



# ***Parks and Recreation Element***

*City of Grover Beach*



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## 1 - Introduction

### Why Parks and Recreation are Important

Recreation and exercise are fundamental to a healthy life. The benefits include greater productivity, less disease, and sense of well-being. As the population grows, competition for limited recreational facilities increases. As the development and urbanization of our area increases, so must the provision of recreation spaces that are available to all people.

Children are the greatest beneficiaries of recreation. Many life lessons are learned in recreational pursuits: cooperative competition, character building, physical and mental health, and an opportunity to escape electronic entertainment.

Health and fitness experts agree that recreation and exercise result in:

- more energy and capacity for work and leisure activities
- greater resistance to stress, disease, anxiety and fatigue, and a better outlook on life
- increased stamina, strength and flexibility
- improved efficiency of the heart and lungs
- loss of extra pounds or body fat
- help in staying at desirable weight
- reduced risk of heart attack



*El Camino Oaks Natural Area*

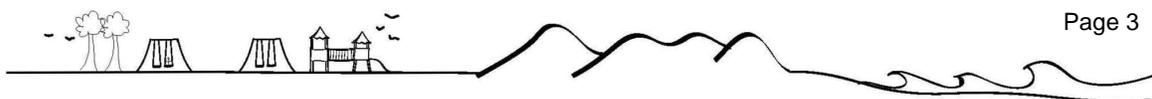
### Parks and Recreation Mission Statement

**GOAL 1-** The City will strive to create quality recreation services and facilities that benefit and enrich the quality of life for Grover Beach residents.

#### Policy 1.1

The Grover Beach Parks and Recreation Department is committed to providing or facilitating quality recreational services, including programs, classes, special events, and

facilities to all members of the community in a courteous and efficient manner.



## **Background**

At the time of the 1991 Parks and Recreation Element (PRE), the City had 10.51 acres of parks and 28.5 acres of dedicated natural open space. Since then the City has added 3.68 acres of parks all in the southeast quadrant of the City, fulfilling specific parks and neighborhood land use objectives. In the period 1990 to 2000, Grover Beach added 1,411 new residents.

One facility unforeseen in the 1991 Parks and Recreation Element, but completed in 1999, was the South County Skate Park.

The City's parks and recreation facilities, with few exceptions, are intensively used and well maintained. The City offers a wide variety of recreation programs and services with a minimal level of staffing.

All of the parks are under five acres in size and would be commonly termed mini-parks, yet they offer a wide range of recreation opportunities and meet many needs.

It is generally recognized, and confirmed in the Parks and Recreation Element field survey, that residents of the Five Cities area regularly cross municipal boundaries to use park facilities. Arroyo Grande continues to provide the majority of fields for organized sports, serving Grover Beach and Oceano residents. Adult and youth sports organizations anticipate growth over the next ten years, with more fields needed now. Oceano continues to lack parks and Oceano residents use Grover Beach parks.

In addition to the park acreage added by Grover Beach since 1989, Arroyo Grande added one baseball field and a neighborhood park to its park system. The City of Pismo Beach added Dinosaur Caves Park and Chumash Park along with sections of coastal blufftop park. These are important additions to the overall recreation opportunities in the Five Cities, however, these facilities are basically neighborhood serving and lack major regional or community-wide recreation facilities.

## **Purpose and Relation to Other General Plan Elements**

The Parks and Recreation Element is an optional component of the City's General Plan. The original Element adopted in 1991 recognizes the important role parks play in the make-

up of the city's quality of life. The adopted Element set a goal of adding fifteen acres of parkland to meet projected needs.

This document updates the Parks and Recreation Element adopted in 1991. This Element establishes goals and policies for guiding the management, renovation and expansion of existing parks and development of new parks and recreation facilities. The Element includes Programs that are action items to implement the goals and policies in order to meet existing and projected needs and to strive for an equitable distribution of parks throughout the City.

The purpose of the Parks and Recreation Element is to (1) give policy guidance for providing of park and recreation services, (2) document the City's existing park and recreation resources, including those resources that are outside of the City's management, and (3) facilitate the evaluation of park and recreation needs during the land use decision process.

The Element does not rezone property, nor does it authorize any public access to lands described here that are currently in private ownership.

Government Code Section 65300 *et seq.* requires the City to have a General Plan that consists of seven mandatory Elements. In addition to the required Elements, the General Plan may include optional Elements that relate to the physical development of the City. The Parks and Recreation Element is an optional Element. It is an integral part of the General Plan. Once adopted, it has the same force and effect as the other Elements of the General Plan.

State law requires that the General Plan be an internally consistent statement of local government policy. Each Element of the General Plan must be consistent with all other Elements. The policies in this plan are consistent with City General Plan policies and standards.

### **Adoption and Public Input**

A series of workshops were conducted in July 2004 in order to receive public input on park and recreation needs. An informal survey was also conducted at several City parks to gain the perspectives of park and recreation program users.



Together these comments and ideas became the basis for preparation of a Needs Assessment.

In July 2004, a Needs Assessment was distributed to the Parks and Recreation Commission for review and comment. The Needs Assessment was forwarded to the City Council on August 2, 2004 for a public hearing and Council comment.

The Public Hearing Draft PRE and a CEQA document (Mitigated Negative Declaration) was circulated for public and agency review in August and September 2004.

The Public Hearing Draft was presented in public hearings before the City Council in December 2004 and February 2005. The CEQA document was certified and the Element was adopted on March 7, 2005 and is now an element of the General Plan.

## **2 - Parks**

### **Value and Benefits of Parks**

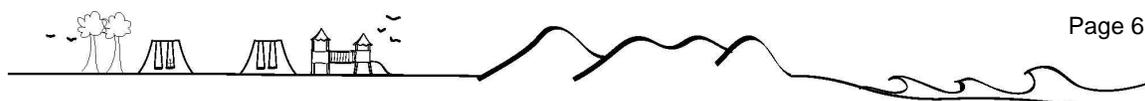
Parks and trails contribute to a higher quality of life and make our communities more livable. A well-rounded City parks program also provides the community with a variety of substantial health, social and economic benefits, including increased property values.

Active recreation opportunities are important to people of all ages to develop and maintain healthy lifestyles. Our lives can be enriched by experiencing nature, recreating and exercising regularly, and it is valuable to have these experiences close to where we live.

Organized sports facilities, community centers and group leagues accommodate important cultural activities for all ages. The availability and use of active recreation facilities and sports programs have been shown to result in a reduction in juvenile crime rates.

### **Existing Parks**

The City of Grover Beach Parks and Recreation Department manages a wide range of park types with recreation opportunities for all ages. The following list describes each park and facility owned and operated by the City, as well as State owned and managed parklands within the City limits. A map of the City with the existing and potential

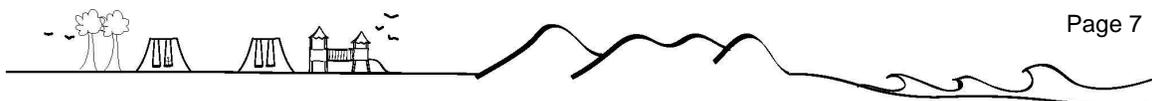


parks and facilities identified is in Appendix A of this document.

**Parks**

- Ramona Garden Park

The park is partially developed and is planned to ultimately encompass about 4.5 acres. The current facilities cover four acres and include open grass areas, a gazebo, an amphitheater, rose garden and stream water feature. Ramona Garden Park Center is located on the southeast corner of the park.



- Hero Community Park  
The park completed in 2003, includes a children's play area, basketball court, tennis court, horseshoes, small picnic barbecue areas and a restroom. Site area: 0.78 acres.
- Grover Heights Park  
The park is a 3.2 acre parcel contiguous to Grover Heights Elementary School that is leased from the school district. Facilities include open turf, tennis courts (lighted), basketball (planned for lighting), play area, group barbecue area, horseshoes, sand volleyball court and a restroom.
- Golden West Park  
The park is about 1/2 acre developed as a passive grass and sitting area and horseshoe pit within the Golden West housing development.
- Mentone Basin Park  
The park consists of a major storm water drainage basin that was developed in the mid 1980's for sport field use and is lighted. The softball field is not regulation size. Other facilities outside the basin that are intensively used include lighted basketball courts, tennis court, and restroom. The Carolan house exists on the southwest corner. Site acreage: 3.10 acres
- 16<sup>th</sup> Street Park  
The park includes a recent addition of 1.25 acres dedicated as parkland with a residential subdivision. The facility includes softball and soccer play fields (short center field), play area, covered group barbecue area, volleyball, horseshoes and a restroom. Site area is 4.0 acres.
- Costa Bella Basin Park at Farroll Ave and Oak Park  
This 0.40 acre grassy stormwater basin was dedicated as a park space as part of a residential subdivision. The park is used as a passive grass area.

