



PARKS AND RECREATION ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

This Element describes the park standards, policies, and implementation programs that ensure that the City's park and recreational needs are met in the future.

Under state law (Planning and Zoning Law, Government Code Section 65000 et seq.) parks and recreation is not a mandatory element of a general plan. However, under state law, each community may prepare optional general plan elements to address issues of particular local importance. During the public outreach for this General Plan update, citizens, the General Plan Steering Committee, and decision makers determined that Live Oak's parkland and recreational programming are fundamental to achieving goals for the local quality of life. The inclusion of this optional Parks and Recreation Element is a reflection of the high priority of these issues for the community.

KEY ISSUES

During a series of workshops to determine a vision for the General Plan, residents of Live Oak identified key issues facing the City of Live Oak. The following issues are related to parks and recreation:

- ✓ To create livable neighborhoods and a healthy citizenry, the City will need to provide adequately maintained parks and open space and cultural and recreational activities and programs.
- ✓ The City does not currently provide adequate park space.
- ✓ New development will be required to pay for the additional park and recreational facilities and meet the minimum service standards set by the City, but new development will not fix the already existing park space deficit.
- ✓ In addition to neighborhood and community parks, the community is highly interested in linear parkland, which would provide walking and bicycling paths and drinking fountains, benches, and other amenities.
- ✓ The City and Live Oak Unified School District are leasing facilities from one another for different recreational programming. A joint-use strategy for existing and future planned park space and recreational facilities could benefit the City and school district alike.
- ✓ With the Feather River and Sutter Buttes nearby, Live Oak has the opportunity to position itself as a regional center for recreational activities that are tied to these nearby important natural resources.



CONTEXT

In 2009, the City of Live Oak had four parks: Oak Tree Park, Date Street Park, Live Oak Memorial Park, and Pennington Ranch Park. These parks provide a range of recreational facilities. Oak Tree Park contains picnic tables, barbecues, and a playground. Date Street Park has a small lawn used as an informal soccer field, benches, picnic tables, and a playground. Live Oak Memorial Park has basketball courts, baseball fields, volleyball courts, picnic tables, barbecues, a playground, restrooms, and the Live Oak Swimming Pool. Pennington Ranch Park is approximately 3.5 acres in size. The majority of park is grass for activities, but there is also a large play structure, two shelters with picnic tables, swings, two ½ court basketball courts, and benches.

Sutter County owns and operates the Live Oak Park and Recreation Area, which is located approximately 2 miles east of downtown. This facility provides access to the Feather River. The park has overnight recreational vehicle (RV) parking and picnic, camping, and barbecue facilities. The County charges a day use fee to use the park.

The City owns and manages the Community Building adjacent to Live Oak Memorial Park and the Boy Scout Building on Myrtle Street. The Community Building is routinely used for public meetings and other events. The Boy Scout Building provides a meeting place for community organizations.

Live Oak Parks and Recreation Department provides a variety of recreational programs. These include youth basketball, youth wrestling, swimming lessons, and fitness programs. Additionally the City hosts a number of recreational-oriented events throughout the year.

PARKS AND RECREATION FRAMEWORK

The 2030 General Plan establishes the City's intent to provide high-quality parks and recreational opportunities within walking distance of each home. The policies and implementation programs in this Parks and Recreation Element ensure:

- ✓ neighborhood facilities that allow convenient access and encourage use;
- ✓ different sizes and types of parkland to serve various age groups, activity levels, and recreational interests;
- ✓ a linear park system that accommodates pedestrian/bicycle recreation throughout the city; and,
- ✓ recreational programming that provides children and seniors with a variety of engaging activities.

This Element contains goals, policies, and implementation strategies to achieve the above mentioned components.

PARK TYPES AND STANDARDS

To provide residents with a high level of access to recreational amenities, the new parks will be dispersed throughout the community and will be connected via the linear park and pedestrian/bicycle path system. Proposed parks will include a new community park, neighborhood parks, numerous pocket parks, and an extensive network of linear parkland.

