

THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Developed over the past 35 years with community partners, Marin County's parks and open space preserves are community treasures. With four regional parks and over 15,000 acres of protected open space that serve 2 million visitors annually, our lands contribute to our quality of life, making Marin County a desirable place to live, work and play.

But the parks and open space system faces new challenges. Park facilities and infrastructure need replacement and improvement. Our growing population of families needs better access and connectivity to our lands. Marin's long legacy of conservation has reached a critical turning point; remaining open space lands, including vulnerable wetlands, creeks and ridgelines, must be preserved for future generations.

To address these challenges, the Marin County Parks and Open Space Department collaborated with community partners to develop a Strategic Plan that sets the course for the revitalization of our parks and for the growth and stewardship of our open space system over the next ten years.

The Strategic Plan identifies five key themes based on community priorities and concerns:

- Care and stewardship of our lands must be the highest priority.
- Additional funding is needed to meet the increased demands of land stewardship, to sustain our maintenance efforts and to implement the Strategic Plan.
- Our parks must be upgraded to meet current and future recreational needs of our communities.
- While more than half of Marin is preserved, important ridgelines, creeks and wildlife linkages must be protected.
- Partnerships are essential to our success.

While the key messages blaze the trail for our vision, the Strategic Plan identifies seven overarching goals and corresponding strategies that will guide the renewal, revitalization, expansion and protection of our public lands. The Strategic Plan is comprehensive and includes a Land Conservation Plan, a Parks Master Plan, a Capital Improvement Plan and a Funding Plan, along with an Action Plan. The Action Plan outlines priorities for our work, direction to collaborate with our partners and the community to implement the Strategic Plan and options to fund our efforts. The Strategic Plan is aligned with the Marin Countywide Plan, the Marin County Strategic Plan and it builds upon the Marin County Open Space District's land preservation policies.

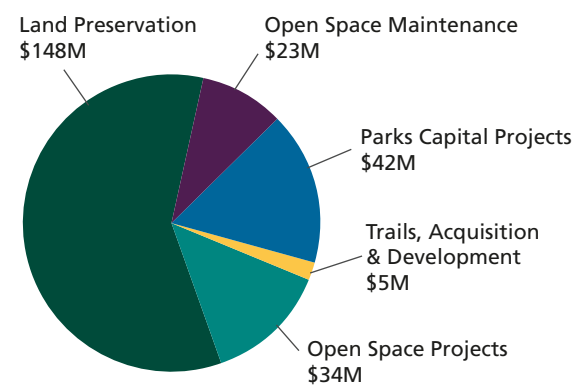
FUNDING PLAN

Essential to the implementation of the Strategic Plan is a funding plan to ensure goals can be met. The funding plan outlines all related costs and proposes a variety of finance strategies for land preservation, land stewardship, capital improvements and ongoing maintenance and operations work.

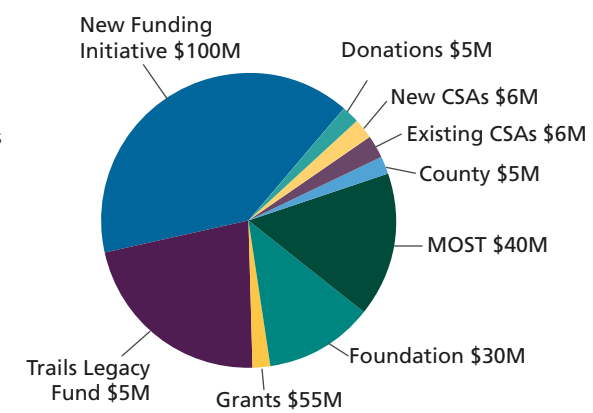
As capital improvements and land acquisitions occur, operating costs and maintenance expenditures will increase. The potential addition of more than 15,000 acres of open space, plus new park and open space facilities, will significantly impact maintenance expenditures. Improved management of natural resources also contributes to a need for additional funding.

