

San Mateo County Department of Parks



STRATEGIC PLAN

MARCH 2008

OVERVIEW

Introduction

San Mateo County is a unique place unlike any other in the world. It is a 780 square mile peninsula bounded on the west by the Pacific Ocean and on the east by San Francisco Bay. This peninsula is at the northern tip of the Santa Cruz Mountains and encompasses a tremendous range of wondrous natural resources amid one of the nation's densest population centers. San Mateo County is graced by a variety of land forms from coastal headlands, redwood forests, farm and ranch lands, and creeks and streams on the west to oak woodlands and saltwater bay marshes surrounding the cities, and the last remaining native scrub and grasslands along the slopes of San Bruno Mountain on the east. From the San Francisco Bay to the Pacific Ocean San Mateo County and its parks are home to many rare and/or endangered species such as the salt-marsh harvest mouse, San Bruno elfin butterfly, Coho salmon, red legged frog, endangered serpentine plants, marbled murrelet, and magnificent steelhead trout among others.

No less diverse is our human population of 740,000. Descendents of immigrants from every country of the world live and work beside new immigrants to weave a cultural tapestry that reflects a broad facet of civilization and yet is uniquely American in its character. The County's moderate weather and burgeoning economy attracts business and labor from all fields from agriculture to biotechnology, making the County one of the most prosperous in the nation. Yet the quality of life is seldom decided on economics alone, but requires places for people to enjoy their prosperity and hard work in ways that enrich their spirit, restore their mind and body, while enhancing their sense of accomplishment and worthiness.

San Mateo County Parks Department is a 84-year-old regional park system that manages 15,680 acres of lands in San Mateo County. There are 17 parks within the system that include some of the most heavily used urban parks and some of the most valuable and unique natural resources in the Bay Area.

Vision for San Mateo County

Through an extensive public process, San Mateo County developed a report in 2001 titled Shared Vision 2010. The report sets out a vision that values people, environments and communities, the quality of life necessary for prosperity, and the ability to work in partnership. The 10 commitments and 25 goals in that ambitious plan will bring together often competing and differing communities to solve the many issues that challenge the County and impact the quality of life of its residents. The Parks Department actively supports the commitments and goals in Shared Vision 2010 and many items in this Strategic Plan contribute to fulfilling the vision, especially:

- Goal 2** - civic engagement including volunteerism, public service, charitable giving and encouraging public participation in public discussions of important issues
- Goal 6** – children grow up healthy in safe and supportive homes and neighborhoods
- Goal 13** – fixing the boundary between open space and development to protect the quality of the natural environment
- Goal 14** – important resources are preserved and enhanced through environmental stewardship
- Goal 15** – residents have access to nearby green space such as parks and recreational opportunities
- Goal 21** – County employees understand, support and integrate the County goals and vision into their delivery of service

San Mateo County Parks Department

San Mateo County Parks Department strives to enhance the quality of life of San Francisco Bay Area residents while protecting and enhancing the County's unique and treasured natural resources. The County Parks are places for people to enrich their spirit, restore their mind and body and learn about our natural environment.

Our Vision:

Through stewardship, the San Mateo County Parks Department preserves our County's natural and cultural treasures, and provides safe, accessible parks, recreation and learning opportunities to enhance the community's quality of life.

Our Vision includes:

- *Enhancing our stewardship of the natural resources by developing science based resources management programs to protect, revitalize and restore the ecosystems indigenous to our parklands.*
- *Providing interpretive and educational programs that instill knowledge, appreciation and stewardship for our rich and diverse natural, historical, and cultural resources.*
- *Providing a unique system of natural parks and programs, a broad spectrum of recreational facilities and opportunities that accommodate people of all abilities, varying needs, and unique interests.*
- *Creating living partnerships with park users and the community to realize our vision and ensure that all County residents and decision-makers participate in and support the preservation and enhancement of San Mateo County parklands.*

For an organization to implement and follow its vision, it must have a plan, the skills and the willingness to implement the plan. This strategic plan communicates to staff, other organizations, and the public how the Department will implement the vision. The plan outlines the actions and the expected outcomes of those actions, and how staff and others can be involved in the process.

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CHAPTER I - TRENDS

In 2005, the California Department of Parks and Recreation produced a report 'Park and Recreation Trends in California 2005'. Understanding these most likely directions of change will enable the Department to position services and respond more quickly to changes in demand. Several of the major trends highlighted in the report are:

Population Changes in the size and composition of California's population, more than anything else, will drive the impacts on the delivery of park and recreation services in the coming years. If California continues to add nearly 500,000 persons each year, by 2012, the population could easily exceed 40 million. The 50-million mark will be passed sometime between 2030 and 2040 if current growth rates persist.

Demographics California's population is becoming more culturally and racially diverse. The proportions of California's ethnic and racial groups will continue to change through 2020 and beyond. California's Hispanic population is projected to comprise 43% of the state's population by 2030.⁶ Between 2000 and 2020, population increases are projected for several racial and ethnic groups:

California's senior population will double by 2020. California's senior population, those 60 and older, will increase by 112% during the period between 1990 and 2020. More than half of California's counties, many in central and southern California, will see their senior populations double. The oldest, those 85 and older, will increase at an even faster rate.

California's baby boomers are approaching retirement age. This, the largest generation ever, is fast approaching its golden years with an appetite for adventure and an aversion to slowing down. For California boomers, the outdoors has been an important extension of the California lifestyle, and they are likely to carry this attitude forward into retirement. The older portion of the baby boom is anticipating a satisfying and experience-filled leisure lifestyle.

California's 18–40 year-old young adults are creating new ways to experience the great outdoors. Into extreme sports and adventure recreation, these young adults are constantly on the move and looking for the next source of excitement. They came of age during the digital revolution and during a period of rapid expansion of muscle-powered outdoor recreation (e.g., mountain biking, kayaking). Attuned to the rapid speed of change, many of their leisure choices involve technology.

California's K–12 children will accelerate the rate of change. Almost 40% of California's households include children under the age of 18. The annual number of incoming school-aged children has remained fairly steady, except for an increase in the early 1990s many are sedentary or solitary in nature. For the social and health-related benefits of outdoor recreation to accrue for these generations of children and youth, access to outdoor recreation must be available, modeled and encouraged.

