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## INTRODUCTION TO THE CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

The Conservation and Open Space Element addresses the preservation and use of the City's important natural resources and open space areas. The goals and policies in this Element build upon those in the other elements of the General Plan, especially the Land Use Element and Urban Design Element. The City's Master Environmental Assessment and the Conservation and Open Space Technical Report provide necessary background information and are supporting documents for this Element.

The Conservation and Open Space Element also addresses the City's park system. However, detailed planning and operation of parks and recreation facilities is the responsibility of the Capistrano Bay Park and Recreation District. The City has both public and private parks and facilities at the community and neighborhood level. Opportunities exist to expand and enhance the recreational components of the City. As a regional center for tourist activities, the City also has a strong interest in providing open space, cultural, and recreational opportunities for visitors to the area. By providing expanded open space, cultural, and recreational opportunities, the City will balance the long term economic viability of the visitor serving segment of its economy with the livability of the City for its residents.

### PURPOSE OF THE CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

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This Element meets State requirements concerning the Conservation and Open Space Elements as defined in Sections 65302d and 65302e of the Government Code. According to these requirements, the Conservation Element must contain goals and policies that further the protection and maintenance of the State's natural resources such as water, soils, wildlife, minerals, and other natural resources, and prevents their wasteful exploitation, degradation, and destruction.

The Open Space Element must contain goals and policies concerned with managing all open space areas, including undeveloped lands and outdoor recreation areas. Specifically, the Open Space Element includes open space that is used for the preservation of natural resources, for the managed production

of resources, for outdoor recreation, and that which is left undeveloped for public health and safety reasons.

## **RELATED PLANS AND PROGRAMS**

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There are a number of existing plans and programs which are directly applicable to the aims and objectives of this Element. These plans and programs were enacted through Federal, State, and local legislation and are administered by agencies or special districts that have been delegated with powers to enforce Federal, State and local laws. Federal laws that are concerned with the protection of significant cultural and natural resources include the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (as amended in 1978), the Antiquities Act and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA).

### **California Environmental Quality Act Law and Guidelines**

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was adopted by the State legislature in response to a public mandate that called for a thorough environmental analysis of those projects that might adversely affect the environment. The provisions of the law, review procedure, and any subsequent analysis are described in the CEQA Law and Guidelines as amended in 1986. CEQA will continue to be instrumental in ensuring that the impacts of all potentially significant projects are assessed by City officials (both appointed and elected) and the general public.

### **California Fish and Game Regulations**

The California Fish and Game Code was adopted by the State legislature to protect the fish and wildlife resources of the State. Special permits are required for any lake or stream alterations, dredging or other activities that may affect fish and game habitat.

### **California Coastal Act**

The 1976 California Coastal Act is intended to protect the natural and scenic qualities of the California coast. The City's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance and other implementing action will comprise the City's Local Coastal Program. The goals and

policies of the Conservation/Open Space Plan implement many of the objectives and requirements of the California Coastal Act.

### **City of Dana Point Land Use Element**

The City's Land Use Element contains two land use designations that encompass open space land uses: Recreation/Open Space and Community Facility. The Recreation/Open Space land use designation encompasses most of the open space that exists in the City including active and passive parkland and natural open space. Distinctions between the active recreation/open spaces and the passive recreation/open areas including natural open space areas will be made in the Zoning Ordinance and the Zoning Map in implementing the General Plan. The Community Facility land use designation contains more intensive recreational and/or cultural facilities such as community or cultural facilities, museums, and art galleries.

Plans and programs that have contributed to the planning in Dana Point related to conservation and open space include the following documents:

### **The Master Plan of Parks and Recreation**

This Plan was completed in 1990 by the Capistrano Bay Park and Recreation District and is the official Master Plan of the District. The parks and recreation facilities in Dana Point are operated and maintained by the District. An update to the Master Plan will be completed in 1991. This Plan, when completed, will describe the master plan of public parkland for the City including specific locations, standards, and design guidelines. The Plan should be consistent with the goals and policies contained in this Conservation and Open Space Element relating to the provision of parkland.

### **County of Orange Master Plan of Local Parks**

The County's Master Parks Plan provides goals, objectives and policies and provides implementation programs for a comprehensive county-wide park plan. In conjunction with the County's Local Park Code, specific criteria are intended to provide an adequate supply of usable county parkland. This Plan provides a regional park planning context for the Dana Point Conservation/Open Space Element.

### **County of Orange Master Plan of Regional Riding and Hiking Trails**

The County's trails plan provides policies and programs to implement the future development and operation of the County-wide trails system. The Plan includes an inventory of existing and proposed trails and standards and criteria for new trails. The City has incorporated the County's trails criteria into the Conservation and Open Space Element.

### **County of Orange Recreation Element**

The Recreation Element of the County of Orange General Plan provides an inventory of existing and proposed parks and open space and includes the Master Plan of Local Parks and Trails component.

### **County of Orange Resources Element**

The County's Resources Element includes an inventory of the County-wide resources such as agricultural, mineral, and wildlife resources, energy, water, air, open space, and cultural-historic resources. The element also includes goals, policies and programs for the development, management, preservation, and conservation of the county's resources. This Element provides sources of regional information affecting the Dana Point area.

### **County of Orange Master Plan of Regional Recreation Facilities**

The Orange County Harbors, Beaches and Parks Department (HBPD) develops and manages six coastal recreational facilities in the City. The Master Plan of Regional Recreation Facilities component of the Orange County Recreation Element establishes policies for developing and maintaining these facilities.

### **State Park Recreation Plan**

The State of California Parks and Recreation Department oversees the plan for Doheny Beach State Park which extends from Del Obispo Street southeast to Capistrano Beach County Park. The plan includes recreational facilities and allowances for overnight camping with tents and trailers.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE ELEMENT

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In addition to the Introduction, the Conservation and Open Space Element includes two sections: Conservation Goals and Policies and Conservation and Open Space Plan. Conservation and Open Space Goals and Policies identify goals and supporting policies addressing open space resources in the City. The Conservation and Open Space Plan is concerned with protecting and enhancing natural and open space resources. The Plan is divided into two sections: Conservation and Open Space. The Conservation Section contains policies for the preservation and utilization of Dana Point's natural resources. The Open Space section focuses on the City's existing and future parkland and the policies for the enhancement and maintenance of its parkland and recreational facilities.

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## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE GOALS AND POLICIES

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A substantial portion of the City's natural open space and biological habitat has been replaced with urban development. However, there are significant portions of the community that remain in a natural state. These areas include the Headlands, portions of Monarch Beach, and the Salt Creek and San Juan Creek Basins. Although portions of these areas are planned to be developed in the future, the conservation of open space and the natural landforms can help to preserve the character of the area. The future development of the areas should respect these natural features of the community.

The goals and supporting policies included in this Element address specific issues and opportunities to conserve the City's remaining sensitive lands and to enhance the open space within the City.

### CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION OF WATER RESOURCES

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Although the City of Dana Point has a high percentage of land that has been developed, areas for future revitalization may have a significant effect on the water resources of the community. Therefore, it is essential to protect the existing drainage courses in as natural condition as possible. The depletion or pollution of groundwater resources is a concern. Water conservation measures should be adopted by the City to effectively reclaim water and encourage water conservation throughout the development process.

**GOAL 1: Conserve and protect surface water, groundwater and imported water resources.**

**Policy 1.1:** Retain, protect and enhance local drainage courses, channels, and creeks in their natural condition, where feasible and desirable, in order to maximize their natural hydrologic functioning so as to minimize adverse impacts from polluted storm water run-off. (Coastal Act/30231)

**Policy 1.2:** Protect groundwater resources from depletion and

sources of pollution.

**Policy 1.3:** Conserve imported water by providing water conservation techniques, and using reclaimed water, water conserving appliances, and drought-resistant landscaping when feasible.

**Policy 1.4:** Protect water quality by seeking strict quality standards and enforcement with regard to water imported into the County, and the preservation of the quality of water in the groundwater basin, streams, estuaries, and the ocean. (Coastal Act/30231)

**Policy 1.5:** Retain, maintain, protect, and enhance existing riparian habitat adjacent to drainage courses, channels, and creeks through methods such as, but not limited to, the establishment of buffer areas adjacent to such habitats. (Coastal Act/30231)

**Policy 1.6:** Channelizations, dams, or other substantial alterations of rivers and streams shall incorporate the best mitigation measures feasible to mitigate the loss of any riparian habitat and any downstream impacts, and shall be limited to (1) necessary water supply projects, (2) flood control projects where no other method for protecting existing structures in the floodplain is feasible and where such protection is necessary for public safety or to protect existing development, or (3) developments where the primary function is the improvement of fish and wildlife habitat. (Coastal Act/30236)

**Policy 1.7:** Maintain and, where feasible, restore the biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, creeks, and groundwater, appropriate to maintain optimum populations of marine organisms and to protect human health. Measures including, but not limited to, minimizing the adverse effects of waste water discharges, controlling runoff, preventing the depletion of ground water supplies, preventing substantial interference with surface water flow, maintaining vegetation buffer areas protecting riparian habitats, minimizing alteration of natural streams, and street sweeping, shall be encouraged. (Coastal Act/30231)

**Policy 1.8:** Coordinate with the appropriate Regional Water Quality Control Board, the County of Orange and other agencies and organizations in the implementation of the

National Pollution Discharge Elimination System Permits (NPDES) regulations to minimize adverse impacts on the quality of coastal waters. (Coastal Act/30231)

## **CONSERVATION OF SIGNIFICANT NATURAL FEATURES**

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The natural features in the Dana Point area have helped to create the desirable character of the area. Topographical features such as the Headlands, Salt Creek and the San Juan Creek watershed, the bluffs, the inland hills, and the beachfront should be protected from insensitive development. Public views should be conserved and the natural vegetation retained as much as possible. The beach areas and bluff area have potential for excessive erosion if not protected.

**GOAL 2: Conserve significant topographical features, important watershed areas, resources, soils and beaches.**

**Policy 2.1:** Place restrictions on the development of floodplain areas, beaches, sea cliffs, ecologically sensitive areas and potentially hazardous areas. (Coastal Act/30235, 30236, 30240, 30253)

**Policy 2.2:** Site and architectural design shall respond to the natural landform whenever possible to minimize grading and visual impact. (Coastal Act/30250)

**Policy 2.3:** Control erosion during and following construction through proper grading techniques, vegetation replanting, and the installation of proper drainage, and erosion control improvements. (Coastal Act/30243)

**Policy 2.4:** Require the practice of proper soil management techniques to reduce erosion, sedimentation, and other soil-related problems. (Coastal Act/30243)

**Policy 2.5:** Lessen beach erosion by minimizing any natural changes or man-caused activities which would reduce the replenishment of sand to the beaches. (Coastal Act/30235)

**Policy 2.6:** Encourage public acquisition of significant land resources for open space when funds or opportunities are available. (Coastal Act/30240)

**Policy 2.7:** Require geotechnical studies for developments that are proposed for steep slopes (4:1 or steeper), on or adjacent to coastal or inland bluffs, and where geological instability may be suspected. (Coastal Act/30253)

**Policy 2.8:** Minimize risks to life and property, and preserve the natural environment, by siting and clustering new development away from areas which have physical constraints associated with steep topography and unstable slopes; and where such areas are designated as Recreation/Open Space or include bluffs, beaches, or wetlands, exclude such areas from the calculation of net acreage available for determining development intensity or density potential. (Coastal Act/30233, 30253)

**Policy 2.9:** Preserve significant natural features as part of new development. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to minimize the alteration of natural landforms. Improvements adjacent to beaches shall protect existing natural features and be carefully integrated with landforms. (Coastal Act/30240, 30250, 30251)

**Policy 2.10:** Adopt setback standards which include, at a minimum, a 25 foot setback from the bluff edge or which take into consideration fifty years of bluff erosion, whichever is most restrictive for a particular blufftop site. When necessary, require additional setbacks of buildings and site improvements from bluff faces which will maximize public and structural safety, consistent with detailed site-specific geotechnical report recommendations. (Coastal Act/30253)

**Policy 2.11:** Preserve Dana Point's bluffs as a natural and scenic resource and avoid risk to life and property through responsible and sensitive bluff top development, including, but not limited to, the provision of drainage which directs runoff away from the bluff edge and towards the street, where feasible, and restricting irrigation and use of water-intensive landscaping within the setback area to prevent bluff erosion. (Coastal Act/30251, 30253)

**Policy 2.12:** New bluff top development shall minimize risks to life and property in geologically sensitive areas and be designed and located so as to ensure geological stability and structural integrity. Such development shall have no

detrimental affect, either on-site or off-site, on erosion or geologic stability, and shall be designed so as not to require the construction of protective devices that would substantially alter natural landforms along bluffs and cliffs. (Coastal Act/30253)

**Policy 2.13:** Bluff repair and erosion control measures such as retaining walls and other similar devices shall be limited to those necessary to protect existing structures in danger from erosion to minimize risks to life and property and shall avoid causing significant alteration to the natural character of the bluffs. (Coastal Act/30251, 30253)

**Policy 2.14:** Shoreline or ocean protective devices such as revetments, breakwaters, groins, harbor channels, seawalls, cliff retaining walls, and other such construction that alters shoreline processes shall be permitted when required to serve coastal-dependent uses or to protect existing structures or public beaches in danger from erosion, and when designed to eliminate or mitigate adverse impacts on local shoreline sand supply and minimize adverse impacts on public use of sandy beach areas. (Coastal Act/30210-12, 30235)

**Policy 2.15:** Assure that public safety is provided for in all new seaward construction or seaward additions to existing beachfront single family structures in a manner that does not interfere, to the maximum extent feasible, with public access along the beach. (Coastal Act/30210-212, 30214, 30253)

