



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: December 15, 2020

TO: Parks and Recreation Department Employees

FROM: Andrew Field, Director, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Parks and Recreation Department Overview, City Strategic Plan, Department Tactical Plan, and Communications Plan

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As stewards of San Diego's World-Class Municipal Park System, the Parks and Recreation Department (Department) developed this memorandum to provide employees with an overview of the City of San Diego's park system specifically highlighting the public benefits of Department's services, the City Strategic Plan, the Department Tactical Plan, and the underlying Department Communications Plan that will help ensure the successful implementation of these Plans. These items are presented as tools for employees to use as a baseline for understanding the role, importance, and goals of the Department within the general City structure; as well as emphasizing the employees' collaborative role in achieving the Department's purpose and objectives.

**Overview and Benefits of the Park System**

As outlined in the [Parks and Recreation Department Fast Facts \(dated January 2020\)](#), the Department operates and maintains over 42,000 acres of a diverse and valued parks system that serves millions of residents and visitors each year. Of these, about 27,000 acres are comprised of undeveloped open space; over 9,000 acres are comprised of developed parks; and nearly 6,000 acres are comprised of the La Jolla Underwater Park. The Department has 58 recreation centers, 13 aquatic centers, and three golf complexes.

As noted by the City Parks Alliance (CPA), National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), Trust for Public Land (TPL), and California Recreation and Parks Society (CPRS), the City's parks provide relief from urban development and opportunities for recreation.<sup>1</sup> Some of the benefits and impacts of the City's parks system to all San Diegans include:

- Fulfilling the public's need for active and passive recreation at a wide variety of regional, community, neighborhood, mini, and pocket parks;
- Providing recreational opportunities in an equitable fashion across the City to foster individual growth, cultural exchange and enrichment, and youth development including opportunities for at-risk youth;

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<sup>1</sup> See reference list at end of memorandum for links to specific documents from each organization that discuss the role of urban parks.

- Providing a robust and varied offering of programs that meet community needs including individuals with disabilities, older adults, and veterans;
- Offering healthy activities by providing places to exercise, robust recreational programs, and a wide variety of special interest activities while emphasizing the importance of play;
- Playing a vital role in our multicultural society by bringing people of different backgrounds together that might not otherwise come together through community events, activities, and programs;
- Engaging the residents of San Diego and connecting with the community in developing equitable new parks, introducing activities and events, and protecting green spaces in urbanized areas;
- Supporting San Diego's economic base through tourism and visitation;
- Enhancing the City's ability to attract and retain businesses;
- Meeting sustainability goals as outlined in the City's [Climate Action Plan](#);
- Making the City more resilient to impacts related to climate change and providing green space amid urban development;
- Preserving and maintaining nearly 27,000 acres of the San Diego region's diverse natural habitat in accordance with the [Multiple Species Conservation Program](#) and [Vernal Pool Habitat Conservation Plan](#);
- Providing sustainable habitats that help protect rare and endangered species;
- Protecting life and property by thinning brush on parkland in the urban-wildland interface adjacent to livable structures; and
- Managing the park urban forest and tree canopy;

*"A park is unlike any other asset in the city. It is not a building, nor a production, nor a warm breeze. A park is a living, growing thing that will die if the will of the people dies, or it will flourish as much as they want it to."*

– Lew Scarr  
San Diego Union  
January 1, 1969

The Department is proud to support these initiatives and thanks to all Department employees – our Parks and Recreation family – for your involvement in continually improving the City's park system.

### **City of San Diego Strategic Plan**

In 2015, the City of San Diego established its current City [Strategic Plan](#) which, through efforts defined in the Strategic Plan, are designed to infuse accountability for performance into City services at every level of the organization, as well as improve communication throughout the City and support data-enabled decision-making.

The vision of the City is to be a **world-class city for all**. The mission statement is for the City to **effectively serve and support our communities**. Included in the Strategic Plan are the

City's core values of people, integrity, excellence, and service. Below are ways we, as City employees, can support these core values:

People:

- Value customers and employees as partners
- Recognize that an engaged City workforce is the key to quality customer service
- Promote diversity as a strength

Integrity:

- Do the right thing
- Be ethical, truthful, and fair
- Take responsibility for our actions

Excellence:

- Foster a high-performance culture
- Establish clear standards and predictable processes
- Measure results and seek improvement in everything

Service:

- Exhibit pride in all that we do
- Treat others as we would like to be treated
- Anticipate and promptly respond to requests

In order to implement and integrate these principles into the parks system daily work, in 2015 the Department developed and adopted the Parks and Recreation Department Tactical Plan.

**Parks and Recreation Department Tactical Plan**

In conjunction with the City's strategic planning efforts, the Department developed the Parks and Recreation Department Tactical Plan, which identifies its core goals and objectives. Our Vision is to **connect all to the City's diverse world class park system**. Our Mission is to **provide healthy, sustainable, and enriching environments for all**.

