

**CITY OF NAPA**

**PARK AND FACILITIES MASTER PLAN**

**COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

**JUNE 17, 2009**

Prepared by:



MIG, Inc.  
Berkeley, California  
Portland, Oregon  
[www.migcom.com](http://www.migcom.com)



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Community Involvement Overview .....	2
Methods.....	2
Key Themes .....	3
Park Land Analysis.....	6
Methodology .....	6
System-wide park Land analysis .....	7
Analysis by park type: Mini parks .....	19
Analysis by park type: Neighborhood parks.....	20
Analysis by park type: Community parks.....	23
Analysis by park type: Civic spaces .....	26
Analysis by park type: special use areas.....	28
Analysis by park type: natural areas and open space.....	30
Outdoor Recreation Facilities .....	33
Methodology .....	33
Baseball fields.....	34
Softball and Little League fields.....	36
Soccer, Football, lacrosse fields.....	40
Trails .....	43
Skateboarding/BMX facilities .....	45
River access .....	47
Aquatics .....	48
Other Facilities.....	51
Indoor Facilities .....	53
Community Centers .....	53



# COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

## INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 2008, the City of Napa Parks and Community Services Department began an update of the 1992 Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan. Over the next eight months, public input on preferences and priorities for the future of the parks system were collected through a variety of methods.

The analysis of the park system, begun with the Existing Recreation Resources Summary Memo, continues here with the identification of community needs. The Community Needs Assessment includes:

- An overview of community involvement activities include key themes developed from the input of over 2000 Napa residents;
- An analysis of Napa's park land based on the park classification system introduced in the Existing Resources memo, evaluation of the distribution of park access and a comparison of the City's level of service to comparable communities;
- An analysis of outdoor recreation facilities examining supply and demand for sports fields as well as the distribution of other facilities that make visiting parks comfortable and fun; and
- An analysis of indoor recreation facilities that describes the needs for currently available facilities as well as the potential of additional community recreation space.

It is important to note that many needs are identified in this assessment. However, the Napa Parks and Recreation Department may not be able to meet all identified needs alone. Some may be met by other agencies, such as the Napa Valley Unified School Districts, private organizations or developers. Others may require partnerships and collaborative efforts. The community may decide to prioritize some needs as higher than others, and make compromises to ensure the needs most rapidly satisfied are also those that serve the broadest spectrum of the community.

## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT OVERVIEW**

### **METHODS**

Public involvement was a critical part of the planning process. To develop a solid foundation for the City of Napa Parks and Recreation Master Plan, feedback was solicited residents regarding their needs and preferences. Public involvement activities were planned to ensure the participation of a diverse cross-section of the City's population. In total, nearly 2,000 Napa residents have participated in the public involvement process, along with information from 10 organized sport leagues representing hundreds more users. These activities took place from September 2008 through April 2009, and included a wide variety of opportunities to participate that are described below.

### **WEB SITE**

A project website, [www.napaparksmasterplan.org](http://www.napaparksmasterplan.org) was established in the fall of 2008 to serve as a virtual project information warehouse. Interim planning documents, such as the previous summary memos have been posted to the site for review by the public. The site also features an opportunity for users to submit comments and questions for consideration in the planning process. Summaries of the other public involvement activities are available from the document library on this site.

### **FOCUS GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS**

A series of eight focus groups and individual stakeholder interviews were held, each targeted towards specific parks and recreation users and related interests. Groups represented during this process included the business community; conservation, youth, Latino residents; parents, seniors, educators and the Napa Valley Unified School District.

### **INTERCEPT SURVEY**

Nearly 70 intercept questionnaires were completed by attendees of the Napa Gift 'n' Thyme Holiday Faire in December, 2008. Additional surveys were completed by visitors to various Napa Recreation facilities during December. This short survey provided an opportunity for residents to share their current park use patterns, needs and priorities.

## **COMMUNITY SURVEY**

A total of 441 residents completed the Napa Community Survey, which was designed to obtain statistically valid results representative of households throughout the City of Napa. This survey tested questions about residents' interest in a wide variety of facilities in the park system and potential additions. The two-part questions also inquired about the level of unmet need in the community for the same types of opportunities. Due to the random distribution and the number of results, responses to this survey can be considered representative of the entire population.

## **COMMUNITY AND YOUTH QUESTIONNAIRE**

In addition to the Napa Community Survey, a shorter questionnaire was available on the project website from October 15, 2008 to March 15, 2009. It was promoted using a variety of methods including local media coverage and multiple listings in Department publications and communications. The questionnaire was available in both English and Spanish. A total of 705 adult questionnaires and 400 youth questionnaires were completed.

## **COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS**

Three community workshops, held during January 2009 at three Napa locations attracted over 220 people to learn about the planning process and provide general and specific input about the current park system and ways to improve it.

## **SPORTS GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE**

Ten of Napa's sports leagues responded to a participation questionnaire distributed by the Napa Parks and Recreation Services Department. The questionnaire allowed user groups to provide input on participation trends, field needs for practices and games and other scheduling and logistical issues.

## **KEY THEMES**

The key themes have been identified and compiled through the variety of public involvement methods described above and represent the opinions of

the community as a whole. Additional detail about the results of each public involvement activity is available at the project website: [www.napaparksmasterplan.org](http://www.napaparksmasterplan.org).

- **Strong support for Napa parks:** Napa residents are passionate about their park system and greatly value the recreational and community-building opportunities that the current park system provides. According to residents, the park system embraces Napa’s unique climate and location, building a sense of place and identity that residents and visitors alike can enjoy. In particular, residents appreciate the existing access to open space opportunities and are largely supportive of the Parks and Recreation Services Department because they believe that parks help make Napa a more desirable place to live, preserve open space and the environment and may help reduce crime.
- **Parks should be a showplace for sustainability:** Parks are an opportunity to showcase resource conservation and low-impact development methods. All aspects of park development and maintenance, from landscaping to facilities, are opportunities for showcasing the environmentally-friendly practices that Napa residents value.
- **Desire for improved local access:** Increasing local access to park and recreation facilities was a recurring theme during the public involvement process. This can take many forms, including the development of additional parkland or the development and improvement of non-vehicular access to parks and community facilities.
- **Desire for a variety of recreation opportunities:** Residents would like a mix of recreational opportunities, including trail walking, bird watching and places for sports such as soccer, lacrosse and bocce ball. This variety of recreational opportunities reflects the diverse ages and cultures of Napa residents.
- **Improve image and identity:** Many existing Napa parks are in need of additional features and an improved amenity

mix to supplement the existing parkland inventory. Increasing safety and park cleanliness were themes commonly heard throughout the process. Parks such as Kennedy and Fuller are highly used, in part because these are the only parks that some residents are familiar with. Improved image and identity of the overall system could increase overall usage.

- **Maintain and build new partnerships:** Residents indicated that the future success of the Parks and Recreations Services Department's ability to continue providing excellent recreational opportunities for residents will depend, to some extent, on maintaining and expanding existing institutional partnerships, such as those with the Napa Valley Unified School District,

## **PARK LAND ANALYSIS**

The desire to provide local parks and trail access within walking or biking distance of all city residents is one factor used in determining how much park land is needed in Napa. Another factor is the availability of open space and recreation facilities that provide the opportunities and experiences desired by Napa residents. These basic premises provide the foundation for the methods used in this analysis. The analysis of park land is split between a system-wide analysis of park land and analysis breaking down needs for each of the following park types in Napa:

- Mini parks;
- Civic spaces;
- Neighborhood parks;
- Community parks;
- Special use areas; and
- Natural areas and open space.

## **METHODOLOGY**

There are a number of ways to analyze need for park land. This assessment combines a variety of methods to establish a clear reasoning for and statement of community needs. The following methods were applied as appropriate to Napa's park lands:

## **PUBLIC INPUT**

All results of the Master Plan public involvement process were factored into the analyses and contributed to the findings.

## **REGIONAL AND NATIONAL TRENDS**

Best practices and trends, regionally and nation-wide, in the provision of park land and recreation facilities are included to highlight directions that Napa could consider in expressing and meeting the community's needs.

## **LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS**

For each park type and system-wide the ratio of park land to population, or level of service, provides a basis for comparison between the current situation and a future population level. This level of service ratio is also used in comparisons between communities.

## **GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

The geographical distribution of parks, and park access, were considered to determine the need for some types of parks within the planning area. An analysis of existing park service areas revealed which areas within Napa are in need of more parks and resources. Proposed standards were developed based on the needs of these identified underserved areas, as compared to the existing level of service.

## **SYSTEM-WIDE PARK LAND ANALYSIS**

### **PUBLIC INPUT AND TRENDS**

A number of community preferences about the provision of park land emerged from the extensive public involvement process, including:

- **Satisfaction with current maintenance:** Residents are generally supportive of the current maintenance level in Napa parks.
- **Improve neighborhood parks:** The condition and facility mix in neighborhood parks was often cited as needing improvement. Children's Playground equipment in particular was frequently identified as an area for improvement
- **Additional facilities throughout system:** Residents repeatedly expressed interest in the development of additional facilities and amenities throughout the existing park system. Picnic areas and social gathering spaces, water features and trails were three frequently mentioned facilities. Other ideas included skate parks and community gardens.
- **Increase natural area access:** Residents appreciate existing access opportunities to natural areas and are interested in increased access to these lands via trails and ongoing partnerships with organizations such as the Napa County Open Space Agency.

Park land has captured the attention of cities across the country as the changing national and global economy has shifted to an information and professional services base, and away from manufacturing and heavy industry. This has made the location where work is performed less and less tied to factories and transportation infrastructure. Quality of life has become a much more important factor in location decisions, both for corporations and individuals. As a result, cities are competing on their ability to attract skilled, creative residents through attractive amenities and

less on their ability to lure large corporations with tax breaks and infrastructure incentives. In a 2006 study, CEOs for Cities found that green space was one of the top five attributes of a city that attract the key demographic of 25-34 year olds. This is the age group most associated with the “Creative Class” that is driving small business growth in many cities.

In addition to using parks and recreation as an economic development tool, cities throughout the country are expanding their park systems in new and creative ways. Since land is at a premium in most cities, creative solutions such as redevelopment of former industrial sites, landfills, rights-of-way and military sites into new park land are becoming more common. These park development efforts also help with neighborhood and downtown revitalization. The Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway in Boston is a prime example of this type of creative park development. After burying a congested freeway, the land above the tunnel was reshaped into a series of parks and open spaces that created social space, enhanced views and increased adjacent property values.

