



Chico Area Recreation and Park District



Park and Recreation Master Plan

Adopted November 2008



Acknowledgments

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Chico Area Recreation and Park District



Executive Summary





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Executive Summary



“The greatest thing we do is create public spaces where we can celebrate our connection with nature and each other.”

– Hank Dittmar, Chief Executive,
Prince Charles Foundation for the
Built Environment

Background

Since its formation, Chico has had a tradition of providing parks, recreation areas, and recreation facilities for residents of the area. The first recreation area provided was the 2,000-plus acre Bidwell Park that terminated on the west side of the City of Chico. Gifted to the City by Annie Bidwell, it included recreation improvements at One Mile Recreation Area and on Children’s Park Playground at the north end of Main Street and Park Avenue. With the recent addition of the nature preserve area above what was Upper Park, Bidwell Park now encompasses more than 3,500 acres. The City also developed a one-block City Plaza Park across from City Hall on Main Street, between 4th and 5th Streets and Park Avenue.

Upper Bidwell Park primarily provided for natural outdoor recreation activities, such as hiking, nature study, fishing, and swimming in natural pools along Big Chico Creek. The City later permitted the development of Bidwell Golf Course, an observatory, and recreation facilities at Horseshoe Lake in the Upper Park. Facilities for family and social activities were developed at the Five Mile Recreation Area just east of Manzanita Avenue; and in the Lower Park area between Manzanita Avenue on the east and Mangrove Avenue, which is the park’s west entrance, on the southwest end of the main park. Individual picnic sites were developed along Big Chico Creek between North and South Park Drives. At One Mile Recreation Area, facilities developed include picnic areas; horseshoe courts; grass playfield; restrooms; a large, fenced, and themed preschool age children’s play area – Caper Acres; and a campfire ring. A dam was also installed to create a swimming pool, called Sycamore Pool.

Later, group picnic facilities and a U.S. Forest Service tree research area were developed midway along South Park Drive, west of what is now Parkview Elementary School. The area was named Cedar Grove. Just east of this area was a barn and small outbuilding that later became the current Bidwell Park Nature Center area. Over time, the residents of the Chico area wanted to have organized recreation programs; however, the Bidwell Park and Playground Commission did not see programming as its roll for the provision of these services or facilities. As a result, in 1948, the residents of the Chico area approved the creation of the Chico Area Recreation and Park District (CARD).

The CARD board and staff worked with the City to develop Sycamore softball field at One Mile Recreation Area. CARD also contracted with the City to lease and develop sports fields and recreation facilities on the 35-acre Bidwell Park Hooker Oak Recreation Area just east of Manzanita Avenue. CARD then worked with the Chico Unified School District (CUSD) to develop lighted sports fields and tennis courts at the CUSD high schools. CARD later developed recreational swimming pools: Shapiro Pool at Chico Jr. High, and Pleasant Valley Pool and Recreation Center on CARD property adjacent to Bidwell Jr. High School.

Working with Butte County, the Chapman Recreation Center – renamed the Dorothy Johnson Center – was developed in 1969 (with HUD funding) at the 16th and C Street, Chapman Park. In the early 70s, CARD purchased the site of its current headquarters on Vallombrosa Avenue, and approved funding to develop the existing CARD Community Center and administrative offices. These facilities were dedicated in 1975. This was before 1978 when California Proposition 13, the Jarvis-Gann tax limiting initiative, was passed by California voters. This new law no longer allowed CARD to set a tax rate to cover its operations and capital improvement projects.

Following Proposition 13, CARD and the City adopted a program whereby new residential development would provide for the dedication of parkland, fees, or a combination of both to ensure parkland acquisition and improvements in areas of new development. One area of new development was adjacent to Highway 99 and 20th Street. Instead of developing a park site east of the freeway, the developer made land available for a park next to Chapman School. After a series of land swaps and purchases, CARD assembled 34 acres for the Community Park site at that location. Aided by California Park Bond Funds, Community Park, at the north end of Whitman Avenue (now Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway), was initially developed and dedicated in 1983. Six acres were later purchased and added to Community Park to expand to its present 40 acres.

Chico continued to grow, particularly to the northeast, northwest, and southeast. A master plan was needed to see that parks and recreation facilities were provided for these new areas. In 1988, a 20-year CARD Master Facilities Plan was developed and approved. The plan was then adopted into the City's General Plan. Part of the plan included meeting the need for neighborhood parks in northwest, northeast, and southeast City neighborhoods.

Sites were purchased for these parks on West 8th Avenue for Oak Way Park; on Ceres and Henshaw Avenues; and in southeast Chico on Baroni Avenue. Sites for small parks in neighborhoods were also provided by developers, within maintenance assessment districts, including Peterson Park, operated by CARD; Hancock Park; and Nob Hill Park. The City purchased, developed, and maintains the small Depot Park to the west of the old Chico train station on 4th Street; Humboldt Neighborhood Skate Park on Humboldt Road; and the small Ringle landscape park at the north intersection of Broadway and Main Streets.

A community park site was also planned north of Eaton Road to the east of the CA 99 freeway. When the DeGarmo family farm site (just west of CA 99 and north of Eaton Road) was being considered for sale, CARD officials met with the family and an agreement was entered into that allowed CARD to purchase the 25-acre site for a community park, to be named in perpetuity for the patriarch of the family, Luther DeGarmo. Eleven acres were also purchased and added to DeGarmo Community Park to bring that site to the current 36 acres. A housing development proposed in northeast Chico (on the northeast corner of Wildwood and Manzanita Avenues) was not approved, and the City subsequently acquired a 15-plus acre site at that location for Wildwood Park.

Most of the park sites in the 1988 CARD Master Plan were purchased. However, due to escalating construction costs, impact fees were not sufficient to fully develop all of the sites. More important, the City found it did not have sufficient general fund money to maintain these new parks as originally planned. Therefore, the Chico City Council adopted a policy requiring that local maintenance districts be established to maintain new neighborhood parks. The residents of the service areas for Oak Way and Baroni Parks approved assessment districts to maintain those parks, which were subsequently developed. Two neighborhood park sites, located at Ceres Avenue and Henshaw Avenue, remain undeveloped because maintenance assessment districts have not been approved by property owners in those service areas. During a series of public meetings, the neighbors in the service area of the planned neighborhood park at East First and Verbena Avenues decided to have this park remain a natural area maintained by the City.

Phase One of DeGarmo Community Park has been developed and Phase Two has been approved, with financial help from City Community Park Impact Fees. However, there are limited CARD funds to maintain the park. The master plan for DeGarmo Park includes a

recreation pool/aquatic facility; a multi-generational community center with senior citizen facilities; and other needed recreation facilities. Although greatly needed, no funds were available to develop the multi-use aquatic complex with competition facilities.

In 2006, the CARD Board of Directors authorized funds to update the outdated 1988 Master Recreation Facilities plan. In recent years, CUSD has experienced declining enrollments. In 2006, voters approved development of the 57-acre Canyon View High School (CVHS) site, with its traditional sports fields, courts, and other public facilities to serve CUSD and secondarily, residents of southeast Chico. Yet the decision to develop recreation facilities was put on hold. One of the first actions in the current CARD master planning process was for the CARD Board of Directors to ask that CUSD not commit, for other uses, the planned and approved land for recreation facilities that were to be at the CVHS site, which could be used for public recreation until the CARD Master Plan was completed. As such, this CARD Master Plan addresses the need for, and provision of, community facilities in southeast Chico, whereby CVHS could serve both the CUSD and CARD residents.

This 2008 master plan, to provide for Chico area public recreation facilities through the year 2028, was developed via a comprehensive process involving a Technical Advisory Committee consisting of CARD's partners providing recreation resources, including: the City of Chico, CUSD, Butte College, California State University, Chico, and others providing recreation resources to the residents of the greater Chico area. It also involved a Citizen's Advisory Committee consisting of residents from throughout the CARD service area and various representatives of recreation resource and service providers. The process included a number of public meetings for input regarding the recreation facility needs for CARD residents and for existing or desired recreation programs.

The plan addresses the deficiencies in the current parks and recreation facility resources. It identifies where and how needed recreation facilities should be provided. It further notes that a new Nexus Study is needed that will determine the cost to provide funds to fully develop parks and provide needed recreation facilities for the Chico area, and the impact assessments needed to provide these public recreation facilities. Supplemental funding from other sources such as RDA, sales taxes, bonds, gifts, corporate sponsorships, and other sources will be needed to provide major recreation facilities. The CARD Master Plan also addresses the need for ongoing funding to maintain these recreation resources. Finally, the CARD Master Plan identifies the need for CARD to work closely with its publicly funded partners identified on the Technical Advisory Committee above, and with private and commercial providers of recreation resources in the Chico Area Recreation and Park District to optimize the provision, use, and maintenance of recreation facilities to benefit the residents of the District.

Why Was the Plan Developed?

The Chico Area Recreation and Park District Park and Recreation Master Plan will become the guiding document for the future of the District as it relates to parks and recreation facilities and services. As the greater Chico area continues to transition and evolve as a premier community within the northern Sacramento Valley, so too will the park and recreation needs of its residents and visitors. As this evolution occurs, the community has been mindful of maintaining the character and heritage that has made it such a unique place to live, work, and play over the years. Easy and equitable access to parks and recreation facilities is a highly valued element of any community. A high quality public realm, including tree-lined streets, safe pedestrian and bicycle environments, natural areas, places to recreate and meet neighbors, attractive parks, recreation facilities, and places for community gatherings and celebrations are all attributes

that enhance community livability and desirability. In addition, the urban forest, parklands, and surrounding open spaces improve environmental health by providing cleaner air and water and preserving critical urban wildlife habitat.

The benefits of a great park and public open space system go well beyond their contribution to the physical environment. The public parks, trails, and recreation system is available to all citizens, regardless of age, ability, or economic status, and provides many great benefits for all people. Parks, recreation, trails, and community areas that celebrate local culture, heritage, and values tend to improve physical and mental health, create opportunities to develop and enhance the community, add to civic pride, and provide positive opportunities for leisure time pursuits. Parks also provide for business, tourism, art, and cultural interests and needs. This master plan is a fundamental element for advancing continued investment in such a critical component of the public realm.

Parks and recreation have always been an integral part of the community, one which residents strongly support. Over the years, CARD leaders have recognized the diverse park and recreation needs of residents, while also being mindful of its relationship with the City of Chico in providing opportunities to address these needs. Time and generous community support have afforded the City the ability to secure large areas of open space in the community for passive and nature-based recreation. However, securing space for active recreation and urban parks has proven more challenging over the years. As such, with the development of this master plan, CARD is making efforts to correct past deficiencies while at the same time looking towards the future to ensure that adequate and appropriate parks and recreational opportunities are made available to residents as the community continues to grow and evolve.

The specific focus of the plan was to:

- Develop a detailed inventory of all parklands and quantify the level of service for existing and future residents.
- Assess the current condition of both CARD and City parks and recreation facilities, including consideration of safety conditions and ADA issues.
- Analyze and determine community needs through discussions with user groups and trends in recreational programs and parks.
- Identify areas of the community currently underserved by parks and changes in population to determine parkland and facility needs, as well as opportunities for synergies between parklands and future redevelopment projects.
- Define level of service standards, a classification system, and general design criteria for parks.
- Outline improvement programs that will update the features in existing parks.
- Create and define a clear vision and complementary goals and objectives for CARD parks and recreation facilities.
- Develop an action plan for implementation.

The emphasis of this Plan focuses on how CARD, in conjunction with the City of Chico and Butte County, can upgrade and enhance its existing parks, trails, and recreation system to better meet the needs of current and future residents. As part of this, the Plan identifies opportunities for the community to increase its total parkland through the enlargement of existing parks, the construction of new parks, and joint-use agreements with outside partners where feasible.

This Parks and Recreation Master Plan should be revisited and updated periodically, ideally every five years and in conjunction with the forthcoming City of Chico General Plan Update as well as Butte County's General Plan, to

ensure that it accurately reflects current and future needs, changing conditions, and to adjust priorities within the community as appropriate.

An Involved and Public Process

The park and recreation master planning process for CARD began in January 2007. This process was developed through a series of meetings with several groups, all of which provided insight, advice, and guidance. These groups included CARD staff; the Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC), composed of community members and citizens representing diverse interests, which served as the primary advisory group; the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), consisting of staff from CARD, the City of Chico, the Chico Unified School District, and California State University, Chico, which provided technical guidance; and the Bidwell Park and Playground Commission. Lastly, the CARD Board of Directors provided invaluable advice, insight, and guidance that shaped the vision, goals, and details of the plan.

A detailed public involvement and community outreach effort was organized. Multiple interviews were conducted with frequent park user groups, including local sports clubs, cultural and civic organizations, and other interested parties. Additionally, two public open houses were held to solicit general community input.

The Plan also includes comparison studies with peer communities in the northern California area. Recreation trends from the California SCORP (State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan) and national recreational trends and statistics were also examined. In addition, prior and relevant plans were incorporated into this Plan, including the 1988 CARD Comprehensive Park and Recreation Master Plan; the unadopted 2002 CARD Park and Recreation Master Plan; the 2003 Nexus Study; the 2005 Municipal Services Review for Recreation and Park Services; 2006 City of Chico Municipal Services Review; the 2005 City

of Chico Park Department Strategic Plan; the 2004 Northwest Chico Specific Plan; the 1994 City of Chico General Plan; and the 1971 Butte County General Plan Parks and Recreation Element. This CARD Parks and Recreation Master Plan is intended to complement and build upon the guidance and principles previously defined in these plans.

Inventory of Parklands, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation Facilities

An important component of this plan is to identify, label, and map all parklands, recreation facilities, and trails owned and managed by both CARD and the City in order to update and refine previous park inventories. CARD and the City of Chico have several types of existing parklands and open space. The classifications and a brief description of each are listed below. The plan then identifies areas of the community in need of additional parklands and recreation facilities based on a standard level of service and geographic service area identified in the inventory phase.

Neighborhood Parks

- **Neighborhood Parks** – Neighborhood-scale parks are intended to serve residents in the neighborhoods surrounding the park. These parks are designed primarily for unsupervised activities. They are generally small in size, 5-10 acres of usable area. While it is not the rule, neighborhood parks sometimes provide space for programmed activities.
- **Mini Parks** – Smaller versions of neighborhood parks with fewer amenities, serving a smaller radius of homes. These parks are often found in a high density development, apartments or townhouse complexes, and residential areas with mixed housing types. They are usually 1-2 acres in size.

Community Parks

- **Community Parks** – Larger multipurpose parks that serve the entire community. These parks are generally designed to provide active play opportunities for all ages. Community parks can also provide indoor facilities to meet a wider range of recreation and interests. These parks should be designed to meet the active community, while providing a sanctuary for those individuals who enjoy more leisure-oriented activities also.

Other Parks

- **Special Purpose Parks and Facilities** – Parks and facilities that serve a singular or focused community need such as an environmental education center or historical park, or land occupied by major structures such as swimming pools, community centers, gymnasiums, etc.
- **Undeveloped Parkland** – Land that is owned by CARD, the City of Chico, or Butte County, and reserved for future park development.

Open Space, Trails, and Greenways

- **Natural Areas, Corridors, and Greenways** – Lands that place emphasis on protection of natural values. These are generally under the management of the City of Chico.
- **Regional Parks** – Generally, regional parks are large recreation areas that serve an entire county or region. They usually exceed 50 acres in size and often include a special use facility, such as a broad expanse of natural scenery or open space. Regional parks are designed to accommodate large numbers of people for a variety of day use activities. If possible, they should be developed around a unique or significant resource, or emphasize regional recreation interests. These parks can also serve as buffers and separations between communities or other urban areas.

- **Regional Open Space** – Lands that protect large areas with natural resource values of communitywide significance, and provide opportunities for nature-oriented outdoor recreation.
- **Visual Green Space and Watershed Amenities** – Lands that have strategically located visual amenities or buffers not associated with drainage ways.

Equestrian, Bike, and Pedestrian Trails – Trails designed to provide linkage between various parts of the community. These are generally under the management of the City of Chico and Butte County.

Parks are classified based on their existing amenities, location within the community, size, and proximity to residential areas. Each classification of parkland is accompanied by standards that describe their characteristics and desired level of service. These classifications and standards provide guidance in the development of a parkland system that offers consistent service to community residents. Detailed standards for each classification are provided in the plan. *Table 2.1 – Neighborhood Park Standards* (Page 2-11) provides specific standards for neighborhood and mini-parks in Chico; and *Table 2.3 – Community Park Standards* (Page 2-20) provides specifics for community parks, sports complexes, and special purpose parks in Chico.

Map 1 – CARD Boundary and Natural Resources shows the extent of CARD’s service area relative to the City of Chico, as well as illustrates some of the natural resource considerations of the community. *Map 2 – Existing Park and Recreation Resources* shows the location of various parklands, open space, recreation facilities, and primary trails within CARD and the City of Chico. A more detailed inventory of those lands and the facilities and amenities they contain is provided in Appendix A. Additionally, a description of each property is provided in Chapter Two.

Only parks and recreation facilities provided by CARD or the City of Chico are considered in calculating and setting the level of service for each classification. Chico Unified School District (CUSD) and California State University, Chico facilities, while recognized for the contribution to the community, are limited in their accessibility to the general public and are not, therefore, factored into neighborhood and community parkland inventory and level of service calculations. The following tables illustrate the existing levels of service for neighborhood and community parks within CARD and the City of Chico. Both of the following tables are also provided in Chapter Two.

Existing Neighborhood Park Level of Service

Neighborhood/ Mini Parks	Effective Level of Service 2007
Population*	105,425
Existing Neighborhood/Mini Parkland (acres)	29.3
Level of Service	0.28 acre/ 1,000 population
Effective Level of Service**	0.37 acre/ 1,000 population

* 2006 Chico Urban Area Population: 105,425 (City of Chico, 2006)

** Effective level of service is calculated by factoring in 10 acres parkland for Lower Bidwell, which serves neighborhood park functions to residents within 0.5-mile radius. Actual neighborhood park acreage does not increase and acreage is not double counted between neighborhood and community parks.

Existing Community Park Level of Service

Community Parks	Effective Level of Service 2007
Population*	105,425
Community Parkland (acres)	164.3
Current Level of Service	1.56 acres/ 1,000 population

*2006 Chico Urban Area Population: 105,425 (City of Chico, 2006).

Open space areas are also an integral part of the fabric of the Chico community. Open space areas protect natural values on various sized parcels of land, and provide opportunities for trail and habitat connections as well as recreation. The degree to which each area is “natural” depends upon its size, configuration, location, and level of use, all of which influence its ability to function in a native state. Within the Chico community, there are four primary types of open space, including regional open space; natural areas, linear parks, and greenways, special resources areas and conservation lands; and visual green spaces.

Table 2.5 – Open Space Standards (Page 2-26) provides specifics for regional open spaces, natural areas, conservation areas, and visual green spaces in Chico. There is also a table showing the overall inventory of open space properties within CARD and the City of Chico; however, due to the unique and differing nature of open space properties, no specific level of service standards are provided. It is most common for communities to view standards for developed parks (i.e., neighborhood and community parks) separate from greenways and linear parks, because they are not designed nor intended to provide the specific active amenities and facilities needed in developed parks. The following table illustrates the overall inventory of open space property within CARD and the City of Chico.

City of Chico Open Space, Natural Areas, Corridors, and Greenways

Property	Acres
Lower Bidwell Park	299.6
Upper Bidwell Park	3371.6
First Street and Verbena Site	16.4
Lindo Channel	150.0
North Chico Bike Path	10.0
Little Chico Creek	22.5
Mudd/Sycamore Creek	6.0
Comanche	15.0
Tiechert Pond	32.70
Total	3923.8

As part of the inventory, all parklands in Chico were mapped to show their relative distribution within the community and the areas of service they provide. *Map 3 – Active Development and Neighborhood Park Service Areas* shows the distribution of neighborhood parks as well as illustrates a 0.25-mile and 0.5-mile service radius around mini and neighborhood parks, respectively. These are the distances for which these types of parks should be expected to serve residents. It should be noted that service areas are clipped along any major barriers that would prevent easy access to the park, such as a major road or waterway. Known active residential development is also shown on this map. A similar exercise was conducted for community parks and is reflected on *Map 4 – Community Park Service Areas*. A one-mile service radius was created around community parks; they are not clipped by barriers, as they are thought of as communitywide destinations.

Also included in Chapter Two is a general discussion of other public lands and park and recreation resources available in Chico, such as school lands, California State University, Chico facilities, the USDA Genetic Resources Center, as well as private resources.

Issues and Needs Analysis

The issues and needs assessment phase of a parks and recreation master plan documents the demand for services from current and future residents and, in association with the inventory of existing facilities, highlights potential areas of shortfall or oversupply, which in turn will give direction to future master plan recommendations. The identification of satisfaction levels, perceptions, use patterns, and priorities for recreational programs and facilities through contact with the user public was critical in this process. Accurately assessing the current and future needs of residents requires a diverse approach, using many different techniques to gather information. In conjunction with the inventory, level of service and distribution analysis, needs assessment techniques also included

interviews with public, private, and nonprofit stakeholders; public participation via a citizens advisory committee and through public open houses; comparisons with peer communities; analyzing local, state, and national recreation trends; an analysis of demographic and growth projections; site visits of each existing park and recreation property; and input from technical advisors with CARD, the City of Chico, Butte County, Chico Unified School District, and California State University, Chico.

The extensive study, public involvement, and inventory conducted in the planning process provided valuable input on issues and needs related to parks, recreation, and trails in the community. Collectively, the data from these various sources creates a picture of what is needed within the CARD boundary, and can serve as the basis from which to develop a list of projects, priorities, and actions for the plan. These needs are illustrated below:

Recreation Programming Needs

Many of the large, intensively used facilities in a parks and recreation system are used by participants of organized programs. Understanding program participation rates and trends allows a community to identify specific activities that may be underserved by facilities. Programs that have waiting lists may indicate a need for either more facilities or program staff.

Athletic and sports activities are very popular in Chico. However, both CARD staff and nonprofit and private recreation providers report that they are limited in adding any new programs due to a severe lack of indoor and outdoor facility space. CARD, in particular, suggests that a direct relationship exists between overall participation numbers and the demand for field, court, and gym space. Over the past several years, CARD has maintained a consistent number of adult sports teams, as is limited in accommodating additional programs with the existing field, court, and gym space in the system.

Private and nonprofit providers also indicate there is not enough field space to accommodate existing demand as well as future demand expected through growth in the community. As such, without additional facilities, they will be limited in their ability to expand their programs to accommodate the added growth and demand. This is especially true with programs providing youth softball and baseball, soccer, aquatics, roller hockey, and lacrosse.

CARD also provides valuable nonsport/athletic programming to the community in the form of leisure and interest classes, as well as youth camp and after school activities. There is adequate space for outdoor camps; however, indoor space is limited. CARD is severely limited in increasing its leisure interest programming for both youth and adults due to a lack of available facility space. CARD staff has been reporting a strong demand for additional classes as well as additional programming, but cannot provide this without additional facility space. Lastly, there is a growing need and desire to increase the amount of senior programming. The current senior center facility must also accommodate leisure and interest programming in the evenings. Due to the lack of a dedicated senior or intergenerational center, expanded programming is limited. To compound the problem, existing CARD facilities are also used for staff meetings and outside rentals due to a lack of adequate meeting space in its facilities.

Existing and Future Recreation Facilities Needs

A detailed community comparison study was conducted that examined the parkland and facility provisions of other similar communities in the Northern Central Valley region. These communities included: Redding, Rocklin, Lincoln, Yuba City, Roseville, Sunrise Park and Recreation District, Elk Grove Community Services District, and Mission Oaks Recreation and Parks District. The following table is a summary of the average number of facilities provided by other similar communities (those providing the highest level of service in each category), and also indicates the amount of developed parkland they provide. In general, the level of service for most recreation facilities is well below that of similar communities.

Summary of Community Comparisons

FACILITIES		
	Average Level of Service for Compared Communities (population per facility)	Current Level of Service for Greater Chico Area (population* per facility)
Multi-use Fields	3,919	5,271
Softball/Baseball Fields	4,723	4,217
Outdoor Basketball Courts	5,778	11,714
Tennis Courts	6,313	13,178
Swimming Pools	28,592	35,142
Disc Golf Courses	68,300	52,713
Skateboard Parks	49,921	105,425
Roller Rinks	68,300	N/A
PARKLAND		
	Average Level of Service for Compared Communities (developed parkland per 1,000 people)	Current Level of Service for Greater Chico Area (developed parkland per 1,000 people)
Community Parkland	2.10	1.56
Neighborhood Parkland	2.36	0.33
Adjusted Neighborhood Parkland**	N/A	0.42
TOTAL DEVELOPED PARKLAND	4.46	1.98

Note: Chico Unified School District and California State University, Chico facilities were not included as part of this comparison information

* 2006 greater urban area population 105,425, City of Chico.

** Effective level of service is calculated by factoring in 10 acres parkland for Lower Bidwell, which serves neighborhood park functions to residents within 0.5-mile radius. Actual neighborhood park acreage does not increase and acreage is not double counted between neighborhood and community parks.

To further refine this analysis, the Citizens Advisory Committee identified a target level of service for each recreation facility category. These targets are very similar to the average level of service for the other similar communities in the community comparison exercise and, in some cases, even more stringent. Based on these targets, both current and future recreation facility needs and deficits have been identified for each facility. The following table illustrates these current and future facility deficits based on existing and projected population.

Recreation Facility Level of Service Analysis for Chico Urban Area

Recreation Facilities				2007 (pop. 105,425)			2030 (pop. 157,475)	
Recreation Facility	2007 Chico Current Level of Service	Target Standard	Average Level of Service for Similar Communities (Population per facility)	Chico 2007 # of Facilities*	Number Needed to Meet Target Standard	Chico 2007 Deficit**	Number Needed to Maintain Average Level of Service in 2030	Chico 2030 Total Deficit**
Multi-use Fields	5,271	4,000	3,919	20	26	<6>	39	<19>
Softball/ Baseball Fields	4,217	5,000	4,723	25 [Ⓞ]	21	<0>	31	<6>
Outdoor Basketball/ Volleyball Courts	11,714	5,000	5,778	9	21	<12>	31	<22>
Tennis Courts	13,178	6,000	6,313	8	18	<10>	26	<18>
Recreation Swimming Pools	35,142	25,000	28,592	3	4	<1>	6	<3>
Disc Golf Courses	52,713	50,000	68,300	1	2	<1>	3	<1>
Skateboard Parks	105,425	50,000	49,921	1	2	<1>	3	<2>
Roller Hockey Rink	N/A	50,000	68,300	0	2	<2>	3	<3>
Full Scale Community Recreation Center	105,425	50,000	N/A	1	2	<1>	3	<2>

Note: Chico Unified School District and California State University, Chico courts are not included in chart due to availability. Courts not open to public during school hours.

* Includes fields located and planned for construction at Baroni and DeGarmo (Phase 1) Parks.

** Based on target standard.

Ⓞ Includes 10 fields at the Eastside and Westside Little League Complexes.

A large percentage of the population, especially families with children, participates in sports such as tennis, soccer, softball, baseball, football, and lacrosse. The facilities in developed parks are in high demand by both CARD programs and nonprofit sports organizations, both of which have been experiencing significant increases in participation. When comparing the number of courts, gyms, and fields that Chico provides with the numbers provided by other similar communities, Chico's level of service is significantly lower. The number of tennis and basketball courts is half, and multi-use fields and softball/baseball fields is approximately two-thirds the level of service in comparable communities. When the fields at the local Little League complexes are factored in, however, the level of service increases to about what is being offered in other similar communities. In general, the recreation facility deficits indicated above are consistent with reports from CARD staff as well as those from private and nonprofit recreation providers.

There has been strong demand for several types of facilities that are growing in popularity across the country, as well as in Chico: roller rinks, skate parks, dog parks, and disc golf courses. Comparing Chico to other communities, it is evident that there is both a current and future deficit for these types of facilities. Additionally, there has been a strong desire in the community for an aquatic facility, one that would accommodate both recreation and competitive uses. Swim leagues in the community report that the current facilities are inadequate for competition and CARD staff reports heavy demand for a leisure aquatic facility, similar to those provided in many communities throughout California and the country.

Lastly, there is strong support for additional indoor recreational amenities. Most comments received from the public included requests for amenities in a few primary focus areas, such as additional indoor court space, an indoor aquatic facility, a teen center, more meeting space,

more community gathering space, more gymnasium space, and full service catering kitchen attached to community gathering space. Combined, they form a core group of facilities that could be co-located into another community/recreation center. This would also provide a good opportunity for CARD to create an inter-generational center that is strongly desired by the community and the space for which is currently needed.

Therefore, there is an overall need for additional multi-use fields, baseball fields, outdoor basketball courts, tennis courts, a skatepark, roller rinks, an aquatic facility, and other community recreation center.

Existing and Future Parkland Needs

Currently the adopted parkland standard for the City of Chico is 5.0 acres of parkland per 1,000 people, consisting of 1.6 acres of community parkland, 0.9 acre of neighborhood parkland, and 2.5 acres of greenways. Within Chico the parkland inventory provides a level of service of 1.93 acres per 1,000 people of neighborhood and community parkland, and 2.67 acres per 1,000 people of greenways and linear parks.

Overall, the acres of neighborhood parks are well below the existing standard and provided at 0.28 acre per 1,000 people. This notable gap is even greater when compared to the level of service that other similar communities are providing, as well as parkland that is needed to accommodate the use areas that neighborhood parks are intended to provide. Even with the inclusion of neighborhood park acreage for Lower Bidwell, the level of service of 0.37 acre per 1,000 people is still somewhat lower than the adopted neighborhood park standard of 0.9 acre per 1,000 people. Additionally, the acres of community parkland is provided at 1.56 acres per 1,000 people, which is also below the existing standard. Through the needs assessment, it has been determined that both the neighborhood and community parkland standards are not adequate to keep pace with similar communities and the needs of residents

who desire a high quality parks and recreation system. The following table illustrates the existing level of service for community and neighborhood parks, and shows the overall parkland deficit that exists based on the new recommended standards.

**Existing Parkland Level of Service for Chico Urban Area
Current CARD Population = 105,425**

Parks	Chico Current Total Parkland	Chico Current Level of Service (acres/ 1,000 pop)	Acreage Needed to Meet Current Parkland Standard	New Standard (acres/ 1,000 pop.)	Acreage Needed to Meet New Standard	New Standards Parkland Deficit	Existing Undeveloped Parkland	Net Deficit
Community	164	1.56	169	2.5	264	<100>	25	<75>
Neighborhood	29	0.28	95	1.5	158	<129>	26	<103>
TOTAL	193	1.84	264	4.0	422	<230>	51	<178>
Adjusted Neighborhood Parklands*	39	.37	95	1.5	158	<119>	26	<93>

* Includes 10 acres of neighborhood parkland for Lower Bidwell.

In addition to not meeting its target level of service standard for neighborhood parkland, the distribution of existing parks throughout Chico does not provide equal access to many residents. There are several underserved areas throughout the community and in many areas there is not adequate access across major barriers to nearby parks. These gaps in service are reflected on *Map 3 – Active Development and Neighborhood Park Service Areas*.

Without the addition of more parkland in the system, the overall level of service for community and neighborhood parkland will continue to decrease as the population of the Chico area continues to increase. There will be an expected population increase in the Chico urban area of approximately 52,050 people by the year 2030. The following table illustrates the additional amount of acreage that will be needed for community and neighborhood parks to meet the new standard by the year 2030.

**Future Parkland Level of Service for Chico Urban Area
Projected Population Increase by 2030 = 52,050
(Total projected pop. in 2030 = 157,475)**

Parks	Chico Current Parkland Standard (acres/ 1,000 pop.)	Additional Acreage Needed to Meet Current Parkland Standard	New Standard (acres/ 1,000 pop.)	Additional Acreage Needed to Meet New Standard
Community Parks	1.6	83	2.5	130
Neighborhood Parks	0.9	47	1.5	78
TOTAL	2.5	130	4.0	208

Using the new target standards established in this plan, there is an existing deficit of approximately 178 acres of parkland; 75 acres of which are community parkland and 103 acres of which are neighborhood parkland. Based on the park classifications described in Chapter Two, this equals approximately 9 additional neighborhood parks, and one additional community park.

To accommodate the anticipated population increase of approximately 52,050 people by the year 2030, there will be a need for an additional 130 acres of community parkland and a total of 78 acres of neighborhood parkland. Based on the park classifications described in Chapter Two, this equals approximately 7 additional neighborhood parks, and one to 2 additional community parks. Combined, this equals a total of approximately 386 acres of additional parkland that will be needed to meet the new standards by the year 2030.

In summation, the following bullets represent the results of the needs assessment and what is needed, both presently and in the future, to bring the overall provision of parks and recreation for CARD and the City of Chico to the high standards expected by residents:

- New parkland, or improved access to existing parkland, in underserved areas
- New parkland in future residential development areas
- Improved parkland level of service, including increased level of service standards
- Additional recreation facilities and amenities to accommodate increased use
- Additional community centers to include classroom and meeting space and intergenerational center
- Improved aquatic facilities
- Additional specialized recreation facilities

- Examination of future alternative management approaches between CARD and the City of Chico

Recommendations of the Plan

Mission, Goals and Objectives

During development of the master plan, a mission statement, goals, and specific objectives were formulated, which are relevant to the specific issues and needs that have emerged as part of this planning process. The mission, goals, and objectives directly support CARD's overall vision for the future of parks and recreation in the community. The mission defines a desired outcome for the provision of parks and recreation related to CARD's overall vision. Goals and objectives provide specific direction to the community and its governing body in support of the District's mission, and provide the policy basics from which decisions can be made. Through these goals and objectives, CARD, the City of Chico, and Butte County are truly making a statement about their commitment to parks, recreation, and trails in the greater Chico community.

In addition to the mission, goals, and objectives, the recommendations chapter of this plan (Chapter Four) includes a discussion of the integration of this plan with other community planning efforts, as well as specific project recommendations that are needed to meet existing and future park and recreation needs in the greater Chico urban area. These recommendations include ways to address existing deficiencies, projected needs, changes in recreational habits, and other issues identified through the inventory and needs assessment.

CARD Mission Statement:

The Mission of the Chico Area Recreation and Park District (CARD) is to provide recreation opportunities to the greater Chico Community in a coordinated and cost effective manner.

Goal 1. Provide a wide range of recreation and leisure opportunities for all residents of the Chico Area Recreation and Park District.

Objectives:

- Promote a balanced system of different parks, specialized recreation facilities, and varied recreational programming.
- Design parks to provide for a variety of experiences that appeal to a broad range of interests, abilities, and ages.
- Provide 1.5 acres of neighborhood parklands and 2.5 acres of community parklands for every 1,000 residents.
- Develop new facilities and services, as well as upgrade existing facilities.
- Ensure that future demands are met through the development of new facilities and services.
- Provide accessible facilities and rehabilitate existing facilities to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Keep abreast of current trends and changing demands for recreational activities by periodically conducting a communitywide survey and updating the Master Plan.
- Develop and provide the necessary funding mechanism to keep up with future growth.

Goal 2. Equitably distribute and conveniently locate parks and recreation facilities and trails throughout CARD, the City of Chico, and Butte County within the Chico Urban Area.

