

LA QUINTA, CALIFORNIA

Community Services Master Plan

MAY 2007

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Foreword

May 15, 2007

Dear Fellow La Quinta Residents:

The Community Services Commission is excited to put forth a new updated Master Plan. The Commission has been working on this project since the summer of 2006. This comprehensive look at the park facilities, recreational and cultural services gives the City of La Quinta a vision for the future. The process included input to our commission from citizens, recreational partners, community based non-profits, city staff, and the Planning Commission. This plan will be a useful tool as the City of Quinta moves forward and matures.

During the development of the plan a survey was distributed to citizens. The Commission hosted community input sessions, reviewed current park assets, assessed the data collected, received input from students at La Quinta Middle Avid program, and the Boys and Girls Club. The Commission took into account national standards for parks and coupled them with the desires of La Quinta residents. One theme that has been constant in the process is the development of trails providing increased walking and biking opportunities in La Quinta. This is a theme that provides many benefits to the majority of our citizens. As the concern for health and fitness increases nationwide, La Quinta can become a model for prevention through keeping ourselves active. Walking, biking and running trails provide access to community events and local businesses. Another theme important to the quality of life in La Quinta is park acquisition and development. Neighborhood parks and the need for outdoor sports facilities also rank high in importance and are perceived as an area requiring increased emphasis in the City of La Quinta.

I hope you take the time to review the data contained in the plan and agree that the recommendations are supported by the information we gathered. The Community Services Commission is looking forward to the implementation of this plan. As we continue to advise City Council, we hope citizens will continue their involvement.

Our meetings take place on the second Monday of the month. We are always open to the public, and look forward to community input by residents who want to keep the City of La Quinta a great place to live and work. Please check the City of La Quinta website (www.La-Quinta.org) for more detailed information.

Best regards,

Mark D. Weber, *Chairman*
Robert F. Sylk, *Vice Chairman*
Andrea Gassman
Robert Leidner
E. Howard Long

La Quinta Community Services Commission



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I. Executive Summary

The City of La Quinta is continually striving to keep up with the expectations and needs of the community. The current facilities are heavily used and most programs have high participation rates. The City of La Quinta athletic fields are also in great demand. All organizations supplying leisure and recreation programs have numerous positive impacts including encouraging healthy lifestyles, promoting social well-being, providing opportunities and facilities for enjoyment, and enhancing the quality of life.

This **Community Services Master Plan** endeavors to provide a guiding mechanism for continuing to meet existing and future community needs, and expand the positive impacts of this portion of the City of La Quinta's services. The strength of this report stems from the extensive research, community involvement, analysis of needs, and public review that form the basis for the recommendations it contains. The recommendations of this Plan are designed to create goals cultivating:

- Focus on consistently meeting and exceeding citizen expectations;
- Use of innovative ideas and methods to successfully meet challenges posed by budgetary, facility and staffing limitations;
- A system that benefits residents by increasing services to all age groups and providing diverse opportunities;
- A service agency that sees itself as a viable partner in providing community services;
- A stewardship approach to providing high-quality facilities, existing and future, through judicious use of public funds;
- Cooperation and partnerships among the City of La Quinta, CVRPD, Public Schools, other non-profit organizations and the private sector in providing recreational services and facilities; and
- A proactive planning process guided by community needs and executable strategies; and a process for reviewing and updating this document annually.

Ultimately, this plan is designed to serve as a decision-making tool for the City of La Quinta. Action Strategies are needed to carry out the Community Services Master Plan recommendations.

Timing

This plan is intended to be a 5-year Plan with a long range vision. The **Action Themes Implementation Table 12** which is in the Recommendation section of this document details the recommendations and indicates timing based on the start of implementation:

- Immediate: immediately or within one-year
- Short-Term: within one-two years
- Long-term: within the five years
- Ongoing

This Community Services Master Plan was created to:

- provide both a vision for parks, recreation, trails and open space, and an action plan for implementing this vision;
- survey the needs of residents;



- provide a comprehensive review of the existing inventory of land, recreation facilities, programs, services and opportunities;
- research and develop recommendations for all aspects of the City of La Quinta's recreational service area, including staffing needs, operation and maintenance funding needs, and recreational programming needs;
- develop a strategic set of goals, objectives, and actions for the next five years;
- identify land needs for future parks and open space acquisition;
- provide a capital improvement schedule, and review of existing finance strategies;
- develop recommendations to fund improvements.

Findings and Analysis were compiled through a detailed process involving:

- public meetings and focus groups;
- stakeholder meetings and staff input;
- a statistically-valid survey sent randomly to 1,750 homes in the City of La Quinta and a separate survey to over 300 residents and businesses from the City's Sphere of Influence area;
- analysis of demographics and trends;
- a complete inventory of all parks, open space, facilities, programs, services, partners and alternative providers;
- SWOT analysis; and
- GRASP® Analysis of current and future Levels of Service for the parks, facilities and their components.

Purpose of these recommendations:

- To identify key focus areas for improvement for the immediate future, short term goals within 1-2 years, and long term goals within the next 5 years.
- To identify priorities and costs and funding mechanisms for improvements, expansions, further study, and conceptual capital projects.
- To plan to update this master plan every 5 years.

General Themes for Improvement Include:

- Community Connectivity
- Maintain Current LOS as Population Grows
- Improve LOS
- Impact Fee Review
- Best Management Practices

Key Components

The following were identified as the most important for consideration within the next 5 years.

- **Trails and Connectivity**
- **Capital Improvements Plan**
- **Continue Enhancement through Partnerships**
- **Feasibility Studies and Site Planning**
- **Land Purchases, Dedications and Impact Fees**



Understanding the Priorities:

The **Findings and Analysis Compilation** completed in January 2007 identified the access to parks, trails, open space, recreation facilities and programs and the current level of service for the City of La Quinta.

#1 – Community Connectivity

- Implement Trail System Plan
- Coordinate public transportation and school bus routes with parks, recreation and community services, facilities and programs

#2 – Maintain Current LOS as Population Grows through the Park System

#3 - Improve LOS Improvements

- Special facility feasibility study - open space park along the whitewater channel in north La Quinta
- Special facility feasibility study - open space and park along the drainage way
- Special facility feasibility study and land acquisition - new sports complex
- Site master plan for the Old Town Corridor
- Open space and natural facilities plan
- Add lighting at Colonel Paige Middle School field
- Re-configure or re-purpose the City of La Quinta Park ball field
- Add fitness and wellness program space
- Increase the amount of land per capita

#4 – Impact Fee Review (Review land dedication and impact fee requirements)

#5 – Best Management Practices

- Review and establish policies
- Track labor hours and equipment use for park and athletic field maintenance tasks
- Encourage, enhance and maximize relationships and partnership opportunities
- Establish life cycle costing assessments
- Implement a 5-year master planning schedule with annual updates
- Establish a 501 (c) 3 Community Services foundation
- Pursue grant opportunities
- Institute volunteer opportunities
- Continue review of park maintenance privatization
- Increase marketing efforts
- Design and renovate with CPTED principles



Considerations for All Recommendations:

Table 1 shows the themed recommendations and implementation impacts including, annual financial allocations, one time costs for planning documents and feasibility studies, and other costs as yet to be determined including land purchasing costs and staffing costs among others.

Table 1: Total Considerations for All Recommendations:

| Recommendations | Implementation Impacts |
|---|---|
| #1 - Community Connectivity | Staff time and bid TBD |
| #2 - Maintain Current LOS as the Population Grows | Staff time; annual allocations per year for development projects TBD over next 4 years plus land costs |
| #3 - Improve LOS | Staff time; one time costs for planning and study documents; annual allocations per year for development projects TBD plus land costs |
| #4 - Impact Fee Review | Staff time |
| #5 - Best Management Practices | Staff time; computer costs TBD; allocations to update Master Plan; staffing costs TBD; construction costs TBD |

The adoption of this Plan is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code Section 21000, et seq. under CEQA Guideline 15262. That Guideline exempts planning studies for possible future action, since the possible future action (e.g. parkland acquisition and development) is not being approved as part of the action to adopt this Plan. This Plan is not intended to be legally binding on the future actions of the Planning Commission or the City Council, but rather as a guide to formulate potential future actions which will be assessed pursuant to the City of La Quinta’s normal processing requirements, including CEQA review. The adoption of this Plan is not intended to commit the City of La Quinta to any definite course of action in regards to the acquisition or development of parkland and recreational amenities.



II. Past, Present and Future – The Master Planning Context

A. History, Mission and Project Vision

History

The City of La Quinta is a community nestled at the base of the majestic Santa Rosa/San Jacinto Mountains, in southern California's Coachella Valley. With its small-town friendliness, the City of La Quinta is a peaceful and relaxing community. However, it is also a year-round, multi-recreational and destination resort community. Known as the "Gem of the Desert," the City of La Quinta enjoys low humidity combined with an abundance of sunshine year-round.

Golf and tennis enthusiasts from around the world visit or relocate to the City of La Quinta for the fabulous facilities and spectacular events hosted here annually. PGA West, internationally recognized as one of the world's most magnificent resort communities, has been the site of numerous national and professional events.

Incorporated in 1982, the City of La Quinta had a population of just over 5,200. Today, the 2006 population has grown to approximately 39,614 and the City of La Quinta is listed as one of California's fastest growing cities. The vast majority of its open area is attractive for development with the opportunity for planned growth.

The Parks and Recreation Department was officially organized in November 1993. It is now known as the Community Services Department as it encompasses more than just the parks and recreation division including the SilverRock Golf Course, La Quinta Library, and Art in Public Places program.

City of La Quinta Mission Statement

The Mission of the City of La Quinta is to enhance the quality of life of our customers and employees in an environment of courtesy, integrity, and respect for quality service.

The Community Services Department's intent is to accomplish the City's mission through promoting and actively supporting the best possible park and recreation program consistent with the desires and wishes of the people of La Quinta.

- We recognize service to the citizens of this community is our number one priority.
- We provide responsive, quality service while maintaining fiscal responsibility.
- We provide all services in an ethical, honest, and equitable manner.
- We demonstrate our pride and commitment to our work by being enthusiastic and professional.
- We use available resources effectively and efficiently.

We recognize the diversity of the workplace by creating an atmosphere which respects the human dignity of all without regard to race, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or physical attributes.



Project Vision

The City of La Quinta sought to hire consultants to prepare a Community Services Master Plan. The plan expands and updates the 1993 Parks & Recreation Master Plan. The plan provides both a vision for parks, recreation, trails and open space, and an action plan for implementing this vision. The plan considers current residents, seasonal residents, visitors, and the Sphere of Influence for the City of La Quinta. A detailed examination of developer impact fees and standards are included. The plan is comprehensive in that it involved implementation of a direct mail-out citizen voter survey to determine and prioritize planning and development of future recreational and park property amenities. The Master Plan also includes research and development of recommendations for all aspects of the City of La Quinta's recreational service area, including capital project needs, land acquisition needs, staffing needs, operation and maintenance funding needs, and recreational programming needs.

The consultants worked closely with the Community Services Director and the Community Development Director. They also worked and communicated closely with the Community Services Commission and the Community Services Department staff.

B. Purpose of this Plan

Project Description

The purpose of the updated Community Services Master Plan is to provide a framework for decision-making over a multi-year planning period. The Master Plan serves as a guide for parks and recreation services, facilities, planning and development. In addition to documenting existing City of La Quinta programs and parks, the plan also addresses community values, growth, future needs, and priorities, creating a clear direction with a set of goals and objectives for staff, advisory and elected officials for the improvement of the City of La Quinta's park system, open space, golf course, trails, museums, senior center, recreation facilities and programs.

A specific focus of the plan is to address the history of the recreational elements of the City of La Quinta having been identified with the La Quinta Resort and Club, the PGA West golf facilities and the annual La Quinta Arts Festival. The plan addresses the needs of year round residents, second homeowners and tourists.

The planning process included developing a comprehensive inventory, an analysis of forecasted needs, and implementation strategies, along with some innovative and successful methodologies for analysis of current and future level of service. The plan helped create consensus on philosophies for resource allocation, revenue generation and cost recovery. This plan includes recommendations and an action plan that will be helpful and implementable, in addition to addressing the following specific items:

- Environmental, Economic and Health issues
- Public Process/Statistical Survey
- Accurate Level of Service analysis
- Capital Development
- Costs and Funding Sources



Background

Nestled in the beautiful desert mountainous Coachella Valley in Riverside County, the City of La Quinta was incorporated in 1982. The City of La Quinta has many gated communities which provide for some, if not most, of the park and recreation needs within each restricted access area.

Current Conditions

Key values in the community include:

- Natural beauty
- Art
- Family
- Healthy active living
- Safety
- Diversity

Key issues facing the City of La Quinta include:

- Growth and changing demographics
- Balance of tourism and sense of community
- Maintaining what exists
- Design for safety
- Parking
- Lack of facilities – fields and indoor spaces
- Service to the Sphere of Influence
- Funding

Public perception is that the Community Services Department strengths include:

- Creative and forward thinking
- Neighborhood focus
- Leadership and outreach
- Accessibility and responsiveness
- Variety of programs
- Partnerships
- Quantity of facilities

The City of La Quinta provides town hall meetings to inform the citizens of the City of La Quinta about short and long term financial goals, and where the tax revenues are going, as well as the City of La Quinta's overall prioritized needs, and where each department's master plan recommendations fit into the future projects in the phased and fiscally responsible comprehensive planning and implementation effort.



Services Required

The City of La Quinta desired that this plan address:

- a comprehensive inventory of parks, facilities and services;
- a prioritized list of capital, operations and maintenance recommendations;
- potential future service needs for the Sphere of Influence and a development impact fees study;
- the provision of a framework to encompass alternative provider efforts; and
- the identification of critical relationships with the Coachella Valley Recreation and Park District, surrounding communities, Riverside County and Desert Sands Unified School District as well as other potential partners within the community.

Process & Timeline

The ten month project was awarded on June 21, 2006 with a completion date of April 30, 2007.

Project Team

The team consisted of GreenPlay, LLC as the lead with Design Concepts and Geowest as the GRASP® Level of Service Analysis Team, and ETC Institute/Leisure Vision as the surveying firm.

C. Organizational Overview

City Governance and Organization

The City of La Quinta is governed by a five member City Council elected at large. It operates under a City Manager form of government. The executive or senior level management consists of five department directors, a police chief (contracted to the Riverside County Sheriff's department), and City Clerk. There is also legal counsel.

Departments or business units in the City of La Quinta's comprehensive services plan include Finance; Community Development; Public Works/Engineering; Building and Safety; and Community Services which consists of Golf and Parks, Recreation, and Senior Services divisions.

The City of La Quinta has a variety of commissions, boards, and committees that serve as advisory bodies to the City Council on matters affecting the City of La Quinta. The Community Services Commission and the Planning Commission were the two groups involved in the development of the Community Services Master Plan. The Commissions include:

- Community Services Commission
- Planning Commission
- Architectural and Landscape Review Committee
- Historic Preservation Commission
- Investment Advisory Board



The Community Services Commission, established in 1998 by combining the Human Services Commission with the Parks & Recreation Commission, is coordinated by the Community Services Department and is comprised of five members appointed by the City Council. The Commission meets monthly.

The Community Services Commission's primary functions are to make recommendations to the City Council by:

- analyzing community services' program effectiveness and needs;
- researching and soliciting grants and donations;
- preparing and maintaining community services master plans;
- recommending fees and operation policies regarding parks and recreation facilities;
- proposing recreation and social programs;
- publicizing and promoting the City of La Quinta 's recreation programs;
- reviewing park maintenance standards and quality;
- making recommendations on community issues;
- evaluating and planning the community service delivery system;
- encouraging and promoting understanding and cooperation between the City of La Quinta and public safety agencies;
- fostering mutual understanding and respect among racial, religious, cultural and nationality groups; and,
- identifying opportunities for cooperation among similar community services programs.

The Planning Commission, established in 1982, and reconstituted most recently in 1998, is coordinated by the Community Development Department and is comprised of five members appointed by the City Council. The Planning Commission meets twice per month. Its primary function is to carry out the powers and duties as prescribed in the Planning and Zoning Laws of the State of California, the City of La Quinta's General Plan, and the City of La Quinta Zoning Ordinance as well as to serve as an advisory body to the City Council. The Planning Commission's duties include:

- developing and maintaining the City of La Quinta 's General Plan;
- consideration of new development applications;
- design review of new developments; and,
- development of specific plans, and coordinating similar planning duties.

The City of La Quinta's mascot is **Gamby** (the Gambel's Quail).



D. Related Planning Efforts and Integration

The following documents were used as background information and supporting studies:

- City of La Quinta Comprehensive General Plan, March 20, 2002
- City of La Quinta Parks and Recreation Master Plan, April 1993
- Coachella Valley Recreation and Park District Master Plan, 2006
- Community Services Commission Minutes regarding the Youth Workshop, January 2006
- City of La Quinta Fiscal Year 2006/2007 Budget
- City of La Quinta Marketing Plan 2006/2007
- City of La Quinta Master Environmental Assessment, March 20, 2002

This Community Services Master Plan is intended to provide relative and current information which will support the update to the City of La Quinta's General Plan. It also provides a framework for decision-making, project prioritization and resource allocation.

E. Relationship to the Previous Master Plan

Parks and Recreation Master Plan

The current Community Services Master Plan was completed in April 1993 as required by the 1992/1993 City of La Quinta's General Plan. It was intended to be the basis for the Parks and Recreation Element of the City of La Quinta's General Plan for a "build out" population of approximately 59,000. It was intended that the Master Plan be updated every five years.

Services are provided by the City of La Quinta, its partners (YMCA of the Desert and Boys and Girls Clubs of America) and the Coachella Valley Recreation and Park District in a limited capacity. Post incorporation, the municipal service concept of the City of La Quinta developing and assuming the parks and recreation services provision responsibilities remains in debate today.

The 1993 Master Plan obtained mailed survey responses from 1,042 households out of 6,500 distributed. Record growth is indicated in the last plan as the population in 1986 was 7,170; and grew to 14,840 by the end of 1992 according to the State of California Department of Finance population estimates. The Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) predicted the 2010 population of La Quinta to reach 31,775; while the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) predicted 47,926. The City of La Quinta's General Plan development assumptions indicated that ultimate "build out" would reach 59,779.

According to the 1993 Master Plan, the City of La Quinta's goal was to become the most desirable community in the Coachella Valley. The plan had valid recommendations outlined in the **Priority Development Plan**; however, the priorities appear to have changed order of importance since 1993. In that plan they were:

1. Correct deficiencies that currently affect the existing population, such as a lack of community parks, special facilities, and neighborhood parks in certain areas;
2. Upgrade existing parks;
3. Develop recreation corridors (linear parks);
4. Acquire land and/or use agreements for future major parks;



5. Develop new parks and other facilities concurrently with new residential and commercial development; and
6. Protect critical resources.

The previous Master Plan focused on park development and indicated that “implementation of this plan will require detailed planning and design. It will be important to involve the community in the planning process on a case by case basis.”

Many conditions have changed in the last thirteen years. The City of La Quinta has experienced rapid growth and the demographics have dramatically changed along with its commercial development.

Some of the recommendations from the previous planning efforts of 1993 have been addressed:

- Positioning the Community Services Department as a major service for the City of La Quinta accomplished through its recognized contribution to the economic development of the City of La Quinta as well as a partner in prevention;
- Securing “equitable” funding in light of ever increasing demands for regional service, rising cost of service provision, and a general fund with many obligations;
- Designing, locating and orienting parks in such a way as to facilitate security, policing and maintenance (this is being addressed although it’s not fully accomplished);
- Ensuring that quality child care facilities and services exist for the families who reside and/or work in the City of La Quinta city limits (this is mostly accomplished by the YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, and CVRPD);
- Development of a senior center;
- Assisting private, non-profit youth recreation providers in accomplishing their programmatic goals within the context of the City of La Quinta; and
- All newly installed playground equipment complies with the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 and State Title 24 requirements.

Many of the original recommendations are still issues today:

- Acquiring land and the ability to develop it;
- Developing a network of bicycle paths or trails to link individual components of the park system and the various, non-gated residential areas; and
- Resolving the relationship in the provision of services by both the City of La Quinta and the Coachella Valley Recreation and Park District.

This Community Services Master Plan will re-evaluate the previous recommendations for relevance today based on the needs assessment; GRASP® analysis; current and projected demographics, trends and market analysis; Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis; financial viability and sustainability.



F. Methodology of this Planning Process

The Approach to the Scope of Work

Community Input/Public Involvement

An in-depth, efficient, open, and citizen-focused community process was created to assure policy makers, staff, user groups, associations, and other stakeholders that they were provided an opportunity to participate in the development of this plan, including:

- An orientation meeting with the project staff;
- Several public focus group meetings with citizen representatives that included those, but not limited to, persons associated with existing programs and activities, members of organized sports leagues, and any other groups or associations identified by city staff or through a publicly advertised notification process;
- An additional public involvement meeting to provide broad-based community input where the findings were presented;
- Many meetings or interviews with stakeholders to provide opportunity for discussion and address pertinent issues;
- Monthly project team meetings/conference calls to review tasks status; and
- Public hearings and/or presentations with the Community Services Commission, and/or City Council to present the draft and final Community Services Master Plan.

Needs Assessment/Statistically-Valid Survey

A statistically-valid survey is crucial in getting reliable information from the residents of the community to establish a baseline for setting realistic and achievable goals in the Community Services Master Plan. It is the only method that gives us statistically valid information, not only from the users, but from the non-users who are also taxpayers and voters. Based on the population of the City of La Quinta being roughly 38,000 according to the US Census projections, a sample of 1,750 households within the City of La Quinta and a separate sampling of over 300 residents and businesses from the City of La Quinta's Sphere of Influence area were used and provided a cost effective statistically-valid survey.

GreenPlay worked with ETC Institute/Leisure Vision to administer the survey completing 391 household surveys in the city limits and 35 in the Sphere of Influence based on the estimated population of the community. The survey was administered by mail and phone.

Questions on the survey were developed with GreenPlay project staff, the Community Services Commission, and the City of La Quinta's Project Team. Overall results for the survey of the 426 households have a 95% level of confidence with a margin of error of +/- 4.7% overall.

The survey instrument was a little over six pages in length. This allowed for twenty-four (24) questions to be asked, with many of the questions having multiple components.

National Benchmarking

Benchmarking "national averages" have been developed for numerous strategically important recreation planning and management issues including: customer satisfaction and use of recreation programs; methods for receiving marketing information about recreation programs; reasons that prevent members of households from using recreation programs



and facilities more often; priority recreation programs, outdoor and indoor recreation facilities to improve or develop; priority programming spaces for planned community and aquatic facilities; etc. This information was provided as compared to survey findings from the City of La Quinta to aid the planning process and consensus development.

Demographic and Trends Analysis

The constituency of the City of La Quinta was identified through a demographic analysis and market profile. Information was compiled from previous planning efforts including the City of La Quinta's past and current planning efforts, the U.S. Census Bureau, and other national and local sources. The analysis used approved methods to evaluate current and future users of recreation facilities, programs and services.

Inventory and Assessment of Existing Recreation and Park Facilities

A comprehensive assessment of each of the City of La Quinta's services was developed including parks, recreation, trails, open space and special use facilities to determine current conditions, use patterns, environmental issues and economic impacts. In addition, we included those services provided by other agencies that may impact the City of La Quinta.

The inventory also included an analysis of best possible providers of community and recreation services, and recommendations for minimizing duplication and/or enhancing possibilities for collaborative partnerships where appropriate. The inventory was compiled and analyzed to provide complete information.

Traditional Level Of Service, often called the **NRPA** (National Recreation and Parks Association) standards method, is typically based on providing X number of acres or X number of facilities per 1,000 population (or "**capacity analysis**"). This methodology was developed in the 1970's and 80's, and the methodology is not accurate for the majority of public agency usage. Even most NRPA officials are now calling this standards methodology "obsolete."

In order to create a way to standardize that is accurate, implementable, can be benchmarked, and is unique to your community, we have adapted these practices to a slightly different approach using a "**composite values analysis**." The *composite values analysis* methodology GreenPlay uses is proprietary and is called the **Geo-Referenced Amenities Standards Program (GRASP®)**. This methodology builds on the traditional capacity analysis, but can track not only the quantity (or capacity), but quality of components of an entire parks, recreation, and/or open space system.

The textual assessment included a comparative analysis to agencies of similar size and density, both regionally and statewide, using nationally accepted standards and **Geo-Referenced Amenities Standards Program (GRASP®)** technology. Specific park types were clearly defined. The inventory identified areas of parkland needed and provided a verifiable basis for acquisition opportunities along with future parkland development priorities.

All mapping of facilities and open spaces were incorporated into the dynamic digital database that becomes property of the City of La Quinta upon completion of the project.



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III. What We Want - Our Community and Identified Needs

A. Community Profile and Demographic Study

Service Area and Population

The primary service area for this analysis is the City of La Quinta, California. The demographics for the “Sphere of Influence” which is the portions of the unincorporated county areas adjacent to the City of La Quinta are not included in this service area market analysis. For this study, the Coachella Valley’s Economy, 2006 Report presented in October by *John Husing, Ph.D., Economics & Politics, Inc.*, and ESRI Business Information Solutions was examined to determine current and future population projections not including future annexation areas. ESRI was founded as Environmental Systems Research Institute in 1969.

The most current population estimate for the City of La Quinta was 39,614 for 2006 based on information from ESRI Business Information Solutions. According to the City of La Quinta Community Development Department the estimated population is 41,400 for January 2007; and the California State Department of Finance’s figure was 38,340 as of January 1, 2006.

Population, Age Ranges, and Family Information

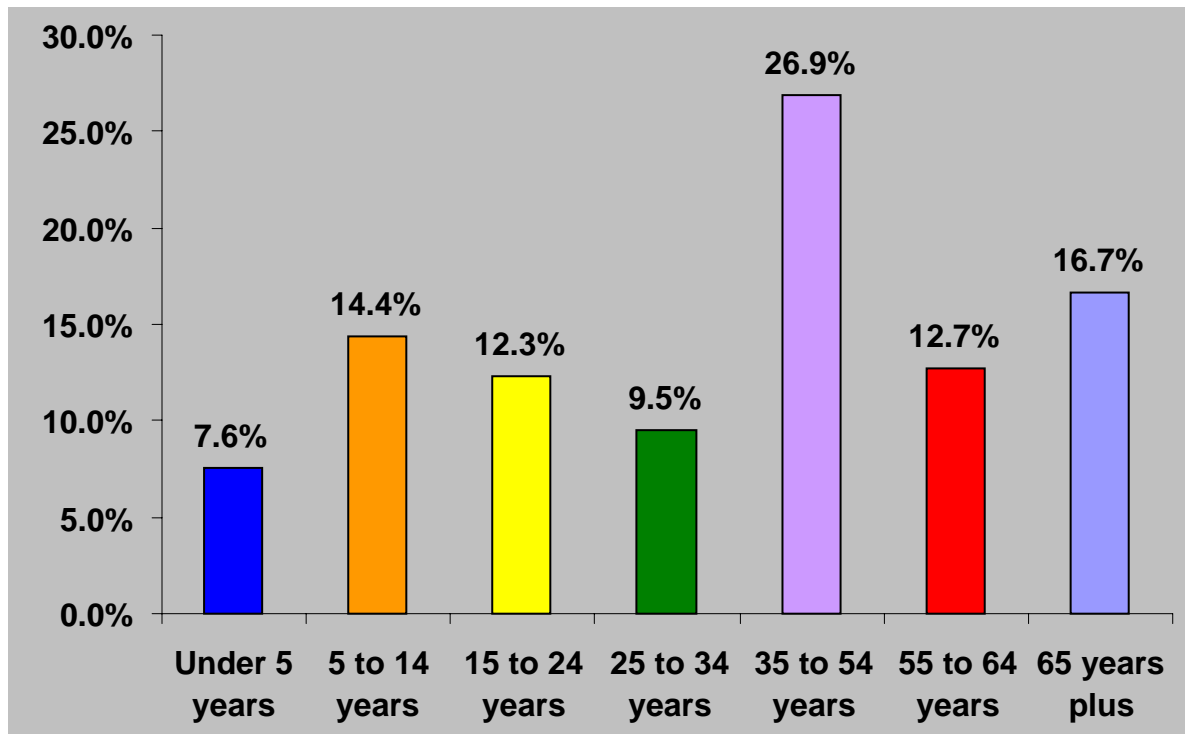
Age Distribution

The following age breakdown is used to separate the population into age-sensitive user groups and to retain the ability to adjust to future age-sensitive trends. Population distribution by age for the City of La Quinta is demonstrated in **Figure 1**.

- **Under 5 years:** This group represents users of preschool and tot programs and facilities, and as trails and open space users, are often in strollers. These individuals are the future participants in youth activities.
- **5 to 14 years:** This group represents current youth program participants.
- **15 to 24 years:** This group represents teen/young adult program participants moving out of the youth programs and into adult programs. Members of this age group are often seasonal employment seekers.
- **25 to 34 years:** This group represents involvement in adult programming with characteristics of beginning long-term relationships and establishing families.
- **35 to 54 years:** This group represents users of a wide range of adult programming and park facilities. Their characteristics extend from having children using preschool and youth programs to becoming empty nesters.
- **55 to 64 years:** This group represents users of older adult programming exhibiting the characteristics of approaching retirement or already retired and typically enjoying grandchildren.
- **65 years plus:** This group will be doubling in 14 years. Programming for this group should positively impact the health of older adults through networking, training and technical assistance, and fundraising. Recreation Centers, senior centers and other senior programs can be a significant link in the health care system. This group generally also ranges from very healthy, active seniors to more physically inactive seniors.



