

## CHAPTER 1

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### PURPOSE OF THE PARKS MASTER PLAN

This document is a long-range plan that guides the development, operation, and maintenance of the City's park and open space system. The master plan defines a balanced system of city-wide recreation facilities that will serve the City's entire population. It is intended to be a "living document" that is regularly used by City Staff, Commissions, and Council as a tool for planning and decision making.

### RELATED PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Several related planning documents have bearing on this Parks Master Plan.

#### General Plan

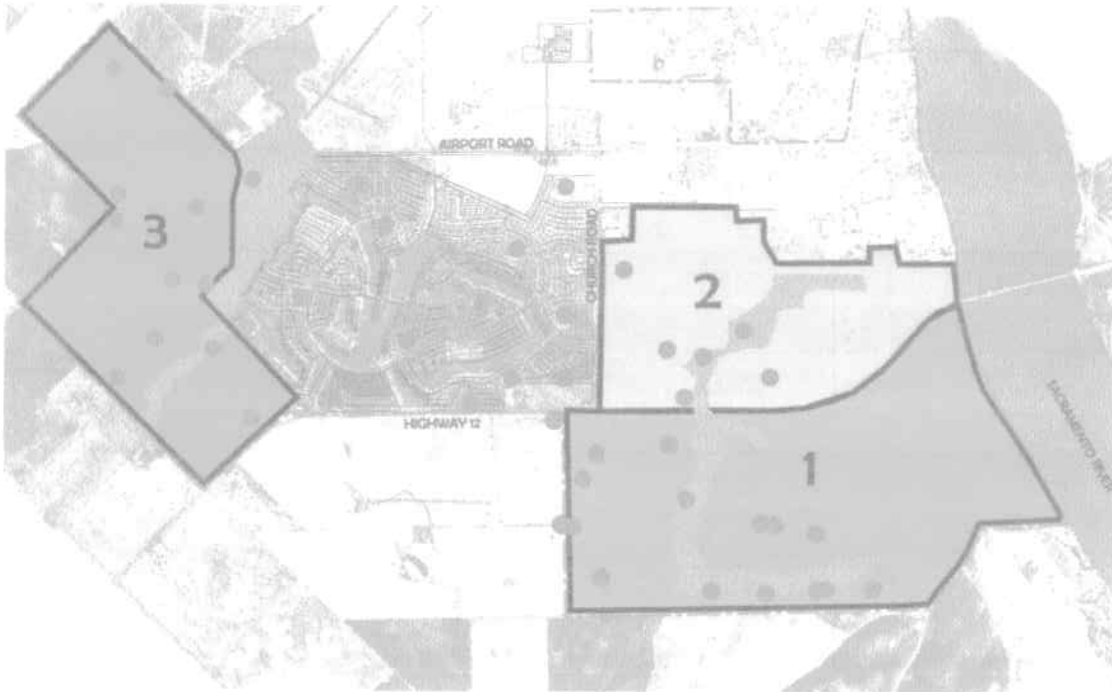
Preparation and regular updating of the Parks Master Plan is required by the City's General Plan. The policies contained in the General Plan create the basis upon which the Parks Master Plan recommendations are developed in greater detail. Chapter 9, "Open Space and Recreation", describes the existing park system; discusses the City's local and regional setting; establishes definitions of the various types of park and recreation facilities, establishes parkland dedication standards expressed as acres per 1000 population; establishes specific development standards for each park and recreation facility type; discusses siting criteria; and describes goals, policies, and implementing actions to guide the development of the City's park system. The General Plan established the following requirements:

- 3 acres of neighborhood parks per 1000 population
- 2 acres of community parks per 1000 population
- 1 mile of trail or 3 acres of trail corridor (at 25 feet wide) per 1000 population, whichever is greater

The General Plan also calls for the development of one new community park in each of three areas of future development and establishes trail design standards. See Figure 1 for a summary of the General Plan Open Space and Recreation Diagrams.

