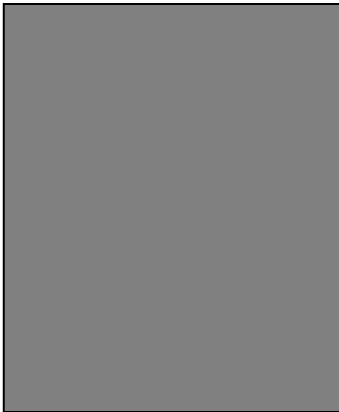


City of Desert Hot Springs



Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2013

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Preface

The City of Desert Hot Springs is located at the foot of the San Bernardino Mountains near the gateway to Joshua Tree National Park. This City is undergoing rapid population and demographic changes. The City occupies a strategic location as the entry city to the Coachella Valley and has sufficient open space to allow for significant growth. It has grown from a smaller, somewhat isolated community with a predominately white retiree population, to a fast growing city that houses a significant Coachella Valley workforce (see Chapter 2). The City has a substantial and growing youth and Hispanic population. The City has a population of 27,383 people.

To understand this document one must understand a little history about the community and the variety of information sources that were used. Over the past two decades, the City has had a history of dissonant governance. There have been changes in City Council leadership, City Managers, and key City staff. The financial health of the City has also been challenging. The current City Council and City Manager have worked to bring stability to City government over the last five years and to begin planning for the City's long-term growth and needs. Fast growth and demographic changes have presented the necessity to update the City's General Plan as well as address the parks and recreation needs of the community. The Desert Hot Springs City Council realized there was a dire need for a comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan to help guide the City's delivery of parks and recreation facilities and services for the next 10 years and beyond. This effort included a collaborative effort that evolved over a number of years and involved input from elected officials, City staff, stakeholders and residents of Desert Hot Springs.

This effort began in 2008 where, under direction of the City Council, the City hired Mr. Dick Guthrie, a consultant, to prepare a Parks and Recreation Assessment Report. That Report, completed in July 2008, included a number of recommendations for future action steps. At that time, there was a downturn in the economy and implementation of the Report stalled. In addition, with reduced financial resources the City had to reduce personnel which further stalled implementation of the Report.

In November of 2009, the City Council, in its continued effort to complete a comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan, contracted out with Desert Recreation District (DRD) to hire a consultant to draft a comprehensive Plan using the information in the Report prepared by Mr. Guthrie. That consultant was MIG. The result of all the efforts to date is this comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan which reflects the current thinking of national standards for recreational parks and facilities as provided by the National Recreation & Parks Association (NRPA) and includes information from multiple sources, including the 2008 Parks and Recreation Assessment Report by Mr. Guthrie, City's General Plan, U.S. census documents, California Department of Finance demographic information and Palm Springs Unified School District accountability reports. In addition, the Plan is supplemented with updated information from on-site tours of existing parks and community facilities. Input from the community is a critical component in determining what facilities and programs should be recommended in the Plan. As a result, input from face-to-face interviews with the City Council, key City staff, public workshops, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, surveys with youth and organized sports organizations has been included to ensure that the Plan is as inclusive as possible and that it reflects the views, preferences and recreational desires of Desert Hot Springs residents.

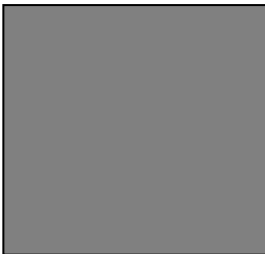
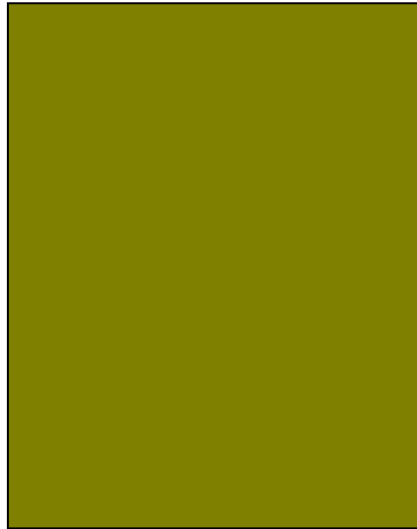
While Desert Hot Springs faces challenges in ensuring its financial stability, it also faces other challenges including rapid growth, expanding youth population and economic development. Desert Hot Springs has an opportunity to transform itself into a model community that has a dynamic quality of life. Among the most important quality of life issues that most residents want are attractive, well maintained parks, good community facilities, and a sense of connection to the community, and good programs and services. This Plan sets a path toward achieving this high quality of life.

While this Plan includes an assessment of the status of current parks, facilities, and programs (Chapters 3 and 4), it also identifies key community needs and issues that leaders and community stakeholders need to address (Chapter 5). These are listed as recommendations in Chapter 6. While some of the recommendations require funding (Chapter 7), others require changes in policy or establishing a new course of action. Others require the completion of projects that currently have some funding and others will take funding that has yet to be identified. These are included in the Capital Improvement Program (Chapter 8).

The recommendations presented in this Plan will require serious effort by the City leadership and the community to complete. Some can be done rather quickly, while others will take a concerted effort to accomplish. Funding will not always be the issue, but the political will to move forward will be central to success. Desert Hot Springs has the opportunity to make quality of life enhancement a benchmark for which it is known.

The Plan is the first step in finding solutions that will enable Desert Hot Springs to effectively meet the current and future needs of parks and recreational services in the community. The Plan provides a vision for the future, taking into account the existing condition of parks and facilities. The Plan should be a fluid document with the understanding that priorities of certain recommendations may change based on City Council policy. The Plan should be used as a planning tool that the City can reference when making decisions for future facility improvements and for delivering parks and recreation services for years to come. The Plan shall be updated as much as possible when new parks and recreational programs and services are provided.

CHAPTER 1



Introduction

Introduction

1.1 INTRODUCTION

IN 2008, the Desert Hot Springs City Council began an effort to develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The City hired Mr. Dick Guthrie, a consultant, to prepare a Parks and Recreation Assessment Report. The Report included a number of recommendations for action steps but the downturn in the stalled implementation of the Report.

Later, in the Spring of 2010, the Desert Hot Springs City Council engaged the Desert Recreation District to develop and complete a comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The purpose of this Plan is to guide the City's delivery of parks and recreation facilities and services for the next 10 years and beyond. It embodies the collaborative efforts of elected officials, City staff, stakeholders and residents of Desert Hot Springs, and will become the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

1.2 PLAN PURPOSE

The City of Desert Hot Springs has a history of celebrating its natural resources and the health and wellness of its residents. Parks and Recreation are a natural extension of these pursuits, and the City has worked to create several parks within the community over the past three decades. The City of Desert Hot



Clouds over Mount San Geronio
Photo by Bruce Montgomery

Springs operates parks and recreation facilities that provide the opportunity for leisure activities for about 27,373 city residents and another 10,000 residents in nearby unincorporated communities. The City's population has experienced significant growth, slowed only recently by economic downturn. Forecasts predict that the population will continue to grow, and the parks system today is charged with the task of providing for the growing and evolving population while anticipating the needs of the future.

The Master Plan is an essential first step in finding solutions that will enable Desert Hot Springs to effectively meet the current and future needs of the community. The Park and Recreation Master Plan will provide a vision for the future, taking into account the existing condition of facilities and parks. The Master Plan will be the planning tool the City will reference when making decisions for future facility improvements and for delivering parks and recreation services years to come.

1.3 HOW THE PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

The Project Team, Desert Recreation District and the City embraced a collaborative approach to the development of the Plan. The City provided valuable insight and extensive

current and historical data for use to develop the Plan including the 2008 Parks and Recreation Assessment Report by Mr. Dick Guthrie, a current facilities inventory, program services, identification of current issues requiring resolution, current and projected breakdown of community demographics, maps, plans and future park plans. These items provided a solid basis for the planning process.

The process included a multi-tiered public outreach process to match the community's diversity. Multiple stakeholder interviews were conducted, youth and adult questionnaires were distributed, several different focus group meetings were held, along with two Community Workshops at two different locations within the City.

Phase I – Where are we now?

The first phase of the process to prepare the Parks and Recreation Master Plan was to review the existing park and recreation resources in the City. This involved a review of existing parks and recreation related documents, several of which are described in further detail in Chapter 5 (Needs Assessment), followed by an inventory and evaluation of all existing parks and recreation facilities. A review of trails, recreation programs, school facilities, and regional facilities used by Desert Hot Springs residents was conducted. In order to understand the context of the City in relation to parks and recreation planning, it was important to review the history, demographics, and overall community character. This research, in combination with early community outreach activities, helped to develop an initial profile of key issues, priorities and perceived needs.



Rossie Stobbs and her quilt.

Phase II – Where do we want to be?

The second phase of the planning efforts focused primarily on public outreach to determine key recreation needs in the community. Several forms of outreach were used to garner public input on current recreation needs. The public was also asked to generate ideas and identify priorities for future park programs and facilities. These outreach opportunities included 10 stakeholder interviews, two focus groups, and two community workshops. In addition, community questionnaires for adults and youth in both English and Spanish were available at the community center, library and other venues throughout the City.

The project team then identified potential deficiencies in existing parks and recreation facilities with respect to park acreage standards and recreation programming needs.

Phase III- How do we get there?

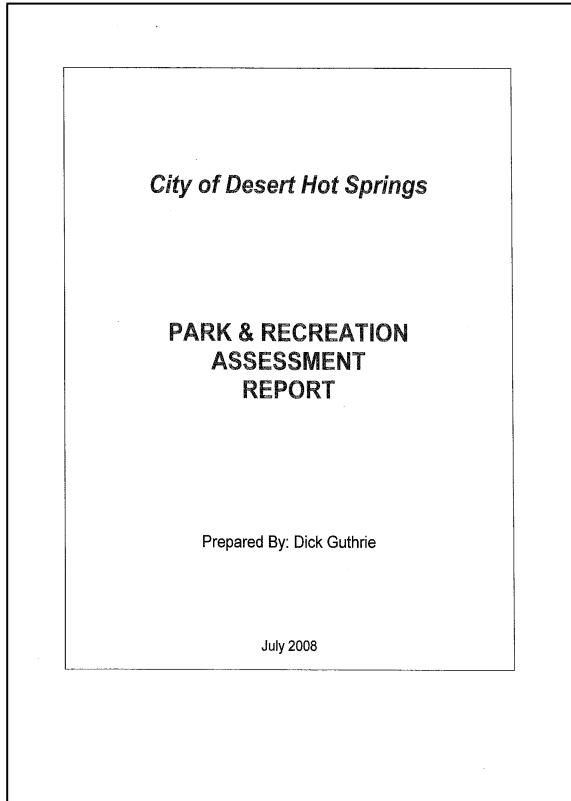
Once the Team analyzes the data and findings, it begins to form conclusions in the way of recommendations to achieve the goals defined by the public and the City along with national trend standards for cities the size, population and economic status of Desert Hot Springs.

The document will then have recommended changes to:

- Criteria and guideline standards for parks and recreation facility development.
- Determine future needs for parks, recreation facilities, trails and programs.
- Analyze the potential for improvement to existing City parks and schools, joint development opportunities, public trail development recommendations and an inventory of parcels in Desert Hot Springs that could potentially be acquired to meet future parks and facility needs.

Phase IV - Adoption of the Master Plan

Acceptance of the Master Plan and its recommendations by the City Council is the final hurdle to adoption of the Master Plan. However, the information gained along the journey to completing the Master Plan provides valuable guidance to those in decision-making positions.

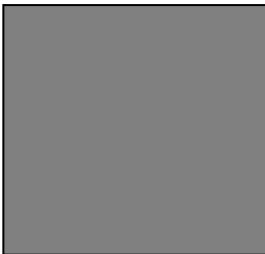
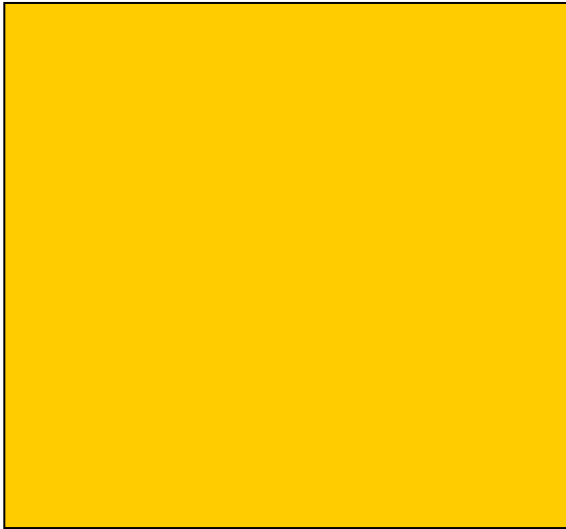


This Master Plan has benefited from, and is impacted by, a number of other plans that have been developed and adopted in recent years. Some of the most significant planning documents are highlighted below.

- Existing Desert Hot Springs General Plan.
- Draft Desert Hot Springs General Plan Update.
- 2008 Parks and Recreation Assessment Report by Dick Guthrie.
- Cabot's Pueblo Museum Site Master Plan and Miracle Hill Master Plan.
- Desert Hot Springs Community Health and Wellness Center Plan.
- The Vortex Specific Plan.
- Local and regional trails maps.
- Palm Springs Unified School District Schools Master Plan.

This Master Plan will guide decision making with regard to policy and contains an inventory and assessment of recreation programs and service offerings, operations, maintenance and capital improvements to be made over the next ten years and beyond that will enhance the quality of life in Desert Hot Springs.

CHAPTER 2



Community Profile & Demographics Introduction

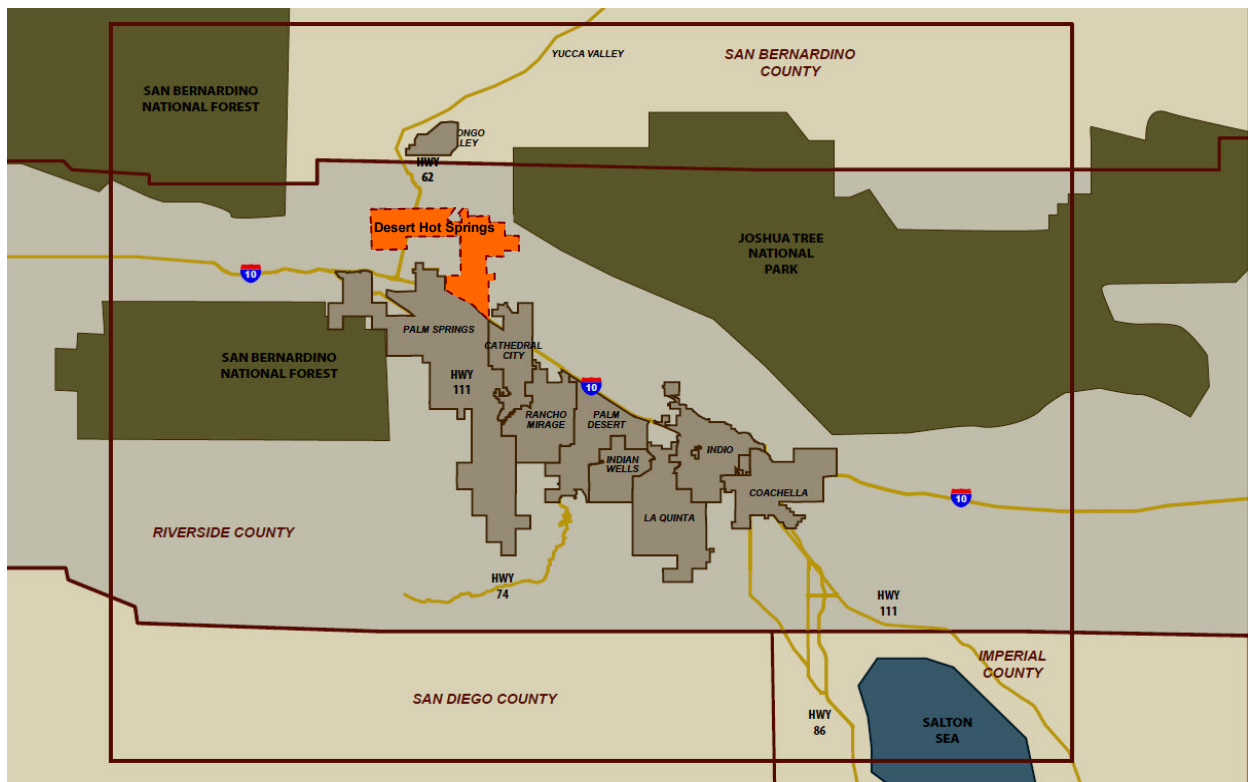
Community Profile & Demographics

2.1 INTRODUCTION

THIS CHAPTER PROVIDES AN overview of the planning context of Desert Hot Springs to lay a foundation for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. It describes the City's locale, the population it serves, and what key demographic, social and political issues affect the delivery of park and recreation services.

2.2 REGIONAL CONTEXT

Desert Hot Springs is located in the County of Riverside within the northern Coachella Valley geographic region. The Coachella Valley extends approximately 45 miles from the San Bernardino Mountains in the north to the Salton Sea in the southeast. The region supports a population of more than 600,000 people. It is surrounded on the east, north and west sides by mountain ranges, through which the San Andreas Fault is located in the southeast corner. The San Andreas Fault lines are responsible for the geologic phenomena of earthquakes and hot water springs in the City. Summers in Desert Hot Springs are hot, with maximum daily temperatures averaging 115, whereas winter temperatures range from a comfortable 70 to 80 degrees (Western Regional Climate Center, Palm Springs Station). Minimal rainfall occurs throughout the year at an average of five inches.



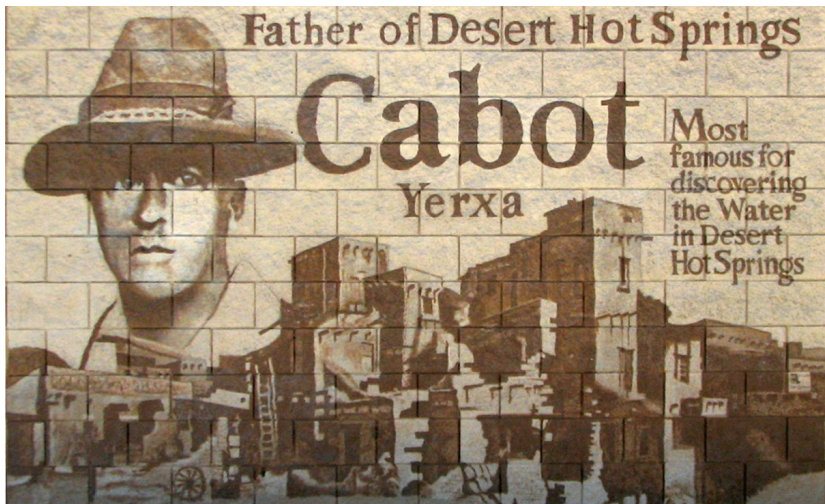
Vicinity Map

2.3 HISTORY

In 1913 the first homesteader in the area was Cabot Yerxa, who discovered a vast aquifer 100 feet below the earth's surface on what is now referred to as Miracle Hill. The aquifer, filled with water naturally heated to 180 degrees, was a discovery that continues to draw visitors to come and explore the area. The San Andreas Fault bisects Miracle Hill, with one side containing cold water and the other containing natural hot water. During his homesteading years, Yerxa built a large adobe structure, over the span of 20 years, until his death in 1965. The site is now one of the oldest adobe structures in Riverside County. It currently houses Cabot's Pueblo Museum, designated a state historical site and was also listed in the fall of 2011 on the National Register of Historic Places. Cabot's Trading Post and Gallery opened in February 2008.

Desert Hot Springs was founded by L. W. Coffee on July 12, 1941. The original town site was centered at the intersection of Palm Drive and Pierson Boulevard and was only one square mile at the time. Desert Hot Springs became a tourist destination in the 1940's because of its small spa hotels and seclusion from the urban lifestyle. Also during that time, real estate investors arrived and bought land for speculation, and thousands of lots and streets were laid out over a six square mile area. Many homes were bought by retirees, initiating what would grow to be a significant population of senior residents. The area incorporated as a city in 1963, with a total population of 1,000.

Desert Hot Springs experienced periods of significant growth in the 1980's and 1990's when lots were filled with new houses, duplexes and apartments. The City's population doubled in the 1980's and increased by 5,000 in the 2000 census. Currently, the City has a total area of 29.3 square miles, including the most recent annexation of 4,000 acres of land extending its city boundary south to the I-10 freeway between North Indian Canyon Drive to the west and Palm Drive to the east.



Mural of Cabot Yerxa in Wardman Park

Desert Hot Springs is especially unique in that it sits atop one of the finest odorless natural hot mineral water aquifers in America. Guests at various hotels and spas can enjoy the soothing, naturally occurring hot mineral water that is pumped up from the depths of the earth. Desert Hot Springs is a popular destination for celebrities and visitors from all over the world who seek the comfort and benefits of the natural mineral spas. The City also boasts pure and delicious award-winning drinking water.



Entrance to Joshua Tree National Park, just minutes from Desert Hot Springs

Mineral springs are not the only natural resource in Desert Hot Springs. Hiking, camping and a host of other recreational activities can be sought at Mt. San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains to the south, Joshua Tree National Park to the east, and San Bernardino National Forest to the northwest. Joshua Tree National Park is the closest of these open space treasures, and can be accessed directly from trails within the City. The City of Desert Hot Springs is comprised of its own unique desert ecosystem and scenic mountain vistas and is currently in the process of adopting the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan to protect these valuable resources. The City's Vision Statement recognizes the importance of all its resources stating:

“The City of Desert Hot Springs is committed to becoming a world class health and wellness destination based upon its famous miracle waters, unique desert ecosystem, spectacular mountain views, and natural environment.”

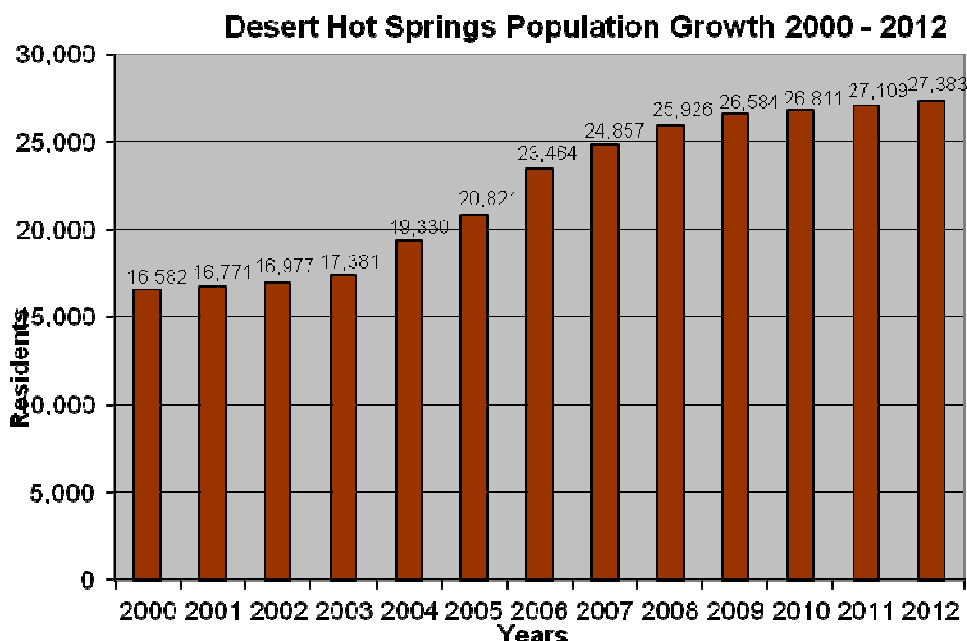
This vision is driving the City to initiate a rebranding and rebirth of its community perception to one of a “Health and Wellness” destination and center.

2.4 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Population growth is the key component of increasing demands for parks and recreation services in most areas. Additionally, demographic characteristics can influence recreational interests and levels of participation. Ethnicity, education and income can all play a role in recreation needs.

Demography

As of 2012, according to the California Department of Finance (DOF), the population of Desert Hot Springs was 27,383. This is a 65% increase from 2000 DOF statistics, a time of major growth for the City. As shown in the DOF figures below, the majority of the population in 2010 was Hispanic (52.6%), followed by a significant White population (34.4%). Other major populations in the community are Black (7.5%), other non-Hispanic (2.1%), and Asian (2.3%). The Hispanic populations have risen greatly since the year 2000 and are predicted to rise to 61% in the very near future. Within the Hispanic populations are residents representing many countries including Mexico and a wide variety of countries from Central and South America.



The growth among Asian and Pacific Islander populations will also be a factor in the rising cultural diversity of the area. Cultural factors in Desert Hot Springs present both challenges and opportunities for the City. Communication with the public, which presents its own challenges, requires more creativity when attempting to inform diverse audiences whose first language may not be English. Identifying and overcoming these barriers will help when seeking to provide for the unique recreation interests of a diverse population.

Category (2012)	Desert Hot Springs	Riverside County	DHS relative to Riverside County
Population	27,383	2,088,322	1.30%
Median Age (Yrs)	30.0	31.8	-1.8
White (Non-Hispanic)	47.00%	43.00%	8.6%
Asian (Non-Hispanic)	2.20%	5.10%	0.43%
Black (Non-Hispanic)	5.80%	5.80%	1.30%
American Indian	0.50%	0.50%	1.40%
All Other Non-Hispanic	2.90%	3.40%	1.10%
Hispanic	45.00%	42.20%	1.50%
Number of Households	9,085	671,036	1.40%
Number of Housing Units	10,907	773,331	1.40%
Home Ownership Rate	47.50%	70.20%	0.90%
Average Household Size	2.9	3.1	-0.3
Median Family Income (\$)	34,569	60,180	-25,611
Median Existing Home Price (\$)	120,000	260,000	-140,000
Number of Jobs	3,461	653,793	0.50%

Since 2010, the population has remained fairly constant, primarily due to the stagnant housing and jobs market for the past two years. The next several years could see a modest population growth in Desert Hot Springs, because of the available land for development and affordability of the area. As the economy picks up, both infill housing and new planned development could increase. The 2030 population has been predicted to reach 35,000 to 40,000. With future annexation and development, there is the potential for Desert Hot Springs to become one of the largest cities in the Coachella Valley. For planning purposes to establish and compare park standards, the Master Plan uses a 2010 population estimate of 26,000 and a 2020 population of 31,000.

The senior population is projected to grow slightly in the next several years, along with the general population growth in the City. The senior population should continue to be an influence in planning for the future, as Desert Hot Springs is a desirable and affordable place to retire, as more projects for age 55 and older communities are constructed. Desert Hot Springs could also continue to attract families. In 2012, the majority of households contained children between the ages of 5-20 and adults ages 35-55. Elementary school enrollment has risen over the past 12 years, in accordance with the City's rising population, with a documented increase of 56.4% from 2000-2012 (Department of Finance 2012). Future schools will be needed in the future to accommodate the rapidly expanding youth population. Infill projects, single-family and multiple-family development projects will continue to make the families with children the dominant population group in Desert Hot Springs.

Education

According to the 2012 U.S. Census, the high school graduation rate for residents of Desert Hot Springs was 72.6%. That number is comparatively lower than the state average of 80.7%. The percent of people earning a bachelor's degrees or higher was 12.7%, also lower than the state average of 30.1%. Desert Hot Springs has five elementary schools plus, one currently under construction, two middle schools, and two high schools. All of these schools are operated by the Palm Springs Unified School District.

