

**MONTEREY PENINSULA REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT**

*Strategic Plan*  
**2021-2025**



*Adopted 12-02-20 by Board of Directors*



***NATURE IS THE EARTH'S PLAYGROUND!***

*Preserving and Protecting Parks and Open Space*

# *Dedication*

We dedicate this plan to the women and men who are our heroes – first responders, essential workers, and others, and the many who have lost their lives and the families, friends, and communities that mourn their loved-ones' untimely departure. May we unite as one, reminding ourselves that we are one people living on one planet, for a finite amount of time...





# *Our Story*

The Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District (MPRPD) developed this Strategic Plan during the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The negative impacts this dangerous, highly virulent disease has inflicted have in one manner or another affected all of humanity. Even so, MPRPD has negotiated these turbulent times in a responsible manner, keeping many of our hiking trails and open spaces available to the public even as many federal, state, and local governments shuttered their properties.

MPRPD recognized the tremendous benefits our open spaces offer, helping maintain our residents' and visitors' physical and emotional health. The model MPRPD formulated and implemented protected, and continues to protect, our visitors, vendors, and staff – a model that has been shared with parks, recreation, and open space organizations across the United States.

Adaptation continues to be MPRPD's key to its provision of services. New methods are sought and implemented, enhancing MPRPD's ability to be nimble and responsive to the 'new world' in which we live. MPRPD's critical habitat, and natural and cultural resources continue to be protected and monitored. The high-quality environmental education programs and unparalleled trail-based experiences we offer are consistently delivered. The award-winning business practices that uphold MPRPD's reputation as one of the region's most transparent and best-run governmental agencies continues.

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# *Our Formation*

In March of 1970, the Sierra Club hosted a forum on the peninsula's critical water supply. After that meeting, the idea of creating a special district for parks and open spaces was discussed. A year later, the Sierra Club, the League of Women Voters, and the Audubon Society joined forces, creating the Committee for Open Space.

In May 1971, a grassroots effort began to collect the required 5,000 signatures to place consideration of a park and open space district on the November ballot. By October, the petition drive had proven successful and the County of Monterey Board of Supervisors placed Measure A on the ballot.

In the November 1972 election, pursuant to the authority granted in the Public Resources Code, Section 5500, Monterey County's electorate approved the measure which created the Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District (MPRPD or District). MPRPD would thereafter be entrusted to acquire lands for the express purpose of preserving open space and providing recreational opportunities. MPRPD's boundaries would include the Monterey Peninsula's seven incorporated cities, and the unincorporated communities of Carmel Valley, Pebble Beach, and the Big Sur Coast. The District's footprint would mirror the Monterey Peninsula College District's boundaries and would be divided into five wards. Each ward would be governed by its respective voter-elected member of the MPRPD Board of Directors.

In December 1972, a month after the electorate approved Measure A's passage, the newly established MPRPD Board of Directors held its first meeting. Since then, MPRPD has acquired, or helped to acquire, a total of 25-parks and open spaces, thereby successfully protecting approximately 14,000-acres of open space and parklands. Some of these properties are operated and maintained by other jurisdictions.

MPRPD has accomplished its many successes by responsibly planning and administering its budget and finances. Funding is generated from a ½ percent allocation of the property tax collected within the District. For every \$100,000 of property value, MPRPD receives approximately \$5.00 for open space acquisition and operations. MPRPD also has a strong track-record of obtaining grants from state and federal sources.

In 2016, voters approved passage of Measure E, creating the Community Facilities District (CFD) funding source. The CFD replaced MPRPD's Assessment District Fund, which 'sunsetted' in 2019. Voters agreed to provide vital funding to MPRPD through an assessment of approximately \$22/yr. per single family dwelling equivalent. These funds enable MPRPD to continue preserving and protecting parks and open spaces while offering environmental and passive recreation opportunities within the District's boundaries.

# *Our Vision*

To have several large well-managed parks distributed across the District, representing a variety of habitats, concurrently protecting our environment, and enhancing our community's health, recreational, environmental education, and multi-modal transportation network opportunities.

# *Our Mission*

To acquire and maintain open space in the District for preservation and use, working with partners and the community, for public benefit and enjoyment, and environmental protection.

