



SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION



STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2020

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STRATEGIC PLAN

This Strategic Plan is a five year plan to establish goals and measures to move forward in implementing the Park and Recreation Element (PRE) of the County's General Plan to meet the needs of the community and accomplish the mission of the Department. This plan states our organization's focus for the next five years, but it does not include everything our organization does.

This plan has been reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Commission in two meetings open to the public for comment and input. The plan will be reviewed annually to track progress using a scorecard measure and will be publicly reported. In year three, the plan will be fully reviewed and a process will begin to create a new five year plan building on the successes and the areas for improvement that are identified during the implementation of this plan.



The plan outlines a five-year vision, a measure to know when we've reached that vision, and goals and objectives to keep us on track. Separate from this plan, the Department will annually create an implementation plan detailing what actions will be taken to achieve our goals and will set targets for each of our performance measures.

Three methods of measurement will be used to track performance: 1) The Department will benchmark its performance based on other similar size and scope departments across the country using the Parks and Recreation Operating Ratio and GIS (PRORAGIS™) system sponsored by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA); 2) The Department will have performance measures for each objective listed later in this document to track progress and meet annual targets and 3) The Department will publicly report our performance using a balanced scorecard approach using the perspectives of the Visitor and Community, Financial, Organizational, and Employee Learning and Development.

ALIGNMENT WITH OTHER PLANS

San Luis Obispo County has an approved General Plan that sets the broad long range goals for the County and establishes the Mission, Vision and Values (Appendix C). The Parks and Recreation Element is part of the County General Plan and is further discussed later in this document.

The County is committed to becoming and remaining a World Class Organization. Seven elements are defined to help the County achieve this goal:

1. Provide a high level of customer service. Be responsive to community wants and needs and exceed expectations.
2. Operate efficiently and relentlessly pursue continuous improvement
3. Strong financial performance
4. Utilize data driven decision making
5. Communicate well (clearly and frequently)
6. Focus on learning (seek new ideas and information and learn from mistakes)
7. Measure performance (measure of all of the above)

This Strategic Plan is intended to fully align with the County General Plan and set measures to help the Department achieve the goals of the Parks and Recreation Element. The Department's Mission, Vision and Values support the County's Mission, Vision and Values. As a newly created Department, this Strategic Plan will set a course for the first five years of activity and will assist in the County becoming a World Class Organization. Each performance measure will be followed with an identifier defining which element of a World Class Organization is targeted by that measure (i.e. WCO#4)

FIVE YEAR VISION

The San Luis Obispo County Department of Parks and Recreation will provide places for people to have memorable experiences that allow them to pursue happiness.

MEASURE

We will know we have achieved our five year vision if, by the year 2020, we are an accredited agency by the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA).

HISTORY OF THE DEPARTMENT

San Luis Obispo County formally began managing parks in 1929 when the County identified miscellaneous expenses associated with "beach parks." In 1932, the County included funding for "County Parks" and for the next five decades, the Department of Parks and Beaches grew to meet the growing demand for parks and recreation.

By the early 1980s, the County was faced with declining revenues and, following a trend seen throughout the state, County government was reorganized in an attempt to reduce costs. The Department of Parks and Beaches was eliminated and consolidated into a division within the newly formed Department of General Services. In 2008, General Services was elevated to an Agency that included County Parks, Airports, Information Technology, Architectural Services, and Real Property Services.



For the past decade, the Parks and Recreation Commission recommended that the County create a Department of Parks and Recreation based on findings from the County Grand Jury and a task force created to analyze the feasibility of a stand-alone department. In 2014, the County created the San Luis Obispo County Department of Parks and Recreation.

Parks facilities range from very large regional parks that are thousands of acres down to coastal access ways that occupy a fraction of an acre. In between are such diverse facilities as bike trails, a historic adobe and a geographically diverse system of community parks that host over 3.2 million annual visitors. The golf program has three championship-style 18-hole courses. The Department also provides grounds maintenance for county owned properties throughout the county.

PARK AND RECREATION ELEMENT

The County has had a Recreation Element as a component of the General Plan since 1968. In 1993, the Board of Supervisors authorized combining the former Recreation Element, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan (1988), and the Trails Plan (1991) into a comprehensive Parks and Recreation Element (PRE) which was finalized in 2006. The PRE establishes goals, policies and implementation measures for management, renovation and expansion of existing, and development of new, parks and recreation facilities in order to meet existing and projected needs and to assure an equitable distribution of parks throughout the county.

The purpose of the PRE is to:

- Provide policy guidance regarding the provision of park and recreation services
- Document the County's existing park and recreation resources, and
- Facilitate the evaluation of park and recreation needs including those resources that are outside of the County's management during the land use decision process

MISSION

The mission of the Department of Parks and Recreation is to ensure diversified opportunities for recreation and the personal enrichment of the county's residents and visitors while protecting its natural, cultural and historical resources.

