

City of Long Beach
Department of Parks, Recreation & Marine

Strategic Plan

Executive Summary





CITY OF LONG BEACH

Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine

2760 Studebaker Road, Long Beach, CA 90815-1697

(562) 570-3100 • FAX (562) 570-3109

April 7, 2003

Dear Colleagues and Patrons:

It gives me great pleasure to present this executive summary of our recently completed Departmental Strategic Plan. Much has changed since we began this endeavor more than two years ago. This is especially true with regard to the City's financial condition. However, it is our belief that the Strategic Plan is more important than ever.

Through the strategic planning process, we have:

- Identified our core values and core services;
- Developed a new mission statement and new goals;
- Identified opportunities for, and obstacles to, service delivery; and
- Developed strategies for the achievement of goals.

The above will not only help us to make the difficult decisions of the present, but will guide us towards a future of relevance, quality, and effectiveness.

We thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Phil T. Hester
Director of Parks, Recreation and Marine





Strategic Plan – Executive Summary

Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine

Introduction

In the fall of 1999, the Long Beach Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine began to develop a strategic plan to identify current issues and potential future challenges to the Department and to develop strategies for meeting them. The resulting plan incorporates many elements of the City of Long Beach's 2010 Strategic Plan (see Appendix) and will be used to direct the Department's recreational programming, park and facility development and improvement, and administrative decisions for the next ten years. The mission of the Long Beach Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine, ***"We create community and enhance the quality of life in Long Beach through people, places, programs, and partnerships,"*** guides the focus and vision of the Strategic Plan.

Long Beach is a city of almost 500,000 with a diverse and growing population. The Department analyzed its assets—the parks, beaches, recreation centers, marinas, programming, and the Department itself to determine strengths, weaknesses, and projected needs. How demographic changes might affect the programming, infrastructure, maintenance, growth, staffing, and funding were all assessed in the context of the City of Long Beach's Strategic Plan 2010.

Long Beach's Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine (PRM) operates 94 parks with 25 community centers, two major tennis centers, one of the busiest municipal golf systems in the country with five courses, the largest municipally operated marina system in the nation with 3,800 boat slips and 11 miles of beaches. Approximately 3,100 acres within the City's 50 square miles are devoted to recreation.

Gathering Information Through Surveys, Research, and Interviews

As PRM began to develop its strategic plan, important community input was gathered through surveys, forums, interviews, meetings with city commissions and advisory groups, the Mayor and City Council, focus groups, and demographic, facility, and program analysis. PRM also reviewed fee structures, potential partnerships, and benchmark information collected from other communities and parks and recreation departments throughout the country. This information was used to identify the Department's strengths, constraints or weaknesses, future threats, and future opportunities.

The vast majority of Long Beach's residents affirm that parks, open space, and the City's appearance are important. Nearly all residents surveyed agree that developing and maintaining parks, beaches, and waterways is an important role for the Department. Nearly as many residents felt the Department's roles in preserving the environment and providing open space are important. While a majority of the City's residents are satisfied with the amount of parks and open spaces in Long Beach, a large number are not. Almost 60 percent of residents surveyed thought the City had enough parks and open spaces, but slightly over 40 percent disagreed.

The level of the dissatisfaction with the amount of parks and open spaces is reflected in the degree to which the residents would be willing to support a tax and additional spending to



Strategic Plan – Executive Summary

Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine

expand or improve the City's parks and recreation system. Only 9 percent of residents surveyed said they would vote *against* a bond measure to improve or expand the City's parks and recreation system. Forty percent would vote in favor, 33 percent might vote in favor, and 18 percent were unsure. Given current anti-tax sentiment among citizens in general, this shows a substantial level of support.

Developing a Strategy

During PRM's strategy development phase, the mission and values of the Department were refined. Strategic issues were identified, discussed, and prioritized, based on their impact on the Department's future vision. Numerous alternative strategies for addressing each issue were developed. Those strategies with the greatest likelihood of contributing to the Department's mission were selected and an implementation timetable was developed. Although planning has been developed in the context of the vast amount of research and information gathered, the Department's mission and supporting core values provide the foundation for the goals and strategies that have been developed to implement the strategic plan.

From the information-gathering phase and the refining of the Department's mission and values, six goals were defined that will guide the future growth and development of Long Beach PRM. For each of these goals, the project team assessed the current conditions, surveyed employees and users, and reviewed benchmark information from other parks and recreation facilities. From this research, PRM examined where improvements could be made and developed strategies to make those improvements to fulfill its mission.

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION, AND MARINE CORE VALUES

- ?? **Strengthen the community image and sense of place by creating a positive identity for the City and its neighborhoods through parks and natural places.**
- ?? **Serve the needs of the community and its citizens, providing the best service and facilities possible, in a professional, customer friendly, efficient, and positive manner.**
- ?? **Protect environmental resources.**
- ?? **Provide recreational experiences; promote play and celebration.**
- ?? **Promote healthy lifestyles, and foster personal development, professional growth, and lifelong learning.**
- ?? **Strengthen safety and security by providing constructive outlets and forums for community interaction. Facilitate community problem solving by providing facilities and programs for positive interaction.**
- ?? **Increase cultural unity by celebrating heritage and diversity. Ensure that people of diverse ages, ethnic origins, abilities, gender, and income levels feel welcome in Long Beach parks, beaches, facilities, and recreation programs.**
- ?? **Ensure that parks, programs, facilities, and services are equitably distributed and easily accessible throughout the community strengthening Long Beach's neighborhoods, and benefiting all residents.**
- ?? **Support economic development by providing parks, beaches, waterways, and programs that enhance quality of life and support continuing economic success.**

A series of strategies have been developed to accomplish each of the goals. Each of these strategies requires some change in priority or approach. Some require additional investment in



Strategic Plan – Executive Summary

Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine

park land and in improving or building new facilities. Other strategies require changes in how things are accomplished, including changes in processes. Some strategies will require changes in the organizational structure of the Department, including changes in roles and responsibilities or units and individuals. Changing management policies and practices will be required to implement some strategies, which may include changing such things as reward systems, or the relationship between management and labor. The most difficult strategies to implement will be those that require people to change. These changes will include upgrading Department employees' skills and abilities. It will also include changing the attitudes, values, beliefs, and culture of the organization.

