

Chapter VIII

Recreation Plan



Planning Commission Public Hearing
February 5, 2002

City Council Public Hearing/Adoption
February 26, 2002

Section I**VISION**

The City of Twentynine Palms recognizes that leisure-time pursuits and recreational activities are critical to human health and well-being, and when adequately provided, create a more positive living environment. Therefore, through effective use of existing facilities and development of new facilities, a variety of wholesome, well rounded recreation activities, serving all segments of the community, will be offered.

Those who provide recreation opportunities will be encouraged to share facilities and coordinate recreation programs. Where possible, activities and facilities of the Morongo Unified School District, the City, the Joshua Tree National Park, the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, and private firms, should work cooperatively to provide the best possible leisure-time activities for the often limited public investment dollar.

Within the planning period, 2001 through 2020, the City will develop a Park Master Plan which will serve as the guiding document for development of existing parks and acquisition of land for future parks. Implementation of the Park Master Plan will ensure that quality recreation opportunities are available to all citizens and visitors.

Section II**PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Recreation Plan is to establish the City's policy regarding sound and logical development of recreational programs and facilities. It identifies existing facilities and provides guidance for acquisition and development of future facilities.

Recreation provides a vital link in the development of physical, social, creative, emotional and intellectual potential and values. Recreation and education form the core foundation necessary for instilling the pursuit of lifelong learning and leisure skills, which ultimately develops balanced, healthy individuals. While the City plays a direct role in this effort through its Community Services Department, it also has a role in establishing a vision for the City, and providing support of other programs and services offered by private and public agencies. Collaboration provides diverse opportunities to develop the total person, strengthen families, and helps in building a sense of community. Recreation results in positive lifestyle choices, resilient youth, safe

and productive environments, and enhanced quality of life.

Section III

EXISTING CITY FACILITIES

A. Luckie Park

Luckie Park is a Community Park which provides a variety of facilities and activities for the community. Located at the southwest corner of Utah Trail and Two Mile Road, Luckie Park has the following facilities:

- ! Soccer field
- ! Lighted baseball/softball fields (4)
- ! Swimming pool
- ! Playgrounds (2)
- ! Picnic shelters (3)
- ! Restrooms (3)
- ! Indoor racquetball courts (4)
- ! Outdoor basketball court
- ! Community building (Patriotic Hall)
- ! Multi-use facility (tennis/basketball/street hockey)
- ! City Park and Recreation administrative offices

Development of a skateboard park is planned.

B. Knott Sky Park

Knott Sky Park is a Neighborhood Park located in a residential setting, south of Hatch Road, on the east side of El Sol Avenue. It includes the following facilities:

- ! Licensed Preschool
- ! Playground
- ! Baseball/softball fields (2)
- ! Restrooms
- ! Picnic Tables and barbecues

C. Youth Services Center

In September 2001, the City purchased a five-acre facility which once housed the Morongo Basin Work Activity Center, located on Joe Davis Drive adjacent to Luckie Park. Plans are being developed to move most of the City's recreation classes and the City-operated preschool to the Center. Long range planning includes development of lighted tennis courts, a passive recreation area, and a picnic shelter.

D. Theater 29

An 18-acre site located near the intersection of Sullivan Road and Adobe Road, was purchased by the City in 2000. Currently one building exists on the site which is utilized for live performance theater.

E. Clifford L. Stanley Park

Clifford L. Stanley Park is a (passive) Mini Park, dedicated to the veterans of the community. It provides open space for a variety of functions. It is located adjacent to City Hall and the County library.

F. Community Center

The Community Center is located south of the intersection of Twentynine Palms Highway and Adobe Road. The facility's primary function is senior activities, including the senior nutrition program.