The Department will employ a variety of funding sources to leverage the resources needed to support services and conservation, and will seek strategic partnerships to collaboratively pursue innovative financing solutions to build and care for the County park and open space system of the future.

Funding Requirements – 20 Years



Proposed Funding Sources – 20 Years



MARIN COUNTY PARKS AND OPEN SPACE STRATEGIC PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROTECT RESTORE GROW CONNECT



LAND CONSERVATION PLAN

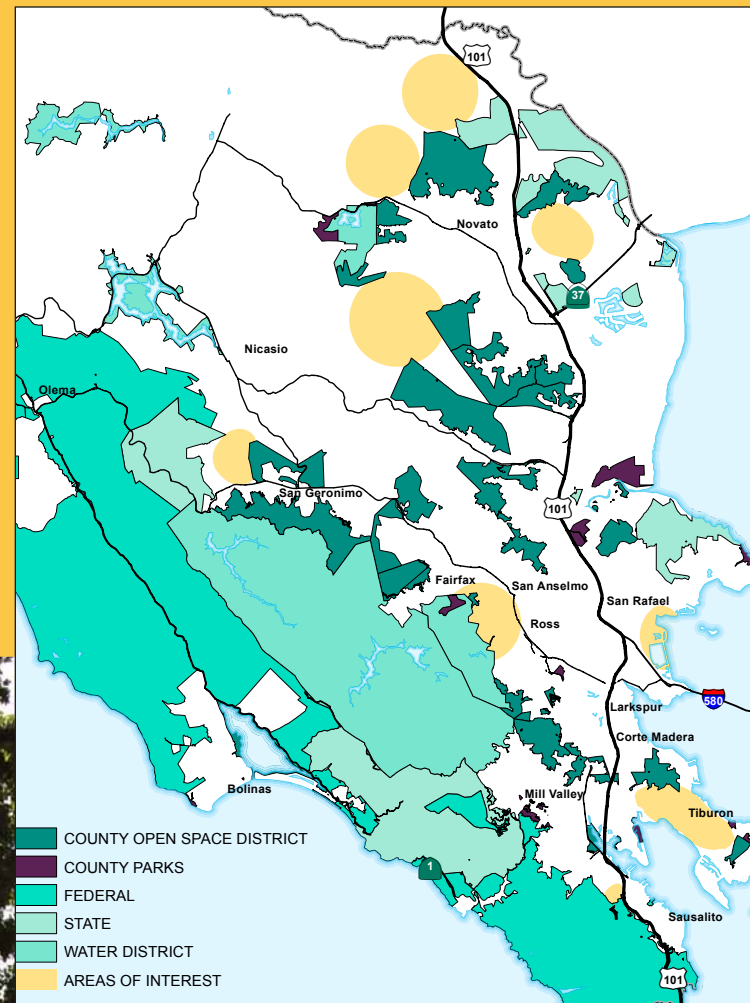
Marin County's conservation vision first declared in 1972 and reconfirmed in the 2007 Countywide Plan is nearly a reality. But there are several gaps in important lands and in the trail system to protect for future generations.

Examples of land at risk include Bowman Canyon in Novato, Bald Hill in San Anselmo and ridgelines in Tiburon. These areas are rich with natural assets, including:

- Ridges, which provide natural boundaries among communities, offer scenic viewsheds and promote wildland fire protection.
- Baylands, wetlands and creek habitats, which are increasingly scarce or threatened due to manmade and natural impacts.
- Other sensitive ecological resources, which provide wildlife habitats and corridors.

We will continue to exercise a variety of land conservation methods to protect vulnerable resources and to engage partners in our preservation efforts.

PROTECTED LANDS AND AREAS OF INTEREST



PARKS MASTER PLAN

The Parks Master Plan (PMP) envisions a dynamic park system. Based on community outreach and a formal needs assessment, the PMP identifies actions and specific improvements for each of our parks and landscape facilities that will provide different recreation experiences, increase access for all, revitalize aging facilities, develop programs and meet emerging needs of the diverse and aging population of Marin, including:

- Community and family gathering spaces.
- Playground renovations.
- New and rehabilitated picnic areas.
- Master Plans for McInnis, McNear's and Stafford Regional Parks.
- Community connectivity to our lands through bike paths, improved transit nodes and expanded education and outreach.
- New recreational facilities, such as swimming pools, water play areas, dog parks and sports fields.



