4 – PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

The element provides an overall guide for park and recreation facilities planning. Parks and recreation facilities, as one of a mix of land uses, work in harmony to provide recreational opportunities for all citizens, contribute to the physical and aesthetic qualities of the City, and enhance economic development opportunities.

This element is based on a more in-depth inventory, review of facilities and identified future needs within the Parks & Recreation Facility Plan. Within that document are development standards for new recreation facilities and a neighborhood analysis for current and future park needs.

This element is structured in the following format. The Background and Existing Conditions section contains an inventory of the existing parks, open space and recreation facilities within the City. The Evaluation and Analysis section reviews park and recreation needs based on population and geographic standards. The Goals, Objectives and Policies, Describes what the City wishes to achieve for park and recreation facilities including specific population standards. The Action Plan identifies steps to bring our parks and recreation facilities to the standards identified in the Goals, Objectives and Policies.

BACKGROUND AND EXISTING CONDITIONS
City of Yuma park facilities range from meeting a limited population’s needs, such as pocket parks, to meeting the at-large community’s needs, such as the baseball and golf facilities at the James P. Deyo Regional Park or the children’s play castle at the Stewart Vincent Wolfe Creative Playground in the Riverfront Regional Park and Wetlands Area. The City’s landscaped parklands provide open space and designed field activities and contribute to meeting the intense recreation needs of the Yuma community. Following is a listing of City maintained facilities.

PARK FACILITIES
Parks are not only recreation spaces, they are community places. Typically composed of trees, grass, and open play areas; these areas have clearly defined geographic locations and boundaries. Parks can offer recreation and leisure opportunities for every community member. The City parks are classified by the following categories: Regional Parks; Area Parks; Neighborhood Parks; Pocket Parks; Paths, Trails, and Linear Parks; Open Space, and Specialized Facilities. The classifications differ by size, service area, and purpose. A service area is the geographic region intended to be served by the park facility, specifically, where the primary users of a specific park reside.
REGIONAL PARKS
These major parks are characterized by natural or ornamental areas used for outdoor recreation such as picnicking, play areas, boating, fishing, swimming, walking, and golfing. The service area for this type of park is defined by a one-hour driving time. A park of this nature will generally serve several communities. The overall population standard for a regional park is one for every 100,000 persons. The park size can range from 25 to 200 acres or if natural areas are included, the acreage may be much higher. Regional parks may also include features that are contiguous to or encompass natural resources.

The City has two Regional Parks: the James P. Deyo Regional Park – 1440 Desert Hills Drive and the Riverfront Regional Park and Wetlands Area - Colorado River from Avenue 5E to 23rd Street. The James P. Deyo Complex, at 240 acres, includes Desert Hills Golf Course, Arroyo Dunes Golf Course, Friendship Park, Caballero Park, Desert Sun Stadium, Ray Kroc Baseball Complex and the Desert Sun Tennis Courts. The Riverfront Regional Park and Wetlands Area, features the West Wetlands (282 N. 12th Avenue), which anchors the west end of the riverfront development, and as one heads east along the Colorado River via connecting pathways, one encounters two additional Park areas, Gateway and Riverside, before reaching the site of the ongoing restoration of the East Wetlands. At 1,500 acres, this facility includes open space, natural and re-forestation areas, the Stewart Vincent Wolfe Creative Playground, the Riverside Outdoor Education Center as well as paths and trails linking and running the length of the regional park.

AREA PARKS
This park type is large and typically encompasses an area suited for athletic complexes or large swimming pools, and includes areas of natural amenities or outdoor recreation for walking, viewing, sitting, picnicking areas and other passive activities. All area parks include restrooms, drinking fountains, playground apparatus, ramadas, and adequate off street parking. Area parks are designed to serve all residents within a 1-2 mile radius (four square miles). With a minimum of 15 to 25 acres in size, these parks should be easily accessible to residents within the service area and should be located along arterial streets, due to the high vehicle traffic volumes associated with these facilities. Area parks may also include features such as man-made lakes and areas suited for athletic facilities or intense park development.

The City’s area parks are:
- Carver Park/Sanguinetti Athletic Complex – 4th Street & 13th Avenue,
- Joe Henry Memorial Park/Athletic Complex – 23rd Avenue & Colorado Street,
- Kennedy Park Athletic Complex/Keegan Field – 23rd Street and Kennedy Lane,
- Smucker Park – Avenue A and 28th Street.
**NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS**

This park type provides an area for informal recreation and open space for field games, court games, crafts, playground apparatus, walking and jogging paths, and picnics. The service area for this type of park is between ¼ to ½ mile radius (one square mile) and serves a population up to 6,000 people in a neighborhood. Neighborhood parks range in size from 5 to 15 acres, are required to have a defined shape (ratio 1.7:1 length to width), but are not required to have restrooms. The desirable neighborhood park consists of a minimum of 3 acres of level play surface with at least 5 acres of total area. The desirable characteristics include: (1) suitability for active or passive recreation; (2) accessibility to neighborhood populations; and (3) geographic protection within the neighborhood, specifically not adjacent to arterial streets yet within safe walking and bicycling distance.

The City’s neighborhood parks are:

- Barkley Ranch Park – 28th Street and Avenue D,
- Desert Ridge Park – 26th Lane and Avenue 7 ¾ E,
- Kiwanis Park – 8th Street and Magnolia Avenue,
- Joe Henry Optimist Center – 1793 1st Avenue,
- Las Casitas Park – 28th Drive and 31st Place,
- Marcus Park – 5th Avenue and 5th Street,
- Netwest Park – 14th Avenue and 12th Street,
- Ocotillo Park – 42nd Place and Jojoba Avenue,
- Parkway Place Park – 27th Street and 39th Drive,
- Ponderosa Park – 26th Street and 31st Avenue,
- Saguaro Park – 4183 Desert Willow Way,
- Sanguinetti Park – 22nd Street and 8th Avenue,
- Sunrise Optimist Park – 20th Street and 45th Avenue,
- Terrace View Park – Avenue 6E and 28th Street,
- Victoria Meadows Park – 23rd Street and 20th Drive,
- Winsor Rotary Park – 20th Street and 34th Drive.

