



GENERAL SERVICES AGENCY

Parks Department
County Government Center
Administration Building, L #1030
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009
(805) 654-3963
Fax (805) 654-3684

September 8, 1998

TO: Grand Jury

FROM: Parks Advisory Commission
Robert Purdum, Chairman

SUBJECT: 1997-98 GRAND JURY RESPONSE

The Parks Advisory Commission concurs with all of the Grand Jury recommendations as does the Parks management staff. The following responses to the recommendations were jointly prepared by the Commission and GSA staff.

Recommendation: That the Board of Supervisors consider privatizing more parks
Response: AGREE- It is appropriate to look at opportunities to establish public/private partnerships in our parks where economically feasible. We will include this option in our internal analysis of operations.

Recommendation: That the proposed new golf courses (Toland and Camarillo) be supported by the Parks Department, Parks Advisory Commission, and the Board of Supervisors

Response: AGREE- With the support of the Board of Supervisors and the Parks Advisory Commission, the Parks Department has been aggressively pursuing the development of these golf course projects.

Recommendation: That a Parks' Needs Assessment and Utilization Study of the Parks be made

Response: AGREE - We agree that an assessment study should be conducted and also that the study should address regional concerns to develop a comprehensive plan for the entire County. Securing a funding source remains a key obstacle to preparing a study.

Recommendation: That the Auditor-Controller prepare a comprehensive audit of the Parks Department to reflect the actual annual revenue and expenses of each park

Response: AGREE - We are in the process of developing methods to better identify individual parks' financial data, but we also welcome input from the Auditor-Controller.



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Recommendation: That consideration be given to closing some seldom used parks in order to improve others.

Response: AGREE - This assessment is on-going and will become more refined as better financial data is available regarding each park operation. This issue could also be a component of a comprehensive needs assessment study.

Recommendation: That the Parks make a concentrated effort to make greater use of those sentenced to perform community service as well as inmate work crews.

Response: AGREE - The Parks maintenance operation uses work release participants whenever possible for major clean-up, planting and other seasonal projects. It is not possible to rely on this labor pool on a regular basis due to uncertainty of the workforce availability. Further, the department's ability to transport and supervise inmate work crews has been diminished again this year due to staffing reductions necessitated by the budget deficit in the Enterprise fund. Nonetheless, we agree that this is a good source of labor for community service and are committed to making as much use of it as is practical.

Recommendation: That a public relations and marketing program be established to promote County Parks.

Response: AGREE - This is a problem of program funding. We have an advertising ordinance and a Parks Foundation in place and have made efforts to initiate partnerships with local marketing agencies to help promote County parks. Our in-house efforts have, unfortunately, not resulted in any sponsorship agreements. It appears that, without some level of funding set aside for an experienced marketing individual, the program is unlikely to succeed.

Please contact John Johnston, Deputy Director, Parks Department at 654-3961 if you would like more information

JFJ/jw



GENERAL SERVICES AGENCY

County Government Center
Administration Building
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009
(805) 654-3800

July 23, 1998

TO: M. L. Koester, Chief Administrative Officer, L#1940
FROM: Peter S. Pedroff, Director, L#1000 *PETE*
SUBJECT: 1997-98 GRAND JURY RESPONSE

The Grand Jury requested a response from the General Services Agency for recommendations made for the Parks Department concerning Parks operations. The following information is provided in response to those recommendations.

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Please contact me at 654-3800 if you would like more information.

PSP/RA/me