



Mendocino County Parks Needs Assessment

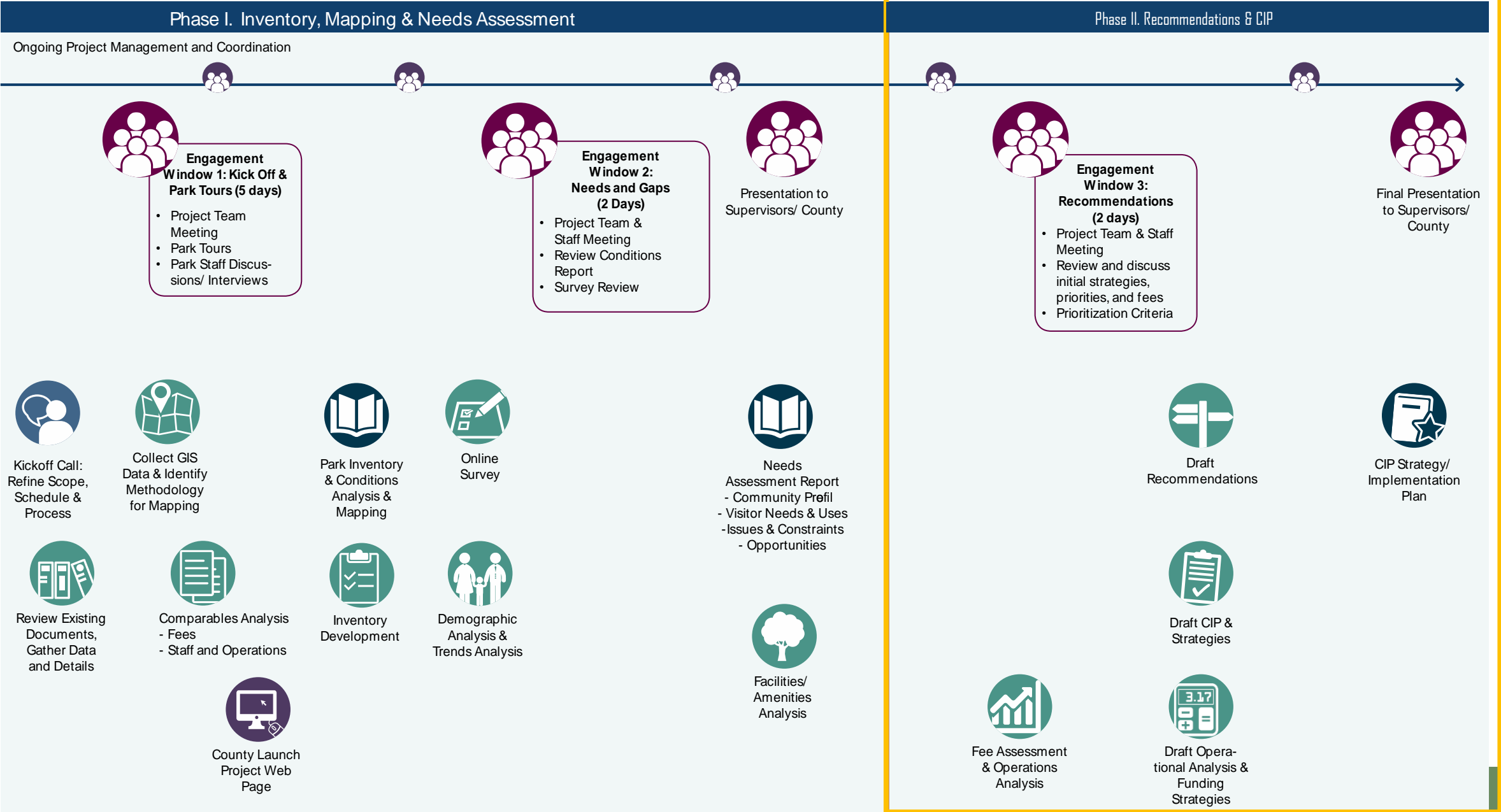
Overview and Phase 2 Kickoff

Board of Supervisors Meeting | August 31, 2021



Presentation Purpose

- Provide an overview of the Needs Assessment completed in Q1 2020
- Get direction for Phase 2 recommendation development
 - Understanding order-of-magnitude deferred maintenance, operations and improvements needed for the park
- Consider and discuss approaches to moving forward to inform Phase 2 work
 - County maintains, operates and manages all parks
 - County outsources operations as a concession-model, and/or with community partners; potential to sell or change ownership of parks
 - County divests all parks to some combination of local government, partners, BLM, etc.