**Policy 2.16:** Identify flood hazard areas and provide appropriate land use regulations, such as but not limited to the requirement that new development shall have the lowest floor, including basement, elevated to or above the base flood elevation, for areas subject to flooding in order to minimize risks to life and property. (Coastal Act/30235, 30253)

**Policy 2.17:** Establish building code, setback, site design and landscaping requirements that assure adequate fire protection to minimize risks to life and property. (Coastal Act/30253)

**Policy 2.18:** Dredging and spoils disposal shall be planned and carried out to avoid significant disruption to marine and wildlife habitats and water circulation. Dredge spoils suitable for beach replenishment should be transported for such purposes to appropriate beaches or into suitable long shore

current systems. (Coastal Act/30233)

**Policy 2.19:** Whenever feasible, the material removed from erosion control and flood control facilities may be placed at appropriate points on the shoreline in accordance with other applicable provisions of the Local Coastal Program, and where feasible mitigation measures have been provided to minimize adverse environmental effects. Aspects that shall be considered before issuing a coastal development permit for such purposes are the method of placement, time of year of placement, and sensitivity of the placement area. (Coastal Act/30233)

## **CONSERVATION OF BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

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The existing development and urbanization of Dana Point has nearly eliminated sizable expanses of undisturbed native vegetation. The remaining vegetation includes small isolated pockets of chaparral and coastal sage scrub. The shoreline areas from north of Dana Point Harbor and extending along Doheny State Beach provide a habitat for a wide variety of marine animals and plants. These areas have been designated by the State of California as Marine Life Refuges. Although there are limited quantities of undisturbed vegetation several sensitive species have been observed with the City including the California Black Tailed Gnatcatcher, the Monarch Butterfly, and the Turkish Ruggish (plant).

### **GOAL 3: Conserve significant natural plant and animal communities.**

**Policy 3.1:** Environmentally sensitive habitat areas, including important plant communities, wildlife habitats, marine refuge areas, riparian areas, wildlife movement corridors, wetlands, and significant tree stands, such as those generally depicted on Figure COS-1, shall be preserved. Development in areas adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly degrade those areas through such methods as, the practice of creative site planning, revegetation, and open space easement/dedications, and shall be compatible with the continuance of those habitat areas. A definitive determination of the existence of environmentally sensitive habitat areas on a specific site shall be made through the coastal development

permitting process. (Coastal Act/30230, 30240)

**Policy 3.2:** Require development proposals in areas expected to contain important plant and animal communities and environmentally sensitive habitat areas, such as but not limited to marine refuge areas, riparian areas, wildlife movement corridors, wetlands, and significant tree stands, to include biological assessments and identify affected habitats. (Coastal Act/30230, 30240)

**Policy 3.3:** Encourage retention of natural vegetation and require revegetation of graded areas.

**Policy 3.4:** Ensure urban use of open space lands that have conservation or open space easements is limited to only those uses expressly allowed by the easements. Document those easements to increase knowledge of their existence. (Coastal Act/30240)

**Policy 3.5:** Ensure that public access to the shore of the marine life refuge is not detrimental to the resources of the refuge. (Coastal Act/30230)

**Policy 3.6:** The diking, filling, or dredging of open coastal waters, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes shall only be permitted in accordance with Section 30233 of the Coastal Act. (Coastal Act/30233)

**Policy 3.7:** Environmentally sensitive habitat areas (ESHA) shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values, and only uses dependent on those resources shall be allowed within those areas. (Coastal Act/30240)

**Policy 3.8:** Development in areas adjacent to parks and recreation areas shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly degrade those areas through, among other methods, creative site planning and minimizing visual impacts, and shall be compatible with the continuance of those parks and recreation areas. (Coastal Act 30240)

**Policy 3.9:** Uses of the marine environment shall be carried out in a manner that will sustain the biological productivity of coastal waters and that will maintain healthy populations of all species of marine organisms adequate for long-term commercial, recreational, scientific, and educational purposes. (Coastal Act

30230)

**Policy 3.10:** Existing marine structures causing water stagnation contributing to pollution problems and fish kills should be phased out or upgraded where feasible.

## CONSERVATION OF ENERGY RESOURCES

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As with many other communities, Dana Point is facing increased energy costs, both economically and environmentally. These increased costs require expansion into renewable energy sources to meet a portion of the City's needs. These renewable sources include solar, wind, and thermal resources. The City should consider requirements to include solar energy systems in new developments and retrofit systems to offset increasing energy demands. Development standards can also provide for efficient solar use by the siting and the design of buildings.

**GOAL 4: Conserve energy resources through use of available technology and conservation practices.**

**Policy 4.1:** Encourage innovative site and building designs, and orientation techniques which minimize energy use by taking advantage of sun/shade patterns, prevailing winds, landscaping, and building materials.

**Policy 4.2:** Maintain local legislation to establish, update and implement energy performance building code requirements established under State Title 24 Energy Regulations. (Coastal Act/30250)

## **REDUCTION OF AIR POLLUTION**

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Air Pollution is a major problem in the rapidly growing areas of Orange County. Regional efforts to control air pollution should be supported by the City. Through effective land use and circulation planning, air pollution can be reduced. The City can also reduce vehicular travel by encouraging alternative modes of circulation by providing pedestrian, bicycle and transit routes serving the entire City.

**GOAL 5: Reduce air pollution through land use, transportation and energy use planning.**

**Policy 5.1:** Design safe and efficient vehicular access to streets to ensure efficient vehicular ingress and egress. (Coastal Act/30252)

**Policy 5.2:** Locate multiple family developments close to commercial areas to encourage pedestrian rather than vehicular travel.

**Policy 5.3:** Encourage neighborhood parks close to concentrations of residents to encourage pedestrian travel to public recreation facilities.

**Policy 5.4:** Provide commercial areas that are conducive to pedestrian and bicycle circulation.

**Policy 5.5:** Actively participate in regional discussions regarding new regional airport facilities and analyze and evaluate potential impacts on the City.

**Policy 5.6:** Encourage bicycle/trail systems to reduce air pollution.

**Policy 5.7:** Consider the development of shuttle systems, train or transit facilities, to help reduce vehicular trips and air pollution.

## **PRESERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES AS OPEN SPACE AREAS**

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The City of Dana Point recognizes the importance of conserving natural resources by preserving open space throughout the

community. The City will encourage sensitive planning of its remaining open space lands to provide an appropriate transition between urban uses and open space. By designating open space in key locations significant views and public access to the ocean and harbor can be provided.

**GOAL 6: Encourage open space areas to preserve natural resources.**

**Policy 6.1:** Mitigate the impacts of development on sensitive lands such as, but not limited to, steep slopes, wetlands, cultural resources, and environmentally sensitive habitat areas through the development review process. (Coastal Act/30233, 30240, 30244, 30253)

**Policy 6.2:** Protect and preserve the public views of the Dana Point Harbor. (Coastal Visual Resources/30251)

**Policy 6.3:** Maintain an inventory of existing natural resources in the City through periodic updates of the City's Master Environmental Assessment.

