

AMADOR COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

PARK AND RECREATION
MASTER PLAN

Presented to

Amador County Recreation Agency

A Strategy for Meeting Park and Recreation Service in
Amador County

Prepared by

MIG Inc.

November, 2006

BLANK SHEET

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

AMADOR COUNTY RECREATION AGENCY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mary Walser	Amador County Unified School District
Richard Lynch	City of Amador
Andrea Bonham	City of Ione
Rosalie Pryor Escamilla	City of Jackson
Patricia Shackleton	City of Plymouth
Bill Hepworth	City of Sutter Creek
Richard Forster	Amador County Board of Supervisors
Richard Escamilla	Amador County Board of Supervisors
Debbie Dunn	Volcano Community Services District
Tom Sheppard	Camanche Community Services Area

AMADOR COUNTY RECREATION AGENCY

Tracey Towner-Yep	Director
Julie Fisher	Program Coordinator

PREPARED BY:



Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc.
815 SW 2nd Avenue, Suite 200
Portland, OR 97204
(503) 297-1005

www.migcom.com

Jerry Draggoo
Project Manager

BLANK SHEET

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1	Public Input	1-2
1.2	Report Organization	1-2

CHAPTER 2: COUNTY PROFILE

2.1	Regional Context	2-2
2.2	Demographic Characteristics	2-3
2.3	Population Growth	2-4
2.4	Land Use	2-5

CHAPTER 3: EXISTING PARKS AND FACILITIES

3.1	Parkland Definitions	3-2
3.2	Parkland Inventory	3-4

CHAPTER 4: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

4.1	Assessment of Needs in General	4-1
4.2	Public Visioning Workshops	4-1
4.3	Adult Household Survey	4-3
4.4	Youth Recreation Survey	4-4
4.5	Parkland Needs	4-6
4.6	Recreation Facility Needs	4-14

CHAPTER 5: RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1	Parkland Planning Concept	5.1
5.2	Parkland Recommendations	5-2
5.3	Specialized Recreation Facilities	5-10
5.4	Park Design Standards	5-13
5.5	Administration and Management	5-22
5.6	Recreation Programs and Services	5-26

CHAPTER 6: FINANCING AND IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 Summary of Needs	6-1
6.2 Financing Strategy	6-1
6.3 Capital Facilities Plan	6-3
6.4 Maintenance and Operations Funding	6-4
6.5 Implementation	6-5

PREFACE

The Plan presented in this document provides the foundation for a park and recreation program for the residents of Amador County. Because of the small population base in the County, all of the five cities and the County itself have been challenged to meet even limited recreation services. To meet these needs, private organizations stepped up to manage organized sports and



Grover Park

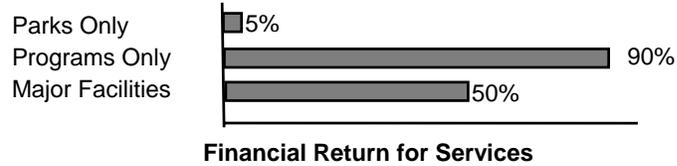
volunteer their time to assist in park and facility development. As the County began to grow, residents desired more in terms of park and recreation services. This is evidenced by the creation of a joint powers agreement that formed the Amador County Recreation Agency (ACRA). One of the first tasks this agency pursued was to develop a strategic policy for meeting future park and recreation needs. The outcome of this strategy is this document called the *Amador County Park and Recreation Master Plan*.

The challenge for this Plan is to define a strategic role the Agency should take in park and recreation services. Currently it provides limited recreation programs and park maintenance to some of the County park sites. Its primary role with the cities has been to provide professional advice on park operations.

This then, brings up the following questions:

- ***What programs and services should ACRA provide?***
- ***What would be the most efficient makeup of a park and recreation program?***

The major factors that determine the efficiency of a park and recreation program are: 1) the ability to generate revenue from services rendered; and 2) the cost to maintain facilities. While good design can help reduce operating costs, the greater impact usually comes from facilities and activities that generate revenue. The chart on the next page illustrates the potential revenue from three basic types of leisure services:



This Plan recommends a balance between parks, recreation programs, and major facilities.

The Plan has identified several key issues and actions the Agency should address in the near future. These are:

- **Community Support:** While the cities and the County have offered park facilities for many years, ACRA is new to the region and is seeking its proper place as a provider of park and recreation services. ACRA not only must build community support for its program but also demonstrate its ability to produce results. The Plan recommends a number of actions that should occur including speaking to all of the communities in the County on the benefits of park and recreation services and taking on the development of several major park facilities.
- **Park Maintenance Responsibilities.** In the long term the Plan recommends that ACRA assume park maintenance responsibilities for the cities. ACRA should take this on as contract services but will need to build a maintenance staff and demonstrate its ability to adequately care for the parks.
- **Park Rehabilitation:** Most of the parks in Amador County are limited either in size or the facilities they offer. The Plan addresses these needs and suggests a program of park expansion and rehabilitation.
- **Aquatics:** Some parts of Amador County are not served by a public swimming pool. The Plan recognizes where these needs exist and suggests appropriate locations. It also suggests the development of several water playgrounds that can meet some of the outdoor splash needs at a much less cost.

