



COUNTY OF LAKE
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Item 6d
9:50 AM
December 11, 2025

STAFF REPORT

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Mireya G. Turner, Community Development Director
Lars Ewing, Public Services Department Director
Michelle Irace, Senior Planner
DATE: December 11, 2025
SUBJECT: Consideration of General Plan Conformity and Initial Study for the Cobb Community Park Project (PL-25-96), located at 16540 State Hwy 175, Cobb (APN 013-056-04).

ATTACHMENTS

1. Site Plans
2. Agency Comments
3. Biological Resources Technical Report
4. Arborist Report
5. Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration
6. Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To address the increasing need for parks, trails, and open space within Cobb and beyond, the County has identified the Cobb Community Park Project (Project) site, located at 16540 State Hwy 175, Cobb, for potential development of a park that would serve the local community. The Project is proposed as a phased project, as funding becomes available. Phase 1 would occur in the western portion of the site (primary recreation area) and includes a main parking lot, restroom, picnic and gathering areas, dog run, concrete paths and curbs, and reinforcement of the existing turnout. Phase 2 would include construction of a pedestrian bridge over Kelsey Creek and a retaining wall along the trail segment paralleling Golf Road in the northeastern portion of the site. It would also include natural surface trails north/east of Kelsey Creek, the northern trailhead furnishings, and signage installation. Phase 3 includes the pedestrian creek overlooks and removal of invasive species and restoration of native species along Kelsey Creek. Phase 4 would provide a secondary parking lot and adjacent concrete walk at the north corner of the site along Golf Road. Site Plans are included in Attachment 1. A Vicinity Map is included in Figure 1; a Map of the Primary Recreation Area is included in Figure 2, and a Phasing Plan is included in Figure 3 below.

Construction activities are planned to begin in 2026. Project construction would be implemented in logical phases depending on the available grant funding. The Project has

been designed to preserve the natural canopy and minimize tree removal. Any necessary tree removal for access, fire safety, or site features would comply with applicable protection and mitigation standards, Lake County's Resolution No. 95-211 (Oak Woodland Management Policy), and Chapter 30, Grading Ordinance, of the Municipal Code.

Staff requests the Lake County Planning Commission assess the Project's conformity with the General Plan, required under Government Code Section 65402, and consider approval of the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared for the Project.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

<u>Project Title:</u>	Cobb Community Park
<u>Permit Numbers:</u>	General Plan of Conformity and Initial Study PL-25-96
<u>Lead Agency:</u>	County of Lake
<u>Applicant:</u>	Lake County Public Services, Facilities Maintenance Division
<u>Property Owner:</u>	County of Lake
<u>Property Location:</u>	16540 State HWY 175, Cobb
<u>Parcel Number(s) APN(s):</u>	013-056-04
<u>Parcel Size:</u>	~ 12.88 acres
<u>General Plan Designation:</u>	RL-RR-SR-Cc (Rural Lands-Rural Residential-Suburban Residential Reserve-Community Commercial)
<u>Zoning Districts:</u>	RL-RR-SR-B5-FF-WW-C2-DR (Rural Lands-Rural Residential-Suburban Reserve-Floodway Fringe-Waterway Combining- Community Commercial-Design Review)
<u>Supervisory District:</u>	5
<u>Flood Zone:</u>	Zone A (Special Flood Hazard Area w/ no base flood elevations); and Zone X (1% chance or less of flooding in any given year)
<u>Hazards:</u>	Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone
<u>Soils:</u>	127 -Collayomi-Aiken-Whispering Complex, 5 to 30 Percent Slopes; and 129 -Collayomi-Whispering Complex, 30 to 50 Percent Slopes. No Serpentine on-site.

Project Overview

The Project site is planned for development by County as a community park. The Project would include a primary recreation area in the western portion of the Project site that includes the following (See Figure 2).

- A main parking lot with 27 vehicle spaces and bicycle parking (accessible from Golf Road) and signage
- A group picnic area and gathering area with up to two (2) shade shelters with picnic tables and barbeques.
- A restroom (approximately 180 sf) with two stalls and a drinking fountain.
- Utilities, including water lines, irrigation and potential reconstruction of the leach field.
- A playground to provide play opportunities for children between the ages of 2 and 12, with equipment and fall-safety surfacing.
- An open grass play field and landscaping.
- Pedestrian pathways connecting the park amenities together.
- The South trailhead (connecting to a future trail system spanning the Project site).
- Removal of approximately 30 trees (to be replanted at a 3:1 ratio for oaks and 2:1 ratio for other natives).
- Landscaping.

At full buildout (depending on funding opportunities), the remaining portion of the park would include the following (See Figure 3):

- 0.2-mile of stabilized accessible (ADA) trails.
- 1-mile natural surface trails parallel to Golf Road.
- 4-foot-high retaining wall along the natural surface trail paralleling Golf Road for less than 0.1 mile
- The North trailhead and secondary parking lot at the northeast corner of the site along Golf Road.
- Free spanning pedestrian bridge over Kelsey Creek to connect the accessible trail to the natural surface trail on the northeast side of the creek.
- Pedestrian access points to Kelsey Creek.
- Kelsey Creek restoration to include invasive plant removal and planting of native plants.
- Maintenance and emergency vehicle access with gates.
- Signs and park furnishings.

Project Site Utilities

Water. The project originally proposed drilling a new well for water. However, the Project now proposes a new connection to Cobb Area County Water District along Golf Road to provide water for the restroom, drinking fountain, and irrigation. The maximum total water demand is estimated at 50.8 gallons per minute (GPM), assuming all restroom fixtures, including two (2) toilets and two (2) sinks, are operating simultaneously. The connection exact location along Golf Road would be at the discretion of the Cobb Area County Water District. The connection would meet the requirements of the State Water Resource Control Board Division of Drinking Water. The irrigation system will require a maximum of 45 GPM. In practice, actual average

water use would be substantially lower due to intermittent usage of both the irrigation system and restroom fixtures. Irrigation would occur primarily during off-hours or non-peak times and would not coincide with restroom use. A will-serve letter for the Project was received from the Cobb Area County Water District on October 27, 2025 (included in Attachment 2).

Wastewater. The existing septic system, located northeast of the existing building, is adequate for proposed needs and will be reused if the leach field is still functional (the restroom would drain into the existing septic system). The septic tank has been assessed and requires only minor repairs. The leach field is approximately 90 linear feet.

