

# Design Considerations

Essential to the development of a successful Master Plan for the Park Complex is input from the community that the park will serve. The community outreach component of the planning process included numerous meetings with the Fair Oaks Recreation and Park District Board of Directors, two community workshops, a user group meeting and coordination with the District staff. Previous reports prepared for this site and the entire district also played an important role in the development of this plan. They provide additional public input prior to this master planning process and are invaluable in the development of this Master Plan.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

### Board Meeting

The initial meeting with the Recreation and Park District Board of Directors was to discuss the project goals, review the process and confirm the design team's deliverables. The meeting was an important first step in the planning process where momentum for the Master Plan process began. The Staff Report and minutes from this meeting are available in the Appendix of this document.

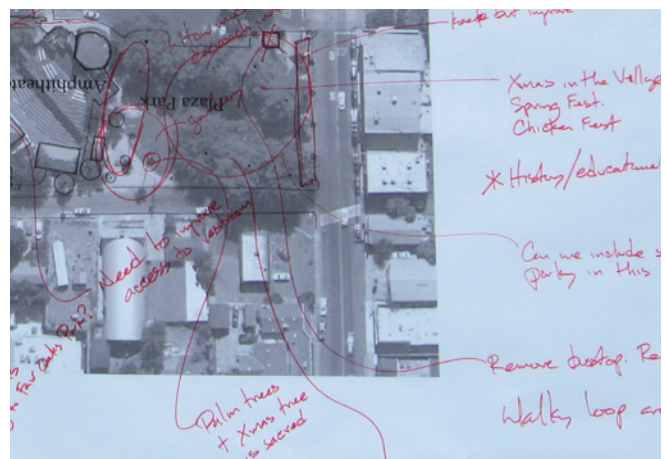
### User Group Meeting

The User Group Meeting was an informal meeting with specific community groups that use the various facilities at the Park Complex. It was important to the Park District to gather input from this group prior to going to the public. Since this site has such a diverse group of users with many scheduled events, it was important to understand how the facilities function during those events. The presentation provided an overview of the master planning process, presentation of the site analysis plan, and explained the importance of the group's input on the future improvements to the Park Complex. Groups in attendance included members of the Fair Oaks Theater Festival, Sierra Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society, Fair Oaks Historical Society, Concerts in the Park, Fair Oaks Rotary Club, and the Fair Oaks Village Enhancement Committee. The attendees broke up into two groups that each had one facilitator from the design team. Each group discussed existing conditions, shared ideas, voiced concerns and drew on the plans. Comments from the group included current lack of parking, ADA accessibility, cohesion between park

elements, improved landscaping, improved access to the restroom building, lack of lighting, lack of directional signage, incorporation of historic elements, and desire to not change the current function and identity of the parks. A complete meeting summary from the User Group Meeting is available in the Appendix of this document.

### Community Workshop #1

Community Workshop #1 was the District's first opportunity to inform and excite the community about the master planning process. More importantly, it was an opportunity for the design team to hear the community's thoughts, ideas, concerns and vision for the Park Complex. The meeting began with a brief introduction to the master planning process including a summary of the previous planning efforts by the Park District on the District-wide Park Master Plan, the Fair Oaks Village Enhancement Committee's Vision Plan, and the Theater Committee's Veterans Memorial Amphitheater Improvements Plan; a summary of the



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User Group Meeting, presentation of the site analysis plan and a presentation of various design ideas for the Park Complex.