# *Our Values*

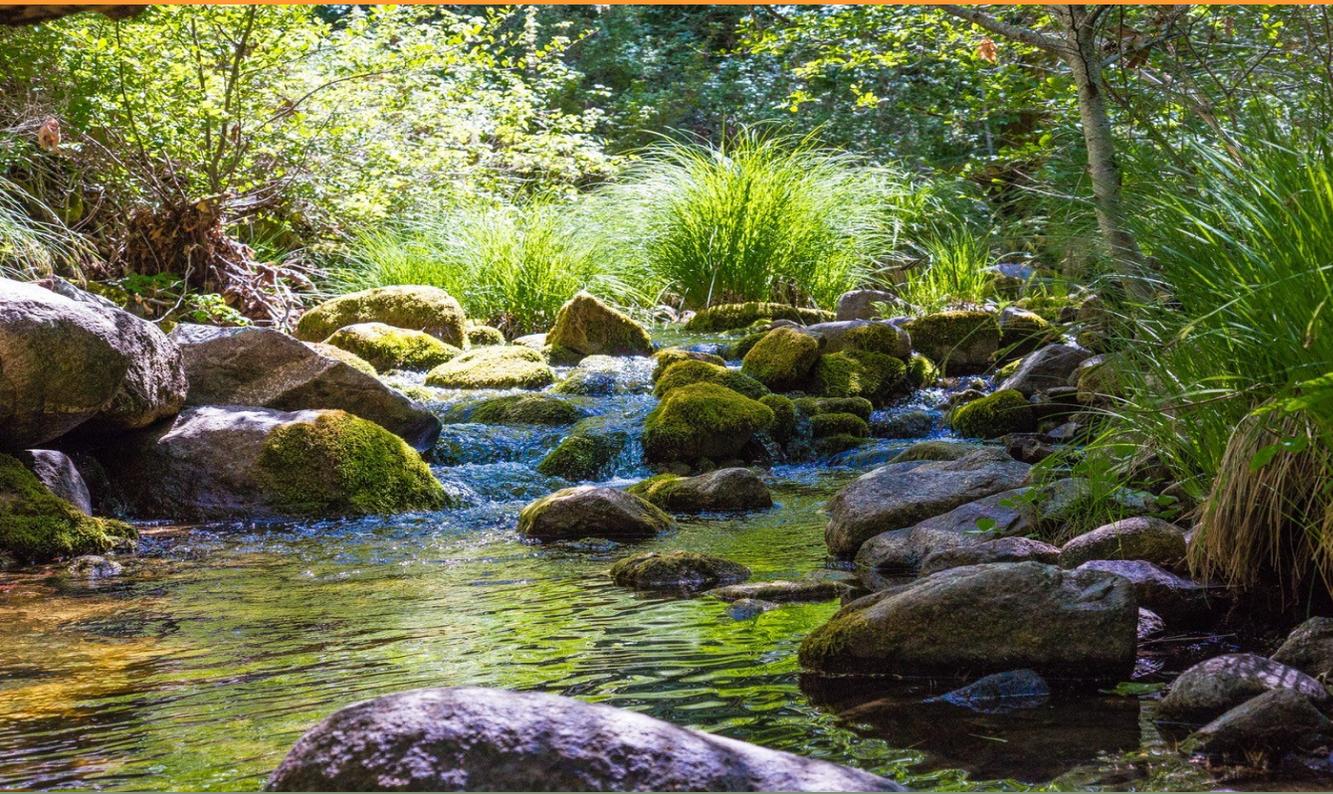
To have safe, accessible open space for recreation enjoyment and protection of natural and cultural resources, and native habitat and wildlife.



# Our Park Map



*Cachagua*  
*Frog Pond*  
*Garland Ranch*  
*Joyce Stevens*  
*Marina Dunes*  
*Palo Corona*  
*And More!*



*OUR PROPERTIES*

# Our Process

This 5-year Strategic Plan (Plan) reflects input from the public, and MPRPD’s key community stakeholders, volunteers, Board of Directors, and staff. The Plan was created to serve our community while balancing environmental, human, and financial realities. This Plan will be used by the District for its annual management plans and budget development processes. Annual management plans will be created to focus on the vital few objectives critical to moving the organization toward the Strategic Goals included in this Plan. In recognition of the need for flexibility and responding to changing economic, social, political, and environmental conditions, this Plan will be reviewed annually and updated bi-annually to ensure that it is current and relevant, and that its goals are attainable.

## The terms for the 2021-25 Strategic Plan are:

**GOAL** An outcome statement that guides a program or management function.

**STRATEGY** A coordinated, broad approach or direction adopted by an organization so that the organization can achieve its purpose.

**OBJECTIVE** A measurable result that supports the achievement of a goal. Objectives in this Plan are to be “S.M.A.R.T.”

**S = SPECIFIC**  
**M = MEASURABLE**  
**A = ATTAINABLE**  
**R = REALISTIC**  
**T = TIME—BOUND**





# *Our Goals & Strategies*

- 1) Adapting to a Changing World
- 2) Stewarding through Land Use and Conservation Planning
- 3) Increasing Social Equity and Engaging People with Nature and History
- 4) Enhancing MPRPD's Relevance to Our Community District-wide
- 5) Building Coalitions
- 6) Investing in Human Capital
- 7) Maintaining Financial Stability
- 8) Revisiting Other Items as Conditions Change



# Goal 1 Adapting to a Changing World

*Identify, formulate, and implement measures that favorably position MPRPD to maximize its timely response to environmental, social, and economic shifts.*





# Goal 1

## Strategies

## Objectives

## Due

Develop policies and procedures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

- Research and implement best practices to safely open and continue providing recreational and educational opportunities in alignment with Federal, State, and County Orders while protecting the public’s and staff’s wellbeing
- Finalize development and have Board ratify MPRPD’s Return to Work Policies and Procedures in alignment with the CDC, state and local guidelines

Ongoing

May 2021

Develop policies and procedures in response to demographic shifts

- Research the region’s demographic trends and create or modify programs and facilities to meet our diverse constituency’s needs and preferences, with the objective of overcoming overt and covert racism, and removing physical, social, economic, and communication barriers

