



**TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS, AZ**  
**COMMUNITY SERVICES**  
**PARKS, TRAILS, AND**  
**RECREATION MASTER PLAN**  
**MAY 2021**



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>1</b>
A. Purpose of this Plan .....	1
B. Planning Process Summary .....	1
C. Key Issues Summary .....	2
D. Inventory Assessment Summary .....	3
E. Summary of Recommended Goals and Objectives.....	5
<b>I. Introduction to the Planning Context</b> .....	<b>7</b>
A. Purpose of this Plan .....	8
B. Strategic Framework .....	8
C. Community Services Department Overview .....	9
D. Related Planning Efforts and Integration.....	10
E. Methodology of this Planning Process .....	11
<b>II. Community and Identified Needs</b> .....	<b>13</b>
A. Fountain Hills Demographic Profile .....	14
B. Park and Recreation Influencing Trends .....	19
C. Community and Stakeholder Input .....	27
D. Community Survey Summary .....	29
E. Benchmarking/Comparative Analysis.....	33
F. Organizational Analysis .....	41
G. Recreation Programming Analysis .....	45
H. Potential Funding Sources.....	56
<b>III. Facility and Asset Inventory</b> .....	<b>71</b>
A. Existing Inventory Summary.....	73
B. Asset Evaluation .....	76
<b>IV. Key Issues Summary</b> .....	<b>113</b>
<b>V. Recommendations and Action Plans</b> .....	<b>117</b>
A. Recommendations .....	118
B. Action Plan, Cost Estimates and Prioritization.....	126
<b>Appendix A: Community Services Inventory Resource Map</b> .....	<b>139</b>
<b>Appendix B: Current Walkability Level of Service Map</b> .....	<b>141</b>
<b>Appendix C: Future Walkability Level of Service Map</b> .....	<b>143</b>

# TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Master Planning Process .....	1
Figure 2: Population Trends in Fountain Hills from 2000 to 2024 .....	14
Figure 3: 2019 Age Distribution in Fountain Hills Compared to Arizona .....	15
Figure 4: 2019 Racial/Ethnic Diversity of the Town of Fountain Hills .....	16
Figure 5: Median Household Income Distribution in Town of Fountain Hills .....	17
Figure 6: Employment Overview in Town of Fountain Hills.....	18
Figure 7: Coronavirus Impact Planning for Town of Fountain Hills.....	19
Figure 8: Team Sport Household Participation .....	20
Figure 9: Fitness and Wellness Participation .....	21
Figure 10: Outdoor Recreation Participation .....	22
Figure 11: Non-Traditional Services Desired in Community Centers.....	24
Figure 12: Community Survey Methodology.....	29
Figure 13: Key Findings from the Community Survey.....	30
Figure 14: Residents Per Park.....	34
Figure 15: NRPA Agency Performance Review Acres Residents Per Park.....	35
Figure 16: Total Park Acres Per 1,000 Residents.....	36
Figure 17: NRPA Agency Performance Review Acres of Parkland Per 1,000 Residents .....	36
Figure 18: NRPA Agency Performance Review Park and Recreation Agency Staffing.....	37
Figure 19: NRPA Agency Performance Review Responsibilities of Park and Recreation Staff .....	38
Figure 20: Parks & Recreation Operating Expenditures Per Capita .....	39
Figure 21: NRPA Agency Performance Review Operating Expenditures Per Capita .....	40
Figure 22: 2020 Average Recreation Expenditures.....	41
Figure 23: Community Services Department Organization Chart.....	42
Figure 24: 2019 Participation by Program Service Area .....	47
Figure 25: Pyramid Methodology.....	51
Figure 26: Typical Parks and Recreation Agency Budget Allocation .....	52
Figure 27: Service Assessment Matrix.....	53
Figure 28: Preferred Communication Methods.....	54
Figure 29: Preferred Communication by Age Group .....	55
Figure 30: Parks & Recreation Operating Expenditures Per Capita .....	56
Figure 31: NRPA Agency Performance Review Operating Expenditures Per Capita .....	57
Figure 32: Survey Results for Potential Funding Sources .....	58
Figure 33: Park Location Map.....	77
Figure 34: Desert Sonoran Botanical Garden Context Map.....	79
Figure 35: Desert Sonoran Botanical Garden Photographic Inventory.....	80
Figure 36: Desert Vista Park Map .....	83
Figure 37: Desert Vista Park Photographic Inventory.....	84
Figure 38: Fountain Park Map .....	88
Figure 39: Fountain Park Photographic Inventory .....	89
Figure 40: Four Peaks Park Map .....	93
Figure 41: Four Peaks Photographic Inventory.....	94
Figure 42: Golden Eagle Park Map .....	99
Figure 43: Golden Eagle Photographic Inventory .....	100
Figure 44: Avenue Linear Park Photographic Inventory .....	103
Figure 45: Community Center Map .....	105
Figure 46: Community Center Photographic Inventory.....	107
Figure 47: Golden Eagle Trailhead Photographic Inventory .....	110
Figure 48: Adero Canyon Trailhead Photographic Inventory.....	112
Figure 49: Best Communication Methods by Age Groups (Invite Survey).....	119
Figure 50: Best Communication Methods by Age Groups (Open Link Survey).....	119

# TABLE OF TABLES

Table 1: Park Facility and Size .....	3
Table 2: Park Facility and Size .....	4
Table 3: 2019 Town of Fountain Hills Educational Attainment .....	16
Table 4: Population of Benchmarked Communities .....	34
Table 5: Total Acres of Park Land .....	35
Table 6: Jurisdiction Population Compared to FTEs.....	37
Table 7: Responsibilities of Staff.....	38
Table 8: Agency Estimated Operating Expenditures.....	39
Table 9: Investment in FTE by Areas of Responsibility.....	44
Table 10: Fountain Hills Program Service Areas .....	46
Table 11: 2019 Recreation Participation and General Fund Subsidy .....	47
Table 12: Current Population in Fountain Hills by Age .....	49
Table 13: Most Important Offerings – Invite Same by Children In/Out Of The Household .....	50
Table 14: Most Important Future Facility Needs – Invite Same by Children In/Out Of The Household ..	51
Table 15: Growth of Recreation Expenditures.....	52
Table 16: Sample Performance Measures, Purposes, and Outcomes .....	53
Table 17: Agency Estimated Operating Expenditures.....	56
Table 18: Green Practices Focus Area and Action Steps .....	69
Table 19: Inventory Summary.....	75
Table 20: Desert Sonoran Botanical Garden Asset Evaluation.....	78
Table 21: Desert Vista Park Asset Evaluation .....	82
Table 22: Fountain Park Asset Evaluation .....	87
Table 23: Four Peaks Park Asset Evaluation.....	92
Table 24: Golden Eagle Asset Evaluation .....	98
Table 25: Avenue Linear Park Asset Evaluation .....	103
Table 26: Community Center Asset Evaluation.....	106
Table 27: Golden Eagle Asset Evaluation .....	109
Table 28: Adero Canyon Trailhead Asset Evaluation.....	111
Table 29: Action Plan .....	126

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## A. Purpose of this Plan

The Community Services, Parks, Trails, and Recreation Master Plan is the first master plan undertaken by the Town of Fountain Hills Community Services Department and is being built upon the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan and the Town’s comprehensive plan. Together, these important documents will act as a road map for the future and guide the department over the next 10 years and beyond.

## B. Planning Process Summary

The process utilized in developing this Town of Fountain Hills Community Services, Parks, Trails, and Recreation Master Plan included the formation of an integrated project team of select Town of Fountain Hills staff, the consultant team of GreenPlay, SWABACK Architects and Planners, RRC Associates, and local Town leadership and stakeholders. The project team provided detailed input to the consultant team throughout the project. This process allowed a collaborative approach to create a plan that blends consultant expertise with the local knowledge of community members and stakeholders.

The development of this plan included the following tasks:

- Document Collection and Review
- Demographic and Trends Analysis
- Benchmarking and Comparative Analysis
- Community Engagement
- Organizational and Recreation Programming Analysis
- Facility Inventory and Level of Service Analysis
- Potential Funding Opportunities
- Recommendations: Goals, Objectives, and Action Plan

The following graphic captures the steps of the Master Planning process and identifies the four stages of public engagement.

Figure 1: Master Planning Process



## C. Key Issues Summary

From review of all of the input and findings, these key issues were identified and presented in a series of meetings with staff, key stakeholders, and the public and determined to be relevant for potential recommendations. The key issues are organized by categories.

### **Organizational**

- Additional staffing is needed to maintain and enhance services to the public
- Increased communication about programs and recreational opportunities in a variety of methods is needed
- Define brand and Department image
- Volunteer programs and opportunities are in high demand applicable to Strategic Plan
- Ongoing program evaluation and continued needs analysis to determine real demand for programs and services

### **Parks and Facilities**

- Greater trail connectivity is requested by the community
- A gathering place for teens is needed
- New aquatic and recreation facility(s) are requested by the community
- A plan to create safe routes to parks for pedestrians and bicyclists is needed
- Wayfinding signs will assist with connectivity to parks and trails
- Park amenities and landscaping (including shade and picnic structures) provide a great opportunity for improvement
- A new location for a new farmers market is needed
- Adventure park amenities (zip lines, nature obstacle course, etc.) are desired
- An Environmental Education Center is desired
- Provide new park spaces in underserved areas of the town
- Some playgrounds require replacement or upgrade
- Outdoor fitness equipment is needed in the parks
- Fountain Park requires a specific capital improvement plan

### **Programs and Services Delivery**

- New programs (teens, youth, pre-teen, adult, multigenerational, senior) are requested by the community
- New events and festivals are requested by the community
- Aquatic classes and programs are desired
- A focus on year-round programs is requested by the community
- Development of outdoor and environmental programs in the parks is needed
- A strategic process is needed for purposefully scheduling classes and activities
- Expansion of opportunities for fitness and wellness programs are important

### **Finance**

- Funding is insufficient for management of parks, trails, and open space
- Increased focus on funding for operations and on-going maintenance, repairs, and replacement of park amenities are needed
- A resource allocation philosophy /pricing model is needed to determine revenue opportunities vs. community services
- Greater use of partnerships is beneficial and may help defray costs applicable to Strategic Plan
- A Scholarship policy is needed

## D. Inventory Assessment Summary

The Town of Fountain Hills Community Services Department provides a broad-spectrum of facilities and amenities for the residents of Fountain Hills encompassing 135 acres of formal parks and numerous community facilities including the Community Center.

The Town's park facilities are currently comprised of 5 formal parks. The largest, Fountain Park, is an Arizona icon and the flagship attraction in Fountain Hills for residents and visitors. The two major trailheads within the town, the Golden Eagle Trailhead and Adero Canyon Trailhead, offer trail access to the McDowell Mountains and provide first-class trailhead facilities for hikers and bicyclists. The size of each of these parks is listed in **Table 1** and the summary of the entire Town of Fountain Hills inventory of facilities and the number of amenities within each facility is listed in **Table 2**.

**Table 1: Park Facility and Size**

Park	Size
Desert Vista Park	12 Acres
Desert Sonoran Botanical Garden	8 Acres
Fountain Park	65 Acres
Four Peaks Park	16 Acres
Golden Eagle Park	25 Acres
Avenue Linear Park	3 Acres
Community Center	3.75 Acres
Golden Eagle Trailhead	.4 Acres
Adero Canyon Trailhead	2 Acres
<b>Total</b>	<b>135.2 Acres</b>



**Table 2: Park Facility and Size**

INVENTORY SUMMARY										
PARK FACILITY/ASSET	TOTAL	DESERT SONORAN BOTANICAL GARDEN	DESERT VISTA PARK	FOUR PEAKS PARK	FOUNTAIN PARK	GOLDEN EAGLE PARK	AVENUE LINEAR PARK	COMMUNITY CENTER	GOLDEN EAGLE TRAILHEAD	ADERO CANYON TRAILHEAD
Amphitheater	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Baseball/Softball Fields	6	-	-	2	-	4	-	-	-	-
Basketball Courts	3	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	-
Bridge (Pedestrian)	2	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
Buildings	8	-	1	1	4	1	-	1	-	-
Disc Golf Course (Holes)	20	-	-	-	20	-	-	-	-	-
Dog Park	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Entry Monument Signage	9	-	-	1	3	3	-	1	-	1
Horseshoe Pit	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Interpretive Signage	13	1	-	-	4	-	-	8	-	-
Sign Kiosk	11	1	-	-	5	3	-	-	1	1
Lake	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Veteran's Memorial	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Multi-Use Sports Field	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Passive Lawn/Recreation	14	-	1	2	6	2	2	1	-	-
Parking Lot	10	1	0	3	2	3	-	1	-	-
Ramada (Picnic Tables)	14	-	4	1	5	3	-	-	-	1
Shade Structure (Benches)	16	-	3	1	-	4	8	-	-	-
Playground 2-5	5	-	1	2	1	1	-	-	-	-
Playground 5+	5	-	1	2	1	1	-	-	-	-
Specialty Play	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Restrooms (Men's & Women's)	16	-	2	2	6	2	-	3	1	-
Splash Pad	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Skate Park	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sand Volleyball	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Tennis Court	6	-	-	2	-	4	-	-	-	-
Water Features	7	-	-	-	1	-	6	-	-	-
Trash Receptacles	155	-	29	20	34	52	9	3	4	4
Recycle	24	-	3	1	20	-	-	-	-	-
Benches	106	2	26	2	44	6	8	18	-	-
Picnic Tables	85	-	9	8	15	28	16	9	-	-
Drinking Fountains	29	-	8	3	8	8	2	-	-	-
Pet Stations	21	-	7	5	3	3	2	-	-	1
Bike Racks	46	-	0	9	7	19	8	1	-	2
Grill	12	-	3	1	3	5	-	-	-	-
Light Bollards	291	-	-	-	278	-	-	-	-	13
Soccer Goals	6	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bleachers	29	-	-	6	-	23	-	-	-	-
Dugout Benches	15	-	-	7	-	8	-	-	-	-
Concrete Pots (Large)	14	-	-	-	14	-	-	-	-	-
Sculptures	53+	-	-	-	33	-	12+	8+	-	-
Wayfinding Signage	8	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	4	-
Shower	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Little Library' Kiosk	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Scoreboard	4	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-
Exercise Equipment	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Fit' Trail Trailhead	2	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
Walking Track/Trails	5.7	0.6	0.9	0.6	2.0	1.2	0.4	-	-	-

## E. Summary of Recommended Goals and Objectives

From review of all the input, findings, and key issues, these summarized recommended goals and objectives were identified through a series of meetings with staff. The discussions and visioning with staff resulted in these recommended goals and objectives, vetted with staff and determined to be valid for the Fountain Hills Community Services Department to achieve over the next ten years. This summary of the recommended goals and objectives also includes a link to the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan tasks.

### GOAL 1: IMPROVE THE FOUNTAIN HILLS COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

- Increase staffing levels between 3.5 and up to 6 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs)
- Improve all Community Services communication avenues with the public
  - Applicable to Strategic Plan tasks 1.1.c, 2.2a, 2.2d, 2.3.a, 2.5.a, 5.2.a
- Enhance existing Volunteer Program
  - Applicable to Strategic Plan tasks 3.3.c., 4.5.f, 5.2.b
- Formalize a recreational program evaluation process
  - Applicable to Strategic Plan tasks 5.4.a, 5.4.b, 5.4.c, 5.4.d

### GOAL 2: IMPROVE PARKS, FACILITIES AND AMENITIES

- Develop a long-range trails plan
  - Applicable to Strategic Plan task 4.1.f
- Create places for teen activities using local teens as advisors
- Conduct a Feasibility Study to determine the need and support of a new aquatic and recreation center
- Create a Safe Routes to Parks Program
- Fund and implement existing wayfinding signage program
  - Applicable to Strategic Plan task 1.3.d
- Repair, upgrade, and/or replace the Low Scoring Amenities from the inventory assessment (staff document)
  - Applicable to Strategic Plan task 2.1.a
- Assist the community in improving the Farmer's Market
- Create extreme sports amenities in parks and enrich offerings at the skatepark
  - Applicable to Strategic Plan task 2.4.b
- Conduct a Feasibility Study to determine the need and support of a new environmental education center
  - Applicable to Strategic Plan task 5.2.a
- Research opportunities for equitable access to park amenities by all residents
- Update the Playground Replacement Program
  - Applicable to Strategic Plan task 3.2.a
- Install outdoor fitness equipment in parks
  - Applicable to Strategic Plan tasks 1.3.a, 1.6.b
- Finalize a Fountain Park Capital Improvement Plan

### GOAL 3: ENHANCE PROGRAM AND SERVICES DELIVERY

- Increase additional program spaces, staffing, and resources to create new programming opportunities for teens, youth, pre-teen, adult, multigenerational, and seniors
  - Applicable to Strategic Plan tasks 1.2.a, 1.2.b, 1.2.c
- Increase opportunities for additional special events/festivals
  - Applicable to Strategic Plan tasks 1.2.b, 1.4.b, 4.5.d

- Offer a full range of aquatic programs if/when an aquatic facility is developed, ensure a full range of aquatic classes/programs
- Enhance year-round recreational programming
- Increase outdoor/environmental education programs in appropriate parks
- Strategically schedule classes and activities to ensure access to all residents during times/days they are available
  - Applicable to Strategic Plan task 5.4.d
- Expand fitness/wellness programming
  - Applicable to Strategic Plan tasks 1.6.a, 1.6.b, 1.6.c, 4.1.f

#### **GOAL 4: IMPROVE FINANCIAL POSITION**

- Consider additional financing opportunities for capital and operational funding, future growth, and improvement projects
  - Applicable to Strategic Plan tasks 4.4.a, 4.4.d, 4.5.d, 4.5.e, 4.5.f
- Establish increased funds for ongoing deferred maintenance, repairs, and replacement for existing amenities/facilities
  - Applicable to Strategic Plan tasks 4.3.d, 4.5.c
- Establish a cost recovery and resource allocation philosophy and policy
  - Applicable to Strategic Plan task 4.4.a
- Utilize partnerships with other service providers in the community
  - Applicable to Strategic Plan task 4.5.d
- Develop a Scholarship Program to ensure equitable access to all facilities and activities

# I. INTRODUCTION TO THE PLANNING CONTEXT



## A. Purpose of this Plan

The Community Services Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan is the first master plan undertaken by the Department and is being built upon the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan and the Town's comprehensive plan. Together, these important documents will guide the department over the next 10 years and beyond.

The Town of Fountain Hills Community Services Department provides a variety of excellent programs and facilities for the residents of Fountain Hills. The Town provides around 135 acres of park space with five parks for gathering, passive and active recreation opportunities to enjoy out of doors and nature experiences in an urban-desert environment. The Department stewards miles of trails and around 1,000 acres of open spaces to serve the same purpose. The quality of facilities and recreational experiences provided by the Community Services Department is excellent in this town of 25,200 residents.

The crown jewel of the community is the 65-acre Fountain Park featuring the world-famous fountain. It is one of the world's tallest continuously operating fountains nestled in the center of a large man-made lake. The plume of water rises to 560 feet on special occasions and normally rises 330 feet into the air from a concrete water lily sculpture.

The Town was incorporated in December 1989 and Parks and Recreation was part of the original town structure, formally established in 1991. Organizationally, the Parks and Recreation Department and the Community Center were merged in 2008 and named the Community Services Department.

Since the Department's inception in 2008, the structure has remained relatively the same. A volunteer coordinator was added in 2019 and responsibility for Tourism was moved from the Community Services Department to the Economic Development Department.

## B. Strategic Framework

This master plan provides a strategic framework for the Community Services Department in the provision of parks, recreation, programs, and events. With population growth of 1.3% per year, the Town is expected to see population reach a 33% increase since 2000. However, most residential properties (61%) are occupied on a seasonal or temporary basis. This creates a "snow-bird" effect, impacting Department programs, activities, and facility use. The median age in Fountain Hills is 58.3 years old and is expected to rise.

The Community Services Department produces 8 annual signature events that attract residents and visitors throughout the Valley of the Sun. These events include a 4th at the Fountain, a 4th of July Celebration, a Turkey Trot, and an Irish Fountain Festival. In total, the signature events attract over 18,000 visitors. The Department annually serves approximately 3,000 community participants in recreation programs.

The Trust for Public lands tracks a community's success in providing a park within a ten-minute walk of community member's homes. There are 20,347 residents in Fountain Hills who do not live within a 10 minute walk to a park.

## C. Community Services Department Overview

The Town of Fountain Hills is in Maricopa County and overlooks the Verde River Valley and the East Valley of the metro Phoenix area. For a Town of its size, its annual budget allocations of \$2.6 million, and limited staff, the Fountain Hills Community Services Department provides high quality parks and delivers exceptional recreational opportunities to the community of 25,200 residents in an area over just 20 square miles.

The Town's Park facilities are currently comprised of 5 developed parks. The largest, Fountain Park, has become an Arizona icon and attracts residents as well as visitors from around the Phoenix metropolitan area and beyond. In addition, the Community Center provides many critical and beloved programs and outreach for the community. Fountain Hills is fortunate to be surrounded by dramatic scenery. The two major trailheads within the town, the Golden Eagle Trailhead and Adero Canyon Trailhead, offer trail access to the McDowell Mountains and provide first-class trailhead facilities for hikers and bicyclists.

The Department is responsible for management and operations of Parks, Recreation, Community Center, Senior Services, the McDowell Mountain Preserve, Desert Sonoran Botanical Garden, the trails system, public art, and the Avenue of the Fountains Linear Park. The Department operates with thirteen full-time and fourteen part-time employees.

### ***The Community Services Department Mission Statement & Values***

To enrich and provide an active quality of life for all residents and visitors through pro-active community engagement, resolute stewardship of amenities and open spaces, and enhancement of the overall health and well-being of our town.

- Provide recreation that inspires personal growth, healthy lifestyles, and a sense of community
- Expand and strengthen outdoor experiences and opportunities to contribute to the region's attractiveness as a place to live, work, and play
- Optimize safe utilization of facilities, amenities, and open space
- Actively seek progressive, future-oriented options for funding, operations, and programs
- Embrace a collaborative spirit and support teamwork with the department and community



## **D. Related Planning Efforts and Integration**

The Community Services Department executed a strategic plan covering the years 2020-2023 that focused on five visions. Each vision was described with objectives as shown below. The Strategic Plan included 105 very specific action items. Those action items are cross referenced (by numbers in parenthesis) with the Master Plan recommended objectives in Section E of the Executive Summary.

### **VISION #1**

**Provide recreation that inspires personal growth, healthy lifestyles, and a sense of community.**

1. Revive the Medical Equipment Loaner Program
2. Expand Senior Program Offerings to Enhance Quality of Life
3. Maintain parks, recreation, and open space as a vital element in the quality of life for residents
4. Support and facilitate programs that appeal to and are appropriate for all ages, demographics, and abilities
5. Involve the community to guide future recreation programming
6. Enhance health and wellness programming
7. Increase the number of multi-day conventions held on annual basis, focusing on niche hobby-type organizations

### **VISION #2**

**Expand and strengthen outdoor experiences and opportunities to contribute to the region's attractiveness as a place to live, work, and play.**

1. Preserve, protect, maintain, and enhance natural resources, parkland, and recreational opportunities
2. Implement unique and attractive marketing strategies and campaigns that highlight activities and inspire all
3. Expand tournament and club offerings
4. Enhance programs that are held in the parks
5. Highlight and advocate for the vision of the parks

### **VISION #3**

**Optimize safe utilization of facilities, amenities, and open space.**

1. Enhance facility utilization to promote sense of Community
2. Provide for a system of safety inspections and maintenance of all facilities and equipment in an efficient and effective manner
3. Create respectful ambassadors for parks, Community Center, and other facilities
4. Re-evaluate and update park rules and policies
5. Increase the number of monthly art displays (especially in summer months) and the number of people attending monthly displays at the Community Center

### **VISION #4**

**Actively seek progressive, future-oriented options for funding, operations, and programs.**

1. Expand effective Programming/Community engagement
2. Create and advocate for additional open space and recreational areas
3. Utilize financial resources efficiently and equitably
4. Create revenue producing programs
5. Consider alternative revenue sources

## **VISION #5**

**Embrace a collaborative spirit and support teamwork within the department and the community.**

1. Become a recognized leader in the community, state, and nation for park and recreation management
2. Continue to expand the level of public information and involvement in parks and recreation
3. Encourage an effective/efficient working relationship with community organizations, school districts, and surrounding communities for the recreational needs of all agencies
4. Provide opportunities for customer feedback
5. Embrace education opportunities and trainings

## **E. Methodology of this Planning Process**

The process utilized in developing the Town of Fountain Hills Community Services, Parks, Trails, and Recreation Master Plan included the formation of an integrated project team of select Town of Fountain Hills staff, the consultant team of GreenPlay, SWABACK Architects and Planners, RRC Associates, and local Town leadership and stakeholders. The project team provided detailed input to the consultant team throughout the project. This process allowed a collaborative approach to create a plan that blends consultant expertise with the local knowledge of community members and stakeholders.