Community Parks: Community parks are large parks that provide recreational facilities for the entire city (see Figure PARKS-1, “Example Community Park”). A community park is approximately 20 to 30 acres in area and provides sports fields, community activity buildings (for indoor public events), and recreational facilities, such as sports courts and other facilities, as local needs dictate. Community parks can also provide spaces for passive recreation (e.g., walking, picnicking, wildlife observation, reading). Community parks will be located along the pedestrian/bike path system, but should also provide vehicular access and some parking. On-street parking should be provided along the perimeter of community parks to reduce the amount of land within the park that must be devoted to surface parking. As the name suggests, community parks are designed and outfitted with facilities appropriate to serve the entire community. Community parks provide venues for sporting or other events attracting participants and spectators from throughout Live Oak and even provide the opportunity for occasional regional events. Playfield portions of Community Parks can be designed to provide areas for stormwater detention and groundwater infiltrations without compromising recreational functions of the parks.

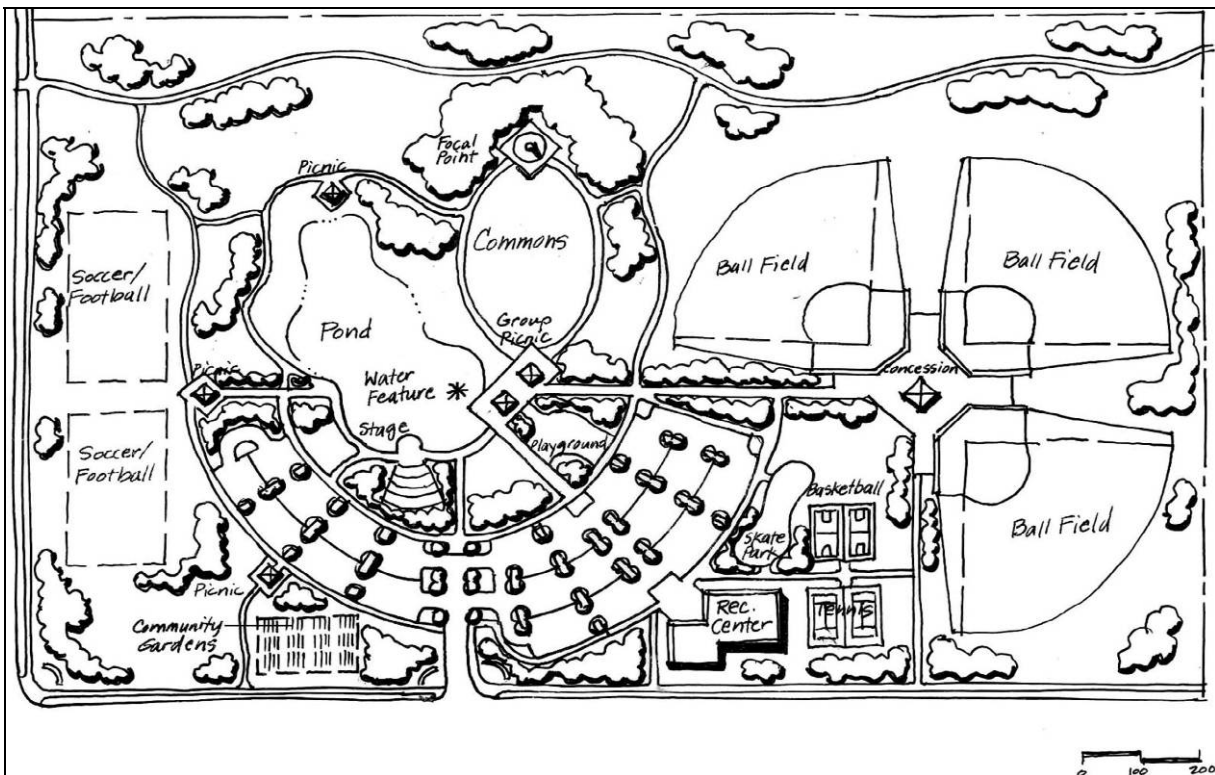


Figure PARKS-1
Example Community Park



Neighborhood Parks: Neighborhood parks are typically between 3 and 8 acres in area and are located and designed to serve the surrounding neighborhood (see Figure PARKS-2, “Example Neighborhood Park”).¹ Neighborhood parks have active recreational facilities, such as playground equipment, sports fields, and sports courts. Neighborhood parks also have passive elements, such as picnic areas, benches, and walking paths. Open playfield portions of neighborhood parks will be designed for stormwater detention and infiltration without compromising the quality of the parkland for recreational use. Neighborhood parks can be designed to meet the needs of an adjacent public school in addition to the broader community. The City’s intent is to ensure that a neighborhood park is within one-half mile of all residences.