Other major trends that will influence the future in San Mateo County include:

1. The Changing California Economy
2. Community Economic Vitality and other Economic Impacts
3. Demographic, Social and Cultural Trends
4. Political and Legislative Trends
5. The Changing Technology and Communications
6. America's Use of Leisure Time

1. Community and Economic Vitality: Several sources link the importance of parks, recreation and open spaces to the economic vitality of areas. Silicon Valley Joint Venture’s survey directly links the area’s open spaces and the opportunities they provide with the business community’s ability to attract and retain qualified employees and their employers. The Outdoor Recreation survey and the Trends Analysis conducted for California Parks and Recreation Society both note the need to recognize the value of parks, recreation and open spaces to California’s booming tourism and hospitality industry. The Outdoor Recreation survey found that 65% of the respondents thought promotion of attractions to tourists as well as residents was a way of generating more operating and maintenance funds for park systems.

2. Demographic, Social and Cultural Trends:

a. **Demographics:** San Mateo County can anticipate a 28% increase in population in the next 40 years. It is also anticipated the County will see an increasing percentage of its population in the 60 and over age groups (from 16% in 2000 to 27% in 2040) as we see the effects of the aging of the Baby Boomer generation. Both of these demographic shifts have implications for the park and recreation field and for San Mateo County Parks in particular. It is also projected that the County will grow increasingly diverse ethnically and that the demographics will vary widely by location within the County.

b. **Social:** Interest in health and wellness will be of growing importance as well as a predicted interest in life-long learning. Income inequality (the disparity between the “haves and the have nots”) will be a growing factor in our society. Interest in the environment and environmental stewardship is also expected to increase.

c. **Cultural:** Cultural diversity is already a tremendous attraction in the Bay Area. However, the growing diversity of the area’s residents does present some interesting challenges for parks and recreation providers. The Outdoor Recreation survey shows a variety of barriers to the use of park facilities (particularly more natural areas) by diverse populations. They include: income levels, length of time in US, lack of familiarity with resources/facilities available, lack of transportation, lack of free time, perceived levels of discrimination and different needs for park use (Hispanic population in particular states a preference for extended family gatherings in parks).

3. America’s Use of Leisure Time: The speeding up of America’s lifestyle is placing a new emphasis on the quality of leisure time activities. Park users are concerned about their “leisure productivity”. Lack of leisure time for low-income earners creates barriers to park use, impacts the ability to pay fees and may create transportation impediments. Increasing number of “couch potatoes” may affect park usage and also indicates the need to market the health benefits and availability of fitness activities.

CHAPTER II - PLANNING

A. Strategic Planning

Goal: Make planning an integral part of San Mateo County Parks Department's guiding method of operation.

Recommended Action:

1. Develop a 5-year Strategic Plan and update the plan every two years
2. Link the plan to the County's visioning process
3. Communicate the contents of the plan to every employee
4. Develop annual plans and link to the goals of the Department's Strategic Plan

B. Performance Standards

Goal: Best Management Practices are the measurement standard for evaluating current programs and developing new ones.

Recommended Action:

1. Identify Best Management Practices
2. Annually evaluate San Mateo County Parks for quality and level of services

C. Capital Expenditure Plan

Goal: Develop Capital Expenditure Plans and provide for annual updates.

Recommended Action:

1. Develop and update annually a comprehensive, prioritized capital projects and programs list that includes accurate cost estimates
2. Develop 1 and 3 year interim prioritized capital projects lists and use to direct the Department's fundraising and implementation resources
3. Establish a Life Cycle Replacement Plan for facilities and equipment
4. Develop a 10-year capital improvement plan for the Marina and update annually

D. Acquisitions

Goal: Develop an Acquisition and Easement Plan.

Recommended Action:

1. Maintain a comprehensive Acquisition Plan that includes a process to identify properties for parkland, trails or other facilities
2. Develop strategies to collaborate with land trusts and acquisition agencies to achieve common goals
3. Evaluate on-going operation and maintenance costs as part of the criteria to evaluate whether to proceed with acquisitions or easements

E. Master Plans

Goal: Each park in San Mateo County park system has a Master Plan that is revised at least every 20 years.

Recommended Action:

1. Evaluate status of Master Plans for all facilities and establish a timeline to update all plans
2. Develop prioritized implementation strategy for all completed plans
3. Develop a monitoring program to evaluate plan implementation
4. Link unit work plans with goals of master plan
5. Evaluate opportunities for special uses and revenue supporting activities as part of the master planning process
6. Ensure community involvement in master plan processes
7. Ensure that plans promote safe and livable communities in their design and recommendations

F. Park Boundary Surveys

Goal: Develop a plan to survey and monument all park boundaries.

Recommended Action:

1. Identify and monument park boundaries through surveys
2. Complete boundary surveys as part of the process for acquisitions
3. Develop GIS layer for park boundary information

CHAPTER III - ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

A. Resource Management

Goal: Develop a resource management approach to restore, protect, preserve and enhance the natural biodiversity and ecosystems within the Parks, enhance water and air quality, and improve overall community livability

Recommended Action:

1. Establish Best Management Practices (BMPs) to guide Department actions including programs and policies
2. Train staff and volunteers in BMPs and management strategies
3. Facilitate scientific research in County parks
4. Develop and implement a fire management plan for each park
5. Interpret natural and cultural resources and protect archeological resources

B. Endangered, Threatened, and Sensitive Species and Resources

Goal: Ensure we protect rare, endangered, and sensitive species in the parks by developing and evaluating strategies to enhance our natural resources

Recommended Action:

1. Prepare a comprehensive list and map of rare and endangered species in the parks
2. Identify Best Management Practices for facility development and maintenance where rare and endangered species and sensitive habitats are present
3. Incorporate the listings and Best Management Practices into Ranger training
4. Develop partnerships to monitor the effectiveness of management activities

C. Watershed Management Plans

Goal: Develop plans for designated impaired watersheds (Pescadero Creek, San Pedro Creek, San Francisquito Creek watersheds).

