

# THE GROVELAND COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

## LAND USE REPORT

JUNE 2007



PREPARED BY:

**PSOMAS**

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Just 26 miles from the Yosemite Park entrance on Highway 120 lies the historic community of Groveland, commonly known as the gateway to Yosemite. This area, including Big Oak Flat and the Pine Mountain Lake community, is slowly expanding and will continue to grow and change for the foreseeable future. As the population increases, the need for more community services and improvements to the critical aging infrastructure that supports it becomes a necessity. The Groveland Community Services District understands these needs and is taking steps to ensure that facilities servicing the community keep up with demand.

### Planning for Growth and Recreational Facilities

The Groveland Community Services District (GCS D) recognizes the need to plan for growth so that it can be managed in a way that supports the social, economic, cultural and environmental needs of the community. This report and accompanying conceptual land use plans attempt to describe, analyze and review the needs of the community that bridge the gaps that currently exist to make Groveland a better place to live, visit, and enjoy.



An Aerial View of the GCS D Property

GCS D estimates that over the next 20 years approximately 1100 residential units could be built from existing infill of the Pine Mountain Lake community and other proposed small to medium sized subdivisions in the Groveland area. Recreational and additional utility services will have to be provided and upgraded. According to a report by RBF Consultants (October 2001), the current wastewater system is already strained and will need to be expanded to accommodate any future growth. The District is now in the planning

and negotiation process of utilizing 40 acres of land from a neighboring ranch for the disposal of recycled water generated by this projected growth. These additional spray fields will be necessary to maintain the integrity of the current GCS D sewage treatment systems as the population of this area increases.

### **Enhancement to the Community**

The Groveland Community Services District wants to develop its 200+ acres of property such that its customers have a unique place that serves the needs of the residents of Groveland-Big Oak Flat and the surrounding communities. It will be an area that will provide:

- A place for people of all ages and abilities to congregate
- A place that captures the natural beauty of its environment and landscape for public enjoyment
- A place that becomes a recreation center for the needs of the entire community
- Friendly and welcoming facilities and programs that are inclusive of the whole community, both in terms of education and recreation

GCS D will offer the opportunity for the community to participate in the planning and development of desired amenities, present and future. The District will consider new facilities that are not available or are not currently accessible to the general public.

### **District's Request for Land Use Study**

These new facilities, both social and recreational, have been recognized by the District to be an essential part of the make up of the community for its current population and future inhabitants. Consequently, with the projected population growth and the demand for these mentioned services, GCS D has commissioned Psomas to study and analyze the properties owned by the District for future utility demands, to craft a land use plan for new recreational amenities, and to identify areas of land for future development opportunities.

Many natural physical features and man-made barriers constrain the planning for future utility and/or recreational services for Groveland and the surrounding area. The GCS D realized this and decided to have the available lands of the District evaluated for potential development. The reason for this land use study is to provide to the District different options on where development can occur, their costs, the type of facilities that will be well-suited to the existing landscape, and to address the desires of the community. The possibility for these new facilities was also weighed against the existing technical uses of the land by the wastewater treatment plant, reservoirs, and recycled water spray fields.

### **Zoning**

The existing zoning on the District's lands are designated as "Public" according to the County. The land uses proposed in this report are compatible with the County's zoning ordinance, which allows for almost any type of public use. "Public" is defined as follows:

"The purpose of the public (P) district is to acknowledge the limited ability of the County to impose regulations on land under the jurisdiction of public agencies, including, but not limited to, federal, state and local governmental bodies and public utilities. This zoning district is compatible with all general plan land use designations. (Ord. 2222 ' 80, 1998; Ord. 1316 ' 1 (part), 1984)".

