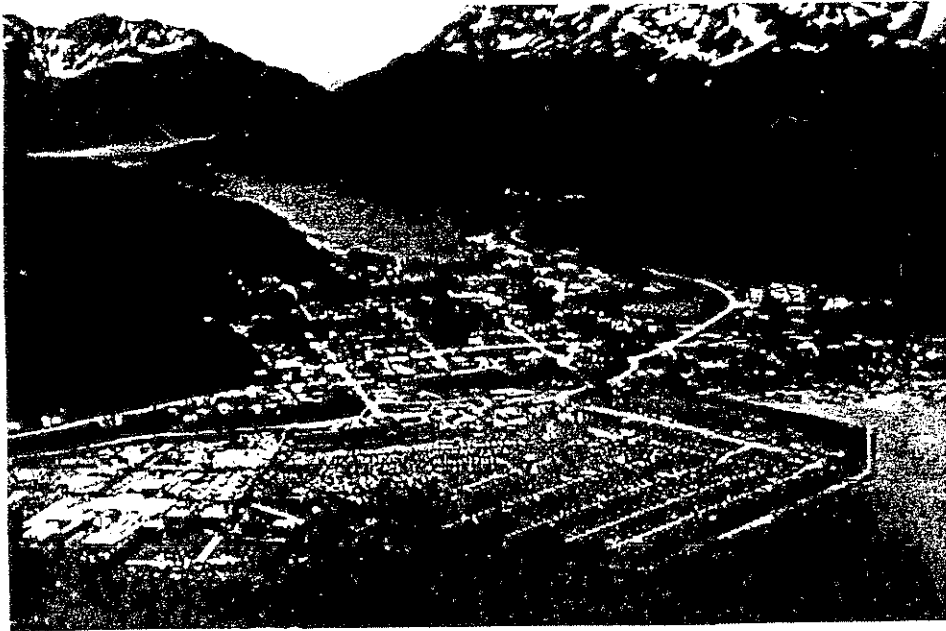
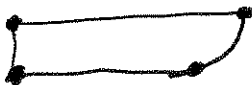