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is an extensive, prioritized list of projected improvements to the parks and open space system for the next 20 years, and identifies \$76 million in capital projects.

- Parks Improvements include a range of projects to renovate existing facilities, to improve accessibility and to increase the diversity of recreational amenities.
- Open Space Stewardship includes a range of projects to improve habitats and natural resources, to conduct wildfire hazard reduction, to provide for road and trail improvements and to address other land management responsibilities.



STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK

GOALS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Protect and Restore Our Lands Protect, restore, and preserve the natural systems of the lands held in trust for current and future generations.	Grow and Link the County's Systems of Parks, Trails, and Protected Lands Complete the County's system of parks, open space, and trails. Support the efforts of other agencies, organizations, and communities to fulfill their land preservation and system goals.	Foster Discovery, Learning, and Stewardship Engage the community by providing volunteer and educational experiences for people to discover, learn about, protect, and restore their parks and open space.	Connect Communities with the Land for Recreation and Health Offer all people opportunities to be active and healthy while enjoying safe and well-maintained lands and facilities.	Lead, Innovate, and Partner Cultivate partnerships, explore new approaches, and adopt best practices and technologies.	Ensure Organizational Effectiveness Encourage innovative Department management and employee development.	Fulfill Financial Needs Achieve sustainable long-term financial viability to satisfy operational needs, capital requirements, and desired programs and services.

STRATEGIES

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Employ best land management practices that preserve natural resources, promote habitat diversity, and contribute to a reduction in greenhouse gases. 2. Inventory and monitor biological resources to develop, evaluate, and redefine management protocols. 3. Work at the watershed level to ensure diverse and thriving biological communities. 4. Incorporate habitat preservation strategies within flood control, fire protection, and other critical land management plans. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manage a prioritized land and trail acquisition, preservation, and improvement plan. 2. Implement the Parks Master Plan to respond to changing community needs and recreation trends 3. Incorporate data regarding value in land acquisition decision making, including habitat and creek connectivity. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop an outdoor education program that complements existing local programs. 2. Outreach to the community to increase access to and knowledge of our lands. 3. Grow the volunteer program to provide experiential learning opportunities that promote land stewardship. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide safe, quality recreation facilities and programming to promote healthy lifestyles through physical activity and to meet community needs. 2. Encourage innovative recreational programming at our facilities through partnerships. 3. Encourage alternative transportation access to parks and open spaces. 4. Encourage the use of parks and open spaces for active living and healthy lifestyles. 5. Ensure that accessible and inviting trails, parks, and open spaces connect communities. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Employ innovative technologies and best practices for Departmental administration, programs, operations, and land management. 2. Apply principles of green design and sustainability to our work. 3. Identify key partnerships to share best practices, technical knowledge, and expertise to implement plans and projects. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve communication and coordination among all divisions and management. 2. Initiate and encourage collaboration among staff and with other County departments. 3. Enhance staff productivity, empowerment, and satisfaction. 4. Involve all Department staff in implementing the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Secure new funding to support the preservation, enhancement, and long-term maintenance of parks and open space lands. 2. Manage the five-year Capital Improvement Plan to identify priority projects and funding needs. 3. Generate new revenues, maximize grant funding, and obtain funding from new sources to support park programs and services.
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VISION

The welcoming natural beauty of Marin's parks and open spaces . . . **great rolling headlands and deep redwood forests, solitary ridge trails, cascading waterfalls and wandering streams, white egrets rising gracefully over green marshlands, recreation areas filled with the laughter of children and families . . .** links people to the land, offering our community a rich source of personal discovery, joy, renewal, and health that inspires a deep sense of belonging and stewardship for generations to come.

DISCOVER YOUR OUTDOORS