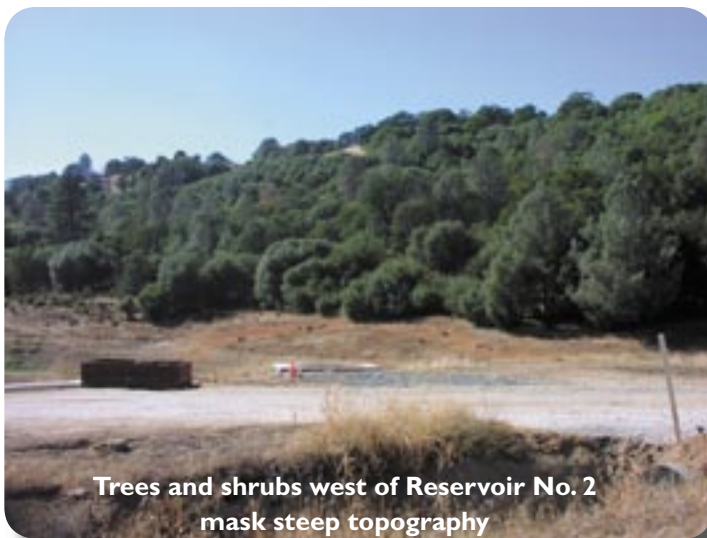
## Wastewater Treatment Operations



Psomas has been working with District staff and information provided by other consultants to develop an understanding of the District's operations and to ensure that existing services will not be compromised from any of the proposed recreational facilities considered in this report. The existing spray fields and treatment ponds must remain and continue operations of effluent disposal until other methods of wastewater disposal are constructed. Further complicating the development of a land use plan is the challenge the District has with increasing recycled water being generated each year and the issues relative to its disposal on its spray fields. The proposed

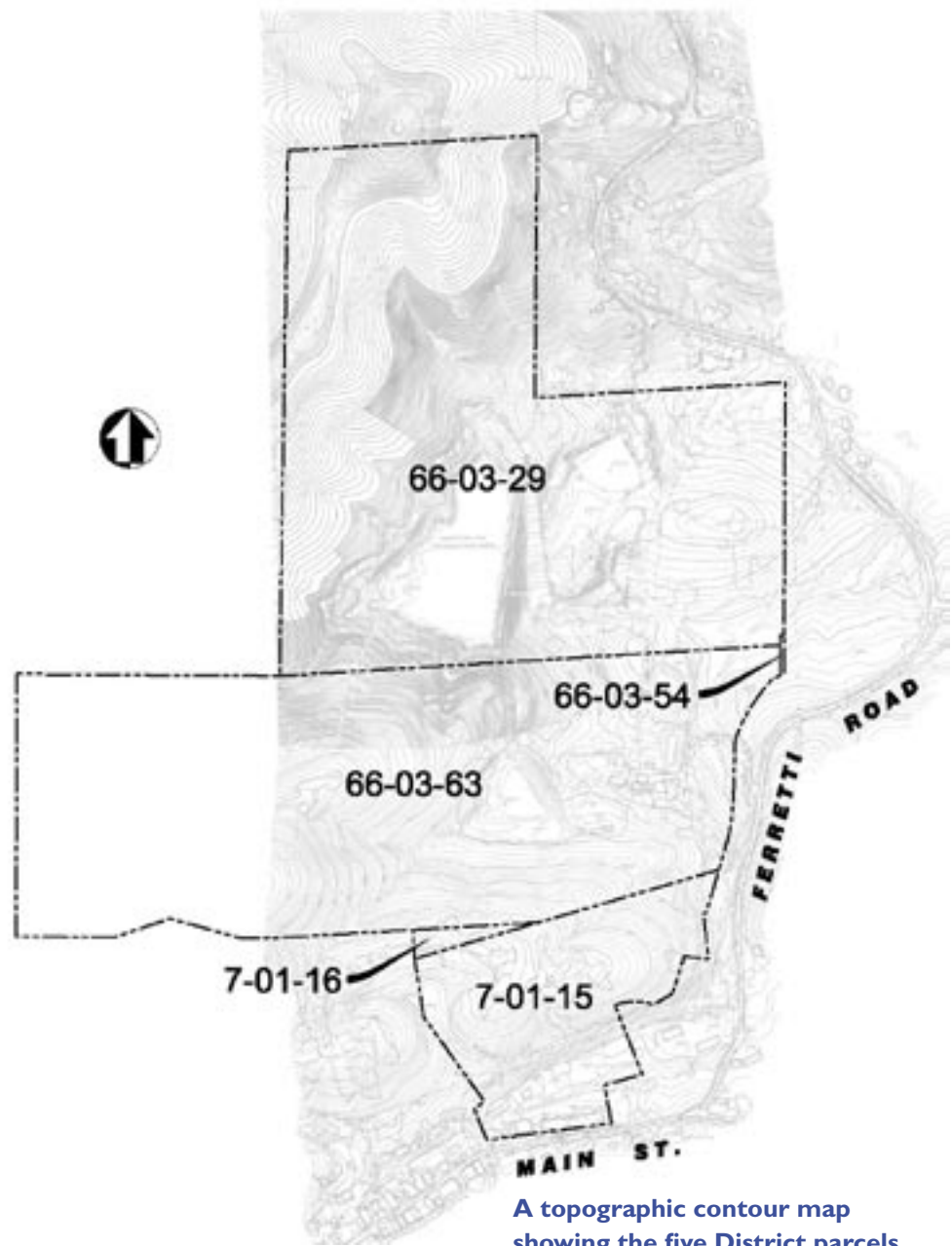
additional spray fields at a neighboring ranch are primarily planned for future residential development and may not have the capacity to handle the disposal of any additional wastewater from existing spray field deficiencies.

