities, and contributing to local identity, individuality, and a sense of place. The Department's system of unpaved trails

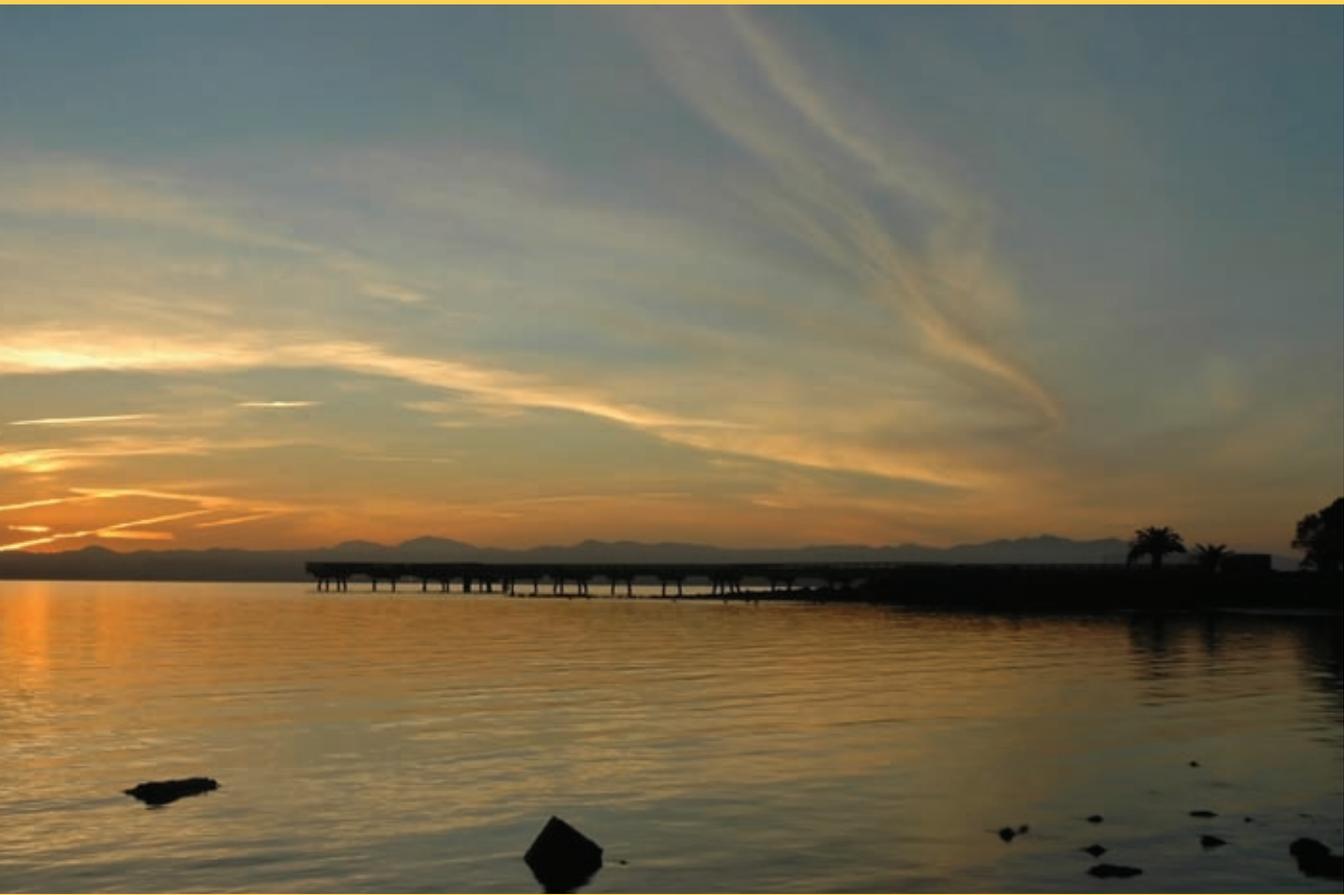
connects communities with other communities and with other parks and open space lands. Its multi-purpose paved paths facilitate bicycle commuting and pedestrian access between communities.

Health, Education, and Public Safety Benefits. The Department's lands, programs, and services provide a variety of benefits that accrue to other public sector service providers, to individual park users, and to the broader community. These include health benefits through recreational opportunities, educational benefits through environmental education, and public safety benefits through wildland fire fuel reduction activities.

User Expenditure Economic Impacts.¹⁴ Visitors to the Department's park and open space lands result in total direct expenditures of about \$420 million each year on durable and non-durable goods associated with use of parks and open space.

About \$42 million, or 10 percent, represent net new direct expenditures in the Marin County economy. In other words, total expenditures on all goods in Marin County are \$42 million higher because of the presence of the Department's lands and facilities. The total annual economic impact of these net new expenditures is \$84 million, when multiplier effects are taken into account.

Expenditure Economic Impacts. The Marin County Parks and Open Space Department currently spends about \$10 million each year. A total of 61 full-time employees work for the Department plus an additional 50 seasonal employees. The majority of these positions are funded through local taxes, though a small portion represent net new annual expenditures funded by non-local grants and charges for services paid by non-Marin residents. These employees, in turn, spend a portion of their income in Marin County and the region.



Sunrise from McNear's Beach Park. Craig Solin.

Discover your outdoors



Performance Measures

Performance measures provide targets to measure the Department's success in achieving the goals outlined in the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan, and in achieving overall goals of the County of Marin. A good measurement system serves multiple functions as a:

- Planning tool to develop goals and priorities.
- Budget tool to help inform resource allocation.
- Management tool that provides meaningful data to improve service delivery.
- Communication tool to communicate results and outcomes to the public, to

the Board of Supervisors/Directors, and to the Department's staff.

Good measures will be applicable for at least several years, so that trends can be identified. However, a performance measurement system must also be flexible and dynamic, to reflect changing needs and priorities of the public and the Department.

Among the 13 measures below, the Department has selected five as high level indicators of service delivery to include in its annual Performance Plan. These measures are indicated with an asterisk (*).

Goal 1
Protect and Restore Our Lands

Protect, restore, and preserve the natural systems of the lands held in trust for current and future generations.

Performance Measures:

*	Reduce the total acreage of target exotic and invasive species	
	Workload	Acres treated to control targeted non-native species (all treatment methods)
	Efficiency	Cost per acre to control targeted non-native species
	Effectiveness	Number of acres treated where targeted species effectively controlled
	Effectiveness	Percent of acres treated where targeted species effectively controlled

*Indicates Performance Measure included in annual Performance Plan.

Goal 2

Grow and Link the County’s Systems of Parks, Trails, and Protected Lands

Complete the County’s system of parks, open space, and trails. Support the efforts of other agencies, organizations, and communities to fulfill their land preservation and system goals.

Performance Measures:

Ensure that accessible & inviting trails, parks, and open spaces connect communities	
Workload	Total linear feet of trails acquired / built
Workload	Number of new linear feet of trails acquired / built
Efficiency	Cost per linear foot of trail acquired / built
Effectiveness	Percent of trail system goal achieved (Goal: 1,689,600 linear feet/320 miles)



Complete 20 land and conservation easement acquisition projects by 2013	
Workload	Number and acreage of acquisition projects completed (all methods, including fee and easement)
Efficiency	Average cost per acre acquired (fee)
Effectiveness	Percent of total acreage targeted for preservation (30,000 acres) that has been preserved (all methods)



Complete 20 Parks capital projects by 2013	
Workload	Number of Parks capital project designs completed
Workload	Number of Parks capital projects completed
Efficiency	Number of parks capital projects completed per full time staff member

*Indicates Performance Measure included in annual Performance Plan.

Goal 3

Foster Discovery, Learning, and Stewardship

Engage the community by providing volunteer and educational experiences for people to discover, learn about, protect, and restore their parks and open space.

Performance Measures:

*** Increase the percentage of returning volunteers**

Workload	Number of volunteer hours worked in parks and open spaces
Efficiency	Value of work performed by volunteers
Effectiveness	Percent change in number of volunteer hours worked per year

Increase participation in the Environmental Education program

Workload	Number of naturalist walks offered (staff and guest naturalist)
Workload	Number of evening walks offered
Workload	Number of walks or classroom visits offered to schoolchildren (K - 12)
Workload	Number of docent or teacher training classes conducted
Workload	Number of participants in all walks conducted
Efficiency	Program cost per walk participant
Effectiveness	Percent change in number of participants in environmental education programs

*Indicates Performance Measure included in annual Performance Plan.

Goal 4

Connect Communities with the Land for Recreation and Health

Offer all people opportunities to be active and healthy while enjoying safe and well maintained lands and facilities.

Performance Measures:



Ensure resident satisfaction with parks and open space	
Workload	Number of acres maintained <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Space • Parks
Efficiency	Cost per resident served <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Space • Parks
Effectiveness	Percentage of community survey respondents indicating they were “some-what satisfied” or “very satisfied” with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • acquiring, restoring, and maintaining additional open space • maintaining facilities at County parks

Ensure the number of events, programs, and activities are related to the improvement of health and fitness	
Workload	Number of health and fitness events, programs, or activities for offered
Efficiency	Average cost per health and fitness event
Efficiency	Average cost per health and fitness program participant
Effectiveness	Percent change in the number of health and fitness events, program, and activities offered
Effectiveness	Percent change in the number of participants in health and fitness events, programs, and activities

Increase the number of individuals accessing County parks by modes other than automobile	
Workload	Number of visitors arriving to County’s four largest County parks by automobile
Workload	Number of visitors arriving at one of the County’s four largest County parks who drove alone
Workload	Number of visitors to County parks who rode a bicycle to the park
Workload	Number of bus stops within 500 feet of County’s four largest County parks
Effectiveness	Percent of park visitors accessing parks by mode other than automobile (self-reporting)

Goal 5

Lead, Innovate, and Partner

Cultivate partnerships, explore new approaches, and adopt best practices and technologies.

Performance Measures:

Increase the number of green principles and sustainability practices applied to Department projects and programs	
Workload	Number of new initiatives related to reducing the Department’s waste, carbon footprint, use of nonrenewable resources
Workload	Number of recycling stations provided at parks
Workload	Number of projects completed related to water conservation and irrigation efficiency improvements in Department-managed areas
Effectiveness	Gallons of water saved through irrigation efficiency efforts
Effectiveness	Percent of Departmental vehicle fleet that are non-gas burning
Effectiveness	Percent of employees who rideshare or use alternative modes of transportation more that 25% of work days

Goal 6

Ensure Organizational Effectiveness

Encourage innovative Department management and employee development.

Performance Measures:

Increase the percent of staff participating in non-mandatory professional development courses or programs	
Workload	Number of non-mandatory training and professional development courses or programs offered to regular hire, full time staff
Workload	Number of regular hire, full time staff members participating in non-mandatory training and professional development courses or programs
Efficiency	Cost of non-mandatory training and professional development courses or programs per participant
Effectiveness	Percentage of regular hire, full time staff members participating in non-mandatory training and development courses or programs
Effectiveness	Percent of non-mandatory training course participants rating programs as good or better

Increase the percent of regular, full-time staff receiving timely annual performance evaluations	
Workload	Number of staff members receiving timely annual performance evaluations
Effectiveness	Percent of staff members receiving timely annual performance evaluations

Goal 7

Fulfill Financial Needs

Achieve sustainable long-term financial viability to satisfy operational needs, capital requirements, and desired programs and services.

Performance Measures:

Meet or exceed a ratio of 1:1 for all land and easement acquisition projects of outside funds (grants, donations, etc.) to Department funds	
Workload	Number of acquisition projects competed
Workload	Total outside funding obtained for all projects completed
Effectiveness	Ratio of total outside funding to total department funding for all projects completed

Back cover photos (L to R): *White Trillium*, Craig Solin; *Fishing, Paradise Beach Park*, MCPOS archives; *Mylitta crescent butterfly*, Craig Solin; *Oaks, Mount Burdell Preserve*, May Chen; *Creekside Park*, MCPOS Archives; (bottom inset): *Stafford Lake and surrounding watershed*, Craig Solin.

Notes

1. State of California, Department of Finance, *Population Projections by Race/Ethnicity, Gender and Age for California and Its Counties 2000-2050*, Sacramento, California, May 2004.
2. Association of Bay Area Governments. Bay Area Census. 2005. <http://census.abag.ca.gov/counties/MarinCounty.htm>.
3. Marin Economic Commission. *Marin Profile: A Survey of Economic, Social Equity, and Environmental Indicators*. November 2005.
4. Marin County Department of Health & Human Services Division of Aging. *Marin County Older Adult Community Survey*. 2004.
5. Marin County Commission on Aging. *Live Long, Live Well Area Plan for Aging Marin County, California. Annual Update FY 2006/07*. April 20, 2006.
6. Comprehensive Strategic Plan for the County of Marin Department of Parks and Open Space: Draft Trends Analysis. February 2007.
7. Comprehensive Strategic Plan for the County of Marin Department of Parks and Open Space: Draft Trends Analysis. February 2007.
8. Comprehensive Strategic Plan for the County of Marin Department of Parks and Open Space: Draft Trends Analysis. February 2007.
9. Universal access refers to the ability of all people to have equal opportunity and access to a service or project from which they can obtain benefit.
10. See the Land Conservation Plan (Appendix C of the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan) for more description about potential acquisitions.
11. Countywide Plan 2007 (adopted November 6, 2007).
12. Total sales tax rates in the County range from 7.75 to 8.25 percent; the City of San Rafael's rate, 8.25 percent, includes an additional half cent sales tax to fund general city services.
13. A study of the economic effects of the East Bay Regional Park District, conducted in 2000, concluded that the user utility was equivalent to \$5.30 per visit; adjusted for inflation, this amount would equal approximately \$6.50. This figure would also vary by region.
14. A study of the economic effects of the East Bay Regional Park District, conducted in 2000 concluded that annual visitor spending was \$100 per visitor. Adjusted for inflation, this amount would equal approximately \$120; this figure would vary by region. The net new spending in Marin County assumes that 90 percent of total recreation-related expenditures would have occurred in any event, if the Marin facilities and lands were not available.



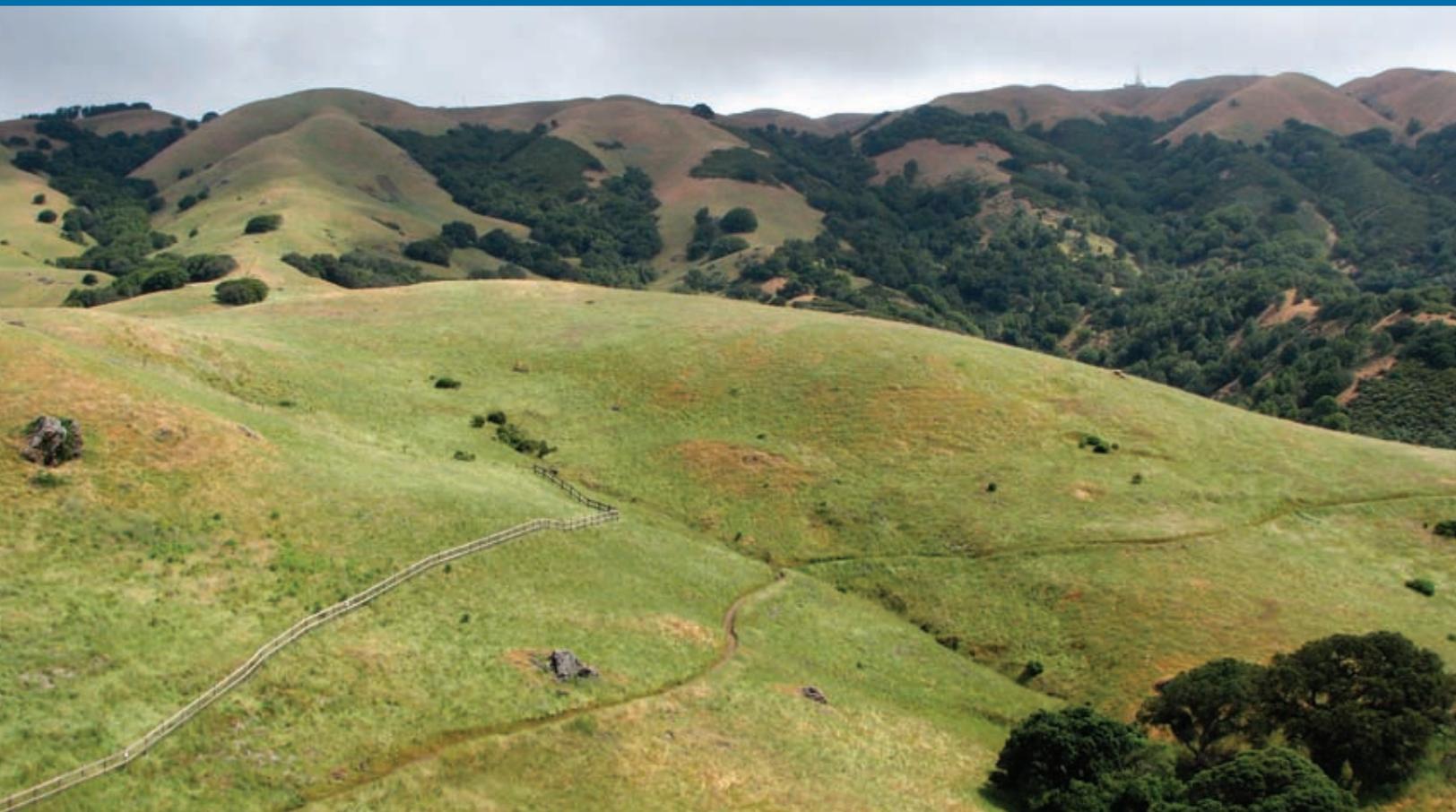
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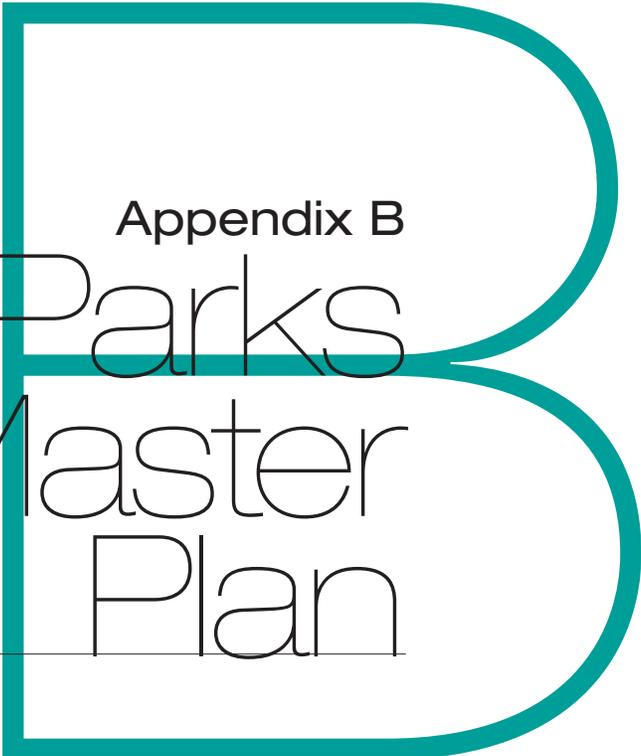
PROTECT
GROW
RESTORE
CONNECT

Marin County Parks and Open Space
Strategic Plan
Appendices
June 2008



Cover: *Big Rock Ridge, Lucas Valley Preserve*, Craig Solin.

