



County of Santa Cruz

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, OPEN SPACE & CULTURAL SERVICES

979 17TH AVENUE, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95062

(831) 454-7901 FAX: (831) 454-7940 TDD: (831) 454-7978

JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA

Monday, August 6, 2018
7:00pm – 9:00pm
Regular Meeting

Pajaro Valley Community Health Trust
85 Nielson Street
Watsonville, CA 95076

I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

II. AGENDA MODIFICATIONS OR LATE ADDITIONS

III. CONSENT AGENDA (Action)

- A. Approve minutes from June 4, 2018.....Pages 2-3
- B. Consider Reports:
 - 1. Maintenance Section – Status ReportPages 4-5
 - 2. Planning Section – Status Report.....Pages 6-7
 - 3. Aquatics Section – Status Report.....Pages 8-10
 - 4. Recreation Section – Status Report.....Pages 11-13
 - 5. Volunteer Program – Status Report.....Pages 14-17

IV. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Opportunity for persons to address the Commission on matters which are within the scope of responsibility of the Commission but not on today's agenda. Presentations must not exceed three (3) minutes in length, and individuals may speak only once during Oral Communications.

V. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

VII. REGULAR AGENDA – Informational Items

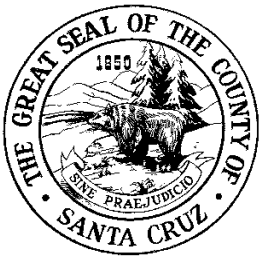
- a. Status report from John Skinner regarding the Pajaro Valley Sports Foundation
- b. Status report from Dave Kegebein regarding the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds

VIII. REGULAR AGENDA – Action Items

- a. Accept and file the Parks Department Strategic Plan
- b. Provide recommendation on development of an interim bike pump track at The Farm Park

IX. WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE LISTING (Page 47)

X. ADJOURNMENT



County of Santa Cruz

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, OPEN SPACE & CULTURAL SERVICES

979 17TH AVENUE, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95062

(831) 454-7901 FAX: (831) 454-7940 TDD: (831) 454-7978

JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION Minutes of June 4, 2018, 7:00 p.m. meeting 15685 Forest Hill Drive Boulder Creek, CA 95006

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Steven Bennett, Jim Rapoza, Mariah Roberts, Kate Minott
Staff: Jeff Gaffney, Jennifer Mead

II. AGENDA MODIFICATIONS (none)

III. CONSENT AGENDA

Approved minutes from April 2, 2018. (Roberts/ Rapoza 4/0)
Accept and file items and reports. (Rapoza/ Minott 4/0)

IV. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS (none)

V. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

- Roberts – First successful movie night at Heart of Soquel on May 17th – this series of movies in the parks is a great way to engage people in the community.
- Roberts – People in the 2nd District are happy! The Rio Del Mar Homeowner's Association has committed funds to update the playground equipment at Hidden Beach Park. We also have an anonymous donor in Seascape who will commit fund toward the project.
- Rapoza – I want to extend a big thank you to the volunteers who helped at Felton Library. Also a big thank you to Will for the getting the grant for the Discovery Park. We have a public meeting come up for the library and park. The Taco Tuesday at the Felton Covered Bridge was a big hit – there were so many people in the park!
- Bennett – great meeting with Pajaro Valley Sports Foundation. Jeff and I got together with the Rotary, and Dave Kegebein at the Fairgrounds to discuss the land near the Fairgrounds. There's about 30+ acres out there, we'd like to see what we can do with them.

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Director Jeff Gaffney gave his report to the Commission.

- Jennifer Mead is back working as Secretary. Lynna Hemeryck is still working in the department for recreation programs and will be with us through first week of August.
- Artist of the Year event was fantastic, another great performance, several people attended.
- July is Parks and Recreation Month! We have three big events during the month: Friday Night Recess, July 6; Movie Night at Highlands, July 13; and Family Fun Day, July 28.
- Budget is coming up, we are doing some staff restructuring to create more Maintenance Worker positions.
- Gretchen Iliff is retiring soon – we are trying to convince her to stay!

- We just went to the Board for a Request to Advertise for Pinto Lake Pump Track. Should have a contract in place by September and finish construction in October.
 - There was an attempted kidnapping at Pinto Lake in broad daylight right near the future pump track sight. Having the pump track will bring more people into the park and deter criminal activity.
- There is a new concessionaire at Rio Del Mar Esplanade – it is a stand up paddle board shack and snack bar.
- Working on an Encroachment policy with a fee structure that will go to the Board on June 12.
- Will Fournier got another grant for the Pinto Lake Pump Track through PeopleForBikes organization.

VII. REGULAR AGENDA – Information Items

- a. Board of Director's Member Tess Fitzgerald provided a report on the Boulder Creek Recreation & Park District
- b. Director Jeff Gaffney gave an overview of the County Parks Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Proposed Budget

VIII. REGULAR AGENDA – Action Items

- a. Teresa Corwin, Mariah Roberts and Tricia Potts were nominated to the Friends of Santa Cruz County Parks Board of Directors (Minott/Rapoza 4/0)

IX. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m. (Minott/Roberts 4/0)



County of Santa Cruz

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, OPEN SPACE & CULTURAL SERVICES

979 17TH AVENUE, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95062

(831) 454-7901 FAX: (831) 454-7940 TDD: (831) 454-7978

JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

Date: August 1, 2018
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Eric Sturm and Gretchen Iliff, Park Superintendents
Subject: Maintenance Section Status Report

MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS

- Has been a somewhat arduous summer working short-staffed. Soon to change with hiring of 2 new Maintenance Worker-I's. Yay!!
- New John Deer turf mower arrived for use. A much-needed asset.
- New fiscal year started, which means getting to commence on a few deferred maintenance items; such as new roofs on a few public restrooms, and installation of ADA porta-pottie at Hidden Beach, etc.

North Section: Scott Creek Beach, Greyhound Rock, Davenport Landing, Bonny Doon, Highlands, Ben Lomond, Wilder Hall, Miller Property, Pace Property, Felton Library, Quail Hollow, Felton Covered Bridge, Michael Gray Field, Emeline Complex, Government Center, Anna Jean Cummings, Twin Lakes, Chanticleer, Brommer, Felt, Floral, Jose Avenue, Winkle, Moran Lake, SC Gardens, Hook, Pleasure Point, and Live Oak area beach accesses (Geoffrey Lane, 12th, 13th, 20th, 21st, 26th, 35th, 38th, 41st)

- New rubber decking installed on Jose park pedestrian bridge.
- Multiple graffiti tags *removed* at Jose park
- Rocks placed at entrance Scott Creek beach bluffs area to stop cars from illegal camping and harm to habitat. Seems to be working. Pedestrian use not restricted.
- New fence installed at Ben Lomond park by river for visitor safety.
- Illegal dirt bike activity still seen at Miller Property, causing habitat damage. Working with volunteers and S.O. to curb activity.
- Several meetings with public and stakeholders to discuss and plan Felton Library park; on-going...
- New backflow irrigation device and piping installed at Juvenile Hall (in preparation for their new gymnasium).
- Still trapping bees and removing from Quail Ranch house. Relocating bees to new hives.
- Caught 112 gophers in three days at Anna Jean Cummings park!! Recent warm weather and yummy grass for munching make more work for maintenance crew!
- Twin Lakes Beachfront coming over to park maintenance. Ribbon-cutting was held 7/27/18.

- Significant irrigation leaks repaired at Brommer and Anna Jean parks.
- Worked with neighbor at Quail Hollow Ranch to resolve a park trespass issue.
- Removed three picnic tables at Moran Lake park at S.O. request.
- Finished annual mowing of tall grass at Waugh Ave.

South Section: Coffee Lane, Soquel Lions, Heart of Soquel, The Farm, Richard Vessy, Willowbrook, Carmichael Trail, Polo Grounds, Valencia Hall, Hidden Beach, Seascape, Seacliff Neighborhood Park, Place de Mer, Aptos Village, Scott Park, Scott Estate, Aldridge Lane, Mesa Village, Pinto Lake, Freedom Annex, and South-County area beach accesses (Beer Can Beach, Dolphin-Sumner, Via Palo Alto, Via Trinita)

- Staff helped prep Special Events including: Summer Soul Festival at Pinto Lake; July 4th festivities in Aptos Village Park; Friday Night Recess downtown SC; and multiple movie nights at the Heart of Soquel Plaza and Aptos Village Park.
- Staff completed mid-summer fertilizing and aerating on Polo and Pinto turf fields.
- Assisted the S.O. at Roundtree Rehabilitation for its grand opening in May. Lots of high-weed mowing, weed whipping, and general site clean-up.
- Cleared brush and weeds at multiple parks for summer fire threat suppression. Late rains made for happy weeds requiring multiple mowings.
- Staff received training in use of *Mirimichi Green*; an approved general-use organic herbicide for broad leaf weed control. Will use as a selective tool in managing weeds.
- Applied for grant to help with costs of new playground equipment at Hidden Beach park.

Veterans Memorial Building

- Former building manager Julia McDermott who gave a much-needed boost to the organization and has since left employment on July 1st. Interim manager Rex Niduaza will be steering the ship for the time being.
- Homeless still live in and around the Vets building literally; *daily* housekeeping still an on-going need.
- Looking at possibly getting new some new carpet donated. Will be eagerly accepted! Vets Board buying new chairs for auditorium.
- “*Best of the West*” wrestling coming to vets Hall. Get your tickets now!!

Simpkins Family Swim Center

- Put up more summer shade for children by deep end of pool.
- Chlorine generator has been taking unapproved holidays. Technicians coming to reinforce need for working summer months.
- Capstone co-generators have been off-line for two months. Contracted service provider experiencing internal corporate challenges.
- Started capital process to identify specs and bids for new boiler on big pool.



County of Santa Cruz

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, OPEN SPACE & CULTURAL SERVICES

979 17TH AVENUE, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95062

(831) 454-7901 FAX: (831) 454-7940 TDD: (831) 454-7978

JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

Date: August 1, 2018
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Sheryl Bailey & Will Fourt, Planning Section
Subject: Planning Section Status Report

County Wide Projects

County Parks Strategic Plan

The Department has revised and posted the final County Parks Strategic Plan based on input from the community and the County Administrative Office on the public review draft.

North Section: (Highlands, Ben Lomond, Felton Covered Bridge, Probation, Michael Gray Field, Quail Hollow Ranch, the North Coast, AJC, Government Center, Emeline Complex, Twin Lakes, Brommer, Felt, Floral, Jose Avenue, Winkle Farm, Twin Lakes Beachfront)

Quail Hollow/Pace Property Trail Planning

The Habitat Conservation Fund grant application for trail construction to the Pace Property was not awarded. Staff is working with partners to find funding and to consider a phased approach to trail development.

Quail Hollow Brook Restoration Grant

Planning staff is currently conducting research on the different components involved in developing, manufacturing and installing engaging and durable interpretive signage. The initial purpose of this research is to develop a Request for Proposal to include graphic design, interpretive language, technical material specifications for signage posts and sign manufacturing, and professional qualifications for graphic interpretive artists & photographers. The final goal will be to install three grant funded interpretive signs along the west side of the Discovery Loop Trail adjacent to Quail Hollow Brook.

Felton Library

The Department held a community meeting on June 14th to get community input, and has held two stakeholder meetings about the project. Staff has been working with consultants on the design development. The CCC were awarded an \$87,000 Active Transportation Program grant for construction of the pathway portion of this project.

Scott Creek Beach Park

Planning staff is working with the Scott Creek Technical Advisory Committee on concepts for Scott Creek lagoon restoration and Highway 1 bridge replacement, and how the project will benefit the environment, public coastal access onto the County's Scott Creek Beach Park and public infrastructure improvements.

Chanticleer Park: The Santa Cruz Playground Project has continued their fundraising efforts. Staff submitted the building permit application to the Building Department for review. The Prop 1 Coastal Conservancy grant for groundwater recharge in the park was not awarded. Staff is working with partners to submit a grant for the groundwater recharge system to the National Recreation and Parks Associate grant program.

Twin Lakes Beachfront- On July 27th, 2018, a well-attended Ribbon Cutting Ceremony occurred with special guest speakers, California Secretary for Natural Resources John Laird, County Supervisor Ryan Coonerty and Former County Supervisor Neal Coonerty. Parks Planning Staff participated in the celebration, as Parks Planning staff was instrumental in the success of the project, with 5 years dedicated to the project management stages of Design Development, County Planning and State Coastal Permits and other State Agency permit coordination, acquiring over \$500,000 of grants, property acquisition negotiations and preparation of construction documents under the umbrella of the combined Departments of Public Works and Parks. The project includes a large iron pelican in flight as its public art component that was coordinated under the direction of the Parks Department. Parks Maintenance staff will begin maintaining the parkway soon.

South Section: (Coffee Lane, Soquel Lions, Willowbrook Lane, Moran Lake, Richard Vessy, Santa Cruz Gardens, Heart of Soquel Plaza, The Farm, Polo Grounds, Valencia Hall, Hidden Beach, Seascape, Aptos Village, South County Beach access areas, Scott Park, Scott Estate, Aldridge Lane, Mesa Village, Pinto Lake, Seacliff Village Park, Freedom Government Annex)

Heart of Soquel Phase 2 & 3

On July 18, 2018, the Soquel Elementary School District Board of Trustees, at a public hearing, approved of the Parks Department's purchase of a trail and riparian easement for the portion of the Soquel Creek Linear Parkway. Parks Planning Staff and the Chief of Real Property completed three acquisitions to allow the completion of the Parkway. The July 18th approval represents the last portion that needed to be purchased to complete the Soquel Creek Linear Parkway that will run along the western bank of Soquel Creek adjacent to the Soquel Elementary School from the "Discovery School" to the pedestrian bridge on Main Street. The Departments of Parks and Public Works will bring a joint board letter to the Board for their approval of this purchase on August 7, 2018.

Phase 2 and 3 of the Soquel Creek Linear Parkway have been awarded a grant from the CCC ATP funds in the amount of \$174,000 for materials and labor with the labor to be provided by the CCC. The source of these grant funds is the State of CA and cannot be used as a match for other State grants. On July 23, 2018, Planning & Fiscal Administrative staff attended a Habitat Conservation Grant Fund (HCF) workshop provided by the State Parks Department to discuss project specific components for the upcoming HCF grant due October 1, 2018. Parks staff learned that this project remains highly competitive for this grant. The amount available for the grant match will be a determining factor as to whether both phases will be included in the grant application or not.

On July 20th, 2018, "A Walking Tour of the Heart of Soquel Park Plaza" was provided by Parks Planning Staff. Participants learned about Best Management Practices and Low Impact Development Design practices incorporated into the park's design, including pervious surfaces, bioswales, rain gardens, and drought tolerant native plants. Participants also learned of the upcoming Soquel Linear Parkway and were enthusiastic about that project's trail and riparian restoration.

Farm Phase 2

Currently, Planning staff is developing scopes of work to have updated reports prepared for the existing traffic and parking and drainage studies to evaluate the impacts of the proposed temporary and interim bike pump track. These studies are required by the Planning Department, as a part of the development permit process. Also, on July 23, 2018, Planning & Fiscal Administrative staff attended a Habitat Conservation Grant Fund (HCF) workshop provided by the State Parks Department to discuss project specific components for the upcoming HCF grant due October 1, 2018. At the workshop, staff learned that the proposed trail will not be highly competitive, as it is currently envisioned but with some minor changes to the design it can be made more competitive.

Hidden Beach

Park Planning and Maintenance were not awarded the "Let's Play Grant" for \$50,000. However, staff is working with Kompan to explore other playground options.

Pinto Lake

Environmental Planning approved the grading permit for the project. The Parks Director has awarded a contract with the low bidder for site preparation. The Parks Department was awarded a \$10,000 grant from the PeopleForBikes program for this project. The contractor will begin construction in August.



County of Santa Cruz

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, OPEN SPACE & CULTURAL SERVICES

979 17TH AVENUE, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95062

(831) 454-7901 FAX: (831) 454-7940 TDD: (831) 454-7978

JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

Date: August 1, 2018
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Rebecca Hurley, Aquatics Supervisor
Subject: Aquatics Division Status Report

AQUATIC PROGRAMS

Summer June 9 – August 19, 2018

Lap Pool hours:

Mondays through Friday from 6:00 am to 7:30 pm.
Saturday and Sunday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Warm-water Pool:

The warm-water pool is available for general use on:

Monday – Friday 6:00 – 9:00 am and 1:00 – 3:30 pm (Rec. Swim)

Saturday and Sunday 9:00 am - 10:30 am (adults only)
 10:30 am – 12:30 pm (adults & kids 6 years and younger)
 1:00 – 4:00 pm (Recreation Swim ~ all ages)

Recreation Swim – This includes the Warm Water Pool, splash ZONE, the shallow area of the 50M pool, the slide, climbing wall, and on Fridays and Saturdays the WIBIT (Floating play apparatus)

Summer Swim Lessons – Summer swimming lessons began on June 11th. Group and private lessons are available Monday thru Friday evening, Monday/Wednesday/Friday evening, Tuesday thru Friday morning and Tuesday/Thursday morning. Lessons are also offered on Saturdays! Lessons have been very popular this summer with almost every class at capacity for the first four summer sessions. Summer lessons continue until 8/17 and then will transition to the fall schedule.

Pool Junior Lifeguard Program – The pool Junior Guard Program remains very popular and has been full all summer with a total of 358 children for Junior Guards and 149 children for Little Guards!

The Little Guard program is designed for children ages 5 and 6. They spend the day at the pool and do a variety of activities with emphasis on improving their swimming ability, and safety awareness. The little guards get to participate in a variety of activities including: stand up paddle boarding, kayaking, and fitness-based games. They also get to experience sitting in a lifeguard chair, the buoyancy of a lifeguard tube, and they practice performing reaching assists. The little guards also enjoy a day on the beach with the big Junior Guards and have their own special field trip to the Central Fire Station where they get to hold the fire hose as a firefighter sprays water or attend a presentation from a State Parks Lifeguard who brings the rescue truck and jet ski for the children to climb on.

The Junior Lifeguard program continues to be an incredible experience for children ages 7-13. This program gives children an insight into the fun and rewarding job of protecting and saving lives at the pool. The program strengthens their swimming ability and confidence in and around the water and introduces them to lifeguard rescue skills. Participants also enjoy special activities such as: kayaking, stand up paddle boarding, CPR demonstrations, climbing wall and slide time, a day at the beach, and a field trip to Golfland in San Jose.

Junior Lifeguard Volunteers – Our Junior Lifeguard volunteer program continues to be successful and rewarding for young adults ages 13 – 15. The program encourages past participants that have reached the age of 13 to volunteer their time helping with the younger children in the program and assisting the leaders. The volunteers allow the program to offer more hands-on teaching and assist the leaders in their daily tasks. The volunteers learn a new level of responsibility, and it gives them a closer look at what being a lifeguard at Simpkins Family Swim Center is all about. Not only do volunteers benefit personally, but the junior guard program benefits as well, as we are able to improve the quality of the program without adding staffing costs.

Adult Fitness Swimming – Adult Fitness Swimming is very popular at the Simpkins Family Swim Center. Fitness swimmers may choose from several different workout times: Mondays at 6:00 am; Tuesday, Thursday & Friday at 6:00 am and 12:00 pm; Wednesdays at 6:00 am, 12:00 pm and 6:00 pm; and Saturday & Sunday workouts at 9:00 am.

In addition to our regular Adult Fitness program, this year we added an Introduction to Lap Swimming class which, this summer, is offer on Saturdays 10:30 am – 11:30 am.

Water Aerobics & Exercise – The water exercise classes this year continue to reach their highest capacity to date. Water exercise is an excellent way for people to meet their fitness goals without impact on the joints. Classes are designed to appeal to all levels of ability including, healthy, pre-natal, seniors, and rehabilitating or cross training fitness enthusiasts. A monthly calendar is available with dates, times and instructor's

names. Previous swimming or water-exercise experience is not required for participation in any of the water exercise classes.

Child Care – The drop-in child care program has now been open for a year! Due to patron requests, we have added new hours on Sundays for the summer season. The program is open to children 6 months and up and costs \$5 per child for up to two hours. It is staffed by both aquatics and recreation staff members.

Current hours are:

9:00 AM – 1:30 PM Tuesday and Thursday

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM Saturday and Sunday

Water Polo – Sundays from 10:30 am - 12:30 pm. Participants must be a member of USAWPA to participate in the program.

Lifeguard Training Exercises – During the summer months lifeguards are required to attend weekly trainings to practice skills and participate in educational sessions. So far this summer staff has covered such topics as:

Victim Recognition

Full facility EAP (Emergency Action Plan) scenario practices

CPR and First Aid skills

Swim Lesson Instructor refreshers

Spinal injury management skill practice

Special Events at the pool:

As part of the July is Parks and Recreation Month we added new and continued to offer the following free events”

On July 4th we held our annual FREE SWIM which is co-sponsored by the Simpkins Family! Over 400 people enjoyed the pools, slide, and climbing walls!

On July 20th we had our first annual Teen Splash Night with recreation style swim just for teens ages 13 – 19 and free entry!

On Saturday July 28 the first annual *Family Fun Day – Get Your Play On* event will be held at the Simpkins Family Swim Center, Shoreline Middle School and the Live Oak Boys and Girls Club. Inflatables, oversized games, music and free recreation swim at the swim center will all be available from 3-7pm.

As well as the free events in July, we will continue to host the 4th annual *Parks and Rex* event at the Simpkins Family Swim Center on August 25th from 12-4 pm. Join the Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter and the Santa Cruz County Parks Department for this fun

and festive special day. This special event is a fundraiser for County youth recreation programs and animal shelter.

Pool Rentals:

Swim Teams – Aptos Cabrillo Swim Club and Quicksilver Swimming swim teams continue to rent lanes in the 50-meter pool. The swim teams offer school-age competitive swimming programs Monday through Friday from 4:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Pool Therapy – Dominican will continue to use the warm water pool for their therapy classes in the fall, reserving the pool space from 9:45 – 2pm on Monday and Fridays and 10:30am – 3pm on Wednesdays.

Private Pool Parties – Private Pool Parties are available on Saturdays & Sundays. A variety of aspects of the facility may be rented for Private Pool Parties, from just the warm pool to aspects accommodating up to 110 people. Private Pool Parties are scheduled on weekends, spring, summer and fall, after the facility has closed to the public.

New for Fall:

Water Polo - We are excited to announce that we are working with both Harbor High Water Polo teams and Soquel High Water Polo teams to provide pool space for them during the fall water polo season. Harbor High does not have a regulation sized pool and have not been able to host “home” games until this season when their “home” games will be played at Simpkins Swim Center! Soquel High is currently renovation their pool so when Harbor High is not hosting a game at Simpkins, Soquel High will use our pool for their practices, two-week nights and Saturday afternoons.

Fall Extended Schedule – With water polo taking up ½ of the pool two-week nights a week and one weekend afternoon, we are extending our weeknight open time from 7:30pm to 8:30pm M-F and will remain open until 4pm on Sundays through October. This will allow the current swim teams and lap swimmers to have the same number of available hours to them despite water polo teams using pool space this fall season.



County of Santa Cruz

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, OPEN SPACE & CULTURAL SERVICES

979 17TH AVENUE, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95062

(831) 454-7901 FAX: (831) 454-7940 TDD: (831) 454-7978

JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

Date: August 1, 2018
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Margaret Ingraham, Volunteer Program Coordinator
Subject: Volunteer Program Status Report

North County

Quail Hollow Ranch

One of our new volunteers at Quail Hollow Ranch is a beekeeper. He is volunteering his time to trap and remove a bee hive from the walls of the ranch house as well as he has placed bee hives in an appropriate location on the property to attract bees and collect honey. We also have plans for bee educational workshops with this volunteer.



A great time was had by all at the Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon in June. Approximately 30 people came out to Quail Hollow Ranch and enjoyed the company, acknowledgements, and refreshments. We gave out 4 pins, marking hours volunteered milestones, and acknowledged 6 other volunteers for hitting other significant marks in volunteer hours. Jeff Gaffney and Supervisor Bruce McPherson were both present and spoke to the group. During lunch, there were reports from the Trail, Nest Box, Broom, and the Master Gardner volunteers. The Friends of Quail Hollow non-profit co-sponsored the event and James Williams, President spoke on their behalf.



In June and July, the Trail Crew Volunteers logged approximately 40 hours of trail maintenance to keep the trails accessible and in good shape for hikers and equestrians. The Broom Bash volunteers are done pulling the invasive French Broom for the season, and in June and July they logged approximately 70 hours.

The Santa Cruz Astronomy Club provided FREE Star Gazing experiences at Quail Hollow Ranch in June and July. The club provides at least 3 volunteers who bring their telescopes and educate the community. During the June experience over 25 community members were in attendance.

