

MAINTAINABLE PARK DESIGN GUIDELINES

Maintainable Park Design Guidelines have been developed to reduce ongoing maintenance requirements and improve water conservation for new park, open space and bikeway development projects. The Department of Parks and Recreation is committed to developing parks that are both maintainable and enjoyable to the community. The proposed guidelines are a revised approach to the design of City parkland. The Department anticipates ongoing savings in maintenance and utilities with the implementation of these guidelines.

The following are the goals of the Maintainable Park Design Guidelines:

- Design parks, open space and bikeways that are more efficient to maintain and include landscaping that requires less water;
- Design turf areas that can be easily maintained and have reduced mowing times;
- Reduce high maintenance and water demanding turf in non-recreational areas;
- Expand the City's Urban Forest;
- Provide increased opportunities for citizens to enjoy and bond with nature while not having to leave the city;
- Plant trees where they will increase the enjoyment of the park while not increasing maintenance requirements;
- Plant trees, shrubs and groundcover that are low maintenance and require less water;
- Standardize park furniture and play equipment that is durable, reduces needed repair and is less costly to maintain;
- Install standard irrigation equipment that is durable, and design irrigation systems that are more efficient and easier to maintain;
- Install computerized, centrally - controlled irrigation systems in all new parks that improves the efficiency of irrigation systems, reduces water usage and costs, alerts maintenance personnel of system malfunctions and weather patterns, automatically operates the irrigation system as programmed, and shuts down the system automatically as needed.

Maintainable Park Design Guidelines

City of Sacramento Department of Parks and Recreation Park Planning, Design and Development

The following Maintainable Park Guidelines shall be used when designing all new park, bikeway and open space development projects, and shall also be used where possible and appropriate in renovation projects to reduce maintenance requirements and to improve water conservation. Also, see the Park Design Guidelines for additional park design requirements. These Maintainable Park Design Guidelines shall be shared with the public during the master plan process, to inform the public of our commitment to maintainable park design and water conservation.

Design:

- 0 Provide a ten-foot (10') wide concrete walkway through the park to all major use areas including the picnic area, playground, sport fields and sport courts for use by park maintenance and service vehicles. Provide a driveway cut at the entrance and exit of the walkway and a turn around if required to maneuver. All curves within this route shall contain curves no smaller than a ten feet (10') radius.
- 0 Concrete mowstrips nine inches (9") wide shall be placed between planter areas or decomposed granite and turf, and along the base of fences (each side) in turf areas.
- 0 Concrete mowstrips twelve inches (12") wide shall be constructed along all vertical elements such as light posts and utility equipment.
- 0 Concrete walkway or decomposed granite path shall be use as the separator between a turf area and a native grass area. If this is not practical then a recycled plastic header may be used to define the turf area from the native grass areas.
- 0 Recycled plastic header shall be used instead of redwood header in all applications (header board, baseball backstops, overthrow fences base boards, etc.)
- 0 Decomposed granite shall be installed in all separated sidewalk areas or narrow planting strips less than 10= wide.
- 0 Decomposed granite paving areas should be graded a 2% min., and large decomposed granite areas shall have an area drain.
- 0 Tables and benches shall be eight feet (8') wide. Tables, benches and trash receptacles shall be made of plastic coated metal in all new projects. Do not specify wood site furniture, except to match existing.
- 0 Trash receptacles shall be placed near all seating areas, picnic areas, play areas, sports fields and all other high use areas or at rest areas along bikeways and major walkways.
- 0 Play equipment shall be selected from the following three Parks approved play equipment companies: Landscape Structure, Little Tike and Miracle. Equipment deviations may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 0 At playgrounds, trees shall be planted in planters, tree wells, mulch area or decomposed granite paving immediately to the south and west side of a playground in sufficient quantity to shade 50% of the playground and sand area when the trees grow to full maturity.
- 0 Rubber mats shall be installed under all swings and tire swings.
- 0 Restrooms shall be designed with the following: automatic battery-operated door locks, stainless steel doors and fixtures, adequate ventilations, masonry walls, sheet steel roof, and sealed concrete floor with area drain.
- 0 Dog Parks shall be designed with the following: a large concrete area at the entry and drinking fountain area; a drinking fountain with jug filler and drain; a large decomposed granite paving area in addition to turf area; no turf mounds; a 6= high fence enclosing the dog park; a fenced entry vestibule; and a Parks standard dog waste bag dispenser with signage.

