

**ISLA VISTA RECREATION
& PARK DISTRICT**

MASTER PLAN
For Recreation & Park Usage

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By the Board of Directors
Isla Vista Recreation and Park District

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SECTION 1 – THE ISLA VISTA RECREATION & PARK DISTRICT

PURPOSE AND ROLE OF THE ISLA VISTA RECREATION & PARK DISTRICT: MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the District is to enhance, improve and protect the quality of life in the community through the maintenance and improvement of parks, and the organization and administration of Recreation Programs. The District will contribute to the health, enjoyment and thriving satisfaction of the people and to the safety, cleanliness and beauty of the environment, its flora and fauna.

The District will acquire and preserve natural open space; will acquire, develop and maintain park land; and will provide recreational, cultural and educational opportunities to its constituents.

As a public entity, the District will encourage public participation in its functions. The resources and activities of the District shall be for the overall benefit of all Isla Vista residents. No individual or group will be discriminated against for reasons of race, sex, age, color, national origin, place of birth, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, opinions, citizenship (as legally allowed), or personal appearance.

The District shall be guided by the theme of respect for the natural environment, and the theme of human cooperation, including cooperation with other agencies. The objective of the Master Plan is to establish a system of parks that provides for and serves public needs. In addition to maintaining parks, the District shall, within its resources, provide a full and varying range of recreational and cultural activities for all residents of Isla Vista. Whenever possible, the District will coordinate with other agencies to maximize the services offered to its constituents, and to maximize efficiency in maintaining and improving parks. This plan shall be rigorously followed. This plan can only be amended or changed by a 2/3 majority vote of the IVRPD Board of Directors.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ISLA VISTA RECREATION & PARK DISTRICT

The District is governed by a 5-member Board of Directors, elected in Isla Vista. Members serve alternating four-year terms. The Board determines District policy, guides priorities, and supervises the annual budget. Board meetings are open to the public. Notices are posted one week in advance, on our public bulletin board. Notices and agendas can be mailed at the request of public members.

The District serves the Isla Vista community, a population of over 20,000 residents and visitors. The District employs 11 full-time employees and over 40 part-time students. The District manages twenty parks with an area of approximately forty-five acres.

HISTORY OF THE ISLA VISTA RECREATION & PARK DISTRICT

The District was formed in 1972 with the intent to provide Isla Vistans with a maximum amount of developed recreational area and open space. This goal continues today. The District has worked towards this goal by acquiring vacant land for parks and gardens; and, in addition, by acquiring land for use as natural preserves, for the perpetuation of various species of vegetation, insects, birds and animal life. It is the District's aim to maintain a high degree of harmony with nature in the preservation of ecology.

One of the most important problems that the Isla Vista Community faces is to prevent the degradation of the environment. A holistic approach to our environment is essential in order to maintain a balance of nature, and to promote a positive direction for the continued construction of the community as development threatens our flora and fauna. It is important for the District's actions to assist, rather than hinder the improvement of planet and animal ecology.

CURRENT CHALLENGES

The Isla Vista Recreation and Park District faces many challenges that did not exist when the Master Plan was last revised in 1998. The following is a summary of key changes affecting the District that have assisted in shaping this Master Plan.

- **Population growth has increased in proportion to the increase in student enrollment at the University of California at Santa Barbara. This has led to a dramatic impact on resources that the District manages. The District must periodically evaluate its programs and the entire park system, in striving to meet the needs of the community.**
- **The cultural and ethnic diversity of the District community has grown, with increased demands for programs to serve youth. In addition, the great numbers of adults residing within the community require new forms of recreation. The range of park users to be served has broadened.**
- **A heightened public interest in open space and recreational areas, coupled with a higher usage of these facilities per capita, has increased the need for services. Public agencies of all types are experiencing increased demands for service, even as they attempt to cope with economic limitations and fiscal uncertainty. The District warmly welcomed the public's support for Measure A in June 1997, which secured financial resources for park and recreational services.**

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

This document serves as a guide to the District's park system, as well as a reference to how the District serves public needs. In addition, the Master Plan sets forth District objectives, principles and standards, and makes a proposal for a system of parks and

recreation that will suit the needs of all the people of Isla Vista, taking into account its Sphere of Influence as a special district in Santa Barbara County.

SECTION 2 – NATURAL RESOURCES

The natural resources of the Isla Vista Recreation and Park District comprise a rare public treasure, containing coastal grasslands, coastal sage scrub, cliffs and blufftops, oak woodlands, vernal pools, and a panoramic vista of the Santa Barbara Channel. The 45 acres of parklands in Isla Vista offer a vast variety of environments which provide essential habitat for wild plants and animals, some which are rare. These same acres provide recreational space to humans, as well. One of the challenges the District faces is to maintain a respectful balance between these co-inhabitants.

This section outlines the goals that pertain to natural resources contained in parklands. Specific policies apply to each type of park. Natural Open Spaces are managed to allow ecological processes to best take their course. The District has identified two sites that have distinctive or irreplaceable resources that require conservation or special management. These sites contain species of plants or animals that are listed as rare, threatened or endangered (RTE) by the State or Federal government. The two sites in Isla Vista that meet these criteria are the Del Sol Vernal Pool Reserve and the Camino Corto Open Space.

The District, in conjunction with other agencies, works to maintain wildlife corridors, which are natural passageways for the movement of wild animals between one open space and another. The District takes a leading role in habitat restoration, by replanting Natural Open Spaces with native flora. In order for native plants to flourish, it is sometimes necessary for exotic vegetation, such as eucalyptus trees, anise and curly dock, to be systematically removed. By removing invasive species, balance may be encouraged within the ecosystem, and the natural ecological processes allowed to occur.

The District is rich in cultural resources, with sites that were once used by Native Americans, and sites that have played a significant role in the development and history of the Isla Vista community. We believe that these resources are of value and must be preserved.

The District maintains its parklands using all organic methods.

We do this with the intention of conserving soil and water quality, protecting park users from toxic materials and promoting plant and animal diversity. Interagency support, planning and cooperation, in conjunction with community cooperation, are necessary to ensure the conservation and protection of our natural resources.

WILDLAND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Approximately 2/3 of District lands are Natural Open Spaces that provide watershed, open areas for passive recreation, and habitat for plant and animal life. The goal of District wildland management is to conserve and enhance important resources such as soil, vegetation, water and wildlife, and to ensure that ecosystems are maintained at their optimum health and productivity.

