# Parks, Recreation Facilities & Trails Master Plan

## City Council

Marie Lopez Rogers, Mayor
Ken Weise, Vice Mayor

Frank Scott, Councilmember
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Jason Earp, Councilmember
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## Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

Amos Reed, Chairman
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Donald Buth, Board Member
Richard Cofield, Board Member
Tamara Massey, Board Member
Dylan Stafford, Board Member
Steven J. Zielinski, Board Member

## City Staff

Charles McClendon, City Manager
David Fitzhugh, Assistant City Manager
Rogene Hill, Assistant City Manager

Daniel Davis, Director, Parks, Recreation, and Libraries Department
Christopher Reams, Assistant Director, Parks, Recreation, and Libraries Department

Prepared by:

Logan Simpson Design Inc.

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# Parks, Recreation Facilities & Trails Master Plan

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background and Purpose

As the City of Avondale (City) continues to develop, it will be faced with providing sufficient, appropriate park and recreation opportunities for its growing population. The purpose of the City of Avondale *Parks, Recreation Facilities & Trails Master Plan* (PRFT) is to provide a vision that will guide development of parks and recreation and trail facilities that will assist in achieving the quality of life Avondale citizens' desire. In addition, the PRFT will address the growing needs of the community as well as specific legislative requirements identified by Arizona's Growing Smarter and Growing Smarter Plus legislation. In order to meet these requirements, this PRFT report includes the following:

- A comprehensive inventory of the City's existing park and recreation resources
- An analysis of the City's forecasted needs as it relates to park and recreation facilities
- A comprehensive system of public park and recreation facilities that provides the level of service desired by the community
- Implementation strategies to further establish recreational resources within existing and planned development
- The identification of funding mechanisms the City can use to implement the additional recreational services needed to serve the projected population

The PRFT incorporates the most current and available information that will influence the future development of the City's parks, recreation, and trail system including the Agua Fria and Gila River corridors. The study area for the PRFT includes the incorporated areas of the city north of Indian Springs Road. It focuses on the overall planning of a wide range of recreational opportunities and establishes the basis for future locations of parks, indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, and trail facilities as Avondale continues to grow.

In the recent past, the costs of land acquisition ceased being affordable for municipalities to purchase as parkland, and it became necessary for them to identify other means for securing parkland in order to meet their current and future needs. With this PRFT, the City has the opportunity to evaluate future community park, facility, and recreation program needs, as well as community desires, for both new and existing development areas, and to provide more definitive input prior to preliminary or final platting of new planned developments.

The *2002 City of Avondale General Plan Update* (General Plan) establishes the foundation upon which this PRFT is built. Coordination with the City's neighboring municipalities and Maricopa County adopted plans was key to ensuring edge areas were adequately addressed in terms of service area coverage so that the City's resources for park and recreational facilities would be maximized in serving its citizens.

The City understands the value of parks, recreational facilities, and trails as an important quality-of-life determinant. It is critically important to identify appropriate areas where park and recreation facilities may be integrated into existing and planned development, while setting the stage for implementation. A critical component of the PRFT is the City's ability to implement the Master Plan's recommendations. Determining the costs associated with implementation will assist the City in developing appropriate measures to realize the vision, goals, and objectives of the PRFT.

## 1.2 Planning Process and Overview

The planning process and approach for the PRFT consisted of 10 basic components, including the participation of a stakeholder advisory group representing a variety of special-interest user groups, homeowner associations, and affected municipalities and agencies.. The following are brief descriptions of each of the key components involved in the master planning process.

***Stakeholder/Issue Identification –*** The City identified key stakeholders to involve in the development of the PRFT, as well as preliminary issues the PRFT would need to address. Existing base mapping and data including previous, current, and planned projects affected by the PRFT were gathered and provided by the City.

***Inventory and Analysis –*** A thorough review of the City's existing infrastructure and utilities; existing and planned land uses; existing land ownership; existing multi-use recreation opportunities; and geological, biological, cultural, and environmental resources—which included an inventory of their respective locations and relative conditions—was conducted. Base data maps were developed to illustrate the compilation of the City's opportunities and constraints and their impacts on subsequent park and recreation planning efforts. This information provided the basis for the development of a preliminary master plan and was presented at the second stakeholder advisory group meeting and the first public meeting/workshop for review and comment.

***Current Conditions and Facilities –*** A thorough review of the City's existing park and recreational facilities was conducted and included an inventory of specific facilities and their relative conditions.

***Values/Issues/Needs Identification –*** Current and future values, issues, and needs related to the development of the PRFT were identified by the stakeholder advisory group members and the community. The stakeholder advisory group and community were given the opportunity to identify values, issues, and needs at the first two stakeholder advisory group meetings and the initial public meeting, as well as through a community-wide needs assessment survey and communications with City staff.

***Public Participation –*** One public meeting and two stakeholder advisory group meetings were conducted at strategic project milestones to provide opportunities for community input, discussion of issues, and comments in relation to the PRFT. The stakeholder advisory group served as the primary conduit for user-specific technical information and project issues and concerns. The public meeting and stakeholder advisory group meetings provided an understanding of the general public's and various stakeholders' values, issues, and needs for the types of recreational opportunities the City should provide for its citizens. In addition to the meetings, a recreational needs assessment survey was mailed to 4,000 randomly selected households within Avondale to measure opinions and attitudes about parks and recreation programs, facilities, and activities. A total of 214 surveys were received (for a 5.4 percent response rate) with a margin of error of plus or minus 6.5 percent at a 95 percent level of confidence.

***Benchmark Survey –*** A benchmark survey, including five other comparable cities around the United States, was conducted to assess the level of park and recreation facilities and programs those cities provide for their citizens in comparison to the City of Avondale. While the components and character of park and recreation systems for each city are unique to their environmental setting, resources, and demographics, the results of this benchmark survey provided a basis for comparing desired quality-of-life determinates and lifestyles as it relates to future parks, recreation, and leisure for the citizens of Avondale.

***Vision, Goals, and Objectives –*** Based on the values, issues, and needs derived from public, stakeholder advisory group, and City staff input received at each meeting, a Vision Statement and Goals and Objectives were developed to create the basis for a preliminary master plan.

***Preliminary Master Plan –*** The *Preliminary Master Plan* was developed based on the opportunities and constraints of the City's natural and physical resources; the vision, goals, and objectives developed through the identification of the community's and stakeholders' values, issue, and needs; and the needs assessment and benchmark survey results. The *Preliminary Master Plan* was presented at a City Council Work Session and to City staff to provide the opportunity to review the initial synthesis of the key master plan components. Comments received from the City Council and City staff were addressed and incorporated into a final master plan.

***Final Master Plan –*** The *Final Master Plan* was developed based on the comments received on the *Preliminary Master Plan*. Comments from the *Preliminary Master Plan* presentation were incorporated into the *Final Master Plan*, which includes a wide spectrum of park and recreation opportunities that are compatible with the natural, physical, and cultural resources of the City. The *Final Master Plan* was presented to the City Council for final review and approval and is meant to serve the City's future parks, recreation, and trails needs relating to daily recreational activities, special events, and potential environmental tourism.

This PRFT report provides a guideline for the City as it moves forward in implementing the proposed parks, recreation facilities, and trails that are illustrated on the City of Avondale *Parks, Recreation Facilities & Trails Master Plan.* This report has been developed to provide an overview of the master

planning process, the public input received during the process, and the proposed park and recreation needs for a projected population of 101,539; this overview is presented in the following sections:

2.0 Inventory and Analysis

3.0 Existing Park and Recreation Facilities Evaluations

4.0 Public Participation Program

5.0 Vision, Goals, and Objectives

6.0 Park and Recreation Facilities Needs Assessment

7.0 Parks and Recreation Facilities Development Program

8.0 Parks and Recreation Facilities Implementation

# 2.0 INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

## 2.1 Introduction

The purpose of the Inventory and Analysis phase of the master planning process is to identify the City's physical, cultural, and environmental resources, as well as the current and planned land uses and ownership that would influence the development of future parks, recreational facilities, and trails. It provides the basis of understanding for the location and condition of existing and planned infrastructure and facilities, potential land use compatibilities, existing natural and cultural resources, and existing or concurrent planning studies.

A search of existing data, reports, studies, and plans were collected from a wide range of sources, including but not limited to:

- Arizona Archaeological Site and Survey Database
- Arizona Electronic Atlas
- Arizona Game and Fish Department
- Arizona State Land Department (ASLD)
- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- City of Avondale
- City of Goodyear
- City of Litchfield Park
- City of Phoenix
- City of Tolleson
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Flood Control District of Maricopa County
- Maricopa Association of Governments
- Maricopa County Assessor's Office
- Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department

The information was obtained in various digital formats, including geographical information system (GIS) files, PDF files, and other electronic documents. In addition to electronic documents many hardcopy documents were also obtained. All relevant information collected was evaluated for its applicability to the development of the PRFT and incorporated appropriately.

## 2.2 Existing Plan Overview

Several key area master plans and studies have provided the basis for determining the direction the City, adjacent communities, and agencies have taken to establish new park and recreational opportunities and facilities in the West Valley to date. A review and evaluation of existing development and these key master plan studies, as well as their policy criteria and recommendations, have helped to establish an approach that provides a cohesive and integrated parks and recreation system for the City. The following is a list of documents reviewed and a summary of the information relevant to this planning effort.

### *City of Avondale General Plan Update – 2002*

The General Plan is the comprehensive planning document that provides the City with a vision to guide growth and development through 2012. The General Plan continues and updates the vision created and adopted by the citizens of Avondale in the 1990 plan and aligns with the requirements of the Growing Smarter and Growing Smarter Plus Legislation adopted by the State of Arizona as Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) § 9-461.05. The plan incorporates by reference several documents, including the *City of Avondale Tres Rios Greenway Specific Plan* (Tres Rios Plan), and includes several regional studies and plans as implementation tools of the plan. The General Plan document includes five sections that pertain to this planning effort: land use element, open space element, recreation element, circulation element, and the bicycling element.

The land use element identifies current planning issues Avondale faces, such as the identification of locations for parks, arts and cultural facilities, and other public facilities to serve new and existing residents; enhancement and maintenance of connections from development to open space areas within and adjacent to Avondale; and the open space, environmental opportunities, and transportation challenges presented by the South Planning Area, south of the Gila River. The General Plan identifies key goals, objectives, and policies, such as the creation of open space buffers between multi-use and low-density residential land uses and coordination with adjacent city and county governments to coordinate land use and transportation along Avondale's borders. Several goals of the land use element

identify objectives or policies to incorporate parks, open space, art, culture, and recreation facilities within future development to meet the diverse social, cultural, and quality-of-life needs of the residents.

The open space and recreation elements discuss the historical background of recreation and open space of Avondale's community as well as its existing community values. The purpose of these elements is to provide direction for recreation opportunities and open space preservation as the community transitions from a rural community into a suburban and urban community. The General Plan outlines goals, objectives, and policies to aid in retaining the rural character of the community and conserving its values, while meeting the needs of its current and future citizens. Additionally, the open space element identifies Avondale's unique natural setting as central to its identity and encourages the development and locating of parks, facilities, and trails adjacent to the Estrella Mountain Regional Park open space, the Tres Rios Greenway corridor, the Agua Fria, Salt, and Gila River corridors, and using existing and planned power line corridors and flood control features as trail connections. The open space element also requires, when practical and feasible, public access through private developments to provide direct connections to public resources and open space by creating shared multi-use linkages throughout and adjacent to the community.

The recreation element, using the level of service (LOS) approach as defined by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), identifies that the City provides an LOS of 2.5 acres per 1,000 population for each of the following: unimproved open space, district parks, and city-wide parks, with an undefined LOS for neighborhood parks. This provides a total LOS of parkland and open space of plus 7.5 acres per 1,000 population for Avondale. This is widely due to the inclusion of river corridors and the Estrella Mountain Regional Park in the LOS calculations for open space. *The recreation element notes that the City does not meet its parkland standards for the projected LOS identified and notes the need for a recreation needs assessment to determine the types of facilities desired by the citizens.*

The circulation and bicycling element of the General Plan targets the need for a multi-modal transportation system in line with the land use element that encourages the development of a safe, efficient circulation system which includes an interconnected street and pathway network accessible and friendly to all modes of travel. This includes the use of bike trails, pedestrian trails, and sidewalks as connections between existing and planned parks, schools, residential areas, and other destinations. The General Plan also calls for the development of a bicycle plan for Avondale to aid in the creation of a connected system of bikeways designed to contribute to safe mobility, encourage commuter cycling, and support recreational bicycle use that considers connectivity between land uses, open space, and destinations of recreation.

The PRFT, through planning tools such as needs assessment and benchmarking surveys, as well as community input, identifies the recreational needs desired by the citizens, updates and revises the City's General Plan park and recreation standards based on these needs, and identifies implementation recommendations based on current population projections and future growth areas.

### *City of Avondale Tres Rios Greenway Specific Plan – 1997*

The Tres Rios Plan, as incorporated by reference into the General Plan, is a regional open space and trails plan that focuses on the three rivers that traverse Avondale: the Gila, Salt, and Agua Fria Rivers. The three rivers merge within the city boundaries and provide opportunities for open space, recreation, and non-motorized circulation throughout Avondale and the surrounding region. The Tres Rios Plan aligned with the regional transportation plans that existed at the time of its publication, including the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Sun Circle trail system. The Sun Circle trail system was later incorporated into the current *Maricopa County Regional Trail System Plan* described below. The main purpose of this document is to guide the development of a regional trail system within the river corridors in a manner that is ecologically sensitive but that still allows for recreation and transportation uses. The Tres Rios Plan recommends a 6-foot-wide multi-use trail with appropriate signage, lighting, and site furnishings throughout the greenway. The trail and adjacent land uses would be protected from flooding by the expansion of the current levee system.

The PRFT incorporates the Tres Rios Plan principles for providing continuous, key linkages throughout the corridor and between the greenway and other pathway and trail systems in the region.

### *City of Phoenix General Plan – 2001*

The main strategy employed by the *2001 General Plan for Phoenix* (Phoenix General Plan) is to understand how the growth in the Phoenix metropolitan area affects the ability of Phoenix to provide services to its citizens. To that end, the Phoenix General Plan ascribes a regional approach to local planning issues. The recreation, open space, circulation, and bicycling elements of the Phoenix General Plan have direct influences on this planning effort.

The recreation element of the Phoenix General Plan places Phoenix's more than 33,000 acres of parks and open space into five distinct categories. The City of Phoenix designates the over 132 traditional park sites as neighborhood, community, or district parks, and its open space is divided into mountain preserves and desert parks. Phoenix's public park and recreation system excludes parks within privately planned community developments since they are generally limited in their ability to provide recreational opportunities and open space needs to the public at large. According to the Phoenix General Plan, neighborhood parks have a service radius of 0.5 mile, serve a population of 4,000 to 7,000 people, and are typically 15 acres in size. Community parks have a service radius of 1.5 miles, serve a population of 20,000 to 50,000 people, are typically larger than 40 acres, and include facilities for programmed and unprogrammed activities and events. District parks generally provide for specialized activities or facilities, serve a population of 100,000 to 200,000 people from several communities, and are 200 acres or larger. Mountain preserves and desert parks are intended to be largely undeveloped, passive recreation areas but may include designated trails and trailheads, parking, picnic areas, and facilities that focus on conservation efforts or educational values of the area.

The recreation element also describes a planned functional network of urban, multi-purpose trails throughout Phoenix that "should connect with other trails and pathways at municipal boundaries." Included with the description are maps of proposed trail corridors through several villages, including Estrella but excluding Maryvale. The Estrella trail system map shows proposed trail connections with Avondale at Lower Buckeye Road, Broadway Road, Southern Avenue, and the Gila River. Although the Maryvale trail system map does not appear in the Phoenix General Plan, the park system map of Maryvale does show the West Valley Multi-modal Transportation Corridor (West Valley Corridor) along the Agua Fria River, which includes a planned trail connection between Phoenix and Avondale. The recreation element also supports the Phoenix General Plan circulation element, which expands pedestrian and bicycle access to transit facilities by adding paths and trails, shade trees, lighting and grade-separated crossings. This is also supported in the bicycle element, which increases bicycle access to destinations within Phoenix, as well as maximizes bike route connections to adjacent cities with on-street bike lanes or trails. The 1987 approved planned bikeway system included in the Phoenix General Plan identifies bike route connections to Avondale along Loop 101 (the Agua Fria Freeway) and along the Agua Fria River.

The open space element of the Phoenix General Plan highlights the importance of trails within the mountain preserves and desert parks, as well as "linear open space" and trail corridors composed of rivers, washes, drainage corridors, and canals. The City of Phoenix has a current standard of 1 square mile of city-owned open space land per 17,000 residents, and is funding acquisition through sales tax initiatives.

### *Goodyear General Plan Update 2003-2013*

The *Goodyear General Plan Update 2003-2013* (Goodyear General Plan) has two sections that pertain to this planning effort: (1) the non-motorized circulation section of the circulation element and (2) the open space element. The non-motorized section of the circulation element includes guidelines on trail system standards and utilizes the designations of Bike Lanes, Multi-Use Equestrian Trails, and Multi-Use Trails presented in the 2001 *Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan.* The open space element of the Goodyear General Plan divides "open space" into three distinct categories: Natural, Passive, and Active.

Natural Open Space includes washes, riverbanks, hillsides, and desert lands (either publicly or privately owned) that are meant to remain as unimproved, virtually undisturbed land for aesthetic and trail uses. Passive Open Space includes trail corridors, linear pathways, plazas, greenbelts, buffers, landscaped parkways, peripheral landscaped tracts, and water or lake features (either publicly or privately owned) that are meant to accommodate dog parks, agricultural activities, community gardens, aesthetic areas, linear routes for neighborhood electric vehicles (NEVs), and passive activities such as hiking, picnicking, bicycling, walking, and horseback riding. Active Open Space includes land set aside, dedicated,

designated, or reserved for improvements that accommodate and support recreational facilities including organized sports fields and courts, play areas, aquatic/pool centers, performing arts centers, community centers, and other special uses. Additionally, the Active Open Space category identifies four specific park types: Mini-Parks, ranging in size from 5,445 square feet to 1 acre; Neighborhood Parks, ranging in size from 5 to 10 acres; Community Parks, ranging in size from 25 to 50 acres; and Large Urban Parks/Sports Complexes, ranging in size from 50 to 100 acres.

The Goodyear General Plan uses the NRPA standards to define the LOS in number of acres of parkland per 1,000 population that a city should provide to its residents, which for a city the size of Goodyear should be in the range of 6.25 to 10.0 acres per 1,000 population. According to the Goodyear General Plan, the 'City of Goodyear's current standard is 10.26 acres of parkland per 1,000 population.

Based on the 2003 projected population growth, the Goodyear General Plan identifies the need for an additional 650 acres of parkland by 2013 and 3,500 acres of open space by the time Goodyear reaches its projected build-out population of 389,500. To more accurately forecast the City of Goodyear's' ability to meet near- and long-term facility and acreage needs, the open space element also proposes to divide the city into four park planning areas: Camelback Road to Interstate 10 (I-10), I-10 to the Gila River, Gila River to Pecos Road, and Pecos Road to Patterson Road.

### *City of Goodyear Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan – 2001*

The master plan for the City of Goodyear's parks, trails, and open space system acts as an addendum to the 1998 Goodyear General Plan and identifies a community-envisioned plan based on ideas, information, values, and opinions gathered through public and advisory committee meetings that included community representatives, residents, members of the development community, business representatives, and public officials. An inventory of existing facilities and service areas for existing parks within Goodyear and the need for additional facilities, including a regional park/sports complex, four community parks, linear greenways, trails, and a dog park master plan, were identified as the results of the master plan study. The master plan also incorporates by reference the *El Rio Watercourse Master Plan,* as a means of restoring the Gila River to its natural state and creating a regional trail and greenway system, involving the cities of Avondale, Buckeye, and Goodyear. In addition, the master plan includes implementation and funding strategies to acquire, conserve, and protect open space, farmland, and desert, as well as to create and maintain trail and greenway corridors. The main purpose for designating lands for parks, trails, and open space is to ensure that the amount of land for the desired use is incorporated into new development planning.

### *City of Goodyear Parks Master Plan Update – 2008 (not adopted)*

The *City of Goodyear Parks Master Plan Update* (PMP Update) includes a parks and recreation facilities needs assessment, which assisted in determining the standard park acreage and facility needs for Goodyear. The PMP Update establishes standards for seven classes of parks: Mini Parks, of a minimum 0.25 acre in size with a service radius of 0.125 to 0.25 mile, at 0.17 acre per 1,000 population; Neighborhood Parks, 5.0 to 10.0 acres in size with a service radius of 0.5 mile, at 3 acres per 1,000 population; Level 1 Community Parks, between 51.0 and 100.0 acres in size with a service radius of 3.0 miles, at 2.64 acres per 1,000 population; Level 2 Community Parks, between 40 and 50.0 acres in size with a service radius of 2.0 miles, at 1.36 acres per 1,00 population; and Regional Parks, over 100 acres in size with a service radius of a 30-minute drive time, at 3.09 acres per 1,000 population. LOS standards for Special Use Parks and Joint Use Facilities vary and may comprise any of the previous classes identified. The PMP Update identifies existing and proposed park and recreation facility locations, some of which their service areas extend into Avondale's boundaries. As of the City of Avondale PRFT publication date, the PMP Update has not been adopted; however, the information contained within it will be taken into consideration as the City of Avondale proceeds in implementing its PRFT recommendations.

### *City of Litchfield Park General Plan Update – 2001*

The *2001 City of Litchfield Park General Plan Update* states that with nearly 80 miles of existing or planned recreational pathways, Litchfield Park maintains more capital investment in multi-purpose paths per capita than any other municipality in the metropolitan region or state using a guideline of 1 mile of path to every 4 miles of local street system. The open space element states the need for continued cooperative planning with the Cities of Avondale and Goodyear to facilitate path connections to regional

centers such as schools, parks, and shopping areas. The City of Litchfield Park is dedicated to maintaining its historic resort-style character through the provision of open space, multi-purpose paths, and parks. The City of Litchfield Park is also dedicated to creating a regionally integrated pathway system, which cannot be realized without the City of Avondale's cooperation in siting shared linkages between the two municipalities. The Avondale PRFT identifies trail connections between Litchfield Park and Avondale and evaluates any potential shared uses of recreational resources.

### *City of Tolleson General Plan – 2005*

The *2005 Tolleson General Plan Update* (Tolleson General Plan) includes the results of a citizen satisfaction survey in which 92 percent of the respondents rated the quality of life in Tolleson as "adequate or "superior." Their most liked aspect was the small, quiet, friendly-town feel of Tolleson despite its location in the middle of a large metropolitan area. The survey also reflects the citizens' desires for additional pathways and park facilities. The Tolleson General Plan identifies two existing community parks, provided through an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with two school districts, in addition to two existing and one planned neighborhood park. The combined acreages (48 acres) of the two community park facilities provide an NRPA standard of 2.5 acres per 1,000 population for a population of 19,000. Likewise, the combined acreages of the three neighborhood park facilities provide an NRPA standard of 2.5 acres per 1,000 population for a population of 6,200. In addition to the existing park facilities, the City of Tolleson also provides recreation activities and programs through the Boys and Girls Club, the community/senior center, and the Tolleson library. The City of Tolleson intends to extend pathways to the city limits to connect with adjacent municipalities but does not specify where those linkages will occur. The City of Tolleson identifies that it will need to work closely with the Cities of Avondale and Phoenix to coordinate a regional, integrated open space and trail system. The PRFT identifies potential open space and trail connections between Tolleson and Avondale and evaluates any potential shared uses of recreational resources.

### *Flood Control District of Maricopa County El Rio Watercourse Master Plan Overview – 2006*

*El Rio Watercourse Master Plan* defines the existing Gila River and its limits, as well as the desired future form and function of the river from the confluence of the Agua Fria River on the western border of Avondale, extending west 17.5 miles through Goodyear and Buckeye, to State Route (SR) 85. The focus of the long-term plan is to maintain and enhance the natural functions of the Gila River through flood-control management and riparian restoration strategies. The plan also provides a funding mechanism for the multiple phases of the project and defines the type and form of development beyond the banks of the Gila River. It also limits the recreational opportunities allowed within the watercourse to non-motorized activities only.

Communities, in which the project is located, such as Avondale, are encouraged to develop recreational facilities and trails adjacent to and within the project boundaries. The PRFT identifies potential park and recreation facilities that can be coordinated with the development of the *El Rio Watercourse Master Plan*.

### *Maricopa County Association of Governments West Valley Multi-Modal Transportation Corridor Master Plan – 2001*

The primary purpose of the *West Valley Multi-Modal Transportation Corridor Master Plan* is to create a regional planning framework for a 42-mile shared-use trail network from New River Road to the confluence of the Agua Fria and Gila Rivers (West Valley Corridor). The shared-use trail corridor for pedestrians, equestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized trail users will provide universal accessibility to a variety of users of different abilities and ages. This network expands on the existing and planned river trail system to connect with other existing trail linkages and major public lands. These non-motorized multi-modal transportation trails take advantage, where possible, of locations that offer the community multiple benefits such as alternative transportation routes, recreational opportunities, wildlife habitat preservation, open space protection, and flood control.

Although not regulatory, the *West Valley Multi-Modal Transportation Corridor Master Plan* provides a concept, design guidelines, funding sources, and implementation tools for municipalities adjacent to the corridor to use when expanding their trail networks. The PRFT incorporates these guidelines to assist in providing regional connectivity throughout the West Valley corridor.

### *Maricopa County Association of Governments (MAG) Desert Spaces Plan – 1997*

The MAG *Desert Spaces Plan* provides regional support, policy recommendations, and implementation tools for municipalities under MAG to use to protect and preserve open space while still allowing for development. The plan identifies key areas for protection and includes policy recommendations for the acquisition, management, and maintenance of open space. The plan divides open space areas prioritized for protection into two categories: Conservation and Retention. Areas classified as Conservation are generally highly sensitive areas, with characteristics such as steep mountains or riparian or wildlife habitats, and may contain valuable cultural resources. Recommended management policies would prohibit all types of development on areas classified as conservation land. Areas classified as Retention include upland Sonoran Desert, hillsides, and other riparian areas already in developed areas. Development that is deemed environmentally sensitive would be allowed in areas classified as Retention, but only with strict oversight.

Many municipalities, such as Avondale, have incorporated by reference the policies of the Desert Spaces Plan into their general plans. The PRFT incorporates many of the tools presented in the Desert Spaces Plan relative to the coordination of the regional trail system.

### *Maricopa County Open Space Report, Comprehensive Plan Element, and Trail System Plan – 2001*

The *Maricopa County Open Space Report* and the *Comprehensive Plan Element* provide regulatory policy for unincorporated lands within Maricopa County and policy guidelines for incorporated areas. Both documents call for clustered development on private land and stricter management policies on public land not yet protected with amendments, easements, or restrictions. One of the main goals of the report and plan element is to establish regional open space connectivity and linkages for both recreation and wildlife. This includes the Maricopa County Regional Trail System, including the Sun Circle Trail; the regional trail system links the eight major parks within the Maricopa County park system. In Avondale, this connection would be from the Estrella Mountain Regional Park, along the Agua Fria River/West Valley Corridor, toward Lake Pleasant and the White Tank Mountain Regional Park. The *Maricopa County Regional Trail System Plan* incorporates the *West Valley Multi-modal Transportation Corridor Plan*.

### *Arizona Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan – 2008*

The *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* (SCORP) for Arizona is a federally mandated document that is required for the state to receive federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) monies and that guides the distribution of those monies to state, regional, and local agencies by identifying public and agency preferences and priorities for outdoor recreation activities and facilities. The SCORP makes recommendations to the Arizona State Parks Board (ASPB) through the Open Project Selection Process for the prioritization of the LWCF, the Local, Regional and State Parks (LRSP) Heritage Fund (ARS § 41-503), and the Trails Heritage Fund. The ASPB also administers the federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP) for motorized and nonmotorized trails (23 United States Code 206), the State Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Fund (ARS § 28-1176), and other grant programs for open space and park acquisition and development of recreation and trail facilities. The LRSP Heritage Fund helped construct Pendergast Park in Avondale, and that grant is a potential source of funding for the implementation of the PRFT goals.

## 2.3 Land Use and Land Ownership Overview

In addition to the review of existing plans and studies for the development of the PRFT, an analysis of the existing and planned land uses and existing land ownership was conducted to determine the most desired and compatible siting locations for new park and recreation facilities. Existing and planned land uses were identified within the City's 2002 General Plan planning boundary for this PRFT. This planning boundary includes the city limits north of the Gila River as of November 2008. The study area for this PRFT does not include the City's South Planning Area, south of the Gila River. This analysis included three main categories: Existing Land Use, Planned Land Use, and Land Ownership and documents land use, legislative designations, and land management that occur within the study area.

### *Existing Land Use*

As described in the General Plan, the majority of existing land use (58 percent) remained undeveloped in 2000 with the predominant use of this undeveloped land being agriculture. Typical of the evolving

suburban/urban landscape of the Phoenix Metropolitan area, the rural agricultural lands are giving way to medium-density residential use and becoming equivalent uses within Avondale as depicted in Figure 1, *Existing Land Use*. The majority of land use north of the Gila River is quickly becoming residential, with commercial, quasi-public, and recreation land uses interspersed among the residential development. Existing industrial land use occurs mostly along the Agua Fria River corridor south of Indian School Road, Van Buren Street, and Broadway Road. In 1995, the third-largest land use category was water (that is, areas of floodways, floodplains, drainage structures, and canals). These areas have become increasingly important throughout the West Valley as a means to provide regional open space connectivity. The majority of existing vacant lands are located south of Buckeye Road along the Agua Fria and Gila Rivers, mostly within the FEMA 100-year floodplains. There are no land use designations for parks or open space included on the existing land use map. The only existing recreation land uses are indicated between Van Buren Street and Buckeye Road from the Agua Fria River to Avondale Boulevard, and at the southeast corner of the study area.

The following categories of existing land uses were identified based on information contained within the City's 2006 Transportation Plan (Figure 1, *Existing Land Use*).

***Agriculture*** **–** identifies areas where the existing land use is cultivation of land for agricultural or ranching purposes.

***Residential*** **–** refers to all density levels of residential development (that is, rural, low-density, medium-density, and high-density single and multi-family).

***Commercial*** **–** includes commercial areas with retail and service-oriented businesses.

***Industrial*** **–** refers to industrial areas for manufacturing, warehouse, research uses, business parks, and office/warehouses.

***Quasi-Public*** **–** includes schools, churches, cemeteries, municipal, agency, and other utility facilities.

***Rail Road*** **–** refers to areas adjacent to the Southern Pacific Railroad corridor used for transporting goods via railroad.

***Recreation*** **–** denotes areas where neighborhood, community, or agency lands are located for recreational purposes.

***Other Landuses*** **–** denotes areas where the land use has been undefined.

***Utilities*** **–** identifies areas for private and public utilities

***Vacant*** **–** refers to areas that are not being utilized for active uses and remain undeveloped.

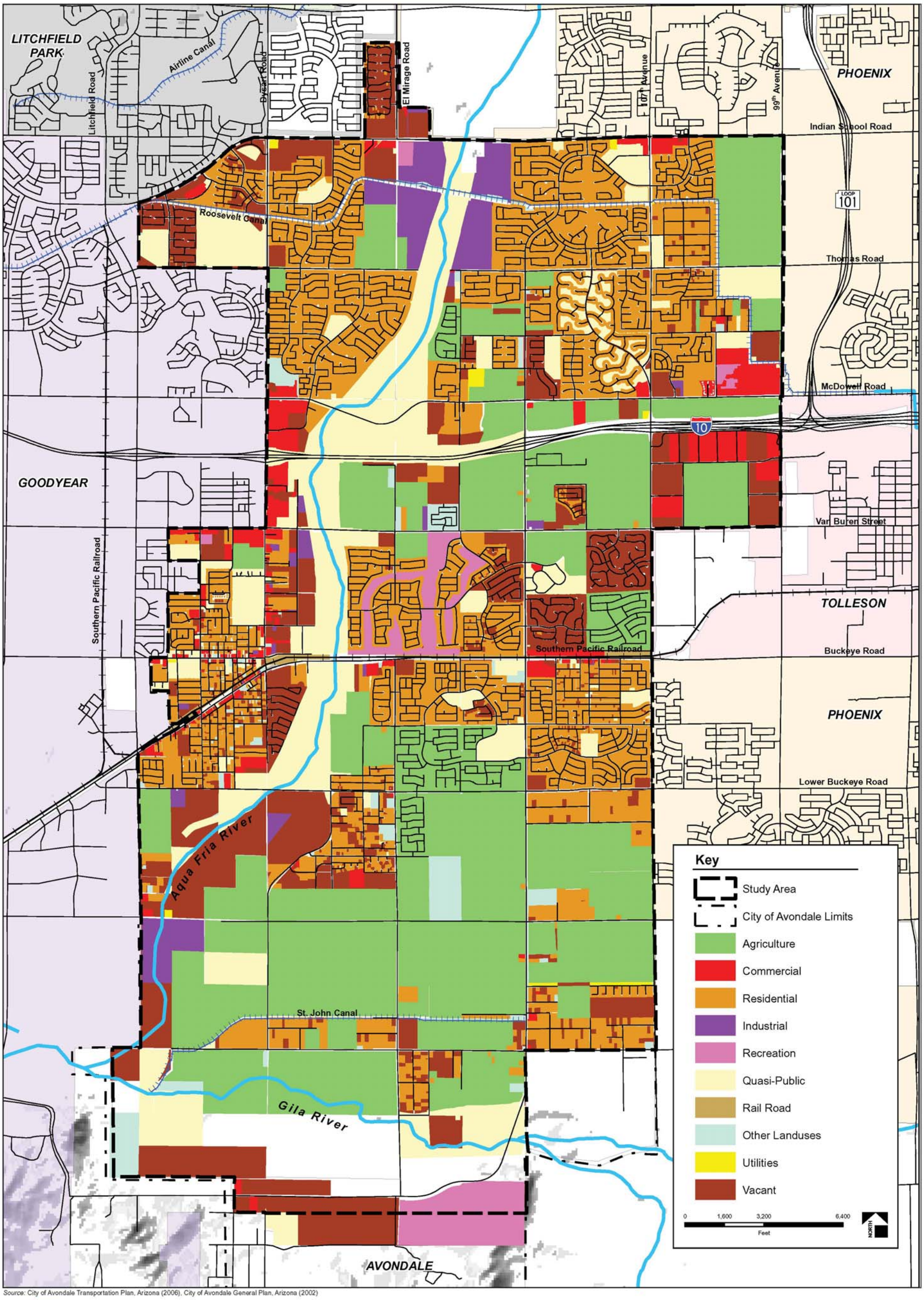
***Planned Land Use***

This category includes all general and specific planned land uses not otherwise identified in existing land uses. The source of the planned land use information is from the City's 2002 General Plan (Figure 2, *Planned Land Use*).

According to the General Plan, most, if not all, agricultural lands are being replaced by varying levels of residential development (that is, rural low density, low density, medium density, medium high density, high density, and multi-family residential). The majority of land use south of Lower Buckeye Road is rural low density and low density residential. The majority of land north of Lower Buckeye Road is medium density residential with the majority of employment, mixed use, commercial, and freeway commercial land uses located between Van Buren Street and McDowell Road. Additional 0.5-mile corridors of these land use types are located on the west side of the Agua Fria River between McDowell and Buckeye Roads and west of 99th Avenue between Indian School and McDowell Roads.

Public facilities land uses are interspersed throughout Avondale from Indian School Road to Southern Avenue. The majority of open space land use areas are incorporated within or adjacent to the Agua Fria and Gila River corridors, with the City's existing and planned parks interspersed between Indian School Road and Broadway Road.

As new development occurs south of Lower Buckeye Road, it is important to identify additional open space areas for neighborhood and community parks to serve the needs of residents that will be living in this area of the city.