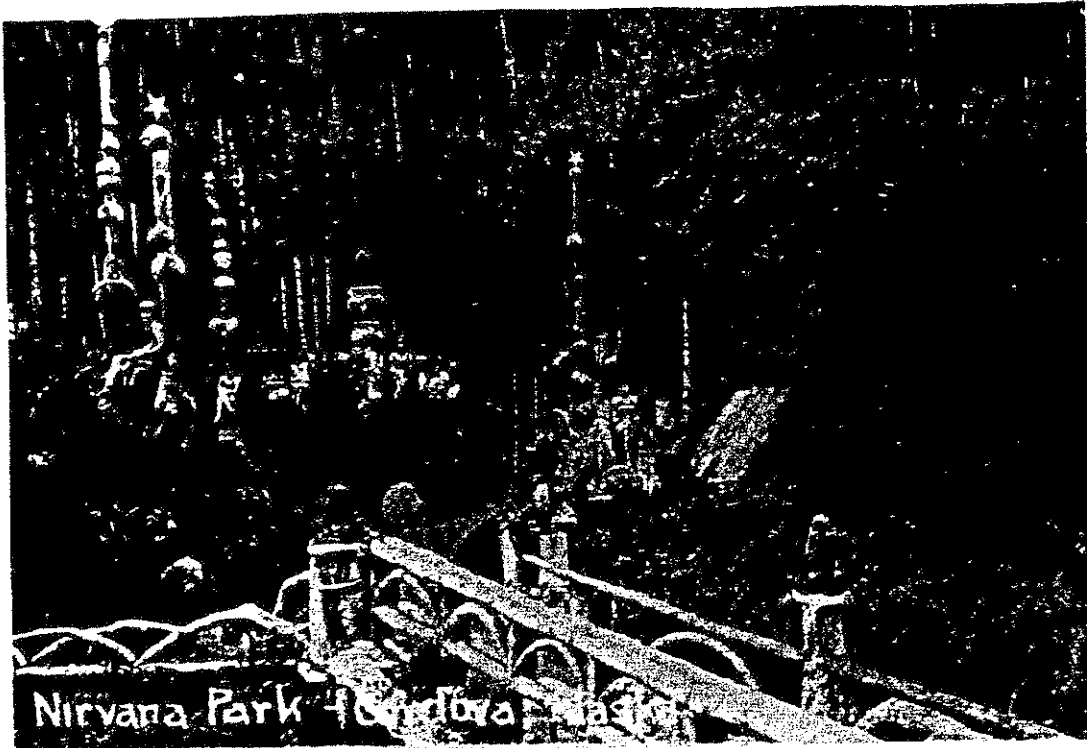
# City of Cordova

## Parks and Recreation Commission Master Plan FY- 2000



Cordova Parks and Recreation  
Department





## **Introduction –**

### **Introduction**

The City of Cordova is a very diverse area with a population of around 2,700 to 3,000 year round residents. Transient workers during the summer months in the fishing, fish processing, construction and tourism industry swells Cordova's population by a few thousand additional people. The population has remained steady over the past few years and there seems to be a growth in the amount of residents who are calling Cordova home. The Parks and Recreation Department is striving to provide a variety of recreational opportunities for the residents and transients that make up the unique City of Cordova.

The past/current Master Plan did not adequately address the park and recreation needs of the community. Much has changed since the City of Cordova adopted its past master plan. In 1990 the City took over the administration of its recreational facilities. In 1992 the City hired its first Parks and Recreation Director to consolidate and administer all its parks and recreational programs and facilities and added a Parks and Recreation Commission to its City Charter. The Commission and department immediately addressed the communities decaying children's parks by replacing much of its play equipment over the past eight years.

It is now time to take the next step and develop a Master Plan for our communities Park and Recreation Department. The Master Plan will take a look at the City's parks, facilities, and maintenance programs in an effort to project and meet community needs for the next five years.

This project is the efforts of the Parks and Recreation staff and Parks and Recreation Commission. This Master Plan was created and shaped by:

- Reviewing the current services CPRD offers.
- Reviewing current and future needs of the community for parks and recreation services.
- Reviewing national and state trends for parks and recreation services, open space and trails.
- Developing a minimum five-year action plan providing recommendations for the future of the Parks and Recreation Department in Cordova.

Understanding the unique nature of Cordova's community and projected continual slow growth is very important when planning the future needs of parks and recreation services. As Cordova continues to experience economic growth and population changes, the Parks and Recreation Department must also grow in order to meet the needs of the community in the present and future.

### **Mission Statement**

*The Cordova Parks and Recreation Department will promote park and recreation facilities and programs that provide personal, social, economic, and environmental benefits for the community.*

### **Purpose of the Master Plan**

The purpose of this Master Plan is to develop a plan of action to be used for the future of the Parks and Recreation Department through the year 2005. The Master Plan will examine such areas as recreation services, facilities and parks. The Master Plan is a working document that will give the community direction for a sense of where it needs to go in the future for planning parks and programs and acquiring more open space. It will focus on what can be achieved over the next five years and must be tied into the City Capital Improvement Plan.

### **Master Plan Goals and Objectives**

Goals for the Parks and Recreation Commission Master Plan are broad and encompass elements of parks and recreation facilities. These goals provide a framework that the Cordova Parks and Recreation Commission can use to evaluate existing facilities and parks, to develop new facilities and parks and to address the needs of the community.

# Existing Facilities and Equipment Inventory

Facility	Total Facility Size	Softball Fields	School Age Play Equipment	Green & Open Space	Picnic Areas	Outdoor B-Ball/Tennis	Rest rooms	Trails	Indoor B-ball	Other
Nirvana Park	1.68 acres			1	1					Lake and swimming area
Hollis Hendrich's Park	11 acres			1	1		**1	**1		Pond & viewing area Boardwalk
Fleming Spit Recreational Area	13.5 acres			**1	**1		1			Fishing and viewing areas
**Whiteshed Rd. Wayside & Viewing Area	7 acres	**1	**1	**1	**1		**1	**1		**Multi-purpose field viewing areas
Municipal Park	2 acres	1	1		1	1	1			Concession area storage area
Jerry Bendzak Playground	7,500 sq. ft.		1			1				Large covered play structure
Children's Memorial Park	8,900 sq ft		1		1					Big playground with lots of equip
Nettie Hansen Park	4,500 sq. ft.		1		1					Small pocket park.
Bidarki Community Recreation Center	7,500 sq ft lot						1		1	Meeting space weight and exercise rooms, saunas, shower, admin offices, multi-purpose m.
Swim Pool							1			25yds, showers
Fishers Mem. Park	3,250 sq ft			1						Statue plaques Benches
Mt Eccles Estates Park	2,500 sq ft		1		1					Small Park
Mt. Eyak Ski Hill	210 acres						1	1		Chair lift, rope tow, trails
Skaters Cabin	1/3 acre				1		1	1		cabin on lake, beach&outhouse
Camper Park	2.4 acres						1			24 spaces