Natural or man-made barriers can physically alter a person’s convenient access to neighborhood parks. Examples of such barriers include bluffs, canals, and major arterial streets. Such barriers may require that more parks be provided in an area than numerical standards dictate. For example, two neighboring parks may be needed in the same section area of land (square mile) serving 6,000 or more residents because a major canal or bluff splits the section of land in half, thus creating two distinct areas each needing a neighborhood park. This type of park may also be developed in conjunction with a school facility lessening the need to build separate facilities within a given neighborhood.

Neighborhood parks are built in conjunction with or by new residential developments. The neighborhood park provides localized open space and recreation options to the residents of neighboring subdivisions. New developments are required to provide retention basins for storm water control. Storm water control basins may offer areas for residential...
development of neighborhood parks. Neighborhood parks can be jointly used for retention basins where sufficient water retention/detention, open space and amenities are provided and maintained. Landscaping is required in storm water control basins for erosion and dust control. In order for a retention basin to be considered for designation as a neighborhood park, the area must be a minimum of 3 acres of level open space suitable for organized activity and amenities and 5 acres of total land area. The defined shape ratio for a Neighborhood Park at 1.7:1 is an important qualifier as well. A deficiency for a neighborhood park within a square mile is a prerequisite to identification.

Neighborhood parks have the potential to offer significant recreational opportunities within neighborhoods if located properly.

Pocket Parks
Pocket parks are small facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population and typically have been geared towards specific groups such as tots or senior citizens. The service area for this type of park is less than 1/4 mile. The size of the park is typically not more than 3 acres, and many pocket parks in the City are less then 1 acre in size. Pocket parks are particularly effective in high density areas that lack open green space such as near apartment complexes or in the downtown area. The City recommends a neighborhood park be designed and constructed in all possible circumstances instead of a pocket park, therefore adequate play and recreation areas can be provided for local residents.

It is difficult to classify pocket parks in a quantitative manner, such as one pocket park per 1,000 people; therefore this type of park is not mentioned in City of Yuma park standards. It is more efficient to classify pocket parks on a qualitative manner based on the community’s desire to have small open spaces nestled in neighborhoods that do not have the space available for development of a 5 acre neighborhood park. Under most circumstances the City of Yuma will no longer own and maintain new pocket parks. The following pocket parks currently exist in the City and will continue to be maintained as City parks: Clymer Park – 553 Orange Avenue, Jennifer Wilson Memorial Park – Colorado Street and 13th Avenue, and three pocket parks/retention basins within the Hacienda Estates subdivision.
### City of Yuma Park Facilities

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<thead>
<tr>
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| OPEN SPACE                 |                               |                             |
|----------------------------|                               |                             |
| Winsor Basin               | 10                            | •                           |
| Big Curve Path             | 9.5                           | •                           |
| Heritage Library Park      | 4.4                           | •                           |
| Bark Park                  | 3.3                           | •                           |

**PATHS, TRAILS AND LINEAR PARKS**

A comprehensive path, trail, and linear park system provides an extensive network of natural open areas, canals, and urban paths to connect parks and other recreation facilities. This system promotes alternative means of transportation. Paths, nature trails, and urban trails are designated routes that provide an opportunity for walking and cycling, and do not need to be paved in order to function effectively as a corridor connecting other park and recreation facilities. Canal banks, rivers, or hilly areas can be used and developed with paths, trails, or greenway corridors to connect areas of the City and provide places of special interest (such as view sheds). It is difficult to classify linear parks in a quantitative manner, such as one linear park per 2,000 people; therefore, population standards do not apply to linear parks. It is more efficient to classify linear parks on a qualitative manner based on the community’s desire to have greenways and bikeways that connect to other parks and key locations throughout the community.

Linear parks are typically wider and developed as continuous greenway corridors, with trees, viewing areas, rest nodes, lighting, and multi-use paths. Linear parks may contain bike paths, pedestrian walkways, equestrian trails, picnic areas, gardens, and children's play areas, or may be left in a natural state. To function properly, the linear park should have a minimum of 50 feet of land available along the respective corridor and should be larger when in proximity to recreational facilities. There are a variety of areas and corridors in the Yuma area that are or can be incorporated into a series of linear parks, such as the irrigation canals and
the river levees. Other park facilities should be located adjacent to linear parks to augment the linear park system and to ensure connectivity within the parks and recreation system. The City has the following linear parks and paths:

**East Main Canal Bike Path** - This 5-mile multi-use facility is lighted with asphalt paving and rest areas located along the canal. The path is developed from Colorado Street to 40th Street with most users being bicyclists, walkers, and joggers. The East Main Canal Bike Path is the primary route for the City’s non-motorized vehicle transportation network.

**Colorado River Levee Multi-Use Path** - This multi-use pathway extends west to east from Joe Henry Park to Gateway Park. The approximately 2 mile paved pathway includes landscaping and rest areas with benches and water fountains.

The City has an adopted Bicycle Facilities Master Plan (R2009-23 April 1, 2009). The Plan includes the identification of a complete bicycle network and design standards.

Equestrian activities are a common thread in the history of Yuma, from the trailblazers of the past to the farm and ranch activities of today. There are a number of informal trails in and around the Yuma area, particularly along canal banks. Currently the City has an equestrian trail that begins at the western end of the West Wetlands Park and connects with Gateway Park to the east of 4th Ave. Equestrian trails have been identified in the East Wetlands project. Equestrian trails should be on the perimeter of the linear park system and adjacent to rural areas. It is intended that the entire equestrian trail will extend 85 miles to the east through the Yuma East Wetlands Project and along the Gila River when completed.