As strategies are implemented, several indicators of success have been adopted to measure progress. The information for these indicators will be collected and reviewed periodically, and, if necessary, strategies will be enhanced, revised, or completely changed to ensure adequate progress is achieved. The Executive Summary provides overall strategies designed to achieve each of the goals listed below. Refer to the complete Strategic Plan of the Long Beach Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine for specific, targeted strategies.

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION & MARINE STRATEGIC GOALS

- Goal 1: Ensure Open Space Parks and Recreational Facilities Meet Community Needs.**
- Goal 2: Ensure City Parks and Recreational Facilities Provide a Positive Experience and Image.**
- Goal 3: Ensure Recreational Programming, Leisure Opportunities, and Community Services Meet the Diverse Needs and Interests of Residents and Visitors.**
- Goal 4: Ensure Beaches, Waterways, and Marine Amenities Are Accessible and Provide a Positive Experience and Image.**
- Goal 5: Ensure Marinas Are Fiscally Sound and Meet Boat Owner and Community Needs.**
- Goal 6: Facilitate and Encourage Productive Service to the Community through the Department's Management Philosophy, Structure, Culture, and Employees.**



Strategic Plan – Executive Summary

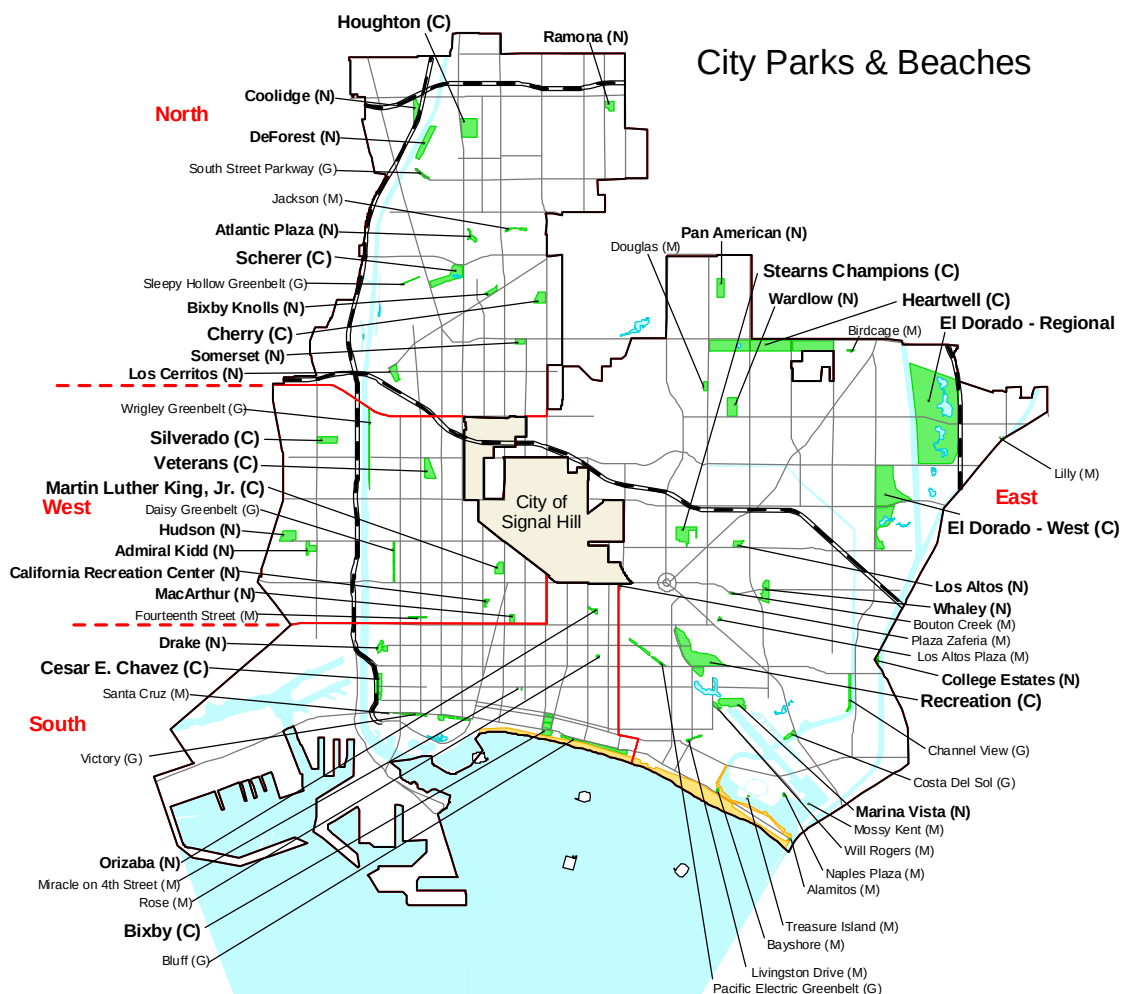
Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine

Goal 1: Ensure Open Space Parks and Recreational Facilities Meet Community Needs.

The City of Long Beach has a substantial parks and recreational system that includes 94 parks encompassing 1,672 acres. Parks include mini, neighborhood, and community parks; regional parks, including 6 linear miles of beach; and greenway parks. In addition to parks, the City has a number of specialty facilities that provide recreational and leisure opportunities. These include a riverfront campground, two historic ranchos, the Long Beach Museum of Art, two marine biological preserves, two special events parks, the park at Colorado Lagoon, Shoreline, Santa Cruz and Victory parks, and the El Dorado Nature Center Park and trail. The City also manages water recreation areas, including five public boat launches, the Alamitos Bay, and Marine Stadium, and five public golf courses.

