



Callander Associates  
Landscape Architecture, Inc.

*Via Hand Delivery*

October 4, 2011 (revised)

**MEMO TO:** Maureen Zamarripa, Fair Oaks Recreation & Park District

**FROM:** Melissa Ruth, Callander Associates

**RE: VILLAGE PARK, PLAZA PARK, COMMUNITY CLUBHOUSE/project issues**

Maureen,

The purpose of this memo is to summarize the major issues that we found to be most important to the community and for the site improvements at Plaza Park and Village Park, and areas around the Community Clubhouse and the Veterans Memorial Amphitheatre (Park). Below is a list that identifies the issues, describes the components of the issue and provides recommendations for how to resolve the issue. These issues will be analyzed and resolved during the conceptual design process. This list will continue to be updated throughout the public input process based on feedback from the community.

**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.

**Recommendations:**

- **Park Identity:**
  1. Preserve the individual parks' identities while highlighting the connections by being consistent with materials, colors and themes.
  2. Creating one park name for the whole Park.
  3. Attract people that come to the village shops to use the park.
- **Park Entry:**
  1. Create a sense of arrival to the Park by creating a destination.
  2. Focus park users to designated entry areas.
- **Lack of Gathering Space:**
  1. Provide a place for large groups to gather with an all weather surface and shade shelter.

2. 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:**
  1. Provide signage that lets people know what is on the other side of the amphitheatre and clubhouse.
  2. Use gateways and monuments as visual clues when directing people to other areas of the site.
- **Restroom:**
  1. Upgrade existing restroom.
  2. Not enough permanent restrooms during park events.

## **ISSUE #2: PARKING**

An overwhelming concern from the community has been the lack of parking dedicated to park users. Plaza Park has none 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 cyclist 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 Amphitheatre 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.

## **Recommendations:**

- **Lack of Parking:**
  1. Expand existing parking lots to gain additional spaces.
  2. Restripe parking lot next to the Clubhouse to make more efficient use of space.
  3. Enhance parking area along Main Street.
  4. Establish a designated public parking lot to serve the village core.
  5. Install signage that designated parking lots be used only for park users during park hours.

6. Provide bicycle parking to encourage community to bike to the park.
- **ADA stalls:**
  1. Restripe existing parking lots to accommodate ADA stalls.
  2. 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.

#### **Recommendations:**

- **Access:**
  1. Provide accessible path linking Plaza Park with the Amphitheatre, the Clubhouse and Village Park.
  2. Provide accessible path from Village Park to the restroom building.
  3. Signage should direct park users to accessible path of travel.
  4. Make a connection from the Amphitheatre to the Clubhouse.
  5. Gateways and monuments should highlight entries to new areas.
  6. Designate areas for pedestrians to cross parking lots.
- **Amenities:**
  1. Path surface should be an all-weather surface such as concrete or asphalt.
  2. Add benches and fitness equipment along the path.
  3. Create gathering spaces where park users will likely congregate like at entrances, next to the amphitheatre and next to the band shell.
  4. 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.

#### **Recommendations:**

- **Lighting:**
  1. Safety level lighting around park pathways.
  2. Lighting design should complement the character of Fair Oaks Village.
- **Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED):**
  1. Open access and views to back sides of buildings to deter hiding spaces.

2. Relocate tertiary buildings that block site lines.
3. Define entrances.
4. Low shrub plantings.
5. 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. 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.

### **Recommendations:**

- **Trees:**
  1. Plant new shade trees to transition out the older trees that may be near the end of their lifespan.
  2. Plant a mix of deciduous trees and evergreen trees to allow for some sunny areas in the winter.
  3. Plant a new conifer tree to serve as the town tree for the holidays.
  4. Provide shade trees at the playground.
- **Turfgrass:**
  1. Grass should be limited to areas where it can grow successfully.
  2. Eliminate grass in high traffic areas.
  3. Install drivable grass in areas used for festivals.
  4. Program high traffic activities so there is time for grass to re-establish.
  5. Expand paved areas.
  6. 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.

### **Recommendations:**

- **Educational Opportunities:**
  1. Create a historical trail that describes historical elements throughout the site.

2. Provide educational signage about the history of the park and Fair Oaks Village.
  3. Provide maps of historic points of interest.
  4. Direct park users to the Museum inside the Clubhouse.
  5. Selective placement of the signage is important so that it doesn't clutter the park.
- **Preservation:**
    1. Preserve existing buildings.
    2. Preserve park dedication plaques where feasible.
    3. Existing WPA rock walls should be preserved and repaired.
    4. Make ADA compliant modifications to the entrance of the Clubhouse without changing the exterior.
    5. Restore and upgrade the interior of the Clubhouse.
    6. 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.

#### **Recommendations:**

- **Site Character:**
  1. Preserve the topography of the site.
  2. Build terraced slopes that match the existing site's rock walls.
- **Access:**
  1. Providing ADA accessible paths where feasible.

This memo is a work in progress and will likely change as we continue our public input process. Once that process is complete, this memo will be included in the final Master Plan for the Park site.

Thank you.



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Melissa Ruth, Project Manager  
Callander Associates

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