

Technical Memorandum

Project: Yolo County Parks Master Plan
Subject: **Review of Directives, Comparable Plans, & Statewide Trends**
Prepared by: Bruce Kemp, AICP
Roberts, Kemp & Associates LLC
Brian Collett, MLA
The Dangermond Group
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The County of Yolo is currently preparing a Countywide Master Plan for its parks and open space properties. The County seeks to develop a Parks Master Plan that will, among other things, set a policy framework and provide guidance for management, uses, and future acquisition and development of County park properties individually and system-wide.

As part of the background studies for the Parks Master Plan, the Consultant Team has conducted a set of reviews of: (1) pertinent County directives, (2) comparable park and recreation plans, and (3) Statewide trends. The results of these reviews are summarized in this report. Each part begins with a statement of scope and objectives.

PART 1. COUNTY DIRECTIVES

1.1 Scope and Objectives

The Consultants reviewed previous and current County directives, policies, and ordinances that address parks and open space. Documents reviewed were:

- The Yolo County Code;
- The 1968 Recreation Element of the Yolo County General Plan;
- The 1998 Draft Parks Master Plan;
- The 2002 Revised Final Cache Resources Management Plan for Lower Cache Creek;
- The 2002 Open Space and Recreation Element of the existing County General Plan; and
- The ongoing development of the County General Plan Update, to the extent practicable.

The objectives of this part of the review were to identify past and current goals, policies, ordinance provisions, and other directives that may be applicable and relevant to the management of County park and open space properties; to help ensure that applicable County policies and directives may be carried forward as appropriate

in the Parks Master Plan; and to help ensure that the Master Plan is consistent with other County policy documentation where appropriate.

1.2 The Yolo County Code

The Yolo County Code consists of 12 titles; the titles most relevant to this review are Title 8, Land Development and Zoning, and Title 9, Parks and Recreation. In addition, chapters in several other titles may be found applicable, including Title 5, Public Welfare, Morals, and Conduct; Title 6, Sanitation and Health; and Title 10, Environment. This information, primarily in the form of excerpts from the Code, is summarized below.

A noticeable omission from the County Code is a section explicitly implementing California Government Code Section 66477, known as the Quimby Act (1975). This statute authorizes local jurisdictions to adopt ordinances requiring developers of residential subdivisions to dedicate land and/or pay in-lieu fees to provide for the development of new, or the rehabilitation of existing, park facilities as conditions of subdivision map approval. The locally adopted ordinance specifies the acceptable uses or restrictions on the expenditure of such funds and provides standards and formulas for determining the exaction. The exactions must be closely tied to a project's impacts as identified through nexus studies, the General Plan, and impact analyses such as those required by CEQA. County Code Title 8, Article 5, Section 8-1.503 notwithstanding (see below), the County does not appear to have a Quimby Act ordinance.

Title 5. Public Welfare, Morals, and Conduct

Chapter 10. Weapons. Generally, this chapter regulates the use of firearms in certain areas of the County. Discharging of weapons is expressly prohibited in the Esparto Park, the Airport, Clarksburg Boat Ramp, Knights Landing Boat Ramp, the Putah Creek Fishing Access, and several other areas of the County.

Title 6. Sanitation and Health

Chapter 13. Camping within the Unincorporated Area of Yolo County.

Sec. 6-13.01. Authority and purpose.

“The purpose of this chapter is to protect public and private property within the unincorporated area of the County from the destruction that accompanies camping. It is also enacted to ensure that proper health and safety accommodations are provided to those who do camp. It is enacted to prevent degradation of public and private lands and assure that such lands can be utilized for their intended purpose. The Board of Supervisors enacts this chapter in accordance with the authority granted to counties by Article XI, Section 7 of the California Constitution. (§ 1, Ord. 1189, eff. August 22, 1996)”

Sec. 6-13.03. Camping on public property.

“Except as may be permitted within parks by the Park and Recreation Director, it is unlawful to camp or squat upon any public property owned or maintained by the County, including, without limitation, streets, easements, parks, dump sites, creek beds, electric utility substations, parking lots, or corporation yards. No person shall set up tents, shacks, house trailers, motor homes, campers, or any other temporary or permanent shelter for the

purpose of overnight camping or squatting, nor shall any person leave in any such place any movable structure or special vehicle to be used or that could be used for such a purpose, such as a house trailer, tent, automobile, or the like. Violation of this section shall be charged as a misdemeanor. (§ 1, Ord. 1189, eff. August 22, 1996)”

Sec. 6-13.05. Campfires.

“No person shall kindle or maintain an open campfire or bonfire, except on park property as designated by the Parks and Recreation Director. ... (§ 1, Ord. 1189, eff. August 22, 1996)”

Title 8. Land Development and Zoning

Chapter 1, Land Development.

Article 5. Preliminary Plans

Sec. 8-1.503. Action by Committee. This section describes, in part, responsibilities of the County Subdivision Review Committee with respect to the review of a “Preliminary Plan,” which a subdivider may submit (it is not required) to the County prior to the Tentative Map.

“The Committee shall, within thirty (30) days after receipt, advise the subdivider or his agent concerning such preliminary plans. Such advice may be provided in conference or in writing. The Committee shall make recommendations as to any necessary changes or desirable improvements in the preliminary plan and shall refer the subdivider to such other public and private agencies for further consultations as may be desirable. The Committee shall indicate the advisability of reserving suitable areas for park, playground, school, and other public or semipublic uses which shall be required or suggested in the subdivision, suggest desirable improvements in the street pattern and lot arrangement, and advise on any other matters or special problems which may arise. (§ 3.20, Ord. 546)”

Article 8. Tentative Maps.

Sec. 8-1.802, Form, specifies the required information for a Tentative Map, including “(18) Provisions for park and recreation facilities, schools, and other needed public areas.”

Chapter 2, Zoning.

This chapter comprises the County’s zoning regulations. Particularly notable here are Articles 19, 19.1, and 19.2, which provide zoning regulations for parks and recreation lands, public open space, and other open space, respectively. The excerpts below recite the text sections covering the purposes of, and principal uses in, these zones; the full County Code sections contain considerably more additional detail with respect to accessory and conditional uses, standards, and conditions.

The Chapter also, generally, allows for recreation uses in the various other zoning classifications in the County, including several agricultural zones, either by right (as a principal use) or by permit. An adopted definition for “rural recreation” and a finding that identifies State Highway 16 as a scenic highway ¹ are also included, as excerpted below.

¹ The statement in the County Code at Section 8-2.2406 that Highway 16 is a state-designated

Article 1. Title, Adoption, Scope, and Purpose

Sec. 8-298.5.² Rural Recreation.

“ ‘Rural Recreation’ shall mean outdoor sporting or leisure activities that require large open space areas and do not have any significant detrimental impact on agricultural use of lands that are in the general vicinity of the rural recreation activity. Rural recreation activities shall include, but are not limited to: the shooting of skeet, trap, and sporting clays; archery; gun, hunting, or fishing clubs; sport parachuting; riding; dude ranches; picnicking; nature study; viewing or enjoying historical, archaeological, scenic, natural or scientific sites; health resorts, rafting, hiking, backpacking, bicycling, or touring excursions; or camping. Rural Recreation shall also include commercial or non-commercial operations related to any outdoor sporting and leisure activities within the meaning of Rural Recreation as defined. (§ 2, Ord. 1244, eff. February 3, 2000, as amended by § 8, Ord. 1250, eff. August 24, 2000).”

Article 19. Park and Recreation Zone (PR)

Sec. 8-2.1901. Purpose (PR)

“The purpose of the Park and Recreation Zone (PR) shall be to preserve lands of natural beauty or lands containing natural or potential park and recreation features or park and recreation development, which protection for such uses is in the public interests. (§ 20.01, Ord. 488)”

Sec. 8-2.1902. Principal permitted uses (PR).

“The following principal uses shall be permitted in the PR Zone:

- (a) Boat docking, fueling, and minor service;
- (b) Parks and recreation facilities, publicly owned;
- (c) Commercial stables, golf courses, and country clubs;
- (d) Schools and buildings, public, when located in conformance with the Master Plan; and
- (e) Swimming, riding, hiking, and fishing facilities. (§ 20.02, Ord. 488, as amended by § 7, Ord. 1212, eff. October 23, 1997)”

Article 19.1. Public Open Space Zone (POS)

Sec. 8-2.1911. Purpose (POS).

“The purpose of the Public Open Space Zone (POS) shall be to preserve public lands designated for public use for open space, drainage, and public right-of-way uses where such uses are in the public interest and consistent with the General Plan. (§ 4, Ord. 488.177, eff. March 7, 1985)”

Sec. 8-2.1912. Principal permitted uses (POS).

“The following principal uses shall be permitted, with the permission of the responsible public agencies, on public lands in the POS Zone:

scenic highway is apparently not correct. The “official list” of designated scenic highways published by Caltrans (http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic_highways/scenic_hwy.htm) does not include Highway 16 or any roads or highways in Yolo County. The Caltrans website does indicate, however, that Highway 16 is an “Eligible State Scenic Highway.”

² [sic]. The section should be numbered 8-2.298.5, as in the section listing at the beginning of the chapter.

- (a) All public open space uses;
- (b) Parks, trails, bikeways, and landscaped areas in conjunction with other public uses;
- (c) Roads, streets, highways, transits, and freeways on public rights-of-way;
- (d) Public sewer, water, drainage, and other open or closed conduit systems; and
- (e) All Open Space Zone (OS) uses. (See Article 19.2 of this chapter.) (§ 4, Ord. 488.177, eff. March 7, 1985)”

Article 19.2. Open Space Zone (OS)

Sec. 8-2.1921. Purpose (OS).

“The purpose of the Open Space Zone (OS) shall be to preserve appropriate lands in open space uses as defined and required in the General Plan. (§ 5, Ord. 488.177, eff. March 7, 1985)”

Sec. 8-2.1922. Principal permitted uses (OS).

“The following principal uses shall be permitted in the OS Zone:

- (a) Areas used for managed resource production, including:
 - (1) Agricultural land;
 - (2) Range land;
 - (3) Managed food and fiber production areas;
 - (4) Groundwater recharge areas;
 - (5) Marshes, rivers, lakes, and streams;
 - and
 - (6) Areas of major mineral deposits, including sand and gravel, clays, ores, metals, and oil and gas;
- (b) Fish, wildlife, and plant habitat;
- (c) Natural areas;
- (d) Riparian areas;
- (e) Outdoor recreation areas; and
- (f) Flood control bypasses and other drain channels. (§ 5, Ord. 488.177, eff. March 7, 1985)

Sec. 8-2.2406. Signs.

“(a) Findings and declaration. The Board of Supervisors finds and declares:

- (1) That the regulations imposed by this section will establish an economic benefit to the County in that absence of general advertising signs along freeways and other highways will constitute a beautification which will in turn tend to attract tourists, settlers, and industries to the County as follows:
 - (i) State Highway 16 has been designated as a scenic highway on the State Master Plan ³ and that in this area scenic environment is commercial and that it is to protect the economic interest of the property to preserve the priceless beauty of the countryside for all man.”

³ See footnote 1.

Chapter 11, Gravel Mining Fee Ordinance.

Chapter 11 of Title 8 establishes fees and administrative procedures for aggregate mining in the unincorporated areas of Yolo County along Cache Creek. Money collected through these fees may be expended in accordance with this ordinance for “long-term habitat restoration, the creation of open space and passive recreation opportunities, and restoration and stabilization of Cache Creek” (Sec. 8-11.02(b)(4)).

Title 9. Parks and Recreation

The four chapters under this title provide regulations for: (1) boating and water skiing, (2) public boating facilities, (3) park regulations, and (4) speed limits on the Sacramento River. The regulations under this title contain considerable detail with respect to requirements for equipment safety, proper operating conditions, prohibitions, etc., not all of which is summarized here.

Chapter 2, Public Boating Facilities.

Sec. 9-2.04. Signs: Construction: Form.

“The Parks Department shall have prepared boating regulation signs in sufficient number to supply all the public boating facilities which are located within the County. The signs shall be constructed of metal and shall be twenty-four (24”) inches by eighteen (18”) inches in dimensions. The following legend shall be printed on such signs in black on a white background surrounded by a one and one-half (1 1/2”) inch orange border:

NOTICE TO BOATERS

State law makes it a misdemeanor to operate your powerboat in excess of five (5) nautical miles per hour when you are:

- (1) Within 100 feet of bathers;
- (2) Within 200 feet of a bathing beach;
- (3) Within 200 feet of a swimming float, diving platform, or lifeline; or
- (4) Within 200 feet of a way or landing float to which boats are made fast or which is used for the embarkation or debarkation of passengers.

Observe these rules.”

Chapter 3, Park Regulations.

Following the statement of purposes and definitions, this chapter includes of the following articles:

- Article 3, Use of Park Facilities;
- Article 4, Permits;
- Article 5, Prohibitions; and
- Article 6, Boating and Water Skiing;
- Article 7, Park Use Fees; and
- Article 8, Enforcement.

These regulations are primarily directed toward public safety, keeping the peace, public health, and procedural matters. They are largely restrictive rather than permissive, and violations of the identified prohibitions are subject to enforcement. Much of the text dates to an ordinance passed in 1975, with some sections added or revised in the 1980s. Selected excerpts follow. "Director" refers to "the Director of the Parks, Museum, and Grounds of the County."

Article 3, Use of Park Facilities

Sec. 9-3.301. Rules.

"The Director, with the approval of the Board, shall promulgate and post rules and regulations governing the use of parks. (§ 1, Ord. 732, eff. October 8, 1975)"

Sec. 9-3.306. Use of park facilities: Designated areas.

"The Director shall designate certain areas within each park facility for specific uses and shall prominently post in such areas the terms, conditions, and hours of such use. (§ 1, Ord. 732, eff. October 8, 1975)"

Article 5, Prohibitions.

Sec. 9-3.505. Camping.

"No person shall camp in any park without a valid permit to do so. (§ 1, Ord. 732, eff. October 8, 1975)"

Sec. 9-3.506. Designated uses.

"No person shall use any park area except in accordance with its designated and posted permitted use. (§ 1, Ord. 732, eff. October 8, 1975)"

Sec. 9-3.507. Fires.

"No person shall build, light, or maintain any fire in any area of any park, except in an area designated and posted by the Director as a permitted area for fires, and except in accordance with a valid fire permit. (§ 1, Ord. 732, eff. October 8, 1975)"

Sec. 9-3.508. Reserved areas.

"No person shall use any portion of a park which has been previously reserved for other users and so posted. (§ 1, Ord. 732, eff. October 8, 1975)"

Sec. 9-3.509. Commercial services.

"No person, other than a concessionaire or a licensee specifically licensed by the Director to do so, shall sell, offer for sale, give away, or dispose of any goods, merchandise, or commercial services or conduct any business or commerce thereon within any park. (§ 1, Ord. 732, eff. October 8, 1975)"

Sec. 9-3.513. Motor vehicles.

"The following acts and conduct pertaining to the use of motor vehicles are prohibited:

- (a) The operation of any automobile or other motor vehicle upon any road, path, or trail within any park except those paved roads, trails, or other areas designated for the use of such vehicles by the Director; ... "

Sec. 9-3.514. Bicycles.

“No person shall ride any bicycle on any grassy area, path, or trail designated exclusively for pedestrian use. (§ 1, Ord. 732, eff. October 8, 1975)”

Sec. 9-3.515. Animals.

“No person shall permit a canine animal to go about any park unless adequately restrained by a leash, halter, or rope. (§ 1, Ord. 732, eff. October 8, 1975)”

Sec. 9-3.519. Horseback riding.

“No person shall ride a horse or any other beast of burden into, over, or through any park other than at times and upon roads or trails designated for such activity by the Director. (§ 1, Ord. 732, eff. October 8, 1975)”

Sec. 9-3.520. Firearms.

“No person shall brandish, fire, or discharge within any park any firearm, air gun, pellet gun, bow and arrow, crossbow, or slingshot except as expressly designated and set forth in a permit issued by the Director. (§ 1, Ord. 732, eff. October 8, 1975)”

Article 7, Park Use Fees.

Sec. 9-3.702. Purpose.

“The purpose of this article is to provide for park use fees in order to defray the cost of operating and maintaining the parks and thereby avoid the closure of one or more of them. (§ 1, Ord. 911, eff. July 9, 1981)”

Sec. 9-3.703. Authority: Applicable parks.

“By resolution adopted, the Board, from time to time, may charge fees for park use at any park or recreation facility owned or controlled by the County, including, but not limited to, the following:

- (a) Putah Creek Park;
- (b) Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park;
- (c) Knights Landing Boat Launching Facility;
- (d) Elkhorn Regional Park;
- (e) Broderick Boat Launching Facility;
- (f) Clarksburg Boat Launching Facility; and
- (g) Vernon Nichols Park (Guinda). (§ 1, Ord. 911, eff. July 9, 1981)”

Title 10. Environment

This title consists of eight chapters, the content of which, for the most part, does not have direct bearing on parks, recreation, conservation, and open space issues relevant to the Parks Master Plan. Chapters under this title contain discussions of aesthetics, cultural resources, wetlands, and wildlife habitat (typically in the context of surface mining activities) that are not found elsewhere in the Code. Section 10-4.803 includes the provision also found in Sec. 8-11.02(b)(4) whereby money collected through these gravel mining fees may be expended in accordance with this ordinance for “long-term habitat restoration, the creation of open space and passive recreation opportunities, and restoration and stabilization of Cache Creek.” Section 10-5.103(d) indicates, in

the context of agricultural land restoration, that recreational and open space lands are declared by the County to be compatible with agricultural activities.

1.3 The 1968 Recreation Element of the Yolo County General Plan

A Recreation Element of the Yolo County General Plan was approved by the County Planning Commission and adopted by the County Board of Supervisors in 1968. Since that time, County General Plan elements have been updated several times, including a comprehensive update of the General Plan 1983. In 2002 the Board of Supervisors adopted an Open Space and Recreation Element (see Section 1.6). While no longer in effect as part of the adopted County General Plan, the 1968 Recreation Element provides relevant background information and may continue to express policy positions that may be useful for comparison today.

In fewer than 50 pages, the 1968 Recreation Element manages to present a fairly comprehensive parks program for Yolo County within a broader demographic, geographic, and sociological context. Beginning with a Preliminary Statement of Objectives and Standards, the document includes:

- Present and future needs for recreation,
- County history, climate, and topography,
- Discussions of the County's role as a provider of regional recreation areas,
- Selection factors for Yolo County recreation sites,
- Discussion of parkland needs and development priorities,
- Benefits of parks and outdoor recreation, and
- An inventory of proposed regional park facilities.

1968 Recreation Element Objectives

Six objectives are presented in the Preliminary Statement of Objectives and Standards in the 1968 Recreation Element:

- “A. To protect and preserve as many of the County's recreation resources as possible.
- “B. To acquire, provide and maintain diversified regional-type recreation facilities to satisfy the leisure time needs of all the County's residents. Yolo County's responsibility should fall between that responsibility assumed by the City, State and Federal agencies.
- “C. To preserve the open space resources of the County and plan for their best use.
- “D. To develop appropriately those areas which have historic and scenic value.
- “E. To cooperate with adjacent counties, state and federal agencies in the acquisition, development and administration of recreation facilities and resources for joint use and mutual advantage.
- “F. To cooperate with private individuals and organizations in the preservation, acquisition and administration of recreation resources.”

Parks and Recreation Needs & Benefits

The 1968 Recreation Element argues that recreation is a “vital need in today’s world.” It predicts that the “demand for all forms of outdoor recreation will increase at an unprecedented pace during the coming years.” The greatest factor in this, according to the Recreation element, is population growth. The population projections in the 1968 document are only slightly higher than current estimates.

The Element’s purpose was “to indicate the potential sites adaptable to recreational uses that will provide a countywide development program, both now and in the future.” The document anticipates that providing recreation needs is a shared responsibility of all providers, including federal and state government, special districts, and private groups and businesses. “It is not the intent of the Recreation Element to suggest that the County provide all of the recreation areas that will be needed for our future population.” The Element states that the “County will request and encourage developments by the State and Federal government and local governments and agencies and will encourage private development of all forms of recreation and resort facilities to supplement publicly provided facilities.”

The 1968 Recreation Element is directed primarily toward regional recreation areas, which are of “sufficient size” to offer a variety of recreation opportunities. While a standard for regional park size is not explicitly specified, the Element does provide other “Development Standards for County and Regional Recreation Facilities,” which is a collection of quantified standards for furnishing picnic areas, campgrounds, trails, etc. at individual park sites.

The Element does not address community and neighborhood parks in detail; however, it does state that these park types are among the “recreation deficiencies” that exist in the unincorporated urban areas of Yolo County. As an interim solution, the Element suggests that the County assume responsibility through County service areas and assessment districts. It also suggests that County general tax funds be reserved for the development and maintenance of regional County Parks.

The Element touts the benefits of outdoor recreation, both in terms of personal, family, and social benefits, as well as economic benefits. Parks increase the property value of adjacent properties. Parks take land off the tax rolls, but the increase in assessed value in the surrounding area often exceeds that which was removed. Parks help to attract new businesses that are choosing a new location. Parks also attract tourist visitors who spend money in the County.

Regional Park Facilities in this 1968 Recreation Element

The 1968 Recreation Element projects parkland needs for the County based on a standard of 10 acres per 1,000 residents; the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) is cited as the source of this standard, which was popular at the time.⁴ In 1965, with a population of 81,125, the corresponding acres of land needed for parks was 810, according to the document. For the year 2000, with a projected population of 210,000 the projected needed acres of parkland were 2100.

⁴ See discussion of level of service in Part 2 of this report.

The 1968 Recreation Element identified the following 14 “proposed regional park facilities:”

1. Putah Creek Fishing Access Area
2. Cottonwood Reservoir
3. Palmer Canyon Reservoir
4. Canyon Park
5. Oat Reservoir
6. Putah Creek Trails
7. Yolo County Public Golf Course and Country Club
8. Comstock Regional Park
9. Knights Landing Fishing Access Area
10. Yolo Bypass Access Area
11. Sacramento River Riding and Hiking Trail
12. Elkhorn Regional Park
13. East Yolo Regional Park
14. Clarksburg Access Area

The Element provides brief descriptions of each of these parks. Five of these recreation sites – Putah Creek Fishing Access, Cache Creek Canyon Park, Knights Landing, Elkhorn, and Clarksburg – are now part of the County park system. Three of the these sites – Cottonwood Reservoir, Palmer Canyon Reservoir, and Oat Reservoir – were proposed as part of a water project that was not developed (according to the document, the Oat Reservoir was proposed by the Bureau of Reclamation as part of the “West Side Canal System”). Comstock Regional Park was a recommended site proposed to be located “on the interior 52-acre parcel of the City of Davis Community Golf Course site.” The Putah Creek Trails is described as a Bureau of Reclamation acquisition of 22 miles of Putah Creek, which would allow “fishing, riding and hiking from the Bypass to Lake Solano.”