Ongoing

Develop policies and procedures in response to climate change

- Develop and implement programs, practices, and a Task Force that monitors, records, and addresses phenological shifts, groundcover and canopy successional change, and manages wildfire potential

Ongoing

Develop and implement policies and procedures in response to economic volatility

- Track global, national, and local economic trends and forecasts to better manage MPRPD’s fiscal trajectory, stability, and sustainability

Ongoing

Be a leader in energy and resource conservation

- Reduce MPRPD’s carbon footprint by implementing resource consumption reduction and conservation measures, and alternative energy technology

Ongoing

# Goal 2

Stewarding through Land Use and Conservation Planning

*Develop and implement graphic master plans, habitat and facility management plans, and interpretive and environmental education plans for MPRPD's properties to enhance those sites' and facilities' respective environmental, recreational, and educational values.*



# Goal 2

## Strategies

Be a national leader in natural and cultural resource preservation, conservation, and native habitat restoration



## Objectives

- Enhance preservation and conservation of natural resources and critical habitat, and restore native habitat and wildlife corridors on MPRPD properties with significant environmental value
- Enhance cultural resource conservation, preservation, and restoration of MPRPD's prehistoric and historic sites, structures, and cultural and historic landscapes
- Develop MPRPD's Cyclical Management Plan for the treatment of invasive flora and fauna
- Update and reissue MPRPD's grazing plan and lease respectively to enhance invasive flora and wildfire management, continue a traditional agricultural use, and provide revenue for MPRPD

## Due

Ongoing

Ongoing

Summer  
2021

Fall 2022

Master plan all MPRPD properties, priority given to environmentally and culturally significant properties, and highly visited open spaces



- Complete Palo Corona Regional Park's Interpretive Master Plan
- Complete Frog Pond Wetland Preserve's Habitat Management and Master Plan
- Complete Cachagua Community Park's Graphic Master Plan
- Complete Joyce Stevens Monterey Pine Preserve's Graphic Master Plan and development of trail maps in partnership with Monterey County Parks Department, integrating Jacks Peak's and this Preserve's uses

Winter  
2021

Summer  
2022

Summer  
2022

Winter  
2023

# Goal 2

## Strategies

Evaluate current land-use and modify practices to ensure uses are aligned with each property's most significant purpose(s)

## Objectives

- Change land and resource use(s) to maximize natural and cultural resource protection even if the required change(s) modify or terminate previously authorized and popular uses and practices
- Evaluate all properties for inclusion of fitness trails and equipment, and provide these amenities where appropriate

*Due*

Early Winter/  
Spring 2021

Beginning  
Summer 2021

Develop Facility Inventory and Cyclical Maintenance Plans for all MPRPD sites and facilities

- Complete comprehensive facility inventory and condition assessment for all facilities, fixtures, and equipment and develop an agency-wide Cyclical Maintenance and Asset Maintenance, Repair, and Replacement Plan

Winter 2024

Finalize and implement MPRPD's Environmental Education Programs Plan

- Evaluate educational goals and directions for all MPRPD sites and update as needed

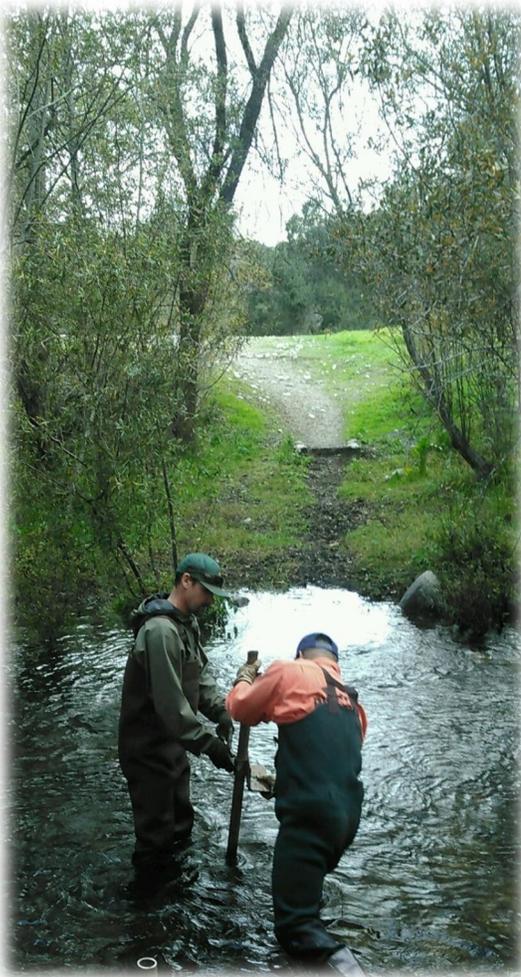
Ongoing



# Goal 2

## Strategies

Evaluate existing wildfire, flood, seismic and other natural disaster preparedness for MPRPD properties and feasibility of alternative strategies and practices



## Objectives

- In consultation with wildfire, flood, and seismic activity experts, universities, offices of emergency management, and others, evaluate existing natural disaster/event preparedness for MPRPD properties and the feasibility of pursuing alternative strategies and practices that may enhance the District's resilience to natural disasters
- In alignment with the US Fish & Wildlife Service's safe harbor protocols, site-specific analyses of MPRPD's properties will consider five core criteria, focusing on the protection, restoration, sustaining, and monitoring of:
  - Fire, flood, and seismic event adapted natural and anthropogenic communities
  - healthy watersheds
  - native biodiversity
  - cultural resources
  - aesthetic, natural, and wilderness qualities of the region's riparian, upland, woodland, grassland, chaparral, and coastal habitats



