

INTRODUCTION & SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS

The Ellen Browning Scripps Memorial Park is a 5.6-acre park bounded by the Pacific Ocean and the village of La Jolla. Gently sloping toward bluffs and beaches, the park is a primarily open-space, landscaped environment heavily used by local residents and visitors from around the world. From its beginning in 1887, the park has been the centerpiece of the La Jolla community. But its significance extends further since the spectacular dynamic shoreline, including world-famous La Jolla Cove, and its offshore waters are a recreational, environmental and ecological resource of worldwide importance.

Located within a major urban center the park is increasingly subject to the impact of heavy use and concerns for its continuing preservation and enhancement have grown in recent years. In 1989, a Preliminary Coastal Plan was adopted by the La Jolla Town Council and another community planning group, the Community Planning Association. Although this plan made specific recommendations pertinent to the coastline around the park, it concluded that the park itself merited more detailed analysis and planning within the framework of “a clear visionary master plan.” However, no action was taken until 2001 when the Scripps Park Project, a group of interested local citizens, adopted as its mission, “developing and implementing a long-term comprehensive long-term plan to preserve, restore, and enhance Ellen Browning Scripps Memorial Park.”

Following a fund-raising effort that drew individual and group donations as well as grant support, a public workshop was held on November 18-19, 2005. Approximately seventy persons heard presentations, toured the park, completed questionnaires, and engaged in table discussions culminating in the expression of their concerns about the park and ideas about its future. From this process, a set of seven Guiding Principles were developed and adopted as representing a consensus of the workshop participants. The park planning consulting firm, Campbell & Campbell then provided a report containing recommendations for the park that, in their view, best addressed the values expressed by the Guiding Principles. This report was subject to several public meetings and a great deal of local media coverage and attention. Responses to the report were then considered and some revisions were made. The following Conceptual Plan is put forth as the result of these processes and outlines important steps that should be taken to provide continuing stewardship of the park into the future.

This Report describes the Consultant’s analysis and recommendations in response to issues and opportunities raised by members of the La Jolla community at the November 18-19, 2005 Community Workshop sponsored by the Scripps Park Project. The Plan presented in this report is Campbell & Campbell’s response to a set of seven “Guiding Principles” developed by the Workshop participants, representing a broad consensus of opinions of over 60 citizens of La Jolla.

The Plan also responds to comments and suggestions received at a Public Presentation held by the Scripps Park Project in La Jolla on June 14, 2006, and subsequent recommendations by the Scripps Park Project Committee.

This consensus can be summarized as based on the recognition by workshop participants of the importance of the Park and its vulnerability.

The Park and its off shore waters represent an environmental and ecological resource of world-wide significance. This spectacular dynamic shoreline at the edge of a major urban center is increasingly subject to the impacts of heavy visitor use and the adjacent community. The effects of these impacts, and the lack of a public policy vision aimed at the preservation, enhancement and continuing stewardship of the Park into the future have led to the current concern that inaction will lead to irreversible deterioration of an irreplaceable resource.

The Guiding Principles for preservation, enhancement and stewardship articulated by the Workshop participants reflect this recognition and outline a planning, design and management strategy for the future.

A New Vision for Scripps Park

The defining physical features of Scripps Park—its sweeping bluff tops, cliffs, beaches and ocean waters—are products of a unique meeting of sea and land. The present appearance and condition of the coastal bluffs and shoreline of the Park are the result of on going, dynamic environmental processes. At any given point in time, the physical setting of the Park is a signature of dynamic processes. The experience of these processes is integral to the experience of the identity and character of the Park, and to the identity and character of the community of La Jolla.

The dynamic nature of the Park’s environment, and the necessity that the land and the waters be considered as parts of an inseparable whole are fundamental to understanding the park, and must underlie the public policy vision guiding all planning, design and environmental management efforts.

The specific interrelationships amongst shoreline erosion processes, surface and groundwater flow patterns, water quality, geology and soils, and flora and fauna of the site must continue to be taken into consideration in the articulation and development of planning guiding principles, landscape design and engineering concept plans and implementation, and on going environmental management.

