



**City of St. Helena
Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting
Monday, March 16, 2026 @ 5:30 PM
Carnegie Building - Second Floor
1360 Oak Avenue**

PLEASE NOTE: Any person who wishes to speak regarding an item on the agenda or make a comment under the "Oral Communication" portion of the agenda may do so, but please observe the time limit of four minutes.

Members of the public or other parties are welcome to email their comments to the Staff Liaison, Ashley Sylvester at asylvester@cityofstheleena.gov. All public comments must be received three hours prior to the meeting. Public comments received after the deadline will be attached to the item the next business day or soon thereafter. Public comments will not be read out loud but will be publicly available and attached to the online agenda.

Page

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

Commission Chair: Doug Boesch

Vice Chair: John Thompson

Members: Julie Jenanyan, Denise Nelson, Stephanie Smithers

Staff Liaison: Ashley Sylvester, Director of Community Services

3. PUBLIC FORUM:

An opportunity for the public to directly address the Commission on items of interest to the public that are not listed on the agenda. Any person addressing the Commission should provide his or her name and address, and limit comments to four minutes. Because of restrictions imposed by **the Brown Act, the Commission may not engage in substantive discussion, nor take action on matters not described on the agenda.**

3.1. [Public Comment - Tracy McBride](#)

[Public Comment Rachael Clark](#)

5 - 7

4. REPORTS BY STAFF AND COMMISSION

Reports by staff and/or commission on items of general interest. Brief questions for clarification may be posed and answered, and Commission may request that items be placed on a future agenda. Except under certain circumstances, **the Brown Act prohibits any other discussion or action by the Parks and Recreation Commission.**

4.1. Park Maintenance Update

4.2. Community Services Update

[Community Services Update PRC 3.16.2026](#)

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5. CONSENT CALENDAR:

Members of the Parks and Recreation Commission or the public may ask that

any items be considered individually for purposes of considering alternative action, for extended discussion, or for public comment. Unless that is done, on motion may be used to adopt all recommendation actions.

- 5.1. Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes of January 20, 2026 11 - 12

[Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes- January 20, 2026](#)

6. SCHEDULED MATTERS:

- 6.1. Gordon Huether Art Project 13 - 82

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA project

Prepared By: Ashley Sylvester, Director of Community Services

[Staff Report - Gordon Huether Art Project](#)

[Public Comment- Lana Ivanoff.](#)

[Public Comment Mariam Hansen 2](#)

[Public Comment Mariam Hansen](#)

[Public Comment Susan McWilliams](#)

[Public Comment Kimberly Phinney](#)

[Public Comment - Michelle Covell](#)

[Public Comment - Pat Friday](#)

[Public Comment Martha Angus](#)

[Public Comment Beth Novak](#)

[Public Comment Claudia Beck](#)

[Public Comment Jordan Coonrad](#)

[Public Comment Kelly Wheaton](#)

[Public Comment Leslie Dunlap](#)

[Public Comment Maria Criscione Stel](#)

[Public Comment Michael Haley](#)

[Public Comment Sandra Jane Weissmiller](#)

[Public Comment Patti Antonaccio](#)

[Public Comment Kristina Young](#)

[Public Comment Laurie Joyce](#)

[Public Comment Pat Friday 2](#)

[Public Comment Dot Varland](#)

[Public Comment John Pedersen](#)

[Public Comment Kathy Pimpan](#)

[Public Comment-Carolyn Bond](#)

[Public Comment Erin Przybylinski](#)

[Public Comment Thomas W. Allen](#)

[Public Comment Elaine de Man](#)

- 6.2. Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan Recommendation 83 - 523

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA project

Prepared By: Mara Strickler, City Librarian

Recommendation:

Provide feedback regarding key findings and final draft of the Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan. presented by BluePoint Planning.

[2.19.26 St. Helena Parks Master Plan](#)

[St. Helena Parks Master Plan appendices](#)

[2.19.26 St. Helena PRT Plan Exec Summary](#)
[3.16.26 St. Helena PRT Final PRC Meeting](#)
[Staff Report - BluePoint Planning / Parks and Recreation Master Plan Recommendation - Pdf](#)
[Staff Report - BluePoint Planning / Parks and Recreation Master Plan Recommendation - Html](#)

6.3. Ad- Hoc Subcommittee Updates

525 - 527

[2025-26 Goals and Committee Assignments](#)
[PRC 2025-26 Park Assignments](#)

7. ADJOURNMENT

The next regular Parks and Recreation Commission meeting is scheduled for April 20th at 5:30 p.m., Carnegie Building, 1360 Oak Avenue.

This agenda was posted at City Hall, 1088 College Ave and 1360 Oak Avenue on March 13, 2026.

Ashley Sylvester, Director of Community Services

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in the meeting, please contact City Hall at (707) 967-2792. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting (28 CFR35.102-35.104 ADA Title II). However, City staff will attempt to assist at any time with accessibility.



For Parks and Rec Meeting 3/16, Public Comment on MOB and Tree of Heaven

From Tracy McBride <tracymcbride22@gmail.com>

Date Sun 3/15/2026 3:49 PM

To Doug Boeschon <Doug@boeschenvineyards.com>; City Clerk <cityclerk@cityofsthelena.gov>

Hello Commissioner Boeschon and City Clerk,

Tree of Heaven:

I'm sure you are aware of the invasive Tree of Heaven. If you are unfamiliar with these resources, I highly recommend you view this:

- UC Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR), <https://ucanr.edu/blog/pests-urban-landscape/article/invasive-pest-spotlight-tree-heaven>
- California Invasive Plant Council, <https://www.cal-ipc.org/plants/profile/ailanthus-altissima-profile/>

A key element to removal of this tree, from UC ANR: "Simply cutting or pruning this tree triggers the growth of new suckers that can emerge up to 50 feet away, leading to rapid and uncontrollable spread."

This tree is in our parks, residential gardens and roadways. I believe there may even be one growing on the smaller Pope St bridge near Allison Ave. Kindly alert who should be aware of this.

Also, besides being invasive, this tree attracts very damaging pests to home landscapes and agriculture. Will you have a similar information session on this invasive tree? While the arborists at the City may be fully aware of this tree and its attributes, much of the public may not.

Mediterranean Oak Beetle (MOB):

I hope you will widely advertise the 4/20/26 discussion about this oak damaging beetle to our community. Since many oaks are on private property, it is important that we all work together to reduce the impact of this disease. While it may seem this is beyond the scope of the Parks and Recreation commission, you are the ideal body to educate our community. Think back to the Signorelli Oak Tree which was removed due to MOB last year. One outcome was to bring knowledge to owners with Valley Oak trees, so that they can help reduce this disease.

Thank you for your consideration. Communities are stronger when we work together.

Tracy McBride,

Phone: 510-517-6202

email: tracymcbride22@gmail.com

Subject: Support for Small Dog Meet-Up Time at St. Helena Dog Park

Dear Parks and Recreation Department,

I'm writing as a St. Helena resident and regular participant in the Sunday small dog meet-up at the College Avenue dog park. For the past year, around 20–30 small dogs and their owners have gathered informally each Sunday from 9:30–10:30 a.m. It has become a wonderful little community where small dogs—many rescues or timid pups—can safely socialize and build confidence.

I've written several posts on Nextdoor over the past year about how positive this group has been for both the dogs and their humans. My own small dogs, Ollie and Bodie, absolutely look forward to Sunday mornings and the chance to run and play with their little friends.

Unfortunately, this past Sunday there was a confrontation by some large dog owners that created confusion and stress for everyone involved.

To help avoid future conflicts and keep the park safe and welcoming, I support Tamara and Beverly's request to designate specific small-dog times, including the existing Sunday 9:30–10:30 a.m. gathering. We understand a large dog group typically meets at 10:30 a.m., so this schedule has naturally worked well.

Many St. Helena residents have expressed appreciation for this weekly gathering and the sense of community it has created.

This small Sunday gathering has become a beautiful example of neighbors supporting one another and creating a safe place for their dogs. I hope we can work together to preserve that spirit while ensuring the park remains welcoming for everyone.

**Warm regards,
Rachael Clark
St. Helena Resident
Ollie & Bodie 🐾🐾**

Community Services Update

- Spring/Summer Recreation Programming
- Recreation Department Staffing- Open Position
- Special Event Calendar
- Community Forest Update
- Volunteer Service Award
- Youth Commissioner

**City of St. Helena
Parks & Recreation Commission
Special Meeting
Tuesday, January 20, 2026 @ 5:30pm
Carnegie Building-Second Floor
1360 Oak Avenue**

1. Call to Order: 5:30pm
2. Roll Call
 - Chair: Doug Boeschen
 - Vice Chair: John Thompson
 - Members: Stephanie Smithers, Julie Jenanyan, Denise Nelson
 - Staff Liaison: Community Services Director Ashley Sylvester
3. Public Forum
 - No Public Forum
4. Reports by Staff and Commission
 - 4.1 Park Maintenance Update
 - Carlos Uribe said that the public works crew completed the re-opening of Hunt after the barrel tree.
 - The Parks team completed Arbor day on Dec. 11th. Rec program TK after school program were present to help the crew plant trees.
 - PW will be working on the planting at the Money Way lot.
 - Update on the
 - Little league steering committee will be next week with representatives
 - 4.2 Community Services Update
 - Sesquicentennial Celebration was presented by community member co-chairs to council with a list of events and celebrations for the year
 - Community Forest and Ashley will be working with them about the community forest
 - Parks, Recreation and Trail Master Plan presented by Mara, explained the meetings with the advisory group and the presentations that will be provided to city council
5. Consent Calendar
 - 5.1 Parks & Recreation Commission Special Meeting Minutes of December 8, 2025
Motion to approve: Smithers ; Second: Jenanyan
Approved: Unanimous
6. Scheduled Matters
 - 6.1 Signorelli Tree Discussion and Tree Update
 - Carlos explained the Tree Form Guide
 - Elm Tree Tunnel removed everything that was there, re planted all trees that were donated by the beautification foundation

Public Comment: Tracy asking about safeway trees, carlos explained they have been unsuccessful with safeway but are trying their absolute best

6.2 Recreation Services 2025 Recap

- Director Sylvester explained the programs and the participants they now have
- She went over sports, camps, special events and program during the year

Public comment from Deanna Griffin

6.3 Volunteer Program

- Staff provided update on current status of the volunteer program
- Ashley worked volunteer when she first started but at the time there is no capacity for the volunteer program in terms of staffing
- Looking to see if there is a way to hire someone for 10-15 hours a week for a volunteer program
- Looking to assign a staff to take over items such as these
- Staff will be working with other departments for volunteers to be utilized across the city

- Public Comment- Tracy McBride

6.4 2025-2026 Commission Meeting Calendar

- Ashley presented a list of upcoming dates through July
- Meetings will be set for the current commission members through their term ending June 30, 2026

6.5 Ad-Hoc Subcommittee Update

- Commissioner Nelson working with staff to host Shakespeare in the park!.
- Commissioner Jenanyan explained that they are working on a 150th anniversary community art project they met with Nimbus Arts and explained it needs to be funded

6.6 Park Assignments

- No park assignment updates
- Adjournment: 8:08pm

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Doug Boesch, Commission Chair

Ashley Sylvester, Community Service Director



Agenda Report to the Parks and Recreation Commission

Agenda Section: SCHEDULED ITEMS

Department: Recreation

DATE:	March 13, 2026
FROM:	Ashley Sylvester, Director of Community Services
SUBJECT:	Gordon Huether Art Project
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Staff recommends the commission support for the proposed artwork to be loaned to the City of St. Helena until December 2027.
PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:	On February 10, 2026, City Council directed staff to pursue an agreement with Gordon Huether on proposed artwork being loaned to the City of St. Helena. On March 10, 2026, Staff brought the item back to council with locations, artwork, and contracts proposed for the City of St. Helena to enter an agreement with Gordon Huether for the loan of 13 art piece to display throughout St. Helena on private and city property. City Council approved the contract with Gordon Huether and directed staff to bring the proposed art to the Parks and Recreation Commission.
STATEMENT OF THE PURPOSE:	To present the proposed Gordon Huether art loan program to the Parks and Recreation Commission for review and consideration of thirteen (13) art pieces proposed for placement at various locations throughout the City of St. Helena.
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	<i>The art pieces are on loan from the artist. The artwork has a total cost of approximately \$550,000. The city has allocated funding of a limit not-to-exceed \$20,000 for the installation associated with all art pieces.</i>

BACKGROUND:

The loan arrangement allows the City to feature professionally created artwork while minimizing acquisition costs. The pieces will be displayed for a defined period of time and may be relocated or removed in accordance with the terms of the agreement. The loan of the city of several pieces of art allows for wide distribution.

Since the city has been given access to several identical pieces (Barrel Rings) of art, they are being prioritized for public and private properties along hwy 29. The city requested some private property owners along Hwy 29 which were both highly visible and had safe egress points to host pieces of art. Pieces on private property expands opportunities for the placement of art that contribute to the visual and cultural experience of the community.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Huether is a Napa Valley–based artist whose work has been widely exhibited in public spaces. The agreement with Mr. Huether will allow the City to display these works on a temporary basis as part of the City’s public art efforts. Together, these agreements will enable the City to coordinate the installation and display of multiple art pieces throughout St. Helena, expanding opportunities for residents and visitors to experience public art within the community

The current effort to install art capitalizes on the opportunity and will hopefully generate community interest and investment of time and money into public art. This project additionally aligns and is consistent with General Plan Implementation Action AC1.C “Adopt an Art in Public Places program and ordinance to ensure that public art projects occur efficiently and in a way that meets citywide objectives.”

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW: Not applicable.

GOAL:

Goal 4: Provide Effective Community Information & Opportunities for Engagement

Goal 5: Enhance Quality of Life

From: [Lana Ivanoff](#)
To: [Ashley Sylvester](#)
Subject: Two letters concerning Huether Art Project
Date: Wednesday, March 11, 2026 9:43:25 PM

Parks and Recreation Commission Members

I wanted to share with you a letter I sent to the CC, for the 3/10 meeting, concerning the Huether Art Project. I express my disapproval of 'the hand' being placed at Lyman Park, and the reasons for feeling negatively.

I also am sending a copy of a letter I sent to the St Helena Star Editor, that will be published in this coming week's Star. That letter also shares my feelings about the Huether 'hand' being placed in Lyman Park.

Please consider these comments at your upcoming meeting about art projects in the City.

Thank you for your involvement and service to our town.

Lana Ivanoff
1533 Pine St
[707-963-7683](tel:707-963-7683)

St. Helena City Council
From: Lana Ivanoff
Subject: Agenda Item 10.1

Formal Objection: The Desecration of Historic Lyman Park

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

As a long-term resident who has spent decades enjoying the quiet dignity of our town, I am writing to express my profound opposition to the installation of "The Hand" in historic Lyman Park.

Lyman Park is the crown jewel of our heritage, representing over a century of community history. Its classic features—the historic gazebo, the 1923 dedication by Sarah Lyman, and the native stone architecture.....create a cohesive, traditional aesthetic that defines St. Helena. This modernistic sculpture is a jarring intrusion that directly clashes with that landscape. (It is particularly insulting that we are being asked to accept a piece that was already rejected by our neighbors in Napa).

I am also deeply concerned by the specific financial commitments in this agreement. The contract states: "The City will pay for the transportation, and installation, of the 'Hand' as set forth in Exhibit 'D'."

By committing to pay for transportation and installation—while explicitly excluding City staff time from the \$10,000 cost estimate—the Council is writing a blank check for labor and logistics. We are committing our Public Works crews to hauling rejected art, and pouring concrete pads, at a time when our residents are still struggling with undrinkable tap water.

The City's own records acknowledge that our water system is aging and in need of urgent attention. To prioritize the "transportation and installation" of a controversial sculpture over the basic human right to clean water is a betrayal of the public trust.

I am also very concerned about the City committing to "maintaining" and "upkeep" of these art pieces. Insuring these items could conceivably be very costly for the City, should damage or theft occur.

I urge the Council to reject the placement of "The Hand" in Lyman Park, and redirect every available dollar, and City staff hour, towards fixing our water crisis.

Sincerely,
Lana Ivanoff

St Helena Star Editor

I need to express my feelings after watching the CC Meeting this last Tuesday night. (I should preface my remarks with the fact that I'm old, and very nostalgic, and sentimental about St Helena....it's history, and all the people, who for generations before us, built and supported this town).

I wish we had a CM, and City personnel, who were able to 'feel' the historical "pulse, and heartbeat" of this farming town. It's the feeling our family had 55 years ago when we moved here. We fell I love with the small, hokey, farming town.....the beauty of the Valley.....the uniqueness not found anywhere else.....the love of community.....and it's partnership with the land.

I certainly don't hold the same vision our current City Manager holds for St. Helena. Mr. Comelo, feels success of a new art project in town, should be measured by visitors being able to take selfies, in Lyman Park, with an art sculpture of a huge, yellow hand holding a ball.....
'a distraction for them, from the deplorable condition of our streets and sidewalks'. This is not what I would hope visitors would take away from their experience at Lyman Park, or our town.

I'd want them to remember the historic gazebo, picnickers, and children running and playing in the park. I'd want them to leave our town, with a feeling of being part of something different than the average. I'd want them to walk the residential areas commenting on the diversity of homes built here, and oftentimes, finding the need to walk in the street to avoid the older network of crumbling sidewalks. I'd want them to see neighbors visiting with one another while walking their dogs on an unimproved

dirt path, thru an old vineyard area. I'd want them to admire, and marvel at the odd mix of architectural buildings thru-out downtown, and maybe take a selfie in front of one of those buildings. I'd want them to remember this town for being different than the norm....a place to escape to a slower pace in time.

BTW. I'm not against art, or art displays. Lyman Park hoisted art festivals on Saturdays and Sundays for years....featuring local artists who painted our beautiful landscapes, and historical buildings. That was certainly more in keeping with the "pulse" of this town, than cars double parked to take selfies of themselves in front of a large yellow hand erected in a historic, community, downtown park. I'm sure the Lyman family never envisioned that scenario when donating the park.

My hope is that somehow, our CM, and those making future decisions for our town, can tap into what brought them here, and keeps them here....the quaintness and uniqueness that isn't like everyone other town in California.

Please remember our "specialness" when you make your decisions. And, pay attention to what the people who live here, and pay your wages, have to say. Fight for the town, and its historical roots.

Following the path of money and fame, doesn't always bring the peace, and prosperity that is promised. Big is not always better. I can't imagine that "glitz and glamor" were what our founding fathers envisioned for St Helena.

There's a lot of history in the 'bones of St Helena'....and not knowing that, can lead one away from our uniqueness.

Lana Ivanoff

History Timeline of Lyman Park
By Mariam Hansen
St. Helena Historical Society
4-14-16

1909

The National Humane Alliance presented the horse and small animal fountain to St. Helena. It first was located at Oak & Adams Street, then moved to the railroad depot.

Feb 1923

John C. Money purchased the old Turner Hall building (built by the St. Helena Turn Verein German Club) from the W.W. Lyman estate and will immediately begin the work of tearing it down, the materials to be used for other purposes. The hall was equipped with stage, scenery for theatrical performances and with apparatus for athletic exercises. As the German population grew smaller, the Turn Verein property passed to Fritz Beringer (who died in 1901) and W.W. Lyman.

5-11-1923

Women's Improvement Club donates \$100 to the St. Helena Concert Band. The check was delivered to band manager Harry E. Prouty by Mrs. Irving Baxter, Mrs. Ellery Murray and Miss Carmelita Murray. The money was designated toward the building of a band stand, with more funds coming in future.

6-8-1923

The St. Helena Concert Band is searching for a location for the new band stand. A joint committee from the band and the Women's Club will take up the matter as funds are now in hand,. Members were Mrs. Irving Baxter, Miss Carmelita Murray, Mrs Charles Heisen, Fred B Rossi, Roy Fox and Warren Steves (of hardware store).

6-29-1923

Large delegation from the Women's Club attended the city council meeting at which the formation of Lyman Park was considered. The land is the St. Helena Turn Verein German Club property, a large lot on Main Street that connects to Railroad Avenue. Bismarck Bruck, ex-officio park commissioner, said the property is worth \$5,000. He discussed with the heirs of the last member of the club to encourage them to sell the land to the city for a park. Sarah Lyman, widow of W.W. Lyman, agreed to donate her 50% interest if the park was named in honor of her husband and her son Theodore, who died while training to be a pilot in World War I. Her son WW Lyman, Jr and the heirs of Theodore Lyman agreed to split \$2,500 for their 50% share. Rowena Lyman Krunich was the guardian of the heirs. Bruck said he would take charge of the property, raise the money to "park it" and turn it over to the city complete. The city council (Mayor Harry Chinn, councilmen John C. Money, Forni, and others) approved the resolution.

7-24-1923

Sarah Lyman signed the land to the city.

7-27-1923

W. W. Lyman, jr signed the land to the city

1-13-1924

Rowena Lyman Krunich signed as guardian of the heirs of Theodore Lyman

1-18-1924

City attorney says the deed from the Lyman heirs was not ready, though the court proceedings were completed. States the city would pay for the property in February (found no mention or record of this-maybe in the minutes??)

2-13-1924

The council adopted the resolution. Warrants to pay for the land were ordered paid and Bismarck Bruck was instructed to proceed with the landscaping. Harry Prouty, St. Helena Concert Band manager, suggested building the desired new band stand in Lyman Park.

3-14-1924

The city clerk was instructed to write to Mrs. Sarah Lyman, thanking her for the donation of one half of the former Turner Hall property and tell her that her wishes regarding the name of the park, etc. will be carried out. Mayor Chinn inquired of the delay in demolishing Turner Hall. Trustee Money said he could not find a drayman (debris hauler), but will take care of it.

5-30-1924

The Women's Club and Concert Band members are weary of waiting for the new Lyman Park land to be cleared and landscaped. They ask Park Commissioner Bruck to approve the band stand as funds are in hand. The band stand will be an octagon, nine feet from floor to ceiling and 24 feet across, totaling 400 square feet. The base will be of stucco and the roof to be shingled. The plans were prepared by Harry Rutherford, to whom the contract was awarded. The cost was \$600 and completion expected by the end of June 1924.

6-23-1924

At the regular meeting of the band, Warren Steves, Orville Thompson and Fred Rossi reported construction of the band stand is complete.

7-18-1924

A large crowd enjoyed the first concert in the park by the band, joined by some members of the St. Helena Sanitarium (Hospital) Band. The band stand was brilliantly lit up. A formal dedication of the park was planned for the near future.

8-14-1924

The band gives another concert in the new band stand. A large crowd was present, with drivers coming from Napa and Calistoga. Many locals stayed home because of the cool weather.

8-23-1924

Band gives a street dance to raise \$200 to finish paying for the band stand. Concerts are free and the town has one of the best amateur bands in the state. They will play for the state fair at the Napa County exhibit.

9-26-1924

The community is proud of their band and frequent concerts are given in the new band stand.

3-13-1925

A blue print for the landscaping of Lyman Park was finished and displayed in the window of the St. Helena Star office. Plans were prepared by John C. McLaren (designer of Golden Gate Park in San Francisco) call for walks, lawn, new shrubs, and leaving existing trees. From Main Street to the band stand was almost entirely left open for a parking lot. Bruck is raising the funds for landscaping from donations.

6-12-1925

Bruck reports to city council that \$1,485 was spent to landscape the park. The Odd Fellows Lodge and Rebekahs are donating a flag pole. The Native Sons and Daughters are donating a sundial, around which will be a lawn.

7-3-1925

Bruck listed all the donors who supported the park. He needs a bit more money to install a drinking fountain. Major donors are Chamber of Commerce, Masonic Lodge, First National Bank, Bank of St. Helena, Bismarck Bruck.

7-24-1925

St. Helena Concert Bank, D.O.Reavis director, will give a concert in Lyman Park next Wednesday.

6-11-1926

Bruck has had placed a huge boulder upon which is embedded in cement a bronze plaque with the words "Lyman Park". Harry Thorsen brought the boulder, weighing several tons, from back of the Redwood Lodge property.

6-25-1926

Plans for the 150th anniversary of our nation were made for a celebration in Lyman Park. A formal service included speeches, prayers, reading scripture and singing. The Concert Band gave concert.

12-31-1926

A New Years Day concert was given by the Concert Band at 2pm in Lyman Park.

3-5-1937

Two Deodara (cedar) trees were planted in Lyman Park, a gift of Yolande Shepherd, owner of St. Helena Florist Shop. Planting ceremony was organized by the Women's Club.

4-4-1963

The band stand roof was replaced by the Rotary Club, who is donating time and materials to improving Lyman Park.

9-26-1974

Chamber of Commerce sponsored the US Navy Band concert in Lyman Park.

3-25-1976

For the St. Helena Centennial and the American Bi-Centennial the fountain in Lyman Park was renovated. Originally donated in 1909, the fountain was donated by Hermon Lee Ensign, founder of the National Humane Alliance.

2-5-1981

Lyman Park band stand restoration drive is underway, led by the St. Helena Beautification Foundation. Liz Brereton helped raise the \$4,500 needed to repair dry rot and termite damage.

4-16-1981

John Hughes Construction removes damaged wood, repairs two main support girders, replaces floor joists and the skirting around the base.

12-11-1986

Renovations of Lyman Park are funded by grant money totaling \$158,000. A new playground will be funded by Beringer Winery. New plantings, walkways and picnic areas were designed by landscape architect Jonathan Herr.

From: [Mariam Hansen-St. Helena Historian](#)
To: [Ashley Sylvester](#)
Subject: Public Comment
Date: Thursday, March 12, 2026 3:53:07 PM
Attachments: [History Timeline of Lyman Park.docx](#)

Hello Ashley,
 The following is my public comment to the Parks & Recreation Commission.

Lyman Park has been a defining feature of the St. Helena downtown landscape since 1923 (see attached). So important is this site that it is listed on our city's Historic Resources Inventory. Why desecrate this site with an 18 foot tall yellow hand?

It seems at the Parks & Rec commission must approve the installation of Huether art around town. What if you decide not to install the art? Why has the concrete pad already been poured at the Carnegie Building? This whole issue and process does not reflect well on our town.

This is my personal opinion
 Mariam Hovanesian Hansen

State of California - The Resource Agency
 DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

IDENTIFICATION

1. Common name: Lyman Park

2. Historic name, if known: Site of Turner Hall

3. Street or rural address: Main Street

City: St. Helena, CA ZIP: 94574 County: NAPA

4. Present owner, if known: City of St. Helena Address: City Hall

City: St. Helena, CA ZIP: 94574 Ownership is: Public ☒ Private ☐

5. Present Use: public park Original Use: Site of Turnverein(meeting hall)

Other past uses: site of St. Helena's first public high school

DESCRIPTION & SIGNIFICANCE

Turner Hall, originally known as the Turnverein, was the meeting place for St. Helena's large German population in the late 19th century and served as an auditorium for the community and later its first public high school (1899-1912). When the Hall was in the early 1900s, the site became St. Helena's public park and was named in honor of the pioneer Lyman family. The Park stretches between Main Street and Railroad Avenue and is central to the commercial district and the town. The Gazebo in the center of the Park was constructed c. 1922 and was part of a tradition of Wednesday evening concerts in the 1920s and 30s. The stone water fountain originally served horses and dogs at the intersection of Oak and Adams Streets and was then moved to the train depot on Railroad Avenue prior to being placed in the Park. The Park is a focal point for the community and is perhaps synonymous with the small town atmosphere of St. Helena where Main Street is still the center of town.

7. Locational sketch map (draw and label site and surrounding streets, roads, and prominent landmarks):

SEE DISTRICT MAP #2

UTM (St. Helena Quad)
 10/545450/4262240
 10/546040/4262360
 10/546640/4261440
 10/546700/4261620

8. Approximate property size:
 Lot size (in feet) Frontage _____
 Depth _____
 or approx. acreage _____

9. Condition: (check one)
 a. Excellent ☒ b. Good ☐ c. Fair ☐
 d. Deteriorated ☐ e. No longer in existence ☐

10. Is the feature a. Altered? ☒ b. Unaltered? ☐

11. Surroundings: (Check more than one if necessary)
 a. Open land ☐ b. Scattered buildings ☐
 c. Densely built up ☐ d. Residential ☐
 e. Commercial ☒ f. Industrial ☐
 g. Other ☐

12. Threats to site:
 a. None known ☒ b. Private development ☐
 c. Zoning ☐ d. Public Works project ☐
 e. Vandalism ☐ f. Other ☐

571M13 R-7R

NOTE: The following (Items 14-19) are for structures only. NOT APPLICABLE

14. Primary exterior building material: a. Stone ☐ b. Brick ☐ c. Stucco ☐ d. Adobe ☐ e. Wood ☐
f. Other ☐

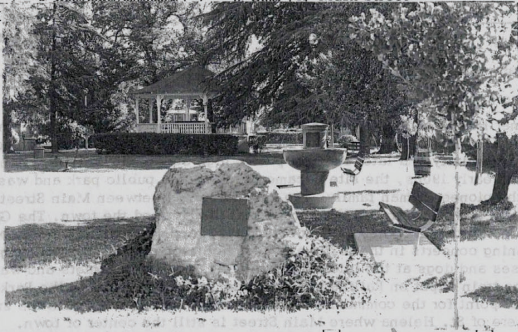
15. Is the structure: a. On its original site? ☐ b. Moved? ☐ c. Unknown? ☐

16. Year of initial construction _____ This date is: a. Factual ☐ b. Estimated ☐

17. Architect (if known): _____

18. Builder (if known): _____

19. Related features: a. Barn ☐ b. Carriage house ☐ c. Outhouse ☐ d. Shed(s) ☐ e. Formal garden(s) ☐
f. Windmill ☐ g. Watertower/tankhouse ☐ h. Other ☒ Main Street ☐ i. None ☐

PHOTOGRAPH 

21. Main theme of the historic resource: (Check only one): a. Architecture ☐ b. Arts & Leisure ☒
c. Economic/Industrial ☐ d. Exploration/Settlement ☐ e. Government ☐ f. Military ☐
g. Religion ☐ h. Social/Education ☐

22. Sources: List books, documents, surveys, personal interviews, and their dates:
Moffitt, Mary. St. Helena Walking Guide (1977)
Notes of Mrs. Mabel Lewelling Johnson

23. Date form prepared: 8-25-78 By (name): Mary Moffitt Napa County Historic Resources Survey
Address: P.O. BOX 702 City NAPA, CALIF. 94558 ZIP: _____
Phone: (707) 255-1836 Organization: NAPA LANDMARKS, INC.

(State Use Only)

Research Director
St. Helena Historical Society
P.O. Box 87/ 1255 Oak Avenue
St. Helena, CA 94574
707-967-5502

Find us on Facebook:

[St. Helena Historical Society & Heritage Center - Home | Facebook](#)

From: susanmcwilliams@comcast.net
To: [Ashley Sylvester](#)
Cc: [Recreation](#)
Subject: Don't put the Hand in the park
Date: Friday, March 13, 2026 3:32:00 PM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

It's clear that most residents do not feel the huge yellow hand sculpture would enhance the appearance of historic Lyman Park. Although no final decision has officially been made, it appears the excavation for the footing has already been dug near the flagpoles. Residents have expressed their views and should have a say in this decision. Why has the installment process already begun?



From: [Kimberly Phinney](#)
To: [Paul Dohring](#); [Aaron Barak](#); [Billy Summers](#); [Michelle Deasy](#); [Kate Spadarotto](#)
Cc: [Ashley Sylvester](#); [Contact City Council](#); [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Public Comment - City Council / Parks and Rec 03/16/26
Date: Thursday, March 12, 2026 2:55:53 PM

Hello All - Mayor, City Council, Parks and Recreation Commissioners, and Ms. Sylvester,

Hoping this finds you well.

I am emailing you after finishing my third go around of the City Council meeting regarding the proposed art installation. Parks and Rec Commission members, I ask that you please watch the meeting from Tuesday, March 10, 2026, specifically on this art installation proposal, if you have not done so already. I think it would be beneficial as representatives to get the full picture and dialogue outside of the report. What's on paper in the staff report doesn't give an accurate, complete picture. Not to forget, there are 32 written public comments, with only three being a 'yes' for this project. This topic, lack of procedure followed, and not doing what was said, is alarming and raises several red flags.

I am frustrated to say the least, and not sure where to get answers, or contribute my public comment in a meaningful way that expresses well enough my disappointment and belief that as a tax-paying, rate-paying, citizen of St. Helena, I am getting bamboozled.

Please note that all quotes come from the City Council Meeting, Item 10.1, March 10, 2026.

The city has an art policy in place, not a "pilot one", as skirted around several times during the meeting (thank you for following the law and bringing that policy to light, Commissioner Deasy and Mayor Dohring). That policy includes an application <https://www.cityofstheleena.gov/340/Public-Art-Donations-Installations>. I cannot find a record of the completed application for this project anywhere, which makes me assume that, since the policy was not followed, there is no application. Now that this matter is at Parks and Rec, the process states that an application needs to be filed.

As of February 24, 2026, the City website says that Heuther's art IS going to be featured in St. Helena. <https://www.cityofstheleena.gov/m/newsflash/home/detail/144>. How is this possible without approval from Parks and Rec or even a contract or loan agreement signed by the City Council?

Whose goal was it to "get it up before the 150th"? I cannot find that information anywhere. I find it horrifying, for lack of a better word, that this art installation should be rushed due to a video by the Chamber of Commerce for our 150th Anniversary, so "rather than our drab old broken streets, I'd like to see a little color in the video". As a tax-paying, rate-paying citizen, I don't care about videos of art in our streets when our water is not drinkable, what we currently own is not maintained, our streets ARE drab and old and broken, and our very own City Hall is falling down, right next door to where one piece of art is going to be displayed.

Anil Comelo, during the meeting, when asked by Ms. Deasy, "why the rush", stated in his reply, "It's free art". We are paying the artist \$10,000; it will cost us close to \$10,000 more for installation and insurance, and does not count the cost to break down and return the five properties to their original state (or if there is a deductible and the items are damaged). How is

this FREE?

Per the Council meeting, the "install date was set for Monday", March 16th, the day of the Parks and Rec meeting, where this art installation, per city policy, was going to be discussed. The joke at the end of the Council Meeting of "wait until Tuesday" to install is not funny. There isn't approval yet on any level, let alone the policy level. How could this installation be scheduled and general funds used without approval? This is not okay.

Can Parks and Rec direct how General Fund dollars are spent? I can't find that answer anywhere. Does this need to go BACK to the council for the use of general fund dollars if this art installation is approved by Parks and Rec?

When this art installation was first presented, donations were to be made so city funds would not be used. How the concept of this installation was sold, and the reality today (especially with the install being Tuesday, March 17th) is that now, this project is 100% tax payer general funded, which "we can absorb within our budget". It doesn't look bright, the fundraising future, if the install happens, agreement signed, and when donations "have not materialized yet" and "not sure how successful we will be, we have not done this before, we don't have the strategy, working on that right now".

Lastly, and to just hopefully bring home the belief on my end, if the success of this project is measured by "tourists come here and take selfies in it" then we have truly lost our way. This is not about the community of St. Helena. This is not only an attempt to bypass a system in place, but it is also covering up years of neglect, loss of revenue, and the total need to fix and maintain what we have, not add anything new.

The cart is well before the horse in this case, and should not be used or considered if you Commissioners decide to move forward. That, my friends, is what makes me feel totally bamboozled. All this staff time and work was done, to the point of scheduling installation, again, before going to Parks and Rec, before an application, before approval, and not as promised with fundraising. I guess we have given in enough that the tone is going rogue and not following through on what is actually spent. This is not okay.

"Lots of hours spent on this and a lot of hard work in a variety of departments" should not make you approve this, as policy and procedure were not followed. This is not okay.

Thank you for your time, and I hope, in the spirit of it all, you "take this seriously and have regular cadence of the committee so we can have public input and have clear goals, even have a strategy soon". That's from our City Manager regarding Public Art in St. Helena, and I agree. I ask you, when you vote Monday, why does this specific project get to bypass all that has been put in place, and why was the attempt to bypass made in the first place? You volunteers are NOT in a tough position; the 'laws' are clear, there is a process to follow, and we are here for a reason. Thank you for your time.

Ciao,
Kim Phinney



Public comment Re: Art item

From Michelle Covell <michelle@covellarchitects.com>

Date Sun 3/15/2026 8:31 AM

To Ashley Sylvester <ASylvester@cityofsthelelena.gov>; Public Comment <publiccomment@cityofsthelelena.gov>

March 15, 2026

In regards to public art item.

Dear Parks and Recreation,

First, I would like to say thank you. I have a 6-year-old in public school here. The schools, the facilities, the recreation programs, and youth activities are truly one of the major reasons why my husband and I decided to set our roots here. All of the after-school and summer programs have been greatly appreciated, and we know how fortunate the kids are to be growing up here.

The Parks and Recreation Department is an asset to our community, as well as to the wider community.

Celebrating 150 years is about showing everyone, residents and visitors, what this town is about: a town built on agrarian roots, a strong work ethic, and the mindset of putting family and community first. This is what makes St. Helena beautiful.

Yes, there are many things that need to be fixed. And yes, there are larger issues.

What I'm trying to say is:

1. St. Helena's 150th birthday is about celebrating its history.
2. Putting art up in a rush that has not been part of this history seems odd.
3. What will be ironic, if the pieces go up, is that in celebrating its birthday, residents may not recognize their own town.
4. There is a process for community art for a good reason. I value art, and I am glad that the conversation around this has brought awareness to the policy, the commission, and the opportunities. Art that serves the community and is paid for by residents should follow a public process. Art that has significant meaning to this town is a beautiful thing and would add to the history that makes this town unique. This requires real thought, oversight, and community input.
5. We should separate the party schedule from this public community art item.
6. As I comb through the water rate studies from the past decades, it has become more evident that there is a need for prioritization, not just of budgets, but also of staff time. Many have written in relation to Item 10.1 regarding other items that could use money and staff attention, the Public works dept. On October 14, 2025, there was a city agenda item on water quality. The committee explained the struggles we face regarding water discoloration and the maintenance and infrastructure upgrades that are needed. It was also said that water costs would be discussed separately as that is a whole topic that deserves its own meeting. There is a Water Forum coming up on **March 30, and I hope the community attends this meeting.** I would also like to better understand the water costs and the history of why they are so high, and why capital improvement projects have been deferred.

7. Prioritization of funds and staff time at a high level, using the General Plan as a guide, community concerns as feedback, and fixing what is not working well is very much needed at this moment. The town has spoken many times in recent years about its overall budget constraints. The strain is being felt, but the decisions continue to not make sense. We are waiting for the Finance committee to give us their insight into the city budget. Not too long ago, the city presented a budget, and the resident Finance committee didn't agree with the city's interpretation. We really want to know the truth, sooner than later, so we can operate thoughtfully, and come together as a community.
8. Who is running the show in this council-manager form of government? In this org chart, who is on top? The city council directs the manager, who then directs staff. The city council is elected by residents, and is serving the public. In public service ethics, serving the community at large is top priority over any personal bias. Decisions are made, publicly and through a transparent process. Public monies should be spent transparently. If this process is not being followed, please figure out why, and address it.
9. Who is following the procedures and policies that are written? After fighting for "covered porches" for a year, where procedures were not followed and the town spent who knows how much on legal fees, what was described as a "clerical edit" led to a situation where the resident who found the improper and illegal process involving zoning text amendments had the police called on him. The city manager asked for barricades at City Hall, and residents spent a year working to stop what they believed was an illegal and unethical change to the zoning code. I have to ask: who is minding the shop? I have asked about legal fees. I have been given the answer that our legal fees have come down significantly since the 2019 Grand Jury. However there is not a level of detail of the fees to understand how much we are spending on individual items. I am glad to hear that the legal fees have reduced, however I would also like the details of legal fees per city issues to understand better if there are additional areas that could be further reduced. The devil is in the details.
10. The water rate studies that determine our water rates, calculating project costs, maintenance, and other expenses, show a plan to use the money received from our payments to fund significant infrastructure upgrades to improve water quality and provide better service. However, projects have been delayed for one reason or another, yet we continue to pay into them per the rate study. As a result the delays, projects become more expensive with inflation, our rates go up, and our water quality remains not fixed. I hope at the forum, we can see the history and transparency of the rising costs of our water, where the monies went if it wasn't spent on the projects in their projected plans, and now the strategies for prioritization for more direct and meaningful use of the monies collected thus far for impactful upgrades to the system for improving water quality. It should be explained why money we paid as rate payers for infrastructure could be used for such things like settling lawsuits. Isn't there an insurance policy for those things? The legal fees for lawsuits came out of our water rates? Please provide transparency.
11. Please provide transparency regarding the art proposal, including whether any funds have already been spent without approval from the appropriate commission and in accordance with established policy. Please also clarify what accountability measures apply if funds were used improperly or if proper procedures were not followed.
12. Measuring success: will we recognize our own town after the party?
13. Plaques, an idea: I envision placing plaques with historic photos in the same locations where the photos were taken, showing the same view, what it was then and look up to see what it is now. That would be a fun installation for both residents and visitors, creating a walking history tour of St. Helena. I know we have the digital architectural tour, but something physically installed in the downtown area, along with a QR code map that allows people to quickly access other plaque locations on their phones, would be a fun way to encourage people to walk around town, explore, learn, and fall in love with it.
14. Please prioritize. This town is amazing, and it could be even better. The kids who are growing up here now need us to prioritize.
15. How can we bring our community together. Transparency from leadership. Following public service ethics. Following written procedures, even it is harder and takes more time. Responsible governance.

Sincerely,

Michelle Liu Covell, Resident, not representing any roles I serve.



The Hand sculpture

From Pat Friday <patfriday1@icloud.com>
Date Sat 3/14/2026 7:24 PM
To Andrew Bradley <abradley@cityofsthelena.gov>

Hello Andrew,
 Since Parks & Rec will be the arbiters of this public art, I'd like to voice my opinion prior to the meeting on Monday evening.

I am opposed to this sculpture going into Lyman Park or anywhere else in town. It is just not an esthetic fit for St. Helena. We are a more subtle town and this hand screams.

I also object to having Gordon Heuther's other artwork loaned to St. Helena, as he has so much on display in Yountville and Napa. The rush to do this seems tied to the City Manager wanting to spiff things up for our 150th anniversary, and Gordon's offer of the loans. That feels backwards and not a good use of our city funds.

Put the \$\$ into our water system repairs instead. St. Helena has made it into the [SF Chronicle](#) because of our poor water quality. Isn't that enough shame to force City staff to make more thoughtful choices on how we spend our limited funds?

Please do not approve this public art and apply that money into improving our water system.

Thank you for sharing my opinion,
 Pat

Pat Friday
 St. Helena CA
 707.484.4579

From: [Martha Angus](#)
To: [Ashley Sylvester](#)
Subject: Hand sculpture
Date: Sunday, March 15, 2026 5:35:51 PM

As a former Arts in Public Places Commissioner for the City of Indian Wells I strongly disagree that this Sculpture should find a public home in St Helena.

I have degrees in Painting and Sculpture from the Ecole des Beaux Arts and Carnegie Mellon so I'm making an enlightened suggestion.

Many thx,

Martha Angus

Sent from my iPhone

Martha Angus

Interior Design

415-728-4961

From: [Beth Novak](#)
To: [Ashley Sylvester](#)
Cc: [Paul Dohring](#)
Subject: Hand Sculpture
Date: Sunday, March 15, 2026 3:16:41 PM

Hello,

I am writing to express my dismay at the hand sculpture that is apparently to be installed at Lyman Park. I feel it is very unattractive and I do not feel it is appropriate for that space or for our town.

Thank you.

Best regards,

Beth

Beth Novak
President & CEO



SPOTTSWOODE ESTATE VINEYARD & WINERY
1902 Madrona Avenue • St. Helena CA 94574
707/963-0134 • Spottswood.com

Rooted in the Land, Protecting our Planet



From: claudiabeck@me.com
To: [Ashley Sylvester](#)
Subject: Gordon Huether Public Art Comment for March 16 Meeting
Date: Saturday, March 14, 2026 4:54:36 PM

Dear Parks & Recreation Commissioners,

This issue is not about whether public art belongs in our community. Public art can enhance shared spaces and be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. However, the proposed installation of thirteen pieces, most notably the enormous “Yellow Hand” by Gordon Huether, raises significant concerns.

First is the apparent lack of due process and transparency. From the outside, this project appears to have been fast-tracked without meaningful public consideration. Who selected these pieces? Is there an arts council or advisory body that made this recommendation? Who determined that these works reflect the character of St. Helena and are appropriate for our community?

Equally troubling is how quickly the project appears to have advanced through approval channels. Installation planning is reportedly already underway, and concrete pads have allegedly been poured even as the project remains under debate. This raises legitimate questions about whether the public process has been meaningful or merely procedural—or whether it has been bypassed altogether.

There are also fiscal concerns. While the project has been estimated at \$10,000, what are the full costs to the city? What are the insurance, liability, maintenance, and staff costs associated with installing and maintaining thirteen sculptures? At a time when residents are repeatedly told there is not enough funding to maintain existing infrastructure and parks, allocating resources to this project is difficult to justify.

Finally, the scale and placement of the “Yellow Hand” are inappropriate for Lyman Park. A sculpture of this size requires a large, open setting. In a small downtown park, it would be visually jarring and out of character with its surroundings. If the primary rationale is to “attract visitors to take selfies,” then the deeper purpose and value of public art in a community have been missed. While social media images can certainly serve as a powerful public relations tool, positioning such a monstrous sculpture next to the severely dilapidated former police station and city offices seems counterintuitive as a positive public relations backdrop for St. Helena.

For these reasons, I strongly object to the placement of all thirteen pieces, especially the “Large Yellow Hand” in Lyman Park, until proper review, transparency, and public consideration have taken place.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Claudia Rouas Beck
 St. Helena Resident

Claudia Rouas Beck
C 707.695.0005
claudiabeck@me.com

From: [Jordan Coonrad](#)
To: [Ashley Sylvester](#)
Subject: Comment on public arts proposal
Date: Sunday, March 15, 2026 11:50:34 AM

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for the time and energy you put into serving our community. I appreciate the work you do to protect and enhance the parks and public spaces that make this town such a special place to live.

Protecting parks and public spaces is exactly why I'm writing to ask you to reject the current Public Art Display proposal featuring thirteen works by a single artist.

Among other things, I'm thinking about the proposed placement of one of the "Barrel Rings" on the city-owned property at the corner of Chiles Avenue and Signorelli Circle--about four feet from a power pole and quite close to the curb. I drive past that corner at least twice a day on my way to and from work and can assure you that that corner is already dangerous. While the art piece, itself, is not objectionable, like "The Hand" is...the placement on that corner is totally inappropriate....I am surprised the artist condoned it.

Not only that, it looks like a very tempting trash receptacle, much like the sitting area next to Safeway on Hunt Street. So, who is going to pay to keep it clean....inside and out? According to the contract, that is the city's responsibility and will require even more staff time and money. If keeping it clean is not an issue, perhaps it could go in Meily Park where more people could enjoy it and it wouldn't be a safety issue.

The issues with "The Hand" are also especially concerning. It is simply out of scale and out of character for its proposed location next to historic Lyman Park-- one of the most beautiful and peaceful spots in town. People love the park because of its quiet, bucolic nature. Dropping a giant, attention-grabbing sculpture there would fundamentally change the feel of that space, and not in a good way.

At a recent city council meeting, when the mayor asked the City Manager how he would measure the overall success of this proposal, the answer was that if lots of visitors came to take selfies with the sculpture, then that would mean it was successful. He also said he hoped it might distract visitors from our "broken and busted streets."

Is that really what public art is supposed to be about? Turning our town into a selfie station? Creating a distraction from major infrastructure problems? Is that how we want St. Helena to present itself to the world?

Later in that same meeting, eyebrows were raised, when the question came up about why the City couldn't simply exclude "The Hand" from the contract. The response suggested that then we might have to pay to store it! That naturally raises another question: who exactly is driving this public art program—the City, or the artist?

Under the City's adopted Public Art Policy, the authority for decisions like this rests with the Parks & Rec Commission and ultimately the City Council. It doesn't rest with the City Manager, and it certainly doesn't rest with the artist.

Which brings me to something else many residents are wondering about. The City Manager, despite receiving a generous housing allowance, has chosen to live in Orinda instead of in St. Helena. That makes it hard for some people to understand why decisions that will affect the visual character long into the future of our town are being pushed so aggressively by someone who doesn't even live here.

If the City really is somehow committed to displaying this artist's work and is required to store "The Hand" if it isn't installed, there's a perfectly practical solution. The City's corporation yard just installed a very nice—and very expensive—new security fence. It seems like the perfect place for the sculpture to sit until the end of the exhibition or until the artist sells it. The "barrel ring" sculpture slated for Signorelli Circle and Chiles could also be stored there.

Finally, there's the issue of the concrete pads through-out town that have already been installed. If those were put in place assuming this proposal would automatically be approved, that shouldn't force your hand. Instead, those spaces could become the foundation for a future public art program that actually reflects the diversity of artists and ideas our community has to offer, and that follows the process outlined in the City's own Public Art Policy.

A lot of people in town are frustrated right now—not just about the artwork itself, but about how this entire process has unfolded. Why was this proposal fast-tracked through the system while other projects with broad and enthusiastic community support, like the St. Helena Community Forest, have been slow-walked and delayed for reasons that are hard to understand.

Public art should come out of a thoughtful, open process that reflects the community. Instead, what we're seeing feels rushed and oddly predetermined. A public display made up of thirteen pieces by just one artist doesn't feel like a public art program—it feels like a single-artist exhibition that the community never had a chance to weigh in on.

St. Helena deserves a thoughtful public art program, not something that is rushed, predetermined, or out of character with the place we all love.

I hope you will take a hard look at this proposal and, if you don't reject it completely, send it back to the City Council with some actionable recommendations and solutions that reflect the community's input and concerns.

Thank you again for your service to the community. I know these decisions aren't easy, and I appreciate the time and care you put into them.

Respectfully,

Jordan Coonrad

From: [Kelly Wheaton](#)
To: [Ashley Sylvester](#)
Subject: Public Art Installation
Date: Sunday, March 15, 2026 8:01:46 AM

Dear Parks and Rec Commissioners,

Many of you know me, so I'll speak plainly. I love and support Public Art. As long as it is thoughtful and reflects, and is supported by our community.

First, thank you for the work you do. This commission has always played an important role in protecting our parks and public spaces.

That's why I'm writing about the proposal to install the large sculpture known as "Hand of the Land" next to Lyman Park, and more broadly about how this whole proposal came about. Public art can enrich a community when it's thoughtfully chosen and appropriately placed.

The scale, character, and location of this particular piece raises serious concerns, especially in relation to one of the most historic and beloved spaces in our town. Lyman Park isn't just another patch of grass. It's been a gathering place for generations of families. The bandstand, the mature trees, the simple design of the park—these things reflect the quiet character of St. Helena and the sense of history that people value here. **It works because it's authentic.** It's not trying to be a spectacle.

There is nothing authentic about turning St Helena into Huetherville. Dropping an 18-foot-tall sculpture of a giant hand immediately next to that setting would fundamentally change the feel of the place. Its sheer scale would dominate the area and draw attention away from the historic features that make the park special. Instead of complementing the park, it would overwhelm it.

At a recent City Council meeting, when the mayor asked the City Manager how he would measure the success of this proposal, the answer was that if visitors stopped to take selfies with the sculpture, that would mark success. He also suggested it might distract people from our "broken and busted streets." That answer said a lot. Is that really what public art in St. Helena should be about—creating a selfie station? And distracting from the City Managers failures?

Public art should deepen a community's identity, not turn a historic park into a novelty backdrop. Many residents are also concerned about how quickly this proposal seems to have been pushed forward. It is being fast-tracked, while other projects that enjoy broad support in the community—like the St. Helena Community Forest and the Walking Trails have been slow-walked.

There are also real questions about the financial and practical side of this program. We've been told the sculptures are being "loaned," but the City IS spending public funds installing them. The costs of installation, staff time, maintenance, and eventual removal haven't been clearly spelled out, and the numbers are suspiciously low.

Another issue that deserves attention is the placement of some of these works on private property. If private property owners want to display artwork, they should be working directly with the artist. It's difficult to understand why public funds when we can't even balance the

budget. Champagne taste on a beer budget.

Rather than this ill thought out, rushed plan, how about a competition for an inaugural public art piece in keeping with our 150th anniversary? Perhaps a brass plaque rendition of the 150th logo celebration? Whatever this Commission decides it should include multiple artists given opportunity and it should follow the process laid out in the City's own Public Art Donation and Installation Policy. A rotating program with a range of artists would make far more sense than a display dominated by the work of a single artist. Which could even lead to the city being sued by not making this open to others. Huetherville we are not!!!

What matters most is protecting the character of places like Lyman Park. Once a historic public space is altered, it's very difficult to get that sense of place back.

So I'm asking you—as neighbors and as the body entrusted with protecting our parks—to take a hard look at this proposal and ask whether it truly reflects the values and priorities of the community you serve. Do not let your decision be based on political pressure or money and time spent. This is but another example of executive over reach and a FAILURE to engage the community in a meaningful way on something that will affect us every day. The City Manager says, "It's only for a year." A true slap in our faces. Do we want a selfie station or something we can be proud of?

Thank you for the time and consideration

Kelly Wheaton
Inglewood Ave
a4est42@gmail.com

From: [Leslie Dunlap](#)
To: [Ashley Sylvester](#)
Subject: Huether Art
Date: Saturday, March 14, 2026 9:03:11 AM

First, Napa sets up a horrible statue of an ugly green cactus in their roundabout.
Now, St. Helena city management wants to display a giant yellow hand and other irrelevant statues in our public spaces.
These are examples of egotistical public servants who have forgotten how to "serve". A survey of our citizens will result in a vote of "no thank you".
(Note: I like some of Gordon Huether's art)
Leslie Dunlap
St. Helena

From: [Maria Criscione Stel](#)
To: [Recreation](#)
Subject: Huether Hand
Date: Sunday, March 15, 2026 1:01:58 PM

Dear Members of the Parks & Recreation Commission,

First, thank you for the time and energy you give to serving our community. Many of us who volunteer in St. Helena know how much work goes into keeping our parks and public spaces the special places they are. I appreciate that the Commission takes that responsibility seriously.

I'm writing to share my concerns about the proposal to install the sculpture commonly referred to as "The Hand" adjacent to Lyman Park.

To put it simply, this piece feels completely out of place in that setting. Lyman Park is one of the most historic and cherished spaces in our town. It's where families gather, where community events happen, and where the simple beauty of our small town is on full display. The park's charm comes from its scale, its history, and its sense of authenticity.

An enormous sculpture of a hand towering over the park would fundamentally change that character. Instead of complementing the space, it would dominate it. What has always felt like a quiet, welcoming town park could easily start to feel more like a novelty attraction.

My concerns also extend to the financial side of this proposal. We are being told that the City's cost will be around \$25,000, but many residents have learned from experience that projects like this rarely stay within the original estimate. Installation, staff time, maintenance, and eventual removal all cost money, and it is difficult to believe that the true costs will not exceed what has been presented.

At a time when the City continues to face important infrastructure challenges, it's fair for residents to ask whether this is really the best use of public funds.

What troubles me most, however, is the process. From what many of us understand, the City has already begun pouring concrete slabs for these installations before the Parks & Recreation Commission or the City Council has fully approved the proposal. That raises serious questions.

The role of this Commission is to review and approve projects that affect our parks. Starting construction before that process is complete feels backwards.

Decisions that permanently affect our public spaces should follow the proper process. That process exists for a reason: to ensure that the community's voice is heard and that projects are carefully evaluated before public money is spent.

Many residents support public art when it is thoughtfully chosen and appropriately placed. But this particular sculpture, in this particular location, simply does not feel right for St. Helena's historic town park.

I hope the Commission will take a close look at both the proposal and the process that has led us here, and ask whether this installation truly serves the character and priorities of our community.

Thank you again for your service and for considering the concerns of those of us who care deeply about this town.

Respectfully,

Maria Stel

Huether comment to Parks and Rec

I'd like to commend the city for bringing in Gordon Huether's art project and I am particularly excited to see Hand of the Land, my favorite piece of his. I fully support the city's effort in doing this exhibit.

I am gob smacked by all the opposition to this. It's just art people, and there is somebody who doesn't like any art you can think of. The reaction here has been particularly vitriolic, and beyond anything reasonable.

It all feels like a heavy attack against city management itself, then the complaint is that the city doesn't listen to them. Is that then a surprise? Also, the attacking nature of the dialogue makes people opt out altogether of participating, which is the worst thing. Who wants to get out in the middle of a nasty food fight?

I have had four people tell me in the last couple days that they won't write any more on nextdoor due to the argumentative nature of it, three of them just workers I interacted with who I had no idea were even reading it.

One result is that I don't think you can assume that all the critical letters you are probably going to get are representative of the city as a whole. With the kind of social media war going on it's hard to tell what most people think around here. My guess is most people are at least fine with the proposed art walk. It's not a big deal either way. Way too much has been made of this, we have far bigger fish to fry here.

In terms of the criticism of spending the money, it looks like now at most it will be \$19,000. It also looks like fund raising attached to this art walk could be more than that, meaning it may well be profitable. I myself have committed to making a financial contribution and I am sure that others will too.

In any case, with an over \$20 million budget it is a pittance in our budget. We don't have to solve every problem in the city first, like the water issue or racism or sexism, things that have actually been suggested by some critics, in order to have some fun with art. That's how low this debate has gotten.

I don't like chocolate ice cream. True fact. I prefer vanilla. Should I therefore demand that all the chocolate ice cream be taken out of the stores in St. Helena? To me, chocolate is chalky and overly sweet. Should I then demand that no one else be allowed to eat it in St. Helena? I could write tomes on social media about the evils of chocolate, how the sugar destroys your brain, I could Al the harms done by chocolate and come up with pages and pages of copy on it to post on Nextdoor.

That is how stupid this whole discussion has gotten. There is no objective standard for art any more than there is an objective standard for ice cream flavors.

My wife is an artist and about 15 years ago the Town of Yountville called for local artists to submit work for a show there. My wife was born and raised in Yountville, where we lived at the time. She was told her work was not representative of Yountville.

In great curiosity at that point to see what did properly represent Yountville at this show, we went to see it. It was all oil paintings of vineyards and grapevines. Like 8000 of them all looking the same. It was the most boring show imaginable.

What passes for art and what is considered "St. Helena" art is entirely subjective and Huether is a nationally recognized home grown artist in Napa and many, such as myself, like his work and would like to see it displayed. I understand that St. Helena has not had public art for some time and this is a great opportunity to get that started, very easily with very low expense, if any.

On a final point, I read commissioner Smithers letter to the editor and I have to say, fair enough, I found it to be a reasonable criticism unlike what I am seeing on social media. The main criticism seems to be over process, that the city management is not following protocol. I have not lived here long enough to be able to make an assessment on that point, a number of people have said that so I tend to believe it.

However, I do think that even if that is true, that really should have no bearing on this decision. It's separate. My impression of Mr. Comelo's efforts here were to simply get something done on time for the Sesquicentennial. He has clearly been listening to the community as well, and basically having watched the city council meeting it is obvious that he is just trying to get something done. I appreciate his efforts.

I contacted the city early on in this debate myself to offer a monetary contribution, and asked if they had set something up. They said they were working on it and would let me know. Critics have focused on that to say that the city didn't know what they were doing, did not have the contract right, were changing their minds and not doing a good job, suddenly changed the contract, etc.

That just seems like nonsense to me. It takes time to formulate something and the city has worked really quickly I think to put it together. Something like this takes time to develop and I am sure there will be further changes based on how things go. The criticism at least in this project is just wrong and unfair.

Bureaucratic wrangling like we are doing now may be enough to have already killed this. The Sesquicentennial is ten days from today, on the 24th. By the time the Parks and Rec makes a decision it may already be too late and the boo birds opposing this will have won simply by

delaying it.

And what will they have won? They will have succeeded in keeping some people from seeing some art they would have enjoyed. That's it, that is all that all this folderol will have accomplished.

If you don't like it, don't go see it. It's temporary anyway. That's it, that is all that stopping this will result in. Not some catastrophic blow to the city budget or causing mental break downs in people forced to see a piece of art they don't like. They will survive it I am sure.

It's just art. It's not going to hurt anybody.

Michael Haley
Spring Mountain Rd.

From: [Weissmiller, Sandra Jane](#)
To: [Ashley Sylvester](#)
Subject: St Helena art work
Date: Saturday, March 14, 2026 9:10:52 PM

To whom it may concern:

I have been working in St Helena for about 6 years, and living in Angwin.

I do not think the hand is a good investment for the city / town of St Helena.

Simon Bulls benches for example add charm and do not overwhelm the limited space and congestion downtown.

I heard St. Helena has a terrible water problem, I think spending, investing money, on sensible needs or a pizza slice shop would be more useful to the community.

Thank you,

Sandra J. Weissmiller, PharmD, BCPS
Email: sweissmiller@gmail.com
Cell: (415) 301 9137

Education is a better safeguard of liberty than a standing army. ~Edward Everett

From: [Patti Antonaccio](#)
To: [Ashley Sylvester](#)
Subject: New art in St Helena
Date: Monday, March 16, 2026 9:34:03 AM

I'm all for new art being installed in
St. Helena. I like Huether's (sp?) art and would like to see it displayed here.

Patti

Sent from my iPhone

Patti Antonaccio

St Helena Travel

CST# 2011247

707 963 8464 H

March 16, 2026

To the St. Helena Parks and Recreation Commission

Submitted for the public record

Dear Commission Members,

Public art controversies don't end when the sculpture is installed. They compound. The question St. Helena is facing right now is not whether to have public art, it's whether the city will build a program the community can trust, or spend the next two years managing the fallout from skipping the process that makes trust possible. I have seen both outcomes. I am writing because there is still time to choose.

My name is Kristina Young. I am an artist based in Napa who spent eleven years at Arts Council Napa Valley, where I conducted a year-long benchmark study of public art programs in comparable cities across the country and helped develop and pass Napa's public art ordinance in 2009. I also served six years on the City of Napa's Public Art Steering Committee and five years as Art Consultant to the Napa Art Walk Sculpture Program. I know this terrain well, and I know what it costs a community when the process fails.

Every city that has ever installed public art has also had a version of this moment: someone stands in front of the new sculpture and asks why the city spent money on that when there are potholes on their street. It happens everywhere, without exception. That friction is not a sign that something went wrong. It is the nature of putting art in shared space. The question is never whether people will have opinions. It is whether they felt they had a voice before the decision was made. That is what process protects.

Public art does not follow the same rules as a private gallery. A gallery owner answers to their own taste and collectors. A city answers to all of its citizens, including its artists, who are also members of that community and who also deserve a voice in how their shared spaces are shaped. That is true even for a temporary loan. These sculptures may come down in 2027. The precedent set by approving them without process will not.

What is being proposed here is thirteen pieces by a single artist, moved forward without a competitive process, with infrastructure reportedly already constructed before this Commission had approved anything. That is not a public art program. It is a private arrangement being executed in public space, with public funds. The city's own Pilot Program establishes this Commission as the approving body and sets out criteria for selection and siting. Those steps exist to protect St. Helena: from cost overruns, from maintenance obligations it didn't agree to, from the kind of precedent that makes the next bypass easier to justify.

The budget history of this project illustrates exactly why process matters. Initial reporting placed the City's cost at \$10,000. That figure grew to \$14,000. The City Manager has now clarified that the total, inclusive of staff time, installation, insurance, and contingency, is closer to \$20,000, and

that does not include the cost of removing the sculptures in 2027. In a city facing proposed budget cuts of nearly two million dollars, that kind of escalating, uncapped expenditure is exactly what scoped proposals and approved budgets are designed to prevent. The community deserves to know what it is committing to before the commitment is made.

How will St. Helena know if accepting this donation was the right decision? Foot traffic and tourist selfies are easy to count, but they don't tell you whether residents feel proud of what went up in their public spaces, or whether they trust the people who put it there. That kind of success is slower to build and much harder to recover once it's lost. It starts with a process that earns confidence before the first piece goes in the ground, not after.

The concrete pads are already poured. I would encourage the Commission to see that not as a problem but as a foundation. The infrastructure exists. Issue an open call. Let St. Helena's artists and artists from the broader region submit proposals for those spaces through the process your own policy requires. A competitive, community-driven selection would be a genuine way to mark St. Helena's 150th year, and it does not have to happen overnight. A sesquicentennial deserves to be celebrated with care, not rushed. A soft launch of the program this spring, with installations following through the year, honors both the milestone and the community it belongs to. That is a legacy worth leaving.

Looking further ahead: St. Helena does not yet have dedicated staff capacity for public art, and that is not a criticism. Napa took more than a decade to get there. But the gap between no program and a staffed program does not have to be filled by ad hoc decisions made under time pressure. A small volunteer advisory panel, composed of artists, community members, and perhaps a design professional with public art experience, convened before decisions are made rather than after, would cost the city almost nothing and would provide exactly the kind of informed, community-rooted guidance that protects everyone, including city staff, from the situation St. Helena now finds itself in.

At a moment when trust in public institutions is fragile at every level of government, the way a city handles something as visible and personal as public space matters more than usual. A community's trust in its local programs, once lost, is extraordinarily difficult to rebuild. Artists stop applying because they assume the outcome is already decided. Residents tune out because they have learned their input doesn't count. Council members grow skeptical of the whole enterprise because the first project became a headache. St. Helena has an opportunity right now to start this program the right way. The first decision sets the tone for everything that follows.

I urge this Commission to uphold its own authority and return this proposal to the beginning of the process. The community you serve deserves nothing less.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristina Young

Artist, Studio KLY LLC
Napa, CA
kly@studiokly.com

Arts Council Napa Valley, 1999–2012
City of Napa Public Art Steering Committee, 2014–2020
Art Consultant, City of Napa Art Walk Sculpture Program, 2014–2019

From: [LAURIE JOYCE](#)
To: [Ashley Sylvester](#)
Subject: St. Helena Artwork
Date: Monday, March 16, 2026 12:39:01 PM

Hi Ashley,

I am contacting you regarding the proposed artwork installations in St. Helena. I am strongly opposed to the “Hand of the Land” installation in Lyman Park. I am familiar with the piece having seen it in person at Bottlerock and viewing many photos of it on social media. While it may be meaningful in some locations, it doesn’t fit in Lyman Park, the heart of St. Helena. My initial response to hearing about it coming to town, to Lyman park, was a sense of heartbreak. Even though it is presented as temporary, it’s hard to ignore and I believe will be a negative focus for our town. I have read many of the comments on FB and ND. I appreciate and agree with the letter written by Kristina Young. I love the idea of public artwork. I have nothing against the artist. I do have issue with how this project has come about and pushed through without going through proper processes. As someone who was born in St. Helena and feels extremely fortunate and proud to still call St. Helena home, I ask that you review and consider public concerns and that the steps are taken to follow the established policies. I don’t find the other art pieces as controversial, however how they are being brought to town is a significant concern. I will be attending today’s Parks and Rec meeting. I thank you in advance for your review and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely, Laurie Joyce

From: [Pat Friday](#)
To: [Ashley Sylvester](#)
Subject: the Hand, public art
Date: Monday, March 16, 2026 11:58:38 AM

I am appalled that the City Manager would authorize concrete pads to be poured for public art that has not been approved by Parks & Rec. He is behaving independently, rather than in accordance with our local regulations. I encourage Parks & Rec to PUSH BACK and make decisions based on what is right for St. Helena, not what the City Manager is dictating.

The Hand is not the right fit for St. Helena.

I'd rather see the money for this series of loaned sculptures be spent on larger Main Street trees (not saplings) or on our water infrastructure.

Please be a responsible body and use our limited city funds wisely.

Thank you for considering my opinion,
Pat

Pat Friday
St. Helena CA
707.484.4579

From: [Dot Varland](#)
To: [Ashley Sylvester](#)
Subject: The hand
Date: Monday, March 16, 2026 8:39:16 AM

Please do not put something so ugly in our beautiful park.

March 16, 2026

RE: Opposition to Installation of ‘Hand of the Land’ in Lyman Park or Anywhere in the City of St Helena

Dear Commissioners,

Hand gestures can be highly controversial and misunderstood. They can be insulting and vulgar. Obscene and offensive. Or symbols of hate.

In the US, a middle finger is the most widely known insulting gesture. A giant middle finger in a park would not be a welcoming sign to an American. And if an American traveled to another country and saw a giant middle finger in a park, there would likely be some hesitation on whether this was an inviting place for American tourists.

Similarly, a giant sculpture with an “OK” gesture must then be viewed from the perspective of a foreign tourist visiting our town of St Helena and seeing the equivalent of a giant middle finger pointing at them.

If you’ve ever lived in another country, chances are that you have learned which hand gestures are taboo, so as not to offend those around you. I have. And I’m reminded of what I learned many years ago about the symbolism of hand gestures.

I’m honestly quite surprised that no one in our city government or any fellow residents on social media have mentioned something so glaringly obvious about the giant yellow hand—it’s an offensive and insulting gesture in many cultures around the world.

So far, I’ve seen plenty of comments from residents suggesting that the city may as well have given us the middle finger. Well, the city *really* is giving the middle finger. It just depends on your culture.

Let’s review its meaning in a few different cultures –

- In European countries, including France, Belgium, Germany, Greece, Poland, and Portugal, giving the OK gesture means you are referring to someone as a ‘zero’ or a ‘loser.’ In Russia—also quite rude.
- In Latin American countries, an OK gesture is an insult. In Brazil, it is highly offensive, equivalent to the middle finger. In Mexico and Argentina—also insulting and vulgar.
- In Turkey, Tunisia, and Greece, and parts of the Middle East, the OK gesture can be interpreted as a vulgar expression resembling a human body part or have sexual connotations. In other Middle Eastern countries, the OK sign signifies the ‘evil eye’ and is used as a curse or threat.
- And in the US, this symbol has been adopted by alt-right white supremacist groups. Since 2017, this symbol of hate has been used widely in the US as a symbol of white power and

white supremacist ideology. In 2019, the Anti-defamation League added the symbol to its 'Hate on Display' database.

The hand of the land sculpture is an OK symbol. Sure, you can argue it's clasping a tiny little grape or ball or whatever it is, but on its face, it's visibly representative of the OK hand gesture—something that's vulgar and offensive in many countries and cultures throughout the world. Although it can also be argued to be harmless in some contexts or cultures, it doesn't promote inclusivity towards all cultures and has no place on Main Street in Lyman Park. Our town and our parks should be inviting and welcoming places for all.

When proponents, including our City Manager and City Council, informed citizens of St Helena that the giant yellow hand sculpture will be popular with tourists, did they consider what foreign tourists will think of this insulting and rude symbol? I doubt it. It seems that proponents of this hand sculpture are either uninformed or uncultured. This is precisely why it's important to gather input from the whole community of St Helena—a town with diverse, informed, and cultured residents.

I don't think tourists will think of the yellow hand as 'art' but rather as something insulting and backwards. And frankly, it's embarrassing to think of tourists visiting our town and laughing about how backward and uncultured we are to have erected such an insulting and divisive sculpture.

Our City Manager has proclaimed that this sculpture will draw tourists to our town to take "selfies," however, these images will most likely be misunderstood by their families and peers back home. It's without question that our town will be misunderstood as an insulting and vulgar place.

This controversial art piece has no place in our welcoming town.

Sincerely,

John Pedersen

Resident of St Helena

From: [Kathy Pimpan](#)
To: [Ashley Sylvester](#)
Subject: Don't want the hand
Date: Monday, March 16, 2026 1:20:52 PM

Hello - I'm very disappointed in you all cutting down the trees in front of Lymon park. It looks horrible there now. I'm also against the giant hand sculpture. The city manager isn't listening to the citizenry. He should be fired. Please have the public put in their opinions. We deserve to be heard.

Kathy Pimpan
St. Helena
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Carolyn Bond](#)
To: [Ashley Sylvester](#)
Subject: Public art discussion
Date: Monday, March 16, 2026 1:43:42 PM

To the Parks and Recreation Department,

We would like to add our names to those opposing the installation of “the hand” at Lyman Park. It is too big, too garish, too ugly and just wrong for this space, especially since the trees have all been cut down.

The process, or lack thereof, leading to this proposal has left so many of us reeling and dumbfounded, wondering how this whole mess could have happened. We urge you to consider everything very carefully before making a decision.

If we want more public art in our community, a careful process should be embarked upon, perhaps as part of our sesquicentennial celebration.

Thank you for all you do for our beautiful city.

Carolyn and Craig Bond
St. Helena residents

Sent from my iPad

From: [Erin Przybylinski](#)
To: [Ashley Sylvester](#)
Subject: Art installation public comment
Date: Monday, March 16, 2026 1:10:25 PM

Dear Parks and Recreation,

I would be remiss to write this note without accepting full accountability for being woefully out of touch with most things that are taking place in St Helena, so I truly do thank each and everyone of you for showing up for our town.

It seems that with the recent art installation topic - process and policies are at the root of the controversy. I know people love to be skeptical of AI, but a quick prompt to Claude asking how best to go about an art installation seemed to yield some pretty sound processes. In the day and age of AI and social media, solid leadership has never been more critical, and it is leadership that AI complements, but doesn't replace. We need your sound leadership now more than ever. When we can point to processes and policies that were adopted and followed, then people like me who haven't been paying attention have nowhere to put my complaint but on myself.

Here's what Claude had to say:

"Here's how I'd approach it:
 Start with transparency before any decision is made.

Don't announce a done deal. Present it as a proposal first. Share the artist's work, the concept, the cost breakdown, and why the 150th birthday feels like the right moment.

People support things they feel invited into, not things dropped on them.

Hold real community input sessions

Not just a public hearing where three people show up. Think town hall meetings, library drop-in events, online surveys, and booths at existing community gatherings like farmers markets or sports events. Ask people what themes, stories, or landmarks matter most to them about the town's history. Let that actually shape the artist's brief.

Make the \$20,000 cost feel concrete and justified \$20,000 for 10 sculptures is actually quite reasonable — that's \$2,000 per piece — and most people don't realize how inexpensive that is for public art. Show comparisons. Explain what goes into it: design, fabrication, installation, long-term durability. If the budget source is public funds, be upfront about where it comes from and what it displaces (or doesn't).

Involve local voices in the placement decisions. Let neighborhoods or community groups nominate sites. A sculpture near the old mill means something to the people who grew up near it. Placement creates personal ownership.

Build anticipation through storytelling

Document the artist's process — studio visits, progress photos, the story behind each piece. Share it through local media, social channels, and the town newsletter. By the time the sculptures arrive, people should already feel like they know them.

Plan a proper unveiling as a community celebration. Don't just install them quietly.

Stagger reveals, organize walking tours, invite schools to participate, pair it with the birthday festivities. Give people a reason to seek them out together.

Address skeptics directly

There will always be people who'd rather spend \$20k on a pothole or the fire department.

Don't dismiss them — acknowledge the tradeoff honestly and make the case for why cultural investment in a milestone moment has lasting value for civic pride and even local tourism.

The through-line in all of this is that people get excited about public art when they feel like co-creators rather than an audience. The more the town sees itself in the sculptures, the more they'll love them.

Would you like help drafting a community engagement plan, a proposal document, or talking points for local officials?"

Sounds pretty solid to me....

Thank you for your time

Erin Przybylinski

1184 Hudson Ave, St Helena, CA 94574

From: [Thomas W. Allen](#)
To: [Anil Comelo](#); [Ashley Sylvester](#)
Subject: The Gloved Hand - Hideous
Date: Monday, March 16, 2026 10:11:11 AM

... is hideous and would be a desecration of our town.



Thomas W. Allen
1703 Madrona Avenue
St. Helena, CA 94574
Mobile 415-990-0240
tallen@northbaymgt.com

From: [Elaine de Man](#)
To: [Ashley Sylvester](#)
Cc: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Parks and Rec Public Art Agenda Item
Date: Monday, March 16, 2026 10:29:26 AM

Dear Commissioners,

I am sure you are all aware of public opinion concerning the “Hand of the Land” and I would like to provide you with some alternative suggestions for that. But first, I would like to draw your attention to the proposed placement of one of the “Barrel Ring” series at the intersection of Chiles Ave. and Signorelli Circle. We now know exactly where that installation is going to be because the concrete pad (See Figures 1 & 2) has already been poured. The pad is about 3-4 feet away from a utility pole and quite close to the sidewalk.

By installing infrastructure before your review, the administrative process has effectively neutralized the Commission's role as the 'mechanism by which residents have a voice'—a key pillar of the 2023 Policy.

As you can see, it is not a particularly attractive setting for a piece of art that is valued at \$20,000. I'm surprised the artist agreed to it.

This is also next to the Signorelli Barn, one of the last vestiges of our rich agricultural heritage. And yet, over the years, the City has allowed it to deteriorate. I can recall *at least* three times that a car has run off Pope St. at this corner and crashed into the barn, which was then hastily repaired with plywood. It shows profound neglect and I doubt that a colorful Barrel Ring nearby will distract visitors from that.

Placing a modern "Barrel Ring" next to a deteriorating historical landmark without first addressing the landmark's repair violates the policy's goal of "enhancing the city's image" and respecting "site suitability."

And then there is the Barrel Ring itself (Photo 3). In this particular location—regardless of what you think of the art itself—I can see it becoming a trash receptacle...an open invitation to getting rid of that plastic cup or food wrapper someone walking by no longer needs. Yes, it is deplorable behavior. But it happens here all the time.

This is a "Maintenance and Liability" issue. Has a "Maintenance Plan" been submitted by the artist (as required by many art policies)? Has Public Works budgeted for the daily cleaning of "interactive" art in high-traffic pedestrian areas?

What are the care and maintenance requirements imposed by the artist on the City? Is the Public Works Department going to commit itself to monitoring these daily to make sure they are maintained to his standards? What is the real cost to the city in terms of additional staff-

time? Wouldn't it have been more prudent to repair the barn BEFORE making it the backdrop of a public art display for our 150-year anniversary?

None of this makes sense and shows how important your role is tonight. It's the reason we have a policy for public art that should be adhered to and not discarded simply because the art is "free."

Nor should you be compelled to agree to any part of this proposal simply because the City Manager has already committed staff time and resources to installing concrete pads in *anticipation* of tacit approval of the contract with the artist. Instead, you should consider that the infrastructure is already in place and available to display the work of other local artists after a legitimate request for proposals is made for the display of public art that is appropriate to each location.

We should be governed by *policy* and *not* the storage needs of a single artist, no matter how famous he is. You might encourage Mr. Huether to take the steps as outlined in St. Helena's 2023 Public Art Donation and Installation Policy by submitting an application. Then, after receiving public input, *you* should make the determination as to which pieces are appropriate and what might go where...taking into account each location from a safety, aesthetic, and historical point of view.

In your role as an advisory board to the City Counsel, you have more choices than to simply recommend accepting or denying the current proposal. In addition to the recommendation above you can make other specific suggestions about the placement of each of the pieces.

If the council is somehow committed to accepting all 13 art pieces being "loaned" by the artist, you might consider suggesting alternative locations for "The Hand" other than Lyman Park. Others have suggested alternative locations near Gott's or Wells Fargo. I would suggest that you recommend swapping "The Hand" for the piece called "Reflections," currently slated for the Napa Valley College/City Hall location. I doubt there would be as much public uproar about that.

"Reflections" might be more "appropriate in scale and content" (two specific policy criteria) for Lyman Park compared to "The Hand," which has faced public outcry regarding its aesthetic fit for that specific green space.

The City Council has already asked the City Manager if it would be possible to agree to the contract without "The Hand." And the response was that it would be "expensive to store." Why the responsibility of storing the artist's work (while his studio is for sale) is falling on the City of St. Helena is another question you might ask. But again, if the city council feels committed to this agreement, including accepting all 13 pieces, we already have a free, safe storage option in the City's Corporation Yard where the city has recently spent more than \$100,000 for new, more secure fencing.