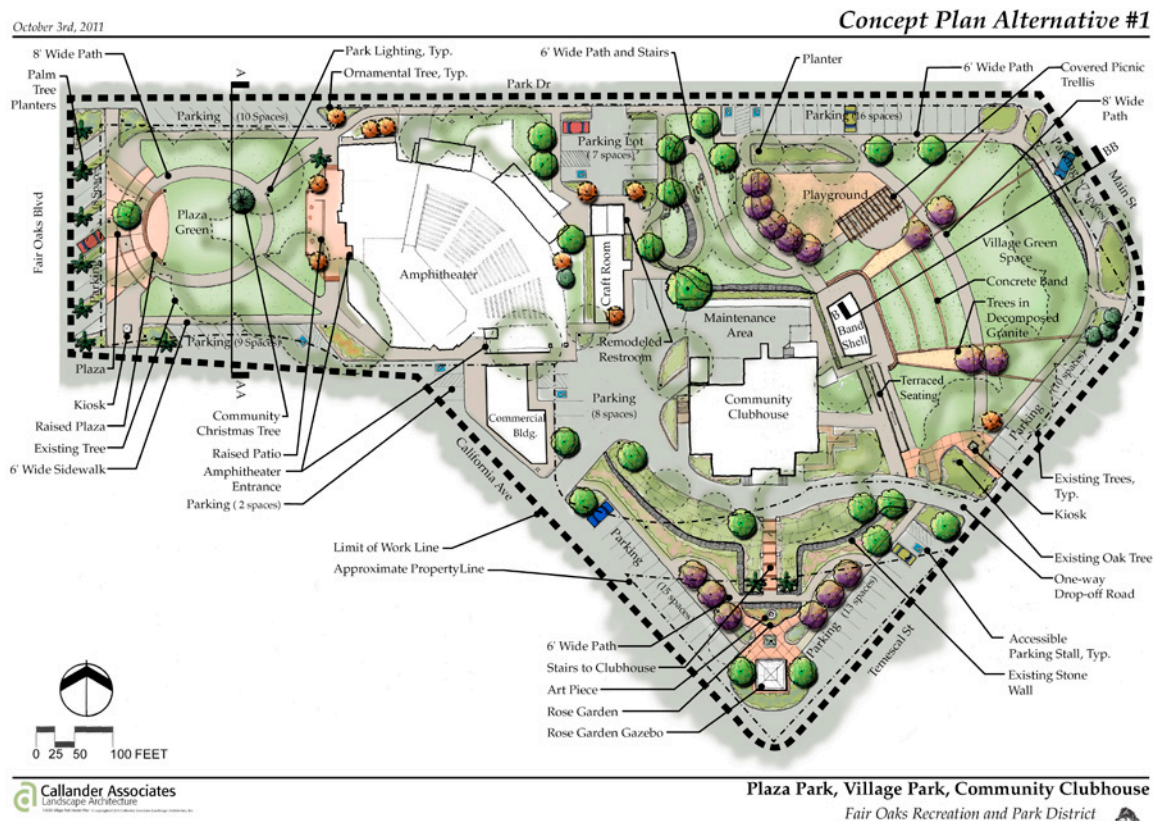
Some central themes from the Community Workshop #1 include additional parking, ADA access, upgrades to the Clubhouse interior, pedestrian scale signage and monumentation, provide links between parks, preserve historic elements, maintain topography of the site, provide more seating, add shade, and preserve the character of each park. A complete meeting summary from the workshop is available in the Appendix of this document.



## Board Meeting #2

The design team presented the results of both the user group meeting and the community workshop and the two conceptual designs developed from the community input. The design team also presented a Project Issues Memo (described later in this section) that identified and outlined the seven major issues that were found to be most important to the community. The list identifies the issues, describes the components of the issue and provides recommendations for how to resolve the issue. The board was given the opportunity to provide input on the two designs and discuss any conflicts or concerns that arose from the community meetings. The board discussed concerns with parking layout, location of the restroom building, site views, and pedestrian access. The design team made revisions to the two designs prior to presentation at the next Community Workshop.

The Staff Report and minutes from this meeting are available in the Appendix of this document.





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## Community Workshop #2

The purpose of the second Community Workshop was to summarize the previous public meetings, present and gather input from the community on the two conceptual plan alternatives. The two designs presented provided overall options for the circulation patterns, parking arrangement, site amenities and design style. The overall arching design concept for the two alternatives is to create a connection between all elements of the Park Complex, maximize parking, open views into the park, provide ADA accessible perimeter path system, and preserve the character and function of each area. Based on the community's initial input, there was not an interest in drastically changing these beloved parks.