VISION

The County Department of Parks and Recreation aspires to provide the following:

1. A quality park, recreation and natural area system
2. An equitable distribution of parks and recreation lands and services
3. Parks and recreation opportunities for all age groups and physical capabilities
4. A system of parks, recreation and natural areas consistent with the community's existing and future needs
5. Protection of sensitive natural and cultural resources within new and existing parks and natural areas
6. A viable park, recreation and natural area funding source which provides for community needs



VALUES

The values of the Department of Parks and Recreation include those common to the County Organizational Values:

Integrity

We are dedicated to high ethical and moral standards and uncompromising honesty in our dealings with the public and each other. We behave in a consistent manner with open, truthful communication, respecting commitments and being true to our word.

Collaboration

We celebrate teamwork by relying on the participation and initiative of every employee. We work cooperatively within and between departments and the public to address issues and achieve results.

Professionalism

We are each personally accountable for the performance of our jobs in a manner which bestows credibility upon ourselves and our community. We consistently treat customers, each other, the County, and the resources entrusted to us with respect and honesty.

Accountability

We assume personal responsibility for our conduct and actions and follow through on our commitments. We are responsible managers of available fiscal and natural resources.

Responsiveness

We provide timely, accurate and complete information to each other and those we serve. We solicit feedback from customers on improving programs and services as part of a continuous improvement process.



STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Strategic Plan is a five year plan to focus our efforts on achieving the Mission and Vision defined in the PRE. There are three overall goals for the Department for which there are twelve objectives:

Goal 1: The Department will have well managed park areas

Objective 1.1 – Parks – Provide parks that offer diverse recreational opportunities for the community

Objective 1.2 – Golf – Provide recreational opportunities at the County's Golf Courses

Objective 1.3 – Sustainability – Provide sustainable parks and facilities for the community

Objective 1.4 – Resource Management – Protect and enhance the natural and cultural resources

Objective 1.5 – Trails – Ensure County trails are designed, constructed and maintained to connect communities and provide for multi-use recreational opportunities

Goal 2: The Department will continuously improve its service delivery

Objective 2.1 – Recreation and Health – Ensure the recreation and health of the community

Objective 2.2 – Access and Equity – Ensure access and equity to our facilities for all individuals

Objective 2.3 – Park Interpretation – Provide opportunities for the personal enrichment of the community and visitors by providing quality interpretive services

Objective 2.4 – Aquatics – Provide opportunities for participating in swimming programs and aquatic activities

Goal 3: The Department will invest in its human resources

Objective 3.1 – Employee Development – Ensure employees are able to develop diverse skills

Objective 3.2 – Safe and Healthy Workplace – Ensure the workplace is safe and provides opportunities to contribute to employee wellness

Objective 3.3 – Sustainable and Representative Workforce – Ensure the workforce is sufficient and reflective of the community

Measuring these objectives is important to tracking success in achieving the Department's mission. The following pages document how these objectives will be measured. In addition, and where applicable, the Department will use a national comparative benchmarking tool, the Parks and Recreation Operating Ratio and GIS (PRORAGIS™) system. This tool is used to collect and analyze data about parks and recreation agencies across the country and allows users to compare themselves to departments that they identify as similar to themselves – whether similar in geography, climate, size, or number of total employees.



Strategic Plan

Goal 1 - *The Department will have well managed park areas*

Objective 1.1 – Parks – Provide parks that offer diverse recreational opportunities for the community

Performance Measure 1.1.1 – Overall customer satisfaction rating for park users based on annual customer satisfaction surveys. (WCO#1)

Performance Measure 1.1.2 – Cost recovery percentage of the total annual operating budget based on tracked financial data as reported in the operating budget. (WCO#2,3)

Performance Measure 1.1.3 – Percentage of CAPRA standards met by the Parks and Golf Divisions to achieve and maintain national accreditation. (WCO#7)

Objective 1.2 - Golf – Provide recreational opportunities at the County's Golf Courses

Performance Measure 1.2.1 – Total number of rounds of golf that are played on County golf courses annually. (WCO#4)

Performance Measure 1.2.2 – Overall customer satisfaction for golf play on county courses based on annual customer satisfaction surveys. (WCO#1)

Objective 1.3 – Sustainability – Provide sustainable parks and golf courses for the community

Performance Measure 1.3.1 – Amount of grant support that is received as revenue annually within the department for partial or total funding of related projects. (WCO#3)

Performance Measure 1.3.2 – Number of deferred maintenance projects that are completed by fiscal year end. (WCO#1,2)

Performance Measure 1.3.3 – Determine a baseline of resource utilization and annually compare against actual utilization. (WCO#2,4)