16<sup>th</sup> Street Park



**Other Lands**

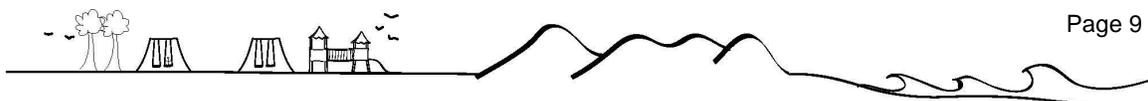
- Community Gardens  
The site located on Brighton Ave is used for gardening on a 0.15 acre parcel.
- "El Camino Oaks" Open Space / Ecological Preserve  
This open space was dedicated as part of several residential subdivisions and covers 28.5 acres of dense and highly scenic oak woodland. The parcel is adjacent to riparian areas along Meadow Creek. An informal hiking trail exists linking 4<sup>th</sup> street to the end of Nacimiento Avenue.
- Charles Street Site  
As part of the open space dedication for the El Camino Oaks area, the City acquired land at the corner of Charles Street and Nacimiento Avenue. The 1991 Element shows this property as a potential park. This land is zoned low density residential in the General Plan and, if developed for recreation, would need to comply with Local Coastal Plan resource protection standards.

**Existing Facilities**

- South County Skate Park  
Located at 1750 Ramona Avenue, the facility is a 13,000 square foot concrete skate park with a restroom, bench seating, and parking. Site area is about 0.5 acre.
- Ramona Garden Park Center  
The center includes a large meeting room, conference room, dance floor, kitchen and outdoor barbecue pit. Seating occupancy is 125 people.
- Grover Beach Community Center  
Located at South 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Trouville Avenue, the Center is an 8,000 square foot multi-use building remodeled in 2002, with a small tot play area and parking. The seating capacity is 250.

**California Department of Parks and Recreation Lands**

- Dune Boardwalk  
The Pismo State Beach natural area park land area north and south of Grand Ave within the City is about 110 acres and includes dunes and riparian woodland. The Dune Boardwalk was constructed in 2004 and



maintained on state land by the City. The pedestrian path extends from the Grand Avenue day use plaza north to the city limit, where it links to a path extending to the Pismo Beach pier.

- **Golf Course**  
The state operates a 9-hole golf course next to the dune area near the end of Grand Avenue.
- **Day Use Plaza and beach access**  
In cooperation with State Parks, the City developed a day use picnic plaza, beach access and restroom near the end of Grand Ave. The day use area includes parking for about 160 cars.

**How Park Needs are Determined**

In the 1970’s as urban and suburban populations began to outstrip the ability of many communities to add park lands for it residents, national park standards were developed to help communities plan for adequate park acreage to meet future demand. The standards were expressed in acres of parkland per thousand of population.<sup>1</sup>

In Grover Beach, some of the park categories listed in Table 2 below do not apply to a community of 13,000 in population. For example regional parks are generally provided by the County or, in the case of metropolitan areas, a regional park district.

<b>Table 2 - 1983 National Recreation and Park Association Standards for Parks</b>				
<b>PARK TYPE</b>	<b>ACRES/1,000 PEOPLE</b>	<b>SIZE RANGE</b>	<b>POPULATION SERVED</b>	<b>SERVICE AREA</b>
Mini Parks	No std.	0.5 to 5 acres	500- 2,500	Sub- neighborhood
Neighborhood Parks	1-3	5 to 25 acres	A Neighborhood Approx. 5,000	1/4 – 1/2 mile
Community Parks	5-8	25+ acres	Several Neighborhoods	1 – 2 miles
Regional Metropolitan Parks	5-10	200+ acres	Several Communities	1 hour driving time
Special Areas	No Applicable Standard	Includes linear parks, trails, beaches, golf courses, historical sites, flood plains, coastal accessways, etc. No standard is applicable.		
Conservancy (Natural Areas)	No Applicable Standard	Protection and management of the natural/cultural environment with recreational use as a secondary objective.		

<sup>1</sup> 1983 National Recreation and Park Association Standards for Parks.

**Need for Parks**

While the current National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Standards suggest the need for each community to develop its own relevant standards, the traditional NRPA standards do provide a starting point for assessing current need. The following table applies the 1983 NRPA Standards from Table 2 to the City's current park inventory. Experience has shown most communities, including Grover Beach, have not been able to consistently meet these standards. For example, Table 3 shows that the 2000 population for the city would require the acquisition and development of an additional 64 acres of neighborhood and community parkland based on traditional park planning standards. While not a community park in a conventional sense, the beach area does provide special types of recreation opportunities that meet many community needs.

Table 3 includes the regional park acreage provided by the County and State in the Five Cities area, i.e. Pismo State Beach and Biddle Regional Park. Regional facilities also do not meet the target standards for the region.

**Table 3 - Application of NRPA Standards- Grover Beach**

Facility Type	NRPA Standard (acres/1,000 pop)	2000 Population	Calculated Need (in acres)	Existing Acreage (2004)	Deficiency (in acres)
Neighborhood Park (City)	1-2 acres	13,063	13- 26	14.19 acres <sup>1</sup>	(64-116)
Community Park (City)	5-8 acres	13,063	65-104		
Regional Park (County / State)	5-10	50,000	250-500	200 <sup>2</sup>	(50-300)
Notes: 1. Natural Area acreage is not included in these figures 2. Regional includes Pismo State Beach within City, Biddle (County) Regional Park					

There is a growing recognition that recreation and parkland demand is best met by a variety of providers acting in cooperation because, typically, traditional target acreages for parks are not realistic given funding limitations. However, as the basis for determining the appropriate amount of land that should be provided with new residential development the City uses a standard of five acres of park land for 1,000 population increase associated with any proposed residential subdivision.

Planning for parkland acquisition also needs to focus on co-operative and adaptive strategies. Grover Beach may be best served by a self-directed approach based on what

citizens in the community determine is the best and most opportune for themselves.

This Element recommends the implementation of local community park acreage standards based on community input, local surveys and review of regional trends. This process is described in Chapter 5 - Providing for Parks and Recreation. This kind of local approach to assessing need is consistent with current NRPA recommendations. This approach may identify the need for additional park acreage for some or all types of parks, or it may determine that parkland needs are being met. Table 3 above is intended to provide some indication of how the community is doing.

Popular new recreational pursuits can create unmet demand in a short period. For this reason, sometimes the traditional models for what needs to be in every park need to be reexamined. For example, 30 years ago, most small communities had perhaps one organized youth sport: Little League Baseball. Today, soccer has exceeded the level of participation in Little League in Grover Beach, and other activities such as skateboarding and adult softball have grown greatly in year-round participation. For planning purposes, Appendix C includes the basic standards for neighborhood / community parks in Grover Beach including the types of facilities and uses that may be a part of these parks.

Given the long planning timeframe leading to park or facility land acquisition and construction, recreational facility planning needs to be flexible, adaptive and responsive to evolving needs. Determining those needs is best accomplished by:

- Examining regional trends
- Performing periodic community surveys
- Conducting local workshops, and
- Preparing long range master plans for each facility

### **Parks Goals, Policies and Programs**

**GOAL 2-** Provide park facilities with a range of recreational opportunities for all ages, as close as possible to where people live.

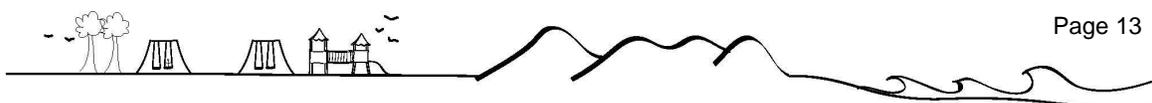
#### Policy 2.1



Continue to maximize the use of each park facility by creatively adapting the recreation opportunities available as community needs change and evolve.

Program 2.1.1: Create Master Plans for each facility and periodically review and update the plans and estimate implementation costs to respond to changing needs.

Program 2.1.2: When creating new, or updating existing, park and facility plans, consider the effects on surrounding neighborhoods for issues such as noise, light and glare, and traffic and parking in order to minimize impacts on neighborhood quality of life.



Policy 2.2

Seek to partner with the State, County, the neighboring Cities, the local school district and sports organizations as opportunities arise to pool resources to meet area-wide recreation needs.

Program 2.2.1: Identify projects that could benefit from a partnership arrangement such as a community pool and new or improved sports fields.

Program 2.2.2: Maintain open communication with the State, County, neighboring Cities and the local school district to establish mutual goals and timelines for achieving the goals.

Policy 2.3

Maintain a Park Capital Projects list that is regularly updated and prioritized with input from the community.

Program 2.3.1: Pursue acquisition and development of a three to five acre park in the southwest quadrant of the City.

Program 2.3.2: Pursue development of a Senior Center by determining the program of uses and building requirements, determining if a joint use facility is a viable option, and evaluating options for land acquisition.

Program 2.3.3: Conduct periodic surveys and / or public workshops to update, prioritize and adapt the ongoing project list for park improvements shown on Table 4.

**Table 4- Potential Park and Facility Project List**

- Cleaver Park  
The 0.84 acre parcel was gifted to the City for development as a park. The Parks and Recreation Commission has reviewed conceptual alternative plans for development of the parcel as a community pool and a passive park, however no formal action has been taken on the park. Development as a Senior Center is another option.
  
- El Camino Oaks Trail  
The informal hiking path within the 28.5 acre ecological preserve / open space lands owned by the City could be improved to be accessible to more age groups and formalized with signage and trail stabilizing features. The oak woodland is a unique and valuable resource within the city. This property includes the

parcels identified as the potential Charles Street Park on the uphill side of Charles Street adjacent to the preserve area.



