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Lyon County’s scenery and natural environment provide diverse recreational opportunities; these amenities also factor strongly into its economy and quality of life. As our population increases, we face a growing need to maintain adequate open space, recreational opportunities and access to public lands. We also need to adequately plan to minimize the potential for open space, recreation areas and public lands to become overused.

The County’s residents are fortunate to have access to open lands within and surrounding their communities, as well as a range of community and neighborhood parks and sports facilities. However, there are park and recreation needs and desires in the County that remain unmet. Lyon County seeks to create equitable (not equal) recreational resources for each of its communities, recognizing that the types of resources available in each area will vary based on the community character, and the specific needs and wants of each community.

Since growth will continue in the County and new residents will desire additional facilities, parks will continue to have an important impact on the quality of life — which is related to the County’s economic development objectives. Businesses and skilled workers are often attracted to communities that have a high level of parks, open space, pathways, and recreational opportunities.

The County can help ensure that we not only retain our parks and open space, but also that they remain accessible to all users for their scenic, recreational, ecological and educational values. This Chapter provides guidelines for managing and improving the County’s recreational and open space amenities, including its parks and trails. The policies strive to balance our need for providing diverse recreational opportunities with our need to preserve the county’s scenic character and the County’s budgetary limitations.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Access to publicly-owned lands will provide opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, bicycling, off-road vehicle uses and other activities, while playgrounds, sports fields and recreation facilities will be available to children and families within communities.

County-wide Goals, Policies and Actions

Goal PR 1: Recreation in Communities

Parks, sports fields and playgrounds will be available for recreation in communities and areas of higher density development.



Policy PR 1.1: Recreation Facilities in Communities

Lyon County will provide park and recreation facilities and services based on sound financial and management planning.

Strategies:

- ◆ Focus Lyon County efforts and investments on improving and creating community parks and recreation facilities, and special use facilities to make the most efficient and cost effective use



- of public funds and personnel.
- ◆ Identify alternatives to public development, operation and maintenance of new local parks required for new residential development.
- ◆ Coordinate with other public entities to promote the efficient location, design and use of sites and facilities.
- ◆ Complete development of planned and programmed facilities within existing parks and multi-use facilities.

Policy PR 1.2: Recreation Facilities in Suburbanizing Communities and community core areas.

Lyon County will provide for park and recreation opportunities such as sports fields and playgrounds within suburbanizing communities and community core areas, and as new development occurs.

Strategies:

- ◆ Identify existing and target levels of service for parklands and facilities in suburbanizing communities, and in community core and urbanizing areas.
- ◆ Require that new residential development in suburbanizing communities and community core and urbanizing areas provide for parkland at the target service level for the additional residential capacity created.

Policy PR 1.3: Recreation Facilities in Rural Communities

Lyon County will provide for park and recreation opportunities such as sports fields and playgrounds for rural communities and as new development occurs.

Strategies:

- ◆ Identify existing and target levels of service for parklands and facilities in rural communities.
- ◆ Coordinate with other entities, such as cities, to promote the efficient location, design and shared use of sites and facilities.
- ◆ Require that new residential development in rural communities and areas outside a community core provide for parkland and/or park improvements at target service levels for the additional residential capacity created.



Policy PR 1.4: Planning and Guidance for Parks and Recreation Facilities

Lyon County will provide further guidance on park and recreation facility development through Community Plans and the development of standards.

Strategies:

- ◆ Identify and establish standards for the design and construction of facilities at local and community parks that meet the basic needs of area residents.
- ◆ Include policies and strategies within Community Plans to identify deficiencies, and general types and locations of parks to meet target levels of service for each community.

Goal PR 2: Recreation in Rural Areas

Residents will have access to a variety of recreation opportunities on public lands.

Policy PR 2.1: Recreation on Public Land



In semi-rural and rural areas, Lyon County recreation opportunities will be on public lands, including federal and state-owned and managed lands and privately held lands with easements or other agreements that ensure public access.

Strategies:

- ◆ Pursue strategies identified in the Natural Resources section of this plan to secure adequate public access to public land.

Goal PR 3: Trails

Lyon County will have trails for recreation and alternative transportation.



Policy PR 3.1: Trails

Trails in Lyon County will be designed to accommodate a variety of desirable uses, tailored to the preferences of the community(s) in which they are located.

Strategies:

- ◆ Within and among communities in Central Lyon County, efforts to develop multi-use trails will be focused toward providing opportunities for non-motorized transportation, and for recreational uses such as biking, roller-blading, and walking.
- ◆ In South Lyon County, efforts to develop multi-use trails will be focused toward providing both motorized and non-motorized recreation.
- ◆ Encourage development of equestrian trails and riding areas in semi-rural and rural areas and on public lands in Lyon County.
- ◆ Encourage the development of non-motorized multi-



use trails along portions of the Carson and Walker Rivers.

- ◆ Encourage the development and use of an aquatic trail in and along the Carson River.
- ◆ Encourage the development of non-motorized multi-use trails along drainages and irrigation ditches, and through open space lands where the paths will not conflict with agricultural and other property uses.
- ◆ Encourage the conversion of former irrigation ditches and ditch easements to non-motorized multi-use trails.

Policy PR 3.2: Trails Implementation and Management.

Lyon County will provide further guidance on the development and management of trails through Community Plans and the development of standards.

Strategies:

- ◆ Include policies and strategies within Community Plans to identify general types and locations of trails.
- ◆ Incorporate planning and provision of trail systems in the review and approval of development projects which include or are adjacent to planned routes.
- ◆ Coordinate with other public and quasi-public entities to create, maintain and operate trail systems within Lyon County and the region.
- ◆ Consider the use of incentives to encourage development projects to contribute to the acquisition or improvement of identified trail systems.
- ◆ Identify and establish guidelines for the location and design of trails to appropriately retain the natural character of the area, minimize impacts on adjacent lands and uses, properly orient and educate the public, and coordinate trail design with other public objectives such as drainage or wetland protection.
- ◆ Identify and establish guidelines for trailheads and staging areas to provide adequate improvements for users and to minimize impacts of trail use on adjacent properties.
- ◆ Manage use of off-highway vehicles within road rights-of-way and on public lands to minimize negative traffic and environmental impacts.

Goal PR 4: Capital Improvement Plan

Lyon County will fund the acquisition and maintenance of public park and recreation facilities based on an adopted Capital Improvement Program and based on sound financial and management planning.



Policy PR 4.1 Identification, acquisition and development

Identification, acquisition and development of parks and recreation facilities will be based on adopted standards and criteria.

Strategies:

- ◆ Establish basic level of service needs based on population and community character.
- ◆ Develop a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for public parks and recreation facilities and use the CIP to guide public parks and recreation facilities priorities, acquisitions and development.