Cities are priding themselves on their natural areas as well as developed parks. Park land is also being used in new ways as “green infrastructure” by many cities. This is not as much a new use as recognition of the functions that park land has always served. Parks are increasingly recognized as part of a system that promotes and preserves the natural functions that plants and animals add to the environment within a city. Some cities are diverting resources that might have been spent on stormwater management, carbon offsetting and improving air quality to expand park systems and capitalize on the multiple benefits. New York City has actively been purchasing open space for over 150 years to protect the sources of the City’s water. This strategy has resulted in 2,000 square miles of protected watershed and saved the City billions of dollars in water treatment costs and reduced water-borne disease.

Several other trends in park land provision are important to consider. Linear parks that connect parks, neighborhoods and other community destinations have become popular, building on the growing interest in walking, biking and other trail-related recreation. In addition, linear parks help create healthy communities by promoting physical activity and encouraging alternatives to automobile transportation. Evaluating park design elements for maintenance efficiency is another effort that responds

to this trend, such as eliminating annual plantings in neighborhood parks and concentrating these plantings in signature regional parks.

Throughout the United States, other trends that impact open space and recreation include:

- Obesity rates are increasing across all age groups.
- Physical inactivity is nearly twice as high among teens with limited access to open space.
- Use of parks and services differs by ethnic and cultural groups and from traditional uses.
- Afterschool activities, especially sports, music, and dance, play a significant role in youth recreation. During the summer, many parents cite challenges in finding activities for children, especially teens.
- Time constraints for families are common nationwide, particularly in households with both parents working.
- Residents are increasingly sensitive to ecological issues.
- New technologies and trends are having an impact on services and facilities. These include surveillance cameras, web access to services/information, artificial turf, and smoking bans.

### **LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS**

There is no perfect number that defines the size of an ideal park system. The optimum number of acres and the ways those acres are used depends on community goals, as well as community resources. That said, a ratio of park acreage per 1,000 residents is a common measure of level of service (LOS) and provides a way of comparing “apples to apples” across communities and identifying trends.

To present a picture of how service standards can change, depending on the additions to the park system over time, the existing level of service and the existing inventory can be applied to a future population. This presents two scenarios, one in which Napa is keeping up with growth and providing the same level of service and the other illustrating the level of service if no additions are made to the land and facilities offered.

Comparisons to other park and recreation agencies in California provides a way to gauge where Napa’s existing level of service (LOS) might be high or low. For this analysis, the park land standards for the cities of Fairfield,

San Luis Obispo, Vacaville and Walnut Creek were identified and compared based on their proximity to Napa and similarity in terms of demographics and role as a regional destination.

Table 1 shows the level of service for each comparable community by park type. Natural areas and open space is separated due to the larger quantities of open space provided by other communities.

**Table 1: Comparable Community Level of Service**

	Fairfield	Vacaville	Walnut Creek	San Luis Obispo	Average LOS	City of Napa Current LOS
Mini Parks	0.004	0.013	0.00	0.07	0.02	0.03
Civic Spaces	0.04	0.003	0.03	0.00	0.02	0.06
Neighborhood Parks	2.20	2.28	0.64	0.74	1.47	1.04
Community Parks	0.79	3.03	2.24	2.73	2.19	2.94
Special Use Areas	2.76	0.00	2.66	0.60	1.51	2.47
Total Developed Parkland	5.79	5.33	5.57	4.14	5.21	6.54
Natural Areas and Open Space	12.75	25.80	41.41	60.41	35.09	4.29
Total Parkland	18.54	31.13	46.98	64.55	40.30	10.53

These figures indicate that with the exception of natural areas and open space, the City of Napa provides a similar to greater amount of park land resources than comparable agencies. The City of Napa generally provides greater amounts of community park space and less amounts of neighborhood park space than comparable agencies.

A drawback to examining acres per 1,000 and other numerical measures is that this figure examines quantity, but it does not indicate quality or location. A city can have a very high acreage, but if the system has few or poorly maintained resources, it may not be serving the community as well as a smaller system in another city. In addition, a city could have a very high acreage, but uneven distribution of that acreage, resulting in poor service. While the acres per 1,000 figures indicate that Napa has a lower level of service than the comparable agencies, the vast majority of this difference is made up of Natural Areas and Open Space land that may have limited recreational value to local residents due to topography and vegetation. The existing level of service for Napa includes the larger open space areas at Alston Park and Westwood Hills but do not include areas that are held for other purposes, such as the watershed and reservoir lands at Millikan Reservoir and Lake Hennessey. Analysis of the impacts of

these lands is included in the Open Space and Natural Area analysis in the next section.

## **GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

In an ideal park system, parks should be situated so that facilities and open space are easily accessible to potential users. For this reason, park access is one of several key criteria in establishing an appropriate level of service for the provision of park land. In Napa, the need for park access is based on the assumption that basic park services (a developed park including a play area and a place to enjoy the outdoors) should be provided within walking distance of all city residents. The analysis does not distinguish the quality of this experience, but simply whether or not it exists nearby. This section includes a broad geographic analysis of Napa's park system to identify gaps in park access across the community.

Several important factors influence park access, relating to how people get to and use parks and recreation facilities. The geographic analysis in this report takes into account the following factors.

**Transportation modes:** Residents of Napa travel to and from parks in a variety of ways. The three primary modes of travel include walking, cycling and driving. For local parks (mini parks, civic spaces, neighborhood parks and community parks) the typical park user will live nearby so the park should be accessible via walking and cycling. For larger parks and destination facilities, any site within the planning area is assumed to be located within a reasonable driving distance.

**Barriers:** For pedestrians and cyclists, a variety of physical and natural barriers in Napa limit the ease of travel from one area to another. Physical barriers include major streets and transportation routes, i.e., SR 29, and SR 121 including Imola Avenue, Soscol Avenue and Silverado Trail. Natural barriers include the Napa River, un-bridged areas along creeks and streams, and steep hillsides in parts of the city. While these barriers are assumed to limit the service areas for particular parks, this analysis takes into account places where improved crossings (e.g., bridges and marked crossings) allow pedestrians and bicyclists to get to parks and facilities.

**Access points:** Each park in Napa has a series of access points that allow entry to and exit from the parks and trails in the system. For parks, access

points are located where trails and streets enter or intersect the site and no barriers exist (such as fencing or protected natural areas).

**Travel distance:** Generally speaking, the distance people are willing to travel to get to a park or trail can be determined by studying user preferences and abilities. Typical pedestrians are willing to walk between ¼ and ½ mile (5-10 minutes) to reach a park destination. The table below summarizes the distances that pedestrians are willing to travel to parks.

Travel Distance to Parks:	Distance
Ideal walking distance	¼ mile
Maximum walking distance	½ mile

The four factors noted on the previous pages (transportation modes, barriers, access points and travel distance) were assembled into a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) model to determine service area coverage for parks and trail facilities in Napa. The model provides a map of city areas that are within ¼ to ½ mile from existing parks and facilities. A service area is determined for each park based on the standard distance traveled on the street and trail networks from access points to each of these sites. The borders of each service area are modified where interrupted by identified barriers.

The output of the analysis described above is presented in Map 1, Existing Park Service Areas, on page 13. These defined service areas are important aspects of the analysis of local park types (i.e., mini and neighborhood parks). While much of the city is covered in one or the other shade of purple, representing the ¼ and ½ mile distances, there are a number of residential areas that are not.

Much of Napa, especially in the north end of the city, is provided local park service that is based on very small mini and neighborhood parks. The larger community parks, with the exception of John F. Kennedy Park which is not adjacent to residential areas, also provide this basic local access. Topography and land use patterns also impact park distribution and this is notable in steeper areas where access is challenging, such as the hilly west side of the city. Some higher housing density areas including some with newly increased allowed density, identified in the Napa Housing Element Update, are not only located in areas without local park access now but will require parks of a size and development level

Map 1: Access Analysis

Back of Map 1

appropriate to larger numbers of users. The specific needs will be discussed by park type in the next section.

Several strategies can be explored to improve park access. These include, but are not limited to:

- Developing undeveloped park property
- Improving access using trails, pedestrian crossings and street and sidewalk improvements to overcome obstacles created by transportation and natural barriers;
- Acquiring additional park sites, where land is or could be made available;
- Improving school sites, in partnership with the school district, to provide park service to underserved neighborhoods; and
- Developing park sites on other publicly owned land (e.g., Sanitation District or Flood Control District property, etc.).

In Map 2, on page 17, these strategies are considered and opportunity areas are accented that require park access. These opportunity areas are numbered to clarify discussion and provide a preliminary count of the number of parks that would be needed to extend park access coverage to all residential portions of Napa. Based on the approximate size of a ½ mile service area along Napa’s streets and trails, the areas outside of current local park access areas could be covered by an additional 17 service areas. These service areas could represent parks of any type. Some of these areas are already served by private park facilities.

### **SERVICE IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITY AREAS**

Two groups of opportunity areas are highlighted in the access analysis, central Napa and the edges of the city limits. Central Napa is a large area, roughly bisected by State Route 29, and lies beyond the ½ mile service areas of surrounding parks. To provide a park within walking distance of all residents in this area would require approximately 8 new park sites (partly because of natural and human-made boundaries of a finer scale than the highways). The second type of opportunity area exists near the city limits in several parts of Napa. These areas are just beyond where the existing park system reaches, and in some cases, have future park land identified within them. Each of these opportunity areas is briefly described below, noting important considerations for each area. The general location is given simply to help locate the area on the analysis map.

#	Location	Description
1	North Napa	This area is primarily within one development that is served by a private park.
2	West Napa	This area is densely developed residential properties with stream corridors running through it.
3	West Napa	This portion of the west edge of Napa is cut off by stream corridors from much of the rest of the city.
4	West Napa	This area sits largely on top of hills with larger residential lots spread across them.
5	Central Napa	Much of this residential area is in currently unincorporated Napa County but is surrounded by the city.
6	Northeast Napa	This area includes an undeveloped parcel of park land and a private park.
7	Central Napa	This established residential neighborhood has an elementary school at the western edge of the opportunity area.
8	Central Napa	Napa High School occupies a large piece of land in this area but while this site has extensively developed sport facilities, it does not provide the basic park amenities. This area also has potential for higher density development.
9	Northeast Napa	Densely developed area with some potentially available land.
10	Central Napa	This area includes undeveloped land that is targeted for higher density development and is adjacent to Westwood Hills Regional Park.
11	Central Napa	A residential area with some ongoing development.
12	Central Napa	A high density residential area with at least one private mini park within a multi-family housing development.
13	Central Napa	A high density residential area that includes the softball complex at Napa Valley Language Academy and some private recreation amenities in specific developments.
14	Central Napa	An established residential neighborhood bounded by major streets.
15	South Napa	A high density residential area with many developments including their own recreation facilities. Also includes Snow Elementary School at the south edge of the city.
16	South Napa	An established neighborhood north of Imola Avenue.
17	South Napa	A developing neighborhood with a mix of single family and multi-family housing. A large parcel of undeveloped park land is adjacent to this area to the south.