Included in the Tactical Plan are the Department's core values of asset protection and enhancement, diverse recreational opportunities, and employee growth and development. Below are ways we, as Department employees, can support these core values:

- Protect and enhance natural assets (such as open space) and developed assets (such as community and neighborhood parks)
  - Protect and preserve existing assets
  - Enhance existing assets

- Develop and offer innovative recreational opportunities to meet the diverse needs of our communities
  - Provide innovative program ideas
  - Solicit feedback from customers and staff
- Foster growth and development of our employees
  - Create mentor/mentee relationships
  - Expand training opportunities
  - Share and celebrate successes

Currently, the Department is reviewing these core values through the process of the [Operational Framework](#), a key component of which is creation of a balanced scorecard.<sup>2</sup> We are conducting this effort in cooperation with the Performance and Analytics Department. This effort is likely to continue through Fiscal Year 2021, and as warranted, we will provide updates to you regarding this process.

### **Communication Plan**

Both the City Strategic Plan and Department Tactical Plan rely on constant communication to ensure we can reliably provide the world-class park system visitors and residents expect from us daily. As part of a hierarchical organization, it is critical that information flow from the Director to the line staff and from the line staff back to the Director via the Unclassified Leadership Team (ULT).<sup>3</sup> In the spirit of Organizational Framework, it is also crucial for information to flow between work units, across divisions, and to other City departments. The flow of information is necessary to ensure staff are aware of the latest direction and guidance, especially those staff who lack access to City e-mail.

The Communication Plan consists of the following items:

- The Department will provide each supervisor with access to a wireless communication device in accordance with [Administrative Regulation 90.25, Wireless Communication Services](#). These devices should be used to help ensure information sharing is consistent between staff.
- To ensure access to all written communications, supervisors must print Citywide and Departmentwide communications and post them in break rooms, on bulletin boards, and/or at other employee gathering locations. These written communications include:

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<sup>2</sup> The Operational Framework is a Citywide, holistic approach to ensuring we fulfill our vision of a diverse, valued workforce proud to consistently provide services exceeding customer expectations by improving operational efficiency, encouraging informed decision making, and promoting employee engagement. The balanced scorecard is intended to improve department operations by transforming performance data into action. Creation of the balanced scorecard for Parks and Recreation Department is currently underway.

<sup>3</sup> The Unclassified Leadership Team (ULT) consists of Appointing Authorities including classifications such as Department Director, Assistant Director, Deputy Director, Assistant Deputy Director, Program Manager, and Program Coordinator.

- Group emails intended for City employees (often sent under the Employee Notification banner on City email)
- Emails sent to All-ParkRec
- Newsletters
  - Department Newsletter
  - City Insider
  - Health and Wellness newsletter bulletin
- Memoranda intended for all City or Department/Division employees
- Posters and flyers related to employee benefits, rights, rewards and recognition, etc.
- Messages from Recognized Employee Organizations intended for its members
- Other internal communications including those posted on CityNet

It is expected that any communication that meets the above criteria needs to be printed and shared with all applicable staff members.

- As we receive notifications and updates from the Chief Operating Officer and other City departments, we will transmit those to the ULT, most frequently via City email. Each ULT member will evaluate these notifications and updates and determine how best to share the information with members of their division leadership teams.
- The Equal Employment Opportunity policy (see [Administrative Regulation 96.50](#) and the [Annual EEO Statement](#)) notes that we must communicate in a manner free of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation and language in our verbal and written communications must:
  - Be clear and concise.
  - Avoid words and gestures that contain threats, obscenities, insults, or slurs.
  - Not be perceived by any audience as being offensive or derogatory.

Any form of harassment, threat, bullying, and retaliation is not tolerated. Peer pressure is not a reason to go along with a bad idea that violates City policies and procedures. The ULT will respond to any reports of violations and keep those reports as confidential as possible as they are addressed.

- Email must be used in accordance with [Administrative Regulation 90.62, Information and Communications Technology and Acceptable Use](#). This policy allows sending confidential documents and information via e-mail, but you should be very cautious in doing so and ensure you are protecting the information and keeping it secure.
- If you see something, say something – if during your shift you notice something looks amiss, out of place, or unusual, please activate your communication plan by contacting your supervisor, District Manager, or Appointing Authority to report it.

