

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE RECREATION ELEMENT OF THE TUOLUMNE COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

CHAPTER 8: RECREATION ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Parks provide ~~a place~~ for friendly social contact by ~~furnishing~~ ~~providing~~ a gathering place for families, co-workers, retired persons, parents with young children and many others. The health benefits of active recreation are well known. In addition, parks are a place for community gatherings that enhance civic pride while preserving green spaces which provide a visual contrast with more urbanized surroundings.

Within Tuolumne County are a myriad of recreational opportunities for the public provided by Yosemite National Park, Stanislaus National Forest, State parks, other State and Federal agencies, the City of Sonora, Don Pedro Recreation Agency, community based recreation and park districts and community services districts as well as the County of Tuolumne. Other recreational facilities are provided by ~~homeowners associations,~~ private businesses and enterprises. The County recognizes the importance of providing recreational facilities and acknowledges that despite the variety of parks and facilities existing within the County today, there is a need to provide a policy framework to promote the continued expansion of these types of facilities to meet the demands of a growing population. The County's role in providing and promoting the provision of such facilities is focused on recreational opportunities of a regional nature, such as the Standard Park sports complex, in recognition of the recreational amenities provided on a community level by the existing recreation and park districts and community services districts. The County also has a responsibility to promote the provision of adequate park and recreation facilities in new communities and to serve the residents of new housing developments in existing communities.

Tuolumne County also recognizes that the provision of adequate, accessible recreational facilities is important to the social, psychological and physical well-being of its residents, provides economic opportunities for business and furthers the goals of other elements of the General Plan. Therefore, in recognition of the importance of recreation to the County's quality of life, Tuolumne County has ~~established~~ ~~provided~~ the following goals, policies and programs to insure adequate recreational opportunities for its residents and visitors.

GOALS, POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

GOAL 8A Provide an adequate supply and equitable distribution of recreation facilities for residents based on existing and projected population and the results of community needs surveys.

Policies

8.A.1 Acquire and develop ~~225 acres of~~ recreation facilities to fulfill the County's projected unmet need based on a goal of 30 acres of recreational facilities per 1,000 residents ~~and based on a projected Countywide population of 100,000+ persons by the year 2020¹.~~

¹ ~~The total recreational need for the entire County in the year 2020 is estimated at 3000 acres. Public lands, subdivisions and existing facilities provide approximately 2,500 acres leaving a 500 acre unmet need. New golf courses will provide 100 acres and new subdivisions will provide nearly 150 acres reducing the unmet need to 250 acres. A 5% adjustment for wildlife mitigation areas used for wildlife viewing and nature study is included and reduces the unmet need from 250 acres to 225 acres.~~

- 8.A.2 Update County population statistics and regularly solicit public input to provide adequate amounts and types of new recreational facilities.
- 8.A.3 Maintain the amount of acreage devoted to the County of Tuolumne's regional recreation facilities and provide for replacement of any such parkland that may be eliminated.

Implementation Programs

- 8.A.a ~~Formulate~~ **Maintain and Update** a Recreation Master Plan

~~Formulate~~ **Maintain** a Recreation Master Plan which describes the general location for regional recreation facilities, provides conceptual designs for future parks and recreational facilities, **identifies desired recreational trails,** estimates costs of construction, identifies potential funding sources, identifies potential management agencies and provides the rationale establishing the need for recreational facilities in Tuolumne County.

- 8.A.b Calculating Existing and Needed Facilities

Establish a program for periodic review of the Recreation Master Plan, ~~approximately every five years.~~ The updates should consider and provide justification for the existing and needed acreage of recreational facilities and the acreages for developed facilities operated by the City of Sonora, Tuolumne County, recreation districts and community services districts, school facilities, commercial recreation facilities and developed acreages used for recreation within subdivisions.

- 8.A.c Acquire and Construct New Parks

Acquire land and construct ~~approximately 190 acres of~~ new parks according to the priorities established, the needs identified and within the general locations shown in the Recreation Master Plan.