The geographic analysis of each park type will address how these opportunity areas translate into needs for new park land. Additional geographic analysis included in the park and facility discussions in this report include the distribution of facilities across the community. This more nuanced look at what residents have available nearby will also affect the walkability and satisfaction with the park system.

Map2: Opportunity Areas

Back of Map 2

## **ANALYSIS BY PARK TYPE: MINI PARKS**

Mini parks are small parks that serve residents in immediately adjacent neighborhoods. Mini parks provide basic recreation amenities, such as playgrounds, benches and landscaping. Mini parks generally are ½ to 2 acres in size and have service areas of ¼ mile or less.

## **PUBLIC INPUT AND TRENDS**

Mini parks did not elicit extensive feedback from the public. Some results indicate support for mini-parks as long as they are well maintained and safe. Some mini parks were commented on specifically as being in poor condition.

Parks departments locally and across the country are reconsidering the mini-park with a simple chunk of turf because these small-spaces can represent a disproportionate maintenance burden on the responsible agency. For this reason, many agencies are looking at ways to redesign these spaces to be more resource efficient and require less maintenance or to not develop them at all. Napa’s mini parks could be a place to experiment with a variety of the native and drought-tolerant plantings that residents expressed interest in seeing more of throughout the park system.

These locations also represent excellent opportunities for partnerships between City Departments and civic or “Friends” groups that want to act as stewards of these properties in partnership with the City.

## **LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS**

The Parks and Community Services Department currently provides nine mini parks, such as Beckworth and Montclair, which comprise a total of two acres. These sites provide an existing level of service of .03 acres/1,000 residents.

To maintain the existing level of service, the City of Napa would need to acquire or develop 0.4 acres of mini parks by 2030. No increase in the amount of park land acreage would result in a level of service of .02 acres/1,000 residents in 2030.

The average level of service of the comparable communities is equal to the City of Napa’s existing 0.03 acres/1,000 residents.

## **GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

Mini parks can provide an area with the most basic park resources but are limited in meeting all of a neighborhood's park needs due to their small size. To provide the best local park access, opportunity areas should be filled in with mini parks only if larger park sites cannot be identified.

## **MINI PARK NEEDS**

New parks will be required to fulfill park access needs, and while mini parks may not be ideal, it is likely that at least one additional mini park will be needed. Assuming that this site will be between 0.2 and 0.4 acres the needs for mini parks in Napa can be summarized as:

- **Level of service standard:** 0.03 acres/1,000 population.
- **Current Need:** Applying the level of service standard to the current population results in zero (0) acres of new mini park land currently needed.
- **Future Need (2030):** Applying the future population of 91,600 results in a total of 2.4 acres of mini parks in the system. This represents one or two additional mini park sites totaling 0.4 acre.

## **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- Areas currently provided park access by mini parks may still require additional recreation facilities locally that cannot be accommodated in these very small sites.
- It is possible that better park service could be provided in some locations at one larger site that replaces or augments two (or more) mini parks.

## **ANALYSIS BY PARK TYPE: NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS**

Located within walking and bicycling distance of most users, neighborhood parks provide close-to-home recreation opportunities for surrounding neighborhoods. These parks are designed primarily for non-supervised, non-organized recreation activities, supported by facilities such as playground equipment, outdoor courts, picnic tables, pathways and multi-use open grass areas or small sport fields. Neighborhood parks provide access to recreation for nearby residents, enhance neighborhood identity, and preserve open space. These parks generally are two to five acres in size and serve residents within a ¼- to ½-mile distance.

## **PUBLIC INPUT AND TRENDS**

Participants in the planning process provided important local knowledge and ideas specifically about the needs in this community through the public input process. Findings unique to neighborhood parks are presented below.

- Survey responses indicate that neighborhood parks are the second most needed recreational feature in the City of Napa. Additionally, residents indicated that upgrading existing parks was one the top ways to improve the Napa park system.
- A common theme across all public involvement activities was the discussion of additional amenities such as restrooms, benches, shade structures, trees and art.
- Residents noted several neighborhood parks that may be able to support designated dog park areas.
- Some neighborhood park areas are ‘at capacity’ and cannot support the ongoing demand for picnic facilities without improved or expanded facilities.

In addition to this local input, a variety of regional and national trends influence this analysis.

In many park systems, neighborhood parks are host to a variety of activities, including formal and informal recreation. In recognizing changing demographics, departments are developing features in parks that provide recreational and educational opportunities for residents of all ages, rather than a focus on playgrounds.

Communities with growth limitations, either physical or political, are looking at ways to intensify the use of existing park land by adding facilities and providing a diverse park experience. This intensification of park land is not limited to neighborhood parks, as other park types and other public properties are increasingly expected to serve the role of neighborhood parks as well.

Some park agencies are rethinking the design of new parks and the redesign of existing parks to include maintenance efficient features and even limiting the use of turf to cut down on ongoing maintenance costs. The approach is not to eliminate grass from the park system but to use it strategically in park design rather than simply as the ground cover of choice. In many cases a more natural, even native, environment can also provide a new type of play and learning opportunity while at the same time saving valuable maintenance resources.

### LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS

The Parks and Community Services Department currently provides 80 acres of neighborhood parks at 25 sites. Examples of neighborhood parks include O'Brien Park, which has a popular children's playground, and Dry Creek Park, which is well integrated and accessible to the surrounding area. Together, the 25 sites translate to an existing level of service of 1.04 acres/1,000 residents. To maintain the existing LOS for neighborhood parks, the City of Napa will need to acquire or develop an additional 15.1 acres by 2030. If no additional land is acquired, the level of service will decrease to 0.88 acres/ 1,000 residents in 2030.

The comparable communities examined in this plan average 1.47 acres/1,000 population of neighborhood park land. This level of service applied to Napa's population results in 113 acres of neighborhood park land, 33 more acres or approximately 10 additional neighborhood parks (Napa's average neighborhood park size is 3.2 acres).

### GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Neighborhood parks are the basic unit of local park access in Napa. The majority of the park opportunity areas are likely to be filled in with neighborhood parks to close access gaps in the system. Of the 17 opportunity areas identified in the access analysis, one is currently served by private park land, at least one will likely be a mini park and one could potentially be a community park. The remaining 14 opportunity areas need neighborhood parks to meet the local access assumptions.

### NEIGHBORHOOD PARK NEEDS

Of the 17 opportunity areas, 14 would best be served by new neighborhood park sites. Assuming new sites average approximately four acres to accommodate the mix of facilities desired; the ultimate need would equal 56 new acres of neighborhood park land. This amount of land would increase the overall level of service for neighborhood parks in Napa. Adding in the existing acreage and dividing by the future population develops a level of service standard that can be applied to the current and future populations to determine current and future needs for neighborhood park land. The level of service standard and needs are summarized below:

- **Level of service standard:** 1.49 acres/1,000 population

- **Current need:** Applying the level of service standard to the current population results in a total need of 115 acres of neighborhood parks, 35 more than currently developed. At four acres per park site, this represents a current need of approximately nine new park sites.
- **Future need:** Applying the level of service standard to the projected future population of 91,600 results in a total need of 136 acres of neighborhood park land. This represents 56 acres or 14 new park sites added to the system by 2030.

### **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- The Napa Housing Element update will direct increased housing densities into specific areas of Napa. The preservation of land for the development of Neighborhood-serving parks in these areas should be prioritized.
- School sites, especially elementary and middle school sites, provide park-like facilities to their neighborhood after school hours. Facilities can be designed to be usable all day while still addressing school security concerns (such as Playground Fantastico).
- Removal of parks serving the neighborhood park function, such as the skate park site downtown, will increase the need for local access in this area. This local access would typically be served with a neighborhood park.

### **ANALYSIS BY PARK TYPE: COMMUNITY PARKS**

Community parks are larger parks that provide both active and passive recreation opportunities and appeal to the entire community. Typically, these sites are designed for active recreation, and are supported by facilities such as sport fields, outdoor courts, skate parks and recreation centers. Community parks can accommodate large numbers of people and offer a wider variety of facilities than neighborhood parks with opportunities such as disc golf, volleyball, tennis courts, dog parks, group picnic areas and shelters. These parks may also include significant natural areas and trails. For this reason, community parks require more support facilities, such as off-street parking and restrooms. The minimum size of community parks is generally between 15-20 acres. Napa's community parks range from 10 to nearly 200 acres and are characterized by their larger-scale facilities.

## **PUBLIC INPUT AND TRENDS**

Findings specific to community parks are presented below.

- Residents indicated a desire for increased access to parks through non-vehicular means such as walking and biking.
- Community parks were the third most-cited recreation facility for which Napa residents have a need.
- This scale of park could support many of the additional community facilities and amenities that Napa residents desire.
- Kennedy Park adjoins Napa's defining feature, the Napa River, an amenity to which residents desire improved access.

Community parks have become an important part of community identity. Park agencies are finding ways to customize the look, feel and recreation opportunities of the larger parks in their systems to portray important characteristics of their communities.

Community parks are often the home of competitive sport facilities and larger group gathering sites, due to the need for similar support facilities such as parking and restrooms. Gathering these types of facilities makes the best use of maintenance resources and maximizes the investment in these amenities.

Community parks are important destinations for all modes of transportation and can be hubs of connectivity in the public transit and trail systems.

## **LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS**

The City of Napa has four community parks, Century Oaks, Fuller, Kennedy and Las Flores, together totaling 226.5 acres. Combined, these sites create an existing level of service of 2.94 acres/ 1,000 residents.

Based on an estimated population of 91,600 for the year 2030, the City of Napa will need to acquire or develop 42.6 acres to maintain the existing LOS for community parks by the year 2030. Without any additions to the community park inventory, the level of service will decline to 2.47 acres/ 1,000 residents in 2030.

Napa has a higher level of service for community parks than the comparable communities (averaging 2.19 acres/1,000 population). If Napa

were at this average, the park land in this category would be 169 acres, or 58 acres less than the current inventory.

### **GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

While community park features can be considered to serve the entire City, encouraging driving alternatives to community park features requires some distribution of these parks across the city. Kennedy Park is the community's signature facility and provides a wide array of community park features. It is in an isolated corner of the city that will require most visitors who are looking to picnic or play sports to drive there. With Las Flores in the north, Century Oaks in the west, Fuller in the south and Kennedy Park further south and east of the river, the areas of the city that are most noticeably lacking a convenient community park are central Napa and east of the Napa River.