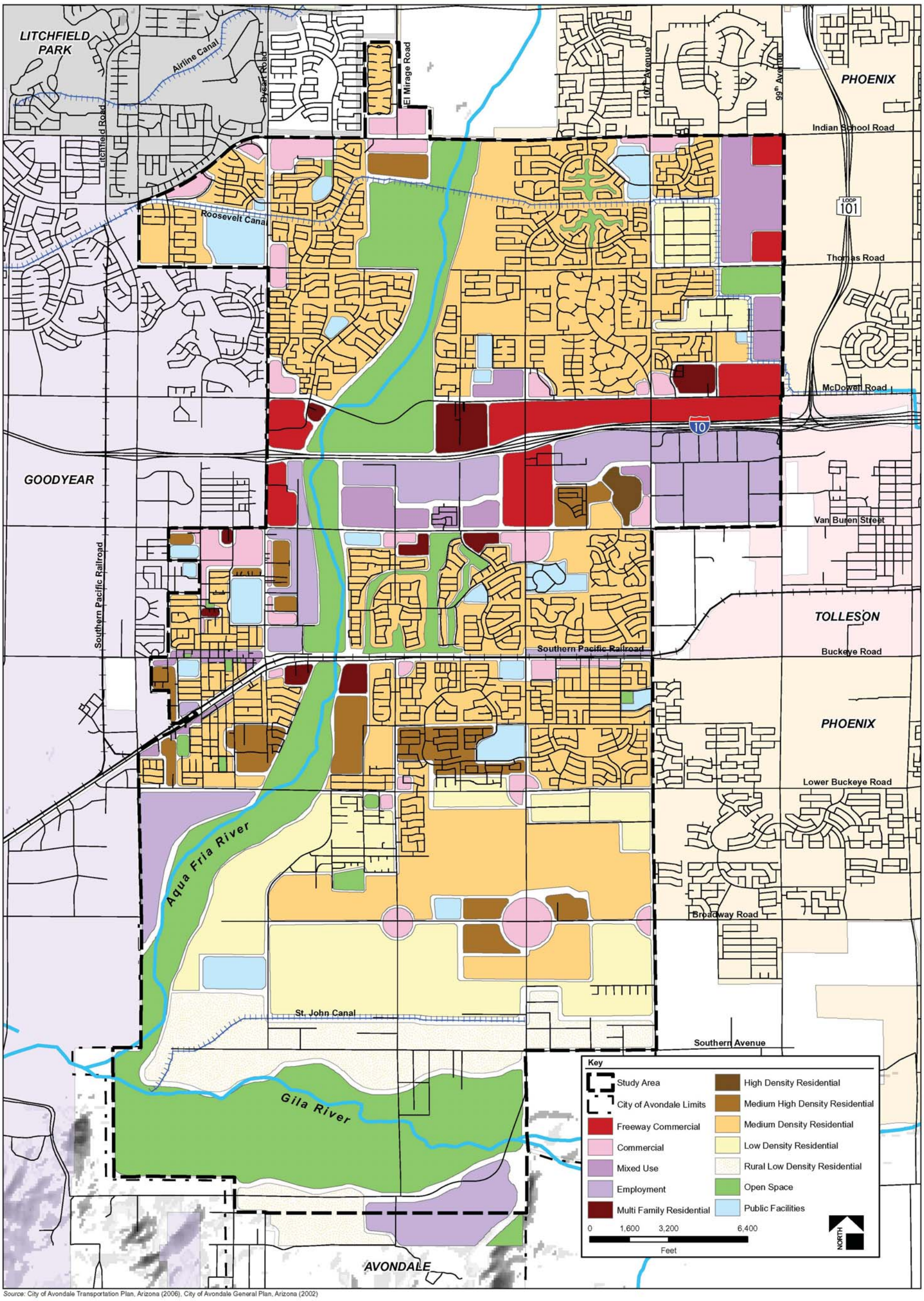

Source: City of Avondale Transportation Plan, Arizona (2006), City of Avondale General Plan, Arizona (2002)

City of Avondale

Parks, Recreation Facilities & Trails Master Plan

Logan Simpson Design Inc.

**Figure 1. Existing Land Use**




Source: City of Avondale Transportation Plan, Arizona (2006), City of Avondale General Plan, Arizona (2002)

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**Figure 2. Planned Land Use**

***Land Jurisdiction and Ownership***

The identification of land jurisdiction and ownership is important in determining future locations of park and recreation facilities as these relate to potential measures and mechanisms the City will need to utilize in implementing the PRFT. As identified from the 2008 Arizona Land Resource Information System digital database, Figure 3, *Land Ownership,* illustrates the current locations of privately and publicly owned lands within the study area. Over 95 percent of the land within the study area is privately owned, which will influence the cost of developing new facilities since the opportunities for partnering with other public landowners (for example, BLM) may be limited. However, BLM owns more than 400 acres south of the Gila River west of El Mirage Road, as well as a smaller parcel of land east of the Agua Fria River south of Indian School Road. The opportunity to secure parkland in this area through Recreation and Public Purposes Patents (R&PP) or BLM's land disposal process may assist in meeting the future recreational needs of the City.

In addition, ASLD owns two parcels of land south of the Gila River between Dysart Road and Avondale Boulevard. The Arizona Game and Fish Department also owns land adjacent to the Gila River on both sides of Avondale Boulevard. While ASLD lands may be purchased when they are brought to auction, land acquisition costs would require that the City expend limited park and recreation resources on acquiring land rather than developing new recreational facilities.

Other publicly held lands located within or adjacent to the study area include the Estrella Mountain Regional Park, which is owned by Maricopa County and managed by the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department, and a number of City-owned parcels throughout the city, many of which are used for municipal services such as parks, offices, and community services.

## 2.4 Multi-Use Recreational Opportunities

In addition to the land use and ownership analysis, an inventory of existing and planned parks, non-motorized trail facilities, public facilities, and open spaces within the study area was conducted. Elements identified in this inventory included existing and planned open space and parks, existing golf courses, existing elementary and secondary schools, public facilities, and police and fire stations. Trails identified included planned multi-use/equestrian trails, multi-use trails, bike trails, pedestrian trails, and open space trail linkages. In addition, existing bike lanes and the existing and planned Maricopa County regional trail system and Estrella Mountain Regional Park trails were identified. This information was compiled graphically in Figure 4, *Multi-Use Recreation Opportunities Analysis*. The following multi-use opportunities were identified during this analysis.

***Public Parks***

Twelve existing parks and one planned park, owned and maintained by the City are located within the study area. These parks are currently categorized as follows: two pocket/specialty parks, eight neighborhood parks, two regional parks, and 72 acres of open space at Crystal Gardens. Most of the parks, excluding the pocket/specialty parks and Crystal Gardens, include recreational amenities such as picnic areas, ramadas, children's play areas, and basketball courts. The two regional parks also include ballfield complexes. Additionally, there is one public golf course located within the city, and Estrella Mountain Regional Park is located to the southwest of the study area.

***Open Space***

Open space includes land dedicated, designated, or reserved as city open space, private open space within subdivisions, and open play areas within city parks that function as recreational amenities, visual spaces, habitat areas, or flood control. In addition, the Estrella Mountain Regional Park and Gila River/El Rio Restoration Project provide large open space and multi-use recreational opportunities and destinations. ASLD lands south of the Gila River are accessible for recreational use with a fee-based use permit. Typically, permits are issued for the purposes of hiking, equestrian use, bicycling, rock climbing, and all-terrain vehicles. Hot-air ballooning is also a permitted use on ASLD lands.

***Trails and Bike Lanes***

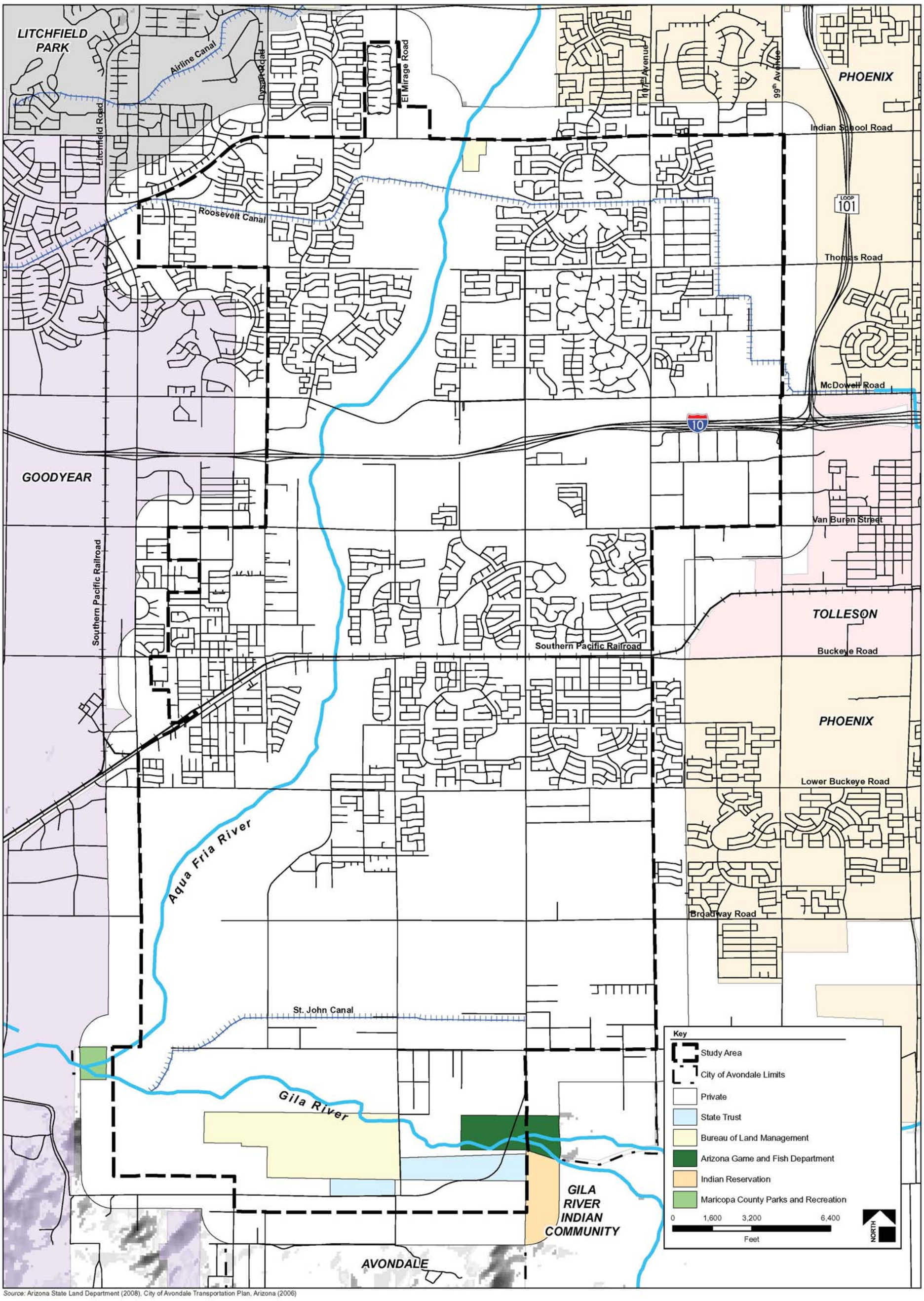
The Maricopa County regional trail system, which joins multi-jurisdictional open space projects and trail systems throughout the county, traverses through Avondale in several areas, including along the Roosevelt Irrigation District Canal, the Agua Fria River, and the Gila River. The City's 2006 Transportation

Plan identifies the routes of existing and planned bike lanes that generally follow mile and half-mile streets and that are designated by pavement markings and signs along the edges of paved roadways outside the travel lanes.

The General Plan also identifies an expanded network of multi-use, pedestrian, and bike trails that generally follow the river corridors (serving as reaches of the Maricopa County regional trail system), canals, and power transmission lines. These trails and bike lanes provide non-motorized public access as well as recreational use throughout the city.

***Other Planning Considerations/Opportunities***

Other considerations and opportunities that may influence the development of the PRFT included an evaluation of the current environmental and planning considerations relative to the City's natural and cultural resources, population trends, future growth areas, and regional competiveness. In addition to these, an understanding of the City's existing and planned infrastructure (utilities and transportation) and drainage patterns provided a basis for identifying appropriate areas for new park and recreation facilities that would serve the existing and future population of the city.




Source: Arizona State Land Department (2008), City of Avondale Transportation Plan, Arizona (2006)

City of Avondale

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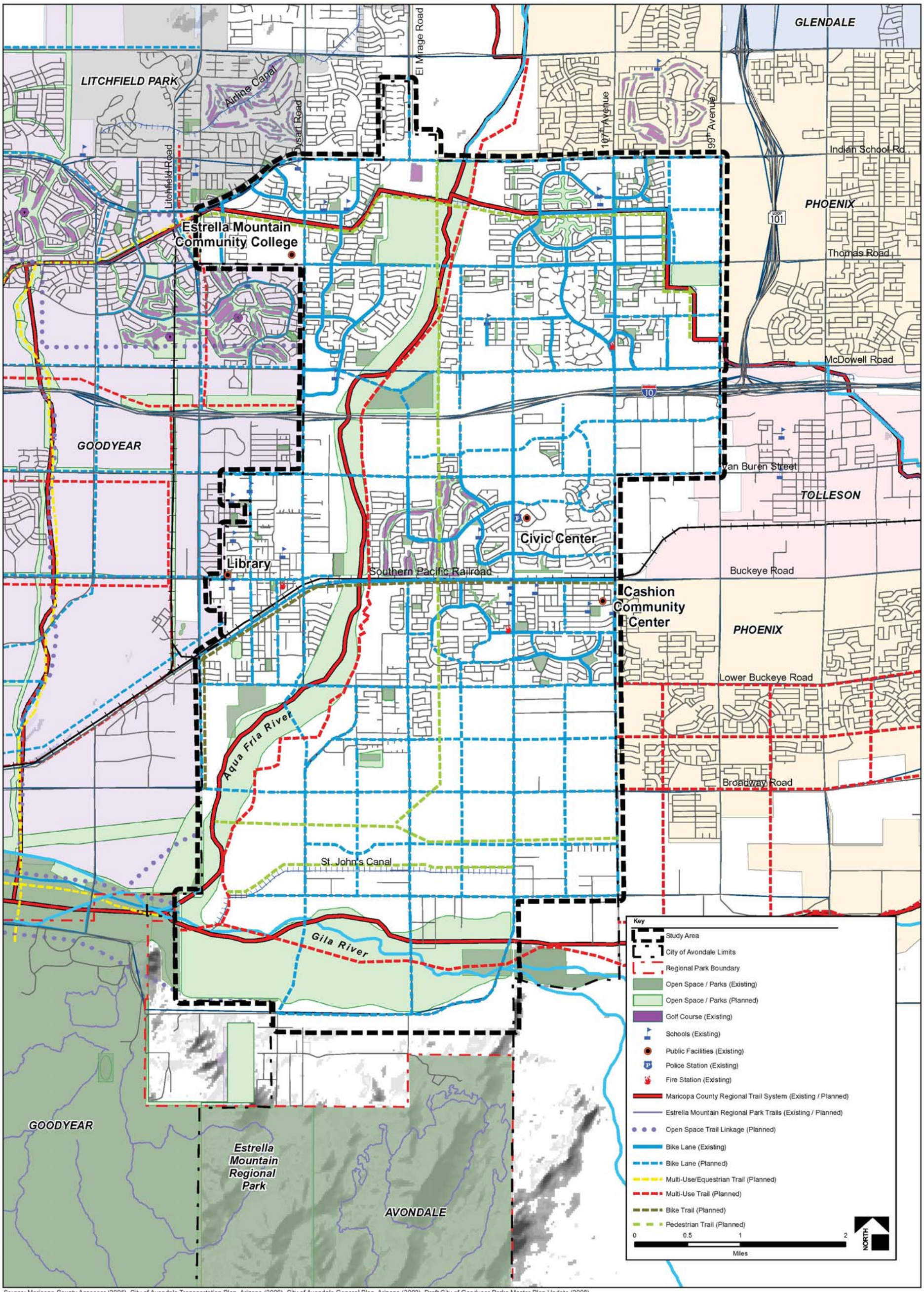
**Figure 3. Land Ownership**




*Source:* Maricopa County Assessor (2005), City of Avondale Transportation Plan, Arizona (2006), City of Avondale General Plan, Arizona (2002), Draft City of Goodyear Parks Master Plan Update (2008)

City of Avondale

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**Figure 4. Multi-Use Recreation Opportunities Analysis**

# 3.0 EXISTING PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES EVALUATIONS

An inventory and analysis of the existing parks was undertaken by City staff to identify the types and numbers of facilities and amenities each park has and their current conditions. This inventory and analysis provides the initial basis for identifying potential deficits within the existing park and recreation system. This inventory includes all existing and planned public parks within Avondale. It identifies each park facility, its classification, physical land size, and assessment of conditions as identified in Table 3.1, *Existing and Planned Recreational Facilities Inventory and Evaluation.*

## 3.1 Evaluation Overview

All available existing data pertinent to the City's recreation facilities has been identified and evaluated through site visits to each park and recreation facility as shown in Figure 5, *Existing and Planned Park Facilities*. An inventory matrix was developed and utilized to assist in documenting the type, amount, and condition of each of the park facilities. This information also includes proposed facilities at one existing regional park site and one planned neighborhood park site and is summarized in Table 3.1, *Existing and Planned Recreational Facilities Inventory and Evaluation.*

Each facility, activity, and amenity was evaluated according to its recreational function and condition as identified in the following categories and shown in Table 3.1.

***Access –*** identifies the means by which park users may access the site.

***Active Play Recreation –*** refers to active, informal, individual, or group play amenities such as play areas, tot lots, or open play grass areas that allow for pickup games.

***Organized Play Recreation –*** refers to active, formally organized team sport facilities such as sport fields, sports courts, and other activities supportive of leagues and tournament play.

***Moderate Recreation –*** generally includes more leisurely type activities such as bocce ball, horseshoes, fishing, hiking, biking, horseback riding, and indoor recreational activities that may be organized or unorganized, programmed or unprogrammed, or individual or group oriented.

***Site Amenities –*** includes elements such as restrooms, ramadas, outdoor barbecue grills, picnic tables, benches, and drinking fountains that increase the user friendliness of the facility, enhance the user's experience, and/or encourage longer durations of park usage. It also includes an evaluation of existing maintenance level and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.

Table 3.1 also assists in identifying the facilities and amenities that need upgrading to enhance the user's experience and increase desired usage or that need updating to meet current codes and maintain acceptable levels of safety, accessibility, and service. Each facility, activity, and amenity was evaluated based on physical, locational, social, and usability considerations.

## 3.2 General Conditions

The need for upgrading and updating some of the existing facilities is largely due to the maturity of the facilities; long-term usage; over usage; impacts of undesirable activities; or the need to address certain standards and criteria that did not exist at the time of their initial development. Listed below are general, common observations that affect the majority, but not all, of these existing park facilities:

- Outdated, deteriorated condition or lack of shade ramadas and canopies, playground equipment, benches, and drinking fountains.
- Lack of or insufficient site amenities (that is, trash receptacles, benches, tables, barbeques).
- Lack of or insufficient pedestrian and/or ADA accessibility to use areas and amenities (for example, ramadas, play equipment, tables, grills, benches, drinking fountains, trash receptacles) within the park development.
- Lack of or insufficient security/site lighting that meets current Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) or Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) standards for public recreational facilities.
- Vandalism and graffiti activities.

**Table 3.1. Existing and Planned Recreational Facilities Inventory and Evaluation**

## City of Avondale- Existing Parks & Recreational Facilities Inventory and Evaluation

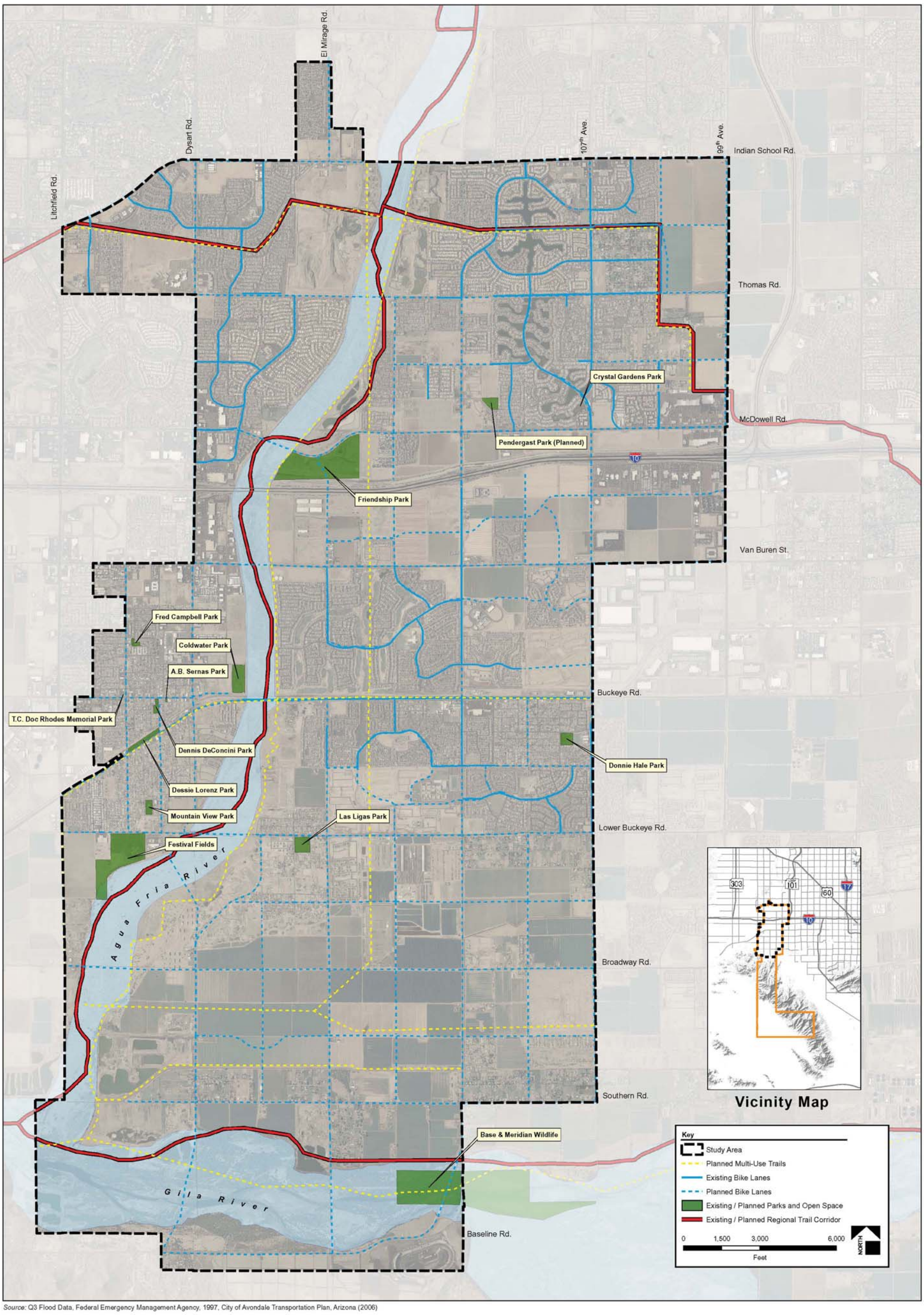
| Activity/ Amenity | Access | | | | | Active Play Recreation | | | | | | | | | | | Organized Play Recreation | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Moderate Recreation | | | | | | | | | | | Site Amenities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FACILITY Name and Type | On-Street Sidewalks | On-Street Parking | Off-Street Parking | On-Street Bike Route | Bicycle Racks | Open Areas | Play Swings (# of Seats) | Tot Swings (# of Seats) | Slides | Spring Animals | Climbing Structures | Tot Lot (0-5 Years) | Play Area (6-12 Years) | Splash Pad | Workout Stations | Fitness Course | Basketball Courts-Lit | Baseball Fields-Lit | Baseball Fields-Unlit | Softball Fields-Lit | Softball Fields-Unlit | Soccer Fields - Lit | Soccer Fields - Unlit | Multi-Use Fields - Lit | Multi-Use Fields - Unlit | Football/Track | Tennis Courts-Lit | Dog Park/Dog Run | Skate Park | Rodeo Arena | Sand Volleyball Courts | Paved Pathway | Unpaved Trails | Biking Trails (Mtn. Bike) | Equestrian Trails | Trailhead/Staging Area | Aquatic Facility | Golf Course-9 Holes | Camping | Fishing Lake | Concession Buildings | Community/Rec. Center | Restrooms | Double Ramadas | Single Ramadas | Shade Canopy | Picnic Tables | Benches | Site Lighting | Plaza/Activity Area | Barbeque Facilities | Ponds/Water Features | Drinking Fountains | Landscape | Turf (Irrigation) | Maintenance | ADA Compliance | Acres |
| **Pocket/Specialty Parks** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| T.C. Doc Rhodes Memorial Park | Good | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Good | | | | | | | | | | | | Good | | | | Fair | Good | | | | Good | Good | Good | Good | 0.28 |
| A.B. Sernas Plaza | Good | Good | | | | Good | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Good | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Good | Good | Good | | | | Good | Good | Good | Good | 0.25 |
| **Neighborhood Parks** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Coldwater Park | Good | | Fair | | | Poor | | | | | 2 Poor | | | | | | | | | 2 Poor | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 Poor | | 1 Poor | | Poor | | | | | Poor | Poor | Poor | Poor | 12.16 |
| Dennis DeConcini Park | Good | Good | Good | | | Good | 4 Good | 4 Good | 4 Poor | | 4 Fair | 1/2 Poor | 1/2 Poor | | | | 1 Good | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 Fair | 1 Poor | 2 Good | | Poor | | | | | Good | Good | Good | Fair | 3.77 |
| Dessie Lorenz Park | Good | Good | Good | | 1 Fair | Good | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Good | | | | | | | | | | | | | 3 Poor | 2 Fair | 3 Fair | Fair | | | | | | Good | Good | Good | Fair | 4.65 |
| Donnie Hale Park | Good | Good | Good | | | Good | 4 Good | 4 Good | 2 Fair | 1 Fair | 6 Fair | | 1 Good | | | | 2 Fair | 1 Good | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Good | | | | | | | | | | 1 Poor | | 1 Fair | 1 Good | 3 Fair | 2 Good | Fair | 1 Fair | 2 Good | | 1 Fair | Good | Good | Good | Good | 5.26 |
| Fred Campbell Park | Good | Good | | | | Good | 2 Fair | 2 Fair | 3 Fair | | 4 Fair | 1/2 Fair | 1/2 Fair | | | | 1 Fair | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Good | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 Good | 1 Good | 1 Poor | | Poor | | 1 Poor | | | Good | Good | Good | Poor | 1.48 |
| Las Ligas Park | Good | Good | Good | | | Good | 3 Good | | 2 Fair | | 2 Good | 1/2 Fair | 1/2 Fair | | | | 1 Good | 1 Good | | | | | | | 1 Fair | | | | | | | Good | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 Fair | 1 Good | 1 Poor | 1 Good | Good | | 1 Good | | 1 Poor | Good | Good | Good | Good | 8.10 |
| Mountain View Park | Good | Good | Good | | | Good | 2 Fair | 2 Fair | 3 Fair | | | 1/2 Poor | 1/2 Poor | | | | 2 Good | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 Good | Good | | | | | | | | | | | 1 Fair | 1 Poor | 1 Good | 3 Fair | | Fair | | | | | Good | Good | Good | Fair | 3.51 |
| Pendergast Park (Planned) | | | 1 | | | 1 | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | | | | | TBD | | | | | | | | | | | | 3 | | 2 | TBD | TBD | | | | 1 | TBD | TBD | | | 10.00 |
| **Regional Parks** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Festival Fields | | | Good | Good | | Good | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4 Good | | | | 1 Good | | | | | | | | Good | | | | | | | | | | | 1 Good | | | | | Good | Good | | | 2 Good | Good | Good | Good | Good | 27.65 |
| Festival Fields Phase 2 (Planned) | | | | | | 5 | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD | 1 | | | 2 | 1 | | 2 | | | | | | | 2 | | | | | TBD | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | 6 | | | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD | | TBD | TBD | TBD | | | 50.00 |
| Friendship Park | | | Good | | | Good | 12 Good | 4 Good | 12 Good | 3 Good | | 1 Fair | 2 Fair | | | | 2 Good | 2 Good | | 1 Good | | | | 6 Good | 3 Good | 1 Good | 2 Good | 1 Good | | | | Good | | | | | | | | 1 Good | | 2 Good | | 3 Good | 5 Good | 3 Good | Good | Good | 1 Fair | 2 Good | 1 Fair | 6 Good | Good | Good | Good | Good | 80.20 |
| **Open Space** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Good | Good | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Good | | Good | | Good | Good | Good | Poor | 72.00 |

Source: City of Avondale and Logan Simpson Design, Inc.

(#) Good (#) Fair (#) Poor

# = Number of Existing Facilities

TBD = Number of Planned Facilities to be determined




*Source:* Q3 Flood Data, Federal Emergency Management Agency, 1997, City of Avondale Transportation Plan, Arizona (2006)

City of Avondale

**Parks, Recreation Facilities & Trails Master Plan**

Logan Simpson Design Inc.

**Figure 5. Existing and Planned Park Facilities**

Four distinct levels of existing development conditions have been identified in the general overview of the City's existing parks and recreation facilities and are listed below.

***Level One –*** consists of park facilities that function as pocket/specialty parks including T. C. Doc Rhodes Memorial Park and A. B. Sernas Plaza. These facilities are approximately 0.25 acre in size and function as small community rest nodes, seating areas, or plazas located adjacent to major street corridors and commercially developed areas. The main site access for these park facilities is from the adjacent on-street sidewalks that encourage cut-through pedestrian traffic. These park facilities appear to be underutilized due to their location adjacent to major street corridors that have no buffer zones and minimal site amenities.

***Level Two –*** consists of park facilities that function as neighborhood parks including Dennis DeConcini, Donnie Hale, Fred Campbell, Las Ligas, and Mountain View Parks. These facilities range from approximately 1.5 to 8 acres in size and contain more site amenities than the Level One parks due to their larger size and function. These park facilities include shade ramadas, picnicking, and play area/tot lot play equipment, sports courts, and open play grass areas and are generally in fair condition. The majority of poor conditions found within these parks were due to age decline and lack of high visibility due to few or no houses facing the park. All parks have experienced a high rate of vandalism and graffiti to the existing amenities and facilities. Most of these parks need improvements in site lighting, age-group separation and safety upgrades for playground equipment, and ADA accessibility. Of all the Level Two parks, Dennis DeConcini Park had the most items rated as poor condition due to overuse and vandalism.

***Level Three –*** consists of park facilities that function as new regional parks with community-level recreation facilities that serve a larger area than the immediate surrounding neighborhoods. The sizes of Level Three parks are approximately 80 acres each and include Festival Fields and Friendship Parks. These facilities are in good condition due to being the most recently developed within the City's park system and should be a measure of standard for future facilities developed throughout the city. Some poor conditions that result from these recently developed facilities are in direct relation to the amount and length of usage due to programmed field activities. Programming field activities with an adequate amount of time to allow the turf areas to rest in-between uses would help to sustain the turf for a longer amount of time. Some items that could increase the usability and/or enjoyment of the facilities include providing more ADA-accessible amenities (shaded tables, benches, and drinking fountains), age-group separation for playground equipment, and designated areas for overflow parking during large events.

***Level Four –*** consists of park facilities that function as neighborhood parks or passive open space including Coldwater and Dessie Lorenz Parks and Crystal Gardens. Coldwater Park is approximately 12 acres in size and developed on an old landfill site. The overall condition of the park is poor due to lack of adequate ADA compliance, potential issues related to the amount of soil cover for turf grass and landscaping, upkeep of existing facilities and amenities, and vandalism.

Dessie Lorenz Park is approximately 4.5 acres in size and functions as a small open space area with seating areas and pathways. Similar to the Level One parks, Dessie Lorenz Park is located adjacent to major street corridors and commercially developed areas. However, it is much larger in size and has more site amenities. The main site access is from the adjacent on-street sidewalks. While it has good access and is well maintained, most of the site amenities are in poor condition due to underutilization by appropriate users, vandalism, and the presence of transients.

Crystal Gardens is a 72-acre open space area integrated within residential development and includes an unpaved trail system. The City does not own this open space land but maintains the stabilized decomposed granite trails that surround the 19 existing lakes within the Crystal Gardens development. The trail corridors are in good condition but lack sufficient lighting for nighttime usage. Each lake is surrounded by residential lots that back onto the open space, lake, and trails.

The majority of issues that are affecting the conditions of the existing park facilities are due to location, over- or underutilization, lack of site amenities in good condition, and vandalism. These most common key issues are described below.

*ADA/IBC/CPTED Conformance* – There is a lack of or insufficient conformance to current ADA and International Building Code (IBC) requirements, and CPTED guidelines. These include, but are not limited

to, an accessible route of travel to areas that serve a “primary function,” such as picnic areas, playgrounds, sports courts, and other site amenities, and that have high visibility.

*Safety and Security* – Every park facility exhibits some level of vandalism and/or safety concerns that occur in public spaces today. Site lighting was insufficient or poor at some of the pocket/specialty and neighborhood parks. Utilizing CPTED principles such as providing sufficient lighting levels for the respective types of activities and encouraging citizen park patrol and user ownership may deter some of the negative activities and influences currently occurring. Developing new neighborhood parks that have residential properties that front onto the park would also assist in better surveillance of activities.

*Over- or Underutilized Facilities* – Site visits during the week indicated that most neighborhood and regional park facilities appear to be appropriately utilized with the exception of T. C. Doc Rhodes Memorial Park, A. B. Sernas Plaza, and Dessie Lorenz Park.

*Site Amenities* – Many parks do not have site access or pathways to designated use areas (for example, picnic areas, sports courts, drinking fountains) that meet ADA requirements. Many site amenities, including playground equipment, tables, and shade canopies, are in fair to poor condition due to vandalism.

*General Graffiti and Vandalism* – The highest level of vandalism and graffiti occurs in the Level Two park facilities that lack high visibility. Graffiti and vandalism are evident in all park facilities ranging from minimal to high intensity and are not correlated to the amount of over- or underutilization of the facilities within the park. Play area/tot lot equipment, ramadas, and concrete walkways are the items vandalized the most within these facilities.

*Maintenance* – Maintenance varies according to the type, size, location, and age of the facility. The older the facility, the more the wear and tear, and the more challenging the maintenance requirements have become. Compaction and/or nutrient depletion over time may be the cause of the turf conditions in some of the facilities. Vandalism, graffiti, and drainage issues present ongoing maintenance challenges.

The existing conditions shown in Table 3.1 are a result of facility age and user and maintenance related influences. All park facilities are well used, and the City’s Parks, Recreation and Libraries Department has done well in developing and maintaining these existing facilities at their current level. Renovation and upgrades of existing facilities can reduce the level of maintenance required and the usability and safety concerns, as well as, increase the level of user enjoyment.

Table 3.1 also identifies that the majority of existing park and recreation facilities lack sufficient organized play and moderate recreation facilities. While active play recreation elements appear to be sufficient in number, they lack the physical separation between age groups recommended by the current *Handbook for Public Playground Safety* published by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and by the U.S. Access Board’s *Summary of Accessibility Guidelines for Play Areas*.

Most site amenities are also provided in sufficient number for the service areas of the community they serve. This information, in addition to Section 6.0, *Park and Recreation Facilities Needs Assessment*, will provide the basis for Section 7.0, *Parks and Recreation Facilities Development Program.*

# 4.0 Public Participation Program

## 4.1 Introduction

Providing opportunities for the citizens of Avondale to actively participate in the master planning process of its parks and recreation facilities was essential to the development of the City's PRFT. One public meeting, two stakeholder advisory group meetings, a city-wide needs assessment survey, and a short-form survey at the World Fest were conducted to identify the community's diverse interests, values, issues, and needs in an effort to provide a common vision for the development of park and recreational facilities throughout the city. The public and stakeholder meetings were also held to solicit the public's input on the preliminary park and recreation standards and the Preliminary Master Plan.

The following is a summary of each of the public and stakeholder advisory group meetings and the World Fest survey that, in addition to the needs assessment and benchmark surveys, provided the basis for the PRFT recommendations.

## 4.2 Public Meeting No. 1

On September 10, 2008, the first public meeting began with a welcome and introduction of the project. The objective of the first public meeting was twofold: (1) to introduce the study, its purpose and process, the schedule, and the City and consultant team members and (2) to receive input from the community on their values, issues, needs, concerns, and vision for the City's park and recreation system. The City posted notices of the meeting 1 week prior to the meeting at City Hall, Fire Station 172, and the Sam Garcia Library. Approximately nine participants were in attendance.

The solicitation of values, issues, and needs was initiated by a facilitator who asked participants what they valued most about the City of Avondale's parks and recreation system. The idea was presented that if they were to move away and come back 5 years later, what did they hope *would not have changed*? The following responses to this question assisted in identifying the community's values, which would drive the vision of the PRFT:

- Clean parks, restrooms, and facilities
- Convenient access to a variety of parks
- Family-oriented activities
- Buildings that provide a variety of options for different age groups and abilities in close proximity to each other
- Adequate shade structures
- Good enforcement of policies that promotes a feeling of safety and security
- No conflict of usage of the same facilities by different user groups
- Encourage larger, open recreation areas rather than pocket parks
- Convenient access to dog parks
- Walking within safe, lit areas
- Openness of City staff
- Long bike/hike routes without interacting with traffic

Similarly, the idea was presented that if they were to move away and come back 5 years later, what did they hope *would have changed*? The responses to this question assisted in identifying the community's issues as they relate to existing park and recreation facilities. The majority of the issues identified were described as items or ideas that are lacking in the existing parks and recreation facilities or recreation programs that are not available or currently offered due to facility or staff constraints.