1.4 The 1998 Draft Parks & Recreation Facilities Master Plan

A draft master plan for County parks was prepared in 1998 by County staff, community members, and others, including members of the Parks, Recreation and Wildlife Advisory Committee at that time. The document, “County of Yolo Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan,” was not finalized, nor was it approved or adopted by the County Board of Supervisors. It is reviewed here as part of this current planning effort to help ensure that relevant information, historical perspectives, and possibly useful policy directions are not overlooked.⁵ The draft master plan is also

⁵ The 1998 draft Yolo Parks and Facilities Master Plan identifies earlier source materials and planning efforts related to parks and recreation, including: an “ ‘internal,’ short term, draft master plan” in 1981; an evaluation of rafting in Cache Creek in 1984; a “crude park survey

important as a source document for the adopted 2002 Open Space and Recreation Element of the County General Plan (see next section).

The 1998 draft master plan consists of four sections: an introduction, a resource and location inventory, a discussion of recreation patterns, and the master plan section, comprised of recommendations for parks, recreation facilities, financing, the County Code, and the General Plan. It is an opinionated document, containing a mixture of facts (e.g., the parks and facilities inventory) and editorial points-of-view (“Progressive practices of today will be the norms of tomorrow”). The document briefly notes the general CEQA compliance review requirement for all parks, trails, and other recreation facilities addressed in the plan.

In the Executive Summary, the draft master plan recommends four “bottom-line choices:”

- Replacement of decaying infrastructure (park infrastructure has exceeded its life expectancy),
- County-based provision of reliable funds for natural resource protection and parks development (the County cannot depend on state park bonds as it did previously);
- Improvement of the park host system (compared with other park systems, Yolo parks offer little to attract prospective hosts, and are consequently the County is dependent upon an “inconsistent and unreliable network of park hosts”);
- Improvement and updating of how the parks are operated as a system (outdated procedures and policies hamper efficiency, marking is virtually non-existent, community group partnerships and collaborations are absent, etc.).

1998 Level of Service Standards⁶

The Preamble indicates, among other things, that the draft master plan was not aimed toward acquisition of new parks and open space areas. This statement (seemingly inconsistent with subsequent parts of the document) was apparently based on the view that in 1998 the County already had ample parks and open space areas, when calculated on an acres-per-1,000 population basis.

“Because Yolo County is in the enviable position of having attained a significant portion of park land, this document is not acquisition based. Twenty year projections bear out satisfaction of land acquisition on a 5 acre per 1000 population basis. Existing park lands range from highly developed to open space preserves.”

questionnaire” that was distributed to campers at the Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park in 1979; and a 1968 document entitled “ ‘Recreation and the General Plan,’ ” which was “a result of policies developed for the Recreation Element of the [County] General Plan” at that time (see previous section of this report). Except to the extent that these documents have been incorporated (explicitly or not) in the 1998 draft plan, they have not been reviewed as part of this current Parks Master Plan project.

⁶ See discussion of level of service standards in Part 2.

There is further discussion of park acreage standards (also known as “level of service” standards) in the draft plan, both in the body of the document as well as in the appended material. The draft master plan recommended that “[a]creage standards for parks in Yolo County system [sic] should be a minimum of 5 developed acres/1,000 population....” This standard was further divided by park category and for developed versus “natural or buffer” areas.

For Regional Parks (30 to 10,000 acres) in developed areas, the recommended standard in the 1998 draft plan was 1.5 acres per 1000 people; in natural areas, 2.0 acres per 1000. For Community Parks (20 to 80 acres in size) in developed areas, the recommended standard was 1.5 acres per 1000 people and, in natural areas, 1.0 acres per 1000. For Neighborhood Parks (2 to 10 acres in size) in developed areas, the recommended standard was 2.0 acres per 1000 and, in natural areas 0.5 acres per 1000.

The draft plan goes on to recommend that:

“Yolo County should establish a 20 year goal of acquiring and developing park, recreation and trails which will use 1995 as the starting year. The County should also adopt as standard 5 acres/1000 population [sic]. In 1995, Yolo County revealed an inventory of 8.5 total acres/1000 population. However, there are only 1.8 developed acres/1,000 population (.18%) falls dismally below the national standard of 5 developed acres/1,000 population (.50%) [sic].”

Appendix B, “Calculation of Park Standards,” suggests a standard of 5 acres per 1000 for community and neighborhood parks, and a minimum standard of 1.5 acres per 1000 for regional parks. How these standards were derived and meant to be applied is not entirely clear.⁷

Parks Inventory

At the time of the 1998 draft master plan, the parks system consisted of 11 park units covering 1,320 acres. The document noted that all parkland acquisition had been accomplished with state park bond money, and that no County general funds had ever been expended for acquisition. Each of the 11 park units is described in some detail; these descriptions, which collectively comprise nearly half of the document, remain among the most comprehensive collections of park information developed to date.

The 1998 draft master plan also includes suggested goals and objectives for each park property, as well as recommendations for recreation facilities. In general, some of the recurring themes include: the deferred maintenance at County park properties, the need for improvement in facilities and new development in certain parks, and cooperation with other entities. The 1998 draft plan also recommended:

- Facility improvements at Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park.

⁷ The 1998 draft master plan indicates that these level of service standards are based on “national standards.” Appendix B states that “The “Calculation of Park Standards” is based on state law (“The current park standard for development is derived from the Quimby Act. The Quimby Act limits the collection of fees for parks up to 5 acres/1,000”). The appended material also includes a table on “National Recreation and Parks Standard[s].”

- Improvements in the park host system.
- Improvements in the County parking areas and changes in the on-highway parking near the Putah Creek Access parks.
- Better management of trees in the parks, around park facilities, and in parking areas.
- Immediate development of Grasslands Park.
- Expansion of developed areas at Elkhorn Regional Park, including tent camping.
- Development of interpretation programs in cooperation with other entities.
- Development of a comprehensive water recreation use plan for Cache Creek, Putah Creek, Sacramento River, and Sycamore Slough.

Information Related to Needs Assessment

The 1998 draft master plan reported the results of four, “very informal” park user surveys conducted since 1960, noting that, although the survey efforts focused on Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park, the surveys did provide some base measure information. As reported in the draft plan, the information generated by these surveys generally produced results that were largely consistent with statewide and national trends. The most commonly pursued activities were camping, picnicking, swimming, and walking.

Future Park System Characteristics

The draft master plan identified Cache Creek, Putah Creek, and the Sacramento River as among the exceptional natural resource areas in Yolo County. The plan states that river and creek riparian corridors offer some of the best recreation and conservation opportunities. The draft master plan advocated a combination of open space and habitat protection with parks and trails. It also suggested a focus on certain countywide “themes”:

“The County should ensure that the elements of its park system reflect the themes that make Yolo County a special place with agriculture, riparian corridors, prize fishing, waterways, pioneer settlers, Native American populations, circulation thoroughfares in Northern California.”

The draft master plan recommended that future parks be developed in cooperation and partnership with other agencies, private sector entities, community groups, non-profit organizations. It also recommended continued and strengthened interaction with state and federal agencies.

Other Recommendations

In addition to the “bottom-line” choices identified in the Executive Summary (see above), the following are some of the recommendations offered by the 1998 draft master plan:

- Catalog all open space areas that are publicly owned by the County.

- Acquisition of property with potential for parks, recreation, and habitat should make use of land banking techniques.
- Identify opportunities to acquire property along Cache Creek.
- Identify opportunities to acquire property along Putah Creek.
- In conjunction with the City of Sacramento, City of West Sacramento, and Sacramento County, pursue parks and recreation opportunities that preserve the Sacramento River corridor.
- Pursue annexation of the federal property adjacent to Grasslands Park.
- Develop marketing brochures.
- Implement an “Adopt-A-Park” program.

Funding Ideas and Recommendations

The 1998 draft master plan recommended the establishment of development impact fees and a Countywide benefit assessment district. The plan suggested that the County aid in funding parks (essentially through in-lieu fees) in areas where there is no other entity with taxing authority. After these mechanisms were in place, according to the plan, the County should also consider: grants, non-profit alliances, concessions, user fees; conservation easements and volunteer labor would also reduce acquisition and maintenance costs.

The 1998 draft plan includes a section on Financing Recommendations, which provides brief assessments of various categories of funding sources. The plan appears to most favor the use of benefit assessment fees and the formation of a parks and open space district.

1.5 2002 Revised Final Cache Resources Management Plan for Lower Cache Creek

The Cache Creek Resources Management Plan for Lower Cache Creek (CCRMP) was adopted in 1996; a revised final document was adopted in 2002. The CCRMP and a companion document, the Off-Channel Mining Plan (OCMP), provide guidance for the integrated management of the natural, social, and economic benefits and resources of lower Cache Creek. The CCRMP planning area encompasses approximately 2,324 acres of channel and floodplain area within and adjacent to nearly 15 miles of Cache Creek, from upstream of the Capay Dam to the vicinity of the community of Yolo.

This area plan ⁸ consists of an introduction and six elements: Floodway and Channel Stability Element; Water Resources Element; Biological Resources Element; Open Space and Recreation Element; Aggregate Resources Element; and Agricultural Resources Element. Most relevant for this review is chapter 5.0, the Open Space and Recreation Element.

⁸ California Code of Regulations, Section 65302.

CCRMP Open Space and Recreation Element

The plan recommends that the County pursue “an integrated system of trails and recreational areas along Cache Creek, similar to efforts occurring along the San Joaquin and American Rivers, although at a less intensive scale of development.” The plan notes that planning for such a “parkway” should be based on additional analysis of recreational needs in the County and that proposals to develop a system of trails and recreation areas would require environmental review. The suggestion is made that “planning efforts for this portion of Cache Creek should be coordinated with recreational plans being developed by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management for the upper watershed.”

In the interim, until such a parkway is established, the CCRMP designates six general locations, or “nodes,” for recreational use. “Sites are located at regular intervals of approximately two miles along Cache Creek, in order to function as trailheads or staging areas for a possible system of bicycle, pedestrian, and/or horse paths. Recreational areas were also sited on lands included for off-channel mining, where proposed reclamation is to permanent ponds.” The plan proposes that the County or a non-profit entity acquire these sites; the statement is made that one primary goal is “to manage future public access” to creekside areas.

The CCRMP contains the following Open Space and Recreation goals, objectives, actions, and performance standards. Particularly notable are: the emphasis on public (or non-profit) acquisition; the intent to create “natural open space;” the intent to limit and control public access to designated points; a management direction favoring low-intensity recreational activities (with horseback riding, picnicking, and boating being mentioned in the context of “intensive uses”); the prohibition on the recreational use of off-road and all-terrain vehicles; and the intent to keep recreational uses away from sensitive habitat areas.

“5.2 GOALS

- 5.2-1 Improve scenic resources within the Cache Creek channel.
- 5.2-2 Establish a variety of outdoor recreational and educational opportunities along Cache Creek for use by the public.
- 5.2-3 Ensure the compatibility of recreational facilities with surrounding land uses and sensitive wildlife habitat, in order to minimize adverse impacts.

“5.3 OBJECTIVES

- 5.3-1 Create a continuous corridor of natural open space along the creek and provide for limited access, at specific locations, to recreational and educational uses.
- 5.3-2 Include use of the "Open Space" designation for the areas where resource management and habitat protection is warranted.

“5.4 ACTIONS

- 5.4-1 Solicit the dedication of restored habitat areas and/or recreational areas to the County or an appropriate land trust, such as the Cache Creek Conservancy, in order to provide continuous open space along the creek.
- 5.4-2 Develop a future recreation plan for Cache Creek, in consultation with the County Parks Administrator, to provide a range of public activities and uses.

Suggested recreational uses may include, but are not limited to: hiking, horseback riding, fishing, picnic grounds, boating, educational exhibits, and birdwatching.

- 5.4-3 Identify possible locations for future recreational, habitat, and educational uses along Cache Creek, such as those shown in Figure 10 [map of proposed locations of “Preliminary Recreation Nodes”]. Sites shall be located at regular intervals throughout the plan area. Intensive recreational uses, such as horseback riding, picnicking, and boating shall be located away from designated habitat areas.
- 5.4-4 Designate identified recreational areas as ‘Open Space’ in the Cache Creek Resource Management Plan.
- 5.4-5 Coordinate with the Bureau of Land Management to investigate the eventual linkage of recreational uses located along the upper watershed of Cache Creek to the designated recreational sites located within the plan area.
- 5.4-6 Design and manage recreational sites so that trespassing, vandalism, and other undesirable activities are discouraged. The TAC [a Technical Advisory Committee proposed by the CCRMP], in consultation with resources agencies, shall develop measures to control human access to sensitive wildlife habitat or other sensitive communities (i.e., wetlands) in the planning area to minimize impacts on these resources.
- 5.4-7 Acquire future sites, through purchase or voluntary donation, so that the County can maintain and develop the areas according to the future recreation plan.

“5.5 PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

- 5.5-1 Only those uses that are river dependent, such as fishing, canoeing, and nature observation shall be located on the creek. More active uses, including parking, restrooms, and picnic areas should be located in areas located away from sensitive habitat, preferably on land that has been reclaimed from sand and gravel mining.
- 5.5-2 Recreational uses shall be clustered at locations along the creek, in order to limit public access, minimize habitat disturbance, and provide efficient and cost-effective management by the County. All access, whether by road or by trail, shall be through an entry point which can be controlled.
- 5.5-3 Physically control access with gates and collect user fees to support operations and deter inappropriate activities. Limited public access will also reduce impacts to sensitive habitat and adjoining private uses. Additional options include permits, volunteer docents to patrol the site, and escorted tours.
- 5.5-4 Recreational facilities shall be located a minimum of one-hundred and fifty (150) feet from private dwellings, with a landscaped buffer provided to reduce noise and maintain privacy.
- 5.5-5 Educational and interpretive curricula shall be developed that will reach all segments of the community. The County shall rely heavily on compatible programs already developed by volunteers, schools, and nonprofit organizations.
- 5.5-6 Large-scale, high-intensity recreational uses, such as amusement parks, off-road vehicle parks, or uses involving motorized watercraft, are not compatible with land uses along Cache Creek.
- 5.5-7 The recreational use of off-road vehicles and all-terrain vehicles on public property shall be prohibited.

- 5.5-8 The hunting and/or discharge of firearms along Cache Creek shall be prohibited on public property.
- 5.5-9 Noise analyses shall be conducted for proposed recreational uses where medium to large groups would congregate in common use areas. The study shall identify likely sources of noise and ways to reduce levels to minimize annoyance at adjacent properties.”

1.6 Existing 2002 General Plan Open Space & Recreation Element

The element of the current Yolo County General Plan most directly applicable to the Parks Master Plan is the Recreation & Open Space Element, adopted in November 2002 as part of the County’s General Plan.

This section discusses selected highlights of that Element, which consists of a “policy” document, the Yolo County Open Space & Recreation Element, and a related “background” report, the Yolo County Open Space & Recreation Element Background Report. The Element is assumed to represent adopted public policy for the County of Yolo; the preparation and adoption process for the document is not addressed here, nor are any presumptions made regarding the level of actual “buy-in” from the public or from decision-makers with respect to the policies and implementation measures.

Background Report

The Yolo County Open Space & Recreation Element Background Report provides a compilation of the open space and recreation policies from the 1983 County General Plan and from other community area plans; an inventory of open space lands; an inventory of parks and recreation resources, including descriptions of eleven County park properties; and chapters describing four main types or functions of open space:

- Open Space Preservation for Natural Resources;
- Open Space for “Managed Production of Resources” (i.e., agriculture, grazing land, and aggregate mining);
- Open Space for Outdoor Recreation; and
- Open Space for Public Health & Safety.

The report also provides information on recreation-oriented tourism, including market trends, number of visitors, visitor spending, market projections, recommendations, and tools for preserving open space. Much of this document is directly or indirectly incorporated into the Policy document.

Open Space & Recreation Policy Document

The Element policy document consists of four chapters:

- Introduction & Vision Statement;
- Yolo County Open Space and Recreation Resources;
- Open Space & Recreation Issues;

- The Open Space & Recreation Element Goals, Objectives and Policies.

The Open Space and Recreation Element states that its purpose is “to be a foundation policy document enabling the County to further establish and preserve open space areas, develop further opportunities for recreation tourism, and active and passive open space and recreation areas” [sic]. It addresses issues at the General Plan planning level, in the context of the State General Plan Guidelines. Under state law, an open space element is a required component in a General Plan; a recreation element is optional. The 2002 Open Space and Recreation Element updates a previous County Open Space Element and adds the optional policy framework for recreation.

A considerable amount of the recreation component of this Element is derived directly from the 1998 Draft Parks Master Plan; some of these derivations are noted below. In a discussion section as well as in an implementation measure (RI-4), the 2002 Element calls for the completion of the Yolo County Parks Master Plan – thus, it is possible to say that preparation of a Parks Master Plan is consistent with the County General Plan.

The 2002 Open Space and Recreation Element, however, contains little guidance for creating a more unified County park system; it does not explicitly address parkland acquisition objectives or evaluation criteria, nor does it clearly address level of service standards. The “Calculation of Park Service Standards” from Appendix B in the 1998 Draft Master Plan is appended verbatim to the Open Space and Recreation Element. The intent and effect of this inclusion is not entirely clear: the information is appended to an adopted Element, but these “standards” are not prescribed by the Element’s policies.

“Introduction” and “Resources” Chapters

The Open Space and Recreation Element argues that the future of open space in Yolo County is closely tied to the future of agriculture – i.e., the “directions and initiatives undertaken to preserve land for agriculture.” The document envisions Yolo County as a destination choice for visitors from the Sacramento and Bay Area region. The document also envisions a limited expansion of non-agriculturally related open space and recreation facilities. The document notes that “Yolo County, like all California counties, is faced with population pressures and increased demand for traditional park and recreation services.” It also notes that open space and recreation are important to Yolo County’s “identity,” as well as to local and regional economies.

The recreation component of the Open Space & Recreation Element is based on eleven County park facilities covering 1,320 acres (not included are: Dunnigan Park, Gibson House Historical Museum, Capay Open Space Park, and Otis Ranch Open Space Area). The park classification scheme is based on the 1998 Draft Parks and Facilities Master Plan. The park property descriptions (as well as other information in the document) are essentially the same as in the Background Report (which relies on the 1998 Draft Master Plan). The Element describes the middle site of Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park as “the main center of recreational activity for the entire Yolo County park system.”

The 2002 Open Space & Recreation Element notes that the County is responsible for providing maintenance and operations at three recreational facilities in State ownership (administered by the Wildlife Conservation Board): Clarksburg Boat Launch, Putah Creek Fishing Access Areas, and Knights Landing Boat Launch. “The arrangements typically involve a long-term maintenance and operations agreement in exchange for funds for capital improvements and to offset operations costs.” Again citing the 1998 Draft Master Plan, the Element goes on to say:

“... these maintenance funds represent only approximately 20 percent of the total annual maintenance costs required; the balance is borne by the County Parks Department, or work simply does not get done. ... closing the revenue gap must occur if the County is to (1) meet even the basic safety conditions for these sites, (2) reduce the flow of revenue from other parks and facilities to these sites, and (3) address costly capital replacements.”

“Issues” Chapter

In the chapter on Open Space & Recreation Issues, the Element policy document identifies and addresses the following 17 issue areas:

- Growth pressure and demand for open space and recreation lands;
- Open space, recreation, and agricultural compatibility;
- Sustainable tourism and its impacts on open space and recreational lands;
- Recreation and tourism as an industry;
- Implementation of a Cache Creek Recreation Plan;
- Community-based recreation programs;
- The Blue Ridge Trail;
- Trail connections to the upper Sacramento River;
- Implementation of the Bicycle Transportation Plan;
- Clustering of development to preserve open space lands;
- Yolo Bypass open space;
- Cache Creek Casino: its impact on recreation;
- Property acquisition along Putah Creek;
- Master planning for Grasslands Regional Park;
- The Sacramento River Greenway project;
- The Yolo County Natural Communities Conservation Plan;
- Fiscal and employment impacts of open space preservation and enhanced tourism.

Growth Pressure and Demand for Open Space and Recreation Lands. This section presents the following recommendations, which are attributed to the 1998 Draft Master Plan (essentially the same text is also in the Background Report):

“To provide the County with direction in their [sic] acquisition of open space acreage in Yolo County, the Draft Yolo County Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan recommended the following:

1. Acquire additional acres of varied recreational opportunities for County residents.
2. Acquire sections of wooded areas adjacent to the Blue Ridge Mountains.
3. Achieve the most effective use of land. Land adjoining existing parkland should be acquired when the adjoining land affects the scenic character of the park or when future development is contemplated.
4. Expand outdoor recreational activities by providing public access to the Sacramento River, Cache Creek, and Putah Creek. A partnership could be developed for construction of wetlands, ponds and lakes for water-based recreational activities.
5. Because open space lands are of great benefit to County residents, those undeveloped lands which are least accessible, least easy to service, and least desirable for residences should be left in their natural state. Marginal lands, including the upper Blue Ridge area, wetlands, and floodplains should remain in open space. Acquisition of these areas would result in the protection and preservation of Yolo County’s natural resources.”

Partnerships. The 2002 Open Space and Recreation Element states that it “provides for the County to establish and/or maintain partnerships with Cache Creek Conservancy, Lower Putah Creek Coordinating Committee, the Yolo Bypass Working Group, and the Sacramento River Conservation Area for creation of open space along Cache Creek, Lower Putah Creek, the Sacramento River and within the Yolo Bypass.” The Element also “calls for the County to encourage and support efforts by State and federal agencies, cities, special districts, and nonprofit and conservation organizations to protect lands containing open space resources....” The Element supports partnerships with private businesses. It also “provides for the County to work with the cities of Yolo County to facilitate development of a regional sports park at an appropriate location between population centers.” It promotes cooperative efforts with the Cache Creek Casino.

Compatibility of Tourism with Agriculture and Private Property. The Element supports “sustainable” tourism, including ecotourism and agri-tourism. The document favorably discusses “farm trails,” branding of agricultural products, and other initiatives to increase tourism. In drawing visitors to outdoor recreation areas and ecotourism opportunities in the County, the document states that the “County should promote access to public land without infringing on private property rights.”

“Goals, Objectives, and Policies” Chapter

Chapter 4 in the Open Space & Recreation Element is a collection of statements that, according to the document, make up the heart of the Element. Excerpts pertaining to recreation are presented below, in the form of Recreation (R) goals (G), objectives (O), policies (P), and implementing measures (I).