### **COMMUNITY PARK NEEDS**

The community places a high value on the activities and variety that a community park can offer. To create a more distributed system, rather than adding larger-scale facilities to neighborhood parks that do not have the supporting facilities, two additional community parks should be added. Considering the limited availability of land, these sites are likely to be limited in size. However, based on preliminary review of potential public lands that could be repurposed, 45 acres of total new community park land between two sites is possible. Adding in the existing acreage and dividing by the future population develops a level of service standard that can be applied to the current and future populations to determine current and future needs for community park land. The level of service standard and needs are summarized below:

- **Level of service standard:** 2.97 acres/1,000 population
- **Current need:** Applying the level of service standard to the current population results in a total need of 229 acres of community parks, essentially the current inventory. This means that no additional community park sites are currently needed.
- **Future need:** Applying the level of service standard to the projected future population of 91,600 results in a total need of 272 acres of community park land. This represents 45 acres assumed to be in two new park sites added to the system by 2030.

**ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- To improve the distribution of community parks, a new park should be located as centrally as possible, with a second park centrally located on the east side of the Napa River.
- Community park facilities can be greatly augmented by proximity to existing sport facilities owned by other public entities such as school districts.

**ANALYSIS BY PARK TYPE: CIVIC SPACES**

Civic spaces include small landscaped spaces and gathering areas. Typically smaller than one acre in size and easily traversed on foot, civic spaces provide social space—often supported by amenities such as benches, tables, landscaping, public art, water features or other amenities to support community events. These spaces are typically located within downtown districts, higher density areas, and transit stations. Civic spaces can provide for the day-to-day open space needs of nearby residents and employees, as well as shoppers, transit-users and people attending community events. They help balance high density development and communicate neighborhood character.

**PUBLIC INPUT AND TRENDS**

Participants in the planning process provided important local knowledge and ideas specifically about the needs in this community through the public input process. Findings relevant to civic spaces are presented below.

- Downtown Napa is a very popular location for Napa teens. Many teens also expressed an ongoing interest and preference for having a space to gather in downtown.
- Napa residents are very enthusiastic about the potential for Napa Parks to present a positive image for residents and visitors alike. Napa residents value local history and have strong environmental values. Parks are an opportunity to display these values.
- Napa residents are very enthusiastic about downtown-based activities such as concerts at Veteran’s Memorial Park and have an unmet need for increased outdoor amphitheatre spaces. Many suggestions have been made about additional outdoor programming such as film night.

Trends influencing the provision of civic spaces in park systems regionally and nationally focus on the importance of public space in downtowns and heavily developed areas. Civic spaces are often located in downtowns and commercial areas that provide the public with places to congregate and gather for short and extended periods of time.

As American downtowns continue to enjoy resurgence, the development of captivating and comfortable civic spaces becomes not only an interesting amenity, but a necessity.

Facilities in civic spaces vary from amenities to make visiting an area more comfortable or enjoyable, such as benches, restrooms and fountains, to large scale gathering places for public performances and festivals.

### **LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS**

The Parks and Community Services Department currently provides nine civic spaces such as Veterans Memorial Park and the Dwight Murray Plaza which comprise a total of 4.4 acres. These sites provide an existing level of service of 0.06 acres/1,000 residents.

Based on an estimated population of 91,600 for the year 2030, the City of Napa will need to acquire or develop 0.8 acres to maintain the existing LOS for civic spaces. No increase in this amount of parkland acreage will result in a Level of Service of 0.05 acres/1,000 residents in 2030.

The comparable communities examined in this plan provide an average of 0.02 acres/1,000 residents of civic spaces. This level of service would represent only one third of the street plazas and downtown parks present in Napa.

### **GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

Civic spaces are concentrated in the downtown area, generally where such spaces are clustered. As downtown development activities continue, an awareness of public support for these spaces and coordination between the various city departments may foster an array of exciting opportunities. Other developing commercial areas may benefit from civic spaces as part of an improved pedestrian environment, particularly where residential and commercial uses mix closely.

### **CIVIC SPACES PARK NEEDS**

Civic spaces are often located on an opportunity basis and connected to planning and development goals of a downtown or similar area. These spaces are important to the experience of Napa's downtown and should be encouraged when they are created to address specific goals, such as the improvement of the pedestrian environment or providing places for community events. However, a level of service standard is not typically appropriate for this type of park land as the need for civic spaces is not directly linear with population.

- **Level of service standard:** None
- **Current need:** Napa has no currently identified need for additional land in this category.
- **Future need:** Opportunities to improve downtown and other dense areas of Napa will arise and the City should be prepared to add land for civic spaces to the park system between now and 2030. As a guideline 0.8 additional acres is a reasonable expectation. This would essentially maintain the existing level of service.

### **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- Current planning efforts such as the Downtown Specific Plan, Soscol gateway projects and the Napa River Bypass project provide an opportunity for the development of civic spaces that may be funded and implemented through a mix of funding sources not often attributed to park purposes.
- Existing civic spaces should be evaluated for upgrades to better serve the goals of downtown development.

### **ANALYSIS BY PARK TYPE: SPECIAL USE AREAS**

Special use areas are freestanding specialized use facilities, such as the senior center, Skate Park and Pelusi Recreation center. Since special use areas vary widely in function, there are no minimum size requirements, but special use areas must be large enough to accommodate the intended use. Support facilities such as parking and restrooms are often included.

### **PUBLIC INPUT AND TRENDS**

Napa residents expressed interest for several significant community facilities that may require special use sites. Some specific facilities mentioned included:

- Community center
- Expanded BMX facility at Kennedy Park
- Relocated Skate Park

Increasingly special use sites are seen as a fall-back option for locating community facilities, second to placing them in an appropriately scaled park of a different type. Multiple uses on one site reduces the investment necessary in supporting facilities and increases the passive security of having users on-site more often.

The position of skate parks in many park systems has been shifting from a special-use facility, often isolated from other parks and facilities, to one of a variety of large sport facilities that are included in special use sport complexes or community parks. This recognition of skateboarding as a sport creates a positive environment that can reduce vandalism and other anti-social behavior often associated with isolated skate facilities.

### **LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS**

The Parks and Community Services Department currently provides seven special use areas such as the Kennedy Golf Course, Napa Senior Center, Napa Skate Park and Pelusi Recreation Center which total 183.3 acres. These sites provide an existing level of service of 2.47 acres/1,000 residents.

To maintain this level of service at an estimated population of 91,600 for the year 2030, the City of Napa would need to acquire or develop 35.7 acres to maintain the existing LOS for special use areas. No increase in this amount of parkland acreage will result in a Level of Service of 2.08 acres/1,000 residents in 2030. Typically, the special purpose nature of these sites does not require the increase in land as population grows.

Comparisons of Napa to other communities in special use sites vary largely based on whether the given community includes an 18-hole golf course. In communities with golf courses, the level of service is nearly equal to Napa's, while communities without publicly owned courses have considerably less land.

### **GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

Special use sites often serve the entire city and as such the primary geographic consideration is a balance between available land and access,

primarily by car. The Napa Skate Park presents an interesting geographic challenge. As part of the bypass project the current site will be demolished, and the ideal location for skate parks is accessible by skateboard and bike. Currently no centrally located park has capacity for a full scale skate park to be added, and the community parks with enough size are not easily accessible without a car.

### **SPECIAL USE AREAS NEEDS**

Special use sites are typically located on an opportunity basis related to the need for specific facilities. A level of service standard is not typically appropriate for this type of park land as the need for special use sites is not directly linear with population.

- **Level of service standard:** None
- **Current need:** Napa has no currently identified need for additional land in this category, although the Skate Park site may need to be replaced.
- **Future need:** Facility needs that cannot be met on existing park sites in Napa will arise and the City should be prepared to add land for special uses to the park system between now and 2030. As a guideline five acres is a reasonable expectation.

### **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- Replacement of the skate park and the location of a future community center are the most likely special use land needs.

### **ANALYSIS BY PARK TYPE: NATURAL AREAS AND OPEN SPACE**

Natural Areas and Open Space are permanent, undeveloped spaces which are managed primarily for their natural resource value, and secondarily for recreational use. Natural Areas and Open Space may include wetlands, wildlife habitats, steep hillsides or stream corridors. The Napa park system has a system of natural areas and open space that preserve or protect environmentally sensitive areas and important natural resources such as watersheds. These spaces can provide opportunities for nature-based recreation, such as trail use, bird watching and environmental education. The size and shape of each natural area will vary depending on the resource it protects.

## **PUBLIC INPUT AND TRENDS**

Napa residents are very supportive of the existing array of Natural Areas and Open Spaces. Some comments received related to natural and open spaces include:

- Increasing trails and trail signage, expanding areas for dogs, improved cleanliness and safety;
- Participants also expressed interest in expanded partnerships with organizations such as the Napa County Open Space District; and
- Some of Napa's most popular natural areas lack adequate facilities to support current or increased use. Additional facilities, including parking and bathrooms are desired.

## **LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS**

The City of Napa provides 325.4 acres of natural areas and open space at three existing sites and two that will be open to the public in the near future: Alston, Westwood Hills, Timberhill, Trancas Crossing and Oxbow Park. Together, these provide an existing level of service of 4.22 acres/1,000 residents.

Based on an estimated population of 91,600 for the year 2030, the City of Napa will need to acquire or develop 61.2 acres to maintain the existing LOS for Natural Areas and Open Space. No increase in this amount of parkland acreage will result in a level of service of 3.55 acres/1,000 residents in 2030.

Communities compared to Napa in this analysis have integrated large amounts of open space into their park systems. The average level of service for these comparable communities is 35.09 acres/1,000 residents. In order to be providing open space land at this level, Napa would need to add almost 2,400 acres of open space land. Although not officially a part of the park system, the City also owns large reservoir sites outside of the city limits that serve major open space functions in addition to protecting and providing water to residents. Lake Hennessey and the Millikan Reservoir include between them nearly 4,600 acres of land. With this land added to the park land in this category the level of service would jump to 63 acres of natural area land/1,000 residents.

Other agencies, such as the flood control district and the County Regional Park and Open Space District own lands such as the South Napa Wetlands across the Napa River from Kennedy Park. The South Napa Wetlands total

600 acres of restored natural area. This does not increase the land the City is providing but illustrates the access Napa residents have to large natural areas.

### **GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

Natural areas and open spaces are most often located based on opportune sites and the preservation of key natural resources. The results of this type of acquisition in Napa have created a system with the key City-owned natural areas at the south, east and west edges of the city. In addition to the natural areas in the park system, Napa residents enjoy scenic, natural surroundings and ready access to a variety of open spaces. Other agencies own and maintain natural areas that are adjacent to (or close by) Napa that expand the access to natural areas for residents.

