

VIII. OPEN SPACE, PARKS AND RECREATION ELEMENT

Purpose

This section is intended to guide public decision making while providing for a comprehensive system of open space, parks, and recreational opportunities available for public use. This section of the General Plan considers the existing open space, parks, and recreational opportunities, then it presents some standards for meeting the needs of the community, and lastly it identifies some future needs. Objectives, policies, and implementation programs are then recommended to guide decisions based on the projected open space, parks, and recreational demands of the community.

There are four general considerations addressed by the objectives, policies, and implementation programs. These include the coordination of public resources to meet demand, the quality and quantity of recreational facilities, the availability of recreational facilities for public use, and the provision of open space sites.

Open space, parks, and recreation are a key component to a balanced and healthy community. Leisure time is used according to a persons needs and desires, as well as the quality and quantity of recreational opportunities available. The City of Lakeport maintains a system of open space, parks, and other recreational opportunities for its citizens. In addition to parks, recreational facilities are provided at the Highland Springs Reservoir, Lake County Fairgrounds, the County Park, Clear Lake State Park, and the Westshore swimming pool, which is located on Lakeport Unified School District (LUSD) property. Community use of school playing fields provides additional recreational facilities.

Open Space

Lakeport is fortunate to be surrounded by a generous amount of open space. Over 50 percent of all land in Lake County is publicly owned, and approximately two thirds of this area is available for public use. The majority of this land has limited recreational use, however, since it is inaccessible to the public. Lakeport residents typically use the Library Park area or nearby State and County Parks for open space related recreational activities.

Open space, which is unimproved land, serves several functions, some of which are listed below:

- It preserves natural resources such as riparian corridors, plant and animal habitats;
- It provides passive recreational opportunities in areas with scenic and/or interesting natural environments and limited active recreational opportunities such as jogging and equestrian trails;
- It provides a visual buffer between developed and non-developed areas;
- It preserves a distinctive community identity; and

- It limits development from occurring in areas with hazardous conditions, such as those with unstable soils and steep hillsides.

Parks

The policies and implementation programs contained in this section provide the framework that is needed for the City to proactively plan and develop park facilities based on anticipated demand for these facilities. Parkland acquisition is an ongoing priority. Funding sources for park land acquisition and development may come from a variety of sources including dedications, developer in-lieu fees pursuant to the Quimby Act, redevelopment tax-increment funds, the City’s general fund, grants, neighborhood assessments, and general obligation and revenue bonds. The City’s parkland standard is set at five acres of developed parkland per 1,000 residents.

As shown in [Table 14](#), the City has approximately 63.5 acres of parkland, not including recreational facilities at the schools (see [Figure 15](#)). Lakeport’s park and recreational facilities include parks and undeveloped parks.

Table 14
Existing Parks – City of Lakeport

Park	Size (acres)	Current Use
Lakefront Park	5.0 ¹	Picnicking, boat ramp, parking lot
Library Park	3.5	Picnicking, play lot, gazebo, boat ramp, dock, and swimming
Westside Community Park	55	Athletic fields, playground (only 8 acres have been developed at this point, the remainder will develop as funds become available).
Total	63.5	
¹ Most of the 5 acres is used for parking		

Open space and recreation facilities at Lakeport’s schools are also considered part of the park inventory due to the cooperative agreement between the City and school district. Not including the school district’s park acreage, there are approximately 12 acres of City owned parkland per 1,000 residents. Only 16.5 acres of the City owned parkland had been developed as of 2004, giving Lakeport a ratio of 3.3 acres of developed parkland per 1,000 residents. This is below the adopted goal of 5 acres per 1,000 residents.

Recreation

LAKE RECREATION

Clear Lake is renowned for its many recreational opportunities. Boating (including fishing, personal watercraft, and water-skiing) is the principal recreation activity on the Lake. There are also beaches and swimming areas. Over the years there has been a general increase in and promotion of lake recreation.