Recommended Action:

1. Implement Watershed Protection Standards and Best Management Practices
2. Ensure Department compliance with the County's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit conditions and reporting requirements
3. Train staff in best management practices for managing roads, erosion control, bank restoration and surface runoff around creeks
4. Participate in collaborations to restore watersheds and management efforts such as FishNet4C, San Pedro Creek Watershed Coalition, Fitzgerald Critical Coastal Area, San Francisquito Creek Watershed Coalition, and others

D. Recycling and Sustainability Program

Goal: Establish a system-wide recycling and sustainability program.

Recommended Action:

1. Appoint a Department “Green Coordinator”
2. Work in collaboration with other County Departments to develop a common approach to recycling issues.
3. Develop a park user education program to ensure recycling by park users
4. Implement County’s “green building” and “cool County” guidelines and policies wherever possible

E. Integrated Pest Management

Goal: Implement the county wide Integrated Pest Management Programs

Recommended Action:

1. Implement Integrated Pest Management Standards
2. Train staff
3. Develop park specific plans and actions

F. Marina

Goal: Implement management practices that ensure environmentally sound long-term vitality of the facility.

Recommended Action:

1. Develop a ten year Marina plan to reflect environmental protection and facility management
2. Plan to assure a safe and navigable entrance channel and Marina waterways through maintenance dredging
3. Establish an educational outreach program for Marina users and visitors to become champions of pollution prevention and the timely reporting of potential or real pollution threats

CHAPTER IV - SAFETY

A. Employee Safety

Goal: Establish current safety policies, procedures, and practices.

Recommended Action:

1. Annually review the Department's Injury and Illness Prevention Plan and Safety Policy, the Department's Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, cash handling, emergency communications, radio system upgrades, emergency response, vehicle equipment, and ranger safety and train employees as appropriate
2. Train all employees on their roles

B. Public Safety Agencies

Goal: Assess and improve communications and coordination with public safety agencies.

Recommended Action:

1. Ensure the Parks Department emergency response system is integrated with responding agencies
2. Focus on areas of specific concern, such as Coyote Point Park, Mid-Coast and Memorial/Pescadero Complex
3. Improve and formalize working relationship with Sheriff's Office's Office of Emergency Services and adjacent emergency response jurisdictions to ensure the safety of park patrons, employees and our facilities
4. Participate in emergency response and major incident preparedness training

C. Safety Equipment and Safety Training

Goal: Provide and maintain appropriate safety equipment and train staff in the use of the safety equipment.

Recommended Action:

1. Conduct annual assessment of the Department's safety equipment
2. Replace or repair defective, outdated, or inappropriate safety equipment
3. Provide staff with training for safety equipment

D. Marina Safety

Goal: Maintain emergency response plans and train staff, concessionaires, and security contractors in those procedures.

Recommended Action:

1. Update all policies and procedures for responding to emergencies as outlined in County policies, the “Emergency Quick Response” policy and the “Emergency Patrol Boat Response” policy of the Marina Operations Manual
2. Assure that staff is proficient in the knowledge and procedures of the County protocols for response to major environmental and human emergencies
3. Ensure that the fuel dock concessionaire is knowledgeable and proficient in emergency procedures related to fuel dock operations
4. Assure that staff is adequately trained in Marina safety procedures including rescues and boater assistance

CHAPTER V - CUSTOMER SERVICE

A. Customer Satisfaction Assessments

Goal: Provide exceptional customer service and ensure every San Mateo County Park employee makes customer service a priority.

Recommended Action:

1. Customer Service Survey are readily available to the public including at parks, through the mail, and on-line
2. Review surveys and initiate improvements

B. Customer Service Levels

Goal: Provide customer service to the Department's customers that meets or exceeds their expectations.

Recommended Action:

1. Establish customer service standards and service levels
2. Train employees in providing exceptional customer service
3. Provide employees with training on dealing with difficult people
4. Develop a continuous improvement approach to park and facility management with employees actively engaged in identifying customer service problem areas, changes in use, etc.

C. Customer Information

Goal: Communications to the public meet the need for information in a format and context that is most readily accessible and usable.

Recommended Action:

1. Brand and standardize format for written information for public distribution
2. Provide multi-lingual literature and signs
3. Fully utilize electronic communication (website, on-line commerce)

CHAPTER VI - COMMUNICATIONS

A. Internal Communication

Goal: Make internal communication a priority for, and responsibility of, each employee.

Recommended Action:

1. Convene Department wide staff meetings twice a year with all field and office staff to discuss issues and share information
2. Convene monthly District Supervisors meetings for program planning, issue identification, problem solving and information exchange
3. Convene monthly staff meetings in each District to exchange information and gain staff input on planning issues and problem solving
4. Establish an annual employee recognition program
5. Train all staff in use of internal communication system and basic computer skills
6. Use internal communication system to improve ability of employees to effectively communicate with management and each other

B. External Communications

Goal: Provide timely and accurate information to the public in a variety of formats to meet community and user needs, and facilitate communication between the Department and citizens of the County

Recommended Action

1. Improve the Department's website to provide timely and relevant information about activities and programs, and how to communicate with the Department
2. Create a set of frequently asked questions with answers and make easily available to staff and the public
3. Implement on-line reservations system
4. Provide appropriate referrals through web page linkages on the Department's site
5. Provide timely notification to the public on issues and how to contribute to the public process
6. Upgrade brochures to include more accurate trail information including length, degree of difficulty, accurate mapping, ADA facilities, etc.
7. Publish/provide information in multi-lingual versions or in universal symbols, including signs, brochures, website information

C. Marketing

Goal: Provide timely, accurate, and user friendly materials and communications systems to facilitate two-way communication with the public

Recommended Action:

1. Develop a marketing strategy to let other organizations and the public know what facilities, features, programs and events are available in San Mateo County Parks
2. Provide parks materials to promotional organizations (such as the Parks Foundation, Historical Association, and Visitor and Convention Bureau)
3. Utilize public television and non-English outlets to disseminate information
4. Develop an organizational identity for San Mateo County Parks (Branding)
5. Develop a standard format for printed materials that includes ADA standards, best practices, public needs, and public input
6. Provide opportunities for visitors to comment on facilities and service through customer surveys and personal contacts
7. Assess cultural, demographic, and linguistic needs of the community and develop materials and communications methodologies to reach these communities and groups

E. Visitor and Interpretative Information

Goal: Provide accurate interpretative, directional, informational, and safety information and signage to enhance the visitor experience and give accurate and educational information to the public.