While these protected natural areas exist within and around the city, and the agricultural reserve protects other scenic views and the character of the area, many residents of Napa do not have close-to-home opportunities to engage and interact with nature.

### **NATURAL AREAS AND OPEN SPACE NEEDS**

Much of the need for local access to nature could be met through design of future parks, especially since many of the identified locations for new parks are the most distant from existing natural and open space areas. Based on the land availability, maintaining the existing level of service could be challenging, unless other City land such as the water shed areas are added to this category. However, recognizing that at least a portion of the 80-plus acre South Jefferson property is likely to be natural or open space, establishing this as a standard with the intention to spread access across the city seems appropriate.

- **Level of service standard:** 4.25 acres/1,000 residents
- **Current need:** This standard is based on the existing level of service and does not result in additional current need for natural and open spaces.
- **Future need:** To maintain this level of service the City will need to add 64 acres of natural and open space areas to the inventory by 2030.

### **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- The City should consider whether or not to include all or part of the watershed and reservoir lands at Lake Hennessey and Millikan Reservoir as part of the park system. If large portions of land are added

to this category from existing City properties the standard should be revisited.

- Small sites, particularly around streams, may present good opportunities for residents to have closer access to natural systems and environments.

## **OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES**

Because a park and recreation system is about more than just open land, recreation facilities also require assessment. These can include all of the structures, amenities and spaces that support the activities people want to do in parks. The provision of specific facilities is often undertaken with different goals in mind. For example, most cities provide playgrounds in locations that create nearby recreation opportunities. They provide sports fields in areas that are accessible to the community in order to support programming needs and spontaneous play. In addition, they provide special-use facilities in accessible locations to draw people from throughout the city and region for special events and recreation opportunities. As a result, different types of facilities should be provided in different types of parks that support these goals and provide these benefits.

## **METHODOLOGY**

For outdoor recreation facility needs, most of the analyses are similar to those used for park land needs. These include:

- Public Input and Trends
- Level of Service Analysis
- Geographic Analysis

The addition of a supply and demand analysis for soccer, football, softball and baseball fields recognizes the importance of these particular facilities to providing the desired recreation opportunities to the community. For recreation facilities, level of service is expressed in terms of facilities per population, such as 1 baseball field per 19,000 residents. Because sports trends shift, setting a standard for sport fields and other recreation facilities may fix the provision of facilities more than is useful when managing the recreation opportunities provided by a community. In this facility analysis guidelines are proposed in stead of a standards. This

approach allows for greater flexibility in meeting needs as the community grows.

### **SUPPLY AND DEMAND ANALYSIS**

The supply and demand analysis provides a broad, system-wide look at the capacity of sport fields and the use by the full range of community groups. On the supply side, the analysis begins count of available playing fields, based on the information collected from the City and the Napa School District. Demand for the use of these fields is determined based on the current number of teams and their practice and game schedules for school, community and city sports leagues. This information is provided by the sport leagues directly via a sports group questionnaire. Both supply and demand in this analysis are quantified in terms of time slots for either practices or games.

Other general assumptions included in the model are:

- Two time slots per weekday, one additional for fields with lights for a total of 20 per week;
- Five time slots per weekend day, one additional for fields with lights for a total of 27 per week;
- Each game uses one half of a time slot (for each of the two teams playing or assuming that the other half of games are on the road); and
- Field use is standardized with all groups receiving the same two hour time-slot for practice or for a game.

The results of the supply and demand analysis are detailed in the discussion of each type of field.

### **BASEBALL FIELDS**

Baseball fields are defined for the purposes of this analysis as hardball fields with 90 foot base paths, suitable for Babe Ruth and high school league use. A baseball field must have a backstop and dugouts, as well as a grass infield. Fields must be level without holes and the minimum distance from home base to the outfield fencing at left and right field should be 320 feet, with the center field distance 400 feet or more.

Napa currently has four baseball fields, including one field with lighting at Kennedy Park. The three unlit fields are located at Napa and Vintage high schools.

## **PUBLIC INPUT AND TRENDS**

- Napa Babe Ruth reports unchanging interest in this level of play;
- From the community survey, 26% of respondents indicated that they participate in activities on sports fields and of those, 74% are satisfied or have no opinion about available time for playing.
- Sport fields are often grouped into complexes to facilitate tournament play and to decrease the duplication of support facilities. These sport complexes are often located at community parks or special use areas, which may contain multiple field types.
- Baseball fields are often added as one field in a complex of softball or other sport fields.

## **LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS**

With four fields total, the City of Napa, in conjunction with the Napa Valley Unified School District, currently offers one baseball field for every 19,275 residents. To maintain this level of service through to the projected 2030 population, one additional field would be needed. If no fields were added the level of service ratio would decrease (more people for each field) to one field per 22,900 residents.

The comparable communities did not consistently breakdown baseball and softball fields separately. Therefore a comparison of the total of ball fields is included in the level of service analysis for softball fields, typically the larger category.

## **SUPPLY AND DEMAND ANALYSIS**

The supply of playable baseball time slots in a given week can be determined as follows:

- 3 fields without lights provide 60 time slots each week; and
- 1 additional field with lights adds 27 time slots for
- **A total supply of 87 time slots per week.**

Demand for baseball fields is based on two organized sport group users: Napa Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken and Napa Valley School District high school sports. The demand generated by these users is broken down below:

- 31 teams playing for Napa Babe Ruth/Cal Ripkin are each practicing an average of twice a week and playing between two and three games per week, creating a demand for 97 time slots per week.

- Four teams, one varsity and one junior varsity at each of Napa High and Vintage High each practice four times per week and play once per week for a total demand of 18 time slots per week.
- **Total demand equal to 115 time slots per week.** Of this total demand, 37 time slots are for games.

Based on this analysis there is **excess demand equal to 28 time slots per week.** This is approximately equal to **one additional field with lights.**

### **BASEBALL FIELD NEEDS**

If Napa currently had the one additional field needed to meet the demand for baseball the total inventory would be five fields. This translates to:

- A level of service guideline of **one field per 15,400 residents;**
- The **current need would be for one additional baseball field;**
- If the guideline were applied to the projected 2030 population, **the future need would equal 6 fields,** or two more fields than are currently in the inventory.

### **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- Most of the baseball fields are owned by the Napa Valley School District and are primarily for school use. These facilities are counted in the inventory due to their extensive community use. The primary factor determining how many teams can be supported on these fields is the scheduling policies in place.
- At this level of play, the development standards and condition of the field are critical to skill development and official play. While practices can take advantage of alternative spaces, such as smaller fields or open turf areas, it is important to have significant practice and all game time on an official field.

### **SOFTBALL AND LITTLE LEAGUE FIELDS**

As defined in this plan, softball fields must have a backstop, skinned infield and dugouts or player benches. The standard base path length is 60', but outfield dimensions vary with intended use. An outfield fence is not required, but fields must be level without holes or mounds. Little League games are played on the same size of infield with or without a grass infield. Little League games require a pitchers mound and outfield fences at the appropriate distance for the age group. These fields are

counted along with softball fields because in most cases the basic softball field can be adapted for little league use.

### **PUBLIC INPUT AND TRENDS**

- 26% of survey respondents indicated a need for youth baseball and softball fields.
- Only 26% of respondents indicated that they participate in activities on sports fields and of those, 74% are satisfied or have no opinion about available time for playing.
- Napa Little League reported interest in this sport as unchanging year to year.
- Napa Valley Express Girls Softball noted an increasing interest in softball.
- The condition of many fields in this category was considered inadequate for game play.
- Youth baseball teams typically prefer to play on fields developed specifically for baseball, including a permanent pitchers mound and grass infield.
- It is common for Cities to own Little League field complexes but leave the maintenance responsibility to the organization running the league in exchange for exclusive use. Some communities are finding that this is not the most efficient use of the fields as the individual league may not completely fill out the potential schedule of the fields.

### **LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS**

With 75 fields in total, the City of Napa, in conjunction with the Napa Valley Unified School District, currently offers one softball or Little League ball field for every 1,028 residents. To maintain this level of service through to the projected 2030 population, 14 additional fields would be needed. If no fields were added, the level of service ratio would decrease (more people for each field) to one field per 1,221 residents.

The communities selected for level of service comparison provide an average of approximately one baseball or softball field per 6,600 residents. This number includes a small number of baseball fields that could not be consistently separated from the softball and little league fields. Based on the information available, this may slightly overstate the ratio of ball fields by population. If this were applied to Napa's current population, this would equate to 12 fields. This is four fewer baseball, softball and little

league fields than is currently in the City of Napa inventory and 67 fewer than the combined City and School District inventory. The inventory numbers for these facilities are taken as described in the community's system plan or published inventory and the threshold at which these communities counted less formal fields or school district fields is unknown.

### **SUPPLY AND DEMAND ANALYSIS**

The supply of all playable softball/little league time slots in a given week can be determined as follows:

- 68 fields without lights provide 1,360 time slots each week; and
- Seven fields with lights adds 189 time slots for
- **A total supply of 1,549 time slots per week.**

The supply of only city-owned softball/little league time slots in a given week can be determined as follows:

- 12 fields without lights provide 240 time slots each week; and
- Three fields with lights adds 81 time slots for
- **A total supply of 321 time slots per week.**

Demand for softball and little league fields are based on four organized sport group users: Napa Valley Express Girls Softball, NCRD Adult Softball League, Napa Little League and NVSD-Softball. The demand generated by these users is broken down below:

- Six teams playing for Napa Valley Express Girls Softball are each practicing an average of three times a week and playing four games per week, creating a demand for 30 time slots per week.
- 95 teams playing for NCRD Adult Softball League are each practicing less than one time a week, because the focus is on games, and playing between one and two games per week, creating a demand for 107 time slots per week.
- 42 teams playing for Napa Little League are each practicing one to two times a week and playing between two and three games per week, creating a demand for 99 time slots per week.
- Four teams playing for NVSD-Softball are each practicing four times a week and one game per week, creating a demand for 18 time slots per week.
- **Total demand equal to 253 time slots per week.** Of this total demand, 108 time slots are for games.

If all city and school-owned softball/little league fields are considered, there is an **excess of 1,296 time slots per week**. This is approximately equal to an **excess of 48 lit fields**.

If only city-owned softball/little league fields are considered, there is an **excess of 68 time slots per week**. This is approximately equal to an **excess of three lit fields**.