Objectives:

- When possible, locate neighborhood parks within one-half mile of the neighbors they are intended to serve, and in locations that are comfortably and safely accessible by pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Develop additional lands, including joint school-park facilities, as adequately sized neighborhood parks in existing underserved neighborhoods. Where additional land is not

feasible, provide safe and convenient pedestrian and bicyclist access to the nearest neighborhood park through construction of sidewalks, improved crossings of roadways, trails, and grade separated crossings of barriers, where feasible.

- Locate parks conveniently accessible to neighborhoods and in areas with good pedestrian or trail access.
- Locate mini parks where larger parks or adequately sized, undeveloped land is not available.
- Retain community parks, generally within one to two miles of residential areas, and on sites that are accessible by trails, bike lanes, and major roadways.
- Appropriately locate recreation centers, community centers, and other facilities that are heavily used by youth, adults, and seniors on sites with visual and vehicular access from major roadways, with public transit access, and with direct trail connections.
- Locate multi-purpose practice fields for youth sports in neighborhood parks as well as community parks. Size neighborhood parks, minimum of 5 usable acres, to adequately allow for such uses.

Goal 3. Develop and maintain parks and recreation facilities at a high level of quality that is appropriate for the location, the type of use, and nature of the facility.

Objectives:

- When possible, only accept land from developers with proper soil types that are of an adequate size and topography for suitable park development. Exceptions should be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- Where appropriate, incorporate historic or cultural resources and art into park designs to celebrate the unique aspects of the

community of Chico and provide distinctiveness between parks.

- Establish maintenance and design standards and management plans for the various types of parks and other properties that CARD and the City maintain.
- Annually assess needed maintenance and renovation projects system-wide, including bringing existing facilities up to ADA standards.
- Manage fields for safe use and to prevent overuse and damage to playing surfaces.
- Select durable materials that are sustainable, resource efficient, and nontoxic for construction of facilities.
- Periodically assess satisfaction levels of residents.
- Adequately staff and fund maintenance and operations to a level that adequately meets acceptable CARD standards. Adjust staffing levels to keep pace with the addition of properties to the system.

Goal 4. Develop and maintain parks and recreation facilities in an environmentally sensitive manner.

Objectives:

- Where appropriate, place greater emphasis on the use of non-irrigated landscapes, native species, and low water-requiring plant materials.
- Where possible, avoid environmentally sensitive areas when locating developed facilities.
- Protect water quality through implementation of “Best Management Practices” in the design of storm water conveyance and detention facilities.
- Use permeable pavements, recycled materials, locally manufactured products, locally available materials, and low energy-requiring facilities and technologies to the greatest extent practicable.

- Seasonally close areas as warranted to protect sensitive resources.
- Provide for integrated pest management where/when necessary.

Goal 5. Provide adequate land acquisition, development, operations, and maintenance funding sources and tools to realize the Master Plan vision.

Objectives:

- Ensure that new residential development provides the needed funding for parks and recreation facilities to the extent allowed by state law.
- Maintenance Impact Statements will be completed for all new recreation areas and facilities and funds will be provided to maintain these facilities.
- Seek public-private partnerships where mutually beneficial and appropriate.
- When possible, aggressively seek grants from available sources.
- Coordinate with other agencies and seek partnerships with these agencies to leverage available funding, such as RDA, grants, bonds, etc.
- As funding allows, keep pace with the need for additional staff and equipment to provide services for the community as the system grows.
- Periodically update park design standards in subdivision, zoning, and other land use and development regulations to incorporate the Parks and Recreation Master Plan recommendations.
- Use residential special districts for park acquisition, development, and/or maintenance where other means do not exist.
- Clearly define developer responsibilities.

Goal 6. Implement, monitor, assess, and adjust intergovernmental and joint-use agreements, tools, goals, policies, action plans, and priorities to meet changing or unforeseen conditions and/or needs for CARD.

Objectives:

- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of past and current policies for providing parks, recreational programs, and recreation facilities.
- Review, and update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan for CARD in concert with the City of Chico General Plan, Butte County General Plan, and updates to transportation plans, comprehensive plans, subarea plans, and state statutes to reflect changing needs and opportunities.
- Monitor annual progress towards achieving the goals.

Integration with Communitywide Planning

It is critical that the CARD Master Plan be coordinated with other community planning efforts currently underway, such as the updated City of Chico and Butte County General Plans, the Northwest Chico Specific Plan, open space planning, and specific individual residential development plans. City of Chico and Butte County leaders are taking progressive steps to outline a vision for the future of the community and how it will look. These planning efforts encompass all elements of the City of Chico and Butte County, including traffic, housing, employment, neighborhood design, and commercial districts. As such, they should also fully incorporate and integrate parks and recreation into their comprehensive planning efforts. Within the community there is broad consensus that parks and recreation, as well as open space, are the backbone and a very visible part of the community. Parks, recreation, and open space are the largest, publicly visible and used component of the public realm.

By incorporating parks and other green space networks into the community, the quality of life as well as the health of the natural world is improved. Green infrastructure is not limited simply to parks and open space, but can include urban plazas, mini parks, and visual green space, such as gateways and medians. Plans for green infrastructure can help the community decide how to grow in the best possible manner, while directly adding an economic benefit to the community. Therefore, this master plan strongly recommends that both the City of Chico and Butte County fully integrate this CARD Master Plan into all citywide planning efforts as well as countywide efforts in the Chico area, particularly the updated City of Chico and Butte County General Plans.

Park and Recreation Facility Projects

As indicated in the Needs Assessment portion of the plan, additional parks will need to be developed to meet existing and future needs of the 105,425 existing residents, and approximately 52,000 potential new residents expected to move to the Chico area. In order to meet these needs, several proactive steps will need to be taken by both CARD and the City that will ensure improvements in the geographic service of parks within the community. Some of these steps include:

- Work with developers to provide suitable parkland and funding for capital and maintenance in new residential developments.
- Work with CUSD to develop joint school-parks to help select school properties function more appropriately as neighborhood parks.
- The City and CARD should enhance existing parks, expand them if possible, and where possible, improve access to them to better serve residents in deficient or growing areas.

Map 5 – Master Plan shows the locations of all proposed park projects, including undeveloped parklands, potential school-park sites, and target areas for new parks.

1. Develop Existing Neighborhood Park Sites

The City of Chico currently owns five parcels of undeveloped parkland, four of which are specifically designated for development as neighborhood parks. These undeveloped park sites, which when developed, will help to enhance service to current and future residential areas that are underserved. The undeveloped park sites are:

- Ceres Park site
- Henshaw Avenue site
- 20th Street and Notre Dame Boulevard site
- Humboldt Road and Notre Dame Boulevard site

2. New Parkland and/or Amenities in Underserved Areas

Map 3 – Active Development and Neighborhood Park Service Areas illustrates portions of Chico that are currently underserved by parks. In an effort to address these deficiencies, CARD and the City should consider strategies that will provide residents with adequate facilities and amenities within one-half mile, or improved access to existing neighborhood park amenities. In areas where working with CUSD to improve existing school properties so they serve as true neighborhood parks is not an option, the acquisition of strategically located vacant or degraded properties (or areas along existing greenways) and subsequent construction of new parks may be in order by both CARD and the City of Chico. Conceptual target areas for new neighborhood parkland, which will help to enhance service to current and future residential areas that are underserved, are listed below, and shown on *Map 5 – Master Plan*.

- Lassen Avenue and Goldman Avenue area
- 12th Street and Holly Avenue area
- Mariposa Avenue and East Avenue area
- Esplanade and East Avenue Area
- Midway Road and Entler Avenue area

3. School Site Upgrades in Underserved Areas

One viable, and cost effective method to providing parks in underserved areas is to work with CUSD to improve existing school properties so they serve as true neighborhood parks. Currently underserved areas of the community with potential school sites that could be upgraded include:

- Neal Dow Elementary School area
- Hooker Oak Elementary School area
- Citrus Avenue Elementary School area
- Rosedale Elementary School area

4. New Neighborhood Parkland in Potential Development Areas

It is important that CARD and the City keep pace with the provision of neighborhood parks to serve residents in new development areas. The proposed projects listed below highlight areas of the community that are known to have development proposals currently in the approval process at the time of production of this plan. It is likely that some of these proposals will change or be modified over time, and that additional new developments will be proposed in other parts of the community. With that in mind, it is important for CARD to periodically review and update this plan in conjunction with changes and amendments in the development review process to ensure that all new residential developments in the future are adequately served by neighborhood parks.

- Northwest Chico (Esplanade and Nord Highway) area
- South-central Chico (Estes Road and West 12th Street) area
- Meriam Park
- South Dead Horse Slough

- Northeast Chico (Canyon Oaks Country Club) area

5. New Community Parkland

After all phases of DeGarmo Park are completed, Chico will continue to fall short of the desired level of service for its current residents. Levels will also continue to decrease as people move to the area. As was illustrated in the Needs Assessment portion of the Plan, due to the current shortage of indoor and outdoor facilities, CARD is limited in its ability to expand recreational programming beyond current levels. As the Chico area continues to grow and expand, this shortage and need for additional facilities will only become more pronounced. Ideally, Chico will need to develop approximately 150 acres of neighborhood and community parkland that are dedicated to practice and game sport fields, and associated parking, for both current and future residents.

Beyond accommodating just active athletic facilities, community parks make ideal locations to accommodate other communitywide, destination recreational amenities and facilities, such as dog parks, skate parks, disc golf courses, multi-purpose hard court surfaces, roller rinks, multi-purpose community centers, and gymnasiums. Water elements, such as recreation pools and splash pads, are also popular and should be considered for inclusion in future community parks.

While it is beyond the scope of this plan to identify specific parcels in the community for development as community parks, target areas have been identified that generally describe where additional community parks will need to be located in the future. Follow is a list of these target areas and a brief description of each:

- **DeGarmo Park** – Full development of this park as planned is recommended, including the community center and skate park. However, the aquatic facility should be placed at an alternate location and only a recreational pool should be constructed at

this site. This would provide ample space for other needed recreational amenities such as athletic fields, additional multi-purpose hard court amenities, an expanded multi-generational community center, or more parking.

- **Southeast Chico** – With the fruition of Meriam Park and other large residential developments, there will be a need to construct a new community park to relieve pressure on existing parks, particularly on Community Park, located near this area. Community Park is at capacity and offers no more available space for additional sports fields. CARD and the City of Chico should immediately begin searching for property that would be adequate to accommodate a full-size community park with level topography and proper soil type.
- **Southwest Chico** – City of Chico planners anticipate that much of the future residential development in the community will occur south of the City and there is still ample vacant property with good topography to accommodate a community park in this area. Although it may not be necessary to begin development of this park until further residential development occurs in the area, it would be advisable to locate the most desirable area before it becomes price prohibitive.
- **Northwest Chico** – Currently there are proposed residential developments planned for northwest Chico and City of Chico planners also anticipate that the land surrounding the local airport could be a future growth area of the community. Although DeGarmo Park is currently coming on-line and available for use, its limited size may require that an additional community park be located to the northwest. There is also currently ample vacant property with level topography to accommodate a community park in this area. As with the southwest, it may not be necessary to begin development of this park until further residential development occurs in the area,

but it would be advisable to locate the most desirable parcels before it becomes price prohibitive.

6. Greenways, Linear Parks, and Trails

This plan does not address open space, greenways, linear parks, or trails in detail. Historically, these have been the purview of the City and not the responsibility of CARD. Yet, the Plan does recommend that the City continue to acquire strategic parcels of land located adjacent to waterways, particularly those along Lindo Channel where possible.

Map 5 –Master Plan shows a major trail connection along the Lindo Channel. Identifying this as a location for a trail corridor has been done in the past and the idea has a long history in Chico. While constructing a connected trail along its length will be a challenge, and the use of street connectors may be needed in certain areas, it is important for this Plan to show the conceptual idea of a much needed east-west trail connection along this drainage.

7. Community Centers

There is both a great need and demand for additional community/recreation centers in Chico. Due to a lack of available space, CARD staff are unable to increase their level of recreational programming. The public and various user groups have also suggested a need for additional indoor recreational amenities court space, meeting space, community gathering space, and a multi-service inter-generational center. All of these facilities could be co-located into one full-service community/recreation center. This Plan strongly recommends that facility feasibility analysis be conducted for a community center to determine exactly which amenities should be provided, an order of magnitude of costs for construction and operation, and the level of support for financial support from the public. Further analysis of potential locations should also be conducted as part of the feasibility

analysis to determine of DeGarmo Park is the most appropriate site for such a facility.

8. Aquatic Facility

The general public, aquatic user groups, and CARD staff have all expressed a desire and need for a facility capable of accommodating swimming competitions, as well as one that provides leisure amenities. As most existing facilities in Chico do not offer the desired modern aquatic amenities, and there are no competition level aquatic facilities between Redding and Sacramento, providing such a facility in the Chico area would be a great addition to the community. Numerous communities throughout California and the rest of the U.S. are now providing similar multi-use aquatic facilities for their residents.

To address the strong demand, CARD should begin a comprehensive feasibility study to determine the location, amenities, and funding for an aquatic facility. Although the scope of this Plan cannot specifically identify a site, it is recommended that another location be examined for such a facility, other than DeGarmo Park. There has been support from CARD, City staff, and the CAC to identify an area where this facility could be co-located with other public resources in conjunction with other public agencies. Potential options include the Humboldt Road site adjacent to Marsh Junior High, currently owned by the City of Chico; and the Canyon View High School site, currently owned by CUSD. Locating near a facility that has ample parking is advisable, as long as the parking needs do not compete with each other (e.g., business park, high school, etc.). This would help reduce the costs associated with developing additional parking and would be more ecologically sensitive. Additional funding sources should also be explored as part of the feasibility analysis.

9. Multi-Generational (i.e., Senior Services)

As indicated earlier, CARD and the City of Chico should continue to provide parks, trails, greenways, and open space with facilities and

programs to promote physical and social activities throughout a person's life span. CARD staff reports that with the limited facility space for all their programming, it is difficult to keep pace with all needs, especially senior programming. CARD should make the construction of an intergenerational facility a top priority, in conjunction with a planned multicultural community center.

10. Communitywide Recreation Facilities and Amenities

Given the rising popularity of several nontraditional sports and the strong demand for specialized recreation facilities to accommodate them, CARD and the City of Chico should search for ways to further provide these options to residents, as many other communities are now doing. These facilities include roller rinks, skate parks, dog parks, multipurpose hard court surfaces, disc golf courses, and recreational water features. The local nonprofit North Valley Hockey and Sports Complex Corporation already possesses a regulation rink and is searching for a public location to house it. Likewise there is a growing demand for additional skatepark facilities in the community. One possibility would be to co-locate a roller hockey rink with a future planned skate park, such as the one planned for DeGarmo Park.

There is also a need for locating additional dog parks and another formalized disc golf course in the community in order to meet new standards set forth in this plan as well as address increasing demand for such facilities. As was mentioned earlier, there has also been great demand additional recreational aquatic facilities in the community. The provision of these should be examined as part of the proposed aquatic center feasibility analysis.

Prioritization, Implementation and Action

Prioritization

Specific projects, which were identified based on the outcome of the inventory and needs assessment process, revealed that residents have interests and needs that range from neighborhood scale to community scale. Large, high profile projects that affect a large number of people and contribute to current communitywide goals may generate great public support, but should be carefully balanced with projects that provide connections and park amenities to currently underserved residents.

In general, this plan is intended to be a flexible and fluid document, designed to respond to opportunities for park and recreation facility development as they arise in the community. CARD and the City can immediately capitalize on these opportunities without being committed to predetermined projects that may have otherwise been identified in an action plan.

While there are numerous large scale projects that need to be addressed, the lack of neighborhood parks or adequate access to existing parks in developed residential areas presents an immediate concern that should be given high priority by both the District and the City of Chico. CARD and the City of Chico should begin the process of creating plans and establishing a funding stream for the development of existing undeveloped neighborhood parklands. Concurrently, CARD and the City should begin discussions with Chico Unified School District to identify areas in which upgrades and access to existing school areas can be made in underserved neighborhoods. Upgrade projects such as these are smaller in scale, require a lower capital investment from the District and City, and are highly visible to the public. This visibility is valuable because it shows that progress is being made on the park system, thus generating further support for future, larger scale projects.

While progress is being made on these smaller projects, site master planning can begin on select larger projects that CARD staff, the CARD Board, and CAC have suggested should be given attention first. The size and scale of these projects will require both advanced planning and identification of dedicated funding streams, which may take several years to accomplish. As planning for these projects progresses, CARD should continue to focus on smaller priorities in the near term. Completing construction of the remaining phases of DeGarmo Park should be the first priority. As part of this effort, examination of the most appropriate location for a new aquatic facility should also be conducted. Additionally, priority should be given to planning for future development of a new community center. Efforts to determine the best approach for financing these projects and how to generate public support for a possible funding mechanism should also begin.

Costs and Implementation Actions

The cost for park and recreation facility construction varies widely. For the purposes of assigning an order of magnitude of cost to the master plan recommendations, general cost estimates have been assigned to each project. The cost estimates are approximate and intended to illustrate order of magnitude, not specific detail. The *Proposed Projects and Implementation Actions* table (Page 5-5) summarizes projects proposed in this plan for inclusion in the District's park and recreation system, and provides estimated costs associated with each project. Costs are estimated in 2007/2008 dollars and based on recent similar projects completed by CARD and the City of Chico, and must be escalated yearly to compensate for inflation. Costs will vary and will need to be adjusted over time due to factors such as inflation, raw materials costs, fuel costs, and other unforeseen economic conditions. As such, these various economic complexities make certain specific costs undeterminable until they are put out to bid. Additionally, the cost for land acquisition will

vary on a site-specific basis. The current estimates for land acquisition are based on averages. Costs for some of the typical park amenities are listed in *Appendix D* of the Plan to provide an understanding of the basis for the estimates.

Other items specific to certain projects are not listed above, but may include demolition, utility relocation, entry plazas, signs, historical restorations, special recreation facilities, maintenance facilities, crossing enhancements, ballfield construction and design, engineering, additional infrastructure, and contingency fees. It should also be noted that additional staff, resources, and maintenance will be needed as more parks and facilities are added to the system within the District and City. These costs should be accounted for and included into overall budgets for any new projects.

The table also lists the various policy and finance actions that are addressed in this *Plan* and described in detail in the next section.

Potential Funding Sources

CARD receives the majority of its operating revenue through a dedicated property tax collected from all households within the District. Revenue is also generated through fees collected for recreational programming and grants. Additionally, both the City and District fund park maintenance through the formation of local landscape and lighting districts (L&L districts).

With new development, CARD and the City have the benefit of receiving park impact fees. However, the current fees are well below the amounts needed for actual park development. Impact fees are also not available for park development in existing underserved areas, contributing to the current lack of parks in certain areas of the community. Additionally, by relying only on impact fees for park acquisition and development, the fee schedule usually does not reflect the true cost of providing the improvements. To make up for the shortage of capital development money, the Chico City

Council has been generous in providing CARD with money from its impact fees to help pay for needed park development. The other primary sources are grants or some form of a tax supported measure.

The preferred method for generating additional revenue for park acquisition and development for CARD and the City would be the formation of a Districtwide L&L district. The use of a general obligation bond may also be necessary to help finance any new large facility construction, such as a recreation center or aquatic facility. The full range of existing and potential funding sources available for park acquisition and development are listed below and described in detail in Chapter Five of the Plan:

- General Fund
- Landscape and Lighting Act
- General Obligation Bond
- Revenue Bonds
- Development Impact Fees
- Certificates of Participation
- Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFE-TEA-LU)
- HUD Block Grants
- Donations
- Private Grants and Foundations
- User Fees and Rentals
- Land and Water Conservation Fund
- Joint Public/Private partnerships
- State Park Funds

Division of Responsibility

Lastly, in the interest of the citizens in the greater Chico urban area, a reduction in the duplication of services and streamlining the parks and recreation provision between CARD and the City is necessary. CARD and City staff should begin the process to examine where duplication of services may exist and develop creative solutions to tackle this complex problem.



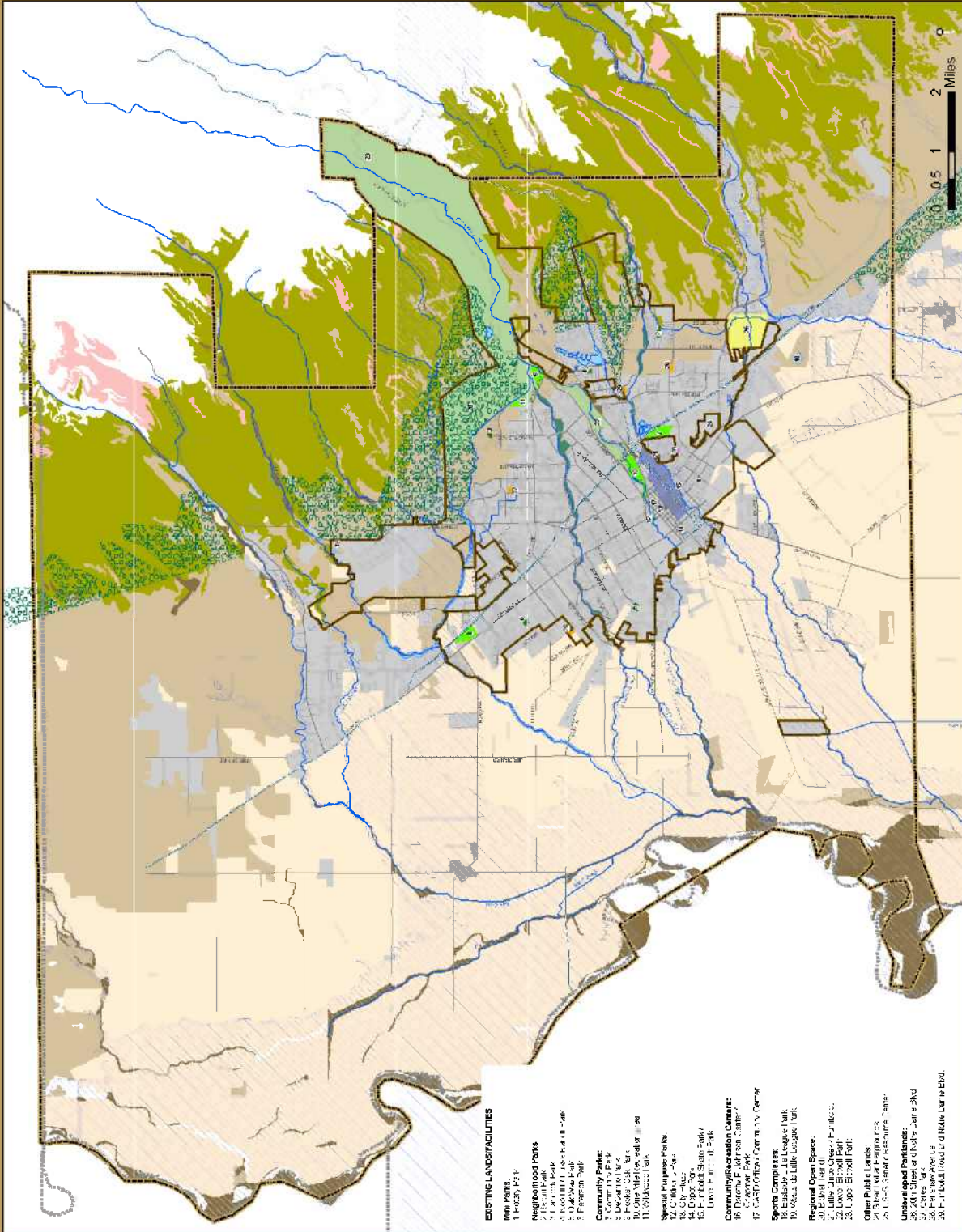
Legend

- Chico City Limits
- CARD Boundary
- County Boundaries
- NATURAL RESOURCES**
- Waterways (Butte County)
- Open Water
- Vernal Pools Critical Habitat
- Flood Hazard Areas
- Moderate Flood Hazard Areas
- 100 Year Flood Hazard Areas
- Natural Communities in Butte County
- Agriculture
- Chaparral
- Development
- Grassland
- Oak Woodland and Savanna
- Riparian
- EXISTING LANDSFACILITIES**
- Mini Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Special Purpose Park
- Community/Recreation Center
- Sports Complex
- Regional Open Space
- Greenway
- Other Public Lands
- Undeveloped Parkland

*Natural resources data were obtained from the Butte Regional Habitat Conservation Plan.

Date: 11 Aug 2008

Map 1. CARD Boundary & Natural Resources



EXISTING LANDSFACILITIES

- Mini Parks:**
- 1. Hooper Park
- Neighborhood Parks:**
- 2. Hill Park
- 3. Linn Park
- 4. Linn Park
- 5. Linn Park
- 6. Linn Park
- 7. Linn Park
- 8. Linn Park
- 9. Linn Park
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- 11. Linn Park
- Community Parks:**
- 12. Linn Park
- 13. Linn Park
- 14. Linn Park
- 15. Linn Park
- 16. Linn Park
- 17. Linn Park
- Special Purpose Parks:**
- 18. Linn Park
- 19. Linn Park
- 20. Linn Park
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- 25. Linn Park
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- 27. Linn Park
- 28. Linn Park
- 29. Linn Park



Legend

- Chico City Limits
- CARD Boundary
- City Owned Land
- Residential Zoning
- Vacant Land
- Active Residential Development
- Park 1/2-mile Buffer

SCHOOLS

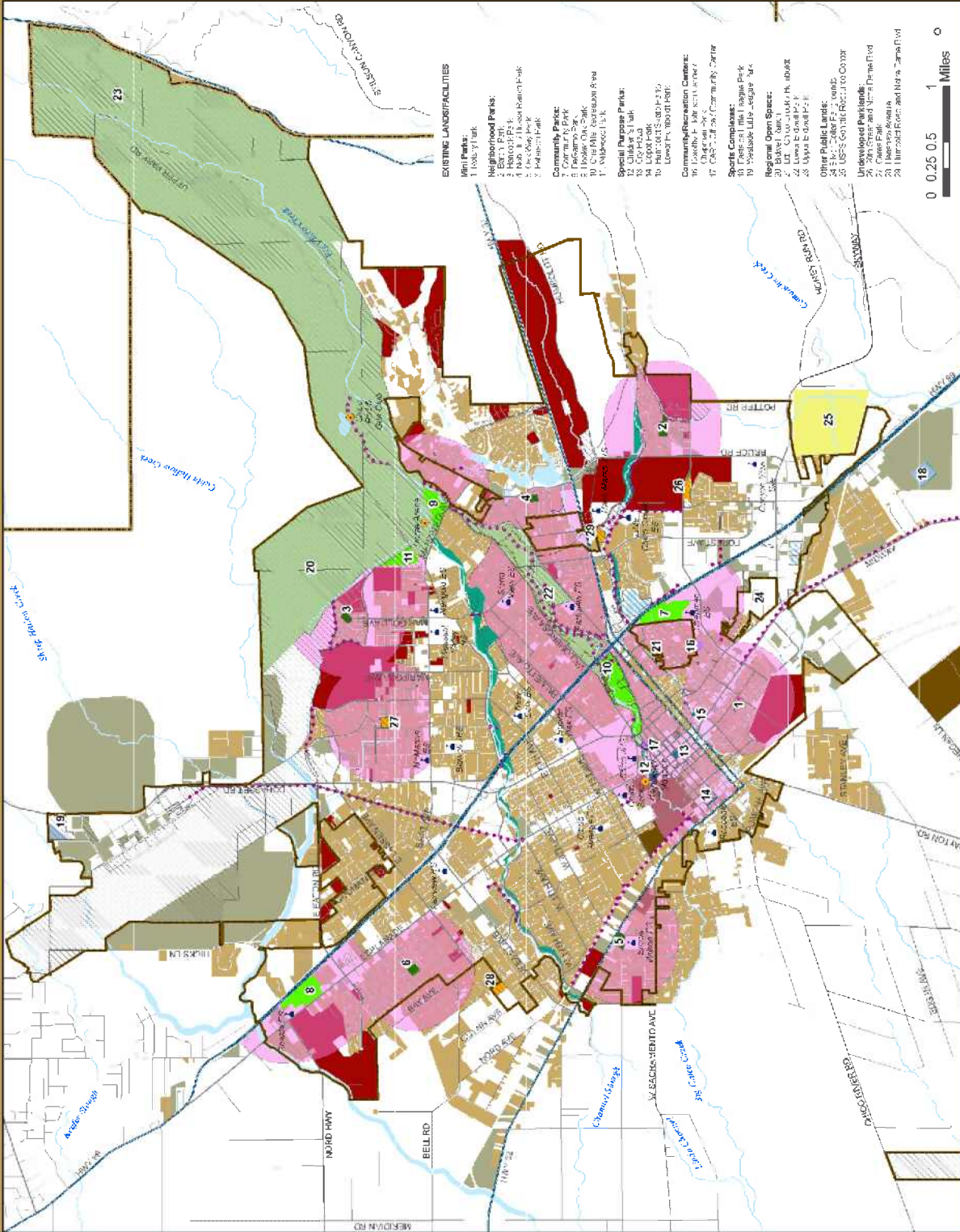
- Chico Public Schools; , proposed school site
- California State University, Chico

EXISTING LANDS/FACILITIES

- Mini Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Special Purpose Park
- Community/Recreation Center
- Sports Complex
- Regional Open Space
- Greenway
- Other Public Lands
- Undeveloped Parkland
- Lower Bidwell Park Trails
- Bike Paths: Existing
- Other Facilities

Date: 11 Aug 2008

Map 3. Active Development
& Neighborhood Park
Service Areas





Legend

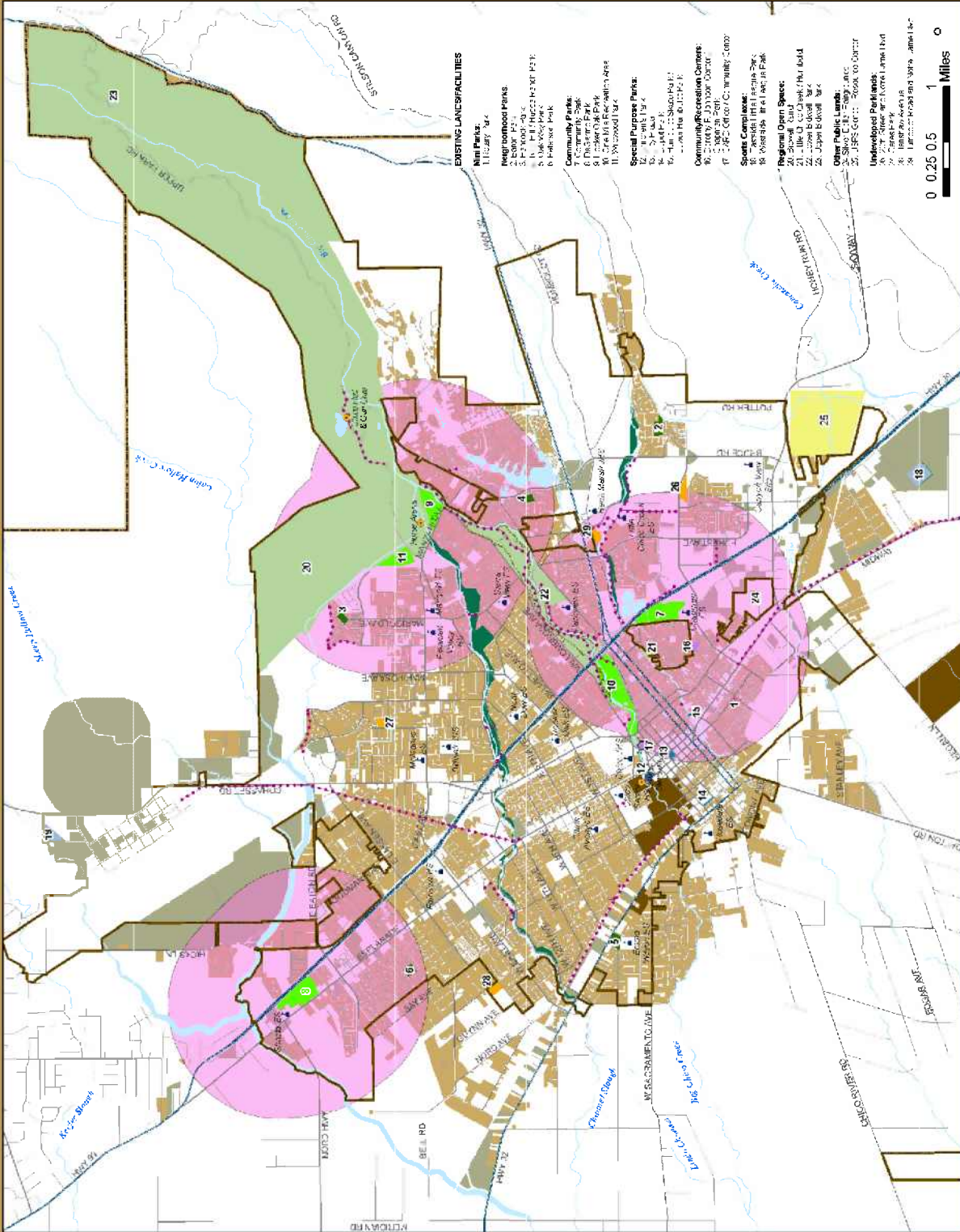
- Chico City Limits
- CARD Boundary
- Residential Zoning
- Vacant Land
- Community Park 1-mile buffer

SCHOOLS

- Chico Public Schools; proposed school site
- California State University, Chico

EXISTING LANDS/FACILITIES

- Mini Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Special Purpose Park
- Community/Recreation Center
- Sports Complex
- Regional Open Space
- Greenway
- Other Public Lands
- Undeveloped Parkland
- Lower Bowtell Park Trails
- Bike Paths: Existing
- Other Facilities



Date: 11 Aug 2008

Map 4. Community Park
Service Areas



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Chapter One

Introduction to the Plan



“Communities can be shaped by choice or...by chance. We can keep accepting the kind of communities we get, or we can insist on getting the kind of communities we want.”

– Richard Moe, *Changing Places*

A. Introduction

Urban parks improve lives. They educate, protect, and enrich people of all ages. They provide places to play after school and during summer vacations, and give individuals and families countless hours of recreation and relaxation. Park vegetation and water features produce clean air and protect cities from floodwaters. They help to increase property value, grow the local tax base, contribute to education, reduce crime, attract businesses, and create jobs. These ideas and principles have been adopted by National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) as a call-to-action in its *National Agenda for Urban parks and Recreation in America*. Parks are also elements that help make up the public realms of great cities; cities in which people desire to live, work, and raise a family. Increasingly, people look to parks and recreation as fundamental elements of what makes a city a great place to be. As such, the Chico Area Recreation and Park District (CARD) has taken the initiative to identify areas of park and recreation needs within the community, and subsequently create innovative solutions to ensure that the greater Chico area continues to be a place that people have a desire to live, work, and play in.

B. Community Profile

The Chico Area Recreation and Park District (CARD) is located in the northern portion of the Sacramento River Valley near the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. It is situated in the northwest corner of Butte County, approximately 15 miles east of the Sacramento River and 90 miles north of the City of Sacramento. The boundaries of CARD encompass an area of approximately 225 square miles, extending generally from the Butte-Tehama County line on the north to the



City Plaza

intersection of Dayton Road and Chico Street on the south; and from Muir Avenue on the west to approximately the east side of Upper Bidwell Park on the east.