(Table 4 cont.)

- New Sports Fields- South Grover Park dedication / acquisition

The undeveloped lands at the southern end of the City include the 30 acre Okui property at Highland/ South 13<sup>th</sup> Street and the 10 acre Hero "North" property on Farroll Road. These lands are zoned for residential and light manufacturing uses. When these lands develop, the last remaining opportunity to acquire park land large enough to accommodate needed sports fields will pass.

The County of San Luis Obispo has expressed initial willingness to explore partnering on park improvements in this area that could also serve Oceano residents. In addition, the local youth soccer league (AYSO) has expressed willingness to investigate grant funding through its national organization.
- Sports fields improvement projects at Schools

There are few parcels available and affordable to the City for new parks and needed sports fields. The City could partner with the school district to upgrade, improve and intensify sports fields and other recreation facilities on the three elementary schools in the city. There would also be maintenance benefits in this arrangement.
- Senior Center

The workshops indicated that more activities for seniors should be developed including the idea of a Senior Center. No specific site in the City is identified.
- Improvements to Mentone Basin

This field is lighted and has the potential to meet some of the need for sports fields. Although the softball field in the basin has a short right field the turf area can be used for soccer. In order to have the field available to organized sports the City would need to commit more maintenance resources to the field to renovate annually after the rainy season.
- Community Pool

The workshops and survey showed a high interest for a community pool. No specific site has been identified in the City and it is possible that this need could be filled regionally by a partnership among the Cities and / or school district.
- Railroad Corridor / 4<sup>th</sup> Street Recreational Path

As part of the widening and realignment of South 4<sup>th</sup> Street identified in the Circulation Element, evaluate the feasibility of incorporating a detached recreational path that may be extended north along the railroad corridor in the future.
- Charles Street path

The City of Pismo Beach owns a fenced water tank site next to Grover Heights Elementary School. In the past, the City has considered acquiring the southern end of this parcel to develop a landscaped parkway and pedestrian connection link to Charles Street, primarily for school children.
- Ramona Cultural Center facilities

The Ramona Specific Plan envisions development of a variety of civic and educational facilities on the 800 and 900 blocks of Ramona Avenue adjoining Ramon Garden Park. These include community library expansion, an educational Exploration Station building, a

youth arts and crafts center, a firefighter's museum, a children's center and associated outdoor use areas.



(Table 4 cont.)

- 6<sup>th</sup> and Longbranch property  
The City owns a small lot that could be developed for more formal recreation such as a tot lot and landscaped sitting area
- Carolan House  
The Carolan House was relocated to the corner of Mentone Park. It is not historically significant in this location. The building and / or the underlying land might be better utilized for recreation.
- Municipal Pier  
The Local Coastal Plan includes a goal to develop a municipal pier on state land at the beach. This idea was reaffirmed at the PRE workshops.
- Farroll Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup> Street Park site  
The Open Space and Conservation Element identifies a potential park site at the corner of Farroll Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup> Street. This neighborhood would benefit from a park, however, this land is currently zoned for manufacturing uses.

### 3 Recreation

#### Value and Benefits of Recreation

While parks provide the land, recreation is provided by the particular amenities and programs provided within the park. Open, green parkland has value; however, that value is typically increased when the land also provides amenities that can be used or appreciated. In Grover Beach the limited amount of park land has meant that recreation facilities at each park are intensively used.

Recreation also includes the various programs offered year-round by the City Parks and Recreation Department, providing exercise and activities for all age groups and all economic backgrounds. A rich variety of recreation program opportunities teach our children values, gives opportunities for healthy exercise for all ages, and provides a format for healthy creativity and competition.

#### Types of Recreation Opportunities Offered by the City

The City offers a wide range of recreation opportunities through structured programs administered by the Parks and Recreation Department. These include Youth and Teen Programs, Adult and Senior Programs, and Special Events and Programs. Annual participation in these programs and classes is approximately 10,000 persons. The City benefits from a strong Volunteer program for recreation assistants.

## How Recreation Need is Determined

The Parks and Recreation Department prepares a quarterly schedule of classes, programs and events by tracking regional trends, surveying participants and, occasionally, as in 2000, conducting a community survey to gauge public interest and satisfaction with recreation programs. Certain core programs serving a range of age groups, such as tennis classes and pre-school and senior classes, are operated consistently year to year; the variety of many other classes, events and programs changes over time in response to needs. The classes, programs and events are offered quarterly in an Activity Guide produced jointly with the Cities of Arroyo Grande and Pismo Beach.



## Recreation Goals, Policies and Programs

**GOAL 3**-Strive to meet the recreational needs of all age groups.

### Policy 3.1

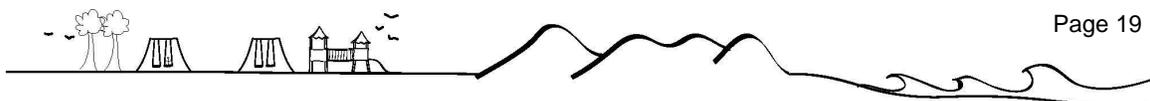
Continue to provide a wide range of programs, classes, events and services that respond to the changing needs of the community.

Program 3.1.1: Annually track recreation program participation changes, review regional trends, and evaluate user response to the recreation programs and services in order to adapt and develop the City's yearly recreation program offerings.

Program 3.1.2: Continue to maintain active cooperative relationships with other recreation providers, such as the YMCA and other Cities.

## 4 - Special Places - Beach and Natural Areas

### Special Places Defined



Grover Beach is fortunate to have a variety of special places, including the coastal dunes and beach and the Natural Area Preserve along the northern edge of the City. These places are unique assets in the City that can enrich the lives of residents, protect sensitive natural resources, and draw visitors to the area. Coastal and special natural features are finite and sensitive resources that require good management, however, with good design and management opportunities exist for these to attract "eco-tourism".

The City's Local Coastal Program (LCP) includes policies and programs to conserve these resources while providing for recreational enjoyment by residents and visitors. Most of the land on the coast in Grover Beach is owned by the State. The LCP represents a coordinated effort, mandated by the Coastal Act, for the City and State to have consistent goals, objectives and policies for use of the Coastal Zone recreational lands. These include describing the type of existing and new facilities that can occur, the requirements for pedestrian access, resource protection and various recreational improvements, including, for example, the Dune Boardwalk.

### **Special Places Goals, Policies and Programs**

**GOAL 4** - Conserve and enhance the beach, dune and natural areas in the City for the use and enjoyment of the public.

#### Policy 4.1

Maintain the beach and dune area for safe pedestrian access consistent with the Local Coastal Program and Open Space and Conservation Element.

#### Policy 4.2

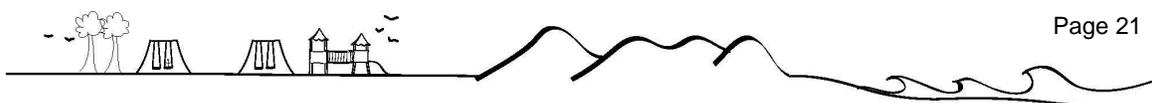
Seek to expand appropriate recreational activities and services for residents and visitors at the beach that are consistent with the Local Coastal Program and State Parks management objectives.

Program 4.2.1: Update the recreation goals, objectives and resource protection and management measures in the



Local Coastal Plan to provide activities such as beach swings, sand volleyball courts and bike rentals.

Program 4.2.2: Consider the effects of new uses and services in the beach and dune area on coastal resources in order to conserve and protect natural resources.



Policy 4.3

Create an urban trails plan and program in coordination with neighboring Cities.

Program 4.3.1: Explore opportunities to improve access to the El Camino Oaks Natural Area for the enjoyment of the public while preserving natural resources and minimizing intrusion on adjoining neighborhoods.

Program 4.3.2: Explore opportunities to create an urban trail link south from Grand Avenue through the dunes to Oceano in coordination with State Parks, the County and the federal De Anza Trail program.

Program 4.3.3: Consider the effects of urban trails on neighboring land uses, wildlife habitat and natural resources in order to minimize land use conflicts, native vegetation loss and wetland sedimentation.

**5 - Providing for Parks and Recreation**

**Decision Process**

Parks and recreation planning is one "special-interest" among many when a land development proposal is presented to public officials. Sometimes parks goals can be met and other times competing goals override park acquisition or expansion.

This chapter outlines a process for choosing the park and recreation facilities the community needs. This is designed to make certain that decisions are based upon an understanding of our current fiscal resources, input from those most effected, and the City's long-term goals.

**Parks and Recreation Commission**

The Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) advises the City Council and the Parks Manager in the policy, planning and development of the City's park system, including implementation of this Element. The PRC is made up of five members who are appointed by the City Council.

Periodically, the Parks and Recreation Manager will provide the Parks and Recreation Commission an update on the status of existing and any proposed significant new projects.

Whenever an individual, public official or group want significant new recreation facilities or a change in facility use, a benefactor proposes a gift, or a property of interest becomes available as part of a land use development proposal, the Parks Manager will process and coordinate such requests.