Objective 1.4 – Resource Management – Protect and enhance the natural and cultural resources

Performance Measure 1.4.1 – Number of acres restored. (WCO#2)

Performance Measure 1.4.2 – Percentage of known historic structures and cultural sites that are stabilized and protected. (WCO#2)

Objective 1.5 – Trails – Ensure County trails are designed, constructed and maintained to connect communities and provide for multi-use recreational opportunities

Performance Measure 1.5.1 – Number of active trail maintenance agreements. (WCO#1,2)

Performance Measure 1.5.2 – Number of trail miles within the county park system that receive a satisfactory or better rating based on annual customer satisfaction surveys. (WCO#1)

Goal 2 - *The Department will continuously improve its service delivery*

Objective 2.1 – Recreation and Health – Ensure the recreation and health of the community

Performance Measure 2.1.1 – Number of visitors that attend County Parks and Golf Courses annually. (WCO#4,5)

Performance Measure 2.1.2 – Number of programs offered by the department that are evaluated annually to ensure they provide for a healthy community based on annual customer satisfaction surveys. (WCO#1)

Objective 2.2 – Access and Equity – Ensure access and equity to our parks for all individuals

Performance Measure 2.2.1 – Fee structures for parks and golf allow for economical access by maintaining fee comparable averages with other local agencies. (WCO#2,3)

Performance Measure 2.2.2 – Parks and golf provide ample recreational opportunities for all individuals of all economic backgrounds based on annual customer satisfaction surveys. (WCO#4,5)

Performance Measure 2.2.3 – Number of projects completed and programs delivered that help implement the Department's ADA transition plan. (WCO#1,4)

Objective 2.3 – Park Interpretation – Provide opportunities for the personal enrichment and education of the community and visitors by providing quality interpretive services

Performance Measure 2.3.1 – Percentage of interpretive services that receive a survey rating of satisfactory or better. (WCO#1,2)

Performance Measure 2.3.2 – Number of interpretive programs delivered. (WCO#4)

Performance Measure 2.3.3 – Number of visitors who attend interpretive and educational activities. (WCO#1,6)

Objective 2.4 – Aquatics – Provide opportunities for participating in swimming programs and aquatic activities

Performance Measure 2.4.1 – Attendance at public pools. (WCO#4)

Performance Measure 2.4.2 – Number of participants in Junior Lifeguard programs. (WCO#1,4)

Goal 3 - *The Department will invest in its human resources*

Objective 3.1 – Employee Development – Ensure employees are able to develop diverse skills

Performance Measure 3.1.1 – Number of training hours completed by employees (seasonal and full time). (WCO#6)

Performance Measure 3.1.2 – Percentage of employees who participate in optional training opportunities. (WCO#6)

Performance Measure 3.1.3 – Percentage of employee performance evaluations that are current. (WCO#7)

Objective 3.2 – Safe and Healthy Workplace – Ensure the workplace is safe and provides opportunities to contribute to employee wellness

Performance Measure 3.2.1 – Number of employee accidents and injuries. (WCO#2,4)

Performance Measure 3.2.2 – Percentage of employees who report satisfactory or above on employee survey of wellness. (WCO#2,5)

Objective 3.3 – Sustainable and Representative Workforce – Ensure the workforce is sufficient and reflective of the community

Performance Measure 3.3.1 – Degree to which diversity of workforce represents diversity of the community. (WCO#1)

Performance Measure 3.3.2 – Annual vacancy rate of funded positions. (WCO#1,2,3)

Performance Measure 3.3.3 – Number of hours of volunteer and partnering services. (WCO#1,2)

Public Reporting

The Department exists to serve the park and recreation needs of the current and future generations. That purpose requires continual public engagement and reporting of our progress in achieving this purpose (WCO#7). To do this, we will annually produce a scorecard that presents our performance measures and objectives as viewed through four perspectives:

- *Visitor and Community*
- *Financial*
- *Organizational*
- *Employee Learning and Development*

Report Scorecard

Visitor and Community Perspective

We must have satisfied and engaged visitors in order to be successful.

Objective Measures

- Satisfaction survey ratings
- Number of visitors
- Number of programs, services, areas and facilities provided
- Equal access to recreational opportunities as revealed through survey

Financial Perspective

We must be fiscally responsible and sustainable in order to achieve our mission.

Objective Measures

- Cost recovery targets
- Equitable fee structure
- Total revenue
- Total expenditures
- Total grant/non-profit support
- Total volunteer hours

Organizational Perspective

We must commit to an efficient and effective organization in order to provide the resources and support to deliver services to the public.

Objective Measures

- Total miles of trails and new trails constructed or re-routed
- Number of CAPRA Standards met
- Number of deferred maintenance projects completed
- Number of partnership agreements

Employee Learning and Development Perspective

We must have an employee culture that supports continuous improvement and growth that reflects the communities we serve to continue to be relevant and meet the County's needs.

