Parks and Recreation Policy Framework

Draft for Public Review

March 2024

CITY OF PETALUMA
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

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Overview

This Public Draft Policy Framework was prepared for review by the Petaluma community. The first two sections provide important context and are identical in each of the draft policy frameworks. The "Introduction" section briefly explains general plans, Petaluma's General Plan Update project, policy frameworks, project next steps, and key terminology. The "Policy Framework Foundations" section summarizes the analysis and community input that informed this policy framework.

The remaining sections are the core of this document that the City would like the community to review. The first of these sections, "Summary of Framework Approach," summarizes the overall approach to the topic addressed by this framework. Next is the main body of the framework, the "Goals, Policies, and Actions" section, which is organized into several goals. Each goal, in turn, has several related policies. And many policies have actions that implement those policies.

Introduction

General Plans

State law requires that each city "adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical development of the county or city." This general plan must contain an "integrated, internally consistent and compatible statement of policies" that appropriately responds to local conditions and circumstances. General plans are organized into different "elements," or chapters, like conservation, housing, and land use. There is no required time interval at which jurisdictions must update their general plans, though Housing Elements must be updated every eight years.

State law stipulates that capital improvements and certain other planning policies, such as specific plans, zoning actions, development agreements, and subdivisions, must be consistent with the general plan. The general plan also includes policies that relate to a wide variety of matters under local jurisdiction, which can guide future decision-making.

Petaluma's General Plan Update

The current Petaluma General Plan was adopted in 2008 and last updated in 2012, and it accounts for a planning period through 2025. Petaluma has experienced a great deal of change since then, so the City initiated an update to the General Plan internally in 2020, and brought a consultant team on to assist with the project in 2021.

Petaluma's updated General Plan will address many topics, including: natural environment, hazard mitigation, historic preservation, land use, urban design, housing, mobility, parks, facilities, the arts, economic development, and environmental justice. To meet State deadlines, the Housing Element was completed, adopted, and certified by the State in early 2023. Concurrently with the General Plan Update, the City is also developing a Climate Action Plan, the "Blueprint for Carbon Neutrality" (Blueprint); the team has worked to align the two concurrent efforts and will continue to align greenhouse gas reduction strategies with the General Plan elements as the Blueprint moves through the adoption process.

For more information about General Plans and Petaluma's General Plan Update process, go to https://www.planpetaluma.org/.

Policy Frameworks

Purpose and Structure

Policy frameworks such as this one outline the proposed General Plan goals, policies, and implementation actions for each topic addressed by the General Plan. They were developed based on:

- The existing General Plan (https://cityofpetaluma.org/general-plan/)
- Key findings from the Existing Conditions Reports (see the "Policy Framework Foundations" section below)
- State requirements and guidance
- Related technical, policy, and programmatic resources
- Extensive community input (https://www.planpetaluma.org/getinvolved)
- The Vision, Pillars, and Guiding Principles developed based on community input (see the "Policy Framework Foundations" section below)
- Input from the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) (https://www.planpetaluma.org/gpac-page)
- Input from City committees, boards, and commissions, and
- Guidance from City staff and consultants.

Topics Covered

There is a draft Policy Framework for each of the following topics[1]:

- Natural Environment
- Safety
- Flood Resilience
- Land Use & Community Character
- Transportation
- Infrastructure & Utilities
- Public Facilities

- Parks & Recreation
- Historic Resources
- Arts, Culture, and Creativity
- Economic Development
- Noise
- Health Equity and Environmental Justice
- Implementation & Governance.

There are many connections among the topics covered in different frameworks. Generally, the following topics are addressed as follows. This list includes overarching topics and subtopics, and then lists the frameworks that address this topic in brackets. This is not a comprehensive list of topics covered or of intersections among frameworks:

Climate Change

- Greenhouse gas reduction (Blueprint for Carbon Neutrality, Parks & Recreation, Transportation, Infrastructure & Utilities)
- Mode shift, active transportation, EV charging, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) (Transportation)
- Green building[2] (Land Use & Community Character, Public Facilities, Infrastructure & Utilities)
- Low impact development[3] (Natural Environment, Infrastructure & Utilities)
- Climate adaptation (Safety, Flood Resilience, Land Use & Community Character, Health Equity & Environmental Justice)
- Just transition[4] (Economic Development)

Ecosystems

- Habitats, wildlife corridors, & open space (Natural Environment, Parks & Recreation, Transportation)
- Urban forestry[5] (Parks & Recreation, Health Equity and Environmental Justice)

Petaluma River and Tributaries

- Ecology, habitats, & wildlife corridors (Natural Environment)
- Flooding (Safety, Flood Resilience)
- Adjacent land uses (Land Use & Community Character, Parks & Recreation, Historic Resources)
- Trails and transportation (Transportation)
- River Access and Enhancement Plan (Parks & Recreation, Flood Resilience)

Stormwater, Water Supply, and Wastewater

- Watershed and river protection (Natural Environment)
- Flood control (Flood Resilience, Parks & Recreation, Safety)
- Public water, water conservation, drought, & wastewater systems (Infrastructure & Utilities, Safety)

Transportation

- Mobility network[6], accessibility[7], safety, and VMT (Transportation, Parks & Recreation, Economic Development, Safety)
- Public realm[8] (Land Use & Community Character, Noise)

15-Minute Neighborhoods

- Types, locations, and characteristics (Land Use & Community Character)
- Mobility networks, design, and safety (Transportation)

Equity (in addition to the Health Equity and Environmental Justice Framework)

- Tribal collaboration[9] (Natural Environment, Historic Resources)
- Equitable transportation (Transportation)
- Park and public facilities access (Parks & Recreation, Public Facilities)
- Recreation program access (Parks & Recreation)
- Cultural equity (Arts, Culture, & Creativity)
- Economic justice[10] (Economic Development)
- Community engagement (Parks & Recreation, Implementation & Governance).

Next Steps

The Public Draft Policy Frameworks will be reviewed by the public, Petaluma committees and commissions, the GPAC, and the City Council. Community input and related direction from the City will inform the Draft General Plan, which will also be reviewed by the community before it is presented to the City Council for adoption. A Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be prepared and approved along with the updated General Plan. For the most up-to-date project information and schedule, go to https://www.planpetaluma.org/.

Key Policy Framework Definitions

When reviewing the Policy Frameworks, keep in mind these definitions:

- **Goal**: a general statement that expresses the outcomes towards which planning efforts are directed; often a topic-specific component of the Vision
- **Policy**: a statement of intent or direction that contributes toward achieving a goal and that guides decision-making
- **Action**: a specific activity, procedure, program, or project aimed at implementing a policy.