## Topography



The lands owned by the District are characterized by a landscape that varies in both slope and vegetation. A recent aerial photo survey, ground survey, and topographic map reveal the degree to which the terrain slopes and the challenges and limitations that will significantly shape the design. Oak trees provide canopy to some of the existing spray fields where the proposed recreation and community center are proposed. Amongst these trees and chaparral, however, many areas offer opportunities for the above mentioned uses.

Psomas purchased digital aerial imagery that was reproduced in the form of a large glossy photo. This aerial photo has been provided to the District to help aid in the decision making process. This imagery of the District's lands illustrates the configuration of the tree canopy and many other physical features that constrained the planning of the project. A reduction of this map is included in this report.



**A topographic contour map showing the five District parcels**

Other information showing topography compiled by Golden State Surveys delineated contour elevations around the perimeter of the large recycled water storage reservoir (Reservoir #2). However, the imagery did not cover some of the land area under consideration in this report. Nonetheless, we were able to research and obtain two old topographic contour maps that were merged together that illustrate the topographical features of most of the District's property. Some of the District's property, however, did not have any coverage as shown on the map above.

## **Recreational Facilities**

Currently, the community of Groveland has several recreational features that make life here unique. There is a championship 18 hole golf course, a marina for boating, water sports at Pine Mountain Lake, tennis courts, and equestrian trails. Some of these facilities are open to the general public (such as the golf course), while others are private (such as the lake in the Pine Mountain Lake community). The District felt that although there were recreational facilities throughout the Groveland community, both public and private, there were important amenities it did not have. For instance, it lacked an active adult community center building and a swimming pool that could be used for both water polo and high school swim meets. It also desired a youth center for tots and teens and a skate park. Facilities such as these would be beneficial to all age groups and were incorporated in the land use plans.



We began our investigations by analyzing the mapping information, including two subsequent site visits and meetings with District staff. Accordingly, we evaluated the property for possible locations of new facilities. We found that heavy vegetated areas of land with assorted tree species, many of which reside on steep terrain, confined development to areas that were accessible. Initial analysis of the property indicated that there were limited opportunities for some facilities because of the topographic constraints. To avoid steep terrain as well as existing uses (such as the reservoirs), our investigation revealed that the areas suitable for most development were around the Leon Rose Ball Park and the adjacent spray fields. Another area that would have possible development opportunities is the western portion of the District's property with access off of Deer Flat Road. This access point would require obtaining an access easement from the adjacent property owner. This is the area that is void of any topography on the above map.

Consequently, proposed public recreational facilities identified in this report may be in conflict with the use of the existing spray fields and difficult terrain. Furthermore, access to the site is limited and ingress/egress easements will eventually be required from adjacent property owners to obtain an access from both Ferretti Road and Deer Flat Road.

Considering all this, we made numerous iterations of alternate plans with large and minimal impact to the spray fields. These were reviewed and evaluated by District staff resulting in three potential plans. These are shown on the attached exhibits (Plan A, B and C). To remain conservative in the planning process, District staff selected a plan which had the least amount of impact to the existing spray fields by avoiding them as much

as possible. Accordingly, we developed Plan A and Plan B and choose not to depend on the expansion of recycled water spray fields in other parts of the District, thus leaving most of the existing spray fields intact.



Spray field near Reservoir No. 2.