The development of this plan included the following tasks:

- Document Collection and Review
- Demographic and Trends Analysis
- Benchmarking/Comparative Analysis
- Community Engagement
- Organizational/Recreation Programming Analysis
- Facility Inventory and Level of Service Analysis
- Potential Funding Opportunities
- Recommendations: Goals, Objectives, and Action Plan

### ***Document Collection and Review***

The Town of Fountain Hills provided the consultants with information related to Department operations to assist with the analysis and preparation of the plan including:

- 2020-23 Strategic Plan
- General Plan 2020
- Annual Reports
- Parks and Facilities Inventory
- Capital Improvement Projects
- Facility Replacement List
- Programming Information
- Other Service Providers
- Department Operational Information
- Marketing Information
- Organizational Chart
- Department Budget
- Policies and Procedures
- Previous Planning Efforts
- Comparative Analysis

### ***Demographic and Trends Analysis***

- Consideration of the profile of the community and demographics, including population growth and projections of demographic changes expected to occur and influence the Town population
- Research trends related to Fountain Hills and the surrounding communities and national, regional, and local lifestyle trends to help guide the efforts to improve the delivery of parks and recreation services

### ***Benchmarking/Comparative Analysis***

Comparative Analysis is a tool used for this master planning process to collect and assess certain attributes of 8 similar community parks and recreation departments and compare these attributes to the Town of Fountain Hills' management practices. This benchmarking process creates a deeper understanding of similar alternative providers, Fountain Hills' place in the market, and varying fee methodologies, which may be used to enhance and improve the service delivery of parks and recreation.

### ***Community Engagement***

Providing a variety of methods for the community to participate results in the richest data for analysis, using the following methods:

- Virtual focus groups
- Virtual stakeholder meetings
- Virtual community-wide public meetings
- Statistically valid community interest and opinion survey
- Online open link survey

### ***Organizational/Recreational Programming Analysis***

- Evaluation of current program offerings
- Statistically-valid and online community interest and opinion survey information
- Identification of alternative providers
- Identification of potential partner organizations
- Identification of opportunities that exist for program expansion and improvement
- Identification of opportunities that exist for marketing and communication improvement

### ***Facility Inventory and Level of Service Analysis***

A full inventory of parks and facilities using existing mapping and on-site visits to verify amenities and assess the condition of the facilities and surrounding areas, along with the following assessments:

- Interviews and tours with staff to provide information about parks and recreation facilities and services, along with insight regarding the current practices and experiences in serving residents and visitors
- Identification of alternative providers of recreation services to determine market needs and opportunities in the area for potential new facilities and services
- Assessment of the condition of each amenity in each park
- Inventory listing and map of each park with photos
- Inventory Summary Chart with quantity of amenities per park
- Map of Community Services Department physical resources targeting walkability level of service that is both feasible and aligned with the desires of citizens expressed through the statistically public outreach methods

### ***Potential Funding Opportunities***

- Introduction and evaluation of potential financing and cost recovery opportunities
- Listing of potential financing sources for future park site development and CIP needs

### ***Recommendations: Goals, Objectives, and Action Plan***

- Identification and categorization of recommendations into themes with goals, objectives, and an action plan for implementation
- Development of an action plan for capital improvements, including operational impacts, and timeframe to support the implementation of the plan

The process allows the Town of Fountain Hills to understand the current context of the Department and the community regarding parks, recreation, trails, and open space. All individuals in the community have an opportunity to provide input through stakeholder focus groups, community meetings, the open link survey, and public meetings. All information gathered through the process was considered to identify the needs and desires of the community and used to construct a plan that will benefit the Town of Fountain Hills for the next ten years, while addressing the anticipated projected growth of the community.

## II. COMMUNITY AND IDENTIFIED NEEDS



## A. Fountain Hills Demographic Profile

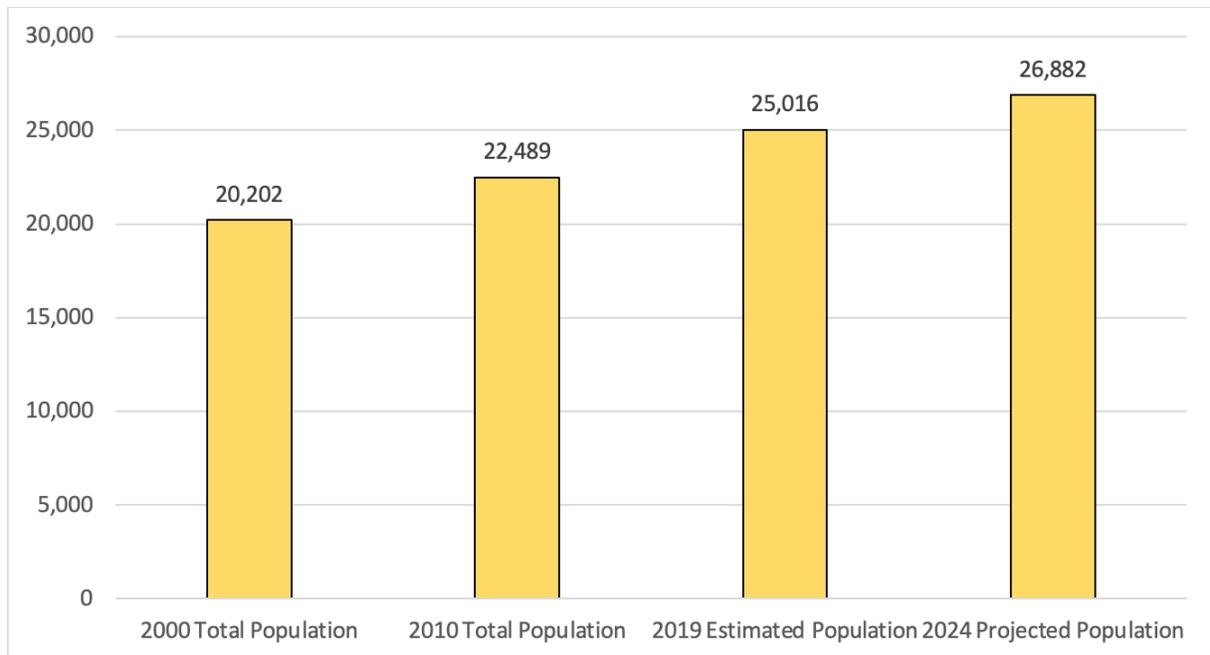
By analyzing population data, trends emerge that can inform decision making and resource allocation strategies for the Town of Fountain Hills Community Services Department. Data referenced throughout this report is sourced from Esri Business Analyst, which are point estimates representing July of the current (2019) and forecast years (2024). Esri balances the Census 2010 against local data sources such as building permits, residential postal delivery counts, and county data from the Internal Revenue Service to generate estimates. Population projections are derived from a combination of models and data sources on both a local and national level. Data for this report was compiled in June 2020.

### Population

In 2000, the population in Fountain Hills was estimated at 20,202. In 2010, the population had reached 22,489 with an estimated annual growth rate of 1.16%. By 2019, the estimated population reached 25,016. In 2024, the population is projected to reach 26,882 with a growth rate of 1.45% per year. The Town had a relatively balanced population of males (48%) and females (52%). The average household size was estimated at 2.15.

**25,016**  
**POPULATION**  
Esri Business Analyst, 2019

**Figure 2: Population Trends in Fountain Hills from 2000 to 2024**



Source: 2019 Esri Business Analyst

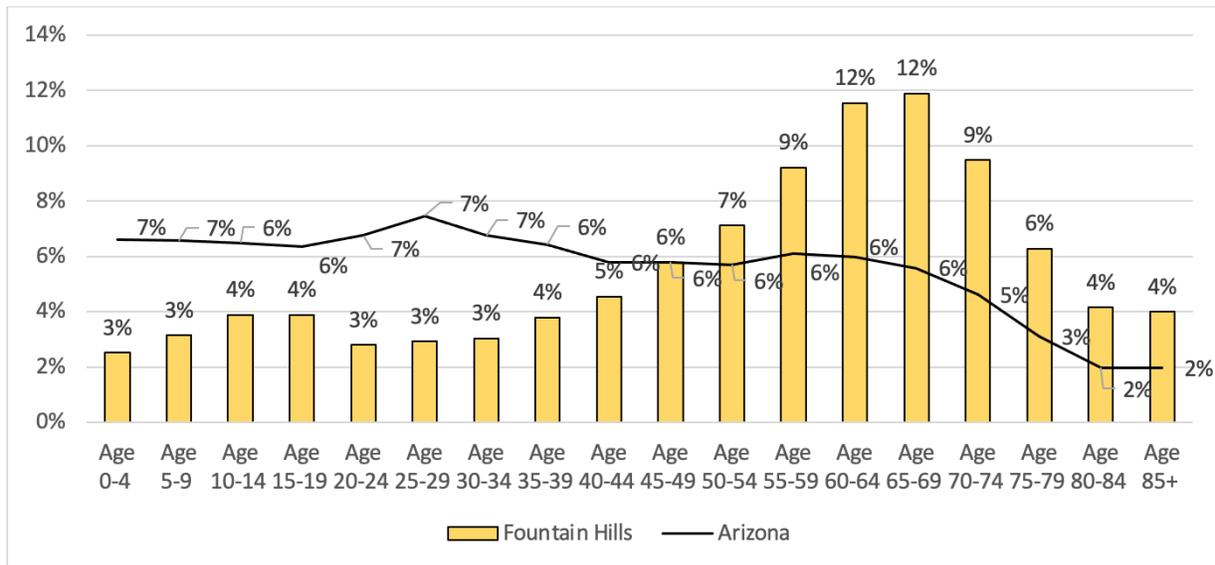
### Age

According to Esri Business Analyst, the median age in the Town of Fountain Hills in 2019 was 58.6 years old, significantly older than the State of Arizona (37.3) and the United States (38.5). The median age in 2010 was 54 years old, and by 2024, it is expected to increase to 60.4 years old. The Town of Fountain Hills had the highest concentration of residents between 60 and 70 years old (12% respectively).

**58.6**  
**MEDIAN AGE**  
Esri Business Analyst, 2019

Approximately 12.8% of the population was under 18 years old compared to state (24.6%) and national (23.4%) averages.

**Figure 3: 2019 Age Distribution in Fountain Hills Compared to Arizona**



Source: 2019 Esri Business Analyst

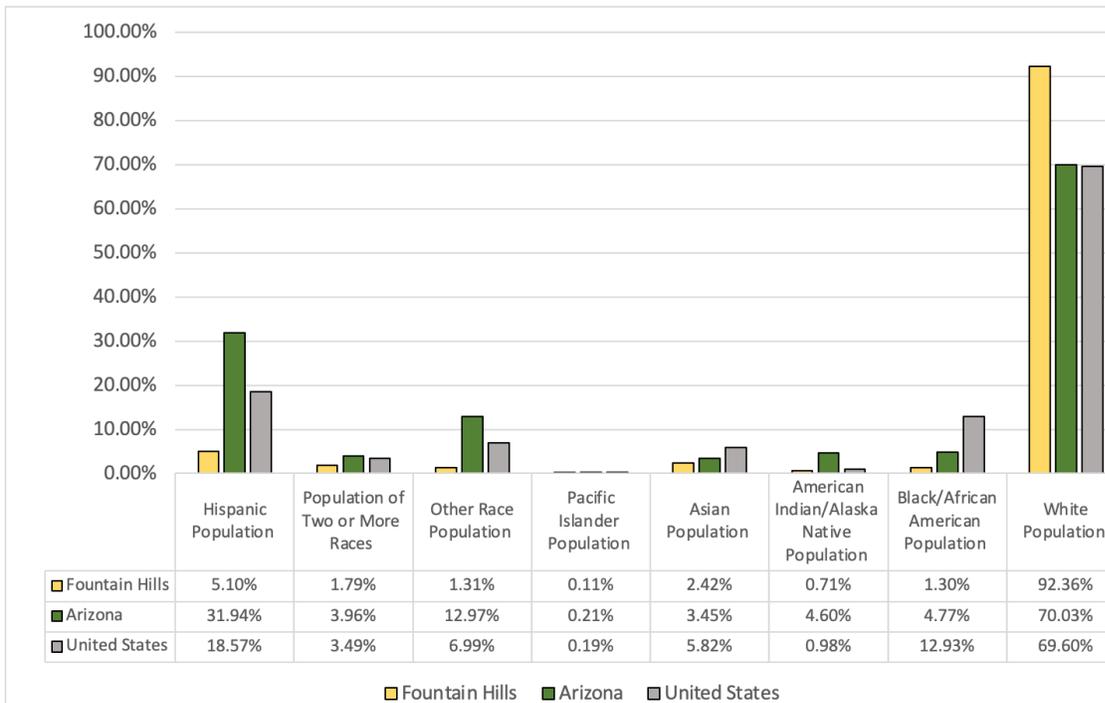
### Race/Ethnic Character

The U.S. Census notes that Hispanic origin can be viewed as the heritage, nationality, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the person’s parents or ancestors before arrival in the United States. According to Esri Business Analyst, approximately 5.1% of Fountain Hills residents identified as Hispanic in 2019.

**5.1%**  
**HISPANIC ORIGIN**  
Esri Business Analyst, 2019

An estimated 2.42% of Fountain Hills residents are Asian, and only 1.30% of the population identified as Black or African American. The demographic makeup Fountain Hills is primarily Caucasian – with approximately 92.36% identifying as White – higher than the State of Arizona (70.0%) and the United States (69.6%).

**Figure 4: 2019 Racial/Ethnic Diversity of the Town of Fountain Hills**



Source: 2019 Esri Business Analyst

**Educational Attainment**

**Table 3** below shows the percentage of residents (18+) that obtained various levels of education. Less than 3% of residents had not completed high school in the Town of Fountain Hills, compared to the States of Arizona (12.5%) and the United States (11.6%). Fountain Hills’ population has a high level of educational attainment compared to Arizona and the United States, with 30.95% of residents receiving at least a bachelor’s degree and 19.32% receiving a graduate/professional level degree.

**Table 3: 2019 Town of Fountain Hills Educational Attainment**

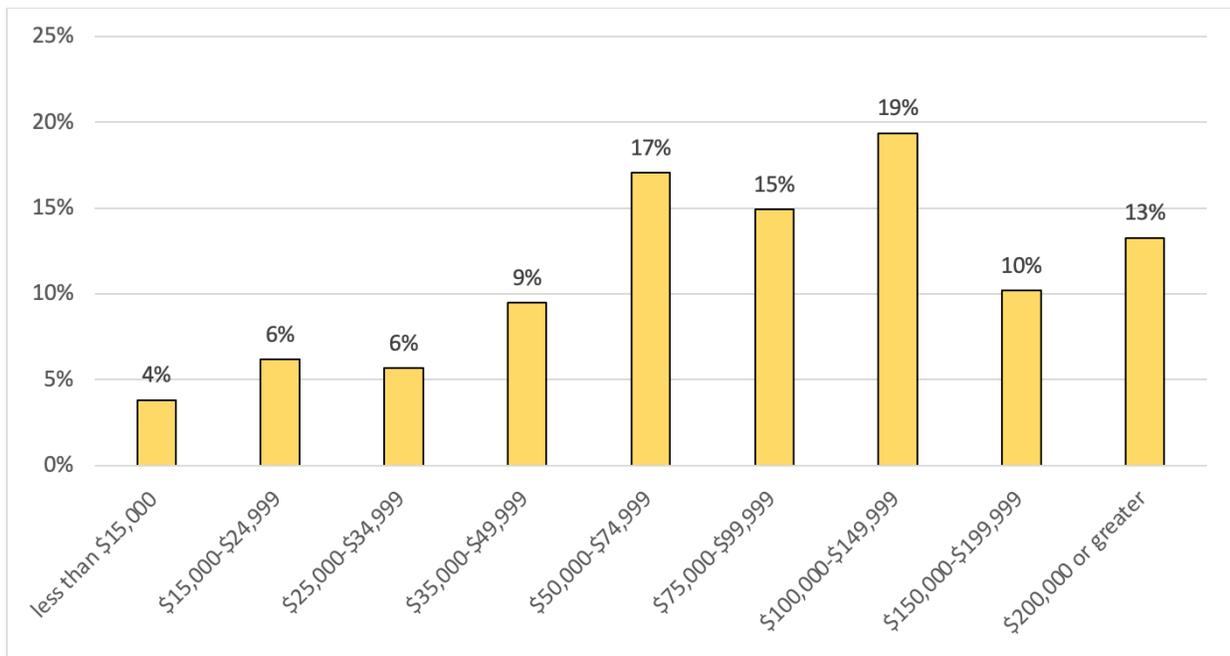
Level of Education	Town of Fountain Hills	Arizona	USA
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	0.71%	5.17%	4.90%
9-12 <sup>th</sup> Grade/No Diploma	1.80%	7.31%	6.74%
High School Diploma	16.57%	20.14%	23.13%
GED/Alternative Credential	1.16%	3.94%	3.90%
Some College/No Degree	21.04%	24.81%	20.23%
Associate degree	8.46%	8.75%	8.58%
Bachelor's Degree	30.95%	18.59%	19.98%
Graduate/Professional Degree	19.32%	11.26%	12.54%

### Household Data

According to Esri Business Analyst, the median household income in Fountain Hills in 2019 was \$86,151, higher than the State of Arizona (\$57,771). The median home value in Town of Fountain Hills was \$421,713, higher than Arizona (\$247,346) and the United States (\$234,154). The average household size was 2.15 persons in Fountain Hills in 2019, compared to 2.64 in Arizona, and 2.59 in the United States. An estimated 1.88% of households in Town of Fountain Hills received food stamps, compared to the rate in Arizona at approximately 11.8% and the national average of 12.2%.

**86,151%**  
**MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME**  
Esri Business Analyst, 2019

Figure 5: Median Household Income Distribution in Town of Fountain Hills



Source: 2019 Esri Business Analyst

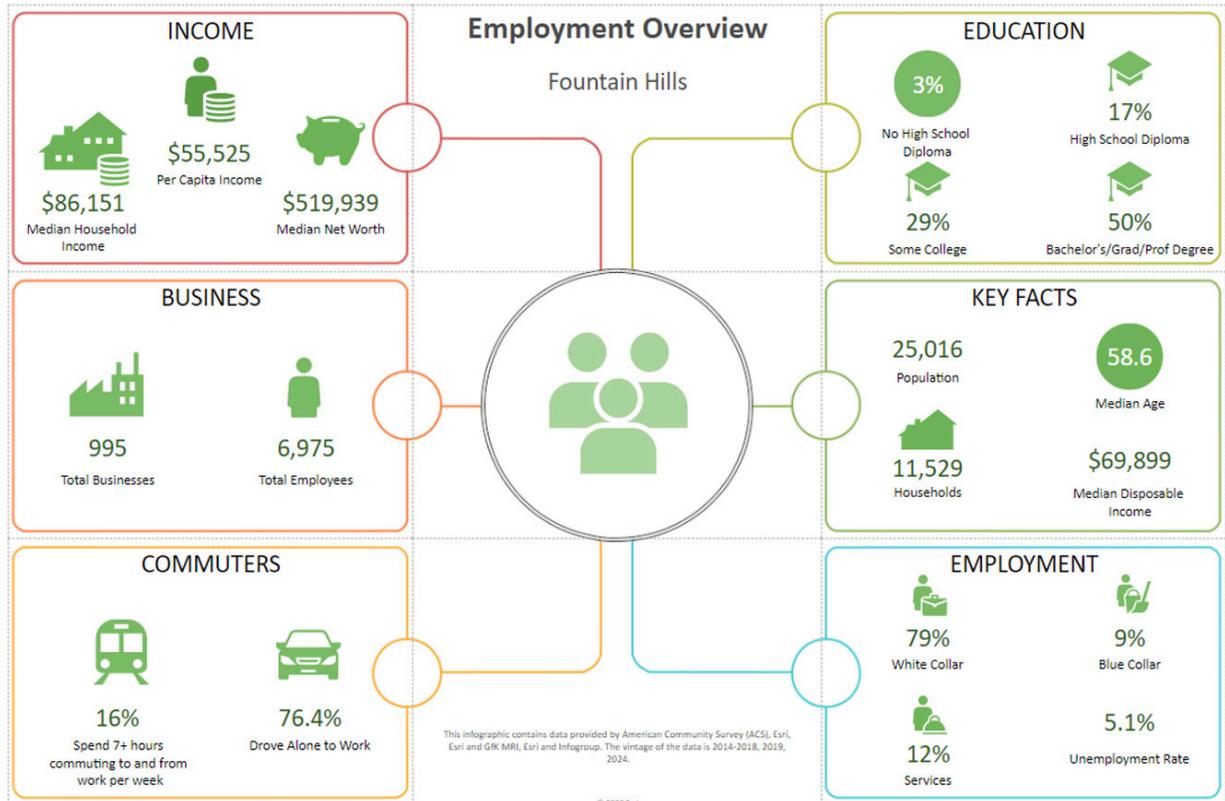
### Employment

In 2019, an estimated 5.1% of the population was unemployed, compared to the rate of Arizona (5.8%) and the United States (4.6%).

According to Esri Business Analyst, in 2019, approximately 79% of the population was employed in white collar positions, which typically performs managerial, technical, administrative, and/or professional capacities. Approximately 9% were employed by blue collar positions, such as construction, maintenance, etc. About 12% of residents were employed by the service industry.

**5.1%**  
**UNEMPLOYMENT RATE**  
Esri Business Analyst, 2019

**Figure 6: Employment Overview in Town of Fountain Hills**



Source: 2019 Esri Business Analyst

### Health Rankings

Understanding the status of the community’s health can help inform policies related to recreation and fitness. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s *County Health Rankings and Roadmaps* provided annual insight on the general health of national, state, and county populations. Maricopa County ranked 1st of 15 Arizona Counties for Health Outcomes. The health ranking gauged the public health of the population based on “how long people live and how healthy people feel while alive,” coupled with ranking factors including healthy behaviors, clinical care, social and economic, and physical environment factors.<sup>1</sup>

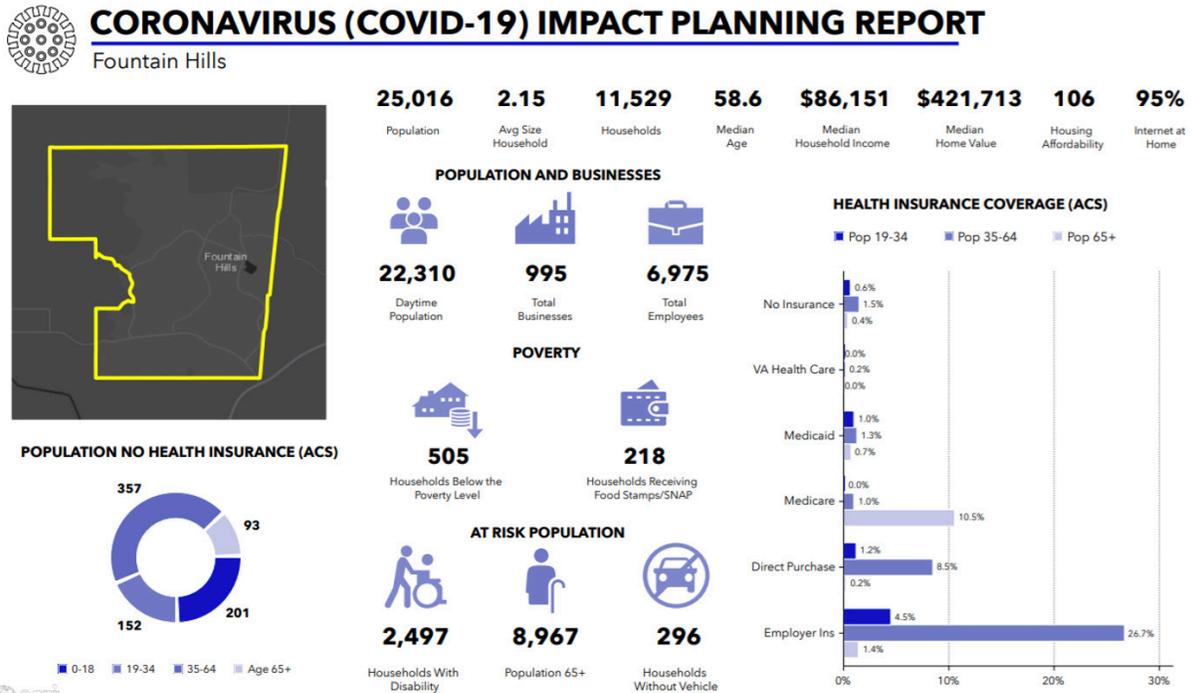
According to Esri Business Analyst, approximately 21.56% of households in 2019 had one or more residents living with some sort of hearing difficulty, vision difficulty, cognitive difficulty, ambulatory difficulty, self-care difficulty, and/or independent living difficulty. This is lower than the state (26.2%) and national average (25.4%), confirming the necessity of inclusive programming and ADA transition plans for parks and facilities.

**21.56%**  
**LIVE WITH A DISABILITY**  
Esri Business Analyst, 2019

Data related to access to health insurance/services, transportation, and internet can help inform decisions related to COVID-19. The following infographic can help the Town understand potential risks of their population and how to respond appropriately.

<sup>1</sup> University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute & Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, County Health Rankings 2019, <http://www.Countyhealthrankings.org>

Figure 7: Coronavirus Impact Planning for Town of Fountain Hills



Source: 2020 Esri Business Analyst

## B. Park and Recreation Influencing Trends

The changing pace of today’s world requires analyzing recreation trends from both a local and national level. From a national perspective, organizations including the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM), and the Outdoor Industry Association (OIA), among many others, attempt to summarize and predict the most relevant trends impacting health, wellness, outdoor recreation, and parks for the current year. This broad level overview of 2020 trends can help prepare agencies to understand what the future of parks and recreation might look, and how agencies can be at the forefront of innovation in the field.