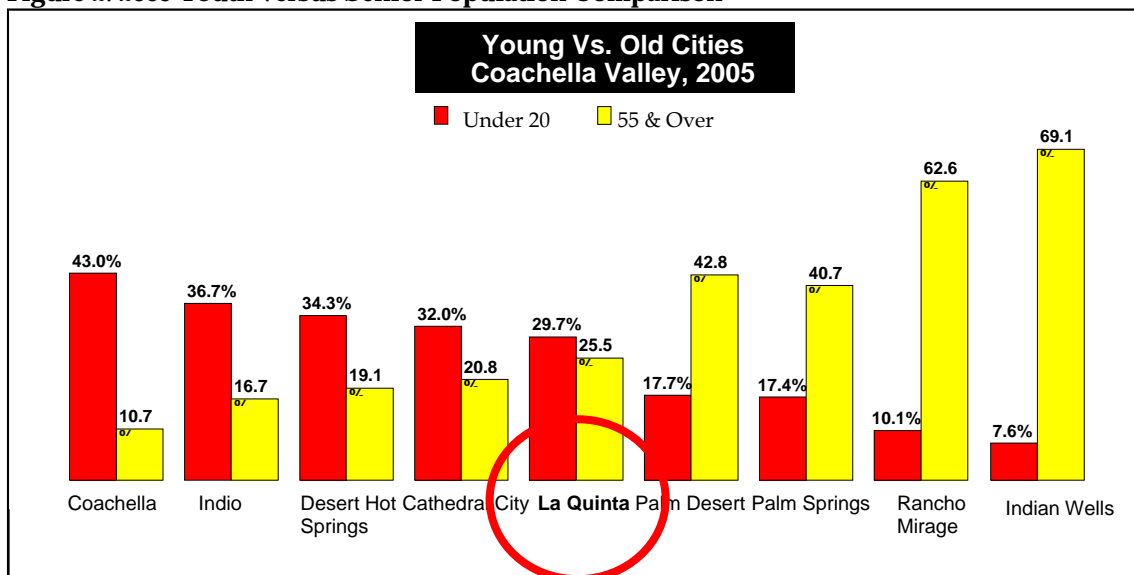
Figure 1: Population Breakdown – City of La Quinta, California (2006)



Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions

According to John Husing, Ph.D., the ratio of old to young in the City of La Quinta has 29.7% of the population under 20 years of age; and 25.5% of the population over the age of 55. **Figure 2** illustrates this and compares the City of La Quinta to other cities in the Coachella Valley.

Figure 2: 2005 Youth versus Senior Population Comparison



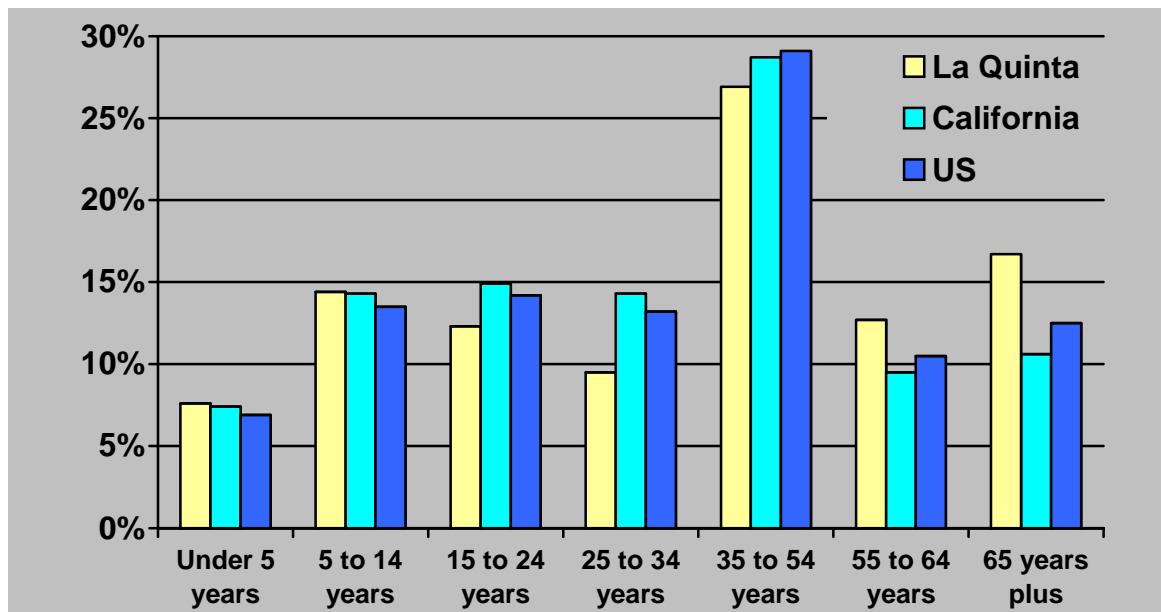
Source: Coachella Valley's Economy, 2006 Report - John Husing, Ph.D., Economics & Politics, Inc.



Population Comparisons

According to ESRI Business Information Solutions, the State of California is within two percentage points of national population percentages in all categories. The population of the City of La Quinta is within two percentage points of the State of California in the 0 to 4 and 5 to 15 years categories, however, it varies in the categories 15 to 24 and 25 to 34 years when compared to the State of California and the nation, and continues to show significant variances onward. The proportion of population in the category 25 to 34 is 4.8% less than the State of California and 3.6% less than the nation. Populations in 35 to 54 years are within 2.2% of the state and nation but begin to vary widely in the 55 to 64 and over 65 categories. In the 55 to 64 years category, the City of La Quinta exhibits a 3.2% increase in the population when compared to the state. The most significant increase is in the over 65 years category, where the City of La Quinta is 6.1% less than the state and 4.2% less than the nation. This is graphically represented in **Figure 3**. As suspected, the median age in 2006 for the City of La Quinta is somewhat older; it was 39.9 which is older than the median for the State of California (34.1) and the nation (36.5).

Figure 3: Population Comparisons – City of La Quinta, State of California, and United States (2006)



Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions

Gender

The 2006 population estimate for the City of La Quinta consists of 48.9% male and 51.1% female. The State of California consists of 49.9% male and 50.1% female, and the United States consists of 49.2% male and 50.8% female.

Race (2006)

Statistics gathered from ESRI Business Solutions provide the race breakdown for the City of La Quinta. As shown in **Table 2**, the race with the largest population is white (73.6%). Those of Hispanic Origin of any race make up 18.5% of the total population.



Table 2: Race Comparisons for 2006

| Race | City of La Quinta | State of California | United States |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| White Alone | 73.6% | 56.0% | 73.0% |
| Hispanic Origin (Any Race) | 37.8% | 36.7% | 14.8% |
| Black Alone | 1.5% | 6.4% | 12.6% |
| American Indian Alone | 0.7% | 1.0% | 0.9% |
| Asian Alone or Pacific Islander Alone | 2.4% | 12.0% | 4.4% |
| Some Other Race Alone | 17.7% | 19.0% | 6.4% |
| Two or More Races | 4.2% | 5.7% | 2.8% |

Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions

Education

According to ESRI Business Information Solutions, 26.7% of the City of La Quinta population has either a Bachelor’s or a Master’s degree. 26.6% of the population in the State of California and 24.4% of the population in the US has a Bachelor’s or a Master’s degree. The educational attainment breakdown is shown in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Educational Attainment – 25 Years and Older (2000)

| Degree | City of La Quinta | State of California | United States |
|---|-------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Less than 9 th Grade | 5.6% | 11.5% | 7.5% |
| 9 th -12 th Grade, No Diploma | 9.5% | 11.7% | 12.1% |
| High School Graduate | 20.5% | 20.1% | 28.6% |
| Some College, No Diploma | 29.3% | 22.9% | 21.0% |
| Associate | 8.4% | 7.1% | 6.3% |
| Bachelor’s | 17.4% | 17.1% | 15.5% |
| Master’s/Prof/Doctorate | 9.3% | 9.5% | 8.9% |

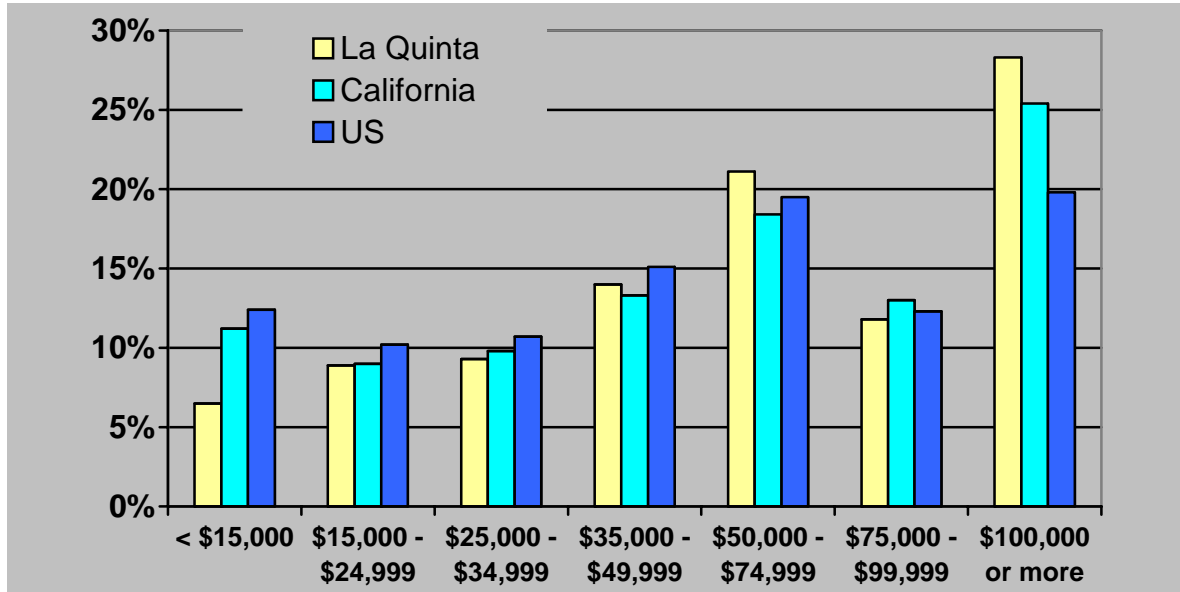
Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions



Household Income

According to ESRI Business Information Solutions, the estimated 2006 median household income for the City of La Quinta is \$62,381. Per capita income was \$32,646. The median household income for the State of California was \$57,776 and the US was \$51,546. The per capita income for the state was \$27,967 and the US was \$27,084. **Figure 4** shows households by income.

Figure 4: Households by Income – City of La Quinta compared to the State of California and the US (2006)



Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions

The largest share of households (28.3%) earns \$100,000 or more; 21.1% earns \$50,000 to \$74,999, and 14% of households earn \$35,000 to \$49,999. A significant portion of the population (15.4%) earns less than \$25,000.

The State of California is within two percentage points of national household income earnings in all categories. In most categories, the state’s percentage is lower for the lower incomes, and higher for all categories from \$75,000 up.

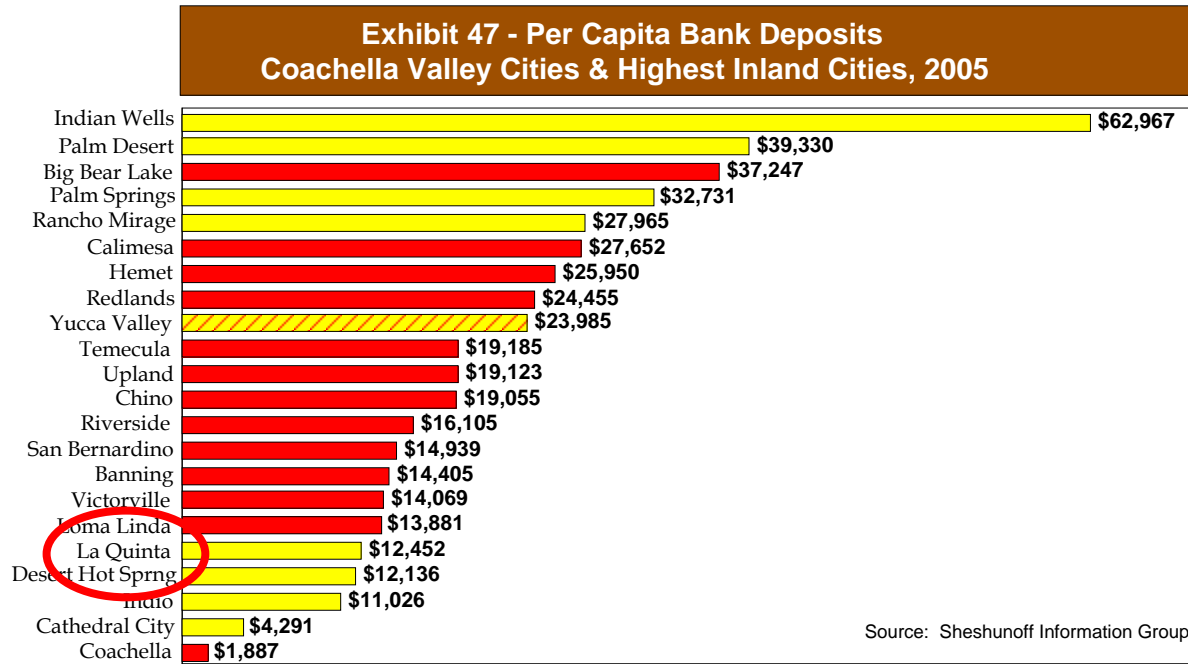
The City of La Quinta shows significantly less than the state in earnings of less than \$15,000 (4.7%) and is within 2 percentage points for \$15,000 to \$24,999, \$25,000 to \$34,999, \$35,000 to \$49,999, and \$75,000 to \$99,999. The City of La Quinta shows a significant increase in household earning \$50,000 to \$74,999 (2.7%) and an even more significant jump in households earning over \$100,000 (2.9%).

Community Wealth

Figures 5 and 6 show per capita wealth and assessed valuation of the City of La Quinta versus others in the Coachella Valley and Riverside County. The City of La Quinta rates the 5th lowest in per capita bank deposits, and the 3rd highest in assessed valuation.

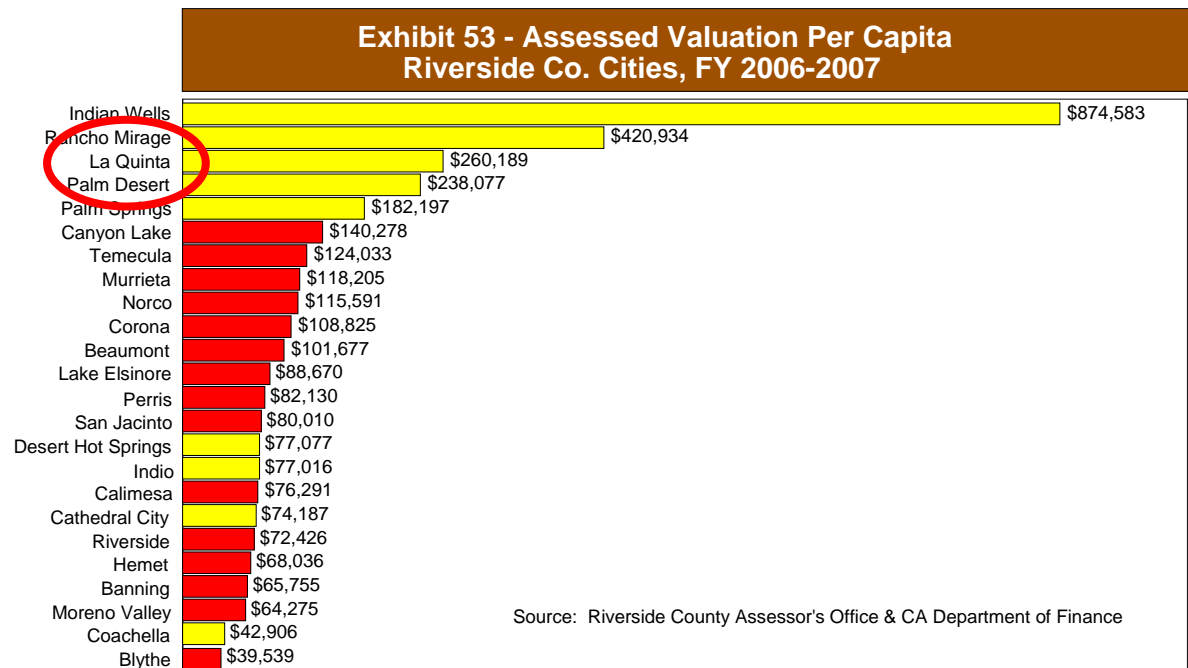


Figure 5: Husing's Exhibit 47 - Per Capita Bank Deposits



Source: Coachella Valley's Economy, 2006 Report - John Husing, Ph.D., Economics & Politics, Inc.

Figure 6: Husing's Exhibit 53 - Assessed Valuation Per Capita



Source: Coachella Valley's Economy, 2006 Report - John Husing, Ph.D., Economics & Politics, Inc.



Household Size and Units

The 2006 average household size in the City of La Quinta is 2.76 people. Nationally, the average size is 2.59 and in the State of California it is 2.93. **Table 4** shows that a significantly smaller percentage of housing units in the City of La Quinta are rented when compared to the state and the nation. Note that row three (3) of the table refers to just the total vacant housing units and does not consider renter/owner, seasonal/second home factor, etc...

Table 4: Housing Units (2006)

| Degree | City of La Quinta | State of California | United States |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Owner Occupied Housing Units | 62.7% | 55.2% | 61.6% |
| Renter Occupied Housing Units | 17.4% | 38.9% | 28.9% |
| Vacant Housing Units | 19.9% | 5.9% | 9.5% |

Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions

According to the *Coachella Valley's Economy, 2006 Report* by John Husing, Ph.D., Economics & Politics, Inc., existing home prices in the City of La Quinta rank 8th out of fifteen cities in the Coachella Valley and Southern California counties for the 2nd quarter of 2006. The median home price from this list is \$502,954; with the City of La Quinta's existing home prices roughly \$4,500 over median. The existing home price in the City of La Quinta is \$507,500 for the 2nd quarter of 2006; as compared to:

- Yucca Valley at \$ 202,500;
- Desert Hot Springs at \$262,945;
- Coachella at \$308,000;
- San Bernardino County at \$360,000;
- Indio at \$365,085;
- Cathedral City at \$380,000;
- Riverside County at \$409,000;
- **La Quinta at \$507,500**
- Palm Desert at \$520,359;
- Los Angeles County at \$545,000;
- Palm Springs \$561,915;
- San Diego County at \$564,000;
- Orange County at \$700,000;
- Rancho Mirage at \$790,000; and
- Indian Wells at \$1,068,000



Employment

The estimated 2006 employed work force in the City of La Quinta is 16,545 or 42% of the population 16 years and over (ESRI Business Information Solutions). The employed work force in the State of California is 43% and the Nation is 46% of the population 16 years and over. Of the employed work force 16 and over in the City La Quinta, 58.3% are engaged in White Collar professions such as management, business, financial and sales, and the balance



of the work force is engaged in service (23.3%) and blue collar (18.4%) professions. The percentage of White Collar Employees is within 2% points of the nation’s average, but 4.5% less than the state percentage. The percentage of employees in the service industry is significantly higher than both the State and Nation (by 7.10% and 6.9% respectively).

2006 Consumer Spending

The Consumer Spending shows the amount spent on a variety of goods and services by households that reside in the market area. Expenditures are shown by broad budget categories that are not mutually exclusive. Consumer spending does not equal business revenue. **Table 5** shows the relative 2006 Consumer Spending for the City of La Quinta for entertainment/recreation.

Table 5: Consumer Spending Index (2006)

| Entertainment/Recreation | City of La Quinta | State of California | United States |
|---|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Total Dollars Spent in 2006 (estimated) | \$61,499,059 | \$47,503,146,149 | \$377,062,919,763 |
| Average Spent - per capita | \$4,283 | \$3,828 | \$3,306 |
| Spending Potential Index* | 130 | 116 | 100 |

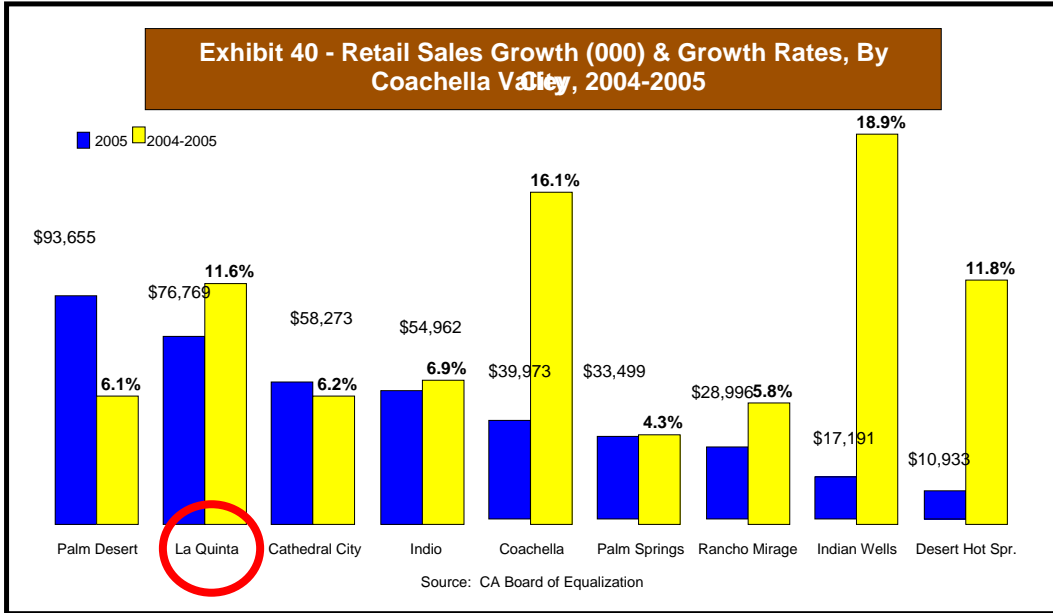
** The Spending Potential Index represents the amount spent in the area relative to a national average of 100. Source: Expenditure data are derived from the 2001, 2002, and 2003 Consumer Expenditure Survey, Bureau of Labor Statistics. ESRI forecasts for 2006 and 2011.*



Retail Sales

2005 Retail sales figures in the City of La Quinta increased 11.6% over 2004, according to John Husing, Ph.D. **Figure 7** shows where the City of La Quinta is in relation to other cities in the Coachella Valley.

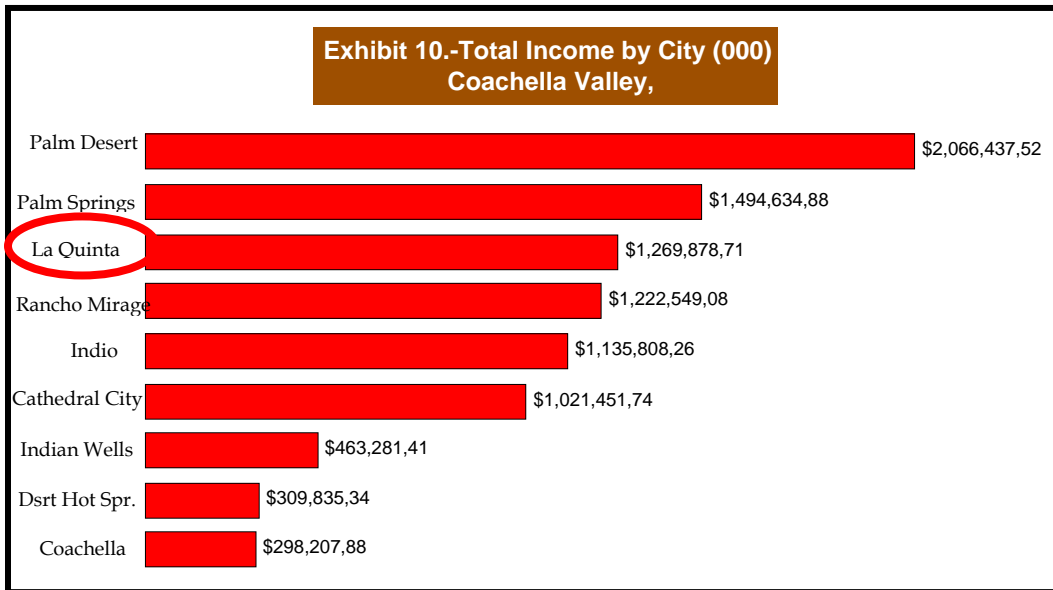
Figure 7: Husing’s Exhibit 40 - 2005 Retail Sales Growth and Growth Rates by City



Source: Coachella Valley’s Economy, 2006 Report - John Husing, Ph.D., Economics & Politics, Inc.

Figure 8 shows that in 2005, the City of La Quinta ranked as the 3rd most economically powerful city overall in the Valley, behind Palm Desert and Palm Springs.

Figure 8: Husing’s Exhibit 10 - 2005 Economic Power by City - Measured in Total Income



Source: Coachella Valley’s Economy, 2006 Report - John Husing, Ph.D., Economics & Politics, Inc.



Health and Obesity

The United Health Foundation has ranked California 22nd in its 2005 State Health Rankings, the same rank as in 2004. The state's biggest strengths include:

- low prevalence of smoking
- a low rate of infant mortality
- a low rate of cancer deaths
- a low rate of occupational fatalities

Some of the challenges the State faces include:

- high rate of uninsured population
- high violent crime rate
- high incidence of infectious disease

Source: <http://www.unitedhealthfoundation.org/shr2005/states/California.html>

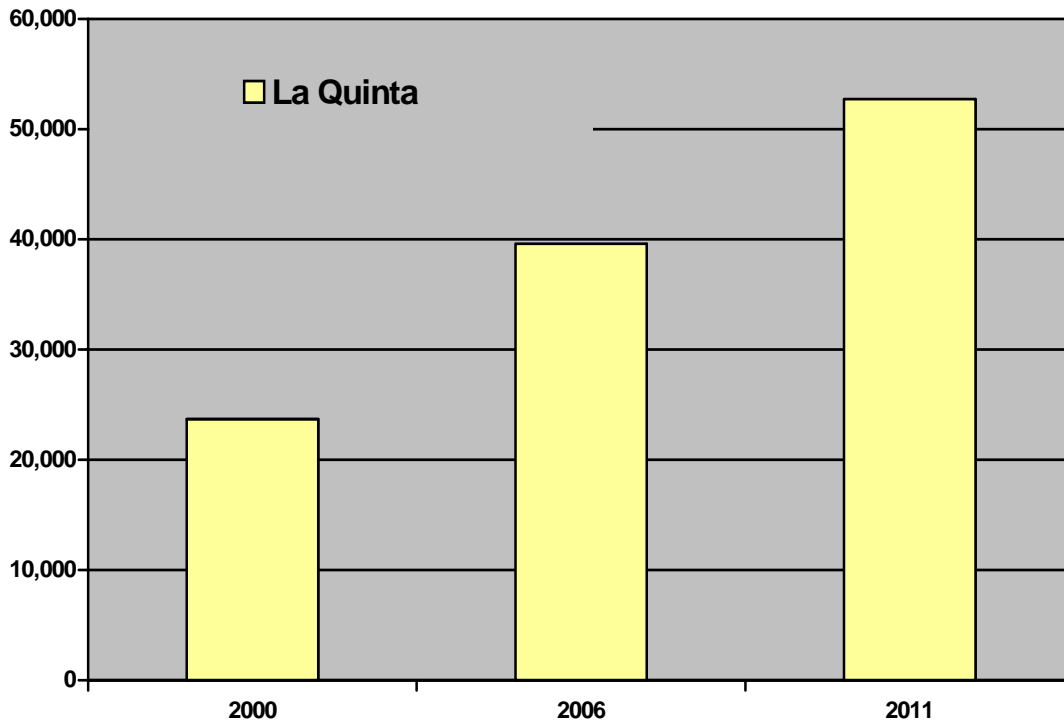


Population Forecasts

Although we can never know the future with certainty, it is helpful to make assumptions about it for economic reasons. 2000 population is from the 2000 US Census. 2006 and 2011 projections for the City of La Quinta were derived from ESRI Business Information Solutions. **Figure 9** details the growth which doesn't take into account any future annexation potential.



Figure 9: Population Projections 2000 to 2010



2000 = 23,694; 2006 = 39,614; 2011 = 52,736

Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions

According to the 2000 census, the population in the City of La Quinta was 23,694. ESRI estimates that the 2006 population is 39,612 although the official city population is **38,340**. ESRI projects that the 2011 population will be **52,736**, while the City of La Quinta estimates 2010 population at about 47,000. The 1993 Master Plan indicated that the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) predicted the 2010 population of the City of La Quinta to reach 31,775; while the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) predicted 47,926. The City of La Quinta’s General Plan development assumptions indicated that the ultimate “build out” would reach 59,779. Of course a housing boom, a rapid infusion of people, surrounding communities, housing prices, a growing economy and future annexation is not reflected in these numbers.

According to the City of La Quinta Community Development Department, the 2006 figures reflect the results of a boom housing cycle now leveling off. Near term growth will not likely be at the same levels. The 2000 Census did not include almost four (4) square miles that are now in the City of La Quinta boundaries. Also, there are approximately twelve (12) square miles that the City of La Quinta might possibly annex over several years, within the City of La Quinta’s Sphere of Influence, that could give the City of La Quinta certain years in which they experience instantaneous population increases due to the annexation of already populated areas.



B. Community and Stakeholder Input

Users and Stakeholders

During the week October 18-20, 2006, several focus group meetings were conducted with members of the public, various stakeholders, City of La Quinta department heads, staff and members from two City of La Quinta commissions. In addition, emails were reviewed; staff interviews and subsequent follow up telephone conference calls were conducted with other stakeholders. The following public groups were engaged in the process:

- Focus groups
- Stakeholder meetings
- Input from over 200 youth
- Seniors meeting
- Emails
- Neighboring cities and the CVRPD
- Desert Sands Unified School District
- La Quinta Arts Festival Foundation
- La Quinta Historical Society
- La Quinta Playhouse
- Boys and Girls Club
- YMCA of the Desert
- Friends of the Library
- Friends of the Senior Center
- Stewards of the Cove
- Service Organizations
- Sports associations (LQYSA and AYSO)
- Staff interviews
- Planning and Community Services Commissions

Focus Group Results

The next step was to incorporate and validate the information gained from the stakeholders and public focus groups through the needs assessment and the results from the citizen opinion/satisfaction survey instrument. This allowed the testing of what was heard from the users against the citizens of the City of La Quinta as an entire community, hearing from both the users and the non-users. A statistically-valid random survey which represents the community's desires as a voting community was developed and subsequently distributed.

The focus group results were summarized for the Department, and were shared with the Community Services and Planning Commissions. The compiled results can be found in **Appendix A, Focus Group Results**. Key elements include:



Facility Improvements/New

- Modifiers
 - Benches
 - Drinking fountains
 - Interesting topography
 - Restrooms
 - Shade
 - Tables
 - Picnic shelters
 - Public art
 - Natural areas
 - Open water
 - Lighting
 - Street access
 - Bike racks
 - Mature landscape
 - Trails
 - Volleyball
 - Playground equipment
- Communication tools
- Re-purposing
- Technology
- Parking
- New components

Program Improvements/New

- Preservation
- Interpretive
- More communication about services
- Coordination among providers
- Alternative sources of revenue
- Transportation for seniors
- More programs
- Farmers Market

Top Priorities

- Land
- Maintaining and improving what we have
- Preservation
- Activity space
- Partnerships
- Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)
- Funding



Stakeholder Input - Youth Sports Associations

In general, many of the sport associations that provided input on the athletic field needs in the City of La Quinta expressed a concern about the lack of parking and field space due to competition among the users. Overall, they are somewhat satisfied with the quality and condition of the fields depending on the sport. There were general suggestions to build a sports complex, more lit fields and separate the different sports.

