# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Section One: Introduction

This report is intended to be an implementation tool to the City of Costa Mesa 2000 General Plan, providing a guide for the orderly development and/or management of recreation facilities and programs for the City, and is an update of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan adopted in 1996. Population changes, the opportunity to conduct a statistically valid telephone survey, and the need to renovate TeWinkle Park in the context of the overall recreation picture prompted the update effort.

Needs analysis and recommendations are community-based, generated with extensive community involvement.

Concurrent with this master plan effort is a planning process for the improvement and enhancement of one of the City's major existing recreational facilities, TeWinkle Park. A separate planning effort is also underway for Fairview Park, a large, passive open space area.

## Section Two: Community Analysis

Understanding existing conditions in the community is an essential first step in a project that includes identification and quantification of facility and program needs and concludes with realistic recommendations.

### Existing Recreation Facilities

Thirty-five (35) City-owned recreation facilities, combined with regional facilities nearby and with school campuses, together constitute an open space and park system in which a variety of passive and active recreation experiences are possible.

One efficient method that the City utilizes to expand its ability to provide recreational opportunities is to develop joint use agreements with the Newport Mesa Unified School District to share field use and responsibilities. Currently the joint use agreement covers ten (10) schools, a revised agreement may add to that number.

## Existing Programs and Services

Programs and services are provided for specific age groups including pre-school, elementary school age, middle school, high school and adults. There are also program and services developed for the community at large and families. Programs are designed and delivered based on interest of the target population. Currently pre-school classes emphasize youth development and fitness. There are a significant number of special interest classes and programs for this elementary school age group which include youth development, fitness, and a good selection of out of school activities such as mobile recreation and camps as well as playground programs. Activities for middle and high school youth are primarily focused upon sports and physical fitness, however, there are also leadership development and out of school activities that have evolved over the last few years. They include the ACT program, the Advisory Committee On Teens, teen camps as well as the mobile skate park program that travels to the teens to provide skateboarding and rollerblading opportunities in their neighborhoods. Adult programs range from special interest classes to sports leagues and health and wellness programs. Community wide events such as concerts and snow day are also available for the residents to enjoy.

## Demographic Trends

In summary, Costa Mesa is a mature City nearing build out capacity. Costa Mesa's population is expected to increase from the 2002 estimate of 110,720 to 122,200 by 2025. The City has been characterized by a below average proportion of families and families with children, however, there is some indication that there will be growth in this sector, as household sizes increase. The City has a growing Hispanic population. This profile indicates an increasing demand for certain types of recreation facilities as reflected in the demand and needs analysis.

## Section Three: Needs Assessment

The following tools were utilized in the needs analysis effort:

- Community Input: Community Workshop #1
  Sports User Groups / Workshop #2
  Community Based Organizations / Workshop #3
  Community Assessment Summary & Prioritization / Workshop #4
  Workshop Participant Questionnaire
  Random Telephone Survey
  Stakeholder Interviews
- Recreation Demand and Needs Analysis
- Service Area Analysis
- Sports Facility Distribution Analysis
- Acreage Analysis
- Trends Analysis

The telephone survey and associated demand and needs analysis in Section Three represent the statistically valid, quantifiable foundation of this report. (See Recreation Needs Assessment [telephone] Survey Report included in Appendix)

A list of important recreation facility needs was developed through extensive community input and other analysis tools. The higher priority needs include (in no particular order) baseball fields, children's play areas, classrooms, equal distribution of sports facilities, lighting of existing fields, a skate park, soccer fields, swimming pool, tennis courts, and more trails.

With regard to program and services, higher priority needs include girls softball, out of school activities, neighborhood events, community events, cultural arts, family programming, homework/tutoring assistance, job training and career development services, on school site programming for elementary, middle and high school, service learning and volunteer opportunities, increased aquatic programs, family services, physical fitness and wellness programs, computer learning activities, and trail events that encourage families and friends to bike or walk the trails.

## Section Four: Facility and Program Recommendations

This section summarizes recommendations with respect to existing parks, unimproved parkland, and joint use opportunities. Recommendations are intended to address the recreation needs identified in previous sections and are the result of analysis of existing inventory, analysis of demand, community input, and consideration of established goals and policies.