The City of Chico is an established, mixed-use community that falls wholly within the boundaries of CARD. Chico is surrounded by unincorporated Butte County on all sides, most of which is used as active agricultural land. The nearest communities of sizable significance include the City of Oroville, approximately 23 miles to the southeast; and the City of Paradise, approximately 13 miles to the east. Map 1, CARD Boundary and Natural Resources, shows Chico's location relative to the larger CARD boundary, as well as neighboring communities, public lands, and significant natural features. California State (CA) Highway 99 runs north-south through the City, while CA Highway 32 runs east-west through the City. These two major thoroughfares intersect in the center of the City. Other major arterials within the City include Nord Avenue, Esplanade, East Avenue, Manzanita Avenue, Bruce Road, Skyway, Park Avenue, 20th Street, Main Street, Broadway Street, and Vallombrosa Avenue.



Orchard in Chico

Chico has a historical and vibrant downtown area that is home to many commercial businesses. Other notable commercial and industrial areas of the City, outside of downtown, are located along Esplanade, Mangrove Avenue, East Avenue, East 20th Street, Park Avenue, and the Skyway. The City's residential areas include a mix of residential housing styles that range from single family detached houses to apartments, along with established schools, parks, recreation facilities, and open space and greenbelts. California State University, Chico is also located within the City, adjacent to downtown. California State University, Chico is a full service university of approximately 17,000 students, offering both undergraduate and graduate education.

Located at the northeast edge of the Sacramento Valley, CARD and the City of Chico sit in one of the richest agricultural areas in the world. The Sacramento River lies approximately five miles to the west and the Sierra Nevada range to the east. The average elevation of Chico is 230 feet above sea level. Additionally, CARD has several significant waterways within its boundaries, including Big



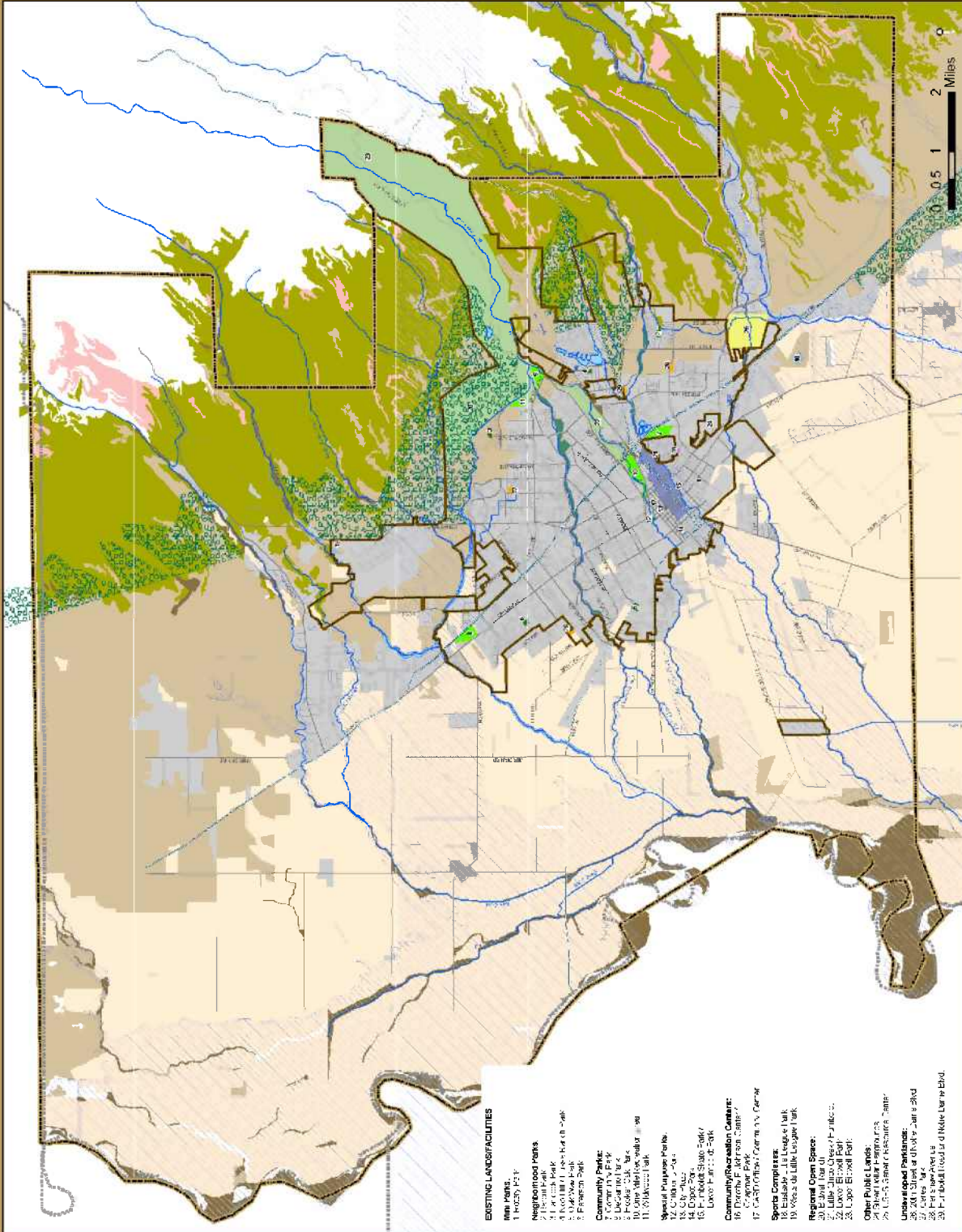
Legend

- Chico City Limits
- CARD Boundary
- County Boundaries
- NATURAL RESOURCES**
- Waterways (Butte County)
- Open Water
- Vernal Pool Critical Habitat
- Flood Hazard Areas
- Moderate Flood Hazard Areas
- 100 Year Flood Hazard Areas
- Natural Communities in Butte County
- Agriculture
- Chaparral
- Development
- Grassland
- Oak Woodland and Savanna
- Riparian
- EXISTING LANDFACILITIES**
- Mini Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Special Purpose Park
- Community/Recreation Center
- Sports Complex
- Regional Open Space
- Greenway
- Other Public Lands
- Undeveloped Parkland

*Natural resources data were obtained from the Butte Regional Habitat Conservation Plan.

Date: 11 Aug 2008

Map 1. CARD Boundary & Natural Resources



EXISTING LANDFACILITIES

- Mini Parks:**
- 1. Hooper Park
- Neighborhood Parks:**
- 2. Hill Park
- 3. Linn Park
- 4. Linn Park
- 5. Linn Park
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Chico Creek, Little Chico Creek, Rio Lindo Channel, Mud Creek, Rock Creek, Keefer Slough, Sycamore Creek, Comanche Creek (Edgar's Slough), Butte Creek, and Dead Horse Slough. Notable floodplain areas are located along Lindo Channel. The Chico area has a typical Mediterranean climate. Temperatures can go into the hundreds in the summer, with occasional light snow on the valley floor in the winter. The average rainfall is 26.04 inches, with a majority of the rain falling in January.

C. Purpose of the Plan

The City of Chico has a proud history of parks and recreation management, beginning with the establishment of Bidwell Park in 1905. CARD, as a special district, was formed in 1948 to provide for all of the recreational needs for Butte County north of Oroville and west of Paradise. However, over time, both the City of Chico and CARD have been unable to keep up with the pace of the growing population. Additionally, the population within the greater Chico urban area is expected to continue to grow steadily over the next 20 years, through both new residential development and infill and redevelopment. As the community continues to evolve, so too will the demand placed on existing parks, trails, and recreation facilities. The community will also need to be proactive in providing new parks for the anticipated new residential development.

The Chico Area Recreation and Park District recognizes the critical role that parks and recreation play in the overall public realm of the community. With this in mind, CARD retained EDAW, Inc. to develop a parks and recreation master plan that defines the 20 to 25-year vision for the community. The specific focus of the plan is to:

- Develop a detailed inventory of all parklands and quantify the level of service for existing and future residents.
- Assess the current condition of the community's parks, trails, and recreation facilities, including consideration of safety

and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) issues.

- Analyze and determine community recreation needs through discussions with user groups, trends in recreational programs, benchmarking with similar communities in the northern Sacramento Valley, and public meetings.
- Identify existing underserved residential areas that are in need of additional parkland.
- Identify potential future redevelopment areas and changes in population to determine future parkland and facility needs, as well as opportunities for synergies between parklands and redevelopment projects.
- Identify current and future parks and facility needs, as well as the establishment of a mechanism to help provide these parks and facilities in new development areas.
- Identify potential financing sources for capital investments, as well as ongoing maintenance.
- Define level-of-service standards, a classification system, and general design criteria for parks, including, but not limited to soils, slope, and size.
- Identify potential funding and acquisition strategies.
- Develop an action plan to help guide the District for implementation of the Plan.

The emphasis of this Plan focuses on how CARD, in conjunction with the City of Chico and Butte County, can upgrade and enhance its existing parks, trails, and recreation system to better meet the needs of current and future residents. As part of this, the Plan identifies opportunities for the community to increase its total parkland through the enlargement of existing parks, the construction of new parks, and joint-use agreements with outside partners where feasible.

This Parks and Recreation Master Plan should be revisited and updated periodically, ideally every five years and in conjunction with the forthcoming City of Chico General Plan Update as well as Butte County's General Plan, to ensure that it accurately reflects current and future needs, changing conditions, and to adjust priorities within the community as appropriate.

D. Planning Process and Document Organization

The Plan was developed through a series of meetings with several groups, all of which provided insight, advice, and guidance. The Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC), which was composed of community members and citizens representing diverse interests, included the local business community, recreation interests, and representatives from other community boards and commissions, and served as the primary advisory group. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) consisted of staff from CARD, the City of Chico General Services, the City of Chico Building and Development Services departments, Chico Unified School District, and California State University, Chico. The City of Chico provided technical guidance throughout the planning process. Separate meetings were also held with CARD and the Bidwell Park and Playground Commission to further provide insight and guidance. Two public open houses were also conducted to gather input from the general public.

The planning process was structured with a series of tasks that built upon each other. The tasks and chapters in which they are described are as follows:

1. Chapter One – Introduction

Establish the purpose of the plan and planning process. Document historical background of CARD and the Chico community and existing relevant policy plans.

2. Chapter Two – Existing Resources

Develop classifications for various types of parks, and standards for their locations, sizes, and other characteristics such as soil type, slope, and amenities. Conduct an inventory and develop a detailed database and maps of existing parklands, trails, and recreation facilities owned and operated by CARD and the City of Chico. Identify the service areas associated with various types of parks.

3. Chapter Three – Issues and Needs

Identify issues and determine needs based on the results of the inventory; interviews with interest groups, recreation providers, and park and recreation staff; input from the public, and TAC and CAC. Analyze participation trends in organized and self-directed recreational activities, population growth and distribution projections, and comparisons with other communities.

4. Chapter Four – Master Plan Recommendations

Develop recommendations and actions for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and define the standards for acreage of parkland provisions based on total population. Identify specific park and recreation enhancement and upgrade projects and potential locations for additional parkland and facilities.

5. Chapter Five – Implementation

Identify existing and potential tools for implementation (including regulations, funding sources, and partnerships) and specific actions with identified responsibilities and costs.

E. CARD and City of Chico History

1. City of Chico¹

In order to develop a vision for the future, it is helpful to have an understanding of the City's past. Prior to the arrival of settlers in the 1800s, Chico was inhabited by the Mechoopda and Maidu Indians.

As a community, Chico was founded by General John Bidwell, a member of one of the first wagon trains to reach California in 1843.



The Old Hooker Oak Tree

General Bidwell first came to the area in that same year as an employee of John Sutter. In 1848, General Bidwell was among the group who first found gold on the Feather River. This event sparked a rush of prospectors into the Butte County area. In two separate purchases in 1849 and 1851, Bidwell bought 28,000 acres on both sides of Chico Creek, known as Rancho del Arroyo Chico.

A peace and friendship treaty was signed on September 18, 1853 between the Mechoopda and other tribes of the area near Bidwell's Ranch. The City of Chico was then founded in

¹ City of Chico history referenced from the following sources:
Wikipedia
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chico%2C_California#_note-7

Chico Chamber of Commerce
http://www.chicochamber.com/Visitors___Relocation/About_Chico_ofChico_History.html

1860 by General Bidwell. While serving as a congressman in Washington, John Bidwell fell in love with Annie Kennedy, the well-educated daughter of a prominent Washington, D.C. family. They were married in 1868 and began to focus on completing their home in Chico. Bidwell Mansion would become the center of social and political life in the upper Sacramento Valley for the next several years.

The Bidwells took great pride in beautifying the City. Rumor has it that John Bidwell rode through Chico in his carriage, occasionally stopping to plant trees for future generations to enjoy. Mrs. Bidwell was an accomplished equestrian, often seen on horseback going to some of her favorite spots in what is now Bidwell Park.



Old Sycamore Swimming Pool

To encourage the development of a quality community, the Bidwell's donated land to churches, individuals with good moral character, public structures, and eventually the land for the Chico Normal School, the basis for what was to become California State University, Chico. In 1905, five years after her husband's death, Annie Kennedy Bidwell donated 1,900 acres to the people of Chico, with the only stipulation being that there be no alcohol served and that there be a recognition of the Sabbath. Mrs. Bidwell was a devout Christian and an active Abolitionist.



Chico State College

In 1917 the first parade, which would later come to be called the Pioneer Day Parade, was held on the downtown streets. This tradition would continue as a celebration of local heritage until 1990.

During World War II, the Chico Army Air Field was used to train fighter and bomber pilots. The runways built for the bombers were eventually turned into the Chico Municipal Airport.

Recognizing the importance of controlling growth to preserve the agricultural heritage of the Chico area, in 1982 the Butte County Board of Supervisors approved an amendment to the Butte County Land Use Element of the Butte County General Plan, with the purpose of protecting agricultural land. This amendment established a "Green Line" on the west side of Chico beyond which urban development would be restricted. This line is responsible for the continued existence of working orchards relatively close to the core of the growing city.



Bidwell Mansion

Today's Chico is a distinct reflection of its colorful history, maintaining a focus on education, agriculture, and the arts. Residential and commercial developments are continuing to occur throughout the City, helping to boost the area's economy and create a vibrant employment base. Chico has a diverse employment base, with the largest employers being California State University, the City of Chico, and Enloe Medical Center.

Currently, the Chico Urban Area's population is estimated at more than 105,000 and is expected to grow to a population of approximately 160,000 in the next 20 years.

2. CARD

The Chico Area Recreation and Park District (CARD), a California Special District, was formed by public vote in 1948 in accordance with the Public Resources Code of the State of California, Division 5, 5700 Series. CARD has the following legal responsibilities:

1. To organize, promote, and conduct recreation programs.
2. To establish an operational system of parks and recreation facilities.
3. To acquire land and facilities for parks and recreation.

4. To cooperate with other agencies – federal, state, and local.

CARD is governed by an elected five-member Board of Directors. CARD's immediate governing body is the County of Butte. CARD has a salaried General Manager who manages the operation of all district staff, programs, and facilities. There are 32 full-time employees whose duties are directed toward the operation of recreation programs and the maintenance of parks and facilities.

Since its inception, CARD has embarked on a program to improve park and recreation conditions for the residents of Butte County northwest of Oroville and north of Durham and west of Paradise, including Chico and the surrounding area. The district has developed excellent recreation programs for all ages and interest groups. Due to the lack of facilities, it has been very difficult for CARD to grow and expand programming much beyond where it is today. Sports and fitness programs offer the chance for team participation for children and adults. In addition, active programs are conducted for teens, senior citizens, and a number of specialized groups, which are largely self-supporting. Throughout this time, CARD has maintained a complementary relationship with the City of Chico's Park Department, as well as the Bidwell Park and Playground Commission. Initially, CARD was responsible for acquisition, development, and operation of community parks, as well as recreation programs, indoor recreation areas, and management of various areas in the Greater Chico area. The City of Chico was subsequently responsible for developing and maintaining Bidwell Park, and for maintaining neighborhood parks, street trees, and landscaping within the public right-of-way. Over the years, a duplication of services between the two agencies has emerged whereby each now operates and maintains both neighborhood and community parks within the community. However, CARD has remained the primary provider of community parks and recreation programming; and the City, in conjunction with

the Bidwell Park and Playground Commission, is still responsible for maintaining open space and natural area properties in Chico. The City of Chico has the authority and duty to operate and maintain all parks and playgrounds owned by the City; and provide for the propagation, planting, replanting, removing, pruning, and caring for the trees and shrubbery on the streets and along the sidewalks of the City

F. Relationship to Other Plans

Both CARD and the City of Chico have adopted several guiding documents over the years that include principles and recommendations for the provision of parks and recreation. When approved by CARD and adopted by the City of Chico, this Parks and Recreation Master Plan will serve as the guiding document for providing parks and recreation facilities within CARD boundaries and within the City of Chico. It builds upon previously adopted plans, and in the case of potentially conflicting information, supersedes the information in the previous documents regarding parks-related topics.

Recent relevant plans include:

1. 1988 CARD Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan

The purpose of this plan was to establish policies for improving park and recreation services and to act as a guide for acquiring and developing parks, trail systems, open space, and indoor facilities in the future. In general, objectives of the plan were to:

- Analyze the existing park and recreation system in the Chico area;
- Analyze and describe recreation needs in the Chico area;
- Recommend strategies for acquiring, developing, and rehabilitating park sites, indoor facilities, and trail systems;
- Recommend prioritization strategies, sources of funds, and estimated costs; and

- Identify probable maintenance costs for proposed projects.

2. 2002 CARD Park and Recreation Plan: A Long Range Plan for Providing Park and Recreation Services (not adopted)

The purpose of this document was to provide a long-range plan for the delivery of park and recreation services within CARD. The plan was intended to identify what types of services the District should provide, to what extent the District should offer these services, and how best to implement and finance these services. While a large majority of this plan was written, it was never completed, and subsequently, never adopted by either the CARD Board of Directors or the City of Chico.

3. 2003 Nexus Study

The purpose of this report was to establish a nexus between new residential development in the Chico/CARD area and the need for additional parks to serve the growing population. This report helps to justify development impact fees needed for park acquisition and development. The report also calculates the development impact fees to be levied for residential land uses based upon the proportionate share of the park system demand generated by new single family and multi-family land use within the Chico/CARD area. An optional recreation facility fee component was included to assist policy makers in determining whether a recreational fee component should be included in the fee component at a later date.

4. 2005 Municipal Services Review Recreation and Park Services

The Municipal Services Review (MSR) document was prepared by Cotton Bridges Associates for the Butte County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). This analysis focuses on the ability of municipalities, special districts, and county service areas to effectively and efficiently provide service to residents within their boundaries, to accommodate

projected increase in service demand, and provide services in their respective sphere of influences. The determination made in the document suggests that CARD should consider expanding its boundaries to include the communities of Cohasset, Forest Ranch, and the populated portions of Butte Creek Canyon area; and as a condition of annexation, ensure that each property included within its service area is subject to the appropriate development impact fee and property tax program. The plan goes on to explain that though the increase in property tax from the expansion of boundaries may make available additional revenue, the funding likely would not be sufficient to build new facilities and expand many, if any, services to the outlying areas. An election of property owners in expansion areas would be required, along with an agreement to charge the new clients for services.

With the update of the Master Plan, CARD will have the appropriate methods to gauge the need for and how to fund and provide parkland, recreation facilities, and recreational programming to meet the needs of the community. The District provides adequate levels of service for parks and recreation facilities, but maintenance and administrative/operational capacity needs to be addressed to meet the needs of existing and future populations within its service area. CARD should consider adopting an impact fee to fund new recreation facilities, and also adopt a lighting district or other similar funding mechanism to provide funding for the maintenance and operation of new parks and recreation facilities. CARD and the City of Chico must work together to ensure that there is a funding accord with responsibility for such.

5. 2006 City of Chico Municipal Services Review

This document was prepared for the Butte County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to comply with statutory requirements and provide information for use in considering an update to the sphere of influence for the City of Chico. The Municipal Services Review

(MSR) evaluates existing and future service conditions and reviews the advantages and disadvantages of various government service structure options. The MSR focuses on those areas within the planning area identified in the City's General Plan, including parks. With respect to parks, the MSR recognizes the joint effort of both the City and CARD in addressing maintenance and administrative/operation capacity issues. It also suggests that the City is providing adequate levels of service and access for parks. Additionally, the 2006 MSR suggests that the City is well positioned financially and has adequate funding and control mechanisms to provide parks and recreation facilities. The MSR also recommends implementing a recreational impact fee for new residential development.

6. 2005 City of Chico Park Department Strategic Plan

This document helps to define the role and vision for the City of Chico's Park Department. It describes specific goals the department has, and related staff and equipment needs through the year 2005. It suggests that these needs are the result of several factors including:

- Increased grant opportunities and administrative tasks;
- Population growth and related visitation increases at all facilities;
- Improved trail access to Upper Bidwell Park that will require ongoing maintenance; and
- Additional street trees and increasing number of public landscape areas from residential, commercial development, and annexations.

It also identifies key planning and capital projects for the period from 2005 through 2010.

7. 2004 Northwest Chico Specific Plan

This document defines clear parameters for the future development of northwest Chico. Implementation of the plan will create new residential neighborhoods in the area that have a distinct sense of place, are well served by commercial uses and open space, and that

celebrate the area's natural amenities. The plan is also intended to ensure that new infrastructure required to serve the area, particularly drainage and storm water systems, is attractively integrated with the new development it serves. The plan suggests that parks will connect to a larger network of walkable streets and a potential trail network on the creek levees. It also describes specifically the future park areas identified for development associated with this plan.

8. 1994 City of Chico General Plan

This plan is intended to be long-range and holistic, addressing several issues within the City. It identifies five main purposes for the plan:

- To outline a vision for Chico's long-range, sustainable, and resource-based development that reflects the aspirations of the community and a strategy for accomplishing that vision;
- To provide a basis for judging whether specific development proposals and public projects are in harmony with plan policies and resource-based standards, and consistent with the concept of a sustainable community;
- To provide a basis for continuing consultation with Butte County on policies and standards that are within the County's jurisdiction; to allow City departments, other public agencies, and private developers to design projects that will enhance the character of the community, preserve and enhance critical environmental resources, and minimize hazards; and
- To provide the basis for establishing and setting priorities for a capital improvement program.

9. 1971 Butte County General Plan Parks and Recreation Element

The primary function of County Government in the field of parks and recreation should be the conservation of large natural open spaces

suited for park and recreation development, and to encourage the various recreation districts to develop recreation facilities that will be used and enjoyed by County residents, tourists, and other visitors to the County.

A regional responsibility of County Government was stated in the County Recreation Policy adopted by the County Supervisors Associations of California in 1960. "County Government should be the primary supplier of day-use regional recreational facilities within a county, when such facilities are intended for use throughout the County."

Although the County has limited direct involvement in recreational planning and has delegated this responsibility to the various recreation districts, the impetus for the development of regional parks or regional recreation areas is a County responsibility.

The continuing trend toward greater expendable income and shorter working hours for the average person has inevitably resulted in an increase in the amount of leisure time for the average person. This trend seems likely to continue with increasing rapidity in the future. The General Plan has not intended to depict all of the many recreation facilities that will be required to fill these needs by 2000. The full responsibility for providing recreation facilities for visitors and residents expected by 2000 must be divided among many agencies. Some of the recreation facilities to be provided in Butte County will be the result of the federal and state government, some by special recreational districts, and based on present trends, it is evident that many recreation facilities will be provided by private enterprise. This General Plan indicates only those parks and trails that are presently existing or proposed and not those needed to serve the entire county by the year 2000.

Neighborhood and Community Parks:

Neighborhood and community parks provide for recreational uses in proximity to the dwelling of the resident. The standards or locational criteria for these parks are not included in this plan. Instead, it is expected that the standards for this type of facility will vary somewhat throughout the County, depending upon the recreational policy of the various city and recreational districts.

Chapter Two Existing Resources



"...urban parks have tremendous value – hard economic value – and cities that recognize the fact do better than those that do not. Although the fiscal benefits generally do not show up at a turnstile or ticket booth, they are reflected in real estate value...retail and restaurant value...and in tourism value."

– Peter Harnik, *Inside City Parks*, ULI and Trust for Public Lands, 2000

This chapter documents the parks and recreation facilities currently available to the Chico Area Recreation and Park District community residents. It includes parks and recreation resources provided by both CARD and the City of Chico. It also includes information on certain facilities not owned by the City or CARD, but used regularly for recreational programming by CARD. Definitions of each park type are included, as well as standards for the desired level of service (calculated as acres per 1,000 people) and types of facilities that should be included within the parks. Neighborhoods in Chico that are served by local parks have been identified, as well as the amount of parkland that is available to them. During the documentation process, areas were identified that currently do not have adequate access to parks. The inventory of parkland and open space is followed by a brief description of the school district resources and special recreation facilities in the community.



Wildwood Park

A. Parks and Open Space Inventory

CARD and the City of Chico have several types of existing parklands and open space. The classifications and a brief description of each

are listed below. Detailed definitions follow this section.

Neighborhood Parks

- **Neighborhood Parks** – Neighborhood-scale parks are intended to serve residents in the neighborhoods surrounding the park. These parks are generally designed primarily for unsupervised activities. They are generally small in size, 5-10 acres of usable area. While it is not the rule, neighborhood parks sometimes provide space for programmed activities.
- **Mini Parks** – Smaller versions of neighborhood parks with fewer amenities, serving a smaller radius of homes. These parks are often found in a high density development, apartments or townhouse complexes, residential areas with mixed housing types. They are usually 1-2 acres in size.

Community Parks

- **Community Parks** – Larger multi-purpose parks that serve the entire community. These parks are generally designed to provide active play opportunities for all ages. Community parks can also provide indoor facilities to meet a wider range of recreation and interests. These parks should be designed to meet the active community, while providing a sanctuary for those individuals who enjoy more leisure oriented activities also.

Other Parks

- **Special Purpose Parks and Facilities** – Parks and facilities that serve a singular or focused community need, such as an environmental education center or historical park, or land occupied by major structures such as swimming pools, community centers, gymnasiums, etc.

- **Undeveloped Parkland** – Land that is owned by CARD, the City of Chico or Butte County, and reserved for future park development.

Open Space, Trails, and Greenways

- **Natural Areas, Corridors and Greenways** – Lands that place emphasis on protection of natural values. These are generally under the management of the City of Chico.
- **Regional Parks** – Generally, regional parks are large recreation areas that serve an entire county or region. They usually exceed 50 acres in size and often include a special use facility, such as a broad expanse of natural scenery or open space. Regional parks are designed to accommodate large numbers of people for a variety of day use activities. If possible, they should be developed around a unique or significant resource, or emphasize regional recreation interests. These parks can also serve as buffers and separations between communities or other urban areas.
- **Regional Open Space** – Lands that protect large areas with natural resource values of communitywide significance, and provide opportunities for nature-oriented outdoor recreation.
- **Visual Green Space and Watershed Amenities** – Lands that have strategically located visual amenities or buffers not associated with drainage ways.
- **Equestrian, Bike, and Pedestrian Trails** – Trails designed to provide linkage between various parts of the community. These are generally under the management of the City of Chico and Butte County.

Parks are classified based on their existing amenities, location within the community, size, and proximity to residential areas. Each classification of parkland is accompanied by standards that describe their characteristics and desired level of service. These classifications and standards provide guidance in the development of a parkland system that offers consistent service to City residents. Only parks and recreation facilities provided by CARD or the City of Chico are considered in calculating and setting the level of service for each classification. Chico Unified School District (CUSD) and California State University, Chico facilities, while recognized, are limited in their accessibility to the general public and are not, therefore, factored into neighborhood and community parkland inventory and level of service calculations. Map 2, Existing Park and Recreation Resources, shows the location of various parklands, open space, recreation facilities, and primary trails within CARD and the City of Chico. A detailed inventory of those lands and the facilities and amenities they contain is provided in Appendix A.

Within both CARD and the City of Chico, there are a total of 37 sites that are parks, open space, recreation centers, or areas of visual green space, totaling approximately 4,176 acres. Of this, 6 sites are neighborhood parks (29 acres), one site is a mini park (0.30 acre), and 5 park sites are community parks (164.3 acres). The community parks also serve as neighborhood parks for residents living nearby, which is generally considered within a 0.5-mile radius. There is also one softball field within One Mile Recreation Area operated and maintained by CARD – Sycamore Field. Other park resources include 8 special purpose parks (13.44 acres), 7 natural areas (252.6 acres), 2 regional open space areas (3,671.20 acres), one area of visual green space (0.20 acre), one special resource area, the Fair Street Wildlife Area (13.8 acres), and 3 recreation centers operated by CARD (7.10 acres).

Lastly, there are 4 undeveloped park sites within the City (24.1 acres).

There are also several other sites that provide recreation resources for the residents, including: CUSD schools that provide gym, courts, and open space for recreational programming; California State University, Chico, which provides recreation facilities and services to its students; the Silver Dollar Fairgrounds and Speedway, which hosts fairs and other events; and the Bidwell Mansion State Historic Park and the United States Forest Service Chico Genetic Resource and Conservation Center, which provide valuable green space that is available for residents to use for walking, hiking, dog walking, and other activities. There are also numerous private organizations that offer recreation services and facilities to the community. These include local Little League organizations, golf courses, health clubs, tennis clubs, and skating clubs, among others. While these organizations provide valuable resources to the community, they are not always accessible and available to the general public; therefore, they have not been included in the neighborhood or community parkland inventory and overall level of service calculations. The larger role of these organizations and groups within the Chico community will be further addressed later in this document.

"Strong evidence shows that when people have access to parks, they exercise more. In a study published by the CDC, creation of or enhanced access to places for physical activity led to a 25.6 percent increase in the percentage of people exercising on three or more days per week."

– CDC, *Increasing Physical Activity*, p.11

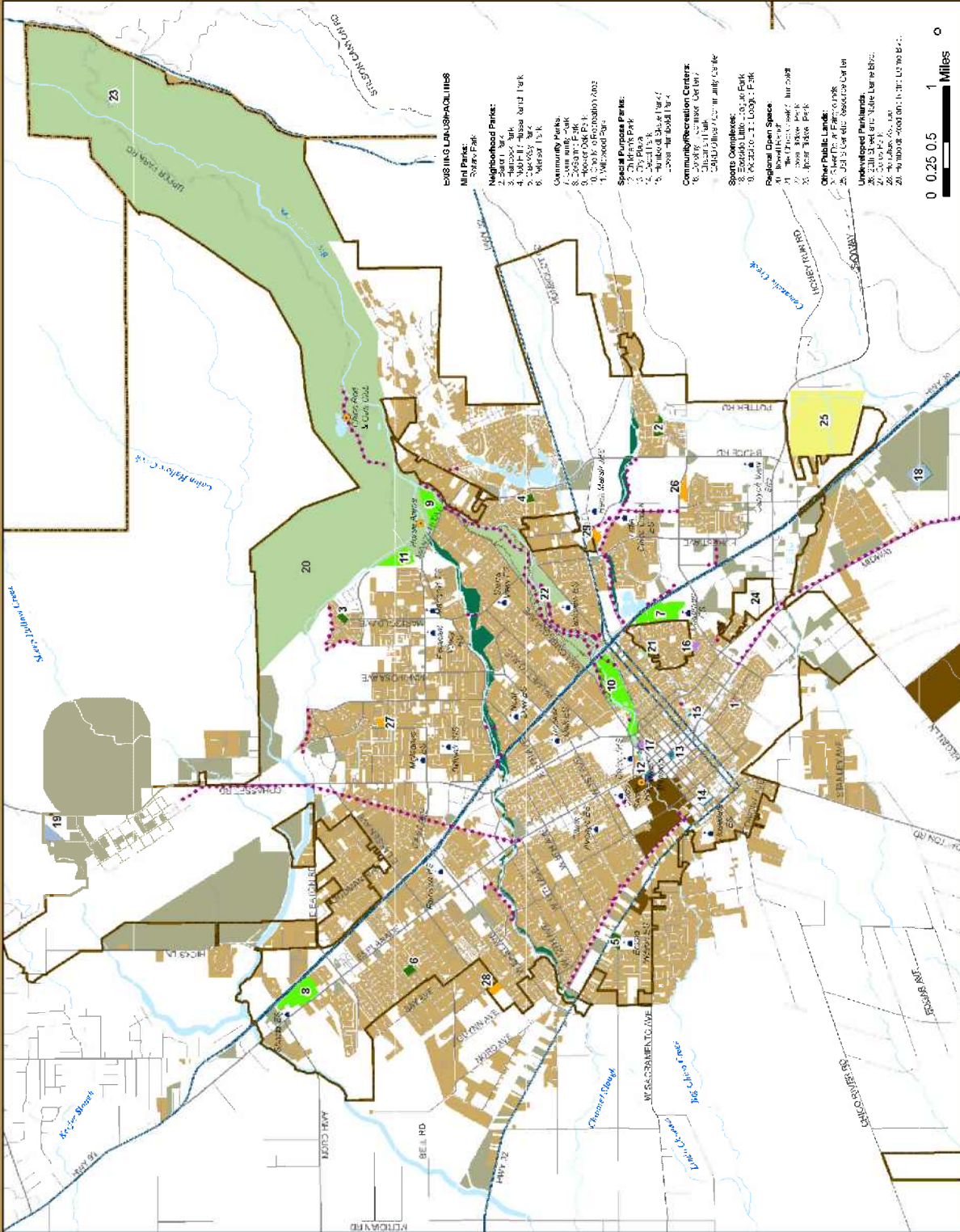


Legend

- Chico City Limits
- CARD Boundary
- Residential Zoning
- Vacant Land
- Chico Public Schools ; proposed school site
- California State University, Chico

EXISTING LANDS/FACILITIES

- Mini Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Special Purpose Park
- Community/Recreation Center
- Sports Complex
- Regional Open Space
- Greenway
- Other Public Lands
- Undeveloped Parkland
- Lower Bowtell Park Trails
- Bike Paths: Existing
- Other Facilities



EXISTING LANDS/FACILITIES

- Mini Parks:**
 - 1. Chico Park
 - 2. Sycamore Park
 - 3. Sycamore Park
 - 4. Sycamore Park
 - 5. Sycamore Park
 - 6. Sycamore Park
- Neighborhood Parks:**
 - 7. Sycamore Park
 - 8. Sycamore Park
 - 9. Sycamore Park
 - 10. Sycamore Park
 - 11. Sycamore Park
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 - 13. Sycamore Park
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 - 23. Sycamore Park
 - 24. Sycamore Park
 - 25. Sycamore Park
 - 26. Sycamore Park
 - 27. Sycamore Park
 - 28. Sycamore Park
- Community Parks:**
 - 1. Chico Park
 - 2. Sycamore Park
 - 3. Sycamore Park
 - 4. Sycamore Park
 - 5. Sycamore Park
 - 6. Sycamore Park
- Special Purpose Parks:**
 - 7. Sycamore Park
 - 8. Sycamore Park
 - 9. Sycamore Park
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 - 25. Sycamore Park
 - 26. Sycamore Park
 - 27. Sycamore Park
 - 28. Sycamore Park
- Community/Recreation Centers:**
 - 1. Chico Park
 - 2. Sycamore Park
 - 3. Sycamore Park
 - 4. Sycamore Park
 - 5. Sycamore Park
 - 6. Sycamore Park
- Sports Complexes:**
 - 7. Sycamore Park
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 - 25. Sycamore Park
 - 26. Sycamore Park
 - 27. Sycamore Park
 - 28. Sycamore Park
- Regional Open Space:**
 - 1. Chico Park
 - 2. Sycamore Park
 - 3. Sycamore Park
 - 4. Sycamore Park
 - 5. Sycamore Park
 - 6. Sycamore Park
- Other Public Lands:**
 - 7. Sycamore Park
 - 8. Sycamore Park
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 - 28. Sycamore Park
- Undeveloped Parklands:**
 - 1. Chico Park
 - 2. Sycamore Park
 - 3. Sycamore Park
 - 4. Sycamore Park
 - 5. Sycamore Park
 - 6. Sycamore Park
- Lower Bowtell Park Trails:**
 - 1. Chico Park
 - 2. Sycamore Park
 - 3. Sycamore Park
 - 4. Sycamore Park
 - 5. Sycamore Park
 - 6. Sycamore Park
- Bike Paths: Existing:**
 - 1. Chico Park
 - 2. Sycamore Park
 - 3. Sycamore Park
 - 4. Sycamore Park
 - 5. Sycamore Park
 - 6. Sycamore Park
- Other Facilities:**
 - 1. Chico Park
 - 2. Sycamore Park
 - 3. Sycamore Park
 - 4. Sycamore Park
 - 5. Sycamore Park
 - 6. Sycamore Park

Date: 11 Aug 2008

Map 2. Existing Park &
Recreation Resources

1. Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks are parks that serve a residential neighborhood. They may be either full-size neighborhood parks or smaller mini parks. Full-size neighborhood parks are typically the backbone of a parks system, and serve as critical elements of healthy neighborhoods and places that provide relief from the built environment. They are located primarily in developed residential areas, and typically have landscaping and walking surfaces that can withstand high levels of use. They are spaces where neighbors can gather, children can play, and people can socialize as well as engage in recreational activities. Generally, neighborhood parks provided by both CARD and the City of Chico are in relatively good condition. Additional amenities, walkways, landscaping, playgrounds, etc., should be considered for future improvements when resources become available.