\*\* Proposed new parks with partial or all funds appropriated to complete or construct park.

## Parkland Classifications

Type of Park	Definition	Benefits	Size	Service Area	Typical Features
Pocket Park	Serves a specific population group such as young children or adults in a specific pocket park area.	Provides the day to day recreation needs for nearby residents. Communicates neighborhood character.	Up to 1/2 acre	Less than 1/4 mile distance in residential setting. Within a 5 to 10 minute walking distance	Playground/structures Play areas
Neighborhood Parks	Provides opportunities for both passive and active recreational needs to a wide variety of age groups and user groups and user groups located in the specific service area.	Provides access to basic recreation opportunities for the nearby residents of all ages. Contributes to neighborhood identity.	1/2 acre to 2 acres	1/4 mile to 1 mile distance. 5 to 15 minute walking distance from residential areas.	Playground -- picnic areas, benches, lawn areas
Community Parks	Provides recreational services for the entire Cordova community. Allows group activities for multiple user groups which would not be available at neighborhood parks. A sports field or other major facility is usually the central focus of the park.	Provides a variety of accessible recreation opportunities for all age groups. Serves recreation needs of families. Provides opportunities for community social activities.	Larger than 3 acres	Entire Community	Play areas for children. Restrooms Activity fields (ballfields) Basketball courts Picnic facilities Open free space Storage areas and parking
Natural Resource Area	Land that is set aside for preservation of remnant landscapes. Used primarily for passive recreation	Provides opportunities for rest relaxation. Contributes to the environmental health of the community.	Vary in size	Varies with resource availability and opportunity.	Picnic areas Trails Viewpoints Campsites

**Reference:**

City of Cordova, Parks and Recreation Commission, 2000

## Cordova Parks

### **Nirvana Park**

#### **Classification: Community Park and Natural Resource Area**

Nirvana Park is Cordova's oldest park located on Eyak Lake. It is a 1.68-acre park and has a covered picnic shelter with picnic tables, fire pits and bar-b-que stands. The spit, located adjacent to the park, is used as a swimming area by many residents. Heavy vandalism caused the outhouses to be removed in 1997. The park is primarily used for family picnics, however an occasional community event may be held at the park. The park also houses many old native gravesites located at its south end. Some of the gravesites are marked but many graves sites have been overgrown and are undistinguishable. The terrain of the park is covered with dense spruce trees, which makes the area dark and damp. Recommendations include thinning some of the trees to allow additional light into the park and adding additional sand or gravel to make the swimming area more desirable. The park should remain more of a natural area and keep its present use patterns.

### **Hollis Hendrich's Memorial Park**

#### **Classification: Community Park and Natural Resource Area**

Hollis Hendrich's Memorial Park is an 11-acre park that is centrally located within Cordova and is next to the Cordova Community Medical Center and Long Term Care Facility. Hollis Hendrich's is in a natural setting with newly planted deciduous trees that outline the park. There is a three-acre grass area, which overlooks a small pond. It is the only large grass area in Cordova and is used by the entire community. Many species of birds use the pond during the spring and summer months. Currently, there is funding to construct about 300 feet of boardwalk with a viewing gazebo over a wetlands area next to the pond. Funding sources are being sought to continue the boardwalk to eventually connect to a trail that would circumference the pond. There are also plans to construct a small covered shelter with restrooms on the knoll overlooking the pond and where the trail would begin and end. An old copper railroad steam engine is planned to be brought into Cordova and be placed on the corner across from the park.