#### Comparative Facilities Study

The *City of Rio Vista Park and Community Facilities Comparative Study*, prepared June 8, 2004 by the Goodwin Consulting Group, Inc., presents an analysis of the provision of specific park and recreation facilities based on population served. The specific facilities relevant to parks and recreation analyzed by the Study are ball fields, multi-use fields, basketball courts, tennis courts, volleyball courts, trails, swimming pools, and community, recreation, and senior center facilities. The Study quantifies and compares the facilities provided in several other comparable communities, and recommends the quantities of individual facilities to be provided by Rio Vista at build out.



**LEGEND**

- Existing and Proposed Gas Well Sites
- Trail and Open Space Corridor Opportunities
- City Limit Line

**Future Community Parks:**

- 1** Rio Vista #1 and Del Rio Hills Target Area
- 2** Rio Vista #2, Homecoming and Riverwalk Target Area
- 3** Brann Ranch and Gibbs Ranch Target Area



Gas Well Site with Potential Contiguous Parkland

**PARK MASTER PLAN**

City of Rio Vista, California

**SUMMARY OF GENERAL PLAN:  
OPEN SPACE & RECREATION DIAGRAMS**

Figure 1

## **Park Needs Assessment**

The *City of Rio Vista Park Needs Assessment*, prepared August 14, 2001 by Gretchen Stranzl McCann, presents an analysis of recreation needs and goals as developed by the City of Rio Vista Recreation Commission in 2001. It then analyzes existing parks and school sites, and provides recommendations for each site based on the goals established by the Recreation Commission. The term “needs assessment” is somewhat of a misnomer, as the study develops action recommendations for each park site, rather than assessing the recreation needs of the community at large. The information presented in this study was reviewed during the preparation of this Parks Master Plan

## **Waterfront Area Specific Plan**

The City is currently in the process of developing a Specific Plan for the waterfront, from the Helene Madere Bridge to Main Street. This plan will evaluate the opportunities for incorporation of public park space and waterfront access into the development plan.

## **Army Base Reuse Plan**

Potential reuse of the Army Base site was addressed by the City in a study completed in 2002 by David Evans and Associates. The conceptual plan for the site includes several athletic fields and other public park improvements.

## **Bridge to Beach: A Path with a View**

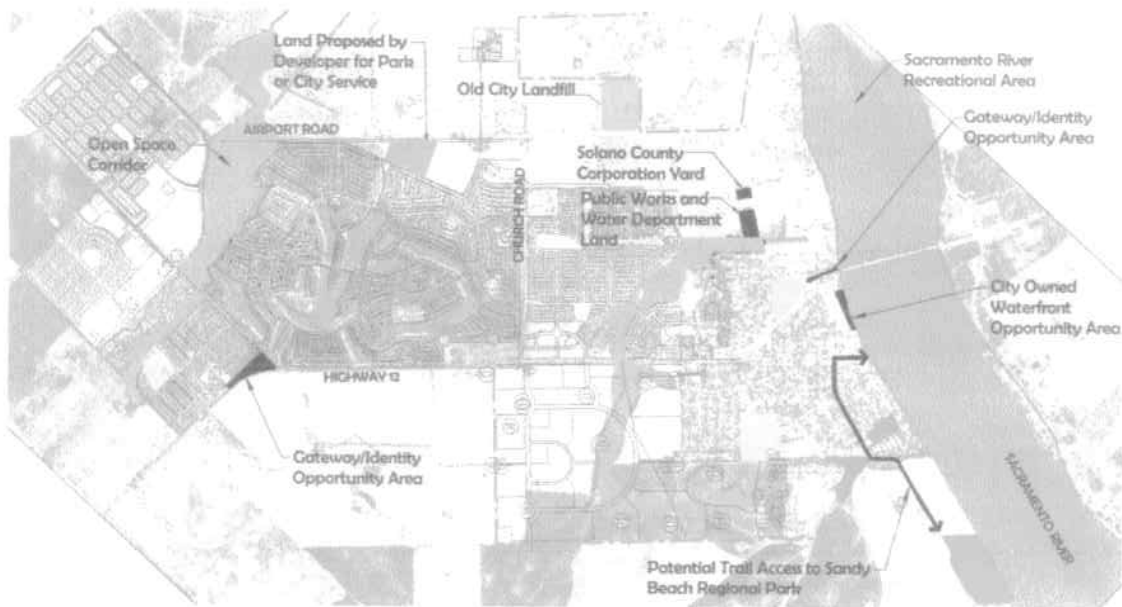
Establishment of a connected waterfront public access trail system from the Helene Madere Bridge to Sandy Beach Regional Park is being explored in an ongoing planning effort with the assistance of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) and the National Park Service Scenic Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA). A working group has been formed that has conducted a design workshop and prepared a working paper. *(Illustrations and text from this effort will be included in the Approved Parks Master Plan.)*

