

PARK AND RECREATION RESOURCES POLICIES

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The County will encourage all providers of park and recreation facilities to:

6.1 Equitable and Balanced System of Facilities

Provide for a balanced and equitable system of park and recreation facilities. Consider identified and/or changing needs and the impact upon environmental, service, competing land use, fiscal and organizational constraints.

6.2 Meet Recreational Need

Meet identified relative park and recreation needs in a manner which best enhances the physical, mental and spiritual quality of life of San Mateo County residents.

GENERAL POLICIES

6.3 Build Upon Existing System

- a. Design all park and recreation systems on the strengths and potentials of existing facilities and develop programs for meeting current and future needs.
- b. Consider the feasibility of redesigning and/or expanding existing park and recreation facilities to meet future needs while developing new acquisition and development programs.

6.4 Environmental Compatibility

- a. Protect and enhance the environmental quality of San Mateo County when developing park and recreation facilities.
- b. Mitigate, to the extent feasible, the impacts of those recreation uses which may adversely affect the environment and adjoining private ownership.

6.5 Access to Park and Recreation Facilities

- a. Attempt to provide appropriate access and conveniences for all people in park and recreation facilities.
- b. Encourage access to the park and recreation system by transportation means other than private automobiles, where feasible.

- c. Attempt to provide adequate access for emergency services.

DEFINITIONS

6.6 Definition of Public Park and Recreation Facilities

Define public park and recreation facilities as lands and facilities serving a range of recreation and/or preservation functions and owned by public agencies or other nonprofit organizations. Such facilities include, but are not limited to, public beaches, parks, recreation areas (including golf courses), natural preserves, wild areas and trails.

6.7 Definition of Private or Commercial Park and Recreation Facilities

Define private or commercial park and recreation facilities as facilities serving a recreation function and owned by private businesses. Such facilities include, but are not limited to, private beaches, stables, specialty stores, golf courses and racket clubs.

6.8 Definition of Private Nonprofit Park and Recreation Facilities

Define private and nonprofit park and recreation facilities as those serving primarily a recreation function and owned by private nonprofit organizations. Such facilities include, but are not limited to, scout camps, YMCA camps, religious camps, music camps, sports-training camps and day camps.

REGULATION OF DEVELOPMENT

ALL PARK AND RECREATION FACILITY PROVIDERS

The County will:

6.9 Locate Suitable Park and Recreation Facilities in Urban Areas

Generally, encourage all providers to locate active park and recreation facilities in urban areas, taking advantage of existing service infrastructure systems and maximizing the recreational use of limited available land. Consider the following activities to be generally compatible with active park and recreation facilities such as group games, swimming, and tennis.

6.10 Locate Suitable Park and Recreation Facilities in Rural Areas

Generally, encourage all providers to locate passive park and recreation facilities in rural areas in order to protect and preserve environmentally sensitive and open space lands. Consider the following activities to be generally

compatible with passive park and recreation facilities such as camping, hiking, picnicking, horseback riding, and nature study.

6.11 Coastal Recreation and Access

- a. Regulate coastal development to delineate appropriate locations and development standards for recreation and visitor serving facilities.
- b. Regulate development to increase public access to the shoreline and along the coast through measures which include, but are not limited to, establishing criteria for when and where access will be provided and how the access will be developed and maintained.
- c. Develop programs to increase and enhance public access to and along the shoreline.

6.12 Minimize Agricultural Land Use Conflicts

Preserve the best agricultural land for agricultural uses. On other lands capable of supporting agriculture, permit the location of park and recreation facilities when efforts are made to lease land not needed for recreational purposes to farm operations, and clearly defined buffer areas such as strips of land are established between these two uses to minimize land use conflicts.

6.13 Development Plans

- a. Encourage all providers to prepare development plans for proposed facilities which contain provisions that easily adapt to changing conditions.
- b. Encourage all development plans to include restroom facilities and ensure that these correspond in size and detail to the type of park and recreation facility proposed.