Participants were asked what they needed or desired for their recreational enjoyment that currently was not being provided by the City. These included activities, facilities, or amenities that they were using elsewhere (another city or private enterprise) or not at all due to the lack of their availability:

- An indoor recreation multi-purpose facility/teen center
- Areas for family and group activities (particularly during the summer heat)

- A pool and water features (splash parks)
- Areas of activities for all age groups (older teen, adult, and senior)
- More outdoor lighted facilities (baseball, multi-purpose, basketball courts)
- Fields available for league play (adult baseball)
- A large pavilion with barbeque and picnic facilities, including food-prep facilities
- A greenbelt/recreation corridor along the Agua Fria River
- An upgrade to the existing trails
- A public golf course
- Areas for fishing
- Areas for unprogrammed activities (pickup games, open turf areas with backstop)
- Enough land for park development (to provide, for example, sufficient parking, unprogrammed areas, open space)

In addition, a meeting survey was distributed to the participants, which asked the following questions:

- What types of facilities or settings would you spend the most time using?
- What types of park facilities would you use?
- What amenities are the most important to include in a park?

Five completed surveys were received and following is a summary of the results.

- The majority of the respondents (80%) indicated that they would spend most of their time using recreation facilities for pickup games, open play, sports tournaments, and events.
- The types of facilities the respondents would use most (60% or greater) are play areas, tot lots, open picnic tables with barbeques, baseball fields, and special gathering/events/activity areas.
- The types of amenities respondents think are most important (60% or greater) to include in park facilities are trash receptacles, shade trees, drinking fountains, pathway/security lighting, benches, parking, picnic tables, grass amphitheaters, barbeque grills, bike racks, landscape berms/forms, drought-tolerant landscape plantings, and an emergency system.

Comment sheets were also provided for the participants to fill out and return at their convenience. Five comment sheets were returned and reflected the discussion and comments received during the public meeting.

Seventeen completed surveys/comment sheets were received at the World Fest held on September 13, 2008. Another 13 completed surveys/comment sheets were received with addresses from other cities. The majority of World Fest respondents who lived within Avondale (over 80%) indicated that they would spend most of their time in facilities that provided leisure and educational/interpretive opportunities. The types of facilities the World Fest respondents (over 58%) would use most are paved walking paths, fitness courses, special gathering/event/activity areas, natural interpretive areas, fishing lakes/ponds, sculpture/art gardens, indoor recreation facilities, sand volleyball courts, decomposed granite or unpaved trails, open picnic tables with barbeques, single-family picnic ramadas, and open grass play areas. The types of amenities respondents (over 58%) think are most important to include in park facilities are shade trees, picnic tables, trash receptacles, drinking fountains, pathway/security lighting, benches, landscape berms/forms, drought-tolerant landscape plantings, parking, barbeque grills, and an emergency system.

World Fest respondents desired more passive, leisure, and natural resource activities than did public meeting respondents. This could be an indication of the types of amenities and activities that draw visitors to Avondale or the types of interests World Fest participants have in common.

All public comments were compiled, and their input—along with the results of the meeting survey, World Fest survey, and needs assessment survey—provided the foundation for forming the vision, goals, and objectives of the PRFT. The results of the meeting survey, World Fest survey, and additional public comments from the first public meeting are included in Appendix A, *Public Participation Input*.

## 4.3 Stakeholder Advisory Group Meetings

The purpose of the Stakeholder Advisory Group meetings was to provide input, data, and guidance on the PRFT at key milestones in the master plan process. The stakeholders included a variety of passive and active special-interest group users, homeowner associations (HOAs), affected county and state agencies, and interested citizens. Stakeholders were identified by the City, and a representative from each was contacted and invited to attend and participate in the upcoming stakeholder advisory group meetings. The following is a brief description of each of the stakeholder meetings that were conducted.

### *Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting No. 1*

On November 18, 2008, the City held the first stakeholder advisory group meeting. Approximately 10 stakeholder advisory group members were in attendance.

The objectives of this first stakeholder advisory group meeting were to:

- Provide the stakeholders an introduction to the project and an overview of the master planning process.
- Present to the stakeholders the physical inventory and analysis findings, including the City's regional context, slopes, land ownership, existing and planned land uses, biological and cultural resources, soils and geology, drainage and floodplains, infrastructure and utilities, and multi-use recreation opportunities.
- Provide a summary of the comments from the initial public meeting.
- Solicit values, issues, and needs specific to their specific user group or agency.
- Provide an overview of the needs assessment and benchmark survey results.
- Gather input on recreation facilities program criteria and standards required by their specific user group or agency recreation activities or interests.
- Receive input on the needs assessment and benchmark survey results, existing and future planning efforts, and user group and agency issues or concerns.

The solicitation of values, issues, and needs was initiated by a facilitator who asked participants what they valued most about the City's parks and recreation system, similar to how it was conducted at the first public meeting. An open-dialog session followed that provided the stakeholders an opportunity to share each of their own ideas and concerns about the recreation needs of their constituents.

The stakeholders were also asked to provide any additional base mapping data or additional information regarding their areas of concern and respective jurisdictions to assist in creating a solid foundation for the PRFT. The input received at the stakeholder advisory meeting, along with the needs assessment and benchmark survey results and the public input, provided the basis for developing the City's preliminary tailored park and recreation standards that were presented at the second stakeholder advisory group meeting. Comments received at the first stakeholder advisory meeting are included in Appendix A, *Public Participation Input*.

### *Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting No. 2*

On January 14, 2009, the City held the second stakeholder advisory group meeting. Approximately 14 stakeholder advisory group members were in attendance.

The objectives of the second stakeholder advisory group meeting were to:

- Provide a review of the needs assessment and benchmark survey results.
- Provide an overview of public input received to date.
- Review the existing park and recreation facilities inventory and evaluation.
- Present the park acreage and recreation facility needs analyses.
- Present the preliminary tailored park and recreation standards for the City.

An information packet was distributed—which included all the public and stakeholder input to date, the existing park and recreational facilities inventory and evaluation, the summarized benchmark survey results for park acreage and trails and indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, the preliminary park acreage needs analysis, the preliminary recreational facility needs analysis for indoor and outdoor

facilities, and the preliminary trails needs analysis. The preliminary needs analyses identified the number of park acres and facilities required to meet the needs of the projected population of 101,539 based on the City's preliminary tailored park and recreation standards. A question and answer session followed the presentation of items mentioned above to discuss specific comments, concerns, and preferences.

The input received at the second stakeholder meeting along with the refinement of the City's preliminary tailored park and recreation standards were incorporated into the draft final standards presented at a Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) meeting. A copy of the final Needs Assessment Survey Report is located in Appendix B, and the final Benchmark Survey Report is located in Appendix C.

### 4.4 Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meetings

The first public meeting on September 10, 2008, was held in conjunction with a PRAB meeting. See Section 4.2, *Public Meeting No. 1*. The draft final park and recreation standards, along with the stakeholder advisory members' input and comments, were presented at a second PRAB meeting on February 11, 2009. An information packet similar to the one distributed at the second stakeholder advisory group meeting was presented to the PRAB for their review and comment. The PRAB also provided input on potential park and recreation facility locations and potential programming requirements they felt were necessary to meet the future needs of the City based on the draft final standards.

The input received at the second PRAB meeting, along with City staff direction, provided the basis for refining the City's draft final tailored park and recreation standards and developing the Preliminary Master Plan, both of which were presented at a City Council Work Session.

### 4.5 City Council Work Session

On June 15, 2009, the draft final park and recreation standards and Preliminary Master Plan were presented to City Council in a work session. The purpose of the presentation was to provide an overview of the master planning process to date; a summary of the needs assessment and benchmark surveys; an overview of the public's input and stakeholder advisory group's input; an understanding of the park and recreation facility needs, deficiencies, and tailored standards on which the PRFT is based; and the Preliminary Master Plan for discussion and comment. The proposed park and recreation facilities required to meet the City's population needs for 101,539 citizens and their recommended general locations were presented.

A question and answer session then followed the presentation to discuss council members' comments, concerns, and preferences to the items presented above that would provide a basis for developing the Final Master Plan. City Council input, along with City staff direction, provided the basis for developing the Final Master Plan.

# 5.0 VISION, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

## 5.1 Introduction

The development of a successful parks master plan is based on goals and objectives that once accomplished create a community vision and a quality of life reflected in the community's daily recreational activities. The vision describes the desired future of a community as it relates to parks and recreational opportunities and amenities. The following definitions assist in understanding how visions, goals, and objectives relate to one another and serve as the basis for implementing a plan.

***Vision***
A vision statement is a concise description of an image reflecting the values and assets a community considers important in terms of achieving their desired quality of life.

***Goal***
A goal is a concise statement describing the desired condition to be achieved and addresses key issues or needs relating to specific values required to achieve the vision.

***Objective***
An objective is a concise statement identifying a method or action that addresses a specific goal and causes it to be achieved. An objective should be measurable and time specific.

## 5.2 Vision, Goals, and Objectives

***VISION***
The City of Avondale provides a wide spectrum of recreational opportunities for all age groups and abilities which reflects Avondale's growing vibrant community. These recreational opportunities establish environmental well-being by providing safe, convenient access to the City's park and recreational facilities, as well as to its regional open space greenways. These opportunities address the active, passive, social, and cultural needs of Avondale's citizens and visitors and are family-oriented, well-maintained recreational facilities that serve as community and regional nodes. These facilities reinforce and establish the community's character, facilitate community involvement, and provide a sense of West Valley connectivity.

***GOALS AND OBJECTIVES***

***Goal 1: Develop a comprehensive park, recreation facilities, and trails system that provides a wide range of passive and active recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities.***

Objective 1.1: Develop a diversified recreational program that reflects the level and types of play, activities, and needs the community desires.

Objective 1.2: Conduct attitudinal surveys periodically to ensure that the appropriate park and recreation facilities and activities are being provided and incorporated into future planning and development endeavors.

Objective 1.3: Integrate open play turf areas that provide for unprogrammed play and leisure activities into all park and recreation facilities.

Objective 1.4: Develop active park and recreation facilities that provide recreational opportunities for specific user groups and new and emerging recreational trends.

Objective 1.5: Provide indoor and outdoor park and recreation facilities that provide relief from weather and climatic extremes, thereby promoting year-round play and park use.

***Goal 2: Create a well-maintained, accessible, and contiguous parks, recreation, and trails system that will provide community and regional connectivity.***

Objective 2.1: Establish park and recreation LOS criteria that ensure the location of parks, recreation facilities, and trails are easily accessible by all citizens.

Objective 2.2: Develop and maintain continuous, accessible multi-use path and trail circulation systems that connect parks, recreation facilities, educational and economic centers, and community and regional destinations throughout the city.

Objective 2.3: Establish open space and multi-use path and trail linkages to adjacent municipalities, and regional county, state, and federal recreational lands for convenient access.

Objective 2.4: Develop well-designed parks and recreation and trail facilities to be as self-sustaining as possible and easily maintained.

***Goal 3: Promote the development of parks, recreational facilities, and trails that encourage and support community and regional involvement and that serve as destinations.***

Objective 3.1: Provide community gathering areas that facilitate and encourage community involvement, family-oriented activities, and social well-being.

Objective 3.2: Develop and integrate areas for festivals, markets, and special events into park and recreation facilities that serve as community and regional destinations.

Objective 3.3: Develop the Tres Rios Greenway open space to provide for recreational, educational, and environmental tourism opportunities.

Objective 3.4: Develop a parks, recreation facilities, and trails system and recreation programs and activities that will enhance the City's economic well-being.

Objective 3.5: Develop a marketing strategy that promotes the City's parks, recreation facilities, trails, festivals, and special events at the community, state, and national levels.

***Goal 4: Develop safe, secure park and recreation facilities that reflect the character of the communities they serve.***

Objective 4.1: Build, maintain, and upgrade park and recreation facilities to conform to both the most current local, state, and national building codes, ordinances, and acts and the most current industry standards and guidelines.

Objective 4.2: Establish municipal, private, or volunteer services to monitor and patrol undesired activities at parks, recreational facilities, and open space areas.

Objective 4.3: Develop a park, recreation facilities, and trails system that preserves, enhances, and reflects the culture and character of its communities.

Objective 4.4: Develop and coordinate architectural and landscape aesthetics and signage to reflect distinct community identities throughout the city.

***Goal 5: Develop land acquisition and funding strategies to provide parks, recreation facilities, and trails to the citizens of Avondale.***

Objective 5.1: Prioritize new park land acquisition and improvements in areas where there are low levels of service and deficiencies.

Objective 5.2: Explore private, public, and partnering funding strategies for the acquisition of new parkland and open space, for the development of new recreational and trail facilities, and for the operations and management of new facilities.

Objective 5.3: Establish local, state, or federal public and quasi-public partnerships to acquire, dedicate, and conserve parkland and open space.

Objective 5.4: Develop a prioritization process to master plan, design, and construct all new park and recreation facility improvements equitably throughout the city.

# 6.0 Park and Recreation Facilities Needs Assessment

## 6.1 Introduction

The purpose of the parks and recreation needs assessment was to identify how the citizens of Avondale felt about the City's current level of service for park and recreation facilities and programs, goals for the City's Park and Recreation Department, and the various funding mechanisms available for new parks and recreation facilities and activities they would support. In addition, the needs assessment assisted in the identification and evaluation of the City's current and future level of service for community-wide park and recreation facilities in relation to existing park acreage and types and number of facilities and programs. The result of the needs assessment evaluations is to develop a community-wide park and recreation facility development plan that provides the most effective use of the City's current and future potential parklands and recreational resources.

An inventory and analysis of the existing and planned parks and recreational facilities, along with the benchmark survey, needs assessment survey, and the Public Participation Program (PPP) help to determine the need of park acreage and facilities within the city. These needs are quantified based on the organization of parks and recreation facilities by type and a review of regional park and recreation standards determined through similar parks and recreation systems benchmarking.

The future park acreage and recreation facility needs for Avondale were based on a population projection of 101,539 people. This population projection was provided by the City. These standards provide a benchmark for further review and comparison with citizens' needs and desires to determine an appropriate tailored standard for the City; they are presented in the following sections:

- Park Classifications
- Park Inventory and Analysis
- Future Park Acreage Needs
- Future Recreation Facility Needs

## 6.2 Park Classifications

The City's General Plan recreation element states that the City will provide parks based on NRPA standards and identifies neighborhood, district, city-wide, and pocket parks as having a combined service ratio of 10 acres per 1,000 population. The City's existing park and recreation facilities currently fall within the mini (pocket/specialty), neighborhood, and large urban (regional) NRPA park classifications. While they were typically developed to serve the general active and passive recreational needs of the current population, the General Plan also states that the City does not meet its projected service area ratios for parks. As of the initiation of this PRFT, the City has yet to develop any park acreage in the community park classification.

The organization of all existing and planned park and recreation facility acreages by their size and function provide the basis for determining the existing and future park facility acreage needs. For the purpose of this PRFT, the park and recreation facilities type, size, service level, and standard are identified in Table 6.1, *Park Classifications*. These classifications were identified through the PRFT planning process as the appropriate types of parks needed to provide the number and diversity of recreation facilities and activities the community desires.

This PRFT recommends that the City's park classifications, standards, and LOS (a total of 10 acres per 1,000 population) be further defined, as identified below, to better serve the diverse active and passive recreational needs of the population. Following Table 6.1 are descriptions of the PRFT-recommended park classifications that will provide a diversification of recreational opportunities typically found in mature, community-wide park and recreation systems.

**Table 6.1. Park Classifications**

| Facility Type | Desirable Size (Acres) | Service Level Standard (Radius) | Park Acres/1000 Population |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mini (Pocket/Specialty) Parks | 1/4 minimum | 1/8–1/4 mile | 0.00* |
| Neighborhood Parks | 5–10 | 1/2 mile | 1.00 |
| Community Parks | 30–80 | 3 miles | 3.50 |
| Regional Parks | 80+ | 30-minute drive time | 2.50 |
| Joint Use Facilities | 10–30 | Varies | 1.00 |
| Public Open Space | Varies | Varies | 2.00 |

Source: City of Avondale; Logan Simpson Design, Inc.
* Not considered part of the required standards

***Mini Parks***
Mini parks are generally a minimum of 0.25 acre in size and serve a specific small area or neighborhood within a 0.25-mile service radius. Mini parks usually have a specialized single function, such as for tots or senior citizens, or serve for general respite within medium- to high-density urban areas. They can provide meeting locations, landmarks, lunching locations, and way-finding features within an urban core and are located in a variety of areas within commercial and urban residential areas.

***Neighborhood Parks***
Neighborhood parks generally range in size from 5 to 10 acres and may serve one or more neighborhoods within a 0.5-mile service radius. Typically neighborhood parks function as neighborhood gathering places, where activities range from leisure activities such as picnics, family gatherings, and strolling to more intensive activities such as pickup or organized court and field games, jogging, and exercising. Neighborhood parks have the ability to define neighborhood boundaries and help to build distinct neighborhood character. Because they serve local neighborhoods, access to the park should be obtainable through the community path and trail system, and for this reason, parking is generally not provided.

***Community Parks***
Community parks generally range in size from 40 to 80 acres and serve several neighborhoods within a 3-mile service radius. Typically community parks provide a wide range of passive and active recreational opportunities for one or more groups of users and function as community gathering places. They typically include multiple lighted sports courts and sports fields for organized recreational activities such as softball, little league, or soccer tournaments and have the same amenities as neighborhood parks. Community parks may also provide areas for more specialized uses and amenities such as community centers, recreation centers, pools and aquatic centers, skate parks, restrooms, concessions, and group picnic facilities for 100–200 people.

Due to their potential for drawing high volumes of users for organized activities and special events, community parks are well suited for locations within commercial and industrial areas where traffic volumes and sports field lighting do not conflict with residential development. Additionally, community parks should be connected to the community and/or regional path and trail systems and should provide enough parking to accommodate their anticipated programmed activities and special events. Parking requirements for this type of park may range from 200 to 600 spaces depending on the composition of uses on site.

***Regional Parks***
Regional parks are typically 80 acres or more, can be reached within a 30-minute drive time, may contain a wide variety of recreational activities, and attract many types of users from a large geographic area. Regional parks may have a passive and/or active focus and include 3–5 sports field fourplexes oriented

toward regional tournament play, an irrigation lake, large group picnic facilities for 200–400 people, specialty-user group facilities (for example, skate parks, BMX parks, disc golf courses, go-kart tracks), indoor aquatic facilities, and multi-use recreational centers that may range in size from 60,000 to 100,000 square feet.

Regional parks may also include other City facilities such as public safety facilities and fire stations. Parking requirements for this type of park may range from 1,000 to 2,000 spaces depending on the composition of uses on site. It may have all or some of the amenities of a neighborhood and community park, while maintaining the majority of its acreage as undeveloped open space, and may include greenways and riparian corridors, recreational lakes, multi-use path and trail corridors, trailhead staging areas, or protected areas for cultural, historic, or archaeological resources.

Each of the park classifications mentioned above (that is, mini, neighborhood, community, regional) may be developed as one of the following park classifications based on the City's recreational needs and demands at the time of site-specific master planning and development.

***Special Use Parks***

Special use parks generally include designated single-use facilities such as aquatic centers, sports complexes, skate parks, dog parks, equestrian staging areas, golf courses, amphitheaters, cultural or social sites, and nature centers or preserves. They vary in size and service radius depending on use. Special use parks enhance the overall park system by providing unique opportunities that help to balance a diverse range of community desires.

***Joint Use Facilities***

Joint use facilities are typically a result of two entities combining their resources to address a greater need than they can address with their separate resources. They vary in size and service radius depending on use. Cities may develop joint use facilities for active and passive recreational activities such as sports fields, gymnasiums, meeting/classrooms, and open space areas. Partners may include school districts, state and federal agencies, and private entities. Joint use facilities include those facilities that have been developed by a public or quasi-public entity that are also available to the public on a full- or part-time basis to fulfill park and recreation facility needs.

## 6.3 Park Inventory and Analysis

The inventory and analysis of the City's existing and planned park and recreation facilities, as described in Section 3.0, Existing Park and Recreation Facilities Evaluations, were evaluated according to the City's current park classification system and include facilities in the mini (pocket/specialty), neighborhood, and regional park, and public open space classifications listed in Table 6.1, Park Classifications. There are a total of two pocket/specialty parks, eight neighborhood parks, two regional parks, and 72 acres of public open space included in this analysis of City facility needs. This includes one planned 10-acre neighborhood park (Pendergast Park), the planned Phase II of Festival Fields, and Crystal Gardens (an open space park). The total acreage of the City's existing parkland (excluding Crystal Gardens) is approximately 208 acres. These City facilities and acreages are included in this analysis of needs for new park and recreation facilities.

***Existing Pocket/Specialty Parks***

There are two City-owned pocket/specialty parks within Avondale. These parks are approximately 0.25 acre in size and are characterized by a service area of a 0.25-mile radius. They are located in the mature northwestern portion of the city along Buckeye Road. Typically, this classification of park being developed today is being built by private developers and maintained by HOAs. The City has determined that they will not develop any pocket/specialty parks in the future since the public demand for them is nonexistent. This type of park may continue to be provided by developers as part of their open space requirements as approved by the City.

***Existing Neighborhood Parks***

Five of the eight existing neighborhood parks are located in the northwestern quadrant of the city, west of the Agua Fria River between Van Buren Street and Lower Buckeye Road. Two additional parks are located east of the Agua Fria River just south of Buckeye and Lower Buckeye Roads. A new park (Pendergast Park) is planned to be located north of McDowell Road, east of Avondale Boulevard, and will be a joint use park in coordination with an existing elementary school. There are no existing

neighborhood parks located north of Thomas Road or south of Elwood Street. These neighborhood parks range in size from approximately 1.5 to 12 acres and are characterized by a service area of a 0.5-mile radius.

The City has determined that they will be limiting their development of new neighborhood parks in the future since these types of amenities are largely being provided by private developers and being maintained by HOAs. It is expected that this park classification and standard will continue to be provided by developers as part of their park and open space requirements as approved by the City.

***Existing Regional Parks***

Two existing regional parks (Friendship Park and Festival Fields) are currently located within Avondale, along the Agua Fria River corridor, and are characterized by a 3-mile-radius service area. Friendship Park is approximately 80 acres in size and located just south of McDowell Road. Festival Fields (Phases I and II) is approximately 78 acres in size and located just south of Lower Buckeye Road. These two parks provide community-type facilities to the majority of citizens within the study area; however, there are isolated areas along the City's southern and eastern boundaries that are outside these service areas.

In addition, adjacent to the City's southwestern boundary is Estrella Mountain Regional Park that is owned and operated by Maricopa County. Estrella Mountain Regional Park serves many diverse user groups, including active and passive recreation activities, and serves as a regional destination point for a much larger service area within the county. Estrella Mountain Regional Park encompasses approximately 19,840 acres with a majority of the land being passive open space and can be accessed by arterial roads within the Avondale. Typical municipal regional parks generally range in size of 80-plus acres with a service area radius of a 30-minute drive time.

One of the recreational trends that has occurred in the last 20 years, and continues to develop, is the need for larger community park sites. Parks that range in size from 20 to 40 acres and were developed 15 to 20 years ago are found to be too small to support the wide spectrum of user groups today. For these reasons, it is a recommendation of this PRFT that Friendship Park and Festival Fields be reclassified as community parks and that new regional parks be developed to provide a minimum of 50 percent undeveloped or unprogrammed open space.

***Existing Public Open Space***

The City currently does not own any public open space areas that are not associated with municipal building complexes including the Crystal Gardens open space areas integrated within the residential development. However, the City does maintain the unpaved trail system located within the Crystal Gardens open space. It is a recommendation of this PRFT that Crystal Gardens be reclassified as private open space rather than a neighborhood park due to its jurisdictional ownership, size (72 acres), its function (passive, walking trails and lakes), and its lack of typical neighborhood park amenities (for example, play areas, picnic areas, sports courts).

## 6.4 Future Park Acreage Needs

A benchmark survey was administered on behalf of the City of Avondale to assist in a comparative analysis of the City's existing parks and recreation facilities to those of other similar communities across the United States that represent different levels of existing populations. In consultation with City staff, ten potential cities that have received awards for having good park and recreation systems from the NRPA were selected and contacted to participate in the benchmark survey. A letter explaining the survey and its purpose was sent with a six-page benchmarking survey to each of the cities. After mailing the surveys, each city was contacted via telephone to verify that they had received the survey and to encourage their participation in the study. The following five cities responded with completed survey information. A copy of the Benchmark Survey Report is located in Appendix C.

- Bloomington, Indiana
- Canton, Michigan
- Chandler, Arizona
- Grand Prairie, Texas
- Santa Clarita, California

The cities that participated in the survey ranged in size from Bloomington, Indiana, with a population of 69,229 to Chandler, Arizona, with a population of 251,297. The average population of all the

benchmarked cities in January 2009 was estimated at 147,776. In comparison, Avondale's population, as of September 2008 when the benchmark survey was conducted, was estimated at 75,000.

To better compare the parks and recreation facilities of cities with considerably different populations, responses were calculated per 1,000 persons (by dividing each City's responses by its population per 1,000 people). For example, the total number of little league fields the City of Grand Prairie has (14) was divided by 156.1, and the total number of little league fields Bloomington has (8) was divided by 69.2. Equalizing the responses in this way provides a clearer analysis for comparing the information on a per capita basis. The benchmark survey identified existing City-owned facilities irrespective of each City's future desired conditions identified within their individual parks and recreation master plans. Therefore, the survey only indicates their existing park and recreation service levels, not their *desired parks and recreation standards*.

The future needs identified in Table 6.2, *Park Acreage Needs* (for a projected population of 101,539) include the desired acreages and service levels for each of the park classifications identified by the City. The desirable size and service radius of park facilities for this PRFT is based on regional benchmarking standards, the desire of the City to be on the leading edge of recreational trends and environmental tourism, and the intended functional use of each specific park facility type. Therefore, the desirable size of community parks is 40–80 acres, and regional parks is 100-plus acres. The desirable size of joint use facilities is 10–30 acres, and the size of special use parks varies depending on their specific function and use.

By reclassifying Friendship Park and Festival Fields as community parks, the City now has a total of 158.0 acres of existing community parks. Multiplying the average benchmark number of community park acres (2.7 acres per 1,000) by the population per 1,000 for a projected population of 101,539 yields a total of approximately 274 acres of community parks required to meet the benchmark needs of the projected population. However, based on the public, stakeholder, and City staff input, the City's desired standard for community parks should be 3.5 acres per 1,000 population in order to meet the needs of the community's vision, goals, and objectives. Subtracting the total existing park acres from the total acreage required to meet the projected population's desired needs (approximately 355 acres) yields an acreage deficiency of 197.25 acres of community parks. The total number of new parks required to meet the projected population needs is typically established by dividing the park acreage deficiencies by the desirable park size. However, since the City has established two community parks at 80-plus acres, and a service radius of 3 miles, this PRFT recommends that the total number of new community parks be approximately 2 to 4 parks. These parks may vary in size depending on land availability but should be located in a manner that minimizes service area overlaps with the existing community parks where possible. (see Table 6.2, *Park Acreage Needs*).

The same methodology was applied to the other park classifications to determine the current deficiencies and number of new parks needed for each classification to meet the projected population (101,539) needs. See Table 6.2 for the total number of parkland acres required for the projected population.

### Table 6.2. Park Acreage Needs

| Population Projected for 2020: 101,539* | | | | | | Park Acreage | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Facility Type | Average Bench Mark # of Acres /1000 Population | Avondale Desired Standard Acres/1,000 Population | Avondale Existing Acres/1,000 Population | Desired Size (Acres) | Service Level Standard (Radius) | Total Existing Park Acres (2008) | Desired Park Acreage Required to Meet 2020 Needs | Park Acreage Deficiency for the 2020 Needs | Total Number of New Parks Required to meet 2020 Needs*** |
| Neighborhood Parks | 0.78 | 1.00 | 0.67 | 5-10 | 1/2 mile | 50.00 | 101.50 | 51.50 | 4-6 |
| Community Parks | 2.70 | 3.50 | 0.00 | 40-80 | 3 miles | 158.00 | 355.25 | 197.25 | 2-4 |
| Regional Parks | 0.78 | 2.50 | 2.11 | 100+ | 1/2 hour drive time | 0.00 | 253.75 | 253.75 | 1-2 |
| Joint Use Parks | 1.38 | 1.00 | 0.00 | 10-30 | Varies | 0.00 | 101.50 | 101.50 | 4-6 |
| Recreational Lakes | 6.07 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1122** | 1/2 hour drive time | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Public Open Space | 4.82 | 2.00 | 0.96 | 127** | 1/2 mile | 72.00 | 203.00 | 131.00 | 1 |

* Anticipated population projection for 2020 provided by City in September 2008

** Benchmark Average Size for item shown

*** Actual number depends on size of individual parks or areas developed

## 6.5 Future Recreation Facility Needs

The future recreation facility needs for the City of Avondale are based on tailored standards developed from the regionally benchmarked communities and input from the public, stakeholders, and City staff as to where the City would like to either meet or exceed the benchmark averages of the number of facilities per 1,000 population. The existing number of City recreation facilities and the proposed number of facilities needed for the projected population of 101,539 are identified in Table 6.3, *Recreation Facility Needs.* The methodology for determining each recreation facility need and deficiency is the same method described in Section 6.4, *Future Park Acreage Needs*.

Table 6.3 illustrates the type and number of recreation facilities that need to be developed to meet the projected population needs based on the City's desired standard. At which time the City reaches the projected population of 101,539, it will need to provide new facilities in all outdoor facility categories except BMX and disc golf courses, multi-purpose turf fields, and softball fields. The City will have an excess of 7 multi-purpose fields for the projected population, which will assist in meeting the soccer field deficiency of 15 (thereby needing only a total of 8 new soccer fields).

For the projected population trail facility needs, the City will need to add approximately 12 miles of trails in both the paved multi-use paths and unpaved multi-use trails categories for a total of approximately 24 miles of paths and trails.

For the projected population indoor facility needs, the City will need to add indoor facilities in all categories except community centers, with an indoor gymnasium or recreation center being the greatest need in order to provide indoor racquetball and basketball courts, as well as the types of programs identified in Section 6.6, *Future Recreation Program Needs*.

## 6.6 Future Recreation Program Needs

The future recreation program needs for the City of Avondale are based on tailored standards developed from the regionally benchmarked communities and input from the public, stakeholders, and City staff as to where the City would like to either meet or exceed the benchmark averages of the number of programs per 1,000 population. The existing number of City recreation programs and the proposed number of programs needed for the projected population of 101,539 are identified in Table 6.4, *Recreation Program Needs.* The methodology for determining each recreation program need and deficiency is the same method described in Section 6.4, *Future Park Acreage Needs*.

Table 6.4 illustrates what programs, and how many, need to be developed for the projected population recreation program needs based on the City's desired standard. At which time the City reaches the projected population of 101,539, it will need to provide new programs in all categories except library programs/events and youth football programs.

For the projected population recreation program needs, the greatest need will be for those programs requiring an indoor facility (that is, senior activities, special-interest classes, youth classes, and youth dance/cultural programs). The greatest sport program need is for a facility that can provide swim lessons and tennis programs/leagues.

## Table 6.3. Recreation Facility Needs

| Type of Facilities | | | | | Number of Facilities | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Average Benchmark # of Facilties/1000 Population | Avondale Desired # of Facilities/1,000 Population | Avondale Existing # of Facilities/1,000 Population | Service Areas (Radius) | Avondale Existing # of Facilities 2008 | Total # of Facilities to Meet 2008 Need | Total # of New Facilities Required to Meet 2008 Need | Total # of Facilities to Meet 2020 Need | Total # of New Facilities Required to Meet 2020 Need |
| **Outdoor Facilities** | | | | | | | | | |
| Outdoor amphitheater/large event area | 0.01 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 30 Minute Drive | 2 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 1 |
| Baseball fields (little league) | 0.04 | 0.07 | 0.05 | 3 Mile | 4 | 5 | 1 | 7 | 3 |
| Baseball fields (full size) | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.00 | 3 Mile | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Basketball courts | 0.11 | 0.22 | 0.12 | 1/2 Mile | 9 | 17 | 8 | 22 | 13 |
| BMX | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 30 Minute Drive | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Disc golf courses | 0.01 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 30 Minute Drive | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Football fields | 0.01 | 0.03 | 0.01 | 3 Mile | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| Fishing pier / viewing platforms | 0.01 | 0.20 | 0.23 | 30 Minute Drive | 17 | 15 | (2) | 20 | 3 |
| Horseshoe courts | 0.02 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 3 Mile | 2 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 1 |
| Multi-purpose turf fields | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.15 | 1/2 Mile | 11 | 3 | (8) | 4 | (7) |
| Off-leash dog parks | 0.01 | 0.03 | 0.01 | 3 Mile | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| Outdoor swimming pools | 0.03 | 0.02 | 0.00 | 3 Mile | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Park shelters / picnic areas | 0.56 | 0.56 | 0.13 | 1/2 Mile | 10 | 42 | 32 | 57 | 47 |
| Playgrounds | 0.19 | 0.20 | 0.09 | 1/2 Mile | 7 | 15 | 8 | 20 | 13 |
| Public golf course | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.00 | 30 Minute Drive | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Skateboard and / or inline parks | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.00 | 30 Minute Drive | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Soccer fields | 0.13 | 0.15 | 0.00 | 3 Mile | 0 | 11 | 11 | 15 | 15 |
| Softball fields | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.07 | 3 Mile | 5 | 4 | (1) | 5 | 0 |
| Tennis courts | 0.10 | 0.08 | 0.03 | 3 Mile | 2 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 6 |
| Sand volleyball courts | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.01 | 3 Mile | 1 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 4 |
| Boating / canoeing / kayaking | 0.00 | 0.01 | 0.00 | 30 Minute Drive | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Water / splash pads | 0.01 | 0.03 | 0.00 | 3 Mile | 0 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| Golf course / driving range | 0.00 | 0.01 | 0.00 | 30 Minute Drive | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| **Total # of Outdoor Facilities/1,000 Pop.** | **1.42** | **1.85** | **0.96** | | | | | | |

| Type of Facilities | | | | | Number of Facilities | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Average Benchmark # of Facilties/1000 Population | Avondale Desired # of Facilities/1,000 Population | Avondale Existing # of Facilities/1,000 Population | Service Areas (Radius) | Avondale Existing # of Facilities 2008 | Total # of Facilities to Meet 2008 Need | Total # of New Facilities Required to Meet 2008 Need | Total # of Facilities to Meet 2020 Need | Total # of New Facilities Required to Meet 2020 Need |
| **Indoor Facilities** | | | | | | | | | |
| Community centers | 0.008 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 3 Mile | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Gymnasiums | 0.009 | 0.01 | 0.00 | 3 Mile | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Performing arts centers | 0.004 | 0.01 | 0.00 | 30 Minute Drive | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Pools / aquatic | 0.009 | 0.01 | 0.00 | 3 Mile | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Racquetball courts | 0.004 | 0.04 | 0.00 | 3 Mile | 0 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| Recreation centers | 0.007 | 0.01 | 0.00 | 3 Mile | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Basketball Courts | 0.003 | 0.04 | 0.00 | 1/2 Mile | 0 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| **Total # of Indoor Facilities/1,000 Pop.** | **0.04** | **0.05** | **0.01** | | | | | | |

Anticipated population projection for 2008 provided by the City in September 2008: 75,000

Anticipated population projection for 2020 provided by the City in September 2008: 101,539

**Numbers indicated in red or parentheses are negative values which mean the City exceeds the desired standard in those categories.**

## Table 6.3. Recreation Facility Needs (continued)

| Type of Facilities | | | | | Number of Facilities | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Average Benchmark # of Miles/1000 Population | Avondale Desired # of Facilities/1,000 Population | Avondale Existing # of Facilities/1,000 Population | Service Areas (Radius) | Avondale Existing # of Miles 2008 | Total # of Miles to Meet 2008 Need | Total # of New Miles Required to Meet 2008 Need | Total # of Miles to Meet 2020 Need | Total # of New Miles Required to Meet 2020 Need |
| **Trail Facilities** | | | | | | | | | |
| All Terrain Bike Trails (mountain bikes) | 0.051 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 30 Minute Drive | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Fitness Courses | 0.006 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 30 Minute Drive | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Multi-Use Paths (paved surface) | 0.046 | 0.12 | 0.00 | 1/4 Mile | 0 | 9.0 | 9.0 | 12.2 | 12.2 |
| Multi-Use Trails (unpaved) | 0.020 | 0.12 | 0.00 | 3 Mile | 0 | 9.0 | 9.0 | 12.2 | 12.2 |
| Nature Center / Interpretive Trails | 0.020 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 30 Minute Drive | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| On-Street Bikeways / Bikelanes | 0.041 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1/4 Mile | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| **Total # of Trail Miles/1,000 Pop.** | **0.18** | **0.24** | **0.00** | | | | | | |

## Table 6.4. Recreation Program Needs

| Type of Programs | | | | | Number of Programs | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Average Benchmark # of Programs/1000 Population | Avondale Desired # of Programs/1,000 Population | Avondale Existing # of Programs/1,000 Population | Service Areas (Radius) | Avondale Existing # of Programs 2008 | Total # of Programs to Meet 2008 Need | Total # of New Programs Required to Meet 2008 Need | Total # of Programs to Meet 2020 Need | Total # of New Programs Required to Meet 2020 Need |
| Adaptive recreation programs | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.00 | 3 Mile | 0 | 5 | 5 | 7 | 7 |
| Adult sports leagues | 0.15 | 0.15 | 0.05 | 3 Mile | 4 | 11 | 7 | 15 | 11 |
| Adult dance programs | 0.30 | 0.19 | 0.19 | 3 Mile | 14 | 14 | 0 | 19 | 5 |
| Adult classes (gen. education) | 0.68 | 0.40 | 0.40 | 3 Mile | 30 | 30 | 0 | 41 | 11 |
| Before & after school programs | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.01 | 3 Mile | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 3 |
| Summer camps | 0.14 | 0.04 | 0.01 | 3 Mile | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 3 |
| Environmental / eco-tourism programs | 0.10 | 0.10 | 0.00 | 30 Minute Drive | 0 | 8 | 8 | 10 | 10 |
| Fitness classes / programs | 0.82 | 0.28 | 0.28 | 3 Mile | 21 | 21 | 0 | 28 | 7 |
| Golf programs / leagues | 0.06 | 0.06 | 0.03 | 3 Mile | 2 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 4 |
| Library programs / events | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.33 | 3 Mile | 25 | 3 | (22) | 4 | (21) |
| Outdoor recreation programs | 0.05 | 0.10 | 0.00 | 30 Minute Drive | 0 | 8 | 8 | 10 | 10 |
| Senior activities | 1.68 | 0.79 | 0.48 | 3 Mile | 36 | 59 | 23 | 80 | 44 |
| Special events | 0.26 | 0.26 | 0.13 | 3 Mile | 10 | 20 | 10 | 26 | 16 |
| Special interest classes | 0.95 | 0.95 | 0.56 | 3 Mile | 42 | 71 | 29 | 96 | 54 |
| Swim lessons | 2.77 | 0.20 | 0.00 | 3 Mile | 0 | 15 | 15 | 20 | 20 |
| Swim team / dive team | 0.03 | 0.04 | 0.00 | 3 Mile | 0 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| Teen activities | 0.30 | 0.30 | 0.19 | 3 Mile | 14 | 23 | 9 | 30 | 16 |
| Tennis programs / leagues | 0.33 | 0.32 | 0.03 | 3 Mile | 2 | 24 | 22 | 32 | 30 |
| Youth baseball leagues | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.03 | 3 Mile | 2 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 2 |
| Youth classes (gen. education) | 0.44 | 0.44 | 0.25 | 3 Mile | 19 | 33 | 14 | 45 | 26 |
| Youth dance / cultural programs | 0.32 | 0.32 | 0.09 | 3 Mile | 7 | 24 | 17 | 32 | 25 |
| Youth football programs | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.03 | 3 Mile | 2 | 2 | (1) | 2 | 0 |
| Youth soccer programs / leagues | 0.14 | 0.14 | 0.03 | 3 Mile | 2 | 11 | 9 | 14 | 12 |
| Youth softball programs / leagues | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.01 | 3 Mile | 1 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 4 |
| **Total # of Programs/1,000 Pop.** | **9.76** | **5.34** | **3.15** | | | | | | |

Anticipated population projection for 2008 provided by the City in September 2008: 75,000

Anticipated population projection for 2020 provided by the City in September 2008: 101,539

**Numbers indicated in red or parentheses are negative values which mean the City exceeds the desired standard in those categories.**

# 7.0 PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

## 7.1 Introduction

The parks and recreation facilities development program provides the City of Avondale and its citizens with a planning guide to assist in developing the City's future parks, recreation facilities, and trails system. It provides a foundation for determining the City's direction for implementation of the recreational opportunities desired by the community and identifies the anticipated park and recreation facility needs for the projected population growth of 101,539 people. The amount, type, and general location of proposed new park facilities are identified in this PRFT so that the City and other affected stakeholders (for example, school districts, Maricopa County, ASLD, AGFD, BLM, Bureau of Reclamation) can work together to achieve the City's vision for its overall parks, recreation facilities, and trails system and the quality of life it provides for its citizens and visitors.