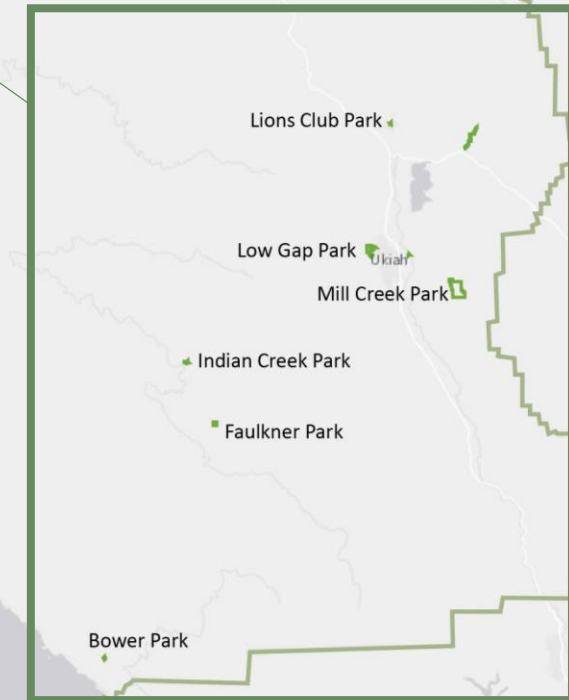
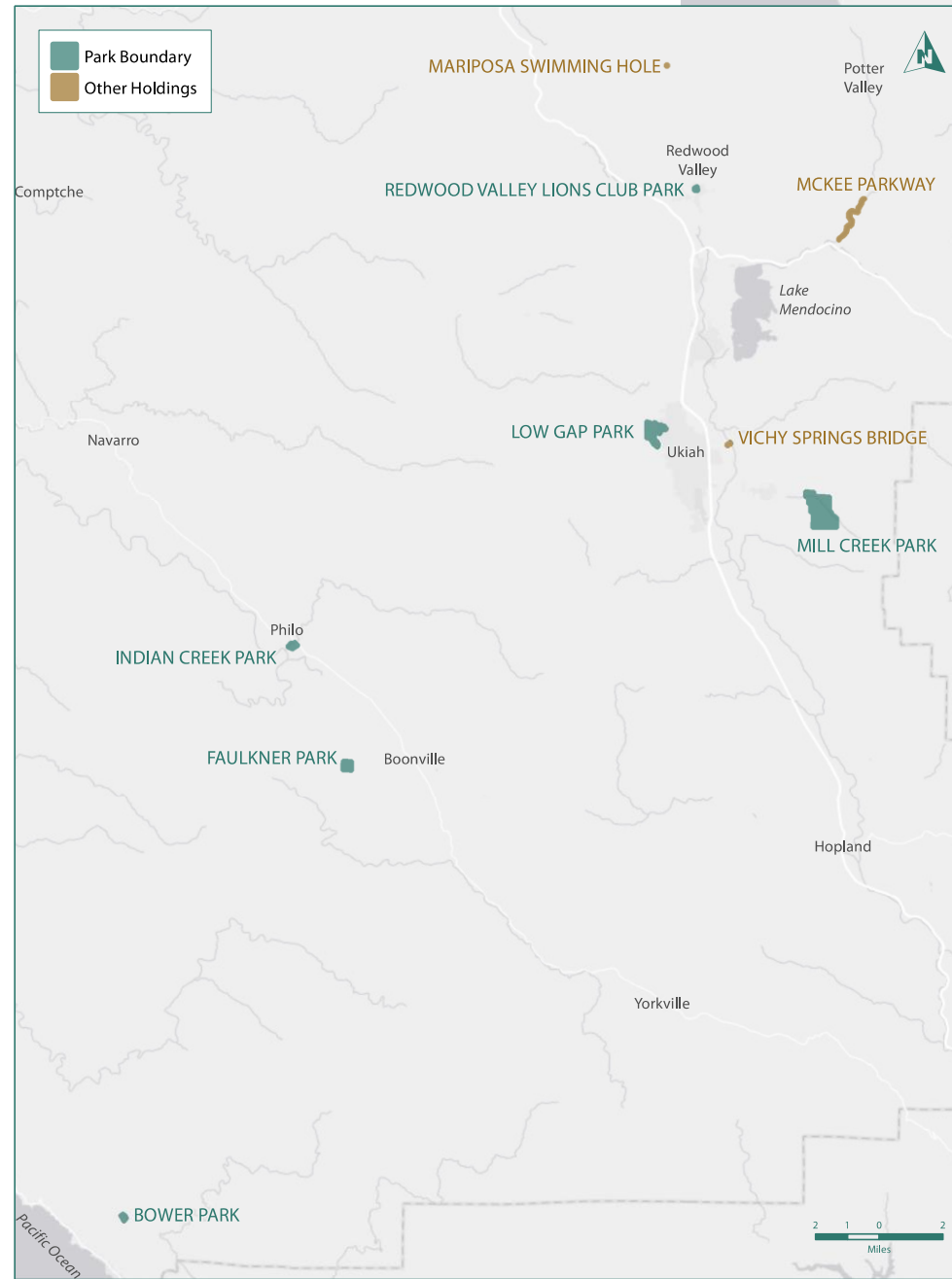