Local participation data, sourced from Esri Business Analyst, as well as community input generated from the engagement process, determine the relevant trends directly related to Fountain Hills. This information is intended to provide a foundational context for potential recommendations discussed later in this report.

It should be noted that local participation data is gathered from Esri Business Analyst and measures the Market Potential for leisure activities. Market Potential provides the estimated demand for a service or product by calculating the consumption rate from local and national datapoints.<sup>2</sup> These estimates in participation provide a snapshot of fitness and wellness activities throughout Fountain Hills; participation estimates help frame activities that are uniquely preferred in Fountain Hills compared to the State. Those activities that have the highest participation serve as a key perspective to understanding the community, and thus providing reference for the recommendations referenced throughout the report.

<sup>2</sup> “Methodology Statement: 2019 Esri Market Potential” Esri. [https://downloads.esri.com/esri\\_content\\_doc/dbl/us/J9672\\_Market\\_Potential\\_DB\\_Methodology\\_Statement\\_2019.pdf](https://downloads.esri.com/esri_content_doc/dbl/us/J9672_Market_Potential_DB_Methodology_Statement_2019.pdf), Accessed March 2020

## NATIONAL PARKS & RECREATION 2020 TRENDS

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) annually releases a number of predictions that could likely impact parks and recreation agencies. The yearly article identifies the changes agencies are likely to see in the coming year. A summary of key predictions for 2020 are listed below:

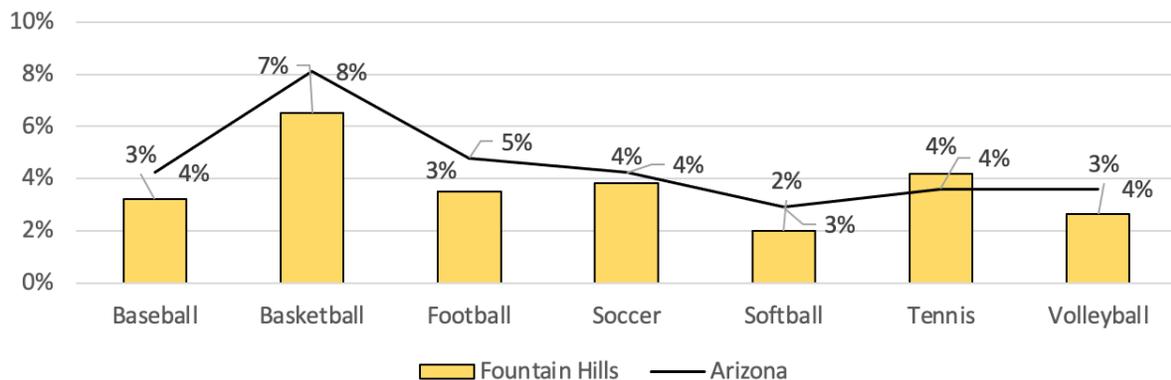
- One-third of agencies will have video surveillance in their parks and facilities, and the public will want more for security
- Private businesses will capitalize on delivery services of food and goods via drones in local parks and beaches. Agencies should be prepared on how to regulate the usage of drones in their public areas.
- E-sports will continue to increase in popularity; agencies who are able to provide tournaments or league play can engage teens and young adults that would otherwise not participate in traditional recreation programs.
- Landscape management practices may remove glyphosate, a common pesticide, due to concerns from the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) that the weed killer is “probably carcinogenic to humans.”
- Large parks have the ability to “cool a city” through the presence of trees and green infrastructure. Agencies may look to linear green spaces and trail corridors to reduce climate change and the impacts of extreme heat.
- Recreation centers will continue to become known as community “wellness hubs.” These innovative models of health and wellness will provide safe gathering spaces, access to healthcare providers, food and nutrition assistance, and additional education opportunities. Partnerships will be formed with health-related organizations.

Source: National Recreation and Parks Association

## Local Participation

According to census data, households in Fountain Hills had high levels of participation in basketball (7%), tennis (4%) and soccer (4%).

Figure 8: Team Sport Household Participation



Source: 2018 Esri Business Analyst

### NATIONAL HEALTH & FITNESS 2020 TRENDS

For the past 14 years, the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) Health and Fitness Journal has released its fitness trends survey, which collects survey data from 3,000 health and fitness professionals. The following items made up the top ten fitness trends from the study for 2020:

1. Wearable Technology
2. High Impact Interval Training (HIIT)
3. Group Training
4. Training with Free Weights
5. Personal Training
6. Exercise is Medicine
7. Body Weight Training
8. Fitness Programs for Older Adults
9. Health/Wellness coaching
10. Employing Certified Fitness Professionals

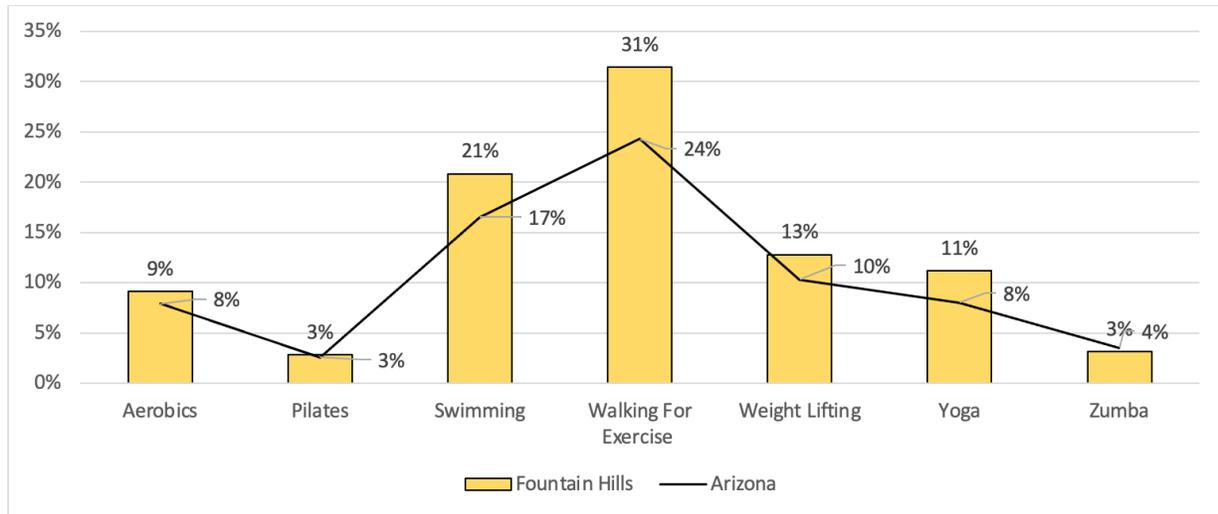
Source: American College of Sports Medicine

### Local Participation

The figure below shows household participation in various fitness activities in Fountain Hills. Participation was highest for the following activities:

- Walking for exercise (31%)
- Swimming (21%)
- Weight Lifting (13%)

Figure 9: Fitness and Wellness Participation



Source: 2018 Esri Business Analyst

## OUTDOOR RECREATION

Outdoor recreation has become a thriving economic driver, creating 7.6 million jobs in 2018 and generating \$65.3 billion in federal tax revenue on a national level. Close to half of the US population six and older participated in at least one outdoor activity in 2017. The most popular activity was running – which included both jogging and trail running. Participation among Hispanics and Asians has increased by 1.0% and 0.9% in the last five years, respectively.

According to the Outdoor Industry Report, in the State of Arizona, the outdoor recreation economy generated:

- 201,000 direct jobs
- \$21.2 billion in consumer spending
- \$5.7 billion in wages and salaries
- \$1.4 billion in state and local tax revenue

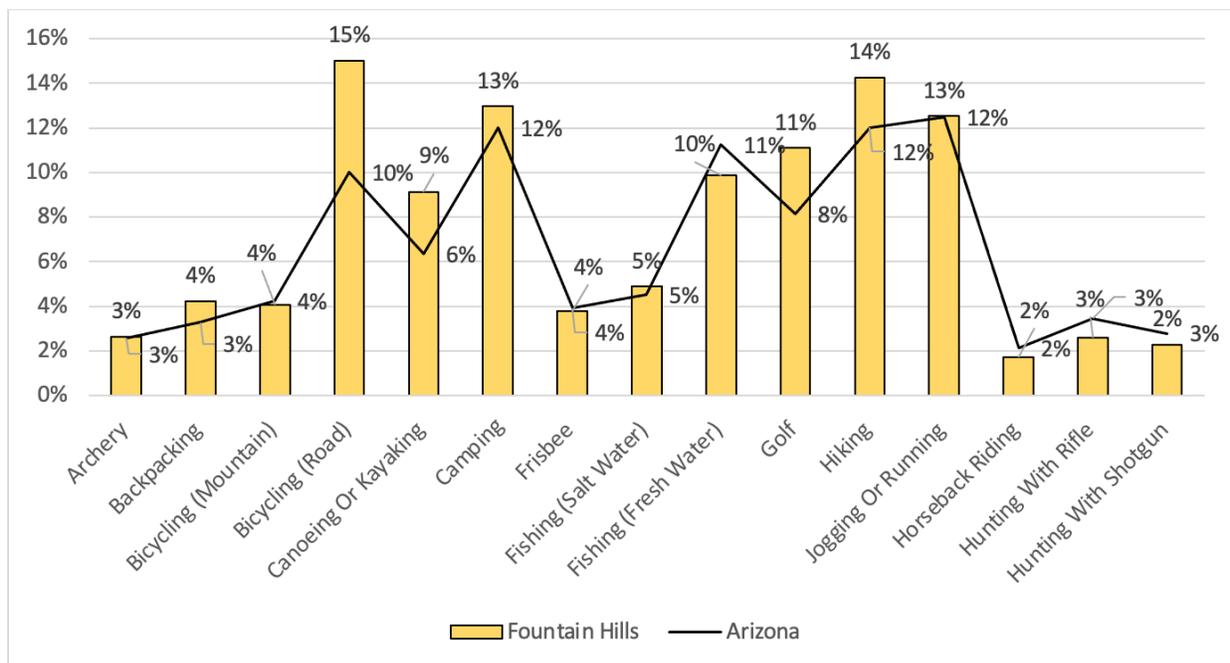
Source: Outdoor Industry Report

### Local Participation

The figure below shows household participation in various outdoor activities in Fountain Hills. Participation was highest for the following activities:

- Road Bicycling (15%)
- Hiking (14%)
- Camping (13%)
- Jogging or Running (13%)

Figure 10: Outdoor Recreation Participation



Source: 2018 Esri Business Analyst

## Relevant Research Trends

The next section focuses on national and regional research that supports community input heard throughout the engagement process. Where applicable, local information is referenced to provide additional context. Based on input from the community, Town demographics, and results from a needs assessment survey, the following trends are included in this section.

### ADMINISTRATIVE

Municipal parks and recreation structures and delivery systems have changed as more alternative methods of delivering services are emerging. Certain services are being contracted out and cooperative agreements with non-profit groups and other public institutions are being developed. Newer partners include the healthcare system, social services, justice system, education, the corporate sector, and community service agencies. These partnerships reflect both a broader interpretation of the mandate of parks and recreation agencies and the increased willingness of other sectors to work together to address community issues. The relationship with health agencies is vital in promoting wellness. The traditional relationship with education and the sharing of facilities through joint-use agreements is evolving into cooperative planning and programming aimed at addressing youth inactivity levels and community needs.

In addition, the role of parks and recreation management has shifted beyond traditional facility oversight and activity programming. The ability to evaluate and interpret data is a critical component of strategic decision making. In an article in *Parks and Recreation* magazine from February 2019, there are several components that allow agencies to keep up with administrative trends and become an agent of change:<sup>3</sup>

- Develop a digital transformation strategy – how will your agency innovate and adapt to technology?
- Anticipate needs of the community through data – what information from your facilities, programs, and services can be collected and utilized for decision making?
- Continuous education - How can you educate yourself and your team to have more knowledge and skills as technology evolves?
- Focus on efficiency – in what ways can your operations be streamlined?
- Embrace change as a leader – how can you help your staff to see the value in new systems and processes?
- Reach out digitally – be sure that the public knows how to find you and ways that they can be involved.

### AQUATICS AND WATER RECREATION TRENDS

According to the National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA), swimming ranked second nationwide in terms of participation in 2018.<sup>4</sup> Nationally, there is an increasing trend towards indoor leisure and therapeutic pools. Swimming for fitness continues to be the top aspirational activity for “inactives” in all age groups, according to the Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) 2016 Sports, Fitness and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report, representing a significant opportunity to engage inactive populations. An “inactive” person is defined as one who does not participate in any of the more than 120 sports/activities covered by the Physical Activity Council Report by SFIA, which includes everything from individual and team sports to walking and running.

<sup>3</sup> “The Digital Transformation of Parks and Rec” National Recreation and Parks Association, <https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2019/february/the-digital-transformation-of-parks-and-rec/> Accessed 2020.

<sup>4</sup> “2018 Sport Participation Snapshot,” National Sporting Goods Association, Accessed 2020.

To add to a more unique aquatics experience, agencies are experimenting with including a variety of new amenities to pools. Most of these elements are related to challenge course elements, with slides, rock climbing elements, and other obstacles. Regarding pool design, zero-depth entry is considered more accessible for young children, seniors, and those with disabilities. Splash pad elements are also becoming more common in shallow waters. In addition, sometimes volleyball nets and basketball hoops can be installed to encourage play.<sup>5</sup>

Additional indoor and outdoor amenities like “spray pads” or “splash pads” are becoming increasingly popular as well. Splash pads are not only enjoyed by children, but also becoming increasingly important because of climate change, and the increasing need for accessible cooling hubs as cities experience hotter, drier summers.

### COMMUNITY CENTERS

Parks and Recreation agencies serve their communities in many ways; one of the primary facilities that many agencies operate are community centers. These facilities may host a variety of amenities, such as sport courts, multi-purpose rooms, fitness gyms, aquatic facilities, and much more. There has been a shift from traditional fitness and general activities in community centers to a more modern approach, which includes healthy living classes, computer classes/internet access, and older adult transportation. Data from the National Recreation and Park Association indicates that recreation centers play an important role in communities across the country. The following infographic demonstrates the potential for community services in offering non-traditional services.<sup>6</sup>

**Figure 11: Non-Traditional Services Desired in Community Centers**



These are **in addition to services traditionally offered** by park and recreation agencies – including fitness centers, out-of-school time programming and aquatic facilities.



[www.nrpa.org/Park-Pulse](http://www.nrpa.org/Park-Pulse)

This Park Pulse survey was conducted on behalf of NRPA by Wakefield Research among 1,000 nationally representative Americans, ages 18+, between August 3 and 9, 2017.

<sup>5</sup> “Swim with the Current: What’s Trending in Aquatics,” Campus Rec <https://campusrecremag.com/swim-current-trending-aquatics/>. Accessed 2020.

<sup>6</sup> National Recreation and Park Association, “Recreation Centers Play an Important Role in Communities” Accessed September 2019 <https://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/park-pulse/park-pulse-survey-recreation-centers-role-in-communities/>

## GENERATIONAL TRENDS

On a national level, activity participation varies based on age, but also varies greatly based on generational preferences. According to the 2018 Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) report, Millennials were more likely than any other generation to participate in water sports – but typically prefer fitness and outdoor activities.<sup>7</sup>

According to Esri Business Analyst, Baby Boomers make up the largest generational group at 41% of the population in Fountain Hills. Millennials only make up 11% of the population in the town, but nationally they are the largest generational group.

- Generation Alpha (Born after 2017): 1%
- Generation Z (Born 1999 – 2016): 13%
- Millennials/Generation Y (Born 1981 – 1998): 11%
- Generation X (Born 1965 – 1980): 18%
- Baby Boomers (Born 1946 – 1964): 41%
- Silent Generation (Born Before 1945): 16%

As Baby Boomers (people born between the years 1946 and 1964) enter retirement, they will be looking for opportunities in fitness, sports, arts, cultural events, and other activities that suit their lifestyles. With their varied life experiences, values, and expectations, Baby Boomers are predicted to redefine the meaning of recreation and leisure programming for mature adults. Boomers are second only to Millennials/Generation Y in participation in fitness and outdoor sports.

Boomers will look to park and recreation professionals to provide opportunities for hobbies and sports. It is anticipated that recreation trends will shift away from games and activities, such as bingo, bridge, and shuffleboard, because Baby Boomers relate these activities with old age.

## OLDER ADULTS AND SENIOR PROGRAMMING

Many older adults and seniors are choosing to maintain active lifestyles and recognize the health benefits of regular physical activities. With the large number of adults in these age cohorts, many communities have found a need to offer more programming, activities, and facilities that support the active lifestyle this generation desires.

Public parks and recreation agencies are increasingly expected to be significant providers of such services and facilities. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) developed the Healthy Aging in Parks initiative to support parks and recreation agencies in serving older adults in the community. This initiative is based on the needs of older adults, including physical fitness, socialization, transportation, and other quality of life desires. Some of the primary strategies of the Healthy Aging in Parks initiative are as follows:

- Promote participation in physical activity through providing social engagement
- Provide safe environments, both inside and outside, – that limit barriers for participation
- Utilize evidence-based interventions to increase support and manage chronic diseases<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> “2018 SFIA Topline Report” Sports and Fitness Industry Association, accessed 2020.

<sup>8</sup> “About Healthy Aging in Parks” National Recreation and Park Association, Accessed September 2019, <https://www.nrpa.org/our-work/partnerships/initiatives/healthy-aging-in-parks/healthy-aging-in-parks-about/>

Park and Recreation agencies can assist the aging demographic in staying healthy through providing programs and facilities. According to an NRPA survey, nine in ten local Park and Recreation agencies offer services for older adults. Surveys reveal that agencies are most likely to offer the following services:

- Exercise classes (91%)
- Field trips, tours, vacations (70%)
- Arts and crafts classes (67%)
- Opportunities to volunteer in recreation centers (58%)
- Special events and festivals (58%)
- Group walks (53%)
- Opportunities to volunteer in parks (48%)
- Paid job opportunities to lead exercise classes, work in recreation centers or at parks (47%)

For underserved older adults, parks and recreation agencies can be a critical resource, providing low-cost meals, low-cost or free fitness programs, and transportation services. However, many organizations are faced with barriers that inhibit the ability to offer these programs, with the top responses being facility space shortage (58%) and inadequate funding (50%). To overcome these obstacles, agencies will often develop relationships with partners in the community who may specialize in serving the older adults. Some of the primary partners include:

- Area agencies on aging (58%)
- Retirement communities (44%)
- Senior meals providers (42%)
- Hospitals and doctors' offices (39%)
- Local health departments (39%)
- Health insurance companies (38%)
- Community-based organizations (faith based, YMCAs, etc.) (38%)

As adults continue to age, many agencies offer a localized bus service for seniors in need of transportation. This type of service can help seniors maintain their independence while meeting their needs for grocery shopping, medical appointments, and other basic services. In addition, transportation services can help combat isolation by providing a socializing experience. Some agencies, such as the City of Walnut Creek, California, are experimenting with new technologies, such as Lyft, to further bridge the gap. Funding for the Lyft pilot program – which provides free rides for qualifying Senior Club members – was provided for by the Transportation Partnership and Cooperation for Contra Costa County (TRANSPAC). To account for a lack of smartphones and technical assistance among older adults, Walnut Creek created a Lyft reservation line where seniors can call and reserve a ride. Staff are also available at recreation centers to provide tutorials on how to use the app if desired.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Nathan, Suzanne, September 2018. "Giving Seniors a 'Lyft'" National Recreation and Park Association. Accessed September 2019. <https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2018/September/giving-seniors-a-lyft/>

## C. Community and Stakeholder Input

Focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and a public forum were conducted during June 22-25, 2020. These meetings were held using the Zoom digital platform. The goal of these sessions was to gather information that would guide the development of the community recreation needs assessment survey and to identify community member needs and desires. Participants included:

- Users/community members
- Town/Department Staff
- Stakeholders
- Community Services Advisory Commission
- Youth and Teens
- Special Interest Groups
- School District PTO
- Library Services
- Town Elected Officials
- McDowell Mountain Preservation Commission
- Fountain Hills Dark Sky Association
- Public safety
- Sports advocates – youth sports, pickleball, disc golf, etc.
- Civic groups – Rotary, the Chamber of Commerce, and Fountain Hills Cultural and Civic Association
- Seniors



Over the course of four days GreenPlay hosted three meetings and spoke with 44 community members and stakeholders and hosted an online public meeting with 53 community members attending. In addition, 23 comments were received in advance of the public meeting.

Top priorities that were identified during this portion of the planning process include:

- The Fountain Hills Community Services staff are collaborative, professional, responsive and desire to serve all ages
- The department requires better funding. The Town struggles from a lack of operating and capital budgets
- A community swimming pool is desired, perhaps near the high school
- Parks and facilities are well maintained and clean
- Fountain Hills teenagers require additional programs and services, especially in the summer

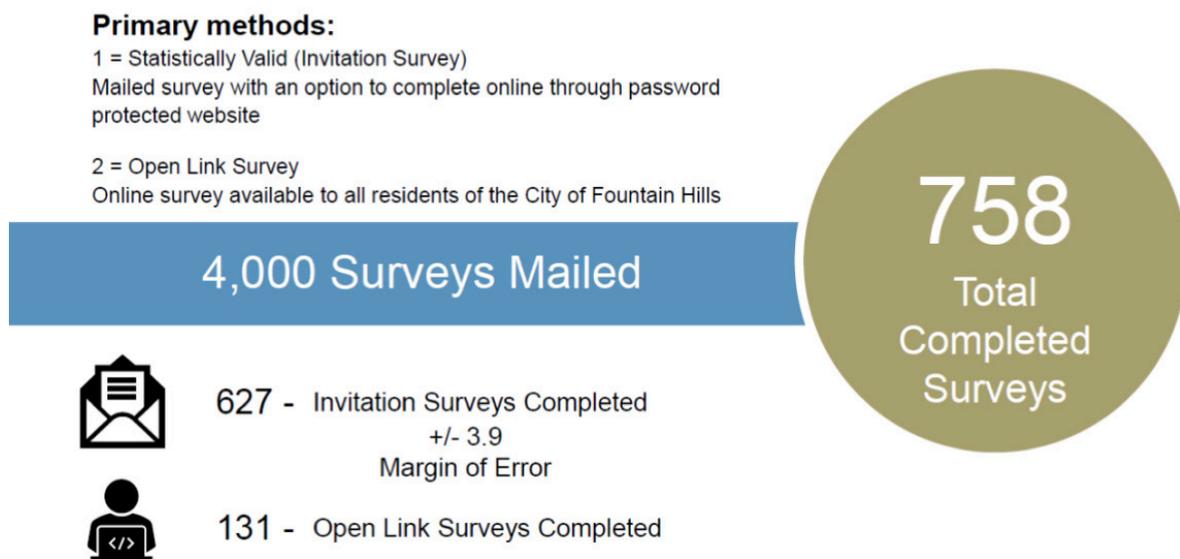
- The Department offers great activities and well-planned events
- Trails are well-maintained, clean, and not too crowded, would love more trails, perhaps connecting to McDowell and Scottsdale. Use washes for new trails
- The Department should focus on Dark Sky community opportunities
- The Town needs to build an indoor recreational space that may include basketball, senior, rental opportunities
- Fountain Hills needs a place for teenagers, like a Teen Center
- The Department should offer more events. More like the Mountain to Fountain race or the White Castle of the past, music concerts and music festivals
- Need to increase activities for young working adults - nightlife that could be centered around community services offerings/town offerings. A town-wide calendar should be kept, and some improvement is being made by Fountain Hills Community and Civic Association. A real true calendar of all events would be great
- More shade structures around walking paths and around the fountain and splash pad
- Wayfinding signs to get to parks are needed
- Park and Recreation should have a brand/image that it promotes inside and outside Fountain Hills
- Fountain Park is almost 50 years old and our crown jewel. The fountain requires maintenance to make it look and smell beautiful
- The Town should host more events to showcase Fountain Park
- The Town should open and operate the closed bowling center
- Public transportation is not sufficient for people who can't drive
- The town needs a more focused direction and definition of its identity. What is the Town's identity? Just seniors? Families? Tourists? We are a little bit of everything!
- Many residents do not want growth within the community. However, for our community to thrive and prosper, growth is necessary. The Town needs to welcome outside visitors and market outside of the Town
- Broader emphasis on the Town as pet friendly
- The department needs a better revenue stream – the community center is underutilized due to marketing and allowing too many free or low-priced facility rentals. The recreation programs, senior programs, non-profit programs have limited revenue
- Fifty-seven partners were identified in the process with the following identified as keys to implementing the master plan.
  - Fountain Hills Unified School District
  - Fort McDowell Preservation Commission
  - Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation
  - Fountain Hills Chamber of Commerce
  - Fountain Hills Dark Sky Association
  - Maricopa County Parks & Recreation
  - The community at large
  - Fountain Hills & Arizona Disc Golf Clubs

Results from the community engagement process were provided as staff documents, and the Public Meeting summary PowerPoint presentation was posted to the Department's website.