Elementary Schools:

- Bubbling Wells
- Edward L. Wenzlaff
- Cabot Yerxa
- Julius Corsini
- Two Bunch Palms
- Bella Vista (under construction)

Middle Schools:

- Desert Springs
- Painted Hills

High Schools:

- Desert Hot Springs
- Desert Hot Springs Alternative Center

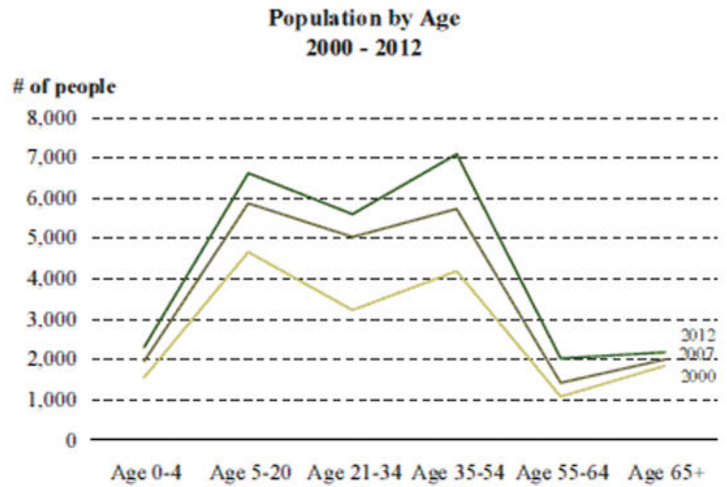
Income and Economy

The median household income of Desert Hot Springs residents as reported in the 2012 US Census during was \$34,569. That number was comparatively lower than the state average of \$60,883. Correspondingly, 24.9% of individuals were below the poverty level, which was significantly more than the state average of 13.7%. Trends show that higher income families tend to participate more frequently in leisure activities. On the other hand, families in lower income communities spend a greater number of hours at work leaving less time for leisure pursuits. They also rely more heavily on more affordable, community-based programs and facilities. Especially during difficult economic times, a community's average annual income can be considered a factor in predicting residents' willingness to pay for park and recreation services and improvements.

Summary of Demographic Planning Issues

A summary of the demographic issues facing Desert Hot Springs in delivering a successful park and recreation system include:

- How to respond to the cultural diversity in Desert Hot Springs with new programs and services, but still offer the activities that are popular and liked by residents?

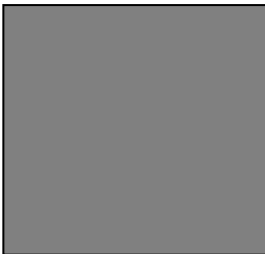
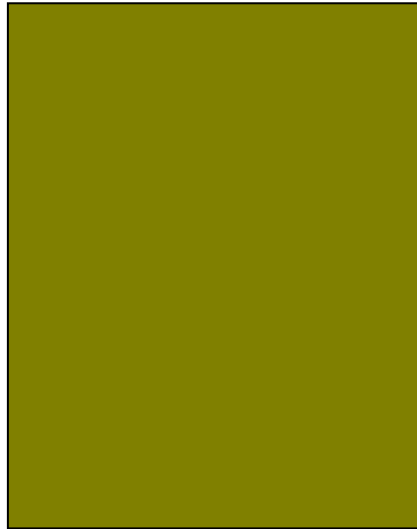
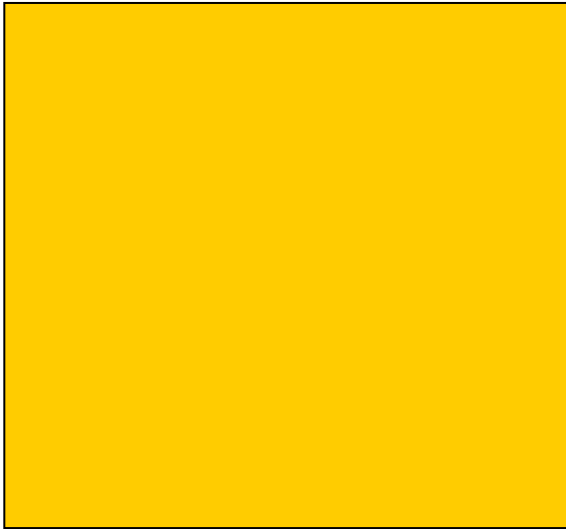


Age Distribution of Desert Hot Springs Population

- How to make programs and activities financially accessible in a city with above average number of residents below the state poverty line?
- How to address the program and service needs of an aging population?
- How to schedule programs and activities that are convenient to residents who commute and work outside the City?
- How to coordinate residents' use of regional programs and services offered by other agencies to reduce the need for expansion of facilities and programs that the City of Desert Hot Springs may not be able to afford and does not need to duplicate?

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan analyzes these issues and provides guidelines and recommendations to respond to these planning issues.

CHAPTER 3



Existing Conditions – Parks & Recreation Facilities

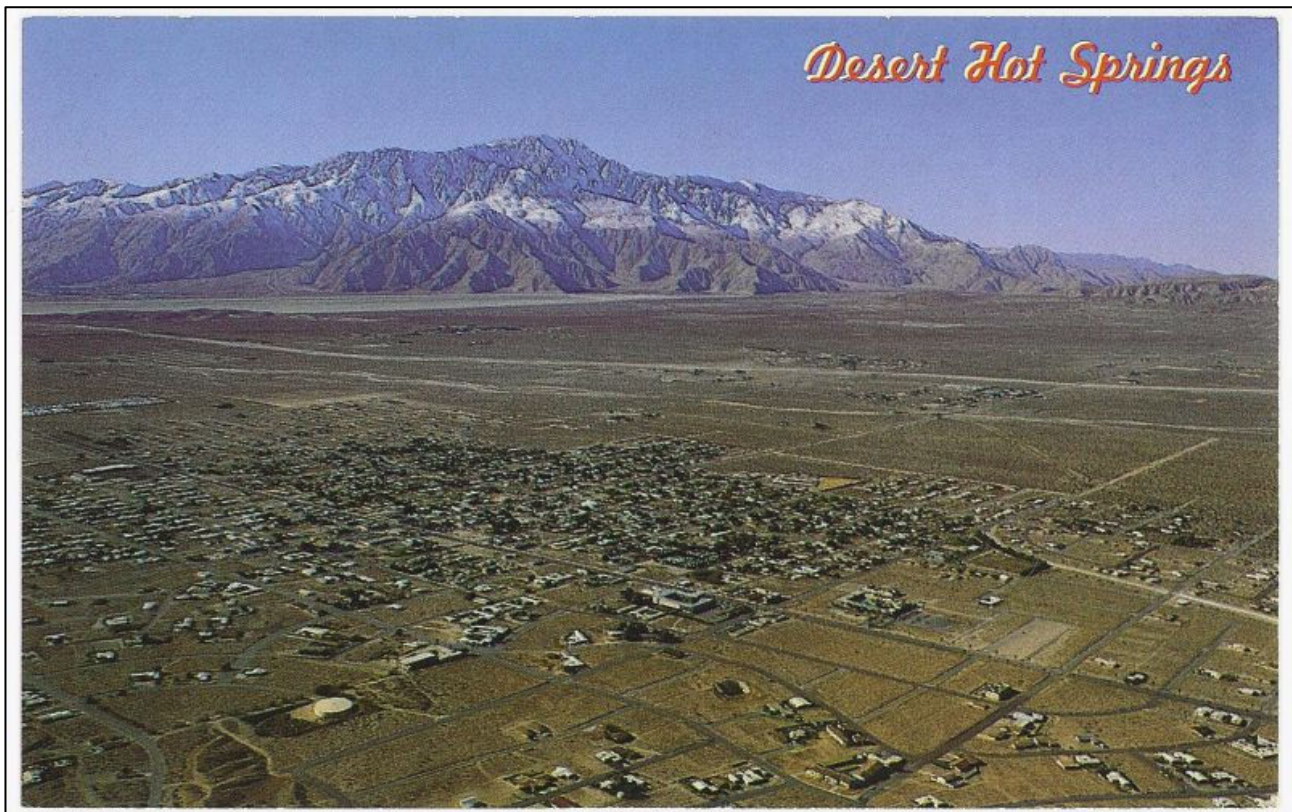
Existing Conditions – Parks & Recreation Facilities

3.1 INTRODUCTION

THE PURPOSE OF THIS CHAPTER is to evaluate the existing park facilities in Desert Hot Springs and determine to what degree those park facilities are serving the needs of the community. In addition, this chapter will serve as a reference for determining the type of amenities required to serve the population as it grows. To illustrate this information, we have included definitions of park classifications, provided a comparison of facilities in comparable cities and updated the City's current inventory of parks and facilities.

3.2 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The City of Desert Hot Springs operates seven parks, a skate park, two community centers, a Community Health & Wellness Center/Boys & Girls Club, Senior Center and museum. Desert Hot Springs does not have a dedicated Parks and Recreation component within its government structure. Maintenance on park facilities is carried out by the Public Works Department.



3.3 OVERVIEW OF PARK CONDITIONS

As part of the planning process, parks and facilities are evaluated to assess the general condition of the parks, infrastructure, equipment, amenities and furnishings. The observation of the parks and recreation facilities takes into account the general attractiveness, usability, accessibility, standards, circulation, maintenance, shelter and shade provided and whether the facility is meeting the needs of area residents. It should be noted that these evaluations are not a substitute for a thorough infrastructure or architectural examination, nor do they take the place of a formal ADA examination.

3.4 PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

A park classification system provides a way to plan for park, recreation and open space needs in the future. These park categories are defined in the next several pages.



Mini Parks

Typically two (2) acres or less in size, mini parks or pocket parks are small parcels that provide limited recreation opportunities. These are small outdoor spaces, sometimes no more than ¼ of an acre, most often located in an urban area that is surrounded by commercial uses or houses on small lots, with no places for people to gather, relax, or to enjoy the outdoors. These sites can include open areas, shade trees, low-maintenance plantings, children's play areas, pathways and picnic tables. Mini parks do not usually feature permanent restrooms or other high maintenance amenities, unless there are homeowner associations or other groups willing to provide more frequent services and maintenance of such facilities.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks provide nearby residents with access to basic recreation opportunities. Typically three (3) to nine (9) acres in size, these parks provide easy access, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists, to close-to-home park and recreation facilities, such as playgrounds, sports fields courts, as well as walking paths and picnic areas. Amenities and facilities should support local use. Neighborhood parks can be developed in conjunction with elementary schools, libraries or other

complementary, compatible public facilities when opportunities are available. These sites help enhance neighborhood identity, preserve or provide open space, and improve the quality of life of nearby residents.



TABLE 3-3: GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNITY PARKS

Community: 10-40 acres

Minimum Facilities & Rec. Number

- Tot Lot/Playground 1
- Informal/Open Space¹ 1
- Open Picnic Tables 12
- Picnic Shelters² 4
- Barbecues 16
- Basketball courts 2
- Lighted Soccer Fields (practice and game)³ 2
- Lighted Tennis Courts 2
- Volleyball 2

Support Facilities

- Public Restrooms
- Trash Receptacles
- Maintenance Building
- Concession Building (3,000 to 5,000 s. f.)
- On-site parking for 150 – 200 cars

Optional Facilities

- Lighted Baseball Fields³
- Lighted Softball Fields³
- Performing Arts Center
- Senior Center
- Gymnasium
- Community Center
- Swimming Pool or Aquatics Complex
- Skate Park
- Horseshoes or Shuffleboard
- Jogging/Exercise Course
- Historical and/or Cultural Facilities
- Teen/Multipurpose Center
- Dog Park

Notes:

¹ All Informal/Open Space areas should have a maximum 2% gradient.

² Picnic shelters for group-type structures should accommodate six to ten picnic tables beneath the shelter.

³ Practice fields can be accommodated in the informal/open space area(s)

Community Parks

Community parks are larger parks (10-40 acres) and focus on serving the active and passive recreational needs of the surrounding community. Typically, community parks accommodate large group activities and offer a wide variety of facilities such as athletic complexes, aquatic facilities, activity centers, gymnasiums, children’s playground equipment, walking paths, natural areas, event space and picnic areas. Community parks should have restrooms in at least one part of the park site. The site should allow for organized group activities and offer other recreational opportunities. The site should be easily accessible by motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists. Community parks may be developed in conjunction with a junior high or high school or other compatible public facilities when opportunities are available.

Regional Parks

Regional parks are large (200 acres or greater), multi-use parks that can include a wide variety of facilities. These parks can be very large versions of community parks that provide sports fields, specialized facilities (amphitheatre) for performance or large group gatherings, or unique facilities that are not appropriate for local parks due to the large number of people using them. Other types of regional parks are themed around a particular facility, historical reference or natural resource that attracts a high level of interest, including areas that preserve significant environmental features. This classification is desirable if the site is contiguous to or encompasses unique natural features. The primary distinction of a regional park is that it draws visitors from a very large geographic area due to the uniqueness of the facilities, setting or theme within the region. Regional parks are intended to serve the population of an entire County.

Regional Recreation Areas

Regional recreation areas provide access to significant ecological, cultural, or historical features or unique facilities that attract visitors from throughout the entire region (including incorporated and unincorporated areas). Regional recreation areas may be composed of one large site or several sites located in proximity that together provide a significant recreation area for the region. These parks may include areas of significant natural resources, as well as more developed activity sites. Regional recreation areas may be supported by a wide variety of specialized facilities such as indoor recreation centers, large group picnic areas, special event facilities/festival space, and campgrounds.

TABLE 3-4: GUIDELINES FOR NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Neighborhood: 3-9 acres

Minimum Rec. Facilities

- Tot Lot/Playground
- Informal/Open Space¹
- Open Picnic Tables
- Picnic Shelters²
- Barbecues
- Basketball
- Volleyball
- Paved Walkways
- Trash Receptacles

Support Facilities

- Public Restrooms
- Tennis Courts (fenced)
- Sand Volleyball
- Jogging Path
- Water Spray Pool
- Softball: Practice Only³
- Baseball: Practice Only³
- On-site parking for 15-20 cars

Notes:

¹ All Informal/Open Space areas should have a maximum 2% gradient.

² Picnic shelters for group-type structures should accommodate six to ten picnic tables beneath the shelter.

³ Practice fields can be accommodated in the informal/open space area(s)

Special Use Facilities

Special use areas are sites that are occupied by a stand-alone specialized facility or fulfill a particular purpose. Typical special use sites include carnivals, fairs, sport field complexes or community centers. These facilities can serve either a local or a regional function, depending on the type of activity and the availability of that activity in other locations.

Linear Parks

Linear parks are developed landscaped areas and other natural lands that follow linear corridors such as rivers, creeks, washes, transportation rights-of-way, utility corridors (i.e., power lines), and other elongated features. This type of park usually contains soft or hard surfaced trails, landscaped areas, signage, viewpoints, and seating areas. These trail corridors may support non-motorized transportation, recreation, exercise, and community access by connecting significant destinations within the City.

Greenspace/Open Space

Greenspace includes natural or landscaped open space within the City to contrast with the built environment. The size and shape of greenspaces will vary depending on function and use. Where appropriate, these parks may support outdoor recreation, such as bicycle and pedestrian trail-related opportunities, bird and wildlife viewing, environmental interpretation and education, and small-scale picnicking. These sites also may function as green oases that are primarily intended for enjoying nature. However, some greenspaces may not have public access nor provide any recreational value.

3.5 PARK STANDARDS

Along with designating classifications for parks, national standards suggest the types of amenities and furnishings that should be provided for visitors in each type of park. Table 3-3 on the previous page and Table 3-4 delineate what activities and recreation facilities ought to be found in Mini, Neighborhood and Community parks.

Level of Service

One way of measuring the amount of park land provided in a community is by calculating the level of service (LOS). Park level of service is a ratio of existing park acreage to the City's current population. This ratio is expressed in terms of acres per 1,000 residents. Together for all park types, Desert Hot Springs provides a level of service of less than one acre per 1,000 residents (27.29 total acres of parkland divided by 27,383 population equals 0.99 acres per 1,000 residents). The map on the following page shows the coverage area of existing parks in the City.

3.6 EXISTING PARK INVENTORY AND CONDITIONS

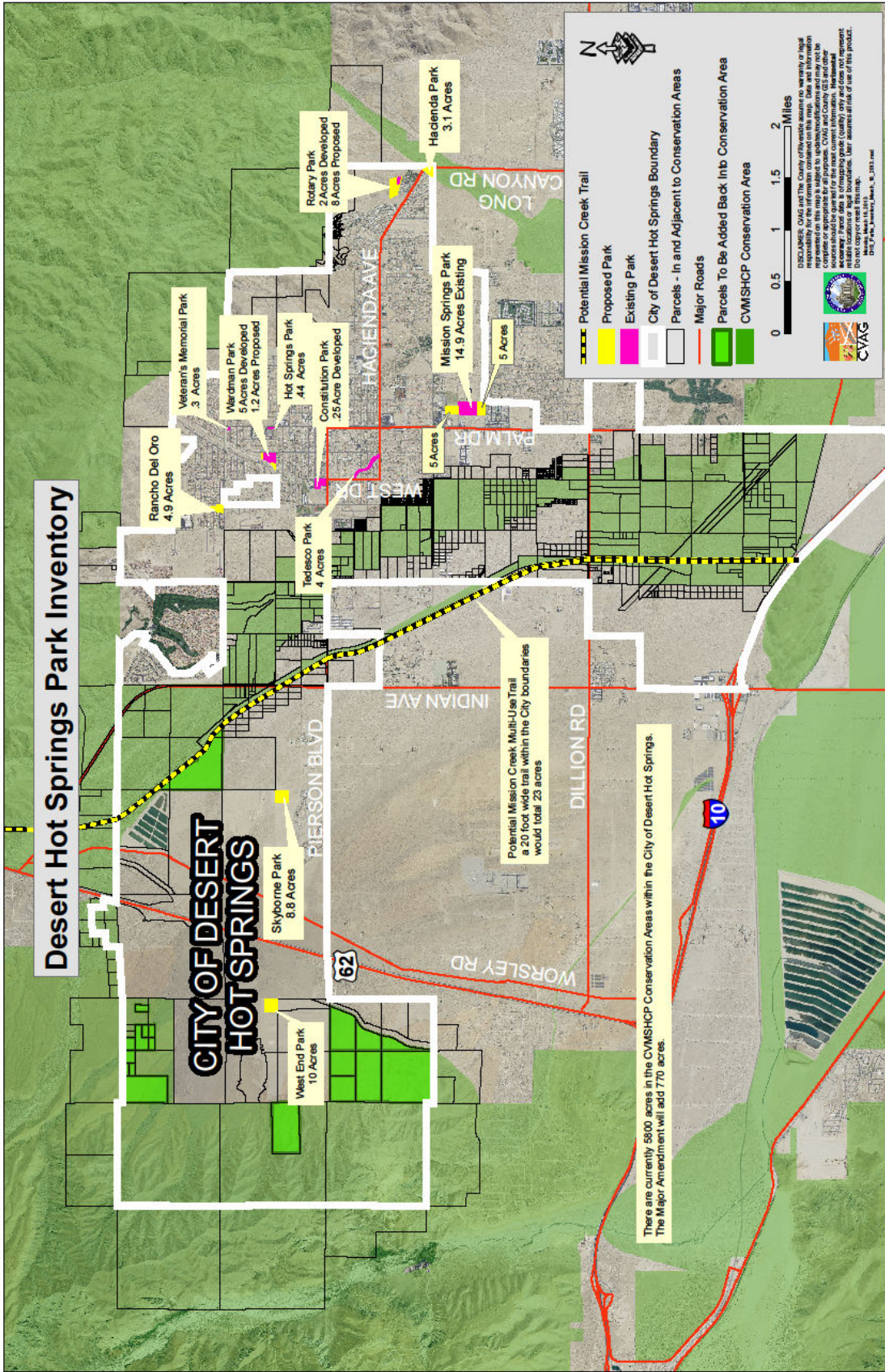
In the Spring of 2012, an inventory of each park was conducted to observe conditions. The following tables and map identify each park or facility visited and the conclusions reached by the Project Team.

TABLE 3-1: EXISTING DEVELOPED AND UNDEVELOPED CITY PARKS

Mini Parks	Existing Acreage	Developed Acreage	Undeveloped Acreage	Future Development
Veteran's Memorial Park	0.30	0.30	0	No
Hot Springs Park	0.44	0.44	0	No
Constitution Park	0.25	0.25	0	No
Fran Hodge Skate Park	0.40	0.40	0	No
Mini Parks Subtotal	1.39	1.39	0	
Neighborhood Parks				
Guy J. Tedesco Park	4.0	4.0	0	No
Wardman Park	6.2	5.0	1.2	Yes
Rotary Park (formerly Coyote Park)	10.0	2.0	8.0	Yes
Hacienda Park	3.1	0	3.1	Yes
West End Park	10.0	0	10.0	Yes
Skyborne Park	8.8	0	8.8	Yes
Rancho del Oro Park	4.9	0	4.9	Yes
Neighborhood Parks Subtotal	47.0	11.00	36.0	
Community Parks				
Mission Springs Park (owned by MSWD)	14.9	14.9	0	Yes
Mission Springs Park Expansion-North	5.0	0	5.0	Yes
Mission Springs Park Expansion-South	5.0	0	5.0	Yes
Community Parks Subtotal	24.9	14.9	10.0	
All Parks Subtotal	73.29	27.29	46.0	
Special Use				
Carl May Community Center	3.0	3.0	0	Yes
Henry V. Lozano Community Center	0.1	0.1	0	No
Cabot's Pueblo Museum	5.0	1.0	4.0	Yes
Community Health & Wellness Center	6.36	6.36	0	No
Special Use Subtotal	14.46	10.46	4.0	

TABLE 3-2: EXISTING CITY FACILITIES

Facilities	Facility Square Feet	Meeting Rooms	Future Development
Henry V. Lozano Community Center	3,935	2	N/A
Desert Hot Springs Senior Center	8,800	2	N/A
Carl May Community Center	3,500	1	N/A
Desert Hot Springs Library	3,608	N/A	N/A
Comm. Health & Wellness Center	32,200	3	N/A
Totals	52,043	8	N/A



VETERAN'S MEMORIAL PARK
10101 Palm Drive

Size

0.30 acres

Classification

Mini Park

Existing Amenities

- Plaza
- Memorial monument
- Seating
- Open Green Space
- Picnic Tables (ADA)

Planned Improvements

None.

Deficiencies

None.

Description

Veteran's Memorial Park serves as a neighborhood mini park for residents of the City. The park is dedicated to honoring all veterans of the United States military. The park has passive turf areas and picnic tables for family use and quiet seating areas for observance and reflection. Every year, the Community and Cultural Affairs Commission hold special events at the park for Veteran's Day and Memorial Day. The surrounding views from the park are impressive.



HOT SPRINGS PARK
10-901 Palm Drive

Size

0.44 acres

Classification

Mini Park

Existing Amenities

- Plaza
- Open Green Space
- Walking Trail
- Fountain
- Seating

Planned Improvements

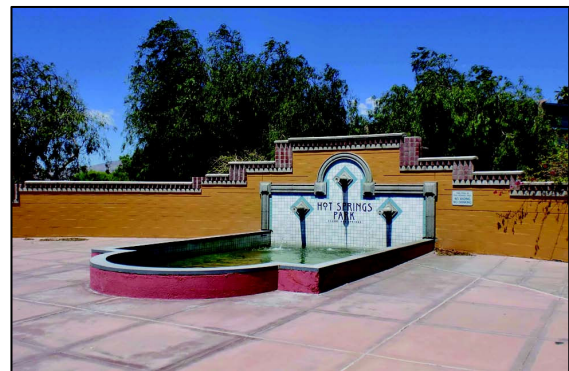
None.

Deficiencies

Lacking maintenance in terms of painting and minor repairs to the fountains.

Description

Hot Springs Park is a mini-park located at the northwest corner of Palm Drive and 8th Street. It was developed as an interpretative park denoting the hot mineral springs that are found in the City of Desert Hot Springs. There are two fountains, a walking trail, landscaping, and a passive turf area.



CONSTITUTION PARK
11-777 West Drive

Size

0.25 acres

Classification

Mini Park

Existing Amenities

- Open space
- Seating
- Public Art
- Shade trees

Planned Improvements

None.

Deficiencies

None.

Description

This plaza-like space connects the Carl May Community Center and the Desert Hot Springs Library to the Desert Hot Springs Senior Center. There are pedestrian paths, shade trees and a donated public art piece that provide a pleasant environment for the area.



GUY J. TEDESCO PARK
12-800 West Arroyo Drive

Size

4.0 acres

Classification

Neighborhood Park

Existing Amenities

- 2 Basketball Courts
- BMX Park
- Waterspray Area
- Shaded, ADA children's play areas (ages 2-5 & 5-12)
- Open Green Space
- Walking Trail
- Plaza
- Bike Racks
- BBQ's
- Picnic Tables (ADA)
- Parking
- Restrooms
- Community Bldg.
- Community Safety Bldg.
- Amphitheater
- Group Picnic Shelter
- Trash Enclosure
- Security Lighting
- Security Cameras
- Storage/Equipment Bldg.

Planned Improvements

None.

Deficiencies

Shade over play equipment has been vandalized; landscape fabric is exposed in planting areas; bathrooms have been vandalized; pedestrian and auto circulation needs improvement.

Description

Guy J. Tedesco Park (formerly Arroyo Park) is a linear park built along an arroyo which serves as a neighborhood park for the southwestern portion of the city. The BMX facility is a main attraction for youth. The community center hosts various meetings and City activities. There is a water spray area and basketball courts to serve both youth and young adults, and open turf areas for family activities and special events. A small amphitheater provides a venue for outdoor classes, local entertainment and group activities for community organizations. Group picnic areas are available for birthday parties, family outings and community events. A concrete path meanders through the park for walking and exercise.



WARDMAN PARK
66150 8th Street

Size

6.2 acres

Classification

Neighborhood Park – Little League & Softball

Existing Amenities

- Lighted Little League Baseball Fields
- Scoreboard
- Ball Division Field
- 2 Tennis Courts
- Basketball Courts
- ADA Children’s Play Area (ages 2-5 & 5-12)
- Open Greenspace
- Plaza
- BBQ’s
- Bike Racks
- Picnic Tables (ADA)
- Restrooms
- Concession Stand
- Community Bldg.
- Storage/Equipment Bldg.
- Group Picnic Shelter
- Trash Enclosure
- Parking



Planned Improvements

Batting cage; additional parking; and re-use of the existing buildings. No plans are set for the re-use of the buildings but meetings are taking place to consider a variety of uses.

Deficiencies

Park equipment needs updating; there is no Senior Division Field or Major Softball Division Field due to lack of land availability; inadequate lighting.

Description

Wardman Park serves neighborhood park uses for the northwest section of the city. There are tennis courts, basketball courts, children’s play equipment, picnic areas with BBQ’s and turf areas for informal play. Wardman Park is the home of Desert Hot Springs Little League and Girls Softball. There are both major and minor division fields for Little League, complete with a scoreboard and concession stand. Parking is located between the park area and the little league fields and serves both uses.



The swimming pool and Boys & Girls Club was located at this park but has been relocated to the new Community Health & Wellness Center/Boys & Girls Club on Cholla Drive.

ROTARY PARK (formerly Coyote Park)
13239 Don English Way

Size

10 acres (approximately 2 acres undeveloped)

Classification

Neighborhood Park

Existing Amenities

- Drinking fountains
- Dog Waste Stations
- Open Green Space
- Trail Connections/Access



Planned Improvements

Possible future improvements include an outdoor amphitheatre, parking, restrooms, concessions for small community venues, trails leading to the mountains to the north.

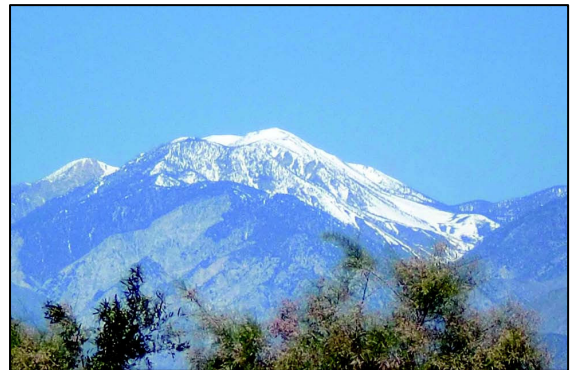


Deficiencies

No seating to observe the beautiful views; parking is limited to a cul-de-sac adjacent to the park. Though trails are accessible from the park, no trail markers or signs direct hikers.