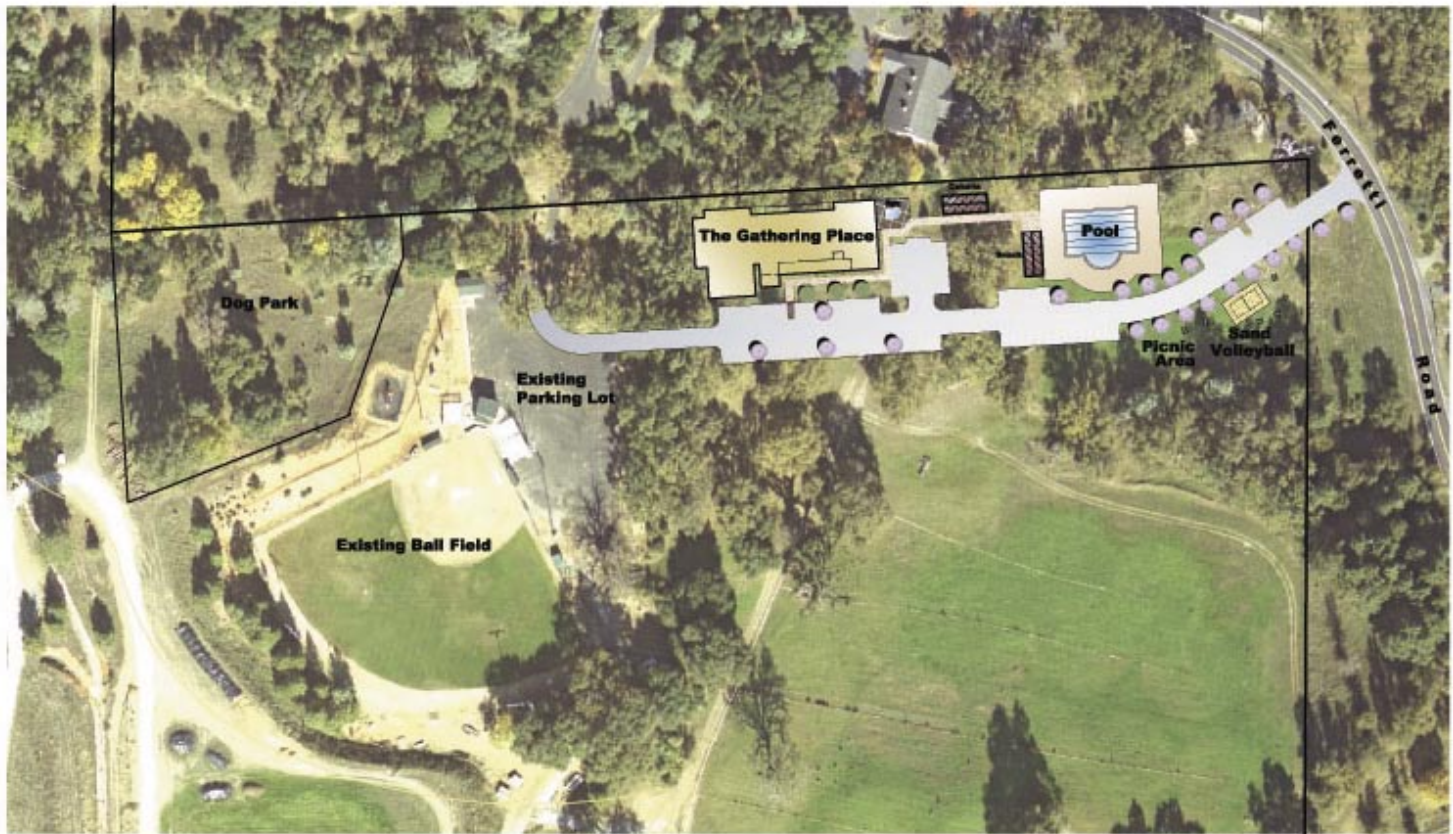
## Two Scenarios

After eliminating Plan C from further consideration, we evaluated Plans A and B under the following scenarios:

The **first scenario** assumes that the existing spray fields are maintained in the event that the Long Gulch Ranch project is either not approved or other off-site spray fields are not available.

The **second scenario** assumes that the proposed Long Gulch Ranch project will be approved and that the development fees from Long Gulch Ranch will fund relocation of the existing spray fields – or that a different type of sewage disposal system would be constructed leaving more land area available for use. Plan C was created as an alternative illustrating the possible land use under this second scenario.

To be conservative in its planning, the first scenario was selected in which the District assumed that existing spray fields would be maintained much as they are today. Although the designs of Plan A and Plan B were both configured to avoid the use of existing spray fields as much as possible, Plan B was selected over Plan A because the design of the driveway and parking lot offered more parking and better traffic calming. For this and other financial reasons, it was decided that this preferred land use plan would require construction in at least two phases. Phase 1 would consist of the construction of the community center, spa, and parking lot. Phase 2 would connect the new parking lot to Ferretti Road and add parking. It would include a community pool, picnic facilities and a sand volleyball court. Phase 1 was configured to avoid any removal of spray fields; however, there may be some instances of overspray. Phase 2 would eliminate about 0.75 acres of spray field land. The construction of Phase 2 may not occur until replacement spray fields can be found.



