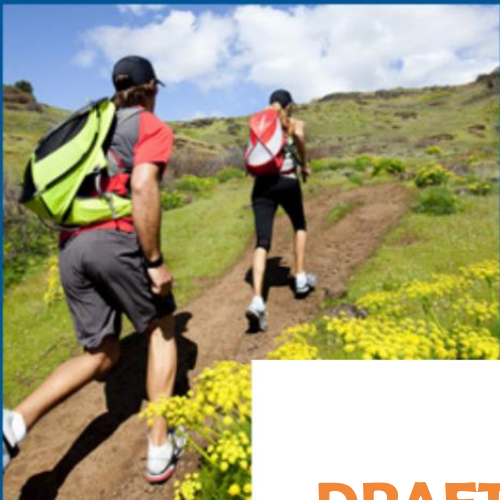




DRAFT
Santa Barbara County

Recreation Master Plan

Community Services Department | Parks Division
November 2025



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DRAFT

Santa Barbara County

Recreation Master Plan



one
COUNTY
one
FUTURE



The County of Santa Barbara
Community Services Department, Parks Division
123 East Anapamu Street, 2nd Floor
Santa Barbara, CA 93101-2058

Special thanks to our local agencies in Santa Barbara County



November 2025

"I only went out for a walk and finally concluded to stay out until sundown,
for going out I found,
was really going in."

John Muir, John of the Mountains



Acknowledgments

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Bob Nelson, Fourth District
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Chapter One: Recreation is Essential



1.0. Recreation is Essential

Recreation is leisure, exercise, sports, and fun during free time and is an indispensable part of human health and well-being. Recreation facilities and programs directly improve human health and have added economic, social, and environmental benefits. Planning for public recreation has unmatched benefits for overall community sustainability and quality of life. A complete parks and recreation system designed to meet the needs of the people it serves is essential to the quality of life and community strength, providing attractive public resources for recreation, fitness, wellness, relaxation, and play for the community and visitors alike.

In Santa Barbara County, approximately 2,200 acres are protected as public parkland and 655,000 acres are protected as public open space by a range of agencies, including 2,740 acres maintained by the County of Santa Barbara Community Services Department, Parks Division (County Parks; see Chapter 3.0, *Existing Parks and Trails*). Santa Barbara County's recreation lands help conserve open land uses, which play a critical role in the region's environmental sustainability by providing a range of ecosystem services that enhance air quality, water quality, and energy conservation and support species habitat, among other benefits. Recreation facilities provide important economic benefits to Santa Barbara County residents from both local activities (e.g., sports tournaments) and tourism. Planning for parks, recreation, and trails in Santa Barbara County benefits everyone in permanent, wide-ranging ways. Investing in parks, recreation facilities, and trails means not only meeting current and future recreation needs but also forging economic vitality, community sustainability, and resilience. Strong connections exist between recreation assets and their impact on local and regional economies, public health, natural resource conservation, and community sustainability and resilience. Park projects preserve public land for outdoor recreation and play while conserving and restoring ecological function (Figure 1-1).

County Parks provides, protects, and enhances parks, recreation, and trails in the unincorporated areas of Santa Barbara County. County Parks' vision is to create and manage a sustainable, vibrant, and diverse system of parks, trails, and recreation facilities that offer all people the opportunity to explore, play, exercise, socialize, and connect with the County's natural resources, consistent with responsible environmental stewardship and resilience. County Parks also partners with other agencies and organizations to support high-quality recreation for all in Santa Barbara County, including local cities, special districts, and the State of California.



The Recreation Master Plan identifies needs for new and improved parks such as sports fields and courts to support youth sports.

Photo: Independent

Figure 1-1. Key Benefits of Recreation Planning in Santa Barbara County

Community Health, Play, & Active Living

- Santa Barbara County's parks and trails support a wide range of active and passive recreation.
- Physical activity helps ensure community health and wellbeing.
- Community health is a key component in maintaining a high quality of life.
- High quality parks, recreation, and trails enhance community health for county residents now and in the future.
- Sports fields, courts, gyms, pools, and other active recreation facilities support youth and adult sports leagues and recreational play.
- Trails are a low-impact way to keep people active and provide access to the natural world, which has innumerable benefits for physical and mental health.

Tourism & Economic Vitality

- The county's coastline, mountains, parks, and trails attract residents and visitors.
- County recreation lands generate roughly \$725 million to \$1.5 billion in annual economic activity from visitation, and roughly \$41 million to \$66 million annually in recreation benefits to residents (Appendix E).
- Demand for parks, recreation, and trails is projected to grow and diversify.
- Planned properly, the demand for recreation can be a strong foundation for the economic wellbeing of the county.
- High-quality facilities can generate revenue through user fees and local economic activity.

Natural Resources & Climate Resilience

- Parks preserve open space, natural vegetation, and local water quality.
- Santa Barbara County has parks, trails, rural lands, beaches, mountains, native California habitats, and pristine coastline that make the county a very special place.
- These resources support outdoor recreation while preserving and enhancing the county's diverse natural resource values.
- Parks can include cooling and warming facilities during extreme weather days.
- Parks can support clean energy infrastructure integrated with recreation facilities, including solar rooftops and carports, electric vehicle charging stations, and battery storage sites.

A. Goals of the Recreation Master Plan for Santa Barbara County

The Santa Barbara County Recreation Master Plan (Recreation Master Plan) is a strategic long-term planning document that assesses the need for parks, recreation, and trails in Santa Barbara County and guides County Parks' capital planning, decisions, and actions for at least the next 20 years. In addition, it is a resource for other agencies to inform priorities and needs for parks, recreation, and trails countywide. While the Recreation Master Plan is a County plan, it also provides vision, direction, context, and recommendations for County Parks to substantially improve the countywide recreation system in partnership with other public agencies and private organizations. The potential for funding, interagency coordination, public-private partnerships, and increased efficiency for planned park, recreation, and trail projects is enhanced through the Recreation Master Plan's programs. The goal of the Recreation Master Plan is to enhance the quality of life and leisure experience for Santa Barbara County residents of all ages. The Recreation Master Plan will guide recreation planning in the county toward the following outcomes:

No. 1. Establish a long-range vision.

The Recreation Master Plan provides an action plan, implementation strategy, and recommendations for near-term (5 to 10 years) and long-term (10-20 years) recreation projects and funding strategies for capital improvements.

No. 2. Assess current and future recreation needs of the community.

As communities change and populations grow, so should parks and recreation systems. The County's recreation needs were last comprehensively assessed in 1980 as part of the Comprehensive Plan. The Recreation Master Plan updates this assessment to support long-term resource allocation.



The Recreation Master Plan provides a long-range vision and planning tools for recreation improvements through 2050. Photo: United Boys & Girls Club

No. 3. Promote new ideas and partnerships.

Through collaborative efforts with community partners, public agencies, and private proponents, the County can help realize new and innovative ideas to help meet diverse recreation needs.

No. 4. Establish a strong foundation for funding pursuits.

Often, grant applications and funding strategies require an approved plan, usually developed through a public engagement process. The Recreation Master Plan provides planning support, as well as environmental review in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

No. 5. Create recreational value within existing public lands.

Recreation facilities within underutilized public open spaces present a key opportunity to accommodate recreation needs in areas where projected population growth is anticipated.

No. 6. Plan for sustainable recreation.

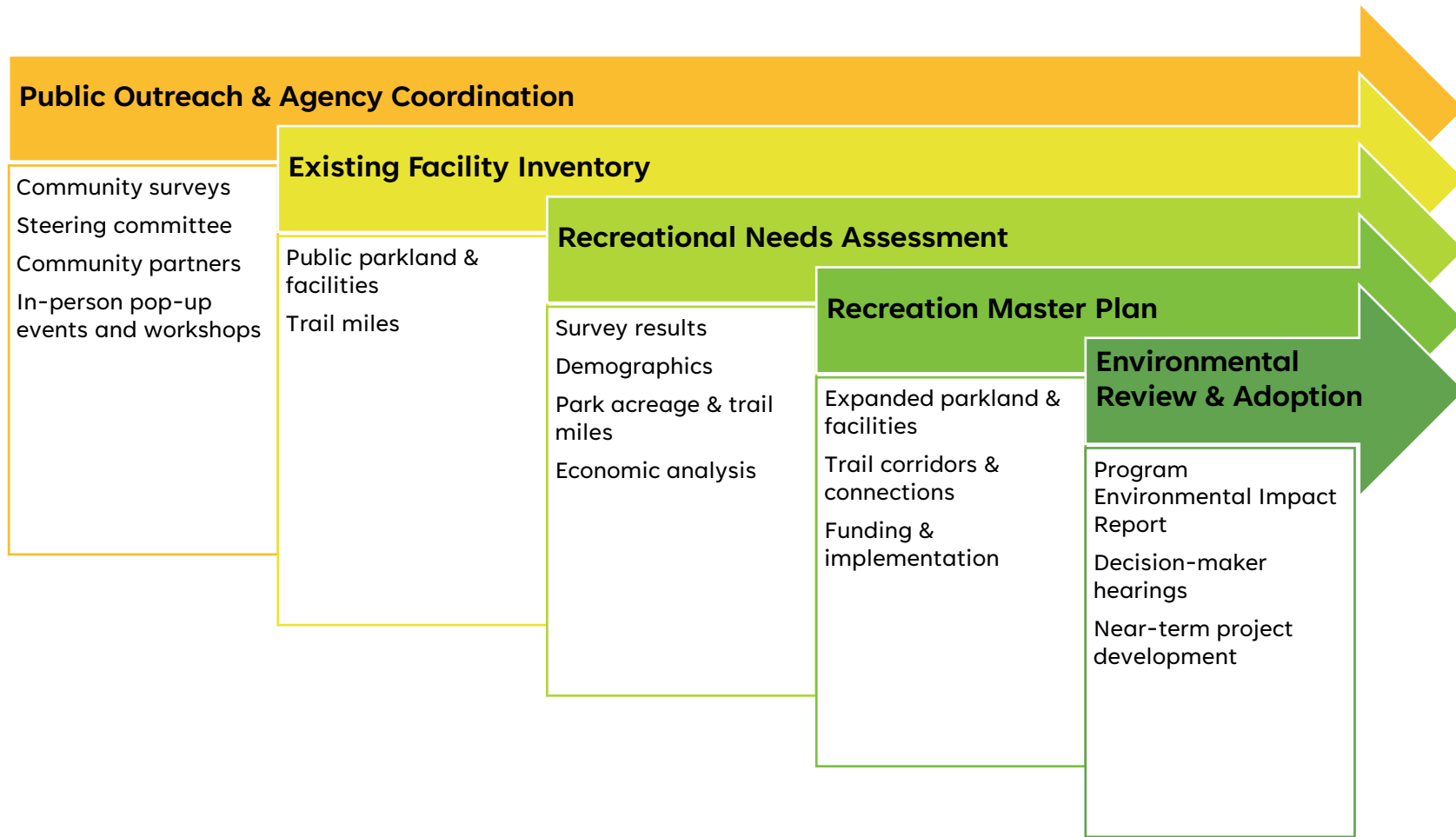
The Recreation Master Plan considers equitable access to parks and trails, active transportation connectivity, low-impact facilities, and economically balanced public infrastructure investments.

No. 7. Build community engagement, education, and support.

A robust community outreach program to develop the Recreation Master Plan creates ongoing engagement and support for funding and implementation strategies on an ongoing basis.

To achieve these goals, the Recreation Master Plan was developed through five major steps (Figure 1-2):

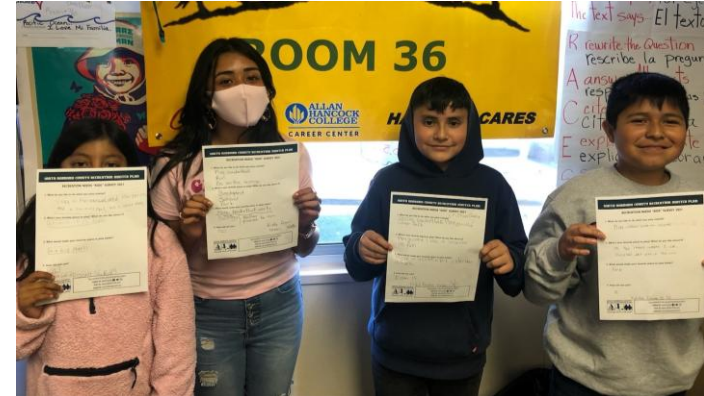
Figure 1-2. Recreation Planning Process Overview



B. Community Engagement & Outreach

By their nature, public parks, recreation facilities, and trails are for everyone, regardless of age, income, race/ethnicity, language, or abilities. This philosophy ensures everyone has access to and feels welcome in public recreational spaces and places. Equitable access to recreation helps support sustainable communities, providing opportunities for play, leisure, exercise, and access to the outdoors to benefit community health and social well-being.

The planning process for the Recreation Master Plan kicked off in July 2019 with a Santa Barbara County Recreation Summit, where recreational stakeholders from across the county, as well as state and federal officials, convened to explore collaboration between groups and explain the Recreation Master Plan's role in regional recreation planning. A Steering Committee was formed to provide early input about the purpose, intent, and opportunities for the Recreation Master Plan, including guidance on equitable and inclusive community engagement. Building from this energy and momentum, the County implemented an unprecedented outreach effort to directly connect with communities throughout Santa Barbara County. Equitable and inclusive community engagement that reaches a diversity of representative groups is central to recreation planning to meet the needs of all people. To create opportunities for as many people as possible to participate in the recreation planning process, the County fostered over two years of creative, adaptive, and diverse outreach techniques directly in communities throughout the county. Between 2021 and 2022, County Parks conducted a robust public outreach program (POP) consisting of a diverse and innovative community engagement toolbox. The input and feedback received through nearly 8,000 recreation surveys and 86 meetings and workshops directly informed the recreation needs assessment and planning for the Recreation Master Plan. The County maximized participation from all communities, as well as targeted input for underserved and underrepresented people, with five objectives (Figure 1-3):



The Recreation Master Plan is informed by input from community members who needs outdoor play and sports the most! Photo: Santa Barbara County Promotores



The COVID-19 pandemic couldn't stop this Recreation Master Plan! The community engagement team took outreach outdoors, conducting in-person pop-up events at parks, trailheads, and community gathering places to gather direct input and promote participation in recreation planning.

Figure 1-3. Objectives of the Public Outreach Program**No. 1. Hear as many voices as possible.**

Community starts at the park, and that's why the County set out to engage directly with the community about the Recreation Master Plan. Through 86 outreach events and ongoing advertising, the County collected nearly 8,000 recreation surveys and recorded direct input from hundreds, if not thousands, of county residents of all ages.

No. 2. Adapt to changing conditions

The County adapted to new information, effective technologies, and emerging opportunities, including the COVID-19 public health restrictions, to transition from a traditional outreach model of large in-person workshops at a community gathering location to a hybrid model with small, distributed pop-ups in outdoor settings. In-person pop-ups and workshops allowed the recreation planning team to engage the community face-to-face. This approach fostered unprecedented participation and input. The input was recorded via recreation surveys. The County extensively advertised the surveys and community events with digital and print materials.

No. 3. Ensure all community members can participate

The County sought input from communities that are underserved by parks, recreation, and trails and/or underrepresented in local planning processes due to barriers to participation (e.g., language, technology, location) by providing inclusive environments and equitable opportunities for participation. Multi-lingual outreach events were strategically located in parks, at trailheads, and at community events, such as farmers' markets, to ensure the recreation planning team was meeting people in their own communities. By engaging directly with community members in local parks and popular events, the recreation planning team removed barriers to access and supported equitable and widespread participation.

No. 4. Involve recreation leaders

The County engaged a steering committee of local recreation planners and community advocates to guide the planning process, make interagency connections, and promote participation. The steering committee includes representatives from all cities and recreation special districts, plus recreation advocates. The steering committee convened as needed throughout the planning process to review and advise the County on recreation needs.

No. 5. Engage community partners

The County partnered with local recreation providers and community partners to spread the word, particularly to non-English speaking and lower-income residents who are harder to engage. Five community partners, including El Centro, MICOP, People's Self-Help Housing, the Promotores, and the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center, worked together to collect input from disadvantaged communities across the county, collecting 1,118 survey responses. Their work was essential to engaging communities who might have otherwise never known about the Recreation Master Plan or been able to contribute their opinions.

A detailed description of the County's outreach program for the Recreation Master Plan and the results of the recreation surveys are available in Appendix A.

"An inclusive and meaningful engagement process ensures that our parks and public spaces are created by the people they are intended to serve."

National Recreation & Parks Association (NRPA), Community Engagement Resource Guide

C. Organization of the Recreation Master Plan

The Recreation Master Plan is organized into seven chapters and a set of appendices:

- **Chapter 1: Recreation is Essential** describes the purpose, key issues, goals, approach to outreach and engagement, and organization of the Recreation Master Plan and provides context for its development.
- **Chapter 2: County Overview** describes the physical and demographic setting in Santa Barbara County as a basis for recreation planning.
- **Chapter 3: Existing Parks & Trails in Santa Barbara County** provides details on all existing parks, trails, recreation facilities, and programs within the county.
- **Chapter 5: Recreation Needs Assessment** uses public input, demographic data, and the parks inventory to describe the existing level of service experienced in each recreation planning area and understand the gaps in recreation amenities throughout Santa Barbara County.
- **Chapter 6: A Plan for Parks, Recreation, and Trails** builds on the Recreation Needs Assessment to prioritize conceptual projects and programs, including potential improvements to existing facilities and recommended new facilities and programs.
- **Chapter 7: Pathways to Implementation** identifies program-level costs for recommended improvements and options for funding, including existing and potential local funding options, state and federal grant program opportunities, and the roadmap for implementing the Recreation Master Plan.
- **Appendices** include technical and regulatory information used in the creation and implementation of the Recreation Master Plan.

Chapter Two: County Overview



Photo: Independent

2.0. County Overview

A necessary step in the recreation planning process involves the assessment of the existing setting in Santa Barbara County, considering both the physical environment and the regulatory setting for plan implementation. Understanding this setting ensures that the Recreation Master Plan will integrate successfully with existing plans and policies and relate to the physical opportunities and constraints of the landscape. This chapter provides an overview of Santa Barbara County's key features as a setting for recreation planning and describes the different communities in each of the county's recreation planning areas (refer to Section 2.8, *Recreation Planning Areas*). It also provides a summary of plans, policies, and regulations that may relate to the recommendations provided in Section 5.0, *A Plan for Parks, Recreation, and Trails*.

2.1. County Snapshot

Santa Barbara County is located about 100 miles north of Los Angeles on the California coast, encompassing beautiful coastlines, mountains, and rural agricultural valleys. It is geographically diverse with over 450,000 residents who live in eight small- to medium-sized cities and 19 unincorporated communities (Figure 2-1). Santa Barbara County is one of 58 counties in California, bordered by Ventura County to the east and south, Kern County to the east, San Luis Obispo County to the north, and the Pacific Ocean to the west and south (Figure 2-1). Santa Barbara County encompasses approximately 3,789 square miles (more than 2.4 million acres), extending approximately 45 miles north from the south-facing coastal segment and approximately 65 miles inland from the west-facing coastline. Of its total area, 2,735 square miles (72 percent) is land area, and 1,061 square miles (28 percent) lie in the Pacific Ocean. Approximately 202 square miles (5 percent) of the county's land area is part of the Channel Islands National Park. Santa Barbara County has 110 miles of coastline with coastal access provided in both rural and urban settings, although most access points are located primarily along the southern coastline.

Santa Barbara County Snapshot:

3,789 Square Miles:
Land 2,735 | Ocean 1,061

8 Incorporated Cities with
310,000 Residents

19 Unincorporated
Communities with 140,000
Residents

2 Special Districts for
Recreation and Parks

4 State and Federal Agencies
with Recreational Assets

Dozens of Private Recreation
Organizations

2.2. Lay of the Land

Topography in the county is highly varied within coastal terraces between the ocean and the mountains, scenic inland valleys with large expanses of cultivated farmlands and gently rolling hillsides, and rugged terrain of the Los Padres National Forest. There are three mountain ranges within the county: the Santa Ynez range divides north county from south county, and the Sierra Madre and San Rafael Mountains, running parallel with the Los Padres National Forest, divide the Cuyama Valley from the Santa Maria and Santa Ynez Valleys. Elevations range from sea level to 6,803 feet at Big Pine Mountain. The largest water body within the county is Lake Cachuma, a water supply reservoir on the Santa Ynez River with a surface area of 3,100 acres. Other key water bodies include Jameson Lake, Gibraltar Reservoir, Twitchell Reservoir, Alisal Lake, and Zaca Lake, the county's only natural lake. Major drainages include the Santa Ynez River, Santa Maria River, and Cuyama River, as well as San Antonio Creek. Only Lake Cachuma is outfitted for recreational uses such as boating and fishing; as a water supply reservoir, Lake Cachuma does not allow swimming. Coastal access is available within coastal communities (i.e., Goleta, Santa Barbara, Carpinteria) and rural recreation amenities (i.e., state parks along the Gaviota coast, Jalama Beach County Park, Guadalupe Dunes County Park).



Santa Barbara County is a coastal county comprising scenic inland valleys, farms and ranches, and rugged mountains.

Photo: Santa Ynez Valley Star

2.3. Climate & Weather

The mild Mediterranean climate in Santa Barbara County attracts visitors and supports outdoor recreation year-round. In coastal areas, the Pacific Ocean regulates seasonal climates so that temperatures rarely spike or drop below freezing. In the interior valleys and higher elevations, high heat and freezing temperatures are more common seasonally. Annual temperature extremes range from an average of 33 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) to 55°F in the winter to an average of 50°F to 80°F in the summer, depending on elevation and proximity to the coastline. The warmest months of the year are usually August and September, and the coldest months of the year are often December and January. Average annual rainfall varies from 18.55 inches in the City of Santa Barbara, 20.5 inches in the town of Santa Ynez, and 16.5 inches in the City of Santa

Maria, with mountainous areas such as San Marcos Pass receiving more than 22 inches annually. Most precipitation falls between December and March, and little rain falls during the summer months.

2.4. Transportation & Access

Regional road access to Santa Barbara County is provided primarily by U.S. Highway 101, which traverses the county north to south, connecting to San Luis Obispo County and Ventura County, and U.S. Highway 166, which connects Santa Barbara County with Kern County in the east. Additional access to San Luis Obispo County is provided by State Route (SR) 1, with SR 150 providing secondary access into Ventura County. Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) maintains north-south train tracks supporting daily Amtrak passenger operations and regional freight trains. Passenger rail stations are located in Carpinteria, Santa Barbara, Goleta, Lompoc (Surf Beach), and Guadalupe. Municipal airports in Santa Maria and Santa Barbara provide regional, national, and international flight services; the Santa Ynez Airport and Lompoc Airport support regional aviation. Santa Barbara Harbor also supports boating, fishing, and periodic cruise ship activities. This connectivity supports robust tourism to Santa Barbara County, including visitors seeking active and passive recreation opportunities.

2.5. History

The county has a rich history of human habitation dating back at least 11,000 to 12,000 years, including the region's first historically identified inhabitants, the Chumash. Native American habitation extended through European exploration periods, which began in 1542 with Juan Cabrillo's explorations and establishment of missions in the 1760s. The naming of both the City of Santa Barbara and the County of Santa Barbara originates from the establishment of Mission Santa Barbara in 1786. Following Mexican independence from Spain in 1822, the Mexican government gained control over California. About 500 land grants were given to local rancheros during the Rancho Period. The Mexican-American War occurred between 1846 and 1848 and ended with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which made California a United States (U.S.) territory. In 1848, the land once occupied by the Chumash was overtaken by the U.S., which led to California's statehood in 1850. The County was one of the original 27 counties in the state, formed at the time of statehood on February 18, 1850. The County originally comprised areas of modern-day Santa Barbara and Ventura counties, but was later divided to create the County of Ventura in 1873. American settlers claimed land in the County through the 1800s as part of the state's Gold Rush, which led to an expansion of ranching and American industrialization, including commercial agriculture and tourism.

2.6. Communities & Character

The character of Santa Barbara County is defined by its distinct urban communities separated by extensive areas of rural and agricultural lands. Most of the county is rural, with substantial mountainous areas dividing productive agricultural valleys. Much of the county is sparsely populated. Developed cities and towns are located primarily along the coastal plain and in the intermountain valleys. Much of the land in the unincorporated areas is undeveloped and used for agriculture, recreation, and tourism, with extensive areas of open space within Los Padres National Forest, Vandenberg Space Force Base, and several state parks. Residential uses are scattered throughout the unincorporated areas, with recreation and tourism-related land uses located primarily along the coastline and in the mountainous areas, including state parks and national forest lands.

There are eight incorporated cities in the county, including Buellton, Carpinteria, Goleta, Guadalupe, Lompoc, Santa Barbara, Santa Maria, and Solvang. These cities provide most community services to residents, including parks and recreation. Each city provides a hub for surrounding unincorporated areas, including small towns scattered throughout the county (Figure 2-1). Major unincorporated population centers are Isla Vista, Montecito, Eastern Goleta Valley, Orcutt, and Santa Ynez Valley.

Vandenberg Space Force Base, the Los Padres National Forest, and the sovereign nation of the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians also lie within the county. Portions of Channel Islands National Park, including Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, San Miguel, and Santa Rosa Islands, lie within Santa Barbara County. There are four federally managed areas within the county, including Channel Islands National Park, Vandenberg Space Force Base, the Los Padres National Forest, Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes National Wildlife Refuge, and a property at Point Sal.

2.7. Demographics

Demographic factors such as existing population, projected growth rate, age, and income are indicators for where and how recreation facilities and programs should be provided. For example, considering age characteristics, where children may seek



Parks create community with facilities for gathering and socializing, bringing people together from communities throughout Santa Barbara County. Photo: Solvang USA

playgrounds, sports fields, and active recreation programs, adults and seniors may desire hiking and running trails, sports courts, and fitness facilities that support active lifestyles. Further, consideration of income helps indicate where residents may struggle with recreation costs and require access to free or low-cost recreation facilities and programs.

A. Population

Approximately 450,000 residents call Santa Barbara County home, representing approximately one percent of the population of the State of California. The county is geographically diverse, with different cities and unincorporated communities that range dramatically from large suburban communities such as Orcutt and Eastern Goleta Valley to small rural towns such as Sisquoc, Los Olivos, and Los Alamos. Most of the county's 2.4 million acres (3,789 square miles) support very low population densities outside of the urban communities, including areas such as Channel Islands National Park and offshore waters, Los Padres National Forest, Vandenberg Space Force Base, and extensive areas of rural agricultural land and wilderness. Approximately 96 percent of residents live in cities and established communities, and approximately 4 percent of residents live in rural areas outside of established communities. The county's population is concentrated in the Santa Maria Valley, along the eastern and central reach of the South Coast from Goleta to Carpinteria, and, to a lesser extent, the Lompoc Valley and Santa Ynez Valley. Within these regions, most residents live in the cities of Santa Maria, Santa Barbara, Goleta, and Lompoc, which support approximately 60 percent of the county's population. The largest unincorporated communities are Orcutt, Eastern Goleta Valley, and Isla Vista, supporting approximately 20 percent of the County's population (Appendix B).

B. Growth

Based on the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) Regional Growth Forecast, Santa Barbara County's population is projected to increase through 2050 by 13.2 percent for a total population of approximately 510,000 (Table 2-1). Most of this growth (48.5 percent) is projected to occur in the Santa Maria Valley. The Lompoc Valley is projected to grow by 13.3 percent, the second-highest growth rate in the County. While the South Coast is projected to experience the lowest growth rate, the population is projected to increase by approximately 14,000 residents, the second-highest total in the county. While all communities within the county are projected to grow, the City of Guadalupe is projected to have the highest population increase of 27.9 percent through 2050, followed by the City of Buellton with a 19.9 percent total increase (Appendix B).

Santa Barbara County Demographic Snapshot

Population: 450,000

Population by 2050: 510,000

Population Increase: 13%

Median Age: 35.1

Children: 22%

Seniors: 27%

Median Household Income (2024):
\$96,000

Table 2-1. Population Growth by Region

Region	Current Population (2019)	Future Population (2050)
Cuyama Valley	596	647
Lompoc Valley	54,806	62,069
Santa Maria Valley	146,838	169,101
Santa Ynez Valley	19,157	21,326
South Coast	208,530	222,659
Total	450,084	509,697

Appendix B

C. Age

The median age in Santa Barbara County is 35.1. The largest age group in the county is seniors over 55 years old, at approximately 27 percent. Children under the age of 18 comprise approximately 22 percent of residents, with young children (ages 0 to 14 years old) comprising about 18 percent. The median age of residents is lowest in the Santa Maria Valley at 37.2, and the median age is highest in the Santa Ynez Valley at 48.4. Communities like Isla Vista, the City of Buellton, and the City of Guadalupe have the youngest populations in the county, while the City of Solvang, Montecito, and Vandenberg Village have some of the County's oldest populations based on median age (Appendix B).

D. Income

The median household income in Santa Barbara County is approximately \$96,000, resulting from wide variations between communities ranging from \$25,00 in Isla Vista to \$223,000 in Montecito. Several communities have substantially lower median incomes than Santa Barbara County, including the City of Guadalupe, the City of Santa Maria, the City of Lompoc, and Isla Vista. Other communities have notably higher median incomes compared to the County, including Orcutt, Eastern Goleta Valley, the City of Goleta, Vandenberg Village, Mission Hills, Buellton, Santa Ynez, Ballard, and Los Olivos (Appendix B).

A countywide demographic analysis is provided in Appendix B, *Demographics*.