 Printed with vegetable-based ink on recycled paper.



Appendix B Parks Master Plan

Executive Summary

Marin County is a place where recreation opportunities abound. As a result, Marin has a history rich in planning and developing parks. This document is the third Parks Master Plan prepared for the County of Marin.

The County's first park planning report was written in 1943 to address the park and recreation needs of a growing population following construction of the Golden Gate Bridge, which linked Marin to the San Francisco Bay Area. A second parks master plan was developed in 1965. Many of the projects identified in the 1965 plan form the core of the current park system.

The 1965 plan was also the basis for creating a County department to manage County parks. Today, parks are managed by the Marin County Parks and Open

Space Department, which has an annual budget of \$11,865,434 and employs 61 full-time staff.

This Master Plan creates a vision for an exciting and dynamic park system in Marin County. Based on community outreach and the 2007 Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment report (Appendix A of the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan), it proposes 48 actions to increase park use, update and revitalize facilities, improve programs, and meet emerging needs. Some of these actions are simple, such as updating the Department's website, while others are more complex, requiring substantial staff time and financial resources. To complete the projects proposed in this Plan, the County will need to invest an additional \$41 million dollars in the park system.¹

Introduction

Marin County is one of the most remarkable places in the world. A gentle climate together with rolling hillsides, flowing streams, and dramatic coastlines make it a wonderful place to live. They also make it a place where recreation opportunities abound.

Several public agencies manage park lands in Marin County. This Parks Master Plan is concerned with the County's own parks system managed by the Marin County Parks and Open Space Department (Department). It is not intended to be viewed in a vacuum, however, because it is influenced by parks and programs provided by cities and towns, the National Park Service, State Parks, and local water districts. Furthermore, this Master Plan does not cover the Department's open space preserves and Department-maintained landscape areas. Marin County Open Space District preserves are discussed in the Land Conservation Plan, which is Appendix C of the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan.

Cows grazing, Mount Burdell Preserve. Craig Solin.



The purpose of this Parks Master Plan is to assess existing facility conditions, determine community needs, and identify future actions necessary to provide a dynamic and comprehensive park system. These actions will guide the Department in future planning, funding, and facility management. This Master Plan includes 48 specific actions designed to address needs identified in the 2007 Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment Report. In addition, this Plan recommends improvements for Marin County's parks and recreation facilities. These improvements form the core of a ten-year Parks Capital Improvement Plan, which is Appendix D of the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan.

Relationship to Other Plans

The Parks Master Plan complements many of Marin County's ongoing planning efforts, including the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan, the 2007 Marin Countywide Plan, the Countywide Bike and Pedestrian Plan 2008 Update, and the Federal Highway Administration's Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot Program. The relationship to each of these plans is summarized below.

Marin County Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan

The Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan defines a vision to guide the expansion and management of Marin County's park, open space, and trail system. In addition, the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan provides long-term direction for park and

open space planning, outlines a capital improvement program, and recommends funding strategies. This Parks Master Plan is an implementation component of the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan.

Marin Countywide Plan Update

The 2007 Marin Countywide Plan provides the framework for the County's park, trail, and public open space system. The Countywide Plan clearly identifies a goal of developing and maintaining "A High Quality Parks and Recreation System." The strategies presented in this Parks Master Plan are consistent with this overarching goal.

Development of this Master Plan directly implements the following Countywide Plan policies:

- Conduct and Coordinate Park Planning.
- Consider User Needs, Impacts, and Costs.
- Update the Parks Master Plan.
- Assess User Needs.
- Conduct a Facilities Inventory.

Countywide Plan Goal: A High-Quality Parks and Recreation System

Provide park and recreation facilities and programs to meet the various needs of all county residents.

Marin Countywide Bike and Pedestrian Plan

In 2001, motivated bicycle and pedestrian advocates spurred the County to develop a Marin Countywide Bike and Pedestrian Plan. Increased awareness and bicycle ridership has resulted in improved government support, both in terms of policy as well as financial commitment. Recommendations of the Countywide Bike and Pedestrian Plan address bicycle facilities, pedestrian facilities, and bicycle/pedestrian programs. The Marin County Board of Supervisors adopted an update of the 2001 Plan in March 2008. By identifying improvements necessary to County-owned multi-use pathways and by encouraging bicycle use as an alternative method of transportation to parks, this Parks Master Plan supports the Countywide Bike and Pedestrian Plan.

Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot Program

In 2006, Marin County was selected as one of four communities nationwide to participate in the Federal Highway Administration's Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot Program (NTPP). NTPP grants each community \$25 million dollars to construct nonmotorized transportation infrastructure facilities, including bicycle lanes, multi-use pathways, and shared-use trails that connect directly with transit stations, schools, residences, businesses, recreation areas, and other community activity centers. In March 2007, the NTPP's Advisory Committee produced a *Recommendations and Process Report* that identifies a mix of bicycle path construction projects, planning studies, and educational programming that

Our Vision

The welcoming natural beauty of Marin's parks and open spaces . . . great rolling headlands and deep redwood forests, solitary ridge trails, cascading waterfalls and wandering streams, white egrets rising gracefully over green marshlands, recreation areas filled with the laughter of children and families . . . links people to the land, offering our community a rich source of personal discovery, joy, renewal, and health that inspires a deep sense of belonging and stewardship for generations to come.

will encourage more bicycling, walking, and transit use in Marin County. Many of the projects identified in this Master Plan and in the Capital Improvement Plan meet the goal of the NTTTP—increase the number of people in Marin County that walk, bike, and use transit.

Other Relevant Plans²

- *Live Long, Live Well: A Strategic Plan for Aging Services in Marin County 2004-2014.*
- *Community Marin 2003: Preserving the Environmental Quality of Marin* (Marin Conservation League).
- *Marin County ADA Transition Plan.*

History of the Marin County Park System

Marin County has a history rich in parks and recreation. Starting in the early twentieth century, Marin served as a recreational destination for San Francisco residents as it was largely undeveloped. With the completion of the Golden Gate Bridge in 1937, the County's population increased as it became possible for people to commute between San Francisco and Marin. Shipyards in Sausalito and an Air Force Base at Hamilton Field brought additional residents during World War II. Population growth in the span of two decades inspired residents to plan more comprehensively for the future of the County.

The *Master Recreation Plan*, completed in 1943, calls Marin “one of the most fa-

mous vacationlands in the United States.”³ It goes on to say, “[T]he urgent need for local and easily accessible play areas for all the residents of Marin has become obvious to the most casual observer . . .”⁴

The 1943 Plan recognized that population growth increased the demand for recreation while decreasing the amount of land available for parks. Facing this challenge, authors of the 1943 Plan sought to identify “an organized scheme” to provide recreational opportunities, including parkways, beaches, shorelines, parks, and playgrounds.

In 1965, development of the *Parks and Recreation Plan 1990* represented another effort to assemble a comprehensive planning document for parks and recreation in Marin. The 1965 Plan re-evaluated recreation needs as Marin's population continued to grow. Many projects identified in the 1965 Plan, such as McInnis and Stafford Lake Parks, are now key features of Marin's recreational landscape.⁵ The 1965 Plan provided the blueprint for creating the park system that Marin residents enjoy today. The 1965 Plan also called for the preparation of an open space element in the Marin Countywide Plan. Following the 1965 Plan's adoption, the Department of Parks and Recreation was formed by the Marin County Board of Supervisors to oversee the development and maintenance of County parks.

In 1972, County residents passed ballot Measure A creating the Marin County Regional Park and Open Space District, which was later renamed the Marin County Open Space District in 1974. County Parks

and the Open Space District are currently administered by the Marin County Parks and Open Space Department.

Department Organization

The Marin County Parks and Open Space Department possesses two divisions, the Parks and Landscape Division (also known as the Parks Division) and the Marin County Open Space District. Collectively, the Department manages the County's parks, open space preserves, multi-use paths, landscape medians, playgrounds, boat launches, beaches, sports fields, and the Civic Center campus, all of which serve several million visitors per year. The Department also administers seven County Service Areas (CSAs) and one Landscape and Lighting District. The Department employs 61 full-time staff and up to 50 additional seasonal employees.

A nine-member Parks and Open Space Commission advises the Marin County Board of Supervisors (Board) on park policy matters. Commission members are appointed by the Board. Five commissioners represent Marin County's five supervisorial districts, while the other four commissioners serve at-large.

Department Funding Sources

The Department's Parks Division had an operating budget of \$4,477,178 in fiscal year 2007-2008. Most of the Parks Division budget was funded through the County General Fund; however, Parks also receives revenue through special taxes, assessments, park user fees, and

concessions. In fiscal year 2006-2007, this amount totaled \$1,752,453, up 18% from the previous year. In addition, funding for park improvements was augmented by grants, particularly those associated with state-wide park bond measures.

Through the years, Parks funding has not kept pace with need. This has led to limited development of new facilities and deferred maintenance of existing facilities, resulting in a visibly aging system. This Parks Master Plan is designed to address these issues and revitalize the park system.

The Park System

Marin County Parks provide outdoor recreation opportunities with a mix of active and passive recreation activities. Figure B-1 depicts the County's existing park system. Table B-1 provides an inventory of the Department's parks and recreation facilities.

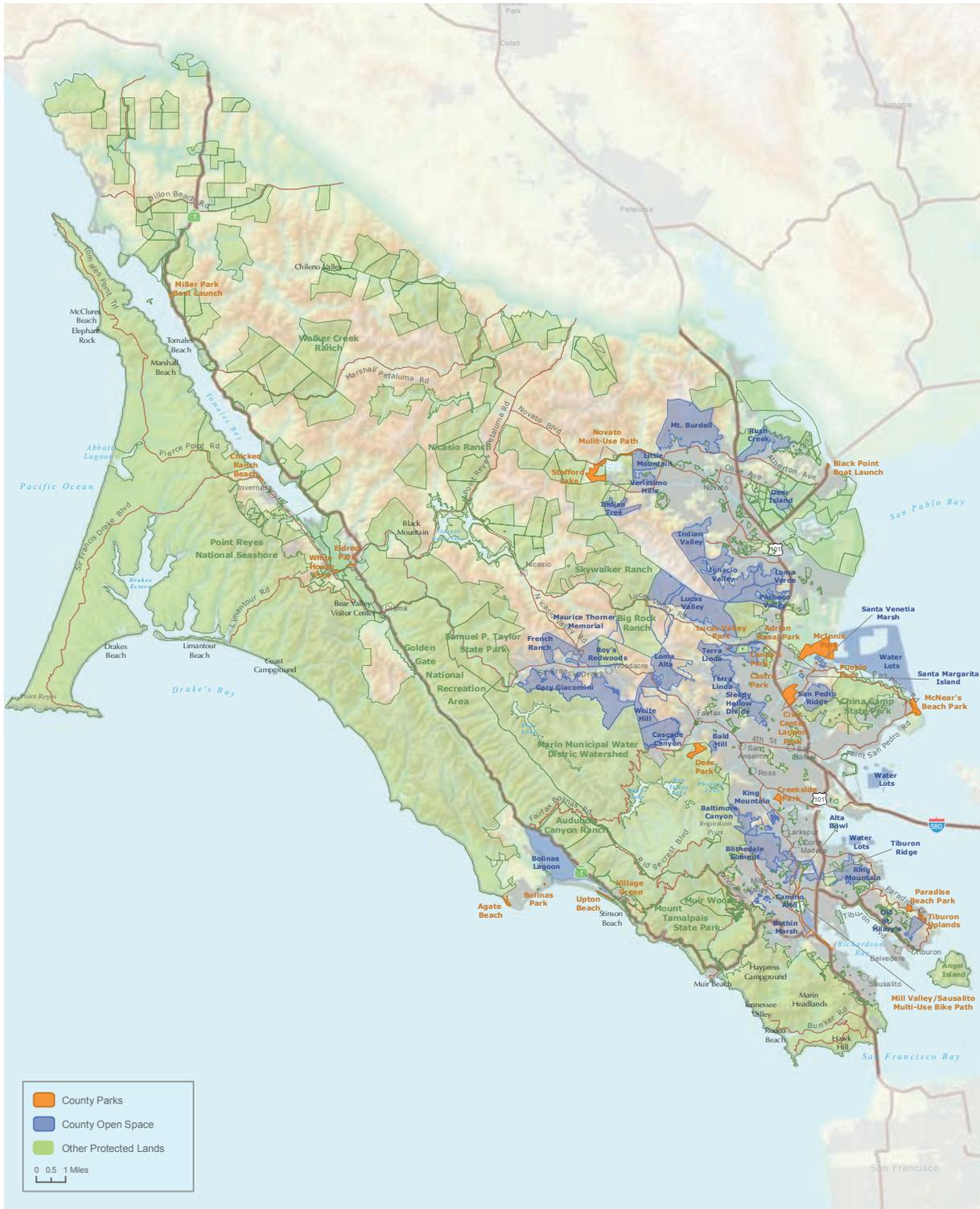
Existing Park Classifications and Standards

The Marin Countywide Plan classifies county parks by type. The classifications presented in the *Parks and Recreation Background Report* (2005) to the Countywide Plan are derived from de Chiara and Koppelman's *Planning and Design Criteria*, and include the following four types:

- **County and Regional Parks** – serving a population of 30,000 and usually incorporating natural areas, trails, water features, picnic areas, and large recreation facilities.

Our Mission:
We are dedicated to educating, inspiring, and engaging the people of Marin in the shared commitment of preserving, protecting, and enriching the natural beauty of Marin's parks and open spaces for the enjoyment of all generations.

Figure B-1: Map of Park and Recreation Facilities in Marin



- **Community Parks** – ideally serving a population of 10,000 to 30,000 within a three mile radius. Usually containing specialized facilities such as swimming pools, tennis courts, community centers, and sports field complexes.
- **Neighborhood Parks** – ideally serving one or more neighborhoods with a population of 2,000-5,000 and within a radius of one-half mile.
- **Mini-Parks and Tot-lots** – very small parks, play spaces, and sitting areas serving neighborhoods and individual developments.

Additional facility types noted in the Countywide Plan include:

- Boat launches.
- Multi-use paths.
- Fishing access.
- Beaches.

These classifications are intended to apply to all park facilities within Marin County.

The County does not have a guideline or standard for park or open space acreage per thousand persons. The National Recreation and Park Association suggests a standard of 10 acres per 1,000 persons; however, the State Quimby Act uses the range of 3-to-5 acres per 1,000 residents. The Quimby Act requirement is not intended to be a park standard; rather, it represents the minimum park acreage that must be dedicated for parks when new development occurs. Still, according to the Countywide Plan, the Novato, Las Gallinas, Upper and Lower Ross Valleys, and West Marin Planning Areas fall short

of the 3-to-5 acres per 1,000 residents.⁶

While the area of County parks totals 800 acres, certain areas within parks, such as the McInnis wetlands, are protected or otherwise unavailable for recreation. Only 458.6 acres within County parks are available for active recreational purposes. When this figure is combined with the park acreage of Marin's cities and towns, developed park land within the County is well below the National Recreation and Park Association standard of 10 acres per 1,000 residents. The *Technical Background Report* included in the Countywide Plan recognizes that the standard might be unrealistic in light of Marin's extensive open space areas, including federal, state, water district, and Open Space District lands. However, it does help to underscore a demonstrated need for additional county-wide parks for active recreation.

The Countywide Plan's Socioeconomic Element includes recommended and existing level of service guidelines for eight recreation facility types in the County:

- Swimming pools.
- Golf.
- Baseball.
- Soccer.
- Football.
- Basketball.
- Tennis.
- Track.

The Department, however, will rely on the findings of the 2007 Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment Report and the implementation strategies and actions of this Master Plan to determine appropriate levels of service.

Figure B-1: Marin County Park and Recreation Facilities Inventory

Park	Type	Amenities					Water Recreation			
		Water Fountain	Restroom	Parking Lot	Lights	Interpretive Kiosk	Swimming Pool	Shoreline/Beach	Fishing Pier	Boat Launch
Adrian Rosal Park	Mini Park	Y	N	S	Y	N				
Agate Beach	Beach	N	P	Y	N	Y		x		
Black Point Boat Launch	Boat Launch	N	P	Y*	N	Y		x		x
Bolinas Park	Neighborhood Park	Y	Y	S	N	N				
Candy's Park	Mini Park	Y	N	S	N	N				
Castro Park	Neighborhood Park	Y	N	S	N	N				
Chicken Ranch Beach	Beach	N	P	N	N	Y		x		
Corte Madera Creek Multi-Use Path	Paved Path	Y	N	N	N	Y				
Creekside Park	Community Park	Y	Y	Y	N	Y				
Deer Park	Community Park	Y	Y	Y	N	N				
Forest Knolls Park	Neighborhood Park	Y	P	S	N	N				
Lagoon Park	Community Park	Y	Y	Y	Y	N		x		
McInnis Park	Regional Park	Y	Y	Y*	Y	Y		x		
McNear's Beach Park	Regional Park	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	x	x	x	
Mill Valley / Sausalito Multi-Use Path	Paved Path	N	N	N	N	Y				
Miller Boat Launch	Boat Launch	N	P	Y*	N	N		x		x
Mission Pass Multi-Use Path	Paved Path	N	N	N	N	N				
Novato Multi-Use Path	Paved Path	N	N	N	N	N				
Paradise Beach Park	Regional Park	Y	Y	Y*	N	Y		x	x	
Point Reyes Playground	Neighborhood Park	Y	Y	Y	N	N				
Pueblo Park	Mini Park	Y	N	S	Y	N				
Rush Creek Park	Neighborhood Park	N	N	N	N	N				
Stafford Lake Park	Regional Park	Y	Y	Y*	N	Y		x		
Tiburon Uplands	Community Park	N	N	S	N	N				
Upton Beach	Beach	N	N	S	N	N		x		
Village Green	Neighborhood Park	Y	Y	S	N	N				
Whitehouse Pool	Community Park	N	P	Y	N	N				

Notes:
B = Bench, N = No, P = Portable Restroom, S = Street Parking, Y = Yes, Y = Yes w/overflow*

Appendix B: Parks Master Plan

Carry In Access	Courts			Play	Sports Fields		Special Use			Picnic Facilities			Trails (miles)			
	Tennis	Basketball	Volleyball		Playground	Sports Fields - Soccer, Softball	Open Field/Turf Area	Skate Park	Disc Golf Course	Golf	Horseshoe Pits	Picnic Tables / Benches	Group Picnicking	BBQ Facilities	Unpaved - Hiking Only	Unpaved - Shared use
						x					x		x			
x														0.3		
x											x					
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				x							x		x			
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											x		x	x		
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Demographics of Marin County

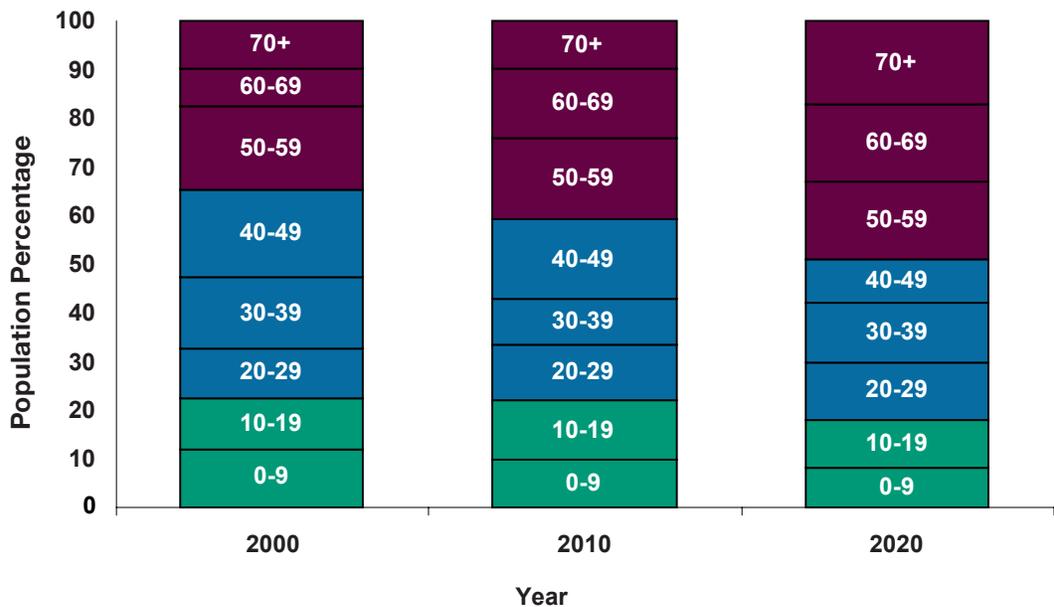
The demographic trends that emerged from the community engagement process for the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan indicate an increase in the County’s older adult population, increasing amounts of leisure time for older adults, increasing child obesity, lack of outdoor activity among youth, and increasing ethnic diversity.