### **Parks and Recreation Project List**

The list of potential new parks and improvements to existing park lands included in Chapter 2 on Table 4 was developed with input from the Parks and Recreation Commission and City staff, as well as through public workshops, surveys and adopted plans and General Plan elements. This list represents the range of possibilities at the time of updating the Parks and Recreation Element and does not necessarily reflect any particular priority or ranking. Appendix D is the Needs Assessment conducted as part of this Update.

Pursuant to Parks and Recreation Element Policies 2.1 and 2.3, this list will be updated from time to time and reflected in the City's Five Year Capital Improvements Program.

## **6 - Funding**

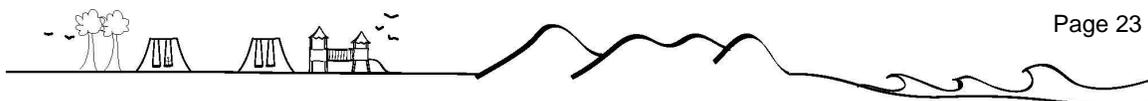
### **Funding Acquisition and Development of Parks**

In order for the City to expand the current park and recreation system, adequate and dependable funding sources will be needed. These funding sources must equally address acquisition, development and maintenance costs. This chapter identifies the existing funding sources for the City Parks Program and considers options for future funding.

The development of parks, recreation facilities and natural areas within City Parks has been funded by a variety of sources including:

#### **Grant and Park Bond funding**

Grants apportioned under the Park Bond Initiative have provided the City with over \$375,000 in capital funding over the past several years. These funds are used to upgrade or add new facilities at existing parks.



### **Development impact fees**

These fees have been a funding source for new or expanded parks. The City collects park development impact fees<sup>2</sup>. Since impact fees are assessed on new development, this source of revenue generation fluctuates with the rate of residential growth. In recent years, development impact fees have made possible the purchase of land to expand Ramona Park and make improvements at other parks.

### **Quimby Act Park Dedications and Park In Lieu fees**

The state Quimby Act makes it possible for cities to require that new residential subdivisions dedicate land for parks or provide a fee in lieu of a park land dedication. The City Municipal Code requires that five park acres per thousand in added population associated with new residential projects be dedicated with new subdivisions. Quimby Act park dedications have resulted in new park and open space land including the Natural Area preserve, Hero Park, Costa Bella Basin Park and the expansion of 16<sup>th</sup> Street Park. The Municipal Code also establishes formulas for determining the amount of fee required in lieu of park land dedication applied to residential subdivisions.

### **Donations**

Gifts have historically been an important source of park acquisition. Donations of land of parks have made possible the Ramona Garden Park, the future Cleaver Park and the South County Skate Park. Donations are an opportunity for individuals and organizations to give a lasting gift to the community.

### **Funding Recreation Programs**

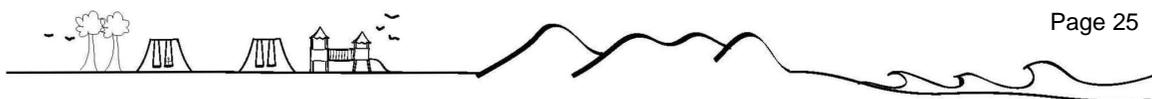
The Parks and Recreation Department generates about 57% of the necessary operational revenue for its recreation programs through user fees. The balance is offset by the General Fund.

### **Funding Maintenance**

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<sup>2</sup> Development Impact Fees and Park In-Lieu fees are intended to provide new facilities which offset the impact of new residential development on existing service levels. These fees are assessed on new residential development only. These fees may not be used for ongoing maintenance.

The maintenance of parks, recreation facilities and natural areas within City parks has been funded by a variety of sources including the following:



**General Fund**

The General Fund currently provides all the funds for maintenance of parks. The General Fund also is the primary funding source for nearly all City services, including such diverse programs as law enforcement, fire protection and street improvements. The competition for finite fiscal resources limits its potential to fund new facilities and ongoing maintenance.

**Grant Funds**

California Park Bond Acts have provided grants to counties, cities and special park districts that can be used for major maintenance projects. While such funds may not be used for daily maintenance needs, like mowing lawns and cleaning restrooms, they can provide funds for overdue major maintenance. Major maintenance projects such as paving deteriorated parking lots and renovating old restrooms can help to reduce daily maintenance expenses simply by improving the condition of park facilities. The availability of grants and bond funding fluctuates over time and is often subject to the vigor of the overall state economy.

The City's Parks and Recreation Department faces two funding challenges. The first is the high cost of funding new facilities. The second is funding ongoing maintenance of existing and new facilities.

**Funding new facilities**

Although in good years the Parks and Recreation Department accumulates annual revenues from grants and park in-lieu fees, due to the City's climbing property values these funds do not buy much. In today's real estate market, the potential land acquisition costs of typical 3-acre neighborhood park for land zoned manufacturing would be in the range of \$540,000; with an underlying zoning of single family residential or multifamily residential the cost for three acres could be \$3 million.

To develop that park with basic facilities would cost roughly \$500,000-\$700,000.<sup>3</sup> At a total cost of roughly \$1.0 to \$3.7 million, at best the City would be able to provide one new neighborhood park every 5 to 10 years. And this

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<sup>3</sup> Typical development could include children's play equipment, landscaping and irrigation, picnic tables, benches, and a basketball court.

would not address what upgrades at existing parks would need to be postponed in order to provide this new facility.

Appendix C lists the estimated costs to implement the parks program in the City over the next 10 to 15 year planning time frame. The projected costs serve as a basis to establish the appropriate level of park impact fees needed to fund improvements.

### **Funding maintenance of new facilities**

Currently the City's parks are very well maintained, a fact noted by public participants in the Parks and Recreation Element update process. As evidenced by the City's experience with the Skate Park facility, the scope and nature of maintaining new facilities can be hard to foresee. In times when the cost of maintaining existing facilities exceeds available funding, determining maintenance priorities can be difficult. Deferring maintenance during such times generally results in greater future costs to rehabilitate neglected parks.

Appendix E includes park maintenance standards for Grover Beach Parks.

### **Funding Goals, Policies and Programs**

**GOAL 5**-Use a variety of funding sources to expand, acquire, develop, and maintain the County's parks, recreation opportunities and natural areas.

#### Policy 5.1

Continue to list potential park projects in the City's Five Year Capital Improvement Project list.

Program 5.1.1: Maintain and update projected costs for new park and recreation facilities to provide a basis of reviewing and updating development impact fees collected by the City to be used to fund improvements.

#### Policy 5.2

Continue to require Quimby Act park dedications at the ratio of five acres of park land for each 1,000 in population added by proposed subdivisions, or payment of park in lieu fees as required by the City Municipal Code and park development impact fees for all new residential development.



Program 5.2.1: Periodically review and evaluate the adopted park dedication ratio and the park development impact fee to determine if changing circumstances warrant a change in the ratio and / or fees.

Policy 5.3

Develop a funding program that balances community need with available revenues.

Program 5.3.1: Explore funding arrangements and partnerships with the County, neighboring cities and the local school district to pool resources and maximize the overall public benefit for needed park and recreation facilities.

Program 5.3.2: Annually review the recreation program fees and costs to maintain an appropriate level of cost recovery through program and event user fees.

**GOAL 6**-Provide high quality park maintenance that is cost effective and environmentally sensitive.

Policy 6.1

In conjunction with accepting or developing a new park, estimate the long-term maintenance and operating costs associated with the proposed project

Policy 6.2

Ensure that the City receive a net benefit to the City park and recreation system when a proposed or existing park is impacted by private or quasi-public infrastructure and other easements.

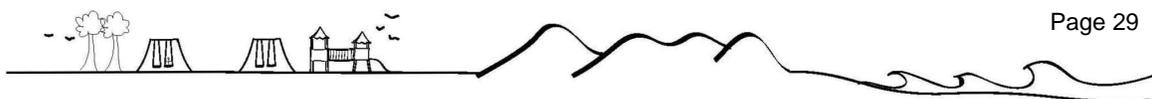
Program 6.2.1: In the development review process of projects with facilities proposed to meet park requirements should be reviewed by the Parks Manager and Community Development Director.

Policy 6.3

Use methods within City Park facilities that reduce maintenance costs.

Program 6.3.1: Evaluate and implement as feasible the use of drought tolerant landscaping, solar oriented structures, structures with natural lighting during daylight hours, and stainless steel fixtures which

having a longer lifetime and are more resistant to vandalism.



## 7 - Definitions

**Active Recreation.** Active recreation tends to involve facilities and usually larger groups of people. Some examples of active recreation include items such as community centers, a skate park, tennis courts, sports fields, and a swimming pool. (See also **Passive Recreation**).

**Coastal Access.** Coastal Access provides public access to and along California's coastline. Access ways are defined as vertical and lateral. Vertical access connects the closest public road to the coast. Lateral access provides access along the coastline, basically providing an area to walk along the beach, an example being the Dune Boardwalk Project

**Community Center.** Community centers or indoor sports facilities typically provide indoor area for recreation such basketball, fitness classes, crafts, games, and other similar recreation. While recreation sites are often limited to a building, parking and exterior landscaping, these sites may also include some outdoor recreation.