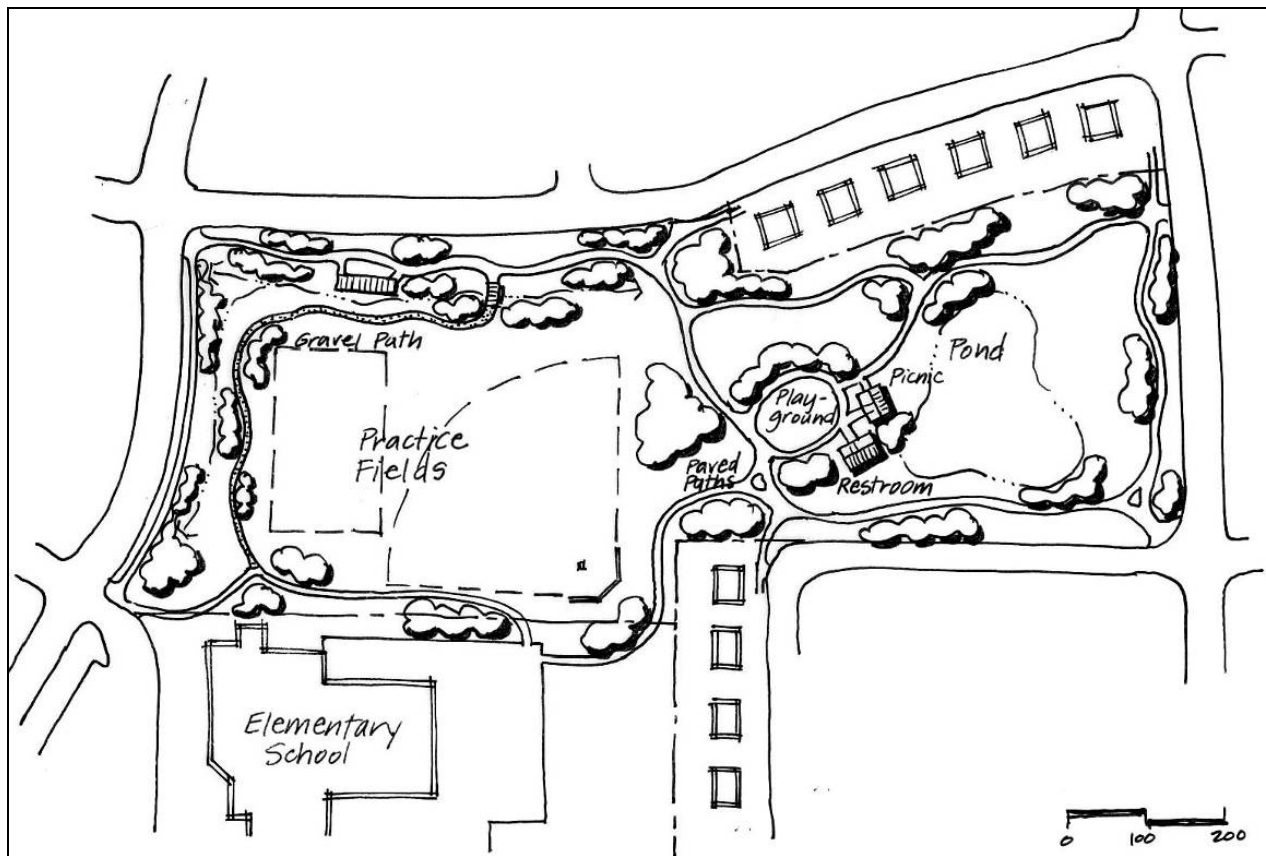


Figure PARKS-2
Example Neighborhood Park

Pocket Parks: Pocket parks are small parks of less than 2 acres in area that provide recreational space for residents living within one-quarter mile of the park. Pocket parks provide picnic areas, playground equipment, and small, landscaped areas for passive or active recreational use (see Figure PARKS-3, “Example Pocket Park”).

¹ Neighborhood parks may be smaller in size if they are located adjacent to a school and school district standards warrant a smaller park site for school-related recreational areas and facilities.