**OPEN SPACE**

Open Space is an open area of land that allows for the free flow of air, the unconstrained movement of people and natural exposure to the elements. It is typically seen as undeveloped land in its natural state that can include washes, arroyos, view-sheds and trails. Open Space can also be a large landscaped plaza in the middle of a busy downtown that provides areas for relaxing, sitting and strolling. The size can range from a pedestrian mall to a regional park to miles of river levee to an entire mountain range. The purpose is to preserve natural areas, provide public gathering places and supply a balance to urban development. In conjunction with a trail system, open space can create a network of
connections to a community’s park, recreation, and specialized facilities. There is no easily identifiable standard for Open Space but every opportunity to protect natural, historic, archeological and scenic resources should be attempted in order to guide urban development to appropriate areas and preserve resources for the health and welfare of the community.

There are a number of open space areas maintained by the City. These include: the City’s Regional, Area, and applicable Neighborhood Parks, the Gila and Colorado River Corridors, the Winsor Avenue Arizona Department of Transportation Flood Control Basin (north of 32nd St.), federal lands along the mesa (south of Desert Hill Golf Course), lands west of Arizona Western College, and the Heritage Library Park. The Heritage Library Park is located at 350 3rd Avenue. The grounds encompass 4.4 acres of green open space surrounding the Heritage Branch of the Yuma County Library. This area provides a public gathering place for the central core of Yuma. Special art exhibits and events occur seasonally in this space, and there is park area provided for public art of a historical/cultural nature.

In addition, the City has significant natural areas that should be identified and preserved for open space in the future. These include the Gila Mountains, Kofa Mountains, Laguna Mountains, Cargo Muchacho Mountains, Chocolate Mountains, Telegraph Pass, Pilot’s Knob, the Yuma Mesa Desert, flood plains, desert washes (Fortuna Wash), and the Colorado and Gila River Corridors. These open spaces, on the edge of the urban area, serve a variety of park and recreational purposes that wouldn’t be possible in proximity to development, such as view sheds, camping, hiking and backpacking, off road vehicle recreation, hunting, bird watching, recreational mining, etc. However, the City of Yuma General Plan area only covers a portion of the Gila and Colorado Rivers and flood- plains. This leaves a majority of the larger open space areas under the planning efforts of Yuma County and Federal and State agencies.

In the Yuma urban area, the primary opportunity for open space preservation is the revitalization of the Gila and Colorado River Corridors through the development of the East and West Wetlands projects. These facilities have opened the river corridors to passive recreation opportunities and included major efforts to re-vegetate and revitalize the natural environment. Included within the project plans are trails and trail heads, boat docks and bird observation areas. Combined, these project areas total 1,500 acres of protected open space. These projects are discussed in greater detail in the Conservation, Environmental and Energy Element-Chapter 7 of the General Plan.

The Barry M. Goldwater Range is another open space area that should be noted. This facility is the nation’s second largest tactical aviation range and has been essential for developing and maintaining combat readiness for the tactical air forces of the United States. The Range also encompasses some of the world’s most unique and well-preserved
natural desert. More than 400 species of plants have been identified on the Goldwater Range and it is home to several notable large mammals including the Sonoran Pronghorn, desert bighorn sheep, mule deer and mountain lion.

Military activities on the range started in 1941 as the nation prepared troops for World War II. Prior to that, the area was the location of one of the southern routes to California - the Camino Del Diablo. Along with various travelers’ stops, the area was host to ranching and mining activities. Remnants of these archeological sites can be found scattered throughout the area.

Through a permitting system monitored by the Bureau of Land Management, Luke Air Force Base, the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge and the Marine Corps Air Station – Yuma, access to non-target and non-munitions areas for recreational activities can be granted. This includes camping and hiking. Those areas allowed for recreational access are outside of the Planning Area of the City of Yuma General Plan but the opportunity for use of this nearby significant resource should be noted. Recreational use and access may be limited by the military due to their activities.

Another major open space resource in the region but outside the Yuma Planning Area is the Gila Mountain Range. The Gila Mountains provide a striking view shed for valley and mesa residents and are a popular destination for hiking and other outdoor activities. Very few formal recreation opportunities are recognized within the range. Old jeep trails and utility access roads typically provide users trail options. In particular, area hikers actively use the utility road used by area communication agencies for access to remote tower sites. This road has limited visibility and is very primitive. Conflicts between utility trucks and pedestrians have and will continue to be a problem unless alternate hiking options are provided.

**SPECIALIZED FACILITIES**

**URBAN FISHING**

A popular past time in the Yuma area is fishing within the waters of the Colorado and Gila Rivers. The City of Yuma, in partnership with state and federal agencies, has enhanced fishing opportunities by expanding access to the rivers with boat docks and fishing piers, and by constructing stand alone fishing ponds in Winsor Rotary Park and the West Wetlands. Another site is under consideration for a joint use facility located in the Barrow Pit in the vicinity of the 28th Street and Avenue 8E alignments. This is the site of a former gravel bed, which is located west of the Agua Viva Water Treatment Facility. The joint use fishing pond would take advantage of the current terrain which is a deep pit and provide a site for back up water containment for the water treatment plant. The City is currently working with the Arizona Game and Fish Department to develop a master plan for the site.
**DOG PARKS**
The City of Yuma currently has one designated Dog Park. The 3.3 acre “Bark Park” is located in a retention basin off of Pacific Avenue and Palo Verde Street – 1705 E. Palo Verde Street. The designation of a separate park designed for the safe play of dogs off leashes is a growing trend in America. Typically, a dog park is a fenced area of at least 3 acres in size with grassed open space. These facilities must follow determined and enforceable safety precautions. Future development will be based on, if and when the demand for such a facility occurs.