Recommended Action:

1. Develop an informational signage program for visitor use including trail signs, directional signs, interpretative signs, and regulatory signs
2. Standardize all Departmental signage, placement, and wording
3. Seek sponsorship for interpretive or informational signage from special interest groups
4. Develop partnerships with community partners (i.e. Historical Association, Coyote Point Museum) to help develop and provide educational and interpretative signage and materials
5. Provide information on Department's web site that visitors can view prior to going to a facility and that can be printed to take along on a visit
6. Identify opportunities to collaborate with other organizations to develop materials and provide materials, and train volunteers
7. Create interpretive programs for County parks that help educate individual park users and families about the unique facilities and the parks' natural and cultural resources
8. Work with environmental education specialists to develop age appropriate, park related interpretive materials and opportunities
9. Provide staff training on interpretation techniques, and in specific areas of interpretation including natural resources, cultural resources, park history, endangered species, and other areas desired by the visiting public

CHAPTER VII - FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

A. Existing Facilities

Goal: Provide safe, sanitary, and attractive recreation and support facilities that are accessible to all visitors, meet community needs, and are compliant with all applicable laws, regulations, and mandates.

Recommended Action:

1. Develop a facility inventory and maintenance/replacement policy
2. Ensure all facilities are compliant with current safety and sanitation standards
3. Evaluate existing facility information to ensure that it is complete and accurate
4. Upgrade brochures to include more accurate trail information including length, degree of difficulty, accurate mapping, ADA facilities, etc.
5. Publish/provide information in multi-lingual versions or in universal symbols, including signs, brochures, website information
6. Develop and implement a maintenance operations plan for each park unit
7. Use GIS and Facility Condition Information System (FCIS) to manage facility maintenance
8. Review sub-standard ratings from customer surveys and make facility improvements
9. Select and train select Park Ranger staff in playground safety and inspection
10. Complete the Playground Safety Audit and establish priorities for required improvement

B. Facilities for Diverse Needs

Goal: Periodically review park usage patterns, demographic data, feed-back from field staff and benchmarking with other agencies to ensure park features are meeting current leisure time requirements.

Recommended Action:

1. Upgrade our facilities to meet changing visitor expectations and needs
2. Develop a strategy to understand park users and their needs, and use that information to develop new facilities or create an implementation strategy to modify existing facilities
3. Evaluate design and layout of existing park facilities and make necessary modifications for changing demographics of user groups and results from the analysis of trends
4. Evaluate usage patterns and demographics of users to determine adequacy of existing facilities and provide information to staff and Commission about how the user needs of Parks is changing
5. Evaluate and update the Department's plan for compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act

C. Maintenance Standards

Goal: Develop consistent maintenance standards and Best Management throughout the Department.

Recommended Action:

1. Complete a park inventory of similar types of facilities
2. Develop descriptions of areas to form standards i.e. landscape, buildings, hardscape, vandalism repair, graffiti removal, trails, signs, fencing, equipment etc.
3. Involve staff and community to develop a level of standards and timetables of frequency of maintenance and replacement

CHAPTER VIII – ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY AND CULTURAL AWARENESS

A. Educational Programs

Goal: Establish educational programs that create environmental literacy and cultural awareness (K-12 school programs based on the California Science Framework), through interpretative programming, signage, and brochures.

Recommended Action:

1. Include park management and resource protection issues in all County Park environmental education and interpretation program
2. Develop partnerships with local schools, institutions, non governmental organizations, businesses, and educators
3. Support school age environmental education programs based on the California Science Framework of the California Department of Education
4. Recruit and train volunteers for County Park natural, cultural or historic resources that would benefit from the use docents
5. Market the availability of park infrastructure to support K-12, college and university school education programs
6. Develop content for the Department's website
7. Facilitate site stewardship projects for hands on habitat restoration projects
8. Provide opportunities for alternative outdoor learning experiences such as local classes (arts, survival training, boating classes, etc.)

B. History/Cultural Resources/Unique Features

Goal: The Department will preserve, enhance, and interpret historical, cultural, and special features and events of County parks and showcase past cultures.

Recommended Action:

1. Identify opportunities to interpret pre-history, historic resources and features, cultural resources, and unique features in the parks
2. Include park's history, cultural context, and unique features whenever interpretive information is prepared
3. Develop a way to preserve photos, reports, and documents relating to parks history, County's culture, and unique park features
4. Encourage historic/cultural research and provide results to the public and academic institutions
5. Develop an administrative history of San Mateo County Parks
6. Enhance the collaboration between the Department and the San Mateo County Historical Association
7. Encourage the development of interpretative or other materials explaining and documenting the significant events and cultural activities that have taken place in the County Parks
8. Reach out to various communities and groups to identify and interpret the cultural interests in the community

C. Signs, Literature, Displays, and Other Public Information

Goal: The Department will provide relevant and accurate materials that meet the needs of park visitors for each of the parks that contain a recognizable park logo or “organizational identity”.

Recommended Action:

1. Develop professional quality trademarks and logos that uniquely identify the San Mateo County Parks Department
2. Professionally design templates for all document types modifiable to complement the unique character of each facility and park
3. Develop literature in the form of books, photo collections, merchandise, and trinkets that educate and inform the public about the park system and leads toward the creation of a positive and worthwhile image for the public
4. Develop and implement a Signage Program that establishes standardized criteria for sign content (language, and graphics), placement, and maintenance
5. Develop interpretative signage standards

CHAPTER IX - STAFF AND ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

A. Staff Diversity

Goal: Ensure that San Mateo County Parks' staff reflects the diverse population of San Mateo County.

Recommended Action:

1. Work with Human Resources to ensure that outreach and recruitment attracts a diverse workforce representative of the County's diversity
2. Outreach to volunteers when recruiting

B. Changing Department Staffing Needs

Goal: Evaluate changing Department business needs to ensure adequate staff and organizational effectiveness.

Recommended Action:

1. Assess organizational effectiveness in relation to personnel and organization structure
2. Assess desired service levels and appropriate staff needed to maintain that level
3. are made
4. Review and adjust job roles, responsibilities and classifications as changes in tasks, work assignments and job requirements occur.

