

Monterey County Parks Department Draft Implementation Action Plan

REVISED DRAFT February 21, 2015

Management
Partners



Making the Most of the Draft Implementation Action Plan

Management Partners has developed this draft Implementation Action Plan to assist the Monterey County Parks Department with the implementation of the Parks Department Strategic Plan. The work involved in implementing the Plan must be integrated into the other work of the divisions, with appropriate assignments of responsibility for implementation and with the identification of specific planned completion dates. The draft Action Plan begins that process with guidance about the length of time that might be required to complete an individual recommendation (estimated total task time) and with a recommended priority assignment (1, 2 or 3, based on the order that the County wishes to initiate work on each item).

Management Partners remains available to consult with you in this process in whatever way we can be helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact Jan Perkins at 408-437-5400 if we can be of assistance. Jan can be reached by email at jperkins@managementpartners.com.

The discipline of successful project planning is basic to successful execution of the work ahead. We hope that you find the draft Action Plan useful in that regard.

Goal 1. Financial Sustainability

Ensure long-term financial sustainability of the County parks system through a balance of fee and non-fee supported uses and activities, an asset management plan, and effective financial information systems.

Strategy	Priority 1, 2, 3	Year to Start Year to Complete	New Staff Resources Needed Yes/No	New Financial Resources Needed Yes/No
1. Fully implement a cost accounting system within the Parks Department to identify all direct and indirect costs as well as fee and non-fee supported programs for each park, facility and special event.	1	2015-2016	Yes	Yes
2. Develop a stable dedicated funding source for the Parks Department; explore all funding options including general fund subsidy and/or new revenue source.. <i>(Note: this replaces language still shown in the strategic plan which reads: "Develop General Fund subsidy priorities after accounting for full costs and understanding how much the market will bear."</i>	1	2015-2016	No	No
3. Develop options for cost reductions for discrete park amenities until such time as an agreement with an outside partner is established or revenues increase.	1	2015-2016	No	No
4. Establish a transparent and clear methodology for setting fees that is consistent with best management practices, accounting for all costs (e.g., direct, indirect, replacement costs), and establishing fees to capture those costs.	2	2016-2017	No	No
5. Improve the department's fee collection methods to ensure consistency with cash and financial management governmental accounting policies and procedures.	1	2015-2016	?	Yes
6. Establish a business manager function with appropriate staffing to manage contracts and ensure compliance for all partnerships, contractors and concessionaires.	2	2016-2017	Yes	Yes
7. Review each existing agreement to determine compliance with terms and conditions, operational subsidies and other performance factors. Create an action plan for each agreement as needed to ensure performance, which could include seeking new partners, renegotiating terms and conditions, and/or seeking financial participation from partners in making investments in facilities. Engage other County departments, such as Purchasing, the Resource Management Agency (RMA) and County Counsel in assisting with this strategy.				
8. Collect funds owed by special event sponsors or contractors, and ensure payments are made before allowing further events by these same contractors.				
9. Expand the real property manager function within the County to support the Parks Department; review existing leases and payments for park facilities and assets to determine appropriate rent levels and compliance with terms and conditions.				
10. Collaborate with the Parks Foundation and other non-profit organizations to increase the role of philanthropy in building and sustaining the Monterey County park system.				
11. Seek grants and financial partnerships to help pay for infrastructure improvements, including water and wastewater systems, within the parks.				

Goal 2. Park Assets and Infrastructure

Maintain park assets and infrastructure to ensure a safe park environment, reduce future costs, and support increased park usage.

Strategy	Priority 1, 2, 3	Year to Start Year to Complete	New Staff Resources Needed Yes/No	New Financial Resources Needed Yes/No
1. Collaborate with Public Works and other departments to identify options to address infrastructure maintenance, replacement and development needs.	1	Ongoing	No	Yes
2. Establish an inventory and tracking system for all park assets, related amenities, utilities and infrastructure. Develop a description of each amenity, its purpose, condition and repair needs, including an assessment of aesthetics and design issues that may impact future use, safety, access, equipment and replacement costs.	2	2016-2017	?	Yes
3. Determine whether the existing condition of any park asset warrants closure to the public while improvements are made.	2	2015-2016	No	No
4. Develop a five-year (short-term) and ten-year (long-term) capital improvement plan based on established criteria, including public safety and employee safety, park usage, expected revenue and availability of funding; update the plan annually.	3	2016-2017	?	Yes
5. Develop an asset management and maintenance management plan based on criteria similar to that contained in the capital improvement program. Include maintenance standards that will assist the department in determining staffing and operating costs associated with each park.	3	2016-2017	Yes	Yes

Goal 3. Partnerships

Strengthen existing partnerships and create new ones to enhance cost-effective management of park assets and increase revenue.