## D. Community Survey Summary

As part of the project, a statistically valid survey was conducted to assess the opinions, desires, and needs of residents in Fountain Hills. The survey was conducted using three primary methods: 1) a mailed survey to 4,000 households in Fountain Hills, 2) an online, password-protected invitation website, 3) an open link survey for all other residents who were not included in the invitation sample. Invitation or invite respondents were given a unique password to participate through the online survey. Approximately two weeks after the mailed surveys began arriving in mailboxes, the open link survey was made available to all residents who did not receive an invitation survey. Results are kept separate to maintain the statistical validity of the invitation sample. The invitation sample contains 627 completed surveys (margin of error: 3.9%) with the open link closing with 131 completed surveys. A full survey results report has been provided as a staff resource document.

**Figure 12: Community Survey Methodology**



### Key Findings

After reviewing all data received through the survey the consultant team summarized key findings which are below in **Figure 13**. These findings present a quick overview of the survey outcomes. The purpose of the community needs assessment study was to gather community feedback on Fountain Hills Community Services facilities, services, programs, amenities, future planning, communication, and more.

**Figure 13: Key Findings from the Community Survey**

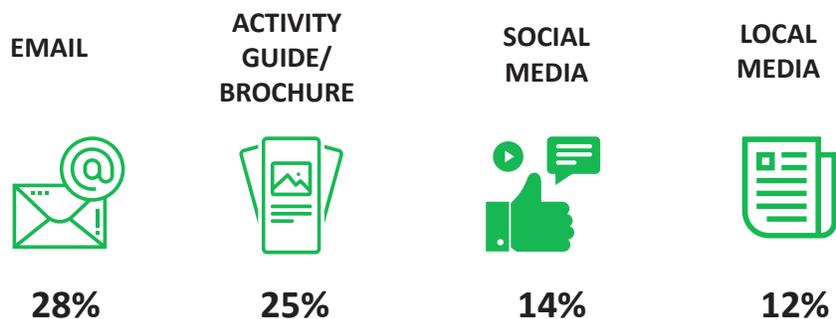


Other findings from the survey are listed below and were integrated into the development of recommendations and actions for the Master Plan update.

**Communication Methods**

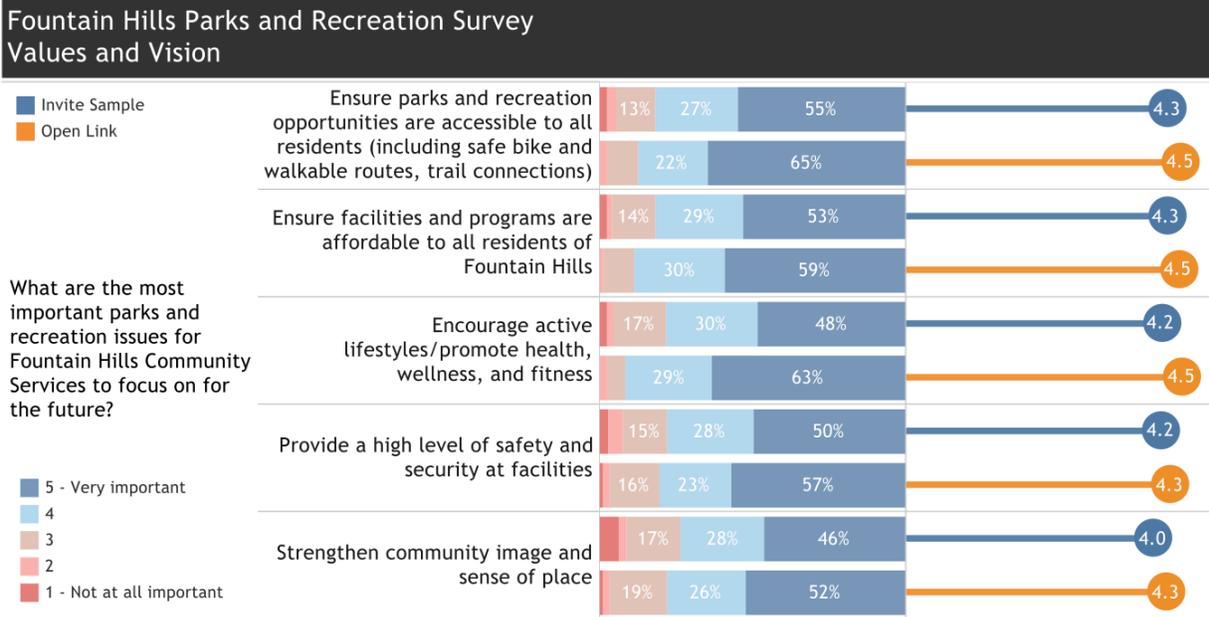
The top two prevalent methods to receive information among invite and open link respondents are Activity Guide/Brochure (61% overall) and word of mouth (46%). Open link respondents are generally more likely to receive information via social media, (54%), but it is still a high priority for invite respondents. Local media, the Town website and newsletters are important ways of receiving information as well. Results demonstrate the Department uses a diversified group of methods to communicate in Fountain Hills.

The four preferred ways to receive communication, per the invite survey were:



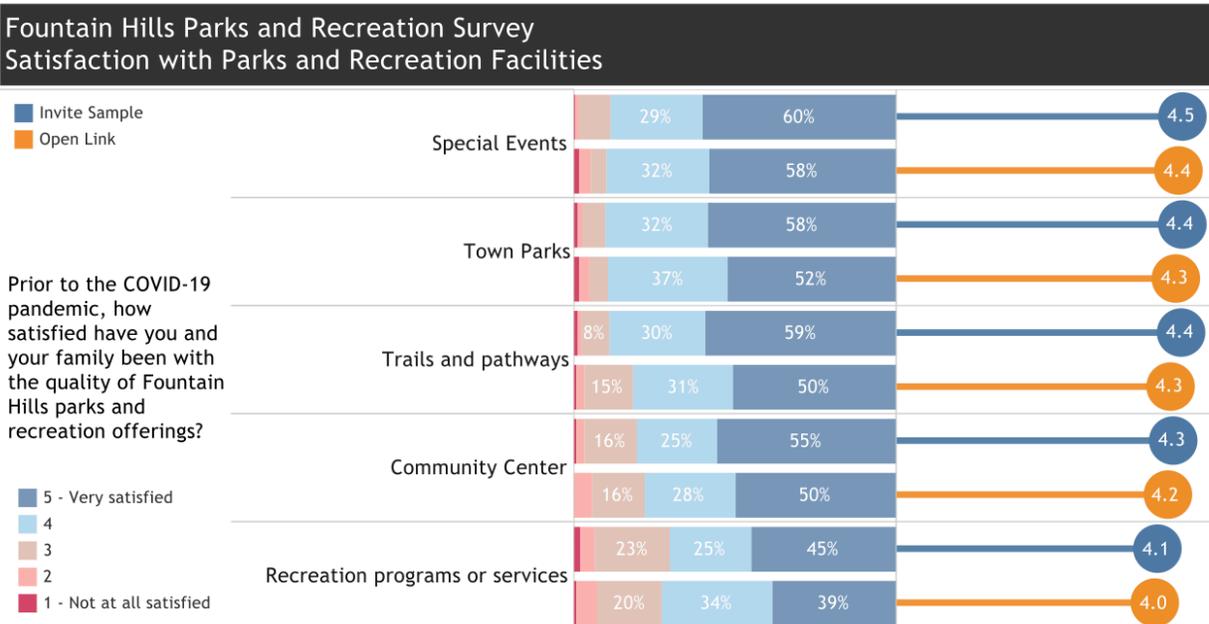
## Most Important Issues to the Community

On a scale of 1-5 with 1 being not at all important and 5 being very important, respondents identified the most important issues as safe access to recreation opportunities (including walkable and bicycle access), affordable programs and the promotion of active lifestyles.



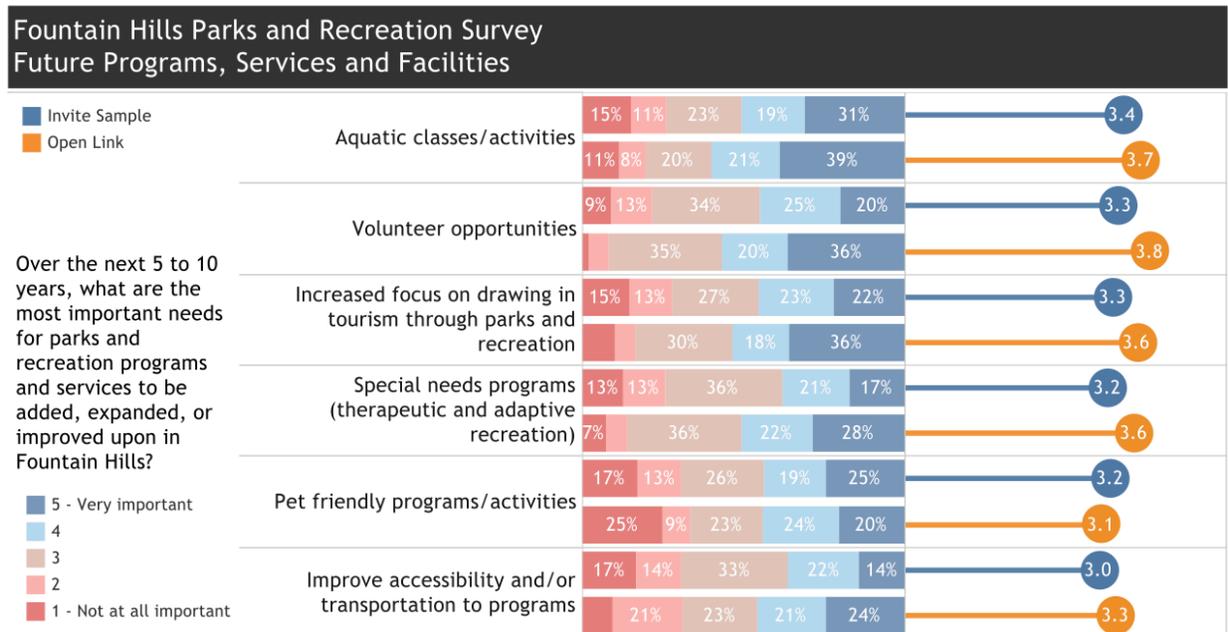
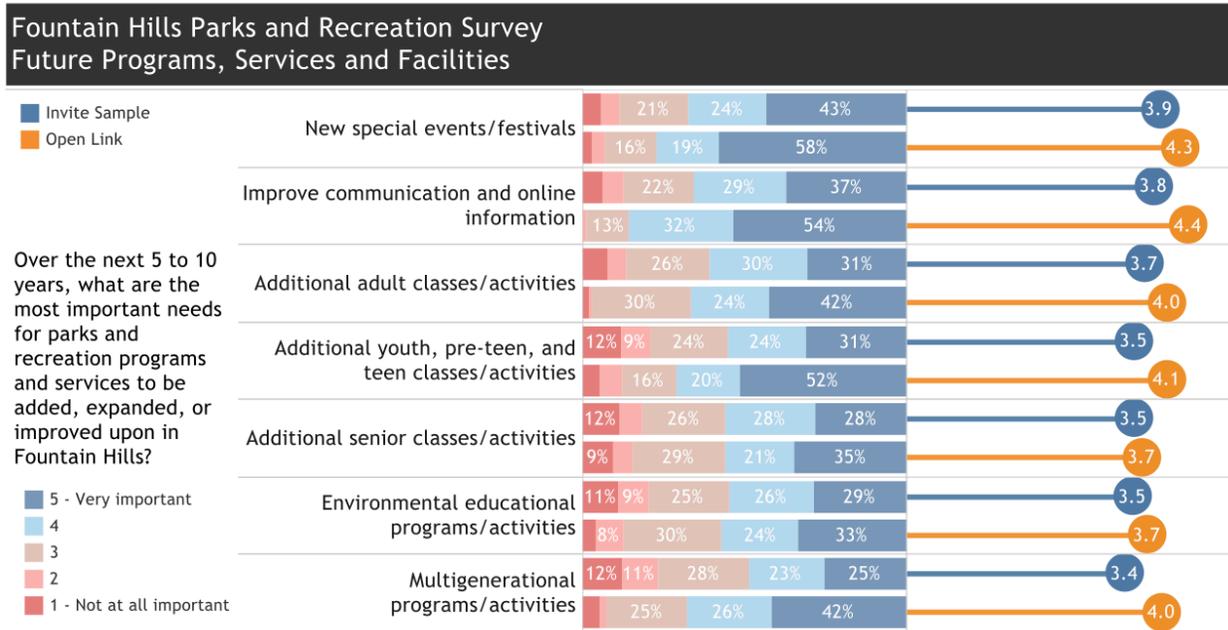
## Current Satisfaction

When asked how satisfied households are with the overall quality of the parks and recreation offerings provided by Fountain Hills, the majority of invite and open link respondents rated their satisfaction levels with all offerings a 4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5 (very satisfied), while a very small percentage rated their satisfaction level as a 1 or 2. Satisfaction with special events rated the highest for both invite and open link respondents.



## Future Needs

In terms of future needs for programs and services, both the invitation and open link samples have the greatest need or desire for new special events/festivals, improved communication and online information, and additional adult classes/activities. The open link sample also rates youth, pre-teen, and teen classes/activities particularly important. The open link sample expressed generally greater levels of importance than the invite sample for most programs and services.



### ***Importance and Performance Factors***

To make solid data driven decisions that prioritize future resource allocation and services to offer, survey respondents were asked which needs are important to their households and how well they thought the Department is currently meeting those needs.

Among invite respondents, the items that require the most attention (high importance, lower meeting of needs) are Amenities, (shade and picnic) at parks, volunteer opportunities, recreation programs/ activities and senior programs. Among the open link respondents, they were similar with special events, recreation programs and activities, amenities, (shade and picnic areas) at parks and Four Peaks Park.

## **E. Benchmarking/Comparative Analysis**

Comparative analysis is a tool that allows for an assessment of certain attributes of the Town of Fountain Hills' management practices. This process creates a deeper understanding of alternative providers, your place in the market, and varying fee methodologies, which may be used to enhance and improve the service delivery of parks and recreation.

It is very difficult to find exact comparable communities because each has its own unique identity, ways of conducting business, and differences in the populations that it serves. The political, social, economic, and physical characteristics of each community make the policies and practices of each parks and recreation agency unique. Additionally, organizations do not typically define the expenditures of parks, trails, facilities, and maintenance the same way.

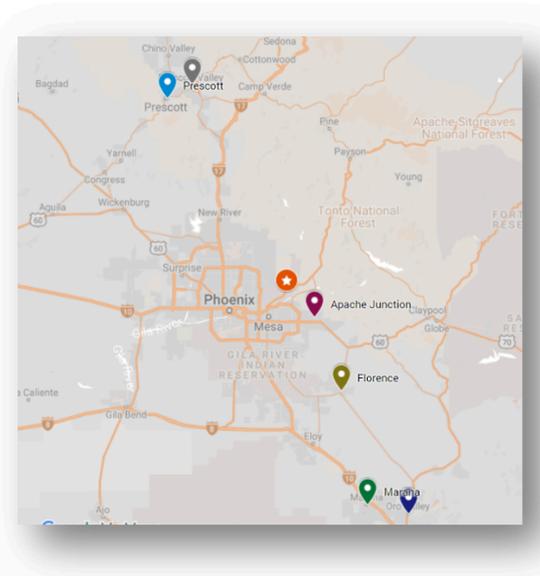
Agencies also vary in terms of how they organize their budget information, and it may be difficult to assess whether the past year's expenses are typical for the community. Finally, the impact of COVID-19 has significantly altered program offerings, facility availability, and overall program delivery. Therefore, it is important to take all data in a benchmarking study with context, realizing that while benchmarking can be a great comparative tool, it does not necessarily lend itself into being a decision-making tool.

For the purposes of this study, a regional approach was taken to benchmark neighboring and regional agencies listed below in **Table 4**. Agencies were selected with assistance from Fountain Hills Community Services staff, and were chosen based on similarity in jurisdiction population, as well as regional similarities. All peer agencies were in Arizona, except Durango, Colorado, which was selected due to recent CAPRA accreditation and commitment to best practices. Population data was sourced from Esri Business Analyst, and current population numbers are listed below. In addition to regional comparison, national data from NRPA Park Metrics was also provided to provide context. The map below shows the locations of these agencies in relation to the Town of Fountain Hills.

**Table 4: Population of Benchmarked Communities**

	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>2020 Population</b>
★	Fountain Hills, AZ	25,198
📍	Apache Junction, AZ	40,462
*	Durango, CO	19,872
📍	Florence, AZ	10,377
📍	Marana, AZ	49,395
📍	Oro Valley, AZ	46,556
📍	Prescott City, AZ	46,526
📍	Prescott Valley, AZ	47,993

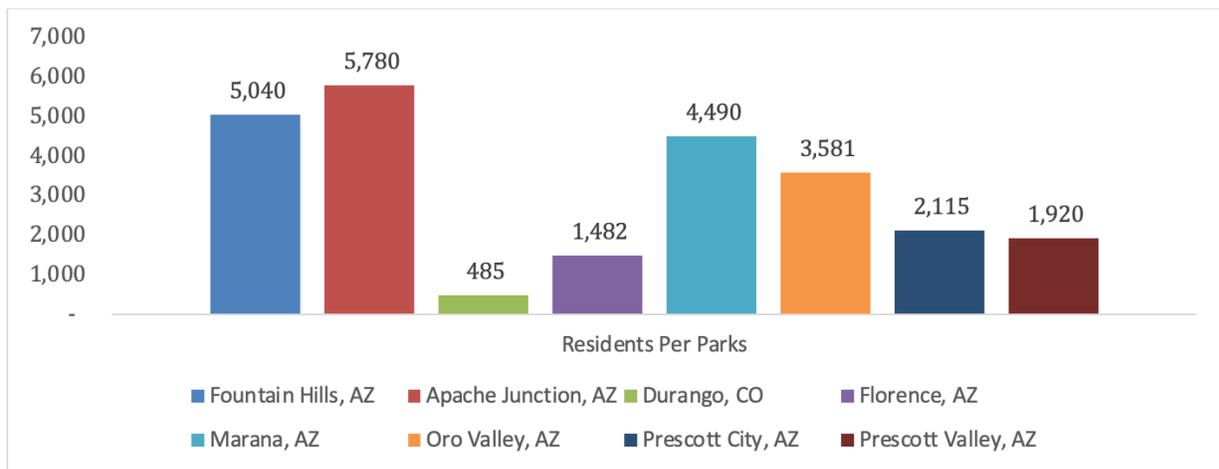
*\*Durango, CO not listed to preserve scale of map*



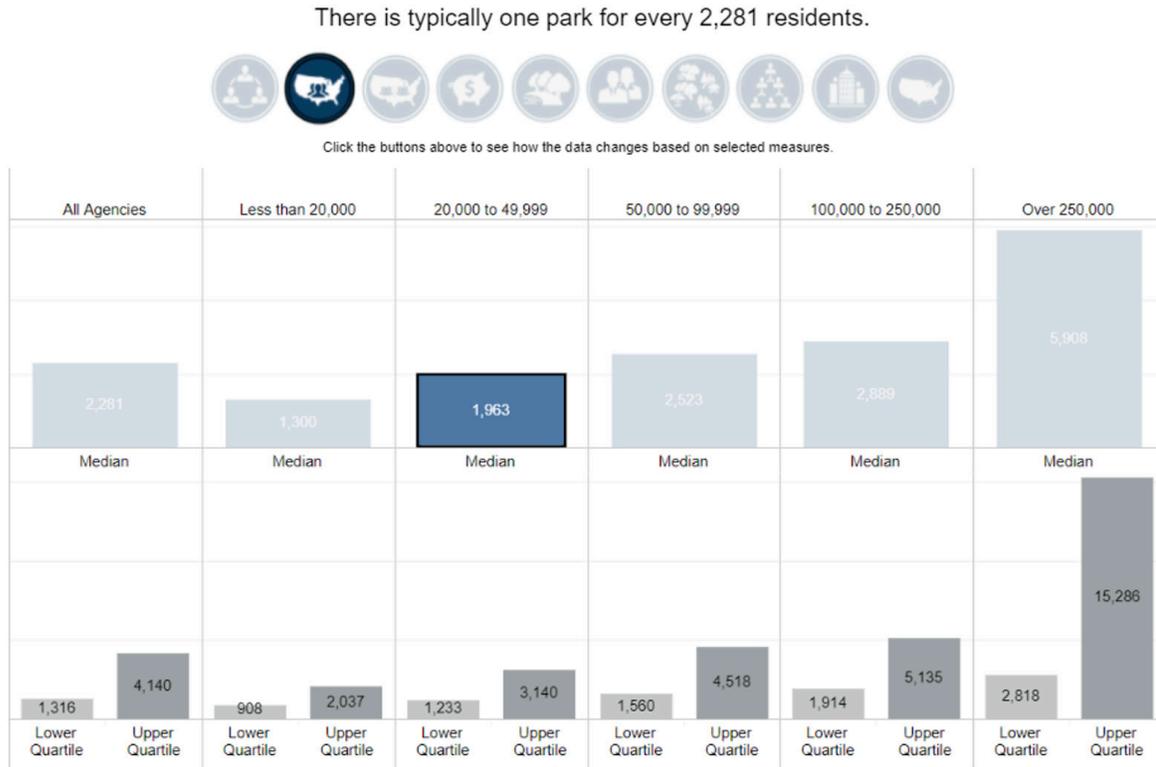
**Residents Per Park**

With five formal parks in the Town of Fountain Hills, and a population of 25,198 in 2020, there is approximately one park per 5,040 residents. This is higher than many of the other peer agencies compared in this study. All the other comparative agencies, except Apache Junction, have a greater number of parks to serve their residents. National data, sourced from NRPA Park Metrics, tells a similar story. Communities with similar population sizes around the country have an estimated 1,963 residents per park. This means that Fountain Hills must accommodate more than 2.5 times more residents per park than the national average.

**Figure 14: Residents Per Park**



**Figure 15: NRPA Agency Performance Review Acres Residents Per Park**



[www.NRPA.org/APR](http://www.NRPA.org/APR)

\*Findings from the 2020 Agency Performance Review uses data from Park Metrics, NRPA's park and recreation agency performance benchmarking tool, from 2017-2019.



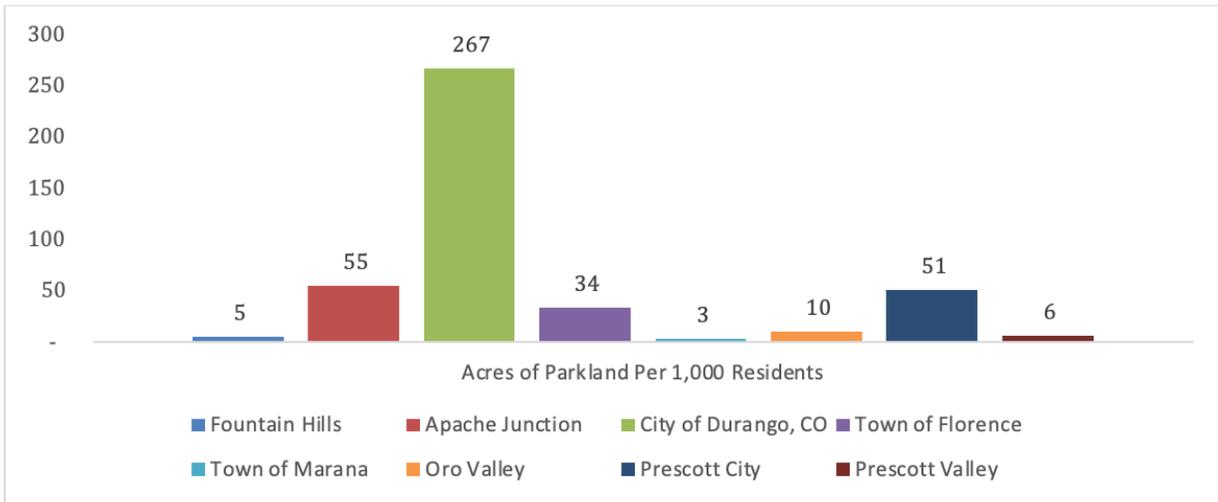
**Acres of Parkland for Residents**

Of all the agencies compared in this analysis, Fountain Hills had the lowest number of acres of parkland with just 127 developed acres. The highest amount of parkland was in Durango, CO. Looking at the number of park acres to serve the community, Fountain Hills had the lowest at five acres per 1,000 residents. NRPA Park Metrics data, as seen in **Figure 16**, indicates that for populations of 20,000 to 49,999, the typical agency has 9.6 acres per 1,000 residents.