Although the County’s population is projected to remain relatively stable through 2020, the percentage of citizens aged 65 and over will increase from 13.8%

in 2000 to 23.5% in 2010. The County’s ethnic composition of Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian residents will increase from 15.9% to 24.2% percent by 2020.

These trends are meaningful to future development and programming for parks. Activities and programs that promote health and wellness within park environments can be targeted to older-aged adults and children. Facilities can be designed to embrace a culturally diverse population. Opportunities to encourage off-peak park use by older-aged adults who have time available during off-peak hours can be explored.

Figure B-2: Projected Marin County Age Distribution



Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment

The Department published the Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment Report as an appendix to the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan in June 2007. The report provided a summary of the public outreach process that was used to determine park and recreation needs. This process included public workshops, meetings, special events, stakeholder meetings, focus groups, and a statistically valid community survey of 500 Marin County residents. Existing conditions of parks and recreation facilities were assessed and, when combined with findings from the public outreach process, needs for the future of the park system were identified.

General Community Survey Findings

The community survey indicates a significant interest and desire for recreation opportunities. Park facilities that accommodate popular activities such as walking and picnicking were important. Where insufficient facilities exist for activities such as swimming, camping, and boating, survey respondents supported development of new facilities. While respondents believed that the County should take a lead role in selecting the appropriate types of parks, facilities, and programs necessary to meet community needs, they also believed that the County should be responsible for determining the financial feasibility of such efforts.

More than 60% of Marin's population uses County parks at least once a month. In terms of recreational pursuits, the

following activities were identified by respondents as something they "always, often, or sometimes do:"

- Walking (97%).
- Getting together with family or friends (92%).
- Picnicking (86%).
- Hiking (84%).
- Birding or wildlife observation (66%).
- Photography (59%).
- Bicycling (55%).
- Nature study (55%).
- Taking a child to a playground (54%).
- Take a dog to a park (34.5%).
- Fishing (25%).
- Golf (23.5%).

The survey also collected participation data for non-traditional or emerging outdoor recreation activities in Marin County parks. The survey found that a higher percentage of younger populations participate in activities such as BMX riding, geocaching, and in-line skating. Activities included:

- Petanque/Bocce.
- Yoga.
- Kayaking.
- Kite Flying.
- Geocaching.
- Meditating.
- BMX Riding.
- In-line Skating.
- Hang Gliding.
- Windsurfing.

With the exception of meditating, however, more than 85% of survey respondents indicated that they never participate in these activities. Despite low participation, several respondents indicated a need to provide facilities for diverse recreational opportunities.

In discussing facilities, community members indicated a need for more swimming locations, camping areas, boat launch facilities, and paved bicycle paths. Details of recreational facilities and related community input are provided below in Table B-2: Adequacy of Facilities to Meet Perceived Needs.

These responses vary based on area of residence and need. For example, Fairfax, San Rafael, Novato, Greenbrae, San Anselmo, and Mill Valley residents expressed a need for additional swimming locations, while Greenbrae and San Rafael residents indicated a need for additional soccer fields. Novato, Mill Valley, and San Rafael residents would like more boating areas.

The 2007 Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment Report also identified “Issues and Opportunities” for Marin County Parks. These items helped to establish the actions recommended in this

Master Plan. Those that relate to development of park facilities are:

- Marin residents seek recreational opportunities that facilitate social experiences, promote nature-based education, and increased personal fitness.
- There is an opportunity to combat increases in obesity and other adverse public health trends through the provision of parks and open spaces.
- The increase in older Marin residents underscores the value of providing parks that are designed to accommodate use by a full range of ages.
- With increasing diversity in ethnic composition, parks can be cross-cultural community gathering places, and can be designed to accommodate different recreational preferences among different ethnic groups.

Table B-2: Adequacy of Facilities to Meet Perceived Needs

	Just About Right	Too Few
Swimming Locations	36%	48%
Camping Sites	47%	36%
Boating Launches	48%	34%
Paved Bike Trails	44%	34%
Self-Guided Nature Trails	60%	23%
Soccer Fields	51%	23%
Picnic Areas	77%	19%
Mountain Bike Trails	57%	18%

Park Needs

The following park needs were developed based upon feedback provided through various community outreach efforts, including the community survey. These needs form the basis for the actions included in the Park Master Plan.

Provide Diverse Recreation Experiences

Participants in every community emphasized the importance of providing a diversity of activities so that parks are responsive to changes in the County's demographic profile. In fact, 86% of community survey respondents identified the "need to provide diverse recreation experiences for everyone" as "Important" or "Very Important."

Replace Aging Facilities

The community acknowledged that facilities are beginning to age. While the Department has done a thorough job maintaining County parks, many facilities are more than 30 years old and have been in use beyond their expected life span. The community survey and the 2007 Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment Report identified replacement of playgrounds, renovation of existing swimming areas, and improvement of recreation support facilities, including restrooms, waste containers, water fountains, lights, parking areas, and spectator seating as priorities.

Universal Access

Participants in the community survey recognized the importance of providing park



Toby's Community Playground, Pt. Reyes. Rob Ruiz.

and recreation facilities that are universally accessible to all people.

Renovated or New Operations and Maintenance Facilities in Parks

Most of the Department's maintenance facilities or corporation yards are inadequate for their intended purpose. Some are located in prime areas for recreational development. While the existing facilities function, the Department would be well-served to relocate, renovate, or construct modern facilities that maximize efficiency.

Additional Long-Term Revenue Source for the Parks Division

The current budget allocation for the Parks Division does not enable the Department to meet existing or future community needs.

Address Aging Population Needs

Participants in community workshops noted that the aging population was one of the most relevant population trends in terms of park planning.

Address Youth Population Needs

Most participants in the community survey believed that increased outreach to youth with regard to parks is important. Reaching Marin's younger residents was of particular concern to workshop participants. Participants also noted the potential for volunteer activities for young adults.

Address Increasing Cultural Diversity

Participants in the community survey recognized the importance of providing recreational experiences for all ethnic groups.

Address "Nature Deficit Disorder"⁷

Marin County residents, particularly younger residents, are increasingly focused on technological pursuits. Trends show that children are spending more time indoors and less time outside. Community workshop participants expressed a desire to get children outside and experience parks.

Address the Increasing Popularity of Non-Traditional Sports and Other Recreational Activities

Non-traditional uses of parks, ranging from kayaking to meditating, are increasingly

popular in Marin County's parks. Residents reported participating in activities such as skateboarding, mountain biking, kayaking, and geocaching. These responses are consistent with statewide trends that show growth in non-traditional and extreme sports, particularly among young people.

Limited Additional Recreation Programs

There were few recreation program needs mentioned during the public outreach process, with the exception of a desire for camping and archery to be offered at parks.

More special or Cultural Events and Programs

According to community workshop participants, there is a need for more special and cultural events and programs at county parks.

Additional Volunteer Programs

A number of workshop participants noted the need for additional volunteer opportunities. It is apparent that there is a need to raise awareness among park users and within the Marin community at large about existing opportunities for volunteering.

Expansion of Educational Programs

Workshop participants expressed a desire for additional coordination with schools and the expansion of educational programs for school-aged children.

Achieving the Vision

The Parks Master Plan shares the same goals, strategies, and actions contained in the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan.

Goals and Strategies

Goal 1 Protect and Restore Our Lands

Protect, restore, and preserve the natural systems of the lands held in trust for current and future generations.

Strategy 1.1

Employ best land management practices that preserve natural resources, promote habitat diversity and contribute to the reduction in greenhouse gases.

Strategy 1.2

Inventory and monitor biological resources to develop, evaluate, and redefine management protocols.

Strategy 1.3

Work at the watershed level to ensure diverse and thriving biological communities.

Strategy 1.4

Incorporate habitat preservation strategies within flood control, fire protection, and other critical land management plans.

Goal 2 Grow and Link the County's System of Parks, Trails, and Protected Lands

Complete the County's system of parks, open space, and trails. Support the

efforts of other agencies, organizations, and communities to fulfill their land preservation and trail system goals.

Strategy 2.1

Manage a prioritized land and trail acquisition, preservation, and improvement plan.

Strategy 2.2

Implement the Parks Master Plan to respond to changing community needs and recreation trends.

Strategy 2.3

Incorporate data regarding resource and habitat value in land acquisition decision-making including habitat and creek connectivity.

Goal 3 Foster Discovery, Learning, and Stewardship

Engage the community by providing volunteer and educational experiences for people to discover, learn about, protect, and restore their parks and open space.

Strategy 3.1

Develop an outdoor education program that complements existing local programs.

Strategy 3.2

Outreach to Marin's increasingly diverse community to increase access to and knowledge of our lands.

Strategy 3.3

Grow the volunteer program to provide experiential learning opportunities that promote land stewardship.

Goal 4 Connect Communities with the Land for Recreation and Health

Offer all people opportunities to be active and healthy while enjoying safe and well maintained lands and facilities.

Strategy 4.1

Provide safe, quality recreation facilities, and programming to promote healthy lifestyles through physical activity and to meet community needs.

Strategy 4.2

Encourage innovative recreational programming through partnerships, including partnerships with private organizations and landowners.

Strategy 4.3

Encourage alternative transportation access to parks and open spaces.

Strategy 4.4

Encourage the use of parks and open space for active living and healthy lifestyles.

Strategy 4.5

Ensure that acceptable and inviting trails, parks, and open spaces connect communities.

Goal 5 Lead, Innovate, and Partner

Cultivate partnerships, explore new approaches, and adopt best practices and technologies.

Strategy 5.1

Employ innovative technologies and best practices for Departmental administration, programs, operations, and land management.

Strategy 5.2

Apply principles of green design and sustainability to our work and projects.

Strategy 5.3

Identify key partnerships to share best practices, technical knowledge, and expertise to implement plans and projects.

Goal 6 Ensure Organizational Effectiveness

Encourage innovative Department management and employee development.

Strategy 6.1

Improve communication and coordination among all divisions and management.

Strategy 6.2

Initiate and encourage collaboration among staff and with other County departments.

Strategy 6.3

Enhance staff productivity, empowerment, and satisfaction.

Strategy 6.4

Involve all Department staff in implementing the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan.

Goal 7 Fulfill Financial Needs

Achieve sustainable long-term financial viability to satisfy operational needs, capital requirements, and desired programs and services.

Strategy 7.1

Secure new funding to support the

preservation, enhancement, and long-term maintenance of parks and open space lands.

Strategy 7.2

Manage the five-year Capital Improvement Plan to identify priority projects and funding needs.

Strategy 7.3

Initiate a program to generate new revenues, maximize grant funding, and obtain funding from new sources to support park programs and services.

Park Master Plan Actions

The Parks Master Plan shares many of the actions identified in the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan, and also includes action specific to the park system.

Goal 1 Protect and Restore Our Lands

- Expand resource management planning and implementation to include parklands.
- Employ best practices to maintain park facilities.

Goal 2 Grow and Link the County's System of Parks, Trails, and Protected Lands

- Develop master plans for major park facilities.
- Expand the paved multi-use path system.
- Update the Parks Master Plan every ten years.

- Update the Needs Assessment Report every ten years.
- Seek opportunities for recreational easements to enable public recreational use of school grounds during non-school hours.
- Explore joint park and open space land acquisition opportunities on lands that have potential for limited park development.

Goal 3 Foster Discovery, Learning, and Stewardship

- Offer naturalist walks in developed County parklands to reach park visitors who are unlikely to visit open space preserves.
- Provide natural areas in parks to enable their exploration and study by visitors unlikely to visit open space preserves.
- Provide regulatory, directional, and interpretive signage in multiple languages.

Goal 4 Connect Communities with the Land for Recreation and Health

- Develop additional sports fields.
- Provide new water recreation facilities.
- Partner with the bicycle community to plan and build a bike park.
- Improve non-motorized boating access.
- Expand group camping and picnicking opportunities.
- Improve existing swimming facilities.
- Provide outdoor venues for cultural, community, and arts events.
- Explore and participate in local,

community health programs that can be implemented through programs and facilities available in County parks.

- Identify and work toward removing barriers to non-motorized transportation access, such as lack of bike lanes and sidewalks, to parks and trails.
- Collaborate with schools, community groups, and local recreation departments in the programming and design of parks.

Goal 5 Lead, Innovate, and Partner

- Prepare Contingency Plans for use of parks as refuges and gathering places during disasters.

- Explore use of artificial turf to reduce field down-time caused by heavy use or wet conditions.

Goal 6 Ensure Organizational Effectiveness

- See Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan.

Goal 7 Fulfill Financial Needs

- Explore new revenue generating recreational facilities and activities.
- Explore transfer of the administration of Quimby Act funds from the Community Development Agency to the Parks and Open Space Department.

Park Profiles

This section provides profiles for 24 parks managed by the Department. Each profile includes detail regarding park size, location, type, key features, amenities, and opportunities for improvement. For additional details, see Appendix D, Capital Improvement Plan.

Adrian Rosal Park	McNear's Beach Park
Agate Beach	Mill Valley/Sausalito Multi-Use Path
Black Point Boat Launch	Miller Boat Launch
Bolinas Park	Mission Path Multi-Use Path
Candy's Park	Novato Multi-Use Path
Castro Park	Paradise Beach Park
Chicken Ranch Beach	Pueblo Park
Corte Madera Creek Multi-Use Path	Stafford Lake Park
Creekside Park	Tiburon Uplands
Deer Park	Upton Beach
John F. McInnis Park	Village Green
Lagoon Park	Whitehouse Pool

Adrian Rosal Park

Location: Santa Venetia
Size: .70 acres
Park Type: Mini-Park/Pocket Park

Description

This is a small pocket park serving the local neighborhood in Santa Venetia with a multipurpose turf area, picnic area, and barbeque facilities. The park is on the corner of Adrian Way and Rosal Way, and shares boundaries on two sides with residences. The park lies within County Service Area 18, which provides limited funding for maintenance and improvements.

Issues and Opportunities

The park is in good condition. The following items are suggested for consideration:

- Renovate turf area.
- Upgrade landscaping.
- Renovate pathway and picnic pads.
- Install drinking fountain and barbeques.
- Expand picnic area.
- Install landscape buffer between picnic area and street.
- Install accessibility improvements.
- Upgrade irrigation system.
- Install pet waste station.
- Install covered waste and recycling receptacles.
- Provide bike racks.

Ed Hulme



Agate Beach Park

Location: Near Bolinas

Size: 6.6 acres

Park Type: Community Park

Description

This 6.6 acre park provides access to almost two miles of ocean shoreline at low tide. Together with adjacent Duxbury Reef, Agate Beach provides a rewarding opportunity to explore tide pools filled with marine life. The beach is located within the Duxbury Reef State Marine Reserve. Existing facilities include an interpretive kiosk and an unpaved parking area. The park is located west of Bolinas, at the end of Elm Road.

Issues and Opportunities

The park's popularity for general beach recreation and exploring tide pools warrants infrastructure improvements and additional public education to address visitor impacts, especially to tide pools. An assessment of visitor impacts to tidepools is currently underway. Among management measures to reduce visitor impact, the installation of regulatory and interpretive signage is the only one related to capital improvements.

Natural resource management at Agate Beach includes control of exotic, invasive plants and upland sediment reduction. In collaboration with the Department of Public Works, planning for a new surfaced parking area with a permeable surface is underway. However, implementation of this project is subject to grant funding.

The following items are suggested for consideration:

- Install additional covered recycling, waste and hot coal receptacles.
- Provide bicycle rack.
- Improve signage, particularly related to protection of tidepools.



Craig Solin

Black Point Boat Launch

Location: Petaluma River at Highway 37 Bridge

Size: 2.0 acres

Park Type: Boat Launch

Description

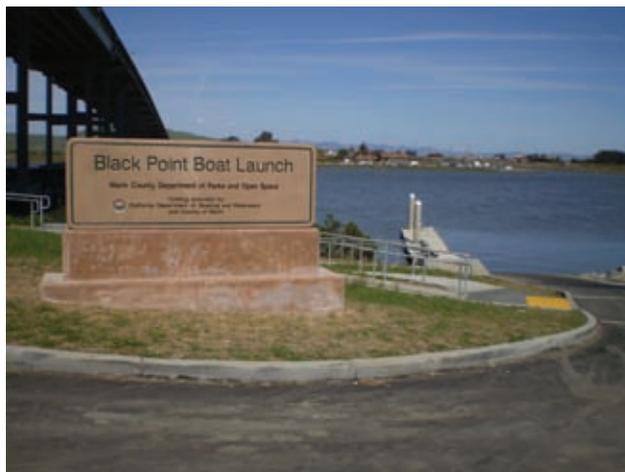
Black Point Boat Launch is a two acre site with a newly renovated, single-lane ramp for motorized and non-motorized boat launching at the mouth of the Petaluma River. Picnic tables and parking are provided at the site.