C. Professional Standards

Goal: Evaluate changing profession standards and external needs to ensure consistently high levels of service in meeting public and community expectations.

Recommended Action:

1. Benchmark the Department periodically with outstanding peer organizations to identify areas for improvement in professional standards and performance
2. Encourage Department personnel to join and participate in professional related organizations
3. Make professional development training available to staff

D. Employee Training and Skill Building

Goal: Recognize the value of on-going training, specialized training, and skill building as important part of the future success of San Mateo County Parks.

Recommended Action:

1. Complete an assessment of the staff's skills

2. Develop a comprehensive training program for staff to meet new skill and programmatic requirements and improved deficiencies
3. Re-institute the Department Safety Committee to address safety concerns of employees and park users, building on information already developed by the Countywide Safety Assessment
4. Expand ranger training to include natural resource management and environmental interpretation
5. Leverage training dollars by having that staff attend off-site training programs share the information with other staff through written reports and/or oral presentations
6. Link training with skills development necessary to provide innovative, relevant park experiences
7. Provide effective training for staff to enhance skills in interpersonal communications, dealing with difficult customers, community outreach, employee relations
8. Utilize the County's Learning Management System to track and document employee training
9. Provide specific training and specialized training to meet specific job, certification, and licensure requirements in areas such as Waste Water Treatment, Pesticide Application, Park Electrician, and Equipment Operator.

E. Mentoring and Succession Planning Program

Goal: Establish a mentoring and succession planning program for employees to learn from each other and build skills and knowledge to move into more responsible positions in as part of the Department.

Recommended Action:

1. Actively participate in the County's Mentoring and Succession Planning Program
2. Foster skill development for leadership development and promotability
3. Develop a skills bank data base to understand the types of skills available within the Department
4. Establish a priority training program for transferring knowledge, particularly of those employees who will be retiring within five years
5. Focus training opportunities on skills of senior and specialty staff who can provide opportunities for others to learn
6. Develop a mentoring program to ensure new employees gain the skills needed to excel at their jobs
7. Identify core competencies and essential skills for all classifications in the Department
8. Rotate or provide assignments that provide for professional growth and skill building

CHAPTER X - EQUIPMENT AND TOOLS

A. Vehicles

Goal: Provide modern, safe, vehicles and vehicle equipment for its employees

Recommended Action:

1. Assess vehicle and large equipment (tractors, mowers, trailers, etc) needs within the Department on a regular basis to find the most cost effective means of meeting transportation and job needs
2. Equip vehicles and maintenance equipment with required and adequate supplies including fire suppression equipment, first responder equipment and materials, radios, lighting, and markings
3. Provide training to employees in routine vehicle inspection, maintenance, and safe vehicle operation
4. Consider fuel efficiency and/or alternative fuels in all vehicle purchasing decisions
5. Incorporate large equipment replacement costs within the Department's Vehicle Replacement Fund

B. Fixed Assets

Goal: Keep fixed asset inventory up to date with modern, safe operating equipment.

Recommended Action:

1. Develop a process to identify fixed asset needs on an ongoing basis and a prioritization that effectively identifies the highest priority needs of the Department
2. Identify fixed asset items for alternative or grant funding

C. Computers and Technology

Goal: Provide the automated equipment and other technologies to facilitate the business processes, marketing efforts, public contact, information dissemination, operations, maintenance, and communication for the Department.

Recommended Action:

1. Provide automated equipment and software to facilitate data handling, communication, and information exchange amongst staff, other County Departments, other organizations and the public
2. Develop automated programs that meet specific task requirements to assist staff in the performance of their duties
3. Use computers as informational tools to support public education, recruitment, marketing, planning, waste reduction, and environmental stewardship efforts
4. Train staff in computer use
5. Provide e-mail, internet, timecard, and other critical systems access to Department staff
6. Keep hardware and software programs at each unit up to date

7. Implement GIS/GPS program in the Department to meet business needs and provide information to the public
8. Create system to file and retain Department's electronic documents, charts, presentations and other items

CHAPTER XI - VOLUNTEERS

A. Volunteer Program

Goal: Reaffirm the Department's commitment to the value of volunteers and seek ways to expand and enhance the program.

Recommended Action:

1. Communicate to staff the value of volunteers and train staff in effective volunteer management and interaction
2. Develop a volunteer recruitment strategy that supplements the existing program and gains new support for parks
3. Recognize the need to have varied opportunities for volunteers that fit their needs as well as the needs of the parks
4. Develop a volunteer recognition program, including an annual recognition event, skill building, and customer service training that will recognize significant contributions, build volunteer skills, celebrate successes and allow volunteers to network with each other
5. Create and maintain a calendar/guide to upcoming volunteer opportunities
6. Develop a core of volunteers that can act as volunteer leaders
7. Develop and implement a volunteer training program to meet volunteer job requirements including first aide, interpretation, public contact, and safety

B. Individual and Small Group Volunteers

Goal: Reaffirm the Department's commitment to the value of volunteers and seek ways to expand and enhance the program.

Recommended Action:

1. Maintain a guide to upcoming events focused on individual and small groups
2. Advertise volunteer opportunities to the public through groups, schools, and organizations
3. Develop a partnership with other volunteer organizations to recruit individual volunteers

C. Friends' Groups

Goal: Reaffirm the value of the contributions of existing park support groups, strengthen the relationships, and expand the program to other parks.

Recommended Action:

1. Create forums for periodic exchange of information between park management and various support groups
2. Formalize agreements between Friends' groups and San Mateo County Parks
3. Develop an annual work plan that includes priorities developed by units and evaluate progress
4. Identify units that currently do not have formal support groups and create new organizations where feasible

5. Analyze Countywide issues and convene special, ad hoc working groups as needed
6. Identify system-wide tasks or opportunities that do not have formal support groups and create new volunteer opportunities for these non-park specific need areas.

D. Business and Large Organizations

Goal: Identify and pursue volunteer programs with large corporate and private organizations.

