Mission Trails Regional Park

Mission Trails Regional Park is a City of San Diego open space park containing approximately 8,000 acres with hiking, mountain biking and equestrian trails that weave together mountains, valleys and lakes. It is located in the eastern part of the City adjacent to the cities of Santee, El Cajon and La Mesa and to the San Diego communities of Tierrasanta, San Carlos and Del Cerro. At the heart of all these activities is the Visitor and Interpretive Center, open seven days a week, free to the public. The Visitor and Interpretive Center provides opportunities for people of all ages to learn about the geology, history, plants and animals found in San Diego County. The building includes classrooms, an auditorium, a library, exhibits and staff offices. Outdoors there is a large viewing and teaching terrace, an amphitheater and additional exhibits. The Visitor and Interpretive Center has proved to be a starting point for many visitors who, after looking at the exhibits and watching the videos and/or slide show, return to explore other areas of the park. The Visitor Center is used extensively by teachers and students from school districts throughout San Diego County. There are approximately 60,000 visitors to the Visitor Center each year.

Mission Trails Regional Park is staffed by six Park Rangers *(one vacant position)*, a Visitor Center Director, a Campground Director *(a vacant position)*, and two Grounds Maintenance Workers. Park staff is responsible for managing and maintaining the Visitor & Interpretive Center, the Old Mission Dam overlook and picnic area, Kumeyaay Lake Campground and adjacent day use area, Cowles Mountain Staging Area which includes a comfort station, and approximately 40 miles of hiking, mountain biking and equestrian trails. They are assisted by approximately 150 volunteers serving in a variety of capacities including staffing the Visitor Center, leading interpretive walks, patrolling the park, maintaining trails, restoring sensitive habitat areas, and assisting with landscape maintenance. An estimated 650,000 people enjoy the parks amenities each year. Mission Trails Regional Park has been listed as one of San Diego's top tourist attractions in the San Diego Daily Transcript and has been recognized as "the best" for its' mountain bike trails in San Diego Union-Tribune's Readers Polls.

Mission Trails Regional Park CAC and Task Force

The MTRP Task Force was created to facilitate inter-agency cooperation in the implementation of the park's Master Development Plan, approved by the San Diego City Council and the San Diego County Board of Supervisors. The Task Force consists of elected officials from the City and County of San Diego and the cities of La Mesa and Santee, and the chair of the MTRP Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC). The purpose of the Task Force, as set forth in the Council Resolution which established it, "is to advise the various public bodies on matters relating to the development of the regional park." The Task Force reviews and approves projects not in conflict with the MTRP Master Development Plan, appoints CAC members on recommendation of the agency/organization represented and appoints the CAC chair.

The MTRP Citizens' Advisory committee is an advisory group to the Task Force. The purpose of the CAC is to provide community input, and a presumed consensus of the interested community groups, on projects not in conflict with the Master Development Plan. The CAC is responsible for making recommendations to the Task Force. All meetings of the Task Force and the CAC are open to the public and subject to the California open meeting law, aka "The Brown Act."

Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation

Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, Inc. was established in January 1988, as a 501(c)(3) non-profit public benefit corporation. Working in cooperation with the City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department, the Foundation Board of Directors is committed to preserving, improving and maintaining Mission Trails Regional Park for San Diego residents and tourists to enjoy through a variety of educational and recreational opportunities. The Foundation is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors and supported by one 30-hour per week Administrative Assistant. In addition, the Foundation has contracted with an independent merchandising consultant who serves as the Gift Shop Manager, an independent fund-raising consultant, and Ridgway Park Communications for public relations for the annual Explore Mission Trails Day.