The Bird Nest Box Volunteers are at the end of the season and in June and July volunteered approximately 60 hours monitoring the nest boxes and documenting the bird activity. The group will continue to log a few more hours as they will bring the nest boxes in for the season.

Miller Property

The Miller Property volunteers have noticed an increase in motorcycle use, causing increased habitat damage. Efforts are being made to confirm property lines so that appropriate signage can be installed in a continued effort to stop the damaging effects. The volunteers have logged approximately 40 hours in June and July repairing trail damage, picking up trash, and removing French Broom.

Anna Jean Cummings Park

Two volunteers continue to assist with efforts to clean up abandoned homeless camps, and trash collection, they logged over 35 hours in June and July. We have a new volunteer at AJ who will be volunteering her time to help keep the picnic gazebos free of staples and other decorations that are left behind.

Over 100 children and chaperones from a summer camp volunteered their time at Anna Jean Park. They split into groups and picked up trash, removed staples, weeded, and cleaned the playground equipment. Thank you Parks staff for leading and supporting the different groups.

Simpkins Family Swim Center/Family Fun Day

Aquatics Supervisor, Rebecca Hurley recruited over 20 water polo players and their parents from the Harbor High, and Soquel High teams to volunteer for our Family Fun Day event. They helped to monitor parking, assist with the inflatable play structures, help set up booths, and assisted at the information tables.

Also volunteering for the Family Fun Day were some of the Junior Recreation Volunteers, and a member from the public. All the volunteers for this event were appreciated immensely!

Junior Volunteers

Junior Lifeguard Volunteers have been volunteering in the Junior Lifeguard program at the swim center all summer long and have logged over 600 hours thus far. Thank you Rebecca Hurley and Aquatics staff for supervising these volunteers!

Recreation

Junior Volunteers have also been volunteering at the summer recreation programs this summer and have logged over 800 hours. Thank you Oscar Arroyo for supervising all of these Junior Volunteers!

South County

Polo Grounds Park

We have one active volunteer at the dog park who has been helping to maintain the dog park area. He has helped to keep the foxtails to a minimum.

Pinto Lake Park

Pinto Lake volunteers have logged over 30 hours in June and July in Disc Golf Course maintenance and some graffiti abatement.

Aptos Village Park

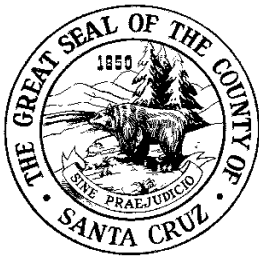
A Youth Serve group volunteered their time to paint the wedding gazebo at the park. It was in need of a fresh look for the wedding season!

The Farm Park

Westlake Charter School from Sacramento bussed 80 middle school aged children and their chaperones to the Farm Park to volunteer their time.

They volunteered their time to help maintain the health and survival rate of the native plants. They weeded, applied coconut mats, and mulched around approximately 200 plants. All the efforts combined totaled 150 hours.





County of Santa Cruz

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, OPEN SPACE & CULTURAL SERVICES

979 17TH AVENUE, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95062

(831) 454-7901 FAX: (831) 454-7940 TDD: (831) 454-7978

JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

August 1, 2018

Parks and Recreation Commission
County of Santa Cruz
979 17th Avenue
Santa Cruz CA 95062

SUBJECT: Final County Parks Strategic Plan

Dear Commissioners,

Since the last presentation to the Parks Commission in April 2018, the Department has received comments and feedback on the Draft Santa Cruz County Parks Strategic Plan at a series of public meetings, through an online form, and from the County Administrative Office. Based on this feedback, staff has revised the Strategic Plan to better represent the vision of the community, and to maximize compatibility with the County Administrative Office's new countywide Strategic Plan and related initiatives. This letter and attached materials provide an update and include the proposed final draft plan.

Background

Over the course of the last 18 months the Strategic Plan project team has completed an extensive public engagement process including eight community meetings, four Parks staff meetings, six Strategic Plan Working Group meetings, online surveys, and presentations at six Parks and Recreation Commission meetings. Based on the input of over 1,000 individuals staff has created and revised this Strategic Plan to reflect the collaborative vision, values, goals, objectives and strategies for the Department for the next ten years.

Changes to the Public Review Draft

Since the last presentation to the Parks and Recreation Commission in April 2018, and based on feedback received, staff has revised including the following most-notable changes to the Final County Parks Strategic Plan:

1. **Re-Organization:** The plan has been re-organized into three sections, and the heart of the strategic plan content is in the first section for emphasis and clarity.
2. **Goals:** The six goals in the Public Review Draft have been streamlined into four goals while retaining all the themes most important to the community. Each goal

has been expanded to provide meaning and begins with a short tagline to summarize the heart of the goal.

3. **'Core' and 'Stretch' Objectives:** The objectives in the Public Review Draft have been re-organized under the new goal structure and have also been categorized as either 'core' or 'stretch' objectives. The distinction is based on several criteria, the most important of which may be that 'core' objectives are a continuation of how the Parks Department currently serves the community and 'stretch' objectives are those that require additional resources. Staff has sought to retain the meaning and content of the objectives from the Public Review Draft while revising into this new format.

Next Steps:

We look forward to future collaboration with the Parks Commission related to the County Parks Strategic Plan and our ongoing work to translate this plan into meaningful actions for results in this community.

It is therefore recommended that the commission accept and file this report on the final Santa Cruz County Parks Strategic Plan.

Warm regards,



Jeff Gaffney
Director of Parks, Open Space & Cultural Services

Attachments:

1. Final Draft Santa Cruz County Parks Strategic Plan
2. Appendices



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY PARKS STRATEGIC PLAN

FINAL
AUGUST 6TH, 2018



JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

County of Santa Cruz

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, OPEN SPACE & CULTURAL SERVICES

979 17TH AVENUE, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95062

(831) 454-7901 FAX: (831) 454-7940 TDD: (831) 454-7978

FORWARD

Dear Friends and Partners,

The Santa Cruz County Parks Department is pleased to present to you our first Strategic Plan. This document represents a year-long process of assessment, inquiry, and outreach to our community, partner organizations, public officials, staff, and supporters. We are proud of the comprehensive and collaborative nature of the document as well as the process which created it.

Our goal was twofold: first, provide a ten-year roadmap for the department that will assist us in adapting and growing our support for a healthy, connected, and culturally vibrant Santa Cruz County. Second, to create a resource for understanding of what we do and how we serve the community, as well as guidance for partnering and collaboration.

The premise of this document is that our system of parks, open spaces, beaches, and recreation and cultural services represent one of our county's most valuable investments. The department's primary role is to ensure that this investment is well-managed, relevant and accessible to all, regardless of age, cultural background, physical ability, or income. We also must see that it is preserved and enhanced for generations to come.

Thank you for your contribution and dedication to our amazing park system and the public value we provide. We hope you will find this plan useful; it is the beginning of a relationship and an open conversation about community priorities.

Sincerely,

Jeff Gaffney
Parks Director

The Mission of the Santa Cruz County Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services is to provide safe, well designed and maintained parks and a wide variety of recreational and cultural opportunities for our diverse community

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This plan would not have been possible without the assistance and participation of a great number of individuals. We would like to thank all the members of the public who participated in the public process that created this Strategic Plan, and to all the staff and volunteers who contributed.

Working Group Members:

Dena Loijos
Mariah Roberts
Jim Rapoza
Tess Fitzgerald
Judy Stabile
Terry Corwin
Melodye Sereno
Brad Blachly
Isabelle Kornberg
Micaela Lopez

Parks and Recreation Commission Members:

Mariah Roberts
Kate Minott
Alexandra Sibille
Steven Bennett
Jim Rapoza

Strategic Plan Project Team:

Jeff Gaffney, Parks Director
Kim Namba, Administrative Services Manager
Will Fourt, Park Planner
Jessica Wolf, Program Coordinator

With Consultant:

Meetings that Matter

Strategic Plan Pyramid

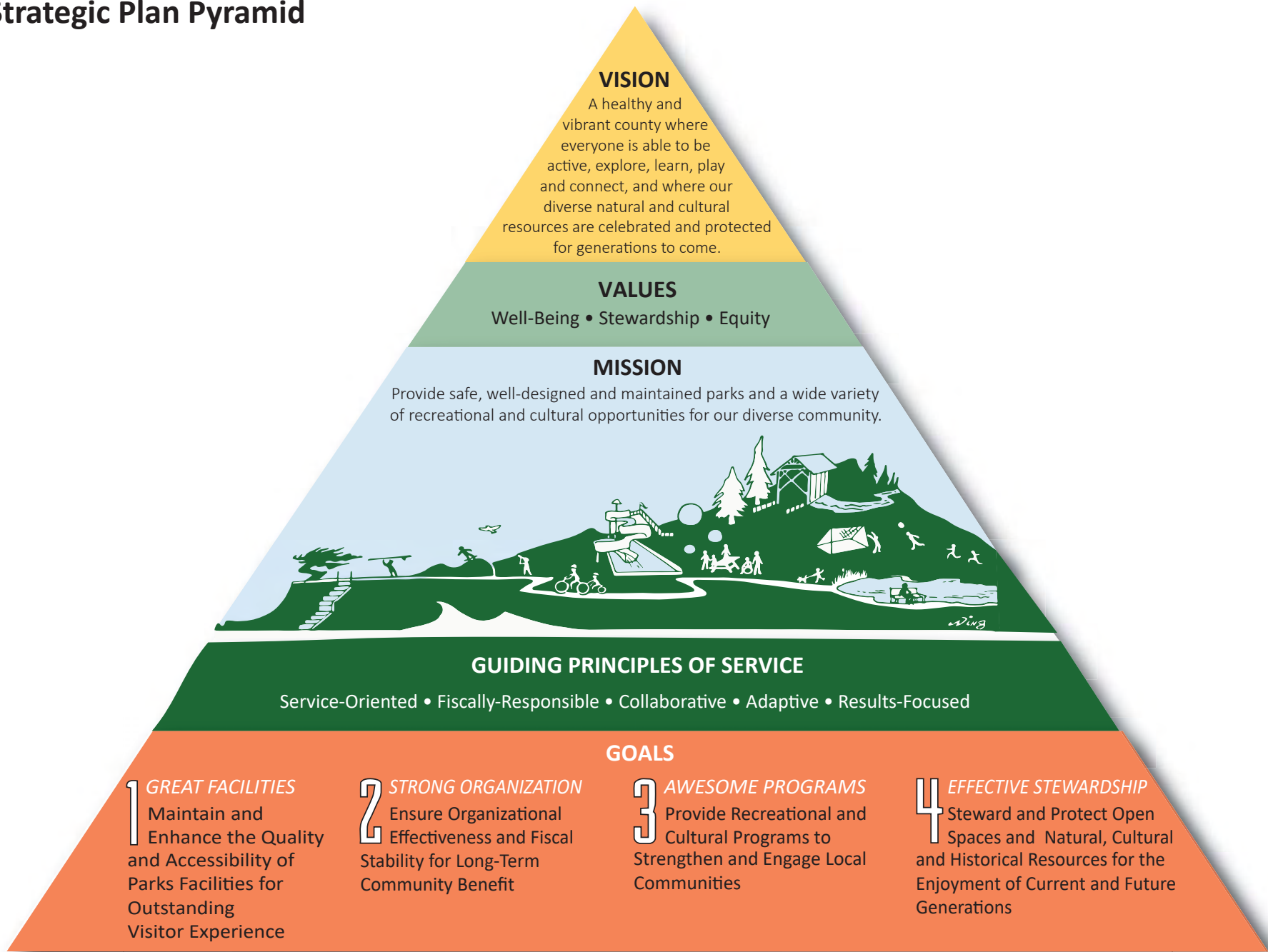


TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTERS

<u>PART I: THE COUNTY PARKS STRATEGIC PLAN</u>	
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 2: VISION, MISSION AND VALUES.....	5
CHAPTER 3: GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES	7
CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION.....	13
<u>PART II: THE COUNTY PARKS DEPARTMENT</u>	
CHAPTER 5: THE PARKS NETWORK AND SERVICES	19
CHAPTER 6: OVERSIGHT AND FUNDING	27
CHAPTER 7: KEY CHALLENGES	31
<u>PART III: CREATING THE PLAN</u>	
CHAPTER 8: PROJECT APPROACH	33
CHAPTER 9: KEY FINDINGS	37

FIGURES

FIGURE 1: STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT CYCLE	13
FIGURE 2: STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT SYSTEM	14
FIGURE 3: NEIGHBORHOOD-PARK-PROVIDING JURISDICTIONS.....	20
FIGURE 4: PROTECTED LANDS IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY	21
FIGURE 5: COUNTY PARKS, FACILITIES, AND COASTAL ACCESS POINTS.....	25
FIGURE 6: PARKS REVENUE SOURCES IN FISCAL YEAR 2016/17.....	27
FIGURE 7: NUMBER OF PARKS AND NUMBER OF PARKS DEPARTMENT STAFF.....	28
FIGURE 8: STRATEGIC PLAN FLOW CHART.....	33
FIGURE 9: WORDS USED IN RESPONSE TO SURVEY	35
FIGURE 10: KEY THEMES AND IDEAS RECEIVED FROM STAFF.....	38
FIGURE 11: PERCENT OF TOPICS RAISED IN COMMENTS DURING PUBLIC MEETINGS	41

TABLES

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.....	8
TABLE 2: KEY NEEDS SUMMARY.....	42

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: PARKSCORE ANALYSIS	
APPENDIX 2: OUTREACH MATERIALS AND SUMMARY	

PART I: THE COUNTY PARKS STRATEGIC PLAN

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This Strategic Plan represents the first comprehensive and collaborative planning effort between the County Parks Department and the local community in Santa Cruz County. The Strategic Plan seeks to articulate the vision and strategic priorities for the future of the County Parks system in a ten-year timeframe. The vision and priorities established through this process reflect the strong value that Santa Cruz County places on parks, coastal access, open space, programs and the events and activities that bring us together as a community.

The Strategic Plan addresses the County's existing park system, including its strengths and challenges, and identifies the necessary areas of improvement to remain responsive to the changing needs of our community. Ultimately, the plan will serve as the basis for future department work plans (operational plans) and as a roadmap for the department.

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE:

A healthy and vibrant county where everyone is able to be active, explore, learn, play and connect, and where our diverse natural and cultural resources are celebrated and protected for generations to come.

WHY A STRATEGIC PLAN?

The Santa Cruz County Department of Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services (County Parks Department or County Parks) has grown in both the size of its holdings and its importance in the lives of county residents since its inception in 1979. Over the course of the last 38 years, the department has undergone many changes, while the County Parks system has grown into a large network of parks, open spaces, facilities, trails and coastal access points throughout the unincorporated portions of the county.

Some highlights of the department's history:

- **1979 - 2002:** Established in 1979, the County Parks system grew for two decades in the number of parks, programs and employees. By 2002 there were 55 County Parks facilities, parks and coastal access points.
- **2002 - 2011:** The number of full time permanent budgeted department staff positions declined from 68 funded full time or equivalent staff positions in 2002/03 to only 35 in 2011/12, along with a decline in program offerings. At the same time, the number of park facilities steadily increased.
- **2011 - 2014:** In the wake of the economic downturn, the Parks Department was temporarily dissolved into the County Department of Public Works from 2011 to 2014.

- **2014 - 2018:** Some limited additional funding for County Parks was established through the passing of Measure F in 2014. The County Parks Department was re-established as an independent department in 2014 and a new director was hired in 2015.

The Parks Department provides both local and regional parks and programs. Santa Cruz County is unique in having such a large portion of the population living outside of incorporated cities (about 130,000 people, or 49 percent according to the 2010 Census). The County Parks Department provides typical county regional parks and open spaces serving the entire county population. The Department also has a role similar to a city parks department in providing local neighborhood and community parks and event facilities in these unincorporated areas, despite having a smaller relative tax apportionment and ability to leverage funding than other counties and cities (see Chapter 7 for more explanation).

Working within the current framework of the County's General Plan, the County Parks Strategic Plan represents the current vision of the community, and identifies opportunities for leveraging funding and resources to move the department towards this vision. The Strategic Plan does not create or change any County policy, but provides a framework to assist us in working more effectively within existing policies.

HOW THE STRATEGIC PLAN WILL BE USED

This document consolidates background information, community feedback, key findings and other information that was used to develop the vision, values, goals, objectives and strategies contained in this Strategic Plan. County Parks has gained a wealth of information about the community and the environment through this process, and this summary will be used by staff, community stakeholders, the County Administrative Office, and the Board of Supervisors as the County moves forward to carry out the vision outlined in this Strategic Plan. Much of this information will be referenced or serve as

a jumping-off point for strategic decision-making. Additionally, this Strategic Plan will serve as the basis for future operational plans for the department, which will contain performance measures, more time-specific priorities, and detailed actions to implement the Strategic Plan and achieve our goals.



Simpkins Family Swim Center in Live Oak

RELATIONSHIP TO THE COUNTYWIDE STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2024

The County Administrative Office developed its first-ever countywide strategic plan in 2018. This plan establishes a common vision and set of goals that will be implemented by all the County departments and will contain broad, inter-departmental goals. The goals and objectives in the County Parks Strategic Plan will work together and align with the countywide goals, while being more specific to the provision of parks and recreation in the county.

The Parks Department is not the only County department to undergo its own strategic planning process. Under the direction of our County's new Chief Administrative Officer, all County departments will be asked to develop plans and to align those plans with the overarching County plan.



Strategic Plan Community Meeting in Watsonville

STRATEGIC PLAN VOCABULARY

Throughout the Strategic Plan, the following terms will be used frequently and have a specific meaning within the context of this Strategic Plan.

- Vision:** A brief statement articulating the desired future state, describing ***why*** the department does the work that it does.
- Values:** Core ***motivators*** reflecting community ideals that drive the work of the Parks Department and relate directly to the vision.
- Mission:** A brief statement describing ***what*** the department does.
- Goals:** Broad statements of ***how*** we pursue our vision.
- Objectives:** Specific ***ways*** we plan to achieve our goals and impact our community.
- Strategies:** The ***approach*** we plan to take to achieve our objectives.

CHAPTER 2: VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

VISION

The vision for the future of Santa Cruz County Parks describes the desired end state of the work that we do and articulates the biggest ‘why’ for the County Parks Department’s existence. Our vision statement was created with extensive input from the staff, the community, and partners during the Strategic Plan process.

MISSION

The County Parks mission states what the department does to serve the community. The mission statement was adopted for the department prior to this Strategic Plan process, and represents the department’s most essential purpose.

OUR VISION:

A healthy and vibrant county where everyone is able to be active, explore, learn, play and connect, and where our diverse natural and cultural resources are celebrated and protected for generations to come.

OUR MISSION:

The Mission of the Santa Cruz County Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services is to provide safe, well designed and maintained parks and a wide variety of recreational and cultural opportunities for our diverse community.

VALUES

The values listed in this section represent the core motivators that drive the work of the Parks Department to serve the community, as identified through the strategic planning process. The values directly support the new Parks Department vision and have been used to identify and define department priorities and our goals and objectives in the Strategic Plan.

The three core values are *Well-Being, Stewardship and Equity*.

WELL-BEING

Creating a happier and healthier Santa Cruz County and improving quality of life by promoting physical activity, safe and welcoming public spaces, positive community interactions, and relief from everyday stress.

STEWARDSHIP

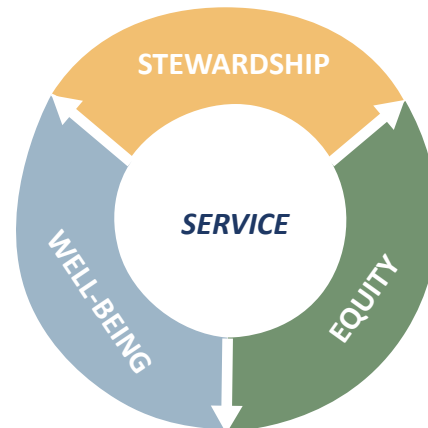
Sustaining natural systems and conserving resources throughout the parks system for future generations, including education and learning opportunities, and chances for people to appreciate and connect with the natural world.

EQUITY

Serving communities throughout the county with a focus on those most in need, to ensure that parks and programming are inclusive, welcoming and accessible to all.



Aptos Village County Park



Parks Department Core Values

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF SERVICE

The following principles describe the strong value the parks department places on **service**. These principles were identified by staff and the community during the strategic planning process, and reflect how the department operates to increase the values of well-being, stewardship, and equity.

Service-Oriented: We work as a team to provide a consistent high level of service to our community.

Fiscally-Responsible: We allocate and use resources responsibly and pursue sustainable funding that meets the needs of the system of parks and parks services.

Collaborative: The department works together with other agencies, organizations, businesses, volunteers, community members and staff to provide the highest possible level of service and to create new opportunities.

Adaptive: The department remains nimble and creative as it responds and adapts its parks and programs to the changing needs of the community.

Results-focused: We establish community driven goals, measure our performance, and communicate with the public our progress in meeting long-range goals in support of community well-being, stewardship and equity.

CHAPTER 3: GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

For the purposes of articulating the vision of the Parks Department, specific means for implementing the plan are described through Strategic Plan goals, objectives and strategies. These means are intended to describe the direction and priorities for the department for the next 10 years. These statements respond to the key issues and themes that emerged during the strategic planning outreach process.

Definitions for goals, objectives and strategies are described in the text box to the right. A summary table of goals and objectives is shown in Table 1. Strategic goals are not ranked and are numbered only for reference. Note that these strategies do not include specific measurable actions. Actions to implement the Strategic Plan will be developed in future operational plans for the department (see Chapter 4).

Objectives and strategies are organized into categories of “core” and “stretch.” These categories illustrate what the department can pursue with existing staffing and resources, and what will require additional resources, according to definitions on the right.

All the goals, objectives, and strategies were developed with extensive input from the community and staff as part of the strategic planning process.

Goals:

Broad statements of how we pursue our vision

Objectives:

Specific ways we plan to achieve our goals and impact our community

Core Objectives:

Objectives that: 1) are essential to the Department’s existence and function, 2) may be pursued with existing staffing and resources, and 3) have been core areas of focus for the department in the past.

Stretch Objectives:

Objectives that: 1) have been identified as important by the community, 2) will require us to leverage new resources and to increase department capacity, and 3) expand the services provided by the Department

Strategies:

The approach we plan to take to achieve our objectives

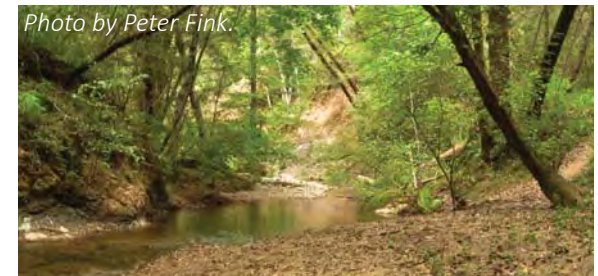


Photo by Peter Fink.