Management of wildland areas requires the conscientious use of conservation practices. Conservation in thought and practice are entirely with the District's mission. The District has, additionally, a legal responsibility to the State and the Federal governments, which is to protect rare, threatened and endangered (RDE) plant and animal species found in the parks. And finally, the District has a responsibility to be respectful towards its constituents and neighbors, including adjacent property owners.

- **The District will manage, maintain, protect, conserve, enhance and restore wildland resources within the park system, in order to hold essential plant and animal habitat within viable, sustainable ecosystems.**

Vegetation Management

District parks contain certain plant communities that were historically found in the Santa Barbara area. These include a diverse mixture of native trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants of both annual and perennial varieties. The native flora has been damaged dramatically and irreversibly over the past two decades, as a result of expanded urban settlement and the introduction of non-native and exotic plants. Notwithstanding, a surprising number of natives remain in our park system. In response to the continuing threat of habitat disappearance, the District uses management techniques that strive to propagate, restore and enhance native habitat. We strive to maintain an ecological balance between native and non-native plant growth. The long-term goal of this work is to restore a viable ecosystem.

Vegetation management within District parks is designed to maintain plant community dynamics and to preserve the intrinsic value of naturally occurring ecosystems. Some District parks contain pockets of introduced, non-native vegetation, such as eucalyptus trees, broom, fennel and certain weed infestations. These require special management, including, in some cases, removal. Another concern of park management is the spread of "invasive" species that crowd out all or most other species in a given area, creating a monotypic and non-diverse ecosystem.

- **The District will maintain and manage vegetation to conserve, enhance, restore natural plant communities; to preserve and protect populations of rare, threatened, endangered, and sensitive plant species and their habitats; and, where possible, to protect bio-diversity and to achieve a high representation of native plants and animals.**
- **The District will evaluate populations of non-native vegetation on a case-by-case basis for thinning and removal, and/or conservation. The District will minimize the spread of monotypic stands of vegetation. The goal is to methodically replace invasive, non-native vegetation with desirable native species.**
- **The District will maintain fire breaks consistent with County of Santa Barbara County Policies.**

- **The District will manage sites in accordance with practices set forth by Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and the District’s Organic Policy.**

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Terrestrial Wildlife

The diverse assortment of birds, mammals, reptiles and invertebrates that thrive or could thrive in the parks is an integral concern of District wildlife management. Abundant terrestrial wildlife is found within the parks, occupying a variety of habitats. Most species are native and are adapted to the landforms and climate of the Isla Vista mesa. Management of these species is the responsibility of the District, the County of Santa Barbara, the Army Corp of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game. The District will work with these other agencies to protect all precious wildlife, inclusive of those animals that are listed by State and Federal agencies as rare, threatened or endangered (RTE), and those animals that are of special concern to use locally. Certain additional species, whose specific habitat requirements limit their population size and distribution, may require special management to reduce the potential for isolation or loss of population diversity.

- **The District will conserve, enhance and protect native animal species and enhance their habitats to maintain viable wildlife populations within balanced ecosystems. Non-native and feral animals will be managed to minimize conflicts with native wildlife species. The District will cooperate with other public agencies and private land managers, as well as recognized wildlife management experts, to address wildlife management issues.**

Aquatic Wildlife

Isla Vista residents enjoy rich and varied aquatic resources, including creeks, ponds, vernal pools, and parks which interface with ocean beaches. To a certain degree, these aquatic resources define the quality of life in Isla Vista.

- **The District will conserve, enhance and restore native aquatic resources. The District will cooperate with other agencies in the management and protection of these resources.**

RARE, THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES MANAGEMENT

District parks, particularly open spaces, contain numerous plants and animals which are considered rare, threatened or endangered (RTE), or which are considered candidates for such designation. Many of these species are native to the Isla Vista mesa, and are therefore vulnerable to changing conditions brought about by urban development and settlement, including the introduction of non-native plants and animals that take over their habitats. The District gladly complies with Federal and State Endangered Species

Acts, which mandates protection of RTE species and their habitats. Other plants and animals found in the parks, while not officially listed, are rare locally, and require some level of protection.

- **The District will identify and evaluate populations of State and Federally listed rare, threatened and endangered species (RTE), as well as species that are endangered locally, in order to conserve, enhance and restore these plants and animals and their habitats, using scientific research, field experience, and other proven methodologies. The District will work with other agencies and recognized experts on projects of conservation and restoration on District lands. Populations of listed species will be monitored through periodic observations of their condition, size, habitat, reproduction and distribution. Conservation of rare, threatened, and endangered species (RTE) of plants and animals and their supporting habitats will take precedence over other proposed activities, if the District determines that such activities would have a significant adverse effect on the RTE resources.**

WATER MANAGEMENT

Water Resources

The District uses water from Lake Cachuma to irrigate the parks. Runoff created during irrigation has an effect on the water quality at local beaches; i.e. pesticides, herbicides, fungicides and fertilizers carried into runoff into natural waters have huge negative impact on ocean water quality, affecting plants, birds and animal inhabitants of ocean and beach ecosystems, as well as humans who surf, swim and wade. Use of these substances on District lands is prohibited by the District's Organic Policy.

- **The District will employ water conservation techniques that do not degrade local water quality. The District will also work to minimize potential storm water pollution. The District will monitor land use planning and local development activities by other agencies and cities, in order to avoid potential adverse impacts to park land and waters from pollutants generated by these offsite sources.**

Riparian and Wetland Resources

Riparian and wetland areas are the transitional lands between terrestrial and aquatic systems, where the water table is usually at or near the surface, or where the land is covered by shallow water for at least part of the year. Such areas include vernal pools, wet meadows, springs, riparian corridors and their buffer zones, and all other areas which seasonally or permanently exhibit at least one of the attributes described in this section. These water resources increase the appeal of surrounding areas as wildlife habitat for plants and animals that require free water or a wetland environment for all or a portion of their life stages. Wetlands are a rich park resource, expanding water sources and the home ranges or wetland community members. They are ecological transition or buffer zones, which help to prevent the loss of wetland resources due to human encroachment.

