



Legislation Text

File #: 24-0766, **Version:** 1

Chief Administrative Office, Parks Division, recommending the Board:

- 1) Receive an update on the Parks and Trails Master Plan Update (Master Plan) process;
- 2) Direct staff to utilize the eight key themes resulting from outreach efforts to develop the remainder of the Master Plan;
- 3) Direct staff to complete the Master Plan, forgoing the option to contract out part of the work; and
- 4) Direct staff to return to the Board with a final draft of the Master Plan for consideration of adoption after a final review by the Parks and Recreation Commission.

FUNDING: N/A

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND

Pursuant to the Parks and Recreation Element of the General Plan, Policy 9.1.1.8, the County must prepare and implement a Parks and Trails Master Plan. The current Parks and Trails Master Plan was developed to provide a long-term vision and direction for the planning, implementation, and management of the west slope park and trail resources provided by El Dorado County, and was finalized in 2012. Given changes in El Dorado County over the last ten years, including implementation of many of the priorities in the Plan, the Plan is now outdated. The Board of Supervisor's included the completion of the Master Plan update in the 2024 Strategic Plan.

The updated plan will provide a roadmap for how the overall system of parks and trails will be developed and managed to reflect the fiscal constraints, relative priorities, and needs of the current and future County population. The scope of work for preparing the plan update focused heavily on community outreach and stakeholder feedback. Staff has involved the Parks and Recreation Commission for community engagement and for direction on project priorities, and completed a countywide survey.

On September 14, 2022, the County entered into an agreement with AIM Consulting, Inc. to conduct a portion of the outreach for the plan. Stakeholder meetings were held in October and November 2022, and a series of five public workshops were conducted in the Winter and Spring of 2023. Staff also assembled a Master Plan Advisory Committee in February 2024, composed of representatives from other agencies, and engaged the public in other more informal ways, all to gain insight into the parks and trail needs. This information has been compiled into a draft public outreach chapter, a version of which will be included in the final Plan. Other work on the plan to-date includes an updated parks inventory, review of existing County plans and other documents, research of demographic data and plans from local agencies that provide parks and recreation, and compiling this information into a draft existing conditions chapter, which will serve as the baseline from which to build the Plan.

The next steps for the plan will be to draft the remaining chapters of the Plan, which will include conducting a needs analysis, drafting park standards, goals, policies, and recommendations for funding and implementing improvements to programs and park and trail facilities. The new Plan will also create a schedule for pursuing recreation opportunities based on anticipated resources. This will ensure that the Plan itself is referenced when making future decisions on parks, and will provide a

roadmap for the Board of Supervisors and County staff.

Through the public engagement process, several needs related to neighborhood, community and regional parks were consistently identified. The parks needs expressed by County residents vary significantly depending on where they live and the types of recreational activities they prefer. Overall several themes emerged from these efforts:

- 1) **Open Space Trails:** The community wide survey, especially, showed the importance placed upon open space accessible for walking and enjoying nature, hiking, and unimproved, natural trails.
- 2) **Volunteerism:** Consistently throughout all forms of outreach, the community conveyed a willingness to volunteer to improve parks, maintain them, and organize themselves in support.
- 3) **Sports Team Fields:** Several concerns focused on the high costs for sports teams, field availability, travel time and lack of lighting at available fields, with a focus on the positive impact to youth as a result of sports team involvement. Youth Baseball and Softball were the highest priority.
- 4) **Special-use Trails:** Outreach effort results confirmed what Parks staff are already aware of: that there are several groups in the County with the need for different types of trails, specifically for walking, biking, and equestrians.
- 5) **Accessibility:** Common themes were ADA accessible spaces, including sports fields, water access points, and trails.
- 6) **Trail Connectivity:** Connectivity between existing trails, especially connections or expansion of the El Dorado Trail, including trails in other Counties or under other park providers, with an emphasis on open, maintained multi-use trails.
- 7) **Water Recreation Access:** Another theme was providing access to water, especially natural water resources including the Cosumnes and American River, for swimming, fishing, and other watersports.
- 8) **Facility Amenities:** Many survey results and outcomes from conversations concerned lighting, parking, drinking water, and access to restrooms.

Staff is recommending that the Board approve the eight themes noted above to be utilized to finish the development of the Master Plan. Staff anticipates bringing the Master Plan to the Parks and Recreation Commission for review, and then to the Board of Supervisors for approval and adoption this winter.

Staff is also recommending that the remainder of the plan development be done using existing County staff instead of contracting out these duties to a consultant. Staff are much more familiar with the specific needs of the County and have been very involved with the public outreach process. Additionally, staff will be able to complete this process in a more effective, and time and cost efficient manner.

ALTERNATIVES

The Board could direct staff to take some other action related to the Parks and Trails Master Plan update.

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Parks and Recreation Commission
Facilities Division
Planning and Building
Transportation

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no direct financial impact associated with this item.

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

N/A

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT

Public Infrastructure - Complete the Parks Master Plan - Presentation to the Board on the outcome of public outreach efforts.

CONTACT

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