## Due

Beginning in 2021 and reviewed at a period not to exceed every five-years

# Goal 3

Increasing Social Equity and Engaging People with Nature and History

*Formulate and implement actions that overcome racism and discrimination, and social, physical, and economic barriers, by creating meaningful opportunities that are available to and welcome everybody in the enjoyment of MPRPD's facilities, programs, and open spaces.*



# Goal 3

## Strategies

Overcome barriers that limit or prohibit public access and enjoyment of MPRPD's facilities, parks, open spaces, and programs



## Objectives

- Research best practices for inclusivity and social justice in our parks, open spaces, and facilities
- Identify social, physical, economic, and language barriers and implement measures that address these constraints by developing or modifying programs, exhibits, standardizing signage, and facilities
- Evaluate all MPRPD properties and, where feasible and applicable, enhance public access to parks and open spaces via mass transit, multimodal transportation/trail corridors, and creating linkages to communities and neighborhoods

## Due

Ongoing

Ongoing

Annual

Enhance K-12 student access to programs, parks, and open spaces

- Subject to availability of funding, provide transportation grants to schools within MPRPD's boundaries for student participation at MPRPD's properties and collaborators' sites, and create and allocate staff to manage web-based teacher sign-up systems for field trips to MPRPD parks and open spaces (like Point Lobos' website)

Annual

Reach and serve underserved populations

- Work with collaborators that have a positive record of reaching underserved populations and adopt and implement best practices, as applicable

Ongoing

# Goal 3

## Strategies

## Objectives

*Due*

Integrate new technology, and expand remote and digital programming to broaden the public's reach and convenience

- Research, adopt, and implement best practices to expand classes, programs, and events through the internet and other technology

Ongoing

Provide high-quality experiences at MPRPD's parks, open spaces, and programs

- Benchmark against organizations providing similar services and implement best practices to enhance service delivery methods

Annual

Become a leader regarding the Central Coast's cultural history

- Partner with the region's Indigenous Tribes, colleges, universities, private parties, and organizations to tell the region's human history

Ongoing

Become a leader regarding the Central Coast's natural history

- Research and implement environmental education and interpretive programs and exhibits, on the region's geomorphology, hydrology, climate, biology, and phenology

Ongoing



# Goal 4

Enhancing MPRPD's Relevance to  
Our Community District-wide

*Balance the distribution of high-quality parks, open spaces, facilities, recreational, and environmental educational opportunities throughout the District, especially focusing on reaching, inviting, and serving the region's diverse populations.*



# Goal 4

## Strategies

## Objectives

*Due*

Increase MPRPD's visibility and recognition

- Enhance MPRPD's branding to build recognition in all formats including website, signage, brochures, social media, etc.

Ongoing

Increase community involvement

- Institutionalize and advertise sponsored programs such as park-wide clean-ups, Adopt-a-Park program, and stewardship activities

Annual

Seek acquisition of real property so that all wards enjoy opportunities like those presently available in the Carmel River Watershed

- Focus acquisition of real property within or in proximity to the cities of Del Rey Oaks, Marina, Sand City, and Seaside. Target properties that offer high-quality and high-impact environmental and cultural resource protection, habitat restoration, recreation, and environmental education opportunities and values
- Continue dialogue with jurisdictions to explore the potential transfer of government properties

Ongoing

Ongoing



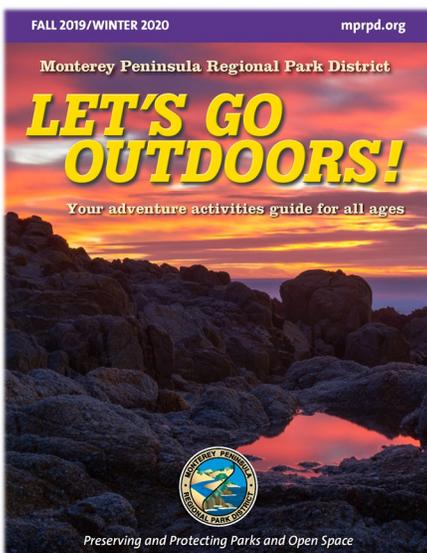
# Goal 4

## Strategies

As appropriate, open extant properties that are presently closed or provide limited public access

Continue participating in multijurisdictional park, open space, and other projects

Increase public outreach



## Objectives

- Complete the Frog Pond East Unit's Habitat Management Plan and boundary survey, and prepare the site for public use as an extension to the Frog Pond West Unit, in coordination with the Fort Ord Trail and Greenway (FORTAG) project
- Prepare and open the San Jose Creek Trail for public use as an extension of Palo Corona Regional Park in coordination with State Parks, Big Sur Land Trust, and other parties

- Actively participate with other jurisdictions' and organizations' staff and constituents in the research, planning, design, and development of natural and cultural resource protection, environmental education, and regional parks and trail/multimodal transportation corridors