Figure 2-1. Santa Barbara County Communities



2.8. Recreation Planning Areas

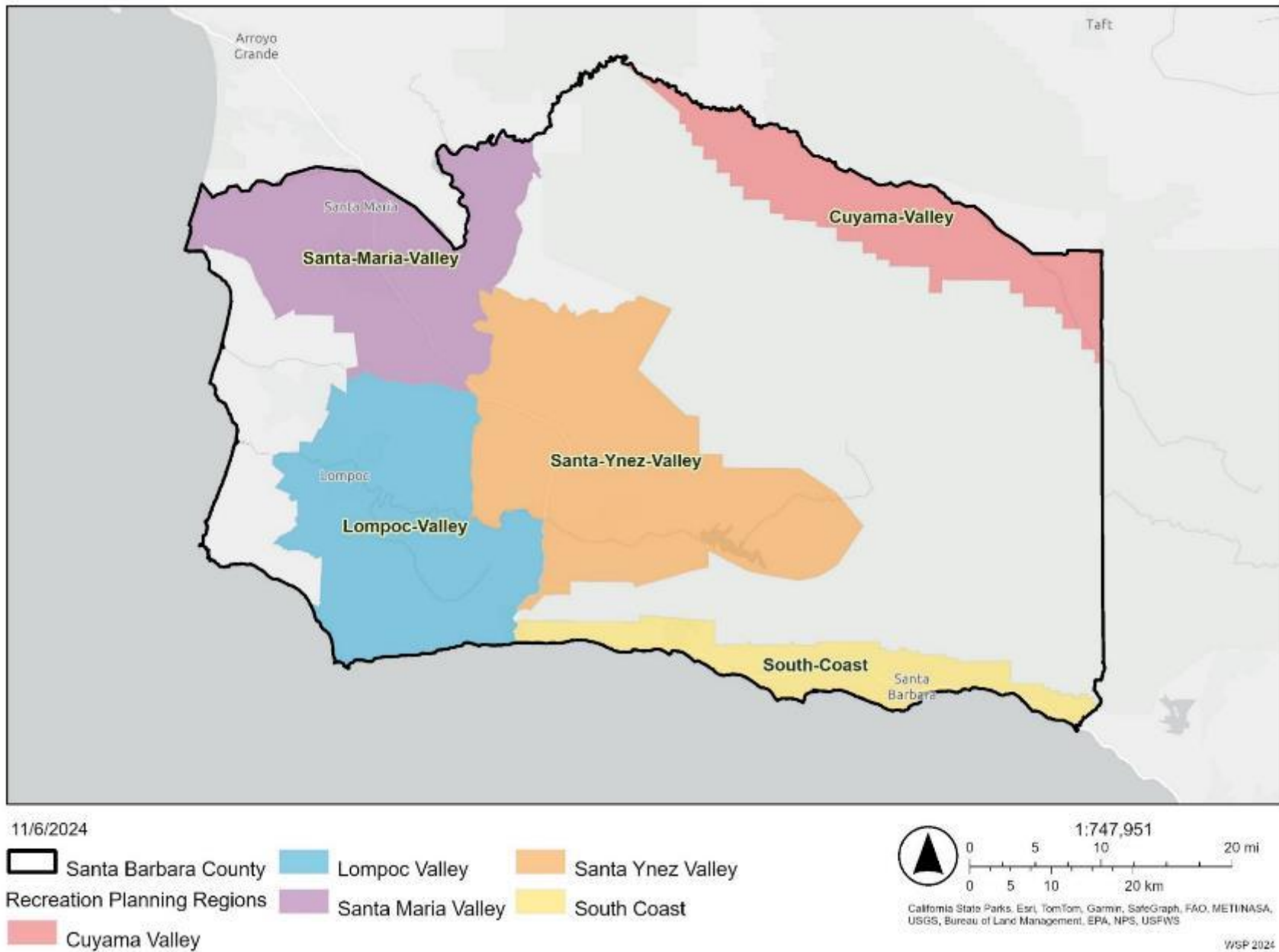
Each community in Santa Barbara County has its own identity, but for recreation planning purposes, there are essentially five recreation planning areas, including Santa Maria Valley, Lompoc Valley, Santa Ynez Valley, Cuyama Valley, and the South Coast. These planning areas recognize that residents tend to share recreational facilities and programs in their local community, such as regional parks, sports complexes, gymnasiums, trail systems, or community parks. The Recreation Master Plan addresses existing parks and trails, recreation needs, and planned improvements countywide and by recreation planning area. Notably, Vandenberg Space Force Base, Los Padres National Forest, and Channel Islands National Park have unique recreation features and are managed outside local agency jurisdictions. While the Recreation Master Plan recognizes recreation in these areas, it does not apply to them.

For recreation planning in Santa Barbara County, these five planning areas consist of:

- The **Santa Maria Valley**, including the cities of Santa Maria and Guadalupe, as well as the communities of Orcutt, Casmalia, Garey, and Sisquoc.
- The **Cuyama Valley**, including the communities of Cuyama and New Cuyama.
- The **Lompoc Valley**, including the City of Lompoc, and the communities of Vandenberg Village and Mission Hills.
- The **Santa Ynez Valley**, including the cities of Buellton and Solvang, as well as the communities of Ballard, Santa Ynez, and Los Olivos; although located in the San Antonio Valley, Los Alamos is also included in this planning area.
- The **South Coast**, including the cities of Santa Barbara, Goleta, and Carpinteria, as well as the communities of Isla Vista, Eastern Goleta Valley, Montecito, Mission Canyon, Toro Canyon, and Summerland, as well as the rural Gaviota Coast.

Each recreation planning area is described below, and a summary of the size and population of each planning area is provided in Appendix B.

Figure 2-2. Recreation Planning Areas in Santa Barbara County



A. Santa Maria Valley

The Santa Maria Valley encompasses 178,146 acres in the northwestern portion of Santa Barbara County, including areas inland from the county's northern coastline and south of the County of San Luis Obispo. This planning area is bound by the Santa Maria River to the north, the Pacific Ocean and Casmalia Hills to the west, the San Rafael Mountains to the east, and the Solomon Hills to the south. The Santa Maria River traverses the valley and drains into the Pacific Ocean west of Guadalupe. The area is accessed by U.S. Highway 101 from the north and south, SR 166 from the east and west, SR 1 from the northwest and southwest, and SR 135 from the south. Amtrak train service is available in the City of Guadalupe. The Santa Maria Airport provides regional and continental passenger flight services. Alan Hancock College's main campus provides higher educational services. The Santa Maria Valley is home to approximately 146,838 residents within the City of Santa Maria, the City of Guadalupe, and several unincorporated communities, including Orcutt, Garey, Sisquoc, and Casmalia, as well as rural residents. Santa Maria Valley communities are geographically distinct from one another, except for the City of Santa Maria and Orcutt, which physically combine as the population center of the Santa Maria Valley. Land uses outside this urban hub are largely rural and dominated by cultivated agriculture, grazing, and open space.



Santa Maria Valley lies in the northernmost area of the county, encompassing distinct urban communities such as Orcutt and the City of Santa Maria, expansive agricultural lands, and unique recreational and coastal resources, including Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park (pictured). Photo: CaliforniaBeaches.com

B. Cuyama Valley

The Cuyama Valley constitutes the northeastern and eastern portions of the county, encompassing 112,783 acres and bound by the Caliente Mountain Range to the north and the Sierra Madre Mountains to the south. The valley is bisected by the Cuyama River and includes the unincorporated communities of Cuyama, New Cuyama, and Ventucopa. Access to the Cuyama Valley is provided by SR 166 from the northwest and SR 33 from the southeast. The area has a population of approximately 596, mostly concentrated in the community of New Cuyama. These communities are geographically isolated from regional urban centers in Santa Maria and Santa Ynez by the Los Padres National Forest and the mountainous areas of the county. The Cuyama Valley is predominantly rural and agricultural in use, with small urban uses limited to Cuyama and New Cuyama.

C. Lompoc Valley

The Lompoc Valley encompasses 195,287 acres located in the mid-western portion of the county, bound by the Purisima, Santa Rita, Santa Rosa, and White Hills. The Santa Ynez River traverses the Lompoc Valley in a westerly direction and drains into the Pacific Ocean at Ocean Beach County Park. This planning area is accessed by SR 1 from the north and south and SR 246 from the east and west. Amtrak train services are available from Surf Beach on the coast, approximately 10 miles west of the City of Lompoc. The Lompoc Airport provides regional aviation services. The Lompoc Valley is home to about 50,806 residents, primarily in the City of Lompoc and the unincorporated communities of Vandenberg Village and Mission Hills. The unincorporated communities lie in low hills immediately north of the Santa Ynez River and the City of Lompoc to form the population center of the Lompoc Valley. This urbanized core is surrounded primarily by agriculture and open space. La



Cuyama Valley, located in the easternmost area of the county, supports the small communities of Cuyama, New Cuyama, and Ventucopa with one public park, and comprises primarily ranchland and open space. Photo: Noozhawk



Lompoc Valley includes the City of Lompoc and communities of Vandenberg Village, Mesa Oaks, and Mission Hills in the mid-western region of the county. The rugged rural coastline is accessible at Jalama Beach County Park and Campground (pictured).

Purisma Mission State Historic Park lies immediately northeast of the City of Lompoc. Vandenberg Space Force Base lies to the west of this population center and separates these communities from the rural northern coastline and beaches.

D. Santa Ynez Valley

The Santa Ynez Valley comprises 202,507 acres located in central Santa Barbara County. The Santa Ynez Valley is located at the base of several converging mountain ranges, including the San Rafael and Santa Ynez mountains, and the Purisima and Santa Rita hills. The Santa Ynez River flows through the valley and into Lake Cachuma, located centrally in the valley, providing both water supplies and a key recreational amenity to the county. The area is accessible by U.S. Highway 101 from the southwest and northwest, SR 246 from the west, and SR 154 from the southeast. The Santa Ynez Airport provides regional aviation services. This planning area is home to approximately 19,157 people who live in the cities of Buellton and Solvang, the unincorporated communities of Santa Ynez, Ballard, and Los Olivos, or rural areas, as well as within the town of Los Alamos, located 6 miles to the north. Population density is generally low in rural areas where land uses are predominantly ranches, grazing, agriculture, and open space.

E. South Coast

The South Coast comprises 77,020 acres along the southern coastline of the county, including the cities of Santa Barbara, Goleta, and Carpinteria, as well as the unincorporated communities of Eastern Goleta Valley, Isla Vista, Mission Canyon, Toro Canyon, Montecito, and Summerland, and the rural Gaviota Coast. This coastal area lies between the ridgeline of the Santa Ynez Mountains and the Pacific Ocean from Gaviota Pass to the Ventura County line. U.S. Highway 101 traverses the



Santa Ynez Valley located centrally in the county, is renowned for its rural wine country and small towns like Solvang, Los Olivos, and Santa Ynez, as well as outdoor recreation in the LPNF and Lake Cachuma (pictured). Photo: Los Angeles Times



The South Coast, including Goleta, Santa Barbara, and Carpinteria and the rural coastline of Gaviota, is set at the base of the LPNF in the Santa Ynez Mountains and provide access to the coastal recreation like off-leash play at Hendry's Beach (pictured). Photo: TheTravelPockets.com

planning area from west to east and parallels the UPRR. Amtrak train service is provided from stations in Carpinteria, Santa Barbara, and Goleta. The Santa Barbara Airport provides regional and continental flight services. The area's 208,530 residents are concentrated within the eastern reach of the South Coast between Goleta and Carpinteria, while the western extent along the Gaviota Coast is sparsely populated and rural. The Los Padres National Forest borders the South Coast to the north and supports several state parks, including Carpinteria State Beach, El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park, El Capitan State Beach, Refugio State Beach, and Gaviota State Park. The University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) campus is located on the coast adjacent to the community of Isla Vista and the City of Goleta, while another major educational institution, Santa Barbara City College, is located within the City of Santa Barbara.

Table 2-2. Communities in Santa Barbara County by Recreation Planning Area

Community by Recreation Planning Area	Acres	Population	Incorporated Cities	Unincorporated Communities
Santa Maria Valley	178,146	146,838	Santa Maria Guadalupe	Orcutt Garey Sisquoc Casmalia
Lompoc Valley	195,287	50,806	Lompoc	Mission Hills Mesa Oaks Vandenberg Village
Santa Ynez Valley	202,507	19,157	Buellton Solvang	Los Olivos Los Alamos Ballard Santa Ynez
South Coast	77,020	208,530	Goleta Santa Barbara Carpinteria	Gaviota Coast Isla Vista Eastern Goleta Valley Mission Canyon Montecito Summerland Toro Canyon

Community by Recreation Planning Area	Acres	Population	Incorporated Cities	Unincorporated Communities
Cuyama Valley	112,783	596	N/A	Cuyama New Cuyama Ventucopa

2.9. Key Recreation Agencies in Santa Barbara County

Parks, open space, trails, and recreation amenities in Santa Barbara County are provided by the County, the eight cities, including Buellton, Carpinteria, Goleta, Guadalupe, Lompoc, Santa Barbara, Santa Maria, and Solvang, and two special districts, including the Isla Vista Recreation and Parks District (IVRPD) and the Cuyama Valley Recreation District (CVRD), as well as private recreation providers. The County provides facilities and limited programs, including campgrounds, regional parks, open space, and trails, while the cities provide both facilities and programs, including local and neighborhood parks hosting recreational sports and classes. Private organizations provide several programs and services (e.g., sports leagues and hiking groups) at many recreation facilities. Private recreation organizations are typically nonprofits like YMCAs and sports leagues. However, there are also for-profit organizations like Rancho Oso RV and Camping Resort, Ocean Mesa RV Park and Campground, and El Capitan Canyon Campground. Groups such as YMCAs throughout the County, the Ben Page Youth Sports Center and the Girsh Park Foundation in the Goleta Valley, and the Elings Park Foundation in the City of Santa Barbara provide key active recreation facilities to supplement local agency efforts. Agencies, organizations, and recreational service providers work together to meet local recreation needs and increasing demands, often with limited budgets and staffing.

"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul."

John Muir The Yosemite (1912)

Planning for parks, recreation, and trails involves local agencies and organizations and regional and state organizations with ties to recreation facilities and programs such as the Los Padres National Forest, State Parks, and organizations such as the Santa Barbara County Land Trust, which collectively manage hundreds of thousands of acres of land in the County; this land is often set aside for conservation purposes and associated trails and campgrounds are generally reserved for passive recreation uses. Each agency has a unique approach to planning for parks, recreation, and trails based on its adopted recreation planning framework, the facilities and land managed, and the user groups served. Recreation demands can be quite different in each jurisdiction. Interagency coordination with cities and other recreation service providers is open and efficient to maximize high-quality recreation programs in each community in Santa Barbara County (Figure 2-3).

The County of Santa Barbara Community Services Department, Parks Division (County Parks) provides the most public parkland of any local agency. State and federal governments also provide expansive lands for outdoor recreation and open space. The eight cities in the county each provide diverse parks and commonly provide robust recreation programs (e.g., sports leagues and fitness classes) to serve residents regionally. Two special districts also provide park facilities and/or recreation programming to meet local needs, including the Isla Vista Recreation and Park District (IVRPD) and the Cuyama Valley Recreation District (CVRD). The cities and special districts, along with private organizations (e.g., youth sports leagues, YMCAs), are central to providing recreational services, particularly for children and seniors, as well as adult fitness and active sports (Figure 2-3). This diversity of demands and services requires interagency coordination to provide adequate parks and recreation, with each agency fulfilling different needs in particular regions. Planning for recreation involves considering those unique needs in the adopted goals, policies, actions, and programs for the recreation service providers, including the cities, special districts, and state and federal agencies.

Figure 2-3. Key Providers of Parks & Recreation in Santa Barbara County



County of Santa Barbara

- Community & regional parks
- Open space & trails
- Limited recreation programs & services



Cities & Special Districts

- Neighborhood, community, & regional parks
- Open space & trails
- Recreational programs for youth & adults



State & Federal Agencies

- Open space & trails
- Campgrounds
- Public access to the coast & the forest



Private Organizations

- Recreation facilities (e.g., gyms, sports courts)
- Recreation programs for youth & adults
- Open space and trail acquisition and management

2.10. County Parks

The mission of County Parks is to provide, protect, and enhance parks, recreation, and trails for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of present and future generations in a safe and resilient environment.

A. A Vision for County Parks

County Parks' vision is to create and manage a sustainable, vibrant, and diverse system of parks, trails, and recreation facilities that offer all people the opportunity to explore, play, exercise, socialize, and connect with the County's natural resources, consistent with responsible environmental stewardship and resilience. This vision is supported by several key principles presented in Figure 2-4.

B. County Parks Operations

County Parks provides recreation facilities and services to approximately 7.6 million visitors annually (County Parks 2021). County Parks currently has 62.75 full-time equivalent employees (FTE) and is supported by seasonal employees (e.g., lifeguards) and volunteers. County Parks staff includes rangers, naturalists, maintenance and custodial team members, water/sewer plant operators, and administrators. Leadership team members include the deputy director, a grant program manager, operations managers, a project manager for capital improvements, an aquatics manager, and a planner. Staff members are stationed at four main locations at Waller Park in Santa Maria, Lake Cachuma in the Santa Ynez Valley, the County Parks maintenance yard in Eastern Goleta Valley, and the Parks Division headquarters in County offices in Downtown Santa Barbara, with some staff assigned to duties at different parks throughout the county. County Parks' operating budget for FY 2023/24 was \$17.2 million, with approximately \$3.8 million in planned capital improvement needs.

Figure 2-4. County Parks Key Principles

Parks are essential for community health, wellbeing, and sustainability.

Parks and trail networks provide equitable access for all people.

Visitor experiences are memorable, diverse, and high-quality.

Public access and recreation are balanced with natural and historical resource management.

Customer service is excellent and parks are clean and well-managed.

County Parks provides a focused range of recreational programs within its public parks. Lifeguard services are provided seasonally at three beaches and two pools at Lake Cachuma. A junior lifeguard program is also provided at Hendry's Beach (Arroyo Burro Beach County Park) in Santa Barbara. While County Parks does not provide in-house recreation programs or services, the County contracts with concessionaires located at various locations throughout the County to provide extended services such as restaurants (e.g., Boathouse at Arroyo Burro County Park or Jalama Beach Store at Jalama Beach County Park) and boat rentals (i.e., watercraft rentals such as kayaks at Goleta Beach and Lake Cachuma). County Parks also provides facilities for programs provided by cities and private recreational service providers (County Parks 2021).

County Parks is committed to the delivery of high-quality visitor service, regulatory enforcement, and development and maintenance of recreation facilities for the public's health, safety, and enjoyment when visiting the County's public park system. Capital planning is a continuous process dependent upon prioritized needs and available funding, including development impact fees, community service areas, deferred and preventive maintenance funds, and grant programs. See Section 2.10.D, *Overview of County Recreation Plans, Policies, and Regulations*, below for a description of key recreation planning documents implemented in the County.

C. County Recreation Advisory Groups

County Parks Commission

County Parks is supported by the County Park Commission, as appointed by the County Board of Supervisors. Commissioners each represent one district in the county and serve a 3-year term. The Park Commission is tasked with the following review and advisory roles:



County Parks provides a lifeguard program, including Junior Guards at Hendry's Beach in Santa Barbara. Photo: County Parks



County Parks staffs 14 lifeguards at two pools and three beaches, including Goleta Beach (pictured). Photo: daytrippen.com

- Balancing departmental and capital improvement resources to be in harmony with population and community demand to the extent possible;
- Reviewing departmental policies and actions and meeting with the public to ensure that park policies and actions are well-thought-out and appropriate to community standards;
- Providing a forum where the public's input regarding park issues may be completely heard;
- Acting as an advocate for a strong local park system that is funded to provide beautiful parks and recreation areas with adequate maintenance and development;
- Advising the Board of Supervisors of the Commission's findings and conclusions (County Parks 2021).

County Riding and Hiking Trails Advisory Committee

The County Riding and Hiking Trails Advisory Committee (CRAHTAC) was established by the County Board of Supervisors in an advisory capacity to review programs, policies, and procedures affecting county recreational riding and hiking trails and their use. Committee members are selected by District Supervisors with 3 to 4 members from each District and are concerned with the location, development, and maintenance of the recreational trails system countywide, to provide public access and links to the Los Padres National Forest, parks, beaches, and other public recreation areas (County Parks 2021)

D. Overview of County Recreation Plans, Policies, and Regulations

Recreation planning in the County is guided by several interrelated documents that serve different purposes. These documents, as amended, form the regulatory basis for recreation planning and the Countywide Recreation Master Plan. Key recreation plans and regulations adopted by the County include the following:

- The **Comprehensive Plan** guides land use and development in unincorporated areas. Key aspects of this plan include the following:
 - Eight mandatory elements, per state law, include the Land Use, Conservation, Housing, Circulation, Open Space, Noise, and Seismic Safety and Safety Elements, plus the Coastal Land Use Plan.
 - Five optional elements, including Agriculture, Energy, Environmental Resource Management, Hazardous Waste, and Scenic Highways elements.
 - The County does not have an adopted Recreation Element; rather, recreation is addressed in the Recreation Section of the Land Use Element and 10 community or area plans.
- The **Community Plans** are adopted as amendments to the Land Use Element and/or Coastal Land Use Plan (for areas within the coastal zone) and plan a particular area at a finer level of detail. The County has 10 community or area plans, including Eastern Goleta Valley, Isla Vista/Unincorporated Goleta, the Gaviota Coast, Los Alamos, Mission Canyon, Montecito, Orcutt, Santa Ynez Valley, Summerland, and Toro Canyon. Each community plan contains goals, policies, and

standards guiding the development of the community it serves, including recreation, although their level of detail regarding recreation varies.

- The **Capital Improvements Program (CIP)** is a multi-year planning tool used to identify and implement the County's short-term and long-term capital needs, including key recreation improvements and action items from the Comprehensive Plan and community plans.
- **Park Master Plans** have been prepared for several County Parks. Examples include master plans for Waller Park, Jalama Beach County Park, the Point Sal Reserve, Lake Cachuma County Park, and Guadalupe Dunes County Park. These plans address park design and layout, circulation and access, visitation and user experience, maintenance and capital improvements, and funding/financial considerations.
- The **County Land Use and Development Code (LUDC; Chapter 35.20 through 28)** carries out the policies of the Comprehensive Plan by classifying and regulating the uses of land within the unincorporated county. Additionally, the **Montecito Land Use Development Code (MLUDC)**, as well as the **Coastal Zoning Ordinance (CZO)**, carry out the policies of the Comprehensive Plan by classifying and regulating the use of land per the Montecito Community Plan Area and the Coastal Land Use Plan, respectively. While land use designations characterize the physical uses and the intensity of those uses, zoning designations legally define permitted uses and development guidelines for those uses.



County Parks has a long-standing history of providing outstanding outdoor recreation opportunities within day-use parks, beaches, pools, group areas, trails, on & off-leash dog parks, open spaces, and campgrounds. Photos: County Parks

Chapter Three: Existing Parks & Trails



3.0. Existing Parks and Trails

Recreation in Santa Barbara County takes place at parks, beaches, campgrounds, trails, open space areas, and outdoor/indoor recreation facilities in distinct communities. Community engagement for the Recreation Master Plan indicates that the most popular recreation facilities in the county include trails, beaches, campgrounds, playgrounds, pools, dog parks, sports fields and courts, community gardens, gyms, skate and BMX parks, golf and disc golf, and outdoor fitness and exploration (Appendix C). The county's recreation system serves residents from unincorporated and incorporated communities, as well as visitors from near and far.

A key step in the recreation planning process involves understanding the parks, recreation, and trail facilities currently available and assessing how that system is serving existing populations. To establish a clear vision for the future of parks, recreation, and trails in Santa Barbara County, this section evaluates the existing parks, trails, and open space to help understand where recreation facilities are meeting community needs and where there may be gaps.

This chapter provides a summary of a comprehensive inventory and assessment of the county's public parkland and recreational facilities and programs in each of the county's recreation planning areas (refer to Section 2.8, *Recreation Planning Areas*).

The parks, recreation, and trails analyzed in this chapter correspond to an interactive GIS-based map of the parkland and trail inventories, available online at www.SBCRecPlan.com.



Public parks support sustainable communities with outdoor play, exercise, youth and adult sports, and community identity. Photo: Conejo Valley Events

"The County hosts an incredible network of parks and trails that offer recreation and ecosystem service benefits to all who live and play here, but access to these benefits is a challenge for many of the County's citizens."

Santa Barbara County Conservation Blueprint (2018)

3.1. Public Parks & Open Space

Santa Barbara County is renowned for its outdoor beauty and recreation opportunities provided by public parks and open spaces. Beaches and blufftop open spaces, high-quality parks with playgrounds and sports facilities, and public open space preserves, along with a mild climate, support year-round recreation. Parks support a diversity of sports and recreation activities while also conserving natural resources and supporting healthy lifestyles and sustainable communities.

As a basis for park planning and needs assessment, an inventory of public parks and open space countywide was developed for the following property types:

- **Public Parkland.** 170 properties (2,192 acres) providing free, accessible public recreation facilities
- **Limited Access Parkland.** 49 properties (149,968 acres) providing fee-based or limited access (e.g., docent-led, reservation-only) recreational opportunities
- **Public Open Space.** 83 properties (655,228 acres) providing public open space primarily for natural resources and low-impact outdoor recreation, such as natural trails or birdwatching in designated areas

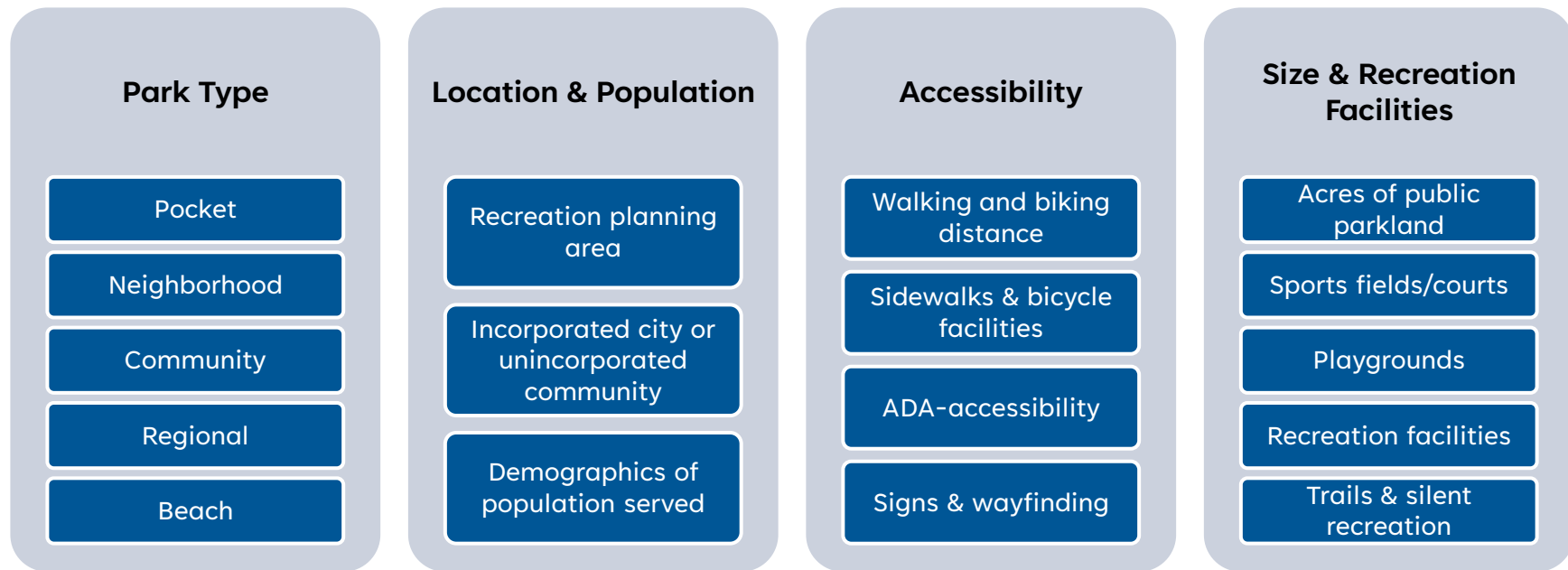
Each property in the inventory is assessed based on type, size, location, owner, service area and population, recreation facilities, and accessibility (Figure 3-1). These aspects are reviewed for each property included in the inventory map.



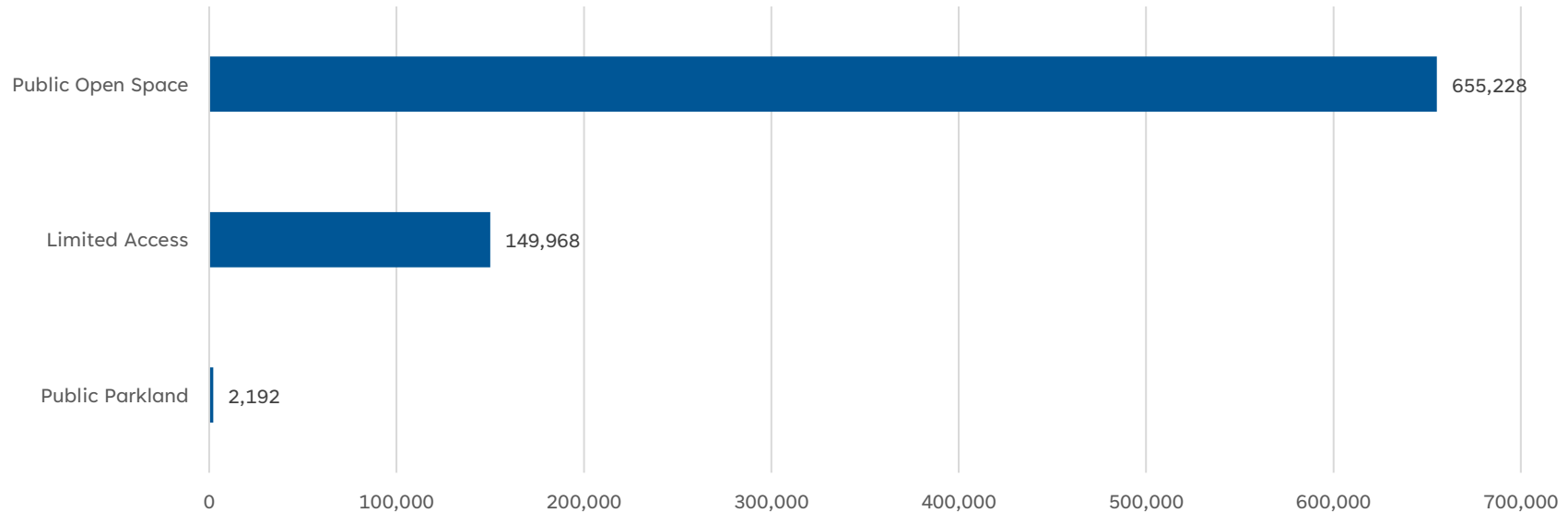
Public open spaces like the San Marcos Foothills (pictured) conserve undeveloped land for wilderness and outdoor exploration. Photo: lotsafunmaps.com



Public parkland like Orcutt Community Park (pictured) combine recreation and leisure with land conservation to provide playgrounds, sports fields/courts, and picnic and gathering areas. Public parkland can also trails in public open spaces like the Orcutt Hills. Photo: County Parks

Figure 3-1. Public Parkland Characteristics Analyzed in the Inventory

Private commercial recreation is also available in the county, such as golf courses, country clubs, and bowling alleys. Private properties that have recreational value to select groups (e.g., homeowners associations, members of clubs or organizations) are also available. However, these types of recreational uses are not captured in the inventory of public recreation resources analyzed in this chapter.

Figure 3-2. Existing Parkland by Status/Accessibility (Acres)

As the Recreation Master Plan's goal is to plan public recreation, public parkland is the basis for local parks and recreation planning.

Approximately 2,192 acres of public parkland provide free, accessible parks and recreation facilities in Santa Barbara County (Figure 3-3). An estimated 715 acres of this public parkland is provided by County Parks with a wide range of facilities, including sports courts and fields, playgrounds, public pools, off-leash dog areas, disc golf, and campgrounds. The remaining 1,477 acres of public parkland are provided primarily by cities and special recreation districts such as the Isla Vista Recreation and Parks District (IVRPD) and the Cuyama Valley Recreation District (CVRD), as well as the State of California.