- **The District will manage riparian and other wetland environments and buffer zones, to preserve and enhance the natural, beneficial values of these resources, and to prevent the destruction, loss or degradation of habitat. The District will participate in the preservation, restoration and management of riparian and wetland areas, and will not initiate actions that could result in a direct or net decrease in park wetlands.**
- **The District will only accept funds in participating in the mitigation of off-site habitat loss as a result of development when the finding is made that on-site mitigation has been determined by professional experts in the particular field to be unfeasible. All funds accepted by the District under these conditions shall include the costs of mitigating the habitat loss in the ratio required by Local, State and Federal codes, laws and statutes. All funds shall include the costs for the initial three (3) years of maintenance.**
- **The District will encourage public access to the beaches, but will monitor and may control access to delicate riparian and wetland areas, when necessary, to protect natural resources.**

SECTION 3 – PUBLIC ACCESS AND SERVICES

One of the happily realized goals of the Isla Vista Recreation and Park District is that its parks and trails are easily accessible to virtually every Isla Vista resident. It is impossible to go anywhere in Isla Vista and be more than a few blocks from a park, either a developed park or an improved or natural open space.

Most park users are drawn from the local Isla Vista population (20,000 residents), but statistics show that we have many visitors who are here during the summer months or for a weekend. The District welcomes tourists and visitors to come and enjoy our parks and recreational opportunities.

The District serves a broad constituency of people who have diverse needs and interests. The most prominent and widely used feature of our park system is the network of neighborhood and community parks that serve Isla Vistans on a daily basis. Some of the larger parks are used for community festivals and children's recreation programs. The open spaces are preserved for ecological study and observation, relaxation and bird watching. The Isla Vista Recreation and Park District has acquired approximately 45 acres of property. Certain parcels have been developed into parks, while other parcels have been held for use as open space, thus providing the maximum in recreational opportunities.

In addition to the property that we own, the District maintains approximately 7.63 acres of property for the Santa Barbara County Redevelopment Agency (RDA Properties).

PUBLIC ACCESS

Transportation Accessibility

All of Isla Vista's parks can be accessed by bicycle or by walking. Curb-cuts or ramps are generally located at parking perimeters for easy access.

Accessibility for Those Requiring Special Assistance or Facilities

Facilities should be easily accessible for all park users. Comprehensive laws, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the corresponding California Accessibility Code require that places of public accommodation, commercial facilities, building additions, or alterations be designated and constructed to meet specific accessibility standards. The District has initiated a park-by-park study (LUP), and will identify any needs for retrofitting facilities to accommodate physically challenged park users. Many of our parks are already designed for wheelchair access.

- **The District will endeavor to make parks accessible to all potential park users, including individuals and groups who require special assistance with programs or facilities due to physical or mental challenges. The District will**

plan parks to serve the needs of these individuals, thus meeting our commitment to serve all of our constituents.

RECREATION PROGRAMS

Youth Programs

The young citizens of Isla Vista are our most precious resource. The District currently serves Isla Vista youths and their families with after-school recreation programs, and summer programs in the parks. The District will strive to co-operate with other local agencies that provide recreational and educational opportunities for Isla Vista's children. These agencies include the Isla Vista Youth Projects, the Youth Task Force, and the Isla Vista Elementary School. Assistance may include financial contributions or loans, (recognizing the limited funding available for this purpose); use of District facilities, parks, equipment and/or labor as approved by the Board; District participation in the planning and implementation of youth programs; and timely consideration of other requests. In addition, fund development for youth recreational programs is a District priority.

- **The District will provide funding in its annual budget for the operation of two after-school recreation sites. The focus of the activities at the sites will be arts, crafts and cooperative games which promote and build self-esteem.**
- **The District will cooperate with other agencies to support additional programs for Isla Vista youth.**

Annual Festivals

Festivals are a way in which, traditionally, the District has endeavored to create a sense of community. Festivals promote the good health of community spirit. The District acts as co-sponsor to certain events and may waive fees for events that are of benefit to the Isla Vista community. This is at the Board's discretion. The District currently sponsors two annual festivals, one each in the Spring and Fall.

- **The District will organize and sponsor annual festivals in the Spring and Fall months. The District will encourage the community to create their own festivals and will offer District facilities to realize them.**

RECREATIONAL & PARK FACILITIES

The District maintains and develops four kinds of parks: Major Parks, Neighborhood Parks, Blufftop Parks and Natural Open Space. These parks offer a variety of opportunities for passive and active types of recreation.

Alcohol Ordinances in the Parks

Alcohol possession and consumption are prohibited by ordinance in some of the parks. A permit to consume or possess alcohol on a park that falls under the ordinance may be obtained at the District office for a small fee. The District and the Isla Vista Foot Patrol prior to the event must grant permission.

Neighborhood Parks

These parks are located throughout Isla Vista. Their purpose is to serve residents who live in the surrounding neighborhoods. Each park is less than 3 acres in size. They do not have restrooms or playing fields, and they are intended for passive recreational use. This means that parks users can run and play in them and hold small picnics. They are not designed to accommodate large events.

Children's Park – All of our parks are for the children. Built in an area that is densely populated with families, Children's Park contains sandy play areas, with a large collection of sturdy play equipment and benches.

Tierra de Fortuna Park & Kids' Trail – One of our newest parks contains an assorted collection of play equipment, with benches and picnic tables. A barbecue and gazebo are provided for neighborhood gatherings. Leading off of the Park, Kids' Trail affords direct beach access to west-end residents as well as to the children and staff of Isla Vista Elementary School. Tierra de Fortuna Park and Kids' Trail connect to a large tract of undeveloped County-owned land that surrounds the elementary school on two sides, with a network of natural trails and vernal pools.

Pardall Gardens – Located on Pardall Road, the most heavily traveled pedestrian and bicycle route to UCSB, this tiny park is surrounded by restaurants and businesses. A small oasis in a busy world, this park contains picnic tables and a grassy area with trees.

Sueño Park – This mid-block lot, bordered on all sides by a charming variety of trees, contains toddler-sized swings and a slide. The open lawn area can be used for Frisbee and games of catch. Picnic tables are provided.

Trigo-Pasado Park – This mid-block lot, shaded by eucalyptus trees, stretched between the two streets for which the park is named. Includes benches, children's play equipment and a green lawn.