Section IV

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

Along the City's northerly border is the world's largest Marine Corps Base, the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (MCAGCC). As a result of a February 2000 annexation, the base Mainside is included in the City. Mainside at MCAGCC has several recreational facilities, including:

- ! Baseball/softball fields (8)
- ! Outdoor tennis courts (4)
- ! Outdoor basketball courts (6)
- ! Outdoor volleyball courts (4)
- ! Racquetball courts (6)
- ! Roller hockey court
- ! Swimming pools (3)
- ! Skeet/trap range
- ! 20-lane bowling facility
- ! Victory Field, including three covered picnic areas
- ! Del Valle Field, including two covered picnic areas
- ! Felix Field, including a covered playground, a 3/4-mile walking/jogging trail, a 440-meter track, and waterfowl refuge
- ! Fenton Field, including a T-ball field
- ! Desert Winds Golf Course (18 holes)

Additionally, the following recreational opportunities are available:

- ! Barracks facilities have picnic areas and outdoor basketball courts
- ! Housing developments include parks and playgrounds
- ! Sporting and recreational gear are available for rent

Maintenance and operation of the MCAGCC facilities is the responsibility of the Base Command. With permission, some facilities are available for public use by non-military entities.

Section V

CURRENT ACREAGE

The following table details the approximate size of current parks and recreational facilities within the City, including those aboard MCAGCC.

Table I PARK/RECREATIONAL FACILITIES		
	Type	Size
Luckie Park	Community Park	26 acres
Knott's Sky Park	Neighborhood Park	20 acres
Youth Services Center	Community Park	5 acres
Theater 29	Community Park	18 acres
General Stanley Veterans Park	Mini Park	.5 acres
Road Runner Dunes Golf Course	Golf Course	50
Community Center	Mini Park	.5 acres
MCAGCC Sports Facilities (including golf course)	Various	133 acres
TOTAL ACREAGE		253 acres
PARK ACREAGE PER 1000 POPULATION (26,400)		9.6 acres

Section VI**GOLF COURSE FACILITIES**

Road Runner Dunes Golf Course is a privately owned facility located at the northwest corner of Utah Trail and Amboy Road. It is open year round, and by contractual agreement with the City, is open to the public. Nine holes are presently operational, occupying approximately 50 acres. An additional 44 acres (approximately) of Publicly zoned land is available for future expansion of an additional nine-hole public facility. A privately owned resort/RV park is located adjacent to the golf course.

Desert Winds Golf Course is located aboard MCAGCC. The 105-acre, 18-hole facility is open to Department of Defense employees, military personnel, their families, and guests.

Section VII**SCHOOL FACILITIES****A. Morongo Unified School District**

Morongo Unified School District serves the Morongo Basin, including the communities of Morongo Valley, Yucca Valley, Landers, Joshua Tree and the City of Twentynine Palms. Within the City, the District has two high schools, one junior high school, and four elementary schools. A fifth elementary school is included in the District's long range planning; the additional school is slated for development at the northwest corner of Two Mile Road and Encelia Avenue.

Each of the elementary schools has a playground. The junior high school campus includes a gymnasium and Tom Nicoll Memorial Field, a lighted track and football field facility with bleacher seating. Within the high school campus, recreational facilities include six tennis courts, an unlighted track field, a baseball field, and a gymnasium.

The City's Community Services Department uses several of the School District facilities for youth and adult recreational activities. An agreement exists allowing mutual, shared use of facilities. The Junior High School and High School gymnasiums are utilized for City sponsored youth and adult programs, and the School District uses the City's swimming pool and sports fields for practices and games.

B. Copper Mountain College

The City is located within the Copper Mountain Community College District. The District has one campus, located one mile west of the City in unincorporated San Bernardino County. During the planning period, the College anticipates development of a multi-use sports complex. Per the College's current planning, construction of the complex will occur 2004-2005.

The Sports Complex will include:

- ! Gymnasium with workout and weight rooms. (Approximately 31,000 square feet)
- ! Three regulation Soccer fields
- ! Men's and Women's regulation baseball fields
- ! All-weather regulation running track to include an infield
- ! Regulation tennis courts
- ! Outdoor basketball courts

The proposed facilities will be constructed on approximately eighteen acres of college property with additional parking lots to accommodate the use.