The interrelatedness of the aesthetic, social and ecological values of the Park’s environment represent significant challenges and opportunities. All planning, design and management decisions must take many factors into consideration, but the outcome provides an opportunity for the restoration of the site as a sustainable, regenerative environment in which humans are an integral part. Experience, enjoyment and understanding of the Park in this context fulfill the intent of its creators.

Immediate Action and Active Stewardship

Immediate action and continuing, active stewardship by the community is crucial in halting the present degradation of the Park’s resources, and restoring and managing these priceless resources into the future. A comprehensive, long-term plan for the Park addressing the issues raised in this Report must be adopted by the City of San Diego. The success of the Plan will depend on three fundamental concepts developed and articulated in this community process. The first concept informs all considerations of the Park with an appreciation of its unique nature as a living system. Growing from this, the second and the third concepts relate to officially sanctioned community design and management review, and dedication of all net revenues generated within the Park for the benefit of Scripps Park.

Site Plan

The accompanying Conceptual Plan provides significant opportunities to maintain and enhance the integrity and vitality of the historic Park and reinforce its connections with the Ocean and La Jolla Village.

Relocated structures open up the experience of the spectacular natural setting and engage and invigorate but do not dominate the historic space. The present sweeping lawn, existing arcing pathways, and small picnic areas remain, providing a public space that is rich in edges, linkages and small gathering places, yet is coherent as a whole. Native bluff top plant communities are restored and expanded, and commitment to sustainable design and stewardship into the future is made visible to all.

Environmental Design Concept

All aspects of the design will be founded on sustainable design principles and linked with the surrounding Village fabric and the management of the uniquely rich resource of the waters off shore. The concept is founded on a firm belief that the presence of the Park and the off shore waters is integral to the well being of the community - and the experience of its landscape is not as merely an aesthetic presentation, but is expressive of the “signatures” of dynamic processes, manifesting an ethic of connection and commitment to the natural world, community, stewardship and re-generation.

The landscape and architecture of Scripps Park **can should** be a visible demonstration of advanced technology - designed and constructed sustainably - the design **can should** explicitly showcase cutting-edge technologies engaging and exploring new relationships with the environment, and promote an ethic of sustainable, responsible public trust.

The safe and welcoming open character of the Park **will should** be enhanced. Barrier free access will be enhanced. Improvements **will should** be flexibly designed to provide a safe and secure daytime and evening setting for a wide array of informal and organized activities.

This Plan is founded on the integration of many discrete elements into a new vision for Scripps Park.

2

Guiding Principles Specific Implementation Strategies

The Guiding principles outlined below represent the results of the Consultant’s analysis of the materials produced by the November 18-19, 2005 Workshop participants as reflected in their individual workbook comments, The Conceptual Plan and Guiding Principles (see below) were developed from the November Workshop participant’s responses to the “evening environment” and “daytime environment” opportunities and constraints maps contained in the Public Workshop Workbooks, their individual diagrams and written comments, and their consensus plan drawings and comments prepared in groups (See Appendix). This information was analyzed by the Consultant and informed by subsequent community dialogue and input by the Scripps Park Project Report Committee .

These guiding principles and implementation recommendations are as follows:

1 Preserve, protect, enhance and re-establish the invaluable natural landscapes and native ecologies of the park and its coastline including the bluffs, caves, tide pools, beaches and adjacent La Jolla Ecological Reserve.

Discussion: This principle reflects a strong consensus of observations and concerns on the part of workshop participants and other community members that storm and irrigation water runoff and the presence of bluff-top exotic ice plant and rodent populations is leading to erosion of the bluffs, water pollution and consequent degradation of the quality of the bluff, beach and ocean environment and is a health hazard to users of the Park’s beaches and off-shore waters.

Implementation:

1. Reconfigure and renovate the Scripps Park storm water drainage system to bring it into compliance with the California Ocean Plan in order to reduce both erosion and pollution.
2. Reconfigure the park’s grading and drainage patterns and irrigation system to minimize storm and irrigation water discharge onto the bluffs and into the ocean.
3. Control rodent population in the park to reduce erosion and other damage.
4. Replace existing, exotic ice plant and other non-native plant species along the park’s bluff perimeter with appropriate, deep-rooted, indigenous plant species to reduce erosion and provide native wildlife habitat. Consider adding references throughout.