The Element explains that a “goal” is a “general expression of community values which sets a direction or ideal future end, condition, or state. An “objective” is a statement that “represents a specific end condition which is viewed as an intermediate step toward attainment of a goal.” A “policy,” according to the document, “is a specific statement to be used in guiding decision making, based on ... [the] goals and objectives.” “Implementation measures are actions, strategies and directives which

carry out ... [the] policies.” These definitions, however, do not prevent considerable overlap and similarity among the goals, objectives, policies, and implementation measures in this Element.

“Goals

- “RG-1: Provide infrastructure to support community-based recreation.
- “RG-2: Establish and maintain sufficient parkland to serve all segments of the population.
- “RG-3: Utilize recreational opportunities to attract a greater number of tourists and visitors to Yolo County.
- “RG-4: Ensure the compatibility of recreational activities with surrounding land uses.
- “RG-5: Design recreational facilities to maintain privacy and security and minimize impacts to surrounding property owners.”
- “RG-6: Develop new facilities to attract tourists and visitors, including entertainment facilities, restaurants, lodging and shopping, clustered in areas already urbanized, or in area designated by the General Plan for such uses.”
- “RG-7: Encourage by various means, including marketing, the potential for growth in visitor spending.”

“Objectives

- “RO-1: Access to county-sponsored recreation programs in all major unincorporated communities. (RG-1)
- “RO-2: Establishment of a variety of outdoor recreational and educational opportunities along Lower Cache Creek, the Sacramento River, Lower Putah Creek, and within the Yolo Bypass for use by the public. (RG-1)
- “RO-3: Provision of adequate and diversified recreational opportunities and facilities to meet the demands of an expanding population. (RG-1, RG-2)
- “RO-4: Maintenance and application of parkland to population standards in new development. (RG-2)
- “RO-5: Creation of mechanisms for funding park acquisition and development, as well as the ongoing costs of park maintenance and recreation services. (RG-2)
- “RO-6: Creation of a tourism-marketing program for Yolo County focused on recreational opportunities. (RG-3)
- “RO-7: Provide for development of a visitor-serving business base in the county that includes a mix of lodging, recreation/amusement services, transportation services, eating and drinking places, food stores and other retail. (RG-3)
- “RO-8: Creation of a Yolo County identity that will promote the county’s recreational opportunities and assist in attracting visitors. (RG-3)
- “RO-9: Maintenance of appropriate zoning categories and standards in order to ensure land use compatibility, protection of agricultural lands and consistency with the General Plan when visitor and tourist oriented activities locate in Yolo County. (RG-4, RG-5, RG-6)
- “RO-10: Improvement of the County tax base and local economy through attraction of visitor and tourist related businesses. (RG-7)

“... Policies

- “RP-1: Open space and wildlife conservation areas shall be combined with parks and trails where appropriate.

- “RP-2: Parks shall be developed and utilized to buffer wildlife areas from development that would impact wildlife habitat.
- “RP-3: The County shall ensure that the signage allowance in rural areas is adequate to assist businesses in attracting visitors.”
- “RP-4: The County shall support the development of visitor-serving business that retain and complement its rural character such as bed and breakfast facilities and eateries, particularly in the Delta region and Capay Valley.
- “RP-5: The County shall promote and support the clustering of commercial/recreational opportunities in an effort to provide ‘linked’ activities for tourists (i.e., activities tourists can link together in a single trip, such as eating, rafting, gaming, shopping, lodging, gas stations, wine tasting, visiting a museum, etc.)
- “RP-6: The County shall support the development of tourist services in the unincorporated areas along I-5 (at Yolo and Zamora), in Clarksburg, Dunnigan, Esparto and Knights Landing.
- “RP-7: The County shall support and facilitate events that showcase its products such as wine, produce, and arts and crafts.
- “RP-8: The County shall encourage and support the development of private recreational facilities that preserve scenic and environmentally sensitive resources and that do not result in the creation of land use conflicts.
- “RP-9: The County shall work with all unincorporated communities to develop adequate recreational infrastructure and facilities.
- “RP-10: The County shall work with willing landowners to create a continuous corridor of natural open space along Lower Cache Creek, Lower Putah Creek, the Sacramento River and within the Yolo Bypass with provision for limited access at specific locations to recreational and educational uses from a County road or highway. The County shall also consider establishing bicycle access to select areas.
- “RP-11: Only those uses that are river- or creek-dependent, such as fishing, canoeing, boating, and nature observation, shall be directly located on Cache Creek, Lower Putah Creek, and the Sacramento River. More active uses, including parking, restrooms, and picnic areas shall be located in areas away from sensitive habitat.
- “RP-12: Recreational uses shall be clustered at locations along Cache Creek, Lower Putah Creek, and the Sacramento River, in order to minimize habitat disturbance and provide efficient and cost-effective management by the County. All access, whether by road or by trail, shall be through an entry point which can be controlled.
- “RP-13: Recreational uses that tend to be land and water intensive (such as golf courses) shall locate in areas with adequate infrastructure, with the potential for multiple uses (e.g., hiking, equestrian, retreat conference centers, etc.) and shall not conflict with agricultural and other open space uses.
- “RP-14: Airport related commercial uses such as flying services shall be located at the Yolo County Airport. Visitor-serving facilities to support such activities should be encouraged in the Airport vicinity.
- “RP-15: The County shall endeavor to coordinate the activities of all county, federal and state agencies and of private operators to manage recreational activities so that such activities do not interfere with agricultural operations, infringe on private property, or harm existing wildlife and vegetative habitat.
- “RP-16: To lower long term public costs and enhance public security, wherever practicable the County shall partner with private business to individually and collectively supervise and manage adjacent and nearby public facilities (for instance, local parks, creek and river access, overlooks, piers, picnic areas, and parking areas).

- “RP-17: The County shall support improved access for bank fishing where safe and adequate parking can be provided and with acquisition of proper rights-of-access from the landowner. Adequate policing, garbage cleanup, sanitation facilities, and fire suppression for such access shall be provided.
- “RP-18: The County shall support the location of additional recreational and traveler service facilities in unincorporated communities, so that these facilities do not significantly harm agricultural operations or open space values.
- “RP-19: Downtown revitalization in unincorporated communities shall be supported as an integral component of increased visitor spending.
- “RP-20: The County shall target development in those areas currently under-served to fill specific gaps in visitor serving and retail services. Encourage development of critical services for travelers where needed, such as public-access restrooms, mini marts, first aid centers and gasoline stations.
- “RP-21: Through policy and leadership, the County shall support the marketing of Yolo County as a destination for vacations and day trips.
- “RP-22: The County shall work with interested groups to complete construction of a bicycle trail system. Ensure that bicycle access is an integral part of future recreational facility design and facility operations.
- “RP-23: The County shall work closely with BLM, adjacent counties and other landowners to establish needed facilities and access in order to make the Blue Ridge Mountains available for mountain biking, hiking, wilderness experiences, equestrian activities, possible Off Road Vehicle activities, and wildlife viewing.
- “RP-24: The County shall promote and support the growth of individual and collective private-sector agri-tourism and eco-tourism operations of all sizes that benefit from wide expanses of open space and agricultural land, including overnight agricultural adventures (staying overnight and working on a farm), other lodging, markets and farmers markets, restaurants, wineries, bird watching, fishing and hunting lodges and clubs and equestrian centers. The County shall work with those operators to encourage regional marketing programs and to ensure that public and private efforts are complementary.
- “RP-25: The County shall encourage development of small-scale/niche visitor services and attractions such as wineries, bed and breakfasts, cafes, etc. in areas that would cater to interested travelers.
- “RP-26: The County shall encourage and work with the cities of Yolo County to facilitate development of a regional sports park at an appropriate location between population centers.
- “... Implementation Measures ...
- “RI-1: Adopt a Quimby Ordinance and park impact fees to establish funding mechanisms for park acquisition and development. ⁹
- Lead Agency: Board of Supervisors
 Timing: Within one year of Plan adoption
 Funding Source: General Fund, Developer Fees, Impact Fees
- “RI-2: Direct a review and update of the County’s sign ordinance for off-site signage provisions.

⁹ Recreation Implementation (RI) measure RI-1 directs the County to: "Adopt a Quimby Ordinance and park impact fees to establish funding mechanisms for park acquisition and development." The timing for this measure was supposed to have been within one year; however, this directive apparently has not been implemented.

- Lead Agency: Board of Supervisors
Timing: Within one year of Plan adoption
Funding Source: General Fund
- “RI-3: Work with local businesses to promote the development of a marketing program and advertising campaign that promote the county’s recreational opportunities and cultural attractions.
- Lead Agency: Board of Supervisors
Timing: Within one year of Plan adoption
Funding Source: General Fund, Transient Occupancy Tax
- “RI-4: Complete the preparation of a Parks Master Plan. This Plan would identify needed recreation infrastructure and facilities and potential funding sources.
- Lead Agency: Board of Supervisors
Timing: Within one year of Plan adoption
Funding Source: General Fund, Transient Occupancy Tax
- “RI-5: In order to attract more visitors to Yolo County, improve funding for ongoing maintenance at the County’s various recreational facilities and catch up on deferred maintenance items. Evaluation of fee structures for resident and non-resident use fees for certain recreation facilities shall be conducted including the appropriate recommendations.
- Lead Agency: Parks Department
Timing: Ongoing
Funding Source: Various
- “RI-6: Fully support and participate in the formation of a cooperative Yolo County visitors and tourism council, including the County, the various cities and communities, the casino, merchants, restaurants, wineries, motels, campgrounds, water attractions, museums and wildlife areas, agricultural exhibits and other visitor destinations.
- Lead Agencies: Board of Supervisors, Economic Development Coordinator
Timing: Immediate
Funding Source: Cooperative, including general fund, special funds and private
- “RI-7: Identify and participate with other groups and organizations to establish new and promote existing programs for tourism (e.g. “Duck Days”, “A Day in the Country,” a “Blossom Trail,” etc.)
- Lead Agencies: Parks Department, Economic Development Coordinator
Timing: Within two years of Plan adoption
Funding Source: Cooperative, including General Fund, special funds and private
- “RI-8: Seek cooperative state and federal funding for tourism promotion, and for enhancing park and visitor facilities. Further develop a use fee structure for resident and non-resident users of recreation services and facilities where possible
- “RI-9: Join multi-county and regional tourism programs.
- Lead Agency: Economic Development Coordinator
Timing: Ongoing
Funding Source: Various
- “RI-10: Develop necessary infrastructure for park users (e.g. restrooms, pump out facilities, trash containers, oily waste disposal facilities and other facilities to meet the needs of boaters.). Include opportunities for concessions where practicable. Enhance security and public safety at County parks.

- Lead Agency: Parks Department
 Timing: Ongoing
 Funding Source: Various, including grants
- “RI-11: Support continued acquisition of open space by land trusts, government agencies and conservancies that are consistent with this Element and where efforts have been coordinated with the County.
- Lead Agencies: Board of Supervisors, Parks Department, Planning and Public Works Department
 Timing: Ongoing
 Funding Source: Various, mostly through the trusts and conservancies
- “RI-12: Identify and improve key road segments, including provision of flood protection. Improve road name and directional signs.
- Lead Agency: Planning and Public Works Agency, Board of Supervisors
 Timing: Ongoing
 Funding Source: Road Fund
- “RI-13: Seek opportunities to acquire or participate in acquisition of land in the Blue Ridge Mountains for trailheads, and equestrian center, and other recreational experiences.
- Lead Agency: Parks Department
 Timing: As soon as practicable
 Funding Source: To be determined
- “RI-14: Meet with the cities of Yolo County to identify potential sites and funding sources for a regional park/sports park. Possibilities include a regional soccer tournament complex.
- Lead Agency: Parks Department, Economic Development Director
 Timing: Ongoing
 Funding Source: To be determined”

1.7 County General Plan Update

Yolo County is currently (2004) undertaking an update of its General Plan, the first such comprehensive update since 1983. The General Plan Update process is running concurrently with the preparation of the Parks Master Plan; however, the Parks Master Plan is scheduled for a much earlier completion. The General Plan Update and the associated Environmental Impact Report are scheduled for completion and adoption by the Board of Supervisors in January 2006.

At the present time, coordination has been initiated with the General Plan Update team to help foster consistency between the General Plan and the Parks Master Plan, as needed. This coordination is expected to continue throughout the preparation of the Parks Master Plan. In its required and optional elements, the General Plan will need to address a far wider range of topics than the Parks Master Plan; the Open Space and Recreation Element, adopted in 2002, will not be updated. Nevertheless, there are opportunities during the preparation of both plans for consideration of some cross-over issues that may benefit from coordinated efforts. Among the areas of mutual interest are the following:

- Overall general vision statements, policies, and goals approved by the Board of Supervisors;

- Public comments related to parks, recreation, open space, and conservation;
- Existing and proposed Countywide community planning areas or other designations of sub-areas of the County for planning purposes;
- Data and survey information related to the recreation “needs” and the demand for parks and recreation areas;
- Cultural resources information, including countywide setting information;
- Identified growth areas in the County and consistency in terms of “official” population projections;
- Possible locations of new parks and open space areas and related land use designations and policies;
- Strategies that would help bring funding into the County parks system;
- How to address the Conaway Ranch property;
- The long-range potential for bringing a state park to the County;
- Strategies that support working landscapes and agri-tourism;
- Strategies to avoid and reduce adverse environmental effects;
- Mitigation measures agreeable to the County for impacts related to public access to riparian corridors and in the vicinity of sensitive habitats.

Early activities of the General Plan Update process have included public participation comment-gathering meetings and preparation of a Vision Statement, which has been adopted by the County Board of Supervisors. The General Plan Update team maintains a website at <http://www.yolocountygeneralplan.org>. Excerpts from the Vision Statement, posted on the website, are included in the discussion below. (How the General Plan Vision Statement came to consist of this particular text, whether it can truly be said to present a consensus view of Yolo County residents, or whether it provides an appropriate inspiration for the future are not part of this discussion).

General Plan Update Vision Statement

The Yolo County General Plan Vision Statement begins with these statements:

“The general objective of the Yolo County General Plan is to guide development of the unincorporated area toward the most desirable future possible. The highest and best use of land within Yolo County is one that combines minimum urbanization with the preservation of productive farm resources and open space amenities.”

The Vision Statement describes the County as dedicated to conserving agricultural lands, maintaining open space, preserving the diversity of its natural resources, and committed to allowing reasonable growth within compact urban areas. “Yolo County is situated between rapidly growing metropolitan areas and faces increasing development pressure from both Sacramento and Bay Area, especially along the Interstate 80 corridor that links the two.” The County, according to the statement, is also “experiencing growth pressure internally.”

“As the population expands, and cities grow,” the Statement continues,

“we can also expect a corresponding increase in demand for new parks, schools, retail, employment, hospitals, government centers, and infrastructure. ... The vision of Yolo County is to provide an active and productive buffer of farmland and open space separating the Bay Area from Sacramento. Our communities will be kept separated and individual through the use of green spaces, while remaining connected by a network of riparian hiking trails, bike paths, and mass transit.”

The Statement concludes with a list of 13 guiding principles; none speak explicitly of parks and recreation. The list does include a statement that “[o]pen space, including both agriculture and wildlife habitat, is fundamental to the economy and quality of life in Yolo County and shall be protected.”

PART 2. COMPARABLE PLANS

2.1 Scope & Objectives

The Consultants conducted a research effort to obtain and review park and open space planning and management documents developed by other jurisdictions. The initial focus was on park system planning efforts in other California counties, including those operating in rural areas under similar circumstances as Yolo County and that were comparable in purpose with the Yolo County Parks Master Plan. A general email query was sent to various departments and districts in 28 selected counties (see Exhibit 1, at the end of this Part). The query resulted in several positive contacts; additional contacts were made through follow-up telephone calls (Exhibit 2).

In addition to the email query and phone calls to California counties, Consultants also obtained comparable park planning documents from similar-function public entities within California and in other states throughout the country. These documents, obtained via the Internet, plus some documents that were provided to or already available to the consultants from other sources, were also reviewed as part of this task.

These various search efforts resulted in identifying more than 50 plans and other documents related to parks, recreation, and open space; 33 plans and documents were reviewed, as listed at the end of this part of the report. Notes from these reviews are also included at the end of this report as Attachment 1 to this report. The selection of the final set of documents was largely subjective, based on the potential of the documents to yield ideas and information; the set of documents reviewed was not presumed to be comprehensive nor a statistically valid, representative sample. The general objective of the effort was to review other park planning efforts with respect to the ongoing development of the master plan for Yolo County parks and open space areas, noting in particular the items listed below. Not every listed item was addressed for every document.

- The breadth and depth of *subject matter and topics* addressed by other jurisdictions in similar planning situations possible applications for the Yolo County Parks Master Plan.
- Alternative and potentially applicable systems, groupings, classifications, or management approaches for *organizing park and open space systems*.
- Various measures or standards of *parkland per capita, parks and recreation funding per capita*, and park and open space “carrying capacity” or “levels of service.”
- Potentially applicable and successful *approaches to parkland acquisition and management* on a regional basis.
- *Other matters of interest* that might contribute to the Yolo County Parks Master Plan.

2.2 Results of the Review

At the most “macro” level, the collection of park planning documents reviewed for this report, as a whole, covered much of the same ground: what do we have, what do we want, how do we get there. The documents reviewed fell into two broad categories of plans: elements in comprehensive plans and stand-alone park master plans. In many cases the documents indicated the close relationship that exists between master park plans and the applicable comprehensive plan.

All dealt with matters pertaining to parks and recreation; most also dealt with conservation and open space. Nearly all, either explicitly or indirectly, recommended increasing their jurisdiction’s parks and recreation supply through expansion and new acquisition. Many plans included statements about their particular region being one of unprecedented or greater than average growth. In nearly all plans there was a general presumption of anticipated population increase and a corresponding increase in the demand for parks and recreation (with the possible exception of Erie County, New York, located in an area of the country that has been losing population).

But while they were all similar enough to be seen as belonging to a recognizable planning “genre,” there was considerable variation in content and emphasis. It was this individual variation that made all the difference. Specific subject matter varied considerably, and plans were often best when dealing with matters of local importance. The review indicated the importance of local flavor, identifying aspects of one’s community that give it its identity, from historical citrus groves [7], to stream valley parks [29] and mountain parks [1], to heritage parks from the Work Project Administration (WPA) era and “windows on the water” [16].¹⁰

Benefits (and, in One Case, Impacts) of Parks and Recreation

The benefits of parks and open space areas are generally well-appreciated by many communities. Parks serve a “vital” role [8]. The benefits are social, economic, environmental, and individual [21]. Parks are “green assets” [6]. They attract businesses choosing new locations. The amenities of parks help to determine quality of life [23]. The “Vital Roles of Parks” [8] contributes to the jurisdiction’s positive image [11].

Sonoma County’s Outdoor Recreation Plan takes this discussion a step further by addressing both the benefits and the impacts; among the latter are potential conflicts with agricultural lands [27]. Several jurisdictions had programs (outside those required by comprehensive planning statutes) specifically aimed at agricultural land preservation; among these are Placer County [20] and Sonoma County Agricultural and Open Space District [30].

The “Vision Thing”

The review indicated the importance of having a vision, a “Big Idea” [16], whether it is for an individual park, a collection of city parks, or a regional system. An indication of

¹⁰ Numbers in brackets are keyed to a list of planning documents reviewed, presented at the end of this Part.

this hope for the future in a master plan may be a chapter entitled “Possibilities” [7]. A community may see its parks as an “emerald necklace” [7] or as part of a spirit of “renewal” [16]; whatever form this vision may take, it provides a lasting impression.

Civic pride is important to successful public park systems. The review indicated the importance of creating and maintaining a park system that a community can be proud of. A community goal may be “to create one of the premier park systems in the region” [21], or contribute to a jurisdiction’s positive image [11]. The review also indicated the importance of having – or attempting to instill – a park stewardship ethic [6, 16].

Visions may encompass a wide range of values (some of which may embody inherent conflicts): active recreation, passive recreation; parks as gathering places, parks as beautiful settings that refresh the spirit; ecosystem preserves, environmental education, and sports facilities; tree-lined streets, paths and trails [1, 21, 24, 25, 27]. Santa Clara County’s vision was, like others, brief but expansive: “We create a growing and diverse system of regional parks, trails, and open spaces of Countywide significance that connects people with the natural environment, offers visitor experiences that renew the human spirit, and balances recreation opportunities with resource protection” [25].

The Near-Universal Application of Some Goals & Policies

A number of the park plans reviewed contain general statements of policy and intent that could apply nearly anywhere. A near universal goal, with some variations, is the wish to provide “high-quality” parks and open space areas that are adequate in size, type, and distribution to serve all residents and meet their leisure interests and health needs both now and in the future [4, 7, 11, 15, 16, 19, 24, 27].

On the other hand, other general goals set the plans apart and defined the community’s focus. San Luis Obispo County sought to “preserve County parkland for active and passive recreation. Community facilities, which have little to no recreational component, should be placed outside of an existing or proposed park.” The review suggested that park plans were better when the goals are few, well-focused, and clearly stated [15, 23, 25, 26].

What the Role of a County Should Be

Providing parks and recreation lands and facilities can occur at every level of community organization, from private business to the federal government. What should the role of a county be? A number of county plans noted that the State guidance assigns creation and administration of countywide parks to the counties [26]. Some counties see themselves as filling a niche [16], setting as policy the role to not create “redundant services” [21], and delegating urban parks to incorporated cities and special districts [12, 26].

A majority of plans that dealt with this subject suggested that counties should not attempt to provide everything to everybody; a county should provide what it can provide best. Cities, special districts, state agencies, and federal agencies provide other park and recreation opportunities, within their own geographical and jurisdictional areas. The review indicated that counties do best when they seek to

provide and maintain parks and recreation programs that meet the needs of county residents and are not typically provided by local, state or national parks, or private recreation providers [16].

Erie County, New York was particularly clear about its “niche:” “The Erie County Park System has traditionally been positioned to fill a niche in the regional parks and recreation framework. Specifically the County park system has emphasized the provision of recreation activities and facilities in natural environment areas as an alternative to localized park settings” [16]. This County is cautious about involving itself in active, developed recreation areas.

El Dorado County sees its role this way: “The County shall assume primary responsibility for the acquisition and development of regional parks and assist in the acquisition and development of neighborhood and community parks to serve County residents and visitors” [15].