Section VIII

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Several groups provide specific recreational programs, targeted to development of youth skills.

- ! Junior All American Football, offers tackle football for ages 8 through 14.
- ! Twentynine Palms Youth Club provides after school and summer programs for youth 6 through 18 years of age.
- ! Twentynine Palms Little League offers baseball and softball for students between the ages of 5 and 18.
- ! The Choices Program is sponsored by the City's Community Services Department, and works with the School District and the Sheriffs Department in offering a daily in-school program, community service, work program, and follow-up for teens at risk.

Section IX

JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK

Joshua Tree National Park (JTNP) is located along the City's southerly border. Eventhough the 794,000-acre Park is not located in the City, it provides abundant recreation opportunities for residents and visitors. The Park Headquarters and visitor's center are located at the southwest corner of Utah Trail and National Park Drive within the City; it includes a nature walk and interactive display.

Facilities within the Park include nine campgrounds with tables, fireplaces, and toilets. JTNP offers one of the best locations in the world for rock climbers, due to the unique rock formation found throughout the park. Additionally, the Park provides opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, nature walks, and educational programs.

Two deserts converge within the Park, the Mojave and the Sonoran Deserts. Elevation ranges from 1,420

to 5,814 feet, with a wide variety of flora and fauna. During the spring, JTNP is in bloom with wild flowers, ocotillo, Joshua trees, yuccas and other plants which come to life. JTNP offers tours of the Park, along with hosting art shows and demonstrations.

There are three primary entries to the Park which are staffed with JTNP personnel, and one of them (Utah Trail) is located in the City. There are several secondary entry points to the Park, two of which are located in the City, Fortynine Palms Canyon via Canyon Road, and Indian Cove Road leading to Indian Cove Campground.

Park visitation has increased throughout the years, from less than 100,000 visitors in 1950 to over one million annual visitors in 1990. Current annual visitation is consistently in excess of one million; visitation in 1999 was 1,235,666.

Section X

CULTURAL SITES AND EVENTS

A variety of cultural activities are available throughout the City:

- ! The Old School House Museum, originally built in 1927 as the first school in Twentynine Palms, was relocated in 1992. In its present location, south of Twentynine Palms Highway on National Park Drive, it showcases the community’s history. The Museum is operated by the Twentynine Palms Historical Society.
- ! The Twentynine Palms Art Gallery, operated by the Artist Guild, is located adjacent to the Old School House Museum. The Gallery displays and offers for sale, the works of local artists.
- ! Pioneer Days is an annual event celebrating the City’s rich pioneering spirit and culture. Sponsored by the Twentynine Palms Chamber of Commerce, the month-long event is held in October and offers activities for all ages, including Children’s Day, carnival, rodeo, live concerts and a parade.
- ! Theatre 29 offers opportunities for local artist, actors, singers, and performers of all ages to display and hone their skills.

Section XI

CITY SPONSORED RECREATION PROGRAMS

The City’s Community Services Department offers a variety of recreational and leisure activities. A year-round State licensed preschool program is offered, as well as a summer day camp, sports camps, and a swim program. The Department also offers a variety of sports programs, dance, theater, and trips to nearby attractions.

Each year since 1958 the Department holds the largest and longest running youth basketball tournament in the State. This event continually attracts more than sixty teams from all over the western United States.

Section XII

COMMUNITY NEEDS

A. Skateboard Park

Planning is underway to construct the City’s first skateboard park to offer youth recreational opportunities. Designs are being considered and completion is expected by 2002.

B. Additional Park Facilities

Additional park sites are under consideration. It is the City's desire to provide a variety of parks located throughout the City, readily available and nearby residential areas and schools.

C. Park Master Plan

The City has identified the need for a park master plan to guide future decisions on park facilities. When completed, the Master Plan will provide guidance and policy direction on the location of future parks, potential expansion of existing parks, and the amenities to be offered at each.

