

DRAFT

**CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
PARKS &
RECREATION**

Path Forward

DRAFT 2021- 2026 Strategic Plan

Winter 2021



Table of Contents

Table of Contents

DRAFT

Click on the links below to access the sections of the Strategic Plan

<u>Strategic Planning Process</u>	4
<u>Path Forward Draft Strategic Plan</u>	9
<u>Theme 1: Employee Development</u>	11
<u>Theme 2: Natural & Cultural Resources</u>	12
<u>Theme 3: Organizational Culture</u>	13
<u>Theme 4: Equity</u>	14
<u>Theme 5: Operations</u>	15
<u>Theme 6: Systems</u>	16
<u>Theme 7: Public Safety</u>	17
<u>Theme 8: Administration</u>	18

Strategic Planning Process

I. Introduction/Background

The California State Park System is a world class network of incomparable lands and features that are vitally important to the well-being of our state's environment, economy, and people. The California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) manages these lands and facilities while providing hundreds of programs and services for the people of California and thousands of visitors from all over the world. Over the years, the system of parks has expanded while population density and the variety of demands on parklands has increased. To help DPR navigate continuous changes in the environment, economy, populations, technology and public interests, there have been periodic assessments and plans developed. These plans helped guide DPR to fulfill its mission and develop its inherent role as California's Park and Recreation leader using approaches that are sustainable, innovative, resilient, and adaptable in a way that best resonates with the current times.

Recently, DPR has been engaged in a comprehensive, positive change process that builds upon the 2001 Seventh Generation Visioning document, the 2012 Parks Forward Commission, and the two-year Transformation effort in 2015. The Parks Forward evaluation and the Transformation process identified and initiated several priority projects that launched DPR on a path of continuous improvement. In the spring of 2020, this path led to the development of a five-year strategic plan, Path Forward, with implementation starting in July 2021. The development was a truly inclusive, co-creative process, involving extensive engagement of Department staff at all levels, partners, stakeholders, and the public.

Knowing that change is inevitable, there are a few reliable constants: funding and staffing levels will always fluctuate, and legislative mandates will always be required. A strategic plan ensures DPR stays on course regardless of unforeseen circumstances. Path Forward guides the organization and strengthens operations by setting priorities, focusing energy and resources, establishing agreed-upon goals and objectives, and ensuring that employees, supervisors, managers, partners, and stakeholders are all working together toward achieving those goals.

II. Mission and Vision

The Path Forward plan is anchored by DPR's mission and the vision and core values developed by the Path Forward employee work group. While the Path Forward goals outline what will be done, the vision describes the ultimate outcome, and the core values are foundations for how the plan will be accomplished.

Department of Parks and Recreation Mission Statement:

The mission of the California Department of Parks and Recreation is to provide for the health, inspiration, and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.

Path Forward Vision:

As innovative stewards, we inspire a diverse public to engage with and sustain California's natural and cultural resources while recreating, learning, and creating experiences that build lifelong memories.

III. Core Values

Core Values



Stewardship

We manage, protect, restore and balance the utilization and preservation of California's resources through planning, innovation, education and partnerships.



Integrity

We act with the highest ethical standards, honesty, and transparency to earn and maintain the trust and respect of our peers, partners, and the public.



Safety

We promote the health and wellness of our employees and the public we serve by adhering to best practices, training, and education to achieve secure and positive environments for our employees and park visitors.



Adaptability

We remain flexible to seize opportunities and quickly mitigate challenges through ongoing assessment, evaluation, and planning.



Collaboration

We foster an environment of teamwork, cooperation, and support among all staff, partners, stakeholders, and the public as we work together toward shared goals.



Equity

We champion our responsibility in providing the inherent social, environmental, economic, physical and mental health benefits resulting from the rightful use of our parks for all Californians, regardless of income, ethnicity, gender, ability or age.



Diversity

We recognize, respect, and embody the state's unique demographics, and include them in the make-up of our workforce and the park experiences we provide.