**AQUATIC CENTERS (NATATORIUM)**
Aquatic Centers serve two specific recreation interests; first, recreational swimming and family swim, and secondly, a facility to support competitive individual and team swim events (including events in speed swimming, diving, water polo, and synchronized swimming). Such a facility includes 5,000 square feet of pool area with adequate deck and dressing facilities. Yuma has one Aquatic Center, the Valley Aquatic Center, which is operated by the City of Yuma Parks and Recreation Department as a joint-use facility with Yuma High School District. The Valley Aquatic Center is located in Sunrise Optimist Park and includes one of the four community pools. The Parks and Recreation Department also operates three community pools to serve recreational swim needs.

**JOINT USE SCHOOL FACILITIES**
The City has various agreements with the local schools and school districts to use school facilities or portions thereof for community recreation programs when available. However, the availability of these facilities is limited by school operations. The following school districts operate joint-use agreements with the City:

**Yuma Union High School District**
The City of Yuma has a joint-use agreement to operate recreational programs in 4 of the 6 YUHSD schools. The City currently has an agreement for Cibola High, Yuma High, Kofa High, and the new Gila Ridge High.

**Yuma Elementary School District #1**
Yuma Elementary School District #1 operates junior high schools, elementary schools, and a special education facility. At three of District #1 schools, Gila Vista, C.W. McGraw, and Woodward; facilities such as lighted sports fields, concession stands, and restrooms, with limited use for junior high gymnasiums have been developed by the City through joint-use agreements.

**Crane School District**
Crane School district has a joint-use agreement allowing the City to use athletic facilities at Centennial Middle School for organized youth sport programs.
Elena Orendain Curtis Athletic Complex at Yuma Catholic High School

Constructed in partnership with the Yuma Catholic High School, the City utilizes 2 softball fields, 3 baseball fields, open green space for seasonal sports, and 2 restroom/concession areas for City recreation programming.

CULTURAL FACILITIES

Cultural facilities have unique characteristics or qualities that serve the community, region, and/or nation. These facilities may support: arts and cultural events, performing arts, assemblages or large social gatherings, artistic and historical museums, regionally significant portrayals of historical events, historic trails, education or advanced training classes, or other unique opportunities for specialized recreation. Facilities for such activities may be developed in cooperative or joint agreements with public agencies.

CULTURAL CENTERS

A cultural center serves a population of 75,000 people and may vary in size from 15,000 sq ft to 50,000 sq ft for various types of events and activities. The City of Yuma has two cultural centers: The Yuma Civic Center, located at the James P. Deyo Complex is a general-purpose cultural center that provides accommodations for social and cultural activities and large events such as conventions and exhibitions. The Yuma Art Center (which includes the Historic Yuma Theatre) offers cultural activities and special theatrical and artistic performances.

PERFORMING ARTS FACILITIES

A Performing Arts Facility provides a venue for a variety of performances such as live theater, choral and symphonic music, film viewings, poetry readings, etc. These facilities may vary in size from 10,000 to 30,000 sq. ft. Performing arts facilities can be classified into three categories based on types of performances and seating capacities.

1. Community Performance Theaters.

This type of facility serves a population of 25,000 people and has seating for several hundred up to 1,000 people. Performances are typically small touring companies, dinner theater, school performances or seminars.

The Yuma community has a number of these types of facilities.

- **The Historic Yuma Theatre** is operated by the City of Yuma and located in the historic downtown. The theatre is 12,000 square feet, seats 640, and contains a thrust stage, raked floor seating and balcony seating, concession area, box office, administrative office, and limited support and storage space.
- **The Arizona Western College Little Theater** has seating for 208 and features several AWC concerts and dramatic productions during the school year.
- **The Yuma Union High School District and Yuma Elementary School District #1** host school productions in their auditoriums, as well as allowing community rental use.
1. **Snider Auditorium**, located at Yuma High School, can seat approximately 713, and features a fly loft.
2. **Kofa and Cibola** High School’s auditoriums seat 525 and 510 respectively.
3. **Gila Ridge High School** has a community performance theater which includes seating for 1,200 and a full fly loft.
4. **Post Auditorium**, located at Mary E. Post Elementary School, seats 1,003 but it is closed at this time.

Another type of Community Performance Theater is a band shell in a City park with a sloped grassy seating area for 200 to 500 persons. This provides a venue for the many types of smaller community performances that lend themselves to outdoor locations and takes advantage of the beautiful weather and views in Yuma. It is appropriate to locate these facilities in large area or regional parks and balance them across the community.

2. **Regional Performing Arts Center**
The second classification of Performing Arts Facility serves a population of 100,000 people and is categorized as a Regional Performing Arts Center. This type of facility hosts larger performances and professional touring acts and can support a variety of performance opportunities. Seating capacity can range from 1,000 to over 4,000. The Yuma community has no facilities of this type, although the Yuma Civic Center, with a maximum seating capacity of 2,028 in the main hall, functions as a black box theater and can accommodate many types of larger performances. A Regional Performing Arts Center should include the ability to function as a multi-use art center in order to support a variety of performance venues and opportunities.

3. **Amphitheater**
The third classification of a Performing Arts Facility is an amphitheater that serves a population of 100,000 people. This type of facility primarily hosts outdoor concerts by large touring bands and performers. Open grass/field seating can accommodate over 4,000 people. This type of facility contains a permanent band shell, lighting and sound equipment. An amphitheater of this type is planned to be incorporated at the Yuma West Wetlands Park. Yuma currently does not have a facility of this type; although small outdoor concerts have been hosted on temporary stages at Smucker Park, the Yuma County Fairgrounds, and private facilities, such as Quechan (Q), Paradise and Cocopah Casinos.

**Visual Arts Facility**
A Visual Arts Facility serves a population of 75,000 people and its primary purpose is to provide a gallery-type setting for the display of artwork. The artwork may be displayed on a temporary/revolving basis or may be installed permanently. Visual arts facilities also generally have an educational component and may provide a variety of workshop spaces and studios equipped with special facilities to house advanced classes in various arts disciplines such as photography, audio-visual, pottery, painting or sculpture. In 2004, the Yuma Art Center opened, which is
located in historic downtown Yuma. This newer facility incorporates the Yuma Art Center Galleries, the Historic Yuma Theatre, the United Building and Studio 270. This facility provides four galleries, five classroom/workshop spaces, and four studios. On a smaller scale, the Yuma Parks and Recreation Department also offers a variety of small arts and craft activities and dance programs at recreation facilities.