D. Planned Improvements to Existing Parks

Updated lighting systems are planned for all Luckie Park fields, and the addition of lighting is slated for the Luckie Park soccer field. With installation of the new lighting systems, additional opportunities for recreation activities will result. Because of the desire to protect the night sky, all lighting will be designed to avoid nuisance glare and trespass.

Knott's Sky Park will see upgrades during the planning period. New restroom facilities, irrigation systems, a playground, and a maintenance building are planned.

Section XIII**PARK ACQUISITION****A. Open Space Easements**

Open space easements may be accomplished by contract, restricting development of specified parcels, or portions of parcels. Such agreements can be utilized to achieve a density transfer for developers wishing to concentrate development for efficiency.

B. Park Fees and/or Land Dedication

A program can be developed to secure and preserve land for public parks. With development or subdivision of land, monies are collected to be used for park land acquisition and development. Such a program, if developed, will include a direct connection between the collection of the fees and the establishment of the facility.

C. Other Sources

Funding for park acquisition may be a result of the City Council's desire to purchase land and/or facilities. Such purchase would be from the City's General Fund, as identified in the annual budget adopted by the Council.

The City's Redevelopment Agency can provide funding for park amenities in certain situations, as allowed by State Redevelopment law.

Grants may be available to the City either for purchase of land, or for facilities to be constructed in new parks.

Section XIV

STANDARDS FOR PARK DEVELOPMENT

A. Park/Population Ratio

To effectively implement the Recreation Plan, it is necessary to establish standards for park and recreation facilities, a means by which the City will determine when additional parks are needed. A standard of four acres of public parks per 1,000 population is established to ensure adequate park facilities within the City. Parks shall be developed and classified according to the Recreation Plan.

B. Small Parks and Play Lots

Up to three acres in size, Small Parks and Play Lots may be obtained as conditions of development, through gifts, or contribution by service organizations. These facilities primarily serve the residents of a specific neighborhood and may be maintained by the City or maintained privately. Play lots usually include play apparatus, benches, sand areas, tables and lawns or attractive open landscaped areas for recreation and scenic beauty.

C. Neighborhood parks

Neighborhood Parks should have a service area of up to one mile. Park size may range from three to 25 acres. These parks should contain areas for passive recreation as well as play apparatus. Amenities could include picnic facilities, multipurpose courts, play fields, horseshoe pits, tennis courts, swimming pools, handball courts, rest rooms, shelters and areas for quiet play. Neighborhood Parks should be planned adjacent to or near elementary schools, both existing and future. By combining the school and park areas, use of facilities can be shared to avoid duplication.

D. Community Parks

Community parks have a larger service area and may be 25+ acres in size. Community Parks supplement Neighborhood Parks by providing a wider range of recreational facilities. Community Parks provide more open space and larger areas for recreational facilities so that they may be enjoyed by a larger number of people. Uses such as a tennis complex, community center and gymnasium, group picnic facilities, sport fields with spectator areas, etc. Other specialized areas may include botanical gardens, amphitheaters, equestrian centers and other such uses. These areas should also contain their own park maintenance yards or areas.

E. Passive Use Areas

This category includes such features as walking trails that may be developed along areas of natural vegetation or unique physical formations, or be a rest area with a unique view. Development of Passive Use Areas may compliment public rights-of-way and may include bicycle trails, connecting other recreational

facilities.

Section XV

PARK/SCHOOL COORDINATION

A successful park plan should be dependent upon and accomplished through a cooperative effort of the City and all others with a stake in development of quality recreational opportunities. The School District is an extremely important member of this cooperative venture because it represents a very large public investment of the taxpayer's dollars in terms of public owned land areas and structural facilities. Schools generally locate in areas best suited to serve a concentration of population at the neighborhood, community and regional levels. The City should maintain an ongoing relationship with the District to efficiently and economically plan for joint school/park facilities. Co-locating schools and parks provides for optimum use of the facilities, personnel, programs, and maintenance.

Section XVI
GOALS AND POLICIES

A. Overview

The following goals are established for the Recreation Plan. The purpose of each goal is established in this section. To facilitate each goal, policies are established and each policy is executed by one or more programs.