Needs Assessment Overview



About County Parks

- 6 Parks – 583 acres
- 3 unimproved access areas
- 3 Community Parks with dog parks, picnic areas, ball fields, playgrounds
- 3 Regional Parks, including trails, camping, picnic areas, fishing and swimming



Comparable Communities

County Name	# of County owned parks	Population 2017 (rounded)	County Size: sq. miles	Parks Acres	Budget	Revenue	Budget per acre	Type of parks	User Fees	Camping
Mendocino	6+3	87,000	3,878	583	\$220,000	\$21,000	\$377/acre	Community, Regional, Camping	Day Use, Rental Fees	Yes
Tehama	7	63,000	2,962	72+	\$ 55,081	\$11,932	\$765/acre	Neighborhood, Community Sports Field, Facilities	Rental fees	No
Lake	25	64,000	1,329	1,800	\$ 2,952,078	\$1,354,886	\$1,640/acre	Neighborhood, Community Sports Field, Facilities	Rental fees	No
Tuolumne	9	54,500	2,235	341	\$ 743,000	\$153,000	\$2,179/acre	Neighborhood, Community Sports Field, Facilities, Camping	Facility fees	Yes
Yuba	5	75,000	644	115	\$ 363,212	\$ 223,212	\$563/acre	Regional, Camping	Rental fees	Yes
Humboldt	17-20	135,000	4,052	900	\$913,438	\$525,366	\$1,014/acre	Regional, Boat Ramps, Campgrounds	Day Use & Rental fees	Yes

National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) Operational Risk Assessment

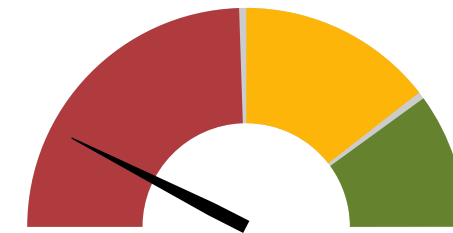
- “Your agency’s ability to deliver high quality park and recreation amenities and services to all members of your community in the future is at HIGH RISK.”
- Lack of funding to adequately implement necessary physical upgrades, replace failing equipment and amenities
- Inability to keep up with garbage and bathroom maintenance
- Increased fire and safety issues, particularly in more remote parks due to illegal fires, overgrown vegetation, and dying trees
- Low level of maintenance and staffing to support parks
- Inability to effectively collect fees for rentals, events, and day use

Park and recreation agencies across the country provide a vital service to an ever-growing population. Operations and maintenance funding, staffing, access, dedicated funding sources and accreditation all play a role in the success of a park and recreation agency being able to provide high-quality amenities and services. Agencies that do not meet those principles are at risk of being unable to serve all members of their community in the future.

Mendocino County

Aug 22, 2019

Based on the data you provided, your agency’s ability to continue delivering quality park and recreation amenities and services to all members of your community in the future is at:



HIGH RISK

Your agency's ability to deliver quality park and recreation amenities and services to all members of your community in the future is at **HIGH RISK**. Please review Page 2 to identify the factors leading to your agency's risk profile.