Boating

Fishing season is open 365 days a year on Clear Lake and the lake is famous for its many fishing tournaments. The largest tournament activity involves bass fishing; there are numerous bass tournaments throughout the year with as many as 300 boats participating in any one tournament. Civic organizations such as the local Chamber of Commerce aggressively court fishing tournaments because of the significant revenue generated by them. The principal bass tournament locations are at City of Clearlake, Lakeport, and Konocti Harbor Resort and Konocti Vista Casino. There are also fishing derbies at a variety of locations for other fish such as catfish, carp, crappie, and blue gill. In addition to the fishing events, there are other boating related events including the Nor-Cal Boat and Ski races, personal watercraft poker runs, and a seaplane fly-in.

The Clear Lake Management Plan notes the need to explore measures to encourage use of more efficient powerboats and personal watercraft on Clear Lake.

OBJECTIVES, POLICIES & PROGRAMS

Parks & Recreation

OBJECTIVE PR 1: TO PROVIDE PARK AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES, PROGRAMS AND ACCESS TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY WHICH ALLOW THE OPPORTUNITY FOR PLAY, RELAXATION AND ENRICHMENT OF MIND AND BODY.

Policy PR 1.1: Parks Master Plan. Update the Parks Master Plan to identify funding sources, acquisition and development priorities, and facilities improvement guidelines.

Policy PR 1.2: Park and Recreation District. Consider the establishment of a Park and Recreation District to develop and maintain city parks, landscaped public open spaces and operate recreation programs.

Program PR 1.2-a: Prepare a report for consideration of the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Planning Commission and the City Council regarding the feasibility of establishing a Parks and Recreation District for Lakeport.

Policy PR 1.3: Public Participation. Actively solicit public participation in the selection, design and facilities planning for future park sites.

Policy PR 1.4: Trail System. Develop a system of pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian trails to connect park and recreational facilities to residential areas.

Program PR 1.4-a: Include in the annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP) the schedule and costs of expanding and improving the urban trails system.

Program PR 1.4-b: Develop and adopt specific design criteria for on- and off-street trails for inclusion in the Zoning Ordinance.

Policy PR 1.5: Park Land Acquisition. Acquire and develop land for public parks at a rate consistent with the growth of the City's population and the needs for additional parks as identified in the General Plan.

Policy PR 1.6: Parks Ratio Standard. Utilize the standard of five acres per 1,000 residents for acquisition of additional developed parks pursuant to the provisions of the Quimby Act [Gov't Code §66477].

Program PR 1.6-a: Establish a Park Acquisition Trust Fund to acquire and develop parkland pursuant to the Quimby Act.

Program PR 1.6-b: Reevaluate and update the population to parkland ratio every two years and amend the Park Dedication Ordinance as appropriate.

Program PR 1.6-c: Prepare, prior to acceptance of any parcels for park or open space, a thorough analysis of geotechnical or other related hazard potential. Identified hazards shall be fully repaired before acceptance of land by City.

Policy PR 1.7: Funding Sources. Consider the following funding sources for park acquisition, development/improvement and maintenance and the operation of recreation programs:

- Sale or trade of City-owned land for the acquisition of comparable facilities elsewhere within the Lakeport Planning Area;
- Redevelopment Tax Increment Revenues;
- Transient Occupancy Tax revenues;
- General Obligation and Revenue Bonds;
- Neighborhood Assessments;
- Grant and foundation funds;
- Recreation concession revenues;
- Donations;
- User fees; and
- Sale of Park and Recreation gift catalogue items.

Policy PR 1.8: Joint Use Parks. The City will work with LUSD to develop joint use of neighborhood parks on school sites using an integrated and comprehensive design which embodies the principle of 'school-in-the-park.' The City's neighborhood park/school sites should serve the entire community and provide a broad range of cultural, recreational and educational activities.

Program PR 1.8-a: Facilitate coordination among the City, the Lakeport Unified School District, Mendocino Community College District and the Recreation and Park District on an ongoing basis to assure continued and expanded use of school facilities for parks and recreational uses.

Policy PR 1.9: Facilities Sharing. Cooperate and work with the County Recreation Department to share facilities and programs.

Policy PR 1.10: Heritage Sites. Identify, recognize and protect sites, buildings, structures and districts with significant cultural, aesthetic and social characteristics which are a part of the City's heritage.