Miller Property County Park in Boulder Creek

COUNTY PARKS STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1: Great Facilities		Goal 2: Strong Organization	
MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF PARKS FACILITIES FOR OUTSTANDING VISITOR EXPERIENCE		ENSURE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND FISCAL STABILITY FOR LONG-TERM COMMUNITY BENEFIT	
CORE OBJECTIVES: 1.1 Maintain and update parks facilities, and the accessibility of parks facilities, to a consistent standard 1.2 Ensure safety and cleanliness of parks facilities	STRETCH OBJECTIVES: 1.3 Increase accessibility of parks facilities to people of all abilities, ages, backgrounds and financial resources 1.4 Create and implement a plan to address deferred maintenance throughout the parks system 1.5 Upgrade parks in alignment with parks master plans and add additional parks facilities in under-served areas	CORE OBJECTIVES: 2.1 Ensure department efficiency and effectiveness 2.2 Invest in staff development and promote innovation and excellence in service 2.3 Develop sources of sustained funding for operations and enhanced services	STRETCH OBJECTIVES: 2.4 Institute improved systems for departmental management and operations planning 2.5 Lead and partner with other departments, agencies and organizations to better serve the community
Goal 3: Awesome Programs		Goal 4: Effective Stewardship	
PROVIDE RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL PROGRAMS TO STRENGTHEN AND ENGAGE LOCAL COMMUNITIES		STEWARD AND PROTECT OPEN SPACES AND NATURAL, CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS	
CORE OBJECTIVES: 3.1 Provide recreational programs and events to meet community needs 3.2 Cultivate the arts and strengthen the culture of the county through public art programs and events 3.3 Conduct community outreach and offer regular opportunities for diverse groups to engage with and learn about their county parks department	STRETCH OBJECTIVES: 3.4 Provide additional recreational programs and events to address areas of unmet need 3.5 Enhance our support of local families and youth by expanding after school and summer offerings 3.6: Increase the department’s understanding of parks customers through increased outreach, data collection and research	CORE OBJECTIVES: 4.1 Partner with other agencies, organizations, and land owners in an integrated regional approach to resource management 4.2 Protect cultural and historical resources throughout the parks system 4.3 Provide interpretive programs and opportunities to increase awareness and appreciation of natural, cultural and historical resources 4.4 Provide opportunities for volunteers in parks, facilities and programs	STRETCH OBJECTIVES: 4.5 Establish a natural resources and open space management program in the parks department to maximize environmental benefits throughout the parks system 4.6 Increase interpretive programs and opportunities to increase awareness and appreciation of all natural, cultural and historical resources 4.7 Increase volunteer opportunities in parks, facilities and programs

Table 1: Summary of Goals and Objectives

GOAL 1: GREAT FACILITIES

MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF PARKS FACILITIES FOR OUTSTANDING VISITOR EXPERIENCE

CORE OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 1.1: MAINTAIN AND UPDATE PARKS FACILITIES, AND THE ACCESSIBILITY OF PARKS FACILITIES, TO A CONSISTENT STANDARD

STRATEGIES:

- a. Continue to establish consistent park maintenance standards and staff levels throughout the parks system
- b. Determine and communicate staffing needs based on department goals and the number of properties, facilities and programs, and pursue appropriate staff levels
- c. Assess the anticipated operational costs for potential new parks projects and budget for projected staffing levels and maintenance costs
- d. Regularly inventory and prioritize system-wide needs for deferred maintenance projects
- e. Continue to increase accessibility of parks to all people as parks are upgraded

OBJECTIVE 1.2: ENSURE SAFETY AND CLEANLINESS OF PARKS FACILITIES

STRATEGIES:

- a. Pursue resources to increase professional staff presence in parks
- b. Increase volunteer presence in parks under direction of staff

- c. Engage community and volunteers in supporting safe and clean parks
- d. Partner with law enforcement to enhance security in parks and facilities
- e. Improve and expand system for tracking and responding to citizen reports of maintenance and safety issues
- f. Increase staff input in identifying and prioritizing maintenance needs

STRETCH OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 1.3: INCREASE THE ACCESSIBILITY OF PARKS FACILITIES TO PEOPLE OF ALL ABILITIES, AGES, BACKGROUNDS AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES

STRATEGIES:

- a. Conduct physical accessibility assessments of existing parks facilities, identifying and prioritizing needed improvements
- b. Increase relevance of parks to youth and aging populations and to families with young children, and ensure that all demographics are served by parks

OBJECTIVE 1.4: CREATE AND IMPLEMENT A PLAN TO ADDRESS DEFERRED MAINTENANCE THROUGHOUT THE PARKS SYSTEM

STRATEGIES:

- a. Identify needs and determine priority projects
- b. Develop budget and timeframes for deferred maintenance projects, and identify potential funding sources
- c. Secure funding for deferred maintenance
- d. Implement the deferred maintenance plan in stages to maintain investments in parks
- e. Anticipate and schedule upgrades as projects are completed

OBJECTIVE 1.5: UPGRADE PARKS IN ALIGNMENT WITH PARKS MASTER PLANS AND ADD ADDITIONAL PARKS FACILITIES IN UNDERSERVED AREAS

STRATEGIES:

- a. Inventory and develop a system to prioritize planned park projects
- a. With input from the community, identify new park uses for existing parklands, including both active and passive recreation opportunities
- b. Pursue park acquisitions in areas that lack access to parks
- c. Pursue resources to develop additional amenities to serve the community

GOAL 2: STRONG ORGANIZATION

ENSURE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND FISCAL STABILITY FOR LONG-TERM COMMUNITY BENEFIT

CORE OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 2.1: ENSURE DEPARTMENT EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

STRATEGIES:

- a. Provide exceptional customer service to park users and the wider community
- b. Provide resources and systems to ensure effective staff communication throughout the department
- c. Engage and deploy volunteers effectively to augment departmental capacity
- d. Upgrade technology where it makes the most difference to staff effectiveness
- e. Regularly survey staff regarding department priorities and effectiveness, and solicit ideas for improving department functionality

OBJECTIVE 2.2: INVEST IN STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTE INNOVATION AND EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE

STRATEGIES:

- a. Create and maintain a variety of opportunities for staff training and leadership development
- b. Encourage collaboration across the department and promote ways for staff to learn from each other and share expertise
- c. Increase regular communication between staff and supervisors

- d. Track and recognize staff performance
- e. Pursue opportunities for networking and staff development with other agencies

OBJECTIVE 2.3: DEVELOP SOURCES OF SUSTAINED FUNDING FOR OPERATIONS AND ENHANCED SERVICES

STRATEGIES:

- a. Pursue new opportunities for revenue generation
- b. Collaborate for the creation of a parks funding measure or other sustainable source of park funding
- c. Evaluate park dedication fees and update as needed
- d. Work with the County Administrative Office and Board of Supervisors to assess department operations and capital projects budgets and secure adequate funds

STRETCH OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 2.4: INSTITUTE IMPROVED SYSTEMS FOR DEPARTMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS PLANNING

STRATEGIES:

- a. Develop metrics and performance measures for Strategic Plan Objectives and share com-

puting data with stakeholders and potential funders

- b. Develop and annually update an Operational Plan, integrated with the Capital Improvement Program and department budget
- c. Regularly track and report progress on Strategic Plan Objectives and Strategies through implementation of the department's strategic management cycle
- d. Work to align the Parks Department's Strategic Plan with the County's Strategic Plan

OBJECTIVE 2.5: LEAD AND PARTNER WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS, AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS TO BETTER SERVE THE COMMUNITY

STRATEGIES:

- a. Partner with other public land owners to provide increased recreational access to existing public open spaces
- b. Partner with school districts, land trusts, non-profit groups, community organizations, and public agencies to provide additional public access to existing facilities
- c. Collaborate to develop an interagency vision for the countywide network of trails

GOAL 3: AWESOME PROGRAMS

PROVIDE RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL PROGRAMS TO STRENGTHEN AND ENGAGE LOCAL COMMUNITIES

CORE OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 3.1: PROVIDE RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS AND EVENTS TO MEET COMMUNITY NEEDS

STRATEGIES:

- a. Continue to offer free and low-cost programs and events to the community
- b. Sponsor and co-sponsor a variety of events for families & diverse audiences
- c. Promote program scholarships offered by non-profit partner organizations based on individuals' financial need

OBJECTIVE 3.2: CULTIVATE THE ARTS AND STRENGTHEN THE CULTURE OF THE COUNTY THROUGH PUBLIC ART PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

STRATEGIES:

- a. Continue to work with the County Arts Commission and partners to: a) fund arts programs, b) include public art components in public projects, c) provide art in public spaces, d) develop new public art programs and e) conserve existing public art
- b. Continue to offer opportunities to engage in rich, hands-on arts curriculum through arts-based summer camps and class offerings

OBJECTIVE 3.3: CONDUCT COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND OFFER REGULAR OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIVERSE GROUPS TO ENGAGE WITH AND LEARN ABOUT THEIR COUNTY PARKS DEPARTMENT

STRATEGIES:

- a. Conduct meaningful outreach to the county's diverse communities to increase access to and knowledge of parks facilities and programming
- b. Regularly engage community members and other agencies and organizations in assessing community needs

STRETCH OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 3.4: PROVIDE NEW AND INNOVATIVE RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS AND EVENTS THAT ADDRESS AREAS OF UNMET NEED

STRATEGIES:

- a. Regularly assess needs and inventory priorities for classes, programs, and events, especially in underserved areas
- b. Pursue partnerships and develop programs where most needed
- c. Add additional programming targeted to and relevant for high-need and underserved groups
- d. Increase relevance of programs to youth, elders, and families with young children, and ensure that all demographics are served by programs

OBJECTIVE 3.5: ENHANCE OUR SUPPORT OF LOCAL FAMILIES AND YOUTH BY EXPANDING AFTER SCHOOL AND SUMMER OFFERINGS

STRATEGIES:

- a. Pursue resources for expanding programs and classes for youth, especially in underserved areas
- b. Regularly survey youth, parents, teachers and school administrators to identify current gaps in services and areas of unmet need
- c. Partner with other agencies and non-profits to expand the cultural, recreational, educational and interpretive program options available to families and youth countywide
- d. Expand the Junior Volunteer Program and Junior Lifeguard programs to support job and life skills development and opportunities for mentoring

OBJECTIVE 3.6: INCREASE THE DEPARTMENT'S UNDERSTANDING OF PARKS CUSTOMERS THROUGH INCREASED OUTREACH, DATA COLLECTION AND RESEARCH

STRATEGIES:

- e. Conduct an equity analysis including a survey to help the department focus on key areas of need
- f. Regularly conduct surveys of park and program users to determine how parks facilities and programs are used and how they can be improved

GOAL 4: EFFECTIVE STEWARDSHIP

STEWARD AND PROTECT OPEN SPACES AND NATURAL, CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

CORE OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 4.1: PARTNER WITH OTHER AGENCIES, ORGANIZATIONS, AND LAND OWNERS IN AN INTEGRATED REGIONAL APPROACH TO RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

STRATEGIES:

- a. Regularly meet with local conservation partners to assess opportunities to lead and/or provide support for stewardship projects
- b. Provide ongoing educational and interpretive opportunities related to natural resources

OBJECTIVE 4.2: PROTECT CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES THROUGHOUT THE PARKS SYSTEM

STRATEGIES:

- a. Inventory and assess priority projects to enhance preservation of cultural and historical resources in the parks system

OBJECTIVE 4.3: PROVIDE INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE AWARENESS AND APPRECIATION OF NATURAL, CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES

STRATEGIES:

- a. Continue to provide interpretive programs led by staff and volunteers in the parks system
- b. Continue to provide interpretive signage and information with all appropriate new parks projects

OBJECTIVE 4.4: PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR VOLUNTEERS IN PARKS, FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS

STRATEGIES:

- a. Provide a variety of types of opportunities for volunteering in the parks system
- b. Establish regional and neighborhood-based Adopt-A-Park programs to encourage community engagement in parks

STRETCH OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 4.5: ESTABLISH A NATURAL RESOURCES AND OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM IN THE PARKS DEPARTMENT TO MAXIMIZE ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS THROUGHOUT THE PARKS SYSTEM

STRATEGIES:

- a. Pursue additional resources to increase department's available expertise, staff capacity, and leadership in natural resource management projects on park properties
- b. Create a natural resources program with staff and volunteers dedicated to developing and implementing resource management goals
- c. Create a parks natural resources management plan to improve ecological outcomes and pursue multiple long-term environmental benefits

OBJECTIVE 4.6: INCREASE INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE AWARENESS AND APPRECIATION OF ALL NATURAL, CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES

STRATEGIES:

- a. Develop an interpretive plan for the parks system
- b. Pursue resources to increase interpretive staff presence at appropriate parks throughout the county to run programs, manage volunteers, and engage with park users
- c. Develop additional interpretive facilities and amenities throughout the parks system

OBJECTIVE 4.7: INCREASE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES IN PARKS, FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS

STRATEGIES:

- a. Grow the volunteer and intern programs to provide experiential learning opportunities and promote land stewardship throughout the parks system
- b. Increase involvement, collaboration, communication and coordination with "friends of" groups to pursue the department mission

CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT SYSTEM & OPERATIONAL PLANNING

THE STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Implementing the Strategic Plan will require future cooperation and planning. The strategic management cycle illustrates how the plan will be implemented (Figures 1 and 2) including the phases of planning, implementing and monitoring, evaluating, and adjusting. These phases will help keep the department on track with the Strategic Plan goals, will set regular times to engage the community, and will help continually improve efficiency and effectiveness.

The Strategic Plan lays the groundwork and sets the framework for future operational plans which will serve to implement the Strategic Plan and help manage department staff work plans and budgets. Together, the Strategic Plan and these future operational plans make up this strategic management system. This is the framework for managing the department and steering us towards our vision and the realization of our Strategic Plan goals.

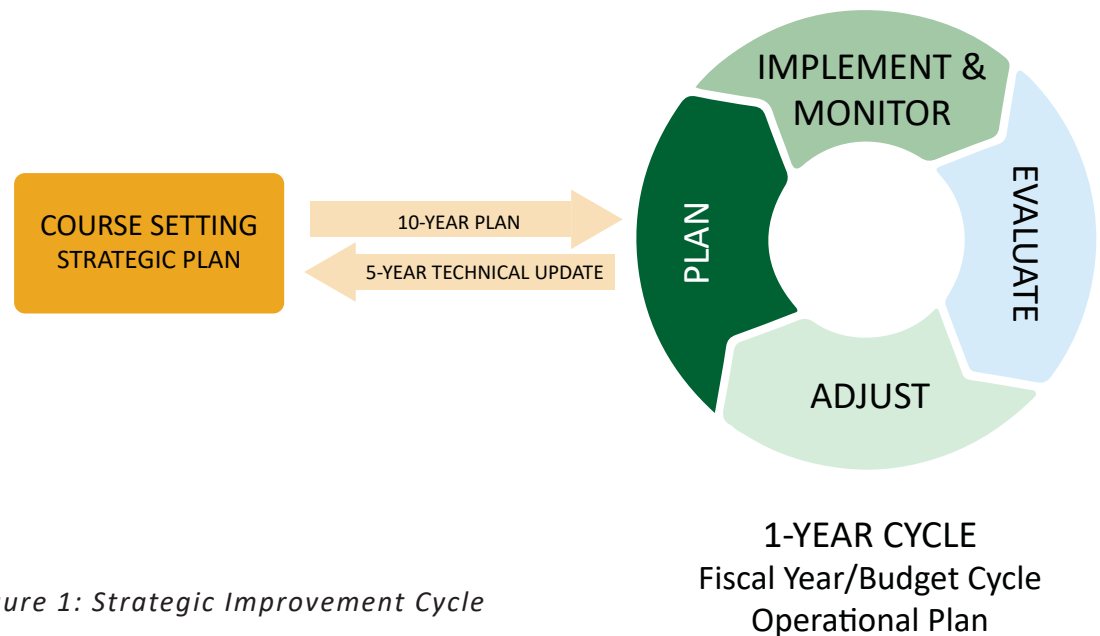
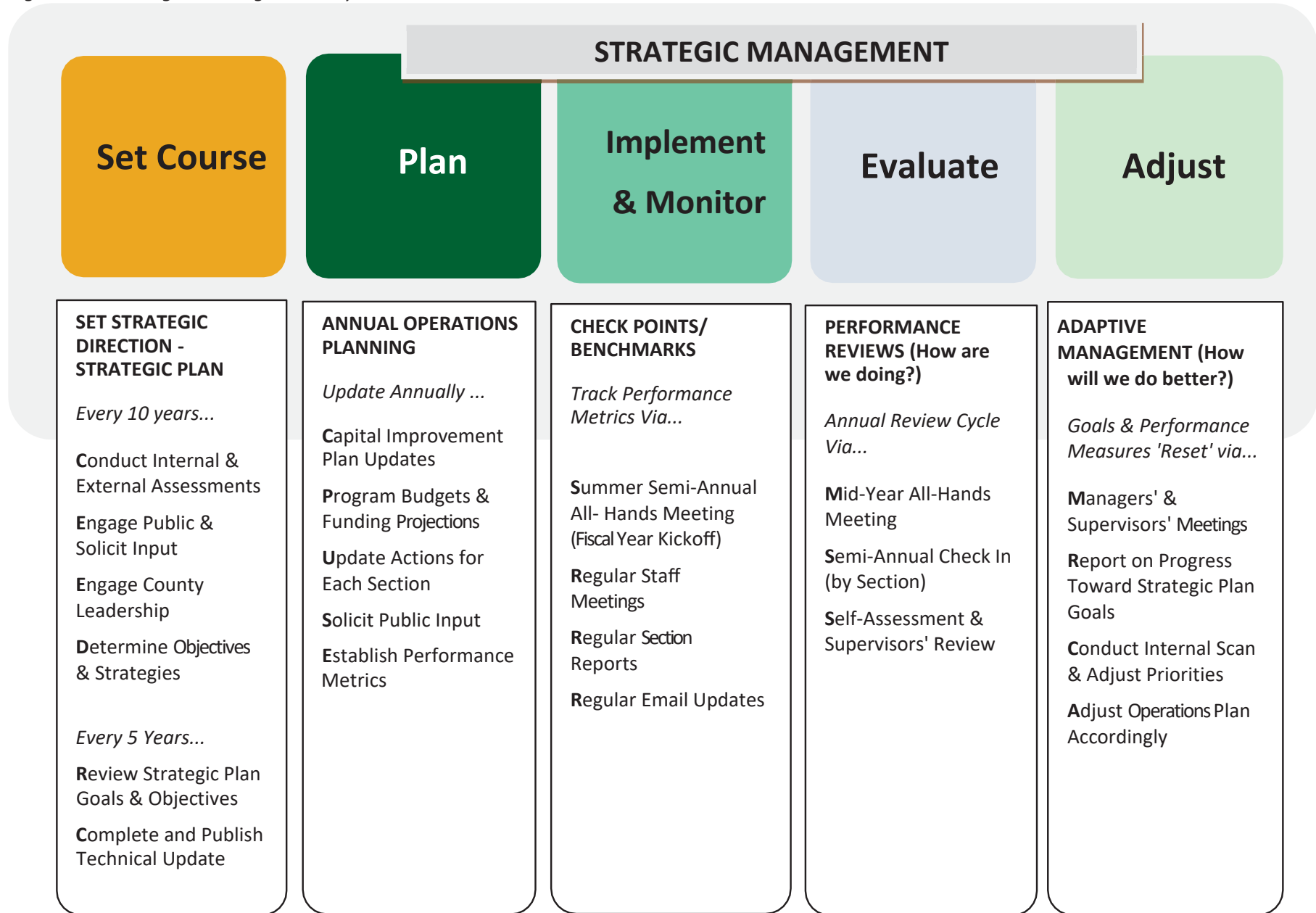


Figure 1: Strategic Improvement Cycle

Figure 2: Strategic Management System





THE OPERATIONAL PLAN

The Operational Plan is a tool we will use to implement this Strategic Plan. The Operational Plan will be updated regularly and will identify short-term (1-2 year) actions that will flow from Strategic Plan goals and objectives and support department priorities. Each operational plan will identify the concrete steps that the County Parks Department will take to assign resources and staff toward achieving the strategic priorities and goals laid out in the Strategic Plan.

The heart of these operational plans will be the formulation and tracking of actions and performance measures. Operational plan actions are specific, measurable, achievable steps to be taken to implement Strategic Plan objectives. In each operational plan, priority will be given to specific actions that further multiple goals and objectives identified in the Strategic Plan. Performance measures will be established and tracked on an annual basis.

CRITERIA FOR PRIORITIZING ACTIONS

With finite staffing levels and budget, the Parks Department must prioritize. In order to determine which actions take priority, the following set of criteria will be used to maximize the potential to achieve the goals, objectives and strategies in this Strategic Plan. Since each goal and objective will require additional resources and needs to build on additional progress, the emphasis is on actions that set the stage and overcome initial barriers, enabling the department to work towards multiple Strategic Plan goals.

Actions should address the following criteria:

1. Lay the groundwork for implementing the long-term goals
2. Work towards fulfilling multiple goals and objectives as identified in the Strategic Plan
3. Create additional resources and enable pursuit of additional goals and objectives identified in the Strategic Plan
4. Be readily achievable in the short-term, with existing funding and staff levels.
5. Capitalize on previous momentum and continue previous progress

THE STRATEGIC PLAN WILL EVOLVE

Over the 10-year horizon for the County Parks Strategic Plan, the priorities and context will evolve in response to changing circumstances. To succeed, we must revisit our Strategic Plan goals regularly and refine our course by adjusting the actions in the Operational Plan. Every five years, the Strategic Plan should undergo a technical update to ensure that the priorities articulated reflect the changing environment, economy, and department and community needs.



Mesa Village County Park

KEYS TO MAKING PROGRESS

FOCUSING

Priority Actions for the first Operational Plan have been selected based on the criteria stated above, as applied to the goals, objectives and strategies included in this Strategic Plan. Based on this approach, the first and highest priorities identified for the Parks Department include the following:

1. Clearly articulate the funding needs of the department through creation of a deferred maintenance plan (Objective 1.4), a system to prioritize capital projects (Objective 1.5), and an assessment of appropriate staff levels needed to operate and maintain the existing parks system (Objective 1.1).
2. Pursue additional funding for the department through potential collaboration on a funding measure, working with the Board of Supervisors and County Administrative Office on department budget allocations, pursuing additional revenue sources, and evaluating park dedication fees (Objective 2.3).
3. Develop metrics and performance measures with the first operational plan (Objective 2.4) for Strategic Plan goals and objectives, and begin to share compelling data with stakeholders and potential funders.

We hope that the focus objectives named here will help the Parks Department achieve the goals, objectives and strategies identified in this Strategic Plan by increasing the capacity and organization of the department.

FUTURE FUNDING

The improvement and growth of the County Parks Department will require investment. This investment is expected to yield a wide range of recreational, environment and socio-economic returns to the community. To realize the goals articulated in this plan, additional department resources and revenue must be pursued.

Before other goals and objectives can be realized, we will need to first develop sources of sustained funding for operational and enhanced services (Objective 2.3). Strategies to meet that objective are detailed below.



Scotts Creek County Beach

PURSUING NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR REVENUE GENERATION

The County Parks Department currently generates revenue through user fees and reservations of facilities. There may be future opportunities to generate new revenue sources through increased services such as providing additional facilities available for reservation.

COLLABORATE FOR THE CREATION OF A PARKS FUNDING MEASURE OR OTHER SUSTAINABLE SOURCE OF PARK FUNDING

The County Parks Department is not the only agency providing parks and recreation services in the county, and is not the only agency that requires additional funding to meet community needs for parks and recreation. Working together, the various parks agencies and the community may pursue a ballot measure to fund parks in the county. This could be in the form of a dedicated parcel tax or a sales tax, which could be used to fund projects identified by the community as important, and could help us implement the goals and objectives of this Strategic Plan. The Parks Department could also individually pursue a ballot measure to secure a sustainable funding source for County Parks.



Willowbrook Park in Soquel

EVALUATE PARK DEDICATION FEES AND UPDATE AS NEEDED

The Park Dedication Fees are required for residential development in the unincorporated county, and are used locally to provide additional park facilities proportionally to serve increased demand resulting from new development. Fees are based on the standard provision of acres of parkland for every 1,000 new residents, and fees are adopted by the Board through resolution. These fees were last evaluated and updated based on market conditions in 1998, and should be assessed for appropriate levels for current economic conditions.

WORK WITH COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE AND BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TO ASSESS DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS AND CAPITAL PROJECTS BUDGETS AND SECURE ADEQUATE FUNDS

The largest source of funding for the County Parks Department is the County General Fund. The General Fund contribution to the department budget has decreased from its pre-recession level, while operational costs and the size and demands on the County Parks system have increased. The Parks Department should work cooperatively with the Board of Supervisors and the County Administrative Office to develop a sustainable source of revenue that is commensurate with the long term needs identified in this plan.

THE NEED FOR COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

This Strategic Plan represents a collaborative vision developed with the Parks Department and the community at large. The County Parks Department cannot implement the goals of this plan alone. Realizing this vision will require the leadership of other organizations and agencies as well as increased participation and support from the community. New partnerships will be needed to pursue strategies identified in this plan that will improve the County Parks system, and that the community sees as important, but which are currently outside the scope of the department to implement (such as improving neighborhood bike and pedestrian infrastructure and connections to parks). Community support will be especially important to help us generate new resources and additional funding, as many goals of this plan simply will not be realized without it.

By focusing on collaboration and partnership, this department intends to foster and to amplify the leadership and innovation in this community, to implement this plan, and to support community values. Working together, County Parks will strive to create a healthier and more vibrant Santa Cruz County for all.



Volunteers at Quail Hollow Ranch County Park

PART II: THE COUNTY PARKS DEPARTMENT

CHAPTER 5: THE PARKS NETWORK AND SERVICES

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY'S PARKS & OPEN SPACE NETWORK

The County Parks Department is one of several entities that provide parks, open space, cultural services and recreation facilities and programs in the county, along with several other public agencies, organizations, and private landholders. Together, these various entities provide a network of parks and open space that serves the entire county. Generally, local urban-type neighborhood and community parks are provided by the cities, County Parks, and the four park and recreation districts. Larger regional-serving parks are provided by State Parks, County Parks, and other entities. Local park-provider jurisdictional lines are shown in Figure 3. Parklands and protected lands are shown in Figure 4.