LONG BEACH DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION, AND MARINE

City Parks & Beaches



Source: Long Beach Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine 2001 Maps of Parks, Facilities, and Service Areas
(C) = Community Park, (N) = Neighborhood Park, (M) = Mini Park, (G) = Greenway



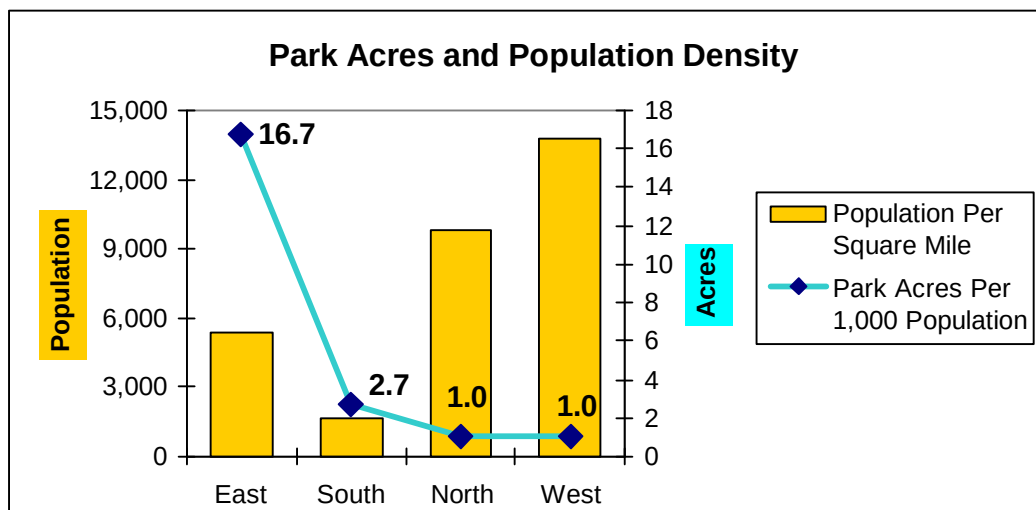
Long Beach Needs Additional Park Space

Although its residents may not think of Long Beach as a densely populated urban city, the City has a population density of over 9,000 persons per square mile, which is more dense than the cities of Baltimore, Detroit, and Los Angeles. There are currently approximately 5.8 acres of park land for every 1,000 residents, which is substantially below the average of 13 acres per 1,000 residents for all the cities compared, and somewhat below the average of 7 acres per 1,000 for other high-density cities. It is important to note that many of these other cities have national, state, or county parks within their boundaries that serve the needs of their residents. Long Beach does not have any of these types of parks.

The high population density also makes it more difficult to develop and maintain park space, given the high demand for land area. Needs for housing, commercial space, and even public services compete for the limited space available. Long Beach also falls well below the average in park area compared to total city area - 7.9 percent of Long Beach is park land compared to the average of 10.9 percent for all the cities benchmarked.

Access to City Parks and Number of Residents Served Is Uneven

While the number of acres of park land is an important indicator of overall park resources, it does not indicate how accessible park resources are to residents. Much of the park land in Long Beach is concentrated on the eastern edge of the City, while the majority of the City's residents are in the central and northern areas. Ideally, residents living in high-density areas would have a neighborhood park within one-quarter mile. Those living in low-density areas would have a neighborhood park within one-half mile. Neighborhood park needs are not met in a substantial part of the City. Park land is not distributed throughout the City in the same proportion as the population. The number of acres per 1,000 population varies widely, ranging from only 1 acre per 1,000 in the North and West Park Districts, to over 16 acres per 1,000 in the East Park District. Given this disparity, the number of persons served per park acre in different areas of the City varies widely, with some parks serving nearly 8,000 residents per acre, while others serve a few hundred residents per acre.





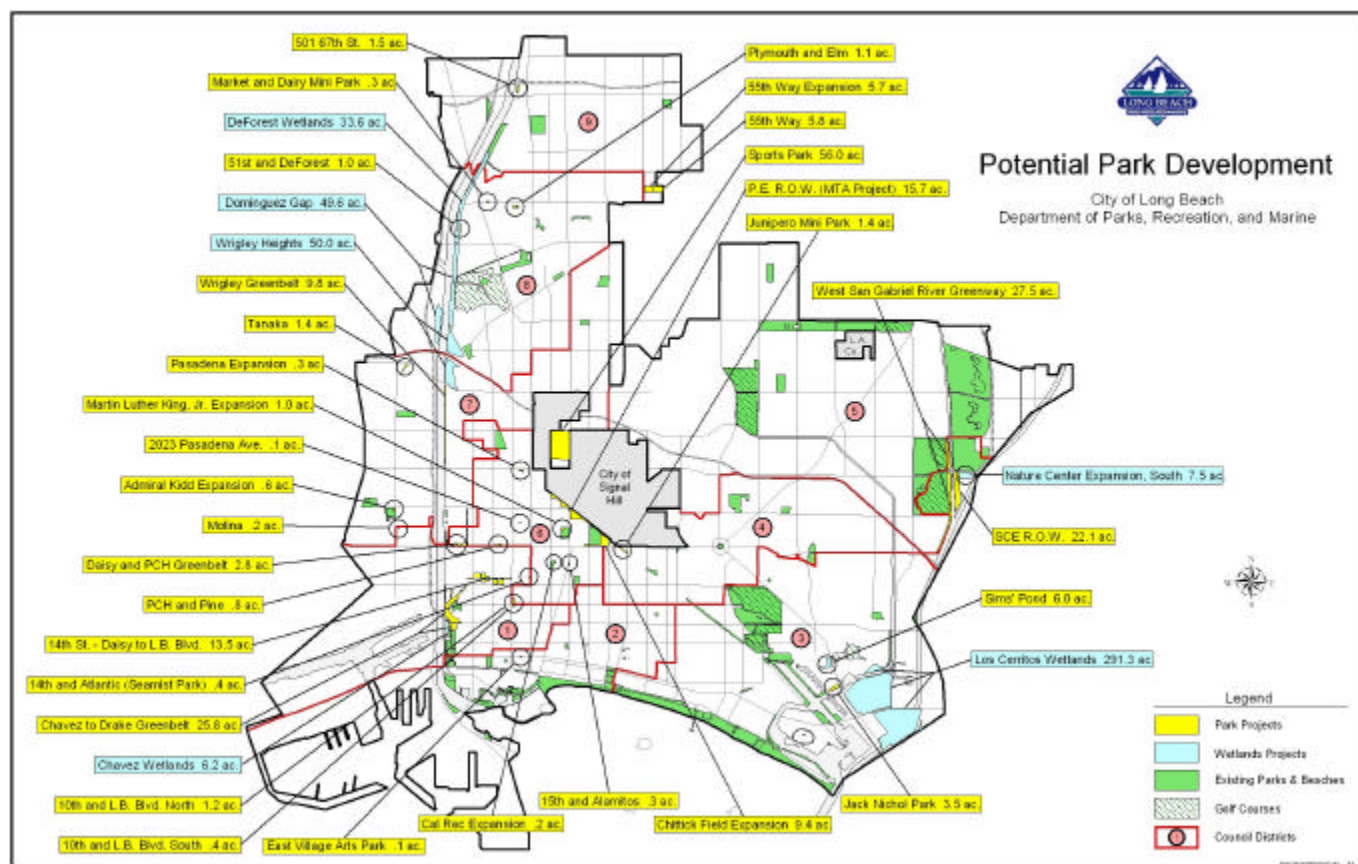
Strategic Plan – Executive Summary

Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine

Strategy 1.1: Increase the Amount of Park Space in Long Beach.