Sustainability

We advocate for and model responsible environmental practices so that California's resources are available for future generations to enjoy.



Innovation

We embrace, pilot, and implement new ideas, technologies, and creative approaches in all that we do.



Access

We design programs, facilities, and opportunities to be inclusive of all people and address the societal and physical barriers that prevent user groups from enjoying California's natural, cultural, and recreational resources.

Stakeholder Responsibilities

DRAFT

Input from many stakeholders provides a holistic approach to the development of the Strategic Plan.



Path Forward

2021-2026 Strategic Plan

Strategic Plan Structure

Draft Vision, Mission, and Strategic Themes

DRAFT

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Vision

As innovative stewards, we inspire a diverse public to engage with and sustain California's natural and cultural resources while recreating, learning, and creating lifelong memories.

Mission

To provide for the health, inspiration, and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.

Themes

1

Employee Development

Invest in and prioritize employee recruitment, development, retention, safety, and involvement to create meaningful systemic change that promotes a more equitable, diversified, and inclusive workplace

2

Natural & Cultural Resources

Protect, preserve, enhance, and interpret natural and cultural resources

3

Organizational Culture

Inspire a culture that is proactive and adaptable to continuous change

4

Equity

Achieve equity and meaningful connections through partnerships, universal access, and relevancy to people

5

Operations

Deliver and maintain the highest quality operations that include premier recreational and educational programming

6

Systems

Implement and maintain effective management information systems

7

Public Safety

Provide and enhance comprehensive public safety and protection

8

Administration

Achieve consistent and efficient administration functionality through improved communication, supportive management, and increased transparency

Strategic Plan Structure: *Employee Development*

DRAFT

[Return to
Table of Contents](#)

1: Employee
Development

2: Natural & Cultural
Resources

3: Culture

4: Equity

5: Operations

6: Systems

7: Public Safety

8: Administration

Theme 1: Invest in and prioritize employee recruitment, development, retention, safety, and involvement to create meaningful systemic change that promotes a more equitable, diversified, and inclusive workplace

1

GOAL 1

*Conduct multi-faceted,
proactive recruitment and expedite hiring.*

1. Implement plan to simplify and expedite the hiring process.
2. Continuously improve recruitment efforts to expand diversity of Department leadership, staff, and volunteers to better reflect the demographics of California.
3. Ensure hiring panels for all levels of the Department reflect programmatic diversity.
4. Complete classification consolidation efforts to ensure expedited hiring and recruitment of diverse staff.

2

GOAL 2

Create a culture of safety and inclusivity.

1. Set, communicate, and meet occupational safety requirements and policies.
2. Create an occupational safety program from within Park Operations.
3. Develop a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Program.
4. Provide all disciplines and classifications with the necessary safety and support to do their jobs successfully.

3

GOAL 3

*Encourage job satisfaction
and professional growth.*

1. Develop and implement a Training for Advancement Program.
2. Establish and implement standardized protocol for division and unit-level Recognition Programs.
3. Develop and implement a comprehensive performance management system.
4. Develop and implement a mentorship program.

4

GOAL 4

*Expand retention and
incentive programs for seasonal employees.*

1. Clearly define promotional and career pathways for seasonal employees.
2. Invest in seasonal employees by providing training, mentorship, and growth opportunities.

Strategic Plan: *Natural and Cultural Resources*

DRAFT

[Return to
Table of Contents](#)

1: Employee
Development

2: Natural & Cultural
Resources

3: Culture

4: Equity

5: Operations

6: Systems

7: Public Safety

8: Administration

Theme 2: Protect, preserve, enhance, and interpret natural and cultural resources

1

GOAL 1

Use innovative methods to better engage the public, younger generations, and underserved populations.