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Parks and Recreation Policy Framework Foundations

Existing Conditions Key Findings

The Existing Conditions Reports for Petaluma's General Plan Update serve as the technical analysis of diverse dimensions of the city's status as evaluated in 2021. They provide a detailed analysis of current conditions and provide a data-based foundation for policymaking. The nineteen Existing Conditions Reports as well as a summary presentation can be downloaded from the "Plan Documents" section of the project website: https://www.planpetaluma.org/documents#ecr-final.

The following are key findings from the Parks, Recreation, and Public Facilities Existing Conditions Report prepared in September 2021 as part of the General Plan Update, as relevant to the Parks and Recreation policy framework.

- Petaluma has 549.1 park acres, not including recreation facilities, trails, or linear parks.
- The City has a target park service ratio of 5 park acres per 1,000 residents. Currently, the City has about 12 park acres per 1,000 residents, exceeding its target, though some of these acres are inaccessible (like the wetlands at Shollenberger Park) or unimproved. Overall, parks differ in their composition and quality and consist of three types: community, neighborhood, and pocket (as defined below).
- Approximately 44 percent of Petaluma's population lives within a 5-minute walk to a park, and 84 percent live within a 10-minute walk, though not all park facilities are of equal recreational or experiential value.
  - Planned parks target many of the existing "park deserts."
- The City's recreation facilities include a community center, a senior center, an arts center, the Kenilworth Teen Center, the Swim Center and Cavanagh Pool, and the Historical Library and Museum. Additionally, there are several sports facilities and fields located at various parks. Private recreation facilities are not counted in this inventory.
- Key issues and opportunities include:
  - Assessing and measuring the adequacy of park facilities: The City measures park service through a park service ratio (5 acres of parks per 1,000 residents), which does not provide a nuanced measure of park type, quality, or accessibility.
  - Increasing linkages between parks for pedestrians and bicyclists to better connect neighborhoods and expand overall park access.
  - The City does not have a Parks and Recreation Master Plan to guide parks and recreation investment and programming priorities.
  - Parks maintenance is challenging due to limited funding, aging infrastructure, and evolving maintenance practices.

Related Vision, Pillars, and Guiding Principles

The Vision Statement, Pillars, Guiding Principles, and Supporting Concepts reflect community engagement input that occurred during the Visioning Phase of the General Plan Update in 2021. On February 17, 2022, the GPAC voted unanimously to recommend that the City Council accept these Vision

materials as the guidance for the ongoing General Plan Update planning process, and the City Council accepted them on March 21, 2022.

- The Vision Statement describes the desired future conditions and characteristics of the city.
- The Pillars are the core community values.
- The Guiding Principles and Supporting Concepts provide the broad direction and pathways to achieve the vision and honor community values, with a focus on the community's specific challenges and opportunities.

The Vision Statement, Pillars, and Guiding Principles and Supporting Concepts can be downloaded from the "Plan Documents" section of the project website: https://www.planpetaluma.org/documents#gpuvision. Together, the Vision Statement, Pillars, and Guiding Principles and Supporting Concepts provide the basis for the goals, policies, and programs included in the General Plan Public Draft Policy Frameworks.

The following verbatim excerpts from the Vision Statement, Pillars, and Guiding Principles informed the preparation of this policy framework:

Vision

Petaluma is **a vibrant river town rooted in the relationship between our people and the land**. Our identity also evolves from our deep agricultural roots, historic downtown, **living river, and preserved open spaces**.

We relish our spirited, distinctive neighborhoods where we live, work, and play. Our friendly, beautiful, and nature-filled streets, parks, urban forest, and accessible river, bike lanes and trails, and walking paths connect people and help keep residents healthy.

Guiding Principles

There are a total of sixteen Guiding Principles, each with multiple, lettered Supporting Concepts. The following Guiding Principles and Supporting Concepts informed this policy framework:

1. Achieve carbon neutrality by 2030 and equitably foster a sustainable and resilient community in which today's needs do not compromise the ability of the community to meet its future needs.
   a. Develop strategies to elevate the ecological and environmental benefits of existing parks and open spaces.
2. Preserve and enhance Petaluma's natural environment and surrounding open spaces.
   a. Protect the natural environment, including wildlife corridors, as the foundation of ecological and human health.
   b. Preserve Petaluma's identity, image, and sense of place that result from its relationship to natural features – the River, Sonoma Mountain, the hills, the creeks, grassland, wetland and marshland.
   c. Maintain the land outside the Urban Growth Boundary for open space, wildlife habitat and movement, agriculture, rural land uses, and protection from hazards.
   d. Expand open spaces within and adjacent to the city.
   e. Ensure the natural and built environment is resilient to flooding, fires, sea level rise, and other natural hazards.
   f. Ensure equitable access to and enjoyment of Petaluma's natural environment.
   g. Advance urban forest management and native plantings.

      h.   Increase the urban tree canopy.

      i.   Open Lafferty Ranch!

5.   Ensure the health and wellness of all residents.

      d.   Ensure equitable access to natural places, parks, playgrounds, and pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

13.   Ensure infrastructure supports infill development and addresses the impacts of climate change.

      f.   Develop strategies to elevate the ecological and environmental benefits of existing parks and open spaces.

Parks and Recreation Definitions

When reviewing the Parks Policy Framework, keep in mind these definitions:

- **Park**: Open space land available for the general public, it includes a formal recreation destination or facility.[11] *See classifications below.*
- **Open Space**: Any parcel or area of land or water that is essentially unimproved and devoted to open-space use[12]
- **Recreational Facility**: Facility offering team or individual sports leagues, arts and crafts, music, dance, theater, exercise groups, walking, biking, hiking, picnicking/barbeques, paddling, boating, horseback riding, historic sites, or other community amenities.[13]

Parks Classification[14]

- **Community Parks:** Community parks serve a citywide population and may include but are not limited to offering sports facilities, such as lighted fields, courts, swimming pools, recreation buildings, and other special-use facilities. Restrooms and off-street parking should be provided. Other example amenities that may be provided include picnic tables, BBQ and reservable group gathering areas, and walking pathways. Community parks often host community gatherings such as celebrations, farmers' markets, and multi-generational programming. Although community parks have a much larger service area than neighborhood parks, they often serve a neighborhood function as well.
- **Neighborhood Parks**: Neighborhood parks are devoted primarily to serving a small portion of the city, usually within walking and biking distance from residences. These parks are typically designed for non-organized and unsupervised recreation activities. Play equipment, ball fields and open turf areas, picnic tables, and BBQ areas may be provided, although restrooms and off-street parking are generally not provided, but are encouraged. Neighborhood parks are intended to provide outdoor spaces for relaxation, exercise, and social connection at a local level. Neighborhood parks typically measure between three and five acres, though some parks are larger. Neighborhood Parks may include programming or facilities for active play and recreation, and/or for more passive uses, such as benches, walking trails, or picnic tables.
- **Pocket Parks**: Pocket parks are very small park sites (less than one acre). They have limited amenities and are intended to serve immediate neighbors. They may provide tot lots, playgrounds, picnic tables, public art features, or small-scale facilities to a localized area. Pocket parks can serve as gathering spaces for a quick break, outdoor meal, or space to meet friends. Pocket Parks may include programming or facilities for active play and recreation, and/or for more passive uses