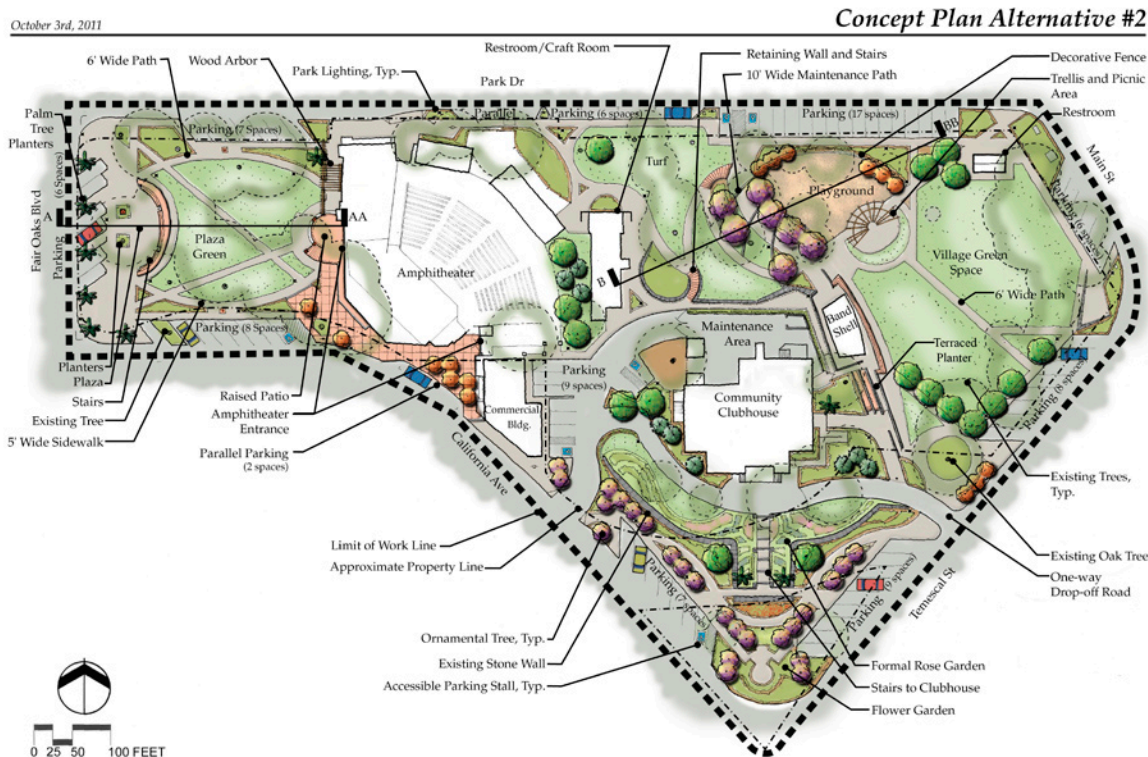


## Conceptual Plan Alternative #1:

- Provides over 20 additional parking stalls throughout the site
- Creates a gathering space in the front and center of Plaza Park to better relate to the Historic Fair Oaks Village.
- Formal and traditional style circulation patterns.
- Creates new on street and off street parking.
- Provides ADA access to the restroom.
- Creates an informal rose garden.
- Enhances and utilizes site slopes.
- Brings elements of the park to the edges to serve as visual clues and wayfinding.

## Comments on Conceptual Plan Alternative #1:

- Community preferred the traditional design style of Plaza Park.
- Do not raise the center of Plaza Park.
- Likes the parking reconfiguration in front of the Clubhouse.
- Wants trees preserved.



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- Prefers the curved paths.
- Does not like the off-street parking lot.
- Would like a focal feature such as a fountain at Plaza Park.
- Remodel the existing restroom.
- Remove kiosk at corner of Temescal Street and California Avenue.

## **Conceptual Plan Alternative #2:**

- Provides 3 additional parking stalls.
- Creates a central gathering space.
- Contemporary style circulation pattern that bisects the green space to provide direct access to other park spaces.
- Reorganizes parking design.
- Formalizes entry area at the Craft/Restroom building.
- Expands the park to the edges and creates direct line of site between park spaces.
- Adds a separate restroom building.

## **Comments on Conceptual Plan Alternative #2:**

- Prefers the raised plaza in front of the Amphitheatre on this concept.
- Likes the large plaza between California Street and the Amphitheater entrances.
- 90 degree parking stalls.
- Likes the reduction of asphalt between the Clubhouse and Amphitheatre.
- Likes the additional restroom stalls but not a stand alone building.
- Prefers the design layout of Village Park in this concept.

A complete meeting summary from the workshop and the two conceptual plans are available in the Appendix of this document.

## **Board Meeting #3**

This board meeting was to review the results from the community workshop and gather input for the creation of the Preferred Conceptual Plan. The public had an opportunity to comment on the proposed

direction and provided the following input:

- Make sure we aren't losing lawn area at Village Park. We have provided before and after square footage of lawn area in the exhibit below.
- Look for opportunities to use parking areas for plaza space when parking is not in high demand.
- Provide more detail on how artwork that reflects the character of Fair Oaks Village into the Master Plan document.
- Provide a fountain or other focal feature in Plaza Park.