I appreciate the work you all do and the commitment of your valuable time to the difficult

decisions you are asked to make. But, you do have choices to deliberate this evening and you can make specific recommendations based on your mandate as described in the City's public art policy. Consequently, I respectfully ask that you **uphold the standards of the 2023 Public Art Donation and Installation Policy** and recommend a more deliberate, transparent process—one that truly respects St. Helena's unique character and preserves your essential role as the community's voice in these matters.

Sincerely,

Elaine de Man





City of St. Helena

Parks, Recreation, & Trails Master Plan



Acknowledgments

Thank you to the numerous St. Helena residents and visitors who participated in this planning process, sharing their time, insights and love of parks and recreation. Without your voices, we could not have developed this plan.

Parks and Recreation Commission

Doug Boesch, Chair
John Thompson, Vice Chair
Stephanie Smithers
Julie Jenanyan
Denise Nelson

Parks, Recreation, and Trails Advisory Group

Jim Anderson
Courtney Andrain
Amy Barak
Kathy Carrick
Amy Cheng
Norma Ferriz
Donna Hinds
Lucy Hoffmeister
Clara Ibarra
Julie Jenanyan
Ewan Oliver
Brent Randol
Marcela Rodriguez
Pam Smithers

City Council

Paul Dohring, Mayor
Michelle Deasy, Vice Mayor
Aaron Barak
Kate Spadarotto
Billy Summers

City of St. Helena Project Management Team

Mara Strickler
Ashley Sylvester

Special Thanks

The Community Services Department thanks all the City staff who contributed to the PRT Plan, especially the City Manager and Public Works Department, as well as the partners who participated, including the St. Helena School District, St. Helena High School Interact Club, St. Helena Historical Society, St. Helena Chamber of Commerce, UpValley Family Center and Rianda House.

Consultants

BluePoint Planning
Donna Legge

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1

Introduction





Chapter 1 Organization

Building on St. Helena's Assets highlights the existing parks and recreation system,.

PRT Planning Process provides an overview of the master plan planning process,.

Community Insights summarizes the engagement activities and themes from across the engagement.

Key Challenges and Needs identifies critical system needs and the resulting master plan vision and goals.

What Is the PRT Master Plan?

The Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan (PRT Master Plan) is a long-range plan that provides comprehensive direction for St. Helena's parks, recreation and trails system for the next 15 to 20 years. It is an implementing document for the St. Helena General Plan and is the primary reference to guide decisions by St. Helena staff, the Parks and Recreation Commission and City Council. It is also a resource for individual community members and partner organizations who are interested in contributing resources, time or expertise.

Building on St. Helena's Assets

The parks, recreation, and trails system is more than a collection of land, facilities and programs – these features define the fabric of the community and shape how people experience St. Helena.

Parks

St. Helena's 26+ designated park acres include parks of different sizes and classifications, distributed around the City as depicted in Figure 1. St. Helena's park system includes several historic resources, including the Carnegie Building, the Signorelli Barn, and the Lyman Park gazebo and historic fountain.

Recreation Facilities

Within the system, St. Helena offers a variety of recreation facilities, including sports fields, a pickleball court complex, a tennis court complex, a bocce complex, a large dog park, a skate park, a sand volleyball court, community gardens, and multiple playgrounds that vary in size and play value. Several parks have public restrooms. Most recreation facilities are concentrated at Crane Park with a smaller cluster of facilities at Jacob Meily Park.

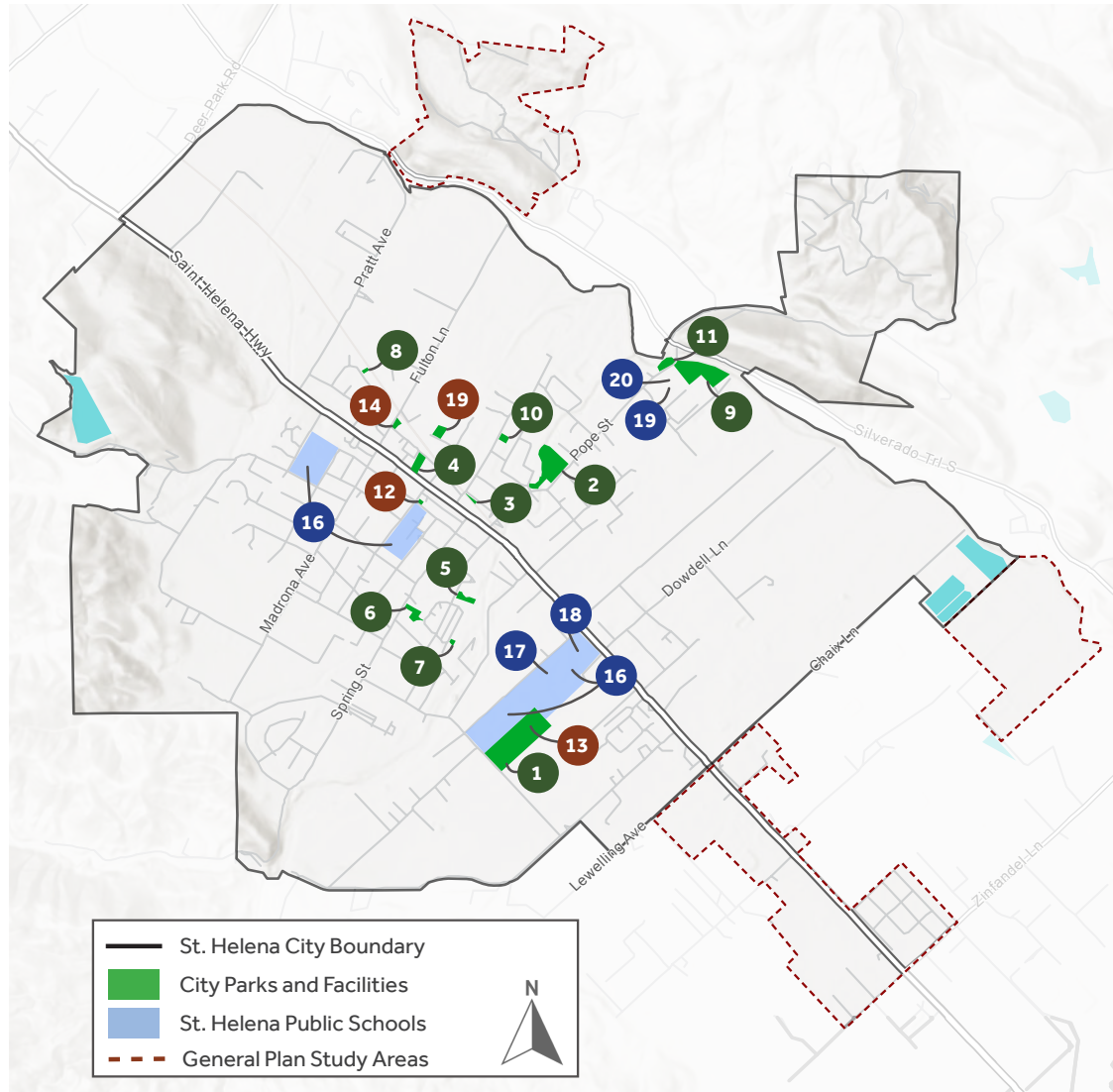
St. Helena does not have a designated community center, but it does have the Carnegie Building, which provides meeting and classroom



space and the Parks & Recreation Division Office and martial arts studio, on land that is slated to be sold or repurposed.

There are other recreation resources in St. Helena, as noted in the sidebar. While these facilities are not part of the park system, they are important assets with varying levels of public access. The School District offers the most facilities, including sports fields and sports courts at multiple sites and a theatre and an outdoor swimming pool at the high school.

St. Helena Park System



Community- and Local-serving Parks

1. Crane Park
2. Jacob Meily Park
3. Lewis Station Park
4. Lyman Park
5. Mary Fryer Park
6. Starr Baldwin Park
7. Mennen Park
8. McCullagh Park
9. Wappo Park

Undeveloped Parks

10. Hunt Avenue Lot
11. Stone Bridge Park

Community & Recreation Facilities

12. Carnegie Building
13. Head Start Building
14. Parks and Recreation Offices
15. St. Helena Public Library

Other Public Facilities

16. St. Helena Public Schools
17. Public School Aquatic Complex
18. Public Schools Performing Arts Center
19. St. Helena City Hall
20. Napa Valley College

Trails

Some of St. Helena’s parks have park pathways, but there are no formally developed trails in the park system. The regional Vine Trail passes through St. Helena, and the surrounding public lands offer hiking opportunities. In 2022, members of the Parks and Recreation Commission presented the Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report to the City Council. This report served as a key resource during the development of the PRT Master Plan, given the significant interest expressed by community members in more walking and biking opportunities, in the park system and within the city.

Natural Resources and Protected Land

The Napa River and its two tributaries, York Creek and Sulphur Creek, flow through St. Helena and are heavily dependent on seasonal rains for water flow. Several of St. Helena’s parks are adjacent to the creeks and river, including Wappo Park and Jacob Meily Park. However, there are no official water access points from any park to the river or creeks.

There are conservation easements on several properties in St. Helena, held by the Napa County Land Trust, including one on the undeveloped Hunt Ave. park site. The Public Works Department also owns several sites, including the reservoir and property near the Napa River, that aren’t currently considered part of the park system but that are used by local residents for walking and nature access.

St. Helena’s General Plan recognizes the natural areas surrounding the city as opportunities for preservation and conservation. Almost half the city’s area is designated as Agriculture (AG) land use designation, which allows agricultural and winery uses and affordable employee housing with limitations on single family residences and other uses. Another significant amount of land is designated Woodland and Watershed (WW) and only allows very low density residential development on large lots. These areas are located on the steep hillsides at the outer western and eastern edges of the city. The AG and WW lands ensure that the surrounding landscapes are protected, which also means that views to the hills from St. Helena’s existing parks are also protected.

Other Recreation Resources

- St. Helena Public Library
- St. Helena School District Facilities
- Boys & Girls Club
- Rianda House
- Nimbus Arts
- Native Sons Hall



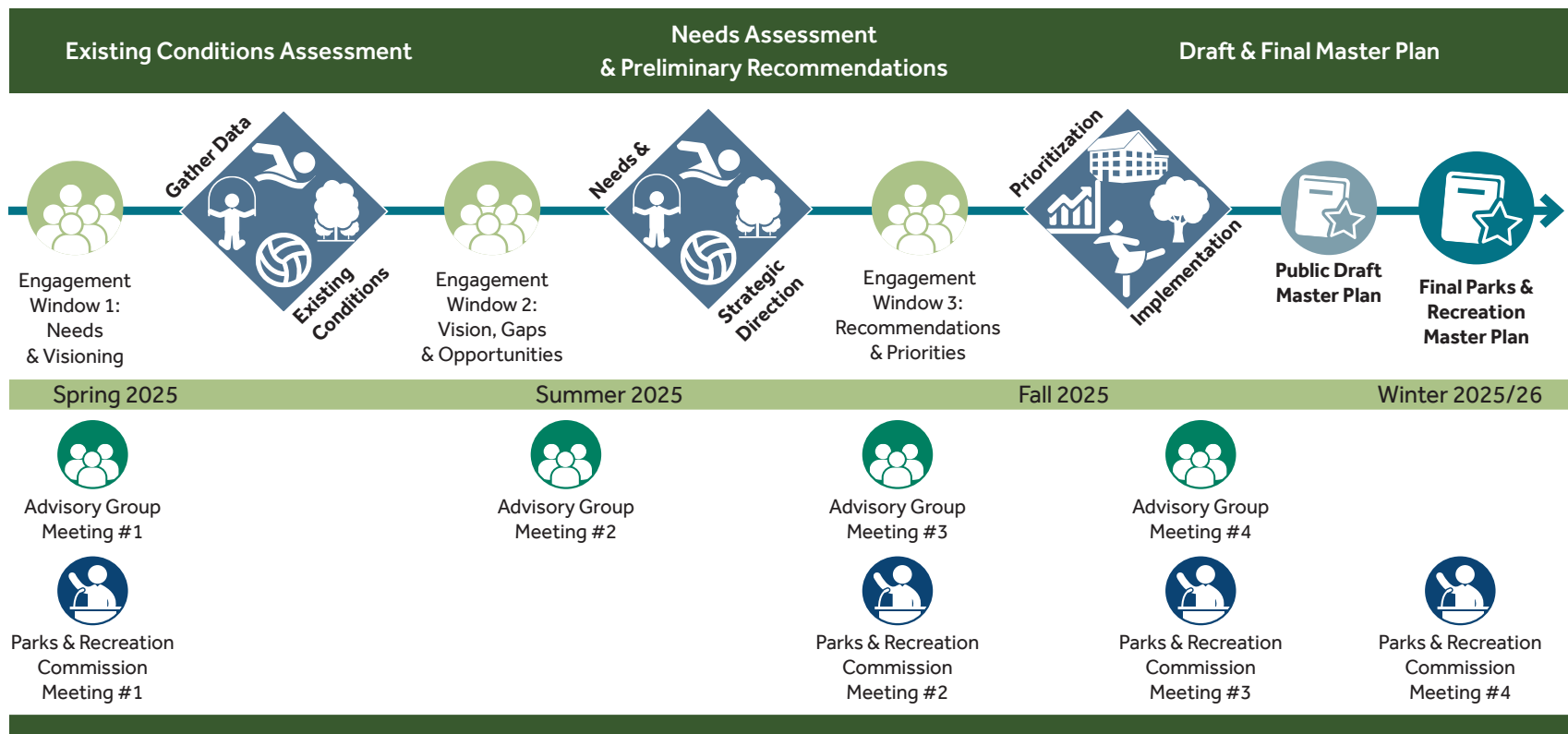
Recreation Programs

The St. Helena Parks and Recreation Division provides popular recreation programs in three main areas: sports and sports leagues (for both youth and adults), summer camps (for youth) and special events (for all ages). The Division also offers limited health and fitness programming and offers rentals of picnic areas, the Carnegie Building and other facilities.

PRT Planning Process

This Master Plan is St. Helena's first standalone long-range plan for parks and recreation services. The master planning process kicked off in March 2025 and continued through February 2026.

The process included extensive technical planning and analysis. This work culminated in two reports – the Existing System Summary and the Needs Assessment – that document and assess the system and provide the basis for the Master Plan policies and recommendations. See the Master Plan appendices to review these reports and their findings.



Community Insights

From start to finish, this planning process engaged community voices in multiple ways, through every phase.

Overview of Engagement Activities

Community participation was organized into three rounds of engagement, taking place at key points in the planning process.

Advisory Group

The city convened the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Advisory Group to provide guidance throughout the planning process. The Advisory Group included representatives from advocacy groups, committee members, the Parks and Recreation Commission and a range of recreation interests and perspectives. This group met in March, July, October and December 2025 and reviewed components outside of meetings.

Parks and Recreation Commission

The Parks and Recreation Commission received updates and provided input at regular and special meetings throughout the year.

Stakeholder Interviews and Meetings

In March and July 2025, representatives of key stakeholder groups and organizations shared their perspectives in a series of interviews and meetings.

Project Website

The project website (<https://www.sthelenaparksplan.com/>) was live from March 2025 through February 2026, offering a one-stop information portal for the planning process.

Online Survey

The online survey was administered from June to August 2025, available in both English and Spanish and publicized by city social media pages,

Participating Stakeholders

- Equitable Recreation Committee
- Rianda House
- St. Helena Chamber of Commerce
- St. Helena City Council Members
- St. Helena City Manager
- St. Helena High School Interact Club
- St. Helena Historical Society
- St. Helena Library
- Parks & Recreation Commissioners
- St. Helena School District
- Trails Committee



Community Visioning Pop-up at Farmer's Market

newsletters, the PRT Plan website, and flyers. The survey received 239 responses (225 English and 14 Spanish).

Community Visioning Pop-ups

This activity brought a series of visioning boards to events and locations in St. Helena in July 2025, intercepting visitors who might not otherwise participate. Community members could use dots to identify what they liked the most or wanted to have in St. Helena. There were 40 inspirational images across four boards, and each person had 10 dots that they could use however they liked. Pop-ups occurred at the Lyman Park Wednesday Night Summer Concert, outside of the Carnegie Building, at Crane Park by the summer camps, and at the Farmers' Market at Crane Park, with 75+ people interacting with the boards.

In-Person and Online Priorities Exercise

The third round of community engagement included an in-person activity at the Harvest Festival on October 18, 2025 and an online version of the same exercise offered from November 10 to November 30, 2025. These exercises gave participants a set amount of dollars to spend as they wished on a set of potential capital projects and program improvements. The project and program categories were designed to meet community needs (identified in the Needs Assessment conducted for the project) and be responsive to earlier community feedback. In addition, the exercises allowed participants to review and refine the draft vision and goals for the PRT system. Combined, 211+ people participated in this exercise.

Staff Participation

St. Helena's Parks and Recreation Division and Public Works Parks and Trees Division participated throughout the planning process, including in several work sessions. An additional work session with St. Helena Public Library staff in July 2025 focused on identifying potential areas of collaboration between the Public Library Division and Parks and Recreation Division.



Insights

The engagement activities generated a wealth of comments and feedback, including detailed feedback about individual parks that will be a resource for staff in the coming years. Several key themes cut across all the engagement activities.

- **Highly valued by the community, but use is focused on only a few sites.** Community members see parks, recreation and trails as a key ingredient in St. Helena's quality of life. At the same time, they visit only a few parks frequently (Crane and Lyman) primarily because of the programming.
- **Broad interest in and support for walking, trails and pathways.** A significant portion of residents walk or bike to the city's parks

but indicated they wish there were safer routes and protected paths to get to the parks. People also prioritize trail and pathway improvements so they have safe places to walk and bike for exercise. Walking, trails and pathways is an area of strong agreement across demographics and recreation interests.

- **Desire to invest in what we have and maintain it.** Engagement feedback was consistent in highlighting the need for more investment in maintenance and in improving existing parks and facilities. Respondents commented on their appreciation for the work completed to address the maintenance backlog at Lyman Park and their desire to see more attention and care throughout the system. People also would like to see investments to add amenities such as shade, water, ADA accessibility improvements and seating in many parks throughout the system, as well as to repair or replace broken or worn facilities.
- **Need for more community events and programs.** Programming and events are a major driver for visiting parks for residents. Parks with regular programming are favored, with popular programs such as adult team sports (especially pickleball and bocce), the farmers market, and summer concerts. There is strong interest in more programming for a broader range of age groups. The most popular ideas from the community visioning events focused on community gathering at an event or program, such as movie nights or community food events.
- **Interest in expanding on partnerships and collaboration.** Community members recognize that there are many organizations and agencies active in St. Helena, and that there are already robust partnerships in place. People would like to see more focus on expanding partnerships to improve the parks, recreation and trails system, internally in the city (such as with the library and with Public Works) and externally with other agencies and organizations. As part of increased collaboration, there is interest in more structured volunteer opportunities.

- **Desire for more water access – both visual and physical.** Residents are interested in more access to the creeks, Napa River and reservoir, including physical access points, viewpoints, and trails along the waterbodies. There is also significant interest in more access to the swimming pool and swimming lessons and in the development of a water-based park feature, such as a splashpad or sprayground, for use during the hot season.
- **Recognition that parks can support a climate-friendly future.** Residents see the park system as a component of the city's climate response. Many comments called for more integration of native and climate-adopted plants and trees in parks, more attention to water conservation, and protection of natural areas and natural resources as part of park system.



Key Challenges and Needs

The approach to assessing needs for St. Helena incorporated multiple layers and criteria, including community insights, benchmarking and technical analysis. This is in line with the state of the art in assessing parks and recreation needs with more responsiveness to local context and a more holistic approach than the past practice of relying on one or two factors, such as acres of population per 1,000 people. Several key challenges and needs were illuminated by the Needs Assessment, which is available in the Appendices for more details.

- **Inconsistent investment in parks and programs across the City.** Confirming public input, the level of amenities and programming varies greatly, and is imbalanced on the east and west sides of St. Helena. Recreation programming is focused on youth activities and adult sports programs. There are a number of gaps that the PRT Master Plan recommendations are designed to address.
- **Lack of park activation and thoughtful design and amenities to interest people.** With the exception of Crane Park, most parks have very few amenities and lack shade, seating and things to do. Many of the playgrounds offer limited play value or only serve the youngest 2- to 5- year old age group. Many paths are lacking or inconsistent and where they exist, the surfacing is uneven.
- **No cohesive approach on to how to leverage parks for the community, visitors, or economic development.** There is no strategy about parks and programming as a key part of St. Helena's economic development strategy, though this is a proven approach for many communities in Napa and Sonoma Counties.
- **Not enough staff capacity to meet community expectations for services or maintenance.** St. Helena provides more services than typical similar sized agencies nationwide yet has a lower level of staffing. The parks and trees maintenance team has responsibilities outside the park system, including maintenance of all city facilities and supporting other Public Works maintenance teams when needed. While the programming team uses a mix of

staffing approaches to provide services (permanent, part-time, seasonal and contract), the parks and trees team relies on full-time permanent staff that is not sized to meet the peak season maintenance workload.

- **Current finances limit the ability to capture opportunity and focus investments effectively.** During this planning process, the City has had to focus on budget shortfalls. This current crisis has resulted in a focus on the short-term, leading to increased maintenance backlog and limiting the ability of staff and elected officials to position St. Helena for future opportunities.
- **Insufficient flexibility, agility and adaptability to meet needs.** Both the staffing situation and the financial challenge mean that there is only an ability to focus on immediate issues, with no time or strategy to work on longer term efforts that could have greater benefit for the community. Fund development (including a more structured approach to increase sponsorships and philanthropic giving), volunteer recruitment, and partnership development and management are areas where consistent, long-term staff attention is needed. There are many recent examples of short-term thinking in making park capital improvements (e.g., Lewis Station Park or the use of mulch that is not firesafe at Crane Park) that have resulted in foreseeable issues had more upfront planning and design time been available.

Master Plan Vision & Goals



The PRT vision and goals provide the framework for the Master Plan. These elements were crafted from community insights to build on existing assets and respond to key challenges and needs.

Drawing inspiration from community engagement, the vision describes the aspiration for the parks, recreation, and trails system in St. Helena and the benefits it will provide for the community. The PRT vision also describes how St. Helena's parks, recreation, and trails system will contribute to the General Plan vision.

The goals describe outcomes and define what is to be achieved. They are also an organizing structure for the Master Plan.

Vision

St. Helena parks, programs, and trails make life better for all by enlivening the community, supporting healthy people and parks, and providing active and connected public places.

Goals



2

Systemwide Policies

Chapter 2 includes systemwide policy recommendations that will guide the St. Helena's decision-making for the parks, recreation and trails system.





Chapter 2 Organization

This chapter is designed to enable the city to make good decisions about enhancement and development of parks and recreation facilities and be adaptable and innovative.

The recommendations supplement and expand upon the policy guidance in St. Helena's General Plan.

Policy recommendations are organized by the PRT goals. Each is given a letter and number code for easy reference.



A. Connections

Establish a dynamic, engaging, and safe parks and trails network, connecting people to each other and to the community.

A.1 Safe Routes to Parks

To ensure equitable access, strive to locate a quality park or green space within 10-minutes (1/2 mile) of every St. Helena resident.

- Each park should be accessible with pedestrian routes or sidewalks that work for people of all ages and abilities.
- Each park should be connected to the bicycle route network to allow easy access by bicycle.
- All parks should incorporate secure bike parking, distributed at each of the major use areas.

A.2 General Plan Refinement

Update the General Plan as follows:

- Use the PRT classifications of local-serving, community-serving, special use, linear and nature parks to better reflect St. Helena's system and the differing functions of parks.
- Apply the classifications to existing parks as described in this PRT Plan, and when considering the addition of new parks.
- Add the 10-minute walk as a park service metric, equal in importance to the 5 acres per 1,000 population metric in the General Plan. Use GIS and/or existing tools like the Trust for Public Land's ParkServe to monitor gaps.

A.3 Well-Designed Parks and Facilities

Ensure that every resident and visitor experiences engaging, high-quality park settings that maximize the function and intended purpose of each park.

- Design each park and facility for flexible use, a diversity of users, and a variety of activities. Parks and facilities should offer spaces for active play, quiet contemplation and respite, group events, and unstructured socializing, not just one type of activity.
- Design parks with central hubs and gathering spots linked by pathways that connect different areas, encouraging social interaction and a sense of belonging.



- Provide a variety of seating options in each park. The presence of seating is a determinant of park use. There should be options for respite and solitude and for socializing with small groups of people, in a variety of settings. At least half should be shaded by tree canopy, shade sails, or structures. Options could include traditional benches, modular seating, seat walls, platform seating, movable seating, and natural elements such as boulders or logs.
- Implement a consistent palette of materials (paving, fencing, site furnishings, etc.) that ties to St. Helena's small town and wine/agricultural identity and use it throughout the park system. This enhances a sense of place throughout the park system, contributes to a more cohesive visitor experience, and improves operational efficiency.

A.4 Distribution of Recreation Facilities

Recreation facilities, facilities that promote activity, sports, movement, and generally support programs, should be distributed throughout the system. This will improve the visitor experience, ensure that all parts of town have facilities nearby (beyond parkland), and provide more balanced park use/wear and tear.

St. Helena should prioritize new facilities at community-serving and special use sites with limited opportunities, such as Lyman, Jacob Meily, and Wappo Parks.

A.5 Enhanced Trail Experience

St. Helena's Streets Master Plan recommends an expanded trail network, and this PRT Master Plan supports it. To realize the planned trail system and pedestrian network, St. Helena should incorporate appropriate support amenities and wayfinding to facilitate use, promote trail safety, provide educational opportunities, and increase the enjoyment of the trail experience.

- Parks near trails can be designated as trailheads. These parks can provide parking for trail users, access to restrooms and water fountains, and may include wayfinding signs describing the trails, their connections, and any access restrictions.



- Vistas, viewing blinds, and benches along trails can increase their recreational value by providing spaces to rest and enjoy the natural scenery.
- Interpretive signs can describe the biological, geographic, and historical aspects of a trail or area around a trail.
- Clear and well-designed wayfinding, including trail signs and mileage markers, will encourage active recreation for residents and visitors alike.

A.6 Social Gathering and Event/Program Space

Expand social gathering spaces in St. Helena's park system, including maximizing use of existing structures, renovating existing spaces, and developing new ones. Social gathering space is currently limited and there is a need for indoor or covered outdoor spaces that support a variety of recreation programs, community events, and individual social gatherings. See Chapter 3 for site-specific recommendations.

A.7 Wayfinding Program

Wayfinding helps residents and visitors find their way around the city and within parks and public facilities. A wayfinding program provides a system of signs with a consistent graphic style and brand. The program projects a consistent image for the City, reduces visual clutter, and makes for more efficient operations (fewer and more effective signs to maintain, fewer parts). Past economic development efforts in St. Helena recommended a citywide wayfinding program.

This policy recommendation affirms prior recommendations about developing a wayfinding program. If a citywide program is not developed, a park system-specific wayfinding program should be developed and implemented as soon as possible, before any existing signs are replaced or new park signs are created. This system should include identification signs (e.g., park entry signs or monuments), informational signs (e.g., park or building layout, trails map), directional signs, and regulatory signs (e.g., no parking). The parks wayfinding system can be designed as a building block of a citywide wayfinding program.

A.8 Feasibility Studies

Conduct financial feasibility and market studies prior to developing a new facility, such as a recreation center or an event venue. The City must consider the financial feasibility and market capacity of these facilities before development, including evaluating opportunities for revenue generation and understanding the costs of maintenance and operation at a level that meets community expectations, to ensure the city can afford the capital and ongoing costs of these new amenities.



B. Livability

Create an active, healthy, and socially vibrant city by activating parks with culture, recreation, and arts programming and events, responding to St. Helena's unique community character and identity.

B.1 Cultural and Historic Interpretation

St. Helena's park system includes several historic resources, including the Carnegie Building, the Signorelli barn, and the Lyman Park gazebo. Parks also offer an opportunity to interpret the local environment and cultural history through programming and art. This can include site-specific art (both permanent and temporary installations), art and interpretation incorporated into park amenities such as destination playgrounds that celebrate the local agricultural or natural history, and informational kiosks. St. Helena should coordinate with the Historic Society and other arts and culture organizations on interpretive themes.

B.2 Integration of Art

Art should be integrated into the park system in multiple ways, including programming, temporary installations, and site-specific art. St. Helena

should work with local artists and arts organizations to design and implement programs and artistic and cultural elements. St. Helena has a public art donation policy in place, but does not have a percent for art program that requires art as part of public capital improvement projects.

- Integrate art and elements that reflect the residents' diverse culture and history within parks and facilities. Encourage local artists, youth, and community participation.
- Art and cultural elements may take the form of temporary installations and activities or longer-term artworks. Hosting performing arts along with visual arts can be a welcome addition.
- Incorporate art into functional elements such as seating, waste receptacles, fencing, and bike racks. Incorporate unique and artful play elements in play areas, in addition to or instead of standard

manufactured play equipment, as functional and beautiful park elements.

- For all major projects, artists should be included on the development teams to design park features such as playgrounds, artistic seat walls, monuments, or paving, or to develop site-specific artworks for a particular park.

B.3 Infrastructure to Support Programming

Provide and upgrade infrastructure and facilities, such as electrical service, restrooms, and adaptable use spaces, to support programming, special events, and activities at community-serving and special use parks, especially Lyman, Crane and Wappo Parks.

B.4 Recreation Programming

Provide programming for all ages and abilities, focusing on resident needs, that emphasizes social connection, supports personal health and well-being, promotes learning and exploration, and responds to a variety of recreational interests and cultural traditions.

- St. Helena's existing programs in the core areas of special events, sports, and summer camps are very popular and well attended. These should be sustained and continued.
- Special events are a priority area for programming expansion because of their drop-in nature, multigenerational appeal, and community-building nature. Additional events that are replicable multiple times (like the concert series) should be added, rather than additional once-a-year themed events like Harvest Fest or 4th of July. Examples of this type of event include movies in the park, food cart nights, and social dances in the parks.





- Fitness, health, and wellness programming should be expanded, focusing on contracting or designing additional fitness and health programming that uses existing parks and spaces. This could include more self-directed health and fitness, such as facilitating walking groups or publishing walking routes as discussed in the Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report (2022).
- St. Helena should routinely offer pilot programs to test new programming areas and options, such as multigenerational activities, visitor and part-time resident programs, mobile programs, programs for active older adults, and alternative formats that require less time commitment (e.g., one-time, short-term, or drop-in options). These new programs can be offered by St. Helena staff or by contracted teachers.
- Consider cultural relevance (see C.2) when developing new programs.

B.5 One-Stop Programming Information Resource

Develop and maintain a user-friendly online resource that promotes existing facilities, recreation programs, and all types of providers, connecting people to the wealth of programs offered by the city and other organizations. The Parks & Recreation website lists some of these other providers, but the information is on different webpages (e.g., aquatics on one page and community resources, which include helpful links to a mix of facilities and organizations, on another).



C. Welcoming

Ensure that programs, services, and public spaces embrace and serve all users, highlighting inclusivity, belonging and cultural diversity.

C.1 Universal Design

Follow Universal Design principles when renovating or developing parks and facilities to create places that work for all. Universal Design goes beyond Americans with Disabilities Act compliance by using the seven principals of Universal Design. Universal design allows for the full range of human diversity, including physical, perceptual, and cognitive abilities, ages and different body sizes and shapes.

C.2 Cultural Relevance

Ensure that programming, procedures, and policies are culturally relevant and inclusive, responding to the specific needs and preferences of St. Helena's diverse community.

- Connect with community cultural organizations to develop programming and tailor services.
- Host culturally diverse events and programs, expanding on successful recent efforts.
- Offer multilingual information, website, flyers, signs, and materials in English and Spanish at a minimum.
- Offer culturally responsive menu items, themes, and foods at events and programs.
- Ensure that staff reflect the communities they serve.
- Provide bilingual resources and staffing.

C.3 Affordability

Reevaluate cost recovery goals for park and recreation programs and facilities to allow affordable access while continuing to offset maintenance and operation costs. Provide low-cost or free options for programs and services that are primarily community benefiting. Provide scholarships or fee waivers to ensure lower-income community members can participate.

C.4 Age-Friendly Community

Consider joining the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities. Locally, Healdsburg and the Town of Windsor are both members of the network. This network helps communities become more age-friendly and welcoming to people of all ages by tapping into national and global research, planning models and best practices. This would be a citywide effort that would require the participation of Community Development and Public Works, in addition to the Community Services Department. See <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/>.

C.5 Volunteerism

Increase community engagement and empowerment by expanding and formalizing the volunteer program. The volunteer program is relatively new and has room to grow by providing more opportunities across a wider range of interests, including park stewardship and other programs. Additional staffing is needed to coordinate, manage, and run volunteer programs.

C.6 Community Engagement

Connect with the community on a regular basis to understand and refine programming options that will excite and involve them. When designing or renovating parks, or developing programming, reach out to the community to invite them to participate in the process so that their desires and concerns are heard and addressed. Provide various opportunities for community input. Proactively remove barriers to participation and use of St. Helena's parks, facilities, and programs.

Seven Principles of Universal Design

- **Principle 1, Equitable Use:** Provides the same means of use for all users, which encourages inclusion and lessens stigma. Example: one gently sloped entrance (used by everyone) vs. a ramp and stairs (segregates users).
- **Principle 2, Flexibility in Use:** Accommodates all by offering choices for users. Example: an adjustable desk.
- **Principle 3, Simple and Intuitive Use:** Eschews complexity while ensuring all users can understand how to use or operate. Example: pictograms in place of written information.
- **Principle 4, Perceptible Information:** Allows all users to access information, regardless of ability, experience, or literacy. Example: a talking microwave.
- **Principle 5, Tolerance for Error:** Minimizes hazards and the consequences of mistakes. Example: a door that shuts slowly.
- **Principle 6, Low Physical Effort:** Requires little effort to use. Example: a lamp that can be turned on by just a touch (rather than twisting a knob).
- **Principle 7, Size and Space for Approach and Use:** Provides easily navigable space and allows all users to reach and manipulate objects. Example: countertops of varying heights.

See Center for Universal Design Excellence for more details at <https://universaldesign.ie/about-universal-design/the-7-principles>.



D. Nature

Preserve land and cultivate healthy ecosystems to enhance community resilience and provide access to nature.

D.1 Land Conservation

Continue to build and foster partnerships, especially with the Napa County Land Trust, to preserve natural systems through strategic purchase and stewardship of land and conservation easements for the benefit of future generations.

D.2 Preservation of Natural Features

Preserve natural features and ecosystems in the park system, including in developed parks. This should also include expanding and protecting views from parks, preserving trees and other natural features, and integrating native plants into park designs. Provide viewing areas where birds and butterflies are frequent and add plantings to encourage more of them. Prioritize channelized creeks for natural bank restoration and overall restoration activities to improve access to and views of the water.

D.3 City-Owned Open Space

Formally recognize St. Helena's city-owned open spaces and natural areas as part of the park system with the purpose of protecting ecosystems and providing sensitive public access. This includes the property known as the Napa River Walk. These lands should be designated as Linear Parks or Nature Parks to acknowledge their important ecosystem function.

D.4 Nature in Developed Parks

Integrate nature and habitat patches into developed parks with pollinator gardens, native planting areas and green stormwater infrastructure. Reduce mowed turf where it is not serving a recreation purpose and replace with lawn alternatives, low water use climate adapted plantings or habitat patches. Create transitional zones between manicured areas

and natural areas such as creeks and wetlands. Use transition plantings and understory vegetation to soften edge zones, reducing maintenance demand, and increasing habitat value.

D.5 Healthy Tree Canopy

Enhance and sustain tree canopy throughout the park system and the city, including a program of tree replacement planting in parks. Maintain, restore, expand, and fund the urban forest to benefit all residents. St. Helena's parks have many mature trees, which require ongoing urban forest care to ensure their continued health. In addition, there is a need for more tree planting and a tree canopy replacement program to ensure that the parks continue to have a healthy tree canopy that provides shade for future generations.



D.6 Updated Plant and Tree Palette

Update the St. Helena tree list and develop a St. Helena parks plant palette with climate-adapted and drought-resistant plants and trees, including native species. Most of the trees and plants in St. Helena's parks were in place before drought and climate change were as severe as today. Updated plant and tree lists are needed so that new plantings can survive and to transition existing park landscapes over time. The City of Sonoma's recently approved updated master tree list, developed in consultation with the UC Master Gardener Program, can provide a model. This list includes 32 trees selected to withstand the area's projected climate for the next 75 years. Organizations such as the California Native Plant Society's Napa County chapter can provide resources for the plant list.

D.7 Natural Area Management

Advance natural area / natural resource management skills and practices internally or through contract relationships to support ecosystem health in the city's natural areas and parks. Monitor and manage natural areas to minimize invasive species and improve ecosystem health. Increase stewardship of native planting areas and natural areas.

D.8 Embrace the Creeks and the Napa River

Increase riparian plantings and access points to creeks and the river in existing park sites, consistent with Living River principles. Expand trails and pathways along the creeks and river, bringing land or easements into the park system as required. St. Helena's creeks and the Napa River are important features that intersect with the park system. In keeping with General Plan Policy OS1.1, these riparian corridors should be preserved for their value in providing wildlife habitat, biodiversity, natural drainage, and visual amenity.

D.9 Community Resilience

Incorporate St. Helena's parks and facilities into the city's Emergency Response Plan, identifying their potential or future potential to serve as cooling centers, resilience hubs, or staging areas for emergency response.



E. Partnerships

Leverage and foster lasting partnerships to expand collaboration, funding, services, recreation programming, and opportunities for the community.

E.1 Library Division Collaboration

Collaborate with the Library Division on facilities and programming. The Library itself offers opportunities to create exterior park spaces that serve the library and provide new park opportunities. The indoor spaces at the library could be revamped to support library programming and potentially community activities. There are also many opportunities to collaborate on programming, especially on cultural and literary arts programs. Existing library programs could be scheduled in parks, such as story time or book clubs. Existing park programs could be brought to the library, or new programs could be jointly developed that draw on the strengths and capacities of both divisions, such as lectures or walking tours on local topics.

E.2 School District Facilities Access

Continue to seek increased public access to school facilities, which owns multiple sites and has invested (with community bond support) in top-tier facilities such as the outdoor swimming pool and the theater. More access to the swimming pool is a top priority based on community feedback, along with athletic fields and indoor facilities such as the theater and gymnasiums.

Seek a formal Memorandum of Understanding or Joint Use Agreements with the School District that specify terms and level of access, as well as maintenance responsibilities, to help codify use, particularly where there are school sites in neighborhoods lacking 10-minute park access.

E.3 Increased Collaboration Between Community Services and Public Works

Increase ongoing coordination and collaboration between the Community Services and Public Works to improve service and maintenance of the City's park facilities. While Community Services is the public face of the park system, Public Works has a critical role in its success. This PRT Master Plan provides a tool to guide the activities of both Departments regarding the parks, recreation and trails system, including budgeting, staffing, and operating procedures. This means that the Public Works Department should use this Master Plan as the basis for decision-making for its budget, capital projects, staffing, and maintenance approaches, coordinating with Community Services on its levels of service, protocols, and procedures.

E.4 Business Community Partnerships

St. Helena should continue to collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce and the business community to activate parks, encourage visitors to linger in St. Helena and support economic vitality.

E.5 Philanthropic Fundraising Collaboration

Significantly increase efforts to work with the parks and arts nonprofit to expand funding through donations, philanthropy and sponsorships.

E.6 Sustain and Grow Partnerships

Facilitate strong partnerships with individuals, service groups, nonprofits and other agencies and organizations to sustain and expand recreation opportunities. This includes sustaining and potentially formalizing existing relationships as well as exploring additional partnerships. Additional organizational partnerships should bring the strengths of both organizations to the table and be formalized in writing. St. Helena should also continue to coordinate with community-based organizations and user groups (e.g., community garden, scouting organizations, St. Helena Little League), especially on park and facility maintenance and improvements. These efforts should be linked with the expanded volunteer program.





F. Stewardship

Provide consistent and sustainable stewardship of parks and facilities through high-quality and efficient landscaping, maintenance, and operations.

F.1 Operational Resources

Ensure staff capacity and operational resources match the needs of St. Helena's park system. St. Helena's relatively small total park acreage, diversity of amenities and multiple sites means that staffing and budget needs on a per acre basis will be higher than in average California communities. Maintaining and caring for the City's parks and facilities is critical to their longevity, function, and ability to serve the community's needs. It is essential to understand and support maintenance requirements for training, replacement costs, and overall staffing. Ensure that parks maintenance costs are included in the cost estimation for renovations and new parks or facilities and are funded to ensure a standard and consistent level of care.

F.2 Accurate Maintenance and Operations Data

Track staff time, contracts, and costs for data to better inform operations and planning. Currently, the scope of responsibilities of the Parks Division is broad. This makes it difficult to compare staffing levels and cost per acre with NRPA data and local peers. It also makes it difficult to accurately forecast future needs. At minimum, staff time and costs should be tracked by developed parks, natural areas, trails, urban forest, janitorial services and grounds maintenance at public buildings.

F.3 Water Management and Efficiency

Conserve water by using low-water use landscape elements, reducing ornamental and underused areas of turf, and watering fields and lawns at non-peak times. Update irrigation systems to high-efficiency systems including "smart" controllers. Expand use of reclaimed water for

irrigation where it is available. Consider the use of greywater systems and rainwater catchment to further manage water.

F.4 Capital Projects Using Durable and High-Quality Materials

St. Helena should invest in high-quality materials that will last and require less maintenance when making capital improvements, including park renovations. This may increase the cost of the capital improvement but will result in less maintenance over the lifetime of the improvement, thus reducing the total cost of ownership. This still requires allocating funds for maintenance.

F.5 Capital Projects to Reduce Operating Costs or Generate Revenue

Prioritize capital reinvestments that reduce operating costs or increase revenue. This may be replacing failing or hard-to-maintain facilities and components (paths, restrooms, fencing, bollards) to reduce staff time requirements and create labor savings. It may also include investments in infrastructure to reduce water or energy use or create labor savings. On the revenue side, it means prioritizing improvements to make a facility or park more attractive or marketable, such as for as a wedding or events venue.

F.6 Greener Operations

Implement sustainable and regenerative landscape practices, such as outlined in the ReScape California design and development guidelines. Maximize the use of sustainable and green fleet, equipment, and power sources. Use nature-based solutions in all parklands to address stormwater management, drought impacts, extreme storms, wildfire risk, and other critical climate hazards. Ensure that maintenance staff are trained to maintain and care for native and non-traditional regenerative landscapes, manage low-water irrigation systems, and operate other innovations and systems employed in the parks.

F.7 Asset Management Plan

Develop a comprehensive replacement schedule for park amenities. The City should develop a comprehensive replacement schedule that considers the level of use, lifetime expectations, and safety, among other factors, in determining when playgrounds, picnic shelters, restrooms, athletic fields, and courts should be renovated, refreshed or resurfaced. This type of schedule will help the City continue to provide park amenities that are consistent with community needs and expectations.

F.8 Operating Funding

Explore new sources of operating funding including earmarking revenue generation from facility rental fees towards park and recreation operations and allocating utility infrastructure funding towards eligible parks (for stormwater facilities, transportation infrastructure, etc.) In the mid to long term, explore a new voter-supported funding mechanism, especially a parcel tax or Landscape and Lighting Assessment District that can support both capital and operations. This will require a feasibility study that includes a voter poll to test the viability of various mechanisms and rates as well as priorities.



3

Recommended Improvements

This chapter includes recommendations on park, facility and trail enhancements and additions that will realize the Master Plan vision and goals.





Chapter 3 Organization

Future Park System Concept, which describes the overall concept and includes diagrams of the Citywide Park System and the Downtown Parks Strategy.

Existing Parks and Facilities Recommendations, which provides more detail about each existing site.

New Parks, Trails and Facilities, describing recommended additions to the park system.

Facilities to Support Recreation Programming and Events, describing facility recommendations to enable continue programming and key programming enhancements in support of the policy guidance in Chapter 2.

Future Park System Concept

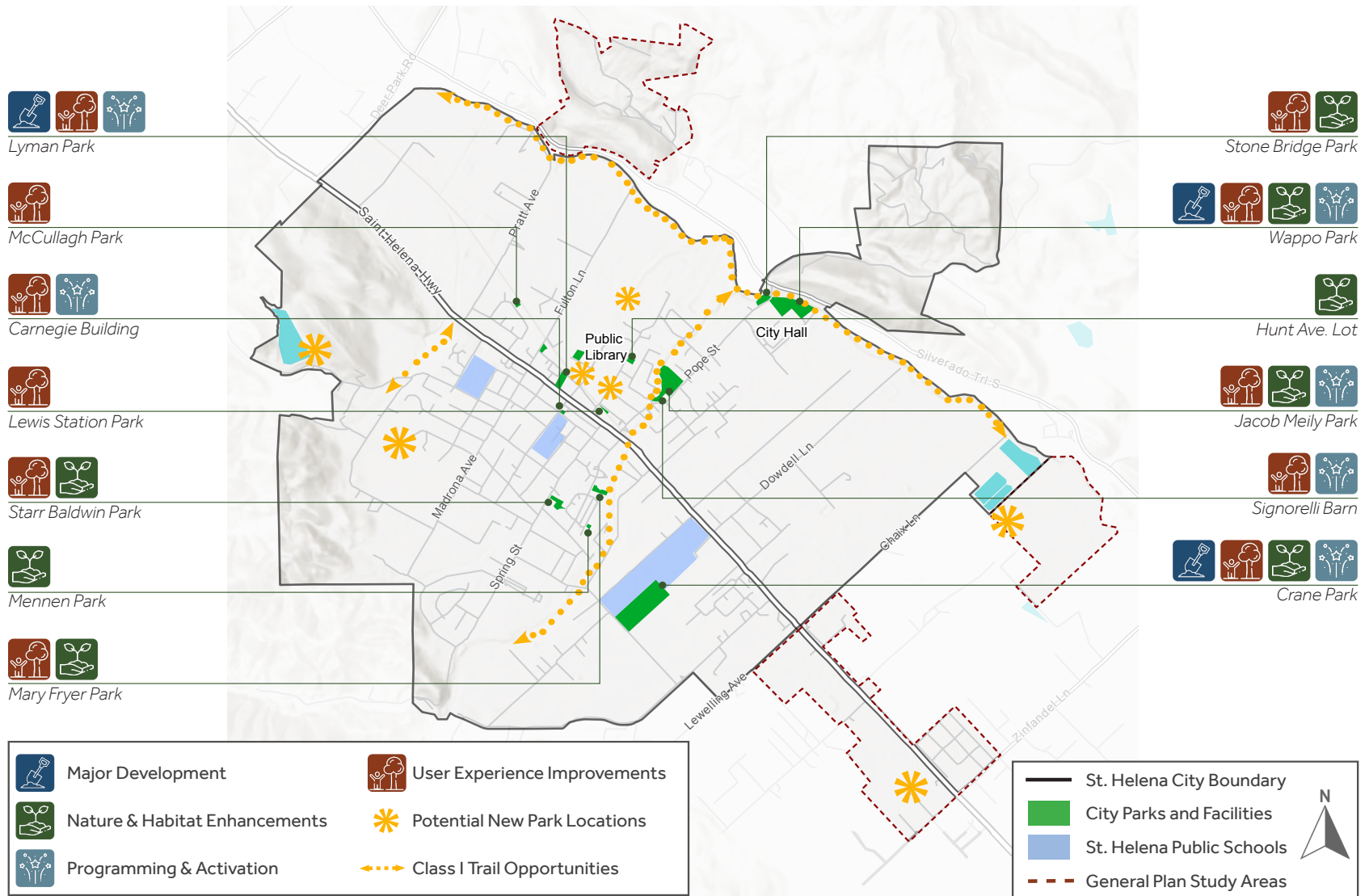
The overall concept for St. Helena's park system achieves the PRT vision by applying six big ideas.

- **Connect the system.** Each site is easily accessible on foot or by bike, and St. Helena's streets, sidewalks, and trails extend the system with clear pathways and wayfinding that link the community.
- **Catalyze downtown with park enhancements and programs.** The park system and community facilities, especially those sites downtown, are designed and programmed to encourage visitors and local residents to linger in St. Helena. See the Downtown Parks Strategy for more details.
- **Embrace the creeks and Napa River.** New trails, viewpoints, and riparian plantings connect park visitors to these highly valued water resources.
- **Celebrate and integrate nature and art.** Parks and city lands integrate nature, habitat and art as ingredients in placemaking and telling St. Helena's story.
- **Create welcoming event and activity spaces.** The system is enlivened with a variety of indoor and outdoor spaces that host events and programs year-round, including revenue-generating event rental spaces.
- **Develop an indoor clubhouse to bring the community together.** The new flexible clubhouse space allows for community gatherings, event rentals and new types of programming.

These big ideas consider existing assets, the PRT Master Plan vision and goals, and the needs and opportunities identified during the planning process.



Park Recommendations



3.4 | St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Citywide Park System

The Citywide Park System Concept diagram depicts recommended improvements and additions to St. Helena's park system. As this graphic shows, the future park system envisions investing in existing parks and facilities and making strategic additions to meet key needs. These recommendations implement the big ideas, the PRT Master Plan vision and goals, the systemwide policies in Chapter 2.

The concept diagram is aspirational, representing a 20-year plan for St. Helena. Implementation depends on available funding, staff capacity, and volunteer efforts.



Major Development



User Experience Improvements



Nature and Habitat Enhancements



Programming and Activation



New Parks



New Class I Trails

Recommended enhancements at existing parks and facilities fall into four categories of improvements:

- **Major Development.** These are the largest investments in developing, renovating, and sustaining facilities for recreation and programs that serve the entire community. Major development projects should be guided by a master plan for the entire site, even if the improvements are implemented in phases.
- **User Experience Improvements.** User experience projects increase the appeal of parks, encouraging more visits and improving the park experience. This category includes projects such as adding shade and seating areas, improving paths, improving restrooms, incorporating Universal Access features, or adding art and amenities such as water fountains, wayfinding signs, and bike racks.
- **Nature and Habitat Enhancements.** The nature and habitat category includes projects that add habitat value or increase resilience, such as replacing mowed turf with low water use alternatives, adding native plants and pollinators, irrigation and water upgrades and adding low impact trails to increase access to nature.
- **Programming and Activation.** The programming and activation category denotes parks and facilities where activation or increased programming is recommended.

Recommended additions to the park system include:

- **New Parks** to fill gaps or meet needs. In some cases, new parks will require land acquisition. In other cases, a new park may be accomplished by joint use.
- **New Class I Trails** that are aligned with the Streets Master Plan.

Downtown Parks Strategy

St. Helena's park system is a critical ingredient in making downtown an appealing destination for both residents and visitors. The city is fortunate to have a cluster of parks and facilities in the downtown area that can be further leveraged to make downtown a more attractive destination and encourage visitors to linger and spend money.

The downtown parks map depicts how St. Helena should use its park resources to strengthen economic development in downtown.



Inspiration Images: Activating streets with temporary parks, seating, and paint.



Activating Downtown with Parks



Implementation Framework



Each of the projects and actions recommended in this plan is important. Some projects and actions are low cost and easy to implement, while others are more complex or costly, some even requiring new sources of funding. And some, once begun, will require ongoing commitment.

Over the lifetime of the plan, St. Helena will need to determine how to take steps and move forward with implementation. The pace of implementation will depend on the availability of resources, not only capital and operating dollars but also the workload capacity of St. Helena's staff. In order to more readily understand implementation considerations and more readily sequence work, the implementation framework below includes four timeframes, as depicted in the following graphic.

Implementation Framework



Existing Park Recommendations



This section provides more details on the recommendations for each existing park and facility.

Crane Park



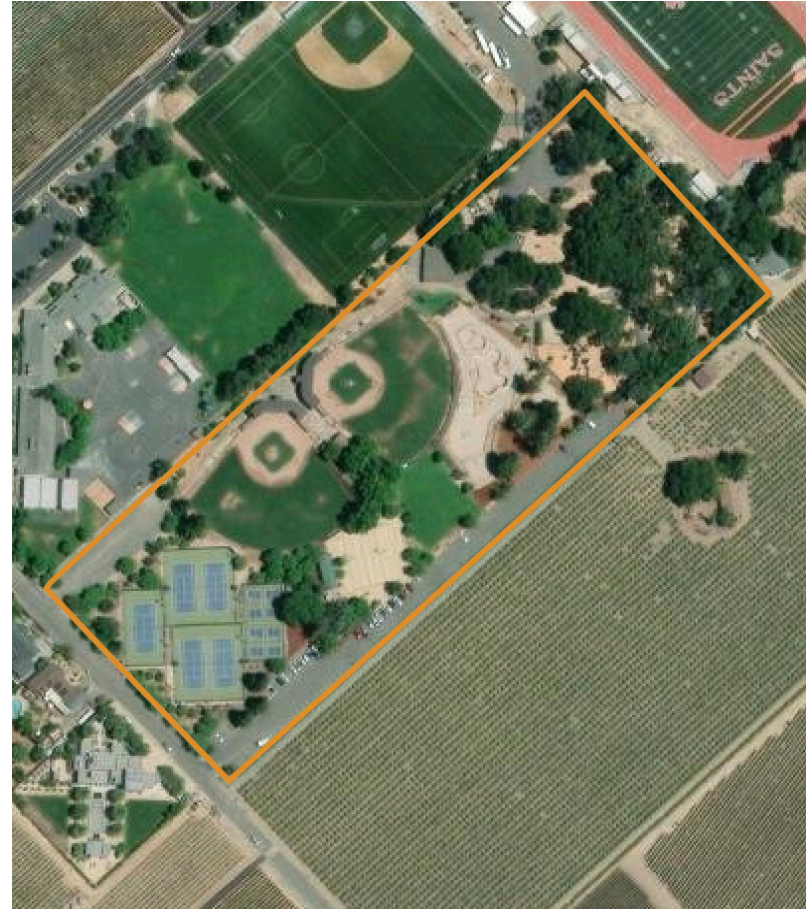
Vision: St. Helena's community park and hub for sports activities.

Community-serving Park

360 S. Crane Ave. | 11.27 acres



Existing conditions at Crane Park.



Recommendations

Recommendation	Priority
A. Updated park master plan to guide future investments. Identify a palette of materials for the site, major pedestrian and vehicle circulation routes, the relocated maintenance yard, the siting of a flexible-use building to replace the Head Start building, and oak protection zones. Consider the addition of an outdoor basketball without eliminating picnic and play spaces. Consider all recommendations listed below.	
B. Retain or increase the acreage used for self-directed activities (picnic and play areas around the oaks) to continues to fulfill the community park function.	
C. Relocate the maintenance yard from center of the park. Replacement yard should be smaller, more functional footprint with more attractive screening fencing. Consider the parking lot off S. Crane.	
D. Create a looped path within the park with mileage markers, using the existing path system where possible and connecting to citywide pathways around the park. Upgrade paving as needed.	
E. Implement an overall renovation to provide consistent fencing, parking bollards, seating, and site furnishings, and to improve the sense of arrival to the major park zones accessed from the east parking area (at the racquet zone, bocce zone, and picnic and play zone).	
F. Upgrade the play area and picnic areas in the oak grove, while prioritizing oak preservation.	



Inspiration Images: Top and bottom left: City of Berkeley, Willard Park Clubhouse; Bottom right - welcoming pathway between parks.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Priority
G. Upgrade and expand the restrooms and upgrade wastewater system (currently a septic system), as needed. Restrooms may be combined as part of any new structure or remodel of Head Start building.	
H. Transition the landscaped to drought-tolerant and climate-adapted plantings, with a focus on trees and low-growing plants. Implement ReScape CA guidelines or similar as outlined in the policies.	
I. Upgrade the area near the tennis and pickleball courts to improve waiting areas, court viewing, and general seating. Add a covered picnic area nearby.	
J. Convert the Head Start building into an indoor/outdoor activity hub with a focus on young kids during the morning and teens in the afternoon. Long term, replace this with a flexible use building similar to the Berkeley Willard Park Clubhouse (see sidebar) with roll-up doors and climate control that can be used for a variety of programs and events, including rentals.	 
K. Negotiate with the School District to increase access to the soccer fields and improve the pedestrian connection to Crane Park.	

Note: Crane Park is not recommended as a future location for a full-service recreation center (over 8,000 sf) in the future. The park is not large enough to accommodate a recreation center and associated parking, which would require at least 1 acre.



*Inspiration Images: Top: Pickleball watching and waiting area with shade;
Bottom: left - social area with movable chairs; right - destination play area with integration of art features.*

Lyman Park



Vision: St. Helena's lively and active downtown hub

Community-serving Park
0.89 acres | 1498 Main St.



Existing conditions at Lyman Park.



Recommendations

Recommendation	Priority
A. Updated park master plan, in conjunction with the Downtown Vision and Master Plan, to address the park and its relationship to downtown.	
B. Activate this park with movable seating and tables, and program spaces.	
C. Retain and preserve existing trees. Replace any trees that are dying or impacted by park renovations on site.	
D. Redesign the Railroad Avenue side of the park to add an interactive fountain and plaza with seating, redoing the current tot lot. Consider how to better integrate the historic gazebo into the park.	
E. Add a café/food and beverage concession near the plaza. Alternatively, a food cart space could be developed with utilities.	
F. Provide a pedestrian promenade/pathway that connects from Railroad Avenue to Main Street and potentially the Library.	
G. Replace the restroom and increase capacity to serve concerts in the park and other events.	
H. Develop a flexible-use hard surface stage area (e.g. pavers, decomposed granite, decking) with upgraded utilities for the concert series and other programming.	
I. Incorporate temporary or permanent public art, particularly along wall of the old city hall.	



Inspiration Images: Top - Artful play area and interactive water feature;
Bottom - Artful and intentional entrance and pathway.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Priority
J. Provide a more defined entry and a social space with seating on the Main Street side of the park. Incorporate the historic fountain into this area.	
K. Consider developing a larger and more interesting playground with more play value, especially if the City Hall site is used for housing or for a public facility.	
L. Add WIFI.	
M. Use this park for regular programming beyond the concert series, such as fitness, yoga/wellness, or art classes in the park.	
N. If the city sells the former City Hall site to a private developer, add conditions for development approval, such as:	
i. Require windows or active public use along the park boundary (where there is a building today).	
ii. Do not allow the footprint of the surface parking lot next to the park to increase.	
iii. If structured parking is proposed adjacent to the park, require public art, green walls, or other treatments to screen the parking from the park.	



Inspiration Images: Top - Seating areas for gathering and enjoying park;
Bottom - City of Windsor Commercial spaces opening onto Town Square.

Carnegie Building



Vision: A highly used community facility with an arts and culture focus.

Facility
1360 Oak Ave. | 0.13 acres



Top: Existing conditions at Carnegie Building, Bottom: Inspiration Images: left - Community cooking class, right - community dance.

Recommendations	Priority
A. Consider moving the P&R office to the Carnegie Building, while keeping event and programming space.	
B. Upgrade the interior spaces to improve usability, including adding doors to the secondary spaces on each floor and installing AV equipment.	
C. Upgrade the aging, unreliable elevator.	
D. On the exterior, replace the mowed turf with a drought-tolerant lawn alternative.	
E. Market the facility more heavily as a reservable event space. Provide pricing information and larger photos in an easier-to-navigate format on the website.	
F. Develop regular programming suitable for the building and its noise profile.	
i. Quieter exercise classes such as yoga and tai chi.	
ii. Add arts and culture programs, collaborating with other organizations, including Nimbus Arts, the St. Helena Public Library, and the Farmer's Market.	
iii. Develop programs to leverage kitchen facilities.	

Jacob Meily Park



St. Helena's northside community park and gateway to Sulphur Creek.

Community-serving Park
750 Pope St. | 5.42 acres



Existing conditions at Jacob Meily Park.



Recommendations	Priority
A. Preserve tree canopy throughout the park.	
B. Incorporate riparian plantings along Sulphur Creek.	
C. Incorporate features that encourage nature-based play, such as sand and water play-features that tie to Sulphur Creek.	
D. Add wayfinding signs at each pedestrian entrance that welcome people to the park.	
E. Repurpose the area of the park containing the vineyard to add more recreation facilities. This is a relatively level prime area of the park, located near the entry and the restrooms. Potential options include the following.	
i. Create a reservable picnic shelter that can also function as an outdoor classroom.	
ii. Add a fitness zone – an outdoor gym with exercise equipment. Pursue grants for outdoor gym equipment to fund the new equipment.	
iii. Add a basketball court or other recreation facilities, only if these can fit without eliminating existing trees.	
iv. This area is an alternative location for the Clubhouse Recreation Building.	



Inspiration Images: Top: Outdoor gym equipment. Bottom: Nature-based play in a creek area.

Recommendations

Signorelli Barn Recommendations

Signorelli Barn is located on Pope St. next to Jacob Meilly Park and is connected to the park by the paved pathway.

Recommendations	Priority
G. Stabilize Signorelli Barn	
H. Use as a rustic programming space for camps and other suitable recreation programs (e.g., nature programs, history programs, starting point of a walk).	



Existing conditions at Signorelli Barn,



Inspiration Images: Stein-Boozier Barn, a city-owned, rentable event space in Wilsonville, Oregon (top: interior, bottom: exterior).

Wappo Park

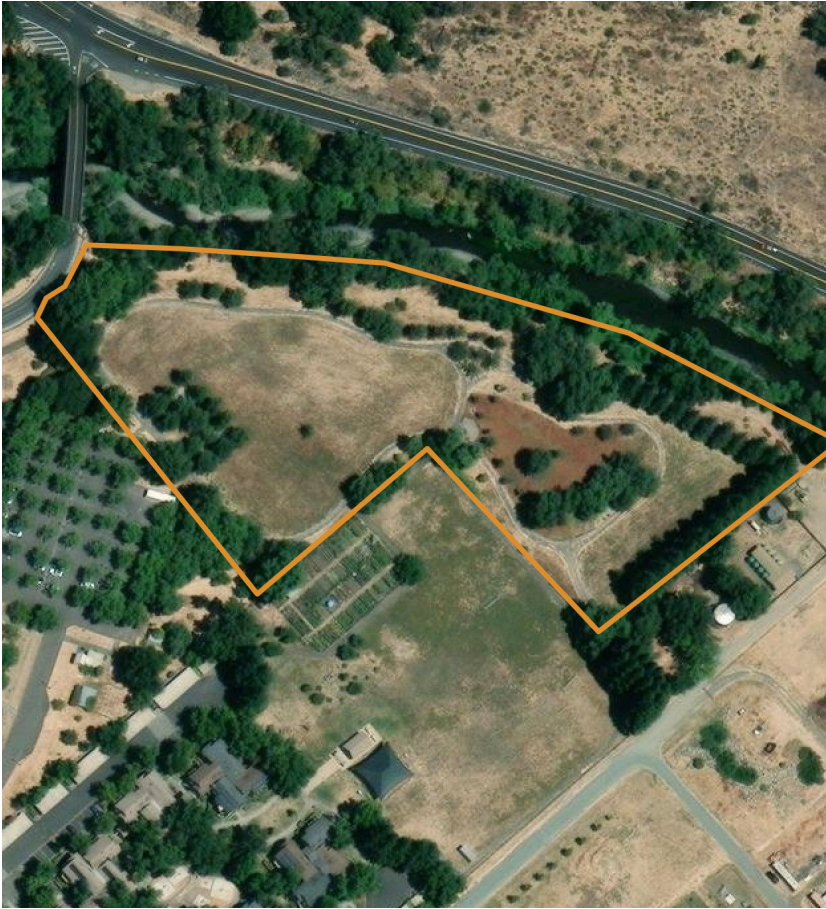


Vision: St. Helena’s nature-focused community park.

Community-serving Park
201 Pope St. | 5.32 acres

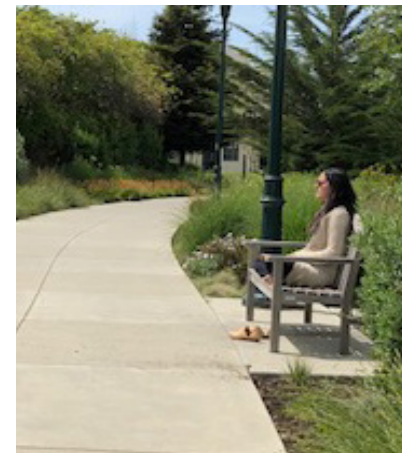


Existing conditions at Wappo Park.



Recommendations

Recommendations	Priority
A. Update the master plan and prioritize low-impact and light-touch facilities. Avoid sports facilities and facilities that require site excavation.	
B. Develop a strategy to use this site as a community events and day camp location, given the large open field, available parking, and proximity to City Hall.	
C. Make upgrades to the existing picnic area for a more welcoming space that is attractive as a rustic wedding venue. Modify the plantings, upgrade the pathways and paving, and consider adding shade sails or a shade structure. Begin marketing this site as a wedding venue.	
D. Collaborate with local tribes on park use and the interpretation of indigenous history and culture. Install a monument and develop interpretative signage with guidance from First Nations tribes or Native American tribes in the northwestern corner of the park.	
E. Retain the dog park and improve it for greater usability, such as adding a double-gate system, a small-dog area, shade, and human seating.	
F. Add bike parking.	
G. Maintain the natural surface trail, add distance markers, and add a midpoint trail to create a smaller loop option.	
H. Add lower-impact additions such as outdoor fitness equipment, community gardens, or a disc golf course.	



Inspiration Images: Top: Enclosed dog park with shade structures and seating. Bottom: left - bike rack, right - seating along a walkway.

Recommendations

Recommendations	Priority
I. Add benches, picnic tables, and boulders for seating along the trail, especially on the Napa River side of the trail, in locations where there are views of the river.	
J. Add a destination nature play area – one that uses logs, natural materials, without excavation - that ties in river and nature themes. This should be located near the parking area and picnic shelter.	
K. Add temporary or place-based art as part of St. Helena's overall public art strategy.	

This park is the nearest city park for both Stonebridge Apartments and Vineyard Valley Mobile Home Park. Both developments have some recreation amenities for residents. Wappo Park should provide green space and nature, in contrast to the more manicured facilities found in both developments.



Inspiration Images: Outdoor rustic wedding in the trees.



Inspiration Images: Top: left - public art installation, right - disc golf course. Bottom: Nature-play area.

Lewis Station Park



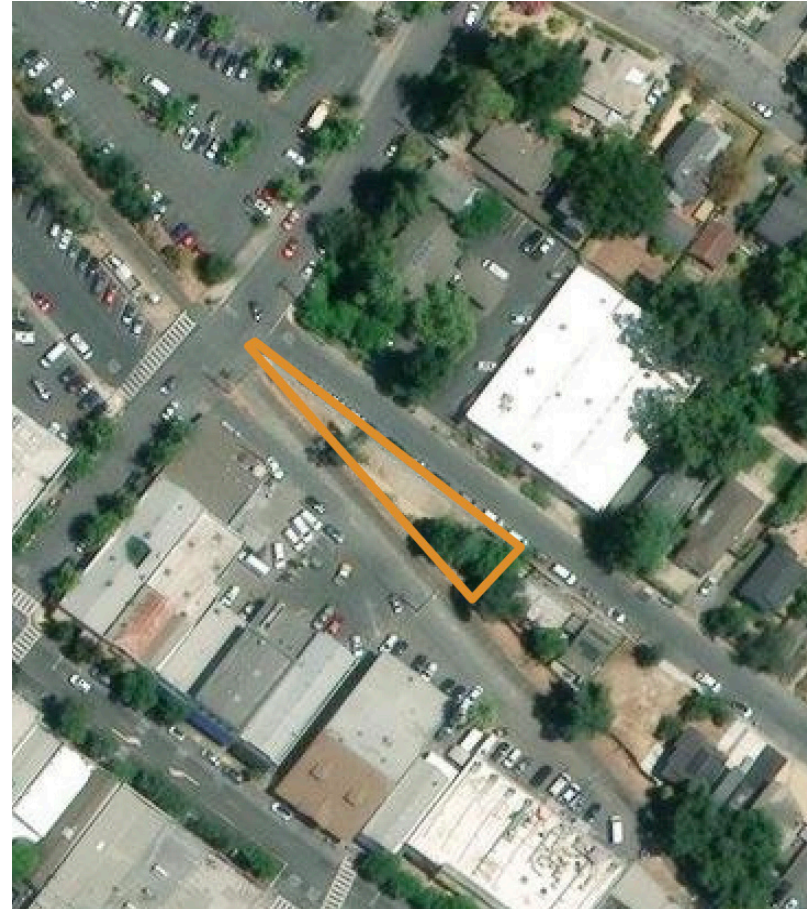
Vision: A downtown wayside and orientation spot.

Local-serving Park

750 Pope St. | 0.13 acres



Top: Existing conditions at Lewis Station Park; Bottom: historic photo.



Recommendations

Recommendations	Priority
A. Add temporary or permanent public art.	
B. Add vegetation, including trees, planters, pots, or a vertical green wall to screen the railroad tracks.	
C. Improve the visual presence of this park at the intersection of Church Street and Hunt Avenue. Art or wayfinding enhancements should be located in this area and designed to provide a landmark for passersby.	
D. Add a wayfinding kiosk, a drinking fountain with water-bottle refills, and bicycle parking.	
E. Add shade and additional seating options. Consider adding string lights or other festive nighttime lighting.	
F. Renovate the restroom in the long term.	
G. Implement the Streets Master Plan crossing and sidewalk improvements to improve connections from this park to Hunt Avenue and downtown.	



Inspiration Images: top - Placemaking and wayfinding with paint. Bottom: left - public art installation, right - wayfinding signage.

Mary Fryer Park



Vision: *Part of a cluster of small parks, each with its own character, connected with a walking loop and providing green space for the surrounding neighborhood.*

Local-serving Park

1500 Mitchell Dr. | 0.84 acres



Top: existing conditions at Mary Fryer Park; Bottom: Inspiration Images, left - small nature play feature; right - example of a simple picnic shelter.

Mary Fryer Park is accessed from Mitchell Drive and is the least constrained by neighboring properties. This park is slightly larger than Starr Baldwin Park and it has a bigger street frontage. Mary Fryer will be the park in the cluster focused on play and recreation.

Recommendations	Priority
A. Expand the playground area toward Mitchell Drive to increase play value and add more features, such as swings. Incorporate nature play elements. Mary Fryer Park should have the largest playground in the cluster.	
B. Improve the appearance and curb appeal Mitchell Dr. entrance. Eliminate the fencing and hedge. Consider eliminating or replacing the wooden structure at the park entrance, which is high-maintenance and offers little recreational value or shade.	
C. Add more seating and small picnic areas near the entrance and around the expanded playground utilizing existing shade and views of the water detention pond.	
D. Add a small- to medium-sized picnic shelter near the entrance of this park.	
E. Improve the path and add wayfinding signage to direct users to the other two parks.	
F. Preserve the tree canopy.	

Mennen Park



Vision: *Part of a cluster of small parks, each with its own character, connected with a walking loop and providing green space for the surrounding neighborhood.*

Local-serving Park
1649 Voorhees Cir. | 0.17 acres



Top: existing conditions at Mennen Park; Bottom: Inspiration Images, left - native plantings; right - small picnic shelter with solar panels.

Mennen Park is the smallest of the three parks, with the least shade and the most constrained site, with houses on three sides of the park. Its primary focus should be to provide a local green space for nearby neighbors for relaxation, enjoyment of the outdoors and small gatherings.

Recommendations	Priority
A. Extend the picnic area towards the streetside of the park to allow more spacing between the tables and the surrounding property lines. Add shade and movable picnic tables.	
B. Add shade trees.	
C. Add more varied seating options – benches, rocks, seat walls, moveable seating.	
D. Eliminate turf grass. Incorporate pollinator plantings and drought-tolerant native plants.	
E. Increase the visibility of this park from the sidewalk, such as by adding a gateway feature or a larger park sign.	
F. Improve the path and add wayfinding signage to direct users to the other two parks.	

Starr Baldwin Park



Vision: Part of a cluster of small parks, each with its own character, connected with a walking loop and providing green space for the surrounding neighborhood.

Local-serving Park
1679 Spring St. | 0.76 acres



Top: existing conditions at Starr Baldwin Park; Bottom: Inspiration Images, left - alternative fencing style for creek; right - example wayfinding signage.

Starr Baldwin Park has a frontage on Spring Street (via a crossing over the small creek) and another narrow frontage on Vorhees Circle. A paved path connects the two sides of the park. In the cluster, this park will focus on nature-based activities and outdoor enjoyment.

Recommendations	Priority
A. Improve access and curb appeal from Spring Street by widening the bridge and upgrading the fence.	
B. Add art or a gateway feature at the park entrance from Vorhees Circle to increase the visibility.	
C. Upgrade the path surfacing throughout the park.	
D. Create a nature play area with nearby seating near the Spring Street end of the park. Consider adding community garden plots to this park.	
E. Add seating throughout the park, along the path, under trees, in groupings, and for solitude and different seating options – benches, rocks, seat walls, movable seating, hammocks.	
F. Maintain the tree canopy and plant with climate-adapted trees and add riparian plantings along the creek edge.	
G. Add wayfinding signage to direct users to the other two parks. Include a map that shows the route and distance.	

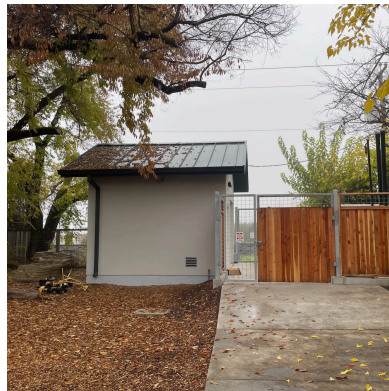
McCullagh Park



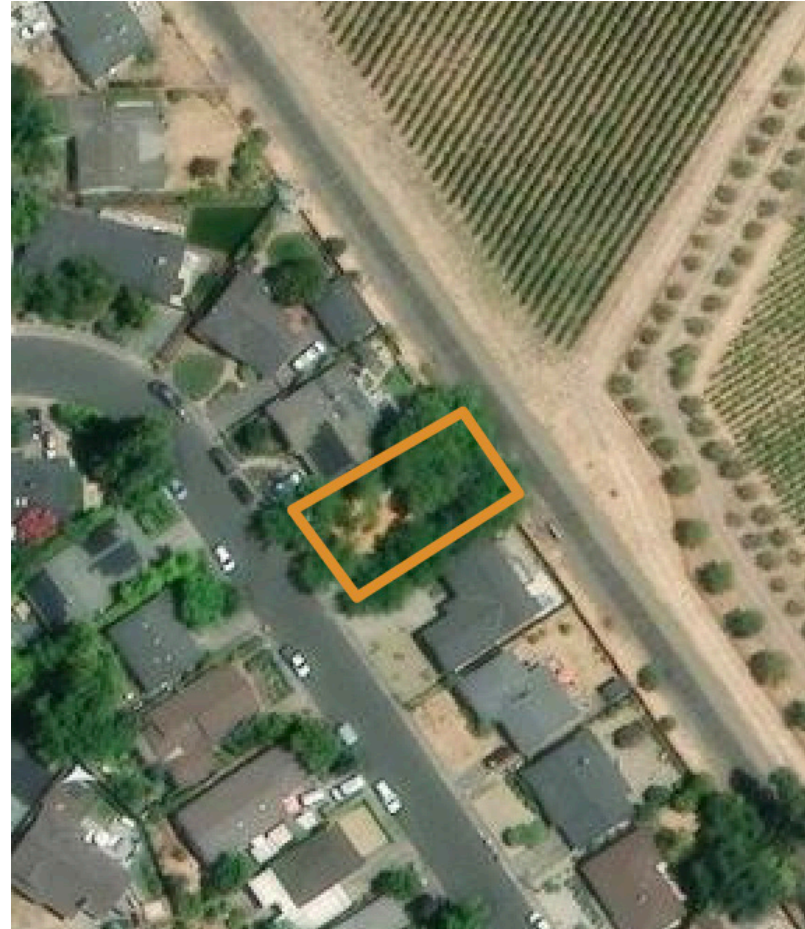
Vision: A small green space for the surrounding neighborhood, memorializing Boy Scout Stephan McCullagh.

Local-serving Park

1758 Crinella Dr. | 0.14 acres



Existing conditions at McCullagh Park.



Recommendations

This park accesses Crinella Drive and offers views of the train tracks and vineyards beyond, giving it a unique character within the park system.

Recommendations	Priority
A. This park has nature-themed play features that fit well with the site and should be maintained. Add more features that expand play value and appeal to 5-12-year-olds.	
B. Add more seating and places to relax for all ages.	
C. Maintain the tree canopy and implement a tree replacement plan.	



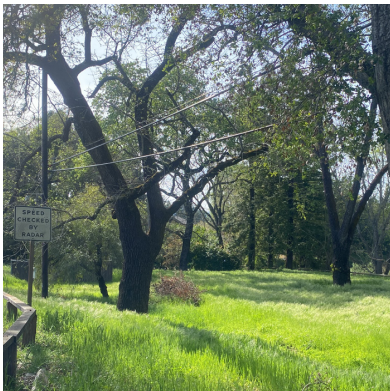
Inspiration Images: Top: Simple nature-themed play structure.
Bottom: left - shaded seating and picnic areas, right - more seating varieties.

Stone Bridge Park



Vision: Trailhead for the future Napa River shared-use path.

Undeveloped Park Area
220 Pope St. | 0.75 acres



Existing conditions at Stone Bridge Park.

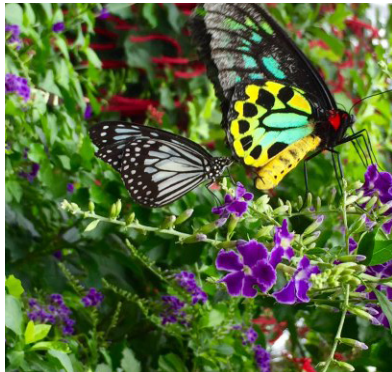
Recommendations	Priority
A. Connect this park with the bicycle and pedestrian networks.	
B. Add a small parking lot for cars when the trail opens for public use.	
C. Add trailhead amenities, including a trail map, bike parking, benches and picnic tables.	
D. Manage invasive species on the site and increase native and riparian plantings.	
E. Maintain the tree canopy and implement a tree replacement plan.	

Hunt Ave. Lot



Vision: Minimal development, nature-focused local park.

Undeveloped Park Area
757 Hunt Ave. | 0.36 acres



Top: Existing conditions; Bottom: Inspiration Images, left - natural seating; right - pollinator planting.

Recommendations	Priority
A. Collaborate with the Napa County Land Trust who has a conservation easement to protect the conservation values of the park.	
B. Develop a master plan that prioritizes oak preservation and restoration and adds compatible low-impact features to serve the neighborhood, including:	
i. A looped walking path (natural surface and accessible)	
ii. Habitat features like bird boxes or pollinator plantings	
iii. Interpretive signage about oaks and their significance	
iv. Natural benches and seating	
v. A small nature play area	



New Parks, Trails & Facilities

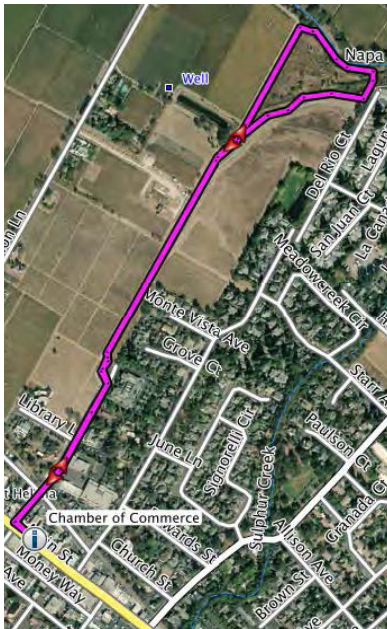


There are a number of potential new facilities that City should develop during the lifetime of this plan. They include expanding and enhancing the availability of trails, as well as looking to develop additional indoor spaces.