6.14 Site Planning for Public and Private Facilities

- a. Encourage all providers to design sites to accommodate recreation uses that minimize adverse effects on the natural environment and adjoining private ownership.
- b. Encourage all providers to design, where feasible, park and recreation sites that accommodate a variety of recreational activities.

6.15 Building Materials and Service Technology for Public and Private Facilities

- a. Encourage the use of materials and technologies that achieve low development, maintenance and operation costs while maintaining environmental compatibility.
- b. Encourage innovative technologies for conserving energy, water and other utilities for park and recreation facilities.

6.16 Prioritizing Facility Development

- a. Encourage all providers to give priority to the development of those facilities that meet the greatest recreational need.
- b. Encourage the phased development of recreation facilities in order to assess whether full development is warranted.

6.17 Techniques for Providing Park and Recreation Facilities

- a. Regulate development to provide new or improved park and recreation facilities. Use one or a combination of the following techniques: (1) offer of dedication, (2) grant of fee interest, and (3) in lieu fees.
- b. Encourage the dedication of easements to implement trails programs.
- c. Base the requirements for the provision of park and recreation facilities on the: (1) size and type of development, (2) benefit to the developer, (3) burden to the public, and (4) within the Coastal Zone, priority given to the type of development under the Coastal Act.

COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

For County-owned park and recreation facilities, the County will:

6.18 Regulation of Encroachment

Regulate the encroachment into park and recreation facilities by non-park uses. When encroachment is deemed necessary, minimize adverse impacts by considering the following measures:

- a. Use the Creative Road Design Guide (San Mateo County Planning Division, 1978) where appropriate to minimize environmental effects when improving roadways or building new ones in or through park and recreation resources.

- b. Discourage the use of park and recreation facilities as access routes for private users. Where such access is deemed necessary, develop these routes in accordance with standards established by the Parks and Recreation Division.
- c. Require restoration or other mitigation measures for damaged parkland.

6.19 Development of County Park and Recreation Facilities

Use the planning and management guidelines and development standards contained in Appendix D as additional standards for the development of County-owned facilities.

PARK ACQUISITION AND DISPOSAL

ALL PARK AND RECREATION FACILITY PROVIDERS

The County will encourage all providers of park and recreation facilities to:

6.20 Consider Land Banking

- a. Utilize land banking as a method of acquiring land for future park and recreation use when conditions are prudent.
- b. Seek to place land banked sites into environmentally compatible interim uses. Provide for the protection and maintenance of these sites.

6.21 Transfer of Unused School Land

Encourage school districts to transfer idle, unused land to appropriate agencies for park and recreation use.

COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

For County-owned park and recreation facilities, the County will:

6.22 Determination of Recreation Needs

- a. Determine recreation needs through the adoption of a process which: (1) is responsive to present and projected needs and priorities of the County and its residents, and (2) comprehensively measures relative recreation needs.
- b. Periodic updates should: (1) reflect changes in the park and recreation system; (2) assess new recreation needs as they arise; (3) take advantage of new needs assessment technology; (4) assess the needs of future

populations; and (5) weigh the fiscal, organizational, environmental, service and competing land use constraints.

6.23 Site Selection Process for County Facilities

Establish a process for evaluating and selecting sites for County park and recreation facilities which will include consideration of, but not be limited to, the following criteria: (1) meeting of identified recreation needs; (2) environmental conditions; (3) existing infrastructure and services; (4) proximity to urban areas; (5) fiscal feasibility; (6) threat of loss; (7) opportunity for joint action; (8) inholdings and boundary round outs; and (9) conditions which would lead to better management of property and resources. Meeting identified recreation needs will be given greater weight than all other considerations.

6.24 Timing Acquisition

Consider the following criteria in determining when to acquire sites: (1) that the site meets present or future identified recreation needs; (2) the existence of unusually favorable acquisition opportunities; (3) the likelihood that the site might be lost to development; (4) the fact the site is appreciating in value at rates greater than inflation (Consumer Price Index); and (5) the existence of advantageous opportunities to cooperate with other public agencies and/or the private sector.

6.25 Cost of Maintenance and Operation for New Acquisitions

- a. Consider potential maintenance and operation costs as important criteria in acquiring and developing park and recreation facilities.
- b. Submit to the Board of Supervisors an estimate of maintenance and operation costs at the time any acquisition and/or development project is recommended.