### **Whiteshed Road Wayside and Ball Diamond Area**

#### **Classification: Community Park**

This area and park is still in the design phase. It will be located on Whiteshed Road on the current landfill area. It will encompass 7 acres of the landfill and will overlook Orca Bay with a view back to town. Cordova has received a TRAAK Grant for partial funding of the project and will be required to match the grant with a combination of in-kind services or cash. This will be a major project and should be carefully planned to make the best use of the property. Currently, a softball field and multipurpose field are planned along with restrooms, a concession facility, storage area and parking. A small play area for younger children is also recommended. Cordova's only camper park facility is located next to the proposed park. The camper park should be redesigned to better meet the visitors' needs. These renovations should be made part of the overall project when the Wayside/ball diamond area is built.

### **Fleming Spit Recreational Area**

#### **Classification: Community Park / Natural Resource Area**

Fleming Spit Recreational Area encompasses 13.5 acres. Fleming Spit is another area, which has received much attention over the past five years. Funding through the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) Trustees allowed the area to have a restroom facility built, deepen and enlarge the pond areas, and enhance the sports fishing area on the Inlet side by constructing erosion control measures, a walkway and fish cleaning station. This area is a natural area on the Orca Inlet and has much wildlife. Sea Otter, seals, sea lions, and an occasional killer whale may all be seen in this area. Various shorebirds can be seen along with eagles, cranes, and blue heron. Both brown and black bear also visit this area. Fleming Spit is being developed as a sports fishing area as both king and silver salmon fry are released each year. A community fishing derby is held each year and the area is heavily used during the fish runs. Parking has become a problem and designated parking areas should be developed and enforced.

This area would make an ideal tent camping area. An area should be identified with plans made to eventually develop fee-based tent camping sites. The city will also have 20 additional acres conveyed to it in the near future.

### **Cordova Municipal Park**

#### **Classification: Community Park**

The Cordova Municipal Park has 2 acres and is located adjacent to the Jr/Sr high school. There is a small softball or little league diamond, concession area and restrooms along with a small storage building. The outdoor tennis court and basketball court along with a tot park are also located here. The tennis/basketball court area is in poor shape. The fencing is sagging and the court surface has been sinking and is breaking apart. The tot park has new equipment and fencing and is in excellent condition.

The park's ball diamond is heavily used by both adults and youth during the summer months. Practice and scheduling conflicts occur, as there is not enough time for all the teams practices or games. The tennis court area has been divided and one side is used for roller sports with a half pipe for skate boarders, while the other side is used for both basketball and tennis. Conflicts arise between the basketball and tennis players as they use the same area. Both the ball diamond and tennis/basketball area are inadequate to meet the needs of the community.

### **Children's Memorial Park**

#### **Classification: Neighborhood Park**

The Children's Memorial Park has 8,900 sq ft. and is located behind the Library/Museum facility. It is the largest of the neighborhood-type parks. The playground park has many different types of play structures. It is designed for elementary age school children and is used by day care centers, schools and pre-schools. The equipment is from two to eight years old and in good condition. Old surface material should be replaced or new material added.

The city uses the surrounding area for a snow dump, which has caused damage to the playground equipment and grounds. This problem hampers efforts to make improvements to the park and will continue to exist as long as snow is dumped into the park. Decisions on how best to use property as park and snow dump must be made.

### **Jerry Bendzak Playground**

#### **Classification: Neighborhood Park**

The Bendzak Playground is located behind the elementary school and has 7,500 sq ft. It is primarily used during school hours by the elementary students for recess and outdoor activities. It is a covered playground with one large Big Toy structure. The playground is over 20 years old and although in fairly good condition, many of the activities available on the structure no longer meet recommended safety codes for play structures.

### **Nettie Hansen Park**

#### **Classification: Pocket Park**

The Nettie Hansen Park is located on the hillside above town and is a small park on a 4,500sq ft. lot the city leases. The hillside residents are the primary users, however many other residents from around town use the park. The play structure at the park is over 20 years old but is still in good condition. However, some of the structures activities no longer meet the recommended national playground safety codes.

### **Mt. Eccles Estates Park**

#### **Classification: Pocket Park**

The Mt. Eccles Estates Park is located at 2 1/2 mile in the Mt. Eccles Estates subdivision. The park is on a 2,500 sq. ft. lot and has a small wooden play structure. The park's play structure is designed for elementary age children and is primarily used by the residents of the subdivision. The structure is over ten years old and is in good condition.