### Recreation Facility Community Concept

The overall concept approach that guides development of facility recommendations which follow is based on the Needs Assessment and is summarized as follows:

- Provide **four major community center facilities** that provide a diverse range of indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities.
- **More evenly distribute neighborhood recreation facilities and sports facilities** throughout Costa Mesa for convenient use and more equal distribution of impacts
- Provide recreational elements (sports fields, children's play areas, etc) within the City in **quantities to meet anticipated build-out needs**.
- Acquire or otherwise make available park and recreation facility area sufficient to meet the General Plan suggestion of **4.26 acres of local parkland per thousand residents**.
- Pursue, as a community-organizing element, the concept of a **Costa Mesa River-Bay Trail and Greenbelt** linking east Costa Mesa and the Newport Back Bay with west Costa Mesa and Fairview Park through a series of open space, recreation, and institutional uses.

### Strategy Discussion

Since the opportunities for acquisition of new City parkland to meet identified needs are limited in Costa Mesa, renovation and improvement of existing facilities for greater usability will be a key strategy.

Discussion of selected issues are offered, including those for baseball, basketball, children's play areas, community centers, skateboard area, soccer, swimming pool, tennis, trails, use impacts at California / TeWinkle Schools, distribution of neighborhood parks, and parkland acreage goals.

For each issue, suggested strategies for addressing the issue are provided.

Programs, services and facilities would best serve the community when they can be aligned to demonstrate how they support strong families, youth development, and promote a safe and secure community.

**Proposed Improvements in Existing City Facilities**

A brief description of recommended capital improvements at existing park sites can be found in Section Five of this report. Recommendations for existing City facilities are highlighted by the following:

- Extensive renovation of TeWinkle Park to include a renovated softball complex, additional children's play areas, lake renovation, skate park, community center, a portion of the Costa Mesa River-Bay Trail, and increased landscape buffering.
- Renovation of Davis Field in Lions Park and conversion to a baseball facility to replace large baseball field at TeWinkle Park (converted to adult softball field).
- Lighting of existing soccer fields at Balearic Center.
- Construction of basketball courts in 8 different parks, distributed throughout Costa Mesa. Two will be lighted.
- Completion of Fairview Park improvements, including trails and picnic elements.
- Picnic elements at Gisler Park, Marina View Park, Vista Park, TeWinkle Park, and Fairview Park.
- Tennis courts at Pinkley Park, Wakeham Park, and Tanager Park to provide better distribution of courts throughout Costa Mesa.
- Construction of a baseball field at Wakeham Park to meet identified needs and reduce impacts at California / TeWinkle Schools.

**TeWinkle Park Master Plan**

A focused planning effort was conducted for TeWinkle Park alongside of and concurrently with the update effort for the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan. A special workshop focusing on TeWinkle Park led to a Preliminary Plan which addresses identified recreation needs in a manner sensitive to existing recreational features, natural, visual, and

cultural resources, and to adjacent land uses. In general, the park's topography, vegetation, recreation features, and location adjacent to Davis School / nearby residential / the Armory / and Orange County Fairgrounds influences the overall concept of the park. The park concept is a balance between preservation of natural features and renovation of recreational facilities. Elements proposed for renovation include: ball fields, the lake, children's play area, picnic areas, restrooms, and the small amphitheatre for small community events. New or additional elements proposed include: a community center, softball field, children's play areas, half court basketball, volleyball, tennis courts, picnic facilities, skate park, restrooms, landscaped medians, and parking.

**Proposed Improvements of Future Facilities**

Several new facilities are already planned in Costa Mesa, but are not yet built, including:

- Hamilton Street Charle Drive (community gardens)
- Home Ranch (interpretive buildings)
- Ketchum-Libolt Park
- Costa Mesa River-Bay Trail (east-west trail and amenities)
- Skateboard Park
- Softball Complex

**Proposed Recreation Elements in School Facilities**

In almost every Costa Mesa neighborhood, school facilities play an important role in terms of children's education and daily family routine. The relatively even, frequent distribution of school facilities throughout Costa Mesa suggests that these facilities could play an important role in neighborhood recreation and programming as well, especially in areas not currently served conveniently by City park facilities. Since opportunities are limited for acquisition of new City parkland to meet identified needs in Costa Mesa, joint use, renovation and improvement of existing school facilities for greater usability could continue to be a key strategy.

School campuses which appear to be in service area gaps and which could be helpful in providing this neighborhood recreation presence include:

- Wilson Elementary
- Pomona Elementary

- Whittier Elementary

Recommendations pertaining to school joint use facilities are highlighted below; a more detailed discussion is provided in Section Five of this report.