*Conceptual Site Plan*

April, 2007  
Scale: 1"=150'

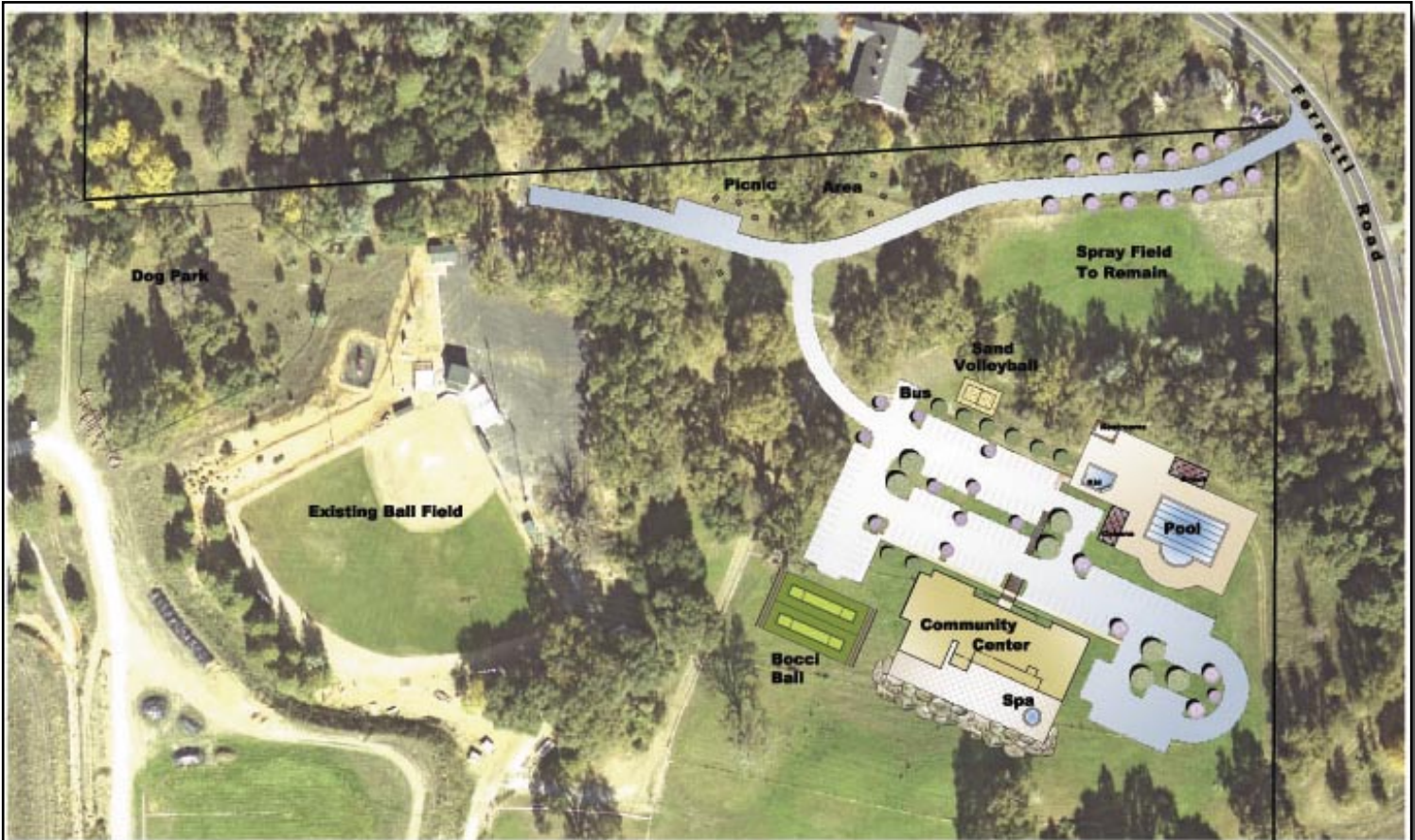
**GROVELAND COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT**

**Plan A**

Plan A takes one of the District's spray fields (about 0.75 acres) out of use.



Plan B, Phase I does not encumber any spray fields and had the added advantage of additional parking at adjacent Leon Rose Ball Field.



*Conceptual Site Plan*

April, 2007  
Scale: 1"=150'

**GROVELAND COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT**  
**Plan C**

Plan C assumes that off-site spray fields will replace existing spray fields, on which new community center facilities will be built.

The GCS D primarily uses their land for a multitude of services to the citizens of the Groveland, Big Oak Flat and Pine Mountain Lake community. A sewer treatment plant, spray fields and storage reservoirs are located just north of the administration building that houses the District's offices. Hiking trails, dirt and gravel maintenance roads meander throughout the property. The District's maintenance building and equipment are located on site here also. Two wastewater storage reservoirs and their accompanying spray fields lie north of the administration building and wastewater treatment plant. Spray fields utilizes about 15 acres of the District's property.