In November 2023, Kelseyville Septic conducted an inspection and determined that the septic tank was operational and did not require pumping. Functional testing was completed by running water through the system, which performed as expected. In Fall 2024, the County's Director of Environmental Health conducted a visual inspection and indicated that the system would be sufficient for the Project's anticipated level of use. Minor improvements and/or repairs would be implemented, including the recommended installation of a new bio-filter and sanitary tees.

Stormwater. The Project is outside of the municipal stormwater sewer system. Stormwater runoff would be managed through landscaping, adherence to erosion control best management practices (BMPs), and the Project would comply with Chapter 30, Grading Ordinance, of the Municipal Code (refer to Figures 3a, 3b, and 4).

Electricity. Existing power provided by Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) to the Project site would be retained and the electrical panel would be replaced with a new panel. The only lighting proposed for the Project is motion sensor and/or timer-managed security lighting associated with the restroom, within the picnic shelters, and in the parking lot. Lockable electrical outlets for special events will be located at the outdoor gathering area.

Solid Waste. Trash collection within the restroom and throughout the Project site would be performed by County park maintenance staff. Solid waste generated by the Project would consist primarily of typical park-related refuse (e.g., food wrappers, paper waste, restroom waste, and small maintenance debris) and is expected to be minimal due to the recreational nature of the Project.

Based on the park's size and anticipated daily use, the volume of solid waste generated would be low and would not require additional hauling capacity or new collection routes. All solid waste would be hauled directly by County staff to the Eastlake Sanitary Landfill, which is the designated disposal facility for County public facilities.

Parking and Access

Two (2) paved parking lots are included within the Project site. The main parking lot would be located on the southwest corner of the site, in the area that previously contained the building and associated parking. The main parking lot would provide 27 stalls. The secondary lot would be located at the north trailhead and would provide no more than four (4) stalls. These parking lots would meet minimum requirements for accessible stalls, electric vehicle charging, and bicycle parking per California Building Code (CBC) requirements.

In addition to emergency and maintenance vehicle access in the parking lot, the Project includes a reinforced maintenance and emergency vehicle access trail between Golf Road

and the pedestrian bridge, and a reinforced maintenance and emergency vehicle turn out off of Highway 175. The maintenance and emergency vehicle access only routes would be blocked by locking gates equipped with Knox boxes available to emergency personnel (anticipating that the Project site would have three [3] vehicular pipe gates) preventing access by the public.

Park Operations

Similar to other County parks, the proposed park would be unmanned with hours posted from dawn to dusk. County park staff would provide regular daily trash collection, as required, ongoing maintenance, and cleaning. During times of regular use, no more than 30 users are anticipated to be present. The County (Public Services Dept.) has a permit available for events with over 20 people to reserve the community gathering area or picnic shelters. This permit ensures adequate operational support for higher uses. During event use, up to 47 users are expected to be present at the Project site.

Trails and Bridge

The proposed trail system consists of an approximately 0.2-mile stabilized accessible trail in the southwest area of Kelsey Creek, natural surface trails paralleling portions of Golf Road, and a pedestrian bridge crossing Kelsey Creek. The bridge would connect the accessible trail to an approximately one (1) mile natural surface trail on the northeast side of the creek. The bridge and associated construction would remain entirely outside and above the ordinary high-water mark (OHWM) of Kelsey Creek. The trail system would be routed to preserve trees, to the extent possible, and would include park rule signs, wayfinding signs, and interpretive signs. The trail system would also provide pedestrian overlooks of Kelsey Creek. These overlooks would be located outside of the top of bank, although they may be sited nearby to provide views of the creek. The trail system would terminate at the northern corner of the property along Golf Road, where the north trailhead and a secondary parking lot would be located. A 4-foot-high retaining wall is anticipated along the natural surface trail paralleling Golf Road for less than 0.1 mile. All applicable permits, such as a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement, from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife would be obtained for work near the creek.

Project Construction

The Project would be constructed in four (4) phases (see Figure 3 Phasing Site Plan). Project construction shall be implemented in logical phases depending on the available funding. Construction activities are planned to begin in 2026. Phase 1 is estimated to take 6-8 months; Phase 2 is estimated to take 3-6 months; Phase 3 is estimated to take 1-3 months; and Phase 4 is estimated to take 1-2 months. The phases are not anticipated to progress continuously; each phase will commence when funding is secured. Construction activities may take place six days a week (Monday through Saturday), from 7:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.

Phase 1 would occur in the western portion of the site (primary recreation area) and includes the main parking lot, restroom, picnic and gathering areas, dog run, and concrete paths and curbs, and reinforcement of the existing turnout. Phase 2 would include construction of the pedestrian bridge over Kelsey Creek and the retaining wall along the trail segment paralleling Golf Road in the northeastern portion of the site. It would also include natural surface trails north/east of Kelsey Creek, the northern trailhead furnishings, and signage installation. Phase

3 includes the pedestrian creek overlooks and removal of invasive species and restoration of native species along Kelsey Creek. Phase 4 would provide a secondary parking lot and adjacent concrete walk at the north corner of the site along Golf Road.

Use of the following construction equipment is anticipated:

- Excavator
- Backhoe
- Posthole digger
- Auger
- Hand tools
- Trucks and trailers
- Forklift
- Woodchipper
- Asphalt roller
- Crane (for delivery of restroom structure and potential play equipment)

All construction equipment would be delivered to the Project site on tractor trailer. During construction, access to the Project site would continue to be provided via the existing driveway on Golf Road (the existing driveway would be replaced by a new driveway during construction).

Earthwork. The four phases of construction would result in a total of approximately 1,393 cubic yards of grading and up to 20,950 square feet of new impervious surfaces. Grading would be balanced on-site with no import or export of soil required. It is also assumed that a grading permit and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be required. The Project site has approximately 2,200 square feet of existing impervious surface, all of which would be demolished. The Project would result in a net increase of up to 18,750 square feet of impervious surface. All earthwork and vegetation/tree removal would be completed with a Grading Permit in compliance with Chapter 30, Grading Ordinance, of the Municipal Code.