Public parkland in Santa Barbara County supports access to outdoor recreation, sports, and play. Most of the parkland is located on the South Coast, including Goleta, Santa Barbara, and

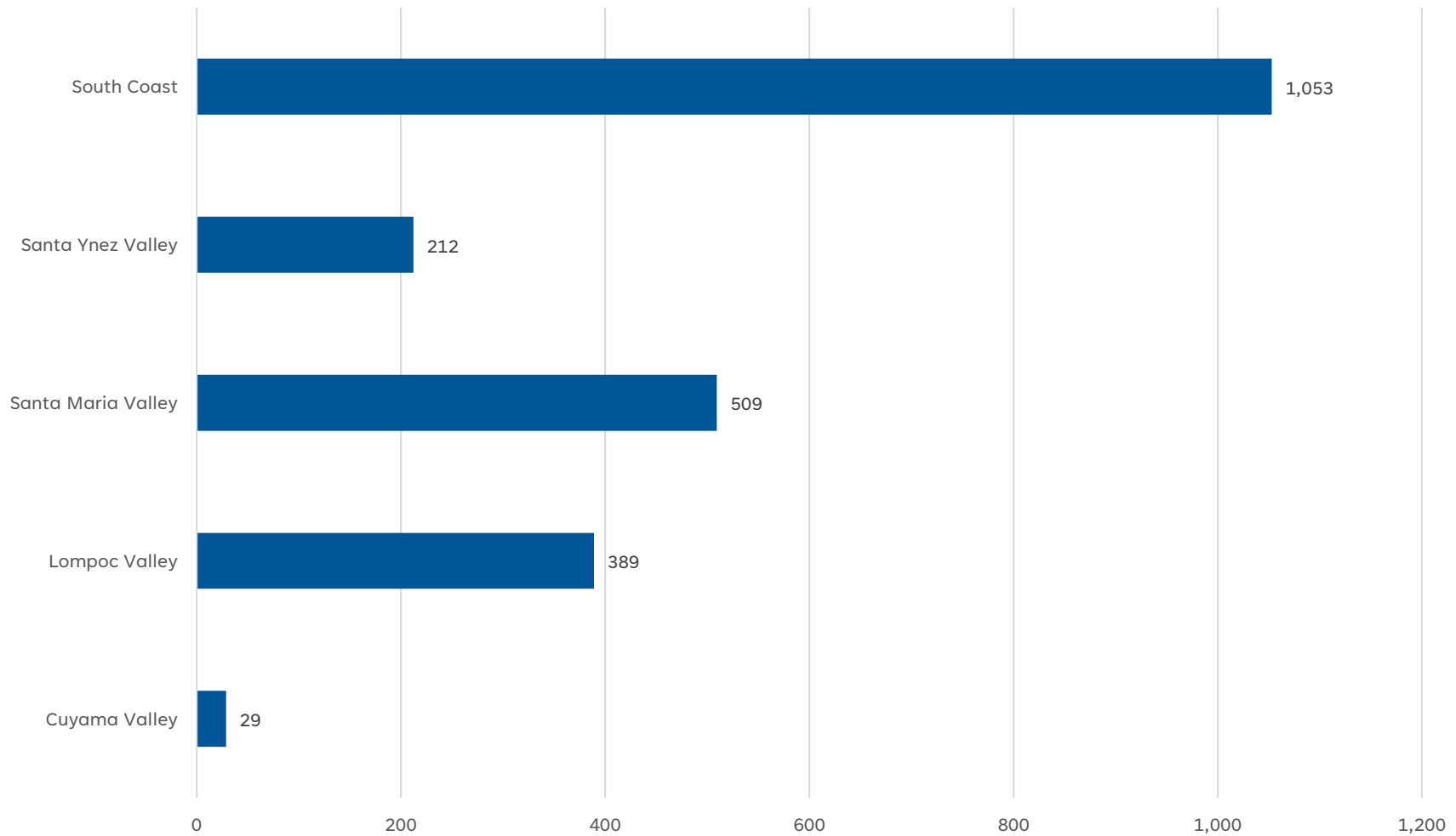


Public parkland is free, openly accessible, and provides a diversity of facilities to meet a range of recreational needs.

Photo: Lompoc Record

Carpinteria. Santa Maria Valley, including Santa Maria, Orcutt, and Guadalupe, provides nearly a quarter of the parkland. Parkland in Lompoc Valley serves Lompoc, Vandenberg Village, and Mission Hills/Mesa Oaks. Santa Ynez Valley parkland is provided primarily by Solvang and Buellton. Cuyama Valley's public parkland is provided by one park located in New Cuyama.

Figure 3-3. Public Parkland by Recreation Planning Area (Acres)



A. Public Parkland

Using the inventory of existing public parkland in Santa Barbara County, County Parks assessed how parks are distributed between the recreation planning areas and what type of parks are provided to the public. As the Recreation Master Plan's goal is to plan for public recreation, this section describes existing public parkland in Santa Barbara County, as defined here:

- Public parkland has recreation value that is openly accessible to the public with little to no barriers to entry.
- Public parkland includes parks, open spaces, and trail networks with free or low-cost entry and/or parking.
- Public parkland is relatively easy to access from communities (i.e., the travel distance or mode does not present a significant barrier to public access).
- Public parkland includes features, including outdoor and indoor amenities, that support the recreational needs of the community.

What is Public Parkland?

Open to the public
Free or low-cost
Easy to access
Nearby
Existing outdoor and/or
indoor recreation facilities

Parks in Santa Barbara County can be categorized into five park types based on the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines and local conditions (Table 3-1). These classifications help to characterize the existing parks and recreation system and guide its future development. Each park type serves a specific need in the community and provides a range of features that are typical for each. A summary of existing public parks by type is provided below, including the total number and combined total acres in Santa Barbara County.

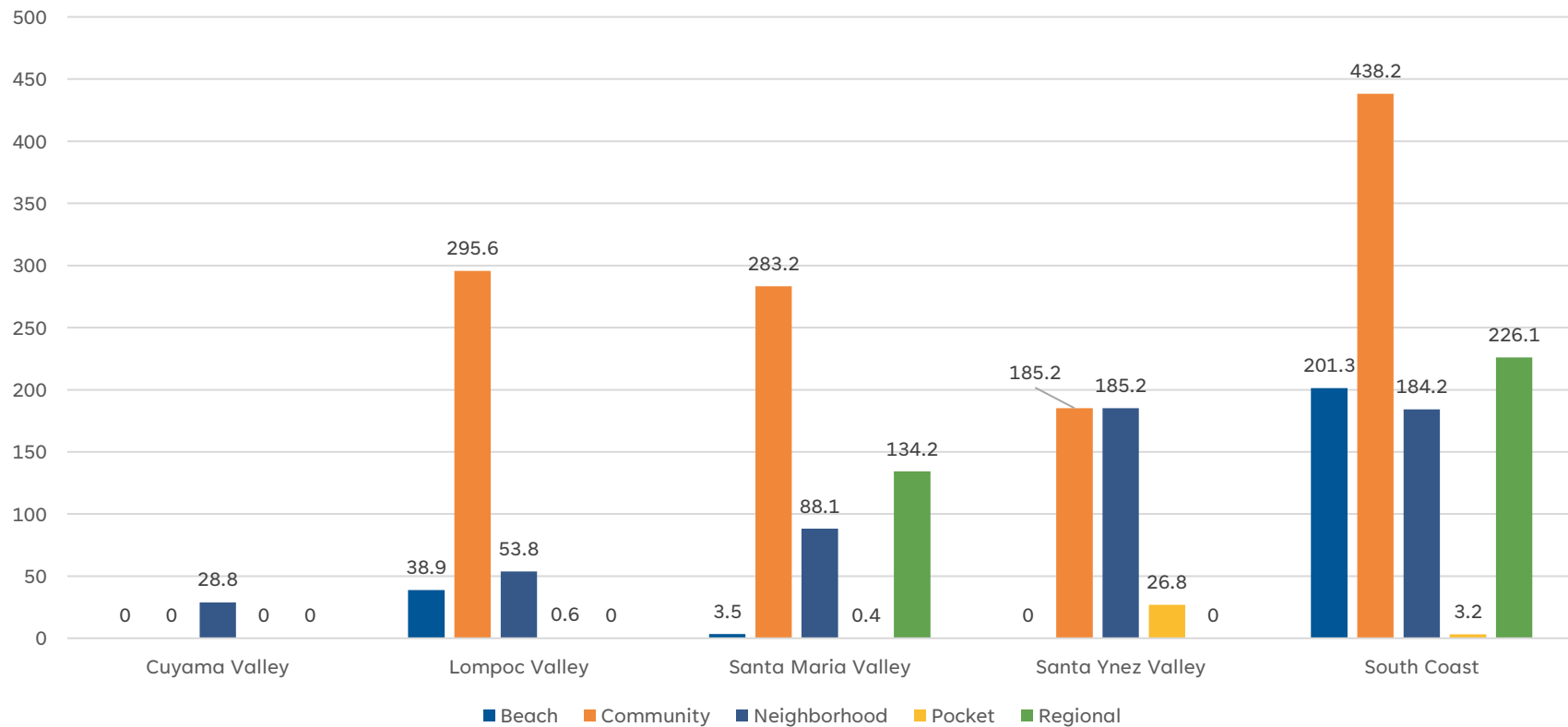
Table 3-1. Park Types in Santa Barbara County

Park Types	Description	Total #	Total Acres
Pocket Park	Pocket parks (aka, tot lots, mini parks) are typically the smallest parks serving limited, isolated, or unique recreation needs of populations within about a ¼-mile radius. Pocket parks are generally smaller than one to two acres in size. These parks may be either active or passive. Typically, pocket parks address a specific recreational need in the immediate vicinity, such as demand for a playground or an open lawn area. As pocket parks are typically locally serving, off-street parking and restrooms are often not	11 pocket parks	4 acres

Park Types	Description	Total #	Total Acres
	provided. Sidewalks and bike paths connecting pocket parks to the surrounding neighborhood are important to ensure accessibility and safety.		
Neighborhood Park	Neighborhood parks serve a variety of age groups within approximately a ½-mile radius. Depending on the neighborhood, these parks may range in size from 1 to 15 acres. Neighborhood parks typically include a combination of active and passive recreation activities. Sports fields and courts, playgrounds, and trails are common, and occasionally restrooms are provided. Passive recreation facilities may include trails, picnic areas, seating, and gathering areas. Facilities are generally unlighted, and off-street parking is limited or not provided. Sidewalks and bike paths connecting pocket parks to the surrounding neighborhood are important to ensure accessibility and safety.	100 neighborhood parks	382 acres
Community Park	Community parks generally serve several neighborhoods within a one- to five-mile radius. Community parks can range in size from 15 to 100 acres. The community park may include outdoor and indoor facilities for competitive sports such as swimming, tennis, pickleball, soccer, baseball/softball, basketball, volleyball, and others, as well as playgrounds, trails and pathways, picnic and group event areas, restrooms, and lighting.	43 community parks	1,202 acres
Regional Park	Regional parks are large, multi-use parks that serve several communities within a region. Regional parks are typically 100 acres or larger and serve those areas within an hour's drive. The regional park offers a diverse range of recreation opportunities, catering to both active and passive interests, with a wide selection of facilities suitable for all age groups. Indoor and outdoor competitive sports facilities support active recreation and leagues, plus natural open space areas for outdoor exploration and resource conservation, as well as picnic and group event areas, restrooms, and lighting.	3 regional parks	360 acres
Beach Park	Beach parks provide public coastal access with complementary recreational facilities such as open lawn, BBQs, volleyball or other sports courts, playgrounds, and/or walking trails or boardwalks. Often, beach	11 beach parks	244 acres

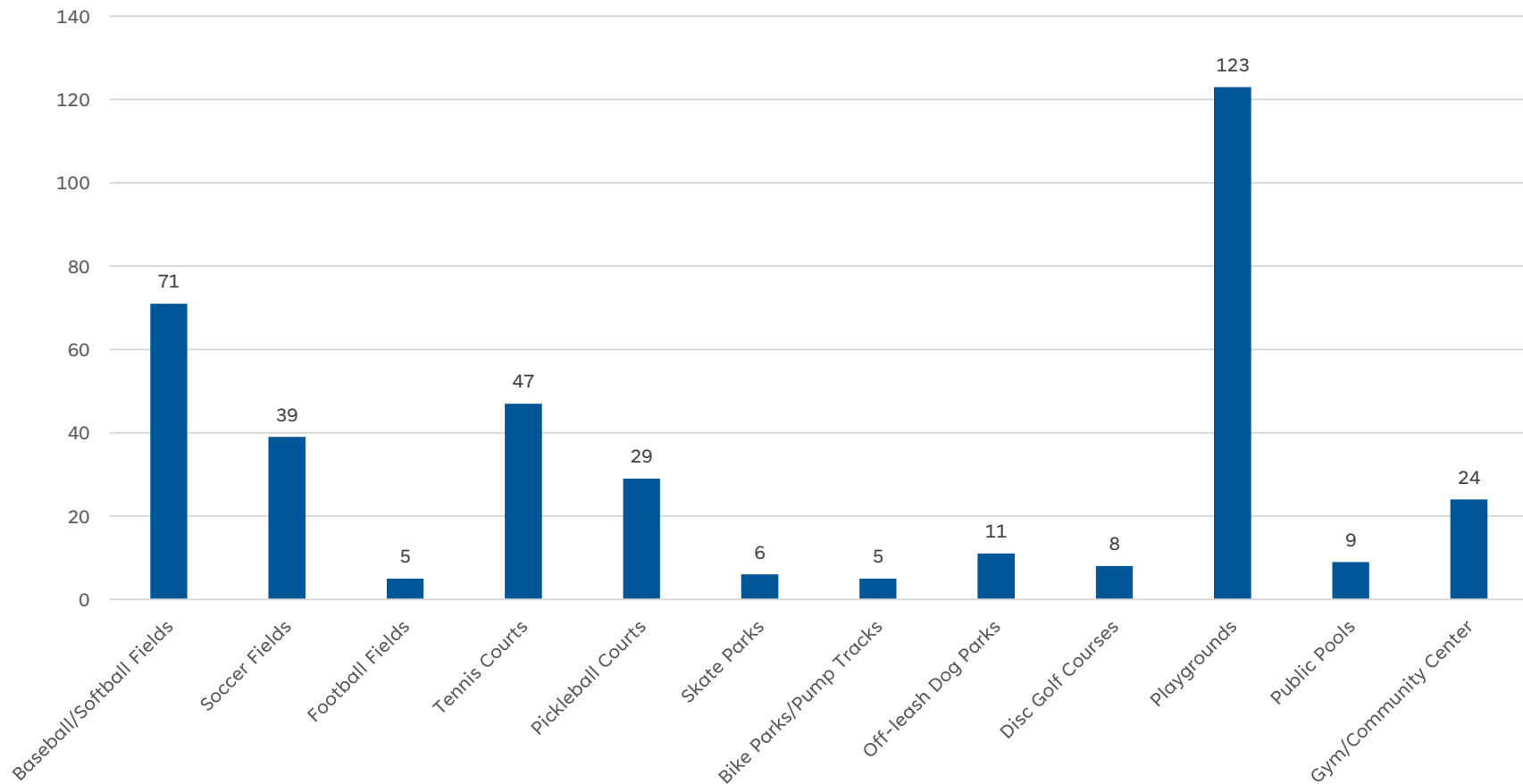
Park Types	Description	Total #	Total Acres
	parks provide public parking either free or with day-use fees and are accessed by local roads and bus routes, as well as sidewalks and bike paths to support neighborhood access. Beach parks can also provide campgrounds, restaurants, or other concessions to serve visitors during the day or overnight.		
	TOTAL	163 parks	2,192 acres

Figure 3-4. Public Parks by Type by Recreation Planning Area (Acres)



Public parks in Santa Barbara County provide a wide array of recreation facilities to support active sports, exercise, play, and recreation needs in each community. From time-tested essentials such as playgrounds, baseball diamonds, soccer fields, and basketball courts to emerging high-demand facilities like pickleball courts, disc golf courses, off-leash dog areas, and aquatic facilities, the Recreation Master Plan includes a countywide inventory of known recreation facilities within public parks. These essential facilities support community well-being and sustainability, supporting many interests and activities for all ages and abilities. A summary of the total number of each facility type analyzed for the Recreation Master Plan is provided below.

Figure 3-5. Total Public Recreation Facilities in Santa Barbara County



B. Campgrounds

As a popular destination for travelers seeking outdoor adventures, Santa Barbara County also has 20 campgrounds in local public parks or State Parks. County Parks provides two popular campgrounds at Lake Cachuma and Jalama Beach County Parks.

Jalama Beach County Park is currently the only campground owned by County Parks (see below for information about the *Lake Cachuma Recreation Area*). The park was donated to the County after 1943 by the Atlantic Richfield Oil Company. Jalama Beach has since been a popular location for camping, surfing, windsurfing, beachgoing, and cycling, and is the only public coastal access point along more than 40 miles of northern Santa Barbara County shoreline. Jalama Campground provides 117 campsites with picnic tables and BBQ pits, as well as two group campsites. 68 sites are designated as tent campsites and 49 as RV sites; 37 sites offer electrical hookups for RVs. There are also cabins with an ocean-view porch. Amenities include restrooms, a coin-operated hot shower building, a dump station, a basketball court, and a children's playground. The Jalama Beach Store and Grill provides an onsite restaurant with groceries, camp gear, and souvenirs. Support facilities include 4 ranger residences, a workshop, an off-site water well, 2 onsite potable water tanks, onsite wastewater disposal via septic systems, and electricity.

California State Parks also provides camping at Gaviota State Park, Refugio State Beach, and El Capitan State Beach. Additional camping and backpacking facilities are provided within the Los Padres National Forest.

C. Federal and State Parks and Open Space

While public parkland is the focus of the Recreation Master Plan, the value and unique resources provided by Santa Barbara County's public open spaces and limited access parklands are recognized as substantial pieces of the natural resource and outdoor recreation landscape. Los Padres National Forest contributes over 630,000 acres of public wilderness and backcountry with over 770 miles of trails. The National Forest supports natural resource conservation and unique outdoor recreational activities such as camping, hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding. California State Parks provides approximately 8,345 acres of public open space with three campgrounds and approximately 7 miles of trails.



County Parks provides two of the 20 public campgrounds in Santa Barbara County, including Jalama Beach located on the spectacular coastline of Lompoc Valley. Photo: County Parks

Lake Cachuma Recreation Area

The Lake Cachuma Recreation Area is located in the Santa Ynez Valley, approximately 12 miles east of Solvang and 22 miles northwest of Santa Barbara. Lake Cachuma was created by the construction of Bradbury Dam by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation in 1953. The name "Cachuma" comes from the Chumash village "Aqitsumu", which in the Barbareño Chumash language translates to "sign". The 9,500-acre Lake Cachuma Recreation Area is owned by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and managed by County Parks. Since Lake Cachuma is a drinking water reservoir for Santa Barbara County, swimming is not currently allowed, but the lake anchors a wide variety of recreational activities, including fishing, camping, disc golf, mountain biking, hiking, and horseback riding.

On the southwestern side of the lake, Cachuma Lake Campground offers several hundred sites that can accommodate tents and/or self-contained RVs, as well as group camping. Over 100 full hookup sites provide dedicated electrical, water, and sewer, and over 30 partial hookups with dedicated electrical and water. Eight cabin sites are equipped with electricity, full bathrooms, kitchenettes, living rooms, and private porches. Each site has a permanent fire pit/ring and picnic table with access to hot showers, restrooms, two pools, and dump station, and potable water nearby. The Cachuma Store provides gasoline, groceries, camping gear, and souvenirs, and an onsite restaurant, Hook'd Bar & Grill, is available. There is a boat and kayak rental facility with a bait and tackle shop where fishing licenses can be purchased. The lake is stocked with rainbow trout throughout the winter season, and fishing is open all year from shore or boat. There are five miles of hiking trails within the park, and Los Padres National Forest trails are close by. A variety of programs include wildlife lake cruises, nature walks, junior ranger programs, and campfire programs.

The Cachuma Lake Disc Golf Course is an 18-hole course featuring concrete tees and orange, powder-coated baskets. Each hole features four pin placements, which can be set up to challenge both recreational players and seasoned pros. The 2.25-mile course begins and ends in front of the Cachuma Lake Store.

On the northeastern side of the lake, Live Oak Campground lies on 40 undeveloped acres that were once a campsite for cowboys. Live Oak Campground can now be rented for large events and group camping up to 200 campers/guests in an "open" site. Live Oak Campground also serves as the trailhead for the Live Oak Equestrian Trail, the only dedicated equestrian trail system in the county, that navigates an active cattle ranch along Lake Cachuma's north bank.

3.2. Public Trails

Trails in Santa Barbara County traverse stunning landscapes ranging from coastal bluffs and sandy beaches to creeks and wetlands to foothill chaparral and rocky canyons. This diversity means outdoor enthusiasts can experience everything from ocean views to serene woodland paths and dramatic mountain vistas. Trails in the Santa Ynez Mountains offer breathtaking panoramic views of the Pacific Ocean and Channel Islands. Coastal trails provide picturesque scenes of the shoreline and marine life. Backcountry trails in the Los Padres National Forest take visitors deep into the county's wilderness areas. Urban trails provide access to beautiful natural corridors, agricultural areas, and open spaces while connecting neighborhoods, schools, parks, and other services. Santa Barbara County's mild climate allows for year-round hiking and outdoor activities, making trails an accessible form of recreation for all ages.

In Santa Barbara County, approximately 1,190 miles of trails support hikers, mountain bikers, equestrians, and nature lovers to explore. An estimated 412 miles of trails are provided within cities and unincorporated communities in the 5 recreation planning areas. These trails provide neighborhood and community access to hiking and biking within open spaces, such as the Orcutt Hills, and along corridors, such as the Obern Trail along San Antonio Creek in Goleta. An additional 778 miles of trails are provided in the Los Padres National Forest and Vandenberg Space Force Base. These trails provide multi-user access to Santa Barbara County's most rural wilderness areas, as well as backcountry camping and backpacking.

Trails are provided by several agencies, including the County, the cities and special districts, State Parks, and the U.S. Forest Service. Strong community involvement and conservation efforts help preserve the natural beauty and accessibility of these trails. Organizations like the Santa Barbara County Trails Council,



Santa Barbara County has world-class hiking trails, that support fitness and exploration of the natural environment for all ages. Photo: Independent



Trails in Santa Barbara County support multiple activities, including hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding. Photo: SLO Horse News

Santa Maria Valley Open Space, Lompoc Trails, and the Montecito Trails Foundation provide resources and support for maintaining and enjoying the trails.

Trails can be categorized in various ways, including by their location or proximity to a roadway, type of trail surface (e.g., asphalt, natural surface), by the allowed users of the trail, and their function. They can include neighborhood trails which provide safe routes to school and commercial centers; beach access way trails; trails that make connections from the urban areas into the national forest and other public lands; as well as self-contained trails within our parks and open spaces providing access for pleasure, nature enjoyment, and exercise. As a basis for trail planning and needs assessment, the Recreation Master Plan includes an inventory of known trails in all 5 recreation planning areas in the county. The existing trail inventory documents the name (if known), location, alignment, and classification. A summary of existing trails by type is provided below, including the combined total trail miles in Santa Barbara County.

*"Of all the paths you take in life,
make sure a few of them are dirt."*

John Muir

Table 3-2. Trail Types in Santa Barbara County

Trail Type	Description	Example Trails	Total Miles
Recreational Trails	Recreational trails typically provide public access to natural environments for outdoor exploration, play, exercise, and quiet recreation such as birdwatching. Recreational trails can accommodate hikers, mountain bikers, equestrians, and other non-motorized uses, such as dog walkers, trail runners, wildlife watchers, artists and photographers, and beachgoers. Recreation trails are often located within natural open space areas and wilderness settings, as well as public parks, beaches, and the coast. Recreational trails are typically designed as natural surface, off-road trails with a tread width that can vary between 1 foot to 14 feet, depending on location, topography, vegetation, and allowed user group(s). Recreational trails can consist of trails constructed along or within public and private easements, or unofficial social trails that have been established over time through repeated use.	- Franklin Trail in Carpinteria - Baron Ranch Trails in Gaviota - Point Sal Trails in Lompoc Valley - Orcutt Hills Trails in Orcutt - Midland School Trails in Santa Ynez	284 miles
Community Trails	Community trails are community connections for both recreation and active transportation. Community trails serve	Obern Trail in Goleta	104 miles

Trail Type	Description	Example Trails	Total Miles
	pedestrians, bicyclists, including e-bikes in some locations, and other wheeled transportation, including skateboarders and rollerbladers. Community trails are typically located in neighborhood or community settings, as well as providing connections to public parks, beaches, and the coast. They often provide key connections to Recreational trails or other Community trails as an important component of a community's circulation network, connecting people to places. The design of a Community trail widely varies depending on the location and intended use of the trail. Community trails are often constructed as paved pathways with a minimum 10-foot width, and up depending on pathway design, separation from other facilities, and user capacity. The paths can also be striped for two-way travel. In other settings, community trails may be constructed with more natural surfaces, such as compacted decomposed granite.	• Las Positas Multi-Use Path in Santa Barbara • Waterfront Trail in Santa Barbara • SR 246/Santa Ynez Trail in Santa Ynez	
State Trails	The State of California provides systems of recreational and community trails that are managed by State agencies, including California State Parks and the University of California. State trails include both on- and off-road trails that are generally multi-use, including pedestrians and bicyclists, and other non-motorized users.	• Carpinteria State Beach • UC Santa Barbara • El Capitan State Beach • Refugio State Beach • Gaviota State Park • La Purisma Mission State Historic Park • Burton Messa Ecological Reserve	123 miles
Federal Trails	The United States government provides a system of recreational and community trails that are managed by federal agencies, including the Los Padres National Forest and Vandenberg Space Force Base. Federal trails include both on- and off-road trails that primarily provide access to	• Manzana Trail • Tunnel Trail • Salisbury Canyon Trail • Surf Beach	680 miles

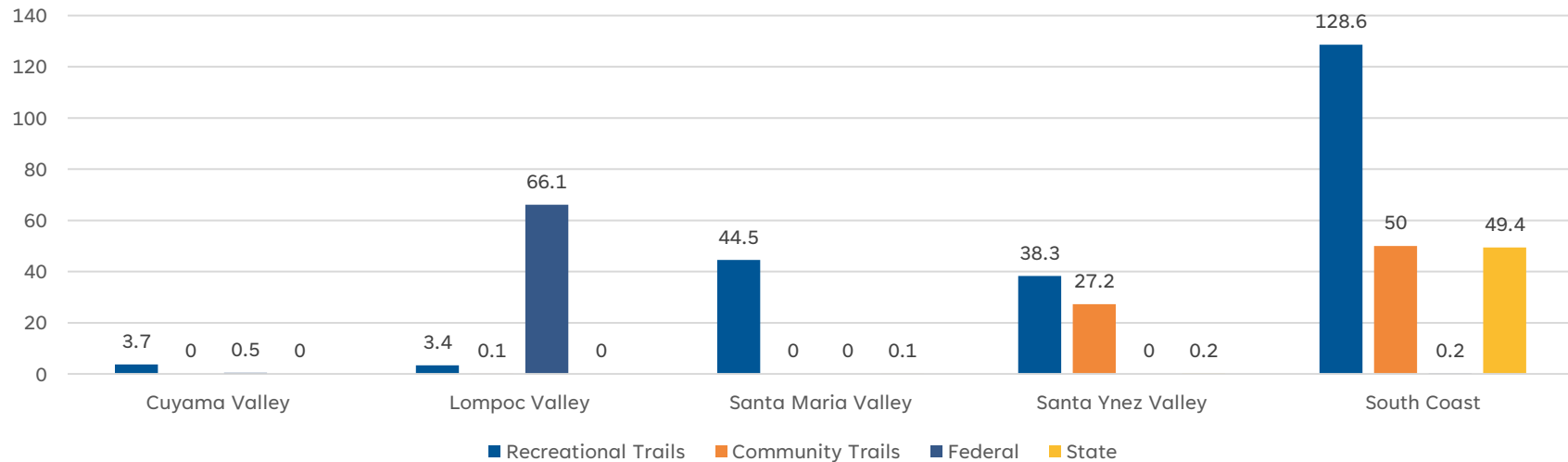
Trail Type	Description	Example Trails	Total Miles
	wilderness areas that support hikers, mountain bikers, dog walkers, trail runners, backpackers, wildlife watchers, nature artists and photographers, equestrians, wilderness campers, and hunters, as well as motorized off-road use in some locations such as all-terrain vehicles (ATV). Motorized uses are only allowed on designated Federal trails in Santa Barbara County.		
	TOTAL		1,190 miles



Recreational trails in the county support hiking, horseback riding, and biking. Photo: Travel Buddies

Trails in Santa Barbara County support access to outdoor recreation, exercise, and exploration of the natural environment. The Recreation Master Plan evaluates existing trails in Santa Barbara County based on how they are distributed between the recreation planning areas and the type of trail experience provided to the public. Most trails are located in the Los Padres National Forest. However, as a basis for local trail planning, the Recreation Master Plan focuses on the trails provided within the 5 recreation planning areas (Figure 3-6). The South Coast, including Goleta, Santa Barbara, and Carpinteria, is served by 55 percent of the local trail miles in the county. Santa Maria Valley, Santa Ynez Valley, and Lompoc Valley each provide less than 20 percent of the trail miles. Cuyama has 1 percent of the trail miles with limited connections to the Los Padres National Forest.

Figure 3-6. Trails by Type by Recreation Planning Area (Miles)



A. California Coastal Trail

The California Coastal Trail also follows portions of the county's 113-mile coastline, comprising segments of both natural trails in scenic settings and paved trails through neighborhoods and busy waterfront areas. Ongoing statewide efforts to complete the California Coastal Trail would achieve a continuous route from Oregon to Mexico, and Santa Barbara County would provide a key segment from Carpinteria, around Point Conception, and through the Guadalupe Dunes. The California Coastal Trail is a network of on- and off-road public trails or routes near or adjacent to the ocean that is intended to provide access to the California coastline for various recreational user groups. In Santa Barbara County, it consists of separate Recreational, Multi-Use, and State trails along which the California Coastal Trail route has been identified as part of a local jurisdiction's Local Coastal Program (LCP). Where sandy beach areas exist, the California Coastal Trail may also be identified as a route along the beach.



*The California Coastal Trail would traverse the county's 113-mile-long coastline to help connect Oregon to Mexico.
Photo: Santa Ynez Valley News*

3.3. Santa Barbara County Parks & Trails Inventory Map

The inventory of parks and trails in Santa Barbara County is presented geographically below in Figure 3-7, combining data from several agencies into one map. The Recreation Master Plan uses this map for park and trail planning. While this map collates the best available geographic information and is considered reliable for planning purposes, the information is subject to change and may not represent the actual conditions on the ground.

An interactive version of the Parks & Trails Inventory Map is available at www.SBCRecPlan.com. Enjoy exploring the different layers to discover all the useful and interesting information they provide! ¹

¹ The GIS-based map of parkland properties (i.e., shapefiles) in Santa Barbara County was originally sourced from the Santa Barbara County Conservation Blueprint (2018) and updated for the Recreation Master Plan. See Appendix C and <https://sbcblueprint.databasin.org/>

Figure 3-7. Public Parks, Trails, and Open Space in Santa Barbara County

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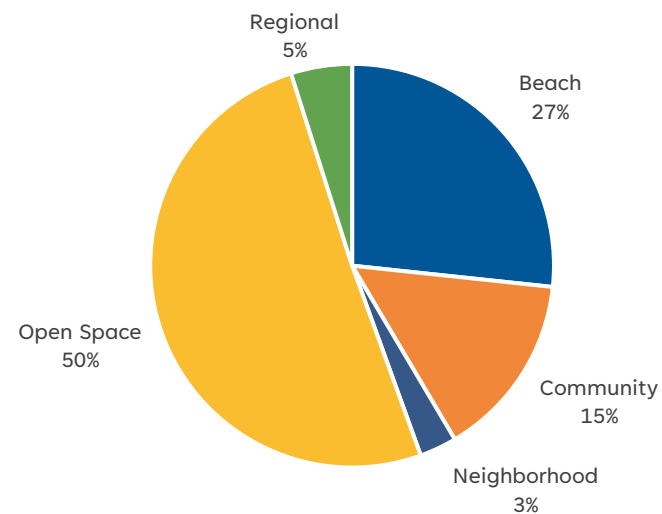
3.4. County-Owned Parks & Open Spaces

County Parks maintains 53 properties providing free access to public parks, trails, and open space in the unincorporated area. County Parks' public parks and open spaces comprise approximately 2,740 acres, with an estimated 2,151 acres serving the North County and 589 acres serving the South Coast. Of these assets, approximately 715 acres within 33 properties are public parkland, providing recreation facilities on land open and accessible to the public with no fees for parking or entry. Of this public parkland, County Parks provides 82 acres in 19 neighborhood parks, 406 acres in eight community parks, 134 acres in one regional park, and 731 acres in seven beach parks. Public parkland provides both active and passive recreation depending on the park type and location, including sports fields and courts, playgrounds, BBQ and picnic areas, restrooms, and trails. County Parks also maintains 1,387 acres of public open space, including several properties with open access to public trails and walking paths such as Orcutt Hills Trail System in the Santa Maria Valley and San Marcos Foothill Preserve in the South Coast.