An aerial view of the existing spray fields and Reservoir No. 2.

## Leon Rose Ball Park



Entry from Flint Court into Leon Rose Ball Park parking lot.

Currently, the main sporting facility on the GCS D land is the Leon Rose Ball Park with backstop, restroom facilities, snack shack, and bleachers. These are located between Reservoir No. 2 and adjacent spray fields. The ball field has a parking lot that is accessed from a driveway at the end of Flint Court.



Leon Rose Ball Field is used for adult league softball and high school baseball and softball.

## **Mary Laveroni Community Park**

On the south side of the District's property, just north of Highway 120 (also known as Main Street), is Mary Laveroni Community Park. Within the southern portion of the park, close to town, there are picnic areas and playground equipment. At the center of the park, nestled among the trees, is a multi-purpose field. This is available for use by the community for several different types of events and fairs. It contains restroom facilities and has a parking lot off of Main Street. Because of a dramatic change in grade, the northern part of the park has limited accessibility. Nonetheless, it has a trail and footbridge that connects to an open space area of the District's property.



**A view into the Mary Laveroni Community Park**



Several other types of activities were proposed to District staff to complement the existing recreational uses. These were delineated on preliminary land use plans and presented previously to District staff for review. The final results of this effort are illustrated in this document depicting three land use alternatives: Plans A, B and C. Each plan sites a community center, pool and other recreational amenities. Suggestions and decisions for the recreational component of the plan have been incorporated in these exhibits from both prior community input and the District staff.

In all instances access will stem off of Ferretti Road with a driveway connecting to the existing parking lot servicing the Leon Rose Ball Field. Every effort was made to preserve as many trees as possible and maintain as much existing operational spray fields as possible. We chose to propose recreational features to the plan that would keep the District's costs down. Picnic areas, sand volleyball and a dog park were some of the features included that would achieve this goal. However, some components to the plan have items that will incur considerable cost particularly the community center, parking lot and pool.

### **The Preferred Alternative**

As previously stated, Plan B currently is the preferred alternative because of its minimal use of spray field land. It is planned to be constructed in two phases. Phase 1 will entail the construction of the community center, spa and parking lot. Phase 2 will add a junior size Olympic swimming pool, snack bar, pool house and cabana/restroom. Also planned in Phase 2 is a sand volleyball court with picnic facilities and additional parking with a driveway to Ferretti Road.

### **The Gathering Place**

It has been the desire of the Southside Senior Services group to have an active adult community center, a vision for several years, better known to them as "The Gathering Place". It has been a primary goal of the District to identify a site within the District's property to be used for this. This center, with meeting, recreational, health and educational facilities, will be a place where adults can get together, interact and learn. It will provide opportunities to partner with businesses and other private enterprises, offering entertainment, day care and special programs or services to the general public. A preliminary architectural plan has been provided by the Southside Senior Services' Architect, Richard G. Pollock. We added another feature to his plan, a spa.

Adequate automobile parking facilities will be provided with a total of 78 spaces. This will entail the construction of a parking lot that will link to the Leon Rose Ball Field by way of a driveway connecting the two lots. A driveway tying into the District's existing dirt maintenance road is possible and shown on this plan for easy access by District staff.

### The Community Pool

Another amenity suggested by District staff is a community pool with the option to have high school swim meets and water polo competitions. This pool will be half the size of a standard Olympic size pool, with dimensions of 45' x 75'. Aquatic and exercise classes could be offered to help offset maintenance costs. Parking, restroom/cabana facilities and a pool equipment building will also be needed.



Proposed Youth Center and Skate Park

### The Youth Center

Plans for a new 1440 square-foot county youth center building is proposed for an area located in Mary Laveroni Community Park. It will have a bike

rack, deck and drinking fountain. This will replace a 24-year-old double-wide trailer currently being used that is in bad repair. Government funding of \$225,000 has been acquired for this facility. The funding was provided in the Fiscal Year 2004 Veterans Affairs, Housing and Urban Development and Independent Agencies appropriations bill, H.R. 2861. A small parking lot will be added and joined with the existing one.

To make this area into a youth complex, a skate park, basketball court and tot lot are currently under development by the District. The slab for the skate park was poured on May 12, 2007. It covers an area of land that is roughly 90' x 120'. The basketball court and tot lot will be constructed over the summer of 2007.

The proposed improvements will be in close proximity to the museum/library. These will all be linked to the community pool and ball field by a trail that connects to the existing foot bridge. New restroom facilities are planned adjacent to the foot bridge.