## **OPPORTUNITIES AND ASSETS**

Rio Vista is blessed with many opportunities for the creation of a premier system of park and recreation facilities. There are many underdeveloped assets that may be taken advantage of as the City moves forward. Figures 2 and 3 illustrate these opportunities and assets, which are described below:

### **The Sacramento River**

The river is central to the identity and image of the Rio Vista, the name of which literally is “River View”. The Sacramento River is the most significant open space resource in the City today. People are naturally attracted to the water’s edge. In Rio Vista, the water is both a scenic resource and one that is used for a number of recreational activities, including boating, fishing, swimming, and windsurfing. However, opportunities to enjoy the river are hampered by the lack of developed public access facilities. Provision of convenient and safe public river access that is sensitive to the natural environment and economic development of the downtown is a key opportunity.



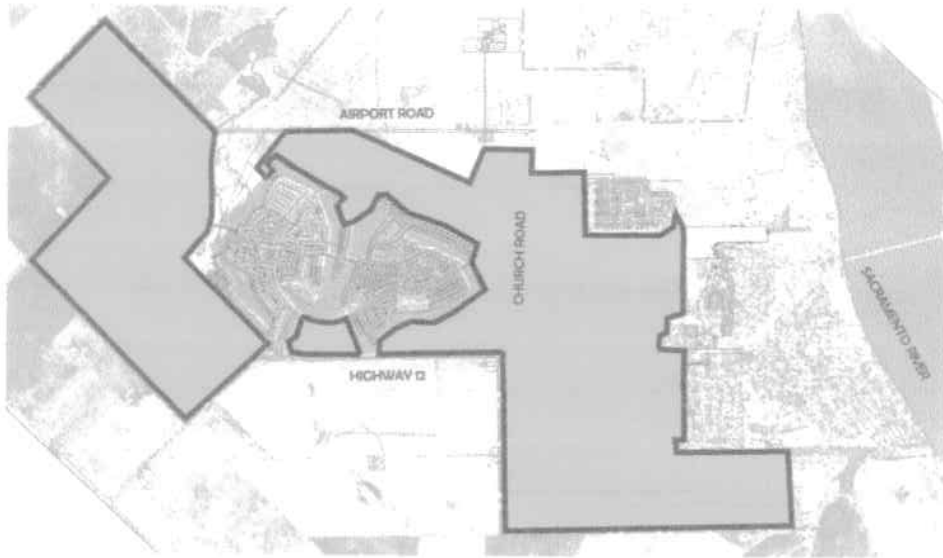
**LEGEND**

- City Limit Line
- Open Space Drainage Corridors
- PG&E/Caltrans Corporation Yards
- Rio Vista High School - Open Space
- Middle School - Open Space
- Army Reserve Base
- Existing Wetland
- Old City Landfill
- Land Available for Park or City Service Use
- Sandy Beach Regional Park

**PARK MASTER PLAN**  
City of Rio Vista, California

**PARK OPPORTUNITY AREAS**

Figure 2



- LEGEND**
- Future Development Areas
  - City Limit Line

**PARK MASTER PLAN**  
 City of Rio Vista, California

**FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AREAS**

*Figure 3*

## **Significant Open Space Resources**

In addition to its water resources, Rio Vista contains drainage corridors, the Montezuma Hills, and freshwater wetlands. These areas are assets worthy of protection. They are also an opportunity to provide public access for enjoyment and education/natural history interpretation. The drainage corridors present an opportunity for development of pedestrian and non-motorized linkages that can be used for transportation as well as recreation. These assets can be used to tie together a community that has been divided by roads, geography, and development patterns.