### **Fisherman's Memorial Park**

#### **Classification: Pocket Park**

The Fisherman's Memorial Park is located in the new harbor area on a 3,250 sq ft. lot. It overlooks the Cordova boat harbor and has a number of benches available for sitting. Memorial plaques may be purchased for display around the outer railing of the park through the cities Park and Recreation Department. It is a passive park and contains a memorial statue, benches and flower boxes.

## **Proposed Future Parks**

### **Fisherman's Park and Breakwater Trail**

#### **Classification: Neighborhood/Pocket Park**

The Cordova Parks and Recreation Commission has recommended that the two end lots on Nicoloff Way be set-aside in the new harbor for a fishermen's related park. The 24,675 sq ft lots would also serve as a trailhead for the proposed Breakwater Trail, which would end at the end of the breakwater or entrance to the boat harbor. The park would have a fish theme with a small play structure for children to use while their parents work on gear or boats.

### **61/2 Mile Park**

#### **Classification: Pocket Park**

Property should be identified and set aside for a pocket park for residents at 61/2 mile. A survey should be made of the type of play equipment residents would like to see in the park and for what age group.



## **Facility Standards**

Facility Standards measure the availability of park and recreation facilities and the ability to meet the needs of the community. In order to determine future facility needs, the number of recreation facilities in Cordova was compared to the following:

- National standards recommended by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).
- The Cordova Parks and Recreation Commission's recommendations for parks, playgrounds and open space areas.

Based on the evaluation of the standards and the input from the community's Parks and Recreation Commission, recommendations for recreation facility standards were proposed. These standards were used to calculate the anticipated community needs through the year 2005. The projected community needs are based on an estimated population of 3,000 in the year 2005. Facility Standards Chart illustrates the facility standards and the additions proposed.

The standards were established by the National Recreation and Park Association and based on information gathered through extensive participant demand assessments throughout the entire United States. Review of the National Standards suggests that most are appropriate for Cordova and do not need much modification. The only standard requiring modification is for a tennis court. The 1986 NRPA standard for tennis courts of 1 court/2000 population is recommended to be modified to 1 court/5000 population for Cordova. One court should be adequate to meet the demand of Cordova residents, considering our climate and short play periods.

## Facility Standards

Facility	Facility standard unit/population	Need		Existing	Additions Proposed
		2000	2005		
Softball Field	1 field / 2,500	1	2	0	2
Multi-purpose football/soccer	1 field / 5,000	0	0	0	1
Tennis/outdoor	1 field / 5,000	0	1	0	1
Volleyball/outdoor	1 court / 5,000	0	1	0	1
Volleyball/indoor	1 court / 5,000	2	2	2	0
Basketball/outdoor	1 court / 5,000	0	1	0	1
Basketball/indoor	1 court / 5,000	2	2	2	2
Indoor/Pool	1 pool / 20,000	1	1	1	0
Racquetball/indoor	1 court / 2,000	0	0	0	1 to 2
Covered/shelter roller sports	1 shelter / 5,000	0	1	0	1

## Additional facilities already present in the City of Cordova

Ski Hill/chairlift		1	0	1	0
Skaters Cabin		1	0	1	0
Camper Park		1	2	1	1

Cordova Parks and Recreation Commission Master Plan 2000

## **Facility Standards Recommendations**

### **Basketball and Tennis:**

**Recommendations:** According to the Facility Standards table, one outdoor basketball court and one outdoor tennis court should be made available to Cordova residents. Existing outdoor basketball and tennis courts are available but are currently in hazardous and unplayable condition. The Parks and Recreation Commission indicated the need for a new outdoor basketball and tennis court. A large covered multipurpose court should be built to serve the various needs for a hard recreational surface such as basketball, tennis and roller sports.

Cordova currently has two indoor basketball and volleyball courts, one at the high school facility and one at the Bidarki Recreation Center. The recreation center is 65 years old. Although it has received major renovation projects over the past fifteen years, the center needs additional repairs to its electrical system, roof, doors and windows. The most critical of these is the roof, as it leaks and is in need of immediate attention.