Strategy	Priority 1, 2, 3	Year to Start Year to Complete	New Staff Resources Needed Yes/No	New Financial Resources Needed Yes/No
1. Create general guidelines and specific criteria for public-private partnerships as they relate to use of and access to the County parks system. These should include policies to ensure a balance between use of parks by specific groups and the general public; volunteer programs; operational performance; compliance with County terms and conditions; and monitoring of contracts or agreements.	1	2015-2016	No	No
2. Identify new partnership opportunities and contact potential partners (including public-public partnerships, other park systems, private for-profit firms, and private non-profit groups). Partnerships could range from health care provider sponsorships, to naming rights, to staff cross-training between agencies, to full management of some County park assets by outside parties.	2	2015-2016	No	No
3. Create robust volunteer, internship, docent and "adopt a park" programs and identify tasks that volunteers could do to enable paid staff to attend to other critical tasks.	3	2016-2017	No	No

Goal 4. Marketing

Market the park system to attract more park visitors, expand community support and awareness and increase revenue.

Strategy	Priority 1, 2, 3	Year to Start Year to Complete	New Staff Resources Needed Yes/No	New Financial Resources Needed Yes/No
1. Engage the California Parks Company (CalParks) to expand parks marketing services while creating a comprehensive marketing program.				
2. Update and reinvigorate the Parks Department website to make it user-friendly and informative to generate increased interest in the parks and events.				
3. Create a comprehensive, professionally-produced marketing strategy for the County's park system, engaging private partners to underwrite the effort. Collaborate with the Spanish <i>language</i> and other media, Health Department, Monterey County Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Chamber of Commerce, agriculture industry, and others in the tourism industry. <i>Create a brand for the County's park system and Parks Department that clearly identifies the entire park system as a special asset of the County. Use the brand consistently in signage, promotions, and all aspects of marketing the parks. (Note: the italicized language includes what is shown in number 4 below, which will be deleted once this is approved)</i>	1	2015-2016	No	Yes
4. <i>Create a brand for the County's park system and Parks Department that clearly identifies the entire park system as a special asset of the County. Use the brand consistently in signage, promotions, and all aspects of marketing the parks. (Note: this strategy will be deleted once the combination with number 3 is finalized in the strategic plan.)</i>				
5. Create a marketing plan for annual passes tailored to both businesses and individuals; improve the use of local media and social media, and reach non-English speaking communities.				
6. Evaluate the return on investment for marketing strategies and campaigns. Establish performance metrics and measure results.				
7. Evaluate existing methods used to obtain feedback from park visitors, make improvements to visitor feedback methods, and use that information to inform marketing, event planning, and other decisions.				
8. Create and implement a plan for improving signage to help publicize amenities at the parks and to make it easier for the public to find park entrances.				
9. Empower and train staff to market the County's parks				

Goal 5. Operational and Staff Effectiveness

Provide reliable leadership, effective operational and financial management, support for an engaged and committed workforce, and accountability for results.