PRM has established a target of 8 acres of park land for every 1,000 Long Beach residents. While this level of park land is well below the average of 13 for all cities compared, it is above the average of 7 acres per 1,000 residents for high-density cities comparable to Long Beach. Approximately 1,080 acres of park land would be needed to meet this target for the current population, with an additional 231 acres of park land needed by 2010 to keep pace with projected population growth.

LONG BEACH DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION, AND MARINE



Source: Long Beach Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine 2001 Maps of Parks, Facilities, and Service Areas

Strategy 1.2: Improve Access to City Parks in Long Beach.

Residents of Long Beach strongly support the Department's role in providing sports and recreation facilities and amenities. PRM uses two measures to determine how well facilities are meeting the needs of the community—the number of residents served per facility and the area served by each facility—and has developed target service levels for each of the types of recreation facilities it provides. The Department currently provides access to playgrounds,



Strategic Plan – Executive Summary

Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine

swimming pools, tennis courts, outdoor basketball courts, football/soccer fields, baseball/softball fields, and community recreation centers.

The Department also provides nontraditional active recreational facilities. These include skate and bicycle parks and plazas, handball courts, roller hockey courts, volleyball courts, spray pools, group picnic facilities, amphitheaters and band shells, a fly-casting pond, an archery range, model plane and boat facilities, sailing, canoeing and kayaking facilities, and an off-leash dog area. While these facilities are important, they were *not* included in this analysis. These facilities are often developed to meet specific needs in specific locations, and are somewhat unique in nature. Given this, there are no national standards or community targeted service levels for these nontraditional facilities. The Long Beach Unified School District also operates and maintains recreation facilities to support the recreational needs of the students. Some of these facilities are open and accessible to the public during non-school hours. School facilities that are accessible to the public have been included in the analysis of service levels and needs. PRM target service levels range from substantially below the established levels in the case of swimming pools and sports fields to somewhat below established levels for tennis courts and basketball courts. The facility additions required to bring the Department up to their established target service levels can be found in the full Strategic Plan, which provides numbers for current needs and projected needs in 2010.

Strategy 1.3: Increase public access to School District recreational facilities.

Public access to school recreation facilities is limited due to the need to secure the facilities from vandalism and the need for personnel to supervise the sites. Facilities are open where the School District or the Department has been able to acquire funding to provide supervised programs or where youth sports organizations have developed agreements with the District to provide for site supervision and security.

The District's current policy allows each school principal to determine if the public can access recreation facilities at each school site. Many of the District's sports fields identified as not accessible are used by youth sports leagues and other members of the public if they provide for site security and supervision. To use these facilities requires applying for and receiving a permit from the District, and payment of a fee to cover the cost of school personnel on-site during the use. This use meets some of the community's recreational needs. In addition to the access discussed above, there is community demand for more open school facilities for casual and/or passive recreational access, and for more use of classrooms and auditoriums to substitute for recreation center facilities in areas without recreation centers.

Strategy 1.4: Develop additional City recreational facilities.

While the School District's recreational facilities can help meet the community's recreational needs, they cannot completely fill the gap between needs and existing facilities. The City will need to develop additional recreational facilities. Specific strategies include developing new master plans for El Dorado Regional Park and for each community park in the City; plans to address citywide aquatics and pools; and developing Chittick Field and a new sports park on the City property at Spring and Orange.



Strategic Plan – Executive Summary

Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine

Strategy 1.5: Develop full service community recreation centers throughout the City.

The Department is pursuing the development of four to five large multi-generational community recreation centers. These centers would be 40,000 to 60,000 square feet in size, and would be located throughout the City based on the population to be served. Each facility would have a variety of facilities, including pools, gymnasiums, exercise areas, sports courts, classrooms, and community rooms. Larger recreation centers are more cost effective to operate and can generate a substantial amount of revenue to offset operational costs. These centers can serve more age groups in one setting, and at a cost per person that is significantly less than current levels.

Strategy 1.6: Develop a recreation service transportation program.

The Community Recreation Services Bureau will work jointly with Long Beach Transit and other agencies to develop recreation routes for youth and seniors to access programs and facilities.





Goal 2: Ensure City Parks and Recreational Facilities Provide a Positive Experience and Image.

Strategy 2.1: Improve the level of safety within City parks and recreational facilities.

City parks and recreational facilities must be safe and in good condition to provide a positive experience and image. Safety was a key issue raised at public input meetings conducted during the development of this plan. Individuals expressed concerns about crime in the parks, including gang and drug activity, the potential for personal injury, and vandalism of personal property. Additionally, Department staff assigned to park locations expressed substantial concern about their personal safety.

PRM will increase its focus on safety by implementing and improving tracking and safety inspection systems to monitor and correct safety hazards and safety incidents, developing better partnerships with the Police Department and increasing Park Ranger presence, installing additional lighting where needed, expanding pest management, and improving communications between enforcement and park staff.

Strategy 2.2: Improve the condition of Department parks and recreational facilities.

Customer perceptions of facility quality ranged widely. PRM assessed the condition of:

- ?? Recreation centers, pools, gymnasiums, restrooms, shelters, parking lots, playgrounds, and game fields;
- ?? Infrastructure and systems;
- ?? Security and safety;
- ?? Function;
- ?? Identity, signage, and curb appeal; and
- ?? Maintenance.

While different facilities vary in their needs for renovation or modernization, much of the infrastructure is old and difficult to maintain in its current condition.



Strategic Plan – Executive Summary

Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine

Across the board, age and heavy use of the facilities from restrooms to fields make maintenance a challenging problem. Aging, root-bound sewer lines are collapsing at a high rate. Many facilities need new roofs and have experienced significant termite damage to wood supports. Grading around the facilities needs to be improved to prevent erosion. The look of many facilities is dated and the structures were designed to support outdated recreational programming that does not meet current needs. Exterior lighting improvements are needed for improved security. Securable storage is an issue in every community center. PRM swimming pools require serious upgrading, including upgrades to the pool water quality systems. The gymnasiums require special maintenance for floors, equipment for competition, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning, and other facility needs.