Issues and Opportunities

The launch was renovated in 2007. The California Department of Boating and Waterways provided grant funding to construct a new ramp and to install new boarding floats, a pumpout station, and an informational kiosk. The Department is taking steps to expand this site by acquiring State-owned land immediately to the north. It is also pursuing a Phase II renovation that includes a permanent restroom, a fish cleaning station, and a boat and trailer turnaround area.

The following items are suggested for consideration:

- Install elevated wildlife viewing platform.
- Install fishing pier.
- Provide bicycle racks.



Nancy Peake

Bolinas Park

Location: Brighton Avenue in the Town of Bolinas

Size: 1.0 acres

Park Type: Community Park

Description

This one acre community park, nestled between Brighton Avenue and Park Avenue in Bolinas, provides tennis courts, picnic facilities, and restroom facilities. The park lies in close proximity to Bolinas Beach and to downtown Bolinas. The park is used by surrounding residents and beach visitors.

Issues and Opportunities

The park is in good condition and receives regular use due to its proximity to the beach and residential neighborhood. A practice wall in the tennis court was recently renovated.

The restroom is heavily used, requiring more frequent maintenance than is currently provided due to limited staff resources in the area. The park has been subject to minor graffiti vandalism and overnight occupancy by homeless persons.

The following items are suggested for consideration:

- Install small playground area.
- Develop landscaping improvements.
- Provide changing rooms.
- Install pet waste station.
- Install one to four new picnic tables with small barbeques.
- Develop accessibility improvements.
- Install a public telephone.
- Provide bicycle racks.



Rob Ruiz

Candy’s Park

Location: La Posada Way and Adrina Drive, Santa Venetia

Size: 0.1 acres

Park Type: Mini-Park/Pocket Park

Description

This is a small pocket park serving a Santa Venetia neighborhood. It includes a play area for small children, benches, and picnic facilities.

Issues and Opportunities

Candy’s Park is in very good condition and meets the needs of local residents.

Although the recreation and support facilities do not require upgrades in the near term, the following items are suggested for consideration:

- Improved accessibility.
- Tree replacement.

Ed Hulme



Castro Park

Location: Vendola Drive and Mabry, Santa Venetia

Size: 1.49 acres

Park Type: Mini-Park/Pocket Park

Description

Formerly a Little League baseball field, Castro Park is a unique pocket park enclosed by the neighborhood it serves. The park boundaries are marked by neighboring residential fences and access is provided from the street via easements between lots. Existing park facilities include a play area, turf volleyball court, picnic tables, and an open turf area.

Issues and Opportunities

Castro Park was renovated in 2001. The park is in excellent condition. The recreation facilities, park amenities, and landscaping do not show signs of age or wear.

Ed Hulme



Chicken Ranch Beach

Location: Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, North of Inverness

Size: 3.0 acres

Park Type: Beach

Description

Chicken Ranch Beach is north of Inverness, along Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and adjacent to the west shore of Tomales Bay. It is popular for kayaking, beach activities, and geological study.

Issues and Opportunities

Chicken Ranch Beach offers improved access to a natural area, though additional amenities are required. The creek and adjacent wetland present natural resource management and water quality challenges. Ongoing maintenance issues include beach cleanup and removal of exotic, non-native species. There are occasional conflicts between kayakers and swimmers.

The following items are suggested for consideration:

- Replace existing split rail fence.
- Expand park area by leasing or otherwise acquiring rights of adjacent State Lands Commission property.
- Develop and implement plans for beach and wetland restoration, creek and drainage issues, and water quality improvements.
- Provide kayak/canoe launch.
- Install picnic tables.
- Install permanent restrooms.
- Provide public telephone.
- Provide bicycle racks.
- Install covered waste and recycling receptacles.



Craig Solin

Corte Madera Creek Multi-use Path

Location: Adjacent to Corte Madera Creek, Corte Madera

Size: 2.7 miles

Park Type: Multi-Use Path

Description

This popular multi-use path extends from Creekside Park to Ross Commons, through the College of Marin. Amenities include a fitness course and benches distributed along the length of the path. The path is used by local residents for walking, jogging, and bicycling, and links residential neighborhoods to Creekside Park, College of Marin, Bacich School, Marin Catholic High School, and Marin General Hospital.

Issues and Opportunities:

The path is in good condition, but would benefit from a higher level of maintenance to control weeds, manage waste, and repair paving.

The following items are suggested for consideration:

- Provide picnic facilities.
- Enhance landscaping.
- Provide additional drinking fountains.
- Provide bicycle racks.
- Install signage.



Craig Solin

Creekside Park

Location: Bon Air Road in Greenbrae, across the street from Marin General Hospital
Size: 25.66 acres
Park Type: Community Park

Description

This community park includes a playground, picnic facilities, a lawn area, an 18 acre natural marsh, and a connection to the Corte Madera Creek Multi-Use Path. It adjoins Marin General Hospital, Bacich Elementary School, Marin Catholic High School, and a private swim and racquet club.

Issues and Opportunities

Creekside Park is showing its age. The Department will prepare a new master plan for it in 2009. The park’s design and facilities should satisfy neighborhood needs, but also reflect its close proximity to the hospital and schools. The park has potential for expanded public use.

Maintenance issues that can be addressed separately from the master plan process include removal of diseased trees and minor repair of paved areas. Tree replacement can occur during implementation of the master plan.



Craig Solin

Deer Park

Location: Located off Porteous Avenue in Fairfax

Size: 30.0 acres

Park Type: Community Park

Description

Deer Park provides picnic areas and nature trails in a natural, wooded setting. Its trails connect to Marin Municipal Water District watershed lands and the Bald Hill Open Space Preserve. Marin Municipal Water District owns the property, which the Department operates pursuant to a 30 year lease that expires in 2009.

Issues and Opportunities

Deer Park was developed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930's, and is clearly showing its age. As an example, some existing picnic tables are relics from the original construction. Since Deer Park lies in a more natural setting than other County parks, fire safety and non-native vegetation are management issues.

The following items are suggested for consideration:

- Improve/repair access route and parking areas, and explore additional parking.
- Replace picnic tables and benches.
- Provide covered picnic area.
- Provide support facilities such as pet waste receptacles, bike racks, signage, public telephone, and drinking fountains.
- Repair or reroute trails to address soil erosion, and replace the pedestrian bridge.
- Stabilize creek banks and control non-native vegetation.
- Improve fire access to southern portion of park.



Ed Hulme

John F. McInnis Park

Location: One mile east of Highway 101, at the end of Smith Ranch Road in San Rafael
Size: 450.0 acres
Park Type: Regional Park

Description

Adjoining extensive bay wetlands to the east, John F. McInnis Park (McInnis Park) contains an award-winning skateboard park, two softball fields, two soccer fields, a canoe launch, four tennis courts, a group picnic area, and nature trails. The park also includes the McInnis Park Golf Center, offering a nine hole executive course and driving range, clubhouse, pro shop, restaurant, miniature golf, and batting cages. The County leases operation of the Golf Center to a private concessionaire.

Issues and Opportunities

McInnis Park’s popularity, especially for organized sports, has resulted in parking need exceeding capacity during weekends and tournaments. In addition, many of the facilities have been well-used and are now in need of renovation or replacement. Examples include the existing lighting system and spectator bleachers. There is substantial opportunity for park expansion in undeveloped and underutilized areas, excluding wetlands.

Steve Petterle

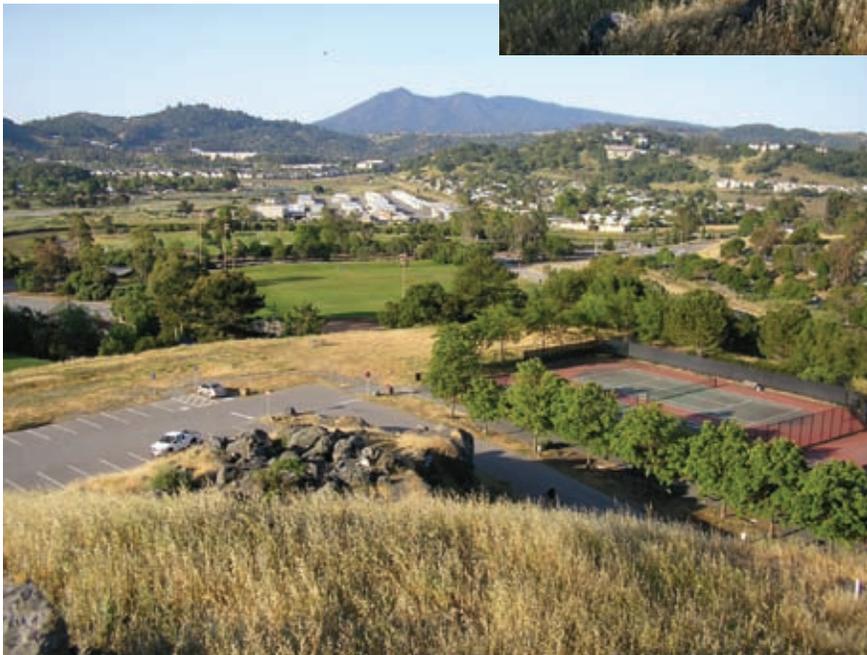


The current McInnis Park master plan identifies the addition of a playground, a group picnic area, and parking areas. A revision to this Master Plan is now underway, which will identify appropriate locations for a dog park and petanque courts. It will also consider reconfiguring and converting two existing play fields to synthetic turf.

The following items are suggested for consideration:

- Facilities to encourage alternative transportation, including bicycle racks.
- Wetland restoration.
- Use of all undeveloped, upland acreage.
- Relocation and/or renovation of existing corporation yard.
- Additional parking.
- Wildlife viewing opportunities.
- Renovation or replacement of:
 - Irrigation system.
 - Landscaping, with the goal of reducing water consumption related to irrigation.
 - Turf fields.
 - Restroom facilities.
 - Light poles, with new energy efficient lights.

Rob Ruiz



Craig Solin

Lagoon Park

Location: Civic Center Complex, San Rafael

Size: 10.0 acres

Park Type: Community Park

Description

Lagoon Park is located on the Marin Civic Center campus and surrounds a man-made lagoon. It provides expansive views of the landmark Civic Center buildings designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. The park is popular for walking, picnicking, frisbee, model boating, and fishing. The playground adjacent to the lagoon was renovated in September 2008 and its innovative and exciting play features make it a favorite spot for kids. For one week each summer, the park is the setting for the carnival rides that are part of the Marin County Fair.

Issues and Opportunities

Lagoon Park has drainage problems and is subject to flooding during the rainy season. In addition, the lagoon's infrastructure has deteriorated, affecting shoreline stability, fountains, landscaping, and water quality. County-owned land immediately south of the park is being considered as the location for a new Public Safety Building. If built, this facility could impact parking for Lagoon Park.

The following items are suggested for consideration:

- Add covered picnic areas.
- Complete paved pathway around the lagoon.
- Conduct a shoreline stabilization study.
- Consider filtration islands in the lagoon.
- Management of the goose population.
- Add support facilities including drinking fountains and bicycle racks.

The Marin Center Renaissance Partnership has developed a Concept Master Plan for the entire Marin Center complex, including portions of Lagoon Park, however, much of the park is unaffected by this plan.



Nancy Peake

McNear's Beach Park

Location: 201 Cantera Way at the end of San Pedro Road, San Rafael

Size: 55.0 acres

Park Type: Regional Park

Description

Set in a beautiful sheltered cove with mature landscaping, this 55 acre regional park is located along the shore of San Pablo Bay in San Rafael, southeast of China Camp State Park. The fishing pier is highly popular. Other recreation facilities include a swimming pool, sand volleyball courts, group picnic areas, carry-in boat access, and tennis courts.

Issues and Opportunities

Wave action has reduced the size of the sandy beach area and undermined a seawall. The fishing pier is presently closed, having been heavily damaged during a January 2008 storm. Engineering studies are being conducted to determine if the pier needs to be replaced or repaired. The swimming pool and utility infrastructure are old and require extensive repairs.

The following items are suggested for consideration:

- Developing underutilized areas.
- Renovating existing recreation facilities and utility infrastructure.
- Providing interpretive signage.
- Creating a trail connection to China Camp State Park.
- Renovating the barn.
- Providing special event facilities, such as a conference center and an amphitheater/ stage area.
- Improving and adding walking paths.
- Repairing the small boat dock.
- Providing camping facilities.
- Providing a water play area with equipment rentals.
- Providing facilities for water sports such as a kayak launch, designated bay swimming area, boat moorings and a boat launch.



Ed Hulme

Mill Valley / Sausalito Multi-Use Path

Location: Mill Valley to Sausalito

Size: 3.06 miles

Park Type: Multi-Use Path

Description

The Mill Valley/Sausalito Multi-Use Path occupies a vacated railroad corridor. It is paved and highly popular with pedestrians and bicyclists. The pathway adjoins Mill Valley's Bayfront Park and Bothin Marsh Open Space Preserve. A spur trail along Coyote Creek connects to Tam Valley and Tennessee Valley.

Issues and Opportunities

The Department of Public Works is currently studying flooding issues and creek flow to Bothin Marsh. The Coyote Creek spur trail will be rebuilt as part of this project.

Along the main pathway, the following items are suggested for consideration:

- Install bike racks at key access points.
- Renovate pathway pavement.
- Replace/upgrade bridges.
- Improve signage, particularly for trail etiquette.



Ed Hulme

Miller Boat Launch

Location: Located on Highway 1, three miles north of Marshall

Size: 4.0 acres

Park Type: Boat Launch

Description

This popular four acre site provides public boating access to Tomales Bay, with a two-lane boat ramp and boarding floats.

Issues and Opportunities

The Department renovated Miller Boat Launch in 2007. Improvements include an overlay of the existing ramp, new boarding floats, and repaved parking areas. Phase II of the renovation, planned for 2009, will include installation of a restroom, a fish cleaning station, electrical service, water service, a dump station, and a septic system.

The following items are suggested for consideration:

- Fishing pier.
- Kayak launch.
- Improved support facilities, such as animal proof waste receptacles, recycling and hot coal receptacles, pet waste receptacles, and public telephone.



Nancy Peake

Mission Pass Multi-Use Path

Location: End of Freitas Parkway, between Terra Linda and Sleepy Hollow

Size: 0.46 miles

Park Type: Multi-Use Path

Description

This short stretch of paved pathway provides a connection for pedestrians and bicyclists between Terra Linda and Sleepy Hollow, crossing the Terra Linda-Sleepy Hollow Divide Open Space Preserve. The path is heavily used.

Issues and Opportunities

The path is in generally good condition. The Fawn Drive entry should be redesigned for improved access.

The Department has installed waste containers and two dispensers of pet waste bags for the convenience of private and commercial dog walkers. However, improper disposal of the bags is an ongoing maintenance issue. Greater enforcement or more frequent maintenance is needed to keep the area free of dog waste.

The following item is suggested for consideration:

- Installation of a bicycle rack would encourage bicycle use by open space visitors.



Ed Hulme

Novato Multi-Use Path

Location: Adjacent to Novato Boulevard between Stafford Lake Park and Novato

Size: 2.37 miles

Park Type: Multi-Use Path

Description

The Novato Multi-Use Path connects Stafford Lake Park to the community of Novato. The paved pathway is adjacent to Novato's O'Hair Park and North Marin Water District lands.

Issues and Opportunities

The trail is worn in segments. The path does not meet basic Class 1 bike path standards.

The following items are suggested for consideration:

- Repave pathway.
- Stripe pathway.
- Install retaining walls and signage.



Craig Solin

Paradise Beach Park

Location: 3450 Paradise Drive, Tiburon

Size: 19.0 acres

Park Type: Regional Park

Description

This park is located on Paradise Drive along the east shore of the Tiburon Peninsula, nestled in a residential neighborhood. The park offers family and group picnic sites along the coast, numerous lawn areas, a horseshoe court, a sandy beach, and a long fishing pier.

Issues and Opportunities

The Department is currently developing a plan to address slope instability and shoreline erosion. Along with this and aging infrastructure, other challenges at this site are access and parking. Its hillside location provides only 92 parking spaces. On special-use days, the parking exceeds capacity by a factor of four.

Paradise Beach Park would benefit greatly from a renovation guided by an updated master plan. ***The following should be explored:***

- Opportunities for additional parking.
- Facilities to encourage access to park by alternate transportation modes such as bicycle and non-motorized boats.
- Additional permanent restrooms at the southern/upper end of the park.
- Covered picnic shelters, kayak launch, playground, and staging area for tri-athlete training.
- Restoring the beach and providing beach access.
- Improving landscaping.
- Facilities and programs to increase year round and off season use.
- Water trail amenities and a nature trail.
- Opportunities for boat moorings, small boat dock, and pier.
- Additional group picnic areas.
- Interpretive display highlighting the park's colorful history.
- Prior to, or as part of, the master plan process, existing maintenance issues should be evaluated and addressed, including:
 - Replacing the irrigation system.
 - Replacing the existing potable water distribution system.
 - Changing from septic system to sewer system hook up.
 - Updating fire hydrants.

Adam Craig



Pueblo Park

Location: Between Descanso and Hacienda, Santa Venetia

Size: 2.0 acres

Park Type: Mini-Park/Pocket Park

Description

This small neighborhood park in Santa Venetia offers a play area, picnic facilities, tennis court, and half-court basketball area.

Issues and Opportunities

The park is well-used and showing wear.

The following items are suggested for consideration:

- Redesign existing basketball court to accommodate shared use.
- Resurface tennis court.
- Install support facilities, including a permanent restroom, security lighting, bicycle racks, and pet waste receptacles.



Ed Hulme

Stafford Lake Park

Location: Situated on the shores of Stafford Lake, three miles west of Novato

Size: 139.0 acres

Park Type: Regional Park

Description

One of the County's flagship parks, Stafford Lake is home to large scale events, picnics, musical performances, and other festivities. This park offers shore fishing, a nature trail, picnic areas with barbecue facilities for groups of up to 500 people, a popular children's play structure, lawn areas, a softball field, volleyball, disc golf, and horseshoe courts.

Issues and Opportunities

An updated master plan should be prepared and explore the following items:

- Renovation of existing recreation facilities, including multipurpose turf area/field.
- New recreation facilities such as archery range, bocce ball courts, BMX park (below dam), water play area, and a permanent events area and stage.
- Opportunities for park expansion.
- Educational facilities.
- Opportunities to attract park users in off peak periods.
- Facilities to encourage non-motorized access.
- Creek restoration below the dam.
- Management of the goose population.
- Camping opportunities.
- Relocation of corporation yard away from prime use area.

In addition to the improvements that would result from implementation of the master plan, ***the following items are suggested for consideration:***

- Upgrading the irrigation system in four phases including main system pump, system mainlines, valves and heads, and remote controller.
- Replacing picnic shelter roofs.