### **The Dog Park**

An area north and west of the ball field has been deemed a good location for a dog park. This area is about an acre in size and will need to be fenced and gated. The current thinking is to leave the area in native vegetation. However, in the future the area could be landscaped with turf. One of the benefits of this location is the proximity of the existing public restroom facilities and parking.



**Proposed Dog Park Location**

## Park Corridor Trail System

The District has plans to construct an interpretive trail that connects Mary Laveroni Community Park and Leon Rose Field. Phase 1 of this project will travel along the abandoned Hetch Hetchy Railroad right of way and sewer line easement road. From there it will travel through a manmade wetlands area north of the wastewater treatment plant, hence to Leon Rose Ball Field.

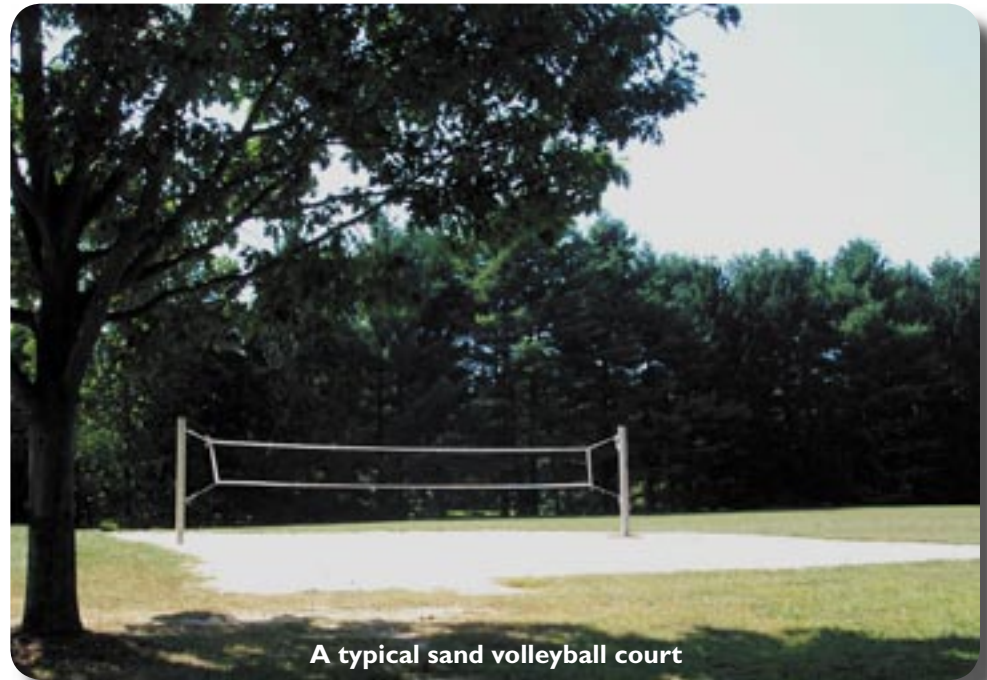
In Phase 2 of this project, the trail will continue from Leon Rose Ball Field around the north and west sides of Reservoirs 1 and 2, hence south to Mary Laveroni Community Park.



Conceptual plan of the proposed jogging and hiking trail system

## Other Amenities

New multi-purpose trails have been delineated in the plan. These trails will link with existing ones and to several of the other recreational features on the plans. They will be available to use for non motorized vehicles, such as hiking, biking, jogging and equestrian enthusiasts. However, the locations illustrated on any of the exhibits are conceptual only and will be located more accurately prior to construction. A sand volleyball court, picnic and barbecue areas are also planned in Phase 2.



A typical sand volleyball court

The District may consider other opportunities for future development. For example, on the west side of the District's property, a hilly, dense forested area offers potential to be used for an RV park. This area is studded with assorted conifers, deciduous trees, and other vegetation that would be ideal for camping and hiking. Developing this area would require clearing and grubbing and the removal of several of these trees. Access is limited and would likely come off of Deer Flat Road. Substantial grading will be needed for access roads, RV pads, driveways and the construction of water and wastewater utilities to serve this area.

Partnering with a third party that develops RV parks and leasing it to them might be something the District could consider. This may minimize costs to the District yet gain income from the land lease.