Department Facilities Determined To Be Below National Standards or in Need of Immediate Renovation

Facility Type	Total	Needing Attention	Percent
Recreation Centers	20	20	100%
Swimming Pools	4	4	100%
Gymnasiums	3	2	67%
Restrooms	46	24	52%
Basketball Courts	31	9	29%
Game fields	86	22	26%
Playgrounds	46	9	20%
Picnic Areas	50	4	8%
Volleyball Courts	14	1	7%
Tennis Courts	32	2	6%

Strategies to address these concerns include: preparing an inventory and evaluation of park amenities and a corresponding replacement program; developing model maintenance standards; and staff training for specialized areas. The complete Strategic Plan provides a detailed assessment and additional strategies.





Goal 3: Ensure Recreational Programming, Leisure Opportunities, and Community Services Meet the Diverse Needs and Interests of Residents and Visitors.

Long Beach PRM provides a wide variety of well-received recreational programming, leisure opportunities, and community services to the residents of the City of Long Beach. All or nearly all of the participants in the day camp, aquatic camp, senior center, extended day, pools, and nature center programs rated them as excellent or good. The class registration process also received high marks. Most participants also felt they received a good value for the cost of participating in the Department programs.

Community Recreation Services Bureau Organization

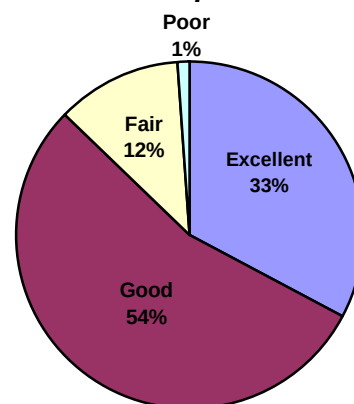
Currently, the Community Recreation Services Bureau is divided into two sections with a manager over the Bureau. The existing sections are not aligned by functionality, but by region and workload availability. Bureau staff feel the organization needs to be changed to streamline and improve communications, trust, teamwork, workflow, and morale. Recreation programs and facility standards are not consistently applied throughout the City, and there is competition between Bureau staff in the various program areas for participants, staff, equipment, and money. Increased coordination between the Community Recreation Services Bureau and other bureaus is needed. Through the Strategic Planning process, greater efforts to re-design the Community Recreation Bureau to matrix with the Planning and Development Bureau and the support Maintenance Operations Bureau and Business Operations Bureau have occurred.

Recreation Programs and Planning

Several strategies have been developed that will provide programming based on maximizing available resources to best meet community recreational needs. The strategies address a number of issues, including: the designation of core and specialty recreation programs; pricing of services; consideration of emerging program issues balanced against those of traditional programs; collaborations; establishment of program standards; program evaluation/customer feedback; equity; culturally appropriate programming; revenue generation; and volunteer development. Core programs are generally year-round, citywide in scope, either traditional programs that are still relevant or strong emerging programs with significant participation, and programs with a large budget and significant market share. A core program may also be one

Citizen Perceptions of Parks, Recreation and Marine Programs

Overall, how would you rate the programs offered by the City Parks, Recreation, and Marine Department



Source: Parks, Recreation, and Marine Citizen Survey, ETC Institute, Spring 2000



Strategic Plan – Executive Summary

Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine

that does not currently have a majority of the factors but one that staff felt should have that emphasis, such as volunteer programs.

Although Bureau staff are aware of community characteristics, they have not used demographic and marketing data to establish program needs. Programs need to be developed based upon market need, survey data and relevance to mission. Measurable objectives have not been established or tracked by staff to demonstrate cost benefit and determination of success. Hours of operation and facility staff responsibilities need to be better defined to assess the most effective use of resources. The integration and utilization of volunteers in Community Recreation Services Bureau programs has not been embraced by staff to the extent that it could be. The existing Volunteer Office is underfunded and unable to make the most efficient use of existing personnel and resources due to technological issues and unreasonable expectations. Funding for marketing, training, screening, matching, and tracking needs to be augmented for this work unit to provide effective assistance to field staff.

Many recreation facilities are outdated, too small, not cost effective, and are not designed to meet the recreation program needs. Very little indoor gym space is available for sports programs for youth and adults. Wellness and fitness space availability is very limited. One of the major challenges for the Department is the proper scheduling and maintenance of the City's sports fields. There is a far greater demand for fields than availability. Field monitoring for inappropriate use also needs to be addressed. Funding for land procurement and development of additional facilities and fields, and the appropriate dedicated staffing to provide for field and facility operations and maintenance is needed.

Strategy 3.1: Establish lifetime use opportunities.

The Department's recreation programs and facilities will be designed to develop and serve a lifetime user through active, passive, and educational experiences. Recreation programs will be designed to provide a diversity of experiences regardless of skills, abilities or interests and to bridge cultures through effective youth and family services and events. The Department will implement an effective pricing policy that allows access by all citizens to use services provided.

Strategy 3.2: Connect the community through program services.

Department programs will connect and rejuvenate the community in a safe and well-maintained environment. Some specific strategies include:

- ?? Developing regional program sites that target a specific program focus to raise its level of awareness and quality of service to target groups;
- ?? Developing a partnership policy to work jointly with other public agencies, not-for-profits, and private agencies in the delivery of programs and facilities; and
- ?? Seeking community input into the design or redesign of recreation programs and facilities to meet their needs.



Strategic Plan – Executive Summary

Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine

Strategy 3.3: Preserve environmental, cultural, and historical resources.

Environmental, cultural, and historical resources stewardship issues were viewed as a high priority by the community in both the citizens' survey and in focus group discussions. Strategic planning of these specific program areas is needed in order to cultivate, preserve, and enhance current efforts. The Department operates one outdoor nature center facility and several natural areas. The Department and the Community Recreation Services Bureau needs to work with neighborhoods to celebrate the diverse ethnic culture and traditional folk arts of its citizens, which will also increase advocacy and support. PRM will develop a resource management plan for each cultural, historical, or environmental site and train staff and volunteers on how to manage within that framework.