Craig Solin

Tiburon Uplands

Location: Paradise Drive, Tiburon south of Paradise Beach Park

Size: 24.0 acres

Park Type: Community Park

Description

Tiburon Uplands is a County nature preserve, rather than a developed park. Its 24 wooded acres are tucked into a canyon along a quiet stretch of Paradise Drive near Tiburon, about one mile south of Paradise Beach Park. A short loop trail allows visitors to enjoy a variety of native plants and animals, as well as excellent bay views from the higher elevations. The property adjoins the Old St. Hilary's Open Space Preserve near the ridgeline.

Issues and Opportunities

Though possessing more characteristics of an open space preserve than a County park, Tiburon Uplands is managed by the Department's Parks Division because of its close proximity to Paradise Beach Park, whose staff maintains it. The preserve provides a secluded natural experience with few recreational facilities. Exotic plant populations require ongoing control.

The following items are suggested for consideration:

- Reroute and improve trail.
- Install benches along the trail.
- Install interpretive kiosks.
- Provide support facilities such as waste and recycling receptacles, signage, and bicycle racks.
- Improve trail connection to Old St. Hilary's Open Space Preserve.



MCPOS Archives

Upton Beach

Location: North of and adjacent to Stinson Beach

Size: 4.0 acres

Park Type: Beach

Description

Upton Beach is a four acre stretch of beach along the coast. Its uses include surfing, sunbathing, fishing, picnicking, birding, and hang gliding.

Issues and Opportunities

Priority issues at Upton Beach include parking, access to the beach, beach cleanup, litter removal (including dead mammal disposal), and periodic hazardous surf conditions. Beachgoers swim at their own risk.

The following items are suggested for consideration:

- Provide covered waste, recycling, pet waste, and hot coal receptacles.
- Replace stairway.
- Provide signs for shark related closures, ownership ID/boundaries, and unsafe surf.
- Assess beach access alternatives.



James Black

Village Green

Location: Stinson Beach

Size: 2.0 acres

Park Type: Neighborhood Park

Description

Village Green Park in Stinson Beach consists of two small parcels directly across the street from each other and known as Village Green I and Village Green II. Village Green I is developed for active recreation, providing a basketball court and a newly renovated playground (November 2008). Village Green II is the town square and offers passive recreation with seating in a landscaped setting.

Issues and Opportunities

While Stinson Beach is a popular destination for tourists, Village Green is meant to serve the local community.

The following items are suggested for consideration:

- Improve drainage.
- Install support facilities, including a public telephone, permanent restrooms, and bicycle racks.



Nancy Peake

Whitehouse Pool

Location: Located on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, one mile west of Point Reyes Station

Size: 22.0 acres

Park Type: Community Park

Description

This 22 acre site is popular for bird watching and kayaking. It offers walking paths, viewing areas, picnic tables, paved parking, restrooms, and access to Lagunitas Creek. The County is coordinating improvements with Point Reyes National Seashore in the adjacent Giacomini Wetlands Restoration Project. The site is owned by the State and leased to the County.

Issues and Opportunities

Whitehouse Pool would benefit from a master plan to provide a comprehensive assessment of the existing facilities and potential for expanded recreation and support facilities.

The following items are suggested for consideration:

- Redesign parking area.
- Provide wildlife viewing platform and benches.
- Provide kayak launch.
- Install interpretive kiosk and signage.
- Renovate and replace bridges and pathway improvements.
- Remove exotic plant species.
- Install support facilities, including animal proof waste and recycling receptacles, pet waste station(s), signage, public telephone, permanent restrooms, and bicycle racks.



Craig Solin

Systemwide and Other Improvements

Many improvements listed on the Park Profiles are proposed for multiple park sites, including those parks for which a park profile has been prepared, but which are not specifically named in the Parks Capital Improvement Plan List, such as Agate Beach. These small improvements, while not costly, will greatly improve the overall quality of user experience at each park. They include:

- New signs.
- Irrigation renovations.
- New bicycle racks.
- New drinking fountains.
- New waste and recycling containers.
- Landscaping renovations.

These improvements are identified in the Parks Capital Improvement Plan (Appendix D) under the category “Multiple Park Facility Improvements.” Under the same category is a line item for a new free-

ride bicycle park, the creation of which the Department is currently exploring in partnership with representatives of the bicycling community.

Cost

Improving Marin County’s park system will require an additional investment—an amount beyond what the County is currently spending to build and maintain parks. Table B-3 provides a summary of costs associated with the implementation of the Parks Master Plan. The figures shown below represent a portion of the overall cost to implement the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan. Additional costs associated with open space, programmatic improvements, staffing, and operations, as well as an implementation timeline, can be found in the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan.

Table B-3: Total Estimated Cost of Master Plan Implementation

Type of Project	Estimated Cost*
Planning, Design, Engineering, Permitting, Environmental, and Construction Management	\$483,100
Capital Improvements to Existing Facilities	\$23,457,000
New Capital Improvements	\$17,440,000
Total Estimated Cost	\$41,400,000

* Note: Estimates have been rounded to the closest million dollars.

Implementing the Plan

Implementation of the Parks Master Plan will expand, improve and revitalize the County's parks system, providing park visitors with the experience described in the Strategic Plan vision. Moving forward

will require both strategic direction with respect to timing as well as new investment in the system. Recommendations related to both are offered in the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan and the Capital Improvement Plan (Appendix D).

Notes

1. All figures are in 2008 dollars.
2. A more complete summary of documents related to the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan can be found in the *2007 Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment Report*.
3. *Master Recreation Plan*, Marin County, Marin County Planning Commission, 1943, page 5.
4. Ibid. 5.
5. *Parks and Recreation Plan 1990: Outdoor Recreation for Marin County*, Marin County Planning Department, August 1965, page 56.
6. The 1975 Quimby Act (California Government Code §66477) authorizes cities and counties to pass ordinances requiring that developers set aside land, donate conservation easements, or pay fees for park improvements. Revenues generated through the Quimby Act cannot be used for the operation and maintenance of park facilities. The Act was designed to ensure “adequate” parks acreage in jurisdictions adopting Quimby Act standards (i.e., 3-5 acres per 1,000 residents).
7. Louv, Richard. *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*. Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books, 2008.



The view from Ring Mountain Preserve. Craig Solin.

Appendix C

Land Conservation Plan

Executive Summary

To plan for the future of Marin County's open space and trail system, this Land Conservation Plan accompanies the Marin County Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan. The Land Conservation Plan identifies target land conservation areas comprising approximately 15,000 acres where the Marin County Parks and Open Space Department should focus its land conservation efforts for the next 20 years. The Plan guides the Department as it moves forward to preserve Marin's most significant remaining unprotected areas—ridgelines, community separators, wetlands, and environmentally sensitive lands—and to close gaps in the County's unparalleled system of trails.

The Land Conservation Plan is comprehensive in scope. It reviews Marin's

unique and successful heritage of land conservation, including the many public and private conservation partners, from federal, state, and local agencies to community-based and neighborhood organizations. It highlights current local, regional, and state conservation planning efforts and discusses the need for continuing land preservation and stewardship, bolstered by the Department's findings gleaned during the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan community outreach process. The Plan identifies ten target land conservation areas located primarily within the hills and wetlands east and west of the Highway 101 corridor and explains the underlying and guiding land acquisition policies and programs the Department will implement. It describes the variety of land conservation methods available to the Department and the advantages and disadvantages

of each. Most importantly, based on a thorough discussion of the characteristics that define the Department's current land conservation program, the Plan provides five recommendations to ensure the future success of the Department's land conservation efforts.

Introduction

Generation after generation of Marin residents greatly value the County's parklands, hills, wetlands, watershed lands, streams, beaches, and trails for their astonishing beauty, the vital natural functions they perform, the wildlife habitats they provide, and the numerous

recreational opportunities they offer. As a public land management and conservation agency, the Marin County Parks and Open Space Department manages open spaces closest to where people live. The challenge is stewarding these sensitive lands in a manner that preserves their ecological resources for generations while keeping the lands accessible to all.

To plan for the future of the County's parks, open space and trail system, this Land Conservation Plan (Plan) accompanies the Marin County Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan and identifies areas where the Department should focus its land conservation efforts. For the purpose of this document, the term "land

Hikers, Mount Burdell Preserve. May Chen.



conservation” refers to all efforts to acquire interests in real property, ranging from the outright purchase of land to conservation easements, for public park and open space purposes. The second goal of the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan, “Grow and Link the County’s System of Parks, Trails, and Protected Lands”, is essential to achieving the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan vision and continues Marin’s longstanding tradition of land conservation. The Plan guides the Department as it moves forward to preserve Marin’s most significant remaining unprotected open spaces and to complete Marin’s interconnected system of trails.

The Purpose of the Land Conservation Plan

The purpose of the Land Conservation Plan is to direct the Department’s land conservation efforts in target areas to achieve the County’s land conservation goals initiated in 1972 and reconfirmed by the 2007 update of the Marin Countywide Plan. Much of Marin is made up of protected lands held by the County, federal and state agencies, local water districts, land trusts, cities, towns and community-based organizations. Despite the success of preserving nearly half of Marin’s total acreage as parklands, open space, and agricultural lands, significant gaps in protected lands remain. Closing these gaps by acquiring land or employing other land conservation methods is essential to protect natural areas from development, to promote biodiversity, create wildlife corridors, and to grow and link the countywide park, open space, and trail system.

The History of Land Conservation in Marin

Marin County’s natural beauty and productive agricultural resources have long been valued by residents and visitors. As early as the 1930’s, the *Marin Journal* called for planning efforts to acquire natural areas in response to the loss of lands that were being developed to support the growing population. Up until that time, Marin remained largely undeveloped, but the completion the Golden Gate Bridge in 1937 made the County a destination for those who wished to live in Marin yet work in San Francisco. Prior to the completion of the bridge, four pioneering environmental stewards, all women with an eye to the future, formed the Marin Conservation League (MCL) in 1934 to protect the natural assets of Marin County for all people. Their early accomplishments included acquiring and/or expanding major natural lands that would eventually become Mount Tamalpais State Park (1934), Stinson Beach (1939), and Samuel P. Taylor State Park (1940). MCL also contributed to the County’s first master plan for recreation in 1943, which helped guide park and open space protection efforts for the next two decades.¹ MCL was instrumental in many of the initial acquisitions stemming from the 1943 Plan including the acquisition of lands that would eventually become Tomales Bay State Park (1951), Angel Island State Park (1954), and the Point Reyes National Seashore (1962).

1965 was an important year for County park and recreation planning. First the Board of Supervisors created the Marin County Department of Parks and Recreation to oversee development of regional

park facilities throughout Marin. Second, the Board adopted the Marin County Planning Department's *Parks and Recreation Plan 1990*. The 1965 Plan reevaluated Marin's recreation needs during a critical time when the County's population was continuing to grow at an increasing rate and was expected to do so for the foreseeable future. By focusing on implementation, the 1965 Plan attempted to remedy the shortcomings of the 1943 Plan, which provided little direction regarding the provision of recreation facilities. Many projects identified in 1965, such as Stafford Lake Park, are now key features of Marin's recreational landscape.² The 1965 Plan provided the blueprint of the County's park system that Marin residents enjoy today. Over the next few years, the County acquired land to develop parks at Paradise Beach in Tiburon, Miller Point in Tomales, and to preserve the ecologically sensitive Bolinas Lagoon.

By the late 1960's, rapid suburban growth in Marin showed little sign of slowing. Consequently County residents mobilized to preserve their natural areas. Several community-based organizations grew out of the desire to protect and preserve open space. Once such organization was the "People for a Golden Gate National Recreation Area", whose successful campaign eventually led to the creation of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) later in 1972.

By 1970, MCL members partnered with the County to promote the creation of a permanently funded County agency whose mission would be to protect and preserve open space. An advocacy group

called "People for Parks and Open Space" was formed and grew community support for the creation of an open space district. The publication of *Can the Last Place Last?* in 1971 set forth a vision of open space preservation for Marin. It also passionately defined "liveability"—what residents felt about Marin because of its protected natural areas, which at the time were facing the threat of future development. With overwhelming public support, Proposition A passed in November 1972, creating the Marin County Regional Park and Open Space District and establishing a funding source from property taxes.³ In 1974, the Marin County Regional Park and Open Space District was renamed the Marin County Open Space District (MCOSD).

Conservation activities continued and expanded throughout the 1970's. More than \$7 million in bonds were approved and issued by County Service Areas throughout Marin for open space acquisition. In 1972, the County rezoned much of its western area, which was predominantly agricultural, requiring a minimum parcel size of 60 acres. Rezoning was followed by the adoption of Marin County's first General Plan in 1972, which directed future growth in the eastern "City-Centered Corridor" of Marin, away from important agricultural and coastal resources in the west. The Marin Agricultural Land Trust (MALT) was founded in 1980 by a coalition of ranchers and environmentalists to fight increased coastal development pressures threatening west Marin's 150-year-old family farming tradition and the County's rural heritage. The serious threat was not imagined. One development proposal included

plans and new roadway infrastructure for a town of 125,000 on the shores of Tomales Bay. MALT's agricultural conservation easement program protects farmland from market forces that otherwise drive ranchers and farmers to sell their valuable and sought-after land for high prices. MALT was the very first land trust in the United States to focus on farmland preservation and is a model for agricultural land preservation across the nation.

Today MCOSD manages over 15,500 acres of natural lands protected in 34 open space preserves spread throughout the County. These lands include hills, watershed lands, wetlands, coastal areas, the internationally significant Bolinas Lagoon, and important ridgelines that act as community separators among Marin's 11 cities and towns. MCOSD also holds conservation easements encumbering another 3000 acres. These lands remain privately owned and are not open to the public, yet the open space value is permanently preserved. 180 miles of walking, hiking, equestrian, and bicycling trails weave throughout MCOSD preserves, linking them to each other and to other public parklands, the Bay Area Ridge Trail, and the Bay Trail. As of 2000, of the 606 square miles that make up Marin County, public land management agencies and private partners combined to protect an incredible 48% of the land as open space, including both parklands and agricultural lands.

MCOSD has helped preserve other lands in Marin, such as Olompali State Historic Park and China Camp State Park, which are now managed by the California Department of Parks and Recreation.



View north, White Hill Preserve. Craig Solin.

In addition to MCOSD, several other agencies manage land in Marin, each with its own mission:

- Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) manages over 75,000 acres spanning three counties, to preserve and enhance the natural environment and cultural resources of the coastal lands north and south of the Golden Gate for the inspiration, education, and recreation of people today, and for future generations. GGNRA brings the national park experience to diverse urban communities and forges partnerships with the greater community to provide education and stewardship opportunities.
- Point Reyes National Seashore manages over 71,000 acres and preserves

and protects wilderness, natural ecosystems, and cultural resources. The Seashore is a sanctuary for countless plant and animal species and a haven for human inspiration, education, and recreation along the coast and extending inland.

- California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) manages over 14,000 acres in Marin and provides for health, inspiration, and education by preserving biological diversity, protecting natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation. There are seven State Parks in Marin including Angel Island State Park, China Camp State Park, Marconi Conference Center State Historic Park, Mount Tamalpias State Park, Olompali State Historic Park, Samuel P. Taylor State Park, and Tomales Bay State Park.
- Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD) manages over 21,000 acres of land to protect natural resources and provide high-quality water that maintains and protects the environmental vitality of the District for future generations.
- North Marin Water District (NMWD) manages 583 acres of land to provide an adequate supply of safe, reliable, and high-quality water with minimum environmental impact.
- Marin Agricultural Trust (MALT) protects over 40,000 acres of land on 61 family farms and ranches through agricultural conservation easements

in voluntary transactions with landowners. MALT encourages public policies that enhance and support agriculture.

Relevant Conservation Planning Efforts

Historically, the Marin Countywide Plan and *Can the Last Place Last?* have been the Department's guiding land conservation documents. Both documents clearly state the County's intent to preserve Marin's environmental heritage. In addition to the Countywide Plan, there are other recent and relevant planning efforts, including Green Vision, Focusing Our Vision, and the California Outdoor Recreation Plan 2007 that complement and provide support for the Department's mission and open space preservation goals.

Marin Countywide Plan

The Countywide Plan separates Marin County into four environmental corridors based on specific geographical and environmental characteristics and natural boundaries formed by north- and south-running ridges. The corridors are:

- The Coastal Corridor adjacent to the Pacific Ocean.
- The Inland-Rural Corridor in the central and northwestern part of the county.
- The City-Centered Corridor along Highway 101 in the eastern part of the county near San Francisco and San Pablo Bays.

- The Baylands Corridor encompassing lands along the shorelines of San Francisco, San Pablo, and Richardson Bays.

The Countywide Plan includes goals, policies, and programs that promote the preservation of open space for the benefit of the environment and the community. The policies and programs identify land targeted for acquisition and protection, with particular emphasis on ridgeland, baylands, and environmentally sensitive lands in the City-Centered Corridor. This Land Conservation Plan includes targeted lands in the Countywide Plan and additional areas identified during the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan community outreach process.

Bay Area Green Vision and Focusing Our Vision

Recently, regional and local planning processes have identified priority conservation areas, including a number in Marin. Green Vision involved conservation, recreation, and resource planning stakeholders from the nine-county Bay Area region. Facilitated by the Greenbelt Alliance and the Bay Area Open Space Council, stakeholders are working to develop a vision for open space around the Bay Area that includes wildlife preserves, working farmlands, and urban parks. The Green Vision program is running concurrently with the Focusing Our Vision (Focus) program, spearheaded by the Association of Bay Area Governments and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. The Focus program is working to designate Priority Conservation Areas for protection and Priority Development Areas targeted for growth. Green Vision

will eventually evaluate and prioritize all conservation areas and develop an implementation strategy.

California Outdoor Recreation Plan

California State Parks is currently conducting public outreach workshops to update the California Outdoor Recreation Plan. In addition, California State Parks produced a Local Needs Assessment in 2004 that surveyed California residents about outdoor recreation needs and trends and identifies a key need to acquire parkland and open space in high population growth areas.

The Need for Land Conservation

During the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan public outreach process, community survey respondents, workshop participants, and community members expressed a strong desire to preserve and protect more land in Marin County. Community members want to preserve additional open space, protect natural resources, and close gaps in the Marin County park, open space, and trail system.

The community survey, administered in February 2007, included a statistically valid telephone survey of 500 Marin County residents. Key results include:

- 68% of survey respondents listed “Preserve additional land to protect open space and natural resources” as Very Important.

- 86.2% of residents agree or strongly agree with the statement that “There is additional land in Marin County that should be preserved as open space”.
- 66.3% said that “Protect endangered species habitat” is Very Important.
- 58% said that “Increase resources for land maintenance, stewardship, and conservation of the County’s natural resources and historic heritage” is Very Important.

In addition to the community survey, outreach for the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan included several workshops and events. Participants expressed a strong desire for additional open space preservation and the protection of natural resources. They also identified additional lands in the County to preserve. The preservation, enhancement, and restoration of natural resources emerged as a high priority in each community workshop and event.

The need to connect the County’s open spaces and parks, with each other and with communities, was echoed repeatedly throughout all of the community workshops and events. Participants desired that a county-wide network of trails be completed and that a system of parks and open spaces connect all of the County’s communities.