**Policy 6.4:** Preserve and protect the scenic and visual quality of the coastal areas as a resource of public importance as depicted in figure COS-5 "Scenic Overlooks from Public Lands", of this Element. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect public views from identified scenic overlooks on public lands to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural landforms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas. (Coastal Act/30251)

**Policy 6.5:** Preserve and protect open space, steep slopes, cultural resources, and environmentally sensitive habitat areas through open space deed restrictions, dedication, or other similar means as a part of the development and subdivision review process. (Coastal Act/30250)

**Policy 6.6:** Concentrate higher intensity uses in areas containing less sensitive landforms and preserve the most sensitive landforms and natural resources as open space.

**Policy 6.7:** Evaluate non-developable or constrained areas for possible use as open space or recreational use. (Coastal

Act/30240)

**Policy 6.8:** Preserve public access to the coastal areas through easement dedications thereby providing marine-oriented recreational uses so that transportation corridors may augment the City's open space system. (Coastal Act/30210, 30211, 30212)

## COORDINATION WITH THE PARK AND RECREATION DISTRICT

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Local parks and recreation services are provided to the City of Dana Point through the Capistrano Bay Park and Recreation District. Detail planning of specific parks and recreation areas is the responsibility of the District. However, the plans of the Park District must be consistent with the General Plan. In order to assure this consistency the City should work closely with the District to review and provide input into the District's master planning efforts.

**GOAL 7: Encourage the development and maintenance of a balanced system of public and private park and recreation facilities in cooperation with the Capistrano Bay Park and Recreation District.**

**Policy 7.1:** Encourage the provision of a range of recreational facilities and programs to meet the needs of City residents and visitors.

**Policy 7.2:** Utilize utility easements as open space linkages where feasible.

**Policy 7.3:** Preserve public and private open space lands for active and passive recreational opportunities. (Coastal Act/30213)

**Policy 7.4:** Encourage priority acquisition and development of parkland in neighborhoods deficient in park facilities.

**Policy 7.5:** Coordinate park and open space planning with the appropriate State and County agencies.

**Policy 7.6:** Encourage the development of parks and acquisition of open space areas to serve the needs of visitors as well as local residents.

## PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

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Although the City of Dana Point is relatively new as an incorporated City, the area has an established heritage that should be

preserved and protected. The historical and cultural assets of the community should be inventoried and preserved as much as possible.

**GOAL 8: Encourage the preservation of significant historical or culturally significant buildings, sites or features within the community.**

**Policy 8.1:** Require reasonable mitigation measures where development may affect historical, archaeological or paleontological resources. (Coastal Act/30244, 30250)

**Policy 8.2:** Retain and protect resources of significant historical, archaeological, or paleontological value for education, visitor-serving, and scientific purposes. (Coastal Act/30244, 30250, 30253)

**Policy 8.3:** Development adjacent to a place, structure or object found to be of historic significance should be designed so that the uses permitted and the architectural design will protect the visual setting of the historical site. (Coastal Act/30250)

**Policy 8.4:** Develop and maintain a cultural resource inventory.

## **RELATED GOALS AND POLICIES**

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Certain goals and policies included in the Conservation/Open Space Element constitute coastal resources planning and management policies that are part of the City's Local Coastal Program (LCP). Table COS-1 identifies the regional components or issue areas of the LCP included in the Conservation/Open Space Element.

**TABLE COS-1  
CONSERVATION/OPEN SPACE ELEMENT  
LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM REFERENCE MATRIX**

<b>Required Component/Issue Area (Coastal Act Section)</b>			
*	Shoreline Access (30210-212.5)		Agriculture (30241-242)
*	Visitor Serving and Recreational Facilities (30213)	*	Soil Resources (30243)
*	Water-Oriented Recreation (30220-224)	*	Archaeological/Paleontological Resources (30244)
*	Water and Marine Resources (30230-232)	*	Locating and Planning New Development (30250, 252, 255)
*	Diking, Filling and Dredging (30233)	*	Coastal Visual Resources (30251)
*	Commercial Fishing and Recreational Boating (30234)	*	Hazard Areas (30253)
*	Shoreline Structures/Flood Control (30235-236)		Public Works (30254)
*	Environmentally Sensitive Habitat (30240)		Industrial Development and Energy Facilities (30260-264)
* Indicates that the Coastal Act issue areas described in this table are included in the Conservation/Open Space Element.			

A number of goals and policies included in the other elements of the City's General Plan will also support, either directly or indirectly, the goals and policies that correspond with the major issue areas considered in the Conservation and Open Space Element. Table COS-2 illustrates the consistency between these General Plan Elements by describing related policies.

**TABLE COS-2  
CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE RELATED GOALS AND POLICIES  
BY ELEMENT**

Conservation/ Open Space Issue Area	Related Goals and Policies by Element								
	Land Use	Urban Design	Housing	Circulation	Noise	Public Safety	Conservation/ Open Space	Public Facilities and Growth Management	Economic Development
Conservation And Protection Of Water Resources	1.1, 2.1, 4.4, 4.9	5.5, 7.2				3.3, 3.5-3.9, 3.11, 3.12		1.1-1.8, 2.1, 2.2	
Conservation of Significant Natural Features	3.5, 4.1-4.5, 4.9, 5.2, 5.3, 8.8	4.5, 7.2		1.14, 1.15, 7.3		1.1, 1.3-1.19			2.7
Conservation of Biological Resources	1.4, 4.1, 4.4, 4.9, 5.3			1.14					2.7
Conservation of Energy Resources		5.2	4.4					6.3	
Reduction of Air Pollution	1.4, 1.6, 3.6, 3.7, 5.5-5.9, 6.2, 6.2, 7.2, 7.5, 8.5, 8.6, 9.1-9.3	1.4, 2.1, 4.5		5.4, 5.6, 5.7					2.7, 7.5
Preservation of Natural Resources as Open Space Areas	1.4, 3.9, 3.10, 4.1, 4.3, 4.5- 4.7, 4.9, 5.1, 5.3, 5.4, 5.6, 8.1, 8.2, 8.6, 8.9	1.4, 2.1, 4.5		5.4, 5.6, 5.7					2.7, 7.5
Coordination with the Park and Recreation District	1.4, 3.1, 3.3, 3.5, 3.9, 3.10, 4.2, 4.3, 4.7, 4.9, 5.3, 5.5, 5.9, 5.10, 8.2, 8.8-8.10	2.3, 2.5, 4.2, 4.4, 5.4, 5.5	4.3, 4.6	5.4, 5.6, 5.9, 5.12				5.7, 5.12	2.7
Preservation of Historic and Cultural Resources		2.4	2.5					5.5	

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## THE CONSERVATION PLAN

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The Conservation Plan describes the approach to be used in implementing the Conservation/Open Space Element goals and policies. The Conservation Plan identifies those undeveloped lands that contain open space for the preservation of natural resources, open space for the managed production of resources, and open space for public health and safety. The undeveloped portions of Dana Point include primarily the Headlands area, parcels in the Monarch Beach area and areas near the San Juan Creek Channel. Several existing canyon areas have been developed and/or designated as private recreation areas. The Conservation Element's goals and policies were formulated in order to effectively preserve portions of these remaining areas as open space opportunities for the City.