Description

Rotary Park (formerly Coyote Park) was named in honor of Jack Webb, a longtime Rotary Club member. The park is located on the northeast side of Desert Hot Springs just north of Julius Corsini Elementary School. Only a three acre portion of the park is currently developed with turf and trees. The park provides access to trails into the Miracle Hill area which will eventually connect to Joshua Tree National Park. The views of the desert floor and Coachella Valley are quite spectacular as are the views of the surrounding snowcapped mountains.



**MISSION SPRINGS PARK (Owned by MSWD)
66-750 Park Lane**

Size

14.9 acres

Classification

Community Park - Soccer Park

Existing Amenities

- 6 Lighted Soccer Fields
- Football Field Overlay
- Scoreboard
- 1 Children's Play Area
- Picnic Areas
- Walking Trail
- Open Green Space
- Plaza
- BBQ's
- Bike Racks
- Picnic Tables (ADA)
- Restroom Bldg.
- Concession Bldg.
- Storage/Equipment Bldg.
- Trash Enclosure
- Parking Lot
- Security Lighting
- Security Cameras

Planned Improvements

Future improvements include replacing the playground equipment, acquiring adjacent land and expanding the park with more sports and community park uses.

Deficiencies

Graffiti is present on concession building; evidence of some vandalism on play equipment; no shaded areas for seating or picnicking; and, inadequate lighting.

Description

Mission Springs Soccer Park is located just east of Palm Drive off of Park Lane and is bordered by the MSWD's Wastewater Treatment Plant on the east and a hotel on the west. This park serves as the major soccer sports complex for AYSO and private soccer clubs but also contains community park amenities, including a children's playground, a perimeter walking trail, picnic facilities, a concession building, rest rooms, parking lot, and six perimeter lighted soccer fields that can be configured different ways to accommodate various soccer age groups. Junior All-American Football also uses the park for its practices with a football field overlay on the soccer fields.



CARL MAY COMMUNITY CENTER

11-777 West Drive

Size

3,500 sq. ft.

Classification

Special Use – City Council Chambers

Existing Amenities

- City Council Chambers
- Plaza
- Parking
- Restrooms
- Public Meeting Rooms
- Kitchen
- Security camera
- Storage



Planned Improvements

None.

Deficiencies

The building was recently renovated for the City Council Chambers, the building is used for a wide variety of community meetings; however, the building is inadequate to accommodate large gatherings.

Description

The Carl May Community Center contains the City Council Chambers, along with community meeting space, a full kitchen and restrooms. The community center is approximately 3,500 square feet in size and plays host to numerous meetings and city activities.

HENRY V. LOZANO COMMUNITY CENTER
12-800 West Arroyo Drive

Size

3,935 sq. ft.

Classification

Special Use - Public Building

Existing Amenities

- Plaza
- Parking
- Restrooms
- Community Meeting Rooms
- Kitchen
- Police Substation
- Security Cameras



Planned Improvements

None.

Deficiencies

None.

Description

The community center is located within Guy J. Tedesco Park. The facility was recently renovated to provide community meeting rooms, restrooms, and a full kitchen. The building also houses a Police Substation.

CABOT'S PUEBLO MUSEUM
66-616 Desert View Avenue

Size
5.0 acres

Classification
Special Use – Cabot's Pueblo Museum and Art Gallery

Existing Amenities

- Walking Trail
- Historic Adobe Home
- Trading Post & Gallery
- Picnic Tables (ADA)
- Restroom
- Gift Shop Building
- Interpretive Center
- Storage/Maintenance
- Equipment Bldg.
- Trash Enclosure
- Parking (unpaved)
- Security Lighting
- Security Cameras

Planned Improvements

A Master Plan has been prepared illustrating the expansion and development of the area surrounding Cabot's Museum. Planned amenities include a Visitor's Center, Museum, Cabot's Academy, Spa, small amphitheater, parking, trailheads to Joshua Tree National Park, a public park, and support facilities.

Deficiencies
None.

Description

Cabot's Pueblo Museum is a unique Hopi inspired Pueblo hand-made by Cabot Yerxa over 70 years ago. This multi-level building includes 35 rooms, 150 windows and 65 doors, all crafted from found materials. The museum houses Cabot's collection of Native American pottery, early 20th century photographs and artifacts from his Alaskan adventures. The museum grounds, including a picnic area, are beautifully landscaped with native plants and home to many rustic period items – early 1900's tools, machinery and house goods. The museum also houses a Trading Post and Art Gallery and the famed sculpture "Waokiye", a 43 foot tall Indian monument carved from a 750 year old Sequoia Redwood by Peter "Wolf" Toth, as part of the "Trail of Whispering Giants". Guided tours of this historic landmark are conducted daily. The museum is available year-round for single tours, group tours and special events.



DESERT HOT SPRINGS COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLNESS CENTER 11750 Cholla Drive

Size

6.36 Acres

Classification

Special Use - Community Building

Existing Amenities

- Boys & Girls Club
- Teen Center and Clinic
- Offices
- Community rooms
- Gymnasium
- Nutrition Center
- Dental Clinic
- Cardio Rehabilitation & Fitness Center
- John Furbee Aquatic Center
- Splash pad
- Playground equipment
- Restrooms/Locker Rooms
- Security cameras

Planned Improvements

None.

Deficiencies

None.

Description

The Community Health & Wellness Center is a \$17 million, 32,200 square foot, state-of-the-art facility that officially opened in January 2013. The facility houses the Boys & Girls Club that includes after school programs for youth and teens, a teen center and clinic, offices, gymnasium, nutrition counseling, dental clinic, a fitness center, an aquatic center, playground equipment, restrooms, locker rooms, and security cameras. The facility offers supervised after school programs to the youth to enable them to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens. The aquatic center offers a competition venue for Desert Hot Springs High School and other aquatic opportunities for health & wellness. The clinic provides comprehensive healthcare services to the greater Desert Hot Springs community.



DESERT HOT SPRINGS SENIOR CENTER
11-777 West Drive

Size

8,800 sq. ft.

Classification

Special Use – Senior Center

Existing Amenities

- Large dining room
- Classrooms
- Kitchen
- Parking
- Offices
- Large big-screen TV
- Restrooms
- Security cameras

Planned Improvements

Plans are being considered to relocate the Senior Center into a more modern facility.



Deficiencies

Although there have been recent renovations to update the kitchen in this facility, the building needs updating to bring it to modern standards and make it more inviting and useable.

Description

The Senior Center is a vital resource for adult recreational activity. In this facility, seniors engage in a wide variety of activities including exercise, board games, singing, dancing and cooking.

FRANK HODGE SKATE PARK
11-777 West Drive

Size

17,760 sq. ft.

Classification

Special Use - Skate Park

Existing Amenities

- Skate Park Features
- Seating
- Bike Racks
- Shade structure
- Landscaped area
- Security cameras

Planned Improvements

None.

Deficiencies

While the skate park provides a recreational benefit to the community, its current location is incompatible with the other uses nearby such as the Carl May Community Center, Senior Center, Library, Fire Station, Police Station and City Hall.

Description

The skate park is constructed of concrete and is heavily used by youth and young adults. It provides a variety of recreational challenges to the skill level of any skater with such obstacles as sloping ramps, rails, platforms and steps.



Desert Hot Springs Public Library
11-691 West Drive

Size

3,608 sq. ft.

Classification

Special Use - Library

Existing Amenities

- Security camera
- Plaza

Planned Improvements

None.



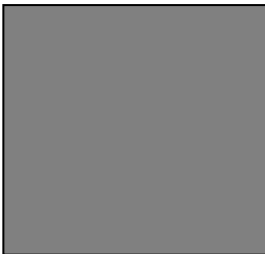
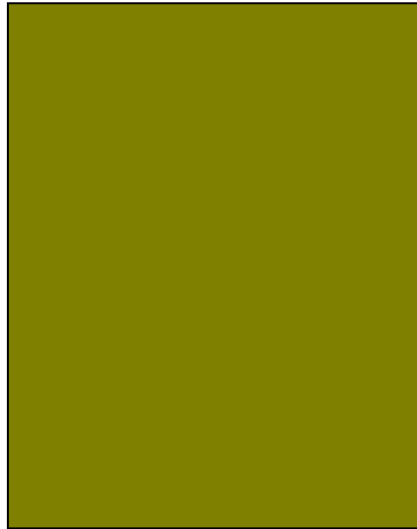
Deficiencies

The building is inadequate in size for a community of 27,373 people and needs to be expanded and updated to fit more modern standards. The City is currently evaluating the construction of a new library on City owned just south of the property where the Community Health & Wellness Center is located. A new location to accommodate a larger facility would be ideal where the existing building can be re-used for other smaller community activities.

Description

The Library holds approximately 33,000 volumes of various media.

CHAPTER 4



Program Inventory & Analysis

Program Inventory & Analysis

4.1 INTRODUCTION

DESERT HOT SPRINGS RESIDENTS enjoy a variety of recreational activities, programs and services. The City along with various non-profit organizations and community groups offer several recreational pursuits to the community. Neighboring cities also provide regional recreation opportunities for Desert Hot Springs residents. Human and social services are available through local nonprofits along with City, County and State offices.

Facilities operated by the City include the Carl May Community Center, Desert Hot Springs Senior Center, Wardman Park Community Buildings, Community Health & Wellness Center/Boys & Girls Club and Henry V. Lozano Community Center. A wide range of cultural activities are available to the residents of Desert Hot Springs at the Cabot's Pueblo Museum and Cultural Center. The City is looking to expand its facilities through grant funding, donations and development impact fees.

Recreation programs benefit individuals, families, businesses, neighborhoods and households of all ages, income levels, cultures and abilities. Programs and services that have been developed, designed and delivered effectively can provide the following benefits:

- Unique identity and character
- Sense of belonging
- Healthy lifestyles
- Lifelong learning
- Professional growth
- Safety and security
- Youth development
- Strong family units
- Cultural enrichment
- Economic development
- Environmental stewardship
- Fun and celebration



Top: Painting faces at the Family Resource Fair.

Middle: Representative of Citizens on Patrol at Family Resources Fair.

Left: Food preparation at the Community Food Bank Wellness Event.

Photos by Bruce Montgomery

Recreation programs normally provided by public recreation agencies range from organized activities such as sports, classes, youth activities, family programming and community events, to more passive endeavors such as picnics, hiking, bicycling, running and walking. Effective recreation programs promote the constructive use of leisure time and a lifelong commitment to healthy lifestyles, personal development and a strong community.

This section summarizes the existing inventory of recreation programs and services in Desert Hot Springs; provides a program analysis based on the City's demographic profile and available facilities for delivering recreation services; and outlines key findings regarding the City's recreation delivery system based on the list of desired benefits above.

4.2 PROGRAM INVENTORY

During the community outreach effort, Desert Hot Springs residents identified the most important benefits of recreation programs and facilities that support the quality of life in Desert Hot Springs as:

- Creating opportunities that increase fitness and wellness for all residents;
- Ensuring trails and open space is increased and maintained;
- Building stronger families and sense of community;
- Promoting security and safety;
- Involving all cultures in the community; and
- Programs for all age groups.

The City of Desert Hot Springs is committed to the delivery of quality, affordable and accessible recreation programs. In general, the City sees its role as both a direct provider of recreation programs and services and a facilitator of helping Desert Hot Springs residents gain access to recreation programs offered by community based agencies and organizations.

The Desert Hot Springs City Council has established two groups to oversee, coordinate and to make recommendations to City Council regarding cultural and recreation programming in the City: the Community and Cultural Affairs Commission (CCAC) and the Parks Committee, respectively.

The CCAC consists of five members who are appointed by and serve at the discretion of the City Council. The Commissioners for 2013 are:

- George Fisher, Chair
- Dot Reed, Vice-Chair
- Brian McDaniel, Member
- Joe KcKee, Member
- Christina Garcia, Member

Regular scheduled meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at the Carl May Community Center. The CCAC functions in an advisory role to the City Council to:

- Recommend a planned approach for the delivery of community and cultural services;
- Recommend and implement programs and activities as approved by the City Council which foster mutual understanding and respect among the City's racial, religious, ethnic and nationality groups;
- Assess the public art needs of the City and make recommendations on the development, maintenance, and preservation of public art;
- Analyze community cultural program's effectiveness and needs; and
- Coordinate special events and festivals for residents and visitors.



*Lady Trojans Basketball Team in competition.
Photo by Bruce Montgomery*

The Parks Committee is charged with the responsibility of working closely with City staff, affiliate organizations and elected officials to ensure the preservation, conservation, maintenance, renovation and enjoyment of Desert Hot Springs playgrounds, ball fields, recreational facilities, community gardens, open public land and green spaces for all residents of the City.

The Parks Committee consists of members who have volunteered their time and service on behalf of the City of Desert Hot Springs. The committee members for 2013 are:

- Scott Matas, Chair
- Lorraine Becker, Member
- Erin Begley, Member
- George Fisher, Member
- Debbie Hadden, Member
- Tim Ingram, Member
- Maria Jimenez, Member
- John Martin, Member
- Joe McKee, Member
- Michael Platt, Member
- Dot Reed, Member
- Roger Rice, Member
- Ginger Ridgway, Member
- Catherine Romero, Member
- Rick Teisan, Member
- Ted Zepeda, Member



*Opening day at Mission Springs Park.
Photo by Bruce Montgomery*

Monthly meetings are held at the Henry V. Lozano Community Center at Guy J. Tedesco Park. The Committee meets the third Monday of every month at 5:00 p.m. The Committee coordinates and provides indirect support for several youth sports organizations including Desert Hot Springs American Youth Soccer Organization Region 588, Desert Hot Springs Club Soccer League, Desert Hot Springs Little League and Girls Softball, Desert Hot Springs Junior All-American Football and Cheer. The City also provides space and supports the activities of the Boys & Girls Club, which recently relocated to the new Community Health & Wellness Center on Cholla Drive. The Family YMCA of the Desert has a small presence in Desert Hot Springs schools, working with the Palm Springs Unified School District for after school programs. The YMCA currently conducts its “Y Be Fit” after-school health and fitness program at Two Bunch Palms Elementary School, Cabot Yerxa Elementary School, and Julius Corsini Elementary School. The YMCA is looking to expand into Desert Hot Springs Middle School in the future.



*Adults and children learn about wildlife at the Science Fair.
Photo by Bruce Montgomery*

The Desert Hot Springs Family Resource Center, operated by the County of Riverside Department of Public Social Services, collaborates with a number of non-profit organizations and brings together services and activities that are available to families and children in Desert Hot Springs. These include parenting skills; skills for self-sufficiency for job and career development; human services advocacy; farm worker services; child abuse prevention services; resource development and referral services; education and literacy services; and, life skills.

There are numerous world class golf courses and tennis clubs available to Desert Hot Springs resident's adjacent to the City and within the Coachella Valley. Commercial recreation facilities, including Big League Dreams, Knott's Soak City and Boomer's Family Fun Center are also located within a 15-mile radius of Desert Hot Springs.

In addition to the Cabot's Pueblo Museum and Cultural Center, located in Desert Hot Springs, there are a variety of specialty museums, art centers and performing arts centers located throughout the Coachella Valley that are within a 25-mile radius of the City. The following is a brief synopsis of each of the programming resources available to Desert Hot Springs residents and visitors, both in and around Desert Hot Springs:

Desert Hot Springs Senior Center

The Desert Hot Springs Senior Center is located at 11-777 West Drive, adjacent to the Carl May Community Center. Founded on July 3, 1979, the Senior Center serves as a gateway to the nation's aging network--connecting older adults to a vital community service that can help them stay healthy and independent. The Senior Center offers a variety of programs to serve many needs of older adults including health, fitness and wellness programs, meals, nutrition education, recreation and social programs, information and assistance, volunteer and civic engagement opportunities, financial education and assistance. The Senior Center is a designated focal point for delivering essential services--allowing older adults to access multiple services in one place.



*Family Resources Fair
Photo by Bruce Montgomery*



*The Senior Center activities.
Photo by Erin Begley*

According to the National Council on Aging, research shows that older adults who participate in senior center programs can learn to manage and delay the onset of chronic disease and experience measurable improvements in their physical, social, spiritual, emotional, mental and economic well-being. The role of the Senior Center continues to expand to have an increasing impact on structuring the quality of life of older adults.

In 2011, the City of Desert Hot Springs contracted with a non-profit organization, Family Service Association (FSA), to assume management of the Senior Center. The FSA agency provides services for Child Development, Mental Health, Senior Nutrition, Senior Specialty, Community Centers, Housing Services, Health and Wellness and Social Enterprise. FSA's vision is to make a difference in the world by strengthening families and individuals, creating strong and vibrant communities. FSA believes that *Family Strength is Community Strength*.

March 1, 2011 through March 1, 2013

Average clients served per month	Average new clients served per month
1,221	144

Client Demographics

Age		Gender		Race		Income	
66+	82%	Female	52%	White	69%	Very Low	87%
41-65	18%	Male	48%	Black/African American	15%	Low	9%
				Hispanic	15%	Moderate	4%
				Not Reported	1%		

Senior Center programs, activities and special events evolve to meet the needs of the clients. The needs of local older adults are assessed routinely to stay current with trends and effectively serve the diverse population. Through minimal service fees, donations and fundraising efforts, the Center can provide affordable services for clients. An overview of services offered is shown in the chart below.

DESERT HOT SPRINGS SENIOR CENTER LIST OF ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMS

Services Offered	Description of Service
Assistance Services	
AARP Tax-Aide	Tax-Aide provides free tax preparation to Senior Center clients over age 60 with low to moderate incomes from February 1 to April 15.
Attorney/Paralegal Services	In partnership with Inland County Legal Services, providing legal advice and services for people ages 60 and older.
Commodities	
Senior Nutrition	FSA Senior Nutrition Division serves daily meals at the Senior Center. Meals are available each day the Center is open for normal operation. A monthly menu is published outlining meals.

	\$3.00 is the suggested donation for clients 60 years of age or older and \$5.00 for all clients/individuals under the age of 60. During congregate dining, seniors can learn about nutrition and socialize with peers. In addition, meals are delivered to homebound senior citizens in Desert Hot Springs who qualify through Riverside County Office on Aging.
Hidden Harvest	Delivering free in a refrigerated truck, the program distributes rescued produce to Desert Hot Springs senior citizens. The produce distributed helps in the fight against two of America's greatest health care problems--diabetes and obesity.
Bread and Fruit Distribution	Bread donated by a local grocery store and other bread companies to distribute to senior citizens. Fruit is provided by local growers and distributed to clients as supplies are available.
Health and Wellness	
Arthritis Exercise	In partnership with the Arthritis Foundation of the Desert, this low impact exercise class improves mobility and strength for those suffering with arthritis.
Yoga Class/Senior Stretching	Classes offered to improve stretching and mobility improving blood circulation, strength and mind rejuvenation.
Movement through Video Games	Group gatherings to improve health and wellness through Nintendo Wii Bowling and Wii Dance.
Dance	Dance classes, such as Hula and Ballroom, conducted by local instructors. Offering special events with recreational dancing, such as the Annual Senior Prom.
Taking Pounds Off Sensibly (TOPS)	TOPS is an international, non-profit, non-commercial weight-loss support group who meets at the Senior Center weekly.
Blood Pressure Checks and Blood Sugar Screening	A volunteer Registered Nurse (RN) administers blood pressure checks and blood sugar screenings to Senior Center participants.
Health Clinics	The Senior Center offers several health clinics in partnership with Coachella Valley health organizations such as but not limited to, Low Vision Screenings with Braille Institute, Flu Shot Clinic with Desert Regional Medical Center and Mammogram Clinics with Desert Women of Equality. In order to bring services, resources and information to Senior Center clients, the Center hosts an annual health fair where local health organizations participate.

Life Long Learning Education	
Computer Class	Classes on fundamental computer skills offered.
Computer Lab	Six computers available during hours of operation for client's general use.
AARP Mature Driving Training	Founded in 1979, AARP Driver Safety has helped millions of drivers stay safe on the roads. Although the course is geared to drivers age 50 and older, the course is open to people of all ages. AARP membership is not required to take the course and there are no tests to pass.
Mental Health/Counseling Services	
Pet Therapy	Therapy Dogs are used to improve a client's social, emotional, or cognitive functioning. The experience allows older adults the opportunity to give and receive affection, as well as stress reduction, build friendships and decrease loneliness.
Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP)	HICAP is a state-sponsored, volunteer-supported program that provides free counseling to Senior Center clients with Medicare about their benefits, rights and options, and other health insurance related questions. HICAP provides unbiased information to help make informed decisions for individual health care needs. HICAP services are free of charge and include individual counseling and assistance as well as community education services.
Caregiver Support Groups	Service provided by FSA. Support groups provide assistance to participants in the caretaking role. Topics discussed during groups include how to talk with doctors, legal issues related to caregiving, identify signs of stress and stress reduction factors, managing medication and healthy lifestyles.
Catholic Charities Counseling	Provides counseling services for older adults at the Senior Center.
Jewish Family Service (JFS) Geriatric Case Management	Helping older adults enjoy a higher quality of life and independence through advocacy with healthcare providers, transportation, volunteer visitation and assisting to obtain benefits.
Recreation and Social Programming	
Crafts Programs	Arts and crafts classes provided by local volunteer crafters.
Music and Signing	Group gathering to enjoy singing and piano playing in a casual environment.

Ice Cream Social	Special event offering ice cream, a variety of toppings and time to socialize.
Movie Day	Group gathering where people can share time viewing a movie.
Board Games	Group gatherings for popular board games such as Pinochle, Bridge and Mahjong.
Bingo	Conducted by Center volunteers, this social game time provides grocery assistance (essential household items) to frontrunners.
Birthday Party	Senior Center clients' birthdays are celebrated monthly.
Day Trips	Offering a group outing to local destinations of interest.
Special Events	Offering several special events in recognition of national holidays, seasons and special occasions including Halloween, Thanksgiving, Easter, Christmas, Saint Patrick's Day, Mother and Father's Day celebrations.
Fundraising Events/Programs	Offers several community events to promote the Center and gain financial partners for the sustainability of the Center's program. Event examples include a Tea Party, Spaghetti Dinner, Pancake Breakfast and Happy Bargains Thrift Shop.

Boys & Girls Club of Coachella Valley

The Boys & Girls Club of Coachella Valley was incorporated on January 29, 1981 as a non-profit public benefit corporation. They believe that the youth in and around Desert Hot Springs should have a positive place to go where they can find role models, informal guidance, and a safe place to have fun and build character.

The Desert Hot Springs Youth Center was initially supported by individual donations and later by the City of Desert Hot Springs. In 1978, the Boys Club of Palm Springs was contracted to run the facility, and they paid the operating expenses until the fall of 1979. A few months later, a group of concerned citizens affiliated to support the agency and locate funding to keep it going. The Boys & Girls Club of Coachella Valley was formed with 15 trustees of the new corporation. In 1982, the Boys & Girls Club of Coachella Valley became an official member of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America. In 2006, the Boys & Girls Club of Coachella Valley celebrated its 25th anniversary. Today the Club continues to provide quality services for boys and girls. It is the primary youth services agency in the City, serving a target youth population of more than 8,000 kids ages 6 to 18 who live in Desert Hot Springs and surrounding areas.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America has a lineup of tested and proven nationally recognized programs that address today's most pressing youth issues, teaching young people the skills they need to succeed in life. More than 25 national programs are available in the areas of education, the environment, health, the arts, careers, alcohol/drug and pregnancy prevention, gang prevention, leadership development and athletics.

The Boys & Girls Club has a very close partnership with the City of Desert Hot Springs and has a member who sits on the City's Park Committee. The City has worked with the Boys & Girls Club, Desert Healthcare District, and various other Federal, State, County and Local agencies to fund and build a new Community Health & Wellness Center to house the Boys & Girls Club. This new \$20 million state-of-the-art facility provides supervised after school programs for youth and teens and includes a teen center and

clinic, offices, gymnasium, nutrition counseling, dental clinic, a fitness center, an aquatic center, playground equipment, restrooms, locker rooms, and security cameras.

Cabot's Pueblo Museum and Cultural Center

Cabot's Pueblo Museum is a unique Hopi inspired Pueblo that was hand-made by Cabot Yerxa over a period of 24 years. This multi-level building includes 35 rooms, 150 windows and 65 doors, all crafted from found materials. Cabot traveled the desert from the Morongo Valley to Palm Springs, gathering reclaimed materials to build into the structure. The museum is home to Cabot's collection of Native American pottery, early 20th century photographs and artifacts from his Alaskan adventures. The museum grounds include a picnic area, extensive native plant landscaping, and a 43 foot tall Indian sculpture called the "Waokiye". Carved from a 750-year-old Sequoia Redwood by the famous sculptor Peter Toth, the monument is one in a series of similar monuments throughout the Country. The series, entitled "Whispering Giants", was intended to bring awareness to the Native American people. Many rustic period items including early 1900's tools, machinery and house goods, can also be viewed on the site.

Guided tours of this historic landmark are conducted daily, and the museum is available year-round for single tours, group tours and special events. The Trading Post and Gallery displays and sells unique Southwest inspired artwork, jewelry and books. There are many programs offered at the museum which focus on Pueblo inspired art. During visiting hours, artists can be found working in the museum courtyard. Pueblo artists in residence work in varied types of media including:

- Pottery
- Needle-arts
- Photography
- Papermaking
- Decorative folk painting
- Plein aire watercolors
- Fine art desertscares
- Southwest jewelry
- Basket-making
- Flint-knapping
- Woodcarving

The City of Desert Hot Springs has prepared a Master Plan (Miracle Hill Master Plan) for Cabot's Pueblo Museum and the 25-acre Miracle Hill property adjacent to the museum. The Master Plan includes proposed expansion and development of the property for a historical and cultural campus that would contain trailheads, desert wild lands, pueblo gardens, meeting facilities and classrooms, an education center for arts, music, health and well-being, a small amphitheater, and a public spa. Completion of the Master Plan would allow the City to expand cultural, educational, and historic programs at the site. The City currently works with the Cabot's Museum Foundation to raise operational funds and deliver program and services at the Museum.

Family Resource Center

The Desert Hot Springs Family Resource Center, operated by the County of Riverside Department of Public Social Services, is a collaborative partnership of public and non-profit organizations and agencies that bring together social services and community activities aimed at serving low income families with children in Desert Hot Springs. They are located at 14201 Palm Drive, Suite 108, Desert Hot Springs, CA. The following organizations offer services and programs at the Riverside County Resource Center:

Catholic Charities San Bernardino/Riverside - Provides basic needs services for families, counseling activities, cooperative parenting classes in English and Spanish, and anger management classes in English and Spanish.

Community Access Center - Provides services for seniors and persons with disabilities.

Shelter from the Storm - Provides shelter and counseling services for victims of domestic violence.

Episcopal Community Services - Provides emergency services to families and a referral service for social service needs.

Braille Institute - Provides services for the visually impaired.

Riverside County Workforce Center - Provides job development services including employment referral and job training activities.

Riverside County Office of Education- Provides migrant education programs, information, and referrals.

Corona Veterans Center - Provides veteran support group and counseling services.

In addition to coordinating the services of the above agencies and organizations, the Family Resource Center works with various non-profit agencies to offer special events such as the American Cancer Society Relay for Life.

Desert Hot Springs Youth Sports Organizations

Desert Hot Springs Little League and Girls Softball

The Desert Hot Springs Little League and Girls Softball program serves youth 4-16 years of age. They run two programs, Little League Baseball and Girls Softball. They primarily use Wardman Park but also use Desert Hot Springs High School, Desert Hot Springs Middle School, and Bubbling Wells Elementary School. They currently have just under 300 youth enrolled in their programs and are looking at expansion of their activities through increasing the Girls Softball program, adding an additional Major's division in Little League and possibly adding a Fall baseball season.