COUNTY PARKS

Generally, the County Parks Department provides two broad categories of services: local neighborhood and community parks and programs in the unincorporated portions of the county (areas outside one of the four city limits), and larger regional-serving parks and facilities that serve the entire county. In Santa Cruz County, there are many urban neighborhoods that are not within a city limit, including the communities of Live Oak, Soquel, and Aptos, and the County provides neighborhood parks in these areas.

CITY PARKS

There are four incorporated cities in the county, including Capitola, Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley and Watsonville. Each of these four cities has their own city parks department providing local neighborhood-serving parks and recreation services within that city's limits.

INDEPENDENT RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICTS

The four independent park and recreation districts of Alba, Boulder Creek, La Selva Beach and Opal Cliffs are responsible for providing local neighborhood and community parks to urban and rural neighborhoods within their independent jurisdiction boundaries.

OTHER PARKS AND OPEN SPACE AGENCIES & LANDHOLDERS

In addition to the local parks provided by the County Parks Department, the four city parks departments, and the four recreation and park districts, California State Parks also provides several large parks and beaches in the county. State Parks provide important recreational opportunities for local county residents as well.

There are also recreational facilities and open space provided by other agencies in the county including local school districts, the Bureau of Land Management, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the City of Santa Cruz Water Department, the San Lorenzo Valley Water District, the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, and the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District.

Figure 3: Neighborhood-Park-Providing Jurisdictions

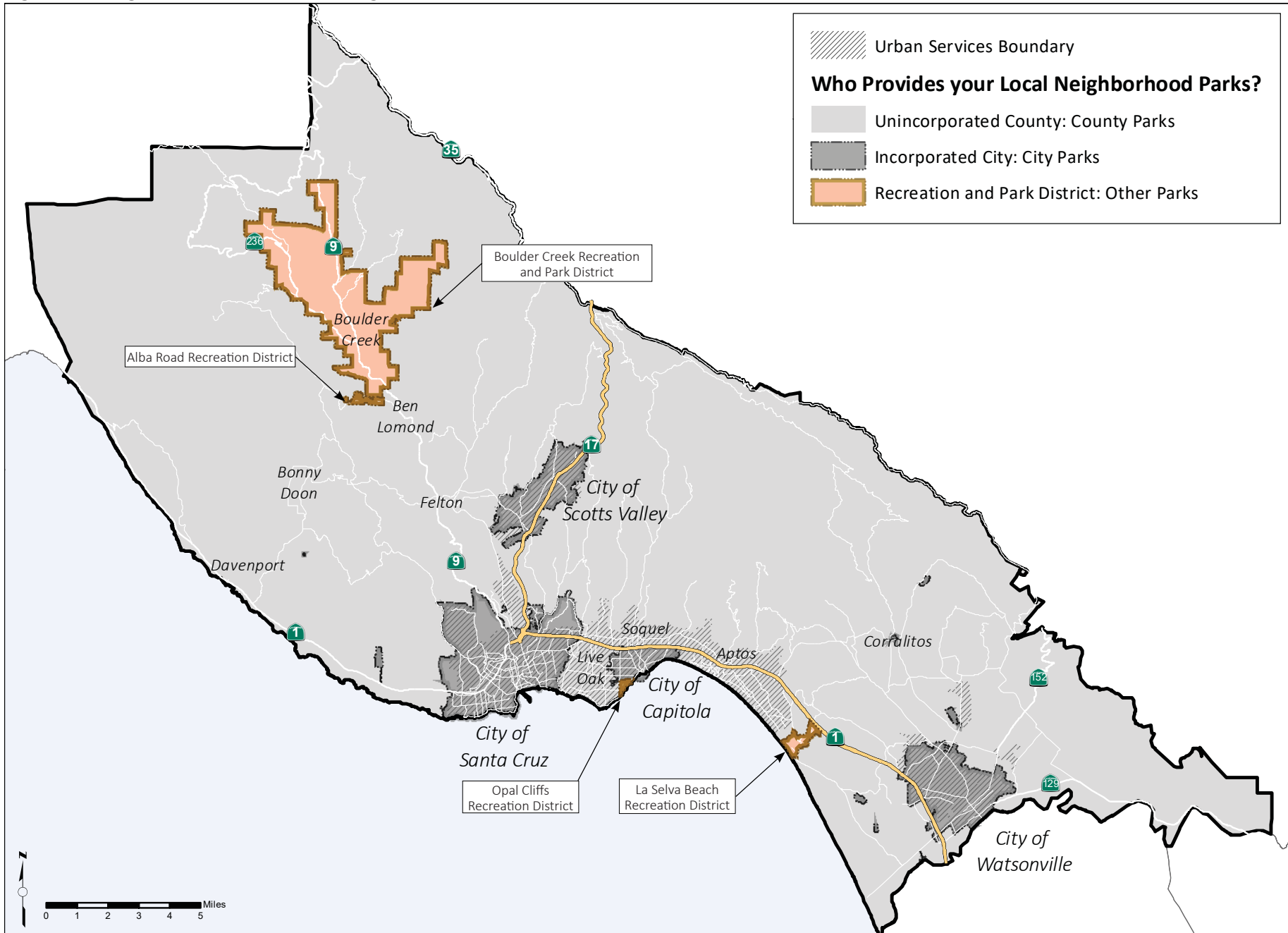
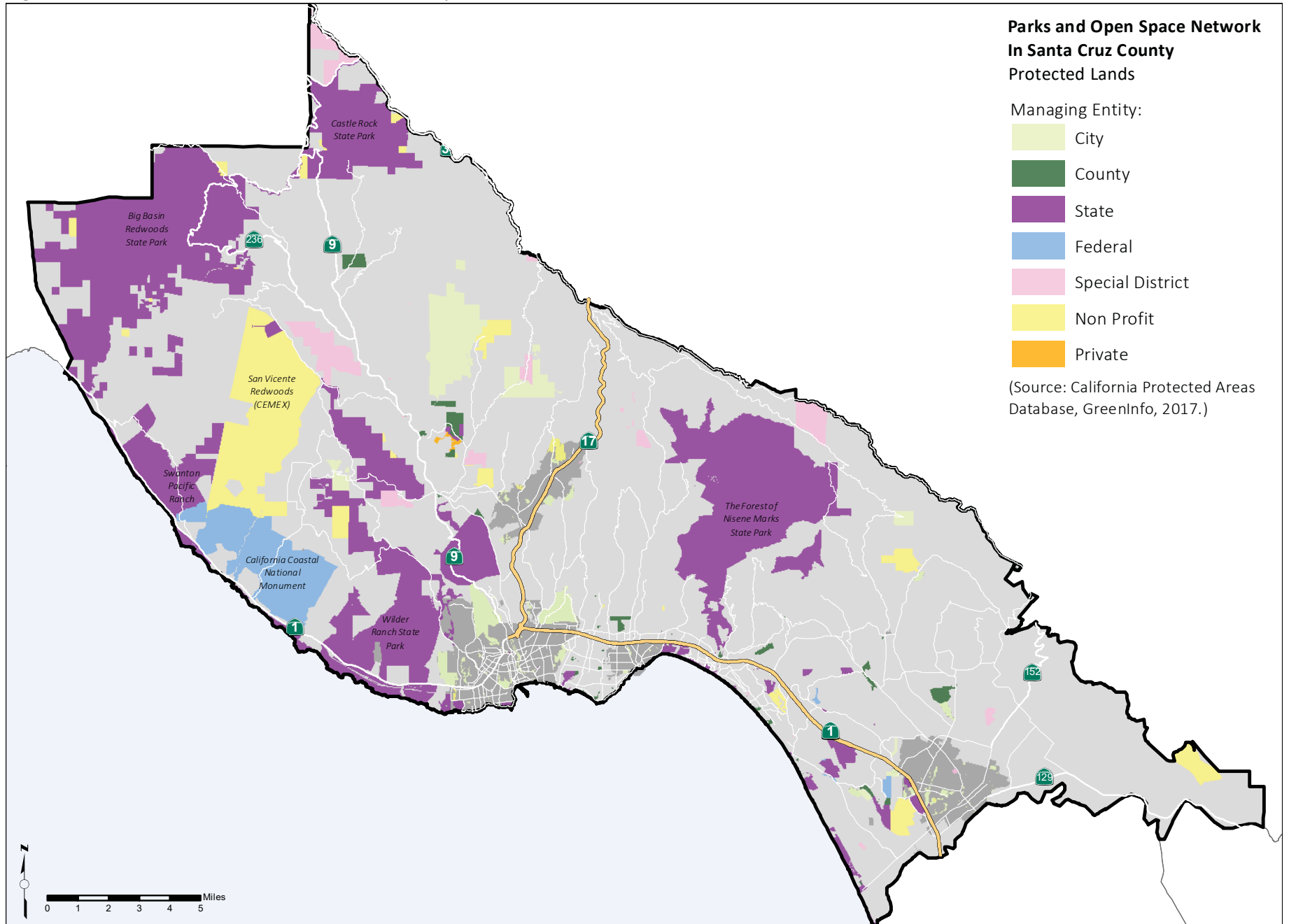


Figure 4: Protected Lands in Santa Cruz County



Today the County Parks Department manages:

- 1,593 acres of parkland including 883 acres of parks and 710 acres of open space
- 38 neighborhood, community, regional or rural parks
- 27 coastal access points
- 23 playgrounds
- 6 parks with sports fields
- 8 parks with basketball courts
- 5 parks with tennis courts
- 5 parks with community rooms
- 1 regional swim center with aquatics and fitness programs and special events throughout the year. Swim Center visits exceed 180,000 per year
- Recreational, cultural and youth programs throughout the unincorporated county
- 4 parks with wedding event facilities

COUNTY PARKS SERVICES

Since 1979, the County Parks Department has managed a diverse parks system including neighborhood, community, regional, and rural parks, coastal access points, trails, and cultural and recreational programs and activities for all ages throughout the unincorporated county. County Parks facilities' locations and amenities are shown in Figure 5.

The County Parks Department also provides

financial support to community arts and recreational programs provided by other organizations such as the Museum of Art and History, the Davenport Teen Center and local school district facilities and programs in various locations around the county.

The Parks Department provides the following services.

Seascape County Park in Aptos



Photo by Mary Chavez

REGIONAL PARKS



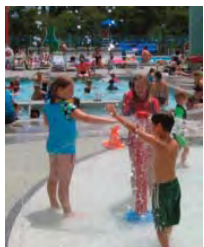
Regional parks, located throughout the county, include Quail Hollow Ranch in the San Lorenzo Valley, Polo Grounds in Aptos, and Pinto Lake in Watsonville. These parks and their facilities have unique geographic features, draw people from a wide area, and provide a wide variety of public amenities such as trails, sports fields, dog parks, and rental facilities.

NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY PARKS



Among the County's 29 neighborhood and community parks are Highlands Park in Ben Lomond, Brommer Park in Live Oak, Seascape Park in Aptos, and Aldridge Lane in Corralitos. These parks serve the surrounding communities and provide amenities such as places to picnic and hold gatherings, play structures for children to explore, benches to rest on, community art for visitors to enjoy, community gardens, skate parks and bike pump tracks, and facilities for community events and weddings.

SIMPKINS FAMILY SWIM CENTER



The Swim Center, also a regional park, is located in Live Oak. Among the aquatic programs offered are swim lessons, recreation and lap swim, water exercise, and water polo, as well as the popular Pool Jr. Guards and Little Guards summer camps. It is the primary public pool in the area and provides services for every age group 363 days a year.

COMMUNITY EVENTS



The County Parks Department puts on events such as the Parks & Rex pool party, where dogs can take a dip in the pool, the Holiday Art & Craft Faire and the Floating Pumpkin Patch.

TEEN PROGRAMS



Zombie Camp (pictured), for ages 11-14, is held at Aptos Park. Teens can gain valuable job skills while having fun by volunteering as a Junior Leader at County Parks youth summer camps, as well as assisting with after-school programs.

COASTAL ACCESS POINTS



Coastal access points include Scott Creek Beach near Davenport, Sunny Cove Beach in Live Oak, and Hidden Beach in Aptos. County Parks, together with State Parks and other entities, provides and maintains coastal access points in the unincorporated portions of the county. These coastal access points sometimes include restroom facilities, trash receptacles, natural plantings, and infrastructure such as stairs and fencing to protect sensitive areas and species.

YOUTH PROGRAMS



School-age youth can enjoy a variety of camps and programs, including Nature Adventure and Science Sleuths at Quail Hollow Ranch, Kreative Kids at Wilder Hall, and art and science camps at Aptos Park. Afterschool programs are held at Mar Vista Elementary and La Selva Beach clubhouse.

ADULT AND SENIOR PROGRAMS



Programs for adults and seniors include local day trips (pictured, trip to Harley Farms), water and dry-land exercise classes at the Swim Center, Spanish language and tap classes, interpretive hikes and workshops at Quail Hollow Ranch, and a popular Mall Walk Program.

ARTS



The Percent for the Arts Program, art exhibitions at the Government Center, Artist of the Year, and Outside the Box are just a few of County Parks art-related programs. Arts programming for youth is provided through summer camps and is integrated into parks after school programs. County Parks-sponsored public art can be enjoyed at locations throughout Santa Cruz County. The department also supports the Arts Council and the Museum of Art and History.



Jose Avenue County Park in Live Oak



Recreational Trip to Suisun Marsh Natural History Cruise



Mar Vista Kinder Enrichment Program

DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE & STAFFING

The County Parks Department is made up of five sections with distinct functions.

ADMINISTRATION AND RESERVATIONS

Administration staff provides support and customer service to all Parks staff and customers, and oversees the department budget, finances, human resources, and office operations. Reservations staff administers the use and rental of all park buildings, beaches and park sites; manages concessionaires and the rentals of private houses in county park sites; provides oversight of community gardens and horse-boarding facilities; and works closely with maintenance staff to maximize the use and enjoyment of public facilities.

AQUATICS

Aquatics staff manages the Simpkins Family Swim Center and the extensive aquatics programs offered there. Swim Center visits exceed 180,000 a year. Staff continues to develop new program opportunities to meet the needs of the community and increase participation at the Swim Center.

MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS

Maintenance staff provides maintenance to all park locations, beaches and facilities. In addition, staff maintains the landscaping around all County government facilities. A partial list of respon-

sibilities include mowing, minor construction projects, trash pick-up, restoration of natural resources, building maintenance, and pool maintenance at the Simpkins Family Swim Center. Maintenance staff also assists Reservations staff in preparation, set up and clean up for events.

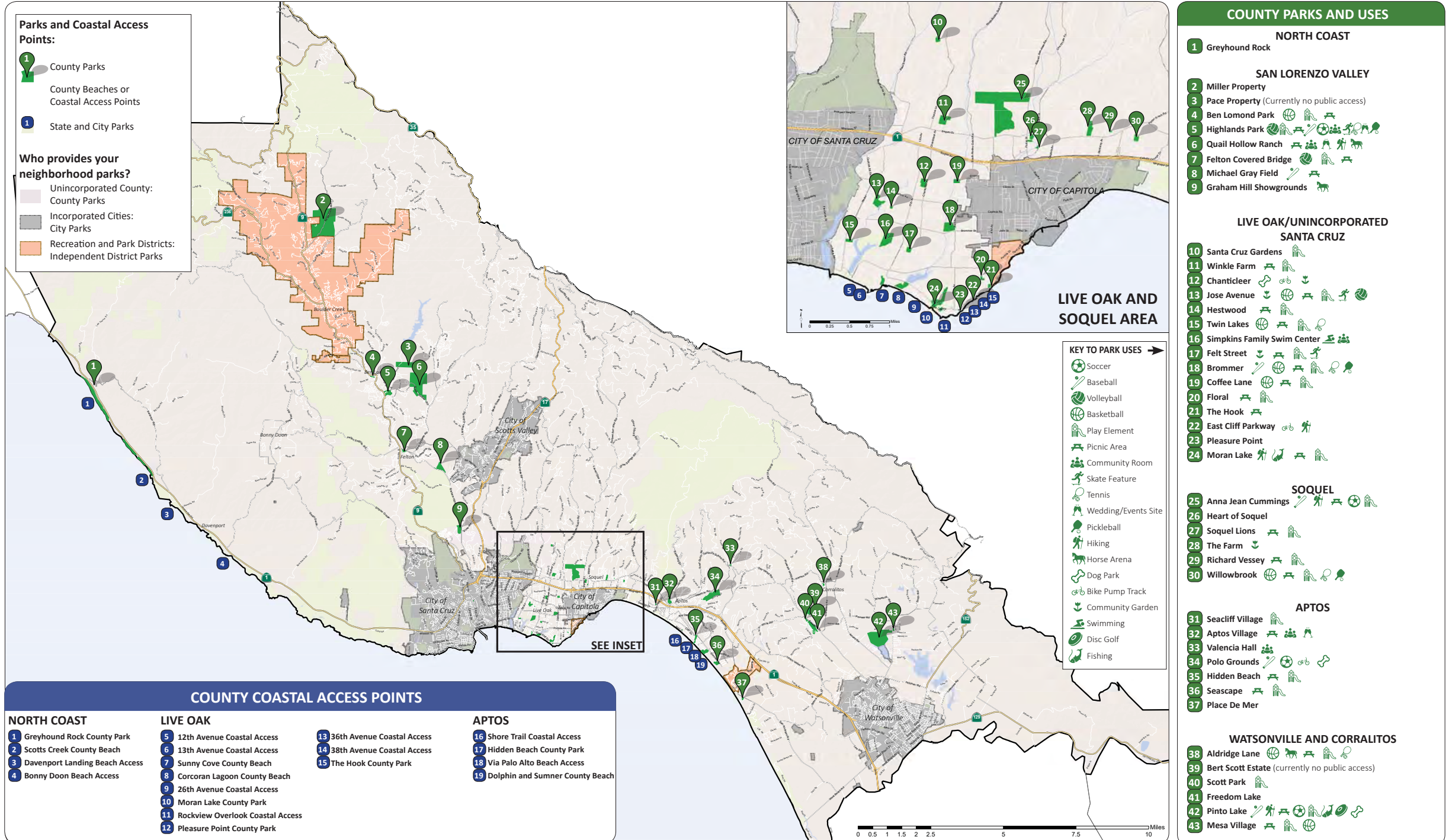
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Planning staff oversees the implementation of the Parks Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects, develops plans and studies for components of the County Parks system, and oversees park construction projects. The Planning and Development section works with specialists from a variety of disciplines and members of the public to develop short, medium and long term plans such as feasibility studies, acquisition studies, park master plans, environmental review documents, design and construction documents, and permits for park projects. Staff leads the submission and administration of grant applications for County Parks projects. The planning section also reviews plans for projects led by other agencies for potential impacts on the County Parks system.

RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

Recreational Program staff administers an extensive list of programs including youth programs, interpretive nature programs centered at Quail Hollow Ranch, adult and senior programs, cultural services and arts programs. Recreation and Cultural Services staff also conducts annual special events, such as the Holiday Art and Craft Fair.

Figure 5: County Parks, Facilities, and Coastal Access Points



COUNTY COASTAL ACCESS POINTS

<p>NORTH COAST</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Greyhound Rock County Park 2 Scotts Creek County Beach 3 Davenport Landing Beach Access 4 Bonny Doon Beach Access 	<p>LIVE OAK</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5 12th Avenue Coastal Access 6 13th Avenue Coastal Access 7 Sunny Cove County Beach 8 Corcoran Lagoon County Beach 9 26th Avenue Coastal Access 10 Moran Lake County Park 11 Rockview Overlook Coastal Access 12 Pleasure Point County Park 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13 36th Avenue Coastal Access 14 38th Avenue Coastal Access 15 The Hook County Park 	<p>APTOS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16 Shore Trail Coastal Access 17 Hidden Beach County Park 18 Via Palo Alto Beach Access 19 Dolphin and Summer County Beach
--	---	---	---

CHAPTER 6: OVERSIGHT AND FUNDING

PUBLIC OVERSIGHT

As with all County departments, the Parks Department is overseen by the Board of Supervisors. In addition, it is supported by two Commissions: the Arts Commission and the Parks and Recreation Commission. These commissions are appointed by the Board of Supervisors, make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors for park-related actions, and assist in coordinating between the public, the department, and the Board.

THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
The mission of the Santa Cruz County Parks and Recreation Commission is to advise and support the Board of Supervisors in its work to provide excellent and accessible parks, open spaces, recreational programs and facilities that promote health and enhance the quality of life for all.

THE ARTS COMMISSION
The mission of the Santa Cruz County Arts Commission is to promote, expand and plan for the cultural life of Santa Cruz County and to bring artists and arts organizations together with government for the benefit of all residents of the county.

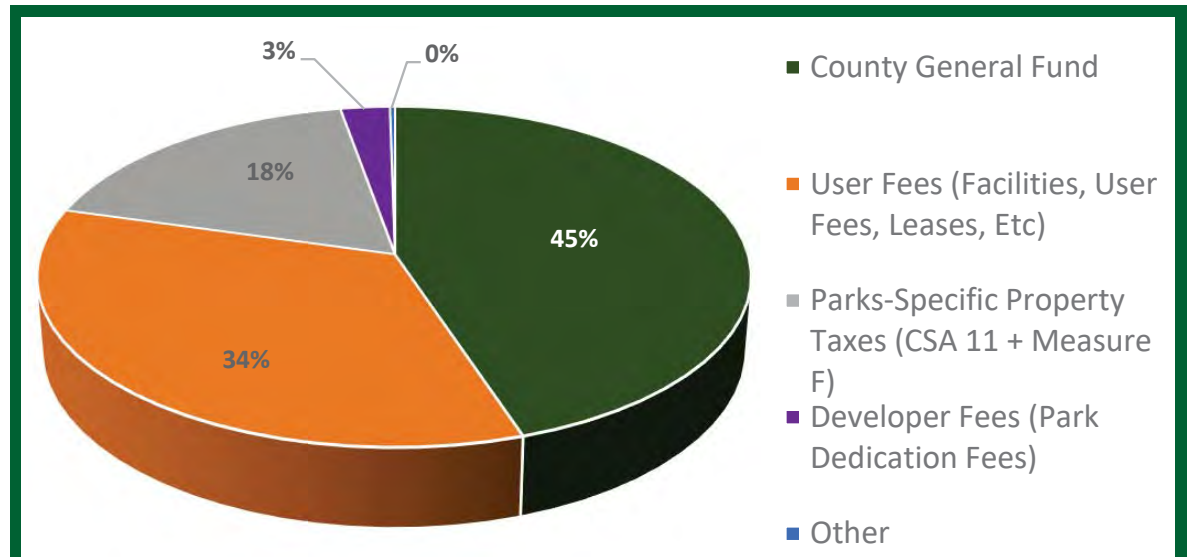


Figure 6: Parks Revenue Sources in Fiscal Year 2016/17

DEPARTMENT FUNDING

County Parks funding comes from a variety of sources including the County General Fund, property taxes, recreation and park facility user fees, grants, and developer fees (for capital projects only) as shown in Figure 6. The amount of each of these sources varies by year depending on specific grants and several other factors. Property tax money includes funds associated with County Service Area (CSA) 11, which exists to provide funding specifically for County Parks.

Generally, the budget can be divided into two categories. First, the operating budget includes the costs associated with operations and maintenance of the existing parks facilities and programs. Second, the capital projects budget includes costs associated with the acquisition of new park properties, development of new or additional park facilities on park properties, and deferred maintenance.

The Parks Department budget, including both the operating budget and the capital projects budget, has not remained proportional to the growing size, demands and costs of operating the parks system (see Figure 7).

OPERATING BUDGET

The sources of funds used for department operations generally include the County General Fund, park user fees, CSA 11, and Measure F.

The overall department operating budget decreased with the recession in 2008, and has only recently (in 2015/16) returned to the pre-2008 level. Additionally, costs associated

with staff, supplies and services have increased over the same time period. To illustrate both of these points, Figure 7 shows that there were 68 funded full time or equivalent staff positions in 2002/03, and only 46 in 2016/17. While staff numbers have decreased, the number of parks and facilities for which the department is responsible has increased from 55 in 2002/03 to 64 in 2016/17.