In addition, County Parks owns and operates the 27-acre Jalama Beach County Park in the Lompoc Valley, which provides fee-based access to a popular coastal campground and day-use facilities. County Parks also operates recreation facilities within the federally-owned Cachuma Lake Recreation Area, which provides fee-based lakefront camping, a general store, a gas station, boat rentals, a playground, and a disc golf course on over 9,500 acres surrounding Lake Cachuma in the Santa Ynez Valley.

As depicted in Table 3-3 and Figure 3-9, County Parks provides parks, trails, and open spaces in all five recreation planning areas, including the greatest area (1,895 acres) in the Santa Maria Valley; however, this total acreage is provided by only 13 properties and a majority (91 percent) is provided as open space with limited access and recreational amenities, including Point Sal and Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Parks. In its dual role to conserve land for both outdoor recreation and resource protection, these open spaces are valuable assets for County Parks, but they do not provide public parkland, including recreation facilities and accessibility, to the same degree as other properties such as Waller Park, which is County Parks' only regional park, in Santa Maria Valley.

Figure 3-8. County-Owned Parks by Type



Note: Cachuma Lake Recreation Area is owned by the federal government and operated by County Parks

Table 3-3. Summary of All County Parks Properties

Park Type	Acres	Total No.
Beach	731.2	7
Community	406.1	8
Neighborhood	81.6	19
Regional	134.2	1
Open Space	1,387.3	18
Total	2,740.3	53

Note: Beach parks owned by the County include Jalama Beach County Park Campground, which provides fee-based reservations for overnight stay and day-use access.

Table 3-4. Summary of Only County Parks Properties Providing Public Parkland

Park Type	Acres	Total No.
Beach	93.2	5
Community	406.1	8
Neighborhood	81.6	19
Regional	134.2	1
Total	715.0	33

Figure 3-9. County-Owned Parks & Open Space by Recreation Planning Area (Acres)

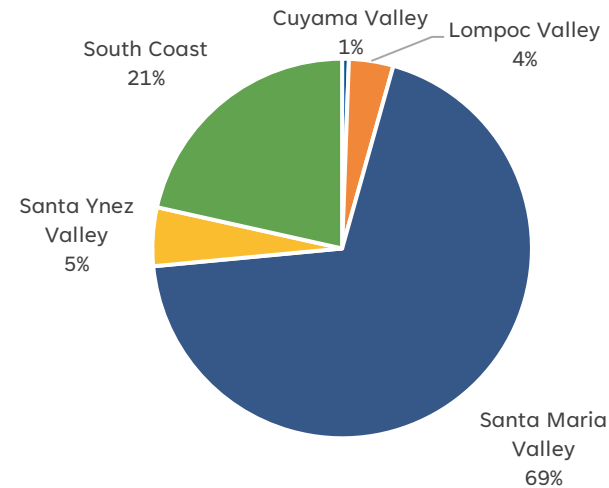
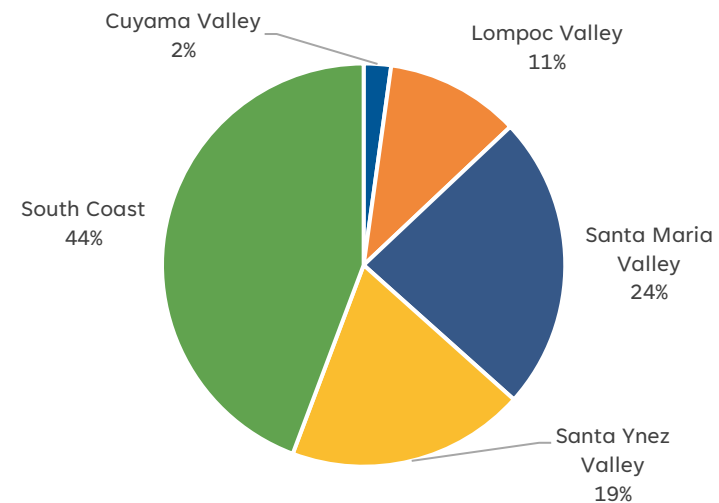


Figure 3-10. County-Owned Public Parkland by Recreation Planning Area (Acres)





County Parks provides a range of recreation facilities, including ballfields used by youth sports leagues. Photo: County Parks



County Parks protects wilderness and the coastline, which supports the county's natural resources and visitation. Photo: CaliforniaBeaches.com

When evaluating only the public parkland provided by County Parks that meets the diverse recreational needs of communities, the distribution of public parks is quite different. County Parks provides 715 acres of public parkland countywide within 33 parks (Table 3-4 and Figure 3-10). Approximately 44 percent (317 acres) of this public parkland is provided on the South Coast within 18 parks. The Santa Maria Valley has 6 County Parks properties providing 169 acres of public parkland.

The complete inventory of County Parks properties is provided below (Table 3-5) and includes the park location, type, size, and approximate total of key recreation facilities currently provided, including sports courts and fields, public pools, community centers and gymnasiums, skate and bike parks, dog parks, and disc golf. While additional types of facilities (i.e., playgrounds, picnic areas, trails) are included and considered in the Recreation Master Plan, these key facilities are estimated in response to public input that indicates a strong need and preference for these types of facilities in the planning process. Profiles of several selected County parks are provided subsequently.

[illegible]

Park Location, Type, and Name	Acres	Baseball - Softball	Soccer Fields	Football Fields	Tennis Courts	Pickleball Courts	Basketball Courts	Public Pools	Community Centers	Public Gymnasiums	Skate Parks	Bike/Pump Tracks	Dog Parks Off Leash	Disc Golf
Rhoads Open Space	0.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sea Lookout Park	1.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Walter Capps Park	2.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Open Space														
Hammond's Meadow	5.4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lassen Open Space	2.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
More Mesa Open Space	36.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Patterson Open Space	3.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
San Marcos Foothills Preserve	200.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Summerland Greenwell Preserve	1.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tabano Hollow Open Space	1.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Tarragona Open Space	3.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Teardrop Open Space	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Thunderbird Open Space	0.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Town & Country Open Space	6.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
University Circle Open Space	11.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	589.5	1	0	0	4	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	0
Total County Parks	2,740.3	8	2	0	4	5	1	2	2	1	0	0	5	1

Goleta Beach County Park

Region	South Coast
Size	33.1 acres
Park Type	Beach

Goleta Beach County Park provides coastal access and recreational facilities in the Eastern Goleta Valley at the mouth of the Goleta Slough. Visitors are served by a full-service restaurant and recreational fishing pier. The park has BBQ areas that can accommodate 25 to 210 people. There are numerous picnic tables and benches, as well as restrooms, a playground, and horseshoe areas. The Obern Trail, a multi-use trail that is popular with cyclists, runs through the park to connect the University of California, Santa Barbara to the Goleta Valley and the City of Santa Barbara.



Jalama Beach County Park & Campground

Region	Lompoc Valley
Size	26.6 acres
Park Type	Beach

Jalama Beach County Park provides a popular coastal campground and beach access. The campground has two group camping areas, tent and RV camping, and cabins available for rent. Campers and day-use visitors can enjoy horseshoes, a playground, a basketball court, restrooms, BBQ areas, picnic tables, and benches. There are also multi-use trails around the park that provide beach access and ocean views. Visitors can also use showers, a dishwashing station, and eat and shop at the Jalama Store. Day-use and campground fees are charged for all visitors.



Lookout Park

Region	South Coast
Size	6.6 acres
Park Type	Neighborhood

Lookout Park in Summerland features two reservable group BBQ areas that can accommodate 25 people each. There are also picnic tables and benches, a horseshoe area, a playground, a restroom, a trail, and an outdoor volleyball court. The trails provide beach access to a popular bird watching and surfing spot at Summerland Beach.



Los Alamos Park

Region	Santa Ynez Valley
Size	49.9 acres
Park Type	Community

Los Alamos County Park is located south of the community of Los Alamos. Three reservable BBQ areas can accommodate 50 to 125 people. Multi-use trails throughout the park connect to open spaces, as well as picnic tables, horseshoe areas, a playground, and a restroom.



Manning Park

Region	Santa Maria Valley
Size	11.8 acres
Park Type	Neighborhood

Manning Park in Montecito provides six reservable BBQ areas that can accommodate 40 to 310 people. Multi-use trails throughout the park connect open spaces, as well as picnic tables, one baseball/softball field, one tennis court, picnic tables, a playground, restrooms, and a horseshoe area.



Miguelito County Park

Region	Santa Maria Valley
Size	5.4 acres
Park Type	Community

Miguelito County Park is located 3 miles south of Lompoc. The park has two reservable BBQ areas that each accommodate up to 60 people. Visitors can use the playground, horseshoe area, picnic tables, and restrooms. Trails at the park are popular for equestrians and dog walkers.



Nojoqui Falls County Park

Region	Santa Ynez Valley
Size	83.5 acres
Park Type	Community

Nojoqui Falls County Park provides a short hiking trail to Nojoqui Falls, as well as other trails that connect to the Santa Ynez Valley. The park has four reservable BBQ areas that can accommodate 100 to 350 people. Visitors can enjoy open space, a playground, picnic tables, and restrooms at the park.



Ocean Beach Park

Region	Lompoc Valley
Size	38.9 acres
Park Type	Beach

Ocean Beach Park is located 13 miles west of Lompoc. The park features BBQ areas, picnic tables and benches, a playground, restrooms, and trails with ocean views that run parallel to the shore and down to Surf Beach. Beach access is closed to the public from March 1 through September 30 each year due to the snowy plover nesting season.



Ocean View Park

Region	South Coast
Size	3.2 acres
Park Type	Neighborhood

Oceanview Park is located at the eastern end of Summerland and features benches and picnic tables, BBQ areas, and a walking path. Most of the park is made up of a large, open grassy area that overlooks the ocean.



Orcutt Community Park

Region	Santa Maria Valley
Size	25.6 acres
Park Type	Community

Orcutt Community Park is located on the south side of Orcutt. This park provides two baseball fields and two soccer fields to support active sports, as well as a playground. An off-leash dog recreation area is fenced within 2.5 acres, providing dedicated areas for small and large dogs, plus amenities such as dog water fountains and seating areas. Amenities for gatherings include BBQs, picnic tables, restrooms, and group picnic areas. Orcutt Community Park contains trailheads to the Orcutt Hills, which provide hiking trails to local and regional networks in Santa Maria Valley.



Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park

Region	Santa Maria Valley
Size	614.9 acres
Park Type	Beach

Guadalupe Dunes County Park is located on the western edge of Guadalupe. This park is known for its miles of pristine dunes along the shore. Popular activities include fishing, bird watching, and whale watching. There is a trail around the parking lot at the beach. There are also picnic tables and restrooms available. Park access is restricted during the snowy plover nesting season from March 1 to October 1 each year.



Richardson County Park

Region	Cuyama Valley
Size	15.7 acres
Park Type	Neighborhood

Richardson County Park is located in New Cuyama, abutting parkland managed by the CVRD. The park includes BBQ grills, picnic tables, group picnic areas, hiking trails, a playground, and restrooms. Joseph Centeno Cuyama Aquatics Complex is also located within the park. The part of the park managed by the CVRD includes two baseball/softball fields and a soccer field.



Rincon Beach Park

Region	South Coast
Size	11.6 acres
Park Type	Beach

Rincon Beach Park is located south of Carpinteria on the coast. This public park provides beach access, picnic tables, restrooms, and BBQ areas, including one reservable area with capacity for 80 people. The park provides a walking trail that runs parallel to the coast.



Rocky Nook Park

Region	Santa Maria Valley
Size	17 acres
Park Type	Community

Rocky Nook Park is in Santa Barbara. The park has one reservable BBQ area that can accommodate up to 50 people. The park offers shaded picnic areas, short trails, and large sandstone boulders for kids to climb. Trails at the park are popular for equestrians and dog walkers. Amenities at Rocky Nook include a horseshoe area, a playground, and restrooms.



Santa Ynez Park

Region	Santa Maria Valley
Size	3.2 acres
Park Type	Neighborhood

Santa Ynez Park in the community of Santa Ynez has two reservable BBQ areas that can accommodate up to 100 people each, and a reservable indoor kitchen. The park has restrooms, a playground, picnic tables and benches, and an outdoor volleyball court.



Tuckers Grove County Park

Region	Santa Maria Valley
Size	111.4 acres
Park Type	Community

Tuckers Grove Park is in Eastern Goleta Valley between Santa Barbara and Goleta. One of the most popular attractions at the park is its large off-leash dog park. The park has eight reservable BBQ areas that can accommodate 25 to 400 people. Visitors can enjoy large grassy open spaces, horseshoe areas, playgrounds, and restrooms. Trails at the park are popular for equestrians, dog walkers, and mountain bikers.



The Isla Vista Recreation and Parks District (IVRPD) was established in 1972 to provide spaces and programs for recreation, social interaction, and cultural events. IVRPD owns and operates 18 properties providing 50.1 acres of public recreation facilities, including 16.5 acres of public parkland and 33.3 acres of public open space, as well as the IVRPD office (Table 3-7).

Table 3-7. IVRPD Properties by Recreation Planning Area, Park Type, and Key Facilities

[illegible]

Park Location, Type, and Name	Acres	Baseball	Soccer Fields	Football Fields	Tennis Courts	Pickleball Courts	Basketball	Public Pools	Community	Public Gymnasia	Skate Parks	Bike/Pump	Dog Parks	Disc Golf
Little Acorn Park	0.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pardall Gardens	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sueno Orchard	0.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sueno Park	0.4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Trigo Pasado Park	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Open Space														
Camino Corto Open Space	21.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Del Sol Vernal Pool Reserve	11.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pocket Parks														
Childrens Park	0.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rottapel Park	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Window to the Sea Park	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Facilities														
Isla Vista Recreation and Park District Office	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total IVRPD	50.1	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1

Chapter Four:

Recreation Needs Assessment



Photo: Noozhawk

4.0. Recreation Needs Assessment

To understand what types of parks, recreation, and trails are needed in Santa Barbara County, an assessment of how and where the existing public parks and trails are either meeting or not meeting local demands must be prepared. The County conducted a recreation needs assessment by combining several indicators for each recreation planning area and Santa Barbara County as a whole. Because of the size, scale, and diversity of Santa Barbara County, this assessment considers several types of indicators, both qualitative and quantitative, to give a broad perspective of the recreation level of service provided countywide now and in the future. As described below, each indicator provides insight into unmet needs to inform the recommendations and actions of the Recreation Master Plan. (see also Chapter 5.0, *A Plan for Parks, Recreation, and Trails*, below).

4.1. Recreation Needs Indicators

Indicators are like gauges on a dashboard. They inform decision-making but do not make those decisions. Rather, decisions are made using the information the dashboard provides. Accordingly, County Parks conducted a Recreation Needs Indicator Study using the following strategically selected indicators to help ensure that the recommendations developed in the Recreation Master Plan are timely, relevant, reliable, and comprehensive. The indicators are considered together with input received through public feedback to help guide County Parks, its partner agencies, and the public toward recreation projects that meet evolving needs over time. The results of the study are integrated with the recreation needs assessment below.



What are indicators?

Like gauges on a dashboard, indicators are data that inform decision-making but do not make decision for us. Instead of picking the destination, they point us in the right direction.

4.2. Public Park Needs Assessment

The County analyzed the existing parks to determine the existing and future Public Park Level of Service (LOS) in Santa Barbara County and within each of the five recreation planning areas. Public Park LOS indicators evaluate how parks serve the community. Since the Recreation Master Plan considers regional recreation needs within 5 recreation planning areas that comprise cities and surrounding unincorporated communities, the Recreation Master Plan considers how local parks compare to similar regions in the nation. Public Park LOS indicators can also be compared to benchmarks set by similar agencies. Benchmarks are published by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) in its Agency Performance Review. These indicators establish current conditions and direct future planning efforts toward recommended LOS targets. A summary of the Recreation LOS metrics used to indicate needs is provided below.

Indicator No. 1. Parkland LOS – Acres of Public Parks per 1,000 people

This indicator compares how much public parkland is available to a population. A low number could indicate overcrowding and conflicting demands for the available facilities.

The County's adopted standard is 4.7 acres of public parkland per 1,000 people, and the Recreation Master Plan recognizes this policy standard for unincorporated areas. This long-standing metric in the County was based on a 1978 needs assessment conducted for the 1980 Land Use Element and has been used for park planning for over four decades. Even though this standard is outdated, it still outperforms the current Parkland LOS for the State of California, which, as of 2020, provides only 3.7 acres of parks per 1,000 people (Appendix D).

To understand current metrics and benchmarks for park planning, County Parks compared Santa Barbara County's existing Parkland LOS to the national average as a benchmark, based on the NRPA's 2023 Annual Performance Review Report, as well as comparing the recreation planning areas to national benchmarks for similar regions. As of 2023, the typical park and recreation agency manages 10.8 acres of parkland per 1,000 people in its jurisdiction. However, the amount of parkland per 1,000 people varies according to the population of the area served by the agency; these form the Parkland LOS goals for the Recreation Master Plan (Table 4-1).

Table 4-1. Recommended Goals for Parkland LOS based on Regional Population

Total Regional Population	Park Acres per 1,000 people
Less than 20,000	13
20,000-49,999	11.3
50,000-99,999	11.2
100,000-250,000	8.9
>250,000	10.1
National Average	10.8

Source: NRPA 2023; Appendix D

Currently, Santa Barbara County provides 4.9 acres of parkland per 1,000 people, exceeding the County's adopted standard but falling significantly short of typical parks and recreation agencies nationally (Table 4-2). Currently, Santa Maria Valley is the only recreation planning area that falls short of meeting the County's adopted standard, with 3.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 people.

Table 4-2. Existing Parkland LOS by Recreation Planning Area (2025)

Recreation Planning Area	Goal for Parkland LOS	Existing Parkland LOS	Additional Acres Needed to Reach Goal Parkland LOS
Cuyama Valley	13	48.2	0
Lompoc Valley	11.2	7.1	225
Santa Maria Valley	8.9	3.5	797
Santa Ynez Valley	13	11.1	37
South Coast	8.9	5.0	803
Countywide	10.8	4.9	2,669

Source: NRPA 2023; Appendix D

Note: **Bold** indicates need for additional public parkland acres

With population growth through 2050 to approximately 510,000 residents and no change to the current amount of public parkland, Santa Barbara County would provide only 4.3 acres of parkland per 1,000 people, which indicates approximately 254 additional acres of parkland are needed at a minimum to maintain the County's adopted standard in 2050. By 2050, only Cuyama Valley will have enough parkland to achieve the Parkland LOS goals. Further, Lompoc Valley and Santa Maria Valley would not achieve the County's adopted standard. To achieve the Recreation Master Plan's Parkland LOS goals for each region, the county needs over 3,300 additional acres of public parkland over the next 20 to 30 years (Table 4-3).

Table 4-3. Future Parkland LOS by Recreation Planning Area (2050)

Recreation Planning Area	Goal for Parkland LOS	Future Parkland LOS	Additional Acres Needed to Reach Goal Parkland LOS
Cuyama Valley	13	44.4	0
Lompoc Valley	11.2	6.3	306
Santa Maria Valley	8.9	3.0	996
Santa Ynez Valley	13	9.9	65
South Coast	8.9	4.7	929
Countywide	10.8	4.3	3,312

Source: NRPA 2023; Appendix D

Note: **Bold** indicates need for additional public parkland acres

Indicator No. 2. Park Count LOS - Total People per Public Park

This indicator compares the total number of parks serving a population. A high number could indicate overcrowding and conflicting demands for available facilities.

As of 2023, the typical park and recreation agency serves 2,287 people per public park (Appendix D). However, the number of people served per park varies according to the population of the area served by the agency; these form the Park Count LOS goals for the Recreation Master Plan (Table 4-4).

Table 4-4. Recommended Goals for Park County LOS based on Regional Population

Total Population	Maximum People per Public Park
Less than 20,000	1,225
20,000-49,999	2,014
50,000-99,999	2,240
100,000-250,000	3,240
>250,000	5,791
National Average	2,287

Source: NRPA 2023; Appendix D

Currently, Santa Barbara County serves an average of 2,648 people per park, exceeding typical parks and recreation agencies nationally and indicating that the county needs at least 27 additional parks (Table 4-5). Santa Maria Valley and Lompoc Valley currently exceed the Park Count LOS goals by population size.

Table 4-5. Existing Park Count LOS by Recreation Planning Area (2025)

Recreation Planning Area	Goal for Park Count LOS	Existing Park Count LOS	Additional Parks Needed to Reach Park Count LOS Goal
Cuyama Valley	1,225	298	0
Lompoc Valley	2,240	2,885	6
Santa Maria Valley	3,240	3,263	1
Santa Ynez Valley	2,041	1,596	0
South Coast	2,340	2,267	0
Countywide	2,287	2,648	27

Source: NRPA 2023; Appendix D

Note: **Bold** indicates need for additional parks

With population growth through 2050, Santa Barbara County would serve 2,998 people per park, which indicates approximately 53 additional parks are needed to achieve the Recreation Master Plan's goals by 2050 (Table 4-6). By 2050, only Cuyama Valley and Santa Ynez Valley would have enough parks to achieve the Park Count LOS goal, and Lompoc Valley, Santa Maria Valley, and the South Coast would not achieve the Park Count LOS goal.

Table 4-6. Future Park Count LOS by Recreation Planning Area (2050)

Recreation Planning Area	Goal for Park Count LOS	Future Park Count LOS	Additional Parks Needed to Reach Park Count LOS Goal
Cuyama Valley	1,225	324	0
Lompoc Valley	2,240	3,267	9
Santa Maria Valley	3,240	3,758	8
Santa Ynez Valley	2,041	1,777	0
South Coast	2,340	2,420	4
Countywide	2,287	2,998	53

Source: NRPA 2023; Appendix D

Note: **Bold** indicates need for additional parks

Indicator No. 3. Key Facility LOS – Total People per Recreation Facility Type

This indicator evaluates whether parks provide enough key recreation facilities to serve demand. A high number could indicate overcrowding. This evaluation could also indicate missing facilities.

The number of people served per key facility varies by facility type based on national averages; these form the Key Facility LOS goals for the Recreation Master Plan (Table 4-7).

Table 4-7. Recommended Goals for Key Facility LOS

Key Recreation Facilities	Maximum Population per Facility
Baseball-Softball Fields	6,339
Soccer Fields	11,541
Football/Multi-Sport Fields	90,017
Tennis Courts*	9,576
Pickleball Courts*	15,520
Basketball Courts	7,896
Skate Parks	75,014
Bike/Pump Tracks	90,017
Dog Parks Off Leash	40,917
Disc Golf	56,261
Playgrounds	3,659
Public Pools	50,009
Community Centers	22,504
Public Gymnasiums	112,521

Source: NRPA 2023; Appendix D

* May be combined in one facility designed for both pickleball and tennis

Currently, Santa Barbara County needs soccer and multi-sport fields, tennis and pickleball courts, basketball courts, skate parks, public pools and aquatic facilities, and public gymnasiums (Table 4-8).

Table 4-8. Existing Key Facility LOS Countywide (2025)

Key Recreation Facilities	Total Facilities Countywide	Population Per Facility	Goal for Key Facility LOS	Additional Facilities Needed to Reach Key Facility LOS Goal
Baseball-Softball Fields	71	6,339	6,863	0
Soccer Fields	39	11,541	7,228	24
Football/Multi-Sport Fields	5	90,017	9,177	45
Tennis Courts	43	10,467	5,860	30
Pickleball Courts	31	14,519	13,922	4
Basketball Courts	57	7,896	7,404	4
Skate Parks	6	75,014	53,114	3
Bike/Pump Tracks	5	90,017	1,205,270	0
Dog Parks Off Leash	11	40,917	43,532	0
Disc Golf	8	56,261	69,355	0
Playgrounds	123	3,659	3,759	0
Public Pools	8	56,261	38,635	3
Community Centers	20	22,504	29,494	0
Public Gymnasiums	4	112,521	31,215	11

Source: NRPA 2023; Appendix D

Note: **Bold** indicates need for additional key recreation facilities

By 2050, Santa Barbara County will also need baseball/softball fields, off-leash dog parks, and playgrounds. These needs are most severe in Santa Ynez Valley, Lompoc Valley, and Santa Maria Valley, although all regions will require different facilities to meet future needs (Table 4-9).

Table 4-9. Future Key Facility LOS Countywide (2050)

Key Recreation Facilities	Total Facilities Countywide	Population Per Facility	Goal for Key Facility LOS	Additional Facilities Needed to Reach Key Facility LOS Goal
Baseball-Softball Fields	71	7,179	6,863	4
Soccer Fields	39	13,069	7,228	32
Football/Multi-Sport Fields	5	101,939	9,177	51
Tennis Courts	43	10,845	5,860	40
Pickleball Courts	31	17,576	13,922	8
Basketball Courts	57	8,942	7,404	12
Skate Parks	6	84,950	53,114	4
Bike/Pump Tracks	5	101,939	1,205,270	0
Dog Parks Off Leash	11	46,336	43,532	1
Disc Golf	8	63,712	69,355	0
Playgrounds	123	4,144	3,759	13
Public Pools	8	56,633	38,635	5
Community Centers	20	25,485	29,494	0
Public Gymnasiums	4	127,424	31,215	13

Source: NRPA 2023; Appendix D

Note: **Bold** indicates need for additional key recreation facilities

Maintaining Recreation Facilities

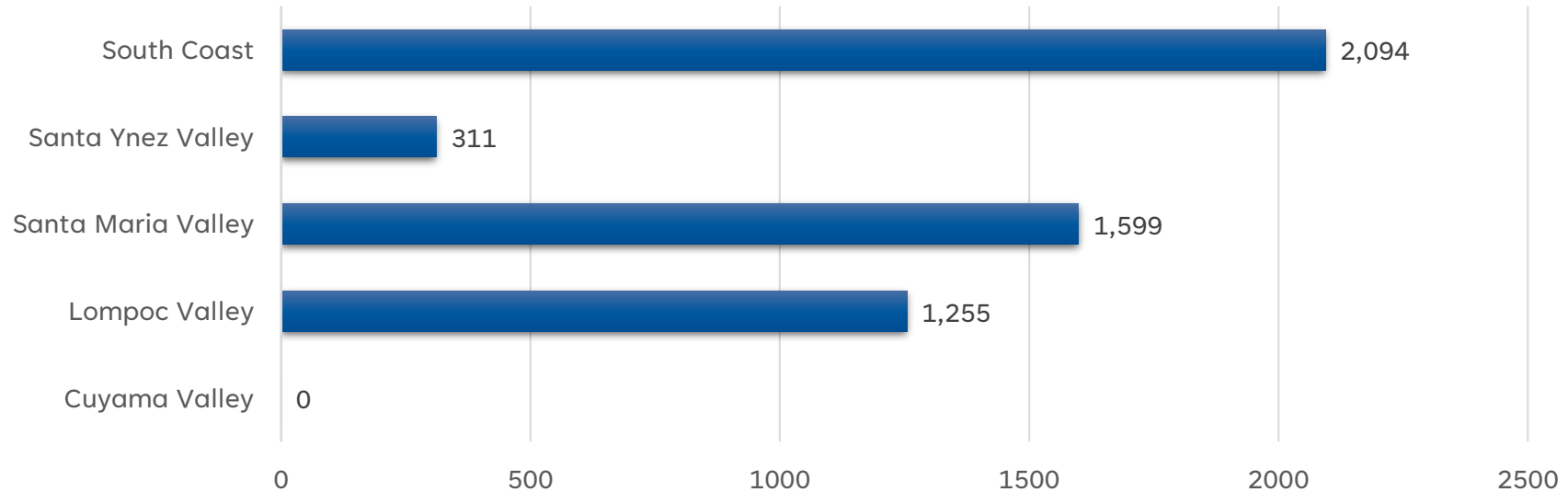
Santa Barbara County's parks system faces persistent and growing needs related to the maintenance, repair, and modernization of its existing facilities. Many parks are aging and require ongoing investment to address deferred maintenance issues such as deteriorating infrastructure, outdated amenities, and safety upgrades. Common needs include repairing or replacing roofs, restrooms, playgrounds, irrigation systems, and pavement, as well as improving accessibility and energy efficiency. Despite efforts to prioritize and fund critical projects, a significant portion of the system's capital needs remains unfunded, creating a backlog that impacts service quality and user experience. These challenges underscore the importance of long-term capital planning, sustainable funding strategies, and community engagement to ensure that parks remain safe, functional, and welcoming for all residents.

4.3. Park Accessibility & Availability Needs Assessment

In addition to considering whether the county is served by enough parks, recreation planning must consider whether the location of parks supports high levels of public access and availability to all user groups. Parks located far from neighborhoods, or accessible only via roadways without sidewalks, bikeways, or other active transportation mode, may not be safely accessible to children, seniors, and others with limited access to access to a personal vehicle. As a goal of the Recreation Master Plan is to ensure access to parks for all, the Recreation Indicators Study also evaluated the accessibility of parks in the county, including how feasible walking to parks is in each recreation planning area and whether parks are accessible via active transportation such as bicycles and public transportation, as summarized below.

Indicator No. 4. Neighborhood Access LOS - Average Population within walking distance of a public park

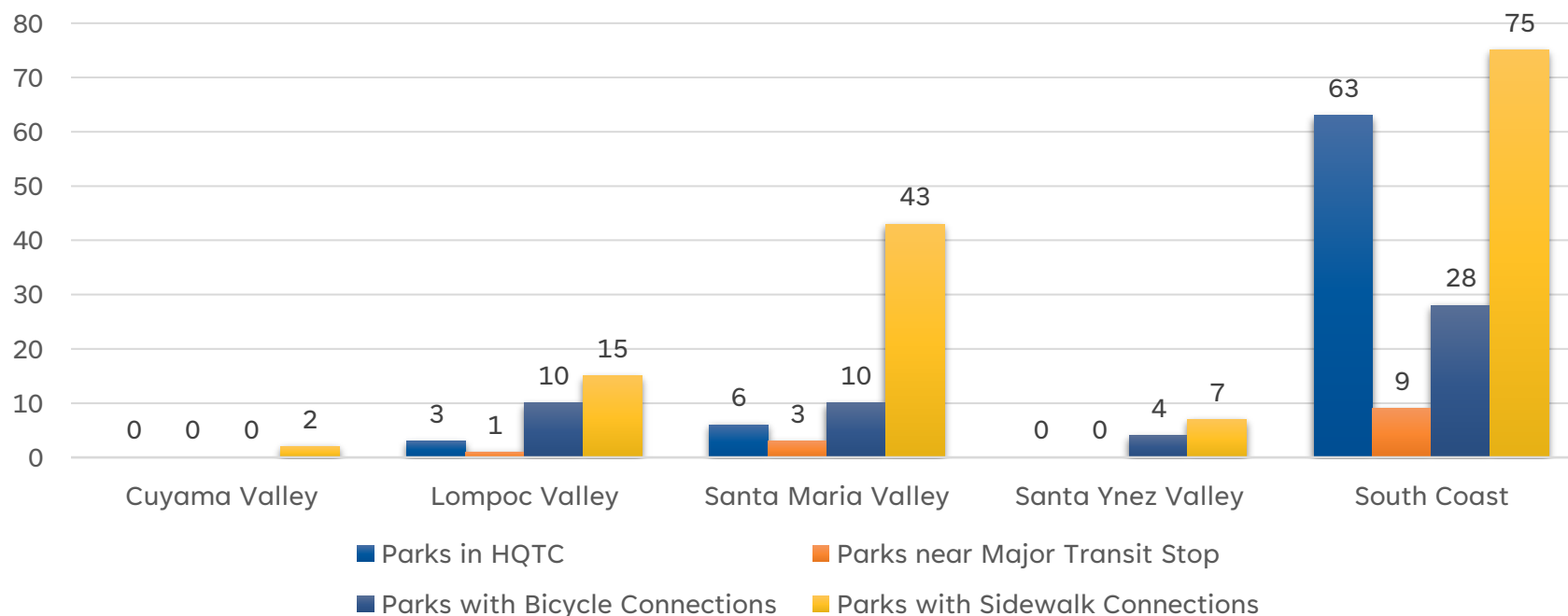
This indicator compares the walkability of each recreation planning area by estimating the average number of people who live within 1/4 mile of a park, which is a reasonable distance to walk and takes about 15 minutes. A higher number indicates that parks are generally located close to where people live and are more walkable. A lower number indicates that more parks are needed closer to where people live.