Baroni Park

Baroni Park, a City of Chico park, is located in southeast Chico along Baroni Drive, just east of Bruce Road. Baroni Park is the newest neighborhood park in Chico, having been completed in the Winter of 2007. Although the property for this park has been dedicated to park use for several years, due to budget constraints and other limitations it has taken the City longer than usual to see it constructed. Now completed, Baroni Park is 7.3 acres and offers a multi-use, open turf play field, a three-quarter length basketball court, a playground, walking path, picnic tables, drinking fountain, and bike parking. The park also provides ample passive space and has retained some areas in a naturalized condition. At this time, no upgrades or modifications are needed at this park.

Dorothy F. Johnson Center / Chapman Park

Chapman Park, surrounding the Dorothy F. Johnson Center, is 3 acres in size. The park is located in south-central Chico at the corner of 16th and Beech Streets. While the building itself serves as a recreation center for the community, the majority of the 3 acres the

center sits on is used as a neighborhood park. The park offers a multi-use turf playfield, 2 basketball courts, a volleyball court, a playground, tetherball, walking path, picnic tables, drinking fountain, barbeques, bike parking, and an off-street parking area. There is also public art in the park associated with the tetherball court and located on the outside of the building. Restrooms are located inside the recreation center building. Additionally, there is a community garden located in the park. The park is in very good condition, and offers ample passive space with mature trees for people to relax. No physical upgrades or modifications are presently needed at this park.



Dorothy F. Johnson Center

Hancock Park

Hancock Park, a City of Chico park, is located in North Chico at the corner of Marigold Avenue and Middletown Avenue, and Valley Forge Drive. The 3.8-acre park offers a multi-use turf playfield, a walking path with benches, and a drinking fountain. While in good physical condition, Hancock Park does not offer much in the way of recreational amenities and facilities for users. Although it is located somewhat close to the undeveloped Ceres Park and Wildwood Community Park, Hancock Park still serves as the neighborhood park for those residents within 0.5 mile. Additionally, it sits north of Eaton Road, providing a park north of this busy thoroughfare. The park would benefit from the addition of more amenities including playgrounds for youth and picnic facilities, as

well as other recreational amenities including a basketball court.

Nob Hill Park / Hussa Ranch Park

Nob Hill/Hussa Ranch Park, a City of Chico park, is located in southeast Chico at the intersection of Coit Tower Way and Lakewest Drive, just west of Bruce Road. Although small, this 2.9-acre park offers recreational amenities, including a multi-use turf playfield, a basketball court, walking path, and drinking fountain. While located close to Lower Bidwell Park, Nob Hill/Hussa Ranch Park is the only neighborhood park in the general vicinity and could benefit from a few additional recreational amenities, including playgrounds, benches, and picnic tables. Overall, the park is in good condition.

Oakway Park

Oakway Park, a CARD park, is located in Southwest Chico along Nord Avenue, adjacent to Emma Wilson Elementary School. This 7.9-acre park offers a multi-use turf playfield, basketball court, youth playground, tot lot, walking path, picnic tables and shelter, barbeques, drinking fountains, restrooms, bike parking, practice disc golf baskets, and an off-street parking area. The natural surface walking path transects the park and has lights lining the path. There are also large areas of the park available for passive use. Although adjacent to Emma Wilson Elementary, the park is completely fenced off from the school, creating a distinct division between the two. There is a vacant lot on the corner of the park property that is anticipated to be developed for a future fire station. All recreational amenities of this park are in good condition; however, the restroom only has a life expectancy of another eight to ten years. As such, consideration should be given to including a restroom replacement in the district's long-range capital improvement plan.



Oakway Park

"We are seeing a greater commitment to America's urban parks than we have seen for decades. New places – and new ways – for people to gather as communities are proving to be an essential foundation for stronger, more vibrant cities."

**– Joe Brown, President of EDAW, Inc.,
Inside City Parks, ULI, 2000**

Peterson Park

Peterson Park, CARD’s newest neighborhood park, is located in Northwest Chico between Denali Drive and Crater Lake Drive. This 4.10-acre park offers a multi-use turf playfield, basketball court, playgrounds, picnic tables, and walking path. Although new, Peterson Park could benefit from a few additional amenities.



Peterson Park

2. Mini Parks

Rotary Park

Rotary Park, a CARD park, is located in Southwest Chico at the corner of Broadway Street and 16th Street. Although small, this 0.30-acre park offers numerous amenities, including a basketball court, youth playground, tot lot, picnic tables, walking path, drinking fountain, barbeques, and bike parking. Rotary Park offers ample passive space with excellent tree shade. Overall, the park is in good condition but is aging. The basketball court needs to be resurfaced and the picnic tables and walkways are reaching their lifespan. Replacement of these items should be included in the district’s long-range capital improvement plan



Rotary Park

Neighborhood Park Standards

Neighborhood parks should be adequately sized to provide space for a variety of activities, and are ideally a minimum of 5 usable acres when complete. They should be centrally located within the residential area they serve and are often located adjacent to an elementary or middle school. Neighborhood parks can be active or passive in nature, but most commonly provide a combination of both. Sports activities in neighborhood parks should normally be limited to practices, as the need to be compatible with surrounding residential land uses limits the intensity of use. Exceptions may be necessary if no other facilities exist or if the use is not detrimental to the neighborhood.

While mini parks supplement the neighborhood park system and provide places for children and families to gather near to their homes, they are not substitutes for adequately sized neighborhood parks. They are typically similar than neighborhood parks and may offer only a few neighborhood park amenities due to their limited size. In Chico, mini parks are typically up to 2 acres in size and are primarily located around the downtown area and high density, urbanized communities, which often makes them more of an amenity to the general area rather than any one neighborhood. However, these parks do provide needed passive green space in the downtown and high density urbanized areas.

In the past, the City of Chico has had a standard of 0.9 acre of neighborhood parkland per 1,000 residents. As this report will show, this standard is inadequate to serve the population of the greater Chico area, and it is recommended that this be increased to meet present and future needs. Table 2.1 describes the standards, site characteristics, and typical level of service for neighborhood and mini parks.

"By preserving open space we fashion a richer, greener, more complex infrastructure that makes cities more appealing places to live. This, in turn, will reduce the pressure to bulldoze economically valuable farmland and natural areas on the urban fringe."

– William Morrish, Director, Design Center for the American Urban Landscape, University of Minnesota

Table 2.1 Neighborhood Park Standards

Classification	Desirable Acreage	Purpose/Function	Site Characteristics	Level of Service
PARKS				
Neighborhood and Mini Parks				
Neighborhood Park	5 -10 acres; slightly smaller size may be acceptable if adjacent to other parkland/natural areas or greenway parks while also accommodating larger neighborhood park purposes/ functions	<p>Provides nearby recreation and leisure opportunities within walking distance (0.5 mile) of residential areas. Should serve as a common area for neighbors of all ages to gather, socialize and play.</p> <p>Typically would include a paved, multi-purpose area for court games/in-line skating or tennis courts, a multi-purpose play field with backstop, play equipment, ADA accessible trails and shaded areas for picnics and sitting within a landscaped setting that is a blend of full irrigation for active uses and xeriscape. Features such as interpretive signs, water bodies, and areas of natural vegetation may also be included where appropriate. In most cases, programmed sports activities should be limited to practices. On-street parking is typically adequate, and separate parking areas are not necessary.</p> <p>School/park facilities include many of the same neighborhood standards, except that school/parks should include: game fields (preferably two), off-street parking that is situated for school and park purposes, and a playground designed for age groups not served by school playgrounds.</p>	<p>Locate adjacent to greenway, open space, elementary or junior high schools when possible.</p> <p>Centrally locate within area served.</p> <p>Accessible via walkway or urban trail.</p> <p>Portions of the site should be relatively flat to accommodate fields and facility development.</p> <p>Size, slope, and soil conditions should be considered for optimum development.</p> <p>At least half of the park (two sides) should be bordered by a street in order to provide easy public access, visual surveillance, and parking. Surrounding the site with the back property lines of houses is strongly discouraged.</p> <p>Site should not be encumbered with constraints that preclude development of the site for desired uses.</p>	1.5 acres/ 1,000 pop.
Mini Park	2 acres or less	<p>From a communitywide standpoint, serves a neighborhood where opportunities for a larger park site are unavailable. Typically considered to serve residents within 0.25 mile of the park. Due to limited size, may only contain a few of the elements typical of a standard neighborhood park. Not a substitute for adequately-sized, neighborhood park. Developments may include mini parks as amenities to residents, but they do not fulfill the requirements for providing neighborhood parks.</p>	Same as those required for neighborhood park.	Not applicable.

Neighborhood Park Level of Service

Between CARD and the City of Chico there are a total of eight neighborhood parks, one of which is a small mini park. The current population within CARD boundaries is 105,425. Combined, the parks total approximately 29 acres, providing a level of service of 0.28 acre per 1,000 people (Table 2.2). The calculated level of service includes only parkland that is officially classified as neighborhood park acreage, and does not include school properties. The acres of neighborhood parkland are well below the existing standard provided in the 1988 master plan. This notable gap is even greater when compared to the level of service that other communities are providing (*discussed in Chapter Three*), as well as the amount of parkland that is needed to accommodate the use areas that neighborhood parks are intended to provide.

For analysis purposes the acreage of Lower Bidwell that is considered as a neighborhood park is 10 acres, which is located within the One Mile Recreation Area. Ten acres is roughly equivalent to the size of one to two typical neighborhood parks as defined by the 1988 CARD Master Plan¹. If the acreage for One Mile is factored in, the overall level of service for neighborhood parkland in Chico would increase to 0.37 acre per 1,000 people, compared to 0.28 acre if it were not included. Even with the inclusion of neighborhood park acreage for Lower Bidwell, the level of service is still somewhat lower than the adopted neighborhood park standard of 0.9 acre per 1,000 people.

Table 2.2. Existing Neighborhood Park Level of Service

Neighborhood/ Mini Parks	Effective Level of Service 2007
Population*	105,425
Existing Neighborhood/Mini Parkland (acres)	29.3
Level of Service	0.28 acre/ 1,000 population
Effective Level of Service**	0.37 acre/ 1,000 population

* 2006 Chico Urban Area Population: 105,425 (City of Chico, 2006)

** Effective level of service is calculated by factoring in 10 acres parkland for Lower Bidwell, which serves neighborhood park functions to residents within 0.5-mile radius. Actual neighborhood park acreage does not increase and acreage is not double counted between neighborhood and community parks.

In addition to not meeting its target level of service standard for neighborhood parkland, the distribution of existing parks throughout Chico does not provide equal access to many residents. Underserved areas include residential neighborhoods north of East 1st Avenue and south of Lassen Avenue on the west side of CA Highway 99; east of CA Highway 99 and south of East Avenue on the north side of 1st Avenue; east of CA Highway 99 and south of Eaton Road on the west side of Cohasset Road; south of CA Highway 32 and east of CA Highway 99 on the west side of Bruce Road; north of East Avenue, east of Cohasset Road, and west of Mariposa Avenue; and much of the area west of Walnut Street and south of Sacramento Avenue.

Some residential areas in Chico may be relatively close to a park, but are essentially underserved because there is not adequate access across major roads, which act as barriers. The neighborhood east of Chico Canyon Road and south of Canyon Oaks Terrace, on the north side of CA Highway 32, is underserved due to a lack of adequate access across Chico Canyon Road to Nob Hill Park. In

¹ If Lower Bidwell Park did not exist, it is likely that two to three additional neighborhood parks would exist in this area to serve residents.

the northwest quadrant of the City, both CA Highway 99 and Esplanade act as major barriers of access to both DeGarmo and Peterson Parks from residential areas to the east.

Two areas that are currently underserved outside of Chico city limits, but within the CARD boundary, include the neighborhoods to the east of Dayton Road and south of the city limits; and the neighborhoods between CA Highway 99 and Midway Road south of the City near the Eastside Little League Complex.

Additionally, many people have been depending on fenced school yards to function as their neighborhood park, which is not an acceptable solution in the long term. Schools do not allow the public onto their properties during school hours, rendering them part-time parks. Additionally, the purpose of schools is to educate and not to maintain parkland for public use. The result is that the school yards are minimally maintained and do not contain equipment, facilities, landscapes, and shade trees that are equal in quality with that provided by, and expected of, public parks and recreation providers. Standard practice in communities across the U.S. is to provide adequate public parkland for their residents and not consider schools to be a substitute for this. The 1999 Chico General Plan recognizes this and suggests that the community should not rely on the availability of schools for recreation purposes. It does, however, encourage development of new park facilities in conjunction with schools where feasible. For these reasons, school properties were not included in parkland inventory and level of service calculations.

Map 3 shows the 0.5-mile and 0.25-mile service areas associated with each developed neighborhood and mini park. Service areas around community parks that can also be considered to function as the adjacent residence's neighborhood park are also shown. As discussed earlier, 10 acres of Lower Bidwell Park is considered a "Neighborhood Park" for the purposes of determining the level of service for the surrounding neighborhoods. The service areas on Map 3 represent the immediate neighborhood that has access to that park without crossing an arterial roadway, active rail line, river, or other barrier, which prevents easy access via walking or by bicycle. The extent of existing residential development, as it is known, is also generally shown.

3. Community Parks

Community parks are larger parks that serve the entire community. They should be equitably distributed throughout the City and easily accessible by all residents. Ideally, they should also be connected via the core commuter off-street trail system to reduce the need to drive to the park. Sports complexes are also often associated with community parks. These are typically parks or areas of community parks that have dedicated sport facilities available for use to the entire community. While many community parks contain sports complexes, not all sports complexes are part of a community park or contain park-like facilities. Within CARD and the City of Chico, each existing community park has a different and unique character. For example, Community Park (owned and operated by CARD) is the largest park within the CARD boundary, except for Bidwell Park, and has the most number of sports facilities. Hooker Oak Park, on the other hand, is owned by the City of Chico and managed by CARD under a long-term lease agreement. The park is located adjacent to the more naturalized Upper Bidwell Park. Each of the other community parks also has a distinct character, providing a wide variety of both active and passive recreational opportunities for users.

Community Park

Community Park, a CARD park, is located in south-central Chico, west of CA Highway 99 and just north of 20th Street. This 40-acre park contains 5 softball fields, 3 multi-use turf fields, 8 tennis courts, 2 sand volleyball courts, 2 horseshoe pits, a playground, a walking path around the circumference of the park, multiple picnic tables, barbeques, restrooms, concessions, 6 off-street parking areas, and park sculptures. The ballfields contain movable fences, which allow for greater flexibility in scheduling games for various leagues. Due to the location of this park adjacent to CA Highway 99 and the number of ballfields, it is used heavily by athletic organizations.

There is also a field house located at the park with a full-size gymnasium used primarily for athletic programming, but with limited spectator seating. The building is currently being retrofitted with air conditioning and attached restrooms. New restrooms are also master planned for the Annex Field, and these amenities should be incorporated into the district's long-range capital improvement plan. There is adequate ADA access throughout the park, and overall, Community Park is in good condition. No major improvements outside of upgrades to the field house are recommended.



Community Park

DeGarmo Park

DeGarmo Park, CARD's newest community park, is located in northwest Chico between CA Highway 99 and Esplanade, just north of East Eaton Road. This 36-acre park is being constructed in multiple phases. The first phase, completed in 2007, provides 3 softball fields, 2 multi-use turf fields, picnic tables and a shelter, restrooms, concessions, and a walking path. Although future phases of this park have not been completed, other likely facilities may include a skate park, additional ballfields, children's play feature, and passive areas. DeGarmo Park is also a likely location for a future recreation center to serve the north end of the community. Due to the need for additional recreation facilities, the district would like to work towards build-out of this park in the near future, and as such, it should be included in the long-range capital improvement plan.

Hooker Oak Park

Hooker Oak Park is located in north Chico on the southeast corner of Upper Bidwell Park along Manzanita Avenue. Although the park sits within Bidwell Park, it is actually owned by the City of Chico, but operated and maintained by CARD by way of a long-term lease agreement. This 35-acre park contains a baseball field, 2 softball fields, 3 multi-use turf playfields, 3 horseshoe pits, a basketball court, a fully accessible ADA youth playground, a tot lot, multiple picnic tables and a shelter, a walking path, restrooms, concessions, barbeques, and an off-street parking area.



Hooker Oak Park

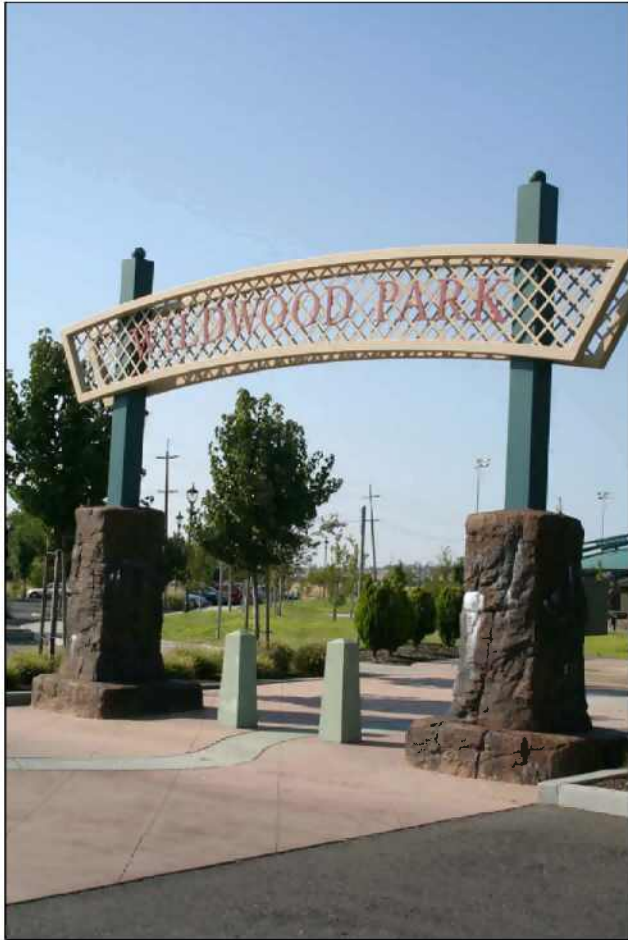
Hooker Oak Park is a fully ADA accessible park and offers a fully ADA accessible playground. Additionally, a new ADA restroom is planned. Hooker Oak offers a great deal of passive space, complete with mature trees and individual picnic sites. The park is also home to CARD's youth summer camp, Camp Chi-Da-Ca. Overall, the park is in very good condition, but it could benefit from the addition of another group picnic shelter. Additionally, the irrigation system and maintenance facility are beyond their life expectancy and should be included in CARD's long-range capital improvement plan.

One-Mile Recreation Area

One-Mile Recreation Area is located in Lower Bidwell Park near Willow Street. As part of Lower Bidwell Park, One-Mile is owned and operated by the City of Chico. This 23-acre park contains a softball field that is programmed and maintained by CARD, multi-use turf playfield, two playgrounds, horseshoe pits, a tot lot, picnic tables, a walking path, barbeques, bike parking, and an off-street parking area. One-Mile Recreation Area houses the Caper Acres children's play area, Sycamore Field, and Sycamore Pool. Sycamore Pool is an outstanding, unique historical resource for the community. It is directly fed by Big Chico Creek, with a new bladder dam on the lower end allowing for the water to pool. It has concrete edges along the banks and ladders to exit the pool. Sycamore Pool is also free of charge to the public. One-Mile Recreation Area also contains a network of paths available for equestrian use that link to the rest of Bidwell Park. Currently, the City is planning to create one contiguous trail that would extend the length of Lower Bidwell Park, traverse through One-Mile, go beneath Mangrove Avenue to Annie's Glen, and continue on to downtown Chico and California State University, Chico. Overall the condition of One-Mile Recreation Area is good and it is well used by the community.

Wildwood Park

Wildwood Park, a City of Chico park, is located in north Chico on the southwest corner of Upper Bidwell Park along Manzanita Avenue. This 30-acre park contains two softball fields, a multi-use turf playfield, a youth playground, a tot lot, a walking path, picnic tables and shelter, barbeques, a restroom, and park sculpture. It is very well designed, and the covered picnic facility and playground are heavily used by the community. The sports fields are primarily programmed for youth athletics. The play features are interactive, and there are several interpretive elements incorporated into the areas surrounding the play areas. Overall, Wildwood Park is in good condition and no upgrades or improvements are recommended.



Wildwood Park

Community Park Standards

Community parks should be adequately sized to accommodate a variety of diverse activities, including passive uses. Table 2.3 lists the specific standards for community parks. Community parks are ideally 25 to 50+ acres in size, and often combine developed parkland for self-directed or programmed activities (festivals, performances, fitness trails, sports fields and courts, picnic shelters, etc.) with natural areas or other interesting elements (water features, forests or gardens). They should be centrally located to geographical locations and accessible to everyone in the service area. An off-street trail system should also be connected to community parks, allowing for access not reliant on automobiles.

Community Park Level of Service

Chico has a total of 5 community parks. Combined, these parks total approximately 164 acres and provide a level of service of 1.56 acres per 1,000 people based on a current population of 105,475 (Table 2.4). Each of the five community parks within CARD and the City of Chico, except one, meet the 25-acre desirable minimum standard. One-Mile Recreation Area is only 23 acres in size; however, this amount of acreage is appropriate given its existing facilities and intended purpose. Map 4 shows a one-mile service area for each developed community park, which illustrates their relatively even distribution throughout the City. This map also shows the location of other resources that serve limited community park functions, such as Upper and Lower Bidwell Park, the USFS Genetic Resource Conservation Center, and the Silver Dollar Fairgrounds. Because community parks are considered citywide destinations, the service areas span arterial roadways and other barriers. However, providing easy pedestrian and bicycle access is strongly encouraged, and the City of Chico should work to provide better on-street trail links to community parks. Additionally, as community parks are often destination parks, it is not uncommon for residents of other cities to use them. Residents of the surrounding communities often rely on the community parks in Chico for many of their recreation and organized athletic needs.



Table 2.3. Community Park Standards

Classification	Desirable Acreage	Purpose/Function	Site Characteristics	Level of Service
PARKS				
Community Parks				
Community Park	25-50+ acres	<p>Provides opportunities for communitywide activities and facilities. Should maintain a balance between programmed sports facilities and other community activity areas, such as urban forests, gardens, historic features, water features, performance areas, festival spaces, plazas, etc., and have features that appeal to the broader community.</p> <p>Sports complexes are not complete community parks as they are very special purpose. However, they contribute to the overall level of service for community parks. See definition below.</p> <p>Community parks should generally be located to provide all residents access to a community park within 1-2 miles of their home. Community parks may also serve as the local neighborhood park for residential areas within 0.5 mile.</p>	<p>Portions of the site should be relatively flat to accommodate fields and facility development. Special site features, such as streams, lakes, forests, rock outcrops, historic or archeological sites, and other interesting elements may add to the unique character of the park.</p> <p>Sites should be centrally located to geographical locations. Ideally, will have good access from a collector or arterial street.</p> <p>Direct access to primary community trail system desirable.</p> <p>Site should not be encumbered with constraints that preclude development of the site for desired uses.</p>	2.5 acres/ 1,000 pop.
Sports Complex	Varies	<p>Provides opportunities for communitywide programmed and self-directed sports, such as: baseball, softball, soccer, tennis, roller hockey, and skateboarding in higher intensity use facilities. Limited areas for passive recreation uses and other features that appeal to the broader community. Strategically locate to fill service gaps for specialized sports facilities.</p>	<p>Majority of site should be relatively flat to accommodate sports fields.</p> <p>Locate away from residential areas to avoid traffic, light, and noise conflicts.</p>	May be part of community park level of service standard.
Special Purpose Parks				
Special Purpose Park	Varies	<p>Serves a singular or much focused community need, such as a horticulture center, environmental education center, working farm, performance area, festival area, fairgrounds, urban plaza, equestrian center, civic park, and children's theme parks.</p>	Varies	Not applicable. Part of neighborhood or community park level of service if site contributes to these types of needs.

Table 2.4. Existing Community Park Level of Service

Community Parks	Effective Level of Service 2007
Population*	105,425
Community Parkland (acres)	164.3
Current Level of Service	1.56 acres/ 1,000 population

*2006 Chico Urban Area Population: 105,425 (City of Chico, 2006).

4. Special Purpose Parks

Special purpose parks are those that tend to serve a singular, or much focused purpose or community need. Examples of special purpose parks include environmental education centers, horticulture centers, working farms, performance areas, festival areas, fairgrounds, urban plazas, equestrian centers, or other parks that serve a specific purpose or need within a community. As these parks vary greatly in nature, they do not have typical characteristics. Additionally, they do not have an identified level of service unless they specifically contribute to meeting neighborhood or community park needs.

Caper's Acres

Caper Acres is a small, children's-only play area owned and operated by the City of Chico. It is located within the One-Mile Recreation Area and offers a youth playground and tot lot, as well as restrooms and a drinking fountain. Adults are required to be accompanied by a child in order to enter Caper Acres.

Chico Creek Nature Center

The Chico Creek Nature Center (CCNC) is a nonprofit organization that serves as the official information and interpretive center for Bidwell Park, the seventh largest municipal park in the U.S. Housed within the center is a nonreleasable, living animal collection that features native animal species from Bidwell Park and other California habitats. Each year the CCNC welcomes thousands of visitors who come to take part in the many educational programs

offered on the natural systems of the park, or to inquire about the recreational opportunities offered within the vast 3,700 acres of parkland. The center also works closely with regional schools to offer life science programs that are closely aligned with the California Public School standards. Through these programs, the center serves approximately 4,000 elementary school students each year.

City Plaza

City Plaza, a City of Chico park, is located in the heart of downtown Chico between Broadway and Main Streets. City Plaza is approximately 1.5 acres in size and contains an interactive water play feature, benches, picnic tables, chess tables, restrooms, a park sculpture, and a permanent performing arts band shell. City Plaza was rebuilt in 2006 to upgrade and enhance the park and offer new amenities like the band shell. This park serves as the focal point for downtown community events and is very popular with residents and visitors alike.

Depot Park

Depot Park, a City of Chico park, is located on the edge of downtown Chico between Orange and Cedar Streets. Depot Park is approximately 1.0 acre in size and offers benches, a walking path, and a drinking fountain. This park was built in the late 80's and has a historical feel to it. While there are no formal recreation facilities, it is very popular as a passive use park. Overall, the park is in good condition and no upgrades or enhancements are necessary.

Children's Park

Children's Park, owned and operated by the City of Chico, is located at Esplanade and East 1st Street in downtown Chico. This 3.7-acre, children-oriented park and play area offers two youth playgrounds, a tot lot, multi-use turf field, walking path, amphitheatre, and drinking fountain. The park also has power to accommodate special events.

Humboldt Skatepark / Lower Humboldt Park

Humboldt Skatepark/Lower Humboldt Park, owned and operated by the City of Chico, is located at the intersection of Humboldt and Flume Streets. This 1.0-acre skate park, in conjunction with a 2.8-acre multi-use turf field, is small but well used by the community. It contains a fenced area with various elements for skating, two picnic tables, a drinking fountain, and a newer restroom facility.



Humboldt Skatepark

BMX Track / Freestyle Facility

The current BMX parcel is 3 acres in size, located at the Silver Dollar Fairgrounds. The track operates and is entirely maintained through the efforts of volunteers. There are plans in the near future to relocate the track to the adjacent property owned by the City of Chico through a long-term lease agreement. The master plan for the new site includes an 80,000 plus square foot BMX racing park, a 15,000 square foot freestyle park, asphalt parking, restrooms, concession area, and spectator seating. CARD is currently working on a partnership agreement to utilize the new facility for programming.



Legend

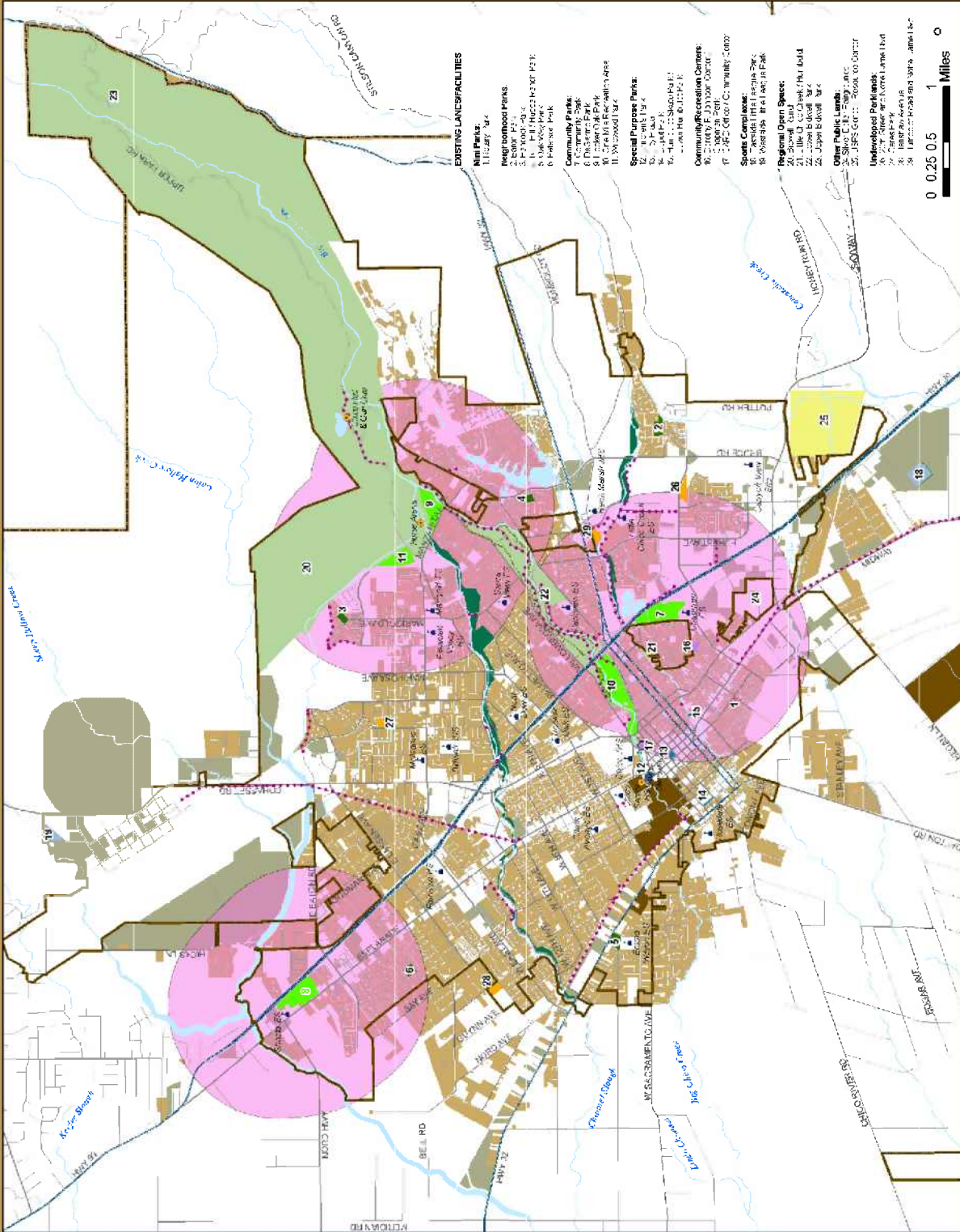
- Chico City Limits
- CARD Boundary
- Residential Zoning
- Vacant Land
- Community Park 1-mile buffer

SCHOOLS

- Chico Public Schools; proposed school site
- California State University, Chico

EXISTING LANDS/FACILITIES

- Mini Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Special Purpose Park
- Community/Recreation Center
- Sports Complex
- Regional Open Space
- Greenway
- Other Public Lands
- Undeveloped Parkland
- Lower Bowtell Park Trails
- Bike Paths: Existing
- Other Facilities



Date: 11 Aug 2008

Map 4. Community Park
Service Areas

5. Open Space, Trails, and Greenways

Open space areas, including regional open space, natural areas, corridors, special resource areas, and conservation areas, protect natural values on various sized parcels of land and provide opportunities for trail and habitat connections. The degree to which each area is “natural” depends upon its size, configuration, location, and level of use, all of which influence its ability to function in a native state. Open space areas are frequently located along stream or river corridors, and often provide opportunities for nature-oriented outdoor recreation. These areas may also contain a multi-purpose trail or a segment of a trail system. However, some open space areas may be sensitive in nature and, therefore, have limited public access in the interest of protecting the resource.



Upper Bidwell Park

Open Space Classifications

Table 2.5 lists classifications and characteristics of four different types open space.

Regional open spaces are typically 100 acres or greater in size and protect large areas containing natural resource values of community-wide significance. Regional open spaces also provide opportunities for nature-oriented outdoor recreation. They typically place an emphasis on achieving an appropriate balance between resource protection and public use. As regional open space never has

identical characteristics in two locations, there are no set standards for level of service.