COUNTY GENERAL FUND CONTRIBUTION

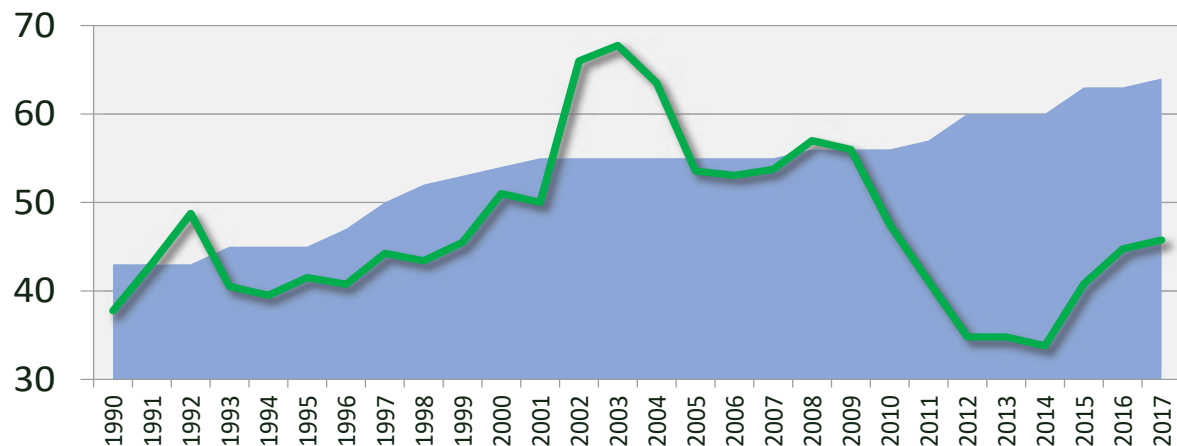
Each fiscal year, the County Board of Supervisors approves the department budget which includes a contribution from the County General Fund. This General Fund contribution generally has increased slightly each year proportionate to rising costs of operating the department. However, in the economic downturn of 2008, with the fiscal crisis and the dissolving of the County Parks Department into the Department of Public Works,

the General Fund contribution to the Parks Department was reduced significantly, from \$4.3 million in 2007/08 to \$2.1 million in 2012/13. Although the total operating budget has partially recovered – due to increasing program participation, user fees and Measure F – in 2016/17 the General Fund contribution was \$3.7 million, and has still not returned to pre-recession levels.

COUNTY SERVICE AREA 11

County Service Area (CSA) 11 is a special district that covers the entire unincorporated county (outside the four cities) except areas that are within one of the four distinct recreation and park districts. This service area was created in 1971 to provide additional property tax funds in an effort to address the gap between needed parks services and available funding. This relatively small fund has been essential to the department in maintaining the most important

Figure 7: Number of Parks and Number of Parks Department Staff





Valencia Hall

department services. Because the Santa Cruz County Parks Department provides an urban level of service in some areas while collecting proportionally fewer taxes than a city, this was a necessary step.

MEASURE F

Measure F was approved by the voters of CSA 11 in 2014, to include a specific per-parcel property tax within CSA 11 that provides a small additional amount of funding to the County Parks Department. Measure F provides less than 4 percent of the annual department budget.

CAPITAL PROJECTS BUDGET

There is no consistent source of funding allocated to capital projects in the County Parks system for upgrades to park infrastructure, deferred maintenance, planning and construction of new

park uses and facilities, and acquisition of new park properties. These types of projects must be funded through unique combinations of funding sources such as grants, park dedication (developer) fees, one-time individual funding sources such as property sales, and public-private funding partnerships.

REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Throughout the past 30 years, the Redevelopment Agency provided the largest amount of capital funding for parks projects. Since the agency was dissolved in 2011, this source of funding is no longer available for development of the County Parks system. Redevelopment Agency funding was only available for parks within the Redevelopment Project Area, which included Live Oak and Soquel. The parks throughout the rest of the County Parks system were not eligible to receive these significant contributions of capital project funds.

PARK DEDICATION FEES

New residential development in the unincorporated portions of the county requires either dedication of new public park land or paying an in-lieu fee to offset additional demand for parks created by the residential development. In-lieu fees go to the County Parks Department and are used to fund capital projects or acquisition of new parkland. The intent of these funds is to allow the parks system to grow proportionally with the increased demand created by new residential development. These fees have not been adjusted to reflect inflation or the increase in property values since 1998.



Photo by Alyssa Johnson

The Hook County Park at Pleasure Point

CHAPTER 7: KEY CHALLENGES

A number of key challenges face this county and this department. Understanding these challenges is critical to creating a way forward that is strategic, holistic, and proactive, rather than reactive. Understanding these challenges will also help the department focus on the big picture rather than responding individually to specific circumstances in a way that is at best piecemeal or partial. The following issues have been identified by staff during the strategic planning process.

LARGE URBANIZED UNINCORPORATED AREAS

The passage of Proposition 13 in 1978 locked in the apportionment rate for each county in California in addition to establishing a maximum property tax rate of one percent statewide. The apportionment rate determines the percentage of property taxes that go to the County as opposed to other local agencies such as cities and special districts. Since that time, Santa Cruz County has been locked into a lower property tax apportionment, on average 13 cents of each tax dollar, than many other counties and cities in California, some of which may receive about twice that for each tax dollar. At the same time, about half (49%) of Santa Cruz County's population lives in the unincorporated area (e.g. outside the cities of Capitola, Scotts Valley, Santa Cruz or Watsonville) compared to the median of 19% living in unincorporated areas in all California counties with populations over 200,000. This means that our parks facilities experience high use and many urban-type challenges, and that the County Parks Department is responsible for

providing more urban-type parks than would typically be provided by a county. At the same time, the County has fewer financial resources to meet those challenges.

DECLINE IN AVAILABLE FUNDING

In the wake of the economic downturn of 2008, available funding for parks and services was reduced dramatically in favor of directing funds toward other essential services such as fire and policing. The General Fund contribution to the department has still not returned to pre-recession levels, while costs have risen. Despite passage of Measure F in 2014, staffing has still not returned to pre-2008 levels despite significant new demands on the department such as new properties and facilities. The number of funded full time or equivalent staff positions has dropped from 68 in 2002/03, to 41 in 2015, and is up only to 46 in 2016/17 (see Figure 7). In addition, in response to our state's budget crisis,



The Shore Trail in Aptos

in 2011 California’s Redevelopment Agencies were shuttered. Redevelopment was previously the primary funding source for almost all parks development and capital projects in the Redevelopment Area of Live Oak and Soquel. The only other source of funding currently available to help us meet community demand for new or improved parks and facilities is Park Dedication Fees, and these haven’t been adjusted for inflation since 1998 and are limited due to the small amount of new development in the county.

DEFERRED MAINTENANCE

The Parks Department estimates that there are approximately \$100 million in deferred maintenance projects needed to address critical or primary maintenance needs within the County Parks system. These deferred maintenance projects include critical upkeep and routine maintenance such as roof replacements, repairs to the Simpkins Family Swim Center, and replacement of facilities such as playground equipment that has reached the end of its usable lifespan. There is a strong potential for ‘cascading’ effects and permanent negative impacts if we don’t address these issues in the near term.

COUNTY LAND AND HOUSING COSTS

Santa Cruz County is now one of the least affordable places to live in the world based on median house price and median household income.¹ Considering the cost of living there’s a great need for low and no-cost programs and facility access. Many residents are housing insecure,

and a growing number are currently experiencing homelessness. Impacts of increased homelessness on parks include use of parks property to meet basic human needs (for sleeping, bathing, storage, etc.), which puts additional environmental and maintenance demands on parks-owned facilities and open spaces. Additionally, the high cost of land means it is much more expensive to purchase and develop new parks facilities.

CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

The demographics and needs of the community in our county continually evolve, causing changes in the demands on the parks system. The parks system must continually adjust its services as needed to meet these changing demographics. Most significantly, over the past two decades, the county’s median age has increased and the percentage of the population identifying as Latino has increased.² These two demographic groups, as well as other groups, may be disproportionately underserved by the parks system. Each community has unique needs, and the department strives to understand and address these needs as they continue to evolve.

PARK ACCESS CHALLENGES

Transportation difficulties exacerbate County Parks’ challenges in providing accessible park facilities and programs throughout the county. The county’s population is spread out, with many residents commuting long distances to jobs. There are few functional alternatives to private

automobile use for residents and visitors to access many of the county parks. The one primary transportation corridor is narrow and heavily impacted. This increases the cost of doing business in a number of important ways such as increased construction and shipping costs, and increased travel time for parks field staff who travel between facilities. Transportation challenges also increase the need to provide local parks within close proximity to all neighborhoods, to make parks more accessible to more people.



Felton Covered Bridge County Park

1. 13th Annual Demographia International Housing Affordability Survey, 2017.

2 “Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010,” for Santa Cruz County, US Census, 2017.

PART III: CREATING THE PLAN

CHAPTER 8: PROJECT APPROACH

The Strategic Plan was developed through a collaborative process that sought to be both geographically and culturally inclusive. Input was solicited through meetings with staff, community members and the Strategic Plan Working Group. Generally, the process is illustrated in Figure 8, and includes outreach, visioning and goal-setting.

GUIDANCE & OVERSIGHT

The Strategic Plan was instigated and the process was led by a Strategic Planning Team which consisted of two lead project designers from the department along with parks leadership. In addition, a Strategic Plan Working group was formed in December of 2016 for the distinct purpose

of helping with the County Parks Strategic Plan process. It was composed of ten outside members of varying backgrounds with diverse interests, expertise, experience and partnerships. A list of Working Group members is included in the Acknowledgements section at the beginning of this document.

The Working Group met periodically, for a total of six times over the course of developing the Strategic Plan, to review and give input into all Strategic Plan materials and project phases. This review included project outreach and public engagement, creation of the parks vision and values, and the framing of the goals and objectives for the department. The Working Group also helped implement the public meetings.



Figure 8: Strategic Plan Flow Chart

STAFF INVOLVEMENT

In Spring 2017 the Parks Department hosted a series of three meetings for staff across the department to solicit their input and engage them in the strategic planning process. Each meeting drew a mix of attendees from various sections, and a total 48 staff members provided input. Ultimately, all sections of the department were represented: maintenance and operations, recreation and cultural services, administration and reservations, aquatics, and planning and development.

These initial meetings included a series of visioning and brainstorming exercises aimed at gathering ideas on how the department can improve and evolve to meet the needs of the community and continue to be a great place to work. Through this process we sought also to identify what changes were needed to both enhance the department's ability to serve the public and to improve job satisfaction for Parks employees.

These meetings generated a wide range of specific ideas and feedback – all of which have been valuable to this process and will be important to the department in future planning. Staff input was synthesized and used to populate a large graphic (see Figure 10 in Chapter 9).

Just as staff input was vital to developing the Parks Vision and Values, it contributed foundationally to establishing the department's priorities. An additional 'All-Hands' meeting took place later in the process to generate specific goals and objectives for the Strategic Plan.

Internal feedback about what is missing, and what can improve the department will continue to be gathered on a regular basis from staff as part of the new Strategic Improvement Cycle.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Community input was an integral part of the Strategic Plan process. The people that live in Santa Cruz County care deeply about their parks system; in total over 1,000 people participated in the Strategic Plan process through completing online surveys, attending one or more of the community meetings about the project, or providing comments or feedback in other ways. Strategic Plan outreach included engagement of

County communications staff, Board of Supervisors' staff, department staff and members of the Strategic Plan Working Group for assistance in personally contacting various groups of stakeholders, key community organizations and interested community members to solicit their input via the survey and to publicize the community meetings.

Our personal outreach included over 5,000 people at over 200 local organizations with a wide geographic and demographic reach with materials in English and Spanish. Feedback from the community members was the most important consideration in developing each component of the Strategic Plan.



Strategic Plan Staff Meeting

STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH/ONLINE SURVEY

As part of the outreach process, the Parks Department created an open online survey and distributed it widely through the official County website, on Nextdoor in neighborhoods throughout the county, and personal contacts via our distribution lists. The survey was available in both English and Spanish for anyone interested in giving input from April 8 through June 2, 2017. In that time, 802 people responded to the survey. The survey was not intended to statisti-

cally represent the county; rather, it was made available to anyone who wanted to participate. Survey responses were completed from all parts of the county.

Survey objectives included:

- Gauge general knowledge of the County Parks system and inform survey respondents about County Parks' services
- Assess satisfaction with existing County Parks system
- Determine people's priorities for types of improvements to the County Parks system
- Learn generally how survey respondents use, and would like to use, parks facilities, coastal access points, and programs
- Hear people's perceptions of gaps in services/facilities
- Involve the community and help people feel invested in the Strategic Plan process, and in the future of the Parks Department

Figure 9: Words used in the responses to the survey about favorite aspects of Santa Cruz County Parks



COMMUNITY MEETINGS

The heart of the engagement process was a series of five community meetings throughout the county on the topic of vision and priorities for the department's Strategic Plan. Over 190 people participated in these meetings, and participants shared a variety of perspectives on their vision and values and their goals for the department. Meetings were held in Ben Lomond, Watsonville, Davenport, Aptos and Live Oak.

The meetings were publicized through individual letters and emails to over 200 stakeholder groups and their membership, publishing in each of the Board of Supervisors' newsletters, posting on both the County's and the Parks Department's website and social media, posting on Nextdoor, posting in the Parks Activity Guide and at parks and community bulletins, distributing flyers to school districts where feasible, and a press release which generated several articles in local media. Outreach materials were provided in English and Spanish.

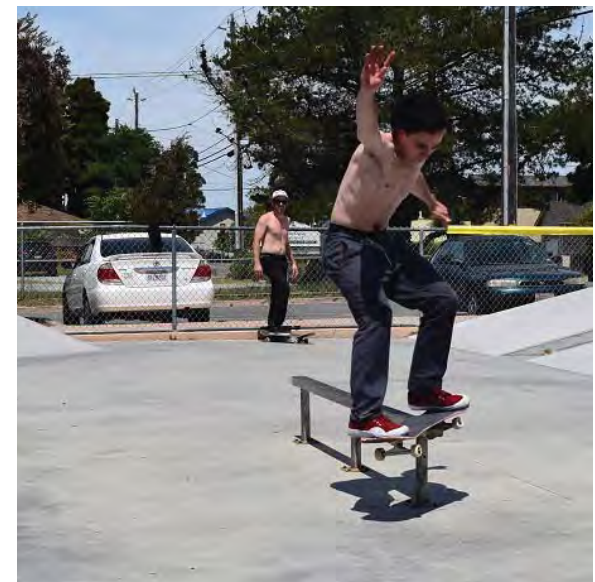
Community meetings included about an hour and fifteen minutes for public comments. Participants were split into four groups for the comment period, and each group rotated through a series of four stations. Each station was facilitated by staff and/or volunteers and focused on one of four topics, including vision and values, parks and facilities, programs and events, and priorities. Facilitators asked a series of prompts and led a series of exercises with each small group, and all comments were recorded. Spanish translation services were available at each meeting.



Strategic Plan Community Meeting in Live Oak



Polo Grounds County Park in Aptos



Felt Street County Park

CHAPTER 9: KEY FINDINGS

KEY DEPARTMENT NEEDS

Community members and parks staff have provided significant contributions during the Strategic Plan process, describing the needs of the parks system and the needs of the department. Funding constraints are a key limiting factor in the ability to meet these needs. For a discussion on needed funding, see Chapters 6 and 7. This chapter summarizes key findings from staff and the community that identifies the needs for the County Parks Department. These needs form the basis for the development of the goals, objectives and strategies in Chapter 3.

All staff members in the County Parks Department were given the opportunity to give input into the strategic planning process through an initial series of three staff meetings, additional written comments and interviews, and as part of a follow-up mid-year ‘All-Hands’ meeting, where they were able to prioritize their ideas on ways to improve the department’s functioning.

In the course of the initial internal strategic planning meetings, staff was asked to consider both the internal needs of the department and what the community most wants and needs—from the perspective of those who are on-the-ground directly serving the public.

DEPARTMENT NEEDS

Parks staff identified the following most important staff needs:

- **More financial resources to maintain the growing number of parks and facilities:** It has been increasingly challenging for the small number of staff—particularly maintenance staff—to do their jobs while being given increasingly more responsibilities with less time.
- **More training and support:** Staff sees great value in participating in training to develop new skills as well as cross-train and share knowledge within the department. These opportunities could increase staff capacity and efficiency, allow for personal growth and career advancement, and allow the department to retain skilled employees with experience and knowledge.
- **Improved internal communication:** Increasing and improving communications between parks management and staff, and between individual parks staff members, has been a consistent key need raised by staff as part of this process. Ideas for improving communication include technological upgrades for staff such as email and network access, as well as improved communications planning and disseminating information throughout the department.

COMMUNITY NEEDS

Parks staff considered the most important community needs as follows:

- Safe, clean and well-maintained parks facilities
- More programs for youth, especially in underserved communities

- Expanded volunteer opportunities and community involvement
- Better awareness of what the Parks Department offers

The input collected in the course of these meetings was used to fill in a large graphic summarizing the key themes and ideas received from staff (see Figure 10).

Many of the specific actions identified as priorities at the internal staff meetings will be incorporated into our first operational plan and will continue to be referenced as the department moves forward.

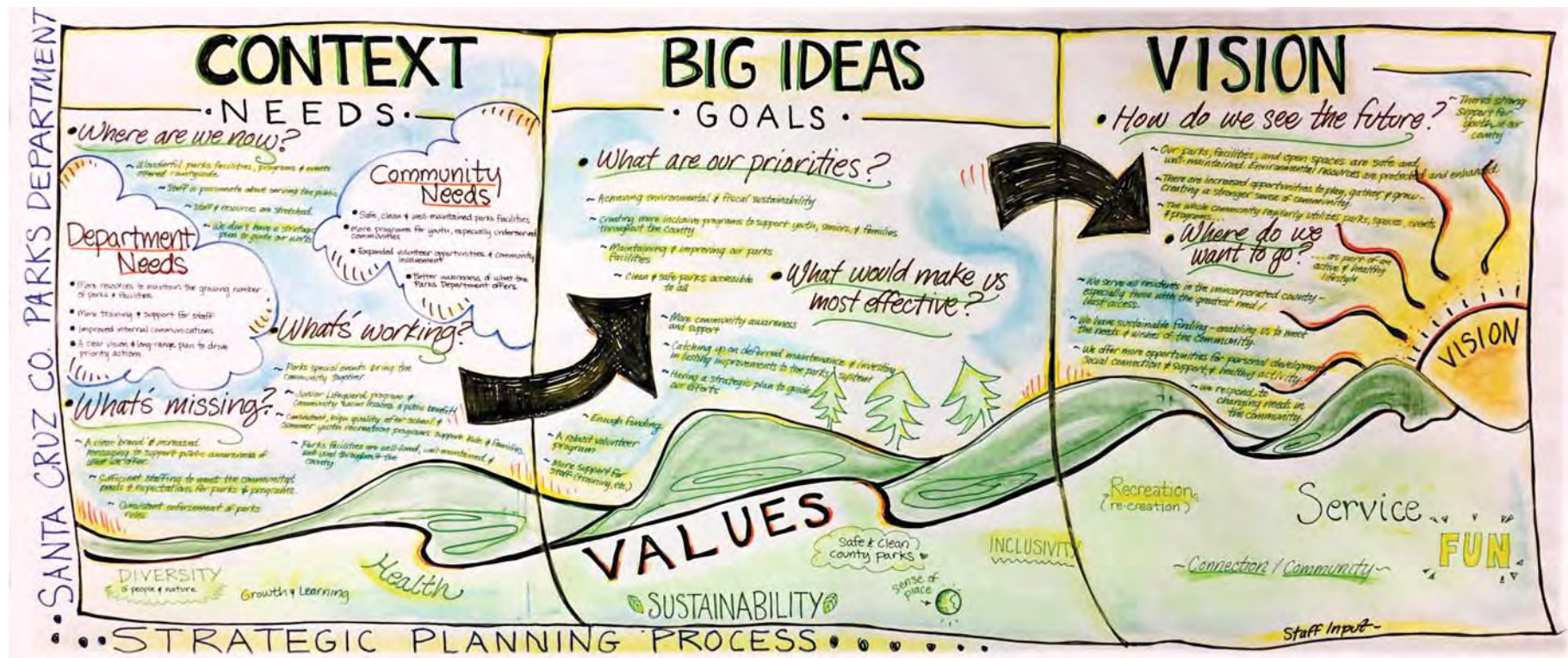


Figure 10: Key Themes and Ideas Received from Staff

Highlights from Graphic Text (Figure 10)

CONTEXT
Needs

Where are we now?

- Wonderful parks facilities, programs & events offered countywide
- Staff is passionate about serving the public
- Staff & resources are stretched

What's working?

- Parks special events bring the community together
- Junior Lifeguard program and community swim lessons a real public benefit
- Consistent, high quality after school & summer youth recreation programs support kids & families
- Parks facilities are well-loved, well-maintained (for the most part) & well-used throughout the county

What's missing?

- Sufficient staffing to meet the community's needs & expectations for parks & programs
- Consistent enforcement of parks rules

BIG IDEAS
Goals

What are our priorities?

- Achieving environmental & fiscal sustainability
- Creating more inclusive programs to support youth, seniors & families throughout the county
- Maintaining & improving our parks facilities
- Clean & safe parks accessible to all

What would make us most effective?

- More community awareness & support
- Catching up on deferred maintenance & investing in lasting improvements to the parks system
- Having a strategic plan to guide our efforts
- Having a robust volunteer program
- More support for staff development

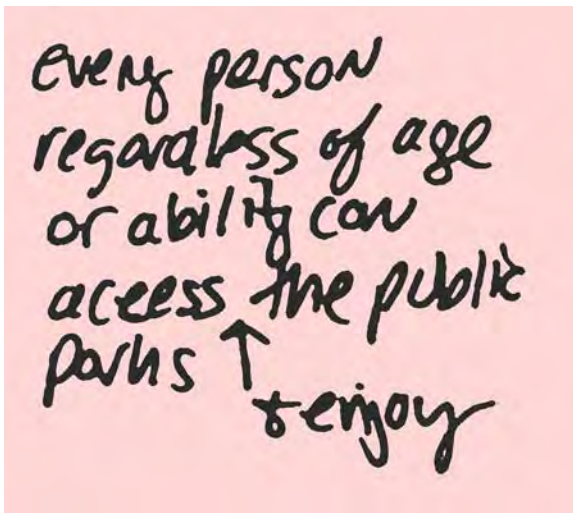
VISION

How do we see the future?

- Our parks, facilities & open spaces are safe & well-maintained. Environmental resources are protected & enhanced
- There are increased opportunities to play, gather & grow – creating a stronger sense of community
- The whole community regularly accesses/utilizes our parks, outdoor spaces, events & programs... as part of an active & healthy lifestyle
- There's strong support for all youth in our County of Santa Cruz

Where do we want to go?

- We serve all residents in the unincorporated county—especially those with the greatest need/least access
- We have sustainable funding—enabling us to meet the needs & wishes of the community... while maintaining what we have
- County residents have more opportunities for personal development, social connection & support & healthy activity
- We respond to changing needs in the community



Vision Statement from Public Meeting

COMMUNITY RESPONSE

The outreach process provided valuable insight into community needs that could be addressed by the County Parks Department. It also clarified priorities and hopes for the future of parks in the county.

In the community conversations, five general themes emerged as being important to community members. These themes include 1) the quality of park experience; 2) opportunities for outdoor recreation; 3) stewardship and protection of open space and natural, cultural and historical resources; 4) accessibility of parks and programs; and 5) engagement of the local community. Generally, these themes are well represented by the number of comments, as shown in Figure 11. However, the most common theme overall was engagement of the local community, which included interest from the community in topics such as programs, outreach, volunteers, events and educational opportunities. Themes are explained below, and the most prominent themes, topics, and comments are summarized in Table 2.

QUALITY OF PARK EXPERIENCE

The community consistently emphasized the need for maintaining and improving the quality of the existing park experience for park visitors. Essential to a positive park experience, things like improving *safety* for park users, improving the *cleanliness* and availability of restrooms, and *maintaining aging parks infrastructure* are of utmost importance. Community members also expressed a need for allocating additional and consistent levels of resources to the parks sys-

tem to allow improvements and consistent levels of service in times of economic downturn.