Greek Park – Located on Embarcadero Del Norte, near the UCSB campus, this small complex contains barbecue pits, a concrete gathering area, picnic tables and basketball courts. Greek Park can be rented out for events by calling the District office at (805) 968-2017.

Blufftop Parks

The purpose of these parks is to provide residents and visitors with opportunities to enjoy views of the ocean, surf and the Channel Islands. Marine wildlife such as birds, dolphins, sea lions and whales can be observed from these locations. These parks are each under 3

acres in size. They do not have restrooms or playing fields and are intended for passive recreational use only.

Pescadero Blufftop – A rough open space that compliments the County-owned beach-access path and stairway, Pescadero Blufftop is an excellent vantage point for viewing the ocean.

Rottappel Lot – This narrow open space provides another look at the ocean for residents and passersby. An adjacent County-owned lot broadens the Rottappel view.

Gaffney – The County maintains a large oceanfront park at the end of Camino Corto, called Sea Lookout Park. The District owns the natural open area which forms a transition between the County's Park and nearby housing. This area is potentially a good site for vernal pool restoration.

Window To The Sea – Located in a densely populated area of Isla Vista, Window To The Sea is a small gem of a park, filled with lush plantings. The park features a two-seater swing on a knoll that overlooks the ocean. Come and enjoy.

Natural Open Spaces

Reminiscent of the age before Isla Vista was developed, our natural open spaces provide Isla Vista residents with areas where we can relax and forget about the concerns of everyday life. Some of these areas are planted with trees, shrubs and other natives of the Isla Vista mesa.

Del Sol – Here is a large natural preserve, 11.7 acres in size. Several vernal pools provide a habitat for unique plant and animal species. After the rainy season, the water that stands in shallow pools attracts migratory birds. Little or no development takes place within the preserve. A raised viewing area is equipped with picnic tables and a drinking fountain. This park is environmentally sensitive habitat (ESH) and careful adherence to posted policies is mandatory for all park users.

Sueño Orchard – The District maintains trails through the orchard, which contains over a hundred trees, bearing fruits for Isla Vistans to take and enjoy. The orchard demonstrates organic gardening techniques such as mulching, use of natural fertilizers and drip irrigation.

Major Parks

There are three parks located in downtown Isla Vista. Often the site of community events, these parks are the most heavily-used in the District. In addition, the community gardens and large play areas on Estero Road enhance quality of life for many Isla Vistans.

Anisq'Oyo' Park – This park was the first community-instituted park in Isla Vista. The park was originally constructed by volunteers and was maintained by the District after its formation.

Anisq'Oyo' Park includes a handicapped-accessible amphitheater and stage, which are used for live outdoor performances. The amphitheater may be rented by public members to present live music and other events. A public restroom is located in the park. **To rent Anisq'Oyo' Park for an event, call the District at 968-2017. Be sure to call well in advance.**

Anisq'Oyo' Park features a rustic windmill and a large pond that provides habitat for birds, frogs, turtles and other wildlife. Children's play equipment, picnic tables and benches complete the picture. We have rocking toys (a bumblebee, frog and purple two-seater dragon) and swings.

Perfect Park – Connected to Anisq'Oyo', this park is located at the south end of the Embarcadero Loop. Maintained trails wind through the South portion of the park, which was designed and landscaped by community members. Perfect Park contains native plants that are endemic to the Isla Vista mesa, as well as a large, open grassy area with trees and a picnic table.

Little Acorn Park – Located on the South side of the Embarcadero Loop, this lovely little park includes a shady arbor with benches, grassy areas, a picnic table and a variety of drought tolerant plants.

Estero Park and Community Gardens – Estero Park contains a large sports playfield with soccer goals, ball courts, a picnic area and a large sandy area with children's play equipment. Public restrooms are located in the park for your convenience.

Isla Vista was once a sprawling ranch. The ranch's original Red Barn, maintained by the District, is set among the Estero Oaks, a mature grove-preserve.

This large complex is the site of our Community Gardens Project. The District offers organic garden space to community members, for a nominal fee. Gardeners may use their plots to grow vegetables, herbs and flowers for their own use consistent with District Organic Policies. **To be placed on the waiting list or to rent a garden, call the District office at 968-2017.**

SECTION 4 – PLANNING AND ACQUISITION

BALANCED RESOURCE DISTRIBUTION: A GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Over the years, the Director has based its planning of resources upon informed public review, which has helped to distribute resources equitably, and to form a framework for acquiring, protecting, restoring, and managing park resources, as well as providing recreational facilities and services. This section describes the District's planning processes and policies.

The District strives to provide a balanced system of parks, trails, and services for all District residents. The District allocated resources based primarily upon the needs of the parks and the requests of park users. However, in order to balance land acquisition, development, services, and park operations equitably among the parks, the District evaluates a variety of other important factors for any given project. These factors include financing, long-term goals, special opportunities, and the unique characteristics of each park. The District also endeavors to take advantage of opportunities that can help to supplement or otherwise make the most of residents' tax dollars. Thus, the District affects the balance with the implementation of each project. Balanced resource distribution among parks is a goal to be considered over time, as well as in the day-to-day decisions.

The District welcomed the passage of Measure A in the June 1997 election enabled the District to continue its operation of parks and recreational services. The Board allocates funds generated by Measure A, basing its decisions upon the guiding principle. The Board holds meetings from January to June to discuss the proposed work-plan and budget. Advance notice of meetings is posted in accordance with the Brown Act, and public input is invited.

- **The District will continue to acquire, develop, and operate areas and facilities and to provide programs and services with the primary goal of achieving a long-term balance throughout the park system. The District will continue to allocate resources based on the needs of the District and will use the guiding principle of balanced resource distribution. In order to make the most efficient use of public funds, the District will evaluate its own parks and services, and will seek to support and enhance the programs and services of other agencies.**

KEY ELEMENTS OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

The District's planning efforts stem from a core commitment to public participation. Plans are based upon informed review, which includes a thorough analysis of natural resources and assessment of public use objectives, the protection of open space, compliance with applicable laws and mindfulness of our liaison with other jurisdictions. Each of these key elements of the planning process is addressed below.