Natural areas, linear parks, and greenways are other types of open space with limited public access and management emphasis placed on habitat and natural resource protection. These properties may be in a narrow corridor configuration or exist as larger pieces of land. There are no set site characteristics of natural areas and corridors; however, limited areas of the site can be dedicated to leisure and outdoor oriented recreation uses and contain recreation amenities such as trails, benches, picnic sites, and environmental interpretation and education areas. As natural areas and corridors are usually provided when available and do not specifically serve park functions, there is no set level of service.

Sensitive or special resource areas and conservation lands protect areas with important cultural, natural and other community values. These may include areas of significant vegetation, important and sensitive habitats, scenic areas, wetlands, or areas that contribute to the urban shaping and buffering goals of the community. Conservation lands are distinctly different from urban parks and cannot be considered a substitute for the intensively used parks that are needed within urban settings. Conservation lands are different from urban parks because their emphasis is on preserving or enhancing the natural environment rather than providing lands for active use. Their character is defined by their inherent natural, ecological, historic, and scenic values.

Visual green spaces are park areas that form vegetative islands and break up the atmosphere of congestion in densely urban areas or provide a space for compatible forms of quiet recreation. Their primary purpose is to enhance community aesthetics and, as such, should be located in visually accessible areas. No level of service for visual green space areas has been calculated, nor is it desired because these types of areas are dependent upon the neighborhood character and most often do not provide for typical park functions.

Table 2.5. Open Space Standards

Classification	Desirable Acreage	Purpose/Function	Site Characteristics	Level of Service
OPEN SPACE				
Regional Open Space/Park				
Regional Open Space/Park	Typically 100 acres or greater	Protects large areas with natural resource values of communitywide significance. Provides opportunities for nature-oriented outdoor recreation.	Emphasis on achieving an appropriate balance between resource protection and public use.	No LOS standard.
Natural Area/Natural Corridor				
Natural Area/Natural Corridor	Varies, but typically 8 acres or greater	Protects natural values on smaller parcels. Often located along stream corridors. Provides opportunities for nature-oriented, outdoor recreation, which may include multi-purpose trails.	Emphasis on resource protection or preservation with some public access provided. Limited site area can be dedicated to leisure and nature-oriented recreation uses, such as roads, parking areas, trails, environmental education/interpretive areas, picnic sites, and visitor support facilities.	No LOS standard.
Sensitive Resource Area/Conservation Area				
Sensitive Resource Area/Conservation Area	Varies	Protects areas with important cultural, natural, and other community values. These may include areas of significant vegetation, important and sensitive habitats, scenic areas, wetlands, or areas that contribute to the urban shaping and buffering goals of the community.	Emphasis is on protection of the values that qualify the area for designation as a sensitive resource area or conservation area. In many cases, public access will not be provided and typically no facilities will be developed. If public access is not desirable or needed, conservation easements may be a suitable preservation tool.	No LOS standard.
Visual Green Space				
Visual Green Spaces	Varies	Strategically located and highly visible natural or manicured lands that contribute significantly to the visual quality of the community. May have little or no public access or recreational activities.	May be part of a larger public project (e.g., arterial streetscape or public building landscape). Community should be very selective in accepting maintenance responsibilities for these types of spaces.	No LOS standard.

The City of Chico currently has an adopted standard of providing 2.5 acres of linear parks and greenways per 1,000 people. Although many other communities have greenways and linear parks in their system, and often have standards for them, they are not normally factored into developed park levels of service. It is most common for communities to view standards for developed parks (i.e., neighborhood and community parks) separate from greenways and linear parks because they are not designed, nor intended to provide the specific active amenities and facilities needed in developed parks.

Open Space and Greenway Properties

The City of Chico owns and maintains several significant areas of open space property in and around the community; the most notable of these is Bidwell Park. Although it is considered a park to the local community, it actually functions as a large tract of open space that is available to all residents.

Bidwell Park

Bidwell Park is the most recognizable park in Chico. Bidwell Park was established in 1905 through the donation of approximately 2,500 acres of land to the City of Chico by Annie Bidwell, wife of the City's founder, John Bidwell. Since that time, the City has purchased additional land, such as Cedar Grove in 1922, and 1,200 acres of land south of Big Chico Creek in Upper Park in 1995. Today, the total park size is 3,670 acres and nearly 11 miles in length, making it one of the largest municipal parks in the U.S. Bidwell Park is managed under the auspices of the Bidwell Park and Playground Commission, and has its own separate management plan currently under development by the City of Chico. Bidwell Park is divided by Manzanita Avenue; the area west of Manzanita Avenue is referred to as Lower Park and the area to the east is referred to as Upper Park.

Upper Bidwell Park

The noticeable difference between Upper and Lower Park is the terrain. Upper Park is located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. It has steep terrain and contains many rock formations, including the unique Chico Formation sandstone and Lovejoy Basalt rocks. Recreation opportunities in Upper Bidwell Park are more passive in nature and include mountain biking, hiking, and equestrian use. Upper Bidwell is also very popular for swimming, having several natural swimming holes along the Big Chico Creek that are popular in warmer months. Upper Bidwell contains the 18-hole regulation Bidwell Park Golf Course, the second oldest municipal golf course in California, having opened in 1929. Other amenities in Upper Park include the Chico Equestrian Center, the Kiwanis Community Observatory and Outdoor Planetarium, Horseshoe Lake, Chico Rod and Gun Club, multi-use trails, group and individual picnic areas, portable restrooms, and parking areas. Both Wildwood Park and Hooker Oak Park are located at the southern end of Upper Bidwell.

Lower Bidwell Park

Lower Bidwell Park is characterized by flat and level topography with a thick canopy of trees. Lower Bidwell transects a large portion of the City in a southwesterly direction, terminating near downtown at Lost Park and the Esplanade. Recreation and use in Lower Bidwell are more active-oriented, being home to the One-Mile Recreation Area, Caper's Acres, Sycamore Pool, and part of the CARD Community Center. Yet overall, Lower Bidwell still retains a very natural character and offers a majority of passive space. Recreation opportunities in Lower Bidwell include hiking and walking, bird watching, biking, swimming, picnicking, and formalized park settings. Additionally, the Chico Creek Nature Center is located in Lower Bidwell, as is Cedar Grove, which is used to host outdoor music events



Lower Bidwell Park

Fair Street Detention Area with Environmental Component

The City of Chico has one special resource area, the Fair Street Detention Area. This property is located in southeast Chico along Fair Street, just west of CA Highway 99; it is intended to serve as a refuge for local wildlife. There are observation areas for the public to view wildlife.

Little Chico Creek / Humboldt

CARD maintains one piece of open space property, the Little Chico Creek/Humboldt natural area. This 15.6-acre property, owned by the City of Chico, is located along Little Chico Creek, adjacent to Humboldt Road on the east side of CA Highway 99. There are 5 picnic tables located at this site, along with an 8-foot wide bike path that transects the property. The City of Chico has master planned a trail connection over Little Chico Creek through this location to connect Chapman Town with this area of the City.

Other Natural Areas, Corridors, and Greenways

The City of Chico owns and maintains several other natural areas, corridors, and greenways in and around the City. Presently, these properties are not developed, nor do they have any formalized passive recreation areas, although most are open to public access. Table 2.6 lists each of these properties and gives their size in acres

Table 2.6. City of Chico Natural Areas, Corridors, and Greenways

Property	Acres
First Street and Verbena Site	16.4
Lindo Channel	150.0
North Chico Bike Path	10.0
Little Chico Creek	22.5
Mudd/Sycamore Creek	6.0
Comanche	15.0
Tiechert Pond	32.70
Total	252.6

6. Urban Tree Canopy

Another critical natural element within Chico is the urban tree canopy. The City of Chico has been designated as a "Tree City USA" for the last 23 years. Research has shown that street trees provide real, quantifiable value for the community. The Chico urban forest creates a significant sense of place and is recognized as a key component of the community design element. Based upon October 2005 records, the City's street tree population was 33,000 and the City has an extensive street tree maintenance program



Community Center

7. Undeveloped Parkland

Beyond the undeveloped land in existing parks, such as that in DeGarmo Park, CARD does not presently own any undeveloped parkland. The City of Chico owns four properties that are tentatively reserved for future park development. The first of these is a 5.5-acre parcel located on Henshaw Avenue in west Chico. This parcel, although small, has good

street and visual access and would provide needed park space in a currently underserved area. The second undeveloped parkland is a 6.6-acre parcel located at the corner of 20th Street and Notre Dame Boulevard. This parcel has good street and visual access and would provide needed neighborhood parkland in a currently underserved area of the City. The third piece of undeveloped parkland is a 7.0-acre parcel located at Humboldt Road and Notre Dame Boulevard. This property has good street and visual access and would help to provide parkland in a currently underserved area of the City. The last of these undeveloped parcels is 5 acres in size and located in north-central Chico on Ceres Avenue.

Another potential site for parkland and recreation facilities is the Canyon View High School site, along Bruce Road in southeast Chico. While owned by CUSD, the development of this site has been delayed. The characteristics of the site offer the possibility of a partnership with CUSD whereby joint facilities, such as sports fields, could be provided for use by both CARD and the school district.

8. Other Park and Recreation Resources

Beyond parks and open space areas, there are several other recreation resources in the community provided by both CARD and the City of Chico. Each of these resources is described below.

CARD Community Center

The CARD Community Center is located on Vallombrosa Avenue, adjacent to the southern end of Lower Bidwell Park. The CARD Community Center is a 12,337 square foot facility that is used for a wide variety of CARD's recreational programming. The building offers a large multi-purpose room with wood floor and 3 multi-purpose community/recreation rooms, as well as amenities such as a catering kitchen, tables, chairs, and a PA system. Other amenities include restrooms, drinking fountains, public art and sculpture, and picnic areas in the manicured lawn area surrounding the building.

The center is home to the CARD Senior programs and CARD's administrative offices.

Dorothy F. Johnson Center / Chapman Park

The Dorothy F. Johnson Center, a CARD facility, is located in south-central Chico at the corner of 16th and Beech Streets. The 6,375 square foot facility sits on a 3.0-acre parcel that is home to a neighborhood park. The center is host to several CARD recreation programs, but is used primarily for after-school youth activities, teen activities, and senior activities. The building has an indoor gym, teen center, meeting rooms, and a kitchen. Other amenities at the building include off-street parking, restrooms, drinking fountains, and all the amenities associated with the park that were listed above.



Dorothy F. Johnson Center

Pleasant Valley Recreation Center and Pool

The Pleasant Valley Recreation Center and Pool, a CARD facility, is located in northeast Chico on North Street, just south of East Avenue adjacent to Bidwell Junior High School. This 1.1-acre site contains a 5,970 square foot recreation center that is used primarily for after-school programs and youth camps. The building contains 3 classrooms and one multi-purpose room. The pool area contains one 25-yard pool, one children's wading pool, picnic tables and a shelter, restrooms, drinking fountains, bike parking, and an off-street parking area. It is frequently rented to the public for events. The pool is used yearly by

Chico Unified School District (CUSD) for physical education classes as well as for high school swim teams. The pool is reaching its life expectancy within the next five to eight years, and the district should consider upgrading the pool, mechanical system, and amenities, and include this in their long-range capital improvement plan.



Pleasant Valley Pool

Shapiro Pool

Shapiro Pool is located on CUSD property, leased by CARD, in central Chico at the intersection of Oleander Avenue and Memorial Way on Chico Junior High School property. The facility occupies a 0.44-acre site and offers a 25-yard pool, diving board, children’s wading pool, and bathhouse. Other amenities include picnic tables, restrooms, and a drinking fountain. Shapiro Pool is approximately ten years beyond its useful life expectancy, and the district should include improvements and upgrades in their long-term capitol project plan.

B. Existing School District Recreation Facilities

Traditionally, CARD and CUSD have had a good working relationship utilizing each other’s facilities to meet the needs of both agencies. CARD actively utilizes CUSD facilities to host some of its sports and after-school programs. In return, CUSD utilizes many CARD facilities for their school sports programming. At times, there are scheduling conflicts with the school

district for use of its resources. In these instances, CARD programs are often displaced if the facility is needed for use by the school district. CARD and CUSD have a joint use agreement for the Marsh Junior High Gymnasium. The agreement is based on grant funding that CARD helped CUSD achieve to construct the gym. The agreement provides for a guarantee of 20 hours of recreation programming per week. Tables 2.7a and 2.7b list the various schools that are actively used by CARD, and the programs each facility is used for.

Table 2.7a. CUSD Facilities Used by CARD

School	Activity
Marsh Junior High	Youth and Adult Sports
Chico Jr. High	Youth and Adult Sports
Bidwell Jr. High	Youth and Adult Sports
Pleasant Valley High	Youth and Adult Sports
Citrus Elementary	Youth Sports, After-school Programs
Hooker Oak Elementary	Youth Sports, After-school Programs
Emma Wilson Elementary	After-school Programs
John McManus Elementary	After-school Programs
Little Chico Creek Elementary	After-school Programs
Marigold Elementary	After-school Programs
Neal Dow Elementary	After-school Programs
Parkview Elementary	After-school Programs
Rosedale Elementary	After-school Programs
Shasta Elementary	After-school Programs
Sierra View Elementary	After-school Programs
Fairview High	Computer Classes
Chico High (Occasionally)	Youth and Adult Sports

Table 2.7b. CARD Facilities Used by CUSD

Facility	Activity
Hooker Oak Park	Sports Programming
Community Park/Field House	Sports Programming, Chapman School PE Classes
Shapiro Pool	Sports Programming, Chico Jr. High PE Classes
Pleasant Valley Pool and Recreation Center	Sports Programming, Bidwell Jr. High PE Classes
Oak Way Park	Emma Wilson PE Classes
DeGarmo Park	Shasta School PE Classes
CARD Community Center	Youth and Adult Meetings/Events
Dorothy Johnson Center	After-school Programs

Options should also be explored for creating a partnership with CUSD for development of joint-use facilities, such as sports fields, at the Canyon View High School site in southeast Chico.

C. Other Public Recreation Resources

There are several other sites that provide recreation resources for the residents of the Chico area that are not owned or operated by either CARD or the City of Chico. Each of these facilities is described below.

1. USFS Chico Genetic Resource and Conservation Center

The Chico Genetic Resource and Conservation Center is located on 209 acres on the outskirts of southeast Chico along Skyway Avenue. The center was established in 1904 when the site was assigned to the Agricultural Research Service for the purpose of plant breeding research and plant introduction from all over the world. The Forest Service acquired the station in 1974, and the center's program gradually changed to developing and producing genetically improved plant material for the reforestation program of the Pacific Southwest Region. In 1992, the center's name changed to Genetic Resource and Conservation Center, which reflects the broader scope and role of genetics in the management of forest ecosystems. The propagation function has evolved over time to include over 130 species of trees, shrubs, grasses, and other native species. Today, the Genetic Resource and Conservation Center produces plants for projects, such as reforestation, wildfire recovery, watershed restoration, fisheries, riparian habitat for threatened and endangered species, Native American culture values, oak woodland restoration, mine reclamation, campgrounds and interpretive areas, and forest health. Additional functions include research and disease resistance and biological, chemical, and clinical research on anti-cancer drugs derived from plants. The center has a one-mile interpretive loop trail, the Comanche

Trail, which supports an abundance of wildlife, including birds, snakes, rabbits, squirrels, rodents, insects, and many other species. There are picnic tables along the trail for relaxing and passive use, and the center is open to the public during the day. The center has also become a popular off-leash area for dog owners.



USFS Genetic Resource and Conservation Center

2. Bidwell Mansion State Historic Park

The Bidwell Mansion State Historic Park is located in downtown Chico on Esplanade. The Bidwell Mansion State Historic Park is a three-story, 26-room Victorian House Museum that stands as a memorial to John and Annie Bidwell. The house contains a museum offering guided tours, a visitor center, gift shop, and theater. There are also picnic facilities available for use on the manicured grounds surrounding the house.

3. Silver Dollar Fairgrounds and Speedway

The Silver Dollar Fairgrounds and Speedway are located in south-central Chico at Skyway and Fair Street. The site is host to the Silver Dollar Fair held each May, as well as various events from craft fairs to bull riding championships and musical concerts. The Speedway features a wide variety of auto racing action from March through September, most notably the Gold Cub World of Outlaws event. The National Bull Riding Championship Finals are also held here each September. The

Silver Dollar Fairgrounds also serves as a large event center.

4. California State University, Chico

California State University, Chico provides a wide range of recreation facilities and services to its students, including a football stadium and track, a baseball stadium, a softball field, a soccer stadium, and several racquetball courts. The campus also has a ropes course, gymnasium, and putting green. The university offers extensive recreational programming to their students and some limited programming to the general community. Laxon Auditorium and Harlan Adams Theatre provide year-round cultural programs open to the public. The university also provides a museum program in conjunction with the community board. The California State University, Chico aquatics program currently uses the CARD pools because they do not have their own aquatic facility. The university is in the process of constructing a new student recreation center, the Wildcat Recreation Center; however, it is anticipated that it will not be available to the general public for use. The center will be a full-scale recreation center with both a competitive and leisure pool available to students and staff. The only facility currently lacking on CUSC campus is a special events facility, as there is not adequate land available on campus to locate such a facility.

D. Private Recreation Resources

The contribution of private and nonprofit recreation providers in the Chico community has been tremendously important over the years. There are four separate Little League organizations in the community that offer baseball to local youth and who have a deep and proud tradition: Westside Little League; Eastside Little League; Central Chico Little League; and El Rancho Little League. There are also two dedicated ballfield complexes available for these leagues to use: the Westside Little League Complex, located in north Chico near the airport on Marauder Lane; and the

Eastside Little League Complex located in south Chico on Southgate Avenue. Each complex has fields for team use.

Numerous private health and fitness clubs and facilities located in and around Chico provide citizens with a wide range of recreation opportunities. As there are no dedicated public recreation centers in the community that offer health and fitness amenities, these private facilities are critical in offering these types of services to residents of Chico. Some of these facilities include: 24 Hour Fitness; Chico Sports Club; Chico Racquet Club and Resort; Gold's Gym and Fitness; In Motion Fitness; Fit-One Fitness; and the North Valley Athletic Club.

Other important private for profit and nonprofit organizations that provide valuable recreation services and facilities in the community include: the Boys and Girls Club; AMF Orchard Lanes; Butte Creek Country Club; Cal Skate; Canyon Oaks Golf Course; Tuscan Ridge Golf Course; Bidwell Golf Course; the Elks Club; Off-the-Wall Soccer; and the Cinemark Theatre.

Chapter Three

Issues and Needs Analysis



"Whereas companies – or sports teams, for that matter – that get financial incentives can pull up and leave at virtually a moment's notice, investments in amenities like urban parks, for example, last for generations. Other amenities – like bike lanes or off-road trails for running, cycling, rollerblading, or just walking your dog – benefit a wide swath of the population."

– Richard Florida, *Rise of the Creative Class*, Perseus Books Group, 2002

This chapter documents the issues and needs that influence the types and number of parks and recreation facilities that are needed in the community. The needs assessment phase of a parks and recreation master plan documents the demand for services from current and future residents and, in association with the inventory of existing facilities, highlights potential areas of shortfall or oversupply, which in turn will give direction to future master plan recommendations. Identifying levels of satisfaction, perceptions, use patterns, and priorities for recreational programs and facilities through contact with the user public is an important part of this process. Accurately assessing the current and future needs of residents requires a diverse approach, using many different techniques to gather information. Collectively, the data from these various sources creates a picture of what is needed within the CARD boundary, and can serve as the basis from which to develop a list of projects, priorities and actions, which will be the next step in this planning process. Each technique used in this process provides valuable information, but the data from any one technique should not be viewed in isolation and without comparing the needs to the Vision, Goals, and Objectives of the community.

Areas of the community that do not have convenient, safe access to neighborhood and community parks were identified in Chapter Two. This chapter includes population and growth projections, demographic characteristics, and locations of planned residential growth, which may affect the locations and quantities of additional parklands, amenities, and sports facilities. Other similar communities were also surveyed to determine the levels of service they provide for parkland and common recreation facilities. This database serves as a benchmark when determining the levels of service that are appropriate for Chico.



Chico in the Fall

Recreational preferences and the level of demand for additional parks and recreational opportunities are also addressed in this chapter. Pertinent information from national databases on recreation participation levels and data from the California Outdoor Recreation Plan 2002 have been considered. Two public open houses were held to solicit input from the general public, and comment forms with questions related to the master planning process were made available to the public. Other members from the public, local business community, CUSD, California State University, Chico, and CARD and City staff also participated in Technical and Citizen Advisory Committees to help provide insight to the issues and needs present in the community. Additionally, interviews were conducted with representatives of other public and nonprofit recreation providers in Chico to assess any specific needs their organizations may have.

The results of this analysis are summarized at the end of the chapter.

A. Population and Demographic Characteristics

In 2007, the City of Chico had an estimated population of 85,150 people in the incorporated area, while the larger Chico urban area has a total of approximately 105,425 residents¹. According to City and CARD staff, the Chico Urban Area is considered to have approximately the same population as people who live within the entire CARD boundary. The Chico Urban Area is defined as the area in which CARD currently collects developer impact fees. The areas of collection are those parcels within the City of Chico sphere of influence, but outside of the Chico City Limits. The average household size for the City of Chico was 2.57 people, which is slightly higher than the Butte County average of 2.40. The median age of the population in Chico is 26.4, significantly lower than the average of the State of California. Approximately 21% of the population is under the age of 18, with 11% age 5 to 14 – the predominant age of children who are most active in programmed recreational sports leagues. Approximately 9.6% of the total population in Chico is age 65 or older; 41.4% are age 20 to 34, and 25.2% are age 35 to 64². Table 3.1 illustrates these numbers in detail.

The ethnic makeup of Chico is slightly less diverse when compared to state and regional averages, with whites comprising 76% of the population. Approximately 10% of the population reports some level of Latino descent, 5% are Asian, 2% are African American, and less than 1% is American Indian. Approximately 6% of the population in Chico reports some combination of more than one race. Changes in diversity should be monitored over time to determine if changes in culturally related programs or facility design based on ethnic preferences and culture should be made.

¹ All current and future projected population figures provided by Cliff Sellars, City of Chico Planning Department, February 2007.

² U.S. Census Bureau, 2005 American Community Survey.

Table 3.1 Chico Age Distribution

Location	Median Age	Under 5 years	5 to 14 years	15 to 19 years	20 to 34 years	35 to 54 years	55 to 64 years	Ages 65+
Chico	26.4	6.9%	11.0%	5.9%	41.4%	19.2%	6.0%	9.6%
California	33.3	7.3%	15.6%	7.2%	22.4%	29.0%	7.7%	10.8%

Note: California State University, Chico population is included in the 20-34 age group. This could add as many as 15,000 to total population.

The population of Chico is aging, as are many areas of California and the U.S. By the year 2030 there will be more Americans over age 65 (20% of the total population) than under age 18³. Parkland will continue to be an important element to neighborhoods and communities regardless of the age of residents, but the programs and facilities may need to adjust in the near term to meet the needs of an active, yet somewhat less mobile and athletic clientele. Being physically active is key in maintaining independence and a high quality of life, and our society and media are certainly emphasizing this in recent years. In general, people become less physically active as they get older; nearly 40% of people over the age of 55 report no leisure-time physical activity. Challenging exercises and physical activities, done regularly, can help many older adults improve their health, even when done at a moderate level⁴. It should be recognized, however, that the demographic characteristics of the community will shift again over time. As such, CARD and the City of Chico should continue to focus on providing parks, trails, greenways, open space, facilities, and programs to promote physical and social activities throughout a person’s entire life span, meeting the needs of all ages.



Senior Activities at the CARD Community Center

B. Future Growth and Development

The projected population of incorporated Chico is expected to increase to approximately 138,925 by the year 2030. The annual growth rate for the Chico incorporated area is assumed to be 2.25%, consisting of 2% new development and 0.25% annexation. For purposes of the growth model, annexation was distributed evenly over the entire growth period, but is likely to occur in cycles of significant incorporated population growth attributable to annexation, and periods of no or little growth attributable to annexation. Major remaining annexation areas include: Chapman-Mulberry; Lassen Avenue/Eaton Road east of the freeway; East Avenue/Manzanita (likely in 2007); and south of West Sacramento Avenue.

³ US Administration on Aging, website accessed January 2006.

⁴ National Institute on Aging – Exercise: A Guide from the National Institute on Aging, 2001.

The projected population of the larger Chico urban area is expected to increase to 157,475 by the year 2030. The growth rate for the Chico urban area is assumed to be 1.76%, consisting of 1.61% new incorporated development and 0.15% new unincorporated development within the CARD district boundary.

Much of the anticipated population growth in Chico and its associated urban area is expected to be associated with new, residential developments. Residential development projects have been platted and approved throughout the city in the last two years. When these developments are built, growth will occur in a few specific areas of the city: in the southeast, northwest, and north-central Chico. Known development projects include Meriam Park, with a potential 3,400 residential units; a development along South Dead Horse Slough in east Chico, with a potential 1,300 residential units; multiple developments around DeGarmo Park in northwest Chico, with a total of 921 potential residential units; and multiple developments in north Chico located east of 6th Avenue and north of East Avenue, with 1,216 residential units. With an average of 2.57 people per household, these developments alone represent more than 17,000 new people.

As the community continues to grow, it is essential that the parks, recreation, trails, and open space system be established in a proactive manner, and in a way that results in a green infrastructure system for the Chico community.

C. Peer Community Comparisons

A detailed community comparison study was conducted that examined the parkland and facility provisions of other similar communities in the Northern Central Valley region. These communities included: Redding, Rocklin, Lincoln, Yuba City, Roseville, Sunrise Park and Recreation District, Elk Grove Community Services District, and Mission Oaks Recreation and Parks District. Most communities have standards for neighborhood and community

parkland that is somewhat higher than the standard in Chico. The average level of service standard of neighborhood parkland of other communities is 3.7 acres per 1,000 people, compared to Chico's 0.9 acre. The average level of service standard for community parkland is 2.5 acres per 1,000 people, compared to Chico's 1.6 acres.

Table 3.2 is a summary of the average number of facilities provided by other similar communities (those providing the highest level of service in each category), and indicates the amount of developed parkland they provide (see Appendix B for the complete table). Interestingly, most of these communities have not yet achieved their standards and are providing a level of service slightly lower than what they have adopted. The actual level of service being provided by the top communities in the comparison is 2.36 acres per 1,000 people for neighborhood parkland, and 2.10 acres per 1,000 people of community parkland. This is very typical of communities across the U.S., as they are often in a catch-up mode and invariably struggle with implementation tools that allow them to achieve their targets. Nonetheless, the level of service for both neighborhood and community parkland in Chico is significantly lower than the average being provided in other similar communities. Chico provides a level of service of 1.56 acres per 1,000 residents for community parkland, and a level of service of 0.28 acre per 1,000 residents for neighborhood parkland. When 10 acres for Lower Bidwell Park, which serves neighborhood park functions to those living within 0.5 mile, is factored in, Chico's level of service rises to 0.37 acre per 1,000 residents.

Table 3.2 Summary of Community Comparisons

FACILITIES		
	Average Level of Service for Compared Communities (population per facility)	Current Level of Service for Greater Chico Area (population* per facility)
Multi-use Fields	3,919	5,271
Softball/Baseball Fields	4,723	4,217
Outdoor Basketball Courts	5,778	11,714
Tennis Courts	6,313	13,178
Swimming Pools	28,592	35,142
Disc Golf Courses	68,300	52,713
Skateboard Parks	49,921	105,425
Roller Rinks	68,300	N/A
PARKLAND		
	Average Level of Service for Compared Communities (developed parkland per 1,000 people)	Current Level of Service for Greater Chico Area (developed parkland per 1,000 people)
Community Parkland	2.10	1.56
Neighborhood Parkland	2.36	0.33
Adjusted Neighborhood Parkland**	N/A	0.42
TOTAL DEVELOPED PARKLAND	4.46	1.98

Note: Chico Unified School District and California State University, Chico facilities were not included as part of this comparison information

* 2006 greater urban area population 105,425, City of Chico.

** Effective level of service is calculated by factoring in 10 acres parkland for Lower Bidwell, which serves neighborhood park functions to residents within 0.5-mile radius. Actual neighborhood park acreage does not increase and acreage is not double counted between neighborhood and community parks.

Although many other communities have greenways and linear parks in their system, and often have standards for them, they are not normally factored into developed park levels of service. It is most common for communities to view standards for developed parks (i.e., neighborhood and community parks) separate from greenways and linear parks, as they are not designed nor intended to provide the specific active amenities and facilities needed in developed parks.

In general, the level of service for most recreation facilities is also well below that of similar communities. When comparing the number of courts and multi-use fields that Chico provides with the number provided by the best-served similar communities, Chico's level of service is significantly lower. The number of tennis and basketball courts is half, and multi-use fields and softball/baseball fields is approximately two-thirds the level of service in comparable communities. When the fields at the local Little League complexes are factored in, however, the level of service increases to

about what is being offered in other similar communities. Tennis courts are also in short supply in comparison to what is being offered in other similar communities. Chico provides one court for every 13,178 residents, compared to other similar communities in the area that provide an average of one court for every 6,313 residents. There are two private Little League complexes in Chico that provide a total of ten fields. While these are not available for use to the general public, they should be considered in the overall total of ballfield facilities because Little League organizations provide the large majority of youth baseball opportunities in the community.

Outdoor basketball courts are also in short supply compared to what is being offered in other similar communities. In some neighborhoods, basketball hoops in the streets in front of houses are very common. If a court were provided in the local neighborhood park, these youth and adults could conduct legitimate pick-up games and, in the process, get to know each other. Chico provides one court for every

11,714 residents, compared to other similar communities in the area that provide an average of one court for every 5,778 residents.



Outdoor Basketball at Hooker Oak Park

Other popular recreation amenities that were surveyed include skateparks, roller rinks, disc golf courses, and swimming pools. Similar communities in the North Central Valley are providing approximately one skatepark per 49,921 residents. Chico already has one skatepark in downtown, giving the community a level of service of one skatepark for every 105,425 residents. Likewise, similar communities are providing one roller hockey rink for every 63,300 residents. Currently Chico does not offer a roller hockey rink, giving it a level of service of zero. Similar communities are providing one disc golf course per 63,300 residents. Although Chico has an unofficial nine-hole and 18-hole course in Upper Bidwell Park, the future of these facilities is uncertain as the new master management plan for Bidwell Park is being developed. CARD currently has one nine-hole disc golf course at Hooker Oak Park. Chico also provides one outdoor pool for every 35,142 residents, whereas the other similar communities provide one pool for every 28,592 residents.

D. State of California Recreation Trends and Issues

According to the Colorado Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) 2002, there are several factors and issues that are likely to drive the impacts on the delivery of park and recreation services in the coming years; however, the greatest of these is an increase in population and demographic shifts that are occurring. When the realities of population growth and demographic shifts are combined with the active lifestyle of Californians, park and recreation providers need to be prepared for steady and constant use of their facilities. Other important recreation trends and issues include:



Swimming at Sycamore Pool

1. Robust Population Growth

This is one of the greatest challenges affecting park and recreation providers in California. Fueled by births and migration, California’s population grew from a little less than 30 million to almost 34 million during the 1990s, an increase of almost 14%. This robust pace of growth is expected to continue, with the population projection for 2020 increasing to 45 million Californians. Related to the overall increase in population are greater urban densities, where much of the population growth is occurring. Similarly, it is expected that intra-state relocation will shift recreation demand into

new areas, particularly those in the Sierra Foothills and Central Valley

2. Demographic Shifts

Related to population increases, demographic shifts will also have a large influence in both the demand and provision of recreation in the future. The following is a brief description of the demographic shifts that are anticipated.

3. Ethnic and Cultural Diversity

California's residents are more multi-ethnic and multi-cultural than ever. Since the largest racial group (white) is now less than 50% of the population, there is no ethnic majority in the state. According to the CORP, by 2020 California's population of European descent will have grown only 4%, while the Hispanic population will have grown 58% and the Asian/Pacific Islander population will have grown 55%. The African American population will have grown 20%, and American Indian population will have grown 29%. California's population mix will have shifted even more by 2030, when Hispanics will be the largest demographic group, comprising 43% of the state's population. Consideration of these shifts must occur as recreation providers plan for their future.

4. Baby Boomers and Baby Bounce

Nearly one-third of the state's population is between 35 and 55 years of age. In 20 years, this group, which encompasses the Baby Boom generation, will be active seniors 55 to 75 years old – that is twice the size of the current 55 to 75 population. With life expectancy and good health increasing, researchers predict tomorrow's seniors will be more active, and will stay active as senior citizens for a longer period of life than previous generations. Recreation providers in California will need to plan carefully for the needs of this quickly emerging group.

5. Income Inequality

As California's population increases, the number of people at the lower end of the income scale is increasing at a disproportionately higher rate. Recreation becomes a crucial quality of life issue, and people with lower incomes rely more heavily on public recreation facilities. It is suspected that outdoor recreation needs of low income people are different, mostly due to the lack of discretionary income, time, and transportation options for outdoor recreation. Barriers to participation include a lack of finances, lack of transportation, lack of free time, and lack of information about recreational opportunities. It is becoming increasingly more important that public recreation providers offer opportunities to disadvantaged populations to participate in recreation activities.

6. Shifting Interests and Preferences

The use of California's park and recreation areas is heavy and continues to increase. In the wake of September 11, 2001, tourism in California was expected to decrease. According to the State Office of Tourism, however, the result has been the opposite. Californians are choosing to vacation closer to home, traveling more within the state, and more by car, visiting in-state destinations such as state and national parks.

7. Heightened Importance of Outdoors for Recreation

In the study on "Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California 1997" (Public Opinions and Attitudes Survey), 98% of respondents indicated that just being in the outdoors is an important part of the enjoyment of their most favorite activities. More than 80% of respondents indicated that outdoor recreation is *important* or *very important* to their quality of life.

8. High Demand for Traditional, Outdoor Recreation

Californians spent approximately 2.2 billion days participating in outdoor recreation activities during 1997. Traditional recreation remains popular, and as more Californians take advantage of state, local, and federal parks, the demand for recreation facilities will only increase. Generally, Californians tend to spend the most time participating in activities that are less expensive, require less equipment, and need fewer technical skills.

9. Other Preferences, Favorites, Shifts, and Interests

Following are other trends and shifts in recreation that will influence how recreation providers should plan for the future.

Nature Study, including Wildlife Viewing

One of the activities that continues to increase in popularity is nature study. Based on the Public Opinions and Attitudes Survey conducted in 1997, it is one of the few activities that have steadily increased in popularity. Nature study/wildlife viewing is a trend with significant potential because it is a preferred activity by two very large future demographic groups: Hispanics and seniors.

Adventure and High-Risk Activities

There is a continuing interest in a broad range of adventure activities, such as mountain biking, rock climbing, and wilderness backpacking. Research suggests that this demand is from a variety of age groups, including the Baby Boom generation, which continues to engage in physically active, resource-based recreation.

Rapid Growth of Motorized Recreation

Californians use of off-highway vehicles continues to rapidly increase.

High-Tech Recreation

Many technical advances are changing the equipment used for alpine and Nordic skiing, snow shoeing, kayaking, skate boarding, and mountain biking.