**HISTORIC FACILITIES**

The Yuma community has a long and significant history. There are three nationally or state recognized historic districts with over fifty buildings on the National Register. Following is information on just a few of those sites. The Historic Districts are discussed in more detail in the Land Use Element – Chapter 2 of the General Plan.

**Roxaboxen**

Roxaboxen is unique to Yuma and is based on a story written by youngster Marion Doan in 1916 about her childhood memories of growing up in Yuma in the early 1900's. The town of “Roxaboxen” was created by neighborhood children using rocks, boxes and lots of imagination. Marion’s daughter, Alice McLerran later turned the story of Roxaboxen into an internationally recognized book of the same name, that school children around the world have read. Citizens and community leaders pursued the acquisition of the ½ acre site at the corner of 2nd Avenue and 8th Street, where the story takes place and developed in into a specialized park which contains a pedestrian path, informational displays and seating areas.

**Historic Southern Pacific Depot Site and Yuma Armed Forces Park**

Located on the 200 block of Gila Street in Downtown Yuma, was the historic Southern Pacific Railroad Depot. The historic building, hosted the original City of Yuma Art Center for many years, until destroyed by fire in 1993. This site is now the home of the Yuma Armed Forces Park. Through a public/private partnership between the City of Yuma and Yuma County Chamber of Commerce, the facility hosts a military memorial and seating area. The site is located in close proximity to the Southern Pacific Railroad.

**Yuma Quartermaster Depot State Park**

The Yuma Quartermaster Depot State Park is unique to Yuma. It is a State Park currently operated by the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area Corporation with assistance from the City of Yuma. This historical site is important to the region and the United States as the original land access point west into California and north for access into the interior desert and mountains along the Colorado River. Yuma Quartermaster Depot State Park is part of the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area, which includes the West Wetlands, the East Wetlands, Gateway and Riverside Parks which are connected through the riverfront trails system.

**Yuma Territorial Prison State Historic Park**

Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area Corporation, with assistance from the City of Yuma, currently operates this historic site which features cell
blocks, a sally port, museum, picnic tables, and views from the original guard tower overlooking the confluence of the Colorado and Gila Rivers. The Yuma Territorial Prison is located in the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area and connects with the riverfront trails system.

**Ocean-to-Ocean Bridge**
The historic Ocean-to-Ocean Bridge was the first automobile bridge crossing of the Colorado River. It currently provides alternating one-way automobile crossing over the Colorado River into the Quechan Indian Reservation and is located between the Yuma Territorial Prison and Gateway Park.

**Pivot Point Interpretative Plaza**
The Pivot Point Interpretative Plaza is intended to showcase the history of the Yuma Crossing site. The Plaza features interpretations of the Rail Passenger Station and Hotel, the Ferry Crossing, the Locomotive Cab, the Pivot and Swing Bridge, Directions to The Siphon and the Three Railroad Bridges.

**Historic Trails**
The Yuma area has a long and distinctive history of various people and groups occupying or moving through the area. As the United States expanded westward, many trails intersected this key river transport community as one of the few places where the Colorado River could be traversed. Groups that traveled through the Yuma area included: Army of the West and The Forty-Niners. Recognition and preservation of the routes through the development of interpretive historical trails, memorials, or other monuments along trail routes provide an acknowledgment of the area’s past while providing recreational opportunities to residents and visitors alike. Two interpretive historic trails, the Historic River Trail and the Historic Gila Trail, should be developed representing the general routes to memorialize their historical importance. The locations of these interpretive historic trails should be incorporated within the linear park system wherever possible, and should connect with other cultural and historic facilities. Opportunities for historic trails near geographically important features, like bluffs, should be linked to linear parks offering bluff protection from new development encroaching on potentially unstable slopes and guarding against removal of important natural vegetation to minimize erosion. Other key cultural and historic resources within the Yuma area include the McPhall Bridge located east of town along Highway 95, the Redondo Ranch Ruins located in the Gila Valley, and the site of the Mormon Battalion crossing located west of town along the 8th Street alignment.

In 2006, a memorial to the 16th Infantry and the Mormon Battalion was erected in the West Wetlands Park. This is just one of the City’s efforts toward honoring Yuma’s rich and unique history. These key cultural and historic resources should continue to be recognized as opportunities to celebrate the Yuma area and be incorporated into park planning where possible.
MILITARY FACILITIES
The Yuma Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) has park and recreation facilities located at MCAS, their residential housing complexes, and at Lake Martinez. According to the 2000 U.S Census report, MCAS had a population of 4,225 people on base with 26.4% of the population 14 years old or younger. The facilities offered by MCAS to the military community within the planning boundaries of Yuma include: 4 softball fields, 1 football field, 2 basketball courts, 1 volleyball court, 2 batting cages, 1 outdoor recreation center, 1 movie theatre, 1 bowling center, 1 baby pool, 2 swimming pools with bathhouses, 2 tennis courts, 1 youth center, 3 community centers, 1 paintball field, 2 soccer fields, 1 ramada with picnic grounds, 1 outdoor hockey rink, 1 youth sports field, 1 auto skills center, 3 fitness centers and 3 play apparatuses. Program services include directed and self directed sports and athletics to include intramural and varsity sports, youth sports, aquatics, plus recreational skill development programming. These facilities serve the specific needs of military families, and are not facilities which are available to serve the general public of Yuma. Lake Martinez is beyond the City of Yuma planning boundaries, therefore those facilities are not detailed in our summary.