- Continue to enhance the *Let's Go Outdoors!* programming, and, in addition to interpretive and educational programming, participate in public presentations, forums, and professional training sessions that enable MPRPD to provide the public, students, scholars, and industry professionals, insight related to MPRPD's status, innovative practices, and programs

*Due*

Winter 2024

Summer 2021

Ongoing

Ongoing

# Goal 5 Building Coalitions

*Be recognized for developing and sustaining strong, productive coalitions with other stakeholders in the research, monitoring, preservation, conservation, the restoration of native habitat, and important natural and cultural resources, and in the provision of high-quality passive recreational and environmental education opportunities.*



# Goal 5

## Strategies

Collaborate with private parties, organizations, and other jurisdictions to advance projects and initiatives of mutual interest and public benefit

## Objectives

- Create and foster coalitions that work together in the pursuit of ballot measures, the acquisition of real properties, and execution of projects that produce vital community and/or environmental benefits irrespective of whether those endeavors are on or off MPRPD lands, and encourage other jurisdictions and organizations to utilize MPRPD's sites for public benefit, as appropriate

*Due*

Ongoing

Convey MPRPD properties that may not significantly support MPRPD's Mission or that may better serve our partners' missions to provide public parks, trails, and open space

- Carefully analyze MPRPD's extant properties and subject to mutual consent, convey appropriate properties and facilities to other jurisdictions, with the caveat that any property that is conveyed to another party must continue to be protected and used by the public as stipulated by MPRPD and is subject to forfeiture in the event corrective measures are not implemented by the receiving party

Ongoing

Reduce vehicle-caused traffic congestion while enhancing access to parks and open space along the Highway 1 corridor

- As part of the Lobos-Coronas Parklands Project, founded in 2014, continue actively participating on the ParkIT! initiative coalition, consisting of State Parks, Big Sur Land Trust, Point Lobos Foundation, MPRPD, and others to explore, test, and implement various options

Summer 2021

Have MPRPD properties become laboratories, researching the impacts of climate change and other natural and human-caused conditions, through decades-long, or longer, monitoring and analysis

- Enter long-term agreements with K-12 schools, colleges, universities, and other research institutes, dedicating specific MPRPD sites for the purpose of sustained habitat restoration, scientific management, projects, and analysis

Ongoing

# Goal 5

## Strategies

Continue restoring native habitat, reestablishing wildlife corridors, and reintroducing native listed and common flora and fauna



## Objectives

- Partner with the California Coastal Conservancy and others in the restoration of the recently acquired Rancho Canada Golf Club and its transformation into native habitat
- As part of the Lobos-Coronas Parklands Project, cooperate with the Big Sur Land Trust and others on the Carmel River Free project and other endeavors
- Continue to work with the County, US Fish & Wildlife, California Fish & Wildlife, and others to research the feasibility of reestablishing the Santa Lucia Mountains/Jacks Peak wildlife corridor via wildlife bridges over the Carmel River and Carmel Valley Road
- Continue partnering with Ventana Wildlife Society in the protection and expansion of critical California Condor habitat and in the provision of a condor feeding station(s) and interpretive exhibits at Palo Corona Regional Park



*Due*

Winter 2024/  
Ongoing

Ongoing

Winter 2025

Ongoing

# Goal 5

## Strategies

Partner with the region's farmers, ranchers, and agriculture industry on the District's historic agricultural landscapes

## Objectives

- Monument the region's agriculture and its global influence, the geomorphic and climatic reasons it exists, and its continuance through interpretive exhibits

*Due*

Ongoing

Continue to advance regional and multi-modal transportation and trail networks

- Continue to actively participate on the Fort Ord Trail and Greenway project coalition with its founders, the Transportation Agency of Monterey County, and others, to advance this project's planning, design, construction, and operation, especially through Frog Pond Wetland Preserve, Laguna Grande and Robert's Lake Regional Park, and the California Coastal Trail

Ongoing

- Continue to work with the California Coastal Trail coalition to identify and plan the trail corridor thru Palo Corona Regional Park and Mill Creek Preserve

Ongoing

- Continue to explore the creation of a multimodal trail, connecting Carmel Valley, the City of Carmel by the Sea, and Point Lobos State Reserve thru Palo Corona Regional Park's Rancho Canada Unit

Fall 2025

- Continue to work with the proposed Rancho Canada Village Development and others to restore Carmel River riparian habitat and enhance public access to Palo Corona Regional Park via Bridge #5, while also enhancing school children's access to Carmel Middle School and MEarth's access to Palo Corona Regional Park

Ongoing

- In partnership with the Big Sur International Marathon Foundation and Carmel Unified School District, finalize the design and construction of the Rancho Canada Unit's Cross-Country/Fitness Course for use by schools, colleges, and universities for meets and as a public fitness trail

Summer 2021



# Goal 5

## Strategies

## Objectives

*Due*

Community enhancement and engagement through civic organizations

- Continue partnering with the region’s civic organizations on projects that benefit the public and MPRPD, including fundraisers that allow civic organizations to reinvest in our residents’ and resources’ well-being

Ongoing

Bring the arts to MPRPD’s properties

- Continue to partner with the region’s different art communities and organizations to provide artistic expression to showcase the region’s natural beauty and cultural history