6.26 Acquisition and Development Program

Encourage the Park and Recreation Division to use the "Site Selection Process for County Facilities" (Policy 6.23) and the "Timing Acquisition" (Policy 6.24) policies to develop a comprehensive acquisition and development program.

6.27 Fiscal Compatibility Programs

Establish a park and recreation system based on acquisition and development programs which are compatible with the County's fiscal capability to provide protection, operation and maintenance.

6.28 Conveyance of Park and Recreation Facilities

- a. Retain all County park and recreation facilities to the greatest extent possible.
- b. Establish criteria for the conveyance of park and recreation facilities. Allow conveyance only when the proceeds from a sale of a park and recreation facility would be used for the acquisition and/or development of other County park and recreation facilities and: (1) another park and recreation provider would maintain the facility, or (2) conveyance is in the overriding public interest.
- c. Encourage the Park and Recreation Commission to develop specific criteria to determine when it is no longer necessary to retain park and recreation facilities.
- d. Modify the Planning Division General Plan Conformity procedures to include the Parks and Recreation Commission in the review of all projects concerning the conveyance of park and recreation facilities.
- e. Encourage the Park and Recreation Commission and the Planning Commission to use the following criteria when reviewing park and recreation facility conveyance projects: (1) the desirability of maintaining the facility as parkland; (2) the extent to which future development of the site, if disposed of, can be regulated to protect remaining park and recreation facilities; (3) how proceeds of a sale may be used to enhance County park and recreation facilities; and (4) the desirability of offering land to other park and recreation facility providers.

MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION

ALL PARK AND RECREATION FACILITY PROVIDERS

The County will encourage all providers of park and recreation facilities to:

6.29 Protection, Operation and Maintenance

Make provisions to protect, operate and maintain park and recreation systems and related easements.

6.30 Minimize Traffic and Litter Problems

- a. Coordinate with CalTrans and/or SamTrans to increase recreational transit through such programs as a Park and Ride service or increased weekend service for recreationists in order to lessen traffic and parking problems.

- b. Encourage recreationists to properly dispose of litter in park and recreation facilities.
- c. Encourage the adequate maintenance and improvement of roads and highways needed to serve recreation facilities.

COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

For County-owned park and recreation facilities, the County will:

6.31 Charge User Fees

Charge reasonable user fees to offset maintenance and operation costs as needed.

6.32 Limited Closing of Park and Recreation Facilities

Consider closing park and recreation facilities temporarily during the day, week or year when utilization could be detrimental to resources or the public.

6.33 Transfer of Facilities

Consider transferring park and recreation facilities to other appropriate public agencies if it would result in more effective and efficient operation.

6.34 Use of Volunteer Programs

- a. Support, encourage and recognize volunteer and docent programs to help maintain and operate the County park and recreation system and to educate the public in the understanding and appreciation of its facilities.
- b. Provide interpretation programs which will encourage the support of volunteer assistance. Also provide coordinative senior citizen and handicapped recreation programs.

6.35 Encouragement of Forest Resilience Studies

Support the use of County-owned forests or public lands for studies of long-term forest resilience, carbon sequestration, or adaptation to changing climate, which would be compatible with park and recreation activities.

MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

ALL PARK AND RECREATION FACILITY PROVIDERS

The County will encourage all providers of park and recreation facilities to:

6.36 Coordinate Services

Cooperate and coordinate their efforts to achieve efficient and effective park and recreation services which meet identified needs and avoid duplication.

COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

For County-owned park and recreation facilities, the County will:

6.37 Coastal Beaches

Promote and be actively involved in State or Federal acquisition of lands for coastal beaches. Explore the possibility of establishing contractual agreements which would allow the County to develop, maintain and operate these facilities with reimbursed funds.

6.38 Bayfront Coordination

Support, encourage and participate in the development of a coordinated and linked system of recreation facilities and public access along San Francisco Bay.