### **CONSERVATION/OPEN SPACE FOR THE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

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The most significant natural resources in Dana Point include the Pacific Ocean, land with open space potential, lands with significant biological resources, water resources, significant landforms, and those sites or structures which have historical, archaeological or paleontological significance. The Headlands is the largest remaining undeveloped area within the City. This area contains coastal sage scrub vegetation which supports a variety of animal species. The Pacific Ocean and shoreline provides important marine habitats for many species. Certain sections of the City's coast have been designated by the California Department of Fish and Game as three separate but contiguous marine life refuges. The other area of natural resource open space includes San Juan Creek and Salt Creek and the beaches and bluff areas along the coast.

These important natural resource areas are shown on Figure COS-1. Other areas of natural resource open space include San Juan Creek and Salt Creek and the beaches and bluff areas along the coast.

Figure COS-1

## **CONSERVATION/OPEN SPACE USED FOR THE MANAGED PRODUCTION OF RESOURCES**

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Open Space areas for the managed production of resources with regard to this section include agricultural lands, areas of economic importance for the production of food or fiber, and areas containing major mineral deposits.

The City of Dana Point is a predominantly residential community and contains limited undeveloped land. None of this undeveloped land is currently used for commercial agriculture, and it is unlikely that any will be used in the future.

No mineral resources have been identified within the City of Dana Point. However, sand and gravel resources are located in San Juan Creek north of the City. The extraction of these resources may affect the preservation of the City's and region's beaches. Offshore oil drilling could have a significant effect on the water resources and beaches in the City.

The conservation of open space areas for the managed production of resources does not directly affect lands within the City of Dana Point. However, activities relating to mineral extractions and offshore drilling in areas outside the City limits could have a substantial effect on the open space resources within the City.

## **CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY**

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Dana Point must protect the public health and safety of the community. This involves the identification of areas that pose a potential threat to health and safety; along with the implementation of proper planning techniques to minimize potential threats to health and safety. Figure COS-2 depicts the areas in the community which require special planning considerations to avoid potential hazards. These areas include the floodplain zones along the San Juan Creek and Salt Creek as well as along the coastal areas. In addition, areas along the coast that may have potential for coastal erosion are also identified. Specific public safety recommendations and emergency preparedness procedures are addressed in the Public Safety Element of the General Plan.

Figure COS-2 Open Space For Public Health and Safety

## CONSERVATION MEASURES

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To protect and conserve sensitive lands that occur within the City, the following measures will be utilized:

- Excavation or grading shall not be permitted unless site specific geologic/soils study indicates no safety problems will result from such grading.
- Archaeological and biological surveys shall be required for any development projects on lands identified in this Element as potentially paleontologically, historically or biologically sensitive. Mitigation measures shall be developed and implemented to mitigate any significant impacts.

The following techniques may be used to acquire or dedicate land for open space purposes:

*Open Space Easements* - pursuant to the Open Space Easement Act of 1974 (Government Code Section 51070 et seq.).

*Conservation Easements* - pursuant to the Conservation Easement Act (Civil Code Sections 815-816).

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## THE OPEN SPACE PLAN

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The Open Space Plan describes the approach to be used in implementing the Conservation/Open Space Element goals and policies. The open space in Dana Point plays an important part in the lives of Dana Point residents. Dana Point has been developed with several open space amenities including local, County and State parks, public and private recreational facilities, pedestrian and bicycle trails, equestrian trails and other public open spaces. Opportunities exist to provide strong linkages between these open space resources to form a contiguous system of open space.

### RELATION TO LAND USE ELEMENT

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The City's Land Use Plan places open space, parkland and recreational facilities into the two designations of Recreation/Open Space and Community Facility. The following is a description of each of these land use designations.

#### **Recreation/Open Space**

The Recreation/Open Space designation includes both public and private recreational uses necessary to meet the active and passive recreational needs of area residents and visitors. Recreational activities include golf courses/driving ranges, community recreational facilities, public parklands and indoor and outdoor sports/athletic facilities. Recreation uses include museums, galleries, outdoor theater, designated open space and similar uses.

#### **Community Facility**

The Community Facility designation includes a wide range of public and private uses distributed throughout the community such as schools, churches, child care centers, transportation facilities, government offices and facilities, public utilities, libraries, museums, art galleries, community theaters, hospitals and cultural and recreational activities. In addition, open space and recreation uses can be accommodated in the other land use designation including the Harbor Marine and Transportation Corridor Designations.

## **PARK CLASSIFICATIONS AND STANDARDS**

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The Open Space Plan establishes a classification system that applies to all existing and future park and recreation facilities in the City. The existing parks and recreational facilities are listed on Table COS-3. Specific standards, based upon existing parkland, have been developed for each category of park or recreation area. Proposed park and recreation facilities are listed on Table COS-4.

The following is a breakdown of the parkland classification system in Dana Point. Parkland is categorized into mini-parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, open space linkages, County and State parks and school playgrounds.

### **Mini-Parks**

Mini-parks are small, passive local parks, generally less than one acre in size. Many of the small parks overlooking Dana Point Harbor can be classified as mini-parks. Most mini-parks are established in higher density areas as a substitute for backyards. Size and location are usually determined by the availability of vacant land. These parks may serve any age group, depending on the characteristics of the neighborhood. They usually feature play apparatus, a paved area for wheeled toys, benches, and landscape treatment. They may also feature children's play areas, quiet game areas, and some sports activities such as multi-purpose courts, if space allows. Some mini-parks are natural areas with minimal improvements (e.g., benches) which safeguard identified archaeological/paleontological sites or other natural resources, or serve as viewpoints. As the City approaches build-out, it becomes more important to take advantage of opportunities available to the City for the establishment of park space. Mini-parks could be established in areas that lack conveniently accessible parkland.