Ongoing

Partner with the region’s Indigenous People and communities on MPRPD projects

- Consistently invite and include Tribal members’ participation in research, planning, design, and implementation of land-use and capital improvement projects and the public’s cultural education, and help coordinate or reinstitute traditional use of native habitats and resources by Indigenous People

Ongoing



Artwork copyright L. Frank Manriquez

# Goal 6 Investing in Human Capital

*Build our organizational capacity and sustainability while fostering a transparent, communicative, supportive, and cooperative organizational culture that advances MPRPD's vision and mission by implementing this Strategic Plan's strategies to achieve its goals and objectives.*



# Goal 6

## Strategies

## Objectives

*Due*

Expand Volunteer Program

- Implement effective measures that enhance communication while working remotely

Ongoing

Create a healthier community and workforce



- Partner with institutions and organizations to transform the Central Coast into a Blue Zone region. Blue Zone regions of the world, it is claimed, host a higher than usual number of people who live much longer than average. The term first appeared in the November 2005 National Geographic magazine cover story, "The Secrets of a Long Life"
- Continue to partner with the region's physicians and veterinarians to develop community-wide health-based clinics, programs (like Walk with a Doc) and initiatives, and exploring the possible temporary utilization of MPRPD's buildings and sites for immunization drives, and visiting nurses, physicians, and dentists clinics

Ongoing

Ongoing

Sustain MPRPD's national reputation as a leader in the parks, recreation, and resource conservation industries through a unified, focused purpose and team

- All staff continue to work cross-divisionally as a single, unified, cooperative agency sustaining a healthy, highly productive, supportive, and amicable organizational culture

Ongoing

Sustain a highly communicative team and organizational culture

- All staff continue to employ strong, appropriately unfiltered lines of communication between all ranks, divisions, staff, volunteers, and other parties, in alignment with the Brown Act, and MPRPD's employment policies and procedures
- Staff will continue to provide the Board of Directors written updates between regular Board meetings, with these reports also being provided to all staff
- Staff to hold regularly scheduled weekly divisional meetings, monthly all-staff meetings, and share weekend/sighting reports intra-divisionally

Ongoing

Monthly

Weekly/  
Monthly

# Goal 6

## Strategies

## Objectives

*Due*

Attract and retain a workforce representative of regional demographics

- Seek opportunities to reach a broader audience when advertising positions and recruiting candidate employees, and as best possible, provide competitive benefits and compensation

Ongoing

Align human resource needs with the Strategic Plan's target outcomes and availability of funds

- Fill vital vacant positions or create new positions in response to the acquisition of additional properties, expanded programming or service delivery requirements, or additional demands placed on the agency by legal mandate, and reflect these in the agency's budget

Annual

Provide meaningful recognition of collaborators, board, volunteers, and staff who significantly advance MPRPD's mission

- As appropriate, and with the party's consent, recognize the person(s) or organization(s) and their efforts as an agenda item or by other means

Ongoing

Provide professional growth at all levels thru training and staff

- Include staff in decision making, serving in an acting capacity, representing the division or organization, giving presentations, and leading tasks requiring increased responsibility
- Offer mentoring, shadowing, and cross-training opportunities, or special assignments to interested staff
- Require staff participation in at least one work-related class or conference per year

Ongoing



Ongoing

Develop and revise personnel succession plans

- Require, evaluate, and develop a contingency plan in preparation for known forthcoming changes in employees' status and unforeseen conditions

Annual

# Goal 6

## Strategies

Perform market research to benchmark employee wage and compensation range, reflecting compensation and benefits packages offered by the Central Coast's tri-county agencies, especially Special Districts of similar size and scope.

## Objectives

- Perform analysis on a regular, predetermined schedule, and subject to availability of funding, phase salary adjustments as appropriate, reflecting the region's competitive wage and compensation rates
- Perform assessment of salaries and benefits offered by MPRPD

## Due

Beginning in May 2021, and repeating no more than every 3-years



# Goal 7

Maintaining Financial Stability

*Ensure MPRPD's long-term financial health, focusing on its strength and stability.*



# Goal 7

## Strategies

Maximize use of MPRPD's funds



## Objectives

- Continue to research and implement best practices
- Align budget development with the Strategic Plan's goals
- Evaluate efficacy of existing programs and modify or replace those that no longer support MPRPD's mission or are found to be inefficient or antiquated, with suitable options
- Evaluate efficacy of existing structures and infra-structure, and modify or replace as necessary to reduce operating costs caused by inefficient systems or those requiring repeated or frequent repair

*Due*

Annual

Annual

Annual

Ongoing

Grant Writer

- Hire or contract with a grant writer to enhance MPRPD's grant award opportunities

August 2021

Grants

- Evaluate available grants and those that will become available and align MPRPD's projects/ activities with grant opportunities

Ongoing

Product Line/Sales Items

- Develop MPRPD-branded product line and provide these and other items for purchase by patrons

Winter 2021

Become a leader and model in reduction of operating costs through technology and consistent implementation of conservation measures

- Explore and implement measures that reduce energy, resource, and supply consumption thru use of alternative energy sources, creating a "paperless office" where possible and appropriate, implementing green-technology, and modifying extant and designing new facilities to meet or exceed current LEED standards

