



# ANNUAL REPORT 2019–2020



## From the Director



### YEAR AT-A-GLANCE

**\$39.2** million  
TOTAL EXPENDITURES

**34**  
PRESERVES

**43**  
PARKS AND FACILITIES

**17,900**  
OPEN SPACE ACRES

**143**  
SEASONAL AND  
FULL TIME EMPLOYEES

**Resilience.** A California oak can live 400 years, through drought and fire, while providing habitat to birds and other wildlife. During a year of unprecedented challenges, Marin's wild oaks inspired us to be resilient—maintain patience, grow, give, and adapt to change. Sheltering in place during the global pandemic, our community was reminded of the interdependence of all living things, and the impact each of us can have on the lives of others. And the restorative power of nature was felt more keenly than ever, with visitors seeking peace, joy, and play in the outdoors.

**Partnership.** Scientists have learned that thriving ecosystems rely not on competition, but on partnerships between individual plants and animals. Facing the COVID-19 crisis, as well as the worst fire season in California history, land managers across the Bay Area collaborated as never before, to protect public health, provide safe access to parks and open space, and deliver emergency aid. The relationships between land management agencies across Marin and beyond, from San Jose to Santa Rosa, grew stronger, emphasizing the importance of sharing resources and working together.

**Agility.** Like a western gray squirrel leaping from branch to branch, the Parks team proved to be adept at navigating changing conditions when life's routines were upended in March due to COVID-19. Essential projects including fire fuel management, road and trail improvements, park maintenance, sea level rise planning, and commission meetings continued moving forward, making use of digital tools and new safety protocols. In addition, staff pivoted to taking on additional responsibilities, as the Parks team at all levels moved to support county-wide disaster service work and emergency operations.

**Community.** The impact of COVID-19 heightened awareness of economic disparity, historic inequities, and underserved neighborhoods. This offered opportunities to listen, learn, and gain greater understanding of community needs. A lasting legacy of 2020, a year like no other, will be continued close collaboration with community organizations, as well as ongoing engagement with the sovereign indigenous tribes of Marin, who protected these treasured lands for thousands of years. We share the common goal of taking care of what we have.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Max Korten'.

**Max Korten, Director**  
Marin County Parks

# 2019–2020 Strategic Achievements



## FIRE HAZARD PREVENTION

**109** Acres of vegetation thinned to maintain emergency access

**1510** Acres grazed by livestock to reduce fire fuel

**228** Piles burned as part of defensible space work in ten high priority locations



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**312k** Visitors to the website [marincountyparks.org](http://marincountyparks.org)

**22k** Views of One Tam online county-wide, multi-jurisdiction status map

**30** Public board and commission meetings



## HABITAT PRESERVATION

**409** Acres surveyed for natural resources in Bowman Canyon

**269** Invasive plant populations removed by the Early Detection, Rapid Response team

**175** Wildlife surveys for nesting, roosting, and inventory assessment

## COLLABORATION ACROSS BOUNDARIES

In 2020, multi-jurisdiction coalitions cultivated over the past decade proved invaluable, as Bay Area public land managers faced unprecedented challenges. These included pandemic stay-at-home orders in spring, and wildfires summer through fall, followed by a resurgence of the pandemic in winter.

In response to the pandemic, land managers across the Bay Area worked together to align visitation guidelines and public communications. They shared information and established priorities on weekly phone calls, to provide a consistent yet localized response. Special projects quickly materialized. To provide visitors with location status updates, the One Tam collaborative created an online, county-wide map. Social media centered on public safety themes such as #RecreateResponsibly.

Wildfires of unprecedented number and scale followed in August, as California became ground zero for climate change. Parks staff assisted fire agencies battling the Woodward Fire at Point Reyes National Seashore, by clearing brush and helping to maintain fire breaks. The fires were a stark reminder of the importance of the work done by Marin County Fire's Tamalpais Crew, coordinated by Parks staff, and funded by Parks Measure A. The crew focuses on maintaining defensible space in priority locations across Marin's wildland/urban interface.