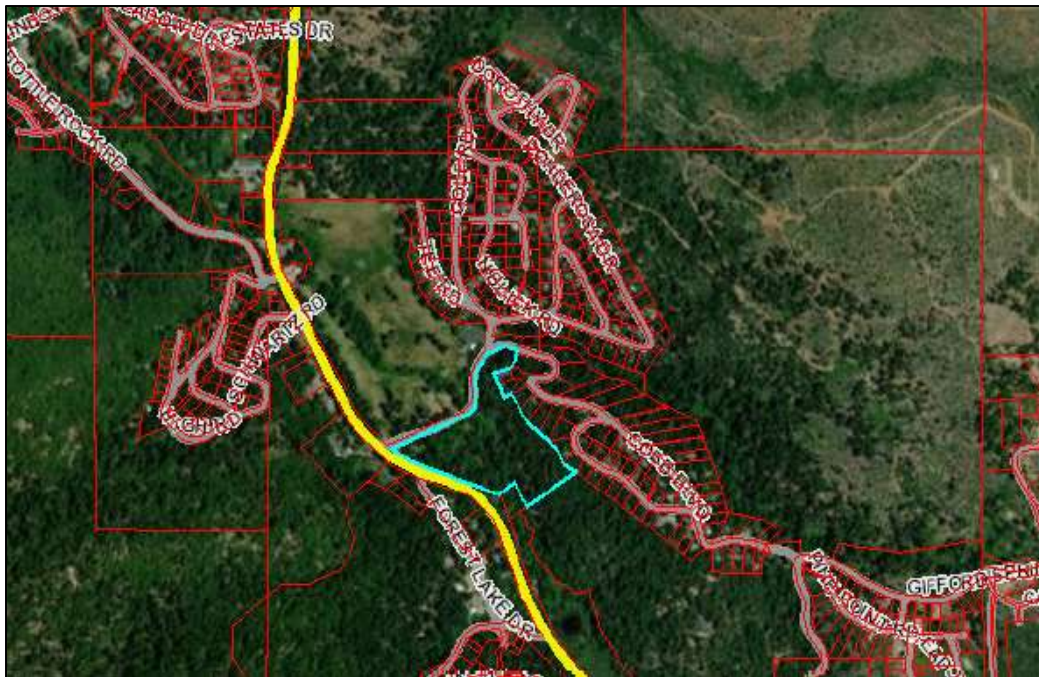
Tree Removal and Replanting . The Project is designed to develop the main park facilities in the west corner of the parcel, where it is generally flat and there is an existing parking lot and structures (as opposed to the steeper, heavily vegetated, undeveloped portion of the site). A Biological Resources Report (Attachment 3) and an Arborist Survey (Attachment 4) were prepared by Environmental Science Associates to conduct a tree inventory and assess the impacts of the project. The Arborist Report surveyed the primary recreation area in the southwest corner of the site. Areas proposed for future natural trails on the east portion of the site was not included, as it is assumed all trees would be avoided and future phases require additional arborist surveys. Additionally, the portion of the site that proposes a pedestrian bridge over Kelsey Creek will be surveyed in the future, as funding is secured and the design phase is commenced.

In accordance with the Lake Country Grading Ordinance, trees over five (5) inches in diameter at breast height (DBH) were surveyed. A total of 114 trees were inventoried: 47 California black oaks (*Quercus kelloggii*); 11 valley oaks (*Quercus lobata*); and 3 canyon live oaks (*Quercus chrysolepis*) with diameter at breast height (dbh) greater than 5 inches. Other trees observed included ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), Douglas fir

(*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), Pacific madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*), white alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*), bigleaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*), California bay laurel (*Umbellularia californica*), and Oregon ash (*Fraxinus latifolia*). Numerous additional trees, primarily alder and valley oak, were located outside the development area near Kelsey Creek. Refer to Figure 1A, Tree Inventory, of the Arborist Report in Attachment 4.

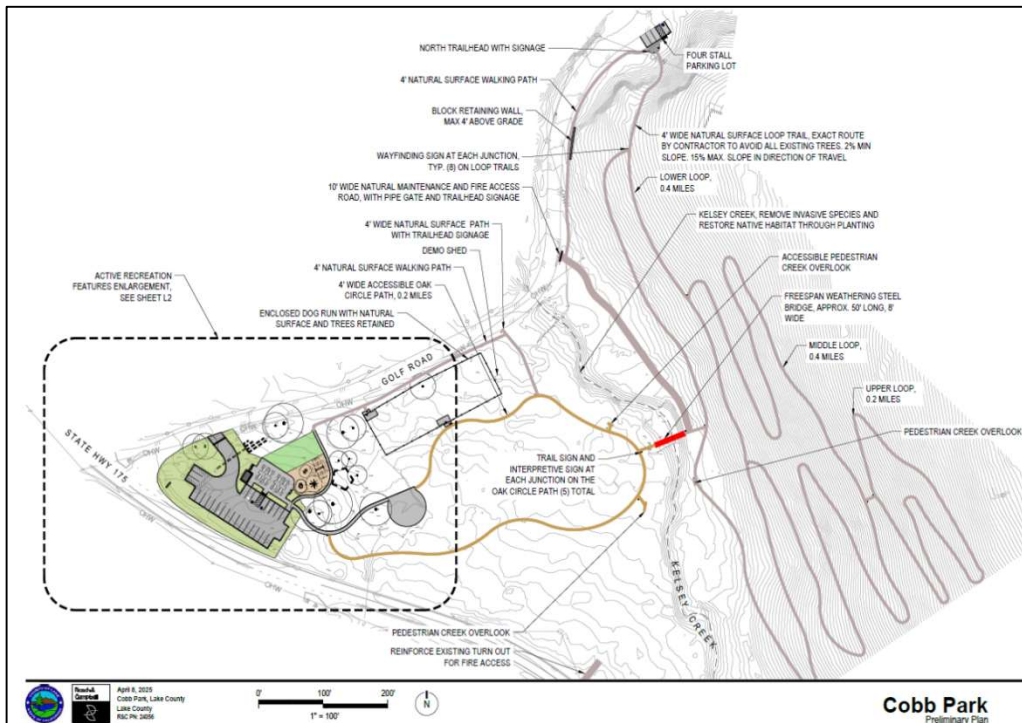
The County will preserve as many trees as possible. However, development of the primary recreation area would result in the removal of approximately 30 trees (including California black oak, Valley oak, Douglass fir, Ponderosa pine and Pacific madrone). The number and location of exact trees to be removed would be confirmed with engineered grading plans during the Grading Permit process. As noted on the site plan, trees with 25 DBH would be preserved. Tree limbing and removal of dead wood may occur along the road or fire safety and defensible space. While the Project proposes the removal of trees within the primary recreation area to develop the parking lot and park facilities, oak trees would be replaced at a ratio of 3:1. The County proposes planting replacement trees on-site if possible, or offsite at Trailside Park in Middletown. The County has coordinated with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) regarding tree removal and the pedestrian bridge over the creek. While initially, CDFW commented that a 5:1 oak tree replacement mitigation is preferred, after meeting with them, they stated that a 3:1 ratio is acceptable with a 75% survival rate over 5 years (included as Mitigation Measure BIO-4). Other native trees will be replanted at a ratio of 2:1. Lastly, the Initial Study prepared for the Project (Attachment 5) identifies mitigation for pre-construction bird nesting, bat roosting and special status species surveys.