Strategy 3.4: Establish effective partnerships.

Developing recreation partnerships eliminates duplication and maximizes the Bureau's resources. The Community Recreation Services Bureau has many partnerships in place that help provide recreation programs and services to the community. Opportunities for contracting in, as well as contracting out, may provide both new and additional revenue sources, as well as cost savings. Formal working agreements and policies that address partnership development are needed. Agreements need to define the amount of equity to be invested by each party, as well as the role each partner will play. Efforts to create new revenue sources through grants and initiatives should be expanded to increase potential leveraging of resources.

Specific actions to implement the strategy of establishing effective partnerships include developing working partnership agreements with all existing partners and seeking to obtain a 50/50 equity split, where appropriate; tracking the expected outcomes of each partnership to ensure that the partnership is achieving its established vision; and reducing the duplication of services and competition between the City and other youth service providers.





Goal 4: Ensure Beaches and Waterways Are Accessible and Provide a Positive Experience and Image.

The City has approximately six linear miles of beach. Of these, approximately four miles are oceanfront beach, reaching from the downtown area to the end of the Peninsula. The remaining two miles are beaches along Alamitos Bay. To attract community users and visitors, beaches and waterways must be accessible, safe, and clean. Unfortunately the current perception of the City beaches is only fair. Over half of Long Beach residents expressed concerns about water quality, including pollution and contaminants in the water. Although there is a widespread impression that City beaches are not clean, this is a false impression. Long Beach ocean beaches consistently rate as clean or cleaner on bacterial measures as the Orange County beaches. Nearly as many residents expressed concerns about the cleanliness of the beaches themselves.

<i>Citizen Perceptions of City Beaches</i>	
<i>Why do you not visit beaches in the City of Long Beach more often?</i>	
Reason	Percent
Pollution / Contaminants in the Water	54%
Beaches are not clean	46%
Waves too small	29%
Poor condition of facilities / amenities	26%
Not enough parking	22%
Do not feel safe	18%
Beaches not easily accessible	14%
Not enough showers/restrooms	13%
Not enough concessions	9%
<i>Source: Parks, Recreation, and Marine Citizen Survey, ETC Institute, Spring 2000</i>	

The lack of large waves was also given as a reason for not visiting City beaches more often. Many of the remaining reasons given for not visiting City beaches relate to access and amenities. These include the poor condition of facilities and amenities, not enough parking, beaches not easily accessible, not enough showers and restrooms, and not enough concessions. Another significant reason given for not visiting City beaches was not feeling safe.

Strategy 4.1: Support efforts to improve the water quality and cleanliness of City beach areas.

The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board has begun rigorous efforts to implement the federal Clean Water Act, assessing what the pollutant loads are and developing a ten-year effort to step down the level of pollutant discharges until Clean Water Act standards are met. This includes both point source discharges (usually factories), which have been regulated for some time, and new regulations for non-point source discharges, such as oil and litter from streets, fertilizers from lawns, and soil from construction sites. If implemented as currently proposed, a rapid and easily noticeable improvement in the waters of the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers, Alamitos Bay, and in San Pedro Bay off Long Beach ocean beaches should begin in the next few years. Because some up-river cities are trying to block these new regulations, the actual dates of implementation are not yet determined.

The Long Beach beaches were almost totally devoid of sand after the beach erosion that occurred in the 1930s and 1940s. Large amounts of sand were dredged from Alamitos Bay and placed on the beaches; however, this sand contained relatively more silt than the traditional beach sand transported down the rivers. When on the beach, the silt mixed in this sand is



Strategic Plan – Executive Summary

Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine

darker than the sand crystals, giving the City beaches somewhat darker and dirtier looking sand and the water a cloudier look than the water off beaches with more crystalline sand.

PRM will support the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board efforts to eliminate point and non-point source discharges through compliance and political support; seek grant funding for and implement high-profile projects, that demonstrate discharge elimination techniques, such as on-site storm water retention in parking lots, storm water treatment, wetlands and storm drain filtration systems; and utilize non-polluting fertilizers and improve irrigations systems to minimize irrigation runoff to streets.

Strategy 4.2: Increase resident and visitor awareness of the positive aspects of the Long Beach beaches.

Specific actions to highlight the positive aspects of the beaches include:

- ?? Promoting the comparative water quality of the Long Beach beaches and bays, particularly those reported by independent sources;
- ?? Ensuring that beach parking lots are accessible, customer friendly, and reasonably priced; and
- ?? Enhancing concession areas and recreational opportunities on the beaches and bays.

Strategy 4.3: Improve access to City beaches.

The City's beaches comprise four types:

- ?? Those located below 30- to 40-foot tall ocean bluffs, the bluff area;
- ?? Those with broad inland area at the same elevation as the beach, Belmont Shore;
- ?? Those bordered by a narrow spit of land, the Peninsula; and
- ?? The Alamitos Bay beaches.

The bluff area has only two parking lots that are often full on holidays and summer weekends and almost no on-street parking. The Belmont Shore area has ample parking in several large public lots, but with limited free on-street parking. The Peninsula has one public parking lot at one end and no on-street parking due to its residential use. Of the Alamitos Bay beaches, Mother's Beach has adequate parking; however, there is a community versus beachgoer conflict caused by beachgoers who park in the community instead of paying in the public lot.

In addition to parking issues, the bluff area provides a physical barrier to beach access. The stairs that go down to the beach are difficult for many beachgoers to access and Ocean Boulevard, a wide major highway with heavy traffic traveling at relatively high speeds, is also a barrier. The beaches are also difficult to access from inland areas, due to the lack of north-south streets between inland areas in the eastern half of the beach area. No roads come directly to Belmont Shore or the Peninsula from the 405 Freeway or areas north, which requires that beachgoers be familiar with the local roads to reach these beaches. In the western half of the beach area, only two roads lead from the 405 Freeway to the beaches.



Strategic Plan – Executive Summary

Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine

Suggested strategies to improve beach access include:

- ?? Revising the local coastal plan to allow increased beach parking at strategic locations;
- ?? Ensuring that beach parking charges remain competitive and do not provide a disincentive to beach usage; and
- ?? Providing beach access ramps in the bluff area, easier ways for pedestrian to cross Ocean Boulevard, and better directional signs from major access routes.

Strategy 4.4: Improve beach facilities, amenities, and concessions.