Achieving “Balance”

The review indicated how common it was for jurisdictions involved with park and open space planning to seek “balance” – in one form or another. A common theme in the documents reviewed was the idea of providing recreational opportunities and public access while protecting natural resources. Sacramento County expressed it this way: “to ensure diversified opportunities for recreation and the personal enrichment of the county's residents and visitors while protecting its natural, cultural and historical resources” [24]. Jurisdictions sought to find the balance between environmental protection and public access (25), or to balance “use, history and ecology” [6], or to preserve open space with provisions for recreation [22]. The County of Jefferson, Colorado, with an active open space protection program, sees “balance” in terms of fulfilling its resource stewardship responsibilities, while providing outdoor recreation opportunities [18].

Among the different uses of “balance,” East Bay Regional Park District’s plan indicated that the District’s strategy was to seek a balance in terms of the distribution of park units throughout the system [28]. Sonoma County’s plan envisions a “balance of facilities – from youth-oriented sports fields to passive parks and hiking, biking and equestrian trails.”

Focus on Certain Groups

While many plans generally sought to fulfill the recreation needs of their citizens as a whole, several plans identified particular segments of their populations that were considered to be in need of particular consideration. Boulder, for example, identified a significant focus on children, teenagers, and families [1]; Marin County sought to meet the needs of special groups, including youths, seniors, and people with disabilities [19].

A slightly different view was noted in other documents. One plan stated: “Although the shortage of recreational opportunities for youth was a key issue amongst the stakeholder groups, there is broad consensus that the City has a greater responsibility

towards certain segments of the community, those being children, youth, seniors, and at-risk groups such as persons with disabilities and low income households.” [5]

Standards & Classification Systems

Many documents reviewed referred to the guidelines promulgated by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA). Many plan makers seemed to feel a desire to adhere to an “industry standard” [21], although the applications were not always consistent. Documents reviewed exhibited similarities in the nomenclature for park types, for example, based to a large degree based on the highly influential NRPA guidelines [1, 2, 4, 10, 21, 24]. The “standard” classification system included: Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks, Regional Metropolitan Parks, Regional Park Reserves, Special Areas, and Natural Areas.

National park standards were developed in the 1960s and 1970s to help communities plan adequate park acreage to meet future demand; these standards were expressed in terms of acres per thousand population [24]. The NRPA approach, however, has changed over the years. As Solano County’s Park and Recreation Element notes [26], the national standards were replaced in about 1996 by suggested guidelines encouraging each county and community to establish its own acres-to-population park standards [24, 26]. Most current park plans do not attempt to adhere to a strict one-size-fits-all set of standards.

Recent guidance from the NRPA suggests that a level of service standard for parks and recreation – such as the 10 acres per 1,000 population standard, which achieved considerable popularity nationwide over the past 30 years – cannot be applied universally by all local governments. Application of a level-of-service standard to “passive” recreation areas, such as natural areas and open space, is generally inappropriate. Current NRPA guidance recommends development of a local level of service based on a series of steps. Table 1 is a sample of park acres per 1,000 population in selected jurisdictions.

Park acquisition was part of most plans, and the review suggested that the better plans offered evaluation criteria to help “reduce the randomness of park acquisition” [24]. The idea of “carrying capacity” is apparently in little favor; only one application of the concept was reviewed. Used for a river management plan [14], the approach seemed rather complicated, requiring adaptive monitoring and detailed regulations. One approach that seemed to contribute to unifying a park system is to use a consistent set of internal land use classifications within each park unit. Erie County Parks System classifies areas in each of its park units according to three types of zones, each with its defined characteristics: “Recreation Zone,” “Heritage Zone,” and “Service Zone.” Jefferson County open space areas are classified “Sensitive Area,” “Natural Area,” and “Park Recreation Area” [18].

Environmental Aspects of Park Planning

A number of documents reviewed spoke generally of the goal of minimizing adverse environmental effects from park development and uses. Several of the California documents referred to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); one CEQA document was included in this review [27b].

Park Acres per 1,000 Population in Selected Jurisdictions

Agency / Jurisdiction	Estimated Population (year)	Acres Managed, Parks & OS	Acres per 1000 pop.	Adopted Standards (acres per 1000)	Notes
Yolo County	184,500 (2004)	Parks & OS: 1,830	9.9	Not identified.	15 parks, open space, & special areas
City of Boulder, CO	94,700 (2003)	Parks: 434; OS: 6,500+	Parks: 4.6; Total: 73	3 acres/1000 for neighborhood & community parks	OS in Natural Areas & Mountain Parks
Boulder County, CO	278,231 (2003)	OS: 70,000	252	Not identified.	Open space program.
Erie County, NY	941,293 (2000)	Parks: 11,000	11.7	Not identified.	38 multi-function parks and other areas
City of Houston, TX	1.9 million	Parks & other assets: 20,000	10.5	Community Parks: 5 to 8 Regional Metro: 15 to 20 Total 21.25 to 30.5 acres/1,000	307 parks and other assets NRPA-based standards
Jefferson County, CO	528,563 (2003)	50,000+	95	Not identified.	Open space program.
City of Sacramento	407,018 (2000)	2,000	4.9	10 acres/1,000 total; 5 acres/1,000 city regional parks	160 parks & OS areas
Sacramento County	1,330,711 (2003)	Parks, OS, other: 11,000	8.3	Not identified.	River parkways, recreation areas, various assets
San Luis Obispo County	239,000 (2003)	Parks: 1,112 Natural Areas: 12,056	Parks 4.7 Total 55	Community park: 5 to 8 Regional Metro: 5 to 10 ac/1,000	NRPA standards used only for establishing need for additional parklands & facilities.
Santa Clara County	1,678,421 (2003)	44,000	26	Not identified.	27 park units
Solano County	412,336 (2003)	County: 229 Total: 3225	County 0.6 Total 7.8	At least 10 acres per 1,000	Cities: 2630 acres; State: 367 acres.
Sonoma County	466,725 (2003)	Regional recreation areas: 892 OS: 3,105	Regional areas: 1.9 Total: 8.6	20 acres/1,000	32 parks & OS areas. Total publicly accessible land: 52,863 acres
Vancouver-Clark: Clark County, WA	379,577 (2003)	Park & OS: 6,025	Total 15.9	Acquisition goal: 20 acres/1,000 Acquisition standard: 10 acres/1,000	Refers to NRPA; however, population-based standards do not apply (e.g., in conservation areas)

Some documents discussed what one plan called “environmentally responsible park management” [16], which included general measures such as returning “manicured” areas to more natural conditions. Other documents spoke of other measures, including the objective of minimizing the use of pesticides and other toxins [19].

The main environmental benefit of the planning efforts behind the plans is in the acquisition of parkland and open space, where these lands are used to protect environmentally significant areas (1, 4, 16). The review indicated that plans are best in this regard where a primary purpose is to protect natural resources [1,6,10,13, 22], to ensure “ecological health” [1], and to “preserve and enhance the County's significant wildlife and botanical habitats” [13]. Such goals tended to be more associated with open space preservation programs than with park and recreation plans focused on developed services and facilities. Parks may also be used to protect cultural heritage and archaeological sites.

Partnerships

Nearly all plans reviewed recognized the importance of partnerships with other entities having shared interests and goals. The review indicated that other counties in other parts of the state are often endowed with considerable amounts of public land under management by others (National Forest lands, for example), which adds to the overall inventory of recreation opportunities available to county citizens. Documents recommended maximizing public-private partnerships to help provide needed facilities [1] and, generally, developing and maintaining partnerships with private groups, state and federal government, and districts, to assist in all aspects of park and recreation planning and development. Recommended programs included “Friends of the Parks” [16], Adopt-A-Park [26], and partnerships with schools [10] and universities [2]. El Dorado County’s General Plan actively promotes land transfer from BLM to the County [15].

Parks and Recreation Funding & Revenue Sources

In terms of funding, the collection of plans provide evidence of creative financing. It seemed true that the more well-funded a park system was, the more it accomplished, particularly in the area of open space acquisition. The plans’ funding sources covered a wide range, from the local government’s general fund to special districts to grants. The following is a composite (but not necessarily comprehensive) list [1, 3, 4, 17, 18, 25, 32].

Federal sources

- Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund
- Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act
- Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund
- Department of Education – 21st Century Learning Centers
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Environmental Education Grants

State/Local Open Space and Recreational Facility Funding Sources:

- General Funds/Bonds

- State Grants/Low Interest Loans
- State Department of Parks and Recreation
- California Coastal Conservancy
- Habitat Conservation Fund
- Wildlife Conservation Board

Local agencies have found various ways to raise money for their park systems. In addition to user fees and charges, other mechanisms include: lottery/conservation trust fund, grants, permanent park and recreation fund, bonding/debt, developer fees, sales tax, even profits from a major flea market (3). Santa Clara County has a “Park Charter Fund,” which is the financial mechanism for acquisition, development, and operation of County Parks; the basis of the fund in 1972 was 10 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation, and, currently, it is 1.425 cents per \$100 [25]. Jefferson County, Colorado, which has an active open space preservation program, uses a one-half of one percent sales tax funding [18]. East Bay Regional Park District derives funding through property tax revenues; fees and charges; bonds and other borrowing; revenue from leasing; benefit assessment districts; donations, grants, easements; and agreements with other agencies.

Parks Planning-Related Documents Reviewed

- 1 City of Boulder, Colorado. Undated [1996?]. City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Master Plan – A Legacy for Future Generations. Accessed at http://www.ci.boulder.co.us/parks-recreation/ABOUT_PARKS_REC/master_plan_main.htm.
- 2 City of Davis, California. 1998. Davis Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan.
- 3 City of Galt, California. 1991. Galt Park Master Plan. Prepared by Dangermond & Associates and Royston Hanamoto Alley & Abey.
- 4 City of Houston, Texas. 2001. Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Prepared by the City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department and Vernon G. Henry & Associates, Inc. Accessed at <http://www.ci.houston.tx.us/pr/masterplan/>.
- 5 City of London, Ontario, Canada. 2003. Parks & Recreation Strategic Master Plan. Prepared for the City of London by Monteith Planning Consultants et al. Accessed at <http://www.city.london.on.ca/CommunityServices/Recreation/RecMasterPlanInfo.htm>.
- 6 City of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. 2001. Pittsburgh's Regional Parks Master Plan – A New Ethic of Stewardship. Prepared for the City of Pittsburgh Department of City Planning by LaQuatra Bonci Associates / Michael A. Stern and others. Accessed at http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/cp/html/parks_plan.html.
- 7 City of Redlands, California. 1987. Park and Open Space Plan for the City of Redlands. Prepared by Dangermond & Associates, Inc.
- 8 City of Riverside, California. 2003. City of Riverside Park and Recreation [Final] Master Plan Update 2003. Prepared for the City of Riverside Park and Recreation Department by The Dangermond Group. Accessed at http://www.riversideca.gov/planning/park_master_plan.htm.
- 9 City of Rochester, Indiana. 2002. Rochester Park and Recreation 2002-2006 Master Plan. Rochester Park & Recreation Department and Patrick S. Brown, ASLA, SiteScapes, Inc. Accessed at <http://www.rochester.in.us/>.
- 10 City of Sacramento, California. 2000. Draft 2000 Master Plan for Park Facilities and Recreation Services Phase I. Sacramento City Parks and Recreation Department and Foothill Associates, RJM Design Group, and others. Accessed at <http://www.cityofsacramento.org/parksandrecreation/masterplan/index.htm>.
- 11 City of San Ramon, California. 2001. A New General Plan for the Future – San Ramon 2020 / General Plan Draft for Voter Approval. In particular, Chapter 6, Parks and Recreation. City of San Ramon and Dyett & Bhatia Urban and Regional Planners and others. Accessed at <http://www.ci.san-ramon.ca.us/gprc/gprcindex.htm>.
- 12 County of Butte, California. [Undated.] Butte County General Plan. Recreation Element. Accessed at <http://www.buttecounty.net/dds/Planning/planning.htm>.

- 13 County of Calaveras, California. 1996. Calaveras County General Plan. Open Space Element. Accessed at http://www.co.calaveras.ca.us/departments/planning/gen_plan.asp.
- 14 County of El Dorado, California. 2001. Proposed Final El Dorado County River Management Plan. Prepared for the El Dorado County of General Services, Division of Airports, Parks, and Grounds, by Environmental Stewardship & Planning. Accessed at http://www.co.el-dorado.ca.us/parks/river/final_rmp_rpt.html.
- 15 County of El Dorado, California. 2004. 2004 El Dorado County General Plan – A Plan for Managed Growth and Open Roads; a Plan for Quality Neighborhoods and Traffic Relief. (Adopted July 19, 2004). Parks and Recreation Element. Prepared by the El Dorado Planning Department, other County Departments, and consultant team. Accessed at <http://www.co.el-dorado.ca.us/generalplan/AdoptedGeneralPlan.html>.
- 16 County of Erie, New York. 2002[?]. Erie County Parks Master Plan – RENEWAL / A 2020 Vision for the Erie County Parks System. Prepared for the County of Erie by Parsons Engineers, Planners & Landscape Architects and others. Accessed at http://rin.buffalo.edu/c_erie/envi/plan/erie_park/index2.html
- 17 County of Humboldt, California. 2004. Clam & Moonstone Beach County Parks Management Master Plan. Prepared for the Humboldt County Department of Public Works by Planwest Partners Team. Accessed at http://www.co.humboldt.ca.us/portal/living/county_parks/default.asp?content=clamMoonstone.htm.
- 18 County of Jefferson, Colorado. 2003. Jefferson County Open Space Master Plan. Accessed at http://www.co.jefferson.co.us/ext/dpt/comm_res/openspac/osoffice.htm#The%20Master%20Plan.
- 19 County of Marin, California. 2004. Marin Countywide Plan. Public Review Draft. Public Review Draft (on CD).
- 20 County of Placer, California. 2000. Placer Legacy Open Space and Agricultural Conservation Program. Summary Report and various webpages, accessed at <http://www.placer.ca.gov/planning/legacy/legacy-other-resources.htm>.
- 21 County of Platte, Missouri. 2000[?]. Platte County Park Master Plan. Prepared for Platte County by Bucher, Willis & Ratliff Corporation. Accessed at <http://www.co.platte.mo.us/parks/>.
- 22 County of Sacramento, California. 1985. American River Parkway Plan. Sacramento County Planning and Community Development. Accessed at <http://www.saccounty.net/planning/american-river-parkway/american-river-parkway.html>.
- 23 County of Sacramento, California. 2002. The Dry Creek Parkway Recreation Master Plan. Department of Regional Parks, Recreation and Open Space and Foothill Associates.
- 24 County of San Luis Obispo, California. 2003. Parks and Recreation Element. Public Review Draft. Prepared by County Parks Division, Crawford Multari & Clark Associates, and Firma. Accessed at <http://www.slocountyparks.com/>.

- 25 County of Santa Clara, California. 2003. Strategic Plan / Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation System. Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department and 2M Associates et al.
- 26 County of Solano, California. 2003. Solano County Park and Recreation Element – A Part of the Solano County General Plan. Prepared for the County of Solano by Harrison & Associates, with Andal Enterprises, and Agonia & Associates.
- 27 County of Sonoma, California. 2003. (a) Sonoma County Outdoor Recreation Plan. Sonoma County Regional Parks Department and others. Accessed at <http://www.sonoma-county.org/parks/outdrpln.htm>. Also (b) County of Sonoma, California. 2003. Initial Study [for the] Sonoma County Outdoor Recreation Plan. Prepared for the Sonoma County Regional Parks Department by Nancy Dakin and David Woltering. Accessed at <http://www.sonoma-county.org/parks/outdrpln.htm>.
- 28 East Bay Regional Park District, California. 1996. Master Plan 1997. East Bay Regional Park District and others. Accessed at <http://www.ebparcs.org/district/mplan.htm>.
- 29 Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. 1998. Park, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan – A Local Land Preservation and Recreation Plan. (Including “Parks for Tomorrow” supplement). Accessed at http://www.mc-mncppc.org/parks/division/master_plan/index.shtm.
- 30 Sonoma County Agricultural and Open Space District. 2000. Acquisition Plan 2000 – A Blueprint for Agricultural and Open Space Preservation.
- 31 Town of Amherst, New York. 2003. Draft Recreation and Parks Master Plan. Prepared for the Town of Amherst by Monteith Planning Consultants et al., London, Ontario. Accessed at http://www.amherst.ny.us/pdf/recreation/exec_sum.pdf.
- 32 Town of Exeter, New Hampshire. 2003. Exeter Open Space Committee brochure, mission statement, and open space property acquisition information.
- 33 Vancouver-Clark Parks & Recreation [City of Vancouver, Washington, and County of Clark, Washington]. 2000. Clark County Regional Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan. Accessed at <http://www.co.clark.wa.us/parks/index.html> and at http://www.ci.vancouver.wa.us/parks-recreation/parks_trails/planning/pdf/regional.pdf.

Exhibit 1. General Email Message Sent to Selected Counties.

To staff involved with management and acquisition of County parks, recreation facilities, and open space areas:

The County of Yolo is preparing a master plan for its parks and open space properties. The master plan will provide inventories of public facilities and natural resources, recommendations for public uses, and management guidelines for each of fifteen County-maintained properties; the plan will also address overall management of the park system as a whole.

As part of this effort, the County's consultants are seeking and reviewing comparable comprehensive park planning documents and management guidelines from other jurisdictions. This message is intended for staff of the department(s) or division(s) of your agency that are responsible for managing and acquiring public parks, recreation, and open space. We would appreciate your assistance in forwarding this message to the other appropriate personnel if necessary.

1. Does your County have a comprehensive plan for County-managed parks and open space properties, either as a part of your General Plan or as a separate document? Is it available online? If not, how can I obtain a copy? Does your County have other guidelines, standards, or ordinances that govern uses at public parks and open space areas?

If you have time, we would also appreciate your responses to the following additional questions:

2. Does your County have specific standards or guidelines for (a) relating the amount of park area to the County population (e.g., number of acres of parkland per capita) or for (b) relating the location of park units to population centers?
3. What criteria do you use when considering the acquisition of new park and open space units?
4. By what methods does your County collect use fees at parks?
5. What does your County do to reduce vandalism?
6. What are your main sources of funding for (a) operations and maintenance and (b) acquisitions and improvements?
7. In round numbers, what is the County parks and recreation share of the total County annual budget; similarly, what is the approximate annual amount spent on parks management per person?
8. Does your agency have, or have you ever considered creating, an assessment district for funding parks and open space management? Do your ordinances require park and open space dedications for new development?

Thank you very much!

Bruce Kemp, AICP
Roberts, Kemp & Associates LLC
129 C Street, Suite 7
Davis, CA 95616
Phone: 530-758-3000
Cellular: 530-867-3151
Fax: 530-758-3008
bkemp@robertskemp.com

Exhibit 2. Summary of Responses to General Email Query.

County: Department or Point(s) of Contact	Results / Notes
1. Alpine: Planning, Public Works	No initial reply. Follow-up call yielded limited information.
2. Amador: webmaster	Reply from webmaster only. General Plan online (Berkeley Digital Library), includes Scenic Highways component.
3. Butte: Planning; Public Works	No reply. General Plan online.
4. Calaveras: Planning	No reply. General Plan online.
5. Contra Costa: online form	Reply received in the form of a telephone discussion with staff.
6. El Dorado: Parks & Recreation	Email address apparently not valid. Follow-up call yielded limited information. General Plan online. County Website also includes "Parks, Rivers, Trails" pages and River Management Plan.
7. Kern: Community & Economic Development	No reply.
8. Lake: Public Services; Parks and Recreation c/o webmaster	No initial reply. Follow-up call returned by Public Services Director. Excerpts from General Plan received. GP Update information online.
9. Madera: general information	No reply.
10. Marin: Parks, Open Space, and Cultural Services	No initial reply. Follow-up call yielded discussion with Parks staff, who also sent CD copy of the Marin Countywide Plan.
11. Mariposa: Parks; Planning	Email address apparently not valid. General Plan online.
12. Monterey: Parks	No reply.
13. Napa: Conservation, Development & Planning; Public Works	Email reply received from Public Works with responses; also received copy of Conservation & Open Space Element from DPW.
14. Nevada: Planning	No reply. Website note: "The County does not currently function as an owner-operator of park or recreation facilities. Current focus is on planning for and facilitating provision of park and recreation services (facilities and programs) throughout the County."
15. Placer: Parks	No initial reply. Follow-up call yielded discussion on the "Placer Legacy Open Space and Agricultural Conservation Program." Document obtained online.
16. Plumas: Planning	No reply.
17. Sacramento: Regional Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Administration	No initial reply. Follow-up call yielded conversations with staff, copies of park master plans.
18. San Joaquin: Parks, Facilities Management	Email reply with responses.
19. San Luis Obispo: County Parks	No reply. Parks and Recreation Element online.

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| 20. Shasta: Public Works | No reply. |
| 21. Siskiyou: Planning | No reply. |
| 22. Solano: General Services; County Parks | Reply received by telephone discussion; info received by fax; info received at public workshops. |
| 23. Sonoma: Regional Parks; Agricultural and Open Space District | Response received in form of Ag and Open Space "Acquisition Plan" received from District. County Outdoor Recreation Plan online. |
| 24. Sierra: Planning | No reply. |
| 25. Sutter: Planning | No reply. |
| 26. Trinity: webmaster | Forwarded by webmaster to other departments; no further contact. |
| 27. Tulare: Parks & Recreation; webmaster | No reply. |
| 28. Yuba: Community Development | No reply. General Plan online. |

PART 3. STATEWIDE RECREATION TRENDS

3.1 Scope & Objectives

Consultants conducted a focused research effort to generally describe, and place the Yolo County Parks Master Plan in the context of, Statewide recreation trends. Consultants reviewed Statewide recreation use data – as well as related demographic information – as part of a baseline for determining the County’s potential recreation needs. This overview provides some insights regarding the changing role of parks and the changing ways in which parks can help serve the community.

The objectives of this part of the review were to:

- Provide a general demographic context for the plan.
- Compare Yolo County’s parks and open space program to State measures and trends for public demand (or needs) and corresponding agency delivery of services.
- Help ensure that the plan is responsive to identified Statewide, particularly with regard to meeting the recreation-related needs of the future.

Documents reviewed included:

- The State Park System Plan 2002;
- California State Outdoor Recreation Plan 2002;
- Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California 2002 – An Element of the California Outdoor Recreation Plan;
- California State Parks and the Great Central Valley 2004; and
- National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE 2000).

3.2 Population Growth

State Trends

Since becoming a state, California has experienced sustained growth – sometimes at a rapid pace, sometimes more moderately. In the past 16 years, the State has grown by 25%, from approximately 25 million to 35 million people. During the 5-year period from 1985-1990, growth spiked, with California achieving the dubious status of representing over one-third of the entire nation’s growth.

Population projections for the State for the Year 2025 range from about 43 million to 52 million people with most projections falling around 50 million residents. Furthermore, projections show the distribution of growth in the state to be approximately 70% for the major centers of Los Angeles, San Francisco, and San Diego, and 17.5% in the Sacramento/San Joaquin Valley vicinity. Already, the Sacramento Valley is experiencing the chronic problems of other metropolitan centers of the State, including worsening traffic conditions, declining air quality, and general infrastructure strain.