## **Undeveloped Land**

A large portion of the City is currently undeveloped. These lands are owned by subdivision developers who are currently planning the new neighborhoods. To take advantage of this opportunity, the City is actively engaged with the development community to craft subdivision plans that will include new parks and other recreational facilities to serve the community. Because the land is undeveloped, few physical constraints exist. Other undeveloped opportunity areas include the City-owned old landfill site on Airport Road, the City-owned industrial park, and the former Army Base reuse site.

## **Population Growth**

Rio Vista is expected to increase from the current population of approximately 7,000, to a build-out population of 24,000. Impact fees assessed on the new development will be a major source of financing for the parks facilities and other capital improvements needed to serve the new residents.

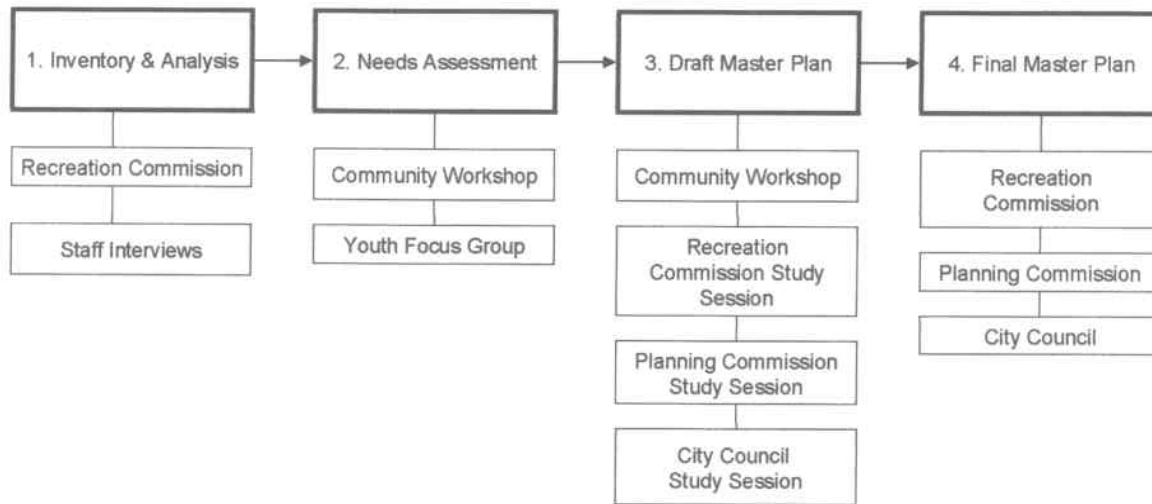
## **THE PLANNING PROCESS**

Planning for the long term recreational needs of the community included five main components:

1. Inventory and analysis of existing parks and recreation facilities.
2. Analysis of current and projected demand for recreational facilities.
3. Identification of goals and priorities to guide the improvement and development of the park system.
4. Development of action plan recommendations to be implemented over a 20-year timeframe.
5. Formulation of an implementation plan to quantify costs and funding sources for the development, operation, and maintenance of the parks system.

The planning process was structured in four phases, as illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Planning Process Diagram



## REGIONAL SETTING

Rio Vista is situated on the west bank of the Sacramento River, in Solano County, approximately 50 miles northeast of Oakland, and 50 miles south of Sacramento. The Helen Madere Memorial Bridge crosses the Sacramento River at Rio Vista and is a prominent local landmark. Rio Vista is relatively isolated from other developing urban areas and the surrounding undeveloped land is largely agricultural.