Figure 1: Vicinity Map



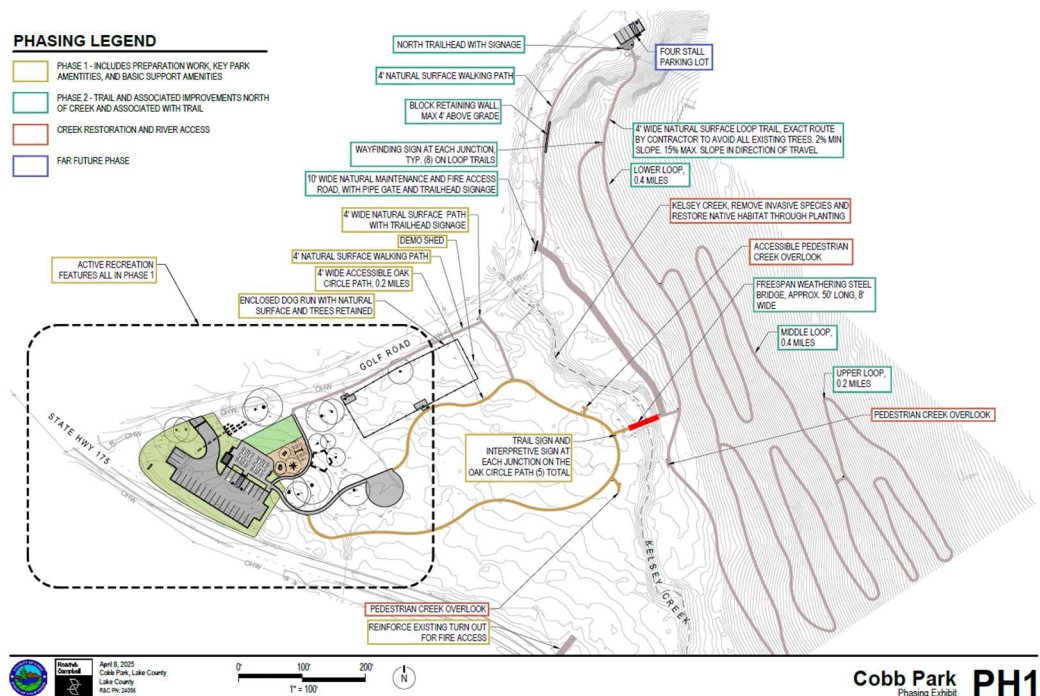
Source: Lake County GIS Mapping, 2025.

Figure 2: Primary Recreation Area Site Plan



Source: Roach and Campbell, 2025

Figure 3: Phasing Plan



Source: Roach and Campbell, 2025

PROJECT SETTING

The 13.13-acre Project site is located at the corner of Golf Road and HWY 175. The northwest corner of the site is developed with a parking lot, a commercial building and two outbuildings that were constructed in the 1950s and 1960s for commercial real estate offices. The site is served by existing PG&E power and a septic system. Cobb Mountain Water serves the area and has existing infrastructure within Golf Road. The remainder of the parcel is undeveloped with steeper vegetated slopes and trees. Kelsey Creek traverses the middle of the parcel and flows north.

General Plan and Zoning Designations with Surrounding Uses

The site is adjacent to a golf course and restaurant immediately across Golf Road to the north, a hotel across Highway 175 to the west, single-family residential houses to the northeast and east, and undeveloped land to the south.

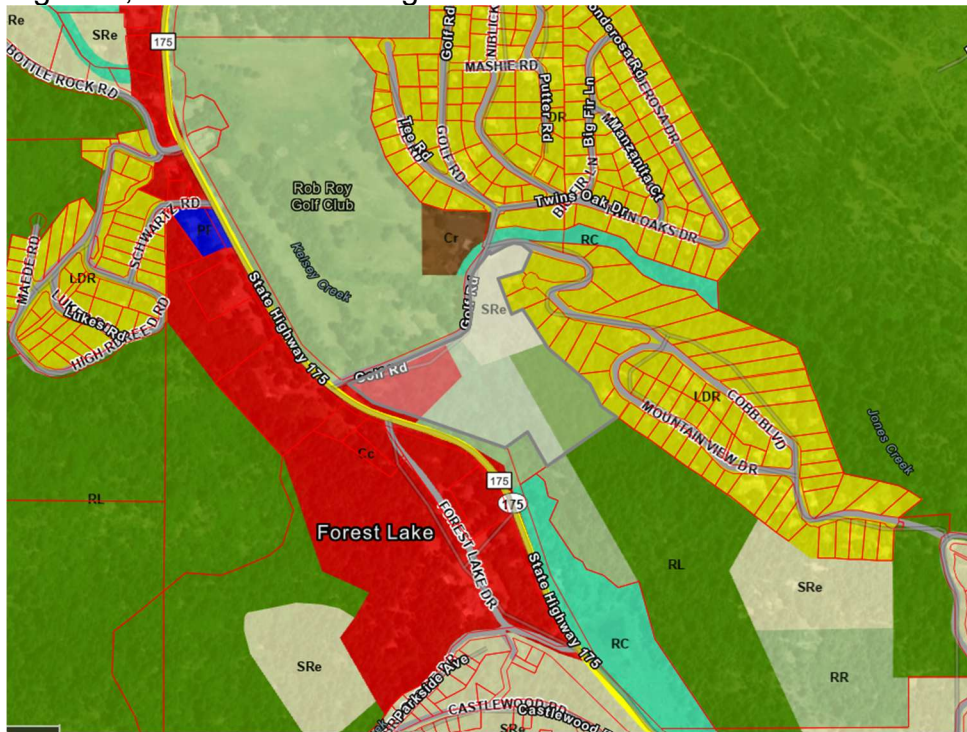
General plan designations around the project site include (Figure 4):