- 8.A.d Construct Trails to Create a Regional Trail System

Construct ~~a minimum of 35 miles² of~~ trails for bicycle, pedestrian and, where feasible, equestrian use linking the County's major population centers with other local, state and federal recreational facilities, significant open space areas, libraries, schools, neighborhoods, public facilities and other destination points. Acquisition and construction shall be in accordance with the priorities established, the needs identified and within the general locations shown in the Tuolumne County Recreation Master Plan in coordination with the Tuolumne County Regional Transportation Plan Non-motorized Element (RTP) and General Plan Circulation Element.

- 8.A.e Update Inventory of Existing Facilities

Update the database of existing recreational facilities on the County's Geographic Information System (GIS) whenever new facilities are constructed. The database shall include, at a minimum, the location, acreage, and description for all **new** public and private recreational

~~2 The total recreational facility unmet need is projected to be 225 acres with 190+ acres of parks proposed. This leaves 35 acres of unmet need. Trail widths average 8 feet (4 feet on both sides of a roadway). Therefore, for one mile of trail (5,280 feet) there are 42,240+ square feet. Since 43,560 square feet is one acre, each mile of trail provides nearly one acre of recreational facility. Therefore, 35 miles of 8-foot wide trails provides slightly less than 35 acres of recreational facilities. Because most proposed trails can be wider, but few are narrower, than 8 feet, the 35 acre goal should be met easily by providing 35 miles of trails.~~

facilities. (BOSPC)

8.A.f Update Community and Visitor Surveys

Distribute a recreational needs assessment survey inviting comment on the adequacy and level of use of existing facilities and need for new facilities to the local, state and federal agencies, local media, and interested stakeholders on a periodic basis at least once every five years.

8.A.g Maintain Regional Recreational Facilities

Maintain the amount of acreage devoted to the County of Tuolumne's regional recreational facilities by establishing a program for replacing any regional parkland that may be eliminated in the future. Such a program should establish guidelines for selecting sites for relocation of the facilities, setting time frames for replacement and identify possible funding mechanisms for such relocation and replacement.

GOAL 8.B Cooperate with other public agencies and private enterprise to provide park and recreation facilities.

Policies

8.B.1 Develop shared-use facilities, where feasible, with the County's school districts and link school facilities, where feasible, into the County-wide trail system.

8.B.2 Locate new park facilities and trail routes on or adjacent to publicly owned property, where feasible, to minimize the cost of acquiring and maintaining new facilities and to minimize avoid the potential conflicts associated with acquiring privately-owned property for public facilities. (BOSPC)

8.B.3 Coordinate with and provide incentives to private industry and commercial businesses to help attain maximum use and minimum duplication in the cost of park and recreation facilities.

8.B.4 Cooperate with the City of Sonora, public schools, recreation and park districts, community services districts and other providers of recreational facilities to provide a coordinated approach for the acquisition, construction and maintenance of recreational facilities.

8.B.5 Encourage and support, in conjunction with local agencies, the development of facilities that are family oriented community centers designed to encourage family values and participation.

Implementation Programs

8.B.a Shared-Use Facilities with Schools

Promote the sharing of recreational facilities between the County and the public schools by coordinating with the schools in master planning new recreational facilities and exploring opportunities to share the costs of acquisition, construction, maintenance and administration of such facilities. Where feasible, link the recreational facilities provided by schools to those offered by the County and other agencies providing public recreational facilities through a regional trail system.

8.B.b Locate Facilities Adjacent to or on Public Lands

Target the acquisition of available public lands for the location of new parks and target public rights-of-way for locating new trails within the regional trail system using the Recreation

Master Plan as a guide.

8.B.c Coordinate with Private Industry and Commercial Development

Prepare a land use map identifying parcels near existing or anticipated population centers which are properly zoned and have a high potential for supporting proposed new recreational facilities, such as a covered swimming pool or roller skating rink. This information will be made available to the ~~Tuolumne County~~ Economic Development ~~Authority Company of Tuolumne County~~, Chamber of Commerce and other appropriate agencies for informing private industry of the County's support for these new facilities. The information should be included in subsequent updates of the Tuolumne County Recreation Master Plan ~~and should be updated at least once every five years in conjunction with updates of the Master Plan.~~

8.B.d Coordination with Other Public Recreation Facilities Providers

Coordinate review of the Recreation Master Plan and Recreation Element of the General Plan and updates to those documents with the City of Sonora, public schools, recreation and park districts, community services districts and other providers of public recreation facilities to promote and facilitate coordination in the planning of new parks and recreational facilities within the County.