Other Definitions

- **Urban Separator:** The Urban Separator is a General Plan Land Use designation. The Urban Separator includes open space lands within and/or directly adjacent to the Urban Growth Boundary that are intended to serve as the outer boundary of urban development, as designated by the City of Petaluma. They provide an edge that buffers agricultural fields from urban land, may serve as a recreational area, and act as a key component of the city's open space system. On lands with development potential, the Urban Separator allows transferability of development potential to the remaining portion of the same property.
- **Open Space:** Any park, right of way, City-owned property, utility corridor, publicly used land, school yard, or natural habitat area which is open land on which there is no structure.
- **Passive recreational uses:** Passive recreational uses are uses that do not require specialized park equipment, infrastructure, or management, such as walking, biking, and picnicking.
- **Active recreational uses:** Active recreational uses are uses that require the use of special facilities, courses, fields, or equipment. Examples of active uses include playing basketball, swimming, and using playground equipment.

Summary of Framework Approach

The Parks and Recreation policy framework sets the foundation for an expanded, well-maintained, and amenity-rich system of parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities for the benefit of existing and future residents (see Goal P-1 and Goal P-2). To achieve this, the framework identifies strategies that will create a more equitable, sustainable, and resilient parks, open space, urban forest, and recreational facilities network that will result in a healthier, more socially connected population (see Goal P-3, Goal P-4, Goal P-6, and Goal P-8). This approach centers accessibility and aims to ensure that all residents can easily and safely access quality parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities and programming (see Goal P-5, Goal P-7, and Goal P-9).

Goals, Policies, and Actions

Goal P-1: Expanded Parks and Recreation Facilities

The City actively **retains and expands** its city-wide parks and recreational facilities which strengthen community connectedness and improve overall health and wellbeing.

Policy P-1.1: Create a city-wide plan for the future of Petaluma's parks and open spaces

Create a city-wide vision and implementation strategy for the planning and maintenance of the City's parks and recreation system.

Action P-1.1.1: Adopt a Strategic Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Develop and implement a Strategic Parks and Recreation Master Plan by engaging the community to help shape a vision for prioritizing future investments in parks, programs, and services. Include the following in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan:

- An analysis of how parks, open spaces, and recreation facilities are used and by whom.
- A recreation and activities needs assessment.
- A parks classification system that categorizes parks based on acreage, park features, passive and active uses, the provision of amenities, and any other factors deemed significant at the time of Plan development.
- A points-based parks service metric to evaluate the quality of parks service and the value parks and open spaces bring to their surrounding communities. This metric should be used to influence the prioritization of park funding, programming, and staff resources. The metric may be based on the following factors that influence park service:
    - Amenities, such as lighting, sports courts, playgrounds, passive recreation facilities, social gathering areas, unique programming, etc.
    - Acreage, including a distinction between accessible acreage and natural areas (like Shollenberger marshland)
    - Activities and programming, such as City-operated recreational programs and community events.

- Access and equity, including ADA-accessibility, walking distance from residents (see also Policy 4.2), and demographic data on socio and economically distressed areas with access to recreation and parks.
- Physical and mental health benchmarking, and environmental health including analyzing wildlife corridors and native planting restorations.
- Need, including but not limited to, if the park is located in an Equity Priority Area and/or if the park is located in a neighborhood that otherwise has limited park access.
- Identify potential areas for future park and open space acquisition and development potential. Evaluate adopting an experienced-based model to help prioritize future investment and programming.
- A framework for an interconnected public space network, and/or pedestrian and bicyclist-priority streets that connect parks and other major destinations (see also Policy 4.1 and Transportation Policy Framework).
- Strategies for funding and equitably distributing park and recreational facility acquisition and maintenance.

Policy P-1.2: Maintain park standards

Achieve and maintain a minimum park standard of 5 acres per 1,000 residents (community parks at 3 acres per 1,000 population and neighborhood parks at 2 acres per 1,000 population) and an open space/urban separator standard of 10 acres per 1,000 population in order to improve access to parks and recreational amenities that enhance the quality of life for residents, the environment, native habitats and the growing needs of a vibrant community.