Part of the draw that is contributing to the growth spike in the Yolo County area is the State's internal migration of people leaving the larger metropolitan areas for areas such as the Central Valley. An ironic corollary between population growth and community amenities and services suggests that the more amenity-rich a community is, the more attractive it is to new businesses and residents and, thus, more subject to growth pressure.

Yolo County's Share of State Growth

Yolo County's population has increased from 168,000 people in 2000 to 182,000 in 2003, roughly growing by approximately 8.5% – making Yolo County the 10th fastest growing county in the State.¹¹ Most of that growth has been in the incorporated communities of Davis, Woodland, West Sacramento, and Winters; however, rural lands and particularly the unincorporated communities have been absorbing a significant share of that growth.

Anticipating growth in terms of parks and recreation facilities may take several forms. A jurisdiction may seek to prioritize projects on the basis of enhancing existing resources, or it may seek to acquire more parks and facilities. When much of the growth has occurred around the edges of the jurisdiction, as it has in Yolo County, the jurisdiction may want to take a more collaborative approach to parks planning and seek to involve other, adjoining jurisdictions in delivering recreation opportunities to meet the regional needs.

Physical Impacts of Growth on Open Space

Continuing population growth is having physical impacts all over California. Population growth in urban areas is causing expansion of development into surrounding, undeveloped lands; as this occurs, demand increases to preserve some areas for open space and habitat. According to one survey, sixty-eight percent of Californians believe more outdoor recreation areas and facilities are needed near large cities. Some of the key potential impacts of growth include:

- Reduction of surrounding open space;
- Increasing demand for services and facilities;
- Over use of existing facilities and services;
- Increasing demand on County resources by adjoining growing communities;
- Loss of County's identity;
- Threat to critical habitat in County's peripheral lands; and
- Natural areas becoming located further away from population centers.

Increasing population in Yolo County leads to greater demand for specific facilities and open space. Additionally, demand is increasing from adjoining communities that use

¹¹ See, for example, the summary of U.S. Census Bureau data online at <http://www.epodunk.com/top10/countyPop/coPop5.html>.

resources within the County. Existing facilities are limited and impacted by over-use when the supply does not keep pace with demand.

While looking at its own resources the County can also create better linkages with the local communities to help meet recreation needs and reinforce open space buffers between communities. In addition to providing recreation opportunities, open space areas can serve to define the urban limits and provide separation from Yolo County's neighbors.

Livable Cities & Sustainable Development

Parks and recreation can play a key role in helping to fulfill the "livable community" agenda, as expressed in the County General Plan. Enhanced living environments combined with natural and cultural preservation are vital tools associated with the revitalization and economic development of our cities. The connection between parks and quality of life is increasing in importance, according to recent polls. Recreation and open space are critical components in creating livable communities and in meeting smart growth objectives.

One important component to livable cities is the development and implementation of a useful and comprehensible park and recreation system that serves the residents. The County has the opportunity to look towards land use and parks/open space synergies that enhance the urban environment. The humanizing effect of pedestrian-scale places and greenways helps create an identifiable and special character for the County.

Transportation also plays a significant role in creating livable cities. Traffic patterns and roadways define distinct areas within the County by either providing or restricting access. Bike trail links within the County, with adjacent cities and linkages with the County/regional trail system can create greater mobility without reliance on cars.

3.3 Changing Population

"Baby Boomers" and the "Baby Bounce"

Besides the obvious increase in population size, there have been other, more subtle changes as reflected in the statewide demographic trends. The make-up of communities has changed, particularly in terms of the age distribution. In the 1960s and 1970s, the population was characterized by a post-war boom and the surge in the number of children entering secondary schools and colleges; that same surge is now reaching retirement age.

The Baby Boom phenomenon has created a wave of impacts as the baby boomers mature; however, the implications for local parks and other recreational venues are not entirely clear. Not only are older people becoming a larger segment of the population, but they are enjoying better health and longer life, and wielding greater economic and political power. By 2020, when baby boomers reach 65, old people will account for approximately 20% of the U.S. population.

The Baby Boomers are not expected to necessarily follow the patterns of their parents as they age. As California's "new" elders age, what is anticipated is a redefinition of leisure and recreation, as they become progressively more active, both in physical and intellectual activities. It is also expected that the aging Baby Boomers will want to combine "fitness with fun" but, at the same time will be more interested in environmentally sound recreational activities.

A second baby boom generation has begun and is now referred to as the "Baby Bounce." In California this boom is dominated by a surge in predominantly Hispanic children, now reaching the elementary school levels. According to an American Demographics article, "Generation Latino," by the year 2001, 18% of all births in the U.S. were expected to be within Hispanic populations. Another implication of the Baby Bounce phenomena is socioeconomic-based: To the extent that Hispanic children are born to families of low income, low education, and new immigrants, they may be less likely to benefit from parks and open space areas that require travel; they may miss out on experiences at parks or cultural/historic sites unless special provisions are made to involve them and help them gain access to the public facilities.

For the Parks Master Plan, these phenomena raise a number of questions: What kinds of changes are needed in recreational facilities? What are Hispanic communities and are Baby Boomers likely to want? How should Yolo parks respond to the "Baby Bounce"? What accommodations should be made for those groups moving into their elderly years?

California Leads the Trend Towards a Multicultural Society

California is the most ethnically diverse state in the country, and with a continuing flow of immigrants, primarily from the Pacific Rim and Spanish-speaking countries, it is becoming more so every day. By 2025, U.S. Census estimates project that Hispanics will become the largest ethnic group in the State, constituting between 44 and 47% of the population. Statewide, whites and blacks are projected to decrease as a percentage of the total population while Hispanics and Asian/Pacific Islanders increase.

These factors raise some key planning issues in terms of the changing ethnic/racial make-up of the County. Young Hispanics are the single fastest increasing demographic group statewide. Attracting diversity can only be accomplished by conveying a sense of inclusion.

Another related demographic phenomenon is the rising gap between people immigrating to versus leaving the State. California's overall population increased from 32,062,912 in 1995 to 33,871,648 in 2000; however, in terms of domestic migration, more people left the state than moved to it, as these numbers show:

California's Changing Population Interstate Migration

Trend	Number
Number of people who left California and moved to another state:	2,204,500
Number who migrated to California from another state:	1,448,964
Net migration:	- 755,536

Source: *San Francisco Chronicle* research 8/2003

Motivations for people wanting to leave the State vary but include: the high cost of housing/living, the general aggravations of worsening traffic, and urban malaise. Regardless, this last census period was the first time more people left California for other states than moved to California from other states, and the trend is continuing, experts say. Hans John with the Public Policy Institute of California suggests that “People move to these other states for some of the same reasons they came to California a couple of decades ago: opportunities and quality of life.” Other characteristics of this exodus have the socioeconomic and ethnic/racial implications. It is a middle class-dominated trend, combined with the tendency for that group to be the Euro-heritage population – in short, “white flight.” The continued population increase in the State is primarily attributable to increases from foreign immigration and births.

These trends are magnified in the youngest population groups of the State. For example, is estimated for the age group of 0-20 years old, between 1990 and 1999, growth was 70% Hispanic. Hispanics and Asian/Pacific Islanders accounted for 125% of the growth in this age cohort, because the number of whites in this age category is declining, not growing.

3.4 2002 Statewide Preferences for Recreation Overview

What kinds of lifestyles changes and recreation trends are impacting parks systems today? What can we expect to see in the future? The answers may be partly reflected in our increasingly fast-paced and complex lifestyles, which are creating changes in the way we view and participate in park and recreation activities. New forms of recreation are emerging as people look for “life balancing” experiences.

The recently released *Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California 2002* provides some interesting insights regarding general preferences for outdoor recreation. The California Department of Parks and Recreation undertakes this public opinion survey approximately every five years to obtain information required for their California Outdoor Recreation Plan. This survey therefore provides a convenient index for local comparison. It should be noted that State trends are broad-based and may not accurately represent what is happening locally. Also, each community is unique, and the availability of resources within a community area can strongly influence the range of preferences and choices for recreation in that community.

Findings from the 2002 Survey

Findings from the 2002 survey are generally consistent with those from the prior 1997 survey. Some of the major findings from the 2002 survey include the following:

- Most (84.1%) Californians believe that public outdoor recreation areas and facilities are important to them and their families.
- More than two-thirds (69.1%) of Californians reported spending the same or more time in outdoor recreation activities than five years ago.

- Being able to relax, feeling safe and secure, being in the outdoors, and beauty of the area were the four most important factors that affect Californians' overall enjoyment of their favorite recreation activity.
- Of five broad types of outdoor recreation areas, highly developed parks and recreation areas in or near urban areas were used by the largest percentage of Californians (93.3%).
- Developed nature-oriented parks and recreation areas were listed as the favorite type of area by the largest percentage of Californians.
- Most (69.7%) Californians were satisfied with public outdoor recreation areas, facilities and services currently available *within* their local community.
- Most (83.6%) said their satisfaction is the same as or better than five years ago.
- About three-fourths (73.7%) of Californians said they were satisfied or very satisfied with public outdoor recreation areas, facilities and services currently available *outside* their local communities.
- 82.0% said their satisfaction is the same as or better than five years ago.
- Almost all Californians (96.7%) agreed or strongly agreed that maintaining the natural environment in outdoor recreation areas is important to them.
- A majority strongly agreed that:
 - Outdoor recreation areas and programs help improve the health and welfare of people in their community,
 - Fees collected at each park, wildlife and recreation area should be spent on that area,
 - Outdoor recreation areas and programs help reduce crime and juvenile delinquency in their community, and
 - Outdoor recreation areas and facilities increase property values in their community.
- More than 90% of Californians participated in walking for fitness and fun at least once in 2002.

Other activities with high percentages of participants included:

- Driving for pleasure,
- Visiting historic or cultural sites,
- Attending outdoor cultural events,
- Beach activities, and
- Visiting outdoor nature museums, zoos, or arboretums.

A needs analysis based on the 2002 survey data revealed that camping in developed sites, trail hiking, walking for fitness and fun, and wildlife viewing were the four top activities that Californians (1) would have done more often if facilities had been available and (2) would support government spending to improve those opportunities.

Among the new or increasing uses statewide are:

- Soccer – both organized and impromptu,
- Nature appreciation,
- Dog parks,
- Skateboarding/rollerblading,
- Tot lot/play equipment,
- Swimming pools,
- Trail hiking,
- Mountain biking, and
- Harvesting mushrooms or other edible plants.

Among the declining uses statewide are:

- Tennis, and
- Football.

The recreation activities with the highest perceived dollar value for a day's participation were those that require specialized equipment and special skills:

- Using personal watercraft,
- Hunting,
- Sailboating,
- Water skiing, and
- Off-road vehicle use.

Most Californians favor private businesses providing some services in public park and recreation areas, including the sale of ready-to-eat food and beverages, equipment rental, sponsorship of contests and special events, and operation of marinas and boat launching facilities. Most do not favor privatization of law enforcement, educational activities, and total operation and management of parks and recreation areas.

Comparison with Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Respondents

Comparisons of responses by Hispanics and respondents from other ethnic groups revealed several important similarities and differences that are summarized below. Both Hispanics and other respondents indicated that developed nature-oriented parks and recreation areas were their most preferred types of areas. However, significantly fewer Hispanics said they visited natural, undeveloped areas than did members of other ethnic groups. A significantly larger percentage of Hispanics strongly or moderately agreed that:

- More community parks were needed near them,
- More parks were needed in urban areas,

- More recreation areas are needed by lakes, and
- Outdoor parks are too crowded.

A significantly larger percentage of Hispanics support increasing taxes and use fees to fund park and recreation areas than members of the other ethnic groups. Changes in park and recreation facilities and services that were favored by a significantly higher percentage of Hispanics included more emphasis on:

- Buying additional parkland and open space for recreation purposes,
- Maintaining or caring for park and recreation areas,
- Providing educational programs,
- Building new facilities,
- Remodeling and improving existing facilities,
- Protecting natural resources,
- Protecting historic resources, and
- Providing more organized activities and special events.

Four activities that a significantly larger percentage of Hispanics said they would do more often if opportunities were available and for which they would support government spending included:

- Walking for fitness and fun,
- Driving for pleasure,
- Soccer, football or rugby, and
- Softball and baseball.

Youth Survey

A survey of California youth was conducted for the first time through the mail portion of the 2002 survey.

- Walking for fitness and fun, pool swimming, visiting water sites other than beaches, beach activities, and visiting outdoor nature museums, zoos, or arboretums were the recreation activities with the largest percentage of youth participation.
- Walking for fitness and fun, jogging and fitness running, bicycling on paved surfaces, pool swimming, and using play equipment were the youth activities with the highest average number of days of participation.
- The activities that California youth would like to do more often if opportunities were available included beach activities, swimming in freshwater lakes, rivers and/or streams, saltwater fishing, camping in developed sites, and bicycling on paved surfaces.

Lifestyle Changes & Recreation

Our lifestyles and work patterns and home lives have changed greatly in the past 35 years. Today we are increasingly dependent on personal vehicles, and we are spending more time in them. The average workweek (including travel time to work) grew from under 41 hours to 47 hours. (Some polls have shown that people prefer to work longer hours for higher income rather than have more leisure and less pay.) The average one-way work commute for residents of Yolo County is around 24 minutes. Time spent commuting is significant in that it is time not spent on other activities.

On the other hand, people are taking more personal responsibility for their health as the “Wellness Movement” gains momentum. There has been an increase in therapeutic activities such as Tai Chi, as well as in walking and low impact sports. There is a greater emphasis on organized and competitive sports than on impromptu or pick-up sports.

There has been a significant rise in double-income families resulting in fewer stay-at-home spouses. Household profiles are also changing to include more single parents and non-traditional families. For some families the decrease in time for recreation has increased the need to schedule activities. The “soccer mom” image evokes a style of parenting where everything – including recreation time – is scheduled within a limited time frame and among many other daily demands.

People are bringing the technological revolution in communications and recreational equipment with them to parks. Most notable are increased family and group activities, as well as high-risk adventure activities. The phenomenon of “X-treme sports” such as in-line skating, skateboarding, mountain biking, vertical climbing walls, and rock climbing has also attracted the interest of many athletes. There has also been a general community shift from self-contained to regionally linked areas that are more dependent on regional facilities and resources.

3.5 California State Parks and the Great Central Valley

The California Department of Parks and Recreation initiated a study of the Central Valley in 2003 to investigate possible State Park System’s future role in the Central Valley in terms of potential acquisition and development projects. A brochure about the program is available on the State Parks website at <http://www.parks.ca.gov/>. According to the brochure, State Parks is interested acquisition and development in the Valley to increase its “visibility and service to Valley residents, and because as an ecological region the Valley supports the least amount of publicly protected areas.”

As part of this background review, the consultants contacted State Parks and obtained a preliminary map of potential project sites. Among the sites is a general location in the Dunnigan Hills as well as an unspecified location in the Valley for a Park unit that will “tell the story of agriculture in California’s heartland.” Further details were not available.

The brochure also outlines the factors to be considered in acquisition and development projects. Potential parkland sites should exhibit these characteristics:

- Under-represented natural or historical resources;
- Water features to support “a multitude of users and interests;”
- River corridors and parkways;
- Capacity for high-demand recreational activities, such as camping, day use, trails, and youth activities;
- Linkages between large blocks of protected habitat resulting in sustainable combined acreage;
- Serve growing communities and a diversity of interests; and
- Offer partnerships with other organizations

Comparison of California Department of Parks and Recreation Outdoor Recreation Use, 1987 - 2002

Percentage of Californians who participated in activity at least once during survey period					
Types of Recreation Activities	1987	1992	1997	2002	Trend
Walking	76.6%	88.0%	84.8%	91.1%	rising
Driving for pleasure	75.6%	68.7%	68.3%	90.2%	rising
Visiting museums & historic sites	72.0%	75.7%	74.6%	85.5%	rising
Attending outdoor cultural events	49.7%	50.8%	56.0%	82.6%	rising
Beach activities	67.9%	69.4%	67.8%	82.2%	rising
Visiting zoos		65.6%	66.3%	80.1%	rising
Picnic (developed sites)	64.4%	63.9%	65.0%	76.7%	rising
Nature study/Wildlife Viewing	47.4%	56.0%	54.0%	75.1%	rising
Trail hiking	37.7%	54.8%	58.0%	68.7%	rising
Open grass/Turf use	64.4%	66.9%	68.4%	65.5%	flat
Swimming pools	31.1%	46.8%	48.0%	59.5%	rising
Camping (developed)	46.1%	53.9%	51.8%	49.8%	flat
Swim- freshwater lakes, rivers				46.7%	
Bicycling	23.0%	45.8%	42.8%	45.8%	flat
Walking a Pet				43.5%	
Tot lot/Play equipment	34.0%	35.4%	40.0%	39.0%	rising
Swim- saltwater, snorkeling, scuba				38.1%	
Jogging	12.6%	30.6%	28.6%	35.6%	rising
Freshwater fishing	36.3%	38.2%	37.3%	34.0%	declining
Power boating	19.8%	19.5%	21.1%	29.1%	rising
Camping (primitive)	24.9%	25.8%	25.8%	28.0%	flat
Softball/Baseball	25.6%	34.0%	26.4%	27.1%	flat
Basketball	11.5%	21.0%	18.1%	25.2%	flat
Mountain biking		14.6%	17.7%	24.0%	rising
Soccer/Football/Rugby				23.1%	
Golf	16.4%	19.4%	17.9%	23.0%	flat
Kayaking, rowing, canoeing, etc.	15.7%	16.2%	18.3%	23.0%	rising
Sledding/Snow play	25.0%	24.1%	23.0%	23.0%	flat
Backback camping				20.1%	
Camping in trailer or RV				19.9%	

Comparison of California Department of Parks and Recreation Outdoor Recreation Use, 1987 - 2002

Percentage of Californians who participated in activity at least once during survey period					
Types of Recreation Activities	1987	1992	1997	2002	Trend
4 wheel drive (off-road)	14.3%	17.8%	14.6%	19.8%	flat
Horseback riding	12.5%	15.6%	14.2%	19.2%	flat
Tennis	17.6%	15.2%	12.6%	18.8%	rising
Skiing (alpine)	17.5%	20.3%	15.6%	18.0%	flat
Saltwater fishing	18.5%	24.9%	22.7%	17.8%	declining
Volleyball				17.5%	
Gathering mushrooms, berries, etc.				17.4%	
Motorcycles, ATV's	13.0%	10.1%	9.9%	16.7%	flat
Target shooting	14.0%	14.9%	17.0%	16.5%	flat
Rockclimbing/Bouldering		15.0%	10.1%	14.8%	flat
Using Personal Watercraft				13.6%	
Other Activities				13.2%	
In-line skating				12.9%	
Surfing	4.1%	6.1%	5.3%	12.4%	rising
Water skiing	14.6%	14.4%	12.8%	10.6%	declining
Sailing				10.4%	
Snowboarding				10.2%	
Skateboarding				9.1%	
Hunting	12.2%	13.3%	8.7%	9.0%	flat
Wakeboarding				8.1%	
Skiing (cross country)	9.5%	8.0%	7.2%	7.1%	declining
Archery				6.4%	
Snowmobiling		3.1%	2.5%	4.6%	flat
Orienteering/Geo-caching				4.6%	
Wind surfing				3.4%	
Right-of-way Use					
Skateboarding/Rollerblading			16.0%		
Cultural/education					
Attending sports events	50.4%		51.9%		

Comparison of California Department of Parks and Recreation Outdoor Recreation Use, 1987 - 2002

Percentage of Californians who participated in activity at least once during survey period					
Types of Recreation Activities	1987	1992	1997	2002	Trend
Guided walks/tours		23.2%			
Developed City Park Use					
Field sports					
Football	9.1%	13.6%	8.5%		
Soccer	7.4%	10.2%	13.8%		
Party groups					
Resource Area Use					
Swim- lakes,rivers,oceans	59.0%	52.1%	57.2%		
Sailing / Wind surfing	10.3%	7.0%	6.7%		
Skiing (down hill/cross country)					

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Attachment 1

Notes from Parks Planning Documents Reviewed

Bruce Kemp, AICP
Roberts, Kemp & Associates LLC
July, August 2004

1. City of Boulder, Colorado. Undated [1996?]. City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Master Plan – A Legacy for Future Generations.

- City Parks and Recreation Department manages 434 acres of parks, 6,500 acres of mountain parks and natural areas, three recreation centers, a golf course, two outdoor pools, athletic complexes, historic sites, and urban forest street trees.
- City of Boulder population in 2000: 94,673.
- Contents at a glance:
 - Summary, key elements, overview
 - Planning context, including history, related efforts, and trends affecting parks and recreation
 - Master Plan recommendations
 - Programs and policies
 - Parkland acquisition
 - Park & playground development
 - New or expanded recreation facilities
 - Parks and recreation facility renovation
 - Funding strategies
 - Action Plan
- Plan places a significant focus on children, teenagers, and families.
- Incorporates updated local policies on land use, transportation.
- Vision encompasses a wide range of values: active recreation, parks as gathering places, parks as beautiful settings that refresh the spirit, ecosystem preserves, environmental education, sports facilities, tree-lined streets, paths and trails.
- Parks and recreation revenue sources: general fund, fees and charges (about 50 percent of general fund budget recovered through fees), lottery/conservation trust fund, grants, permanent park and recreation fund, bonding/debt, developer fees.
- Recommends the use of level of service standards, intended to bring parks and recreation facilities closer to more residents. Level of service standards “are measures of the amount or quality of the public service that must be provided to meet community needs and expectations.”
- Current park standard for the total amount of neighborhood and community park land is 3 acres per 1,000 population.
- Among the various recommendations, plan calls for development of new pocket parks, renovation of older parks, completion of playing fields, pursuit of public-private partnerships to provide new facilities, cooperation with City planning department in development of urban open lands, and acquisition of critical land parcels to ensure ecological health of mountain parks.
- City has used a sales tax to fund park maintenance.
- Recommended standards for types of parks:

- Neighborhood Parks
 - At least five acres in size
 - Located within one-half mile of the population to be served, taking into account major barriers to access
 - One and one-half acres per 1,000 residents in each subcommunity and city-wide
- Community Parks
 - At least 50 acres in size
 - Located within 3.5 miles of the population to be served
 - One and one-half acres per 1,000 population city-wide
- Pocket Parks
 - Less than five acres in size; usually one to three acres
 - Located within 1/4 mile of the population to be served
 - Help to meet neighborhood park needs where no other alternatives exist
- Playgrounds
 - Provide facilities appropriate for toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children up through age 12
 - Playgrounds in community or neighborhood parks of five acres or larger will serve a one-half mile service radius
 - Playgrounds in parks under five acres in size will have a one-quarter mile service radius; if adjacent to a school with play equipment for older children it will serve a one-half-mile service radius.
- The “Level of Service Standards” seek to provide a neighborhood park within one-half mile of every home. The desired minimum five-acre park site can help to buffer more active uses from the surrounding neighborhood and incorporate more natural areas.
- Development has compromised integrity of wildlife habitat in mountain parks, including migration corridors. Plan includes recommendation to acquire critical lands through easements, agreements, purchase.