8.B.e Consider Establishing Recreation Advisory Committee

Consider establishing a committee of private and public members appointed by the Board of Supervisors to review needs and proposals that may impact recreation in the County, to make recommendations to the Board and its Planning Commissions and committees.

8.B.f Support Provision of Family Community Centers

Encourage and support the efforts of local agencies in developing community partnerships to create family community centers that encourage family values and participation.

GOAL 8.C Further the goals of other General Plan elements in the acquisition and development of lands for recreational facilities and opportunities.

Policies

8.C.1 Identify existing public parks and recreational facilities on the land use diagrams of the General Plan to facilitate planning compatible land uses near these facilities, planning trails to link such facilities and identifying land for new parks and recreational facilities.

8.C.2 Designate trail locations for recreation purposes to link with and/or otherwise complement, where feasible, trail locations specified within the Non-Motorized ~~e~~Element of the Tuolumne County Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and General Plan Circulation Element.

8.C.3 Design parks and trails incorporating scenic resources and biological and water resource areas consistent with the goals and policies of the ~~Tuolumne County~~ Conservation and Open Space Element of the General Plan.

8.C.4 Address the needs of visitors and provide recreational opportunities which enhance business within the County's defined communities consistent with the goals and policies of the Economic Development Element of the General Plan.

Implementation Programs

8.C.a. Identify Recreation Facilities on General Plan Land Use Diagrams

Identify existing public parks and recreational facilities on the land use diagrams of the General Plan to facilitate planning compatible land uses near these facilities, planning trails to link such facilities and identifying locations for new parks and recreational facilities. This information will be utilized in updating the ~~formulating a Master~~ Recreation Master Plan for regional recreational facilities to meet the needs of the County's population as it continues to grow.

8.C.b Coordination with the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Circulation Element

Develop plans for recreational trails which target routes that link the County's major population centers with other local, state and federal recreational facilities, significant open areas, libraries, schools, neighborhoods, public facilities and other destination points for greatest consistency with trail routes identified in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Circulation Element. Grant applications for facilities under the RTP should be coordinated with grant applications for recreational trails. Updates of both the RTP's non-motorized element and the Recreation Master Plan should be coordinated for consistency.

8.C.c Consistency with the Conservation and Open Space Element

Review all revisions of the Master Plan prior to adoption for consistency with the Conservation and Open Space Element of the General Plan. In addition, design plans for all trails, especially those adjacent to creeks, shall require the input and review of the Tuolumne County Community Resources Agency Planning Department and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Game for consistency with the Conservation and Open Space Element.

8.C.d Provide and Promote Visitor Access to the Regional Trail System

Prepare a brochure indicating the location of existing trails and highlighting destination points along the trails for distribution along the trails and by the Tuolumne County Chamber of Commerce, Tuolumne County Visitor's Bureau and area lodging facilities.

8.C.e Promote Bicycle Rental Shops for Visitor Access to Regional Trail Systems

Amend the Tuolumne County zoning ordinance to include bicycle rental facilities and other such facilities as a-permitted uses within C-(Commercial), C-K-(Commercial-Recreational), and K-(Recreational) zones zoning districts to facilitate and encourage use of the County's regional trail system.

8.C.f Preserve Open Areas for Recreation

Encourage the preservation of open areas for recreational activities, including provision of an appropriate balance of facilities suitable for intensive use (e.g. playgrounds, sports fields) and low intensity use (e.g. hiking, camping) that meet the needs of residents and visitors. Preservation of open areas that provide cultural, historical and educational opportunities for residents and visitors should also be encouraged.

8.C.g Recreation in Proximity to Neighborhoods

Provide parks and recreational opportunities in proximity to neighborhoods to promote physical activity and increase access to facilities.

GOAL 8.D Address the impacts of new development on the County's recreational facilities.

Policies

- 8.D.1 Address the location, amount of acreage for and design of new recreational facilities in conjunction with approvals for new communities and community plans.
- 8.D.2 Maintain and update, as necessary, the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code sections pertaining to land dedications and/or payment of in-lieu fees for new development's contribution to providing recreational facilities consistent with Government Code Section 66477 et seq.