Learn more about the key principles behind NRPA Park Check at www.NRPA.org/Park-Check

The information presented in this NRPA Park Check report is based on agency data provided by the survey respondent. The validity of the results presented within this report depends on the accuracy and completeness of this data. © National Recreation and Park Association

Outreach Elements

- An Online Survey
- Community Meetings (Areas: Ukiah, Gualala, Laytonville, Fort Bragg, Anderson Valley)
- Park Needs Assessment Website
www.mymendocinoparks.org, describing the project, and providing the opportunity for community members to make comments, be involved, and join the e-mail list
- Library book mobile outreach throughout the county
- Announcements of all of the outreach activities on the City's website and Facebook page





Existing Parks Assessment

Bower Park

Community Park

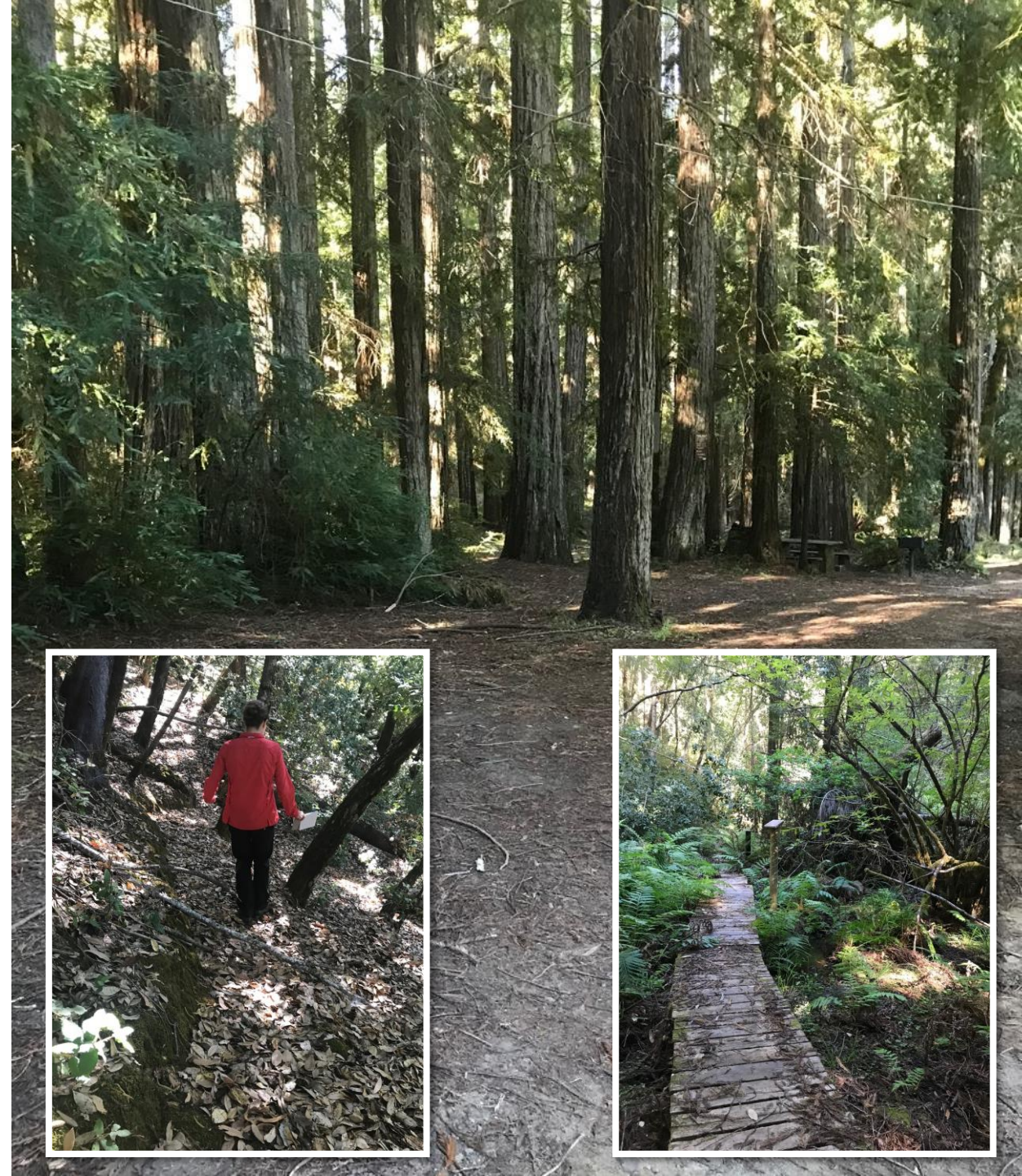
- Overall assessment: Very nice park setting, lots of space and ability to make a unique and special place.
- Concerns: Dying trees, poor maintenance, many facilities are in disrepair, hardscape throughout park cracking and potential safety issues
- General recommendation: Renovate the entire park including reorganizing activities to work better together, new master plan is needed for the park.
- Is this an active community park or more of a natural environment? Clarifying the character is important to focus future updates.
- Only community park in area.
- Coordinate with neighbor recreation project.