The forces of nature move across property boundaries. Maintaining these strong relationships has made Parks more agile and resilient in our emergency response.

## PARTNERSHIPS

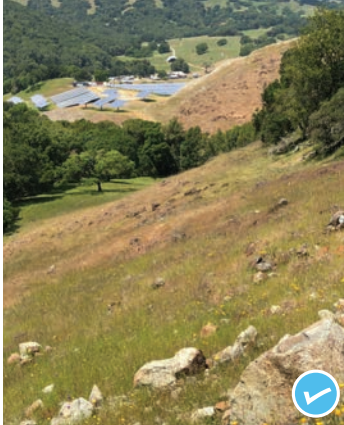
**One Tam** mobilizes the joint resources of the National Park Service, California State Parks, The Marin Municipal Water District, Marin County Parks, and Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy.

**Together Bay Area** is a 66-member coalition of public agencies, indigenous tribes, and nonprofit community organizations across ten counties.

Marin County Parks collaborates regularly with **Marin County Fire**, and other regional fire agencies, as well as the non-profit community group **FIREsafe Marin**.

Marin County Parks routinely works with Marin's **cities, towns, and special districts**, to help support their parks and open spaces.

# 2019–2020 Project Highlights



Marin County Open Space District completed phase 2 of the **Bowman Canyon Acquisition**, expanding the western boundary of Mount Burdell Preserve by 409 acres.



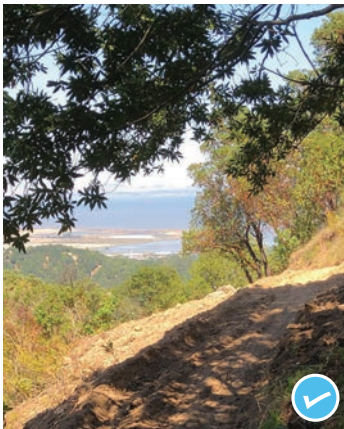
In collaboration with Marin County Fire, the 14-person **Fire Fuels Crew** continues reducing fire risk in high priority areas of parks and open space across the county.



A colorful **Shade Structure** in powder-coated steel enhances the picnic plaza at Stafford Lake Bike Park, improving the recreational experience for riders and spectators.



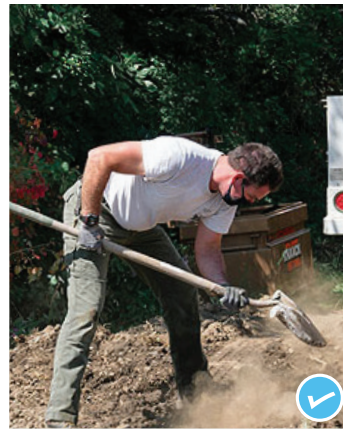
**Evolving Shorelines** at Bothin Marsh progressed with a shared vision document and community conversations about draft concepts for mitigating the impact of sea level rise.



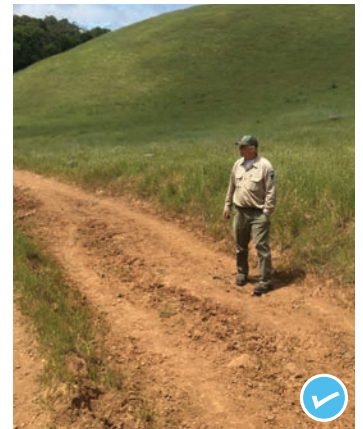
In Pacheco Valle Preserve, the **Ponti Ridge** project successfully converted an unsustainable and steep fire road to a scenic multiuse trail. Work continued through the COVID-19 shelter-in-place, keeping the project on schedule.



Underground irrigation keeps Lagoon Park vegetation healthy. Parks completed the second phase of **Irrigation Mainline** improvements. This significant component of park infrastructure had reached the end of its service life. Purple pipe indicates the use of recycled water.