- North: Rural Residential.
- South: Rural Lands and Resource Conservation.
- East: Low Density Residential.
- West: Community Commercial and Planned Development-Commercial

Zoning designations and uses around the project site include (Figure 5):

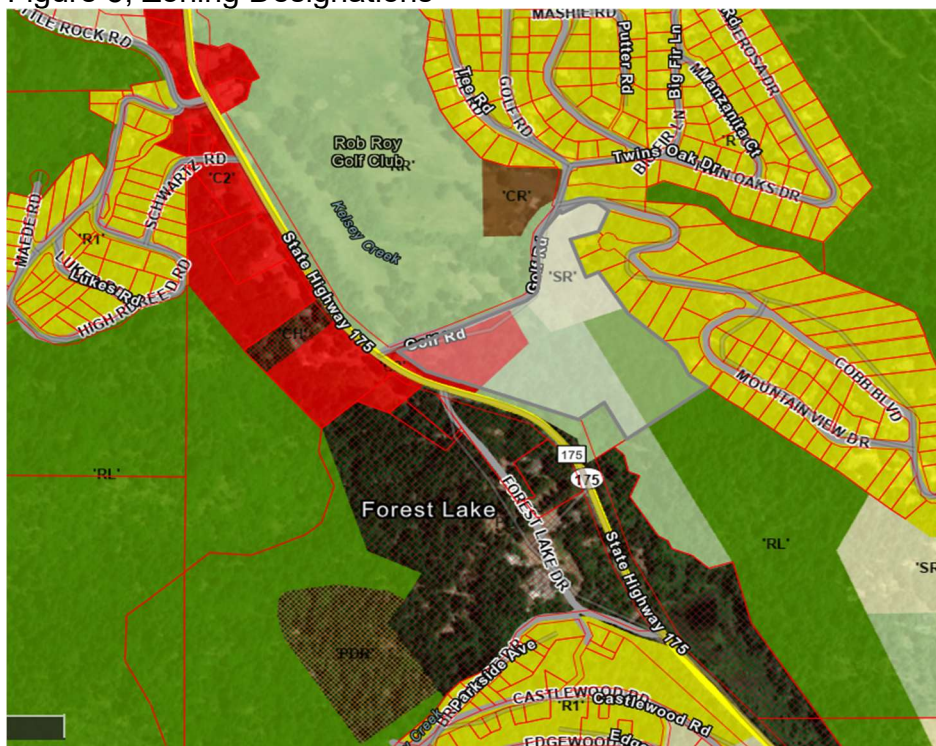
- North: Rural Residential; developed with a golf course.
- South: Rural Lands and Resource Conservation; undeveloped.
- East: Single-Family Residential; developed with single family homes.
- West: Community Commercial and Planned Development-Commercial; developed with a hotel.

Figure 4, General Plan Designations



Source: Lake County Parcel Viewer, 2025

Figure 5, Zoning Designations



Source: Lake County Parcel Viewer, 2025

PROJECT ANALYSIS

General Plan Conformity

Government Code Section 65402 (Planning and Zoning Laws) states the following:

(a) If a general plan or part thereof has been adopted, no real property shall be acquired by dedication or otherwise for street, square, park or other public purposes, and no real property shall be disposed of, no street shall be vacated or abandoned, and no public building or structure shall be constructed or authorized, if the adopted general plan or part thereof applies thereto, until the location, purpose and extent of such acquisition or disposition, such street vacation or abandonment, or such public building or structure have been submitted to and reported upon by the planning agency as to conformity with said adopted general plan or part thereof.

In compliance with State regulations, the Community Development Department, Planning Division, has identified goals and policies from the Lake County General Plan that support conformity of the proposed project. Policies specifically related to parks and trails are discussed in detail, while other supporting policies are summarized by chapter for brevity.

Chapter 3, Land Use- Policies related to land use compatibility and siting residential subdivisions within walking distance to parks.

Response: The Project proposes a community park with access from Golf Road and HWY 175, a main road within the community of Cobb. The Project proposes trails and also connects to an existing bike path. Lastly, the Project location is adjacent to residential uses, providing a new recreational opportunity for residents.

Chapter 5, Public Facilities and Services- Policies related to access to public facilities and siting them along major thoroughfares; protection from erosion and stormwater.

Response: This portion of the General Plan relates to public facilities, generally including schools and libraries, etc. However, the park would be a public park that is maintained by the County and supports the placement of such facilities along major roadways for easy access. Additionally, the Project is consistent with the policies related to stormwater and erosion, as it includes stormwater facilities around the proposed parking lot, in addition to open grass and pervious surfaces. Lastly, construction of the project would require a Grading Permit in compliance with Chapter 30 of the Lake County Municipal Code.

Chapter 9- Open Space, Conservation and Recreation- Policies related to preservation of sensitive habitats, biological resources, riparian corridors, providing trails in scenic areas, completing CEQA analyses and developing mitigation for potential impacts, coordination with other agencies with jurisdiction over the project. This chapter of the General Plan also includes policies related to protection of cultural resources, and coordinating with Tribes.

Response: In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), an Initial Study (Attachment 5) was prepared and found that all impacts, including those to biological resources, could be mitigated to a less than significant level. To

support the analysis, a Biological Technical Report (Attachment 3) and Arborist Report (Attachment 4) was prepared.

The project is designed to develop the main park facilities in the west corner of the parcel, where it is generally flat and there is an existing parking lot and structures (as opposed to the steeper, heavily vegetated, undeveloped portion of the site). While the Project does propose removal of trees within the primary recreation area to develop the parking lot and park facilities, oak trees would be replaced at a ratio of 3:1. Additionally, bird nesting surveys are required, additional tree surveys are required for future phases of the project, and the project proposes restoration of a portion of Kelsey Creek. Lastly, the County has coordinated with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) regarding the pedestrian bridge and tree removal. While initially, CDFW commented that a 5:1 oak tree replacement mitigation is preferred, they also noted that a 3:1 is acceptable with a 75% survival rate over 5 years (included as Mitigation Measure BIO-4). Other native species will be replanted at a 2:1 ratio. Lastly, the County will also obtain all regulatory permits prior to commencing work within the Kelsey Creek area.