**TABLE COS-3  
EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN DANA POINT**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>ACRES</b>	<b>FACILITIES</b>
<b><u>District Parks:</u></b>			
1. Del Obispo Community Park	Del Obispo north of Pacific Coast Highway (PCH)	9.0	Community center w/gym, all-purpose rooms, kitchen, District office; fields (3), two w/lights & bleachers; courts – tennis (2), handball (2), basketball; bike trail; restrooms; parking; tot lot
2. Heritage Park	Del Obispo/Old Golden Lantern	7.0	Open play area; benches
3. Sea Canyon Park	Santiago/Trinidad	7.0	Amphitheater; tot & elementary play areas; picnic shelters w/tables; BBQs; restrooms
4. Thunderbird Park	Ocean Hill/Stonehill	4.5	Multipurpose field; elementary play area; basketball court; picnic tables; parking
5. Pines park	Camino Capistrano/Doheny	4.0	Open & tot play areas; picnic areas; benches
6. Dana Woods Park	Dana Woods Dr.	3.5	Picnic area
7. Dana Crest Development Park Site	Josiah/Leah	3.1	Multipurpose field; elementary play area; tot lot; basketball court; picnic areas; BBQs
8. Sunset Park	Calle Portola/Calle Juanita	3.0	Tot & elementary play areas; open play area; picnic area; restrooms
9. Harry Otsubo Community Gardens	Golden Lantern/Stonehill	2.0	Public garden plots; demonstration area; parking
10. Louise Leyden Park	Via Verde/Dana Bluffs	1.2	Arbor; tables; benches
11. Plaza Park	PCH west of Golden Lantern	1.0	Gazebo; stage; picnic tables; benches
12. Palisades Gazebo Park	Palisades	1.0	Gazebo overlook; rose garden; slope planting; benches
13. Shipwreck Park	La Cresta/Golden Lantern	0.25	Tot & elementary play areas; benches; picnic area; game tables
14. Crystal Cove Park	Via Elevado	1.5	Ocean view; greenbelt with path; benches
15. Park at The Village	Calle La Primavera/Manzanita	0.5	Greenbelt with path; tot play area
16. Camino de Estrella Overlook	Camino de Estrella	0.02	Ocean view
<b>TOTAL EXISTING DISTRICT PARKS</b>		48.57	
<b><u>COUNTY PARKS:</u></b>			
17. Salt Creek Beach Park	Pacific Ocean/Salt Creek/Headlands	34.0	Concession stand; restrooms; parking
18. Dana Point Harbor	Dana Point Harbor	---	Picnic shelters; tables; BBQs; restrooms
19. Lantern Bay Park	Del Obispo south of PCH	16.0	Par course; amphitheater; tot & elementary play areas; basketball courts; picnic tables
20. Bluff Top Park	Ritz Carlton Drive	9.0	Basketball court; picnic shelters w/tables; BBQs

NAME	LOCATION	ACRES	FACILITIES
21. Capistrano Beach County Park	PCH south of Doheny Beach State Park	7.9	Basketball court; fire rings; restrooms; parking
22. Street of the Blue Lantern Overlook	Blue Lantern (south end)	0.15	Gazebo; telescope; benches
23. Dana Point Youth & Group Facility	Dana Point Harbor	---	Sailing; boating; recreational programs; multipurpose room
<b>TOTAL EXISTING COUNTY PARKS (EXCLUDING HARBOR)</b>		67.05	
<b><u>STATE RECREATION AREAS:</u></b>			
24. Doheny Beach State Park	PCH/Del Obispo	62.02	Day & overnight camping (tent & trailer); concession stand; volleyball; picnic tables; fire rings; restrooms
<b>TOTAL EXISTING STATE RECREATION AREAS</b>		62.02	
<b><u>SCHOOL PLAYGROUNDS:</u></b>			
25. Dana Hills High School	Golden Lantern/Acapulco	16.4	Football stadium; track; softball fields (3); multipurpose fields (2); gym; community pool; courts – basketball/volleyball (9/8), tennis (6), handball (6); stage
26. Palisades Elementary School	Camino Capistrano/Via Sacramento	6.8	Multipurpose field; tot & elementary play areas; basketball courts (4)
27. Richard Henry Dana School	Chula Vista/La Cresta	3.9	Multipurpose field; tot & elementary play areas; basketball courts
<b>TOTAL EXISTING SCHOOL PLAYGROUNDS</b>		27.1	
<b><u>PRIVATE FACILITIES AVAILABLE TO GENERAL PUBLIC:</u></b>			
28. The Links at Monarch Beach	Niguel/PCH/Camino Del Avion	157.3	Semi-public golf course, 18 holes
29. Dana Hills Tennis Center	Calle de Tennis	---	Tennis courts (8)
30. Marine Studies Institute	Dana Point Harbor	---	Sailing
<b>TOTAL EXISTING PRIVATE FACILITIES AVAILABLE TO GENERAL PUBLIC (EXCLUDING</b>		157.3	

NAME	LOCATION	ACRES	FACILITIES
<b>HARBOR)</b>			
<b>SUMMARY:</b>			
District Parks		48.57	
County Parks		67.05	
State Recreation Areas		62.02	
Private Facilities Available to General Public		157.3	
School Playgrounds		27.1	
<b>TOTAL EXISTING PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS, &amp; RECREATIONAL AREAS (EXCLUDING HARBOR)</b>		362.04	

Source: Capistrano Bay Park and Recreation District; California State Polytechnic University General Plan Project; The Links at Monarch Beach; Dana Point Youth & Group Facility; Dana Hills Tennis Center, Orange County Recreation Element; Capistrano Unified School District, September 1990.

**TABLE COS-4  
PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

<b>SITE</b>	<b>NET NEW ACREAGE</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>PROPOSED FEATURES<sup>1</sup></b>
<b><u>DISTRICT PARKS:</u></b>			
<b>Existing</b>			
Del Obispo Community Park	Upgrade of existing park; no net new acreage	Del Obispo Street north of Pacific Coast Highway	Group picnic area; elementary play area; community center bleachers; field bleachers; basketball hoops
Heritage Park	Upgrade of existing park; no net new acreage	Del Obispo street	Picnic tables; telescope
Sea Canyon park	Upgrade of existing park; no net new acreage	Santiago Drive and Trinidad Drive	Offsite hiking; multi-purpose utility field
Thunderbird Park	Upgrade of existing park; no net new acreage	Ocean Hill Drive and Stonehill Drive	Volleyball/multi-use courts; picnic area; tot play area; nature preserve area
Pines Park	Upgrade of existing park; no net new acreage	Camino Capistrano and Doheny Place	New playground equipment; coastal access
Sunset Park	Upgrade of existing park; no net new acreage	Calle Portola and Calle Juanita	Multi-purpose utility field; par course; BBQs
<b>Proposed</b>			
Proposed Park at Serra School	To be determined	Victoria Blvd. And Sepulveda	Senior center; shuffleboard; horseshoes; lawn bowling; tot lot; tennis
Proposed Park Site in the Lantern Area	To be determined	North of PCH and west of Street of the Copper Lantern (to be determined)	Basketball court; tot lot
Proposed Park at Salt Creek	To be determined	Salt Creek and Camino del Avion	To be determined
Open Space parcel A	12.0	South of Camino del Avion and west of Rachel Circle	To be determined
Open Space Parcel B	17.0	West of Dana Hills H.S. and south of Sea Canyon Park	To be determined
Open Space Parcel C	15.0	Canyon west of Sea Bright Drive	To be determined
Sea Terrace park	26.0	PCH at Niguel Road and Salt Creek	Picnic area; tot lots (2); par course; maintenance facility; gazebo; benches; bike and pedestrian trails
Canyon Trail	To be determined	Canyons west of Sea Bright Drive	Day camping; hiking
Bike and Pedestrian	To be determined	San Juan Creek Channel	To be determined
Dedicated Park	(est. 2 acres)	Between Cove Drive and Coral Reach Street	Picnic tables; play equipment
<b>TOTAL PROPOSED</b>	<b>72.0</b>		