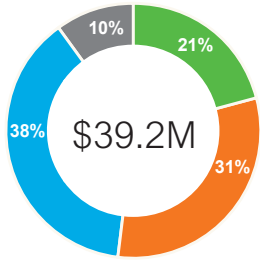
After community conversations and engineering site assessments, Parks moved forward on resurfacing and improving drainage on **School Trail** in French Ranch Preserve, improving safety for commuting students and other travelers.



Parks consults regularly with Marin County Fire on emergency access priorities. Improvements were completed this year on a two-mile stretch of **Middle Summit Fire Road**, in Mount Burdell Preserve.

# FY 2019–20 Revenue & Expenditures

## TOTAL EXPENDITURES BY BUDGET AREAS



- PARKS
- OPEN SPACE
- MEASURE A
- CSAs

## MEASURE A OVERSIGHT

Appointed by the Board of Supervisors, seven committee members oversee Measure A expenditures, assist with compliance audits, and approve this annual report:

Robert Berner  
Michael Dybeck  
Larry Kennings  
Joe Meylan  
Daniel Russell  
Mary Stompe  
Jeff Williams

Each year Measure A funds undergo two compliance audits. The Marin County Department of Finance audited organizations other than Marin County Parks that receive Measure A funding. Badawi and Associates audited Marin County Parks and will issue a report in February 2021. Audit reports are available on [marincountyparks.org](http://marincountyparks.org).

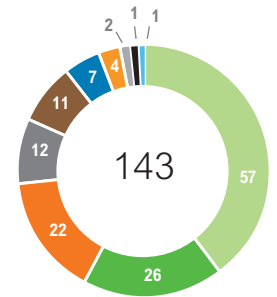
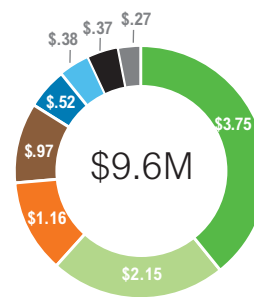
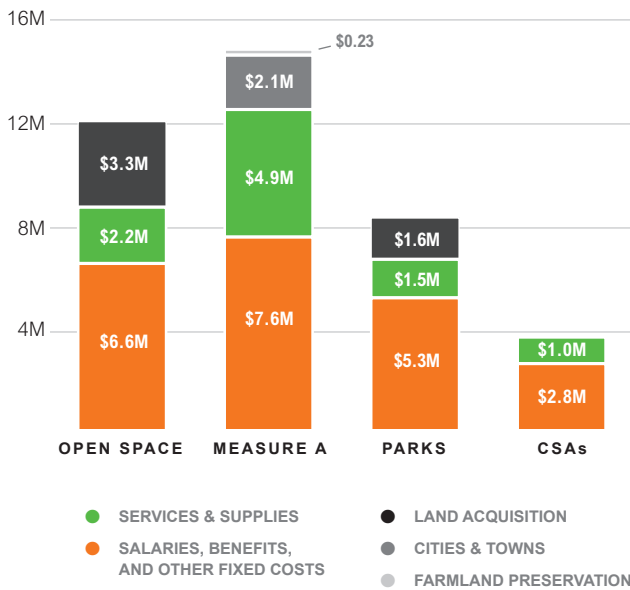
This table summarizes actual revenues and expenditures handled by Marin County Parks.