2 Preserve and enhance views to, from and through the park.

Discussion: This principle reflects a strong consensus of observations and concerns on the part of workshop participants and other community members that ad hoc placement of Park facilities and furnishings and vegetation management practices had over time resulted in degradation of the Park’s visual connections with its spectacular ocean views.

While there was general consensus related to the relocation of the Bathhouse structure and other features, opinions expressed in the Workshop and subsequent community dialogue were divided with respect to the removal of the building housing the Bridge Club from its present location at the most prominent site of the Park. While the Consultant strongly recommends that this site be restored as open bluff top, and that the original portion of the structure be relocated away from the Point to the center of the Park below Girard, the Scripps Park Project Report Committee has determined that the proposal to relocate the Bridge Club should not be pursued.

Implementation:

1. Redesign the Point La Jolla area to better capitalize on it as the park's best and most prominent view by clearing the area of unnecessary vegetation and hardware and providing an off-sidewalk, ADA accessible viewing station.
2. Maintain the wide, open lawn that sweeps through the center of the park northwesterly from around the Lincoln Tree to the maintenance access way.
3. ~~Relocate~~ Replace the present bathhouse closer to Coast Boulevard and ~~re-design~~ it to enhance views, appropriately recall the small scale, coastal, historic La Jolla character, to withstand coastal conditions, to be accessible and sustainable and to serve its heavy, year-round use.
4. Remove or only where necessary replace the disparate collection of perimeter railings with a uniform system designed to enhance views - preferably a low seat wall similar to the existing one along the Point.
5. Remove or only where necessary replace the existing chain link fencing and pipe safety barricades along the bluffs with such less obtrusive barriers as native California plants or low cable barriers.
6. Remove, prune or replace over-grown trees and shrubs which block views with appropriate, low growing species.
7. Gather all park signage to two or three low monuments at the park’s primary access points.
8. Develop and implement a uniform signage system for the park.

3 Preserve and enhance the historic landscape design features of the park.

Discussion: This principle reflects a strong consensus of observations and concerns on the part of workshop participants and other community members that the Park’s historic landscape design is presently degraded and requires appropriate restoration. Further, the Consultant Plan recommends the preparation of a Landscape Master Plan that will guide the restoration and re-visioning of the park’s historic landscape design features.

Implementation:

1. Engage a certified arborist to assess the health and prepare maintenance recommendations for the park’s historic, specimen trees to insure both their long-term health and public safety.
2. Preserve and if necessary augment the rows of Mexican Fan Palms (*Washingtonia robusta*) along Coast Boulevard.
3. Replace dead, dying or diseased trees with appropriate species.
4. Restore and if necessary relocate the park’s historic gazebos with historically appropriate, sustainable materials and methods.
5. Use building and plant materials, and site furnishings that are both sustainable and appropriate to the small scale, coastal, historic La Jolla character of the park.
6. Repair the structure of the Cove Cave in keeping with the original design intent and in a sustainable way
7. Repair and maintain paths from the park to the ocean where appropriate.

4 Improve accessibility to and throughout the park.

Discussion: This principle reflects a strong consensus of observations and concerns on the part of workshop participants and other community members that safe, universally accessible paths of travel be maintained and provided to and throughout the Park.

Implementation:

1. Reopen, re-designate and generally improve the existing historic pedestrian access ways between Prospect and Coast Boulevards. Add clear signage at the top and bottom, benches at the stair landings and step lighting where possible.

2. Add diagonal parking along the village side of Coast Boulevard and a turn around and loading space near the Cove end of the park. Conduct a feasibility study to determine if diagonal parking can be added along the village side of Coast Boulevard.
3. Improve views and pedestrian connections between La Jolla Village and the park along Lower Girard Avenue. Specific suggestions included raising the southeast bound lane of Prospect, adding partially underground parking and a landscape feature below the raised street bed, Widen widening the sidewalks along Lower Girard Avenue, adding diagonal parking along the southeast side of Lower Girard Avenue and reconfiguring the intersection of Lower Girard Avenue and Coast Boulevard to improve pedestrian access to the park.
4. Repair the damaged stairs from the park to beaches in an appropriate and timely fashion.
5. Repair potholes in walkways in an appropriate and timely fashion.
6. Add equal access parking spaces along Coast Blvd. at the base of Lower Girard Ave.
7. Re-grade and maintain the decomposed granite surfaces and turf edges of the picnic areas and pathways to accommodate universal access for wheelchairs, strollers, and etc., including the provision of an off-sidewalk ADA accessible viewing area at Point La Jolla.
8. Add universal access companion-seating places next to existing benches and future bench locations as determined.
9. Redesign the new lifeguard tower emergency facilities to be accessible; ensuring that any proposal to make changes to the existing lifeguard tower and/or provide ADA access to the same will be done in a way that fully preserves and protects the current use and space of the terrace and surrounding environs.
10. Remove existing pole light standards and add low, walkway lighting along the perimeter walks to improve nighttime access and safety.