**Table 5: Total Acres of Park Land**

Table X: Total Acres of Park Land	
Fountain Hills	127
Apache Junction	2,230
City of Durango, CO	5,300
Town of Florence	348
Town of Marana	158
Oro Valley	449
Prescott City	2,353
Prescott Valley	274

**Figure 16: Total Park Acres Per 1,000 Residents**

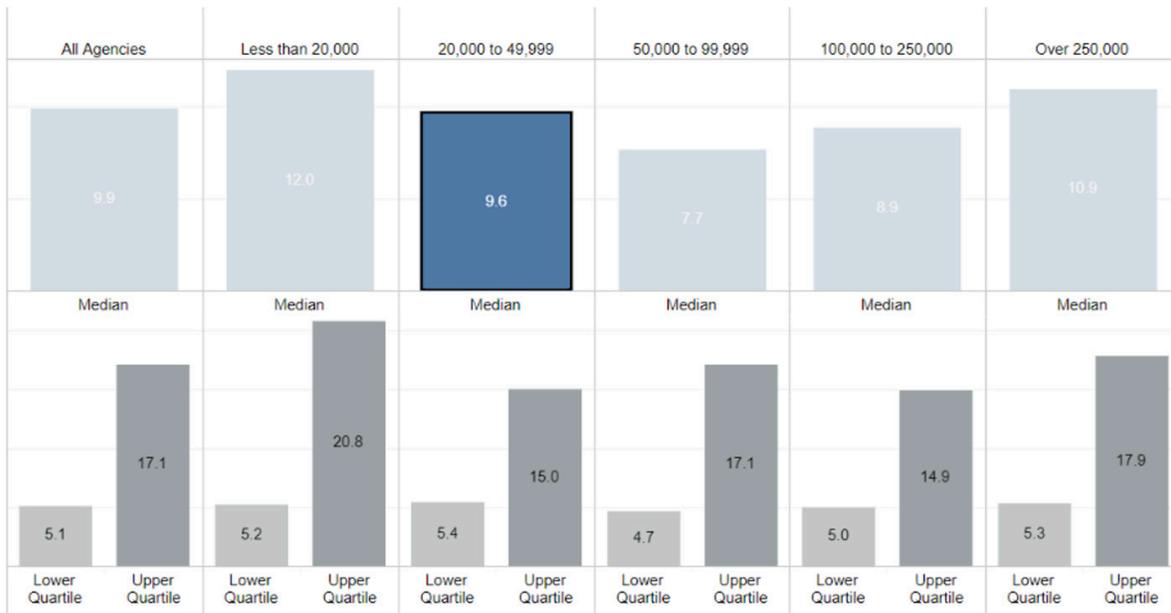


**Figure 17: NRPA Agency Performance Review Acres of Parkland Per 1,000 Residents**

The typical park and recreation agency has 9.9 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents in the jurisdiction.



Click the buttons above to see how the data changes based on selected measures.



[www.NRPA.org/APR](http://www.NRPA.org/APR)

\*Findings from the 2020 Agency Performance Review uses data from Park Metrics, NRPA's park and recreation agency performance benchmarking tool, from 2017-2019.



## Staffing

The Town of Fountain Hills budget allocated for 22 Total full-time equivalent (FTE) employees in 2020. Compared to peer agencies, the number of FTEs fluctuated greatly, from 7 to 41. However, on a national level, the typical park and recreation agency for populations between 20,000 and 49,999 allocated for 27.3 FTE employees. This is an indication that Fountain Hills has fewer staff than the typical agency on a nationwide scale, and that other nearby agencies may be understaffed as well.

**Table 6: Jurisdiction Population Compared to FTEs**

	Total Resident Population	FTEs
Fountain Hills	25,198	22
Apache Junction	40,462	42
City of Durango, CO	19,872	41
Town of Florence	10,377	25
Town of Marana	49,395	42
Oro Valley	46,556	63
Prescott City	46,526	22
Prescott Valley	47,993	27

\*Population data for agencies sourced from Esri Business Analyst.

\*\*Prison population of approximately 16,500 not included in Florence population estimates

**Figure 18: NRPA Agency Performance Review Park and Recreation Agency Staffing**

The typical park and recreation agency has a payroll of 41.9 full-time equivalent staff (FTEs).



Click the buttons above to see how the data changes based on selected measures.



[www.NRPA.org/APR](http://www.NRPA.org/APR)

\*Findings from the 2020 Agency Performance Review uses data from Park Metrics, NRPA's park and recreation agency performance benchmarking tool, from 2017-2019.



### Staff Responsibilities

Data from agencies across the country indicate that it is common for the typical Park and Recreation staff responsibilities to be divided into four primary categories: operations/maintenance, programmers, administration, and capital development. **Table 7** shows the responsibilities for the typical agency on a nationwide level compared to the Town of Fountain Hills.

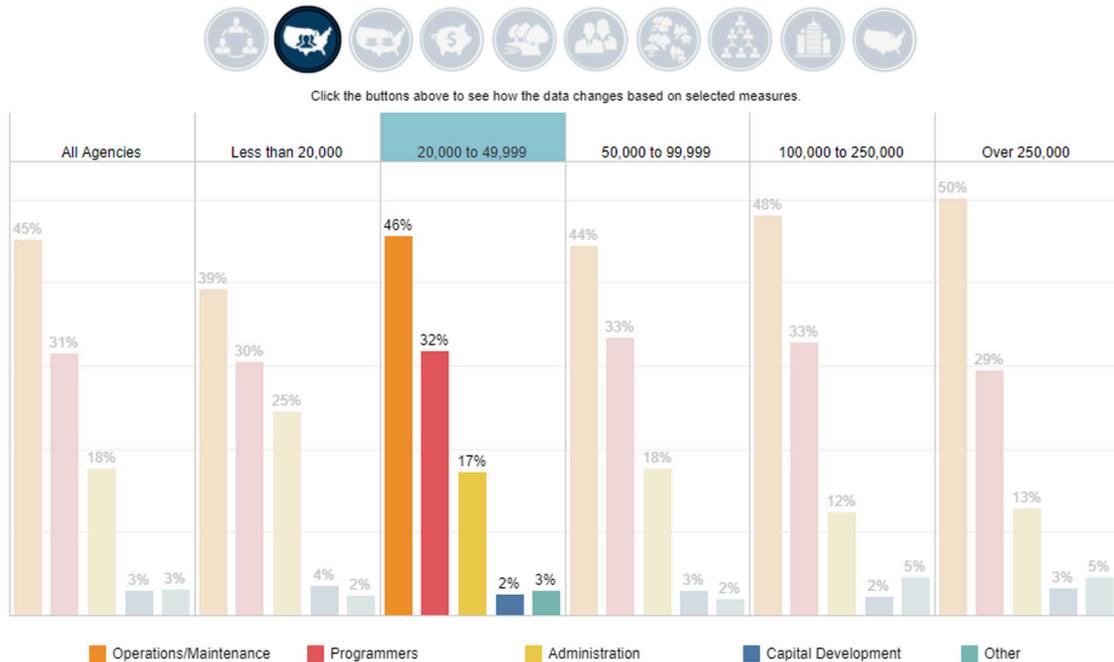
**Table 7: Responsibilities of Staff**

	Fountain Hills	National Average (20,000 to 49,999)
<b>Administration</b>	14%	17%
<b>Operations/Maintenance</b>	57%	46%
<b>Programmers</b>	29%	32%
<b>Capital Development</b>	0%	5%

Operations and maintenance are the primary responsibility for park and recreation professionals on a national scale, and that is true for Fountain Hills as well. Over 57% of staff in the Town of Fountain Hills is dedicated to Operations, compared to 46% for the typical agency nationally.

**Figure 19: NRPA Agency Performance Review Responsibilities of Park and Recreation Staff**

Operations and maintenance are the primary work responsibility for park and recreation professionals.



[www.NRPA.org/APR](http://www.NRPA.org/APR)

\*Findings from the 2020 Agency Performance Review uses data from Park Metrics, NRPA's park and recreation agency performance benchmarking tool, from 2017-2019.



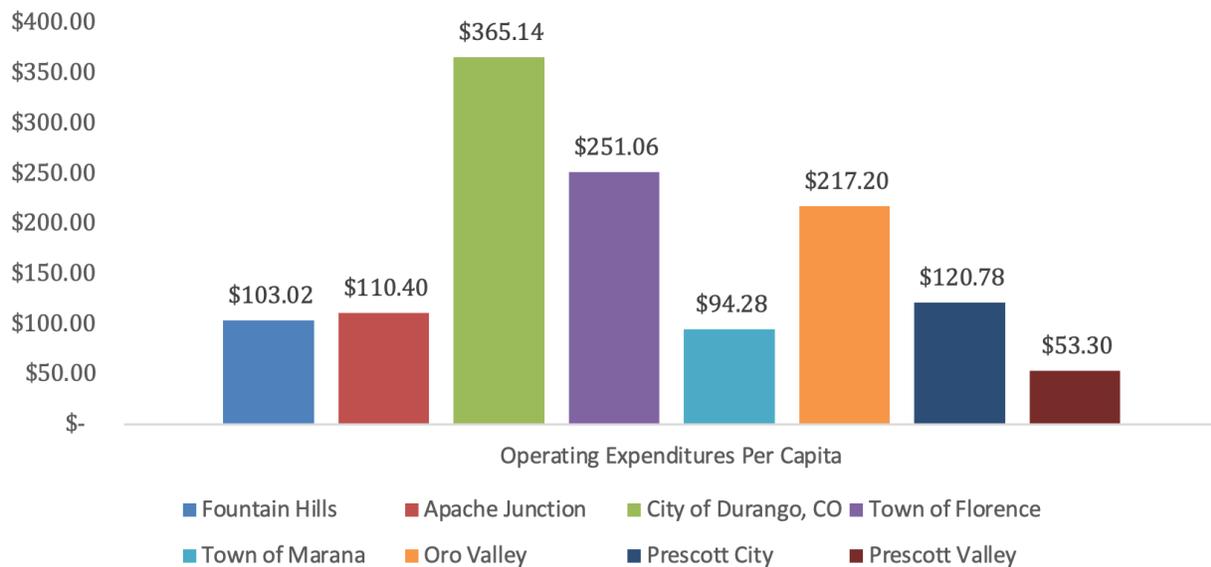
### Operating Expenditures

Operating expenditures from current (2019) year were researched from planning and budget documents. These numbers should be used as an estimate only, due to the possibility of errors, data omissions, and changes due to COVID-19. Data from the study indicate that expenditures varied greatly, with majority of peer agencies spending between 2.5 million to 7.3 million annually, except for Oro Valley (\$10.1 million). On a national level, the typical parks and recreation agency with a population between 20,000 to 49,999 residents had expenditures of \$2,885,847 annually. This is equivalent to \$95.34 per capita, similar in comparison to several of the agencies in this study, including Fountain Hills.

Table 8: Agency Estimated Operating Expenditures

Agency Estimated Operating Expenditures	
Fountain Hills	\$2,595,839
Apache Junction	\$4,467,000
City of Durango, CO	\$7,256,124
Town of Florence	\$2,605,234
Town of Marana	\$4,656,735
Oro Valley	\$10,111,731
Prescott City	\$5,619,434
Prescott Valley	\$2,557,810

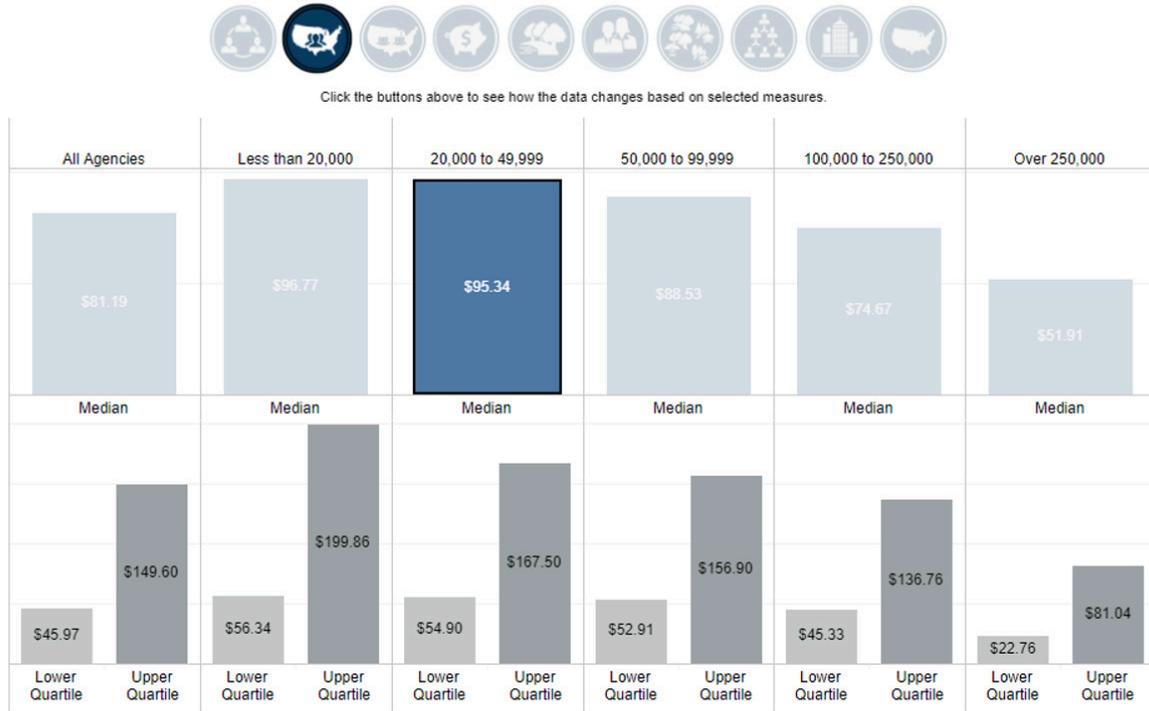
Figure 20: Parks & Recreation Operating Expenditures Per Capita



Source: Budget and Planning Documents, 2019 – 2021

**Figure 21: NRPA Agency Performance Review Operating Expenditures Per Capita**

The typical park and recreation agency has annual operating expenses of \$81.19 on a per capita basis.



[www.NRPA.org/APR](http://www.NRPA.org/APR)

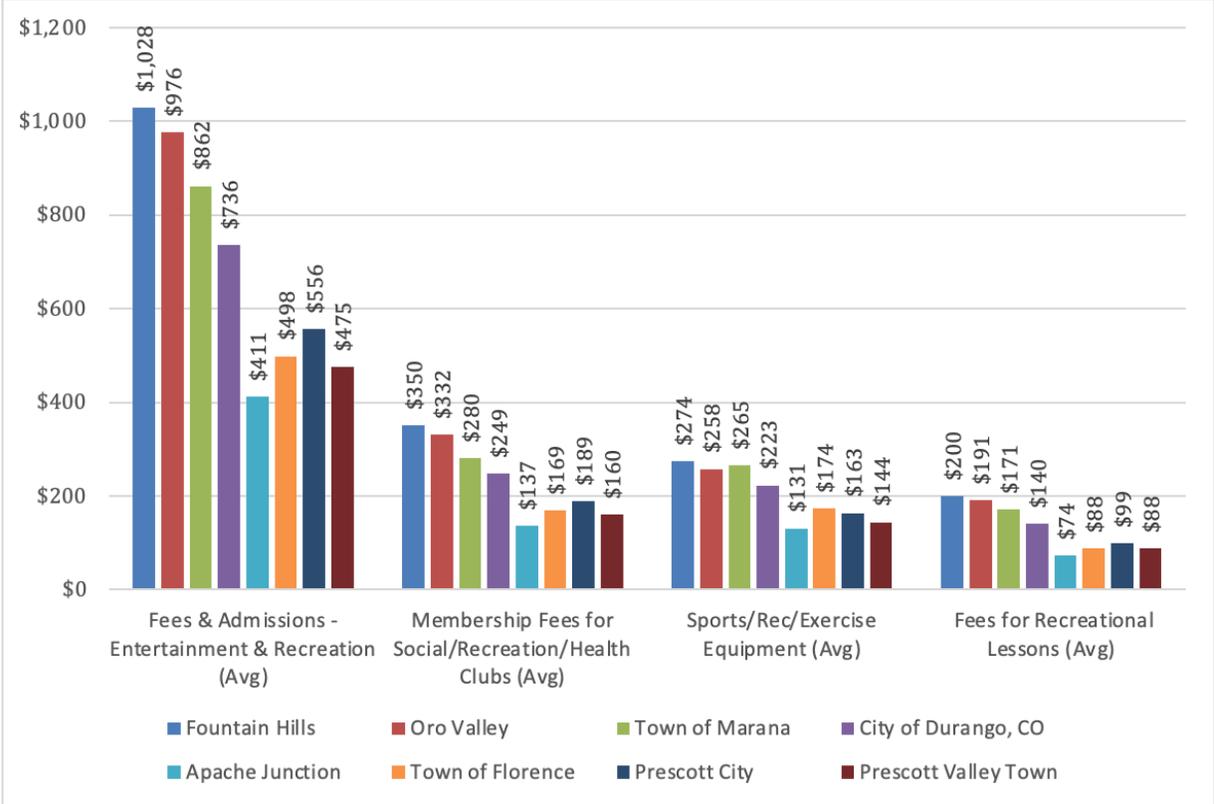
\*Findings from the 2020 Agency Performance Review uses data from Park Metrics, NRPA's park and recreation agency performance benchmarking tool, from 2017-2019.



**Average Recreation Expenditures**

Looking at the average recreation expenditures for the compared regions, data from Esri Business Analyst indicates that Fountain Hills’ residents, on average, spend \$1,028 per year on fees and admission costs related to recreation and entertainment. This is the highest of the comparative agencies, and similar themes emerged when looking at data related to membership fees, sports/recreation equipment, and fees for recreational lessons.

**Figure 22: 2020 Average Recreation Expenditures**



**F. Organizational Analysis**

**Departmental Organization**

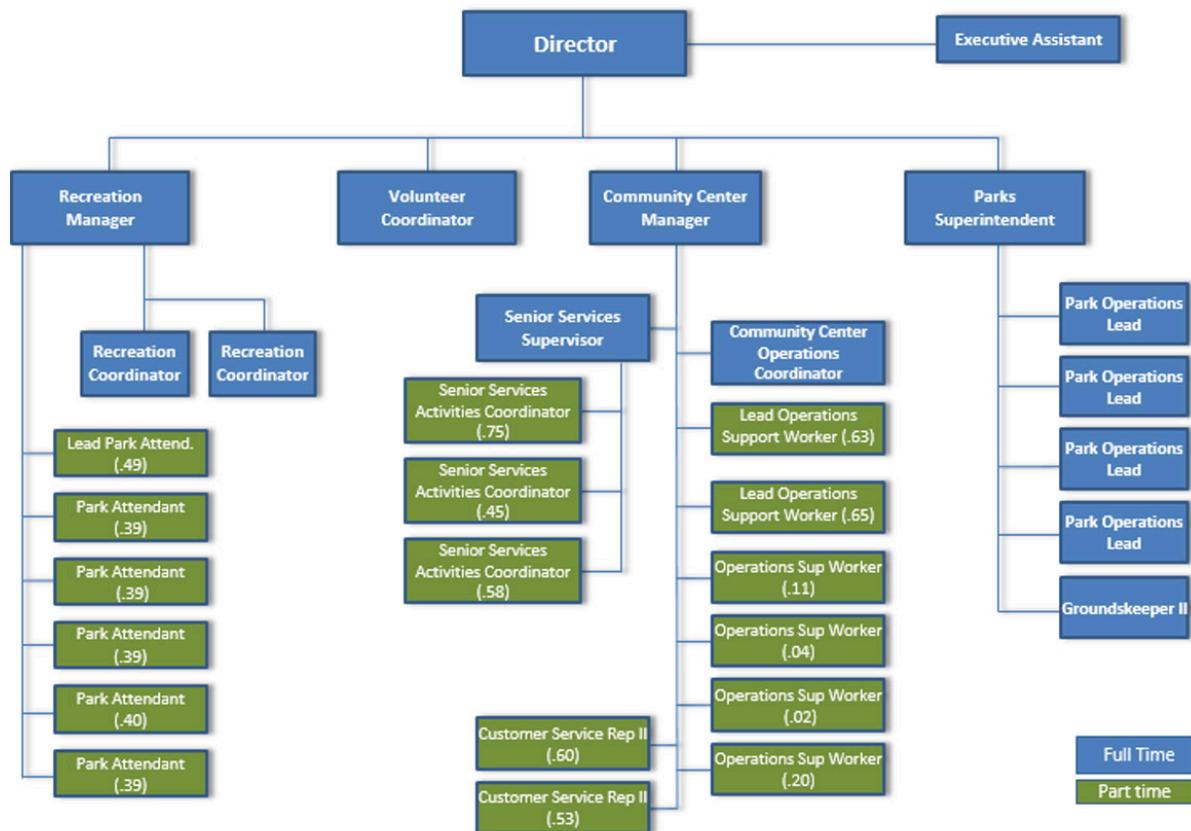
The Community Services Department manages the Town’s parks and outdoor spaces, programs, and services for the public to enjoy. The services and offerings are widely used in the community. Nine in ten residents have used town parks in the last 12 months, followed by 73% who attended a special event and 70% who used trails and pathways.

Residents are quite satisfied with the overall quality of Fountain Hills Community Services Department offerings. Based on the survey results, satisfaction with special events rated the highest with 89% rating a 4 or 5 (on the 1 to 5 scale). In fact, all offerings average 4.0 or higher for meeting needs of the community, indicating a strong level of satisfaction with most facilities and services.

The Department is managed by a Director who autonomously manages the functions, budget, personnel, programs, etc. Supporting the Director, the Department has six full-time community services employees, six park employees, a Volunteer Coordinator, and an Executive Assistant.

In addition, recreation programs and services are supported by between 4-7 part-time employees that assist with park tournaments and events. The Department does not employ seasonal or part-time employees to operate its parks. The National Recreation and Park Association published a 2020 Agency Review that reported data from over 1,000 parks and recreation agencies across the county and suggests that a typical agency with a similar population would dedicate between 14.7 and 50.5 positions or a median of 27.3. Fountain Hills invests in 22 positions which although lower than the national median, reflects well on the Town’s dedication to parks and recreation services.

**Figure 23: Community Services Department Organization Chart**



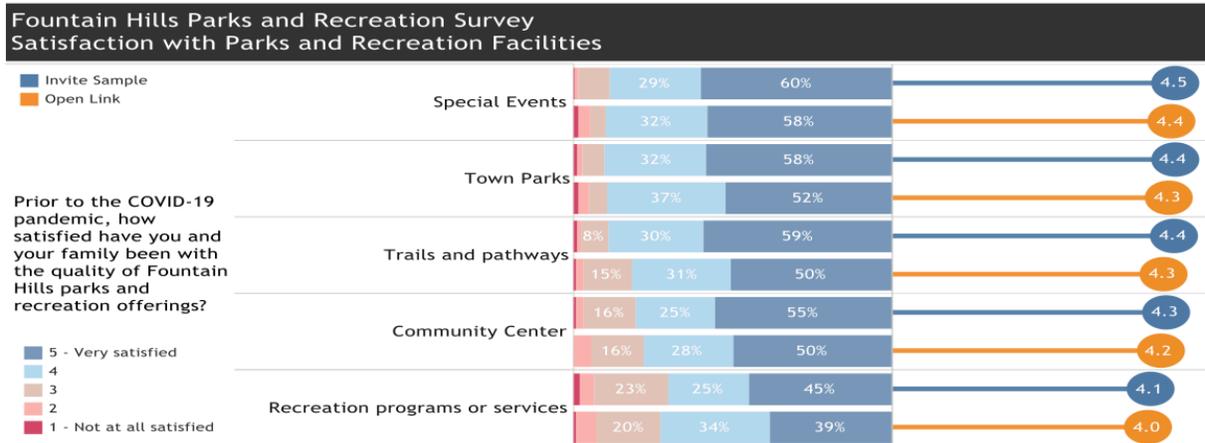
Note: Numbers in parentheses represent full-time equivalents (FTE).

### Organizational Structure

GreenPlay broadly assessed the organizational and management structure of the Recreation and Community Services Department and staffing to determine effectiveness and efficiency in meeting current and future departmental responsibilities relating to the community's needs.

It is important to acknowledge that the median age of Fountain Hills residents is 58.6 compared to the rest of Arizona (37.3 years old) and the United States (38.5 years old). The median age suggests significant numbers of retired residents who have increased leisure needs for services from the Department. These needs significantly impact the need for recreation employees.

Fountain Hills residents rate programs and services provided by the department as exemplary. When residents were asked to rate their satisfaction with parks, programs, and facilities (between 1 and 5 - 5 being fully satisfied), the community rated special events, the community center/programs and recreation programs extremely high which is primarily related to the professionalism and quality of both leadership and staff. The consultants note that satisfaction ratings at this level reflect greatly on the Department and the investment in the program.



The needs assessment, including input from staff interviews, community and key stakeholder engagement, the survey and level of service analysis, along with the consultant’s expertise has identified a few areas for operational enhancement that demonstrate a need for additional FTE during the time the master plan is implemented.

Key areas for operational enhancement include:

- Address a need for additional programs and events
- Address staffing for maintenance to meet current and future demands for services.
- Increase marketing and communication of services, programs, and activities.
- A gathering place and enhanced programs for teens are desired
- Aquatics programs/facility is desired

The span of control for each supervisory employee has in the opinion of the consultants acceptable and efficient. While typical span of control may be 3 to 4 positions, the size of the Department suggests that for the Parks Superintendent, the five direct reports is an acceptable number to effectively manage.

**Position:**

Director  
Maintenance Superintendent  
Recreation Manager  
Senior Services Supervisor  
Community Center manager

**Full Time Direct Reports:**

5 direct reports  
5 direct reports  
2 direct reports  
0 direct reports  
2 direct reports

**Staffing Analysis**

Typical agencies dedicate FTE positions to meet the needs of their individual communities. In comparison to what other similar agencies have, Fountain Hills dedicates positions in **Table 9**.