**Possible RV park location**

## **Planning for Future Operations**

At some future point, the District may need to modify the existing secondary treatment facilities to a tertiary system. Changing the level of treatment from secondary to tertiary will increase the quality of the effluent but will not reduce the land needed for disposal and storage. As the future brings in new housing units, and additional wastewater flows, the District will need additional storage and disposal area. A previous Wastewater Master Plan report by RBF offers three possible alternatives for treatment. The first alternative calls for the expansion of the existing facility to plan for 100% of the future build-out flows. This would entail the use of at least 30 additional acres of land for irrigation and an expansion of reservoir storage. The second would be to split the existing system and divert the future flows by adding another satellite treatment plant offsite and diverting a portion of the future flows to this. The third alternative is to build a new treatment plant at an offsite location to handle all of the existing and future flows. This third alternative would allow for more recreational use of the District's lands, in which case a land use plan similar to Plan C would be feasible.

A rough cost estimate for construction of both Phases 1 and 2 for Plan B is itemized below. Please note that this estimate is preliminary. The rough costs associated with the construction of the community center can vary depending on the type of building construction, materials and other unique internal features. Once a final set of architectural plans is completed, a more precise estimate of all components to the building can be ascertained. For the purposes of this study and with information provided to us from a preliminary architect's plan, we assumed that a single story structure is proposed and the building has a floor area of approximately 14,600 square feet. A junior size Olympic pool suitable for swim meets and water polo, including pool equipment and flatwork, is included in this cost estimate.

### Phase I

Community Center Building	14,600/sf @ \$350/sf	\$5,110,000
Spa w/Flatwork		\$16,000
Parking Lot and Driveway		\$328,000
Water/Sewer/Storm		\$222,000
Parking Lot Lighting		\$28,000
Misc. Site Work		\$189,000
SUBTOTAL		<u>\$5,893,000</u>
<i>Design/Construction Administration/Contingency (30%)</i>		<i>\$1,768,000</i>
TOTAL		<u>\$7,661,000</u>

## Phase 2

The cabana/pool equipment building can range from about \$180 to \$250 per square foot. The junior size Olympic pool is 75'x45' with a pop out area.

Cabana/Equipment building	(20'x40' @ \$225/sf)	\$180,000
Sand Volleyball Court		\$4,000
Chain Link Fenced Dog Park	(720lf)	\$14,000
Junior Olympic Pool	(4,300sf)	\$827,000
Picnic Facilities	(3 tables & BBQ)	\$5,000
Parking Lot Lighting		\$14,000
Misc. Site Work		\$132,000
Multi-purpose Trails	(10,200 lf @ \$50/lf)	\$510,000
SUBTOTAL		<u>\$1,686,000</u>
<i>Design/Construction Administration/Contingency (30%)</i>		\$506,000
TOTAL		\$2,192,000

TOTAL PHASE 1 AND PHASE 2 .....\$9,853,000

## RV Park Cost Estimate

3560 lf 25' wide roads		\$534,000
20 RV pads	@ 20x40	\$96,000
Restroom and showers		\$75,000
Water, sewer, storm, erosion control		\$346,000
Access road and driveway		\$534,000
Water pump station		\$250,000
SUBTOTAL		<u>\$1,835,000</u>
<i>Design/Construction Administration/Contingency (30%)</i>		\$550,000
TOTAL		\$2,385,000



### **Youth Center and Facilities Cost Estimate**

Youth center building	\$250/sf	\$390,000
Parking facilities	6000sf	\$36,000
Basketball court	\$9/sf	\$38,000
Tot lot		\$43,000
Skate park	90'x120' (10,800 sf)	\$225,000
Restroom facilities		\$65,000
SUBTOTAL .....		<u>\$797,000</u>
<i>Design/Construction Administration/Contingency (30%)</i> .....		\$239,000
TOTAL .....		\$1,036,000

### **Total Costs**

Phase 1 .....	\$7,661,000
Phase 2 .....	\$2,192,000
Youth Center .....	\$1,036,000
RV Park .....	<u>\$2,385,000</u>
GRAND TOTAL .....	\$13,274,000

While the opportunities were limited, we were still able to produce a plan that contained the desired facilities that staff had asked for and left available most of the area that is currently being used for continued spraying operations. District staff thinks that the most important amenity the community desires is a community center for active adults. The development of “The Gathering Place” community center (Phase 1) addresses this need.

The current design and facilities illustrated on Plan B are conceptual only and may be contingent on a number of unknown events, public acceptance, and the funding that will be available. Reconsideration or changes to both of these phases could also be influenced by the approval of Long Gulch Ranch, their conditions of approval, mitigation measures, and the availability of satellite spray fields.

The facilities delineated on Plan B, however, are not a complete concept of what District staff is planning for, or what all of the needs and desires of the community are. They are just a start to fulfilling the vision of amenities and services of the citizens for an ideal place to live, work, and recreate.