Additional Trails

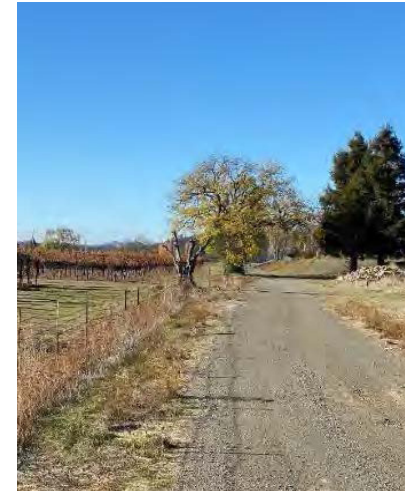
Napa River Walk Park

- Add the Napa River Walk Loop open space to the St. Helena park inventory, designating it as a linear park.
- Formalize this trail as a park.
- Add seating and amenities, and create the loop as shown in the *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report*.



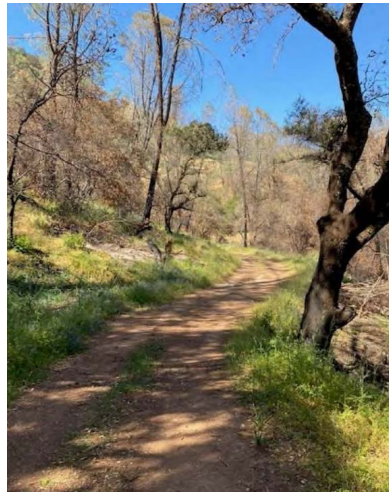
Valley Floor Walk and Community Forest at the Wastewater Treatment Plant

- Support development of the St. Helena Community Forest that uses land around the existing St. Helena Wastewater Treatment Plant for tree planting, with trails and public access.
- Formalize the walking loop around the wastewater treatment plant, called the Valley Floor Walk and described on p. 32 of the *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report*.



Reservoir Trail

- Develop a natural surface trail at the reservoir, extending to a loop in the future if possible.
- In addition, incorporate the Bell Canyon loop as a hiking trail as described in the *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report*.



Napa River, Sulphur Creek, and York Creek Shared Use and Recreational Paths

- Develop the shared use and recreational paths along the Napa River and Sulphur and York Creeks as recommended in the Streets Master Plan and shown on the Citywide Park System map.



Trails and hiking inspiration images.

St. Helena Public Library Park

The Library's has outdoor space at the Library Lane frontage and a larger area at the back of the building and parking lot that is currently planted as a vineyard. Neither space offers much recreation value or usable outdoor space. Both areas offer significant potential to provide welcoming and activated space that will serve library programs and provide park space in the center of town.

- A. Develop a master plan to re-envision both spaces to serve as plaza-like park spaces for play, relaxing and outdoor gathering.
- B. Incorporate play features, plenty of seating in a variety of configurations, picnic areas, outdoor classroom space, shade and public art. These spaces should be designed so that library staff can use them to extend library programs outdoors.
- C. Implement the master plan as funds allow. Prioritize the entry plaza for implementation first.
- D. If the library is relocated to another site in the future, the replacement library should include outdoor plaza space and community center space, like Palo Alto's Mitchell Center (a combined

library and community center located in Mitchell Park). If the city opted to relocate the library, potential locations that could fit a facility like the Mitchell Park Center are the former City Hall site adjacent to Lyman Park or a new park site. Crane Park is likely too constrained to fit a combination library/community center, without eliminating the oak trees and picnic areas.



Outdoor space around the Public Library, outlined in orange.



Public Library inspiration from Palo Alto (top) and Half Moon Bay (bottom).

"Clubhouse" Community Center

St. Helena has a need for indoor space that can be used for recreation programs, events, and rentals. To meet this need, St. Helena should pursue development of a "clubhouse" style community center. This is a smaller flexible use building that can be used for recreation programs and events and as a rental facility for private parties and events. The Willard Clubhouse Recreation Center in Berkeley is a good model. This LEED Gold facility, 3,400 sf in size, replaced a much smaller, aging facility. The building opened in 2025 and had a construction cost of \$8 million.

The city does not have the population or budget to support a full-service recreation center. These facilities are typically 40,000+ sf in size, cost millions for capital development and require an annual operating subsidy even if they are significant revenue generators.

- A. This facility should be located in a park and be oriented to the outdoors and the park landscape. There should be parking on site or ample parking nearby. Sites that should be considered for a stand-alone clubhouse include:
 - i. Crane Park, replacing the aging Headstart building.
 - ii. Adjacent to Lyman Park on the former City Hall site.

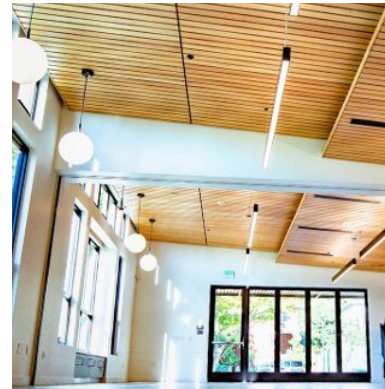


Willard Clubhouse in Berkeley.

iii. Possibly Jacob Meily Park, where the vineyard and restroom is located currently.

iv. At the new community park.

- B. The building should include a large multipurpose room that can accommodate an event of at least 150 people seated, single occupancy restrooms, office space for staff, a catering/service kitchen and ample storage for tables, chairs and any associated recreation equipment. It should be at least 4,000 sf in size and have doors that open from the main multipurpose room directly outdoors.
- C. The city should develop a business and operations study to finalize location, size, building elements, and operating proforma. This should be used to guide the design of the facility.
- D. This facility is suitable for philanthropic fundraising.
- E. If St. Helena moves the library, the clubhouse should be developed as part of a combined library and community center, not as a stand-alone facility.



Willard Clubhouse in Berkeley.



Additional Recommendations

New Park or Joint Use Agreement Site to Serve Hillcrest/Dean York Area

This area of St. Helena lacks a park within walking distance but has little land available. The following recommendations will Potential options to serve this area by adding a new park (such as developing a park at the reservoir on Spring Mountain Road), formalizing joint use agreements at the middle school or the Boys & Girls Club, or incorporating park amenities along the planned York Creek shared use path between Pratt Ave and Spring Mountain Road. Formally opening and recognizing the Adams-Pine pathway, described on p. 24 of the *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report*, would increase the access of residents in this neighborhood to the Boys & Girls Club and other city parks and facilities located nearby.

New Park to Keep Pace with Growth

To maintain the current level of service of 5 acres per 1,000 population, St. Helena will need to add 6.12 acres of park land by 2040 if population growth projections are met. Preferably, this should be accomplished through the acquisition of a larger community-serving park site that offers a variety of opportunities. It should be of a size and amenity mix similar to Jacob Meily or Crane Park. St. Helena should avoid acquiring multiple small sites or sites that are environmentally constrained.

Additional Recommendations

- **ADA Transition Plan.** Implement the recommended ADA upgrades at parks and facilities, as recommended in the ADA Transition Plan.
- **Parks and Recreation Office.** Move the Parks & Recreation office to a location central to St. Helena and in or adjacent to a park. Potential options include the Carnegie Building, Crane Park, or co-location with another agency.

- **School District Facilities.** Work with the School District to secure more consistent public access to school facilities, including the theater, swimming pool, gymnasiums and sports fields.



School District facilities: Top: playground at St. Helena Elementary School, Bottom: St. Helena High School Performing Arts Center.

Facilities: Recreation Programming and Events

This chapter outlines a variety of renovations and new facilities at sites across the park system that will provide more indoor and outdoor programming and event space, meeting one of the biggest needs in St. Helena's park system. The Parks & Recreation Division has been creative in developing programming that can make use of existing structures, even those that are very limited or in poor condition. This section outlines how to sequence implementation of recommendations over the next five years to support the Parks & Recreation in sustaining and growing programming as outlined in Chapter 2.

- Continue to program the martial arts studio in the converted garage at the Parks & Recreation Office and the aging Head Start Building in Crane Park until the facilities are no longer available or closed due to their condition.
- Develop programming that can make use of the Carnegie Building in its current state.
- Move the Parks & Recreation Division office to the Carnegie Building, with associated improvements needed to make it function effectively as an office in a building that has regular recreation programming.



Head Start Building in Crane Park.

- Initiate discussions with the School District on facility access.
- Coordinate with Rianda House on programming, including encouraging use of Lyman Park.
- Implement utility upgrades to support recreation programming at target sites (Lyman, Crane, Wappo and Jacob Meily), working one park at a time.
- Develop the recommended large picnic shelter at Wappo Park that can be used for both wedding rentals and Parks & Recreation programs (such as day camps).
- Stabilize Signorelli Barn, at minimum making it useable to support programming such as day camps.

Within five years, the Parks & Recreation Division should begin studies for development of the Clubhouse. If the City Council opts to relocate the library, the Community Services Director should lead the process to develop a combined library and community center.



Aquatic Center at the St. Helena High School.

4

Implementation

Chapter 4 describes how St. Helena can take incremental steps to implement the PRT Master Plan and includes recommendations and tools for Implementation.





Chapter 4 Organization

Funding recommendations.

Staffing recommendations.

A **summary recommendations** table.

A tool to **evaluate new ideas** proposed in the future.

Criteria to help staff prioritize when developing annual work plans.

Transitioning to a Vibrant and Connected System



The PRT Master Plan sets forth a comprehensive direction for the enhancement of St. Helena's park system over the next 15 to 20 years. The implementation of this plan will happen step by step, using the plan to guide the best use of opportunities for funding and partnerships. The result of the this work will be to meet our goals and these six critical outcomes.

**Enhance parks with
a sense of place -
This is St. Helena!**

**Secure consistent
and reliable funding
and revenue stream.**

**Leverage parks as
critical elements
of City livability
and connect
to downtown,
neighborhoods, and
tourism.**

**Balance the
investments east
and west.**

**Embrace parks as
more than green
spaces and activate
the in-between
spaces of plazas,
sidewalks, and
underutilized places.**

**Bolster staff capacity
to build partnerships,
capture volunteer
support, and to
deliver innovative
and creative
programs and events.**

Funding

There are a variety of funding sources available for parks and recreation, many of which are already used by St. Helena. Different funding sources have different limitations on use. Some sources can be used only for capital improvements, others can be used for operations, and some can be used for both. This section includes funding recommendations, organized by operations, capital improvements and longer term resource development.

Operations Funding

- **Allocate parks and recreation revenues from facility use fees and recreation program fees to parks and recreation services.** These fees offset the cost of operations for activities that have some individual benefit and are not fully public benefit.
- **Adjust the recently adopted nonresident facility use fees recommended by Willdan's study for events.** Willdan's recommended facility use fees included a fee philosophy about public good and private benefit. These fees also recommended higher costs for nonresidents, but did not consider that some facilities would be marketable for special events. For example, Yountville charges nonresidents for picnic shelter rentals a fee three times the resident fee, with a 4-hour time block (which allows for 2 rentals on a peak day). Yountville's packages for its community center and outdoor space range from \$2,000 to over \$6,000. Larger events require a permit, and costs are higher for events with alcohol. Security is required for some larger events.

St. Helena should adjust the fees for nonresident events based on the local market for similar vendors, and at minimum should eliminate the subsidy for nonresident special events. In particular, the fee for Wappo in particular should be increased before the site is marketed for weddings.

- **Increase revenue generation by marketing St. Helena parks and facilities for weddings and events to nonresidents.** St.

Right Funding for Right Projects

Capital improvement funding can be used for land acquisition, design, and construction. This includes expansion or renovation of existing parks and facilities, as well as new parks and facilities. By City of St. Helena policy, a capital project is considered a one-time expenditure but may take multiple years to deliver and fully fund.

The City of St. Helena manages capital development through the citywide five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), managed by the Public Works Department. This is updated annually by staff and approved by the City Council.

Operations funding supports ongoing services, such as maintenance, facility operations, recreation programming, events, marketing, and management. Funding for parks and recreation operations comes from the City's general revenue sources, including property taxes, sales taxes, and Transient Occupancy Tax, among others.

Community Services also generates revenues from facility rentals, recreation program registrations, and donations and sponsorships (such as for the Fourth of July celebration). Revenues can offset operations costs.



Helena currently does not generate much revenue from event rentals. Weddings and events can generate significant revenues, especially given the tourism in Napa County. For example, Wappo Park could be very attractive as a rustic wedding venue, with just a few improvements and a marketing campaign. Other facilities, including Carnegie Center and the entire Lyman Park, are also attractive as event venues and would be more attractive with a few improvements. Some events, such as biking events, runs and walks, could also be attracted to St. Helena. Wappo Park's parking lot is a major asset for this type of activity.

Implementing this recommendation will require staff time to conduct market research, develop marketing materials, market and book events, and provide customer service during events. This will require additional staff time, beyond existing staffing levels.

- **Consider allocating a portion of TOT funding specifically for visitor-attracting events and potentially capital improvements that support visitors.** St. Helena's parks, public spaces and programs contribute to its appeal for visitors. City Council should consider allocating a portion of TOT funding, particularly as new hotel rooms and lodging come online, to projects and programs that benefit tourism, such as wayfinding or Lyman Park seating and social spaces.
- **Maintain affordability for local residents when setting recreation program fees.** The city could consider fee increases, but these should be paired with additional free options and the establishment of a scholarship fund.
- **Increase sponsorship revenues for events.** Create a comprehensive sponsorship package to fund events, rather than seeking funding for individual events. Increase the sponsorship target beyond the current targets and consider different levels of sponsorship at different price points. Make requests earlier in the year and seek multi-year commitments. This will require additional staff time.

Yountville, California

Comparable city **Yountville** markets its community center through an events marketing website managed by recreation staff: www.yountvilleevents.com/. The site promises a 2-day turnaround for a price quote. The site includes packages, which makes it easier for potential clients to get a sense of costs without City staff having to generate a price quote.

In addition, Yountville has a downloadable special events guide outlining events permitting and various guidelines. Events could include races, weddings, corporate events, etc., and the guide covers amplified music, alcohol, food carts, parking, security and other typical event questions.



Event website and rentable event space at the Yountville Community Center.

Capital Improvement Funding

- **Adjust the Capital Improvement Plan to align with PRT Master Plan priorities.** Prioritize “Immediate Deliverables” that will demonstrate success to the community.
- **Make strategic capital investments to reduce operating costs.** Prioritize capital improvements that lower operating costs, such as irrigation system upgrades, conversion of turfgrass areas to low-mow or lawn alternatives, and the addition of solar power/ renewable energy at parks and facilities.
- **Leverage existing capital funding sources for infrastructure.** St. Helena’s stormwater, water, wastewater and streets infrastructure systems intersect with the parks and recreation system. Infrastructure capital projects can deliver multiple benefits. For example, if a project is completed at the reservoir access road, it can be structured to develop the recommended trail. Or when a Class 1 trail recommended in the Streets Master Plan passes through a park, it can improve the trail corridor through the park. In addition, parks offer opportunities for green stormwater infrastructure that reduces runoff and increases infiltration.
- **Add a small asset management surcharge on all facility use and recreation program fees (such as \$1 or a percentage of the total) and place the funds into a budget account for capital preservation and replacement.** The surcharge would be applied to all program fees and rental charges. The proceeds from the surcharge would go into an account used to support long-term facility repair, renovation, and replacement.
- **Continue to regularly update the City’s impact fee study and require fees in lieu of land.** The Park Impact Fee is St. Helena’s primary source of capital improvement funding for parks and recreation improvement. The fees in lieu help fund capacity-enhancing projects within the existing system and can help fund the development of new parks. Given the high cost of land in Napa



County, it is important to continue regular updates to keep pace with increased costs.

- **Use some General Fund dollars to fund park improvements in the existing system.** St. Helena has primarily used impact fees to fund park improvements, even though it is not a high growth city. Comparable cities, including Calistoga, Half Moon Bay, Healdsburg, Ojai, and Yountville, use some General Funds to fund park improvements. In Ojai, residents have voted to use some TOT funds to fund improvements.
- **Prioritize improvements that will increase revenue generation**

from event rentals. As noted under Operations Funding above, St. Helena should focus on generating revenue from event rentals, which is unrestricted revenue. The city can use this revenue in combination with other revenues to prioritize capital improvements that make event rental locations more marketable or to command a higher rental fee. See Chapter 3 improvement recommendations.

- **In the mid to long term, explore a new voter-supported funding mechanism, especially a parcel tax or Landscape and Lighting Assessment District that can support both capital and operations.** This will require a feasibility study that includes a voter poll to test the viability of various mechanisms and rates as well as priorities. Many successful voter-approved tax measures for parks and recreation focus on taking care of existing assets or on land protection/conservation, and not solely on funding big-ticket capital facilities.

Resource Development

The recommendations below could increase the resources available for parks and recreation, with the use of resources (whether capital, operations or both) depending on the partner or specific opportunity.

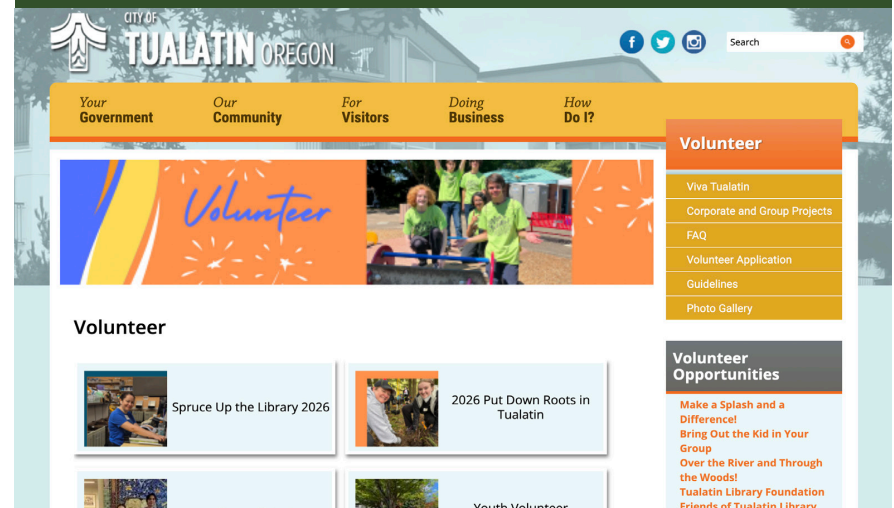
- **Significantly increase efforts to work with the parks and arts nonprofit to expand funding through donations, philanthropy and sponsorships.** The newly refocused nonprofit provides a way for St. Helena to expand its efforts to generate donations. Increasing donations will require consistent City staff time.
- **Increase opportunities for residents to volunteer in St. Helena's parks and recreation system.** Develop a volunteer program that includes a range of activities, time commitments, and focus areas. This will require dedicated staff time. None of the comparable cities have a dedicated volunteer coordinator, but most of them have more recreation staffing per capita than St. Helena.
- **Collaborate with other organizations to increase resources for**

Tualatin, Oregon

The City of Tualatin in Oregon (population 27,000) has an outstanding and comprehensive city volunteer programs. It has dedicated volunteer coordinators housed in the City Manager's office who recruit and manage volunteers citywide, including for special events, the library and for hands-on park stewardship activities. They offer a variety of opportunities and use an online platform to manage volunteers.

In FY 2023-34, the City recorded 15,115 donated volunteer hours from 856 volunteers, all working within the library and the parks and recreation system. This translates to more than 7 full-time staff.

See for program details. <https://www.tualatinoregon.gov/volunteer/volunteer-guidelines>



Volunteer website for Tualatin, Oregon.

parks and recreation. St. Helena should increase collaborations with local organizations to increase resources for parks and recreation. For example, the Napa Valley Land Trust has been an important partner, such as in the acquisition of Hunts Grove Park. The School District has sites and facilities that the community would like to have more access to. This effort will require consistent staff time to build relationships and develop agreements.

- **Continue to seek grant and foundation funding.** Grant funding is opportunity-based and often government grants are focused on underserved communities. Grants are not a sustainable or reliable source of funding and should not be considered a primary source. St. Helena received a Prop 68 per capita grant, but the community's overall demographics, especially per capita income, make it ineligible for some public grants that focus on vulnerable populations. Potentially, St. Helena could qualify for climate- or wildfire prevention-related public grants, but that will depend on the grant criteria. Some foundation grants may be a match, for specific programs for residents with specific needs or vulnerabilities. The nonprofit will be an important sponsor for any foundation grants

Implementing this recommendation will require consistent staff time to monitor grant opportunities and develop relationships with foundations. If an opportunity is identified, each application or proposal will require additional staff time to prepare and submit. The skills needed to prepare some applications and proposals are specialized and may require outside assistance as well as dedicated staff time.

- **Reach out to local businesses, especially vintners and hotels, to seek partnerships.** Local vineyards and hotels have a vested interest in ensuring visitors enjoy their stays and want to return to the area. There may be opportunities to partner in ways that help the city and the businesses reach their goals, whether through events, concessions agreements, park improvements, or other collaborations. Partnerships take time to develop and eventually

Healdsburg, California

Healdsburg's new pavilion included significant funding from the Foley Family Charitable Foundation. This fund was established in 1999 by Bill and Carol Foley of the Foley Entertainment Group to support the communities in which they live.

St. Helena may have charitable foundations that staff could reach out to Healdsburg colleagues to learn how they successfully secured foundation funding for the project.



The Foley Family Community Pavilion in Healdsburg.

formalize and will require consistent time commitment from a staff member with the authority to make decisions about the use of city resources. The St. Helena Chamber of Commerce may be a good resource for identifying business needs and potential contacts.

Staffing

Two Departments are responsible for St. Helena's parks and recreation services.

The **Community Services Department** was created in 2024 to merge Parks and Recreation and Library into one department. The Community Services Department oversees St. Helena Public Library, recreation programming, and community engagement and communications. The Community Services Director is the staff liaison for the Parks & Recreation Commission.

The **Public Works Department** is responsible for all aspects of the City's infrastructure and public rights-of-way, including streets, storm drains, parks, water treatment, water distribution, wastewater collection and treatment, and capital projects. Within the Department, the Parks and Trees Division is responsible for parks maintenance and maintenance of the urban forest, among other duties.

Benchmarking during the planning process identified that St. Helena provides a similar level of services compared to peer communities such as Calistoga, Ojai and Yountville, but more parks and recreation services than similar size agencies nationwide. However, St. Helena's staffing levels are lower. Compared to small agencies nationwide based on National Recreation and Park Association data, St. Helena is below the median level of staffing despite offering more services. These recommendations focus on key staffing needs to sustain the current system at a level consistent with community expectations and to leverage opportunities (such as increasing sponsorships).

- **Fill vacant position(s) in the Community Services Department.** The Parks and Recreation Division is already lightly staffed. The



Division has been down a staff person since August, and there is no space capacity. Filling all budgeted positions should be a top priority.

- **Make the Recreation Assistant position full-time.** This position is currently less than full-time but the workload justifies a full-time role, not a 0.85% position.
- **Quantify the percentage of time the Parks and Trees Division spends on tasks outside the park system.** The Parks and Trees Division is tasked with maintaining the park system, but has other responsibilities including maintaining the grounds of city buildings

and supporting other Public Works responsibilities when needed. The Division appears to be staffed at lower levels than other agencies and industry averages, even without accounting for these other responsibilities.

- **Explore using seasonal positions and contracted services for routine maintenance tasks to expand capacity of the Parks and Trees Division.** Tasks such as litter pickup, trash pickup, restroom cleaning, event setup/takedown and mowing should be considered for seasonals and contracts. This would allow permanent full-time employees to focus on higher skill or specialized tasks and quality control.
- **Add capacity to expand existing efforts or add missing functions in the following areas:**
 - Volunteer Recruitment, Management and Coordination, which will require regular dedicated staff time.
 - Communications and Marketing, including marketing event spaces and programming.
 - Fund Development, which will require regular time investment including working with the nonprofit, dedicated time for fundraising, and regular time for sponsorships.
 - Added Recreation Programming Capacity using a mix of in-house and contracted resources.
 - Natural Areas Management, a function that is not part of the Parks & Trees Division's responsibilities currently.
 - Trails Maintenance, a function that will be needed as more trails are added.
 - Added Groundskeeping Capacity, to increase the ability of the Parks & Trees Division to provide the level of stewardship the community desires.

- Added Urban Forestry Capacity, to ensure St. Helena's tree canopy is sustained and expanded.

- **Determine the best approach to providing more capacity and new functions.** Updated job descriptions can be used to reallocate and reprioritize responsibilities, add new responsibilities and remove responsibilities. New positions can be funded to bring in additional staff resources, whether seasonal, permanent, temporary or full-time. Contracted services can add more capacity or bring in a specialized resource without committing to permanent staffing.

As St. Helena's population increases and more parks, facilities, trails, or services are added, additional staffing will be required.

- **Add staff or contracted resources as the system expands.** When new parks, natural areas, or facilities are added to the system, staff increases must be built into the budget.



Recommendations, Programs and Initiatives Summary

The Master Plan Implementation Table, beginning on the following page, summarizes all recommended new projects, programs and initiatives, synthesized from Chapters 2 and 3. This table does not include continuing programs, such as the well-attended recreation programs and special events, and ongoing operations to take care of and maintain the park system. The Master Plan Implementation Table includes projects, programs and initiatives that are above and beyond existing staff efforts, and that must be adequately resourced and sequenced in over time.

This table is intended to serve as a resource, along with Chapter 3, for the City's established capital improvement plan process. Capital projects identified in this PRT Master Plan will be considered for inclusion in future CIP update cycles, based on available funding.

The Implementation Table is organized into three sections: Existing Parks and Facilities; New Parks, Facilities and Trails and New Programs and Initiatives (with policy reference).

For each project, program or initiative, the following information is provided:

- **Recommendations Type.** These columns indicate which of the four recommendations types apply to each site or initiative.
- **City Lead/Partner Project.** Some projects, programs, or initiatives are intended to be led by the City, while others will involve or be led by a partner. Checkboxes indicate which projects are planned for the City to lead, and which are projected to have partner involvement.
- **Top Priority:** This column includes the top one or two priority steps for implementation.

Recommendations, Programs & Initiatives Summary

Existing Parks and Facilities

	Major Development	User Experience Improvements	Nature and Habitat Enhancements	Programming and Activation	City Lead	Partner Project	Top Priority
Carnegie Building		■		■	■		Develop more regular programming suitable for the building and its noise profile. Consider moving the Parks & Recreation office to the Carnegie Center, while still retaining event and programming space.
Crane Park	■	■	■	■	■		Convert the Head Start building into an indoor/outdoor activity hub, focusing on young kids in the morning and teens in the afternoon. Create a looped path within the park with mileage markers, using the existing path system where possible.
Jacob Meily Park		■	■	■	■		Preserve tree canopy throughout the park. Add wayfinding signs at each pedestrian entrance that welcome people to the park
Signorelli Barn		■		■	■		Stabilize Signorelli Barn.
Lewis Station		■			■	■	Add temporary or permanent public art. Improve the visual presence of this park at the intersection of Church Street and Hunt Avenue.
Lyman Park	■	■		■	■		Activate this park with moveable seating and tables, and program spaces. Add wifi.

Existing Parks and Facilities

	Major Development	User Experience Improvements	Nature and Habitat Enhancements	Programming and Activation	City Lead	Partner Project	Top Priority
Wappo Park	■	■	■	■	■		Upgrade the existing picnic area to create a more welcoming space that is attractive as a rustic wedding venue. Retain the dog park and improve it for greater usability, such as adding a double-gate system, a small-dog area, shade, and human seating.
Mary Fryer Park		■	■		■		Improve the path and add wayfinding signage to direct users to the other two parks.
Mennen Park			■		■		Add more varied seating options – benches, rocks, seat walls, moveable seating.
Starr Baldwin Park		■	■		■		Add art or a gateway feature at the park entrance from Vorhees Circle to increase the park's visibility and invite people in. Consider adding community garden plots to this park.
Stephen C. McCullagh Park		■				■	Maintain the tree canopy and implement a tree replacement plan.
Hunt Ave. Lot			■			■	Collaborate with the Land Trust.
Stone Bridge Park		■	■		■		Manage invasive species on the site and increase native and riparian plantings.

New Parks, Facilities & Trails

	Major Development	User Experience Improvements	Nature and Habitat Enhancements	Programming and Activation	City Lead	Partner Project	Top Priority
St. Helena Public Library Park	■	■		■	■		Pilot programming in the outdoor areas to test this concept.
"Clubhouse" Community Center	■	■			■		Within five years, begin studies for development of the Clubhouse.
New Park or Joint Use Site to Serve Hillcrest/Dean York		■	■		■		Formally open the Adams-Pine pathway to increase access to the Boys & Girls Club and other city facilities located nearby as an interim step.
New Park to Keep Pace with Growth	■		■		■		No immediate action - Depends on development proposals.
Napa River Walk Park		■	■		■		Add the Napa River Walk Loop open space to the St. Helena park inventory, designating it as a linear park.
Valley Floor Walk and Community Forest			■			■	Collaborate with St. Helena Community Forest advocates, who are advancing this idea.
Reservoir Trail		■	■		■		Develop a natural surface trail to formalize the existing rough path at the reservoir as a first step.
Napa River Shared Use Path	■		■		■		Coordinate with Streets Master Plan on implementation. Begin with the Wappo Park segment.
Sulphur Creek Shared Use Path		■	■		■		Coordinate with the Streets Master Plan on implementation.
York Creek Shared Use Path		■	■		■		Coordinate with the Streets Master Plan on implementation.

New Programs and Initiatives (with policy reference)

	Major Development	User Experience Improvements	Nature and Habitat Enhancements	Programming and Activation	City Lead	Partner Project	Top Priority
A.7 Parks Wayfinding Program		■			■		Develop sign program and updated sign design; use new standard for any signs replaced or installed.
B.4 Pilot Recreation Programs				■	■		Test at least one new special event and at least one new Carnegie Building program in 2026.
B.5 One-Stop Programming Information Resource		■			■	■	Meet with St. Helena's webmaster to determine capabilities of city website as the first step.
C.5 Volunteer Program				■	■	■	Budget for additional staffing, hire for volunteer and partnership management experience.
D.5 Tree Canopy Replacement Program			■		■		Include a regular allocation for tree replacement (materials purchase) in the operating budget.
D.6 Updated Plant and Tree Palette			■		■		Reach out to the City of Sonoma to learn about their recently updated master tree list (developed with the UC Master Gardener Program).
D.7 Natural Area Management Program			■		■		Convene a work session with Napa County Land Trust and Napa County Resource Conservation District.
E.1 Library Division Collaboration				■	■		Continue to build relationship and cross-group engagement
E.3 Community Services/Public Works Collaboration and Coordination		■	■		■		Continue to meet regularly to coordinate efforts.

New Programs and Initiatives (with policy reference)

	Major Development	User Experience Improvements	Nature and Habitat Enhancements	Programming and Activation	City Lead	Partner Project	Top Priority
E.5 Nonprofit Collaboration Fundraising	■	■	■	■	■	■	Continue to advance the nonprofit.
E.6 Partnership Management and Development		■	■	■	■	■	Budget for additional staffing, hire for volunteer and partnership management experience.
F.3 Water and Irrigation Efficiency Upgrade Program			■		■	■	Include a regular allocation for tree irrigation upgrades (materials purchases) in the operating budget.
F.7 Asset Management Plan	■	■	■		■		Coordinate with Public Works on this effort for consistency citywide.
F.8 New Voter-Supported Funding	■	■	■	■	■		Initiate exploration in five years.

Evaluating New Ideas



Over the 15- to 20-year life of this long-range plan, additional projects and ideas may be proposed in the future by staff, the Parks and Recreation Commission, or by community members. The tool in this section provides a structured proposal and evaluation process so that new ideas can be vetted for consistency with the PRT Master Plan.

Future Project Analysis & Criteria

Use the following six questions to develop the idea into a more concrete proposal for new parks, programs, and improvements.

1

What is the project?
Clearly outline and scope the proposed project or program.

2

What are the costs?
Capital Costs?
Operational Costs?
Maintenance?

3

Is there a funding mechanism in place to cover costs? How will it be paid for today and in the future?

4

Who is served?
A particular demographic?
User?
Neighborhood?

5

Does it meet the PRT Goals? Use the Criteria Checklist to identify alignment.

6

What is the timeframe for development?

Criteria Checklist

Alignment with Goals & Needs	Yes (x)	Notes & Considerations
Goal A. Connections		
Fills gaps in 10-minute walk standard		
Connects the System (signage or path)		
Enhances the design & usability of existing park		
Adds social gathering space		
Adds trail to existing park or new space		
Goal B. Livability		
Adds health/fitness facilities		
Adds priority outdoor facility		
Adds programmable space (indoors or outdoors)		
Incorporates cultural, historic or other art		
Adds additional programming		
Goal C. Welcoming		
Provides Universal Design enhancements		
Increases cultural relevancy of facility or program		
Improves affordability		
Increases access and usability for all ages and users		

Alignment with Goals & Needs	Yes (x)	Notes & Considerations
Goal D. Nature		
Adds or preserves natural features, plantings, ecosystem		
Improves or adds to tree canopy		
Offers visual or physical access to water		
Increases community resilience to climate hazards		
Goal E. Partnerships		
Leverages and enhances Library connections		
Increase access to school facilities		
Supports new and existing funding opportunities		
Grows community partnerships		
Goal F. Stewardship		
Increases or limits to impact staff capacity & resources		
Supports and improves maintenance and asset management practices		
Offers multiple benefits including sustainability		
Increases revenues, funding, and/or reduces Dept. costs		



Annual Work Plan Criteria

Each year, staff will update an Annual Work Plan. This is the tool for staff to sequence Master Plan projects, programs initiatives for implementation, based on available staffing and financial resources. Each Work Plan should include a mix of recommendation types – some “Immediate Deliverables” to demonstrate progress, but also actions that make progress on implementing more complex “Meets Our Vision” or “Long Term Need” efforts.

These criteria below will help staff prioritize their work to get the most benefit for the parks, recreation and trails system.

- **Partnership potential:** Partnerships are an important aspect of St. Helena’s approach to parks and recreation services. Those projects or initiatives with one or more partners who will help with implementation and/or ongoing operation make an effort more viable and successful.
- **Reduce operating costs or generate revenue:** Projects, programs or initiatives that improve maintenance or operations efficiencies and conserve water or reduce energy usage can create operating cost savings in future years. Projects that contribute to revenue generation, such as adding spaces or features that support expanded recreation programming or event rentals, can bring more resources into the system.
- **Provide balanced investment:** The projects, programs and initiatives underway in any given timeframe should respond to St. Helena’s varied demographics, recreation interests, and geography.
- **Increase equity:** St. Helena values equity. Projects, programs and initiatives that increase equity should be prioritized.
- **Limited time opportunity:** Opportunities arise, and may come with a time constraint, such as a grant, a new residential or commercial development, or a project being completed by another department or agency. Time-limited opportunities should be leveraged when they are likely to deliver results.

Afterword

This Master Plan is the culmination of almost a year of work by Community Services Department and Parks and Trees Division staff, the Advisory Committee, and the Parks and Recreation Commission, with the participation of organizations and individuals from across the City.

This PRT Master Plan, the first guiding plan for the City's park system, provides the guidance to realize the community's vision:

St. Helena parks, programs, and trails make life better for all by enlivening the community, supporting healthy people and parks, and providing active and connected public places.

The PRT Master Plan is the St. Helena community's tool for action. Working together, City staff, the Parks and Recreation Commission, partner organizations and individual volunteers can take action to make St. Helena an even better place to live, work and play, for today and for future generations.



Glossary



Glossary

Parks

Park Classification: A park classification system groups sites with similar functions and services to help better understand the park network. The classification system in the PRT Master Plan is a refinement of the categorizations in the St. Helena General Plan.

Community-serving Park: A community-serving parks serves multiple neighborhoods or provides features that draw users from the entire city. Typically, community-serving parks are larger parks with multiple features such as sports fields, destination playgrounds, and community centers.

Local-serving Park: A local-serving park is characterized by its small size (less than one acre) and limited features. They vary from small picnic spaces and greens to small squares and plazas and primarily serve nearby neighbors.

Facility: A facility is a stand-alone recreation facility that is not incorporated into a larger park.

Linear Park: A linear park is longer than it is wide, connects areas, and typically includes a path that follows a linear feature, such as a river, creek, or utility right-of-way.

Natural Area: Natural areas are properties set aside to preserve natural resources or features, remnant landscapes, or scenic resources/views. Low-impact recreation or facilities may be provided at these sites, as long as the primary conservation objective is maintained.

Undeveloped Site: Undeveloped sites are intended for future park use, but do have developed public access points or facilities.

Trails

Recreational Trail: The term 'recreational trail' means a thoroughfare or track across land, used for recreational purposes such as pedestrian activities, including wheelchair use; skating or skateboarding; and bicycling.

Regional Trail: A regional trail is a long-distance, typically paved or hardened, off-street pathway connecting multiple cities, counties, or communities.

Shared Use Path: The Streets Master Plan defines Shared Use Paths, also known as Class 1 Bikeways. These are intended for bicycle and pedestrian use.

Park Pathway: A park pathway is a circulation routes in a park. Some park pathways may be part of a designated recreational trail.

City of St. Helena

Parks, Recreation, & Trails Master Plan

Appendices

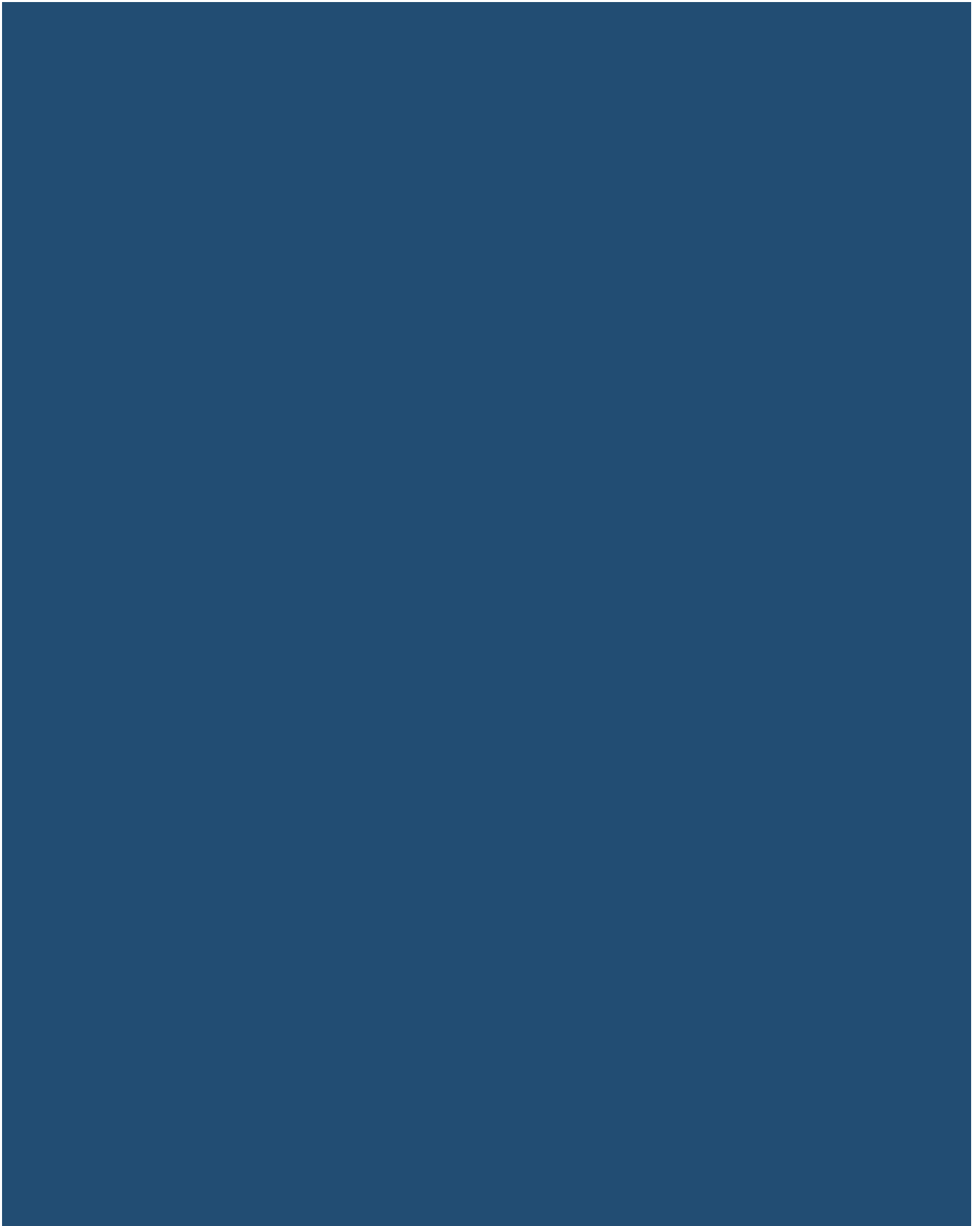




Appendix A



Existing Conditions





Existing Conditions Report

St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

August 2025



City of St. Helena
Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

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City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Introduction

Overview of Parks, Recreation, and Trails Planning Process

The City of St. Helena is in the process of developing a new Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan (PRT Master Plan). Led by the Parks and Recreation Division, this new plan will be the first standalone parks, recreation, and trails plan for the city and will complement the 2019 St. Helena General Plan. It will stand as a blueprint to guide decisions on parks, trails, and recreation services for the next 10 to 15 years.

The Master Planning process kicked off in Spring 2025, with the major public engagement launched in May 2025. The PRT Master Plan is anticipated to be completed in Winter 2025-2026. The process diagram below shows the timing of planning phases and the integration of community engagement throughout the process.

Figure 1: Planning Process



Purpose of the Existing Conditions Report

This Existing Conditions Report details the findings from the first phase of the process, establishing a baseline for the PRT Master Plan. This summary discusses the planning context, examines demographics, and documents the existing system to set a foundation for the needs assessment and recommendations that will be developed in later phases.

This document will serve as a reference throughout the planning process and will form a building block for the final PRT Master Plan document.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Planning Context

Regional Context

St. Helena is centrally located in Napa County, situated at the heart of the upper Napa Valley, a region known for its diverse soils, microclimates, and success as a center for agriculture and the wine-making industry. As shown in Figure 2, State Route 29 runs directly through downtown and serves as St. Helena's Main Street. It is a critical piece of transportation infrastructure for both St. Helena residents and Napa County visitors, but also creates a barrier for east-west movement during peak times.

St. Helena is a popular destination for visitors interested in the many wineries and vineyards within and around the city. Historically, St. Helena is known as the business center of the wine country. In addition, the Culinary Institute of America at Greystone is located at the north end of St. Helena. Nationally known for its culinary and wine education programs, CIA at Greystone draws visitors to its programs, campus and student-run restaurant.

The city has views of the Mayacamas Mountains and Mount St. Helena, the highest point in Napa County and home to the headwaters of the Napa River. It is near popular parks and recreation options within Napa County, including Robert Louis Stevenson State Park. Many of the 3.7 million visitors to Napa Valley in 2023 reported being drawn to the scenic beauty and recreational experiences, in addition to wine.

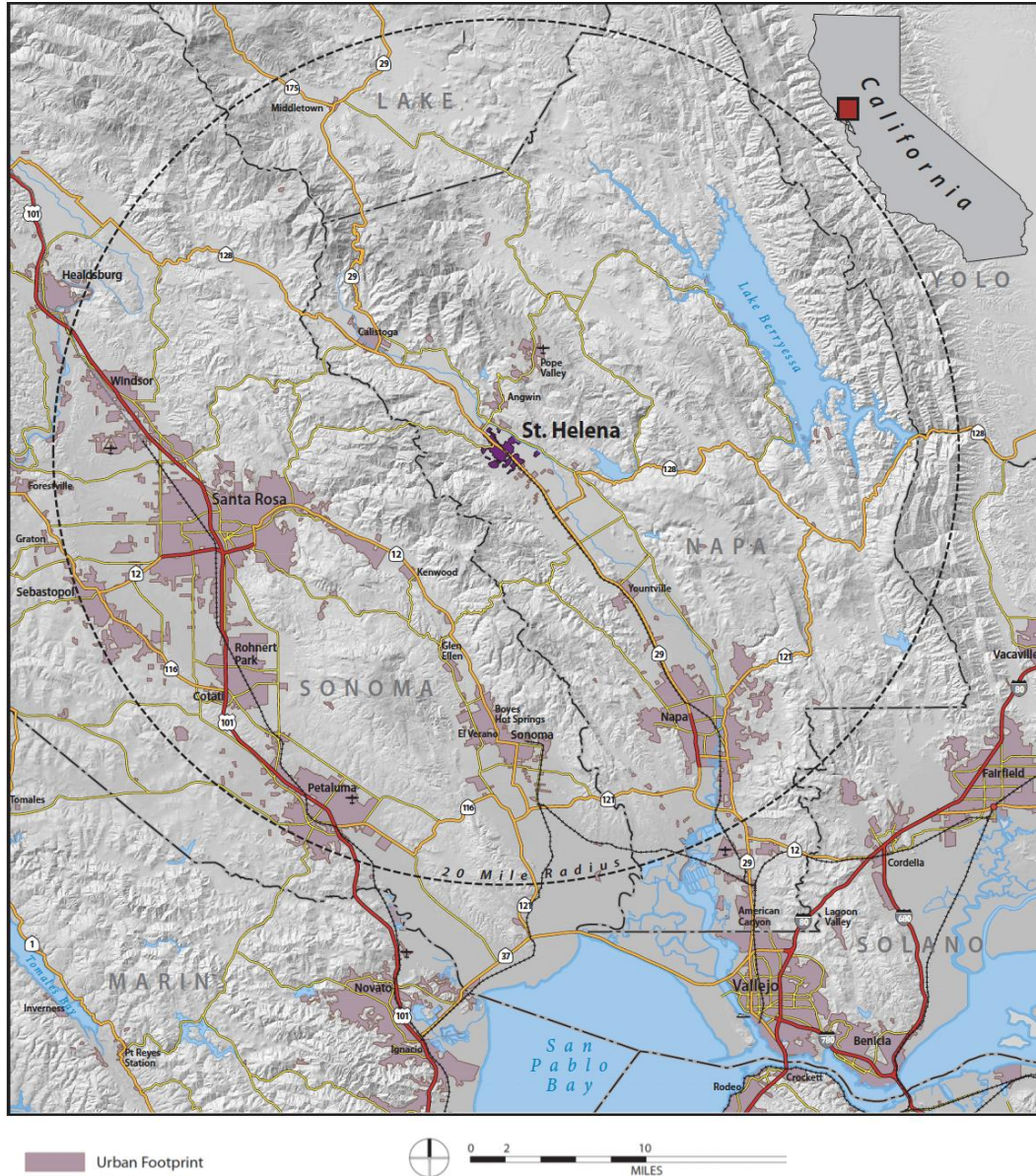
Figure 1: View of a Winery in St. Helena





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Figure 2: Regional Context



Sources: Metropolitan Transportation Commission, 2001;
Green Info Network, 2001; Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program,
California Department of Conservation; Dyett & Bhatia, 2018.

Source: St. Helena General Plan

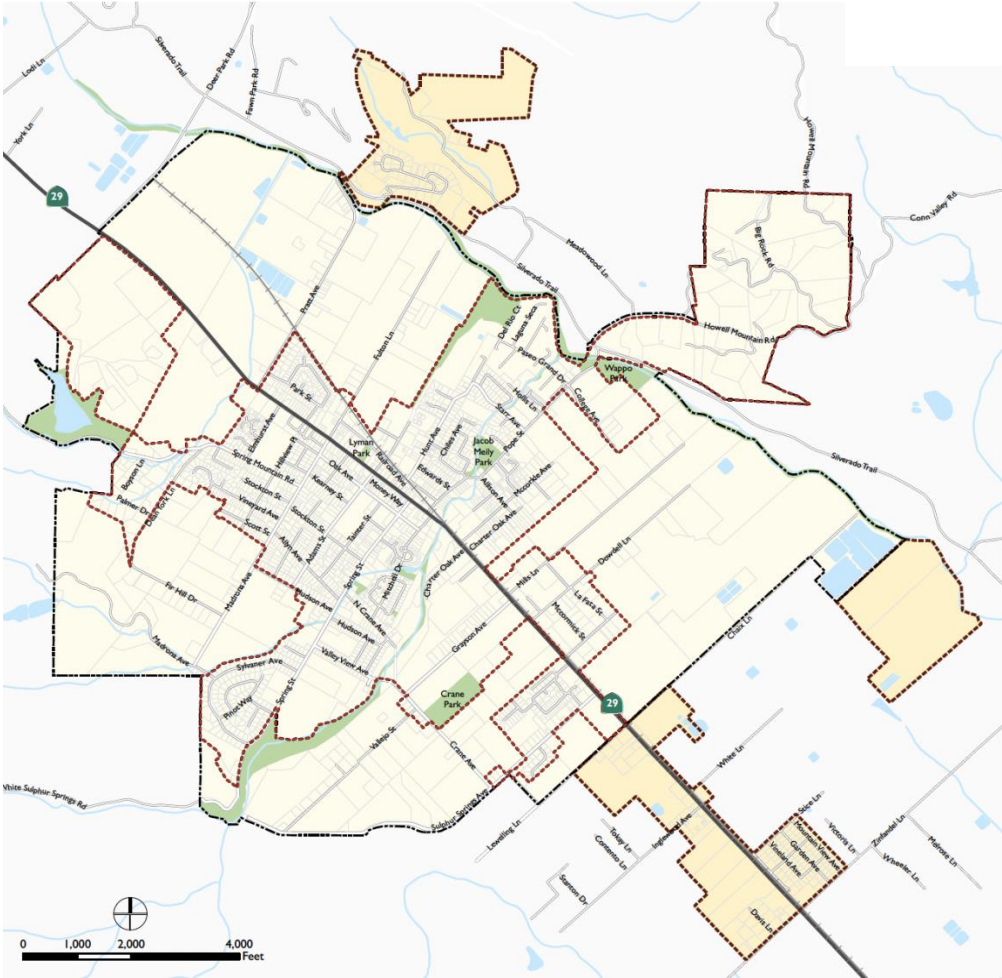


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Planning Area

St. Helena is a small city of about five square miles, encompassing the residential and downtown areas within the urban limit line, as well as agricultural and natural areas surrounding the urban area. For consistency, the PRT Master Plan will use the same planning areas as the General Plan, shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Planning Area



Source: St. Helena General Plan

The primary planning area for the PRT Master Plan is the City of St. Helena city limits. The PRT Master Plan will also consider the three “Study Areas” identified in St. Helena’s General Plan, as the secondary planning area. Of specific interest to this plan is Study Area 2, located south of Chaix Lane, immediately adjacent to the southeastern City limit. The area is approximately 100 acres and comprises the spray fields currently used to dispose of treated effluent from the City’s Wastewater Treatment Plant. The urban limit line is relevant to the PRT Master Plan because all areas outside

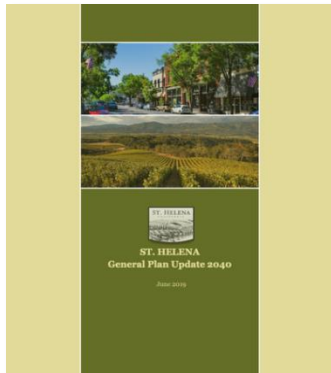


City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

that boundary are designated Agriculture or Woodlands and Watersheds, regardless of their current use.

Guiding Documents

St. Helena General Plan (2019)



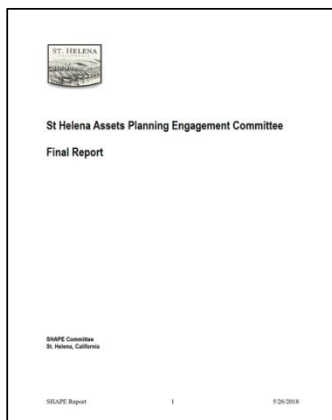
The St. Helena General Plan, published in 2019, is the primary policy document for the City of St. Helena as it moves toward the year 2040. It sets forth the town's policies to guide future land use decisions and provides the needed framework to preserve the character and quality of development that the community desires. These 12 Elements of the plan establish the policy direction necessary to achieve the community's vision that in the year 2040, the town will be a well-integrated place linked by effective community institutions, safe neighborhoods and streets, and superior schools, parks, and public facilities.

The Parks and Recreation Element (Chapter 12) of St. Helena's General Plan is directly relevant to the Parks, Recreation, and

Trails Master Plan. Additional Elements direct St. Helena's parks system to play a role in expanding bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, preserving the city's agricultural heritage, enhancing native habitats, and mitigating climate change through urban forestry. See **Appendix A: General Plan Policy Scan** for the list of relevant General Plan policies and implementing actions from the chapters outside the Parks and Recreation Element.

The PRT Master Plan will reference these policies and implementing actions and may make recommendations for updates or additions.

St. Helena Assets Planning Engagement Committee Final Report (2018)

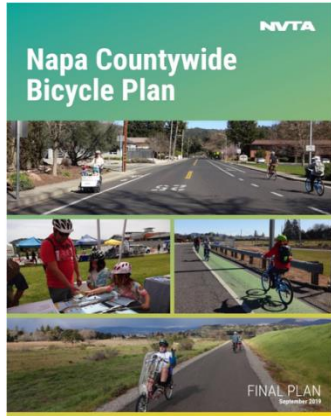


The St. Helena Assets Planning Engagement Committee (SHAPE) was created to advise the St. Helena City Council in prioritizing and identifying strategies to address civic needs and opportunities. The final report of the SHAPE committee analyzed city assets and provided recommendations for how to best improve and utilize those assets. The committee final report also identified challenges in the Long Range Financial Forecast and feasibility of concepts identified in the 2009 Visioning Statement.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

St. Helena Bicycle Plan (2019)



The St. Helena Bicycle Plan, part of the Napa Countywide Bicycle Plan, was published in 2019. The citywide Bicycle Plan was produced by the Napa Valley Transportation Authority and includes Napa Vine Trail. The St. Helena Bicycle Plan outlines existing and planned bicycle routes intended to provide safe and convenient bicycle access to parks, open spaces, commercial areas, residential neighborhoods, and community facilities. Once completed, the network will play a key role in bolstering the City's efforts to increase the use of bicycles as non-auto modes of transit, and to reduce overall vehicle miles traveled in the city.

St. Helena Pedestrian Plan (2016)

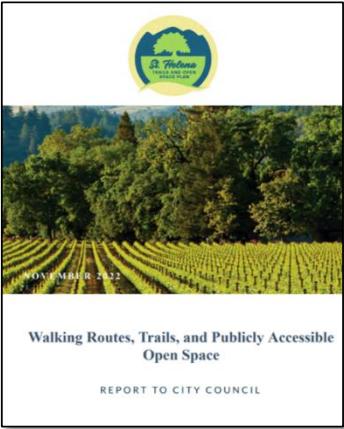


The St. Helena Pedestrian Plan, part of the Napa Countywide Pedestrian Plan, was published in 2016. The plan was produced by the Napa Valley Transportation Authority to address pedestrian needs and opportunities. The Pedestrian plan establishes a policy framework and implementation plan for each city in Napa County to enhance pedestrian mobility and safety throughout. The plan identified key high-risk intersections and areas to prioritize solutions for through GIS analysis and community engagement.



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Walking Routes, Trails and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report to City Council (2022)



The Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report (2022) presents the Parks & Recreation Commission’s Ad Hoc Subcommittee’s findings and recommendations to help the City of St. Helena become a world-class rural walking town. The report initiative began with a mission to develop a framework for the City of St. Helena to deliver the walking, access, passive recreation, and connectivity goals contained within the 2019 General Plan and the 2016 Pedestrian Plan.

The goal of the report is to preserve, develop and open walking paths within St. Helena. The report emphasizes that developing walking routes and trails will improve the quality of life for full-time residents, attract new visitors, and encourage existing visitors to spend additional time in town, which will also further help St. Helena’s downtown to remain a lively and active place.

Streets Master Plan



The St. Helena Streets Master Plan, currently underway, aims to revolutionize the city's transportation network, boosting connectivity and synergy to enhance circulation, public safety, and mobility for everyone. The plan will produce a conceptual design plan for the transportation network throughout the city with context-sensitive pedestrian, bicyclist, and transit improvements. The project area will cover the entire transportation infrastructure of the city, except the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) area. The PRT Master Plan will coordinate with the Streets Master Plan on topics including safe routes to parks and trails.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Natural Systems and Climate Change

St. Helena is located between the Mayacamas Mountains to the west and the Howell Mountains to the east within what is commonly known as Napa Valley. Summers in St. Helena are very hot and dry, while the winters are relatively cool and rainy. These seasonal extremes are likely to increase in severity as the area experiences impacts from climate change and as California continues to experience periods of drought and substantial winter storms. In addition, the valley is in a high-risk wildfire area and the areas surrounding the town have a very high to high risk based on CalFire recent mapping¹.

Although it is located near several mountain ranges, St. Helena is relatively flat within the city limits. The surrounding landscape is a mixture of grassland, oak woodland, agricultural croplands, and developed lands, with three waterways winding through the city.

Rivers and Creeks (Sulphur Creek, York Creek, Napa River)

The Napa River and its two tributaries, York Creek and Sulphur Creek, flow through St. Helena and are heavily dependent on seasonal rains for water flow. Several of St. Helena's parks are adjacent to the creeks and river, including Wappo Park and Jacob Meily Park. However, there is no official water access from any park to the river.

Protected Lands

St. Helena's General Plan recognizes the natural areas surrounding the city as opportunities for preservation and conservation. The Agriculture (AG) land use designation, accounting for almost half the city's area, allows agricultural and winery uses and affordable employee housing with limitations on single family residences and other uses. The areas designated Woodland and Watershed (WW) are located on the steep hillsides at outer western and eastern edges of the city. Only very low-density residential development is allowed, on lots of at least 5 acres in size. As noted earlier, all lands outside St. Helena's urban limit line not designated as WW are designated AG regardless of size or actual use to conserve agricultural land.

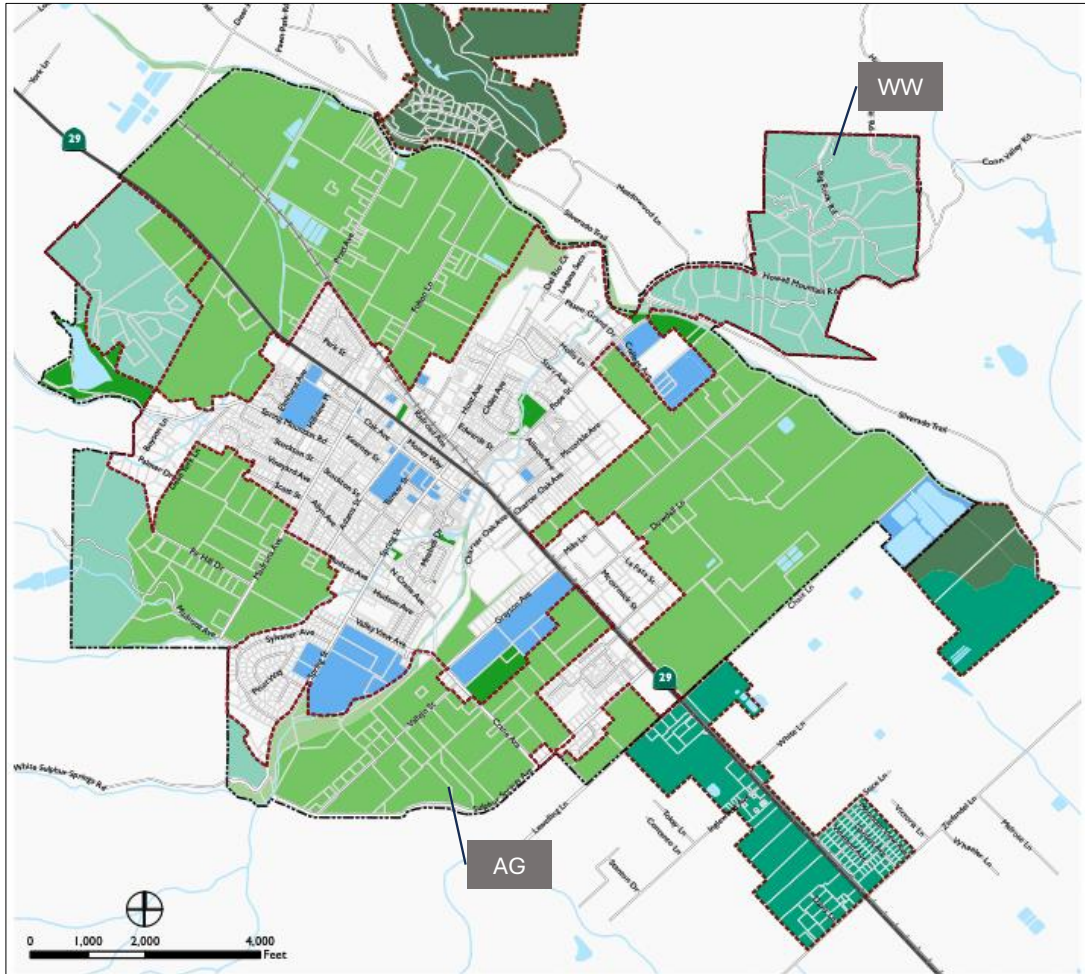
As shown in Figure 4, these land use designations offer a landscape greenbelt around St. Helena, providing opportunities for viewsheds and recreation while focusing urban development in the central portion of the planning area.

¹ CalFire, Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer, accessed June 12, 2025.
<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/6a9cb66bb1824cd98756812af41292a0>



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Figure 4: WW and AG Lands



Source: St. Helena General Plan

Climate Change

St. Helena's Safety Element included a *Climate Change Hazards and Vulnerability Assessment*, completed in 2023. According to this report:

St. Helena is, and will continue to be, affected by the impacts of climate change in the form of increased extreme heat days, increased average temperature, stronger storms, more severe floods, deeper droughts, and more frequent and larger wildfires.

As parks can support climate resilience and carbon sequestration, the PRT Master Plan will consider how to optimize park lands as solution areas for climate impacts.

This assessment focused on three hazards:



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- Extreme Heat.** In St. Helena an extreme heat day is when the maximum temperature exceeds 100.4°F. Before 2000, the city typically experienced an average of four extreme heat days each year. This has been increasing as temperatures have increased with climate change. Projections indicate that the city will experience 17 extreme heat days per year based on lower Green House Gas (GHG) projections and up to 31 extreme heat days based on higher GHG projections. Extreme heat has a major effect on parks, recreation and the urban forest. This PRT Master Plan needs to consider how parks and the urban forest can help mitigate extreme heat.
- Wildfire.** Wildfire is a significant concern for St. Helena, and risks are increased with extreme heat. According to the Napa Communities Firesafe Foundation, over half of Napa County burned between 2017-2020. On its most recent maps, CalFire has designated the hills surrounding St. Helena as having very high and high fire risk severity. According to the 2023 Safety Element, many cities in Napa Valley, including St. Helena, have areas that are within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). There is an active Fire Safe Council in St. Helena, working to educate community members about wildfire prevention. While St. Helena does not currently have parks in wildland-urban interface areas, future parks and open space areas may fall within Woodlands and Watersheds zones, be subject to wildfire risks, and have a need for firewise vegetation management. In addition, St. Helena is likely to experience more frequent smoke from wildfires elsewhere in the region. The PRT Plan should consider how city's parks and public facilities can help with emergency response for wildfire events, including providing refuge space.
- Precipitation/Flooding.** The vulnerability assessment projects more intense storms, increasing the risk of flooding. More than 10 years ago, St. Helena built a levee (also used as a walking path) to protect low-lying residential areas from flooding. Even with the levee in place, St. Helena still experiences flood events, and a portion of the city is located within mapped floodplains.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Demographics

Understanding the demographic and potential trends in St. Helena can help identify future needs and inform the development of parks, recreation, and trails to meet those needs. St. Helena has an overall population of 5,378 (2023), which is anticipated to continue to shrink in the coming years.

Residents

The following are some key takeaways from the St. Helena residential demographic analysis. These demographics are based on the 2023 American Community Survey and 2020 Census data and should be considered approximate and not absolute numbers.

- The population of St. Helena has decreased over the past 20 years and is anticipated to continue that trend. Enrollment in the St. Helena Unified School District has also decreased in the past five years.²
- The population within St. Helena is relatively dense, with 1,096 people per square mile, compared to California's average of 254 per square mile.
- St. Helena is financially better off than the average population in California. While the State's median income is \$96,334, Napa County's median income is \$108,970, and St. Helena's median income is \$158,218. California's poverty rate sits at 12 percent, whereas six percent of people in St. Helena sit below the poverty level.
- The population is significantly older than the average in California, with the median age in St. Helena being 47.6, compared to 43.6 in Napa County and 37.6 in the State as a whole.
- Nearly 30 percent of the city is aged 65 or older; in Napa County, 22 percent of the population is 65 or older, and in California as a whole, 15 percent of the population is 65 or older.
- The city has a large Hispanic/Latino population (25.8 percent). Approximately 29.4 percent of the population speaks a language other than English at home.
- Most of the community lives in single-family homes, with a median home value of \$1,964,300 (compared to Napa County, with a median home value of \$831,800 and California, with a median home value of \$695,400). The average selling price of a single-family home in 2024 was \$3,052,898.³
- St. Helena has a high percentage of second homes, with 10 percent of all housing units serving as seasonal or second homes.⁴

For St. Helena, these figures point to several key takeaways:

- Napa County skews older than California as a whole, and St. Helena skews older than Napa County, driven by the over 65 population.
- St. Helena's population of young and middle-aged adults is lower than typical, likely due to the high housing costs. In comparison, the 19 and under population is similar to Napa

² Education Data Partnership, St. Helena Unified, www.ed-data.org/district/Napa/Saint-Helena-Unified

³ Our Town St. Helena 2024 Housing Outlook Report, https://ourtownsthehena.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Housing-Outlook-2024_.pdf

⁴ Bay Area Metro, Bay Area Census, St. Helena. https://census.bayareametro.gov/housing-units?location=st_helena



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County, even though the household size is smaller. These patterns have implications for recreation programming and participation.

- The large amount of second homes in St. Helena means not all residents are in town year-round, leading to seasonal spikes in recreational programming participation.
- Though the poverty level is low, St. Helena's residents are burdened by high housing costs. Affordability and access are a concern for St. Helena's parks and recreation services.

Visitors

St. Helena is a popular attraction in the Napa Valley for both wine and recreational tourism. Although data is not available for visitor trends specifically in St. Helena, data is available at the county level (Napa County).

Key takeaways from the visitor demographic analysis are listed below. This data is from the 2023 [Visit Napa Valley](#) visitor analysis report, as well as the demographics listed above, and should be considered approximate and not absolute numbers.

- The Transit Occupancy Tax (TOT), levied on every overnight hotel stay, accounts for 20 percent of St. Helena's general fund budget.
- In 2018, St. Helena had the second-highest reported visitation among all Napa Valley cities and towns (the city of Napa was the most visited).
- The average age of visitors to Napa Valley has decreased since 2018, from 46 to 40 in 2023.
- There is a significant difference between visitor and resident demographics in both St. Helena and Napa County.
 - The share of Black and Hispanic/Latino visitors has increased significantly since 2018, while the share of Black residents has remained very low.
 - The share of Asian visitors to Napa Valley has decreased since 2018, but this population still makes up the second-largest visitor racial group.
 - The average age of Napa Valley visitors (40) is lower than the median age (47) in St. Helena.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Table 1: St. Helena, Napa County and State of California Demographics

	St. Helena	Napa County	California
Population Characteristics			
Population Estimate, 2024	5,257	132,727	39,431,263
Growth 2020-2024	-3.2%	-3.8%	-0.3%
Population Density/Sq Mile (2020 Census)	1,096	184	254
Population by Gender			
Male	50.70%	50.20%	50.00%
Female	49.30%	49.80%	50.00%
By Age			
Ages 0-9	9.6%	9.6%	11.6%
Ages 10-19	10.9%	11.2%	13.2%
Ages 20-29	8.9%	12.3%	13.8%
Ages 30-39	9.6%	12.9%	14.7%
Ages 40-49	13.9%	12.7%	12.9%
Ages 50-59	12.7%	12.8%	12.6%
Ages 60-69	12.7%	12.8%	10.9%
Ages 70-79	13.2%	11.1%	6.7%
Ages 80+	8.5%	4.8%	3.6%
Under 18	18.9%	19.1%	22.2%
Ages 18-64	51.3%	59.1%	62.5%
Seniors 65+	29.8%	22.0%	15.3%
Median Age	47.6	43.60	37.60
By Race/Ethnicity			
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	69.0%	49.2%	34.3%
Black	0.7%	2.4%	6.5%
Hispanic	25.8%	36.7%	40.4%
Asian	1.4%	9.4%	16.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.4%	0.5%
American Indian and Alaska Native	1.0%	1.3%	1.7%
Two or more races	11.1%	3.6%	4.3%
Education (over 25)			
No Degree	11.4%	12.5%	15.4%
High School	9.2%	17.1%	20.4%
Some College	21.1%	30.9%	27.7%
Bachelor's Degree	34.7%	25.3%	22.4%
Graduate/Professional Degree	23.6%	14.3%	14.1%
Housing			
Total Housing Units	2,747	56,046	14,532,683
Occupied Units	84.1%	91.3%	92.5%
Owner Occupied	66.6%	62.7%	55.9%
Renter Occupied	33.5%	37.3%	44.2%
Vacant Housing Units (incl. second homes)	15.9%	8.7%	7.6%
Average Household Size	2.31	2.66	2.86
Median value of owner-occupied housing	\$1,964,300	\$831,800	\$695,400
Language Spoken at Home			
Language other than English	29.40%	33.9%	44.1%
Income and Poverty Rate			
Median Household Income (2023 dollars)	\$158,218	\$108,970	\$96,334
Poverty Rate	6.00%	8.9%	12.0%

2020-2024 data from US Census, Census Reporter, and DataUSA



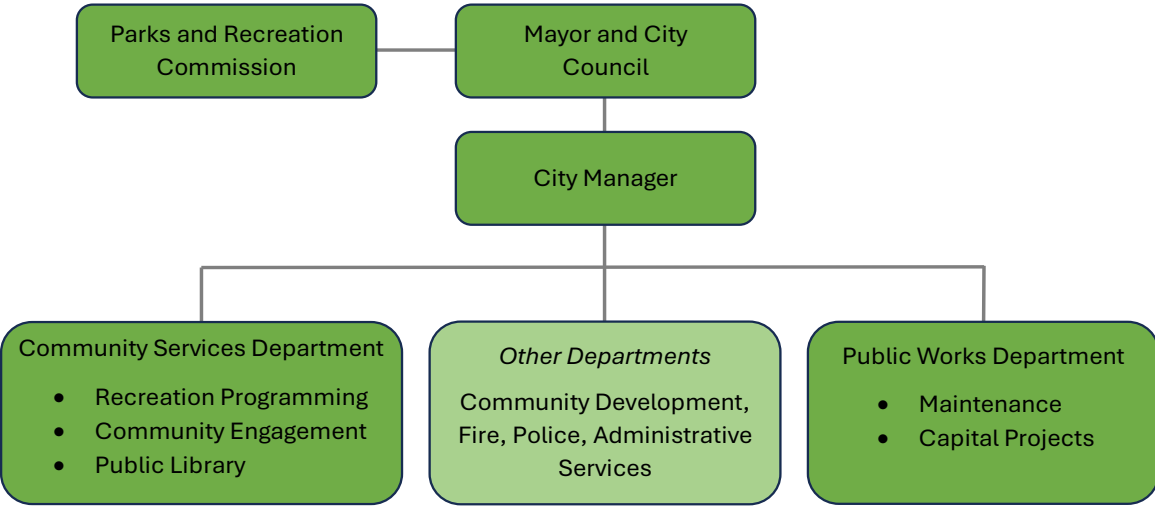
City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Parks and Recreation Service Provision

Organizational Structure

Two departments are responsible for providing parks and recreation services: The Community Services Department and the Public Works Department. Both departments report to the City Manager and coordinate with other departments.

Figure 5: Organizational Structure for Parks and Recreation Service Provision



The **Community Services Department** was created in 2024 to merge Parks and Recreation and Library into one department. The Community Services Department oversees St. Helena Public Library, recreation programming, and community engagement and communications. The Community Services Director is the staff liaison for the Parks & Recreation Commission.

The **Public Works Department** is responsible for all aspects of the City's infrastructure and public rights-of-way, including streets, storm drains, parks, water treatment, water distribution, wastewater collection, and wastewater treatment. Within the Department, the Parks and Trees Division is responsible for parks maintenance and maintenance of the urban forest, among other duties.

The Parks and Recreation Commission

St. Helena's Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) advises both departments on parks and recreation matters. The PRC is a 5-member body that meets monthly. Members are appointed by the City Council to two-year terms and serve in an advisory capacity to the City Council. Four members must be St. Helena residents, and one member may reside outside the city limits but within the boundaries of the St. Helena Unified School District.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Staffing Levels

Parks and Recreation Division (Community Services)

The Parks & Recreation Division provides recreation programs and special events, including adult and youth sports, summer camps, and the summer concert series. It is responsible for registrations and marketing, as well as partnerships and collaboration with other providers. Its mission statement is, “Harvesting Community Experiences that Celebrate St. Helena,” and its vision statement is, “To be the destination for leisure and community experiences that preserves St. Helena’s small-town lifestyle.”

The Division is staffed by a total of 7.85 Full Time Equivalents, or FTES. Permanent, year-round staffing includes the following positions:

- Community Services Director (1 FTE)
- Recreation Supervisor (1 FTE)
- Recreation Manager (1 FTE)
- Recreation Assistant (.85 FTE)

The remaining FTEs are seasonal and part-time staff, such as camp counselors. In addition, the Division has contracts with recreation program providers for sports, aquatics, and after-school programming.

Parks and Trees Division (Public Works Department)

The Parks and Trees Division is responsible for operating and maintaining:

- Maintaining developed parks, including landscape maintenance, mowing, trash removal, restroom cleaning, and other regular maintenance tasks.
- Set up for the farmers market and other events.
- Maintaining landscapes at all other city facilities, such as City Hall and the Public Library.
- Caring for St. Helena’s urban forest.
- Implementing St. Helena’s pesticide-free parks program and
- Maintaining natural areas and open spaces (not included in the inventory of developed parks).

The Parks and Trees Division is staffed by 5 FTEs, all of whom are permanent, year-round positions:

- Trees and Parks Superintendent (1 FTE)
- Lead Maintenance Worker (1 FTE)
- Maintenance Worker I/II (3 FTE)

The Division does not have seasonal or part-time staff.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

NRPA Park Metrics Comparables

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) provides a benchmarking data source called NRPA Park Metrics. This set of data represents information on parks agencies throughout the United States, with data self-reported by each agency in the categories set forth by NRPA. NRPA issues benchmarking reports each year that aggregate agency self-reported data into groups. For each group, a median figure and upper and lower quartile figures are provided to allow comparisons with an "average" agency within the grouping.

Several considerations should be kept in mind when using Park Metrics data for comparison:

- **Cities are grouped by resident population size.** For some metrics, NRPA breaks out agencies based on population size. St. Helena is in the smallest size classes of less than 20,000 residents. For metrics where population size class is provided, comparisons are shown for all agencies and for agencies with less than 20,000 residents.
- **This data set is best for providing a high-level perspective** on agencies nationwide and is not suitable for fine-grained comparisons.

Agency Responsibilities

The City of St. Helena is a full-service parks and recreation provider. According to the *2025 NRPA Agency Performance Review*, 98% of parks agencies provide park sites, 93% provide recreation programming and services, 82% provide jurisdiction-wide special events, and 80% provide racquet sport activities/courts/facilities, all of which are provided by St. Helena. St. Helena also provides community gardens and the city's farmers market, services provided by 50% and 22% of agencies, according to NRPA data.

Agency Staffing

The City of St. Helena has 12.85 FTEs when totaling the FTES in the Parks & Recreation Division and the Parks and Trees Division. For the purpose of comparisons, it should be noted that the Parks and Trees Division has more responsibilities than the typical parks agency. For this reason, Table 2 shows two FTE figures. The adjusted figure assumes 20% of the Parks and Trees Division staff time is spent on city landscapes outside the park system for better comparability with other parks agencies.

Table 2: NRPA Park Metrics: Parks and Recreation Agency Staffing by FTEs

	All Agencies	Less than 20,000	St. Helena
Median	59.2	13.8	12.85
Lower Quartile	20.5	6.0	(11.85 adjusted)
Upper Quartile	161.4	32.1	

As Table 2 shows, the City of St. Helena is below the median for staffing in its size class and well below the upper quartile. While the city is above the lower quartile, the lower quartile is generally associated with agencies that provide fewer services than St. Helena. Compared to agencies nationwide, St. Helena's staffing is leaner than the median.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Parks and Facilities

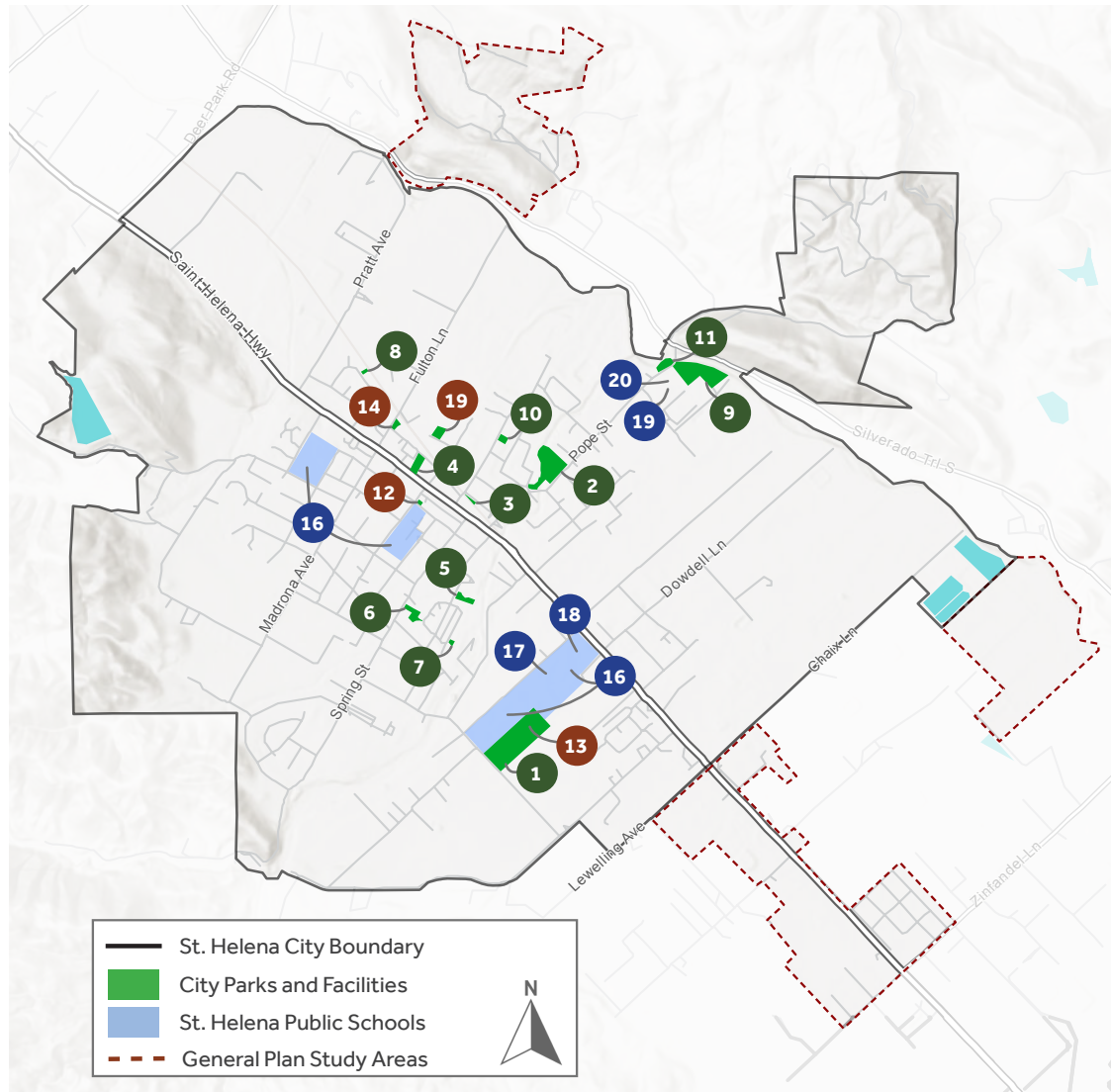
Figure 6 on the next page depicts the locations of St. Helena's parks and recreation facilities.