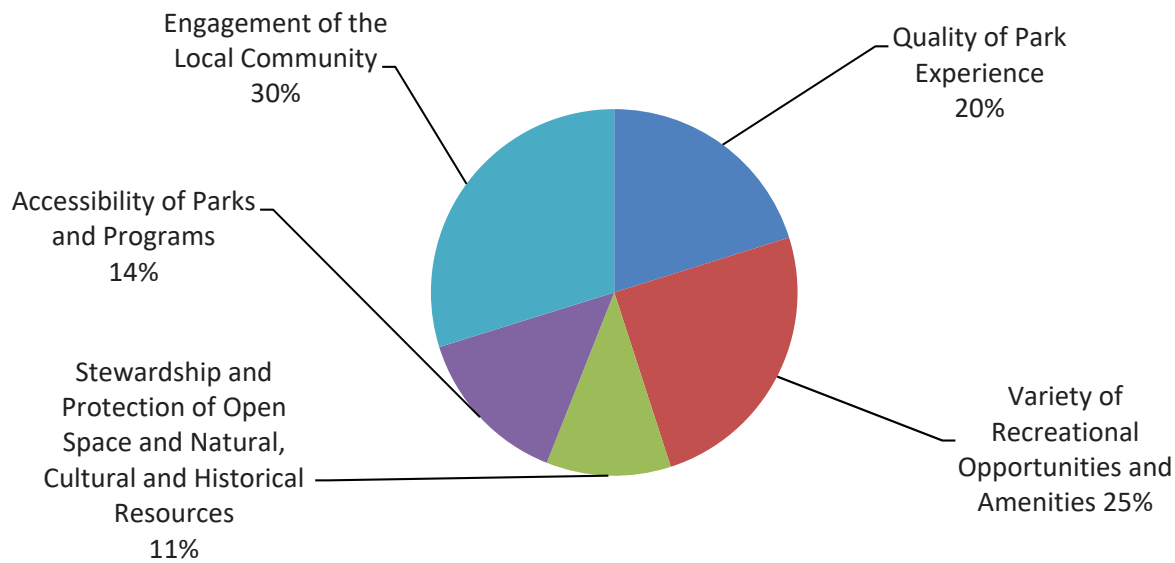
VARIETY OF RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND AMENITIES

The parks system needs to provide adequate and appropriate opportunities for both active and passive recreation, and common outdoor spaces and facilities for group activities. Community members expressed a need for a variety of specific activities and new facilities they wished to see within the parks system. These facilities and uses included *sports facilities, trails, community centers, natural open areas, places to take dogs, additional amenities for youth*, and other types of parks uses. The range of suggestions reflects the community's diverse needs and their vision for what a healthy lifestyle and improved quality of life mean to them.

STEWARDSHIP AND PROTECTION OF OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL, CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES

Santa Cruz County residents feel strongly about the importance of protecting the natural environment and cultural and historical resources. Particularly, in the parks system, there is a need to *preserve natural open space* and to balance the development of recreational facilities with the protection of the environment. There also is a need to improve the *management* of natural areas and to restore and enhance natural habitats within the parks system. There is a strong desire to preserve our historical and cultural buildings, sites, landscapes and resources.

Figure 11: Percent of topics raised in comments during public meetings



ACCESSIBILITY OF PARKS AND PROGRAMS
 People find accessibility of parks and programs to all people and geographic areas in the county to be a key need. Many comments related to increasing *equity in park and program distribution* and access. Another consistent topic is *universal access* to facilities for people with various types of abilities. Improving *connections* between and to parks to make them more accessible to local neighborhoods is another key need.

ENGAGEMENT OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY
 Locals expressed a desire for more opportunities to engage with and learn about the Parks Department, the parks system and parks programs. The department needs to increase *outreach* about offerings, and especially outreach to *underrepresented communities*. People would like to see more programs, events and volunteer opportunities in the parks and to have better and more accessible information about these opportunities. This would increase individuals' and the community's connection to the parks system. Educational opportunities and particularly *interpretive programs* and facilities are important throughout the parks system.

REGIONAL DIFFERENCES
 There are specific needs and unique gaps in the park network in each part of the county, and in each of the five meetings, topics that were most important to participants varied. Prominent themes by region are summarized in more detail in Appendix 2.



Greyhound Rock County Park

Table 2: Key Needs Summary


THEME: QUALITY OF PARK EXPERIENCE

PROMINENT TOPICS:

- Safety of park users
- Cleanliness of park restrooms and facilities
- Local stewardship of parks
- Updating and maintaining aging park infrastructure
- Adequate and sustainable funding for parks system
- Working with other park agencies to provide consistent facilities, hours and regulations

OTHER FREQUENT COMMENTS:

- Keeping park facilities operational
- Upgrading park facilities to accommodate increases in use
- Enforcing park rules
- Appropriate resources for maintenance and operations of existing facilities
- Consistent park funds that are not significantly reduced in times of economic downturn such as the recession of 2008



Restroom and Concession Building at Polo Grounds County Park in Aptos

THEME: VARIETY OF RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND AMENITIES

PROMINENT TOPICS:

- Providing a variety of types of community-serving park amenities
- Adapting to provide opportunities for current and future trends in recreation
- Opportunities for active and healthy lifestyles
- Adding new uses and improvements to existing park properties
- Opportunities for people to access open spaces and natural landscapes in the parks system
- Partnering with other parks agencies to provide new facilities



Shared Pickleball, Tennis and Basketball Courts at Brommer County Park in Live Oak

OTHER FREQUENT COMMENTS:

- Additional sports facilities such as soccer, baseball and softball fields, and basketball, tennis and pickleball courts
- Additional pool facilities and programs in underserved areas
- Additional trail connections for all types of trail users
- Spaces to take dogs
- Community centers for programs and events
- Youth facilities such as bike jumps and pump tracks, skate parks, adventure courses and climbing walls
- Joint use agreements with schools and other agencies to provide public access to park-like facilities during off hours

Table 2: Key Needs Summary (Continued)


THEME:
STEWARDSHIP AND PROTECTION OF OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL, CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES

PROMINENT TOPICS:

- Balancing the development of recreational facilities with protection and enhancement of natural, cultural and historical resources
- Functional habitat for native flora and fauna
- Protecting sensitive biological communities
- Protecting natural open spaces in parks
- Working with other park agencies to provide consistent facilities, hours and regulations


OTHER FREQUENT COMMENTS:

- Connectivity between open spaces and natural areas to maximize benefits to wildlife
- Conserving long-term viability of the variety of ecosystems within the county
- Allowing natural biological processes to occur and biological systems to adapt to future conditions



Pinto Lake Regional County Park in Watsonville

THEME:
ACCESSIBILITY OF PARKS AND PROGRAMS



Future Site of LEO's Haven, an Inclusive Playground at Chanticleer County Park

PROMINENT TOPICS:

- Equitable opportunities for access to parks and programs for all county residents and people with varying economic resources
- Universal accessibility to built infrastructure for people of all abilities
- Additional neighborhood parks within walking distance of people's homes, especially in underserved areas
- Increasing youth programs and bringing them to new locations

OTHER FREQUENT COMMENTS:

- Safe pedestrian and bicycle routes to access parks
- Public transportation to parks and programs
- Signs and materials in both English and Spanish
- Shuttle services or other forms of transportation to people who need it to access parks and programs


THEME:
ENGAGEMENT OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

PROMINENT TOPICS:

- Outreach to all demographics, particularly underrepresented communities
- More volunteer opportunities
- Additional programs and events
- Partnering with community organizations and local cities
- Educational opportunities

OTHER FREQUENT COMMENTS:

- Relevant publicity of parks, programs and events
- Coordination with school districts in publicizing parks and programs
- Events for families with activities for multiple age groups
- Interpretive programs
- Working with neighbors and being respectful to local residents



Strategic Plan Community Meeting in Watsonville

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY PARKS STRATEGIC PLAN

APPENDIX 1



ParkScore® Index for the County of Santa Cruz, California

Prepared by the Trust for Public Land

November, 2017

As the leading U.S. organization that works to analyze and determine the value of urban parks, The Trust for Public Land has created a methodology to give a general rating of every major U.S. city’s park system through its proprietary program called ParkScore®.

Santa Cruz County has a total population of 274,780 in 2017.¹ It is located in the mid-coast of California at the north end of the Monterey Bay. The county is 285,522 acres² making the density a little under 1 person per acre (0.96 people/acre). Of that acreage, 51,776 acres, or 18.1%, of Santa Cruz County are publically accessible parks, parkland, or open space. The county includes four incorporated municipalities. These are the cities of Capitola, Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley, and Watsonville (Table 1).

Table 1. Incorporated cities of Santa Cruz County and populations

City	Population ³
Capitola	10,180
Santa Cruz	64,465
Scotts Valley	11,928
Watsonville	53,796

Each of these municipalities operate parks, recreation facilities, or open space of their own. In addition, there are four special recreation and park districts in unincorporated areas that provide different combinations of these services (Table 2). These are independent of city and county governments and are governed by a board of directors.⁴

Parkland in the unincorporated part of the county is managed by the Santa Cruz County Department of Parks, Open Space, and Cultural Services. This agency manages significant acreage including neighborhood, community, regional, and rural parks, as well as coastal access points, trails, and cultural and recreational programs.

Table 2. Parks, recreation, and open space amenities provided in Santa Cruz County

2016 Service Review of Recreation and Park Districts Functions Provided	Parks	Recreational Facilities	Public Open Space
Cities			
City of Capitola	•	•	
City of Santa Cruz	•	•	•
City of Scotts Valley	•	•	•
City of Watsonville	•	•	•
Special Districts			
CSA 11 – Recreation and Parks	•	•	•
Alba Park, Recreation and Parkway District	•	•	
Boulder Creek Recreation and Park District	•	•	
La Selva Beach Recreation and Park District	•	•	
Opal Cliffs Recreation and Park District	•	•	•

¹ 2016 Forecast Census block groups provided by Esri

² U.S. Census Bureau

³ American Community Survey (ACS), U.S. Census Bureau

⁴ “Review of Recreation and Park Districts Services and Spheres of Influence.” Local Agency Formation Commission of Santa Cruz County. March 2016. Page 2.

Along with parkland belonging to the county, the municipalities, and the special recreation and park districts, there are also a number of state lands. Approximately 1,500 acres are managed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, primarily in ecological reserves focused on conservation and which are not accessible to the public. There are also a number of state forests, parks, and beaches, which are accessible and are a treasured part of the county. The Land Trust of Santa Cruz County also manages acreage in the county – much of which is not open to the public but some of which is.

Table 3. Agencies owning or managing publically accessible parkland in Santa Cruz County

Agency	Publically Accessible Acres ⁵
Boulder Creek Recreation District	3.4
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire)	2,861
California State Parks	44,519
City of Capitola	39
City of Santa Cruz	1,753
City of Scotts Valley	108
City of Watsonville	190
La Selva Recreation District	2.4
Land Trust of Santa Cruz County	551.6
Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District ⁶	n/a
Opal Cliffs Recreation District	.25
San Lorenzo Valley Water District	180
Santa Cruz County Department of Parks, Open Space, and Cultural Services	1,388
Santa Cruz City Water Department	180

Santa Cruz is the first county that the Trust for Public Land has scored using the ParkScore Index. As such, it is important to understand the above profile of the county as compared to the cities scored in ParkScore when considering the following analysis. The cities in ParkScore are the 100 most populous cities in the US, so some are operating in a very different setting than is Santa Cruz County. Some of the smaller ParkScore cities are similar in population to the county, but population density remains a significant difference as well. The median density of ParkScore cities is 5.75 people per acre.

Table 4 compares Santa Cruz County to selected ParkScore cities which are similar to the county in terms of population size or density.

Table 4. Santa Cruz County compared to selected ParkScore cities

Place	Population	Land Area	Population Density (people per acre of total land area)	Acres of Parkland	Parkland as Percent of the Land Area	ParkScore 2017
Santa Cruz County	274,780	285,522	0.96	51,776	18%	
Greensboro, NC	261,833	80,970	3.49	7,582	9%	44
Jersey City, NJ	266,010	9,468	28.69	1,677	18%	56.5
Henderson, NV	277,102	68,948	4.11	9,173	13%	61
Toledo, OH	278,254	51,643	5.41	3,128	6%	45
Anchorage, AK	305,446	1,090,997	0.28	914,138	84%	61.5

⁵ Many of these agencies own and/or manage far more acreage than is denoted here. This table only reflects that which is publically accessible.

⁶The Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District encompasses 1,047 acres, but this mostly serves populations outside of Santa Cruz County. Only 4 acres fall within county limits. For this reason the District and associated land was not included in the analysis.

ParkScore® Scoring Index

Cities can earn a maximum ParkScore of 100. For easy comparison and at-a-glance assessment, each city is also given a rating of one to five park benches. One bench means the park system needs major improvement, while five benches means the park system is outstanding. In evaluating park systems, we consider land owned by regional, state, and federal agencies within the 100 most populous U.S. cities—including schoolyards formally open to the public and greenways that function as parks. The analysis is based on three important characteristics of an effective park system: acreage, facilities and investment, and access.

Acreage

ParkScore awards each city points for acreage based on two equally weighted measures: median park size and parkland as a percentage of city area. Factoring park acreage into each city’s ParkScore helps account for the importance of larger “destination parks” that serve many users who live farther than ten minutes’ walking distance.

Investment and Amenities

ParkScore awards each city points for investment and amenities based on two equally weighted measures: total spending per resident and an average of per-capita provision of four key park amenities - basketball hoops, dog parks, playgrounds, and recreation and senior centers.

- Spending per resident is calculated from a three-year average (FY 2014/2015, FY 2015/2016, and FY 2016/2017, depending on a city’s fiscal calendar) to minimize the effect of annual fluctuations. Spending figures include capital and operational spending by all agencies that own parkland within the city limits, including federal, state, and regional agencies.
- Amenities were chosen because of the breadth of users served, the ubiquity of these amenity types, and the ease of accurate counting of these measures.

Access

ParkScore awards each city points for access based on the percentage of the population living within a ten-minute (half-mile) walk of a public park. The half-mile is defined as entirely within the public road network and uninterrupted by physical barriers such as highways, train tracks, and rivers.

Scoring

The scoring system recognizes the accomplishments of cities that have made significant investments in their parks without holding dissimilar cities to an unrealistic standard. It enables detailed analysis and allows cities to increase their ParkScore through incremental improvements to different aspects of their park systems.

To determine a city’s ParkScore, we assign points in three categories: acreage, investment and amenities, and access.

- Acreage: 20 points for median park size, and 20 points for park acres as a percentage of city area
- Investment and Amenities: 20 points for spending per resident and 20 points for the average of the four key amenity scores (basketball hoops, dog parks, playgrounds, and recreation and senior centers)
- Access: 40 points for percentage of the population living within a walkable half-mile, ten-minute walk of a public park

Points for each statistic are assigned by breaking the data range established by our national sample into 20 brackets (with the exception of Access, which has 40 brackets), with the lowest bracket receiving the least points and the highest bracket receiving the most points. Each city’s total points—out of a maximum of 120—are then normalized to a ParkScore of up to 100.

Outliers

To prevent outliers from skewing the results, the top bracket for each measure includes all values equal to more than double the median of the data range. For example, spending per resident in our 100-city national sample ranges from \$21 to \$279, with a median of \$80. To control distortion from local anomalies, all cities that spend more than double the median value (i.e., \$160 per resident) are assigned to the highest bracket and receive 20 points. With the top bracket thus defined, the parameters for the remaining brackets are established so that each bracket comprises an equal portion of the remaining data range. This protocol applies to all categories except access, which has no outliers.

Mapping

To map access to parks and open space, ParkScore first identifies gaps in park availability, and then determines which gaps represent the most urgent need for parkland.

Access gaps are based on a service area representing a ten-minute walk. To map park need, we combined three differently weighted demographic profiles:

- Population density – weighted at 50%
- Density of children age 19 and younger – weighted at 25%
- Density of individuals in households with income less than 75% of city median income – weighted at 25%

Each city's park need is mapped from data collected in the 2016 Forecast Census block groups provided by Esri.

Analysis of the ParkScore for the County of Santa Cruz and Municipalities

City of Capitola

The City of Capitola receives a score of 76, in a tie with the City of Santa Cruz for the highest scoring municipality. Capitola's parks are mostly small, but make up a not insignificant percentage (18%) of the city. Among this acreage is 160 acres at New Brighton State Beach. The city's parks are accessible within a 10-minute walk for 89% of the population. The city spends \$151 per resident on its parks and recreation offerings, even higher than the county. The population is quite well served in terms of recreational amenities, with the lowest score in this area being for basketball hoops.

City of Santa Cruz

The City of Santa Cruz ties with Capitola in scoring 76 points. The city has small parks at a median of 2.3 acres, but a quarter of the city (25%) is parkland. This is echoed in the impressive 94% of residents who live within a 10-minute walk to a park. Some of this acreage (201 acres) is state parkland. The city also spends the most on its parks out of all the municipalities, at \$164 per person. This is due in part to spending by California at the state parks of Seabright/Twin Lakes, Natural Bridges State Beach, and Lighthouse Field which fall within the city. The city has mid-range scores for amenities, with very low points for basketball hoops balanced out by full marks for 6 dog parks.

City of Scotts Valley

The City of Scotts Valley receives a score of 56. Scotts Valley has fairly large parks, with a median park size of almost 10 acres. Lodato Open Space (46 acres) and Skypark (32 acres) bring this score up. However the city's park offerings are concentrated in these large chunks; only about 4% of the city's land area is parkland and less than half (47%) of Scotts Valley residents can walk to a park within 10 minutes. The city invests well in its parks though, spending \$140 per resident, and also scores very well in recreational amenities.

City of Watsonville

The City of Watsonville scores 51.5 due to a combination of factors including low spending. The city spends \$50 per resident on parks and recreation, less than half of what each of the other municipalities and the county as a whole spend per resident. However, Watsonville has a significant 88% of its residents within a 10-minute walk of a park. The city also

receives high scores for its recreational offerings, outscoring all other municipalities and the county in nearly every category besides dog parks (though it still receives 19 out of 20 possible points here).

Santa Cruz County – Unincorporated

In addition to scoring each individual incorporated place in Santa Cruz County, the unincorporated portion of the county was also scored (and the county was ultimately scored as a whole, below). The unincorporated county receives a score of 48.5, and 2.5 park benches. It has a range of park sizes resulting in a median park size of 4.3 acres, and is 18% parkland. Much of this parkland is managed by the county, but also includes some large state parks and some preserves run by the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County. In the unincorporated portion of the county, 44% of residents are within a 10-minute walk to a park. While low, this is still fairly good considering the population density of 0.5 people per acre. Spending on parks in the unincorporated places is \$92 per resident, and people living in these areas are fairly well served by recreational amenities.

Analysis was also done to examine the rural versus the urban unincorporated areas of the county, to take into account the differences in density and walkability in the more heavily developed areas around the municipalities and the rest of the county. In rural unincorporated areas, only 25% of the population is within a 10-minute walk to a park. In urban unincorporated areas, this access is 76%. This variance should be taken into account when considering specific areas, though the overall score for the county (below) provides a useful sense of the parks and recreation offerings for county residents overall.

Santa Cruz County - Countywide

Santa Cruz County was also scored as a whole, including all the above incorporated places as well as the unincorporated areas. These scores include all parklands, spending, and amenities pertaining to all parks agencies that own or manage public land within the county. This portrays how well the county as a whole is serving its residents in terms of parks and recreation, as well as allowing specific municipalities to be considered on an individual basis.

With a score of 57.5, Santa Cruz County as a whole scores slightly above the national median (51) according to the 2017 ParkScore Index. The county's median park size is fairly low (2.5 acres), reflecting that a lot of the parks in the county are small, ranging from pocket parks to neighborhood parks. However, the county is 18% parkland, double the national median of 9%. This reflects the large state parks and other preserves and open spaces available to residents which are partially a product of California's Open Space Easement Act.

Interestingly, 65% of people living in Santa Cruz County as a whole are within a ten minute walk to a park. This is in line with the national median score of 66%. Despite the obvious differences between Santa Cruz County and the large, dense cities in ParkScore, the county has about the same access to parks as many of the largest cities, and in fact does better than many as well.

The county is making significant investments in its parks and recreation; at \$105 per resident it is above the national median of \$80. Additional state dollars are contributed within the county, as well as the spending by the Santa Cruz County Department of Parks, Open Space, and Cultural Services and that of each individual incorporated area. The county has mid-range scores for amenities. A full 20 points are awarded for dog parks, and indeed dog parks seem to be a popular (or at least common) amenity in both the county as a whole as well as in all municipalities, all of which received full and nearly full (19) points.

Comparison

Santa Cruz County indicated some cities in California to compare their ParkScore against (Table 5). A detailed table of each city's score can be found at parkscore.tpl.org.

Table 5. Selected California cities from the 2017 ParkScore Index, chosen by Santa Cruz County for comparison.

City	ParkScore 2017 Ranking	ParkScore 2017 Score	ParkScore 2017 Park Benches
San Francisco	3	80	5.0
San Diego	14	69	4.0
Sacramento	21	63.5	3.5
Oakland	24	62.5	3.5
San Jose	24	62.5	3.5
Los Angeles	74	41.5	2.0
Fresno	90	33.5	1.5

The county’s median park size is lower than that of most of the selected cities, with the exception of densely packed San Francisco (median park size: 1.6 acres). However, it does better than most in terms of parkland as percent of city area, with only San Francisco (20%) and San Diego (23%) scoring higher.

The county’s parks are less accessible than most of the cities, partially because of its low density. It does score higher than Los Angeles (54%) and Fresno (61%) in terms of percent of the population that lives within a 10 minute walk to a park.

Most of the cities spend more on their parks per resident than the county does, again with only Los Angeles (\$85) and Fresno (\$38) spending less. With an average of 13 points in the overall amenities category, Santa Cruz County does better than most of the selected cities in terms of recreational offerings, with only Sacramento (14 points out of 20) scoring better.

Conclusion

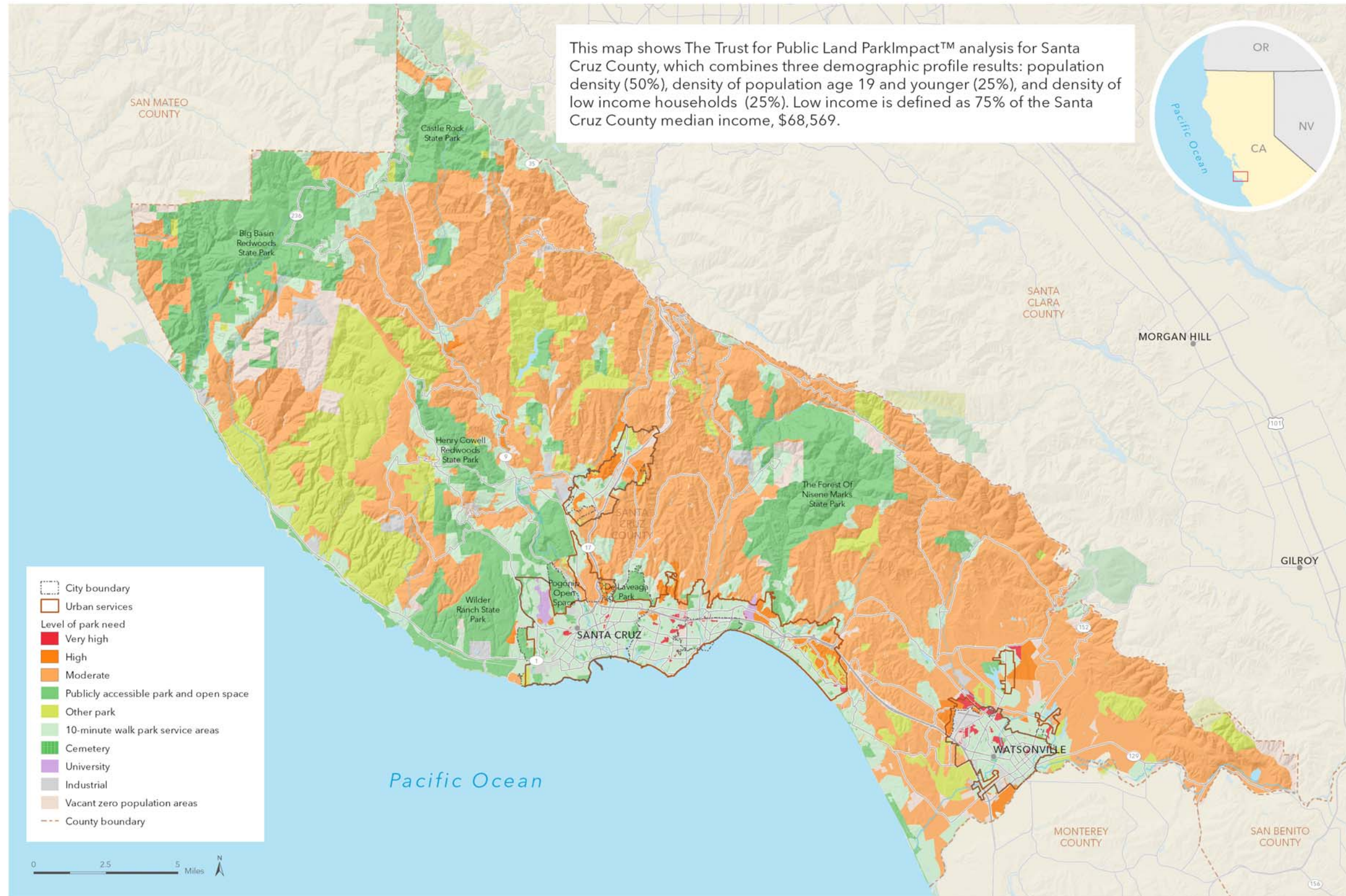
Santa Cruz County scores in the middle of the selected California cities, and slightly above average compared to the national medians in ParkScore. The county does quite well in comparison to many more dense and more urban places, and offers its residents a lot in terms of parks, recreation, and open space. Many small parks bring the county’s score down, though this is balanced out by the high points in the Parkland as Percent of City Area category. The county could also increase investment in its parks; while the residents of the county are fairly well-served in terms of recreational offerings, the county spends slightly less per capita than its California neighbors, suggesting that an increase in moneys directed toward parks and recreation would be beneficial. The county can also increase park access for residents through strategic placement of new parks and improving access to existing ones in order to improve the park system. GIS analysis revealed areas in and around Watsonville and Capitola that are particularly high need in terms of access to parkland (indicated in red in the accompanying mapping analysis). These places, as well as those in darker orange in the unincorporated areas, can be used to inform future park planning efforts.