6.39 Trail System Coordination

- a. Support, encourage and participate in the development of a system of trails that link existing and proposed park and recreation facilities within this County and adjacent counties.
- b. Particularly encourage the development of: trails that link park and recreation facilities on San Francisco Bay to those on the Pacific Coast; multi-use trails where appropriate and trails in County lands under management by other public agencies. Ensure that these trails do not adversely affect adjacent land uses.

FINANCE

ALL PARK AND RECREATION FACILITY PROVIDERS

The County will encourage all providers of park and recreation facilities to:

6.40 Consider Alternative Acquisition Methods

Consider alternative methods to the outright fee purchase of sites (e.g., gifts, leases, trail easements) in order to reduce the costs of providing park and recreation facilities.

6.41 Alternative Revenue Sources

Initiate, promote and support liaisons with other governmental agencies and the private sector to develop alternative revenue sources, including, but not limited to, new legislation so that the cost of protecting, maintaining and operating park and recreation facilities will be borne equitably by the County and other bodies.

COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

For County-owned park and recreation facilities, the County will:

6.42 Development of Financial Management Program

Establish a financial management program which will efficiently allocate funds for acquisition and development in response to identified recreation needs of County residents.

6.43 Use of Private Sector Sponsors and Concessionaires

- a. Encourage, where feasible, sponsors (i.e., foundations, nonprofit organizations) to maintain and operate special use parks and facilities (i.e., historical sites, nature exhibits).
- b. Solicit, where appropriate, private concessionaires to operate park and recreation facilities. Further, examine the current system of contracting with concessionaires to determine how it can be improved.
- c. Retain, where they exist, structures on newly acquired parkland for use as caretaker residences.

6.44 Cooperative Agreement

Pursue to the maximum extent possible the establishment of cooperative agreements with other public agencies and encourage the private sector to provide park and recreation facilities and services.

PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE OF ALL PARK AND RECREATION FACILITY PROVIDERS

The County will:

6.45 Role of the Federal Government

Encourage the Federal government to provide park and recreation facilities of national significance.

6.46 Role of the State Department of Parks and Recreation

- a. Encourage the State Department of Parks and Recreation to give priority to developing existing facilities.
- b. Encourage the State Department of Parks and Recreation to provide park and recreation facilities of statewide significance.
- c. Designate the State Department of Parks and Recreation as the principal agency to acquire, develop and maintain coastal beaches.

6.47 Role of the Cities

Encourage the cities to provide park and recreation facilities suitable to accommodate active recreation activities which address the needs of the affected community.

6.48 Role of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Encourage the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to acquire, protect, and make available for public use open space lands in rural areas and open space of regional significance in urban areas in cooperation with San Mateo County.

6.49 Role of Private Sector

Encourage the private sector to provide park and recreation facilities and services.

ROLE OF THE COUNTY FOR COUNTY-OWNED PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

6.50 Provision of Countywide Facilities

Provide and maintain, either independently or through joint agreements, park and recreation facilities which are of Countywide significance (i.e., serving more than one city and/or unincorporated community).

6.51 Outdoor Recreation and Programs

Provide County park and recreation facilities for primarily outdoor rather than indoor recreation. Facilities should emphasize the enjoyment and appreciation of natural outdoor settings.

6.52 Park and Recreation Facilities for Unincorporated Areas

Encourage the provision of park and recreation facilities for use by local residents in unincorporated areas consistent with community plans.

ROLE OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

6.53 Plan Development

- a. Work with the public in the formulation of specific Concept Plans, Master Plans, including planning and management guidelines and development plan proposals.
- b. Encourage and solicit public comment through hearings on acquisition and development programs and on planning proposals.
- c. Continue to communicate and cooperate with other agencies, public and private, e.g., Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, Historical Resources Advisory Board, San Mateo County Historical Association, Golden Gate Natural Recreation Area, etc., where appropriate.
- d. Classify all new and existing park and recreation facilities accordingly: Park, Recreation Area, Natural Preserve, Wild Area, Linear Park and Trail, Cultural Facility and Historic Site. Use for each facility the planning and management guidelines and development standards detailed in Appendix D of this Chapter. Solicit public input during the classification process.