Faulkner Park

Regional Destination

- Overall impression: Beautiful location with amazing redwoods and potential location for camping. Out of the way unless you are in Boonville.
- Concerns: How can the County effectively maintain park? Not maintained and potential fire hazards with overgrown vegetation, trails underutilized, picnic areas are in poor repair. Parking and access needs improvement.
- General recommendations: Consider allowing overnight group camping only with reservation and/or summer camp (day/overnight?) establish as a refuge for firefighters in case of fire in area. Renovate natural areas, stream, and nature trail.
- Partner with Anderson Valley Fire + CalFire



Indian Creek Park

Regional Park

- Overall Impression: Beautiful spot for car camping with access to swimming hole and nice trail. Highest revenue of all parks.
- Concerns: Lots of social trails eroding landscape, inadequate bathrooms for camping, not clear registration system for day use. Illegal fires are a major concern. Fencing along creek and along property is in disrepair.
- General Recommendations: Establish a way to maintain and monitor park to reduce fire danger and improve fee collection, improve stream access, trails, and nature signage. Add an additional bathroom.



Low Gap Park

Community Park

- Overall Impression: Well used community park with potential for enhancements to amenities, reduction of impacts from use.
- Concerns: Some facilities needs to be replaced or updated (amphitheater, picnic shelter, care taker space, bridge) Some areas need maintenance, ecological restoration. Lots of social trails, overgrown brush and poison oak.
- General Recommendations: Focus on improving group picnic area and expanding opportunities for picnics with new restrooms, shade and facilities, do general maintenance, and work on enhancing trails with addition of bench and view spots. Restore creeks and habitat and reset frisbee golf course to reduce environmental impacts.



Mill Creek

Regional Destination

- Overall Impression: Beautiful regional/ community asset used well for fishing, swimming and group picnics. Trails to big views!
- Concerns: Remote location encourages late night partying and trash. Safety issues on certain parts of the dam. Port-a-potties are poorly maintained, bathrooms are dark and unappealing, wayfinding is lacking, lack of maintenance personnel for picnic rentals. Lots of social trails/erosion along lake.
- General Recommendations: Consider improvements along inside lake to improve access and reduce erosion, better awareness and maintenance system, add restrooms – potential chemical toilets, enhance trails and signage, add/improve individual picnic areas.



Lions Club Park

Community Park

- Overall Impression: Nice community park that appears well maintained and well used.
- Concerns: Bathrooms were badly vandalized 2019 but have since been repaired. The park is open 24/7 increasing potential bad behavior in standard offhours. Broken fencing along creek.
- Recommendations; Add shade areas, and replace porcelain fixtures with more sturdy bathroom fixtures. Bring back the dog park, provide more individual picnic areas and registration system for group picnic areas. Transform 2 half court basketball into a full court.



Mariposa “Swimming Hole”

Access Area

- Currently closed due to dangerous conditions created by the 2017 fires
- Located in recent burn area which impacted access (wooden steps) and trees.
- Adjacent to neighbors and housing
- Fencing is broken or damaged
- Inadequate parking - just off the road
- Old signage with warnings
- Dangerous access
- Large Drainage tunnel under road
- Appealing swimming area but tough to regulate or manage



McKee Parkway

Access Area

- Large parking area off of the road with ample access for a number of cars. There is a gate.
- Multiple access routes to water - mostly informal with some remnants of old cement stairs.
- Beautiful site, lots of poison oak.
- River is fast and dangerous with lots of large boulders with fast current
- There is a hint of a trail with signage for portage for boaters.
- No trash cans
- There are two pull outs off the road. One location has a portapotty and county park signs.