Related to cultural resources and tribal cultural resources, a Cultural Resources Report was prepared for the project to assess impacts to such resources. Additionally, the County has been coordinating with Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians and the Middletown Rancheria for this project since 2023 during the early design phase. A site visit was conducted with Middletown Rancheria in November, 2023. Lastly, formal AB 52 tribal consultation notifications were sent to all tribes during the CEQA process (May, 2025), but no requests for formal consultation were received.

9.6 Recreation and Open Space Resources

Goal OSC-6: To provide a parks, recreation, and open space system that serves the recreational needs of County residents and visitors, including a regional non-motorized recreational trail system.

- Policy OSC 6.2: Policy OSC-6.2 Park Amenities. The County shall provide a broad range of active and passive recreational needs within community parks. When possible, this should include large trees for shade, active sports fields and facilities, community center/recreation buildings, multi-use areas and trails, sitting areas, and other specialized uses as appropriate.

Response: The proposed Project includes a variety of trails, including accessible trails, as well as play equipment, a field and gathering areas.

- Policy OSC-6.3 Location and Size Criteria for Parks. The following guidelines should be observed in locating County parks:
 - Centrally located to serve as much of a population base as possible, within a 3-mile radius;
 - Located at the intersection of major and/or minor collectors to facilitate access;
 - Located along designated bicycle routes to facilitate access by bicyclists;

- In close proximity to shopping areas, cultural facilities such as libraries or museums, schools, and employment centers.
- Community parks should vary between 5-20 acres. Where feasible night lighting should be provided to reduce vandalism and to extend the use of the facility.
- A level of service standard of 5 acres per 1,000 residents should be maintained for community parks.
- Located to ensure equitable distribution of facilities within the County.
- Located on sites not containing Naturally Occurring Asbestos, unless adequate clean cover material and other effective controls to minimize public exposure to asbestos dust can be incorporated.

Response: The proposed Project meets the park siting criteria noted above. Specifically, it is 12 acres in size and is located adjacent to the golf course, commercial, and residential uses. The site is also located at the intersection of two main streets within Cobb that has adequate vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian access, and will provide another recreation opportunity for the residents, improving the level of service for the area. The Project site is also not located on a site containing Naturally Occurring Asbestos.

Lastly, the proposed Project addresses priorities identified in the 2024 Lake County Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan, which designates the Cobb Mountain area as a target for new park development.

- Policy OSC-6.6 Recreational Facilities for Special Use Groups. The County should encourage the provision of recreation facilities and activities for special use groups such as people living with physical or mental disabilities, and senior citizens.

Response: The Project includes an ADA accessible trail, as well as open grass areas, play equipment, and gathering/picnic areas offering a variety of options for different use groups. Additionally, ADA parking and restroom facilities would be provided.

- Policy OSC-6.7 Existing and Future Recreational Opportunities. The County shall support the continued maintenance and improvement of existing recreational facilities and expansion of new recreational opportunities on county, state, and federal lands.

Response: The Project proposes a new community park, which is supported by this policy.

- Policy OSC-6.15 Ridgeline Trails. Locate trails, where feasible, along the ridgelines to enhance scenic viewpoints of Clear Lake, Mt. Konocti, low-lying valleys and the distant wilderness areas.
- Policy OSC-6.16 Trail Interconnectivity . Create trail linkages and loops with other public facilities (such as parks, open spaces, trail systems of other jurisdictions), communities, points of interest, visitor attractions and/or with educational or historical significance.

- Policy OSC-6.18 Provide a Diverse Trail System. Create trails of different lengths and terrains to provide a variety of recreational experiences. Allow for different styles of trails (nature, hiking, equestrian, etc.) to stem off of the main system.

Response: Consistent with the three policies noted above, the Project proposes a variety of trails with different terrain and lengths. The Project would also provide connectivity to pedestrian and bicycle paths, an adjacent golf course, and educational signage/vantage points along Kelsey Creek and ridgeline trails.

Zoning Ordinance Conformance

Article 2 – General Provisions

According to the Lake County, Zoning Ordinance Article 2, Section 2.4 (b) Exemptions, development undertaken by the County of Lake is exempted (Ord. 1749, 7/7/1988). Thus, any proposed development must adhere to the Lake County General Plan and is not subject to the Lake County's Zoning Ordinance. However, The County of Lake must continue to ensure full compliance with all applicable federal and state regulations.

It should be noted that although the Zoning Ordinance is not applicable to County development, the County Project is consistent with the current land use and zoning designations applied to the site. Specifically, Article 27, Uses Generally Allowed, identifies outdoor recreation as an allowed use within the noted zoning designations with approval of a use permit. Additionally, the proposed amenities would comply with zoning performance standards related to height (35 feet maximum for primary structures), setbacks (30-foot front, 25-foot rear, and 15-foot side), lot coverage, and grading requirements.

Cobb Mountain Area Plan

Section 5.3 Public Services

Subsection (f), Recreation of Section 5.3, Public Services, of the Cobb Mountain Area Plan notes that most of the policies related to siting of community parks are addressed in the General Plan. However, the Area Plan identifies that there is a need to rejuvenate both the area's private resorts and develop more public park and recreation opportunities in the Cobb Mountain Area. The Area Plan also supports development of integrated bicycle/pedestrian trail systems that provide access to recreation facilities. The below objective and policies are specific to park and trail development in the Cobb area.

Section 5.6 Community Development Policies

Objective 5.14: To provide adequate and diverse park and recreation opportunities that are compatible with private resort and commercial development in the area.