Public Participation

The District encourages public participation in all of its planning processes. For example, the District holds a public meeting before developing a Land Use Plan (LUP), to obtain comments from public members about resources available, as well as to find out which activities and facilities are in demand. The LUP process includes review by an appropriate committee, when necessary. The Board will only adopt the LUP after it has been circulated and the public has had ample opportunity to comment on it. As a part of the public-input process, the District notifies interested agencies, groups, individuals and park neighbors who may be impacted. The District publishes/posts notice of public hearings concerning the plan.

- **The District will post public notices about upcoming plans and/or projects, which include the date and time of public hearings. Hearings will usually take place at the District office. Whenever feasible or necessary, hearings will be scheduled to take place in the park where the proposed plans will take effect. Meetings will be scheduled and noticed in an effort to fully communicate the goals of the plan and/or project to public members and interested parties, and to accept public review and comment.**

Compliance with Environmental Laws

The District follows policies and procedures that comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The District evaluates the environmental impact of planned projects and prepares the appropriate CEQA documentation in conformance with District policies. In the case of parks located on lands owned by other jurisdictions, the District fully considers the comments of neighboring agencies, as required by CEQA and District policies. Additionally, the District complies with applicable laws and permit requirements.

- **All District planning documents and policies shall be developed and approved in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and, when appropriate, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).**

Resource Use Analysis and Resource Protection

Resource protection is a primary goal of the District planning process. In order to meet this goal, the District will conduct field investigations, research and surveys. These methods will enable us to analyze existing uses, conditions and constraints, as well as potential threats and opportunities for improvement. Measures will be taken to address problems and to mitigate the impact that plans for alteration and development may have on natural resources. The District will actively seek public review of these recommendations. Another primary planning goal is to determine the appropriate use for potential parks before initiating projects for parks and facilities. The District determines appropriate use through its own surveys, existing policies and observations, as well as surveys by other agencies and comments from the public. These methods help the District to form a basis for establishing public use.

- **The District will identify important natural resources in the parks and develop measures to protect them. Based upon its evaluation, the District will make recommendations and take appropriate action within the District's capability. The District will consider the needs of potential park users by soliciting comments at public hearings. The District will also consider resource information and recreational policies, in determining future recreation facilities and projects.**

Open Space Protection

Cities and Counties in California are required by State legislation to include an open space element in their general plans. Open space is defined broadly in this legislation to mean land that is used for preservation of natural resources and land for use in managed production of resources. The definition also includes land or water for protection of fishing or mineral deposits, land, or water for recreation, or land for public health and safety. A wide range of public agencies and private groups are involved in the protection of open spaces, and a wide range of approaches are being used. The District participates actively in this open space preservation effort.

The District seeks to protect its parks through policies that promote preservation of open space. The District will work with the County and other agencies to preserve open space, in order to enhance biodiversity and protect important wildlife habitat and corridors.

- **The District will participate in efforts to protect open space in Isla Vista. Whenever appropriate, the District will work with other agencies that recognize the District's interest in open space preservation, such that the outcome of all liaisons is consistent with Board policy. The District will support and abide by legislation that requires inclusion and preservation of natural open space.**

Liaison with Other Agencies

The District maintains direct relationships with other public agencies that have common interests, through formal or informal liaison committees. The District also participates in joint powers agreements of various types, and serves on a wide range of special purpose committees and study groups. The District monitors the activities of the City of Santa Barbara, County of Santa Barbara, University of California at Santa Barbara, numerous special districts, and a variety of state, federal and regional agencies, in order to identify mutual goals and to protect its interests. The District requests changes in proposed projects and/or requests specific mitigation measures and conditions of approval, in order to protect or support its purposes. The District seeks financial assistance from these agencies, as appropriate, in order to acquire, develop, operate or maintain District properties.

- **The District will work actively with cities, counties, districts and other governmental agencies to assure that they understand and consider District interests. The District will protect its interests when other agencies plan or**

- approve projects that affect the District's constituents, and will work with these agencies to offer possible mitigation or solutions. The District will seek to understand the perspectives of other governmental agencies, to resolve conflicts in a mutually satisfactory manner.**
- **The District will work with local governments and other agencies to develop funding agreements that offset the cost of maintaining and operating open space and parklands accepted by the District.**

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND LAND USE PLANNING

The District's planning documents establish the direction for future resource management, land use and facility development. Planning projects vary greatly in scale depending on the issues to be resolved, goals to be achieved and applicable codes, as well as laws and regulations which apply to the scope of the project. The District has historically prepared a summary of the project documents and presented this at Board meetings for public review.

- **To protect park resources while providing for recreational use and access, the District will prepare documentation of park resources and comprehensive plans for parks (LUP's), which describe the various levels of resource protection and recreational intensity in the parks. Planning efforts will include consideration by the Board of public comment through noticed public hearings. The District will strive to create and maintain up-to-date information about each of its parks. Significant changes or amendments to adopted Land Use Plans (LUP) will require further public comment and Board action.**

Land Use Plan (LUP)

A Land Use Plan (LUP) is the description and long-range plan for an entire park. This plan evaluates existing park resources; it also documents and recommends programs for managing and conserving these resources, discusses key planning issues, indicates relevant policies, and offers proposals for future improvements. A Land Use Plan typically includes a description and evaluation of existing facilities and their uses, with an assessment of public needs. LUP's help the District and the public to keep abreast of information that is critical managing the park wisely. The District has as its long-term goal, to create a Land Use Plan for each park.

- **District Land Use Plans will identify current features of parks, as well as describe their current needs and uses. LUP's will be comprehensive in scope, providing information on future resource management strategies and recreational uses for each park in its entirety. The District will continue to prepare Land Use Plans for new and existing parks, and will amend these as the parks grow and change.**

PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Planning and Management Guidelines for Natural Open Space

The purpose of Natural Open Space Parks is to provide a wildlife habitat and to provide land in a naturally-occurring form for the perpetuation of various forms of insects, birds, vegetation and other animal life natural to this area; and to provide a land resource which promotes human understanding and cooperation with the environment; and to provide opportunities for park users to relax in a natural environment and to observe wildlife. The District recognizes the need to preserve vacant lands that provide human enjoyment derived from the aesthetics of natural vistas, existing trees, vegetation and unique natural landforms found within Isla Vista. Existing vacant lands are also recognized to have value, in that they provide visual relief from the predominance of developed parcels in Isla Vista.