This facilities development program is based on the research and analysis identified in Section 2, *Inventory and Analysis;* the results of the needs assessment and benchmark surveys; the input received from the public and stakeholder advisory group participants as described in Section 4.0, *Public Participation Program;* and the input received from City Council and staff.

## 7.2 Park Acreage Development Program

The basis for determining the park acreage development for new park facilities is described in Section 6.0, *Park and Recreation Facilities Needs Assessment.* Utilizing the desirable park size and the projected population's required acreages for each park classification; the recommended development of these facilities is indicated in Table 6.2, *Park Acreage Needs.*

The additional park acreages required for the City's projected population is based on the amount of existing 2008 park acreage. Regional benchmarking and public and stakeholder input of City recreation facilities indicates that the desirable park size is 40–80 acres for community park facilities. The City has done well in providing community-level play facilities within its two existing regional park facilities, Friendship Park and Festival Fields, which have been reclassified as community parks in this PRFT. The current size of each park is approximately 80 acres, which is more consistent with the desired acreage requirement of a large community park. Public input has identified that the existing parks function well for active sporting events but they do not have enough parking area, or provide any unprogrammed open space for informal use and enjoyment. Recent trends in park and recreation development, and the input from the public, stakeholders, and city staff indicate a desire for larger community park facilities that accommodate the types and numbers of recreation facilities needed to meet the vision, goals, and objectives of the community.

In addition, there is a desire to provide water-based activities along the Gila River corridor for active use, as well as for environmental tourism opportunities. These opportunities are consistent with the *Tres Rios Plan,* and it is a recommendation of this PRFT to develop regional park facilities in conjunction with the Gila and Agua Fria River corridors to provide a regional destination amenity to the City.

The geographic size and shape of Avondale, and the location of its existing park facilities, allows the City to provide equitable park access for its citizens. Integrating neighborhood park facilities within new development areas will provide the local passive and active recreational opportunities required within a single facility that is not disruptive to traditional neighborhood activities. Neighborhood park facilities will continue to provide areas for family activities and gathering places, as well as moderate recreation such as basketball, sand volleyball, playgrounds, and picnic facilities. However, future lighted sports fields and indoor facilities should be located in either existing or proposed community parks or proposed regional parks to minimize noise, lighting, and traffic conflicts with adjacent residences.

As the City continues to develop community parks similar to Friendship Park, it will provide for the community-level of play and events while providing convenient access to needed recreational opportunities with a close-to-home feel. Developing larger, regional parks with large amounts of open space and trail corridors will provide greater active, passive, and educational opportunities for all Avondale citizens and visitors. Both the community and regional park acreage will provide areas for

addressing growing community needs for organized special events such as tournament-play sports leagues, emerging recreational trends, social and cultural venues, environmental tourism, and local economic development.

All these factors have provided the basis for the recommended number of new park facilities by the projected population as shown in Figure 6, *Parks, Recreation Facilities & Trails Master Plan.* The approach to siting new park facilities was to first determine the existing developed areas that are currently underserved by park facilities and then to identify potential land availability for integrating new facilities into these previously developed areas. Based on the location of the existing Friendship Park and Festival Fields (reclassified as community parks) along the Agua Fria River, the additional community parks should be located north of Thomas Road and south of Broadway Road, east of El Mirage Road, to compensate for projected development patterns, and to provide an equitable LOS that ensures community-wide access to community park facilities.

Additional active recreation facilities should be integrated within the regional park/open space along the Gila and Agua Fria River corridors to augment the community park facilities and provide an equitable distribution of community recreational facilities throughout the city. This would ensure an efficient use of public monies; more convenient park access; and greater user satisfaction with the overall parks, recreation, and trails system. It would also promote a healthy active lifestyle. The overall service level desired for park facilities was identified through the benchmark survey analysis and resulted in the LOS standard for new park facility service radii identified in Table 6.2. Additional siting considerations and rationale for determining new locations of park and recreation facilities are listed below.

***Compatibility of existing and planned adjacent land uses –*** neighborhood parks should be located within 0.5 mile of the residences they serve. Community parks shall be located within commercial, industrial, or agricultural areas to minimize conflicts of noise, lighting, and traffic levels to residential areas. Regional parks and open space shall be located in such a manner as to protect and conserve the City's natural and cultural resources.

***Coordination of new proposed service areas –*** overlapping of new service areas with existing and planned parks, recreation, and trail facilities shall be minimized to maximize the City's recreational resources.

***Identification of major physical barriers –*** some overlapping of service areas may be required to address limited access created by physical manmade or natural barriers (that is Interstate-10, Southern Pacific Railroad, canals and waterways, Agua Fria and Gila Rivers, and major roadways).

***Identification of natural resources as constraints or opportunities –*** sloped terrain may lend opportunities for spectator viewing; floodplains may lend opportunities for facilities with a large footprint that can manage occasional flooding (for example, sports fields/courts).

***Identification of potential partnerships and shared uses –*** to minimize duplications in facilities, expenditures, and manpower (for example, BLM, AGFD, and school districts).

***Coordination of shared rights-of-way and easements –*** existing and planned major arterial roadways, utilities, and/or drainage easements may provide opportunities for incorporating recreational trail facilities with adequate buffer zones.

***Identification of environmentally appropriate locations –*** facilities should be located to minimize disturbance of the natural environment (that is, locating community parks in areas with 50 to 100 acres of contiguous land and slopes that are less than 5 percent).

***Evaluation of land ownership –*** for projecting potential future land uses, as well as any potential conflicts or compatibilities with proposed park, recreational facilities, and trail corridor locations, and for identifying land acquisition opportunities.

The specific parks, recreation facilities, and trails development program and siting for specific development will be determined by the City as the need and demand occurs based on the standards and guidelines presented within this PRFT. These standards and guidelines have been specifically tailored to meet the park and recreation needs and service levels of Avondale's citizens. Figure 6, *Parks, Recreation Facilities & Trails Master Plan* identifies existing, planned, and proposed park facilities and their general service areas. This PRFT includes a total of two existing pocket/specialty parks, seven existing

neighborhood parks, one planned neighborhood park, five proposed neighborhood parks, two existing community parks, two proposed community parks, one proposed regional parks, and the planned Tres Rios Greenway open space and trails along the Agua Fria and Gila River corridors.

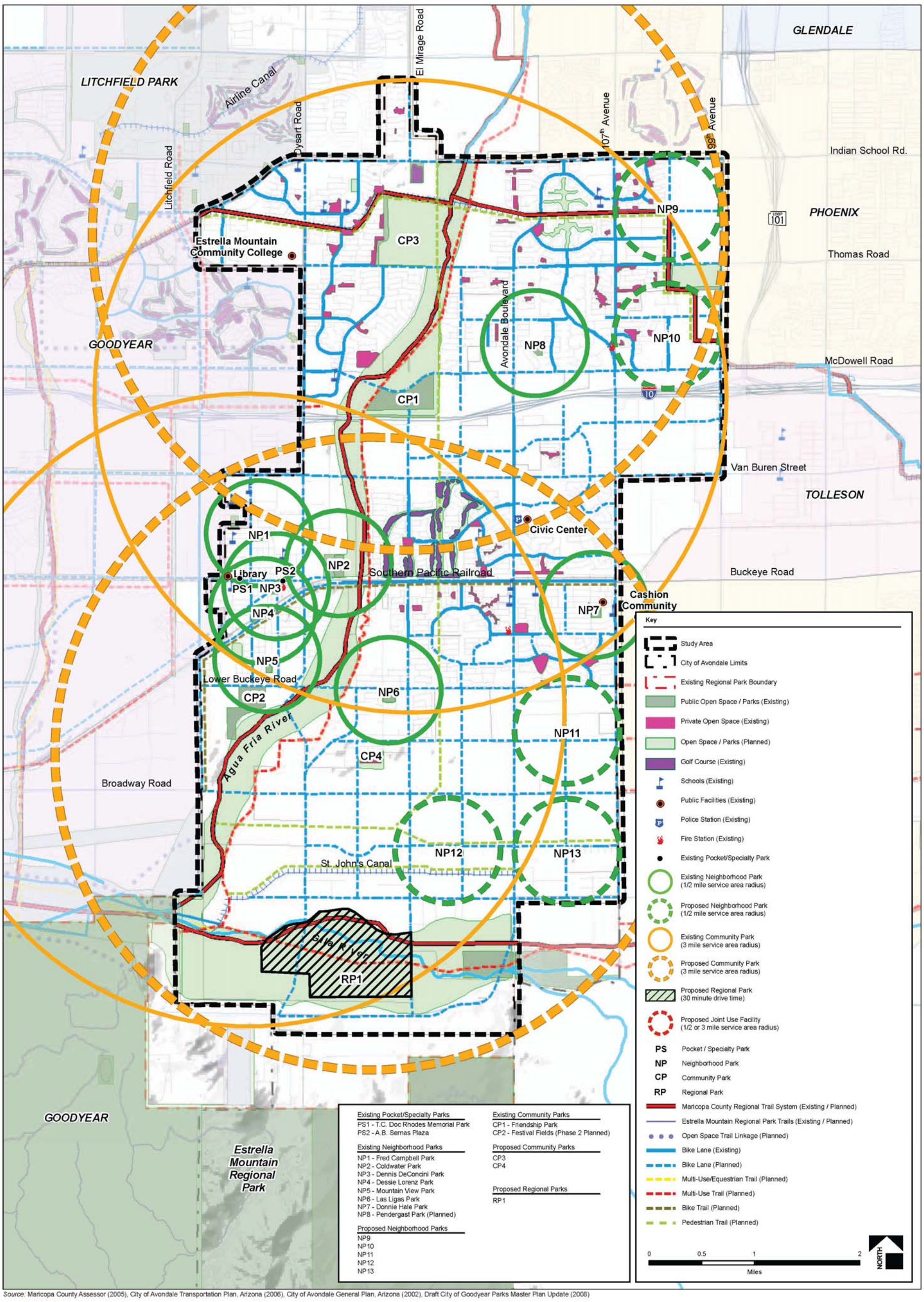



**Figure 6. Parks, Recreation Facilities & Trails Master Plan**

## 7.3 Recreation Facility Development Program

The recreation facility development program offers a strategy for addressing the anticipated recreational needs of the City by the projected population of 101,539. Based on the City's tailored recreation facility standards, new park siting considerations, and the projected population growth of Avondale, an overall recreation facility program has been developed to assist in implementing the PRFT. The following is a description of the types of facilities and desired criteria for implementing future development of recreational facilities that will serve the city's projected population.

***Access***

Providing safe and convenient multi-modal access and support amenities serves to encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation, thereby reducing vehicular traffic and congestion. To minimize parking in adjacent neighborhoods and to reduce vehicular/pedestrian conflicts, sufficient on- and off-street parking for the facility type should be maintained. Providing linkages to existing facilities through the City's nonmotorized trail system will serve to connect existing park and recreation facilities with new park and recreation facilities. It is recommended that all existing and new park facilities be accessible through the City's nonmotorized trails system or public transit system.

***Playground Facilities***

Available safe, secure, and accessible play areas for children of all ages and abilities is currently regulated by several entities for the health, safety, and welfare of the public. Evaluating and upgrading existing active-play facilities according to the CPSC's current *Handbook for Public Playground Safety* and the U.S. Access Board's Summary *of Accessibility Guidelines for Play Areas* would ensure the safety and usability of these facilities for the current population. For the purpose of this PRFT, a playground shall consist of both a play area (for children ages 6–12 years old) and a tot lot (for children ages 2–5 years old).

The City standard for the minimum number of new playground facilities needed by the projected population is approximately 13. It is recommended that 1 new playground facility be placed in each of the proposed neighborhood, community, regional, and joint use parks for convenient access from the service area each facility serves. Providing separate active-play areas appropriate for different age levels (2–5 years old and 6–12 years old) will provide varying degrees of challenge; these should be developed for each new park facility and in existing park facilities, where appropriate. Existing playground structures should be evaluated by the playground manufacturer who installed the equipment. If existing equipment does not meet current safety codes and accessibility guidelines, updates shall be made to the existing structures. Existing playground surfacing that does not meet current accessibility guidelines shall be removed in its entirety and replaced with an approved ADA-accessible material.

***Sports Fields***

Sports fields are typically utilized for organized play requiring a team of people, and they are generally associated with and located within community, regional, or joint use park facilities. Sports field activities are most compatible with adjacent commercial, office, industrial, and open space land uses due to traffic volumes and high lighting levels. Based on the total number of sports field facilities needed for the projected population identified in Table 6.3, *Recreation Facility Needs* (for the projected population of 101,539), the recommended development criteria for each type of sports field facility is summarized below.

*Baseball/Little League*

The City desired standard for the minimum number of new baseball/little league fields needed by the projected population is approximately five new fields. It is recommended that all baseball/little league fields be lighted and include turf infields, spectator seating, restroom/concession facilities, and sufficient parking to serve the anticipated activities and special events of the park users.

*Football Fields*

The City's desired standard for the minimum number of new football fields needed by the projected population is approximately two fields. These fields may be addressed by the excess of multi-purpose fields, thereby eliminating the need for developing new fields for the projected population. It is

recommended that the two football fields be lighted and include sufficient buffer zones between fields for team and spectator seating, restroom/concession facilities, and sufficient parking to serve the anticipated types of activities and special events the park users will desire.

*Multi-Purpose Fields*
The City currently has eleven multi-purpose fields and exceeds the desired standard for the minimum number of multi-purpose fields needed for the projected population by seven fields. These fields may be utilized for a variety of sports programs such as soccer, rugby, Pop Warner football, field hockey, and softball, and assist in addressing their needs. Multi-purpose fields generally require restroom/concession facilities and sufficient parking to serve the anticipated number of park users and spectators.

*Soccer Fields*
The City's desired standard for the minimum number of new soccer fields needed by the projected population is approximately 15 fields. Seven of these fields may be addressed by the excess of multi-purpose fields; therefore only 8 additional new fields will be needed for the projected population. It is recommended that all soccer fields be lighted and include sufficient buffer zones between fields for team and spectator seating, restroom/concession facilities, and sufficient parking to serve the anticipated types of activities and special events the park users will desire.

*Softball Fields*
The City currently meets the desired standard for the minimum number of softball fields needed for the projected population. No new fields will need to be developed to meet the projected population needs. If it is determined at a later date that new softball fields need to be developed, it is recommended that all softball fields be lighted and include skinned infields, spectator seating, restroom/concession facilities, and sufficient parking to serve the anticipated activities and special events of the park users.

***Sports Courts***
Sports courts may be utilized for individual, pickup, or organized play and may be located within neighborhood, community, regional, or joint use park facilities. Sports court activities are compatible with most types of adjacent land uses since they typically do not generate large volumes of noise or traffic. However, it is recommended that lighted courts be located in the interior of a park or adjacent to a street to minimize light glare in residential areas. Based on the total number of sports court facilities needed for the projected population identified in Table 6.3, *Recreation Facility Needs* (for the projected population of 101,539), the recommended development criteria for each type of sports court facility is summarized below.

*Basketball Courts*
The City's desired standard for the minimum number of new basketball courts needed by the projected population is approximately 13 courts. The City has done well in providing basketball courts to date, and it is recommended that each neighborhood park provide one lighted court and that each community park provide two lighted courts. Additional amenities should also include courtside seating, nearby shade, restroom/concession facilities, and sufficient parking to serve the anticipated activities of the park users.

*Tennis Courts*
The City's desired standard for the minimum number of new tennis courts needed by the projected population is approximately six courts. It is recommended that each community park include at least two lighted tennis courts. Additional amenities should also include courtside seating, nearby shade, restroom/concession facilities, and sufficient parking to serve the anticipated activities and special events of the park users.

*Volleyball Courts*
The City does not have a desired standard for the minimum number of indoor volleyball courts needed by the projected population since the need identified is for sand volleyball courts. The minimum number of new sand volleyball courts needed by the projected population is approximately four courts. It is recommended that these four courts be provided at one of the community or regional parks to allow for tournament play or special events. New indoor volleyball courts will be provided within new community centers that have gymnasiums or within new recreation centers.

It is recommended that new sand volleyball courts be lighted within all community parks to increase the length of usage and users' comfort. Additional amenities should include courtside seating, nearby shade, restroom/concession facilities, and sufficient parking to serve the anticipated activities and special events of the park users.

***Outdoor Recreation***

Because of the southwestern climate and culture that Avondale citizens enjoy, outdoor recreation is the main focus for most new recreation facilities located within community and regional park settings. In addition to play areas, sports fields, and sports courts, successful park development includes outdoor recreation facilities that support year-round activities. These activities may include, but are not limited to, disc golf, picnicking, outdoor events and concerts, golfing, skateboarding, and biking. All these facilities could be located within neighborhood, community, or regional park facilities at varying levels that are compatible with the other user groups within the park and with adjacent land uses. Based on the total number of outdoor recreation facilities needed for the projected population identified in Table 6.3, *Recreation Facility Needs* (for the projected population of 101,539), the recommended development criteria for each type of outdoor recreation facility is summarized below.

*Outdoor Swimming Pools and Water/Splash Pads*

The City's desired standard for the minimum number of new public outdoor pool facilities needed by the projected population is approximately two outdoor swimming pools and three new water/splash pads. Outdoor public swimming pool and water/splash pad facilities are best located within community and regional parks due to the large volume of traffic and parking they can generate. They can be located in coordination with community centers and recreation centers to provide shared usage of locker/changing rooms, showers, and restroom/concession facilities.

While the City is in need of more outdoor pool facilities, the recreational trend in the past 10 years for these types of facilities has been one of providing a much broader spectrum of water-based opportunities for all ages in the form of full-service aquatic centers. Outdoor aquatic centers may include water-play amenities, such as dedicated lap pools, leisure pools with zero depth entry, spray pads (zero depth play), water slides, play structures, and current channels, and multi-use amenities, such as deck space and medium-depth pools for classes and exercises.

*Amphitheaters/Large Event Areas*

The City's desired standard for the minimum number of new amphitheaters/large event areas needed by the projected population is approximately one new amphitheater or large event area. Due to the types of activities that are generally programmed for amphitheaters, it is recommended that they be located within large community parks, regional parks, or joint use facilities where parking can be shared with other uses during special events. Amphitheaters may also be located in coordination with community or recreation centers.

*Park Shelters/Picnic Areas*

The City's desired standard for the minimum number of new park shelters/picnic areas needed by the projected population is approximately 47 park shelters/picnic areas. The intent of the picnic areas is to provide individual, family, and small-group picnicking opportunities at every neighborhood park and to provide all levels of picnicking opportunities, including large-group facilities, at community parks. Each community park should provide up to eight picnicking opportunities throughout the park, including one large-group picnic area for 50–150 people. Regional parks may provide up to 12 picnicking opportunities throughout the park, including a facility that could serve 250–500 people for large events and festivals.

*Skateboard/BMX Parks*

The City's desired standard for the minimum number of new skateboard/BMX parks needed by the projected population is approximately one skateboard/BMX park. It is recommended that this facility be located at a community or regional park.

*Disc Golf Courses*

The City does not have a desired standard for the minimum number of disc golf courses needed for the projected population. However, if it is determined at a later date that a disc golf course needs to be developed, it is recommended that it be located within natural open space areas such as the Agua Fria

River corridor, Gila River corridor, Estrella Mountain Regional Park, or within public lands such as BLM or ASLD lands to take advantage of the natural terrain and the partnering opportunities with public agencies.

*Off-Leash Dog Parks*
The City's desired standard for the minimum number of new off-leash dog parks needed by the projected population is approximately two parks. Due to the growing trend of dog owners wanting to recreate with their dogs, it is recommended that new off-leash areas be provided at proposed community or regional parks.

*Public 18-Hole Golf Course*
The City's desired standard for the minimum number of new public 18-hole golf courses needed by the projected population is approximately one new golf course. It is recommended that the location of the new public 18-hole golf course be located adjacent to the Agua Fria or Gila River corridors, south of Broadway Road, to serve the southern area of the city.

*Boating/Canoeing/Kayaking*
The City's desired standard for the minimum number of new boating, canoeing, or kayaking facility needed by the projected population is approximately one. It is recommended that these activities be incorporated into the regional, open space areas of the Tres Rios Greenway along the Gila River, near the west boundary of the city, and assist in promoting a regional destination within the city.

*Fishing Pier/Viewing Platforms*
The City's desired standard for the minimum number of new fishing piers or viewing platforms needed by the projected population is approximately three piers/platforms. It is recommended that these facilities be incorporated into the regional open space areas of the Tres Rios Greenway along the Agua Fria and Gila Rivers and assist in promoting regional destinations and environmental tourism within the city.

*Multi-Use Paths and Trails*
The City's desired standard for the minimum number of new paved multi-use paths and unpaved multi-use trails needed by the projected population is approximately 12 miles each (paved and unpaved), for a total of 24 miles. It is recommended that these facilities be incorporated into the regional open space areas of the Tres Rios Greenway along the Agua Fria and Gila Rivers and into irrigation canal and power transmission line corridors where possible to assist in providing regional and community connectivity and in promoting regional destinations and environmental tourism within the city.

***Indoor Recreation***
The City's desired standard for the minimum number of indoor recreation facilities needed by the projected population is approximately one recreational center, one indoor pool/aquatic center, one gymnasium, one performing arts center, four racquetball courts, and four basketball courts. The City currently meets its projected population need for community centers.

*Recreational centers*
Recreation centers generally range in size from 60,000 to 100,000 square feet and may include such amenities and activities as child care, preschool, small commercial kitchen, a flexible meeting/event space, dance studio, theatrical stage, arts and craft rooms, classrooms, fitness rooms, racquetball courts, basketball courts, an indoor track, multipurpose rooms, and gymnasiums. They are typically located in community or regional parks that can provide shared support amenities such as parking.

*Racquetball Courts*
The City's desired standard for the minimum number of new racquetball courts needed by the projected population is approximately four (indoor) racquetball courts. Generally, racquetball courts are located within community or regional park facilities in coordination with a recreation center or gymnasium to capitalize on shared amenities such as locker rooms, showers, equipment storage/rental, and restroom/concession facilities.

*Gymnasiums/Indoor Basketball Courts*
The City's desired standard for the minimum number of new gymnasiums needed by the projected population is approximately one gymnasium. However, The City's desired standard for the minimum number of new indoor basketball courts needed by the projected population is approximately four

basketball courts, which could be provided within the new gymnasium. Gymnasiums are generally incorporated into community or multi-use recreational centers to capitalize on shared amenities such as locker rooms, showers, equipment storage/rental, and restroom/concession facilities.

*Indoor pool and aquatics*

Indoor pool and aquatic facilities may also be coordinated with other indoor facilities such as gymnasiums and recreational centers to maximize utilization of building space and create a multipurpose, multi-generational facility. Indoor pool and aquatic centers may include water play amenities such as dedicated lap pools, leisure pools with zero depth entry, spray pads (zero depth play), water slides, play structures, current channels, and vortex (whirlpool) features; therapeutic amenities such as hot tubs, cold plunges, steam rooms, saunas, and jacuzzis; and multi-use amenities such as deck space and medium depth pools for classes and exercises.

It is recommended that these types of facilities be developed at community or regional park sites to better serve the public as a whole. It is also recommended that the City seek partnering opportunities with school districts, Maricopa County, or private organizations for potential indoor facilities to maximize available resources in the community.

*Performing arts centers*

The City's desired standard for the minimum number of new performing arts centers needed by the projected population is approximately 1 performing arts center. These types of cultural facilities can be incorporated within other community or civic centers as a means of ensuring maximum utilization of joint support facilities (for example, parking areas, plazas) by diverse user groups that are present for other activities. However, performing arts centers can also provide a single-focused community amenity for cultural events and social gatherings. The size of performing arts centers varies depending on the programming of events and functions offered.

# 8.0 PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES IMPLEMENTATION

## 8.1 Introduction

The Parks and Recreation Facilities Development Program (see Section 7.0) provides the basis for developing capital improvement program recommendations as the City moves forward in implementing the PRFT. This PRFT is intended to be a living document that is updated and refined through time, while providing recommendations for development of future parks, recreation facilities, and trails based on the City's tailored standards. These standards recognize the dynamic growth environment the City has with neighboring communities, existing development patterns, projected population densities, and potential growth characteristics. The PRFT recognizes existing park and recreation community needs on a city-wide basis. Prioritizing the development of new neighborhood, community, regional, and joint use parks based on needs and demand will help provide a systematic way to address future park and recreation opportunities throughout the city. In addition, the implementation of new park and recreation facilities will greatly enhance the needs and experiences of the users who use these facilities as their local community gathering and recreation areas.

As the City moves forward in implementing the PRFT, a logical approach that allows the City to balance land acquisition with the development of new park and recreation facilities will be essential. The standards and guidelines presented within the PRFT will assist in maximizing the City's capital resources, while striving to meet the diverse recreational needs of a growing community. The success of the implementation of the PRFT is dependent on the cooperation and coordination efforts of city leaders and departments. Each of the facilities and elements identified in the park and recreation facilities development program will require ownership of responsibilities and support from various areas of specialized expertise and agencies. Coordination and communication with agencies outside Avondale—such as Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department; Maricopa County Flood Control District; BLM; ASLD; AGFD; and the Cities of Goodyear, Phoenix, Tolleson, and Litchfield Park—will be instrumental in developing partnerships that can expedite land acquisition, provide regional connectivity and shared resources of future park and recreation facilities, and provide funding. Prioritization of the recommended park, recreation facility, and trail improvements will be determined by the City as funding becomes available.

## 8.2 Financial Resource Opportunities

Recently, the U.S. economy began a decline which has impacted the availability of federal, state, and private funding for park, recreation, and open space areas and facilities. The future availability of many traditional funding options is difficult to predict given these circumstances. On the other hand, the long-term nature of municipal amenities such as parks, secures a reasonable expectation of certainty that when the economy begins to grow, the fiscal pressure on these amenities will ease. During the intervening years, the ability for Avondale to serve its residents with a high level of service in regards to parks and recreation facilities will bode well when the fiscal pressure is relieved and population growth resumes an upward trajectory.

In the near-term, it will be important to explore ever more creative ways to fund park and recreational facilities. Funding may be in the form of a direct financing mechanism such as the General Fund, or indirect resources such as grants, loans, and public/private partnerships. Several complimentary funding sources may be used on any given project. Following is a brief summary of the City's current funding mechanisms used for parks, recreation facilities, and trails development.

***Development Impact Fees***

The primary and ongoing funding source for park development is the development impact fee. Using existing fee levels, we have estimated the future revenue from this source of funding for parks, recreation facilities, and trails. Assuming a population total of 101,539, it is estimated that an additional 9,789 housing units will be added, which equates to $23.4 million in impact fees that would be generated.

Development Impact Fees are assessed on all new residential construction. The revenue from these fees is allotted for parks and recreation infrastructure development, land acquisition, operations and maintenance. The current impact fee schedule includes:

- $2,501 for each single family residential unit
- $1,970 for each multi-family unit
- $2,526 for each manufactured home unit

The revenue projections in Table 8.1, *City of Avondale Development Impact Fee Projection* are conservative estimates that do not take into consideration the increase in development impact fees or inflation.

### Table 8.1 City of Avondale Development Impact Fee Projection

| | Single Family | Multi-Family | Manufactured Home | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Housing Type Distribution* | 80% | 14% | 6% | **100%** |
| Additional Housing Units | 7,120 | 2,063 | 607 | **9,789** |
| Household Size* | 3.75 | 2.27 | 3.30 | **-** |
| Impact Fee** | $2,501 | $1,970 | $2,526 | **-** |
| Revenue | $17,807,042 | $4,063,562 | $1,532,377 | **$23,402,981** |

Source: U.S. Census: American Community Survey, 2007; City of Avondale; ESI Corp
* 2007 Figure
** City of Avondale Parks Impact Fee Structure as of May 2009

***Other Current Funding Resources***

Over the years the City of Avondale has funded the development of parks, recreation facilities, and trails in a variety of ways including general funds and obligation bonds, as well as, joint use partnerships.

The General Fund includes revenues from a variety of sources including, but not limited to, sales tax, property tax, state and federal sources, user fees, and permit fees. It is the main fund used by the City for all expenses. In addition, funds from the most recent General Obligation Bond issue have been earmarked for indoor park facilities, such as the planned City of Avondale Community and Sports Center located in the Avondale City Center planning area.

The City is currently involved in both public and private partnerships that provide joint use park and recreation amenities to the community. Public partnerships, or inter-governmental agreements, have been entered into with two school facilities and the Maricopa County Flood Control District. Private partnerships, or joint-use facility agreements, have been entered into with the Boys and Girls Club and the YMCA.

## 8.3 Potential Funding Sources

To provide a comprehensive park, recreation facilities, and trails system for its residents, Avondale needs to maintain a level of service standard that ensures the location of parks are accessible to all citizens. Allocating funds for parks and recreation facility development is always a challenge, and becomes more so during economic recession periods. Leveraging a variety of funds such as combining park facilities with education facilities (for example sports fields, gymnasiums, play areas) or habitat restoration projects (for example improving water quality, re-establishing wildlife, educational opportunities) will help allocate additional monies to park facility development, and will serve a more diverse range of needs. These types of complimentary relationships may help leverage more funding for parks and other recreational facilities within Avondale. Examples include:

- Building interpretive kiosks along trails and in parks, which function as shade structures
- Habitat conservation and restoration projects developed as educational laboratories utilized to teach adults and children, while functioning as landscape improvements

Table 8.2, *Potential Funding Resources*, includes the planned and proposed parks and opens space and trails, and their potential funding resources identified to date. New proposed neighborhood parks are scheduled to be provided by the private development community accompanying residential development and maintained by the homeowners association, therefore these parks are not identified in Table 8.2.

### Table 8.2 Potential Funding Resources

| Name | Description | Funding Resources* |
|---|---|---|
| **Neighborhood Parks** | | |
| **Pendergast Park (Planned)** | See Section 6.2, Park Classifications, for a description of Neighborhood Park | AZ State Parks Board Heritage Fund, Growing Smarter State Trust Land Acquisition Grant, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Community Cultural Inventory, American Forests AZ Community Tree Council, Other Funding Resources and Mechanisms (Table 8.4) |
| **Community Parks** | | |
| **Festival Fields (Phase 2 Planned)** | See Section 6.2, Park Classifications, for a description of Community Park | AZ State Parks Board Heritage Fund, Growing Smarter State Trust Land Acquisition Grant, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Community Cultural Inventory, American Forests AZ Community Tree Council, AZ Bird Conservation Initiative, North American Wetlands Conservation Act, Other Funding Resources and Mechanisms (Table 8.4) |
| **CP3 (Proposed)** | See Section 6.2, Park Classifications, for a description of Community Park | AZ State Parks Board Heritage Fund, Growing Smarter State Trust Land Acquisition Grant, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Community Cultural Inventory, Brownfields Assistance Program, American Forests AZ Community Tree Council, AZ Bird Conservation Initiative, Access Program, Land Owner Incentive Program, North American Wetlands Conservation Act, Other Funding Resources and Mechanisms (Table 8.4) |
| **CP4 (Proposed)** | See Section 6.2, Park Classifications, for a description of Community Park | AZ State Parks Board Heritage Fund, Growing Smarter State Trust Land Acquisition Grant, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Community Cultural Inventory, Brownfields Assistance Program, American Forests AZ Community Tree Council, Access Program, Land Owner Incentive Program, Other Funding Resources and Mechanisms (Table 8.4) |
| **Regional Parks** | | |
| **RP1 (Proposed)** | See Section 6.2, Park Classifications, for the description of a Regional Park | AZ State Parks Board Heritage Fund, Growing Smarter State Trust Land Acquisition Grant, State Lake Improvement Fund, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Community Cultural Inventory, Brownfields Assistance Program, American Forests AZ Community Tree Council, AZ Bird Conservation Initiative, Access Program, Land Owner Incentive Program, North American Wetlands Conservation Act, Other Funding Resources and Mechanisms (Table 8.4) |

### Table 8.2 Potential Funding Resources (continued)

| Open Space, Trails, Paths and Bike Lanes | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Agua Fria River Recreation/Open Space Corridor (Proposed)** | Multi-use paths and trails along the Agua Fria River, as well as, recreation and open space areas | AZ State Parks Board Heritage Fund, Growing Smarter State Trust Land Acquisition Grant, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Community Cultural Inventory, Brownfields Assistance Program, American Forests AZ Community Tree Council, AZ Bird Conservation Initiative, Access Program, Land Owner Incentive Program, North American Wetlands Conservation Act, Other Funding Resources and Mechanisms (Table 8.4) |
| **Gila River Recreation/Open Space Corridor (Proposed** | Multi-use paths and trails along the Gila River, as well as, recreation and open space areas | AZ State Parks Board Heritage Fund, Growing Smarter State Trust Land Acquisition Grant, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Community Cultural Inventory, Brownfields Assistance Program, American Forests AZ Community Tree Council, AZ Bird Conservation Initiative, Access Program, Land Owner Incentive Program, North American Wetlands Conservation Act, Other Funding Resources and Mechanisms (Table 8.4) |
| **Bike Lanes** | Designated lanes in existing and new street Right-Of-Way (ROW) | Bikes Belong Grant, Arizona Safe Routes to School |

Source: ESI Corp, 2009
* Description and details of applicable Funding Resources can be found in Table 8.4 – Funding Resources

Funding allocations from the City's General Fund and Development Impact Fee program are assumed to be well entrenched resources for the development, improvement, and acquisition of park and recreation facilities, as well as, state distributed funds such as Highway User Revenue Fund, Vehicle License Tax, Regional Area Road Fund, and the Local Transportation Assistance Fund. Since these resources are assumed to be well known and already utilized for parks, recreation facilities, trails, and bike lane development, they are not specifically identified in the following table.