Stakeholder Input - Seniors

The primary issues facing the seniors include:

- Variety, quality of services and availability of services to all
- Open space and environment- views, preservation, not building on our mountains
- Need more maintenance staff to keep up with all needs at the Senior Center; also need set up, tear down help; the center gets a lot of use from renters and other users
- Ability to pay and have quality instructors and programs
- Affordability - very rich and very poor community - how do we deal with?
- Addition to Senior Center - classrooms and study areas, fitness, therapy pool, better kitchen, storage
- Safety and security in the community - especially Civic Center Campus

Stakeholder Input - Various Emails

- Adult classes at night
- The dog park needs shade, water and fencing
- Some parks need maintenance attention
- Youth baseball/softball fields

Stakeholder Input - Youth Workshop

A meeting was conducted at the Boys and Girls Club in October 2006 to solicit input from the youth of the City of La Quinta. The meeting was well-attended, with participants ranging in age from elementary school to high school. At this meeting, a report was presented by a student that summarized the opinions of 7th-graders at the City of La Quinta Middle School. Their main concerns were:

- Better security and more lights at parks
- Bigger skate parks
- Cleaner bathrooms
- More trash cans

When asked what they like to do in parks and for fun, answers from the participants at the meeting included the following:

- Water-related activities like being at the river, fishing, going to the lake or the beach, and swimming
- Activities like climbing trees, rock climbing, playing basketball or football, skateboarding, riding mini-bikes and ATV's in the desert, horseback riding, and volleyball



- Passive activities such as playing a musical instrument, reading, playing with their cat or walking the dog, walks in general, arts and crafts, dancing
- Entertainment such as movies, going to Disneyland, going to the mall, playing video games, or watching TV

Things they liked about being at the Boys and Girls Club included:

- Doing activities with friends, such as using the library and playing pool, whiffleball, karate, dodgeball, flag football, festivals and parties, dances, Keystone Teen Group and Teen Time (both of these programs are offered by the Boys and Girls Club)
- They also liked that it was a safe place, with opportunities to help others through community service, and the fact that friends play there and they get along really well

Things they like about parks include:

- They like that the parks are clean and provide a place to watch people and be seen by others, and a place to play, lie down and read a book, have a picnic, hang out with friends, and be away from home with friends and family. They also like having parks close to home.
- They enjoy activities such as playing baseball, going to the water park, watching people play softball, and using the swings, spring riders, and other playground equipment, and going to the dog park.

Things they like to do in parks but don't have include:

- Amenities and activities such as a pool with a diving board, a waterslide, toddler pools, hot tubs for kids at the pool, an amphitheater, more soccer fields, a football stadium, sports complex, weight rooms, a lake with fish in it, BMX track, all-ages playground and a fishing pond
- Some more creative and unusual ideas included rock climbing, doggie pools, a place for doing art, a baby park for toddlers, public art to climb on, a trampoline, bungee jumping, and areas for boys-only and girls-only
- Entertainment features such as a movie theater, theme park, petting zoo, and food
- Programs such as equipment check-out, dance studio, basketball camps, boxing, history and science programs, day care, computers, holiday programs, community gatherings, and other events
- They also mentioned having good parking, security cameras, street lights, more benches, drinking fountains, lockers, and a place for adults to drop off the kids and go do things parents enjoy

Stakeholder Input - AVID - (Student Success Path for 7th and 8th Grade La Quinta Middle School Students)

Almost all of the letters we received from this group were concerned with unclean bathrooms and that parks were unsafe with homeless people, trash and drugs. The primary issues facing the youth include:

- Having a healthy and active lifestyle
- Cleaner and updated park bathrooms
- Safer parks with more police monitoring and patrolling (especially from 2pm to midnight)



- Better lighting in parks
- Shade, tables and water fountains
- Places for families to have fun
- Homeless and drugs
- Graffiti and vandalism
- Parking
- Trash

The primary desires of this group are:

- Put an AVID program at the Civic Center
- More special interest camps (sports, cheerleading, dance)
- Animal (dog) parks; more waste receptacles and bags for feces
- Heated pool in winter
- Skate park for all abilities
- Special Events
- More basketball, volleyball and tennis courts
- More and updated playground equipment; sand boxes
- More pool hours
- More fields
- Replace woodchips in playgrounds with another material
- Climbing wall in parks; BMX
- Sports equipment in parks (like balls and racquets)

Results from the City of La Quinta GRASP® Survey

During the public meetings held in the City of La Quinta in October 2006, a survey was handed out to aid in the GRASP® analysis. The survey included three questions that measure residents' desire to have outdoor recreation facilities and within walking distance of their homes. The third question asked specifically about features that make a park a more pleasant place to be. Final tabulated data and chart results can be found in **Appendix B**.

Respondents were asked to indicate the top five outdoor facilities that they would like to have within walking distance from their home. They were then asked to indicate how far they would be willing to walk to each of the facilities. The following facilities were used in the survey: youth baseball/softball fields, youth soccer/football fields, youth lacrosse fields, adult softball/baseball fields, equestrian trail, off leash dog park, walking and biking trail, walking loop in a park, nature trail, nature center, natural area, picnic shelters/areas, children's playground, open grassy area, skate park, BMX track, inline skate rink, youth golf facility, senior adult center, indoor pool/leisure pool, performing/cultural arts facility, indoor fitness and exercise space, outdoor basketball, outdoor tennis, interactive water feature, outdoor swimming/leisure pool, and golf course.

The other questions asked respondents to rank a list of seventeen comfort and convenience features found in parks according to importance. These items included: shade, benches, mature landscaping, natural areas, open water, variety of topography, good street access, restrooms, drinking fountains, public art, park lighting, bike racks, vehicular parking, sand volleyball, playground equipment, and trails.



Thirty-nine surveys were collected during the three days of meetings. While survey content differed from surveys of other western communities, results of the surveys show interests consistent with those of other western communities the size of the City of La Quinta, however the results also show interest in features not common in similar communities.

Outdoor Recreation Facilities

Specifically, participants showed a high degree of interest in being able to walk to trails. The top three ranked components were walking and biking trails, walking loop in park and nature trails. Natural areas also ranked highly with survey participants.

The walking tolerance for getting to outdoor recreation facilities is generally around 10-20 minutes. Thirty percent (30%) or more of respondents listed their desire to have picnic shelters/areas, children's playground, nature trails, nature center, walking and biking trails, walking loop in park and natural areas within a 20 minute walk of home. Items that respondents would like to have within a 10-minute walk from their homes included walking and biking trails, open grass and indoor fitness. Several things also stand out as items that residents would not walk to, including a golf course, equestrian trails, a skate park, BMX track, inline skate rink and youth golf facility.

Park Features

As in many communities, shade ranked as the most important feature to have in a park. The second most preferred element was benches and/or tables. Restroom availability and natural areas led the remaining and more evenly ranked features.

Statistically-Valid Survey

The City of La Quinta conducted a Community Attitude and Interest Survey during October and November of 2006 as part of the Community Services Master Plan Study to set priorities for the future development of facilities, programs and services in the community. The survey was designed to obtain statistically valid results from households throughout the City of La Quinta with a small and separate sample from the SOI. The survey was administered by mail and phone.

ETC Institute/Leisure Vision worked extensively with City of La Quinta officials, as well as members of the GreenPlay LLC project team in the development of the survey questionnaire. This work allowed the survey to be tailored to issues of strategic importance to effectively plan the future system.

The goal was to obtain a total of at least 350 completed surveys within the city limits, and 50 from the SOI for a total of 400. These goals were accomplished, with a total of 391 surveys having been completed within the City of La Quinta and 35 from the SOI.

The overall results of the random sample of 426 households from within the City of La Quinta and the SOI have a 95% level of confidence with a precision of at least +/-4.7%. The complete survey results Executive Summary can be found in **Appendix C**.



Key Survey Findings

The organizations used by the highest percentage of respondent households are: private country clubs (25%), City of La Quinta Community Services (23%), churches (21%) and private or public schools (19%). Other key providers on the list rank in order: Coachella Valley Recreation and Park District (12%), the Boys and Girls Club (10%), and YMCA of the Desert (7%).

Fifty-seven percent (57%) of respondents indicated being either very satisfied (23%) or somewhat satisfied (34%) with the overall value their household receives from City of La Quinta parks and recreation service.

Of the parks visited by the respondents in the last year, La Quinta Park ranked highest followed by Fritz Burns Park, Adams Park, and the Bear Creek Trail. Over 70% of the respondents have visited a City of La Quinta Park in the last year. And when asked to rank the physical condition of the parks, 35% ranked them excellent, and 57% ranked them good.

The parks and recreation services that respondents feel should receive the most attention over the next two years is maintenance of the City of La Quinta parks (31%). Other parks and recreation services that respondents feel should receive the most attention include: the number of walking/biking trails (26%) and the number of the City of La Quinta parks (20%).

The improvements that respondents feel would add the most value to parks are: shade trees/structures (26%), restrooms (24%), park lighting (14%), parking (12%) and drinking fountains (12%).

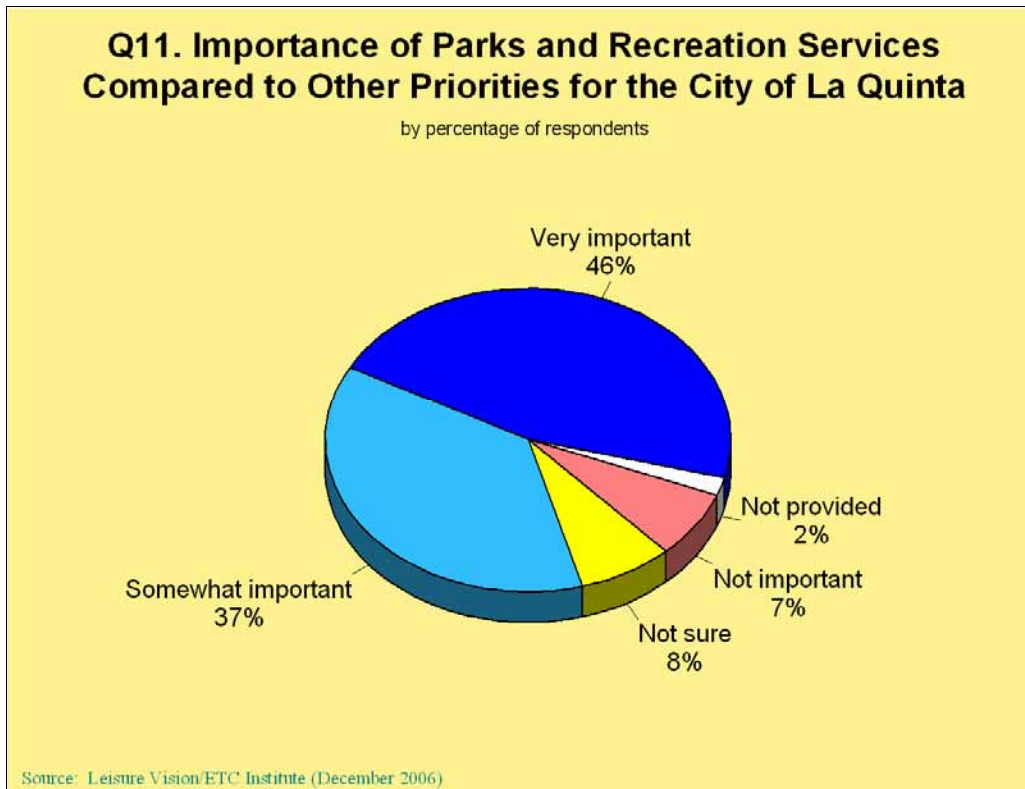
Nineteen percent (19%) of respondent households have participated in recreation programs offered by the City of La Quinta during the past 12 months. Overall satisfaction with the programs offered by the City of La Quinta showed 88% rated the programs as excellent (39%) or good (49%). The programs that respondents rated as the most important are: fitness and wellness programs (26%), senior adult programs (18%), community special events (17%), adult education (16%), and youth sports programs (16%). It should also be noted that fitness and wellness programs and youth sports programs had the highest percentage of respondents select them as their first choice as the most important program.

The actions that respondents would be most willing to fund with their tax dollars are: renovate/develop walking and biking trails (43%), purchase land to develop for passive use (24%), develop new indoor recreation facilities (24%), renovate/develop athletic fields for youth sports (23%), and purchase land for open space (22%). It should also be noted that renovate/develop walking and biking trails had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the action they would be most willing to fund with their tax dollars.



Figure 10 shows that eighty-three percent (83%) of respondents feel that improvements to parks and recreation services are either very important (46%) or somewhat important (37%) compared to other priorities for the City of La Quinta. Only 7% of respondents feel that parks and recreation improvements are not important compared to other priorities, and 8% indicated “not sure.”

Figure 10: Importance of Parks and Recreation Services – City of La Quinta Survey Results



The reasons preventing the highest percentage of respondent households from using parks, facilities, and programs of the City of La Quinta more often are: “We are too busy or not interested” (27%), “I do not know what is being offered” (12%), “Program times are convenient” (10%), and “Security is insufficient” (8%).

Of those City of La Quinta residents responding, 48% lived in a gated community, and 52% do not; 28% have lived in the City of La Quinta for 3-5 years and another 25% for 6-10 years; 50% of the respondents were between the ages of 35-54 and have 2 persons living in their household. There was a slightly higher percentage of respondents in the 55-64, and 65+ than the demographics of the community.

Importance-Unmet Needs Matrix

The Importance-Unmet Needs Matrix is a tool for assessing the priority that should be placed on parks and recreation facilities and recreation programs in the City of La Quinta.



Each of the facilities and programs that were assessed on the survey were placed in one of the following four quadrants:

- **Top Priorities** (higher unmet need and higher importance). Items in this quadrant should be given the highest priority for improvement. Respondents placed a high level of importance on these items, and the unmet need rating is high. Improvements to items in this quadrant will have positive benefits for the highest number of City of La Quinta residents.
- **Opportunities for Improvement** (higher unmet need and lower importance). Respondents placed a lower level of importance on these items, but the unmet need rating is relatively high. Items in this quadrant should be given secondary priority for improvement.
- **Special Needs** (lower unmet need and higher importance). This quadrant shows where improvements may be needed to serve the needs of specialized populations. Respondents placed a high level of importance on these items, but the unmet need rating is relatively low.
- **Less Important** (lower unmet need and lower importance). Items in this quadrant should receive the lowest priority for improvement. Respondents placed a lower level of importance on these items, and the unmet need rating is relatively low.

The matrices show the Importance-Unmet Need for facilities and programs and they follow in **Figures 11 and 12**. Priority consideration should be given to the *Top Priorities* quadrant and secondarily on the *Opportunities for Improvement* quadrant.

Top priorities for facilities include: performing/cultural arts facility; walking/biking trails; indoor fitness/exercise facility; nature trails/nature center; off leash dog park; natural areas/wildlife habitats; and small neighborhood parks.

Top priorities for programs include: fitness/wellness; community special events; music; senior adult and adult education programs; adult golf programs and tournaments; adult art, dance and performing arts; and day trips and extended trips.



Figure 11: Importance-Unmet Need Assessment Matrix for Facilities

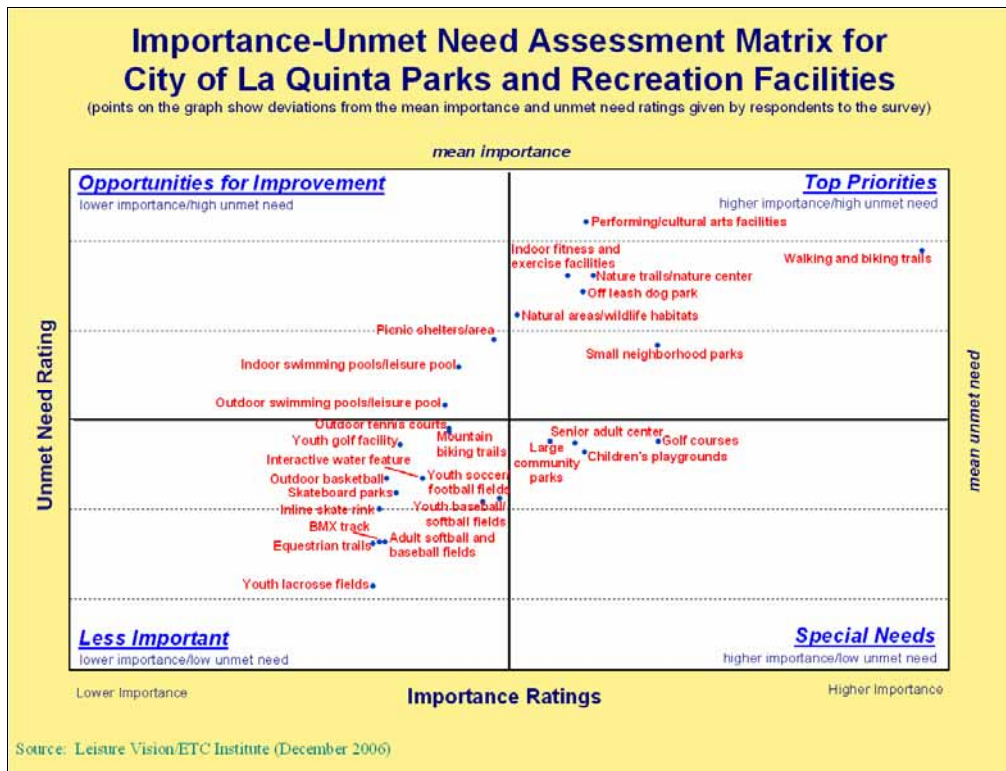
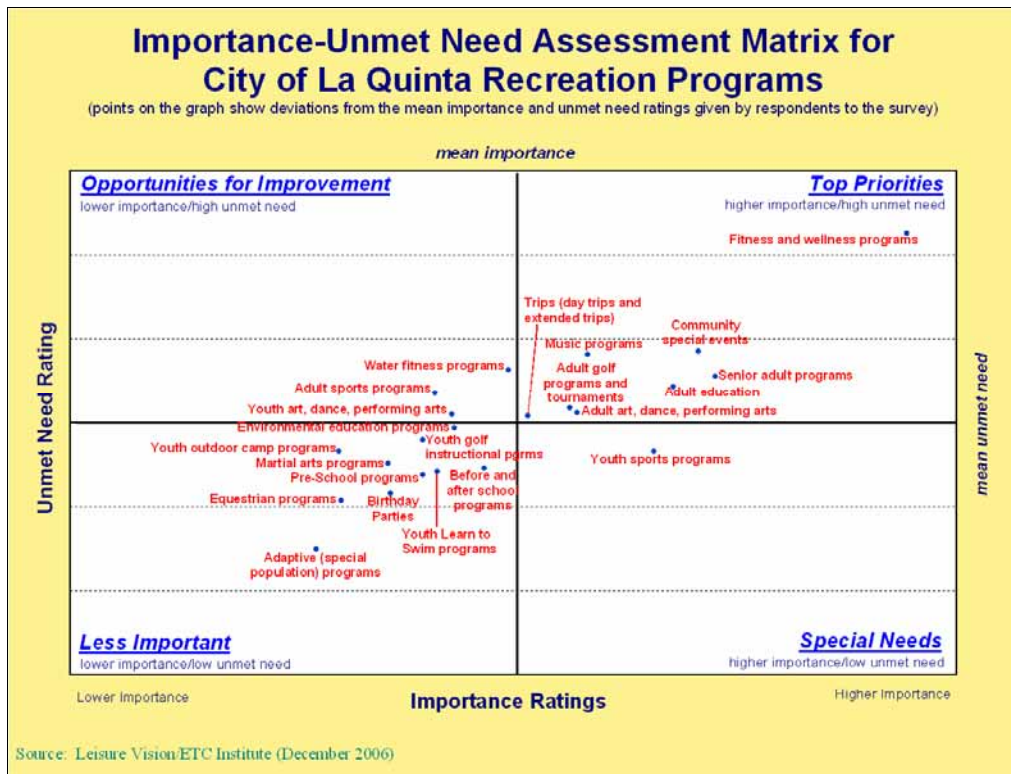


Figure 12: Importance-Unmet Need Assessment Matrix for Programs



Survey Questions National Benchmarking

ETC Institute/Leisure Vision benchmarked key questions against other communities across the nation. The entire results can be found in the Survey Report provided by Leisure Vision (a separate document). When compared to other cities completing similar surveys, the City of the City of La Quinta rates:

| Quality of Parks | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
|------------------|-----------|------|------|------|
| La Quinta | 35% | 57% | 6% | 1% |
| National Average | 30% | 53% | 12% | 2% |

When compared to other cities, the City of La Quinta rates somewhat lower than the national average on the need for walking/biking trails; small neighborhood parks; nature center/nature trails, natural areas/wildlife habitats; large community parks; picnic shelters/areas; indoor fitness/exercise facilities; playgrounds; outdoor and indoor aquatic facilities; outdoor basketball; youth baseball/softball fields; inline skate rink; and adult softball/baseball fields.

When compared to other cities, the City of La Quinta rates performing/cultural arts center; golf courses; senior adult center; off leash dog parks; outdoor tennis courts; skateboard parks; and BMX tracks more important than the national average.

Not compared for a lack of corresponding data but important to the City of La Quinta are mountain biking trails; interactive water feature; a youth golf facility; equestrian trails; and youth lacrosse fields.

C. California Trends

California State Parks - Recreation Trends 2005

The *Parks and Recreation Trends in California 2005*[®] report is an element of the California Outdoor Recreation Planning Program, formulated under the provisions of Chapter 5099 of the California Public Resources Code. Dr. Emilyn Sheffield, Chairperson of the Department of Recreation and Parks Management at the California State University, Chico prepared this report.

According to the report, California's drivers for the changing parks and recreation trends include:

- Growing population;
- Cultural and racially diverse population;
- Aging population - senior population will double by 2020;
- Baby boomers retiring;
- 18-40 year old adults creating new ways to experience the outdoors;
- Kindergarteners through 12th graders will accelerate the rate of change;
- California's active outdoor lifestyle;
- California's natural scenic beauty;
- Californians' differing participation rates and favored activities; and
- Advances in technology.



The report details the desired activities in California which are available almost year round and are low cost, don't usually require special equipment or highly developed skills. They do require public investment in the infrastructure necessary to support the activity. Favored outdoor recreation programs for California adults and youth are included in the following **Table 6**.

Table 6: Favorite California Outdoor Activities

| All California | California Youth |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Walking for fun/fitness | Walking for fun/fitness |
| Driving for pleasure | Pool swimming |
| Wildlife viewing | Beaches, surf play |
| Trail hiking | Visiting non-beach water sites |
| Using open turf areas | Bicycling on paved surfaces |
| Pool swimming, beach swimming | Using open turf areas |

Source: California Department of Parks and Recreation. (2003, December). *Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California-2002: An Element of the California Outdoor Recreation Plan*.

The VIP Project: Looking for Trends

Several "big-picture" trends are impacting the parks and recreation profession and the delivery of service in the State of California. According to an article in the *Summer 2006 California Parks and Recreation Society Magazine*, (Volume 62, No.3, Page 18) Laura Westrup from the Planning Division of the California State Parks indicates the following six key areas:

1. Explosive growth and shifts in the demographic groups (aging Baby Boomers; rapid growth of the Inland Empire region; immigration; increasing under 18 population; cultural diversity)
2. Changing recreation patterns (blocks of leisure time; re-entering the workforce post initial retirement with an emphasis on avocation; lifelong learning and developmental programming; 24/7 service; multi-tasking)
3. Favorite outdoor activities tend to be those that are inexpensive and don't require a great amount of skill or driving distance to participate. When compared to the nation, Californians prefer nature- and environment-centered programming and participate more frequently in walking, hiking, backpacking, developed and primitive camping, driving for pleasure, picnicking, and visiting historic/cultural sites, nature centers, zoos, etc.
4. The obesity epidemic in California is costing over \$2 billion annually in medical, lost productivity and worker's compensation. Improving health and wellness through participation in physical activities and outdoor recreation programs are paramount for both youth and adults.



5. The need for convenience, even in recreation and leisure pursuits.
6. Technology's role: the need to stay connected through the internet; new light weight, durable materials for construction and equipment; advances in all aspects of technology and its role in everyday life.
7. Public policy trends include a willingness to pay for services and facilities versus the reality of closing parks; the urban space crunch and the need for dedicated leisure and open space; deferred maintenance costs versus an investment in the infrastructure; and park and recreation as an essential service.



TrendScan Parks and Recreation - California

According to TrendScan Parks and Recreation, the following issues are hot in California:

- Competitive rock climbing is in
- Fishing makes a come back
- People want life-changing experiences versus stuff
- Fight clubs are up and coming
- Juvenile crime is on the rise
- California ranks 17th overall on parks and recreation spending per capita
- After school and out-of-school programs are important to families
- Parks and Recreation is part of a systematic approach to childhood obesity
- Maturing Baby Boomers offer great opportunities
- Five California Mega-trends
 - Two large age cohorts are the young and old
 - Immigration
 - California is an expensive state in which to live, work and play
 - Two Californias: Norcal and Southland
 - Population growth

Excerpts from the report can be found in **Appendix D**.



D. National Trends

The following national trends in recreation and leisure are relevant to the City of La Quinta. The National Sporting Goods Association Survey on sports participation found the top ten activities ranked by total participation included many outdoor activities that are consistent with the California Trends outlined above:

- Walking;
- Swimming;
- Bicycle riding;
- Hiking; and
- Fishing.

And the following active, organized or skill development activities still remain popular:

- Field sports;
- Skateboarding and inline skating;
- Golf;
- Aerobic exercise and working out; and
- Yoga, Tai Chi, Pilates, Martial Arts, etc.

Regarding **Recreation Facilities**, the following trends are relevant to the City of La Quinta; however, due to the desert climate, shade plays a vital role in all outdoor facilities:

- The current national trend is toward a “one-stop” facility to serve all ages. Large, multi purpose regional centers help increase cost recovery, promote retention, and encourage cross-use.
- Agencies across the U.S. are increasing revenue production and cost recovery.
- Amenities that are becoming “typical” as opposed to alternative:
 - Multi-purpose, large regional centers (65,000 to 125,000+ sq. ft.) for all ages/abilities with all amenities in one place. This design saves on staff costs, encourages retention and participation, and saves on operating expenses due to economies of scale.
 - Leisure and therapeutic pools
 - Interactive game rooms
 - Nature centers/outdoor recreation and education centers
 - Regional playground for all ages of youth
 - In-line hockey and skate parks
 - Partnerships with private providers or other government agencies
 - Indoor walking tracks
 - Themed décor
- Amenities that are still considered “alternative” but increasing in popularity:
 - Climbing walls
 - BMX tracks and Indoor Soccer
 - Cultural art facilities
- Green design techniques and certifications such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). A recent BCA survey indicated that 52% of the recreation-industry survey respondents indicated they were willing to pay more for green design knowing that it would significantly reduce or eliminate the negative impact of buildings on the environment and occupants.



And regarding **Recreation and Park Administration**:

- Level of subsidy for programs is lessening and more “enterprise” activities are being developed, thereby allowing subsidy to be used where deemed appropriate.
- Agencies are hiring consultants for master planning, feasibility, and strategic/policy plans.
- Recreation programmers and administrators are being involved at the beginning of the planning process.
- Information technology allows for tracking and reporting.
- Pricing is often done by peak, off-peak, and off-season rates.
- More agencies are partnering with private, public, and non-profit groups.
- Organization is structured away from specific geographic units into agency-wide sections for athletics, youth/teen sports, seniors, facilities, parks, planning, etc.

There are national trends in relation to the **Master Planning Process** as well:

- Most parks and recreation master planning and other long-range planning processes consider a 20 year, or longer, horizon to assure an adequate vision to move from existing conditions to a desired future. However, the plan itself is most often written for a 5 year period requiring a major update at that time interval. In this age of information, mobility, and ever changing advancements in technology, it is impossible with any acceptable degree of reliability to predict demographics, interests, and how technology will change the way we live work and play, much beyond the 5 year timeframe. The 5 year timeframe also coincides with a typical timeframe for an agency’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP).
- Most parks and recreation master planning and other long-range planning processes rely on the mission and vision statements developed as a result of the development of the plan and its public process to guide and drive the facilities, programs and operation of the organization.
- Traditional master planning efforts relied heavily on national level of service standards for the provision of parks and facilities (number of acres or number of facilities/1000 population). Due to unique circumstances in most communities, including but not limited to things such as climate, other providers, exposure to trends, demographics, etc.), today’s master planning efforts rely much less on pre-determined standards, and much more on fresh citizen input, often through community surveys that reach current users, as well as non-users of park and recreation systems, supplemented by community open houses, focus groups and stakeholder interviews.
- Early master planning efforts did a good job identifying the initial one-time costs associated with capital improvements. Today’s master plans consider the ongoing operating costs and potential revenue generation of equal importance. In addition, plans are identifying traditional and alternative funding sources for projects.

More trends regarding Environmental Stewardship, Urban Communities, the Role of Physical Activity and its Effect on Health, Partnerships, Programming for Pre-School Age Youngsters, and Employment Practices can be found in **Appendix E**. Please refer to this Appendix for the entire national trends document.



IV. What We Have Now – An Analysis of Public Programs and Spaces

A. Community Recreation Programs

The City of La Quinta began providing parks and recreation services in September 1991 when they hired their first parks and recreation manager. The previous Master Plan indicates that there was a desire to become a full service department and eliminate any reliance upon the Coachella Valley Recreation and Park District to provide facilities, programs or leisure services. This “detachment” process has begun and was an assumption of the previous Master Plan, with the goal being to provide the citizens of the City of La Quinta with “higher quality programming and accessibility to residents.”

City of La Quinta - Community Service Events

The City of La Quinta has been dubbed “the Gem of the Desert.” The City of La Quinta offers the following special events throughout the year.

La Quinta Arts Festival

This annual event in March welcomes visitors to view the works of over 250 North American artists in the picturesque Civic Center Campus. This nationally recognized event is produced and funded by the La Quinta Arts Foundation and sponsored by the City of La Quinta. City of La Quinta staff works with the Foundation to prepare the site and utilize facility space at the campus prior and during the event. The City of La Quinta also purchases pieces each year as part of the Civic Center Art Purchase Program.

Egg Hunt and Chalk Drawing Contest

For children 2 to 14 years old, this free event is held around Easter and features a hunt for candy, eggs and prizes and an appearance by the Easter Bunny.

Community Concerts and Open Air Cinema

Free events held throughout the year.