Ongoing

# Goal 7

## Strategies

Become a leader and model in reduction of operating costs through technology and consistent implementation of conservation measures

## Objectives

- Reduce MPRPD’s operating costs and carbon footprint by replacing fossil fuel powered vehicles with e-powered or alternative fuel powered vehicles, subject to availability, application, and funding, as practicable

*Due*

Ongoing

Evaluate real costs and opportunity costs when considering execution of projects internally

- Evaluate costs savings for special projects undertaken by staff and determine the impacts these projects may have in the possible displacement or delay of other projects

Ongoing

Enhance MPRPD’s revenue generation



- Explore creation of a foundation and endowment program, and/or partner with an existing organization like the Community Foundation for Monterey County to secure funds from interested donors
- Renegotiate or enter a new agreement for the Rancho Canada banquet facility’s Concession Agreement
- Install electric vehicle charging stations that conveniently charge users via credit or debit
- Consider charging for some special programs and docent-led hikes while ensuring “scholarship” opportunities are offered for individuals, families, or groups negatively affected by a fee

Summer 2021

Summer 2021

Winter 2022

Annual

# Goal 7

## Strategies

Protect MPRPD's financial stability



## Objectives

- Always maintain a minimum of a six-months' reserve that can be used to cover MPRPD's operating costs
- When acquiring additional properties, ensure MPRPD can absorb additional operating costs, and explore and implement potential revenue generating opportunities
- Continue to track the impacts COVID-19 may have on property taxes and promptly adjust and prepare budget as necessary
- Continue to track impacts that changes in pension liability may pose and promptly adjust and prepare budget as necessary

*Due*

Annual

Ongoing

Annual

Annual

Be recognized for MPRPD's sound fiscal management and transparency

- Continue to meet all requirements pertinent to fiscal transparency and sound fiscal management, and be recognized for excellence in practice

Annual

Protect cash reserves

- Rather than using MPRPD's available but limited cash reserves, seek options to address unforeseen (such as emergencies) and planned costs (such as construction of capital improvement projects) through alternative funding measures including grants, stimulus funds subject to availability, low interest rate loans, and bond measures

Annual

# Goal 8

## Revisiting Other Items as Conditions Change

*Several items were identified in the planning process that, while compelling and perhaps even vital, could not realistically be accomplished within this Strategic Plan's 5-year implementation period. This effort recognizes that during this Plan's 5-year life cycle, new information and unanticipated events may surface. These, along with the Plan's other seven goals, will require further analysis. As appropriate, modifications to this plan may be considered.*





# Our Outcomes

## **Goal 1** *Adapting to a Changing World*

MPPRPD's adaptability and resilience will continue to be the key to providing the public high-quality, safe, and relevant program and recreation opportunities. We will continue to implement best management practices that provide environmental education and recreation opportunities, implement energy, supply, and resource conservation measures, and establish baselines that enable MPPRPD to understand and adapt to environmental, social, and economic shifts.

We will focus on developing more online content, presentations, and remote access applications for our education and interpretive programs. This will be achieved through the placement of wildlife cameras that offer real-time activity, and recorded programming that offers virtual hikes that allow

the public to "visit" sites and trails for the purpose of planning an excursion, creating a "postcard" of places a hiker may have visited, and, most importantly, to provide a "wilderness" experience to those whom may not be able to visit the site.

MPPRPD will phase the transformation of our vehicle fleet to reduce our carbon footprint. Alternative fuel sources and green technology will also be used. Electric vehicle charging stations will be installed at several highly visited properties to encourage a shift away from fossil fuel-powered vehicles by the public, vendors, concessionaires, and staff. MPPRPD will request that the region's mass transit providers expand service to include the District's parks, museums, and open spaces.



## **Goal 2** *Stewarding through Land Use and Conservation Planning*

Within the next five-years, every MPRPD property will have a graphic master plan that will guide the conservation, development, and public use for each park and open space. Each graphic master plan will identify critical habitat that shall be protected and suitable lands that allow native habitat restoration. In alignment with the State Historic Preservation Office's parameters, identify pre-historic sites and historic structures that are culturally or architecturally significant and must be protected, stabilized or restored, and nominated for state and federal designation. Master Plans will also identify sites and facilities that may be used or re-purposed for public use. Sites that may establish or reestablish wildlife and/or recreation corridors on MPRPD and, as suitable, on adjacent properties will also be listed.



The Rancho Canada Unit's native habitat restoration and the Big Sur Land Trusts and Monterey County's Carmel River Free projects provide an opportunity for the Central Coast to gain recognition and acclaim through these important projects that may ultimately serve as a model that may be adopted world-wide.

We will increase our staff expertise and involvement with a broader range of natural and cultural resource conservation and restoration projects through participation in courses, training workshops, and assignments. MPRPD's capacity will be greatly enhanced through the creation of a science-based Native Habitat Conservation and Restoration Task Force. The Task Force will be composed of the region's top scholars, researchers, and habitat restoration experts who will develop protocols for the long-term monitoring of restored native habitats. The primary goal is to develop and institutionalize the means to monitor and track habitat protection and restoration measures on MPRPD's properties. Ground-cover modification post fire/flood/modified land use will be analyzed over decades. Study plots that serve as control groups will also be included. Datasets will help us develop a database(s) that will inform future administrators, researchers, and others. This data may especially be valuable in providing information in the short/mid/long-term in the face of climate change. This model may also be shared with other jurisdictions, perhaps coalescing data for biologically, hydrologically, or geomorphologically-specific regions (e.g. Central Coast to Santa Barbara).