Table 8.3, *Potential Funding Resource Information*, identifies programs and funds available to help finance various park and recreation facility improvements. This information includes the specific program or fund name, a description of the program or fund, amount of potential funding available, application due dates, the grant coordinator or program director contact information, and website address.

In addition to the funding resources noted in Table 8.3, the City has at their disposable other municipal financing mechanisms and tools to fund city-wide parks and recreation development, improvements, and land acquisition. Table 8.4, *Potential Municipal Financing Mechanisms and Tools* includes traditional resources, as well as non-traditional resources, that may assist the City in implementing the PRFT as the demand and need for new facilities occur.

**Table 8.3 Potential Funding Resource Information**

| Name | Description | Amount | Due Dates | Contact | Address | Phone Number | Website (Source) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **AZ State Parks Board Heritage Fund: Historic Preservation** | Grants in support of historic preservation projects on, or eligible, for the State or National Register of Historic Places. Must attend mandatory workshop. | $150,000/project<br>Match: 40% (min) | 1st cycle - May 29, 2009<br>2nd cycle - Dec. 29, 2009 | Vivia Strang<br>Historic Preservation Grant Consultant<br>vstrang@azstateparks.gov | AZ State Parks<br>1300 W. Washington St.<br>Phoenix, AZ 85007 | 602-542-4662 | www.azstateparks.com |
| **AZ State Parks Board Heritage Fund: Local, Regional and State Parks** | Grant in support of land acquisition and facility development for parks, outdoor recreation and open space preservation. | N/A | No later than 5:00PM on the last working day in February | Danielle Silvas<br>Grant Coordinator<br>dsilvas@azstateparks.gov | AZ State Parks<br>1300 W. Washington St.<br>Phoenix, AZ 85008 | 602-542-7160 | www.azstateparks.com |
| **AZ State Parks Board Heritage Fund: Trails** | Grant in support of non-motorized trail acquisition, construction and trail improvements in the State Trail System. | N/A | No later than 5:00PM on the last working day in February<br>State Trails no later than 5:00PM on the first working day in August | Bob Baldwin | AZ State Parks<br>1300 W. Washington St.<br>Phoenix, AZ 85009 | 602-542-7130 | www.azstateparks.com |
| **Growing Smarter State Trust Land Acquisition Grant Program** | The Growing Smarter Act provides for the acquisition and preservation of open spaces and establishes a program for continuing study and consideration of pertinent issues relating to public land use policies. | Match: 10% | June 30th 2009<br>5:00 PM | Doris Pulsifer<br>Chief of Grants<br>dpulsifer@azstateparks.gov | AZ State Parks<br>1300 W. Washington St.<br>Phoenix, AZ 85010 | 602-542-7127 | www.azstateparks.com |
| **State Lake Improvement Fund** | Grants which assist state and local governments in funding projects on water where gasoline powered boats are permitted | Does not require matching of funds, but points are awarded for those who can. Max can't exceed 20% of total revenue in any fiscal year | last working day of January | Danielle Silvas<br>Grant Coordinator<br>dsilvas@azstateparks.gov | AZ State Parks<br>1300 W. Washington St.<br>Phoenix, AZ 85011 | 602-542-7160 | www.azstateparks.com |
| **Land and Water Conservation Fund** | Grants in support of land acquisition and facility development for parks, outdoor recreation, and open space preservation | N/A | No later than 5:00PM on the last working day in February | Danielle Silvas<br>Grant Coordinator<br>dsilvas@azstateparks.gov | AZ State Parks<br>1300 W. Washington St.<br>Phoenix, AZ 85011 | 602-542-7160 | www.azstateparks.com |
| **Community Cultural Inventory** | Tool to help towns, cities, and counties gather info about cultural resources available in their communities and develop future cultural opportunities | Grant support of $500/day, up to max of 3 days, for total of $1500 | throughout the year on a first-come, first-served basis and are subject to approval and availability of funds | Mitch Menchaca<br>Director of Local Arts Development<br>mmenchaca@azarts.gov | Arizona Commission on the Arts<br>417 W. Roosevelt St.<br>Phoenix, AZ 85003 | 602-771-6529 | www.azarts.gov |
| **Brownfields Assistance Program** | Encourages redevelopment of sites that have been, or may have, environmental contamination by providing funds to conduct thorough investigations and implement the necessary steps to end the contamination | Max of $200,000 | N/A | Arcelious Stephens or Beth Amparan<br>ADEQ Brownfields Coordinator(s) | AZ Dept. of Environmental Quality<br>1110 W. Washington St.<br>Phoenix, AZ 85007 | Arcelious<br>602-771-4401<br>Beth<br>602-771-4562. | www.azdeq.gov/environ/waste/cleanup/brownfields.html |
| **Bikes Belong Grant** | Fundable projects include paved bike paths and rail-trails as well as mountain bike trails, bike parks, BMX facilities, and large-scale bicycle advocacy initiatives. | Up to $10,000<br>No match required but highly desirable | May 26, 2009<br>August 24, 2009<br>November 23, 2009 | Elizabeth Train<br>Grants & Research Director<br>elizabeth@bikesbelong.org | Bikes Belong Coalition<br>P.O Box 2359<br>Boulder, CO, 80306 | 303-449-4893<br>Ext. 3 | www.bikesbelong.org |

**Table 8.3 Potential Funding Resource Information (continued)**

| Name | Description | Amount | Due Dates | Contact | Address | Phone Number | Website (Source) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Arizona Bird Conservation Initiative** | Proposals should address specific priority actions as identified in the Arizona Partners in Flight Bird Conservation Plan (APIF Plan). The APIF plan identifies priority species and habitats, and establishes objectives for bird populations and habitats in Arizona. Application package (guidelines, instructions, and form), are provided below. | Grants awarded up to $120,000 subject to funds availability | No new grant application period designated | Edwin Juarez<br>ABCI Coordinator | Arizona Game and Fish Department/WMNG<br>5000 W. Carefree Hwy.<br>Phoenix, AZ 85085 | 623-236-7516 | http://www.azgfd.gov/w_c/abci_grants.shtml |
| **American Forests: Arizona Community Tree Council** | American Forests is always looking for quality tree-planting projects to be funded by our Global ReLeaf Forests ecosystem restoration program. We are particularly interested in partnering with private and public sector organizations and agencies to plant trees and improve the environment in projects that would otherwise not be feasible. We support projects that plant the right trees in the right places for the right reasons. | $2000 to $20000 per grant<br>can not be matched with federal funds<br>Submit one original and 4 copies<br>Match: 50% | No new grant application period designated | Louise Wakem<br>Urban and Community Forester<br>Or | Community Challenge Grant Program<br>Arizona State Forestry Division<br>Urban and Community Forestry<br>1110 W. Washington, #100<br>Phoenix, AZ 85007 | 602-542-6191 | http://aztrees.org/grants.html<br><br>www.americanforests.org/global_releaf/grants/ |
| **Access Program** | The Landowner Relation Program utilizes funds provided through the access program to perform various projects with private landowners in exchange for short-term or perpetual access agreements. These projects vary in scale depending on the importance of the access point as well as the length of the access agreement. Access funds can also be utilized to purchase perpetual public access easements on privately owned roads that can provide public access to federal lands. | Cost Share | Rolling Deadline | Al Eiden<br>Private Lands Stewardship Coordinator<br>aeiden@azgfd.gov | Arizona Game and Fish Department<br>5000 W. Carefree Hwy.<br>Phoenix, AZ 85086 | 623-236-7624 | http://www.azgfd.gov/outdoor_recreation/landowner_access.shtml |
| **Land Owner Incentive Program** | To be eligible for these funds, a habitat project must occur on private land, and the project must conserve, enhance or restore habitat for an "at-risk" species. 25% match is required, which can be in-kind contributions by the landowner (labor, use of equipment, donation of materials, volunteer time, etc). | Match: 25% | Rolling Deadline | Al Eiden<br>Private Lands Stewardship Coordinator<br>aeiden@azgfd.gov | Arizona Game and Fish Department<br>5000 W. Carefree Hwy.<br>Phoenix, AZ 85087 | 623-236-7624 | http://www.azgfd.gov/outdoor_recreation/landowner_lip.shtml |
| **North American Wetlands Conservation Act Division of Bird Habitat Conservation** | Supports public-private partnerships carrying out projects that further the goals of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act. These projects must involve long-term protection, restoration, and/or enhancement of wetlands and associated uplands habitats for the benefit of all wetlands-associated migratory birds. | Match: 50% | Deadline: March 6, and July 31, 2009. | U.S. Standard Grants Program Proposal Coordinators:<br>David Buie<br>david_buie@fws.gov<br>Bonnie Gaukler<br>bonnie_j-gaukler@fws.gov | US Fish and Wildlife Service<br>Division of Bird Habitat Conservation<br>4401 North Fairfax Drive<br>Mailstop MBSP 4075<br>Arlington, Virginia 22203 USA | David<br>301-497-5870<br>Bonnie<br>703-358-2017 | www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/Standard/US/index.shtm |
| **Arizona Safe Routes to School** | The Safe Routes to School program has three overarching purposes: 1) to enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school;2) to make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age; and 3) to facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce [automobile] traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools. | Not Available | Not Available | Brian Fellows<br>Arizona DOT SRTS Coordinator<br>bfellows@azdot.gov | Not Available | 602-712-8010 | www.saferoutespartnership.org/state/5043/arizona<br><br>http://tpd.azdot.gov/planning/srts_index.php |

### Table 8.4 Potential Municipal Financing Mechanisms and Tools

| Name | Description |
|---|---|
| **General Obligation Bond** | Promissory notes backed by the municipality's ability to generate revenues, especially via taxes. |
| **Assessment Bond** | Promissory notes backed by a dedicated assessment/tax source (special industry tax, special improvement district tax, etc.). |
| **Revenue Bond** | Promissory notes backed by a dedicated revenue source (user fees, impact fees, parking fees, etc.). |
| **Special Industry Tax** | Taxes assessed on a specific industry or activity such as rental car tax, hotel bed tax, passenger tax, etc. |
| **Special Improvement District** | A generally defined area with taxes imposed to provide specific public services. |
| **Joint Service Authorities** | Joint service authorities combine aspects of special improvement districts and intergovernmental agreements. As opposed to special improvement districts, legislation to establish jurisdictional and taxing authority may not be required. Agreements between the City and other agencies, establishing areas of responsibility and levels of funding, are often sufficient to establish joint service authorities. |
| **Partnerships** | Partnerships are agreements between the City and other entities such as a private company, another public agency, a not-for-profit organization or simply a group of citizens, for the purpose of providing the resources necessary to deliver a needed park and/or recreation amenity. |
| **Sponsorships** | Sponsorships are situations where an outside entity, such as a private company, agrees to assume the annual maintenance costs of a particular community park or to sponsor events and/or activities in parks or other City facilities. |
| **Private Concessionaires** | Private Concessionaire contracts may be entered into by the City which provides an amenity for park users, while also generating revenue for the City. |
| **Park and Recreation Gift Catalog** | This catalog would detail park and street furnishings and recreation facilities that are needed by the City. Furnishings may include items such as covered picnic tables, barbecue grills, drinking fountains, trash receptacles, park benches, planting boxes, trees, shrubs, flowers, tot lot, and playground equipment. The current price of each item and the number of items needed should be included in the catalog. The Gift Catalog would allow philanthropic businesses, service clubs, and individuals to select items, for donation, possibly on a yearly basis. Plaques and inscriptions may be included. To the purchaser, these gifts represent a tax-deductible contribution or a contribution that has immediate positive results for the community. A range of affordability options should be included. |

**Table 8.4 Potential Municipal Financing Mechanisms and Tools (continued)**

| Name | Description |
|---|---|
| **Community Roundtable** | A roundtable is a mechanism for businesses and community leaders to join forces to support programs for parks, recreation, and open space. The members of the roundtable would agree to contribute to the park system by allocating a percentage of profits to be pooled and donated to the Park and Recreation Department through a Park Foundation. Another aspect of a community roundtable can be the establishment of matching employee programs, where an employee decides that a percentage of their paycheck is donated, while the employer matches the donation. Companies and organizations can also donate services which can be performed on a volunteer basis by employees or members. Corporate sponsorships can also be organized and promoted via the community roundtable. |
| **Cost Recovery From Park and Recreation Fees and User Charges** | Key considerations in establishing pricing or cost recovery policy is the communities economic situation, impact of the fee on users, and ability for the City to subsidize the activity. It is important to keep in mind that as the cost of a program or service rises, the number of participants declines. A policy will need to be set and adhered to, in order to keep the program equitable. Activities which benefit the community, i.e., teen programs or league sports, should be subsidized more, while individual activities such as dance classes, should be subsidized less. Imposition of a non-resident user fee surcharge would ensure a fairer share of costs borne by non-residents. The primary disadvantage of a surcharge is that it could limit participation by lower income families. |
| **Enterprise Recreation Facilities** | Enterprise Recreation Facilities introduce new facilities into the system that operate for the express purpose of making a profit in order to fund the facility and associated programs. Water theme parks, amusement parks, restaurants and clubhouses at community golf courses and similar facilities represent those kinds of enterprise operations within a community park and recreation system that can earn a respectable return. The City Council and the Park and Recreation Commission may then determine how much of the profit should be reinvested back into the facility and how much can be reallocated into the general Parks and Recreation fund. |
| **Cost Avoidance** | Cost avoidance is a strategy wherein foreseeable future costs are avoided by preventative or efficiency measures in the near-term. The preventative or efficiency measure typically has a cost of its own; however, it is justified by the net savings it generates from evading future costs. Examples of cost avoidance include replacing equipment parts before they fail and damage other parts and obtaining economies of scale by aggregating known future expenditures. The money saved on operations and maintenance can be used to fund improvements and land acquisition. |
| **Utility Bill Donations** | A utility bill donation program is a viable method for the public to contribute to the park and recreation system. The option for donation would appear on City utility bills. |

Source: ESI Corp

# Appendix A – Public Participation Input

# City of Avondale

## City of Avondale Parks, Recreation Facilities & Trails Master Plan

Public Meeting #1 Comments Summary
September 10, 2008

***Values***

- Clean parks and facilities
- Clean restrooms
- Convenient access
- Variety of parks
- Buildings that provide a variety of options for different age groups and abilities in close proximity to each other
- Adequate shade structures
- Good enforcement of policies leads to a feeling of safety and security
- Dog park is great for families
- No conflict of usage
- Encourage larger, open recreation areas vs. pocket parks
- Like Rio Vista Park (Peoria)
- Convenient access to dog park
- Walking within safe, lit areas
- Openness of City staff
- Long bike/hike routes without interacting with traffic
- Water and Play in same area

***Issues***

- Affordable areas for activities
- No indoor recreation area/teen center
- No fields available for league play (Adult Baseball)
- Parking is a problem (insufficient)
- Lack of pool and water features (splash parks)
- Lack of areas for group activities (family activities that provide areas during summer heat)
- Insufficient outdoor facilities (multipurpose)

***Needs***

- Restrooms closer to ramadas for convenience
- Large pavilion with BBQ and picnic facilities – including food prep facilities
- Family-oriented activities
- Indoor gym
- Greenbelt/Recreation corridor along Agua Fria
- Interactive green area
- Six adult baseball fields
- Upgrade existing trails
- Basketball courts (Lit)
- Build facilities with expansion in mind
- Public Golf Course
- Areas for fishing
- Indoor multi-purpose facility
- Need place for pick up games (open turf areas with backstop)
- Need for enough land for park development
- Areas for teen activities
- Ramadas with misting systems
- Lighted fields
- Areas for older teen, adult, and senior activities
- Areas of activities for all age groups

***Additional Comments Received at Public Meeting***

From comment sheets:

1. Splash Park, indoor/outdoor heated pool, waterpark

2. Heated Swimming Pool (most)
   Restrooms Near Ramadas (most)
   Boulder Co., Ballfields

3. Outdoor Recreation – "A Pool Park"
   Beach Style "A tropical getaway in the desert."
   - A place to hold community/city functions (splash night, concerts, etc. & charge admittance.)*Have a small stage with a bonfire pit.
   - Hold youth activities and events. A positive outlet, keeping them involved in the community. Great opportunity for jobs for teens.
   - Place affordable frequent visits. ($5.00 residents/non. Res. $6.00)
   - Family oriented environment. Have picnic tables, Barbecue pits, and sand area with children's jungle gym, volleyball nets.
   - Have birthday/company parties or just to get out with friends/family.
   - Pool features may include:
     - Waterfall slide
     - Pirate boat in the water, where kids can play on. Maybe with a plank, telescope, compass, and maps.
     - Water guns on boat & sides of pool for and extra splash!
     - Have rafts, floaters, and inner tubes there for rentals or can bring your own.

   Other Accommodations:
   - Snack bar
   - Ice cream/Hawaiian Shaved ice karts (Vendors can pay a permit fee to the city. So, It would be 100% profit)
   - Bathrooms/ with showers.
   - Have and indoor "party room" for reserved parties only
   - You can also hold classes there.Swimming lessons, water aerobics, have yoga "on the Beach"
   - Lifeguards on duty
   - Great place for school field trip.

   Depending on park location can also be a beautiful setting for other businesses.

4. Pool, Recreation Center
   Benchmark – Goodyear Park
   Rio Vista Park

5. I would just like to point out that there is about 16 Teams of Single (A) Baseball that have being play in Avondale scence 12 Years ado and are not able to because there is no baseball fields anymore in Avondale.
   All this teams got famaly's that go watch and have fun watching a good (Baseball Fields.)

***Note: 16 Teams = About 400 Players (avg) + Famaly's that sometimes cant go on a Sunday to play or watch that that event because there is no fields and other city's don't rent or it's too far…***

## City of Avondale
## Parks, Recreation Facilities & Trails Master Plan
# PUBLIC MEETING #1 SURVEY RESULTS (5 Respondents)

The following information was identified to be the major and/or most important recreation facilities and components desired from the surveys distributed at the first public meeting. Percentages were derived from the total number of completed surveys submitted.

**MASTER PLAN ELEMENT**

| 1) What types of facilities or settings would you spend the most time using? | |
|---|---|
| *Recreational (Pick-up Games, Open Play, etc.)* | 80.0% |
| *Competitive (sports tournaments, events, etc.)* | 80.0% |
| *Educational/ Interpretive* | 60.0% |
| *Leisure (Passive, Picnic, Trails, etc.)* | 40.0% |

| 2) What types of park facilities would you use? | |
|---|---|
| *Play Areas (6-12 year olds)* | 80.0% |
| *Tot Lots (2-5 year olds)* | 80.0% |
| *Open Picnic Tables with BBQs* | 60.0% |
| *Baseball Fields* | 60.0% |
| *Special Gathering/Events/Activity Areas* | 60.0% |
| *Single Family Picnic Ramadas* | 40.0% |
| *Group Picnic Ramadas* | 40.0% |
| *Softball Fields* | 40.0% |
| *Sand Volleyball Courts* | 40.0% |
| *Walking Paths (Paved)* | 40.0% |
| *Fishing Lakes/Ponds* | 40.0% |
| *Indoor Recreation Facilities* | 40.0% |
| *Open Grass Play Areas* | 20.0% |
| *Soccer Fields* | 20.0% |
| *Tennis Courts* | 20.0% |
| *Fitness Courses* | 20.0% |
| *Off-leash Dog Parks* | 20.0% |
| *Natural Interpretive Areas* | 20.0% |
| *Sculpture/Art Garden* | 20.0% |
| *Skateboard Parks* | 20.0% |
| *Racquetball Courts* | 0.0% |
| *Basketball Courts* | 0.0% |
| *Decomposed Granite Trails (Unpaved)* | 0.0% |
| *BMX Parks* | 0.0% |
| *Bird Habitat Areas* | 0.0% |

| 3) What amenities are the most important to include in a park? | |
|---|---|
| *Trash Receptacles* | 100.0% |
| *Shade Trees* | 100.0% |
| *Drinking Fountains* | 100.0% |
| *Pathway/Security Lighting* | 100.0% |
| *Benches* | 80.0% |
| *Parking* | 80.0% |
| *Picnic Tables* | 60.0% |
| *Grass Amphitheaters* | 60.0% |
| *Barbeque Grills* | 60.0% |
| *Bike Racks* | 60.0% |
| *Landscape Berms/Forms* | 60.0% |
| *Drought Tolerant Landscape Plantings* | 60.0% |
| *Emergency System/Phone* | 60.0% |
| *Limited Perimeter Access* | 40.0% |

Source: Logan Simpson Design, Inc.

# *Survey Results for PUBLIC MEETING #1 (September 10, 2008)*

### *Additional Comments*

1. Comments on front of survey: [RE:"Shade Trees"] ☆; Comments on back of survey: No Comment.

2. Splash park, indoor/outdoor heated pool, waterpark.

3. Heated Swimming Pool (most)
   Restrooms near ramadas (most)
   Boulder, CO. ballfields
   [attached document "Outdoor Recreation – 'A Pool Park'"]
   Outdoor Recreation – "A Pool Park"
   Beach Style "A tropical getaway in the desert."
   - A place to hold community/city functions (splash night, concerts, etc. & charge admittance.)*Have a small stage with a bonfire pit.
   - Hold youth activities and events. A positive outlet, keeping them involved in the community. Great opportunity for jobs for teens.
   - Place affordable frequent visits. ($5.00 residents/non. Res. $6.00)
   - Family oriented environment. Have picnic tables, Barbecue pits, and sand area with children's jungle gym, volleyball nets.
   - Have birthday/company parties or just to get out with friends/family.
   - Pool features may include:
     - Waterfall slide
     - Pirate boat in the water, where kids can play on. Maybe with a plank, telescope, compass, and maps.
     - Water guns on boat & sides of pool for and extra splash!
     - Have rafts, floaters, and inner tubes there for rentals or can bring your own.

   Other Accommodations:
   - Snack bar
   - Ice cream/Hawaiian Shaved ice karts (Vendors can pay a permit fee to the city. So, It would be 100% profit)
   - Bathrooms/ with showers.
   - Have and indoor "party room" for reserved parties only
   - You can also hold classes there.Swimming lessons, water aerobics, have yoga "on the Beach"
   - Lifeguards on duty
   - Great place for school field trip.

   Depending on park location can also be a beautiful setting for other businesses.

4. No Comment

5. Pool, Recreation Center
   Benchmark – Goodyear Park
   Rio Vista Park

## City of Avondale
## Parks, Recreation Facilities & Trails Master Plan
# WORLD FEST SURVEY RESULTS (17 Respondents)

The following information was identified to be the major and/or most important recreation facilities and components desired from the surveys distributed at the World Fest event. Percentages were derived from the total number of completed surveys submitted.

| MASTER PLAN ELEMENT |
|---|

| 1) What types of facilities or settings would you spend the most time using? | |
|---|---|
| *Leisure (Passive, Picnic, Trails, etc.)* | 88.2% |
| *Educational/ Interpretive* | 82.4% |
| *Competitive (sports tournaments, events, etc.)* | 52.9% |
| *Recreational (Pick-up Games, Open Play, etc.)* | 41.2% |

| 2) What types of park facilities would you use? | |
|---|---|
| *Walking Paths (Paved)* | 88.2% |
| *Fitness Courses* | 76.5% |
| *Special Gathering/Events/Activity Areas* | 70.6% |
| *Natural Interpretive Areas* | 70.6% |
| *Fishing Lakes/Ponds* | 70.6% |
| *Sculpture/Art Garden* | 70.6% |
| *Indoor Recreation Facilities* | 70.6% |
| *Sand Volleyball Courts* | 64.7% |
| *Decomposed Granite Trails (Unpaved)* | 64.7% |
| *Open Picnic Tables with BBQs* | 58.8% |
| *Single Family Picnic Ramadas* | 58.8% |
| *Open Grass Play Areas* | 58.8% |
| *Racquetball Courts* | 52.9% |
| *Play Areas (6-12 year olds)* | 52.9% |
| *Off-leash Dog Parks* | 52.9% |
| *Bird Habitat Areas* | 52.9% |
| *Group Picnic Ramadas* | 47.1% |
| *Basketball Courts* | 47.1% |
| *Tennis Courts* | 47.1% |
| *Tot Lots (2-5 year olds)* | 47.1% |
| *Skateboard Parks* | 47.1% |
| *BMX Parks* | 41.2% |
| *Soccer Fields* | 35.3% |
| *Baseball Fields* | 29.4% |
| *Softball Fields* | 29.4% |

| 3) What amenities are the most important to include in a park? | |
|---|---|
| *Shade Trees* | 88.2% |
| *Picnic Tables* | 82.4% |
| *Trash Receptacles* | 82.4% |
| *Drinking Fountains* | 76.5% |
| *Pathway/Security Lighting* | 76.5% |
| *Benches* | 70.6% |
| *Landscape Berms/Forms* | 70.6% |
| *Drought Tolerant Landscape Plantings* | 70.6% |
| *Parking* | 70.6% |
| *Barbeque Grills* | 58.8% |
| *Emergency System/Phone* | 58.8% |
| *Grass Amphitheaters* | 52.9% |
| *Bike Racks* | 52.9% |
| *Limited Perimeter Access* | 52.9% |

| 4) How often do you use a bicycle to travel to or from the following destinations? | |
|---|---|
| *Neighborhood or City Park* | 41.2% |
| *A Trail System* | 29.4% |
| *Gym, Rec Centers or Sports (not at a school)* | 23.5% |
| *Avondale City Hall* | 23.5% |
| *Special Events or Parades* | 23.5% |
| *Libraries* | 17.6% |
| *Work* | 11.8% |
| *A Public Transit Stop* | 11.8% |
| *Shopping or Dining* | 11.8% |
| *School* | 5.9% |

Source: Logan Simpson Design, Inc.

***City of Avondale Parks, Recreation Facilities & Trails Master Plan***

## *Survey Results for World Fest (September 13, 2008)*

### *Additional Comments*

1. No Comment
2. No Comment
3. No Comment
4. No Comment
5. Definately more tot lots, + put them closer to the bathrooms (easier for little ones potty training)

   SpASh PAD!!!
6. No Comment
7. No Comment
8. No Comment
9. No Comment
10. [Comment from front of page: Multiple checkmarks on "Off-leash Dog Parks"] [Comment from back of page: Nikola J. Moody 623-210-8233]
11. Indoor Swimming Pool
12. Friendship Park is not a free park. We are always kicked off the fields, even if the field is not reserved.
13. No Comment
14. No Comment
15. No Comment
16. No Comment
17. The Events Committee has had some really great activities!! Keep it up!

# City of Avondale

## Parks, Recreation Facilities & Trails Master Plan

Stakeholder Meeting #1
Comments Summary
November 18, 2008

### *Comments Received at Stakeholder Meeting*

- Joint ventures with Flood Control District of Maricopa County should be pursued for future recreation facilities.
- Desire outdoor fields to have year-round use.
- Trails and trail connectivity are critical; new trail linkages should be proposed in areas to complete an overall trail system and network.
- Park users drive (instead of walk or bike) to larger community park facilities that offer multiple recreational opportunities; use larger park as a designation place and once there will participate in other recreational activities (e.g. – hiking).
- Existing canals and flood control features should be utilized as trail connection linkages and corridors.
- Trailheads should be incorporated in regional areas; access should be located in areas that would benefit many trails users.
- Trail connection links need to be open to everyone; trail corridors should not be located in public areas that then connect to private developments because private developments can fence-off sections of a trail network and then trail users cannot access entire trail system (e.g. – Crystal Gardens Development).
- Need an indoor recreation facility that is community-owned and contains a mix of indoor facilities, weight-lifting, basketball, etc. (e.g. – Maryville).
- Opportunities for outdoor recreation activities (fishing, etc.) using manmade and natural flood control facilities; including the use of future facilities.
- Would like to have kayaking, moving water trails, it would be a unique attraction to the local area (e.g. – Charlotte, NC and Moab, UT); water recreation, ecotourism.
- City should pursue public/private partnership opportunities.
- Joining together with other cities as a partnership to develop future recreation facilities to alleviate duplication of same facilities within neighboring cities (e.g. – City of Avondale could partner with the City of Goodyear in developing outdoor recreation facilities in the ADOT basins).
- Important to diversify recreation facilities for both cities (Avondale and Goodyear).
- Volunteer coaches for football and soccer leagues prefer open grass areas for practice purposes for both types of sports. Multi-use areas are more beneficial to multiple sports because they are not programmed or designed as a single sport use area, and these areas can also be used throughout the week. Leagues rent designated sport areas for official games and tournament play only.
- Indoor recreation facility needed within a regional park. Poor air quality and high outdoor temperatures are big issues that will continue to force more people to use indoor facilities. Preferred indoor recreation facilities would include soccer, court sports, running track, and exercise equipment.
- Multi-recreational uses within indoor facilities would be beneficial along with multi-revenue producing methods. Include other uses within facility that would benefit indoor recreation users (e.g. – food and beverage, meeting rooms, etc.)

# City of Avondale

## Parks, Recreation Facilities & Trails Master Plan

Stakeholder Meeting #2
Comments Summary
January 14th, 2009

### *Comments Received at Stakeholder Meeting*

- Soccer – Friendship Park's fields are ideal.
- Football – currently use two fields to accommodate 3-6 teams at Friendship Park.
- Prefer current location of existing fields at Friendship Park.
- Friendship Park's field sizes are accurate but there is not enough parking to accommodate amount of users for existing facilities.
- Field conditions at Friendship Park are poor/over used.
- Need more of the same type of fields that are at Friendship Park.
- Soccer – can fill up five fields every Saturday.
- Larger fields needed – High School sizes.
- Need another four diamond field complex to accommodate softball, baseball, and batting cages.
- Prefer natural turf for ballfields and soccer.
- Good example of multiple fields for football is the Glendale Sports Complex (one main field with three practice fields).
- Fields are over programmed, too many users.
- Need more trails – have seen an increase in bike users.
- Aging population prefers passive recreation.
- Need to review passive use areas vs. active areas of the City based on geographics and distance from home.
- Shorter duration (drive) times for active vs. passive recreation needs.
- Trade-off use of facilities to give fields (grass) time to rest.

# Appendix B – Needs Assessment Survey Report

# City of Avondale

Parks Master Plan

Needs Assessment Report

PREPARED BY:

**ESI CORPORATION**

**300 West Clarendon Avenue**

**Suite 470**

**Phoenix, Arizona 85013**

**(602) 265-6120**

**www.esicorp.net**

**December 2008**

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**APPENDIX A – SURVEY INSTRUMENT.....A-1**
**APPENDIX B – SURVEY COMMENTS.....B-1**

# I. Needs Assessment Findings

A Needs Assessment survey was conducted for the City of Avondale to gauge the attitudes of the residents of the area concerning their parks, facilities, programs, and other activities. These findings will be used to prepare the Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the City. A mail survey was sent to 4,000 randomly selected households in Avondale, which was completed in September 2008. Two hundred and fourteen surveys were tabulated, which yielded a margin of error of plus or minus 6.5 percent at a confidence level of 95 percent, as is noted in Table 1.

**Table 1 – Overall Survey Response Rate and Margin of Error**

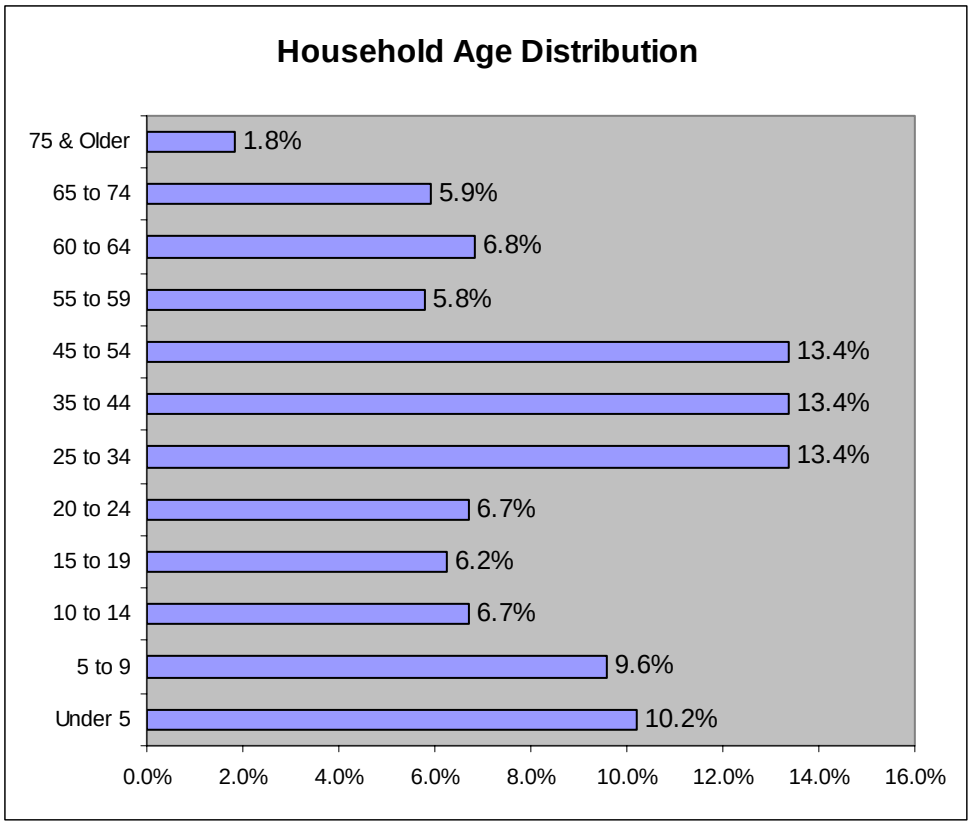
| | Margin of Error - 90% Confidence | Margin of Error - 95% Confidence | Margin of Error - 99% Confidence |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Number Surveyed** | 4,000 | 4,000 | 4,000 |
| **Tabulated Responses** | 214 | 214 | 214 |
| **Response Rate** | 5.4% | 5.4% | 5.4% |
| **Error Level** | 5.5% | 6.5% | 8.6% |

Source: Avondale Needs Assessment Survey, September 2008

The survey instrument for this Needs Assessment is included in Appendix A. Following are the most important findings from the assessment survey. Key aspects and statistics have been noted in charts, graphs, and tables. Places where open-ended questions were asked are noted and have had their answers tabulated in Appendix B.

## Respondent Profile

A total of 214 surveys were tabulated, which represents a 5.4 percent response rate. The largest age cohorts represented are those between the ages of 25 and 54 years of age. Just over 40 percent of the respondents fall into this category. A significant proportion of the population, 19.8 percent, is younger than 10 years of age. The high representation of these two age groups suggests a significant presence of families living within Avondale. The age breakdown of survey respondents and their family members closely resembles the 2006 U.S. Census of the City of Avondale.




Source: Avondale Needs Assessment Survey, September 2008

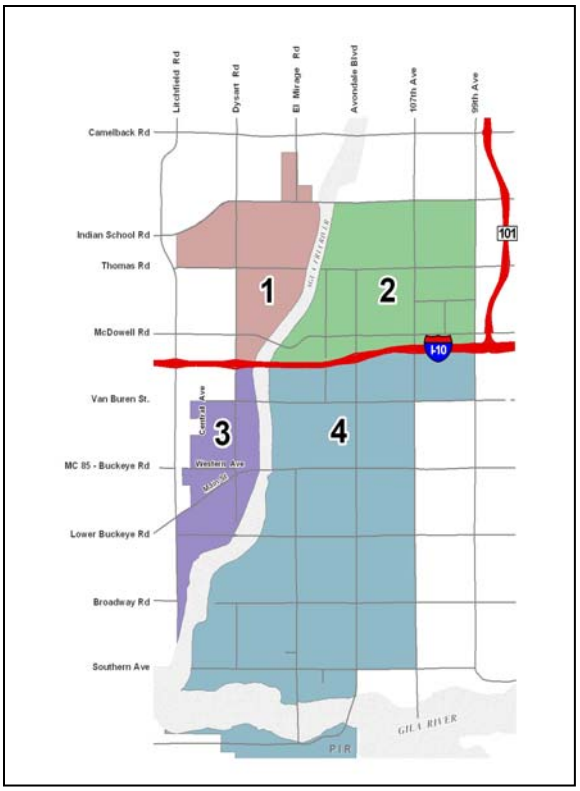
Additionally, a map denoting quadrants was provided on the survey with a question asking respondents to identify where they live within Avondale. The four quadrants are represented in the following table and map which shows I-10 as the divider for north-south and the Agua Fria River as the divider for east-west. Not everyone who responded to the survey answered the question about which quadrant they live in. Of those that answered this question, thirty-five percent live in quadrant 2, followed by 27 percent in quadrant 4. Quadrant 3 has the smallest number of respondents at 13 percent.