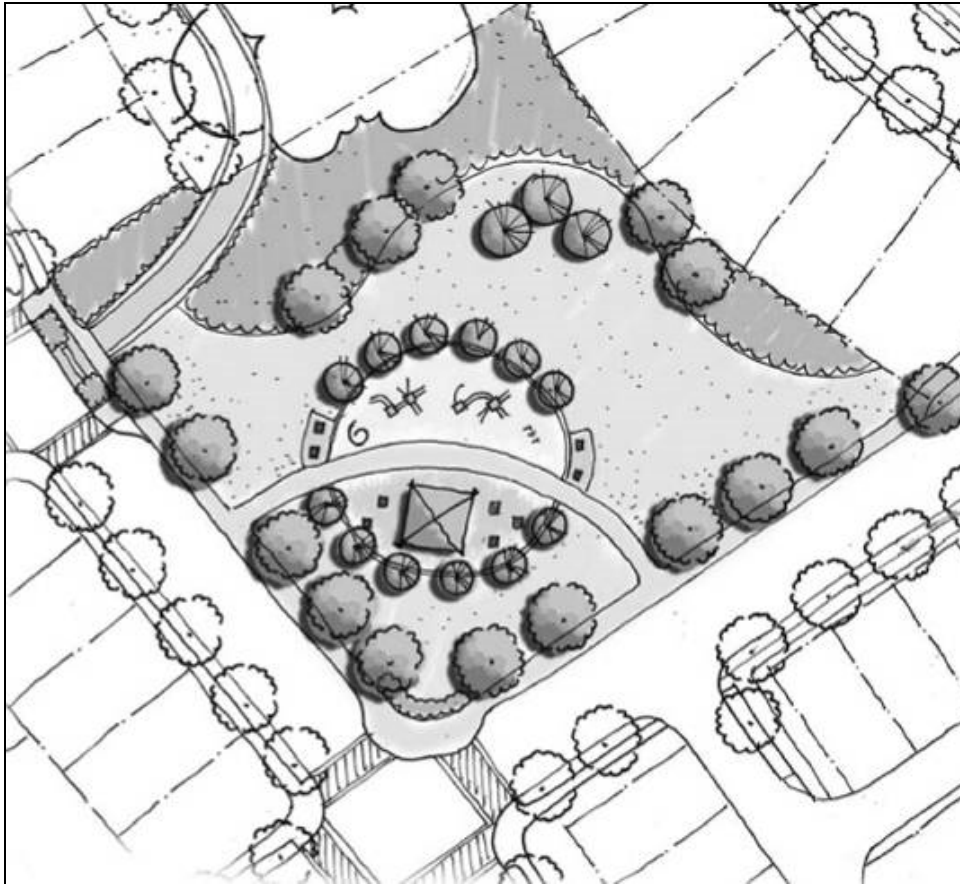


Figure PARKS-3
Example Pocket Park

Linear Parks: Linear Parks are long, narrow greenways with a pedestrian/bicycle path. A typical linear park could range from 20 to 150 feet wide, and would be comprised of low-maintenance landscaping, lighting, drinking fountains, benches, and other appropriate amenities, in addition to the pedestrian/bicycle path. If linear parks cross streets or nonresidential areas, the width of the linear park property may narrow down to the width of the pedestrian/bicycle pathway. Within linear park corridors, there could also be constructed or restored stormwater management facilities and natural open space providing some habitat value. Linear parks provide recreational space, could potentially serve drainage needs, and can be located to provide buffer areas between potentially incompatible uses, such as active farmland and residential development. Linear parks are strategically located to provide connections to neighborhood parks, community parks, and other destinations.



PARKS ACREAGE STANDARD

The City's park standard is 7 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents. Of the required 7 acres, at least 3.5 acres should be community parks, neighborhood parks, or pocket parks (see definition of these park types above). Playfield portions for City parks may be designed also to provide stormwater detention, and this acreage can be counted toward the City's parkland standard. The City will be flexible with respect to the distribution of parkland between community parks, neighborhood parks, and pocket parks, to best meet the changing needs of the community. The desired distribution of parkland is as follows:

- ✓ Community parks (1–2 acres per thousand residents)
- ✓ Neighborhood parks (1–2 acres per thousand residents)
- ✓ Pocket parks (0.5–1.5 acres per thousand residents)

Up to 3.5 of the 7 required parkland acres can be in linear parks. Corridors alongside linear parkland can also be designed to accommodate stormwater drainage swales (refer to the Public Facilities and Services Element and the Open Space Element for more description of the City's approach to stormwater management). With these dual-use facilities, the drainageway itself does not count toward the City's park acreage standard.