*Little League team walking onto Richardson Field
Photo by Bruce Montgomery*



*Pledge of allegiance at Richardson Field dedication in 2009
Photo by Bruce Montgomery*

Desert Hot Springs American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) Region 588

Desert Hot Springs American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) was founded in 1986 and has grown to be the largest youth sports program in Desert Hot Springs. AYSO provides a quality program based on sound philosophies where everyone plays, under the supervision of positive coaching, good

sportsmanship and player development. AYSO provides soccer programs for youth ages 5-16. Their primary fields are at Mission Springs Soccer Park. Coaches also use school sites and passive grass areas at other parks for practice purposes. AYSO currently serves 750 youth in Fall, Winter and Spring soccer programs.

Desert Hot Springs Junior All-American Football

Desert Hot Springs Junior All-American Football provides football programs for youth 7-14 years of age. There are currently 120 youth in Desert Hot Springs enrolled for the tackle football program. Junior All-American Football uses Mission Springs Soccer Park for practices and Desert Hot Springs High School football field for games. The football program runs from late summer through the fall of each year. Junior All-American Football also has cheer programs with approximately twenty-five participants.

Family YMCA of the Desert

The Family YMCA of the Desert does not have a physical facility in Desert Hot Springs, however, they deliver programs and activities in an after-school program format to K-8th grade schools within the Palm Springs Unified School District. Programs are paid for by public and private grants and sponsors such as the Desert Health Care District. The program teaches fitness and nutrition using games and sports as the medium. Approximately 150 – 200 students participate in the program, Monday – Friday after school. The YMCA program also teaches good behavior, bonding, and team work. It has a partnership with “Bridges of Hope” to provide students with backpacks full of meals and snacks.

Regional Recreation Opportunities

Desert Hot Springs residents have access to a multitude of sports facilities and leisure time pursuits in the Coachella Valley ranging from hiking to golf to cultural programs. There are two regulation golf courses and several executive courses open to the public near Desert Hot Springs that take public play. There are also more than 50 public play courses within the Coachella Valley within a short drive of Desert Hot Springs. There are numerous family commercial recreational venues including Knott’s Soak City Water Park, in Palm Springs; Big League Dreams Sports Park, in Cathedral City; and bowling and family fun centers in Palms Springs and other close desert communities.



*Children’s art on display at Earth Day 2010 at Cabots Museum.
Photo by Bruce Montgomery*

Hiking opportunities are abundant both locally in Desert Hot Springs and regionally in the surrounding national park and preserve areas.

Cultural opportunities abound in the Coachella Valley from Desert Hot Springs to Coachella with a number of performing art centers, galleries, and museums.

Special Events

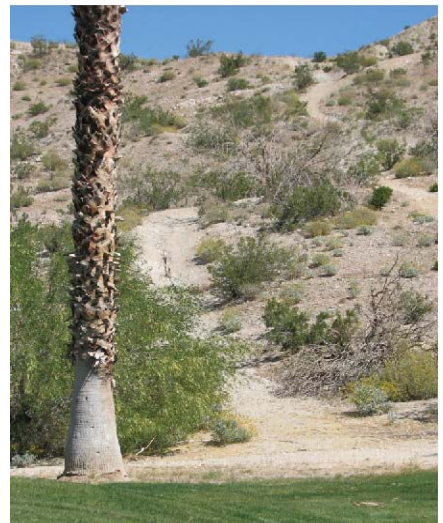
The City works with non-profit and community organizations to host various community events throughout the year including, but not limited to, Earth Day Festival at the Cabot's Museum, Family Science Day, Cabot's Annual Celebration and BBQ, Spa Tour, Veteran's Memorial Day, Memorial Day, Tree Lighting Ceremony, Chili Cook-Off, Tour de Palm Springs, Skyborne Half Marathon & 5K Run & Walk, American Cancer Society Relay for Life, AYSO regional soccer tournaments, little league events and events put on by the schools in Desert Hot Springs.

Community events play an important role in developing a sense of place and promoting cultural understanding. Working with promoters and organizations to increase the number of special events and cultural programs for the community is important for Desert Hot Springs in the future.

4.3 PROGRAM ANALYSIS

Because of budget limitations and financial priorities, the City has concentrated on providing core services for youth and seniors, maintaining its recreation facilities, and collaborating with other agencies and organizations to provide a park and recreation system of both direct city services and community-based programming. The City has attempted to meet priorities and deliver programs and services that address the highest needs in Desert Hot Springs. As stated in Section 4.1, during the community outreach effort, Desert Hot Springs residents identified the most important benefits of recreation programs and facilities that support the quality of life in Desert Hot Springs. The following is an analysis of the program inventory in Section 4.2 using the identified criteria to determine where programming is meeting resident's needs and where programming could be enhanced to accomplish the identified benefits.

Creating opportunities that increase fitness and wellness for all residents - The City provides direct fitness and wellness programs for seniors at the Senior Center on a year round schedule and for youth through adults at the Wardman Park Pool during the spring and summer months. The City works with health agencies and event promoters to bring health and wellness events into the City. The YMCA provides fitness and wellness programs for children through its after-school programs. Youth sports organizations offer baseball, softball, soccer and football to keep youth active and fit. The Boys & Girls Club also has fitness programs for youth and teens.



*One of many trail heads throughout the City of Desert Hot Springs
Photo by Bruce Montgomery*

What's missing is the opportunity for residents to participate in affordable fee based programs in fitness and health at the Carl May and Henry V. Lozano community centers. Because of Desert Hot Springs' financial constraints and limited staff resources, the City is unable to institute a program of contract instructor recreation activities such as: yoga, tai chi, jazzercise, pilates, dance for fitness, karate, and other exercise and fitness classes for all ages. Other fitness activities that are typical in a well rounded park and recreation delivery system include organized walking activities, group hiking opportunities, open gym and fitness activities, and year-round swimming fitness programs.

Ensuring Trails and Open Spaces are Maintained and Increased - The City has several local trails for hiking and has preserved open space at Rotary Park, Cabot's Museum and the Miracle Hill area. The Miracle Hill Master Plan will increase the preservation of open space and create trailheads for access to local and regional trails. What are missing are proper signage and trail directional markers. Trails can be difficult to locate and follow without a map. The City has participated with hiking clubs and organizations to develop trails maps, and has plans to develop a complete Trails Master Plan. In addition, the City can work with agencies (i.e., BLM) and organizations (i.e., Boy Scouts) to establish trailhead starting points and trail directional signage and monuments.

Building Stronger Families and Sense of Community -

Throughout the year the City works with local organizations and promoters to develop special events and festivals. Events help to foster a sense of belonging amongst residents and encourage social bonding within the community. Resident feedback during the public outreach process indicated that the community would like to see more special events and festivals.

The City also works with the County of Riverside Department of Public Social Services at the Desert Hot Springs Family Resource Center to help provide family services, parenting classes, and other various family counseling services. The American Youth Sports Organization and the Boys & Girls Club also invite and encourage involvement and participation of families in the programs they offer.



The City of Desert Hot Springs has always been known as a city of “health and wellness” due to its unique hot mineral spring waters and peaceful natural surroundings. Health and wellness is a natural tie-in to recreation, and recreational programs and events can help to reinvigorate the City’s identity. Working with agencies and promoters on wellness events, Healthy Eating-Active Living, environmental programs, and promotional activities are ways to reinforce this important theme.

Promoting Security and Safety - Security and safety at park facilities and during park programs was a major concern expressed by residents during the public outreach process. Park vandalism, graffiti and crime were all issues of concern. These issues divert City resources from family programming and deter residents from visiting parks.

The City has made several recent improvements to security and safety at public facilities and has increased the size of their Public Safety department. Guy J. Tedesco Park now has a permanent office for a Police Substation to house Community Services. The Citizens on Patrol (COP) program, whose members act as eyes and ears for local law enforcement, is operated out of that office. The City has also implemented a community camera program in public spaces throughout the City, with at least one camera located in each City park. City staff has noticed a reduction in crime at its parks with the increased presence of safety personnel and security cameras.



*National Night Out at Guy J. Tedesco Park
Photo by Bruce Montgomery*

The City has adopted the Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) program. CPTED is based upon the theory that the proper design and effective use of the built environment can lead to a reduction in the incidence and fear of crime and an improvement in the quality of life. Chapter 6 of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan contains operating policies and recommendations for promoting security and safety in parks and programs.

Involving All Cultures in the Community - Citywide events and festivals that currently take place in Desert Hot Springs specifically try to offer activities that promote cultural diversity and attendance. This is especially important if the City is to achieve the goal of creating a feeling of belonging for all residents. The demographic composition of Desert Hot Springs includes a significant Latin American population. Recreation and activities offered by the City and community-based agencies should try to reflect the

ethnic diversity of the City. Programs that allow cultures to share traditions and customs help to promote inter-cultural relations and understanding, and increase feelings of personal investment in the community.

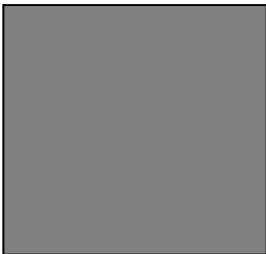
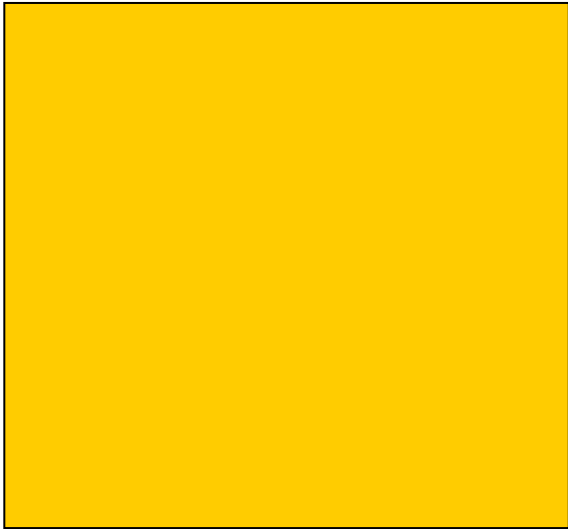
Programs for all age groups – Due to budget and staff restraints, the City has had to focus its resources on youth and seniors. The Senior Center offers basic senior services in the areas of fitness and exercise, social activities, meals and special events. Senior programs could be expanded by the development of senior special interest clubs and the use of contract instructors for special interest classes.

The City addresses youth programming through community-based organizations such as the Youth Sports Groups, YMCA, and the Boys & Girls Club. Other than family services offered through the Family Resource Center, there are very few opportunities for recreational activities for teens, young adults and families.

A future priority for securing funding should be to increase the recreational opportunities for affordable activities for teens, young adults, and families. This can be done by the use of sponsorships and scholarships. Multi-generation activities should also be considered and encouraged, such as multi-generational exercise programs, events, and mentoring.

In summary, the City provides basic programming to meet the needs of its residents by operating direct services and facilitating the program activities of community-based organizations. The City is currently lacking the financial and staff resources to provide a comprehensive system of recreation programming for all ages.

CHAPTER 5



Needs Assessment

Needs Assessment

5.1 INTRODUCTION/METHODOLOGY

THE PURPOSE OF A NEEDS ASSESSMENT is to quantify and understand the recreational needs of the community. In order for Desert Hot Springs to develop a long-range plan for providing appropriate recreational facilities and programs, it must understand the nature of the community: the community's recreational desires, actual needs, social makeup and the ability to provide services identified by the Demand and Needs Analysis.

Defining the needs of a community is sometimes difficult to quantify. Determining recreation needs based solely on a numerical standard does not take into account the makeup of the community, its economic situation, history, traditional recreation uses, or political environment. This report assesses the recreational programming and park facilities needs of Desert Hot Springs using several methods, including comparison to national and state trends, evaluation of past levels of service, analysis of public involvement, and identification of community demands and desires.

Several years ago the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) established guidelines for park facilities for both urban and rural communities. They also defined a number of issues that affect the demand for park facilities, including environmental, social, economic, demographic and technology trends, and trends in urban development. Among these issues, the following were identified as those that affect the demand for facilities in Desert Hot Springs:

1. Disappearing resources such as open space and natural habitat.
2. Cost of available land within the City limits to acquire for parkland.
3. Environmental regulations regarding water quality, runoff, and hazardous waste.
4. Reduction in number of vehicle trips mandated by states and communities.
5. Poverty – homelessness and unemployment.
6. Crime and violence in homes and school, drugs, vandalism, and social tension.
7. Increased number of children at risk.
8. Increased desire for citizen participation and involvement.
9. Social service networking – organizing community organizations and resources to attack social problems.
10. Increasing concern for personal and family safety.
11. Increased public cost for maintenance and upgrading aging infrastructure.
12. Fewer “traditional” family households, i.e.: single-parent families, families sharing living units, extended families living together, etc.
13. Increasing cultural diversity throughout the city.
14. Increased contact with computers in the home or the workplace.
15. Increased media overload.
16. Political pressure for parks, open space and recreation facilities.



Invitational flyer to attend community workshops

All of these national issues are germane to Desert Hot Springs and need to be taken into consideration when trying to provide essential recreation opportunities and allocating resources to the parks and recreation system.

5.2 TREND ANALYSIS AND PROJECTIONS

In 2004 the NRPA developed a list of trends which will cause the greatest impact on local agencies trying to plan for recreational facilities. The NRPA's list of pertinent trends that will affect the Desert Hot Springs's planning efforts for developing recreation facilities and programs are as follows:

- A greater need for walking and biking on trails, sidewalks, within parks and along streets, and utility corridors.
- Collaboration between parks and schools to share construction, development, and use of lands and facilities.
- Preventive recreation, that is, recreation as an antidote for social problems.
- Recreation for groups limited by income, physical disability, language, or cultural barriers.
- Collaboration among program and facility providers, partnering and cooperation between public, private, and non-profit sectors, especially cultural organizations.
- The need for family recreation centers that offer a variety of services for each family member.
- Pressure to increase park capacity and infrastructure of existing parks and concern for adequate maintenance.
- Community volunteering opportunities, such as adopt a park projects, friends of the parks groups, and park watch programs.
- Increased demand for youth and teen programs and activities.
- Protective measures for open space.
- Provision for aquatics programs and water safety instruction.
- Provision for Senior Citizen programs and activities.

In addition to these national trends, the socio-demographic make-up of the community will also influence the demands and needs for recreation and parks. A quick look at Desert Hot Springs shows a current population of approximately 27,383 people. Future residential development will ultimately increase the population and create more demand for parks and recreational services. However, this Master Plan document covers the period of growth to 2023.

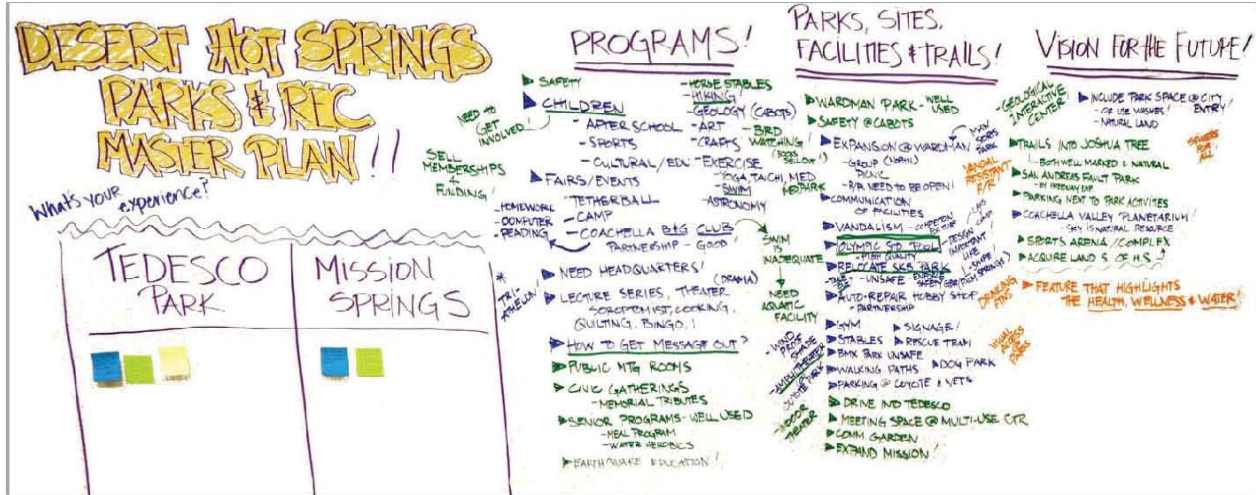
In 2020 the park and recreation master plan will need to be updated for the next 10 years of growth, and will need to be based on future population projections at that time.



Participants in Relay for Life 2010 demonstrate the range of diverse cultures in Desert Hot Springs.

Photo by Bruce Montgomery

The current demographics of the City's 27,383 population are described in Chapter 2. The demand and needs for recreation services and park facilities should take into account that Desert Hot Springs is primarily a working class community with limited discretionary income. Its current growth pattern shows that young families with children along with older adults will dominate the population within the next 10 years.



Results of Workshop #1 shown in a wall graphic.

5.3 PUBLIC OUTREACH AND INPUT

5.3.1 Introduction and Methodology

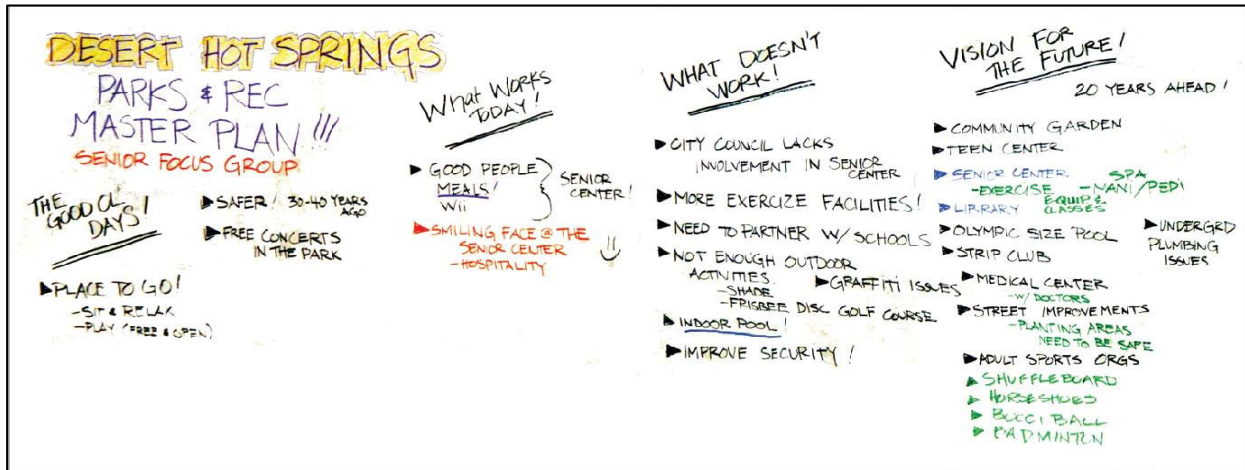
Input from the community is a critical component of doing the Demand and Needs Analysis and determining what facilities and programs should be recommended in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. While park standards and facility comparisons can give the statistical picture of what the needs are in a city, listening to residents, stakeholders, and park users gives us the specific information as to what is important to the citizens of Desert Hot Springs. The methods used for public outreach to gain community input for this Master Plan included: public workshops, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, surveys with organized sports organizations, a community survey, a youth survey, interviews with park users when the facility inventory was conducted, and use of the analysis done in the 2008 Park and Recreation Assessment Report completed by Dick Guthrie.

The purpose of gathering community input through a variety of methods is to ensure that the Park and Recreation Master Plan is as inclusive as possible and that it reflects the views, preferences and recreational desires of Desert Hot Springs residents. Attendance at the community workshops was limited however, other forms of outreach tapped more extensive input, i.e, stakeholder interviews, meetings with the Community and Cultural Services Commission and Park Committee, focus groups, conversations with people at park sites, the sports groups, community, and youth surveys. These along with data from the



2008 Park and Recreation Assessment Report, provided a broad spectrum of community input involving almost 400 individuals.

The following summary of community input represents a significant majority of the opinions, desires and needs of Desert Hot Springs residents.



Wall graphic of senior focus group discussion.

5.4 STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

5.4.1 General Comments

All of the stakeholder groups and individuals interviewed were very supportive of the City's efforts to address its park and recreation needs. For the most part they understood the major issues facing the City: the economy, the broad cultural diversity, future growth, funding, and community perception of what Desert Hot Springs actually deserves or should have compared to other communities.

5.4.2 Specific Comments

The Project Team conducted in-person interviews with individuals and representatives of a number of stakeholder groups in the community that are actively involved in the delivery of programs and services to Desert Hot Springs residents. The Project Team interviewed City Council members, appointed officials, staff, school district representatives, community leaders and staff from the Desert Recreation District, which contracts with several cities outside of Desert Hot Springs to provide recreation services.

The input of these individuals and groups provided the team with perspective on the views and attitudes of a wide range of organizations and their leadership personnel about where the successes and gaps in recreation occurred in the City and how to address that in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Drawing on the expertise of these individuals allowed the team to begin to develop a strategy for addressing the City's most critical recreation issues. The discussions with the Desert Hot Springs Community and Cultural Affairs Commission and the Parks Committee provided more valuable insight into community issues:

- What these appointed groups have done to address the issues in the past,
- How they view the facility and operational needs in Desert Hot Springs,
- Their future plans, and
- Their ability to be a part of future recommendations for meeting community demands in Desert Hot Springs.

The comments and input from the stakeholder interviews were wide-ranging and diverse in scope. Some comments involved acquiring huge parcels of land, while others addressed parking availability at individual parks. To put these comments into perspective, the team divided them into several categories and themes that encompassed the majority of opinions. These broad categories were developed from community input as well as a reflection of the goals that the City has identified in past and current planning documents as a vision to improving the quality of life of its residents. The categories are as follows:

- Park Improvements
- New Park Facilities
- Special Facilities
- Safety & Security
- Trails
- Programs
- Public Awareness/Communication
- Partnerships

What follows is a summarization of the total of the comments received. A complete transcription of the comments received is included in the Appendices of this document.

Park Improvements - It's clear that residents are using the parks in Desert Hot Springs, but would like to have more diverse amenities installed at existing parks: more sports fields, performance venues, additional picnic shelters, walking paths, improved pedestrian and motorized circulation, better and ongoing maintenance to buildings (especially restrooms), better parking, security lighting and signage.

New Park Facilities - The general consensus was that existing parks are not capable of fulfilling all the needs stated by the community, so new facilities should be planned to fulfill the backyard uses and sports field uses and gathering places that most people seek in the city parks. Additional new passive and active recreation space must be created to fill the gaps in underserved areas of the City. The new parks should include activities for all age groups from small children to families to seniors. Some of those activities include multi-use sports fields, areas dedicated to health and wellness, easy accessibility, adequate parking, meeting and gathering spaces, learning and performance areas. Many people requested specialized equipment or facilities that could be classified within the "Special Facilities" category, but could also be incorporated into some neighborhood (3-10 acres) or community (10-30 acres) parks, i.e., exercise stations, off-leash dog parks, computer lab and indoor recreation space, to name a few.

Special Facilities - Desert Hot Springs already has a number of facilities dedicated to special recreation and cultural activities: Mission Springs Soccer Park, Cabot's Pueblo Museum, Desert Hot Springs Senior Center and the Frank Hodge Skate Park. Other specialized facilities are housed within existing parks, such as the pool at Wardman Park and the BMX course at Guy J. Tedesco Park. But many of the sports groups and their families see the need for additional dedicated facilities to meet the growing populations participating in their sports. Seniors want to have more active recreation opportunities and teens would like to have a place to gather and socialize. Among the requested special facilities are an aquatic center, community center with a gymnasium and meeting rooms, a sports complex to host regional competition events, a major performance venue, community gardens, a fairground and campground and a museum dedicated to the geological wonders of the area.

Safety & Security - The topic heard the most often among all the outreach groups and individuals was the concern for safety in the parks and recreation facilities in Desert Hot Springs. People mentioned the visibility and frequency of vandalism in the parks and fear of their children playing in parks where crime occurs. Even Guy J. Tedesco, is already showing its scars on play equipment and in the restrooms. The City has already taken steps to improve safety in the parks, but the perception among residents is that more needs to be done. Suggested remedies included designing parks for visibility and ease of patrolling, stepped up surveillance by security and police, furnishings that are more vandal-resistant and clear signage with rules of behavior and conduct in the park so police can enforce the codes.

Trails - Trails and walking paths are among the most requested recreation facilities in the country, and Desert Hot Springs is no exception. The need for trails in parks and wilderness areas along with appropriate signage was heard frequently among residents.

Desert Hot Springs is fortunate to have plenty of open space suitable for trails. Much of the undeveloped land owned by the City is available for trails development. In addition, Desert Hot Springs is in close proximity to federal trails and a national park, Joshua Tree. There are some informal trails identified by a trails committee, but no new maps have been produced recently.

Programs - Desert Hot Springs does not run its own recreation programs, instead it relies on service organizations, non-profits and faith-based organizations to provide programming at its facilities. But among the participants there was a clear need for more recreational, educational, cultural and sports programs in Desert Hot Springs.

Sports are always at the top of the list in the way of programming, but other areas of focus are the special needs to help at risk youth and teens and seniors.

People voiced a desire to share their culture with others, celebrate and memorialize special citizens or historic events and host athletic tournaments, such as a triathlon or tetherball competition. They also recognized the revenue potential of attracting regional participation in such events.

Public Awareness/Communication - Many of the participants expressed frustration at how to find out about events or programs occurring in Desert Hot Springs. Despite the overwhelming publicity given to the public workshops surrounding the master plan, few people responded. Participants felt that banners, brochures and signage throughout the City might be a way to help increase communication with the public.

Partnerships - Participants and stakeholders recognized the value of partnering with other organizations and agencies, something Desert Hot Springs already does well. They supported the existing partnerships with the Boys & Girls Club and faith-based organizations, but felt the City could engage more with schools for the use of facilities and with the Desert Recreation District for programs.



*Sharing cultures at Earth Day
Photo by Bruce Montgomery*

5.5 SUMMARY ANALYSIS OF STAKEHOLDER ISSUES

Taking our direction from the comments gathered from the public outreach and from vision documents in current use by the City, we can see that the issues to be addressed by the City of Desert Hot Springs through its Parks and Recreation Master Plan are clearly emerging.

The next section will begin to define the Demands and Needs that form the basis for the recommendations in Chapter 6.

- Park Maintenance Needs
 - Low maintenance design (drought tolerant landscaping, vandal resistant fixtures, graffiti resistant surfaces, etc)
 - More resources to maintain parks and facilities
 - Programs to reduce vandalism (enforcement, reward stipends, camera placements, etc)

- Trail Needs
 - Local and regional trails and connections
 - Identify trails and access points
 - Both hiking trails and flat walking/exercise trails
 - Perimeter walking paths wide enough for police patrol

- Sports Facilities Needs
 - Goal to have 6-U10, 6-U12, and 6-U14 soccer fields*
 - Expand girls softball fields to a total of three
 - Add a Little League Senior Division field
 - Lights and other improvements to Little League fields at Wardman
 - Practice fields for Jr. All American Football

*Note: * The U stands for "Under". At younger ages, soccer leagues are often organized in 2-year increments.*

- Community Cultural Events Needs
 - Mini-Fairground/Community Park to host festivals
 - Community size amphitheater for local community entertainment
 - Community Health and Wellness Center
 - Community Garden Park
 - Cabot's Museum and Miracle Hill Master Plan

- Program Needs
 - Active programs for seniors
 - Affordable programs for youth that are safely accessed
 - Aquatic programs
 - Child care programs
 - Classes for youth and adults

- Park Needs
 - Neighborhood or Mini-Parks
 - Community or Regional Park
 - Special Use Parks
 - Dog Parks
 - Skate and BMX Park

5.6 COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS INPUT

Two community workshops were scheduled for residents to participate in discussing the park and recreation needs in Desert Hot Springs. The first night's workshop was held at the Carl May Community Center; the second workshop was held at the Henry V. Lozano Center at Guy J. Tedesco Park. Notifications of the meetings were advertised extensively in the *Desert Sun* newspaper and announced on the local TV morning news show, as well as being published on the City's website. Despite the excellent coverage, a handful of residents attended each of the workshops. While small in numbers, the residents were fully engaged in the process and provided solid information throughout the evenings. The intention of participants in both evening workshops was to make a contribution to improve the desirability of Desert Hot Springs as a place to live, work and thrive.