**Table 2 - Number of Responses by Quadrant**

| | # Responses | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Quadrant 1 | 50 | 25% |
| Quadrant 2 | 70 | 35% |
| Quadrant 3 | 27 | 13% |
| Quadrant 4 | 55 | 27% |
| | 202 | 100% |

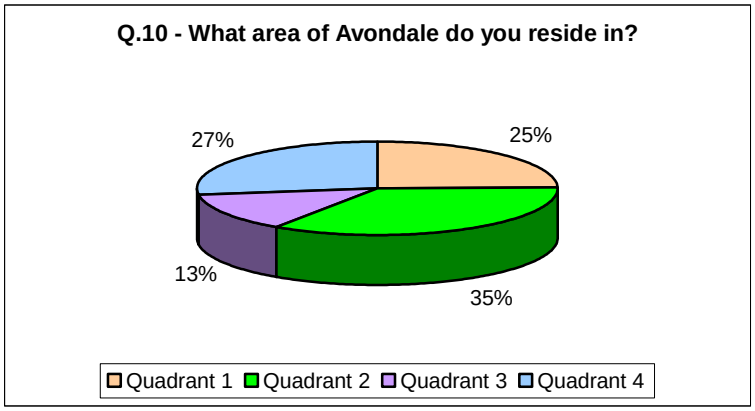
Source: Needs Assessment Survey, September 2008

Due to the fact that the Needs Assessment survey was a stratified random sample based on the entire city of Avondale, the response rate by quadrant does not have a statistical validity of 95 percent with a 5.6 percent margin of error. However, while the response rates for the individual quadrants are not statistically valid; the results are included in order to understand any differences in opinions of residents based on where they live.




Due to the small number of responses from Quadrant 3, a word of caution is in order. Findings from this Quadrant may not be representative of the households living within that Quadrant.

The map and chart indicate the areas in question, as well as the proportion of respondents by area.




Source: Avondale Needs Assessment Survey, September 2008

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

The Needs Assessment survey was designed to determine how well the existing parks system, ancillary programs, and facilities are meeting the needs of the residents of Avondale. Additionally, from these findings it was sought to understand what areas could use improvement, what methods of funding the respondents would or would not support, and gauge the level of support respondents would have in targeting specific amenities that could potentially aid in developing Avondale as a destination. The findings of this report will also provide insight into which areas of Avondale are most in need of specific facilities, programs, and activities.

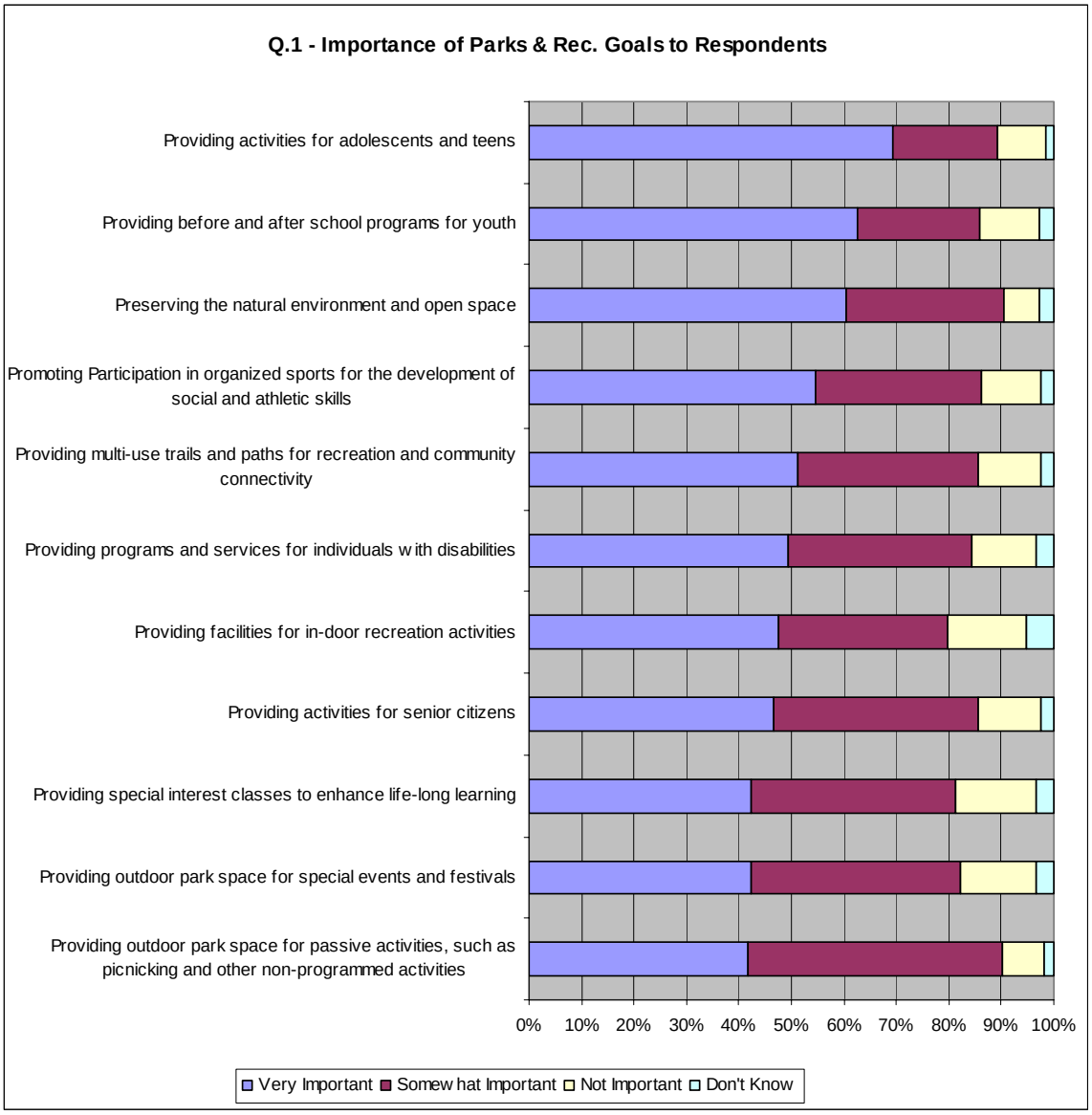
## PARKS AND RECREATION GOAL SUPPORT

The first few questions of the needs assessment survey sought to determine the level of support for a variety of goals of the Avondale Parks and Recreation Department, as well as current issues being considered, such as developing Avondale as a destination, and biking and walking trends.

**Question One** asked respondents about their level of support for various overarching goals of the Avondale Parks and Recreation Department.

- According to the respondents, the most important overarching goals of the Parks and Recreation Department, rated as "very important" to them, should be providing activities for adolescents and teens (68.7%), providing before and after school programs for youth (62.1%), and preserving the natural environment and open space (60.3%).
- While the previous percentages were strictly related to "very important" when both "very important" and "somewhat important" are combined, respondents appear to be generally supportive of all of the overarching goals of the Avondale Parks and Recreation Department. No category received fewer than 79.9 percent votes of either "very important" or "somewhat important."
- There was not much variation amongst the individual quadrants aside from Quadrant 3. In general, the top three supported goals in quadrants 1, 2, and 4 match the overall findings:
  - Quadrant 1: providing activities for adolescents and teens (72% "very supportive"), providing before and after school programs for youth (66%), and preserving the natural environment and open space (60%).
  - Quadrant 2: providing activities for adolescents and teens (65.7% "very supportive"), preserving the natural environment and open space (61.4%), and providing multi-use trails and paths for recreation and community connectivity (54.3%).
  - Quadrant 3: providing programs and services for individuals with disabilities, promoting participation in organized sports for the development of social and athletic skills, and providing activities for adolescents and teens (all three 77.8% "very supportive").
  - Quadrant 4: providing activities for adolescents and teens (63.6% "very supportive"), providing before and after school programs for youth (60%), and preserving the natural environment and open space (56.4%).
- On the other end of the spectrum, the goals that were least important to respondents, rated as "not important," were providing special interest classes to enhance lifelong learning (15.4%), providing facilities for in-door recreation activities (15%), and providing outdoor park space for special events and festivals (14.5%).

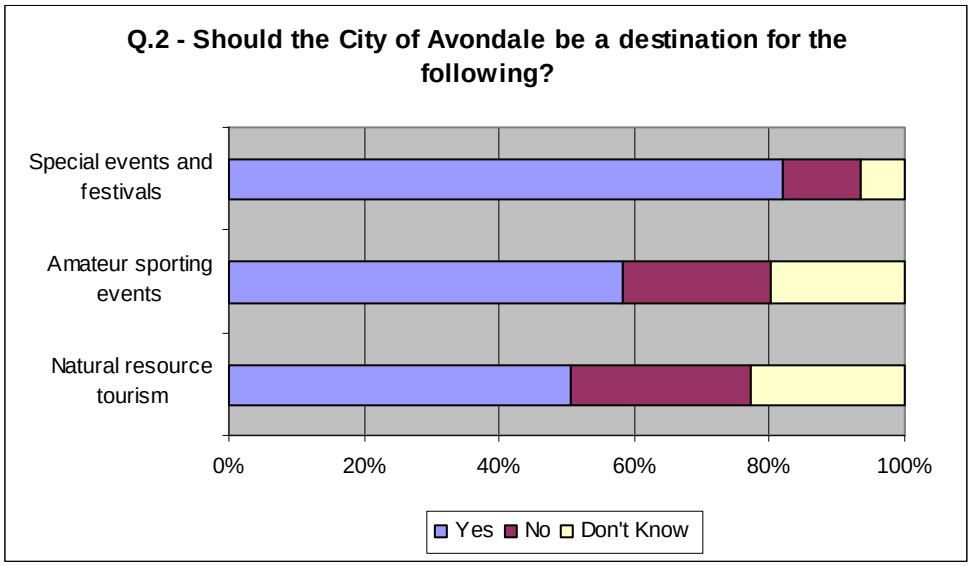
- Within the individual quadrants, there was not much variation. Quadrants 1, 2, and 4 rated as the three least important overarching goals some combination of: providing outdoor park space for special events and festivals, providing special interest classes to enhance lifelong learning, providing facilities for indoor recreation activities, providing activities for senior citizens, or providing programs and services for individuals with disabilities. Quadrant 3 did not have enough responses for unsupported goals to make a comparison.




Source: Avondale Needs Assessment Survey, September 2008

**Question Two** asked how residents felt about whether or not Avondale should or should not be a destination for special events and festivals, natural resource tourism, or amateur sporting events.

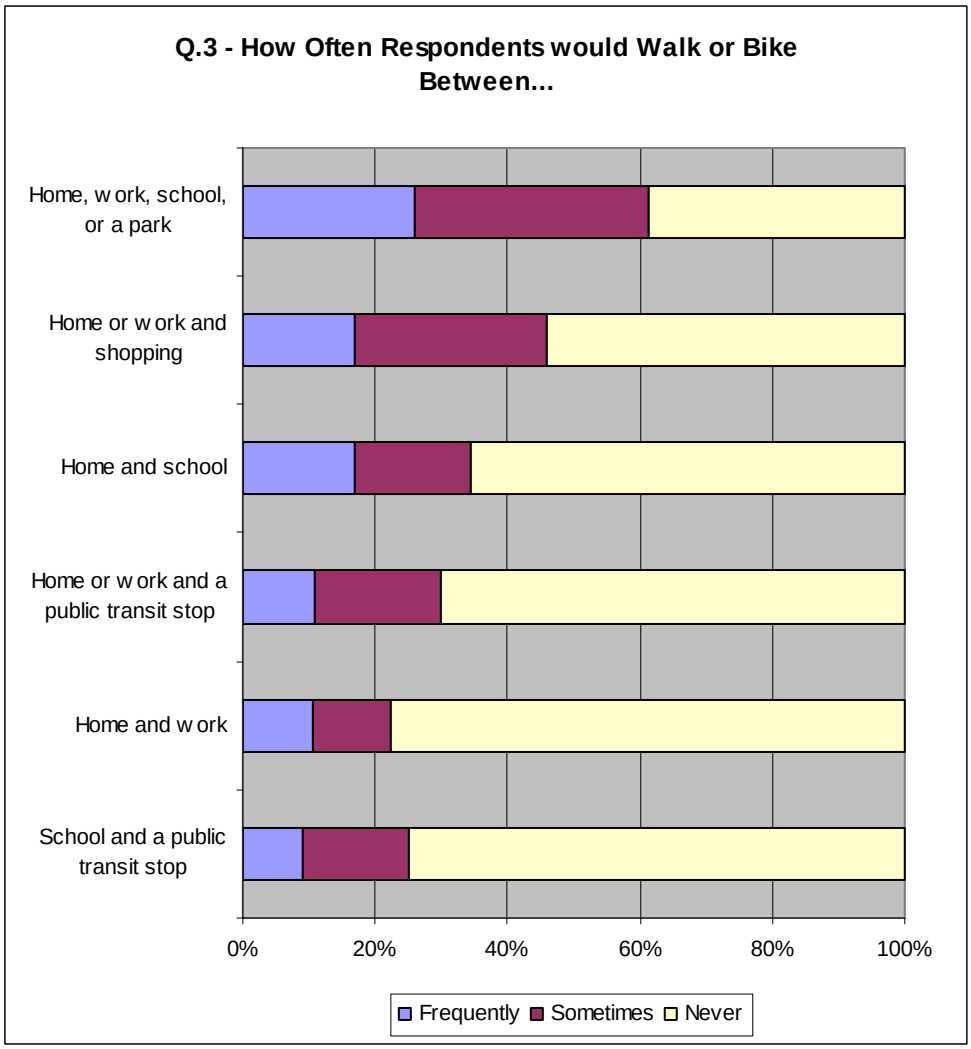
- A clear delineation was apparent in the rating of attractions, with special events and festivals being the most supported (81.3%), followed by amateur sporting events (57.5%), and finally natural resource tourism (50%).




Source: Avondale Needs Assessment Survey, September 2008

**Question Three** sought to determine how often respondents walked or rode their bikes between various destinations.

- The destinations most traveled between by bike or on foot were home, work, school, or a park (25.2% rated as "Frequently" used); home or work and shopping (16.8%); and home or school (15.9%).
- The destinations least traveled between by these modes of transportation were home and work (74.8% rated as "Never" used), school and a public transit stop (70.1%), and home or work and a public transit stop (66.8%).



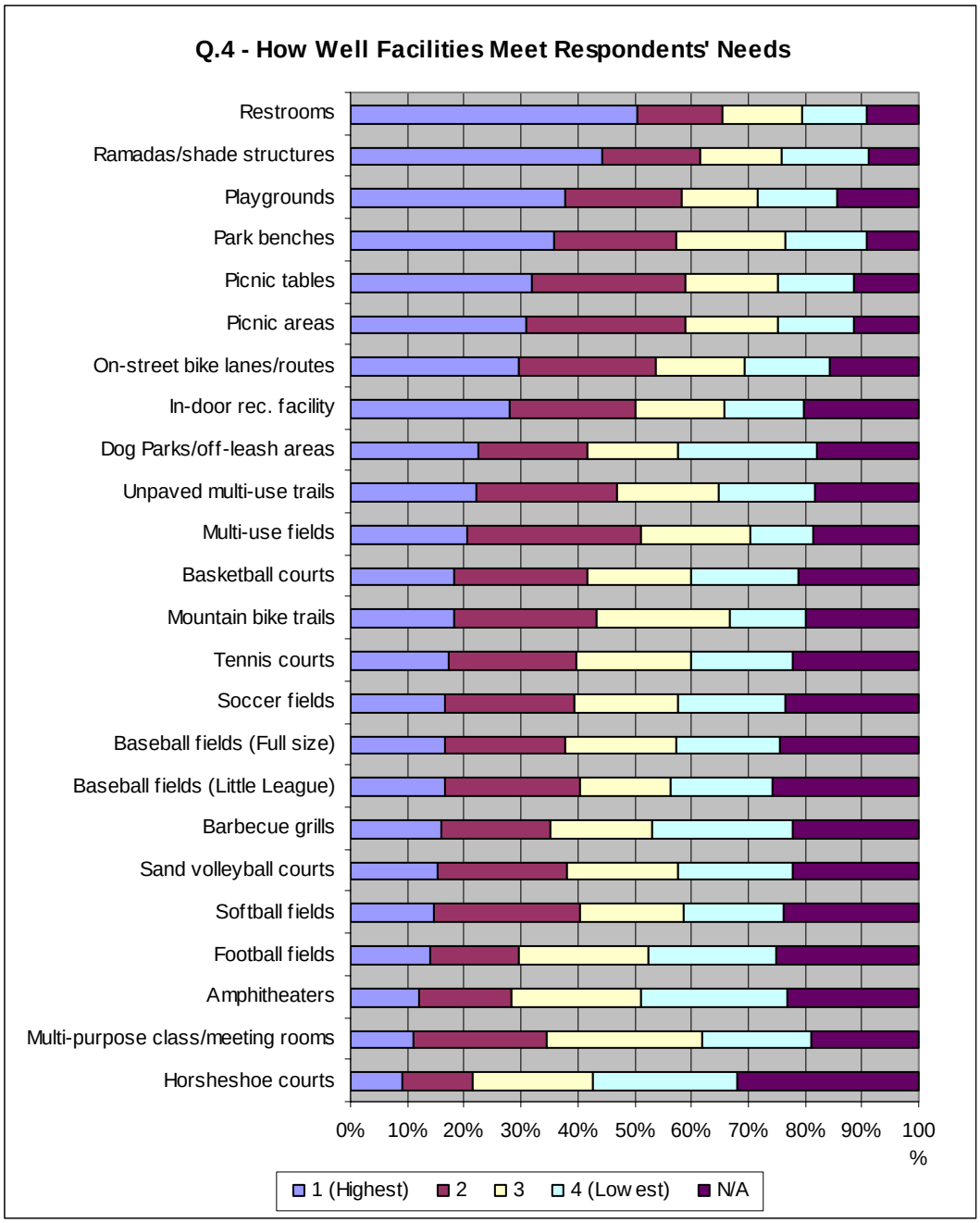

Source: Avondale Needs Assessment Survey, September 2008

## USE OF EXISTING PARKS AND FACILITIES

**Question Four** asked how well the existing facilities met the needs of the respondents.

Facilities

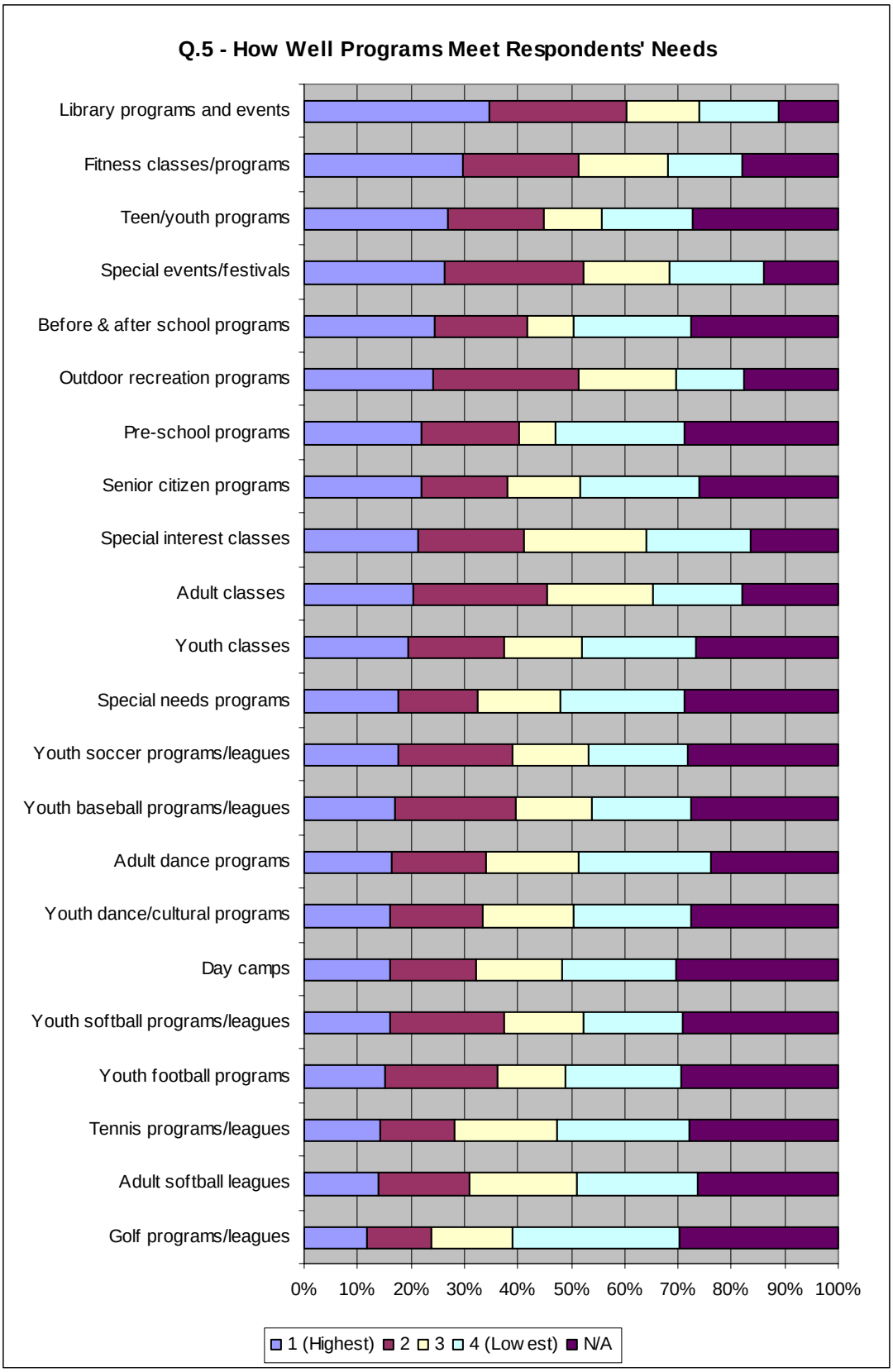
- The facilities that meet respondents' needs the most are restrooms (49.1%), ramadas/shade structures (43%), and playgrounds (36.9%).
- Among those facilities that least meets the needs of respondents are horseshoe courts (24.3%), barbecue grills (23.8%), and amphitheaters (23.8%).
- Within the individual quadrants, there was not much variation. All four rated as their top three facilities that most meet their needs as some combination of: ramadas/shade structures, restrooms, playgrounds, park benches, or picnic tables.
- Within the individual quadrants, there was some variance in the facilities that least meets the needs of residents.
  - Quadrant 1: amphitheaters (34%), barbecue grills (32%), and dog parks/off-leash areas (30%).
  - Quadrant 2: barbecue grills (27.1%), amphitheaters (27.1%), and horseshoe courts (25.7%).
  - Quadrant 3: dog parks/off-leash areas (29.6%), unpaved multi-use trails (25.9%), and multi-use fields (25.9%).
  - Quadrant 4: dog parks/off-leash areas (25.5%), barbecue grills (23.6%), and sand volleyball courts (23.6%).




Source: Avondale Needs Assessment Survey, September 2008

**Question Five** inquired as to how well programs offered by the City of Avondale met the respondents' needs:

- The most highly rated programs are library programs and events (33.2%), fitness classes/programs (28.5%), teen/youth programs (25.7%), special events/festivals (25.2%), and before and after school programs (23.4%).
- Those programs that were rated as the least satisfying were golf programs/leagues (29.9%), adult dance programs (23.8%), tennis programs/leagues (23.8%), pre-school programs (22.9%), special needs programs (22%), and adult softball leagues (22%).
- Within the individual quadrants, there was some variance in the programs that best meet the needs of residents.
  - Quadrant 1: adult classes (28%), library programs and events (24%), and teen/youth programs (22%).
  - Quadrant 2: library programs and events (28.6%), teen/youth programs (17.1%), and special interest classes (17.1%).
  - Quadrant 3: day camps (48.1%), adult classes (48.1%), and youth softball programs/leagues (44.4%).
  - Quadrant 4: library programs and events (43.6%), day camps (27.3%), and adult classes (27.3%).
- Within the individual quadrants, there was some variance in the programs that least meet the needs of residents.
  - Quadrant 1: golf programs/leagues (40%), tennis programs/leagues (34%), and special events/festivals (30%).
  - Quadrant 2: golf programs/leagues (31.4%), special needs programs (30%), and pre-school programs/youth football (28.6%).
  - Quadrant 3: golf programs/leagues (29.6%), youth football programs (25.9%), and day camps/youth classes/special interest classes (all 18.5%).
  - Quadrant 4: tennis programs/leagues (25.5%) and pre-school programs/adult dance programs/golf programs/leagues (all 23.6%).

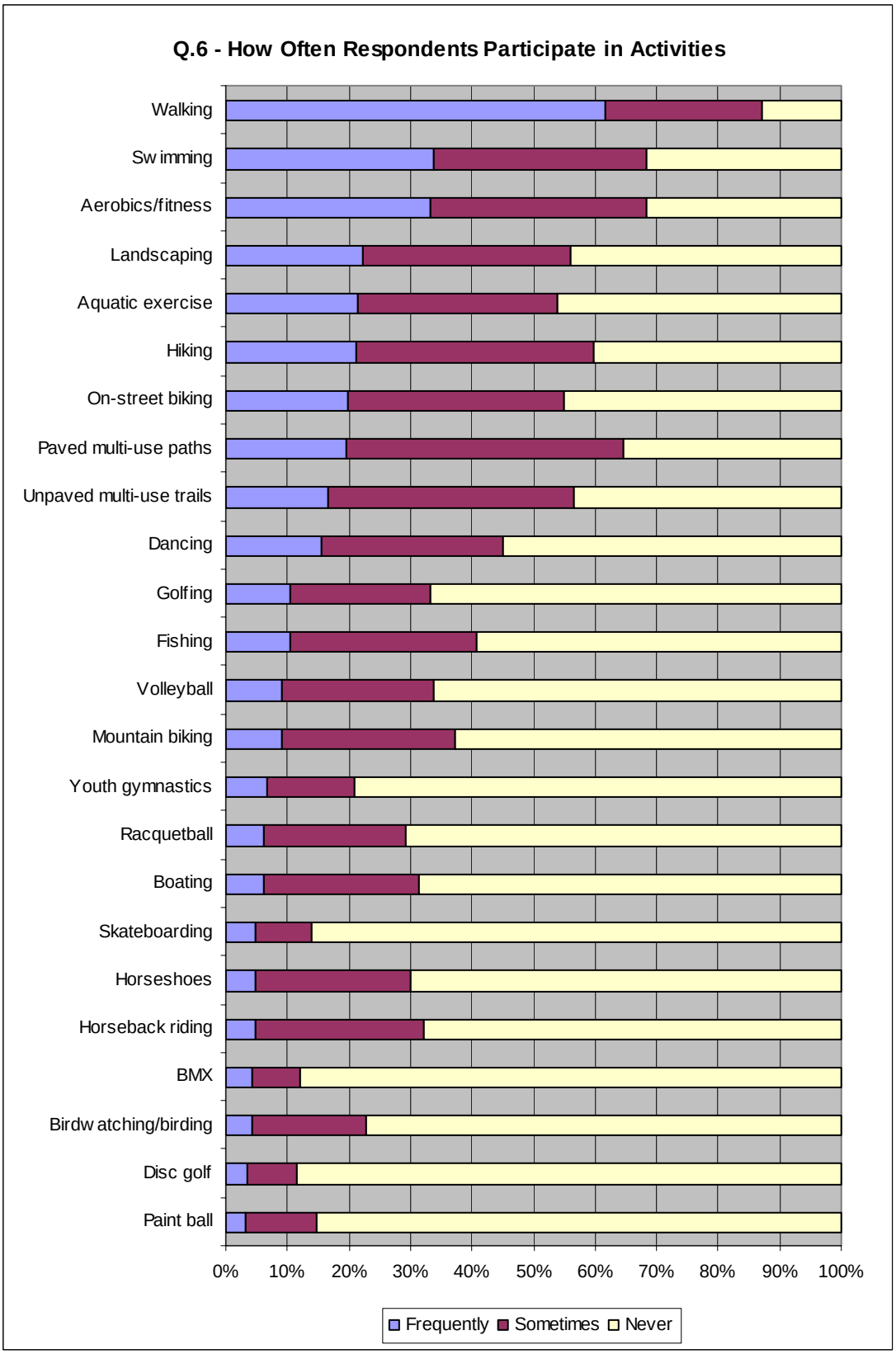



Source: Avondale Needs Assessment Survey, September 2008

## PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

**Question Six** asked respondents about how often they participated in a variety of activities offered by the City of Avondale.

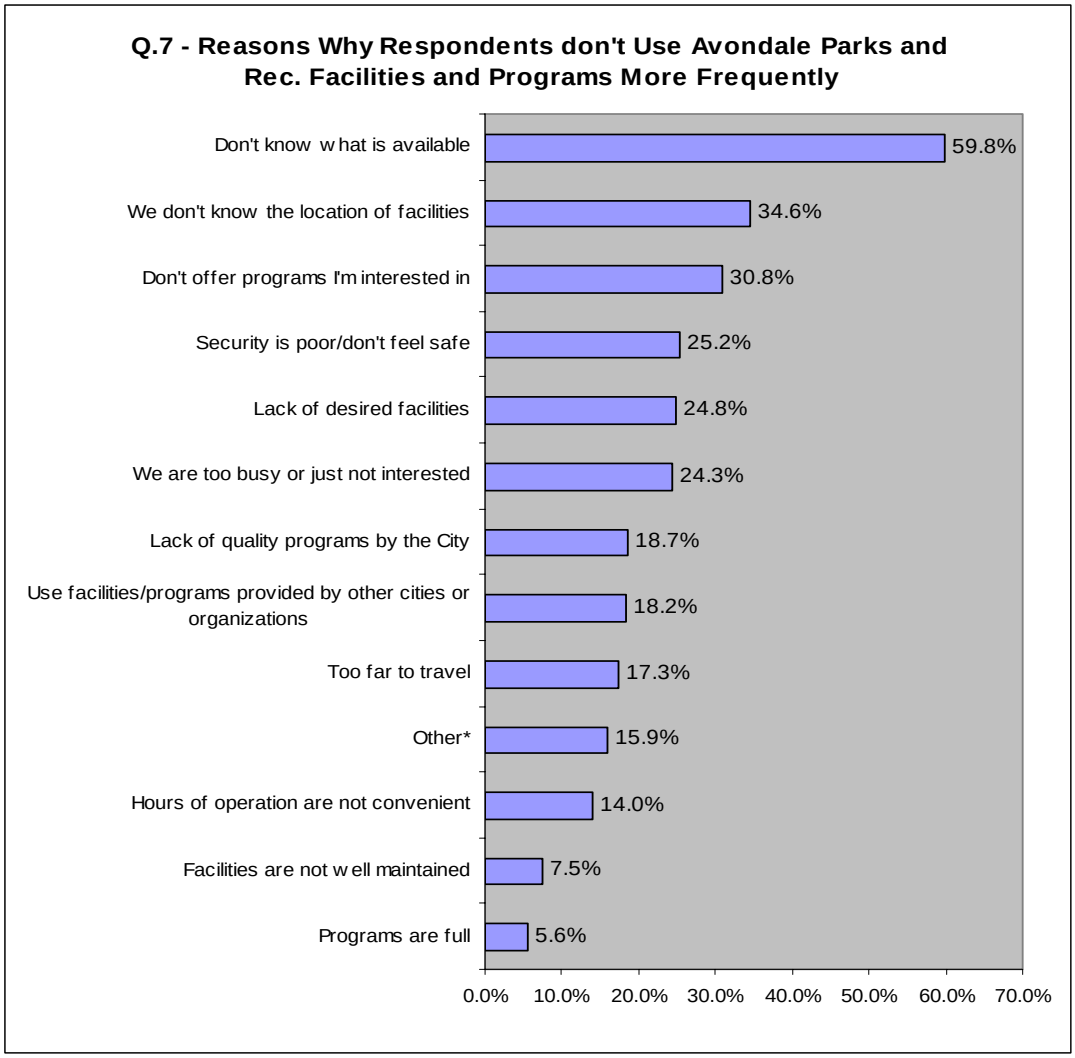
- The programs and activities that respondents participate in most frequently are walking (61.2%), swimming (33.2%), and aerobics/fitness (32.7%).
- The programs/activities that respondents indicated that they never participate in were BMX (86% "never" participate in), disc golf (86%), skateboarding (84.1%), paint ball (83.6%), and youth gymnastics (77.6%).
- Within the individual quadrants, there was hardly any variation. All four quadrants rated as their three most participated in activities as some combination of walking, aerobics/fitness, and swimming; and the activities that they never participate in as some combination of disc golf, paint ball, skateboarding, or BMX. The one exception is Quadrant 3, whose third least-used activity is horseshoes (81.5%).




Source: Avondale Needs Assessment Survey, September 2008

**Question Seven** asked why the respondents don't use the existing parks and facilities more often. On this particular question, more than one answer could be selected.

- The most popular reasons why respondents don't use the parks and facilities of Avondale more often were "Don't know what is available" (59.8% of respondents), "We don't know the location of facilities" (34.6%), "Don't offer programs I'm interested in" (30.8%), "Security is poor/don't feel safe" (25.2%), and "Lack of desired facilities" (24.8%).
- The most common answers for the "Other" comments include a perceived lack of desired facilities, concern with the state of current facilities, the heat and/or lack of shade, health/disability problems, and inappropriate times offered for classes and activities.




Source: Avondale Needs Assessment Survey, September 2008

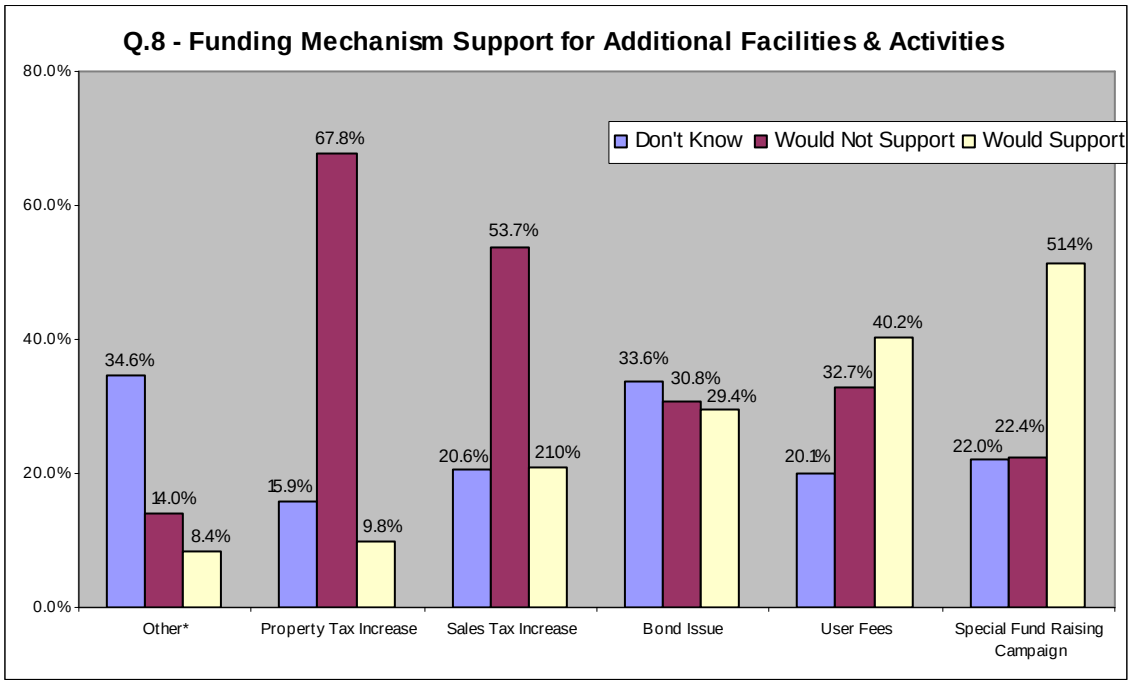
*Answers for "Other" are included within Appendix B

## ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

### FUNDING MECHANISMS

**Question Eight** asked respondents to rate which of various funding methods they would support.

- The three most supported options for obtaining funding included having a special fund-raising campaign (51.4% rated "would support"), user fees (40.2%), and issuing bonds (29.4%).
- Aside from the "Other" category, by far the least supported options were those having to do with taxes. A property tax increase was the least popular, with 67.8 percent of respondents indicating they would not support it. Additionally, more than half of respondents said they would not support an increase in sales taxes.
- In addition to these options for funding, an "Other" option was available so that respondents could fill in their own ideas, however only 4.2 percent of respondents provided an answer. Of these, only six were actual suggestions.
- The responses for "Other" have been tabulated in Appendix B – Survey Comments. The responses included suggestions such as applying for some sort of grant, cutting spending elsewhere and having the government fund it, and leveraging higher fees on users and developers.