5 Initiate sustainable, smart design and on-going maintenance practices to enhance the park.

Discussion: This principle reflects a strong consensus of observations and concerns on the part of workshop participants and other community members that immediate and long term sustainable design and maintenance practices be implemented for the Park.

Implementation:

1. Improve or replace existing irrigation system to conserve water, prevent over-watering and on-going breakage and other maintenance problems.
2. Reconfigure the existing lawn between the bathhouse and the Cove to appropriately accommodate its heavy use.

3. As natural processes undermine existing perimeter walkways relocate them back from the bluff edges.
4. Where possible, replace poured concrete paving with permeable, durable paving such as stabilized decomposed granite or pavers set in sand.
5. Initiate a trash re-cycling program for the park.
6. Add solar water heating for the bathhouse showers.
7. Use only sustainable materials and methods when repairing, renovating, restoring or replacing park features and amenities including but not limited to walls, paving, railings, signage, site furniture, planting and every element of the park’s structures.
8. Use only non-polluting pest control and fertilizer products.

6 Insure that all park additions, renovations, repairs, event selection and scheduling, and maintenance practices reflect, contribute to and enhance the unique, inherent, natural coastal landscapes, ecologies and historic and cultural landscape of the park.

Discussion: This principle reflects a strong consensus of observations and concerns on the part of workshop participants and other community members that a detailed Master Plan be developed with a unified oversight to carry out these concepts .

Implementation:

1. The Consultant concurs with the Scripps Park Project Report Committee that a single, unified Park Review Board comprised of appointees by the La Jolla Town Council, the Community Planning Association, and Promote La Jolla with attention paid to participants relevant expertise. The Board will serve in an advisory capacity to the Parks Department, taking action on the following:
 - a. Review all design proposals involving the park;
 - b. Approve or reject all proposals for organized events within the park;
 - c. Oversee expenditures of a park fund (see below) dedicated to accomplishing particular recommendations contained within an officially adopted long-term plan for the park; and,
 - d. Establish priorities for those expenditures.
2. Develop a detailed, long-term, park master plan and specific design and maintenance guidelines to direct the implementation of the above.
3. Develop specific, seaside and aesthetically appropriate, sustainable designs or product designations for site materials and furnishings including but not limited to paving materials,

walls, railings, signage, recycling/trash receptacles, light fixtures, drinking fountains, benches, picnic tables, fire pits and barbeques, etc.

4. Add public art and memorials program to add works in the spirit of the David C. Freeman Memorial Lifeguard Callbox that celebrate, honor, reflect or recall the specific qualities, features, people, history, flora and/or fauna of the park.

7 Secure funding to implement the workshop recommendations for the park.

Discussion: This principle reflects a strong consensus of observations and concerns on the part of workshop participants and other community members that funding must be secured to implement the both the necessary immediate maintenance and long-term improvements required, and that a mechanism be established to dedicate funds generated in the Park for Park to this effort.

Implementation:

1. Require that all funds generated within the park, beyond the reasonable operational costs of the organizations involved and fees required by the City, be dedicated to accomplishing the particular recommendations contained within an officially adopted long-term Master Plan for the Park. Fees required by the City should be reviewed to ensure that they cover the mitigation of all impacts from any of these Park activities. Funds generated specifically for officially sanctioned fund raising events by recognized charitable organizations should be exempt after any mitigation costs are covered.
2. Identify and apply for specific governmental grants and funds set aside for specific projects mentioned above for example, California State Resources Agency grants for infrastructure planning and public access and park improvement grants from the State Coastal Conservancy.