The workshop process consisted of attendees seated at tables in small groups. Each group was given the same tasks to perform and then report their findings to the entire gathering. They were given three topics to consider:

1. Given your experience, what programs are needed in Desert Hot Springs?
2. Given your experience, what does Desert Hot Springs need in the way of parks, facilities and trails?
3. With no consideration of what it would cost, what is your vision for the future of Desert Hot Springs?



Richardson Little League field at Wardman Park
Photo by Bruce Montgomery

As with the stakeholders, a transcript of comments can be found in the Appendices of this document.

Summary

In general, the responses from both nights were in accord with those received from stakeholders. Safety emerged as a major concern. Gang activity in Desert Hot Springs is rampant and residents tend not to feel safe at night in the parks. Their suggestions mirrored the stakeholders as well. Workshop attendees differed from stakeholders in a couple of preferences: 1) the development of an Aquatic Center. A high quality, competitive swimming pool along with a need for more swimming lessons and water activities for all ages and abilities. One group recommended the L-shape layout of the Palm Springs pool, which allows for both competitive and recreational swim simultaneously; 2) Residents are proud of the mineral springs and natural resources which have drawn people to the City of Desert Hot Springs. However, public access to mineral springs is limited since most springs are enclosed in private spas. They voiced a desire to have a public mineral spring available to residents; 3) along with their concern for public safety they emphasized the need to enforce the use of safety equipment at the BMX course, skate park and within the city limits. More than one participant suggested removing the Skate Park entirely because of the unruly nature of its users and their unwanted interaction with seniors in the nearby senior center.

5.7 SPORTS ORGANIZATION SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES

A questionnaire was distributed in May 2010 to each of the sports organizations in Desert Hot Springs. Questionnaires were collected from Desert Hot Springs Little League, Desert Hot Springs Girls Softball, AYSO R588, Desert Hot Springs Junior All-American Football and the Desert Hot Springs Swimming Program. The purpose of the questionnaire was to solicit the perceived needs of community sports organizations and allow them the opportunity to describe their future growth potential within the community. The questionnaire was designed to solicit information regarding facility usage, team size, recreation season, and player volume. This data was then used in the demand analysis for future sports field needs. The actual form can be found in the Appendices of this document.

The following chart shows the results of the data received from the questionnaires filled out by the groups. It shows the ages served, total current participation, projected growth for the next five years, if the group needs lighted fields, future field needs, and comments from the groups regarding their current and future growth issues. This analysis, along with the facility standard analysis later in this chapter, forms the basis for the future field recommendations contained in Chapter 6 of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The projected growth for all categories in the next five years is 1,105, which represents a 31% increase. These participation figures show that ideally, Desert Hot Springs should have a total of 12 soccer practice/game fields and two football practice/game fields along with three girls softball fields and five little league fields to accommodate the future number of teams participating in organized youth sports.

SUMMARY OF SPORTS GROUPS SURVEY

Organization	Ages Served	Total Served	Projected Growth Next 5 Yrs	Need Lights	Field Needs	Comments
Desert Hot Springs Girls Softball	5 to 15	15	60	Yes	2 Fields for Future Growth	Need one lighted softball field now, another in future
Desert Hot Springs Jr All American Football	7 to 14	120	200	Yes	1 for Practice 1 for Games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflicts with Soccer at Mission Springs Park. • Game field at Desert Hot Springs HS • Need own dedicated field
Desert Hot Springs Little League	5 to 15	270	300 (more if fall season is added)	Yes	2 Fields for Future Growth	90' Lighted Field for majors division needed now
Desert Hot Springs AYSO	5 to 18	750	1000	Yes	Practice Fields and game fields – Dedicated Soccer Complex	Wants to hold tournaments and needs 12 fields
Desert Hot Springs Swim Program	3 to Seniors	1300	2000	NA	Aquatic Complex w/regulation size competition pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wardman Park Pool needs new deck and fence. • Could share new pool with School District and Competitive Swim Teams
Total: All Categories		2,455	3,560			
Total: Youth Sports Only		1,155	1,560			

5.8 FOCUS GROUPS

The Project Team approached two special populations to involve them in their own focus group meetings: seniors and teens. Both of these groups bring a unique perspective to recreation because their needs are specialized. Both senior issues and youth issues were major themes in the community workshops and stakeholder interviews. The focus group meetings with the seniors and the youth allowed for specific input from representatives of these two special interest groups.

The Senior Focus Group was held on May 20, 2010. Overall, the seniors did not express many urgent needs, desires or complaints regarding park programs and facilities. When asked what should be included in future parks and recreation plans, participants suggested an Olympic-sized swimming pool, indoor exercise equipment and classes, and a Community Garden. Activities that the seniors felt they would enjoy having in the future included: shuffleboard, horseshoes, bocce ball, badminton, and Frisbee disc golf. Overall, the seniors were most concerned with City-wide security and graffiti issues. Seniors want a safe place to go for hospitality and to see smiling faces, a meals program, exercise facilities, swimming pool activities, and some outdoor recreation specifically for seniors. The Library was an important facility for the seniors.

The Youth Focus Group was held on June 29, 2010 at Wardman Park. The youth were asked several questions about their favorite park activities, the services they receive at parks, and desires for future park amenities. The entire questionnaire and results can be found in the Appendices of this document.

Not surprisingly, the youth in the focus group were the most concerned about having safe places to meet and socialize with their friends. These activities are currently carried out at shopping areas, which are scarce in Desert Hot Springs. Many are engaged in active team sports, but they also found enjoyment in cycling and skateboarding. Though they like the idea of the BMX track, most felt that a dirt track would be more challenging and effective for competition.

Some traditional activities requested by the groups was ping pong, a water park, a boxing ring, a lake (fishing/swimming), an ice skating rink and roller rink and a teen center. When asked about some areas of improvement in and around parks, they stated that on-site staff was very limited and sometimes fights would occur among teens with no one to intervene.

Among the more unusual suggestions for recreation activities was to bring in a shopping mall and a Ralph's grocery store. At the time of the focus group, Desert Hot Springs High School was in summer session.

The Project Team was able to interview several teens at Desert Hot Springs High School after the stakeholder interviews with the high school administration, and those conversations pointed out the need for a future teen center, close to the high school, that could provide a safe place after school and in the evenings for teens to have facilities to do homework, access computer labs, socialize, attend parties and sign up for fun and creative recreation classes.

The biggest request was for a community gym for indoor recreation activities and drop in programs, as the high school gym is completely booked with school programs, athletics and other uses.

5.9 COMMUNITY AND YOUTH QUESTIONNAIRES

By and large, the face-to-face portion of the public outreach described in the previous sections of this chapter consists of avid park users and people familiar with the Desert Hot Springs park system and services. In an effort to tap the less vigorous user population of Desert Hot Springs, a two page community survey was prepared and distributed to residents at the Carl May Community Center, Library, on the City website and by staff at various programs. There were separate surveys prepared for adults and youth in both English and Spanish. A total of 41 written adult surveys were returned and tabulated, the results of which give insight into the way people perceive the benefits of park and recreation programs, their current park use patterns, their opinion of current park maintenance, what facilities they think are most needed in Desert Hot Springs, where the city should focus its efforts in the area of parks and recreation, if they would be willing to pay more to have the park and recreation system they desire, and what recreation activities they participate in and how often.

The following is a summary of the questionnaires. The actual questionnaires and complete tabulated results can be found in the Appendices of this document.

Adult Community Questionnaire

Age of Respondents - The community survey responses provide a good representation of all adult age groups in Desert Hot Springs.

Age Group	%
18-24 years	14%
25-34 years	22%
35-44 years	27%
45-54 years	16%
55-64 years	14%
64+	8%

Gender Distribution - About twice as many females (70%) returned the survey as males (31%), so the overall results definitely tend to represent the female populations view of the questions answered; however, the questions in the survey were not gender specific and thus the overall results are still a good representation of the adult population opinions in Desert Hot Springs.

Number of Years in Desert Hot Springs - The responses represent a wide range of length of time living in Desert Hot Springs, with the most responses coming from people living in Desert Hot Springs from 11 to 19 years (28%) and under 3 years (24%). This represents a good mix of opinions from new residents and people who have been in the community for at least a decade.

Importance of Parks and Recreation

Seventy-eight percent (78%) of the responses said that parks and recreation are very important to them in their life.

Most Important Benefit of Parks and Recreation - All the respondents indicated they receive benefits from park and recreation programs and facilities, with the most perceived benefits being improved health and wellness; the promotion of youth development; and enjoyment of nature and the outdoors.

Benefit	# of Responses
Improve Health and Wellness	21
Promote Youth Development	23
Enjoying Nature/Outdoors	16
Build Stronger Families/Neighborhoods	12
Enhance Community Image	9
Protect the Natural Environment	7
Lifelong Learning	6
Cultural Opportunities	6
Help Seniors Remain Active	6

Have you visited a Desert Hot Springs Park the Last 12 Months? – Almost 90% of respondents have visited a park within the City and are familiar with the park system.

How often do you use the Parks? (From the yes answers above) - Within this group of respondents the two most frequented parks are Wardman Park and Guy J. Tedesco Park, which is to be expected, as these were the parks the surveys were handed out in and these parks have the most park amenities for people to use. Mission Springs Park probably did not rate high because it is primarily a soccer facility and the survey was taken after the soccer season for 2009-2010 had ended and before the 2010-2011 soccer season started. All of the other developed parks in Desert Hot Springs had about the same visitation rates from the responders. It is somewhat surprising that the Senior Center did not indicate more frequent use, and that the Cabot’s Museum actually showed more visitation than the Senior Center and the Henry V. Lozano Community Center. This is most likely due to the fact that Earth Day was held at the Cabot’s Museum during the time of the community survey and it was very well attended.

Reasons for Not Using the Parks - The reasons given on the survey for not using the park system included the following:

Reason	% of Responses
No time	37%
Don't know where they are	16%
Feel unsafe	16%
Activities unavailable	11%
Lack of facilities	8%
Poorly maintained	5%
Too far away	5%
Not interested	2%

The City really cannot do anything about the “No time” and “Not interested” responses, but the City can try to address the rest of the responses, subject to available funding and resources.

How would you rate Park and Facility Maintenance? - About half of the respondents are either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with park and facility maintenance, while the other half think it could be better. Park and facility maintenance is an important issue. If residents perceive the City cannot properly maintain what facilities it has, it will be less likely to support the City's desire to add new parks and amenities. MIG recommends that cities strive to attain a minimum 80% park and facility maintenance satisfaction rate among the community as a goal in the park and recreation master plan. Chapter 6 contains policies and recommendations to help the City attain this goal.

Most Needed Parks and Facilities in Desert Hot Springs? - When asked what parks and facilities are most needed in Desert Hot Springs the respondents replied as follows:

Community Gym	22%
Large multi-use community park	22%
Natural areas	20%
Teen Center	20%
Community Center	14%
Dog Park	14%
Swings	14%
Bathrooms	14%
Neighborhood Parks	8%
Trails	5%
No additional facilities needed	5%

Note: Percentages add to more than 100% because respondents checked multiple items.

The top four responses (Community Gym, Large Multi-Use Community Park, Preservation of Natural Areas, and Teen Center) reflect the same priorities for needed parks and facilities as the stakeholder, community workshops, and focus groups indicated.

In which area should the City focus its park and recreation efforts?

Upgrading its existing parks	35%
Providing recreation programs and activities	35%
Developing new trails	21%
Building new parks/facilities	16%
Maintaining existing parks	10%
Acquiring land for parks	5%

Note: Total is greater than 100% because respondents checked more than one response.

The respondents clearly think the City's priority efforts should be in the areas of upgrading existing parks and providing programs and activities.

Would you approve of partnering with other agencies to provide facilities and programs? - Partnering with other agencies was supported by all of the respondents to the community survey, with churches, schools and the Desert Recreation District being the most likely for the City to partner with for facilities and programs.

Who is most underserved in Desert Hot Springs? - In the opinion of those who returned the survey, teens are the most underserved group in Desert Hot Springs. This opinion parallels that of the workshops and focus groups. It is somewhat surprising, because most of the existing facilities currently in Desert Hot Springs are specifically for teens, such as the Boys & Girls Club, Skateboard Park, BMX Park, sports fields/basketball courts and summer swim programs.

Where do people go for recreation programs? - Most of the people who responded to the community survey find their recreation in Desert Hot Springs; however, people also attend programs in other cities; participate in activities at schools; and use private facilities, like local golf courses and country club facilities.

Would you be willing to pay additional taxes for park and recreation facilities and programs you want? - About 40% of the responses indicated they would be very willing or somewhat willing to pay extra taxes for the park and recreation facilities and programs they desired. 17% said they would not be willing to pay extra and 43% said they were unsure if they would vote to pay any extra taxes for parks and recreation. The high percentage of unsure responses indicates that people may vote to pay more if the facilities and programs are specific to what they want and would support.

What activities do you participate in?

Recreation Activity	% of Participation	Recreation Activity (cont.)	% of Participation
Running/Walking	12%	Gardening	5%
Exercising/Aerobics	11%	Museums/Galleries	5%
Playground/Tot Lot	9%	Attend Concerts	5%
Soccer	9%	Baseball	4%
Fairs and Festivals	8%	Painting/Sketching	4%
Volunteer Activities	7%	Photography	4%
Golf	7%	Softball	4%
Dancing	7%	Bicycling	3%

Dog Walking	7%	Football	3%
Hiking	7%	Group Day Trips	3%
Picnicking	6%	Musical Instrument	3%
Swimming	6%	Yoga/Pilates	3%
Gourmet Cooking	5%	Volleyball	2%
Cultural Events	5%	Martial Arts	2%
Basketball	5%	Skateboarding	1%
		Tennis	1%

If we assume that the people who responded to the community survey are “typical” Desert Hot Springs residents, then we can assume that these percentages of participation would be generally equal to the participation rates of the whole community. If we then multiply the participation percentages by the current Desert Hot Springs population, we can get a rough estimate of the numbers of people within Desert Hot Springs the City needs to provide facilities and programs for in order to accommodate the activity demand. The following table shows this calculation:

Rec. Activity	# of Participants	Rec. Activity (cont.)	# of Participants	Rec. Activity (cont.)	# of Participants
Baseball	1,040	Hiking	1,820	Tennis	260
Basketball	1,300	Running/Walking	3,120	Volleyball	520
Bicycling	780	Martial Arts	520	Volunteer Activities	1,820
Attend Concerts	1,300	Museums/Galleries	1,300	Yoga/Pilates	780
Gourmet Cooking	1,300	Musical Instrument	780	Golf	1,820
Cultural Events	1,300	Painting/Sketching	1,040		
Dancing	1,820	Photography	1,040		
Dog Walking	1,820	Picnicking	1,560		
Exercising/Aerobics	2,860	Playground/Tot Lot	2,340		
Fairs and Festivals	2,080	Skateboarding	260		
Football	780	Soccer	2,340		
Gardening	1,300	Softball	1,040		
Group Day Trips	780	Swimming	1,560		

The above estimates are not statistically valid; however, they can be used as a guideline (along with park standard guidelines and community outreach findings) in setting policies regarding the City’s priorities in allocating funding and resources towards parks and recreation facilities and programs. For example, allocating city resources to offering programs and facilities that potentially serve a thousand residents or more will more likely increase community satisfaction with the park and recreation system than spending resources on facilities and programs that serve less than a thousand residents.

Youth Community Questionnaire - A “Teen Survey” was distributed at the Boys & Girls Club to gain feedback from the youth there regarding the reasons they use the parks in Desert Hot Springs, what they think are the most needed facilities in Desert Hot Springs, and what types of recreation programs they would like to see offered in Desert Hot Springs.

A total of 17 youth ranging in age from 7 to 18 years of age filled out the survey and returned it to the city. All of the responses indicated they either walked or rode with someone else to get to parks and facilities.

When asked what the main reason they use Desert Hot Springs Parks for, most responded “to play sports” and “to meet friends”. Other responses included enjoying the outdoors, picnics, walking and biking, family activities and attending special events.

When asked what type of parks are needed by youth in Desert Hot Springs they responded that the city needs small parks in their neighborhood, a large park to serve the community, a sports park, and a trail system for walking, biking and hiking. When asked how often they use the parks, most responded they use Wardman Park daily (the Boys & Girls Club is located in Wardman Park) and all of the other parks on an occasional basis. They also indicated they use school sites for recreation purposes. Only one said they travel to other cities to use facilities.

Several responded that kids hang out at the car wash and Rite-Aid to meet with friends, but would like a teen center they could go to. When asked what one recreation facility is needed most by youth in Desert Hot Springs the majority responded that the city needs an indoor recreation center with a community gym, social areas and classrooms for activities. They also indicated an aquatics center is needed and also a movie theater and a skating rink. There was a wide range of responses to the question of what recreation programs are most needed by youth in Desert Hot Springs. The three most requested programs from the teens surveyed were special events, gym and sports. These results reflect the same priorities for teens as the community surveys and other public outreach tools used to get public input.

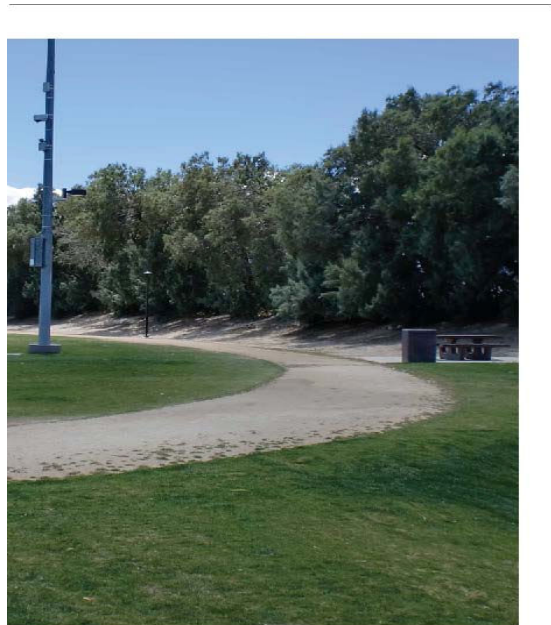
5.10 PARK USER INTERVIEWS

The Project Team visited Desert Hot Springs’ parks on five different dates to interview park users and to receive their input as to their satisfaction with the conditions of the park and what, if anything, they would like to see done to the park. The following is a list of comments made by those interviewed at the indicated park sites.

Coyote Park – Users interviewed at Coyote Park indicated their support for keeping the park as it is with grass and trees and to be used as a dog park. They felt if the City added typical park amenities such as a tot lot, picnic facilities, courts, etc., that it would drive out the ability to exercise their dogs. The hikers interviewed indicated the need for trail head signs, better parking access, and signs with hiking rules and regulations so that people know to clean up after themselves. Also, the installation of some viewpoint areas to take advantage of the valley views was suggested. Other requests for the park included trash receptacles, a drinking fountain and monument signs.

Mission Springs Park – The people interviewed at Mission Springs Park were using the walking path and expressed a desire for more walking/exercise paths in the City. People using the tot lot equipment would like to see the play area expanded with more creative play equipment for children. An improved plaza with group picnic areas for service clubs and special events was also requested. The soccer users indicated the need for at least two more soccer fields.

Wardman Park – Those interviewed at Wardman Park included Little League representatives, Boys & Girls Club participants, and swimming pool users. Little League indicated they needed additional lighted fields and fields for girls softball, they would like to see access improvements to their snack stand. Boys & Girls Club participants wanted a gymnasium for basketball, volleyball, and classrooms for recreation activities. The swimmers indicated the need for a larger pool with more amenities for swim exercise programs, lessons, recreational swim, and competitive swim programs.



Walking trail at Mission Springs Park

Tedesco Park – Those interviewed at Tedesco Park included a number of youth ages 13 – 18 and several parents with children using the play equipment. The youth really liked the BMX course and the basketball courts, but would like to see the community center open after school and on weekends, offering drop-in programs for kids and teens. The biggest concern of parents with children was safety and vandalism. They indicated they would like to see a park patrol or park ranger program established to offer more supervision at Tedesco Park. They also felt the community center was underutilized and that there should be fee based recreation programs offered at the site using contract instructors.

Carl May Center – Those interviewed at the Carl May Center included teens, seniors, and library patrons. The most common response was that the Carl May Center needs refurbishing and upgrading. The library patrons would like to see a larger library with more amenities. The seniors interviewed were happy with the senior center but would like to see some outdoor spaces developed for senior activities.



5.11 PARK AND RECREATION ASSESSMENT REPORT FROM 2008

In 2008, the City contracted with Dick Guthrie, a Park and Recreation Consultant, to prepare a Park and Recreation Assessment Report. The *2008 Park and Recreation Assessment Report* included a Demand and Needs Analysis based on stakeholder interviews and National Park Standards. The following is a summary of the needs that were identified in the 2008 report.

1. The level of maintenance for the existing parks is a concern. Except for Tedesco Park, the parks have not been updated for many years. They appear worn out and uninviting. This is particularly true for the community buildings, restrooms, and storage buildings. This will require expending additional funds on park maintenance.
2. Development of the Hacienda Park site may not be the City's highest priority given its location and other pressing park refurbishment needs.
3. Closing the current gap in park acreage standards could be addressed by a combination of adding acreage to an existing park(s) as well as planning for additional parks.
4. The Carl May Center is in need of refurbishment and a decision on whether or not to keep the City Council chambers in the building needs to be made. It minimizes the building's effectiveness as a community space to have the Council chamber occupy so much of the square footage.
5. The senior center while currently meeting basic needs as a comprehensive senior center, also needs refurbishing and will likely need to be expanded at some point.
6. The public library facility is not only significantly too small for a community of 26,000 residents, but it is serving as an ex-officio summer/after school site (as most public libraries have done in recent years) without adequate amenities (computer lab, meeting room, etc.) for programs. While this is not the City's operation, it should be on the priority list in working with Riverside County Public Library.
7. The current Boys & Girls Club clubhouse in Wardman Park is too small and is often overcrowded. It is not located in the center of the community and there is not direct bus service to it.
8. There is a significant shortage of child care spaces in the community, and this gap will continue to grow as the population increases, unless additional programs/facilities are opened.
9. The AYSO program is growing, given the popularity of soccer, but usable field space is limited. Mission Springs Park has the primary soccer park with an expanded number of fields.
10. Little League Baseball and Softball lost their Senior Division (90') Field as well as two practice/softball fields when Mission Springs Park was up graded for AYSO. Little League needs

an adequate lighted softball field at Wardman Park and a 90' Senior Division field within the City Parks.

5.12 PARK STANDARDS AND FACILITY ANALYSIS

Park acreage standards are generally established through an acreage requirement per 1,000 residents. The Subdivision Map Act and the Quimby Act (Section 66477 of the Govt. Code) relating to parkland dedication allows a city or town to adopt a local ordinance establishing a citywide park standard and the requirement of parkland dedication, or fair market value in-lieu fees, when there is residential development. The current developed park acreage in Desert Hot Springs is as follows:

Veterans Memorial Park	0.25
Hot Springs Park	3.00
Constitution Park	0.03
Guy J. Tedesco Park	3.97
Wardman Park	6.60
Rotary Park	3.00
Mission Springs Park	12.00
Total Acreage Developed Parks	28.85

The City also has undeveloped park property to be developed in the future including the Skyborne, Hacienda, and Park Lane sites. The estimated current undeveloped park acreage is as follows:

Cabot's Museum	2.27
Rotary Park	18.0
Skyborne	5.00
Hacienda	3.00
Park Lane	10.00
Miracle Hill Master Plan	38.27
Total Acreage Undeveloped Parks	76.54

Other specific plans, that are either in approval process or are on hold because of the current economic climate in the housing industry, could add additional parkland acreage that could be used for neighborhood, community, or special interest parks in the future. Chapter 6 contains policy recommendations for establishing park standards within future specific plans.

Based on current developed parkland owned by the City the parkland ratio in Desert Hot Springs is 1.0 acres per one thousand population. This is considerably below the Quimby recommended ratio of 3 acres per one thousand population. In order to meet the Quimby standard, the City would have to have a total of 86.55 acres of parkland, or an additional 57.7 acres of developed parkland, based on the current population of 27,383. If the City is successful in getting the undeveloped park sites developed, it should be able to meet the Quimby standard in the future.

At the City's projected build out, the City will need a total of 180 acres of parkland to meet the Quimby standard. This will require the development of an additional 151.15 acres of parkland by build out. Within the time scope of this master plan to the year 2020, the City will need a total of 93 acres of developed

parkland to meet the Quimby standard, which would require the development of an additional 60.18 acres of parkland.

Chapter 6 describes policies and recommendations as to how the City can meet the Quimby standard in the future as build out takes place. Probably more important than what the total parkland acreage is in a city, is where the parkland is located and what it can be used for. The ideal park and recreation system consists of neighborhood and community parks centrally located and easily accessible to residents. The parks should contain park amenities and facilities that meet the program and activity demands of the City's residents. The Existing Parks Map in Chapter 3 shows the distribution of the current park system in Desert Hot Springs, including the areas served within the community by each park. Current parks are primarily located in the developed areas of the City however, as growth takes place parks will need to be acquired and placed in future planning areas.

5.12.1 Facility Comparison

Based on the community outreach and input process presented in this Chapter, the Project Team has developed a list of facilities most requested by the community and that reflect the trends in park and recreation facility development. The table below shows these facilities and compares the current number of facilities in the Desert Hot Springs service area with the chosen comparison cities. The benchmark for comparing desired facilities and determining the facility surplus/deficit in Desert Hot Springs is the median number of facilities of the comparison cities. This benchmark is helpful in determining the priorities for facilities and in setting goals and objectives for seeking funding for capital improvements.

A second benchmark that is useful in determining facility needs is a comparison of existing facilities in Desert Hot Springs with the NRPA (National Recreation Parks Association) adjusted standard for facilities based on 25,000 population. The table below shows this comparison. The comparison cities benchmark and the NRPA benchmark for facility surplus/deficits show some similar and some different results. Both benchmarks and the findings from the community outreach tools were used for determining the key findings and summary analysis of the current and future park and recreation needs in Desert Hot Springs.

Facility Type	Desert Hot Springs	Sun Valley (Nev)	Oakdale	Lompoc	Yuca Valley	Apple Valley	Median of Comparison Cities	Desert Hot Springs Difference from Median
Youth Baseball Fields	3	5	6	5	7	7	6	-3
Youth Softball Fields	1	0	5	5	5	4	3	-2
Soccer Fields	6	4	4	6	5	13	6	0
Youth Football Fields	1	1	0	1	2	2	1	0
Outdoor Basketball Courts	4	6	6	4	12	6	6	-2
Outdoor Tennis Courts	2	0	2	2	8	2	3	-1
Child Play Areas (Tot Lots)	3	2	9	10	6	11	7	-4
Spray/Water Play Area	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0
Community Center	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	0
Public Meeting Rooms	2	2	4	7	8	5	5	-3
Senior Center	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
Teen Center	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Public Swimming Pool	1	1	1	2	0	2	1	0
Family Picnic Facilities	14	8	10	8	14	13	11	3
Group Picnic Shelters	2	4	2	10	3	7	5	-3
Skate Park	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
Dog Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gymnasium	0	0	0	1	4	1	1	-1
Dedicated Walking Trail	1	2	4	5	2	1	3	-2
Open Turf Area Parks	4	2	3	7	2	14	5	-1
Amphitheater/Stage	1	0	1	3	1	2	1	0
Community Events Area	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0

Comparison Cities—Recreation Facilities—Surplus/Deficit

5.13 DEMAND AND NEEDS ANALYSIS

The public outreach tools provided a wide range of input into what the community would like to have for its parks, facilities, recreation and cultural programs. The types of facilities and programs requested during the input process followed along the lines of the national and state trends explained in Section 5.1. Desert Hot Springs residents are concerned with and want facilities and programs that address fitness, preventive recreation as an antidote for social problems, family recreation and cultural opportunities, volunteering, protecting open space, places to perform, indoor recreation, sports facilities and aquatic programs. This is what they perceive as a successful park and recreation delivery system.