FUTURE PARK NEEDS

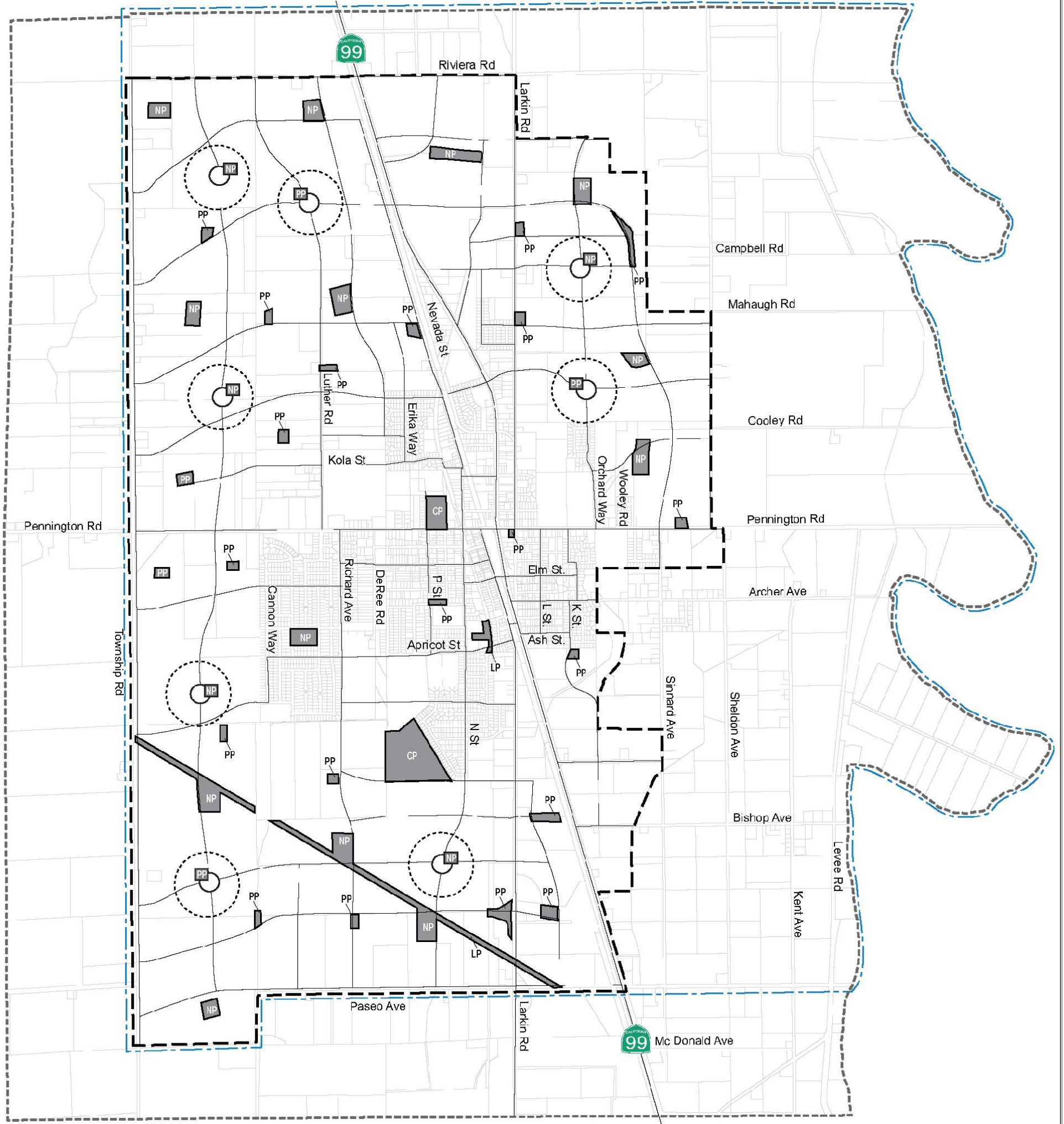
This General Plan establishes policy to address the current parkland deficiency for the existing city and the size and distribution of parkland within new growth areas to meet the City's standards.

PARK LOCATION AND DISTRIBUTION

The City has identified general locations and sizes for parks on the General Plan Land Use Diagram (please refer to the Land Use Element). The Land Use Diagram was prepared, in part, to ensure that at least one park is within one-half mile to one mile of every residence and that most residences are within one-quarter mile of at least one park. Please also refer to Figure PARKS-4, which depicts the general location of parks in Live Oak.