2. City of Davis, California. 1998. Davis Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan.

- Plan includes a needs assessment for parks and recreation facilities.
- City has more than 30 parks and recreation facilities, including 9 mini-parks, 18 neighborhood parks, 6 community parks, golf course, Central Park, two playing fields.
- Plan cites General Plan standards for park acres per 1,000 population:
 - Community Park – 1.8 acres per 1,000 persons
 - Neighborhood Park – 1.8
 - Mini-Parks – 0.2
 - Other Parks – 1.2
 - Total parks – 5 acres per 1,000 persons
- Plan includes an inventory – with short descriptions and maps – of all city parks
- Role of university and private providers noted.

3. City of Galt, California. 1991. Galt Park Master Plan

- Department of Parks and Recreation administers 26.5 acres developed (including a 11-acre softball complex), 48.1 acres undeveloped.
- Park fees attached to new development; these funds provide for acquisition but not development.
- Plan considers (but recommends against) use of buffer lands around abandoned sewage treatment plant.
- Goals, objectives, and implementation programs. Expands upon basic goal in the General Plan.
- Inventory *and analysis* of existing conditions.
- In addition to usual topics, plan addressed “Freeway Entry Statements” (enhanced landscaping, etc. at points of entry to city).
- Standard of 5 acres/1000 people and 1 mile trail/2000 people. In a corridor 220 feet wide, this would be 24 acres per mile of trail. Plan suggests 6 to 12 acres per 1000 population for trails.
- Plan includes list and discussion of 38 outdoor activities identified and tracked by State Parks.
- Two categories of parks: Linear Parks and Neighborhood/Community/Resource Focal Point Parks.
- Program areas (for goals and objectives): Park & Recreation Planning, Park & Open Space Acquisition, Open Space Rehabilitation & Development, Park & Recreation Development, Park Acquisition and Development Funding, Park & Recreation & Program Funding, Other.
- Profits from a major flea market significant source of revenue
- Operations and maintenance supported by lighting and landscape maintenance districts

4. City of Houston, Texas. 2001. Parks and Recreation Master Plan

- Contents at a glance:
 - Intro (purpose, previous plans, population)
 - Plan Development Process
 - Goals & Objectives
 - Existing Parks & Recreation Facilities
 - Park Classification System and Development Guidelines
 - Park System Needs (including land acquisition target areas, park development, maintenance facilities, and park headquarters)
 - Park Implementation (prioritization of needs, funding sources)
 - Appendices.
- A previous plan prepared with direction from a “Green Ribbon” Committee
- Assessed needs for parkland and for park and recreation facilities by using:
 - Standard-based criteria including those set forth by the National Recreation and Park Association, the Urban Land Institute and the Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan
 - Demand-based information derived from citizen input and local planning documents
- Includes five goals (that could apply *anywhere*):

- Provide parks and common open spaces adequate in size, distribution, and condition to serve all citizens.
- Provide recreational facilities and activities to meet the leisure interests and health needs of Houston citizens.
- Use the park system to preserve and protect environmentally significant areas for public enjoyment and education.
- Maintain, secure and manage parks in a manner which encourages their appropriate use.
- Maximize public/private partnerships to assist in all aspects of park and recreation planning and development.
- The City of Houston (fourth largest city in the U.S.), through its Parks and Recreation Department, manages over 20,000 acres of land, most containing buildings and fixtures, with a combined estimated value of more than \$2 billion. Includes 307 parks and wide variety of other assets. The inventory takes up 45 pages.
- Park classifications closely follow those recommended by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). (“In fact, the Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines published by the NRPA in 1996 have been a principal reference source.”)
 - Pocket Park (less than 1 acre)
 - Neighborhood Park (1 to 10 acres)
 - Community Park (5 to 50 acres)
 - Regional Park (50 to 200 acres)
 - Metro Park (200+ acres)
 - Linear Park (min width 50 feet, length variable)
 - Special Purpose Parks (10+ acres)
 - Park Reserve/Natural Areas
 - Plaza or Square
 - Cultural or Historical Park
- Park needs determined by combination of three approaches: standards, demand (survey), and resources.
- Document cites an “old rule-of-thumb” used to estimate the amount of needed parkland: 10 acres per 1,000 population “plus at least an equal amount of acreage in parkways, large parks, forests and the like, either within or adjacent to the city.” For many years, the NRPA further refined this rule into the following (“traditional”) standards:
 - Neighborhood: 1.25 to 2.5 acres / 1000 population
 - Community & Linear: 5 to 8
 - Regional, Metro: 15 to 20
 - Total: 21.25 to 30.5
- “The NRPA standards are echoed by the Urban Land Institute, which recommends 25.5 acres of parkland per thousand residents.”
- Discussion notes that NRPA no longer espouses “one size fits all” standard.
- Process included 12 community meetings.
- Among potential funding sources: the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), regarding bikeways.
- Recommends a new park system headquarters.

5. City of London, Ontario, Canada. 2003. Parks & Recreation Strategic Master Plan.

- City 2001 population 338,575. The City has over 280 parks, open space, and environmentally significant areas totaling over 2,000 hectares of land.
- Plan development process included a survey distributed to approximately 225 stakeholder groups; a random sample household telephone survey (400 interviews); face-to-face interviews with over 70 stakeholder groups, City Councilors and administrators; five focus group sessions, and other activities.
- The focus of recreation services in the plan: “Although the shortage of recreational opportunities for youth was a key issue amongst the stakeholder groups, there is broad consensus that the City has a greater responsibility towards certain segments of the community, those being children, youth, seniors, and at-risk groups such as persons with disabilities and low income households.”
- The total capital cost of the Plan’s recommendations, which span a fifteen year period, are estimated to cost approximately \$120.7 million:
- Plan oriented toward programs and delivery of services.

6. City of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. 2001. Pittsburgh’s Regional Parks Master Plan – A New Ethic of Stewardship.

- Urban parks plan, focused on *restoration* of four city parks, “rooted in an ethic of stewardship.” City has some 178 park facilities (“designed landscapes”).
- Primary objective of this master plan, beyond promoting the stewardship ethic, was “balancing use, history and ecology within each park.” This became their “planning mantra.”
- Plan included a new management program, with emphasis on maintenance
- Plan implementation estimated cost \$113.5 million, \$26.2 million for system-wide strategies and \$87.3 million for capital improvement projects at each regional park. Estimated implementation timeframe is 20 years.
- Plan consists of four parts:
 - Master Planning process, creating a stewardship ethic
 - Creating a park system for the city, including a vision for the future
 - Individual park recommendations.
 - Appendix of design guidelines, preliminary cost estimates, priorities
- Parks are seen as part of the “green assets” of the city or “green infrastructure” or, with additional connections, a “green web.”
- Plan uses reiterations of city map or park maps to show various components and features.
- Plan recognizes parks as *ecological reservoirs*. Connections established by drainages and greenways, with regional parks as cornerstones.
- Among the means by which a recognizable parks system could be attained: marketing campaign; consistent signage, maps, guides, furnishings; improved connections; area-wide ecological strategy; citizen volunteer program; uniform design standards.
- A Trails Master Plan suggested.
- Many suggestions for improving visitor services and partnership strategies.

- Plan recognized a scale of ecological values for existing park properties, with interior forests, streams, and wetlands at the high end and playfields, playgrounds, and courts at the low end.
- For each of the cornerstone regional parks, the master plan addressed: the perceived image / the “big idea”; history, ecological conditions; existing and proposed landscape types; existing and proposed trails; and renewal projects.
- The general design guidelines in the appendix provided consistent general specifications for site furnishings (benches, trash cans, playground equipment, etc.), paving, trails, walls, restrooms, and structures.

7. City of Redlands, California. 1987. Park and Open Space Plan for the City of Redlands

- Plan is “an integration between parks and recreation and open space areas.”
- Not a greenbelt, but better described as an “emerald necklace” type of system
- Chapter I, Planning Objectives includes broad statements (that virtually any community could espouse):
 - achieve a high quality diverse park system which enhances and builds upon unique community values
 - Provide adequate park acreage and recreation facilities to serve the needs of present and future residents
 - Enhance the beauty of the city and the overall quality of life for its residents, etc.
- Also includes statements aimed at special, local community characteristics
 - Preserve citrus groves and
 - Preserve historic homes in groves.
- “A broadly held standard [for park and recreation needs] by communities throughout California is 5 acres/thousand population.”
- Chapter III is entitled “Possibilities.”
- Appends the Open Space and Conservation Element and the Recreation Element of the General Plan.
- Uses a minimum standard of 5 to 6 acres per thousand for recreational use.

8. City of Riverside, California. 2003. City of Riverside Park and Recreation [Final] Master Plan Update 2003

- The Master Plan was intended serve as a resource document for the update of the City’s General Plan, which it preceded.
- Contents at a glance:
 - Intro, purpose of plan, etc.
 - Regional Overview
 - History of Parks System
 - Current Categories, Standards, and Opportunities
 - Present State of the Parks System, Findings
 - Priorities and Recommendations
 - Costs and Financing Strategies
 - Park and Recreation Policies
 - Outreach Methodologies and Findings

- “Vital Roles of Parks” section (could apply virtually anywhere):
 - Open Space and Habitat
 - Enhanced Quality of Life through Services
 - City Image
 - Financial Returns
- Process included a telephone survey of 300 households.
- “Developed park acres are only 2 AC/1000 population, short of the 3AC/1000 population statewide standard.”
- Reflects common problems, also noted in other jurisdictions: parkland shortages, overuse of facilities, and deferred maintenance.

9. City of Rochester, Indiana. 2002. Rochester Park and Recreation 2002-2006 Master Plan

- The City of Rochester, with a 2000 population estimate of 7,869, is located in the north central section of Indiana.
- Contents at a glance:
 - Master Plan Process
 - Issues
 - Priorities
 - Five Action Plan
 - Five Year Budget Forecast
 - Park Development Opportunities
 - Recreational Program Opportunities
- Included strengths, weaknesses, opportunities assessment.
- Provided a long-range vision of the general location, size, and facility requirements for the next 10-20 years, and a specific program of development for each of the next five years.

10. City of Sacramento, California. Draft 2000 Master Plan for Park Facilities and Recreation Services Phase I.

- Over 150 public parks and open spaces in city.
- Includes a history of the city with respect to public land & parks.
- Plan uses “Did You Know” text boxes to deliver sidebar information
- Plan organized in two main parts. Contents at a glance:
 - Part 1 – Today & Future Vision
 - Park System History
 - Our Parks Today
 - Includes park categories
 - Vision for City Parks
 - Includes discussion of population/ demographics, needs assessment, and standards
 - Parks & Rec Policies (8 major topics)
 - park lands and facilities,
 - trails and parkways,
 - open space,

- school parks,
- community participation and image,
- natural resource management for parks,
- maintenance,
- funding and acquisition.
- Part 2 – Implementation
 - Priorities & Recommendations
 - By Planning Areas
 - Includes analyses of park acreage, facilities, repairs & renovations, and overall area
 - Regional Parks, Open Space, & Parkways
 - Park System Management
 - Includes inventories by area
 - Paying for Our parks
- Maps showing ½-mile radius around neighborhood parks and 3-mile radius around community parks (indicates areas not served)
- Park unit categories:
 - neighborhood parks
 - community parks
 - regional parks (75 acres or more)
 - open space and parkways
 - school parks
 - golf courses
- Nearly 665 acres acquired by City and designated for five regional parks; two are pending development.
- Recognizes a value in regional parks is the larger size, which allows more recreation opportunities as well as provide significant open space (and nearby nature); per capita cost of developed facilities at regional parks is more reasonable than at smaller parks because the facilities are available to many more people
- Regional parks provide sense of place, serve as landmarks, may even be destinations.
- More than other parks, regional parks are an expression of community-wide values toward recreation and leisure.
- Open space area intended to have limited recreation use, set aside “to enhance ... environmental amenities.”
- School parks – land owned by school district, responsibility for operation and maintenance shared with City Parks & Rec Department (more than 50 such joint use agreements).
- Lists, summarizes nearby state and county recreation opportunities
- Includes maintenance recommendations.
- Process included telephone survey of 400 households of demand and preferences in 1997 (Research Network Inc.).
- Includes comparison table of costs per capita (p. 22); also funding survey (p. 74)
- Parks lands & facilities standards (based on national standards – e.g., National Recreation and Park Association):
 - Neighborhood parks – 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents; 5 to 10 acres in size
 - Community parks – 2.5 acres / 1,000 ; 6 to 60 acres in size
 - Regional parks – 5.0 acres / 1,000; 75 and greater acres

- Total 10 acres per 1,000 persons
- Park lands and facilities: park standards, priorities for expenditures, location, design.
- Providing park areas and recreation opportunities that are responsive to community: how many parks, where, what types. Demographics & trends tell us how many potential users and where parks could be located; public input and standards say what types of parklands.
- Current cost of maintenance about \$4000 per developed park acre
- Recommends new funding sources:
 - special tax & assessment
 - capital equipment fee (in addition to park development impact fee)
 - consideration of major bond issue,
 - grants coordinator

11. City of San Ramon, California. 2001. A New General Plan for the Future – San Ramon 2020 / General Plan Draft for Voter Approval

- The City “is committed to creating and maintaining a park system that meets citizens’ recreational needs and contributes to the City’s positive image. The presence of well-designed parks and community facilities is essential to the health and well-being of a community.”
- City also has a Parks and Community Services Master Plan, with a planning horizon of 10 years, reviewed biennially and updated every four years
- Current standard for “functional” public parkland is 6.5 acres per 1000 residents, comprised of 4.5 acres of neighborhood parks (those serving residents living within a half mile radius) and 2 acres of community parks (those serving residents within a three-mile radius)
- Park classifications:
 - Neighborhood park
 - School park
 - Community park (10 to 60 acres)
 - Regional park (min. 200 acres)
 - Specialized Recreation Area (includes linear parks / trails, tennis courts)
- East Bay Regional Park District primary provider of regional park space and activities in Contra Costa County
- Plan has “guiding policies” and “implementing policies”
- For recreation, one guiding policy:
 - “Create and maintain a high-quality public park system for San Ramon”
- Each implementing policy followed by a short interpretation.

12. County of Butte, California. [Undated.] Butte County General Plan. Recreation Element.

- “The primary function of County Government in the field of parks and recreation should be the conservation of large natural open spaces suited for park and recreation development and to encourage the various recreation districts to develop recreational facilities that will be used and enjoyed by County residents, tourists and other visitors to the County.”

- “A regional responsibility of County Government, was stated in the County Recreation Policy adopted by the County Supervisors Associations of California in 1960. ‘County Government should be the primary supplier of day-use regional recreational facilities within a county, when such facilities are intended for use throughout the County.’”
- “Although the County has limited direct involvement in recreational planning and has delegated this responsibility to the various recreation districts, the impetus for the development of regional parks or regional recreation areas is a County responsibility.”
- Tourism is a important factor in the present and future economic development of the County. Increase in tourism expected.

13. County of Calaveras, California. 1996. Calaveras County General Plan. Open Space Element.

- Primary focus of open space: to “preserve and enhance the County's significant wildlife and botanical habitats,” as well as riparian habitat, historical and other cultural areas, scenic qualities, and recreation resources.
- Recreation section addresses
 - Parks and Reserves.
 - Federal lands with recreation opportunities
 - State recreation areas
 - Wild & scenic rivers
 - Caves
 - Trails
 - Local recreation areas/facilities

14. County of El Dorado, California. 2001. Proposed Final El Dorado County River Management Plan.

- Plan establishes a set of operational rules for commercial and private boaters navigating the South Fork of the American River between the Chili Bar Dam and Salmon Falls Road in El Dorado County (a 20.7-mile segment of the South Fork of the American River).
- County 2002 estimated population: 163,600
- Over the past 25 years, the County has banned (1976), and then actively managed, whitewater recreation on the South Fork of the American River.
- Carrying Capacity: A prescribed number and type of people (demand) that an area will accommodate (supply), given the desired biophysical/cultural resources, visitor experiences, and management program.
- Heart of the plan: goals and objectives, carrying capacity concept, and 11 management plan elements
- Includes a table pairing objectives with elements
- System of rules and regulations seems complex, requiring monitoring for determining carrying capacity, rules for infractions, and standardized complaint forms, etc.
- Elements of the plan:
 - Element 1 – Educational Programs

- Element 2 – Safety Programs
- Element 3 – Transportation Programs
- Element 4 – Monitoring and Reporting Programs
- Element 5 – Agency and Community Coordination Programs
- Element 6 – Permits and Requirements
- Element 7 – Carrying Capacity Exceedance Actions and Implementation
- Element 8 – Regulations and Ordinances
- Element 9 – Facilities and Lands Management
- Element 10 – Funding
- Element 11 – River Data Availability

15. County of El Dorado, California. 2004. 2004 El Dorado County General Plan. Parks and Recreation Element.

- Blanket statement in the introduction paragraph that “El Dorado County residents are in need of additional recreation lands and facilities, and the policies and implementation measures in this element are responsive to that demand.”
- Element indicates that County has an “Interim Master Plan for Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Trails.”
- County population estimate 2003: 168,822.
- County’s role: “The County shall assume primary responsibility for the acquisition and development of regional parks and assist in the acquisition and development of neighborhood and community parks to serve County residents and visitors.” (Policy 9.1.1 – Park Acquisition and Development)
- “... under the Quimby Act (Government Code Section 66477), conditioning subdivision approval upon the provision of park or recreation areas must be based upon an assessment of needs contained in the general plan.”
- Three goals, each with several objectives, each objectives with a number of policies. Three goals as follows:
 - Parks and Recreation Facilities:
 - “Provide adequate recreation opportunities and facilities including developed regional and community parks, trails, and resource-based recreation areas for the health and welfare of all residents and visitors of El Dorado County.”
 - Funding:
 - “Secure an adequate and stable source of funding to implement a comprehensive County-wide parks and recreation plan.”
 - Recreation and Tourism:
 - “Greater opportunities to capitalize on the recreational resources of the County through tourism and recreational based businesses and industries.”
- County-adopted guidelines for acquisition and development of park facilities (included in the Element as a policies)
 - Regional Parks (30 to 10,000 acres) – 1.5 ac/1,000 population
 - Community Parks (10 to 44 acres) – 1.5 ac/1,000 population
 - Neighborhood Parks (2 to 10 acres) – 2.0 ac/1,000 population
 - For two CSD neighborhood parks and planned communities – 5.0 ac/1,000 population

- Policies encourage cooperation with cities and districts, and actively pursuing land transfers from federal agencies.
- “The County shall strongly encourage the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to divest itself of all lands within the County to provide ownership so the County can reap the benefits therefrom.”
- Implementation measure calls for the County to prepare and implement a Parks Master Plan and Parks and Recreation Capital Improvement Program focused on:
 - Development of sufficient park and recreation land to serve the residents for neighborhood, community, and regional parkland;
 - Applicability of parkland dedications under the Quimby Act;
 - Serving residents of and visitors to the County;
 - Identification of funding sources; and
 - Maintenance.

16. County of Erie, New York. 2002[?]. Erie County Parks Master Plan – RENEWAL / A 2020 Vision for the Erie County Parks System

- Major, apparently well-funded plan, consisting of 4 volumes:
 - Vol. 1: Park System Master Plan;
 - Vol. 2: Park-Specific Recommendations
 - Vol. 3: Recreational Trails
 - Vol. 4: Parks Inventory and Assessment
- “RENEWAL” is an acronym (which could cover areas of interest for many park systems, including Yolo County):
 - Recreation
 - Environmental Sustainability
 - Natural and Cultural Heritage
 - Education and Interpretation
 - Waterways
 - Accessibility
 - Linkages
- Erie County is situated at the eastern end of Lake Erie in western New York State and covers 1,054 square miles of land.
- Population of Erie County in 2000 estimated at 950,265; population has declined over the past thirty years.
- Erie County owns and operates a parks system containing nearly 11,000 acres of land on 38 sites throughout the county. These sites include eleven large multi-purpose parks, five undeveloped parks, thirteen forestry lots, seven small special-purpose parks and two multi-use recreational trails.
- Contents, Volume 1, Park System Master Plan:
 - Introduction (including background, process, etc.)
 - Planning context (including county overview, natural and cultural setting, park system assessment, recreation trends, user survey results, case studies)
 - Overall system framework (including role and significance of park system, mission & goals, park classifications)
 - Overall system recommendations
 - Waterfront strategy
 - Park development recommendations

- Park management zones
 - Environmental management
 - Public awareness and education
 - Volunteer assistance
 - Signage system
- Implementation strategies (including capital improvement priorities, capital cost estimates, management and operations challenges, acquisition and consolidation strategy).
- As in most other jurisdictions, the Parks MP and the jurisdiction’s comprehensive plan are closely related. The “Parks System Master Plan is the first component of a full update of the Erie County Comprehensive Plan.”
- Master Plan is comprised of the following elements:
 - Inventory and Assessment of Existing Facilities and Conditions
 - Review and Update of Existing Park Plans (including conceptual master plans for five specific parks)
 - Recreational Trails
 - Waterfront Strategy
 - Assessment of Consolidation and Management Opportunities
- Park system dates to WPA-era structures, constructed in the 1930s.
- Includes discussion of the County’s Role in “Recreation Service Delivery”
- “The role of the County Park system shall be:
 - To provide residents opportunities to enjoy recreational pursuits in natural settings on a year-round basis
 - To protect regionally important areas of exceptional scenic, environmental, and cultural heritage significance
 - To contribute to the economic vitality of the County
 - To promote public awareness of the resources available within the park system.”
- County thinks of itself as a niche service provider. Mission of the Park System:
 - “The Erie County Park System has traditionally been positioned to fill a niche in the regional parks and recreation framework. Specifically the County park system has emphasized the provision of recreation activities and facilities in natural environment areas as an alternative to localized park settings.”
 - Plan recommends that County focus on this core mission, be careful about getting involved with developed active recreation functions that are very expensive.
- Plan used a 20-year planning horizon.
- Parks as important to quality of life, for providing myriad of recreation opportunities, and as an economic investment, a major attraction and a reason for new corporate relocation into the County.
- Classification system (newly recommended in this plan):
 - Heritage Parks (the original components)
 - Waterfront Parks, with sub-categories:
 - Destination Parks
 - Windows on the Water
 - Linkages
 - Special Purpose Parks
 - Conservation Parks

- Forest Management Areas
- Each classification is described in terms of:
 - Role and function
 - Facilities
 - Management Focus
- Plan addresses preservation and restoration of cultural heritage features and preservation and restoration of natural systems; included section on environmental management and restoration strategies.
- Also addresses “environmentally responsible parks management” (e.g., reduced mowing to return some “manicured” areas to more natural conditions; improving riparian and aquatic environments, limiting use of herbicides & pesticides, creating habitat areas).
- Suggests that following sufficient upgrades, County should undertake marketing program.
- Supports partnerships (incl. “Friends of Erie Parks”).
- Management zones (like zoning classifications) were used in each individual park master plan:
 - Nature reserve zone
 - Recreation zone
 - Heritage zone
 - Service zone
- Recommends a business plan for the Parks Department, which would include:
 - Market research and analysis
 - Cost/benefit financial (ROI) analysis
 - Maximization of revenue generation and service provision at special use facilities (golf courses, beaches, other)
 - A comprehensive marketing plan
 - A comprehensive communication plan
 - A comprehensive corporate sponsorship program
 - Development of a comprehensive grant-writing strategy
 - Development of a “friends of”, volunteer committee, and strategic planning/community committee infrastructure
- Strategies to increase revenues included:
 - Maximizing the use of existing parks:
 - Ensuring that the parks are efficiently operated
 - Selectively developing new parks
- As revised from the previous plan, there are seven goals:
 - Build a connected County-wide system of parks, trails, and greenways for environmental conservation and recreation purposes.
 - Provide and maintain parks and recreation programs that meet the needs of County residents and are not typically provided by local, state or national parks, or private recreation providers.
 - Preserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage resources within the park system
 - Ensure accessibility of the park system for all County residents.
 - Ensure sustainable and cost effective park and recreation service delivery.
 - Promote economic and tourism potential of the park system, in particular the waterfront and heritage parks

- Build an effective public outreach strategy that promotes volunteerism and land stewardship
- Plan suggests that some parks or areas within parks be designated “quiet zones.”
- Plan includes suggested new logo for “re-branding” as part of marketing and outreach.