RECREATION FACILITIES
Recreation facilities are those hardscape improvements designed for active, recreational exercise requiring the installation of hard surfaces, building improvements or other physical modification of the natural environment. These facilities enhance the features of a park and are the main reason many people will use the facility. The following recreational facilities are identified in this inventory: Tennis Courts, Softball Diamonds, Baseball Diamonds, Regulation and Practice Soccer Fields, Basketball Courts, Volleyball Facilities, Play Apparatus, Exercise Facilities, Community Recreation Centers, Gymnasiums and Community Pools.

Many school playgrounds and athletic facilities serve the education needs of the community, as well as being available to the general public for recreational programs. Generally, school facilities can be used for community recreational programs on a time available basis. However, the availability of these facilities is limited by school operations. Consequently, the City offers recreational programs utilizing local schools on a site-by-site basis. It is important to note that as the school districts’ schedules change, the current joint-use agreements and shared facilities may be affected.
The Remote Control (RC) Mini-Race Track located at Kiwanis Park is a joint use facility between the City of Yuma and the Yuma County Flood Control District. The primary purpose of this basin is stormwater retention. The Flood Control District has recently determined a need to expand the basin. This will result in the removal of the RC Mini-Race Track. The City of Yuma is looking for another location to construct a new facility or rebuilding the track at the current location.
EVALUATION AND ANALYSIS

This section will address how the City is meeting the park and recreation needs of the community and aid in identifying deficiencies and inefficiencies. The assessment is based on an analysis of existing park and recreation facilities and the facility standards adopted in the Parks and Recreation Facility Plan. The facility standards were developed using the National Park and Recreation Association’s recommendations with modifications based on the needs and desires of Yuma’s residents.

Two methods were followed to evaluate parks and recreation facility and service needs. The first method reviews population totals and projections and the second method examines the geographic location of existing and future populations. This first analysis was based on the established service standards identified within the Goals, Objectives and Policies. These population and location based standards, or objectives, identify the desired quantity and location of the parks and recreation facilities. A population of 94,361 (source: Arizona Department of Economic Security, July 2009) was used to identify overall park and recreational facility deficiencies for the residents within the city limits. The analysis identified that the City, in general, was deficient in number and types of parks and recreational facilities it offered for its citizens, but the deficiencies have decreased since the assessment completed for the 1999 Parks Master Plan. Population projections were based on an anticipated build out population of 276,000 that was identified to determine park and recreation needs for the build out of the urban area and the future city limits. Build out population was calculated based on the anticipated population of land uses within the Land Use Element – Chapter 2 of the General Plan.

The park facilities needed for the urban area cannot be determined exclusively on a population basis. The population numbers must be balanced with the physical layout of the community in order to meet any location deficiencies. This will focus the Neighborhood and Area Parks within a reasonable distance to their primary service population. The population analysis was completed on a one square mile level to more specifically identify Neighborhood and Area Park needs. 2000 Census population numbers were used to identify populations for neighborhoods both within and outside the City limits. Neighborhoods are defined as areas bordered by major roadways and natural or man-made barriers.

The City has been successful in addressing Neighborhood park needs in and around the community, particularly in high growth areas, but there are deficiencies.

Identified in the geographic analysis are established neighborhoods (square mile area) with populations above 6,000 people that were not served with a park of any type.

Over the past several years, a number of new subdivisions have congregated retention facilities to create large open space areas which
has aided in neighborhood park development. These basins are being developed with the joint use of neighborhood recreation facilities. The service area for those neighborhood parks and the existing population are based on Census 2000 population numbers.

A deficiency in neighborhood parks exists for the East Mesa population which is located in individual subdivisions with a disbursed population. Providing Neighborhood Parks on the East Mesa will be difficult because those subdivisions are fully developed and open land is scarce.

There is one area within the Yuma Valley that is primarily within the city of Yuma that does not have a neighborhood park in proximity—between 8th Street and 16th Street and Avenue B and Avenue C. This area has a population of 6,870 persons. Very little undeveloped land remains, making the provision of new park facilities difficult. An area on the West Mesa is deficient—between Arizona Avenue and Avenue A and 24th Street and 32nd Street. This area has a population of 6,561 persons. The area is developed with commercial activities on 4th Avenue and 32nd Street frontages, single family homes on the Arizona Avenue and Avenue A frontages, with the balance of the area apartment complexes and mobile home/RV parks. Very little undeveloped land remains, making the provision of new park facilities difficult.

New neighborhood park development should focus on opportunities to jointly use large retention basins, church or school facilities or if shared options are not available, acquire and develop land for a park facility.

For those areas that are primarily undeveloped, the City can address Neighborhood Parks as the area develops. However, for those areas that are developed, the goal of the City is to develop Area Parks within reasonable proximity to those established neighborhoods to provide for the area’s open space needs.

### Parks and Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park Facility</th>
<th>Standard 1</th>
<th>Existing</th>
<th>Park Needs 2010</th>
<th>Park Needs 2022^2</th>
<th>Park Needs 3 Build Out</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>1 per 100,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>1 per 6,000</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 – 2006 Parks & Recreation Facility Plan
2 – AZ Dept. of Commerce, 2006-2055 Projection Series
3 – City of Yuma Land Use Element – Expected Population at Build Out
Based on the information in the table above, the City of Yuma has a sufficient number of area parks for the current population. But the growing population in the East Mesa and a large area of the Yuma Valley are not located within the Service Area for an area park. Geographically the City is deficient by one area park in the South Yuma Valley and will be deficient in two area parks in the East Mesa if the population grows as great as projected. The residents in this fast growing area are two to four miles from the nearest Area Park. To meet the current need in the South Yuma Valley the City is focusing on developing a joint use facility at 24th Street and the Thacker Canal, the City of Yuma has initiated land acquisition for the Yuma Valley Area Park. This site takes advantage of proximity to the future Thacker Canal linear park and access from a major arterial, 24th Street. The future facility locations were identified to meet the recreation needs of the potential population, with a concentration in east Yuma. The locations are approximate and could vary within the intended service area.