Planning and Management Guidelines for Improved and Developed Parks

The purpose of Improved Parks is to serve the diverse interests of Isla Vista constituents of all ages. The District recognizes that Isla Vista is primarily an apartment community that lacks yard areas, and that there is a need to secure parks throughout the community to provide adequate recreational opportunities. Improved Parks provide a release from the congested Isla Vista environment. Wherever possible, improved parks are integrated with plans for street removal, for incorporation of former street areas into the parks. This reduces automobile traffic safety problems, as well as traffic noise and pollution adjacent to areas of play, while enhancing the size and appearance of parks. Improved parks will incorporate the aspects of open space parks to the maximum degree compatible with designated improvements. Access to improved parks and all amenities shall be available to all members of the community. Major site improvements shall be approved by the Board of Directors and all improvements shall adhere to the following standards:

- **Improvements shall be sympathetic to nature, the amenities of the site and the surrounding areas;**
- **Natural colors and materials, such as stained and unfinished woods, brick, shingles, stone, adobe, tile and warm earthen colors will be encouraged;**
- **Existing trees shall be preserved per District policies;**
- **Parking and driveways shall be screened by landscaping, wall and fences, or else shall be incorporated in a manner that is aesthetically pleasing;**
- **Natural resource conservation techniques shall be used. Where determined to be economically and aesthetically feasible by the General Manager, recycled or recyclable materials are preferable.**
- **Consideration shall be made to provide plants consisting of edible, fragrant, medicinal or colorful parts. Consideration shall be made to the planting of**

native species and species useful to wildlife. Consideration will be given to plants that promote a diverse environment for the flora and fauna of Isla Vista.

DEVELOPED PARKS

Developed Parks provide recreational activities that require an intense use of space, protection from the weather, and facilities not permitted in open space parks or improved parks, such as sheds, restrooms, gazebos, platforms and children's play equipment. Plans for developed parks should be the same as improved parks, i.e. they should be considerate to nature, the amenities of the site and the surrounding areas. Construction materials should consist of natural colors, such as stained woods and warm earthen colors, whenever feasible. Landscaping, walls, fences or berms will screen parking areas and driveways, when feasible. Adequate exterior lighting will be provided whenever feasible.

FACILITY DEVELOPMENT

- The District builds facilities within the parks to protect resources, serve operational requirements and support recreation uses and activities. The location of facilities is designated in the planning document for each park. Facility development ranges from small projects such as signs, fences, or foot bridges across creeks, to parking lots and community centers. The District schedules construction of facilities as part of the annual capital budget and work-plan process. Factors that can influence scheduling of construction include project size, the need to respond to emergencies, unforeseen availability of funds and natural emergencies.

General Development of Facilities

- **The District will seek to locate facilities in a manner which preserves open space whenever possible. The District will design proposed facilities so that their color, scale, style and materials will blend with the natural and existing landscape. Park improvements will be designed to avoid or minimize impacts on wildlife habitats, plant populations and other resources.**

Capital Improvement Budget

- **The District will prepare a three-year Capital Improvement Budget, listing construction projects to be built over a three-year period. The Capital Improvement Budget will be based on available funds. The District will fully consider approved park plans in preparing the Capital Improvement Budget, as well as request from public members.**

Development Proposals

- **The District will follow established procedures and guidelines consistent with the Master Plan, in considering proposals from individuals or groups who wish to develop or use facilities within the parks. It may be necessary to**

prepare an amended or more focused project plan before the project can be approved. Fees may be charged to the individual or group proposing the project, to cover permits and environmental and planning costs.

Environmental Compliance

- **The District will fully comply with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the development of new facilities. Evidence of CEQA compliance will be provided in the planning document, or separately as a project-specific CEQA document. The District will also comply, when appropriate, with the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA). District policies shall be used as a guide in implementing these environmental acts.**

SECTION 5 – HUMAN & FINANCIAL RESOURCES

OUR RESOURCE BASE

In order to achieve the District's vision and mission, the Isla Vista Recreation and Park District must rely on broad public involvement and support, a sound financial base, skilled employees, and dedicated friends and associates. This section discusses these critical human and financial resources, and sets forth policies intended to build a strong financial foundation for the future.

Public Service

The Isla Vista Recreation and Park District traces its beginnings to the actions of local citizens. These dedicated people expressed the need to create a public park system, in order to preserve the quality of life for the present, as well as for the future residents and visitors of Isla Vista. Since that time, public service and participation by the public in the governance of the District, have always been fundamental goals of District activity. The District recognizes that the public it serves is becoming more culturally diverse, and that this diversity is a growing source of inspiration and strength.

Public Outreach

The population of the District is growing and becoming culturally more diverse. In the past twenty years, the population of the District has almost doubled.

- **The District will continue to adapt its services and programs in response to changes in the District's resident population, recognizing that the cultural diversity of the District will change with the population changes.**
- **The District will develop programs and activities consistent with the District's mission. The District will also focus on developing programs to involve local youth. These programs will be coordinated, whenever possible, with other organizations in the County of Santa Barbara, emphasizing partnership with school districts, recreation and conservation agencies, universities and community groups.**
- **The District will endeavor to broaden its outreach efforts, multilingual media programs and signage, in order to inform the public about its mission, programs and facilities, as well as its hiring practices and opportunities, in an effort to encourage participation by constituents in all aspects of District activities. The District will communicate to its various audiences with sensitivity to their needs and will seek to ensure that its purposes and services are well understood. The District will solicit community input on an on-going basis regarding how to interest and meet the needs of the community.**

Public Participation

The District strongly encourages public comment, advice and participation in a wide range of issues relating to the service it provides as a public agency.

- **All meetings of the Board of Directors and its committees will be open to the public, and conducted in full compliance with the provisions and intent of the Ralph M. Brown Act. The District will use the public meeting process to receive and evaluate public comment, and will properly notify newspapers of general circulation, in the area of its meetings. The District will communicate with neighbors and community groups, and will conduct information meetings with interested groups, as needed, to clarify District programs and activities. Where appropriate, the District will mail notices of its meetings to interested park users and adjacent landowners.**
- **As necessary, the Board will establish special advisory committees, task forces, joint study committees, and joint powers agencies, which will gather information, solve problems, and provide recommendation for complex park issues. These committees will report their recommendation to the Board.**

HUMAN RESOURCES

The efforts of many people – employees, volunteers, elected Board members, advisory committee members, contractors, concessionaires, interns and others, are critical to the continued operation of the District and the realization of the goals of this Master Plan. The District has developed an efficient and successful employee organizational structure. The greatest percentage of the District work force is utilized in park operations, maintenance and improvements, i.e. the bulk of hours are spent directly on the parks. Administrative Staff provides support for staff doing park maintenance and improvements, in addition to providing support for the Board of Directors and for the needs of the Public.