Santa Cruz County ParkScore® Index

	City	Acreage		Parkland as Percent of City Area		Access		Spending per Resident		Investment & Amenities										Total Points/100	Park Benches	City
		Median Park Size		Data	Points/20	Data	Points/40	Data	Points/20	Amenities												
		Data (Acres)	Points/20							Basketball Hoops per 10,000 Residents	Dog Parks per 100,000 Residents	Playgrounds per 10,000 Residents	Recreation & Senior Centers per 20,000 Residents	Amenities Average								
										Data	Points/20	Data	Points/20	Data	Points/20	Data	Points/20	Amenities Points/20				
	Capitola	2.7	5	18%	19	89%	35	\$151	18	2.0	6	9.8	20	2.9	11	2.0	20	14	76.0	4.5	Capitola	
	Santa Cruz City	2.3	4	25%	20	94%	37	\$164	20	0.9	2	9.3	20	3.3	12	0.6	7	10	76.0	4.5	Santa Cruz City	
	Scotts Valley	9.8	19	4%	3	47%	11	\$140	17	3.4	12	8.4	20	4.2	16	1.7	20	17	56.0	3.0	Scotts Valley	
	Watsonville	1.4	2	5%	4	88%	34	\$50	4	5.2	19	1.9	19	3.5	13	2.6	20	18	51.5	2.5	Watsonville	
	Santa Cruz County - Unincorporated	4.3	8	18%	19	44%	10	\$92	10	1.2	3	3.7	20	2.5	9	0.9	11	11	48.5	2.5	Santa Cruz County - Unincorporated	
	Santa Cruz County - Countywide	2.5	4	18%	19	65%	21	\$105	12	2.0	6	5.1	20	2.9	11	1.2	15	13	57.5	3.0	Santa Cruz County	
3	San Francisco	1.6	3	20%	20	100%	40	\$235	20	3.8	13	3.8	20	2.4	8	0.8	10	13	80.0	5.0	San Francisco	
14	San Diego	5.7	11	23%	20	77%	28	\$120	14	2.8	9	1.2	11	1.9	6	1.0	12	10	69.0	4.0	San Diego	
21	Sacramento	5.5	11	8%	8	79%	29	\$122	14	2.7	9	2.3	20	4.0	16	1.0	12	14	63.5	3.5	Sacramento	
24	Oakland	2.5	4	12%	12	85%	32	\$145	17	2.6	9	1.0	9	1.8	6	1.3	15	10	62.5	3.5	Oakland	
24	San Jose	3.2	6	14%	15	75%	27	\$147	18	1.6	4	1.0	9	2.7	10	1.1	13	9	62.5	3.5	San Jose	
74	Los Angeles	4.8	9	13%	13	54%	15	\$85	9	0.8	1	0.3	1	1.1	2	1.1	13	4	41.5	2.0	Los Angeles	
90	Fresno	3.6	7	4%	3	61%	19	\$38	3	3.6	13	1.2	12	1.5	4	0.3	4	8	33.5	1.5	Fresno	
	National Median	5.0	9	9.3%	9	66%	22	\$80	9	2.6	9	0.9	8	2.4	8	0.8	10	10	51.0	2.5	National Median	
	National Maximum	16.6		84.2%		100%		\$279		10.2		7.2		7.4		2.9		19	87.5	5.0	National Maximum	
	National Minimum	0.6		1.5%		27%		\$21		0.7		0.0		0.7		0.1		2	28.5	1.0	National Minimum	

Scores are calculated based on the Trust for Public Land's 2017 ParkScore Index.



ParkImpact™ analysis urban services

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

February 2, 2018. Copyright © The Trust for Public Land. The Trust for Public Land and The Trust for Public Land logo are federally registered marks of The Trust for Public Land. Information on this map is provided for purposes of discussion and visualization only. www.tpl.org



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY PARKS STRATEGIC PLAN

APPENDIX 2

OUTREACH MATERIALS AND SUMMARY

HOW NEEDS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED

In order to identify the community and internal needs of the County Parks Department, staff conducted an internal assessment, a community outreach process, and reviewed findings from other relevant documents and plans.

Close to all of our permanent staff and approximately 1,000 members of the public participated in some way in the Strategic Planning process - through attending meetings, giving input to our draft, or filling out the online survey. All public input generated was compiled into a document and the data were used to generate our Values, Vision, and Strategic Priorities, Goals, and Objectives in the County Parks Strategic Plan. The processes for the internal assessment, community outreach, and review of other data are represented in the following three tables.

Table 1: Internal Assessment

Internal Assessment & Review		
Strategic Planning Project Team	<p>The core team included the Parks Director, the Administrative Services Manager, and the two project leads. This team designed the process, tracked progress, and led the Strategic Plan Process.</p> <p><i>Additional staff assisted with the public meetings, the layout of the plan, translation into Spanish, etc.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met monthly • Encouraged cross-collaboration and whole department engagement • Achieved the goal of this Strategic Plan only with the help of the entire County Parks team
Staff Strategic Planning Meetings	<p>A majority of permanent staff and many extra help staff across all five sections were included.</p> <p><i>Gathered priorities and ideas for how the Department could improve and continue to evolve to meet various needs in the community.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A series of three staff meetings held in December 2016 and January, 2017 • A well-attended follow-up ‘All-Staff’ meeting held in August, 2017 • Informal one-on-one and small meetings • Supervisory staff input at a number of bi-weekly management meetings • 50-60 members of the parks staff participated in this strategic planning process
Strategic Plan Working Group	<p>The Working Group was an advisory group composed of 10 members representing a variety of perspectives and interests.</p> <p><i>Met periodically throughout the process to give input, to assist with public outreach, to assess what we heard from the community, to review data, and to give input to the draft plan.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation from both Watsonville & north county • Representatives from the Parks and Arts Commissions • Boulder Creek Recreation District, and the County were also represented • Note: See Acknowledgements section of the Strategic Plan for a list of members
Parks Commission	<p>The County’s Parks and Recreation Commission is an advisory committee to the County’s Board of Supervisors. Meetings are open to the public.</p> <p><i>Staff presented contents of the Strategic Plan to the Parks Commission throughout the process</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress reports were included in the agenda packet for commissioners, and available to the general public • Members of the public as well as commissioners gave input to Strategic Plan materials periodically at these Parks Commission meetings.

Table 2: External Assessment

External Assessment & Community Outreach		
Stakeholder Outreach	<p>Over 200 key stakeholders from various community groups were personally invited by Parks staff and Working Group members to give input into the Strategic Plan.</p> <p><i>Stakeholders were invited to participate through attending one of the public meetings and/or filling out the online survey. We also encouraged them to alert their membership to do the same.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders reached included community groups, advocacy organizations, partnering agencies, park user groups, and business and civic organizations • Invitations included a link to the online survey and information about the public meetings • Outreach materials were provided in both English and Spanish
Board of Supervisors and County Administrative Office	<p>Each County Supervisor was invited to share thoughts on core issues heard from constituents related to the County Parks Department.</p> <p>In addition the Parks Department team coordinated with the early stages of the <i>Vision Santa Cruz County Strategic Planning Process</i> and solicited input from the County Administrative Office.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All 5 supervisors attended the public meeting in their district and addressed constituents • The County CAO contributed information and advice to our Strategic Planning Team
Website & Online Survey	<p>An open online survey was created for anyone interested in giving input into the strategic planning process, and promoted heavily through our networks. (See Stakeholder Outreach above.)</p> <p><i>The survey was available in both English and Spanish and was open for responses from April 8 through June 2, 2017 on our Strategic Plan page of the Parks website.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 802 people responded to the survey in detail or simply added themselves to our mailing list • 676 respondents completed meaningful portions of the survey • Survey responses were completed from all parts of the County, as shown in Figure 1 <p>Note: The survey was not intended to be scientific or to statistically represent the county. Since the respondents are self-selected and not a random sample, the results of the survey do not necessarily represent the entire county population.</p>
Community Meetings	<p>A series of five community meetings were held to solicit community input on vision and priorities for the Department for the Strategic Plan. Meetings were held throughout the county—in Ben Lomond, Watsonville, Davenport, Aptos and Live Oak.</p> <p>Meetings were publicized through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ individual letters and emails to over 200 stakeholder groups and their membership ✓ Board of Supervisors’ newsletters ✓ the County’s and the Parks Department’s websites and social media ✓ Next Door postings (a community-based social network website) ✓ the Parks Activity Guide ✓ flyers and handbills at parks and community bulletins ✓ flyers to school districts as feasible ✓ a press release - which generated several articles in local media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 190 people attended a meeting • Participants were split into four groups for the comment period; each group rotated through a series of four stations • Stations were facilitated by parks staff and Working Group members and focused on: 1) vision and values, 2) parks and facilities, 3) programs and events, and 4) priorities • Facilitators asked a series of prompts or lead a series of exercises with each small group • Meetings included about an hour and fifteen minutes for public comment; all comments were recorded on a large note pad and compiled for this Strategic Plan • Some community meeting materials are included in the Community Meeting Materials section below. • Publicity materials were provided in English and Spanish. Spanish translation services were available at each meeting.

Table 3: External Review

Review of Local Relevant Plans and Documents	
<i>To assess park needs in the county, staff also reviewed summaries of other related outreach efforts in the county in the last ten years, including those below:</i>	
Draft City of Santa Cruz Parks Master Plan 2030 (2017)	This project included extensive outreach within the City of Santa Cruz about park needs for the city parks department, and includes results of two statistically valid polls related to parks issues.
City of Watsonville Trails & Bicycle Master Plan (2012)	This project included community input and identifies needs for trails in the southern part of the county.
City of Watsonville Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan (2009)	This plan includes a needs assessment for Watsonville parks, recreation, and trails, and was developed with extensive community meetings, focus groups and surveys.
Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network Master Plan (2013)	The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) developed this master plan with community input to guide the implementation of the rail trail, which will be an off-street trail from Davenport to Watsonville along the Santa Cruz Branch rail line.
Sustainable Santa Cruz County Plan (2014)	The County Planning Department created this plan to describe the vision, guiding principles, and strategies that can lead to a more sustainable development pattern in Santa Cruz County within the planning area of Live Oak, Soquel and Aptos, including policies related to trails and parks in the Plan’s policies for open space and the bicycle and pedestrian network.
Conservation Blueprint (2011) by the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County	This project included extensive countywide outreach related to needs for open space and conservation.
Santa Cruz County Parks, Recreation, Agricultural Conservation and Open Space Project (2016)	This ‘Needs Assessment, Revenue Feasibility and Governance’ report was presented to the County Board of Supervisors on May 24, 2016. It includes an assessment of existing parks, recreation, agriculture and open space in the County, a statement of needs related to these topics, an assessment of existing and needed revenue, and potential governance structures for meeting these needs. Convened by the Santa Cruz County Parks Department, this report was created in a cooperative effort with Parks Directors from the cities of Watsonville and Santa Cruz, the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau, the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County, the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, and the Sempervirens Fund.
ParkScore Report (2018)	The Trust for Public Land completed an analysis of all of the public park land in Santa Cruz County, including City, State, County and other parks. The analysis included benchmarks on amenities, acreage, access and spending on parks, and compares the county to comparable areas in California and across the country.

RESULTS

The results of each of the community meetings and the online survey can be analyzed in a number of ways. To look at the community response as a whole, the priority ranking exercises from both the survey and meetings are combined and discussed as one section below. Additional findings beyond what is summarized in the Strategic Plan from the online survey and from the community meetings are also summarized in separate sections below.

PRIORITY RANKING RESULTS

Both the survey and the public meetings included an opportunity for participants to rank various topics in order of importance or priority to them. Results of the highest-ranking choices in these exercises are shown in Tables 4 through 6, which includes results from both the online surveys as well as the community meetings. These tables include the three choices that were ranked the highest (1), second highest (2) and third highest (3) summarized by each meeting, all the meetings combined, the online survey responses, and a combination of the five meetings and the online survey responses (overall total). The rankings are calculated through a weighted average of responses, where respondents' first choices are weighted the most, and last choices are weighted the least.

In the "Overall Total" column, meetings with more responses have more weight. For example, the online survey had many more responses than all of the meetings combined, so in the "Overall Total" column, the online survey is weighted proportionally more than the public meetings based on the greater number of responses. The following numbers of responses are represented in each category:

- Ben Lomond Public Meeting: 45 responses
- Watsonville Public Meeting: 20 responses
- Davenport Public Meeting: 24 responses
- Aptos Public Meeting: 24 responses
- Live Oak Public Meeting: 50 responses
- Total Public Meetings: 163 responses
- Online Survey: 616 responses
- Overall Total: 779 responses

In regards to the existing parks system (see Table 4) improving general maintenance ranked the highest overall. At the public meetings, improving public safety ranked the highest. Improving management and conservation of natural resources ranked high in all meetings and in the online survey as well. Integrating public art was consistently ranked lower than other options.

In regards to improving the parks system (see Table 5) creating and improving trail connections between parks ranked the highest overall. Providing access to County-owned open spaces ranked the highest at the public meetings. Since meeting participants learned a lot more about the parks system and had more introduction to the Strategic Plan than the online survey respondents did, they may have been more likely to notice open spaces owned by the County that do not currently have public access. Adding new uses to parks, and creating new neighborhood parks were also important to a lot of respondents. Creating new large regional parks consistently ranked lower than other options, indicating a perception that there is currently sufficient acreage of large regional open space in public ownership in the county or at least that acquiring new large parks is not as high a priority as other things.

In regards to park programming (see Table 6) increasing interpretive programs ranked the highest overall, followed very closely by increasing kids' after-school programs. All possible answers were ranked highly by some respondents, indicating that all of the options are important to some types of people.

Table 4: Highest Ranked Responses* to Question “What needs/deserves the most focus in our existing parks?”

	Public Meetings						Survey	Overall
	Ben Lomond	Watson-ville	Daven-port	Aptos	Live Oak	Mtgs Total	Online Survey	Overall Total
Integrate Art in Public Spaces								
Increase cleanliness							3	3
Increase Safety	1	1	2	1	3	1		
Increase number of programs and events		3		3	2	3		
Improve Management and conservation of natural resources	2		1	2	1	2	2	2
Improve general maintenance	3	2	3				1	1

*Numbers represent summary rankings where 1 is the highest, 2 is the second highest, and 3 is the third highest. Total columns represent a weighted average where meetings with more attendees were weighted proportionally more.

Table 5: Highest Ranked Responses* to Question “What’s needed to best serve county residents and visitors?”

	Public Meetings						Survey	Overall
	Ben Lomond	Watson-ville	Daven-port	Aptos	Live Oak	Mtgs Total	Online Survey	Overall Total
Create More Large Regional Parks								
Add New Uses and Improvements	2	1		2			2	2
Provide Access to County-Owned Open Spaces	3	2	2	1	3	1	3	3
Improve and Add Amenities to Beaches and Coastal Access Points	3		1			2		
Create and Improve trail connections between Parks	1			2	2		1	1
Create Additional Neighborhood Parks		3	3	2	1	3		

*Numbers represent summary rankings where 1 is the highest, 2 is the second highest, and 3 is the third highest. Total columns represent a weighted average where meetings with more attendees were weighted proportionally more.

Table 6: Highest Ranked Responses* to Question “What parks programming is most wanted/should be pursued?”

	Public Meetings						Survey	Overall
	Ben Lomond	Watson-ville	Daven-port	Aptos	Live Oak	Mtgs Total	Online Survey	Overall Total
Increase Kids' After-School Programs			2	3	1	1	2	2
Increase Summer Programs for Kids and Teens		3					3	3
Increase Interpretive Programs	2		3		2	2	1	1
Increase Recreation Programs and trips for Adults and Seniors	3	1		2		3		
Increase Classes		2		1				
Increase Aquatics Programs					3			
Increase Family-Focused Special Events	1		1					

*Numbers represent summary rankings where 1 is the highest, 2 is the second highest, and 3 is the third highest. Total columns represent a weighted average where meetings with more attendees were weighted proportionally more.

Overall, people care a lot about improving their parks and programs. While the highest-ranked choices vary by meeting versus survey, and by geographic area, the highest ranked choices are sometimes not significantly higher than other choices. All of the possible choices were highest priority to some respondents and attendees. The forced ranking exercise is useful for respondents to get a sense of a need to prioritize some things over other things, and to have to make choices since resources are finite. However, the final summary of the results shows that each of these general priorities is important to someone.

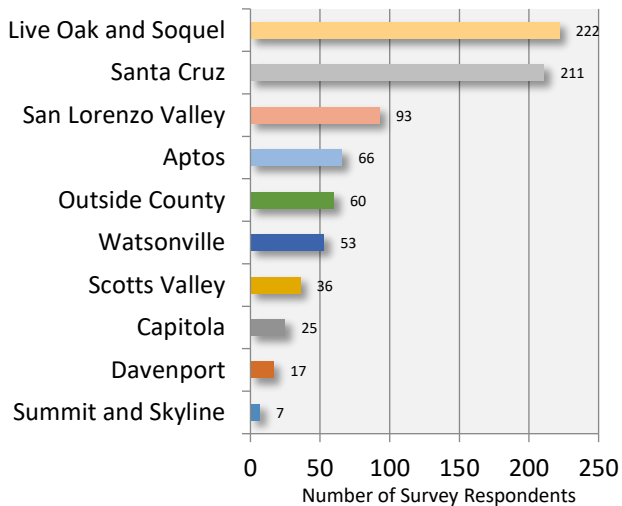
ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

The Parks Department created an open online survey for anyone interested in giving input into the strategic planning process. The survey had a broad reach as it was easily accessible to people throughout the county. Survey respondents also learned about the Parks Department, the parks system and gained more of an understanding of the parks system as a whole. Comments and information gathered in the survey were an important contributor to the key findings and needs summarized in the Strategic Plan.

The survey was available in both English and Spanish and was open for responses from April 8 through June 2, 2017. In that time, 802 people responded to the survey. Some of these respondents only completed the name and email sections. 676 respondents completed meaningful portions of the survey.

The survey was not intended to be scientific or to statistically represent the county. Since the respondents are self-selected and do not represent a random sample, the results of the survey do not necessarily represent the entire county population. Staff decided to make the survey available to anyone who wanted to complete it to ensure that there was a way for anyone who wanted to participate to do so. Survey responses were completed from all parts of the County, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Survey respondent approximate locations by zip code

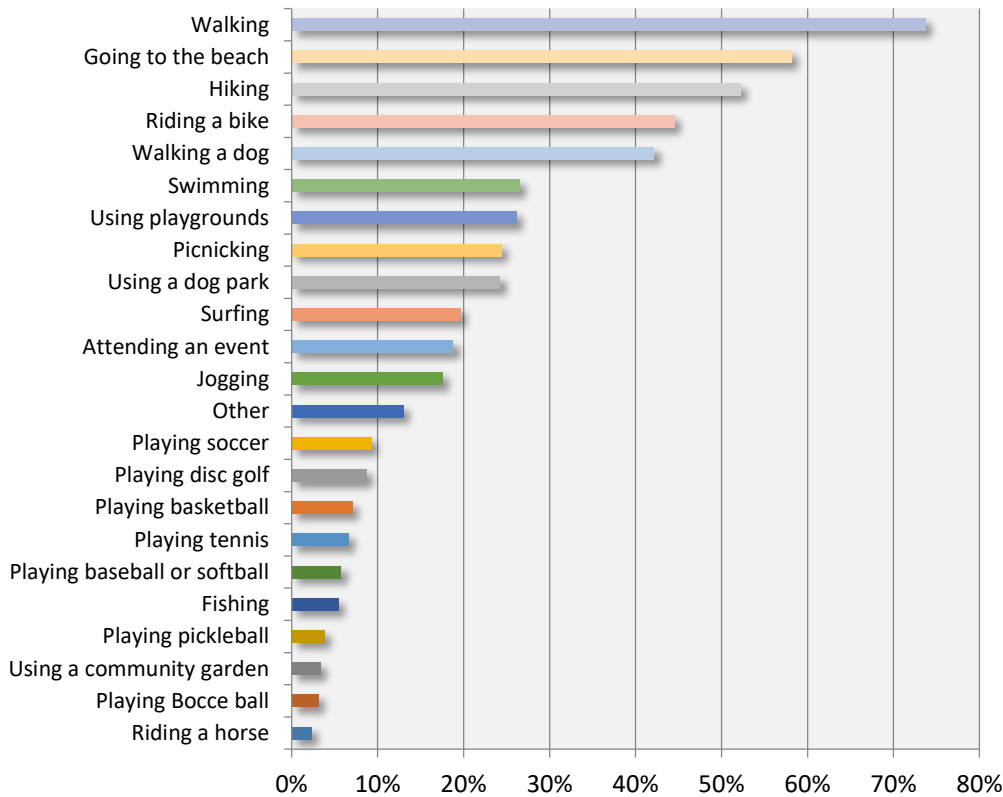


Comments from the survey are grouped into five themes as explained in the Community Response section of Chapter 5 in the Strategic Plan on pages 32-35. Priority ranking results from the survey are discussed in the previous Priority Ranking section of this appendix. A complete set of survey responses and comments is available upon request. Some additional general findings from the survey include the following:

- **County Parks Brand:** Santa Cruz County residents do not have a strong association with county parks as being distinct from city parks, state parks, or other parks. When asked to select from a complete list which “county park” you use the most, the most common answer (8.7%) was “other,” and respondents listed a state or city park.
- **Popular Recreational Activities:** County residents value a variety of recreational opportunities in their parks. Based on survey responses, walking and going to the beach are the most common activities, but all types of recreation listed, plus many types not listed, were important. Figure 2 includes responses about typical activities people like to do in the parks.
- **Travel to Parks:** Most respondents (61%) typically drive to the parks, but a significant number typically walk (22%) and bike (15%).

- **Opinion of Parks Department:** Most respondents have a favorable or very favorable opinion of Santa Cruz County Parks (75%), while only 5% have an unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion.

Figure 2: Survey responses to typical activities in county parks



COMMUNITY MEETINGS RESULTS

The community meetings provided opportunities for a broad range of community input. General themes raised at all the meetings are summarized in the Community Response section of Chapter 5 in the Strategic Plan on pages 32-35. Priority ranking results from the community meetings are discussed in the previous Priority Ranking section.

In addition to the themes common to all five meetings summarized in the Strategic Plan, each region of the County had specific issues that were most important to locals. These region-specific themes became evident as they were repeated by many participants and stood out as key themes to that community in each of the five meetings. Region-specific themes from these meetings are summarized by geographic area in Table 7. A complete set of public meeting comments is available upon request.

Table 7: Community Meeting Themes by Area

Area	Prominent Themes from Community Meetings
San Lorenzo Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More trails and trail connections between parks • Improvements to access Miller Property • Opportunities for dogs and a dog park in SLV • Places to mountain bike and a bike pump track in SLV • More interpretive programs and features
Watsonville Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional uses at Pinto Lake such as sports facilities, aquatics, boating, interpretive materials, exercise equipment and facilities for youth programming • Increase in active youth recreation facilities and youth programming • Creation of additional beach access points and improved connections to existing beach access points in south county • Access to Bert Scott Estate and Freedom Lake • More sports facilities • A public pool or water feature and aquatics programs accessible to south county • Trail connections and coordination with City of Watsonville trail plans
North Coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased patrol, management and maintenance of north coast county beaches • Improved restrooms, parking, trash removal and amenities at all county beaches to accommodate increasing visitorship • Creating a biking and walking trail along the rail corridor between Davenport and Santa Cruz • Coordinated planning with State Parks and more planned and patrolled parking areas for beaches along north coast • County ownership, management, patrol and access improvements to Davenport main beach
Aptos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More local neighborhood parks in Aptos to serve the local population to reduce residents' need to travel to other parts of the County • Addition of uses at existing parks (and completion of parks master plans) at undeveloped parks such as Polo Grounds, Aptos Village and Seacliff Village • More coastal access points and improvements to existing points in Aptos area
Live Oak and Soquel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and enforcement of rules on Live Oak beaches • More off-leash dog facilities • Interpretive signage, facilities and programs at county beaches • Improved park infrastructure and amenities at county beaches • Improvements to Moran Lake park such as trail improvements and connections, tree safety and interpretive signage • More active sports facilities such as all-weather fields for soccer, additional pickleball and tennis courts, basketball, and other sports facilities • More neighborhood parks

ONLINE SURVEY

The following survey was available through Survey Monkey online in English and Spanish.