- Policy 5.14a: Park and recreation facilities should be developed to serve local needs, as well as help attract tourism and resort uses of the Cobb Mountain Area.
- Policy 5.14c: Park facilities shall be created that complement the protection of riparian and other important wildlife habitat while providing for the area's recreation needs.
- Policy 5.14d: The County shall pursue long-term development of its public parks system in the Cobb Mountain Area. The following are recommended long-term park and recreation facilities, assuming funding is available:
 1. A passive use community park site which focuses on day uses such as fishing, wildlife observation and other similar recreational uses;
 2. Passive-use regional/community park sites in meadow areas with aquatic resources that provide wildlife habitat, riparian areas, and recreational benefits;
 3. The development of a bicycle/pedestrian trail system in the vicinity of Cobb Valley between Whispering Pines and the Anderson Meadow area and from Cobb to Hobergs;
 4. Bicycle facilities or multipurpose trails in Cobb Valley; and
 5. The development of highway waysides and vehicle oriented picnic sites along portions of State Route 175 and/or Bottle Rock Road.

Response: The proposed Project is consistent with the aforementioned objective and policies of the Cobb Mountain Area Plan as it helps address the noted issue of needing to provide additional recreation opportunities in the Cobb Area. Specifically, the Project supports the needs identified in Policy 5.14(d) 2, 4 and 5 that express the need for community parks adjacent to riparian areas, multipurpose trails, and facilities along HWY 175. Lastly, as previously noted, the Project addresses priorities identified in the 2024 Lake County Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan, which designates the Cobb Mountain area as a target for new park development.

AGENCY COMMENTS

Staff circulated the Project to departments and agencies with interest or jurisdiction over the project on May 15, 2025. Agency comments received are included in Attachment 2. As previously discussed above in this Staff Report, comments received by the CDFW have been addressed after meeting with agency staff and modifying mitigation for tree replacement. Although not included in written comments, County staff also met with Caltrans (and the Department of Public Works) to discuss ingress and egress to HWY 175. Lastly, during the environmental review period (further discussed below), the State Water Board noted that a permit for a public drinking system was required because the Project originally proposed drilling a new well for water services. However, upon further coordination, the County now proposes to connect to the Cobb Area County Water District system and the drinking system permit is no longer needed. All other comments received either required no action, or have been included in the project design or required as apart of Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program prepared for the Project (Attachment 6).

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

An Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) has been prepared for the Project, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The IS/MND (SCH No. 2025080737) was circulated for public review from August 15, 2025, to September 19, 2025.

The only comments received during the CEQA public review period were from the State Water Board (included in Attachment 2). As discussed above in the Agency Comments section of this staff report, based on feedback received from the State Water Board, the Project was modified to connect to the Cobb Area County Water District instead of drilling a new well for water services. The IS/MND was revised, as necessary to address these changes. The changes were minor in nature and resulted in less impacts than previously identified in the original draft of the IS/MND, as such the changes did not necessitate the recirculation of the IS/MND, per CEQA Guidelines Section 15073.5(c).

The IS/MND found that all impacts could be reduced to less than significant with the following mitigation measures. The IS/MND is included in Attachment 5 and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program is included in Attachment 6.

Biological Resources

BIO-1: Focused Botanical Survey. A focused botanical survey shall be conducted during the typical blooming season (April through June) for special-status plant species with the potential to be impacted by Project activities. The survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist in accordance with the field methodology portion of the *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Sensitive Natural Communities* (CDFW, 2018). The survey shall occur during the appropriate blooming times (April to June) of the special-status plant species prior to the start of Project activities. If found, populations shall be flagged and avoided during construction, or may be relocated to the nearest local population, preserved on- or off-site or compensated in consultation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

BIO-2: Nesting Bird Survey. If vegetation removal or grading occurs between February 1 and August 31, a qualified biologist shall conduct a nesting bird survey within 7 days prior to disturbance in all work areas and areas within 50 ft. If active nests are found, an exclusion buffer of 50 to 300 feet (depending on species) shall be maintained until young have fledged, as determined by the biologist.

BIO-3: Preconstruction Bat Survey. If tree removal or major pruning occurs between October 15 and March 1 or April 15 and September 1, a preconstruction bat survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist. If active maternity or hibernation roosts are identified, work shall be postponed until the roost is vacated or a relocation plan is developed in coordination with CDFW. Between March 1 and April 15 and between September 1 and October 15 (i.e., outside of maternity and hibernation seasons), trees with potential bat habitat can be removed using a two-day process, where limbs

are removed the first day, under supervision of a qualified biologist, and the remainder of the tree is removed the second day.

BIO-4: Tree Replacement. The Project will engage a certified arborist to survey trees prior to design of each Project phase. If removal of native trees, including oaks, is required for Project development, the trees shall be replanted on-site, or on other County property (e.g., Trailside Park in Middletown), at a ratio of 3:1 planted to removed tree for oaks, and 2:1 for all other native species, or as required by any permits obtained for the Project.

Planted trees shall be caged and irrigated for a period of five years, and shall meet success criteria of 75 percent survival after five years. If this criterion is not met, replacement trees shall be planted and subsequently monitored for five years. In addition, compensatory restoration enhancement to support ecosystem function at the Project site may be pursued in coordination with CDFW.

Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources

CUL-1: Accidental Discovery of Archaeological Resources. In the unlikely event that subsurface resources are identified during ground disturbing activities, County of Lake would comply with PRC §21083.2(i), which requires the lead agency to make provisions for archaeological resources accidentally discovered during construction. County of Lake would be required to make an immediate evaluation by a qualified archaeologist, and if the find is determined to be a unique archaeological resource or a historical resource, then it must be avoided. If avoidance is not feasible, the resource must be recovered and treated accordingly. Construction would be allowed in other areas while the recovery takes place.

CUL-2. Accidental Discovery of Human Remains. In the unlikely event that ground disturbing activities identify undiscovered human remains, County of Lake will comply with Government Code Section 27460 et seq., which requires ground disturbing activities to halt until the County Coroner can determine whether the remains are subject to the provisions of Section 27491 of the Government Code or any other related provisions of law concerning investigation of the circumstances, manner, and cause of death; and the required recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made. Pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, the coroner shall make a determination within 48 hours of notification of the discovery of the human remains. If the coroner determines that the remains are not subject to their authority and recognizes or has reason to believe that they are those of a Native American, the coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours. With compliance with existing regulations, the potential impact related to the accidental discovery of human remains would be less than significant.