Employees

District employees are the core of our human resource support system, and provide dedicated professional service for all aspects of the District's operations. The District currently employs 10 people as regular employees. These staff members maintain parks and facilities and provide administrative support. The District hires seasonal employees to fill out work requirements during peak periods, and hires temporary employees to fill short-term non-recruiting needs. As delegated by the Board of Directors and directed by the General Manager, employees are responsible for the work necessary to achieve the District's vision and mission.

- **The District will maintain a staff of highly motivated and skilled public employees to manage, supervise, coordinate and work on the District's activities, including maintenance, operation, safety, education, administration, resource management, acquisition, development, program services and public communications. These services will be supported through the use of volunteers, interns, contractors, concessionaires or others, in addition to Staff.**

- **Before opening a park to the public, the District will provide sufficient funds, equipment and staffing for the proper level of park maintenance. The District will review this level periodically for the entire District, and/or as it adds new facilities or lands. The District will provide administrative and service facilities for efficient operation of the parks.**

Volunteers

Volunteers link the District to the community and other organizations throughout the region. Volunteers provide an important level of support for District employees, serving District activities and programs. They are a cherished resource, whenever available. The District welcomes the participation of volunteers in all suitable aspects of its operations.

- **The District will actively seek volunteers, individuals, and organizations to support its activities and programs, both ongoing and new. Volunteer service will be coordinated with and integrated into District operations in a manner that compliments the services provided by staff, concessionaires, contractors and others. The District will commit resources to support volunteer services and will offer formal recognition to acknowledge the value of volunteers.**

Interns

The services provided through the intern programs represent a cooperative relationship between the District and other educational or service organizations. Interns are generally young persons seeking experience in the work world who may serve for a period of several months to more than a year, and usually receive academic units for their work. Interns provide significant service to the District for planning, management or financial studies, fieldwork and public outreach programs. They receive valuable training in return. Interns are an important bridge between the community and the District, bringing new ideas to the District and conveying their experience here to other students and residents. The District may also view interns as potential employees.

- **The District will preserve and expand project opportunities for interns.**

Concessionaires

Concessionaires are businesses that use District facilities to provide services or activities that the District could not otherwise provide. Concessionaires typically provide some revenue to the District, although the amount may be nominal, depending on the type of service provided. Based on market conditions, financial records, quality of service and experience of the facility, the District changes the operating mode of a service in keeping with environmental standards and park values. The District modifies or discontinues a concessionaire service should it not be consistent with the District's goals, (refer to the District's policy on concessionaires).

- **The District will use concessionaires, consistent with District policies and when they are economically viable, as independent entities to augment services to the public. Concessions may be used to operate special**

recreational facilities, such as food service or retail sales, at District parks. Concessionaires will be required to provide a high quality of service, to maintain the condition of the facility, and to provide some share of revenues to the District in return for the use of District assets. Concessionaires who provide services in District facilities, or for District activities, will be required to uphold environmental standards and park values consistent with the District's mission and policies.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

To support its many activities, the District relies on several funding sources, all of which are subject to and comply with laws and procedures governing the financial activities of public agencies. The District's major source of financial support for operations, maintenance and funding of recreational programs, is that of special taxes levied in Isla Vista. The District manages the monies it receives in three broad funding categories: General, Capital and Debt Service. Funds may be restricted, based upon law or policy, and are appropriated and disbursed in accordance with the District's Annual Budget, Landscape and Lighting District engineer's report, and other mandated processes.

- **The District will seek to protect and augment diversified, equitable, long-term funding sources that support the strategic goals described in this Master Plan and will manage, within these resources, to assure the District's continuing sound financial operation.**

Property Tax Revenues

One of the major sources of the District's General Fund is that of property tax revenues received in accordance with the County of Santa Barbara's Teeter Plan. The District received property taxes from the County of Santa Barbara in accordance with California law.

- **The District will continue to use property tax revenues as a supplementary means for meeting its public service responsibilities.**

Fees and Charges

The District derives revenue from fees collected for use of facilities and garden space, in addition to rents. Fees traditionally make up approximately five percent of the District General Fund revenues. Fees are structured to recoup the costs of special events, and may be adjusted to limit impacts on facilities. The District may charge a premium for special activities, and may elect to reduce or waive fees for individuals who require financial assistance, or for non-profit community interest groups, in accordance with District policies. The District reviews and adjusts fees and charges accordingly. New programs and activities offered in the future may have to be supported through user fees.

- **The District may establish fees for programs and services.**

Bonds and Other Borrowing

The District has historically borrowed funds to pay for the acquisition of land or large capital improvement projects. Revenue may not be sufficient in the General Fund to pay for land acquisition or for large capital improvement projects.

- **Where economically advantageous, the District may borrow to make major capital equipment or fixed asset purchases. The District may borrow funds on a short-term basis against anticipated revenue, to fund annual operation, in accordance with California law.**

Special Taxes

The District has two special taxes that have been approved by the voters. The first special tax was passed in 1988, and allows the District to levy a maximum tax of \$10.00 per door and \$0.05 per square foot of commercial space. The tax may be levied to augment General Funds used for park maintenance and improvements.

A second special tax (Measure A) was approved by voters in June of 1997. The special tax replaced existing benefit assessment district revenues used for park maintenance and improvements. The monies generated by Measure A are more elastic than previous benefit assessment district revenues, and can be used for recreation programs in addition to park maintenance and improvements. The special tax is levied every June by the Board of Directors, and can be increased by inflation factors with certain limitations.

- **The District will continue to levy Special Taxes as a primary means for meeting its public service responsibilities.**

Revenue from Leases

The District will, from time to time, lease certain facilities when it benefits the public. Revenues from such leases have historically made up a minimal amount of District revenues.