**Enterprise Fund.** Enterprise funds are established to finance and account for the operation and maintenance of facilities and services which are self-supporting by user charges with the use of tax revenues.

**General Fund.** The General Fund is the main operating fund of the City accounting for expenditures and revenues for citywide activities.

**General Fund Support.** General Fund Support is the amount of General Fund financial support to a given budget unit after revenues and other funding are subtracted from expenditures.

**Goals.** Goals are a general expression of community values, an ideal future result or condition related to the mission statement.

**Impact Fees.** In Grover Beach, Development impact fees are assessed on new residential development. These funds may be used to acquire, construct and rehabilitate parks.

**Linear Parks.** Linear parks are located along a corridor such as a river, creek, or a trail system. These parks tend to be narrow and long in configuration. Linear parks may link schools, parks or neighborhoods and may also serve a community's transportation needs. Often a linear park derives its shape by conforming to an

edge: of the coast, of a river or creek or an abandoned railroad right of way.

**Mini-Parks.** Also known as **Pocket Parks**, mini-parks are the smallest type of park. They may range in size from a small residential lot, in some cases as small as 6,000 square feet, up to 3 or more acres. In most cases, mini-parks are usually one acre or less. Because of their small size, mini-parks may be more passive in nature. Mini-parks serve a distinct sub-neighborhood.

**Mission Statement.** A Mission Statement is a broad statement which defines the agency's values, principles, and what matters most. Goals and policies should be guided by an agency's Mission Statement.

**Neighborhood Parks.** Neighborhood parks typically serve nearby populations consisting of one or more neighborhoods. According to National Recreation and Parks Association standards, a neighborhood park may range in size from roughly five to ten acres. In general, neighborhood parks are within walking distance from the people they are primarily intended to serve, i.e. one mile or less. Neighborhood parks usually include passive recreation as well as some active recreation. Typical facilities might include children's play equipment, a court game (such as basketball, tennis or handball), a turf area and individual picnic areas.

**Passive Recreation.** Passive recreation tends to be more tranquil and involve activities that are more individual or involve a small group. Examples of passive recreation include such items as a walking trail, individual picnic sites, nature appreciation, and birding. (See also **Active Recreation**).

**Pocket Parks.** See **Mini-Parks**.

**Policies.** Policies are statements that guide decision-making and imply a clear commitment. Policies are based on the information gathered and analyzed during the preparation of this Element.

**Quimby Fees.** Quimby fees are collected when new residential lots are created and can only be used to expand, acquire, rehabilitate, or develop community-serving parks

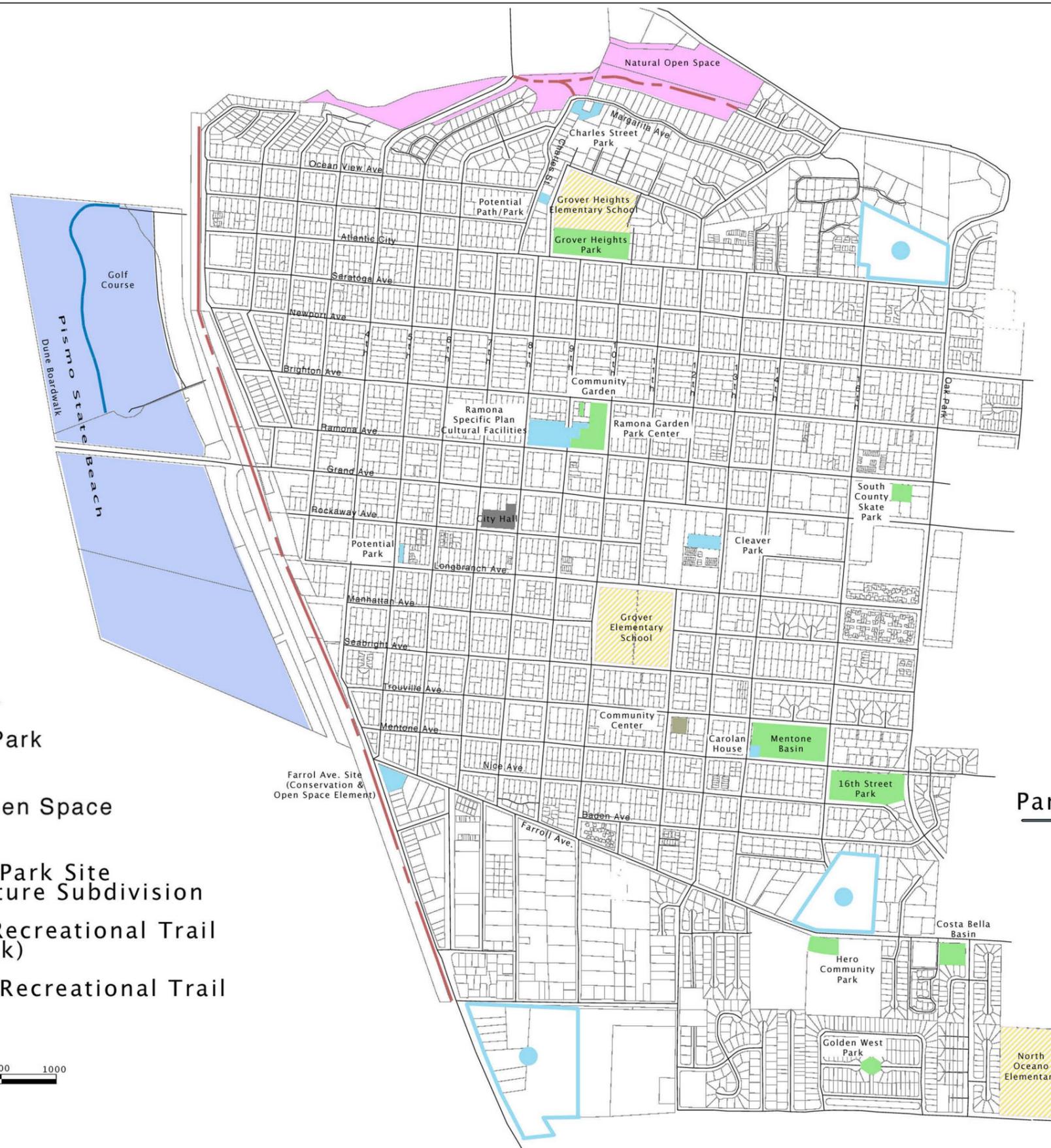
**Regional Parks.** The City of Grover Beach does not operate regional parks. San Luis Obispo County provides regional parks, for example, Biddle Regional Park east of Arroyo Grande serves the South County area.

**Appendix A**

**Map of Existing and Proposed Parks and Facilities**

**LEGEND:**

- Roads
- ▭ Parcels
- Property Type**
- ▭ Civic Center
- ▭ Potential Park
- ▭ Park
- ▭ Natural Open Space
- ▨ School
- ▭ Potential Park Site within Future Subdivision
- Existing Recreational Trail (Boardwalk)
- - - Potential Recreational Trail



City of Grover Beach  
Parks and Recreation Element Update

**Parks and Other Facilities**

**Appendix B**  
**Consolidated Goals, Policies and Programs**

**GOAL 1-** The City will strive to create quality recreation services and facilities that benefit and enrich the quality of life for Grover Beach residents.

Policy 1.1

The Grover Beach Parks and Recreation Department is committed to providing or facilitating quality recreational services, including programs, classes, special events, and facilities to all members of the community in a courteous and efficient manner.

**GOAL 2-** Provide park facilities with a range of recreational opportunities for all ages, as close as possible to where people live.

Policy 2.1

Continue to maximize the use of each park facility by creatively adapting the recreation opportunities available as community needs change and evolve.

Program 2.1.1: Create Master Plans for each facility and periodically review and update the plans and estimate implementation costs to respond to changing needs.

Program 2.1.2: When creating new, or updating existing, park and facility plans, consider the effects on surrounding neighborhoods for issues such as noise, light and glare, and traffic and parking in order to minimize impacts on neighborhood quality of life.

Policy 2.2

Seek to partner with the State, County, the neighboring Cities, the local school district and sports organizations as opportunities arise to pool resources to meet area-wide recreation needs.

Program 2.2.1: Identify projects that could benefit from a partnership arrangement such as a community pool and new or improved sports fields.

Program 2.2.2: Maintain open communication with the State, County, neighboring Cities and the local school district to establish mutual goals and timelines for achieving the goals.

Policy 2.3

Maintain a Park Capital Projects list that is regularly updated and prioritized with input from the community.

Program 2.3.1: Pursue acquisition and development of a three to five acre park in the southwest quadrant of the City.

Program 2.3.2: Pursue development of a Senior Center by determining the program of uses and building requirements, determining if a joint use facility is a viable option, and evaluating options for land acquisition.

Program 2.3.3: Conduct periodic surveys and / or public workshops to update, prioritize and adapt the ongoing project list for park improvements shown on Table 4.

**GOAL 3-** Strive to meet the recreational needs of all age groups.

Policy 3.1

Continue to provide a wide range of programs, classes, events and services that respond to the changing needs of the community.

Program 3.1.1: Annually track recreation program participation changes, review regional trends, and evaluate user response to the recreation programs and services in order to adapt and develop the City's yearly recreation program offerings.