Table 4-10. Average Population within ¼ mile of a Public Park by Recreation Planning Area

The most walkable region is the South Coast, where an average of 2,094 people live within 1/4 mile of a park. The least walkable regions are the Cuyama Valley, where no one lives within 1/4 mile of a park, and the Santa Ynez Valley, where an average of 311 people live near a park. A priority should be placed on citing new parks near existing and future neighborhoods to ensure walkability and accessibility in these regions and reduce the need for vehicle trips and travel time to reach recreation (Table 4-10).

Indicator No. 5. Active Transportation LOS - Active transportation access to a public park

This indicator assesses each recreation planning area based on how parks serve active transportation facilities, including sidewalks, bike lanes or paths, or public transportation such as transit stops and high-quality transit corridors (HQTC). This evaluation aligns with the Active Transportation Plan prepared by the County in coordination with SBCAG. This assessment helps indicate where improvements to transportation infrastructure could help park visitors use non-vehicular modes to reach recreation.

Table 4-11. Total Parks with Access to Active Transportation Modes by Recreation Planning Area

The South Coast has the most parks with sidewalks and bicycle connections to surrounding communities. The South Coast also has the most parks within an HQTC or near transit stops. Cuyama Valley and Santa Ynez Valley have the fewest parks with sidewalks or bicycle connections, and no major public transportation serves the parks. Consistent with the Active Transportation Plan, a priority should be placed on extending sidewalks, walking paths, bicycle lanes and paths, and transit services to serve existing and future parks, particularly regional and community parks that host competitive sports and after-school programs (Table 4-11).

4.4. Trail Needs Assessment

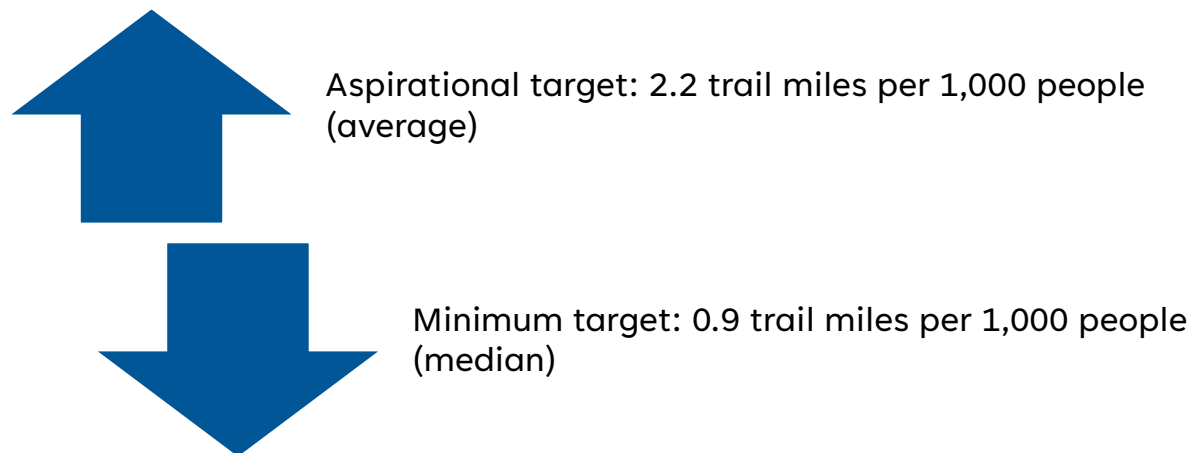
County Parks analyzed the existing trails to determine the existing and future Trail LOS in Santa Barbara County and within each of the five recreation planning areas. Trail LOS indicators evaluate how trails serve the community. The Recreation Master Plan considers the total miles of local trails (i.e., non-federal and non-state) relative to population countywide and in each recreation planning area. Local metrics are used for trail needs assessment since national benchmarks for similar trail metrics are not currently available, and trail conditions vary widely depending on local conditions and jurisdictional boundaries. These

local metrics establish current conditions to inform trail planning, including drawing attention to underserved communities. A summary of the Trail LOS metrics used to indicate needs is provided below.

Indicator No. 6. Trail LOS – Miles of trails per 1,000 people

This indicator compares how many miles of trails are available to a population. A low number could indicate overcrowding and conflicting demands for the available facilities. When considering existing Trail LOS in the five recreation planning areas only, Santa Barbara County provides an average of 2.2 miles of trails per 1,000 people and a median of 0.9 miles of trails per 1,000 people. The Recreation Master Plan uses this range to help identify the areas of the county most in need of additional trails and provide an aspirational target for planning purposes.

Figure 4-1. Trail LOS Range Based on Existing Local Trail Conditions in Recreation Planning Areas



Source: See Section 3.2, *Public Trails*; Appendix D

Based on these indicators, Santa Barbara County would benefit from at least 90 more miles of trails, primarily in Lompoc Valley and Santa Maria Valley, to create similar trail conditions in all recreation planning areas. However, to achieve the goal of 2.2 miles of trails per 1,000 people, Santa Barbara County needs over 670 additional miles within the five recreation planning areas (Table 4-12). This need may be offset with trails provided in accessible areas within federal lands, such as the front-country of Los Padres National Forest within the South Coast.

Table 4-12. Existing Trail LOS by Recreation Planning Area (2025)

Recreation Planning Area	Goal for Trail LOS	Existing Trail LOS	Additional Trail Miles Needed to Reach Trail LOS Goal
Cuyama Valley	2.2	6.2	0
Lompoc Valley	2.2	0.1	115
Santa Maria Valley	2.2	0.3	273
Santa Ynez Valley	2.2	3.4	0
South Coast	2.2	0.9	272
Countywide	2.2	0.7	677

See Section 3.2, *Public Trails*; Appendix DNote: **Bold** indicates need for additional key recreation facilities

To maintain this Trail LOS by 2050, at least 51 additional miles of trails would be needed for a total of 141 more miles of trails, including on the South Coast. However, to achieve the goal of 2.2 miles of trails per 1,000 people by 2050, Santa Barbara County needs over 670 additional miles within the five recreation planning areas (Table 4-13). While these needs are most apparent in Lompoc Valley, Santa Maria Valley, and the South Coast, trails are the most popular form of recreation countywide, and all regions, including Santa Ynez Valley and Cuyama Valley, would benefit from more trails (see Section 4.5, *Recreation Facility Needs Indicated by the Recreation Survey Results*).

Table 4-13. Future Trail LOS by Recreation Planning Area (2050)

Recreation Planning Area	Goal for Trail LOS	Future Trail LOS	Additional Trail Miles Needed to Reach Trail LOS Goal
Cuyama Valley	2.2	5.7	0
Lompoc Valley	2.2	0.1	131
Santa Maria Valley	2.2	0.3	321
Santa Ynez Valley	2.2	3.1	0
South Coast	2.2	0.8	303
Countywide	2.2	0.6	806

Source: Appendix D

Note: **Bold** indicates need for additional key recreation facilities

4.5. Recreation Facility Needs Indicated by the Recreation Survey Results

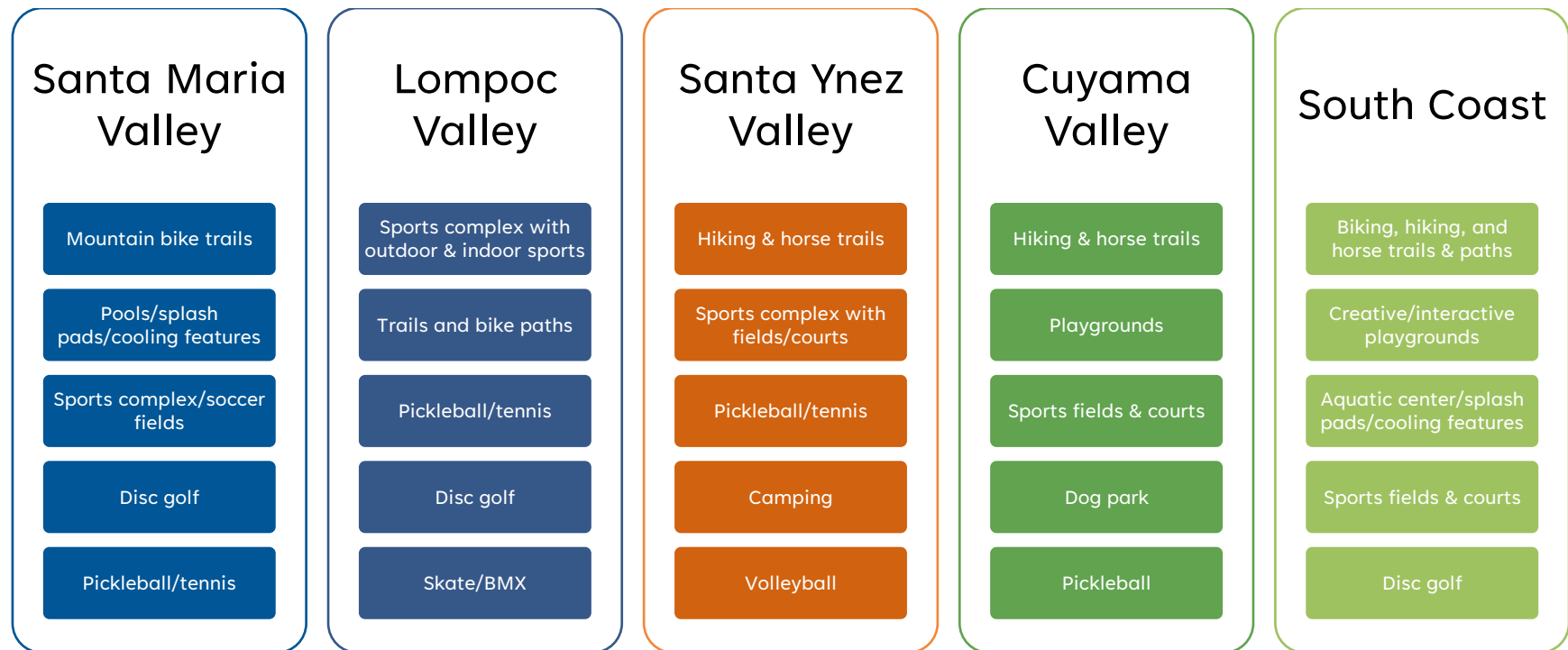
The Recreation Surveys (Appendix A) indicate a wide range of needs for specific recreation facilities in the county. Requests for more facilities with improved access and maintenance range from public trails to campgrounds to sports fields and courts, and aquatic facilities with cooling features. A strong theme heard through the community outreach conducted for the Recreation Master Plan was a need for more local facilities to support youth and adult sports leagues and recreational play to reduce the need to leave the county for competitive sports. Additionally, the community reported a strong need for trails to serve hikers, mountain bikers, horseback riders, and other non-motorized users, including specialized facilities for specific users, such as equestrian-only facilities and bike parks, such as single-track downhill facilities for mountain bikes and BMX pump track facilities. While the Recreation Master Plan considers all ideas and suggestions, in summary, the top 10 new and improved recreation facilities needed countywide include a balance of higher-intensity recreation facilities, such as sports and aquatic complexes, with lower-intensity outdoor recreation, such as campgrounds, trails, and disc golf courses (Figure 4-2).

Figure 4-2. Top Ten Recreation Facility Needs based on Community Engagement



When survey results were analyzed based on recreation planning areas, several of these recreation needs fell within the top five for each (Figure 4-3). Priorities change by location, and unique needs arise in some places, such as volleyball in Santa Ynez Valley and creative/interactive playgrounds on the South Coast. Consistently, trails, sports field complexes, and aquatic centers were among the most popular needs in all five regions.

Figure 4-3. Top Five Recreation Facility Needs by Recreation Planning Area



Appendix A

The Recreation Survey also informed County Parks about key issues to address through park and trail planning, as well as facility management and operations. Key opportunities include upgrading or repairing existing playgrounds, restrooms, trash cans, and water fountains, providing better turf and weed management, and installing natural playscapes and other improvements for children to safely explore outdoors. Additional park rangers could better enforce County Parks rules, and additional maintenance staff could provide cleaner and higher-quality park facilities. Many community members desire extended park hours, particularly for open recreational swimming in public pools, and lighting for nighttime play and sports leagues. A strong desire was expressed for more recreation and sports programs to engage and protect kids' health and well-

being, as well as more community events in parks, like music, movies, art, and celebrations or public gatherings. Lastly, the community showed support for interagency coordination and public-private partnerships to make building public parks and trails more efficient and feasible.

Through community engagement, County Parks also heard about the needs of specific user groups, including off-leash dog recreation, horseback riding and equestrian recreation, and mountain biking. The popularity of these forms of recreation relates to Santa Barbara County's history, geography, climate, and culture. Often, these user groups seek out the same locations, including trails, beaches, and open space areas. These unique needs and the balance between them are recognized in the Recreation Master Plan.

Santa Barbara County is a pet-friendly place! Through survey results and community engagement, County Parks understands there is a need for facilities that support off-leash dog recreation and equestrian activities and trail riding. Santa Barbara County has 11 off-leash dog parks, including one off-leash beach in the City of Santa Barbara, accessed at Arroyo Burro County Park on the South Coast. There are no dedicated off-leash trails in local parks and open spaces. Further, several open spaces support horse trail riding, including Los Flores Ranch and Ellwood Mesa Open Space, as well as beach riding, but there are no public equestrian facilities, including barns, stables, arenas, or boarding. There is also only one dedicated equestrian trail in the county on the north shore of Lake Cachuma, with a trailhead at Live Oak Campground. Additionally, Santa Barbara County's terrain supports world-class mountain biking, particularly on front-country trails of the South Coast and the dirt roads in the Los Padres National Forest, Santa Ynez Valley, Cuyama Valley, and Lompoc Valley. However, no mountain bike terrain parks or dedicated downhill courses exist in Santa Barbara County. While in most cases, County Parks provides multi-use facilities and aims to support public use by all groups, the safety and enjoyment of all users is a factor for the Recreation Master Plan. Through community outreach, County Parks heard support for recreation that involves dogs, horses, and mountain bikes, though not necessarily together.



*Recreation needs are ever-changing, including for our community's animal companions! Recreation for horses and dogs is a component of the Recreation Master Plan.
Photo: Lompoc Record*

4.6. Recreation Needs for Existing and Future Residents

Demand for new parks and trails is very high in Santa Barbara County. Public input and analysis of countywide recreation needs conducted for the Recreation Master Plan indicate that communities seek more extensive and higher quality public trails for hiking, active parks that provide sports fields and courts, neighborhood parks in underserved areas, aquatic facilities for swimming and cooling, public equestrian trails and facilities, campgrounds, coastal access, and mountain bike/BMX trails and track parks. Demand is highest in areas that lack equitable access to these recreational facilities, such as Eastern Goleta Valley, Mission Hills, Los Olivos, Santa Ynez, and many neighborhoods in Orcutt.

Further, existing parkland may not meet all needs for recreational activities and is often not located conveniently to serve all residents equitably, particularly when using active transportation modes such as walking, biking, or public transit. For example, Eastern Goleta Valley and central Orcutt lack sufficient public parks within reasonable walking or biking distance for most residents. Smaller communities commonly struggle to provide adequate public parks and trails, including Mission Hills/Vandenberg Village in the Lompoc Valley and Los Olivos in the Santa Ynez Valley. Similarly, several cities also face challenges. Further, some communities, such as those in the Eastern Goleta Valley or Santa Ynez Valley, lack easy access to extended rural hiking trails, and residents must drive to more distant trail opportunities such as those in Montecito or the Los Padres National Forest.

Looking ahead to increasing demands for parks and trails, housing is planned in unincorporated communities, which would substantially increase the county's population with thousands of new residents not currently addressed in this Recreation Needs Assessment. Most new housing is planned for the South Coast, including Eastern Goleta Valley, where residents are already underserved by existing parks and trails. New residents will result in a substantial increase in the need for new public parkland under existing County standards or far greater amounts of new public parkland under NRPA national benchmarks. Estimated growth would require at least 254 acres and up to 3,300 acres of new parkland and at least 141 miles and up to 806 miles of new public trails to increase outdoor recreation to meet the needs of existing and future residents. The Recreation Master Plan plans for many County Parks' projects to help meet these needs, but County Parks cannot achieve these goals alone.



Multi-sport complexes serve a wide range of youth and adult recreation needs and support local recreation businesses. Photo: Paradise Coast



Camping brings visitors of all ages to enjoy the outdoors and supports economic vitality and low-cost overnight accommodations. Photo: KOA

Chapter Five: A Plan for Parks, Recreation, and Trails



5.0. A Plan for Parks, Recreation, and Trails

The Recreation Master Plan presents a unique opportunity to envision how to improve access to recreation for residents throughout the county, particularly in underserved unincorporated communities and neighborhoods in the South Coast, Lompoc Valley, Santa Maria Valley, Santa Ynez Valley, and Cuyama Valley. As described in Chapter 4.0, *Recreation Needs Assessment*, Santa Barbara County has a wide range of recreation needs, including additional public parks and trails, as well as funding and management of facilities to serve all users. This chapter provides a plan to help meet these needs in several ways. First, County Parks' planned parks, trails, and recreation facility projects are described, including the conceptual location and range of facilities, as well as estimated cost and timing. A summary of known planned recreation projects by other agencies, including cities, State Parks, and private recreation organizations, is also provided. Each planned project is unique and varies in complexity, vision, location, and users served. Lastly, the recreational value of these planned projects relative to the Recreation Master Plan's Recreation Needs Indicators is estimated to help assess to what degree the Recreation Master Plan will be able to meet the countywide needs identified in Chapter 4.0, *Recreation Needs Assessment*. Taken together, this chapter provides a roadmap for parks, recreation, and trails planning through 2050.



The Recreation Master Plan is a once in a lifetime opportunity to plan for parks and trails to serve all our community members, including children, adults, disadvantaged communities, and future generations in Santa Barbara County. Photo: Newspress

5.1. County Parks' Planned Parks, Recreation, & Trails Projects

As a County Parks plan, planned parks, recreation, and trail projects lie in the unincorporated area on properties that are either already owned by the County or other public agencies or are currently privately owned and would require acquisition as part of project development. Some projects are brand-new concepts for existing or future parks developed through the Recreation Master Plan process, including community outreach and interagency coordination. Other projects are long-standing concepts in the County's community plans and Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), waiting for the right mix of funding, planning, and initiative to be realized. Some planned park and trail projects may be wholly feasible as County Parks' efforts, while others require partnerships with other agencies, organizations, or private landowners. Some projects are prioritized in the near-term



The Recreation Master Plan envisions unique and innovative projects to meet a wide range of user. Photo: Bring Me the News

(5 to 10 years). Others require a longer planning timeframe (10 to 20 years). See Chapter 6.0, *Pathways to Implementation*, for more information about project timing and strategies.

Profiles for County Parks' planned parks, recreation, and trails projects are presented below with a description of the planned project, its location (if known), the agencies that would facilitate it, its estimated cost to construct, and its estimated timing/priority as either a near-term (5 to 10 years) project or a long-term (10 to 20 years) project. There are nine planned recreation projects that County Parks is already undertaking that will benefit from the adoption of the Recreation Master Plan. These projects will create 11.5 acres of new public parkland and 37.8 miles of trails countywide. In addition, there are 18 new recreation projects that County Parks is planning to undertake to help meet the recreation needs identified by the Recreation Master Plan. These projects will create 175 acres of new public parkland and 37.5 miles of trails countywide. Together, County Parks is planning 27 new public parks and trails projects through 2050 to create 186.5 acres of new public parkland and 75.2 miles of new and improved public trails (Table

5-1). Planned public parks will improve existing facilities and expand campgrounds, community parks, neighborhood parks, and open space for outdoor recreation (Figure 5-2). Planned trail projects will increase the mileage of recreational and community trails (Figure 5-1).

An interactive map of existing and planned parks & trails, comprising a countywide blueprint for recreation, a "RecPrint", is available at www.SBCRecPlan.com.² Enjoy exploring each potential location and how the project will relate to the recreation needs identified countywide and in each recreation planning area, including Santa Maria Valley, Lompoc Valley, Santa Ynez Valley, Cuyama Valley, and the South Coast.

² The GIS-based map of parkland properties (i.e., shapefiles) in Santa Barbara County was originally sourced from the Santa Barbara County Conservation Blueprint (2018) and updated for the Recreation Master Plan. See Appendix XX and <https://sbcblueprint.databasesin.org/>

Table 5-1. Overview of County Parks' Planned Park, Recreation, and Trails Projects

No.	County Parks Projects	Add'l Public Parkland (Acres)	Add'l Miles of Trails
Currently Planned Projects			
1	Baron Ranch Trails		14
2	Lake Cachuma Campground and South Shore Facilities Improvements		
3	Lake Cachuma North Shore Trails & Recreation Facilities Management Plan		15
4	Oak Knoll (aka Mud Lake) Neighborhood Park	10	0.5
5	Orcutt Creek Trail		1.6
6	San Marcos Foothills Open Space		3
7	Solomon Hills (Bonney) Trails		3.65
8	Vandenberg Village Park	1.5	
9	Waller Park Regional Sports Fields		
	Subtotal of Currently Planned Projects	11.5 acres	37.75 miles
New Planned Projects			
10	Ben Page Neighborhood Park	5	
11	Drum Canyon Trail		8.8
12	Gaviota Marine Terminal Recreation Area	32	2
13	Glen Annie to Los Padres National Forest Trail		3
14	Goleta Community Sports Park	20	
15	Mission Hills Community Trail		2
16	Mission Hills Mountain Bike Park	22	2
17	Mission Hills Neighborhood Park	3	
18	Obern Trail Play & Skate Project		
19	South Coast Aquatic Center	5	
20	South Coast Foothill Mountain Bike Park	40	10

No.	County Parks Projects	Add'l Public Parkland (Acres)	Add'l Miles of Trails
21	Sunrise Open Space	8	1.5
22	Vandenberg Village Community Trail		1
23	Guadalupe Community Park & Campground	40	
24	Jalama Beach Campground Expansion & Upgrade Project		
25	Jalama Bluff Trail		0.5
26	Point Sal Trails & Coastal Access Improvements		6
27	Surf Beach to Ocean Beach Boardwalk		0.65
	Subtotal of New Planned Projects	175 acres	37.45 miles
	TOTAL COUNTY PARKS PROJECTS	186.5 acres	75.2 miles

Figure 5-2. County Parks' Planned Park Projects by Type (Acres)

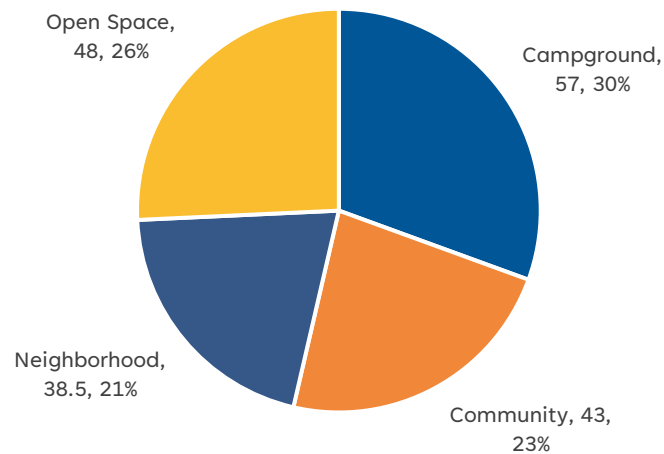
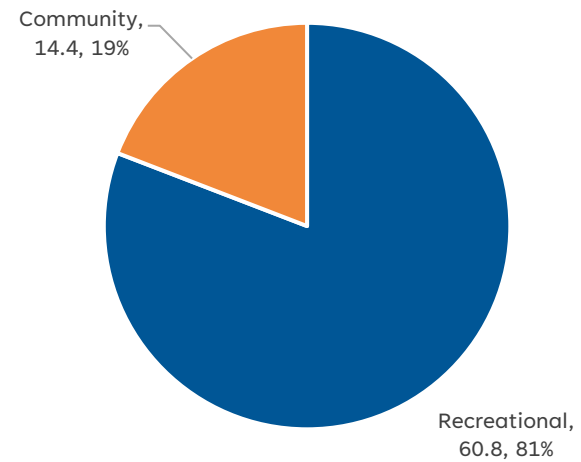


Figure 5-1. County Parks' Planned Trail Projects by Type (Miles)



Baron Ranch Trails

This project would create additional outdoor recreation within the County-owned Baron Ranch. The proposed trail network would expand with approximately 14 miles of new recreational trails designated for multi-use by hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians, with some trails designated for hiker and equestrian use only. Some proposed trail alignments would utilize existing agricultural access roads, while new trail segments would require new vegetation clearance and grading. The proposed trail routes would vary in terrain to provide access to unique, scenic, and natural spaces at Baron Ranch for different experience levels. A new mountain bike pump track and skills course, separated from the recreational trails, could also be built. The trail network would include a new pedestrian connection on the southern end of the property, connecting under the U.S. Hwy 101 and the UPRR corridor through to the beach at Arroyo Quemado. The connection under U.S. Highway 101 would improve an existing creek culvert to allow pedestrian access through an approximately 465-foot-long tunnel.



14 miles of trail improvements in Baron Ranch would provide access to unmatched natural beauty and wilderness on the Gaviota Coast, serving countywide needs for more public hiking and riding trails. Photo: Ron Williams, SBC Trails Council

Recreation Planning Area: South Coast	
Type	Recreational Trails
Responsible Agencies	County Parks/ Resource Recovery
Add'l Parkland	0 acres
Add'l Trails	14 miles
Timing	Near-term (5 to 10 years)
Cost Estimate	\$350,000

Lake Cachuma Campground and South Shore Facilities Improvements

County Parks is the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's local managing partner for the Cachuma Lake Recreation Area and provides the Cachuma Lake Campground and associated recreation facilities. County Parks is planning several improvements to these existing facilities, as follows:

- **Cachuma Splash & Swim Project.** This project would replace two aging pools with a modern aquatic complex featuring recreation pools, slides, and water play features. The aquatic center would be available for day use for residents, as well as overnight campers at Cachuma Campground
- **Cachuma Campground Expansion.** This project would provide up to 32 new cabins or yurts, offering visitors unique and comfortable "glamping" lodging options. The new structures would be thoughtfully placed to blend in with the existing natural landscape of Lake Cachuma, with interspersed benches, tables, and communal restrooms and showers. The existing amphitheater will be renovated to include updated seating, improved lighting, and enhanced accessibility
- **Mohawk Point Trails Improvements.** This project would improve and potentially expand trails at Mohawk Point to support additional user groups, such as mountain bikers, while supporting existing users of the disc golf course and trails.

Recreation Planning Area: Santa Ynez Valley	
Type	Recreational Trails, Campground, Aquatic Facility
Responsible Agencies	County Parks, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Add'l Parkland	0 acres
Add'l Trails	2 miles
Timing	Near-term (5 to 10 years)
Cost Estimate	\$40.7 million



Additional cabins or yurts at Lake Cachuma's South Shore would support additional visitation annually. Photo: County Parks

Lake Cachuma North Shore Trails & Recreation Facilities Management Plan

County Parks is the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's local managing partner for the Cachuma Lake Recreation Area. Consistent with the Bureau's Cachuma Resource Management Plan, County Parks would prepare a Cachuma North Shore Trail System & Facility Management Plan to provide public recreational access to existing and potential future facilities while protecting natural resources, including water quality, biological resources, geology and soils, agriculture, and public recreation. The plan would be prepared through a public process involving community input and environmental review in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Access to the north shore of Lake Cachuma would be subject to reservations, permits, and fees by County Parks. County Parks could limit access during and immediately after rain events to reduce damage to trails. County Parks could limit access during severe fire conditions when prolonged high temperatures, winds, or other factors that may prohibit entry occur to minimize the risk of wildfire in the Cachuma Lake Recreation Area. For planning purposes, the Recreation Master Plan anticipates that the following facilities could be provided within the northern and eastern shoreline areas of Lake Cachuma within existing developed campgrounds, trails, and associated recreation facilities.

- **Public Equestrian Facility.** To provide a "home base" for horses and their riders exploring Lake Cachuma, this facility would provide a public outdoor equestrian facility near Live Oak Campground, featuring an outdoor riding arena for training, recreation, and competitions, as well as trailer parking and equestrian trailhead access and signage. Potential overnight accommodations could be provided to support equestrian trail use. Through a fee-based program, equestrians would have access to stables and barns for day use, as well as memberships. Overnight use would require reservations and fees. The facility would include wash racks, tack rooms, and shaded rest areas for horses and riders. If additional camping sites are provided, hitching posts would be provided in addition to typical tent site amenities (i.e., no hookups or utilities). If feasible, boarding services for both short-term and long-term uses could be available through a concessionaire.
- **Pack-In/Pack-Out Campground.** As a destination on the North Shore Trails, a unique rural recreation experience would provide backcountry overnight accommodations on the northern shores of Lake Cachuma. The new primitive, self-contained campground would provide a rustic overnight stop for visitors exploring the North Shore of Lake Cachuma. From the existing Live Oak Campground, visitors could pack self-contained into a rustic tent-only campground (or sleep under the stars). Boating into the campground may be possible as well at appropriate unimproved landing locations. Sites would include picnic tables, rustic seating, and horse hitching posts. Fire rings or BBQs could be provided if feasible and consistent with wildfire management plans and requirements. Composting or other onsite toilets would be provided with no water or other services

- North Shore Trails Project.** The existing equestrian trail network on the north side of Lake Cachuma would be improved and expanded to support equestrians with separate segments and facilities for other non-motorized users. The equestrian trail system would offer scenic routes in varying terrain for riders of various skill levels to encourage advancement of local equestrians. Non-equestrian trails would support hiking and non-motorized biking. Where trail conflicts could arise with other recreational users, horse-only bypasses would be integrated into the trail design to ensure the safety and comfort of riders and horses. The trail system could provide an "out and back" experience or circumvent the north side of the lake if feasible. The trail system would connect to existing and planned facilities at Live Oak Campground and a proposed pack-in/pack-out campground.