### **SOFTBALL AND LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD NEEDS**

Napa currently more than meets the demand for softball and little league fields with its inventory of city and school-owned fields. Even considering condition and other limitations of some existing fields, Napa has more softball and little league capable fields than are needed for league play. To ensure that Napa has adequate playable fields, the community should provide considerably more fields than are needed for organized play. If the City maintained the current number of fields in city parks and added the 21 middle and high school fields and the four Napa Valley Language Academy fields, this would represent approximately the number of fields organized sports groups are currently using. This is a total of 36 fields. If this were used as a starting point for the need for developed softball/Little League fields this translates to:

- A level of service guideline of **one field per 2,200 residents**.
- The resulting **current need is met** by existing fields.
- If the guidelines were applied to the projected 2030 population, the **future need would be equal to 42 total developed fields** six more than are assumed as game quality fields in the current combined inventory.

### **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- The Napa Valley Unified School District currently manages the majority of these facilities and an enhanced scheduling and coordination policy will likely increase the ability to accommodate demand for fields.
- The inventory of softball and little league fields, more than any other type of outdoor facility, varies in the level of development and condition of the fields. It is clear that many of the fields, at the elementary schools in particular, are not much more than a backstop with adequate playing space. These fields are more appropriate for a school yard game than an organized league.
- Additional game-quality fields needed should first be improved from the informal fields at other school sites.

- Supplying more of this type of field than is necessary for league play provides opportunity for the expansion of current leagues, but also allows for emerging sports and informal recreational use.

### **SOCCER, FOOTBALL, LACROSSE FIELDS**

The title of this section is used as a place holder (recognizing the most common sports in Napa to use these fields) for the many types of activities that can be played on a turf field of approximately 130 yards by 80 yards. Soccer field dimensions can vary in dimension according to the intended age group. However, in order to support regulation play, a soccer field must be at least 50 yards x 80 yards for youth and 60-75 yards x 110-120 yards for adults. One full size field is often split for use by two or more youth teams for practices and games. Portable goals are generally used. Fields must be level without holes or mounds. Usually, a standard soccer field is large enough to accommodate football and lacrosse play. In many cases, football fields are designed and, in the event of artificial turf, are even lined to support soccer play as well. Removable uprights facilitate flexible use of fields. Lacrosse fields are 110 yards long typically with portable goals.

### **PUBLIC INPUT AND TRENDS**

- 23% of survey respondents indicated a need for youth soccer fields.
- 9% of survey respondents indicated a need for adult soccer fields.
- 12% of survey respondents indicated a need for youth football fields.
- Only 26% of respondents indicated that they participate in activities on sports fields and of those, 74% are satisfied or have no opinion about available time for playing.
- The Napa Youth Soccer League reports unchanging interest in their program. However, the Napa Sport Soccer Club reports increasing interest.
- Napa Junior Lacrosse reports increasing interest in their program and limited field access due to established patterns of use by soccer and football.
- Many communities are finding that artificial turf fields greatly increase the playable time per field for soccer, football and lacrosse due to the damage that can be caused by regular play of any of these sports on grass.

- The trend toward sport complexes extends to soccer, with large turf areas often set up to be configured in multiple ways to support a large number of practices and games at once.

### **LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS**

With 34 total soccer, football and lacrosse fields, the City of Napa in conjunction with the Napa Valley Unified School District currently offers one field for every 2,268 residents. To maintain this level of service through to the projected 2030 population, six additional fields would be needed. If no fields were added the level of service ratio would decrease (more people for each field) to one field per 2,694 residents. It is important to note that not all of these fields may be of game quality or size, particularly the 16 soccer fields identified by the School District on elementary school grounds. For this analysis, all fields reported are treated as though they have equal potential for game and practice use. Communities compared to Napa for this analysis provide an average of one soccer field per 10,500 residents. Applied to Napa's current population, this translates to seven soccer fields. The inventory of soccer fields did not include fields at school district property. As noted above, Napa currently provides no soccer, football or lacrosse fields. All existing facilities are on school property.

### **SUPPLY AND DEMAND ANALYSIS**

The supply of playable soccer/football/lacrosse time slots in a given week can be determined as follows:

- 29 fields without lights provide 580 time slots each week; and
- Five fields with lights provide 135 time slots for
- **A total supply of 715 time slots per week.**

Demand for soccer, football and lacrosse fields are based on seven organized sport group users: Napa Sport Soccer Club, Napa Youth Soccer League, Napa Junior Lacrosse, NCRD Flag Football, Napa Saints, NVSD-Football and NVSD-Soccer. The demand generated by these users is broken down below:

- 65 teams playing for Napa Sport Soccer Club are each practicing one or two times weekly and playing one or two games per week, creating a demand for 167 time slots per week.

- 144 teams playing for Napa Youth Soccer League are each practicing two times per week and playing one or two games per week, creating a demand for 396 time slots per week.
- Seven teams playing for Napa Junior Lacrosse are each practicing two to three times weekly and playing once per week, creating a demand for 24 time slots per week.
- 11 teams playing for NCRD Flag Football are each practicing once weekly and playing one game per week, creating a demand for 17 time slots per week.
- Five teams playing for Napa Saints are each practicing five times weekly and playing one game per week, creating a demand for 28 time slots per week.
- Six teams playing for NVSD-Football are each practicing four times weekly and playing one game per week, creating a demand for 27 time slots per week.
- Eight teams playing for NVSD-Soccer are each practicing five times weekly and playing one game per week, creating a demand for 44 time slots per week.
- **Total demand equal to 701 time slots per week.** Of this total demand, 145 time slots are for games.

Based on this analysis there is an **excess equal to 14 time slots per week.** This is slightly less than **one extra lit or unlit field.**

### **SOCCER, FOOTBALL AND LACROSSE FIELD NEEDS**

Napa currently has enough field space to meet the need for organized sport use assuming fields are in playable condition and have strict scheduling. Meeting all of the demand for soccer, football, lacrosse and other sports that can use this type of field means more than having enough time slots for organized play. Additional field capacity will be required to support emerging sports and casual use. Recognizing that not all of the current fields in the inventory provide the assumed capacity for play, the need here is intended to reflect additional capacity needed. This capacity could be increased through new fields or field upgrades. A reasonable increase in capacity, expressed as a ratio of fields per population translates to:

- A level of service guidelines of one field per 2,000 residents;
- This guideline applied to the current population of Napa results in a **current need for 39 soccer fields in total, five more than in the current inventory.**

- If the guidelines were applied to the projected 2030 population, the total **future need would be equal to 46 fields, 12 more than in the current inventory.**

### **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- The Napa Valley Unified School District currently controls the majority of these facilities and an enhanced scheduling and coordination policy will likely increase the ability to accommodate demand for fields.
- The Napa Valley School District has adopted extensive use of artificial turf for soccer/football fields. These fields can accommodate use beyond a grass turf field due to not needing resting and recovery time. The School District's preference is that these fields be used as intensively as possible and be organized to make the most of the significant investment and to ensure proper use of the fields.
- The current capacity of some school fields should also be discounted due to inadequate size or field quality for all levels of play.
- Emerging sports such as Lacrosse are growing in popularity and have similar field dimensions as soccer and football. Flexible field design will allow for fields to support a greater array of activities.
- Supplying more of this type of field than is necessary for league play provides opportunity for the expansion of current leagues, but also allows for emerging sports and informal recreational use.

### **TRAILS**

Trail facilities can vary from informal soft-surfaced pathways within a specific park to 12-15 foot-wide paved regional off-street multi-use trail routes. The type of facilities that support trails also vary based on the intended use. The most significant and well known trail in Napa is the Napa River Trail that follows the east bank of the river from Kennedy Park into downtown where it crosses and continues north on the west bank. Other important resources are the River to Ridge Trail and the internal pathways in Westwood Hills Park and Alston Park.

### **PUBLIC INPUT AND TRENDS**

Trails support the most popular recreational activity in Napa and across the country: walking. Walking is an activity that all generations can enjoy

and residents expect to be able to walk safely in town, from their homes to community destinations and within parks.

Napa residents expressed a high degree of enthusiasm for existing trails and also a desire for an expanded and improved trail system. Many existing planning documents have identified the range of potential local and regional trail linkages in Napa. Residents have expressed strong support for the completion of these large-scale plans and of cost-efficient and strategic local connections that will help connect existing trail systems and pathways to community facilities, parks and schools.

Residents are interested an improved trail system with enhanced safety and educational signage. This could be coordinated with a variety of recreational and environmental programming.

In addition to trails for walking, residents expressed strong interest for expanded bicycle routes as well. Generally, these improvements would improve the non-motorized transportation network in Napa and there were also specific requests for biking trails at Westwood Hills.

Regional trail systems are a trend in parks and recreation that has the ability to capture the public imagination in a way that local trails often miss out on. Napa is a major intersection of regional trail plans and has accommodated these trails mostly in bike routes through the city.

For local trail systems, an important feature of a particular trail segment is the connection, not only to key destinations, but to other trails. In an ideal situation, these connections can form a loop that allows a recreational trail user to return to a starting point without having to back-track along the same route.

### **GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

Trail connections in urban areas are as often about making a connection of 100 feet or less as they are about connecting one side of a city to the other. In examining access to park locations, at least one of Napa's existing parks could serve considerably more people within walking distance if a key trail could be secured before residential development blocks the connection. If a trail could be connected from Shoreline Drive to the Napa River Trail, not only would the neighborhood have continuing access to this major trail facility but residents south of Stonehouse Drive would have much improved access to Lake Park.

These types of small, neighborhood scale connections can make a great difference in the value of the over all park system. However, understanding both the opportunities and the challenges of these small connecting trails requires a finer level of detail than this analysis can complete.

### **TRAIL NEEDS**

Napa and the region, including the County Park and Open Space District, continues to plan for the regional connections that will link communities not only within Napa County, but also to communities beyond the county. Connections are also planned to connect to, as well as within, regional open spaces. Based on the public input these efforts are valuable to Napa residents who see a need for these connections.

Tails connecting neighborhoods, linking parks, schools and destinations such as downtown are also needed at a local level. The largely built-out city and the cost of land acquisition limit the outright purchase of trail corridors in many parts of the city. Napa needs to establish a process to identify the small neighborhood level connections that will increase access to important destinations, thereby raising the value of the existing and future park system.

At the same time, the City needs to continue to add recreational trail loops within park sites, as is appropriate to create opportunities for the highly valued trail activities. These trails are needed where they can be conveniently accessed as well as where they would provide opportunities to enjoy natural features of the city's parks.