Some Traditional Activities in Decline

Not all outdoor recreation activities are increasing in popularity. Hunting and fishing, for example, continue to decline. Baby Boomers often grew up participating in these activities with their families, but Gen X and Gen Y children grew up with computers and video games. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also found that blacks and Hispanics are far less likely to hunt and fish than the general population.

In addition to State of California trends in recreation, broader trends in recreation are also occurring at the national level. Each year, the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association (SGMA) commissions a survey of American households to determine the most popular recreation activities. Tables describing these trends and activities are included in Appendix C.



Maintenance Activities at Community Park

E. Recreational Program Participation and Needs

Many of the large, intensively used facilities in a parks and recreation system are used by participants of organized programs.

Understanding program participation rates and trends allows a community to identify specific activities that may be underserved by facilities. Programs that have waiting lists may indicate a need for either more facilities or program staff.

In addition, different age groups, abilities, and skills often require different types and sizes of facilities. Understanding the differences in these user groups will help CARD more specifically determine what needs to be provided in the system.

To determine program usage, CARD staff, as well as local interest groups that provide recreational activities, were interviewed to determine how their organization and programs utilize CARD facilities. The interest groups interviewed were also asked for information regarding the quality of facilities they use, the need for additional facilities, the size of their organization, and how it functions within the community. CARD offers a variety of organized sports and activities to the community. Additionally, a number of other programmed sports are available from nonprofit and private organizations in Chico, including the American Legion Nuts-N-Suns baseball program, Chico Youth Soccer League, Senior Softball, El Rancho Little League, Aqua Jets Swim Team, North Valley Aquatics, North Valley Hockey and Sports Complex, Chico Area Youth Lacrosse, Chico Equestrian Association and Do-It-Leisure. Other private and nonprofit organizations and interest groups providing nonathletic-oriented recreational activities within Chico were interviewed as well. These groups include Butte College and Butte County CAA Senior Nutrition.

1. Athletic / Sport Recreation Program Activity

Athletic and sports activities are very popular in Chico. However, CARD staff reports that they are limited in adding any new programs due to a severe lack of indoor and outdoor facility space. They suggest that a direct relationship exists between overall participation numbers and the demand for field, court, and gym space. Over the past several years, CARD has maintained a consistent number of adult sports teams, as it is limited to accommodate more with the existing field, court, and gym space in the system.

Baseball / Softball Programs

There has been steady and increasing demand for organized youth baseball and adult softball within Chico. Youth baseball in the community is provided through the American Legion Nuts-N-Suns program, as well as through the four competitive little league programs: Eastside Little League, Westside Little League, Central Chico Little League, and El Rancho Little League. Representatives from the American Legion report a great relationship with CARD. They state that CARD tries hard to accommodate all of their needs and does an excellent job with very limited resources. However, they suggest that there is currently not enough regulation baseball field space in Chico to meet the demand from all groups desiring to use regulation fields in the community. The only regulation baseball field available for use is at Hooker Oak Park, and it is often overprogrammed. They also suggest that the regulation baseball fields at Hooker Oak Park are in need of rehabilitation due to deteriorating conditions. Other items at this facility need attention, as well as the replacement of the restroom facility and seating.



Hooker Oak Park

Representatives from El Rancho Little League report a good relationship with CARD, although their interaction is relatively limited. El Rancho, and other Little League organizations in Chico, primarily use their own fields for practice and games, yet they still have scheduling conflicts

and would like to use public fields more often if possible. However, they suggest that more access to public field space is needed in Chico. Currently, most public fields are over-programmed with adult softball, which limits the time youth sports can use the fields.

Adult softball in Chico is provided primarily through CARD. Participation in adult softball has been steady over the last several years. CARD staff reports that the demand for adult softball is high; however, due to limited field space, they are not able to increase the number of teams in existing leagues. Representatives from the senior softball organization report steady participation. They primarily utilize Sycamore Field in One-Mile Recreation Area and have no major scheduling conflicts or issues.

Aquatics

Swimming and aquatics programs in Chico are tremendously popular. General aquatics programs are offered by CARD and include lap swims, swimming lessons, lifeguard classes and aquatic adventure camps. While participation in these programs has remained steady over the last several years, CARD staff reports that the numbers do not adequately express the demand on existing aquatics facilities. These facilities are scheduled with back-to-back programming, as early as 5:30 am and as late as 10 pm, Monday through Saturday from April through September. Additionally, CARD now has users contracted for both aquatic facilities for the months of October through March. These groups include Chico Unified School District; California State University, Chico; North Valley Aquatics; and the Aqua Jets. Without an additional multi-use aquatic facility, CARD is unable to offer expanded or additional aquatics programming.



Swimming at Shapiro Pool

Organized competitive swimming for both youth and adults is organized through the Aqua Jets Swim team and North Valley Aquatics. The Aqua Jets swimming program has a robust and popular program and reports a very good relationship with CARD. As none of the pools in Chico are 50 meter regulation size, the Aqua Jets find it difficult hosting any large swim meets. Representatives from the Aqua Jets feel that the Chico community is ready for a new aquatic facility that is multi-use in nature.

North Valley Aquatics hosts the local United States Swimming (USS) team in Chico for both youth and adults. North Valley Aquatics also reports a very good relationship with CARD. Representatives from this organization also state that the Chico area is very much in need of a modern, multi-use aquatic facility with a competition level pool, capable of hosting large events and meets. No facility exists between Sacramento and Redding of this nature, and such a facility would allow for multiple aquatic programs to flourish, in addition to organized swimming.

Soccer

Organized adult soccer in Chico is provided through CARD, and youth soccer is provided through the Chico Youth Soccer League (CYSL), Chico Cal and Butte United Soccer. While a representative from Butte United Soccer could not be reached, representatives from the CYSL and CARD staff report strong

and steady participation in their programs. CYSL reports an excellent relationship with CARD. Although there has been tremendous pressure on the existing fields in the past, it is anticipated that the opening of DeGarmo Park will help alleviate some of this. CYSL will remain at Community Park, while other programs will move to DeGarmo. They do feel, however, that a few more fields would greatly help the crowding that sometimes occurs on fields between all the sports competing for space. CARD staff has indicated that the fields at DeGarmo Park will help to alleviate some scheduling conflicts; however, without fields in addition to those at DeGarmo, CARD is not likely to be able to increase their level of programs or offer additional adult teams.



Soccer at Community Park

Lacrosse

Organized lacrosse in Chico is offered through the Chico Area Youth Lacrosse Association. No organized adult lacrosse is offered in the community. Chico Area Youth Lacrosse is a small but rapidly growing and well-respected organization, whose junior varsity team won the California State title in 2006. Currently, they utilize the field at Chico Junior High School for practice, which is in very poor condition. They hold games at Chico High School, which is in fair condition; and occasionally at Community Park, which is in good condition.

Representatives report that their biggest need at the moment is for a field in good condition

they can use without scheduling conflicts with other groups that opposing teams are comfortable playing on.

Roller Hockey

Organized roller hockey is provided through the North Valley Hockey and Sports Complex. North Valley is a grass roots organization created to provide roller hockey for the community when it did not exist before. Currently, they are limited to renting space at Cal Skate only two days per week, and have no other options for practice or games. Therefore, they generally have to travel outside the community to participate in tournaments. The group has already purchased a regulation rink and would like to partner with CARD to have it placed in a local park. It would be ideal if a roof could be provided for the rink and the ability to lock it after hours so that the surface can be protected. They feel a partnership would benefit the community by providing a well-needed recreation amenity that the community is lacking.

Other Organized Youth and Adult Sports and Athletics

Several other organized sports programs for both adults and youth are provided in the community by CARD. For adults, CARD provides basketball, flag football, dodgeball, and volleyball. These programs have steady participation from the community. For youth, CARD provides volleyball, flag football, basketball, track, field hockey, conditioning classes, and various sports clinics. CARD reports steady participation in all youth programs as well.

Like the outdoor programs mentioned above, CARD indoor programs are also limited due to a high demand for courts and gyms, and a limited number of facilities available in the community. The Field House at Community Park is programmed from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm each week night for most of the year. Gym space is also used at Pleasant Valley High, and Chico, Bidwell, and Marsh Junior High Schools. Shared space with schools is often a challenge as their functions take first priority.

Consequently, without direct control over the facilities CARD uses, they cannot improve or increase their program offerings.

The CARD Board of Directors and CARD staff have a great desire to increase youth sports and athletic offerings. Over the past several years, CARD has not had sufficient staffing levels for this to happen. However, over the past year staffing levels were increased and six new programs were added, thereby placing more demand on recreation facilities. Future growth of youth sports and athletics programs will be limited unless CARD is able to secure additional facility space. One program that seems to be flourishing is the Upward Bound basketball program, which is operated through the Evangelical Free Church in Chico. Their program is a faith-based program that seems to be gaining momentum

2. Non-Athletic / Sport Recreational Program Activity

There are a variety of other nonsport related recreation activities offered in the community through both CARD and private and nonprofit organizations. CARD provides invaluable youth camp and after-school programs to the community. Participation in most of these programs is high and has remained steady for several years. Most after-school programs are housed in the Dorothy F. Johnson Center, the Pleasant Valley Recreation Center, and at 11 CUSD elementary school properties. With the addition of 21st Century and ASES grant funding, enrollment has nearly doubled in 6 of these programs. The majority of CARD's 6-10 camps per year are held during the summer. Most of these camps occur at CARD facilities, while some occur offsite. Several new camps were added this past year also. While space for outdoor camps appears to be adequate at the moment, indoor camp space is limited as they must compete with the leisure interest classes for facility time. Additional indoor programming space would help tremendously in alleviating pressure on existing facilities.

Numerous other adult and youth leisure interest classes are offered through CARD, including dance, art, music, fitness, education, computer, and outdoor classes among others.

Participation in most CARD classes is strong and has remained steady over the years. Leisure interest classes are held at the Dorothy F. Johnson Center, Pleasant Valley Recreation Center, CARD Community Center, and many nondistrict locations throughout Chico. All CARD buildings are scheduled with classes each night of the week from 4:00 to 9:30 pm. CARD is severely limited in increasing its leisure interest programming for both youth and adults due to a lack of available facility space. Staff reports a strong demand for both additional classes as well as additional programming, but is simply unable without more facility space. To compound the problem, CARD facilities are also used for staff meetings and outside rentals due to a lack of adequate meeting space in its facilities.



Teen Center at Dorothy F. Johnson Center

Until February 2007, Butte College had been providing some level of organized recreational and leisure interest programming for the community. Many of these programs and classes were duplicative with those offered through CARD. Representatives from Butte College stated that they have maintained a

good relationship with CARD; however, agency leaders made the decision to transfer all duplicative service to CARD for their management. Butte College will then focus their attention on other programs and services. Butte College will remain a partner with CARD by providing instructors for these classes and helping with the scheduling of non-CARD facilities.

Another provider of recreation services in the Chico community that was contacted for their input is Do-It-Leisure. Do-It-Leisure is a division of the Butte County Work Training Center that provides recreation and education services for people with developmental disabilities. They utilize the CARD Community Center and the Pleasant Valley Recreation Center for some of their programs. They report an excellent relationship with CARD; however, they express there is a need for more recreational indoor and outdoor facilities in Chico that are oriented to people with disabilities. One major request they have is that if a new aquatic facility is constructed, that it be ADA friendly and provide a zero entry pool.

Another organization providing recreation to the Chico community is the Chico Equestrian Association. Their goal is to ensure that riding opportunities are maintained and kept open in the community. They maintain the riding arena in Upper Bidwell Park, provide social and educational opportunities related to equestrian riding for the community, help to maintain trails, and advocate for open access for equestrian enthusiasts. Representatives report there is a very good trail system in Chico, and they want to ensure that no trails, or access to trails, are lost to future development. One need they report is for some type of picnic facility located near the riding arena in Upper Bidwell Park. They would also like to see CARD become involved in some level of equestrian programming. They feel there is a desire and need for it in the community, and their members would be willing to provide the instructors classes.

3. Multi-Generational (i.e., senior) Recreation

Multi-generational (i.e., senior) recreation in Chico is provided primarily through CARD. CARD offers a small but well used senior center in the Community Center. The senior center is adequately staffed with open hours during the day to provide senior activities; some other activities are provided at the Dorothy F. Johnson Center. While the Community Center can provide some programming during the day, it doubles as classroom space for leisure interest classes in the evening. Consequently, CARD is unable to provide any fixed recreation equipment or accessories to make it a true senior or intergenerational community center. Senior programming is an area that the district would like to place added focus on in the future. As such, any future community center constructed by CARD should include an active multi-services center component.

Other multi-generational (i.e., senior) services in Chico are provided through Butte County Senior CAA Nutrition. This organization provides recreation and educational programs for seniors with disabilities. Representatives report an excellent relationship with CARD and that CARD is very supportive of their program and easy to work with. They do indicate that there is a need for more indoor facilities in Chico geared towards people with disabilities. An indoor zero entry pool would be very beneficial to the community. They also report that CARD has been good about making any necessary ADA upgrades to its facilities and amenities, yet this should remain a consideration in all future park development.

F. Existing and Future Recreation Facilities Needs

Table 3.3 lists the current level of service for various recreation facilities that groups and individuals in Chico use, as well as the average level of service for other communities in the North Central Valley. Additionally, the CAC developed a target level of service for each facility category. These targets are very similar

Table 3.3. Recreation Facility Level of Service Analysis for Chico Urban Area

Recreation Facilities				2007 (pop. 105,425)			2030 (pop. 157,475)	
Recreation Facility	2007 Chico Current Level of Service	Target Standard	Average Level of Service for Similar Communities (Population per facility)	Chico 2007 # of Facilities*	Number Needed to Meet Target Standard	Chico 2007 Deficit**	Number Needed to Maintain Average Level of Service in 2030	Chico 2030 Total Deficit**
Multi-use Fields	5,271	4,000	3,919	20	26	<6>	39	<19>
Softball/ Baseball Fields	4,217	5,000	4,723	25 [Ⓞ]	21	<0>	31	<6>
Outdoor Basketball/ Volleyball Courts	11,714	5,000	5,778	9	21	<12>	31	<22>
Tennis Courts	13,178	6,000	6,313	8	18	<10>	26	<18>
Recreation Swimming Pools	35,142	25,000	28,592	3	4	<1>	6	<3>
Disc Golf Courses	52,713	50,000	68,300	1	2	<1>	3	<1>
Skateboard Parks	105,425	50,000	49,921	1	2	<1>	3	<2>
Roller Hockey Rink	N/A	50,000	68,300	0	2	<2>	3	<3>
Full Scale Community Recreation Center	105,425	50,000	N/A	1	2	<1>	3	<2>

Note: Chico Unified School District and California State University, Chico courts are not included in chart due to availability. Courts not open to public during school hours.

* Includes fields located and planned for construction at Baroni and DeGarmo (Phase 1) Parks.

** Based on target standard.

Ⓞ Includes 10 fields at the Eastside and Westside Little League Complexes.

to the average level of service for the other similar communities in the community comparison exercise and, in some cases, even more stringent. Based on these targets, both current and future recreation facility needs and deficits are given for each facility.

Sports such as tennis, soccer, softball, baseball, football, and lacrosse are typically enjoyed by a significant percentage of the population, especially families with children. These facilities in developed parks are in high demand by both CARD programs and nonprofit sports organizations, and have been experiencing significant increases in participation.

When comparing the number of courts, gyms, and fields that Chico provides with the numbers provided by other similar communities, Chico's level of service is significantly lower. The number of tennis and basketball courts is half, and multi-use fields and softball/baseball fields is approximately two-thirds the level of service in comparable communities. When the fields at the local Little League complexes are factored in, however, the level of service increases to about what is being offered in other similar communities. In general, the recreation facility deficits indicated above are consistent with reports from CARD staff. In particular, CARD staff suggests that without additional recreation facilities, athletic fields, and indoor recreation

space, they are not able to expand the program offerings. Therefore, there is an overall need for additional multi-use fields, baseball fields, outdoor basketball courts, tennis courts, a skatepark, roller rinks, an aquatic facility, and other community recreation center.

In addition to CARD leagues, there are numerous outside groups that use outdoor sports facilities. The user groups have also indicated a shortage of field space for programmed sports. Some youth baseball organizations state that the public fields in Chico are overused and there are not enough fields available to meet the current demand. They feel the development of fields is not keeping pace with the growth of baseball in the community. Although some of the Little League organizations in Chico have their own facilities, they too state that they could benefit from the availability of extra field space. One baseball organization, the American Legion Nuts-n-Suns, reports that the community would benefit from the addition of at least two more regulation sized baseball fields at a minimum. The only regulation sized public baseball field in Chico is at Hooker Oak Park, and it is constantly over-programmed.



Rex Murphy Field at Hooker Oak Park

User groups of multi-purpose fields indicate a slight shortage of fields and some scheduling conflicts. One soccer group indicated that the opening of the fields at DeGarmo will help with scheduling conflicts at Community Park and

relieve some of the pressure on the fields, but there is still a need for more fields in the community. The organized lacrosse group in Chico reports a great need for a field they can both practice on and host games and tournaments. They currently play at Chico Junior High School fields. As the community continues to grow, the pressure on existing fields will only increase and more demand will be placed on already heavily used fields.

Tennis courts are in short supply in comparison to what is being offered in other similar communities. Chico provides one court for every 13,178 residents, compared to the top one-third of other communities in the area that provide an average of 1 court for every 6,313 residents. Outdoor basketball courts are also in short supply compared to what is being offered in other similar communities. In some neighborhoods, basketball hoops in the streets in front of houses are very common. Chico provides one court for every 11,714 residents, compared to the top one-third of other communities in the area that provide an average of one court for every 5,778 residents. In the absence of space in existing neighborhood parks to construct full courts, half courts should be considered, which would help improve this level of service.

Additional sports fields and courts will also be in demand as the Chico's population grows. The population of the Chico urban area is expected to reach approximately 157,475 people by the year 2030. When the target standards are applied to this projected population, there will be large deficits in both recreational amenities if nothing additional is built or acquired. If no additional parkland or recreational amenities are added to the parks and recreation system in Chico with a projected population of 157,475 people, the following deficits will exist after the planned development of DeGarmo and Baroni parks: 20 multi-use fields; 6 baseball/softball fields; 22 outdoor basketball courts; 2 disc golf courses; and 18 tennis courts.

There has been strong demand for several types of facilities that are growing in popularity across the country, as well as in Chico: roller rinks, skate parks, dog parks, and disc golf courses. There is an organized roller hockey association in Chico that reports increasing participation and growing demand for a dedicated facility. Most other similar communities provide one or more regulation roller hockey facility for its residents. Other similar communities offer approximately one roller hockey rink for every 68,300 residents.

Communities in the North Central Valley are providing approximately one skate park per 49,921 residents. Target standards are similar to this number of one skate park for every 50,000 residents. Chico already has one skate park in downtown. Another facility is planned for future phases of DeGarmo Park that will provide a skate park in the northwest area of the city. In order to keep pace with expected growth by the year 2030, at least 2 more skate parks will be needed in the community.



Humboldt Skatepark

As there is only one dedicated enclosed dog park in Chico and only two off-leash areas at the USFS Genetic Resource Conservation Center and Bidwell Park, there is a need for more dog parks somewhere within CARD.

Disc golf is another sport that is rapidly gaining popularity throughout the country, as well as California. Organized disc golf is very popular

and the existing unapproved courses in Upper Bidwell Park receive heavy use. Other similar communities are offering one disc golf course for every 68,300 residents, and target standards suggest one disc golf course for every 50,000 people. CARD has constructed one family 9-hole disc golf course at Hooker Oak Park. If the courses in Upper Bidwell Park do not become official, two more courses located in other areas of Chico would be needed.

There is strong demand in the community for an additional outdoor aquatic facility. Swimming groups in Chico report a large need for a competition level pool capable of hosting meets. The current facilities at Pleasant Valley and Shapiro Pool are not desirable for competition and unsuitable to host large meets, as the pools do not conform to current standards. California State University, Chico also utilizes Shapiro Pool for classes, placing additional need to construct a new facility. Currently, there are no competition level aquatic facilities between Redding to the north and Roseville to the south, a total distance of approximately 180 miles. Both organized swim groups feel the time is good for a new aquatic facility that is multi-use in nature, and that the community would benefit from such a facility. Other user groups that provide therapeutic service for disabled residents also report the need for a zero entry pool.

Additionally, CARD staff reports that in reviewing the three-year comparison on aquatics programs, the numbers do not adequately express the demand on existing aquatic facilities. Comments received at the open house also strongly support the need for a multi-use outdoor aquatic facility, particularly one that offers play features and slides in addition to pools. Numerous communities throughout California and the rest of the U.S. are now providing multi-use aquatic facilities to their residents.

Other comments received from user groups, as well as the public at open houses held during

the needs assessment process, indicate there is strong support for additional indoor recreational amenities. Most comments received included requests for amenities in a few primary focus areas. These amenities include additional indoor court space, an indoor aquatic facility, a teen center, more meeting space, more community gathering space, more gymnasium space, and full service catering kitchen attached to community gathering space. Combined, they form a core group of facilities that could be co-located into another community/recreation center.

Another area of concern associated with the Community Center relates to additional senior center space and amenities. While the Community Center can provide some senior programming during the day, it doubles as classroom space for leisure interest classes in the evening as well as community gathering space. Demand for senior related activities and facilities is expected to increase as the population ages. There is a clear need to address the lack of adequate space for seniors in Chico.

G. Existing and Future Parkland Needs

The City of Chico has a currently adopted standard of 5.0 acres of parkland per 1,000 people. This consists of 1.6 acres of community parkland, 0.9 acre of neighborhood parkland, and 2.5 acres of greenways. Currently, the City has an inventory that provides a level of service of 1.93 acres per 1,000 people of neighborhood and community parkland, and 2.67 acres per 1,000 people of greenways and linear parks. The level of service for community parks and greenways is near the established standard; however, through the needs assessment, it has been determined that the community park standard is not adequate to keep pace with other similar communities and the needs of residents who desire a high quality parks and recreation system.

The acres of neighborhood parks are well below the existing standard and provided at 0.28 acre per 1,000 people. This notable gap is even greater when compared to the level of service that other similar communities are providing, as well as parkland that is needed to accommodate the use areas that neighborhood parks are intended to provide. Even with the inclusion of neighborhood park acreage for Lower Bidwell, the level of service of 0.37 acre per 1,000 people is still somewhat lower than the adopted neighborhood park standard of 0.9 acre per 1,000 people. Additionally, the acres of community parkland is provided at 1.56 acres per 1,000 people, which is also below the existing standard. Through the needs assessment, it has been determined that both the neighborhood and community parkland standards are not adequate to keep pace with similar communities and the needs of residents who desire a high quality parks and recreation system.

Therefore, it is recommended that the usable parkland standards for both community and neighborhood parks be increased. Increasing these standards will help to provide the community with the additional parkland it so desperately needs. It will also give CARD and the City the policy basis it needs to compel developers to provide both adequate amounts of parkland as well as suitable sites for parkland. As such, it is recommended that the neighborhood parkland standards be increased to 1.5 acres per 1,000 people and the community parkland standard be increased to 2.5 acres per 1,000 people. Table 3.4 illustrates the existing level of service for community and neighborhood parks, and shows the overall parkland deficit that exists based on the new recommended standards.

Table 3.4. Existing Parkland Level of Service for Chico Urban Area
Current CARD Population = 105,425

Parks	Chico Current Total Parkland	Chico Current Level of Service (acres/ 1,000 pop)	Acreage Needed to Meet Current Parkland Standard	New Standard (acres/ 1,000 pop.)	Acreage Needed to Meet New Standard	New Standards Parkland Deficit	Existing Undeveloped Parkland	Net Deficit
Community	164	1.56	169	2.5	264	<100>	25	<75>
Neighborhood	29	0.28	95	1.5	158	<129>	26	<103>
TOTAL	193	1.84	264	4.0	422	<230>	51	<178>
Adjusted Neighborhood Parklands*	39	.37	95	1.5	158	<119>	26	<93>

* Includes 10 acres of neighborhood parkland for Lower Bidwell.

In addition to not meeting its target level of service standard for neighborhood parkland, the distribution of existing parks throughout Chico does not provide equal access to many residents. Several underserved areas existing throughout the community and in many areas there is not adequate access across major barriers to nearby parks. These gaps in service are reflected on Map 3: Neighborhood Park Service Areas in Chapter Two.

As the population of the Chico area continues to increase, the overall level of service for community and neighborhood parkland will continue to decrease without additional parkland in the system. There will be an expected population increase in the Chico urban area of approximately 52,050 people by the year 2030. Table 3.5 illustrates the additional amount of acreage that will be needed for community and neighborhood parks to meet the new standard by the year 2030.

Table 3.5. Future Parkland Level of Service for Chico Urban Area

Projected Population Increase by 2030 = 52,050
(Total projected pop. in 2030 = 157,475)

Parks	Chico Current Parkland Standard (acres/ 1,000 pop.)	Additional Acreage Needed to Meet Current Parkland Standard	New Standard (acres/ 1,000 pop.)	Additional Acreage Needed to Meet New Standard
Community Parks	1.6	83	2.5	130
Neighborhood Parks	0.9	47	1.5	78
TOTAL	2.5	130	4.0	208

By the standards set in this plan, there is an existing deficit of approximately 178 acres of parkland; 75 acres of which are community parkland and 103 acres of which are neighborhood parkland. Based on the park classifications described in Chapter Two, this equals approximately 9 additional neighborhood parks, and one additional community park. To accommodate the anticipated population increase of approximately 52,050 people by the year 2030, there will be a need for an additional 130 acres of community parkland and a total of 78 acres of neighborhood parkland. Based on the park classifications described in Chapter Two, this equals approximately 7 additional neighborhood parks, and 1 to 2 additional community parks. Combined, this equals a total of approximately 386 acres of additional parkland that will be needed to meet the new standards by the year 2030.

Chapter Four Recommendations of the Master Plan



"By performing all the miraculous functions that people appreciate – cleaning the air, giving cool shade, providing space for recreation and play, offering attractive vistas, and furnishing outdoor environmental classrooms – parks improve the quality of life in a city."

– Peter Harnik, *Inside City Parks, ULI and Trust for Public Lands*, 2000

This chapter includes specific goals for CARD and the City of Chico related to parks and recreation, and also includes a discussion of the integration of this plan with other community planning efforts and specific project recommendations that are needed to meet existing and future park and recreation needs in the greater Chico urban area. A master plan map is also included that graphically depicts the locations of specific project recommendations. These recommendations include ways to address existing deficiencies, projected needs, changes in recreational habits, and other issues identified through the inventory and needs assessment.

A. Goals

During the development of this master plan, a set of goals were formulated that are relevant to the specific issues that have emerged as part of this planning process. Goals and objectives provide specific direction to the community and its governing body in support of the overall District vision, and provide the policy basics from which decisions can be made. Through these goals and objectives, CARD, the City of Chico, and Butte County are truly making a statement about their commitment to parks, recreation, and trails in the Greater Chico community.

CARD Mission Statement:

The Mission of the Chico Area Recreation and Park District (CARD) is to provide recreation opportunities to the greater Chico Community in a coordinated and cost effective manner.

1. Goals and Objectives

Goal 1. Provide a wide range of recreation and leisure opportunities for all residents of the Chico Area Recreation and Park District.

Objectives:

- Promote a balanced system of different parks, specialized recreation facilities, and varied recreational programming.
- Design parks to provide for a variety of experiences that appeal to a broad range of interests, abilities, and ages.
- Provide 1.5 acres of neighborhood parklands and 2.5 acres of community parklands for every 1,000 residents.
- Develop new facilities and services, as well as upgrade existing facilities.
- Ensure that future demands are met through the development of new facilities and services.
- Provide accessible facilities and rehabilitate existing facilities to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Keep abreast of current trends and changing demands for recreational activities by periodically conducting a communitywide survey and updating the Master Plan.
- Develop and provide the necessary funding mechanism to keep up with future growth.

Goal 2. Equitably distribute and conveniently locate parks and recreation facilities and trails throughout CARD, the City of Chico, and Butte County within the Chico Urban Area.

Objectives:

- When possible, locate neighborhood parks within one-half mile of the neighbors they are intended to serve, and in locations that are comfortably and safely accessible by pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Develop additional lands, including joint school-park facilities, as adequately sized neighborhood parks in existing underserved

neighborhoods. Where additional land is not feasible, provide safe and convenient pedestrian and bicyclist access to the nearest neighborhood park through construction of sidewalks, improved crossings of roadways, trails, and grade separated crossings of barriers, where feasible.

- Locate parks conveniently accessible to neighborhoods and in areas with good pedestrian or trail access.
- Locate mini parks where larger parks or adequately sized, undeveloped land is not available.
- Retain community parks, generally within one to two miles of residential areas, and on sites that are accessible by trails, bike lanes, and major roadways.
- Appropriately locate recreation centers, community centers, and other facilities that are heavily used by youth, adults, and seniors on sites with visual and vehicular access from major roadways, with public transit access, and with direct trail connections.
- Locate multi-purpose practice fields for youth sports in neighborhood parks as well as community parks. Size neighborhood parks, minimum of 5 usable acres, to adequately allow for such uses.

Goal 3. Develop and maintain parks and recreation facilities at a high level of quality that is appropriate for the location, the type of use, and nature of the facility.

Objectives:

- When possible, only accept land from developers with proper soil types that are of an adequate size and topography for suitable park development. Exceptions should be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- Where appropriate, incorporate historic or cultural resources and art into park designs

to celebrate the unique aspects of the community of Chico and provide distinctiveness between parks.

- Establish maintenance and design standards and management plans for the various types of parks and other properties that CARD and the City maintain.
- Annually assess needed maintenance and renovation projects systemwide, including bringing existing facilities up to ADA standards.
- Manage fields for safe use and to prevent overuse and damage to playing surfaces.
- Select durable materials that are sustainable, resource efficient, and nontoxic for construction of facilities.
- Periodically assess satisfaction levels of residents.
- Adequately staff and fund maintenance and operations to a level that adequately meets acceptable CARD standards. Adjust staffing levels to keep pace with the addition of properties to the system.

Goal 4. Develop and maintain parks and recreation facilities in an environmentally sensitive manner.

Objectives:

- Where appropriate, place greater emphasis on the use of nonirrigated landscapes, native species, and low water-requiring plant materials.
- Where possible, avoid environmentally sensitive areas when locating developed facilities.
- Protect water quality through implementation of “Best Management Practices” in the design of storm water conveyance and detention facilities.
- Use permeable pavements, recycled materials, locally manufactured products, locally available materials, and low energy-requiring facilities and technologies to the greatest extent practicable.

- Seasonally close areas as warranted to protect sensitive resources.
- Provide for integrated pest management where/when necessary.

Goal 5. Provide adequate land acquisition, development, operations, and maintenance funding sources and tools to realize the Master Plan vision.

Objectives:

- Ensure that new residential development provides the needed funding for parks and recreation facilities to the extent allowed by state law.
- Maintenance Impact Statements will be completed for all new recreation areas and facilities and funds will be provided to maintain these facilities.
- Seek public-private partnerships where mutually beneficial and appropriate.
- When possible, aggressively seek grants from available sources.
- Coordinate with other agencies and seek partnerships with these agencies to leverage available funding, such as RDA, grants, bonds, etc.
- As funding allows, keep pace with the need for additional staff and equipment to provide services for the community as the system grows.
- Periodically update park design standards in subdivision, zoning, and other land use and development regulations to incorporate the Parks and Recreation Master Plan recommendations.
- Use residential special districts for park acquisition, development, and/or maintenance where other means do not exist.
- Clearly define developer responsibilities.

Goal 6. Implement, monitor, assess, and adjust intergovernmental and joint-use agreements, tools, goals, policies, action plans, and priorities to meet changing or unforeseen conditions and/or needs for CARD.

Objectives:

- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of past and current policies for providing parks, recreational programs, and recreation facilities.
- Review, and update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan for CARD in concert with the City of Chico General Plan, Butte County General Plan, and updates to transportation plans, comprehensive plans, subarea plans, and state statutes to reflect changing needs and opportunities.
- Monitor annual progress towards achieving the goals.

B. Integration with Communitywide Planning

As the City of Chico and Butte County move forward with future planning efforts, such as the updated City of Chico and Butte County General Plans, the Northwest Chico Specific Plan, open space planning and specific individual residential development plans, it is imperative that the CARD Master Plan be coordinated with these efforts. City of Chico and Butte County leaders are taking progressive steps to outline a vision for the future of the community and how it will look. These planning efforts encompass all elements of the City of Chico and Butte County, including traffic, housing, employment, neighborhood design, and commercial districts.

The City of Chico and Butte County should also fully incorporate and integrate parks and recreation into their comprehensive planning efforts. There is broad consensus within the community that parks and recreation, as well as open space, are both the backbone and the face of the city; it is the largest publicly visible

and used component – the public realm. Residents and civic leaders alike agree that unique resources, such as Bidwell Park and the diverse recreational programming, give the Chico community an identifiable character. These are the resources that will continue to make the Chico area a thriving, desirable place for new families to want to relocate to in the future.

In order to encourage thriving natural and human communities, the process of green infrastructure planning should treat open spaces as a necessary and beneficial aspect of urban and suburban environments. By incorporating parks and other green space networks into communities, the quality of life, as well as the health of the natural world, is improved. Green infrastructure is not limited simply to parks and open space, but can include urban plazas, mini parks, and visual green space, such as gateways and medians. Plans for green infrastructure help communities decide how to grow in the best possible manner while directly adding an economic benefit to the community. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that the City of Chico and Butte County fully integrate this CARD Master Plan into all citywide planning efforts, as well as countywide efforts in the Chico area, particularly the updated City of Chico and Butte County General Plans.

C. Park Projects

Additional parks will need to be developed to meet existing and future needs of the 105,425 existing residents, and approximately 52,000 potential new residents expected to move to the Chico area. It is anticipated that by the year 2030, there will be a total of 157,475 people in the greater Chico urban area. In order to meet the needs of both existing and future residents, several proactive steps will need to be taken by both CARD and the City that will ensure improvements in the geographic service of parks within the community.

- Work with developers to provide suitable parkland and funding for capital and maintenance in new residential developments, other methods may be necessary to ensure a more equitable distribution of parks throughout the community. This will involve a three-pronged approach: developing undeveloped parklands; acquiring strategically located vacant or degraded properties or areas along existing greenways in underserved areas; and
- Where possible, work with CUSD to develop joint school-parks to help select school properties function more appropriately as neighborhood parks. Map 5, Master Plan Map, shows the proposed target areas for future neighborhood parks and community parks, as well as target areas for a new aquatic center and new community center(s).
- The City and CARD should also enhance existing parks, expand them if possible, and where possible, improve access to them to better serve residents in deficient or growing areas. The deficient areas may lack easy access (within one-half mile without major barriers) and/or have lower levels of service based on population in the immediate neighborhood. The areas without adequate access were identified in Chapter Two.

1. Develop Existing Neighborhood Park Sites

The City of Chico currently owns five parcels of undeveloped parkland, four of which are specifically designated for development as a neighborhood park. Map 5, Proposed Master Plan, shows the locations of the undeveloped park sites, which when developed, will help to enhance service to current and future residential areas that are underserved.