1. Institutionalize and maximize quantity and quality of Parks Online Resources for Teachers and Students (PORTS) program and other digital learning capabilities.
2. Utilize interns and students, partnerships with universities, and dedicated fulltime staff to develop new innovative digital programming strategies, while expanding on current successful programs.
3. Continue partnership with UC Merced to complete the Bodie State Historic Park 3-D project and implement best practices and scale program statewide.
4. Complete implementation of online collections in order to reach broader audiences worldwide.

2

GOAL 2

Ensure that the necessary tools and training are available for all to do their jobs effectively.

1. Ensure the prioritization of ongoing maintenance and stewardship for the restoration and preservation of natural and cultural resources.
2. Train staff on natural disaster planning and emergency response protocol and protection priorities for historic structures, sensitive natural resources, and cultural resources.
3. Ensure necessary and sufficient in-house technical experts and outside consultant resources to conduct trainings and meet the Department's operational demand.

3

GOAL 3

Strategically manage the Department's natural and cultural resources and facilities to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

1. Develop and implement a department-wide Climate Change Action Strategy and Climate Change Action Plans in collaboration with other agencies, entities, and partners.
2. Support landscape-scale sustainable restoration, protection, and stewardship projects, such as the Redwoods Rising Project and the Crystal Cove landscape-scale stewardship project.
3. Prioritize sustainable funding of planning and adaptive management strategies and projects.

4

GOAL 4

Prioritize the acquisition of strategic properties.

1. Collaborate with external land management agencies, non-governmental organizations, tribes, and communities to identify a process for prioritization and criteria for acquiring strategic properties.
2. Develop a system-wide acquisition plan that includes funding, operational considerations, priorities, and property inventories.
3. Acquire properties that reduce significant system-wide property gaps, facilitate adaptation to climate change, represent important people, places and events in our state's history, provide unmet recreational demands, and are strategically located for underrepresented populations.

Strategic Plan: *Organizational Culture*

DRAFT

[Return to
Table of Contents](#)

1: Employee
Development

2: Natural & Cultural
Resources

3: Culture

4: Equity

5: Operations

6: Systems

7: Public Safety

8: Administration

Theme 3: Inspire a culture that is proactive and adaptable to continuous change

1

GOAL 1

Foster a culture of innovation and an adaptable and resilient workforce by empowering employees and stakeholders.

1. Create platforms where suggestions can be submitted for quarterly review and assessment by a committee with diverse perspectives and makeup including a mixture of employees and stakeholders.
2. Develop “problem-solving labs” where Parks employees and external subject matter experts present on theme-based topics in an open forum to brainstorm ideas, issues, and solutions.
3. Establish a change management process that facilitates smooth transitions and communication with employees and the public when implementing department-wide changes.
4. Ensure preservation of historic properties by developing the Adaptive Use program that identifies and properly rehabilitates Department-owned historical properties while supporting Department and public serving needs.

2

GOAL 2

Cultivate a supportive, innovative and collaborative leadership environment.

1. Implement a leadership evaluation program, such as Leadership 360, for all employees in leadership positions.
2. Provide training in collaborative leadership and teambuilding.
3. Create more opportunities for Training and Development Assignments.

Strategic Plan: *Equity*

DRAFT

[Return to
Table of Contents](#)

1: Employee
Development

2: Natural & Cultural
Resources

3: Culture

4: Equity

5: Operations

6: Systems

7: Public Safety

8: Administration

Theme 4: Achieve equity and meaningful connections through partnerships, universal access, and relevancy to people

1

GOAL 1

Expand community engagement.

1. Allocate sufficient resources to increase effective coordination with new and existing partners.
2. Establish and expand community engagement in all districts and program areas.
3. Update the volunteer program policies and increase volunteer opportunities in program areas where appropriate.
4. Continue to improve and develop the existing Community Liaison programs at Los Angeles State Historic Park and Candlestick Point State Recreation Area and implement best practices to scale the program statewide.

2

GOAL 2

Address community access needs.