Halloween Carnival and Costumer Contest-

In cooperation with the Boys and Girls Club

Christmas Tree Lighting and Breakfast with Santa

Seasonal holiday events both offered free and for a fee.

Other Events

- Tiny Tot Events
- Senior Events
- Grand Opening and Dedication Events
- La Quinta’s Annual Community Picnic and Birthday Bash
- Pet Events
- Stargazing in La Quinta
- Health Fairs



- Open Houses
- Arts and Crafts Bazaar
- Trails Days
- Anniversary Events-This year the staff will coordinate with other local agencies to provide a wide variety of events to the community for the 25th anniversary of the City of La Quinta.

City of La Quinta - Community Services Programs

- Sports Leagues and Tournaments (the staff would like to create more leagues for adult volleyball, softball, basketball and dodge ball, but the City of La Quinta needs facilities/fields)
- Excursions
- Leisure Enrichment Classes (ex: kickboxing, fitness, yoga, language, tai chi, acting)
- Music and Special Interest
- Arts and Crafts
- Summer golf tour
- Computer Classes
- Teen Dances
- Senior Center Classes (for adults and seniors)
- Monthly Luncheons for Seniors
- Senior Dances

City of La Quinta - Other Community Services

- Park Rentals
- Facility Rentals
- Community Grants Program-Coordination of the community wide grants program for non-profits
- Oversight of the Art in Public Places Program and the Civic Center Art Purchase Program
- "Pillars of the Community" Recognition
- Tribute and Acknowledgements
 - Veterans
 - Sports Figures
 - Artists

Scholarship Program

The Community Services Department does not have a formal Fee Reduction or Scholarship Program for Community Services classes.

Youth Non-Profit Sports Associations

The following youth sports associations and organizations serve the recreational athletic needs of the City of La Quinta's school age children.

- La Quinta AYSO (according to AYSO they have 1551 kids per season; 70% or 1081 participants are from the City of La Quinta; 30% or 470 participants come from



various other cities including Bermuda Dunes and the City of Indio which accounts for 343 participants);

- Palm Desert Football (221 kids per season, 99 are the City of La Quinta kids);
- La Quinta Youth Baseball league (1500 kids per season, not necessarily all City of La Quinta kids); and
- Various travel teams and clubs teams from schools
- LQYSA (La Quinta Youth Sports Association) Baseball and Softball organization at the Sports Complex

The City of La Quinta and the youth sports associations use city-owned fields and school facilities. There isn't enough capacity for the existing youth sports like soccer and baseball. There are a number of kids from neighboring cities on the City of La Quinta teams; perhaps if Indio and Coachella build sports complexes or more fields, the City of La Quinta will no longer have capacity issues in the short term, but there aren't enough dedicated spaces per type of sports or full sized sports fields to handle the future growth. Multiple age groups are practicing at the same time (which could create safety concerns). The City of La Quinta needs more lit fields and more full sized fields in part due to servicing a portion of non-residents of the City of La Quinta.

The top priority for all the organizations is not enough fields or space to meet the growing demand for play. A dedicated sports complex is desired.

B. Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Facilities

City of La Quinta Park and Recreation Facilities

The previous Master Plan indicated that the number one choice of the residents city-wide as determined by the survey was a multipurpose center, with the municipal pool being second. The City of La Quinta subsequently built the Senior Center and a swimming pool at Fritz Burns Park. The pool is maintained in cooperation with the YMCA of the Desert.

La Quinta City Hall and Civic Center Campus

The seventeen and a half acre campus contains indoor facilities within an attractive park. The indoor facilities include the senior center, library, and city hall. The campus is host to many pieces of community art through the Art In Public Places and the Civic Center Art Purchase programs.

La Quinta Senior Center

The 10,000 square foot facility features a kitchen and dining area and several classrooms. The center is open for Seniors 8-5 Monday-Friday and then youth and adult programming takes over with leisure enrichment programs. The center may need more classrooms, and a fitness facility. The facility is heavily programmed September to April.

The Senior Center is supported by The Friends of La Quinta Senior Center (a non-profit, membership based organization funded through donations). Most participants get their information by word of mouth and the senior newsletter. Most instructors either teach free or are independent contractors.



Aquatic Center

The 10,000 square foot facility features a rectangular outdoor pool. See **Partnership with the YMCA**.

La Quinta Public Library

This 20,000 square foot facility was designed for expansion and opened in summer 2005. The existing unused section of the library is used for recreation and community events. The Library is issuing 500 new cards per month with 5-8,000 items in circulation at any time. The facility currently has room for events. The classroom at the library is used by the library, by the City of La Quinta, and by the University of San Bernardino for continuing education.

Staff is in discussions with Library staff in regard to expansion of the Library into the Phase 2 area. However an expansion will take the space away from the recreation programming and rentals for private parties and community events. The expansion will also lose reception space for weddings held at the gazebo at the Civic Center; but the newly opening Embassy Suites and La Quinta Resorts should be able to fill the need. Seating is full in the current space at peak times.

La Quinta Historical Museum

This facility is presently under design and construction for a \$2.5 million addition of 9,000 sq ft. and will open in 2008. It is located on the south side of La Quinta Community Park and will be managed by the Community Services Department. Fundraising, volunteering and some programming will be done by the La Quinta Historical Society.

SilverRock Resort

The City of La Quinta was named America's "Best Place to Live for Golfing" by *Robb Report* magazine in its Best Places to Live issue (July 2003). The 546 acre SilverRock Resort is an Arnold Palmer Classic Course that is a future home joining the rotation of the Bob Hope Chrysler Classic. The course may host many nationally recognized tournaments and events. It was rated one of the Top 10 New Courses You Can Play In America, *Golf Magazine, 2005*; the only California course to make the Top 10 List. This public course features 18 holes of championship golf, indoor and outdoor dining, a well stocked Golf Shop, qualified PGA golf instructors, and rate discounts for the City of La Quinta residents.

La Quinta Skate Parks

The unsupervised skate parks, located at Fritz Burns Park and La Quinta Park are open daily from 6:00 am to 10:00 pm. Skateboards and in-line skates may be used within the outdoor, partially shaded facility. Proper safety equipment is required and organized activities are not permitted without city approval.

Partnership with the Desert Sands Unified School District

Outdoor space at the La Quinta Middle School is used heavily for community use. The High School is used entirely by the High School and it spills over onto community spaces. Elementary School fields are not lit - these are not used by the community. The La Quinta High School field rents for \$5 per hour per field, plus \$7 per hour for lights, plus \$500 deposit for all organizations. The Community Services Department utilizes indoor space at



the High School for evening programs under a facility use agreement. The high school Golf Program also utilizes the SilverRock Golf Course for practice and golf matches.

Partnership with the YMCA

The City of La Quinta contracts with the YMCA of the Desert to operate, manage and program the pool during the summer months. The YMCA offers after school programs at the elementary schools.

Boys and Girls Club

The Boys and Girls Club usually contains its programs within its own facility. The City of La Quinta recently constructed a small fitness area as an addition off the gymnasium of the Boys and Girls Club Facility. The fitness center is open 6-10pm Monday-Thursday and Saturday 8-1 pm and shares the gymnasium use after 7:30pm during the school year. Since opening in July 2006, there are over 160 members. The Boys and Girls Club facility is 12,000 square feet and includes a gymnasium, several classrooms, a game room, restrooms and a kitchen area.

Coachella Valley Recreation and Park District - Community Center

The Coachella Valley Recreation and Park District (CVRPD) own and operate a small community center (1200 square feet), a baseball field and an amphitheater at the La Quinta Community Park (formerly Francis Hack Park). In 2007 the District began offering monthly concerts at the amphitheater in January through May. CVRPD provides programs in two of the schools. Fitness, yoga, dance, gymnastics and preschool programs are offered at this location. The Coral Mountain Interpretive Center is in design with construction anticipated to begin in 2007.

City of La Quinta - Alternative Providers of Various Recreation Services

While some alternative and complementary services exist within the service area, specifically within the gated communities, regional forecasted population growth, the demand for indoor aquatics and recreation facilities and the obesity epidemic demonstrate a continued need for all public, private and non-profit venues. Often, existing providers are operating at or near capacity during peak operating hours.

A general overview of the services provided by these facilities is listed subsequently. This information is relevant in defining the facility and program components of a community services master plan. It also provides awareness of the alternative providers and their distinct differences, insight regarding the market opportunities in an area, how new facilities could provide services in an underserved market, and how partnerships and open communication with various agencies could help limit duplication of services.

Creating synergy based on expanded program offerings, and collaborative efforts can be beneficial to all providers as interest grows and people gravitate to the type of facility and programs that best suit their recreational needs and schedules. However, while competition provides choice for the consumer it will be important for an agency to track program



offerings at other facilities. This will help reduce potential duplication and/or saturation of program offerings and identify where deficiencies are occurring in the market.

The facilities listed on the following pages offer a wide variety of indoor fitness, aquatics and recreation programming.

Alternative Providers, Public, Private and Non-Profit

The following is a list of alternative recreation, fitness and exercise, and golf. Specific information was obtained through the consultant's site tours and stakeholder interviews, the Chamber of Commerce, DexOnline, La Quinta Magazine, Discover (www.thedesertsun.com/discover; A Newcomer's Guide to Living and Playing in the Coachella Valley; 2006/2007), the City of La Quinta's telephone yellow pages and various websites.

Exercise, Fitness and Gyms

1,2,3 Fit

79440 Highway 111, La Quinta, CA (760) 771-0974

World Gym La Quinta

46760 Commerce Ct, La Quinta, CA (760) 564-9822

Golf

Neighboring Cities and some private country clubs are also available

La Quinta Resort and Club Mountain Course, Dunes Course (resort and semi-private)
49-499 Eisenhower, La Quinta, (760) 564-5729

Palm Royale Country Club (public)

78-259 Indigo Drive, La Quinta, (760) 345-9701

PGA West ® (semi-private)

Jack Nicklaus Tournament Course, Pete Dye Stadium Course, Greg Norman Course
56-150 PGA Blvd., La Quinta (760) 564-7170

Trilogy Golf Club

60-151 Trilogy Parkway, La Quinta (760) 771-0707

Partnerships Opportunities with the City of La Quinta - Non-Profit and Profit Organizations for Health, Wellness and Fitness Programs

Other current and potential partners may include:

Hospitals - Kaiser Permanente Medical Center in the City of La Quinta and hospitals in neighboring communities:

JFK Medical Center and Eisenhower Medical Center

WellMax Center for Preventive Medicine in the City of La Quinta

PRN California Rehab and Sports in the City of La Quinta

Neighboring Cities



Heath Fair Partners include:

Eisenhower Immediate Care - flu/pneumonia shots
Alzheimer's Association - resources
Advanced Hearing Systems - hearing consultations
Desert Aids Project - information and resources
Guilda's Club - cancer support groups, resources and support
Health Insurance Advocacy Program - advocate for seniors
Chiropractor- Dr. Greenwood
Office on Aging - resources for seniors from nutrition to transportation
Osher Life Long Learning - adult classes - California State San Bernardino
Laser Center @ Contour Dermatology - skin cancer screenings
Seniors Helping Seniors - home care and companionship
Stroke Recovery Center - resources for stroke patients and family members
Tai Chi Education & Research Institute - exercise and independent living
Eisenhower Center for Healthy Living - screenings: blood pressure, carotid artery checks, and nutritional counseling
Sunline Transit Agency - transportation discounted for seniors
Law Offices of David M. Grossman - free legal consultation
Scott Lanterman, Financial Advisor - free financial help
A.A.R.P. Tax Assistance - Tain Soreboe
Social Security - information on Medicare Part D
John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital - blood pressure and body mass index test

C. Opportunities to Improve Indoor Facilities and Programs

Many opportunities exist to continue to improve the indoor facilities and programs. Emphasis should be placed on the results of the statistically-valid survey.

- Performing arts facilities ranked 4th in needed facilities, 1st in unmet need, and 5th most important; and music programs ranked 3rd in need and 6th in importance, and adult art, dance, and adult performing art programs ranked 6th in need and 7th in importance; adult and youth performing art programs ranked 9th and 10th respectively in unmet need;
- Indoor fitness and exercise programs ranked 1st in need and importance and unmet need; fitness and exercise facilities ranked 9th in needed facilities and most important, and 3rd in unmet need expansion of the fitness area at the Boys and Girls Club facility;
- Cooperative conversion of the CVRPD facility to a fitness and exercise facility;
- Expansion of the senior center to add additional space for programs and fitness;
- Increased partnerships for the provision of services in general;
- The Ahmanson House (currently used as a temporary building at the SilverRock Golf Course which will be replaced by a permanent clubhouse) is owned by the City of La Quinta. This facility could be available for public and community use once the permanent clubhouse is constructed.



D. Outdoor Active Facilities and Sports

The City of La Quinta's pleasant winter climate draws an active population of both seasonal and full-time residents who enjoy golfing, hiking, bicycling, and other outdoor sports. It also has permanent residents with families that enjoy more traditional park activities such as recreational sports leagues, playing on a playground, and picnicking. The combination of mountain wilderness and developed parks serves the needs of both visitors and residents.

Other opportunities include:

- Investigation of youth sports associations' participation could determine where children live and impact to the field capacity issues
- Coordination of youth athletic programming and field development with neighboring cities
- Field capacity issues may be resolved in the short term once Indio or other neighboring cities build additional fields
- Long term field development should be considered a regional issue and increasing the conversations among the cities is paramount

E. Parks and Natural Resources Facilities

The City of La Quinta is nestled against the Santa Rosa/San Jacinto Mountains that frame the Coachella Valley. The mountains provide a scenic backdrop and opportunities for hiking and enjoying nature. The Fred Wolff Bear Creek Nature Preserve is situated here as well, and a paved multi-use trail skirts the base of the mountains in the Cove area of the City of La Quinta.

The City of La Quinta's dry climate offers ample opportunities to get outside and play, particularly in the months from October through April when temperatures are ideal and there is lots of sunshine. While many of the neighborhoods in the City of La Quinta are gated communities with their own parks, golf courses, and other amenities, the City of La Quinta provides a variety of parks and other facilities for people to enjoy.

The largest city-owned parks are La Quinta Park, at 18 acres, the Civic Center Campus at 17.5 acres, and Fritz Burns Park at 12 acres. These parks provide community-wide activities such as soccer, baseball, and tennis, as well as playgrounds, picnic shelters, and open turf for informal play.

La Quinta Park offers a very popular interactive water feature and play structure for kids, as well as picnic tables, and lighted fields for soccer, lacrosse, basketball, and baseball. There is also a skate park and a loop walk that is scheduled to receive distance markers to enhance its use for fitness and wellness. Parking is provided at this park, but is inadequate during busy periods.

Fritz Burns Park contains a dog park, picnic areas, playground, tennis courts, skatepark, and the City of La Quinta's municipal outdoor pool (operated by the YMCA of the Desert). The park's location makes it an important amenity for a part of the City of La Quinta that does not have any private parks or other facilities. Situated between Old Town and the Cove and easily accessible from Washington Street, the park offers a lot of activity in a small amount



of space. This fits well with the demographics of this part of the City of La Quinta, which is influenced by a Hispanic culture and heritage that enjoys opportunities for everyone in the family to be together and have a good time.

The Civic Center Campus is a jewel within the City of La Quinta, offering an attractive place for strolling, relaxing, and enjoying special events. There is an attractive lake and waterfall, numerous pieces of art, and a series of commemorative memorials. The city's library and senior center are located within the campus, as is the municipal building. Parking is provided at a variety of locations around the park.

Across Old Town, to the west of the Civic Center Campus, is La Quinta Community Park. Owned and maintained by the Coachella Valley Recreation and Park District, it serves as an anchor on either end of an axis through Old Town. It provides a more active complement to the Civic Center Campus, offering park components such as a shaded playground, picnic shelters, and a lighted ball field, and a small amphitheatre. A community center is located within it and the Historical Museum is located adjacent. Parking is conveniently located around the park. They are planning several concerts at the park this season.

The locations and relative positions of the Civic Center Campus, Old Town, and La Quinta Community Park are ideal for making downtown La Quinta a very livable place, enhancing opportunities for redevelopment, infill, and economic development within Old Town.

The City of La Quinta's other parks provide opportunities for outdoor recreation in proximity to neighborhoods throughout the city. These typically contain a playground, picnic tables, and open turf areas for informal play. In addition to these, there are private parks within the gated communities that serve a similar function.

Schools provide another part of the City of La Quinta's parks and recreation infrastructure. Of particular importance is the Sports Complex at La Quinta Middle School. The City of La Quinta shares in the operations and maintenance of this complex that contains five ball fields with lights, along with open turf and batting cages. Plans are underway to renovate and upgrade this facility.

Lake Cahuilla Park, managed by Riverside County Parks and Recreation, is another important facility in the City of La Quinta. Swimming, camping, and picnicking are offered here, and there is a swimming pool, playground, and open turf. Non-motorized boating, fishing, and horseback riding are other activities enjoyed at the park.

Art is an important part of the the City of La Quinta experience. The City of La Quinta has a successful Art In Public Places program that has integrated art into parks, streetscapes, and commercial areas throughout the community.

Coral Mountain Interpretive Center is located on Avenue 58 by Lake Cahuilla County Park in the City of La Quinta. This 619.51 acre area has just come into Coachella Valley Recreation and Park District inventory base and is not yet open.



Trails are an important part of the outdoor recreation experience. The Bear Creek Trail and bike routes around the Cove provide access to Fritz Burns Park as well as the Santa Rosa/San Jacinto National Monument. Trails in other parts of the City of La Quinta are limited and do not provide good connectivity.

F. Opportunities to Improve Outdoor Facilities, Parks and Natural Areas

Providing new parks within the built-out areas of the City of La Quinta is difficult, so it is important that existing parks provide the maximum benefits to serve the needs of the community. This means that facilities within existing parks should be well-maintained and kept updated to serve the most current needs. Needs may change as demographics change, so remodeling or re-purposing existing facilities should be a consideration over time.

Opportunities to assure that newly developing parts of the City of La Quinta have connected greenspace should not be overlooked. One opportunity that has been missed in the built-out parts of the City of La Quinta has been the use of drainage ways as public amenities. Many of these have been privatized or engineered in ways that preclude their use as greenways and trail corridors. As development expands into new areas, consideration should be given to creating a network of greenways and trails that connect neighborhoods and parks to one another. This is especially important to consider when gated communities could potentially conflict with this goal.

The Whitewater Storm Channel currently provides no recreational amenities in the City of La Quinta. By working with the Coachella Water District and adjacent communities, it is possible that this could become a major greenway corridor through the region. Issues of flooding, safety, and other concerns would need to be worked out, but such hurdles have been overcome in other places throughout the Coachella Valley.

Another opportunity may exist for passive park development on the corner of Jefferson Avenue and 50. The 40 acre parcel is on the SilverRock property.

G. Current Level of Service – The GRASP® Analysis

Inventory Process and Method

The inventory compilation is a three-step process: preliminary data collection, site visits, and data review and compilation. In the first step, the planning team prepared a preliminary inventory using a geo-referenced black and white aerial photo obtained from USGS (flight date unknown). In addition, the team referenced the color aerial available from the City of La Quinta's website on-line mapping application. The preliminary inventory included components as identified in the aerial photo and as listed in the Department's recreation activity guide. Each of the components was given a GIS point and a name. Using the preliminary inventory the planning team visited each city property in October 2006.

For the second step, the team visited the City of La Quinta and conducted staff interviews and site visits. Based on staff input, a standard of service was established that is provided to



the community by the City of La Quinta. This standard of care forms the basis on which the component rating system was based. While on site, the inventory team used the following three-tier rating system to evaluate the City of La Quinta's facilities:

- B = Below Expectations (1),*
- M = Meets Expectations (2,) and*
- E = Exceeds Expectations (3)*

During the site visits the following information was collected:

- Component type
- Component location
- Evaluation of component condition - record of comfort and convenience features
- Evaluation of comfort and convenience features
- Evaluation of park design and ambience
- Site photos
- General comments

Components were evaluated from two perspectives: first, the value of the component in serving the immediate neighborhood, and second, its value to the entire community. In addition to the components' scores, each park site or facility was given a set of scores to rate its comfort, convenience, and ambient qualities. These scores were used as modifiers that affect the scores of the components within the park or facility during the GRASP® analysis. Each component was given a score to indicate how well it met expectations for its intended function. The scores were based on both the condition and ability of the component to meet the needs of the users of the park.

To complete the inventory, GIS and CAD data was obtained from the City of La Quinta. Information collected during the site visit was then compiled and corrections and comparisons made to GIS. In addition all parcels and GIS were checked for accuracy and area information was gathered. Following the comparisons and compilation, the inventory was sent to the City of La Quinta staff for corrections and comments.

The compiled inventory data can be found in **Appendix F for the inventory spreadsheet and in Appendix G for the GRASP® Inventory Map.**



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V. How We Manage – Analysis of Findings and Oversight

A. Administration, Management and Organizational Development

Community Services Department Structure

The City of La Quinta Community Services Department has a five member Community Services Commission acting in an advisory capacity.

The Community Services Department is comprised of four divisions; Administration, Seniors, Recreation, and Golf and Parks. The Senior Division operates and manages the Senior Center, lunch program, special events and senior programming. The Recreation Division provides a variety of programs, special events, classes, and athletics for residents and guests of all ages. The Golf and Parks Division provides maintenance and care of all parks, fields, pools and recreational facilities as well as the golf course and Art in Public Places. Interior facility maintenance is provided by the Building and Safety Department.

The Community Services Department also oversees the contract for services for the La Quinta Library.

In the Administration Division, two full time positions support the Department's efforts; an Office Assistant and a Secretary.

In the Senior Division, one full time Supervisor, one full time Coordinator and a full time Office Assistant oversee the facility, senior programs and services, along with a number of volunteers.

In the Recreation Division, two full time Supervisors and one full time Coordinator oversee various programming areas and services including:

- Youth and adult programs
- Youth and adult athletics
- Excursions
- Special Events
- Part-time Employees and staffing
- Community Services Grants Program
- Student Art Wall Program
- Computer registration and brochure development
- Park shelters, room rentals and field scheduling

The Golf and Parks Division is managed by one fulltime Manager. This position has oversight of the SilverRock Resort operations contract, the park maintenance contract, and the Art in Public Places maintenance.

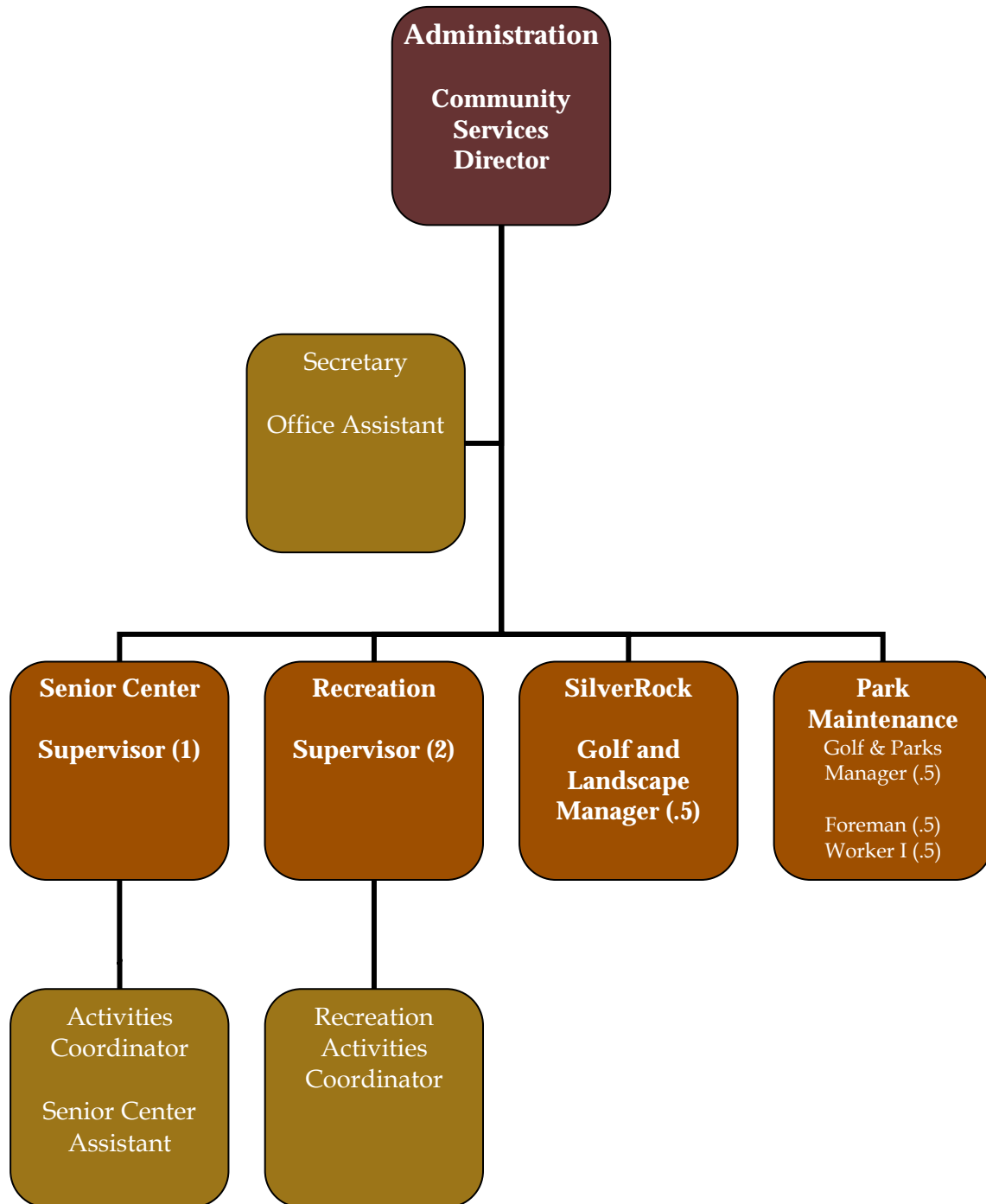
The Manager and three full time Supervisors directly report to the Department Director along with the Administrative Office Assistant and Secretary.



Organizational Chart

The following **Figure 13** represents the City of La Quinta Community Services Department's organizational chart as found in the 2006/2007 Budget documents.

Figure 13: Community Services Organizational Chart



Budget

The Community Services Department's annual operations and maintenance budget was anticipated to increase for 2006/2007 over 2005/2006 estimated with a decrease in the capital equipment line. **Table 7** details the revenues, expenditures, net loss and percent of cost recovery through fees and charges.

Table 7: 2005/6 - 2006/7 Community Services Department Operating Budgets

| | 2005/2006 Approved Budget | 2005/2006 Estimated Actual | 2006/2007 Requested |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Operating Expense | \$2,340,119 | \$1,471,287 | \$2,832,126 |
| Capital Equipment | \$76,500 | \$24,109 | \$24,400 |
| Total Before Reimbursements | \$3,258,218 | \$1,495,396 | \$3,721,326 |
| Reimbursements | <\$851,811> | <\$247,088> | <\$889,570> |
| Net | \$2,396,406 | \$1,248,308 | \$2,831,756 |
| Revenue | \$245,605 | \$428,948 | \$397,700 |
| % Cost Recovery | 10% | 34% | 14% |

Capital Improvements

In 2005/2006 capital improvements included the water feature at La Quinta Park; the Fitness Center addition to the La Quinta Boys and Girls Club facility; restrooms at the sports complex; and some final work at the Cove Oasis. Funded and planned improvements include a \$2.5 million addition to the museum which will open in 2008; an additional 18 holes and new clubhouse at SilverRock will be in design in 2007 (the SilverRock Disposition and Development Agreement (DDA) with the Desert Development Corporation includes plans for a black box theater); and plans are underway for more improvements to the sports complex.

Economic Development

People move to the City of La Quinta for the quality of life. It provides the ultimate venue for the "California desert outdoor" experience.

The importance of parks and recreation as a factor in providing for a high quality of life was discussed in the 1993 Master Plan. In addition, the role of Community Services is vital in the City of La Quinta's economic development and tourism industry. With the incredible growth in the community and influx of younger families moving to the area, the Community Services Department's facilities, programs and services fulfill a vital regional need and expectation.



While the City of La Quinta relies on tourism and second home owners to fuel the economic engine, it's the City of La Quinta's services that enhance and supplement the tourist and seasonal resident experience, as well as provide quality of life expectations for the working citizens and attract additional commercial businesses which contribute to the fiscal health of the City of La Quinta through sales tax.

The tourism industry, while acting as a catalyst for local businesses sustainability, contributes property tax revenues for venues in the City of La Quinta boundaries, or sales tax revenue on the sale of merchandise. Attractions, such as the City of La Quinta's Community Services facilities, parks and programs, the SilverRock Golf Course, and large special events help sustain the hotel/motel industry whose sales tax revenue is typically dedicated to promotion of the tourism industry. The City of La Quinta considers the SilverRock golf course an economic development project to attract additional transient occupancy taxes through new hotels and retail venues.

A Place at the Table

Community Services facilities, programs and services are the vivid descriptor of the community's vision. They paint the picture of a strong municipal economy, provide opportunities for healthy partnerships in the provision of services, and express the government's commitment to the quality of life for all its citizens.

Parks provide the necessary buffer from traffic, noise, and overcrowding. They preserve natural resources and protect a community from uncontrolled development. The Department's facilities, programs and services provide a balance necessary for a sustainable community and an outlet to celebrate and explore diversity.

The Department must be recognized as a partner in the prevention, health and environment movement. It is a critical player in the solution to transportation issues. It provides life long learning, leisure and wellness opportunities, employment and volunteer opportunities, and is the "green infrastructure" of a city. Community services are an investment in the vitality and quality of a community.

Use of Volunteers

The Senior Center uses volunteers through RSVP (Retired Seniors Volunteer Program.) There are 120 on the list. The Senior Center uses about 50 volunteers per week with each volunteer working one to four hours at a time. Duties include paperwork processing for specific senior needs. They don't use volunteers on the front desk because it requires handling money and the City of La Quinta prefers to have employed persons handling those transactions. Volunteer hours are submitted to RSVP for tracking purposes.

The City of La Quinta needs to develop standards and training for city-wide volunteer use. This can help offset the need for part time staffing. In 2005/2006, 3,481 hours of volunteer labor was utilized by the department.

The Independent Sector is the leadership forum for charities, foundations, and corporate giving programs committed to advancing the common good in America and around the



world. Since its founding in 1980, they have sponsored ground-breaking research, fought for public policies that support a dynamic, independent sector, and created unparalleled resources so staff, boards, and volunteers can improve their organizations and better serve their communities. According to the Independent Sector's website (www.independentsector.org/programs/research/volunteer_time.html), the value of volunteer time is based on the average hourly earnings of all production and non-supervisory workers on private non-farm payrolls (as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics). The Independent Sector takes this figure and increases it by 12 percent to estimate for fringe benefits.