Vichy Springs Fishing Area

Access Area

- Large parking area off of road with relatively easy access to the Russian River
- Large beach area under road typically used for fishing.
- River appears to be wide and slow in this section which might allow for boat launching. Not clear what the river is like ahead.
- Lots of trash - not necessarily due to park in the parking area
- Historic location for homeless encampments



Policy & Operations Assessment

- A major concern for the county is establishing adequate funding and staffing for maintenance and operation of current and any future parks
 - Support events and rentals
 - Physical upgrades and enhancements
 - Garbage and bathroom maintenance
 - Fire and safety issues
- Need dedicated funding and people to manage parks
- Need an online reservation system
- Community partnerships (and volunteers) are critical!
 - Adopt A Park
 - Leverage activities
 - Create stewardship
 - Requires staff and oversight
- Strategic uses, fees, and operations are important
- Need a new model for bathrooms
- Potential for additional programs and community services!



Estimated Order-of Magnitude Costs

Operations | Ongoing Maintenance | Capital Improvement

Parks and Recreation Costs and Revenue

Costs

1. **Ongoing Maintenance Costs** – Annual cost for basic upkeep and management of park cleanliness based on typical use
2. **Capital Costs** – One time cost for replacement of amenities, renovations, or additions
3. **Operations Costs** – Ongoing costs for providing services and programs at the parks/facilities
4. **Deferred Maintenance** – Catch up with maintenance that has not been done on a regular basis

Revenues

1. **Rental Revenues** – One time fees for using facilities for a particular time, includes picnics, weddings, and family gatherings, etc.
2. **Program and Event Revenues** – Fees for classes, camps, or similar activity that can be ongoing or one time
3. **Special Use Revenues** – Fees for use of campground, fishing boat fees, or other special activity

Snapshot of Recent Costs

ACTUALS AVERAGE FY 2014-2017		(from county Info)
	Average REVENUE	Average EXPENSES
Bower	\$1,093	\$32,760
Lions Club	\$3,060	\$16,429
Low Gap	\$1,094	\$36,729
Faulkner	\$0	\$3,538
Indian Creek	\$16,371	\$12,967
Mill Creek	\$2,300	\$48,026
Mariposa Swimming Hole	\$0	\$1,247
MkKee Parkway	\$42	\$15,541
Vichy Springs	\$0	\$3,535
Total	\$24,081	\$161,897

These figures reflect:

1. **Less than 1 FTE** for Program, Recreation and Administration staff
2. 1 Maintenance Staff
3. Limited ability to generate or collect revenues
4. No programming of parks
5. Approximately 50 to 75% per acre less than similar county park systems

Estimated Ongoing Annual Maintenance Costs

TYPICAL ANNUAL MAINTENANCE			
	\$5,000	\$500	TOTAL
Bower	\$50,000		\$50,000
Lions Club	\$20,000		\$20,000
Low Gap	\$75,000	\$32,500	\$107,500
Faulkner	\$10,000	\$19,000	\$29,000
Indian Creek	\$25,000	\$5,000	\$30,000
Mill Creek	\$50,000	\$195,000	\$245,000
Mariposa Swimming Hole		\$175	\$175
MkKee Parkway		\$12,500	\$12,500
Vichy Springs		\$1,350	\$1,350
Total	\$230,000	\$265,525	\$495,525

- Estimated \$5000/acre for developed park area
- 1 FTE per 15/acre developed land
 - Approximately 2.5 FTE
- Estimated \$500/acre for natural areas
- Plan on an annual maintenance cost of \$500,000 +/-
- Includes some basic deferred maintenance

Estimated Capital Improvement Costs

	HIGH PRIORITY (health and safety, major infrastructure issue)	MEDIUM PRIORITY (Significantly improves park functionality, preserves asset)	LOW PRIORITY (Deferred maintenance, repair or minor improvements needed)
Bower	\$170,500	\$370,600	\$225,000
Lions Club	\$21,000	\$10,000	\$12,300
Low Gap	\$702,000	\$322,000	\$0
Faulkner	\$134,700	\$212,600	\$5,000
Indian Creek	\$165,000	\$7,600	\$5,000
Mill Creek	\$410,000	\$71,400	\$6,400
Mariposa Swimming Hole	\$23,500	\$0	\$0
MkKee Parkway	\$0	\$2,000	\$126,400
Vichy Springs	\$0	\$1,000	\$0
Total	\$1,626,700	\$997,200	\$380,100