Geology and Soils

GEO-1: Erosion Control. Prior to ground disturbance the Project shall submit erosion control and sediment plans to the Water Resource Department and the Community

Development Department for review and approval. Said erosion control and sediment plans shall protect the local watershed from runoff pollution through the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) in accordance with the Grading Ordinance. Typical BMPs include the placement of straw, mulch, seeding, straw wattles, silt fencing, and the planting of native vegetation on all disturbed areas. No silt, sediment, or other materials exceeding natural background levels shall be allowed to flow from the Project area. The natural background level is the level of erosion that currently occurs from the area in a natural, undisturbed state. Vegetative cover and water bars shall be used as permanent erosion control after Project installation.

GEO-2: Soil Disturbance. Excavation, filling, vegetation clearing, or other disturbance of the soil shall not occur between October 15 and April 15 unless authorized by the Community Development Department Director. The actual dates of this defined grading period may be adjusted according to weather and soil conditions at the discretion of the Community Development Director.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Implementation of Mitigation Measures GEO-1 and GEO-2

Noise

NOI-1: Construction Hours. All construction activities, including construction equipment warm-up, shall be limited to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Construction shall be prohibited on Sundays and federal holidays. All equipment shall be properly maintained and fitted with factory-recommended mufflers to minimize noise generation.

Wildfire

WILD-1: Cessation of Construction on Red Flag Warning Days. Construction activities shall not occur on red flag warning days, as determined by CAL FIRE or the National Weather Service. Wind speed, temperature, and humidity shall be monitored to minimize ignition risk, and grading shall not occur during periods of high wind.

WILD-2: Emergency Exit Routes. Prior to public use, the County shall coordinate with the County's Department of Public Works to install "Emergency Exit Route" signage at both driveway entrances (Highway 175 and Golf Road) to direct outbound traffic in the event of an emergency. Public parking shall be limited to designated spaces within the park.

WILD-3: Emergency Turnout. Prior to the portion of the Project included in Phase 1 opening for public use, the emergency turnout off Highway 175 shall be constructed in accordance with PRC §4290. This improvement shall be reviewed and approved by the County Fire Marshal or other designated authority during final permitting. Similarly, prior to the portion of the Project included in Phase 2 opening for public use, the emergency/maintenance access route northeast of Kelsey Creek shall be constructed in accordance with Public Resources Code §4290. This improvement shall be reviewed and approved by the County Fire Marshal or other designated authority

during final permitting. Emergency access turnouts shall be maintained clear of obstructions.

Fire safety and Project site readiness requirements shall include, but are not limited to:

- a. An interior driveway at least 20 feet wide, constructed with an all-weather surface designed to support a 75,000-pound emergency vehicle;
- b. A vertical clearance of at least 15 feet along all emergency access routes;
- c. Defensible space established around all structures per applicable fire code and PRC §4291 guidelines;
- d. Lockable emergency gates and address signage visible and legible from the roadway;
- g. Driveway shall be inspected by the County and the driveway entrance shall be marked with 6-inch-tall contrasting address numbers visible at night.

WILD-4: Defensible Space. Prior to public use of the park, defensible space shall be established and maintained around structures and gathering areas in compliance with PRC §4291. This may include strategic limbing of trees or vegetation thinning rather than tree removal, as determined by the Fire Marshal or designated agency.

WILD-5: Pre-Occupancy Inspection. A pre-occupancy inspection shall be conducted by County Building and Safety to verify the following:

- Minimum 20-foot-wide access roads with appropriate load-bearing surfaces;
- Adequate vertical clearance and emergency vehicle turnaround;
- Fire-resistant restroom and utility structure materials;
- Address signage and emergency contact postings.

WILD-6: Emergency Evacuation Information. The County shall install posted emergency evacuation information at park entrances and kiosks, consistent with local emergency protocols. The information shall include evacuation zone number, available exit routes, and procedures during red flag conditions.

WILD-7: Campfire Prohibition. Recreational campfires shall be prohibited. Barbeques must be contained, monitored, and located within cleared defensible space zones (i.e. picnic area).

FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL

General Plan Conformity

1. The Project would provide a new community park in the Cobb area that would provide a variety of recreational opportunities for different user groups, which is described as a need in the Cobb Mountain Area Plan.
2. The Project addresses priorities identified in the 2024 Lake County Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan, which designates the Cobb Mountain area as a target for new park development.

3. The Project supports the General Plan goals and policies listed in Chapter 9, Open Space, Conservation and Recreation; Chapter 3, Land Use; and Chapter 5, Public Facilities and Services.
4. The Project site is located at the corner of two main roads, including a state highway, that provide easy access to the proposed facilities. The Project would not be incompatible with surrounding land uses and is consistent with the siting criteria for public parks noted in Policy 5.14 of the General Plan.
5. As required under the California Code of Regulations Section 65402, the Project has been found to be consistent with the Lake County General Plan, based on the analysis contained within the Staff Report dated November 11, 2025.

Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration

1. An Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) has been prepared for the Project, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
2. The IS/MND (SCH No. 2025080737) was circulated for public review from August 15, 2025, to September 19, 2025.
3. The IS/MND found that the Project has the potential to result in impacts to Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Tribal Cultural Resources, and Wildfire.
4. Implementation of BMPs, adherence with existing local and state regulations, and implementation of the mitigation measures identified in Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program would reduce all potential environmental impacts to less-than-significant levels.
5. The Project would not result in a significant impact on the environment.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Planning Commission find that the proposed Cobb Community Park Project (PL-25-96) is in conformance with the County of Lake General Plan pursuant to California Government Code Section 65402, and adopt the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration with the Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program prepared for the Project, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

SAMPLE MOTIONS

Environmental Review

- A. I move that the Planning Commission adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program prepared for the Cobb Community Park Project (PL-25-96), proposed by the County of Lake, Public Services Department, located at 16540 State Hwy 175, Cobb (APN 013-056-04), based on the findings in the staff report dated December 11, 2025.

General Plan Conformity Report

- B. I move that the Planning Commission finds that the Cobb Community Park Project, proposed by the County of Lake, Public Services Department, located at 16540 State Hwy 175, Cobb (APN 013-056-04), is in conformity with the Lake County General Plan as required under the California Code of Regulations Section 65402 with the findings in the staff report dated December 11, 2025.

NOTE: The applicant or any interested person is reminded that the Zoning Ordinance provides for a seven-calendar day appeal period. If there is a disagreement with the Planning Commission's recommendation, an appeal to the Board of Supervisors may be filed. The appropriate forms and applicable fee must be submitted prior to 5:00 p.m. on or before the seventh calendar day following the Commission's final determination.