The estimated dollar value of volunteer time in California is \$19.74 per hour for 2004 (the most recent year of available data). Using this \$19.74 per hour figure, volunteer hours in the City of La Quinta equates to over \$68,715 annually in saved labor costs.

Volunteer Recruitment and Training

The City of La Quinta does not have a formal volunteer recruitment and training program, a dedicated volunteer coordinator, volunteer manual, job description or application process that details the rights and responsibilities of its volunteers.

The potential is there for the City of La Quinta to greatly expand this program. The savings currently actualized in volunteer labor would offset the cost of a full time volunteer coordinator position to recruit, train, and schedule, track hours, monitor, evaluate and recognize a volunteer workforce. This position would work in concert with the Human Resources Department, conducting the program on behalf of the entire Community Services Department.

Another benefit to formalizing this program is the ability to track the use of volunteers and the value of the in-kind support to grant funded programs and events. Many grant applications ask for community support and agency in-kind contributions or a match.

California Trends in Volunteering

Trends in volunteerism in California indicate that there is an incredible willingness of the citizenry to volunteer for community service. The information in **Figure 14** is provided for general information and is included with permission.



Figure 14: TrendScan Highlights on California Volunteerism

California's Volunteer Trends from TrendScan Parks and Recreation

The following information was obtained from the June 2006 issue of Trendscan and is quoted with Dr. O'Sullivan's permission. *Trendscan is created by Leisure Lifestyle Consulting, Dr. Ellen O'Sullivan for California Parks and Recreation Society (CPRS.)*

Volunteering in the United States: \$147.6 billion in 2005

The first-ever federal report on volunteering was released by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Over sixty-five million Americans or 28.8% of American adults volunteered in 2005. This number represents an increase of nearly 6 million volunteers since 2002. Some of the findings:

- On a national level, American volunteers spent a median of 50 hours per year volunteering, and gave a total of 8.2 billion hours of volunteer service in 2005;
- Women in every state of the country had higher levels of volunteering than did males;
- Women with children and women who work have higher volunteer rates than other women;
- The typical American volunteer is a white female who gives 50 hours per year volunteering through a religious organization as a tutor, mentor, coach, or referee;
- The highest regional volunteer rate last year was in the Midwest, at 33.3%;
- The largest growth in volunteering since 2002 comes from the South (2.4 million) and the West (2 million);
- The top volunteer activities by category are mentoring, tutoring, coaching, and refereeing (35%), fundraising (29.7%) and collecting, preparing, distributing, or serving food (26.3%); and
- Adult volunteering generally follows a life cycle, with people age 35-54 volunteering at the highest rate, and rates subsequently declining as people age, particularly for individuals over 65.

(Source: http://www.nationalservice.org/about/newsroom/releases_detail.asp?tbl_pr_id=397)

Volunteering in California

The report also broke out information on volunteering for each of the states. While the rate of volunteering in California is less than the average rates in the rest of the country including other Western states, such behavior is clearly on the increase. Californians volunteered at a rate of 26.1%; while the West had an overall rate of 29.0%; and the nation as a whole weighed in with a rate of 28.8%. Some of the information and statistics that specifically relate to volunteers in California include:

- California was one of only 8 states where the number of volunteers increased each year since 2002;
- The number of people volunteering increased from 6.21 million to 7.27 million between 2002 and 2005;
- California was one of only 5 states where the proportion of persons volunteering increased each year since 2002;
- Nearly 30% of California residents between the ages of 35 and 44 years volunteered during 2003 to 2005; and
- Nearly one-third of volunteers in California donated between 100 and 499 hours annually.



California Volunteers: Where and What?

- The largest percentage, approximately 32% volunteered with education or youth service organizations;
- Another 20% volunteered primarily with religious organizations or social or community service programs;
- More Californians volunteered with educational or youth organizations than did residents of other Western states or the rest of the country; and
- One-third of volunteers coached, refereed, tutored, taught, or mentored.

Volunteer Rates and Hours by Demographic Variations

The following provides a more detailed breakdown of just who is providing volunteer services in California.

| Demographic Variation | Participation % | Average Hours |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Males | 21.9 | 52 |
| Females | 30.2 | 58 |
| White Residents | 27.4 | 58 |
| Non-White | 21.9 | 52 |
| Black | 24.2 | 80 |
| Asian | 19.7 | 48 |
| Hispanic | 16.9 | 48 |
| Ages 16 to 24 | 22.0 | 52 |
| Ages 25 to 34 | 23.3 | 40 |
| Ages 35 to 44 | 30.3 | 52 |
| Ages 45 to 54 | 29.8 | 52 |
| Ages 55 to 64 | 28.7 | 72 |
| Ages 65+ | 21.5 | 104 |

(Source: http://www.nationalservice.org/pdf/VIA/VIA_synopsis_CA.pdf)

B. Planning and Design

The primary planning issues facing the City of La Quinta in relation to parks and recreation are how to assure that needs are met now and in the future, as the City of La Quinta grows and changes. Expansion of the City of La Quinta to the east provides both opportunities and challenges. The opportunities include the chance to start with a “blank slate” and create a framework for parks and recreation that will create a livable, walkable community that supports and encourages healthy living and a high quality of life. The challenges include integrating this with the City of La Quinta’s development patterns that support gated communities and private amenities in combination with public ones. Maintaining the proper balance between providing an appropriate basic level of service to all of the public while accommodating the needs and desires of private communities will be important.



In addition, finding land for large park uses such as a sports complex will be another challenge. This needs to be done proactively, to assure that such land is available when needed.

C. Marketing and Communications

There is not a formal division or position dedicated to marketing, communication or public relations for the Community Services Department. A marketing plan was created for the City of La Quinta by Kiner Communications. The plan's key goals are:

- General City of La Quinta Marketing - Use the City of La Quinta's 25th Anniversary as an underlying theme to promote new hotels, shops, restaurants, recreation and business opportunities (managed by Economic Development):
 - Market the City of La Quinta locally as a shopping, dining and golfing destination;
 - Market the City of La Quinta as a visitor destination; and
 - Market the City of La Quinta through event attendance, relevant publications/program guide, and other promotional efforts.
- City of La Quinta Communication and Community Events - Inform residents and the local community about the City of La Quinta's growth and progress, new amenities; plan, promote and offer special community events (managed by Economic Development and Community Services):
 - Communicating with the City of La Quinta residents; and
 - Offer 25th anniversary celebration and special community events.
- Arnold Palmer Classic Course - Promote golf play at SilverRock Resort (managed by golf operator)
 - Continue marketing and branding of SilverRock

The Department produces an activity guide three times per year. Flyers are used to promote programs as is the senior newsletter. The Department also mails out Spring and Fall postcards; utilizes email blasts; places information in *The Gem*, the quarterly City Report, the *La Quinta* and the *Desert Sun*, and the *La Quinta Magazine*. Forty percent of the Community Services participants are using on-line services for information gathering and registration.

D. Information Technology

As the Community Services Department's program and facility responsibilities are increased, the need for technology also increases. Ideally, you should increase the support services to deal with technology demands. Without good tracking, management, and integration processes, the use of available technological information for sound decision making is limited.

The Community Service Department has been allowed to research, suggest and implement the software systems felt to best suits its needs. In September 2006, the City of La Quinta was the first in the valley to begin using VSI Web Trac for on-line activity registration.



E. Park Maintenance

Open Space, Parks, Golf and Trail Systems

The City of La Quinta, Golf and Parks Maintenance Division, manage a diverse number of facilities that include parks, athletic fields, art in public places, and the SilverRock Resort. Additionally the City of La Quinta manages a disconnected trail system, and also oversees the maintenance of tennis courts, basketball courts, art, water features, playgrounds and park structures such as picnic shelters. All of these facilities and properties provide recreational opportunities for residents of the City of La Quinta, residents of the surrounding communities and tourists that visit throughout the year.

Parks and Athletic Fields

Recently, Community Services took over park maintenance responsibilities from the Public Works Department. The Maintenance Division oversees approximately 68 acres of park land and athletic fields. All park maintenance operations are contracted out.

Athletic Fields and Capacity Issues

Many of the sports associations that provided input on the athletic field needs in the City of La Quinta expressed a concern about the lack of field availability. The Department understands this need and would like to provide more. The Department feels that some capacity issues could be eliminated with more joint use agreements with the school district.

Trails

Hiking the Cove

(Source: LQ Magazine, Spring 2006, by Gayl Biondi)

The Cove Oasis Trailhead marks the entrance into the Santa Rosa Mountains and the Bureau of Land Management properties. Hikers have their choice of four trails with varying degrees of length and difficulty:

- **The Bear Creek Urban Trail** is six miles roundtrip along a paved walkway that's suitable for kids, bicycles and strollers. The scenic walk winds around the base of the mountains and skirts pleasant residential areas. The trail ends at Calle Tampico, where walkers have the choice of turning back or walking on city streets toward the La Quinta Resort and Club or the Village.
- **The Morrow Trail** is a moderate four miles that ends at Lake Cahuilla. It's a two-hour trip each way, and affords some great views of The Quarry Country Club and the Salton Sea.
- **The Bear Creek Canyon Ridge Trail** is an eight mile roundtrip that takes about five hours and includes a strenuous elevation gain of 2,000 feet. The reward for the efforts is a spectacular panoramic view.
- **The Boo Hoff Trail.** The "Big Daddy" of hikes from the Cove Oasis is the Boo Hoff Trail. Its twelve miles take you deep into the Santa Rosa Mountains where you have



the option to connect to the Guadalupe Trail and make the climb up to the Sugar Loaf Café up Highway 74.

City-wide Trail System

The City of La Quinta's trail system relies heavily upon on-street lanes and/or adjacent walks to provide routes for bike travel. This may work well for bikes as a transportation mode, but is less desirable for recreational uses such as walking, running, or bicycling. Providing off-street paths in existing developed parts of the City of La Quinta is difficult due to the large number of gated communities with restricted access. Efforts should be made to avoid this situation in newly developing areas. In existing areas, efforts should be focused on creating off-street loops. Loops make excellent recreational trails, especially if they can be located in scenic places and designed with amenities such as distance markers, waysides for seating and rest, and easy access from surrounding neighborhoods.

Contracted Services

Park maintenance tasks are completed with contracted maintenance. Some duties fall outside the scope of the agreement with the maintenance contractor, and the City of La Quinta has limited staff able to handle those tasks. Some repair and replacement needs are handled by Public Works using a work order process, and others are handled by the Parks and Golf Manager. The volume of maintenance tasks complicated by a lack of staff and multiple responsible parties can create difficulties in prioritizing and accomplishing work to be completed.

Staffing Levels

Currently maintenance duties for parks facilities are contracted and managed by the Division Manager.

Irrigation

All developed parks are irrigated and are on automatic systems with central control. Fritz Burns Park and the Civic Center Campus are the most used parks in the southern part of the city, and La Quinta Park is the hub for the north.

Equipment

A preventive maintenance program is in place to maximize equipment lifespan. A sinking fund is established for the purchase of equipment replacement or capital repairs.

Maintenance Primary Concerns

It is the Community Services and Public Works Department goal to maintain parks, trails and drainage areas in good condition. It is a concern that the number of responsibilities being handled by the Departments has stretched their time and ability to effectively and properly manage. The addition of qualified staff could help alleviate this; especially as the City of La Quinta's growth and demand for services continue to strain existing resources.



Other top Department concerns focus around:

- Improvement to parks restrooms. Many park restrooms are in need of updating and employment of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) improvements.
- Vandalism and safety are an ongoing concern. As with communities across the country, vandalism of park amenities is an ongoing issue in the City of La Quinta. Vandalism creates unplanned expenses that put strains on budgets and manpower. Adopt a Park programs that organize community activism in reporting these instances and monitoring use of parks may help in reducing vandalism.
- The need for more sun protection. Temperatures in the City of La Quinta can reach way over 100 degrees regularly during the summer months making uncovered playground equipment unusable for a good part of the day. The addition of shade structures in the most utilized parks would be a benefit to the community.
- Maintenance of multipurpose fields is challenging due to environmental conditions as well as intensity of use. The sports fields in La Quinta Park have been recently rehabilitated, and contracting for consulting services to renovate the Sports Complex is currently in progress.

Trends in Parks, Open Space and Trail Maintenance Practices

Park Maintenance Staffing Standards

Very limited information exists regarding standards for labor ratios for park maintenance activities. In his book, *Municipal Benchmarks Assessing Local Performance and Establishing Community Standards*, David N. Ammons reports that “although every municipality may wish to design its own standards to reflect local preferences and conditions, it need not start from scratch.” He further suggests that the following labor ratio guidelines devised by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) may be useful to a community deciding on its own standards, procedures, and resource requirements.

Table 8 which follows describes the labor rates from NRPA.

Table 8: Labor Ratios for Selected Community Services Maintenance Activities

| Labor Ratios for Selected Community Services Maintenance Activities | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Task | Labor Hours |
| Mowing 1 Acre, Flat Medium Terrain at Medium Speed | |
| 20" walking | 2.8 per acre |
| 24" walking | 2.2 per acre |
| 30" riding | 2.0 per acre |
| 72" (6-foot) riding | 0.35 per acre |
| Bush hog [rough mower] | 0.5 per acre |
| Trim | |
| Gas powered (weed eater) | 1.0 per 1,000 linear ft. |



| Labor Ratios for Selected Community Services Maintenance Activities | |
|---|---------------------------|
| Task | Labor Hours |
| Planting Grass | |
| Cut and plant sod by hand (1.5' strips) | 1.0 per 1,000 sq. ft. |
| Cut and plant sprigs by hand (not watered) | 10.9 per 1,000 linear ft. |
| Seed, by hand | 0.5 per 1,000 sq. ft. |
| Over seeding, Reconditioning | 0.8 per acre |
| Fertilize Turf | |
| 24": sifter spreader | 0.16 per 1,000 sq. ft. |
| Hand push spreader 36" | 2.96 per acre |
| Tractor towed spreader 12" | 0.43 per acre |
| Weed Control | |
| Spraying herbicide w/ fence line truck, tank sprayer 2 ft. wide (1" either side of fence) | 0.45 per 1,000 sq. ft. |
| Leaf Removal | |
| Hand rake leaves | 0.42 per 1,000 sq. ft. |
| Vacuum 30" | 0.08 per 1,000 sq. ft. |
| Planting Trees | |
| Plant tree 5-6 ft. ht. | 0.44 per tree |
| Plan tree 2-3.5" dia. | 1.0 per tree |
| Tree Removal | |
| Street tree removal | 13.0 per tree |
| Street tree stump removal | 3.5 per tree |
| Park tree removal | 5.0 per tree |
| Park tree stump removal | 2.0 per tree |

Ammons also indicated that a report “prepared by a management analysis team in Pasadena, California, concluded that a ratio of one park maintenance employee for every 7-10 acres should produce ‘A-Level’ service—in other words, ‘a high-frequency maintenance service’ (City of Pasadena [CA] Management Audit Team, 1986, p. 9.4).” However, he was quick to point out that “standards of the maintenance-employee-per-park-acreage variety and corresponding statistics reported by individual cities, are complicated by the question of developed versus undeveloped park acreage... and therefore should be interpreted cautiously.” Among ten cities he examined, ratios of 10.6 to 84.7 acres maintained per maintenance employee were reported.



Currently the City of La Quinta has contract park maintenance. If and when the City of La Quinta determines to bring maintenance operations in house, this information may be useful to develop City of La Quinta maintenance standards. With such variables in reporting from different communities, it is less important to measure this aspect of operations against other communities and more important to establish a benchmark for the City of La Quinta against citizen expectation and satisfaction levels.

Athletic Field Maintenance

Specific data regarding the cost of California athletic field maintenance was not readily available. Maintenance cost figures per acre typically include mowing operations, fertilization applications, aeration, weed and insect control, over seeding, topdressing, irrigation expenses (includes water where applicable), lining and striping, infield preparation, lighting, restroom cleaning, and trash removal.

A yearly cost for maintaining athletic fields in a complex setting should include the following costs associated with the typical park maintenance operations plus increased costs for additional fertilization, aeration, infield preparation, lining and striping, top dressing, field lighting, restroom maintenance, etc.

F. Recreation

Contracted Services

The Recreation Division uses independent contractors as instructors for all if not most of their programs and activities. The contract is a 70/30 split with the City of La Quinta receiving 30%.

Operations and Facility Maintenance

The facilities have opening and closing procedures and the City of La Quinta has an emergency action plan. What are missing are detailed facility and preventative maintenance plans dedicated to the care and oversight of the infrastructure. The senior center, outdoor pool, library, sports buildings and City Hall are heavily used. These facilities continue to age and the Building and Safety Department handles the janitorial and maintenance contracting with only one staff person coordinating all of the maintenance efforts. Some projects take too long to complete with only one dedicated staff person.

Revenues

Recreation non-tax subsidized revenues come from fees and charges for the fitness center; facility and equipment rental fees; park reservations; program fees; resident cards, adult league fees, grants, and donations.

Fitness Center Fees

The fitness center has an annual membership fee for the use of the equipment for residents and non-residents.

Facility and Park Rentals

Multi-Purpose rooms and Community rooms at the Senior Center and the Library; and the Civic Center Campus and La Quinta Park pavilions are available to rent (non-



profit/government and profit rates apply). Tables and chairs are included in the fees at facilities.

Program and Class Fees

The City of La Quinta doesn't have a formal fees and charges policy. However, fees are evaluated annually. All classes are under contract with instructors and they all pay a 70/30 split for instructional services. The City of La Quinta also administers excursions, adult soccer leagues, and a golf tour during the summer. Fees cover all direct costs for each of these programs.

Resident Card Fees

The City of La Quinta charges \$15 for a three year resident card for discounts to permanent residents to use SilverRock Resort.

G. Finances and Traditional Funding

The primary sources of traditional funding for parks maintenance and recreation operations come from the General Fund. The General Fund is primarily made up of property and sales taxes. Other sources of funding include park impact fees that are used for capital development projects.

The overall City of La Quinta budget includes a variety of funds supported through voter approved tax, fees, charges and other revenue streams, grants and other alternative funding sources.

Equipment Repair/Replacement Funding

There are established and adequately funded Equipment Repair/Replacement Funds for vehicles, computers, mechanical items, and major building capital repairs.

Park Development/Land Dedication Funds

The City of La Quinta has both a park land dedication requirement, and development impact fees addressing *Parks and Recreation Facilities*, the *Civic Center*, *Community Centers*, and *Maintenance Facilities*. The intent of these requirements is to provide adequate sites and to provide or assist in providing the financing required to acquire, develop and maintain City of La Quinta parks and recreation facilities to serve new growth. This is true for existing areas within the City of La Quinta's corporate limits as well as in anticipation of future annexations of areas in the City of La Quinta's *Sphere of Influence (SOI)*.

The park dedication requirements are set forth in the *Quimby Act* adopted as Chapter 13.48 of the City of La Quinta's Municipal Code which states that all residential subdivisions of land, with some exemptions, are to provide for parks by either dedicating land, paying an in-lieu fee, or a combination of the two. The requirement formula is three acres of land per one thousand people calculated by multiplying the number of dwelling units times the average density per dwelling unit in the City of La Quinta according to the latest U.S. Census. In-lieu fees are based on the fair market value of land within a subdivision.



Development impact fees are one-time charges imposed on development projects to recover capital costs for public facilities needed to serve those new developments and the additional residents, employees, and visitors they bring to the community. California law, with a few minor exceptions, prohibits the use of impact fees for ongoing maintenance or operations costs.

H. Alternative Funding

Donations and sponsorships are approved by resolution by the City Council. Sponsorships with local businesses are used for underwriting various special events. Grants are researched and used for capital projects and materials. In the past the Department has received grants from the State of California for park improvements and use of recycled materials.

I. Partnerships

The City of La Quinta has programmatic partnerships with the YMCA of the Desert, and the Boys and Girls Club; and a strategic partnership with the Desert Sands Unified School District for reciprocal use of their facilities and fields in exchange for maintenance.

J. Next Steps

Analysis and development of draft recommendations for the Community Services Commission's consideration will be accomplished based on geocoded survey results, GRASP®, SWOT analysis, pricing and alternative funding.



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VI. Great Things to Come - Analysis

The next step after reviewing the findings, public input, survey results, inventory, and trends is analysis and identification of opportunities based on best practices in the field.

Analysis and Opportunities

Analysis of Financial Planning and Recommendations for Funding Strategies

The City of La Quinta uses a number of options for funding community services including traditional funding such as taxes.

The City of La Quinta is updating its Master Plan for future facility and programming needs. Respondents were asked how important they feel parks and recreation services are compared to other priorities for the City of La Quinta, such as law enforcement, fire and streets. Eighty-three percent (83%) of respondents feel that improvements to parks and recreation services are either very important (46%) or somewhat important (37%) compared to other priorities for the City of La Quinta. From the list of 15 actions the City of La Quinta could take to improve and expand parks and recreation facilities in the City of La Quinta, respondents were asked to select the **four** they would be most willing to fund with their tax dollars. Based on the sum of their top choices, the actions that respondents would be most willing to fund with their tax dollars are: renovate/develop walking and biking trails (43%), purchase land to develop for passive use (24%), develop new indoor recreation facilities (24%), renovate/develop athletic fields for youth sports (23%), and purchase land for open space (22%).

The citizens indicate a willingness to fund the necessary improvements outlined in the survey results. The City of La Quinta has done a really good job in collaborating with their partners and avoiding duplication of services and should continue to leverage current partnerships with a focus on sustainability, planning for future growth and meeting the needs of the community. The City of La Quinta has the ability to use these and other funding mechanisms to enhance the quality of life in La Quinta and expand recreation and park services to the community.

Traditional Funding Mechanisms

Taxes:

The City of La Quinta's General Fund is comprised of 8% property tax, 13% Transient Occupancy Tax and 23% sales tax, with an additional 20% from intergovernment agreements, 11% reimbursements, and another 11% from interest. The rest of the budget is comprised of franchise taxes, licenses and permits, fees, transfers in, reserves, and miscellaneous incomes. The Community Services Department accounts for 10% of the General Fund expenditures.

Art in Public Places Fund:

This fund is used to account for developer contributions from Art in Public Places projects within the City of La Quinta.



Park and Recreation Capital Development:

In the past, the City of La Quinta has used impact fees, RDA and Quimby funds for capital improvements and developments. The City of La Quinta has also used alternative funding sources such as State Grants and Recycled materials grants as they become available. Land and Water Conservation Grants will be discussed in the Alternative Funding section.

Land Dedication or Fees in-lieu Charges: Park dedication requirements are set forth in the *Quimby Act* which states that all residential subdivisions of land, with some exemptions, are to provide for parks by either dedicating land, paying an in-lieu fee, or a combination of the two, and City Ordinance 13.48 which implements the Act. In cases where the provision of land is not in the best interest of the park system, an “in-lieu fee program” is established that would provide a cash option to developers.

Development Impact Fees: Development impact fees are one-time charges imposed on development projects to recover capital costs for public facilities needed to serve those new developments and the additional residents, employees, and visitors they bring to the community. California law, with a few minor exceptions, prohibits the use of impact fees for ongoing maintenance or operations costs.

Debt Service, Loans and Bonding: The City of La Quinta should fund the prioritized Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) recommendations, pursuing alternative funding where applicable; and use the Master Plan for the basis of requesting future debt service funding.

Dedicated Tax: The City of La Quinta does not have a dedicated tax or special taxing district to fund park and recreation infrastructure improvements. Coachella Valley Recreation & Park District is a special taxing district within the City of La Quinta boundaries.

Key Opportunity: The City of La Quinta could consider a dedicated sales tax, such as a meals tax, or utility (user) tax for Community Services, Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space needs.

Park and Recreation Operations, Maintenance and Equipment Repair/Replacement:

The City of La Quinta does dedicate a portion of general fund tax revenue to community services, parks and recreation facilities and other services and sets aside deferred maintenance funds.

Fees and Charges: The City of La Quinta charges fees for programs and as a standard practice all programs cover direct costs and a portion of indirect costs by providing these services through contract instructors. However, youth sports associations do not pay for field use.

Key Opportunity: The City of La Quinta should consider field use fees or player fees for field use.



Implement Ability to Pay and Fee Reduction/Waiver Policy:

Key Opportunity: Since community services exist to benefit the community as a whole, ability to pay can be an issue for all age groups and all persons of varying ability or participation levels.

The fee reduction/waiver policy could be designed to follow the free and reduced school lunch program guidelines utilizing annual household income thresholds to determine eligibility. It is recommended that the fee reduction policy include all persons facing difficulties with ability to pay. A simple application procedure along with consistent and fair proof of eligibility should be implemented. Eligibility requirements might include proof of Medicare or Social Security beneficiary with a per year maximum benefit per person or household. Other criteria can include income verification, although this is often not a reliable indicator of ability to pay for retired persons.

Alternative Funding Methods

Park and Recreation Capital Development, Operations and Maintenance:

In the past, the City of La Quinta has used alternative funding sources such as State Grants and Recycled materials grants. In recent years, the City of La Quinta has not used Land and Water Conservation Grants to fund capital development although these funds have recently been used by neighboring cities and the County. The City of La Quinta has used partnership agreements for operations and shared use of facilities, volunteers in special events and athletics, and donations solicitation and grant applications as research and management time allowed.

The following subsections summarize research findings on potential funding sources that could enhance capital expenditures for capital repair, renovation and new construction and operating budgets for the Department. This report does not represent any particular funding strategy over another. The economic conditions within the City of La Quinta vary with time and the City of La Quinta should explore the best means of achieving its goals towards the operations of the Department, the programs and the facilities on an ongoing basis.

Philanthropic:

Defined as the concept of voluntary giving by an individual or group to promote the common good and improve the quality of life. Philanthropy generally takes the form of donor programs, capital campaigns, and volunteers/in-kind services.

The time commitment to initiate a philanthropic campaign can be significant. Current City of La Quinta resources that could be dedicated to such a venture are limited. If this option is deemed possible by City of La Quinta decision-makers, it is recommended that the City of La Quinta outsource most of this task to a non-profit or private agency experienced in seeking funding of this type.

To manage a volunteer program, typically an agency dedicates a staff member to oversee the program for the entire Community Services Department. This staff member could then



work closely with Human Resources as volunteers are another source of staffing a program, facility or event. Relevant methods are discussed below:

Friends Associations: These groups are formed to raise money typically for a single focus purpose that could include a park facility or program that will better the community as a whole and its special interest.

Volunteers/In-Kind Services: This revenue source is an indirect revenue source in that persons donate time to assist the department in providing a product or service on an hourly basis. This reduces the City of La Quinta's cost in providing the service plus it builds advocacy for the system.

Grants:

Grants are used primarily as a way to supplement or match funding already received. For example, grants can be used for program purposes, planning, design, and seed money. Due to their infrequent nature, grants are normally looked at as a way to fund a specific venture and should not be used as a continuous source of funding.

Private Grant and Philanthropic Agencies

The foundations and charitable organizations listed in **Appendix H** appear to generally fit with the City of La Quinta's potential park and recreation partnership opportunities, programming and services. A more thorough investigation and further research is necessary to assure mutually compatible interests and current status of available funding.

Corporate Sponsorship

The City of La Quinta does not currently solicit this revenue-funding source themselves. The City of La Quinta does work with agencies that pursue and use this type of funding. Sponsorships are highly used for programs and events by the City of La Quinta's partners.

Naming Rights

Many cities, towns and counties throughout the country have successfully sold the naming rights for newly constructed facilities or when renovating existing buildings. Additionally, newly developed and renovated parks have also been successfully funded through the sale of naming rights. Generally the cost for naming rights offsets the development costs associated with the improvement. People incorrectly assume that selling the naming rights for facilities is reserved for professional stadiums and other high profile team sport venues. This trend has expanded in the recent years to include public recreation centers and facilities as viable naming rights sales opportunities.

Naming rights can be a one-time payment or amortized with a fixed payment schedule over a defined period of time. During this time the sponsor retains the "rights" to have the building named for them. Also during this time, all publications, advertisements, events, and activities could have the sponsoring group's name as the venue. Naming rights negotiations need to be developed by professionals so as to ensure a proper agreement that benefits all agents in the contractual obligation and provides remedies to change or cancel the arrangements at any time during the agreement period.



Advertising Sales

Advertising sales are a viable opportunity for revenue through the sale of tasteful and appropriate advertising on park and recreation related items such as in the program guides, on scoreboards, dasher boards and other visible products or services that are consumable or permanent that exposes the product or service to many people. The current sign code should be reviewed for conflicts and necessary revisions.

Other Fees and Charges:

Recreation Service Fee

The Recreation Service Fee is a dedicated user fee that can be established by a local ordinance or other government procedures for the purpose of constructing and maintaining recreation facilities. The fee can apply to all organized activities which require a reservation of some type, or other purposes as defined by the governing agency. Examples of such generally accepted activities that are assigned a service fee include adult basketball, volleyball, and softball leagues, youth baseball, soccer, and softball leagues, and special interest classes. The fee allows participants an opportunity to contribute toward the maintenance of the facilities being used.

Capital Improvement Fees

These fees are on top of the set user rate for accessing facilities such as golf, recreation centers and pools, to support capital improvements that benefit the user of the facility.

Contractual Services:

Private Concessionaires

Contracts can be developed with private businesses to provide and operate desirable recreational activities financed, constructed, and operated by the private sector or non-profit organization with additional compensation paid to the City of La Quinta.

Concession Management

Concession management is the retail sales or rental of soft goods, hard goods, or consumable items. The City of La Quinta can either contract for the service or receive a percentage of the gross sales or the net revenue dollars from the profits after expenses are paid.

Merchandising Sales or Services

This revenue source comes from the public or private sector on resale items from gift shops and coffee shops in the Library or Senior Center for example for either all of the sales or a defined percentage of the gross sales.

Cell Towers and Wi-Fi

Cell towers attached to existing or new light poles in game field complexes are another source of revenue the City of La Quinta could seek in helping support the system.

Another type of revenue for a facility or complex can come from providing sites for supporting Wi-Fi technology. Wi-Fi, or Wireless Fidelity, allows individuals to connect to the Internet without wires, similar to cell phone technology. Wi-Fi enabled computers send and receive data indoors and out - anywhere within the range of a base station. The



connection and data transfer time is several times faster than the fastest cable modem connection. In California the State Park System is providing wireless internet access and is charging \$7.95 for 24 hours of connectivity (approximately \$.33 per hour) within their service area. They are connecting 85 state parks with SBC Communications. For more information contact California State Parks at www.parks.ca.gov.