Facility Type	Currently Available in Desert Hot Springs	Recommended Standard Per 25,000 Population	Desert Hot Springs Surplus or Deficit
Youth Baseball Fields	3	5	-2
Youth Softball Fields	1	3	-2
Soccer Fields	6	8	-2
Youth Football Fields	1	3	-2
Outdoor Basketball Courts	4	5	-1
Outdoor Tennis Courts	2	8	-6
Child Play Areas (Tot Lots)	3	5	-2
Spray/Water Play Area	1	2	-1
Community Center	2	2	0
Public Meeting Rooms	2	5	-3
Senior Center	1	1	0
Teen Center	0	1	-1
Public Swimming Pool	1	1	0
Family Picnic Facilities	14	10	4
Group Picnic Shelters	2	4	-2
Skate Park	1	1	0
Dog Park	0	1	-1
Gymnasium	0	1	-1
Dedicated Walking Trail	1	3	-2
Open Turf Area Parks	4	5	-1
Amphitheater/Stage	1	1	0
Community Events Area	0	1	-1

Park Facilities – Surplus/Deficit Based on NRPA Standards.

Sports facilities and sports programs were the most requested recreation category. This is due to the public's desire for youth and adult programs that promote fitness and exercise, involve people in positive activities, offer opportunities for volunteering, and bridge ethnic barriers. They perceive sports programs as an antidote for social problems by providing positive use of leisure time and a chance for self growth and confidence. It was clear during the public input that sports facilities and programs are important to Desert Hot Springs residents. The City has made great strides to address this need with the development of Mission Springs Park Soccer Fields and Wardman Park Little League/Softball field improvements.

Another important category to Desert Hot Springs residents was cultural facilities and programs. Again, there were numerous comments about cultural programs being part of the solution to social problems. Creative outlets, chances to socialize in a productive way, promotion of ethnic understanding and chances to learn were all mentioned as the benefits of including cultural facilities and programs in the park and recreation delivery system.

Aquatic facilities and programs received a high request rate, especially from the participants in the workshops, stakeholder and focus group input sessions. Making children water safe, opportunities to cool down in the summer, year round swim fitness programs, competition swimming, mommy and me and family recreation opportunities were all comments received as to why aquatic programs were important to residents. Just as people want to live in a city that a multitude of recreation and leisure time opportunities are available, people want to work in areas where they can recreate before or after work, or during their lunch hour. Being able to walk for fitness in a secure, safe and attractive environment was the biggest response for the type of recreation people participated in at work. Lunch time basketball programs, fitness classes and workout equipment were also high on the list of comments of how people recreate while at work.

Targeted activities for specific age groups were a common theme in each of the public outreach tools. While family recreation was identified as being necessary for a successful park and recreation system, specific programs appealing to youth, teens, adults and seniors were repeated as desirable in each of the public input tools conducted. There seems to be a wide variety of opinions as to what facilities are

needed in Desert Hot Springs in the future to meet community needs for recreation and cultural activities. However, each of the outreach tools and the benchmark comparisons indicated the number one need is for a Community Center/Gym Complex to serve all ages for indoor sports, recreation classes, meeting rooms and community events. When analyzing all of the community input the second most pressing need is for a Community Park with sports fields, stage/festival area, dog park, group picnic areas, trails, tot lots, rest rooms and open space.

People were also concerned with the City's ability to meet basic recreation needs for neighborhood parks in recently developing areas that contained the types of facilities needed by families to raise their children. After analyzing all of the community input and considering the comparison benchmarks, the project team put together the following list of priority facility needs that if completed by the time of city build-out, would provide the facilities the city will want to deliver, as well as the desired community programs identified in this chapter. Specific policies and facility and program recommendations and implementation strategies are contained in Chapter 6.

5.13.1 Priority Needs for New Facilities

The Project Team reviewed and analyzed all of the community input obtained through the various public input processes detailed above; and, in terms of community demand and needs the facilities that would best meet the desired demand for the future in Desert Hot Springs are:

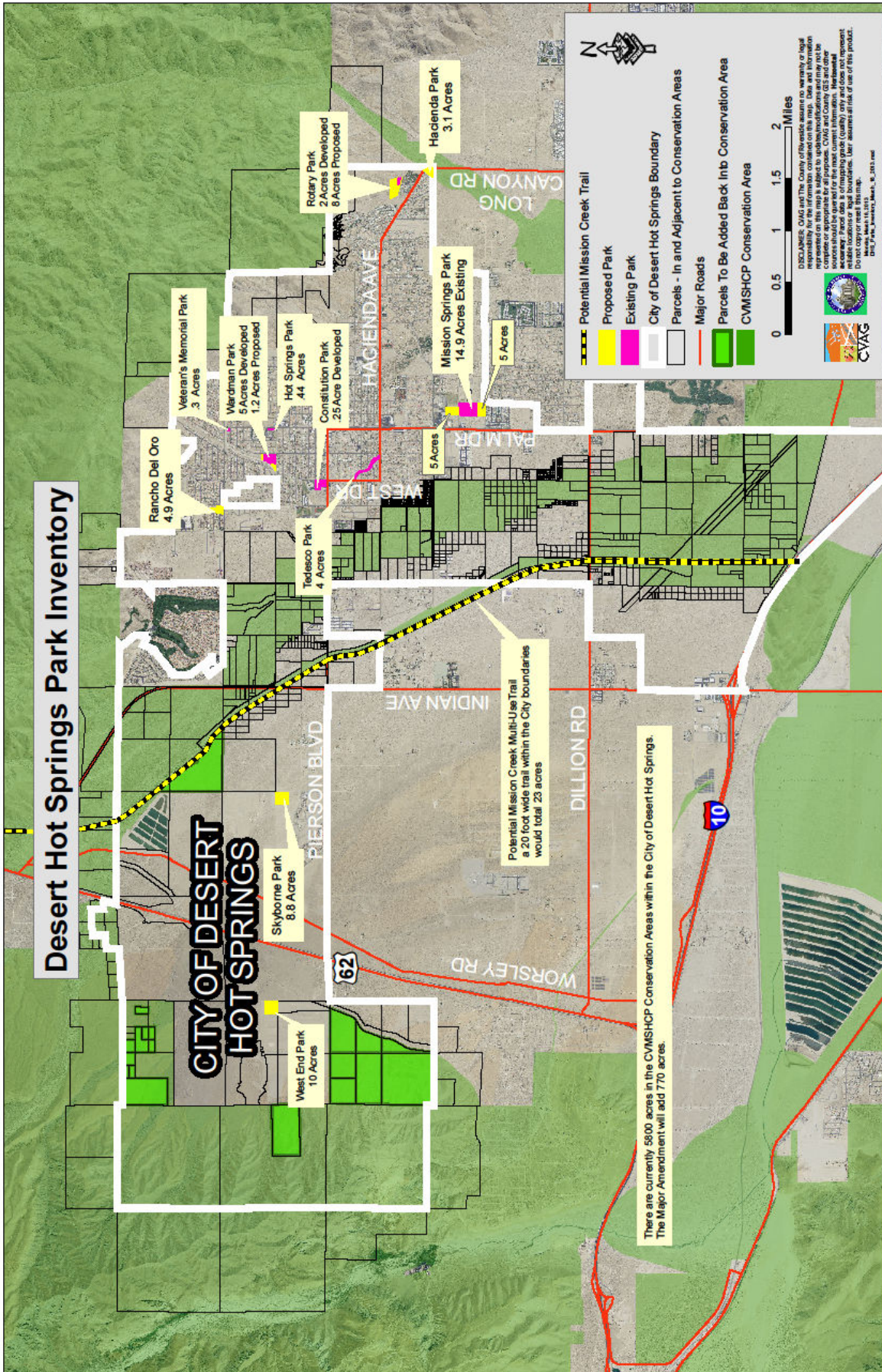
1. Community Center/Gym Complex to serve all ages for indoor sports, recreation classes, meeting rooms and community events.
2. Two Community Parks with sports fields, stage/festival areas, a Dog Park, group picnic areas, trails, tot lots, restrooms and open space.
3. Aquatics Complex for lessons, recreational and competitive swim activities, water exercise and water safety programs.
4. New Neighborhood Parks with fields, tot lots, spray pools, family picnic areas, and informal open space (Skyborne, Hacienda, Park Lane and future development sites).

5.13.2 Priority Needs for Existing Facilities

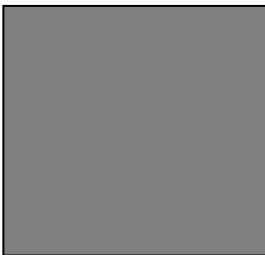
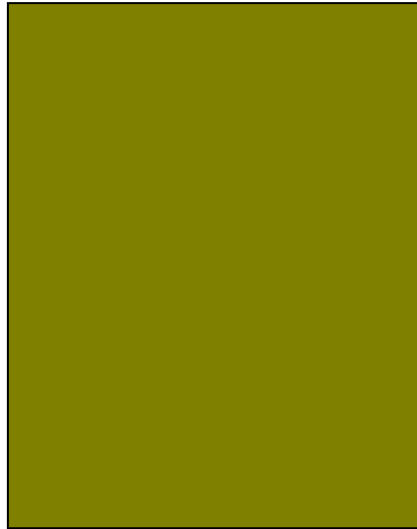
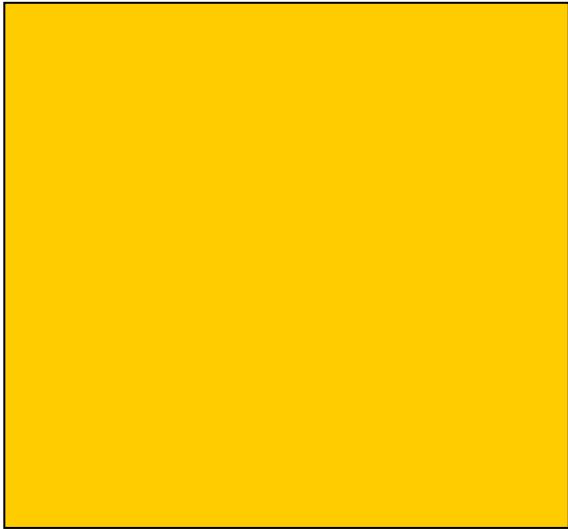
Based on community input, existing site evaluations, and the above demand analysis, the following are the priority needs for existing facilities.

1. Refurbishment of the existing or construction of a new Boys & Girls Club with a primary emphasis on serving teens.
2. Refurbishment and expansion of the Senior Center to include outdoor recreation amenities.
3. Additional lighted fields for little league/girls softball at Wardman Park.
4. Upgrade and expansion of the Library into the Carl May Center when the new City Hall complex is completed.
5. Relocation of the Skate Park facility at Carl May Center and the BMX facility at Guy J. Tedesco Park into a joint facility adjacent to the proposed new Boys & Girls Club within the Health & Wellness Center development, or at Wardman Park if it is expanded and refurbished.
6. Installation of trailheads, trail markers and view point spots at Rotary Park, but no further active development of the park so as to keep it a passive park facility.

The following map shows proposed locations for these facilities, and the areas they will serve within the community. In combination with existing park facilities, the distribution of the proposed park system will provide coverage for the entire City. Chapter 6 of the parks and recreation master plan presents policies, recommendations, projected costs and implementation options to meet the current and long term priority needs for new facilities and existing facilities, which will enable the City of Desert Hot Springs to deliver the programs, services and activities its residents desire.



CHAPTER 6



Recommendations & Policies

Recommendations & Polices

6.1 INTRODUCTION

THIS CHAPTER ANALYZES, summarizes and presents the following sections which contain the policies, guidelines and recommendations the City can follow to provide a winning park and recreation system:

- Community Challenges and Issues Affecting Service Delivery;
- Park Standards, Policy and Guideline Recommendations;
- Summary of Community Outreach Recommendations;
- Facility Recommendations; and
- Program Recommendations.

In actuality, it is unrealistic to think the City will be able to secure all of the funding necessary to implement every capital project and program. However, by presenting all of the capital projects and programs needed and desired by the community, the City has a complete awareness of what an ideal park and recreation system would look like. From there it can make its best efforts within the resources it is able to secure to implement that system.

6.2 COMMUNITY CHALLENGES AND ISSUES AFFECTING SERVICE DELIVERY

The project team defined a number of Community Challenges facing Desert Hot Springs that emerged from the research and analysis done for Chapters 2 through 5. These are very important factors that the team feels the City will have to deal with if it is to deliver a successful park and recreation system. The specific challenges that will affect the City's ability to implement the recommendations in the Master Plan are as follows:

Changes in Demographics - The long-term change in demographics, especially the projected changes in the Hispanic and Asian population, income levels and the level of education in Desert Hot Springs, will have a profound effect on both the types of programs and the types of facilities that are needed to meet the community's current and projected demand for park and recreation services. The City is now faced with providing services to residents with different cultural and social needs from the community profile that existed when the City incorporated. The diversity in ethnic backgrounds and economic levels in the community will affect the policy decisions the City will be making in the future with regards to allocating resources to parks and recreation facilities and programs. Aging of the community will also have an impact on the types of programs and facilities that will be needed in the future. As the community changes ethnically, families and youth may be caught between traditional cultural values and the values of being "American." Cross-cultural communication may also be a barrier to youth success.

Graffiti and Vandalism - Graffiti and vandalism are prevalent in today's society and Desert Hot Springs is not immune to this phenomena. Graffiti and vandalism in the park system causes maintenance problems and resident dissatisfaction with park facilities and the condition of the parks. The City has a very successful graffiti removal program and must continue to address the graffiti and vandalism problem because it improves the community's overall image and existing facilities. Building new facilities will not satisfy the community if graffiti and vandalism prevail.

Lack of Funding - Funding for ongoing park and facility maintenance and for meeting programming demands will be a critical problem for the City in the future. Desert Hot Springs is experiencing some new development and continued growth that will provide new revenue, however, the downturn in the economy; the State's budget problems, the dissolution of redevelopment agencies and increased costs of goods and services will affect the City's ability to find funding from traditional sources to implement the recommendations in the Park and Recreation Master Plan. It is going to be difficult in the short-term to maintain park maintenance levels, implement existing park improvements, build new parks and facilities, and provide programs and services desired by the community. Consequently, the City will need to continue policy directions that will allow:

- Use of resources as assets to generate new revenue;
- Partnering with other public agencies, non-profits and commercial entities; and,
- Development of more fee based recreation programs.

These policies will be critical for the City in the future if it is to address the funding required to implement the programming and facility recommendations.

Awareness - A frequently documented response as to why youth and their families do not participate in programs in Desert Hot Springs is that they were not aware of available services, programs, and facilities. Finding new ways of making people aware of the programs and services available to them will be critical in the future in order to increase participation and obtain the desired outcomes and benefits of a successful park and recreation system.

FUNDING POLICIES

- Use resources as assets to generate new revenue to pay for desired service levels
- Collaborate with other agencies to leverage resources
- Determine the best option for delivering recreation programs

Negative Image - The City of Desert Hot Springs has made great strides in the past few years in improving its infrastructure, downtown area, code enforcement, parks and schools, and residential neighborhoods; however, the city still suffers from negative publicity about crime, gangs, lack of retail opportunities and street conditions. While the City has started to address these issues by new development and promoting the positive images of Desert Hot Springs it will be imperative to continue these efforts in to gain community support for future facilities and programs.



*Citizens on Patrol's entry at the Chili Cook-off.
Photo by Bruce Montgomery*

Climate - The climate of Desert Hot Springs provides its residents with extreme conditions much of the year in the way of heat, cold and winds. In terms of recreation, the heat and wind provide the greatest challenges to year round use of outdoor facilities. Many participants in the outreach process were specific in requesting facilities that would allow them to enjoy activities without being hampered by high winds and blistering heat.

Health and Wellness - Youth and adults experience high levels of stress due to performance anxiety today. Local and national trends indicate a growing and substantial concern regarding sedentary behavior, obesity, and poor eating habits of youth and their families. Making Desert Hot Springs a center for health and wellness and an example of a successful health and wellness city, will ultimately change all the negative associations and transform the image of Desert Hot Springs into a most desirable place to live and visit.

Water Conservation and Energy Sustainability - When planning for future park facilities and improving existing facilities the City will need to work with the local Building Industry Association, Mission Springs Water District and other agencies and be committed to incorporating as many Green Building technologies as possible into each park design project to assist in water conservation, energy sustainability, reducing energy consumption and lower CO² gas emissions including the following site planning techniques:

- Building locations that take advantage of site options for solar access;
- Building shape, thermal mass and window location to minimize excess energy consumption;
- Use of water permeable or “porous” paving;
- On site storm water recharge;
- Utilization of recycled building materials;
- Protection of existing plants;
- New plantings from diverse communities of plant species well adapted to the site;
- The use of mulch in planted areas;
- Water efficiencies through the grouping of plants with similar water requirements; and
- Increased irrigation efficiencies through hydro zoning according to plant requirements and site microclimates, in addition to sensors to reduce over irrigation.

In developing the recommendations and strategies in the following sections the Project Team took each of these Community Challenges into account.

6.3 PARK STANDARDS, POLICY AND GUIDELINE RECOMMENDATIONS

Community and Neighborhood Parks and Centers are often considered the heart of the community, a place where the community and neighborhoods come together for recreation, learning, socializing, growing, and health. Community parks should be located based on a three to five mile service radius and neighborhood/local parks based on a ¼ to one mile service radius to ensure even distribution of park facilities throughout the City. (See Chapter 5 maps - Service Areas for Existing Parks, Future Parks and Schools).

The City should continue its practice of requiring new neighborhood parks and community parks be dedicated as part of new residential development. Chapter 3, the Park Facilities Inventory and Analysis shows what park amenities should be typically included in neighborhood and community parks, and the City should strive to include as many of the recommended amenities as the size and cost of development will allow. Special emphasis should be placed on providing the most requested amenities from the public outreach



*Kids and adults learned about sustainability at Earth Day Fest 2010.
Photo by Bruce Montgomery*

and Demand and Needs Analysis, including tot lots, playgrounds, and water play features, meeting room space, passive open space and practice fields.

The following park development standards should be adopted to ensure future park sites are designed to accomplish this goal:

- Provide and distribute Parks and Recreation to meet the diverse needs of the community.
- Coordinate the development of park facilities and trail systems throughout the community to provide safety, accessibility and compatibility between recreation facilities and residential areas
- Ensure all parks and facilities are adequately designed, landscaped and maintained. Provide parks and recreation facilities to meet the planning area’s diverse needs.
- Supply neighborhood and community parks at a minimum of 3 acres per 1,000 persons throughout the city.
- Strive to provide 10 acres of recreation and park space for each 1,000 persons for general regional recreation opportunity as a desirable goal. Recreational and park space includes neighborhood parks, community parks, school open space, county parks and state recreation areas.
- Establish one mile of recreational trails for each 1,000 persons as a desirable goal for developing trail systems.
- Coordinate development of park facilities and trail systems throughout the plan area which enhance the community centers concept and complement unique visual or natural resources.
- Ensure that all recreation and park facilities are adequately designed with “Sustainable Design Elements”, landscaped, and maintained at levels acceptable to the community.
- Require that the costs of recreation and park facilities and programs are borne by those who benefit from and contribute to additional demand.

SUSTAINABILITY

- Green Building Technologies
- Water Conservation
- Reduce Energy Consumption
- Lower Gas Emissions



Example of drought tolerant plants in the landscape.

- Provide safety, accessibility, and compatibility between parks and adjacent residential areas through “good neighbor” park practices and retrofit existing parks and design new parks according to “Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED).
- Encourage development and maintenance of regional parks and recreational facilities by the County of Riverside and the State of California Department of Parks and Recreation.
- Whenever possible pursue parks as a component of proposed groundwater recharge areas.
- Park access should be provided in close proximity to public transportation or make provisions for public transportation.
- Community parks should be located at the juncture of major and/or collector streets to provide for safe, efficient, and convenient vehicular access, and to allow for easy surveillance by law enforcement
- Locate community park-type athletic field complexes adjacent to major arterials.
- Use community parks as focal points for community development. Locate community parks to be highly visible and easily accessible.
- Consider community park locations adjacent to middle school sites when feasible.
- Provide appropriate buffers between community parks and adjacent residential development to help minimize noise and glare from lighted fields.
- Encourage the development of local non-profit organization social and recreational facilities in those areas currently under served by City community parks
- Locate community parks based on a three to five mile service radius to ensure even distribution of park facilities throughout the City.
- Community parks should have full street improvements and utility connections including, but not limited to, curbs, gutters, grading, automatic irrigation systems (within rights-of-way), turf, walkways and walkway lighting, street paving, traffic control devices, street trees, and sidewalks.
- Community Parks should have fencing or walls, where appropriate, along the property line of that portion of the subdivision contiguous to the dedicated land.
- Community Park sites should have enhanced drainage systems with special consideration given to possible installation of subsurface drainage systems in the sports fields.
- Locate neighborhood/local parks based on a 3/4 to one mile service radius to ensure even distribution of neighborhood park facilities throughout the City.
- Orient neighborhood and local parks to encourage convenient and safe pedestrian access.
- Consider annexation into the Desert Park District which can provide higher park standards than the minimum stated above.
- Require developers to dedicate land, provide improvements and/or in-lieu fees to serve the needs of the population in newly developing areas.



Trails need mapping and signage.

- Require developers of new subdivisions to show and adhere to park locations depicted in the Land Use Element of the General Plan and the Recreation and Parks Master Plan.
- Consider building indoor facilities to allow for year round recreation needs.
- Allow neighborhood park requirements to be met by community parks when such community parks are situated within, or at the boundaries, of neighborhoods and when they provide equivalent facilities.
- Encourage schools to make playgrounds and playfields available to local residents after normal school hours and on weekends as they provide neighborhood park uses.
- Pursue acquisition or long term lease of publicly-owned lands and utility rights-of-way as recreational facilities including trails, fields and/or picnic/tot-lots.
- In future retail and commercial development projects, it is important to see that places for community events, links to trails, passive open space, and commercial family recreation opportunities are included in the design review process. The benefits of including these items in retail and commercial developments are:
 - Greater generation of pedestrian traffic to the commercial facility;
 - Increased satisfaction of the shopping experience;
 - Increased social interaction among the community; and
 - Opportunities for events that bring the community together.

Following the above policies and guidelines, when making park and recreation decisions and allocating resources to the park and recreation system; will ensure a comprehensive approach to park development and operations. Staff should incorporate the above policies and guidelines into its annual work programs and planning procedures.

6.4 SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH RECOMMENDATIONS

Taking into account the above Community Challenges affecting the delivery of programs and services, and the summary of the Demand and Needs Analysis of 2008 that was presented earlier in Chapter 5, the Project Team developed a list of recommendations from all of the community outreach tools, that if pursued, would deliver the park and recreation system desired by the community. The summary of the community outreach recommendations listed below form the basis for the recommendations contained in Sections 6.5 and 6.6 of this chapter. They are divided into nine categories that reflect the input from the community from the questionnaires and workshops as to the most important items and issues the community wanted addressed in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. An action plan with costs and strategies for implementing the recommendations is presented in Chapter 7.

Synopsis of requests for existing park improvements:

- Improvements to Wardman Park that include additional little league and girls softball fields, a small performance venue, and improved picnic shelters. Re-use of the former Boys & Girls Club; the existing facilities at Wardman Park should be remodeled and used to meet community program demands.
- Improved walking trails at Mission Springs Park, along with expanded sports fields.
- Additional parking, monument signs, and trail head access points at Coyote Park.
- Relocation of the BMX facility from Tedesco Park to a regional park location, change of landscape features to reduce maintenance needs, and development of an additional passive turf area.
- Additional signage and lighting improvements to all parks.

Desired new park facilities:

- Gymnasium for indoor sports and activities.
- Community or Regional Park for sports fields, community center, event space.
- Neighborhood parks within future specific plan areas and underserved existing residential areas.
- Use of school sites for sports fields, play areas and after school activities.

- Health and Wellness facility.
- New Boys & Girls Club.
- Boxing Club facility.

Most requested special facilities wanted:

- Completion and Implementation of the Miracle Hill Master Plan.
- Formal Off-leash Dog Park(s).
- Competition and Recreational Aquatic Facility.
- Teen Center.
- BMX dirt track in a regional park setting as both a local and destination attraction facility.
- Festival and Events Center to host local and regional events.
- Community Garden(s).
- Relocated skate park in a regional park setting.
- Regional Sports Complex.
- Local trails and connections to regional trail systems.
- Expanded library with computer labs and study corrals.
- Campground with trail access.
- Geology Museum.

Safety and Security Goals:

- Change the perception that parks are unsafe due to gangs and crime.
- Retrofit existing parks and design new parks according to “Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).
- Improve park surveillance and patrol at Coyote Park.
- Design walking paths in parks that can accommodate public safety vehicles and police patrol.
- Enforce helmet and safety regulations.
- Pursue funding to establish a “Citizen Wilderness Rescue Team.”
- Seek funding to establish a “Park Ranger” program to increase staff presence at parks and facilities and enforce park regulations.

Desired trail development:

- Preparation of a Trails Master Plan with trail standards and trail development priorities.
- Seek funding and Use Agreements to use washes and flood channels as local trail systems and regional trail connectors.
- Design all future parks with walking trails.
- Provide walking trails within the downtown redevelopment plans.
- Establish formal trail heads with signage and directional access to local and regional trails.

Synopsis of most desired program recommendations:

- After school and evening activities for teens, especially for “At Risk” teens vulnerable to gang recruitment.
- After school programs for elementary and middle school youth in the areas of arts/crafts,



Young girl at National Night Out.

music, dance, self esteem, sports, exercise, fitness, self defense.

- Indoor sports and recreation activities; volleyball, basketball, indoor walking track, fitness equipment, exercise classes, leagues, and clinics.
- More programs for seniors to keep them active, both indoor and outdoor activities; establish clubs of special interest and provide social events.
- Affordable activities for low income families; recreation classes, sports clinics, summer day camps, holiday events, swimming opportunities and self improvement programs.
- Youth sports programs that teach fundamentals and give experience so that they act as feeder programs into high school sports and help Desert Hot Springs kids compete better with other high schools.
- Health and wellness programs and activities that promote exercise, healthy eating, environmental sensitivity, and cultural tolerance.
- Cultural diversity activities such as American-Canadian Day, Cinco de Mayo festival, etc.
- Opportunities to perform, such as a battle of the bands, Community Theater, concerts in the park, children's theater, etc.
- Patriotic programs and activities and memorial tributes for the whole city to participate in.
- Destination events, tournaments and activities that generate revenue and promote economic development.
- Improved library services, including study corrals, computer labs, children's activities, etc.
- Educational programs, lecture series, earthquake awareness, home security, financial programs, parent-child communication, resource center for social services.

Public Awareness/Communication recommendations:

- Broader communication between all service providers and the community on available programs, activities and services by use of direct mail recreation brochure, e-mail, web site, newspaper, flyers, information kiosks, street banners, and coordination with Chamber of Commerce.
- Better identification and directional signage for trails and parks.
- Branding campaign to promote the image of a health and wellness city that is culturally rich.

Partnerships and coordination efforts:

- Explore possible relationships with Desert Recreation District for facilities and programs.
- Develop joint use agreements with Palm Springs Unified School District for use of elementary and middle schools for recreation purposes and access for youth sports groups to fields.
- Coordination with YMCA for after school latch key programs at school sites.
- Help Boys & Girls club build a new full service facility.
- Work with churches, service clubs, and non-profit organizations to promote community events, social service programs, family activities, cultural programs, and counseling services.