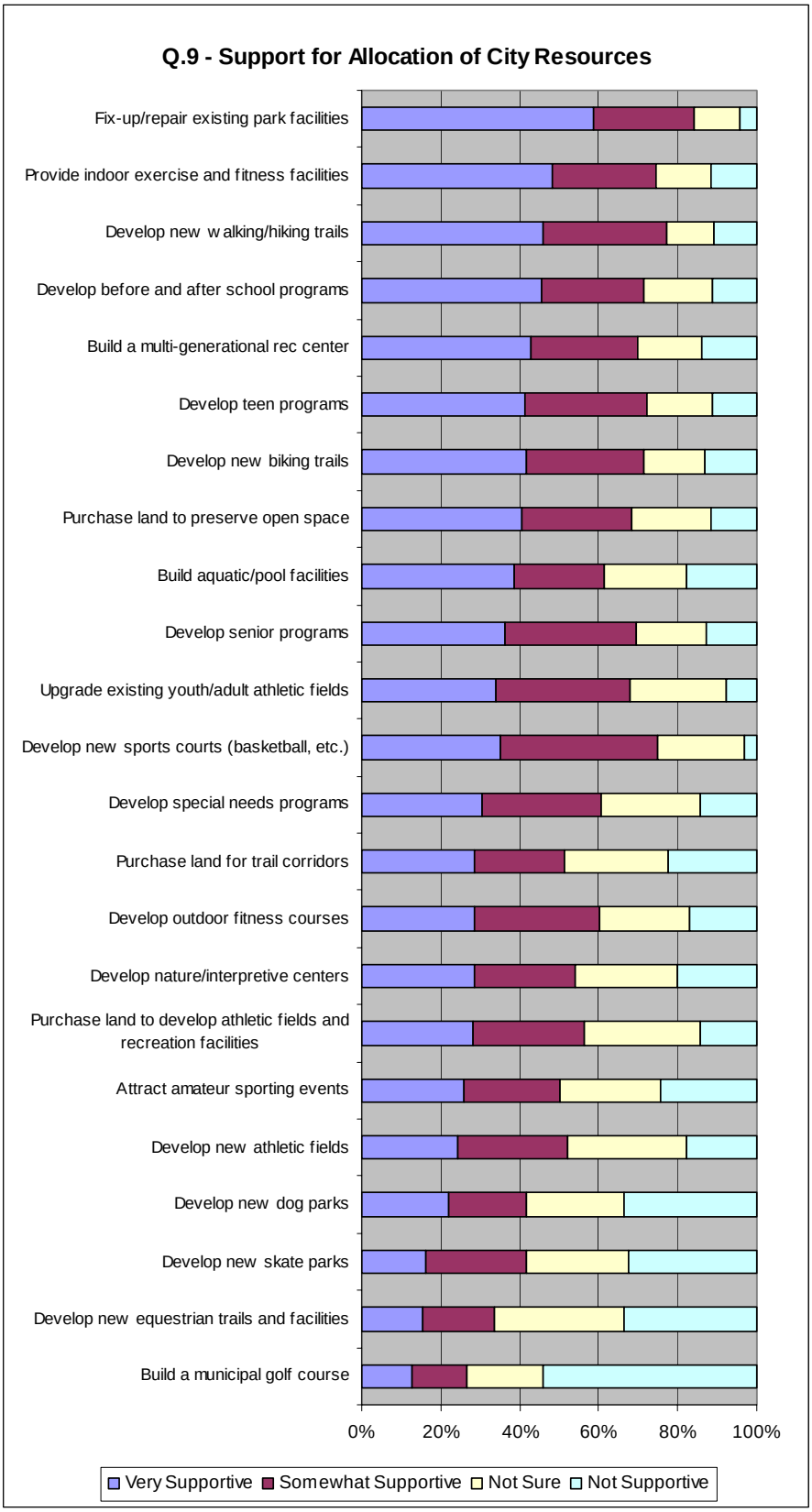



Source: Avondale Needs Assessment Survey, September 2008

*Answers for "Other are included within Appendix B

**Question Nine** asked how supportive the respondent is in allocating city resources for various parks, facilities, and programs. Respondents were given a list of 23 different options to note their level of support.

- Those that responded "very supportive" identified fixing-up/repairing existing park facilities (55.6%), providing indoor exercise and fitness facilities (46.3%), developing new walking/hiking trails (44.4%), developing before and after school programs (43.9%), and building a multi-generational rec. center (41.1%) as the most important areas to allocate resources.
- The choices that respondents most often indicated they were "not supportive" of included building a municipal golf course (51.4%), developing new dog parks (32.2%), developing new equestrian trails and facilities (31.8%), developing new skate parks (30.8%), and attracting amateur sporting events (23.4%).




Source: Avondale Needs Assessment Survey, September 2008

# APPENDIX A – SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Dear Avondale Resident:

The City of Avondale is updating its Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Trails Master Plan and is asking for your assistance. We are requesting that our residents complete this brief needs assessment survey relating to parks, facilities, and programs. This survey shouldn't take you more than 5-8 minutes to complete.

Your input is very important to help determine the needs relating to current and future parks, facilities and programs. It will provide invaluable information to the Parks and Recreation Department as they prepare the Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Trails Master Plan for the City.

Please complete the survey and enclose it in the postage paid envelope. Return it to ESI Corporation (who is tabulating the results) **BEFORE SEPTEMBER 25, 2008.**

Thank you for your help.

**GOALS FOR THE CITY'S PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

1. **For each suggested goal listed below, please indicate whether you think the goal is very important, somewhat important, or not important to you and members of your household by circling the corresponding number.**

| | | Very Important | Somewhat Important | Not Important | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. | Providing activities for adolescents and teens | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| B. | Providing multi-use trails and paths for recreation and community connectivity | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| C. | Providing before and after school programs for youth | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| D. | Promoting participation in organized sports for the development of social and athletic skills | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| E. | Preserving the natural environment and open space | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| F. | Providing programs and services for individuals with disabilities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| G. | Providing outdoor park space for special events and festivals | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| H. | Providing outdoor park space for passive activities, such as picnicking and other non-programmed activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| I. | Providing activities for senior citizens | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| J. | Providing facilities for in-door recreation activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| K. | Providing special interest classes to enhance life-long learning | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

2. **Do you think that the City of Avondale should be a destination for the following items? (check the appropriate box)**

| | | Yes | No | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. | Special events and festivals | | | |
| B. | Natural resource tourism | | | |
| C. | Amateur sporting events | | | |

3. **How often would you walk or bike between the following destinations? (Circle the corresponding number)**

| | | Frequently | Sometimes | Never |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. | Between home and work | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| B. | Between home and school | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| C. | Between home or work and a public transit stop | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| D. | Between school and a public transit stop | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| E. | Between home, work, school or a park | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| F. | Between home or work and shopping | 1 | 2 | 3 |

**USE OF EXISTING PARKS, FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS**

**4. Please rate the following FACILITIES on how they meet your recreation needs. (Circle the corresponding number)**

| | | Highest | | | Lowest | N/A |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. | Amphitheaters | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| B. | Barbecue grills | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| C. | Baseball fields (Little League) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| D. | Baseball fields (Full size) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| E. | Basketball courts | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| F. | Dog Parks/off-leash areas | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| G. | Football fields | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| H. | Horseshoe courts | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I. | In-door recreation facility (gym, multi-purpose rooms) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| J. | Mountain bike trails | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| K. | Multi-use fields | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| L. | Multi-purpose class/meeting rooms | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| M. | On street bike lanes/routes | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| N. | Park benches | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| O. | Picnic areas | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| P. | Picnic tables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Q. | Playgrounds | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| R. | Ramadas/shade structures | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| S. | Restrooms | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| T. | Sand volleyball courts | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| U. | Soccer Fields | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| V. | Softball Fields | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| W. | Tennis Courts | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| X. | Unpaved multi-use trails | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**5. Please rate the following PROGRAMS on how they meet your recreation needs. (Circle the corresponding number)**

| | | Highest | | | Lowest | N/A |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. | Fitness classes/programs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| B. | Adult dance programs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| C. | Adult softball leagues | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| D. | Adult classes (general education/skills/health) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| E. | Before & after school programs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| F. | Day camps | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| G. | Golf programs/leagues | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| H. | Library programs and events | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I. | Outdoor recreation programs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| J. | Pre-school programs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| K. | Senior citizen programs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| L. | Special interest classes | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| M. | Special events/festivals | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| N. | Special needs programs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| O. | Teen/Youth Programs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| P. | Tennis programs/leagues | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Q. | Youth baseball programs/leagues | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| R. | Youth classes (general education) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| S. | Youth dance/cultural programs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| T. | Youth football programs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| U. | Youth soccer programs/leagues | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| V. | Youth softball programs/leagues | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**6. How often do you participate in the following activities? (Circle the corresponding number)**

| | | Frequently | Sometimes | Never |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. | Aerobics/fitness | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| B. | Aquatic exercise | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| C. | Birdwatching/Birding | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| D. | BMX | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| E. | Boating | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| F. | Dancing | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| G. | Disc Golf | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| H. | Golfing | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I. | Fishing | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| J. | Hiking | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| K. | Horsehoes | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| L. | Horseback riding | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| M. | Landscaping | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| N. | Mountain biking | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| O. | On-street biking | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| P. | Paint ball | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Q. | Paved multi-use paths | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| R. | Racquetball | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| S. | Skateboarding | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| T. | Swimming | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| U. | Unpaved multi-use trails | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| V. | Volleyball | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| W. | Youth Gymnastics | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| X. | Walking | 1 | 2 | 3 |

**7. Please check all of the reasons that PREVENT YOU or members of your household from using City of Avondale parks and recreation facilities or programs more often?**

____ A. Hours of operation are not convenient
____ B. Too far to travel
____ C. Don't know what is available
____ D. Facilities are not well maintained
____ E. Lack of quality programs by the City
____ F. Don't offer programs I'm interested in
____ G. Programs are full
____ H Lack of desired facilities
____ I. We are too busy or just not interested
____ J. Use facilities/programs provided by other cities or organizations
____ K. We don't know the location of the facilities
____ L. Security is poor/don't feel safe
____ M. Other: _____

**PARKS FUNDING**

**8. Which of the following funding mechanisms would your family be willing to support for additional parks and recreation facilities and activities? (Circle the corresponding number)**

| | | Would Support | Would Not Support | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. | Sales Tax Increase | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| B. | Bond Issue | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| C. | Special Fund Raising Campaign | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| D. | User Fees | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| E. | Property Tax Increase | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| F. | Other _____ | 1 | 2 | 3 |

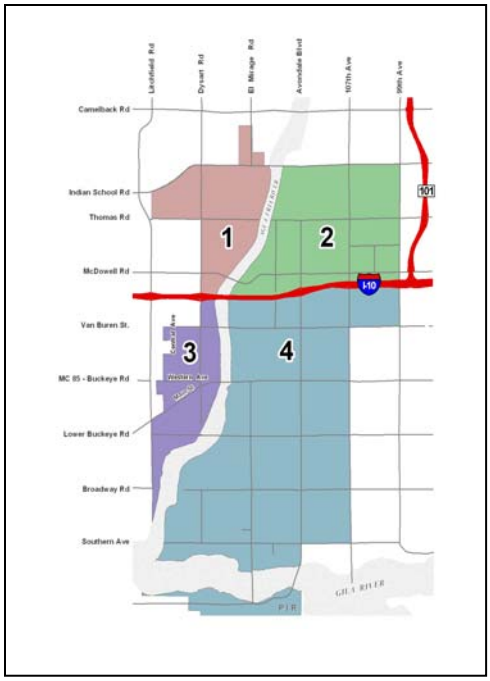
**9. Tell us how supportive you are for ALLOCATING CITY RESOURCES to the following: (Circle the corresponding number)**

| | Very Supportive | Somewhat Supportive | Not Sure | Not Supportive |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A. Fix-up/repair existing park facilities** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **B. Purchase land to preserve open space** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **C. Build a municipal golf course** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **D. Develop new walking/hiking trails** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **E. Develop new biking trails** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **F. Upgrade existing youth/adult athletic fields** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **G. Purchase land to develop athletic fields & recreation facilities** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **H. Build a multi-generational recreation center** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **I. Develop outdoor fitness courses** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **J. Build aquatic/pool facilities** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **K. Develop new athletic fields** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **L. Develop new dog parks** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **M. Develop new skate parks** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **N. Develop new sports courts (basketball, tennis, racquetball, volleyball, etc.)** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **O. Develop nature centers / interpretive centers** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **P. Provide indoor exercise and fitness facilities** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **Q. Develop teen programs** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **R. Develop before and after school programs** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **S. Develop senior programs** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **T. Develop special needs programs** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **U. Purchase land for trail corridors** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **V. Develop new equestrian trails and facilities** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| **W. Attract amateur sporting events** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

**TELL US ABOUT YOU**

**10. Using the map to the right, <u>please circle</u> the number that corresponds to the area that you live in?**

1 2 3 4




**11. <u>How many</u> members of your household, including yourself, are the following ages:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| _____ Under 5 | _____ 20 to 24 | _____ 55 to 59 |
| _____ 5 to 9 | _____ 25 to 34 | _____ 60 to 64 |
| _____ 10 to 14 | _____ 35 to 44 | _____ 65 to 74 |
| _____ 15 to 19 | _____ 45 to 54 | _____ 75 & older |

# APPENDIX B – SURVEY COMMENTS

**Question 7 - "Other"**

**(Reasons that prevent you from using Avondale parks and recreation facilities).**

Thirty-five of the respondents either gave an answer for the "Other" option on the question for the 8th chart, or left a related comment in the margin below. This question covered the reasons why respondents don't utilize the existing parks and facilities more than they currently do. The most frequently given reasons included a perceived lack of desired facilities or concern with the state of current facilities (11); the weather being too hot, a lack of shade (7); problems due to health, being disabled, or new to the area (6); and inappropriate times for classes and activities (4). Some answers encompassed more than one of these categories and were counted for each related category.

Common weather and shade concerns mentioned:

- Arizona heat
- Weather
- Lack of shade/trees/ramadas
- Too hot to go to the park

Common concerns with facilities included:

- Most fields are for rent only
- Not enough shade/ramadas etc.
- No swimming pools in AZ?
- All fields are filled with "Soccer." Friendship park is a gathering place for the Spanish and Soccer kids.
- Need picnic areas and play area for the children, also skateboarding, and maybe a swimming pool and volleyball. More family group things like Sun City
- Dog areas not maintained

Common concerns with health, disability, and being new included:

- Just new to area
- My health prevents me from doing a lot of activities
- New mover to AZ and I am deaf – need interpreter
- Disabled/handicapped

- Recent health problems
- Disabled

Common activity and program time issues included:

- Times for youth programs
- Classes I'm interested in are during my work hours. Daytime
- Work
- Only Saturday is available for working Moms to take their kids to activities, but I work Saturday, so my kids cannot enjoy

A significant proportion of concerns with lack of facilities focused on sidewalks, bike paths, and walking trails:

- Ride bike everywhere. No bike lanes or sidewalks
- No good running paths with distance and traffic is too busy on street
- I live a quarter mile from Friendship Park, but I can't walk there because there is no contiguous sidewalk on McDowell

Answers for "Other" on Question 8

Question number 8 was concerned with discerning how supportive the respondents are of various funding mechanisms for use by the parks planners. Nine respondents provided a response for "Other" funding mechanisms, of which six were actual suggestions.

These responses were:

- Donation
- Government funded!
- Grants
- Increased fees for developers
- Visitor fees
- Offsetting spending decreases

**Other Miscellaneous Comments**

Although there was not a space on the survey for other comments, a number of people wrote in comments in the margins, on the front, or elsewhere. Most of the time, these comments were expressing concerns and opinions, or sometimes further explaining their answers. In general, comments explaining answers were tabulated under the "Other" category when that comment pertained to that particular question. Most comments listed issues people have with the parks and facilities. The remaining comments are listed here:

- I ride a bike everywhere I go, as I no longer own a car. I am retired. I am 69 and retired.
- Need more programs.
- Need sidewalks and bike lanes from 127th to 107th on Indian School.
- (Referring to "On street bike lanes/routes" in question 4) DANGEROUS! Like the sidewalk/bike lane.
- Not aware of any problems (referring to how well facilities meet their needs, how well programs meet their needs). Not in Upland Park area. Low cost (referring to user fees on question 8)!
- Get supporters to do/pay for (referring to special events, natural resource tourism, and amateur sporting events in Question 2). We wish you wouldn't spend so much $ on that very colorful "P & R class info catalog" each year!
- NONE FOR MORE SPANISH SOCCER FIELDS (referring to funding mechanisms they would be willing to support in Question 8)!
- I can't understand why city or towns can't think of other things to waste taxs [sic] payer money. I would like my property taxes to be lower not to go up for all this kind of stuff.
- Not Interested. Not Interested. Not Interested (referring to Questions 4,5,6,7,8,10,11).
- Avondale taxes have skyrocketed, where's the fiscal management for government and schools! My taxes went way up even though my property value went way down (referring to their complete disagreement with using sales tax and property tax increases mentioned in Question 8).
- Covered outdoor picnic areas for Birthday parties or rental facilitys [sic] for smaller parties (referring to Question 9 relating to allocation of city resources).
- Classes for kids are mainly available during the day, so only stay at home moms can use them. That is no help!

- Please, please enhance the sidewalk system! It's so inconstant [sic] right now. I can't get anywhere from where I live without going on a busy street.
- 25 miles 1 way, don't go to school, and won't let me kids walk alone (referring to walking or biking between home and school or work in Question 3). Need more stops and then "2" (referring to walking or biking between home or work and a public transit stop in Question 3).
- This respondent included many other comments, which generally seemed to indicate unfamiliarity with a number of facilities, programs, and activities. Other remarks commented on the state of current facilities, such as "nets need replacing" next to basketball courts on Question 4.
- Some have outdoor back rooms and that isn't desirable especially for handicap.

# Appendix C – Benchmark Survey Report

# City of Avondale
# Parks Master Plan
# Benchmarking Report

PREPARED BY:

**ESI CORPORATION**

**300 West Clarendon Avenue**
**Suite 470**
**Phoenix, Arizona 85013**
**(602) 265-6120**
**www.esicorp.net**

**March 2009**

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# I. INTRODUCTION

A benchmark survey was conducted by ESI Corporation on behalf of the City of Avondale, which was administered to assess the status of parks, recreational facilities, and programs in Avondale relative to those in comparable cities around the United States.

The City of Avondale chose ten cities for inclusion in the benchmarking survey. ESI mailed each city a six-page benchmarking survey (see Appendix A) as well as a letter explaining the survey and requesting that they complete it. After mailing, ESI contacted each city by telephone to encourage participation and to answer questions. Five cities responded and participated in the survey, which include:

- Grand Prairie, Texas
- Bloomington, Indiana
- Canton, Michigan
- Santa Clarita, California
- Chandler, Arizona

The size of participating cities ranged considerably, from Bloomington, Indiana with a population of 69,229 to Chandler, Arizona with a population of 251,297. The average population for cities included in the benchmark is 147,776, while Avondale has a population of 75,000. To gain better insight into the parks, facilities, and programs that cities offer their citizens, many aspects of the survey were calculated on a per 1,000 resident basis. Equalizing the responses in this way provided data that was more easily comparable. In addition, per 1,000 calculations are useful in creating service standards.

The benchmark average referenced in this report takes into account the average response of all of the five cities surveyed. Key findings are summarized in Tables 1 and 2. The full database of tabulated responses can be found at the end of the report in Table 3.

# II. MAJOR FINDINGS

The summarized findings of the Benchmarking Survey are presented in this section. Information that was evaluated included acres of parks and open space, square feet of indoor recreational facilities, recreational programs offered, outdoor recreational facilities, trails, joint use agreements, budgets, staffing, and capital improvement plans.

## PARKS

As shown in Table 1, Avondale has 13 parks, which is considerably lower than the benchmark average of 38.8, as well as each of the surveyed cities except Canton, Michigan. Avondale possesses fewer parks than the benchmark average, which when combined, the parks encompass 3.73 acres per 1,000 population. This figure also appears low in comparison to the benchmark average of 18.98 park acres per 1,000 population, which ranged in size from 6.25 to 33.82 acres per 1,000 population for the surveyed cities. However, the benchmark average may be skewed somewhat by large numbers of acreage being reported by the benchmark cities, particularly for recreational lakes. Even when recreational lakes are taken out of the equation, Avondale's park area appears to be quite low compared to the adjusted benchmark average of 12.91 park acres per 1,000 population.

When evaluating the number of acres per 1,000 people, Avondale lags in each type of park aside from regional parks, where they possess 2.11 parks compared to the benchmark average of 0.78. For passive open space, Avondale has 0.96 parks per 1,000 compared to the benchmark of 4.82. With neighborhood parks Avondale is slightly below the benchmark average of 0.78, coming in at 0.67 parks per 1,000 residents. Finally, Avondale does not possess any recreational lakes, community or joint use parks. The benchmark average of the surveyed cities offers 6.07, 2.71, and 1.38 parks per 1,000 population for each of these parks, respectively.

## Table 1 - Benchmark Survey Results Summary

| | Benchmark Average | Avondale | Grand Prairie | Bloomington | Canton | Santa Clarita | Chandler |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Population** | 147,776 | 75,000 | 156,050 | 69,229 | 85,144 | 177,158 | 251,297 |
| **Total # of Parks** | 38.80 | 13.00 | 43.00 | 37.00 | 11.00 | 34.00 | 69.00 |
| **Park Acres/1,000** | 18.98 | 3.73 | 29.07 | 33.82 | 8.53 | 17.24 | 6.25 |
| **Passive Open Space acres/1,000** | 4.82 | 0.96 | 1.09 | 1.33 | 5.46 | 15.91 | 0.07 |
| **Neighborhood Park acres/1,000** | 0.78 | 0.67 | 0.42 | 0.98 | -- | 0.33 | 1.54 |
| **Community Park acres/1,000** | 2.71 | -- | 4.78 | 4.68 | 3.07 | 0.42 | 2.37 |
| **Regional Park acres/1,000** | 0.78 | 2.11 | 1.10 | -- | -- | 0.58 | 1.21 |
| **Joint Use Park acres/1,000** | 1.38 | -- | 0.60 | 9.61 | -- | -- | 1.03 |
| **Recreational Lake acres/1,000** | 6.07 | -- | 21.07 | 17.21 | -- | -- | 0.04 |
| **# of Indoor Facilities/1,000** | 0.06 | 0.03 | 0.08 | 0.09 | 0.13 | 0.02 | 0.04 |
| **# Outdoor Recreation Facilities/1,000** | 1.42 | 1.00 | 1.60 | 1.59 | 1.05 | 1.57 | 1.28 |
| **# Recreation Programs/1,000** | 11.31 | 1.00 | 11.20 | 9.53 | 26.06 | 18.09 | 2.09 |
| **Miles of Trails/1,000** | 0.18 | -- | 0.12 | 0.87 | 0.14 | 0.21 | 0.03 |
| **Annual Operating Budget/1,000** | $262,545 | $45,301 | $122,172 | $120,757 | $122,333 | $683,435 | $139,565 |
| **FT Staff/1,000** | 0.57 | 0.24 | 0.83 | 0.84 | 0.63 | 0.33 | 0.48 |
| **PT Staff/1,000** | 0.96 | 0.83 | 1.22 | 3.64 | 1.20 | 0.07 | 0.62 |
| **Total $ in CIP/1,000** | $321,528 | $607,439 | $147,389 | $373,199 | -- | $26,462 | $543,307 |
| **$ in CIP Per Year/1,000** | $61,243 | $60,744 | $29,478 | $62,200 | -- | $5,292 | $108,661 |

Source: Parks & Recreation Benchmark Survey Results, January 2009

An additional distinction in the quality of parks is park service radius, which represents the area in miles that each park type services, as seen in Table 2. For Avondale and the other cities surveyed, there was quite a variance in service area radii, ranging anywhere from 0.25 to 11.77 miles. Half of the cities surveyed did not provide a service radius standard for a particular type of park, and were subsequently excluded from the respective calculated averages. In general, regional parks offer the greatest radius of service, followed by passive open space.

**Table 2 - Service Radius for Publicly Maintained Parks by Park Type (Denoted in Miles)**

| | Passive Open Space | Neighborhood Parks | Community Parks | Regional Parks | Joint Use Parks | Recreational Lakes | Total All Parks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Benchmark Average** | | | | | | | |
| Number of Parks | 5.60 | 16.80 | 8.60 | 0.80 | 6.20 | 0.80 | 38.80 |
| Service Radius | 2.62 | 1.41 | 2.45 | 8.41 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 8.29 |
| Per 1,000 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.06 |
| **Avondale** | | | | | | | |
| Number of Parks | 1.00 | 10.00 | -- | 2.00 | -- | -- | 13.00 |
| Service Radius | 2.00 | 1.00 | -- | 3.00 | -- | -- | 6.00 |
| Per 1,000 | 0.03 | 0.01 | -- | 0.04 | -- | -- | 0.08 |
| **Grand Prairie** | | | | | | | |
| Number of Parks | 3.00 | 9.00 | 14.00 | 1.00 | 15.00 | 1.00 | 43.00 |
| Service Radius | -- | 0.50 | 2.50 | 11.77 | -- | -- | 14.77 |
| Per 1,000 | -- | 0.00 | 0.02 | 0.08 | -- | -- | 0.09 |
| **Bloomington** | | | | | | | |
| Number of Parks | 2.00 | 12.00 | 8.00 | -- | 14.00 | 1.00 | 37.00 |
| Service Radius | 1.00 | 0.25 | 1.50 | -- | 0.50 | 1.00 | 4.25 |
| Per 1,000 | 0.01 | 0.00 | 0.02 | -- | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.06 |
| **Canton** | | | | | | | |
| Number of Parks | 6.00 | -- | 5.00 | -- | -- | -- | 11.00 |
| Service Radius | 4.24 | -- | 4.24 | -- | -- | -- | 8.48 |
| Per 1,000 | 0.05 | -- | 0.05 | -- | -- | -- | 0.10 |
| **Santa Clarita** | | | | | | | |
| Number of Parks | 15.00 | 12.00 | 5.00 | 2.00 | -- | -- | 34.00 |
| Service Radius | -- | 0.50 | 2.00 | -- | -- | -- | 2.50 |
| Per 1,000 | -- | 0.00 | 0.01 | -- | -- | -- | 0.01 |
| **Chandler** | | | | | | | |
| Number of Parks | 2.00 | 51.00 | 11.00 | 1.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 69.00 |
| Service Radius | -- | 4.40 | 2.00 | 5.05 | -- | -- | 11.45 |
| Per 1,000 | -- | 0.02 | 0.01 | 0.02 | -- | -- | 0.05 |

Source: Parks & Recreation Benchmark Survey Results, September 2008

For average total service radius, Avondale covers slightly less distance than the benchmark, offering 6 miles compared to the 8.29 mile service radius average.

Following are the summarized key findings of the Benchmark Survey. The data associated with this section can be found in Table 2, or more detailed information can be found in Table 3 at the end of this report.

## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

Two community centers comprise Avondale's 15,000 square feet of indoor recreational facilities. With two indoor facilities, Avondale lags the benchmark average of 9.6 facilities. However, compared to the benchmark average of 0.065 indoor facilities per 1,000, Avondale fairs slightly better with 0.027 facilities per 1,000 persons. The most numerous indoor facilities noted were gymnasiums (average size of 12,528 sq. ft.) and pool / aquatic facilities (average size of 10,738 sq. ft.), each with an average of 1.4 facilities per city. Although every benchmark city possesses gyms, only three of the five possess indoor pool / aquatic facilities. Four of the five benchmark cities report having community centers (29,747 sq. ft. average), with an average of 1.2 facilities per city. On average, each of the benchmarked cities offers 120,629 sq. ft. of indoor recreational space, compared to Avondale's 15,000.

Every benchmark city indicated that they possess a community center or multi-purpose facility. Within the community center and/or multi-purpose facilities, the most numerously cited facilities present were gymnasiums, kitchens/cafeterias, meeting rooms, classrooms, and exercise/dance facilities, which every city indicated offering.

## RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS

The City of Avondale offers 75 recreational programs, including special interest classes (25), adult classes (15), library programs / events (12), and special events (10). This figure falls extremely short in comparison to the benchmark average of 1,671 programs. Likewise, with 1 program per 1,000 persons, Avondale offers significantly fewer programs than the benchmark average of 11.31 programs per 1,000. All of the surveyed cities offer more than 500 recreation programs, the most common of which are swimming lessons (409 classes offered on average), senior activities (247.8), and special interest classes (140.2). The number of senior activities being offered are somewhat skewed by the 880 programs offered by Grand Prairie, Texas. Eliminating Grand Prairie brings the benchmark average to 89.8 senior programs, which is still significantly greater than the number of programs offered by Avondale. On a per 1,000 basis, Avondale falls short of the benchmark average for every type of recreational program, except for library programs / events, which they possess 0.16 per 1,000 compared to the average of 0.04. On average, the benchmark cities offer 22 different types of programs, compared to Avondale's 15 program types.

## OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

In regards to outdoor recreation facilities, all five benchmark cities reported possessing basketball courts, disc golf courses, park shelters / picnic areas, playgrounds, skateboard / inline parks, soccer fields, and tennis courts. The most numerously offered of these include park shelters / picnic areas (83 average), playgrounds (27.8), basketball courts (16.4), and tennis courts (15.2). Comparatively, Avondale possesses fewer of each of these facilities than the benchmark average. However, on a per 1,000 population basis, Avondale actually possesses more basketball courts and soccer fields than the benchmark average. In Avondale, the most numerous outdoor facilities include fishing pier / viewing platforms (17), park shelters / picnic areas (10), soccer fields (10), basketball courts (9), and playgrounds (7).

Although the number of outdoor facilities that Avondale has may seem low in comparison to the benchmark average, at a per 1,000 population level, Avondale surpasses the benchmark average in many areas. For nine of the fourteen outdoor recreation facilities that they possess, Avondale has more outdoor facilities per 1,000 population than the benchmark average. The facilities where they do not exceed the benchmark average include multi-purpose turf fields (0.037 per 1,000 benchmark average), playgrounds (0.188), softball fields (0.054), and tennis courts (0.103).

According to the survey results, none of the benchmark cities own or maintain a synthetic turf field.

The majority of benchmarked cities, 80 percent, possess an average of three aquatic facilities. The average size of these facilities was 68,934 square feet. Average annual operating costs for these facilities were approximately $312,703, though it is noted that utility costs were not available for every city. There was a large range of reported values for each of these averages. Facility sizes ranged anywhere from 3,017 square feet to 413,660 square feet, and maintenance costs ranged between $20,000 and $564,044 per facility. Many of the larger facilities contain multiple pools, rooms, and amenities, whereas the smaller ones may contain only a pool. The aquatic facilities of the benchmarked cities most commonly included lap pools, splash pools, diving areas, zero-depth play areas, and amenities such as ramadas and restrooms. Other facilities included water slides, lazy rivers, vortex pools, and classrooms. Common programs featured at the aquatics facilities include various types of swim lessons, scuba lessons, aquatic fitness programs, water sports, and lifeguard / water safety training. The hours of operation ranged from between 5:30 AM and 7:00 PM, with a wide range in-between. Most facilities observe seasonal hours, with common hours being from 1:00 PM through 5:00 PM. Only Santa Clarita reported having aquatic facilities open before 11:00 AM. Every city who indicated possession of at least one aquatic facility also signified that they employ on-duty lifeguards, and that some type of sand filtration system is used for their pools.

## TRAILS

Currently, Avondale does not offer its residents any trails. On average, the benchmark cities offer 27.21 miles of trails, the most common of which being multi-use paths and trails, each offered by 80 percent of the cities. The most extensive type of trails reported were all-terrain bike trails, offering an average of 7.54 miles, followed by multi-use paths with 6.86 miles. This remains true on a per 1,000 resident basis, with 0.51 and 0.46 per 1,000 being offered, respectively.

Aside from Avondale, the cities of Bloomington and Canton are the only benchmark cities who reported publicly dedicated open space (excluding parks) in their communities. Bloomington offers 3,831 acres, Canton 504 acres, and Avondale 150 acres. On a per 1,000 population basis, Bloomington offers 55.34 acres, Canton offers 5.92 acres, and Avondale offers 2 acres per 1,000. Santa Clarita property owners recently voted in favor of an "Open Space Preservation District," which will allow the City to purchase land to preserve as open space instead of developing it. While the plan has been passed and the guidelines for land purchase have been outlined, land has not yet been acquired[1].

## JOINT USE AGREEMENTS

All of the cities who participated in the survey indicated having agreements with school districts for the shared use of recreational facilities. However, only three out of five benchmarked cities have agreements for the shared development of recreational facilities, as well as with other community groups or agencies. Avondale possesses joint use agreements in all three instances. The two most common recreational facilities that were reported as having shared use were fields and pools, each used by 60 percent of the cities. Fields were also the most common recreational facility shared for development, reported in 40 percent of the cities. For agreements with community organizations, the department of transportation was the most common (60 percent), followed by the Boys & Girls Clubs, flood control districts, and the counties, with two of the five benchmark respondents reporting at least one such agreement. Avondale, likewise, has joint use agreements with the local Boys & Girls Club and flood control districts. The most common types of facilities reported for joint use agreements are spread equally amongst therapeutic recreation, ice arena, senior transportation, athletic fields, park property leases, trails, recreation programs, and facility use, each reported by one of the five surveyed cities.

## ANNUAL OPERATIONAL BUDGET

The City of Avondale's annual operating budget is $3,397,540, which represents $45,301 per 1,000 population. This figure is considerably behind the benchmark

[1] City of Santa Clarita Open Space Preservation District http://www.santaclaritaopenspace.com/

average of $38,797,766, or $262,545 per 1,000 residents, as well as behind each of the five surveyed cities. The city with the highest reported operating budget is Santa Clarita, who reports a budget of $121,075,964, which also translates to the highest per 1,000 budget of $683,435. This figure somewhat skews the average, which when omitted drops to $18,228,217, and is still nearly six times the budget of Avondale. Additionally, the re-calculated operational budget per 1,000 residents remains higher than Avondale at $126,207.

Just less than one-half of Avondale's operating budget expenditures, 45 percent, is for contracted services, which is quite high compared to the benchmark average of 7.7 percent. The maintenance line item accounts for their next highest budget allocation at 15 percent, a figure which is also somewhat higher than the benchmark average of 10.2 percent. The expenditure that the benchmark average dedicates the most resources to is full-time staffing at 44.3 percent of the operating budget, compared to a mere 8 percent for Avondale. Second highest is part-time staffing at 12.9 percent, which Avondale does not allocate any funding for. As a percentage of their operating budget, Avondale spends two and a half times the money on equipment, nearly twice the amount on general operations, less than one-third as much on programs, and one-third more on utilities as the benchmark average. Detailed amounts can be found in Table 3 at the end of this report.

Only Chandler,[2] Arizona indicated that they utilize parks maintenance services separately from the Parks and Recreation Department's budget. Chandler reports dedicating a separate $6,485,534 to facilities maintenance, or $25,808 per 1,000 population. The majority of this funding, 44.1 percent is on full time maintenance employees. The next largest amount, 24.3 percent, is spent on utilities for maintenance facilities. Maintenance costs themselves account for 15.8 percent of this funding, and supplies for another 10.3 percent. The remaining funding is split up amongst contracted services, equipment, part time staff, and general operations, none of which account for more than 2.1 percent of the maintenance budget.

Most of the cities surveyed rely on very few sources of revenue, limited almost entirely to their general fund and fees and charges. For the benchmark average, the general fund contributes 70.1 percent of revenues to fund departmental annual operations. Fees and charges comprised another 16.6 percent of these funds, and the remaining balance was accounted for through grants, sponsorships, enterprise funds, as well as a variety of funds and trusts in the case of Chandler. In comparison, Avondale receives 75 percent of its operating budget from the general fund, 23 percent from fees and charges, and the remaining 2 percent from sponsorships.

[2] Annual operating budget information for the City of Chandler has been estimated based upon their published city budget for the current fiscal year.

## STAFFING

Avondale has approximately 18 full-time parks and recreation employees, equating to 0.24 employees per 1,000 residents. This is supplemented by 62 part-time staff, which equates to 0.83 part-time staff per 1,000 population. Comparatively, their full-time staffing amounts to less than half of the benchmark average of 0.57 per 1,000 population, and their part-time staffing is slightly lower than the benchmark average of 0.96.

The three most common full time occupations for both Avondale and the benchmark average are recreation programming, park maintenance, and facility maintenance. Where Avondale has 7 full-time workers in parks maintenance, the benchmark average employs 27.6. For facilities maintenance, Avondale employs 4 full-time employees, and the benchmark average employs 19.4 full-time employees. In recreation programming, Avondale employs 4 full-time employees, compared to the average of 19.2.