Objective Measures

- Percentage of performance evaluations current
- Number of training hours (both required and development training)
- Number of employee accident and injuries

APPENDIX A

PARK AND RECREATION ELEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The PRE identifies seven Goals with associated Objectives:

Goal 1: An equitable and quality public park system within San Luis Obispo County

Objective A: Maintain and improve as well as provide new and expanded parks and recreation with the County consistent with the Parks and Recreation Project List and the County's available funding.

Goal 2: Recreation that serves the County's residents and visitors, various age groups, varying economic situations and physical abilities.

Objective B: Provide new and expanded recreation within the County consistent with the Parks and Recreation Project List and the County's available funding.

Objective C: Provide a viable multi-use trail system which is protective of private property interests and public resources and is consistent with the Parks and Recreation Project List.

Objective D: Provide a quality and affordable golf program at the County's golf courses.

Goal 3: Maintain and augment access to and along the coast.

Objective E: Provide a viable coastal access program through the County's coastal Area Plans and the Local Coastal Program.

Goal 4: Natural areas preserved within the County that protect unique and sensitive resources.

Objective F: Provide natural areas consistent with the Parks and Recreation Project List and/or the County's Agriculture and Open Space Element.

Goal 5: An equitable and realistic park, recreation, natural area, and coastal access Project List.

Objective G: Determine a reasonable list of priority projects based on community needs, staffing, practical consideration of projects development potential, and funding.

Goal 6: A variety of funding sources to expand, acquire, develop, and maintain the County's parks, recreation opportunities and natural areas.

Objective H: Develop a funding mechanism that provides for acquisition, development and maintenance of parks, recreation, natural areas, and coastal access, taking advantage of collaborative agreements and volunteers.

Goal 7: High quality park maintenance that is cost effective and environmentally sensitive.

Objective I: Provide new or expanded public facilities consistent with available maintenance funding.

APPENDIX B

ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES

In accordance with our stated mission, the Department will be structured according to the following principles:

1. Services are provided and resources are preserved at the park. Accordingly the park is the point of organizational focus. While the mission is accomplished at the park, employees integral to mission accomplishment are located throughout the organization.
2. Responsibility, accountability and associated funding for administering, operating and expanding the Department will be delegated to the most basic unit of the organization practicable.
3. The system of parks will be continually evaluated to insure that its facilities, programs and services meet the standards for accreditation.
4. Meaningful park experiences require an appreciation of the intrinsic values of the parks. Accordingly, interpretation and visitor information are essential elements of the park experience and, therefore, will be essential components of the Department.
5. Consistent with its mission, the Department will be open to innovative ideas from and participate in creative partnerships with the private sector and other public entities.
6. Park and Recreation Services require an engaged group of employees and volunteers committed to public service. Ongoing training and development of those employees and volunteers is essential to accomplishing the mission of the department.

APPENDIX C

San Luis Obispo County Mission, Vision, Core Values

Mission

The County's elected representatives and employees are committed to serving the community with pride to enhance the economic, environmental and social quality of life in San Luis Obispo County.

Vision

The County strives to create a safe, healthy, livable, prosperous and well-governed community.



A Safe
Community

The County will strive to create a community where all people – adults and children alike – have a sense of security and well being, crime is controlled, fire and rescue response is timely and roads are safe.



A Healthy
Community

The County will strive to ensure all people in our community enjoy healthy, successful and productive lives, and have access to the basic necessities.



A Livable
Community

The County will strive to keep our community a good place to live by carefully managing growth, protecting our natural resources, promoting lifelong learning, and creating an environment that encourages respect for all people.



A Prosperous
Community

The County will strive to keep our economy strong and viable and assure that all share in this economic prosperity.



A Well-Governed
Community

The County will provide high-quality, results-oriented services that are responsive to community desires.

Core Values

Integrity

We consistently demonstrate and adhere to the moral and ethical principles of impartiality, honesty, and respect. We uphold the principles of fairness, honesty, and respect.

Collaboration

We celebrate teamwork by working cooperatively to ensure the achievement of our common goals. We collaborate within and across departments for the good of the customer and community.

Professionalism

We perform our duties in a manner which bestows credibility upon ourselves and our County.

Accountability

We assume responsibility for our actions and follow through on our commitments. We practice good stewardship of our resources and we adhere to the accepted principles of fiscal responsibility. We follow through on our commitments. We hold ourselves and others accountable for results. We use the resources entrusted to us wisely. We effectively balance the needs of the community with available resources while advocating for the best value and best service.

Responsiveness

We provide timely, accurate and complete information to each other and those we serve. We solicit feedback from customers on improving programs and services as part of a continuous improvement process.