Recreation Planning Area: Santa Ynez Valley	
Type	Recreational Trails, Campground
Responsible Agencies	County Parks, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Add'l Parkland	0 acres
Add'l Trails	15 miles
Timing	Long-term (10 – 20 years)
Cost Estimate	\$1.4 million



Visitors could pack in and out to a new rustic campground on the North Shore of Lake Cachuma via improved equestrian trails and home base facilities at Live Oak Campground. Photo: Courtesy Travel Alberta

Oak Knolls Park (a.k.a., Mud Lake)

This project would transform an existing flood control retention basin into a dual-purpose neighborhood park that provides Orcutt residents with new recreational opportunities while maintaining critical flood and stormwater management functions. The Project would introduce new recreational elements, including possible multi-purpose sports fields, basketball courts, pickleball/tennis courts, and a playground area. Other amenities could include shade structures and picnic tables. Walking paths would provide internal circulation and access to the surrounding neighborhood.

Recreation Planning Area: Santa Maria Valley	
Type	Neighborhood Park
Responsible Agencies	County Parks, Flood Control
Add'l Parkland	10 acres
Add'l Trails	0.5 miles
Timing	Near-term (5 to 10 years)
Cost Estimate	\$11.5 million



The Oak Knolls Park project would improve an existing flood control basin and also serve neighborhood recreation needs in Orcutt. Photo: BirdingHotspots.org

Orcutt Creek Trail

The Orcutt Creek Trail is a proposed multi-purpose trail traversing the Orcutt community. The trail would accommodate hikers, equestrians, and bicyclists throughout the community, with several connections to neighboring trails. Significant trail planning has been conducted on the Orcutt Creek Trail by the County, and several segments of the Orcutt Creek Trail have been acquired and developed, but many gaps in the trail remain. One major gap in the Orcutt Creek Trail is “Segment 10,” a 1.6-mile-long segment of proposed trail along the south side of Orcutt Creek that would connect S. Bradley Road to Orcutt Road. Segment 10 fills a key gap in the greater proposed Orcutt Creek Trail and provides a recreational trail connection between existing developed trails, neighborhoods, and existing and proposed community/neighborhood parks. Further, the trail would have interpretive signage that educates residents about local wildlife, the riparian ecosystem, and the creek's role in stormwater management.



The planned Orcutt Creek Trail would connect neighborhoods to local parks, recreation, and trails in Orcutt. Photo: The Outbound

Recreation Planning Area: Santa Maria Valley	
Type	Community Trail
Responsible Agencies	County Parks
Add'l Parkland	0 acres
Add'l Trails	1.6 miles
Timing	Near-term (5 to 10 years)
Cost Estimate	\$2.4 million

San Marcos Foothills Open Space

This project would implement new trail and open space improvements including a Chumash ethno-botanical garden, an ADA accessible trail and ADA parking and a trail plan for the 100-acre West Mesa site added to the San Marcos Preserve. The Project would expand the existing trail network to support hiking and environmental education.

Recreation Planning Area: South Coast	
Type	Recreational Trails
Responsible Agencies	County Parks
Add'l Parkland	0 acres
Add'l Trails	3 miles
Timing	Near-term (5 to 10 years)
Cost Estimate	\$3.4 million



Trail improvements to the San Marcos Foothills Open Space would provide more space for hiking in the South Coast's frontcountry foothills of the Santa Ynez Mountains. Photo: lotsafunmaps.com

Solomon Hills (Bonney) Trails

This project would extend the existing Orcutt trail network into Solomon Hills in southeastern Orcutt. The proposed 3.65-mile trail system would include 9 trail segments of various lengths, difficulties, and elevations, accommodating users of all ages and abilities. Key features of the trail system would include new trailheads and trail alignments that preserve and protect existing biological resources while featuring significant views of the Santa Maria Valley oak woodland and chaparral landscape.

Recreation Planning Area: Santa Maria Valley	
Type	Recreational Trail
Responsible Agencies	County Parks
Add'l Parkland	0 acres
Add'l Trails	3.65 miles
Timing	Near-term (5 to 10 years)
Cost Estimate	\$106,000



The Solomon Hills would support a new trail system to expand hiking and riding in the Santa Maria Valley. Photo: All Trails

Vandenberg Village Park

This project would provide a modern, innovative public park in central Vandenberg Village. Designed with a focus on sustainability, inclusivity, and versatility, the park would provide a variety of amenities to serve residents of all ages while preserving and enhancing the site's natural features. The park will feature one tot-lot for 2-6-year-olds and one playground for 6-12-year-olds. For active recreation, the Project would include a basketball half-court and a dedicated skateboarding area with grind boxes and other features for users of various skill levels. The central corridor will serve as a dynamic, flexible-use space for community gatherings, events, and outdoor programming. Adjacent to this space would include a donor garden, a gazebo/pavilion, and an open lawn space for play, relaxation, and community events. A new stormwater basin would be constructed to capture and manage runoff from the site. An elevated boardwalk will traverse the basin. A designated natural zone with picnic areas would offer visitors space for respite and connection with nature while protecting Burton Mesa chaparral and mature tree canopies. Onsite parking and pedestrian connections would be provided.



*Vandenberg Village Park will be located adjacent to planned housing to serve neighborhood recreation needs.
Photo: County Parks*

Recreation Planning Area: Lompoc Valley	
Type	Neighborhood Park
Responsible Agencies	County Parks
Add'l Parkland	1.5 acres
Add'l Trails	0 miles
Timing	Near-term (5 to 10 years)
Cost Estimate	\$3.8 million

Waller Park Regional Sports Fields

This project is a critical element of the Waller Park Master Plan to expand the only County-owned regional park in the Santa Maria Valley, developing new sports fields designed for youth and adult play, regional tournaments, and other sports programs. The new fields would be accompanied by a new plaza featuring redeveloped picnic areas, an inclusive playground, and a gazebo.

Recreation Planning Area: Santa Maria Valley	
Type	Regional Park
Responsible Agencies	County Parks
Add'l Parkland	0 acres
Add'l Trails	0 miles
Timing	Near-term (5 to 10 years)
Planning/ Funding Tools	Development Impact Fees Capital Improvement Program
Cost Estimate	\$17.8 million



New sports fields in Waller Park would support youth and adult play, regional tournaments, and other sports programs.

Ben Page Neighborhood Park

This project would expand recreation facilities at the Ben Page Youth Center to provide a new neighborhood park. The project would provide a playground, new shade structures, and picnic tables to supplement the adult and youth programs hosted at the Ben Page Youth Center.

Recreation Planning Area: South Coast	
Type	Neighborhood Park
Responsible Agencies	County Parks, County Flood Control District
Add'l Parkland	5 acres
Add'l Trails	0 miles
Timing	Long-term (10 to 20 years)
Cost Estimate	\$4.2 million



A neighborhood park located near Ben Page Youth Center would expand recreation facilities and support existing sports programs.

Drum Canyon Trail

This project would create an approximately 8.8-mile-long on-road or road-parallel trail along Drum Canyon Road from Los Alamos County Park to Hwy 246. The new trail would primarily serve as a formal route for road cyclists. The project would involve road shoulder improvements, installation of signage notifying motorists of potential presence of cyclists, and potentially some speed or traffic calming measures along Drum Canyon Road.

Recreation Planning Area: Santa Ynez Valley	
Type	Recreational Trail
Responsible Agencies	County Parks, Public Works Department
Add'l Parkland	0 acres
Add'l Trails	8.8 miles
Timing	Long-term (10 to 20 years)
Cost Estimate	\$230,000



The Drum Canyon Trail would support riding in beautiful terrain surrounding Los Alamos. Photo: Napa Valley Bike Tours

Gaviota Marine Terminal Recreation Area

This project would redevelop a former onshore oil and gas facility into an enhanced recreational site with beach access, trail connections, and a new campground. The recreation area would include designated pathways, stairways, and viewing areas that allow visitors to access the beach while protecting sensitive habitats along the shore. To fill a gap in the California Coastal Trail, the project would complete 2 miles of blufftop trail from the Gaviota Marine Terminal to Gaviota State Park. A full-service public campground for tent, RV, and cabin camping would provide low-cost overnight accommodations on the Gaviota Coast. The campsites would include a firepit or BBQ, picnic tables, and nearby communal amenities, such as restrooms with showers, water spigots, and a camp store. The RV-designed campsites would include water, electricity, and sewer hookups (Appendix F).

Recreation Planning Area: South Coast	
Type	Campground, Beach Park, Recreational Trails, and CCT
Responsible Agencies	County Parks, State of California, property owners
Add'l Parkland	32 acres
Add'l Trails	2 miles
Timing	Near-term (5 to 10 years)
Cost Estimate	\$21.3 million



A new coastal campground on the Gaviota Coast would supplement other low-cost overnight accommodations in the area, such as El Capitan State Park campground, to meet high demands for coastal access and recreation.

Photo: TripSavvy

Glen Annie to Los Padres National Forest Trail

This project would create a new hiking and riding trail route along Glen Annie Road from Cathedral Oaks Road to Los Padres National Forest. The trail route would be approximately 3 miles in length, following Glen Annie Road in existing road right-of-way for the majority of the alignment. The project would connect urban areas in the Goleta Valley with existing foothills trails in Los Padres National Forest. The County would also explore opportunities to separate the trail from the roadway by coordinating with private landowners for off-road trail easements.

Recreation Planning Area: South Coast	
Type	Community Trail
Responsible Agencies	County Parks, Public Works Department
Add'l Parkland	0 acres
Add'l Trails	3 miles
Timing	Long-term (10 to 20 years)
Cost Estimate	\$91,000



A new trail to connect the Goleta Valley with Los Padres National Forest would improve access to hiking and riding in the South Coast's front country foothills of the Santa Ynez Mountains. Photo: Dan Gira

Goleta Community Sports Park

This project would develop a new community park and outdoor sports complex to help meet the regional needs for community and competitive sports and recreation. The community park would provide new sports fields and courts. The multi-purpose sports fields would support organized sports, leagues, and competitions, such as youth and adult soccer, football, ultimate frisbee, lacrosse, and field hockey. Multi-sport courts would support basketball, volleyball, tennis, or pickleball. Other recreational amenities include a new playground, off-leash dog park, picnic tables, public restrooms, shade structures, and walking paths that connect to surrounding neighborhoods and the Obern Trail. A South Coast Aquatic Center is also being considered for the adjacent area.

Recreation Planning Area: South Coast	
Type	Community Park
Responsible Agencies	County Parks, nonprofit organizations, property owners
Add'l Parkland	20 acres
Add'l Trails	0 miles
Timing	Near-term (5 to 10 years)
Cost Estimate	\$30 million



The Eastern Goleta Valley is severely underserved by community parks providing adequate competitive sports fields and courts to support league play for youth and adults. Photo: Girsh Park

Mission Hills Community Trail

This project would result in system of approximately 2.0 miles of trails around the community of Mission Hills, providing recreational hiking and biking connections between existing neighborhoods, Los Berros Elementary School, and existing La Purisima Mission trails. The trails would be constructed on County-owned properties within and bordering residential neighborhoods, but portions of the proposed trail system would traverse or cross into properties owned by the Mission Hills Community Services District, State of California Public Works Board, Lompoc Unified School District, and private landowners. The trail network would feature unpaved multi-use segments for walking, jogging, dog walking (on-leash and potentially off-leash in some segments), and biking. The Project would prioritize trail connectivity to the surrounding neighborhoods and nearby parks, offering residents increased access to recreation options while supporting safe routes to schools.



A new trail in Mission Hills would improve recreational access and safe routes to school. Photo: SB Bucket Brigade

Recreation Planning Area: Lompoc Valley	
Type	Recreational Trail
Responsible Agencies	County Parks, County Flood Control District, Mission Hills Community Services District, property owners
Add'l Parkland	0 acres
Add'l Trails	2 miles
Timing	Long-term (10 to 20 years)
Cost Estimate	\$170,000

Mission Hills Mountain Bike Park

This project would develop a public trail network and neighborhood park on a 22-acre County-owned site in Mission Hills. The trail network would feature designated mountain bike trails, as well as multi-use segments for hikers. The Project would prioritize trail connectivity to the surrounding neighborhoods and nearby parks, offering residents increased access to recreation options in the community. A new playground and amenities would be provided, including picnic benches, shaded areas, bike parking, water fountains, and park restrooms.

Recreation Planning Area: Lompoc Valley	
Type	Recreational Trail
Responsible Agencies	County Parks, General Services Department
Add'l Parkland	22 acres
Add'l Trails	2 miles
Timing	Long-term (10 to 20 years)
Cost Estimate	\$1.2 million



A new mountain bike skills park in Mission Hills would support riders of all ages and experience levels. Photo: City of Columbus, MO

Mission Hills Neighborhood Park

This project would expand park facilities provided by the Mission Hills Community Services District to provide a multi-use community sports and recreation park that serves the Mission Hills and Mesa Oaks communities. The project would include a soccer field, a baseball/softball field, and tennis/pickleball courts. Amenities would include picnic tables, shade structures, drinking fountains, and restrooms.

Recreation Planning Area: Lompoc Valley	
Type	Neighborhood Park
Responsible Agencies	County Parks, County Flood Control District, Mission Hills Community Services District
Add'l Parkland	3 acres
Add'l Trails	0 miles
Timing	Long-term (10 to 20 years)
Cost Estimate	\$2.8 million



*Expansion of existing park in Mission Hills (i.e., Mission Hills Community Service District and County-owned properties) could accommodate more facilities such as sports fields and trails for mountain bikers and hikers.
Photo: Mission Hills Community Services District*

Obern Trail Play & Skate Project

This project would install trail-side structures such as ramps, rails, and curves to support skating, BMX, and creative play along the existing Obern Trail multi-use path in Eastern Goleta Valley. The structures would be integrated adjacent to the existing multi-use path, creating pockets of micro-recreation without changing the function of the existing trail. Creating a skate trail would support more diverse active transportation and outdoor recreation.

Recreation Planning Area: South Coast	
Type	Community Trail
Responsible Agencies	County Parks, Public Works Department, nonprofit organizations
Add'l Parkland	0 acres
Add'l Trails	0 miles
Timing	Long-term (10 to 20 years)
Cost Estimate	\$820,000



Trail-side skate structures such as ramps, rails, and curves along segments of the Obern Trail will support diverse use and expansion of riding skills. Photo: City of Trails

South Coast Aquatic Center

This project would develop a new regional aquatic center to help meet the needs of the South Coast for community and competitive sports and recreation. The proposed aquatic center would consist of a competitive lap pool and a diving pool. A separate recreational pool with a dedicated water slide area would support youth aquatic recreation. The facility would provide changing rooms, lockers, showers, and restrooms. The center would support competitive sports and community activities, such as classes, summer programs, public events, and special private events. This project is being considered for a location near Goleta Community Park. Partnerships with UC Santa Barbara, local non-profit aquatics organizations, and local school districts would support the operations and programming of the facility.

Recreation Planning Area: South Coast	
Type	Community Park
Responsible Agencies	County Parks, nonprofit organizations, property owners
Add'l Parkland	5 acres
Add'l Trails	0 miles
Timing	Long-term (10 to 20 years)
Cost Estimate	\$24.4 million



The South Coast needs a high-quality aquatic center to serve regional needs in Goleta, Santa Barbara, and Carpinteria. The South Coast Aquatic Center would provide residents with public aquatic recreation for both local recreation, cooling, and local and regional competition.

Photo: City of Overland Park, KS

South Coast Foothill Mountain Bike Park

This project would develop a nature-based mountain biking park in the South Coast foothills offering trails and features, including pump tracks, flow trails, technical courses, and jump lines. Each route would be designated for its features and difficulty, catering to riders of all interests and skill levels. The park's layout will maximize the natural terrain, integrating each riding trail with the natural landscape. Sustainable design practices would be employed to minimize environmental impacts, such as careful siting of trails, the use of erosion control measures, and designated natural resource conservation areas. Supporting amenities would include a parking area, restrooms, shaded seating areas, and trail signage. Potential locations could include public property owned by the County and the City of Santa Barbara, which could integrate with existing foothill trails.



A new trail system built for mountain bikers of all ages and skill levels would support this popular sport in Santa Barbara County. Photo: explore.com

Recreation Planning Area: South Coast	
Type	Recreational Trail/Public Open Space
Responsible Agencies	County Parks, City of Santa Barbara, property owners
Add'l Parkland	40 acres
Add'l Trails	10 miles
Timing	Long-term (10 to 20 years)
Cost Estimate	\$1.5 million

Sunrise Open Space

This project would develop a new open space with walking paths to implement the Summerland Community Plan. The project would expand the community's trail system with connections from Ocean View Park and the Summerland Trail through the Summerland Greenwell Preserve.

Recreation Planning Area: South Coast	
Type	Neighborhood Park
Responsible Agencies	County Parks
Add'l Parkland	8 acres
Add'l Trails	1.5 miles
Timing	Long-term (10 to 20 years)
Cost Estimate	\$140,000



Expanded public access to County-owned open space in Summerland would improve recreation and trails and connect neighborhoods. Photo: County Parks

Vandenberg Village Community Trail

This project would create a multi-use pathway to connect areas of Vandenberg Village north and south of Hwy 1. The alignment would connect existing and proposed parks with local schools and neighborhoods to enhance safe, recreational riding in the community, as well as connect to existing Burton Mesa recreational trails in natural areas adjacent to neighborhoods.

Recreation Planning Area: Lompoc Valley	
Type	Community Trail
Responsible Agencies	County Parks, Public Works Department, State of California, property owners
Add'l Parkland	0 acres
Add'l Trails	1 mile
Timing	Long-term (10 to 20 years)
Cost Estimate	\$2.8 million



A new multi-use pathway in Vandenberg Village would connect the community to parks and recreation and support active living. Photo: Rails to Trails Conservancy

North County Coastal Access Improvements

Through community engagement and the recreation needs assessment conducted for the Recreation Master Plan, County Parks understands that coastal access is highly limited for residents of northern Santa Barbara County. Coastal access and beach parks including Jalama Beach County Park, Point Sal, Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park, and Surf Beach/Ocean Beach County Park. These parks require driving distances from local communities in Lompoc Valley, Santa Maria Valley, and Santa Ynez Valley and access is limited by a variety of physical and programmatic barriers, including day-use fees at Jalama Beach, resource conservation at Surf/Ocean Beach and the Guadalupe Dunes, and closed roads and challenging terrain at Point Sal. As a result, many residents in northern Santa Barbara County seek beach and coastal access in the South Coast or in San Luis Obispo County.

The planned projects below would help address the need for improved coastal access in northern Santa Barbara County, increasing coastal access and recreation to over 200,000 residents. Full summaries of these planned projects are presented

- Guadalupe Community Park & Campground
- Jalama Beach Campground Expansion & Upgrade Project
- Jalama Bluff Trail
- Point Sal Trails & Coastal Access Improvements
- Surf Beach to Ocean Beach Boardwalk

As described further below, these planned projects would occur primarily on County-owned land or in partnership with other agencies and property owners. Together, the intent is to welcome people to these key coastal recreation facilities while continuing to protect the pristine coastline and its diverse natural resource values along the 60 miles of shoreline in Northern Santa Barbara County.

Additional details and information regarding the Jalama Beach Campground Expansion & Update Project, Jalama Bluff Trail, Point Sal Trails & Coastal Access Improvement, and Guadalupe Community Park & Campground is available in Appendix F.

Guadalupe Community Park & Campground

This project would create a multi-use community sports complex and campground adjacent to the City of Guadalupe. The community park would provide sports facilities, including soccer/football fields and multi-purpose courts for basketball, tennis, and pickleball. Shaded seating, picnic areas, a playground, and restrooms would be provided. The campground would provide up to 90 spaces for tent and RV camping, as well as cabins or yurts. Each site would be accompanied by a fire pit or BBQ, picnic table, nearby restrooms, communal water spigots, and a camp store, as well as potentially a pool or splash pad. The RV sites will feature level pads with full utility hookups and access to a centralized dump station (Appendix F).



Guadalupe is 5 miles from the coast and Guadalupe Dunes County Park. This area is also severely underserved by sports fields and facilities. This project would create low-cost overnight accommodations to support coastal tourism plus sports facilities to serve local and regional youth and adult athletics programs. Photos: KOA

Recreation Planning Area: Santa Maria Valley	
Type	Community Park/Campground
Responsible Agencies	County Parks, City of Guadalupe, property owners
Add'l Parkland	15 to 40 acres
Add'l Trails	0 miles
Timing	Near-term (5 to 10 years)
Cost Estimate	\$32.6 million

Jalama Beach Campground Expansion & Upgrade Project

This project would expand the Jalama Beach Campground to a new area on the upper mesa immediately north of the existing campground. This would increase capacity by approximately 30 new campsites or RV cabins. A redesigned campground would accommodate new restrooms and day-use parking, and alleviate site congestion issues. Infrastructure upgrades would utilize solar energy, expand the onsite wastewater treatment system, and increase utility capacity. A 17-panel photovoltaic system would be installed on the rooftop of the existing County Parks Workshop Building, and a six-panel solar thermal flat plate collection system would be installed on the rooftop of the existing/expanded shower facility. Other upgrades include a 1,500-gallon septic tank and new utility lines for site electricity, water, and sewage drainage (Appendix F).

Recreation Planning Area: Lompoc Valley	
Type	Campground/Other
Responsible Agencies	County Parks, Environmental Health
Add'l Parkland	5.4 acres
Add'l Trails	0 miles
Timing	Near-term (5 to 10 years)
Cost Estimate	\$10.6 million



Expanding and improving the Jalama Beach Campground will support high-demand low-cost overnight accommodations on the coast. Photo: County Parks

Jalama Bluff Trail Project

This project would offer new coastal and beach access from the Jalama Beach County Park and its campground. Following the blufftop, a new natural surface trail would be constructed, connecting the campground to a new stairway down to Jalama Beach from the bluff. This new trail would provide a significant new recreational activity at Jalama Beach and support coastal access in the region. (Appendix F).

Recreation Planning Area: Lompoc Valley	
Type	Recreational Trail
Responsible Agencies	County Parks, Public Works Department, Dangermond Preserve
Add'l Parkland	0 acres
Add'l Trails	0.5 miles
Timing	Long-term (10 to 20 years)
Cost Estimate	\$2 million



A blufftop trail will expand the range of recreation activities at Jalama Beach County Park and provide safe coastal access. Photo: County Parks

Point Sal Trails & Coastal Access Improvements

This project would improve beach and coastal access in northern Santa Barbara County to reach the spectacular, rugged coastline of Point Sal. Key access improvements would include reopening Point Sal Road, constructing new beach access parking, and building a new coastal access stairwell. The trailhead could be equipped with public restrooms and picnic areas. Further, the Project would include over 6 miles of new trail improvements through the 900 acres of Point Sal and Paradise Beach, including formalizing a key segment of the California Coastal Trail (Appendix F).

Recreation Planning Area: Santa Maria Valley	
Type	Recreational Trail
Responsible Agencies	County Parks, Public Works Department, General Services Department, Vandenberg Space Force Base
Add'l Parkland	0 acres
Add'l Trails	6 miles
Timing	Long-term (10 to 20 years)
Cost Estimate	\$13.8 million



Point Sal provides unbeatable rural coastal access. Trail improvements would support coastal recreation in northern Santa Barbara County. Photo: Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center

Surf Beach to Ocean Beach Boardwalk

This project would create a new approximately 0.65-mile boardwalk from Ocean Beach County Park south to Surf Beach near the Lompoc-Surf Amtrak Station. The boardwalk would be up to 8 feet wide and would be elevated to reduce impacts to dune habitat. Except for Jalama Beach County Park, Ocean Beach County Park and Surf Beach are the only public coastal access points in the Lompoc Valley, but can frequently be closed due to regulations protecting the threatened western snowy plover. The new boardwalk would be constructed largely on federally-owned lands or within the UPRR corridor along the beach, landward of existing dune habitat, to minimize impacts and disturbance to dune and western snowy plover nesting habitat. The boardwalk would provide a formal pedestrian connection between Ocean Beach and Surf Beach and a lateral accessway parallel to the beach, reducing disturbance to western snowy plover habitat and improving access and coastal recreation.

Recreation Planning Area: Lompoc Valley	
Type	Recreational Trail
Responsible Agencies	County Parks, Union Pacific Railroad
Add'l Parkland	0 acres
Add'l Trails	0.65 miles
Timing	Long-term (10 to 20 years)
Cost Estimate	\$1.25 million



A new boardwalk from Ocean Beach to Surf Beach would provide coastal access while protecting sensitive coastal resources. Photo: California State Parks

5.2. Planned Recreation Projects by Other Public Agencies & Private Organizations

In addition to County Parks' planned projects, other public agencies and private organizations have planned parks, recreation, and trails projects that will help address recreation needs recognized by the Recreation Master Plan. These known projects are presented below with a description of the planned project, its location (if known), the agencies that would facilitate it, and the estimated amount of public parkland and/or trails for each. There are 35 recreation projects planned by local cities, special districts, non-profit organizations, and other private organizations that will create new public parkland and trails countywide (Table 5-2 and Table 5-3)

Table 5-2. Planned Public Agency Projects in Santa Barbara County

Project	Description	Location	Agencies
Buellton Library, Children's Museum, and Open Space	In 2020, the City of Buellton acquired the former home and remaining agricultural property (about 24 acres total) of Jake and Jeannette Willemssen. The Buellton Public Library opened in the Willemssen house. Some uses have been conceptually approved, but formal plans have not yet been approved, such as the Santa Ynez Valley Children's Museum on the area just east of the barn. Some portions of the site, such as the barn and open space, have not yet been approved for long-term use at this point, but could include recreation uses.	Santa Ynez Valley	City of Buellton
Buellton Median 3 Avenue of Flags Public Plaza	Median 3 is at the center of the envisioned downtown core, planned to be a unique public gathering space that functions as a town plaza and park. Amenities identified in the Specific Plan include an amphitheater, public restroom, shade structures, open landscaped area, trees and drought-tolerant plantings, vendor kiosks, and a small community building that could house a visitor's center, museum, or other desired uses.	Santa Ynez Valley	City of Buellton
Calle Real @ Vega Neighborhood Park	With the new residential development near Los Carneros Road, an increased demand for parks and recreational facilities in this "park-poor" area will occur. The 1.1-acre city-owned vacant land at the corner is perfect for a new neighborhood park to serve this area.	South Coast	City of Goleta

Project	Description	Location	Agencies
Carpinteria Living Shoreline Project	This project would construct a nature-based solution to protect the shoreline and landward infrastructure against coastal hazards (e.g., tidal inundation, coastal flooding, and erosion) and future sea level rise. The conceptual living shoreline is a dune restoration adaptation strategy that will provide important benefits to coastal recreation, natural ecosystems, beach neighborhood, and the local economy, including protecting the City Beach and Carpinteria State Beach.	South Coast	City of Carpinteria
Central Park Renovation	Construct a new dog park, skate park, half basketball court, bocce ball court, fitness equipment, board game area, picnic/BBQ areas, swings/spinners and climbing feature, public art including a painted water tower and mural, perimeter wall, restroom building, and lighting and landscaping throughout the park. Renovate existing sidewalks/paths and fencing.	Santa Maria Valley	City of Guadalupe
Children's Park Renovation	Improvements in the park design include two nature-themed playgrounds, ADA-accessible pathways, an amphitheater for workshops and performances, a new standalone restroom, an educational demonstration garden, a renovated recreation building for expanding workshop programs, and services for students and youth alike.	South Coast	Isla Vista Recreation and Park District
College Park Renovation & Skate Park	Construct a new skate park with lighting, two half basketball courts with lighting, a playground and game area with lighting, a picnic area with shade structure, a mural wall that will block wind, a restroom building, and landscaping throughout the park.	Lompoc Valley	City of Lompoc
Deckers Park Expansion	This city-owned parcel is adjacent to the existing Deckers Park, a privately owned park located near the airport. The parcel is 2.3 acres in size and currently occupied by a corporation yard, but almost half of the space remains undeveloped. This land opportunity makes the potential expansion of Deckers Park possible, although it depends on further study and cooperation with the developer of Deckers Park.	South Coast	City of Goleta

Project	Description	Location	Agencies
Dwight Murphy Field Renovation	The park renovation includes the construction of a 36,000 square foot all-inclusive playground	South Coast	City of Santa Barbara
Franceschi House	In 2018, the City Council voted unanimously to replace Franceschi House with an open-air space that would honor the legacy of Dr. Franceschi and Mr. Freeman, incorporate elements of Franceschi House, and provide access to the public. This project is currently in the preliminary design phase.	South Coast	City of Santa Barbara
Goleta City Hall Park	This county-owned parcel is adjacent to Calle Real and a retail complex. The 1.1-acre vacant land at the corner is perfect for siting a neighborhood park to serve this “park-poor” area.	South Coast	City of Goleta
Guadalupe to the Dunes Trail	This project would comprise an approximately 6.2-mile-long multi-use path connecting the City of Guadalupe to the beach at the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park, providing much-needed coastal access in North County, a community aspiration for many years. Since 2018, the Coastal Conservancy has been coordinating with the City of Guadalupe, residents, community organizations, and public agencies in planning efforts to identify a feasible multi-use trail to enhance non-motorized recreational access to the coast. The preferred alignment for the Guadalupe to the Dunes Trail would generally follow the “River Trail” alignment identified in the Coastal Conservancy's Draft Guadalupe to Beach Multi-Use Trail Feasibility Study (2021). The alignment would provide an on-road shared-use path along the existing park road to the beach. The trailhead for the Guadalupe to the Dunes Trail would be located at Leroy Park and the proposed Guadalupe Community Park and Campground (see above project description). The trail would complement and connect to planned bike lanes and sidewalk improvements in Guadalupe and the western terminus of the proposed Santa Maria River Levee Trail.	Santa Maria Valley	California Coastal Conservancy
Ken Adam Park Discontinuance &	Lompoc voters passed Measure R2024 to discontinue the use of Ken Adam Park to allow the possible sale and development of	Lompoc Valley	City of Lompoc

Project	Description	Location	Agencies
Space Base California	the site for a potential space-themed educational and recreational development.		
Leroy Park Renovation	The LeRoy Park Community Center and Park was provided with a complete renovation and substantial addition of a future flexible use space. The redesigned community center includes recreation rooms, classrooms, offices, a commercial kitchen, bathrooms, and large multi-purpose areas. The facility was designed to be an operations center in the case of emergencies and has many sustainable features. The park includes a brand new playground, new BBQ picnic areas, an amphitheater, new landscaping, a new parking lot, and a fitness walking path around the property. A new detached restroom building was also designed to service the park when the community center is closed.	Santa Maria Valley	City of Guadalupe
Linden Plaza Project	The Linden Plaza Project focuses on enhancing the Linden Avenue beach-end to create a more inviting and visually appealing urban park that seamlessly transitions to Carpinteria Beach. The improvements aim to beautify the area, enriching the visitor experience while preserving its coastal charm.	South Coast	City of Carpinteria
Lompoc Riverbend Sports Complex Concept Plan	The 37-acre community park would include 4 baseball/softball fields; 3 soccer fields; a children's play environment with tot lot, splash pad, and shade shelter; a 7,000 square-foot restaurant building with office and locker space below; outdoor patio space; a concession/restroom/storage area; 450-capacity concrete bleachers; and a ticket booth building	Lompoc Valley	City of Lompoc, County of Santa Barbara
Ortega Park Revitalization Project	The revitalization plan for Ortega Park includes public art, improved aquatics facilities, dedicated community gathering areas, a revitalized play space, an improved basketball court, a skate/multi-wheel park, and a sports field that could be used year-round. The project will also enhance access and parking along Ortega and Salsipuedes Streets.	South Coast	City of Santa Barbara