Santa Cruz County Parks Strategic Plan - Please Give Your Input!

Welcome

Use this form to give your input for the Santa Cruz County Parks Department's Strategic Plan.

To help you get oriented, please see a map of the County Parks system [here](#).

Responda en español [aquí](#).

* 1. Please tell us who you are (we will not share this information with anyone)

First Name

Last Name

ZIP/Postal Code

Email Address

2. Would you like to receive emails with updates about the County Parks Strategic Plan?

Yes

3. Would you like to be added to the County Parks email list?

Yes

4. How did you hear about the County Parks Strategic Plan?

1

Santa Cruz County Parks Strategic Plan - Please Give Your Input!

Park and Programs

5. Which Santa Cruz county park do you use the most? (See a map of county parks [here](#))

6. Which Santa Cruz county beach or coastal access point do you use the most? (see a map of county parks and coastal access points [here](#))

7. Which County Parks program is most important to you or your family?

8. What is your favorite public art piece in a Santa Cruz County park? (See a map of public art sites [here](#))

9. Which activities do you typically do when you visit the Santa Cruz county parks? (Check as many as apply)

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walking | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing pickleball | <input type="checkbox"/> Using a dog park |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jogging | <input type="checkbox"/> Riding a horse | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing disc golf |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking | <input type="checkbox"/> Riding a bike | <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Using playgrounds | <input type="checkbox"/> Using a community garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Surfing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playing tennis | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing Bocce ball |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playing basketball | <input type="checkbox"/> Picnicking | <input type="checkbox"/> Attending an event |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playing soccer | <input type="checkbox"/> Going to the beach | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playing baseball or softball | <input type="checkbox"/> Walking a dog | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | | |

10. How do you typically get to the park or coastal access point that you use the most?

11. Generally speaking, what is your opinion of Santa Cruz County Parks?

- Very favorable Favorable Neutral Unfavorable Very unfavorable

Santa Cruz County Parks Strategic Plan - Please Give Your Input!

Priorities

12. Which of the following things are most important to you? (drag items into order of importance to you - OR- pick numbers, with 1 being the most important)

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Increasing cleanliness in parks
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Increasing safety in parks
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	General maintenance of existing park infrastructure
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Improving management and conservation of natural resources
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Integrating art into new and existing public spaces
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Increasing programs and events in existing parks

13. Which of the following things are most important to you? (drag items into order of importance to you - OR- pick numbers, with 1 being the most important)

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Creating additional large regional parks
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Adding new uses and improvements to existing parks
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Providing access to County-Owned open spaces (eg the Miller Property, the Pace Property, the Bert Scott Estate)
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Improving and adding amenities to beaches and coastal access points
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Creating and improving bicycle and pedestrian trail connections between parks
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Creating additional neighborhood parks

4

14. Which of the following things are most important to you? (drag items into order of importance to you - OR- pick numbers, with 1 being the most important)

<input type="text"/>	Increasing kids after-school programs
<input type="text"/>	Increasing summer programs for kids
<input type="text"/>	Increasing aquatics programs
<input type="text"/>	Increasing recreation programs and trips for adults and seniors
<input type="text"/>	Increasing family-focused special events
<input type="text"/>	Increasing classes (eg Spanish language, fitness, meditation, etc)
<input type="text"/>	Increasing interpretive programs (eg nature walks, history tours, stargazing, etc)

Santa Cruz County Parks Strategic Plan - Please Give Your Input!

Comments (Optional, but we would love to hear from you!)

15. What do you like most about Santa Cruz county parks?

16. Are there park facilities, amenities or programs you would like to see added to the county parks system? What and where?

17. What do you think would most improve the Santa Cruz county parks system?

18. Please share a memory you have from a county park or program:

19. Other comments for the County Parks Department:

THANK YOU!

Your input is important.

COMMUNITY MEETING MATERIALS

Community meeting publicity materials and the graphics available at each of the meetings are included in Figures 3 –10.

Figure 3: County Programs, Events and Public Art

COUNTY PROGRAMS, EVENTS AND PUBLIC ART

Youth Programs



- **Art and science camps** (Renaissance Camp, Art Studio 95003, Science Exploration)
- Quail Hollow Ranch **summer day camps** (Nature Adventure Camp, Science Sleuths Day Camp)
- **After-school childhood enrichment programs** at La Selva Clubhouse and Mar Vista Elementary School
- **Kinder enrichment** programs and transitional kinder programs at Mar Vista Elementary School
- **Winter and Spring Camps** at Aptos Park

- **La Selva Beach Summer Camp**
- **Kreative Kids** Programs and Musical Theater
- **Arts classes** such as Polymer Clay-Apalooza
- **Baseball Summer Camps**
- Quail Hollow Ranch **Interpretive Programs** (unique activities throughout the year)
- **Tap For Kids**

Adult and Senior Programs



- **Spanish language** classes
- **Tap For Adults**
- Quail Hollow Ranch **Interpretive Programs** (unique activities scheduled throughout the year)
- Capitola **Mall Walking**
- **Adult and senior trips**, local and out-of-county
- **Multi-day trips** in partnership with Collette Vacations and Premier Travel

- **Senior Stretching**
- **Arthritis Foundation Aquatic Program**
- **Fit Forever!** Gentle Strength Training for Seniors

Teen Programs



- **Zombie Camp**
- **Junior Leadership** volunteers at La Selva Beach Summer Camp, Quail Hollow Ranch Day Camps, & Art and Science Camps at Aptos Park
- **Junior Leadership** volunteers at after-school childhood enrichment programs at La Selva Clubhouse and Mar Vista Elementary School

Public Art Programs



- **Artist of the Year**
- **Eloise Pickard Smith Award**
- County **Public Art Collection**
- **Outside the Box** (traffic box art program)
- **Art Exhibitions**

- **Percent for Art** public art program for public development projects
- Community-led **public art projects** reviewed by the Just-In-Time panel

Aquatics



- **Swim lessons**
- **Recreation and lap swim**
- **Water exercise**
- **Water polo**
- **Jr. Guards** and **Little Guards** summer camps

Community Events



- **Holiday Art and Craft Faire**
- **April Pool's Day**
- **Parks and Rex**
- **Floating Pumpkin Patch**
- **Free Community Swim Days** at the Simpkins Family Swim Center

- **SuperKid Triathlon** co-sponsorship
- **Summer Kick-off** at the Simpkins Family Swim Center

Figure 4: County Parks, Facilities, and Coastal Access Points

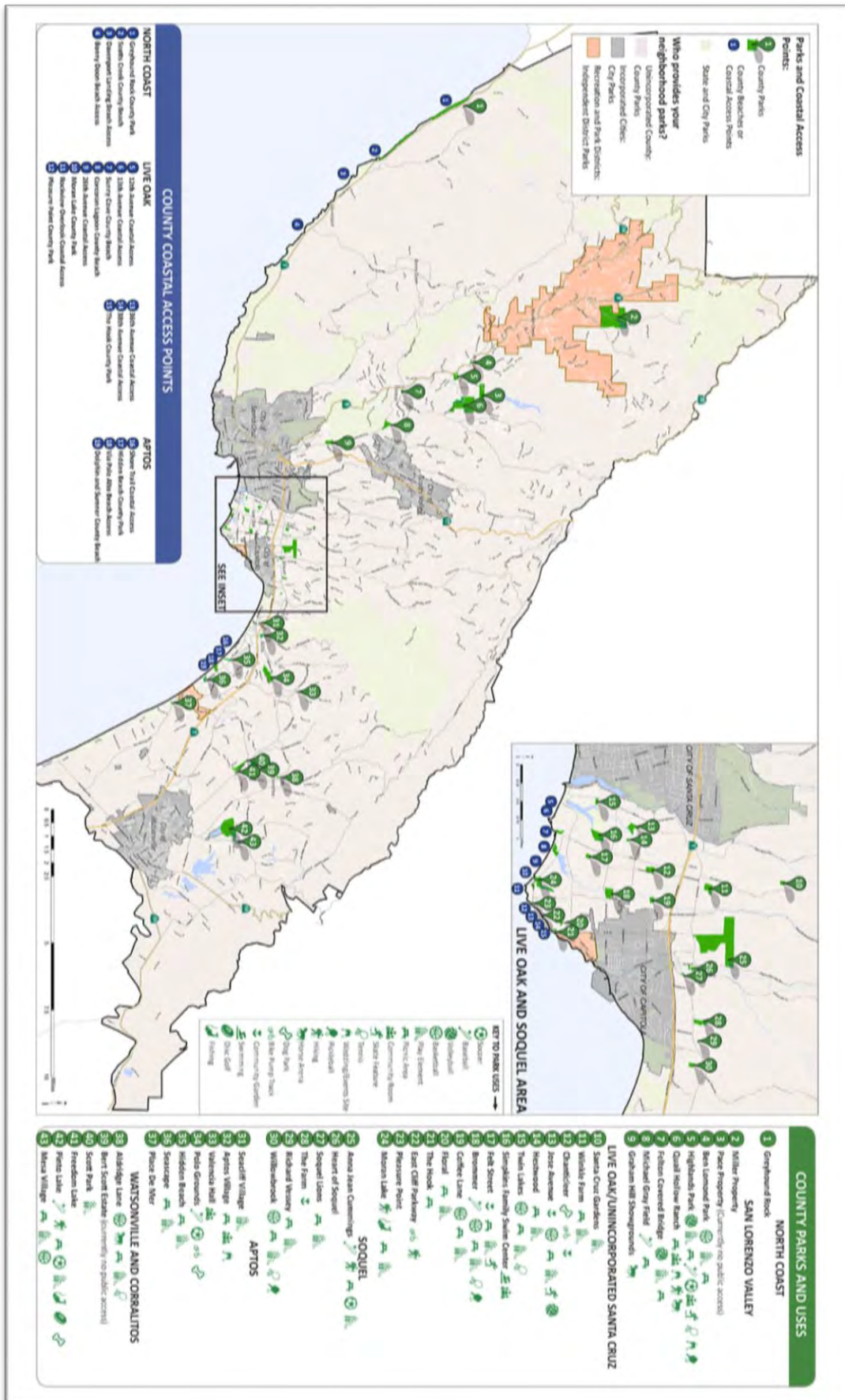


Figure 5: Community Meeting Priority Ranking Exercise Boards

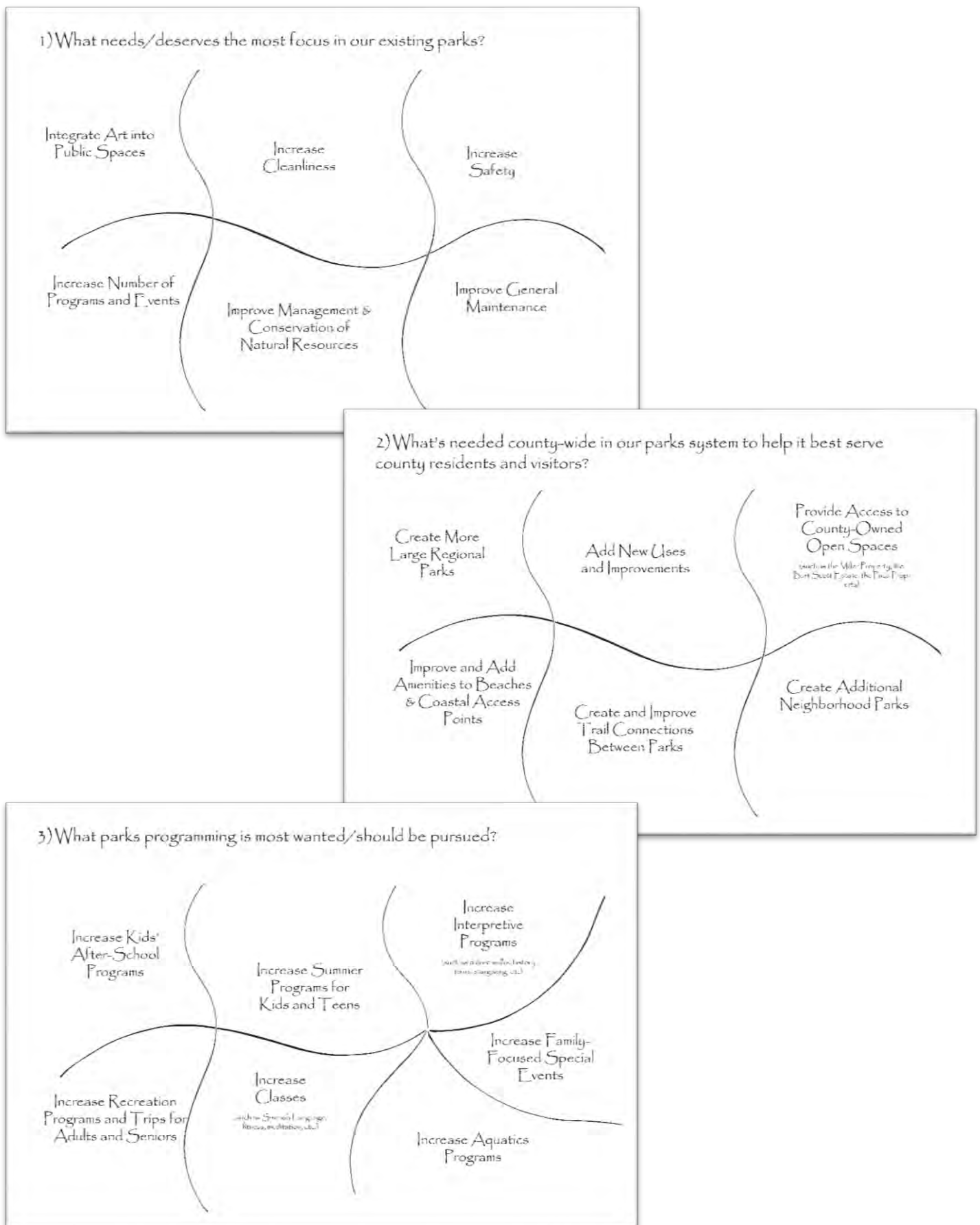


Figure 6: Publicity in the Activity Guide (mailed to residents of unincorporated County)

PLEASE JOIN US!
YOUR COUNTY, YOUR PARKS

DON'T MISS THE PUBLIC MEETINGS FOR THE NEW STRATEGIC PLAN!

Your County Parks Department is planning for the future! Join us in creating a new vision for our parks, programs, and facilities.

These meetings will be held throughout Santa Cruz County. We want to hear from you and your neighbors as we create the document that will guide the Department's work for the next decade! Come learn more about your County Parks Department and consider options for the future.

What do YOU want to see in YOUR County Parks?

See list of meeting dates on inside back cover.

Learn more: www.scparks.com/strategicplan

County of Santa Cruz Department of Parks, Open Space & Cultural Services
979 17th Ave.
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER

Post 31d
U.S. Postage
PAID
Santa Cruz, CA
Permit No. 7029
ECPSSS

50

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY PARKS DEPARTMENT - STRATEGIC PLAN

**COUNTY PARKS STRATEGIC PLAN
Public Meetings**

What do YOU want to see in YOUR County Parks?

You are invited to participate in creating a strategic plan for the Santa Cruz County Parks Department! The plan will provide a path toward enhanced Department effectiveness, community relevance, sustainability, and growth for our future.

From neighborhood parks to after school programs, from swim lessons to summer camps, from senior trips to coastal access, County Parks make life in Santa Cruz County better! Come share your thoughts!

Public Meeting Times and Locations:

Wednesday, April 26, 6:30 PM:	Highlands County Park (Ben Lomond)
Thursday, April 27, 6:30 PM:	Civic Center Community Room (Watsonville)
Tuesday, May 2, 6:30 PM:	Pacific Elementary School (Davenport)
Saturday, May 6, 10:00 AM:	Aptos Village Park (Aptos)
Thursday, May 11, 6:30 PM:	Community Room at Simpkins Family Swim Center (Live Oak)

Learn more at www.scparks.com/strategicplan

Figure 7: Community Meetings Publicity Flyer

COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ DEPARTMENT OF
PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND CULTURAL SERVICES

PLEASE JOIN US!

YOUR COUNTY, YOUR PARKS



Public Meeting Dates & Times

Wednesday, April 26, 6:30-8:30 PM	Ben Lomond - Highlands County Park, 8500 Highway 9
Thursday, April 27, 6:30-8:30 PM	Watsonville - Civic Center Community Room 275 Main St. (upstairs)
Tuesday, May 2, 6:30-8:30 PM	Davenport - Pacific Elementary School, 50 Ocean St.
Saturday, May 6, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM	Aptos - Aptos Village County Park, 100 Aptos Creek Rd.
Thursday, May 11, 6:30-8:30 PM	Live Oak - Community Room at Simpkins Family Swim Center, 979 17th Ave, Santa Cruz

Strategic Plan Public Meetings

The Parks Department is holding a series of meetings throughout the county, and we need to hear from you and your neighbors! Your input is essential as we create the document that will help guide the department's work over the next decade. What do YOU want to see in YOUR County Parks? Please join us as we look to the future of our parks, programs, and facilities! Childcare and translation services (Spanish language) will be available.

 **Please RSVP for a meeting!**
For more info. or to RSVP, please visit
www.scparks.com/strategicplan



Figure 8: Community Meetings Publicity Flyer (Spanish Version)

COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ DEPARTMENT OF
PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND CULTURAL SERVICES

¡ÚNASE CON NOSOTROS!

SU CONDADO, SUS PARQUES



Fechas y Horas de las Reuniones Públicas

Miércoles, 26 de abril, 6:30-8:30 PM	Ben Lomond - Highlands County Park, 8500 Highway 9
Jueves, 27 de abril, 6:30-8:30 PM	Watsonville - Civic Center Community Room 275 Main St. (segundo piso)
Martes, 2 de mayo, 6:30-8:30 PM	Davenport - Pacific Elementary School, 50 Ocean St.
Sábado, 6 de mayo, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM	Aptos - Aptos Village County Park, 100 Aptos Creek Rd.
Jueves, 11 de mayo, 6:30-8:30 PM	Live Oak - Community Room at Simpkins Family Swim Center, 979 17th Ave, Santa Cruz

Reuniones Públicas para el Plan Estratégico

¡El Departamento de Parques está celebrando una serie de reuniones por todo el condado, y nos interesa oír las opiniones de usted y sus vecinos! Su participación es esencial a medida que creamos el documento que ayudará a guiar el trabajo del Departamento durante la próxima década. ¿Qué es lo que USTED desea ver en SUS Parques del Condado? ¡Por favor únase a nosotros para mirar hacia el futuro de nuestros parques, programas e instalaciones! Servicios de guardería y de traducción (el español) estarán disponibles.

Favor de confirmar su asistencia (RSVP) a una reunión! Para obtener más información, o RSVP, visite www.scparks.com/strategicplan



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND CULTURAL SERVICES

Know Your County Parks!



YOUR COUNTY, YOUR PARKS

The Santa Cruz County Parks Department provides parks, coastal access points, and a wide variety of programs and activities for all ages throughout the county.

Regional Parks



Regional parks, located throughout the county, include Quail Hollow Ranch in Felton, Polo Grounds in Aptos, and Pinto Lake in Watsonville.

Neighborhood & Community Parks



Among the county's 29 neighborhood and community parks are Highlands Park in Ben Lomond, Brommer Park in Live Oak, Seascape Park in Aptos, and Aldridge Lane in Corralitos.

Simpkins Family Swim Center



The Swim Center, also a regional park, is located in Live Oak. Among the aquatic programs offered are swim lessons, recreation and lap swim, water exercise, and water polo, as well as the popular Pool Jr. Guards and Little Guards summer camps.

Coastal Access Points



Coastal access points include Scott Creek Beach near Davenport, Sunny Cove Beach in Live oak, and Hidden Beach in Aptos.

Community Events



Pictured here - Parks & Rex pool party, where dogs can take a dip in the pool; other events include the Holiday Art & Craft Faire and the Floating Pumpkin Patch.

Arts



The Percent for Art Program, art exhibitions at the Government Center, Artist of the Year, and Outside the Box are just a few of County Parks art-related programs.

Youth Programs



School-age youth can enjoy a variety of camps and programs, including Nature Adventure and Science Sleuths at Quail Hollow Ranch, Kreative Kids at Wilder Hall, and art and science camps at Aptos Park. Afterschool programs are held at Mar Vista Elementary and La Selva Beach clubhouse.

Adult & Senior Programs



Programs for adults and seniors include local day trips (pictured, trip to Harley Farms), water and dry-land exercise classes at the Swim Center, Spanish language and tap classes, interpretive hikes and workshops at Quail Hollow Ranch, and the Mall Walk Program.

Teen Programs



Zombie Camp (pictured), for ages 11-14, is held at Aptos Park. Also, teens can gain valuable job skills while having fun by volunteering as a Junior Leader at County Parks youth summer camps, as well as assisting with after-school programs.

Learn more and see a map which shows all parks in the County Parks system at www.scparks.com

Figure 10: Know Your County Parks Department (Spanish Version)

COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ DEPARTMENT OF
PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND CULTURAL SERVICES

¡Conoce Sus Parques del Condado!



SU CONDADO, SUS PARQUES

El Departamento de Parques del Condado de Santa Cruz ofrece parques, puntos de acceso costero, y una variedad extensa de programas y actividades para todas las edades por todo el condado.

Los Parques Regionales



Los parques regionales, ubicados por todo el condado, incluyen Quail Hollow Ranch en Felton, Polo Grounds en Aptos, y el Parque de Pinto Lake en Watsonville.

Los Parques del Vecindario y Comunidad



Entre los 29 parques del condado de vecindario y comunidad están Highlands Park en Ben Lomond, Brommer Park en Live Oak, Seascape Park en Aptos, y Aldridge Lane en Corralitos.

El Centro de Natación de Simpkins Family Swim Center



El Centro de Natación, también un parque regional, se encuentra en Live Oak. Entre los programas de natación ofrecidos son clases de natación, recreación en el agua y nadar en línea (lap swim), ejercicio en el agua, y polo en el agua, así como los campamentos de verano muy populares de Jr. Guards y Little Guards.

Los Puntos de Acceso Costero



Los puntos de acceso costero incluyen Scott Creek Beach cerca de Davenport, Sunny Cove Beach en Live Oak, y Hidden Beach en Aptos.

Los Eventos de la Comunidad



Fotografiada aquí – Parks and Rex Pool Party (fiesta de la piscina) donde los perros pueden mojarse en la piscina; otros eventos incluyen Holiday Art & Craft Faire y Floating Pumpkin Patch (una huerta de calabazas flotantes).

Arte



Percent for the Arts Program (el programa del porcentaje para el arte), las exposiciones de arte en el Centro de Gobierno, Artist of the Year, y Outside the Box (el programa de arte fuera de la caja) son solamente algunos de los programas relacionados con el arte de los Parques del Condado.

Los Programas para Niños



Los niños de edades escolares pueden disfrutar de una variedad de campamentos y programas, incluyendo Nature Adventure and Science Sleuths en Quail Hollow Ranch, Kreative Kids en Wilder Hall, y los campamentos de arte y ciencia en Aptos Park. Los programas después de escuela son ubicados en Mar Vista Elementary y La Selva Beach Clubhouse.

Los Programas para Adultos y Personas Mayores



Los programas para adultos y personas mayores incluyen excursiones locales (en la foto, el viaje a Harley Farms), las clases de ejercicio en agua y tierra-seca en el Centro de Natación, las clases de español y de tap, los programas interpretativos de caminatas y talleres en Quail Hollow Ranch, y el Mall Walk Program.

Los Programas para Adolescentes



El Campo de Zombi (en la foto), para las edades de 11-14, está ubicado en Aptos Park. Además, los adolescentes pueden obtener habilidades valiosas de trabajo mientras se divierten como voluntarios en los campamentos de verano para niños con los Parques del Condado, así como ayudar con programas después de la escuela.

Obtenga más información y vea un mapa que muestra todos los parques en el sistema de Parques del Condado en www.scparks.com