Policy P-1.3: Expand parks and open space through development approval

Contribute to parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces as part of the City's development approval process through the following strategies:
- Require dedication of parcel-specific proposed parks, and proposed extension of parks, as shown in Figure 1 and Table 1, as a condition of development entitlements, consistent with federal, State, and local law. Dedication requirements for development subject to the Quimby Act (Government Code Sec. 66477) shall be consistent with the requirements of that Act.
- Require funding and/or construction for and of new parks or recreation facilities, beyond those identified in the General Plan, as well as contributions to the Enhanced Maintenance Fund as part of a specific project's development review process.
- Require neighborhood parks, pocket parks, open spaces, and river and creek access points to be donated, constructed, and maintained within or in addition to the developing property(ies). Evaluate existing maintenance levels that align with assessments levied within the landscape assessment districts and engage parcel owners impacted on recommendations for funding mechanisms to offset costs associated with developing, upgrading, and maintaining parks and recreational facilities that may be imposed as a condition of development. Privately owned, publicly accessible open spaces, such as roof gardens and patios, and transfer of density within a project site from donated acreage in excess of dedication/in lieu requirements may be considered.
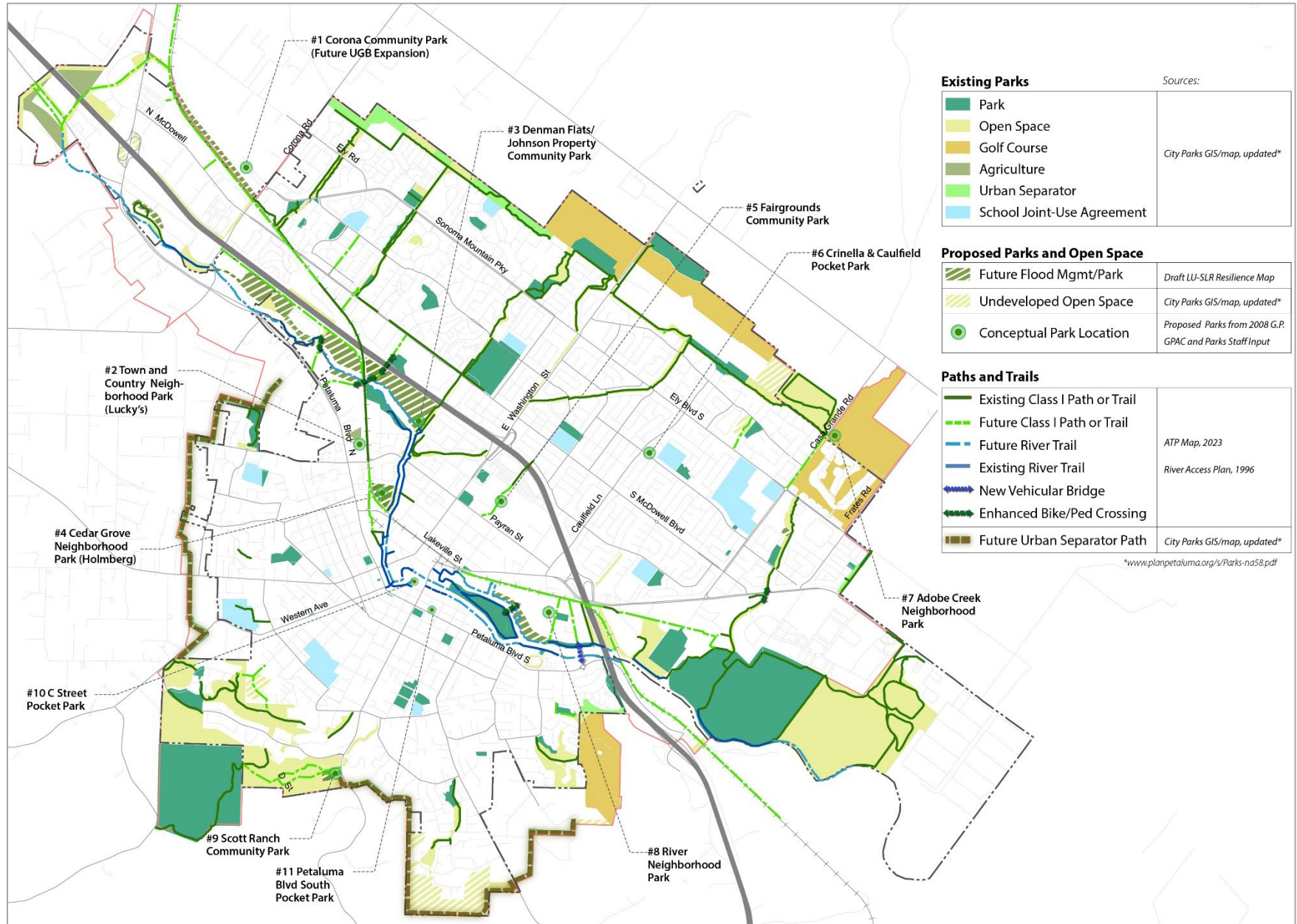
Action P-1.3.1: Review and, if necessary, revise the City's Municipal Code regarding the payment of park impact fees to maximize all opportunities for enhancing citywide park maintenance, capital park improvement projects, and park operations through the development entitlement process.

Action P-1.3.2: Consider establishing regulations for allowing the development of and ensuring access to privately owned publicly accessible open spaces.

Action P-1.3.3: Establish a transfer of development rights (TDR) program that allows project applicants for multi-parcel development projects on parcels where new neighborhood park locations are shown in Figure 1 to transfer development rights from portions of the parcel(s) dedicated as public open space/park beyond required dedication/in lieu requirements (2 acres of neighborhood park per 1,000 residents) to the remainder of the parcel(s) at the base land use designation on the site, subject to approval by the City Council or the adoption of a TDR Program, provided the following criteria are met:

- The resulting park area meets the minimum size and location requirements shown in Figure 1 and Table 1;
- The park/open space is useful for recreational use, and not just leftover acreage;
- The park/open space is physically and perceptually available to the community-at-large; and
- The resulting transfer will not unduly impact the character of the neighborhood where the development is located.

Figure 1: Existing and Proposed Parks and Open Space

Existing Parks
- Park
- Open Space
- Golf Course
- Agriculture
- Urban Separator
- School Joint-Use Agreement

Sources:

City Parks GIS/map, updated*

Proposed Parks and Open Space
- Future Flood Mgmt/Park — *Draft LU-SLR Resilience Map*
- Undeveloped Open Space — *City Parks GIS/map, updated**
- Conceptual Park Location — *Proposed Parks from 2008 G.P. GPAC and Parks Staff Input*

Paths and Trails
- Existing Class I Path or Trail
- Future Class I Path or Trail
- Future River Trail — *ATP Map, 2023*
- Existing River Trail — *River Access Plan, 1996*
- New Vehicular Bridge
- Enhanced Bike/Ped Crossing
- Future Urban Separator Path — *City Parks GIS/map, updated**

*www.planpetaluma.org/s/Parks-na58.pdf

Map labels:
- #1 Corona Community Park (Future UGB Expansion)
- #3 Denman Flats/ Johnson Property Community Park
- #5 Fairgrounds Community Park
- #6 Crinella & Caulfield Pocket Park
- #2 Town and Country Neighborhood Park (Lucky's)
- #4 Cedar Grove Neighborhood Park (Holmberg)
- #7 Adobe Creek Neighborhood Park
- #10 C Street Pocket Park
- #9 Scott Ranch Community Park
- #11 Petaluma Blvd South Pocket Park
- #8 River Neighborhood Park

Street labels: N McDowell, Corona Rd, Ely Rd, Sonoma Mountain Pky, E Washington St, Ely Blvd S, Petaluma Blvd N, Casa Grande Rd, Frates Rd, Caulfield Ln, S McDowell Blvd, Payran St, Lakeville St, Western Ave, Petaluma Blvd S, I St

Figure 2A and 2B: Existing and Proposed Parks, Upstream and Downtown

Existing Parks   *Sources:*

- Park
- Open Space
- Golf Course   *City Parks GIS/map, updated**
- Agriculture
- Urban Separator
- School Joint-Use Agreement

Proposed Parks and Open Space

- Future Flood Mgmt/Park   *Draft LU-SLR Resilience Map*
- Undeveloped Open Space   *City Parks GIS/map, updated**
- Conceptual Park Location   *Proposed Parks from 2008 G.P.*
                                                      GPAC and Parks Staff Input

Paths and Trails

- Existing Class I Path or Trail
- Future Class I Path or Trail
- Future River Trail   *ATP Map, 2023*
- Existing River Trail   *River Access Plan, 1996*
- New Vehicular Bridge
- Enhanced Bike/Ped Crossing
- Future Urban Separator Path   *City Parks GIS/map, updated**

*www.planpetaluma.org/s/Parks-na58.pdf

#2 Town and Country Neighborhood Park (Lucky's)

Table 1: Proposed Parks

# on Figure 1	Park Name	Typology	Acreage (approx.)
1	Corona (Future UGB Expansion)	Community	20
2	Town and Country (Lucky's)	Neighborhood	1
3	Denman Flats/Johnson Property	Community	10
4	Cedar Grove (Holmberg)	Neighborhood	10
5	Fairgrounds	Community	10
6	Crinella & Caulfield	Pocket	0.5
7	Adobe Creek	Neighborhood	10
8	River	Neighborhood	3.5
9	Scott Ranch	Community	47
10	C Street	Pocket	TBD
11	Petaluma Boulevard South	Pocket	0.25
Sources: Open Data Petaluma website, City of Petaluma General Plan 2025			

Policy P-1.4: Acquire park land

Acquire necessary land and develop new parks in the locations shown in Figure 1 and Table 1, prioritizing areas where new development may occur, neighborhoods underserved by parks, Equity Priority Areas, and other areas identified as having significant park needs. Prioritize the identification and development of adequate parks to meet identified standards and community needs.