Recommended Action:

1. Identify specific tasks, needs or programs that require specific professional or trade skills and seek a corporate or private collaboration for them
2. Seek assistance from such sources to develop a marketing plan, parks logos, newsletter underwriting
3. Develop collaborations with colleges and universities to identify appropriate internship opportunities
4. Expand opportunities for corporate volunteers and market these programs
5. Encourage financial support for large business's and organization's volunteer efforts

CHAPTER XII - PARTNERSHIPS

A. Other Park and Recreation Agencies and Allied Public Service Providers

Goal: Expand working relationships with other park and recreation providers and promoters to share information and ideas to provide better service to the public and draw on each agency's area of expertise or unique features.

Recommended Action:

1. Market San Mateo County Parks' unique features to other park agencies so they may take advantage of features not contained in their systems
2. Seek collaborations (such as wildlife management) to draw on expertise that each agency may have and develop combined/common responses where warranted (illegal trail building, coyote management protocols)
3. Publicize other agencies' events or facilities to provide for more accessible information for County residents
4. Focus on best practices in other agencies where there are common issues/problems such as natural and cultural resources
5. Explore opportunities for collaborations with other public agencies and community based organizations to bring needed services to park users
6. Work collaboratively to provide a seamless park experience between agencies such as similar signage, trail alignments, complementary usage, and appropriate referrals

B. Neighborhood and Community Organizations

Goal: Develop a community outreach program to improve park facilities and programs, and to promote community support and participation in the parks.

Recommended Action:

1. Develop an outreach strategy
2. Identify key groups and stakeholders including youth and seniors
3. Train staff in effective community building techniques
4. Maintain a database of key contacts
5. Periodically evaluate parks and community needs and identify collaborative opportunities to meet those needs

C. Professional Organizations

Goal: Expand the Department's connections with professional organizations to track trends and take advantage of professional training opportunities.

Recommended Action:

1. Identify a matrix of organizations that are relevant to San Mateo County Parks and have appropriate staff join and participate in their programs

2. Encourage staff to engage in continuous education programs to increase skills and stay current in trends in parks, recreation, natural resources management and environmental education programs
3. Develop a mechanism for staff to share new information, skills, and ideas with other Department personnel

D. Health Organizations

Goal: Develop linkages with health providers and agencies to connect parks to fitness and wellbeing efforts.

Recommended Action:

1. Identify health organizations that the Department can partner with to provide support for health and fitness programs, and foster healthy lifestyles, and reduce stress
2. Evaluate and modify facilities to allow and facilitate health and fitness oriented activities
3. Work with community health partners and organizations to publicize the opportunities and health benefits of parks and open space
4. Work with community health partners and organizations to develop specific opportunities for the public and patients
5. Incorporate health and fitness components in public information

CHAPTER XIII – FINANCIAL SUPPORT

A. Fees and Charges

Goal: Maximize opportunities for generating revenue from existing and new sources and at price levels comparable to equivalent public agencies by effectively marketing park and recreation opportunities in San Mateo County.

Recommended Action:

1. Evaluate fee collection programs to maximize revenue (gatehouse, iron ranger, reservations, wood sales etc) including benchmarking with other agencies
2. Clarify fee and pricing policies for all parks and review fees annually
3. Evaluate opportunities for additional revenue generating activities such as campgrounds, additional picnic facilities, enhancements and special events at park facilities
4. Revise special event policy and procedures to make the process easier
5. Place donation boxes in visitor centers and other facilities in prominent locations
6. Evaluate revenue sources (parking, fishing fines, development fees, etc.) and ensure the Department is receiving all revenues due to the Department
7. Review policies to allow maximum use and revenue generation annually
8. Explore new uses or activities to promote park usage
9. Develop fee and policy for repeat special event operators

B. Concessions and Leases

Goal: Ensure that leases and concessions support the mission of the Department, existing park activities and maximize service to the public.

Recommended Action:

1. Work with Real Property to evaluate all existing leases and concessions to ensure compliance with lease requirements
2. Use benchmarking and best practices to evaluate leases when up for renewal
3. Ensure lease conditions preserve and enhance the park experience for visitors
4. Evaluate opportunities for new concessions where appropriate
5. Include a cost/benefit analysis for all lease provisions to ensure a fair return to the County and lessee

C. Marina

Goal: Operate the Marina at its optimal level of occupancy and efficiency.

Recommended Action:

1. Seek to implement additional revenue producing activities
2. Ensure funded capital improvement programs are completed in a timely manner and within budget to maximize berther satisfaction
3. Develop a long range capital projects plan and funding strategy plan that addresses the needs of the Marina over the next ten years

4. Use the trends analysis of Marina berthing mix to target boating market
5. Develop and implement a strategy to increase berther occupancy rates
6. Review existing fees annually and benchmark to other marinas

E. Public and Private Funding Mechanisms

Goal: Support various public and private strategies to secure a dedicated, adequate funding stream to support the long-term needs of San Mateo County Parks and park users.

Recommended Action:

1. Coordinate various public and private strategies
2. Identify opportunities for public-private collaboration for parks projects and programs
3. Coordinate various opportunities to leverage and match dollars from all sources
4. Develop and implement a promotional strategy that highlights priority capital projects and programs
5. Develop a plan with identified funding strategies to provide recreation in the unincorporated areas of San Mateo County
6. Support the efforts of the San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Foundation
7. Compare programmatic and funding support available to other similar agencies

F. Public Sector Grants

Goal: Actively pursue grants from public sector sources to address longstanding planning and capital project efforts. Effort will be made to leverage funds wherever possible.