Permitting:

Permits (Special Use Permits)

These special permits allow individuals to use specific park property for financial gain. The City of La Quinta either receives a set amount of money or a percentage of the gross service that is being provided.

Catering Permits and Services

This is a license to allow caterers to work in the park system on a permit basis with a set fee or percentage of food sales returning to the City of La Quinta. Also many cities have their own catering service and receive a percentage of dollars from the sale of food.

Partnerships:

Partnerships are joint development funding sources or operational funding sources between two separate agencies, such as two government entities, a non-profit and a government department, or a private business and a government agency. Two partners jointly develop revenue producing park and recreation facilities and share risk, operational costs, responsibilities, and asset management based on the strengths and weaknesses of each partner.

Positive Cash Flow:

Depending on how aggressive the marketing and management strategies are pursued there may be a positive fund balance at the end of each year, especially if a new leisure pool or sports complex is built. While current facilities, projections and fee policies do not anticipate a positive cash flow, the climate can change. The ending positive balance could be used, for example, to establish a maintenance endowment for recreation facilities, set aside funds for capital replacement and/or repair, or generate a fund balance for contingency or new programming opportunities. It is suggested that the Department be challenged to generate a fund balance and it not be returned to the City of La Quinta's general fund.

Financial and Funding Opportunities

Opportunities for the City of La Quinta - Grants

Although seeking of philanthropic dollars to augment funding for the development of future facilities would be a large task, seeking grants to fund programs, to act as seed money, or to provide matching funds is a good investment. Many communities have had success in seeking grants for programs and community quality of life.

Key Opportunity: It is recommended that the City of La Quinta evaluate what types of grant programs would best match the opportunities to be provided by future facilities and seek funds either internally or through an associated non-profit.



Grants should not be a priority goal when seeking dollars to initially develop facilities. Most grants that could contribute substantial dollars towards parks and recreation ventures are normally tied to land acquisition and preservation ventures (EPA, Land Water Conservation Fund, Trust for Public Lands, etc.).

Opportunities for the City of La Quinta - Permitting

Key Opportunity: The City of La Quinta may need to monitor where players live when permitting fields. Field capacity issues may necessitate the institution of player fees based on city of residence. Consideration will need to be given to balanced opportunities for the community with outside users, priority use given to the community and the City of La Quinta Community Services Department and the program offerings, and should be reviewed annually.

Opportunities for the City of La Quinta - Partnerships

Key Opportunity: It is suggested that the City of La Quinta actively research expanding the partnership opportunities with the Desert Sands Unified School District for practice field use, any private and charter schools, local non-profit agencies like the YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, and local businesses. A negotiated partnership with the Coachella Valley Recreation and Park District (CVRPD) may yield the conversion of the current CVRPD Community Center for expanded fitness uses. The City of La Quinta might also consider a partnership with the recreational non-profit sports associations, especially for future development of a sports complex. If preferred, rental opportunities or player fees may be more advantageous for these types of partners, which should also be reviewed annually.

Opportunities for the City of La Quinta - Policies

Partnership Policy

Key Opportunity: It is suggested that the City of La Quinta create a partnership policy. Please see **Appendix I** for a sample policy, a partnering process, an evaluation process and an outline format.

Facility and Field Use Policy

Key Opportunity: It is suggested that the City of La Quinta review their facility and field use policy. Please see **Appendix J** for a sample field use policy and a facility/responsibility inventory sheet.

Analysis of Staffing Issues

Key Opportunity: The City of La Quinta should increase the marketing emphasis for the Community Services Department to: promote programs; coordinate donations, sponsorships, advertisements and partnerships, and keep the website current and coordinated with the Information Technology department. Administer grants through the initiation of a 501 (c) 3 Foundation; and consider a dedicated City of La Quinta staff position to coordinate volunteers and administer the Adopt-a-Park program.

Analysis of Information Technology Issues

Key Opportunity: It would be advantageous for the City of La Quinta to pursue the full utilization of investment in additional modules for the recreation software - POS,



scheduling of reservations, pass management, etc... that will integrate with the current applications.

Analysis of Expanded Programming

Key Opportunity: It is clear from the survey and needs assessment that the community is pleased with what the City of La Quinta offers for recreation and leisure programming. To expand programming, the City of La Quinta should focus on fitness and wellness activities and continue to establish partnerships with alternative providers to utilize available and unused spaces for additional recreation programming.

Analysis of Geocoded Survey Responses

The results of the Importance-Unmet Need Matrix created the Top Priorities. The geocoded data from the survey responses along with the corresponding responses from the questions that resulted in the Top Priorities in the Importance-Unmet Need Matrix were mapped.

Appendix K includes the various maps of responses to the following items:

The top priorities from the responses for **Unmet Needs for Facilities** were mapped using the results of question three (3) from the survey. The maps appear in the following prioritized order:

- Performing/Cultural Arts Facilities
- Walking and Biking Trails
- Indoor Fitness and Exercise Facilities
- Nature Trails/Nature Center
- Off Leash Dog Park
- Natural and Wildlife Areas
- Small Neighborhood Parks

The top priorities from the responses for **Unmet Needs for Programs** were mapped using the results of question five (5) from the survey. The maps appear in the following prioritized order:

- Adult Fitness and Wellness Programs
- Community Special Events
- Music Programs
- Senior Adult Programs
- Adult Education
- Adult Golf Programs and Tournaments
- Adult Art, Dance, Performing Arts
- Trips (day trips and extended trips)

Regarding **Reasons for not using Parks and Recreation Facilities or Programs**, using the results of question ten (10), the following responses were mapped:

- Security is insufficient
- Don't know what's being offered
- Don't know the location of facilities



Analysis of Marketing Efforts

Based on the survey responses, the City of La Quinta and/or its partners need to do a better job of marketing programs and services currently being offered. Survey responses from the geocoded mapping can indicate market segments on which to concentrate. A discussion with the partner entities that provide programs and services to the City of La Quinta's residents should focus on providing or increasing the desired services indicated in the survey, and improved marketing efforts.

Top Priorities Currently Being Addressed by the City of La Quinta

The facility top priorities which have current opportunities to be addressed include:

Performing/Cultural Arts

The City of La Quinta has an opportunity to fulfill this top priority through the SilverRock development which includes concepts for a Blackbox Theater. Working with the La Quinta Playhouse and the La Quinta Arts Foundation may yield additional programmatic and facility opportunities for the community.

Indoor Fitness and Exercise Facilities

While the addition to the Boys and Girls Club facility has begun to address some of these needs, the tremendous response to this fledgling attempt and the survey response indicate that fitness and wellness programs, services and facilities are of great importance and high un-met need. More needs to be done. Additional space for classes at the Senior Center and exploration of a partnership with CVRPD to convert the Community Center to fitness emphasis may also help with the demand.

Sports Complex

A Rehabilitation Study for renovations of the fields and landscape areas is currently under way. This is a project that will be in collaboration with the Desert Sands Unified School District.

Off Leash Dog Park and Small Neighborhood Parks

While the City of La Quinta does have these amenities around the area, the fact that they both ranked in the top priorities quadrant of the matrix demonstrates that more needs to be accomplished. This is true especially in the Cove and higher density housing areas. This could be an awareness problem as the City of La Quinta has off leash dog space at the Fritz Burns Park. Dog waste cleanup is also an issue, especially true in the Cove area and more citizen awareness in this area is warranted.

Trails, Natural Areas, Nature and Wildlife Centers

Since a key value for this community is nature, and the natural beauty of the desert is what attracts many to this area, preservation and places to enjoy these amenities rank as a top priority. Improvements to the Fred Wolff Bear Creek Nature Preserve are in progress. Unfortunately in relation to connectivity, missed opportunities for trails and trail corridors have slipped through the City of La Quinta's hands. A regional effort to address the connectivity and recreational trail is necessary.



The program top priorities which have current opportunities to be addressed include:

Trips and Special Events

The City of La Quinta does offer many day trips which are very popular especially in the summertime. The City of La Quinta also offers an array of special events. The City of La Quinta should continue to offer these and expand as possible with partners and other providers.

Adult Golf and Tournaments

The City of La Quinta offers a summer golf program allowing participants to play numerous golf courses at discounted rates. City of La Quinta residents receive discounted rates with the purchase of a Resident Card to play SilverRock Resort. With the wonderful outdoor climate in the City of La Quinta much of the year, so many gated communities that have golf courses within the communities, future expansion efforts for SilverRock, and opportunities in surrounding communities, many opportunities for golf exist for residents.

Music, Arts, Dance, Performing Arts, Fitness and Wellness, Senior Adult and Adult Education Programs

The City of La Quinta offers many of these types of programs which are well attended. The City of La Quinta should continue to offer these programs and expand as possible through city efforts, and the use of partners and other providers.

Analysis of Survey Comparison

As a part of the planning process, two surveys were conducted – One survey collected information in a statistically valid format while the other collected information informally at focus group meetings. Both surveys asked respondents to rate features that made parks more pleasant places to be.

The statistically valid survey lists the top five as (in order -most important first):

- Shade
- Restrooms
- Park lighting
- Parking
- Drinking fountains

The GRASP survey lists the top five as (in order -most important first):

- Shade
- Benches
- (Tie) restrooms and natural areas
- Good street access

Of the features ranked in the top five in both surveys, shade and restrooms were consistent in desirability between the two groups surveyed.



Analysis of Level of Service (LOS) - GRASP® Perspective Analysis

Level of Service Analysis

During the planning process, several methods were employed to analyze the current facilities in relationship to the needs of the community. This relationship is often referred to as Level of Service or LOS and each method used in this analysis provides a different look at the community and addresses different aspects of the system. These tools allow for analysis of the inventory, location, distribution, and access to the parks and recreation. When the results of each analysis are combined, a full view of the system and the LOS that is provided to each resident is created upon which recommendations can be formed.

NRPA Standards

LOS is typically defined in parks and recreation master plans as the capacity of system components and facilities to meet the needs of the public. The traditional means of measuring Levels of Service (LOS), often called the **NRPA** (National Recreation and Parks Association) **Standards** method, was typically based on providing X number of facilities or acres per 1,000 population (or “capacity”). This methodology was developed in the 1970s and 80s and it is now recognized as not accurate for the majority of public agencies because each community has different demographics, physical conditions and market conditions that make national standards inappropriate. This is especially true of the City of La Quinta because of the high percentage of gated communities and private recreation facilities. Even NRPA officials are now calling this standards methodology “obsolete.”

In order to find a way to standardize LOS that is accurate, implementable, and can be benchmarked, this plan includes an enhanced approach using the **Geo-Referenced Amenities Standards Program (GRASP®)**. This methodology builds on traditional community standards based on capacity, but can track not only the quantity, but also quality and distribution of amenities or components.

GRASP® technology applies to individual components, such as basketball courts, as well as to overall facilities such as neighborhood and community parks. It replaces the traditional classification of park sites with a classification of the individual components within parks and open space according to their *functions*, to create a component-based system. By thinking of the *components* within the parks, trails, and recreational facility system as an integrated whole that provides a service to residents, it is possible to measure and quantify the net level of service provided.

Process

Each of various components found within the park and recreation system were evaluated for quality and condition, and assigned a score. The geographic location of each component was also recorded. The quantity of each component is recorded as well as providing a look at capacity.

GRASP® uses comfort, convenience, and ambience as characteristics that are part of the context and setting of a component. These comfort and convenience features are items such as drinking fountains, seating, and shade. They are not characteristics of the component



itself, but when they exist in proximity to a component they enhance the value of the component. In GRASP® terminology these are referred to as *modifiers*.

Using GRASP® methodology, a **Base Score** is calculated for each component using the following formula:

$$\text{Component Score} \times \text{Modifier Value} \times \text{Design and Ambience Score} = \text{Base Score}$$

By combining the base scores of each component it is possible to measure the service provided by the entire park system from a variety of perspectives and for any given location. This was done for the City of La Quinta, and the results are presented in a series of maps and tables that make up the GRASP® analysis of the study area.

GRASP® Level of Service shows how well the community is served by the relevant components by **evaluating individual park GRASP® scores, using maps to graphically display the GRASP® scores, and with a quantified measurement spreadsheet** (as presented in the Capacities LOS Chart in **Table 11**). This quantification system provides a benchmark against which a community can determine how well it is doing providing services in relation to the community's goals, presently and over time.

The GRASP® enabled dataset is “living” digital data. The City of La Quinta is encouraged to maintain and update this valuable resource, so that further analyses may be performed in the future to measure progress in maintaining and enhancing levels of service for the community.

GRASP® Mapping

For each map, each inventoried component has been assigned a service value, or GRASP® score, and a service area, or buffer, based on a radius from the component. The buffer is the distance from which getting to the component can be accomplished within a reasonable time frame. The GRASP® score for each component has been assigned to the service radius for that component in the dataset.

One mile buffers have been placed around each component and shaded according to the component's GRASP® score. This represents a distance from which convenient access to the component can be achieved by normal means such as driving or bicycling. In addition a one-third mile buffer has been plotted for each component. The one-third mile buffer shows the distance that a resident can reasonably walk in 10 minutes. Scores are doubled within the 1/3 mile buffer to reflect the added accessibility of walking, since almost anyone can reach the location on their own by walking, even if they don't drive or ride a bicycle.

When service areas, with their scores, for multiple components are plotted on a map a picture emerges that represents the cumulative service provided by that set of components upon the geographic area. Where service areas for multiple components overlap, a darker shade results from the overlap. Darker shades indicate locations that are “served” by a combination of more components and/or higher quality ones. The shades all have numeric values associated with them, which means that for any given location on a GRASP® map,



there is a numeric GRASP® Level of Service score for that location and that particular set of components.

The maps can be used to determine levels of service throughout the community from a variety of perspectives. These perspectives can show a specific set of components, depict estimated travel time to services, highlight a particular geographic area, or display facilities that accommodate specific programming.

In the completed maps, it is not necessary for all parts of the community to score equally in the analyses. The desired level of service for any particular location will depend on the type of service being analyzed, and the characteristics of the particular location. Commercial and industrial areas might reasonably be expected to have lower levels of service for parks and recreation opportunities than residential areas. Levels of service for retail services in high-density residential areas might be different than those for lower-density areas.

The maps can be used to determine if current levels of service are appropriate in a given location. If so, then plans can be developed that provide similar levels of service to new neighborhoods. Conversely, if it is determined that different levels of service are desired, then new planning can differ from the existing community patterns to provide the desired LOS.

Reading the GRASP® Perspectives

Each Perspective shows the cumulative levels of service across the study area when the buffers for a particular set of components are plotted together. Where there are darker shades, the level of service is higher for that particular perspective. It is important to note that the shade overlaying any given point on the map represents the cumulative value offered by the surrounding park system to an individual situated in that specific location, rather than the service being provided by components at that location to the areas around it.

By reviewing the Perspectives, it is possible to see where higher and lower levels of service are being provided from a given set of components. Decisions can then be made regarding the appropriateness of the levels of service and whether or not to change the system in some way to alter levels of service in various locations.

GRASP® Map Descriptions

The complete GRASP® Perspectives A through G can be found in **Appendix L**.

Perspective A: Inventory

This map shows the existing components of the system contained within the dataset and where they are located. High concentrations of components are found in the original part of the City of La Quinta, particularly in the Civic Center Campus, Fritz Burns Park, and La Quinta Community Park. The map also shows trails and the classification of lands that are designated as park, open space, or other uses relevant to parks and recreation.

Perspective B: Analysis Areas

This map shows the areas in which the community has been divided for analysis purposes. These analysis areas are used for comparative purposes, and to determine targets, goals,



and strategies for providing appropriate levels of service for different parts of the community.

The analysis areas include:

North La Quinta – this includes all of the non-gated communities that lie north of Highway 111.

The Cove and South La Quinta – this includes all of the non-gated areas located in the central and older part of the City of La Quinta.

Gated Communities and Remaining City Areas – this includes all of the gated portions of the City of La Quinta and large undeveloped tracts, including open space and natural areas.

Perspective C: GRASP® Composite Values Access to All Outdoor and Indoor Components

This map shows all components provided by all providers. Each component is given both a 1/3 mile radius and a one mile radius. A summary table has been prepared that shows the GRASP® scores for the sub-areas identified on Perspective B and provides further analysis of the LOS.

GRASP® Target Scores

Perspective C shows the cumulative level of service available to a resident at any given location in the City of La Quinta. It is a blended value based on the number and quality of opportunities to enjoy a recreation experience that exist in a reasonable proximity to the given location. If a philosophy is adopted wherein the goal is to provide some minimum combination of opportunities to every residence, a GRASP® score can be calculated that represents this minimum.

A reasonable goal would be to offer a selection of active and passive recreation opportunities to every residence, along with access to a recreational trail. The formula for calculating the GRASP® value of such a combination of components is:

*Number of Components x Score for each Component x Modifier Value (will be 1.2 if adequate set of modifiers is present) x Design and Ambience Score (will be 2.0 if met to normal expectations) = **Base Score***

If we assume that at least two active components (courts, athletic fields, etc.) and two passive components (picnic shelters, natural areas, landscaped gardens, art, etc.) should be made available to each home, a base score of 19.2 is arrived at:

Number of Components (4) x Score for each Component (2.0) x Modifier Value (will be 1.2 if adequate set of modifiers is present) x Design and Ambience Score (will be 2.0 if met to normal expectations) = (19.2) Base Score

Because Perspective C also places a premium on walkable access to the components, the Base Score is doubled within 1/3 mile of the component. (The 1/3 mile distance represents an approximate 10-minute walk). Assuming that the basic set of components should similarly be located within 1/3 mile of each home, the base score



for the component set should also be doubled, to arrive at a desired GRASP® score of **38.4**. This is the desired minimum score that should exist at any home within the City of La Quinta on Perspective C. However, because the mix of components may not always be the combination listed above (for example, a home that is within 1/3 mile of four tennis courts and no other amenities would meet this numeric standard, but not the intent of the standard), it is recommended that the goal be to exceed this minimum score by some factor whenever possible. This minimal score is for neighborhoods only and does not include trails, schools, alternative providers or the community-wide level of service. It is only reflective of neighborhood amenities within a 1/3 mile of each home.

Table 9 demonstrates the level of service numerically which is shown on the GRASP® Perspective C.

Table 9: City of La Quinta Sub-Area LOS Summary Analysis Matrix - Acreages

| GRASP® LOS Summary Sub-Area Analysis Matrix La Quinta - California Prepared 4 April 2007 | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|---------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| <i>This table is based on the Perspective C: GRASP® COMPOSITE VALUES - ACCESS TO ALL OUTDOOR & INDOOR COMPONENTS GRASP® Analysis Map</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| Analysis Area | Total Acres | Acres. w/LOS | % of Total w/LOS | Acres = 0 (No LOS) | Percent Total Area = 0 (No LOS) | Avg. LOS Score Per Acre Served | Acres > 0 & < 19.2 | Acres 19.2 - 38.4 | Acres > 38.4 |
| Area 1 - North La Quinta | 1,286 | 1,283 | 100% | 4 | 0% | 164.44 | 23 | 17 | 1,242 |
| Area 2 - The Cove & South La Quinta | 1,677 | 1,677 | 100% | 0 | 0% | 242.27 | 14 | 77 | 1,586 |
| Area 3 - Gated Communities & Remaining City Area | 19,865 | 15,055 | 76% | 4,810 | 24% | 51.71 | 9,030 | 1,520 | 4,505 |
| Entire La Quinta | 22,829 | 18,015 | 79% | 4,814 | 21% | 77.48 | 9,067 | 1,615 | 7,333 |
| Definitions | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Total Acres:</i> Total area within the designated analysis area as calculated from the GIS | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Acres With LOS:</i> Area within each analysis area that has some service (LOS > 0). | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Percent of Total with LOS:</i> Percentage of the designated analysis area that has some service (LOS > 0). | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Average LOS per Acre Served:</i> The average GRASP® score for any given acre within the designated analysis area. | | | | | | | | | |

Highest service values are found in Area 2, the oldest part of the City of La Quinta, where there are a number of larger parks, including Fritz Burns Park, La Quinta Park, Civic Center Campus, and the Sports Complex. Several schools are located within this area as well, providing additional opportunities for park and recreation services. In addition, this part of the City of La Quinta has good access to open space and trails in the surrounding mountains. GRASP® service values in this area average 242.27 points and range to over 600 points.

The southern portions of Area 2, however, have much lower GRASP® scores than the northern portion. Numerically, only 6% of Area 2 scores lower than the recommended minimum of 38.4 points, and 100% have a score greater than zero, meaning that all of Area 2 has access to at least one recreational component. See **Table 10** for the percentages of acreages discussed here. The south end of The Cove has good access to trails and natural



areas, but it is lacking in developed parks. This issue is compounded by the higher density found here and the lack of sidewalks to provide access to the amenities that do exist, although this may be somewhat mitigated by the presence of bus service that circulates through The Cove and connects it to Old Town and the commercial district in north La Quinta. It may be desirable to increase the variety of components available to residents in the southern portions of The Cove, either by adding more developed park amenities, or by assuring good access to such amenities through trails and transit.

Table 10: City of La Quinta Sub-Area LOS Summary Analysis Matrix - Percent of Acreages

| GRASP® LOS Summary Sub-Area Analysis Matrix La Quinta - California Prepared 4 April 2007 <small>This table is based on the Perspective C: GRASP® COMPOSITE VALUES - ACCESS TO ALL OUTDOOR & INDOOR COMPONENTS GRASP® Analysis Map</small> | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|---------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Analysis Area | Total Acres | Acres. w/LOS | % of Total w/LOS | Acres = 0 (No LOS) | Percent Total Area = 0 (No LOS) | Avg. LOS Score Per Acre Served | Percent Total Area > 0 & < 19.2 | Percent Total Area 19.2 - 38.4 | Percent Total Area > 38.4 | Percent Area With LOS > 0 & < 19.2 | Percent Area With LOS 19.2 - 38.4 | Percent Area With LOS > 38.4 | |
| Area 1 - North La Quinta | 1,286 | 1,283 | 100% | 4 | 0% | 164.44 | 2% | 1% | 97% | 2% | 1% | 97% | |
| Area 2 - The Cove & South La Quinta | 1,677 | 1,677 | 100% | 0 | 0% | 242.27 | 1% | 5% | 95% | 1% | 5% | 95% | |
| Area 3 - Gated Communities & Remaining City Area | 19,865 | 15,055 | 76% | 4,810 | 24% | 51.71 | 45% | 8% | 23% | 60% | 10% | 30% | |
| Entire La Quinta | 22,829 | 18,015 | 79% | 4,814 | 21% | 77.48 | 40% | 7% | 32% | 50% | 9% | 41% | |

Definitions
 Total Acres: Total area within the designated analysis area as calculated from the GIS
 Acres With LOS: Area within each analysis area that has some service (LOS > 0).
 Percent of Total with LOS: Percentage of the designated analysis area that has some service (LOS > 0).
 Average LOS per Acre Served: The average GRASP® score for any given acre within the designated analysis area.

The area with the next-best levels of service is the northernmost section of the City of La Quinta, Area 1, where La Quinta Park and several neighborhood parks combine to provide GRASP® values of 164.44 points per acre on average. While this average is lower than the average for Area 2, Area 1 has a better distribution of service than Area 2. Only 3% of Area 1 has service that is below the minimum target of 38.4 points. Like Area 2, 100% of area has access to at least one component (i.e. score greater than zero). See the previous **Table 10** for the percentages of acreages discussed here.

For Area 3, GRASP® values are much lower. The average points per acre score for the gated and remaining parts of the City of La Quinta is 51.71. There are few if any city-owned parks or other amenities except for bike routes in these areas. This is partly due to the prevalence of gated communities in these areas. These provide private neighborhood park facilities, such as pools, tennis courts, club houses, walking trails, etc. For the purposes of this study it is assumed that the neighborhood needs of the gated communities are met through the private facilities. However, the residents of these neighborhoods use City of La Quinta parks as well as other facilities and programs provided by the City of La Quinta. In particular, it should be noted that there are relatively few playgrounds within the gated communities, so residents within these communities must rely on City of La Quinta parks and the local school yards to provide playgrounds. Even though many residents may not have children, they may have grandchildren with whom they would like to visit a playground.



For the Gated and Remaining Areas of the City of La Quinta, it must be noted that the GRASP® scores do not include private parks, trails, and other amenities. The scores only reflect the level of service provided by the public system. While this area has a lower GRASP® score than the other two, it is also served by private amenities. Of this area, 24% has no public park and recreation services at all. Only 23% of the area scores above the desired target of 38.4 points. However, the average score for all of this area is 51.71, thanks mainly to the overlap of service from the other areas, and the presence of trails.

For the City of La Quinta as a whole, 21% has a score of zero, 40% scores between zero and 19.2, 7% between 19.2 and 38.4, and 32% above 38.4.

These numbers will be used to set targets and recommendations will be made to achieve the targets for various parts of the City of La Quinta.

Perspective D: GRASP® Composite Values Walkable Access to All Outdoor and Indoor Components

This map shows the level of service provided to the community at a walkable level. All components are shown and each has only a 1/3 mile buffer. These buffers have been truncated at the pedestrian barrier formed by Highway 111.

The map looks similar to Perspective C, but is intended to show specifically those areas where walkability is good. The results show that the central part of the City of La Quinta, between the Civic Center Campus and La Quinta Community Park, is a highly walkable area. This will likely extend to the east as the SilverRock Resort is built out with additional trails and walkable destinations.

The white areas in the middle of The Cove indicate that walkable access is particularly low there. It should be noted that this part of the City of La Quinta may also have a higher number of children and youth, who desire access to a variety of activities that may not be available nearby. Attention should be given to increasing access to activities from within this neighborhood.

Perspective E: GRASP® Access to Trails and Bike Routes

This map shows access to trails within the City of La Quinta. Recreational trails are shown in four categories: off street recreational trail, bike route (often within the road right-of-way), shared bike route, and off street - primitive trail. Each trail was scored according to the degree that it provides recreational opportunities. Off street recreational trails received a score of 3, while primitive trails and on-street bike lanes received scores of 2. Shared paths received a score of 1.

Currently, the City of La Quinta has 10.7 miles of off-street primitive trail, 11.3 miles of off-street recreational trail, 35.22 miles of bike routes, and 1.1 miles of shared paths.

While the City of La Quinta has a framework in place for on-street commuter bike trails, it is poorly served by recreational trails. Recreational trails are designed primarily for providing a pleasant recreational experience for non-motorized transportation, including walking, bikes and other human-powered wheel modes, and equestrians. Preferably these trails



interconnect to form a network that allows people to travel from home or work to parks, open space and other recreation sites. Ideally, a recreational trail would be available within 1/3 mile or less of each home. This would provide a GRASP® score of 3 on this perspective for any location in City of La Quinta. Currently, GRASP® scores are 2 or less for most of the City of La Quinta.

The presence of gated communities in the City of La Quinta makes trail connections throughout the City of La Quinta difficult to accomplish. It is also very difficult to create new trails in areas that are completely built out. Therefore, it is extremely important to acquire trail easements and rights-of-way at the time that new development is occurring.

While connections across developed parts of the City of La Quinta may not be possible to attain, it may be possible to offer recreational trail opportunities on loops located within existing parks, natural areas, and other open lands. This will be addressed in the Recommendations section of this plan.

Perspective F: GRASP® Values Access to Outdoor and Indoor Passive Components

This map shows the level of service that is being provided to residents by recreation components that provide a passive experience for users. These components include outdoor facilities such as: open turf, shelters, spray mister, loop walks, public art, natural areas, picnic grounds, memorials, ponds, water features, trails, and campgrounds. Indoor passive components include: community rooms, arts and crafts rooms, game rooms, computer rooms, kitchens, learning centers, stages, multi-purpose rooms, museums, and the library.

The perspective shows that at least some level of service is found across most of the City of La Quinta. However, much of this is due to the existence of on-street bike lanes that have been counted as passive recreation in this analysis. If these were to be excluded, the analysis would instead show concentrations of passive components in The Cove and South La Quinta as well as north La Quinta, and little or no service elsewhere.

Scores range from a low value of 1.0 to a high value of over 445, with the high values occurring in the downtown area between the Civic Center Campus, La Quinta Community Park, and Fritz Burns Park. This area also has relatively easy access to the natural areas that surround The Cove.

Other areas in the City of La Quinta that might offer access to passive open space, yet have not been taken advantage of, include the washes and drainages. Some of these have already been developed as private lands, but others are in public ownership. Including these may provide opportunities for connectivity, loop trails, natural areas, or other passive uses.

Perspective G: GRASP® Values Access to Outdoor and Indoor Active Components

Recreation components that provide active recreation opportunities are shown in this perspective. Like Perspective F: Passive, this map shows both indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities. Active outdoor components shown on this map include: ball fields; basketball courts; batting cages; campgrounds; dog parks; fitness courses; golf courses; multi-purpose fields; open turf; playgrounds; pools; putting greens; skate parks;



spray grounds; tennis courts; and loop walks. Indoor components include: auditorium/dance; fitness rooms; and gymnasiums.

Like Perspective F, this map shows that much of the City of La Quinta has some service for active components, due mostly to the presence of on-street bike lanes. Without these, service would be concentrated in the same areas as described for Perspective F. However, it should be noted that the highest scores found on this perspective are in the range of 250, which is significantly lower than the highest scores found on Perspective F. This can mean several different things. For one, it is a result of the fact that parts of the City of La Quinta have excellent opportunities for passive recreation, thanks to the park and trail system and the surrounding mountain open space. However, it can also indicate that active recreation components are more distributed throughout the City of La Quinta than passive ones. Higher scores will result when components are concentrated within a relatively small area.

Capacities LOS Findings

The mapping shown as a part of the GRASP® analysis gives a good picture of how various aspects of the parks, recreation, and trail system serves the City of La Quinta. It shows component distribution and areas of service concentration when quality and capacities are combined. This works well for assuring that opportunities are provided close to home for residents of the City of La Quinta to recreate and enjoy a healthy lifestyle. However, for some components, location and distribution are not as critical as whether or not enough capacity is provided at the quality expected. This is especially true for things like skate parks, programmed athletic fields, and group picnic shelters, where having an adequate supply of facilities is more important than the location or distribution of those facilities.

For some components, the quantity needed is proportional to the population that will be served by that component. For some components this is a fairly easy calculation because the components are programmed for use. The programming determines how many people will be using the facilities over a period of time. Sports fields and courts fall into this category. For other components, the ratio of components to the population may vary, depending upon the size or capacity of the component and the participation levels within the community for the activity served by the component. Skate parks and group picnic facilities fall into this category.