- High priority: Health and safety and serious infrastructure needs
- Medium priority: Significant functionality improvement, potential revenue enhancement, preserves assets
- Low priority: Deferred maintenance or minor improvements
- These priorities will be refined but this is an idea of need

Operations Staffing Considerations

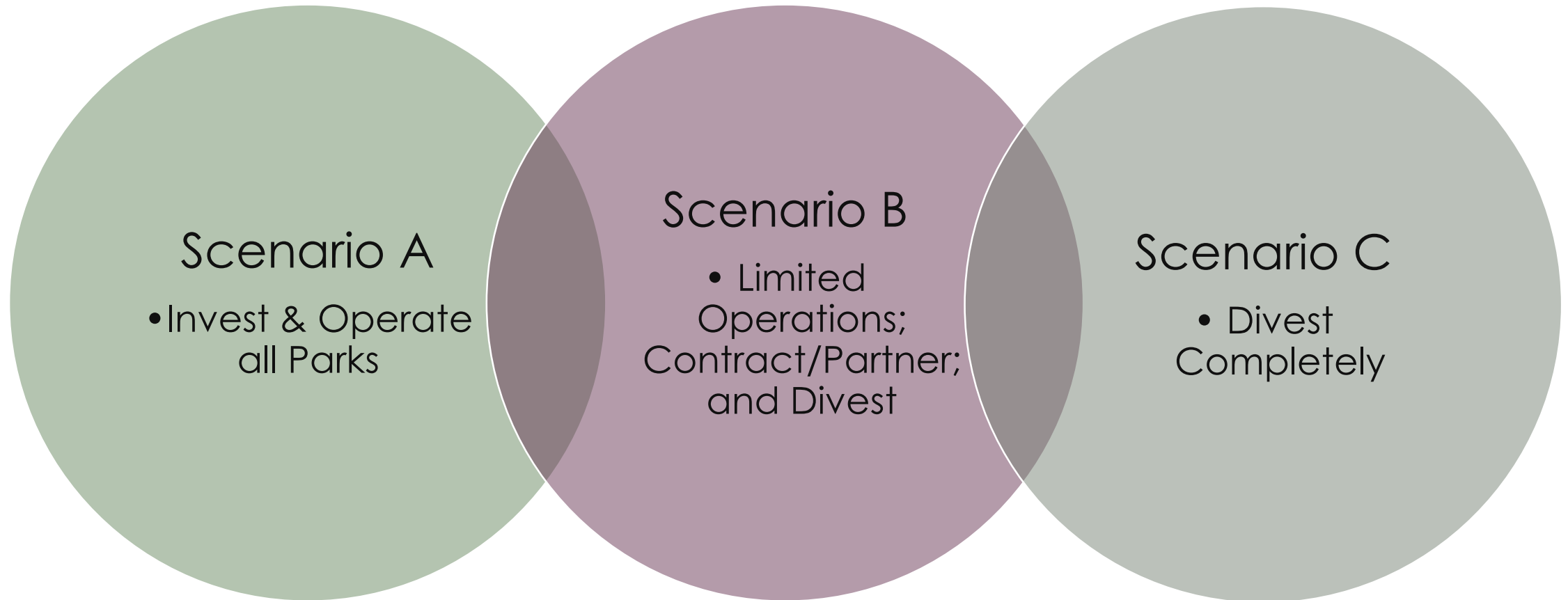
Programming, Rentals, Volunteer Management

- Operational models for recreation and services vary, but staffing at a minimum level is essential
 - 45% Maintenance; 34% Programming; 16% Administration
 - *NRPA's lowest average FTE for an agency = 15.9 or 4.5 per 10,000 residents (Not recommended for Mendocino but notable)*
- Programs
 - Can be provided by contractors and other providers or staff
 - Critical to activate and serve community
 - Revenue source
- Rentals
 - Typically managed by the government entity unless it is a specialized facility
 - Can use concessionaire when there are revenues available to offset costs: wedding venues, sports facilities, food, campground
 - Revenue source
- Volunteers must have oversight



+ 2-5 FTE

Scenarios to Consider





Questions and Discussion



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