SITE	NET NEW ACREAGE	LOCATION	PROPOSED FEATURES <sup>1</sup>
<b>DISTRICT PARKS</b>			
<b><u>OTHER RECREATION SPACES:</u></b>			
Camino del Estrella Overlook	Upgrade of existing facility; no net new acreage	Camino de Estrella	Telescope; benches
Dana Hills Tennis Center	Upgrade of existing facility; no net new acreage	Calle de Tennis	Tennis Courts
Headlands park	To be determined	Dana Strand Road	To be determined
Open Space Areas A-E	5.22	Monarch Beach Resort	To be determined
<b><u>SCHOOL ACREAGE:</u></b>			
Palisades Elementary School	To be determined	Camino Capistrano and Via Sacramento	Refurbish basketball courts; tennis court
Richard Henry Dana School	To be determined	Vista Avenue and La Cresta Drive	Refurbish basketball courts
<b>TOTAL SCHOOL ACREAGE</b>	To be determined		

<sup>1</sup>The Park and Recreation areas and features are based upon preliminary surveys and studies. Final determinations will be made by the City and/or the Capistrano Bay park and Recreation District.

## **Neighborhood Parks**

A neighborhood park is any general use local park developed to serve the active recreation needs of a particular neighborhood within the City. The size of a neighborhood park depends on the population within its service area and the extent of desired amenities. Typically, neighborhood parks have a maximum service radius of one-half mile to be within walking or cycling distance of park patrons. The neighborhood parks in Dana Point feature such amenities as landscaping, children's play areas, active ball fields, multi-purpose play fields, game courts, open turf areas and lighting for night use. In some cases, the neighborhood parks provide off-street parking and rest rooms. Most of the parks in Dana Point are categorized as neighborhood parks serving individual neighborhoods. Preferably, a neighborhood park should be located adjoining an elementary school and near the center of a defined neighborhood so that it can best serve the local pedestrian user.

## **Community Parks**

The community park is typically designed to meet the active recreational needs of several neighborhoods. These parks are intended to serve pedestrian and motorists within a radius of up to three miles. They contain facilities which require more space than neighborhood parks and which may include: extensive landscaping; nature areas; multi-purpose playfields for softball, baseball, soccer and football; court sport facilities for basketball, racquetball/handball and tennis; swimming pools; and community centers with adequate off-street parking. Community parks provide the greatest economy of scale in terms of active and passive recreation benefit versus cost of maintenance and operation.

## **Open Space Linkages**

Open space linkages are usually linear strips of open space along lands such as easements, floodplains, and canyons. These linkages form trails and open space systems that connect parkland or neighborhoods. Pedestrian, bicycle, and equestrian trails are usually located along the open space linkages. Natural open space along hilltops, within canyons, or along riparian corridors form excellent linkages to other open space. Continuation of the blufftop trail represents an Open Space Linkage that can provide access to scenic vistas and provide pedestrian

connections between lookouts and park areas.

### **County Parks and Facilities**

The County of Orange owns and maintains several regional recreational facilities in the City of Dana Point. Policy for the development, maintenance and improvement of these parks is provided by the Orange County Recreation Element, which includes a Master Plan for regional recreational facilities in the County.

County parks and recreational areas in the City include two beach areas, Salt Creek Beach Park and Capistrano Beach County Park. Dana Point Harbor, created in the late 1960s and early 1970s, is also managed by the County, as are the nine-acre Bluff Top Park, near the Ritz-Carlton Resort, and the 16-acre Lantern Bay Park overlooking Dana Point Harbor.

### **State Recreation Areas**

Doheny Beach State Park (62 acres) extends along the beach from Del Obispo Street southeast to Capistrano Beach County park. Doheny Beach is the only park in Dana Point that permits overnight camping with tents and trailers.

### **School Playgrounds**

Three school playgrounds under the jurisdiction of the Capistrano Unified School District are within the City of Dana Point and open to the public after school hours. Organized sports leagues such as those for baseball, soccer and football utilize ballfields through a permit process with the School District. The playgrounds are: Dana Hills High School (16.4 acres), Palisades Elementary School (6.8 acres) and Richard Henry Dana School (3.9 acres). The high school offers the most facilities including handball courts, a community pool, volleyball courts and three softball fields.

### **Other Parks and Facilities**

The City of Dana Point includes a variety of other recreational facilities open to the general public. These include: the Marine Studies Institute, which offers sailing from Dana Point Harbor; the Dana Hills Tennis Center with six courts; and the Links at Monarch Beach 18-hole golf course. Several residential developments also include their own tennis courts and swim-

ming pools, which are available only to residents and guests.

### **Biking/Hiking Trails**

The Capistrano Bay Park and Recreation District operates a coordinated system of trails, including bikeways, equestrian trails and hiking trails. The District's trails system is described in the District Master Plan which is updated annually and constitutes the most current source of trail information. Figure COS-3 shows the location of these trails. The one existing hiking trail in Dana Point extends approximately one mile through Salt Creek Beach Park.

Bikeways comprise the most extensive part of the District's trail network. There are three categories of bikeways:

- ° **Class I:** a paved path that is separate from any motor vehicle travel lane;
- ° **Class II:** a restricted lane within the right of way of a paved roadway for the exclusive or semi-exclusive use of bicycles; and
- ° **Class III:** a bikeway that shares the street with motor vehicles or the sidewalk with pedestrians.

The biking network in Dana Point connects with other trails and paths in adjacent communities and throughout Orange County. Several new bike trails and paths have been proposed.

### **Other Recreational Facilities**

In addition to its beaches, parks, and trails, Dana Point includes many private recreational facilities, such as those identified in Figure COS-3 and Table COS-3. While some private facilities (e.g., private parks, tennis courts, swimming pools) are available only to the residents of the general particular complex in which they are located, others are available to the public for a fee (e.g., The Links at Monarch Beach).

In addition, the City offers resort accommodations for tourists. Therefore, the City's open space and recreational opportunities must be planned not only for Dana Point residents, but also for regional and even international visitors and tourists.

Figure COS-3

## **FUTURE PARK SITE SELECTION STANDARDS**

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The State of California Planning and Zoning Law and the Subdivision Map Act Code Section 66477 (The Quimby Act) indicate that the legislative body of a City or County, may, by Ordinance, require the dedication of land, the payment of fees in lieu thereof, or a combination of both, for park and recreational purposes as a condition to the approval for a final tract map or parcel map. In cases where such dedication/fees have not been obtained for particular lots through a map, they may be imposed at the time that building permits are issued. Among other requirements, the following conditions must be met:

- The Ordinance must include definite standards for determining the proportion of a subdivision to be dedicated and the amount of any fee to be paid in lieu thereof; and
- The legislative body has adopted a General Plan containing a Recreation Element, and any proposed park and recreational facilities are in accordance with definite principles and standards contained therein.