## **Board Committee Meeting #4**

The design team presented the Draft Master Plan Document to the board for review and comment. The next set in the Master Planning Process is to address the comments from both the District Staff and the Board of Directors and finalize the Master Plan for this Park Complex. This document will be reviewed with the remaining board members and recommended for approval and adoption.





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## PREVIOUS REPORTS

As mentioned earlier, there were two previous documents used as guidance in developing this Master Plan. The 2010 Master Plan for Parks, Facilities, & Recreation Services and the 2008 Fair Oaks Village Enhancement Vision. The plans provide insight into past community input on the Park facilities and serve as additional guidance in the development of the park improvements.



## AMPHITHEATRE

The 2010 Veterans Memorial Amphitheatre Improvements Plan is a conceptual design that proposes to provide an indoor concert facility and additional improvements to the existing outdoor facility.

The new footprint expands the Amphitheatre to the west, into Plaza Park. This expansion is accounted for in the design of Plaza Park.

The Amphitheatre improvements do not currently have enough funding to build the first phase of the project and there is no timeline for when those funds are proposed to be met. Design around the Amphitheatre should respect the proposed expansion.



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During the community outreach process, a list of issues was generated based on the seven major issues found to be most important to the community. The list identifies the issues, describes the components of the issue and provides recommendations for how to resolve the issue. These design considerations were the basis for the overall development of the park complex Preferred Concept Plan. Photographs in this section are examples and not necessarily with the proposed improvements.

## ISSUE #1: PARK ORGANIZATION

The site consists of two independent parks, an Amphitheatre, a Community building and other tertiary buildings. An overwhelming comment from the community was to connect the spaces both visually and physically. The community also liked that each area served a specific purpose for the community.

### DESIGN CONSIDERATION:

#### **Park Identity:**

- Preserve the individual parks' identities while highlighting the connections by being consistent with materials, colors and themes.
- Creating one park name for the whole Park.
- Attract people that come to the village shops to use the park.



#### **Park Entry:**

- Create a sense of arrival to the Park by creating a destination.
- Focus park users to designated entry areas.

#### **Lack of Gathering Space:**

- Provide a place for large groups to gather with an all weather surface and shade shelter.
- Focus the gathering space next to amenities that people will naturally gather at.
  - In front of the Amphitheatre
  - Near the band shell

- Next to the Community Clubhouse
- In close proximity to the retail space

#### **Wayfinding/Signage:**

- Provide signage that lets people know what is on the other side of the amphitheatre and clubhouse.
- Use gateways and monuments as visual clues when directing people to other areas of the site.



#### **Restroom:**

- Upgrade existing restroom.
- Not enough permanent restrooms during park events





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## ISSUE #2: PARKING

An overwhelming concern from the community has been the lack of parking dedicated to park users. Plaza Park has nose in parking along Fair Oaks Boulevard and along a portion of California Avenue. This parking serves both the park and the neighboring retail shops. There is concern that these do not provide enough parking to serve both needs of the village and the park. These lots do not provide accessible paths to the park.

Village Park offers parking along Park Drive and in a lot off of Temescal Street. Some of the community have concerns that these parking spaces are used as a staging area for cyclists that continue on to the American River Bike Trail. Parking for the Community Clubhouse is located in a lot near the corner of California Avenue and Temescal Street. Limited parking is also located at the rear of the building for ADA stalls and vendor/event parking. The large expanse of asphalt in this area is under utilized because of the circulation patterns and existing striping. Street parking is available on both sides of California Avenue, Temescal Streets and Main Street. Street parking on Park Drive is only available on the north side of the street. The Amphitheater does not have any designated parking spaces which impacts all nearby parking. During events, parking becomes more of a demand yet the quantity is decreased due to a portion of California Avenue closing down for vendors.

### DESIGN CONSIDERATION:

#### **Lack of Parking:**

- Expand existing parking lots to gain additional spaces.
- Re-stripe parking lot next to the Clubhouse to make more efficient use of space.
- Enhance parking area along Main Street.
- Establish a designated public parking lot to serve the village core.
- Install signage that designated parking lots be used only for park users during park hours.

- Provide bicycle parking to encourage the community to bike to the park.



#### **ADA stalls:**

- Re-stripe existing parking lots to accommodate ADA stalls.
- Provide ADA stalls near accessible paths of travel.