Other community input recommendations:

- Preservation, protection, and controlled access to the open space within the MSHCP.
- Inclusion of programmable space and walking trails within the downtown core revitalization.
- Implementation of Park Development Impact fees that reflect the true cost of providing the desired park and recreation system.
- Acquisition of properties for mini parks in underserved neighborhoods.
- Promote the recruitment of commercial recreation facilities such as movie theaters, roller and ice skating rinks, family fun centers, etc.

6.5 PRIORITY FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the demand and needs analysis presented in Chapter 5 and the summary of community input recommendations above, the consultant team has developed recommendations for existing parks and facilities and for new facilities that would allow the City to implement the programs, activities and services desired by the community in the future.

6.5.1 Recommended Improvements to Existing Facilities

Wardman Park – Wardman Park is one of the most heavily used parks in the city and functions as a community park because it has public tennis courts, group picnic areas, and little league/girls softball fields. The city's public swimming pool and Boys & Girls Club have been relocated to the new Community Health and Wellness Center across from Desert Hot Springs High School, which, frees up the facilities at Wardman Park for other uses. The City is currently outreaching to all the commissions, the Parks Committee, and the general public for ideas on the re-use of the Wardman Park buildings. The recommended improvements to Wardman Park include the following:

- Upgrade of the group picnic areas and shelters;
- Inclusion of a small outdoor performance venue;
- Redesign and replacement of the tennis and basketball courts;
- A new tot lot and play area for 2- to 5-year-olds and for 5- to 12-year-olds;
- Re-use of the existing community buildings and the community pool;
- Additional lighted little league and girls softball fields;
- A perimeter walking trail;
- Additional off-street parking; and
- New restroom facilities.

Mission Springs Park – Mission Springs Park serves as the City's major soccer complex. It is also heavily used for walking and jogging on its perimeter walking trail. To meet the demand for future soccer/football fields the City should pursue the possible acquisition of additional property adjacent to Mission Springs Park. Pedestrian and bicycle paths should link the existing and new parks for easy access for those using different modes of transportation other than motor vehicles.

Tedesco Park – Tedesco Park serves both neighborhood and community purposes and has been recently upgraded. Due to community requests, a BMX course/facility was included in the redesign and upgrades. The BMX facility draws both local and regional users however, without constant supervision it creates conflicts with the neighborhood users of the play equipment, picnic, spray pool, and passive turf areas. The recommended long term option is to relocate the BMX facility to a regional park setting where it will not conflict with neighborhood park uses. The BMX facility is very popular and a facility is needed in Desert Hot Springs. If the City can find another location for the BMX facility it is recommended that the area of Guy J. Tedesco Park occupied by the course be redesigned into more passive turf areas for the neighborhood to use. The current community center at Guy J. Tedesco Park is mainly used as a Police Substation and meeting room space and for operating special events at the park. Increasing activity at the community center will reduce vandalism and increase neighborhood satisfaction with the park. Chapter 7 contains strategies for accomplishing this.

Coyote Park – Coyote Park is located in the northeast area of the City and currently serves as a passive neighborhood park, dog park, and trailhead for trails in the surrounding hills. There has been talk of developing this park into a community park with typical community park amenities and an outdoor performance venue. With the implementation of the Miracle Hill Master Plan and the future development of Hacienda Park in this area, park needs in this area can be accommodated. Improvements should include playground equipment, larger dog park, passive recreation area, pedestrian and bicycle paths, park and trail head signage, adequate parking, improved access, a small amphitheatre with concessions and restrooms.

6.5.2 New Facility Recommendations

Palm Drive and Park Lane Community Park Proposal - The County of Riverside has constructed a medical clinic on the front portion of a 14 acre site on the northeast corner of Palm Drive and Park Lane. The City is currently in negotiations with the County of Riverside for the acquisition of the rear portion of the remaining 10 acres to expand Mission Springs Park to accommodate the immediate need for additional sports fields to host local and regional events and destination attractions. Currently, the City uses the adjacent Mission Springs Park for community and regional events, which can cause conflicts with sports field scheduling and does not really have the support amenities necessary for the ease of operation in producing events.

It is recommended that the design for this park site accommodate the facilities necessary to deliver the programs desired by the community. These include a sports complex containing three combination soccer and football fields recessed into a bowl area with perimeter turf spectator seating; a multi-purpose sports and community center; a small recessed amphitheater for performance or speaker events, walking and jogging trails with exercise equipment stations, tot and children's playground equipment, adequate restrooms and parking and family picnic areas. Development of this facility will meet the needs for sports fields (both league games and tournaments); multi-purpose community center space for classes and activities for youth through adults; and the need for specifically designed space for local and regional events, celebrations, festivals, and concerts. Costs and strategies for developing this site are discussed in Chapter 7.



Proposed Location for Community Park at Palm Drive and Park Lane.

Cabot's Pueblo Museum and Miracle Hill Master Plan - The City has recently completed the Cabot's Pueblo Museum and Miracle Hill Master Plan. These projects will provide for a number of cultural and educational venues for its residents and visitors. In addition to museums, art galleries, classrooms, amphitheater, public hot springs, and public art there will be opportunities for trailhead access to both local and regional trail systems. Development of these master plans is critically important to Desert Hot Springs in its efforts to brand itself as a culturally aware health and wellness city and to create a world class destination attraction to support economic development. Therefore, it is recommended that completion of the Cabot's Museum and Miracle Hill Master Plans be a priority for capital improvements.

Future Parks - There are currently three main undeveloped park sites that the City is actively pursuing through the park dedication process, and several other specific plans for residential development that will require park dedication. It is recommended that the park dedications and developments be consistent with the park standards and descriptions stated above in Section 6.3. It is also recommended that the park standards, policies and guidelines be incorporated into the parks and open space element of the City's General Plan when it is updated.

Special Facilities - There were numerous requests from the public for a movie theater, roller/ice skating rink and family fun center. It is recommended that the City pursue these facilities through commercial development efforts and that a developer operate these special facilities. While these facilities were desired, it is not recommended that the City develop and operate them itself.

6.6 NEW PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Due to the City's current limitations of staff resources and available funding, the City has had to prioritize the direct programs and activities it operates to the following: Senior Center, activities at the new Community Health & Wellness Center/Boys & Girls Club, and community special events. The City also provides coordination and resources for community based organizations to deliver programs and activities. The City works with the Palm Springs Unified School District, Cabot's Museum Foundation, and faith based institutions to coordinate and support programs for the community.

It is recommended the City continue this practice while resources are limited. As revenue for parks and recreation programs and services becomes available, the City should hire a Recreation Supervisor to enhance and expand this delivery system and to coordinate more special events and destination attraction activities. The community desires and is in need of additional recreation, cultural and social programs, especially for children, youth, teens, and adults. While the City has a new Community Health & Wellness Center/Boys & Girls Club that addresses these needs it is recommended that the City pursue ways to build another gym and community center as the City grows. The City should strive to provide a comprehensive program schedule of fee-based recreation classes for all ages, family activities, self improvement programs, indoor sports activities, and leagues/camps/clinics for youth and adults through coordination with Desert Recreation District. Chapter 7 provides strategies and options for accomplishing these program needs.

6.7 PARK MAINTENANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

The following section contains the recommended park maintenance standards the City should adopt and make a priority to implement. During the community outreach it was continually brought up how important existing park maintenance is for both residents and for future economic development. Following the recommended park maintenance standards will insure Desert Hot Springs's parks meet community expectations and are safe for park users.

Quality Standards for Parks and Facility Maintenance - The Quality Standards contained in this document define the desired conditions of park features, fields, and facilities and are designed to provide a standard of maintenance satisfactory to the community and clearly attainable by maintenance staff. The public expectations serve as the basis for these Quality Standards and provide a road map for staff to maintain parks and facilities to acceptable performance ratings.



A variety of maintenance issues were observed during site visit of park sites.

I. ORNAMENTAL TURF

Ornamental turf refers to those lawn areas serving primarily as visual attractions. Because different types of grasses serve different functions, the methods used to maintain them, the dollars allotted for their maintenance and the criteria used to evaluate them are also different. On athletic fields, for example, usability is more important than attractiveness. No other structure, fixture or landscape feature has a greater impact on the appearance of the park system than that of the ornamental turf. Indeed, the quality of it often overshadows all else. For many observers, it is the primary indicator of overall park quality. A well-managed lawn can effectively draw attention away from shortcomings in other areas, while impressions of even the best facility can be quickly ruined by poorly-managed turf. In regard to attractiveness, the quality of turf in lawn areas shall be judged by a review of five factors – color, height, density, texture, and edging. In regard to usability, the quality of turf in lawn areas shall be judged by a review of one factor – utility. These are further discussed below.

Attractiveness

Color - There is no doubt that color is one of the most obvious and widely-used (if not the most valid) indicator of turf quality. So great is its influence that it can leave a lasting impression (good or bad) on those who may never do more than view the park from a passing automobile. It is intended that only the color of existing turf will be evaluated. That is, a lack of color due to an inoperative sprinkler or chemically treated grass would affect the rating, but a lack of color due to non-existent turf (bare patches) would not. Such problems would be identified and rated under a separate category (e.g., density).

Quality Standard: Overall color is uniform and quite green despite occasional small (in proportion to overall size of lawn) spots of discoloration (yellowing/browning, etc.) noticeable from a distance.

Height - The importance of uniform height of turf is easily demonstrated by the visual impact of a newly mowed lawn and one that has not been maintained for several days.

Quality Standard: Turf is kept at a uniform height.

Density - The density of turf is as important as its height. A thick stand of turf provides a more functional surface for park users, a healthier, groomed appearance and greater protection against texture variations (by allowing fewer weeds to germinate) than does a thin stand. It is intended that the overall density of designated lawn areas will be evaluated, not just that of existing grasses. That is, there is where the impact of bare spots is taken into account.

Quality Standard: Turf appears extremely dense from a distance. Closer inspection reveals that while it is quite dense, the soil surface can be identified without great difficulty.

Texture - The importance of uniform texture when judging the overall quality of a lawn is subtle but considerable. Often, for example, it is the different texture of weeds which makes them offensive to the eye in a stand of turf. Degrees of difference in texture account for the fact that broadleaf weeds are generally more noticeable, and hence more offensive, than grassy weeds.

Quality Standard: Texture from a distance is quite consistent as characterized by lawns comprised solely of grass blades. Slight or patchy variations in grass blade texture may be evident. Close inspection may reveal occasional, broadleaf weeds.

Edging - The aesthetic qualities of turf are generally enhanced by clear, purposeful contrasts to surrounding differences in material, texture and color. This is achieved by clearly defining the borders of designated turf areas. The more obvious the border, the sharper the contrast will be. Allowing grasses to stray from their designated boundaries may impact not only the overall appearance of the turf, but the utility of surrounding park surfaces as well.

Quality Standard: Designated turf boundaries are obvious and sharply defined throughout the park.

Usability

Utility - Park visitors use lawn areas for a variety of purposes, including such activities as picnicking, informal ball games, kite flying and passive recreation. While the five factors previously mentioned may influence the utility of a lawn, other constraints affect it as well. An uneven soil surface, for example, can make it more difficult or dangerous for users to jog or to play ball; a soggy or deeply-rutted lawn is of little use to picnickers.

Quality Standard: Entire lawn area is capable of supporting all reasonable lawn activities. There are no areas unsuitable for use.

II. TREES

City of Desert Hot Springs maintains an urban forest throughout its park system because it recognizes the vital roles that trees play in landscape beautification. Trees provide the City with various colors, shapes and textures – with natural grace and beauty. They camouflage unsightly scenes and break the monotony of man-made materials such as concrete and asphalt.

The City also realizes that trees contribute a great deal more than their natural beauty to the quality of our lives. They help to keep our air supply fresh by producing oxygen and absorbing the carbon dioxide the City, industries and automobiles produce. Their leaves trap and filter dust and pollen. Trees act as natural air conditioners, providing shade in the summer and insulation during winter months. Trees slow strong winds, function as effective sound barriers, give shade and privacy, and increase surrounding property values.

The large number of trees comprising the park systems forest makes it difficult to perform a detailed, time-consuming appraisal of each tree on a tri-annual basis. Indeed, a thorough evaluation would require that each tree be climbed and inspected by a qualified arborist – an unwarranted task requiring thousands of hours. While initial observations of specific trees may prompt such detailed evaluations on occasion, the routine inspection of each tree on a triennial basis shall be performed from ground level and in the following manner.

Attractiveness

Quality Standard: Trees should display at least some semblance of the form common to the species. Some allowance shall be made for natural “character,” but grossly misshapen trees will not pass muster.

Quality Standard: There should be no stubs, dead “flags” or other unsightly distractions.

Quality Standard: Stumps should not be visible. They should either be removed to at least twelve inches below ground (e.g., in open turf) or hidden by existing vegetation (e.g., planter beds).

Usability

Quality Standard: Trees planted for a specific reason (e.g., to serve as visual screens, noise barriers, or to provide summer shade) should serve the intended purpose.

Quality Standard: Tree limbs should not interfere with buildings, utility wires, etc.

Quality Standard: Limbs and/or foliage should not obstruct park signs. Tree roots should not interfere with the utility of surrounding facilities or fixtures.

III. GROUND COVERS AND SHRUBS

Ground covers vary widely in height, leaf color, texture and form. Although technically most any plant which covers the surface may be called ground cover most plants within the park system designated as ground cover are low-growing evergreen plants which are encouraged to form a fairly dense mat. A shrub can be generally defined as a woody perennial plant, often with many stems, which measure 8" or less. This is a useful working definition, but is rather arbitrary, as distinctions between ground covers and shrubs and between shrubs and trees can blur. Certain shrubs can be designated as ground cover while others can be trained as trees. Both ground cover and shrubs serve several landscape functions. Ground Cover is a relatively low maintenance portion of the landscape, which can help suppress weeds and aid in soil retention. Ground Cover/Shrubs may be planted to route traffic or camouflage unsightly objects (vacuum breakers, poles, etc.) They also provide visual interest and contrast to expanses of turf areas by varying heights, shapes, and seasonal color.

Attractiveness

Quality Standard: There are no inappropriate bare areas in ground cover areas. Flowering Ground Cover/Shrubs display good distribution of flowers (in appropriate season) across entire planting. No evidence of pests or debris from normal viewing distances. Close inspection reveals minor signs of pests/disease.

Usability

Quality Standard: Plants conform to height consistent with species and intended function.

IV. TURF ATHLETIC FIELDS

No other structure, fixture or landscape feature has a greater impact on the appearance of the park system than that of the ornamental turf. Indeed, the quality of it often overshadows all else. For many observers, it is the primary indicator of overall park quality. A well-managed lawn can effectively draw attention away from shortcomings in other areas, while impressions of even the best facility can be quickly ruined by poorly-managed turf.

Attractiveness

Color - There is no doubt that color is one of the most obvious and widely-used (if not the most valid) indicator of turf quality. So great is its influence that it can leave a lasting impression (good or bad) on those who may never do more than view the park from a passing automobile. It is intended that only the color of existing turf will be evaluated. That is, a lack of color due to an inoperative sprinkler or chemically treated Kikuyu grass would affect the rating, but a lack of color due to non-existent turf (bare patches) would not. Such problems would be identified and rated under a separate category (e.g., density).

Quality Standard: Overall color is uniform and quite green despite occasional small (in proportion to overall size of lawn) spots of discoloration (yellowing/browning, etc.) noticeable from a distance.

Height - The importance of uniform height to turf is easily demonstrated by the visual impact of a newly mowed one that has not been maintained for several days. Height also can affect the utility of the turf.

Quality Standard: Turf is kept at a uniform height.

Density - The density of turf is as important as its height. A thick stand of turf provides a more functional surface for park users, a healthier, groomed appearance and greater protection against texture variations (by allowing fewer weeds to germinate) than does a thin stand. It is intended that the overall density of designated lawn areas will be evaluated, not just that of existing grasses. That is, there is where the impact of bare spots is taken into account.

Quality Standard: Turf appears extremely dense from a distance. Closer inspection reveals that while it is quite dense, the soil surface can be identified without great difficulty.

Edging - The aesthetic qualities of turf are generally enhanced by clear, purposeful contrasts to surrounding differences in material, texture and color. This is achieved by clearly defining the borders of designated turf areas. The more obvious the border, the sharper the contrast will be. Allowing grasses to stray from their designated boundaries may impact not only the overall appearance of the turf, but the utility of surrounding park surfaces as well. Edges designed to flow or be more subtle in nature should be identified prior to the audit.

Quality Standard: Designated turf boundaries are obvious and sharply defined throughout the park.

Usability

Utility - Park visitors use lawn areas for a variety of purposes, including such activities as picnicking, informal ball games, kite flying and passive recreation. While the five factors previously mentioned may influence the utility of a lawn, other constraints affect it as well. An uneven soil surface, for example, can make it more difficult or dangerous for users to jog or to play ball; a soggy or deeply-rutted lawn is of little use to picnickers.

Quality Standard: Entire lawn area is functional (capable of supporting all reasonable lawn activities).

V. BALL FIELDS (INFIELDS)

Turf areas of sports fields are maintained in accordance with the Quality Standards. However, the condition of the ball field, both turf infield with skinned base line and pads and skinned infields, is integral to use of the sport fields for hundreds of park visitors of all ages. The following Quality Standards apply specifically to the infield area of ball fields throughout the park system.

Attractiveness

Quality Standard: Areas are free of litter, debris and weeds. Bleachers and backstops are properly painted/sealed/cleaned where appropriate.

Usability

Quality Standard: Areas are reasonably level, free of holes, depressions, rocks and debris. Areas have clearly defined boundaries. Areas are free of compaction. Lights are functional.

VI. TENNIS AND BASKETBALL COURTS

Tennis and basketball courts are maintained through combined operational and capital efforts. Court surfaces are sealed and striped periodically and staff/contractors provide the tasks of litter removal, net repair/replacement and court washing on a routine basis.

Attractiveness

Quality Standard: Areas are free of litter, debris, vandalism and graffiti. Surfaces are painted where applicable.

Usability

Quality Standard: Areas are clean, smooth without large cracks and have clearly visible and well-defined lines. Nets, rims and backboards are set at the proper height and/or tension. Lights are functional.

VII. TOT LOTS/PLAYGROUNDS

The relatively high standards by which it is judged, the quality of the playgrounds is a reflection of their importance in several respects. First, they are depended on by both children and guardians on a regular basis. It should be kept in mind that while one inoperative piece of play equipment may seem to you a minor problem when compared to your total park responsibilities, to any number of children it may be a catastrophic loss as their scope of concern is extremely narrow and tends to focus on immediate gratification. Second, related safety issues become paramount when one considers that while children are among our most precious natural resources, they cannot be expected to search for or to recognize many threats to their own well-being. For this, they are largely dependent on you.

The quality of playgrounds and tot lots (defined below) shall be judged on the basis of their safety, utility, and attractiveness, with the following description serving as the general quality standard:

Designated playgrounds and tot lots shall be maintained to be safe and attractive, and to provide school-age children with a variety of skill and sensory activity opportunities, such that the qualities of safety, aesthetics, and utility are in superior condition throughout the year.

DEFINITIONS

Pre-School Age Tot Lots (designed for ages 2 to 5 year-old children) - Tot Lots are designed with very young children in mind. Base material is generally a rubberized surface with areas of washed plaster sand, which serves as the primary medium for tot activity. There are play fixtures designed in height and form to satisfy the needs of pre-school age children.

Elementary Age Playgrounds (designed for ages 6 to 10 year-old children) - Elementary age playgrounds are designed with older children in mind. Base material is generally a rubberized surface with areas of washed plaster sand capable of withstanding heavy foot traffic and cushioning minor falls. Fixtures/structures are planned to stimulate children's imagination and to provide a variety of skill and sensory experiences.

Safety - Safety is by far the most important standard by which to evaluate the quality of the playgrounds. It is expected that safety will always be the staff's highest priority, and that he/she will pay close and special attention to areas frequented by children. Informal (unscheduled) safety inspections of playground areas should be performed often by staff, and hazards identified should be eliminated immediately (within 48 hours). Equipment which cannot be repaired immediately should be removed from service whenever possible thus rendering them safe.

The following list of quality standards should be used as a general guide during playground safety inspections. They are meant to serve as basic foundations on which to build – they are not substitutes for close scrutiny or common sense.

Attractiveness

Beauty, as the saying goes, is in the eye of the beholder. Thus, this particular rating of playground equipment requires a certain amount of subjectivity. The intent, however, is not to judge the appeal of a structure's design, or the choice of color for a particular piece of equipment; rather, the intent is to judge the appearance of each piece of play equipment as compared to its original appearance (e.g., is the paint peeling? Does it appear to be in "very used" or "like new" condition?).

Playgrounds and activity centers in particular, will never be fully functional if they are not attractive to those intended to use them. In general, children prefer new things to old, shiny objects instead of dull and bright colors as compared to faded. Playground apparatus should be maintained and rated with this in mind.

Quality Standard: Are free of litter, debris, vandalism and graffiti. Surfaces are bright and colorful.

Usability

Playground utility refers to the ability of individual pieces of equipment to perform their intended function. Rating Criteria: Apparatus serve their intended purpose.

Quality Standard: Surfaces are clean and surface material is adequate.

VIII. PICNIC SITES

The City's parks attract thousands of picnickers each year. Companies and residents use these facilities extensively, especially during the cooler months of October through April. It is essential that staff prepare picnic sites for this intense use and hold to the Quality Standards noted below so the picnic users experience will be positive and memorable.

Attractiveness

Quality Standard: Are free of litter, debris, vandalism and graffiti. Surfaces are painted where applicable.

Usability

Quality Standard: Are clean and functional according to their intended purpose. Used briquettes are emptied from barbecues.

IX. RESTROOMS

Ornamental turf areas are key to the public's general perception of park conditions; however, the condition of park restrooms can destroy even the most positive opinions of park conditions. Properly or poorly maintained restrooms are both noted by park visitors. Many visitors use the restroom condition as their criteria for which park to visit. Few tasks provide staff an opportunity (when properly done) to make such a positive impact on the perception of parks. The restroom Quality Standards are as follows:

Attractiveness

Quality Standard: Toilets, urinals, sinks, floors, walls and partitions are clean, odor and graffiti free.

Usability

Quality Standard: Are clean, odor free and functional.

X. HARDSCAPE

Park hardscape areas facilitate many activities throughout the parks system. Movement from one park activity center (building, sports field, etc.) to another is just one purpose of hardscape. Other important uses include parties on patios near buildings and leisure strolls. And, no other portion of the parks system holds as great a potential for visitor injury. It is critical that staff familiarize themselves with, and provides support actions for the following hardscape Quality Standards.

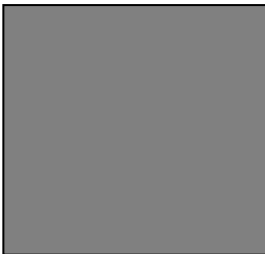
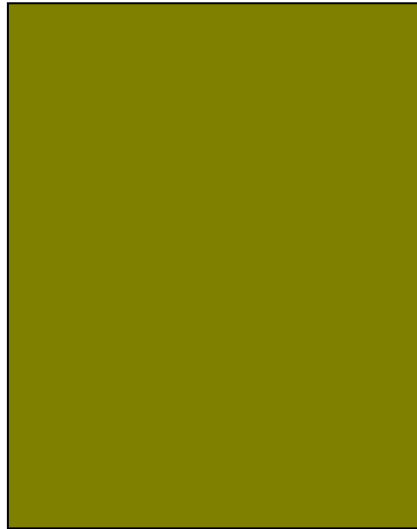
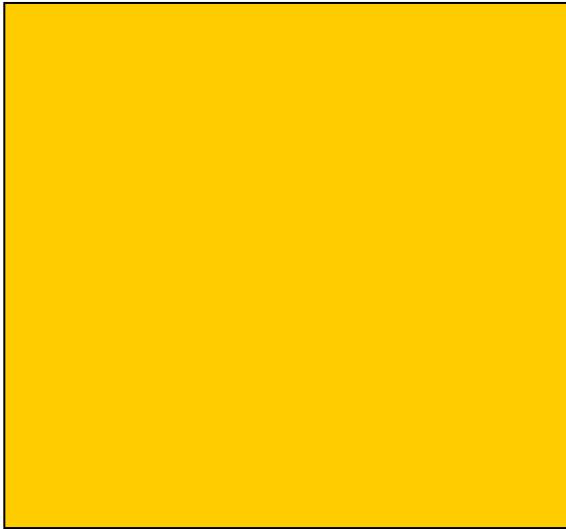
Attractiveness

Quality Standard: Are free of weeds, graffiti and debris.

Usability

Quality Standard: Are free of obstructing debris. Displaced hardscape should not have unintended differentials greater than one-half inch in height. Hardscape should be free of severe cracking and/or unintended separations greater than one-half inch wide.

CHAPTER 7



Costs, Implementation Strategies & Operating Options

Costs, Implementation Strategies & Operating Options

7.1 INTRODUCTION

THIS SECTION PRESENTS options and strategies the City may wish to consider for implementing the recommendations contained in Chapter 6. The methodology for the basis for estimations of costs is provided, along with preliminary cost estimates the City can use to determine future funding requirements.

The implementation strategies are intended to present options the City can consider for implementing existing park and recreation facility improvement recommendations.

The strategies presented are based on strategies used by other agencies to successfully fund or finance and implement similar types of facilities that are recommended for Desert Hot Springs. These options may or may not be right for Desert Hot Springs, but can at least provide ideas and development strategies the City can use as a basis for discussion to develop an implementation strategy that is right for Desert Hot Springs.



Mission Springs tot lot.

Photo Courtesy of Bruce Montgomery

The methods used to determine probable costs and funding requirements include looking at similar projects being done by other agencies, building industry cost estimates, inflation and economic factors, determining desired quality of construction, level of service needed to implement the recommendations and the types of funding sources that will be used to implement the proposed recommendations.

The facility recommendations are organized according to the key findings identified through the community outreach and needs analysis process. Year 2010-dollar amounts is used to calculate projected costs and required funding estimates for going “green” with “LEED Compliant” (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) construction. The cost estimates represent the following LEED compliance:

- Sustainable sites
- Materials and resources
- Water efficiency
- Indoor environmental quality
- Energy and atmosphere
- Innovation and design process

Although the cost estimates are for standard quality “green” construction for the recommendations, there are less expensive ways of implementing the recommended facilities if political and financial concerns

limit the ability to be LEED compliant. In order for the City to develop costs estimates to determine potential funding needs for facility development the following data published in 2010 from the “United States Office of Construction and Facilities Management (Los Angeles Area)” pertaining to per square foot construction costs for the typical types of municipal facilities is shown in the table below.

**Per square foot costs taken from
“United States Office of Construction and Facilities Management (Los Angeles Area)”**

Standard Community/Senior Center	\$409 s.f.
Gymnasium/Indoor Sports facility	\$515 s.f.
Aquatic Center with 50 meter pool, lesson pool, and support amenities	\$565 s.f.
ADA compliant vandal resistant park Rest Room	\$364 s.f.
Artificial Turf U14 Soccer Field	\$800,000
Natural turf U14 Soccer Field	\$600,000
Girls Softball field with natural turf and 180’ outfield	\$265,000
Little League Baseball field with natural turf and 200’ outfield	\$345,000
Artificial Turf regulation Football field	\$800,000
Natural Turf regulation Football field	\$550,000
ADA compliant standard 10,000 square foot tot lot	\$325,000
ADA compliant 2,500 square foot water play/spray pool	\$285,000
Surface parking with turf block and landscaping	\$1,200 per space

The construction market is subject to rapid changes brought on by natural disasters and global events. The cost estimates are for standard LEED compliant construction and could increase significantly if construction was in a Federal Flood Plain, on fill or slopes requiring pilings or retaining walls, or containing exotic architectural features. Adjustments may need to be made to cost estimates when specific plans are prepared for park and facility projects based on most current market surveys and industry reports. The cost estimates provided below do not include preparation of plans and specifications, environmental remediation if necessary, cost of financing or any construction contingency the City requires for capital projects. As projects go through their final approval process, the cost estimates will need updating to reflect current conditions.

