



County of San Luis Obispo

## **PARKS & RECREATION**

Curtis Black, Interim Director

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THINK OUTSIDE!

Date: October 30, 2014  
To: Brian Pedoritti, Planner, County Planning Department  
From: Elizabeth Kavanaugh, Planner, County Parks and Recreation Department  
RE: Resource Summary Report Criteria for Parks

After review of the Resource Summary Report's proposed Level of Severity criteria for parks, County Parks and Recreation has determined that park acreage per population served is the best level of service indicator for parks. We request two indicator categories are removed: Parkland or recreation facilities that are inconsistent with the Park and Recreation Element; and deferred maintenance on parks. These indicator criteria do not enable measurable levels of severity for parks.

The "Parkland or recreation facilities are inconsistent with the Park and Recreation Element" criterion is not a good level of severity indicator because the County Parks and Recreation Element includes existing and proposed parks. The Parks and Recreation Element is a planning document that guides future park and recreation facility projects.

The "Deferred maintenance on parks" criterion is not a good level of severity indicator because maintenance needs are subjective and not easily measurable. Deferred maintenance does not directly correlate to the park and recreation facilities provided. The purpose of the Resource Summary Report is review today's community resources. During the two years captured by this Resource Summary Report all parks and facilities have been open and deferred maintenance has not forced the closure of a park or park feature which would affect the level of severity.



## Chapter 3 of Framework for Planning (Inland) – Resource Management System – Planning Commission Recommendation – Parks-Rec revisions

### Parks: Policy Issues

Parks are an important part of our communities. The County General Plan’s Parks and Recreation Element (PRE), adopted in 2006, states that:

“Recreation and exercise are fundamental to a healthy life. The benefits include greater productivity, less disease, and a brighter future. As the population grows, competition for recreational resources increases. Wide open spaces, once the haven of the equestrian, hiker and poet, are more often fenced and the right of exclusivity enforced. As the development and formality of our area increases, so must the provision of recreation spaces that are available to all people.”

With County acknowledgement of the importance of parks in our lives, the RMS is a good tool to assess our success in providing this important community need.

The PRE describes not only the difficulties of funding new parklands and park development, but also the challenge of funding their ongoing operations and maintenance. Policy 6.4 addresses the importance of ongoing funding of parks:

“Prior to accepting or developing a new park, County Parks shall determine the long-term maintenance and operating costs associated with the proposed project. The County shall not develop the park until adequate funds are available for maintenance.”

The PRE includes several park classifications, which include mini-parks, linear parks, neighborhood and community parks, regional parks, and recreation settings. The criteria for levels of severity for parks consist of both nationally recognized park acreage standards, and the ability to fund park maintenance activities. The criteria also recognize the need to provide proper distribution of the various park classifications throughout each community and the availability of recreational facilities within parks.

**Table M**  
**Parks: Level of Severity Criteria and Recommended Actions<sup>1</sup>**

<u>Level of Severity</u>	<u>Parks Criteria</u>	<u>Recommended Actions</u>
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## Chapter 3 of Framework for Planning (Inland) – Resource Management System – Planning Commission Recommendation – Parks-Rec revisions

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>I</u></p>	<p><u>Regional Parks. The County provides between 10 and 15 acres of regional parkland per 1,000 population for the county’s total population (i.e., incorporated and unincorporated population)</u></p> <p><u>Community Parks. An unincorporated community has between 2.0 and 3.0 acres of community parkland per 1,000 population, OR</u></p> <p><u>Parkland or recreation facilities are somewhat inconsistent with the Parks and Recreation Element. This may include the following considerations: i) substantial concentration of parkland in too few areas of a community, leaving other areas with insufficient parkland, ii) insufficient parkland within a particular park classification, or iii) an insufficient amount of active park recreation facilities (i.e. sports fields, courts) for a community, OR</u></p> <p><u>Deferred maintenance on a park has accrued to greater than 2 years of maintenance activities.</u></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Collaborate with County Parks (General Services Agency) to review the Parks and Recreation Project List in the Parks and Recreation Element and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding which park projects to implement.</u></li> <li>2. <u>Collaborate with other potential parks operators such as CSDs and school districts to provide park and recreation opportunities.</u></li> </ol>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>II</u></p>	<p><u>Regional Parks. The County provides between 5 and 10 acres of regional parkland per 1,000 population for the county’s total population (i.e., incorporated and unincorporated population).</u></p> <p><u>Community Parks. An unincorporated community has between 1.0 to 2.0 acres of community parkland per 1,000 population, OR</u></p> <p><u>Parkland or recreation facilities are substantially inconsistent with the Parks and Recreation Element. This may include the considerations described in the criteria for Level of Severity I, OR</u></p> <p><u>Deferred maintenance on a park has accrued to greater than 5 years of maintenance activities.</u></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <del><u>Recommend to the Board of Supervisors that maintenance should be increased at certain park facilities.</u></del></li> <li>2. <u>Collaborate with County Parks (General Services Agency) to review the Parks and Recreation Project List in the Parks and Recreation Element and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding which park projects to implement.</u></li> <li>3. <u>Collaborate with other potential parks operators such as CSDs and school districts to provide park and recreation opportunities.</u></li> </ol>

## Chapter 3 of Framework for Planning (Inland) – Resource Management System – Planning Commission Recommendation – Parks-Rec revisions

<p><b>III</b></p>	<p><u>Regional Parks. The County provides between 5 and 10 acres of regional parkland per 1,000 population for the county’s total population (i.e., incorporated and unincorporated population).</u></p> <p><u>Community Parks. An unincorporated community has 1.0 acre or less of community parkland per 1,000 population,</u> <u>OR</u></p> <p><u>Parkland or recreation facilities are mostly inconsistent with the Parks and Recreation Element. This may include the considerations described in the criteria for Level of Severity I, OR</u></p> <p><u>Deferred maintenance on a park has accrued to greater than 8 years of maintenance activities.</u></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <del>Recommend to the Board of Supervisors that maintenance should be increased at certain park facilities.</del></li> <li>2. <u>Collaborate with County Parks (General Services Agency) to review the Parks and Recreation Project List in the Parks and Recreation Element and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding which park projects to implement.</u></li> <li>3. <u>Collaborate with other potential parks operators such as CSDs and school districts to provide park and recreation opportunities.</u></li> </ol>
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1. ~~Levels of severity are recommended by County Parks (General Services Agency) using the criteria in this table.~~

### Parks: Resource Capacity Study

A resource capacity study is prepared by County Parks (General Services Agency). It should:

1. Inventory existing parkland in the affected unincorporated community.
2. Document existing shortfalls in park acreage.
3. Describe the distribution and classification levels of parkland throughout the community.
4. Determine maintenance shortfalls.