The most common part-time occupations differ slightly. Avondale maintains the same three occupations as for full time employees, employing 6 for facility maintenance, 6 for park maintenance, and 50 for recreation programming. However, the three most common part-time occupations for the benchmark average are recreation programming (79.8 part-time employees on average), park maintenance (16.6), and Golf (13.6).

## CAPITAL BUDGET

Four of the five cities surveyed possess a capital improvements plan (CIP), of which three are 5 years in duration. Bloomington is the exception, with a 6-year CIP. Canton, Michigan is the only city to report currently not having a CIP. Avondale currently has a 10-year CIP. Technically, Grand Prairie possesses a continuous CIP, however their planning process and funding allocation are done in 5-year increments, so it has been considered a 5-year CIP for the purposes of this benchmark.

The benchmark average CIP is 5.3 years in duration, with a total amount of $47,513,923 million in the program, or approximately $9,050,271 million per year. On average, most of the CIP is dedicated to new parks or recreational facilities at 61.5 percent of the funding. The next highest allocation is 36.4 percent for park renovations, and finally 2.2 percent is assigned to acquiring new land. The majority of cities, Avondale included, weight their CIP allocations most heavily towards new park or recreation facilities, whereas the town of Bloomington has constructed their CIP to weight almost everything toward parks renovation, which has somewhat skewed these averages. When Bloomington is taken out of the calculation, the average funding allocation for new park or recreational facilities rises to 82 percent, land acquisition funding becomes 1.33 percent, and park renovation funding falls to 16.67 percent.

## REVENUE SOURCES

The most common revenue sources for funding capital projects among the benchmarked cities are general obligation bonds, which are utilized by four of the five cities. Aside from GO bonds, grants, revenue bonds, and sales taxes are each used by three of the five cities as key revenue sources. Sources of revenue for Avondale currently include general obligation bonds, grants, impact fees, and their general fund. Avondale is the only city to report using their general fund.

Four of the five cities surveyed indicated that in addition to sales taxes, their cities employed the use of some other classification of taxes. Of these, the most popularly used was a lodging or bed tax at an average rate of 7 percent. In addition, one city each reported using restaurant and liquor taxes in the amounts of 1.8 and 14 percent, respectively.

**Table 3 - City of Avondale Benchmark Survey Results**
**March 2009**

| GENERAL PARKS INFORMATION | Benchmark Average | Avondale | Grand Prairie | Bloomington | Canton | Santa Clarita | Chandler |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **What is your current population?** | 147,776 | 75,000 | 156,050 | 69,229 | 85,144 | 177,158 | 251,297 |
| Population per 1,000 | 147.8 | 75.0 | 156.1 | 69.2 | 85.1 | 177.2 | 251.3 |

| | Benchmark Average | | | | Avondale | | | | Grand Prairie | | | | Bloomington | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **PARKS** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **1. Identify the number and acres of parks you have.** | **Number** | **Acres** | **Service Radius** | **% Public Maintained** | **Number** | **Acres** | **Service Radius** | **% Public Maintained** | **Number** | **Acres** | **Service Radius** | **% Public Maintained** | **Number** | **Acres** | **Service Radius** | **% Public Maintained** |
| Passive Open Space | 5.6 | 712.54 | 1.05 | 80% | 1 | 72.00 | 2.00 | 100% | 3 | 170.22 | 0.00 | 100% | 2 | 92.00 | 1.00 | 0% |
| Neighborhood Parks | 16.8 | 115.96 | 1.13 | 60% | 10 | 50.00 | 1.00 | 100% | 9 | 65.44 | 0.50 | 100% | 12 | 67.86 | 0.25 | 0% |
| Community Parks | 8.6 | 399.86 | 2.45 | 80% | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0% | 14 | 746.13 | 2.50 | 100% | 8 | 323.97 | 1.50 | 0% |
| Regional Parks | 0.8 | 115.69 | 3.36 | 60% | 2 | 158.00 | 3.00 | 100% | 1 | 172.00 | 11.77 | 100% | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0% |
| Joint Use Parks | 6.2 | 203.89 | 0.10 | 36% | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0% | 15 | 94.00 | 0.00 | 80% | 14 | 665.49 | 0.50 | 0% |
| Recreational Lakes | 0.8 | 897.73 | 0.20 | 40% | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0% | 1 | 3288.00 | 0.00 | 100% | 1 | 1191.74 | 1.00 | 0% |
| **Total** | **38.8** | **2445.66** | 8.29 | 0% | **13** | **280.00** | **6.00** | **0%** | **43** | **4535.79** | **14.77** | **0%** | **37** | **2341.06** | **4.25** | **0%** |

| | Canton | | | | Santa Clarita | | | | Chandler | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Passive Open Space | 6 | 465.00 | 4.24 | 100% | 15 | 2819.00 | 0.00 | 100% | 2 | 16.46 | 0.00 | 100% |
| Neighborhood Parks | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0% | 12 | 59.30 | 0.50 | 100% | 51 | 387.19 | 4.40 | 100% |
| Community Parks | 5 | 261.00 | 4.24 | 100% | 5 | 73.70 | 2.00 | 100% | 11 | 594.51 | 2.00 | 100% |
| Regional Parks | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0% | 2 | 102.00 | 0.00 | 100% | 1 | 304.45 | 5.05 | 100% |
| Joint Use Parks | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0% | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0% | 2 | 259.94 | 0.00 | 100% |
| Recreational Lakes | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0% | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0% | 2 | 8.90 | 0.00 | 100% |
| **Total** | **11** | **726.00** | **8.48** | **0%** | **34** | **3054.00** | **2.50** | **0%** | **69** | **1571.45** | **11.45** | **0%** |

Note 1: "City Parks" were included under Community Parks for Grand Prairie. Chandler Service Radii have been estimated based upon 10 acres/sq. mile metric and a city service area.

| | Benchmark Average | Avondale | Grand Prairie | Bloomington |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **2. What is the level of service standard (acres/1,000 population?** | 8.30 | 0.00 | -- | 33.21 |
| | **Canton** | **Santa Clarita** | **Chandler** | |
| | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | |

| | Avondale | Grand Prairie | Bloomington | Canton | Santa Clarita | Chandler |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **3. Aquatic Facilities Information** | | | | | | |
| Number of Aquatic Facilities | -- | 3 | 2 | -- | 1 | 6 |
| What is the size of the facility? | -- | 3,772 sq. ft.<br>3,181 sq. ft.<br>3,017 sq. ft. | 10,295 sq. ft.<br>5,264 sq. ft. | -- | 413,660 sq. ft. | 43,560 sq. ft. 74,052 sq. ft.<br>87,120 sq. ft. 40,000 sq. ft.<br>30,025 sq. ft. 87,120 sq. ft. |
| What does it include (pool, splash pool, etc.?) | -- | Pool, Splash Pool | Water Slides, Floatables, Zero-depth Pools | -- | Pools, Competition Pool, Dive Pool, Activity Pool, Water Play Equipment, Water Slide | Lap Pools, Competition Pools, Dive Tanks, Zero-depth areas, Ramadas, Restrooms, Lazy Rivers, Water Slides, Vortex Pool, Volleyball |
| What is the annual operating cost (not including personnel)? | -- | $20,000 each | $98,750<br>$34,425 | -- | $175,000 plus utilities | $3,384,262 |
| What are the hours of operation? | -- | 1:00 PM - 6:00 PM | 11:00 AM - 7:00 PM | -- | 5:30 Am - 6:30 PM | 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM<br>12:00 PM - 5:00 PM<br>Weekends |
| Do you have a lifeguard on duty? | -- | Yes | Yes | -- | Yes | Yes |
| What aquatics programs do you operate? | -- | Swim Lessons, Scuba Lessons, Birthday Parties | Swim Lessons, Aqua Fitness, Scuba Lessons | -- | Lap Swim, Swim Team, Swim Lessons, Lifeguard / Junior Lifeguard Training, Rec. Swim, Youth Leagues, Diving, Synchronized Swimming, Water Polo | Swim Lessons, Aqua Fitness, Scuba Lessons, Free Swim, Lifeguard Training, Red Cross Training, Water Safety Instructor Courses, Lap Swimming, Diving, Private Rentals |
| Number of Pools | -- | 3 | 2 | -- | 3 plus Play Pools | 6 plus Play Pools |
| What is the size of the pool? | -- | 2,522 sq. ft.<br>2,125 sq. ft.<br>1,263 sq. ft. | 326,000 gal.<br>155,000 gal. | -- | 50m x 25y<br>25m x 25y<br>Zero-depth play pool<br>5y x 25y 6-lane Competition | 50m x 25y L-pool x 2<br>Zero-depth play pool x 4<br>25y 8-lane Competition Pool x 4 |
| What type of filtration system do you use? | -- | Sand | Vacuum Sand | -- | High Rate Sand Filtration | Sand Filter |

Sources: Benchmarking Survey, http://www.chandleraz.gov/default.aspx?pageid=301, http://www.santa-clarita.com/cityhall/parks/facilities/aquatic.asp

**Table 3 - City of Avondale Benchmark Survey Results**
**March 2009**

| Recreation Facilities Information | Benchmark Average | Avondale | Grand Prairie | Bloomington | Canton | Santa Clarita | Chandler |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **4. What Outdoor Recreational Facilities do you offer?** | | | | | | | |
| Outdoor amphitheater / large event area | 0.8 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Baseball fields (little league) | 6.2 | 5 | 14 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 9 |
| Baseball fields (full size) | 3.2 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 6 |
| Basketball courts | 16.4 | 9 | 20 | 12 | 3 | 15 | 32 |
| BMX | 0.4 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Disc golf courses | 1.0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Football fields | 1.6 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| Fishing pier / viewing platforms | 1.2 | 17 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Horseshoe courts | 2.4 | 2 | 8 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Multi-purpose turf fields | 5.4 | 1 | 12 | 2 | 3 | 10 | 0 |
| Off-leash dog parks | 1.2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| Outdoor swimming pools | 3.8 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 8 | 6 |
| Park shelters / picnic areas | 83.0 | 10 | 104 | 21 | 6 | 198 | 86 |
| Playgrounds | 27.8 | 7 | 30 | 25 | 7 | 26 | 51 |
| Public golf course | 1.0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Skateboard and / or inline parks | 1.4 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Soccer fields | 18.8 | 10 | 18 | 2 | 22 | 11 | 41 |
| Softball fields | 8.0 | 4 | 10 | 7 | 12 | 0 | 11 |
| Tennis courts | 15.2 | 2 | 13 | 21 | 8 | 7 | 27 |
| Sand volleyball courts | 7.6 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 32 |
| Boating / canoeing / kayaking | 0.2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Water / splash pads | 1.0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| **Other (Listed below)** | | | | | | | |
| Golf course / driving range | 0.4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Restroom facilities | 0.6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Rugby Field | 0.2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cricket Field | 0.2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Raquetball Courts | 0.8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| **Total** | **209.8** | **75** | **249** | **110** | **89** | **279** | **322** |

| | Benchmark Average | Avondale | Grand Prairie | Bloomington | Canton | Santa Clarita | Chandler |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **5. How many synthetic turf fields do you own and maintain?** | | | | | | | |
| Number of synthetic turf fields | 0.0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| **6. How many of each indoor recreational facility do you have and how big are they?** | Number | Number | Size | Number | Size | Number | Size | Number | Size | Number | Size | Number | Size |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Community centers | 1.2 | 2 | 15,000 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 31,479 | 1 | 95,000 | 1 | 19,000 | 1 | 33,000 |
| Gymnasiums | 1.4 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 28,350 | 1 | 4,366 | 1 | 7,600 | 1 | 21,000 | 1 | 9,796 |
| Performing arts centers | 0.6 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 18,500 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 30,000 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 64,000 |
| Pools / aquatic | 1.4 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 13,742 | 2 | 494000 gal | 1 | 13,650 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Racquetball courts | 0.6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 850 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1,600 |
| Recreation centers | 1.0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 60,300 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 78,700 |
| Senior centers | 0.6 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 8,150 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2,800 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 10,400 |
| Teen centers | 0.8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5,200 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Other | 0.0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Historic sites | 0.8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 5,263 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Conference | 0.2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 32,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Basketball Courts | 0.4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 8,400 | 0 | 0 |
| **Total Number** | 9.6 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Total Sq. Ft.** | **120,629** | **2** | **15,000** | **13** | **161,042** | **6** | **35,845** | **11** | **160,363** | **4** | **48,400** | **11** | **197,496** |

| **7. What community center or multi-purpose facility amenities do you have?** | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Racquetball Courts | 60% | No | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Gymnasium | 100% | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Kitchen / cafeteria | 100% | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Meeting rooms | 100% | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Class rooms | 100% | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Exercise / dance | 100% | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Weight room | 60% | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Track | 60% | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Swimming pool | 20% | No | No | No | Yes | No | No |
| **Other (listed below)** | | | | | | | |
| Senior center | 20% | No | No | No | Yes | No | No |
| Boxing Ring | 20% | No | No | No | No | Yes | No |

**Table 3 - City of Avondale Benchmark Survey Results**
**March 2009**

| | Benchmark Average | Avondale | Grand Prairie | Bloomington | Canton | Santa Clarita | Chandler |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **8. How many of each recreational program do you offer?** | | | | | | | |
| Adaptive recreation programs | 11 | 0 | 4 | 15 | 4 | 22 | 8 |
| Adult sports leagues | 22 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 53 | 39 | 7 |
| Adult dance programs | 44 | 0 | 36 | 30 | 72 | 55 | 28 |
| Adult classes (gen. education) | 100 | 15 | 48 | 0 | 302 | 52 | 97 |
| Adventure recreation programs (parasailing, rock climb | 3 | 0 | 4 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Before & after school programs | 6 | 1 | 1 | 25 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Day camps | 20 | 0 | 80 | 0 | 3 | 17 | 0 |
| Environmental / eco-tourism programs | 14 | 0 | 2 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 30 |
| Fitness classes / programs | 121 | 2 | 0 | 59 | 62 | 437 | 45 |
| Golf programs / leagues | 9 | 1 | 12 | 5 | 5 | 20 | 1 |
| Intramural sports programs | 13 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 65 | 0 |
| Library programs / events | 6 | 12 | 3 | 20 | 0 | 9 | 0 |
| Outdoor recreation programs | 8 | 0 | 0 | 20 | 0 | 14 | 4 |
| Pre-school programs | 183 | 0 | 0 | 30 | 259 | 517 | 109 |
| Senior activities | 248 | 2 | 880 | 83 | 147 | 108 | 21 |
| Special events | 39 | 10 | 20 | 73 | 51 | 29 | 23 |
| Special interest classes | 140 | 25 | 12 | 150 | 40 | 499 | 0 |
| Summer camps | 30 | 1 | 4 | 33 | 8 | 62 | 44 |
| Swim lessons | 409 | 0 | 391 | 24 | 924 | 706 | 0 |
| Swim team / dive team | 4 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 18 | 0 |
| Teen activities | 45 | 1 | 120 | 24 | 68 | 0 | 11 |
| Tennis programs / leagues | 49 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 20 | 195 | 23 |
| Youth baseball leagues | 6 | 1 | 12 | 0 | 14 | 6 | 0 |
| Youth classes (gen. education) | 65 | 0 | 56 | 0 | 161 | 46 | 60 |
| Youth dance / cultural programs | 47 | 1 | 16 | 6 | 3 | 199 | 9 |
| Youth football programs | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 11 | 1 |
| Youth soccer programs / leagues | 20 | 0 | 18 | 0 | 14 | 69 | 0 |
| Youth softball programs / leagues | 7 | 1 | 14 | 5 | 5 | 9 | 0 |

Note 2: Only Fall 2008 programs have been tabulated for Santa Clarita

| TRAILS | Benchmark Average | Avondale | Grand Prairie | Bloomington | Canton | Santa Clarita | Chandler |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **9. How many miles of trail do you have?** | | | | | | | |
| All Terrain Bike Trails (mountain bikes) | 7.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 5.0 | 2.0 | 30.7 | 0.0 |
| Fitness Courses | 0.8 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 4.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Multi-Use Paths (paved surface) | 6.9 | 0.0 | 17.3 | 4.5 | 6.0 | 0.0 | 6.5 |
| Multi-Use Trails (unpaved) | 3.0 | 0.0 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 7.0 | 0.0 |
| Nature Center / Interpretive Trails | 3.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 14.5 | 0.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| On-Street Bikeways / Bikelanes | 6.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 30.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| **Other** | | | | | | | |
| **Total** | 27.2 | 0.0 | 19.4 | 60.2 | 12.3 | 37.7 | 6.5 |

**Table 3 - City of Avondale Benchmark Survey Results**
**March 2009**

| JOINT USE AGREEMENTS | Benchmark Average | Avondale | Grand Prairie | Bloomington | Canton | Santa Clarita | Chandler |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **10. How many acres of publicly dedicated open space do you have?** | 867 | 150.00 | 0.00 | 3,831 | 504 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| **11. What Joint Use Agreements do you have?** | | | | | | | |
| With school districts in use of recreational facilities | 100% | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| With school districts in the development of recreational facilities | 60% | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | Yes |
| Written agreement with schools | 60% | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | Yes |
| With other community groups or agencies? | 60% | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| **Which community groups:** | | | | | | | |
| Boys / girls clubs | 40% | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | Yes |
| Departments of transportation | 60% | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Flood control districts | 40% | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | Yes |
| County (parks, indoor facilities, etc.) | 40% | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | No |
| Federal (i.e. national forest, BLM, etc.) | 20% | No | Yes | No | No | No | No |
| Community colleges | 0% | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| YMCA | 20% | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | No |
| **Types of facilities with joint use agreements:** | | | | | | | |
| **With school districts in use of recreational facilities** | | | | | | | |
| Ice arena | 20% | No | No | No | Yes | No | No |
| Indoor soccer | 20% | No | No | No | Yes | No | No |
| Fields | 60% | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Gyms | 20% | No | No | Yes | No | No | No |
| Pools | 60% | No | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| Playground | 20% | No | Yes | No | No | No | No |
| Tennis | 20% | No | Yes | No | No | No | No |
| Nature Center | 20% | No | Yes | No | No | No | No |
| School Facilities | 0% | Yes | No | No | No | No | No |
| Gymnasium | 20% | No | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| Arts Center | 20% | No | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| **With school districts in development of recreational facilities** | | | | | | | |
| Fields | 40% | No | No | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| Neighborhood parks | 0% | Yes | No | No | No | No | No |
| Pool | 20% | No | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| **With other community groups or agencies** | | | | | | | |
| Therepeutic recreation | 20% | No | No | No | Yes | No | No |
| Ice arena | 20% | No | No | No | Yes | No | No |
| Senior transportation | 20% | No | No | No | Yes | No | No |
| Athletic Field | 20% | No | Yes | No | No | No | No |
| Park Property Leases | 20% | No | Yes | No | No | No | No |
| Trails | 20% | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | No |
| Recreation Programs | 20% | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | No |
| Facility use | 0% | Yes | No | No | No | No | No |

**Table 3 - City of Avondale Benchmark Survey Results**
**March 2009**

| BUDGET | Benchmark Average | Avondale | Grand Prairie | Bloomington | Canton | Santa Clarita | Chandler |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **12. What is your annual operation budget?** | | | | | | | |
| Full Operating Budget | $38,797,766 | $3,397,540 | $19,064,913 | $8,359,858 | $10,415,942 | $121,075,964 | $35,072,154 |
| **13. What is the breakdown of your expenditures?** | | | | | | | |
| Contracted Services | 7.7% | 45.0% | 6.0% | 1.6% | 9.0% | 14.5% | 7.5% |
| Equipment (Mowers, Vehicles) | 1.9% | 5.0% | 3.0% | 2.1% | 2.0% | 1.0% | 1.4% |
| Full-Time Staffing | 44.3% | 8.0% | 43.0% | 40.9% | 34.0% | 50.5% | 53.0% |
| General Operations (administration) | 12.9% | 0.0% | 7.0% | 16.5% | 24.0% | 14.8% | 2.5% |
| Maintenance (facilities, parks, trails, equipment, utilitie | 8.4% | 14.0% | 8.0% | 2.6% | 15.0% | 5.5% | 11.2% |
| Part-Time Staffing | 10.2% | 15.0% | 14.0% | 21.2% | 7.0% | 4.1% | 4.5% |
| Programs (supplies) | 6.8% | 2.0% | 9.0% | 10.0% | 2.0% | 4.1% | 9.1% |
| Utilities | 7.7% | 11.0% | 10.0% | 5.2% | 7.0% | 5.5% | 10.8% |
| **Total** | **100.0%** | **100.0%** | **100.0%** | **100.0%** | **100.0%** | **100.0%** | **100.0%** |

Note 3: Chandler expenditures have been estimated based upon their city budget. A FT/PT ratio given for maintenance expenditures has been applied to estimate their delineation of workers.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Separate Maintenance Costs** | | | | | | | |
| **14. What is the maintenance budget for this fiscal year?** | $1,297,107 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $6,485,534 |
| **15. What is the breakdown of maintenance expenditures?** | | | | | | | |
| Contracted Services | 0.2% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.8% |
| Equipment (Mowers, Vehicles) | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.6% |
| Full-Time Staffing | 8.8% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 44.1% |
| General Operations (administration) | 0.4% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 2.1% |
| Maintenance (facilities, parks, trails, equipment, utilitie | 0.4% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 2.0% |
| Part-Time Staffing | 3.2% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 15.8% |
| Programs (supplies) | 2.1% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 10.3% |
| Utilities | 4.8% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 24.2% |
| **Total** | **20.0%** | **0.0%** | **0.0%** | **0.0%** | **0.0%** | **0.0%** | **100.0%** |

Note 4: Chandler maintenance expenditures have been estimated based upon their city budget.

| EMPLOYMENT | Benchmark Survey | Avondale | Grand Prairie | Bloomington | Canton | Santa Clarita | Chandler |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **16. How many full time and part time staff do you have?** | | | | | | | |
| **FULL TIME EMPLOYEES** | | | | | | | |
| Facility Maintenance | 19.4 | 4.0 | 17.0 | 8.0 | 18.0 | 10.0 | 44.0 |
| Golf | 5.2 | 0.0 | 19.0 | 5.0 | 2.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Park Maintenance | 27.6 | 7.0 | 47.0 | 12.0 | 10.0 | 22.0 | 47.0 |
| (Parks and Recreation) Administration | 7.2 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 10.0 | 9.0 | 6.0 | 8.0 |
| Recreation Programming | 19.2 | 4.0 | 26.0 | 13.0 | 15.0 | 21.0 | 21.0 |
| **Other:** | | | | | | | |
| Other sports programming | 2.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 10.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Cemetery | 0.8 | 0.0 | 4.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Lake Parks | 2.8 | 0.0 | 14.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| **Total** | **84.2** | **18.0** | **130.0** | **58.0** | **54.0** | **59.0** | **120.0** |
| **PART TIME EMPLOYEES** | | | | | | | |
| Facility Maintenance | 2.4 | 6.0 | 0.0 | 2.0 | 10.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Golf | 13.6 | 0.0 | 14.0 | 24.0 | 30.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Park Maintenance | 16.6 | 6.0 | 20.0 | 28.0 | 30.0 | 0.0 | 5.0 |
| (Parks and Recreation) Administration | 0.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Recreation Programming | 79.8 | 50.0 | 119.0 | 87.0 | 30.0 | 13.0 | 150.0 |
| **Other:** | | | | | | | |
| Other sports programming | 22.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 110.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Cemetery | 0.2 | 0.0 | 1.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Lake Parks | 7.2 | 0.0 | 36.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| **Total** | **142.4** | **62.0** | **190.0** | **252.0** | **102.0** | **13.0** | **155.0** |
| **FT per 1,000** | **0.57** | **0.24** | **0.83** | **0.84** | **0.63** | **0.33** | **0.48** |
| **PT per 1,000** | **0.96** | **0.83** | **1.22** | **3.64** | **1.20** | **0.07** | **0.62** |

**Table 3 - City of Avondale Benchmark Survey Results**
**March 2009**

| FUNDING | Benchmark Average | Avondale | Grand Prairie | Bloomington | Canton | Santa Clarita | Chandler |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **17. What are your sources of revenue to fund operations?** | | | | | | | |
| General Fund | 70.1% | 75.0% | 43.0% | 71.0% | 46.0% | 98.5% | 92.0% |
| Fees and Charges | 16.6% | 23.0% | 14.0% | 14.2% | 54.0% | 0.0% | 0.8% |
| Sponsorships | 0.2% | 2.0% | 0.0% | 1.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Grants | 1.4% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 1.0% | 0.0% | 1.1% | 5.0% |
| **Enterprise Fund (operations listed below)** | | | | | | | |
| Cemetary, Lake, Golf | 3.2% | 0.0% | 16.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Other | 2.6% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 12.8% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| **Other (listed below)** | | | | | | | |
| Sales Tax | 5.4% | 0.0% | 27.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Transit Fund | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.3% | 0.0% |
| Parks & Rec Trust | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.5% |
| Library Trust | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.2% |
| Library Bond Fund | 0.2% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.9% |
| Municipal Arts Fund | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.6% |
| **Total** | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

Note 5: Chandler revenue sources have been estimated based upon their city budget.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **18. Does your city impose any of the following taxes?** | | | | | | | |
| Lodging or bed tax | 4.2% | 0.0% | 7.0% | 4.0% | 0.0% | 10.0% | 0.0% |
| Restaurant tax | 0.4% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 1.8% |
| Liquor tax | 2.8% | 0.0% | 14.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **19. Do you have a Capital Improvements Plan?** | 80% | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes |
| Length of Program in Years | 5.3 | 10 | 5 | 6 | 0 | 5 | 5 |
| Capital Budget | $47,513,923 | $45,557,950 | $23,000,000 | $25,836,222 | $0 | $4,688,000 | $136,531,468 |
| Dollars Per Year | $9,287,483 | $4,555,795 | $4,600,000 | $4,306,037 | $0 | $937,600 | $27,306,294 |
| Percent Park Renovation | 36.4% | 2% | 19% | 95% | 0% | 19% | 12% |
| Percent Land Acquisition | 2.2% | 0% | 1% | 5% | 0% | 0% | 3% |
| Percent New Park or Recreational Facilities | 61.5% | 98% | 80% | 0% | 0% | 81% | 85% |

Note 6: Grand Prairie's continuous CIP is split into 5-year intervals, and has been recorded as such for calculation purposes. Chandler's CIP allocation has been estimated based upon their city CIP report.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **20. What are the sources of revenue for funding your capital projects?** | | | | | | | |
| Concessionaire Contracts | 0% | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| General Obligation Bonds | 80% | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes |
| Grants | 60% | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| Impact Fees | 20% | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| Intergovernmental Agreements | 0% | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| Lease Purchase Financing | 40% | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | No |
| Private Donations | 40% | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | No |
| Lodging, restaurant, & liquor taxes | 0% | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| Private Fund-Raising | 0% | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| Revenue Bonds | 60% | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No |
| Sales Taxes | 60% | No | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| Special Improvement Districts | 0% | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| User Fees | 20% | No | Yes | No | No | No | No |
| **Other:** | | | | | | | |
| General Fund | 0% | Yes | No | No | No | No | No |

# APPENDIX A – BENCHMARK SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

# Parks and Recreation Benchmarking Survey for Avondale, Arizona

| | |
|---|---|
| **Name of Agency:** | |
| **Address:** | |
| **Director/Manager:** | |
| **Name and title of person filling out survey:** | |
| **Telephone Number:** | |
| **Email Address:** | |
| **Current Population of the Community:** | |

## PARKS AND OPEN SPACE AREAS:

1. **The following is a list of various park classifications. Please indicate how many existing or planned parks you have in each classification, the total number of acres for all parks in the classification, any service radius standard, (i.e. x number of miles) and what percent is maintained by the city versus others (county, private, etc.)**

| | | Total | # of Acres | Service Radius (miles) | % City Maintained |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. | Neighborhood parks | | | | |
| B. | Community parks | | | | |
| C. | Passive regional parks | | | | |
| D. | Joint use parks (i.e. schools) | | | | |

2. **What is your existing park acreage level of service standard for city owned and maintained parks (acres/1,000 population)? _____**

## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

3. **Following is a list of various types of <u>INDOOR</u> recreational facilities. Please identify the number of facilities you have of each type and, if applicable, the square feet. If a facility you have is not listed, please write in the type under "Other."**

| | Number | | Size or Sq. Ft. | | Number | | Size or Sq. Ft. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. | _____ | Community centers | _____ | G. | _____ | Racquetball courts | _____ |
| B. | _____ | Gymnasiums | _____ | H. | _____ | Recreation centers | _____ |
| C. | _____ | Libraries | _____ | I. | _____ | Senior centers | _____ |
| D. | _____ | Multi-generational centers | _____ | J. | _____ | Teen centers | _____ |
| E. | _____ | Performing arts centers | _____ | K. | _____ | Other_____ | _____ |
| F. | _____ | Pools/aquatics | _____ | L. | _____ | Other_____ | _____ |

## RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS

**4. What type of recreational programs are you offering? Identify the number of programs next to each type.**

| | Number | | | Number | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. | _____ | Adult Sport Leagues | G | _____ | Special Interest Classes |
| B. | _____ | Before & After School Programs | H. | _____ | Summer Camps |
| C. | _____ | Intramural Sports Programs | I. | _____ | Swim Lessons |
| D. | _____ | Outdoor Recreation Programs | J. | _____ | Swim Team – Dive Team |
| E. | _____ | Senior Activities | K. | _____ | Teen Activities |
| F. | _____ | Special Events | L. | _____ | Youth Sports Leagues |

## OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

**5. The following is a list of <u>OUTDOOR</u> recreational facilities. Please identify the number of facilities you have of each type. If not listed, please write in the type under "Other."**

| | Number | | | Number | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. | _____ | Amphitheater | M. | _____ | Ponds/reservoirs |
| B. | _____ | Archery range | N. | _____ | Pools/aquatic |
| C. | _____ | Baseball fields | O. | _____ | Public Golf courses (18 hole) |
| D. | _____ | Basketball courts | P. | _____ | Public Golf courses (9 hole) |
| E. | _____ | BMX (dirt) | Q. | _____ | Racquetball courts |
| F. | _____ | Disc golf courses | R. | _____ | Skate parks |
| G. | _____ | Driving range | S. | _____ | Shooting range |
| H. | _____ | Football fields | T. | _____ | Soccer fields |
| I. | _____ | Multi-purpose fields | U. | _____ | Softball fields |
| J. | _____ | Off-leash dog parks | V. | _____ | Tennis courts |
| K. | _____ | Paint ball courses | W. | _____ | Volleyball courts |
| L. | _____ | Park shelters/picnic areas | X. | _____ | Water/splash pads |
| M. | _____ | Playgrounds | Y. | _____ | Other_____ |

## TRAILS

**6. Following is a list of various types of existing or planned trails. Please identify the type of trails that you have and the approximate number of miles for each type of trail.**

| | Check those that apply | Approx. No. of Miles | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **A.** | | | **All terrain bike trails (mountain bikes)** |
| **B.** | | | **Fitness courses** |
| **C.** | | | **Multi-use paths (paved surface)** |
| **D.** | | | **Multi-use trails (unpaved)** |
| **E.** | | | **Nature center/ interpretive trails** |
| **F.** | | | **On-street bikeways/bike lanes** |
| **G.** | | | **Single-use designated trails** |
| **H.** | | | **Other** _____ |

## USER FEES

**7. Do you currently charge a fee for participating in activities or using the following facilities? If so, please check the box next to the activity and ATTACH A FEE SCHEDULE THAT LISTS THE ACTIVITY/FACILITY AND FEE OR FEES CHARGED.**

| | Fee? (Check if Applicable) | Activity or Facility |
|---|---|---|
| A. | _____ | Aquatics |
| B. | _____ | Youth Sports Programs/Leagues |
| C. | _____ | Adult Sports Leagues |
| D. | _____ | Aerobics |
| E. | _____ | Art classes |
| F. | _____ | Pre-school programs |
| G. | _____ | After school programs |
| H. | _____ | Lights for ball fields |
| I. | _____ | Picnic shelters |
| J. | _____ | Gymnasiums |
| K. | _____ | Meeting rooms |
| L. | _____ | Shooting range |
| M. | _____ | Golf course |
| N. | _____ | (Name Other)_____ |
| O. | _____ | (Name Other)_____ |

**Please attach a fee schedule that lists each activity/facility noted above and the fee or fees charged.**

**8. Please indicate the total annual revenue obtained from user fees $_____**
**Provide approximate percentages for each revenue source. The total should add to 100%.**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| A. | _____ % | Recreational Programs |
| B. | _____ % | Recreational Facilities (i.e. ball fields, courts, lights, etc) |
| C. | _____ % | Aquatics |
| D. | _____ % | Golf |
| E. | _____ % | Reservations (i.e. picnic shelters, ramadas, etc.) |
| F. | _____ % | Special Events |
| G. | _____ % | Concessions |
| H. | _____ % | Adult Leagues |
| I. | _____ % | Youth Leagues |
| J. | _____ % | Meeting Rooms |
| K. | _____ % | Special Interest Classes (i.e. drawing, pottery, stained glass, etc.) |
| L. | _____ % | Other(please list)_____ |
| | 100 % | **Total** |

## JOINT USE AGREEMENTS

**9. The following is a list of various types of joint use agreements you may have with local schools, other governments, and/or community providers. Please answer by circling yes or no.**

A. Does your city and school district(s) have joint use agreements for the use of recreational facilities? Yes No

Type of facility? (i.e. pool, meeting rooms, fields) _____

B. Does your city and school district(s) have joint use agreements pertaining to the development of recreational facilities? Yes No

If yes, Are these agreements in writing? Yes No

Type of facility? (i.e. pool, meeting rooms, fields) _____

C. Does your city have any joint use or written agreements with other community groups or agencies? Circle all that apply: YMCA, Boys/Girls Clubs, County, DOT's, Other_____ Yes No

What type of facilities do these include? _____

## ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

**10. What is the Parks and Recreation Department's full operating budget for this fiscal year? $_____.**

**11. Based on your current operating budget, please identify the breakdown of your expenditures associated with each category. The total should add to 100%.**

A. _____% Contracted Services
B. _____% Equipment (mowers, vehicles)
C. _____% Full Time Staffing
D. _____% General Operations (administration)
E. _____% Maintenance (facilities, parks, trails)
F. _____% Part Time Staffing
G. _____% Programs (supplies)
H. _____% Utilities
100% **Total**

**12. Following are various functions within parks and recreation programs. Please indicate how many full time and part time staff you have working in each area.**

| | **# of Full Time Equivalents** | |
|---|---|---|
| A. | _____ | Facility maintenance |
| B. | _____ | Golf |
| C. | _____ | Park maintenance |
| D. | _____ | Recreation administration |
| E. | _____ | Recreation programming |
| F. | _____ | Other _____ |
| G. | _____ | Other _____ |
| H. | _____ | **Total** |

**13. Provide approximate percentages for the revenue sources that your department uses to fund annual operations. The total should add to 100%.**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| A. | _____ % | General fund |
| B. | _____ % | User fees and charges |
| C. | _____ % | Sponsorships |
| D. | _____ % | Grants |
| E. | _____ % | Enterprise fund (for which operations)_____ |
| F. | _____ % | Other _____ |
| | 100% | **Total** |

## CAPITAL BUDGET

**14. Do you have a long range capital improvement program (CIP) for funding capital projects (i.e. new parks, trails, facilities, park renovations and land acquisition)?**

_____ (A) Yes (please answer questions A through E)

_____ (B) No (please skip to question 15)

A. How many years is your CIP? _____

B. How much in total dollars is allocated over the duration of your CIP to parks and recreation? $_____ .

C. Based on the total dollars noted above, what is the percentage allocated to park renovation? _____%

D. Based on the total dollars noted above, what is the percentage allocated to land acquisition? _____%

E. Based on the total dollars noted above, what is the percentage allocated to new park or recreational facilities? _____%

**15. What are your sources of revenue for funding capital projects (i.e. parks and trails development, recreational facilities, land acquisition, pools). Please check all of that apply.**

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| _____ | A. | Concessionaire contracts | _____ | H. | Private fund-raising |
| _____ | B. | General obligation bonds | _____ | I. | Revenue bonds |
| _____ | C. | Grants | _____ | J. | Sales taxes |
| _____ | D. | Impact fees | _____ | K. | Special improvement districts |
| _____ | E. | Intergovernmental agreements | _____ | L. | User fees |
| _____ | F. | Lease purchase financing | _____ | M. | Other _____ |
| _____ | G. | Private donations | _____ | N. | Other _____ |

**Thank you for participating in this benchmarking survey. Please return the completed survey no later than Friday July 11, 2008 in the enclosed postage paid envelope to:**

**ESI Corp**
**300 W. Clarendon Avenue**
**Suite 470**
**Phoenix, AZ 85013**

**If you desire, you may fax the completed survey to 602-265-5919.**

**If you have any questions, please contact Jonathan Zwayer-Jones or Judie Scalise at 602-265-6120.**