Project	Description	Location	Agencies
Parma Park Sustainable Trails Project	The Parma Park Sustainable Trails Project aimed to improve and expand the trail system within one of Santa Barbara's largest open space parks. Work included improvements to existing trails, the creation of new trails, decommissioning and restoration of realigned trails and access roads, and the addition of a new half-mile reduced-grade loop through a native habitat restoration site to allow all community members to enjoy the beauty of Parma Park.	South Coast	City of Santa Barbara
Pioneer Park Renovation	Renovations at the park include the construction of a new playground, fitness stations, and baseball fields.	Lompoc Valley	City of Lompoc
Rincon Multi-Use Trail	The Rincon Multi-Use Trail Project involves a new 0.5-mile-long multi-use trail connection between the City of Carpinteria near the Rincon Bluffs Preserve and Rincon Beach County Park. The proposed shared-use trail would be 16 feet wide (10-foot-wide path with 3-foot-wide shoulder) and would include a 160-foot clear-span pedestrian/bicycle bridge over the UPRR alignment. The project is currently being led by the City of Carpinteria and will be supported by County Parks.	South Coast	City of Carpinteria, County of Santa Barbara
Santa Maria Community Sports Park	Create the new Santa Maria Community Sports Park adjacent to Adam/Minami Park. Acquire 19.7 acres of land in the City of Santa Maria. Construct four new soccer fields, four half-court basketball courts, a walking/jogging trail with exercise stations, a playground, a plaza with an art wall, a restroom building, a maintenance area, a parking lot, and lighting and landscaping throughout the park.	Santa Maria Valley	City of Santa Maria
Santa Ynez River Trail	This project would create a new 4.5-mile-long multi-use trail corridor along the Santa Ynez River, extending from near Alisal Road in the City of Solvang to River View Park in the City of Buellton. The trail would be paved to serve pedestrians and bicyclists, and a separate, protected dirt trail would serve equestrians. Several alignment options have been developed by SBCAG in the Trail Suitability Analysis. The Recreation Master	Santa Ynez Valley	Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, County of Santa Barbara, City of Solvang, City of

Project	Description	Location	Agencies
	Plan would help implement alignments within unincorporated areas where the County has permit jurisdiction, including segments within the Santa Ynez River corridor between the City of Solvang and the City of Buellton. This project would require partnerships between the SBCAG, the County, cities of Buellton and Solvang, and private landowners to acquire and build the trail.		Buellton, private landowners
Stow Canyon Open Space/San Pedro Creek Trail	This county-owned parcel is currently a linear natural area along the San Pedro Creek that is unimproved. It is adjacent to the existing Stow Tennis Courts, which is a community park. This is a good opportunity for a dirt trail along the creek bank to connect Stow Canyon Rd and Covington Way, although further study and coordination with the county would be needed to test feasibility.	South Coast	City of Goleta, County of Santa Barbara
UCSB/QAD Summerland Park & Trails	This potential project includes an outdoor amphitheater, pickleball courts, and a lighted walking path connecting the sidewalks from the mobile home park to this site. Within steps of the amphitheater, there would be food and beverages, as well as public restrooms, including ADA-compliant facilities. This would include some shaded seating areas.	South Coast	UCSB
Veterans Memorial Park Renovation	The renovation of Veterans Memorial Park included a park redesign that consists of adding exercise stations, walking paths, a playground with inclusive features, and picnic areas. Renovations also included a memorial garden with a monument, benches, and a masonry wall with a mural. The parking area between the park and the Veterans Memorial Community Center was transformed to create an event plaza. The area in front of the Veterans Memorial Community Center has a patriotic atmosphere with flags, banners, artwork, and memorials to honor Veterans and inspire youth.	Santa Maria Valley	City of Santa Maria

Table 5-3. Planned Nonprofit/Nongovernmental Organization Projects in Santa Barbara County

Project	Description	Location	Organization
Bill Wallace Trail Improvements	This project would improve the existing Bill Wallace Trail within El Capitan State Park and connect with the historic abandoned Gato Trail in the Los Padres National Forest to create a new 8- to 9-mile-long trail extending from US Hwy 101 to West Camino Cielo. The project would realign the existing Bill Wallace Trail west of El Capitan Canyon from existing dirt roads with unacceptable grades to a new trail that meets modern design standards. Realignment may include new switchbacks traversing both public and private land west of the canyon as needed to meet design standards. The project would also construct a new trail east of the El Capitan Canyon with a connection to the western trail to provide a loop trail opportunity. Improvements would also include a new small public parking lot (e.g., 8-10 spaces, including equestrian parking) east of the Canyon.	South Coast	Santa Barbara County Trails Council, County of Santa Barbara, California State Parks, private landowners
Las Flores & Corral Canyons Trails	This project would convert the existing major oil processing facility to a regional park, campground, and trail system when this facility is decommissioned over the next 20-25 years. After the cleanup of any contamination, the major graded pads that support oil operations could be repurposed to regional park facilities and a campground. Because this property borders the Los Padres National Forest, both Las Flores Creek and Corral Creek Canyons would provide direct access from this newly acquired public park to public lands. These two trails would each extend 6 to 7 miles to Refugio Road at the crest of the Santa Ynez Mountains to connect US Hwy 101 to forestlands.	South Coast	Santa Barbara County Trails Council, County of Santa Barbara, private landowners
Lompoc (Bodger) Trails	This project would construct approximately 5 miles of single-track dirt hiking and biking trails on an 82.22-acre parcel owned by the Lompoc Valley Parks, Recreation & Pool Foundation. The Project would restore and expand the existing trails, which were washed out during winter storms in 2023 and were only temporarily restored. The Project would include a new trail network of 6	Lompoc Valley	County Parks, Lompoc Trails

Project	Description	Location	Organization
	segments, approximately 700 ft of elevation gain. In addition, the Project would construct a new compact, dirt parking lot along the site's northern edge to address the existing parking demand.		
Mariposa Reina Recreation Area & Trails	This project would entail a new public open space with a trail system and recreation facilities, such as a campground and visitor center, along the Gaviota Coast. The project would lie north of US Hwy 101 at the former oil processing and support facilities for the Gaviota Marine Terminal. This area has substantial undeveloped open space, potentially along with several adjacent parcels, which would accommodate a trail system of initially approximately 4 miles and could be expanded with off-site trail connections to State Parks and the Los Padres National Forest.	South Coast	Santa Barbara County Trails Council, County of Santa Barbara, California State Parks, private landowners
Old Town Orcutt Neighborhood Park	This project would develop and dedicate a neighborhood park as part of a pending private development. The park would include a new inclusive playground, open lawn play area, and sports fields and courts, as well as walking paths connecting to surrounding neighborhoods.	Santa Maria Valley	County Parks, Planning & Development
Refugio Road Trail	This project would provide expanded trails along Refugio Road on the Gaviota Coast.	South Coast	Santa Barbara County Trails Council, County of Santa Barbara, private landowners
San Antonio Creek Trail Connector to San Marcos Foothills	This project would involve new pedestrian safety and trail improvements to provide pedestrian and mountain biking access between the San Antonio Creek Trail and the San Marcos Foothills Preserve. The northern terminus and trailhead for the San Antonio Creek Trail is located only 650 feet from the boundary of the San Marcos Foothill Preserve across Hwy 154, but no pedestrian connection exists between these two recreational areas. The County would coordinate with Caltrans to install a new pedestrian crossing under or over the highway, along with roadway safety	South Coast	County Parks, Caltrans, private landowners

Project	Description	Location	Organization
	signage and potentially lighting. Along the eastern side of Hwy 154, the County would seek a new trail easement to existing trails within the San Marcos Foothills Preserve.		
Santa Maria Valley Rim Trails	This project is a conceptual vision for the completion of 100 miles or more of trails ringing the Santa Maria Valley. The proposed trail system would extend from the Pacific Ocean at Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park and the County's Point Sal Open Space more than 35 miles inland, roughly to Tepusquet Canyon Road. On the valley's south side, the trail would traverse the slopes and crest of Casmalia and Solomon Hills from the area of Point Sal east to the vicinity of Foxen Canyon Road. The trail would traverse the valley bottom and the Santa Maria River, paralleling Tepusquet Canyon Road. It would loop north more than 10 miles along the rim of Power Line Canyon through private and federal lands along the western spur of the Sierra Madre Mountains before returning south along Power Line Canyon and Rancho Tepusquet Canyon Roads to the Santa Maria River. From Santa Maria Mesa Road, the trail would extend more than 25 miles west along the bank of the Santa Maria River to Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park. This rim trail concept would connect to existing recreational areas at Orcutt Hills, Los Flores Ranch, Rancho Guadalupe Dunes Park, and Point Sal. This concept would also include a series of approximately 20 trailheads that can be used for daily recreational use, providing potential 3- to 5-mile subloops in those areas.	Santa Maria Valley	Santa Maria Valley Open Space, Santa Barbara County Trails Council, City of Santa Maria, County of Santa Barbara, private landowners
Santa Ynez High School Aquatic Center	This planned aquatics complex will be located on the Santa Ynez Valley Union High School campus and feature two pools: a 33-meter competition pool for student athletes, local clubs, and lap swimmers, and a smaller 25-yard warm-water pool for swim instruction, aqua therapy, senior wellness, and low-cost public swim sessions.	Santa Ynez Valley	Santa Ynez Valley Community Aquatics Foundation, City of Solvang, County of Santa Barbara

Project	Description	Location	Organization
Southside Neighborhood Park	This project would develop a much-needed neighborhood park in the southern neighborhoods of Eastern Goleta Valley. To meet the needs of surrounding families, the project would include a tot lot designed for two-to-five-year-old children and a playground for children five years and up. The tot lot would include a low-to-the-ground play structure, small slides, and crawling spaces. The playground would consist of features such as monkey bars, climbing structures, and swings. Other site improvements include new paths, benches, picnic tables, shade structures, and potentially a public restroom.	South Coast	County Parks, homeowners' associations, private landowners

Chapter Six: Pathways to Implementation



6.0. Pathways to Implementation

6.1. Recreation Planning & Funding Toolbox

This section summarizes several existing and proposed tools available for the acquisition and development of new parks and trails in Santa Barbara County.

County Parks currently acquires and develops parks, recreation, open space, and trails using a variety of tools, including zoning requirements for new development, Park Development Impact Mitigation Fees, state and federal grants, and partnerships with trail or conservation groups. In the past, one of the most common methods for acquiring new parks and trails has been the dedication of public parkland as part of private development projects, often supplemented by additional funding. Interagency coordination and public-private partnerships are also critical to negotiating access to public open spaces and providing high-quality recreation facilities. The County employs several programs, regulations, and ordinances to acquire and develop new parks, open areas, and trails, primarily through the permit process for new development. Land use regulations in the Land Use Element and Zoning Ordinance provide the opportunity for exactions of parks and trails, and the County's development impact fee program collects funds for recreational capital improvements.

Notably, the County's existing tools rely heavily on private developers to create the opportunity for park and trail acquisition. In growing communities, these tools have a higher potential to result in valuable and desirable park and trail development; however, in communities with little to no growth potential (i.e., built-out communities), these tools are less successful. Additionally, as planned urban development trends have shifted over time toward streamlined infill housing development projects, County Parks has fewer opportunities and less agency to create new public parks and trails as a condition of development approvals. Therefore, County Parks requires a more diverse recreation planning and funding toolbox to ensure the continued acquisition and provision of parks, trails, and recreational facilities that meet the needs of existing and future residents.

To support County Parks in the next era of planning and funding of public parks, trails, and recreation facilities, several new tools were developed for the Recreation Master Plan. These tools support creative opportunities to meet recreation needs countywide. Each tool is described below as a means for the implementation of County Parks' planned recreation projects.

No.1. Recreation Benefit Projects Program

Funding and constructing parks and trails in sufficient numbers and locations to meet the needs identified in the Recreation Master Plan is challenging due to several factors, including land availability, land acquisition, site development, staffing, and ongoing maintenance costs. Park and trail projects are more feasible when land is either already owned by a public agency or

is acquired through donation or other public-private agreement, when site development is supported with a clear, reliable permitting path and a variety of secured funding sources, and maintenance needs are accounted for in the project design and implementation. The County recognizes that the success of the Recreation Master Plan hinges on the ability of the County to acquire and develop the land for parks, recreation, and trails, including in partnership with other agencies, such as cities and special districts in Santa Barbara County, as well as private entities, such as local foundations, non-profit organizations, and property owners.

One of the Recreation Master Plan's key strategies is a public-private partnership program called the Recreation Benefits Projects (RBP) Program. This new, innovative program would encourage private landowners to dedicate, develop, and maintain publicly accessible recreation amenities in exchange for incentives and assistance from the County. The program creates a framework for formal public-private partnerships between the applicant and the County to address recreation facilities development, management, and maintenance for the long term (i.e., acquisitions and transfers of land and/or assets to public ownership, maintenance and funding agreements, etc.). RBPs are eligible for valuable permitting incentives, such as downshifted permit requirements, adjusted development standards, and an expanded range of allowable uses under the County's zoning ordinances. The incentives are intended to attract private investment in public recreation to supplement the capabilities of public agencies to meet recreational needs countywide.

To be processed as an RBP, a proposed project must have two components:

- **A public recreation component.** The proposed RBP would offer needed public parks, trails, and recreation facilities or substantially contribute to the creation of needed public parks, trails, and recreational facilities identified in the Recreation Master Plan and/or at the discretion of County Parks. The proposed public recreation component must meet the needs identified in the Recreation Master Plan, must be permanent and open to the public, and must be provided either on-site or off-site within the same recreation planning area as the site.
- **A private use or development component.** The proposed RBP would involve a component of private use or development that could benefit from incentives offered by the County in exchange for the public recreation component.

What is the Recreation Benefit Project (RBP) Program?

A voluntary opportunity for private projects in the unincorporated area that provide public recreation facilities to receive permitting incentives and assistance in the County of Santa Barbara

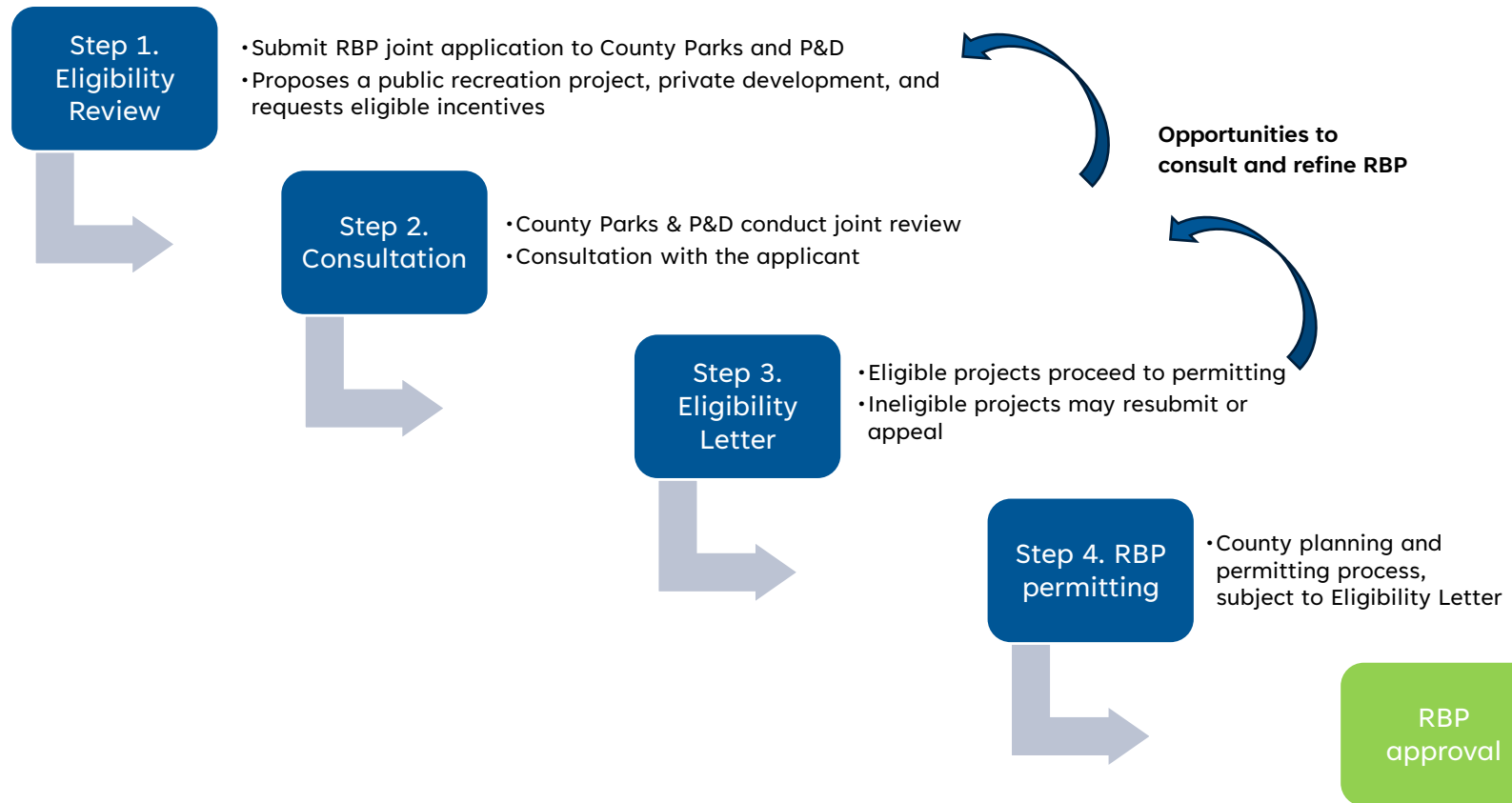
To support successful RBP projects, County Parks would assess the public recreation component of the proposed RBP to determine eligibility through a preliminary review process before permit processing. Criteria for the assessment would include whether the project would result in a public recreation project that meets community needs identified in the Recreation Master Plan and whether the public park, trail, or recreation facility is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, as amended. This prequalification review would give RBP applicants confidence that they have an attractive, viable project idea before investing the effort to complete an RBP application with all required components (site plans, surveys, etc.) and pursue discretionary approvals. The prequalification establishes a partnership between the private applicant and the County with the following outcomes:

1. Commits the applicant to a conceptual RBP that guarantees a qualified public recreation facility per the RBP program.
2. Commits the County to work collaboratively with the applicant to shape the conceptual RBP into an approvable project, subject to regulations/permits and the menu of incentives offered by the RBP program.
3. Establishes a public-private partnership to formalize a shared vision for the RBP and give investors/funders confidence to move it to the application stage.
4. An application for an RBP may not be accepted or processed by the County Planning and Development Department without RBP eligibility review by the County.

Why RBP Eligibility Review?

Eligibility review for RBPs would give RBP applicants confidence that they have an attractive, viable project idea before investing the effort to complete a development application and pursue discretionary approvals.

Figure 6-1. Conceptual Planning Process to Develop a Recreation Benefit Project



Over the course of planning and community outreach for the Recreation Master Plan, County Parks considered several conceptual projects that would help meet recreation needs but are not within the control or agency of County Parks. These project concepts could be developed and pursued by proponents, and, accordingly, they are recognized by the Recreation Master Plan. As described in Table 6-1, these projects could benefit from partnering with the County under the RBP Program to realize mutual goals for public recreation and private land development. These descriptions are informational for planning purposes only and would require independent project planning and approval processes.

Table 6-1. Conceptual Public Recreation Projects Potentially Assisted by the Recreation Benefit Project Program

Project	Description	Location	Key Parties
Chumash Triangle Camping & Sports Park	This project would provide a new playground equipped with swings and slides. The site would also support outdoor social gatherings with shaded picnic areas, water fountains, and restrooms. A new park in Santa Ynez would meet the needs of existing neighborhoods and future housing development.	Santa Ynez Valley	Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, County Parks
Foxen Canyon Winery Trail	This project would consist of new on- and off-road trail improvements parallel to Foxen Canyon Road, from Los Olivos to Sisquoc, a distance of approximately 22 miles. The Foxen Canyon Wine Trail is proposed as a multi-purpose trail connecting wineries and estates along the route. The trail would provide recreational opportunities while helping to support agricultural tourism in the region. Most of the trail is envisioned as an off-road natural surface trail; however, the trail may follow the existing road shoulder in some segments. To support the trail's success, the project could also include signage and branding for the Foxen Canyon Wine Trail, park-and-ride lots for cyclists, electric bicycle rental, charging, and repair stations, and safety barriers where needed.	Santa Ynez Valley	County Parks, private landowners
Jalama Beach to Point Conception Lighthouse Trail	This project would create a new coastal trail extending from Jalama Beach County Park toward Point Conception. In support of the California Coastal Trail, the County would pursue partnership opportunities with The Nature Conservancy's Dangermond Preserve to advance public programming on the Preserve from Jalama	Lompoc Valley	County Parks, The Nature Conservancy/Dangermond Preserve

Project	Description	Location	Key Parties
	Beach County Park and develop appropriate public access mechanisms. The trail would provide hikers with breathtaking views and passive outdoor recreation. Trail development would be coordinated with the Dangermond Preserve on land owned by the Nature Conservancy. Trailhead parking could be available on County-owned land associated with Jalama Beach County Park.		
Los Alamos Community Plaza	This project would create a new community gathering space in the heart of Los Alamos. A new plaza would feature a patio, grassy area, gazebo, and outdoor seating. Adjacent to the plaza would be an open play area with an interactive water feature, picnic benches, shade structures, and restrooms. No location is currently identified for this needed project.	Santa Ynez Valley	County Parks, private landowners
Los Olivos Park	This project would provide a small park nestled into existing neighborhoods in Los Olivos, which currently does not have a children's park. The new park would provide a playground, a small open lawn area, and shaded seating areas with natural landscaping. A natural surface trail could be provided to improve neighborhood connections to the new park. No location is currently identified for this needed project.	Santa Ynez Valley	County Parks, private landowners
Los Olivos to Los Alamos (LOLA) Trail	This project would create an 8.4-mile-long trail extending from Zaca Station Road near the community of Los Olivos to Los Alamos. The trail would traverse private agricultural lands and winery estates along the north side of U.S. Hwy 101. The trail would be predominately off-road	Santa Ynez Valley	County of Santa Barbara, private landowners

Project	Description	Location	Key Parties
	natural surface hiking, biking, and equestrian trail, though the trail would likely follow existing private ranch roads in some segments. The trail would provide a valuable recreational connection from Los Olivos to Los Alamos, offering a significant new route for bicyclists and equestrians, as well as long-distance hikers/backpackers. The exact alignment of the trail requires further investigation and will depend largely upon participating landowners. Trailheads and park-and-ride lots could be developed at either end of the trail, at Zaca Station Road near Los Olivos and Price Ranch Road near Los Alamos.		
Orcutt Creek Neighborhood Park	This project would provide a neighborhood park as part of future development along the Orcutt Creek Trail.	Santa Maria Valley	County Parks, private landowners
Santa Ynez Valley Sports Complex	This project would create a multi-purpose destination for recreation, fitness, and leisure in Santa Ynez Valley. The proposed sports complex would include multiple softball/baseball fields, multi-use fields suitable for soccer and football, and indoor and outdoor courts for basketball, tennis, and pickleball courts. A children's playground with integrated water features would offer an engaging space for younger visitors to play and cool off. A modern community center would provide flexible indoor spaces for fitness classes, community programs, and events. The facility would be surrounded by outdoor exercise stations and a walking path to encourage movement and wellness. Supporting amenities	Santa Ynez Valley	County Parks, City of Solvang, Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, private landowners

Project	Description	Location	Key Parties
	would include shaded seating areas, picnic tables, and a central concession area.		
Toro Canyon Neighborhood Park	This project would develop approximately 3 acres into Toro Canyon's first neighborhood park. To adequately serve the surrounding community, the project would provide a modern playground designed for all ages and abilities with such features as inclusive swings, ramps, and spinners. The park would feature an open lawn area, shaded picnic and seating areas, and potentially a restroom.	South Coast	County Parks, private landowners

No. 2. Parks & Recreation District

A special district is a powerful, common, and relatively accessible tool for recreation planning. Special districts are local government agencies that provide essential services to millions of Californians. Special districts are formed and governed by residents to establish or enhance essential services and infrastructure in their communities. Each special district focuses on providing specific types of services, consistent with state law. It is this focused service that allows for innovation, flexibility, and long-term planning to meet the community's needs. Ultimately, a special district is a tool for communities that need something done well with local control.

In California, a Parks and Recreation District (District) is an invaluable tool available to overcome deficiencies in recreational amenities and programs, as well as coordinate regional leadership and advocacy for recreation and parks. A District would provide a solid source of annual funding distributed to a range of recreation needs throughout the County to support the goals in each community for high-quality and diverse recreation and park amenities. Further, a District would have built-in leadership and representation from all communities within its boundaries to ensure a balance in project and program development to serve unique needs throughout Santa Barbara County. The District would facilitate annual assessments, funding management, and project development to serve residents within the boundaries of the District.

Santa Barbara County residents fund two special districts specifically to provide parks and recreation. The Isla Vista Recreation and Parks District develops and maintains public parks in the unincorporated community of Isla Vista. The Cuyama Valley Recreation District provides programming and maintenance for public recreation facilities in Cuyama Valley. Other special districts also help fund park and open space maintenance, such as the Mission Hills Community Service District, which provides the only public parkland in Mission Hills.

Future efforts to form a new special recreation district to fund parks, trails, and recreation projects countywide would provide a strong funding source to support local parks and trails projects and recreation programs, and would require leadership among County and City decision-makers, other recreation providers, and the public. Fortunately for Santa Barbara County, **AB1613 - County Regional Open Space District Formation** is an existing state law that allows for the formation of a regional open space district in Santa Barbara County to be initiated by a resolution of the County Board of Supervisors without the burden of effort and cost that can accompany a community petition campaign. District formation is then subject to an election by voters within the proposed district. Since AB1613 was enacted in 2000, no districts have been formed in the county under this legislation.

Why a Parks District?

A Parks and Recreation District in Santa Barbara County would be a powerful tool to fund local parks, trails, and recreation facilities under local control. District boundaries can be set to reflect the needs of residents directly benefitting from the projects funded with district resources.

No. 3. Local Funding Strategies

A community's park and recreation goals are often attainable with a less formal initiative. A District may ultimately be the goal for a community, but other tools are available to continue recreation planning and improvements in the near term while progressing toward a District, including a Joint Powers Authority, Community Facilities District, and benefit assessment districts.

- **Joint Powers Authorities (JPA)** are legal entities of two or more public agencies jointly exercising common powers. The Joint Exercise of Powers Act (California Government Code section 6500) governs JPAs. Per state law, JPAs are available to public agencies only, including, but not limited to, the state or state department, public districts, and cities.
- **Community Facilities Districts (CFD)** are special tax districts in California that fund public improvements and ongoing services in a specific area, including parks and trails. The Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act of 1982 allows any county, city, special district, school district, or JPA to establish a CFD. CFDs levy a special tax on taxable property within the district boundaries. The special tax levy, secured by the property within the CFD, is the security for any debt issued, including municipal bonds, bank loans, and state funds (see also *Municipal Bond Programs*, below). A CFD can be initiated by registered voters, landowners, or a legislative body.
- **Benefit assessment districts** are financing tools to fund capital improvements and maintenance of public facilities, including specific parks and recreation amenities. Unlike taxes or fees, such as assessments to fund a District, a benefit assessment distributes costs in proportion to benefits. Benefit assessments ensure that the defined group of property owners who use and benefit from the public services pays for them.

Further, recreation funding may need to be creative and opportunistic while a secure, established funding source (i.e., property assessment) is created through District formation and voter initiatives. Recreational funding can come from unique sources, including transient occupancy tax (TOT) and grant programs. As demonstrated by several examples in California, a creative combination of organizational structures and funding sources provides the means and flexibility to coordinate and plan for recreation with flexibility regardless of whether a District exists or is in the works.

No. 4. Municipal Bond Programs

Municipal bonds are debt securities issued by government entities, often to finance capital projects such as public parks, water systems, transportation, and other essential infrastructure. By purchasing municipal bonds, investors lend money to the bond issuer in exchange for a promise of regular interest payments and the return of the original investment, or "principal." A municipal bond's maturity date, or the date when the issuer of the bond repays the principal, may be years in the future. Investor income from bond payments is generally tax-free as an incentive to bondholders to invest. In California, bonds must

be approved in elections by two-thirds of the voters in the jurisdiction for which the bonds are to be issued. The two most common types of municipal bonds are the following:

- **General Obligation (GO) Bonds** are issued by local governments for the acquisition or improvement of real property. GO Bonds are backed by the “full faith and credit” of the issuer, which has the power to tax residents to pay bondholders.
- **Revenue Bonds** are not backed by the government’s taxing power but by revenues from a specific project or source, such as user and/or lease fees. Some revenue bonds are “non-recourse”, meaning that if the revenue stream dries up, the bondholders do not have a claim on the underlying revenue source.

In addition, municipal borrowers sometimes issue bonds on behalf of private entities such as non-profit colleges or hospitals. These “conduit” borrowers typically agree to repay the issuer, who pays the interest and principal on the bonds. In cases where the conduit borrower fails to make a payment, the issuer usually is not required to pay the bondholders.

The County uses debt financing to: 1) fund certain capital assets that support the provision of services by the County; and 2) provide for short-term cash flow requirements. The decision to use debt financing is governed by several factors, including the nature of the project to be financed, the availability of other financing, and the current economic climate. The County’s financings adhere to a Board of Supervisors-approved Debt Management Policy, which aims to provide benefits to the public, including identifying the benefits, cost savings, and the prudent use of debt financing, and investing cash to use municipal assets most effectively and to finance or refinance to maintain the lowest practical cost (i.e., to maximize the use of municipal assets to determine pay-as-you-go or debt financing alternatives). Debt repayment requires establishing debt payment schedules that accommodate the ability to pay and synchronize the cost with the benefits or useful life. The level of debt must be closely coordinated with the responsible agency’s capital and operating budget processes to avoid adverse impacts of debt on the County’s credit rating and total debt burden. Also, when entering into public market financings, they undergo the scrutiny of the credit rating agencies.

Financing parks and trail projects typically utilizes long-term obligations. In the County, long-term obligations could include GO Bonds and/or Revenue Bonds. With an adopted Recreation Master Plan, the Board of Supervisors could initiate and approve the bond measure proposal, then hold a special election for voters to approve the bond(s), which requires a two-thirds majority vote for passage. The county then works with underwriters to sell the bonds and use the funds for park projects as outlined in the approved plan. The funds raised from the bond sale are used to finance the park projects described in the approved plan.

Bonds in the County

The County currently has no GO Bond obligations, but in 2024, COP bonds were issued to finance six projects, including the \$14 million Lake Cachuma RV Park Renovations project.

Alternatively, the County could issue a local **Certificate of Participation (COP)** to investors for specific recreation projects. Investors purchase COPs that represent a share in the project being financed, which the County leases back to itself. The County uses the bond proceeds to fund the recreation project(s), and the annual lease payments from the County's general fund are used to repay the COP holders. The general fund is supported by revenue streams like property and sales taxes, as well as fees.

No. 5. Grant Programs

Grants are used to fund park, trail, and open space acquisition and development. In combination with the local zoning requirements, grants contributed to the acquisition of the County’s Point Sal Reserve, Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park, San Marcos Foothill Preserve, Ellwood Mesa-Sperling Open Space, the City of Guadalupe’s recent park improvements, and the Devereux Slough restoration and trail system.

