



Maricopa County

Parks & Recreation Commission

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May 17, 2016

Maricopa County Board of Supervisors

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Andrew Kunasek, Vice Chairman, District 3

Denny Barney, Supervisor, District 1

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Steve Gallardo, Supervisor, District 5

The Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Commission, "*The Commission*", would like to commend the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, "*The Board*", for their recent budgetary actions to initiate the development and operations of the Vulture Mountains Recreation Area. The Board's action of securing *The Hassayampa River Preserve* is a key component to the ultimate development of the larger Vulture Mountain Park. This will add another "gem" to our current County Park system, securing the County Park System as one of the best and most efficient park systems in The United States.

In its advisory role to *The Board*, *The Commission*, recommends broad policies and long-range programs for the acquisition, planning, development, maintenance, and operation of the County's regional park system in an effort to preserve Maricopa County heritage, offer opportunities for family bonding, provide activities for physical fitness, and improve air and water quality.

Due to the extended recessionary period following the adoption of the 2009 Park and Recreation System Master Plan, many of the improvement projects have not been fully realized, and the full implementation of the plan is lagging. However, now, given the moderate and sustained recovery, it seems appropriate to consider a renewed effort to reinvigorate our regional park system.

In keeping with our role as an advisory body, *The Commission* would like to propose the following broad policy recommendations for further consideration:

1. *The Commission*, in furtherance of their role and duties, recommends that *The Board* develop a defined program of development and operations for the Vulture Mountains Recreation Area over the next five years, much like the approach that has been successfully used to develop the Maricopa Trail.
2. *The Commission* recommends that *The Board* work closely with the Parks and Recreation Department and the Office of Management and Budget to develop a defined program for park renovations and improvements per the adopted park master plans for the existing County parks over the next ten years. Our park system does a fantastic job of recovering a majority of their operating cost due, in part, to the quality facilities that are available. Through the most recent ASU Visitor's Survey, it was noted that residents will pay a reasonable fee for quality. Investing in park infrastructure and facilities will continue to allow the park system to continue to recover a high percentage of operating costs at accessible rates.
3. *The Commission* recommends *The Board* adopt a proactive approach to the identification, acquisition and development of future County parks in conjunction with population growth.

4. *The Commission* recommends *The Board* continue to support park operations and maintenance through a sustainable mix of reasonable user fees and charges and supplemental funding to protect park resources, maximize visitor use and maintain a high level of customer satisfaction with services and facilities.
5. *The Commission* recommends the Parks and Recreation Department and *The Board* continue to pursue private and non-profit partners to increase service offerings in the parks and provide additional revenue streams for park maintenance and youth outdoor education opportunities. Partnerships should only be considered when they fit the mission and vision of the Department.
6. *The Commission* respectfully requests that *The Board* acknowledge and adopt these recommendations thereby providing policy direction for the Parks and Recreation Commission.

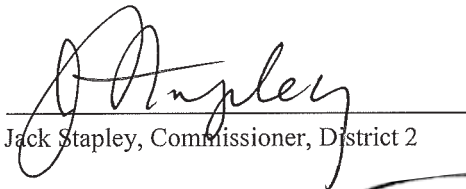
As an advisory body, *The Commission* recommends *The Board* continue to invest in our existing, highly prized park system, and to look toward the future. *The Commission* honors past Commissioners and Board members for creating and enhancing a legacy regional park system. It is now our turn to continue the legacy, and we want to work with *The Board* to meet the needs of an ever growing population. We are committed to working for you and with you to continue the Maricopa County Parks legacy.



Dr. Robert Branch, Chairman, District 4



Denise Merdon, Vice Chair, District 1



Jack Stapley, Commissioner, District 2



Anne Lynch, Commissioner, District 3



Devin Del Palacio, Commissioner, District 5



Rod Jarvis, Commissioner, Member at Large



Megha Budruk, Commissioner, Member at Large