The following table represents the Capacity LOS for the City of La Quinta. This spreadsheet closely resembles a traditional LOS analysis and shows how the quantities of certain park and recreation components compare to population. For each component, the spreadsheet shows the current quantity of that component on a “per-1000 persons” basis (referred to as the Capacity LOS) and the pro-rata number of persons in the community represented by each component. This kind of analysis can be used to show the capacity of the current inventory – in other words, how many people are potentially being served by park components. Note that facilities provided by the HOA’s have not been counted in the capacities analysis.

Aside from measuring what is currently provided to the residents of the City of La Quinta, the spreadsheet is also set up to project the number of facilities that will need to be added to maintain the current ratios to accommodate population growth. One set of numbers that is



typically referred to in capacities analysis is the “NRPA standards.” Often, these “standards” are used to establish the capacity of each component needed for a community. In conducting planning work, it is key to realize that these standards can be valuable when referenced as benchmarks for capacity, but not necessarily as the target standards for which a community should strive, as communities can differ greatly in need and desire for recreation facilities.

In the case of the City of La Quinta, information from the statistically-valid survey, focus groups, and other input indicated that the current ratios for existing components were adequate and that those ratios should be maintained as the population grows, but they do not need to be adjusted. The additional capacity needed for each component as the population grows is shown on the spreadsheet. The estimated amount of land needed to contain these new facilities and the life-cycle cost to operate them is also shown on the spreadsheet. The life-cycle costs include an amortized replacement amount in current dollars for the facilities, but not for the land.

It is important to note that this spreadsheet is simply a tool that is used to make final recommendations and establish budgets. The numbers of facilities and costs shown on this spreadsheet may differ from the final recommendations. One reason for this is that some components may be added to existing parks on land that is currently owned by the City of La Quinta, or may be an expansion or upgrade of existing facilities, while others may require the purchase of additional land. In some cases, the prescribed additional components may be provided by partner agencies or other entities to the satisfaction of the City of La Quinta, and therefore there may be little or no cost to the City of La Quinta.



Table 11: City of La Quinta - Level of Services Capacities Chart

Capacities Level of Service Chart
La Quinta, CA 3.06.07

| | <i>Spraygrounds (interactive water feature for play)</i> | <i>Outdoor Pool</i> | <i>Ballfields</i> | <i>Basketball</i> | <i>Dog Park</i> | <i>Fitness Course</i> | <i>Golf (per 18 Holes)</i> | <i>Loop Walk</i> | <i>Multi-use Field - large</i> | <i>Open Turf</i> | <i>Shade Shelter - small (Individual)</i> | <i>Picnic shelter - large (group)</i> | <i>Playground</i> | <i>Skate Park</i> | <i>Tennis Courts</i> | |
|--|--|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|---|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--|
| INVENTORY | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| City Components | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 10 | 15 | 4 | 10 | 2 | 6 | |
| Schools (Sports Complex Only) | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | |
| Other (County & CVPRD) | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | |
| TOTAL | 1 | 2 | 9 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 13 | 17 | 4 | 13 | 2 | 6 | |
| RATIOS PER POPULATION | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CURRENT POPULATION (2006) | 38,340 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Current Ratio per 1000 Population | 0.03 | 0.05 | 0.23 | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.03 | 0.10 | 0.13 | 0.34 | 0.44 | 0.10 | 0.34 | 0.05 | 0.16 | |
| Population per component | 38,340 | 19,170 | 4,260 | 19,170 | 19,170 | 19,170 | 38,340 | 9,585 | 7,668 | 2,949 | 2,255 | 9,585 | 2,949 | 19,170 | 6,390 | |
| PROJECTED POPULATION - YEAR 2011 | 52,736 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total # needed to maintain current ratio of all existing facilities at projected population | 1 | 3 | 12 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 7 | 18 | 23 | 6 | 18 | 3 | 8 | |
| <i>Number that should be added to achieve current ratio at projected population</i> | 0 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 2 | |



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Analysis of GRASP® Perspective Observations

The GRASP® perspectives show that overall levels of service in general are good in the non-gated areas of the City of La Quinta. An assumption can be made that the gated areas are adequately served by private amenities, although the exact makeup of these is not available. It is possible that certain amenities are lacking in the gated communities, such as playgrounds. This would cause an impact on the parks outside of the gated communities as residents of the gated communities would use facilities within the non-gated neighborhoods when these are not available within their own neighborhoods.

Even though the overall levels of service are good, there are some inequities that may need to be addressed within the system. There also are some specific needs that go beyond the general level of service. These can be identified from the public input process.

According to the Importance-Unmet Need Assessment Matrix from the statistically-valid survey, the following *facilities* have both a high unmet need and high importance to the citizens of the City of La Quinta:

- Performing and Cultural Arts Facilities
- Walking and Biking Trails
- Indoor Fitness and Exercise Facilities
- Nature Trails/Nature Center
- Natural Areas/Wildlife Habitats
- Small Neighborhood Parks

It might be useful to group these into the following categories:

- Indoor Facilities – Arts and Fitness, Nature Center
- Natural Facilities - Interpretive Trails and Center, Habitats, and Natural Areas
- Trails – Walking, Biking, and Nature Trails
- Neighborhood Parks

Looking at these, recommendations can be focused on each of the groupings.

Indoor Facilities

The top priorities for several indoor facilities currently being addressed by the City of La Quinta include performing arts with the potential of the black box theater at SilverRock, and to a lesser degree, indoor fitness and exercise facilities with the addition to the Boys and Girls Club facility. More needs to be done by perhaps exploring the partnership with CVRPD to convert the Community Center to fitness emphasis, and adding additional program space at the senior center for fitness equipment and classes.

Another possibility is to add additional fitness space and restrooms at the Boys and Girls Club. The agreement with the Boys and Girls Club allows for use of the facility at night for programming. As of February, 2007, 225 memberships have been sold for the existing fitness addition since July, 2006. With fitness being one of the top priorities, and the lack of



other available fitness facilities, the existing fitness space could be expanded which would begin to address the expressed needs.

As far as an indoor nature center, perhaps exploring collaborative partnership with the Coral Mountain Interpretive Center as well as local organizations might lend itself to future development.

Athletic Fields

Athletic Fields play an important role in the City of La Quinta community. The City of La Quinta manages nine (9) baseball fields (both general and adult) and five (5) large multi-use fields that are used by many organizations and are also used by player and teams from outside the City of La Quinta. Youth and adult soccer, football, lacrosse, softball and baseball field facilities rank low in priority according to the citizen survey. The number of fields provided by the City of La Quinta and by other agencies, such as the Desert Sands Unified School District, seems to be meeting the needs of the current citizens, however sports associations and staff has expressed concern about overuse. Some of that use is being caused by users from outside of the City of La Quinta, however the City of La Quinta is not established as a regional provider, therefore we recommend that the City of La Quinta pursue a feasibility study addressing field needs in collaboration with neighboring communities. To meet the current capacity ratio in the future, the City of La Quinta will need to add fields.

Golf Course

Golf also ranks lower in priority and as a special interest according to the survey. This is probably due to the sheer number of golf courses in the City of La Quinta and the surrounding communities, both publicly and privately provided.

Natural Facilities

The City of La Quinta is blessed with easy access to natural areas within the mountains that shape its southern and western boundaries. This, combined with the well-maintained developed parks located within Old Town and north La Quinta, lead to high levels of service for passive recreation, as shown on GRASP® Perspective F. The citizens of the City of La Quinta value this access to natural and passive recreation, and desire to have more of it. Toward that end, new passive park land is planned for the SilverRock development.

Undeveloped open space provides the primary vehicle for addressing this need. Within the developed parts of the City of La Quinta it will be difficult to provide additional open space. One of the few large open areas that exist here is the Whitewater Channel that crosses through north La Quinta. This corridor could be enhanced with trails, natural landscaping, and other features to provide a large open space park adjacent to some of the City of La Quinta's most highly-developed areas. Trails on both the north and south sides of the Whitewater Channel could be linked at the major street crossings to create a series of loops, offering a variety of opportunities for exercise, bicycling, or strolling, with a circuit of up to three miles in length possible. Landscaping within the channel could be a natural desert landscape, with shady oases and waysides located along the trail on the upper benches on both sides. The openness of the channel would assure expansive views along the channel and out to the surrounding mountain backdrop.



This area could also serve as a natural habitat and corridor for wildlife. Interpretive signs along the trail would explain the natural history and geography of the region and other interesting information.

The proximity of this area to the commercial areas nearby could offer visitors the combination of a pleasant natural experience combined with shopping and entertainment. The residential areas to the north would have easy access to open space and trails without having to cross Highway 111. Connecting this area to La Quinta Park and La Quinta High School through spur trails and bike lanes would offer residents a complete range of natural and developed recreational opportunities.

These improvements would not only benefit residents and visitors to the City of La Quinta by providing a natural park, it could also be a model for other communities to follow throughout the Valley. It could even spark the development of a regional trail system that would connect similar facilities throughout the Valley.

Opportunities to preserve open space within the Sphere of Influence should be taken advantage of if the City of La Quinta elects to expand there. Drainage ways, canals, utility easements, and other corridors should be designated as greenways for trails and native landscaping, open to the public rather than walled off in gated communities. In addition to canals, other remnants of the region's historic agricultural past should be preserved in the SOI as open space.

Trails

Recreational trails are among the highest-ranked amenities desired by residents in the City of La Quinta and communities across America. Connectivity and the creation of a linked network are key aspects of a successful trail system. It is difficult to achieve this for the existing developed parts of the City of La Quinta, but should be a priority for any newly developing parts. Washes, utility corridors, canals, and other linear features should be considered as prime candidates for setting aside as trail and greenway corridors.

Recreational trails should form loops wherever possible. Ideally, multiple loops should be interconnected to offer a series of optional lengths and routes for recreational use. The City of La Quinta currently has no recreational loops, but it may be possible to form some. For example, two looped trails were proposed in the previous section as part of the development of open space and natural areas. Trails proposed around the SilverRock Resort will form a loop around the resort, and will connect to neighborhoods to the south and east by way of existing recreational trails along Avenue 54, Avenue 56, Avenue 58, and Madison Street. A future link is planned that will connect from these trails to Lake Cahuilla County Regional Park along Avenue 58. Another potentially difficult connection that is nonetheless worth investigating is connecting from Avenue 58 to SilverRock Resort through Lake Cahuilla County Regional Park and along the CVWD Canal. Both of these would greatly enhance the connectivity of the trail system and offer exceptional recreational trail experiences.

Old Town La Quinta has a high walk ability score, as indicated on Perspective D. There are numerous destinations within Old Town that encourage walking. Several bike lanes



surround and intersect this part of the City of La Quinta. This area should be looked at more closely to assure that sidewalks, crossings, and other elements are in place that support walking in the same way that bike lanes encourage cycling. In addition, a high-quality pedestrian/multi-use corridor should be implemented between Old Town and SilverRock Resort, to encourage walking and biking between these two areas. The City of La Quinta is also implementing its first phase of the Golf Cart Program which also integrates with this plan. This might consist of upgrading the walkway surface with special paving, artwork, or other elements to make it feel special. Benches and shaded waysides should be provided along the corridor to encourage leisurely use. This corridor should be extended west to connect with the Bear Creek Trail and the mountains. Signage should highlight the corridor as a special pedestrian route that connects recreation, open space, civic, and commercial areas to one another. This could become a “signature” feature for the City of La Quinta that will help fill hotel rooms, restaurants, and other businesses in the central part of the City of La Quinta.

Smaller trail loops should be incorporated into all parks whenever possible. Even short loops are useful when they allow people to walk out of their homes, make a circuit and return home. Such amenities can have a large impact on improving the health and well-being of people of all ages, from tots in strollers to senior citizens.

Primitive trails through the mountains and open space are equally important as paved recreational trails for the City of La Quinta. The network of trails in open space should be treated similarly to the rest of the system by creating loops and enhancing connectivity. Signage and way finding should be clear and understandable to visitors and residents alike. Trails could be rated for their degree of challenge and difficulty and signed accordingly, much like the runs of ski areas. Interpretive signage could be added to trails, with certain trails expressing a specific theme, such as history, geology, etc.

Trails are noticeably absent in north La Quinta. While adding off-street multi-use trails is not likely to be feasible in this built-out area, the neighborhood should be looked at more closely to assure that the street and sidewalk system provides safe and convenient travel for bikes and pedestrians to the parks and schools within the neighborhood. If the open space park and trail system recommended in the previous section is implemented, safe connections from the neighborhood should be identified and enhanced with signage, art, and other elements.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks were identified as an unmet need on the survey. While the GRASP® perspectives show that the overall level of service for neighborhoods is generally good in the City of La Quinta, there are some areas that are lacking in variety and opportunity for park and recreation experiences. The Cove is a notable example. While this area has a relatively good score for level of service, based primarily on access to open space, natural areas, and trails, it has only two very small developed parks with playgrounds. In the Cove, there are no components for sports or organized events in this part of the City of La Quinta. The closest park for sports is the La Quinta Community Park.



The only way to add developed park amenities in The Cove is likely to be through acquisition and removal of existing homes. While land values are likely to make this an expensive proposition, it may be possible to fund this through such avenues as redevelopment funds or the creation of a special tax district. Another way to enhance access to services from The Cove would be to assure good bus service with connections to developed parks and indoor recreation located in other parts of the City of La Quinta. The current bus route circulates through The Cove, however, the bus does not connect to the Boys and Girls Club or the Sports Complex negating its usefulness for the age group most likely to use those facilities. Working with transit officials, it may be possible to make the bus an effective way of providing residents of The Cove with access to a wide range of park and recreation services. This doesn't have to be limited to extending routes.

One possible reason for the need for additional neighborhood parks could be that some of the components found within them are lacking inside of gated communities. The example of playgrounds has been brought up already. A strong recommendation would be to conduct an inventory of existing amenities within the gated communities of the City of La Quinta and integrate this with the GRASP® analysis for the City of La Quinta to see where deficiencies might exist. Ways could then be found to either increase service within the gated communities for specific needs, or to expand and enhance the parks adjacent to gated communities that are being impacted by a lack of specific amenities within gated communities.

If the City of La Quinta expands into the SOI, the effects of gated communities on parks and amenities in the non-gated neighborhoods need to be carefully considered and addressed through the land dedication, impact fee, and design guideline ordinances. The intent should be to assure that park and recreation amenities within gated communities are adequate in quantity, quality, and variety to serve the needs of residents without relying on neighborhood parks in non-gated communities to satisfy the needs. Developers of gated communities will also need to contribute sufficiently to community-wide facilities such as athletic fields, trails, etc. to cover the impacts of their residents.

Community-Wide Facilities

In addition to the items identified in the Needs Assessment and described above, the City of La Quinta also has some community-wide needs that should be addressed. The GRASP® perspectives show that the City of La Quinta is well-served for passive recreation. However, they also indicate that service levels for active recreation are considerably lower than those for passive recreation. This would include such things as sports fields, which input from staff and the public indicates are highly in demand. This is partly a regional phenomenon, due to the fact that participants in league sports come not just from the City of La Quinta, but from other parts of the Valley. Because of this, it might make sense to look at sports fields from a regional perspective.

There is current consideration for a sports complex in Indio and Coachella that would relieve some of the current demand. However, the City of La Quinta has no control over whether or when this is likely to happen. The City of La Quinta should be considering its options for addressing this need. One possibility is to acquire land and construct a sports complex of its own. This would require from 30 to 100 acres or more of undeveloped land.



Such parcels exist just outside the southeast part of the City of La Quinta. This also has the advantage of being near current and proposed multi-use trails, which would provide good access by bicycle. The City of La Quinta should consider acquisition while opportunities are still available to do so.

Analysis of Crime Prevention Design

Security

It should be of concern that according to the Community Attitude and Interest Survey, the number four reason citizens do not use City of La Quinta's facilities is that security is insufficient. Coordination with public transportation or school bus stops which could be adjacent to small neighborhood "pocket" parks, especially in the Cove area (either new or existing parks) may help address this issue, as well as providing lit fields with adequate parking.

Key Opportunity: It should be high priority for the City of La Quinta to determine the cause of this survey finding regardless if it is real or perceived, and react accordingly.

Designing Against Crime

In most cities, crime prevention in parks has become a major issue. It is known that quality parks and trails increase surrounding property values. However, there is also a fear that these types of facilities can also bring undesirable activities into the surrounding neighborhood. The phrase Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) (C. Ray Jeffreys, 1971) is defined as the "proper design and effective use of the built environment that can lead to a reduction in the fear and the incidence of crime, and an improvement in the quality of life." There are four main principles to CPTED:

1. Natural Surveillance: the environment is maintained so that people can be easily seen by others
2. Natural Access Control: the natural access is controlled by some means
3. Territoriality: distinguishing between public and private spaces
4. Maintenance: park and recreation departments should only build what they can maintain

Key Opportunity: The City of La Quinta is familiar with CPTED design standards and should incorporate them into any future park development or new improvements. Resources for CPTED include:

- Designing Safer Communities: A CPTED Handbook by the National Crime Prevention Council
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, Second Edition, by Timothy Crowe
- Virginia CPTED Guidelines: www.vcpa.org
- Trees and Crime: The Role of Landscapes in Crime Prevention: www1.brcc.edu/murray/research/cpted



Analysis of Facility, Field and Park Maintenance Issues

Indoor Facility Maintenance

Continued coordination of indoor maintenance accomplished interdepartmentally is warranted as is consideration for additional staffing as facilities expand or level of service increases.

Park and Athletic Field Maintenance

It is the Community Service Department's goal to maintain all fields in good condition. It is a concern of the Department that capacity demands on field use versus the expected level of service for maintenance, is out of balance. Additionally, rising costs in contractual park maintenance and maintenance standards may need to be pro-actively monitored when it comes to dealing with turf care, preventive maintenance and safety issues.

Key Opportunity: The City of La Quinta should monitor the effectiveness of their newly developed field maintenance standards in relation to the annual performance of the contract maintenance practices. The City of La Quinta should have the contractor track labor cost by task, as well as vandalism costs and continually reassess the funding allocation to the Department in relation to field use and capacity; and perhaps pursue a dedicated Park and Recreation tax.

Development of Formalized Park and Athletic Field Maintenance Standards

Key Opportunity: The City of La Quinta should continue to develop formalized park and athletic field maintenance standards reflecting the City of La Quinta's expectation. These standards would also recommend timeframes for responding to maintenance concerns such as lighting, restroom servicing and repairs to playgrounds. Once the standards are developed the City of La Quinta would use the standards as a guide that will help in providing necessary yearly budget estimates based on actual recorded costs.

Determine Cost for Maintenance Tasks

Utilizing the City of La Quinta's contractor to establish a baseline for park and athletic field maintenance would develop a historic record of costs for budget projections and create an understanding of what maintenance costs would be involved in any new park or athletic field development. It would also help the Department assess when and if it is time to perform this work in house or to continue to fulfill the needs through a contract.

Key Opportunity: Tasks that should be tracked for both labor and equipment use might include:

- Training
- Inspection
- Meetings
- Fertilizing
- Mowing
- Pruning/Tree Maintenance
- Edging/Weed-eating
- Trash Removal
- Marking/Striping



- Infield Preparation
- Irrigation
- Irrigation maintenance and repairs
- Weed control
- Spraying (pesticides, shrubs and trees)
- Trail Maintenance

Benefits of Tracking Costs

- Accurate estimating of costs for new park acreage
- As new facilities come online, having a cost for each maintenance task that would be required including staffing, supplies and equipment will allow the City of La Quinta to accurately estimate future maintenance costs.
- Improved scheduling of maintenance activities
- Understanding how many hours it takes to complete maintenance tasks will allow for better contract management and service standards. This in turn should allow for more efficient operations and maximizing use of contractors and equipment.
- Safer conditions
- More efficient park and athletic field maintenance operations will lead to better maintenance practices therefore improving conditions for user.
- Improved ability to apply maintenance costs to programming fees formulas
- Understanding costs associated with maintenance, especially athletic field maintenance, will allow the City of La Quinta to potentially recoup these costs (if deemed appropriate) by applying some or all maintenance costs to programming and/or field rental and/or player use fees formulas.

Key Opportunity: As a summary the City of La Quinta should be diligent in tracking and record keeping establishing a benchmark and meeting performance measures.

Development of a Life Cycle Costing Assessment Program for Park and Athletic Field Amenities

The goals of this assessment would be to gain a better understanding of deferred maintenance needs that have not been met and to develop a strategy for renovating or replacing facilities. The life cycle cost would include a review of field conditions, picnic shelters, all site furnishings, field turf, fencing, comfort, athletic courts and lights, athletic field lights and other site furnishings. Historical replacement data and manufacturing specifications can be used as a guide in developing life cycle assessments.

Benefits of Implementing Life-Cycle Costing Tracking Systems

- Creates a better estimating system for developing the annual capital budget and a five-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP)
- Provides a mechanism for making budget adjustments when necessary capital funds are unavailable by providing cost and lifecycle inventory for all facility types
- Will be a valuable tool for facility analysis, and will aid in deciding which facilities will not be replaced due to the high cost of duplicate facilities and high operating cost of facilities



Development of Volunteer Programs

Adopt a Park

Key Opportunity: The Department should develop volunteer groups to help support the maintenance needs of the City of La Quinta. The volunteer support could be focused around interests such as parents with children to support playground maintenance, horticultural groups for flower bed maintenance support, sport associations for athletic field support, (*note: sports associations provide athletic field support to some degree at this time*). These groups can provide a tremendous benefit to the Department if fully organized. City of La Quinta sponsored programs, such as adopt-a-park or adopt a trail should be created with and supported by the residents, businesses, and/or organizations. These programs allow volunteers to actively assist in improving and maintaining trails, parks, related facilities, and ultimately, the community in which they live.

Neighborhood Park Watch

As a way to reduce cost associated with vandalism and other crimes against property, the City of La Quinta should develop a neighborhood park watch program. This program would develop community ownership of the City of La Quinta's facilities. Perhaps the existing Citizen's on Patrol Program could have more of an emphasis on the parks.

Analysis of Impact Fee Review

The City of La Quinta has both a park land dedication requirement (Quimby Act), and development impact fees addressing *Parks and Recreation Facilities*, the *Civic Center*, *Community Centers* and *Maintenance Facilities*. The intent of these requirements is to provide adequate sites and to provide or assist in providing the financing required to acquire, develop and maintain City of La Quinta parks and recreation facilities to serve new growth. This is true for existing areas within the City of La Quinta's corporate limits as well as in anticipation of future annexations of areas in the City of La Quinta's *Sphere of Influence (SOI)*.

As part of the Master Plan update process, focus groups, stakeholder interviews, staff interviews and a statistically-valid community opinion survey were conducted to ascertain current participation patterns, satisfaction levels, needs and desires, priorities and willingness to pay. This information was incorporated, along with demographic analysis; local, state, and national trends; an analysis of the market; and current conditions, into a recommendation of standards for park, recreation facility, trails and open space for the City of La Quinta community. It is these standards on which the recommendations regarding land dedication and development impact fees should be made.

Policy 5-2.1.2 of the *City of La Quinta General Plan*. It may be time for the City of La Quinta to revise, and make more specific, its existing ordinance regulating the dedication of land and payment of fees for park and recreation purposes. A review of the existing requirements, in conjunction with this *Master Plan* update, provides standards as well as flexibility to address the unique park needs of each neighborhood, as well as accounts for community-wide needs, open space and trails.



It is recommended that the current land dedication and impact fees be reviewed to determine, define and quantify the park land and services providing the current level of service and necessary to provide for new growth according to the standards set forth in the *2006-2007 Community Services Master Plan* update.



VIII. Implementation and Action Plans

The City of La Quinta is doing many things well related to providing quality community services, parks and recreation opportunities to the community. The 2006 Citizen Survey included in **Appendix C** shows that only nineteen percent (19%) of respondent households have participated in recreation programs offered by the City of La Quinta Community Services Department during the past 12 months. Of the 19% of respondent households that have participated in the City of La Quinta Community Services Department programs during the past 12 months, 88% rated the programs as either excellent (39%) or good (49%).

Nineteen percent (19%) participation may sound low for a city the size of the City of La Quinta's; however, 26% of the respondents indicate they don't use any services (and 27% indicate they are too busy or not interested to use the City of La Quinta's services), and 25% of the respondents use their private country clubs within gated communities. This leaves only 30% of the population using other providers. The City of La Quinta should target the specific interest areas and unmet needs identified in the survey results to reach those not using any or using other providers' programs and services.

The primary challenge in the coming years will be to meet the desired level of service throughout the community in the immediate future while adjusting to any population growth; increased demand for programming and facilities; and changing economics and demographics. The **Action Themes Implementation** in **Table 12** summarizes the Master Plan recommendations and the narrative of each of the recommendations follows the description of the **Guiding Themes**.

Guiding Themes

Throughout this planning process, five primary themes emerged to address current needs, future goals, and guide the action and implementation plan.

Community Connectivity: The coordination of all planning efforts within the region, and especially within the City of La Quinta, for the development of additional trails to provide connectivity are desired and expected by the community to meet and maintain current and expected levels of satisfaction. This was the highest priority for the City of La Quinta as identified through the survey results, needs assessment and GRASP® analysis.

Maintain Current LOS as Population Grows: In order to maintain the current LOS offered by the City of La Quinta as it grows, a variety of mechanisms should be employed. These could include the land dedication and impact fees for development in gated and un-gated neighborhoods, improvements or renovations to existing facilities, special use facilities such as a sports complex, and additional and new funding methods, including partnerships with other like minded organizations. The LOS should be monitored as population grows to assure that these mechanisms are maintaining current ratios. Ongoing maintenance, as well as the completion of what has already been promised are desired and expected by the community in order to meet and maintain current and expected levels of satisfaction.



The growing demand for leisure and recreation services has created the need for the City of La Quinta to maximize use of its resources through leveraging its partnerships and assets. Continued relationship development between the City of La Quinta and the YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, CVRPD, the Desert Sands Unified School District, alternative providers and stakeholders will help provide additional resources for the City of La Quinta to leverage space for expanded recreational programming. New facilities and programs may be possible in the future through partnerships, alternative funding mechanisms and new revenue streams.

Improve LOS: Improving the overall LOS for the City of La Quinta includes feasibility studies and future recommendations based on the Capacities Chart, GRASP® analysis, survey results and public input.

Impact Fee Review: These revisions are the result of our review of the current Impact Fee Study, growth factors, maintaining existing community and neighborhood levels of service, as well as improving levels of service for trails and open space.

Best Management Practices: The creation of policies and procedures that will further define how to operate, facilitate data collection and provide for increased financial sustainability is paramount. *The importance of the role of public input and the leadership in the decision making process is paramount.*

Action Theme One - Community Connectivity

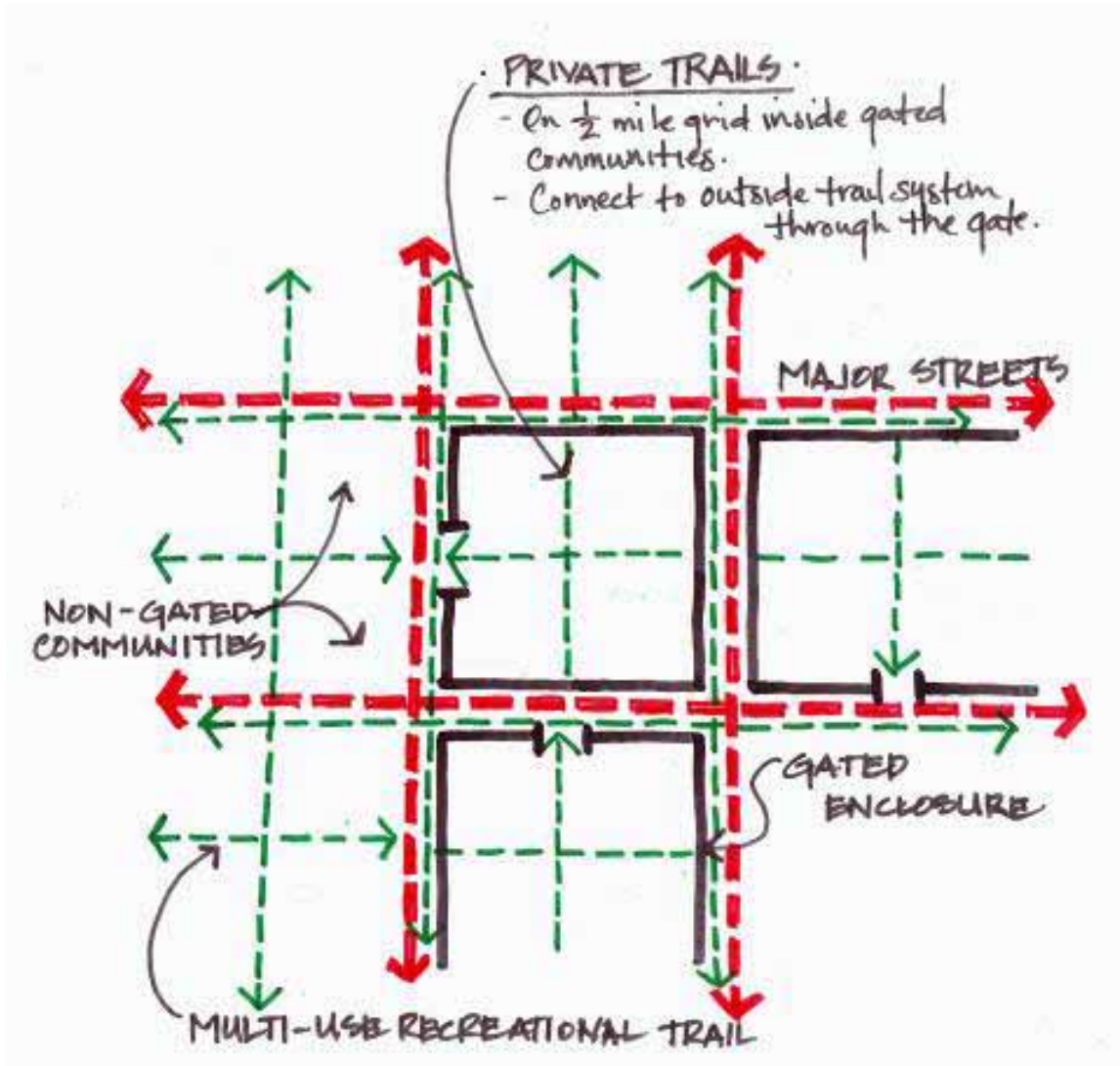
As with most communities surveyed around the country, the most important recreational need is walking and biking trails, which ranks as the most important need in the 2006 Citizen Survey. Connectivity, trails and walkability is vital to the City of La Quinta Community. Widening or converting existing routes to grade separated trails should occur wherever possible. The GRASP® Perspective H - Recommendations Map located in **Appendix M** shows the suggested locations of future connecting trails. The trail improvements shown on this map should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis for feasibility and cost.