Program 3.1.2: Continue to maintain active cooperative relationships with other recreation providers, such as the YMCA and other Cities.

**GOAL 4 -** Conserve and enhance the beach, dune and natural areas in the City for the use and enjoyment of the public.

Policy 4.1

Maintain the beach and dune area for safe pedestrian access consistent with the Local Coastal Program and Open Space and Conservation Element.

Policy 4.2

Seek to expand appropriate recreational activities and services for residents and visitors at the beach that are consistent with the Local Coastal Program and State Parks management objectives.

Program 4.2.1: Update the recreation goals, objectives and resource protection and management measures in the Local Coastal Plan to provide activities such as beach swings, sand volleyball courts and bike rentals.

Program 4.2.2: Consider the effects of new uses and services in the beach and dune area on coastal resources in order to conserve and protect natural resources.

Policy 4.3

Create an urban trails plan and program in coordination with neighboring Cities.

Program 4.3.1: Explore opportunities to improve access to the El Camino Oaks Natural Area for the enjoyment of the public while preserving natural resources and minimizing intrusion on adjoining neighborhoods.

Program 4.3.2: Explore opportunities to create an urban trail link south from Grand Avenue through the dunes to Oceano in coordination with State Parks, the County and the federal De Anza Trail program.

Program 4.3.3: Consider the effects of urban trails on neighboring land uses, wildlife habitat and natural resources in order to minimize land use conflicts, native vegetation loss and wetland sedimentation.

**GOAL 5-**Use a variety of funding sources to expand, acquire, develop, and maintain the County's parks, recreation opportunities and natural areas.

Policy 5.1

Continue to list potential park projects in the City's Five Year Capital Improvement Project list.

Program 5.1.1: Maintain and update projected costs for new park and recreation facilities to provide a basis of reviewing and updating development impact fees collected by the City to be used to fund improvements.

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Develop a funding program that balances community need with available revenues.

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**GOAL 6-**Provide high quality park maintenance that is cost effective and environmentally sensitive.

Policy 6.1

In conjunction with accepting or developing a new park, estimate the long-term maintenance and operating costs associated with the proposed project

Policy 6.2

Ensure that the City receive a net benefit to the City park and recreation system when a proposed or existing park is impacted by private or quasi-public infrastructure and other easements.

Program 6.2.1: In the development review process of projects with facilities proposed to meet park requirements should be reviewed by the Parks Manager and Community Development Director.

Policy 6.3

Use methods within City Park facilities that reduce maintenance costs.

Program 6.3.1: Evaluate and implement as feasible the use of drought tolerant landscaping, solar oriented structures, structures with natural lighting during daylight hours, and stainless steel fixtures which having a longer lifetime and are more resistant to vandalism.

# **Appendix C - Parks Standards and Projected Implementation Costs**

## Appendix C- Parks Standards and Projected Implementation Costs

The following basic park standards are adopted with the Parks and Recreation Element to provide a basis for determining projected costs to implement the Element policies and action items. The standards will establish the types of facilities that would normally be considered part of a new neighborhood park and their costs. As discussed in the Element, the final components of each existing and new park would be subject to public and Parks and Recreation Commission input.

The cost per acre of park development (not land cost) is higher for intensely developed, small parks than for a park of any size that has mostly open grass areas. As a result, a range in costs in 2004 dollars is presented (cost should be adjusted annually relative to inflation):

- Neighborhood Park site development cost (acquisition not included):  
\$150,000 to \$300,000 per acre
  
- Neighborhood park components and cost for a typical 3 acre park:
  - Open grass play area- 1 to 1.5 acres  
Cost: \$3.00 /sf
  - Active grass sports field- 1 acre  
Cost: \$4.50 /sf
  - Parking 10 to 20 spaces in addition to on street frontage  
Cost: \$4.00 /sf
  - Restroom  
Cost: \$175 to \$200 /sf
  - Group barbecue shaded pavilion area 1,000 to 3,000 s.f.  
Cost: \$25 /sf
  - Individual picnic areas 5 to 10 tables and barbecues (on conc.pad)  
Cost: \$1,500 each
  - Childrens Play area- 3,000 to 6,000 square feet (accessible mat)  
Cost: \$30 to \$50 /sf
  - Benches  
Cost: \$1,000 each
  - Paths and walks (concrete)  
Cost: \$4.00 /sf
  - Play Courts 2,500 to 10,000 s.f  
Cost: \$6.00 /sf
  - Landscaped buffers and planters 8,000 to 12,000 s.f  
Cost: \$2.50/ sf

## Projected Costs for the Potential Parks and Facilities

The following projected costs for park and facility construction are included in the Parks and Recreation Element to provide a starting point for establishing a five-year parks capital projects list and also a basis to evaluate the level of development impact fee required to provide park facilities in the community.

- Cleaver Park: 0.84 acres. Passive park costs of \$150,000 per acre equals \$126,000. Active facility such as community pool facility with associated parking and hardscape cost: \$1.0 to \$1.2 million
- El Camino Oaks Trail / Charles Street Park: program includes permitting, mitigation, trail construction at 4 to 6 foot width, surfaced, signage, parking. Cost: \$200,000 to \$300,000.
- Sports Field Improvement Projects at Schools: Three schools with play field turf and irrigation renovation, backstop and bleacher improvements. Cost per field: \$100,00 to \$200,000.
- New Sports Fields: Minimum five acre park with sports field emphasis, small playground area, restroom, parking for minimum 75 cars. Cost: \$1,500,000.
- Improvements to Mentone Basin: Initial renovation of fields. Cost: \$150,000. Annual maintenance renovation after storm season cost: \$15,000 to \$25,000.
- Community Pool: Depending on size and range of facilities cost would range from \$1.0 million to \$1.4 million (land cost not included).
- Senior Center: Depending on size and site development costs (not land) cost is \$150 to \$200 per square foot.
- Charles Street Path: approximately 10,000 sf landscaped with path surface and fencing. Cost: \$15,000.
- 6<sup>th</sup> and Longbranch Property: Passive park improvements. Cost: \$20,000 to \$50,000.
- Carolan House re-use or removal: Depending on final determination of use costs could range from \$50,000 for renovation and adaptive use to \$100,000 for removal and development of some other recreation use such as a court or picnic area.

**Appendix D**  
**Needs Assessment**

## **Needs Assessment Overview and Workshop Summary**

### **Overview**

- At the time of the 1991 Parks and Recreation Element, the City had 10.51 acres of parks and 28.5 acres of dedicated natural open space. Since then the City has added 3.68 acres of parks all in the southeast quadrant of the City, fulfilling specific parks and neighborhood land use objectives. The City also completed the dune boardwalk.
- One facility unforeseen in 1989 but completed in 1999 is the South County Skate Park.
- The City's parks and recreation facilities, with few exceptions, are intensively used and well maintained.
- The City offers a wide variety of recreation programs and services.
- By most park standards the City does not have enough park land for its population. All of the parks are under five acres in size and would be commonly termed mini-parks, yet they offer a wide range of recreation opportunities and meet many needs.
- Arroyo Grande continues to provide the majority of fields for organized sports, serving Grover Beach and Oceano residents. Adult and youth sports organizations anticipate growth over the next ten years, with more fields needed now. Oceano continues to lack parks and Oceano residents use Grover Beach parks.
- Depending largely on the ultimate regional provision for affordable housing over the next ten years, school age children are expected to slightly decrease and senior populations increase over that period.

### **Public Workshops and User Survey**

Two public workshops were held to get input from residents. There was consensus that the City should seek to provide more sports fields and develop a community or regional pool. These facilities would serve both youth and adults.

There was also consensus that more recreation activities should be provided for seniors. Examples included walking paths and a senior center.

Development of the Ramona Specific plan civic / community facilities was also viewed as important. These facilities would serve all ages and include provision for public art.

A questionnaire survey was undertaken in July at several parks and recreation facilities in the City and at the local supermarket. The initial results correspond generally to the types of comments and ideas received in the workshops.

## Demographic / Needs Analysis Summary

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### School Age Children

The following is summarized from the Lucia Mar Unified School District's 2004 Enrollment Projection Report.

- Over the next ten years district wide enrollment is projected to decrease by roughly 300 students. The decrease will occur in the 5 Cities area, while Nipomo is projected to have an increase in students.
- Grover Beach student population will decrease by 130 (12%) and Oceano by 17 (2%).
- Underlying factors:

Changes in Existing housing have been toward "gentrification", i.e. increased costs in Grover and Oceano. This affects the introduction of young kids (decrease) while upper income single family type housing is projected to increase in student generation by 21%, mostly with older children.

Recent new housing projects approved / under construction are mostly single family detached with a modest student generation rate of 29/100 homes. By contrast, Peoples Self Help Housing in Nipomo generated 174 students per 100 homes. The lack of affordable housing is tending to depress student generation rates.

Projected new housing is for 3,400 homes in the district, which over ten years is 340 units annually down from 400 / year from 1999 to 2002. The decrease is largely due to "build out" of large planned expansion areas in the 5 Cities area.

The availability of Affordable Housing over the next ten years will affect the numbers and ages of new children. Many projects are paying affordable housing in-lieu fees rather than constructing affordable units. Currently the trend for housing built with these funds is toward senior housing.