Suggested strategies to improve beach facilities, amenities, and concessions include:

- ?? Preparing an inventory of beach amenities, (e.g., restrooms, drinking fountains, benches, trash receptacles) and developing a replacement program;
- ?? Constructing a series of oases along the beach bike path providing such amenities as shade shelters, drinking fountains, benches, trash receptacles, palm trees and other landscaping, art, and possibly barbecues and/or fire pits at selected locations;
- ?? Improving concession facilities along the beach through additional landscaping and aesthetic treatments, expanded services, and additional storage for recreational equipment rentals; and
- ?? Developing a beach master plan, as a section of the Local Coastal Plan, to increase beach use.





Goal 5: Ensure Marinas Are Fiscally Sound and Meet Boat Owner and Community Needs.

PRM oversees and maintains three marina facilities—Long Beach Shoreline Marina, Rainbow Harbor/Marina, and Alamitos Bay Marina—that have a total of 3,850 available boat slips and berths that represent over 10 percent of the total number of slips in Southern California. The City's marinas are considered enterprise operations; user fees and charges are intended to cover the City's costs of providing this service. For the five years prior to 2001, the City's Marina enterprise operations did not generate sufficient income to cover current operating costs, including debt retirement, and to undertake needed capital improvements. This financial dilemma is believed to be directly attributable to the effects of the economic recession. Projections for the year 2010 indicate there will be a fairly steady purchasing rate for each boat category. The Long Beach marinas are already beginning to see the demand increase, however the smaller slips continue to experience a softer demand while the demand for the available larger slips has steadily increased in the past two years.

Other factors affecting the City's marina occupancy include a highly competitive market in the South Coast marina industry; the current design, layout, and age of the City of Long Beach's marinas; and the City's limited resources needed to make desired changes. The Shoreline and Rainbow Marinas were built in a period of high slip demand, and as a result were designed with a no frills focus, including double-loaded slips, inadequate vehicle parking, uncomfortable restrooms, and virtually no landscaping.

A recent survey of the various stakeholders demonstrated a strong belief that the marina is an important asset of the community. There is no interest on the part of elected officials to eliminate or dramatically reduce the scope of the City's marinas. Boat owners surveyed reported a high level of satisfaction with the level of service provided at all Long Beach marinas. The survey also noted support to increase current fees and charges, provided they are earmarked to fund needed and desired capital improvements at the two marinas.

Strategy 5.1: Establish and maintain financial stability of City marinas through competitive fees and charges.

To implement this strategy the Marine Bureau will identify the three Marina facilities, Shoreline, Alamitos Bay, and Rainbow Harbor/Marina, as three separate cost and revenue centers within the overall framework of the City's Marina Enterprise Fund, and maintain a minimum occupancy rate of 85 percent for available slips at the Shoreline and Rainbow Marinas and 93 percent at the Alamitos Bay Marina. The Marine Bureau will establish user fees and charges that cover the costs reasonably borne by the City in providing desired services while maintaining competitive position in private market place; conduct customer service surveys on an annual basis; and provide a flexible operational structure to enable changes needed as a result of customer desires.



Strategic Plan – Executive Summary

Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine

Strategy 5.2: Improve and modernize marina condition, infrastructure, and amenities.

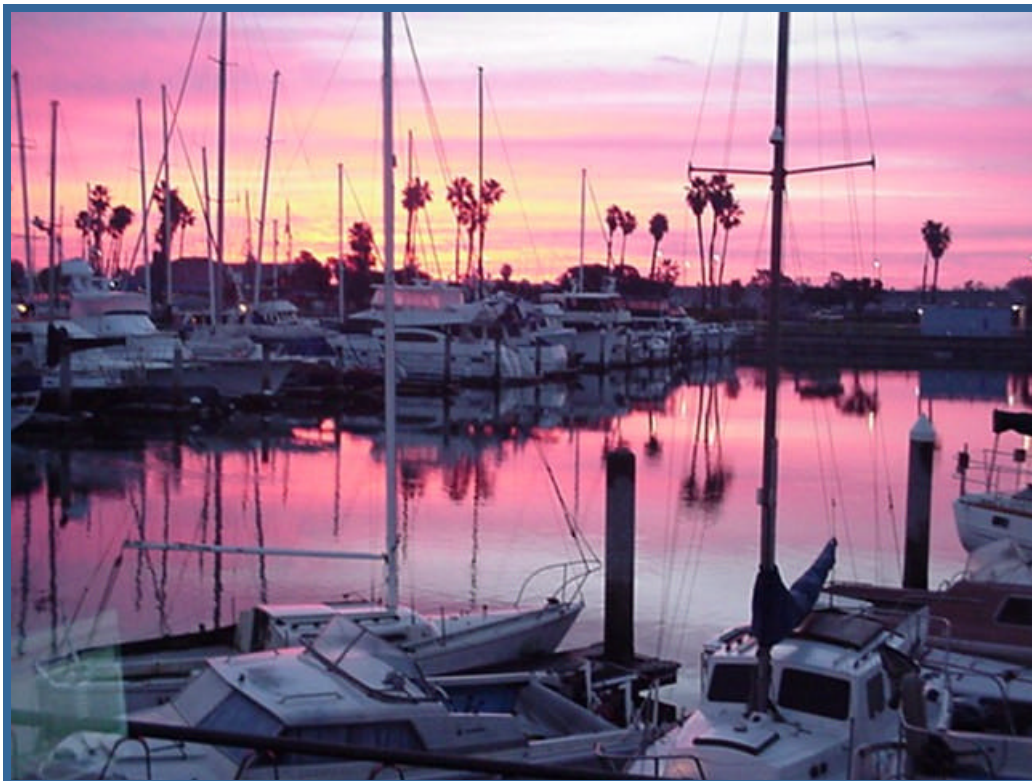
The Marine Bureau will develop a conceptual plan for the Long Beach Shoreline and Rainbow Marinas to correct design flaws, develop a master development plan for the Alamitos Bay Marina to modernize the aging facility, and secure needed funding for implementing the refurbishment/reconstruction plans at all three marina facilities.

Strategy 5.3: Increase resident and visitor awareness of the positive aspects of City marinas.

The Marine Bureau will ensure that resident and other stakeholder interests are represented in all decisions relative to construction or operational changes in the marina areas, work with the various boating education agencies and clubs to increase outreach, and provide resources to those institutions and agencies that increase awareness and use of the marinas and waterfront areas.