The Plan also assessed the need for an indoor swimming pool. The recommendation was the development of a small regional indoor leisure pool. However, because of its cost, it would need to be funded and managed by a regional taxing authority such as ACRA. The capital cost of this facility was not included in the first six-year capital facilities plan.

- **New Parks:** Most of the cities in Amador County will need 1-2 additional parks in the future. Many of these parks will require community park status in order to meet sport field needs.
- **Recreation Programs and Services:** Recreation classes and programs provide a considerable benefit and reach a significant number of county residents. Because program fees can offset some of the cost of these services, the net cost to ACRA can be minimal. Because of these factors, ACRA should develop a comprehensive recreation program that serves all age groups and abilities; and is self sustaining..
- **Partnerships:** ACRA cannot and should not provide all of the recreation services needed in the region. It is important for ACRA to monitor community needs and note where voids exist. One way of efficiently providing more park and recreation services is to partner with private and non-profit organizations.
- **Plan Update:** Because Amador County is expected to grow significantly in the next few years, and ACRA is new as an agency, the Plan should be reviewed and updated in approximately four years. This will give the community time to review the effect of ACRA and clarify its roles and responsibilities.



CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In October 2003, the Amador County Recreation Agency (ACRA) was formed as a joint powers authority consisting of Amador County; the Amador County Unified School District; the cities of Amador City, Lone, Jackson, Plymouth, and Sutter Creek; and the Community Services Districts for Volcano and Camanche. Together, these agencies represent the recreation needs in the County.



Excluding the 652 square miles of land in the County that is occupied by the Eldorado National Forest, there are only 278 acres of land that is used for urban recreation and open space purposes. Many of the 30 urban parks are very small in size and offer limited recreation opportunities. With a limited inventory of parkland and a growing population, the need for more areas to support recreation activities will continue to grow.

In the summer of 2006, ACRA recognized the need to develop a regional plan for park and recreation services by initiating the preparation of the ***Amador County Park and Recreation Master Plan***. This document contained herein assesses the current inventory of parks, assesses the need for additional recreation areas and facilities, and develops a plan to meet those needs. The final chapter in this report is a financing strategy to fund needed improvements.

Unlike many communities in the Sacramento area, parkland in Amador County is still available. However, as the region continues to grow opportunities will be lost to other land uses. This is why it is important to designate and acquire parkland while it is still available. The Park and Recreation Master Plan will help identify those opportunities and create an overall vision for meeting recreation needs.

As new residents move into Amador County, they will bring with them their recreation values and perceived needs. As a result, ACRA and the existing communities can expect increased demand for parks, recreation facilities and new program services.

1.1 PUBLIC INPUT

To develop a solid foundation for the Park and Recreation Master Plan, Amador County residents contributed to the development of the plan in the following ways:

- **Adult Survey:** A self-administered questionnaire was distributed throughout the County at random public places including the Fair. Respondents were then responsible for mailing or delivering them to the ACRA Office. A total of 257 responses were received.
- **Youth Survey:** A youth recreation survey was sent to 7th and 10th graders at Amador High School, Argonaut High School, Lone Jr. High School, and Jackson Jr. High School. Conducted during the month of June, a total of 187 questionnaires were returned.
- **Public Visioning Workshops:** During the summer of 2006, a series of Public Visioning Workshops were held to identify recreation issues and needs. Eight meetings were held in the communities of Lone, Pioneer, River Pines, Jackson, Sutter Creek, Plymouth, and Camanche (two meetings were held in Sutter Creek due to a small turnout the first time). A total of 186 residents of the County participated in these meetings.

1.2 REPORT ORGANIZATION

The Park and Recreation Master Plan is organized into six chapters:

- **Chapter 1: Introduction** describes the purpose of the report, the planning process, the public involvement activities, and the organization of this document.
- **Chapter 2: County Profile** discusses the setting of Amador County as it relates to park and recreation services and needs. This includes a discussion of the planning area and demographic characteristics.
- **Chapter 3: Existing Parks and Facilities** summarizes the park and facility inventory and analyzes parkland within the various communities.
- **Chapter 4: Needs Assessment** presents an assessment of parkland and recreation facilities.
- **Chapter 5: Recommendations** includes recommendations for improvements to existing parks and for the acquisition and development of new sites and specialized facilities. It also introduces strategies for recreation programming and the administration and maintenance of parks and facilities.

- **Chapter 6: Implementation** identifies a financial strategy to fund capital improvements and operations of ACRA.