Recommended Action:

1. Maintain a data base of funding sources and submittal dates for outside public grant opportunities
2. Identify priority projects and develop plans that meet the funding criteria
3. Evaluate how to provide matching funds when required, when funding is not already available from the Department or other sources
4. Develop a funding strategy that leverages funds wherever possible
5. Develop a method to provide adequate oversight for grant administration and project implementation

APPENDIX A – SAN MATEO COUNTY DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

San Mateo County Statistics

Total Land Area: 450 sq. miles
2000 Population: 707,161
1990 City Population: 649,623

Sex:

Male: 349,651
 Female: 357,510

Native born persons: 479,043 (67.7%)

Foreign born persons: 228,118 (32.3%)

Household Income:

Less than \$10,000: 10,441 (4.1%)
 \$10,000 - \$14,999: 7,526 (3.0%)
 \$15,000 - \$24,999: 16,438 (6.5%)
 \$25,000 - \$34,999: 19,254 (7.6%)
 \$35,000 - \$49,999: 31,588 (12.4%)
 \$50,000 - \$74,999: 49,266 (19.4%)
 \$75,000 - \$99,999: 37,665 (14.8%)
 \$100,000 - \$149,999: 43,104 (17.0%)
 \$150,000 - \$199,999: 16,965 (6.7%)
 \$200,000 or more: 21,972 (8.6%)
 Total Households: 254,219 (100%)

Median Household Income: \$70,819

Education of persons 25+

Less than grade 9: 35,193 (7.2%)
 Grade 9-12, no diploma: 36,971 (7.5%)
 High School diploma/GED: 85,569 (17.5%)
 College, no degree: 105,606 (21.5%)
 Associate degree: 35,669 (7.3%)
 Bachelor's degree or higher: 191,277 (39.0%)

Total Housing Units: 260,576

Occupied: 254,103 (97.5%)
 Owner occupied: 156,133 (61.4%)
 Renter occupied: 97,970 (38.6%)
 Vacant: 6,473 (2.5%)

Average Household Size: 2.74

Owner occupied: 2.83
 Renter occupied: 2.59

Median value owner-occupied units: \$469,200

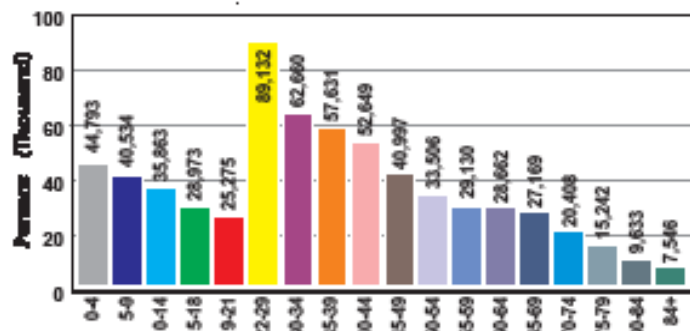
Median contract rent: \$1,144

Projected Population, Employment, and Income

San Mateo County	2000	2005	2015	2025
Total population	707,161	734,100	775,900	795,100
Total households	254,103	260,960	274,640	281,670
Persons per household	2.74	2.77	2.78	2.78
Employed res.	403,083	415,800	446,100	458,000
Total Jobs	395,890	411,630	458,050	480,970
Mean household income (2000 dollars)	\$110,500	\$112,700	\$124,400	\$130,800

Source: Association of Bay Area Gov'ts., Projection 2002

2000 Population by Age Group



Source: 2000 Census

2000 Housing Units by Building Type

Building Types	Units
Single Family Detached	150,302
Single Family Attached	22,700
Multiple Family Structures with 2 to 4 units	18,250
Multiple Family Structures with 5+ units	65,834
Mobile Homes	2,969
Total Units	260,055

Source: 2000 Census

(1)

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APPENDIX B – PARKS 5-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN

San Mateo County Department of Parks - Capital Projects Budget Projects FY2008/09

Parks Project Title	Priority FY 08-09	Reappropriation From Prior Yr	New FY 08-09	New FY 09-10	New FY 10-11	New FY 11-12	New FY 12-13	Total
Coyote Point Bay Trail Construction		\$1,829,442						\$1,829,442
Coyote Point Marina Harbormaster Office Demo		\$105,000						\$105,000
Coyote Point Promenade Study		\$35,000						\$35,000
Coyote Point Water Distribution System		\$269,970						\$269,970
Crystal Springs Restrooms		\$106,970						\$106,970
CST South of Dam to Hwy 35 Construction		\$434,970						\$434,970
Edgewood Park Interpretative Center		\$777,278						\$777,278
McGarvey Gulch Salmonid Barrier		\$11,500						\$11,500
Parks Wash Down Racks		\$165,120						\$165,120
Trails Master Plan Update		\$75,000						\$75,000
Mirada Surf Coastal Trail	1		\$600,000					\$600,000
SBMT Remainder Parcel Fencing	2		\$40,000					\$40,000
Fltz San Vicente Bridge, Ramp and Coastal Trail	3		\$450,000					\$450,000
Pescadero Trestle Creek Bridge Repair	4		\$12,500					\$12,500
SBMT Day Camp ADA Improvements	5		\$6,000	\$28,000				\$34,000
Pigeon Point Guard Rail	6		\$84,000					\$84,000
SBMT Day Camp Sewer Line	7		\$182,971					\$182,971
SBMT Day Camp Restroom	8		\$100,000					\$100,000
Sequoia Flat Barrier Removal	9		\$253,244					\$253,244
Coyote Point Gatehouse Renovation	10		\$35,000					\$35,000
Crystal Springs South of Hwy 92 Plans and Permits	11		\$200,000					\$200,000
Folger Barn Parking Lot	12		\$350,000					\$350,000
Fitzgerald Parking Lot	13		\$250,000					\$250,000
Seal Cove Stainway Construction	14		\$300,000					\$300,000
SBMT Trail From Ridge to Bay Trail	15		\$64,000	\$303,029				\$367,029
SBMT Friends Parking Lot	16		\$175,000					\$175,000
Pescadero Creek Dam Removal	17		\$525,000					\$525,000
Fitzgerald Educational Center	18			\$360,000	\$3,140,000			\$3,500,000
Sanchez Adobe Historic Site	19			\$300,000	\$4,400,000			\$4,700,000
Total		\$3,810,250	\$2,563,715	\$1,092,000	\$603,029	\$4,760,000	\$3,140,000	\$15,968,994
Marina Project Title								
Dock 29 Replacement	1		\$1,830,000					\$1,830,000
Launch Ramp Restroom	2		\$117,500					\$117,500
Marina Center Restroom ADA and Upgrades	3		\$85,000					\$85,000
Marina Bollards	4		\$40,000					\$40,000
Boater Restroom Sleeve Repair	5		\$5,000	\$45,000		\$60,000		\$110,000
Replace Floatation Dock 24 and 25	6		\$5,000	\$32,000				\$37,000
Kayak Shell Rowing Dock	7		\$50,000					\$50,000
Accessibility to Courtesy Dock	8			\$60,000				\$60,000
Repave Sidewalk Around Anchor Park	9			\$37,000				\$37,000
Repave Roadway to Office and Launch Ramp	10			\$5,000	\$70,000			\$75,000
Southwest Sidewalk Repair	11			\$25,000				\$25,000
Total		\$0	\$2,077,500	\$100,000	\$32,000	\$187,000	\$70,000	\$2,466,500