### Conclusion

It is generally recognized that the region is experiencing a demographic shift towards older residents, however, the LMUSD enrollment projections may not take fully into account the direction the Grover Beach Visioning workshops have taken in advance of the upcoming Land Use Element update, which is toward intensification of certain areas with live / work zoning, e.g. apartments on second and third stories above office/ commercial. School age children either could decrease or increase depending largely on the extent of the regional provision for affordable housing over the next ten years.

In either case, the numbers of adults, and in particular seniors, will increase. These age groups have somewhat different recreation needs than children, but are not necessarily mutually exclusive from children's needs.

## Sports Organizations- Adult and Youth

Letters and calls were made to all the regional organized sports providers. The following summarizes the needs of the responding major organizations.

### American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) - 1,500 participants 5 Cities area

- Need an additional large field
- Lack a tournament complex
- Participation is increasing
- Uses all LMUSD schools for practice / play in addition to Soto Sports complex (AG) and 16<sup>th</sup> St Park (Grover)
- Requests that Mentone Basin field be maintained for use, this field is lighted but not maintained for optimal use.
- National Soccer foundation has grant funds available for field improvement.

### Arroyo Grande Valley Little League - 375 participants, AG

- Uses three Soto Complex fields (AG) for majors/minors game play, schools for practice and younger kids play.
- Needs one more playing field.

### Five Cities Youth Football - 150 players, 40 cheerleaders, LMUSD boundary

- Uses Pilg and Campbell fields at Soto Complex (AG). These fields are too small for spectators.
- Does not use LMUSD
- Needs two more football size fields.

### Arroyo Grande Babe Ruth Baseball - 150 participants, LMUSD boundary

- Uses a single field at Soto Sports Complex (AG). Needs another baseball field

### Arroyo Grande Adult Softball and Baseball – 560 Spring/ 840 summer participants

- Along with girls softball, this league competes for fields with all the above organizations. Needs one more field for current demand.

### Beach Cities Little League – 220 participants. Pismo, Grover, Oceano

- Uses two fields in Pismo Beach complex, school fields

### Five Cities Girls Softball – all cities

- Uses Soto Sports Complex in AG, school fields

## Conclusion

Organized sports will likely grow, especially in adult leagues, over ten years. Present needs for youth leagues are for one standard baseball field and two full size soccer/football fields. Adult league needs appear to be for at least two more softball fields.

**Appendix E**  
**Maintenance Standards**

# PARK MAINTENANCE STANDARDS



A cooperative project of  
the American Park and Recreation Society  
and  
the National Society for Park Resources,  
professional branches of  
the National Recreation and Park Association.

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Development of a standard maintenance classification system has been extremely difficult because there have been problems devising a system comprehensive enough to apply to the wide variety of park systems in existence. In order to be of help in setting up a standard approach at the local level, each maintenance Mode has 14 elements of consideration. There may be additional segments within these elements to make up the total maintenance cost program. Even the choice of nomenclature has avoided the term "class" so that less intense maintenance approaches avoid possible name stigma that might come to mind when "Class 2" or "Class 8" is used. Mode is meant to mean "the way of" maintenance ranging from the most intensive to the least intensive. Some park systems may have parks that match only one or two of the defined modes. Some systems may have maintenance approaches that almost match the system but leave one or two elements out. An exact match is not necessary, but this system is intended to give a wide enough range of options that a general match-up can be achieved. Some park departments may even designate a part of a park at one mode and the rest of the park as another mode. Costs per unit for maintenance can vary from locality to locality because of labor rates, costs of materials, extent of design, length of season, moisture availability, transportation costs and intensity of public use. It should be possible, however, to establish a local maintenance cost standard for each mode and chart those unit costs year by year. It should also be possible to come up with a maintenance cost forecast for new developments by assigning the proper mode to the new development. At higher maintenance modes it is assumed that the administering agencies will have adequate time and properly trained personnel to accomplish the quality that should accompany the quantity of work done.

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# Mode I

State of the art maintenance applied to a high quality diverse landscape. Usually associated with high traffic urban areas such as public squares, malls, governmental grounds or high visitation parks.

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1. *Turf care* — Grass height maintained according to species and variety of grass. Mowed at least once every five working days but may be as often as once every three working days. Aeration as required, not less than four times per year. Reseeding or sodding as needed. Weed control should be practiced so that no more than one percent of the surface has weeds present.

2. *Fertilizer* — Adequate fertilization applied to plant species according to their optimum requirements. Turf species should follow the chart on page 00 for recommended rates. Application rates and times should ensure an even supply of nutrients for the entire year. Nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium percentages should follow local recommendations from your County Extension Service. Trees, shrubs and flowers should be fertilized according to their individual requirements of nutrients for optimum growth. Unusually long or short growing seasons may modify the chart slightly.

3. *Irrigation* — Sprinkler irrigated. Electric automatic commonly used. Some manual systems could be considered adequate under plentiful rainfall circumstances and adequate staffing. Frequency of use follows rainfall, temperature, seasonal length and demands of plant material.

4. *Litter control* — Minimum of once per day, 7 days per week. Extremely high visitation may increase the frequency. Receptacles should be plentiful enough to hold all trash generated between servicing without normally overflowing.

5. *Pruning* — Frequency dictated primarily by species and variety of trees and shrubs. Length of growing season and design concept also a controlling factor as are clipped hedges versus natural style. Timing usually scheduled to coincide with low demand periods or to take advantage of special growing characteristics such as low demand periods or to take advantage of special growing characteristics such as pruning after flowering.

6. *Disease and Insect Control* — Control program may use any of three philosophies: 1.) Pre-

ventative; a scheduled chemical or cultural program designed to prevent significant damage. 2.) Corrective; application of chemical or mechanical controls designed to eliminate observed problems. 3.) Integrated pest management; withholding any controls until such time as pests demonstrate damage to plant materials or become a demonstrated irritant in the case of flies, mosquitoes, gnats, etc. At this maintenance level the controlling objective is to not have the public notice any problems. It is anticipated at Mode I that problems will either be prevented or observed at a very early stage and corrected immediately.

7. *Snow removal* — Snow removal starts the same day as accumulations of ½ inch are present. At no time will snow be permitted to cover transportation or parking surfaces longer than noon of the day after the snow stops. Applications of snow melting compound and/or gravel are appropriate to reduce the danger of injury due to falls.

8. *Lighting* — Maintenance should preserve the original design. Damaged systems should be repaired as quickly as they are discovered. Bulb replacement should be done during the first working day after the outage is reported.

9. *Surfaces* — Sweeping, cleaning and washing of surfaces needs to be done so that at no time does an accumulation of sand, dirt and leaves distract from the looks or safety of the area. Repainting or restaining of structures should occur when weather or wear deteriorate the appearance of the covering. Wood surfaces requiring oiling should be done a minimum of four times per year. Stains to surfaces should be taken off within five working days. Graffiti should be washed off or painted over the next working day after application.

10. *Repairs* — Repairs to all elements of the design should be done immediately upon discovery provided replacement parts and technicians are available to accomplish the job. When disruption to the public might be major and the repair not critical, repairs may be postponed to a time period which is least disruptive.

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11. *Inspection* — Inspections of this area should be done daily by a member of staff.

12. *Floral plantings* — Normally extensive or unusual floral plantings are part of the design. These may include ground level beds, planters or hanging baskets. Often multiple plantings are scheduled, usually at least two blooming cycles per year. Some designs may call for a more frequent rotation of bloom. Maximum care of watering, fertilizing, disease control, disbudding and weeding is necessary. Weeding flowers and shrubs is done a minimum of once per week. The desired standard is essentially weed free.

13. *Rest rooms* — Not always a part of the design but where required will normally receive no less than once per day servicing. Especially high traffic areas may require multiple servicing or a person assigned as attendant.

14. *Special features* — Features such as fountains, drinking fountains, sculpture, speaker systems, structural art, flag poles or parking and crowd control devices may be part of the integral design. Maintenance requirements can vary drastically but for this mode it should be of the highest possible order.

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# Mode II

High level maintenance—associated with well developed park areas with reasonably high visitation.

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1. *Turf care* — Grass cut once every five working days. Aeration as required but not less than two times per year. Reseeding or sodding when bare spots are present. Weed control practiced when weeds present visible problem or when weeds represent 5 percent of the turf surface. Some pre-emergent products may be utilized at this level.

2. *Fertilizer* — Adequate fertilizer level to ensure that all plant materials are healthy and growing vigorously. Amounts depend on species, length of growing season, soils and rainfall. Rates should correspond to the lowest recommended rates shown on the chart on page 14. Distribution should ensure an even supply of nutrients for the entire year. Nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium percentage should follow local recommendations from the County Extension Service. Trees, shrubs and flowers should receive fertilizer levels to ensure optimum growth.

3. *Irrigation* — Some type of irrigation system available. Frequency of use follows rainfall, temperature, seasonal length, and demands of plant material.

4. *Litter control* — Minimum of once per day, five days a week. Off-site movement of trash dependent on size of containers and use by the public. High use may dictate once per day cleaning or more. Containers are serviced.