	PARKS	OPEN SPACE	MEASURE A	CSAs
<b>REVENUE</b>				
Taxes	0	8,411,346	13,766,174	1,920,451
From Use of Money	467,972	154,598	238,005	81,548
Intergovernmental	548,886	33,878	269,768	2,684
Charges for Services	1,594,187	(99,005)	0	(14,951)
Miscellaneous	29,341	348,228	833,310	0
Budgeted Transfer In	1,095,272	3,295,671	0	1,899,487
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,735,658</b>	<b>12,144,717</b>	<b>15,107,257</b>	<b>3,889,219</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>				
<b>Fixed Costs</b>				
- Salaries and Benefits	4,976,973	5,414,887	3,104,975	0
- Budgeted Transfer Out	15,000	10,000	4,390,943	1,785,487
- Interdepartmental Charges	319,352	854,236	152,226	376,762
<b>Grants</b>				
- Other Charges and Capital Assets	1,595,272	3,650,699	0	620,722
- Farmland Preservation	0	0	229,058	0
- Cities and Towns	0	0	2,087,805	0
<b>Services and Supplies</b>				
- Road and Trail Management	0	845,322	127,924	0
- Vegetation Management and Fire Fuel Reduction	0	115,503	2,036,759	0
- Wetland Restoration and Erosion Control	0	51,861	330,856	0
- Real Estate and Acquisition	0	251,446	17,796	0
- Park Facilities and Landscape	1,346,370	0	1,384,387	1,019,777
- Public Engagement and Equity	33,872	643,868	477,363	0
- Science and Research	0	21,242	348,888	0
- Administration	100,534	233,374	181,163	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,387,372</b>	<b>12,092,437</b>	<b>14,870,143</b>	<b>3,802,748</b>
<b>OTHER USE OF FUND BALANCE/NET COUNTY COST</b>				
- Fund Balance		(52,280)	(237,114)	(86,471)
- General Fund	<b>4,651,715</b>			

# FY 2019–20 Financial Information

## Marin County Parks Expenditures and Set Aside for Land Acquisition FY 2019–20

### PARKS, OPEN SPACE, AND MEASURE A



## Measure A Expenditures and Set Aside for Land Acquisition FY 2019–20

### PARKS AND OPEN SPACE



### LAND ACQUISITION

In FY 2019–20, \$4.9M was expended on land acquisition. The Bowman Canyon phase 2 acquisition added 242 acres to the 167 acres purchased in 2018. Also, 33-acre Buck’s Landing on the San Pedro Peninsula was purchased after four years of planning. \$1.8M was allocated to land acquisition set aside, with total set aside at the end of FY 2019–20 \$4.3M.

PROPERTY	ACRES	MEASURE A	OTHER
Bowman Canyon 2	242	\$3,295,671	
Buck’s Landing	33	\$1,095,272	\$500,000 state grant

### CITIES AND TOWNS

Marin’s 19 cities, towns, and applicable special districts received \$2.1M in Measure A funds in FY 2019–20 for fire fuel vegetation management, neighborhood park renovations, maintenance, and staff.

### FARMLAND PRESERVATION

Marin Resource Conservation District (RCD) receives 5% of Farmland Preservation funds to support resources on easement-protected agricultural lands. RCD matches other grants to maintain soil and water quality, water supplies, and fencing. RCD received \$136,404 in FY 2019–20.

In FY 2019–20, the Marin Agricultural Land Trust returned \$833,250 to the Farmland Preservation program.

# Measure A: Caring For What We Have



52%

**Parks and Open Space**



20%

**Farmland Preservation**



15%

**Cities and Towns**

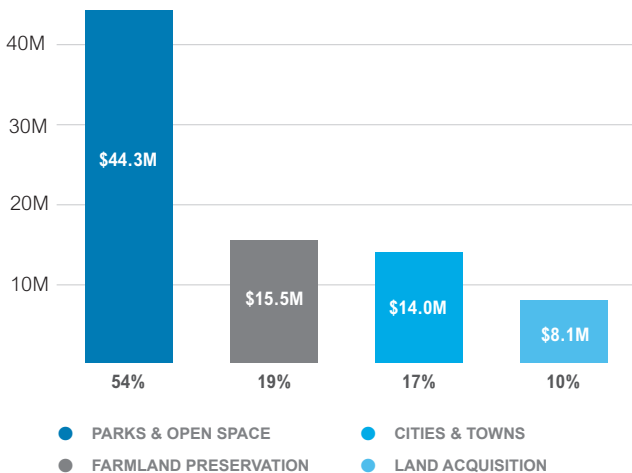


13%

**Land Acquisition**

**Measure A protects the parks, open space, and farmland that make Marin County an extraordinary place to live, work, and play.** In 2012, Marin voters approved a one-quarter of one percent sales tax (County Ordinance 3586) to support parks, open space, and agricultural lands across Marin. By law, funds raised by Measure A must be spent on parks and open space, farmland preservation, recreation in Marin's nineteen cities and towns, and land acquisition. Measure A also funds over \$100,000 annually in community grants, extending opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy parks and preserves through local non-profit organizations.