California State Parks’ grants cover a diverse range of projects, such as the renovation and expansion of local parks’ basketball courts and soccer fields, the construction of boat launching facilities on California’s waterways, programs for off-highway motor vehicle safety and environmental education, youth theater programs, and the repair of playground equipment. Future grant funding becomes available in cycles, often in response to voter initiatives like the 2024 voter-approved Proposition 4, which dedicates approximately \$10 billion for safe drinking water, wildfire prevention, drought preparedness, and clean air, with \$700 million identified for parks. Near-term recreation projects may be supported by several upcoming state and federal grant programs

Proposition 4 (2024)

Park acquisition and development projects in California will be eligible for up to \$700 million in near-term funding from the State of California.

Table 6-2. Upcoming State and Federal Grant Programs

Grant Name	Program	Funding Available	Max. Project Funding	Local Match %	Timing
Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program (SPP)	Creates new parks and new recreation opportunities in underserved communities across California. Projects must involve either development or a combination of acquisition and development to create a new park, expand an existing park, or renovate an existing park.	SPP Round 5 allocates \$188.5 million in the 2025/26 State Budget	\$8.5 million	0%	2026/27

Grant Name	Program	Funding Available	Max. Project Funding	Local Match %	Timing
Statewide Recreational Trails Program (RTP)	Provides funds annually to develop and maintain recreational trails and trails-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized projects.	TBD	TBD	12%	2026/27
Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP)	A nationally competitive program targeting grant assistance to help economically disadvantaged urban communities with no or almost no access to publicly available, close-by, outdoor recreation. Funds can be used for the acquisition and/or development of, or to substantially renovate, obsolete public parks and other outdoor recreation spaces.	\$90 million; funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund	\$15 million	50%	2026/27
Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)	Provide funding for the acquisition or development of land to create new outdoor recreation opportunities for the health and wellness of Californians	\$35 million	\$6 million	50%	TBD

Source: California State Parks, Grant Programs 2026/27: https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=29752

The projects included in the Recreation Master Plan are strategically aligned with California's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Program (SCORP) to ensure their eligibility for grant funding as opportunities are renewed over the next 20 - 30 years. Additionally, community trail projects that support active transportation may be eligible for transportation funding programs under the County's Active Transportation Plan.

No. 6. Development Impact Mitigation Fees

Developer fees, specifically Quimby Fees and Park Development Impact Mitigation Fees, are a source of funding for the acquisition or development of parks, open space, and trails. The Quimby Act (Government Code Section 66477) is the enabling statute for County Ordinances Nos. 3339 and 3656 of the Santa Barbara County Code, which require dedication of land and/or payment of a fee to provide park and recreation facilities as a condition of all subdivisions. Any subdivision creating 50 or more units may be required to dedicate land for park purposes. Expenditure of Quimby funds is limited to capital improvements. Park Development Mitigation Fees are collected for other residential developments per County Resolution 88-328, including a fee per unit proposed as part of new development; discounted fees may be available for specific project types

such as affordable housing projects. The use of these fees is not restricted, but they have only been used for capital improvements. The balance of these two funding sources fluctuates based on development trends and capital expenditures.

No. 7. Private Open Space Dedication Program

This new program would provide the opportunity for undeveloped and underutilized HOA-owned common open space areas that are suitable for public recreation to be transferred to County Parks for development and management as public parks and open spaces. Past development of residential neighborhoods under the DR zoning district commonly results in underutilized and unmanaged open space areas within existing communities, which have occurred in Orcutt, Eastern Goleta Valley, and Mission Hills. Through this proposed program, remnant open space lands could become public parks and trails to better serve existing unmet recreation needs. This program would benefit the public by creating new parks in built-out communities under a public management program, as well as benefit HOAs that struggle with management costs, trespassing, natural hazards, and insurance and tax liabilities associated with maintaining common open space in private co-ownership. Interested organizations would consult with County Parks on the location, condition, features, and desirability of potential donations to meet needs identified in the Recreation Master Plan. If accepted, the County would foster the real estate transfer.

No. 8. Interagency Partnerships

In 2019, County Parks formed the Santa Barbara County Recreation Steering Committee, comprising representatives of all 8 cities, 2 recreation and park districts, and other recreation nonprofit advocacy groups. Under the Recreation Master Plan, the Recreation Steering Committee should continue as a standing committee that works together throughout the year (at least twice annually) to discuss and coordinate improving recreation in Santa Barbara County. The Recreation Steering Committee will continue to identify and pursue opportunities for park development, acquisition, funding, and beneficial partnerships between agencies and recreation interest groups in the recreational needs of our communities. This would include coordinating to:

- Identify available district- and public agency-owned lands for future parks, recreation, and trail development.
- Facilitate inter-agency trail planning and development.
- Provide support to nonprofit organizations to aid in acquiring land easements for parks and trails.
- Provide support to nonprofit organizations and recreation partnerships through methods such as fundraising for park and trail land/easement acquisition, improvement, and maintenance.

The Recreation Steering Committee would be led by County Parks, with committee composition including, at a minimum, a designated Representative and Alternate from the 8 City parks/recreation departments, Isla Vista Recreation and Parks District, Cuyama Valley Recreation District, Los Padres National Forest, California State Parks, UCSB, and the Chumash Nation,

with optional committee members from other special districts (e.g., Mission Hills Community Services District) and nonprofit groups and organizations (e.g., Santa Barbara County Trails Council, Sage Alliance, Santa Maria Valley Open Space, Elings Park Foundation) as determined at the discretion of the County Parks Director. As a long-term goal of the Recreation Master Plan, the Recreation Steering Committee could serve as the foundation for a future Santa Barbara County Recreation District Board.

Local nonprofit groups can raise funds to purchase property or easements and develop and maintain parks, trails, and recreation facilities. For example, the Land Trust led the acquisition of sites such as the Coronado Butterfly Reserve in Goleta and the protection of Midland School open space in the Santa Ynez Valley. The Montecito Trails Foundation built and maintains over 40 miles of trails in Montecito. The Los Padres Forest Association builds and maintains trails in the National Forest. The Santa Barbara County Trails Council helped the County build the Franklin Trail in Carpinteria and the Orcutt Hills trail system. Lompoc Trails is currently working with County Parks to build the Bodger Trails system south of Lompoc. These and other trail groups help build and maintain trails due to public funding and staffing shortages. Additionally, public-private partnerships with sports and/or recreation organizations, including aquatics groups, schools, and other recreation-based businesses, could result in fundraising and sponsorship for new recreation projects, as well as ongoing maintenance, operations, and programming. These partnerships are highly beneficial to large capital projects with ongoing operational needs, such as community centers, aquatic facilities, campgrounds, and competitive sports complexes. County Parks, in coordination with the Recreation Steering Committee, would continue to work closely with local organizations in partnership to acquire and maintain parks, recreation, and trails that meet local needs identified in the Recreation Master Plan.

No. 9. Strengthening County Parks

Community starts at the park, and the park starts with the people, including the parks staff who plan, maintain, and upgrade the parks and recreation properties. Funding and staffing are critical to ensure the quality and adequacy of the parks, recreation facilities, and trails serving the community. These metrics also indicate whether capacity exists in existing resources to take on needed park, recreation, and trail projects in the Recreation Master Plan.

The Recreation Master Plan will require substantial long-term effort by County Parks. To implement the Recreation Master Plan, County Parks' responsibilities and resources should expand incrementally over time and in response to new park, trail, and recreation facility development, including grant writing and funding management, enforcing County Parks rules and regulations, managing and operating facilities to generate local revenue, and coordinating with local agencies, partners, and other County departments. This investment reflects County Parks' role as a leader for public parks and trails acquisition, development, and management countywide. Expanding department funding for County Parks could be accommodated through adjustments in the County's annual budget, additional revenue from planned facilities and programs, private development fees, and new local funding sources (refer to **Error! Reference source not found.**). Additional department funding would be utilized to support the provision or acquisition of additional resources and facilities, including equipment, specialized staff and training, program funding, and the operation and maintenance of existing and proposed facilities such as pools or sports complexes. This support would be bolstered by increased revenue from these high-value recreation improvements, which have user and reservation fees to offset capital and operational costs, including campgrounds, concessionaires, facility rentals, and competitive sports league fees.

The Recreation Master Plan evaluates the costs, revenues, and staffing of County Parks to understand current operations based on the adopted 2023/24 budget relative to the County's recreational assets and service populations. Current operations are compared to national benchmarks to indicate how County Parks compares to typical recreation agencies. As the Recreation Master Plan is a County Parks project, only County Parks staffing and funding information was assessed relative to unincorporated populations. This assessment does not consider the operations or service populations of incorporated cities. A summary of County Parks' annual operational information compared to national benchmarks published by the NRPA for 2023 is provided below:

- **Operating Costs (Expenditures Per Acre of Public Parkland).** In 2023/24, County Parks had annual operating expenditures of \$17.3 million. Based on national benchmarks published by NRPA, a typical agency serving a similar population to County

Revenue Generators

In 2023/24, County Parks received over \$10.3 million in revenue from its two campgrounds and rental properties, including two restaurants and several concessionaires. That's 60 percent of its total annual operating costs!

Parks spent \$7,323 per acre of parkland and non-park sites. In 2023/24, County Parks spent \$1,549 per acre of its public parks and non-park sites, including Cachuma Lake Recreation Area, which is owned by the federal government but operated for recreational use by County Parks. Excluding Lake Cachuma, County Parks spent \$6,955 per acre of public parks and open spaces.

- **Cost Recovery (Non-tax Revenue as % of Operating Costs).** In 2023/24, County Parks revenues were balanced with the operating budget, including \$4.1 million (24 percent) in general fund contributions. Based on national benchmarks published by NRPA, a typical agency serving a similar population to County Parks recovered 22 percent of its operating costs through non-tax revenue sources. In 2023/24, County Parks received \$10.3 million in revenue from camping, administrative fees, site use/rental, concessionaires, and cabin/yurt rental, contributing 60 percent of annual operating costs. County Parks' primary operational revenue sources include charges for services at Cachuma Lake Campground and Recreation Area and Jalama Beach County Park.
- **Staffing (Total Employees (FTE) and FTE per 10,000 residents).** In 2023/24, County Parks employed 62.75 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. Based on national benchmarks published by NRPA, a typical agency serving a similar population to County Parks employed 121.5 FTE and 8 FTE per 10,000 residents. County Parks is staffed with only 52 percent of the staffing levels typical for similarly sized agencies. Further, County Parks staffing levels provide 4.5 FTE per 10,000 residents in the unincorporated area, which is approximately half of what similar agencies enjoy nationwide.

No. 10. Sustainable & Resilient Parks

To integrate the Recreation Master Plan with the County's One Climate Initiative, this program builds sustainability and resiliency features into existing and future recreational facilities. Under this program, park development projects may include sustainability features (e.g., drought-tolerant landscaping, use of recycled water supplies for landscaping, net-zero facilities, sustainable building strategies) and/or features in their design to support the resiliency of our communities, such as emergency shelters, cooling/warming centers, livestock evacuation centers, and other support for County emergency management operations. In addition to supporting the County's existing commitments to reducing GHG emissions and increasing sustainability and resiliency, sustainable and resilient parks can strengthen grant eligibility and funding acquisition.

The County has a long history of adopting and implementing policies, programs, and projects directly or indirectly involving climate action, and in 2020, the County reaffirmed its leadership in addressing climate change through the One Climate Initiative. As a result, the County takes an active role in helping to address climate change through GHG reduction, climate sustainability, and climate resiliency strategies. As a component of the One Climate Initiative, the County prepared and adopted the new 2030 Climate Action Plan, which identifies measures and actions under the County's direct jurisdiction or represent areas the County can influence through collaboration and coordination.

One Climate Actions for Parks

Promote and support land management practices that sequester carbon.

Tree Planting & Maintenance: Plant new drought tolerant, native, fire resistant trees at County facilities, parks and in rights-of-way, where appropriate, focusing on areas that are at risk from extreme heat. Secure additional funding to maintain existing trees. Apply to Tree City USA to become a recognized jurisdiction expanding benefits of trees and committing to the four-step framework outlined by the Arbor Day Foundation.

Increase sustainability and resilience of County-operated facilities.

Electrification Policy: Adopt a policy requiring all new county buildings to be all-electric and replace or retrofit space and water heating devices and equipment in existing buildings with heat pumps at time of replacement.

Energy Procurement: Procure renewable natural gas for County-owned facilities that cannot be electrified.

Renewable Energy Expansion: Expand the use of renewable energy and energy storage at County facilities.

Water – Energy Nexus Projects: Implement cost-effective measures to reduce County facilities' water use and water-related energy use.

To further support these actions and the County's commitments, County Parks will strive to incorporate sustainability and resiliency features in existing and future recreational facilities, including applying the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating Systems™ (STARS) standards or other comparable sustainability ratings. Under this program, special attention or focus will be given to parks and trails projects that would be suitable for or incorporate sustainability and resiliency features (**Error! Reference source not found.**). These could include park development projects that directly propose or could accommodate sustainability features (e.g., drought-tolerant landscaping, use of recycled water supplies for landscaping, net-zero facilities, sustainable building strategies) and/or features in their design to support resiliency of our communities, such community centers that could serve as emergency shelters, cooling/warming centers, horse evacuation centers, and that support County emergency management operations.

Table 6-3. Types of Sustainability and Resiliency Features by Park Type

Park Type	Sustainability Features	Resiliency Features
Pocket Park	• Drought-tolerant landscaping	• Shade structures and/or low-heat absorbing surfaces and structures
Neighborhood Park	• Drought-tolerant landscaping • Building electrification • Use of green building practices • Stormwater retention and recycling for landscape/ballfield irrigation • Minimization of impervious surfaces	• Shade structures and/or low-heat absorbing surfaces and structures • Siting and design of wildfire fuel buffers • Natural stormwater/flood management systems
Community and Regional Parks	• Drought-tolerant landscaping • Building electrification • Use of green building practices • Stormwater retention and recycling for landscape/ballfield irrigation • Minimization of impervious surfaces • Active transportation connections • Incorporation of solar or wind energy and storage	• Shade structures and/or low-heat absorbing surfaces and structures • Siting and design of wildfire fuel buffers • Natural stormwater/flood management systems • Accommodation of emergency shelters, evacuation centers, cooling/warming centers

No. 11. Parks, Recreation, and Trails (PRT) Maps

In unincorporated areas, the Park, Recreation, and Trail (PRT) maps are adopted in the County Comprehensive Plan and amended over time in response to local planning and acquisition efforts. PRT maps show existing and proposed parkland and trail corridors throughout the unincorporated county. The PRT maps include six subareas of the County, such as the Lompoc Valley and the Santa Barbara-Goleta area. The PRT maps depict recreation features independently from the land use designation map and are key planning tools used by the County to acquire new parkland and trails. Key elements of the PRT maps delineate parks, open areas, and various types of trails, including:

- **Existing Parks, Open Space Areas, and Joint Use Facilities:** These three designations identify existing parks, open space areas, and joint use facilities (e.g., designated school playgrounds/ballfields) in each countywide subarea, as well as within the community plans.
- **Proposed Parks, Open Areas, and Joint Use Facilities:** Proposed parks include planned new parks that are often proposed to meet existing demand or serve new development.
- **Existing On-road and Off-road Trails:** The County PRT maps include known existing on-road and off-road trails. On-road trails can be located on the travel lane on streets with low traffic volumes, combined with bike lanes, or provided on a paved or unpaved shoulder, a separate paved trail parallel to the road, or an off-road dirt trail parallel to the road, depending upon conditions such as availability of excess road right-of-way. Off-road trails are typically natural surface trails, but may also include off-road paved multi-use paths with parallel natural surface walking paths. Both types of trails support multiple uses such as hiking, running, mountain biking, and equestrian use.
- **Proposed On-road and Off-road Trails:** The County PRT maps include proposed on-road and off-road trails. These include an extensive on-road trail system in the Santa Ynez Valley and new trails in Orcutt.

As part of the Comprehensive Plan, updates to the PRT maps require a general plan amendment.

No. 12. Planned Residential Development

The County reviews the PRT maps for all proposed development projects. Where there is a reasonable relationship to the proposed development, the County can negotiate trail easements and/or dedication of public parkland or open space. As a result, new development on some sites may help create new parks, trails, or open space. In other instances, where only a portion of the planned open space is required for dedication, the owner(s) may voluntarily dedicate the remainder of the open space to reduce maintenance and liability costs.

Additionally, to acquire public recreation facilities through a dedication, the County has historically applied the Planned Development (PD) land use designation and accompanying Planned Residential Development (PRD) zone district, which requires dedication of public parkland. To develop private recreational facilities (i.e., facilities serving residents of the development only), the Design Residential (DR) zone district is often used. The DR zone district also requires setting aside open space as part of development proposals, but the space is reserved for residents of the development, including pools, playgrounds, BBQ facilities, and clubhouses. These tools are appropriate where proposed projects have adequate land area, increased density, or a large number of units, creating a sizable demand for recreation/open space, or where there is a significant historic public use of a site. However, the feasibility of this tool in creating public parks, recreation, and trails is limited in the future, as most future development includes infill housing development projects that are not mandated to dedicate public recreation facilities.

6.2. Implementation Tools for Planned County Parks Projects

In Chapter 5.0, *A Plan for Parks, Recreation, and Trails*, each planned project by County Parks includes cost estimates and timing based on feasibility and priority. This section aligns each planned project with the recommended implementation tools described above. Planning for each project will consider appropriate tools to acquire and develop the park and/or trail. The potential tools recommended factor in location, ownership, site conditions, population potentially served, acquisition techniques, and planning context. For example, all park and trail projects would be eligible for funding through a new Parks & Recreation District and would also align well with the Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program (SPP) grant program. However, a municipal bond would be more appropriate for large capital improvements that result in operational revenue, which would support the required debt service for the bond. Overall, each project will consider the best mix of financial tools during project planning, using the Recreation Master Plan as a strategic framework for implementation.

Table 6-4. Recommended Tools for County Parks' Planned Park, Recreation, and Trails Projects

No.	County Parks Projects	RBP	Park & Rec District	Muni Bond	Grants	DIMFs	Private Open Space	Fund-raising Partners	Parks Revenue	Dept. Budget
Currently Planned Projects										
1	Baron Ranch Trails		X		X	X				X
2	Lake Cachuma Campground and South Shore Facilities Improvements		X	X	X	X			X	
3	Lake Cachuma North Shore Trails & Recreation Facilities Management Plan		X	X	X	X		X	X	
4	Oak Knoll (aka Mud Lake) Neighborhood Park		X		X	X				X

No .	County Parks Projects	RBP	Park & Rec District	Muni Bond	Grants	DIMFs	Private Open Space	Fund-raising Parters	Parks Revenue	Dept. Budget
5	Orcutt Creek Trail	X	X		X	X				X
6	San Marcos Foothills Open Space		X		X	X		X		X
7	Solomon Hills (Bonney) Trails		X		X	X		X		X
8	Vandenberg Village Park		X		X	X				X
9	Waller Park Regional Sports Fields		X	X	X	X			X	
<i>New Planned Projects</i>										
10	Ben Page Neighborhood Park		X		X	X				X
11	Drum Canyon Trail		X		X	X				X
12	Gaviota Marine Terminal Recreation Area		X	X	X	X			X	
13	Glen Annie to Los Padres National Forest Trail		X		X	X				X
14	Goleta Community Sports Park	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
15	Mission Hills Community Trail		X		X	X				X
16	Mission Hills Mountain Bike Park		X		X	X			X	X

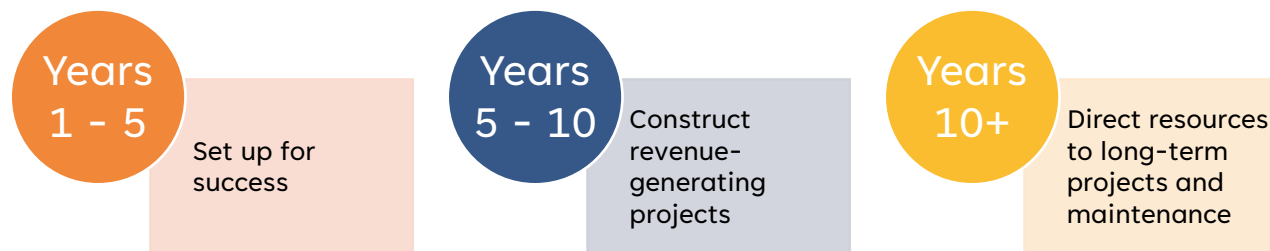
No .	County Parks Projects	RBP	Park & Rec District	Muni Bond	Grants	DIMFs	Private Open Space	Fund-raising Parters	Parks Revenue	Dept. Budget
17	Mission Hills Neighborhood Park		X		X	X				X
18	Obern Trail Play & Skate Project		X		X	X				X
19	South Coast Aquatic Center	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
20	South Coast Foothill Mountain Bike Park	X	X		X	X		X	X	
21	Sunrise Open Space		X		X	X				X
22	Vandenberg Village Community Trail		X		X	X				X
23	Guadalupe Community Park & Campground	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
24	Jalama Beach Campground Expansion & Upgrade Project		X		X	X			X	
25	Jalama Bluff Trail		X		X	X			X	X
26	Point Sal Trails & Coastal Access Improvements		X		X	X		X		X
27	Surf Beach to Ocean Beach Boardwalk		X		X	X				X

6.3. Timeline

Building a high-quality system of parks, trails, and recreation facilities takes time, commitment, and resourcefulness to maintain the facilities we have while also creating the facilities we need. Achieving the Recreation Master Plan's goals, projects, and programs requires a clear, focused work program in the near term that supports the long-term success of future efforts. As community recreation needs evolve and opportunities rise and fall, the Recreation Master Plan must adapt. An adaptive plan is achieved through periodic review. Accordingly, the Recreation Master Plan creates a framework of near-term actions within 5-year targets. This approach ensures the Recreation Master Plan adapts to change and opportunities over the long run by prioritizing the success of early efforts in support of future efforts. This section addresses the phased implementation of the Recreation Master Plan in five-year intervals (Figure 6-2).

Over the life of the plan, County Parks' efforts and resources will shift as the focus changes. In the first five years, the focus is on setting up the Recreation Master Plan's programs and financial strategies, including updating County policies and regulations, building a strong coalition of recreation planning partners, cultivating local funding, and designing near-term projects. Over the next five years, the focus will shift to constructing projects that generate revenue through user fees and rates, supporting County Parks' operations and maintenance of facilities. Through 2050, with a stable operational base, County Parks can direct resources to long-term projects and support for other organizational efforts within Santa Barbara County. Annual review and monitoring paired with five-year updates will ensure the Recreation Master Plan remains relevant, effective, and timely.

Figure 6-2. Phased Focus for Implementation of the Recreation Master Plan



With a focus on funding, County Parks will prioritize the following actions in the first five years following the adoption of the Recreation Master Plan, as depicted in Figure 6-3..

Figure 6-3. Near-Term Actions for Recreation Master Plan (5 to 10 Years)

Timeline	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Years 5 - 10+
Update Local Policies & Regulations						
Amend Comprehensive Plan & LUDC						
Amend CZO & MLUDC						
CCC approval of Recreation Master Plan & CZO						
Build a Strong Coalition						
Formalize the Recreation Steering Committee						
Create a County recreation working group						
Annual community engagement		North County	South County	North County	South County	Ongoing
Cultivate Local Funding for Parks, Trails, and Recreation						
Form a Parks & Recreation District	Board Reso	Ballot Measure				
Apply for Prop 4 grants annually		Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Ongoing
Issue a municipal bond for near-term projects						
Secure public-private partnerships						
Plan & Construct the Near-term County Parks Projects						
Lake Cachuma Campground & South Shore Facilities Improvements			Funding	Planning & Design	Construction	Finishing
Lake Cachuma North Shore Trails & Recreation Facilities Management Plan				Funding	Planning & Design	Construction
Waller Regional Sports Fields	Planning & Design	Funding	Construction	Finishing		
Goleta Community Sports Park			Funding	Acquire Site	Planning & Design	Construction
Guadalupe Community Park & Campground	Planning & Design	Acquire Site	Funding	Construction		
Mission Hills Mountain Bike Park					Planning & Design	
Jalama Beach Campground Expansion & Upgrade				Planning & Design	Funding	Construction
Gaviota Marine Terminal Recreation Area						Planning & Design
CIP County Parks projects					Planning & Design	Construction
Monitor & Review						
Annual recreation steering committee update meeting						
Review and update RecPrint map and PRT map						
Review and update planned projects						
Review and update tools, funding sources, and partnerships						
Update the Recreation Master Plan every 5 years						

6.4. Key Near-Term Actions

A. Update Local Policies and Regulations

To foster the successful implementation of the Recreation Master Plan, County Parks has created amendments to County policy and regulations to support public parks and recreation as a key component of sustainable communities and the County's One Climate program (<https://sbco.mysocialpinpoint.com/oneclimatehome>). The Project would amend the Comprehensive Plan with updated policies for parks, recreation, open spaces, and trails that reflect current community input and more actively support the County's efforts and attention to recreation needs in the unincorporated area. This effort would update the County's PRT maps to reflect the current extent of existing and planned County Parks properties and facilities.

The Project would also amend the County's zoning ordinances, including the County Land Use and Development Code (LUDC), Montecito LUDC, and Coastal Zoning Ordinance (CZO), to support permitting public parks and trails by private entities. Lastly, the Project would create the RBP Program to foster public-private partnerships as a key strategy to acquire and construct new parks and trails in Santa Barbara County.

The California Coastal Commission (CCC) will also review and approve the Recreation Master Plan and its related amendments within the Coastal Zone of Santa Barbara County.

B. Build a Strong Coalition for Recreation

The Recreation Master Plan was developed with the input and assistance of community partners and local recreation agencies throughout Santa Barbara County. This foundation of collaboration will continue through the implementation of the Recreation Master Plan. Following adoption, County Parks will formalize the Recreation Steering Committee as a standing interagency group interested in supporting the Recreation Master Plan over its implementation. The Steering Committee will be supported by a recreation planning team comprising County staff members from key departments.

County Parks will conduct community engagement for each planned project and will engage its coalition of recreation specialists annually to maximize opportunities for successful recreation planning and project development. The public will continue to be involved whenever the plan is updated and as appropriate during the monitoring and evaluation process. Tools for engaging the public may include direct emails, community surveys, community partnerships, fact sheets, social media postings, press releases, websites, and virtual and/or in-person workshops.

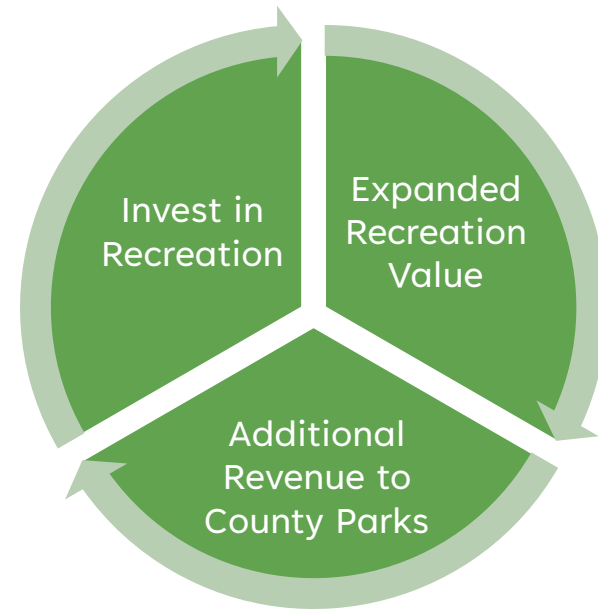
C. Cultivate Local Funding for Parks, Trails, and Recreation Facilities

Building and maintaining high-quality parks, trails, and recreation facilities can require substantial financial resources. Simply put, recreational amenities and programs are not possible without funding and staff to design, finance, and build the parks, sports fields and courts, trails, and community centers desperately needed in Santa Barbara County. Limits to available funding for improvements or development of recreational facilities, as well as for maintenance and provision of services, are a continuing challenge to service providers.

Park development costs vary, but \$750,000 to \$900,000 per acre to develop public parkland from vacant land already in public ownership is a general estimate, while specialized facilities such as baseball fields can cost more. For example, a typical baseball field of about three acres could cost up to \$2.3 million, including fences, stands, dugouts, and other amenities. Specialized facilities such as gyms, pools, or aquatics centers can run into millions of dollars and have ongoing maintenance costs. The cost to develop a mile of new trail can also vary significantly depending on factors like terrain, surface material, amenities, ownership, and location. Natural dirt or gravel trails typically cost between \$20,000 and \$50,000 per mile, while typical paved trails cost between \$100,000 and \$500,000 per mile. A complex paved trail with bridges and extensive grading could reach over \$1 million or more per mile.

A key goal of the Recreation Master Plan is to improve recreational facilities and services through enhanced regional coordination, strategic funding initiatives, increased revenue from recreational facilities, and improved staffing to realize recreational goals in local communities. Planned campgrounds and sports complexes are estimated to generate sustaining revenue with high-quality facilities and programming to support County Parks operations and ongoing capital improvements, as well as debt service. The total development costs must be addressed incrementally to ensure early investment supports the long-term success of the program. The funding strategy for each phase of implementation will change over time in response to improvements in recreation facilities, creation of new funding programs, and improved revenue generation. In the first five years, County Parks will focus on local funding sources, including:

Figure 6-4. Focus First on Funding



During the first 5 years, County Parks will focus on investment in recreation facilities that generate revenue for operations the future improvements, ongoing maintenance, and debt service.

- Exploring the formation of a special district or other local funding program for parks and open space countywide.
- Considering a municipal bond for strategic recreation projects.
- Pursuing annual grant funding cycles for near-term parks and trails projects.
- Fostering funding partnerships, including working with non-profit organizations to fundraise for specific projects, cost-sharing with local agencies and recreation service providers, and permitting eligible RBPs as a public-private partnership to achieve the goals of the Recreation Master Plan.

D. Plan and Construct Near-Term Projects

Project development will occur over time, with the investment in earlier projects creating financial means to support later projects. In the first five years, County Parks will focus resources first on:

- **Design and development of:**
 - Waller Regional Sports Fields,
 - Guadalupe Community Park and Campground, and
 - Lake Cachuma Campground and South Shore Improvements Project.
- **Funding, planning, and design of:**
 - Goleta Community Sports Park
 - Lake Cachuma North Shore Trails and Recreation Management Plan
 - Mission Hills Mountain Bike Park
 - Jalama Beach Campground Expansion and Upgrade
- **Initial planning for:**
 - Gaviota Marine Terminal Recreation Area
 - County Capital Improvement Program projects and long-term improvements of the Recreation Master Plan

E. Monitor and Review

County Parks is responsible for ensuring that this plan is being monitored, evaluated, and implemented on a continuing and as-needed basis. The Recreation Master Plan is evaluated annually to determine the effectiveness of programs and to react to changes in land development or programs. This includes re-evaluation of projects and programs. County Parks will call the Recreation Steering Committee to meet, review the projects, and discuss progress (Refer to Section 6.2, *Implementation Tools for Planned County Parks Projects*, No. 8. Interagency Partnerships). During these meetings, the Steering Committee may

recommend items to be updated, added, or removed in future revisions of this plan. Any updates or changes can be processed through annual updates of the Recreation Master Plan, if needed.

County Parks will formally evaluate and update the Recreation Master Plan every five years, including the following activities:

- Analyze, evaluate, and update the inventory of parks, trails, and recreation facilities and RecPrint map.
- Complete a new community survey and conduct public outreach, including the Recreation Steering Committee.
- Update the recreation needs assessment to reflect changes in the inventory and public survey results.
- Review and update planned parks, recreation, and trails projects and update the Recreation Master Plan and the RecPrint map, if needed.
- Evaluate funding sources and timing of projects, and adjust the implementation plan accordingly.
- Submit the updated Recreation Master Plan to the Board of Supervisors.