1. Assess current programs to evaluate their success in reaching underserved communities and populations.
2. Provide and expand inclusive experiences and programs that are relevant and accessible for underserved communities and populations.
3. Continue to implement the Relevancy and History Project at California Citrus State Historic Park and El Presidio de Santa Barbara, develop new pilot sites, and showcase the stories of underrepresented communities in park units.
4. Identify and develop new cabin and alternative accommodation sites statewide.
5. Identify new sites for Google Trekker Expansion.
6. Create programs to support the Healthy Parks Initiative.

3

GOAL 3

Strengthen existing relationships with tribes, partners, concessionaires, and other stakeholders.

1. Develop customizable approaches for tribal and partnership coordination.
2. Improve communication among volunteer coordinators, cooperating associations (or their liaisons), concessionaires, operating partners and the district.
3. Focus on improving working relationships between district staff and external/local facility and utility districts.

Strategic Plan: *Equity (cont.)*

DRAFT

[Return to
Table of Contents](#)

1: Employee
Development

2: Natural & Cultural
Resources

3: Culture

4: Equity

5: Operations

6: Systems

7: Public Safety

8: Administration

Theme 4: Achieve equity and meaningful connections through partnerships, universal access, and relevancy to people

4

GOAL 4

Identify and engage with tribes, partners and stakeholders to support funding, scientific research, professional practices, and operational needs.

1. Identify and promote internally and externally supported research that advances applied science for park management.
2. Establish a State Parks in-house grants resource center to support the field and core programs.
3. Strengthen partnerships with California Native American tribes to preserve tribal cultural resources, increase interpretive programs using Native American voices, and apply traditional ecological resource management practices.
4. Continue to further develop the Crystal Cove Co-Management Project while replicating best practices where appropriate throughout the state.
5. Work collaboratively with Parks California to identify potential partners and funding for priority projects and programs.

5

GOAL 5

Increase, embrace, and encompass diversity across all aspects of the Department.

1. Assign a diversity outreach coordinator in each district to reduce barriers to inclusion, increase awareness, and expand outreach to underrepresented groups.
2. Reevaluate interpretation of our cultural and natural resources to ensure an accurate and thorough portrayal of a diverse history as part of the Re-Examining Our Past effort with the California Natural Resources Agency and Governor's Office.
3. Increase availability of communications, education, and written material that are accessible to all.

6

GOAL 6

Build and deploy a comprehensive and compelling communications and marketing strategy.

1. Conduct market research to understand and build the Department's audience and potential partners.
2. Utilize and develop social media and the public website to engage broader and more diverse audiences.
3. Allocate resources necessary to enable the Communications and Marketing Office to generate high quality professional level media and positive public relations.

Strategic Plan: *Operations*

DRAFT

[Return to
Table of Contents](#)

1: Employee
Development

2: Natural & Cultural
Resources

3: Culture

4: Equity

5: Operations

6: Systems

7: Public Safety

8: Administration

*Theme 5: Deliver and maintain the highest quality operations that include
premier recreational and educational programming*

1

GOAL 1

*Implement continuous assessment,
planning, and improvements.*

1. Develop a process to improve department wide planning efforts based on goals and guidelines identified in General Plans and Cornerstone documents.
2. Improve inventory and monitoring to support system wide natural and cultural resource management.
3. Continuously assess, evaluate, and improve the Department's recreational programs and opportunities.
4. Evaluate and assess the organizational structure that was revised during the Transformation effort.

2

GOAL 2

*Empower park professionals to manage
locally to promote accountability
and expeditious decision-making.*

1. Clearly define all departmental roles and hold employees accountable by annual evaluations from their supervisors and peers.
2. Develop and update policies that clearly sets decision-making protocols for each operational level in the Department.