Desert Hot Springs’ Capital Improvement Program is funded from a variety of sources, including park fees, general fund monies, per capita allocation of state park bond money, competitive grants from state propositions and specialized grants for ADA improvements and trails/transportation projects. The City will be able to pursue funding from Federal stimulus grants, open space conservancy grants, clean energy/conservation grants and earmarks from County and State representatives as they secure Federal stimulus funds for local projects. While these funding sources can provide opportunities for funding improvements recommended in the master plan, finding funding to continue the level of park and facility maintenance the citizens expect and to fund new facilities the community wants will be more difficult. The City’s traditional funding sources, along with grants, will be the primary method for implementing the master plan recommendations. Of course, the economy and political priorities will play a large role in determining the City’s ability to pursue this strategy.

7.2 OVERVIEW OF FUNDING/FINANCING PARK CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Chapter 6 of the document contains specific recommendations for existing park improvements as well as future parks and facilities. The following section is an overview and explanation of various funding and financing methods available to municipal agencies for funding capital projects. This information is provided to inform the reader of options the City may consider when funding needed capital improvements. Section 7.3 presents specific strategies and options for each of the facility and program

recommendations listed in Chapter 6. Again the following overview is simply educational for the reader and not a specific recommendation to proceed with any one of the types of funding options presented.

Use of Bonds - General Obligation Bonds make sense when a city has several different types of facilities it needs to develop and there is strong community support. For example, if a city wanted to build a new police station, community park and library, it may bundle all three into one General Obligation Bond. Hopefully this would create a wider voter support to get the two-thirds approval required by General Obligation Bonds. General Obligation Bonds sometimes do not succeed for special interest facilities. For example, a General Obligation Bond to build a new aquatics facility or sports complex would probably not receive the two-thirds voter approval necessary to issue the bonds because such projects are only important to a specific segment of the community who will use them, and unless that segment can convince two thirds of the voters the projects are worthwhile, it is difficult to get such a measure passed.

Some cities that need to develop a number of recreation and park facilities have had success selling General Obligation Bonds to support the city's implementation of its Parks and Recreation Master Plan for facility development. When voters know that the bonds will only go to a Park Master Plan that they have approved, they tend to support such initiatives. General Obligation Bonds are paid for out of the City's General Tax Allotment Fund. So the allocation of dollars to a General Obligation Bond for park purposes will compete with the City's needs for ongoing operations and other types of needed capital improvements. Only cities with excess general fund capacity are really able to use General Obligation Bonds for park and facility development.

Paying for Bonds - The most common method for implementing recreation and park facility development by the use of bonds is to gain voter approval for an additional property tax assessment to pay for the debt of the Park Bonds. The bond issuing method is the same as General Obligation Bonds; they require two-thirds voter approval. However, along with the voter approval to issue the bonds, the voters need to approve an additional annual tax assessment to pay for the debt service on the bonds.

This approach is successful if there is strong community support for park facilities and implementing the Master Plan. The key to a successful Park Bond and tax assessment approval campaign is to work with a community foundation to build support for the tax assessment and to educate the voters that the additional tax assessment can only be used for development of the approved park facilities. Most cities have found that Park Bonds with a tax assessment are most successful when placed on a general election ballot rather than a special election ballot. It usually takes at least two years to develop a community support foundation, educate the voters, and develop enough community support to get two-thirds approval. Before this financing approach should be undertaken, the City should allocate some resources to doing a statistically valid community survey on how the community perceives the adopted Parks and Recreation Master Plan and if they would be willing to pay additional taxes to implement it, and if so, how much additional taxes would be acceptable.

The public's perception of value is the most important element of generating a two-thirds voter approval. For example, the community may be willing to pay an additional \$30 a year on their property taxes to implement a number of facilities they believe they will use, but not \$100 a year. A statistically valid random phone survey is the only way to find out what the community's acceptance might be. This is absolutely necessary if the City wishes to finance park facility development by going to the voters for approval of a Park Bond with a tax assessment.

Revenue Bonds - Revenue Bonds are a popular way for cities to finance capital improvements, especially recreation and park facilities, when the facility being developed will generate the necessary revenue to pay the debt service on the bonds. This method is common for development of sports arenas, convention centers, and other facilities that generate revenue through admission, concessions, and rentals. Revenue Bonds require the city to provide collateral equal to one and half times the value of the bond issue. A city must provide collateral in the form of property or properties it owns that have a market value of at least one and a half times the amount of Revenue Bond it wishes to issue.

Revenue Bonds do not require voter approval but do require a four-fifths vote of the City Council. Revenue Bonds are usually combined with the establishment of an Assessment District under AB1600. If the City can design capital improvements with revenue generating components so that the debt service and the cost of maintenance and operations do not impact the City's General Fund, Revenue Bonds are a good approach to funding facilities where there is strong City Council support and political motivation to develop the facilities.

Certificates of Participation (COPS) - Certificates of Participation (COPs) are similar to Revenue Bonds in that they do not require voter approval but do require a four-fifths vote of the City Council. And they require the City to provide collateral in the form of property equity one and a half times the market value of the proposed issue. The advantage of COPs is that they are issued in script of \$5,000 or \$10,000 which allows for smaller investors to invest, and they are tax exempt, so interest rates are lower. Again, the key to this type of financing is to design the proposed facilities with revenue generating components and/or combine it with an AB1600 Assessment District so that there is no impact on the City's existing General Fund to issue the COPs.

Assessment Methods - There are two main methods for establishing assessments to pay for recreation and park facility development. These are:

- Lighting and Landscape Assessment Districts,
- Mello-Roos, and other state legislation allowing cities and park districts to create assessment districts for capital improvements.

Each of these requires approval by the property owners who are within the district and are subject to paying the assessment. State law AB1600 allows local agencies to impose an assessment on properties within an improvement area when the agency can show a nexus that the improvements being made are a benefit to the properties being assessed. Under this method of assessment, the agency sends a direct mail ballot to the property owners, if fewer than 50% of the property owners vote "No", it could implement the assessment. Agencies typically use enabling legislation for assessment districts for facility improvements that impact or benefit the whole city or a specific area.

Some agencies have had some success using this legislation to fund large community or regional park developments where there is broad community support for the improvements. Newer agencies have had the most success in setting up assessment districts, because they can be established when only a few property owners are within the proposed assessment district. Established agencies where there are thousands of property owners within the proposed assessment district have had trouble getting 50% approval. This legislation requires the agency to do an engineering study to determine the proportionate benefit each property within the proposed district receives.

AB1600 has several benefits over other assessment legislation in that it is an impact fee. Unlike the benefit assessment districts, the agency does not have to do an engineering study to proportion the cost according to benefit. The agency simply has to make a finding that there is a need for recreation and park facilities based on the impact of the proposed development, and the proposed development is not contributing to mitigate the impact. This is accomplished by preparing a nexus study showing the relationship between the defined impact and the facility or facilities the proposed development's impact.

For example, if the City wanted to use AB1600 to impose an impact fee on new commercial and industrial development, it would need to do nexus studies to determine if existing commercial and industrial properties have an impact on its recreation and park services and facilities. If the City finds that employees in commercial and industrial businesses use the City's recreation and park facilities, employers use the park system and/or recreation programs as recruiting tools, and as a result commercial and industrial property increases in value due to a well developed and maintained park system, the City could use the authority under AB1600 to impose a park fee on new commercial and industrial development within its jurisdiction.

Lease Purchase Financing – Another concept in financing recreation and park improvements is a form of lease/purchase financing. Under the lease/purchase financing method, the City would contract with a financial institution that would put together an investment group. The City would then lease the proposed site and facility improvements to the investment group who would provide the funding for the development of the site and facility. The investment group then leases the site and facility back to the City at a lease rate equal to the cost of the financing the investment group provides to the City for the development of the site and facility.

The lease serves as the collateral for the financing, not other real property, as is the case in issuing revenue bonds or COPs. If the City defaults on the lease payments, the investment group would own the lease and could operate the facility or contract the operation of the facility to a third party. The City owns the site throughout the lease purchase period, and at the end of the lease period, the City owns the improvements free and clear. This form of financing currently has very attractive interest rates, is tax exempt for investors, and does not impact the City's bond indebtedness or credit rating.

Grant Programs - The City of Desert Hot Springs has used state grant money in the past for park projects. The City should continue to apply for and make use of both state and federal grant programs. Federal grant programs such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and Urban Recreation and Park Programs can provide funding for specialized facilities that meet the criteria for these particular grant programs. The City could also consider combining several different grant programs for the development of a single project. For example, the City could apply for several different beautification grants, trails grants, storm drain improvement grants, urban park development grants, open space grants, and per capita grants to match a state grant to accomplish the funding necessary for improvements to the trail system.

Public/Private Partnerships - Communities can sometimes meet their recreational needs by encouraging the development of private recreation facilities. This can be in the form of partnerships with pre-school and day-care centers, churches, non-profit organizations, schools, or commercial recreation companies. For example, if the City has a need for a family fun center, it may be able to lease public property to a developer/operator for a commercial family fun park to meet the community needs. In today's political and economic climate, many cities are partnering with school districts for joint development and sharing of such facilities as sports fields, gymnasiums, swimming pools, performing arts theaters, and outdoor community event space. Partnering with schools and could also provide funding opportunities for facility development.

Community Foundations - A key element of funding recreation and park facilities is community support. Whether the funding method is bonds, assessment districts, asset management, or joint partnerships, it will be necessary to build community support in order to implement facility development. The best way to build community support for facility development is through a community foundation made up of concerned volunteers to support the City's implementation of its Parks and Recreation Master Plan. In addition, a Community Foundation can also provide the following:

- An organization that can accept donations that are tax deductible to the contributor.
- An organization that can apply for grants that are not eligible for government application.
- An organization that can put on fundraising campaigns and recruit a large volunteer base to implement the campaigns.
- An organization that can partner with other non-profits, such as churches, service clubs and organizations, and private companies to jointly develop recreation facilities.

The key to developing a successful Community Recreation and Parks Foundation is in the development of by-laws establishing the foundation, recruitment of board members, and training of volunteers. The by-laws should be developed so that they are very specific about the role and duties of the foundation. Board members should represent all segments of the community and not be controlled by any one special interest group.

Summary of Funding/Financing Methods - The above methods are typical ways municipalities fund parks and recreation capital projects. Strategies for specific projects may combine several of the methods. When exploring possible funding for a project, the City can refer back to this information to see if one or more of these methods might fit the proposed project to be funded.

7.3 COSTS, STRATEGIES AND OPTIONS FOR MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

The following section provides the City with projected cost estimates, implementation strategies, and operational options for the recommendations contained in Chapter 6 for improvements to existing parks, recommended new parks and facilities, and for delivering new programs and services to the community. These should be considered as suggestions and concepts for funding and operating the recommended projects, the City may pursue other avenues and options based on current economic circumstances and political realities.

Wardman Park – Based on the new Community Health & Wellness Center/Boys & Girls Club adjacent to the proposed Civic Center Complex, it is recommended that the city start the process to evaluate the re-use, re-design and/or upgrades to the Wardman Park buildings. Possible uses could be a boxing club, Center for Employment training for job development, additional after school programs, arts and crafts activities, community meeting rooms or storage. The swimming pool may be re-used for continued swimming classes for various ages.

Other areas of Wardman Park that need improvements are the picnic areas, redesign of the tennis and basketball courts, new tot lots, additional lighted little league and girls softball fields, upgraded restrooms and additional parking. The estimated cost for all of these improvements is estimated at \$5,331,000. The improvements could be done as one project or phased over a number of years depending on available funding.

Upgrade picnic areas and shade shelters.....	\$200,000
Redesign of tennis and basketball courts.....	\$300,000
Tot lot.....	\$325,000
Lighted Little League and Girls Softball Fields.....	\$610,000
50 Additional off-street parking spaces.....	\$60,000
New restrooms (1,000 sq. ft.).....	\$364,000
Note: Site prep and infrastructure will be extra.	

The Wardman Park improvements would be a good candidate for both state and federal grants, community fund raising or combining with other recommended master plan improvements in a park bond to address development of several facilities. Implementing the improvements in phases using park impact fees and park in-lieu fees is another funding option.

Palm Drive and Park Lane Community Park Proposal - The City is in negotiations with the County of Riverside for the acquisition of approximately 10 acres on Park Lane to expand Mission Springs Park. The site was purchased by the County to develop a County services facility but has only utilized approximately four acres.

It is recommended that the park be designed to accommodate a sports complex containing three combination soccer and football fields recessed into a bowl area with perimeter turf spectator seating; a 20,000 square foot multi-purpose sports and community center; a small recessed amphitheater for performance or speaker events, walking and jogging trails with exercise equipment stations, tot and children’s playground equipment, adequate restrooms and parking and family picnic areas. Currently, the City uses the adjacent Mission Springs Park for community and regional events, which can cause conflicts with sports field scheduling and does not really have the support amenities necessary for producing events.

The estimated costs for this park, assuming the City can acquire the property from the County of Riverside, is approximately \$10 million. This project could be built in phases to spread costs over time. The City should continue to seek traditional funding from grants and park fees and build the park. The costs for operations and maintenance of this site will be considerable, around an estimated \$50,000 per year for the sports fields, amphitheater/event space, parking, and landscaping. The proposed multi-purpose sports and community center is estimated to cost \$120,000 per year to maintain and operate. Consequently, a strategy the City could pursue would be to join forces with the Desert Recreation District to develop and operate this facility via an assessment or special district. Another option would be to seek a development and operating agreement with a private commercial sports center developer. Such public/private partnerships have been successful in creating facilities.

Three (3) field soccer/football recessed bowl complex/amphitheater.....	\$1,750,000
Multi-purpose indoor sports and community center (20,000 square feet).....	\$8,180,000
Tot lot, picnic shelters, walking/jogging trail.....	\$162,000
Parking spaces (120).....	\$144,000

Note: Site prep and infrastructure will be extra.

Partnering with the Desert Recreation District - The Desert Recreation District provides an extensive array of park and recreation programs and activities throughout the Coachella Valley. The majority of cities in the Coachella Valley have chosen to join the Desert Recreation District to deliver a comprehensive park and recreation system to their residents. However, the City of Desert Hot Springs is not within the current sphere of influence of the Desert Recreation District, and thus, would have to go through an administrative annexation process in order to annex into the Desert Recreation District to deliver programs and services. Annexing into the Desert Recreation District would not prohibit or decrease the City's current strategy of providing direct recreation and social services for seniors and coordinating with community based agencies to deliver programs for youth and adults. Annexing into the Desert Recreation District would be one strategy for increasing program offerings and building needed new facilities for the future.

Another option for delivering future programs and facilities would be for the City to establish a Park and Recreation Department and hire staff to deliver park and recreation services for Desert Hot Springs residents. The City's current revenue stream from property and sales tax, which are the traditional funding mechanisms for parks and recreation services, is not sufficient to support the establishment of an in-house Park and Recreation Department. The City could consider establishing a Community Services and Program District with a tax assessment in order to generate a funding source to establish a Park and Recreation Department with sufficient resources to meet the identified needs.

The Desert Recreation District already has the administrative infrastructure in place to do property tax assessments and operate park and recreation programs and facilities, so it may make sense to pursue annexing into the Desert Recreation District for such services. Another advantage of joining the Desert Recreation District is that it would allow Desert Hot Springs residents access to the programs and facilities that it operates throughout the Coachella Valley.

Annexation into the Desert Recreation District's sphere of influence would require an application to Local Riverside County Area Formation Commission Office (LAFCO). Once in the Desert Recreation District's sphere of influence the City could then decide to either contract with the Desert Recreation District for programs and services, or it could decide to join the District and jointly develop facilities such as the proposed Palm Drive and Park Lane Community Park and the Aquatics Center at the proposed Community Health and Wellness Center.

The annual property tax assessment to join the Desert Recreation District would be based on negotiations between the City and the District. It would depend on what programs and facilities are desired and the amount of funding needed to implement them. Contracting with the Desert Recreation District for programs and services would require a vote of Desert Hot Springs City Council once the City

annexes into the District's sphere of influence. It would also require a vote of property owners if the City were to join the District and implement a property tax assessment.

Attracting a Commercial Recreation Developer - Another option for developing community parks would be to attract a commercial recreation developer/operator. There are national companies that partner with local municipalities to develop sports facilities and family fun centers. Attracting a commercial recreation developer usually means the City would provide the land for the project and either guarantee private financing or provide public financing for the proposed project.

In either case, the project itself acts as the collateral for the financing and does not affect the City's credit rating or general fund unless the value of the project would fall below the debt service remaining on the project and the operators default on the financing. The City would then have to guarantee payment or allow the facility to be turned over to the creditors. The City should perform an Economic Feasibility/Marketing Study to determine the deal structure that would attract the appropriate commercial recreation developer and provide the City with minimal future financial risks to develop the project.

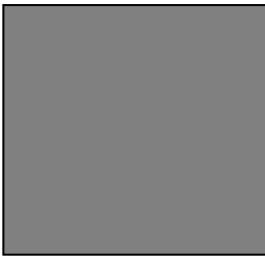
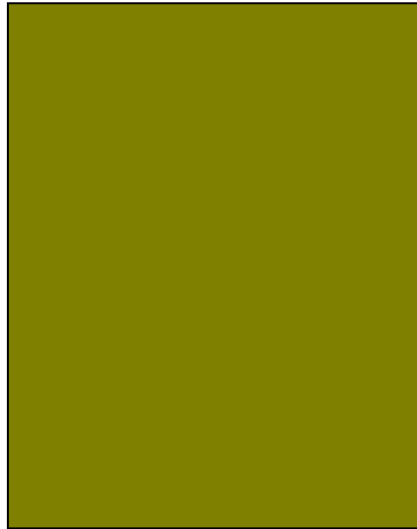
Trails - As part of the General Plan Update, Desert Hot Springs is examining local and regional trails and trail connections. The City's Trails Sub-Committee has been working on developing a local trails map as well as trail standards, trail definitions, and trail descriptions. Once adopted, the trails map and the Trails Sub-Committee Report and Recommendations should be adopted into the Parks and Recreation Master Plan so that they can be included in the General Plan Recreation and Open Space Element.

Funding for trail improvements can come from State and Federal grants, park impact fees, community service projects by local organizations, fund raising, donations, and health and wellness grants. The City's Capital Improvement Program should have an annual amount dedicated to implementing the Trails Sub-Committee recommendations for trail improvements.

Future Parks within Specific Plan Developments - There are currently a number of residential development specific plans in various stages of the approval process and each will require park dedication equal to a minimum of three acres per 1,000 anticipated population of the development. This is known as the Quimby Act requirement mandated by State Law. Desert Hot Springs has a General Plan goal of five acres per 1,000 population. However, until Desert Hot Springs reaches a current standard of five acres per 1,000 population of usable park space, it cannot extract more than three acres per 1,000 population from developers. The City has a number of options when dealing with development proposals. The City can simply require the dedication of parkland or the payment of park-in-lieu fees equal to the value of the number of acres required for park dedication. The City could also enter into a Development Agreement with the proposed developer and negotiate additional parkland, or the development of parkland by the developer in exchange for development credits and incentives. Under either scenario the City should be sure that park dedications and developments follow the park standards and recommended guidelines in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Development Impact Fees (DIF) - Development Impact Fees (DIF) for parks, are fees required for development in addition to the Quimby Act park fees. DIF for parks, are fees imposed to offset the increased demand on the City's entire Park and Recreation system and to help build new parks and facilities to meet demand created as a result of proposed development projects. In 2009, the City conducted a Development Impact Fee study that established a Park Impact Fee based on the City's cost to deliver its Park and Recreation system. However, at that time the City did not have an adopted Parks and Recreation Master Plan, so the study used park standards recommended by the National Recreation and Parks Association to determine future Park and Recreation needs for Desert Hot Springs. After reviewing the 2009 study, the City Council determined that the City should prepare a Parks and Recreation Master Plan that reflects the actual Demands and Needs Analysis specifically for Desert Hot Springs that contains recommended parks and facilities and their costs, to use as the basis for adopting an updated Development Impact Fee for parks. When the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is adopted, the City will revisit the Development Impact Fee Study and adopt a Park Impact Fee consistent with the recommendations of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan for future parks and facilities.

CHAPTER 8



Capital Improvement Plan

Capital Improvement Plan

8.1 INTRODUCTION

THIS SECTION PRESENTS a Capital Improvement Program based on the overall analysis of needed improvements to existing parks and facilities; and needed new parks and facilities to meet current and future recreational demands in Desert Hot Springs. The recommended Capital Improvements are split into four categories:

- Urgent Priority Need – Should be accomplished in next 3 to 5 years.
- Needed, but not Urgent Priority- Should be accomplished in next 5 to10 years.
- Non Priority Needs – Should be accomplished when funding is available.
- Desired Special Use Facilities – Should be pursued as resources permit.

The City of Desert Hot Springs' ability to make improvements to existing parks and develop new park and recreation facilities will depend on several factors, including local and national economic health, rate of growth, receiving grant funding, community support and available staff resources to implement capital projects. The tables on the following pages list all recommended capital projects for existing parks and facilities and for recommended new park and facility development based on the priority criteria listed above. The proposed prioritized list is simply a guideline for City consideration. The City may decide some projects should be moved to higher priorities depending on specific funding that becomes available or partnership opportunities that present themselves.

The list of prioritized capital projects should be used to develop the City's annual budget and work program subject to what funding the City is able to obtain for capital projects from Quimby Fees, Development Impact Fees, General Fund allocations, public and private grants, partnerships and collaborations, donations/fundraising, financing, and future assessments. The list should also be used to recalculate and adopt a new Development Impact Fee for Parks.

The prioritized capital improvement program represents the complete park and recreation system needed to meet the park and recreation demands in Desert Hot Springs through the 10-year horizon of this master plan. Future Development Impact Fees for parks should be based on the costs to complete this system. The City of Desert Hot Springs may not be able to complete all of these projects because of funding limitations and/or political considerations, however, the proposed Capital Improvement Program can serve as a guide in developing future priorities for allocating resources, seeking funding, and pursuing development partners.

The Capital Improvement Program is intended to give staff, Parks Committee, Community and Cultural Affairs Commission and City Council a sense of the funding required so that they may begin their planning efforts for the implementation of the recommendations knowing the financial resources that will be needed to implement the various projects. The estimated costs and needed funding amounts will need reviewing and updating on a project-by-project basis as each project moves forward in the implementation process.

It should be noted that while this Parks and Recreation Master Plan lays out existing park facilities and needs for additional parks, there are a number of items that have been accomplished by the City that help improve the quality of life for all age groups. These are noted below first and then the proposed Capital Improvement Program.

8.2 ACCOMPLISHMENTS BETWEEN 2007-2012

Location	Project	Estimated Cost	Funding Partners
Health & Wellness Center	New 32,200 sq. ft. state-of-the-art facility with B&G Club, gymnasium, Teen Center with Computer Lab and Learning Center, medical and dental clinics, Nutrition Center, Aquatic Center, splash pad, playground equipment, exercise stations, parking and landscaping.	\$17,000,000	City, Boys & Girls Club, Desert Healthcare District, Federal, County and Local Grants, Bonds, New Market Tax Credits
Mission Springs Park	New fields, walking, jogging trail, playground equipment, new lighting	\$1,200,000	Redevelopment Agency, DIF, Grants
Wardman Park	New fields, lights, fencing, landscaping, score board, bleachers	\$450,000	Redevelopment Agency, DIF, Grants
Guy J. Tedesco Park/Henry V. Lozano Community Center	New lawns, splash pad, community center, Police Substation, offices, basketball courts, BMX course, walkways, small amphitheatre, restrooms	\$3,200,000	Redevelopment Agency, DIF, Grants
Cabot's Pueblo Museum	New restrooms and landscaping		Redevelopment Agency
Total Estimated Costs		\$21,850,000	

8.3 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM – 3 TO 5 YEARS

Location	Project	Estimated Cost	Funding Options
Wardman Park	One lighted Little League Field and one lighted Girls Softball Field	\$610,000	Phase the fields and the lighting over 5 years using park funds, donations, and General Funds
Wardman Park	Upgrade group picnic facilities and add performance venue	\$275,000	Park Fund or Prop 84 State Park Bond Competitive Program
Wardman Park	Perimeter walking trail	\$125,000	Park Fund, grants, DIF
Citywide	Community Gardens	\$30,000 per site	General fund or Health & Wellness Grant
Citywide	Trails Master Plan	\$40,000	General Fund, possible Trails Grant
All Parks	Identification & directional		Park Fund or General Fund
Mission Springs Park	Widen walking path, exercise equipment	\$125,000	State grant, Health & Wellness grant, or Public Safety grant
Palm Drive & Park Lane	3 Field Soccer/Football recessed bowl complex	\$1,650,000	Park Fund, State Competitive Grant Program, Desert Recreation District or Commercial Recreation Developer
Palm Drive & Park Lane	Multi-purpose sports and Community Center	\$24,540,000	Park Bond with Tax Assessment, Desert Recreation District, or Commercial Recreation Developer
Palm Drive & Park Lane	Bowl Amphitheater and Event Space with family park amenities	\$2,570,000	County of Riverside, Development Impact Fees, Park Fund, Bond Issue, or Commercial Developer/Promoter
Pocket Parks	Construct pocket parks within residential neighborhoods with small amenities such as a tot lot, lawn area, benches, drinking fountain, lighting.	\$2,000,000	
Total Estimated Costs		\$31,965,000	

8.4 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM – 5 TO 10 YEARS

Location	Project	Estimated Cost	Funding Options
Citywide	Implement Trails Master Plan	\$500,000	Trails Grants, Developer Agreements, Park Funds
West & East sides of City	Formal Dog Parks	\$150,000	General Fund, Park Fund, and Donations
Citywide	Eight Specific Plan Neighborhood Parks	\$20,000,000	Developer Fees or Development Agreements
Wardman Park	New Restrooms	\$364,000	Park Fund or State Grants
Wardman Park	Replacement of tennis courts, basketball courts, tot lots	\$625,000	Park Fund, DIF or possible Park Bond
Hacienda Park	Build new park	6,000,000	Park Fund, DIF or possible Park Bond
Total Estimated Costs		\$27,639,000	

8.5 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM – ACCOMPLISH AS FUNDING BECOMES AVAILABLE

Location	Project	Estimated Cost	Funding Options
Rotary Park	Parking and access, park expansion	\$175,000	Park Fund, DIF
Elementary & Middle School Sites	Joint-Use Field Improvements at four sites	\$4,000,000	Future School Facility State Bond, partnerships with sports organizations
All parks	Park landscape improvements for going “green” and “CPTED” compliance	\$3,000,000	State & Federal Grants and possible “Ear-Mark” funding
Total Estimated Costs		\$7,175,000	

8.6 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM – SPECIAL USE FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS PURSUED AS RESOURCES ALLOW

Location	Project	Estimated Cost	Funding Options
Cabot’s Pueblo Museum	Cabot’s Pueblo Museum Master Plan including a climate controlled building and permeable pavers in the parking lot.	\$5,000,000	Public and Private Grants, possible revenue bond, parking & admission fees and fund raising
Miracle Hill	Miracle Hill Master Plan	\$25,000,000	Possible revenue bond, use fees, private concessions, redevelopment
Site TBD	Relocate Skate Park and Tedesco BMX park to a future regional extreme sports park	\$1,200,000	Possible commercial developer, Park Fund, or partnership with County Park & Recreation
Site TBD	Boxing Club, Marshal Arts facility, Art & Crafts, additional after School Programs	TBD	Commercial operator, non-profit collaboration, or possible inclusion into one of the community centers (Tedesco or Wardman)
Estimated Total Costs		\$31,200,000	