

PETALUMA RIVER PARK CONCEPT PLAN

Executive Summary



Petaluma River Park is a rare riverfront parkland offering a shared space for people, art, and nature in the beautiful North Bay. This document presents a summary of the River Park Concept Plan—our specific, but still high-level collective vision for the future of this spectacular park for all.

ABOUT THE PETALUMA RIVER PARK FOUNDATION

Founded in 2019, the Petaluma River Park Foundation is a private, nonprofit organization that works hand-in-hand with the community to bring the long-held dream of Petaluma River Park to life. The Foundation owns and manages the River Park and is 100% reliant on fundraising for our management and park planning.

COMMUNITY LEADS THE WAY

From the start, the Foundation committed to a community-led park planning process that centers communities' historically excluded from public place making. This approach ensures that everyone—regardless of background—feels seen, valued, and included in both the planning and the final design, creating a park that fosters connection and shared stewardship.

A NEW PARK FOR PETALUMA AND ALL OF THE NORTH BAY

After years of working with the community, we are excited to announce the final vision of the future River Park. Embracing a “light on the land” philosophy, the Foundation envisions about 80% of the parkland will be native habitat. There will be quiet spaces for visitors to relax and refresh in nature as well as active settings suitable for groups to gather, celebrate, and play. The Foundation is planning for spaces that are flexible and multipurpose, able to adapt as

community needs change over time. And, it is incorporating safety and accessibility into all areas of the park. We expect the first phase of the park to be completed in 2028.

The Concept Plan is driven by three overarching design goals, each encompassing a suite of infrastructure and amenities: Connect For Success; Nurture Nature; and Uplift Community.

Connect For Success

At Petaluma River Park, it's the connections that count. Connect to the river at the new beach or kayak launch. Take a short stroll to connect to downtown Petaluma and nearby public transit. Link up with the Bay Area Ridge Trail and other regional trails. Connect with friends and family as you cruise the new promenade. Walk across the park's new bridge connecting the east and west sides of Petaluma. The opportunities to connect will be waiting for you at the River Park.

Nurture Nature

Imagine a raw, undeveloped landscape becoming a vibrant natural refuge in the heart of the city. That's the future of the River Park. Acres of new and restored native habitat, hundreds of trees, wildflower meadows, and improved tidal marshland will provide a beneficial place for wildlife and a calming space that nourishes body and soul.

Uplift Community

Petaluma River Park will be a welcoming, shared space for the entire community. Here, you can relax and renew, find inspiration, share stories, and celebrate time in nature together. Whether you want to gather for a special occasion, enjoy an afternoon at the playground, join a casual game of pickleball, take in a concert, or walk and talk with family and friends, there will be something that brings the community together at Petaluma River Park.

OUR THANKS

Our community of park builders is far-reaching, including residents, community organizations from throughout the region, renowned landscape designers and park planners, restoration experts, community engagement specialists, community park designers, artists, schoolchildren, state and local agencies, individual donors, city leaders, and our diverse Board of Directors, advisors, volunteers, and staff. The Foundation expresses its deep appreciation to all those who are helping create a Petaluma River Park for all.

Special thanks go to the CA State Coastal Conservancy, the Wildlife Conservation Board, the Sonoma County Ag & Open Space District, Anonymous, the Peter E. Haas Jr Family Fund, the McKegney Family, Creative Sonoma, the Creative Work Fund, the National Endowment for the Arts, and more than 900 individuals and organizations who have provided significant financial support since 2019.

JOIN US!

Over the next several years, the project team will work on formal design, environmental review, permitting, and fundraising with the expectation of beginning construction in 2027 and holding a grand opening celebration in 2028. While the full scope of the Concept Plan may adapt to levels of funding obtained, our commitment to the community's vision for the park will remain steadfast. Acres of raw space will take on new life as a vibrant, welcoming park for people, art, and nature.