**Table 9: Investment in FTE by Areas of Responsibility**

	Fountain Hills	FTE Positions	Nationally	FTE Positions	Overage/Deficit
Operations and Maintenance	27%	6	45%	12	-6 FTE
Programming	59%	13	31%	8	+5 FTE
Administration	14%	3	18%	5	-2 FTE
Capital Development	0%	0	3%	.8	-.8 FTE
Other	0%	0	3%	.8	-.8 FTE
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>22 FTE</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>26.6</b>	<b>-4.6 FTE</b>

Observations and staff feedback were considered to determine if the current staffing organization was satisfactory within the Department. Analysis included the observations and assessments from community input, staff focus group and community satisfaction ratings. Interviews with Department staff resulted in the following observations:

- Our vision is bigger than we can always accomplish. It is hard to maintain quality
- We set high expectations and sometimes cannot be everything to everyone
- We have a shortage of staffing for the level of productivity. The team works efficiently.
- Staff are collaborative, highly experienced and create a strong, responsive, and collaborative team
- Strong and flexible team which can adjust to meet community needs

***Staffing Considerations***

After evaluating the observations and assessments, the consultant team has determined that the Community Services Department should look to increase FTE in operations and maintenance and administration to operate more effectively in the future. In total, to maintain the high-quality services and parks that Fountain Hills residents enjoy, the Department will need to hire a minimum of 3.5 additional FTEs and up to 6 additional FTEs to maintain existing and new facilities, programs, and services at or above acceptable standards during the next ten years as the master plan is implemented. The suggested positions are listed below.

<b><u>First Minimum 3.5 FTEs Positions Suggested</u></b>	<b><u>Annual Budget Costs with Benefits</u></b>
1 Full Time Groundskeeper (+Benefits)	\$65,969
1 Full Time Park Attendant (+Benefits)	\$49,849
1 FTE Volunteer Coordinator	\$91,287
.5 FTE Community Center Executive/Support	<u>\$32,160</u>
3.5 FTE Total -	\$239,265

<b><u>Suggested Positions to Reach 6 FTEs (in addition to above)</u></b>	
1.5 FTEs Recreation Leader and Site Supervisor	\$63,951
.5 Special Events Programmer	\$24,916
.5 Marketing/Communications Coordinator	<u>\$24,916</u>
6 FTE Total -	\$113,783

Ideal staffing needs would include the following positions in addition to the above:

- 1 Full Time Community Center Building Supervisor (+Benefits)
- 1 FTE Groundskeeper
- 1 FTE Recreation Leader and Site Supervisor
- .5 FTE Marketing/Communications Coordinator (turn above .5 FTE position into 1 Full Time +Benefits)
- .5 FTE Special Events Supervisor (turn above .5 FTE position into 1 Full Time +Benefits)
- .5 FTE Community Center Executive/Support (turn above .5 FTE position into 1 Full Time +Benefits)

### **G. Recreation Programming Analysis**

At the core of the Department’s mission and vision statements is the mandate to provide recreation that inspires personal growth, healthy lifestyles, and a sense of community. The Department aspires to expand and strengthen outdoor experiences and opportunities to contribute to the region’s attractiveness as a place to live, work, and play.

The purpose of this section of the master plan is to determine how well the Department is meeting the recreation needs of Fountain Hills residents. This recreation program analysis will focus on the efficiency and effectiveness of programs, events and activities related to the Department’s mission and vision.

#### ***Current Recreation Program Service Areas***

Programs, events, and activities are offered primarily in eight service areas that collectively provide core recreational and educational programs, camps, classes, activities, and events produced, hosted, staffed, and/or facilitated by the Department. Descriptions of the program service areas and 2019 participation rates are summarized below, with key observations provided at the end of each section.

- Special Events
- Community Events
- Special Interest Programs
- Virtual Programs
- Health and Wellness
- Youth and Teen
- Sports Activities
- Senior Programs and Services



**Table 10: Fountain Hills Program Service Areas**

Program Service Area	Program Type	Age Group
Special Events	Music Festival Turkey Trot Cultural Celebrations 4 <sup>th</sup> of July Celebration	All ages
Community Events	Movies in the Parks Holiday Celebrations Back to School Bash	All ages
Special Interest Programs	Dance Cooking Music Arts STEM	Teens Adults
Virtual Programs	Tours Fitness Arts	All ages
Health and Wellness	Tennis Martial Arts Zumba CrossFit Outdoor Fitness in the Parks	All ages
Youth and Teen	Youth Fitness Excursions Youth Sports Open Gym Preschool Sports	Youth Teens
Sports Activities	Senior Softball	Adults
Senior Programs and Services	Medical Loan Program Support Services (legal, health and support groups) Dancing Arts Social Opportunities (cards, games, bingo, etc.) Enhancement Classes Health and Wellness	Senior Adults

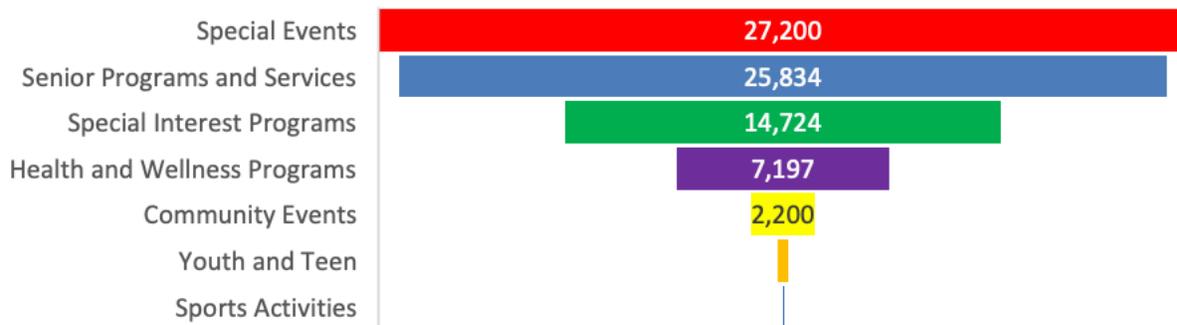
***Participation Trends and Financial Investment in Recreation***

Participation data demonstrates high demand for the activities and events offered by the Department. The Department allocated \$203,898 in general fund subsidy for recreation in 2019. For a town the size of Fountain Hills, this is a minimal investment.

This analysis provides a focus on only the subsidy based on direct costs associated with the programs. The actual subsidy, when full-time staff and other allocated costs are included, is significantly greater. The Department recovered 41% of direct expenses for recreation in fees, charges, and sponsorships. However, the Department recovered only 5% of total operating expenses, (including park operations, administration, etc.) compared to other agencies across the nation, which is 25.9%. See **Table 11, 2019 Recreation Participation and General Fund Subsidy**.

Tracking participation in recreation programs can be challenging due to the differences in programs and activities. For this analysis, a contact hour was used to count each time an individual participated in a particular activity.

**Figure 24: 2019 Participation by Program Service Area**



**Table 11: 2019 Recreation Participation and General Fund Subsidy**

Program Name	Participation	Revenues	Expenses	Total General Fund Subsidy	% General Fund Subsidy	Subsidy per Participant
Special Events	27,200	\$ 72,000	\$ 155,000	\$ 83,000	\$ 0.41	\$ 3.05
Community Events	2,200	\$ 25,698	\$ 25,478	\$ (220)	\$ (0.00)	\$ (0.10)
Special Interest Programs	14,724	\$ 5,078	\$ 15,821	\$ 10,743	\$ 0.05	\$ 0.73
Virtual Programs	Unknown	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Health and Wellness	7,197	\$ 22,461	\$ 6,846	\$ (15,615)	\$ (0.08)	\$ (2.17)
Youth and Teen	377	\$ 4,466	\$ 29,915	\$ 25,449	\$ 0.12	\$ 67.50
Sports Activities	60	\$ 13,199	\$ 52,170	\$ 38,971	\$ 0.19	\$ 649.52
Senior Programs and Services	25,834	\$ -	\$ 61,570	\$ 61,570	\$ 0.30	\$ 2.38
<b>Total</b>	<b>77,592</b>	<b>\$ 142,902.00</b>	<b>\$ 346,800.00</b>	<b>\$ 203,898</b>	<b>\$ 1.00</b>	<b>\$ 2.63</b>

Source: 2020 NRPA Agency Performance Review

The Town does not have a formal scholarship program. Although there is not a significant number of residents who may need or take advantage of a scholarship program, one is recommended to ensure access to recreation programs for all residents.

### Program Locations

Programs were primarily offered at the Fountain Hills Community Center. A few selected activities were offered at Fountain Hills Park.

### Facility Rentals

The town annually completes many facility rentals for community members. In 2018, income from park rentals was \$19,082 and income from Fountain Hills Community Center rentals was \$52,794. Parks, sports courts, sports fields, and space in the community center are locations available for rent. There is not a shortage of rental facilities available to the community.

### Special Events

The Department offers special events that serve to connect the residents of Fountain Hills to each other through social opportunities, cultural celebrations, and family activities. Special events are offered at a minimal cost to promote a sense of community togetherness, and cultural diversity. The Department considers activities with a regional draw to be classified as special events.

The schedule features an Independence Day celebration that draws greater than 12,000 community members, as well as Ballet Under the Stars, a music festival, and a signature event, the Turkey Trot. New to the Town's special events is an Irish Fountain Festival, drawing an impressive crowd - 8,000 community members for the inaugural event in 2018. The Town dedicates over 40% of the annual subsidy allotted to recreation programs on these special events. The immense popularity and efficiency in how the Department offers the events demonstrates a very good return on investment with a minimal subsidy of just over \$3.00 per participant. Collectively, 27,200 people attended a special event in 2019.

### ***Community Events***

On a bit smaller scale than the Department's special events are those intended to connect community members through events that feature holiday celebrations, outdoor entertainment, Noon Year's Eve party, Back to School Bash and an "Eggstravaganza" (spring egg hunt & celebration). In 2019, 2,200 community members participated in these activities. Community events received adequate income to cover all direct costs associated with the activities.

### ***Special Interest Programs***

These programs are intended to enrich the lives of residents through offering classes in dance, art, STEM, (science, technology, engineering, and math), gardening, music, painting, cooking, first aid, CPR, Spanish, creative writing, and others.

Overall, 14,724 community members participated in many different activities. The Department receives approximately \$5,000 per year in revenues from these important programs.

### ***Virtual Programs***

As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the department began offering virtual programs that include tours, yoga, fitness, and arts programs. Measuring success and determining the number of people who take part is easy given access to the appropriate software. It is recommended that the Department work with available IT resources to monitor both the number of people who come to the virtual classes and activities, and the amount of time spent at the activities to properly gauge interest.

### ***Fitness and Wellness Programs***

The Town offers a variety of traditional fitness programs including tennis, cardio, and mindfulness programs such as Tai Chi and meditation, and programs held in the parks. The intent is to provide inexpensive programs that contribute to the individual's sense of wellbeing and create a healthier community. Over 7,000 community member registrations were received for these programs in 2019. Net revenue received was just under \$16,000 which offset the Department's recreation subsidy.

### ***Youth and Teen Programs***

Youth and teen enrichment programs and activities provide a safe and encouraging environment where children develop healthy habits while engaging in activities including camps, physical activities and games designed to support success at any age, skill, or level of ability. A small percentage of Fountain Hills residents are youth, and the department attracted under 400 youth participants in 2019 (See **Table 12**).

This program service area accounted for only 1% of all recreation participation. Given the Town's youth population (9.5%) compared to Arizona (19.6%), it is understandable that the department focuses more on adult and senior activities (See **Table 12**). However, among respondents of the invitation survey (statistically valid +/- 3.9% margin of error), youth and teen programs were among the Town residents' top 5 priorities for the Department (25% of respondents). For many departments, summer camp programs

are a staple offering. In Fountain Hills, the Department offers one two-week session with modest participation of 13 youth attending.

Youth sports are not offered by the Department because the Boys and Girls Club, and various non-profit youth sports providers offer baseball, softball, soccer flag football, Jr. Suns Basketball and Boys and Girls Club Basketball. In 2018, over 1,700 field rentals were utilized by local non-profit sports providers or schools.

**Table 12: Current Population in Fountain Hills by Age**

Variable	Fountain Hills Town, AZ	Arizona	USA
2019 Total Population Age 0-4 (%)	2.51%	6.61%	5.99%
2019 Total Population Age 5-9 (%)	3.14%	6.57%	6.14%
2019 Total Population Age 10-14 (%)	3.88%	6.49%	6.30%
2019 Total Population Age 15-19 (%)	3.88%	6.35%	6.34%
2019 Total Population Age 20-24 (%)	2.79%	6.76%	6.69%
2019 Total Population Age 25-29 (%)	2.93%	7.46%	7.20%
2019 Total Population Age 30-34 (%)	3.03%	6.76%	6.80%
2019 Total Population Age 35-39 (%)	3.79%	6.42%	6.58%
2019 Total Population Age 40-44 (%)	4.55%	5.77%	5.99%
2019 Total Population Age 45-49 (%)	5.78%	5.79%	6.21%
2019 Total Population Age 50-54 (%)	7.12%	5.70%	6.30%
2019 Total Population Age 55-59 (%)	9.22%	6.09%	6.75%
2019 Total Population Age 60-64 (%)	11.55%	5.96%	6.31%
2019 Total Population Age 65-69 (%)	11.90%	5.58%	5.42%
2019 Total Population Age 70-74 (%)	9.48%	4.62%	4.25%
2019 Total Population Age 75-79 (%)	6.29%	3.11%	2.85%
2019 Total Population Age 80-84 (%)	4.16%	1.98%	1.87%
2019 Total Population Age 85+ (%)	4.00%	1.97%	2.02%

**Seniors Enrichment, Services, and Events**

The Senior Program area includes all programs, activities and services designed and offered for adults without an age restriction and is housed at the Fountain Hills Community Center. Senior programs and services accounted for 21,834 participants. The Senior program requires a membership at a cost of \$20.00 for residents or \$30.00 for non-residents. Approximately 1,300 residents purchase memberships to participate.

Programs included social activities, a robust schedule of events and critical services for seniors including legal consultations, home meal deliveries, health education (balance management, BP 101, diabetes management among others), and a variety of enrichment activities featuring writing, arts, poetry, etc. Senior programs are offered by program volunteers, minimizing expenses to provide the services. In 2019-2020, 5,215 meals were delivered to the homes of seniors 80+ years or older and those with restrictive conditions.

## PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The demographic profile, public input received, and the needs assessment suggested a variety of areas for future program development:

### Demographic Profile

- The community has a significant number of people with lower educational attainment (16% less than 9th grade and an additional 15% without a high school diploma) suggesting the need for providing lifelong learning classes and opportunities.
- There is a significant percentage of residents with a disability (27%). In addition to ensuring facilities and programs are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, a focus on inclusive programming is important

### The Public Engagement Process

- Teens require additional programs and services, especially in the summer
- The Department needs to build an indoor recreational space that may include basketball, senior services, and rental opportunities
- The Department needs to increase activities for young working adults - nightlife that could be centered around community services offerings/town offerings
- The Department should offer more events like the Mountain to Fountain race or the White Castle of the past, music concerts and music festivals
- A Town-wide calendar should be kept

### The Needs Assessment

- Special Events/Festivals
- Additional adult classes
- Additional youth and teen classes
- Additional senior events
- Multicultural activities and events
- Aquatics programs

*“More programs for children and teens in town instead of having to go out of town. Swimming, diving, tennis, basketball courts, volleyball programs, foreign language programs, exercise, and science programs.”*

A quote from a survey respondent

## EFFECT OF CHILDREN IN THE HOUSEHOLD ON IMPORTANCE OF CURRENT AND FUTURE OFFERINGS AND FACILITY NEEDS

The responses from the statistically valid invite sample are broken out below by whether children were living in the household or not. Few differences were present between the two groups as shown with the top three items in each group in **Table 13 and 14**.

**Table 13: Most Important Offerings – Invite Same by Children In/Out Of The Household**

Most Important Offerings	With Children in the Household	Without Children in the Household
Fountain Park	4.5 (1)	4.6 (1)
Amenities at Parks	4.5 (1)	4.4 (2)
Trails and Pathways	4.3 (3)	4.3 (3)
Special Events	4.3 (3)	4.3 (3)

**Table 14: Most Important Future Facility Needs – Invite Same by Children In/Out Of The Household**

Most Important Future Facility Needs	With Children in the Household	Without Children in the Household
Farmer’s Market	4.0 (1)	4.1 (1)
New aquatics center/indoor pool	3.8 (2)	N/A
Adventure park amenities (zip lines, natural obstacle course, etc.)	3.6 (3)	N/A
Increase trail and pathway connectivity	3.6 (3)	3.7 (2)
Make improvements and/or renovate existing amenities at parks		3.3 (3)

**Other Recreation Service Providers in Fountain Hills**

Other service providers (both for profit and not for profit) were identified during the planning process.

- Boys and Girls Club
- Fountain Hills Little League
- Fountain Hills Soccer Club
- Fountain Hills Theater
- Fountain Hills Library

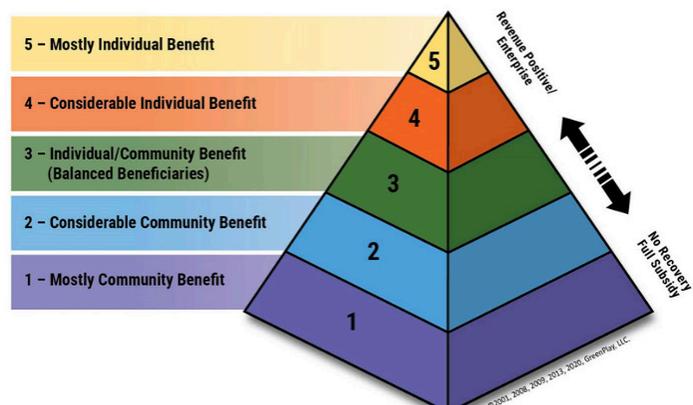
The Town does not have a public swimming pool and residents must rely on swimming pools in Scottsdale, (Cactus Aquatic and Fitness Center, Chaparral Aquatic Center, Eldorado Aquatic and Fitness Center and McDowell Mountain Ranch Aquatic and Fitness Center) approximately 12 -20 miles from the Town. The benefits of low impact aquatic exercise are well documented for adults and seniors that match Fountain Hills’ demographic profile. The Town may want to investigate partnership opportunities with the City of Scottsdale, for greater access to their facilities.

**Resource Allocation and Subsidy Level Policies**

Parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services are essential to improving the lives of the Fountain Hills Community. However, not all facilities, programs, and services are equal. In general, the more a facility, program, or service provides a community benefit to its citizens as a whole, the more that service should be paid for by all citizens with general fund allocation. The more a facility, program, or service provides individual benefits, the more that service should be paid for through user fees. A resource allocation and subsidy philosophy can acknowledge the many known public benefits a healthy parks and recreation system provides to the community. Parks and recreation services are known to promote and contribute to economic development, a sense of safety, and the public’s well-being.

GreenPlay, LLC has long championed such a philosophy demonstrated using the “Pyramid Methodology” shown in **Figure 25**. This methodology develops and implements a refined philosophy and policy based on current best practices as determined by the mission of the agency and categorical service benefits to the community and/or individual. A resource allocation and subsidy philosophy and policy will support the Town of Fountain Hills’ public facilities and service goal of ensuring public services which are cost-effective.

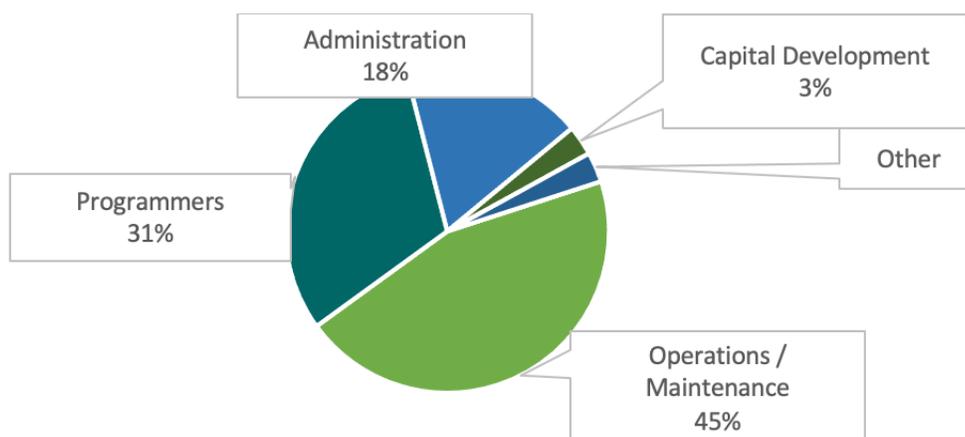
**Figure 25: Pyramid Methodology**



### Resources Dedicated to Recreation

Typical parks and recreation agencies will dedicate approximately 31% of their budgets to programs and events. The Department dedicates 43%, prioritizing affordable programs with minimal or no fees. Budgets have increased for Recreation programs and community center operations since 2016/17 while the budget supporting senior center programs and services has decreased just slightly. Overall, budgets for recreation have increased by 30% since 2016/17 (See **Figure 26**).

**Figure 26: Typical Parks and Recreation Agency Budget Allocation**



**Table 15: Growth of Recreation Expenditures**

Growth of Recreation Expenditures				
Division	FY16-17 Actual	FY17-18 Actual	FY18-19 Revised Budget	FY19-20 Proposed Budget
Recreation	447,385	501,645	616,098	635,552
Community Center Operations	216,560	240,316	293,198	286,622
Senior Services	202,898	195,665	197,875	212,946
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$866,843</b>	<b>\$937,626</b>	<b>\$1,107,171</b>	<b>\$1,135,120</b>

### Recreation Program Effectiveness

The Department currently evaluates program satisfaction by administering surveys after approximately 40% of activities. Provision of a survey at the conclusion of each program and activity is recommended with a goal of surveying a minimum of 75% of all program participants. The Department can also use cancellation rates to help make decisions regarding resource allocation and efficiencies in their marketing. Cancellation rates in 2019 included:

Adult Tennis	0.78
Pet CPR and First Aid	0.5
Preschooler Sports	0.5
Youth Tennis	0.49
STEM Programs	0.38
Open Gym	0.33
Gentle Balancing Yoga	0.27
Qigong	0.25

Currently, performance measures are in place to report program satisfaction and quantity of programs. An expanded evaluation process designed to determine both user satisfaction with each program and activity, and a measure of variety of new programs may serve the Department well. Some sample performance measures with outcome and purpose are in **Table 16**. A minimum of five performance measures, reported quarterly, is recommended.

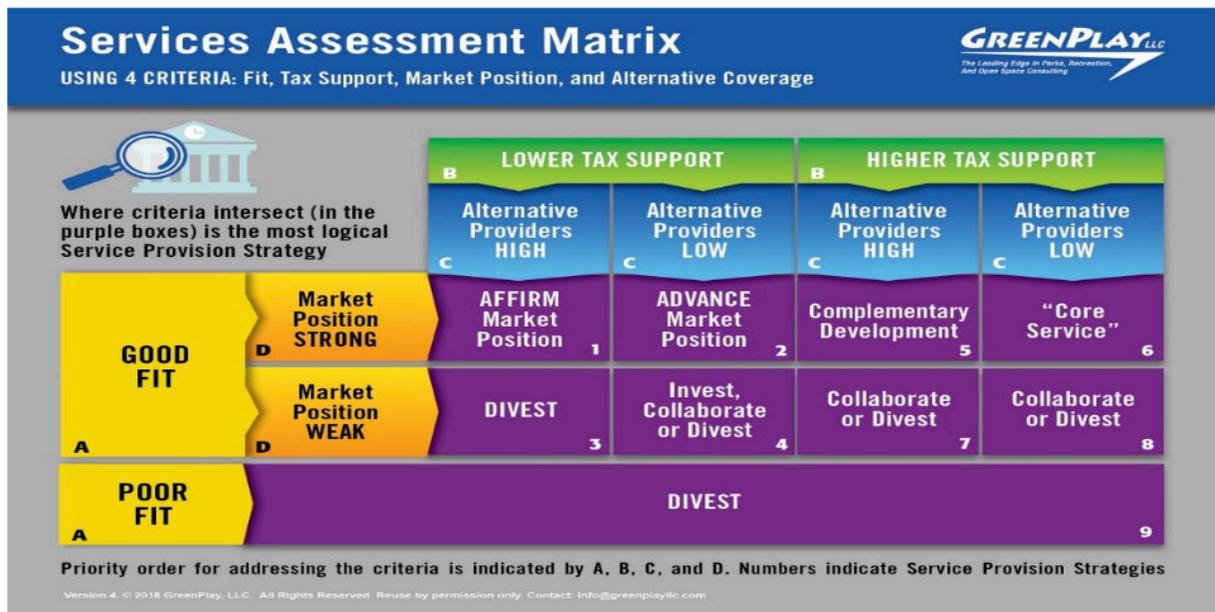
**Table 16: Sample Performance Measures, Purposes, and Outcomes**

Performance Measure	Purpose	Outcome
# of new classes per quarter	Maintain a fresh and novel recreation program	Attract new and returning participants
# of program cancellations	Keep programming from stagnating	Make efficient use of coordination time and marketing budget
Participant satisfaction rates	Maintain and attract advocates, strong, sustainable revenues, and word of mouth marketing	Encourage high quality program delivery
Ongoing Patron Satisfaction surveys	Receive continuing data to improve programs	Survey at least 75% of program participants

### Recreation Program Evaluation

The Department should have a process in place to evaluate the success of current program offerings and criteria to determine if new programs should be instituted or if changes should be made to current programs, including eliminating or suspending existing programs. The Service Assessment Matrix in **Figure 27** provides one tool for evaluating the delivery of the recreation program.