A number of recreation hardscape facility deficiencies were identified. A detailed assessment can be found in the 2006 Parks and Recreation Facility Plan. Meeting these needs will be addressed in new park developments and through joint use school facility agreements.
GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Goal 1.0: Provide and maintain a safe, attractive, enjoyable, and diverse park system that meets the needs of the City’s residents, businesses and visitors.

Objective 1.1: Continue to encourage coordination by Federal, State, and City entities for the development of the riverfront and wetlands.

Objective 1.2: Provide a diversity of park facilities

Policy 1.2.1: Ensure that all new and existing park and recreational facilities are designed to be universally accessible, safe, and sufficiently lighted. All facilities shall be designed using Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies.

Policy 1.2.2: Provide trails, paths, picnic areas, play equipment and recreational amenities which are accessible to the disabled.

Policy 1.2.3: Make a wide variety of park and recreation facilities available to meet the desires of special needs and interest populations.

Objective 1.3: Develop facilities and utilize existing resources to offer a variety of cultural and artistic experiences.

Objective 1.4: Place greater emphasis on promoting the development of larger centralized parks with functional amenities, as well as greater open space areas for varied leisure-time pursuits.

Objective 1.5: Develop the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to meet the park needs stated in the Parks Master Plan. Public park improvements should be re-assessed and re-evaluated annually based on population growth trends and projected facility needs.

Objective 1.6: Achieve a coordinated and cooperative program between governmental entities, private, and non-profit groups to provide park and recreational amenities to recently annexed and recently developed areas of the City.

Objective 1.7: Coordinate with area school districts to expand the development, access and/or continued joint-use of school facilities for public use.

Objective 1.8: Require agreements be made with the City for private parks under 3 acres in size to be maintained by the new residential community or the development entity.

Objective 1.9: Achieve a coordinated and cooperative program between the City, County, and other governmental entities in areas of mutual concern.

Objective 1.10: Implement an Adopt-a-Park and Adopt-a-Trail program to continue working with service organizations, private companies, and individuals to provide and maintain park and recreation facilities.
Goal 2.0: Create an open space and recreation system that reflects the community's setting and serves the needs of citizens and visitors alike.

Objective 2.1: Encourage specific area plans for the planned development of trails, linear parks, and scenic routes to connect neighborhood and area parks to public activity centers.

Objective 2.2: Utilize open space to protect sensitive areas, including hillsides, water courses, or other natural geographic features, such as the East and West Wetlands, the Fortuna Wash, the Gila and Laguna Mountains.

Objective 2.3: Develop a linear park and trail system for walking, cycling, and horseback riding along the canal banks, riverfront, and other natural and man-made corridors.

Objective 2.4: Enhance the open space and recreation system to provide opportunities for all populations.

Policy 2.4.1: Establish easily identifiable facilities and opportunities for both streets along linear parks to provide accessibility, safety, and lighting to the linear parks.

Policy 2.4.2: Develop accessible programs for the handicapped in a variety of settings-parks, recreation areas, community centers, and other cultural and education facilities.

Policy 2.4.3: Maintain recreational programming for special needs populations. Assure creative projects in the following areas-pottery, puppets, story telling, weaving, and other sensory based projects.

Policy 2.4.4: Initiate an interpretive arts workshop, insuring site accessibility.

Objective 2.5: Work in conjunction with the elements of the General Plan to identify future parks, connective bicycle routes, linear parks, and open space corridors.

Objective 2.6: Utilize existing vacant land, retention basins, utility easements, and rights-of-way for recreation potentials and multiple uses.

Objective 2.7: Expand recreational opportunities through landscape or conservation easements, trail easements, land leases, or other non-ownership methods.

Objective 2.8: Develop the linear park system in proximity to historic trails where possible.

Objective 2.9: Establish public open space areas for hillsides, escarpments, natural dunes, and bluffs through development guidelines for sensitive lands and other natural features.

Objective 2.10: Incorporate water-play features or water misting stations in parks, and utilize playground shades to extend the life of playground apparatus.

Goal 3.0: Use park facility standards as the basis for providing appropriate levels of park facilities needed to achieve a balanced park and recreation system. These standards include the following:
Objective 3.1: Regional Parks - One regional park for every 100,000 citizens. The size of the regional park is from 25 to 200 acres, and services an area within a 1 hour drive time.

Objective 3.2: Area Parks - One area park for every 25,000 citizens. The size of the area park is from 15 to 25 acres, services an area incorporating a 1 to 2 mile radius (4 square miles), and should be located along arterial streets.

Objective 3.3: Neighborhood Parks - One neighborhood park for every 6,000 citizens. The size of the neighborhood park is from 5 to 15 acres, with a minimum of 3 acres of level open space in an appropriate shape. Neighborhood Parks service an area incorporating ¼ to ½ mile radius, and should be located within a 10 minute walk or 5 minute bicycle ride making them accessible to residents within an identified neighborhood. Neighborhood parks include walking paths, playground apparatus, drinking fountains and security lighting, but do not typically include restrooms or ramadas. Natural or man-made barriers may require more parks in a neighborhood area than dictated by numerical standards.

Objective 3.4: Paths, Trails, and Linear Parks - Provide a multi-use system of paths, urban trails, nature trails, and linear parks within natural and man-made corridors, and along historic trails where possible. Paths, trails, and linear parks should effectively connect parks and key locations throughout the community.

Objective 3.5: Require all new residential developments to provide connections to any and all City parks, trails, or open spaces within a ½ mile radius.

Objective 3.6: Support City’s Department of Community Development’s efforts in re-evaluating bicycle access and designated bicycle facilities throughout Yuma as they develop a Bicycle Master Plan that meets the objectives set for Linear Parks, paths, and trails.

Goal 4.0: Promote the establishment of specialized facilities to reflect the character and needs of Yuma residents. Pursue cooperative or joint-use agreements with public agencies to develop specialized facilities throughout the City.