A new community park is identified in the southwestern portion of the Planning Area, south of Allen Street and west of Larkin Road (see the definition above for community parks). Neighborhood and pocket parks (see definitions above) are distributed throughout residential areas.

To ensure bicycle and pedestrian access, parks should be especially focused in areas with medium- and higher-density housing, such as Civic Centers and Neighborhood Centers. Focusing parkland and other destinations near areas with more residents makes it possible for people to walk or bicycle to meet travel daily needs. Providing more parkland in areas with higher-density housing allows residents of medium- and higher-density housing, who do not have large private backyards, access to recreation space. Residents living in small-lot, medium-density, and higher-density housing can trade smaller private backyard spaces for nearby publicly maintained recreational space. Please refer to the Land Use Element for more detailed discussion of Centers.



LEGEND

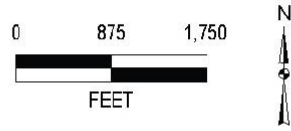
- Boundaries**
- Study Area
 - Planning Area
 - Sphere of Influence
 - Parcels

- Parks**
- CP Community
 - PP Pocket
 - LP Linear
 - NP Neighborhood

- Centers**
- Civic Center with Neighborhood Park
 - Neighborhood Center with Pocket Park



**Figure PARKS-4
Parks Diagram**





As described in the Circulation Element, a network of pedestrian and bicycle routes will be provided throughout the city. The network will provide residents with the opportunity for healthy recreational activities, transportation alternatives, and access to scenic views and natural areas. Linear parks (see the definition below) will serve a dual role as both a recreational resource and as part of the City's stormwater management system. Swales alongside trails can convey stormwater runoff to detention areas in neighborhood and community parks.

GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

The goals, policies, and implementation strategies found in this section address the provision, operation, and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities during the planning horizon of the 2030 General Plan.

- Goal PARKS-1. Provide a variety of parkland in the existing developed City to meet park standards.**
 - Policy PARKS-1.1 As funding is available, the City will develop additional parkland to serve the existing City, with a focus on areas lacking adequate park acreage according to City parkland standards.
 - Policy PARKS-1.2 The City will proactively seek state and federal funds for parkland acquisition to address deficiencies in the existing City relative to parkland acreage standards.
 - Policy PARKS-1.3 The City will explore options with Sutter County to open up access to Live Oak Park and Recreation Area, improve bicycle/pedestrian access to and from the park, and expand and improve this park to meet existing and future needs.
 - Policy PARKS-1.4 The City will coordinate with the Live Oak Unified School District to expand joint school and community use and maintenance of park space and facilities at existing schools. As existing schools are expanded or otherwise improved, additional public access to school parkland should be made available to meet City demand for park space.
 - Policy PARKS-1.5 The City will seek opportunities to construct linear parks with pedestrian/bicycle pathways that connect homes and destinations and address existing deficiencies relative to the City's parkland acreage standards.

- Goal PARKS-2. Ensure that accessible, high-quality parkland is planned and developed as the City grows.**
 - Policy PARKS-2.1 The City's parks and recreation master plan will direct phased park acquisition and improvements.



- Policy PARKS-2.2 New developments shall set aside land and dedicate improved, publicly accessible parkland, in locations and amounts dictated by City park standards and the City's parks and recreation master plan.
- Policy PARKS-2.3 Private recreation facilities may count toward the City's parkland standards if they are publicly accessible and available for City recreational programming.
- Policy PARKS-2.4 The City may allow new developments to contribute to a park in-lieu-fee program instead of dedicating improved parkland to meet City standards. The park in-lieu-fee program will be used for fair-share funding of parks that serve local, neighborhood, and community-wide needs, as directed by the City.
- Policy PARKS-2.5 The City will encourage multiple uses of the linear park and open space system. These facilities will be designed for recreational, circulation, and stormwater drainage conveyance and detention purposes. The City will structure drainage development impact fees and park in-lieu-fee programs to take into account overlapping purposes of linear parkland and open space.
- Policy PARKS-2.6 The City will collaborate with the school district on planning, financing, and development of new park space adjacent to school sites that would be jointly used by schools and new residential development in the surrounding neighborhood.
- Policy PARKS-2.7 Joint-use school/park facilities should be located in or near Civic Centers to ensure safe routes to and from surrounding neighborhoods.
- Policy PARKS-2.8 New parks will be located and designed to encourage pedestrian and bicycle travel to and from the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Policy PARKS-2.9 Active portions of neighborhood and community parks that may generate light and noise should be located and designed to promote compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood.