### **SKATEBOARDING/BMX FACILITIES**

The City of Napa currently provides one centralized skate park facility, located on Napa Sanitation District property in Downtown. In addition to skate boarding, this facility allows street-style BMX biking as well. This facility will have to be relocated as part of the Napa River bypass project within the next 5 years. Smaller "Skate Spots" are located at Fairview, Sunrise and Vinehill parks. A BMX track is located at Kennedy Park; the facility is operated in partnership with North Bay BMX, a volunteer-based organization.

## **PUBLIC INPUT AND TRENDS**

Strong representation at the community workshops from the skateboarding community provided several design-specific recommendations for a relocated, centralized skate park facility. Suggestions included developing a facility with lighting and in proximity to other facilities such as bathrooms or a community center.

There were also several location ideas suggested at the workshop, including:

- Under the Imola or Soscol Bridge;
- Within the Napa River bypass Dry Channel; or
- Kennedy Park.

When asked as one choice in a list of options in the community survey, “skateboard park” did not rank highly as a needed facility. It is worth noting that in this survey no information was provided about the planned removal of the existing skate park.

In several of the public input opportunities, the idea of expanding the existing BMX dirt track at Kennedy park was raised.

Skate parks (used generically to include ramp or street plaza type parks that often allow both skate boarders and a variety of other wheeled equipment) have become nearly a must-have facility for urban park systems. Cities of all sizes have found that these parks provide an important venue for one of the most participated in sports in the country.

There are different styles of skate park that can be developed and different materials and modular components that can be used. The most successful projects are planned, based on the styles and needs of local skaters as determined in the design process.

Most communities have found that when skate parks are presented as the sport venues and training grounds that they are, the anticipated problems with graffiti and delinquency largely disappear. It is the dominant trend to place a skate park as a one sport facility in a community park, or on its own, with the visibility and spectator facilities of a true sport venue.

Opportunities for skateboarding and freestyle biking can also be provided in other parks and public facilities in both formal and informal ways. An example of a formal “skate spot” would be a modular ramp added to an

existing neighborhood park for local skaters to practice on. An informal site might be a reinforced concrete table or ledge designed with the appropriate pathway run-in.

### **GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

The current skate park location offers a central location that is close to downtown. Replacing this park in the downtown area presents a challenge that may require very creative thinking to overcome the high cost of property. If the skate park is moved to a more remote location, such as Kennedy Park, extra consideration should be given to the distribution of other skateboarding opportunities. Existing skate spots are broadly distributed in the east, west and north areas.

### **SKATEBOARDING/BMX FACILITY NEEDS**

Public support indicates that Napa needs to have a large, community scale skate park and could also support additional skate spots.

One BMX track facility is adequate for Napa, however, the size, location and configuration of the facility could be modified based on park space needs.

### **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- Wherever possible, skate facilities should be designed to be shared with BMX riders and other wheeled equipment (such as inline skates and scooters).
- The existing partnership between the department and North Bay BMX is strong and provides benefits for many residents. It should be periodically evaluated to ensure that this is highly needed as it is in use of limited park space.

### **RIVER ACCESS**

The Napa River is the defining feature for the City of Napa and residents enjoy views of the river and the opportunity to access it for a variety of recreational activities including boating and birding. In 2005, the City of Napa completed a River Parkway Master Plan that identifies a series of existing and desired access points of several types from overlooks to boat ramps.

## **PUBLIC INPUT AND TRENDS**

Access to the Napa River is important to residents who participated in the planning process. Some comments involving river access include:

- Improve access at Napa Yacht Club
- Identify and formalize key strategic informal access points
- Support for improved water access and related programming
- Water access is a strategic resource and recreational amenity that can serve Napa residents and visitors alike.

Providing access to major natural assets is a key strategy of many park systems to encourage stewardship of resources.

Water bodies such as the Napa River present potential trail corridors. These “water trails” can include interpretive materials about the importance of the river and provide appropriate access to sensitive lands.

## **WATER ACCESS NEEDS**

The Napa River Parkway Master Plan identifies six potential hand boat launch locations and 10 potential dock locations. No information surfaced that changed the need for these access points.

## **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- Actual development since the 2005 master plan may change the practicality of some river access points.
- Public access points that are not clearly identified add limited value to the park system.

## **AQUATICS**

There are five school district owned pools in the City of Napa. The pools are deep-water tanks that provide opportunities for lap swimming, swimming lessons, water polo and competitive swimming. The City of Napa has been operating these pools for public use during the summer months. Current budgetary constraints may further limit public access to these pools, even during the summer months.

## **PUBLIC INPUT AND TRENDS ANALYSIS**

Public involvement activities indicate that there is a strong level of interest and support for expanded aquatics and aquatic programming opportunities in the City of Napa.

In addition to deep water tanks that support competitive swimming, there was a strong interest in other types of aquatic opportunities such as leisure pools, spray and water play features that could be integrated into existing neighborhood parks.

In the community survey, 46% of households indicated that they have a need for outdoor swimming pools, higher than the 33% that indicated a need for indoor lap lanes for exercise swimming and 28% that indicated a need for outdoor stand-alone spray features.

Aquatic facilities in park systems are Leisure pools may include: current channels, slides, wave and spray features.

Many park systems pair leisure pools, which can include current channels, slides, and wave and spray features, with a deep water tank for recreational and competitive swimming. This pairing increases income from traditional deep-water tanks alone.

On a smaller scale, many agencies have found that stand-alone spray features can be provided in local parks to complement or replace some of the need for pools. These can be child focused water playgrounds or more decorative interactive water fountains. This type of facility has low operating costs and typically does not recover any costs through fees.

## **GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

Existing aquatic facilities are located at the following schools:

- Napa High School
- Vintage High School
- Harvest Middle School
- Redwood Middle School
- Silverado Middle School

One additional deep water pool is located at Napa Valley College. This facility is only available to students and the swim club that leases pool time for training and events.

The geographic distribution of the school pool facilities is indicated on Map 3: Existing Pool Sites. These facilities provide substantial coverage of the major areas of the City assuming all are available for some level of public use. The area most lacking service would be the central west side of Napa.

Service areas for pools in most communities are either defined as community wide or at a distance equivalent to 5-10 minutes travel time (which can be three-five miles or more). The proximity of Redwood Middle School to Vintage High School and Napa High School potentially creates a significant overlap of service areas.

### **AQUATIC FACILITY NEEDS**

Based on the school district facilities, Napa has far more pools than a typical community of this size. How well these facilities meet community needs is largely based on public access. Assuming that summer access provides the opportunity for swim lessons and other recreation programming, the operation of some of these pools should be able to meet community needs for deep water pool facilities. The number of facilities operated in summer months for these programs will need to be balanced between convenient access and the cost of operating multiple sites.

Additional need for aquatics that are focused on leisure pool functions or water play is not met by existing facilities. The need for these types of facilities is more local and should be incorporated into a larger number of more distributed sites. Seven spray features or interactive fountains distributed across the community would provide a reasonable level of access for water play.

### **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- Splash features and interactive fountains should be designed to minimize maintenance and staffing costs. With no standing water, no lifeguards are necessary.
- If operating three pools for recreation programming proves adequate, the three middle school pools appear to provide the best geographic spread.

## **OTHER FACILITIES**

In addition to the facilities noted previously, several other types of facilities should be provided in the City of Napa to increase the variety of recreation opportunities available to city residents. These facilities described in this section are based on preferences expressed during the public involvement process and include:

- Picnic Areas
- Community Gardens
- Dog Parks
- Outdoor Amphitheatres and Public Spaces

## **PICNIC AREAS**

Picnic Areas often include benches and barbecue grills in Napa's neighborhood parks. These picnic areas are popular and well-used and don't adequately serve the needs of Napa residents. Public input findings indicate a desire for improved picnic areas including developed shade structures, wash basins, drinking fountains and bathrooms. The development of additional reservable picnic areas will ease the competitive nature of picnic area selection.

- Kennedy and Fuller are only parks with reservable picnic areas.
- Dry Creek and other neighborhood park picnic areas are heavily used on weekends and families claim spots in the early morning.
- High demand for picnic facilities with bathrooms, currently no bathrooms in neighborhood parks.
- Existing picnic facilities can be modified with additional facilities to meet existing demand.
- 60% of households surveyed indicated a need for park shelters and picnic areas.

## **DOG PARKS**

Dog parks can be separated in off-leash areas where dogs can run free or areas in parks where dogs are allowed to be on leash. Napa's off-leash dog areas are in Alston and Shurtleff Parks. Facilities specifically for dogs to be exercised and socialized off-leash also provide important benefits to

dog owners. Communities often form around regular visitors who are often the best advocates for the upkeep of these facilities.

The public has varying understandings of the rules for on-leash dogs in parks and the public would benefit from updated signage or educational outreach about current rules.

There is interest in increased off leash dog areas throughout the park system and an expansion of the off leash area at Alston Park. Community members also expressed interest in being able to take dogs on-leash on the River Trail.

While Napa provides two significant off-leash dog facilities, serving the east and west edges of the city, at least one additional location would improve the ability of residents to walk to a dog park. An additional off-leash area should be considered for a new park in the central part of Napa.

### **COMMUNITY GARDENS**

Community Gardens provide space for gardening and related activities. Community members expressed a desire for additional community gardening locations as well as related programming.

The existing partnership at Connelly Ranch is a successful model for one type of agricultural related facility and program that could be modeled to support the development of a community garden program while minimizing the operational burden on the department.

### **OUTDOOR AMPHITHEATRES**

Outdoor amphitheatres and performance spaces provide a location for a variety of programming opportunities and can be located in many types of parks. It is important to ensure that parks have adequate supporting facilities prior to the introduction of a performance space designed to draw people from other parts of the city.

In the community survey, 39% of households indicated a need for outdoor amphitheatres. The success of the new space at Veteran's Park will likely drive additional interest in outdoor performance and event spaces.

The need for performance spaces should be driven by the programming available. Spreading events across the park system is a good way to draw

people into parks, but until there is an established need for fixed amphitheaters, temporary stages can be used in a variety of park settings.

## INDOOR FACILITIES

### COMMUNITY CENTERS

Currently Napa has several indoor facilities that provide community center services. The community center buildings are described below:

- **Las Flores Community Center:** The 8,000 square ft. building is located in North Napa and includes a 5,000 sq. ft gym and multi-purpose room as well as classrooms, a kitchen, office and restrooms. Over 40 programs are offered at the center, childcare and volleyball are two of the more popular programs hosted at Las Flores.
- **Pelusi Recreation Building:** The 1,600 ft. facility is located adjacent to Kennedy Park and features a large meeting or event space, kitchenette and restrooms. The building supports recreational programming and can be rented to private or non-profit groups for meetings, receptions, parties or other activities.
- **Junior Museum Building:** this small building in Fuller Park is currently used by Headstart for child care programming.