As part of our Communication Plan, the Department has a specific notification process (**Big 10 Notification Process**) that staff should utilize, at the direction of their Appointing Authority or other ULT members, in the event of any of the following circumstances:

- Facility or pool closures (of a day or more)
- Serious injuries of staff or patrons (e.g. transported to hospital, CPR or AED deployed, etc.)
- Incidents requiring a 911 call (e.g. medical or crime-related emergencies— shootings, facility lockdowns, etc.)
- Incidents impacting health and safety of employees (e.g. power outage, water shut-off, building-wide restroom closure, etc.)
- Anything that you and your Appointing Authority feel could be of interest to the media

Staff involved in these issues should contact their Appointing Authority or other members of the ULT to initiate the Big 10 Notification Process.<sup>4</sup> When staff are involved in the incident, the supervisor on duty should tell the Appointing Authority the number of staff involved and their classifications, actions being taken to rectify the situation (e.g. reasonable alternate accommodations), and current status and timeframe of when the situation is expected to be resolved. For serious injuries, the supervisor on duty should:

- Send an email addressed to the Appointing Authority, Administrative Services Program Manager, and Administrative Services Program Coordinator the following information:
  - Name(s) of the impacted employee(s)
  - Classification(s)
  - Where they were taken (if transported)
  - Any other available details
- Call (800) 427-7980 within 24 hours if there are injuries or medical incidents that require medical treatment.
- Call Cal-OSHA at (800) 321-6742 or (619) 767-2280 within eight (8) hours if the employee is hospitalized for any length of time overnight, suffers the loss of any body part, sustains a serious or permanent disfigurement, or a fatality occurs.

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<sup>4</sup> The Appointing Authority or Designee will initiate the Big 10 Notification process, which involves the following positions: Parks and Recreation Department Director, Assistant Director, Deputy Chief Operating Officer (DCOO), Mayors Office Liaison, Human Resources Director, Supervising Human Resources Officer, Supervising Human Resources Analyst, Administrative Services Program Manager, Administrative Services Program Coordinator, and Supervising Public Information Officer. In the event of employee injury, the notification process also includes the Risk Management Director.

- Refer employees, when appropriate, to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) by calling (800) 999-7222 or visiting [www.anthemEAP.com](http://www.anthemEAP.com) and entering CitySD to log into the webpage.

For all Big 10 Notifications, the on-duty supervisor should provide incident reports to the Appointing Authority and Administrative Services Program Coordinator as quickly as practicable. Depending on the facts of the situation, the Appointing Authority may provide the incident report to the Director for further communication to appropriate authorities in the City.

### **Conclusion**

As public servants and members of the Parks and Recreation Family, we have the heart of service. We take pride in offering recreational opportunities to our community and making our park system as safe and enjoyable as we can. We honor and value each other, and we commit to each other's well-being while at work. We act not from a basis of selfishness but rather one of selflessness. We are here to serve.

It is an honor and a privilege for me to serve as your Department Director. While I know we have seen unusual difficulty and changed working conditions due to the ongoing global pandemic related to COVID-19, I hope that we can continue to work together to develop appropriate programs suitable for all, ensure safe play experiences, and keep our parks clean. Together, we can continue to make this a World-Class Municipal Park System for all to use and enjoy. Thank you for all your hard work.

Sincerely,



Andrew Field  
Director  
Parks and Recreation Department

cc: Kristina Peralta, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Neighborhood Services  
Parks and Recreation Department Unclassified Leadership Team

### References:

- Parks and Recreation Department Fast Facts: <https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/fastfacts.pdf>
- City Parks Alliance – Benefits of Urban Parks: <https://cityparksalliance.org/about-us/why-city-parks-matter/>
- National Recreation and Parks Association – The Power of Parks: <https://www.nrpa.org/events/july/power-of-parks/>
- Trust for Public Lands – The Health Benefits of Parks: <https://www.tpl.org/health-benefits-parks>

- California Parks and Recreation Society – July Is Parks Make Life Better Month:  
<https://www.cprs.org/advocacy/pmlb2020>
- Multiple Species Conservation Program:  
<https://www.sandiego.gov/planning/programs/mscp/docsmaps>
- Vernal Pool Habitat Conservation Plan:  
<https://www.sandiego.gov/planning/programs/mscp/vphcp>
- Climate Action Plan: <https://www.sandiego.gov/sustainability/climate-action-plan>
- City Strategic Plan:  
[https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/city\\_of\\_san\\_diego\\_strategic\\_plan\\_8x11\\_handout.pdf](https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/city_of_san_diego_strategic_plan_8x11_handout.pdf)
- Volume One of the Annual City Budget - <https://www.sandiego.gov/finance/annual>
- Operational Framework - <https://citynet.sandiego.gov/know/operational-framework>
- Administrative Regulation 90.25, Wireless Communication Services -  
<https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/humanresources/pdf/ar/ar9025.pdf>
- Administrative Regulation 96.50 Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and Complaint Resolution Procedures -  
<https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/humanresources/pdf/ar/ar9650.pdf>
- Annual Equal Employment Opportunity Statement -  
<https://citynet.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/eeopolicyfy21.pdf>
- Administrative Regulation 90.62, Information and Communications Technology and Acceptable Use -  
<https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/humanresources/pdf/ar/ar9062.pdf>
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) – <https://www.anthemEAP.com>