Goal PARKS-3. Provide recreation facilities and programs to accommodate the needs of existing and future residents.

- Policy PARKS-3.1 The City will prepare a parks and recreation master plan to identify recreational facilities standards and planning and funding of recreational facilities development, operations, and maintenance.
- Policy PARKS-3.2 The City will monitor the use of existing recreational facilities and participation in recreational programs to identify local preferences and priorities for recreational facilities development.
- Policy PARKS-3.3 The City will support and promote awareness of volunteer groups and organizations that provide recreation activities for young people, seniors, and disabled persons. Such organizations should have easy and relatively inexpensive access to City recreational facilities, as needed.



Policy PARKS-3.4 The City will make efforts to provide recreational programs (e.g., swim lessons, after school programs, teen center activities, senior fitness programs) if such programs are not provided by other organizations within the community.

Goal PARKS-4. Become a countywide or regional center for recreation.

Policy PARKS-4.1 The City will proactively coordinate with Sutter County and Yuba City to identify regional park and recreation needs, such as regional parks or trails, which could be planned, jointly funded, and developed in Live Oak.

Policy PARKS-4.2 The City will coordinate with the other cities and the county to plan for improvements at Live Oak Park and Recreation Area to support and complement future trails along the Feather River.

Policy PARKS-4.3 The City will coordinate with California State Parks on funding opportunities to support local recreational goals and plan for improvements in Live Oak that would complement any future nearby state parks and recreational lands.

Implementation Program PARKS-1

Following adoption of the General Plan, the City will prepare and implement a Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The Master Plan will provide general guidance for the acquisition and improvement of parkland to serve Live Oak during General Plan buildout, consistent with the General Plan. The Master Plan will identify general standards for types and sizes of recreational facilities to be included in each park type, as well as and planning and funding of facilities development, operations, and maintenance.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan should consider the needs of all age groups and residents with differing abilities. This Master Plan should also be designed to provide for needs and preferences of existing and anticipated future residents. The Master Plan should consider guidance from state and federal park agencies relative to recreation facilities standards.

The Master Plan should provide conceptual design ideas for community parks, neighborhood parks, pocket parks, and linear parks. Parkland will be designed in coordination with the City's drainage master planning for dual use of linear parkland for stormwater conveyance and neighborhood and community parks for detention. The design of neighborhood parks should be coordinated with the Live Oak Unified School District to promote joint use. Parks and related open space should also be located to take advantage of opportunities for joint benefits in recreation and habitat preservation. The Master Plan should take advantage of other joint use, dual use, and other efficient use of resources and opportunities for meeting multiple City planning and environmental objectives, including buffering between potentially incompatible uses. Linear parkland can coincide with agricultural buffers, for example. Neighborhood and community parks should be designed to reduce noise and light impacts on nearby residential areas. Community parks will have events that may require some amount of surface parking. The Master Plan will take into account parking demand for events at planned community parks and balance the City's desire to limit surface parking with the on-street parking needs of the surrounding neighborhood.



This Master Plan will include conceptual cost estimates—both capital and ongoing—for development, operation, and maintenance of Live Oak’s park system, recreational facilities, and recreational programs. These cost estimates will be integrated into the City’s park in-lieu-fee program, operations and maintenance funding programs, and Capital Improvements Program.

The City will use the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, in part, to identify projects that can be the subject of grant applications, or that otherwise can be funded through cooperative regional funding arrangements.

The Recreation Master Plan should be structured to position Live Oak as a regional center for parks and recreation facilities. The Master Plan should integrate with County parks and recreation planning and link with existing and planned County pedestrian and bicycle routes. The Master Plan should integrate with the planning of state parks, including developing bicycle access to existing and future state parks and recreation lands.

Implementation Program PARKS-2

The City will develop and maintain park in-lieu fees at a level adequate to provide parks and recreational facilities consistent with standards in the General Plan and the City’s Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Park in-lieu fees and dedication requirements will be structured according to a metric that reasonably estimates the impact of the proposed development on park facilities. Acceptable metrics include the anticipated population of development projects according to the anticipated number of proposed bedrooms, in accordance with state law.