- At California and TeWinkle Schools, it is recommended that the City pursue projects to minimize sports event impacts on surrounding residential neighborhoods, including off-street parking additions, planting for increased buffering and screening, earlier field lighting shut-off, restrooms addition.
- At Kaiser School, provide off-street parking that will enhance facility use and reduce parking impacts on surrounding neighborhoods, provide restrooms and concessions (possibly in adjacent William T. Jordan Park) that will benefit both soccer, baseball, and casual users, and reconfigure fields to add one baseball field.
- Develop lighted baseball and soccer facilities at Parsons School.
- Develop baseball facility on underused field at Sonora School.
- Develop joint use agreement to participate in construction of large, lighted soccer field at Orange Coast College.
- Develop joint use agreement to use existing softball field at Vanguard University.
- Develop facilities at Davis School in accordance with the TeWinkle Park Master Plan.
- Light soccer fields at Costa Mesa High School.

**Facility Recommendations Prioritization**

Based on the needs summary of the previous section, it is fair to say that recommendations which address the higher priority needs should in turn have a higher priority. Based on this premise, the following might be considered the top twelve (12) projects to be considered high priority. The first two listed might be considered top priority, with the remainder listed in no particular order.

- Develop skate park in TeWinkle Park / Davis School.
- Implement projects in California / TeWinkle Schools to minimize event impacts.
- Pursue sports field lighting projects at existing fields.
- Renovate TeWinkle Park per TeWinkle Park Master Plan.
- Improve maintenance of fields at joint use facilities.

- Pursue joint use of large soccer field at Orange Coast College.
- Pursue construction of new baseball fields at Wakeham Park, Parson's School (with soccer), and Sonora Elementary.
- Pursue parking, baseball field addition, landscape buffering, concessions, and restroom at Kaiser Elementary to increase usability and reduce neighborhood impacts.
- Renovate Davis Field and convert to baseball.
- Pursue efforts to convert Monte Vista / Back Bay School to community center and neighborhood park.
- Pursue studies for implementation of the Costa Mesa River-Bay Trail.

The many additional projects that would implement other recommendations described in this report are also important; the above are suggested as starting points with high priority.

**Program Recommendations Prioritization**

This section summarizes recommendations with respect to existing and proposed programs. The recommendations purpose is to identify activities that will address needs of the community which have been previously outlined in this report. These are based upon the analysis of existing inventory, analysis of demand, community input, existing City documents and plans, as well as trends.

**Recommendations for New Programs and Services**

It is important to note the recommendations are intended to assist in planning for the future. Staff and City Council will determine other considerations within the context of annual programming and budgeting processes. These can include issues such as organizational capacity and changing priorities of the community.

Recreation programs and services are tools utilized to support what is important to its citizenry. They cannot be seen as a means to an end in and of itself, but rather a means to an end that grows community and addresses issues negatively impacting its citizenry.

Due to the changing demographics, lifestyles and trends, the Department has great opportunities to better serve the community and strengthen those characteristics important to their residents. In addition to establishing new programs and services, existing programs have the opportunity to support the community through realignment. There are some activities that may not be the best use of resources. These activities

need careful consideration as to what may already be provided in the community or perhaps better provided by another services provider. The resources made available through this evaluation can be aligned to other activities that will better meet the greater needs of the community.

1. Design, develop and deliver all programs, services and activities in order that they can demonstrate how they support the greater community with respect to the community characteristics and issues.

2. Emphasize asset building for the purpose of promoting youth development through the delivery of recreation services.

3. Provide organized girls softball for girls aged 6 – 18 years.

4. Increase opportunities for out of school activities.

5. Increase community outreach programs for neighborhoods, family and youth.

6. Work with the educational community to expand homework/tutoring assistance programs.

7. Out of school activities on school sites when possible.

8. Work with educational community to expand job training and career bound programs and services on school sites when possible.

9. Increase cultural arts programs through community and neighborhood events as well as through special interest classes and/or workshops.

10. Increase programs, services, workshops and events that educate and encourage physical fitness for all age groups.

11. Continue to build volunteer programs for all age groups with an emphasis on service learning for youth and families.

12. Increase recreation swim and lessons for all age groups.

13. Increase family and intergenerational programming.

14. Develop a family and youth services program component that would include family counseling and/or parenting workshops as well as resource and referral services.

15. Establish computer classes and workshops for all age groups and when possible house these activities in environments that are similar to community technology centers.

16. Explore and determine opportunities to provide a family or community bike trail event(s) where the system can be promoted as well as encouraging healthy lifestyle and connecting to people.

## Section Five: Individual Facility Concepts

Recommendations for individual facilities are listed along with a rough estimate of associated costs.

## Section Six: Appendix

Back-up information and supplementary data is provided in the Appendix.