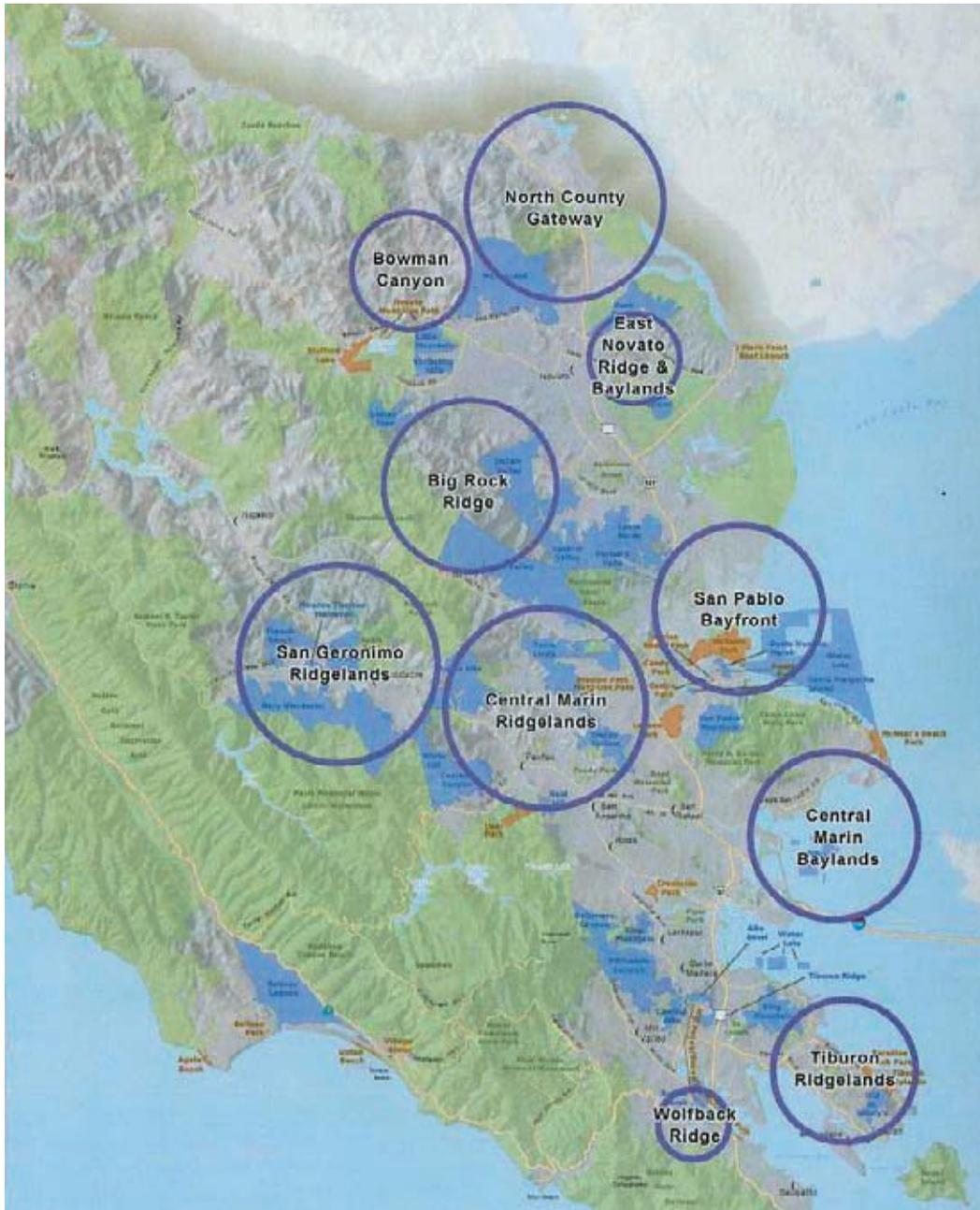
Land Conservation Areas

Lands targeted for preservation in the Land Conservation Plan amount to approximately 15,000 acres within the areas

described below, and shown in Figure C-1. Each area identified in Figure C-1 contains one or more significant gaps in the Countywide system of protected lands. Land parcels representing gaps in the system may be protected by any of the land conservation methods described later in this chapter.

- ⊙ **North County Gateway and Bowman Canyon** – the Mount Burdell Open Space Preserve is a major element of a proposed greenbelt extending from Rush Creek wetlands to Stafford Lake Park.
- ⊙ **East Novato Ridge and Baylands** – the tidal marsh from Novato Creek to Black Point; Petaluma River marshes, riverbank areas, and other lowlands; and additional upland greenbelt/community separator lands of the Pinheiro Ridge should be preserved.
- ⊙ **Big Rock Ridge** – is part of a continuous greenbelt system envisioned between Big Rock Ridge and San Pablo Bay.
- ⊙ **San Pablo Bayfront** – Gallinas Creek to Novato Creek should be kept open to preserve the tidelands. This area also includes John F. McInnis Park and the surrounding undeveloped, diked baylands.
- ⊙ **Central Marin Ridglands** – important community separators and ridges of the Terra Linda/Sleepy Hollow Divide, Southern Heights Ridge, and Northridge areas should continue to be preserved.

Figure C-1: Map of Land Conservation Areas



- ⊙ **San Geronimo Ridglands** – ridge-lands defining the San Geronimo Valley, including Pine Mountain Ridge westward from White Hill Preserve and the lands between Loma Alta Preserve and Samuel P. Taylor State Park should continue to be preserved.
- ⊙ **Central Marin Baylands** – existing marshes should be preserved, and portions of the San Quentin area should be considered for public access to the bay.
- ⊙ **Tiburon Ridglands** – includes trails to numerous points along the bay.
- ⊙ **Wolfback Ridge** – includes ridge-lands and community separators west of Highway 101, around to Oakwood Valley to preserve Marin’s southern gateway.

Preservation of all targeted lands will require an investment of approximately \$146,700,000.

Department Land Conservation Policies and Criteria

Real Property (RP) Acquisition Policies

The following policies guide the Department’s acquisition of real property interests for the purpose of preserving and growing Marin County’s park, open space, and trail system.

RP 1

The Department shall acquire or otherwise protect land for public park, open space, and trail purposes consistent with the Marin Countywide Plan and/or the Department’s own plans.

RP 2

The Department may acquire less than fee simple interests in real property, including but not limited to conservation or open space easements, leases, and licenses, as an alternative to outright land ownership.

RP 3

The Department shall use the following criteria, in addition to Policy RP 1, when evaluating land or trails for inclusion in the County’s park, open space, and trail system:

- a. Natural resource, habitat, scenic, cultural, historic, and recreational values.
- b. Proximity to existing Department or other public land.
- c. Size.
- d. Boundary configuration.
- e. Access.
- f. Maintenance costs.
- g. Presence of fire, geologic, flood or other natural hazards.
- h. Presence of man-made hazards.
- i. Presence of encroachments.
- j. Title encumbrances.
- k. Adjacent land uses.
- l. Community and political support.

- m. Preferred conservation method (for example, fee simple title versus conservation easement).
- n. Agricultural utility and values.
- o. Other criteria as the Department deems necessary to inform decision-making.

RP 4

The Department shall strive to purchase real property interests from willing sellers. The Department may employ eminent domain as a method of last resort when good-faith attempts at voluntary negotiations fail.

RP 5

The Department shall strive to assemble partnerships and multiple sources of funding to facilitate its land and trail acquisition and protection efforts.

RP 6

The Department shall prepare multi-year acquisition and conservation plans with the goal of completing Marin County's parks, open space and trail systems. The Department shall annually evaluate its progress toward this goal.

RP 7

The Department shall protect and defend its real property interests.

RP 8

The Department may contribute to the acquisition of real property interests to be held by another public agency or non-governmental organization, when the acquisition or protection of such lands is consistent with the Marin Countywide Plan. In this circumstance, the Department

shall strive to encumber such lands with an open space or conservation easement to ensure their permanent preservation.

Land Conservation Methods

A successful acquisition program often involves the resourceful use of different conservation methods. Multiple, often complex, factors enter into each conservation transaction, requiring tools and methods to meet each circumstance.

The Department preserves land for parks and open space by acquiring either fee title or easements. Fee title acquisition of land consists of all the real property interests, including the rights to sell, lease, and develop the property. An easement consists of a portion of the rights to real property, though the landowner retains all property rights not stipulated in the easement. The Department acquires the permanent property rights associated with fee title and easements by purchase, development dedication, or donation. Table C-1: provides a graphic representation of the methods the Department uses to preserve lands.

The primary methods of land conservation employed by the Department have historically been fee acquisition by purchase from willing sellers and through development dedication. As a conservation tool, fee acquisition has served the Department well in the past, but as the value of land in Marin County has increased tremendously, the Department's ability to assemble the necessary funding has become increasingly challenging.

Fee Acquisition: Purchase

Full Fair Market Value

The outright purchase of land for fair market value is used to respond quickly to conservation opportunities and has been the Department’s most used conservation method.

Benefits

- Quick response to conservation opportunities.
- Significant financial benefit to seller.
- All property rights become purchaser’s.

Disadvantages

- High cost of purchase, compared to bargain sale, life estate or tax default.

Bargain Sale

A bargain (or “Charitable”) sale is the sale of land for less than fair market value to a non government conservation organization or governmental agency. For a bargain sale to occur, the land being purchased must yield some public benefit such as conservation, recreation, and/or water supply. Bargain sales are most feasible when landowners are highly motivated to conserve their land and/or when in a position to realize a tax savings based on their “donation”. In the case of a bargain sale, the “donation” is the difference between the full fair market value of the land and its less than fair market value sale price.

Table C-1: Land Conservation Methods

Fee Acquisition	Less Than Fee Acquisition (Easements)
Purchase	Purchase
• Full Fair Market Value	Development Dedication
• Bargain Sale	Donation
• Life Estate	
• Tax Default	
• Sale / Leaseback	
• Eminent Domain	
• Option / Right of First Refusal	
Development Dedication	
Donation	

Benefits

- Seller can sometimes come out ahead financially, in terms of sale proceeds plus tax savings, than if the land had been sold at fair market value.

Disadvantages

- Time needed to educate owners about the benefits of a bargain sale.
- Landowner sometimes faces up-front costs for professional advice related to determining eligibility for tax deductions.

Life Estates

In a land purchase involving a life estate, the seller retains the right to continue to reside on the property as long as they are alive or are able. The land is nonetheless preserved, and the agency or conservation organization assumes the remaining rights of the seller when the seller dies or is no longer able to live on the property. The Department currently holds one life estate.

Benefits

- Can preclude land going to market.
- Lower cost than full fair market value.
- Reduced property tax burden for seller.

Disadvantages

- May require a significant investment in the development of landowner relationships.
- Could be a lengthy time until purchaser can exercise all ownership rights.

Tax Defaults

When a landowner has not paid their property taxes for a period of time, the taxing entity may sell the property to

recover back taxes. In Marin County, a list of tax defaulted lands is circulated among local government agencies before going public. The agencies have the first opportunity to purchase the property and, in this circumstance, the sale price is equal to the amount of back taxes. The Department has acquired dozens of tax defaulted parcels over the years. Most have been small inholdings surrounded by Department lands or submerged tide lots. Tax defaulted properties are typically very small and/or undevelopable.

Benefits

- Low cost.

Disadvantages

- Back taxes are sometimes paid by owner at the last minute and the effort expended in the purchase is lost.

Sale-Leaseback

In a sale-leaseback transaction, the agency or conservation organization purchases fee simple ownership, then leases the property back to the original seller, or a third party. This allows the purchaser to earn a monthly income from the lease of the land and enables the seller or third party to receive the benefit of the land's use (in most cases, agricultural production) without the property tax burden of outright ownership. Sale-leaseback is particularly appropriate for agricultural properties in areas with high land values, such as Marin County. To date, the Department has not used this conservation method.

Benefits

- Monthly income to purchaser.

- Reduced property tax burden for seller.

Disadvantages

- High cost of initial purchase.

Eminent Domain

Eminent domain is the ability of government to take private property for public purposes upon payment of just compensation at fair market value. The term “condemnation” refers to the process of exercising eminent domain powers. MCOSD possesses the power of eminent domain but, as it is a highly controversial method of land acquisition, has never exercised it, preferring to work with willing sellers.

Benefits

- Provides government with a tool to acquire properties necessary for a public purpose if other land acquisition methods are not feasible.

Disadvantages

- Landowner and public opposition.
- Potentially expensive and time-consuming litigation.

Anise swallowtail. May Chen.



- Grant funds are seldom available for land purchases involving eminent domain.
- Outcome of court proceedings that determine fair market value can be unpredictable.

Option and Right of First Refusal

The purchase of an option or the right of first refusal gives a purchaser an advantage over other potential purchasers. An option requires payment to secure the right to purchase property within a specified time period, whereas a right of first refusal is an agreement that allows the conservation organization to counter any offer received for the purchase of the property. The Department has exercised options and rights of first refusal in the past.

Benefits

- Allows the conservation organization to initiate the conservation transaction with minimal cost, particularly in cases where the funds needed to complete the transaction are not immediately available.

Disadvantages

- There is no guarantee that the land will be acquired.

Fee Acquisition: Development Dedication

Land may also be protected through the development approval process conducted by the government entity responsible for approving subdivisions and other development. The term “dedication” refers to a landowner’s offer, during this process, to convey certain property rights, either fee

or easement, to a public entity for public purposes. As part of the development approval process, conditions may be placed on development proposals requiring the dedication of property rights to preserve open space. Offers of dedication may be accepted or rejected by one or more public entities. The Department has acquired thousands of acres of land through development dedication. It has also acquired conservation easements and public trail easements in the same way.

Benefits

- No cost to acquire the property.

Disadvantages

- Difficult to meet the requirements to establish a nexus between the development proposal and a condition of approval requiring an offer of dedication.
- Land offered for dedication may not be a conservation priority.

Fee Acquisition: Donation

Land may be donated by property owners for conservation purposes. Donations or gifts of property may make the donor eligible for tax deductions while, in other circumstances, may eliminate an annual property tax burden and/or the burden of managing undeveloped land. Land donations to the Department are infrequent due to the high value of real estate in Marin.

Easements

An easement provides its recipient with specific limited property rights while the

owner of the land encumbered by the easement retains all other property rights. Easements are typically permanent and are therefore said to “run with the land”, meaning that the land remains encumbered even though its ownership may change. Similar to fee acquisition, conservation organizations acquire easements by purchase, dedication, or donation. Land conservation organizations typically acquire one or more of the following easement types.

Conservation Easements

Conservation easements protect the land from development by restricting the fee owner’s use of it in ways that preserve its conservation values. While the terms of conservation easements vary from case to case, they either preclude or limit the scope of development. Conservation easements do not allow for public access. Once acquired, the conservation organization has the responsibility to monitor the easement at least annually to ensure that the property’s conservation values remain intact. The Department currently holds numerous conservation easements.

Benefits

- Reduced cost for conservation organization, compared to fee simple purchase.
- Reduced property tax burden for landowner.
- Potential income tax benefits for landowner, if easement is donated.
- Potential for large, lump sum payment for landowner.
- Conservation organization has no land management costs; these remain with the fee owner.

Disadvantages

- Although the easement runs with the land, a change in landowner may present challenges in enforcing the original intent of the easement.
- Can be costly and time consuming to enforce the terms of the easement through legal proceedings.

Agricultural Conservation Easements

An agricultural conservation easement is similar to a conservation easement, but focused on preserving a property's agricultural use and resources. Such easements typically preclude non-agricultural development, subdivision, and uses or practices not in keeping with maintenance and enhancement of the property's agricultural values.

Per an agreement that has existed for many years, MCOSD sets aside 10% of its land acquisition budget for use by MALT to purchase agricultural conservation easements. Because MCOSD has not allocated any of its own funds for land acquisition in recent years, none are currently available to MALT. Nonetheless, MCOSD has helped MALT purchase two agricultural conservation easements that are held by MALT. The Department also holds one agricultural conservation easement.

Benefits

- Permanently protect farmland from being lost to future non-agricultural development.
- Landowners can receive large lump sum payment and still retain ownership of their land. This money can be used to expand or improve a farm operation or pay off debt.

- Landowners can successfully pass on their farms to their next generation farmers, who have been part of the business, allowing farms to remain within families.

Disadvantages

- Conservation organization is obligated to ensure the land is managed in a way that is consistent with the terms of the agreement.
- Although the easement runs with the land, a change in landowner may present challenges in enforcing the original intent of the easement.
- Can be costly and time consuming to enforce the terms of the easement through legal proceedings.

Trail Easements

Easements can also enable the public to access trails on private lands for recreational purposes. The Trails Element of the Marin Countywide Plan guides the Department's acquisition of public trail easements.

The Department has acquired miles of trail easements for the purpose of linking its lands to each other, to communities, and to public parks and open spaces owned and managed by other entities. It has acquired most of its trail easements through development dedications and donations. In 2007, the Department created a Trails Legacy Fund as a source of funds for purchasing trail easements.

Benefits

- Reduced cost for conservation organization, relative to cost to purchase the property outright.

- Potential for one time payment for landowner.
- State law affords liability protection to landowners and easement holders.

Disadvantages

- Trail easements are difficult to negotiate due to landowner concerns regarding liability, privacy, and conducting agricultural operations.
- Although the easement runs with the land, a change in landowner may present challenges in enforcing the original intent of the easement.

Leases

Though not a permanent land conservation method, a lease is a tool that could enable public use of private lands for limited recreational purposes within a specified period of time. The leasing of private lands could be explored for specialized recreational uses, such as a mountain bicycling park, that cannot be accommodated in existing parks and open space preserves.

The Department holds one lease that enables public use of a trail that is a key connection between open space preserves. Use of such leases could be explored when a private property owner is willing to experiment with public access through his or her land, to “see how it goes”, as a step toward potentially conveying a permanent trail easement.

Completing the Dream: Ensuring the Future Success of the Department’s Land Conservation Efforts

Within the Department’s organizational structure, responsibility for land preservation falls mainly within the Planning and Acquisition Program. Its staff is responsible for land conservation and trail planning, coordinating acquisitions and other real estate transactions, reviewing development proposals affecting the Department’s interests, assembling funding packages for land acquisitions, administering conservation easements, and maintaining a database of the Department’s lands.

With over 15,500 acres preserved, plus trail easements and contributions toward other agencies’ land protection efforts, the acquisition program has been highly successful in helping the Department achieve its vision. However, substantial challenges must be overcome if the Department is to realize its goal of preserving an additional 15,000 acres. An assessment of the Department’s existing land preservation efforts will help to identify what the Department must do to successfully meet these challenges.

Characteristics Defining the Department’s Current Land Conservation Program

Lack of Funding for Land Acquisitions

In recent years, the Department has allocated little to none of its own revenues for land acquisitions due to the necessity of funding stewardship of lands that the Department already holds. Nonetheless,

the Department has continued to acquire land using grants, and through the methods of development dedication and tax default. The fact that the Department has little of its own money to purchase land or easements increases the challenge of acquiring competitive grants, many of which require matching contributions. As a consequence of these factors, the acreage of land acquired annually over the past decade has been substantially less than in previous years.