In 1991 the Foundation entered into a Master Agreement with the City of San Diego which establishes a process to govern the use of public funds which may from time to time be allocated to the Foundation by the City, including an Annual Work Program and budget for the use of funds in the Public Fund account. Per the Master Agreement, the Annual Work Program and budget is to be approved by the City Manager. That responsibility has been delegated to the Director of the Park and Recreation Department. Funds received under this Master Agreement include $1.2 million as specified in the Tierrasanta Norte Development Agreement. The Master Agreement also provides for separate Agreements for capital improvement projects. The first Agreement was for the construction of the Visitor & Interpretive Center for which the Foundation provided the following funding: $1,790,000 from State of California environmental grants and $1,200,000 from the Tierrasanta Norte Development Agreement. The second Agreement was for the construction of the Equestrian Staging Area for which the Foundation provided the following funding: $890,628 State of California Park and Recreation Department grant; $220,486 from Public Fund account interest earnings (Tierrasanta Norte Development Agreement funds); $149,909 in private contributions.

The Foundation also provided funding for the self-guided interpretive pathway and overlook at Old Mission Dam (a national historic landmark).

Working with park staff, the Foundation has

- produced and maintained educational and inspirational audio-visual presentations which are shown in the Visitor Center theater,
- constructed and maintained exhibits and interpretive displays at the Visitor Center and throughout the park,
- developed and printed park related brochures,
- published "San Diego's Mission Trails Regional Park," the official park guidebook.

The Foundation also owns and maintains the Mission Trails Regional Park web site which includes an Intranet component used for volunteer signups and record keeping of volunteer hours, for visitor center room reservations, for school field trips, and for campground reservations. In December 2006 a new and improved campground reservation system will be launched. Art Street Interactive (ASI) is donating the system valued at $14,000 to the Foundation and the Foundation is paying for the customization of the system to meet the needs of the Kumeyaay Lake Campground staff. The Foundation owns and maintains the computers at

the Visitor & Interpretive Center and the Kumeyaay Lake Campground and provides cable and high speed Internet access through Cox Communications at both facilities. The cable and Internet access at the Visitor Center is donated to the Foundation by Cox Communications. The Foundation owns and maintains all audio visual equipment in the Visitor Center theater and the majority of the exhibits and related equipment in the Visitor Center exhibit area.

Through an agreement with the City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department, the Foundation Board of Directors assists in the management and maintenance of the Visitor & Interpretive Center and other park facilities. The Foundation has paid for the purchase and upkeep of Visitor Center furnishings, including office furnishings. In 2006 the Foundation paid for new carpeting and a new telephone system in the Visitor Center, and a new small monument wooden sign to be installed on Father Junipero Serra Trail directing park visitors to the Visitor Center, Old Mission Dam and Kumeyaay Lake Campground. This new sign will be installed across from the Visitor Center driveway entrance in December 2006.

In addition, the Foundation

- maintains a gift shop at the Visitor Center;
- provides financial support for the volunteer program;
- publishes a quarterly newsletter;
- sponsors an annual amateur photography contest;
- sponsors exhibits of the work of local artists at the Visitor center;
- sponsors an annual holiday party for volunteers, donors and staff;
- co-sponsors an annual volunteer recognition event;
- co-sponsors an annual Arbor Day;
- co-sponsors an annual Explore Mission Trails Day.

The Foundation also purchases advertising in the San Diego East County Visitors Map, a publication of the San Diego East Visitors Bureau, and in "Out and About" and the January through May issues of "San Diego Family Magazine." These advertisements promote the amenities and activities available in the park with specific emphasis on the Visitor Center, Old Mission Dam Historical Site, the 46-site Campground, and Lake Murray.

The Foundation receives the majority of its funding from individual and corporate donations, public and private grants, bequests, and interest on investments.

City of San Diego Agreements with Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation

Below is a list of Agreements between the Foundation and City of San Diego. This list includes the Master Agreement and two Capital Improvement Project Agreements, one for the Visitor & Interpretive Center and one for the Equestrian Staging Area, which were approved by the City Council. All other Agreements are between the Foundation and the Park and Recreation Department.