Implementation Programs

8.D.a Recreational Needs in New Communities and Community Plans

Address recreational needs of new defined communities and community plans through a recreation plan to be approved in conjunction with approvals for new communities and community plans which includes the following:

1. Recommendations for the amount of acreage needed to serve the population of the new community or within the community plan's boundaries using a minimum standard of 5 acres/1,000 population.
2. Recommendations for the locations and alternative locations for park sites within the boundaries based on projected acreage needs.
3. Appropriate zoning to facilitate future dedication/development of identified park sites.
4. Recommendations for maintaining proposed recreation facilities, including maintenance districts.
5. Identification of potential routes for trails to link new towns or communities into the County-wide trail system.

8.D.b Recreational Facilities for New Residential Development

Require new residential development of five or more units to participate in the provision of recreational facilities for their residents as follows:

- a. For multiple family housing developments, such as apartments, or mobilehome parks, recreational facilities shall be provided on site.
- b. For residential subdivisions, the subdivider shall have the option to provide recreational facilities on site, pay an in-lieu recreation fee or dedicate land for public recreational facilities in accordance with Government Code Section 66477 et seq. Any such fees collected may be used for the acquisition, construction and maintenance of recreational facilities.

8.D.c Encourage Bicycle Use

Encourage provisions for bicycle facilities, such as bike parking and/or storage lockers, at work places, transit nodes, recreational facilities and public spaces.

8.D.d Recreational Facilities for New Commercial and Industrial Development

Encourage the inclusion of recreational facilities, dedicated open space, and/or trails within new commercial and industrial developments.

GOAL 8.E Acquire, develop and manage recreational lands according to principles which protect

private property rights, maximize cost efficiency, promote accessibility by all residents, advocate safety, and encourage public participation.

Policies

- 8.E.1 Avoid impinging on private property rights whenever possible by locating new recreational facilities on publicly-owned lands whenever feasible and encourage cooperation from private property owners by providing compensation to and indemnification from liability for willing sellers when the acquisition of private property is necessary.
- 8.E.2 Consider topography, existence of mature vegetation, and location adjacent to existing population centers when locating new recreational facilities.
- 8.E.3 Give preference to locating new recreational facilities in areas where high levels of community support and interest are expressed.
- 8.E.4 Reduce liability through careful design of new facilities, acquisition of adequate levels of insurance and by adopting long-term maintenance plans for new facilities.
- 8.E.5 Encourage the dedication and installation of multi-use non-motorized trails in new development proposals. Provision of any such trails shall count toward the required on-site recreational facilities pursuant to Government Code Section 66477(1)(g).

Implementation Programs

- 8.E.a **Recognize and Protect Private Property Rights**

Avoid impinging on private property rights whenever possible by locating new recreational facilities on publicly-owned lands whenever feasible and encourage cooperation from private property owners by providing compensation to and indemnification from liability for willing sellers when the acquisition of private property is necessary.
- 8.E.b **Prepare Sample Recreation Easements for Trails Across Private Property**

Prepare a sample recreation easement detailing the rights and restrictions of the public to use trails over private property, detailing methods for screening private property from public trail use and addressing indemnification of private property owners.
- 8.E.c **Equestrian Trails through Private Subdivisions**

Encourage the private development and maintenance of trails of all kinds, including equestrian facilities, within private subdivisions. Recognize that the provision of equestrian trails should be the choice of the developer of new residential subdivisions and that choice should include responsibility for maintenance of those trails by future property owners; as such, discontinue the County's acceptance of equestrian trail easements within private subdivisions and discontinue requiring such easements as a condition of project approval. The County will continue to consider accepting easements for future equestrian trails outside of new residential subdivisions to serve public needs.
- 8.E.d **Target Park Lands Requiring Reduced Site Preparation**

Target lands for proposed facilities within the Recreation Master Plan which require minimal grading with topography consistent, where feasible, with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In addition, emphasize sites which feature mature vegetation and would require minimal additional landscaping. Proposed facility locations should be adjacent to existing or anticipated population centers for convenient access by residents of those areas and to provide for efficient use of existing infrastructure.

8.E.e Solicit Public Input

Solicit input from the people to be served by a new recreational facility to gauge interest prior to allocating funding to acquire and/or construct new facilities. Identify local organizations interested in adopting parks for maintenance and identify volunteers to assist permanent staff with construction and maintenance of facilities.