Park Classifications

A park classification system groups sites with similar functions and services to help better understand the park network. For the PRT Master Plan, the current park system includes three classifications, defined below. This classification system is a refinement of the categorizations in the St. Helena General Plan.

- **Local-serving Parks.** Local-serving parks are characterized by their small size (less than one acre) and limited features. They vary from small picnic spaces and greens to small squares and plazas.
- **Community-serving Parks.** Community-serving parks serve multiple neighborhoods or provide features that draw users from the entire city. Typically, community-serving parks are larger parks with multiple features such as sports fields, destination playgrounds, and community centers.
- **Facilities.** The city has several facilities that are or can become important elements for recreation and community programs, and events. Currently, the Parks and Recreation Division offices also serve as a community facility and recreation building. The Carnegie Building is currently used as a meeting and recreational space, but has the potential to be used for more offerings to the broader community.

St. Helena Parks



Community- and Local-serving Parks

1. Crane Park
2. Jacob Meily Park
3. Lewis Station Park
4. Lyman Park
5. Mary Fryer Park
6. Starr Baldwin Park
7. Mennen Park
8. McCullagh Park
9. Wappo Park

Undeveloped Parks

10. Hunt Avenue Lot
11. Stone Bridge Park

Community & Recreation Facilities

12. Carnegie Building
13. Head Start Building
14. Parks and Recreation Offices
15. St. Helena Public Library

Other Public Facilities

16. St. Helena Public Schools
17. Public School Aquatic Complex
18. Public Schools Performing Arts Center
19. St. Helena City Hall
20. Napa Valley College



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

St. Helena's inventory by classification is summarized in Table 3 below. The city has two undeveloped sites, also listed in the table.

Table 3: St. Helena Parks by Classification

Local-serving Parks
Lewis Station
Mary Fryer Park
Mennen Park
Starr Baldwin Park
Stephen C. McCullagh Park
Community-serving Parks
Crane Park
Jacob Meily Park
Lyman Park
Wappo Park
Undeveloped Parks
Hunt Ave Lot
Stone Bridge Park
Facilities
Carnegie Building
Head Start Building
Parks and Recreation Division Offices & Martial Arts Building



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Summary Park Inventory

Table 4 provides a summary inventory of the city parks. This table provides information on each site, including name, street address, acreage, classification and a description. Appendix B contains a more detailed inventory of each site.

Together, these sites total 26.99 acres. This translates to **5.02 park acres per 1,000 residents**, based on the city population of 5,257.

Table 4: Summary of Park Inventory

Park / Facility Name	Street Address	Approx. Acres	Park Land Classification	Park Description
Carnegie Building	1360 Oak Ave	0.13	Facility	Historic former library with welcoming seating area at the front entrance. The Carnegie Building now used for parks and recreation and community services events and meetings. Residents can reserve rooms for use. Has been updated to be ADA- compliant. Includes a kitchen in the lower level.
Crane Park	360 S Crane Ave	11.27	Community-serving Park	Busy and popular park on the south edge of town, adjacent to the high school. Multiple activities and the site for many community events and programs including the farmer's market. It is the home for sports activities including skateboarding, pickleball, baseball and the very popular bocce league. Includes picnic areas and a large playground.
Hunt Ave. Lot	757 Hunt Avenue	0.36	Undeveloped Park Area	Shaded character with mature trees, including oaks.
Jacob Meily Park	750 Pope St	5.42	Community-serving Park	Site of St. Helena's community garden. Shaded, pleasant character in the park interior, which has a large playground surrounding by seating and picnic areas. The newly updated soccer field and picnic area is inviting and well landscaped. The park has multiple entrances from different neighborhoods and includes a nice walking path along the creek
Lewis Station	1195 Church St	0.13	Local-serving Park	- Very small park right next to train tracks with limited amenities and little recreation value. - Some shade but not much.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Park / Facility Name	Street Address	Approx. Acres	Park Land Classification	Park Description
Lyman Park	1498 Main St	0.89	Community-serving Park	Downtown park located adjacent to the former City Hall (now closed) and across the street from the Senior Center. The park has excellent tree canopy and a large open lawn area. The city made landscape upgrades in recent years using in-house crews. The park includes a historic gazebo. Lyman Park is used for the popular summer concert series, using a stage set up adjacent to the gazebo.
Mary Fryer Park	1500 Mitchell Dr	0.84	Local-serving Park	Small park that is shaded and has a small playground and picnic area.
Mennen Park	1649 Voorhees Cir	0.17	Local-serving Park	Very small park used by nearby residents. Small grassy area for kids to play in and a few grills and picnic tables.
Parks and Recreation Division Offices	1574 Railroad Ave	0.80	Facility	Former residential house converted to office use with outbuilding converted to martial arts studio.
Starr Baldwin Park	1679 Spring St	0.76	Local-serving Park	Medium neighborhood park that has entrances on two streets, shaded walking path and benches, channelized creek at one entrance
Stephen C. McCullagh Park	1758 Crinella Dr	0.14	Local-serving Park	Small park located within a neighborhood with excellent tree canopy. Includes interesting playground features (bouldering and sandbox/water feature area).
Stone Bridge Park	220 Pope St	0.75	Undeveloped Park Area	Lot with trees and grass along the river, no identifying sign. Access is limited.
Wappo Park	201 Pope St	5.32	Community-serving Park	Large park with walking path encircling a grassy field and a large, fenced dog park area. Several large grassy areas that are shaded but unused. Adjacent to the City Hall (on former community college campus).



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Facilities Inventory

Table 5 provides a summary of sports facilities and park features in St. Helena.

Table 5: Facilities Inventory

		Sports									Park Features											
		Baseball Field	Bocce Court	Pickleball Court	Playground	Skatepark	Soccer Field	T-Ball Field	Tennis Court	Volleyball Court	Art - Mural	Community Garden	Community Meeting Space	Concessions	Dog Park	Gazebo	Parking Area	Passive Park Space	Picnic Area	Restrooms	Vineyard	Walking Path
Local-serving Parks	Lewis Station																	x	x			
	Mary Fryer Park				x													x	x			x
	Mennen Park																	x	x			
	Starr Baldwin Park																	x	x			x
	Stephen C. McCullagh Park				2						x							x	x			
Community-serving Park	Crane Park	2	8	4	x	x		x	5	x			x	x			x	x	4	x		x
	Jacob Meily Park				x		x	x				x					x	x	2	x	x	x
	Lyman Park				x								x			x		x	x			x
	Wappo Park														x		x	x	x			x
Undeveloped Parks	Hunt Ave. Lot																					
	Stone Bridge Park																					
Facilities	Carnegie Building												x							x		
	Head Start Building																			x		
	P&R Offices & Event Space												x				x			x		
	Totals	2	8	4	6	1	1	2	5	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	4	8	13	6	1	6



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Key observations on the facilities in the park system include the following:

- Almost all St. Helena parks offer opportunities for picnicking.
- Many of St. Helena's sports facilities are located at one park (Crane Park), leaving neighborhoods on the north and east sides of town with few nearby facilities (and sometimes none).
- There is only one off-leash, fenced dog park in town (Wappo Park).
- St. Helena does not have any publicly available basketball courts or hoops; residents must use the indoor and outdoor areas at the public schools.
- There are several different playground options in the parks, but a few, such as the playgrounds at Lyman and Mary Fryer Parks, are small and only appropriate for very young children.
- There are no dedicated facilities for teens to hang out and gather, except for the skate park in Crane Park.
- While St. Helena Unified School District offers public programming at its outdoor swimming pool, the City of St. Helena does not have any aquatics facilities, including splashpads or interactive fountains.

Indoor Facilities

St. Helena has several indoor recreation facilities that host indoor recreation events and classes. These buildings are owned by the city and serve multiple purposes.

Carnegie Building

The Carnegie Building, located near downtown, was built in 1908 and served as the city's library until 1979. The building serves as a small community and event space with two meeting rooms and a dance room. The rooms are all rentable and are often used for committee meetings and recreation events such as summer camps and exercise classes.



Parks and Recreation Division Offices

The Parks and Recreation Division Offices are located a few blocks from downtown and consist of an office building with a few rooms and gathering space. The office area currently serves as the temporary offices for the Parks and Recreation Division and hosts small community events in the main area.



Martial Arts Building

The martial arts building, located behind the Parks and Recreation Division Offices, consists of a martial arts studio, small office, and weight room. The building hosts a variety of martial arts classes and camps year-round.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Head Start Building

The Head Start Building in Crane Park hosts several summer camps, including the popular Adventure Day Camp. The building is in poor condition and would benefit from renovations, including to the industrial kitchen, bathrooms, and outdoor fenced space.



Trails

St. Helena does not have any formal walking trails within the city, but it is surrounded by many walking and hiking opportunities in nearby parks and on the Vine Trail. There is significant interest from parts of the community to develop and formalize walking trails within the city. In 2022, members of the Parks and Recreation Commission presented the Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report to the City Council, which developed a framework for the city to develop the walking, access, passive recreation, and connectivity goals contained within the 2019 General Plan and 2016 Pedestrian Plan.

There already exist a few informal walking trails in St. Helena, the most used one being the walking path in the vineyards by the St. Helena Public Library. This trail is popular with dog walkers and goes down to the Napa River.

Recreation Programs

The St. Helena Parks and Recreation Division operates its recreation programs, including youth and adult sports, rentals, and summer camps. The city does not have its own aquatics facility; the St. Helena School District does offer public access to the pool and programs, with programming run by a private company.

The table below provides a snapshot of the programming currently available in St. Helena, with information on program areas and populations served. This matrix will provide a baseline for programming recommendations in the Needs Assessment that will be completed in the next phase.

Key takeaways from this analysis are listed below:

- St. Helena offers a variety of programming for all ages, mainly focused on sports, fitness, and wellness.
- There are several adults-only sports and class options, which are partially tailored for St. Helena's large senior population.



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Table 6: Recreation Programs

		Program Type									Population Served							
		Aquatics	Arts and Culture	Fitness and Wellness	Environmental Education & Stewardship	Lifelong Learning	Outdoor Recreation	Out of School/Summer Camps	Team Sports	Individual/Dual Sports	Preschool	K-8 Youth	Teens (Ages 13-18)	Young Adults (Ages 18-24)	Adults (Ages 25-64)	Older Adults (65+)	People with Disabilities	Multi-Generational
Parks and Recreation Division	Little Sluggers Tee Ball						x		x		x							
	Youth Soccer						x		x		x	x						
	Youth Basketball								x			x	x					
	Youth Volleyball						x		x			x	x					
	Taekwondo									x	x	x	x					
	Muay Thai/Kickboxing									x		x	x	x	x			
	Tae Bo			x						x				x	x	x		
	Shotokan/Adult Karate									x			x	x	x			
	Drop-In Adult Basketball								x					x	x			
	Adult Basketball League													x	x			
	Drop-In Adult Volleyball								x					x	x			
	Adult Slow Pitch Softball								x					x	x			
	Bocce								x					x	x	x		
	Fitness Boxing			x						x			x	x	x	x		
	Water Aerobics	x		x									x	x	x	x		
	Tennis								x					x	x	x		
	Volunteer Program				x													x
	Summer Camps							x			x	x	x					
St. Helena Public Library	All-ages Programming		x			x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
School District Aquatic Center	Open Swim	x																x
	Adult/Masters Lap Swim	x		x									x	x	x			
	Swim Lessons	x				x				x	x	x						
	Youth Swim Team	x							x		x	x						
	Lifeguard Training	x				x						x	x					
Boys and Girls Club	After-school care							x			x	x						
	Summer Program							x			x	x						
	Summer Basketball Camp							x	x		x							
	Youth Basketball Program								x		x							
Rianda House Senior Center	Language Lessons		x			x										x		
	Yoga/Aerobics			x												x		
	Drop-in Activities		x	x		x										x		
	Writing/Art/Poetry		x			x										x		
Nimbus Arts	Art Classes		x			x												



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Events and Programs & Participation Data

The Parks and Recreation Division offers a broad range of program offerings for youth and adults in the community.

- **Summer Camps** are offered to youth ages 3-17 and range from sports camps (soccer, pickleball, tennis) to cooking, and from STEM focus to a general adventure camp. The summer camps are popular and in 2024 had 413 participants.
- **Fitness** classes are available for both youth and adults and are held at the Parks and Recreation Office and the Carnegie Building. These include martial arts and Tae Bo classes. In 2024, around 135 people participated in fitness classes.
- **Sports** teams and games are offered for both youth and adults and are usually held at Crane Park or the High School Sports Complex. These include adult basketball and softball teams, youth soccer, basketball, and volleyball teams, as well as the very popular bocce league. In 2024 and 2025, there were over 1600 participants in sports programs, with 860 of those from the spring/summer bocce league.
- **Aquatics** programs offered by the Parks and Recreation Division are limited to a water aerobics class open to anyone 12 and older. They take place at the St. Helena High School Aquatics Facility; in 2024 there were 68 participants in the classes.
- **Volunteering** is a new program area that provides opportunities for community members to work on park clean-ups and beautification projects around the community. In 2024, there were 5 to 25 or more volunteers at each event.
- **Special Events** are hosted by the Parks and Recreation Division each year in both the city's parks as well as downtown. These events include the summer concert series in Lyman Park, the Harvest Festival, Fourth of July Fireworks and Festivities, and the Holiday Wine Barrel Tree. In 2024 and 2025, these events brought in more than 8,000 visitors, with the Harvest Festival and Fourth of July Fireworks being the most popular events.

Other Providers

There are several other community organizations in St. Helena that offer recreation programming and facilities.

School District Aquatic Facility

The St. Helena School District owns and operates an aquatic complex at St. Helena High School with a lap pool and diving board. In addition to the internal aquatic programs, the school district has contracted with Waves Aquatics Napa Valley to offer publicly available aquatic programming, including a youth swim team, swimming lessons, open and lap swim, and lifeguard training.

Although open to the public, access to the aquatic complex is limited during the school year. It is difficult to register for the programming offered by Waves Aquatics, and there aren't any child-friendly play structures or access.

Boys and Girls Club

The Boys and Girls Club of St. Helena and Calistoga operates out of St. Helena Elementary School and is open for children ages 5 to 18. They offer after-school care, summer care programs, and basketball camps.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

The Boys and Girls Club runs a teen center across the street from the Elementary School; this is difficult to reach from the High School.

Rianda House Senior Center

The Rianda House Senior Center is located downtown across from Lyman Park. It provides free programs and activities aimed at older adults. Rianda House does not partner much with the Parks and Recreation Division; it offers fitness classes, language classes, and other drop-in activities such as technology literacy and art classes.

Nimbus Arts

Nimbus Arts is a non-profit arts organization located in downtown St. Helena, serving both St. Helena and the greater Napa Valley Community. They offer on-site arts classes and camps, open studios, and free public events and community service programs. Nimbus Arts also helps coordinate collaborative art projects in Napa County and has partnered with local public and private schools to offer classes.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Funding

This section provides an overview of funding for parks and recreation services, looking at both operations funding and capital funding.

Operations

Funding for operations comes from the City's general revenue sources, including property taxes, sales taxes, and Transient Occupancy Tax, among others. Parks and recreation services also generate revenues from user fees, registrations, and program fees.

Expenditures

Funding for parks and recreation services is detailed in the City's annual budget. As previously described, two departments are directly involved in providing services, and each has specific budgets.

Table 7: Parks and Recreation Expenditures (City of St. Helena Operating Budget)

	FY 22-23	FY 23-24	FY 24-25
Community Services – Parks and Recreation ¹	\$1,007,033	\$1,254,368	\$1,304,046
Public Works – Park Division	\$1,021,202	\$1,295,440	\$1,354,745
Total	\$2,028,235	\$2,549,808	\$2,658,791

¹Excludes Park Impact Fee line item.

The Public Works Department also has a separate Tree City budget, which is not included in the table above for comparability with other agencies.

Revenues

Community Services generates revenue from several sources:

- **Facility Rentals.** The City's master fee schedule includes rates for facility rentals for picnic areas, courts, fields, the Carnegie Building, entire parks, and the various other facilities within the system. Rates vary for residents and nonresidents, and by facility type.
- **Recreation Program Fees.** Program fees are charged in the registration system and vary by program.
- **Donations and Sponsorships.** The Department seeks donations and sponsorships to fund certain programs, such as the Fourth of July celebration.

The City tracks certain programs to better account for service provision costs. As noted in the City's budget document, these accounts are:

- **286 Bocce Ball League:** This fund is used to account for the costs of running Bocce league services to the general public on a continuing basis. The intent is to recover costs through user charges and fees. The fund, therefore, is operated in a manner similar to a private business enterprise.
- **287 Harvest Festival:** This fund is used to account for revenues from registration fees and donations and is used to fund the expenses incurred in administering the Harvest Festival.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

- 288 Fourth of July: This fund is used to account for donations and is used to fund the expenses incurred in administering the Fourth of July fireworks show
- 223 Skate Park Lighting: This fund is used to account for donations and is used to fund the expenses incurred in maintaining the Skate Park lights.

Capital Development

By City of St. Helena policy, a capital project is considered a one-time expenditure but may take multiple years to deliver and fully fund. The City of St. Helena manages capital development through the citywide five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), managed by the Public Works Department. This is updated annually by staff and approved by the City Council. The most current CIP covers the FY 2024-2028 and was approved in September 2024. Project funding can be approved by a separate City Council action when funding adjustments are necessary outside the normal budget cycle.

The following park improvements are included in the current CIP:

- Crane Park Lighting Improvements
- Baldwin Park Fence & Pathway Repair
- Crane Park - Replace Playground Equipment and Fence
- Jacob Meily Park Drainage Site Survey and Installation of New Turf and Upgrade Irrigation (completed in April 2025)
- Parks & Recreation Master Plan (this planning effort)
- Trails & Open Space Amenities - Phase 1

Park Impact Fees

An important source of capital improvement funds is the City's Park impact fee (PIF), charged on new construction, additions, and occupancy changes. As of May 2025, the PIF rates are:

- All New Low-Density (Single Family) Residential Development or Conversions: \$ 3.83 per Square Foot
- All New Medium and Higher-Density (multifamily) Residential Development or Conversions \$ 3.83 per Square Foot

The City tracks other capital funding for parks in special funds, including:

- 222 Park Development: A special revenue fund for Ballpark State Grant, Proposition 12 Park per capita funding, other park grants, and park donations. These funds are restricted for park improvements and development.
- 734 Park Impact: This fund is used to accumulate funds from new or proposed residential development solely for park land acquisition and park improvements.



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Comparables

This section provides a snapshot of how St. Helena compares to other California cities in providing parks. St. Helena is unique, and it is understood that no one city will serve as a perfect model. However, the following table provides a reasonable set of comparisons to better understand similar community park systems and the overall needs for parks in St. Helena. Comparable cities analyzed include Calistoga, Half Moon Bay, Healdsburg, Ojai, and Yountville.

The cities were chosen for the following reasons:

1. Size of population and city
2. Active and similar tourism
3. Climate (especially hot summers)

For this comparison, information was gathered through online resources, and all information reflects the years 2022/2023, when information is consistently available. All parks included in this assessment are city-owned and operated.

Key takeaways from the comparable city analysis are listed below.

- St. Helena has about 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which is similar to the other comparable cities.
- Median income in St. Helena and Half Moon Bay is significantly higher than in the comparable communities. Healdsburg is the next highest.
- Many of the comparable cities have their own indoor recreation facility or community center, which serves as a central meeting space and event space. While St. Helena has some indoor spaces, none are a true community center or recreation center/gym.
- Although not all comparable cities have aquatic facilities, most have public options available, including community pools and beaches.



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Table 8 - Comparables

City Name	# of parks	Population 2023	Median income	City size (sq. mi)	Acres per 1,000	Facilities	Total Operating Expenses	Total Programming Revenue
St. Helena	10 (27 acres)	5,378	\$158,218	5 sq miles	5.02	Skate park, sports courts (tennis, pickleball, bocce), baseball field, picnic areas, Carnegie Building community space, playgrounds, dog park, library, trails	\$1,304,046 (community services), \$2,658,791 (public works)	\$143,709
Calistoga	2 (13 acres)	5,159	\$84,892	2.6 sq miles	2.52	Calistoga Community Pool, Teen Center, racquetball courts, sports fields, Community Center, picnic areas, playgrounds	\$979,894	\$78,558
Half Moon Bay	8 (19.8 acres)	11,454	\$153,199	6.4 sq miles	1.73	Skate Park, Plaza, Community Center, Historic Train Depot, sports fields, playgrounds, picnic areas, trails	\$566,322	\$215,493
Healdsburg	12 parks (60 acres), 2 open space areas (350 acres)	11,274	\$100,082	4.1 sq miles	5.32	Golf course, playing fields, community gardens, Villa Chanticleer, Senior Center, Community Center, picnic areas, playgrounds, walking paths, Swim Center, skate park, museum/library	\$1,249,676	\$20,169
Ojai	8 parks (34 acres)	7,576	\$79,202	4.4 sq miles	4.49	Athletic fields, sports courts (tennis, pickleball), community center, gymnasium, playgrounds, weight room, skate park	\$1,388,640	\$453,166
Yountville	10 parks (15 acres)	3,396	\$79,696	1.5 sq miles	4.42	Sports courts, dog park, community center, gym, picnic areas, trails, playgrounds	\$2,180,466	\$673,881



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Comparables Analysis Summary

St. Helena, a small city of five square miles, has 10 city parks, totaling 27 acres (5.02 acres per 1,000 residents). The budget covers three full-time Parks and Recreation staff, four full-time Public Library staff, and two Public Works and Trees staff. The Parks and Recreation budget receives most of its revenues from its recreation programs, including youth and adult sports and summer camps.

Calistoga

The City of Calistoga is located north of St. Helena in Napa County and is also known for its wineries, hot springs, and tourism. The city is 2.6 square miles and has a population of approximately 5,150 people.

The city has two city parks covering 13 acres (2.52 acres per 1,000 residents), managed by the city, as well as the County Fairgrounds and Mt. St. Helena Golf Course. Calistoga operates a community pool that is a draw from St. Helena. Most recreation programming, including summer pool access, is free for Calistoga residents.

Half Moon Bay

The City of Half Moon Bay is a small city located on the coast in San Mateo County, south of San Francisco. It is known for its beaches, surfing, and tourism. The city is 6.4 square miles and has a population of 11,454 people.

Half Moon Bay has six city parks that cover almost 20 acres (1.73 acres per 1,000 residents), including several neighborhood parks and beaches. The California Coastal Trail, popular with walkers and bikers, also goes through the city.

Healdsburg

The City of Healdsburg is in central Sonoma County; it is known for its wineries, fine dining, and tourism. The city is 4.1 square miles and has a population of 11,274. Healdsburg is a popular location for second home ownership.

Healdsburg has 12 parks, totaling about 60 acres (5.32 acres per 1,000 residents) and two open space areas, totaling about 320 acres. The city owns and operates a golf course and a large community center, which has indoor basketball courts, meeting rooms, and an outdoor amphitheater.

Ojai

The City of Ojai is a small city in Ventura County, northwest of Los Angeles, known for its wellness and spirituality focus, arts, and recreational activities. The city is 4.4 square miles in size and has about 7,500 residents.

Ojai has eight parks totaling 34 acres (4.49 acres per 1,000 residents). The city owns a large gymnasium and weight room, as well as a community center with a game room and art room. The recreation department runs several senior programs and excursions, children's summer camps, and special events throughout the year.



Appendix B



Inventory Assessment

Parks Inventory

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City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Parks Inventory

Carnegie Building



Park Type: Facility

Address: 1360 Oak Avenue

Year Established: 1908

Description

Historic former library with welcoming seating area at the front entrance. The Carnegie Building is now used for parks and recreation and community services events and meetings. Residents can reserve rooms for use. Has been updated to be ADA-compliant. Includes a kitchen in the lower level.



Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Opportunity to increase use of the space for recreation programming and community rentals. Consider upgrades to overall building and secondary space, including doors and AV equipment.



Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Large meeting room	Good	No permanent AV equipment
Small meeting room	Good	Hard to be private
Exercise/dance room	Adequate	Small
Restrooms (2 single stall)	Good	
Elevator	Good	



City of St. Helena
Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Crane Park



Park Type: Community-serving
Address: 360 S Crane Ave
Acreage: 11.27 acres

Description

Busy and popular park on the south edge of town, adjacent to the high school. Multiple activities and the site for many community events and programs including the farmer's market. It is the home for sports activities including skateboarding, pickleball, baseball and the very popular bocce league. Includes picnic areas, a large playground, and a community building used for recreation programming.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment

The Head Start community recreation building is underutilized and not welcoming; it could be used as a teen center. Consider improvements to both the indoor and outdoor space around the building. Improvements to the walking path and passive grassy areas near the picnic spots would improve usability and make it feel more welcoming.

Needs overall enhancements for the landscape, including bollards surrounding the parking area. Consider addition of a splash pad or water element. Upgrade area near tennis courts to improve viewing and seating.





City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Bocce courts (8)	Excellent	Recently upgraded
Picnic areas (4)	Adequate	
Restrooms (2x2 stall)	Good	
Tennis courts (5)	Excellent	Not much shade
Pickleball courts (4)	Excellent	
Baseball fields (2)	Good	
T-ball field	Poor	Makeshift, temporary field
Concessions building	Good	Only for use during baseball games
Skatepark	Good	Being updated; add hang-out space
Volleyball (sand) court	Adequate	
Playground	Good	
Recreation building	Poor	Needs upgrades and reconfiguration
Open lawn area with trees	Good	
Maintenance yard area	Adequate	Highly visible, primary parks maintenance facility
Off-street parking (2 lots)	Adequate	One lot used for Farmers' Markets on Fridays



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Hunt Ave. Lot



Park Type: Undeveloped

Address: 757 Hunt Avenue

Acreage: 0.36 acres

Description

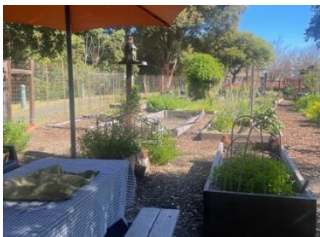
Shaded character with mature trees, including oaks.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Would require intense updates to become usable and welcoming.
Could be kept as passive park space or repurposed.



City of St. Helena
Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan



Jacob Meily Park

Park Type: Community-serving

Address: 750 Pope Street

Acreage: 5.42 acres

Description

Site of St. Helena's community garden. Shaded, pleasant character in the park interior, which has a large playground surrounding by seating and picnic areas. The newly updated soccer field and picnic area is inviting and well landscaped. The park has multiple entrances from different neighborhoods and includes a nice walking path along the creek.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Recent updates to the soccer field and picnic area have improved the character and usability of this park. The vineyard is not maintained and looks poor. Opportunity to increase programming and partnerships with the community garden.

Consider adding access and walking path near creek. Potential for classes at the community garden.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Community garden	Excellent	Opportunity to add a compost area
Wooded area with creek and paths	Good	
Picnic areas (2)	Good	
Playground (large)	Good	
Restroom (2 stalls)	Adequate	
Soccer field also used for T-ball	Excellent	Newly renovated
Vineyard	Adequate	Not maintained
Walking path	Good	
Off-street parking	Good	



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Lewis Station



Park Type: Local-serving

Address: 1195 Church Street

Acreage: 0.13 acres

Description

Very small park on a triangle of land with tables and restroom. Shade arbor is being replaced.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment

A lack of shade and landscaping makes this area unwelcoming, but with room for improvements.



Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Restroom	Adequate	
Picnic tables	Adequate	



City of St. Helena
Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Lyman Park



Park Type: Community-serving
Address: 1498 Main Street
Acreage: 0.89 acres

Description

Downtown park located adjacent to the former City Hall (now closed) and across the street from the Senior Center. The park has an excellent tree canopy and a large open lawn area. The city made landscape upgrades in recent years using in-house crews. The park includes a historic gazebo. Lyman Park is used for the popular summer concert series, using a stage set up adjacent to the gazebo.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Consider uses with nearby Rianda House Senior Center. Small playground is inadequate, a larger structure aimed at a larger range of ages would be more welcoming and accessible.

The adjacent former City Hall building is a potential activation site for increased programming or partnership, depending on the use the City chooses.

Consider adding small moveable tables, umbrellas, and game tables. Add a mural to the large wall.





City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Historic Gazebo	Good	Not well positioned for events
Benches/seating	Good	
Walking path	Adequate	Cracks, needs repaving
Picnic areas (2)	Adequate	No grills
Restrooms (2 stalls)	Good	
Playground (toddlers)	Poor	Very small, limited features
Open lawn	Good	
Mature trees	Good	
Historic Fountain	Poor	Needs interpretive signage and water



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Mary Fryer Park



Park Type: Local-serving

Address: 1500 Mitchell Drive

Acreage: 0.84 acres

Description

Small shaded park with a small playground and picnic area adjacent to a water detention pond.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Consider improving view and seating to water area.



Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Entrance with seating	Good	Entrance has a bus stop and benches
Open lawn areas	Good	
Picnic Area	Adequate	Tables but no grill
Playground	Adequate	Very small
Walking path	Good	Shaded but cracked



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Mennen Park



Park Type: Local-serving

Address: 1649 Voorhees Circle

Acreage: 0.17 acres

Year Established: 2005

Description

Very small park used by nearby residents. Small grassy area for kids to play in and a few grills and picnic tables.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Add play structures that can be used by children to make the park more usable by families. Consider addition of pollinator garden and native plantings.



Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Open lawn area	Excellent	
Picnic Area	Excellent	



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Parks and Recreation Division Offices and Event Space



Park Type: Facility

Address: 1574 Railroad Avenue

Description

Former residential house converted to office use with outbuilding converted to martial arts studio.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Slated to be eliminated, offices will be moving to a different location.

Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Parks and Recreation Offices	Good	
Martial arts space with office and weight room	Adequate	



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Starr Baldwin Park



Park Type: Local-serving

Address: 1679 Spring Street

Acreage: 0.76 acres

Description

Medium neighborhood park that has entrances on two streets, shaded walking path and benches, channelized creek at one entrance.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Improve signage and consider alternative to chain link fence at entrance.



Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Walking path	Good	
Picnic area	Adequate	No grills
Passive park space (grassy field)	Good	



City of St. Helena
Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Stephen C. McCullagh Park



Park Type: Local-serving
Address: 1758 Crinella Drive
Acreage: 0.14 acres
Year Established: 2015

Description
Small park located within a neighborhood with excellent tree canopy. Includes interesting playground features (bouldering and sandbox/water feature area).

Initial Recommendations and Assessment
Connect the sandbox structure to a water source to create a more interactive play system. Add more seating options.



Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Picnic area	Good	No grill, has a water fountain
Playground (rock climbing, all ages)	Excellent	
Play area (sandbox, water feature)	Adequate	Possible water feature capabilities
Mural	Good	



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Stone Bridge Park



Park Type: Undeveloped

Address: 220 Pope Street

Acreage: 0.75 acres

Description

Lot with trees and grass along the river, no identifying sign. Access is limited.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Grassy area with a few dozen trees, fenced off	Poor	



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Wappo Park



Park Type: Community-serving

Address: 201 Pope Street

Acreage: 5.32 acres

Description

Large park with walking path encircling a grassy field and a large fenced dog park area. Several large grassy areas that are shaded but unused. Adjacent to the City Hall (on former community college campus) and affordable housing site.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Add seating to the dog park for dog owners. Add children's play area, for nearby housing complex residents to use.

Add signage indicating mileage around the circular walking track. Opportunities for additional activation should be explored.



Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Dog park	Good	Large, fenced dog park
Walking path	Good	Gravel loop
Open meadow area	Adequate	Underutilized
Picnic area	Good	
Off-street parking at City Hall lot	Excellent	



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Yountville

The Town of Yountville is located south of St. Helena in Napa County, and is known for its wineries, fine dining, and large tourism draw. The town is 1.5 square miles in size and has a population of approximately 3,400 people.

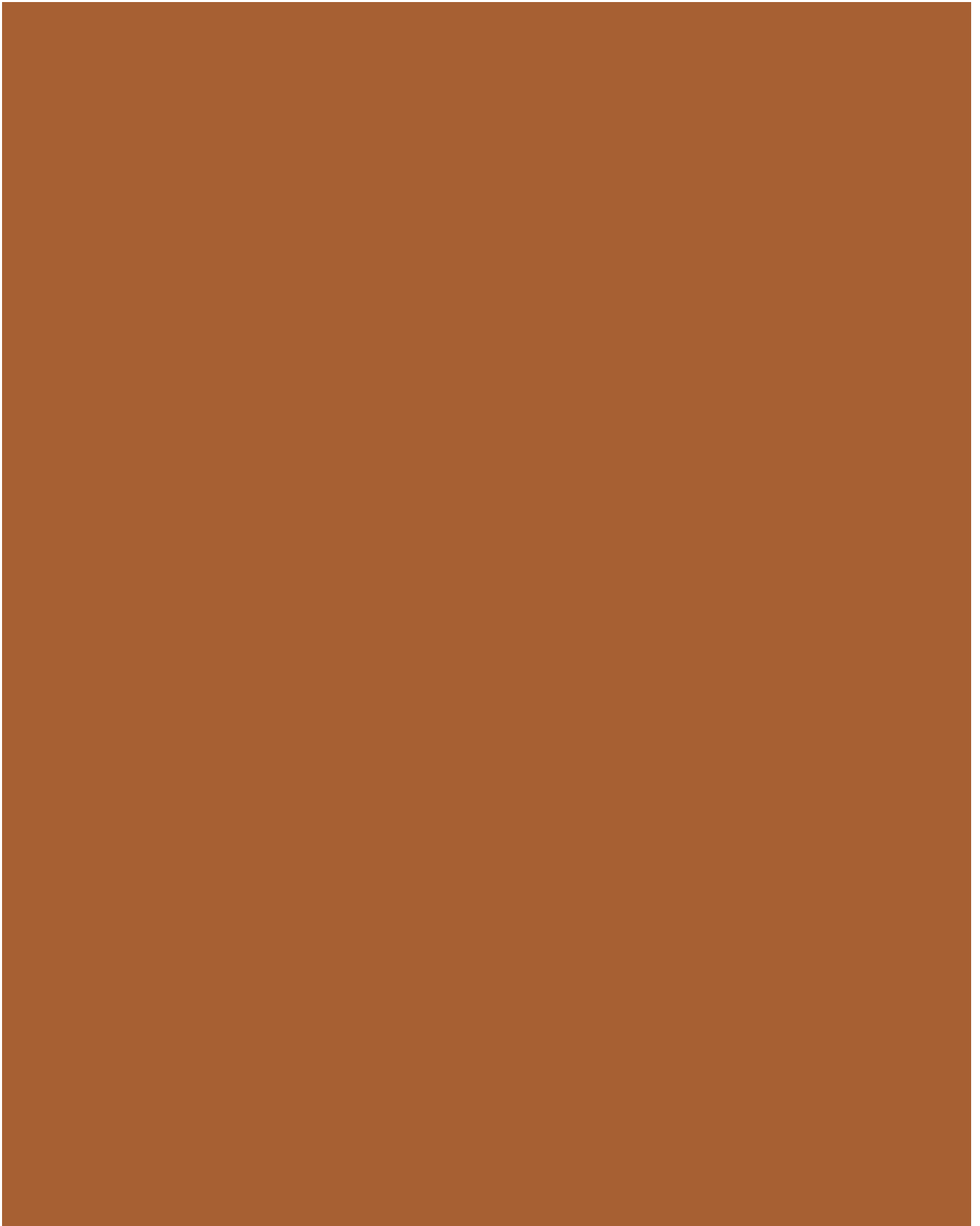
Yountville has 10 parks totaling 15 acres (4.42 acres per 1,000 residents), as well as five miles of walking paths and trails within the town. The town's community center is a popular location for large event rentals, receptions, recreation, and outdoor events.



Appendix C



General Plan Policy Scan





City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Applicable General Plan Policies

The St. Helena General Plan, published in 2019, is the primary policy document for the City of St. Helena as it moves toward the year 2040. It sets forth the City's policies to guide future land use decisions and provides the needed framework to preserve the character and quality of development that the community desires.

The Parks and Recreation Element (Chapter 12) of St. Helena's General Plan is directly relevant to the Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan. Other General Plan Elements also include relevant policies and implementing actions, including the Land Use & Growth Management (Chapter 2), Public Facilities & Services (Chapter 4), Circulation (Chapter 5), Community Design (Chapter 7), Open Space & Conservation (Chapter 8), Public Health, Safety, & Noise (Chapter 9), and Climate Change (Chapter 10) elements.

Relevant policies from these elements are listed below for reference during the St. Helena PRT Master Planning process.

Land Use & Growth Management

Policies

- LU5.1 Discourage conversion of existing farmland to non-agricultural uses.
- LU5.4 Support community-based agricultural uses within the city, including community gardens, orchards, and parks.
- LU5.D Identify sites for community gardens, orchards, and parks. Establish a program to maintain public areas within and surrounding community gardens and to administer the assignment of garden spaces and collection of use fees.
- LU6.1 Provide a wide-range of high-quality public facilities, including parks, multi-use trails, schools, fire and police services, water and wastewater systems, and community centers.
- LU6.B Pursue sites for future public facilities, including parks, consistent with projected growth.

Public Facilities & Services

Policies

- PF5.5 Encourage continued support for the St. Helena public library and the library foundation [St. Helena Public Library and the Foundation of St. Helena Public Library] to ensure that it maintains high-quality services for all St. Helenans.

Implementing Actions

- PF3.A Require developers to provide adequate drainage improvements and detention to mitigate storm runoff from the site to the nearest major waterway. Drainage improvements



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

can include measures such as creating settling basins, bio-swales, and the use of pervious materials for driveways and parking areas. Key waterways include York Creek, Sulphur Creek and the Napa River.

Circulation

Policies

- CR2.2 Promote walking and bicycling as safe and convenient modes of transportation.
- CR2.3 Ensure secure, accessible, and convenient bicycle parking facilities throughout St. Helena, including downtown, commercial areas, schools, and parks.

Community Design

Policies

- CD4.1 Encourage the development of public spaces for formal and informal gatherings, such as plazas, seating and small performance areas.
- CD4.2 Integrate open space, including parks, community gardens, natural areas, and agriculture into the community to strengthen the connection to St. Helena's agricultural heritage and provide a sense of openness.
- CD5.1 Preserve the visual and physical connection to agriculture by protecting views from streets, parks, and open spaces to vineyards, agriculture, and hillsides.

Implementing Actions

- CD4.A Require private development to incorporate appropriate public open space into site designs.

Open Space & Conservation

Policies

- OS2.3 Preserve open space for recreational uses, including a bicycle and pedestrian trail system along creek corridors when compatible with riparian vegetation and wildlife habitat. Where possible, integrate stream corridors with trails and other recreational open space, provided that the vegetation, habitat value, and water quality is not significantly impacted.
- OS2.5 Limit public access to habitat areas when public access will significantly impact the sensitivity of the habitat area.
- OS4.1 Protect and enhance tree resources in developed and undeveloped areas. Efforts should include: adequate maintenance of street trees, requiring replacement trees where



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

existing significant trees cannot be saved, and requiring street trees as a condition of new development.

Implementing Actions

- OS2.D Provide for open space opportunities by including passive and active public recreation areas within projects as they develop.
- OS2.E Explore the possibility of public use or agricultural option of the wastewater treatment plant spray field in the form of trails and passive open space or other agricultural option.
- OS3.E Promote the installation of drought tolerant and native plants in landscaping throughout the city. Potential measures include:
 - Require City parks and properties to be landscaped with drought tolerant native plants that allow for high shade capacity wherever possible and use water-wise irrigation systems as a model for residents and businesses
- OS4.A Establish an urban forestry program to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive approach to maintaining and increasing the City's trees. Key program aspects will include the following:
 - A tree planting program to ensure that new trees are planted regularly;
 - A tree maintenance program to ensure that existing trees are healthy and pruned;
 - A tree inventory to create a comprehensive listing of the City's trees and tree-related needs;
 - A Tree Committee to oversee the implementation of the urban forestry program and approval of tree removals;
 - A landmark tree list that identifies trees that require additional protection from damage and/or removal; and
 - Appropriate Heritage tree deed restrictions.
- OS4.D Explore the concept of establishing a City nursery program to enhance native species for preparation and planting throughout the city.

Public Health, Safety, and Noise

Policies

- PS5.3 Within the 100-year floodplain, encourage open space uses, such as parks or natural areas.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Climate Change

Policies

- CC4.4 Support efforts to expand and improve the City's managed urban forest in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve overall air quality.
- CC4.5 Promote community gardens to reduce emissions generated in food transportation.

Implementing Actions

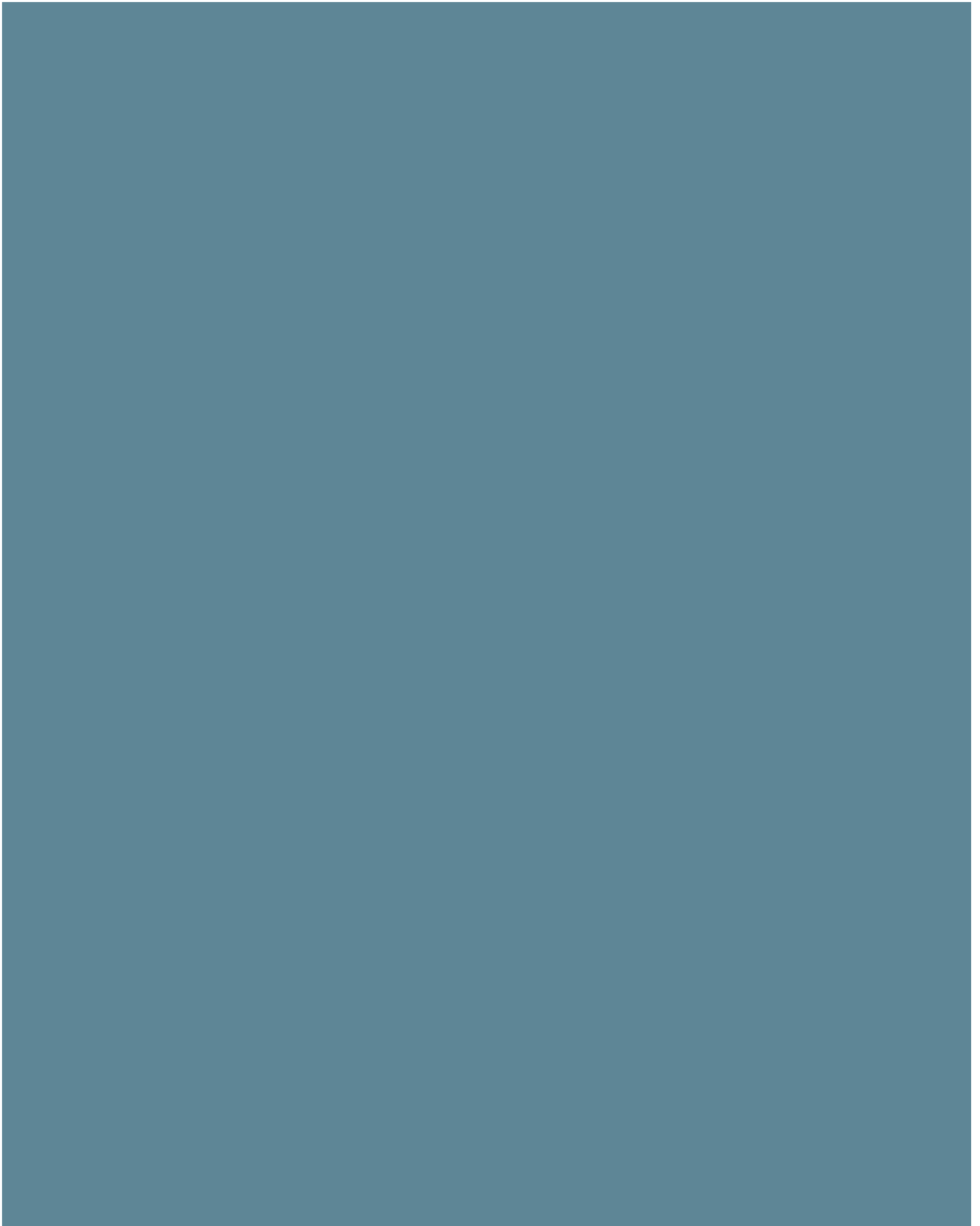
- CC1.L Develop parks and open spaces in support of efforts to create walkable, bikeable mixed-use neighborhoods, especially to complement higher-density development and connect lower-density areas.
- CC4.B Promote edible landscaping where possible.
- CC4.C Establish programs and plans that create and enhance urban forests and greenways.
- CC4.J Establish an urban forestry program to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive approach to maintaining and increasing the City's trees especially native varieties when possible.



Appendix D



Needs Assessment





Needs Assessment

St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

November 2025



City of St. Helena

Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

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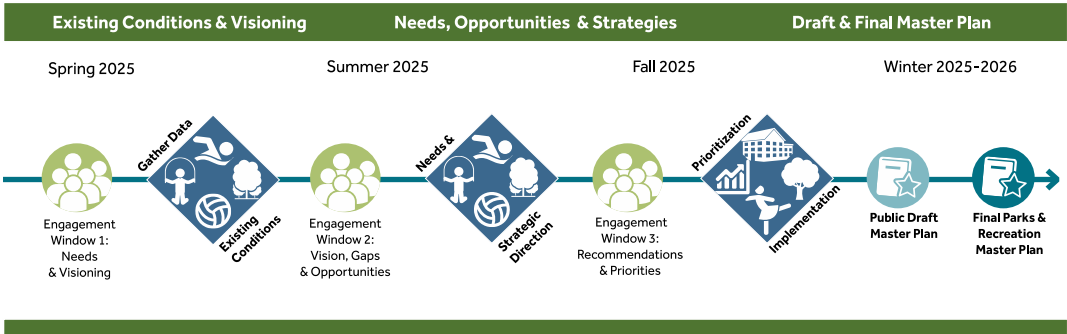
Introduction

Overview of Parks, Recreation, and Trails Planning Process

The City of St. Helena is in the process of developing a new Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan (PRT Master Plan). Led by the Parks and Recreation Division, this new plan will be the first standalone parks, recreation, and trails master plan for the city and will complement the 2019 St. Helena General Plan. It will stand as a blueprint to guide decisions on parks, trails, and recreation services for the next 10 to 15 years.

The Master Planning process kicked off in Spring 2025, with the major public engagement launched in May 2025. The PRT Master Plan is anticipated to be completed in Winter 2025-2026.

Figure 1 - Project Process



Purpose of the Needs Assessment

This Needs Assessment is the culmination of the Needs, Opportunities, and Strategies Phase; it builds upon the Existing Conditions Summary document, incorporates all the findings of work to date, and analyzes the gaps and needs for the city’s parks, recreation, and trails system. This document will be integrated into the final Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan.

Methodology

The state of the art in assessing parks and recreation needs is more responsive to context and more holistic than the past practice of relying on one or two factors, such as Quimby Act calculations of acres of park land per 1,000 people or the results of a single survey. The approach to assessing needs for St. Helena incorporates multiple layers and criteria, as shown in Figure 2 on the next page.

This approach provides a deeper understanding of high-priority community needs and lays the foundation for policies and specific recommendations, and the multiple elements that must be considered in the PRT Plan.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Figure 2 - Approach to Assessing Needs



The Existing Conditions report documented and assessed the existing parks, facilities, trails, and recreation program inventory, identified comparable communities, and evaluated demographics.

This needs assessment builds on the Existing Conditions report. It is organized as follows:

- Community Engagement, which summarizes community engagement activities and identifies major themes.
- PRT Framework, which presents a vision and goals for the parks, recreation, and trails system.
- Trends, which discuss trends that are especially relevant to St. Helena's needs, considering the community context.
- Community Needs and Gaps, organized by Citywide Opportunities, Parks, Trails, Facilities, and Programs.
- Preliminary Recommendations, draft recommendations that respond to the PRT vision and goals and that help address needs and gaps.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Community Engagement

Overview of Methods

Community participation is foundational to the Parks, Recreation, and Trails (PRT) Master Plan. The city convened an Advisory Group to provide guidance throughout the planning process. In addition, the project includes a comprehensive community engagement program, with three phases, or rounds, of outreach. The first two rounds of outreach led up to the Needs Assessment and included a variety of activities that informed the development of the Plan and its recommendations.

Themes and findings from the following engagement activities are listed in the *Key Themes* section below.

Advisory Group

The Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Advisory Group met in March, July, and October 2025. The Advisory Group is composed of representatives from advocacy groups, committee members, and a range of recreation interests and perspectives, and will act as a sounding board throughout the planning process, meeting at key points in the project to provide guidance.

The first meeting focused on a preliminary discussion of strengths, challenges, needs, and opportunities for St. Helena parks, recreation, and trails. The second meeting continued that discussion with a review of the initial engagement findings and a visioning activity. The third meeting looked at preliminary needs and potential recommendations by site.

Figure 3 - Advisory Group Meeting #1, March 2025





City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Stakeholder Interviews and Meetings

Stakeholder interviews and meetings were conducted in March and July 2025 to gain perspectives on facility and program strengths, areas for improvement, and future opportunities. The interviews and meetings included sessions with representatives of the following groups and organizations:

- Equitable Recreation Committee
- Parks & Recreation Staff
- Public Works – Parks Maintenance
- Rianda House
- St. Helena Chamber of Commerce
- St. Helena City Council Members
- St. Helena City Manager
- St. Helena High School Interact Club
- St. Helena Historical Society
- St. Helena Library
- St. Helena Parks & Recreation Commission members
- St. Helena School District
- Trails Committee

Online Survey

The city distributed an online survey in both English and Spanish via its social media pages, newsletters, the PRT Plan website, and flyers. The survey was available from June to August 2025 and received 239 responses (225 English and 14 Spanish). The survey included a range of questions to help determine how respondents currently use the parks and facilities, which parks they frequented, what barriers and issues affected their use, and their future needs and wants for the parks and recreation system.

Community Visioning Pop-ups

Visioning pop-ups were held at several park locations across St. Helena in July 2025 to give residents an opportunity to create a vision and priorities for the future of St. Helena parks and recreation. Community members participated in four pop-up visioning events that aimed to create a parks and recreation programming vision for St. Helena for the next 10 to 15 years. At each event, community members could vote on what images they liked the most or wanted to have in St. Helena; there were 40 images across four boards, and each person had 10 dots that they could use however they liked.

The images were categorized into three groups: Community Gathering and Activities, Recreation Programs, and Trails and Nature Areas. Pop-ups occurred at the Lyman Park Wednesday Night Summer Concert, outside of the Carnegie Building, at Crane Park by the summer camps, and at the Farmers' Market at Crane Park.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Figure 4 - Community Visioning Pop-up at Farmer's Market



Internal Staff Work sessions

Work sessions with park maintenance staff, held in March and July 2025, focused on the strengths and weaknesses of internal operations and identifying opportunities for improvements. An additional work session with St. Helena Public Library staff in July 2025 focused on identifying potential areas of collaboration between the Public Library Division and Parks and Recreation Division.

Parks and Recreation Commission

The St. Helena Parks and Recreation Commission received several updates from internal and consulting staff on the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Planning process. Staff also met with the Parks and Recreation Commission chair to further develop an understanding of parks and recreation in St. Helena and factors that could impact the master plan.

Key Themes

The following key themes emerged from the community engagement process to date.

Highly Valued Parks, Uneven Use

- A few St. Helena parks are frequently visited and highly valued by the community (Crane Park, Lyman Park), but others are lightly used.
- Several parks in St. Helena have a long history and historical aspects that are valued by the community, such as the gazebo in Lyman Park.

Need for User Comforts

- There is a need for increased shade throughout the park system, especially around picnic areas, for residents to feel comfortable outdoors during hot sunny days.
- Additional water fountains and water bottle fillers across the park system were requested by residents during the visioning events and survey responses.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

- Accessibility improvements, including increased seating, improved walking paths, and improved signage, would make the park system more welcoming and accessible to all residents and visitors.

Broad Support for Walking and Trails

- There is broad interest in formalizing trails within and around St Helena for walking and hiking.
- Previous plans and initiatives have begun the process of analyzing land and trails to create a trail network, but more work is needed to create a comprehensive vision for the trails system and walking/biking networks.
- A significant portion of residents walk or bike to access the city's parks but indicated they wish there were safer routes and protected paths to get to the parks.

Desire for Expanded Collaboration and Partnerships

- There is potential for the library and the parks department to build on their coordination on programming and events.
- Parks and Recreation has robust partnerships with several community groups that help extend the capacity of staff for recreation and library events.
- The recent partnership with the School District to enable more public use of the high school swimming pool is widely seen as a success. However, swimming lessons are inaccessible to many, as are access to several other key facilities.

Figure 5 - Community Visioning at Crane Park



Climate Resilience and Parks

- A comprehensive landscaping and tree planting plan would address climate concerns by prioritizing native and drought-tolerant plants, providing guidelines for what should be planted in the parks, and would help decrease the labor needed to maintain the landscaping.
- Indoor recreation areas, such as a community center, would provide a refuge from wildfire-induced air quality issues and worsening extreme heat, especially in the summer.
- Increased drought and heat impact the health and appearance of landscaping, as well as invasive insects that are killing the native Valley Oaks.

Desire for Water Access

- Residents expressed significant interest in a water-based park feature, such as a splashpad or sprayground, for use during the summer.



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- Although there are several creeks that flow seasonally through St. Helena, there is no direct access to the creeks. Residents were interested in developing access points to the creeks and the Napa River.

Interest in Increased Recreation Programming

- The most popular ideas from the community visioning events focused on community gathering at an event or program, such as movie nights or community food events.
- Programming and activities are a major driver for visiting parks for residents. Many residents favor the parks that offer structured activities and events, such as adult team sports, the farmers market, and summer concerts.
- Teenagers indicate that St. Helena needs more recreation and hang-out options for teenagers, ideally near the high school.

Maintenance Investment

- The city's parks maintenance team is limited in its capacity and struggles to maintain and landscape the parks and also upgrade and improve the parks.
- The St. Helena community has high expectations for their parks, and it is often difficult to meet those expectations with the limited staff and budget of the maintenance team.
- Any park or trail improvements should take into consideration the limited capacity of the maintenance team.

Figure 6 - Advisory Group Priority Activity





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PRT Framework

General Plan Vision and Guiding Principles

The St. Helena General Plan Update 2040, adopted in 2019, set forth a vision and guiding principles:

With an eye toward the future, while building on the assets of today, the community of St. Helena envisions that, in the year 2040, the town will be a well-integrated place linked by effective community institutions, safe neighborhoods and streets, and superior schools, parks, and public facilities.

In addition, planning for thoughtful, well-managed development, while maintaining its small-town, rural character is of vital importance to St. Helena's residents.

Guiding principles for St. Helena in 2040

- Sustainable Community
- Stable Economy
- Environmental Stewardship

PRT Vision

The PRT vision describes how St. Helena's parks, recreation, and trails system will contribute to the General Plan vision. Drawing inspiration from community engagement and the city's existing parks and recreation assets, the vision describes the aspiration or big idea for the parks, recreation, and trails system in St. Helena and the outcomes it will provide for the community.

St. Helena parks, programs, and trails make life better for all by enlivening the community, supporting healthy people and parks, and providing active and connected public places.

PRT Goals

A goal is a specific target or destination, a result that contributes to achieving the vision.

- **Connections:** Establish a dynamic, welcoming, and safe parks and trails network, connecting people to each other and to the community.
- **Livability:** Create an active, healthy, and socially vibrant city by activating parks with culture, recreation, and arts programming and events, responding to St. Helena's unique community character and identity.
- **Partnerships:** Leverage and foster lasting partnerships to expand collaboration, funding, services, recreation programming, and opportunities for the community.
- **Stewardship:** Ensure consistent and sustainable stewardship of parks and facilities through high-quality and efficient landscaping, maintenance, and operations.
- **Nature:** Preserve land and cultivate healthy ecosystems to enhance community resilience and provide access to nature.



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Trends

The following section highlights trends and ideas for the city to consider when meeting community needs and interests. These also offer ideas about how to expand the city's programming and diversity of facilities and parks.

Access to Water



Extreme heat is expected to increase as the climate warms, and having cooling water features, including splashpads and river and creek access, will improve residents' health and well-being. Water access was one of the most popular activities in the engagement session, especially as an activity for young children. Water recreation is accessible to all ages and abilities, can improve community health, and provides refuge during the hot Napa Valley summers.

Activation and Placemaking



Activating public spaces through programming and physical improvements can create a sense of place and community, which can improve the local economy and community wellbeing. Examples include street markets, festivals, parklets, and public seating, all of which help create community awareness and improve quality of life in public areas like streets, plazas, and parks. Activated spaces have increased since the COVID-19 pandemic and were one of the top requested improvements to recreation programming offerings in St. Helena.

Climate Change & the Park System



The impacts of climate change, including extreme heat, wildfire, air quality, and extreme storms and flooding, are already being felt by St. Helenans. Parks play a central role in assisting and addressing some of these issues. This includes sustainable planting approaches for parks and overall maintenance practices and limiting urban heat islands. Recreation programs and facilities that focus on walkability and bikeability are critical to reducing vehicle miles traveled, a key statewide goal to reduce greenhouse gases. Open space and parks can also be effective buffers for potential flood zones or wildfire paths. Energy conservation efforts and the use of solar panels for recreation facilities and



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lighting can help reduce the city's carbon footprint, act as a model for businesses and residents, and save money in operations.

Engaging Teens



A major challenge in St. Helena is supporting and attracting families; the population of children and teenagers has decreased in the past few decades. Teenagers are a challenging group to satisfy in the parks and recreation system. They often indicate a desire to 'hang out,' and need safe places day and night to do this. Skateparks, teen playgrounds, and teen centers are a few areas that have some success in satisfying this need. Evaluating how to provide safe and enjoyable experiences for this group is paramount to fully serving the needs of

residents. Additional programs integrating technology and esports are also on the rise.

Older Adults



People aged 65 and older account for nearly 30 percent of the city's population, nearly double the statewide proportion; the population of older adults in St. Helena has grown significantly since 2000. The population of seniors participating in outdoor and physical recreation programs has increased in the past decade, as both the number participating goes up and a larger percentage of older adults seek out those activities than in the past. Continued interest in leisure activities for older adults is expected, including the popular bocce club, other senior

sports clubs, and culture- or history-related programs.

Tourism Trends



The Napa Valley tourism industry is growing, with both tax revenue and direct visitor spending increasing more than 13 percent since 2018.¹ Napa County is especially attractive to tourists seeking farm-to-table and food and drink experiences. In St. Helena, special events, such as Harvest Festival and Holiday Wine Barrel Tree, are increasingly popular for both residents and visitors. Special events and activities that bring people downtown were the top programs to add from residents in the Visioning

¹ Visit Napa Valley, 2023 Visitor Profile and Economic Impact Study, accessed 9 September 2025.
<https://www.visitnapavalley.com/about-us/research/>



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Survey. Events that bring in both residents and tourists, like food truck events or holiday decorations in the parks, would improve economic activity and help develop a sense of community.

Volunteerism



Volunteering can create a sense of wellbeing, improve physical and mental health, and connect communities of all ages and backgrounds.² St. Helena recently started a volunteer program in the parks, which is growing in popularity. Parks volunteering programs can create a sense of ownership and responsibility, as well as improve the sense of community in the local neighborhood. Different types of volunteering, such as planting, trash pick-up, and events staffing, can appeal to residents of different ages and abilities.

Walking



Walking for fitness, pleasure, and transportation is one of the most popular outdoor activities in the United States.³ In St. Helena, residents indicated that having access to safe trails, paths, and walkways is important and would increase their likelihood of walking. A community walking group, St. Helena Striders, formed in 2024 to improve fitness and community. Implementing pedestrian and bike plans, creating and formalizing walking routes and trails, and creating community walking programs are all ways to improve the walking

experience and ensure everyone feels safe walking both to and within parks.

² Mayo Clinic, Benefits of Volunteering, accessed 9 September 2025.

<https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/3-health-benefits-of-volunteering>

³ Outdoor Industry Association, Outdoor Participation Trends; accessed 9 September, 2025.

<https://oia.outdoorindustry.org/exec-summary-outdoor-participation-trends>



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Community Needs

This section discusses the findings from the needs assessment and gaps analysis, which looks at the system and individual sites from a variety of perspectives. It is organized as follows:

- Citywide opportunities that address the park system as a whole;
- Park needs and gaps identified from the evaluation of park quantity, distribution, and quality;
- Trail needs and gaps, including coordination with the Streets Master Plan;
- Recreation facility needs and gaps, including benchmarking with NRPA data;
- Recreation programming needs and gaps, based on community input and the capacity of existing parks and facilities.

Systemwide and Citywide Opportunities

The parks, recreation, and trails system is more than a collection of land and facilities – it defines the fabric of the community and shapes how people experience St. Helena. This section discusses opportunities in the park system to contribute to St. Helena’s General Plan vision.

Increasing St. Helena’s Sense of Place

St. Helena’s park system has strong potential to contribute to its sense of place and identity as a rural small town. Not only is this community character highly valued by residents, but it also contributes to St. Helena’s attractiveness to visitors looking for an authentic small-town environment.

Key Needs

- **Placemaking.** Activating key parks with placemaking approaches that encourage people to visit and linger, leading to more people in parks, increased vibrancy, and even increased spending in local businesses. St. Helena’s Summer Concert Series and the weekly farmers market are excellent foundations, but there is a demand for much more placemaking activity. Placemaking can be accomplished by adding more special events, like the concert series. Several other approaches are suited to St. Helena.

Creative placemaking brings arts, culture, music, and design activities into parks and public spaces. The mural at Lyman Park is an example of this. With the arts, cultural, and history organizations in St. Helena, these types of efforts could be expanded to more sites and increased frequency.

Tactical placemaking experiments with temporary installations in existing parks, and sometimes the creation of temporary parks or pathways. These approaches are a low-risk, low-cost way to experiment and test ideas before making more costly investments. For example, tactical placemaking ideas include low-cost tables and chairs, hammocks, casual seating from natural materials such as logs and boulders, or strings



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of lights. Larger parks such as Lyman, Crane, or Wappo Park are good candidates for these types of interventions.

Mobile programming is another approach to placemaking and activation. Mobile programming brings activities to parks on a regularly scheduled basis and allows drop-in participation. The old-fashioned bookmobile is an example of mobile programming. There are excellent examples of mobile programming in communities of all sizes, with activities ranging from play and games (hula hoops, corn hole, giant Jenga) to health and fitness to STEM activities like LEGO robotics. Most of St. Helena's parks are suitable for mobile programming to encourage visitation and use.

- **Park design to celebrate community identity.** The features and amenities in St. Helena's parks appear to have been selected without considering long-term operations or how material and amenity choices can contribute to community character and identity. There is a mix of materials (in fencing, bollards, pathways, etc.), facilities (restrooms, playgrounds, etc.), and site furnishings (benches, picnic tables, trash receptacles) throughout the park system, sometimes even in a single site. Selecting consistent features and amenities in parks that convey St. Helena's agricultural and rural identity will help increase St. Helena's sense of place and will also create maintenance efficiencies for repair and replacement.
- **Celebration and interpretation of local environment and history.** St. Helena's park system includes several historic resources, including the Carnegie Building, the Signorelli barn, and the Lyman Park gazebo. Parks also offer an opportunity to interpret the local environment and cultural history through art. This can include site-specific art (both permanent and temporary installations), art and interpretation incorporated into park amenities such as destination playgrounds that celebrate the local agricultural or natural history, and informational kiosks.

This should also include protecting views from parks, preserving trees and geographic features, and integrating native plants into park designs.

- **Embracing St. Helena's creeks and the Napa River.** General Plan Policy OS1.1 states: Preserve and enhance St. Helena's riparian corridors for their value in providing wildlife habitat, biodiversity, natural drainage, and visual amenity. General Plan policies also support Living River Principles. St. Helena's creeks and the Napa River are important features that intersect with the park system. There is an opportunity to increase riparian plantings and access points in existing park sites and to expand trails and pathways along the creeks and rivers.

Connecting the System

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) and the Trust for Public Land (TPL) have helped communities adopt the 10-Minute Walk as the national metric for park system access. Crossing Highway 29 is a challenge – the highway is a barrier for walking, biking, and even driving to parks, especially at peak park use times. Public engagement showed that 79% of survey respondents said they would be more likely to walk or bike to a park or other destinations in St. Helena if there were improvements to trails, paths, and walkways.



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Key Needs

- **Safe Routes to Parks.** NRPA and the Safe Routes Coalition define Safe Routes to Parks as a movement to provide safe, convenient, and equitable access to parks for people walking and biking. As the Safe Routes Coalition notes, walking or bicycling to a park supports health, reduces traffic and pollution, and creates more opportunities for social connection and time outdoors.

This means that all of St. Helena's parks should be accessible by safe bike lanes or trails, sidewalks or pathways, safe crossings, and good visual access from surrounding streets. There should also be sidewalks and pathways connecting from the public street into the park's internal pedestrian circulation system, with bicycle racks near park entries and activity areas.

- **Coordination with the Streets Master Plan.** Concurrent to the PRT Master Plan, St. Helena is developing a new Streets Master Plan with consultant Toole Design Group. This study will produce a conceptual design plan for the transportation network throughout the city with context-sensitive pedestrian, bicyclist, and transit improvements. There is both an opportunity and a need for the PRT Master Plan to coordinate with the Streets Master Plan to ensure Safe Routes to Parks are maximized, to get the most value out of the city's existing parks assets.
- **Wayfinding program.** Wayfinding helps residents and visitors find their way around the city and within parks and public facilities. A wayfinding program provides a system of signs with a consistent graphic style and brand. The program projects a consistent image for the City, reduces visual clutter, and makes for more efficient operations (fewer and more effective signs to maintain, fewer parts). This system should include identification signs (e.g., park entry sign or monument), informational signs (e.g., park or building layout, trails map), directional signs, and regulatory signs (e.g., no parking).

Past economic development efforts in St. Helena recommended a citywide wayfinding program. If a citywide program is not developed, a park system-specific wayfinding program should be developed and implemented as soon as possible.

Community Resilience

As noted in the Existing Conditions Report, St. Helena's Safety General Plan Element included a *Climate Change Hazards and Vulnerability Assessment*, completed in 2023. According to this report:

St. Helena is, and will continue to be, affected by the impacts of climate change in the form of increased extreme heat days, increased average temperature, stronger storms, more severe floods, deeper droughts, and more frequent and larger wildfires.

St. Helena's parks can better support community and climate resilience if the following key needs are addressed.

Key Needs

- **Updated, climate-adapted, and drought-resistant plant palette and tree list.** Most of the trees and plants in St. Helena's parks were in place before drought and climate



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change were as severe as today. Updated plant and tree lists are needed so that new plantings can survive and to guide the transition of existing park landscapes over time. For example, the City of Sonoma recently approved an updated master tree list developed in consultation with the UC Master Gardener Program. This list includes 32 trees selected to withstand the area's projected climate for the next 75 years.

- **Shade and cooling in parks.** St. Helena's parks have many mature trees, which require ongoing urban forest care to ensure their continued health. In addition, there is a need for more tree planting and a tree canopy replacement program to ensure that the parks continue to have a healthy tree canopy that provides shade for future generations. There is also a need to provide shade structures or canopies in parks, where additional shade is needed. As part of the cooling infrastructure in parks, water fountains/hydration stations are needed, at least one in every park.
- **Community disaster response.** Element 9 of St. Helena's General Plan includes implementing action PS6.A, to maintain and periodically update the city's Emergency Response Plan. When that update happens, St. Helena's parks should be considered for their potential or future potential to serve as cooling centers, resilience hubs, or staging areas for emergency response.



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Park Needs & Gaps

Parkland Quantity

St. Helena's developed park inventory is summarized in the sidebar to the right, organized by park classification. For more information, see the *Existing Conditions Report* (August 2025), which defines the classification system, documents the existing park inventory and provides information about the planning context.

As this table shows St. Helena's developed parks (not including designated open space lands) total 26.98 acres. This translates to 5.01 park acres per 1,000 residents, based on the city population of 5,378. The maximum a city can require under California's Quimby Act, which regulates subdivision park land dedications, is 5.0 acres per 1,000. General Plan Policy PRT.1 supports maintaining 5.0 acres per 1,000 as the baseline and supports a higher level of service if feasible.

This means that each existing site and the acreage it contributes is important to maintaining the desired ratio of park land to population in St. Helena. If a site goes away or is repurposed for another use, the acreage needs to be replaced in order to sustain the desired baseline level of service.

Park Distribution and Access

In 2017, the 10-Minute Walk Campaign was launched by the Trust for Public Land (TPL), Urban Land Institute (ULI), and National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). Across the US, 300+ mayors have committed to the vision that everyone in U.S. cities should have access to a quality park within a 10-minute walk of their home, focusing on quality and distribution rather than simply the quantity or acres of parkland.

To support the 10-minute walk campaign, TPL has created the ParkServe mapping platform, the most comprehensive database of U.S. parks. Using the database, TPL has created a user-friendly tool to map a 10-minute walk, estimated at a half mile, as a proxy for assessing the availability of close-to-home parks for each city, town, or village in its database. ParkServe (<https://www.tpl.org/parkserve>) provides a free, easy-to-use tool for St. Helena to track park access. TPL even provides a way for communities to provide updated park inventory data, which St. Helena could do in the future if new parks are added.

Table 1: St. Helena Parks

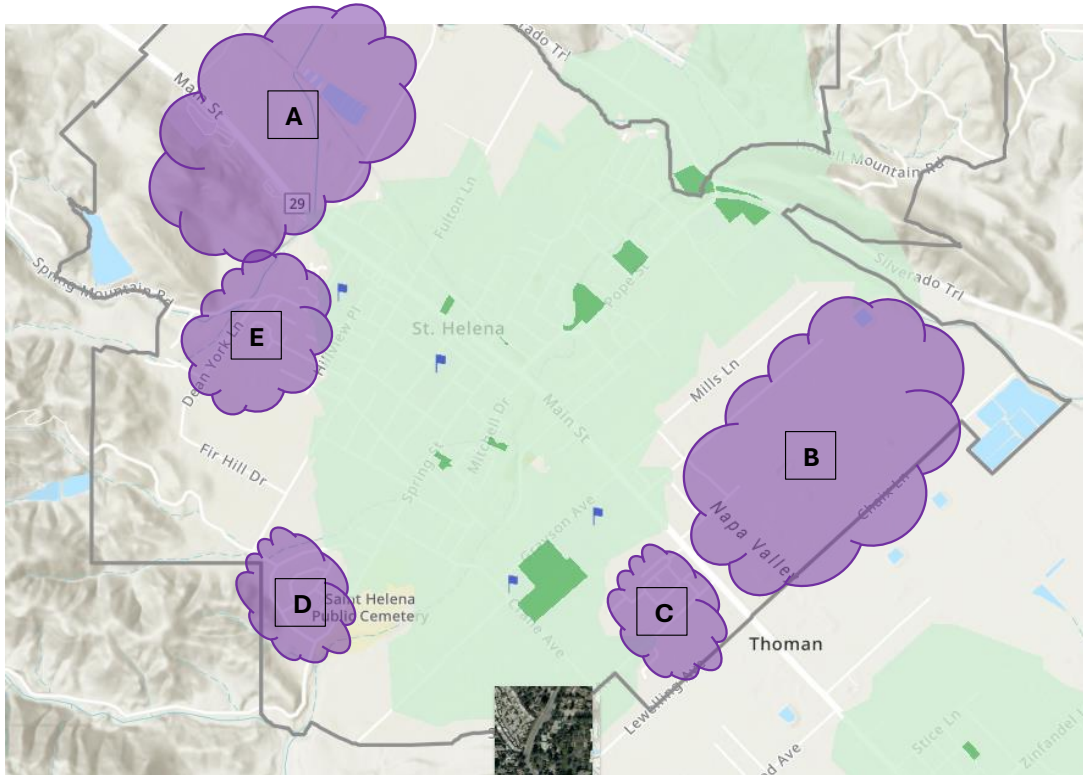
Local-serving Parks	Acreage
Lewis Station	0.13
Mary Fryer Park	0.84
Mennen Park	0.17
Starr Baldwin Park	0.76
Stephen C. McCullagh Park	0.14
Community-serving Parks	
Crane Park	11.27
Jacob Meily Park	5.42
Lyman Park	0.89
Wappo Park	5.32
Undeveloped Parks	
Hunt Ave Lot	0.36
Stone Bridge Park	0.75
Special Use Facilities	
Carnegie Building	0.13
Parks and Recreation Division Offices & Martial Arts Building	0.80
Total Acreage	26.98



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Figure 7 depicts the areas of St. Helena that have 10-minute walk park access shaded in light green, based on TPL's ParkServe dataset. The blue flags show the locations of public schools. The purple cloud areas are the areas within St. Helena that lack 10-minute walk access. Each is given a letter that corresponds to the discussion below.

Figure 7 - Screenshot of St. Helena's 10-Minute Walk Park Access, Using TPL's ParkServe



Overall, the distribution of park land is excellent in the core of St. Helena. Though ParkServe shows that the core area of St. Helena has parks within walking distance, it is important to recognize that this is theoretical access. The path of travel is not always conducive to walking. Crossing Highway 29 is a challenge – the highway is a barrier for walking, biking, and even driving to parks, especially at peak park use times. As noted in the Connecting the System discussion on, Safe Routes to Parks is a key need for all of St. Helena's parks.

Five areas of St. Helena lack 10-minute park access, as shown by the purple bubbles. Each of these areas is discussed below.

- **Areas A and B:** Area A (around Pratt Ave) and Area B (around Mills Lane) are both in areas with 20-Acre Agriculture or Winery zoning. There is no need for 10-minute walk access to parks in areas with these zoning designations. In the future, parks that serve the broader community could be located in these areas.



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- **Area C:** Area C is the Magnolia/El Bonita residential area, zoned for medium and high residential use. This neighborhood is in close proximity to Crane Park based on a linear distance. However, it lacks access due to the agricultural land between Area C and Crane Park. Residents of Area C can get to Crane Park using Sulphur Springs and Crane Avenue, but lack a more direct route. The Streets Master Plan is looking at two potential mobility improvements that would increase access to Crane Park for this area: a shared-use path from La Quinta to Crane Park and a Sulphur Springs/ Crane Ave Class 2 bikeway.
- **Area D:** Area D (Spring St./Sylvaner Ave.) is fully built out and is zoned for low-density residential. This area is adjacent to the St. Helena Public Cemetery and has views of land zoned Woodlands & Watershed and 20-Acre Agriculture to the west and south. The Access to Crane Park for this neighborhood would be improved by the proposed Sulphur Creek shared-use path. This corridor could potentially incorporate a parklet or park amenities such as benches and picnic areas, near Area D.
- **Area E:** This area (Hillcrest/Dean York Lane) is zoned for medium-density residential use and lacks walkable park access. Unlike Areas C and D, Area E is not close enough to other parks to allow pathway improvements to close the 10-minute walk gap. There are potential options to serve this area by adding a new park (such as developing a park at the reservoir on Spring Mountain Road), formalizing joint use agreements at the middle school or the Boys & Girls Club, or incorporating park amenities along the planned York Creek shared use path between Pratt Ave and Spring Mountain Road. Formally opening and recognizing the Adams-Pine pathway, described on p. 24 of the *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report*, would increase the access of residents in Area E to the Boys & Girls Club and other city parks and facilities located nearby.

Key Needs

- **Keeping up with population growth.** Willdan's 2023 *Development Impact Fee Update Study* projects St. Helena's 2040 population to be 6,600 people, an increase of 1,222. To maintain the current level of service of 5 acres per 1,000 population, St. Helena will need to add 6.12 acres of park land by 2040 if population growth projections are met.
- **The 10-minute walk.** Outside of WW and AG zoning areas, St. Helena provides 10-minute walk park access for most of the community. Addressing park access in the few gap areas (Areas C, D, and E) is a key need.
- **More engaging parks.** Except for Crane Park and Jacob Meily Park, there isn't much to do at many of the other parks, especially the smaller ones. Adding a greater variety of facilities and activities to existing parks is a key need in order to get the most out of existing sites and provide a good visitor experience.

The parks in the system have the capacity to incorporate more activities. The small size of many parks is a factor in where and which amenities and facilities can be provided. Many small-scale amenities and facilities would fit in even St. Helena's smallest parks, including options such as ping pong tables, corn hole, single bocce courts,



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spraygrounds, outdoor exercise equipment, climbing walls or climbable art pieces, and community gardens.

- **More social spaces, including shaded areas.** Most of St. Helena’s parks lack social space for meeting up with friends, relaxing outdoors with a small group or family members, or holding small events such as a birthday party. Most of the play areas don’t have seating nearby, and while there are picnic tables scattered around, there aren’t picnic areas. Overall, there is a lack of inviting seating areas and social areas that encourage people to linger in parks. These types of social spaces allow people to converse in small groups or find a place to relax, read, or people-watch. The seating outside the Carnegie Center is a good example of well-located social seating that is shaded by trees.

Throughout the park system, there is a need for more seating areas, including benches, seat walls, “plop” seating; small gathering areas with shade, such as picnic shelters and plaza spaces; and “social seating” where seating allows people to converse. The casual games discussed above (ping pong, corn hole, etc.) can be located near social spaces to further encourage use. Seating areas should include plenty of shaded options, whether the shade is provided by tree canopy or a structure. Almost 20% of survey respondents said not having enough shade was a barrier to using parks and recreation facilities more frequently.

- **Nature in developed parks.** There are opportunities to increase habitat and nature in most of St. Helena’s developed parks, such as planting more large canopy trees and clusters of trees, adding more understory plantings and richer planting palettes, replacement of turf with ecolawn, and adding pollinator plantings.
- **Linear Park and/or Nature Park classifications.** St. Helena has some undeveloped properties included in the park inventory (Hunt Ave and Stone Bridge) and other city-owned properties that are used for recreation but are not included in the city’s park inventory. One such property contains the heavily used walking path that starts at Adams Street and continues to the Napa River. If potential future shared-use pathways along St. Helena’s creeks and the Napa River include property acquisition, these properties should be designated as park land and will need a classification that suits their function and intended use.
 - Linear Park definition: *A linear park is longer than it is wide, connects areas, and typically includes a path that follows a linear feature, such as a river, creek, or utility right-of-way.*
 - Nature Park (or Natural Area) definition: *Nature parks are properties set aside to preserve natural resources or features, remnant landscapes, or scenic resources/views. Low-impact recreation or facilities may be provided at these sites, as long as the primary conservation objective is maintained.*



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Trail Needs & Gaps

Public engagement results highlighted trails as a priority need for the community. The top three reasons for using trails in St. Helena are for exercise (79% of survey respondents), getting around town (51% of respondents), and dog walking (34% of respondents).

For the purposes of St. Helena's *PRT Master Plan*, the federal definition of a recreational trail (23 U.S.C. 206) will guide the scope. This definition states:

The term 'recreational trail' means a thoroughfare or track across land or snow, used for recreational purposes such as—

- *pedestrian activities, including wheelchair use;*
- *skating or skateboarding;*
- *equestrian activities, including carriage driving;*
- *nonmotorized snow trail activities, including skiing;*
- *bicycling or use of other human-powered vehicles;*
- *aquatic or water activities; and*
- *motorized vehicular activities, including all-terrain vehicle riding, motorcycling, snowmobiling, use of off-road light trucks, or use of other off-road motorized vehicles.*

This means that while St. Helena's vehicular, bike, and pedestrian transportation networks are important to providing access to parks and facilities, these systems are not the subject of the trails component of the *PRT Master Plan*. The *Streets Master Plan* (currently under development) addresses these on-street networks (sidewalks, bike lanes, bike boulevards, street crossings), as well as "shared use paths" that also function as recreational trails.