Goal P-2: Park and Open Space Acquisitions

The City is compelled to **collaborate** with local, regional, and State agencies; community organizations, and the private sector to acquire and fund park and open space acquisitions and allow joint use of parks, open space, and recreational facilities.

Policy P-2.1: Expand joint use agreements with school districts

Recognizing that schools are community assets, actively promote and coordinate joint use of school properties as neighborhood parks and recreation program sites to help meet the community's demand for additional recreational facilities while realizing the cost benefits from the shared use of publicly-owned land. Establish and maintain joint use agreements with local school districts to allow public use of school open space, playfields, and facilities to augment the City-owned recreational facilities.

Policy P-2.2: Collaboration with local agencies

Work with the Sonoma County Regional Park Department, the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, the Sonoma County Water Agency, the Sonoma Land Trust, the Sonoma

County Watershed Council, the California State Parks Department, and other entities to develop common goals for open space beyond the Urban Growth Boundary, and coordinate acquisition efforts and priorities without overstretching City resources.

Action P-2.2.1: Develop a management plan to expand access to Lafferty Ranch for public use and develop and map the trail network.

Policy P-2.3: Work with community partners

Work with community partners to acquire and/or restore, maintain, and use for the community's benefit, local historic assets (e.g., Steamer Landing Livery Stable, McNear Channel, Polly Hannah Klaas Performing Arts Center, etc.). When this is not possible, develop and maintain agreements with property owners for joint use of these facilities.

Policy P-2.4: Partner with Sonoma County Library

Continue to partner with the Sonoma County Library on joint programming and use of facilities, including joint programming at Kenilworth Park, adjacent to the Petaluma Branch Library.

Policy P-2.5: Evaluate Landscape and Lighting Assessment Districts

Evaluate the Landscape and Lighting Assessment District (LLAD) program operations and financial sustainability as a means of maintaining landscaping and instilling civic pride. Engage property owners through community outreach to determine priorities for future investment toward creating resilient and environmentally sustainable landscaping. partnerships and adequate funding to ensure Landscape and Lighting Assessment Districts are properly maintained.

Action P-2.5.1: Establish partnerships with local neighborhood groups and other organizations to contribute to the maintenance and stewardship of Landscape and Lighting Assessment Districts.

Action P-2.5.2: Continue to maintain a database of maintenance costs for each Landscape and Lighting Assessment District and as needed, periodically increase assessments. Identify and prioritize the Landscape and Lighting Assessment Districts based on the severity of their financial situation to develop a phased approach for addressing them.

Goal P-3: Petaluma River Recreation

The Petaluma River is a recreational asset, providing opportunities for programming, enhanced walking and biking connectivity, and connections to nature.

Policy P-3.1: Update the Petaluma River Access and Enhancement Plan

Update the Petaluma River Access and Enhancement Plan to guide policy related to riverfront uses, public spaces and recreational programming, ecology, sustainability, and nearby development. To enhance recreational uses along the River, the Petaluma River Access and Enhancement Plan should study the following:

- Developing a connected system of publicly accessible, if not always publicly owned, parks, plazas, linear parks, and open spaces along the Petaluma River, including the McNear Peninsula.
- Clarify the importance of the River and creeks as part of Petaluma's parks and open space system.

- Providing continuous publicly accessible trails along both sides of the Petaluma River, where feasible.
- Creating floodable waterfront parks and open spaces to simultaneously manage flooding and provide opportunities for recreation.
- Creating publicly accessible access points to and from the River.
- Enhancing recreation, special events, and educational programming near and/or related to the River.
- Providing public viewing areas.
- Installing educational signage along the River, particularly related to its history and ecology.
- Providing riverside furniture and amenities to support recreational use, including lighting, seating, public art, and curated vantage points.
- Protecting community assets from sea level rise and climate change-related flooding.
- Adapting to climate change and related climatic and flooding risk factors.
- Including management of and access along creek channels.
- Clarifying funding sources and methodology for Plan recommendations.

Action P-3.1.1: Initiate an update to the Petaluma River Access and Enhancement Plan.

Policy P-3.2: Support small boating

Use navigable channels for small boating in concert with local organizations, including the development of a small boating facility that can house instructional and/or historical programs relating to the Petaluma River and Petaluma's historical heritage.

Policy P-3.3: Explore public multi-use small-craft facilities

Explore opportunities for public multi-use small-craft facilities to provide venues for recreational and competitive small boaters (e.g., rowing shells, outrigger canoes, kayaks, traditional wooden boats, and other human and sail-powered watercraft) on the Petaluma River.

Goal P-4: Interconnected Parks and Facilities Network

Parks, recreational facilities, trails, and public facilities are connected and **accessible** to all in an interconnected public space network.

Policy P-4.1: Develop an interconnected public space network

Develop a framework for an interconnected public space network, inclusive of habitats, the Petaluma River, the urban tree canopy, parks, open spaces, public plazas, public facilities, and active transportation corridors, in order to guide City decision-making and create more equitable access to public space throughout the city (see also Policy 1.1).

Policy P-4.2: Ensure ten-minute walk access to parks and open space

Ensure 100% of residents are within a ten-minute walk of a community park, neighborhood park, linear greenway or "Park Street", accessible open space, regional park, or State park (see also Policy 1.1 and Transportation Policy Framework).

Policy P-4.3: Require trail and pathway rights-of-way

Require development along designated trails and pathway corridors to provide sufficient right-of-way for trails and to ensure that adjacent new development does not detract from the scenic and aesthetic qualities of the corridor, as well as wayfinding to encourage trail and river access (see also Policy 1.3).

Policy P-4.4: Co-locate recreation facilities

Connect City parks and recreational facilities with other public facilities, open spaces, employment centers, and residential neighborhoods by locating new recreation facilities in proximity to these uses and by fully integrating the parks system and recreational facilities with the City's pedestrian, bicycle, and transit systems.