### **Softball, Soccer and Football:**

**Recommendations:** According to the Facility Standards table, one softball field and one soccer/football field should be made available to Cordova residents. Cordova has one little league baseball diamond which doubles as its softball field. The little league diamond does not meet the required dimensions of a regulation youth or adult softball field. Cordova has no soccer, football or multipurpose field available to its residents. The Cordova Parks and Recreation Commission recommends that a regulation size softball field with an adjoining multipurpose field large enough for soccer and football and other various field games be constructed. Adequate parking, spectator seating, restrooms and concession facilities will be required as well as a play area for smaller children.

### **Indoor Swimming Pool**

**Recommendations:** The pool is 28 years old and in good condition and should not need any major repairs in the near future. It has received new siding, new lockers, new interior paint, and it has been maintained quite well over the years. The annual draining and repainting the pool is a large and time-consuming maintenance project. Eventually, a pool liner should be looked at to alleviate that annual maintenance project. The water quality should improve after this year, as the pool is receiving a new chlorination system.

The only area that needs attention is the metal roofing over the boiler room. This area should be replaced as it has corroded and has had to be wet patched to keep it from causing water damage to the interior of the boiler room.

### **Racquetball Courts**

**Recommendation:** Currently there are no racquetball courts available in Cordova. At least one court should be available to the residents. Racquetball courts have been requested by many of the residents who use the recreation center and pool. It could be located at either facility and would enhance programs as well as bring in additional revenues.

### **Bidarki Recreation Center**

**Recommendation:** The recreation center once housed the old city hall, high school gymnasium, public works, fire, and public safety departments. In 1976 it was leased to the Bidarki Corporation, a non-profit organization, and in 1992 it became the city's parks and recreation department. The community heavily uses the facility for both youth and adult programs. The facility has seen much renovation over the past twenty years and will continue to require additional maintenance projects throughout its continued life. The structure is 65 years old, and although in fairly good condition, the facility does not meet many current ADA and code requirements. These areas will need to be addressed in the near future and will require a large capital outlay of funds. The communities demand for programs and space is quickly outgrowing the current space at the recreation center. As the population continues to grow a new center or expansion and renovation of the current center will be required to meet the needs of the community.

## **Facilities not listed on the Facility Standards Chart**

### **Mt. Eyak Ski Area**

**Recommendation:** The City contracts with the Sheridan Ski Club, a non-profit organization, to run and operate the Mt Eyak Ski Area. The Sheridan Ski Club has always received city funds to help offset their cost to operate and maintain the ski hill facilities. This relationship has worked well and the Parks and Recreation Commission recommends that the city continue this arrangement. The city could not operate the ski hill as efficiently as the non-profit organization. The organization is made up of many community volunteers who give many hours providing oversight of the ski area.

### **Skaters Cabin**

**Recommendation:** The Parks and Recreation Department administers and maintains Skaters Cabin. The cabin is used by the public and community organizations for programs, camping and general use. The cabin may be rented for overnight stays with the revenue being used to help maintain the cabin. The cabin has been renovated over the past ten years. Logs were replaced, a new metal roof was installed, a more efficient air tight wood stove was installed, the front deck was replaced, a fire grill and pit were installed, electrical service was completed, and gravel was brought in and placed around the cabin. When sewer lines reach the cabin the outhouse should be replaced with standard type public restrooms. The Parks and Recreation Commission recommend that the cabin remain under the cities Park and Recreation Department.

### **Camper Park**

**Recommendation:** Cordova's camper park is located on Whiteshed Road and has 24 spaces for campers/motor homes. It has restroom facilities with one shower each for the women and men. Each space has electrical, phone and television service with an available dump station in the camper park. The current park is not adequate for the type of use and number of people that make the camper park home during the summer fishing seasons. The camper park should be completely redesigned to meet the current needs of the visitors.



## **Action and Implementation Plan --**

This section presents recommendations for implementing a vision for the Cordova Parks and Recreation Department and integrating them into a plan of action. The recommendations in this section are prioritized by projects that have funds available and projects that still need to have funds appropriated or identified. The recommendations address two primary components:

- Parks and Recreational Facilities
- Management for implementation

### **Parks and Facilities**

In order to meet the future needs of the residents of Cordova, the following recommendations have been made by the Cordova Parks and Recreation Commission. The first recommendations are those projects that have full or partial funding. Other recommendations are made but are not in any particular order, for economic climates change rapidly and funds may or may not be available for any one project. The Parks and Recreation Commission, Department, and the community will need to work together to see the recommendations become a reality by the year 2005.