## Measure A Expenditures FY 2014–20



**As of FY 2019–20, Measure A has been in effect for seven years and has generated \$91.2 million.** These funds are being used to address deferred maintenance in parks and preserves, finance agricultural easements that protect ranches and farms, support outdoor recreational programs in cities and towns, and help Marin adapt to climate change.

## Support for Cities, Towns, and Special Districts

**Measure A provides funding for parks, open space, and recreation facilities across the county.** Measure A helps cities, towns, and special districts maintain parks, open space, and recreational programming. To date \$14M dollars have been granted. By 2021, Measure A is estimated to generate \$15.7M for Marin cities, towns, and special districts.

### CITIES

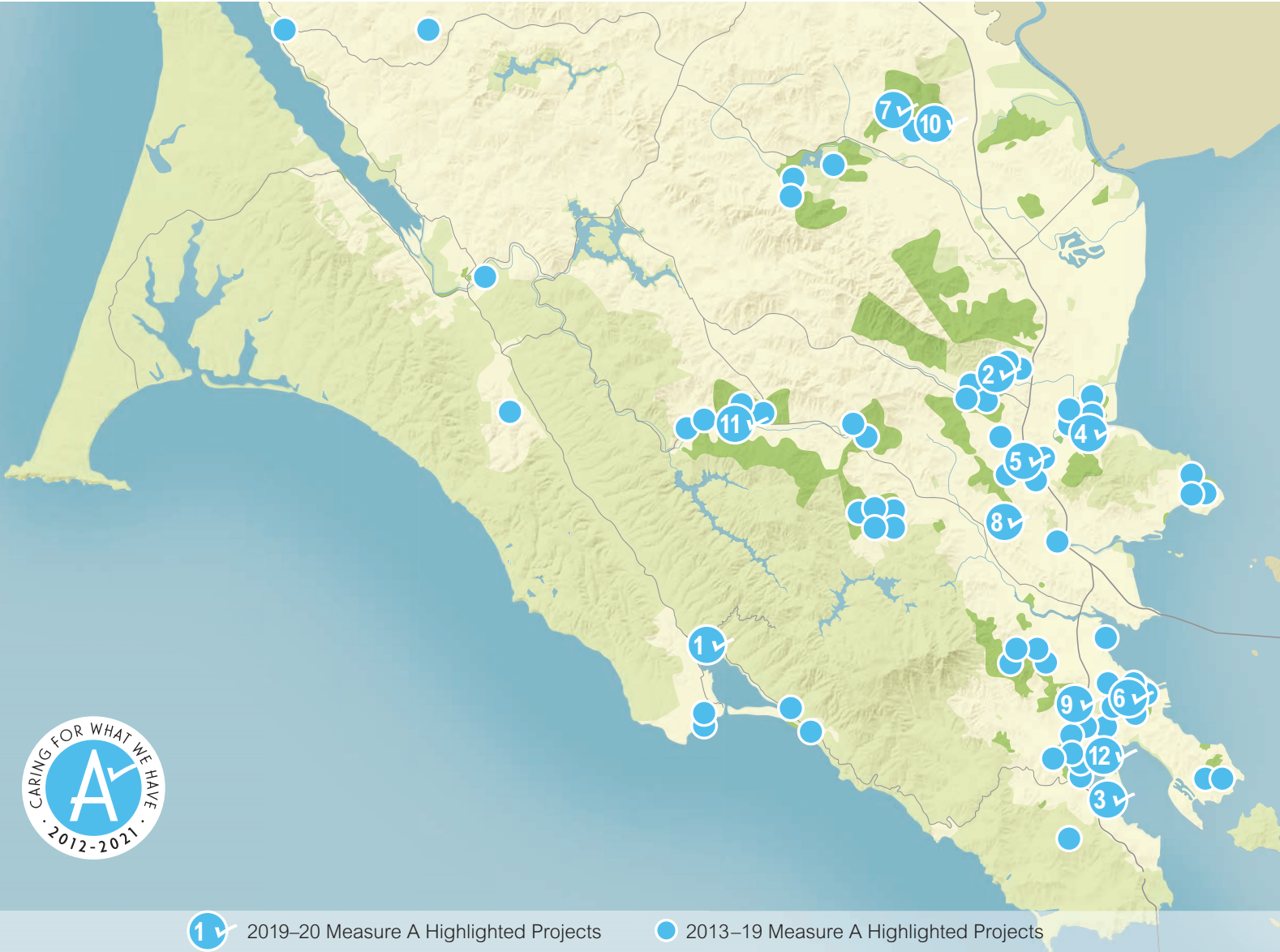
Mill Valley  
Novato  
San Rafael  
Sausalito  
  