Policy P-4.5: Ensure accessibility regardless of ability

In designing park and recreational facilities, strive to ensure all visitors regardless of age or ability can safely access facilities, recognizing that accessibility will vary depending on the location and purpose of the facility, consistent with State and federal guidelines.

Policy P-4.6: Prioritize connections within urban separators

As feasible, prioritize potential projects to connect contiguous pathways within the urban separators, the SMART Trail, Bay Ridge Trail, and other regional trails to allow for greater lengths of travel throughout and beyond the city. *For more information, please refer to the Natural Resources policy framework.*

Policy P-4.7: Provide safe and high-quality public trails

Provide safe and high-quality public trails, ensuring that trails are adequately surfaced and maintained and provide lighting, seating, and signage that supports accessibility, safety, and wayfinding as appropriate.

Action P-4.7.1: Upgrade the Lynch Creek Trail to include safe street crossings and abundant lighting, seating, and wayfinding amenities to better connect East and West Petaluma and encourage physical activity.

Action P-4.7.2: Establish an interpretive signage program that highlights natural, historic, cultural, and educational features and contexts

Policy P-4.8: Support native wildlife

Ensure parks and open spaces support the movement of, and resources for, native wildlife through the following:
- Evaluating park and open space improvements for their ability to support biodiversity, enable the movement of wildlife, and increase resilience.
- Evaluating and updating existing guidelines for landscape design and planting to support native species and non-native species that provide valuable resources for native wildlife.
- Where appropriate, planting for pollinators to support food and habitat health.
- Prioritizing restorative land maintenance best practices including expanding urban and open space grazing programs and upgrading water conservation infrastructure.
- Providing interpretive signage to educate the community on City programs and habitat functions
- Prioritizing connections between habitat nodes, including open spaces and greenways in the public right of way.

Goal P-5: Well-Maintained and Safe Parks and Recreational Facilities

The City's inventory of parks and recreational facilities is **well-maintained** and allows for safe and equitable access.

Policy P-5.1: Expand parks and recreational facility maintenance

Recognizing that well-maintained community spaces and park amenities are a matter of civic pride, priority, and safety, establish regional partnerships to leverage funding and resources, form agreements with community organizations to expand maintenance activities for City-owned parks and recreational facilities, and manage the work of community organizations and volunteers.

Action P-5.1.1: Create opportunities and incentives, such as public acknowledgments plaques and signs, for other agencies, non-profits, private businesses, and user groups to participate in the provision, development, and maintenance of parks, open space, and recreation facilities.

Action P-5.1.2: Establish a volunteer and partner management program to organize individual volunteer efforts to effectively and efficiently supplement park maintenance staff and expand seasonal park improvement projects citywide.

Action P-5.1.3: Formalize a Friends of Parks program, where park stewardship groups can enter into service, lease agreements, and maintenance agreements with the City.

Policy P-5.2: Maintain public-private partnerships for maintenance

Develop and maintain public-private partnerships with volunteer groups and private entities that make City-owned facilities available for community use and enjoyment and reduce the City's fiscal burden for operations and maintenance.

Policy P-5.3: Require trail and pathway maintenance

Require development that occurs adjacent to designated public trails and pathway corridors to install, maintain, and ensure access to the publicly accessible trail, in perpetuity.

Policy P-5.4: Jointly renovate and maintain facilities with school districts

Collaborate with local school districts to jointly renovate and maintain City and district recreational facilities.

Action P-5.4.1: Create a program for shared renovation and maintenance of all recreational facilities (City and school district lands) through a possible city-wide assessment which will be in addition to current funding provided for renovation and maintenance of those facilities by the responsible agency or authority.

Policy P-5.5: Prioritize accessibility maintenance

Maintain parks and recreational facilities to ensure that they are safe and accessible for all users. Prioritize improvements in order to maximize support for all users.

Action P-5.5.1: Develop a maintenance evaluation framework and standards for maintenance that are consistent across all facilities and that is transparent to the community and evaluate parks and recreational facilities every one to two years.

Action P-5.5.2: Implement and maintain an Asset Management System for short-term workflow management and long-term maintenance needs that incorporates information about the life cycle and age of park infrastructure, buildings, and other facilities; addresses deferred maintenance needs; and proposes a funding strategy for deferred and ongoing maintenance and facility replacement.

Policy P-5.6: Adopt new maintenance funding strategies

Identify and adopt new funding strategies to increase resources dedicated to maintaining park and recreational facilities.

Action P-5.6.1: Study potential maintenance funding mechanisms and develop strategies to seek sustained funding, which may include the following:

- Funding from public and private partners
- Bonds and tax measures
- Assessment districts
- Expanding fee-based recreational programming and leasing agreements
- Transient Occupancy Tax
- Establishing a Friends of Petaluma Parks Foundation that would support the City of Petaluma's Parks & Recreation Department through raising funds for projects and programs.

Policy P-5.7: Integrate smart technology

Integrate smart technology where relevant to conserve resources, streamline operations and maintenance, and improve the overall user experience.

Action P-5.7.1: Initiate a study of smart technologies to understand which smart technologies should be incorporated in City parks and identify funding strategies and phasing.

Policy P-5.8: Keep parks safe and welcoming

Develop parks as places where all can feel safe and welcome by providing adequate lighting, sight lines to increase visibility, and other design and maintenance considerations.

Policy P-5.9: Design for integrated pest management

Ensure existing parks and planned future parks are designed to avoid conditions that lead to nuisance pest conditions, in accordance with Integrated Pest Management principles and the City's Integrated Pest Management policy.

Action P-5.9.1: Maintain and implement the City's Integrated Pest Management Policy.

Goal P-6: Thriving Urban Forest

Petaluma sustains a **thriving and healthy urban forest** that forms an interface between the natural and built environment, beautifies the community, and mitigates climate impacts.

Policy P-6.1: Expand and maintain the urban forest

Expand and maintain the urban forest throughout the city, prioritizing vulnerable communities and places lacking urban forest.

Action P-6.1.1: Identify and prioritize vulnerable communities for the implementation of an expanded urban forest, especially for those with enhanced risk to extreme heat exposure and neighborhoods with low access to air conditioning, higher concentrations of young children, and seniors.

Action P-6.1.2: Develop a Street Tree Master Plan for key City districts, including the Historic Downtown, Warehouse District, and Station Area/Fairgrounds.

Action P-6.1.3: Develop a checklist to ensure that developments follow all City regulations and ordinances regarding tree preservation, maintenance, and/or removal.

Action P-6.1.4: Develop partnerships with community organizations to plant trees in areas where street trees have been removed.

Action P-6.1.5: Develop neighborhood-specific and ecologically-informed vegetation and landscaping guidance to support an integrated ecological network.

Action P-6.1.6: Require street trees as part of all street projects.

Action P-6.1.7: Identify and apply for State and federal tree planting project funding, including California ReLeaf, Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program (AHSC), Urban and Community Forestry Program, and US Department of Agriculture Plant-A-Tree Program.