Like many of the recreation facilities in Napa, the indoor facilities owned by the City are supplemented by the extensive indoor spaces owned by Napa Valley School District. The Park and Recreation Services Department provides programming in classrooms, gyms and other indoor spaces at many elementary and middle schools in Napa. These programs focus on youth recreation during the after school hours and during school breaks. Gymnasiums are also used for some adult indoor sports leagues as space allows.

The Napa Senior Center also provides similar indoor facilities. The discussion of this facility is separated due to its special focus on a particular population.

## **PUBLIC INPUT AND TRENDS**

During the Community Workshops, residents expressed a strong desire for additional recreation facility space for evening programming, youth programming and childcare. Support for the concept of a multi-use community center that serves residents of all ages and visitors in a central location was strong.

- Many questionnaire respondents expressed a desire for additional programming and rentable space for activities of all kinds including childcare, volleyball and all types of fitness related programming.
- Developing a new indoor recreation center was the third most popular project that survey respondent households indicated they would support with tax dollars. Developing new and connecting existing walking/biking trails and fixing up/repairing small neighborhood parks were the first and second most popular responses, respectively.
- 76% of survey respondent households were “Very Supportive” or “Somewhat Supportive” of developing a new indoor recreation center.
- When asked for reasons why they don’t use recreation facilities or participate in programs more often, the most often cited response was “Program or Facility not Offered” indicated an interest in participation, but a lack of facility type to support desired programs.
- Survey respondent households cited Adult Fitness and Wellness Programs most often as those for which they have a need.
- When asked how well a variety of Parks and Recreation facilities meet their needs, indoor facilities such as basketball/ volleyball courts, fitness and exercise facilities, indoor running/ walking tracks and indoor pools ranked the lowest.

## **FACILITY SIZE AND DISTRIBUTION**

To understand the need for community centers in Napa, it is helpful to examine the range of facility sizes and the distribution of facilities in other communities. The most prevalent trend in the provision of recreation centers across the country is to build larger, more comprehensive centers that provide centralized service to large areas or even entire communities. These “mega-centers” create the top end of a spectrum of facility sizes that

also includes community centers and special use buildings. Each size category is described below.

### **Mega-centers**

Mega-Centers are large community centers that provide a wide range of revenue generating activities from a central location. Facilities often include aquatics centers, gymnasiums, fitness centers and meeting space for various size groups. These centers often include specialized facilities for computers or art, or specific areas for certain age groups, such as teen centers, childcare centers or senior centers. These Mega-Centers are generally 80-100,000+ square feet in size, and charge membership fees for fitness facilities as well as additional user fees for classes and aquatics. These centers have high cost recovery goals. The service area for Mega-Centers is typically five miles or more, and some centers may attract users from throughout the region.

### **Community centers**

Community centers typically provide services to a specific neighborhood within a service area radius of approximately two miles. Community centers are generally between 10,000 and 40,000 sf. The centers often include a gymnasium or a large multi-purpose room, and several classrooms as well as other indoor and outdoor amenities. Community centers do not support as wide an array of programs as Mega-centers, and generally do not produce as much revenue. These centers often lack extensive areas for specialized programs, and generally do not have as high cost recovery as Mega-centers. This means that community centers require more general fund subsidy than the more self-supporting Mega-centers. Some centers may recover more costs than others, depending on the demographics of their surrounding community. The Las Flores center is a small version of this model. Some communities choose to provide a distributed system of smaller facilities while others centralize their staff and programs into centralized larger community or mega centers.

### **Special use buildings**

Special use buildings can vary in size but often are smaller than 10,000 sf. These facilities are often provided for a particular purpose and then over time evolve as needs change. The City of Napa has two special use buildings. The Pelusi Center is located at Kennedy Park and the Junior Museum Building is located at Fuller Park. Although these buildings do not take the place of community centers, the community buildings could be used to provide some programs in areas unserved by community

centers, to provide needed programs that could not be accommodated due to lack of space, or to provide additional program space in targeted areas, such as very low income or high density neighborhoods.

In addition to indoor facilities, community centers should be located in a Community or Regional Parks that provides these outdoor facilities:

- Picnic areas
- Group picnic areas
- Walking paths
- Playgrounds
- Aquatics or spraygrounds
- Turf areas for outdoor programs
- Small amphitheater areas
- Outdoor sports courts and fields

### **GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

Las Flores is located in North Napa, providing community center facility space for that area of town. The Pelusi building is located at Kennedy Park in South Napa and does not offer the variety of programmable space and classroom offered at the Las Flores Center. The lack of facilities in other parts of the city means that these facilities, along with school buildings are destinations from all over the city.

### **PROGRAMMING SPACE NEEDS**

Napa's recreation program has made extensive use of the facilities available, particularly school sites. The use of school facilities comes with limitations due to the needs of the host school for after school and evening activities. These activities take priority over any City sponsored or community based programming and makes it difficult to operate regularly scheduled programs such as leagues. The expansion of adult programming in particular presents challenges. Adult sport programs face extensive competition from both city and community youth sports programming. Rescheduling is also difficult for adult participants. In other program areas, specialized spaces, such as fitness studios, are needed to support the types of programs desired. These are not spaces typically included in school facilities. The very limited City-owned space and the reliance on school district facilities also restricts the amount of daytime programming possible.

## **COMMUNITY CENTER NEEDS**

The need for community center space is both dependent on and partially determines the amount of recreation programming available. Napa has actively expanded programming options into every space available, especially focusing on opportunities for youth. Public input indicates that the next area to expand should be adult-focused opportunities, particularly those that increase health and wellness. The current and projected size of Napa, both in geographic size and in population, makes a large community center the appropriate size of facility.

## **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- When developing community center facilities, the emphasis should be placed on providing flexible multi-use spaces rather than highly specialized spaces.
- The ideal community center would serve as a multi-generational gathering place for Napa residents and non-residents alike.
- A central location would provide the best accessibility for all users and would encourage traveling to and from the facility using alternative transportation.

A number of potential community center locations have been identified and are described below, along with some advantages and disadvantages.

- Existing Senior Center: The Napa Senior Center occupies a central site in the City that is already owned by the City. This site is fairly small for a community scale facility and would be particularly constrained for parking. Existing senior center programming would be displaced during construction but should be able to be integrated into the new facility.
- County Fairgrounds: Although this site is not owned by the City it is a large publicly owned parcel that is reasonably central to Napa. None of the existing structures could accommodate a community center, locating a community center on this site would require coordination with a variety of existing user groups.
- Kennedy Park (Peulsi Building Site): This site provides adequate space for a building and parking that would also provide views and access to golf course, wetlands area and the Napa River Trail. The City owns this site but it is not centrally located and would create a great deal of traffic into this area.

- **Copia Site:** The bankruptcy of Copia has created a lot of interest in this site. The size and debts that may come with trying to acquire this site make it an expensive purchase. However, the facilities on site would complement additional recreation uses and much of the site could be used as is.
- **South Jefferson:** The City-owned site between the city limit and the Napa River wetlands has adequate area for at least a small community center. However the extremely limited access to the site and the environmental and community impacts make this a less attractive option.

### **SENIOR CENTER**

The 7,300 sq. ft. Senior Center houses a variety of senior activities and provides meeting space for numerous Napa social and activity groups. The site also includes a covered bocce court that is very popular. The 1,600 Sq. Ft. Senior Center Annex, adjacent to the Senior Center, is used for recreational and senior programs. The Center can be rented for private or non-profit groups for meeting and other activities.

### **PUBLIC INPUT AND TRENDS**

Input received during the planning process has included a number of specific comments about the Senior Center and programming there. This input is summarized below.

- Seniors noted that the quality of the food at the center could be substantially improved, to reflect the Napa region's commitment to healthy and local produce.
- There is a growing senior Hispanic population and the senior center could provide additional programming for this group.
- A 2008 survey of seniors using the facility indicated an interest in out of town trips and one day local trips.
- The vast majority (87%) of seniors drive to the center.

- The majority of respondents visit the center for exercise programming, the dining program or to visit with friends.

One of the strongest trends through out the United States, California and the region is the aging of our population. Cities throughout California must consider and develop facilities and programs that will serve older adults with a variety of needs and interests. Seniors can no longer be lumped into a single, 65-plus category and be effectively served. With healthier lifestyles, people live longer and more active than ever before. Parks and recreation providers need to consider multiple stages and interests of seniors' diverse lives. Facilities and programs must provide for seniors who are: interested in developing new skills, participating in new activities; for those with some health issues and access concerns; for passive and more contemplative activities; for seniors looking for intergenerational interactions and for those who want more quiet environments.

The growing older adult demographic of 50+ includes a multi-generational group that can include individuals still in the workforce, young retirees and both the frail and active elderly. The needs of each of these sub-groups can vary, and a one size fits all approach is not appropriate. There is a need to look at the time targeted programs that are offered and the type of programs that are offered in order to address the needs of all of these groups.

The typical active aging Baby Boomer generation is not inclined to play a game of bingo. Rather, they are interested in continued involvement in their community, active lifestyles, outdoor recreation, technology, and volunteerism. The services, which could include computer classes, medical assistance, financial counseling, and exercise classes, may even be offered in the context of a café.

- The Bay Area population is aging. Nearly 20% of the Bay Area population will be 65 years or older by 2020.
- Adults age 50 + have a variety of interests and ability levels and increasingly have access to more economic resources than in the past. (AARP and Public Policy Institute of California)

Nationally, the trend in providing senior activities is to include them as part of multi-generational community and recreation centers that provide a broader range of services, rather than a special purpose facility. Park

agencies are finding that many of the activities that are designed to serve younger residents are also appealing to the more active senior population. Additionally the gathering spaces that are a key part of most senior center programs are more effective at building community when they attract users from all age groups. Flexible social gathering spaces can be programmed to also provide time that is more specifically for senior interests without reserving large amounts of space on a full-time basis.

### **GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

The existing Napa Senior Center is centrally located near downtown Napa. This is the only special purpose senior recreation facility that the City provides.

### **SENIOR CENTER NEEDS**

While the needs of today's senior population are changing, it is important to continue to provide services to this larger and growing segment of the population. However, the changes in what services are required means that Napa should be able to better serve seniors within the context of a larger community center.

### **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- While Napa still calls its center a "Senior" Center, other communities have found that alternative names may encourage those who are uncomfortable calling themselves seniors to participate.
- It will be important to design any new combination center to make sure that it belongs as much to Napa's seniors as it does to any other group. This can be the difference between this important group resisting what they see as taking away their facility and embracing the new facility as an improvement not only for them but for the entire community.