Strategy 5.4: Improve the level of safety within City marinas.

The Marine Bureau will ensure that funding is available for adequate staffing levels for police and fire services to ensure timely response to calls for service at marina facilities and that adequate maintenance funding is available to maintain secure facilities.





Strategic Plan – Executive Summary

Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine

Goal 6: Facilitate and Encourage Productive Service to the Community through the Department's Management Philosophy, Structure, Culture, and Employees.

Long Beach PRM's most important resource is its employees. These employees perform a myriad of duties, each of which can contribute to the quality of life in Long Beach. Each employee's effectiveness in making these contributions is determined by how well they understand their duties, how well they work together, their motivation level and morale, and their commitment to providing quality service to the community. A survey of employees was conducted in both 1999 and 2002 to determine employee perspectives, including work environment, communication, management support and fairness, motivation and morale, and customer service and effectiveness.

Work environment issues include job safety, adequate training, access to tools or equipment, adequate workspace, appropriate workload, and cooperation and assistance. Department employees state they feel safe and adequately trained, with improvements in employee perspectives on training from 1999 to 2002. The majority of Department employees also agree they have proper equipment, adequate workspace, and receive good cooperation both within their own division and the rest of the Department, with ratings of equipment and cooperation again improving between 1999 and 2002. Less than half the Department's employees agree their programs are adequately staffed, however, with the percentage declining between 1999 and 2002.

Communication includes the degree to which employees understand the Department's goals and objectives and are clear about job expectations and performance standards. Most employees stated that goals and objectives are clear and that they are accountable for achieving results. Most also agree the direction provided by their supervisors is adequate, with notable improvement between 1999 and 2002.

Employee perspectives regarding how well they are supported and how fairly they are treated by management improved between 1999 and 2002. However, the overall percentages of employees who feel they are fairly paid, receive appropriate recognition, have a career path, receive fair assignments, fair promotions and opportunity to prepare for promotion, receive fair discipline, and that management handles issues fairly is relatively low. Motivation and morale reflects the employees' enthusiasm and commitment to the Department. Overall percentages of employees who feel their suggestions are valued, trust management, and feel management exhibits good leadership are relatively low. Employees rated the Department's morale level and coworker performance as relatively low as well.

Strategy 6.1: Value the contributions of staff at all levels.

PRM will empower staff to fulfill the mission of the Department and support, respect, and utilize their expertise to the highest level possible. Specific strategies include encouraging supervisors to give employees comment cards or e-mails recognizing good work and sending global e-mail listing employees who were recognized by their supervisors.



Strategic Plan – Executive Summary

Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine

Strategy 6.2: Build mutual trust and respect among management and staff.

Some specific actions to implement this strategy include developing a Business Operations newsletter, creating an issues list to be discussed as a standing item at monthly Bureau meetings, publicizing the monthly TEAM Meeting to rectify issues, and allowing employees to bring issues anonymously to monthly Bureau meetings. PRM will also provide appropriate resources to support staff in providing programs and services and professional development for staff at all levels.

Managers, supervisors, and staff will commit to personal contact and communication in a timely fashion when changing commitments to each other, and develop a Project Calendar to develop a measurable assignment chart to inform managers of staff assignments.

Strategy 6.3: Improve the level of motivation and morale among department staff.

In addition to other specific strategies, PRM will conduct regular Department employee orientations, develop a Department mentor program for new employees, create “commonly asked questions” flyer for each division, establish training opportunities and classes, create a training website, and establish a formal job standards checklist that will be reviewed with new employees as part of the orientation process.



APPENDIX

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEPARTMENT AND CITY STRATEGIC PLANS

The City of Long Beach Strategic Plan 2010 provided a foundation and important direction to the Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine in the development of the Department's Strategic Plan. The following table illustrates the relationship between goals and strategies in the Department's Strategic Plan and those in the Long Beach 2010 Plan.

PRM Strategic Plan

Long Beach 2010 Correlates

1	Ensure open space, parks, and recreational facilities meet community needs	
	Strategy	
	1.1 Increase the amount of park space in Long Beach	E2, E3, N1
	1.2 Improve Access to City parks in Long Beach	E2, N1
	1.3 Increase public access to School District recreational facilities	E2, N1, N4
	1.4 Develop additional City recreational facilities	N1, N4
	1.5 Develop full service community centers throughout the City	N3, N4
	1.6 Develop a recreation service transportation program	N3, Y1
2	Ensure city parks and recreational facilities provide a positive experience and image	
	Strategy	
	2.1 Improve the level of safety within City parks and recreational facilities	S1, S2, S4, S5, Y5, Y8
	2.2 Improve the condition of City parks and recreational facilities	B5, N4
3	Ensure recreational programming, leisure opportunities, and community services meet the diverse needs and interests of residents and visitors	
	Strategy	
	3.1 Establish lifetime use opportunities	---
	3.2 Connect the community through program services	N1, N3, N4, N6, S4, Y1
	3.3 Preserve environmental, cultural, and historical resources	E1, E3, E4, N4, N6
	3.4 Establish effective partnerships	N1, Y1, Y3, Y4, Y5, Y8
4	Ensure beaches, waterways, and marine amenities are accessible and provide a positive experience and image	
	Strategy	
	4.1 Support efforts to improve water quality and cleanliness of City beach areas	E5, N4
	4.2 Increase resident and visitor awareness of the positive aspects of City beaches	B1, E5
	4.3 Improve access to City beaches	E2, Y1
	4.4 Improve beach facilities, amenities, and concessions	N4

PRM Strategic Plan

Long Beach 2010
Correlates

5	Ensure marinas are fiscally sound and meet boat owner and community needs
---	---

Strategy

5.1	Establish and maintain financial stability of City marinas through competitive fees and charges
5.2	Improve and modernize marina condition, infrastructure, and amenities
5.3	Increase resident and visitor awareness of the positive aspects of City marinas
5.4	Improve the level of safety with City marinas

B5
B5, N4
B1, E5
N4, S1

6	Facilitate and encourage productive service to the Community through the Department's management philosophy, structure, culture, and employees
---	--

Strategy

6.1	Value the contributions of staff at all levels
6.2	Build mutual trust and respect among management and staff
6.3	Improve the level of motivation and morale among department staff