The 2022 *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report* contains detailed recommendations for recreational trails in St. Helena, with a primary focus on trails that can be developed on existing public land. Specific recommendations from this document are referenced in this and other sections.

There are several types of recreational trails that contribute to St. Helena's system:

- The Napa Valley Vine Trail is the one **regional trail** that passes through St. Helena. The nonprofit Napa Valley Vine Trail Coalition and the Napa Valley Transportation Authority are the two entities responsible for the design, construction, and management of the Vine Trail. St. Helena does not have any regional trails itself, though the Vine Trail is an important recreation resource for the community and for visitors.
- The Streets Master Plan defines and provides proposed routes for **Shared Use Paths**, also known as **Class 1 Bikeways**. These are intended for bicycle and pedestrian use.
- **Park pathways** are circulation routes in parks. Some park pathways may be part of a designated recreational trail loop.



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- **Recreational trails** are designated routes. These may be in a park, on a publicly owned property or right-of-way, or in an open space property. They may be designated for single use, such as hiking/walking only, or for multiple use (walking and biking), and may be natural surface or paved.

Key Needs

- **Looped recreational trails in parks.** St. Helena's parks should have looped trails that support walking for exercise in parks. These routes should include measured distances. They could be a separate trail if the park is large enough, or could use park pathways for all or part of the loop. In addition, on-street pedestrian infrastructure could be used to complete loops or add to the distance.
 - Wappo, Crane, and Meily Parks are large enough to have a looped trail within the park.
 - St. Helena's smaller parks can be connected by loops that use on-street infrastructure to connect clusters of small parks or to loop out and back to a small site.
- **Recreational trails on city properties.** Community members would like more opportunities for exercise, including walking, running, and biking, with dogs if possible. To meet this demand, St. Helena needs designated recreational trails with longer distances, offering loop options where possible. The *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report* includes several key routes that would meet these needs, including:
 - **Formalizing and adding amenities to the Napa River Walk Loop** (the route that begins at Adams and extends to the Napa River).
 - **Developing a natural surface trail at the reservoir**, extending to a loop in the future if possible. In addition, incorporating the **Bell Canyon loop** as a hiking trail, as described in the *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report*.
 - Formalizing the **walking loop around the water treatment plant**, called the Valley Floor Walk, and described on p. 32 of the *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report*.
- **Shared use paths or recreational trails along the Napa River, Sulphur Creek, and York Creek.** Both the *Streets Master Plan* and *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report* have identified routes along the river and creek. These are important facilities to provide opportunities to experience nature as well as exercise.



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Recreation Facility Needs & Gaps

Table 2 shows recreation facilities either provided by St. Helena or that came up in the engagement process or trends analysis, St. Helena's inventory, the percentage of park agencies across the US that offer the facility in their system based on Park Metrics data, and whether another organization in St. Helena provides the facility.

Table 2: St. Helena Recreation Facilities Analysis

Recreation Facilities	Parks & Rec Division Facility Count	% of US Agencies Offering ⁴	Other St. Helena Provider Offering
Outdoor basketball courts	0	85%	Y
Diamond sports field (baseball, softball, T-ball)	2	80%	Y
Rectangular sports field (soccer, lacrosse)	1	77%	Y
Bocce courts	8	(not tracked)	N
Pickleball courts	4	45%	N
Tennis courts	5	74%	Y
Volleyball court	1	41%	N
Skate park	1	47%	N
Pump track/bike skills course	0	(not tracked)	N
Dog park	1	70%	N
Community garden	1 site, 22 plots	54%	N
Fitness zones (outdoor gym)	0	39%	N
Disc golf course	0	35%	N
Splash pads	0	38%	N
Outdoor swimming pool	0	49%	Y
Playgrounds	6 sites	94%	Y
Recreation center (w/ gym)	0	63%	Y (gym)
Community center	0	60%	N
Teen center	0	11%	N
Senior center	0	41%	Y
Arts center	0	(not tracked)	Y

⁴ 2025 NRPA Agency Performance Review



City of St. Helena

Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

In 2019, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)'s Research Director noted that the *NRPA Areas and Facilities Standards* publication had not been updated in more than two decades and would never again be updated because the organization recognized that there is not a single set of standards for parks and recreation. NRPA launched *Park Metrics* as a benchmarking tool to allow comparisons to other agencies, with the guidance that agencies should tailor their offerings and standards to their specific community.

Table 2 shows recreation facilities either provided by St. Helena or that came up in the engagement process or trends analysis, St. Helena's inventory, the percentage of park agencies across the US that offer the facility in their system based on Park Metrics data, and whether another organization in St. Helena provides the facility.

While St. Helena does not have a designated community center, it does have the Carnegie Building, which serves some of the functions that a community center does in providing meeting and classroom space.

In addition to St. Helena's facilities, there are also recreation facilities provided by the school district, including sports fields, sports courts, a theatre, and an outdoor swimming pool, as documented in the Existing Conditions Report. These other facilities are important to consider when evaluating needs.

Currently, most recreation facilities are concentrated at Crane Park, which is located at the southern end of town. Jacob Meily Park has another cluster of facilities. St. Helena has grouped many of its sports facilities into complexes. While sports fields and tennis court groupings are fairly common, pickleball and bocce complexes are rarer, especially in small city park systems. As Table 2 shows, NRPA doesn't even track bocce courts at this time.

Nationally, for sports requiring special facilities, the highest participation sports are basketball and tennis. Skateboarding has had steady growth, and both skateboarding and pickleball have experienced significant growth post-COVID. It's important to remember that, regardless of its participation level or growth in popularity, any sports activity is only pursued by a portion of the population. For example, only about 9% of the US population plays basketball, the highest participation field or court sport.

Like the rest of the US, people in St. Helena participate in a wide variety of recreation activities. However, because the city has a relatively small population and operating resources, it is challenging for the park system to provide dedicated facilities for all potential recreation pursuits. The facility needs identified below factor in St. Helena's existing inventory and the need for balance and variety in the system.

Key Needs

- **Distribution of recreation facilities throughout the park system.** Rather than adding new facilities to Crane Park as the default solution, St. Helena should prioritize new facilities at other sites. Jacob Meilly and Wappo Park should be prioritized for new facilities with community-wide draw if they are compatible with the site. Lyman Park should be prioritized for facilities that will engage visitors and residents and encourage them to spend time downtown, such as an interactive fountain, a destination playground, a café, or games such as ping pong and cornhole. By distributing facilities



City of St. Helena

Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

at parks throughout the system, St. Helena can improve the visitor experience, ensure that all parts of town have facilities nearby (not just park land) and provide more balanced park use/wear and tear.

- **Health and fitness facilities in parks.** St. Helena residents expressed interest in more health and fitness opportunities in the park system, which can be supported with both facilities and recreation programming. Examples of facilities that can help support health and fitness include outdoor gyms, outdoor classroom space suitable for fitness classes and walking/running loops with measured distances. These health and fitness facilities generally have small footprints and can be fit into St. Helena's parks easily.
- **More engaging playgrounds.** St. Helena's playgrounds at Crane and Jacob Meily Parks are larger, more engaging facilities, located under or near a tree canopy that provides shade. The other playgrounds tend to be small, manufactured post and platform structures with minimal play value. The playgrounds in the park system should offer different types of play experiences, including options such as a nature playground, themed destination play area, and features such as net climbers, disc swings, and spinners, in addition to traditional play structures. As playgrounds age and require replacement, they should be replaced with more interesting playgrounds. Lyman Park in particular, should have a large, signature play area that incorporates art as a focal point located in downtown.
- **Additional outdoor facilities in parks.** St. Helena has a variety of outdoor facilities in its system already, but there is a need for additional facilities based on public feedback, trends, and benchmarking. St. Helena should consider the following additions:
 - **Additional dog park.** The existing dog park is an excellent facility. It offers a more expansive type of dog park, is located on the edge of town with little visibility, and is sited to require a walk and thus a longer time commitment. It also does not have a small dog area. A smaller second dog park, potentially with a small dog focus, closer to central St. Helena in a visible, walkable location, would serve both residents and visitors and allow for quick visits.
 - **At least one additional community garden site.** The community garden at Jacob Meily Park is fully subscribed. One or more community garden sites on the other side of St. Helena, preferably near higher-density residential areas, is preferable to adding more plots at the existing community garden.
 - **An interactive fountain or sprayground.** An interactive fountain like the one shown in the image to the right can be designed to serve as a plaza space when the water is turned off. With St. Helena's hot summers, an interactive fountain offers the opportunity to cool off and play in the water without the need for lifeguards, since there





City of St. Helena

Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

is no standing water. This type of facility attracts a lot of use, so it should be located in a community-serving or special-use park that has a restroom. It isn't suitable for a local-serving park.

- Recreation **facilities that expand the variety of options** in St. Helena's park system. Options include a basketball court (potentially with a combination goal that allows for futsal and roller hockey), a pump track or bicycle skills course, an outdoor gym (as previously discussed), and, if a suitable location can be identified, a disc golf course (9- or 18-hole).



- **Programmable indoor space.** St. Helena has several indoor spaces, but does not have any specifically designed for programming. The martial arts studio in the converted garage at the Parks & Recreation Office will need to be replaced, as will the office space when the property is sold. The aging Head Start Building in Crane Park no longer has functional restrooms, although the space is still used for day camps and children's programming. This structure should be replaced due to its poor condition, but the site is not large enough for a full-service community center.

As a former library, the Carnegie Building offers the most potential for programming. However, the building is not flexible and is currently only suitable for certain types of programming (quieter programs, smaller classes, meetings). It is suitable for a limited set of programs and for events. It may be best used as a specialty facility. An example of a repurposed Carnegie library is The Dalles Arts Center, used for arts programs and gallery space in a small city of 15,000 residents in Oregon. It is operated by a nonprofit. Other communities have adapted former Carnegie libraries into event spaces, such as Snohomish, WA (population 10,000).

The School District has a large theater at the high school and indoor gyms at sites around St. Helena. These public resources are important to consider in the overall supply of recreation facilities in St. Helena, though the availability varies, and access can be challenging.

Even considering other public facilities, existing indoor spaces are inadequate for St. Helena's programming needs. There is a need for a community or recreation center, or at a minimum, a flexible-use building that is climate-controlled and usable for a variety of indoor activities.

- **Event space.** Event centers/pavilions are facilities or areas that can accommodate large group gatherings, from weddings to family reunions to competitions. They are rental spaces and may be an enclosed building or simply be an outdoor area with upgraded utilities designed to hold tents and booths. Event center buildings are often connected to the outdoors with roll-up or sliding doors and exterior patio space. In



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

some cases, they may be converted from other uses, such as a barn or other agricultural building. Event spaces can be revenue generators for Parks & Recreation, and they fill a need for gathering space in St. Helena. If designed properly, even spaces can also provide recreation programming space. Planning an event space should include a financial feasibility study and business plan, which will consider the types of events and facilities required. There are many examples of successful event spaces in other communities that can serve as case studies for St. Helena. Three approaches are shown below

Large Capacity Picnic Shelter in a Scenic Setting



There are many examples throughout the region of large picnic shelters, suitable for parties and events, including weddings. These shelters can also serve as space for programming during weekdays, such as day camps, teen programs, and arts classes.

Repurposed Existing Facility



The Stein-Boozier Barn in Wilsonville, Oregon is an example of an historic barn in a park that was stabilized and repurposed as a site for events and programs. Restrooms are available in the park. This type of approach might be suitable for the historic Signorelli Barn.

New Facility in an Existing Park



The Pioneer Park Pavilion was built in downtown Puyallup, WA's downtown park. It is a flexible-use pavilion with roll-up doors, used for the weekly farmers market, for community events, and as a revenue-generating wedding venue. A flexible-use building could replace the Head Start building, since there isn't space for a full-service community center.



City of St. Helena

Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Recreation Programming Needs & Gaps

The St. Helena Parks and Recreation Division operates its recreation programs, including youth and adult sports, rentals, and summer camps. The city does not have its own aquatics facility or theater. The St. Helena School District offers public access to the pool and programs, with programming run by a private company, and has a performing arts center at the high school. Additional detail on recreation programming providers in St. Helena, including participation in City programs, is available in the *Existing Conditions Report*.

Table 3 (on the next page) identifies recreation program areas either offered in St. Helena (by the city or another provider) or identified as needed through public engagement. For each program area, the table identifies the level of programming offered by the City in that area, the percent of US parks agencies offering the program area, and whether another entity in St. Helena offers programming. All programming is provided by the Parks & Recreation Division.

From public engagement results, 38.25 percent of respondents said that the department does not meet their needs with its arts, history, and culture programming. Since NRPA breaks this into several categories, Table 3 lists visual arts, performing arts, cultural crafts, and natural and cultural history on individual rows. In addition, public engagement indicated a strong desire for more events and more aquatics programming, especially swimming lessons.

There are three roles for the city in providing recreation programming:

- **Direct** program provision means designing and implementing recreation programs using in-house staff (permanent, part-time, or seasonal).
- **Contract** program provision means recruiting and managing contract instructors to provide programs at a park or recreation facility, and participants register through the city's system.
- Program **coordination** means providing information about programs provided by others (that may use City facilities), with registration occurring through the provider's system (e.g., Waves Aquatics, St. Helena Little League)

Key Needs

The availability of facilities is a limiting factor in the programming that St. Helena can offer, especially in the near and medium term. The needs discussed below are focused on programming that is feasible with the parks and facilities currently available.

- **Sustaining existing programming.** St. Helena's existing programs are very popular and well-attended. These should continue, with special events, sports, and summer camps, St. Helena's core program areas.
- **Additional special events programming.** There is significant interest in additional special events. The drop-in nature, multigenerational appeal, and community-building nature of the existing special events make these programs very popular in St. Helena. Additional events that are replicable multiple times (like the concert series) should be added, rather than additional once-a-year themed events like Harvest Fest or 4th of July. Examples of these types of events include movies in the park, food cart nights, and social dances in the parks.



City of St. Helena

Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

- **Expanded fitness/health and wellness programming options.** Current offerings use contracted teachers, an efficient way of providing additional programming. The Park & Recreation Division could recruit additional fitness and health programming that can make use of existing parks and spaces, with a focus on expanding the available options and providing opportunities for social connections.
 - Recruiting teachers to offer fitness classes in parks – yoga, tai chi, boot camp, Zumba, etc. would expand opportunities using available facilities.
 - Another area to consider is walking as a recreation program, where the Division organizes walking groups or publishes self-directed walking routes. This is discussed on p. 7 in *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report (2022)*.
- **Programming collaboration with the Library Division.** With the Library and Parks & Recreation both being City services, there are many opportunities to collaborate on programming, especially on cultural and literary arts programs. Existing library programs could potentially be scheduled into parks, such as story time or book clubs in parks. Existing parks programs could be brought to the library, or new programs could be jointly developed that draw from the strengths and capacities of both divisions, such as lectures or walking tours themed to local topics.
- **More access to aquatics programs.** The School District owns the outdoor swimming pool and has a contracted operator that offers aquatics programming, including swim lessons and open swim. The Parks & Recreation Division is able to offer an aquatics exercise class with a contracted teacher, but does not have access to additional pool time. Community feedback indicated there is a need for more aquatics programming, including swimming lessons. There is a need to advocate to the School District for more aquatics programming, swimming lessons, and additional scholarships or low-cost programming.
- **More comprehensive information about existing programming.** There are many organizations providing recreation in St. Helena, as documented in the Existing Conditions Report. The Parks & Recreation website lists some of these other providers, but the information is on different webpages (e.g., aquatics on one page, community resources that include helpful links to a mix of facilities and organizations on another). There isn't a page with listings by program type, such as arts programs, senior programs, community gardens, sports programs, which would make it easier for community members to find programming they are interested in.
- **Increased volunteer opportunities through a formal program.** According to AmeriCorps' Civic Engagement and Volunteering database, 23% of Californians volunteered time in formal programs, and 43% do charitable giving. The volunteer program is relatively new and has room to grow by providing more opportunities in a wider range of interest areas, including park stewardship, as well as volunteering in programs.



City of St. Helena

Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Table 3: St. Helena Recreation Programs Analysis

Recreation Program Area	City Programming Level ⁵	City Programming Role	% of US Agencies Offering ⁶	Other St. Helena Provider Offering
Special events	H	Direct	91% (themed), 88% (social)	N
Summer camps	H	Direct	83%	Y
Sports and sports leagues	H	Direct	86% (team sports), 76% (individual sports), 76% (racquet sports)	Y
Fitness classes	M	Contract	82% (fitness classes), 57% (martial arts)	Y
Aquatics	L	Contract	68%	Y
Volunteering	L	Direct	not tracked	Y
Visual arts	-	-	65%	Y
Performing arts	-	-	64%	Y
Cultural crafts	-	-	67%	Y
Natural and cultural history	-	-	70%	N
Health and wellness education	-	-	82%	N
Specific teen programs	-	-	68%	N
Specific older adult programs	-	-	77%	Y

⁵ Ratings: -- (none), L (low), M (medium), H (high)

⁶ 2025 NRPA Agency Performance Review

City of St. Helena

Parks, Recreation, & Trails Master Plan

Executive Summary



Community Inspired



The long-range Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan (PRT Plan) is St. Helena's first standalone guiding document for the parks, recreation and trails system and is an implementation document for the 2019 St. Helena General Plan. From Spring 2025 through February 2026, this planning process engaged community voices in multiple ways, through every phase. With input from a specially convened Advisory Group, the Parks and Recreation Commission, local organizations and the broader community of residents and visitors, this plan is community inspired.

See Chapter 1 for more details on the engagement process.

"Designated walks with signage, improved sidewalks, advertised routes, more benches."

(Survey Respondent)

99% of residents feel parks, recreation and trails are important to quality of life.

(All Survey Respondents)

**Top 3 priorities:
Community park renovations,
river access,
activating public areas**

(211 Harvest Festival and Online Budgeting Exercise Respondents)

"Ongoing maintenance to make and keep our parks in beautiful shape..."

(Survey Respondent)

"Create a community space that can be used by the citizens and rented to generate revenue."

(Survey Respondent)

"Let's make sure we can afford what we have and maintain it for the future."

(Survey Respondent)

"Be sure seniors are included in the plans!"

(Survey Respondent)

"Programming needs to be affordable for St. Helena residents—like Calistoga. Cooperate with other public or community entities on indoor spaces."

(Survey Respondent)

"Please address existing facilities first."

(Survey Respondent)

Addressing Critical Needs



The approach to assessing needs for St. Helena incorporated multiple layers and criteria, including community insights, benchmarking and technical analysis, with input from the advisory group and Parks and Recreation Commission.

Review the Master Plan appendices if you're interested in the technical reports.

**Inconsistent
investment in parks
and programs
across the City**

**Lack of park activation
and thoughtful design
and amenities to
interest people**

**No cohesive approach
to how to leverage
parks for the
community, visitors, or
economic development**

**Insufficient flexibility,
agility and adaptability
to meet needs**

**Limited staff capacity
to meet community
expectations for
service levels or
maintenance**

**Current finances limit
the ability to capture
opportunity and
focus investments
effectively**

Master Plan Vision & Goals



The PRT vision describes how St. Helena's parks, recreation, and trails system will contribute to the General Plan vision. Drawing inspiration from community engagement and the city's existing parks and recreation assets, the vision describes the aspiration or big idea for the parks, recreation, and trails system in St. Helena and the outcomes it will provide for the community.

The goals describe outcomes and reflect the aspirations expressed in the vision. The goals provide a framework and define what is to be achieved. Chapter 2 includes systemwide policies that provide strategic direction for each goal.

Vision

St. Helena parks, programs, and trails make life better for all by enlivening the community, supporting healthy people and parks, and providing active and connected public places.

Goals



Big Ideas for a Thriving City



Six big ideas will bring St. Helena's PRT vision to reality. Chapter 3 provides further detail on these big ideas.

Connect the system



**Celebrate and integrate
nature, culture, and art**



**Create welcoming event
and activity spaces**



St. Helena Downtown Parks Strategy



**Catalyze downtown with
park enhancements
and programs**



**Embrace the creeks
and Napa River**

**Develop an indoor
clubhouse to bring the
community together**



A Comprehensive System

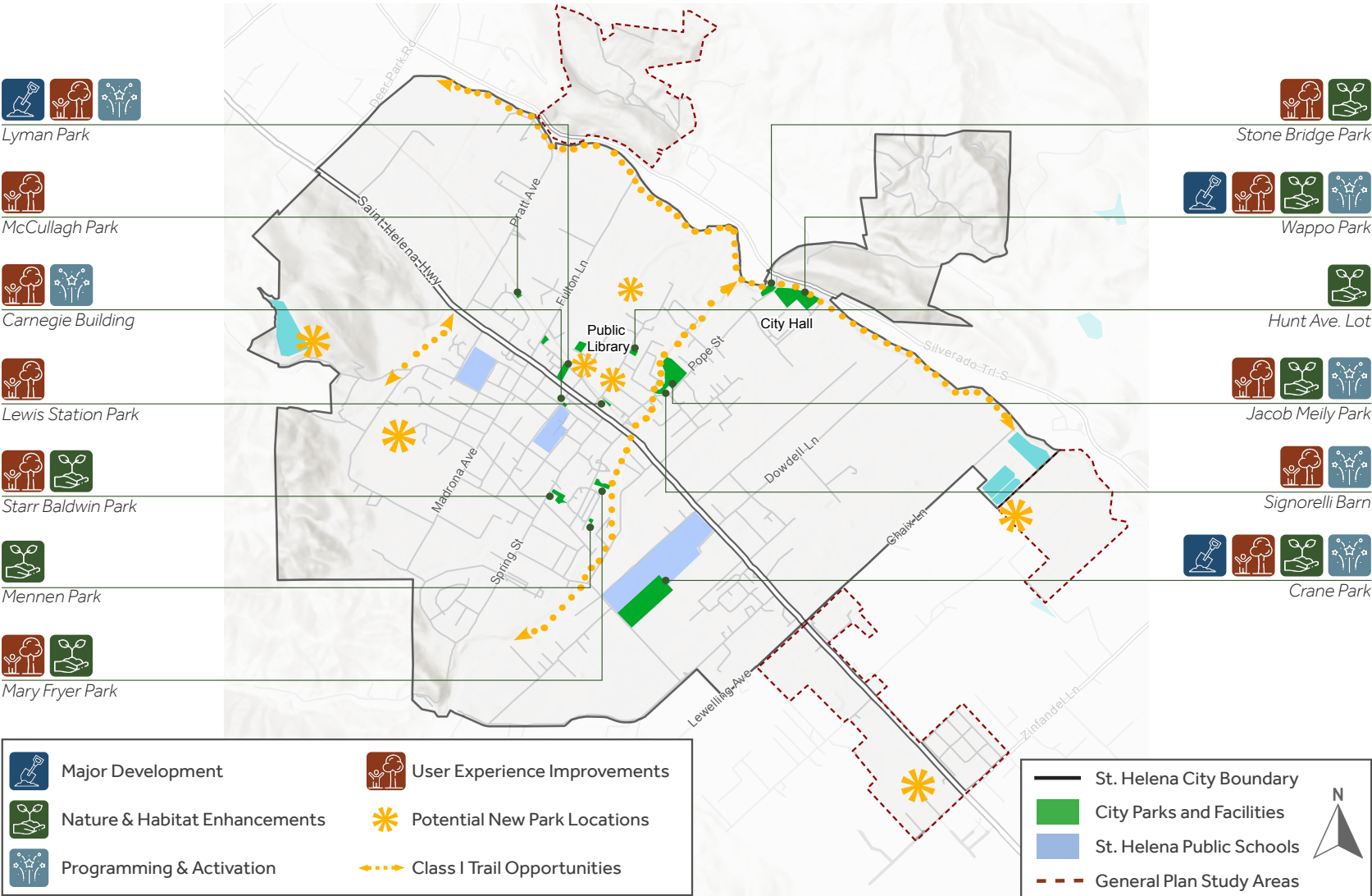


The Citywide Park System Concept diagram shows recommended improvements and additions to St. Helena's park system, in four project types. As this graphic shows, the future park system invests in existing parks and makes strategic additions to meet key needs, bring the vision and goals to life, and advance the big ideas.

The concept diagram is aspirational, representing a 15- to 20-year plan for St. Helena. Implementation depends on available funding, staff capacity, volunteer efforts, and partnerships (or collaborations).

See Chapter 3 for details on recommendations for each existing site and the proposed new additions.

Citywide Park System Concept



Acknowledgments

Thank you to the numerous St. Helena residents and visitors who participated in this planning process, sharing their time, insights and love of parks and recreation. Without your voices, we could not have developed this plan.

Parks and Recreation Commission

Doug Boesch, Chair
John Thompson, Vice Chair
Stephanie Smithers
Julie Jenanyan
Denise Nelson

Parks, Recreation, and Trails Advisory Group

Jim Anderson
Courtney Andrain
Amy Barak
Kathy Carrick
Amy Cheng
Norma Ferriz
Donna Hinds
Lucy Hoffmeister
Clara Ibarra
Julie Jenanyan
Ewan Oliver
Brent Randol
Marcela Rodriguez
Pam Smithers

City Council

Paul Dohring, Mayor
Michelle Deasy, Vice Mayor
Aaron Barak
Kate Spadarotto
Billy Summers

City of St. Helena Project Management Team

Mara Strickler
Ashley Sylvester

Special Thanks

The Community Services Department thanks all the City staff who contributed to the PRT Plan, especially the City Manager and Public Works Department, as well as the partners who participated, including the St. Helena School District, St. Helena High School Interact Club, St. Helena Historical Society, St. Helena Chamber of Commerce, UpValley Family Center and Rianda House.

Consultants

BluePoint Planning
Donna Legge

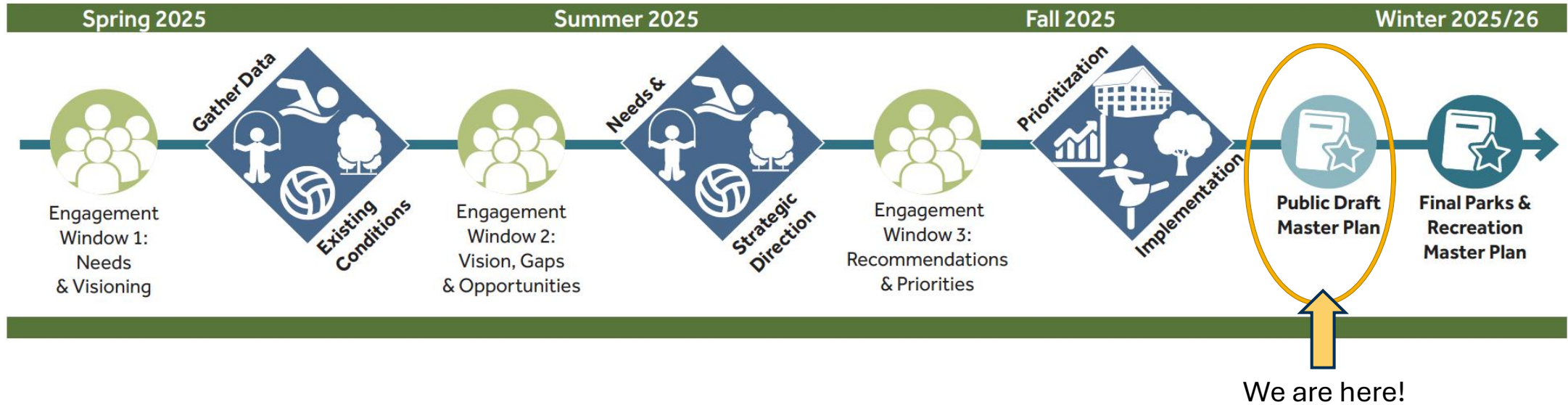


St. Helena Parks, Recreation, & Trails Master Plan

**Parks & Recreation Commission
March 16, 2026**



PLANNING PROCESS



Parks
Make
Life
Better!



COMMUNITY INSPIRED

“Let’s make sure we can afford what we have and maintain it for the future.”

“Designated walks with signage, improved sidewalks, advertised routes, more benches.”

“Please address existing facilities first.”

“Be sure seniors are included in the plans!”

99% of residents feel parks, recreation and trails are important to quality of life.

Top 3 priorities:
Community park renovations,
river access,
activating public areas

“Create a community space that can be used by the citizens and rented to generate revenue.”

“Ongoing maintenance to make and keep our parks in beautiful shape...”

**Parks
Make
Life
Better!**



ADDRESSING CRITICAL NEEDS

Inconsistent investment in parks and programs across the City

Lack of park activation and thoughtful design and amenities to interest people

No cohesive approach to how to leverage parks for the community, visitors, or economic development

Insufficient flexibility, agility and adaptability to meet needs

Limited staff capacity to meet community expectations for service levels or maintenance

Current finances limit the ability to capture opportunity and focus investments effectively

**Parks
Make
Life
Better!**



VISION FOR ST. HELENA PARKS

St. Helena parks, programs, and trails make life better for all by enlivening the community, supporting healthy people and parks, and providing active and connected public places.



PARKS, RECREATION & TRAILS MASTER PLAN GOALS

A. Connections

Establish a dynamic, welcoming, and safe parks and trails network, connecting people to each other and to the community.

Livability

Create an active, healthy, and socially vibrant city by activating parks with culture, recreation, and arts programming and events, responding to St. Helena's unique community character and identity.

C. Welcoming

Ensure that programs, services, and public spaces embrace and serve all users, highlighting inclusivity, belonging and cultural diversity.

D. Nature

Preserve land and cultivate healthy ecosystems to enhance community resilience and provide access to nature.

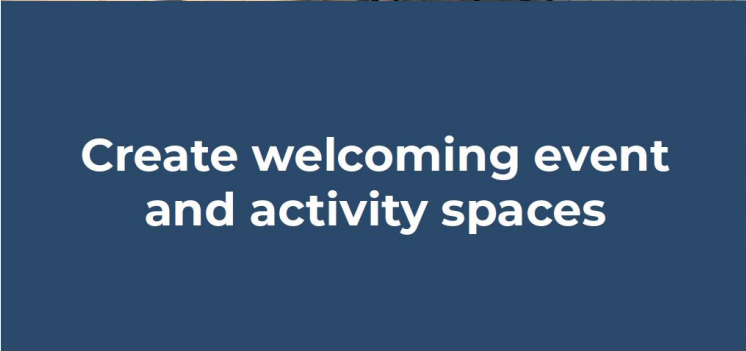
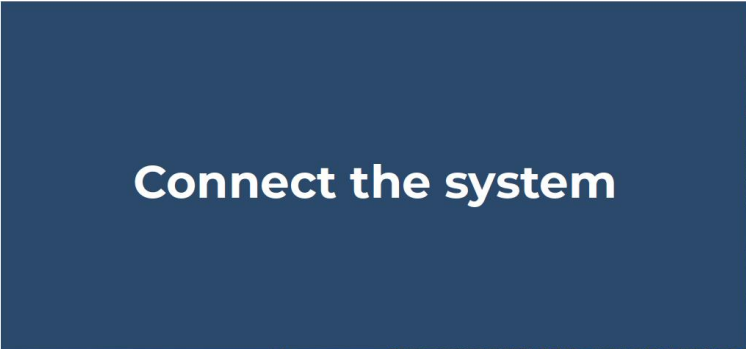
E. Partnerships

Leverage and foster lasting partnerships to expand collaboration, funding, services, recreation programming, and opportunities for the community.

F. Stewardship

Provide consistent and sustainable stewardship of parks and facilities through high-quality and efficient landscaping, maintenance, and operations.

**BIG IDEAS FOR A
THRIVING CITY**



BIG IDEAS FOR A THRIVING CITY

Catalyze downtown with park enhancements and programs



Embrace the creeks and Napa River

Develop an indoor clubhouse to bring the community together



DOWNTOWN PARKS STRATEGY

Revamp Lyman Park to better activate this Downtown Gateway and serve all users.

Ensure future development at old City Hall directly connects with Lyman Park.

Partner with Rianda House to support collaborative programming in Lyman Park.

Increase year round events, programming & activities at Lyman Park.

Establish outdoor park spaces at the Library to become more welcoming and engaging space.

Create clear pathways to key destinations and parks and green spaces throughout downtown.

Upgrade Lewis Station Park and implement strategic closures of Hunt Ave for Downtown events.

Implement wayfinding and pathways to link Downtown to parks.

Publicize the Historic Building Walk.

Increase use of Carnegie Building for regular programming.

Downtown Specific Plan Boundary

City Parks and Facilities

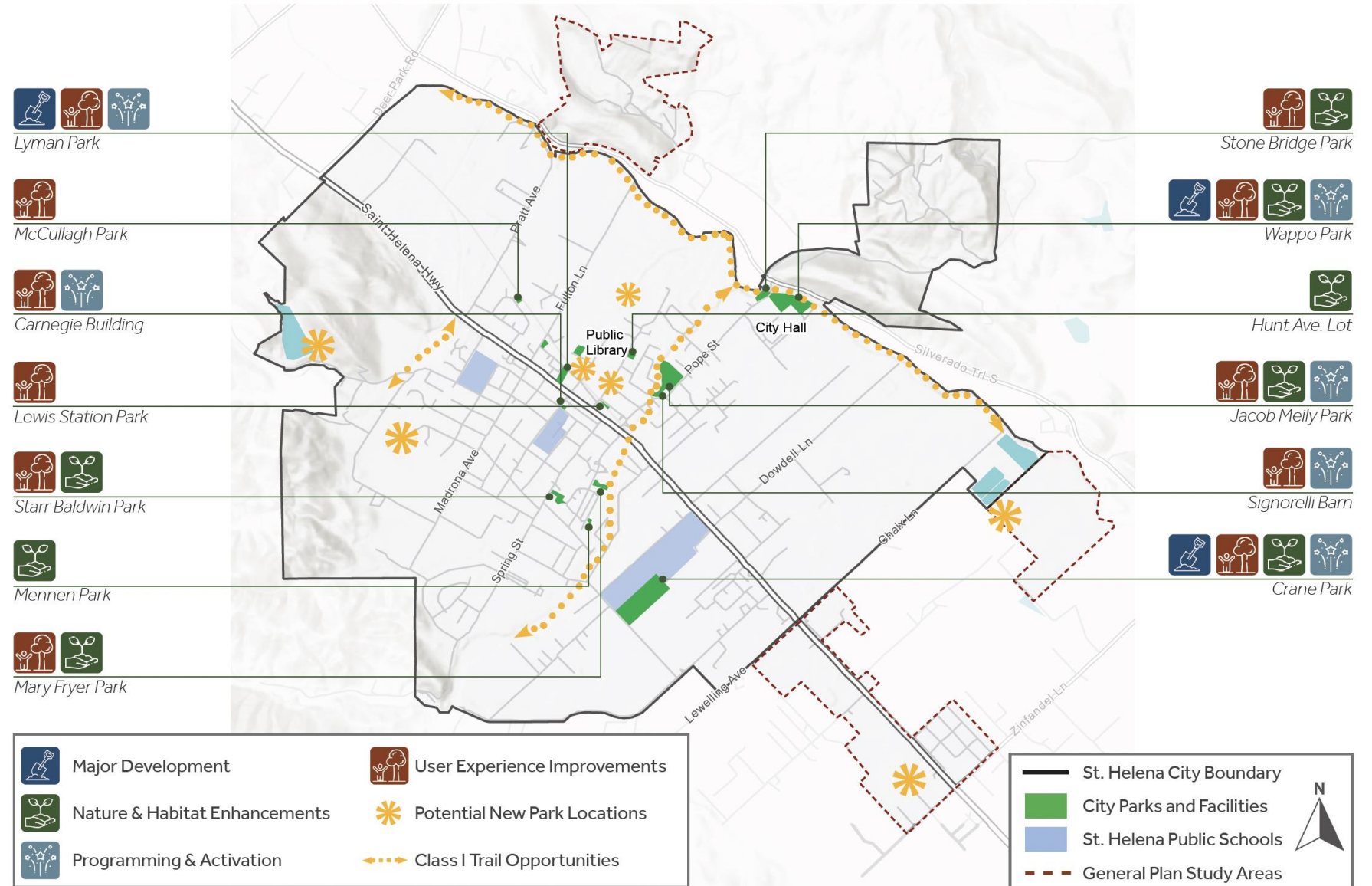
Napa Valley Vine Trail

Proposed Walking Routes

N



CITYWIDE PARK SYSTEM CONCEPT



Thank you!

Questions/Comments?





St. Helena Parks, Recreation, & Trails Master Plan

Parks & Recreation Commission
March 16, 2026



Parks & Recreation Department



Agenda Report to the City Council

Agenda Section: SCHEDULED MATTERS:

Department: Recreation

DATE:	March 16, 2026
FROM:	Mara Strickler, City Librarian
SUBJECT:	Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan Recommendation
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Provide feedback regarding key findings and final draft of the Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan. presented by BluePoint Planning.
PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:	On January 28, 2025, City Council voted to approve adoption of a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a Professional Services Agreement with BluePoint Planning for parks and recreation master planning services. On February 24, 2026, City Council voted to approve an extended schedule with BluPoint Planning for master planning services with additional cost of \$5,175
STATEMENT OF THE PURPOSE:	Receive final draft materials from BluePoint Planning related to the Parks, Recreation & Trails master planning services.
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	The total cost of the Master Plan approved by City Council is \$130,149. Any subsequent recommended projects undertaken by the City referred to in the Master Plan will be budgeted for separately.

BACKGROUND:

As a part of the adopted 2024-26 goals, City Council established the objective to complete a comprehensive Parks and Recreation master plan. The Parks & Recreation Commission expressed support for the plan and completion of the plan is established within the City Council's adopted 2024-2028 Capital Improvement Program.

Staff prepared and released a Request for Proposals to solicit responses from qualified firms in the Fall of 2024. The City received seven responses, all who met the minimum criteria and experience to provide parks and recreation master planning services. A review team consisting of Parks & Recreation staff, Public Works staff, and members from the Parks & Recreation Commission reviewed the submitted proposals. Firms were evaluated based on proposal response, firm expertise and project team composition, previous related work, ability to create a comprehensive and actionable plan unique to St. Helena, and overall price point.

After reviewing proposals, follow-up interviews, and reference checks, staff recommended and City Council voted to move forward with BluePoint Planning for Parks and Recreation Master Planning Services.

DISCUSSION:

The Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan is intended to evaluate existing conditions, identify unmet community needs, provide a strategy for development and maintenance of current/future parks, examine methods to improve parks and recreation programming, project future costs, and provide creative funding strategies, analyze service models, and consider opportunities for collaboration with other public and private entities. The scope of the work is broken down into five overarching components (listed below), with various sub-objectives within each component.

- Assess existing conditions, data collection, and review previous/current studies
- Conduct a community needs assessment
- Foster community engagement and feedback
- Develop recommendations, financial forecasts, and implementation/funding strategies
- Develop and propose adoption of an actionable final master plan

Foundational to the Master Plan is community participation program, which has included an Advisory Group, stakeholder interviews and group meetings, input from members of the Parks and Recreation Commission, internal staff work sessions, community visioning pop-ups at the Farmer's Market, the Summer Concert series and Harvest Festival, and two online surveys.

BluePoint Planning has completed all steps outlined in their original proposal, including an existing conditions assessment, community engagement activities, a needs assessment and development of a prioritization process and implementation plan. The presentation provided by BluePoint Planning will focus on the executive summary and key points of the of the Parks, Recreation, & Trails Master Plan. BluePoint Planning is scheduled to present the final Master Plan, including feedback from the Parks and Recreation Commission, to City Council, on March 24, 2026.

GOAL:

Goal 2: Improve Infrastructure & Further Environmental Sustainability

Goal 5: Enhance Quality of Life

Goal 7: Enhance Organizational Effectiveness

Goal 8: Implement Capital Improvement Plans (CIP) Projects Miscellaneous/Other

DOCUMENTS ATTACHMENTS:

[2.19.26 St. Helena Parks Master Plan](#)

[St. Helena Parks Master Plan appendices](#)

[2.19.26 St. Helena PRT Plan Exec Summary](#)

[3.16.26 St. Helena PRT Final PRC Meeting](#)

City of St. Helena

Parks, Recreation, & Trails Master Plan



Acknowledgments

Thank you to the numerous St. Helena residents and visitors who participated in this planning process, sharing their time, insights and love of parks and recreation. Without your voices, we could not have developed this plan.

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Ewan Oliver
Brent Randol
Marcela Rodriguez
Pam Smithers

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Aaron Barak
Kate Spadarotto
Billy Summers

City of St. Helena Project Management Team

Mara Strickler
Ashley Sylvester

Special Thanks

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1

Introduction





Chapter 1 Organization

Building on St. Helena's Assets highlights the existing parks and recreation system,.

PRT Planning Process provides an overview of the master plan planning process,.

Community Insights summarizes the engagement activities and themes from across the engagement.

Key Challenges and Needs identifies critical system needs and the resulting master plan vision and goals.

What Is the PRT Master Plan?

The Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan (PRT Master Plan) is a long-range plan that provides comprehensive direction for St. Helena's parks, recreation and trails system for the next 15 to 20 years. It is an implementing document for the St. Helena General Plan and is the primary reference to guide decisions by St. Helena staff, the Parks and Recreation Commission and City Council. It is also a resource for individual community members and partner organizations who are interested in contributing resources, time or expertise.

Building on St. Helena's Assets

The parks, recreation, and trails system is more than a collection of land, facilities and programs – these features define the fabric of the community and shape how people experience St. Helena.

Parks

St. Helena's 26+ designated park acres include parks of different sizes and classifications, distributed around the City as depicted in Figure 1. St. Helena's park system includes several historic resources, including the Carnegie Building, the Signorelli Barn, and the Lyman Park gazebo and historic fountain.

Recreation Facilities

Within the system, St. Helena offers a variety of recreation facilities, including sports fields, a pickleball court complex, a tennis court complex, a bocce complex, a large dog park, a skate park, a sand volleyball court, community gardens, and multiple playgrounds that vary in size and play value. Several parks have public restrooms. Most recreation facilities are concentrated at Crane Park with a smaller cluster of facilities at Jacob Meily Park.

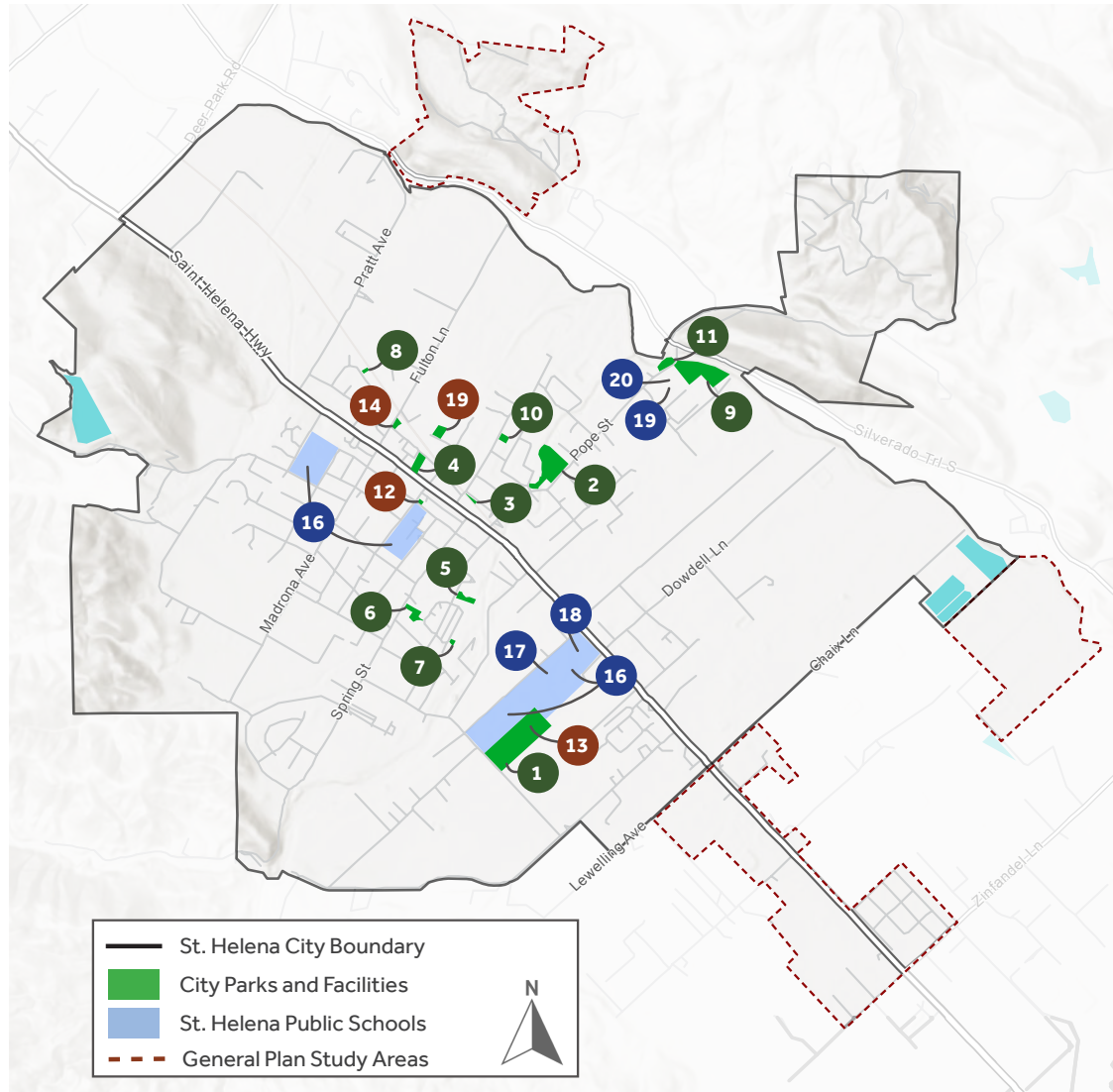
St. Helena does not have a designated community center, but it does have the Carnegie Building, which provides meeting and classroom



space and the Parks & Recreation Division Office and martial arts studio, on land that is slated to be sold or repurposed.

There are other recreation resources in St. Helena, as noted in the sidebar. While these facilities are not part of the park system, they are important assets with varying levels of public access. The School District offers the most facilities, including sports fields and sports courts at multiple sites and a theatre and an outdoor swimming pool at the high school.

St. Helena Park System



Community- and Local-serving Parks

1. Crane Park
2. Jacob Meily Park
3. Lewis Station Park
4. Lyman Park
5. Mary Fryer Park
6. Starr Baldwin Park
7. Mennen Park
8. McCullagh Park
9. Wappo Park

Undeveloped Parks

10. Hunt Avenue Lot
11. Stone Bridge Park

Community & Recreation Facilities

12. Carnegie Building
13. Head Start Building
14. Parks and Recreation Offices
15. St. Helena Public Library

Other Public Facilities

16. St. Helena Public Schools
17. Public School Aquatic Complex
18. Public Schools Performing Arts Center
19. St. Helena City Hall
20. Napa Valley College

Trails

Some of St. Helena’s parks have park pathways, but there are no formally developed trails in the park system. The regional Vine Trail passes through St. Helena, and the surrounding public lands offer hiking opportunities. In 2022, members of the Parks and Recreation Commission presented the Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report to the City Council. This report served as a key resource during the development of the PRT Master Plan, given the significant interest expressed by community members in more walking and biking opportunities, in the park system and within the city.

Natural Resources and Protected Land

The Napa River and its two tributaries, York Creek and Sulphur Creek, flow through St. Helena and are heavily dependent on seasonal rains for water flow. Several of St. Helena’s parks are adjacent to the creeks and river, including Wappo Park and Jacob Meily Park. However, there are no official water access points from any park to the river or creeks.

There are conservation easements on several properties in St. Helena, held by the Napa County Land Trust, including one on the undeveloped Hunt Ave. park site. The Public Works Department also owns several sites, including the reservoir and property near the Napa River, that aren’t currently considered part of the park system but that are used by local residents for walking and nature access.

St. Helena’s General Plan recognizes the natural areas surrounding the city as opportunities for preservation and conservation. Almost half the city’s area is designated as Agriculture (AG) land use designation, which allows agricultural and winery uses and affordable employee housing with limitations on single family residences and other uses. Another significant amount of land is designated Woodland and Watershed (WW) and only allows very low density residential development on large lots. These areas are located on the steep hillsides at the outer western and eastern edges of the city. The AG and WW lands ensure that the surrounding landscapes are protected, which also means that views to the hills from St. Helena’s existing parks are also protected.

Other Recreation Resources

- St. Helena Public Library
- St. Helena School District Facilities
- Boys & Girls Club
- Rianda House
- Nimbus Arts
- Native Sons Hall



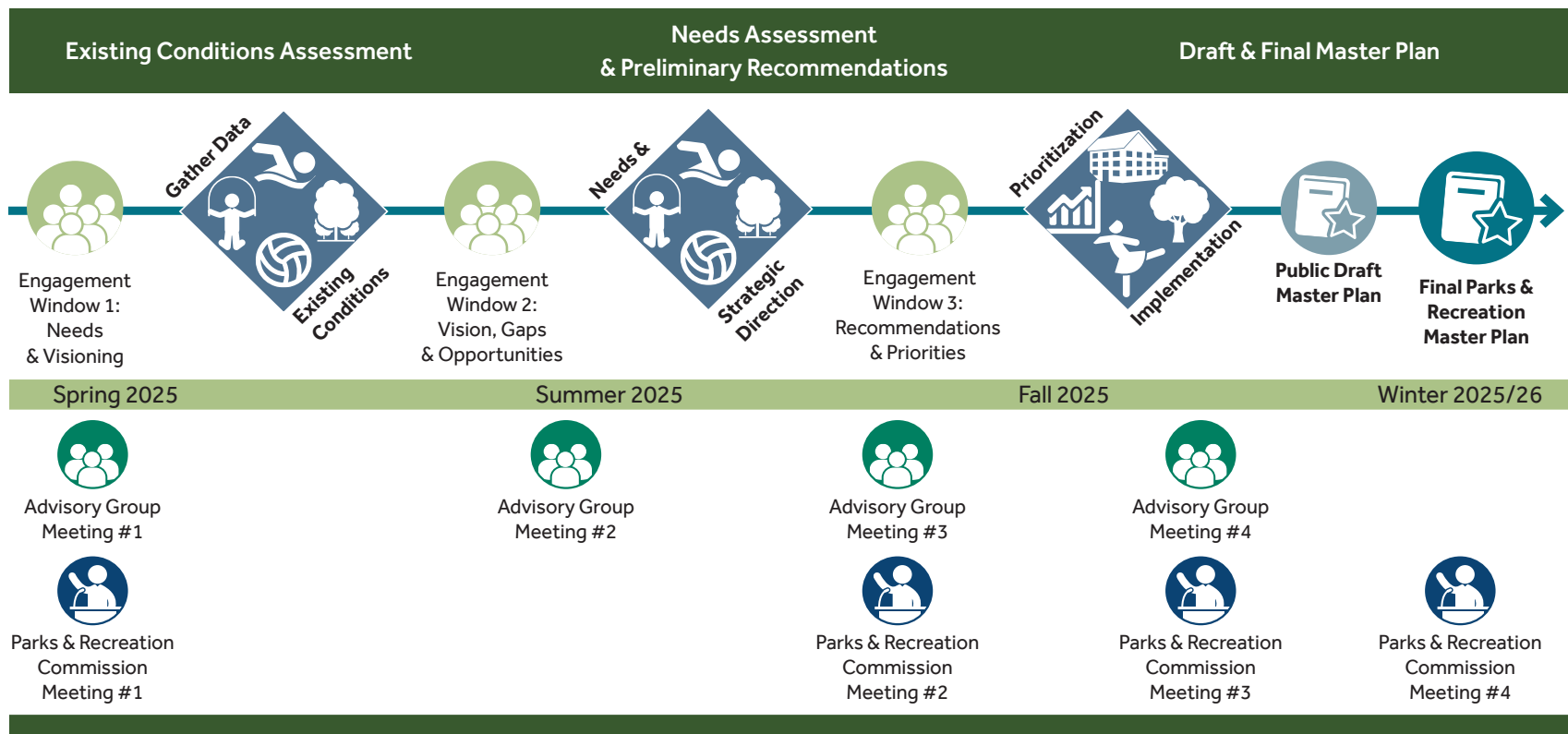
Recreation Programs

The St. Helena Parks and Recreation Division provides popular recreation programs in three main areas: sports and sports leagues (for both youth and adults), summer camps (for youth) and special events (for all ages). The Division also offers limited health and fitness programming and offers rentals of picnic areas, the Carnegie Building and other facilities.

PRT Planning Process

This Master Plan is St. Helena's first standalone long-range plan for parks and recreation services. The master planning process kicked off in March 2025 and continued through February 2026.

The process included extensive technical planning and analysis. This work culminated in two reports – the Existing System Summary and the Needs Assessment – that document and assess the system and provide the basis for the Master Plan policies and recommendations. See the Master Plan appendices to review these reports and their findings.



Community Insights

From start to finish, this planning process engaged community voices in multiple ways, through every phase.

Overview of Engagement Activities

Community participation was organized into three rounds of engagement, taking place at key points in the planning process.

Advisory Group

The city convened the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Advisory Group to provide guidance throughout the planning process. The Advisory Group included representatives from advocacy groups, committee members, the Parks and Recreation Commission and a range of recreation interests and perspectives. This group met in March, July, October and December 2025 and reviewed components outside of meetings.

Parks and Recreation Commission

The Parks and Recreation Commission received updates and provided input at regular and special meetings throughout the year.

Stakeholder Interviews and Meetings

In March and July 2025, representatives of key stakeholder groups and organizations shared their perspectives in a series of interviews and meetings.

Project Website

The project website (<https://www.sthelenaparksplan.com/>) was live from March 2025 through February 2026, offering a one-stop information portal for the planning process.

Online Survey

The online survey was administered from June to August 2025, available in both English and Spanish and publicized by city social media pages,

Participating Stakeholders

- Equitable Recreation Committee
- Rianda House
- St. Helena Chamber of Commerce
- St. Helena City Council Members
- St. Helena City Manager
- St. Helena High School Interact Club
- St. Helena Historical Society
- St. Helena Library
- Parks & Recreation Commissioners
- St. Helena School District
- Trails Committee



Community Visioning Pop-up at Farmer's Market

newsletters, the PRT Plan website, and flyers. The survey received 239 responses (225 English and 14 Spanish).

Community Visioning Pop-ups

This activity brought a series of visioning boards to events and locations in St. Helena in July 2025, intercepting visitors who might not otherwise participate. Community members could use dots to identify what they liked the most or wanted to have in St. Helena. There were 40 inspirational images across four boards, and each person had 10 dots that they could use however they liked. Pop-ups occurred at the Lyman Park Wednesday Night Summer Concert, outside of the Carnegie Building, at Crane Park by the summer camps, and at the Farmers' Market at Crane Park, with 75+ people interacting with the boards.

In-Person and Online Priorities Exercise

The third round of community engagement included an in-person activity at the Harvest Festival on October 18, 2025 and an online version of the same exercise offered from November 10 to November 30, 2025. These exercises gave participants a set amount of dollars to spend as they wished on a set of potential capital projects and program improvements. The project and program categories were designed to meet community needs (identified in the Needs Assessment conducted for the project) and be responsive to earlier community feedback. In addition, the exercises allowed participants to review and refine the draft vision and goals for the PRT system. Combined, 211+ people participated in this exercise.

Staff Participation

St. Helena's Parks and Recreation Division and Public Works Parks and Trees Division participated throughout the planning process, including in several work sessions. An additional work session with St. Helena Public Library staff in July 2025 focused on identifying potential areas of collaboration between the Public Library Division and Parks and Recreation Division.



Insights

The engagement activities generated a wealth of comments and feedback, including detailed feedback about individual parks that will be a resource for staff in the coming years. Several key themes cut across all the engagement activities.

- **Highly valued by the community, but use is focused on only a few sites.** Community members see parks, recreation and trails as a key ingredient in St. Helena's quality of life. At the same time, they visit only a few parks frequently (Crane and Lyman) primarily because of the programming.
- **Broad interest in and support for walking, trails and pathways.** A significant portion of residents walk or bike to the city's parks

but indicated they wish there were safer routes and protected paths to get to the parks. People also prioritize trail and pathway improvements so they have safe places to walk and bike for exercise. Walking, trails and pathways is an area of strong agreement across demographics and recreation interests.

- **Desire to invest in what we have and maintain it.** Engagement feedback was consistent in highlighting the need for more investment in maintenance and in improving existing parks and facilities. Respondents commented on their appreciation for the work completed to address the maintenance backlog at Lyman Park and their desire to see more attention and care throughout the system. People also would like to see investments to add amenities such as shade, water, ADA accessibility improvements and seating in many parks throughout the system, as well as to repair or replace broken or worn facilities.
- **Need for more community events and programs.** Programming and events are a major driver for visiting parks for residents. Parks with regular programming are favored, with popular programs such as adult team sports (especially pickleball and bocce), the farmers market, and summer concerts. There is strong interest in more programming for a broader range of age groups. The most popular ideas from the community visioning events focused on community gathering at an event or program, such as movie nights or community food events.
- **Interest in expanding on partnerships and collaboration.** Community members recognize that there are many organizations and agencies active in St. Helena, and that there are already robust partnerships in place. People would like to see more focus on expanding partnerships to improve the parks, recreation and trails system, internally in the city (such as with the library and with Public Works) and externally with other agencies and organizations. As part of increased collaboration, there is interest in more structured volunteer opportunities.

- **Desire for more water access – both visual and physical.** Residents are interested in more access to the creeks, Napa River and reservoir, including physical access points, viewpoints, and trails along the waterbodies. There is also significant interest in more access to the swimming pool and swimming lessons and in the development of a water-based park feature, such as a splashpad or sprayground, for use during the hot season.
- **Recognition that parks can support a climate-friendly future.** Residents see the park system as a component of the city's climate response. Many comments called for more integration of native and climate-adopted plants and trees in parks, more attention to water conservation, and protection of natural areas and natural resources as part of park system.



Key Challenges and Needs

The approach to assessing needs for St. Helena incorporated multiple layers and criteria, including community insights, benchmarking and technical analysis. This is in line with the state of the art in assessing parks and recreation needs with more responsiveness to local context and a more holistic approach than the past practice of relying on one or two factors, such as acres of population per 1,000 people. Several key challenges and needs were illuminated by the Needs Assessment, which is available in the Appendices for more details.

- **Inconsistent investment in parks and programs across the City.** Confirming public input, the level of amenities and programming varies greatly, and is imbalanced on the east and west sides of St. Helena. Recreation programming is focused on youth activities and adult sports programs. There are a number of gaps that the PRT Master Plan recommendations are designed to address.
- **Lack of park activation and thoughtful design and amenities to interest people.** With the exception of Crane Park, most parks have very few amenities and lack shade, seating and things to do. Many of the playgrounds offer limited play value or only serve the youngest 2- to 5- year old age group. Many paths are lacking or inconsistent and where they exist, the surfacing is uneven.
- **No cohesive approach on to how to leverage parks for the community, visitors, or economic development.** There is no strategy about parks and programming as a key part of St. Helena's economic development strategy, though this is a proven approach for many communities in Napa and Sonoma Counties.
- **Not enough staff capacity to meet community expectations for services or maintenance.** St. Helena provides more services than typical similar sized agencies nationwide yet has a lower level of staffing. The parks and trees maintenance team has responsibilities outside the park system, including maintenance of all city facilities and supporting other Public Works maintenance teams when needed. While the programming team uses a mix of

staffing approaches to provide services (permanent, part-time, seasonal and contract), the parks and trees team relies on full-time permanent staff that is not sized to meet the peak season maintenance workload.

- **Current finances limit the ability to capture opportunity and focus investments effectively.** During this planning process, the City has had to focus on budget shortfalls. This current crisis has resulted in a focus on the short-term, leading to increased maintenance backlog and limiting the ability of staff and elected officials to position St. Helena for future opportunities.
- **Insufficient flexibility, agility and adaptability to meet needs.** Both the staffing situation and the financial challenge mean that there is only an ability to focus on immediate issues, with no time or strategy to work on longer term efforts that could have greater benefit for the community. Fund development (including a more structured approach to increase sponsorships and philanthropic giving), volunteer recruitment, and partnership development and management are areas where consistent, long-term staff attention is needed. There are many recent examples of short-term thinking in making park capital improvements (e.g., Lewis Station Park or the use of mulch that is not firesafe at Crane Park) that have resulted in foreseeable issues had more upfront planning and design time been available.

Master Plan Vision & Goals



The PRT vision and goals provide the framework for the Master Plan. These elements were crafted from community insights to build on existing assets and respond to key challenges and needs.

Drawing inspiration from community engagement, the vision describes the aspiration for the parks, recreation, and trails system in St. Helena and the benefits it will provide for the community. The PRT vision also describes how St. Helena's parks, recreation, and trails system will contribute to the General Plan vision.

The goals describe outcomes and define what is to be achieved. They are also an organizing structure for the Master Plan.

Vision

St. Helena parks, programs, and trails make life better for all by enlivening the community, supporting healthy people and parks, and providing active and connected public places.

Goals



2

Systemwide Policies

Chapter 2 includes systemwide policy recommendations that will guide the St. Helena's decision-making for the parks, recreation and trails system.





Chapter 2 Organization

This chapter is designed to enable the city to make good decisions about enhancement and development of parks and recreation facilities and be adaptable and innovative.

The recommendations supplement and expand upon the policy guidance in St. Helena's General Plan.

Policy recommendations are organized by the PRT goals. Each is given a letter and number code for easy reference.



A. Connections

Establish a dynamic, engaging, and safe parks and trails network, connecting people to each other and to the community.

A.1 Safe Routes to Parks

To ensure equitable access, strive to locate a quality park or green space within 10-minutes (1/2 mile) of every St. Helena resident.

- Each park should be accessible with pedestrian routes or sidewalks that work for people of all ages and abilities.
- Each park should be connected to the bicycle route network to allow easy access by bicycle.
- All parks should incorporate secure bike parking, distributed at each of the major use areas.

A.2 General Plan Refinement

Update the General Plan as follows:

- Use the PRT classifications of local-serving, community-serving, special use, linear and nature parks to better reflect St. Helena's system and the differing functions of parks.
- Apply the classifications to existing parks as described in this PRT Plan, and when considering the addition of new parks.
- Add the 10-minute walk as a park service metric, equal in importance to the 5 acres per 1,000 population metric in the General Plan. Use GIS and/or existing tools like the Trust for Public Land's ParkServe to monitor gaps.

A.3 Well-Designed Parks and Facilities

Ensure that every resident and visitor experiences engaging, high-quality park settings that maximize the function and intended purpose of each park.

- Design each park and facility for flexible use, a diversity of users, and a variety of activities. Parks and facilities should offer spaces for active play, quiet contemplation and respite, group events, and unstructured socializing, not just one type of activity.
- Design parks with central hubs and gathering spots linked by pathways that connect different areas, encouraging social interaction and a sense of belonging.



- Provide a variety of seating options in each park. The presence of seating is a determinant of park use. There should be options for respite and solitude and for socializing with small groups of people, in a variety of settings. At least half should be shaded by tree canopy, shade sails, or structures. Options could include traditional benches, modular seating, seat walls, platform seating, movable seating, and natural elements such as boulders or logs.
- Implement a consistent palette of materials (paving, fencing, site furnishings, etc.) that ties to St. Helena's small town and wine/agricultural identity and use it throughout the park system. This enhances a sense of place throughout the park system, contributes to a more cohesive visitor experience, and improves operational efficiency.

A.4 Distribution of Recreation Facilities

Recreation facilities, facilities that promote activity, sports, movement, and generally support programs, should be distributed throughout the system. This will improve the visitor experience, ensure that all parts of town have facilities nearby (beyond parkland), and provide more balanced park use/wear and tear.

St. Helena should prioritize new facilities at community-serving and special use sites with limited opportunities, such as Lyman, Jacob Meily, and Wappo Parks.

A.5 Enhanced Trail Experience

St. Helena's Streets Master Plan recommends an expanded trail network, and this PRT Master Plan supports it. To realize the planned trail system and pedestrian network, St. Helena should incorporate appropriate support amenities and wayfinding to facilitate use, promote trail safety, provide educational opportunities, and increase the enjoyment of the trail experience.

- Parks near trails can be designated as trailheads. These parks can provide parking for trail users, access to restrooms and water fountains, and may include wayfinding signs describing the trails, their connections, and any access restrictions.



- Vistas, viewing blinds, and benches along trails can increase their recreational value by providing spaces to rest and enjoy the natural scenery.
- Interpretive signs can describe the biological, geographic, and historical aspects of a trail or area around a trail.
- Clear and well-designed wayfinding, including trail signs and mileage markers, will encourage active recreation for residents and visitors alike.

A.6 Social Gathering and Event/Program Space

Expand social gathering spaces in St. Helena's park system, including maximizing use of existing structures, renovating existing spaces, and developing new ones. Social gathering space is currently limited and there is a need for indoor or covered outdoor spaces that support a variety of recreation programs, community events, and individual social gatherings. See Chapter 3 for site-specific recommendations.

A.7 Wayfinding Program

Wayfinding helps residents and visitors find their way around the city and within parks and public facilities. A wayfinding program provides a system of signs with a consistent graphic style and brand. The program projects a consistent image for the City, reduces visual clutter, and makes for more efficient operations (fewer and more effective signs to maintain, fewer parts). Past economic development efforts in St. Helena recommended a citywide wayfinding program.

This policy recommendation affirms prior recommendations about developing a wayfinding program. If a citywide program is not developed, a park system-specific wayfinding program should be developed and implemented as soon as possible, before any existing signs are replaced or new park signs are created. This system should include identification signs (e.g., park entry signs or monuments), informational signs (e.g., park or building layout, trails map), directional signs, and regulatory signs (e.g., no parking). The parks wayfinding system can be designed as a building block of a citywide wayfinding program.

A.8 Feasibility Studies

Conduct financial feasibility and market studies prior to developing a new facility, such as a recreation center or an event venue. The City must consider the financial feasibility and market capacity of these facilities before development, including evaluating opportunities for revenue generation and understanding the costs of maintenance and operation at a level that meets community expectations, to ensure the city can afford the capital and ongoing costs of these new amenities.



B. Livability

Create an active, healthy, and socially vibrant city by activating parks with culture, recreation, and arts programming and events, responding to St. Helena's unique community character and identity.

B.1 Cultural and Historic Interpretation

St. Helena's park system includes several historic resources, including the Carnegie Building, the Signorelli barn, and the Lyman Park gazebo. Parks also offer an opportunity to interpret the local environment and cultural history through programming and art. This can include site-specific art (both permanent and temporary installations), art and interpretation incorporated into park amenities such as destination playgrounds that celebrate the local agricultural or natural history, and informational kiosks. St. Helena should coordinate with the Historic Society and other arts and culture organizations on interpretive themes.

B.2 Integration of Art

Art should be integrated into the park system in multiple ways, including programming, temporary installations, and site-specific art. St. Helena

should work with local artists and arts organizations to design and implement programs and artistic and cultural elements. St. Helena has a public art donation policy in place, but does not have a percent for art program that requires art as part of public capital improvement projects.

- Integrate art and elements that reflect the residents' diverse culture and history within parks and facilities. Encourage local artists, youth, and community participation.
- Art and cultural elements may take the form of temporary installations and activities or longer-term artworks. Hosting performing arts along with visual arts can be a welcome addition.
- Incorporate art into functional elements such as seating, waste receptacles, fencing, and bike racks. Incorporate unique and artful play elements in play areas, in addition to or instead of standard

manufactured play equipment, as functional and beautiful park elements.

- For all major projects, artists should be included on the development teams to design park features such as playgrounds, artistic seat walls, monuments, or paving, or to develop site-specific artworks for a particular park.

B.3 Infrastructure to Support Programming

Provide and upgrade infrastructure and facilities, such as electrical service, restrooms, and adaptable use spaces, to support programming, special events, and activities at community-serving and special use parks, especially Lyman, Crane and Wappo Parks.

B.4 Recreation Programming

Provide programming for all ages and abilities, focusing on resident needs, that emphasizes social connection, supports personal health and well-being, promotes learning and exploration, and responds to a variety of recreational interests and cultural traditions.

- St. Helena's existing programs in the core areas of special events, sports, and summer camps are very popular and well attended. These should be sustained and continued.
- Special events are a priority area for programming expansion because of their drop-in nature, multigenerational appeal, and community-building nature. Additional events that are replicable multiple times (like the concert series) should be added, rather than additional once-a-year themed events like Harvest Fest or 4th of July. Examples of this type of event include movies in the park, food cart nights, and social dances in the parks.





- Fitness, health, and wellness programming should be expanded, focusing on contracting or designing additional fitness and health programming that uses existing parks and spaces. This could include more self-directed health and fitness, such as facilitating walking groups or publishing walking routes as discussed in the Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report (2022).
- St. Helena should routinely offer pilot programs to test new programming areas and options, such as multigenerational activities, visitor and part-time resident programs, mobile programs, programs for active older adults, and alternative formats that require less time commitment (e.g., one-time, short-term, or drop-in options). These new programs can be offered by St. Helena staff or by contracted teachers.
- Consider cultural relevance (see C.2) when developing new programs.

B.5 One-Stop Programming Information Resource

Develop and maintain a user-friendly online resource that promotes existing facilities, recreation programs, and all types of providers, connecting people to the wealth of programs offered by the city and other organizations. The Parks & Recreation website lists some of these other providers, but the information is on different webpages (e.g., aquatics on one page and community resources, which include helpful links to a mix of facilities and organizations, on another).



C. Welcoming

Ensure that programs, services, and public spaces embrace and serve all users, highlighting inclusivity, belonging and cultural diversity.

C.1 Universal Design

Follow Universal Design principles when renovating or developing parks and facilities to create places that work for all. Universal Design goes beyond Americans with Disabilities Act compliance by using the seven principals of Universal Design. Universal design allows for the full range of human diversity, including physical, perceptual, and cognitive abilities, ages and different body sizes and shapes.

C.2 Cultural Relevance

Ensure that programming, procedures, and policies are culturally relevant and inclusive, responding to the specific needs and preferences of St. Helena's diverse community.

- Connect with community cultural organizations to develop programming and tailor services.
- Host culturally diverse events and programs, expanding on successful recent efforts.
- Offer multilingual information, website, flyers, signs, and materials in English and Spanish at a minimum.
- Offer culturally responsive menu items, themes, and foods at events and programs.
- Ensure that staff reflect the communities they serve.
- Provide bilingual resources and staffing.

C.3 Affordability

Reevaluate cost recovery goals for park and recreation programs and facilities to allow affordable access while continuing to offset maintenance and operation costs. Provide low-cost or free options for programs and services that are primarily community benefiting. Provide scholarships or fee waivers to ensure lower-income community members can participate.

C.4 Age-Friendly Community

Consider joining the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities. Locally, Healdsburg and the Town of Windsor are both members of the network. This network helps communities become more age-friendly and welcoming to people of all ages by tapping into national and global research, planning models and best practices. This would be a citywide effort that would require the participation of Community Development and Public Works, in addition to the Community Services Department. See <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/>.

C.5 Volunteerism

Increase community engagement and empowerment by expanding and formalizing the volunteer program. The volunteer program is relatively new and has room to grow by providing more opportunities across a wider range of interests, including park stewardship and other programs. Additional staffing is needed to coordinate, manage, and run volunteer programs.

C.6 Community Engagement

Connect with the community on a regular basis to understand and refine programming options that will excite and involve them. When designing or renovating parks, or developing programming, reach out to the community to invite them to participate in the process so that their desires and concerns are heard and addressed. Provide various opportunities for community input. Proactively remove barriers to participation and use of St. Helena's parks, facilities, and programs.

Seven Principles of Universal Design

- **Principle 1, Equitable Use:** Provides the same means of use for all users, which encourages inclusion and lessens stigma. Example: one gently sloped entrance (used by everyone) vs. a ramp and stairs (segregates users).
- **Principle 2, Flexibility in Use:** Accommodates all by offering choices for users. Example: an adjustable desk.
- **Principle 3, Simple and Intuitive Use:** Eschews complexity while ensuring all users can understand how to use or operate. Example: pictograms in place of written information.
- **Principle 4, Perceptible Information:** Allows all users to access information, regardless of ability, experience, or literacy. Example: a talking microwave.
- **Principle 5, Tolerance for Error:** Minimizes hazards and the consequences of mistakes. Example: a door that shuts slowly.
- **Principle 6, Low Physical Effort:** Requires little effort to use. Example: a lamp that can be turned on by just a touch (rather than twisting a knob).
- **Principle 7, Size and Space for Approach and Use:** Provides easily navigable space and allows all users to reach and manipulate objects. Example: countertops of varying heights.

See Center for Universal Design Excellence for more details at <https://universaldesign.ie/about-universal-design/the-7-principles>.



D. Nature

Preserve land and cultivate healthy ecosystems to enhance community resilience and provide access to nature.

D.1 Land Conservation

Continue to build and foster partnerships, especially with the Napa County Land Trust, to preserve natural systems through strategic purchase and stewardship of land and conservation easements for the benefit of future generations.

D.2 Preservation of Natural Features

Preserve natural features and ecosystems in the park system, including in developed parks. This should also include expanding and protecting views from parks, preserving trees and other natural features, and integrating native plants into park designs. Provide viewing areas where birds and butterflies are frequent and add plantings to encourage more of them. Prioritize channelized creeks for natural bank restoration and overall restoration activities to improve access to and views of the water.

D.3 City-Owned Open Space

Formally recognize St. Helena's city-owned open spaces and natural areas as part of the park system with the purpose of protecting ecosystems and providing sensitive public access. This includes the property known as the Napa River Walk. These lands should be designated as Linear Parks or Nature Parks to acknowledge their important ecosystem function.

D.4 Nature in Developed Parks

Integrate nature and habitat patches into developed parks with pollinator gardens, native planting areas and green stormwater infrastructure. Reduce mowed turf where it is not serving a recreation purpose and replace with lawn alternatives, low water use climate adapted plantings or habitat patches. Create transitional zones between manicured areas

and natural areas such as creeks and wetlands. Use transition plantings and understory vegetation to soften edge zones, reducing maintenance demand, and increasing habitat value.

D.5 Healthy Tree Canopy

Enhance and sustain tree canopy throughout the park system and the city, including a program of tree replacement planting in parks. Maintain, restore, expand, and fund the urban forest to benefit all residents. St. Helena's parks have many mature trees, which require ongoing urban forest care to ensure their continued health. In addition, there is a need for more tree planting and a tree canopy replacement program to ensure that the parks continue to have a healthy tree canopy that provides shade for future generations.



D.6 Updated Plant and Tree Palette

Update the St. Helena tree list and develop a St. Helena parks plant palette with climate-adapted and drought-resistant plants and trees, including native species. Most of the trees and plants in St. Helena's parks were in place before drought and climate change were as severe as today. Updated plant and tree lists are needed so that new plantings can survive and to transition existing park landscapes over time. The City of Sonoma's recently approved updated master tree list, developed in consultation with the UC Master Gardener Program, can provide a model. This list includes 32 trees selected to withstand the area's projected climate for the next 75 years. Organizations such as the California Native Plant Society's Napa County chapter can provide resources for the plant list.

D.7 Natural Area Management

Advance natural area / natural resource management skills and practices internally or through contract relationships to support ecosystem health in the city's natural areas and parks. Monitor and manage natural areas to minimize invasive species and improve ecosystem health. Increase stewardship of native planting areas and natural areas.

D.8 Embrace the Creeks and the Napa River

Increase riparian plantings and access points to creeks and the river in existing park sites, consistent with Living River principles. Expand trails and pathways along the creeks and river, bringing land or easements into the park system as required. St. Helena's creeks and the Napa River are important features that intersect with the park system. In keeping with General Plan Policy OS1.1, these riparian corridors should be preserved for their value in providing wildlife habitat, biodiversity, natural drainage, and visual amenity.

D.9 Community Resilience

Incorporate St. Helena's parks and facilities into the city's Emergency Response Plan, identifying their potential or future potential to serve as cooling centers, resilience hubs, or staging areas for emergency response.



E. Partnerships

Leverage and foster lasting partnerships to expand collaboration, funding, services, recreation programming, and opportunities for the community.

E.1 Library Division Collaboration

Collaborate with the Library Division on facilities and programming. The Library itself offers opportunities to create exterior park spaces that serve the library and provide new park opportunities. The indoor spaces at the library could be revamped to support library programming and potentially community activities. There are also many opportunities to collaborate on programming, especially on cultural and literary arts programs. Existing library programs could be scheduled in parks, such as story time or book clubs. Existing park programs could be brought to the library, or new programs could be jointly developed that draw on the strengths and capacities of both divisions, such as lectures or walking tours on local topics.

E.2 School District Facilities Access

Continue to seek increased public access to school facilities, which owns multiple sites and has invested (with community bond support) in top-tier facilities such as the outdoor swimming pool and the theater. More access to the swimming pool is a top priority based on community feedback, along with athletic fields and indoor facilities such as the theater and gymnasiums.

Seek a formal Memorandum of Understanding or Joint Use Agreements with the School District that specify terms and level of access, as well as maintenance responsibilities, to help codify use, particularly where there are school sites in neighborhoods lacking 10-minute park access.

E.3 Increased Collaboration Between Community Services and Public Works

Increase ongoing coordination and collaboration between the Community Services and Public Works to improve service and maintenance of the City's park facilities. While Community Services is the public face of the park system, Public Works has a critical role in its success. This PRT Master Plan provides a tool to guide the activities of both Departments regarding the parks, recreation and trails system, including budgeting, staffing, and operating procedures. This means that the Public Works Department should use this Master Plan as the basis for decision-making for its budget, capital projects, staffing, and maintenance approaches, coordinating with Community Services on its levels of service, protocols, and procedures.

E.4 Business Community Partnerships

St. Helena should continue to collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce and the business community to activate parks, encourage visitors to linger in St. Helena and support economic vitality.

E.5 Philanthropic Fundraising Collaboration

Significantly increase efforts to work with the parks and arts nonprofit to expand funding through donations, philanthropy and sponsorships.

E.6 Sustain and Grow Partnerships

Facilitate strong partnerships with individuals, service groups, nonprofits and other agencies and organizations to sustain and expand recreation opportunities. This includes sustaining and potentially formalizing existing relationships as well as exploring additional partnerships. Additional organizational partnerships should bring the strengths of both organizations to the table and be formalized in writing. St. Helena should also continue to coordinate with community-based organizations and user groups (e.g., community garden, scouting organizations, St. Helena Little League), especially on park and facility maintenance and improvements. These efforts should be linked with the expanded volunteer program.





F. Stewardship

Provide consistent and sustainable stewardship of parks and facilities through high-quality and efficient landscaping, maintenance, and operations.

F.1 Operational Resources

Ensure staff capacity and operational resources match the needs of St. Helena's park system. St. Helena's relatively small total park acreage, diversity of amenities and multiple sites means that staffing and budget needs on a per acre basis will be higher than in average California communities. Maintaining and caring for the City's parks and facilities is critical to their longevity, function, and ability to serve the community's needs. It is essential to understand and support maintenance requirements for training, replacement costs, and overall staffing. Ensure that parks maintenance costs are included in the cost estimation for renovations and new parks or facilities and are funded to ensure a standard and consistent level of care.

F.2 Accurate Maintenance and Operations Data

Track staff time, contracts, and costs for data to better inform operations and planning. Currently, the scope of responsibilities of the Parks Division is broad. This makes it difficult to compare staffing levels and cost per acre with NRPA data and local peers. It also makes it difficult to accurately forecast future needs. At minimum, staff time and costs should be tracked by developed parks, natural areas, trails, urban forest, janitorial services and grounds maintenance at public buildings.

F.3 Water Management and Efficiency

Conserve water by using low-water use landscape elements, reducing ornamental and underused areas of turf, and watering fields and lawns at non-peak times. Update irrigation systems to high-efficiency systems including "smart" controllers. Expand use of reclaimed water for

irrigation where it is available. Consider the use of greywater systems and rainwater catchment to further manage water.