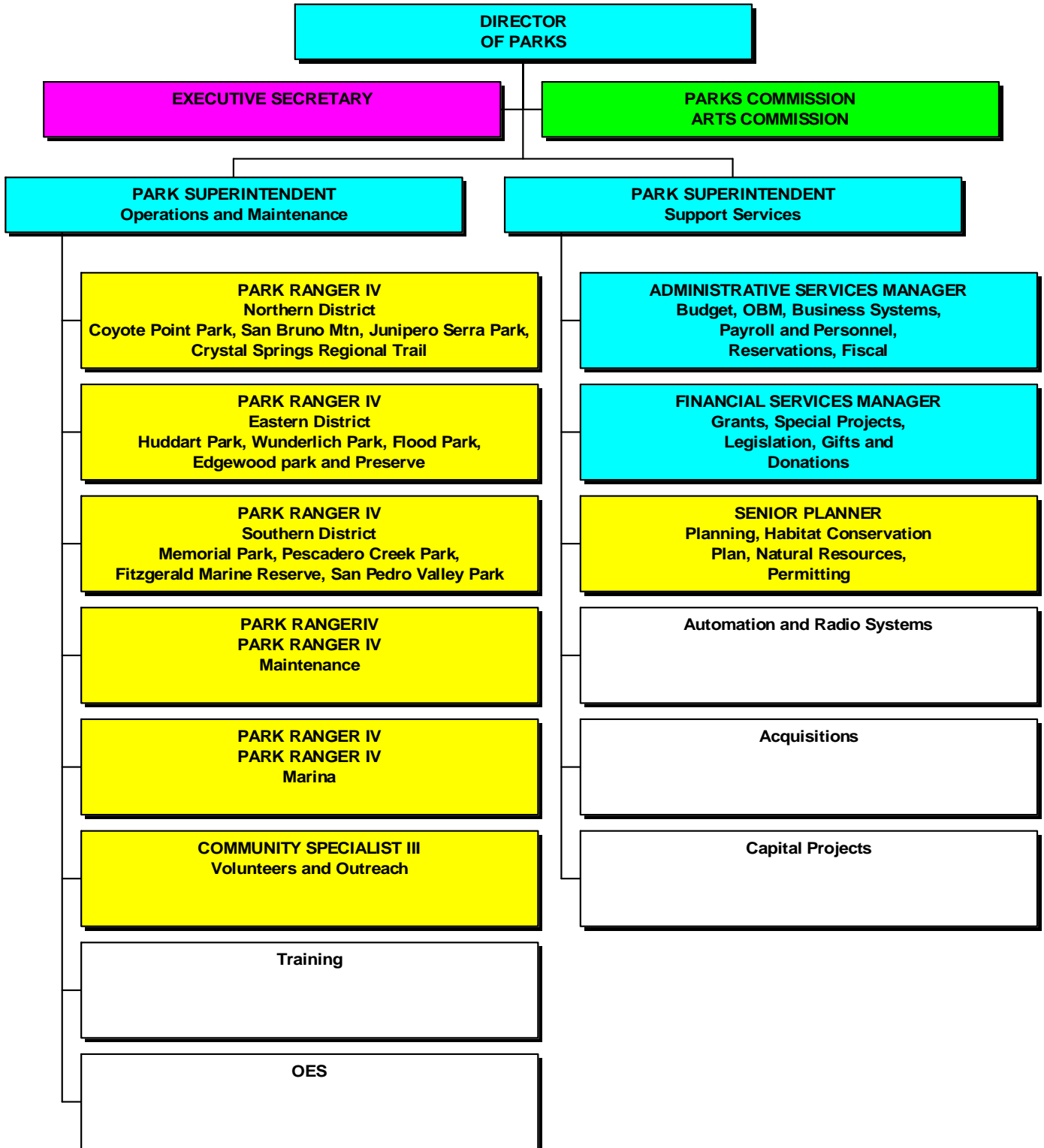
APPENDIX C – PARK LOCATION MAP



APPENDIX D – ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Parks Department Organizational Structure

-- MARCH 2008 --



APPENDIX E – CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

SAN MATEO COUNTY CARES

...about providing excellent and courteous public service.
 We would like to know if we are succeeding and how we can do better.
 Please take a moment to complete this survey.

IV. If you answered FAIR or POOR to any of the previous questions, please indicate what was unsatisfactory about the service:

V. In order to improve our service and facilities, we would appreciate your comments and suggestions:

VI. If you would like to recognize an employee who provided excellent service, please indicate their name and how they assisted you:

Please print the following information (optional):

Name _____

Address _____

Tel _____

Fax _____

Email _____

Thank you for your comments!

<p>I. Services Provided:</p>	<p>IIIa. Park and facility visited:</p>	<p>IIIb. Please rate: <i>Excellent</i> <i>Good</i> <i>Fair</i> <i>Poor</i> <i>N/A</i></p>
<p>a. Response time <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>b. Courtesy of Staff <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>c. Knowledge of staff assisting you <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>d. Helpfulness of information / <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p> — Written <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p> — Verbal <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>e. Staff availability <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>f. Information about the process <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>g. Appropriate follow-up <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>a. Facility condition <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>b. Facility maintenance <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>c. Facility cleanliness <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>d. Facility Information</p> <p> — signs / markers <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p> — printed material <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>IIIc. Your activity:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hiking <input type="checkbox"/> Horseback Riding</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Picnicking <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycling</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Camping <input type="checkbox"/> Windsurfing / Swimming</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Boating <input type="checkbox"/> Special Event</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Jogging / Exercise <input type="checkbox"/> Interpretive Program</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p>
<p>III. Overall satisfaction with service <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>IIId. Overall satisfaction with the facility <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	