TOWNS  
Belvedere  
Corte Madera  
Fairfax  
Larkspur  
Ross  
San Anselmo  
Tiburon

### SPECIAL DISTRICTS

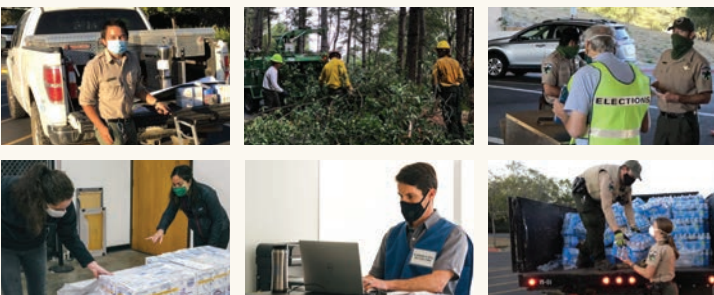
Bel Marin Keyes CSD  
Bollinas Firehouse Community  
Park Agency  
Marin City CSD  
Marinwood CSD  
Muir Beach CSD  
Strawberry Recreation District  
Tamalpais CSD  
Tomales CSD

# Highlighted County-wide Projects Enhanced by Measure A

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 1 Bolinas Wye Wetlands draft conceptual designs   | 5 Lagoon Park picnic site furnishings                 | 9 Alto Bowl/Horse Hill eucalyptus grove thinning     |
| 2 Ponti Ridge Trail                               | 6 Ring Mountain rare plant research                   | 10 Middle Summit Fire Road improvements, Mt. Burdell |
| 3 Mill Valley/Sausalito Pathway bridges redecking | 7 Bowman Canyon acquisition part two                  | 11 School Trail improvements, French Ranch Preserve  |
| 4 McInnis Marsh draft conceptual designs          | 8 Kent Woodlands defensible space vegetation thinning | 12 Evolving Shorelines draft conceptual designs      |



## 2020: A Year Like No Other



In 2020, Parks staff supported a wide range of emergency services, while continuing to make significant progress on the projects that are taking care of what we have.

## Looking Ahead

Measure A allows Marin County Parks to enhance recreation and safety while preserving the natural wonders of Marin. Watch for these future projects:

- McNears Beach Park parking lot resurfacing
- Paradise Beach Park slope stabilization studies
- Stafford Bike Park asphalt pump track design concepts
- Rush Creek trail improvements
- Whitehouse Pool inclusive access improvements
- Dog waste stations in over 20 locations, with more to come
- Bayside Park renovation
- Toyon, Lower Cascade, and Greenwood Way fire road improvements
- Evolving Shorelines Bothin Marsh community conversations and design specifications