Objective 4.1: Use specialized facility standards as the basis for providing the appropriate number and types of specialized facilities desired to achieve a balanced park and recreation system. These standards include the following:

Policy 4.1.1: Aquatic Center - One aquatic center for every 100,000 citizens.

Policy 4.1.2: Cultural Center - One cultural center for every 75,000 citizens.

Policy 4.1.3: Community Performance Theater - One community performance theater for every 25,000 citizens.

Policy 4.1.4: Regional Performing Arts Center - One regional performing arts center for every 100,000 citizens.
Policy 4.1.5: Amphitheater - One amphitheater for every 100,000 citizens.

Policy 4.1.6: Visual Arts Facility - One visual arts facility for every 75,000 citizens.

Objective 4.2: The City shall focus specialized facility development on social and cultural activities; the natural assemblages or other large gatherings of people; the performing arts; community gardens; living history museums or other regionally significant historical places; and education or training classes in a studio environment for arts, crafts or special hobby pursuits.

Objective 4.3: Support development and preservation of unique recreation facilities which reflect the cultural and historic integrity of Yuma. Special efforts shall be taken to preserve Yuma Crossing Park, Yuma Territorial Prison, Ocean to Ocean Bridge, Pivot Point and Roxaboxen Park.

Objective 4.4: Enhance the artistic and cultural opportunities of the Yuma community by incorporating artistic design elements or public art in development of all new City facilities, and also include display areas for artwork.

Goal 5.0: Continue to expand and promote City recreation programs to serve the needs of the community.

Objective 5.1: Recreational Facilities - Provide the following recreational facilities within appropriate park and recreation locations to achieve a balanced park and recreation system:

Policy 5.1.1: Tennis Courts - One tennis court for every 10,000 citizens.

Policy 5.1.2: Softball Diamonds - One softball diamond for every 4,000 citizens.

Policy 5.1.3: Baseball Diamonds - One baseball diamond for every 15,000 citizens.

Policy 5.1.4: Soccer Fields (Adult/Regulation) - One soccer field for every 10,000 citizens.

Policy 5.1.5: Soccer Fields (Youth/Practice) - One soccer field for every 6,000 citizens.

Policy 5.1.6: Basketball Courts - One basketball court for every 6,000 citizens.

Policy 5.1.7: Exercise Facilities - One exercise facility for every 10,000 citizens.

Policy 5.1.8: Volleyball Courts - One volleyball court for every 5,000 citizens.

Policy 5.1.9: Play Apparatus Area - One apparatus area for each 4,000 citizens.

Policy 5.1.10: Recreation Center - One recreation center for every 25,000 citizens.
Policy 5.1.11: Community Recreation Center - One center for every 50,000 citizens.

Policy 5.1.12: Regional Recreation Center - One center for every 100,000 citizens.

Policy 5.1.13: Gymnasium - One gymnasium for every 25,000 citizens.

Policy 5.1.14: Community Pool - One community pool for every 15,000 citizens.

Policy 5.1.15: Skate Facilities - One skate facility for every 60,000 citizens.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Responsible Agency/Department</th>
<th>Funding Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - 5 years</td>
<td>Bring existing parks to standard with security lighting, sprinkler systems, play apparatus, shades, bleachers and ramadas</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pursue land acquisition opportunities for future parks</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>General/Dev. Fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Construct various Bike/Pathway facilities to provide linkages between city activity areas</td>
<td>Parks/Public Works</td>
<td>General/Dev. Fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop Master Plans for the following facilities: Smucker Park, Yuma Valley Area Park and the Agua Viva Lake</td>
<td>Parks/Community Development</td>
<td>General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Begin Phase 2 design of West Wetlands Park</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Design and construct the Yuma Valley Area Park</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Complete the Smucker Park expansion</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clearing and expansion of Riverside Park to the east</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>General/Grant</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pursue future development of recreation centers</td>
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<td>General</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work with AWC to develop joint use soccer complex and Area Park</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Design and construct phase 1 of the East Yuma Athletic Park</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop funding mechanism for inclusion of Public Art in public facilities and gateways</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Construct 1 mile of the Thacker lateral Linear Park between 24&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; St. and 32&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; St. and Construct ½ mile along the 33&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; Dr. Linear Park from 32&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; St. to 36&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; St.</td>
<td>Public Works/Parks</td>
<td>General</td>
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<tr>
<td>6+ years</td>
<td>Develop Strategy for developing a Regional Recreation/Community Center</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>General</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Construct South Yuma Valley Area Park and soccer complex</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>General/Dev. Fees</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Annex or partner with the Bureau of Land Management and Yuma County to provide a public trail into the Gila Mountains for hiking activities and bicycling</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>General/Grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop Strategy to move forward with Phase II of the Yuma Art Center, to provide an expanded stage, fly loft, and performer support space in the Historic Yuma Theatre</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6+ years cont.</td>
<td>Expand James P. Deyo Regional Park to 48th Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete the build out of the East Mesa Athletic Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pursue land acquisition opportunities for future parks</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>General/Dev. Fees</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Construct West Wetlands Amphitheater, camp and classrooms</td>
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<td>General</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Expand the Joint Use School Agreements to better meet the recreation needs of the community</td>
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<td>General</td>
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<tr>
<td>Design and construct a community pool in the East Mesa area in partnership with educational institutions</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>General</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Construct Central Canal Park- Ave. B to East Main Canal linear park as well as other various Bike/Pathway facilities</td>
<td>Parks/Community Development/Public Works</td>
<td>General/Dev. Fees</td>
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<td>Develop strategies and target opportunities to provide Park System facilities in areas to be annexed by the City in the next five years</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>General</td>
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<tr>
<td>Upgrading of parks facilities to include restrooms, play apparatus, pathways and lighting</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>General</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Design and construct two East Mesa Area Parks: one located between Readiness Center and Gila Ridge High and the second located at the Cielo Verde development</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>General/Dev. Fees</td>
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<td>Construct a Regional Multi-Use Art Center</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>General/Dev. Fees</td>
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