**Figure 27: Service Assessment Matrix**



A few simple questions should be asked of participants and staff about each program:

- Is participation increasing or decreasing? If participation is increasing, then it could mean that the program should be continued. If participation is decreasing, are there steps to take to increase interest through marketing efforts, changes to the time/day of the program, format, or instructor? If not, it may be time to discontinue the program.
- Is there information contained in the participation/staff feedback that can be used to improve the program?
- Are cost recovery goals being met? If not, can costs be reduced or can fees be realistically increased?
- Is there another provider of the program that is more suitable to offer it? If yes, the Department could provide referrals for its customers
- Is this program taking up facility space that could be used for expansion of new or more popular programs in demand by the community?

### Marketing Efforts, Channels, and Opportunities to Increase Program Participation

As service organizations, parks and recreation agencies require a proactive and consistent marketing approach.

Typical agencies use annual reports, press releases, letters to the editors, letters to stakeholders, letters to human service providers, newsletters, presentations to civic groups, paid advertisements, news features, brochures, flyers, information on press kits, displays, demonstrations and electronic communication and social media to publicize events and activities.

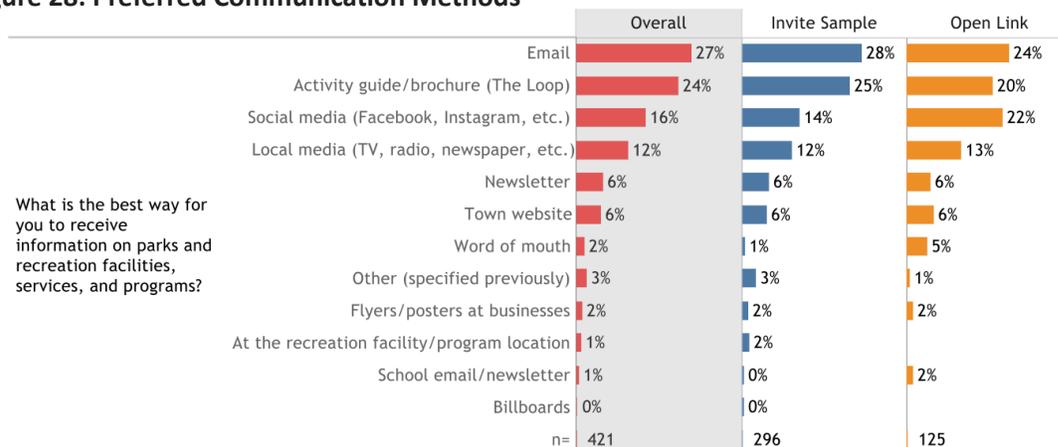
The Department does not have a marketing plan. Each coordinator is responsible for posting their program information on social media. A review of the Department’s Facebook page demonstrates creative, informative, and up to date postings. A detailed marketing plan, including a fee study is recommended.

### COMMUNICATION METHODS TO PROMOTE ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

The needs assessment, randomly invited, survey demonstrated that most residents currently receive information on programs and activities from the activity guide/brochure (62%), followed by word of mouth (46%) and local media (44%). The open link receives information equally from the activity guide and social media (both 54%), followed by word of mouth (47%) and local media (44%).

**Figure 28** shows residents’ preferred methods to receive communication. Residents receive communication from the Department via word of mouth (46%) but prefer other methods.

**Figure 28: Preferred Communication Methods**



There are typically differences in preferred communication methods, based on age and generation. **Figure 29** may assist the Department to focus communication for specific age groups (percentage of preference in each age group).

**Figure 29: Preferred Communication by Age Group**

	Overall	Under 35	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75 or over
Email	29%	18%	32%	24%	27%	37%	29%
Activity guide/brochure (The Loop)	26%	18%	29%	29%	27%	22%	29%
Social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Nextdoor)	14%	18%	25%	2%	20%	10%	5%
Local media (e.g., TV, radio, newspaper)	12%	9%	4%	10%	6%	15%	29%
Town website	6%			10%	8%	6%	3%
Newsletter	5%	18%	4%	15%	1%	4%	3%
At the recreation facility/program location	1%	9%		2%	2%		
Flyers/posters at businesses	1%	9%		2%	1%		
Word of mouth	1%				2%	1%	
Billboards	0%		4%				
School email/newsletter	0%		4%				
n=	296	11	28	41	85	78	38

**Key Program Analysis Findings**

- Aquatics programs are important to the Town as the survey respondents placed an aquatic facility among the top five new facilities and amenities needed over the next 5 to 10 years. No aquatics programs are currently offered by the Department
- A small amount of capacity exists for expansion of activities for youth. Currently, only 1% of the Department’s participation is from youth programs
- There is a need to better delineate between programs desired and those for which actual demand is present
- Special events programs are well received and efficiently run with modest subsidy
- Participation data reflects high interest in sports and fitness programs although Senior Softball is the only sports activity offered
- Health and wellness is a top priority for the department, although only 9% of program participation is in that service area. Health and wellness programs and opportunities, especially in the area of walking programs may be an important focus area for program expansion
- The average fill rate for enrichment classes is 52% and may suggest the Department prioritize other program areas and step away from programs offered by other providers such as the Boys and Girls Club of Fountain Hills
- The Department’s total cost recovery is 5%. There are additional revenue opportunities, based on the Department’s resource allocation philosophy and policy for fees and new programs
- The Department has a consistent way to evaluate the success of current program offerings. Although the recreation team meets after events to talk about ways to improve, they do not always solicit feedback directly from their community members. A performance measure would serve the Department well
- The Department does not have a formal marketing plan. Department marketing efforts should be evaluated. It is likely that the low fill rates for enrichment classes may be related to marketing efforts

## H. Potential Funding Sources

The following section highlights the current financial situation of the Department and identifying potential funding opportunities of which the Town can take advantage, as additional amenities and resources are added that may come about from this planning process.

### Financial Comparison Analysis

Much of the financial assessment consists of comparisons to seven Arizona park and recreation departments and in Durango CO.

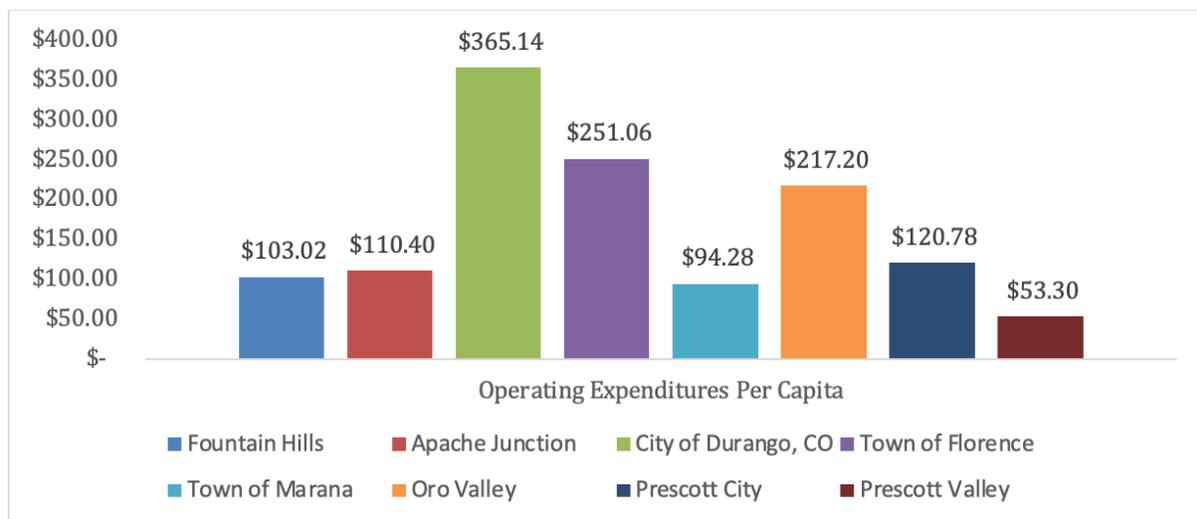
Table 17: Agency Estimated Operating Expenditures

Agency Estimated Operating Expenditures	
Fountain Hills	\$2,595,839
Apache Junction	\$4,467,000
City of Durango, CO	\$7,256,124
Town of Florence	\$2,605,234
Town of Marana	\$4,656,735
Oro Valley	\$10,111,731
Prescott City	\$5,619,434
Prescott Valley	\$2,557,810

### Operating Expenditures

Operating expenditures from current (2019) year were researched from planning and budget documents. These numbers should be used as an estimate only, due to the possibility of errors, data omissions, and changes due to COVID-19. Data from the study indicate that expenditures varied greatly, with majority of peer agencies spending between 2.5 million to 7.3 million annually, except for Oro Valley (\$10.1 million). On a national level, the typical parks and recreation agency with a population between 20,000 to 49,999 residents had expenditures of \$2,885,847 annually. This is equivalent to \$95.34 per capita, similar in comparison to several of the agencies in this study, including Fountain Hills.

Figure 30: Parks & Recreation Operating Expenditures Per Capita



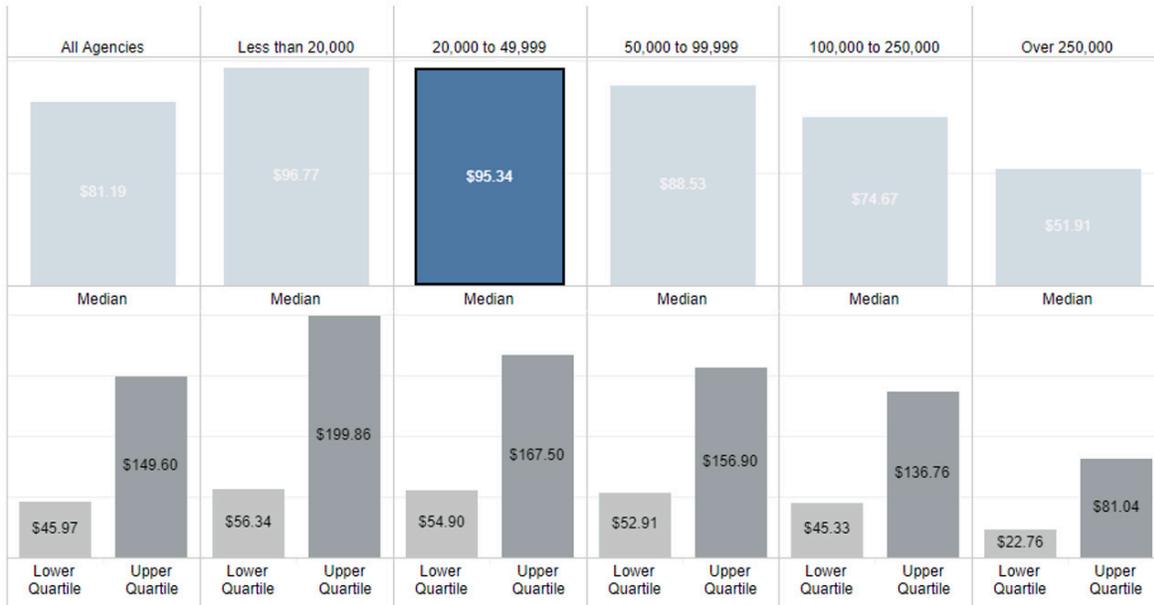
Source: Budget and Planning Documents, 2019 – 2021

**Figure 31: NRPA Agency Performance Review Operating Expenditures Per Capita**

The typical park and recreation agency has annual operating expenses of \$81.19 on a per capita basis.



Click the buttons above to see how the data changes based on selected measures.



[www.NRPA.org/APR](http://www.NRPA.org/APR)

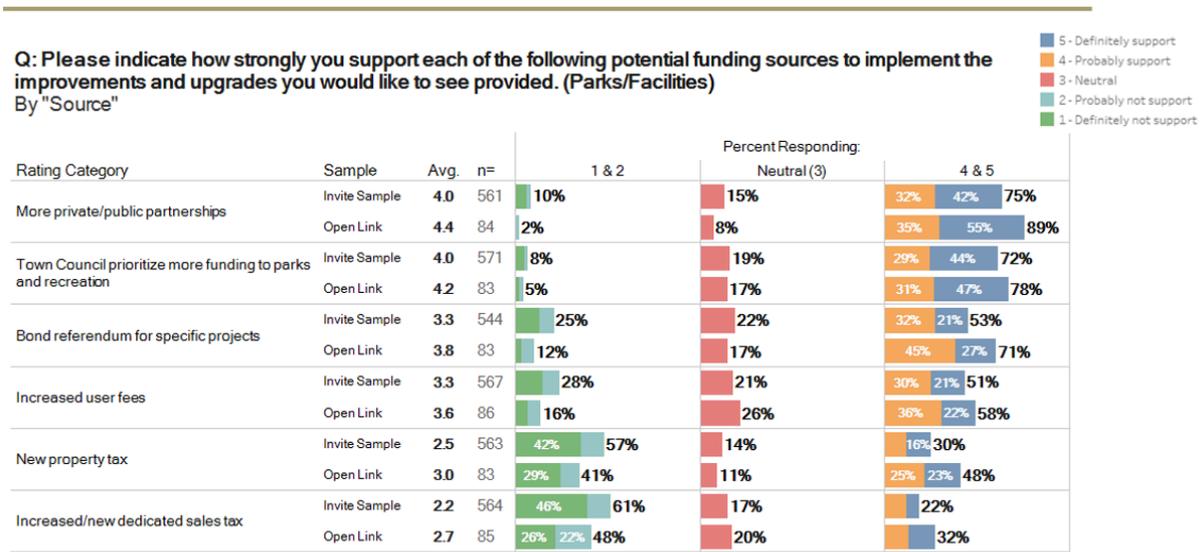
\*Findings from the 2020 Agency Performance Review uses data from Park Metrics, NRPA's park and recreation agency performance benchmarking tool, from 2017-2019.



**Survey Results of Financial Mechanisms**

The survey demonstrates mixed support for various potential funding mechanisms, as seen in **Figure 32**. Of all the funding mechanisms probed, more private/public partnerships and Town Council prioritizing more funding to the Community Services Department have strong support as potential funding sources. Support for a bond referendum or increased user fees is more middle of the road and increased/new sales or property taxes have very limited support.

**Figure 32: Survey Results for Potential Funding Sources**



A component of this plan addressed potential funding through an exercise aimed at identifying current funding sources and potential funding sources for the future. A variety of funding methodologies are in use across the country for ongoing operations/maintenance as well as capital/project related needs. There are also many alternative funding opportunities that have been identified to recognize as long-term potentials.

**Traditional Parks and Recreation Operations and Capital Funding Sources**

There is an assortment of mechanisms that the Town of Fountain Hills can employ to provide services and to make public improvements. The Community Services Department’s operating, and capital development funding typically comes from conventional sources such as a portion of the General Fund. Operating funds are typically capped by legislation; may fluctuate based on the economy, public spending, or assessed valuation; and may not always keep up with inflationary factors. In the case of capital development, “borrowed funds” sunset with the completion of loan repayment and are not available to carry-over or re-invest without voter approval.

**Alternative Parks and Recreation Operations and Capital Funding Sources**

Alternative funding sources include a variety of different or non-conventional public-sector strategies for diversifying the funding base beyond traditional tax-based support. A staff document has been provided to Fountain Hills Community Services Department that includes known industry funding practices, potential sources, and strategies, as compiled by GreenPlay, with definitions and examples for Fountain Hills Community Services Department to use as reference.

The following is a list of funding sources or alternative providers/sources that Fountain Hills Community Services Department identified as a current or potential mechanism for funding.

**These funding sources are CURRENTLY BEING USED OR COULD EASILY BE USED by the Fountain Hills Community Services Department to create the existing budgets for capital and operational**

### **GENERAL OR OPERATING FUND**

Parks and recreation services are typically funded by an agency's General or Operating Fund, which can be comprised of property tax, sales tax, and other compulsory charges levied by a government for the purpose of financing services performed for the common benefit of a community. These funds may also come from resources such as inter-governmental agreements, reimbursements, and interest and may include such revenue sources as franchise taxes, licenses and permits, fees, transfers in, reserves, interest income, and miscellaneous other incomes.

### **DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEES**

Development impact fees are one-time charges imposed on development projects at the time of permit issue to recover capital costs for public facilities needed to serve new developments and the additional residents, employees, and visitors they bring to the community. State laws, with a few minor exceptions, prohibit the use of impact fees for ongoing maintenance or operations costs. Not all states allow the collection of impact fees.

### **DAILY ADMISSION AND ANNUAL PASS SALES OR VEHICLE PERMITS**

Daily and annual pass fees can apply to regional parks and aquatics centers. The consultant team recommends consideration of bulk discount buying of daily admission fees marketed as "monthly, seasonal, 3-month, 6-month, and/or annual passes."

### **REGISTRATION FEES**

This revenue source is for participating in programs, classes, activities, and events which typically require pre-registration to ensure a place. These services may or may not have limited space. These participant fees attempt to recover most if not all the direct expenses and are often revenue positive due to market demand.

### **GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS**

Bonded indebtedness issued with the approval of the electorate for capital improvements and public improvements.

### **REVENUE BONDS**

Bonds used for capital projects that will generate revenue for debt service where fees can be set aside to support repayment of the bond. These are typically issued for water, sewer or drainage charges, and other enterprise type activities.

### **ANNUAL APPROPRIATION/LEASEHOLD FINANCING**

This is a more complex financing structure that requires use of a third party to act as an issuer of the bonds who would construct the facility and retain title until the bonds are retired. For example, an agency can enter into a lease agreement with the third party with annual lease payments equal to the debt service requirements. The bonds issued by the third party are considered less secure than general obligation bonds of an agency and are therefore more costly. Since a separate corporation issues these bonds, they do not impact an agency's debt limitations and do not require a vote. However, they also do not entitle an agency to levy property taxes to service the debt. The annual lease payments must be appropriated from existing revenues.

### **INTER-LOCAL AGREEMENTS**

Contractual relationships could be established between two or more local units of government and/or between a local unit of government and a non-profit organization for the joint usage/development of sports fields, regional parks, or other facilities.

### **PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

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 agency, 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.

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. Potential strategic alliance partnerships where missions run parallel, and mutually beneficial relationships can be fostered and may include the following:

- School Districts
- Boys and Girls Club
- Kiwanis, Optimists, VFWs, Elks, Rotary, and other service and civic organizations
- Chamber of Commerce
- Homeowner or Neighborhood Associations
- Youth Sports Associations
- Adult Sports Associations
- Private alternative providers
- Churches
- Professional Sports Teams/Organizations
- Senior Citizen Groups (AARP, Silver Sneakers)
- Medical Centers or Hospitals
- Neighboring counties/communities

### **CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS**

An agency can solicit this revenue-funding source itself or work with agencies that pursue and use this type of funding. Sponsorships are often used for programs and events where there are greater opportunities for sponsor recognition (greater value to the sponsor).

### **FUNDRAISING**

Many park and recreation agencies have special fundraisers on an annual basis to help cover specific programs and capital projects. This can include selling bricks, benches, pavers, tiles, and commemorative tree plantings, etc.

### **CROWDFUNDING**

Crowdfunding is the practice of funding a project or venture by raising many small amounts of money from many people, typically via the Internet. Park and Recreation agencies are beginning to incorporate crowdfunding efforts alongside traditional fundraising strategies. NRPA has implemented a Fund Your Park crowdfunding platform. It is free to members; donations are tax deductible and you have all the support you need from NRPA staff. Source: Kara Kish, MPA, CPRE, CPSI, article in *Parks and Recreation* magazine, December 2015. [www.NRPA.org](http://www.NRPA.org)

## **GRANTS**

Grants often supplement or match funds that have already been received. For example, grants can be used for program purposes, information technology infrastructure, planning, design, seed money, and construction. Due to their infrequent nature, grants are often used to fund a specific venture and should not be viewed as a continuous source of funding.

### **Facilities and Equipment Grants**

These grants help buy long-lasting physical assets, such as a building. The applicant organization must make the case that the new acquisition will help better serve its clients. Fund providers considering these requests will not only be interested in the applicant's current activities and financial health, but they will also inquire as to the financial and program plans for the next several years. Fund providers do not want allocate resources to an organization or program only to see it shut down in a few years because of poor management.

### **General Purpose or Operating Grants**

When a grant maker gives an operating grant, it can be used to support the general expenses of operating. An operating grant means the fund provider supports the overall mission and trusts that the money will be put to good use. Operating grants are generally much harder to procure than program or support grants.

### **Matching Grants**

Many grant makers will provide funding only on the condition that an amount equal to the size of the grant can be raised from other sources. This type of grant is another means by which foundations can determine the viability of an organization or program.

### **Planning Grants**

When planning a major new program, an agency may need to spend a good deal of time and money conducting research. A planning grant supports this initial project development work, which may include investigating the needs of constituents, consulting with experts in the field, or conducting research and planning activities.

### **Private Grant and Philanthropic Agencies**

Many resources are available which provide information on private grant and philanthropic agency opportunities. A thorough investigation and research on available grants is necessary to ensure mutually compatible interests and to confirm the status of available funding. Examples of publicly accessible resources are summarized below.

- Information on current and archived Federal Register Grant Announcements can be accessed from The Grantsmanship Center (TGCI) on the Internet at: <http://www.tgci.com>.
- Another resource is the Foundation Center's RFP Bulletin Grants Page on Health at: <http://foundationcenter.org>.
- Research [www.ecivis.com](http://www.ecivis.com) for a contract provider of a web-based Grants Locator system for government and foundation grants specifically designed for local government.

### **Program or Support Grants**

A program or support grant is given to support a specific or connected set of activities that typically have a beginning and an end, specific objectives, and predetermined costs. Listed below are some of the most common types of program or support grants.

### **Seed Money or Start-up Grants**

These grants help a new organization or program in its first few years. The idea is to give the new effort a strong push forward, so it can devote its energy early on to setting up programs without worrying constantly about raising money. Such grants are often for more than one year, and frequently decrease in amount each year.

### **LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND**

This fund was reauthorized by Congress in December in 2019. Generally, the funding allocated to states is (through the State and Local Assistance Program) for outdoor recreation land acquisition and facility development is anticipated to rise. Every state runs their State and Local Assistance Program in a slightly unique manner, so we encourage any municipal or county parks personnel interested in LWCF to contact their LWCF State Liaison Officer (typically someone at a state's department of fish and game, environmental protection, or conservation and recreation) for more information.

### **NAMING RIGHTS**

Many agencies 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 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 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. During this time, the sponsor retains the "rights" to have the park, facility, or amenity 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 legal professionals to ensure that the contractual obligation is equitable to all agents and provides remedies to change or cancel the arrangements at any time during the agreement period.

### **PHILANTHROPIC OPPORTUNITIES**

Philanthropy can be defined as the concept of voluntary giving by an individual or group to promote the common good and to 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. If an agency decides to implement a capital fundraising campaign and current resources that could be dedicated to such a venture are limited, it may be recommended that the agency outsource some or most of this task to a non-profit or private agency experienced in managing community-based capital fundraising campaigns. Capital campaigns should be limited to large-scale capital projects that are desired by the community, but for which dedicated funding is not readily available.

### **Foundation/Gifts**

These dollars are received from tax-exempt, non-profit organization. The funds are private donations in promotion of specific causes, activities, or issues. They offer a variety of means to fund capital projects, including capital campaigns, gifts catalogs, fundraisers, endowments, etc.

### **Friends Associations**

These groups are typically formed to raise money for a single purpose that could include a park facility or program that will benefit a particular special interest population or the community.

### **Volunteer Programs/In-Kind Services**

This revenue source is an indirect source in that persons donate time to assist an agency in providing a product or service on an hourly basis. This reduces cost in providing the service, plus it builds advocacy for the system. To manage a volunteer program, an agency typically dedicates a staff member to oversee the program for the entire agency.

### **Adopt-a-Park/Adopt-a-Trail Programs**

Programs such as adopt-a-park may be created with and supported by the residents, businesses, and/or organizations located in the park's vicinity. These programs allow volunteers to actively assist in improving and maintaining parks, related facilities, and the community in which they live.

## **EQUIPMENT RENTAL**

This revenue source is generated from the rental of equipment such as tables and chairs tents, stages, bicycles, roller blades, boogie boards, etc. that are used for recreation purposes.

## **FLEXIBLE FEE STRATEGIES**

This pricing strategy would allow an agency to maximize revenues during peak times and premium sites/ areas with higher fees and to fill in excess capacity during low use times with lower fees to maximize play.

## **FRANCHISE FEE ON CABLE**

This would allow an agency to add a franchise fee on cable designated for parks and recreation. The normal fee is \$1.00 a month or \$12.00 a year per household. Fees usually go toward land acquisition or capital improvements.

## **LIGHTING FEES**

Some agencies charge additional fees for lighting as it applies to leagues, special use sites, and special facilities that allow play after daylight hours. This fee may include utility demand charges.

## **PERCENT-FOR-ART LEGISLATION**

Percent-for-art legislation dedicates a percentage (usually .5 to 2) of publicly funded capital improvement projects (CIP) for art in public places, usually in, on, or adjacent to the project, building, or park being constructed or improved. This guarantees funding for public art projects and that public art projects will be planned with each new improvement. This can also be conceived as an Art-in-the-Park program.

## **PROCESSING/CONVENIENCE FEES**

This is a surcharge or premium placed on electronic transfers of funds, automatic payments, or other conveniences.