## **I. Completion of Hollis Hendrich's Memorial Park:**

- Boardwalk and viewing gazebo
- Restrooms and covered area
- Trail around the pond
- Train engine set in place and corner landscaped
- Weir construction at outflow of pond

TRAAK grant funds have been secured along with municipal matching funds to complete the first 250 feet of the trail, 400 feet of the boardwalk and the hopefully the gazebo.

The city has also secured funds to build restrooms but will need to find additional funds to complete the covered area of the facility. These improvements should be completed by January 2001. A U.S. Forest Service Community Development Grant will be applied for in March 2000. If funded, the monies will be used to continue the trail system around the pond, complete the restroom facility or construct the weir to raise the level of the pond.

The City has been working with the U.S. Forest Service and the Cordova Historical Society to get the train engine brought to Cordova from the Katalla area. Grant funds are available to help with the cost of moving the train.

## **II. Bidarki Recreation Center Renovation**

- Replace/Repair Roof
- Renovate facility to add a specific teen area that would include a kitchen area, lounge area for table games, dances, TV area and general seating.
- Renovate gymnasium area, electrical, walls, lighting, and re-sand/paint floor.

Currently no funds have been appropriated for any of these projects at the recreation center. The roof needs to be replaced as it now leaks and is causing damage to the interior areas of the facility. This should be repaired as soon as possible (spring of 2000) and funds should be made available immediately. The other renovation projects should be considered as they could be completed in phases over the next few years.

## **III. Whiteshed Road Wayside and Ball Diamond and Camper Park**

- Ball diamond constructed with dugouts and spectator seating.
- Concession and restroom area constructed
- Multi-purpose field constructed for baseball, soccer, football and with possible running track around field.
- Parking area constructed
- Small playground constructed
- Trail from the Copper River Hwy to the ball diamond area constructed along Whiteshed Rd.
- Tennis/Basketball court area
- Camper Park Renovation – redesign current space and address needs

With the Cordova landfill closing in the spring of the year 2000, plans are being made to construct a ball diamond over the existing landfill. A TRAAK grant and matching municipal funds will be used to help construct the wayside and ball diamond area. Construction should begin in the spring of 2001 with completion scheduled for the fall of 2002. The total project will be completed in phases with the ball diamond area being completed first. Additional funds will be needed to complete this project.

#### **IV. Permanent Parks and Recreation Maintenance Position**

- Request a permanent full time maintenance position during budget process
- Better maintain current facilities, parks and playgrounds to reduce cost of repairs and provide clean safe public facilities.

The Parks and Recreation Commission recognize the need for a full time maintenance position for the Parks and Recreation Department. It will continue to request the position during the budget process. As the community constructs new recreational facilities it will have to maintain them and as our older facilities begin to deteriorate they will take additional maintenance to keep them in safe condition for public use. Hopefully this position will be funded by the 2001 budget cycle.

#### **V. Municipal Covered Playground Structure**

- Construct a large 100' x 100' covered and lighted play structure.
- Tennis, basketball and roller sports courts will be available.
- Restroom area constructed or renovated.

Currently no funds have been appropriated for this project. The project would not begin until the new ball diamond area was completed. The city should begin looking for funding sources and begin plans for construction in the spring of 2004.

#### **VI. Fleming Spit Recreational Area**

- Organized tent camping area
- Fishing area and Cleaning station
- Picnic area
- Designated parking area

The Fleming Spit Recreational Area received an Oil Spill Grant from the Trustees Council through the Alaska State Parks. The pond was deepened and a restroom was constructed, a fish cleaning station was installed and erosion control efforts were made.

The city should be conveyed additional properties in the surrounding areas by 2002. A portion of this area should be developed for tent camping. This should provide our summer transient population and visitors a clean and sanitary tent camping area.

*The Cordova Parks and Recreation Commission* (CPRC) is committed to the betterment of our community parks, playgrounds, recreation facilities and open space. The five projects above are the CPRC top priorities through the year 2005. It recognizes that funding must be found or made available in order for these large projects to become a reality. It also realizes that our communities current facilities must be maintained and that unforeseen problems and cost with these facilities could change the listed priorities.