- **Leases will be negotiated in accordance with District policies and California Law to enhance park activities or value, and to maximize revenue to the District. Revenues generated from leases will, at minimum, offset the direct or indirect costs of affecting the lease, and are expected to provide additional revenue to the General Fund.**

Benefit Assessment Districts

In 1992, the District established two Benefit Assessment Districts for the purpose of paying bond debts in connection with the purchase of blufftop parcels and Perfect Park. Both Assessment District assisted with securing more open space for current and future residents of Isla Vista. Specifically, Perfect Park, a site of historical significance, was preserved, and today it is a park planted with local native species.

- **The District will continue administering the current benefit assessment districts and related zones of benefit, which support local open space. The**

District will consider establishing additional zones of benefit in support of local open space or recreational facilities, when these areas are congruent with Master Plan objectives. The District will also consider using benefit assessment revenues for acquisitions or improvements, or for debt service to fund such improvements with public input.

Donations, Grant and Endowments

The District receives funding directly from time to time, from donations, grants and gifts through fund-raising or grant-writing activities. Additionally, the District uses a separate non-profit corporation, Isla Vista Public Improvement Corporation, to receive significant funds from grants, donations or gifts not directly available to government agencies. In 1996, grants from a variety of federal and local agencies provided more than \$40,000 in improvement funds.'

- **The District will continue to aggressively seek grants, donations of funds, assets and services that support Master Plan goals. Funds will be disbursed through the annual budget process or in accordance with specific funding agreements.**

Agreements with Other Agencies

The District engages in many financial relationships with other agencies, including joint powers agreements and tax sharing contracts. In addition, the District provides services in exchange for funds, which other agencies cannot efficiently provide. The District currently operates a street sweeping program in Isla Vista that is funded by the University, Goleta West Sanitary District and the County of Santa Barbara. Programs like these present a combined effort with other agencies, for most efficient use of public monies toward a specific purpose.

- **The District will coordinate with and/or provide services to other agencies when the activities are related to the District's mission. Service agreements will include provision of payments to the District, which are sufficient to support the direct and indirect cost of providing such a service.**

SECTION 6 – OUR SHARED FUTURES

Today, because of continued urbanization, the need for a local system of publicly owned recreational facilities, open space areas and trails, is perhaps even greater than it was 32 years ago when the District was started. As in 1972, the times are uncertain. Legislative pressures, ballot initiatives, and efforts to restructure local government, threaten the District with the potential loss of essential revenues in the face of growing demands for services. Among the key challenges that could shape Isla Vista in the next century, are economic uncertainty; population growth and a related need for more recreational resources; increased ethnic and cultural diversity; imported scientific knowledge in the areas of natural and cultural resource management; and land use changes that could create more parks in urban areas. The District accepts its responsibility to address these important challenges, and offers this Master Plan as its response to the opportunities created by change.

The 1998 Master Plan is a rededication of the Isla Vista Recreation and Park District to the vision of its founders, the public-spirited citizens and elected officials who accurately foresaw the great potential of this region, and who had the courage and the will to advocate the creation of a park system for the benefit and enjoyment of the public. The Plan acknowledges the continuing commitment of citizens, elected officials, and staff, whose dedicated efforts have expanded the District from its first park, Anisq'Oyo', to a system of over 20 parks. The Master Plan will guide the District as it responds to challenges that lie ahead. The guidelines established by the Plan will further the protection of natural and cultural resources, help the District provide needed public access and recreational services, guide the District's public planning process to balance resource conservation and recreation, and enable the District to manage its human and financial resources effectively. This section of the Master Plan describes the future physical growth and expansion of the District, highlights the priorities for the next decade, and discusses an annual budget, which is the chief vehicle for realizing the goals of the Master Plan and the vision and mission of the District.

Parks, Trails, and Services for the Twenty-First Century

The major areas of growth envisioned in this Master Plan for the next ten years, include the completion of efforts to restore native vegetation throughout the park system. Continued efforts will be made to enhance and restore native ecosystems throughout the District, as feasible.

Future Additions to the District

The future physical growth and expansion of the Isla Vista Recreation and Park District will be described in each Land Use Plan (LUP) that the District will develop, with input from the public, during the upcoming years. The park matrix, included in this Master Plan, shows existing amenities in each park, and illustrates the room for growth.

Master Plan Priorities

The 1997 Master Plan sets the following priorities for implementing the vision and mission of the District in the next decade:

- **Continue to preserve open space, as well as natural and cultural resources in the parks, through planning, acquisition, management, and liaison with other agencies and organizations.**
- **Complete the acquisition of the blufftop properties.**
- **Complete the development of Land Use Plan (LUP's) for each park.**
- **Actively seek individual, business, and corporate sponsorship, encourage volunteer and intern activities and form other partnerships that improve the availability of services.**
- **Expand the interpretive and recreational programs to reach more District residents. Launch a focused effort to attract young people and families into the parks. Develop and modify recreational programs, as necessary, to meet the community's needs.**
- **Encourage local communities, agencies, and organizations to create opportunities for children, youth and families to come to the parks.**

Shaping the Future: The Annual Budget

The chief vehicle for translating the District's vision and mission into action is its annual budget. The District evaluates and prioritizes all proposed services each year in the course of preparing its annual budget, which serves as its "work-plan" for the coming year, in keeping with the goals of the Master Plan. The budget is prepared under the direction of the General Manager, in cooperation with the Finance Committee. Finance Committee meetings are open to the public and are generally held during the months of January-June. The annual budget is supported by other information developed to ensure long-term continuation of District activities.

As part of the annual budget process, the District analyzes the impact that new acquisitions, facility development and increased levels of use will have on its operations, and make strategic adjustments. Since 1988, the District has, within budget revenues, accommodated growth in parks services. The District has accomplished this by carefully balancing financial resources with desire for services.

The District develops its annual budget with public review and comment. Thus, the preparation of the budget each year provides an ongoing opportunity for residents of the District to participate in shaping the future of the parks.

The Board of Directors and the Staff of the Isla Vista Recreation and Park District are committed to working day by day, year by year, to achieve the goals of this Master Plan. We welcome the involvement of all District residents in this important endeavor.

- **The District will continue to use its annual budget process as the primary means for achieving the goals of the Master Plan, and will manage the growth of the park system within the available budget revenues. New revenue will be sought, and adjustments to basic services will be considered during the budget process, in order to provide new, modified, or expanded services.**