## ISSUE #3: PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

The Park lacks a defined circulation pattern that takes park users from the front of Plaza Park to the back of Village Park. Obstacles such as steep slopes, buildings, parking lots, uneven pavement and visual disconnect prevent park users from accessing all of the sites amenities. The community has a desire to have access to all these amenities by way of an accessible, all weather path. Village Park lacks an accessible perimeter path to connect all the amenities within that park area.



### DESIGN CONSIDERATION:

#### **Access:**

- Provide accessible path linking Plaza Park with the Amphitheater, the Clubhouse and Village Park.



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- Provide accessible path from Village Park to the restroom building.
- Signage should direct park users to accessible path of travel.
- Make a connection from the Amphitheatre to the Clubhouse.
- Gateways and monuments should highlight entries to new areas.
- Designate areas for pedestrians to cross parking lots.

## Amenities:

- Path surface should be an all-weather surface such as concrete or asphalt.
- Add benches and fitness equipment along the path.
- Create gathering spaces where park users will likely congregate like at entrances, next to the amphitheatre and next to the band shell.
- Add active recreation amenities such as bocce ball, horseshoes, lawn bowling, and volleyball.



## ISSUE #4: SAFETY

Safety is an important component of all public facilities. The Park needs to address the typical safety concerns of a neighborhood park as well as address the safety concerns of a night use park. The existing buildings block views and create hiding spots. Dense tree canopies cast dark shadows on the park. Existing parking areas create pedestrian and vehicular

conflicts because there is a lack of circulation pattern or crosswalks.

## DESIGN CONSIDERATION:

### Lighting:

- Safety level lighting around park pathways.
- Lighting design should complement the character of Fair Oaks Village.



## Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED):

- Open access and views to back sides of buildings to deter hiding spaces.
- Relocate tertiary buildings that block site lines.
- Define entrances.
- Low shrub plantings.
- Provide views into park from the street.

## ISSUE #5: LANDSCAPE

Both parks have many large trees that provide shade and serve as focal elements of the park. One of the trees at Plaza Park is decorated for the holiday season. Many of these trees were planted when the parks were established and are nearing the end of their life span. Plaza Park has many large shrub beds and open grass areas.





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The chickens cause a mess with the mulch shrub beds by scattering mulch on the sidewalks. The grass area at Plaza Park has drainage problems in the winter. It also has wear problems due to the chickens and heavy foot traffic from the festivals.

Village Park has one large open grass area and a smaller grass area on a slope. The turf has wear problems due to the heavy foot traffic during concerts in the park. The grass also is sparse under the dense shade of the trees.

## DESIGN CONSIDERATION:

### **Trees:**

- Plant new shade trees to transition out the older trees that may be near the end of their lifespan.
- Plant a mix of deciduous trees and evergreen trees to allow for some sunny areas in the winter.
- Plant a new conifer tree to serve as the town tree for the holidays.
- Provide shade trees at the playground.



### **Turfgrass:**

- Grass should be limited to areas where it can grow successfully.
- Eliminate grass in high traffic areas.
- Install drivable grass in areas used for festivals.
- Program high traffic activities so there is time for grass to re-establish.
- Expand paved areas.
- Relocate high traffic activities to pavement.



## **ISSUE #6: SITE HISTORY**

The town of Fair Oaks is rich in history. Much of it is either within the park or just around the perimeter. It is important to the community to teach people about the town's history. The Park also has many dedications on benches, trees, and buildings that need to be taken into consideration before removing or relocating amenities.

## DESIGN CONSIDERATION:

### **Educational Opportunities:**

- Create a historical trail that describes historical elements throughout the site.
- Provide educational signage about the history of the park and Fair Oaks Village.
- Provide maps of historic points of interest.
- Direct park users to the Museum inside the Clubhouse.
- Selective placement of the signage is important so that it doesn't clutter the park.



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## Preservation:

- Preserve existing buildings.
- Preserve park dedication plaques where feasible.
- Existing WPA rock walls should be preserved and repaired.
- Make ADA compliant modifications to the entrance of the Clubhouse without changing the exterior.
- Restore and upgrade the interior of the Clubhouse.
- Renovate the kitchens in both levels of the Clubhouse.

## ISSUE #7: SITE TOPOGRAPHY

Topography brings a unique character of the park. The community identifies with the hilly slopes as being distinctively Fair Oaks.



## DESIGN CONSIDERATION:

### Site Character:

- Preserve the topography of the site.
- Build terraced slopes that match the existing site's rock walls.

### Access:

- Providing ADA accessible paths where feasible.