Action P-6.1.8: Allocate funding for the planting of trees on public property as well as for the planting and long-term care of trees on residential streets.

Policy P-6.2: Establish an urban forest dataset

Establish a comprehensive and accurate baseline dataset on the existing urban forest and tree canopy coverage within Petaluma, encompassing both public and private lands to inform decision-making and long-term management.

Action P-6.2.1: Develop a mechanism for ongoing monitoring of the urban forest and tree canopy, ensuring changes are tracked periodically.

Action P-6.2.2: Provide and continually update tree-related information on the City's website for public reference (e.g. street tree planting procedures and guidelines, approved street tree list, heritage tree applications, GIS data, etc.).

Policy P-6.3: Develop an urban forestry program

Develop an urban forestry program to consolidate the various City policies and ordinances regarding tree planting, maintenance, and removal.

Action P-6.3.1: Develop a City urban forestry program.

Action P-6.3.2: Regularly engage in staff training to ensure qualified staff resources at appropriate levels to support the City's tree preservation efforts, including but not limited to:

- Reviewing tree removal applications;
- Supporting appropriate enforcement efforts and replanting requirements;

- Educating staff on citywide tree-related issues;
- Developing and collaborating with community members on public education efforts related to tree preservation;
- Supporting, coordinating, reviewing, and developing tree-related policies and programs; and
- Promoting a healthy urban forest and encouraging best practices.

Action P-6.3.3: Periodically review and update existing tree regulations (including tree removal and the approved street tree list) and development procedures relating to trees, including the Tree Ordinance and the Tree Technical Manual, and provide periodic education for City field staff on care and proper pruning of trees.

Action P-6.3.4: Update streetscape standards to include street tree standards in all new or updated streets, recognizing the importance of a robust urban forest in promoting active transportation.

Action P-6.3.5: Adopt an update to the approved trees list to be included in Municipal Code Chapter 17 (Tree Preservation) that includes climate resilient, native, and fruit tree species appropriate for the region and by local habitat type.

Policy P-6.4: Engage with the community to support the urban forest

Engage, collaborate with, and educate the Petaluma community to support Petaluma's urban forest.

Action P-6.4.1: Support community efforts to disseminate current information to the public advocating the use of Best Management Practices for the care and maintenance of the thriving urban forest.

Action P-6.4.2: Provide incentives for and encourage property owners and community organizations to plant street trees (e.g., no fee permits for concrete removal, neighborhood tree planting programs, etc.).

Action P-6.4.3: Educate and celebrate the value and importance of trees to the Petaluma community, including celebrating Arbor Day with a community tree planting day or community cleanup day; reviewing, updating, and publishing tree walking tours of Petaluma; and identifying trees of significance to the community.

Action P-6.4.4: Maintain the City of Petaluma's designation as a "Tree City USA" by the National Arbor Day Foundation.

Action P-6.4.5: Develop and provide educational guidance to property owners to assist in selecting climate-resilient tree species, including species that are drought tolerant, resistant to pests and diseases, fire-retardant or fire-resistant, and saline tolerant.

Policy P-6.5: Create food forests

Where feasible, facilitate the development of urban food forests — including food-bearing trees, shrubs, and other edible plants — prioritizing vulnerable communities with limited access to healthy food.

Action P-6.5.1: Partner with local nurseries and other small businesses to develop a program to provide residents with a native, low-maintenance, and/or fruit tree at low or no cost.

Action P-6.5.2: Develop a work program to partner with local organizations and schools, prioritizing vulnerable communities, for the implementation of an expanded food forest.

Action P-6.5.3: Identify staff, community partners, funding sources, and a community engagement plan to facilitate the creation of a food forest in Petaluma.

Action P-6.5.4: Develop and maintain a list of viable lots — including vacant, parking, or other underdeveloped lots — to be used as opportunities to create community gardens for food forests and tree plantings.

Goal P-7: Equity-Focused Facilities and Programs

The City supports and values the health, education, social activities, and overall well-being of Petaluma residents, regardless of age, ability, race/ethnicity, gender, primary language spoken, or socio-economic status, by ensuring residents are **equitably engaged by the City and served** by parks, programming, and facilities.

Policy P-7.1: Make equitable parks and recreation investments

Prioritize investments in parks and recreational services and programming to levels that ensure everyone, regardless of access or ability, can equitably enjoy and make use of public facilities through the following strategies:

- Regularly engage the community, tracking demographics of participants, to understand who is using parks, amenities, and services desired, and how residents use City parks and recreational facilities and programming in order to plan for improvements that meet the community's needs.
- Provide pop-up or mobile recreational programs and services in areas underserved by parks and recreational services.
- Offer programming and provide promotional materials, resources, and other text in Spanish.
- Show a variety of cultural identities, ages, body types, and gender expressions in communications and outreach materials.
- Ensure inter-departmental coordination and partner with local organizations to provide spaces and facilities to support community social services.
- Provide public restrooms and handwashing facilities.

Action P-7.1.1: Develop and support a recreational voucher program to offer free or low-cost waivers for low-income youth, older adults, and others to participate in City-run physical activity programs and activities.

Action P-7.1.2: Continue to create public, private, and non-profit partnerships to develop and maintain parks, recreational facilities, and publicly accessible private open spaces, especially in Equity Priority Areas.

Action P-7.1.3: Survey park and recreation visitors on an annual basis to understand recreational service needs, particularly among residents underserved by parks, residents living in Equity Priority Areas, or other residents in need of specialized programming, and collaborate with these groups to identify and initiate programming to meet their needs.

Policy P-7.2: Support youth engagement and programming

Support and value the health, education, social activities, and overall well-being of Petaluma's youth via the following strategies:

- Use relevant targeted outreach strategies to engage youth on projects and policies impacting them and to understand their recreational needs.
- Identify potential facilities for hosting teen programming and events.
- Continue developing year-round programming, with particular emphasis on engaging youth during school breaks.

Action P-7.2.1: Expand scholarship program for City-run summer camps.

Policy P-7.3: Support senior programming

Recognize the unique needs of Petaluma's aging adults in recreational programming and services via the following strategies:

- Maintain the Adult/Senior Center and continue to support senior activity programming, services, special events, and trips program.
- Renovate the Cavanagh Recreation Center in order to expand recreational programming including activities for adults/seniors.
- Collaborate with the Senior Advisory Committee, Senior Center members, and service providers to consistently engage members and prioritize programs based on needs. Continue to seek partnerships with public agencies and non-profit organizations to meet the needs of seniors.

Policy P-7.4: Prioritize Equity Priority Areas

Prioritize including residents in Equity Priority Areas in ongoing parks and recreation related engagement and decision-making processes.