F.4 Capital Projects Using Durable and High-Quality Materials

St. Helena should invest in high-quality materials that will last and require less maintenance when making capital improvements, including park renovations. This may increase the cost of the capital improvement but will result in less maintenance over the lifetime of the improvement, thus reducing the total cost of ownership. This still requires allocating funds for maintenance.

F.5 Capital Projects to Reduce Operating Costs or Generate Revenue

Prioritize capital reinvestments that reduce operating costs or increase revenue. This may be replacing failing or hard-to-maintain facilities and components (paths, restrooms, fencing, bollards) to reduce staff time requirements and create labor savings. It may also include investments in infrastructure to reduce water or energy use or create labor savings. On the revenue side, it means prioritizing improvements to make a facility or park more attractive or marketable, such as for as a wedding or events venue.

F.6 Greener Operations

Implement sustainable and regenerative landscape practices, such as outlined in the ReScape California design and development guidelines. Maximize the use of sustainable and green fleet, equipment, and power sources. Use nature-based solutions in all parklands to address stormwater management, drought impacts, extreme storms, wildfire risk, and other critical climate hazards. Ensure that maintenance staff are trained to maintain and care for native and non-traditional regenerative landscapes, manage low-water irrigation systems, and operate other innovations and systems employed in the parks.

F.7 Asset Management Plan

Develop a comprehensive replacement schedule for park amenities. The City should develop a comprehensive replacement schedule that considers the level of use, lifetime expectations, and safety, among other factors, in determining when playgrounds, picnic shelters, restrooms, athletic fields, and courts should be renovated, refreshed or resurfaced. This type of schedule will help the City continue to provide park amenities that are consistent with community needs and expectations.

F.8 Operating Funding

Explore new sources of operating funding including earmarking revenue generation from facility rental fees towards park and recreation operations and allocating utility infrastructure funding towards eligible parks (for stormwater facilities, transportation infrastructure, etc.) In the mid to long term, explore a new voter-supported funding mechanism, especially a parcel tax or Landscape and Lighting Assessment District that can support both capital and operations. This will require a feasibility study that includes a voter poll to test the viability of various mechanisms and rates as well as priorities.



3

Recommended Improvements

This chapter includes recommendations on park, facility and trail enhancements and additions that will realize the Master Plan vision and goals.





Chapter 3 Organization

Future Park System Concept, which describes the overall concept and includes diagrams of the Citywide Park System and the Downtown Parks Strategy.

Existing Parks and Facilities Recommendations, which provides more detail about each existing site.

New Parks, Trails and Facilities, describing recommended additions to the park system.

Facilities to Support Recreation Programming and Events, describing facility recommendations to enable continue programming and key programming enhancements in support of the policy guidance in Chapter 2.

Future Park System Concept

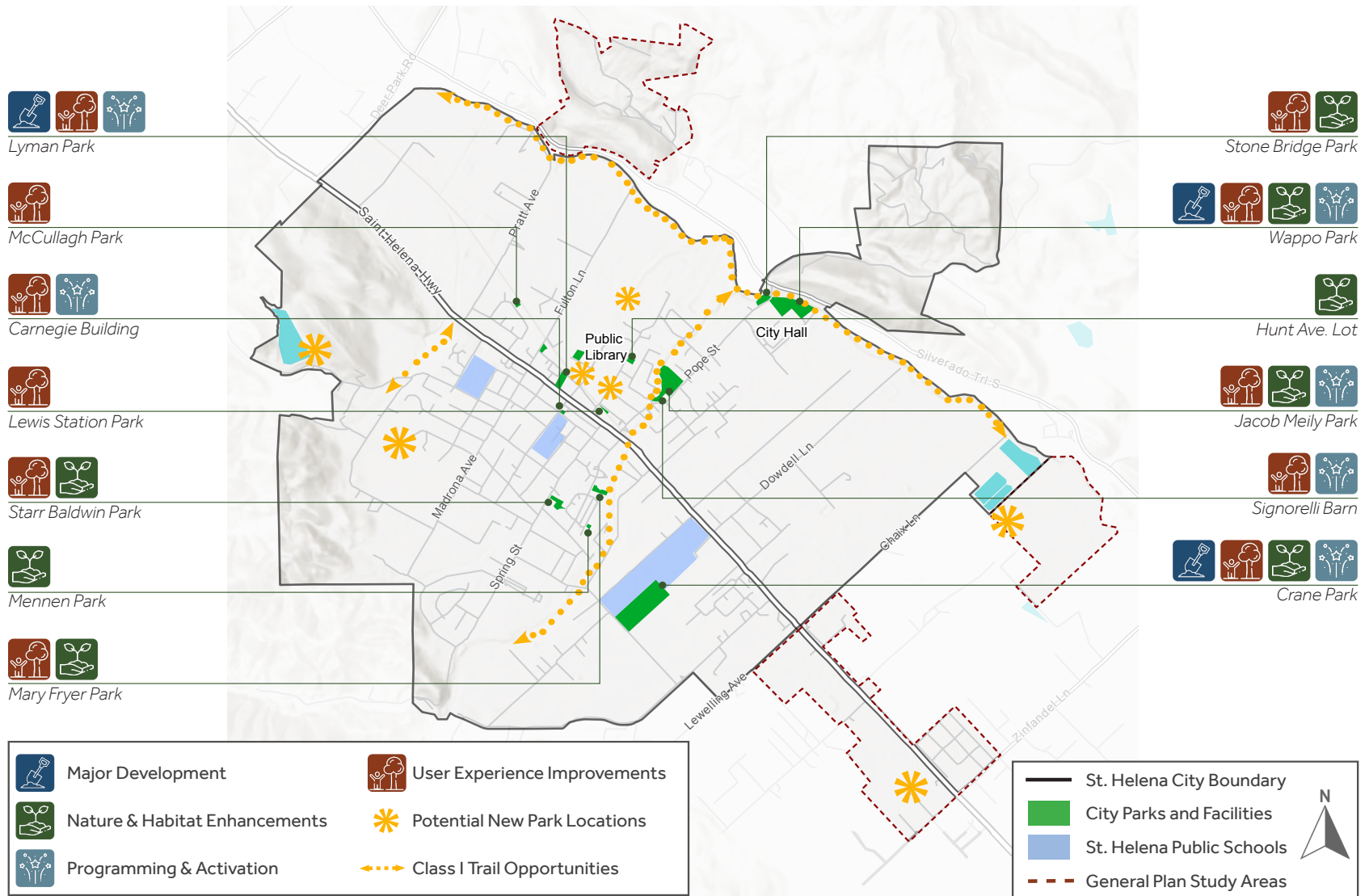
The overall concept for St. Helena's park system achieves the PRT vision by applying six big ideas.

- **Connect the system.** Each site is easily accessible on foot or by bike, and St. Helena's streets, sidewalks, and trails extend the system with clear pathways and wayfinding that link the community.
- **Catalyze downtown with park enhancements and programs.** The park system and community facilities, especially those sites downtown, are designed and programmed to encourage visitors and local residents to linger in St. Helena. See the Downtown Parks Strategy for more details.
- **Embrace the creeks and Napa River.** New trails, viewpoints, and riparian plantings connect park visitors to these highly valued water resources.
- **Celebrate and integrate nature and art.** Parks and city lands integrate nature, habitat and art as ingredients in placemaking and telling St. Helena's story.
- **Create welcoming event and activity spaces.** The system is enlivened with a variety of indoor and outdoor spaces that host events and programs year-round, including revenue-generating event rental spaces.
- **Develop an indoor clubhouse to bring the community together.** The new flexible clubhouse space allows for community gatherings, event rentals and new types of programming.

These big ideas consider existing assets, the PRT Master Plan vision and goals, and the needs and opportunities identified during the planning process.



Park Recommendations



3.4 | St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Citywide Park System

The Citywide Park System Concept diagram depicts recommended improvements and additions to St. Helena's park system. As this graphic shows, the future park system envisions investing in existing parks and facilities and making strategic additions to meet key needs. These recommendations implement the big ideas, the PRT Master Plan vision and goals, the systemwide policies in Chapter 2.

The concept diagram is aspirational, representing a 20-year plan for St. Helena. Implementation depends on available funding, staff capacity, and volunteer efforts.



Major Development



User Experience Improvements



Nature and Habitat Enhancements



Programming and Activation



New Parks



New Class I Trails

Recommended enhancements at existing parks and facilities fall into four categories of improvements:

- **Major Development.** These are the largest investments in developing, renovating, and sustaining facilities for recreation and programs that serve the entire community. Major development projects should be guided by a master plan for the entire site, even if the improvements are implemented in phases.
- **User Experience Improvements.** User experience projects increase the appeal of parks, encouraging more visits and improving the park experience. This category includes projects such as adding shade and seating areas, improving paths, improving restrooms, incorporating Universal Access features, or adding art and amenities such as water fountains, wayfinding signs, and bike racks.
- **Nature and Habitat Enhancements.** The nature and habitat category includes projects that add habitat value or increase resilience, such as replacing mowed turf with low water use alternatives, adding native plants and pollinators, irrigation and water upgrades and adding low impact trails to increase access to nature.
- **Programming and Activation.** The programming and activation category denotes parks and facilities where activation or increased programming is recommended.

Recommended additions to the park system include:

- **New Parks** to fill gaps or meet needs. In some cases, new parks will require land acquisition. In other cases, a new park may be accomplished by joint use.
- **New Class I Trails** that are aligned with the Streets Master Plan.

Downtown Parks Strategy

St. Helena's park system is a critical ingredient in making downtown an appealing destination for both residents and visitors. The city is fortunate to have a cluster of parks and facilities in the downtown area that can be further leveraged to make downtown a more attractive destination and encourage visitors to linger and spend money.

The downtown parks map depicts how St. Helena should use its park resources to strengthen economic development in downtown.



Inspiration Images: Activating streets with temporary parks, seating, and paint.



Activating Downtown with Parks



Implementation Framework



Each of the projects and actions recommended in this plan is important. Some projects and actions are low cost and easy to implement, while others are more complex or costly, some even requiring new sources of funding. And some, once begun, will require ongoing commitment.

Over the lifetime of the plan, St. Helena will need to determine how to take steps and move forward with implementation. The pace of implementation will depend on the availability of resources, not only capital and operating dollars but also the workload capacity of St. Helena's staff. In order to more readily understand implementation considerations and more readily sequence work, the implementation framework below includes four timeframes, as depicted in the following graphic.

Implementation Framework



Existing Park Recommendations



This section provides more details on the recommendations for each existing park and facility.

Crane Park



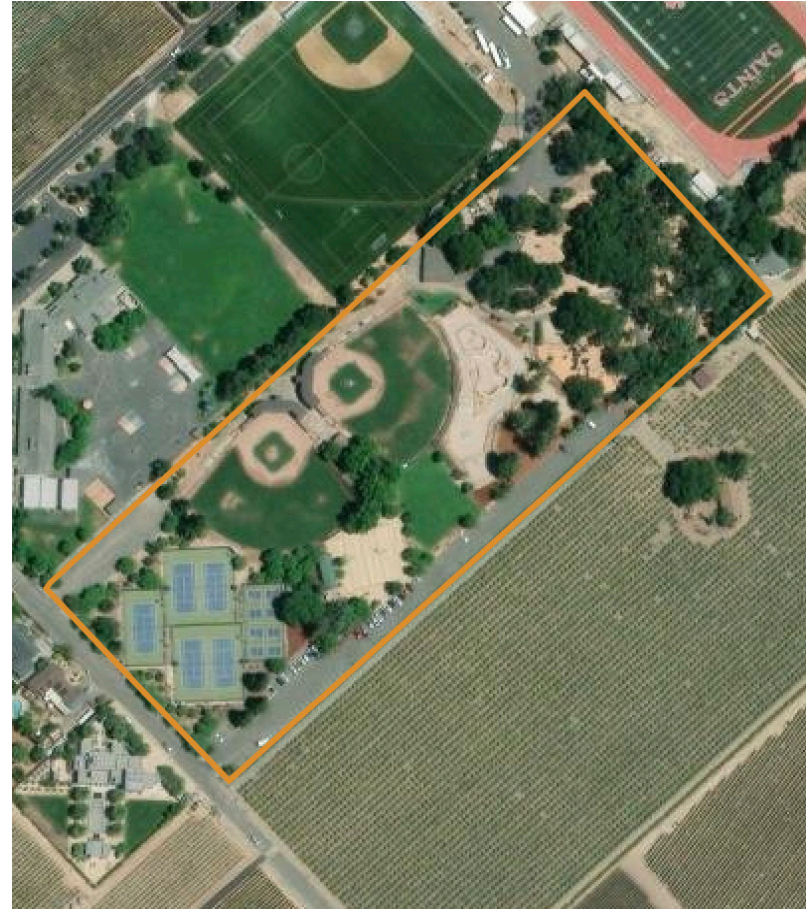
Vision: St. Helena's community park and hub for sports activities.

Community-serving Park

360 S. Crane Ave. | 11.27 acres



Existing conditions at Crane Park.



Recommendations

Recommendation	Priority
A. Updated park master plan to guide future investments. Identify a palette of materials for the site, major pedestrian and vehicle circulation routes, the relocated maintenance yard, the siting of a flexible-use building to replace the Head Start building, and oak protection zones. Consider the addition of an outdoor basketball without eliminating picnic and play spaces. Consider all recommendations listed below.	
B. Retain or increase the acreage used for self-directed activities (picnic and play areas around the oaks) to continues to fulfill the community park function.	
C. Relocate the maintenance yard from center of the park. Replacement yard should be smaller, more functional footprint with more attractive screening fencing. Consider the parking lot off S. Crane.	
D. Create a looped path within the park with mileage markers, using the existing path system where possible and connecting to citywide pathways around the park. Upgrade paving as needed.	
E. Implement an overall renovation to provide consistent fencing, parking bollards, seating, and site furnishings, and to improve the sense of arrival to the major park zones accessed from the east parking area (at the racquet zone, bocce zone, and picnic and play zone).	
F. Upgrade the play area and picnic areas in the oak grove, while prioritizing oak preservation.	



Inspiration Images: Top and bottom left: City of Berkeley, Willard Park Clubhouse; Bottom right - welcoming pathway between parks.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Priority
G. Upgrade and expand the restrooms and upgrade wastewater system (currently a septic system), as needed. Restrooms may be combined as part of any new structure or remodel of Head Start building.	
H. Transition the landscaped to drought-tolerant and climate-adapted plantings, with a focus on trees and low-growing plants. Implement ReScape CA guidelines or similar as outlined in the policies.	
I. Upgrade the area near the tennis and pickleball courts to improve waiting areas, court viewing, and general seating. Add a covered picnic area nearby.	
J. Convert the Head Start building into an indoor/outdoor activity hub with a focus on young kids during the morning and teens in the afternoon. Long term, replace this with a flexible use building similar to the Berkeley Willard Park Clubhouse (see sidebar) with roll-up doors and climate control that can be used for a variety of programs and events, including rentals.	 
K. Negotiate with the School District to increase access to the soccer fields and improve the pedestrian connection to Crane Park.	

Note: Crane Park is not recommended as a future location for a full-service recreation center (over 8,000 sf) in the future. The park is not large enough to accommodate a recreation center and associated parking, which would require at least 1 acre.



*Inspiration Images: Top: Pickleball watching and waiting area with shade;
Bottom: left - social area with movable chairs; right - destination play area with integration of art features.*

Lyman Park



Vision: St. Helena's lively and active downtown hub

Community-serving Park
0.89 acres | 1498 Main St.



Existing conditions at Lyman Park.



Recommendations

Recommendation	Priority
A. Updated park master plan, in conjunction with the Downtown Vision and Master Plan, to address the park and its relationship to downtown.	
B. Activate this park with movable seating and tables, and program spaces.	
C. Retain and preserve existing trees. Replace any trees that are dying or impacted by park renovations on site.	
D. Redesign the Railroad Avenue side of the park to add an interactive fountain and plaza with seating, redoing the current tot lot. Consider how to better integrate the historic gazebo into the park.	
E. Add a café/food and beverage concession near the plaza. Alternatively, a food cart space could be developed with utilities.	
F. Provide a pedestrian promenade/pathway that connects from Railroad Avenue to Main Street and potentially the Library.	
G. Replace the restroom and increase capacity to serve concerts in the park and other events.	
H. Develop a flexible-use hard surface stage area (e.g. pavers, decomposed granite, decking) with upgraded utilities for the concert series and other programming.	
I. Incorporate temporary or permanent public art, particularly along wall of the old city hall.	



Inspiration Images: Top - Artful play area and interactive water feature;
Bottom - Artful and intentional entrance and pathway.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Priority
J. Provide a more defined entry and a social space with seating on the Main Street side of the park. Incorporate the historic fountain into this area.	
K. Consider developing a larger and more interesting playground with more play value, especially if the City Hall site is used for housing or for a public facility.	
L. Add WIFI.	
M. Use this park for regular programming beyond the concert series, such as fitness, yoga/wellness, or art classes in the park.	
N. If the city sells the former City Hall site to a private developer, add conditions for development approval, such as:	
i. Require windows or active public use along the park boundary (where there is a building today).	
ii. Do not allow the footprint of the surface parking lot next to the park to increase.	
iii. If structured parking is proposed adjacent to the park, require public art, green walls, or other treatments to screen the parking from the park.	



Inspiration Images: Top - Seating areas for gathering and enjoying park;
Bottom - City of Windsor Commercial spaces opening onto Town Square.

Carnegie Building



Vision: A highly used community facility with an arts and culture focus.

Facility
1360 Oak Ave. | 0.13 acres



Top: Existing conditions at Carnegie Building, Bottom: Inspiration Images: left - Community cooking class, right - community dance.

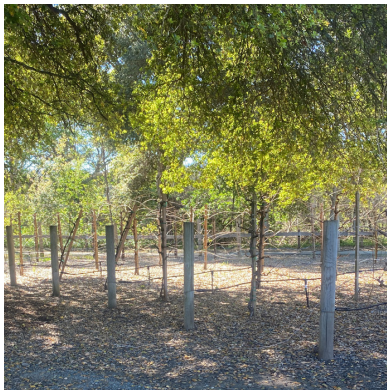
Recommendations	Priority
A. Consider moving the P&R office to the Carnegie Building, while keeping event and programming space.	
B. Upgrade the interior spaces to improve usability, including adding doors to the secondary spaces on each floor and installing AV equipment.	
C. Upgrade the aging, unreliable elevator.	
D. On the exterior, replace the mowed turf with a drought-tolerant lawn alternative.	
E. Market the facility more heavily as a reservable event space. Provide pricing information and larger photos in an easier-to-navigate format on the website.	
F. Develop regular programming suitable for the building and its noise profile.	
i. Quieter exercise classes such as yoga and tai chi.	
ii. Add arts and culture programs, collaborating with other organizations, including Nimbus Arts, the St. Helena Public Library, and the Farmer's Market.	
iii. Develop programs to leverage kitchen facilities.	

Jacob Meily Park



St. Helena's northside community park and gateway to Sulphur Creek.

Community-serving Park
750 Pope St. | 5.42 acres



Existing conditions at Jacob Meily Park.



Recommendations	Priority
A. Preserve tree canopy throughout the park.	
B. Incorporate riparian plantings along Sulphur Creek.	
C. Incorporate features that encourage nature-based play, such as sand and water play-features that tie to Sulphur Creek.	
D. Add wayfinding signs at each pedestrian entrance that welcome people to the park.	
E. Repurpose the area of the park containing the vineyard to add more recreation facilities. This is a relatively level prime area of the park, located near the entry and the restrooms. Potential options include the following.	
i. Create a reservable picnic shelter that can also function as an outdoor classroom.	
ii. Add a fitness zone – an outdoor gym with exercise equipment. Pursue grants for outdoor gym equipment to fund the new equipment.	
iii. Add a basketball court or other recreation facilities, only if these can fit without eliminating existing trees.	
iv. This area is an alternative location for the Clubhouse Recreation Building.	



Inspiration Images: Top: Outdoor gym equipment. Bottom: Nature-based play in a creek area.

Recommendations

Signorelli Barn Recommendations

Signorelli Barn is located on Pope St. next to Jacob Meilly Park and is connected to the park by the paved pathway.

Recommendations	Priority
G. Stabilize Signorelli Barn	
H. Use as a rustic programming space for camps and other suitable recreation programs (e.g., nature programs, history programs, starting point of a walk).	



Existing conditions at Signorelli Barn,



Inspiration Images: Stein-Boozier Barn, a city-owned, rentable event space in Wilsonville, Oregon (top: interior, bottom: exterior).

Wappo Park

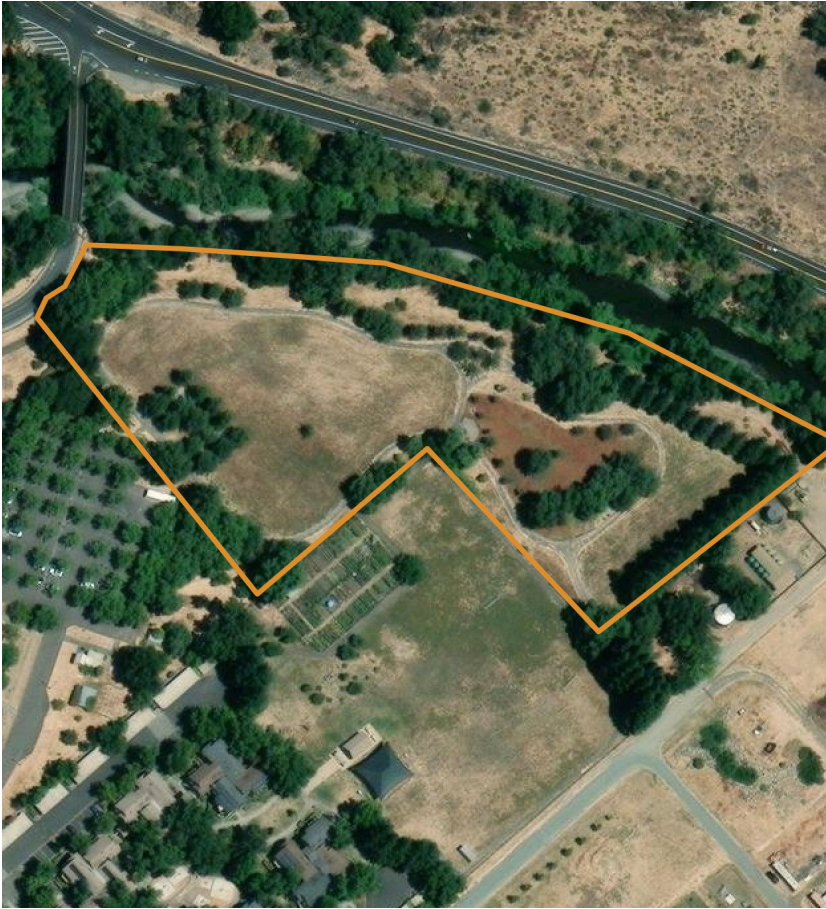


Vision: St. Helena’s nature-focused community park.

Community-serving Park
201 Pope St. | 5.32 acres

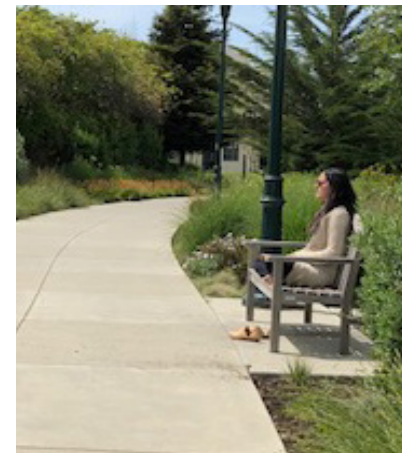
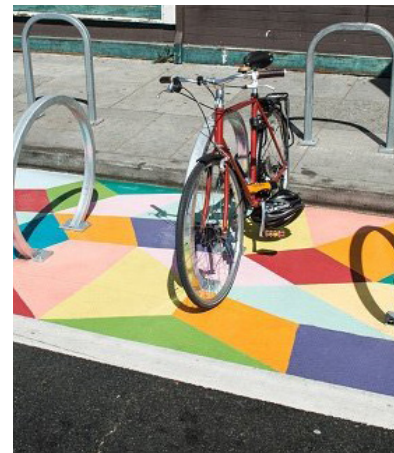


Existing conditions at Wappo Park.



Recommendations

Recommendations	Priority
A. Update the master plan and prioritize low-impact and light-touch facilities. Avoid sports facilities and facilities that require site excavation.	
B. Develop a strategy to use this site as a community events and day camp location, given the large open field, available parking, and proximity to City Hall.	
C. Make upgrades to the existing picnic area for a more welcoming space that is attractive as a rustic wedding venue. Modify the plantings, upgrade the pathways and paving, and consider adding shade sails or a shade structure. Begin marketing this site as a wedding venue.	
D. Collaborate with local tribes on park use and the interpretation of indigenous history and culture. Install a monument and develop interpretative signage with guidance from First Nations tribes or Native American tribes in the northwestern corner of the park.	
E. Retain the dog park and improve it for greater usability, such as adding a double-gate system, a small-dog area, shade, and human seating.	
F. Add bike parking.	
G. Maintain the natural surface trail, add distance markers, and add a midpoint trail to create a smaller loop option.	
H. Add lower-impact additions such as outdoor fitness equipment, community gardens, or a disc golf course.	



Inspiration Images: Top: Enclosed dog park with shade structures and seating. Bottom: left - bike rack, right - seating along a walkway.

Recommendations

Recommendations	Priority
I. Add benches, picnic tables, and boulders for seating along the trail, especially on the Napa River side of the trail, in locations where there are views of the river.	
J. Add a destination nature play area – one that uses logs, natural materials, without excavation - that ties in river and nature themes. This should be located near the parking area and picnic shelter.	
K. Add temporary or place-based art as part of St. Helena's overall public art strategy.	

This park is the nearest city park for both Stonebridge Apartments and Vineyard Valley Mobile Home Park. Both developments have some recreation amenities for residents. Wappo Park should provide green space and nature, in contrast to the more manicured facilities found in both developments.



Inspiration Images: Outdoor rustic wedding in the trees.



Inspiration Images: Top: left - public art installation, right - disc golf course. Bottom: Nature-play area.

Lewis Station Park



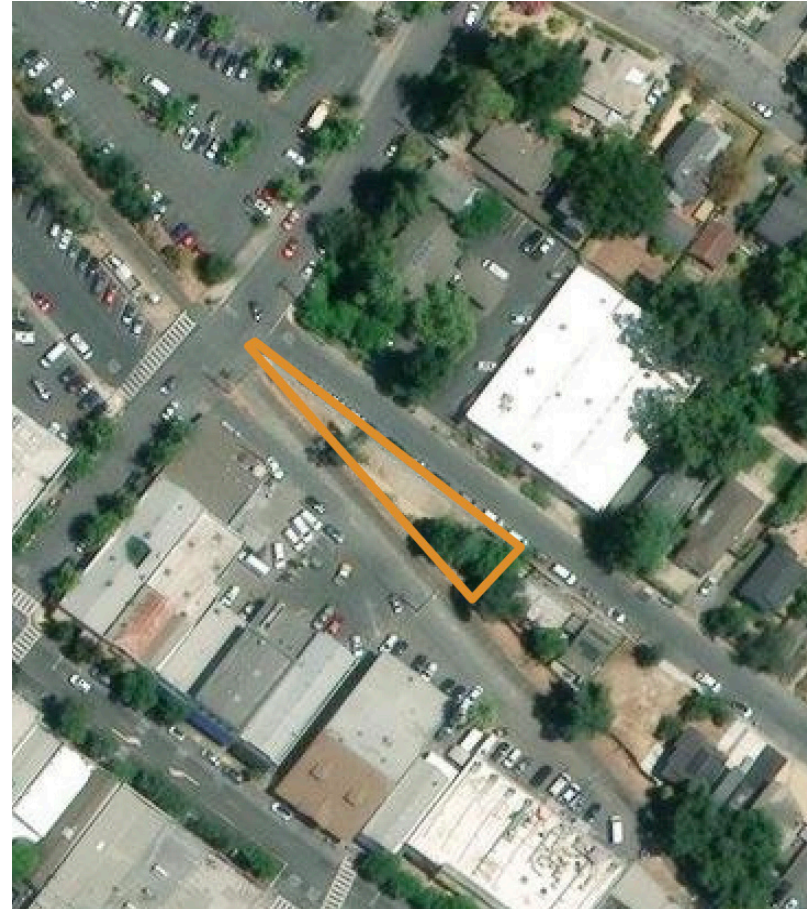
Vision: A downtown wayside and orientation spot.

Local-serving Park

750 Pope St. | 0.13 acres



Top: Existing conditions at Lewis Station Park; Bottom: historic photo.



Recommendations

Recommendations	Priority
A. Add temporary or permanent public art.	
B. Add vegetation, including trees, planters, pots, or a vertical green wall to screen the railroad tracks.	
C. Improve the visual presence of this park at the intersection of Church Street and Hunt Avenue. Art or wayfinding enhancements should be located in this area and designed to provide a landmark for passersby.	
D. Add a wayfinding kiosk, a drinking fountain with water-bottle refills, and bicycle parking.	
E. Add shade and additional seating options. Consider adding string lights or other festive nighttime lighting.	
F. Renovate the restroom in the long term.	
G. Implement the Streets Master Plan crossing and sidewalk improvements to improve connections from this park to Hunt Avenue and downtown.	



Inspiration Images: top - Placemaking and wayfinding with paint. Bottom: left - public art installation, right - wayfinding signage.

Mary Fryer Park



Vision: Part of a cluster of small parks, each with its own character, connected with a walking loop and providing green space for the surrounding neighborhood.

Local-serving Park

1500 Mitchell Dr. | 0.84 acres



Top: existing conditions at Mary Fryer Park; Bottom: Inspiration Images, left - small nature play feature; right - example of a simple picnic shelter.

Mary Fryer Park is accessed from Mitchell Drive and is the least constrained by neighboring properties. This park is slightly larger than Starr Baldwin Park and it has a bigger street frontage. Mary Fryer will be the park in the cluster focused on play and recreation.

Recommendations	Priority
A. Expand the playground area toward Mitchell Drive to increase play value and add more features, such as swings. Incorporate nature play elements. Mary Fryer Park should have the largest playground in the cluster.	
B. Improve the appearance and curb appeal Mitchell Dr. entrance. Eliminate the fencing and hedge. Consider eliminating or replacing the wooden structure at the park entrance, which is high-maintenance and offers little recreational value or shade.	
C. Add more seating and small picnic areas near the entrance and around the expanded playground utilizing existing shade and views of the water detention pond.	
D. Add a small- to medium-sized picnic shelter near the entrance of this park.	
E. Improve the path and add wayfinding signage to direct users to the other two parks.	
F. Preserve the tree canopy.	

Mennen Park



Vision: *Part of a cluster of small parks, each with its own character, connected with a walking loop and providing green space for the surrounding neighborhood.*

Local-serving Park
1649 Voorhees Cir. | 0.17 acres



Top: existing conditions at Mennen Park; Bottom: Inspiration Images, left - native plantings; right - small picnic shelter with solar panels.

Mennen Park is the smallest of the three parks, with the least shade and the most constrained site, with houses on three sides of the park. Its primary focus should be to provide a local green space for nearby neighbors for relaxation, enjoyment of the outdoors and small gatherings.

Recommendations	Priority
A. Extend the picnic area towards the streetside of the park to allow more spacing between the tables and the surrounding property lines. Add shade and movable picnic tables.	
B. Add shade trees.	
C. Add more varied seating options – benches, rocks, seat walls, moveable seating.	
D. Eliminate turf grass. Incorporate pollinator plantings and drought-tolerant native plants.	
E. Increase the visibility of this park from the sidewalk, such as by adding a gateway feature or a larger park sign.	
F. Improve the path and add wayfinding signage to direct users to the other two parks.	

Starr Baldwin Park



Vision: Part of a cluster of small parks, each with its own character, connected with a walking loop and providing green space for the surrounding neighborhood.

Local-serving Park
1679 Spring St. | 0.76 acres



Top: existing conditions at Starr Baldwin Park; Bottom: Inspiration Images, left - alternative fencing style for creek; right - example wayfinding signage.

Starr Baldwin Park has a frontage on Spring Street (via a crossing over the small creek) and another narrow frontage on Vorhees Circle. A paved path connects the two sides of the park. In the cluster, this park will focus on nature-based activities and outdoor enjoyment.

Recommendations	Priority
A. Improve access and curb appeal from Spring Street by widening the bridge and upgrading the fence.	
B. Add art or a gateway feature at the park entrance from Vorhees Circle to increase the visibility.	
C. Upgrade the path surfacing throughout the park.	
D. Create a nature play area with nearby seating near the Spring Street end of the park. Consider adding community garden plots to this park.	
E. Add seating throughout the park, along the path, under trees, in groupings, and for solitude and different seating options – benches, rocks, seat walls, movable seating, hammocks.	
F. Maintain the tree canopy and plant with climate-adapted trees and add riparian plantings along the creek edge.	
G. Add wayfinding signage to direct users to the other two parks. Include a map that shows the route and distance.	

McCullagh Park



Vision: A small green space for the surrounding neighborhood, memorializing Boy Scout Stephan McCullagh.

Local-serving Park

1758 Crinella Dr. | 0.14 acres



Existing conditions at McCullagh Park.



Recommendations

This park accesses Crinella Drive and offers views of the train tracks and vineyards beyond, giving it a unique character within the park system.

Recommendations	Priority
A. This park has nature-themed play features that fit well with the site and should be maintained. Add more features that expand play value and appeal to 5-12-year-olds.	
B. Add more seating and places to relax for all ages.	
C. Maintain the tree canopy and implement a tree replacement plan.	



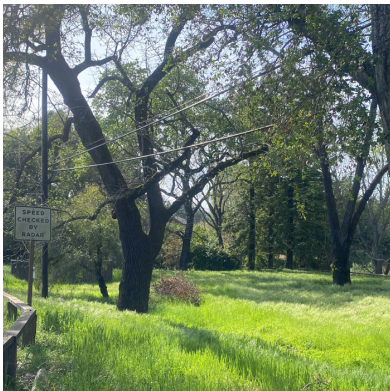
Inspiration Images: Top: Simple nature-themed play structure.
Bottom: left - shaded seating and picnic areas, right - more seating varieties.

Stone Bridge Park



Vision: Trailhead for the future Napa River shared-use path.

Undeveloped Park Area
220 Pope St. | 0.75 acres



Existing conditions at Stone Bridge Park.

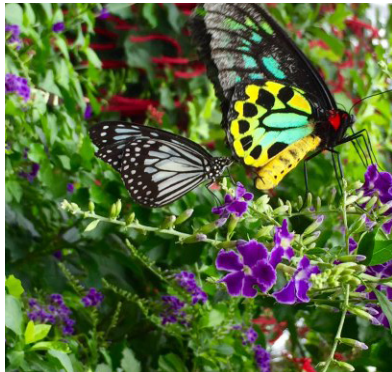
Recommendations	Priority
A. Connect this park with the bicycle and pedestrian networks.	
B. Add a small parking lot for cars when the trail opens for public use.	
C. Add trailhead amenities, including a trail map, bike parking, benches and picnic tables.	
D. Manage invasive species on the site and increase native and riparian plantings.	
E. Maintain the tree canopy and implement a tree replacement plan.	

Hunt Ave. Lot



Vision: Minimal development, nature-focused local park.

Undeveloped Park Area
757 Hunt Ave. | 0.36 acres



Top: Existing conditions; Bottom: Inspiration Images, left - natural seating; right - pollinator planting.

Recommendations	Priority
A. Collaborate with the Napa County Land Trust who has a conservation easement to protect the conservation values of the park.	
B. Develop a master plan that prioritizes oak preservation and restoration and adds compatible low-impact features to serve the neighborhood, including:	
i. A looped walking path (natural surface and accessible)	
ii. Habitat features like bird boxes or pollinator plantings	
iii. Interpretive signage about oaks and their significance	
iv. Natural benches and seating	
v. A small nature play area	



New Parks, Trails & Facilities

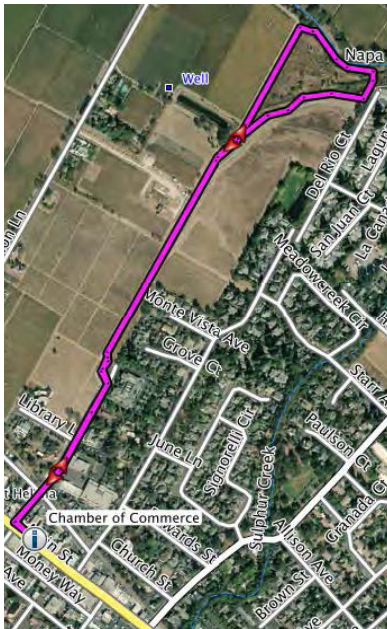


There are a number of potential new facilities that City should develop during the lifetime of this plan. They include expanding and enhancing the availability of trails, as well as looking to develop additional indoor spaces.

Additional Trails

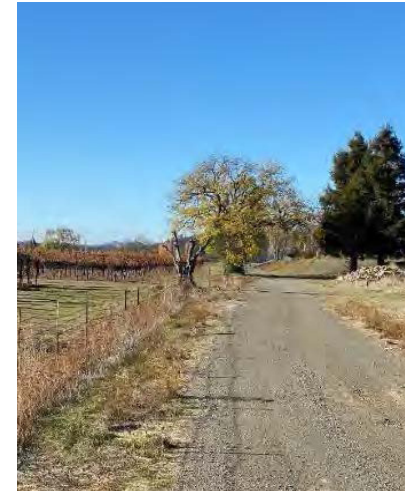
Napa River Walk Park

- Add the Napa River Walk Loop open space to the St. Helena park inventory, designating it as a linear park.
- Formalize this trail as a park.
- Add seating and amenities, and create the loop as shown in the *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report*.



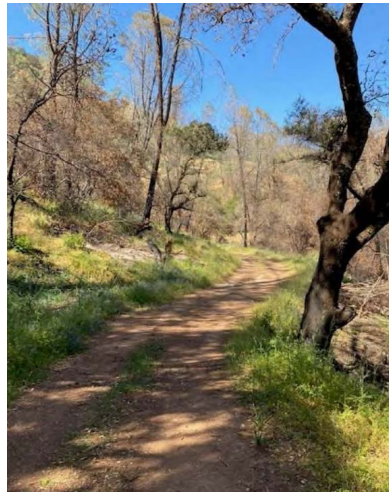
Valley Floor Walk and Community Forest at the Wastewater Treatment Plant

- Support development of the St. Helena Community Forest that uses land around the existing St. Helena Wastewater Treatment Plant for tree planting, with trails and public access.
- Formalize the walking loop around the wastewater treatment plant, called the Valley Floor Walk and described on p. 32 of the *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report*.



Reservoir Trail

- Develop a natural surface trail at the reservoir, extending to a loop in the future if possible.
- In addition, incorporate the Bell Canyon loop as a hiking trail as described in the *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report*.



Napa River, Sulphur Creek, and York Creek Shared Use and Recreational Paths

- Develop the shared use and recreational paths along the Napa River and Sulphur and York Creeks as recommended in the Streets Master Plan and shown on the Citywide Park System map.



Trails and hiking inspiration images.

St. Helena Public Library Park

The Library's has outdoor space at the Library Lane frontage and a larger area at the back of the building and parking lot that is currently planted as a vineyard. Neither space offers much recreation value or usable outdoor space. Both areas offer significant potential to provide welcoming and activated space that will serve library programs and provide park space in the center of town.

- A. Develop a master plan to re-envision both spaces to serve as plaza-like park spaces for play, relaxing and outdoor gathering.
- B. Incorporate play features, plenty of seating in a variety of configurations, picnic areas, outdoor classroom space, shade and public art. These spaces should be designed so that library staff can use them to extend library programs outdoors.
- C. Implement the master plan as funds allow. Prioritize the entry plaza for implementation first.
- D. If the library is relocated to another site in the future, the replacement library should include outdoor plaza space and community center space, like Palo Alto's Mitchell Center (a combined

library and community center located in Mitchell Park). If the city opted to relocate the library, potential locations that could fit a facility like the Mitchell Park Center are the former City Hall site adjacent to Lyman Park or a new park site. Crane Park is likely too constrained to fit a combination library/community center, without eliminating the oak trees and picnic areas.



Outdoor space around the Public Library, outlined in orange.



Public Library inspiration from Palo Alto (top) and Half Moon Bay (bottom).

"Clubhouse" Community Center

St. Helena has a need for indoor space that can be used for recreation programs, events, and rentals. To meet this need, St. Helena should pursue development of a "clubhouse" style community center. This is a smaller flexible use building that can be used for recreation programs and events and as a rental facility for private parties and events. The Willard Clubhouse Recreation Center in Berkeley is a good model. This LEED Gold facility, 3,400 sf in size, replaced a much smaller, aging facility. The building opened in 2025 and had a construction cost of \$8 million.

The city does not have the population or budget to support a full-service recreation center. These facilities are typically 40,000+ sf in size, cost millions for capital development and require an annual operating subsidy even if they are significant revenue generators.

- A. This facility should be located in a park and be oriented to the outdoors and the park landscape. There should be parking on site or ample parking nearby. Sites that should be considered for a stand-alone clubhouse include:
 - i. Crane Park, replacing the aging Headstart building.
 - ii. Adjacent to Lyman Park on the former City Hall site.

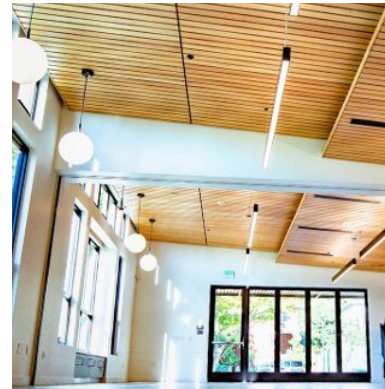


Willard Clubhouse in Berkeley.

- iii. Possibly Jacob Meily Park, where the vineyard and restroom is located currently.

- iv. At the new community park.

- B. The building should include a large multipurpose room that can accommodate an event of at least 150 people seated, single occupancy restrooms, office space for staff, a catering/service kitchen and ample storage for tables, chairs and any associated recreation equipment. It should be at least 4,000 sf in size and have doors that open from the main multipurpose room directly outdoors.
- C. The city should develop a business and operations study to finalize location, size, building elements, and operating proforma. This should be used to guide the design of the facility.
- D. This facility is suitable for philanthropic fundraising.
- E. If St. Helena moves the library, the clubhouse should be developed as part of a combined library and community center, not as a stand-alone facility.



Willard Clubhouse in Berkeley.



Additional Recommendations

New Park or Joint Use Agreement Site to Serve Hillcrest/Dean York Area

This area of St. Helena lacks a park within walking distance but has little land available. The following recommendations will Potential options to serve this area by adding a new park (such as developing a park at the reservoir on Spring Mountain Road), formalizing joint use agreements at the middle school or the Boys & Girls Club, or incorporating park amenities along the planned York Creek shared use path between Pratt Ave and Spring Mountain Road. Formally opening and recognizing the Adams-Pine pathway, described on p. 24 of the *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report*, would increase the access of residents in this neighborhood to the Boys & Girls Club and other city parks and facilities located nearby.

New Park to Keep Pace with Growth

To maintain the current level of service of 5 acres per 1,000 population, St. Helena will need to add 6.12 acres of park land by 2040 if population growth projections are met. Preferably, this should be accomplished through the acquisition of a larger community-serving park site that offers a variety of opportunities. It should be of a size and amenity mix similar to Jacob Meily or Crane Park. St. Helena should avoid acquiring multiple small sites or sites that are environmentally constrained.

Additional Recommendations

- **ADA Transition Plan.** Implement the recommended ADA upgrades at parks and facilities, as recommended in the ADA Transition Plan.
- **Parks and Recreation Office.** Move the Parks & Recreation office to a location central to St. Helena and in or adjacent to a park. Potential options include the Carnegie Building, Crane Park, or co-location with another agency.

- **School District Facilities.** Work with the School District to secure more consistent public access to school facilities, including the theater, swimming pool, gymnasiums and sports fields.



School District facilities: Top: playground at St. Helena Elementary School, Bottom: St. Helena High School Performing Arts Center.

Facilities: Recreation Programming and Events

This chapter outlines a variety of renovations and new facilities at sites across the park system that will provide more indoor and outdoor programming and event space, meeting one of the biggest needs in St. Helena's park system. The Parks & Recreation Division has been creative in developing programming that can make use of existing structures, even those that are very limited or in poor condition. This section outlines how to sequence implementation of recommendations over the next five years to support the Parks & Recreation in sustaining and growing programming as outlined in Chapter 2.

- Continue to program the martial arts studio in the converted garage at the Parks & Recreation Office and the aging Head Start Building in Crane Park until the facilities are no longer available or closed due to their condition.
- Develop programming that can make use of the Carnegie Building in its current state.
- Move the Parks & Recreation Division office to the Carnegie Building, with associated improvements needed to make it function effectively as an office in a building that has regular recreation programming.



Head Start Building in Crane Park.

- Initiate discussions with the School District on facility access.
- Coordinate with Rianda House on programming, including encouraging use of Lyman Park.
- Implement utility upgrades to support recreation programming at target sites (Lyman, Crane, Wappo and Jacob Meily), working one park at a time.
- Develop the recommended large picnic shelter at Wappo Park that can be used for both wedding rentals and Parks & Recreation programs (such as day camps).
- Stabilize Signorelli Barn, at minimum making it useable to support programming such as day camps.

Within five years, the Parks & Recreation Division should begin studies for development of the Clubhouse. If the City Council opts to relocate the library, the Community Services Director should lead the process to develop a combined library and community center.



Aquatic Center at the St. Helena High School.

4

Implementation

Chapter 4 describes how St. Helena can take incremental steps to implement the PRT Master Plan and includes recommendations and tools for Implementation.





Chapter 4 Organization

Funding recommendations.

Staffing recommendations.

A **summary recommendations** table.

A tool to **evaluate new ideas** proposed in the future.

Criteria to help staff prioritize when developing annual work plans.

Transitioning to a Vibrant and Connected System



The PRT Master Plan sets forth a comprehensive direction for the enhancement of St. Helena's park system over the next 15 to 20 years. The implementation of this plan will happen step by step, using the plan to guide the best use of opportunities for funding and partnerships. The result of the this work will be to meet our goals and these six critical outcomes.

**Enhance parks with
a sense of place -
This is St. Helena!**

**Secure consistent
and reliable funding
and revenue stream.**

**Leverage parks as
critical elements
of City livability
and connect
to downtown,
neighborhoods, and
tourism.**

**Balance the
investments east
and west.**

**Embrace parks as
more than green
spaces and activate
the in-between
spaces of plazas,
sidewalks, and
underutilized places.**

**Bolster staff capacity
to build partnerships,
capture volunteer
support, and to
deliver innovative
and creative
programs and events.**

Funding

There are a variety of funding sources available for parks and recreation, many of which are already used by St. Helena. Different funding sources have different limitations on use. Some sources can be used only for capital improvements, others can be used for operations, and some can be used for both. This section includes funding recommendations, organized by operations, capital improvements and longer term resource development.

Operations Funding

- **Allocate parks and recreation revenues from facility use fees and recreation program fees to parks and recreation services.** These fees offset the cost of operations for activities that have some individual benefit and are not fully public benefit.
- **Adjust the recently adopted nonresident facility use fees recommended by Willdan's study for events.** Willdan's recommended facility use fees included a fee philosophy about public good and private benefit. These fees also recommended higher costs for nonresidents, but did not consider that some facilities would be marketable for special events. For example, Yountville charges nonresidents for picnic shelter rentals a fee three times the resident fee, with a 4-hour time block (which allows for 2 rentals on a peak day). Yountville's packages for its community center and outdoor space range from \$2,000 to over \$6,000. Larger events require a permit, and costs are higher for events with alcohol. Security is required for some larger events.

St. Helena should adjust the fees for nonresident events based on the local market for similar vendors, and at minimum should eliminate the subsidy for nonresident special events. In particular, the fee for Wappo in particular should be increased before the site is marketed for weddings.

- **Increase revenue generation by marketing St. Helena parks and facilities for weddings and events to nonresidents.** St.

Right Funding for Right Projects

Capital improvement funding can be used for land acquisition, design, and construction. This includes expansion or renovation of existing parks and facilities, as well as new parks and facilities. By City of St. Helena policy, a capital project is considered a one-time expenditure but may take multiple years to deliver and fully fund.

The City of St. Helena manages capital development through the citywide five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), managed by the Public Works Department. This is updated annually by staff and approved by the City Council.

Operations funding supports ongoing services, such as maintenance, facility operations, recreation programming, events, marketing, and management. Funding for parks and recreation operations comes from the City's general revenue sources, including property taxes, sales taxes, and Transient Occupancy Tax, among others.

Community Services also generates revenues from facility rentals, recreation program registrations, and donations and sponsorships (such as for the Fourth of July celebration). Revenues can offset operations costs.



Helena currently does not generate much revenue from event rentals. Weddings and events can generate significant revenues, especially given the tourism in Napa County. For example, Wappo Park could be very attractive as a rustic wedding venue, with just a few improvements and a marketing campaign. Other facilities, including Carnegie Center and the entire Lyman Park, are also attractive as event venues and would be more attractive with a few improvements. Some events, such as biking events, runs and walks, could also be attracted to St. Helena. Wappo Park's parking lot is a major asset for this type of activity.

Implementing this recommendation will require staff time to conduct market research, develop marketing materials, market and book events, and provide customer service during events. This will require additional staff time, beyond existing staffing levels.

- **Consider allocating a portion of TOT funding specifically for visitor-attracting events and potentially capital improvements that support visitors.** St. Helena's parks, public spaces and programs contribute to its appeal for visitors. City Council should consider allocating a portion of TOT funding, particularly as new hotel rooms and lodging come online, to projects and programs that benefit tourism, such as wayfinding or Lyman Park seating and social spaces.
- **Maintain affordability for local residents when setting recreation program fees.** The city could consider fee increases, but these should be paired with additional free options and the establishment of a scholarship fund.
- **Increase sponsorship revenues for events.** Create a comprehensive sponsorship package to fund events, rather than seeking funding for individual events. Increase the sponsorship target beyond the current targets and consider different levels of sponsorship at different price points. Make requests earlier in the year and seek multi-year commitments. This will require additional staff time.

Yountville, California

Comparable city **Yountville** markets its community center through an events marketing website managed by recreation staff: www.yountvilleevents.com/. The site promises a 2-day turnaround for a price quote. The site includes packages, which makes it easier for potential clients to get a sense of costs without City staff having to generate a price quote.

In addition, Yountville has a downloadable special events guide outlining events permitting and various guidelines. Events could include races, weddings, corporate events, etc., and the guide covers amplified music, alcohol, food carts, parking, security and other typical event questions.



Event website and rentable event space at the Yountville Community Center.

Capital Improvement Funding

- **Adjust the Capital Improvement Plan to align with PRT Master Plan priorities.** Prioritize “Immediate Deliverables” that will demonstrate success to the community.
- **Make strategic capital investments to reduce operating costs.** Prioritize capital improvements that lower operating costs, such as irrigation system upgrades, conversion of turfgrass areas to low-mow or lawn alternatives, and the addition of solar power/ renewable energy at parks and facilities.
- **Leverage existing capital funding sources for infrastructure.** St. Helena’s stormwater, water, wastewater and streets infrastructure systems intersect with the parks and recreation system. Infrastructure capital projects can deliver multiple benefits. For example, if a project is completed at the reservoir access road, it can be structured to develop the recommended trail. Or when a Class 1 trail recommended in the Streets Master Plan passes through a park, it can improve the trail corridor through the park. In addition, parks offer opportunities for green stormwater infrastructure that reduces runoff and increases infiltration.
- **Add a small asset management surcharge on all facility use and recreation program fees (such as \$1 or a percentage of the total) and place the funds into a budget account for capital preservation and replacement.** The surcharge would be applied to all program fees and rental charges. The proceeds from the surcharge would go into an account used to support long-term facility repair, renovation, and replacement.
- **Continue to regularly update the City’s impact fee study and require fees in lieu of land.** The Park Impact Fee is St. Helena’s primary source of capital improvement funding for parks and recreation improvement. The fees in lieu help fund capacity-enhancing projects within the existing system and can help fund the development of new parks. Given the high cost of land in Napa



County, it is important to continue regular updates to keep pace with increased costs.

- **Use some General Fund dollars to fund park improvements in the existing system.** St. Helena has primarily used impact fees to fund park improvements, even though it is not a high growth city. Comparable cities, including Calistoga, Half Moon Bay, Healdsburg, Ojai, and Yountville, use some General Funds to fund park improvements. In Ojai, residents have voted to use some TOT funds to fund improvements.
- **Prioritize improvements that will increase revenue generation**

from event rentals. As noted under Operations Funding above, St. Helena should focus on generating revenue from event rentals, which is unrestricted revenue. The city can use this revenue in combination with other revenues to prioritize capital improvements that make event rental locations more marketable or to command a higher rental fee. See Chapter 3 improvement recommendations.

- **In the mid to long term, explore a new voter-supported funding mechanism, especially a parcel tax or Landscape and Lighting Assessment District that can support both capital and operations.** This will require a feasibility study that includes a voter poll to test the viability of various mechanisms and rates as well as priorities. Many successful voter-approved tax measures for parks and recreation focus on taking care of existing assets or on land protection/conservation, and not solely on funding big-ticket capital facilities.

Resource Development

The recommendations below could increase the resources available for parks and recreation, with the use of resources (whether capital, operations or both) depending on the partner or specific opportunity.

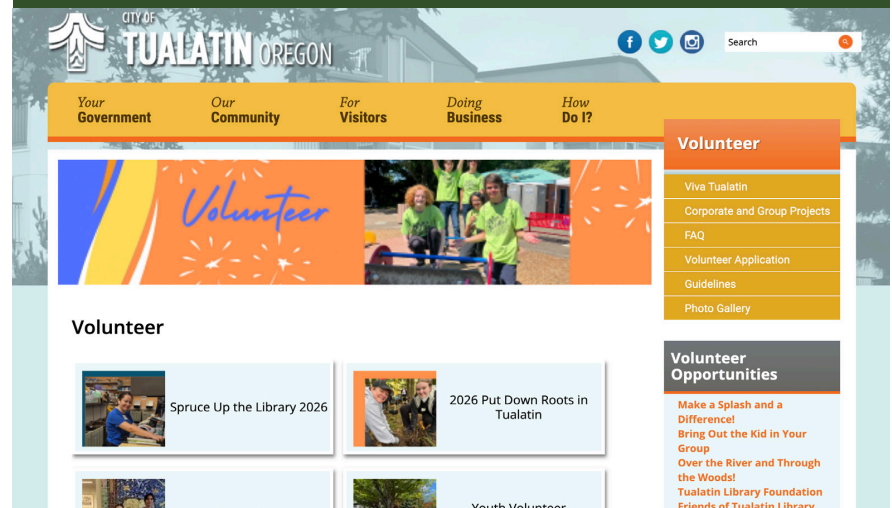
- **Significantly increase efforts to work with the parks and arts nonprofit to expand funding through donations, philanthropy and sponsorships.** The newly refocused nonprofit provides a way for St. Helena to expand its efforts to generate donations. Increasing donations will require consistent City staff time.
- **Increase opportunities for residents to volunteer in St. Helena's parks and recreation system.** Develop a volunteer program that includes a range of activities, time commitments, and focus areas. This will require dedicated staff time. None of the comparable cities have a dedicated volunteer coordinator, but most of them have more recreation staffing per capita than St. Helena.
- **Collaborate with other organizations to increase resources for**

Tualatin, Oregon

The City of Tualatin in Oregon (population 27,000) has an outstanding and comprehensive city volunteer programs. It has dedicated volunteer coordinators housed in the City Manager's office who recruit and manage volunteers citywide, including for special events, the library and for hands-on park stewardship activities. They offer a variety of opportunities and use an online platform to manage volunteers.

In FY 2023-34, the City recorded 15,115 donated volunteer hours from 856 volunteers, all working within the library and the parks and recreation system. This translates to more than 7 full-time staff.

See for program details. <https://www.tualatinoregon.gov/volunteer/volunteer-guidelines>



Volunteer website for Tualatin, Oregon.

parks and recreation. St. Helena should increase collaborations with local organizations to increase resources for parks and recreation. For example, the Napa Valley Land Trust has been an important partner, such as in the acquisition of Hunts Grove Park. The School District has sites and facilities that the community would like to have more access to. This effort will require consistent staff time to build relationships and develop agreements.

- **Continue to seek grant and foundation funding.** Grant funding is opportunity-based and often government grants are focused on underserved communities. Grants are not a sustainable or reliable source of funding and should not be considered a primary source. St. Helena received a Prop 68 per capita grant, but the community's overall demographics, especially per capita income, make it ineligible for some public grants that focus on vulnerable populations. Potentially, St. Helena could qualify for climate- or wildfire prevention-related public grants, but that will depend on the grant criteria. Some foundation grants may be a match, for specific programs for residents with specific needs or vulnerabilities. The nonprofit will be an important sponsor for any foundation grants

Implementing this recommendation will require consistent staff time to monitor grant opportunities and develop relationships with foundations. If an opportunity is identified, each application or proposal will require additional staff time to prepare and submit. The skills needed to prepare some applications and proposals are specialized and may require outside assistance as well as dedicated staff time.

- **Reach out to local businesses, especially vintners and hotels, to seek partnerships.** Local vineyards and hotels have a vested interest in ensuring visitors enjoy their stays and want to return to the area. There may be opportunities to partner in ways that help the city and the businesses reach their goals, whether through events, concessions agreements, park improvements, or other collaborations. Partnerships take time to develop and eventually

Healdsburg, California

Healdsburg's new pavilion included significant funding from the Foley Family Charitable Foundation. This fund was established in 1999 by Bill and Carol Foley of the Foley Entertainment Group to support the communities in which they live.

St. Helena may have charitable foundations that staff could reach out to Healdsburg colleagues to learn how they successfully secured foundation funding for the project.



The Foley Family Community Pavilion in Healdsburg.

formalize and will require consistent time commitment from a staff member with the authority to make decisions about the use of city resources. The St. Helena Chamber of Commerce may be a good resource for identifying business needs and potential contacts.

Staffing

Two Departments are responsible for St. Helena's parks and recreation services.

The **Community Services Department** was created in 2024 to merge Parks and Recreation and Library into one department. The Community Services Department oversees St. Helena Public Library, recreation programming, and community engagement and communications. The Community Services Director is the staff liaison for the Parks & Recreation Commission.

The **Public Works Department** is responsible for all aspects of the City's infrastructure and public rights-of-way, including streets, storm drains, parks, water treatment, water distribution, wastewater collection and treatment, and capital projects. Within the Department, the Parks and Trees Division is responsible for parks maintenance and maintenance of the urban forest, among other duties.

Benchmarking during the planning process identified that St. Helena provides a similar level of services compared to peer communities such as Calistoga, Ojai and Yountville, but more parks and recreation services than similar size agencies nationwide. However, St. Helena's staffing levels are lower. Compared to small agencies nationwide based on National Recreation and Park Association data, St. Helena is below the median level of staffing despite offering more services. These recommendations focus on key staffing needs to sustain the current system at a level consistent with community expectations and to leverage opportunities (such as increasing sponsorships).

- **Fill vacant position(s) in the Community Services Department.** The Parks and Recreation Division is already lightly staffed. The



Division has been down a staff person since August, and there is no space capacity. Filling all budgeted positions should be a top priority.

- **Make the Recreation Assistant position full-time.** This position is currently less than full-time but the workload justifies a full-time role, not a 0.85% position.
- **Quantify the percentage of time the Parks and Trees Division spends on tasks outside the park system.** The Parks and Trees Division is tasked with maintaining the park system, but has other responsibilities including maintaining the grounds of city buildings

and supporting other Public Works responsibilities when needed. The Division appears to be staffed at lower levels than other agencies and industry averages, even without accounting for these other responsibilities.

- **Explore using seasonal positions and contracted services for routine maintenance tasks to expand capacity of the Parks and Trees Division.** Tasks such as litter pickup, trash pickup, restroom cleaning, event setup/takedown and mowing should be considered for seasonals and contracts. This would allow permanent full-time employees to focus on higher skill or specialized tasks and quality control.
- **Add capacity to expand existing efforts or add missing functions in the following areas:**
 - Volunteer Recruitment, Management and Coordination, which will require regular dedicated staff time.
 - Communications and Marketing, including marketing event spaces and programming.
 - Fund Development, which will require regular time investment including working with the nonprofit, dedicated time for fundraising, and regular time for sponsorships.
 - Added Recreation Programming Capacity using a mix of in-house and contracted resources.
 - Natural Areas Management, a function that is not part of the Parks & Trees Division's responsibilities currently.
 - Trails Maintenance, a function that will be needed as more trails are added.
 - Added Groundskeeping Capacity, to increase the ability of the Parks & Trees Division to provide the level of stewardship the community desires.

- Added Urban Forestry Capacity, to ensure St. Helena's tree canopy is sustained and expanded.

- **Determine the best approach to providing more capacity and new functions.** Updated job descriptions can be used to reallocate and reprioritize responsibilities, add new responsibilities and remove responsibilities. New positions can be funded to bring in additional staff resources, whether seasonal, permanent, temporary or full-time. Contracted services can add more capacity or bring in a specialized resource without committing to permanent staffing.

As St. Helena's population increases and more parks, facilities, trails, or services are added, additional staffing will be required.

- **Add staff or contracted resources as the system expands.** When new parks, natural areas, or facilities are added to the system, staff increases must be built into the budget.



Recommendations, Programs and Initiatives Summary

The Master Plan Implementation Table, beginning on the following page, summarizes all recommended new projects, programs and initiatives, synthesized from Chapters 2 and 3. This table does not include continuing programs, such as the well-attended recreation programs and special events, and ongoing operations to take care of and maintain the park system. The Master Plan Implementation Table includes projects, programs and initiatives that are above and beyond existing staff efforts, and that must be adequately resourced and sequenced in over time.

This table is intended to serve as a resource, along with Chapter 3, for the City's established capital improvement plan process. Capital projects identified in this PRT Master Plan will be considered for inclusion in future CIP update cycles, based on available funding.

The Implementation Table is organized into three sections: Existing Parks and Facilities; New Parks, Facilities and Trails and New Programs and Initiatives (with policy reference).

For each project, program or initiative, the following information is provided:

- **Recommendations Type.** These columns indicate which of the four recommendations types apply to each site or initiative.
- **City Lead/Partner Project.** Some projects, programs, or initiatives are intended to be led by the City, while others will involve or be led by a partner. Checkboxes indicate which projects are planned for the City to lead, and which are projected to have partner involvement.
- **Top Priority:** This column includes the top one or two priority steps for implementation.

Recommendations, Programs & Initiatives Summary

Existing Parks and Facilities

	Major Development	User Experience Improvements	Nature and Habitat Enhancements	Programming and Activation	City Lead	Partner Project	Top Priority
Carnegie Building		■		■	■		Develop more regular programming suitable for the building and its noise profile. Consider moving the Parks & Recreation office to the Carnegie Center, while still retaining event and programming space.
Crane Park	■	■	■	■	■		Convert the Head Start building into an indoor/outdoor activity hub, focusing on young kids in the morning and teens in the afternoon. Create a looped path within the park with mileage markers, using the existing path system where possible.
Jacob Meily Park		■	■	■	■		Preserve tree canopy throughout the park. Add wayfinding signs at each pedestrian entrance that welcome people to the park
Signorelli Barn		■		■	■		Stabilize Signorelli Barn.
Lewis Station		■			■	■	Add temporary or permanent public art. Improve the visual presence of this park at the intersection of Church Street and Hunt Avenue.
Lyman Park	■	■		■	■		Activate this park with moveable seating and tables, and program spaces. Add wifi.

Existing Parks and Facilities

	Major Development	User Experience Improvements	Nature and Habitat Enhancements	Programming and Activation	City Lead	Partner Project	Top Priority
Wappo Park	■	■	■	■	■		Upgrade the existing picnic area to create a more welcoming space that is attractive as a rustic wedding venue. Retain the dog park and improve it for greater usability, such as adding a double-gate system, a small-dog area, shade, and human seating.
Mary Fryer Park		■	■		■		Improve the path and add wayfinding signage to direct users to the other two parks.
Mennen Park			■		■		Add more varied seating options – benches, rocks, seat walls, moveable seating.
Starr Baldwin Park		■	■		■		Add art or a gateway feature at the park entrance from Vorhees Circle to increase the park's visibility and invite people in. Consider adding community garden plots to this park.
Stephen C. McCullagh Park		■				■	Maintain the tree canopy and implement a tree replacement plan.
Hunt Ave. Lot			■			■	Collaborate with the Land Trust.
Stone Bridge Park		■	■		■		Manage invasive species on the site and increase native and riparian plantings.

New Parks, Facilities & Trails

	Major Development	User Experience Improvements	Nature and Habitat Enhancements	Programming and Activation	City Lead	Partner Project	Top Priority
St. Helena Public Library Park	■	■		■	■		Pilot programming in the outdoor areas to test this concept.
"Clubhouse" Community Center	■	■			■		Within five years, begin studies for development of the Clubhouse.
New Park or Joint Use Site to Serve Hillcrest/Dean York		■	■		■		Formally open the Adams-Pine pathway to increase access to the Boys & Girls Club and other city facilities located nearby as an interim step.
New Park to Keep Pace with Growth	■		■		■		No immediate action - Depends on development proposals.
Napa River Walk Park		■	■		■		Add the Napa River Walk Loop open space to the St. Helena park inventory, designating it as a linear park.
Valley Floor Walk and Community Forest			■			■	Collaborate with St. Helena Community Forest advocates, who are advancing this idea.
Reservoir Trail		■	■		■		Develop a natural surface trail to formalize the existing rough path at the reservoir as a first step.
Napa River Shared Use Path	■		■		■		Coordinate with Streets Master Plan on implementation. Begin with the Wappo Park segment.
Sulphur Creek Shared Use Path		■	■		■		Coordinate with the Streets Master Plan on implementation.
York Creek Shared Use Path		■	■		■		Coordinate with the Streets Master Plan on implementation.

New Programs and Initiatives (with policy reference)

	Major Development	User Experience Improvements	Nature and Habitat Enhancements	Programming and Activation	City Lead	Partner Project	Top Priority
A.7 Parks Wayfinding Program		■			■		Develop sign program and updated sign design; use new standard for any signs replaced or installed.
B.4 Pilot Recreation Programs				■	■		Test at least one new special event and at least one new Carnegie Building program in 2026.
B.5 One-Stop Programming Information Resource		■			■	■	Meet with St. Helena's webmaster to determine capabilities of city website as the first step.
C.5 Volunteer Program				■	■	■	Budget for additional staffing, hire for volunteer and partnership management experience.
D.5 Tree Canopy Replacement Program			■		■		Include a regular allocation for tree replacement (materials purchase) in the operating budget.
D.6 Updated Plant and Tree Palette			■		■		Reach out to the City of Sonoma to learn about their recently updated master tree list (developed with the UC Master Gardener Program).
D.7 Natural Area Management Program			■		■		Convene a work session with Napa County Land Trust and Napa County Resource Conservation District.
E.1 Library Division Collaboration				■	■		Continue to build relationship and cross-group engagement
E.3 Community Services/Public Works Collaboration and Coordination		■	■		■		Continue to meet regularly to coordinate efforts.

New Programs and Initiatives (with policy reference)

	Major Development	User Experience Improvements	Nature and Habitat Enhancements	Programming and Activation	City Lead	Partner Project	Top Priority
E.5 Nonprofit Collaboration Fundraising	■	■	■	■	■	■	Continue to advance the nonprofit.
E.6 Partnership Management and Development		■	■	■	■	■	Budget for additional staffing, hire for volunteer and partnership management experience.
F.3 Water and Irrigation Efficiency Upgrade Program			■		■	■	Include a regular allocation for tree irrigation upgrades (materials purchases) in the operating budget.
F.7 Asset Management Plan	■	■	■		■		Coordinate with Public Works on this effort for consistency citywide.
F.8 New Voter-Supported Funding	■	■	■	■	■		Initiate exploration in five years.

Evaluating New Ideas



Over the 15- to 20-year life of this long-range plan, additional projects and ideas may be proposed in the future by staff, the Parks and Recreation Commission, or by community members. The tool in this section provides a structured proposal and evaluation process so that new ideas can be vetted for consistency with the PRT Master Plan.

Future Project Analysis & Criteria

Use the following six questions to develop the idea into a more concrete proposal for new parks, programs, and improvements.

1

What is the project?
Clearly outline and scope the proposed project or program.

2

What are the costs?
Capital Costs?
Operational Costs?
Maintenance?

3

Is there a funding mechanism in place to cover costs? How will it be paid for today and in the future?

4

Who is served?
A particular demographic?
User?
Neighborhood?

5

Does it meet the PRT Goals? Use the Criteria Checklist to identify alignment.

6

What is the timeframe for development?

Criteria Checklist

Alignment with Goals & Needs	Yes (x)	Notes & Considerations
Goal A. Connections		
Fills gaps in 10-minute walk standard		
Connects the System (signage or path)		
Enhances the design & usability of existing park		
Adds social gathering space		
Adds trail to existing park or new space		
Goal B. Livability		
Adds health/fitness facilities		
Adds priority outdoor facility		
Adds programmable space (indoors or outdoors)		
Incorporates cultural, historic or other art		
Adds additional programming		
Goal C. Welcoming		
Provides Universal Design enhancements		
Increases cultural relevancy of facility or program		
Improves affordability		
Increases access and usability for all ages and users		

Alignment with Goals & Needs	Yes (x)	Notes & Considerations
Goal D. Nature		
Adds or preserves natural features, plantings, ecosystem		
Improves or adds to tree canopy		
Offers visual or physical access to water		
Increases community resilience to climate hazards		
Goal E. Partnerships		
Leverages and enhances Library connections		
Increase access to school facilities		
Supports new and existing funding opportunities		
Grows community partnerships		
Goal F. Stewardship		
Increases or limits to impact staff capacity & resources		
Supports and improves maintenance and asset management practices		
Offers multiple benefits including sustainability		
Increases revenues, funding, and/or reduces Dept. costs		



Annual Work Plan Criteria

Each year, staff will update an Annual Work Plan. This is the tool for staff to sequence Master Plan projects, programs initiatives for implementation, based on available staffing and financial resources. Each Work Plan should include a mix of recommendation types – some “Immediate Deliverables” to demonstrate progress, but also actions that make progress on implementing more complex “Meets Our Vision” or “Long Term Need” efforts.

These criteria below will help staff prioritize their work to get the most benefit for the parks, recreation and trails system.

- **Partnership potential:** Partnerships are an important aspect of St. Helena’s approach to parks and recreation services. Those projects or initiatives with one or more partners who will help with implementation and/or ongoing operation make an effort more viable and successful.
- **Reduce operating costs or generate revenue:** Projects, programs or initiatives that improve maintenance or operations efficiencies and conserve water or reduce energy usage can create operating cost savings in future years. Projects that contribute to revenue generation, such as adding spaces or features that support expanded recreation programming or event rentals, can bring more resources into the system.
- **Provide balanced investment:** The projects, programs and initiatives underway in any given timeframe should respond to St. Helena’s varied demographics, recreation interests, and geography.
- **Increase equity:** St. Helena values equity. Projects, programs and initiatives that increase equity should be prioritized.
- **Limited time opportunity:** Opportunities arise, and may come with a time constraint, such as a grant, a new residential or commercial development, or a project being completed by another department or agency. Time-limited opportunities should be leveraged when they are likely to deliver results.

Afterword

This Master Plan is the culmination of almost a year of work by Community Services Department and Parks and Trees Division staff, the Advisory Committee, and the Parks and Recreation Commission, with the participation of organizations and individuals from across the City.

This PRT Master Plan, the first guiding plan for the City's park system, provides the guidance to realize the community's vision:

St. Helena parks, programs, and trails make life better for all by enlivening the community, supporting healthy people and parks, and providing active and connected public places.

The PRT Master Plan is the St. Helena community's tool for action. Working together, City staff, the Parks and Recreation Commission, partner organizations and individual volunteers can take action to make St. Helena an even better place to live, work and play, for today and for future generations.



Glossary



Glossary

Parks

Park Classification: A park classification system groups sites with similar functions and services to help better understand the park network. The classification system in the PRT Master Plan is a refinement of the categorizations in the St. Helena General Plan.

Community-serving Park: A community-serving parks serves multiple neighborhoods or provides features that draw users from the entire city. Typically, community-serving parks are larger parks with multiple features such as sports fields, destination playgrounds, and community centers.

Local-serving Park: A local-serving park is characterized by its small size (less than one acre) and limited features. They vary from small picnic spaces and greens to small squares and plazas and primarily serve nearby neighbors.

Facility: A facility is a stand-alone recreation facility that is not incorporated into a larger park.

Linear Park: A linear park is longer than it is wide, connects areas, and typically includes a path that follows a linear feature, such as a river, creek, or utility right-of-way.

Natural Area: Natural areas are properties set aside to preserve natural resources or features, remnant landscapes, or scenic resources/views. Low-impact recreation or facilities may be provided at these sites, as long as the primary conservation objective is maintained.

Undeveloped Site: Undeveloped sites are intended for future park use, but do have developed public access points or facilities.

Trails

Recreational Trail: The term 'recreational trail' means a thoroughfare or track across land, used for recreational purposes such as pedestrian activities, including wheelchair use; skating or skateboarding; and bicycling.

Regional Trail: A regional trail is a long-distance, typically paved or hardened, off-street pathway connecting multiple cities, counties, or communities.

Shared Use Path: The Streets Master Plan defines Shared Use Paths, also known as Class 1 Bikeways. These are intended for bicycle and pedestrian use.

Park Pathway: A park pathway is a circulation routes in a park. Some park pathways may be part of a designated recreational trail.

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Parks, Recreation, & Trails Master Plan

Appendices

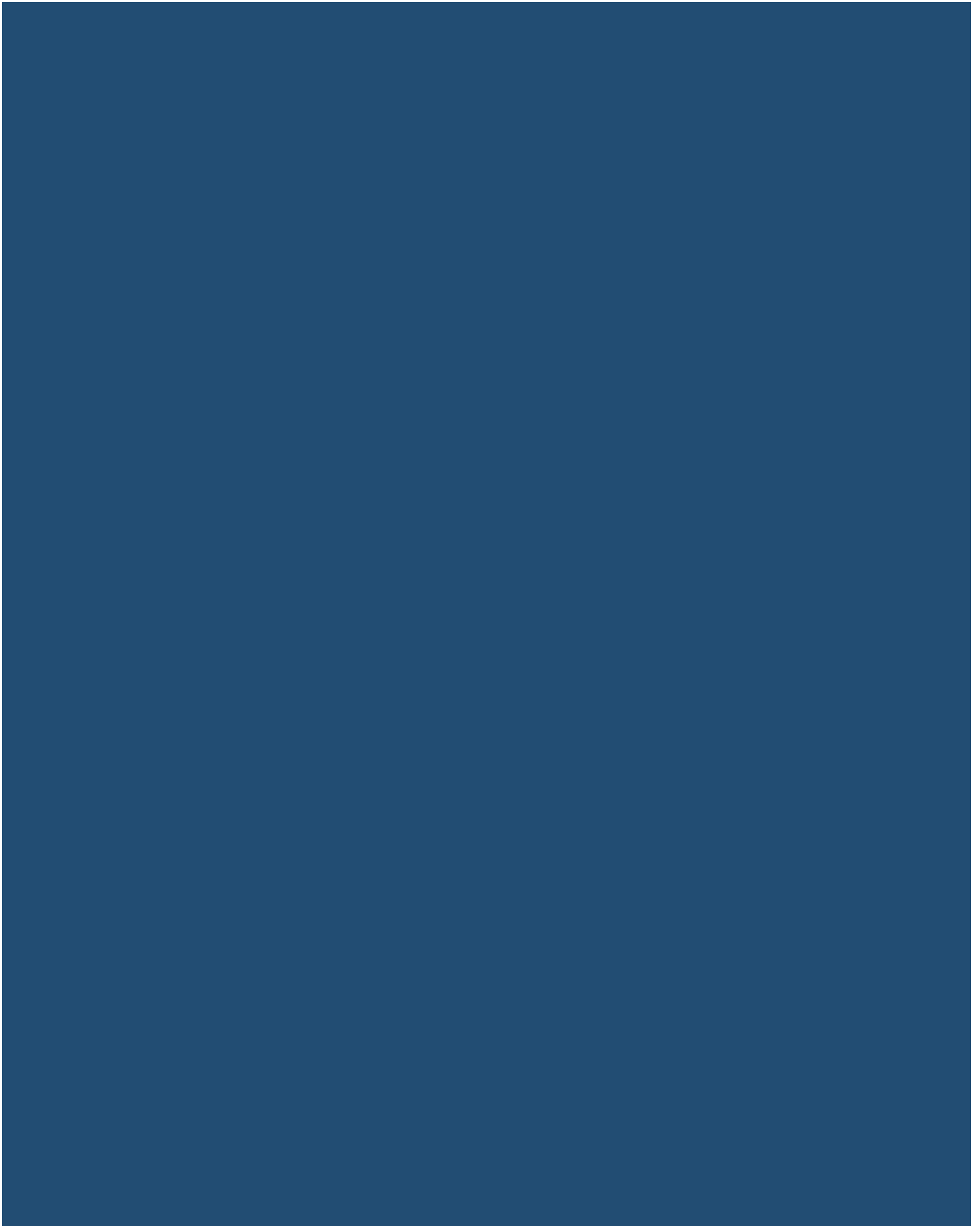




Appendix A



Existing Conditions





Existing Conditions Report

St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

August 2025



City of St. Helena
Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

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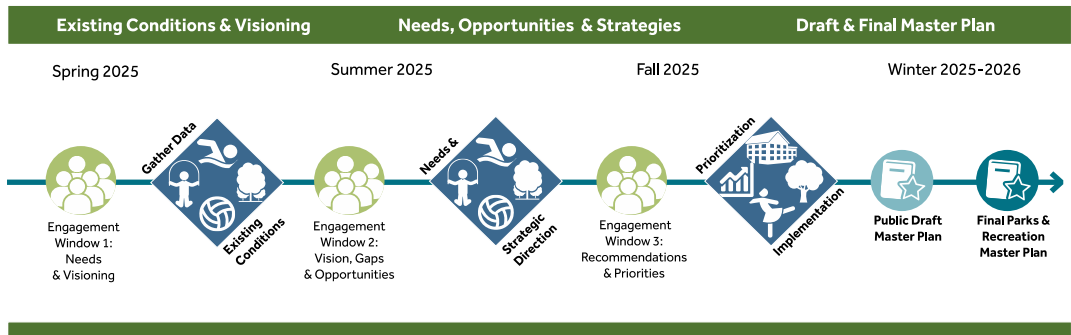
Introduction

Overview of Parks, Recreation, and Trails Planning Process

The City of St. Helena is in the process of developing a new Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan (PRT Master Plan). Led by the Parks and Recreation Division, this new plan will be the first standalone parks, recreation, and trails plan for the city and will complement the 2019 St. Helena General Plan. It will stand as a blueprint to guide decisions on parks, trails, and recreation services for the next 10 to 15 years.

The Master Planning process kicked off in Spring 2025, with the major public engagement launched in May 2025. The PRT Master Plan is anticipated to be completed in Winter 2025-2026. The process diagram below shows the timing of planning phases and the integration of community engagement throughout the process.

Figure 1: Planning Process



Purpose of the Existing Conditions Report

This Existing Conditions Report details the findings from the first phase of the process, establishing a baseline for the PRT Master Plan. This summary discusses the planning context, examines demographics, and documents the existing system to set a foundation for the needs assessment and recommendations that will be developed in later phases.

This document will serve as a reference throughout the planning process and will form a building block for the final PRT Master Plan document.



City of St. Helena
Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Planning Context

Regional Context

St. Helena is centrally located in Napa County, situated at the heart of the upper Napa Valley, a region known for its diverse soils, microclimates, and success as a center for agriculture and the wine-making industry. As shown in Figure 2, State Route 29 runs directly through downtown and serves as St. Helena’s Main Street. It is a critical piece of transportation infrastructure for both St. Helena residents and Napa County visitors, but also creates a barrier for east-west movement during peak times.