Program PR 1.10-a: Adopt a cultural resources management ordinance to identify, recognize, protect and preserve sites, buildings, structures, districts and objects that reflect significant elements of Lakeport's cultural, social, aesthetic, architectural or natural heritage.

Program PR 1.10-b: Prior to altering any structure with historical significance within the City of Lakeport, the General Plan shall be consulted and any alterations shall be in compliance with General Plan policies. For structures over 45 years old an architectural historian and a historic archaeologist should conduct archival and/or field research to determine the structure's historical value. Relocation of historic structures should only be done if there is no other alternative available.

Program PR 1.10-c: During review of future development projects, the City shall evaluate the need for the project to have a qualified archeologist conduct the following activities: (1) conduct a record search at the Archeological Information Center and other appropriate historical repositories, (2) conduct field surveys where appropriate, and (3) prepare technical reports, where appropriate, meeting California Office of Historic Preservation Standards. In the event there is a likelihood of resources present the appropriate tribe representatives shall be notified in order to determine whether the presence of an on-site monitor is required. If the project is located within 150 feet of a known or recorded archaeological site, the tribe will be notified prior to commencement of any work and a monitor will be present during the excavation portion of the project and will observe the work to ensure that archeological resources are not damaged.

In the event that archaeological resources are encountered during subsurface construction for land development projects, land alteration work in the general vicinity of the find shall be halted and a qualified archaeologist shall be consulted. Prompt evaluations could then be made regarding the finds and course of action acceptable to all concerned parties could then be adopted. Local Native American organizations and tribe representatives shall be consulted if human remains are encountered.

Policy PR 1.11: Specialized Facilities. Consider the development of recreation programs and specialized facilities for different age groups, such as senior citizens and youths.

Open Space

OBJECTIVE OS 2: PRESERVE AND ENSURE ACCESS TO OPEN SPACE AREAS THROUGHOUT THE PLANNING AREA THAT ARE HARMONIOUS WITH BOTH THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND EXISTING DEVELOPED AREAS AND AVAILABLE TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY.

Policy OS 2.1: Open Space Preservation. Leave and/or restore open space areas to their natural state wherever possible and limit uses to those with a minimal environmental impact.

Program OS 2.1-a: The City should require underground utilities in parks and adopt an ordinance to require solar wherever practical and cost efficient. Utilities should be located and designed to minimize an area's environmental and visual qualities.

Policy OS 2.2: Wildlife Corridors. Ensure that adequate open space is provided to permit effective wildlife corridors for animal movement.

Policy OS 2.3: Sensitive Habitat Areas. Facilitate public access to open space in a manner that ensures protection of sensitive habitat areas.

Policy OS 2.4: Right-of-Way for Trails. Use, wherever possible, existing public easements, right-of-ways, flood control facilities, and other public property for the development of trails. Where it is not possible to acquire right-of-way to connect trails systems, the City shall provide access links within the existing street right-of-way.

Policy OS 2.5: Clear Lake Shoreline. Ensure, wherever possible, maximum public access to the Clear Lake shoreline.

Program OS 2.5-a: Require public access easements across lakefront property between 'C' Street and Ninth Street as development occurs.

Policy OS 2.6: Open Space Uses. Seek balance in use of open space for agriculture, habitat preservation, and recreation.

Policy OS 2.7: Agricultural Protection. Protect agricultural activity and long-term commercially viable agricultural land.

Policy OS 2.8: Coordination with Biological Resources Policies. Coordinate open space programs with the other Plan policies to protect plant and wildlife habitat.

Program OS 2.8-a: Establish an active program of land/development rights acquisition in order to protect sensitive environmental areas and features.

Program OS 2.8-b: Establish standards for inclusion and management of permanent open space in new developments.

Policy OS 2.9: Development Rights Transfers. Study the potential for inter-jurisdictional transfer of development rights.

Policy OS 2.10: Protection of Scenic Views. Protect and preserve valuable scenic view sheds and view corridors (see [Figure 16](#)).

Policy OS 2.11: Open Space Links. Preserve and expand links between open spaces and creek corridors.

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