## KEY FACTORS

Rio Vista is a unique community. Several factors have direct bearing on the formulation of recommendations contained within the Parks Master Plan:

- Rio Vista is a city of opportunity, characterized by an abundance of underdeveloped assets.
- The City's adjacency to the Sacramento River creates much of its local character and identity.
- The City consists of three distinct geographic areas: the historic urban center; Trilogy, a gated senior community; and the remaining area within the incorporated limits, which consists of undeveloped land slated for subdivision development. Each of these three parts has unique park and recreation facility development needs.
- The City's population is expected to more than triple by the year 2025. The Parks Master Plan's recommendations are based on an anticipated build-out population of 24,000.
- Most of the population growth will occur in the new subdivisions in the form of suburban (single family) development, with a small percentage of the new development taking the form of multi-family housing. In addition, the population of Trilogy (an active adult community) is anticipated to increase by more than two-fold.

- Trilogy residents' need for traditional Neighborhood Parks is low compared to other residents. The Trilogy development provides for the neighborhood recreational needs with its own facilities. Trilogy residents can, however, reasonably be expected to use community-wide facilities located outside of Trilogy such as community and swim centers.
- New housing development will generate development impact fees and land dedications to provide for the recreation needs of new residents. By law, these monies may only be used to serve the demand for neighborhood park acreage resulting from future population growth, and to serve the demand for a portion of the community park acreage, trail acreage, and city-wide special facilities in a ratio equal to the proportion of new population relative to existing population.
- Rio Vista has historically provided few park and recreation facilities, perhaps as a reflection of the relatively small population base. The City provided very few organized recreation programs until the recent creation of the Recreation Manager position.

## **PARK CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM**

The Rio Vista park system is composed of several categories of parks and recreational facilities, each with a distinct function:

### **Community Parks**

Community Parks are large parks with a minimum size of 10 acres, and a desired size of 20 acres or more. Community Parks serve the needs of people from several neighborhoods or the entire city. Community Parks contain a wide variety of facilities for active and passive recreation, organized sports, and night use. They also provide facilities typical of Neighborhood Parks for use by the surrounding residents. Parks smaller than 10 acres but that contain facilities that serve the entire city may be classified as Community Parks. Rio Vista currently lacks a park that fits this definition. Although it is smaller than 10 acres, Egbert Field is classified as a community park by this master plan because it provides active sports facilities used by the entire community. Existing community parks include:

- Egbert Field

### **Neighborhood Parks**

Neighborhood Parks provide for the daily recreation needs of nearby residents, with primarily passive and informal recreation facilities. Such facilities often include play areas, picnic areas, open turf areas, basketball and tennis courts. Although the desired size is 4 to 10 acres, the City of Rio Vista General Plan establishes a flexible definition for Neighborhood Parks that permits them to be as small as 1 acre. Because active recreation use of Neighborhood Parks often creates noise, light, and traffic impacts on adjacent residents, any sports facilities provided should be limited to informal practice fields and hard surface playing courts. Some Neighborhood Parks, large enough to accommodate sports fields, such as little league and youth soccer, which do not require lighting, can be developed based on a detailed assessment of the impacts to the local neighborhood. Typically, facilities for organized sports should be located in Community Parks and/or a dedicated Sports Complex. In Neighborhood Parks, lighting should be limited to safety lighting, with the recreational amenities not lighted. Existing Neighborhood Parks include:

- Homecoming Park
- Val de Flores Park
- Brunavista Park
- City Park



- Drouin Park
- Old Airport Basketball Court

## **Village Greens**

Village Greens are small facilities, generally less than two acres in size, which accommodate the daily recreation needs of nearby residents. They typically include children's play areas, sitting areas, and limited green space, but are not large enough to contain play fields. Village Greens are typically developed as community design features or amenities, and in response to spatial constraints, as they are too small to provide the range of facilities and feeling of open space required to serve the needs of an entire neighborhood. Existing Village Greens include:

- Crescent Park
- Sierra Park

## **Special Facilities**

Special facilities are built structures that provide for indoor recreation and other community needs. These facilities typically serve a specific population group. This category includes community centers, senior centers, teen centers, community pools, and indoor gymnasiums. Existing Special Facilities include:

- Senior Center
- Youth Center
- Municipal Boat Ramp
- Fishing Pier
- Fishing Pier Park

## **Trails**

Trails are pathways serve multiple uses such as bicycling, walking, jogging, and rollerblading. The General Plan Chapter 8, Circulation and Mobility, proposes a system of on- and off-street bicycle trails to connect the entire city, as illustrated on the General Plan's "Trails and Pathways Map". The Open Space and Recreation Element of the General Plan requires the dedication of one mile of trail or three acres of trail corridor per 1000 population, whichever is greater. Rio Vista currently lacks developed trails or recreation corridors.

## **Open Space Areas**

Open Space areas are lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, open space, and public education. Rio Vista contains freshwater wetlands, the Montezuma Hills, and natural drainage corridors. These features are categorized as open space areas by the General Plan that present opportunities for trails and open space corridors. In Rio Vista, some of the designated open space areas contain wetlands and/or fall with the City of Rio Airport flight path restriction areas. These environmental and planning constraints will need to be considered when developing specific design options for the Open Space areas.

## **Regional Parks**

A regional park is a large park, typically organized around a significant geographical feature such as a lake, mountain, forest or coastline, and that serves several communities within a one hour driving time. Regional parks are typically

administered by the state, counties, or other park agencies rather than municipalities due to their large size and unique nature. The nearby Sandy Beach County Park, operated by Solano County, provides regional park facilities including picnicking, camping sites, and a boat launch ramp. The City of Rio Vista itself does not provide regional parks.

## **Sports Complex**

A sports complex is a specialized type of community park that provides for active recreation only. It serves the entire community. Twenty acres is considered to be the minimum size to accommodate several ball fields, off-street parking, and related support facilities.

## **ADA AND CPSC**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is federal legislation enacted to protect the rights of disabled people in employment, public accommodations, telecommunications, and state and local government services. The California State building code requires conformance with the ADA for all public buildings, parks, and outdoor spaces. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has established safety guidelines for public playgrounds. A survey of existing facilities for compliance with the ADA and CPSC is outside the scope of this document. However, it is clear that many existing parks will require improvements to play structures, picnic areas, drinking fountains, and parking areas to achieve compliance. The Action Plan chapter of this Parks Master Plan includes budgets for these improvements to existing parks.

## **ACTION PLAN**

The Action Plan (Chapter 3) contains specific recommendations for development and improvement of the City of Rio Vista park system. The action plan recommendations were based on careful analysis of existing conditions, assessment of demand, evaluation of opportunities for new facilities, and analysis of existing and future financing resources. Public participation played an important role in determining priorities for implementation.

## **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

The Implementation Plan (Chapter 4) provides estimated acquisition and development costs, describes potential funding sources, and discusses operation and maintenance.

## **MONITORING PROCESS**

This document is a flexible planning tool intended to be periodically reviewed and evaluated in light of changing conditions. The plan should be updated at approximately five-year intervals.

## **FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION**

Further planning is required for implementation of the projects outlined within this plan. The planning and design process will vary based on the unique requirements of each improvement project, but will typically follow a similar general sequence of activities:

1. Secure project funding.
2. Prepare master plan; receive public design approval.
3. Prepare environmental documentation.
4. Prepare preliminary design.
5. Prepare construction documents.
6. Construct the project.
7. Operate and maintain the facility.

Most improvement projects will require professional design and planning services. The entire planning sequence will be open to public review. The preliminary design phase will involve public participation to help determine overall direction and specific details. Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) will be required for each project.

Approval by the Recreation Commission, the City Council, and possibly the Planning Commission and School Board will be required. Public review and comment will be an integral part of these meetings. The public will be notified of all meetings and workshops through a variety of methods. Such methods may include posting notices at the project site, mailing out flyers, notifying homeowners' associations, and publication in the local press.