17. County of Humboldt, California. 2004. Clam & Moonstone Beach County Parks Management Master Plan

- Plan addressed two coastal County parks in Humboldt County
- Policy framework based on primarily on General Plan, local coastal plan, and objectives of Coastal Conservancy funding
- Main components of plan
 - Recreational Activities
 - Recreational Facilities
 - Access, Circulation, & Parking
 - Natural Resources Management
 - Historical & Cultural Resource Management
 - Education & Signage Program
 - Enforcement
- Plan focused on fairly specific objectives
 - Help alleviate use conflicts at the beaches;
 - Allow park staff to effectively manage the parks;
 - Maintain public coastal access;
 - Protect and enhance the natural resources; and
 - Provide a safe environment for quality recreational opportunities.
- Addressed functions of park hosts
- Funding sources identified:
 - Federal sources
 - Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund
 - Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act
 - Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund
 - Department of Education – 21st Century Learning Centers
 - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Environmental Education Grants
 - NOAA Coastal Services Center (CSC)
 - State/Local Open Space and Recreational Facility Funding Sources:
 - General Funds/Bonds
 - State Grants/Low Interest Loans
 - State Department of Parks and Recreation
 - California Coastal Conservancy
 - Habitat Conservation Fund
 - Wildlife Conservation Board

18. County of Jefferson, Colorado. 2003. Jefferson County Open Space Master Plan. Contents at a glance:

- Focus is on the County's open space program, which incorporates outdoor recreation opportunities
- Located on western edge of metropolitan Denver, Jefferson County is 774 square miles; 2000 estimated population was 527,000, the second most populated county in the state
- Master Plan is updated approximately every 5 years.
- Open Space program, established in 1972, has preserved 50,000 acres in 30 years. Lands secured in fee, conservation easement, lease, and donation.
- Program is funded by a one-half of one-percent sales tax on retail sales in Jefferson County.
- Several bond measures (over \$300 million) were approved over the past five years.
- Document less than 50 pages, including appendices. Contents at a glance:
 - Mission Statement
 - Statement of Purpose
 - Introduction
 - Goals and Objectives
 - History and Background
 - Summary of Land Acquisitions
 - Changes in the County
 - Current Issues in Open Space
 - Management Tools
 - Master Planning Process
 - Management Unit Classifications
 - Proposing Lands for Acquisition
 - Master Plan Acquisition Values
 - Land Preservation Options
 - Funding Options
 - Future Roles
 - Appendices
- Mission statement: "The mission of the Open Space Program is to provide a living resource of open space lands and waters throughout Jefferson County for the physical, psychological, recreational and social enjoyment of present and future generations."
- Increasing levels of use and increasing conflicts among types of use (hiking versus mountain biking).
- One day-to-day challenge is balancing resource stewardship responsibilities with mandate to provide for "passive" outdoor recreational opportunities.
- Park Management Plans are prepared for each Open Space Park.
- Three classifications used in each Park Management Plan:
 - Sensitive Areas – limited visitation through a special use permit
 - Natural Areas – ecological processes dominate and people experience remoteness and solitude
 - Parkland Recreation Areas – wide variety of outdoor recreation, while ensuring sustainability of natural systems

- County Open Space Program manages 64,000 acres of land jointly with the City of Denver. Two agencies also joined with a local community group in 2001 to pursue grant funding for a regional management plan.
- County has joint ventures program with cities; annual grant application and review process is conducted by Open Space staff and Advisory Committee
- Anyone in County may submit a recommendation for acquisition. Process is well-defined.
- Plan includes “acquisition values” by which new proposals are evaluated
- Program “has enjoyed a long and successful partnership with the cities and districts throughout the County.” (Long list of joint venture projects)

19. County of Marin, California. 2004. Marin Countywide Plan.

- General Plan document. Recreation addressed as part of the “Socioeconomic Element.”
- Programs regarding lands managed primarily for habitat and scenic values and lower-impact, passive recreation are part of the Open Space Section in the “Natural Systems Element”
- “State law allows cities and counties to acquire parkland through dedication or payment of in-lieu fees during subdivision review (Government Code Section 66477, known as the ‘Quimby’ Act), and to purchase surplus school sites for recreation if public lands in the vicinity are not adequate to meet community outdoor recreation needs (Education Code Sections 17485-17500).”
- The County is “about 300 acres shy of an overall 5-acre standard.”
- Predicts increase in demand for parks & recreation
- Goal: “A High-Quality Parks and Recreation System.” Provide park and recreation facilities and programs to meet the various needs of all County residents.
- How will results be achieved? Implementing Programs:
 - Update the Parks Master Plan to assess current facilities; determine appropriate locations for new facilities; and explore funding options.
 - Assess user needs.
 - Offer assistance to local agencies.
 - Explore options with local agencies.
 - Replace closed facilities.
 - Prepare an Acquisition Plan for each proposed new park site, addressing user needs, alternative sites, environmental impacts and financing options.
 - Prepare an impact assessment for each proposed facility that identifies significant resource values and provides a plan for management of vegetation, wildlife, and water resources (if applicable).
 - Develop a master plan and capital improvement plan for each acquired park area that includes a site development plan, phasing for development, estimated cost for each phase and long-term operation and maintenance, estimated revenue generation, and funding sources for development.
 - Conduct a detailed facilities inventory
 - Meet needs of special groups (youths, seniors and people with disabilities)
 - Consider group camping and picnic needs – identify areas appropriate for overnight camping by groups with permits from the County, and provide group picnic areas as needed.

- Consider garden sites; study the feasibility of allowing community gardens in some park areas, and create a garden pilot program.
- Minimize Toxins – protect the health of park visitors by utilizing the least toxic means available of reducing weeds and other pests, if necessary, to acceptable levels.

20. County of Placer, California. 2000. Placer Legacy Open Space and Agricultural Conservation Program.

- Program seeks to protect and conserve open space and agricultural lands in Placer County. Implements the County’s General Plan.
- Fast-growing area; document recognizes that County risks losing the natural and scenic qualities that distinguish it from other developing regions of the state.
- Program works with willing sellers, with County as a willing buyer.
- “It is the goal of this project to develop specific, economically viable, implementation programs that will enable the residents of Placer County to preserve a sufficient quantity of these resources [woodlands, forests, grasslands, riparian areas, lakes, rivers, and an assortment of open spaces] to maintain a high quality of life and an abundance of diverse natural habitats while supporting the economic viability of the County and enhancing property values.”
- Using open space to separate population centers, enhance scenic routes, and protect scenic vistas; also acquisition of lands with safety concerns, such as flooding or landslide hazard, as open space.
- Program prioritizes open space resource types, under the categories of agriculture, biological, outdoor recreation, scenic resources / urban separators, and public safety.
- Program includes a wide variety of proposed implementation measures for each study area.
- Estimated costs range from \$25.2 million to \$182.9 million for acquisition and start-up over thirty years, with annual costs between \$1 and \$3.7 million.

21. County of Platte, Missouri. 2000[?]. Platte County Park Master Plan.

- Kansas City Metro Area. County population estimate 2003: 79,390.
- Generally a conventional approach in this plan.
- “The vision of Platte County Parks and Recreation is to enhance the quality of life for all of its citizens by providing one of the premier county parks systems in the region.”
- “We will achieve our vision by:
 - Knowing and responding to the needs of our citizens
 - Preserving and enhancing our unique natural beauty and our county’s rich history
 - Developing multi-purpose land uses and programs
 - Practicing the fiscal responsibility and environmental stewardship our citizens expect.”
- Includes commonly expressed idea that parks and recreation programs provide a range of benefits
 - social
 - economic

- environmental
- individuals
- Plan identifies its purposes, including marketing:
 - “The Platte County Master Plan is intended to define a structure for phasing the development of the recommended amenities based on the development cost and the operating cost. This plan is also designed to be an aid in the development of community awareness with regard to both existing and future amenities within the County’s parks. Finally, the Master Plan will act as a promotional tool to market parks redevelopment to both the business community and the private sector. The preparation of the Park Master Plan has resulted in a number of findings and recommendations that will be vital to the future growth and development of the park system.”
- Generally, County parks are large parks, usually several hundred acres in size, which contain amenities not otherwise typically found in small city parks.
- Plan generally used National Recreation and Park Association standards. “It is our intention to use the industry standard as a general guide for the definition for County parks.” Recommendations for surplus & deficiency determinations also based on “some professional judgement and subjective decisions.”
 - Neighborhood Park/Playground (15+ acres) – 1.0 to 2.0 acres/1000
 - Community Park (25+ acres) – 5.0 to 8.0 acres/1000
 - Regional / Metropolitan Park (200+ acres) – 12.0 to 18.0 acres/1000
 - Regional Park Preserve (1,000+ acres) – “Variable”
- Generally recommended acquisitions in all categories.
- Included a competitive market analysis. A key element of plan was to “not create redundant facilities and/or services in the County.”
- Plan included a statistically valid phone survey of 400 County households.
- Among the “action strategies” for the plan was to create a County Parks and Recreation Department.
- Plan included an analysis of a bonding approach to the Implementation Plan.
- In August 2000, voters in Platte County passed a one-half cent sales tax dedicated to parks and recreation and stormwater control.

22. County of Sacramento, California. 1985. American River Parkway Plan. Sacramento County Planning and Community Development.

- “An element of the Sacramento County General Plan.”
- Plan was adopted by the Board of Supervisors.
- 29-mile greenbelt.
- Plan presents goals and policies up-front (section 2).
- Much of plan devoted to detailed plans for sub-areas.
- Parkway concept intended to (a) preserve natural open space and protect environmental quality and (b) contribute to recreational opportunities.
 - Ongoing management of natural resources.
 - Accommodation of demand for passive, unstructured, river-oriented recreational pursuits in a natural environment which are not normally provided by other county recreational facilities in a manner that minimizes impact on the environment.
 - Limitation of use of parkway to prevent overuse.
 - Coordination of parkway planning & management.
 - Balance of preservation of natural open space with provision of recreation.

23. County of Sacramento, California. 2002. The Dry Creek Parkway Recreation Master Plan.

- Approximately six-mile open space and riparian corridor
- Contents at a glance
 - Introduction (including parkway concept and description)
 - Goals and Policies
 - Parkway Resource Assessment
 - Public Uses of Parkway
 - Concept Plan and Programs
 - Implementation
 - Funding
- Plan presents goals and policies up-front (section 2).
- Includes “concept plans” (design and use maps) and programs for sub-areas.
- “The amenities provided by a variety of passive and active recreation opportunities and open space are very important components in determining the overall ‘quality of life’ enjoyed by residents of Sacramento County. It is a commonly acknowledged irony that while these amenities attract new residents, their quality and existence can be significantly threatened by the demand for building sites and the land use practices associated with development.”
- Uses of this parkway include preservation of flood conveyance and capacity within the floodway.
- There was an Environmental Impact Report for the Dry Creek Parkway Recreation Master Plan. Mitigation measures specified in the FEIR were incorporated into the plan.
- Six main goals in the plan:
 - To develop Dry Creek Parkway as a valuable asset to both the community and the region.
 - To manage the Parkway in a manner that will preserve, protect, enhance, and interpret the diverse resources of the Parkway including archaeological and cultural resources, adequate flow of high quality water, anadromous and resident fishes, migratory and resident wildlife, habitat to support these species, diverse natural vegetation, and adequate channel capacity and conveyance to support flood control.
 - To provide opportunities for the protection, and enhancement of wildlife and habitat through the creation of a continuous open space corridor along Dry Creek extending from the Sacramento/Placer County line to the Sacramento city limits.
 - To provide for public use and trail access opportunities compatible with the goals of the Parkway.
 - To obtain funding and develop partnerships to facilitate development and management of the Parkway.
 - To establish realistic and sustainable development and management strategies for the Parkway.

24. County of San Luis Obispo, California. 2003. Parks and Recreation Element. Public Review Draft. Prepared by County Parks Division, Crawford Multari & Clark Associates, and Firma.

- Public review draft approximately 160 pages
- The mission of the County Parks Division is “to ensure diversified opportunities for recreation and the personal enrichment of the county's residents and visitors while protecting its natural, cultural and historical resources.”
- Population currently about 239,000; estimated to grow to 323,100 by the year 2010.
- Contents at a glance:
 - Introduction (including why parks and recreation are important, history of County parks, mission of Parks Division, vision, etc.)
 - Parks (value and benefits, classifications, existing inventory, determining needs, etc.)
 - Recreation (value and benefits, definition, types of recreation offered, determining need, etc.)
 - Special Places & Uses (includes cultural sites, habitat protection)
 - Choosing Parks and Recreation (to “reduce the randomness of park acquisition.” Includes decision process for accepting donations, role of advisory committee, a process for choosing park and recreation facilities.)
 - Funding Acquisition, Development, & Maintenance
 - Definitions
 - Appendices
- Types of parks:
 - Mini-parks
 - Linear parks
 - Neighborhood & community parks
 - Regional parks
 - Recreation site
- The County parks inventory, 2003, total operational acreage:
 - Park areas: 1,112
 - Natural Area acres: 12,056
- Other agencies that provide parks and recreation
 - Cities
 - State Parks
 - BLM
 - USDA Forest Service
- Determining Park Needs:
 - While the current National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Standards suggest the need for each community to develop its own relevant standards, the NRPA 1983 standards do provide a starting point for assessing current need.
 - “There is a growing recognition that recreation and parkland demand should be met by a host of providers acting in cooperation. Further, planning for parkland acquisition should focus on flexible and adaptive strategies. In practical terms, traditional target acreages for parks are not realistic given funding limitations. Communities may be best served by a self-directed approach based on what citizens in a region or community determine is the best and most opportune for themselves.”

- Parks Division Visions for the Future
 - A quality park, recreation and natural area system.
 - An equitable distribution of parks and recreation lands and services.
 - Parks and recreation lands and services for all age groups and physical capabilities.
 - A system of parks, recreation and natural areas consistent with the community's existing and future needs.
 - Protection of sensitive natural and cultural resources within new and existing parks and natural areas.
 - A viable park, recreation and natural area funding source which provides for community needs.
- Element contains 6 goals, each of which concludes a chapter on a related topic. Each goal is followed by one objective and a number of policies. The 6 goals:
 - Parks – Provide an equitable and quality public park system within San Luis Obispo County.
 - Recreation – Provide recreation that serves the County's various age groups and varying economic situations and physical abilities.
 - Special places – Maintain and augment access to and along the coast.
 - Choosing park and recreation – Provide an equitable and realistic park, recreation, natural area, and coastal access project list.
 - Funding Acquisition, development, & maintenance – Use a variety of funding sources to expand, acquire, develop, and maintain the County's parks, recreation opportunities and natural areas.
 - Maintenance – Provide high quality park maintenance that is cost effective and environmentally sensitive.
- Element includes a number of good (potentially adaptable) policies, including these:
 - “Preserve County parkland for active and passive recreation. Community facilities, which have little to no recreational component, should be placed outside of an existing or proposed park.”
 - “Prior to accepting or developing a new park, County Parks shall determine the long-term maintenance and operating costs associated with the proposed project.”
 - “To provide an equitable distribution of recreation throughout the County, County Parks should attempt to provide new or expanded recreation (as a first priority) in those Planning Areas that have:
 1. Experienced faster growth rates.
 2. Very limited existing park acreage and/or recreation opportunities in relation to population density.”
 - “When assessing existing park acreage and/or recreation opportunities consider parks and recreation offered by all entities provided that entity offers comparable service to the County's unincorporated population.”
- Trail policies in this Element bear examination:
 - “TRAILS:
“OBJECTIVE C: Provide a viable multi-use trail system in the County consistent with Appendix B, Table 2 and the County's available funding.
 - “3.6 The County will attempt to route trails on public land. Where public lands are not available or where significant environmental or economic impacts are

identified, routing across private property may be considered only in the following instances:

1. As funds are available, across those lands where a willing-seller has been identified, provided that sufficient funds are available for on-going maintenance and the assumption of liability responsibilities and insurance for as long as the public trail shall exist.
 2. As a condition of approval in conjunction with a significant development proposal or subdivision, excluding lands which remain in active agricultural production, i.e., crop production and grazing, nursery specialties, and specialized animal facilities, as defined by the Land Use Element; provided it can be clearly shown that the easement dedication being sought is in balance with the level of development being proposed.
- “3.7 The County shall fully indemnify, protect and hold harmless (including all costs and attorney fees) private property owners who dedicate or grant a public trail easement from, and against, those risks and damages which arise out of the usage of the trail easement by the public and which, in good conscience, should not be borne by the private property owner.
- “3.8 To assure that if, for any reason, the public trail easement is abandoned, or if the liability acceptance is discontinued, the trail easement shall revert to the underlying property owner(s).
- “3.9 To assure the reasonable protection of adjacent public and private properties. Security to protect the neighboring property may include:
1. Trail fencing to encourage the prevention of trespass of trail users onto neighboring land uses, from infringing on the trail activities.
 2. As necessary, the imposition of enforceable limitations on the trail use; including, but not limited to, the posting of rules and regulations, and/or patrolling to guarantee the security of both the trail users and neighboring properties.
 3. Where feasible a system of permits to assure that the user knows and understands the safe and appropriate use of county trails.
- “3.10 Trail projects should:
1. Be consistent with the standards contained in this element.
 2. Provide adequate signs and fencing. Trail signs should identify permitted trail users, direct trail users to relevant public areas, provide for safety (such as yield signs), and other important information.
 3. To the extent feasible, provide for multi-use.
 4. Provide a trail corridor which minimizes development and maintenance costs. Trail corridors should, to the extent feasible, be located outside of drainage swales, basins, areas with an average slope greater than 5%, sensitive resource areas, and other areas that would not allow or significantly hinder trail development. Unless no other reasonable alternative is available locate obstructions and private and quasi-public easements outside the trail corridor.
 5. Provide a legal description and an offer to dedicate prior to final map recordation or similar timing for projects which are not subdivisions.”

25. County of Santa Clara, California. 2003. Strategic Plan / Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation System. Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department and 2M Associates et al.

- Regional park system with 27 park units and 44,000 acres. Inception of Parks and Recreation Department in 1956.
- Santa Clara County population over 1,600,000. Projection: 23% increase over next 20 years.
- Original vision involved a “necklace of parks.” This was the first part of “the recipe” for the park system.
- The second part of the “recipe” is the “Park Charter Fund,” which is the financial mechanism for acquisition, development, and operation of County Parks. Approved by voters in 1972. In 1972, basis of fund was 10 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation. Currently, 1.425 cents per \$100.
- Santa Clara County residents have passed measures 6 times to set aside percentage of County’s property tax for parkland acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance.
- Acknowledges the need “to strive to find the proper balance” between “quality recreation opportunities” and resource protection.
- “... methodically expand regional outdoor recreation opportunities within the County to keep pace with its growing needs.” Over next ten years, \$275,000,000 additional funding needed to meet goals of plan.
- Strategic Plan organized in three sections:
 - “Developing the Vision” – core values, needs, vision
 - “Painting the Picture” – criteria for evaluating new proposals, classification system, and 8 strategic goals and 56 strategies
 - “From Picture to Practice” – 12 Action Plans, including funding
- Contents at a glance:
 - Introduction (including relationship to General Plan, process, and what plan is and is not)
 - Regional Park and Recreation Needs
 - Values that Guide Regional Parks and Recreation
 - A Vision for Regional Parks and Recreation
 - What is Regional Parks and Recreation? (including significance criteria, parkland classification system, trail classifications)
 - Regional Park and Recreation Strategies
 - Strategic Actions and Priorities
 - Funding Regional Parks and Recreation
- Vision Statement: "We create a growing and diverse system of regional parks, trails, and open spaces of Countywide significance that connects people with the natural environment, offers visitor experiences that renew the human spirit, and balances recreation opportunities with resource protection."
- Eight strategic goals:
 - Strategic Goal #1: A system of parks and trails of regional significance sufficient to accommodate growth in both recreation demand and diversity.
 - Strategic Goal #2: A Strategic Plan that that includes parks, trails, recreation and open space lands owned by others in addition to the County.
 - Strategic Goal #3: An interconnected system of regional parks and trails that are accessible, of the highest quality, and community-supported.