Henshaw Avenue Site

This parcel is 5.5 acres in size and is located on Henshaw Avenue in west Chico. Development of this site will provide needed parkland in an underserved area of the City. The parcel has street frontage on both Henshaw and Alamo Avenues, which will provide good access, both physically and visually. The land has already been acquired by the City. This park should provide basic park amenities, including a playground, picnic shelter, optional restroom, shade, and a multi-purpose playfield if the site is large enough to accommodate this use.

20th Street and Notre Dame Boulevard Site

This parcel is 7.0 acres in size and is located at the corner of 20th Street and Notre Dame Boulevard in southeast Chico. This parcel has excellent street frontage along East 20th Street, providing good access, both physically and visually. Development of this site will provide needed parkland in an underserved area of the City. The land is already owned by the City. This park should provide basic park amenities, including a playground, picnic shelter, optional restroom, shade, and a multi-purpose playfield if possible.

Humboldt Road and Notre Dame Boulevard Site

This parcel is also approximately 6.6 acres in size and is located at the corner of Humboldt Road and Notre Dame Boulevard in east Chico. Currently, this parcel is being held by the City of Chico for a potential future aquatic facility. This parcel has good street frontage along both Humboldt Road and Notre Dame Boulevard, providing good access, both physically and visually. The site is also located across the street from Marsh Junior High School. Development of this site will provide needed facilities for the Chico area. Adjacency to the school would also allow for additional off-street parking during nonschool hours, making it a good location for a future potential aquatic facility or multi-use practice and game field. If the aquatic facility is not feasible, this site should provide basic park amenities, including a playground, picnic shelter, optional restroom, shade, and a multi-purpose playfield.



Legend

- Chico City Limits
- CARD Boundary
- Residential Zoning
- Vacant Land

IMPROVEMENTS

- Develop Existing Neighborhood Park Site
- Potential Site for New Community Center and Potential Site for New Aquatic Facility
- Potential Site for New Aquatic Center
- Develop Existing Neighborhood Park Site and Potential Site for New Aquatic Facility

- Target Area for Neighborhood Park
- Target Area for Community Park
- Potential Bike Path

SCHOOLS

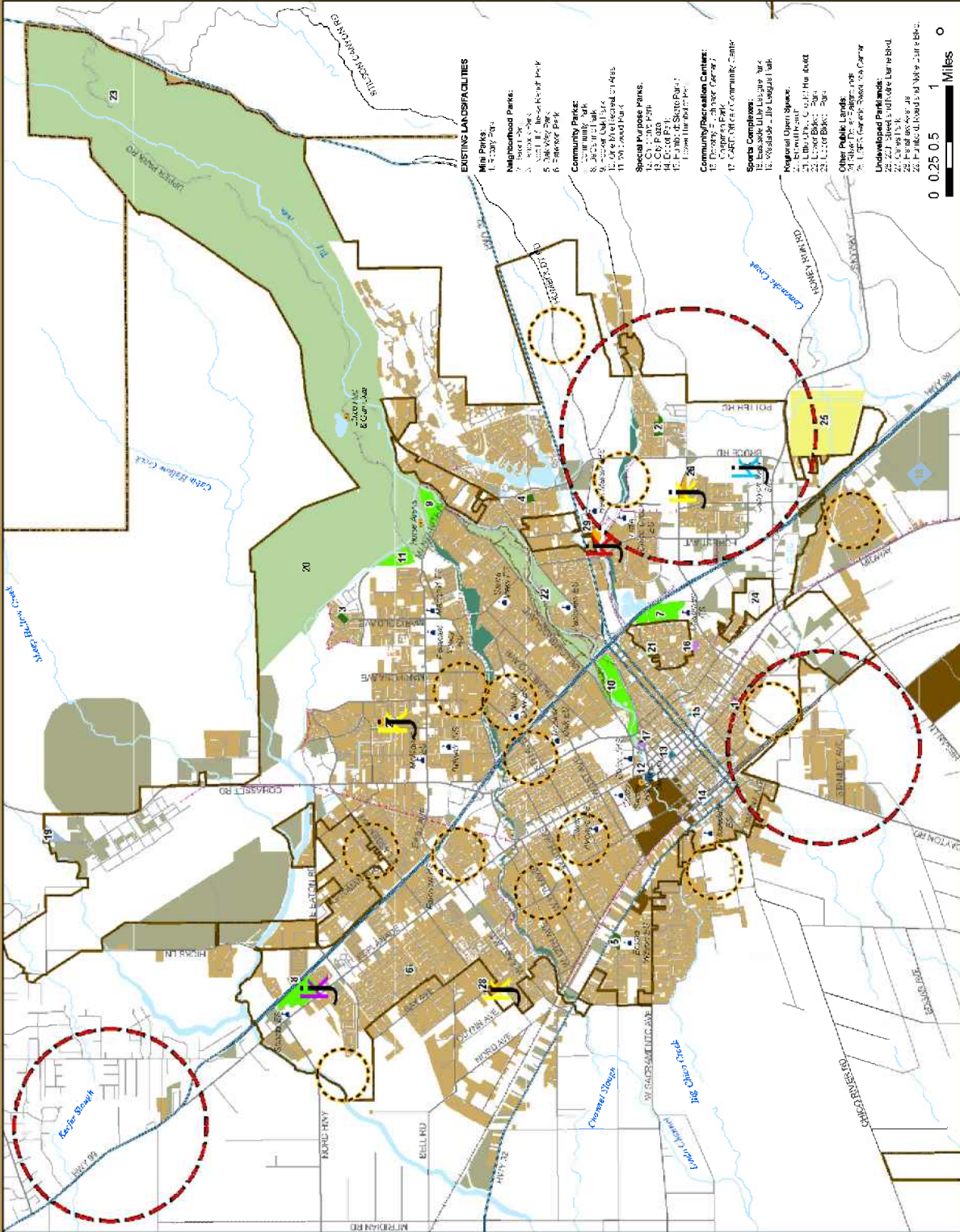
- Chico Public Schools, proposed school site
- California State University, Chico

EXISTING LANDS/FACILITIES

EXISTING LANDS/FACILITIES

- Mini Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Special Purpose Park
- Community/Recreation Center
- Sports Complex
- Regional Open Space
- Greenway
- Other Public Lands
- Undeveloped Parkland
- Lower Bidwell Park Trails
- Bike Paths: Existing
- Other Facilities

Map 5. Master Plan



Ceres Avenue Site

The last of these undeveloped parcels is 5 acres in size and located in north-central Chico on Ceres Avenue. Development of this site will provide needed parkland in an underserved area of the City. The parcel has adequate street frontage which will provide good access, both physically and visually. This park should provide basic park amenities, including a playground, picnic shelter, optional restroom, shade, and a multi-purpose playfield if the site is large enough to accommodate this use. The land has already been acquired by the City. Although recent efforts to secure bond funding for construction of the park failed a local neighborhood election, attempt to develop this park in the future should still be made. While current residents may not desire to fund it, the provision of a park in this area of the city is necessary for future residents moving in who deserve adequate access to park facilities.

BMX / Freestyle Facility

This parcel is approximately 3 acres in size and is located at the Silver Dollar Fair Grounds. The Silver Dollar BMX track is approximately 1,100 feet in length. The track operates and is maintained entirely on the efforts of volunteers. Currently, there are plans to move this site to adjacent City of Chico property. The plans for the new site include not only the race track, but also a freestyle park, restroom facility, spectator seating, parking, and concessions. CARD is also working on a partnership agreement with the BMX organization that would provide programming opportunities for the community.

2. New Parkland and/or Amenities in Underserved Areas

Map 3, Neighborhood and Mini Park Service Areas (located in Chapter Two) illustrates portions of Chico that are currently underserved by parks. In an effort to address these deficiencies, CARD and the City should consider strategies that will provide residents with adequate facilities and amenities within one-half mile, or improved access to existing neighborhood park amenities. Although one

option may be to work with CUSD to improve existing school properties so they serve as true neighborhood parks, there are locations that do not currently have schools suitable for upgrading to neighborhood parks. In these areas, the acquisition of strategically located vacant or degraded properties (or areas along existing greenways) and subsequent construction of new parks may be in order. In addition to the above and when feasible, CARD and the City of Chico should also consider the acquisition of vacant school properties and facilities on a case-by-case basis to help meet the general needs of the community.

In addition to an overall lack of neighborhood parks, there is also a shortage of recreation facilities, such as sports fields, in existing parks. In the past, CARD and the City have included a multi-purpose field in many neighborhood parks, as well as providing them in community parks. In order to help alleviate the shortage, CARD and the City should be proactive at this time to find additional neighborhood park sites suitable for accommodating multi-use practice fields, as well as backstops for baseball and softball practices. It would be advisable for CARD and the City to incorporate practice and youth game fields in neighborhood parks with the goal of minimizing impacts to neighbors by limiting the use to practices. Additional off-street parking areas to accommodate users are not recommended, as on-street parking should be maximized rather than paving more parkland for cars that could use available streets.

Map 5, Proposed Master Plan, shows conceptual target areas for new parkland, which will help to enhance service to current and future residential areas that are underserved. Following is a description of each location and suggested park developments.

Lassen Avenue and Godman Avenue Area

Currently, there is no neighborhood park, nor adequate access to one, for residents in the area east of CA Highway 99 and south of Eaton Road on the west side of Cohasset Road. In an effort to address this problem, CARD and the

City should pursue acquisition of property to provide these residents with the needed facilities. If acquisition of property is not possible, then other options should be pursued. Any park provided should contain typical neighborhood amenities, including a playground, picnic shelter, optional restroom, shade, and a multi-purpose playfield if the site is suitable in size. Soil type and topography should also be considered where possible.

12th Avenue and Holly Avenue Area

Currently, there is no neighborhood park, nor adequate access to one, for residents in the general area south of Lindo Channel, north of West 8th Avenue, east of Nord Avenue, and west of Esplanade. In an effort to address this problem, CARD and the City should pursue acquisition of property to provide these residents with the needed facilities. If acquisition of property is not possible, then other options should be pursued. Any park provided should contain typical neighborhood amenities, including a playground, picnic shelter, optional restroom, shade, and a multi-purpose playfield if the site is suitable in size. Soil type and topography should also be considered where possible.



Ceres Park Before Development

Mariposa Avenue and East Avenue Area

Currently, there is no neighborhood park, nor adequate access to one, for residents in the general area south of East Avenue, north of Lindo Channel, east of Marigold Avenue, and

west of Cohasset Road. In an effort to address this problem, CARD and the City should pursue acquisition of property to provide these residents with the needed facilities. If acquisition of property is not possible, then other options should be pursued. Any park provided should contain typical neighborhood amenities, including a playground, picnic shelter, optional restroom, shade, and a multi-purpose playfield if the site is suitable in size. Soil type and topography should also be considered where possible.

Esplanade and East Avenue Area

Currently, there is no neighborhood park, nor adequate access to one, for residents in the general area south of East Avenue, west of CA Highway 99, east of Esplanade, and north of Lindo Channel. In an effort to address this problem, CARD and the City should pursue acquisition of property to provide these residents with the needed facilities. Utilizing any existing public property or acquisition of additional land along Lindo Channel for minor park development would be ideal in this area, if possible. If acquisition of property is not possible, then other options should be pursued. Any park provided should contain typical neighborhood amenities, including a playground, picnic shelter, optional restroom, shade, and a multi-purpose playfield if the site is suitable in size. Soil type and topography should also be considered where possible.

Midway Road and Entler Avenue

There is no neighborhood park, nor adequate access to one, for residents in the neighborhoods between CA Highway 99 and Midway Road, south of the City near the Eastside Little League Complex. In an effort to address this problem, CARD should investigate options for the acquisition of property to provide these residents with the needed facilities. If acquisition of property is not possible, then other options should be pursued, such as some type of partnership with the Eastside Little League Complex. Any park provided should contain typical neighborhood amenities, including a playground, picnic shelter, optional

restroom, shade, and a multi-purpose playfield if the site is suitable in size. Soil type and topography should also be considered where possible.

3. School Site Upgrades in Underserved Areas

Neal Dow Elementary School Area

There is no neighborhood park, nor adequate access to one, for residents in the neighborhood east of CA Highway 99, south of Lindo Channel, and north of East 1st Avenue. Similar to several other portions of the core area of Chico, there are few, if any, opportunities for the acquisition and development of additional properties for park use in this area. In an effort to address this problem, CARD and the City should investigate the possibility of partnering with CUSD to enhance lands at Neal Dow Elementary School. Providing open access to a portion of the property that could be utilized as neighborhood parkland would be ideal. Any park provided should contain some typical neighborhood amenities, including a playground, picnic shelter, benches, shade, and a multi-purpose playfield if the site is suitable in size.

Hooker Oak Elementary School Area

There is no neighborhood park, nor adequate access to one, for residents in the neighborhood west of CA Highway 99, south of Lindo Channel, north of East 1st Avenue, and east of Esplanade. Similar to several other portions of the core area of Chico, there are few, if any, opportunities for the acquisition and development of additional properties for park use in this area. In an effort to address this problem, CARD and the City should investigate the possibility of partnering with CUSD to enhance lands at Hooker Oak Elementary School. Providing open access to a portion of the property that could be utilized as neighborhood parkland would be ideal. Any park provided should contain some typical neighborhood amenities, including a playground, picnic shelter, benches, shade, and a multi-purpose playfield if the site is suitable in size.

Citrus Avenue Elementary School

There is no neighborhood park, nor adequate access to one, for residents in the neighborhood west of Esplanade, south of Lindo Channel, north of East 1st Avenue, and east of CA Highway 32. Similar to several other portions of the core area of Chico, there are few, if any, opportunities for the acquisition and development of additional properties for park use in this area. In an effort to address this problem, CARD and the City should investigate the possibility of partnering with CUSD to enhance lands at Citrus Avenue Elementary School. Providing open access to a portion of the property that could be utilized as neighborhood parkland would be ideal. Any park provided should contain some typical neighborhood amenities, including a playground, picnic shelter, benches, shade, and a multi-purpose playfield if the site is suitable in size.

Rosedale Elementary School

There is no neighborhood park, nor adequate access to one, for residents in the neighborhood west of CA Highway 32, south of Lindo Channel, and northwest of Dayton Road. Although Depot Park is in close proximity to this area, CA Highway 32 acts as a major barrier to access. Additionally, Depot Park provides only limited amenities and is not a suitable neighborhood park for residents in this area. Similar to several other portions of the core area of Chico, there are few, if any, opportunities for the acquisition and development of additional properties for park use in this area. In an effort to address this problem, CARD and the City should investigate the possibility of partnering with CUSD to enhance lands at Rosedale Elementary School. Providing open access to a portion of the property that could be utilized as neighborhood parkland would be ideal. Any park provided should contain some typical neighborhood amenities, including a playground, picnic shelter, benches, shade, and a multi-purpose playfield if the site is suitable in size.

Note: There are challenges with utilizing school properties for neighborhood parks due to availability to the public. With that in mind, it may be the most economical approach in providing needed services to these areas in the short term.

4. New Neighborhood Parkland in Potential Development Areas

As new residential development continues to occur through the Chico area, it is important that CARD and the City keep pace with the provision of neighborhood parks to serve these new residents. The proposed projects listed below highlight areas of the community that are known to have development proposals currently in the approval process at the time of production of this plan. However, it is likely that some of these proposals will change or be modified over time, and that additional new developments will be proposed in other parts of the community. As such, it is critically important for CARD to periodically review and update this plan in conjunction with changes and amendments in the development review process to ensure that all new residential developments in the future are adequately served by neighborhood parks.

Northwest Chico (Esplanade and Nord Highway)

It is anticipated that there will be significant new residential development in northwest Chico, near the area of Esplanade and Nord Highway. Although the neighborhood park service area for DeGarmo Park will cover some of this area, significant portions will be left underserved without an additional neighborhood park. As such, CARD and the City should set standards to provide adequate land, development and operations funding for a suitable neighborhood park to be provided here. Any park provided should contain all typical neighborhood amenities, including but not limited to a playground, picnic shelter, optional restroom, shade, multi-use hard court surface and a multi-purpose playfield.

South-Central Chico (Estes Road and West 12th Street)

It is anticipated that there will be significant new residential development in south-central Chico, near the area between Estes Road and West 12th Street. Although the neighborhood park service area for Rotary Park will cover most of this area, Rotary Park will not serve as an adequate neighborhood park for residents of this area. Additionally, the residential area outside of the Chico city limits to the southwest is also underserved due to the railroad tracks along McIntosh Avenue acting as a major barrier. As such, CARD and the City should set standards to provide adequate land, development and operations funding for a suitable neighborhood park to be provided here. Any park provided should contain all typical neighborhood amenities, including but not limited to a playground, picnic shelter, optional restroom, shade, multi purpose hard court surface, and a multi-purpose playfield. A pedestrian overpass over the railroad tracks in this area should also be considered to help with access to this site.

Meriam Park

There will be a significant new residential development in east-central Chico in the Meriam Park area. Although the development of existing neighborhood park sites at Humboldt Road and Notre Dame Boulevard, and at 20th Street and Notre Dame Boulevard, will provide needed parkland in this area, additional neighborhood parkland will be needed to accommodate the large number of anticipated residents. As such, CARD and the City should set standards to provide adequate land, development and operational funding for a suitable neighborhood park to be provided here, potentially in the area along Little Chico Creek. Any park provided should contain all typical neighborhood amenities, including a playground, picnic shelter, optional restroom, shade, multi-purpose hard court surface, and a multi-purpose playfield. At this time, the Meriam Park development includes plans for six mini parks and extensive greenway development.

South Dead Horse Slough

It is anticipated that there will be a significant new residential development in east-central Chico along South Dead Horse Slough. Due to the long, linear nature of this development, two additional neighborhood parks will be needed to accommodate residents in this area. As such, CARD and the City should set standards to provide adequate land, development and operational funding for a suitable neighborhood park to be provided here. These parks should contain all typical neighborhood amenities, including but not limited to a playground, picnic shelter, optional restroom, shade, multi-purpose hard court surface, and a multi-purpose playfield.

Northeast Chico (Canyon Oaks Country Club area)

It is anticipated that there will be additional new residential development in the Canyon Oaks country club area of northeast Chico. Most new development will likely occur on the easternmost side of this area. Residents of this area have excellent access to both Upper Bidwell Park and various other recreational amenities associated with the country club. However, there is no adequate neighborhood park. As such, CARD and the City should set standards to provide adequate land, or fees-in-lieu of land, and maintenance funding for a suitable neighborhood park to be provided here. This park should contain basic neighborhood park amenities, including a playground, picnic shelter, optional restroom, shade, multi-purpose hard courts and a multi-purpose playfield. A park in this area could also be provided through the local homeowners association and serve as a private park for residents of this subdivision.

5. New Community Parkland

Even with the full development of DeGarmo Park, Chico will still fall short of the desired level of service for its current residents, and levels will continue to decrease as people move to the area. Due to the current shortage of indoor and outdoor facilities, CARD is limited in its ability to expand recreational programming beyond current levels. As the Chico area continues to grow and expand, this shortage

and need for additional facilities will only become more pronounced. For example, it is estimated that there is a current shortage of approximately six multi-use turf fields. By the year 2030, if no other fields are constructed, it is estimated that there will be a shortage of 19 multi-use turf fields in the community. Ideally, Chico will need to develop approximately 150 acres of neighborhood and community parkland (depending upon the size of the fields and configurations) that are dedicated to practice and game sport fields, and associated parking, for both current and future residents.

While some of these facilities could be constructed in neighborhood parks where possible, the majority of game fields will have to be constructed in existing or future community parks. Community parks are typically of a size and layout that accommodate the incorporation of multiple sports fields. Additionally, community parks make ideal locations to accommodate other communitywide, destination recreational amenities and facilities, such as dog parks, skate parks, disc golf courses, multi-purpose hard court surfaces, roller rinks, multi-purpose community centers, and gymnasiums. Water elements, such as recreation pools and splash pads, are also popular and should be considered for inclusion in future community parks.



Hooker Oak Park

CARD should also be proactive in finding and locating community park sites that have a percentage of level topography and proper soil

types before the land in ideal areas is gone or becomes price prohibitive. CARD and the City should look at available park sites to determine if they can accommodate additional sports fields without negatively impacting valued natural landscapes. Following are the target areas identified through this master plan process that generally describe where additional community parks will need to be located in the future. Prior to ground-breaking for any future community park, a detailed site-specific master plan and management plan should be developed for each location.

DeGarmo Park

The master plan for DeGarmo Park currently calls for full development of the 36-acre site. Although 11 acres have been developed under Phase One, including three ballfields and two multi-use turf fields, full use of this site is necessary. CARD should immediately proceed with development of this park as planned, including two additional ballfields and two additional multi-use soccer fields, as well as playgrounds, restrooms, multi-use hard courts and parking areas. The plans also show DeGarmo as a potential location for a multi-generational community center, skate park, and aquatic facility. It is recommended that the community center and skate park be constructed here; however, it may be beneficial to locate the aquatic facility at an alternate location and only construct a recreational pool at this site. A relocation of the aquatic facility would allow ample space for other additional recreational amenities if need be, such as more athletic fields, additional multi-purpose hard court amenities, an expanded multi-generational community center, or more parking.

Southeast Chico

As the proposed Meriam Park development and other residential developments in the area start to evolve and people begin to populate them, there will be additional pressure placed on existing parks, particularly on Community Park located near this area. At the time this plan was published, there were more than 5,200

individual residential units planned for this vicinity. Community Park is at capacity and offers no more available space for additional sports fields. As such, it is recommended that CARD and the City of Chico immediately begin searching for property that would be adequate to accommodate a full-size community park. A site of adequate size, with level topography and proper soil type, would be capable of accommodating a multi-field sports complex and other recreational amenities, such as a dog park, skate park, disc golf course and multi-use hard court amenities to name a few. The site should also have ample room to allow for passive park uses, as well as indoor community space. One potential option for the provision of additional parkland and recreational facilities in the southeast part of Chico is the future canyon View High School site. Creating a partnership with CUSD for development of joint-use facilities at this location would provide the both the school district and the community with needed facilities, such as sports fields, that both could utilize. Another benefit is that the land is already owned by CUSD and would help save CARD money over the long run.

Southwest Chico

Currently, there is a proposed residential development of 1,100 units planned for southwest Chico. City of Chico planners also anticipate that much of the future residential development in the community will occur south of the City. There is still ample vacant property with good topography to accommodate a community park in this area. A park in this general location should provide all the typical community park amenities, including indoor recreation space, ballfields, multi-use fields, tennis and basketball courts, playgrounds, picnic shelters, and other recreational amenities such as a dog park and/or a roller rink, as well as multi-purpose hard courts. It is recommended that CARD begin to search for available undeveloped land in south Chico that would be suitable for the eventual construction of a community park. Although it may not be necessary to begin development of this park until further residential development occurs in

the area, it would be advisable to locate the most desirable area before it becomes price prohibitive.

Northwest Chico

Currently there are proposed residential developments planned for northwest Chico. The City of Chico has identified the need for a neighborhood park in this area, and is making one a condition of the project. A location has not been identified, as the project is in its infancy stages at this time. City of Chico planners also anticipate that the land surrounding the local airport could be a future growth area of the community. Although DeGarmo Park is currently coming on-line and available for use, its limited size may require that an additional community park be located to the northwest. Currently, there is ample vacant property with level topography to accommodate a community park in this area. A park in this general location should provide all the typical community park amenities, including indoor recreation space, ballfields, multi-use fields, multi-purpose hard courts, playgrounds and picnic shelters, but it should be complementary to DeGarmo instead of compete with it. It is recommended that CARD begin to search for available undeveloped land in northwest Chico that would be suitable for the eventual construction of a community park. Although it may not be necessary to begin development of this park until further residential development occurs in the area, it would be advisable to locate the most desirable area before it becomes price prohibitive.

6. Greenways, Linear Parks, and Trails

Chico is fortunate that it has a large inventory of open space, greenways, and linear parks. This plan will not address open space, greenways, linear parks, or trails in detail. Typically these have been the purview of the City and not the responsibility of CARD. However, it is recommended that where possible, the City continue to acquire strategic parcels of land located adjacent to waterways, particularly those along Lindo Channel, both on and off

street. The Master Plan map shows a major trail connection along the Lindo Channel. Identifying this as a location for a trail corridor has been done in the past and the idea has a long history in Chico. Since 1994, developers have been required to respect open space setbacks along the corridor; however, prior to that, residential lots extended to the edge of the channel, preventing the possibility of a trail. Successfully constructing a connected trail along its length will certainly be a challenge, and the use of street connectors may be needed in certain areas. However, it is important for this plan to show the conceptual idea of a much needed east-west trail connection along this drainage on the Master Plan map, which will indicate that CARD and the City recognize the need for a trail connection in this area of the City, and given the opportunity will attempt to bring it to fruition.



Lindo Channel

7. Community Centers

The need and demand for additional community/recreation centers in Chico is great. As reported, CARD staff are unable to increase their level of recreational programming due to a lack of available space. Comments from the public and user groups also indicate a need for specific indoor recreational amenities, such as court space, meeting space, indoor community gathering space, and a multi-service inter-generational center. Together, these form a core group of facilities that could be co-located into another community/recreation center.

Therefore, it is recommended that a full scale facility feasibility analysis be conducted to determine exactly which amenities should be provided in new community center(s), the associated costs for their construction and operation, and if the public would be willing to financially support construction of such facilities. Classrooms, gymnasium space, catering kitchen, offices, multi-purpose areas, afterschool areas, and daycare areas should be part of the consideration when master planning such a facility. The locations for these facilities should also be analyzed further; however, an initial location has been identified for future phases of development in DeGarmo Park. This appears to be an appropriate location for such a facility, as recent residential growth has occurred in this area of the City and is likely to continue in the future.

8. Aquatic Facility

Chapter Three indicated the strong demand and need in the community for an additional outdoor aquatic facility. Both the general public and user groups have expressed a desire for a facility capable of accommodating competitions, as well as one that provides leisure amenities. Given that most of the existing facilities in Chico do not offer the desired modern amenities and that there are no competition level aquatic facilities between Redding and Sacramento, providing such a facility in the Chico area would be a great addition to the community. Numerous communities throughout California and the rest of the U.S. are now providing similar multi-use aquatic facilities for their residents.

Due to the strong demand and clear need for a multi-use aquatic facility, it is recommended that CARD begin a comprehensive feasibility study. It is recommended that another location, other than DeGarmo Park, be identified for such a facility. There has been support from the CAC, CARD, and City staff to identify an area in which this facility could be co-located with other public resources in conjunction with other public agencies. One potential option for this facility is

the Humboldt Road site, adjacent to Marsh Junior High, currently owned by the City of Chico. Another option for this facility, if it was determined that the Humboldt site would not accommodate such a facility and if an agreement could be reached with CUSD, could be the Canyon View High School site currently owned by CUSD. Its location is conceptual, with the goal of finding partners and symbiotic relationships for its funding and use. Locating near a facility that has ample parking would be logical, as long as the parking needs do not compete with each other (e.g., business park, high school, etc.). This would lessen the costs associated with developing additional parking areas and be more ecologically sensitive. Additional funding sources, other than General Fund dollars for not only the capitol cost but also maintenance and operational costs, need to be explored to make this complex a reality.

The recommended feasibility study should also specifically determine the size and amenities to be included in an aquatic facility. A 50-meter x 25-yard pool, in conjunction with a recreation water park feature, should be part of the consideration for constructing such a facility. The 50-meter element would help attract larger venues to this area, while the recreation element would enhance the quality of life for the Chico community.

9. Multi-Generational (i.e., Senior Services)

As indicated in Chapter Three, the population of Chico is aging, as are many areas of California and the U.S. By the year 2030, there will be more Americans over age 65 (20% of the total population) than under age 18. In general, people become less physically active as they get older; nearly 40% of people over the age of 55 report no leisure-time physical activity. Challenging exercises and physical activities, done regularly, can help many older adults improve their health, even when done at a moderate level. As such, CARD and the City of Chico should continue to focus on providing parks, trails, greenways, and open space with facilities and programs to promote physical and

social activities throughout a person's entire life span. CARD staff reports that with the limited facility space for all their programming, it is very difficult to keep pace with all needs, especially senior programming. With a multi-cultural community center facility being planned for DeGarmo Park as part of the site master plan, CARD should make the construction of this facility a top priority.

10. Communitywide Recreation Facilities and Amenities

As indicated in Chapter Three, there has been strong demand for several types of recreation facilities that are growing in popularity across the country and in Chico. These facilities include roller rinks, skate parks, dog parks, multi-purpose hard court surfaces, and disc golf courses. The local organized in-line hockey group in Chico, the North Valley Hockey and Sports Complex Corporation, already owns a regulation in-line hockey rink, but does not have a suitable location on which to locate it. Given the rising popularity of this sport, and that Chico does not currently have a roller hockey rink, it is recommended that CARD identify a suitable location for this amenity and work with this group for programming. Locating the rink in an existing or future community park would be the best alternative and would serve as a communitywide resource. One possibility would be to co-locate the rink in DeGarmo Park, adjacent to the planned skate park. This facility would not only provide a needed resource in the community, but it could host competition events that could potentially generate revenue. It would also allow CARD an opportunity to offer classes to the community in this activity.

Skate Parks

While there is one existing skate park in Chico and another planned for DeGarmo Park, an additional skate park may be needed in the future. In order to keep pace with expected growth by the year 2030, at least two more skate parks will be needed in the community. These should likely be provided in larger

community parks because they are a communitywide resource and will draw users from throughout the area.

Disc Golf

Disc golf is another sport that is rapidly gaining popularity throughout the country and in California. Organized disc golf is very popular, and the 9-hole family disc golf course at Hooker Oak Park does not meet the minimum standard set by this plan. If the unofficial courses in Upper Bidwell Park do not become official, additional courses located in other areas of Chico are recommended. As future community parks and greenways are designed, additional disc golf courses should be considered for inclusion. The USFS Genetic Resource Center is already used as an off-leash dog area and may be an ideal site for a disc golf course as well, provided that a partnership could be negotiated with the Forest Service.

Dog Parks

Dog parks have become popular throughout the U.S. and California, yet Chico offers only one fenced dog park at DeGarmo Park. The USFS Genetic Resource Center and Bidwell Park offer informal, off-leash areas. Designated dog parks are typically more formalized; are places where dogs can play with each other in a secured, off-leash area; and they serve as social spaces for dog owners as well. CARD and the City should identify opportunities to provide space for dog parks, either at independent locations or in conjunction with existing community parks. Other options include designating an area along greenways or in Lower Bidwell Park. It is also recommended, when possible, that a dog park be included in the design of future community parks.

Recreation Pools

As suggested in previous chapters, the existing outdoor pools in Chico, with the exception of Sycamore Pool, which is a historical resource, are in need of repair and modernization. This plan recommends that CARD conduct a study as to the cost and feasibility of upgrading their pools, circulation system, and amenities at

Pleasant Valley and Shapiro Pools and include these projects in their long-range capital improvement plan. The construction of a new aquatic facility is likely to be several years out, and these pools are both well used and needed in the community. When the new aquatic facility is constructed, the future of the Pleasant Valley and Shapiro Pools can be re-examined.

11. Community Events Facilities

Facilities for community events and celebration of culture and the arts are also critical to healthy communities, and are certainly desired by some Chico residents. Comments received from the public, the TAC and CAC committees indicate a level of support for an events center, which can host a variety of entertainment venues and performance activities in addition to the space provided at the Fairgrounds. This plan recommends that such a facility should be provided by private, commercial, and other sectors of the community that may benefit from such a facility, including the City of Chico.

12. Cultural Events Facilities

Significant cultural facilities and programs are available to the residents of the greater Chico area by way of California State University, Chico. These facilities and programs address many of the area's theater arts needs. Designed properly, the addition of new community center facilities can also help close the gap in providing community or entry level recreational education and participation. The City should also pursue the possibility of acquiring local theaters, such as the Senator, to meet a segment of the cultural arts needs in the Chico area.

13. Equestrian Facilities

Equestrian facilities in Chico are provided at Bidwell Park and maintained by the Chico Equestrian Association. Equestrian use in Bidwell Park has been a primary recreation activity since the parks inception and is an important activity to the community. Most trails in Upper Bidwell Park are multiple-use and as such, there are ample opportunities to pursue this activity. The City should ensure that these opportunities are maintained and there is no loss of trails, or loss of access to trails, in the future.



USFS Genetic Resource Center, an Off-Leash Area

Chapter Five Implementation



"The enjoyment of scenery employs the mind without fatigue and yet exercises it; tranquilizes it and yet enlivens it; and thus, through the influence of the mind over the body gives the effect of refreshing rest and reinvigoration to the whole system."

– Frederick Law Olmstead, *The Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Big Trees*, 1865

This chapter lists prioritization considerations, costs, and implementation actions that will help to achieve the vision of the CARD Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

A. Project Prioritization Considerations

Since future park and recreation projects will compete for funding, it is helpful to define criteria that can guide the identification of highest priority actions. Chapter Four identified specific projects based on the outcome of the inventory and needs assessment process, and the public input revealed the citizens of Chico have interests and needs that range from the neighborhood scale to the community scale.

This plan is intended to be flexible and fluid, so that as opportunities for land acquisition or easements and park development become available, the District and City can immediately capitalize on these opportunities without being committed to a predetermined project that was identified in an action plan.

The following list presents criteria that should be carefully considered when attempting to prioritize projects. There should not be a numeric weighting of these criteria, as the importance of each varies with each situation, available funding, need, and opportunity. Projects that address immediate issues of public health and safety should certainly take precedence over other choices.

1. Project Prioritization Considerations

Health, Safety, Welfare, and Code Compliance

- Does the project involve upgrades that will bring a park into compliance with codes, and ensure the health, safety, and welfare of park users?

Ease of Implementation

- Does the project capitalize on opportunities that are easily implemented (i.e., low cost project with large gains, ready implementers, available property, etc.)?

Economy of Scale

- Does implementing several projects or portions of projects simultaneously save money or time (e.g., bulk purchase of materials, more efficient project management, etc.)?

Community Significance

- Does the project provide benefits to a large number of people within the community?
- Does the project contribute to a larger city vision and community goals?
- Would the project provide revenue for agencies?

Community Balance

- Does the project contribute to the balance of needs across the community (i.e., neighborhood parks, community parks, trails, open space, underserved neighborhoods)?

Partnerships for Funding

- Does the project leverage available partnership opportunities for funding (i.e., urban drainages, Butte College, Chico Unified School District, California State University, Chico, private property, adjacent cities, etc.)?

Satisfies Urgent Need

- Does the project satisfy urgent park and recreation needs within the community?
- Does the project serve underserved neighborhoods?
- Does the project help to fill a recreation facility/amenity shortage?

Completes Phasing of Current Projects

- Does the project help to complete ongoing phases of current projects that have yet to be finished?

Ongoing Maintenance Costs

- Are future ongoing maintenance costs proportionate to the money invested in construction of the project and the benefit the community receives?

Although there are a myriad of large-scale projects that need to be addressed, the lack of neighborhood parks or adequate access to existing parks in developed residential areas presents an immediate concern that should be given high priority by both the District and the City of Chico. There are limited opportunities to increase the inventory of developed parkland in existing developed areas, especially those areas close to downtown. Opportunities that do exist often come in the form of small, single lot parcels that are not big enough for a complete neighborhood park. In these instances, Chico needs to identify case-by-case solutions, which may mean improving road crossings and access to the nearest park, or looking for opportunities to acquire parcels adjacent to schools, greenways, or other public lands.