3

GOAL 3

*Provide a high standard of service,
both internally and externally.*

1. Collaborate with resource specialists, subject matter experts, as well as tribal and community representatives to develop and deliver innovative, compelling, and diverse interpretive programs.
2. Address deferred maintenance and capital improvements to provide well-maintained facilities and amenities with a focus on sustainability.
3. Develop policy that considers all forms of recreation to balance recreational trends with resource and visitation management goals.
4. Evaluate, integrate and deliver necessary changes to the state parks pass programs and fee structures.
5. Promote a customer service ethic that extends courtesy, professionalism, and responsiveness to the public and internally among staff.

1: Employee
Development

2: Natural & Cultural
Resources

3: Culture

4: Equity

5: Operations

6: Systems

7: Public Safety

8: Administration

Theme 6: Implement and maintain effective management information systems

1

GOAL 1

Create system-wide technology and digital asset management standards.

1. Initiate, manage, and maintain digital asset management technology and data.
2. Develop standard guidelines and regular training for all databases.
3. Create a process to effectively manage database, software, connectivity, and hardware needs and upgrade systems that no longer function.
4. Develop and maintain a system wide geospatial information system (Enterprise GIS) program.

2

GOAL 2

Identify and deploy the most effective technologies that enable efficient operations and enhance the visitor experience.

1. Implement the Parks Mobile Application for public use, with an internal employee portal that collects experience and feedback data.
2. Use technology to deploy new and enhanced revenue collection.
3. Implement the most effective technology for all aspects of park operations.

Strategic Plan: *Public Safety*

[Return to
Table of Contents](#)

1: Employee
Development

2: Natural & Cultural
Resources

3: Culture

4: Equity

5: Operations

6: Systems

7: Public Safety

8: Administration

Theme 7: Provide and enhance comprehensive public safety and protection

1

GOAL 1

Develop and enhance the Department's capabilities to optimize emergency response as well as public health and safety.

1. Streamline decision-making process to be more responsive to changing laws, mandates, community concerns, and situational requirements.
2. Ensure that state mandates for incident response training for all staff are met.
3. Enhance public health measures to limit exposure and spread of illnesses and disease, for both the staff and the public.
4. Conduct a law enforcement needs assessment based on established parks public safety standards.

2

GOAL 2

Support acquisition and utilization of law enforcement industry-standard equipment, technology, training, and practices.

1. Survey all districts annually for law enforcement vehicle and equipment expenditures and ensure annual budgets support law enforcement operations.
2. Ensure up-to-date equipment is equitably distributed and available to the field for public safety and peace officer staff.
3. Ensure in-service training compliance and continuous training for peace officers.
4. Create an approach to address law enforcement needs as technology changes.
5. Promote and practice the community policing strategy throughout the Department.

Strategic Plan: *Administration*

[Return to
Table of Contents](#)

1: Employee
Development

2: Natural & Cultural
Resources

3: Culture

4: Equity

5: Operations

6: Systems

7: Public Safety

8: Administration

Theme 8: Achieve consistent and efficient administrative functionality through improved communication, supportive management, and increased transparency

1

GOAL 1

Foster multi-disciplinary program and project collaboration among all levels of the Department.

1. Create and implement a standardized approach to share and communicate information across all levels within the Department.
2. Provide cross-training among program areas to give employees and volunteers a broad understanding of the processes and actions required to serve visitors, employees, and protect resources.
3. Establish and implement department-wide standardized project management approach.
4. Develop and implement a department-wide succession plan.
5. Support and encourage multi-disciplinary cross division and district management in programs such as the Cannabis Watershed Protection and Wildland Resiliency programs.

2

GOAL 2

Streamline the tools, processes, and resources for real-time accounting, budgets, and project and equipment management.

1. Document, catalog, publish, and communicate work processes across all core disciplines and districts.
2. Develop and implement a system to share information about budgets, expenditures, and allocations for field programs and functions.
3. Establish workflows for efficient electronic document tracking, approval, and processes.
4. Update and maintain the Service Based Budgeting (SBB) tool for current and ongoing application.
5. Implement KRONOS software to improve timekeeping and staff scheduling.