St. Helena is a popular destination for visitors interested in the many wineries and vineyards within and around the city. Historically, St. Helena is known as the business center of the wine country. In addition, the Culinary Institute of America at Greystone is located at the north end of St. Helena. Nationally known for its culinary and wine education programs, CIA at Greystone draws visitors to its programs, campus and student-run restaurant.

The city has views of the Mayacamas Mountains and Mount St. Helena, the highest point in Napa County and home to the headwaters of the Napa River. It is near popular parks and recreation options within Napa County, including Robert Louis Stevenson State Park. Many of the 3.7 million visitors to Napa Valley in 2023 reported being drawn to the scenic beauty and recreational experiences, in addition to wine.

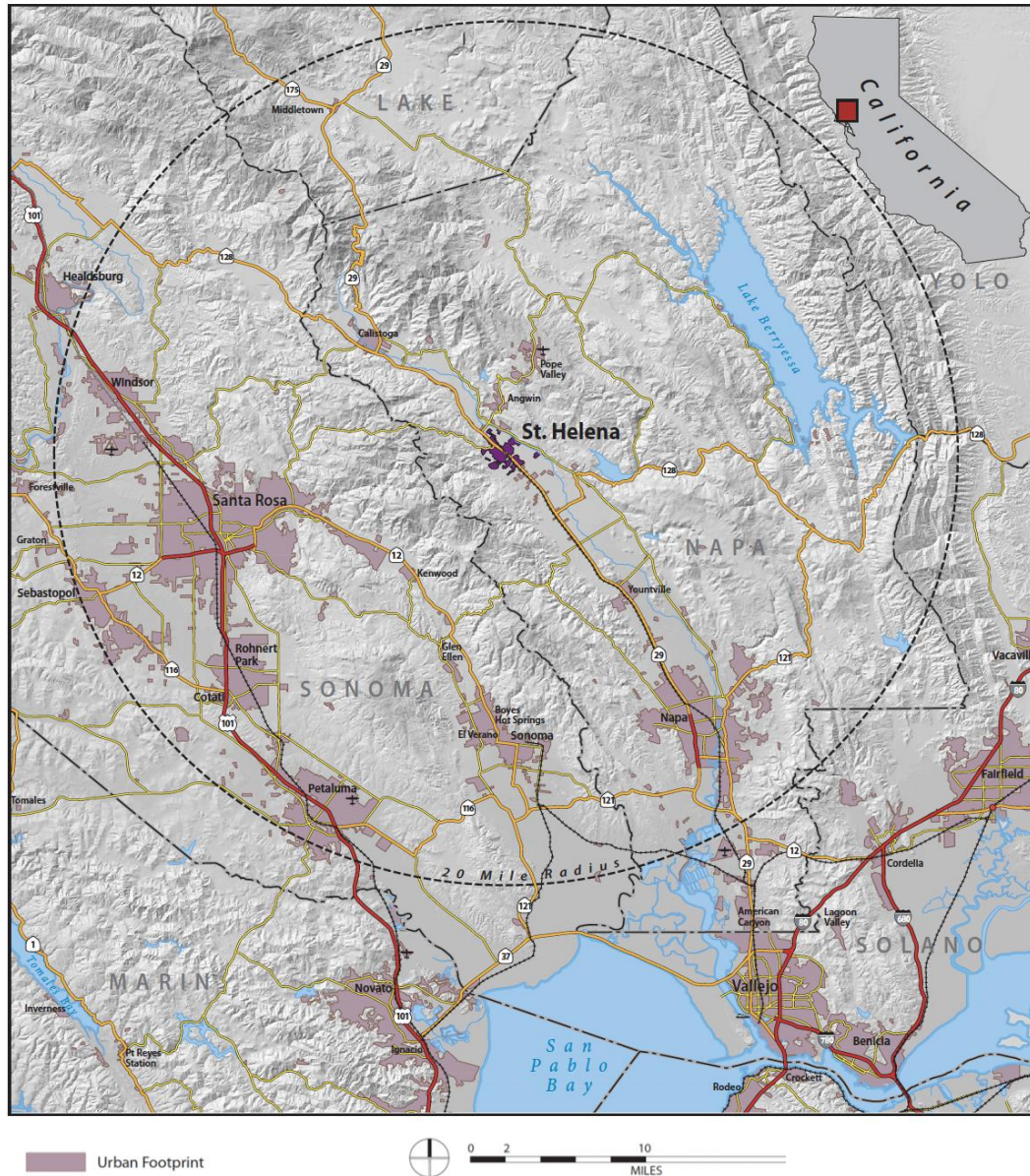
Figure 1: View of a Winery in St. Helena





City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Figure 2: Regional Context



Sources: Metropolitan Transportation Commission, 2001; Green Info Network, 2001; Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, California Department of Conservation; Dyett & Bhatia, 2018.

Source: St. Helena General Plan

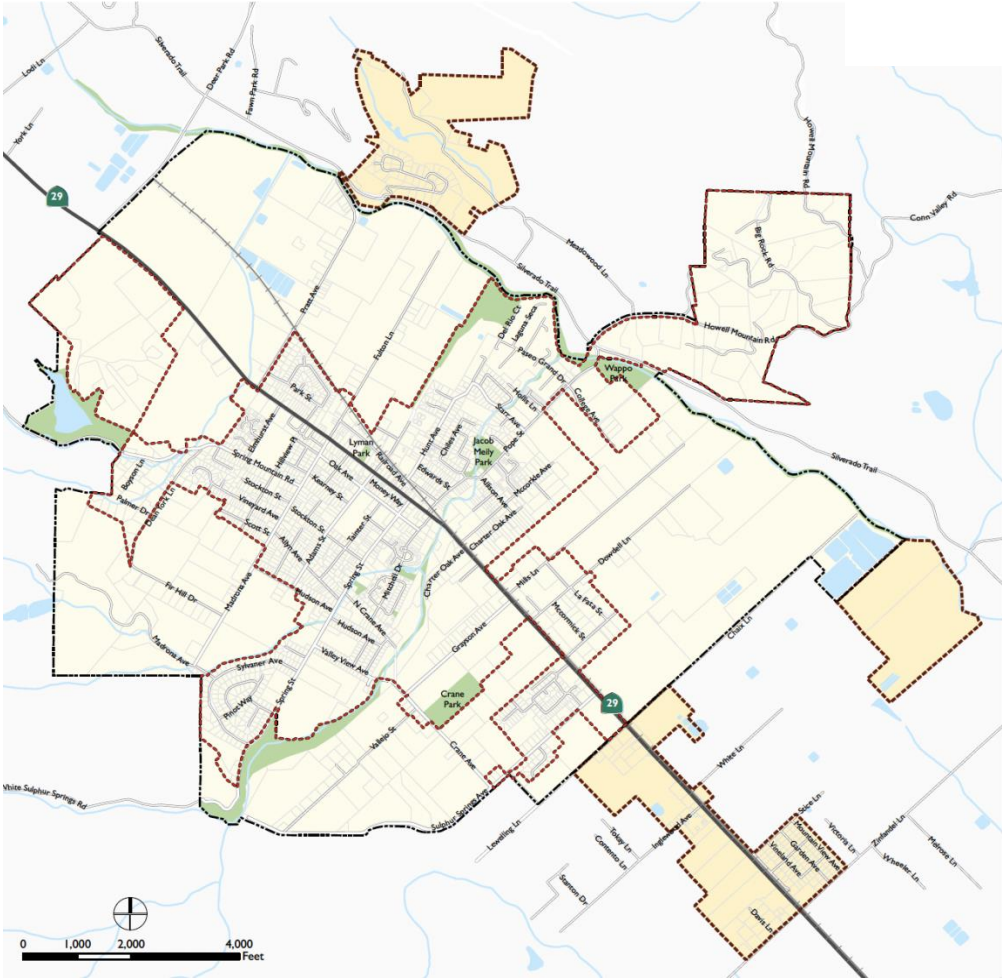


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Planning Area

St. Helena is a small city of about five square miles, encompassing the residential and downtown areas within the urban limit line, as well as agricultural and natural areas surrounding the urban area. For consistency, the PRT Master Plan will use the same planning areas as the General Plan, shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Planning Area



Source: St. Helena General Plan

The primary planning area for the PRT Master Plan is the City of St. Helena city limits. The PRT Master Plan will also consider the three “Study Areas” identified in St. Helena’s General Plan, as the secondary planning area. Of specific interest to this plan is Study Area 2, located south of Chaix Lane, immediately adjacent to the southeastern City limit. The area is approximately 100 acres and comprises the spray fields currently used to dispose of treated effluent from the City’s Wastewater Treatment Plant. The urban limit line is relevant to the PRT Master Plan because all areas outside

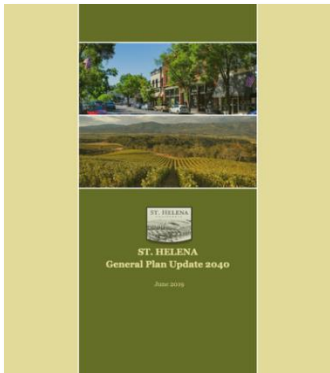


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that boundary are designated Agriculture or Woodlands and Watersheds, regardless of their current use.

Guiding Documents

St. Helena General Plan (2019)

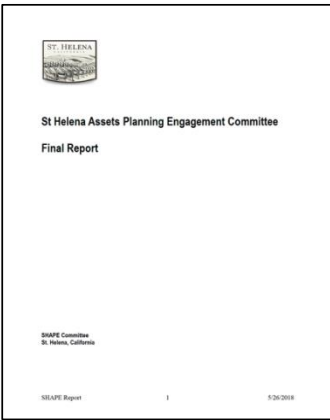


The St. Helena General Plan, published in 2019, is the primary policy document for the City of St. Helena as it moves toward the year 2040. It sets forth the town’s policies to guide future land use decisions and provides the needed framework to preserve the character and quality of development that the community desires. These 12 Elements of the plan establish the policy direction necessary to achieve the community’s vision that in the year 2040, the town will be a well-integrated place linked by effective community institutions, safe neighborhoods and streets, and superior schools, parks, and public facilities.

The Parks and Recreation Element (Chapter 12) of St. Helena’s General Plan is directly relevant to the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan. Additional Elements direct St. Helena’s parks system to play a role in expanding bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, preserving the city’s agricultural heritage, enhancing native habitats, and mitigating climate change through urban forestry. See **Appendix A: General Plan Policy Scan** for the list of relevant General Plan policies and implementing actions from the chapters outside the Parks and Recreation Element.

The PRT Master Plan will reference these policies and implementing actions and may make recommendations for updates or additions.

St. Helena Assets Planning Engagement Committee Final Report (2018)

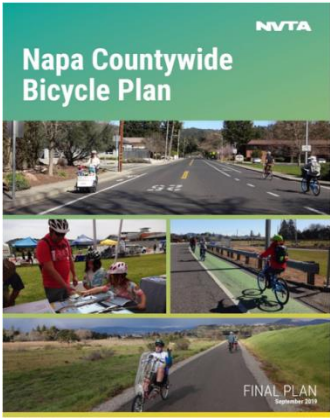


The St. Helena Assets Planning Engagement Committee (SHAPE) was created to advise the St. Helena City Council in prioritizing and identifying strategies to address civic needs and opportunities. The final report of the SHAPE committee analyzed city assets and provided recommendations for how to best improve and utilize those assets. The committee final report also identified challenges in the Long Range Financial Forecast and feasibility of concepts identified in the 2009 Visioning Statement.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

St. Helena Bicycle Plan (2019)



The St. Helena Bicycle Plan, part of the Napa Countywide Bicycle Plan, was published in 2019. The citywide Bicycle Plan was produced by the Napa Valley Transportation Authority and includes Napa Vine Trail. The St. Helena Bicycle Plan outlines existing and planned bicycle routes intended to provide safe and convenient bicycle access to parks, open spaces, commercial areas, residential neighborhoods, and community facilities. Once completed, the network will play a key role in bolstering the City’s efforts to increase the use of bicycles as non-auto modes of transit, and to reduce overall vehicle miles traveled in the city.

St. Helena Pedestrian Plan (2016)

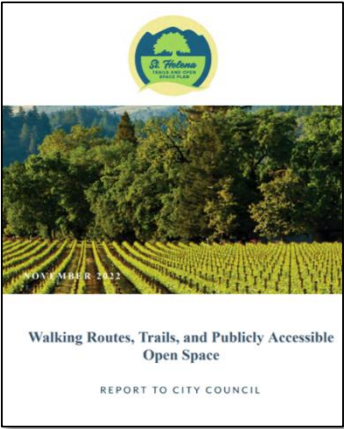


The St. Helena Pedestrian Plan, part of the Napa Countywide Pedestrian Plan, was published in 2016. The plan was produced by the Napa Valley Transportation Authority to address pedestrian needs and opportunities. The Pedestrian plan establishes a policy framework and implementation plan for each city in Napa County to enhance pedestrian mobility and safety throughout. The plan identified key high-risk intersections and areas to prioritize solutions for through GIS analysis and community engagement.



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Walking Routes, Trails and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report to City Council (2022)



The Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report (2022) presents the Parks & Recreation Commission’s Ad Hoc Subcommittee’s findings and recommendations to help the City of St. Helena become a world-class rural walking town. The report initiative began with a mission to develop a framework for the City of St. Helena to deliver the walking, access, passive recreation, and connectivity goals contained within the 2019 General Plan and the 2016 Pedestrian Plan.

The goal of the report is to preserve, develop and open walking paths within St. Helena. The report emphasizes that developing walking routes and trails will improve the quality of life for full-time residents, attract new visitors, and encourage existing visitors to spend additional time in town, which will also further help St. Helena’s downtown to remain a lively and active place.

Streets Master Plan



The St. Helena Streets Master Plan, currently underway, aims to revolutionize the city's transportation network, boosting connectivity and synergy to enhance circulation, public safety, and mobility for everyone. The plan will produce a conceptual design plan for the transportation network throughout the city with context-sensitive pedestrian, bicyclist, and transit improvements. The project area will cover the entire transportation infrastructure of the city, except the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) area. The PRT Master Plan will coordinate with the Streets Master Plan on topics including safe routes to parks and trails.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Natural Systems and Climate Change

St. Helena is located between the Mayacamas Mountains to the west and the Howell Mountains to the east within what is commonly known as Napa Valley. Summers in St. Helena are very hot and dry, while the winters are relatively cool and rainy. These seasonal extremes are likely to increase in severity as the area experiences impacts from climate change and as California continues to experience periods of drought and substantial winter storms. In addition, the valley is in a high-risk wildfire area and the areas surrounding the town have a very high to high risk based on CalFire recent mapping¹.

Although it is located near several mountain ranges, St. Helena is relatively flat within the city limits. The surrounding landscape is a mixture of grassland, oak woodland, agricultural croplands, and developed lands, with three waterways winding through the city.

Rivers and Creeks (Sulphur Creek, York Creek, Napa River)

The Napa River and its two tributaries, York Creek and Sulphur Creek, flow through St. Helena and are heavily dependent on seasonal rains for water flow. Several of St. Helena's parks are adjacent to the creeks and river, including Wappo Park and Jacob Meily Park. However, there is no official water access from any park to the river.

Protected Lands

St. Helena's General Plan recognizes the natural areas surrounding the city as opportunities for preservation and conservation. The Agriculture (AG) land use designation, accounting for almost half the city's area, allows agricultural and winery uses and affordable employee housing with limitations on single family residences and other uses. The areas designated Woodland and Watershed (WW) are located on the steep hillsides at outer western and eastern edges of the city. Only very low-density residential development is allowed, on lots of at least 5 acres in size. As noted earlier, all lands outside St. Helena's urban limit line not designated as WW are designated AG regardless of size or actual use to conserve agricultural land.

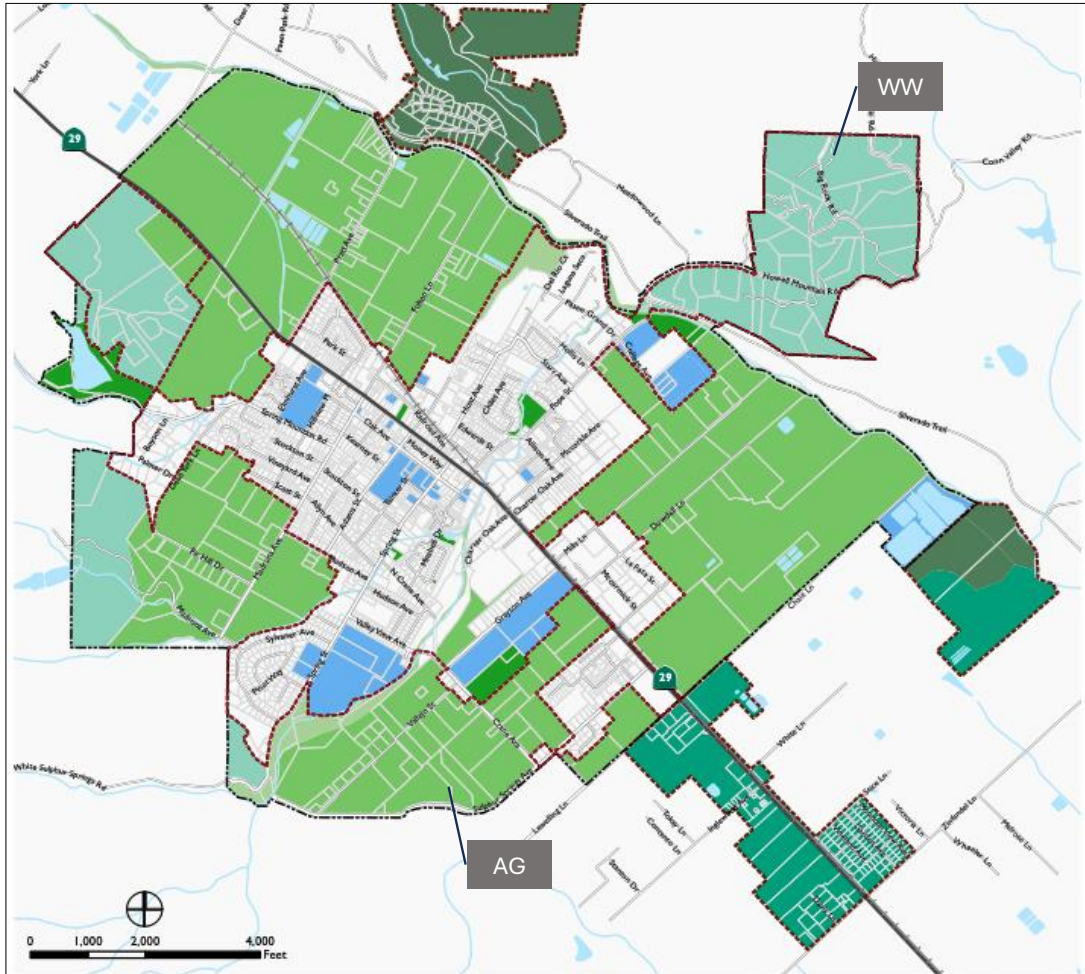
As shown in Figure 4, these land use designations offer a landscape greenbelt around St. Helena, providing opportunities for viewsheds and recreation while focusing urban development in the central portion of the planning area.

¹ CalFire, Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer, accessed June 12, 2025.
<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/6a9cb66bb1824cd98756812af41292a0>



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Figure 4: WW and AG Lands



Source: St. Helena General Plan

Climate Change

St. Helena's Safety Element included a *Climate Change Hazards and Vulnerability Assessment*, completed in 2023. According to this report:

St. Helena is, and will continue to be, affected by the impacts of climate change in the form of increased extreme heat days, increased average temperature, stronger storms, more severe floods, deeper droughts, and more frequent and larger wildfires.

As parks can support climate resilience and carbon sequestration, the PRT Master Plan will consider how to optimize park lands as solution areas for climate impacts.

This assessment focused on three hazards:



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- **Extreme Heat.** In St. Helena an extreme heat day is when the maximum temperature exceeds 100.4°F. Before 2000, the city typically experienced an average of four extreme heat days each year. This has been increasing as temperatures have increased with climate change. Projections indicate that the city will experience 17 extreme heat days per year based on lower Green House Gas (GHG) projections and up to 31 extreme heat days based on higher GHG projections. Extreme heat has a major effect on parks, recreation and the urban forest. This PRT Master Plan needs to consider how parks and the urban forest can help mitigate extreme heat.
- **Wildfire.** Wildfire is a significant concern for St. Helena, and risks are increased with extreme heat. According to the Napa Communities Firesafe Foundation, over half of Napa County burned between 2017-2020. On its most recent maps, CalFire has designated the hills surrounding St. Helena as having very high and high fire risk severity. According to the 2023 Safety Element, many cities in Napa Valley, including St. Helena, have areas that are within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). There is an active Fire Safe Council in St. Helena, working to educate community members about wildfire prevention. While St. Helena does not currently have parks in wildland-urban interface areas, future parks and open space areas may fall within Woodlands and Watersheds zones, be subject to wildfire risks, and have a need for firewise vegetation management. In addition, St. Helena is likely to experience more frequent smoke from wildfires elsewhere in the region. The PRT Plan should consider how city's parks and public facilities can help with emergency response for wildfire events, including providing refuge space.
- **Precipitation/Flooding.** The vulnerability assessment projects more intense storms, increasing the risk of flooding. More than 10 years ago, St. Helena built a levee (also used as a walking path) to protect low-lying residential areas from flooding. Even with the levee in place, St. Helena still experiences flood events, and a portion of the city is located within mapped floodplains.



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Demographics

Understanding the demographic and potential trends in St. Helena can help identify future needs and inform the development of parks, recreation, and trails to meet those needs. St. Helena has an overall population of 5,378 (2023), which is anticipated to continue to shrink in the coming years.

Residents

The following are some key takeaways from the St. Helena residential demographic analysis. These demographics are based on the 2023 American Community Survey and 2020 Census data and should be considered approximate and not absolute numbers.

- The population of St. Helena has decreased over the past 20 years and is anticipated to continue that trend. Enrollment in the St. Helena Unified School District has also decreased in the past five years.²
- The population within St. Helena is relatively dense, with 1,096 people per square mile, compared to California's average of 254 per square mile.
- St. Helena is financially better off than the average population in California. While the State's median income is \$96,334, Napa County's median income is \$108,970, and St. Helena's median income is \$158,218. California's poverty rate sits at 12 percent, whereas six percent of people in St. Helena sit below the poverty level.
- The population is significantly older than the average in California, with the median age in St. Helena being 47.6, compared to 43.6 in Napa County and 37.6 in the State as a whole.
- Nearly 30 percent of the city is aged 65 or older; in Napa County, 22 percent of the population is 65 or older, and in California as a whole, 15 percent of the population is 65 or older.
- The city has a large Hispanic/Latino population (25.8 percent). Approximately 29.4 percent of the population speaks a language other than English at home.
- Most of the community lives in single-family homes, with a median home value of \$1,964,300 (compared to Napa County, with a median home value of \$831,800 and California, with a median home value of \$695,400). The average selling price of a single-family home in 2024 was \$3,052,898.³
- St. Helena has a high percentage of second homes, with 10 percent of all housing units serving as seasonal or second homes.⁴

For St. Helena, these figures point to several key takeaways:

- Napa County skews older than California as a whole, and St. Helena skews older than Napa County, driven by the over 65 population.
- St. Helena's population of young and middle-aged adults is lower than typical, likely due to the high housing costs. In comparison, the 19 and under population is similar to Napa

² Education Data Partnership, St. Helena Unified, www.ed-data.org/district/Napa/Saint-Helena-Unified

³ Our Town St. Helena 2024 Housing Outlook Report, https://ourtownsthehena.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Housing-Outlook-2024_.pdf

⁴ Bay Area Metro, Bay Area Census, St. Helena. https://census.bayareametro.gov/housing-units?location=st_helena



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County, even though the household size is smaller. These patterns have implications for recreation programming and participation.

- The large amount of second homes in St. Helena means not all residents are in town year-round, leading to seasonal spikes in recreational programming participation.
- Though the poverty level is low, St. Helena's residents are burdened by high housing costs. Affordability and access are a concern for St. Helena's parks and recreation services.

Visitors

St. Helena is a popular attraction in the Napa Valley for both wine and recreational tourism. Although data is not available for visitor trends specifically in St. Helena, data is available at the county level (Napa County).

Key takeaways from the visitor demographic analysis are listed below. This data is from the 2023 [Visit Napa Valley](#) visitor analysis report, as well as the demographics listed above, and should be considered approximate and not absolute numbers.

- The Transit Occupancy Tax (TOT), levied on every overnight hotel stay, accounts for 20 percent of St. Helena's general fund budget.
- In 2018, St. Helena had the second-highest reported visitation among all Napa Valley cities and towns (the city of Napa was the most visited).
- The average age of visitors to Napa Valley has decreased since 2018, from 46 to 40 in 2023.
- There is a significant difference between visitor and resident demographics in both St. Helena and Napa County.
 - The share of Black and Hispanic/Latino visitors has increased significantly since 2018, while the share of Black residents has remained very low.
 - The share of Asian visitors to Napa Valley has decreased since 2018, but this population still makes up the second-largest visitor racial group.
 - The average age of Napa Valley visitors (40) is lower than the median age (47) in St. Helena.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Table 1: St. Helena, Napa County and State of California Demographics

	St. Helena	Napa County	California
Population Characteristics			
Population Estimate, 2024	5,257	132,727	39,431,263
Growth 2020-2024	-3.2%	-3.8%	-0.3%
Population Density/Sq Mile (2020 Census)	1,096	184	254
Population by Gender			
Male	50.70%	50.20%	50.00%
Female	49.30%	49.80%	50.00%
By Age			
Ages 0-9	9.6%	9.6%	11.6%
Ages 10-19	10.9%	11.2%	13.2%
Ages 20-29	8.9%	12.3%	13.8%
Ages 30-39	9.6%	12.9%	14.7%
Ages 40-49	13.9%	12.7%	12.9%
Ages 50-59	12.7%	12.8%	12.6%
Ages 60-69	12.7%	12.8%	10.9%
Ages 70-79	13.2%	11.1%	6.7%
Ages 80+	8.5%	4.8%	3.6%
Under 18	18.9%	19.1%	22.2%
Ages 18-64	51.3%	59.1%	62.5%
Seniors 65+	29.8%	22.0%	15.3%
Median Age	47.6	43.60	37.60
By Race/Ethnicity			
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	69.0%	49.2%	34.3%
Black	0.7%	2.4%	6.5%
Hispanic	25.8%	36.7%	40.4%
Asian	1.4%	9.4%	16.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.4%	0.5%
American Indian and Alaska Native	1.0%	1.3%	1.7%
Two or more races	11.1%	3.6%	4.3%
Education (over 25)			
No Degree	11.4%	12.5%	15.4%
High School	9.2%	17.1%	20.4%
Some College	21.1%	30.9%	27.7%
Bachelor's Degree	34.7%	25.3%	22.4%
Graduate/Professional Degree	23.6%	14.3%	14.1%
Housing			
Total Housing Units	2,747	56,046	14,532,683
Occupied Units	84.1%	91.3%	92.5%
Owner Occupied	66.6%	62.7%	55.9%
Renter Occupied	33.5%	37.3%	44.2%
Vacant Housing Units (incl. second homes)	15.9%	8.7%	7.6%
Average Household Size	2.31	2.66	2.86
Median value of owner-occupied housing	\$1,964,300	\$831,800	\$695,400
Language Spoken at Home			
Language other than English	29.40%	33.9%	44.1%
Income and Poverty Rate			
Median Household Income (2023 dollars)	\$158,218	\$108,970	\$96,334
Poverty Rate	6.00%	8.9%	12.0%

2020-2024 data from US Census, Census Reporter, and DataUSA



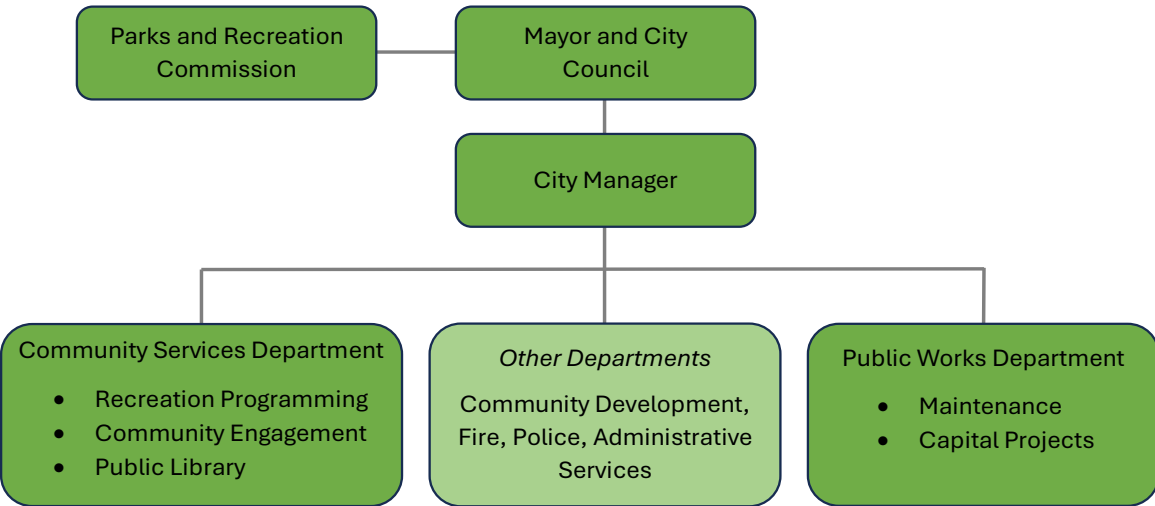
City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Parks and Recreation Service Provision

Organizational Structure

Two departments are responsible for providing parks and recreation services: The Community Services Department and the Public Works Department. Both departments report to the City Manager and coordinate with other departments.

Figure 5: Organizational Structure for Parks and Recreation Service Provision



The **Community Services Department** was created in 2024 to merge Parks and Recreation and Library into one department. The Community Services Department oversees St. Helena Public Library, recreation programming, and community engagement and communications. The Community Services Director is the staff liaison for the Parks & Recreation Commission.

The **Public Works Department** is responsible for all aspects of the City's infrastructure and public rights-of-way, including streets, storm drains, parks, water treatment, water distribution, wastewater collection, and wastewater treatment. Within the Department, the Parks and Trees Division is responsible for parks maintenance and maintenance of the urban forest, among other duties.

The Parks and Recreation Commission

St. Helena's Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) advises both departments on parks and recreation matters. The PRC is a 5-member body that meets monthly. Members are appointed by the City Council to two-year terms and serve in an advisory capacity to the City Council. Four members must be St. Helena residents, and one member may reside outside the city limits but within the boundaries of the St. Helena Unified School District.



City of St. Helena

Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Staffing Levels

Parks and Recreation Division (Community Services)

The Parks & Recreation Division provides recreation programs and special events, including adult and youth sports, summer camps, and the summer concert series. It is responsible for registrations and marketing, as well as partnerships and collaboration with other providers. Its mission statement is, “Harvesting Community Experiences that Celebrate St. Helena,” and its vision statement is, “To be the destination for leisure and community experiences that preserves St. Helena’s small-town lifestyle.”

The Division is staffed by a total of 7.85 Full Time Equivalents, or FTES. Permanent, year-round staffing includes the following positions:

- Community Services Director (1 FTE)
- Recreation Supervisor (1 FTE)
- Recreation Manager (1 FTE)
- Recreation Assistant (.85 FTE)

The remaining FTEs are seasonal and part-time staff, such as camp counselors. In addition, the Division has contracts with recreation program providers for sports, aquatics, and after-school programming.

Parks and Trees Division (Public Works Department)

The Parks and Trees Division is responsible for operating and maintaining:

- Maintaining developed parks, including landscape maintenance, mowing, trash removal, restroom cleaning, and other regular maintenance tasks.
- Set up for the farmers market and other events.
- Maintaining landscapes at all other city facilities, such as City Hall and the Public Library.
- Caring for St. Helena’s urban forest.
- Implementing St. Helena’s pesticide-free parks program and
- Maintaining natural areas and open spaces (not included in the inventory of developed parks).

The Parks and Trees Division is staffed by 5 FTEs, all of whom are permanent, year-round positions:

- Trees and Parks Superintendent (1 FTE)
- Lead Maintenance Worker (1 FTE)
- Maintenance Worker I/II (3 FTE)

The Division does not have seasonal or part-time staff.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

NRPA Park Metrics Comparables

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) provides a benchmarking data source called NRPA Park Metrics. This set of data represents information on parks agencies throughout the United States, with data self-reported by each agency in the categories set forth by NRPA. NRPA issues benchmarking reports each year that aggregate agency self-reported data into groups. For each group, a median figure and upper and lower quartile figures are provided to allow comparisons with an "average" agency within the grouping.

Several considerations should be kept in mind when using Park Metrics data for comparison:

- **Cities are grouped by resident population size.** For some metrics, NRPA breaks out agencies based on population size. St. Helena is in the smallest size classes of less than 20,000 residents. For metrics where population size class is provided, comparisons are shown for all agencies and for agencies with less than 20,000 residents.
- **This data set is best for providing a high-level perspective** on agencies nationwide and is not suitable for fine-grained comparisons.

Agency Responsibilities

The City of St. Helena is a full-service parks and recreation provider. According to the *2025 NRPA Agency Performance Review*, 98% of parks agencies provide park sites, 93% provide recreation programming and services, 82% provide jurisdiction-wide special events, and 80% provide racquet sport activities/courts/facilities, all of which are provided by St. Helena. St. Helena also provides community gardens and the city's farmers market, services provided by 50% and 22% of agencies, according to NRPA data.

Agency Staffing

The City of St. Helena has 12.85 FTEs when totaling the FTES in the Parks & Recreation Division and the Parks and Trees Division. For the purpose of comparisons, it should be noted that the Parks and Trees Division has more responsibilities than the typical parks agency. For this reason, Table 2 shows two FTE figures. The adjusted figure assumes 20% of the Parks and Trees Division staff time is spent on city landscapes outside the park system for better comparability with other parks agencies.

Table 2: NRPA Park Metrics: Parks and Recreation Agency Staffing by FTEs

	All Agencies	Less than 20,000	St. Helena
Median	59.2	13.8	12.85
Lower Quartile	20.5	6.0	(11.85 adjusted)
Upper Quartile	161.4	32.1	

As Table 2 shows, the City of St. Helena is below the median for staffing in its size class and well below the upper quartile. While the city is above the lower quartile, the lower quartile is generally associated with agencies that provide fewer services than St. Helena. Compared to agencies nationwide, St. Helena's staffing is leaner than the median.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Parks and Facilities

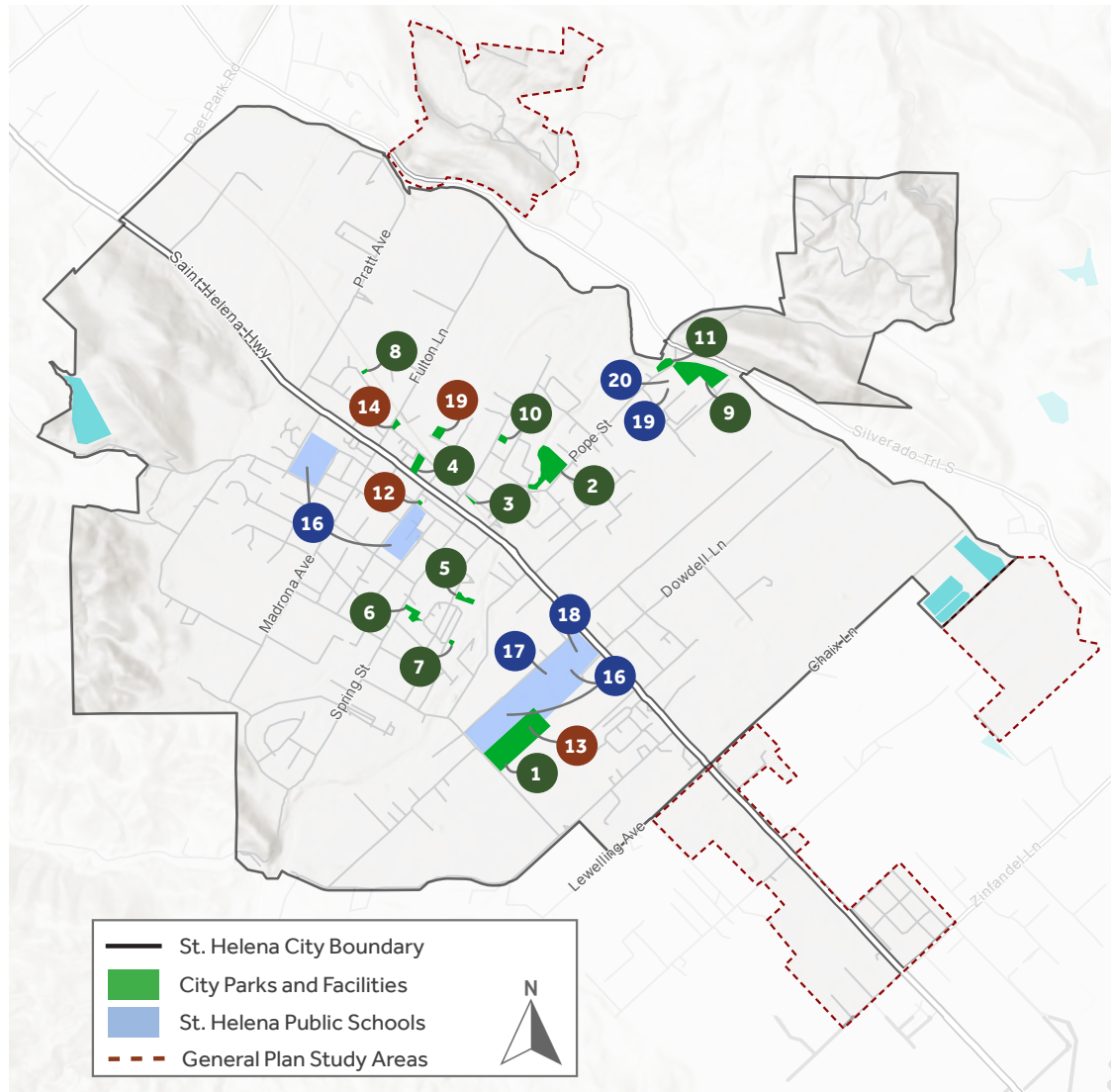
Figure 6 on the next page depicts the locations of St. Helena's parks and recreation facilities.

Park Classifications

A park classification system groups sites with similar functions and services to help better understand the park network. For the PRT Master Plan, the current park system includes three classifications, defined below. This classification system is a refinement of the categorizations in the St. Helena General Plan.

- **Local-serving Parks.** Local-serving parks are characterized by their small size (less than one acre) and limited features. They vary from small picnic spaces and greens to small squares and plazas.
- **Community-serving Parks.** Community-serving parks serve multiple neighborhoods or provide features that draw users from the entire city. Typically, community-serving parks are larger parks with multiple features such as sports fields, destination playgrounds, and community centers.
- **Facilities.** The city has several facilities that are or can become important elements for recreation and community programs, and events. Currently, the Parks and Recreation Division offices also serve as a community facility and recreation building. The Carnegie Building is currently used as a meeting and recreational space, but has the potential to be used for more offerings to the broader community.

St. Helena Parks



Community- and Local-serving Parks

1. Crane Park
2. Jacob Meily Park
3. Lewis Station Park
4. Lyman Park
5. Mary Fryer Park
6. Starr Baldwin Park
7. Mennen Park
8. McCullagh Park
9. Wappo Park

Undeveloped Parks

10. Hunt Avenue Lot
11. Stone Bridge Park

Community & Recreation Facilities

12. Carnegie Building
13. Head Start Building
14. Parks and Recreation Offices
15. St. Helena Public Library

Other Public Facilities

16. St. Helena Public Schools
17. Public School Aquatic Complex
18. Public Schools Performing Arts Center
19. St. Helena City Hall
20. Napa Valley College



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

St. Helena's inventory by classification is summarized in Table 3 below. The city has two undeveloped sites, also listed in the table.

Table 3: St. Helena Parks by Classification

Local-serving Parks
Lewis Station
Mary Fryer Park
Mennen Park
Starr Baldwin Park
Stephen C. McCullagh Park
Community-serving Parks
Crane Park
Jacob Meily Park
Lyman Park
Wappo Park
Undeveloped Parks
Hunt Ave Lot
Stone Bridge Park
Facilities
Carnegie Building
Head Start Building
Parks and Recreation Division Offices & Martial Arts Building



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Summary Park Inventory

Table 4 provides a summary inventory of the city parks. This table provides information on each site, including name, street address, acreage, classification and a description. Appendix B contains a more detailed inventory of each site.

Together, these sites total 26.99 acres. This translates to **5.02 park acres per 1,000 residents**, based on the city population of 5,257.

Table 4: Summary of Park Inventory

Park / Facility Name	Street Address	Approx. Acres	Park Land Classification	Park Description
Carnegie Building	1360 Oak Ave	0.13	Facility	Historic former library with welcoming seating area at the front entrance. The Carnegie Building now used for parks and recreation and community services events and meetings. Residents can reserve rooms for use. Has been updated to be ADA- compliant. Includes a kitchen in the lower level.
Crane Park	360 S Crane Ave	11.27	Community-serving Park	Busy and popular park on the south edge of town, adjacent to the high school. Multiple activities and the site for many community events and programs including the farmer's market. It is the home for sports activities including skateboarding, pickleball, baseball and the very popular bocce league. Includes picnic areas and a large playground.
Hunt Ave. Lot	757 Hunt Avenue	0.36	Undeveloped Park Area	Shaded character with mature trees, including oaks.
Jacob Meily Park	750 Pope St	5.42	Community-serving Park	Site of St. Helena's community garden. Shaded, pleasant character in the park interior, which has a large playground surrounding by seating and picnic areas. The newly updated soccer field and picnic area is inviting and well landscaped. The park has multiple entrances from different neighborhoods and includes a nice walking path along the creek
Lewis Station	1195 Church St	0.13	Local-serving Park	- Very small park right next to train tracks with limited amenities and little recreation value. - Some shade but not much.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Park / Facility Name	Street Address	Approx. Acres	Park Land Classification	Park Description
Lyman Park	1498 Main St	0.89	Community-serving Park	Downtown park located adjacent to the former City Hall (now closed) and across the street from the Senior Center. The park has excellent tree canopy and a large open lawn area. The city made landscape upgrades in recent years using in-house crews. The park includes a historic gazebo. Lyman Park is used for the popular summer concert series, using a stage set up adjacent to the gazebo.
Mary Fryer Park	1500 Mitchell Dr	0.84	Local-serving Park	Small park that is shaded and has a small playground and picnic area.
Mennen Park	1649 Voorhees Cir	0.17	Local-serving Park	Very small park used by nearby residents. Small grassy area for kids to play in and a few grills and picnic tables.
Parks and Recreation Division Offices	1574 Railroad Ave	0.80	Facility	Former residential house converted to office use with outbuilding converted to martial arts studio.
Starr Baldwin Park	1679 Spring St	0.76	Local-serving Park	Medium neighborhood park that has entrances on two streets, shaded walking path and benches, channelized creek at one entrance
Stephen C. McCullagh Park	1758 Crinella Dr	0.14	Local-serving Park	Small park located within a neighborhood with excellent tree canopy. Includes interesting playground features (bouldering and sandbox/water feature area).
Stone Bridge Park	220 Pope St	0.75	Undeveloped Park Area	Lot with trees and grass along the river, no identifying sign. Access is limited.
Wappo Park	201 Pope St	5.32	Community-serving Park	Large park with walking path encircling a grassy field and a large, fenced dog park area. Several large grassy areas that are shaded but unused. Adjacent to the City Hall (on former community college campus).



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Facilities Inventory

Table 5 provides a summary of sports facilities and park features in St. Helena.

Table 5: Facilities Inventory

		Sports									Park Features											
		Baseball Field	Bocce Court	Pickleball Court	Playground	Skatepark	Soccer Field	T-Ball Field	Tennis Court	Volleyball Court	Art - Mural	Community Garden	Community Meeting Space	Concessions	Dog Park	Gazebo	Parking Area	Passive Park Space	Picnic Area	Restrooms	Vineyard	Walking Path
Local-serving Parks	Lewis Station																	x	x			
	Mary Fryer Park				x												x	x				x
	Mennen Park																x	x				
	Starr Baldwin Park																x	x				x
	Stephen C. McCullagh Park				2						x							x	x			
Community-serving Park	Crane Park	2	8	4	x	x		x	5	x			x	x			x	x	4	x		x
	Jacob Meily Park				x		x	x				x					x	x	2	x	x	x
	Lyman Park				x								x			x		x	x			x
	Wappo Park													x			x	x	x			x
Undeveloped Parks	Hunt Ave. Lot																					
	Stone Bridge Park																					
Facilities	Carnegie Building												x							x		
	Head Start Building																			x		
	P&R Offices & Event Space												x				x			x		
Totals		2	8	4	6	1	1	2	5	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	4	8	13	6	1	6



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Key observations on the facilities in the park system include the following:

- Almost all St. Helena parks offer opportunities for picnicking.
- Many of St. Helena's sports facilities are located at one park (Crane Park), leaving neighborhoods on the north and east sides of town with few nearby facilities (and sometimes none).
- There is only one off-leash, fenced dog park in town (Wappo Park).
- St. Helena does not have any publicly available basketball courts or hoops; residents must use the indoor and outdoor areas at the public schools.
- There are several different playground options in the parks, but a few, such as the playgrounds at Lyman and Mary Fryer Parks, are small and only appropriate for very young children.
- There are no dedicated facilities for teens to hang out and gather, except for the skate park in Crane Park.
- While St. Helena Unified School District offers public programming at its outdoor swimming pool, the City of St. Helena does not have any aquatics facilities, including splashpads or interactive fountains.

Indoor Facilities

St. Helena has several indoor recreation facilities that host indoor recreation events and classes. These buildings are owned by the city and serve multiple purposes.

Carnegie Building

The Carnegie Building, located near downtown, was built in 1908 and served as the city's library until 1979. The building serves as a small community and event space with two meeting rooms and a dance room. The rooms are all rentable and are often used for committee meetings and recreation events such as summer camps and exercise classes.



Parks and Recreation Division Offices

The Parks and Recreation Division Offices are located a few blocks from downtown and consist of an office building with a few rooms and gathering space. The office area currently serves as the temporary offices for the Parks and Recreation Division and hosts small community events in the main area.



Martial Arts Building

The martial arts building, located behind the Parks and Recreation Division Offices, consists of a martial arts studio, small office, and weight room. The building hosts a variety of martial arts classes and camps year-round.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Head Start Building

The Head Start Building in Crane Park hosts several summer camps, including the popular Adventure Day Camp. The building is in poor condition and would benefit from renovations, including to the industrial kitchen, bathrooms, and outdoor fenced space.



Trails

St. Helena does not have any formal walking trails within the city, but it is surrounded by many walking and hiking opportunities in nearby parks and on the Vine Trail. There is significant interest from parts of the community to develop and formalize walking trails within the city. In 2022, members of the Parks and Recreation Commission presented the Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report to the City Council, which developed a framework for the city to develop the walking, access, passive recreation, and connectivity goals contained within the 2019 General Plan and 2016 Pedestrian Plan.

There already exist a few informal walking trails in St. Helena, the most used one being the walking path in the vineyards by the St. Helena Public Library. This trail is popular with dog walkers and goes down to the Napa River.

Recreation Programs

The St. Helena Parks and Recreation Division operates its recreation programs, including youth and adult sports, rentals, and summer camps. The city does not have its own aquatics facility; the St. Helena School District does offer public access to the pool and programs, with programming run by a private company.

The table below provides a snapshot of the programming currently available in St. Helena, with information on program areas and populations served. This matrix will provide a baseline for programming recommendations in the Needs Assessment that will be completed in the next phase.

Key takeaways from this analysis are listed below:

- St. Helena offers a variety of programming for all ages, mainly focused on sports, fitness, and wellness.
- There are several adults-only sports and class options, which are partially tailored for St. Helena's large senior population.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Table 6: Recreation Programs

		Program Type									Population Served							
		Aquatics	Arts and Culture	Fitness and Wellness	Environmental Education & Stewardship	Lifelong Learning	Outdoor Recreation	Out of School/Summer Camps	Team Sports	Individual/Dual Sports	Preschool	K-8 Youth	Teens (Ages 13-18)	Young Adults (Ages 18-24)	Adults (Ages 25-64)	Older Adults (65+)	People with Disabilities	Multi-Generational
Parks and Recreation Division	Little Sluggers Tee Ball						x		x		x							
	Youth Soccer						x		x		x	x						
	Youth Basketball								x			x	x					
	Youth Volleyball						x		x			x	x					
	Taekwondo									x	x	x	x					
	Muay Thai/Kickboxing									x		x	x	x	x			
	Tae Bo			x						x				x	x	x		
	Shotokan/Adult Karate									x			x	x	x			
	Drop-In Adult Basketball								x					x	x			
	Adult Basketball League													x	x			
	Drop-In Adult Volleyball								x					x	x			
	Adult Slow Pitch Softball								x					x	x			
	Bocce								x					x	x	x		
	Fitness Boxing			x						x			x	x	x	x		
	Water Aerobics	x		x									x	x	x	x		
	Tennis								x					x	x	x		
	Volunteer Program				x													x
	Summer Camps							x			x	x	x					
St. Helena Public Library	All-ages Programming		x			x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
School District Aquatic Center	Open Swim	x																x
	Adult/Masters Lap Swim	x		x									x	x	x			
	Swim Lessons	x				x				x	x	x						
	Youth Swim Team	x							x		x	x						
	Lifeguard Training	x				x						x	x					
Boys and Girls Club	After-school care							x			x	x						
	Summer Program							x			x	x						
	Summer Basketball Camp							x	x		x							
	Youth Basketball Program								x		x							
Rianda House Senior Center	Language Lessons		x			x										x		
	Yoga/Aerobics			x												x		
	Drop-in Activities		x	x		x										x		
	Writing/Art/Poetry		x			x										x		
Nimbus Arts	Art Classes		x			x												



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Events and Programs & Participation Data

The Parks and Recreation Division offers a broad range of program offerings for youth and adults in the community.

- **Summer Camps** are offered to youth ages 3-17 and range from sports camps (soccer, pickleball, tennis) to cooking, and from STEM focus to a general adventure camp. The summer camps are popular and in 2024 had 413 participants.
- **Fitness** classes are available for both youth and adults and are held at the Parks and Recreation Office and the Carnegie Building. These include martial arts and Tae Bo classes. In 2024, around 135 people participated in fitness classes.
- **Sports** teams and games are offered for both youth and adults and are usually held at Crane Park or the High School Sports Complex. These include adult basketball and softball teams, youth soccer, basketball, and volleyball teams, as well as the very popular bocce league. In 2024 and 2025, there were over 1600 participants in sports programs, with 860 of those from the spring/summer bocce league.
- **Aquatics** programs offered by the Parks and Recreation Division are limited to a water aerobics class open to anyone 12 and older. They take place at the St. Helena High School Aquatics Facility; in 2024 there were 68 participants in the classes.
- **Volunteering** is a new program area that provides opportunities for community members to work on park clean-ups and beautification projects around the community. In 2024, there were 5 to 25 or more volunteers at each event.
- **Special Events** are hosted by the Parks and Recreation Division each year in both the city's parks as well as downtown. These events include the summer concert series in Lyman Park, the Harvest Festival, Fourth of July Fireworks and Festivities, and the Holiday Wine Barrel Tree. In 2024 and 2025, these events brought in more than 8,000 visitors, with the Harvest Festival and Fourth of July Fireworks being the most popular events.

Other Providers

There are several other community organizations in St. Helena that offer recreation programming and facilities.

School District Aquatic Facility

The St. Helena School District owns and operates an aquatic complex at St. Helena High School with a lap pool and diving board. In addition to the internal aquatic programs, the school district has contracted with Waves Aquatics Napa Valley to offer publicly available aquatic programming, including a youth swim team, swimming lessons, open and lap swim, and lifeguard training.

Although open to the public, access to the aquatic complex is limited during the school year. It is difficult to register for the programming offered by Waves Aquatics, and there aren't any child-friendly play structures or access.

Boys and Girls Club

The Boys and Girls Club of St. Helena and Calistoga operates out of St. Helena Elementary School and is open for children ages 5 to 18. They offer after-school care, summer care programs, and basketball camps.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

The Boys and Girls Club runs a teen center across the street from the Elementary School; this is difficult to reach from the High School.

Rianda House Senior Center

The Rianda House Senior Center is located downtown across from Lyman Park. It provides free programs and activities aimed at older adults. Rianda House does not partner much with the Parks and Recreation Division; it offers fitness classes, language classes, and other drop-in activities such as technology literacy and art classes.

Nimbus Arts

Nimbus Arts is a non-profit arts organization located in downtown St. Helena, serving both St. Helena and the greater Napa Valley Community. They offer on-site arts classes and camps, open studios, and free public events and community service programs. Nimbus Arts also helps coordinate collaborative art projects in Napa County and has partnered with local public and private schools to offer classes.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Funding

This section provides an overview of funding for parks and recreation services, looking at both operations funding and capital funding.

Operations

Funding for operations comes from the City's general revenue sources, including property taxes, sales taxes, and Transient Occupancy Tax, among others. Parks and recreation services also generate revenues from user fees, registrations, and program fees.

Expenditures

Funding for parks and recreation services is detailed in the City's annual budget. As previously described, two departments are directly involved in providing services, and each has specific budgets.

Table 7: Parks and Recreation Expenditures (City of St. Helena Operating Budget)

	FY 22-23	FY 23-24	FY 24-25
Community Services – Parks and Recreation ¹	\$1,007,033	\$1,254,368	\$1,304,046
Public Works – Park Division	\$1,021,202	\$1,295,440	\$1,354,745
Total	\$2,028,235	\$2,549,808	\$2,658,791

¹Excludes Park Impact Fee line item.

The Public Works Department also has a separate Tree City budget, which is not included in the table above for comparability with other agencies.

Revenues

Community Services generates revenue from several sources:

- **Facility Rentals.** The City's master fee schedule includes rates for facility rentals for picnic areas, courts, fields, the Carnegie Building, entire parks, and the various other facilities within the system. Rates vary for residents and nonresidents, and by facility type.
- **Recreation Program Fees.** Program fees are charged in the registration system and vary by program.
- **Donations and Sponsorships.** The Department seeks donations and sponsorships to fund certain programs, such as the Fourth of July celebration.

The City tracks certain programs to better account for service provision costs. As noted in the City's budget document, these accounts are:

- **286 Bocce Ball League:** This fund is used to account for the costs of running Bocce league services to the general public on a continuing basis. The intent is to recover costs through user charges and fees. The fund, therefore, is operated in a manner similar to a private business enterprise.
- **287 Harvest Festival:** This fund is used to account for revenues from registration fees and donations and is used to fund the expenses incurred in administering the Harvest Festival.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

- 288 Fourth of July: This fund is used to account for donations and is used to fund the expenses incurred in administering the Fourth of July fireworks show
- 223 Skate Park Lighting: This fund is used to account for donations and is used to fund the expenses incurred in maintaining the Skate Park lights.

Capital Development

By City of St. Helena policy, a capital project is considered a one-time expenditure but may take multiple years to deliver and fully fund. The City of St. Helena manages capital development through the citywide five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), managed by the Public Works Department. This is updated annually by staff and approved by the City Council. The most current CIP covers the FY 2024-2028 and was approved in September 2024. Project funding can be approved by a separate City Council action when funding adjustments are necessary outside the normal budget cycle.

The following park improvements are included in the current CIP:

- Crane Park Lighting Improvements
- Baldwin Park Fence & Pathway Repair
- Crane Park - Replace Playground Equipment and Fence
- Jacob Meily Park Drainage Site Survey and Installation of New Turf and Upgrade Irrigation (completed in April 2025)
- Parks & Recreation Master Plan (this planning effort)
- Trails & Open Space Amenities - Phase 1

Park Impact Fees

An important source of capital improvement funds is the City's Park impact fee (PIF), charged on new construction, additions, and occupancy changes. As of May 2025, the PIF rates are:

- All New Low-Density (Single Family) Residential Development or Conversions: \$ 3.83 per Square Foot
- All New Medium and Higher-Density (multifamily) Residential Development or Conversions \$ 3.83 per Square Foot

The City tracks other capital funding for parks in special funds, including:

- 222 Park Development: A special revenue fund for Ballpark State Grant, Proposition 12 Park per capita funding, other park grants, and park donations. These funds are restricted for park improvements and development.
- 734 Park Impact: This fund is used to accumulate funds from new or proposed residential development solely for park land acquisition and park improvements.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Comparables

This section provides a snapshot of how St. Helena compares to other California cities in providing parks. St. Helena is unique, and it is understood that no one city will serve as a perfect model. However, the following table provides a reasonable set of comparisons to better understand similar community park systems and the overall needs for parks in St. Helena. Comparable cities analyzed include Calistoga, Half Moon Bay, Healdsburg, Ojai, and Yountville.

The cities were chosen for the following reasons:

1. Size of population and city
2. Active and similar tourism
3. Climate (especially hot summers)

For this comparison, information was gathered through online resources, and all information reflects the years 2022/2023, when information is consistently available. All parks included in this assessment are city-owned and operated.

Key takeaways from the comparable city analysis are listed below.

- St. Helena has about 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which is similar to the other comparable cities.
- Median income in St. Helena and Half Moon Bay is significantly higher than in the comparable communities. Healdsburg is the next highest.
- Many of the comparable cities have their own indoor recreation facility or community center, which serves as a central meeting space and event space. While St. Helena has some indoor spaces, none are a true community center or recreation center/gym.
- Although not all comparable cities have aquatic facilities, most have public options available, including community pools and beaches.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Table 8 - Comparables

City Name	# of parks	Population 2023	Median income	City size (sq. mi)	Acres per 1,000	Facilities	Total Operating Expenses	Total Programming Revenue
St. Helena	10 (27 acres)	5,378	\$158,218	5 sq miles	5.02	Skate park, sports courts (tennis, pickleball, bocce), baseball field, picnic areas, Carnegie Building community space, playgrounds, dog park, library, trails	\$1,304,046 (community services), \$2,658,791 (public works)	\$143,709
Calistoga	2 (13 acres)	5,159	\$84,892	2.6 sq miles	2.52	Calistoga Community Pool, Teen Center, racquetball courts, sports fields, Community Center, picnic areas, playgrounds	\$979,894	\$78,558
Half Moon Bay	8 (19.8 acres)	11,454	\$153,199	6.4 sq miles	1.73	Skate Park, Plaza, Community Center, Historic Train Depot, sports fields, playgrounds, picnic areas, trails	\$566,322	\$215,493
Healdsburg	12 parks (60 acres), 2 open space areas (350 acres)	11,274	\$100,082	4.1 sq miles	5.32	Golf course, playing fields, community gardens, Villa Chanticleer, Senior Center, Community Center, picnic areas, playgrounds, walking paths, Swim Center, skate park, museum/library	\$1,249,676	\$20,169
Ojai	8 parks (34 acres)	7,576	\$79,202	4.4 sq miles	4.49	Athletic fields, sports courts (tennis, pickleball), community center, gymnasium, playgrounds, weight room, skate park	\$1,388,640	\$453,166
Yountville	10 parks (15 acres)	3,396	\$79,696	1.5 sq miles	4.42	Sports courts, dog park, community center, gym, picnic areas, trails, playgrounds	\$2,180,466	\$673,881



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Comparables Analysis Summary

St. Helena, a small city of five square miles, has 10 city parks, totaling 27 acres (5.02 acres per 1,000 residents). The budget covers three full-time Parks and Recreation staff, four full-time Public Library staff, and two Public Works and Trees staff. The Parks and Recreation budget receives most of its revenues from its recreation programs, including youth and adult sports and summer camps.

Calistoga

The City of Calistoga is located north of St. Helena in Napa County and is also known for its wineries, hot springs, and tourism. The city is 2.6 square miles and has a population of approximately 5,150 people.

The city has two city parks covering 13 acres (2.52 acres per 1,000 residents), managed by the city, as well as the County Fairgrounds and Mt. St. Helena Golf Course. Calistoga operates a community pool that is a draw from St. Helena. Most recreation programming, including summer pool access, is free for Calistoga residents.

Half Moon Bay

The City of Half Moon Bay is a small city located on the coast in San Mateo County, south of San Francisco. It is known for its beaches, surfing, and tourism. The city is 6.4 square miles and has a population of 11,454 people.

Half Moon Bay has six city parks that cover almost 20 acres (1.73 acres per 1,000 residents), including several neighborhood parks and beaches. The California Coastal Trail, popular with walkers and bikers, also goes through the city.

Healdsburg

The City of Healdsburg is in central Sonoma County; it is known for its wineries, fine dining, and tourism. The city is 4.1 square miles and has a population of 11,274. Healdsburg is a popular location for second home ownership.

Healdsburg has 12 parks, totaling about 60 acres (5.32 acres per 1,000 residents) and two open space areas, totaling about 320 acres. The city owns and operates a golf course and a large community center, which has indoor basketball courts, meeting rooms, and an outdoor amphitheater.

Ojai

The City of Ojai is a small city in Ventura County, northwest of Los Angeles, known for its wellness and spirituality focus, arts, and recreational activities. The city is 4.4 square miles in size and has about 7,500 residents.

Ojai has eight parks totaling 34 acres (4.49 acres per 1,000 residents). The city owns a large gymnasium and weight room, as well as a community center with a game room and art room. The recreation department runs several senior programs and excursions, children's summer camps, and special events throughout the year.



Appendix B



Inventory Assessment

Parks Inventory

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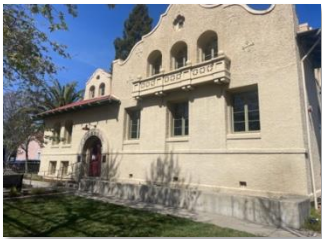
Parks Inventory

Carnegie Building



Park Type: Facility
Address: 1360 Oak Avenue
Year Established: 1908

Description
Historic former library with welcoming seating area at the front entrance. The Carnegie Building is now used for parks and recreation and community services events and meetings. Residents can reserve rooms for use. Has been updated to be ADA-compliant. Includes a kitchen in the lower level.



Initial Recommendations and Assessment
Opportunity to increase use of the space for recreation programming and community rentals. Consider upgrades to overall building and secondary space, including doors and AV equipment.



Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Large meeting room	Good	No permanent AV equipment
Small meeting room	Good	Hard to be private
Exercise/dance room	Adequate	Small
Restrooms (2 single stall)	Good	
Elevator	Good	



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Crane Park



Park Type: Community-serving

Address: 360 S Crane Ave

Acreage: 11.27 acres

Description

Busy and popular park on the south edge of town, adjacent to the high school. Multiple activities and the site for many community events and programs including the farmer's market. It is the home for sports activities including skateboarding, pickleball, baseball and the very popular bocce league. Includes picnic areas, a large playground, and a community building used for recreation programming.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment

The Head Start community recreation building is underutilized and not welcoming; it could be used as a teen center. Consider improvements to both the indoor and outdoor space around the building. Improvements to the walking path and passive grassy areas near the picnic spots would improve usability and make it feel more welcoming.

Needs overall enhancements for the landscape, including bollards surrounding the parking area. Consider addition of a splash pad or water element. Upgrade area near tennis courts to improve viewing and seating.





City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Bocce courts (8)	Excellent	Recently upgraded
Picnic areas (4)	Adequate	
Restrooms (2x2 stall)	Good	
Tennis courts (5)	Excellent	Not much shade
Pickleball courts (4)	Excellent	
Baseball fields (2)	Good	
T-ball field	Poor	Makeshift, temporary field
Concessions building	Good	Only for use during baseball games
Skatepark	Good	Being updated; add hang-out space
Volleyball (sand) court	Adequate	
Playground	Good	
Recreation building	Poor	Needs upgrades and reconfiguration
Open lawn area with trees	Good	
Maintenance yard area	Adequate	Highly visible, primary parks maintenance facility
Off-street parking (2 lots)	Adequate	One lot used for Farmers' Markets on Fridays



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Hunt Ave. Lot



Park Type: Undeveloped

Address: 757 Hunt Avenue

Acreage: 0.36 acres

Description

Shaded character with mature trees, including oaks.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Would require intense updates to become usable and welcoming.
Could be kept as passive park space or repurposed.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Jacob Meily Park

Park Type: Community-serving

Address: 750 Pope Street

Acreage: 5.42 acres

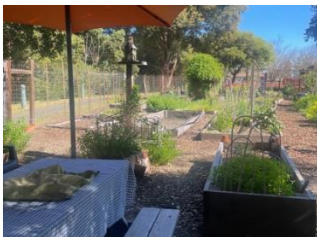
Description

Site of St. Helena's community garden. Shaded, pleasant character in the park interior, which has a large playground surrounding by seating and picnic areas. The newly updated soccer field and picnic area is inviting and well landscaped. The park has multiple entrances from different neighborhoods and includes a nice walking path along the creek.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Recent updates to the soccer field and picnic area have improved the character and usability of this park. The vineyard is not maintained and looks poor. Opportunity to increase programming and partnerships with the community garden.

Consider adding access and walking path near creek. Potential for classes at the community garden.





City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Community garden	Excellent	Opportunity to add a compost area
Wooded area with creek and paths	Good	
Picnic areas (2)	Good	
Playground (large)	Good	
Restroom (2 stalls)	Adequate	
Soccer field also used for T-ball	Excellent	Newly renovated
Vineyard	Adequate	Not maintained
Walking path	Good	
Off-street parking	Good	



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Lewis Station



Park Type: Local-serving

Address: 1195 Church Street

Acreage: 0.13 acres

Description

Very small park on a triangle of land with tables and restroom. Shade arbor is being replaced.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment

A lack of shade and landscaping makes this area unwelcoming, but with room for improvements.



Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Restroom	Adequate	
Picnic tables	Adequate	



City of St. Helena
Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Lyman Park



Park Type: Community-serving
Address: 1498 Main Street
Acreage: 0.89 acres

Description

Downtown park located adjacent to the former City Hall (now closed) and across the street from the Senior Center. The park has an excellent tree canopy and a large open lawn area. The city made landscape upgrades in recent years using in-house crews. The park includes a historic gazebo. Lyman Park is used for the popular summer concert series, using a stage set up adjacent to the gazebo.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Consider uses with nearby Rianda House Senior Center. Small playground is inadequate, a larger structure aimed at a larger range of ages would be more welcoming and accessible.

The adjacent former City Hall building is a potential activation site for increased programming or partnership, depending on the use the City chooses.

Consider adding small moveable tables, umbrellas, and game tables. Add a mural to the large wall.





City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Historic Gazebo	Good	Not well positioned for events
Benches/seating	Good	
Walking path	Adequate	Cracks, needs repaving
Picnic areas (2)	Adequate	No grills
Restrooms (2 stalls)	Good	
Playground (toddlers)	Poor	Very small, limited features
Open lawn	Good	
Mature trees	Good	
Historic Fountain	Poor	Needs interpretive signage and water



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Mary Fryer Park



Park Type: Local-serving

Address: 1500 Mitchell Drive

Acreage: 0.84 acres

Description

Small shaded park with a small playground and picnic area adjacent to a water detention pond.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Consider improving view and seating to water area.



Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Entrance with seating	Good	Entrance has a bus stop and benches
Open lawn areas	Good	
Picnic Area	Adequate	Tables but no grill
Playground	Adequate	Very small
Walking path	Good	Shaded but cracked



City of St. Helena
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Mennen Park



Park Type: Local-serving
Address: 1649 Voorhees Circle
Acreage: 0.17 acres
Year Established: 2005

Description
Very small park used by nearby residents. Small grassy area for kids to play in and a few grills and picnic tables.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment
Add play structures that can be used by children to make the park more usable by families. Consider addition of pollinator garden and native plantings.

Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Open lawn area	Excellent	
Picnic Area	Excellent	



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Parks and Recreation Division Offices and Event Space



Park Type: Facility

Address: 1574 Railroad Avenue

Description

Former residential house converted to office use with outbuilding converted to martial arts studio.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Slated to be eliminated, offices will be moving to a different location.

Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Parks and Recreation Offices	Good	
Martial arts space with office and weight room	Adequate	



City of St. Helena
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Starr Baldwin Park



Park Type: Local-serving
Address: 1679 Spring Street
Acreage: 0.76 acres

Description
Medium neighborhood park that has entrances on two streets, shaded walking path and benches, channelized creek at one entrance.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment
Improve signage and consider alternative to chain link fence at entrance.



Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Walking path	Good	
Picnic area	Adequate	No grills
Passive park space (grassy field)	Good	



City of St. Helena
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Stephen C. McCullagh Park



Park Type: Local-serving
Address: 1758 Crinella Drive
Acreage: 0.14 acres
Year Established: 2015

Description
Small park located within a neighborhood with excellent tree canopy. Includes interesting playground features (bouldering and sandbox/water feature area).

Initial Recommendations and Assessment
Connect the sandbox structure to a water source to create a more interactive play system. Add more seating options.



Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Picnic area	Good	No grill, has a water fountain
Playground (rock climbing, all ages)	Excellent	
Play area (sandbox, water feature)	Adequate	Possible water feature capabilities
Mural	Good	



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Stone Bridge Park



Park Type: Undeveloped

Address: 220 Pope Street

Acreage: 0.75 acres

Description

Lot with trees and grass along the river, no identifying sign. Access is limited.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Grassy area with a few dozen trees, fenced off	Poor	



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Wappo Park



Park Type: Community-serving

Address: 201 Pope Street

Acreage: 5.32 acres

Description

Large park with walking path encircling a grassy field and a large fenced dog park area. Several large grassy areas that are shaded but unused. Adjacent to the City Hall (on former community college campus) and affordable housing site.

Initial Recommendations and Assessment

Add seating to the dog park for dog owners. Add children's play area, for nearby housing complex residents to use.

Add signage indicating mileage around the circular walking track. Opportunities for additional activation should be explored.



Feature/Condition	Description	Notes
Dog park	Good	Large, fenced dog park
Walking path	Good	Gravel loop
Open meadow area	Adequate	Underutilized
Picnic area	Good	
Off-street parking at City Hall lot	Excellent	



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Yountville

The Town of Yountville is located south of St. Helena in Napa County, and is known for its wineries, fine dining, and large tourism draw. The town is 1.5 square miles in size and has a population of approximately 3,400 people.

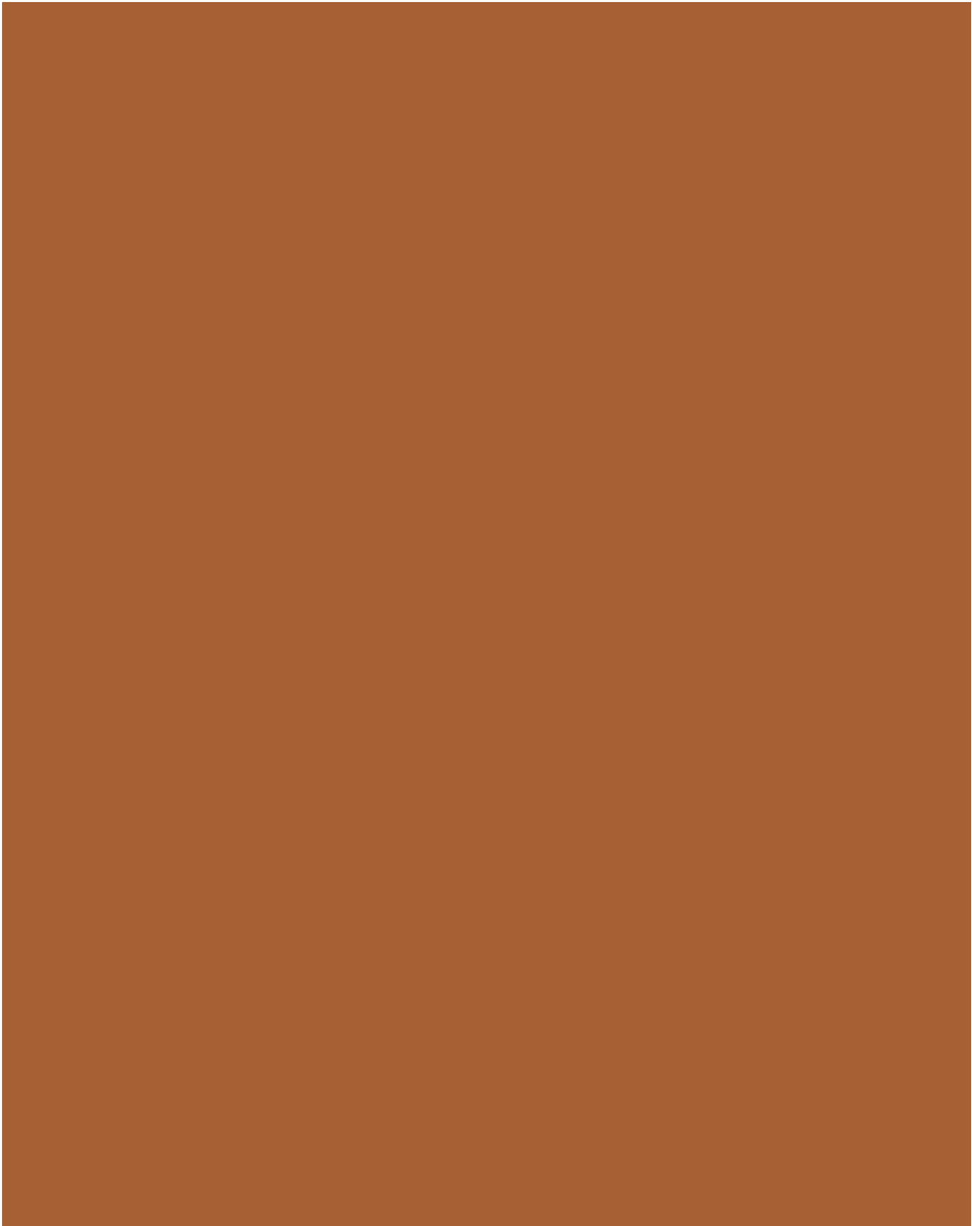
Yountville has 10 parks totaling 15 acres (4.42 acres per 1,000 residents), as well as five miles of walking paths and trails within the town. The town's community center is a popular location for large event rentals, receptions, recreation, and outdoor events.



Appendix C



General Plan Policy Scan





City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Applicable General Plan Policies

The St. Helena General Plan, published in 2019, is the primary policy document for the City of St. Helena as it moves toward the year 2040. It sets forth the City's policies to guide future land use decisions and provides the needed framework to preserve the character and quality of development that the community desires.

The Parks and Recreation Element (Chapter 12) of St. Helena's General Plan is directly relevant to the Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan. Other General Plan Elements also include relevant policies and implementing actions, including the Land Use & Growth Management (Chapter 2), Public Facilities & Services (Chapter 4), Circulation (Chapter 5), Community Design (Chapter 7), Open Space & Conservation (Chapter 8), Public Health, Safety, & Noise (Chapter 9), and Climate Change (Chapter 10) elements.

Relevant policies from these elements are listed below for reference during the St. Helena PRT Master Planning process.

Land Use & Growth Management

Policies

- LU5.1 Discourage conversion of existing farmland to non-agricultural uses.
- LU5.4 Support community-based agricultural uses within the city, including community gardens, orchards, and parks.
- LU5.D Identify sites for community gardens, orchards, and parks. Establish a program to maintain public areas within and surrounding community gardens and to administer the assignment of garden spaces and collection of use fees.
- LU6.1 Provide a wide-range of high-quality public facilities, including parks, multi-use trails, schools, fire and police services, water and wastewater systems, and community centers.
- LU6.B Pursue sites for future public facilities, including parks, consistent with projected growth.

Public Facilities & Services

Policies

- PF5.5 Encourage continued support for the St. Helena public library and the library foundation [St. Helena Public Library and the Foundation of St. Helena Public Library] to ensure that it maintains high-quality services for all St. Helenans.

Implementing Actions

- PF3.A Require developers to provide adequate drainage improvements and detention to mitigate storm runoff from the site to the nearest major waterway. Drainage improvements



City of St. Helena

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can include measures such as creating settling basins, bio-swales, and the use of pervious materials for driveways and parking areas. Key waterways include York Creek, Sulphur Creek and the Napa River.

Circulation

Policies

- CR2.2 Promote walking and bicycling as safe and convenient modes of transportation.
- CR2.3 Ensure secure, accessible, and convenient bicycle parking facilities throughout St. Helena, including downtown, commercial areas, schools, and parks.

Community Design

Policies

- CD4.1 Encourage the development of public spaces for formal and informal gatherings, such as plazas, seating and small performance areas.
- CD4.2 Integrate open space, including parks, community gardens, natural areas, and agriculture into the community to strengthen the connection to St. Helena's agricultural heritage and provide a sense of openness.
- CD5.1 Preserve the visual and physical connection to agriculture by protecting views from streets, parks, and open spaces to vineyards, agriculture, and hillsides.

Implementing Actions

- CD4.A Require private development to incorporate appropriate public open space into site designs.

Open Space & Conservation

Policies

- OS2.3 Preserve open space for recreational uses, including a bicycle and pedestrian trail system along creek corridors when compatible with riparian vegetation and wildlife habitat. Where possible, integrate stream corridors with trails and other recreational open space, provided that the vegetation, habitat value, and water quality is not significantly impacted.
- OS2.5 Limit public access to habitat areas when public access will significantly impact the sensitivity of the habitat area.
- OS4.1 Protect and enhance tree resources in developed and undeveloped areas. Efforts should include: adequate maintenance of street trees, requiring replacement trees where



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

existing significant trees cannot be saved, and requiring street trees as a condition of new development.

Implementing Actions

- OS2.D Provide for open space opportunities by including passive and active public recreation areas within projects as they develop.
- OS2.E Explore the possibility of public use or agricultural option of the wastewater treatment plant spray field in the form of trails and passive open space or other agricultural option.
- OS3.E Promote the installation of drought tolerant and native plants in landscaping throughout the city. Potential measures include:
 - Require City parks and properties to be landscaped with drought tolerant native plants that allow for high shade capacity wherever possible and use water-wise irrigation systems as a model for residents and businesses
- OS4.A Establish an urban forestry program to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive approach to maintaining and increasing the City's trees. Key program aspects will include the following:
 - A tree planting program to ensure that new trees are planted regularly;
 - A tree maintenance program to ensure that existing trees are healthy and pruned;
 - A tree inventory to create a comprehensive listing of the City's trees and tree-related needs;
 - A Tree Committee to oversee the implementation of the urban forestry program and approval of tree removals;
 - A landmark tree list that identifies trees that require additional protection from damage and/or removal; and
 - Appropriate Heritage tree deed restrictions.
- OS4.D Explore the concept of establishing a City nursery program to enhance native species for preparation and planting throughout the city.

Public Health, Safety, and Noise

Policies

- PS5.3 Within the 100-year floodplain, encourage open space uses, such as parks or natural areas.



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Climate Change

Policies

- CC4.4 Support efforts to expand and improve the City's managed urban forest in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve overall air quality.
- CC4.5 Promote community gardens to reduce emissions generated in food transportation.