CARD and the City of Chico should begin formalizing plans and establishing a funding stream for the development of existing undeveloped neighborhood parklands. All of these parcels are located in underserved areas of the city and would go a long way towards improving the level of service for residents in these areas, particularly the Ceres Avenue site. Development of these sites should include the provision of all basic amenities normally found in neighborhood parks, including playgrounds, walking paths, optional restrooms, drinking fountains, and basketball courts. It would also be advisable to incorporate practice and youth multi-purpose fields in neighborhood parks, while including the goal of minimizing impacts to neighbors by limiting the use to practices. Incorporating these types of fields in neighborhood parks could help alleviate the pressure on existing fields and allow CARD to increase its current level of outdoor athletic programming.



Playground at Hooker Oak Park

Beyond the provision of neighborhood parks in underserved areas, there are a myriad of large-scale projects that could be addressed. Input from CARD staff, the CARD Board, and the CAC has suggested there are a few select projects that should be given attention first. These are larger-scale projects that will require both advanced planning and identification of dedicated funding streams. Efforts of this nature are not short term and may require several years to bring them to fruition. As such, it is recommended that the District begin initial planning efforts for these specific projects while focusing on other, smaller priorities in the near term. The first of these identified project priorities is the need to complete construction of DeGarmo Park. Original plans called for DeGarmo to be completed in five phases. Phase One is already complete and progress should begin immediately on the subsequent two phases. Initial plans identified DeGarmo as the location for a community recreation center and possibly an aquatic center. It is recommended that alternate locations be considered for the aquatic facility to be able to better utilize the 36-acre DeGarmo site.

The next select project identified by the CAC and CARD Board that should be given priority attention is a community recreation center. There is strong support both from CARD staff and the public for the creation of such a facility. Currently, the District is limited in offering any additional indoor recreational programs due to

space limitations. All existing recreation centers are at capacity with current programming, and they are unable to rely on CUSD facilities due to frequent scheduling conflicts. The construction of a facility will allow the District to increase its overall programming as well as provide the community with needed new and modern facilities. Initial plans at DeGarmo Park identified this as an appropriate location for this facility. Both the CAC and CARD Board agree that constructing such a facility at this location is a priority. DeGarmo has adequate space to accommodate a recreation center.

Another priority identified by the CAC and CARD Board is the construction of a multi-purpose aquatic facility. There is also strong demand in the community, from both the general public and organized swim groups, for a multi-use outdoor aquatic facility, particularly one that offers play features and slides in addition to a competition element. The current facilities at Shapiro and Pleasant Valley Pools are inadequate for competition needs.



Aquatic Facility at Shapiro Pool

Discussions should begin immediately with CUSD to identify areas in which upgrades and access to existing school areas in underserved neighborhoods can be made. These upgrade projects are somewhat smaller in scale; require a lower capital investment from the District and City to accomplish; and serve a dual purpose of providing underserved areas with needed parkland and amenities, while at the same time being highly visible to the public. This visibility is valuable in that it shows that progress is

being made on the park system, thus generating further support for future larger-scale projects. One possibility is to form a partnership with CUSD for the development of the Canyon View High School site in southeast Chico. Another easy-to-implement, lower cost, and high visibility project includes completing the connection of the trail in Lower Bidwell Park to the downtown area, terminating at California State University, Chico.

While progress is being made on these smaller projects, site master planning can begin on select larger projects, which require a greater investment of capital and take a longer, often multi-year timeframe to accomplish. Additionally, efforts can begin to determine the best approach for financing these projects, which may require a public relations effort in support of a possible funding mechanism. This long-range planning may also involve the establishment of a perpetual fund or “land bank” by both the District and the City to strategically acquire parcels for projects that may become available in the future.

B. Estimated Costs and Implementation Actions

The cost for park and recreation facility construction varies widely, depending on the specific elements to be included in each project, the terrain, utilities, necessary road crossings, and other physical features that require more extensive design solutions. For the purposes of assigning an order of magnitude of cost to the master plan recommendations, general cost estimates have been assigned to each project. Costs have been assumed that are in order with the costs EDAW has experienced in designing and overseeing the construction of similar facilities in the past. The cost estimates are approximate and intended to illustrate order of magnitude, not detail. Actual costs for land acquisition (if needed) and development

should be developed more specifically for each project. Costs for some of the typical park amenities are listed in Appendix D to provide an understanding of the basis for the estimates. These costs are in 2007 dollars and must be escalated yearly to compensate for inflation. Other items specific to certain projects are not listed above, but may include demolition, utility relocation, entry plazas, signs, historical restorations, special recreation facilities, maintenance facilities, crossing enhancements, ballfield construction and design, engineering, additional infrastructure, and contingency fees. It should also be noted that additional staff, resources, and maintenance will be needed as more parks and facilities are added to the system within the District and City. These costs should be accounted for and included into overall budgets for any new projects.

Table 5.1 summarizes projects proposed in this plan for inclusion in the District’s park and recreation system, and provides estimated costs associated with each project. Costs are estimated in 2007/2008 dollars and are based on recent similar projects completed by CARD and the City of Chico. Costs will vary and will need to be adjusted over time due to factors such as inflation, raw materials costs, fuel costs, and other unforeseen economic conditions. As such, these various economic complexities make determining certain specific costs undeterminable until they are put out to bid. Additionally, the cost for land acquisition will vary on a site-specific basis. The current estimates for land acquisition are based on averages.

Proposed projects in Table 5.1 are listed in the order described in Chapter Four, which does not imply an order of priority. The table also lists the various policy and finance actions that are addressed in this plan and described in detail in the next section.

Table 5.1. Proposed Projects and Implementation Actions

Actions	Time Frame			Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source	Comments
	Adopt w/ Plan	1-2 Yrs	2-5 Yrs			
<i>Policy, Finance, and Administration</i>						
Adopt a standard of 1.5 acres per 1,000 people for neighborhood parks.	✓				Staff Time	CARD/City CARD/City/ County responsibility
Adopt a standard of 2.5 acres per 1,000 people for community parks.	✓				Staff Time	CARD/City CARD/City/ County responsibility
Upwardly adjust park impact fees for new development.	✓				Part of Nexus	Developers CARD/City/ County responsibility
Upwardly adjust park dedication requirements for new development according to new standards.	✓				Part of Nexus	Developers CARD/City/ County responsibility
Adopt park design standards as part of City of Chico and Butte County General Plan.		✓			Staff Time	CARD/City City responsibility
Pursue landscape and lighting district, or other appropriate funding mechanism, to fund future capital and maintenance operations of existing and future parks and facilities. Work with City joint project to possibly collapse all current Districts to one.		✓			\$250,000	CARD/City CARD/City responsibility
Include CARD Parks and Recreation Master Plan recommendations in forthcoming Nexus study. Nexus study should be started upon completion of the CARD Master Plan Update. Coordinate with the City of Chico's Capital Projects Services (CPS) Department		✓			\$50,000	CARD/City CARD and City responsibility
Pursue outside funding partnerships.		✓	✓	✓	Staff Time	CARD CARD responsibility-on- going effort
Explore feasibility of establishing a possible Memorandum of Understanding or similar agreement consisting of City of Chico and CARD.		✓			Staff Time	CARD/City CARD and City responsibility
Explore the level of community support for additional funding sources, such as a bond issue.		✓			\$25,000 Bond Consultant	CARD/City CARD/City responsibility
Prepare an annual report card on progress toward achieving the Parks and Recreation Plan.	✓				Staff Time	CARD CARD/City responsibility
Regularly update the parklands inventory and maps to reflect existing conditions.	✓				Staff Time	CARD/City CARD/City responsibility
Adopt park design standards as part of Butte County General Plan.		✓			Staff Time	CARD/ County County responsibility

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**Table 5.1. Proposed Projects and Implementation Actions
(continued)**

Actions	Time Frame				Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source	Comments
	Adopt w/ Plan	1-2 Yrs	2-5 Yrs	6-10 Yrs			
Develop Existing Park Sites							
Henshaw Avenue			✓		\$100,000/acre	Developer Fees/City/CARD	Develop site master plan and construction documents; Include management plan
20 th Street and Notre Dame Boulevard			✓		\$100,000/acre	Developer Fees/City/CARD	Develop site master plan and construction documents; Include management plan
Humboldt Road and Notre Dame Boulevard			✓		\$100,000/acre	Developer Fees/City/CARD	Develop site master plan and construction documents; Include management plan
Ceres Avenue Park		✓			\$100,000/acre	Developer Fees/City/CARD	Develop site master plan and construction documents; Include management plan
Neighborhood Parkland or Amenities in Underserved Areas							
Work with City staff; actively identify target lands for acquisition in underserved areas; develop parks upon acquisition of available funding.			✓	✓	Cost of land + park construction \$250,000/acre	CARD/City	Ongoing effort; should acquire strategically located suitable parcels when available
Work with City Park staff, Planning Services Department, and developers in the acquisition of parkland and trail corridors associated with any new residential development.		✓	✓	✓	Undetermined Will vary from site to site based on need and extent of project	CARD/City	Ongoing effort; City and CARD should be proactive in identifying suitable parklands in conjunction with new development
Improve access across barriers, in conjunction with the Building and Development Services Department, in underserved areas to existing parks		✓	✓	✓	Undetermined Will vary from site to site based on need and extent of project	CARD/City	Ongoing effort; City and CARD should be proactive in identifying suitable opportunities
Work with CUSD to develop agreement and plans for improvements to select school sites for use by neighborhoods and the larger community.		✓			Undetermined Will vary from site to site based on need	CARD/City	Identify suitable schools in underserved areas to improve

**Table 5.1. Proposed Projects and Implementation Actions
(continued)**

Actions	Time Frame				Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source	Comments
	Adopt w/ Plan	1-2 Yrs	2-5 Yrs	6-10 Yrs			
Neighborhood and Community Park Upgrades							
Conduct planning processes and prepare design documents for neighborhood park upgrades. Include management plans as part of master plans.		✓	✓	✓	\$15,000.00 Per site	CARD/City	On-going effort
Rehabilitate or replace existing playgrounds, restrooms, and other park facilities, including bringing existing facilities up to ADA standards, as needed.		✓	✓	✓	Undetermined Will vary from project to project and site to site	CARD / City	On-going effort
New Community Parkland							
Complete phasing of DeGarmo Park as currently master planned.		✓	✓		\$35,000,000	CARD/City	Complete as per concept plans
Southeast Chico Land acquisition and development.				✓	\$500,000/acre	CARD/City	Community park needed
Southwest Chico Land acquisition and development.				✓	\$500,000/acre	CARD/City	Community park needed
Northwest Chico Land acquisition and development.				✓	\$500,000/acre	CARD/City	Community park needed
New Community Recreation Centers							
Conduct feasibility analysis to determine amenities, cost, and confirmation of DeGarmo as location of new community center. For economic purposes, also explore the feasibility of turning the existing CARD Community Center into a designated multi-generational (i.e., senior) center upon completion of a recreation center at DeGarmo Park.		✓			\$7,500.00	CARD	Highest priority
Conduct feasibility analysis to determine amenities, cost, location of new aquatic center		✓			\$10,000.00	CARD/City	Highest priority

C. Potential Funding Sources

CARD receives the majority of its operating revenue through a dedicated property tax collected from all households within the District. Revenue is also generated through fees collected for recreational programming and grants. Additionally, both the City and District fund park maintenance through the formation of local landscape and lighting districts (L&L districts). The District currently has two L&L districts in place. The City of Chico also funds much of its infrastructure maintenance through the use of L&L districts. At the current time, the City has over 100 maintenance districts in place, but only a few were formed specifically to fund park maintenance.

Acquisition of parkland for new parks, either in new development or in existing underserved areas, is always a challenge. With new development, CARD and the City have the benefit of receiving park impact fees. However, the current fees are well below the amounts needed for actual park development. The use of impact fees only works if there is enough money in the reserve account to pay for the acquisition. As a rule, impact fees are generated at the time of the issuance of building permits, which is after the area is developed. Therefore, money from impact fees lags far behind the actual need. Impact fees are not available for park development in existing underserved areas, contributing to the current problem of a lack of parks in certain areas of the community.

Additionally, by relying only on impact fees for park acquisition and development, the fee schedule usually does not reflect the true cost of providing the improvements. To make up for the shortage of capital development money, the Chico City Council has been generous in providing CARD with money from its impact fees to help pay for needed park development. The other primary sources are grants or some form of a tax supported measure. While grants are always a favorite funding form, as a practical point, very little money is available.



Peterson Park Playground, CARD's Newest Neighborhood Park

The preferred method for generating additional revenue for park acquisition and development for CARD and the City would be the formation of a Districtwide L&L district. The use of a general obligation bond may also be necessary to help finance any new large facility construction, such as a recreation center or aquatic facility. These, and other existing and potential funding sources, are described in detail below:

1. **General Fund:** This fund accounts for revenues and expenditures that result from ongoing operations of district functions. The major revenue sources include property taxes, charges for service, and grants. Minor improvements are financed under this fund.
2. **Landscape and Lighting Act:** This funding mechanism permits a public agency to assess housing units or land parcels. The assessment revenues can be used for park land acquisition, development, and/or maintenance. This act requires 50% voter approval. CARD has approved two small assessment districts thus far, and the City has implemented a large number of L&L districts. An option would be to collapse all CARD and City L&L districts into one overall L&L district to cover all parks in the community. A Joint Powers Authority Agreement (JPA) for sharing revenues

between the two agencies would then need to be created (Intergovernmental Agency).

3. **General Obligation Bond:** These are voter-approved bonds with the assessment placed on real property. The money can only be used for capital improvements and not maintenance. This property tax is levied for a specified period of time (usually 20-30 years). Passage requires a two-thirds approval by the voters. Disadvantages to this type of levy are the interest costs as well as the inability to fund ongoing maintenance costs.
4. **Revenue Bonds:** These bonds are sold and paid from the revenue produced from the operation of a facility. In California, this requires voter approval.
5. **Development Impact Fees:** Development impact fees are collected as part of new residential development construction. Typically, the fee schedule usually does not reflect the true cost of park development. Therefore, an option for generating additional revenue would be to increase impact fees to more accurately reflect the cost of park development. As a rule, impact fees are generated at the time of the issuance of building permits, typically after the land has been developed. Thus, money from impact fees has a tendency to lag behind the actual park need.
6. **Certificates of Participation:** This is a lease-purchase approach where the District can sell Certificates of Participation (COPs) to a lending institution. The District then pays the loan off from revenue produced by the facility or from its general operating budget. The lending institution holds title to the property until the COPs are repaid. This procedure does not require a vote of the public.
7. **Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFE-TEA-LU):** A Legacy for Users (SAFE-TEA-LU): This is the reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). Section 1202 "Enhancement Grants" are available from the federal government on a competitive basis to fund bicycle transportation, wetland improvements, and historic preservation among other things. These grants are a potential supplemental source of revenue for some trail improvements.
8. **HUD Block Grants:** These grants come from the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development and are available for a wide variety of development projects. These would most likely be administered by the City of Chico and utilized in lower income areas of the community. Grants can cover up to 100% of project cost.
9. **Donations:** The donation of labor, land, or cash by service agencies, private groups, or individuals is a popular way to raise small amounts of money for specific projects. Service agencies, such as Kiwanis and Rotary, often fund small projects like mini parks, sport fields, or playgrounds.
10. **Private Grants and Foundations:** Private grants and foundations provide money for a wide range of projects. They are sometimes difficult to find and equally difficult to secure because of the open competition. They usually fund unique projects or ones of extreme need.
11. **User Fees and Rentals:** User fees and rental charges are direct charges to individuals and groups that use specific areas and facilities. These fees are usually used to help offset the cost of operation and maintenance of the services.

12. **Land and Water Conservation Fund:** In the past, this was one of the major sources of federal grants for park acquisition. However, for the last several years, this program was not funded; but in 2000, this program was reinstated. In California, the State Parks Division administers this program. Last year there was approximately \$13 million available for distribution to local communities.
13. **Joint Public/Private Partnership:** The basic approach is a public agency entering into a working agreement with a quasi-public or private corporation to help fund, build, and/or operate a public facility. Several options exist, such as an agency entering into an agreement with a private for-profit organization that would manage and/or build a facility. The agency benefits because it does not front the cost of construction and may receive concession or lease fees. The private operator benefits because the land is free (usually leased by the agency for a nominal fee). Another option is for an agency to partner with another public or nonprofit agency, such as private sport groups, which would share in the operation and maintenance of sport fields.
14. **State Park Funds:** Occasionally the California voters approve various types of funding for local government agencies. These programs vary in availability and in amount to be funded. They vary from pass through dollars to agencies based on population to competitive funding based on need.

D. CARD and City of Chico Roles and Responsibilities

CARD and the City of Chico provide neighborhood and community parks within the community. The City also handles most natural resource based areas, such as greenways, open space, and Bidwell Park, while CARD handles the publicly-provided recreation

programming in the community. Still, there are several areas where duplication of services exists and the general public is unclear on who provides which service. Duplication of services for providing and maintaining neighborhood and community parks is confusing, and inherently decreases efficiency when there are two organizations administering similar services. While the scope and process associated with this master plan will not solve this complex problem, there is strong support from within CARD and from City staff and residents to address this organizational issue. Below is a short discussion outlining the current organizational situation. Additionally, various alternatives to consider for possible future alternative management approaches are described. Including a description of these approaches in the plan will allow the City of Chico and CARD to continue discussions and hopefully find a way to more efficiently serve the residents of the greater Chico area.

In general, park and recreation facilities in the Chico area are offered and maintained as a collaborated effort between the Chico Recreation and Park District and the City of Chico. Both CARD and the City of Chico provide neighborhood parks as well as community parks. The Chico General Plan indicates that generally, CARD is responsible for acquisition, development, and operation of community parks, as well as recreation programs, indoor recreation areas, and management of various facilities in the Chico area. The General Plan also indicates that generally, the City of Chico is responsible for developing and maintaining Bidwell Park and for maintaining City parks, street trees, and landscaping within public rights-of-way. This is also the premise the 1988 CARD Parks and Recreation Plan was developed under. At the time of development of these plans, there was a more clear-cut understanding of these roles. However, due to the absence of a stable funding mechanism for acquiring land, the District has been unable to acquire land in underserved neighborhoods and keep pace with development in growing neighborhoods.

The City, on the other hand, has had the means for securing additional property and has purchased a number of sites throughout the City, therefore slowly assuming the role of providing neighborhood parks in Chico. Throughout the development of this plan, three options for alternative management approaches of parks and recreation in the Chico area have been discussed by the TAC, CAC, and District and City staff. These options are as follows:

1. The City of Chico would be responsible for natural resource-based and passive use parks and recreation in the community. This would include Bidwell Park, greenways and trails, and urban parks and plazas in the downtown area. CARD would be responsible for developed neighborhood and community parks, indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, and publicly provided recreational programs.
2. This option is the same as option #1, except the City of Chico would also be responsible for the development and operation of neighborhood parks instead of CARD.
3. The City of Chico and CARD should develop a Memorandum of Understanding, or similar type agreement, to establish a full-service parks, recreation, and cultural facilities department within the City/CARD government that would define responsibilities for the entire parks and recreation system in the community, as well as cultural facilities and programming.

Each of these options has challenges for their implementation, including, but not limited to: historical responsibilities; CARD Board, Bidwell Park and Playground Commission, and City Council concerns over specific details; concern of staff regarding their futures; and the relative costs for maintenance and overhead between CARD and the City of Chico. Beyond this, the greatest of these challenges would be the ability to generate adequate revenue to sustain the system. As indicated above, the City has a more stable and secure funding mechanism.

Any changes whereby CARD would assume greater responsibility for neighborhood parks would require the development of an agreeable funding stream from the City to help support the acquisition, development, and maintenance of the parks.

As suggested, this plan does not solve this complex and historically complicated issue. However, in the interest of the citizens in the greater Chico urban area, a reduction in the duplication of services and streamlining the parks and recreation provision process is absolutely necessary. At a minimum, CARD and City staff should begin the process of forming a Joint Authority Board to begin examining where duplication of services exists and developing creative solutions to tackle this complex problem.



Chico Area Recreation and Park District



Appendices



CARD Parks and Recreational Facilities Inventory - FINAL																																						
Name	Total Ac.	Devel. Ac.	Undev. Ac.	Comments	Disc Golf	Art/Sculpture	In-line Hockey	Skatepark	Dog Park/Off-Leash Area	Amphitheater	Off-street Parking Lot	Leisure Pond	Horticulture	Barbecue	Bike Parking	Concession	Restrooms/Smoking	Natural Environment	Water-play Feature	Pool	Community Center	Recreation Center	Museum/Informational Site	Trailing Access	Pavilion/Event Shelter	Picnic Tables	Playground	Tree Lot	Walking Path/Bicycled Trail	Volleyball	Tennis Court	Baseball Court	Soccer/Multi-Use Field	Golfball Field	Softball Field	Drinking Fountains		
TOTAL ACRES - ALL NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY PARKS	155.74																																					
OPEN SPACE - NATURAL AREAS/CORRIDORS	16.51																																					
Total Natural Areas/Corridors Acres	16.50																																					
OPEN SPACE - REGIONAL OPEN SPACE	0.00																																					
Total Regional Open Space Acres	0.00																																					
OPEN SPACE - GREENWAYS	0.00																																					
Total Greenways	0.00																																					
OPEN SPACE - SPECIAL RESOURCE AREAS	0.00																																					
Total Special Resource Areas Acres	0.00																																					
TOTAL ACRES - ALL OPEN SPACE FACILITIES	16.50																																					
Visual Green Space/Retention Facilities																																						
Total Visual Green Space Acres	0.00																																					
TOTAL ACRES - ALL VISUAL GREEN SPACE	0.00																																					
UNDEVELOPED PARLAND																																						
Total Undeveloped Parkland Acres	0.00																																					
RECREATION/COMMUNITY CENTERS																																						
Recreation/Community Center	0.00																																					
Recreation/Community Center	0.00																																					
Recreation/Community Center	0.00																																					

City of Chico Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory - FINAL		TOTAL PARKS: 05/27/06																																			
Name	Total Ac.	Devel. Ac.	Natural Ac.	Undev. Ac.	Disc Golf	Art Sculpture	In-Line Hockey	Skatepark	Dog Park/Off-Leash Area	Amphitheater	Off-street Parking Lot	Lakefront	Horseback	Barbecue	Bike Parking	Concession	Feet Footrest/Benches	Natural Environment	Water-Play Feature	Outdoor Pool	Community Center	Recreation Center	Restroom/Restroom Site	Feeling Access	Parent/Physical Shelter	Picnic Tables	Playground	Tot Lot	Walking Path/Wooded Trail	Volleyball	Tennis Court	Baseball Court	Soccer/Flag Field	Softball Field	Baseball Field	Drinking Fountains	
PARKS - NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS																																					
NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS																																					
Alto Park	7.50	7.49	3.87	3.70	X				X		X																										
Alto Park - Park	3.80	3.80																																			
Alto Park - Natural Area	4.00	4.00	4.00						X		X																										
TOTAL NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS ACRES	14.00	14.00	7.87	3.70					X		X																										
PARKS - COMMUNITY PARKS																																					
COMMUNITY PARKS																																					
Alto Park	20.00	19.99							X		X																										
Alto Park - Recreation Area	10.00	10.00							X		X																										
Alto Park - Natural Area	10.00	9.99																																			
TOTAL COMMUNITY PARKS ACRES	30.00	29.98	0.00	0.00					X		X																										
SPORTS COMPLEXES																																					
SPORTS COMPLEX ACRES	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00																																	
PARKS - SPECIAL PURPOSE PARKS																																					
SPECIAL PURPOSE PARKS																																					
Alto Park - Special Purpose	10.00	10.00																																			
Alto Park - Special Purpose	1.00	1.00																																			
Alto Park - Special Purpose	2.00	2.00																																			
Alto Park - Special Purpose	10.00	10.00																																			
TOTAL SPECIAL PURPOSE PARKS ACRES	23.00	23.00	0.00	0.00																																	
TOTAL INCREASE - ALL PARKS	67.00	66.98	7.87	3.70					X		X																										

City of Chicago Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory - FINAL		Map Location: 063-138	
OPEN SPACE - NATURAL AREAS (POND/SWELLS)			
Map Location: 063-138		17.4	
1000		1000	
152.00		152.00	
7.00		7.00	
15.00		15.00	
62.70		62.70	
Total Natural Areas/Condition's Acreage		262.60	
OPEN SPACE - REGIONAL OPEN SPACE			
Map Location: 063-138		225.66	
3,374,000		3,374,000	
Total Regional Open Space Acreage		3,374,225.66	
OPEN SPACE - SPECIAL RESOURCE AREAS			
Map Location: 063-138		13.20	
Total Special Resource Areas Acreage		13.20	
TOTAL ACREAGE - ALL OPEN SPACE FACILITIES		3,937.60	
VISUAL GREEN SPACES/OPEN FACILITIES			
Map Location: 063-138		0.20	
Total Visual Green Space Acreage		0.20	
TOTAL ACREAGE - ALL VISUAL GREEN SPACES		0.20	
UNDEVELOPED PARKLAND			
Map Location: 063-138		5.00	
2.50		2.50	
7.00		7.00	
7.50		7.50	
Total Undeveloped Parkland Acreage		24.10	
RECREATION/COMMUNITY CENTERS			
OTHER CITY RESOURCES, PARKS, AND RECREATION FACILITIES			

Appendix B - Comparative Level of Service Between Communities for Selected Recreational Facilities

FINAL - 05/30/2008	Facility, Acres or Miles per Population										Average of Best Communities
	Sunrise Park and Recreation District	Elk Grove Community Services District	City of Redding, CA	Mission Oaks Recreation and Parks District	City of Rocklin, CA	City of Lincoln, CA	Yuba City, CA	City of Roseville, CA	Avg. of Other Communities Providing Facilities	Chico Urban Area (CARD & City)	
Recreational Facility	Population	136,000	85,600	62,500	51,000	32,800	60,507	104,000	Population	105,425	
Soccer Fields											
50 yds X 80 yds or less	13	20			9			22			
65 yds X 100 yds or greater	1	13	3	7				16			
Total	2	33	3	9	16	5	0	38	20		
Population per Soccer Field	69,857	4,121	28,533	6,844	3,188	6,560	N/A	2,737	17,420	5,271	4,710
Football Fields											
150 ft X 240 ft or less	0	0						0			
160 ft X 360 ft or more	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1		0	
Total	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	
Population per Football Field	N/A	136,000	N/A	N/A	51,000	32,800	N/A	104,000	80,950	0	41,900
Total Soccer/Football/Multi-use Fields	2	34	3	9	17	11	0	39	20		
Population per Football/Soccer Field	69,857	4,000	28,533	6,844	9,000	2,982	N/A	2,667	16,855	5,271	3,919
Softball/Baseball Fields											
Size Undetermined	0	0		7				3			
200 - 299-ft centerfields	26	39	6	12	12	3		29			
300 - 360-ft centerfields or larger	0	5	9	4	4	3	3	8			
Total	26	44	15	7	16	10	3	40	15		
Population per Softball/Baseball Field	5,269	3,081	5,707	8,928	3,188	3,280	20,169	2,600	5,654	7,028	4,723
Outdoor Basketball Courts											
Full-size	18	0	7	8	5	2	2	13			
Half-size	2	15	12	3	12	6	6	29			
Total	20	15	19	11	17	2	8	42	9		
Population per Outdoor Basketball Court	5,150	9,067	4,505	5,842	5,000	16,400	7,563	2,476	7,105	11,714	5,778

FINAL - 05/30/2008

	Facility, Acres or Miles per Population									
	Sumrise Park and Recreation District	Elk Grove Community Services District	City of Redding, CA	Mission Oaks Recreation and Parks District	City of Rocklin, CA	City of Lincoln, CA	Yuba City, CA	City of Roseville, CA	Avg. of Other Communities Providing Facilities	Chico Urban Area (CARD & City)
Tennis Courts	Population	136,000	85,600	51,000	32,800	60,507	104,000	Population	105,425	
With lights	20	0	6	6	4	6	8			
Without lights	8	40	2	19	4	4	12		8	
Total	28	40	8	19	4	4	12		8	
Population per Tennis Court	6,321	3,400	10,700	3,239	8,500	15,127	8,667	7,963	13,178	6,313
Total Number of Skate Parks	1	1	2	1	1	1	1		1	
Population per Skate Park	163,000	136,000	42,800	52,940	51,000	60,507	104,000	81,576	105,425	49,921
Inline Hockey Rinks	0	0				0	0			
165 ft X 80 ft (indoor)	0	0	1	1	1	0	0		0	
165 ft X 80 ft (outdoor)	0	0	1	0	1	0	0		0	
Total	0	0	1	0	1	0	0		0	
Population per inline Hockey Rink	N/A	N/A	85,600	N/A	51,000	N/A	N/A	68,300	0	68,300
Total Number of Ice Rinks	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	
Population per Ice Rink	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Swimming Pools	3	2	3	2	1	1	3		3	
Outdoor	0	0	1	0	0	0	0		0	
Indoor	3	2	4	2	1	1	3		3	
Total	3	2	4	2	1	1	3		3	
Population per Swimming Pool	54,333	68,000	21,400	25,500	32,800	60,507	34,667	42,458	95,142	28,592
Total Number of Full-size City Gymnasiums	1	1	1	0	1	0	1		1	
Population per Gymnasium	163,000	136,000	85,600	N/A	51,000	N/A	104,000	107,920	105,425	111,100

	Facility, Acres or Miles per Population										Average of Best Communities
	Sunrise Park and Recreation District	Elk Grove Community Services District	City of Redding, CA	Mission Oaks Recreation and Parks District	City of Rocklin, CA	City of Lincoln, CA	Yuba City, CA	City of Roseville, CA	Avg. of Other Communities Providing Facilities	Chico Urban Area (CARD & City)	
Disc Golf Course	Population	136,000	85,600	51,000	32,800	60,507	104,000	Population	105,425		
9-Hole		0				0	0		1		
18-Hole		0		1		0	0		1		
Total		0	1	1	0	0	0		2		
Population per Disc Golf Course	N/A	N/A	85,600	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	68,300	52,713		68,300
Community Parks											
Developed Acres	95.00	143.40	140.24	28	207.10	30.00	97.00	108.41	164.30		180.25
Developed Park/Population (acres/1000)	0.58	1.05	2.22	0.45	1.73	0.50	0.93	1.23	1.56		2.10
Parkland Standard (acres/1000 pop)	2.85	1.16	N/A	N/A	5.00	1.50	3.00	2.53	1.60		3.33
Neighborhood Parks											
Developed Acres	300.00	373.50	105.84	72	103.60	48.00	236.88	163.82	29.30		304.83
Developed Park/Population (acres/1000)	1.84	2.73	1.24	1.15	1.57	0.79	2.37	1.71	0.28		2.36
Adjusted Park/Population* (acres/1000)											
Parkland Standard (acres/1000)	4.35	5.00	N/A	N/A	5.00	1.00	3.00	3.70	0.90		4.83

Appendix C: National Recreation Participation Trends

The Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association (SGMA) has commissioned an annual mail survey of American households to determine what activities they participate in at least one time per year. Approximately 15,000 completed mail surveys are received and responses are balanced to reflect U.S. Census parameters for age, gender, race, household income, and geographic region. The responses reflect people age six and above. The last few SGMA surveys have been more comprehensive than previous years; therefore, benchmark data is not available for many of the categories.

As shown in Table C.1, the most popular activity is recreational swimming, followed by walking, free weights, biking, fishing, hiking, and running/jogging. Many activities have seen a decline in total numbers over the past 12 years, including many of the organized team sports. However, three relatively new activities have made large gains in popularity – in-line roller skating, free weight use, and mountain biking. Data was not available by region, but it is likely that mountain biking involves a larger percentage of the population in this region than nationally.

Table C.1 Total National Participants by Activity – All Ages

Activity	Percent Change Since 1987	2004 Participants (in 1,000's)
Recreational Swimming	Na	95,268
Recreational Walking	Na	92,677
Free Weights	+ 131%	52,056
Recreational Bicycling	Na	52,021
Fishing	- 18%	47,906
Fitness Walking	+ 48%	40,299
Day Hiking	Na	39,334
Running/Jogging	0%	37,310
Basketball	- 4%	34,223
Golf	- 2%	25,723
Volleyball	- 38%	22,216
Tennis	- 13%	18,346
In-Line Roller Skating	+ 270%	17,348
Football	Na	16,436
Softball	- 24%	16,324
Soccer	+ 3%	15,900
Horseback Riding	Na	14,695
Yoga	Na	12,414
Skateboarding	- 3%	10,592
Baseball	- 36%	9,694
Artificial Wall Climbing	Na	7,659
Mountain Biking	+ 253%	5,334

Sports Participation Trends 2004, Sports Research Partnership, April 2005.

According to a 1997 SGMA reports¹, the most popular sports for youth based on “frequent” participation are (Table C.2):

Table C.2 Total National “Frequent” Youth Participants

Activity	Number of Participants in U.S. (in 1,000's)
Basketball (25+ days/year)	12,803
Soccer (25+ days/year)	6,971
Baseball (25+ days/year)	5,229
In-Line Skating (52+ days/year)	3,591
Touch Football (25+ days/year)	3,590
Volleyball (25+ days/year)	3,022
Running/Jogging (100+ days/year)	2,824
Slow-Pitch Softball (25+ days/year)	2,717
Tackle Football (52+ days/year)	2,079
Fishing	2,021

Seven of the 10 most popular activities are team oriented; 8 of the 10 require specialized outdoor facilities. More recent data is not publicly available from this organization; but since 1997 when this study was conducted, it is well known in the parks and recreation industry that interest in in-line skating, skateboarding, and rock climbing has increased dramatically, and lacrosse and bmx/hill jump biking is emerging in popularity.

¹ Sporting Goods Manufacturer's Association, study conducted annually by American Sports Data, Inc. 1997.

Appendix D: Typical Park Project Item Costs

Item	Unit Cost
Basketball Court	\$75,000 each
Skate Park	\$500,000 each
Neighborhood-Scale Playground	\$80,000 each
Community-Scale Playground	\$250,000 each
Single Picnic Shelter (20'x20')	\$50,000 each
Large Group Picnic Shelter	\$300,000 each
Small Restroom	\$125,000 each
Large Restroom	\$250,000 each
Parking Lot Light	\$4,000 each
Pedestrian Light	\$3,500 each
New Parking Lot	\$8.00 square foot
Picnic Tables	\$1,500 each
Bike Racks	\$650 each
Benches	\$1,500 each
Trash Containers	\$750 each
Irrigation System Replacement	\$2.20 square foot
8" Concrete Multi-Purpose Trail	\$8.00 square foot
6" Gravel Trail	\$12.00 linear foot
Native Landscape Restoration	\$0.75 square foot
Turf and Shrub Landscape	\$3.50 square foot
Deciduous Trees (15 gallon)	\$150.00 each

Note: These costs are in 2007 dollars and must be escalated yearly to compensate for inflation, raw materials costs, etc.