B. Goal #1

The City will prepare a Park Master Plan to guide future decisions on the location of future parks, potential expansion of existing parks, and the amenities to be offered at each.

Purpose

The purpose of Goal #1 is to ensure that park development will occur with long range objectives in mind.

Policy 1.1

In determining what lands are purchased by the City for public parks, the City shall first review the Park Master Plan and take action according to the conclusions of the Plan.

Program 1.1.1

The City will utilize the Park Master Plan as the basis for decisions regarding the purchase of lands for future parks.

Policy 1.2

Expansion of existing park facilities shall be in concert with the Park Master Plan.

Program 1.2.1

The City will utilize the Park Master Plan as the basis for decisions regarding the expansion of existing park facilities.

C. Goal #2

The priority is to sustain the park acreage ratio of four acres of land per 1,000 people.

Purpose

The purpose of Goal #2 is to ensure that adequate park facilities are provided within the City.

Policy 2.1

The City will evaluate available park acreage annually to determine the park/population ratio.

Program 2.1.1

If the annual analysis reveals that public park acreage is less than four acres per 1,000 persons in the City, funding will be sought or made available through the General Fund for acquisition of park lands.

Program 2.1.2

Growth inducing development within the City shall be required to provide, as a condition of approval, dedication of land or the payment of a fee for park purposes.

D. Goal #3

Recreation facilities shall be available to the widest variety of citizens and visitors possible.

Purpose

The purpose of Goal #3 is to ensure efficient development and use of parks and recreation facilities.

Policy 3.1

The City will cooperate with the Morongo Unified School District, and provide assistance when requested, to promote joint usage of resources.

Program 3.1.1

Staff will meet with District personnel as needed to ensure that efforts are coordinated in the location and development of future school sites.

Policy 3.2

New facilities will be developed to ensure that park and recreation facilities are available to all segments of the community.

Program 3.2.1

The City shall undertake development of a skateboard park to be available and open to the public.

E. Goal #4

The City will continue development of Bikeways throughout the City.

Purpose

The purpose of Goal #4 to provide bicycle systems as recreational opportunities.

Policy 4.1

Developments are required to dedicate and improve bicycle trails as identified in the Circulation Plan.

Program 4.1.1

Bikeways will be developed with emphasis focused on routes connecting residential areas, schools, parks and other recreational facilities.

Program 4.1.2

Bicycle parking facilities will be required for commercial and institutional facilities located along planned Bikeway routes.

F. Goal #5

The City's Community Services Department will offer a variety of recreational programs designed to meet the needs of all citizens.

Purpose

The purpose of Goal #5 is to provide recreational opportunities to all segments of the community.

Policy 5.1

Programs and facilities shall be offered to develop emotional and physical health for all citizens and visitors, to develop a sound body and mind through wholesome, vigorous and creative activities.

Program 5.1.1

The Community Services Department shall provide recreation programs with focus placed on building character through creative leisure activities focused on the attainment of socially desirable attitudes, habits and values.

Policy 5.2

Character development will be a determining factor in the creation of new recreation programs offered by the City's Community Services Department.

Program 5.2.1

The Community Services Department shall regularly review recreation programs to ensure that a primary focus is placed in building character through rich, satisfying and creative leisure activities.

Program 5.2.2

Citizenship with respect for the worth and dignity of individuals and faith in democratic action shall be incorporated into the development of recreation programs.

G. Goal #6

The City will foster an environment that encourages widening interest in the arts and cultural benefits.

Purpose

The purpose of Goal #6 is to state the importance of arts and cultural development in the community and identify the City's responsibility for attainment of improved amenities.

Policy 6.1

The City shall support the efforts of those entities whose primary responsibility is to provide increased and improved cultural refinement.

Program 6.1.1

Government restraints to the free expression of art shall be removed and the City shall not adopt regulations which would hinder the expression of art by citizens.

Program 6.1.2

The City shall support the efforts of locally sponsored groups and organizations who provide arts and cultural events and accommodations.