5. *Pruning* — Usually done at least once per season unless species planted dictate more frequent attention. Sculptured hedges or high growth species may dictate a more frequent requirement than most trees and shrubs in natural growth style plantings.

6. *Diseases and disease control* — Usually done when disease or insects are inflicting noticeable damage, reducing vigor of plant materials or could be considered a bother to the public. Some

preventative measures may be utilized such as systemic chemical treatments. Cultural prevention of disease problems can reduce time spent in this category. Some minor problems may be tolerated at this level.

7. *Snow removal* — Snow removed by noon the day following snowfall. Gravel or snow melt may be utilized to reduce ice accumulation.

8. *Lighting* — Replacement or repair of fixtures when observed or reported as not working.

9. *Surfaces* — Should be cleaned, repaired, repainted or replaced when appearance has noticeably deteriorated.

10. *Repairs* — Should be done whenever safety, function, or bad appearance is in question.

11. *Inspection* — Inspection by some staff member at least once a day when regular staff is scheduled.

12. *Floral planting* — Some sort of floral plantings present. Normally no more complex than two rotations of bloom per year. Care cycle usually at least once per week except watering may be more frequent. Health and vigor dictate cycle of fertilization and disease control. Beds essentially kept weed free.

13. *Rest rooms* — When present should be maintained at least once per day as long as they are open to public use. High use may dictate two servicings or more per day. Servicing period should ensure an adequate supply of paper and that rest rooms are reasonably clean and free from bad odors.

14. *Special features* — Should be maintained for safety, function and high quality appearance as per established design.

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# Mode III

Moderate level maintenance—associated with locations with moderate to low levels of development, moderate to low levels of visitation or with agencies that because of budget restrictions can't afford a higher intensity of maintenance.

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1. *Turf care* — Cut once every 10 working days. Normally not aerated unless turf quality indicates a need or in anticipation of an application of fertilizer. Reseeding or resodding done only when major bare spots appear. Weed control measures normally used when 50 percent of small areas is weed infested or general turf quality low in 15 percent or more of the surface area.

2. *Fertilizer* — Applied only when turf vigor seems to be low. Low level application done on a once per year basis. Rate suggested is one-half the level recommended on page 14 for species and variety.

3. *Irrigation* — Dependent on climate. Rainfall locations above 25 inches a year usually rely on natural rainfall with the possible addition of portable irrigation during periods of drought. Dry climates below 25 inches normally have some form of supplemental irrigation. When irrigation is automatic a demand schedule is programmed. Where manual servicing is required two to three times per week operation would be the norm.

4. *Litter control* — Minimum service of two to three times per week. High use may dictate higher levels during warm season.

5. *Pruning* — When required for health or reasonable appearance. With most tree and shrub species this would not be more frequent than once every two or three years.

6. *Disease and Insect Control* — Done only on epidemic or serious complaint basis. Control measures may be put into effect when the health or survival of the plant material is threatened or where public's comfort is concerned.

7. *Snow removal* — Snow removal done based on local law requirements but generally accomplished by the day following snowfall. Some crosswalks or surfaces may not be cleared at all.

8. *Lighting* — Replacement or repair of fixtures when report filed or when noticed by employees.

9. *Surfaces* — Cleaned on complaint basis. Repaired or replaced as budget allows.

10. *Repairs* — Should be done whenever safety or function is in question.

11. *Inspections* — Once per week.

12. *Floral planting* — Only perennials or flowering trees or shrubs.

13. *Rest rooms* — When present, serviced minimum of 5 times per week. Seldom more than once each day.

14. *Special features* — Minimum allowable maintenance for features present with function and safety in mind.

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## Mode IV

Moderately low level—usually associated with low level of development, low visitation, undeveloped areas or remote parks.

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1. *Turf care* — Low frequency mowing schedule based on species. Low growing grasses may not be mowed. High grasses may receive periodic mowing to aid public use or reduce fire danger. Weed control limited to legal requirements of noxious weeds.

2. *Fertilizer* — Not fertilized.

3. *Irrigation* — No irrigation.

4. *Litter control* — Once per week or less. Complaint may increase level above one servicing.

5. *Pruning* — No regular trimming. Safety or damage from weather may dictate actual work schedule.

6. *Disease and Insect Control* — None except where epidemic and epidemic condition threatens resource or public.

7. *Snow removal* — None except where major access ways or active parking areas dictate the need for removal.

8. *Lighting* — Replacement on complaint or employee discovery.

9. *Surfaces* — Replaced or repaired when safety is a concern and when budget is available.

10. *Repairs* — Should be done when safety or function is in question.

11. *Inspections* — Once per month.

12. *Floral plantings* — None, may have wild-flowers, perennials, flowering trees or shrubs in place.

13. *Rest rooms* — When present, five times per week.

14. *Special features* — Minimum maintenance to allow safe use.

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## Mode V

High visitation natural areas—usually associated with large urban or regional parks. Size and user frequency may dictate resident maintenance staff. Road, pathway or trail systems relatively well developed. Other facilities at strategic locations such as entries, trail heads, building complexes and parking lots.

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1. *Turf care* — Normally not mowed but grassed parking lots, approaches to buildings or road shoulders, may be cut to reduce fire danger. Weed control on noxious weeds.

2. *Fertilizer* — None.

3. *Irrigation* — None.

4. *Litter control* — Based on visitation, may be more than once per day if crowds dictate that level.

5. *Pruning* — Only done for safety.

6. *Insect and Disease Control* — Done only to ensure safety or when problem seriously discourages public use.

7. *Snow removal* — One day service on roads and parking areas.

8. *Lighting* — Replaced on complaint or when noticed by employees.

9. *Surfaces* — Cleaned on complaint. Repaired or replaced when budget will permit.

10. *Repairs* — Done when safety or function impaired. Should have same year service on poor appearance.

11. *Inspection* — Once per day when staff is available.

12. *Floral planting* — None introduced except at special locations such as interpretive buildings, headquarters, etc. Once per week service on these designs. Flowering trees and shrubs, wildflowers, present but demand no regular maintenance.

13. *Rest rooms* — Frequency geared to visitor level. Once a day is the common routine but for some locations and reasons frequency may be more often.

~~14.~~ *Special features* — Repaired whenever safety or function are a concern. Appearance corrected in the current budget year.

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# Mode VI

Minimum maintenance level—low visitation natural area or large urban parks that are undeveloped.

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1. *Turf areas* — Not mowed. Weed control only if legal requirements demand it.
2. *Fertilizer* — Not fertilized.
3. *Irrigation* — No irrigation.
4. *Litter control* — On demand or complaint basis.
5. *Pruning* — No pruning unless safety is involved.
6. *Disease insect control* — No control except in epidemic or safety situations.
7. *Snow removal* — Snow removal only on strategic roads and parking lots. Accomplished within two days after snow stops.
8. *Lighting* — Replacement on complaint basis.
9. *Surfaces* — Serviced when safety is consideration.
10. *Repairs* — Should be done when safety or function is in question.
11. *Inspection* — Once per month.
12. *Floral plantings* — None.
13. *Rest rooms* — Service based on need.
14. *Special features* — Service based on lowest acceptable frequency for feature. Safety and function interruption a concern when either seem significant.



## PARK ELEMENT UPDATE - MAINTENANCE SECTION

### Factors Relating To Maintenance Of Park Facilities

The ability to provide and maintain parks at a quality level is determined by a wide variety of factors. These factors together, determine the ease and level of on-going maintenance. Quality park maintenance comes about by careful consideration of all the following factors:

#### The Design

Is care taken during the design process to include maintenance concerns? Are maintenance professionals asked for input? Is the facility designed to promote a high level of maintenance, ease of maintenance and low-cost in maintenance concerns?

#### Installation of the Facility

Were competent workers used for installation? Were the plans and specifications adhered to during the installation? Were on-site improvements made to enhance ease of maintenance?

#### Inspection

Were those inspecting the facilities cognizant of maintenance concerns? Were they competent in their ability to make decisions regarding maintenance? During the inspection time were Parks and Recreation maintenance experts brought in on the final inspections of the site to insure improved on-going maintenance?

#### Lack of On-going Maintenance

Facilities that have periodic lack or low levels of maintenance will cause on-going maintenance concerns. Are things not replaced when they need to be? Are minor repairs not made thus causing major difficulties in the future?

Park and Recreation Element  
Appendix E cont'd

Money

Is there enough money available to provide for on-going necessary maintenance and care of the facility?

Water

Are all irrigation systems operational, efficient, (i.e., time clock oriented)? Is there adequate water available to maintain the facility at an optimum level?

Personnel

Ensure the people working at the sites are capable and trained in proper maintenance techniques. Have enough personnel available to provide on-going maintenance. Staff need to be consistent enough so substantial training can take place and improvements can be made in maintenance. Encourage staff to be helpful and cooperative in providing the best possible service. Also, all safety concerns should be met.

Vandalism

This is a key factor in the maintenance spectrum. Vandalism causes two ~~two~~ ~~success~~ problems: 1) it is extremely costly and time consuming to repair vandalism and 2) on-going misuse and vandalism is discouraging to park workers.

Intensity of Recreational Use

As facilities become more popular, over use can cause increased maintenance concerns and also reduce the amount of time available for on-going maintenance.