In conformance with this statute, the City of Dana Point Conservation and Open Space Element includes standards determining land requirements for future park sites. The standards identified in Table COS-5 and in the following text should be utilized in selecting sites for parks and should serve as guidelines governing the acceptance of land dedicated to the City. Future acquisition should focus on acquiring land for neighborhood and community parks as well as obtaining easements and property for trails.

Figure COS-4 illustrates the open space opportunities that exist within Dana Point. These opportunities, combined with the City's existing recreational setting, define the City's overall Open Space Plan. The opportunities for additional open space and recreation in the City relate to the linkage of existing parkland to establish an open space system. The Dana Point Open Space Diagram is shown in Figure COS-6. The completion of the City's Open Space Plan may involve the acquisition and development of new parkland based on the objectives discussed below.

**TABLE COS-5  
EXISTING AND FUTURE PARK ACREAGE NEEDS**

Acreage Required			Available Acreage from Existing and Proposed Parkland		Surplus/Shortfall	
City Population	2.5 acres/1000 District Parks	1.5 acres/1000 School Playground	District Parks	School Play-ground	District Parks	School Play-ground
31,100 (1990)	77.7	46.65	47.05	27.1	-36.6	-19.6
32,533-39,148 (2010)	81.3-97.87	48.8-58.72	113.55	27.1	(+15.68)- (+32.25)	(-21.7)- (-31.62)

Source: Standards: Master Plan of Parks and Recreation, Capistrano Bay Park and Recreation District, March, 1990.  
Population Data: Cotton/Beland/Associates and Orange County Forecast Analysis Center (OCP-88)

Figure COS-4  
Open Space Walkway/Bike Trail Opportunities

## **Neighborhood Parks**

Many of the facilities located within neighborhood parks are associated with active recreation. All neighborhood parks should contain some area for active recreation depending on the size of the park.

Neighborhood park size criteria should conform to the District's Master Parks Plan. The park site should contain consolidated parcels with appropriate area devoted to active recreation such as ball fields, court sports, tot lots, picnic facilities, swimming pools, community buildings, and on-site parking.

Neighborhood parks should be located near the center of a neighborhood unit and, if possible, adjoining an elementary school. Easy access should be provided to pedestrians, bicyclists, and maintenance and public safety vehicles. The neighborhood park should serve an area approximately within a 1/2 mile radius. A neighborhood park should not be separated from its user population by major highways, railroads, or untraversable obstacles. A neighborhood park should be situated adjacent to or near greenbelts, open space linkages, or other community open space/recreation facilities to facilitate an open space system throughout the City.

## **Community Parks**

Community parks are intended to serve an approximate radius of one (1) to three (3) miles. Individual community parks should meet the size criteria outlined in the District's Master Parks Plan. No specific shape is required for community parks as they are intended to incorporate both active recreational facilities and passive open space in the form of unique physical features such as a ridgeline. Community parks should encompass pedestrian and bicycle paths and natural open space and may be partially linear in shape.

Community parks should contribute to the City's open space system by connecting to neighborhood parks through open space linkages or connecting to other recreational facilities. They should be located at or near the intersection of an arterial near the center of their service area. Community parks should contain space for active recreational facilities such as ballfields, court sports, and play areas as well as on-site parking, restrooms, and picnic areas. Proposed parks and recreation facilities are shown in the Open Space Diagram, Figure COS-6.

## **Open Space Linkages**

The City recognizes the following as future open space linkages on its Open Space and Walkways/Bike/Trail Opportunities Map as shown on Figure COS-4.

## **Future Joint School/Recreation Agreements**

Opportunities exist to establish future school/recreation joint use agreements with the school districts serving the City. The City should consider agreements with these schools whenever feasible to enter into a joint school/recreation use and maintenance program.

## **Trail System**

A number of policies included in this Element are concerned with the expansion of the City-wide system of hiking and biking trails. Precise development standards for the various types of trails are difficult to establish since trail width and gradient will depend on topography, surface features, and availability of an easement. The City's trail system includes pedestrian and bike trails within open space corridors and along regional trails which link to local and regional parkland. The bikeways located along the City's street system are addressed in the City's Circulation Element.

## **The Coastal Bluff Trail**

The Coastal Bluff Trail is intended to provide a linkage from the Monarch Beach Area through the Headlands and the Lantern Bay area to the Doheny State Park Area. This walkway and trail system will link the various lookout points and parks. While in certain areas the existing residential and commercial development precludes a continuous bluff edge easement, the trail system could continue on local streets around those existing developments. In the future as areas are redeveloped, reservations should be considered for the Blufftop Trail.

Where possible, the missing links of the Coastal Bluff Trail between the Headlands and Doheny State Beach should be completed. Since existing single family homes prohibit a continuous bluff edge easement between The Streets of the Blue and Amber Lanterns and between Streets of the Violet and Golden Lantern, pedestrian improvements (street trees,

benches, bike lanes, and graphic markers) should be developed along Santa Clara Avenue.

### **Scenic Resources**

The scenic resources in Dana Point are a major asset of the community. In the western portion of the City, including Monarch Beach, high points provide sweeping views of the southern California coast and Catalina Island while the lower elevations provide whitewater views of the shoreline. In the central portion of the City, including the "Headlands", there are views and panoramas of the Pacific Ocean, the Dana Point harbor, distant views as far as the Palos Verdes Peninsula to the north, La Jolla to the south and Catalina Island to the west, and inland views to the foothills and valleys. In the Capistrano Beach area of the City the blufftops offer panoramic views of the coastline.

A unique sequence of parks and lookouts on the coastal terrace offer outstanding views of the ocean. These include the Pine Bluffs Park, Gazebo Park, Leyton Park, Lantern Bay Park, Heritage Park, Blue Lantern Lookout Point, and Salt Creek Beach Park.

As new development is considered public views should be preserved as much as possible. Consideration should be given to protecting public views along the ridge lines, views toward the inland mountains and along scenic transportation corridors. Figure COS-5 conceptually identifies significant public scenic view resources in Dana Point. Because of the unique character and the environmental setting of the City consideration of scenic resource opportunities should be a key factor in development and revitalization decisions.

## **GENERAL PLAN POLICIES AND FUTURE RECREATION FACILITIES**

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The Land Use Element describes a land use designation that is applicable for identifying areas of the City where existing and future parks, trails, and other recreational facilities are or may be located. Other sites adjacent to these designated areas may be purchased or acquired as development exactions for more intensive recreational uses when land is made available. Figure COS-6 includes those areas designated on the Land Use Plan

Map for recreation and open space purposes which are to be preserved.

By comparing projected build-out for the City with the standards and criteria of this Element, it is possible to identify those areas which will be adequately served by existing park facilities and those for which new parks will be needed. As part of its implementation program for this Element, the Capistrano Bay Park and Recreation District will develop a Master Parks Plan showing the approximate number and location of additional park facilities, by category, according to the specific criteria outlined in the Master Parks Plan and this Element. This information will be used as a reference tool, along with the above criteria, for planning the acquisition and siting of park facilities.

Figure COS-5  
Scenic Overlooks from Public Lands

Figure COS-6  
Open Space Diagram