Landscaping:

- 0 New community or regional parks shall have 20% of site in low maintenance naturalized areas with either 4" layer of mulch, non-irrigated native grass, and/or decomposed granite paving areas planted with native tree groves wherever possible and appropriate. Design deviations may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 0 New neighborhood parks shall include a low maintenance naturalized area where possible and appropriate.
- 0 Naturalized areas shall be designed to include passive recreation such as: picnicking, nature trails with interpretive signage, bikeways, rest areas, horseshoe courts or similar activities.
- 0 Existing parks shall be redesigned to reduce or eliminate non-recreational turf areas outside of active sports fields or picnic areas in parks and replaced with non-irrigated native grasses, 4" layer of mulch, decomposed granite paving, or low-maintenance groundcover to limit mowing and irrigation.
- 0 Parkways, open-space and bikeways should be designed with the majority of the site in non-irrigated native grasses and trees, or mulch and trees and limited planter areas at entry points. Turf shall be limited to no more than 10% of site and planted to enhance active-use gathering areas, picnic areas, or to providing a recreational turf area. Design deviations may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 0 Natural landscape features are desirable in park designs, which include tree grooves, natural plantings, water features, dry streambeds, rock features, and earthforms to enhance the natural character of the site.
- 0 Plant material (trees, shrubs and groundcover) shall be low maintenance, drought-tolerant or native species.
- 0 Turf areas shall be graded no steeper than 5:1, as it cannot be easily mowed.
- 0 Turf types shall be selected that require less mowing and water.
- 0 Trees planted in turf areas shall be a minimum of twenty-foot (20') apart, or between trees and other vertical site improvements.
- 0 Trees planted in turf areas next to the street shall be set back fifteen feet (15=) from the front of the curb face.
- 0 Trees planted in native grass area, mulch, decomposed granite or planters shall be planted a minimum of twelve-foot (12') apart.
- 0 Trees planted in naturalized areas shall be drought-tolerant or native tree species only.
- 0 Trees with excessive fruit, branch or litter drop such as: Purple-leaf plum, Liquidambar, and Chinese Elm shall be avoided in parks.
- 0 Planter areas shall be limited to park entry points, focal points, gathering areas, and to screen irrigation equipment.
- 0 Planter areas shall be planted with low maintenance, dwarf, naturally compact, and hardy perennials, shrubs and low-growing groundcover that require no routine pruning or dead heading. Shrubs planted next to property line fences shall not grow over six feet (6=) high and shrubs planted elsewhere in the park shall not grow over four feet (4=) high.
- 0 Plants and trees shall be planted in mass groupings of similar plant types.

Irrigation:

- 0 Booster Pump System shall be installed in all parks as needed and shall meet the Park Standard Specifications.
- 0 Rainmaster Central Control System shall be installed in all parks as needed and shall meet the Park Standard Specifications.
- 0 Moisture sensors and flow sensors shall be used in all park projects.

- 0 Rotary sprinkler heads shall have a stainless steel riser.
- 0 Irrigation main lines or irrigation valves shall not be placed in sport fields or future paved areas.
- 0 Irrigation equipment and utility boxes shall be installed in a planter area, and shall be screened with plant material.
- 0 Irrigation valves shall be designed per function (i.e.: soccer field turf isolated separately from picnic area turf).
- 0 Trees planted in native grass areas, mulch, tree wells or decomposed granite paving shall be irrigated by a two-bubbler systems.
- 0 Comply with the City Water Conservation Ordinance.
- 0 Provide a complete watering schedule, outlining water needs per valve by month for a twelve-month period. Watering schedule shall be included on the project construction plans.