Policy P-7.5: Create intergenerational gathering spaces

Bring the community together by creating intergenerational gathering spaces that may include interactive play structures for all ages, universally accessible amenities, active areas, as well as areas to sit and rest.

Goal P-8: Parks, Open Spaces, and Facilities Advance Sustainability

Petaluma has a parks, open space, and recreational facility network that acts as a climate solution, contributing to the city's overall **sustainability and resiliency.**

Policy P-8.1: Ensure carbon neutral parks and open spaces

Develop strategies to ensure all parks, open spaces, and recreation facilities achieve carbon neutrality by 2030, while continuing to elevate the ecological and environmental benefits of existing parks and open spaces through strategies such as:

- Developing a shade coverage standard to increase tree canopy.
- Consider low-carbon options when constructing parks and recreational facilities.
- Providing ample waste, compost, and recycling receptacles at parks and open spaces.
- Using sustainable and local materials for equipment in parks and open spaces.
- Incorporating drought-tolerant landscaping and/or native landscaping in City parks, recreational facilities, City buildings, and other City-owned facilities.
- Reducing potable water use through recycled water, greywater, and smart irrigation systems.
- Incorporating solar energy at City facilities.
- Introducing rainwater capture mechanisms in City parks and recreation facilities.
- Continually improving indoor and outdoor energy use, including light through retrocommissioning[15], retrofits, and lighting upgrades.
- Installing additional Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers at suitable recreational facilities and community parks.

- Promoting the electrification of parks maintenance equipment.

Policy P-8.2: Educate about climate action

Educate the community about the impacts of climate change and encourage residents to take action through the following:
- Hosting educational programs and events in City parks and facilities.
- Incorporating educational signage related to sustainability in parks and recreational facilities. The signage should inform users about sustainable practices the City is undertaking, highlight the site's conservation value, and educate the community on ways they can be more sustainable.

Policy P-8.3: Design parks and open spaces as flood control

Design parks and open spaces to also serve as flood control facilities where appropriate.

Goal P-9: High Quality Recreation

The City provides high-quality recreational **services and programming**.

Policy P-9.1: Sponsor community events

Improve community health and unity by providing community-wide, family-oriented special events that bring the community together (e.g., Movies in the Park, family bike nights, heritage festivals, etc.).

Policy P-9.2: Collaborate on educational programming

Encourage and support the collaboration of local school districts, non-profit organizations, and private parties in the use of public lands for outdoor education opportunities such as educational events, community gardens, riparian or wetland enhancement projects, wildlife study/ protection areas, etc.

Policy P-9.3: Enhance aquatic programs

Recognize, maintain, and improve aquatics programs as a key element of Petaluma's Parks and Recreation Services through the following strategies:
- Conduct a facility assessment of the Petaluma Swim Center and determine the feasibility of retrofitting the existing facility versus recommending new construction to meet the growing needs of providing a safe and inclusive aquatics program.
- Maintain and improve the aquatics programming in Petaluma by operating Petaluma swim facilities with a season lasting from March 1 to October 30 and with the goal of year-round operation.
- Consider options for electric heating systems for the pool.
- Use an enhanced program mix based on resident preference and with continuing efforts to increase patronage at the Swim Center through marketing, advertising, and website access.
- Incorporate in the Strategic Parks and Recreation Master Plan a vision for aquatics to ensure that a full range of aquatic programs are provided in Petaluma, incorporating the following:
  - An analysis of projected population and demographic changes in Petaluma and the anticipated impact of those changes on the future demand for aquatic facilities and programs.
  - An evaluation of the current capacity of Petaluma's aquatic facilities, taking into consideration the impact of proposed development adjacent to the Petaluma Swim

Center site and beyond, and project the viability of those facilities to meet the projected demand. The Aquatic Plan shall also recognize that the Petaluma pool is a unique recreational facility in the North Bay and should be considered in terms of potential programming and economic sustainability.

- Identification of improvements, enhancements, or replacement of existing facilities, including considerations of equity and access for the disabled in selecting the location, design, and capacity of new facilities.
- An analysis of the potential for leveraging resources from the Petaluma School District, local services agencies, Santa Rosa Junior College District, local employers, and other governmental entities to address the project demand.
- Methods and strategies for financing the changes necessary to meet projected programming demand, with separate provisions for capital replacement, routine capital financing, and annual maintenance costs.

Action P-9.3.1: Establish a joint use agreement with Petaluma High School for year-round programming and use of its aquatics facilities.

Policy P-9.4: Enhance arts and cultural programming

Provide opportunities for arts and cultural programming in the City's parks and recreation spaces, including:

- Partnering with the Petaluma Public Art Committee to create, fund, and maintain art integrated into public spaces and playgrounds.
- Educational signage within public parks and spaces that hold historical significance for Native American history and acknowledges native history and current place in Petaluma.
- Banners and signs that announce community events, cultural celebrations, and programs.
- Prioritize arts and cultural placemaking, including public art from local artists and cultural organizations.
- Activate spaces with performing arts and temporary/ephemeral art in City parks and recreational facilities.

Notes

[1] The Flood Resilience and Land Use policy frameworks will be released after the other frameworks. These Frameworks relied on the development of a comprehensive update to the City's floodplain model, which was completed in late 2023.

[2] Environmentally responsible and resource-efficient planning, design, construction, operation, maintenance, renovation, and demolition of buildings

[3] Techniques to increase water infiltration, reduce runoff, and improve water quality

[4] The protection of workers' rights and livelihoods while economies are shifting to sustainable production, combating climate change, and protecting biodiversity

[5] The management of trees in urban settings

[6] The system of streets, walkways, trails, and railroads used to move goods and people

[7] The ease of reaching destinations by people of all abilities

[8] Public space that is open and accessible to the general public, including roads, trails, public squares, and parks

[9] Communication and coordination among local government and Native American Tribes

[10] Creating opportunities for every person to have a dignified, productive, and creative life

[11] California Department of Parks and Recreation. "California's Vision for Park Equity: 2000–2020: Transforming Park Access with Data and Technology." State of California. Retrieved from: https://www.parksforcalifornia.org/methods/. 2022.

[12] California Governor's Office of Planning and Research. "Required Elements." State of California. Retrieved from: https://opr.ca.gov/docs/OPR_C4_final.pdf. 2022.

[13] California Department of Parks and Recreation. California's 2021–2025 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). State of California. https://www.parksforcalifornia.org/scorp/2021#executive_summary. 2022.

[14] Parks Classifications from the existing General Plan with additional language added to reflect how current parks in these classifications are used.

[15] Retrocommissioning is fine-tuning existing buildings and systems in order to make them operate optimally and more efficiently through scheduling, sequencing, controls programming, and optimizing set points. Source: PG&E (https://www.pge.com/en_US/large-business/save-energy-and-money/facility-improvement/retrocommissioning.page)