Strategy	Priority 1, 2, 3	Year to Start Year to Complete	New Staff Resources Needed Yes/No	New Financial Resources Needed Yes/No
Personnel				
1. Hire a director with demonstrated success in leading a large, diverse and complex park system such as Monterey County's, with the skills to move the park system forward. Empower the new director to create partnerships, advocate for the park system, use entrepreneurial approaches, and be an effective executive team member.	1	2015	No	No
2. Engage employees in active ways to so they can be a vital part of the changes needed to create future successes of the County park system.	1	2015-2016	No	No
3. Actively focus attention on building a diverse workforce to better reflect the County of Monterey's population.	1	2015-2016	No	?
4. Develop a rotational assignment system to ensure adequate staff coverage throughout the park system (including skills needed in all parks), and foster a system-wide and team view of the park system among staff.	2	2015-2016	No	No
5. Evaluate the department's organizational structure and modify as needed to improve reporting relationships, management effectiveness and communications with staff.	1	2015-2016	No	No
6. Determine appropriate classifications for Parks Department employees. Identify tasks that are being performed by higher paid employees that could be appropriately carried out by lower paid staff, contractors or volunteers, and thereby free up staff time to do other work. Determine optimum staffing for providing law enforcement services, which could include a combination of safety and non-safety employees.	2	2016-2017		Yes
7. Create clear work assignments, standards, expectations and professional development plans for each employee, including identifying requirements for promotions. Support ongoing training for all employees in needed skills, including customer service and diversity. Establish a method of tracking employee progress towards goals and evaluate performance annually				
Operations				
1. Strengthen the role of the Parks Commission in representing residents, providing advice about ways to achieve financial sustainability, engaging park stakeholders in creating business plans, and providing advice to the Board of Supervisors and staff about priorities for implementation of the strategic plan.	1	Ongoing	No	No
2. Create or update park policies and procedures to improve work standardization and efficiencies in park operations, with priority placed on improving financial controls and correcting inefficient use of staff.	1	2015-2016	No	No
3. Assess current practices pertaining to volunteers driving County vehicles, and create procedures consistent with County risk management requirements.				

Strategy	Priority 1, 2, 3	Year to Start Year to Complete	New Staff Resources Needed Yes/No	New Financial Resources Needed Yes/No
4. Review data being collected as part of the County's Managing for Performance program on a quarterly basis and utilize the data to make management decisions.				
5. Create an organized system of capturing crime and other public safety information, and review statistics monthly with Sheriff's Department to identify trouble spots and collaboratively establish action steps.				
6. Conduct an information technology (IT) assessment and create an IT plan for the Parks Department. Prioritize operational efficiencies in the plan through automation of tasks that are now labor-intensive. Determine what is needed to add Wi-Fi to selected areas within the parks.	1	2015-2016	No	Yes
7. Make quarterly progress reports for the first two years and annual reports thereafter on the implementation of the strategic plan to the County Administrative Officer, Board of Supervisors, Parks Commission, and Parks Department staff.	2	2015-2016	No	No

Goal 6. Individual Park Business Plans

Develop business plans for each park property with the goal of optimizing financial sustainability and providing a safe and enjoyable environment for park users.

Strategy	Priority 1, 2, 3	Year to Start Year to Complete	New Staff Resources Needed Yes/No	New Financial Resources Needed Yes/No
1. Prepare interim business plans for each park within one year. Develop a longer-term plan within three years for each park. <i>Identify what will be required to make infrastructure improvements to bring each park up to desired standards. Create a timeline and funding plan. (Note: Italicized language was initially strategy 7. Once the plan is approved, strategy 7 will be deleted.)</i>	1	2015 (Interim plan) 2018 (Long-term plan)	No	Yes
2. Determine the County's full cost of operating and maintaining each park as a baseline for park-specific business plans.				
3. Develop new or enhanced methods of increasing revenue and recovering costs for each park, such as fees that fully cover costs, partnerships, special events, ecotourism, concessions, contracts, and retail opportunities.				
4. Establish measures of success from a financial and user perspective for each special event. Conduct an analysis following completion of an event to determine to what extent it met the measures of success.				
5. Identify opportunities and constraints pertaining to each park and create a vision and set of expected uses for each park. Engage the community and park users in identifying interests and priorities, alternative uses and opportunities to increase financial sustainability.	1	2015-2017	No	Yes
6. Clearly establish who "owns" each business plan and who is accountable for its implementation. The plan should state the role of each staff person in the park's success.	2	2016 (Interim plan)	No	Yes
7. <i>Identify what will be required to make infrastructure improvements to bring each park up to desired standards. Create a timeline and funding plan. (Note: it is intended that strategy 7 be deleted and incorporated into strategy 1, once the plan is approved.)</i>				