- Strategic Goal #4: A system of regional parks and trails that is balanced with resource protection.
- Strategic Goal #5: A leadership role by the County that engages all potential partners in implementing the Strategic Plan (public agencies, nonprofits, private groups, and Parks and Recreation staff).
- Strategic Goal #6: A system of regional parks and trails that fosters education and research.
- Strategic Goal #7: Maintenance and implementation of the Strategic Plan so it remains a dynamic guide for the growth of the regional parks, trails, and open space system.
- Strategic Goal #8: Adequate funding to implement the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan on a timely basis.
- 12 Action Plans, covering 100 specific tasks:
 - Partnership / Volunteers
 - Natural Resource Management
 - Countywide Trails
 - Outdoor Recreation Program
 - Interpretive Program
 - Marketing / Customer Service
 - Operations
 - Maintenance
 - Capital Improvement Program
 - Acquisition
 - Staffing / Organization
 - Funding
- Plan is NOT:
 - A detailed master plan for all the County Parks.
 - An acquisition plan.
 - An update of the existing General Plan policies.
 - A green light for any specific outdoor recreation use or development proposal to be implemented.
 - A plan that mandates how jurisdictions other than the County government must act. This plan represents a coordinated, backbone system of strategies and tasks for implementing the strategies that will expand and link the County's regional park and recreation opportunities with its populace.
- Plan development included phone survey of 500 interviews, focus groups, round table discussions, public workshops, commissioners summits, etc.
- Park classifications:
 - Regional Park Resource Bank (for future public use to be re-classified during a site-specific park Master Plan process)
 - Regional Park Natural Area
 - Regional Park Rural Recreation Area
 - Regional Park Urban Recreation Area
 - Regional Historic Sites
- Includes an appendix of about 60 capital improvement projects with a total cost between \$58.8 million and \$74.8 million.

26. County of Solano, California. 2003. Solano County Park and Recreation Element – A Part of the Solano County General Plan.

- Contents at a glance:
 - Introduction (purpose, relationship to General Plan, etc.)
 - Goals & Objectives
 - Recreation Today
 - Recreation Needs
 - Plan Proposals and Implementation Recommendations
 - Implementation Alternatives
 - Appendices (including inventory, community meetings, preferences survey, demographic information, funding, CIP, etc.)
- Population Solano County (2000 census): 394,542. [Population (2003 estimate): 412,336.]
- Needs assessment – surveyed 500 members of the public, four public forums, website input. In summary:
 - Particularly high demand for: group and family camping, trails, picnicking, visiting scenic and cultural places.
 - Significant increase also in: sports fields, boating, nature appreciation, regional sports complex, equestrian trails, off-road recreation.
- Two “overall goals” to guide recreation planning in Solano County:
 - “Preserve and manage a diverse system of regional parks and natural resources for the enjoyment of present and future County residents and park visitors.
 - “Promote, develop and manage diversified recreational facilities to meet regional recreation needs of the County.”
- Eleven objectives were identified to direct efforts toward achieving the goals.
- Refers to the California Outdoor Recreation Resources Plan and its assignment of countywide parks and recreation to the counties.
- Emphasis on County as a coordinator of regional recreation, working with the cities, the Greater Vallejo Recreation District, the State, and federal government. County policies support an active coordination role with other entities.
- An adopted objective is to ensure that there are at least 10 acres of regional and local parkland per 1,000 people.
- “In 1996, national standards were replaced by suggested guidelines encouraging each county and community to establish its own acres-to-population park standards. This Park and Recreation Element recommends ten total acres of local and regional parkland for each 1,000 persons.”
- Element states that the County’s traditional role has been limited to the provision of regional parks, consistent with State policy. “In Solano County, under General Plan policies, all development at urban density is to be located in cities.” Cities are providers of community and neighborhood parks; counties and special districts providers of regional parks.
- Regional Parks:
 - Serve two or more communities
 - Service area is up to one-hour drive
 - Natural or cultural resources are basis
 - Minimum size – 50 acres
 - User fees common

- Other park categories:
 - Regional Preserves
 - Regional Recreation Area
 - Recreation/Staging Units
- Emphasis on addressing needs that cannot be totally accommodated in urban setting.
- Consideration also given to special needs of elderly, physically impaired, and low-income.
- Among many policies, are those that allow private concessions within County parks and that support County promotion of an “Adopt-A-Park” program.
- Among entities providing parks and recreation in the County, plan mentions federal, state, ABAG, cities, and special districts, including the Greater Vallejo Recreation District, which serves a 65-square mile area including Vallejo and some adjoining unincorporated areas.
- Of a total 3225 countywide park acres, the County is responsible for approximately 229. Cities provide 2630 acres; State provides 367.
- Element sets forth 14 proposals, each of which includes a rationale, lead agency, timing, estimated cost, and funding source.
 - Proposal #8 is to expand camping facilities at Lake Solano County Park.
 - Proposal #13 is to consider the creation of a Countywide Regional Park District. (Refers to alternative ways to establish such a district and cites Section 5500 of the California Public Resources Code.)
- Appendix G is a Capital Improvements Program. Solano Board of Supervisors has approved a five-year CIP developed by Parks Division. Element includes summaries of 13 projects; most of the projects use Prop 12 and/or Prop 40 funds.
- Adopted County Regional Parks Map shows 3 existing regional parks, 3 existing County-operated regional parks, and 2 proposed new County-operated Regional Parks.

27(a). County of Sonoma, California. 2003. Sonoma County Outdoor Recreation Plan. Sonoma County Regional Parks Department and others.

- Plan was prepared by several County agencies (County Regional Parks Department, County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, and County Water Agency) and a CAC over several years; is well-supported by needs assessments and public involvement; covers a wide range of material in depth, including detailed assessment of park needs and specific acquisitions (approximately 130 pages)
- County manages 32 park facilities; total of over 4,000 acres of parks and open space areas, including 3,105 regional open space and 892 regional recreation areas.
- Categories:
 - Community and Neighborhood Parks – 25 acres or less
 - Active Regional Recreation Areas – 200 acres or less
 - Passive Regional Open Space Parks – 200 acres or larger
 - Trails
 - Other Lands

- “Passive” is used to mean “parks that are generally managed in their natural condition supporting recreation activities with minimal impact on the environment.”
- County has a total of 1,042,500 acres of publicly accessible land, 52,863 acres of which is owned by federal, State, and local agencies.
- The plan recommends increasing the number of County Open Space Parks by 11 and expanding the 5 existing areas.
- The plan recommends increasing the number of County Regional Recreation Areas by 12, including 6 river access sites.
- The plan recommends increasing the number of State Parks within Sonoma County; recommends creation of 6,500 acres of regional preserves to be operated by local, state, or federal agencies
- Contents at a glance:
 - Executive summary, including highlights
 - Chapter I – introduction, including vision, sponsoring and other agencies, goals of plan, relationship to CEQA
 - Chapter II – the value recreation to County. Economic benefits and other benefits. Also includes section on Farm Bureau concerns regarding impacts of recreation on agriculture.
 - Chapter III – recommended policies that have been developed to coordinate and implement the Plan (developed by Citizens Advisory Committee, “may form basis of a General Plan Amendment”);
 - Chapter IV classifies parkland by category and includes an inventory of all parkland in County;
 - Chapter V describes the Needs Assessment that was conducted to identify the types of parkland that are required and of interest to Sonoma County residents in the future;
 - Chapter VI – specific recommendations of the plan by Planning Area and includes the Outdoor Recreation Maps;
 - Chapter VII – financing options required to implement the Plan.
 - Chapter VIII – References.
- County has adopted a standard of 20 acres per thousand population. Further defined as:
 - Active Regional Recreation Areas – 5 acres / 1000
 - Passive Regional Open Space Parks – 15 acres / 1000.
- “Vision of the Plan” covers many points common to other plans: enhancing lives of residents, quality experiences, recreation contributing to local economy, meeting the needs of people of all ages and groups, etc. Also includes statement: “We envision outdoor recreation facilities that respect the rights and desires of private property owners and that protect agricultural interests in the County.”
- Vision involves a “balance of facilities – from youth-oriented sports fields to passive parks and hiking, biking and equestrian trails.”
- Plan is notable for extended discussion of agricultural conflict issues, including documentation of Farm Bureau concerns.
- Plan addresses both the benefits and the impacts of recreation. Among the latter are potential conflicts with agricultural lands.
- Notes that in the 1993 CA Outdoor Recreation Plan, camping was activity with most public support.

- In a discussion of agricultural buffers, the plan mentions the City of Davis’s ordinance requiring a 100-foot agricultural buffer.

27(b). County of Sonoma, California. 2003. Initial Study [for the] Sonoma County Outdoor Recreation Plan.

- Part of the CEQA review for Item 29, following.
- Document states that implementation of individual projects identified in the Outdoor Recreation Plan “would require preparation of project-specific environmental documents, discretionary approvals from the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, and permits from applicable regulatory agencies.”
- The basis of the document is a version of the environmental checklist adapted from Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines.
- Initial Study does not contain a determination by the lead agency with respect to whether the proposed project (i.e., the Outdoor Recreation Plan) would have a significant effect on the environment. Statement is made that “Regional Parks will prepare appropriate CEQA compliance documents for all ORP recommended projects.”
- The checklist responses within nearly every topical category include one or more items marked “potentially significant unless mitigated.”
- The Initial Study document provides a considerable number of mitigation measures. The document concludes in each topical section that the identified mitigation measures would reduce the potentially significant effects to less-than-significant levels.
- Mitigation measures are programmatic, generally identifying: conditions or requirements for park and trail siting, materials, and design; methods or timing of construction; pre-construction studies and agency consultations; and post-construction monitoring.

28. East Bay Regional Park District, California. 1996. Master Plan 1997. East Bay Regional Park District and others.

- Plan document has attractive design (photos, maps, artwork). Large, captioned photos on section divider pages.
- District formed in 1934. Now 85,000 acres. More than 1,000 miles of trails
- About 2.1 million residents in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties can find a regional park within 15 to 30 minutes of their homes; no park more than an hour away from any District resident by auto or public transit.
- recognizes two primary duties: conservation of scenic, natural, and open space resources and the provision of needed recreation opportunities and “describes the process to find a proper balance between these responsibilities.”
- Contents at a glance:
 - Chapter 1 – District purpose and mission; purpose of master plan; history of district; current challenges; how to use document
 - Chapter 2 – Natural and cultural resources
 - Chapter 3 – Public access and services
 - Chapter 4 – Planning and acquisition
 - Chapter 5 – Human and financial resources

- Chapter 6 – Our shared future
- “Balance parkland distribution” is a guiding principle. District divided into three “sectors.” District allocates resources based primarily on population projections of the three sectors, as well as other factors.
- Includes acquisition criteria, procedures, land banking.
- Classes of parkland: regional park (min. 500 acres), regional preserve (natural or cultural, wilderness [min. 3000 acres], or open space preserves (min. 200 acres), regional recreation area (min. 40 acres), regional shoreline, regional trail
- Human resources includes not just employees but also volunteers, interns, concessionaires.
- Financial resources: property tax revenues; fees and charges; bonds and other borrowing; revenue from leasing; benefit assessment districts; donations, grants, easements; agreements with other agencies.
- Shared future includes future additions to system, master plan priorities, and annual budget.
- Challenges: population growth has increased the impact on natural resources; growing diversity, ADA, and more seniors has led to demand for new forms of recreation; increased need for parks, recreation, trails.
- District strives to minimize “monotypic stands” of certain plant species and uses IPM methods.
- Parks used as gathering places for Native Americans.
- Master Plan includes:
 - “Existing Resource Matrix” – park units on left, with columns for special status birds, animals, and plants; geologic features; historical; NA; grassland; chaparral; woodland; wetlands; etc.
 - “Existing Activities and Facilities Matrix” – park units on left, with columns for parking / staging areas, swimming, fishing, boat launch, children play area, etc.
- Combination of natural areas and built / developed facilities.
- Accessibility for all park users: “Whole Park Access” program.
- Policies are presented in context in each section (not separate section, not numbered).
- Paved bike trails connect with parks.
- Types of trails: hiking and equestrian narrow trails; unpaved multi-use trails, paved multi-use trails. Volunteers help to build trails.
- Five types of camps: day, group, backpack, family, residential. Also District encourages others to establish hostels.
- MP provides criteria for acquiring new parks and trails and for evaluating new uses. District seeks to acquire parkland to maintain an equitable distribution of facilities and programs throughout the District. In some cases, may be part of coordinated program with another agency. Usually acquires contiguous lands, but not always.
- District policy states that all their planning documents will be developed and approved in compliance with CEQA (and, when appropriate, NEPA)
- District monitors the activities of 32 neighboring cities, counties, special districts, state, regional, and federal agencies.
- If newly acquired property not immediately suitable for public access, District holds land in “land bank” status.

- District prepares a land use plan for each park unit. Land use designations are used to indicate levels of resource protection and recreation intensity: natural units; recreation/staging units; special protection features. Land use guidelines are applied to each land use designation.
- MP has provisions requiring under-grounding of utilities and for keeping ridgetops free of communication towers and equipment.

29. Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. 1998. Park, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan – A Local Land Preservation and Recreation Plan. (Including “Parks for Tomorrow” supplement).

- M-NCPPC is regional agency created in 1927; commission members come from Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties, Maryland
- Population Montgomery County approximately 870,000
- Contents at a glance:
 - Foundations of the Plan (including related studies, guiding policies, relations to general plan and state plan)
 - Plan Recommendations and Policies
 - Description of the County: Current Trends and Projections (physical setting and demographics; socioeconomic and fiscal benefits of recreation and land preservation)
 - Parks and Open Spaces in Montgomery County
 - Existing Recreation Facilities and Resource Protection Programs
 - The Demand Side (surveys, needs assessments)
 - Plan Implementation (including CIP park proposals).
- Total park acreage managed by M-NCPPC in Montgomery County is over 28,350 acres; total park, recreation, and open space in the County is 55,811 acres. County total size (including water) is 324,000 acres.
- M-NCPPC properties supplemented by other entities. Substantial public lands in County and nearby managed by National Park Service, State, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, and others. Private areas managed by Izaak Walton League and Audubon.
- Park Classification System:
 - County-wide Parks
 - Recreation-Oriented Parks
 - Regional Parks
 - Recreation Parks
 - Special Parks
 - Conservation-Oriented Parks
 - Stream Valley Parks
 - Conservation Area Parks
 - Community Use Parks
 - Urban Parks
 - Neighborhood Parks
 - Local Parks
 - Neighborhood Conservation Areas
- Policies address developed recreation areas, forest and stream valley preservation, interconnected trails, cultural heritage protection, and other.

30. Sonoma County Agricultural and Open Space District. 2000. Acquisition Plan 2000 – A Blueprint for Agricultural and Open Space Preservation.

- Document is well-designed, less than 30 pages; evidently considerable GIS mapping and analysis.
- “Our Mission – The Sonoma County Agricultural and Open Space District permanently preserves the diverse agricultural, natural resource and scenic open space lands of Sonoma County for future generations. To this end, the District conserves greenbelts between cities (community separators), farmland, biological resources, wildlife habitat and land for public recreation.”
- “The District is one of the top ten farmland and open space preservation programs in the Nation and the first special district established for the purpose of protecting agricultural lands.”
- Uses a sales tax to purchase conservation easements.
- Special District formed under Sections 65562 and 5500 Ca. Pub. Res. Code.
- Boundary of district coterminous with County boundary.
- District was created (1990) and funded by measures approved by County voters.
- Funded by ¼ percent sales tax over 20 years.
- District can only purchase from willing sellers, no eminent domain power.
- As of 2000, District had completed 80 projects protecting over 27,000 acres at a cost of \$50 million.
- Document recognizes that the adoption of the Acquisition Plan, individual property acquisitions, and other District activities must conform to the requirements of CEQA. District adopted its own CEQA guidelines in 1991.
- Acquisition plan is a “science-based conservation plan.”
- Four acquisition categories goal:
 - Agriculture
 - Greenbelts
 - Natural Resources
 - Recreation
- Recreation goal: “Assist local, regional and State agencies in establishing a Countywide recreation system by acquiring land for a diversity of future recreational purposes.”
- Plan identifies goals, objectives, and policies for the District’s program and to “establish the context” for acquisition and selection criteria.

31. Town of Amherst, New York. 2003. Draft Recreation and Parks Master Plan. Prepared for the Town of Amherst by Monteith Planning Consultants et al., London, Ontario.

- Town of Amherst (Erie County, NY) had a 2000 Census population of 116,510.
- 53 public and quasi-public parks and natural areas within the Town, totaling 2,664 acres.
- Plan’s main focus is on playgrounds, sports fields, other developed recreation areas and activities.

- Plan recommends that the Town maintain an overall standard of 4.25 acres of public accessible neighborhood and community parkland per 1,000 population; this standard slightly higher than the existing supply of 3.98 acres per 1,000 population.

32. Town of Exeter, New Hampshire. 2003. Exeter Open Space Committee brochure, mission statement, and open space property acquisition information.

- Town residents approved a \$3 million bond issue for the purpose of protecting some of the remaining undeveloped land in the community.
- Exeter (pop. 14,058) founded in 1638.
- Criteria for acquiring land:
 - Critical to quality of drinking water
 - Scenic landscapes and town gateways
 - Historical properties
 - Potential for recreation use
 - Linking conservation lands to maintain greenways
 - Places that give town its character
 - Key habitat areas, protection of native plants and wildlife, biodiversity
 - Important agricultural and forest lands

33. Vancouver-Clark Parks & Recreation [City of Vancouver, Washington, and County of Clark, Washington]. 2000. Clark County Regional Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan. Also, Vancouver-Clark Parks & Recreation. 2002. Vancouver Urban Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan.

- Clark County and the City of Vancouver consolidated the Clark County Parks Division and the Vancouver Parks and Recreation Department in 1997.
- The Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation Department now manages a combined inventory of approximately 6,025 acres of park and open space lands.
- Parks and Recreation element of the county comprehensive plan.
- “This planning element lays the groundwork for a comprehensive regional parks and open space system by:
 - Assessing public attitudes toward the acquisition, development, and management of regional parks, open space, and recreation facilities,
 - Establishing goals, objectives, and standards for regional outdoor recreation facilities and grounds, including regional parks, conservation areas and greenways, habitat areas, trails, special facilities, and regional parks.
 - Establishing priorities for the acquisition and development of regional park and open space facilities, and the implementation of recreation programs, and to incorporate these priorities into the county’s capital facilities program.
 - Establishing the groundwork for obtaining funds and other resources for acquisition, capital improvements, operation and maintenance programs, and recreation activities.
 - Planning for and developing a park and recreation system that serves the diverse recreational interests of the residents of Clark County and fosters an environmentally sensitive approach towards preservation and enhancement of the county’s valuable natural resources such as its fish and wildlife habitat, wetlands, and water quality.
 - Considering cooperative “partnership” agreements with other government agencies, land trust organizations, and private and commercial interests in the area of park, open space, and recreation planning and development.

- Providing the framework from which the Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation Commission and Board of County Commissioners can establish specific policies for the parks department.”
- Clark County’s estimated 1999 population was 337,000. Eight incorporated towns and cities within the county. The largest city is Vancouver, with an in-city population (1999) of 135,100.
- Parklands are divided into eight categories:
 - regional parks,
 - trails,
 - conservation and greenway systems,
 - wildlife habitat,
 - special facilities,
 - community parks,
 - neighborhood parks, and
 - urban open space.
- Clark County’s regional system of parks and open space uses first five categories.
- County also contains lands under the management of federal and state agencies, local government and others:
 - USDA Forest Service
 - National Park Service
 - USFWS
 - WA State Dept. Fish & Wildlife
 - WA State Dept. Natural Resources
 - Cities & towns
 - School District
 - Private & non-profit (inc. land trust organizations)
 - Partnerships
 - Special study areas
- Contents at a glance:
 - Intro (including plan approach)
 - Planning Area (including physical setting, population, socioeconomic conditions)
 - Habitat Areas (including summaries of Open Space Commission Report, County Critical Areas Designations, and Priority Habitat and Species Programs; limiting factors analysis, Lower Columbia Steelhead Conservation Initiative)
 - Wildlife Species (including priority species, species of concern, and migratory species)
 - Existing Areas
 - Public Involvement
 - Definitions & Standards (for parks, conservation & greenway systems, trails, special facilities, and habitat)
 - Benefits of Recreation
 - Goals, Objectives, Policies
 - Demand & Needs Analysis
 - Financing Programs
 - Partnerships
 - Action Plan and 6-year CIP
 - Appendices (including habitat maps, species lists, park inventories, public survey results, 20-year project lists)

- Includes an inventory matrix, areas/park units versus facilities and services.
- Each category of parks is composed of facilities that serve a regional function; that is, they serve the entire county.
- Park categories in plan, as well as the population-based standards, have evolved through several editions of the county's parks, recreation, and open space plan. Based generally on standards published by the National Recreation and Parks Association (Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines, 1983), modified to fit the needs of Clark County.
- Regional parks range in size from 100 to more than 325 acres.
- Acquisition goal: 20 acres/1000 population; acquisition standard: 10 acres / 1000; development standard: 18% of site developed. (see below)
- Regional conservation and greenway systems are resource-based open spaces, acquired with the intent of little or no development. Conservation areas may act as a buffer for an existing park or residential area, or may protect a sensitive natural area. Greenways are similar to conservation areas, but are typically long, relatively narrow lands which follow roads, creeks, ridges, ravines, and other natural or transportation corridors. Conservation and greenway systems serve various functions, including protection of environmentally sensitive areas and wildlife habitat, wildlife viewing, environmental education, and trails. Four categories:
 - River systems and associated floodplains,
 - Columbia River lowlands,
 - Cascade foothills,
 - Dispersed open space areas
- Benefits of parks and recreation: Personal, Social, Economic, Environmental.
- Plan examines the demand and need for regional parks and open space facilities based on definitions, standards, goals and objectives, public comment, and other key factors. The analysis of demand and need is divided into the five regional facility and land types:
 - Regional Parks,
 - Regional Trails,
 - Conservation and Greenway Systems,
 - Special Facilities and
 - Wildlife Habitat.
- In the case of regional parks, both definitional and population-based standards are used to help determine need. Definitional standards identify physical characteristics of the park type including size (generally 200 to 350 acres), service area (1- hour drive time), location and other features. Population-based standards identify need based on a ratio of parkland per 1,000 population.
- Refers to the standards (guidelines) provided by the NRPA. Clark County has adopted a minimum standard for regional parks of 10 acres per 1,000 population and a goal of 20 acres per 1,000 population.
- Population-based standards do not always apply – e.g., for conservation and greenway systems, wildlife habitat, and trails. Need and acquisition value evaluated on definitional standards, goals and objectives, resource values, habitat requirements, etc.
- Federal funding programs:
 - Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP); Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

- Water Resources Development Act; Environmental Restoration Programs and Authorities; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP); United States Department of Agriculture – Farm Service Agency
- 6-year CIP: Total 6-Year CIP: 26 acquisition projects (\$52,481,000), 17 development projects (\$16,690,300).