Acquisitions are Primarily Opportunistic

With a few exceptions, the Department pursues land and easement acquisitions as opportunities present themselves. This is not necessarily undesirable and, in fact, most land conservation agencies operate in this manner.

Acquires Fee Ownership

Historically, the Department has acquired fee ownership of land in order to preserve land. The acreage of land owned in fee by the Department far exceeds its acreage of conservation easements. While fee ownership enables the Department to open the land to the public, it also places upon the Department the long term responsibility and expense of land stewardship.

Uses a Wide Range of Land Conservation Tools and Methods

With the exception of eminent domain and sale/leaseback, the Department has used most tools and methods available to preserve land. The Department's close working relationships with other County departments, including the Community Development Agency and the Tax Collec-

tor's Office, has enabled it to take particular advantage of development dedication and tax default opportunities.

Uses Performance Measures

Land preservation figures prominently in the Department's annual performance plan. This fact encourages accountability and maintains staff's focus on land preservation priorities.

Partners to Preserve Land

The Department has historically relied on a wide range of public agency, non governmental organization, and local community partners in its efforts to preserve land. This has, in large measure, contributed to its land preservation successes. A partial listing of the Department's land preservation partners is shown in Table C-2.

Enjoys Political and Community Support

Historically, the Marin County Board of Supervisors has consistently supported the Department's land protection efforts. In addition, public surveys have consistently shown strong support for preserving additional land in Marin.

Possesses Clear Land Acquisition Policies

The Board of Supervisors recently approved a new set of land acquisition policies, shown above, to guide and support the Department's land preservation efforts.

Assists Other Agencies and Organizations with Land Preservation

The Department has assisted the land preservation efforts of other public agencies and

non governmental organizations, including the City of San Rafael, State Parks, Town of San Anselmo, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, MALT, and Marin Audubon Society, by providing technical and/or financial assistance. When the Department provides a financial contribution for the acquisition of land that it will not own, it is typically on the condition that the purchaser convey a conservation easement to the Department. Such an encumbrance serves to protect the Department’s financial investment in the purchase.

Monitors Conservation Easements

The Department monitors, on an annual basis, the conservation easements that it holds.

Recommendations

Address Funding Needs

Inadequate funding is the primary factor limiting the Department’s land preservation

success. The Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan describes this need in detail, and recommends strategies and actions to address it. Funding from both public and private funding sources should be sought. Obtaining a new, substantial, and ongoing source of public funding should be a priority. Such funding could be leveraged or matched, on a project by project basis, by one-time grants, private donations, and community contributions in the form of special taxes and assessments.

Proactively Pursue Land Preservation

While maintaining its flexibility to pursue opportunity purchases, the Department should initiate contact and build relationships with landowners whose property is of interest to the Department. Over time, the Department could explore land preservation options, financial benefits associated with bargain sales, and related topics of interest with landowners who desire to cooperate. Alternatively, an

Table C-2: Land Conservation Partners (Partial List)

Bayland Advocates	Town of Tiburon
Nature Conservancy	City of Belvedere
Trust for Public Land	San Anselmo Open Space Committee
Marin Audubon	City of San Rafael
Marin Agricultural Land Trust	City of Novato
Marin County Community Development Agency	City of Mill Valley
Marin Conservation League	Last Chance Committee (Tiburon, Belvedere)
Marin Community Foundation	Sleepy Hollow Community
National Park Service	Pleasant Valley Community (Novato)
United States Fish and Wildlife Service	Pacheco Valle Community (Novato)
California State Parks	Save Horse Hill Committee
California Coastal Conservancy	(Mill Valley, Corte Madera)

organization such as the newly established Marin Open Space Trust (MOST) could act in this capacity.

Consider Alternatives to Fee Ownership

To stretch its land preservation dollars, the Department should assess, on a case by case basis, whether fee acquisition of property is necessary to achieve its land preservation goals. The purchase of conservation easements would avoid the financial burden of ongoing land management, but at the expense of public use of the land.

Improve Easement Documentation

The quality of the Department's existing conservation easements is highly variable. The Department should develop a new, standard conservation easement that could be modified as necessary on a case by case basis. The Department should also research and adopt best practices associated with easement documentation and monitoring.

Address Encroachments

Over the years, the Department has identified numerous private encroachments on its lands. The size and scope of known encroachments varies widely, from a few hundred to several thousand square feet. In some cases private landowners have enclosed encroachment areas with fences.

Whether fenced or not, many encroachment areas have been improved with plantings and other landscape improvements. The Department should review and update its encroachment policies, and begin an ongoing program to resolve its encroachments. At the very least, the Department should notify encroaching landowners in writing, so that encroachments could be disclosed when property changes hands.

Coordinate with Regional Open Space Planning Efforts

Continue to participate in and monitor progress of regional open space planning efforts such as the Bay Area Green Vision and Focusing Our Vision projects. Lands that are designated as Priority Conservation Areas could be more competitive than those not so designated when seeking grants related to their purchase.

Use Natural Resource Data to Refine Land Conservation Priorities

The Department's Open Space Planning and Resource Management programs should increase collaboration related to land acquisition efforts. Use of the Resource Management program's geographic information system could focus land conservation efforts on properties having high ecological, habitat, and natural resource values.

Notes

1. *Master Recreation Plan*, Marin County Planning Commission, 1943.

2. *Parks and Recreation Plan 1990: Outdoor Recreation for Marin County*, Marin County Planning Department, August 1965, page 56.

3. Pierre Joske, *How did we get an Open Space District Anyway?* August 1984.



San Francisco from Old St. Hilary's Preserve. Craig Solin.

Appendix D Capital Improvement Plan

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), composed of a Parks Capital Improvement Plan and an Open Space Capital Improvement Plan, is a summary of projected improvements and enhancements to County parklands and open space for the next 20 years, based on needs identified in the Strategic Plan. The value of the CIP is as a tool for estimating total financial need over the life of the Strategic Plan, and for informing development of the Department’s annual work plan and budgets.

While projects in the CIP are described in detail to provide a clear picture of proposed improvements and to provide reasonable “ballpark” cost estimates, the CIP is subject to change based on Board priorities, community needs and preferences,

funding availability, permits and approvals. Some projects may be implemented as described, some may be revised to various degrees, while others may be eliminated altogether in favor of entirely new projects. The Department will review and evaluate the CIP at least annually, and principally during the annual budget and work plan development process.

The Parks Capital Improvement Plan

Proposed Parks capital improvements for the next 20 years consist of 83 projects requiring an investment of \$41 million. Projects range from replacing drinking fountains at neighborhood parks to the implementation of new master plans at

the Department's regional parks. Projects are organized by park to enable the reader to understand the scope of improvements proposed for each park.

The Open Space Capital Improvement Plan

An open space capital improvement plan is rather a misnomer, due to the fact that capital improvements typically refer to facilities of the types proposed in the Parks Capital Improvement Plan. Playgrounds and swimming pools won't be found in open space preserves, because the purpose of open space is different from parks, as described in the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan. However, the value of the phrase lies in its inference to an action or improvement with a useful life spanning many years that requires a significant investment to implement. Large scale open space stewardship projects to control erosion or the spread of non native plant species can be as costly as traditional capital improvements. Similarly, a system of new fuelbreaks requires a considerable investment to plan, build, and maintain.

The Open Space Capital Improvement Plan consists of 88 projects requiring an investment of \$33 million to enhance open space stewardship. This total does not include land acquisition. Of these projects, seven are system-wide or partially system-wide, and the remainder pertain to individual open space preserves.

Cost Estimates

Cost estimates are in 2008 dollars. All lists

are based on best available information at the time of preparation. Project scope, costs, and priority are subject to change based on funding availability and county-wide priorities. The actual number of projects in each list is subject to change depending on whether and how projects are combined. All cost estimates reflect multipliers for design, planning, engineering, permitting, environmental review, construction management, and contingencies, as applicable.

Priorities

A priority of 1 (highest), 2 (medium), or 3 (important, but not as high a priority as 2 or 3) is assigned to each project in the Capital Improvement Plan. Priorities were determined by Department managers, using criteria similar to those used by the County of Marin in its annual capital improvement plan development process. The six priority setting criteria are:

- Reduces threats to safety / Mitigates hazards / Prevents major repairs (Weight: 3).
- Meets legal mandates (Weight: 3).
- Maintains operations and functions (Weight: 2).
- Meets County goals (Weight: 1).
- Community support / Community equity / Political interest (Weight: 1).
- Has funding sources with urgent time constraints / Represents a limited time opportunity (Weight: 2).

Staff assigned a score of 1 to 4 for each criterion, with a 4 being assigned to projects that fully meet a criterion. In addition, each criterion was assigned a weight of from

1 to 3, with a weight of 3 indicating the most important. A project's score for each criterion was calculated by multiplying the score by the weight. A project's total score equals the sum of scores for all six criteria. Staff created three subsets within the range of total scores, representing the three priority rankings.

Relationship of the Strategic Plan's Capital Improvement Plan to the Department's Annual Capital Improvement Plan

The Capital Improvement Plan in the following pages will inform the Department's annual capital improvement

plan development process. During this process, staff will refine the scope and cost estimate of each candidate project, and research potential funding sources. Staff will present a list of candidate projects to the Board of Supervisors/Directors and the Parks and Open Space Commission for consideration. While the Department will focus on implementing projects in their order of priority, the availability of funding, newly emerging needs and/or other circumstances may result in project of lesser priority being implemented before all priority 1 projects. For the same reasons, projects not currently identified may be added to the list, while projects already on the list may be lowered in priority or eliminated altogether from the list.

Parks & Open Space Strategic Plan

Table D-1: Parks Capital Projects, May 2008

Park	Project	Category	Project Elements	Cost	Priority
Black Point Boat Launch				\$783,666	
	New Fishing Pier	New Improvements	Pier structure - 100' x 12' decomposed granite pathway - 5' x 50'	\$401,940	2
	New Restroom	New Improvements	restroom - prefabricated - 2 stalls utilities for restroom & related facilities	\$198,000	1
	New Turn-around area - 60 ft diameter	New Improvements	site grading, retaining walls and restoration construction	\$114,976	1
	New Fish Cleaning Station (hookups on new boat ramp facility)	New Improvements	6' x 4' prefabricated platform w/ sink, garbage disposal	\$5,500	1
	New Wildlife Viewing Area	New Improvements	15' x 15' raised platform w/integrated seating, railings decomposed granite pathway - 200' x 6'	\$33,154	3
	New Kayak Launch	New Improvements	concrete launch pad w/ covering - 16' x 12' decomposed granite pathway - 200 x 5'	\$30,096	3
Chicken Ranch Beach				\$1,100,000	
	Beach Restoration	New Improvements	Study and Design Implementation	\$1,100,000	1
Civic Center Campus				\$3,931,188	
	Renovate Grounds	Renovation	Renovate all shrub beds, new outdoor meeting spaces, drainage improvements, seating areas, water conserving garden	\$2,420,000	1
	Renovate Parking Lot Planting Areas and Roadway Medians	Renovation		\$363,000	1
	Renovate Cafeteria Patio	Renovation	turf - 50' x 50' landscaping (shrubs)	\$17,938	1
	New Lagoon Filtration	New Improvements	filter islands (5) 20' x 20' @ \$20,000 ea.	\$132,000	1
	New Waterline (Irrigation) Study	Renovation	Site survey / study Immediate Repairs (2-3 year) Construction Replacement Construction	\$90,750 \$907,500	1 2
Creekside Park (CSA 17)				\$3,150,590	
	Master Plan	Planning		\$350,000	1
	Creekside Park	Renovation	Construction	\$2,640,000	1
	Replace Creekside Pathway pavement	Renovation	Asphalt overlay - 2,460' x 10'	\$40,590	1
	Creekside Pathway Picnic Area	New Improvements	picnic tables barbecues fence - 50' x 6' decomposed granite pathway and picnic pads landscaping (shrubs)	\$120,000	2

Appendix D: Parks & Open Space Capital Improvement Plan

Park	Project	Category	Project Elements	Cost	Priority
Deer Park				\$87,956	
	Replace Road and Parking Lot pavement	Renovation		\$87,956	1
			asphalt dig out & replace - roadway - 524' x 19'		
			asphalt dig out & replace - parking lot - 217' x 17'		
Eldred Preserve				\$23,925	
	Repair Landslide & erosion		construction - size: 25' x 25' x depth	\$23,925	3
Homestead Valley (CSA 14)				\$1,923,900	
	Repair Community Center Building	Renovation		\$242,000	1
			structural repairs		
			interior renovations		
	Replace Swimming Pool	Renovation		\$1,361,250	1
			demolition		
			pool structure and filter system		
			new bathrooms / changing rooms		
	Repair Historic Home	Renovation		\$320,650	3
			renovate utilities		
			earthquake work		
			roof and gutters		
			windows and doors		
			repair structural defects		
			garage and driveway		
			painting		
Inkswells				\$528,000	
	Trail Connection - Bay Area Ridge Trail	New Improvements		\$475,200	1
			trail alternatives study / draft plan		
			trail alternatives construction		
	New Landscaping @ Trail Head	New Improvements	plantings, erosion control, irrigation	\$52,800	3
Lagoon Park				\$1,608,200	
	Renovate Playground	Renovation		\$330,000	1
			play structures, water/sand play		
			landscaping, benches		
	Lagoon Shoreline Stabilization	Renovation	Shoreline stabilization construction	\$528,000	1
	Repair Cascade Fountains	Renovation		\$42,350	1
	New Waterline (Irrigation) Study	Renovation		\$102,850	1
			Engineering Studies and/or Planning & Design: \$20,000 + 10% of construction		
			Immediate Repairs (2-3 year) Construction		
			Replacement Construction	\$605,000	2
Lucas Valley Department Field Office				\$78,650	
	Renovate Corp Yard paving	Renovation		\$78,650	1
McInnis				\$9,766,386	
	New Master Plan Update	Planning			1
	New Parking Lot Pavement	Renovation	asphalt dig out & replace - 500' x 500'	\$440,000	1
	New Dog Park	New Improvements		\$125,931	1
			turf area		
			play features		
			landscaping (shrubs)		
			picnic tables		
			benches		
			fencing		

Parks & Open Space Strategic Plan

Park	Project	Category	Project Elements	Cost	Priority
			drinking fountain		
			covered structure - 10' x 20'		
			concrete pad - 20' x 30'		
			concrete pathway - 50' x 5'		
	New Petanque Courts (22)	New Improvements		\$884,389	1
			demolition, grading, drainage, irrigation		
			decomposed granite surfacing without binder- 100' x 200'		
			benches		
			landscaping (shrubs)		
			landscaping (trees) 36" box (installed)		
			relocate trees from Civic Center		
			drinking fountain		
			picnic tables		
	Renovate (4) Multi-use Fields to Artificial Turf	Renovation		\$3,798,795	1
			construction		
			bleachers - seating capacity = 150		
			field lighting		
	New Playground	New Improvements		\$357,071	2
			new play structure (large) w/ engineered fiber fall material		
			landscaping (shrubs)		
			landscaping (trees) 5" diameter		
			fencing		
			benches		
	Replace Tennis court surfacing	Renovation	total of 4 regulation courts	\$114,400	1
	New Group picnic area	New Improvements		\$2,263,800	3
			engineering / design		
			playground		
			access road & parking lot		
			bathrooms (3 stall)		
			turf areas		
			utilities, irrigation, etc.		
			shelters / roofed covers		
			picnic tables / BBQs / benches		
	New Multi-Use Rink	New Improvements		\$792,000	3
	New Corporation Yard & Shop	New Improvements		\$990,000	3
	McNear's Beach			\$6,705,477	
	New Master Plan	Planning			2
	Replace stairway	Renovation		\$217,800	1
	Renovate landscape/Irrigate berm	Renovation		\$33,000	2
	Utility Study and Replacement: natural gas, telephone, electrical, potable water	Renovation		\$302,500	2
			Study / design		
			Construction / replacement		
	Renovate Barn Building & Retaining Wall Structure (conference center, museum)	Renovation	86' x 20' - 2 stories	\$1,135,200	3
	Immediate Repairs: replace pool heater before 2009 season	Renovation		\$38,500	1
	Repair parking lot paving	Renovation	2 lots: #1 = 150' x 244'; #2 = 125' x 245'	\$117,920	1

Appendix D: Parks & Open Space Capital Improvement Plan

Park	Project	Category	Project Elements	Cost	Priority
	New Shoreline Stabilization	Renovation		\$528,000	1
			Design / engineering Construction		
	New Waterline (Irrigation) Study	Renovation		\$121,000	1
			Study / design Construction		
	Replace Pool	Renovation		\$1,706,197	2
			Demolition & clearing Main pool 75' x 35' Wading pool 17' x 14' Pool deck, patio & surround, drainage, electrical Landscaping, turf Fencing		
	New Starvation Gulch Picnic Area	New Improvements		\$1,053,360	3
			demolition, grading, drainage picnic tables BBQs - large (group) BBQs - small Bathrooms (2 stall) Utilities, infrastructure, pathways Signs, trash containers, entry structures Amphitheatre New roads, upgrades		
	New Small Boat Launch	New Improvements		\$330,000	3
	New Event Pavilion (weddings, groups)	New Improvements		\$132,000	3
	New Corporation Yard & Shop	New Improvements		\$990,000	3
Mill Valley/Sausalito Multi-Use Path				\$1,656,356	
	Renovate pathway pavement	Renovation		\$626,756	1
			Repave asphalt surface + re-build pot holes & other failures @ 10' wide x 17,266' long Repave decomposed granite shoulders @ 4' wide x 17,266' long		
	Replace bridges (4)	Renovation		\$1,029,600	2
			#1 Bridge @ 10' wide x 110' long #2 Bridge @ 10' wide x 40' long #3 Bridge @ 10' wide x 60' long #4 Bridge @ 10' wide x 60' long		3 1
Miller Boat Launch				\$481,800	
	New Restroom	New Improvements		\$459,800	1
			restroom - 2 stalls per side septic & utilities for restroom & related facilities		
	New Fish Cleaning Station	New Improvements		\$22,000	1
Multiple Park Facilities Improvements				\$1,921,480	
	New Sign program	Renovation	35 Parks with 400+ signs	\$96,800	2
	New progressive skills bike park - location to be determined	New Improvements		\$1,379,400	3
			engineering / design access road & parking lot construction track construction		
	Renovate Irrigation Systems			\$187,550	2