Implementing Actions

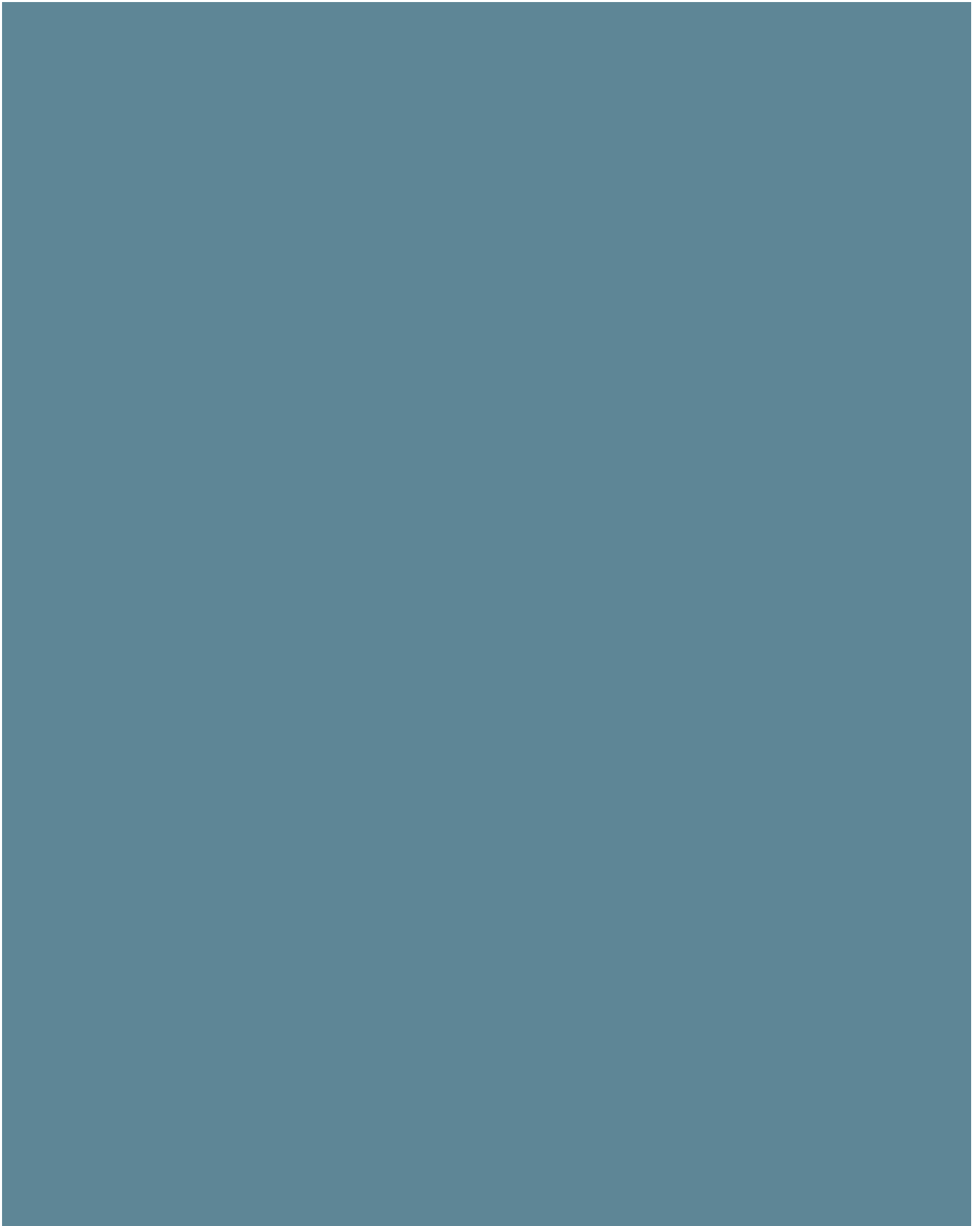
- CC1.L Develop parks and open spaces in support of efforts to create walkable, bikeable mixed-use neighborhoods, especially to complement higher-density development and connect lower-density areas.
- CC4.B Promote edible landscaping where possible.
- CC4.C Establish programs and plans that create and enhance urban forests and greenways.
- CC4.J Establish an urban forestry program to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive approach to maintaining and increasing the City's trees especially native varieties when possible.



Appendix D



Needs Assessment





Needs Assessment

St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

November 2025



City of St. Helena

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City of St. Helena

Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Introduction

Overview of Parks, Recreation, and Trails Planning Process

The City of St. Helena is in the process of developing a new Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan (PRT Master Plan). Led by the Parks and Recreation Division, this new plan will be the first standalone parks, recreation, and trails master plan for the city and will complement the 2019 St. Helena General Plan. It will stand as a blueprint to guide decisions on parks, trails, and recreation services for the next 10 to 15 years.

The Master Planning process kicked off in Spring 2025, with the major public engagement launched in May 2025. The PRT Master Plan is anticipated to be completed in Winter 2025-2026.

Figure 1 - Project Process



Purpose of the Needs Assessment

This Needs Assessment is the culmination of the Needs, Opportunities, and Strategies Phase; it builds upon the Existing Conditions Summary document, incorporates all the findings of work to date, and analyzes the gaps and needs for the city’s parks, recreation, and trails system. This document will be integrated into the final Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan.

Methodology

The state of the art in assessing parks and recreation needs is more responsive to context and more holistic than the past practice of relying on one or two factors, such as Quimby Act calculations of acres of park land per 1,000 people or the results of a single survey. The approach to assessing needs for St. Helena incorporates multiple layers and criteria, as shown in Figure 2 on the next page.

This approach provides a deeper understanding of high-priority community needs and lays the foundation for policies and specific recommendations, and the multiple elements that must be considered in the PRT Plan.



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Figure 2 - Approach to Assessing Needs



The Existing Conditions report documented and assessed the existing parks, facilities, trails, and recreation program inventory, identified comparable communities, and evaluated demographics.

This needs assessment builds on the Existing Conditions report. It is organized as follows:

- Community Engagement, which summarizes community engagement activities and identifies major themes.
- PRT Framework, which presents a vision and goals for the parks, recreation, and trails system.
- Trends, which discuss trends that are especially relevant to St. Helena's needs, considering the community context.
- Community Needs and Gaps, organized by Citywide Opportunities, Parks, Trails, Facilities, and Programs.
- Preliminary Recommendations, draft recommendations that respond to the PRT vision and goals and that help address needs and gaps.



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Community Engagement

Overview of Methods

Community participation is foundational to the Parks, Recreation, and Trails (PRT) Master Plan. The city convened an Advisory Group to provide guidance throughout the planning process. In addition, the project includes a comprehensive community engagement program, with three phases, or rounds, of outreach. The first two rounds of outreach led up to the Needs Assessment and included a variety of activities that informed the development of the Plan and its recommendations.

Themes and findings from the following engagement activities are listed in the *Key Themes* section below.

Advisory Group

The Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan Advisory Group met in March, July, and October 2025. The Advisory Group is composed of representatives from advocacy groups, committee members, and a range of recreation interests and perspectives, and will act as a sounding board throughout the planning process, meeting at key points in the project to provide guidance.

The first meeting focused on a preliminary discussion of strengths, challenges, needs, and opportunities for St. Helena parks, recreation, and trails. The second meeting continued that discussion with a review of the initial engagement findings and a visioning activity. The third meeting looked at preliminary needs and potential recommendations by site.

Figure 3 - Advisory Group Meeting #1, March 2025





City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Stakeholder Interviews and Meetings

Stakeholder interviews and meetings were conducted in March and July 2025 to gain perspectives on facility and program strengths, areas for improvement, and future opportunities. The interviews and meetings included sessions with representatives of the following groups and organizations:

- Equitable Recreation Committee
- Parks & Recreation Staff
- Public Works – Parks Maintenance
- Rianda House
- St. Helena Chamber of Commerce
- St. Helena City Council Members
- St. Helena City Manager
- St. Helena High School Interact Club
- St. Helena Historical Society
- St. Helena Library
- St. Helena Parks & Recreation Commission members
- St. Helena School District
- Trails Committee

Online Survey

The city distributed an online survey in both English and Spanish via its social media pages, newsletters, the PRT Plan website, and flyers. The survey was available from June to August 2025 and received 239 responses (225 English and 14 Spanish). The survey included a range of questions to help determine how respondents currently use the parks and facilities, which parks they frequented, what barriers and issues affected their use, and their future needs and wants for the parks and recreation system.

Community Visioning Pop-ups

Visioning pop-ups were held at several park locations across St. Helena in July 2025 to give residents an opportunity to create a vision and priorities for the future of St. Helena parks and recreation. Community members participated in four pop-up visioning events that aimed to create a parks and recreation programming vision for St. Helena for the next 10 to 15 years. At each event, community members could vote on what images they liked the most or wanted to have in St. Helena; there were 40 images across four boards, and each person had 10 dots that they could use however they liked.

The images were categorized into three groups: Community Gathering and Activities, Recreation Programs, and Trails and Nature Areas. Pop-ups occurred at the Lyman Park Wednesday Night Summer Concert, outside of the Carnegie Building, at Crane Park by the summer camps, and at the Farmers' Market at Crane Park.



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Figure 4 - Community Visioning Pop-up at Farmer's Market



Internal Staff Work sessions

Work sessions with park maintenance staff, held in March and July 2025, focused on the strengths and weaknesses of internal operations and identifying opportunities for improvements. An additional work session with St. Helena Public Library staff in July 2025 focused on identifying potential areas of collaboration between the Public Library Division and Parks and Recreation Division.

Parks and Recreation Commission

The St. Helena Parks and Recreation Commission received several updates from internal and consulting staff on the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Planning process. Staff also met with the Parks and Recreation Commission chair to further develop an understanding of parks and recreation in St. Helena and factors that could impact the master plan.

Key Themes

The following key themes emerged from the community engagement process to date.

Highly Valued Parks, Uneven Use

- A few St. Helena parks are frequently visited and highly valued by the community (Crane Park, Lyman Park), but others are lightly used.
- Several parks in St. Helena have a long history and historical aspects that are valued by the community, such as the gazebo in Lyman Park.

Need for User Comforts

- There is a need for increased shade throughout the park system, especially around picnic areas, for residents to feel comfortable outdoors during hot sunny days.
- Additional water fountains and water bottle fillers across the park system were requested by residents during the visioning events and survey responses.



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- Accessibility improvements, including increased seating, improved walking paths, and improved signage, would make the park system more welcoming and accessible to all residents and visitors.

Broad Support for Walking and Trails

- There is broad interest in formalizing trails within and around St Helena for walking and hiking.
- Previous plans and initiatives have begun the process of analyzing land and trails to create a trail network, but more work is needed to create a comprehensive vision for the trails system and walking/biking networks.
- A significant portion of residents walk or bike to access the city's parks but indicated they wish there were safer routes and protected paths to get to the parks.

Desire for Expanded Collaboration and Partnerships

- There is potential for the library and the parks department to build on their coordination on programming and events.
- Parks and Recreation has robust partnerships with several community groups that help extend the capacity of staff for recreation and library events.
- The recent partnership with the School District to enable more public use of the high school swimming pool is widely seen as a success. However, swimming lessons are inaccessible to many, as are access to several other key facilities.

Figure 5 - Community Visioning at Crane Park



Climate Resilience and Parks

- A comprehensive landscaping and tree planting plan would address climate concerns by prioritizing native and drought-tolerant plants, providing guidelines for what should be planted in the parks, and would help decrease the labor needed to maintain the landscaping.
- Indoor recreation areas, such as a community center, would provide a refuge from wildfire-induced air quality issues and worsening extreme heat, especially in the summer.
- Increased drought and heat impact the health and appearance of landscaping, as well as invasive insects that are killing the native Valley Oaks.

Desire for Water Access

- Residents expressed significant interest in a water-based park feature, such as a splashpad or sprayground, for use during the summer.



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- Although there are several creeks that flow seasonally through St. Helena, there is no direct access to the creeks. Residents were interested in developing access points to the creeks and the Napa River.

Interest in Increased Recreation Programming

- The most popular ideas from the community visioning events focused on community gathering at an event or program, such as movie nights or community food events.
- Programming and activities are a major driver for visiting parks for residents. Many residents favor the parks that offer structured activities and events, such as adult team sports, the farmers market, and summer concerts.
- Teenagers indicate that St. Helena needs more recreation and hang-out options for teenagers, ideally near the high school.

Maintenance Investment

- The city's parks maintenance team is limited in its capacity and struggles to maintain and landscape the parks and also upgrade and improve the parks.
- The St. Helena community has high expectations for their parks, and it is often difficult to meet those expectations with the limited staff and budget of the maintenance team.
- Any park or trail improvements should take into consideration the limited capacity of the maintenance team.

Figure 6 - Advisory Group Priority Activity





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PRT Framework

General Plan Vision and Guiding Principles

The St. Helena General Plan Update 2040, adopted in 2019, set forth a vision and guiding principles:

With an eye toward the future, while building on the assets of today, the community of St. Helena envisions that, in the year 2040, the town will be a well-integrated place linked by effective community institutions, safe neighborhoods and streets, and superior schools, parks, and public facilities.

In addition, planning for thoughtful, well-managed development, while maintaining its small-town, rural character is of vital importance to St. Helena's residents.

Guiding principles for St. Helena in 2040

- Sustainable Community
- Stable Economy
- Environmental Stewardship

PRT Vision

The PRT vision describes how St. Helena's parks, recreation, and trails system will contribute to the General Plan vision. Drawing inspiration from community engagement and the city's existing parks and recreation assets, the vision describes the aspiration or big idea for the parks, recreation, and trails system in St. Helena and the outcomes it will provide for the community.

St. Helena parks, programs, and trails make life better for all by enlivening the community, supporting healthy people and parks, and providing active and connected public places.

PRT Goals

A goal is a specific target or destination, a result that contributes to achieving the vision.

- **Connections:** Establish a dynamic, welcoming, and safe parks and trails network, connecting people to each other and to the community.
- **Livability:** Create an active, healthy, and socially vibrant city by activating parks with culture, recreation, and arts programming and events, responding to St. Helena's unique community character and identity.
- **Partnerships:** Leverage and foster lasting partnerships to expand collaboration, funding, services, recreation programming, and opportunities for the community.
- **Stewardship:** Ensure consistent and sustainable stewardship of parks and facilities through high-quality and efficient landscaping, maintenance, and operations.
- **Nature:** Preserve land and cultivate healthy ecosystems to enhance community resilience and provide access to nature.



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Trends

The following section highlights trends and ideas for the city to consider when meeting community needs and interests. These also offer ideas about how to expand the city's programming and diversity of facilities and parks.

Access to Water



Extreme heat is expected to increase as the climate warms, and having cooling water features, including splashpads and river and creek access, will improve residents' health and well-being. Water access was one of the most popular activities in the engagement session, especially as an activity for young children. Water recreation is accessible to all ages and abilities, can improve community health, and provides refuge during the hot Napa Valley summers.

Activation and Placemaking



Activating public spaces through programming and physical improvements can create a sense of place and community, which can improve the local economy and community wellbeing. Examples include street markets, festivals, parklets, and public seating, all of which help create community awareness and improve quality of life in public areas like streets, plazas, and parks. Activated spaces have increased since the COVID-19 pandemic and were one of the top requested improvements to recreation programming offerings in St. Helena.

Climate Change & the Park System



The impacts of climate change, including extreme heat, wildfire, air quality, and extreme storms and flooding, are already being felt by St. Helenans. Parks play a central role in assisting and addressing some of these issues. This includes sustainable planting approaches for parks and overall maintenance practices and limiting urban heat islands. Recreation programs and facilities that focus on walkability and bikeability are critical to reducing vehicle miles traveled, a key statewide goal to reduce greenhouse gases. Open space and parks can also be effective buffers for potential flood zones or wildfire paths. Energy conservation efforts and the use of solar panels for recreation facilities and



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lighting can help reduce the city's carbon footprint, act as a model for businesses and residents, and save money in operations.

Engaging Teens



A major challenge in St. Helena is supporting and attracting families; the population of children and teenagers has decreased in the past few decades. Teenagers are a challenging group to satisfy in the parks and recreation system. They often indicate a desire to 'hang out,' and need safe places day and night to do this. Skateparks, teen playgrounds, and teen centers are a few areas that have some success in satisfying this need. Evaluating how to provide safe and enjoyable experiences for this group is paramount to fully serving the needs of

residents. Additional programs integrating technology and esports are also on the rise.

Older Adults



People aged 65 and older account for nearly 30 percent of the city's population, nearly double the statewide proportion; the population of older adults in St. Helena has grown significantly since 2000. The population of seniors participating in outdoor and physical recreation programs has increased in the past decade, as both the number participating goes up and a larger percentage of older adults seek out those activities than in the past. Continued interest in leisure activities for older adults is expected, including the popular bocce club, other senior

sports clubs, and culture- or history-related programs.

Tourism Trends



The Napa Valley tourism industry is growing, with both tax revenue and direct visitor spending increasing more than 13 percent since 2018.¹ Napa County is especially attractive to tourists seeking farm-to-table and food and drink experiences. In St. Helena, special events, such as Harvest Festival and Holiday Wine Barrel Tree, are increasingly popular for both residents and visitors. Special events and activities that bring people downtown were the top programs to add from residents in the Visioning

¹ Visit Napa Valley, 2023 Visitor Profile and Economic Impact Study, accessed 9 September 2025.
<https://www.visitnapavalley.com/about-us/research/>



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Survey. Events that bring in both residents and tourists, like food truck events or holiday decorations in the parks, would improve economic activity and help develop a sense of community.

Volunteerism



Volunteering can create a sense of wellbeing, improve physical and mental health, and connect communities of all ages and backgrounds.² St. Helena recently started a volunteer program in the parks, which is growing in popularity. Parks volunteering programs can create a sense of ownership and responsibility, as well as improve the sense of community in the local neighborhood. Different types of volunteering, such as planting, trash pick-up, and events staffing, can appeal to residents of different ages and abilities.

Walking



Walking for fitness, pleasure, and transportation is one of the most popular outdoor activities in the United States.³ In St. Helena, residents indicated that having access to safe trails, paths, and walkways is important and would increase their likelihood of walking. A community walking group, St. Helena Striders, formed in 2024 to improve fitness and community. Implementing pedestrian and bike plans, creating and formalizing walking routes and trails, and creating community walking programs are all ways to improve the walking

experience and ensure everyone feels safe walking both to and within parks.

² Mayo Clinic, Benefits of Volunteering, accessed 9 September 2025.

<https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/3-health-benefits-of-volunteering>

³ Outdoor Industry Association, Outdoor Participation Trends; accessed 9 September, 2025.

<https://oia.outdoorindustry.org/exec-summary-outdoor-participation-trends>



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Community Needs

This section discusses the findings from the needs assessment and gaps analysis, which looks at the system and individual sites from a variety of perspectives. It is organized as follows:

- Citywide opportunities that address the park system as a whole;
- Park needs and gaps identified from the evaluation of park quantity, distribution, and quality;
- Trail needs and gaps, including coordination with the Streets Master Plan;
- Recreation facility needs and gaps, including benchmarking with NRPA data;
- Recreation programming needs and gaps, based on community input and the capacity of existing parks and facilities.

Systemwide and Citywide Opportunities

The parks, recreation, and trails system is more than a collection of land and facilities – it defines the fabric of the community and shapes how people experience St. Helena. This section discusses opportunities in the park system to contribute to St. Helena’s General Plan vision.

Increasing St. Helena’s Sense of Place

St. Helena’s park system has strong potential to contribute to its sense of place and identity as a rural small town. Not only is this community character highly valued by residents, but it also contributes to St. Helena’s attractiveness to visitors looking for an authentic small-town environment.

Key Needs

- **Placemaking.** Activating key parks with placemaking approaches that encourage people to visit and linger, leading to more people in parks, increased vibrancy, and even increased spending in local businesses. St. Helena’s Summer Concert Series and the weekly farmers market are excellent foundations, but there is a demand for much more placemaking activity. Placemaking can be accomplished by adding more special events, like the concert series. Several other approaches are suited to St. Helena.

Creative placemaking brings arts, culture, music, and design activities into parks and public spaces. The mural at Lyman Park is an example of this. With the arts, cultural, and history organizations in St. Helena, these types of efforts could be expanded to more sites and increased frequency.

Tactical placemaking experiments with temporary installations in existing parks, and sometimes the creation of temporary parks or pathways. These approaches are a low-risk, low-cost way to experiment and test ideas before making more costly investments. For example, tactical placemaking ideas include low-cost tables and chairs, hammocks, casual seating from natural materials such as logs and boulders, or strings



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of lights. Larger parks such as Lyman, Crane, or Wappo Park are good candidates for these types of interventions.

Mobile programming is another approach to placemaking and activation. Mobile programming brings activities to parks on a regularly scheduled basis and allows drop-in participation. The old-fashioned bookmobile is an example of mobile programming. There are excellent examples of mobile programming in communities of all sizes, with activities ranging from play and games (hula hoops, corn hole, giant Jenga) to health and fitness to STEM activities like LEGO robotics. Most of St. Helena's parks are suitable for mobile programming to encourage visitation and use.

- **Park design to celebrate community identity.** The features and amenities in St. Helena's parks appear to have been selected without considering long-term operations or how material and amenity choices can contribute to community character and identity. There is a mix of materials (in fencing, bollards, pathways, etc.), facilities (restrooms, playgrounds, etc.), and site furnishings (benches, picnic tables, trash receptacles) throughout the park system, sometimes even in a single site. Selecting consistent features and amenities in parks that convey St. Helena's agricultural and rural identity will help increase St. Helena's sense of place and will also create maintenance efficiencies for repair and replacement.
- **Celebration and interpretation of local environment and history.** St. Helena's park system includes several historic resources, including the Carnegie Building, the Signorelli barn, and the Lyman Park gazebo. Parks also offer an opportunity to interpret the local environment and cultural history through art. This can include site-specific art (both permanent and temporary installations), art and interpretation incorporated into park amenities such as destination playgrounds that celebrate the local agricultural or natural history, and informational kiosks.

This should also include protecting views from parks, preserving trees and geographic features, and integrating native plants into park designs.

- **Embracing St. Helena's creeks and the Napa River.** General Plan Policy OS1.1 states: Preserve and enhance St. Helena's riparian corridors for their value in providing wildlife habitat, biodiversity, natural drainage, and visual amenity. General Plan policies also support Living River Principles. St. Helena's creeks and the Napa River are important features that intersect with the park system. There is an opportunity to increase riparian plantings and access points in existing park sites and to expand trails and pathways along the creeks and rivers.

Connecting the System

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) and the Trust for Public Land (TPL) have helped communities adopt the 10-Minute Walk as the national metric for park system access. Crossing Highway 29 is a challenge – the highway is a barrier for walking, biking, and even driving to parks, especially at peak park use times. Public engagement showed that 79% of survey respondents said they would be more likely to walk or bike to a park or other destinations in St. Helena if there were improvements to trails, paths, and walkways.



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Key Needs

- **Safe Routes to Parks.** NRPA and the Safe Routes Coalition define Safe Routes to Parks as a movement to provide safe, convenient, and equitable access to parks for people walking and biking. As the Safe Routes Coalition notes, walking or bicycling to a park supports health, reduces traffic and pollution, and creates more opportunities for social connection and time outdoors.

This means that all of St. Helena's parks should be accessible by safe bike lanes or trails, sidewalks or pathways, safe crossings, and good visual access from surrounding streets. There should also be sidewalks and pathways connecting from the public street into the park's internal pedestrian circulation system, with bicycle racks near park entries and activity areas.

- **Coordination with the Streets Master Plan.** Concurrent to the PRT Master Plan, St. Helena is developing a new Streets Master Plan with consultant Toole Design Group. This study will produce a conceptual design plan for the transportation network throughout the city with context-sensitive pedestrian, bicyclist, and transit improvements. There is both an opportunity and a need for the PRT Master Plan to coordinate with the Streets Master Plan to ensure Safe Routes to Parks are maximized, to get the most value out of the city's existing parks assets.
- **Wayfinding program.** Wayfinding helps residents and visitors find their way around the city and within parks and public facilities. A wayfinding program provides a system of signs with a consistent graphic style and brand. The program projects a consistent image for the City, reduces visual clutter, and makes for more efficient operations (fewer and more effective signs to maintain, fewer parts). This system should include identification signs (e.g., park entry sign or monument), informational signs (e.g., park or building layout, trails map), directional signs, and regulatory signs (e.g., no parking).

Past economic development efforts in St. Helena recommended a citywide wayfinding program. If a citywide program is not developed, a park system-specific wayfinding program should be developed and implemented as soon as possible.

Community Resilience

As noted in the Existing Conditions Report, St. Helena's Safety General Plan Element included a *Climate Change Hazards and Vulnerability Assessment*, completed in 2023. According to this report:

St. Helena is, and will continue to be, affected by the impacts of climate change in the form of increased extreme heat days, increased average temperature, stronger storms, more severe floods, deeper droughts, and more frequent and larger wildfires.

St. Helena's parks can better support community and climate resilience if the following key needs are addressed.

Key Needs

- **Updated, climate-adapted, and drought-resistant plant palette and tree list.** Most of the trees and plants in St. Helena's parks were in place before drought and climate



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change were as severe as today. Updated plant and tree lists are needed so that new plantings can survive and to guide the transition of existing park landscapes over time. For example, the City of Sonoma recently approved an updated master tree list developed in consultation with the UC Master Gardener Program. This list includes 32 trees selected to withstand the area's projected climate for the next 75 years.

- Shade and cooling in parks.** St. Helena's parks have many mature trees, which require ongoing urban forest care to ensure their continued health. In addition, there is a need for more tree planting and a tree canopy replacement program to ensure that the parks continue to have a healthy tree canopy that provides shade for future generations. There is also a need to provide shade structures or canopies in parks, where additional shade is needed. As part of the cooling infrastructure in parks, water fountains/hydration stations are needed, at least one in every park.
- Community disaster response.** Element 9 of St. Helena's General Plan includes implementing action PS6.A, to maintain and periodically update the city's Emergency Response Plan. When that update happens, St. Helena's parks should be considered for their potential or future potential to serve as cooling centers, resilience hubs, or staging areas for emergency response.



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Park Needs & Gaps

Parkland Quantity

St. Helena's developed park inventory is summarized in the sidebar to the right, organized by park classification. For more information, see the *Existing Conditions Report* (August 2025), which defines the classification system, documents the existing park inventory and provides information about the planning context.

As this table shows St. Helena's developed parks (not including designated open space lands) total 26.98 acres. This translates to 5.01 park acres per 1,000 residents, based on the city population of 5,378. The maximum a city can require under California's Quimby Act, which regulates subdivision park land dedications, is 5.0 acres per 1,000. General Plan Policy PRT.1 supports maintaining 5.0 acres per 1,000 as the baseline and supports a higher level of service if feasible.

This means that each existing site and the acreage it contributes is important to maintaining the desired ratio of park land to population in St. Helena. If a site goes away or is repurposed for another use, the acreage needs to be replaced in order to sustain the desired baseline level of service.

Park Distribution and Access

In 2017, the 10-Minute Walk Campaign was launched by the Trust for Public Land (TPL), Urban Land Institute (ULI), and National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). Across the US, 300+ mayors have committed to the vision that everyone in U.S. cities should have access to a quality park within a 10-minute walk of their home, focusing on quality and distribution rather than simply the quantity or acres of parkland.

To support the 10-minute walk campaign, TPL has created the ParkServe mapping platform, the most comprehensive database of U.S. parks. Using the database, TPL has created a user-friendly tool to map a 10-minute walk, estimated at a half mile, as a proxy for assessing the availability of close-to-home parks for each city, town, or village in its database. ParkServe (<https://www.tpl.org/parkserve>) provides a free, easy-to-use tool for St. Helena to track park access. TPL even provides a way for communities to provide updated park inventory data, which St. Helena could do in the future if new parks are added.

Table 1: St. Helena Parks

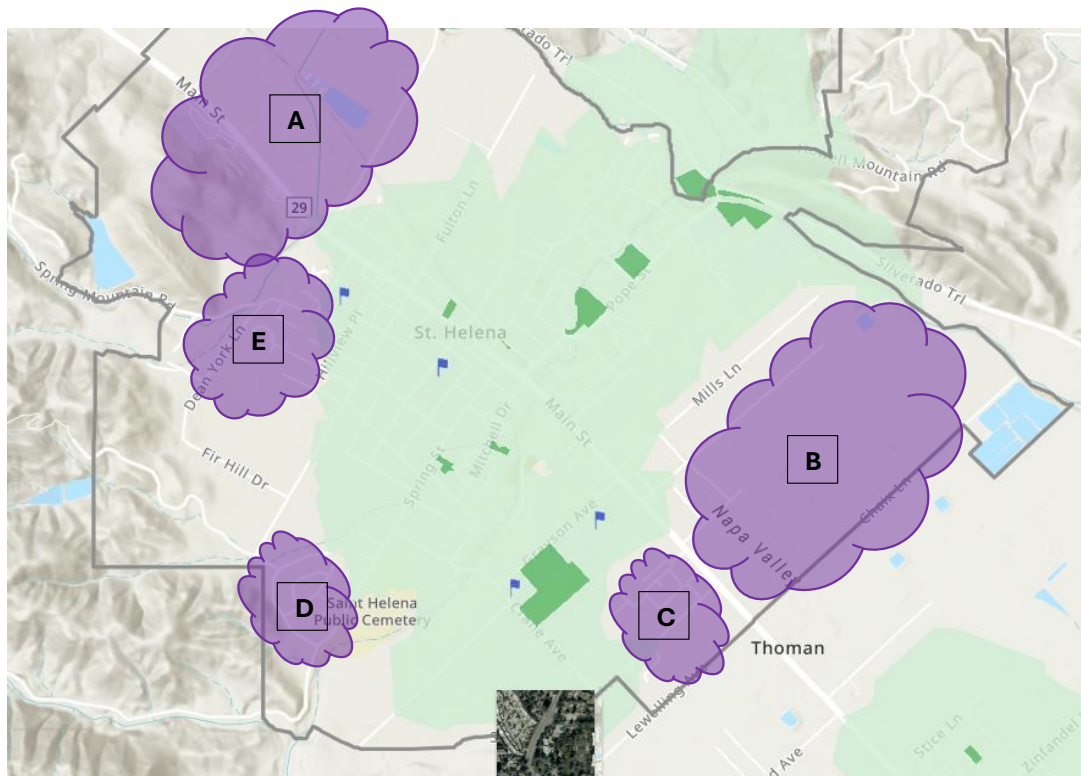
Local-serving Parks	Acreage
Lewis Station	0.13
Mary Fryer Park	0.84
Mennen Park	0.17
Starr Baldwin Park	0.76
Stephen C. McCullagh Park	0.14
Community-serving Parks	
Crane Park	11.27
Jacob Meily Park	5.42
Lyman Park	0.89
Wappo Park	5.32
Undeveloped Parks	
Hunt Ave Lot	0.36
Stone Bridge Park	0.75
Special Use Facilities	
Carnegie Building	0.13
Parks and Recreation Division Offices & Martial Arts Building	0.80
Total Acreage	26.98



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Figure 7 depicts the areas of St. Helena that have 10-minute walk park access shaded in light green, based on TPL's ParkServe dataset. The blue flags show the locations of public schools. The purple cloud areas are the areas within St. Helena that lack 10-minute walk access. Each is given a letter that corresponds to the discussion below.

Figure 7 - Screenshot of St. Helena's 10-Minute Walk Park Access, Using TPL's ParkServe



Overall, the distribution of park land is excellent in the core of St. Helena. Though ParkServe shows that the core area of St. Helena has parks within walking distance, it is important to recognize that this is theoretical access. The path of travel is not always conducive to walking. Crossing Highway 29 is a challenge – the highway is a barrier for walking, biking, and even driving to parks, especially at peak park use times. As noted in the Connecting the System discussion on, Safe Routes to Parks is a key need for all of St. Helena's parks.

Five areas of St. Helena lack 10-minute park access, as shown by the purple bubbles. Each of these areas is discussed below.

- **Areas A and B:** Area A (around Pratt Ave) and Area B (around Mills Lane) are both in areas with 20-Acre Agriculture or Winery zoning. There is no need for 10-minute walk access to parks in areas with these zoning designations. In the future, parks that serve the broader community could be located in these areas.



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- **Area C:** Area C is the Magnolia/El Bonita residential area, zoned for medium and high residential use. This neighborhood is in close proximity to Crane Park based on a linear distance. However, it lacks access due to the agricultural land between Area C and Crane Park. Residents of Area C can get to Crane Park using Sulphur Springs and Crane Avenue, but lack a more direct route. The Streets Master Plan is looking at two potential mobility improvements that would increase access to Crane Park for this area: a shared-use path from La Quinta to Crane Park and a Sulphur Springs/ Crane Ave Class 2 bikeway.
- **Area D:** Area D (Spring St./Sylvaner Ave.) is fully built out and is zoned for low-density residential. This area is adjacent to the St. Helena Public Cemetery and has views of land zoned Woodlands & Watershed and 20-Acre Agriculture to the west and south. The Access to Crane Park for this neighborhood would be improved by the proposed Sulphur Creek shared-use path. This corridor could potentially incorporate a parklet or park amenities such as benches and picnic areas, near Area D.
- **Area E:** This area (Hillcrest/Dean York Lane) is zoned for medium-density residential use and lacks walkable park access. Unlike Areas C and D, Area E is not close enough to other parks to allow pathway improvements to close the 10-minute walk gap. There are potential options to serve this area by adding a new park (such as developing a park at the reservoir on Spring Mountain Road), formalizing joint use agreements at the middle school or the Boys & Girls Club, or incorporating park amenities along the planned York Creek shared use path between Pratt Ave and Spring Mountain Road. Formally opening and recognizing the Adams-Pine pathway, described on p. 24 of the *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report*, would increase the access of residents in Area E to the Boys & Girls Club and other city parks and facilities located nearby.

Key Needs

- **Keeping up with population growth.** Willdan's 2023 *Development Impact Fee Update Study* projects St. Helena's 2040 population to be 6,600 people, an increase of 1,222. To maintain the current level of service of 5 acres per 1,000 population, St. Helena will need to add 6.12 acres of park land by 2040 if population growth projections are met.
- **The 10-minute walk.** Outside of WW and AG zoning areas, St. Helena provides 10-minute walk park access for most of the community. Addressing park access in the few gap areas (Areas C, D, and E) is a key need.
- **More engaging parks.** Except for Crane Park and Jacob Meily Park, there isn't much to do at many of the other parks, especially the smaller ones. Adding a greater variety of facilities and activities to existing parks is a key need in order to get the most out of existing sites and provide a good visitor experience.

The parks in the system have the capacity to incorporate more activities. The small size of many parks is a factor in where and which amenities and facilities can be provided. Many small-scale amenities and facilities would fit in even St. Helena's smallest parks, including options such as ping pong tables, corn hole, single bocce courts,



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spraygrounds, outdoor exercise equipment, climbing walls or climbable art pieces, and community gardens.

- **More social spaces, including shaded areas.** Most of St. Helena’s parks lack social space for meeting up with friends, relaxing outdoors with a small group or family members, or holding small events such as a birthday party. Most of the play areas don’t have seating nearby, and while there are picnic tables scattered around, there aren’t picnic areas. Overall, there is a lack of inviting seating areas and social areas that encourage people to linger in parks. These types of social spaces allow people to converse in small groups or find a place to relax, read, or people-watch. The seating outside the Carnegie Center is a good example of well-located social seating that is shaded by trees.

Throughout the park system, there is a need for more seating areas, including benches, seat walls, “plop” seating; small gathering areas with shade, such as picnic shelters and plaza spaces; and “social seating” where seating allows people to converse. The casual games discussed above (ping pong, corn hole, etc.) can be located near social spaces to further encourage use. Seating areas should include plenty of shaded options, whether the shade is provided by tree canopy or a structure. Almost 20% of survey respondents said not having enough shade was a barrier to using parks and recreation facilities more frequently.

- **Nature in developed parks.** There are opportunities to increase habitat and nature in most of St. Helena’s developed parks, such as planting more large canopy trees and clusters of trees, adding more understory plantings and richer planting palettes, replacement of turf with ecolawn, and adding pollinator plantings.
- **Linear Park and/or Nature Park classifications.** St. Helena has some undeveloped properties included in the park inventory (Hunt Ave and Stone Bridge) and other city-owned properties that are used for recreation but are not included in the city’s park inventory. One such property contains the heavily used walking path that starts at Adams Street and continues to the Napa River. If potential future shared-use pathways along St. Helena’s creeks and the Napa River include property acquisition, these properties should be designated as park land and will need a classification that suits their function and intended use.
 - Linear Park definition: *A linear park is longer than it is wide, connects areas, and typically includes a path that follows a linear feature, such as a river, creek, or utility right-of-way.*
 - Nature Park (or Natural Area) definition: *Nature parks are properties set aside to preserve natural resources or features, remnant landscapes, or scenic resources/views. Low-impact recreation or facilities may be provided at these sites, as long as the primary conservation objective is maintained.*



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Trail Needs & Gaps

Public engagement results highlighted trails as a priority need for the community. The top three reasons for using trails in St. Helena are for exercise (79% of survey respondents), getting around town (51% of respondents), and dog walking (34% of respondents).

For the purposes of St. Helena's *PRT Master Plan*, the federal definition of a recreational trail (23 U.S.C. 206) will guide the scope. This definition states:

The term 'recreational trail' means a thoroughfare or track across land or snow, used for recreational purposes such as—

- *pedestrian activities, including wheelchair use;*
- *skating or skateboarding;*
- *equestrian activities, including carriage driving;*
- *nonmotorized snow trail activities, including skiing;*
- *bicycling or use of other human-powered vehicles;*
- *aquatic or water activities; and*
- *motorized vehicular activities, including all-terrain vehicle riding, motorcycling, snowmobiling, use of off-road light trucks, or use of other off-road motorized vehicles.*

This means that while St. Helena's vehicular, bike, and pedestrian transportation networks are important to providing access to parks and facilities, these systems are not the subject of the trails component of the *PRT Master Plan*. The *Streets Master Plan* (currently under development) addresses these on-street networks (sidewalks, bike lanes, bike boulevards, street crossings), as well as "shared use paths" that also function as recreational trails.

The 2022 *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report* contains detailed recommendations for recreational trails in St. Helena, with a primary focus on trails that can be developed on existing public land. Specific recommendations from this document are referenced in this and other sections.

There are several types of recreational trails that contribute to St. Helena's system:

- The Napa Valley Vine Trail is the one **regional trail** that passes through St. Helena. The nonprofit Napa Valley Vine Trail Coalition and the Napa Valley Transportation Authority are the two entities responsible for the design, construction, and management of the Vine Trail. St. Helena does not have any regional trails itself, though the Vine Trail is an important recreation resource for the community and for visitors.
- The Streets Master Plan defines and provides proposed routes for **Shared Use Paths**, also known as **Class 1 Bikeways**. These are intended for bicycle and pedestrian use.
- **Park pathways** are circulation routes in parks. Some park pathways may be part of a designated recreational trail loop.



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Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

- **Recreational trails** are designated routes. These may be in a park, on a publicly owned property or right-of-way, or in an open space property. They may be designated for single use, such as hiking/walking only, or for multiple use (walking and biking), and may be natural surface or paved.

Key Needs

- **Looped recreational trails in parks.** St. Helena's parks should have looped trails that support walking for exercise in parks. These routes should include measured distances. They could be a separate trail if the park is large enough, or could use park pathways for all or part of the loop. In addition, on-street pedestrian infrastructure could be used to complete loops or add to the distance.
 - Wappo, Crane, and Meily Parks are large enough to have a looped trail within the park.
 - St. Helena's smaller parks can be connected by loops that use on-street infrastructure to connect clusters of small parks or to loop out and back to a small site.
- **Recreational trails on city properties.** Community members would like more opportunities for exercise, including walking, running, and biking, with dogs if possible. To meet this demand, St. Helena needs designated recreational trails with longer distances, offering loop options where possible. The *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report* includes several key routes that would meet these needs, including:
 - **Formalizing and adding amenities to the Napa River Walk Loop** (the route that begins at Adams and extends to the Napa River).
 - **Developing a natural surface trail at the reservoir**, extending to a loop in the future if possible. In addition, incorporating the **Bell Canyon loop** as a hiking trail, as described in the *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report*.
 - Formalizing the **walking loop around the water treatment plant**, called the Valley Floor Walk, and described on p. 32 of the *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report*.
- **Shared use paths or recreational trails along the Napa River, Sulphur Creek, and York Creek.** Both the *Streets Master Plan* and *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report* have identified routes along the river and creek. These are important facilities to provide opportunities to experience nature as well as exercise.



City of St. Helena

Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Recreation Facility Needs & Gaps

Table 2 shows recreation facilities either provided by St. Helena or that came up in the engagement process or trends analysis, St. Helena's inventory, the percentage of park agencies across the US that offer the facility in their system based on Park Metrics data, and whether another organization in St. Helena provides the facility.

Table 2: St. Helena Recreation Facilities Analysis

Recreation Facilities	Parks & Rec Division Facility Count	% of US Agencies Offering ⁴	Other St. Helena Provider Offering
Outdoor basketball courts	0	85%	Y
Diamond sports field (baseball, softball, T-ball)	2	80%	Y
Rectangular sports field (soccer, lacrosse)	1	77%	Y
Bocce courts	8	(not tracked)	N
Pickleball courts	4	45%	N
Tennis courts	5	74%	Y
Volleyball court	1	41%	N
Skate park	1	47%	N
Pump track/bike skills course	0	(not tracked)	N
Dog park	1	70%	N
Community garden	1 site, 22 plots	54%	N
Fitness zones (outdoor gym)	0	39%	N
Disc golf course	0	35%	N
Splash pads	0	38%	N
Outdoor swimming pool	0	49%	Y
Playgrounds	6 sites	94%	Y
Recreation center (w/ gym)	0	63%	Y (gym)
Community center	0	60%	N
Teen center	0	11%	N
Senior center	0	41%	Y
Arts center	0	(not tracked)	Y

⁴ 2025 NRPA Agency Performance Review



City of St. Helena

Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

In 2019, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)'s Research Director noted that the *NRPA Areas and Facilities Standards* publication had not been updated in more than two decades and would never again be updated because the organization recognized that there is not a single set of standards for parks and recreation. NRPA launched *Park Metrics* as a benchmarking tool to allow comparisons to other agencies, with the guidance that agencies should tailor their offerings and standards to their specific community.

Table 2 shows recreation facilities either provided by St. Helena or that came up in the engagement process or trends analysis, St. Helena's inventory, the percentage of park agencies across the US that offer the facility in their system based on Park Metrics data, and whether another organization in St. Helena provides the facility.

While St. Helena does not have a designated community center, it does have the Carnegie Building, which serves some of the functions that a community center does in providing meeting and classroom space.

In addition to St. Helena's facilities, there are also recreation facilities provided by the school district, including sports fields, sports courts, a theatre, and an outdoor swimming pool, as documented in the Existing Conditions Report. These other facilities are important to consider when evaluating needs.

Currently, most recreation facilities are concentrated at Crane Park, which is located at the southern end of town. Jacob Meily Park has another cluster of facilities. St. Helena has grouped many of its sports facilities into complexes. While sports fields and tennis court groupings are fairly common, pickleball and bocce complexes are rarer, especially in small city park systems. As Table 2 shows, NRPA doesn't even track bocce courts at this time.

Nationally, for sports requiring special facilities, the highest participation sports are basketball and tennis. Skateboarding has had steady growth, and both skateboarding and pickleball have experienced significant growth post-COVID. It's important to remember that, regardless of its participation level or growth in popularity, any sports activity is only pursued by a portion of the population. For example, only about 9% of the US population plays basketball, the highest participation field or court sport.

Like the rest of the US, people in St. Helena participate in a wide variety of recreation activities. However, because the city has a relatively small population and operating resources, it is challenging for the park system to provide dedicated facilities for all potential recreation pursuits. The facility needs identified below factor in St. Helena's existing inventory and the need for balance and variety in the system.

Key Needs

- **Distribution of recreation facilities throughout the park system.** Rather than adding new facilities to Crane Park as the default solution, St. Helena should prioritize new facilities at other sites. Jacob Meilly and Wappo Park should be prioritized for new facilities with community-wide draw if they are compatible with the site. Lyman Park should be prioritized for facilities that will engage visitors and residents and encourage them to spend time downtown, such as an interactive fountain, a destination playground, a café, or games such as ping pong and cornhole. By distributing facilities



City of St. Helena

Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

at parks throughout the system, St. Helena can improve the visitor experience, ensure that all parts of town have facilities nearby (not just park land) and provide more balanced park use/wear and tear.

- **Health and fitness facilities in parks.** St. Helena residents expressed interest in more health and fitness opportunities in the park system, which can be supported with both facilities and recreation programming. Examples of facilities that can help support health and fitness include outdoor gyms, outdoor classroom space suitable for fitness classes and walking/running loops with measured distances. These health and fitness facilities generally have small footprints and can be fit into St. Helena's parks easily.
- **More engaging playgrounds.** St. Helena's playgrounds at Crane and Jacob Meily Parks are larger, more engaging facilities, located under or near a tree canopy that provides shade. The other playgrounds tend to be small, manufactured post and platform structures with minimal play value. The playgrounds in the park system should offer different types of play experiences, including options such as a nature playground, themed destination play area, and features such as net climbers, disc swings, and spinners, in addition to traditional play structures. As playgrounds age and require replacement, they should be replaced with more interesting playgrounds. Lyman Park in particular, should have a large, signature play area that incorporates art as a focal point located in downtown.
- **Additional outdoor facilities in parks.** St. Helena has a variety of outdoor facilities in its system already, but there is a need for additional facilities based on public feedback, trends, and benchmarking. St. Helena should consider the following additions:
 - **Additional dog park.** The existing dog park is an excellent facility. It offers a more expansive type of dog park, is located on the edge of town with little visibility, and is sited to require a walk and thus a longer time commitment. It also does not have a small dog area. A smaller second dog park, potentially with a small dog focus, closer to central St. Helena in a visible, walkable location, would serve both residents and visitors and allow for quick visits.
 - At least one additional **community garden** site. The community garden at Jacob Meily Park is fully subscribed. One or more community garden sites on the other side of St. Helena, preferably near higher-density residential areas, is preferable to adding more plots at the existing community garden.
 - An **interactive fountain or sprayground**. An interactive fountain like the one shown in the image to the right can be designed to serve as a plaza space when the water is turned off. With St. Helena's hot summers, an interactive fountain offers the opportunity to cool off and play in the water without the need for lifeguards, since there





City of St. Helena

Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

is no standing water. This type of facility attracts a lot of use, so it should be located in a community-serving or special-use park that has a restroom. It isn't suitable for a local-serving park.

- Recreation **facilities that expand the variety of options** in St. Helena's park system. Options include a basketball court (potentially with a combination goal that allows for futsal and roller hockey), a pump track or bicycle skills course, an outdoor gym (as previously discussed), and, if a suitable location can be identified, a disc golf course (9- or 18-hole).



- **Programmable indoor space.** St. Helena has several indoor spaces, but does not have any specifically designed for programming. The martial arts studio in the converted garage at the Parks & Recreation Office will need to be replaced, as will the office space when the property is sold. The aging Head Start Building in Crane Park no longer has functional restrooms, although the space is still used for day camps and children's programming. This structure should be replaced due to its poor condition, but the site is not large enough for a full-service community center.

As a former library, the Carnegie Building offers the most potential for programming. However, the building is not flexible and is currently only suitable for certain types of programming (quieter programs, smaller classes, meetings). It is suitable for a limited set of programs and for events. It may be best used as a specialty facility. An example of a repurposed Carnegie library is The Dalles Arts Center, used for arts programs and gallery space in a small city of 15,000 residents in Oregon. It is operated by a nonprofit. Other communities have adapted former Carnegie libraries into event spaces, such as Snohomish, WA (population 10,000).

The School District has a large theater at the high school and indoor gyms at sites around St. Helena. These public resources are important to consider in the overall supply of recreation facilities in St. Helena, though the availability varies, and access can be challenging.

Even considering other public facilities, existing indoor spaces are inadequate for St. Helena's programming needs. There is a need for a community or recreation center, or at a minimum, a flexible-use building that is climate-controlled and usable for a variety of indoor activities.

- **Event space.** Event centers/pavilions are facilities or areas that can accommodate large group gatherings, from weddings to family reunions to competitions. They are rental spaces and may be an enclosed building or simply be an outdoor area with upgraded utilities designed to hold tents and booths. Event center buildings are often connected to the outdoors with roll-up or sliding doors and exterior patio space. In



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

some cases, they may be converted from other uses, such as a barn or other agricultural building. Event spaces can be revenue generators for Parks & Recreation, and they fill a need for gathering space in St. Helena. If designed properly, even spaces can also provide recreation programming space. Planning an event space should include a financial feasibility study and business plan, which will consider the types of events and facilities required. There are many examples of successful event spaces in other communities that can serve as case studies for St. Helena. Three approaches are shown below

Large Capacity Picnic Shelter in a Scenic Setting



There are many examples throughout the region of large picnic shelters, suitable for parties and events, including weddings. These shelters can also serve as space for programming during weekdays, such as day camps, teen programs, and arts classes.

Repurposed Existing Facility



The Stein-Boozier Barn in Wilsonville, Oregon is an example of an historic barn in a park that was stabilized and repurposed as a site for events and programs. Restrooms are available in the park. This type of approach might be suitable for the historic Signorelli Barn.

New Facility in an Existing Park



The Pioneer Park Pavilion was built in downtown Puyallup, WA's downtown park. It is a flexible-use pavilion with roll-up doors, used for the weekly farmers market, for community events, and as a revenue-generating wedding venue. A flexible-use building could replace the Head Start building, since there isn't space for a full-service community center.



City of St. Helena Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Recreation Programming Needs & Gaps

The St. Helena Parks and Recreation Division operates its recreation programs, including youth and adult sports, rentals, and summer camps. The city does not have its own aquatics facility or theater. The St. Helena School District offers public access to the pool and programs, with programming run by a private company, and has a performing arts center at the high school. Additional detail on recreation programming providers in St. Helena, including participation in City programs, is available in the *Existing Conditions Report*.

Table 3 (on the next page) identifies recreation program areas either offered in St. Helena (by the city or another provider) or identified as needed through public engagement. For each program area, the table identifies the level of programming offered by the City in that area, the percent of US parks agencies offering the program area, and whether another entity in St. Helena offers programming. All programming is provided by the Parks & Recreation Division.

From public engagement results, 38.25 percent of respondents said that the department does not meet their needs with its arts, history, and culture programming. Since NRPA breaks this into several categories, Table 3 lists visual arts, performing arts, cultural crafts, and natural and cultural history on individual rows. In addition, public engagement indicated a strong desire for more events and more aquatics programming, especially swimming lessons.

There are three roles for the city in providing recreation programming:

- **Direct** program provision means designing and implementing recreation programs using in-house staff (permanent, part-time, or seasonal).
- **Contract** program provision means recruiting and managing contract instructors to provide programs at a park or recreation facility, and participants register through the city's system.
- Program **coordination** means providing information about programs provided by others (that may use City facilities), with registration occurring through the provider's system (e.g., Waves Aquatics, St. Helena Little League)

Key Needs

The availability of facilities is a limiting factor in the programming that St. Helena can offer, especially in the near and medium term. The needs discussed below are focused on programming that is feasible with the parks and facilities currently available.

- **Sustaining existing programming.** St. Helena's existing programs are very popular and well-attended. These should continue, with special events, sports, and summer camps, St. Helena's core program areas.
- **Additional special events programming.** There is significant interest in additional special events. The drop-in nature, multigenerational appeal, and community-building nature of the existing special events make these programs very popular in St. Helena. Additional events that are replicable multiple times (like the concert series) should be added, rather than additional once-a-year themed events like Harvest Fest or 4th of July. Examples of these types of events include movies in the park, food cart nights, and social dances in the parks.



City of St. Helena

Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

- **Expanded fitness/health and wellness programming options.** Current offerings use contracted teachers, an efficient way of providing additional programming. The Park & Recreation Division could recruit additional fitness and health programming that can make use of existing parks and spaces, with a focus on expanding the available options and providing opportunities for social connections.
 - Recruiting teachers to offer fitness classes in parks – yoga, tai chi, boot camp, Zumba, etc. would expand opportunities using available facilities.
 - Another area to consider is walking as a recreation program, where the Division organizes walking groups or publishes self-directed walking routes. This is discussed on p. 7 in *Walking Routes, Trails, and Publicly Accessible Open Space Report (2022)*.
- **Programming collaboration with the Library Division.** With the Library and Parks & Recreation both being City services, there are many opportunities to collaborate on programming, especially on cultural and literary arts programs. Existing library programs could potentially be scheduled into parks, such as story time or book clubs in parks. Existing parks programs could be brought to the library, or new programs could be jointly developed that draw from the strengths and capacities of both divisions, such as lectures or walking tours themed to local topics.
- **More access to aquatics programs.** The School District owns the outdoor swimming pool and has a contracted operator that offers aquatics programming, including swim lessons and open swim. The Parks & Recreation Division is able to offer an aquatics exercise class with a contracted teacher, but does not have access to additional pool time. Community feedback indicated there is a need for more aquatics programming, including swimming lessons. There is a need to advocate to the School District for more aquatics programming, swimming lessons, and additional scholarships or low-cost programming.
- **More comprehensive information about existing programming.** There are many organizations providing recreation in St. Helena, as documented in the Existing Conditions Report. The Parks & Recreation website lists some of these other providers, but the information is on different webpages (e.g., aquatics on one page, community resources that include helpful links to a mix of facilities and organizations on another). There isn't a page with listings by program type, such as arts programs, senior programs, community gardens, sports programs, which would make it easier for community members to find programming they are interested in.
- **Increased volunteer opportunities through a formal program.** According to AmeriCorps' Civic Engagement and Volunteering database, 23% of Californians volunteered time in formal programs, and 43% do charitable giving. The volunteer program is relatively new and has room to grow by providing more opportunities in a wider range of interest areas, including park stewardship, as well as volunteering in programs.



City of St. Helena

Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

Table 3: St. Helena Recreation Programs Analysis

Recreation Program Area	City Programming Level ⁵	City Programming Role	% of US Agencies Offering ⁶	Other St. Helena Provider Offering
Special events	H	Direct	91% (themed), 88% (social)	N
Summer camps	H	Direct	83%	Y
Sports and sports leagues	H	Direct	86% (team sports), 76% (individual sports), 76% (racquet sports)	Y
Fitness classes	M	Contract	82% (fitness classes), 57% (martial arts)	Y
Aquatics	L	Contract	68%	Y
Volunteering	L	Direct	not tracked	Y
Visual arts	-	-	65%	Y
Performing arts	-	-	64%	Y
Cultural crafts	-	-	67%	Y
Natural and cultural history	-	-	70%	N
Health and wellness education	-	-	82%	N
Specific teen programs	-	-	68%	N
Specific older adult programs	-	-	77%	Y

⁵ Ratings: -- (none), L (low), M (medium), H (high)

⁶ 2025 NRPA Agency Performance Review

City of St. Helena

Parks, Recreation, & Trails Master Plan

Executive Summary



Community Inspired



The long-range Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan (PRT Plan) is St. Helena's first standalone guiding document for the parks, recreation and trails system and is an implementation document for the 2019 St. Helena General Plan. From Spring 2025 through February 2026, this planning process engaged community voices in multiple ways, through every phase. With input from a specially convened Advisory Group, the Parks and Recreation Commission, local organizations and the broader community of residents and visitors, this plan is community inspired.

See Chapter 1 for more details on the engagement process.

"Designated walks with signage, improved sidewalks, advertised routes, more benches."

(Survey Respondent)

99% of residents feel parks, recreation and trails are important to quality of life.

(All Survey Respondents)

**Top 3 priorities:
Community park renovations,
river access,
activating public areas**

(211 Harvest Festival and Online Budgeting Exercise Respondents)

"Ongoing maintenance to make and keep our parks in beautiful shape..."

(Survey Respondent)

"Create a community space that can be used by the citizens and rented to generate revenue."

(Survey Respondent)

"Let's make sure we can afford what we have and maintain it for the future."

(Survey Respondent)

"Be sure seniors are included in the plans!"

(Survey Respondent)

"Programming needs to be affordable for St. Helena residents—like Calistoga. Cooperate with other public or community entities on indoor spaces."

(Survey Respondent)

"Please address existing facilities first."

(Survey Respondent)

Addressing Critical Needs



The approach to assessing needs for St. Helena incorporated multiple layers and criteria, including community insights, benchmarking and technical analysis, with input from the advisory group and Parks and Recreation Commission.

Review the Master Plan appendices if you're interested in the technical reports.

**Inconsistent
investment in parks
and programs
across the City**

**Lack of park activation
and thoughtful design
and amenities to
interest people**

**No cohesive approach
to how to leverage
parks for the
community, visitors, or
economic development**

**Insufficient flexibility,
agility and adaptability
to meet needs**

**Limited staff capacity
to meet community
expectations for
service levels or
maintenance**

**Current finances limit
the ability to capture
opportunity and
focus investments
effectively**

Master Plan Vision & Goals



The PRT vision describes how St. Helena's parks, recreation, and trails system will contribute to the General Plan vision. Drawing inspiration from community engagement and the city's existing parks and recreation assets, the vision describes the aspiration or big idea for the parks, recreation, and trails system in St. Helena and the outcomes it will provide for the community.

The goals describe outcomes and reflect the aspirations expressed in the vision. The goals provide a framework and define what is to be achieved. Chapter 2 includes systemwide policies that provide strategic direction for each goal.

Vision

St. Helena parks, programs, and trails make life better for all by enlivening the community, supporting healthy people and parks, and providing active and connected public places.

Goals



Big Ideas for a Thriving City



Six big ideas will bring St. Helena's PRT vision to reality. Chapter 3 provides further detail on these big ideas.

Connect the system



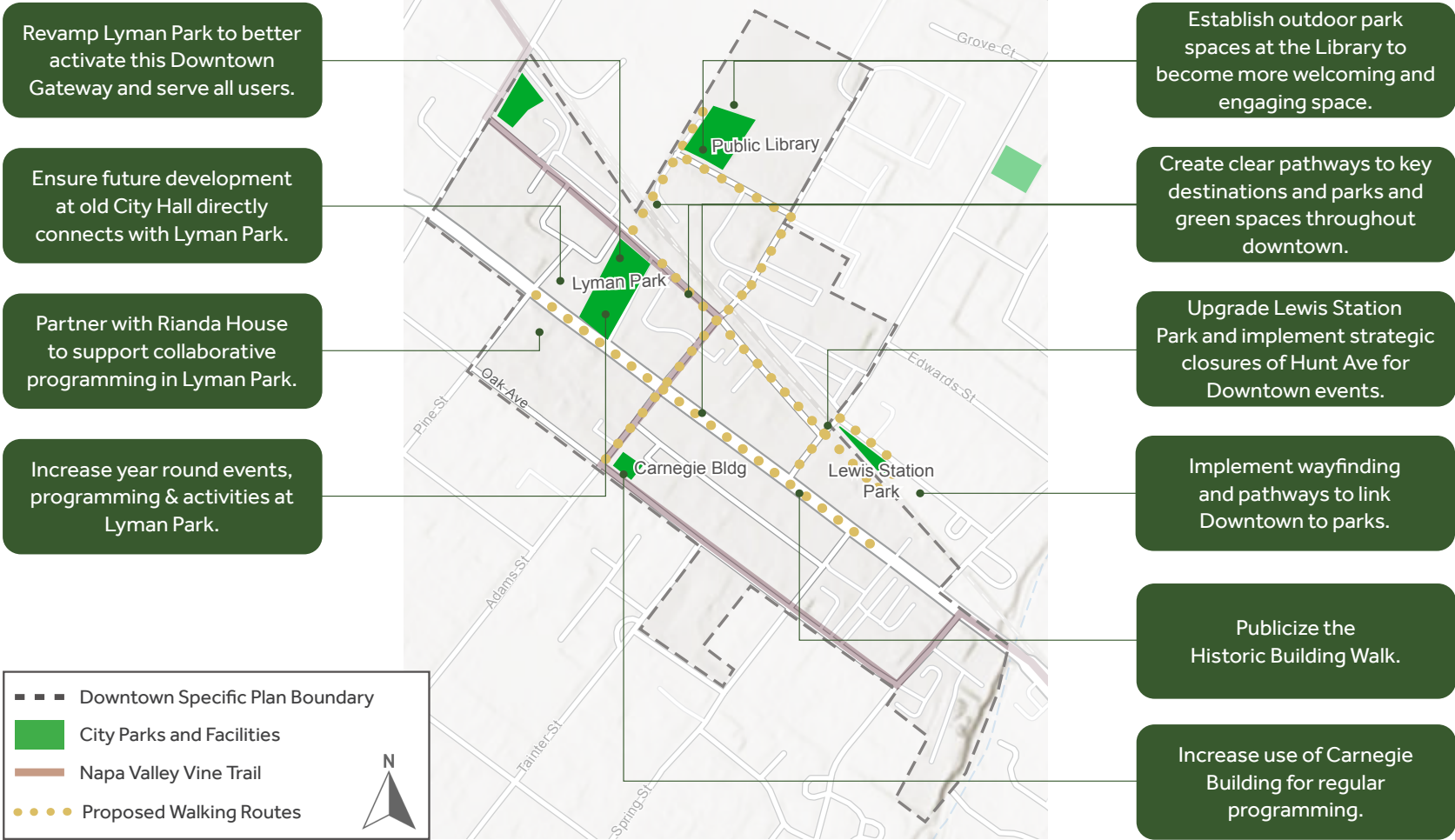
**Celebrate and integrate
nature, culture, and art**



**Create welcoming event
and activity spaces**



St. Helena Downtown Parks Strategy



**Catalyze downtown with
park enhancements
and programs**



**Embrace the creeks
and Napa River**

**Develop an indoor
clubhouse to bring the
community together**



A Comprehensive System

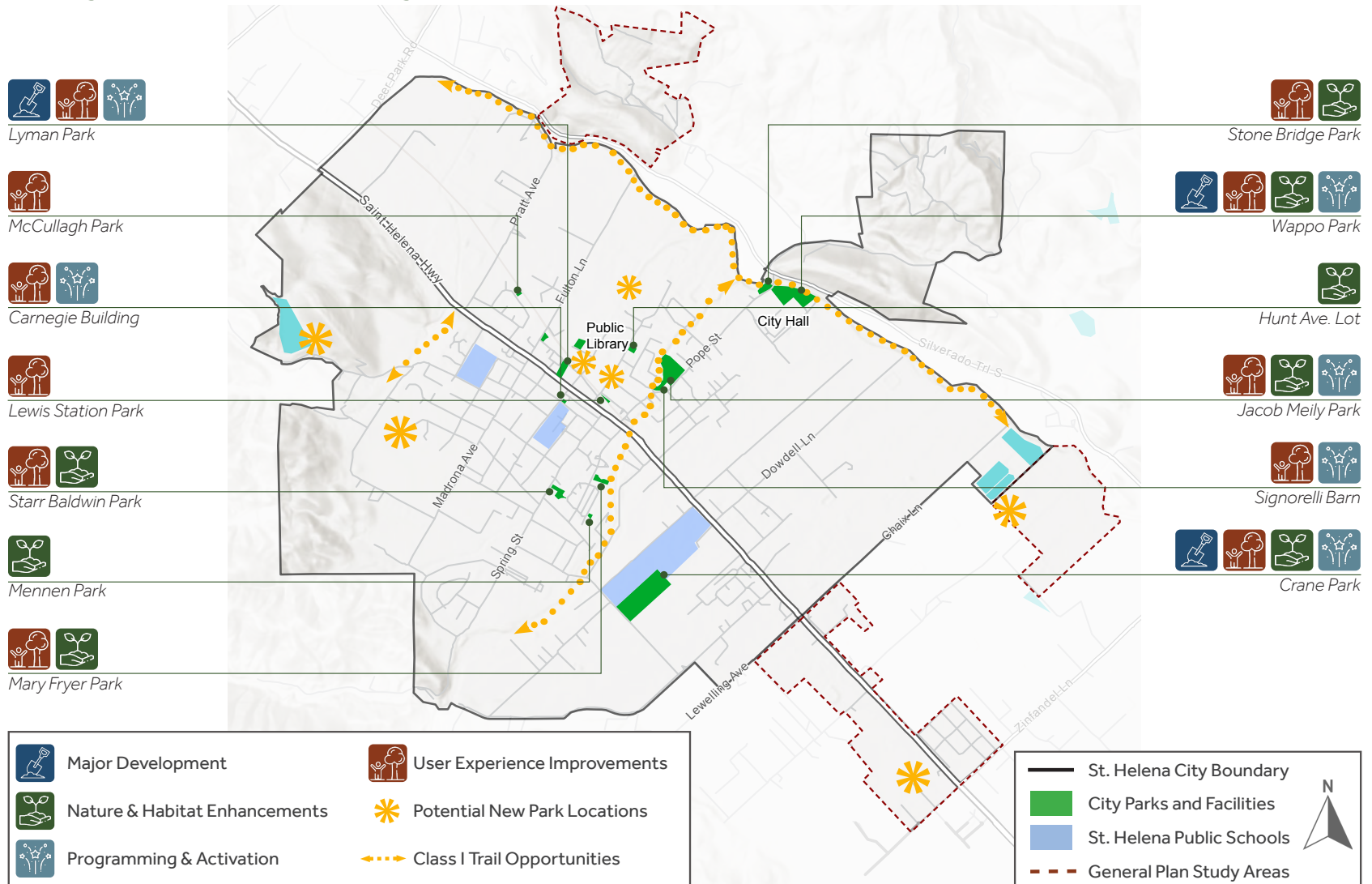


The Citywide Park System Concept diagram shows recommended improvements and additions to St. Helena's park system, in four project types. As this graphic shows, the future park system invests in existing parks and makes strategic additions to meet key needs, bring the vision and goals to life, and advance the big ideas.

The concept diagram is aspirational, representing a 15- to 20-year plan for St. Helena. Implementation depends on available funding, staff capacity, volunteer efforts, and partnerships (or collaborations).

See Chapter 3 for details on recommendations for each existing site and the proposed new additions.

Citywide Park System Concept



Acknowledgments

Thank you to the numerous St. Helena residents and visitors who participated in this planning process, sharing their time, insights and love of parks and recreation. Without your voices, we could not have developed this plan.

Parks and Recreation Commission

Doug Boesch, Chair
John Thompson, Vice Chair
Stephanie Smithers
Julie Jenanyan
Denise Nelson

Parks, Recreation, and Trails Advisory Group

Jim Anderson
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City Council

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Michelle Deasy, Vice Mayor
Aaron Barak
Kate Spadarotto
Billy Summers

City of St. Helena Project Management Team

Mara Strickler
Ashley Sylvester

Special Thanks

The Community Services Department thanks all the City staff who contributed to the PRT Plan, especially the City Manager and Public Works Department, as well as the partners who participated, including the St. Helena School District, St. Helena High School Interact Club, St. Helena Historical Society, St. Helena Chamber of Commerce, UpValley Family Center and Rianda House.

Consultants

BluePoint Planning
Donna Legge

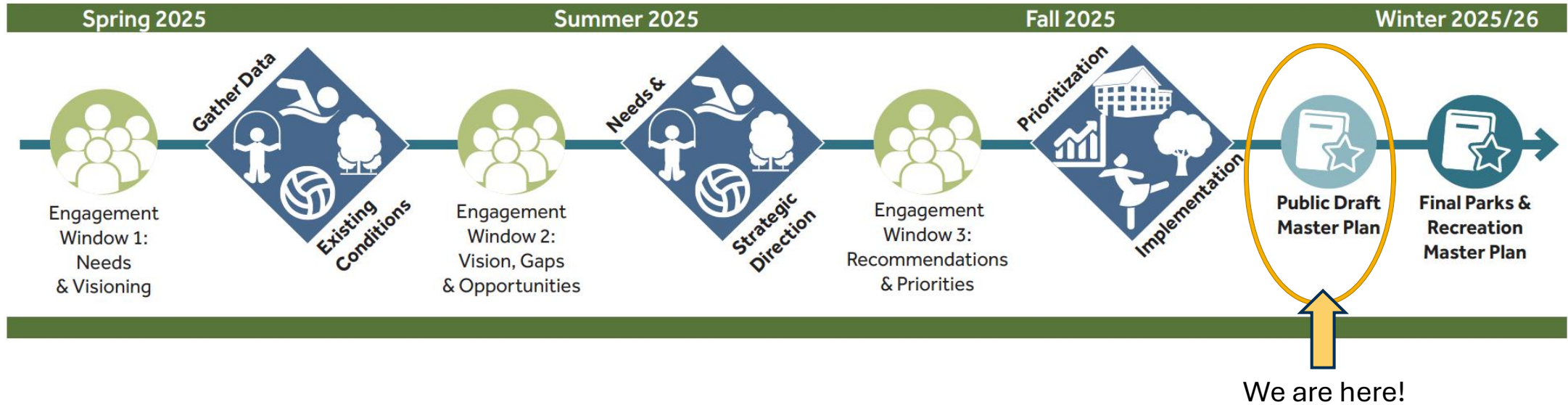


St. Helena Parks, Recreation, & Trails Master Plan

**Parks & Recreation Commission
March 16, 2026**



PLANNING PROCESS



COMMUNITY INSPIRED

“Let’s make sure we can afford what we have and maintain it for the future.”

“Designated walks with signage, improved sidewalks, advertised routes, more benches.”

“Please address existing facilities first.”

“Be sure seniors are included in the plans!”

99% of residents feel parks, recreation and trails are important to quality of life.

Top 3 priorities:
Community park renovations,
river access,
activating public areas

“Create a community space that can be used by the citizens and rented to generate revenue.”

“Ongoing maintenance to make and keep our parks in beautiful shape...”

**Parks
Make
Life
Better!**



ADDRESSING CRITICAL NEEDS

Inconsistent investment in parks and programs across the City

Lack of park activation and thoughtful design and amenities to interest people

No cohesive approach to how to leverage parks for the community, visitors, or economic development

Insufficient flexibility, agility and adaptability to meet needs

Limited staff capacity to meet community expectations for service levels or maintenance

Current finances limit the ability to capture opportunity and focus investments effectively

**Parks
Make
Life
Better!**



VISION FOR ST. HELENA PARKS

St. Helena parks, programs, and trails make life better for all by enlivening the community, supporting healthy people and parks, and providing active and connected public places.



PARKS, RECREATION & TRAILS MASTER PLAN GOALS

A. Connections

Establish a dynamic, welcoming, and safe parks and trails network, connecting people to each other and to the community.

Livability

Create an active, healthy, and socially vibrant city by activating parks with culture, recreation, and arts programming and events, responding to St. Helena's unique community character and identity.

C. Welcoming

Ensure that programs, services, and public spaces embrace and serve all users, highlighting inclusivity, belonging and cultural diversity.

D. Nature

Preserve land and cultivate healthy ecosystems to enhance community resilience and provide access to nature.

E. Partnerships

Leverage and foster lasting partnerships to expand collaboration, funding, services, recreation programming, and opportunities for the community.

F. Stewardship

Provide consistent and sustainable stewardship of parks and facilities through high-quality and efficient landscaping, maintenance, and operations.

BIG IDEAS FOR A THRIVING CITY

Connect the system



Celebrate and integrate nature, culture, and art

Create welcoming event and activity spaces



BIG IDEAS FOR A THRIVING CITY

Catalyze downtown with park enhancements and programs



Embrace the creeks and Napa River



Develop an indoor clubhouse to bring the community together



DOWNTOWN PARKS STRATEGY

Revamp Lyman Park to better activate this Downtown Gateway and serve all users.

Ensure future development at old City Hall directly connects with Lyman Park.

Partner with Rianda House to support collaborative programming in Lyman Park.

Increase year round events, programming & activities at Lyman Park.

Downtown Specific Plan Boundary

City Parks and Facilities

Napa Valley Vine Trail

Proposed Walking Routes

N



Establish outdoor park spaces at the Library to become more welcoming and engaging space.

Create clear pathways to key destinations and parks and green spaces throughout downtown.

Upgrade Lewis Station Park and implement strategic closures of Hunt Ave for Downtown events.

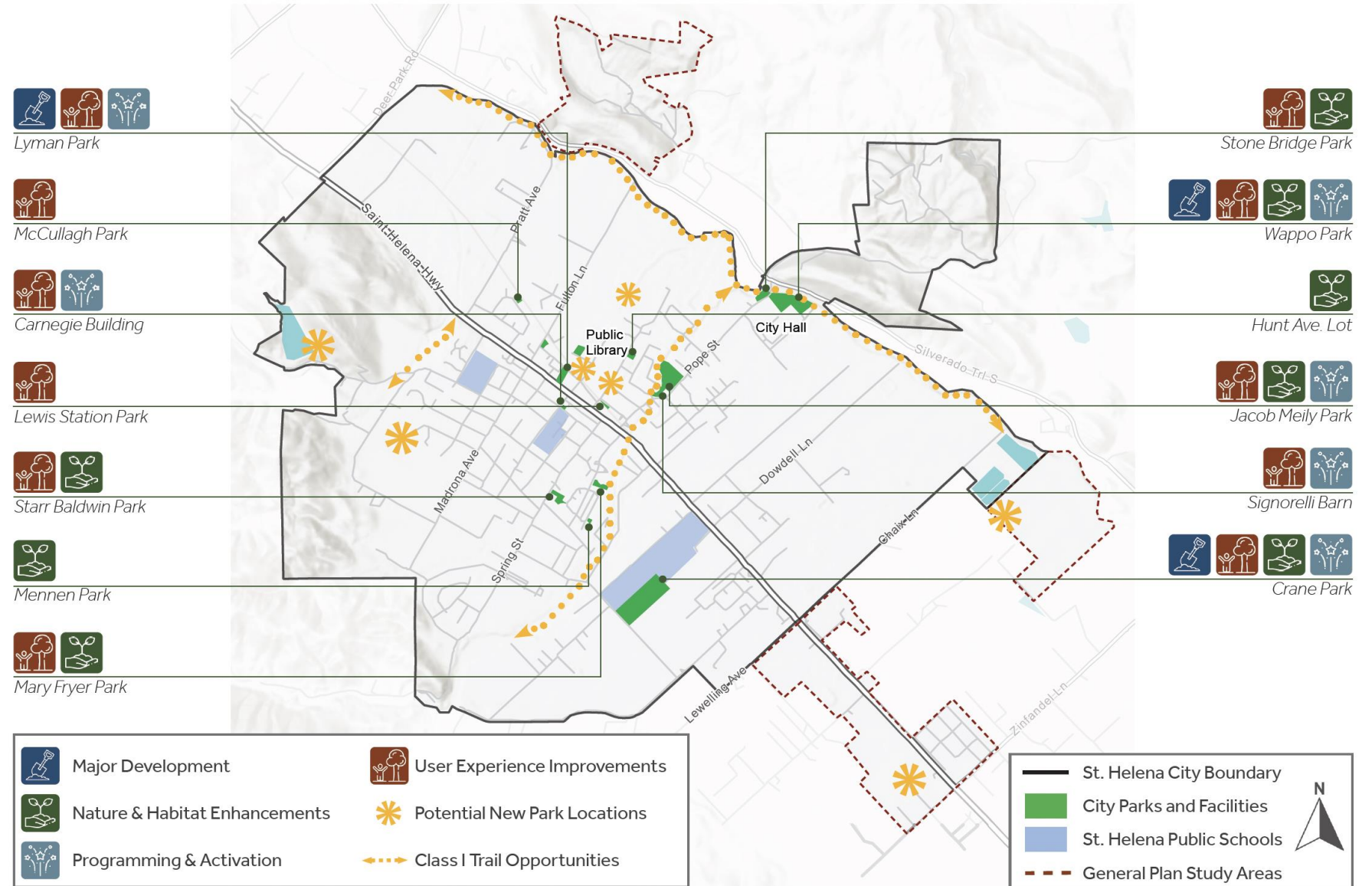
Implement wayfinding and pathways to link Downtown to parks.

Publicize the Historic Building Walk.

Increase use of Carnegie Building for regular programming.



CITYWIDE PARK SYSTEM CONCEPT



Thank you!

Questions/Comments?





St. Helena Parks, Recreation, & Trails Master Plan

Parks & Recreation Commission
March 16, 2026



Parks & Recreation Department



Agenda Report to the City Council

Agenda Section: SCHEDULED MATTERS:

Department: Recreation

DATE:	March 16, 2026
FROM:	Mara Strickler, City Librarian
SUBJECT:	Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan Recommendation
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Provide feedback regarding key findings and final draft of the Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan. presented by BluePoint Planning.
PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:	On January 28, 2025, City Council voted to approve adoption of a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a Professional Services Agreement with BluePoint Planning for parks and recreation master planning services. On February 24, 2026, City Council voted to approve an extended schedule with BluPoint Planning for master planning services with additional cost of \$5,175
STATEMENT OF THE PURPOSE:	Receive final draft materials from BluePoint Planning related to the Parks, Recreation & Trails master planning services.
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	The total cost of the Master Plan approved by City Council is \$130,149. Any subsequent recommended projects undertaken by the City referred to in the Master Plan will be budgeted for separately.

BACKGROUND:

As a part of the adopted 2024-26 goals, City Council established the objective to complete a comprehensive Parks and Recreation master plan. The Parks & Recreation Commission expressed support for the plan and completion of the plan is established within the City Council's adopted 2024-2028 Capital Improvement Program.

Staff prepared and released a Request for Proposals to solicit responses from qualified firms in the Fall of 2024. The City received seven responses, all who met the minimum criteria and experience to provide parks and recreation master planning services. A review team consisting of Parks & Recreation staff, Public Works staff, and members from the Parks & Recreation Commission reviewed the submitted proposals. Firms were evaluated based on proposal response, firm expertise and project team composition, previous related work, ability to create a comprehensive and actionable plan unique to St. Helena, and overall price point.

After reviewing proposals, follow-up interviews, and reference checks, staff recommended and City Council voted to move forward with BluePoint Planning for Parks and Recreation Master Planning Services.

DISCUSSION:

The Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan is intended to evaluate existing conditions, identify unmet community needs, provide a strategy for development and maintenance of current/future parks, examine methods to improve parks and recreation programming, project future costs, and provide creative funding strategies, analyze service models, and consider opportunities for collaboration with other public and private entities. The scope of the work is broken down into five overarching components (listed below), with various sub-objectives within each component.

- Assess existing conditions, data collection, and review previous/current studies
- Conduct a community needs assessment
- Foster community engagement and feedback
- Develop recommendations, financial forecasts, and implementation/funding strategies
- Develop and propose adoption of an actionable final master plan

Foundational to the Master Plan is community participation program, which has included an Advisory Group, stakeholder interviews and group meetings, input from members of the Parks and Recreation Commission, internal staff work sessions, community visioning pop-ups at the Farmer's Market, the Summer Concert series and Harvest Festival, and two online surveys.

BluePoint Planning has completed all steps outlined in their original proposal, including an existing conditions assessment, community engagement activities, a needs assessment and development of a prioritization process and implementation plan. The presentation provided by BluePoint Planning will focus on the executive summary and key points of the of the Parks, Recreation, & Trails Master Plan. BluePoint Planning is scheduled to present the final Master Plan, including feedback from the Parks and Recreation Commission, to City Council, on March 24, 2026.

GOAL:

Goal 2: Improve Infrastructure & Further Environmental Sustainability

Goal 5: Enhance Quality of Life

Goal 7: Enhance Organizational Effectiveness

Goal 8: Implement Capital Improvement Plans (CIP) Projects Miscellaneous/Other

DOCUMENTS ATTACHMENTS:

[2.19.26 St. Helena Parks Master Plan](#)

[St. Helena Parks Master Plan appendices](#)

[2.19.26 St. Helena PRT Plan Exec Summary](#)

[3.16.26 St. Helena PRT Final PRC Meeting](#)



ST. HELENA PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION 2025-26 Goals and Ad-Hoc Subcommittee Assignments

1. Parks and Recreation Master Plan (Trails, Open Spaces, & Park Enhancement Strategy) (Nelson, Smithers)
2. Communication & Outreach (Jenanyan, Smithers)
3. Parks & Recreation Grants (*Thompson*)
4. Cross-Community Integration & Partnerships (Boeschen)
5. Arts & Culture (Jenanyan & Nelson)

Updated September 2025



ST. HELENA PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION 2025-26 PARK ASSIGNMENTS

- Wappo, Jacob Meily (Thompson)
- Lyman Park, Stonebridge, Hunt (Nelson)
- Crane (Boeschen, Jenanyan)
- Mary Fryer, Mennen, Starr Baldwin, Lewis Station,
McCullah (Smithers)