1. Resolution adopted by San Diego City Council on July 30, 1991 authorizing the City Manager to execute a Master Agreement with the MTRP Foundation governing its role in the preservation, development and maintenance of the park, and to execute an Agreement for the design and construction of the park's visitor center project.

2. Master Agreement dated July 30, 1991 (Document No. RR-278444-1) governing the Foundation's role in the preservation, development and maintenance of the park.
3. Agreement dated July 30, 1991 (Document No. RR-278444-1) which created a partnership between the City and the MTRP Foundation relative to the construction of the Mission Trails Regional Park Visitor & Interpretive Center.
4. Park and Recreation Department Special Use Permit for the purpose of authorizing the MTRP Foundation use of the Visitor & Interpretive Center; to be renewed on April 1 of each year. *Superseded by new Agreement dated May 7, 2003 (item 9 below).*
5. Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation Work Program – July 1 through June 30 of each year; approved by the MTRP Foundation Board of Directors and the Park and Recreation Department Director in accordance with the MTRP Foundation's Master Agreement with the City of San Diego (item 2 above).
6. Agreement dated December 1, 2000 between the MTRP Foundation and the Park and Recreation Department for the Electronic Collection of Kumeyaay Lake Campground Fees. *Superseded by new Agreement dated December 20, 2002 (item 8 below).*
7. Agreement dated February 5, 2001 (Document No. RR-294509) which created a partnership between the City and the MTRP Foundation relative to the construction of the East Fortuna Equestrian Staging Area.
8. Memorandum of Understanding dated December 20, 2002 between the MTRP Foundation and the Park and Recreation Department whereby the Foundation agrees to host the City of San Diego MTRP Campground Reservation system to provide for the collection of Kumeyaay Lake Campground fees by credit card electronically via the MTRP Foundation's website. *Supersedes Agreement dated December 1, 2000 (item 6 above).*
9. Agreement dated May 7, 2003 between the MTRP Foundation and the Park and Recreation Department for the purpose of authorizing Foundation use of MTRP facilities. *Supersedes Special Use Permit in item 4 above.*
10. Agreement dated April 28, 2005 between the MTRP Foundation and the City of San Diego, signed by the Director of the Park and Recreation Department, governing the appropriation and use of Sycamore Estates funds in the amount of $1,760,000 as authorized by City Council Resolution No. R-295403 on August 7, 2001 and Ordinance No. 0-18974 on September 10, 2001.

<u>Sycamore Estates Funds Agreement</u>

Ordinance No. 0-18974 was adopted by the City Council on September 10, 2001, entitled "Authorizing the City Manager to Execute an Agreement Regarding Substitution of Extraordinary Benefits, Expansion of Mission Trails Park and Satisfaction of Development Agreement Requirements with Sycamore Estates, LLC." This Ordinance authorizes the city Manager to execute, on behalf of the City, an agreement between the City and the MTRP Foundation regarding the appropriation and use of $1,760,000. These Funds are to be paid by Sycamore Estates, LLC to the City of San Diego in four equal installments of $440,000, to be deposited into a City of San Diego interest bearing fund, and then disbursed to the MTRP Foundation. In accordance with Resolution No. R-295403 and Ordinance No. O-18974, $260,000 of the Funds shall be deposited into a Public Fund 2 account and can be used

immediately for acquisition, management, maintenance and capital improvements within Mission Trails Regional Park. $1,500,000 of the Funds shall be maintained in an Endowment Fund Account solely for acquisition, management, maintenance and capital improvements within Mission Trails Regional Park. The Foundation cannot disburse more than five percent of the principal and interest balance of the Endowment Fund Account per fiscal year unless authority is otherwise granted by the City Council. Funds shall be appropriated with prior written concurrence signed by the Park and Recreation Department Director, or his or her designee. Acquisition and capital improvement projects must be approved by the Mission Trails Regional Park Task Force. The Foundation has received two installments of $440,000 each, the first in June 2005 and the second in May 2006. $260,000 has been deposited into a Public Fund II account and the balance into an Endowment Fund account.