8.E.f Alternatives for Maintaining Adequate Levels of Liability Coverage

~~Assess~~ Evaluate alternatives ~~for to~~ maintaining ~~adequate~~ liability coverage for public parks and indemnification of private property owners.

GOAL 8.F Develop a broad-based financing program with a wide variety of revenue sources which equitably distributes and/or reduces the cost of providing new recreation facilities.

Policies

8.F.1 Distribute the cost of providing and maintaining new recreational facilities to visitors and County residents.

8.F.2 Pursue private, local, state and federal grants and actively investigate other funding sources to finance recreational facilities.

8.F.3 Reduce the costs of constructing and maintaining recreational facilities by encouraging volunteers and community groups to assist in the construction and maintenance of recreational facilities.

8.F.4 ~~Sell~~ Consider selling surplus public land to generate income for providing recreational facilities.

8.F.5 Continue to explore new funding sources for acquisition, construction and maintenance of recreational facilities.

Implementation Programs

8.F.a Consider ~~a Landscaping and Lighting~~ Assessment Districts
Investigate the feasibility of forming assessment districts ~~a Landscaping and Lighting Assessment District~~ for the purpose of financing the installation, construction and maintenance of landscaping, park and recreational improvements and for the purchase of land for improvements related to parks, lighting and landscaping.

8.F.b Update User Fees
Update existing ordinances establishing user fees at public recreation facilities. Fees generated shall be used for acquisition, construction and maintenance of new recreational facilities.

8.F.c Grants and Other Funding Sources
Seek grants and other funding for acquisition and construction of recreation facilities and maintain a list of potential grant sources.

8.F.d Adopt-A-Park Programs

Encourage community groups to "Adopt-A-Park" for maintenance of parks and recreational facilities ~~is complete~~.

8.F.e Consider Selling Public Lands to Finance Recreational Facilities

Consider selling surplus public lands and vacant public lands that are too small to be developed into meaningful recreational facilities or are not in propitious locations, to finance larger, more functional, recreational facilities serving the same population.

8.F.f Explore New Funding Sources

Continue to explore funding sources, such as grants and bond acts for acquisition, development and/or maintenance of recreational facilities.

GOAL 8.G Provide for the ongoing acquisition, construction and maintenance of R~~e~~creation F~~a~~ilities.

Policies

8.G.1 Consider the formation of a regional recreation district or similar entity, exclusive of existing community recreation and park districts and community services districts which provide public recreational facilities, to oversee the acquisition, construction and maintenance of recreational facilities. Recreation and park districts and community services districts which provide public recreational facilities would have the option of participating in a regional recreation district.

8.G.2 Provide public handouts describing the location and types of facilities located throughout the County for residents and visitors.

Implementation Programs

8.G.a Formation of a Regional Recreation District

Investigate the feasibility of forming a regional recreation district to organize and conduct recreation programs, establish systems of recreation and recreation centers and to acquire, construct, maintain and operate recreation centers within the district. The intent of the formation of such a district would be to provide for public recreational facilities of a regional nature that are located outside of the individual communities. Any proposed regional recreation district would not include the areas lying within the jurisdictional boundaries of existing recreation and park districts or community services districts which provide public recreational facilities unless those districts choose to participate in the regional recreation district.

8.G.~~bd~~ Prepare and Distribute Public Handouts

Prepare a public handout describing the location and type of recreational facilities located in the County and available to residents and visitors. Handouts should be made available to public libraries, the Tuolumne County Visitor's Bureau, Tuolumne County Chamber of Commerce and other entities with wide contact with residents and visitors to Tuolumne County.

Responsibility for Programs: Administration of the Implementation Programs listed in this Element is the responsibility of the Board of Supervisors, County Administration Office, County Counsel, Community Resources Agency, Planning Department, Department of Public Works, and Recreation Department with the

Community Resources Agency Planning Department serving as the primary administrator.

Funding Sources: Administration of the Implementation Programs listed herein will be funded through the County's General Fund, Road Fund and grants.

Time Frame for Implementation: Implementation of the programs listed in this Element related to preparing a Recreation Master Plan and amending the County's development regulations will be completed by FY 98-99; all other programs are ongoing.

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