Parks & Open Space Strategic Plan

Park	Project	Category	Project Elements	Cost	Priority
	@ 7 small park sites & road medians				
		Planning	Study / design		
		Renovation	Construction		
	New Bicycle Rack Project	New Improvements	35 sites for new bike rack program	\$18,150	2
	New Dog Waste Dogi Potts	New Improvements	30 locations @ \$800 each	\$29,040	2
	Replace Drinking Water Fountains	Renovation	15 locations @ \$2,500 each	\$45,375	1
	Renovate "Clean Park" Program	Renovation		\$165,165	1
			Animal-proof garbage receptacles @ \$850 each		
			Recycling garbage receptacles		
			Hot Coals receptacles @ \$625 each		
Novato Multi-use Path				\$748,935	
	Repair bank failures and tread damage near Stafford dam			\$665,280	1
		Planning	Perform engineering review and develop plan		
		Renovation	construct path = 1,200' long x 7' wide + shoulders- includes retaining walls, railing, pavement & shoulder overlay		
	Renovate bike path pavement	Renovation	dig out & repave 1.6 mi. x 6+ ft.	\$83,655	2
Paradise Beach				\$1,427,800	
	New Shoreline Stabilization			\$528,000	1
		Planning	engineering / develop plan		
		Renovation	Construction		
	New Waterline (Irrigation)			\$121,000	2
		Planning	engineering / develop plan		
		New Improvements	Construction		
	Repair asphalt paving	Renovation	Dig-out 3" AC/4" AB 1-1/2" overlay	\$89,100	2
	Replace / repair utilities		Potable water, telephone, electrical	\$242,000	3
		Planning	engineering / develop plan		
		Renovation	Construction		
	Renovate Slide & re-landscape	Renovation	Native plants re-landscaping on slope	\$54,450	3
	New Paradise Beach Assessment	Planning	Site & Use Assessment	\$30,250	3
	New Public Anchor Outs	New Improvements		\$99,000	3
	Repair Small Boat Launch	Renovation		\$264,000	3
Pueblo Park				\$390,000	
	Replace Playground Equipment	Renovation		\$390,000	1
Stafford Lake				\$5,971,900	
	New Master Plan	Planning			1
	Replace Picnic Area roof (2)	Renovation	Gable/octagonal group area roof structures & support structure, including 30 year composite shingles	\$48,400	1
	New Creek Restoration - Below Dam	New Improvements	Bank stabilization; re-vegetation; plus trail paving as needed	\$264,000	3
	New Stafford Lake Shoreline Loop Trail	New Improvements		\$1,122,000	3
			Study / design		
			Construction		
	New Water Play Facility	New Improvements		\$3,025,000	3
	New Day Camp Facility	New Improvements		\$605,000	3
	New Corporation Yard & Shop	New Improvements		\$907,500	3

Appendix D: Parks & Open Space Capital Improvement Plan

Park	Project	Category	Project Elements	Cost	Priority
Village Green (CSA 33)				\$203,500	
	Replace Playground at Village Green I	Renovation		\$203,500	1
			street drainage - DPW?		
			New Play Structures		
			Site drainage		
White House Pool				\$474,197	
	New Dredging	Renovation		\$99,000	1
	Renovate Parking lot	Renovation	136' x 190' - raise lot elevation	\$375,197	1

Parks & Open Space Strategic Plan

Table D-2: Open Space Capital Projects, May 2008

Preserve	Project	Category	Project Elements	Cost	Priority
System Wide Projects				\$8,528,000	
	Defensible Space Stewardship	deferred maintenance	Annual Vegetation Management	\$4,235,000	1
	System-wide vegetation management plan	planning	Phased - North, Central, West & South Preserves	\$960,000	1
	Trail Easement Program			\$1,221,000	
		capital project	Robertson easement to SP Taylor State Park - Complete design and construct trail per easement		3
	Trail system plan	planning	Phased - North, Central, West & South Preserves		2
	Shared-use trail projects ¹	capital projects	Re-routes, upgrades and connections		2
	New or replacement bridges	capital project	Planned inspection & replacement program	\$792,000	1
	New or replacement drainage facilities	capital project	Planned inspection & replacement program	\$1,320,000	2
West Preserves				\$1,112,100	
	Cascade Canyon Defensible Space maintenance	deferred maintenance	\$15,000 per year (work every 2-4 years)	\$181,500	1
	San Geronimo Creek Watershed sediment reduction and repair - PWA implementation	capital project	Phased construction of plan recommendations	\$930,600	1
South Preserves				\$2,400,000	
	Bliethedale Ridge Habitat Reclamation Project	capital project	5 miles @ \$200,000 per year	\$2,400,000	2
	Tiburon Peninsula Natural Resource Inventory				
Alto Bowl				\$1,242,600	
	Fire Management			\$726,000	
		capital project	MTVMP Stewardship & Phased Upgrade		1
		capital project	Eucalyptus Management		2
	Habitat Reclamation - Biodiversity	capital project	Erosion and bank repairs on Sausalito Street creek channel - street drain damage	\$180,000	2
	Roads and Trails			\$158,400	
		capital project	Trail Sustainability & use Improvements - Bob Middagh TR		1
		capital project	Quarry Meadows Trail completion & upgrades		2
	Facilities and Built Features	capital project	Phased Preserve Entries Replacement	\$79,200	3
	Drains & Sediment Control	capital project	Camino Alto Grade culvert & erosion repair	\$99,000	3
Bald Hill				\$680,900	
	Fire Management	deferred maintenance	Worn Springs FR WUI fuel break stewardship + additional work w/ MCFD & MMWD	\$423,500	1
	Roads and Trails		Redwood Ave erosion repair at Steep Trail cut	\$79,200	
	Facilities and Built Features	capital project	Improvements for entries, signs	\$46,200	3

¹ Any changes in trail-use designations would be subject to appropriate review and approval. Aside from the Shared-use trail project, no trail improvements listed in the CIP involve a change in existing trail designation.

Appendix D: Parks & Open Space Capital Improvement Plan

Preserve	Project	Category	Project Elements	Cost	Priority
	Drains & Sediment Control	capital project	Steep Trail drainage & bank erosion	\$132,000	2
Baltimore Canyon				\$1,869,800	
	Fire Management			\$605,000	
		deferred maintenance	MTVMP Stewardship & Phased Upgrade		1
		deferred maintenance	Evergreen/Kent Woodlands WUI management & fuel breaks		1
	Habitat Reclamation - Biodiversity			\$618,000	
		planning	Larkspur Creek Bank Stabilization - planning		2
		capital project	Larkspur Creek Bank Stabilization - implementation		3
	Roads and Trails			\$429,000	
		deferred maintenance	Annual tree management		1
		capital project	Dawn Falls Trail structure replacement project & re-route		2
		capital project	Improve Dawn Falls TR vehicle access - secure tread		2
	Facilities and Built Features			\$217,800	
		capital project	Entry structure phased repair / replacement program		2
		capital project	Lessin Property trail & road construction		1
Blithedale Summit				\$1,010,350	
	Fire Management			\$574,750	
		capital project	Marin County Fire Plan - Blithedale Ridge / Mill Valley Community fuel break		2
		deferred maintenance	MTVMP Stewardship & Phased Upgrade		1
	Roads and Trails			\$415,800	
		capital project	Blithedale Summit fire road tread repair and restoration		2
		capital project	Old RR Grade tread reconstruction		2
		capital project	MMWD Road & Trail Plan projects related to Redwood Creek - DFG grant work		1
	Facilities and Built Features	capital project	West Blithedale entry bridge railing w/ MMWD	\$19,800	1
Bolinas Lagoon				\$1,255,000	
	Natural Resource Inventory	planning	Bolinas Lagoon bathymetric survey	\$750,000	1
	Facilities and Built Features	capital project	Letter property improvements & maintenance	\$330,000	2
	Other	capital project	Oil spill response and cleanup materials improvements	\$175,000	1
Bothin Marsh / Strawberry Tidelands				\$33,000	
	Facilities and Built Features	capital project	DPW Flood control project contribution	\$33,000	2
Camino Alto				\$1,112,200	
	Fire Management	deferred maintenance	MTVMP Stewardship & Phased Upgrade	\$484,000	1
	Habitat Reclamation - Biodiversity	capital project	Mycix property - eucalyptus, other non-natives	\$120,000	3
	Roads and Trails	capital project	Middle Summit & Octopus fire roads	\$198,000	2

Parks & Open Space Strategic Plan

Preserve	Project	Category	Project Elements	Cost	Priority
			drainage and upgrades		
	Drains & Sediment Control			\$310,200	
		capital project	Investigation & repair of drainage issues from Escalon FR		3
		capital project	Mycix property - erosion & drainage		3
Cascade Canyon				\$1,202,300	
	Fire Management	deferred maintenance	NPS - WUI Cascade Drive Interface Fuel break - on-going maint + all fuel breaks	\$423,500	1
	Roads and Trails			\$778,800	
		capital project	Management Plan road and trail closures		2
		capital project	Split Rock Trail re-route / upgrade		2
Deer Island				\$389,400	
	Roads and Trails	capital project	De Borba Trail re-route	\$59,400	2
	Facilities and Built Features	capital project	Residence safety, security and upgrade projects	\$330,000	2
French Ranch				\$475,200	
	Roads and Trails			\$475,200	
		capital project	Top Flight Trail (Phase II) - additional projects, signs, tread finish		1
		capital project	French Ranch Connection to Sam. Taylor SP. - Dickson Ridge. Easement Acquisitions and Public Access Improvements		3
		capital project	French Ranch Fire Roads Enhancement and Erosion Control		2
		capital project	French Ranch to Nicasio Valley Road through Ferrari		1
Gary Giacomini				\$645,000	
	Roads and Trails			\$495,000	
		capital project	Manzanita Bypass Trail (Zangpo) construction		1
		capital project	Sylvestris fire road erosion repairs per Prunuske Chatham (Appleton) recommendations		2
		capital project	Anderson Trail layout & construction		3
		capital project	Baumsteiger - Summit Road trail construction		2
	Other	capital project	SOD tree identification and removal	\$150,000	1
Horse Hill				\$247,200	
	Habitat Reclamation - Biodiversity			\$102,000	
		capital project	Oak tree protection at top of ridge		1
		capital project	Invasive plant control - arundo, teasel, thistle, broom		2
	Roads and Trails	capital project	Horse Hill FR erosion repairs and upgrades	\$72,600	2
	Facilities and Built Features	deferred maintenance	Old bridge replacement above Lomita	\$72,600	1
Ignacio Valley				\$105,600	
	Facilities and Built Features	capital project	Vehicle bridge over creek per Fairway Drive acquisition	\$105,600	1
Indian Tree				\$138,600	
	Roads and Trails			\$138,600	
		capital project	Indian Tree FR re-route at steep section w/ Hill Ranch		2

Appendix D: Parks & Open Space Capital Improvement Plan

Preserve	Project	Category	Project Elements	Cost	Priority
		capital project	Vineyard Road - Robelo Lane trail easement improvements		2
Indian Valley				\$725,400	
	Habitat Reclamation - Biodiversity	capital project	Phased Pacheco Pond management improvements (Egeria, spillway erosion, trail crossing)	\$210,000	2
	Roads and Trails			\$455,400	
		capital project	Susan Alexander Trail reroute - Reconstruct hazardous Susan Alexander trail from Waterfall trail to Hill Ranch trail		1
		capital project	Hill Ranch trail connections - easement and new acquisitions		2
		capital project	Garner Drive trail connection design & construction		3
	Other	capital project	CSA 20 Funded projects: Ignacio Community fuel break, trail repairs, sign upgrades, Pacheco Pond cleanup	\$60,000	1
King Mountain				\$184,200	
	Habitat Reclamation - Biodiversity	capital project	Eucalyptus & Acacia management program	\$72,000	1
	Roads and Trails	capital project	Ridgecrest Road connection for King Mt. Loop trail connection completion	\$112,200	3
Little Mountain				\$0	
Loma Alta				\$692,400	
	Habitat Reclamation - Biodiversity	capital project	Invasive management: pampas, purple star thistle	\$72,000	2
	Roads and Trails			\$600,600	
		capital project	Fox Hollow creek culvert bridge		1
		planning	Mather Road connection trail to Triple C Ranch - easement acquisition + improvements		2
		capital project	Old road cut restoration / closure at Glen fire road to Fox Hollow on Old RR Grade (after MMWD creek bridge project)		3
		capital project	Triple C Ranch acquisition & trail easement improvements		3
		capital project	San Domenico 600 TR construction		2
		capital project	Old RR Grade trestle section slope repair		1
	Facilities and Built Features	deferred maintenance	Cleanup at MMWD tank on top of Oak Manor	\$19,800	2
Loma Verde				\$66,000	
	Roads and Trails	capital project	Via Escondida fire road tread erosion repair & BMP upgrades	\$66,000	2
Lucas Valley				\$25,300	
	Roads and Trails	planning	Lucas Tunnel – Big Rock Trail - Per construction – additional projects, long-term maintenance planning	\$19,800	1
	Boundary & Encroachments	deferred maintenance	Identify lot at ridge with telecommunications facility - Lucas property	\$5,500	1
Maurice Thorner Memorial				\$33,000	
	Roads and Trails	capital project	Complete trail from Roy's across Golf Course property	\$26,400	3
	Facilities and Built Features	capital project	Upgrade entry at San Geronimo Valley school	\$6,600	3
	Preserve Additions	planning	Acquisition of lot at SFD - McGibbon		

Parks & Open Space Strategic Plan

Preserve	Project	Category	Project Elements	Cost	Priority
Mount Burdell				\$904,200	
	Habitat Reclamation - Biodiversity			\$132,000	
		deferred maintenance	Grazing Program Upgrades		2
		capital project	Invasive control (thistle, goat grass)		2
	Roads and Trails			\$343,200	
		capital project	Olompali to Mount Burdell trail construction - new Buck Center land		1
		capital project	Brookside Trail - Causeway installation, drainage inspection, signs – creek and bank impacts on existing structures		2
		capital project	North trail construction - Burdell to San Antonio Road (after acquisition)		3
		capital project	Bowman Canyon - trail connection to Little Mt (after acquisition)		3
		capital project	Fire road sustainability upgrades		3
	Facilities and Built Features			\$363,000	
		deferred maintenance	Spring and trough water system repairs		2
		capital project	Pasture Fence Phased Replacement		2
		capital project	Olompali trailhead entry at MB quarry - structures installation (SC gate, vehicle gate, etc.)		1
		capital project	Entry structure phased repair / replacement program		2
	Drains & Sediment Control	capital project	Sereno Way creek repair	\$66,000	2
Old St Hilary's				\$79,200	
	Roads and Trails			\$79,200	
		capital project	Vistazo FR - Heathcliff FR ridge trail connection reroute / upgrade per community request		3
		capital project	Vistazo FR tread & drainage improvements		2
Pacheco Valle				\$213,600	
	Roads and Trails	capital project	Alameda Del Prado loop trail (MCOSD sections) paved path & fence repairs	\$99,000	3
	Drains & Sediment Control	deferred maintenance	Timothy Court creek erosion improvements	\$39,600	2
	Other	deferred maintenance	SOD tree identification and removal	\$75,000	1
Ring Mountain				\$630,000	
	Habitat Reclamation - Biodiversity	capital project	Implementation of habitat enhancement plans - LSA @ \$25,000 per year	\$300,000	1
	Roads and Trails	capital project	Infrastructure replacement phased projects	\$39,600	3
	Facilities and Built Features			\$92,400	
		capital project	Taylor Road access entry structures improvement		2
		capital project	Petroglyph Rock protection measures		2
	Drains & Sediment Control	capital project	Engineered slide protection structures audit and repair: Paseo Mirasol, Midden Ln, Reed Ranch Rd, others	\$198,000	3

Appendix D: Parks & Open Space Capital Improvement Plan

Preserve	Project	Category	Project Elements	Cost	Priority
Roy's Redwoods				\$65,890	
	Roads and Trails	capital project	Spirit Rock Trail easement - Tread work, signs, gates/structures on Dickson Ridge fire road per negotiation with Spirit Rock Center	\$39,600	2
	Facilities and Built Features			\$22,440	
		capital project	Fence Replacement/Planting Sir Francis Drake Blvd.		3
		capital project	Redwood Interpretive sign		3
	Boundary & Encroachments	planning	Golf Course Road	\$3,850	3
Rush Creek				\$667,200	
	Habitat Reclamation - Biodiversity	capital project	Invasive control (sedge, broom, Tree of Heaven, Harding Grass, eucalyptus)	\$60,000	1
	Roads and Trails			\$257,400	
		capital project	West trail connections to Mount Burdell and west side of Highway 101		2
		capital project	Fire road overlay & tread improvements		3
	Facilities and Built Features			\$198,000	
		capital project	Atherton Road Vehicle barrier		3
		capital project	Bahia Drive Vehicle barrier		3
	Drains & Sediment Control			\$151,800	
		capital project	Binford entry bank improvements for erosion control		3
		capital project	Rush cemetery erosion gully repair		3
San Pedro Ridge				\$112,200	
	Roads and Trails	capital project	Easement repair & road cut restoration (Bayhills Drive, old cut at Granlee Canyon)	\$112,200	2
Santa Venetia Marsh				\$360,000	
	Habitat Reclamation - Biodiversity	capital project	Enhancement Plan Review & Implementation	\$360,000	1
TL/SH Divide				\$1,243,790	
	Fire Management			\$381,150	
		capital project	Continue fire plan installation and maintenance on existing fuel break system		1
		capital project	WUI fuel break plan & installation		3
	Habitat Reclamation - Biodiversity			\$354,000	
		capital project	Ridgewood fire road at Fawn Drive entry - large erosion gully repair		2
		capital project	Invasive Management: Eucalyptus, broom, goat grass		1
	Roads and Trails			\$418,440	
		capital project	Butterfield – Crane Drive (Berto) trail easement - Construction, sign, long-term maintenance planning		2
		capital project	Mt. Tam Cemetery trail connections - Trail routes at cemetery and on San Anselmo Open Space to Memorial Park – new connections		2
		capital project	Oakridge Road Trail Reroute - Re-build steep eroded trail from entry at roadside (Earl's trail) to Ridgewood fire		1

Parks & Open Space Strategic Plan

Preserve	Project	Category	Project Elements	Cost	Priority
			road		
	Facilities and Built Features	capital project	Phase entry structure project	\$79,200	2
	Boundary & Encroachments	planning	Investigate access rights across private lands at end of Fawn Drive	\$11,000	3
Verissimo Hills				\$33,000	
	Roads and Trails	deferred maintenance	Stafford Lake Trail erosion improvements		2
White Hill				\$211,200	
	Roads and Trails			\$191,400	
		deferred maintenance	White Hill fire road above Bothin erosion repairs / BMP upgrades		2
		capital project	Tamarancho FR re-route trail construction		3
		capital project	Bothin access road drainage improvements		2
	Facilities and Built Features	capital project	Sherwood Forest & Brown Bridge landscape plantings and entry facilities	\$19,800	2

Back cover: *White Hill Preserve*, Craig Solin; *California Clapper Rail*, Len Blumin; *Fields at McInnis Park*, Craig Solin; *Juvenile Spotted Owl*, Kate Fehring; *Buttercups, Mount Burdell Preserve*, May Chen; *McInnis Park Skate Park*, Steve Petterle.



Marin County Parks & Open Space Department

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