## **Goal 3** *Increasing Social Equity and Engaging People with Nature and History*

MPRPD shall make our properties available to all residents and visitors. All properties, facilities, signage, exhibits, programs, and work environment will be analyzed to determine where physical, social, and economic barriers may exist, and, as feasible, take corrective action. We will strive to have bilingual educators and volunteer docents on staff, and we will take steps toward greater cultural relevancy in our materials and instruction.



We will meet with and invite participation on District properties by all K-12 schools within MPRPD's regional boundaries. As budgets allow, MPRPD will provide transportation grants to schools to facilitate their access to MPRPD's and our partnering organizations' sites, facilities, and programs. Our efforts will especially focus on students from underserved communities.



## **Goal 4** *Enhancing MPRPD's Relevance to Our Community District-wide*

We will continue to pursue the model known as The Five Garlands. MPRPD will focus on the acquisition, development, and connectivity to adjacent parks and open spaces so that each of the five wards has at least one significant open space that offers protection and restoration of native habitat, and environmental education and passive recreation opportunities like those found at Garland Ranch Regional Park.

We will increase our effort to modify or develop programs, facilities, and signage that value, invite, and serve the region's diverse populations. This will include multi-language collateral information, interpretive signage along trails and at vistas, and within our discovery and visitor centers.

Programs like our Walk with a Doc or Walk with a Veterinarian will be expanded to enhance our region's access to health-focused activities. Our facilities may also be integrated into the region's health and wellness programs—especially those for children—by offering periodic on-site visiting nurses, doctors, or dentist clinics, and vaccination days. This may especially provide a community benefit aiding in the distribution of COVID-19 related vaccinations.



## **Goal 5** *Building Coalitions*

MPPRD will continue to promote and advance our mission and vision through coalitions that bring the community, non-governmental organizations, and governmental jurisdictions together. Coalitions will identify or create, implement, and sustain common goals that will benefit the region's residents, visitors, and natural and cultural resources.

We will integrate our region's expertise and resources into a mosaic of unified efforts that, as reasonably feasible, provide consistent approaches as to how research is undertaken irrespective of it being at the site-specific or the landscape level, how educational and recreational opportunities are produced and delivered, and how natural and cultural resources are protected, restored, and made available for the benefit of current and future generations.



MPPRD will continue to invite the region's K-12 schools and youth-serving organizations to participate in the Rancho Canada Unit's and other sites' native habitat restoration projects. The region's institutions of higher learning will also be encouraged to enter long-term agreements that facilitate and result in the long-term environmental research and monitoring of MPPRD's properties. The region's jurisdictions will coordinate their multi-modal transportation and regional trail networks, creating one of the nation's premier seamless systems.

## **Goal 6** *Invest in Human Capital*

We will seek ways to improve the satisfaction and effectiveness of all staff and Board members to maintain a healthy, productive, communicative, supportive work environment. We will provide volunteers and staff training opportunities, schedule and hold weekly division and monthly all-staff meetings, provide the Board monthly written updates, and issue volunteer newsletters. We will encourage feedback that identifies potential means of enhancing the organization's productivity and service delivery, and provide competitive salaries and benefits. We will continue to maintain Board participation in standing committees.

## **Goal 7** *Maintaining Financial Sustainability*

MPPRD will continue to employ its sound and award-winning business practices, including transparency in the administration of its financial resources. MPPRD will protect its cash reserves by seeking ways to finance capital improvement projects through grants, stimulus funds, bond measures and low-interest loans. The cost-effectiveness of facilities, equipment, and programs will be analyzed, identifying where cost-saving measures can be applied. Potential revenue sources will also be explored including fees charged for event and rental space, and the creation of a foundation. Where possible, enter innovative, cost effective agreements with other organizations to staff or undertake important functions and projects (e.g. Legal Services provided by the County of Monterey, motor fleet maintenance and repair services provided by the City of Monterey, and native habitat restoration services and expertise provided by the California Coastal Conservancy).



## **Goal 8** *Revisiting Other Items as Conditions Change*



Update Strategic Plan as needed, and review no later than mid-February of each Fiscal Year. The Strategic Plan will help plan and formulate the succeeding Fiscal Year's budget. Items that cannot be accomplished within this plan's five-year term shall be filed for possible inclusion in the succeeding Strategic Plan.

# *Acknowledgement*

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## *CONSULTANTS*

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Ventana Wildlife Society, Advisor*

## *MPRPD's VOLUNTEERS, RESIDENTS, VISITORS, & STAFF*

*Dr. Rafael Payan - General Manager*

## *MPRPD BOARD of DIRECTORS*

*Kelly Sorenson - Ward 1  
Shane Anderson, President - Ward 2  
Dr. Kevin Raskoff - Ward 3  
Kathleen Lee, Secretary/Treasurer - Ward 4  
Monta Potter, Vice President - Ward 5*





Photo courtesy of Doug Steakly

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# *Strategic Plan 2021-2025*