Recommendation 1.1 – Implement Trail System Plan

New trails will come with new development through the land dedication and impact fee process. **Figure 15** on the following page shows conceptually how the trail network should be implemented in the Sphere of Influence (SOI) or other new development, whether the communities are gated or non-gated. Other trails may be accomplished during the timeframe of this Master Plan as special projects. See **Recommendation 3.4– Site Master Plan for the Old Town Corridor** for increased LOS to the trail system. The cost of these will vary depending on the nature of the project and whether or not land acquisition is required.



Figure 15: Future Trail Connections



Adding loop walks in existing parks wherever feasible is a recommendation that could be done immediately. Existing parks should be considered on a case by case basis as funds are available. Look for opportunities around detention ponds or unfinished trails connections. See **Appendix M for GRASP® Perspective H - Recommendations Map**.

Recommendation 1.2 – Coordinate Public Transportation and School Bus Routes with Community Services Access

Another task that can be done immediately at little expense is to work with SunLine Transit Agency to see if alterations to the Line 70 Route could be accomplished to make it more useful for park and recreation access. In addition, coordination with the Desert Sands Unified School District could connect school bus routes with existing and future small neighborhood “pocket” parks, especially in the Cove area to improve security concerns and provide more recreation, leisure, health and wellness opportunities. See **Appendix M for GRASP® Perspective H - Recommendations Map**.



Action Theme Two - Maintain Current LOS as the Population Grows

In general, the citizens of the City of La Quinta are satisfied with the existing levels of service provided to them. Therefore, as a minimum, levels of service should be maintained at current ratios as the population grows. **Table 11** shows how the quantities of key components may need to be increased to assure that levels of service remain consistent. However, the table is intended only as a guide. As demographics, trends, and other factors change, it may not be necessary or desirable to maintain the exact ratios for each component as shown on the table. While the mix of components and the ratios of each may change, the net levels of service provided to the community should be maintained as population grows. The GRASP® analysis is useful for this purpose and can be reviewed and consulted on an on-going basis to assure that this is happening.

Recommendation 2.1 – Maintain Current LOS throughout the Park System

In order to maintain the existing level of service for parks and recreation as the population of the City of La Quinta grows, it will be necessary to acquire and improve additional lands in proportion to the population. When all of the lands making up the current inventory are accounted for, the total is 262.5 acres for parks and recreation services. Dividing this by the permanent resident population of 38,340 persons equates to 6.84 acres per 1000 persons. As the population grows, it will be necessary to add land at this same ratio and improve it accordingly.

The current inventory of lands can be categorized into three general categories:

1. *Developed Parks and Facilities* – these include sites such as the Boys and Girls Club, in addition to parks and the sports complex. This category makes up approximately 46% of the current inventory.
2. *Greenways* – these include natural and developed corridors for trails and other uses. This category makes up approximately 2% of the current inventory. It will be useful in the calculations presented below to assume that half of these lands are developed to the same level as developed parks, and the other half are developed to a level commensurate with natural areas.
3. *Natural Areas* – these are areas maintained for conservation and low-impact recreation purposes. This category makes up approximately 52% of the current inventory.

The cost to develop the lands in each category varies. For developed parks, this can range from over \$200,000 per acre to nearly \$500,000 per acre. The City of La Quinta has used \$225,000 per acre in determining impact fees, so it may be useful to use this number as a starting point. Local experience indicates, however, that the actual costs may be up to twice this much for highly-developed sites.

For Greenways, it is difficult to determine a per-acre cost for development, because of variables such as whether or not the greenway is fully developed with a hard-surface trail and landscaping, or with a soft-surface trail and native landscape. The width of the greenway in proportion to the width of the trail is also a factor. Because of this, the recommendation here is to assume that the greenway land is allocated half to developed



parks and half to natural areas, and the development costs for each of those categories applied accordingly.

For natural areas, the cost of development is assumed to be limited to minimal improvements such as trails, seating, picnic shelters and other related facilities. The cost of developing this land is therefore much lower. A typical trail corridor one acre in size and 50 feet wide through an undeveloped natural area would provide about 870 linear feet of trail. At \$25.00 per foot, this trail would cost \$21,750 to construct. Adding in signs, benches, and other amenities, the one acre would cost approximately \$25,000 to improve. On the other hand, a natural area with little or no trail or other improvements might be developed for as little as a few thousand dollars per acre. For the purposes of estimating, a number of \$10,000 per acre is suggested as a starting point.

Using these numbers, a cost can be calculated for maintaining the existing level of service per 1000 persons as follows:

Developed Parkland: 6.84 acres x 47% x \$225,000 per acre = \$723,330

Natural Areas: 6.84 acres x 53% x \$10,000 per acre = \$36,252

Total Development Cost: \$759,582

At a growth rate of 2,879 persons each year over the next four years, this level of development would cost \$2.2 million each year.

Action Theme Three - Improve LOS

While some of the recommended amenities described above are directly related to population growth and can be funded through impact fees, others are not and should be done as special projects. These may be constructed later in the 5-year timeframe, or even beyond. Feasibility studies could be done immediately for these special projects (short-term timeframe), while implementation is likely to occur towards the latter part of the timeframe, or even beyond the timeframe of the plan.

Recommendation 3.1 – Special Facility Feasibility Study - Open Space Park along the Whitewater Channel in North La Quinta

The feasibility study for this would include determining if it is possible to partner with the agencies involved, collecting base data, coming up with a concept for the park, and doing cost estimates and phasing and implementation plans. An approximate budget for these tasks would be somewhere between \$40,000 and \$120,000 depending on the available information, level of detail desired, and other factors. See **Figures 16 and 17** for examples of an Oasis Park along the whitewater channel and a section. See **Appendix M for GRASP® Perspective H - Recommendations Map**.



Figure 16: Recommendation 3.1 Open Space Park along the Whitewater Channel - Oasis

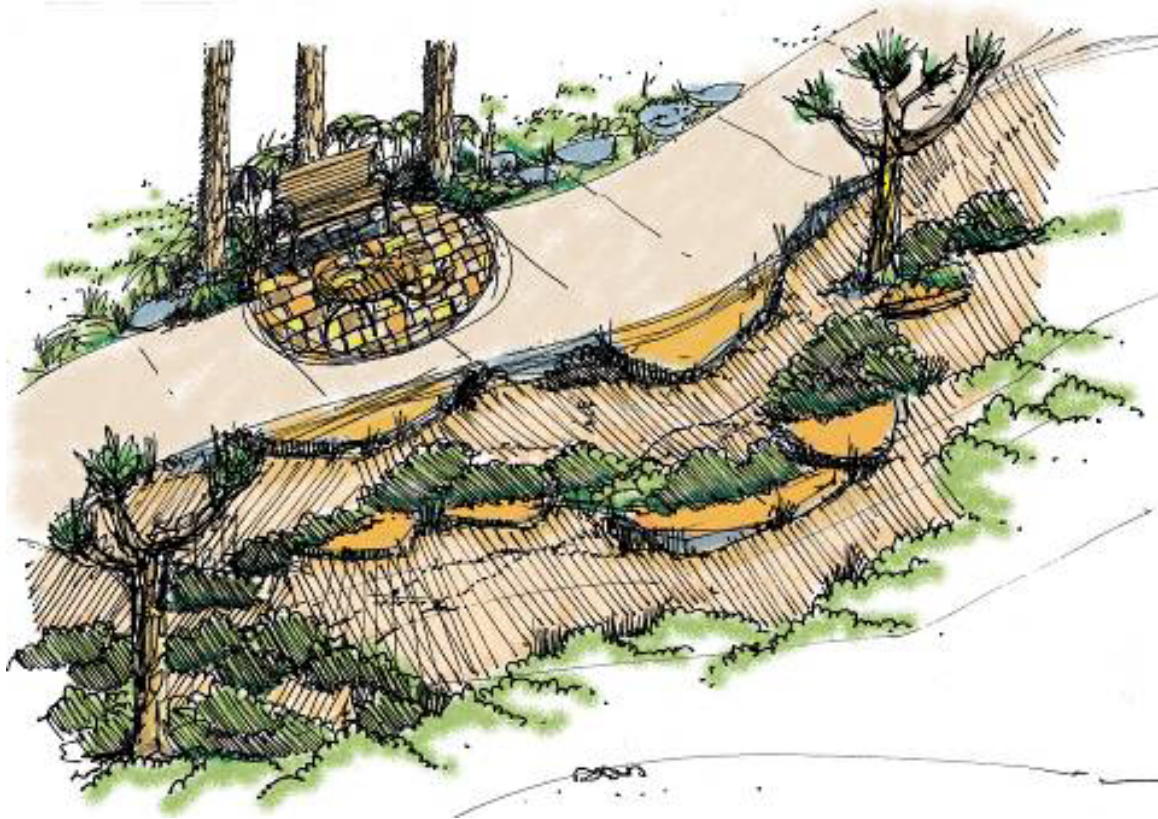
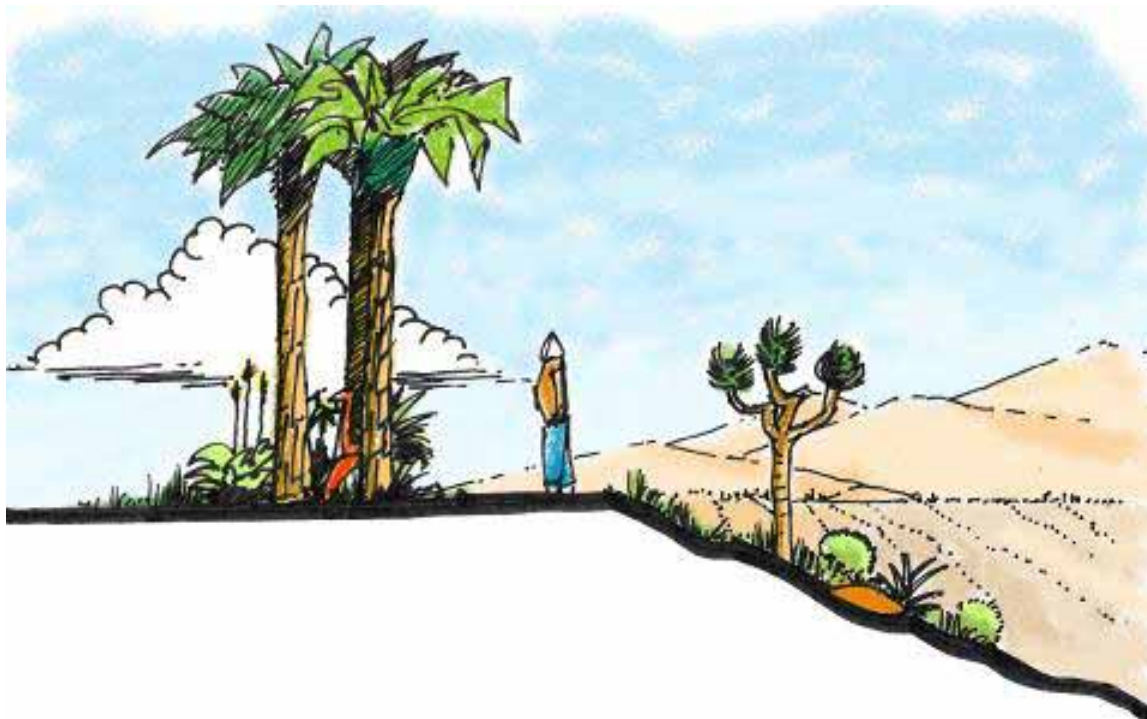


Figure 17: Recommendation 3.1 Open Space Park along the Whitewater Channel - Oasis Section



Recommendation 3.2 – Special Facility Feasibility Study - Open Space and Park along the Drainage Way

The feasibility study for this project would be similar to the previous one, with a budget range of between \$30,000 and \$90,000. The cost of the land is determined by both the parcel size and negotiations with the owner. See **Appendix M for GRASP® Perspective H - Recommendations Map**.

Recommendation 3.3 – Special Facility Feasibility Study and Land Acquisition - New Sports Complex

Because the City of La Quinta’s fields are located in various neighborhood parks, the City of La Quinta should conduct a feasibility study to locate all game fields in a sports complex and re-purpose the neighborhood park fields to be local practice fields. This would require an available large parcel of land of around 30-50 acres and would have a positive impact on the parking and congestion of the neighborhood parks from players and spectators during games. Additionally, light spillage into the neighborhood could be reduced by concentrating the fields in one complex.

This study could include several components in one complex, like multi-purpose fields and baseball fields, a destination playground, and tennis courts. Additional elements of this study would typically include:

- Complex program analysis and conceptual design
- Pricing and cost recovery projections
- Staffing projections
- Market analysis
- Potential partners
- Impact on the City of La Quinta’s economic development
- Financial implications for construction and operational cost

Location and acquisition of land for this should proceed immediately, while the feasibility study is underway, in order to capture any opportunities for land as soon as possible. The feasibility study might cost somewhere between \$30,000 to \$90,000, depending on what the City of La Quinta needed to make a decision and move forward on the land purchase. The land costs could vary tremendously. See **Appendix M for GRASP® Perspective H - Recommendations Map**.

Recommendation 3.4 – Site Master Plan for the Old Town Corridor

The plan would consider route options and potential improvements for linkages from the open space west of the Cove through Old Town to the SilverRock Resort, and provide connections to parks and downtown commercial districts in Old Town. See **Figures 18 and 19** for examples of a streetscape and section. This site Master Plan includes design concepts, costs, and an implementation strategy. An estimated budget range for this plan is between \$30,000 and \$75,000. See **Appendix M for GRASP® Perspective H - Recommendations Map**.



Figure 18: Recommendation 3.4 - Old Town Corridor Streetscape



Figure 19: Recommendation 3.4 - Old Town Corridor Streetscape Section



Recommendation 3.5 – Open Space and Natural Facilities Plan

Some of these will come with new development through the land dedication and impact fee process, but others may be done during the timeframe of this Master Plan as special projects. The cost of these will vary depending on the nature of the project and whether or not land acquisition is required. Some of these would be simple improvements such as interpretive signs in existing parks and open space. An annual budget as small as \$10,000 to



\$25,000 could accomplish a lot, depending on other resources available, such as staff time or the availability of a partnership (volunteer organizations, etc.).

Others are more elaborate and would likely require further study, such as the feasibility of a nature center. Costs for this would vary depending on size and other characteristics of the center. A reasonable estimate for such a study might be between \$10,000 and \$30,000.

Improvements to existing natural areas should be targeted and budgeted for on an annual basis. This cost could be as low as a few thousand dollars to be used wherever needed, to a significant amount if problem areas in need of immediate attention exist. This is another place to look for partnerships, grants, etc.

Acquisition of land that has unique or special characteristics for open space should occur on the basis of opportunity and/or urgency. In newly developing areas, negotiations with developers should occur to acquire such areas as part of the land dedication requirements or through purchase of the land.

Recommendation 3.6 – Add Lighting at Colonel Paige Middle School Fields

Add sports field lighting to the existing three full sized multi-purpose fields at a cost of \$230,000. See **Appendix M for GRASP® Perspective H - Recommendations Map.**

Recommendation 3.7 – Re-configure or Re-purpose the La Quinta Park Ball Field

The existing ball field at La Quinta Park does not have adequate outfield distance to allow the field to be used for league play. The field is not being programmed at this time, although it is used for practice. The recommendation is to re-purpose this field for other uses. The field itself could be re-graded to serve as extra multi-purpose field space in conjunction with the adjacent existing multi-purpose fields. The backstop could be removed to allow the multi-purpose field to be as large as possible, or it could remain and allow the field to continue to be used as a practice field.

A properly-sized ball field should be constructed in another location to serve the need that this field was intended to serve. This could happen at a sports complex if one was built or perhaps at a school site by partnering with the school district.

Another option for re-purposing this field would be to use the area for additional parking. Parking has been brought up as a problem at this park. While there is ample parking available at the school, some people do not like to cross the street between the school and the park, and illegal parking has occurred on the street during games in the park. Additional parking in the park may not completely solve this problem, but could alleviate it somewhat. Further study would be needed to determine how much parking could or should be added, but it may be possible to add as many as 100 parking spaces in the area occupied by the field. A compromise might be to reconfigure the field for multi-purpose use and also add some parking. See **Appendix M for GRASP® Perspective H - Recommendations Map.**



Recommendation 3.8 – Add Fitness and Wellness Program Space

Through the City of La Quinta or discussion with its partners and alternative providers, add fitness and wellness program space and amenities to meet the current and growing demand for these types of services. Capital costs will be determined through negotiations and feasibility studies. If the City of La Quinta conducts a feasibility study to add space to an existing facility, modify or convert existing space, or build a new facility, then they should budget \$10,000 to \$35,000 depending on the finalized study scope.

Recommendation 3.9 – Increase the Amount of Land Per Capita

The City of La Quinta’s parks are currently developed about as densely as possible and perhaps too densely. As a result, some facilities are too small or too close to other facilities. For example, La Quinta Park has a softball field that is too small to be programmed for normal use, and parking is in short supply. While it is a wonderful asset, La Quinta Park should probably be at least 10 to 20 percent larger to accommodate the program and amount of use it gets. Similarly, Fritz Burns Park squeezes a tremendous number of activities into a 12-acre site. While it too is a gem for the community, it suffers from a lack of “breathing room,” and some of its facilities, such as the swimming pool, could probably be larger. For these reasons, the City of La Quinta should consider increasing the amount of land per capita for developed parks and spreading the development out on each site to make the parks more pleasant and functional. An increase of 10% to 30% would be reasonable for this category of land.

The City of La Quinta could also benefit from additional greenways with off-street multi-use recreational trails. An increase of 10% to 30% for this category of land is recommended.

The amount of land to provide in natural areas is more opportunity-based than population-based. Therefore, some fluctuation in the proportion of land in this category should be accepted. A basic recommendation would be to keep the same proportion of land per capita as currently provided. At the same time, some lands in this category could do double-duty as greenways through natural areas, which would reduce the need to increase the amount of land in the greenway category.

Action Theme Four – Land Dedication and Impact Fee Revisions

The current structure for quantifying the impact of new development results in park acreage that is a land dedication requirement and a cost per capita for park improvements, which is used as the basis for an impact fee.

Recommendation 4.1 – Review Land Dedication and Impact Fee Requirements

Review current land dedication and impact fees to define and quantify the park land and services providing the current level of service and necessary to provide for new growth according to the standards set forth in the *2006-2007 Community Services Master Plan* update.

Action Theme Five – Best Management Practices

A strong dedication to providing quality facilities and programs resonates throughout every level of the City of La Quinta’s staff. The following recommendations and strategies can help to improve operations through current best practices in management, may ensure new



funding sources, and continue to ensure that the Community Services Department equally contributes to the overall City of La Quinta organization.

Recommendation 5.1 – Review and Establish Policies

The Community Services Department should create the following policies to assist it in the provision of services for the City of La Quinta Community:

- Examine the Partnership Policy
- Fee Reduction or Scholarship Policy

Recommendation 5.2 –Tracking Labor Hours and Equipment Use for Park and Athletic Field Maintenance Tasks

The importance of understanding how maintenance dollars are being spent cannot be understated. Developing systems to track labor and equipment costs through the private contractor will require a change in operational philosophy in order to gather accurate maintenance data. Tracking labor costs and equipment costs for maintenance tasks will allow for:

- More accurate estimating of associated maintenance costs for new parks and athletic fields;
- Establishing true costs for maintenance;
- Greater understanding of the impacts of maintenance budgets; and
- Providing the necessary information basis for a cost benefit analysis of the merits of continued outsourcing of the parks maintenance operations

Recommendation 5.3 – Encourage, Enhance and Maximize Relationships and Partnerships Opportunities

Continue to facilitate and improve collaborative relationships and partnerships with all stakeholders including non-profit organizations, other governmental agencies, homeowner associations, etc. Where possible, provide liaisons to other boards, councils or commissions; encourage participation and involvement with the Community Services Commission; exchange information and facilitate collaborative brainstorming, problem solving and decision making for the greater benefit for the citizens of the City of La Quinta.

Recommendation 5.4 – Establish Life Cycle Costing Assessments

The goals of this assessment would be to gain a better understanding of deferred maintenance needs that have not been met, develop a strategy for renovating or replacing facilities, and assist in future budget requirements to replace equipment. \$900,000 is currently set aside for future repair and replacement.

Recommendation 5.5 – Implement a 5-Year Master Planning Schedule as well as Annual Updates to the Plan

This Master Plan represents a comprehensive update to the existing Master Plan for the City of La Quinta Community Services Department. While some agencies attempt to adopt Master Plans for more than five years it is very difficult to plan accurately more than five years in advance. Technological advancement, along with changes in needs and trends, alter greatly over short periods of time. Current programs and facilities have been developed in a “reactive” manner, due primarily to citizen demand. In order to allow for a more proactive and managed approach, and knowing that the process is detailed and



involves extensive public outreach, it is recommended that the City of La Quinta schedule annual updates and a major update every five years by allocating resources starting in 2012.

Since this **Community Services Master Plan** has been created using dynamic land management tools (including **GRASP**[®] and GIS), the next update should be easier and less time-consuming, but will still require stakeholder involvement (which should include a statistically valid survey) and needs assessment, along with reexamination of management practices and the future cost recovery and budget realities.

Recommendation 5.6 – Establish a 501 (c) 3 Community Services Foundation

To facilitate the receipt of grant funds and other fundraising activities, the City of La Quinta should establish a 501 (c) 3 Foundation or work with one in partnership where appropriate.

Recommendation 5.7 – Pursue Grant Opportunities

It has been several years since the City of La Quinta has pursued Land and Water Conservation Grant funding. The Trust for Public Lands may be another resource for future acquisitions. The City of La Quinta should pursue all avenues of grant funding for capital as well as ongoing operations.

Recommendation 5.8 – Institute Volunteer Opportunities

The City of La Quinta should establish an Adopt a Park Program, Adopt a Trail Program, and a Neighborhood Park Watch Program. Consideration should be given to creating a city-wide full time dedicated position in the future to manage these programs as they grow as well as to pursue grant and marketing opportunities.

Recommendation 5.9 – Continued Review of Park Maintenance Privatization

The City of La Quinta should continue to review the effectiveness of the private park maintenance provider by comparing the annual performance against the City of La Quinta's standards, and the cost and performance of other private providers to determine if this contract continues to be cost effective and efficient.

Recommendation 5.10 – Increase Marketing Efforts

The City of La Quinta needs to place a greater marketing emphasis on community services and target specific market segments like north La Quinta and the Cove area. Over the next year, the City of La Quinta needs to budget to increase the marketing efforts in targeted market segments to advertise what programs, amenities and services are available through the City of La Quinta, its partners and alternative providers.

Recommendation 5.11 – Design and Renovate with CPTED Principles

As the City of La Quinta updates and renovates, repurposes, or designs new parks and facilities, they should employ the CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design) principles as feasible.



Action Plans – What Happens Next

The City of La Quinta is continually striving to keep up with the expectations and needs of the community. The current facilities are heavily used and most programs have high participation rates. The City of La Quinta athletic fields are also in great demand. All organizations supplying leisure and recreation programs have numerous positive impacts including encouraging healthy lifestyles, promoting social well-being, providing opportunities and facilities for enjoyment, and enhancing the quality of life.

This **Community Services Master Plan** endeavors to provide a guiding mechanism for continuing to meet existing and future community needs, and expand the positive impacts of this portion of the City of La Quinta’s services. The strength of this report stems from the extensive research, community involvement, analysis of needs, and public review that form the basis for the recommendations it contains. The recommendations of this Plan are designed to create goals cultivating:

- Focus on consistently meeting and exceeding citizen expectations;
- Use of innovative ideas and methods to successfully meet challenges posed by budgetary, facility and staffing limitations;
- A system that benefits residents by increasing services to all age groups and providing diverse opportunities;
- A service agency that sees itself as a viable partner in providing community services;
- A stewardship approach to providing high-quality facilities, existing and future, through judicious use of public funds;
- Cooperation and partnerships among the City of La Quinta, CVRPD, Public Schools, other non-profit organizations and the private sector in providing recreational services and facilities;
- A proactive planning process guided by community needs and executable strategies; and a process for reviewing and updating this document annually.

Ultimately, this plan is designed to serve as a decision-making tool for the City of La Quinta. Action Strategies are needed to carry out the Community Services Master Plan recommendations. The following chart has been developed which summarizes the recommendations including actions, funding where appropriate, and timing.

Timing

This plan is intended to be a 5-year Plan with a long range vision. The following **Action Themes Implementation Table 12** indicates timing based on the start of implementation:

- Immediate: immediately or within one-year
- Short-Term: within one-two years
- Long-term: within the five years
- Ongoing

Master Plan Action Themes Implementation

The **Capacities LOS Table 11** provides an analysis of the current ratios of key components to population for the City of La Quinta. This allows projections to be made for adding future components as the population grows. By comparing the existing quantity of each component to the current population, ratios are generated that can then be used to calculate



the number of new components needed to maintain these same ratios as the City of La Quinta grows.

The results provide an estimate of the number of each component that should be added to meet the needs of the City of La Quinta’s population in the year 2011. The costs for providing these facilities have been incorporated into the **La Quinta Community Services Master Plan Action Themes Implementation Table 12** which shows the estimated timing and costs for the capital improvements recommended within this plan. These have been broken down by the *Immediate, Short-Term, and Long-Term* categories described previously.

The City of La Quinta should pursue dedicated capital tax funding as well as grant funds as soon as possible, and concurrently with or immediately after the establishment of a 501 (c) 3 foundation. The Capital Improvement Project (CIP) costs shown in the Action Themes Implementation Table are in current dollars, and may need to be adjusted for inflation.

Table 12: City of La Quinta Community Services Master Plan Action Themes Implementation

| Recommendations | Timing | Responsibility | Financial Impact |
|---|-------------------------|---|--|
| <i>Action Theme One – Community Connectivity</i> | | | |
| Recommendation 1.1 – Implement Trail System Plan | Short Term Long Term | Community Services Department; Community Development Department; Public Works Department; Partners; Developers | Bid and contract construction |
| Recommendation 1.2 – Coordinate Public Transportation and School Bus Routes with Community Services Access | Immediate | Community Services Department | Staff time |
| <i>Action Theme Two – Maintain Current LOS as Population Grows</i> | | | |
| Recommendation 2.1 – Maintain Current LOS throughout the Park System | Short Term Long Term | Community Services Department; Partners; Developers | Staff time; \$2.2M per year over 4 years plus land costs |
| <i>Action Theme Three – LOS Improvements</i> | | | |
| Recommendation 3.1 – Special Facility Feasibility Study - Open Space Park along the Whitewater Channel in north La Quinta | Short Term | Community Services Department | Staff time; \$40,000 - \$120,000 |



| Recommendations | Timing | Responsibility | Financial Impact |
|--|---|--|---|
| Recommendation 3.2 - Special Facility Feasibility Study - Open Space and Park along the drainage way | Immediate (land acquisition) Short Term | Community Services Department | Staff time; \$30,000 - \$90,000; plus land costs |
| Recommendation 3.3 - Special Facility Feasibility Study and Land Acquisition - New Sports Complex | Immediate (land acquisition) Long Term | Community Services Department | Staff time; \$30,000 - \$90,000; plus land costs |
| Recommendation 3.4 - Site Master Plan for the Old Town Corridor | Immediate Short Term | Community Services Department | Staff time; \$30,000 - \$75,000 |
| Recommendation 3.5 - Open Space and Natural Facilities Plan | Immediate (annual allocation) Long Term | Community Services Department | Staff time; \$10,000 - \$25,000 annual costs; \$10,000 - \$30,000 for feasibility studies |
| Recommendation 3.6 - Add Lighting at Colonel Paige Middle School Field | Immediate | Community Services Department | Staff time; \$230,000 current bid |
| Recommendation 3.7 - Re-configure or Re-purpose the La Quinta Ball Field | Short Term | Community Services Department | Staff time; Bid and contract construction plus land costs |
| Recommendation 3.8 - Add Fitness and Wellness Program Space | Immediate Short Term (feasibility study) | Community Services Department /Partners | Staff time; TBD; \$10,000 - \$35,000 for study |
| Recommendation 3.9 - Increase the Amount of Land Per Capita | Immediate | Community Services Department | \$267,000 per year for four years |
| Action Theme Four – Land Dedication and Impact Fee Study Revisions | | | |
| Recommendation 4.1 - Review Land Dedication and Impact Fee Requirements | Immediate | Community Services Department /Planning Commission | Staff time; Planning Commission approval |
| Action Theme Five – Best Management Practices | | | |
| Recommendation 5.1 - Review and Establish Policies | Immediate | Community Services Department | Staff time |



| Recommendations | Timing | Responsibility | Financial Impact |
|---|-----------------------|---|---|
| Recommendation 5.2 - Tracking Labor Hours and Equipment Use for Parks' and Athletic Fields' Maintenance Tasks | Short Term | Community Services Department | Staff time/Software Costs |
| Recommendation 5.3 - Encourage, Enhance and Maximize Relationships and Partnerships Opportunities | Immediate | Community Services Department | Staff time |
| Recommendation 5.4 - Establish Life Cycle Costing Assessments | Short Term | Community Services Department | Staff time |
| Recommendation 5.5 - Implement a 5-Year Master Planning Schedule as well as Annual Updates to the Plan | Long Term | Community Services Department; Consultant | Staff time; \$45,000 -55,000 |
| Recommendation 5.6 - Establish a 501 © 3 Park and Recreation Foundation | Short Term | Community Services Department | Staff time |
| Recommendation 5.7 - Pursue Grant Opportunities | Immediate | Community Services Department | Staff time |
| Recommendation 5.8 - Institute Volunteer Opportunities | Immediate | Community Services Department | Dedicated staff position |
| Recommendation 5.9 - Continued Review of Park Maintenance Privatization | Ongoing | Community Services Department /Consultant | Staff time |
| Recommendation 5.10 - Increase Marketing Efforts | Immediate | Community Services Department | Staff time; increase annual expenditure |
| Recommendation 5.11 - Design and Renovate with CPTED Principles | Immediate and Ongoing | Community Services Department; Planning Commission; Police Department | Staff time; construction costs TBD |



The adoption of this Plan is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code Section 21000, et seq. under CEQA Guideline 15262. That Guideline exempts planning studies for possible future action, since the possible future action (e.g. parkland acquisition and development) is not being approved as part of the action to adopt this Plan. This Plan is not intended to be legally binding on the future actions of the Planning Commission or the City Council, but rather as a guide to formulate potential future actions which will be assessed pursuant to the City of La Quinta's normal processing requirements, including CEQA review. The adoption of this Plan is not intended to commit the City of La Quinta to any definite course of action in regards to the acquisition or development of parkland and recreational amenities.



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