## **RECREATION SURCHARGE FEES ON SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT TICKETS, CLASSES, MASTERCARD, VISA**

This fee is a surcharge on top of the regular sports revenue fee or convenience fee for use of MasterCard and Visa. The fee usually is no more than \$5.00 and is usually \$3.00 on all exchanges. The money earned would be used to help pay off the costs of improvements or for operational purposes.

### **SECURITY AND CLEAN-UP FEES**

An agency may charge groups and individuals security and clean-up fees for special events other type of events held at facilities.

### **BOOTH LEASE SPACE**

Some agencies sell booth space to sidewalk vendors in parks or at special events for a flat rate or based on volume of product sold. The booth space can also be used for sporting events and tournaments.

### **FILMING RIGHTS**

Many agencies issue permits so that park sites may be used for commercial film and photography activities. The production company pays a daily fee for the site plus the loss of revenue the agency would incur during use of the community space.

### **LAND SWAPS**

An agency may trade property to improve access or protection of resources. This could include a property gain by the agency for non-payment of taxes or a situation where a developer needs a larger or smaller space to improve its profitability. The agency would typically gain more property for more recreation opportunities in exchange for the land swap.

### **MANUFACTURING PRODUCT TESTING AND DISPLAY OR RESEARCH**

An agency may work with specific manufacturers to test their products in a park, recreation facility, or in a program or service. The agency may test the product under normal conditions and report the results back to the manufacturer. Examples include lighting, playground equipment, tires on vehicles, mowers, irrigation systems, seed & fertilizers, etc. The agency may receive the product for free but must pay for the costs of installation and for tracking results. Research Fees may be charged to allow research to occur on park lands or related to equipment used at Parks. Companies may pay to have their equipment installed and tested to prove durability and user satisfaction. Product Placement fees may also be an option – having a company not only donate their equipment but also pay a fee to have their equipment used at a public facility.

### **SPECIAL USE PERMITS**

Special permits allow individuals to use specific park property for financial gain. The agency receives either a set amount of money or a percentage of the gross service provided.

### **SURPLUS SALE OF EQUIPMENT BY AUCTION**

Agencies often have annual surplus auctions to get rid of old and used equipment, generating additional income on a yearly basis.

**The following funding sources are potential funding opportunities the Fountain Hills Community Services Department WOULD CONSIDER for additional funding of capital and operational**

### **PARK LAND DEDICATION ORDINANCE**

Park land dedication requirements typically state that all residential subdivisions of land (and often commercial), with some exemptions, are to provide for parks by either dedicating land, paying an in-lieu fee (the amounts may be adjusted annually), or a combination of the two.

### **TICKET SALES/ADMISSIONS**

This revenue source is for accessing facilities for self-directed or spectator activities such as splash parks, ballparks, and entertainment activities. Fees may also be assessed for tours, entrance or gate admission, and other activities, which may or may not be self-directed. These user fees help offset operational costs or apply to new projects.

### **FULL FAITH AND CREDIT BONDS**

Bonds that are payable from the general resources of the agency. They are not tied to a specific revenue source, but the payment of principal and interest uses available operating funds.

### **MANAGEMENT OR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS**

Unlike most project grants, a technical assistance grant does not directly support the mission-related activities of an agency. Instead, they support management or administration and the associated fundraising, marketing, and financial management needs.

### **PROGRAM-RELATED INVESTMENTS (PRIS)**

In addition to grants, the Internal Revenue Service allows foundations to make loans—called Program-Related Investments (PRIs)—to nonprofits. PRIs must be for projects that would be eligible for grant support. They are usually made at low or zero interest. PRIs must be paid back to the grant maker. PRIs are often made to organizations involved in building projects.

### **GIFT CATALOGS**

Gift catalogs provide organizations the opportunity to let the community know what their needs are on a yearly basis. The community purchases items from the gift catalog and donates them to an agency.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD PARK WATCH**

To reduce costs associated with vandalism and other crimes against property, an agency may consider a neighborhood park watch program. This program develops community ownership of an agency's facilities.

### **IRREVOCABLE REMAINDER TRUSTS**

These trusts are set up with individuals who typically have more than a million dollars in wealth. They will leave a portion of their wealth to an agency in a trust fund that allows the fund to grow over a period and then is available to use a portion of the interest to support specific park and recreation facilities or programs that are designated by the trustee.

### **RAFFLING**

Some agencies offer annual community raffles, such as purchasing an antique car that can be raffled off in contests.

### **RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM (RTP)**

Establish an RTP as a not-for-profit organization to solicit donations to be used on maintenance and repair projects on recreational trails.

### **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FEES**

These fees are on top of the set user rate for accessing facilities such as sport and tournament venues and are used to support capital improvements that benefit the user of the facility.

**These funding sources are potential funding opportunities the Fountain Hills Community Services Department COULD CONSIDER for additional funding of capital and operational expenditures.**

### **SALES TAX**

This revenue source often funds public park and recreation agencies either partially or fully. Sales tax revenue is very popular in high traffic tourism agencies and with cities, counties, and state parks. Special Districts cannot exact sales taxes, which often calls into question the issue of charging resident and non-resident fee differentials.

### **LOCAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS**

Different from cities that are direct beneficiaries of these funds, Special Districts (or local improvement districts) are the beneficiaries of pass-through funding from cities or counties, which have responsibility for their interests. Special Districts cannot exact or collect the land dedication or the fee-in-lieu on their own.

### **SPECIAL ASSESSMENT BONDS**

These bonds are payable from the proceeds of special assessments such as local improvement districts.

### **ADVERTISING SALES**

Advertising sales are a viable opportunity for revenue through the sale of tasteful and appropriate advertising on items such as program guides, scoreboards, dasher boards, and other visible products or services. This could be a viable strategy in the future if appropriate opportunities present themselves, such as the acquisition of scoreboards, etc. Current sign codes should be reviewed for conflicts or appropriate revisions.

### **LIFE ESTATES**

This revenue source is available when someone wants to leave their property to an agency in exchange for their continued residence on the property until their death. An agency can usually use a portion of the property for park and recreational purposes, and then use all of it after the person's death. This revenue source is very popular for individuals who have a lot of wealth and their estate will be highly taxed at their death. Their benefactors will have to sell their property because of probate costs. Life Estates allow individuals to receive a good yearly tax deduction on their property while leaving property for the community. Agencies benefit because they do not have to pay for the land.

### **MAINTENANCE ENDOWMENTS**

Maintenance Endowments are set up for organizations and individuals to invest in ongoing maintenance improvements, and infrastructure needs of specific/targeted facilities. Endowments retain money from user fees, individual gifts, impact fees, development rights, partnerships, conservation easements, and for wetland mitigations.

### **DOG PARK FEES**

These fees are attached to kennel clubs who pay for the rights to have dog park facilities for their own exclusive use. Fees are on the dogs themselves and/or on the people who take care of other people's dogs.

## **CONCESSION MANAGEMENT**

Concession management is the retail sale or rental of soft goods, hard goods, or consumable items. Through contracting, the agency either receives a percentage of the gross sales or the net revenue dollars from the revenue above direct expenses. Net proceeds are generally more difficult to monitor.

## **MERCHANDISING SALES OR SERVICES**

This revenue source comes from the public or private sector on resale items from gift shops, pro-shops, restaurants, concessions, and coffee shops for either all the sales or a defined percentage of the gross sales. Typically, agencies engage in this type of service as a convenience to their patrons and as a means of enhancing overall operational cost recovery.

## **PRIVATE CONCESSIONAIRES**

Contracts with private sector concessionaires provide resources to operate desirable recreational activities. These services are typically financed, constructed, and operated by a private business or a non-profit organization with additional compensation paid to an agency.

## **LEASEBACKS ON RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

Many agencies do not have adequate capital dollars to build desired revenue-producing facilities. One option is to hire a private investor to build the facility according to the specifications requested with the investment company financing the project. An agency would then lease the property back from the investor over 20+ years. This can be reversed whereby an agency builds the facility and leases to a private management company who then operates the property for a percentage of gross dollars to pay off the construction loans through a subordinate lease.

## **PRIVATE DEVELOPERS**

Developers may lease land through a subordinate lease that pays out a set dollar amount plus a percentage of gross dollars for recreation enhancements. These could include sports complexes and recreation centers.

## **SUBORDINATE EASEMENTS – RECREATION/NATURAL AREA EASEMENTS**

This revenue source is available when an agency allows utility companies, businesses, or individuals to develop some type of an improvement above ground, or below ground, on its property. Subordinate easements are typically arranged over a set period of time, with a set dollar amount that is allocated to the agency on an annual basis.

## **COST SAVING MEASURES**

In addition to aligning cost recovery with goals, charging appropriate fees, and using traditional and alternative funding mechanisms, several cost saving measures can improve the overall cost recovery picture for an agency.

### **Change Maintenance Standards/Practices**

- Add one extra day onto the mowing interval: thus, reducing the amount of mowing in a season.
- Evaluate and determine actual maintenance needs and schedules for upkeep of different facilities and landscape features/types. Based on needs, evaluate resource needs (equipment, staff, etc.) and production rates of staff/equipment for the system's regularly occurring maintenance work and prioritize maintenance program needs, schedules and relevant resource allocations.

- Consider turf management strategies by turf use/wear – high intensity use and maintenance needs (such as sports fields) versus low intensity use areas such as lawns along the edge of a woodlot or roadway – there are usually areas of turf that are regularly maintained because “they have always been mowed”; by changing the maintenance strategy to not mowing or not regularly mowing such areas, less time/resources need to be dedicated to mowing overall.
- Naturalizing areas of lawn where you do not need lawn is a “going green” type of practice that also reduces maintenance needs/costs.
- Buildings/Facilities
  - Evaluate needs and consider in-house versus contracted maintenance workers for different needed services/trades.
  - Standardize equipment, fixtures, and relevant materials.
  - Are some facilities in such disrepair that continuing to throw limited funding on “band-aids” no longer practical?
  - In designing new facilities, are simple sustainability factors being vetted (such as orienting the building to maximize solar gain to reduce lighting and heating costs)?
- Add energy efficient fixtures, low flow water fixtures, eliminate throw away products like paper towels and replace with energy efficient hand dryers.
- Strategically locate trash and recyclable containers to reduce cost of having staff empty these and spend time picking up trash/recyclables that are not properly placed by patrons.
- Reduce cleaning frequency of office spaces and centralize trash and recyclables into one location in employee work areas to save on costs of related to housekeeping.
- Consider having staff complete multiple tasks at the same time – emptying recyclables and trash at the same time as doing rounds or inspections.
- Educate users to better utilize existing facilities and resources to cut down costs – clean up after themselves.
- Equipment and Supplies
  - Purchase better equipment that last longer and requires less maintenance – saving money on the front end does not always result in cost savings overall.
  - Standardize equipment (such as vehicles, grounds equipment and tools, etc.) to increase efficiency in training staff to use it, and to simplify and reduce costs associated with parts inventory and maintenance/repair programs (ex. Mechanic places one order for 10 air filters for 1 type of lawnmower and gets bulk price from one vendor, versus ordering 10 different filters for 10 different mowers, from multiple vendors and keeping track of it all)
  - Consider leasing vehicles or other heavily used equipment - it can be more cost effective for an organization to lease vehicles or equipment and rotate their fleet regularly versus allocating resources to maintain and repair aging fleets of old, well used vehicles/ equipment that have higher likelihood of breakdowns and associated loss of production time.
- Use volunteers to assist with housekeeping and maintenance.
- Solicit in-kind donation of time and services in exchange for maintenance assistance

### **CONTRACT RE-NEGOTIATE OR RE-BID**

At every opportunity, review contracts to assure you are not paying more than you must or are receiving the maximum amount of revenue possible.

### **COST AVOIDANCE**

An agency must maintain a position of not being everything for everyone. It must be driven by the market and stay with its core businesses. By shifting roles away from being a direct provider of facilities, programs, or services, an agency may experience additional savings. This process is referred to as cost

avoidance. The estimated savings could be realized through partnering, outsourcing, or deferring to another provider in the provision of a service and/or facility. One example is purchasing in bulk.

## GREENING TRENDS

### Green Practices

- Use light, water, and motion sensors
- Conduct energy audits
- Update to energy efficient ballasts, motors, appliances
- Develop “Pack It Out” trash program
- Use greywater
- Use solar and wind energy
- Implement green operating practices

Many agencies miss the easiest green practices in their everyday operating procedures and policies. These include administrative procedures, best operating standards, and sustainable stewardship performance measures. Many of the industry best practices outlined below (**Table 18**) may be currently and successfully employed by your agency.

**Table 18: Green Practices Focus Area and Action Steps**

Focus Area	Action Step
<b>Administrative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recycle Office Trash (consolidate trash and recyclables to one common location – reduce cost to empty containers in each office)</li> <li>• Clean offices weekly instead of daily</li> <li>• Go Paperless</li> <li>• Conserve Resources</li> <li>• Flex Scheduling</li> <li>• Virtual Meetings</li> </ul>
<b>Operating Standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preventative Maintenance</li> <li>• Reduce Driving</li> <li>• Recycling in Parks</li> <li>• Eliminate Environmentally Negative Chemicals and Materials</li> <li>• Green Purchasing Policies</li> <li>• LEED® Design</li> <li>• Purchase better equipment and supplies that require less maintenance and are more durable</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainable Stewardship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-analyze and Revised Practices and Standards</li> <li>• Monitor and Report Results</li> <li>• Lead by Example</li> <li>• Public Education - agencies should lead by example teaching the public a little bit about what green practices is and how they might be able to incorporate some of the same features (maybe raingardens or LED lighting) in their own home to help conserve our shared natural resources.</li> <li>• Incorporate Stewardship Principles in all Park and Recreation Services</li> <li>• Seek Available Grant Funding and Initiative Awards</li> </ul>

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### III. FACILITY AND ASSET INVENTORY



The Town of Fountain Hills Parks and Recreation under the auspices of the Community Services Department provides a broad spectrum of programs and facilities for the residents of Fountain Hills. For a Town of its size, its budget allocations, and limited staff, Fountain Hills provides outstanding facilities and services for its residents. Encompassing over 135 acres of formal parks, miles of trails, nearly 1,000 acres of preserve land, and numerous community facilities including the Community Center, the recreation outlets available to town residents and visitors are substantial.

The Town’s Park facilities are currently comprised of 5 formal parks. The largest, Fountain Park, has become an Arizona icon and attracts residents as well as visitors from around the Phoenix metropolitan area and beyond. While Fountain Park and as an extension, the Avenue Linear Park, serve as the iconic anchor to the system, the remaining three community focused parks (Desert Vista Park, Golden Eagle Park, & Four Peaks Park) provide a wide array of facilities and amenities for residents. In addition, the Community Center provides critical & much beloved programs and outreach for the community. Fountain Hills is fortunate to be surrounded by dramatic scenery. The two major trailheads within the town, the Golden Eagle Trailhead and Adero Canyon Trailhead, offer trail access to the McDowell Mountains and provide first-class trailhead facilities for hikers & bikers.

The inventory and subsequent analysis of the Town’s existing park system is an instrumental component to ongoing facility maintenance and future park planning. By understanding where the park system’s facilities and amenities fall within their life cycle and how residents are served or underserved by these community amenities the Town can appropriately and efficiently allocate resources to fully utilize existing facilities and for future system expansion. The analysis and commentary outlined herein are not intended to outline specific solutions or methodologies to mitigate deficiencies, but to provide objective observations and recommendations on the current condition and character of facilities and suggestions for improvement. Further detailed analysis will be required and should be performed on any specific implementation plans or strategies moving forward.

**Park Facility/Asset Size:**

<b>Park</b>	<b>Size</b>
Desert Vista Park	12 Acres
Desert Sonoran Botanical Garden	8 Acres
Fountain Park	65 Acres
Four Peaks Park	16 Acres
Golden Eagle Park	25 Acres
Avenue Linear Park	3 Acres
Community Center	3.75 Acres
Golden Eagle Trailhead	.4 Acres
Adero Canyon Trailhead	2 Acres
<b>Total</b>	<b>135.2 Acres</b>

**COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT**  
*“To enrich and provide an active quality of life for all residents and visitors through pro-active community engagement, resolute stewardship of amenities and open spaces, and enhancement of the overall health and well-being of our town.”*

## A. Existing Inventory Summary

In summary, the overall character, condition, and maintenance regimens of the parks and open space system are outstanding, especially considering limited budgets and staffing. The services and facilities provided to residents are remarkable and a result of caring and knowledgeable staff committed to providing exceptional services for the Town of Fountain Hills residents.

While the overall character and quality of the facilities within the system are very high, there are areas or items in need of attention that should be addressed, although none are urgent for repair or replacement. Specific areas for improvement are noted within each park assessment, but universal or overarching areas of improvement to consider are outlined below.

### 1. CONNECTIVITY, PLANNING, & ACCESS

Due to historic development patterns of the Town, ideal connectivity is challenging, but attention to convenient and safe pedestrian and bike access to open space is critical, especially to attract younger families to the community. As a recognized industry target, residents should have access to open space or a park within a 5-10-minute walk of their home. Private communities, especially when gated, often make optimal park location planning challenging because they can bisect critical connections. Where possible, open space trail networks, delineated on-street pedestrian zones, and/or private/public partnerships may help to mitigate these challenges and provide broader non-vehicular park access. Currently park distribution is primarily focused in the Central area of Town and may not provide easy access or use to residents in outlying areas or communities. However, future park locations have been preliminarily indicated to better serve these currently underserved areas.

### 2. BUILT ENVIRONMENT

For the size of the community, the park system provides a wide variety of recreation outlets and facilities for residents of all ages. Generally, all facilities are well maintained, clean, and safe. No major deficiencies or problems were noted. Items outlined for repair or replacement are generally a result of their age and normal wear and tear. Fortunately, because no elements or assets need immediate repair or replacement from a public safety standpoint, with the possible exception of the Cactus Wren Ramada at Desert Vista Park, this allows the Town to prioritize and plan for improvement programs over time.

There is a somewhat universal theme of trash receptacles being outdated, damaged, and noted for replacement throughout the system. While it is often a challenge to justify the expense of quality receptacles, these are items that are the ‘finishing touches’ of successful open space. Subpar, inadequate, or damaged accessories can make a park seem subtly less attractive and of a lower quality.

Thankfully, these concerns are easy to remedy by replacing fixtures when and where possible over time. When looking to replace park accessories, consider cost savings of bulk purchases of uniform materials. Uniformity and consistency are hallmarks of high-quality open space. Similarly, numerous elements within the park system require replacement or repair due to faded paint/powder coat, or rust. Examples of this are the light posts and metalwork throughout Golden Eagle Park. When selecting new fixtures or paint colors, consider a more contemporary palette of colors. This is an easy and inexpensive way to give a park a fresh ‘updated’ look as a result of regular maintenance.

Lastly, as noted the parks within the Town offer a wide variety of activities within a small number of parks in a very efficient use of open space and resources. However, the Community Center seems to struggle to be all things to all people. While a product of its own success, to a certain degree this creates an image, branding, and operations conundrum. Who is it for? Who uses it most? What is the public’s

perception and how does that work for or against its success? What demographics are missing? Do we need to attract other demographics? What programs or services help the Center to be economically viable and can we expand upon those without alienating less profitable programs? None of these questions are easily answered but are important to consider. As demographics in the Town change, different demands will be put on the facility that it may not be best equipped to provide. Specific facilities to consider for the future that are currently not sufficiently provided by the Community Center or any other facilities within the Town are dedicated fitness facilities, public pool(s), and a teen/youth center. As the Community Center matures, it should evolve with the community to stay relevant. This is true both programatically and aesthetically. In the market today, community facilities are leaning much more toward casual, interactive, and social spaces than their predecessors. The Town's Community Center, in many ways is a relic of a different time and function of space. When considering improvements to the lobby and facility in general, explore materials, colors, and accessories that help to liven and brighten the space. Consider transforming the lobby into a casual yet active 'living room' that can become an amenity in and of itself. Creative and comfortable seating, computers, charging stations, table games, reading nooks, etc. are a vast departure from the sterile pre and post function space it is today and would breathe new life into the facility and may even help to attract new patrons.

### **3. LANDSCAPE, PLANTS, AND SHADE**

Throughout the park system, landscape treatments have reached maturity and need a refresh. Generally, within the landscape industry in Arizona, landscape treatments and irrigation systems should go through a major overhaul/refresh every 15-20 years. Much of the Town's facilities are past this threshold. At the end of this timeframe, we see some plants that are past their prime, many plants that have died and were never replaced, and trees that have matured and create new microclimates beneath them. All of these conditions are evident within the Town's Parks. It is very likely that the Town's own Parks do not meet the Town Development Standards for minimum plant requirements new development must adhere to. Consider implementation of a long-term re-vegetation/landscape plan. If the Town implements new landscape programs, consider the following:

- A comprehensive 'Shade Masterplan' that explores the current state of shaded open space showing deficiencies and providing insight on areas for improvement. Similarly, consider implementation of 'shade zones' throughout the parks and parking lots that cluster trees around key nodes of activity to utilize shade as efficiently as possible.
- The use of 'broadleaf trees' in select revegetation/planting programs. Native trees have their place in the landscape, but native or adapted broadleaf trees like elm, ash, etc. provide significantly more shade and often outlive native trees especially in turf.
- Consider partnering with a nursery in 'contract growing.' Because of the large quantities of material needed, nurseries often 'contract grow' allowing clients to purchase smaller plant material in advance while it matures at the nursery for future use in the field. With large quantities required, this can save significant capital.
- Consider renovations with 'desert pavement' where applicable and appropriate. This desert natural surface is less maintenance, radiates less heat, and functions better for erosion control. Decomposed granite has its place in more 'refined' areas, but in peripheral areas or for parks that warrant a more natural appearance, desert pavement is an excellent choice.
- As substantial improvement/re-planting plans are considered, major irrigation system overhauls may be warranted. Many of the parks' irrigation systems are likely towards the end of their lifespan and often require significantly more maintenance than a new system does. Regularly fixing old systems consumes scarce staffing resources and prevents them from being used elsewhere.

**Table 19: Inventory Summary**

INVENTORY SUMMARY										
PARK FACILITY/ASSET	TOTAL	DESERT SONORAN BOTANICAL GARDEN	DESERT VISTA PARK	FOUR PEAKS PARK	FOUNTAIN PARK	GOLDEN EAGLE PARK	AVENUE LINEAR PARK	COMMUNITY CENTER	GOLDEN EAGLE TRAILHEAD	ADERO CANYON TRAILHEAD
Amphitheater	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Baseball/Softball Fields	6	-	-	2	-	4	-	-	-	-
Basketball Courts	3	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	-
Bridge (Pedestrian)	2	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
Buildings	8	-	1	1	4	1	-	1	-	-
Disc Golf Course (Holes)	20	-	-	-	20	-	-	-	-	-
Dog Park	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Entry Monument Signage	9	-	-	1	3	3	-	1	-	1
Horseshoe Pit	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Interpretive Signage	13	1	-	-	4	-	-	8	-	-
Sign Kiosk	11	1	-	-	5	3	-	-	1	1
Lake	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Veteran's Memorial	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Multi-Use Sports Field	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Passive Lawn/Recreation	14	-	1	2	6	2	2	1	-	-
Parking Lot	10	1	0	3	2	3	-	1	-	-
Ramada (Picnic Tables)	14	-	4	1	5	3	-	-	-	1
Shade Structure (Benches)	16	-	3	1	-	4	8	-	-	-
Playground 2-5	5	-	1	2	1	1	-	-	-	-
Playground 5+	5	-	1	2	1	1	-	-	-	-
Specialty Play	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Restrooms (Men's & Women's)	16	-	2	2	6	2	-	3	1	-
Splash Pad	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Skate Park	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sand Volleyball	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Tennis Court	6	-	-	2	-	4	-	-	-	-
Water Features	7	-	-	-	1	-	6	-	-	-
Trash Receptacles	155	-	29	20	34	52	9	3	4	4
Recycle	24	-	3	1	20	-	-	-	-	-
Benches	106	2	26	2	44	6	8	18	-	-
Picnic Tables	85	-	9	8	15	28	16	9	-	-
Drinking Fountains	29	-	8	3	8	8	2	-	-	-
Pet Stations	21	-	7	5	3	3	2	-	-	1
Bike Racks	46	-	0	9	7	19	8	1	-	2
Grill	12	-	3	1	3	5	-	-	-	-
Light Bollards	291	-	-	-	278	-	-	-	-	13
Soccer Goals	6	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bleachers	29	-	-	6	-	23	-	-	-	-
Dugout Benches	15	-	-	7	-	8	-	-	-	-
Concrete Pots (Large)	14	-	-	-	14	-	-	-	-	-
Sculptures	53+	-	-	-	33	-	12+	8+	-	-
Wayfinding Signage	8	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	4	-
Shower	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Little Library' Kiosk	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Scoreboard	4	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-
Exercise Equipment	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Fit' Trail Trailhead	2	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
Walking Track/Trails	5.7	0.6	0.9	0.6	2.0	1.2	0.4	-	-	-

## B. Asset Evaluation

Understanding the overall quality of the facilities and amenities within the Town's park system is a critical step in evaluating the current standing of the Town's facilities and for projecting future improvement timelines, strategies, and budgets. By examining how each park fits within the overall system and where each facility falls in their respective life cycle, department management/staff can evaluate and prioritize park improvement projects and generate informed strategies across the entire system.

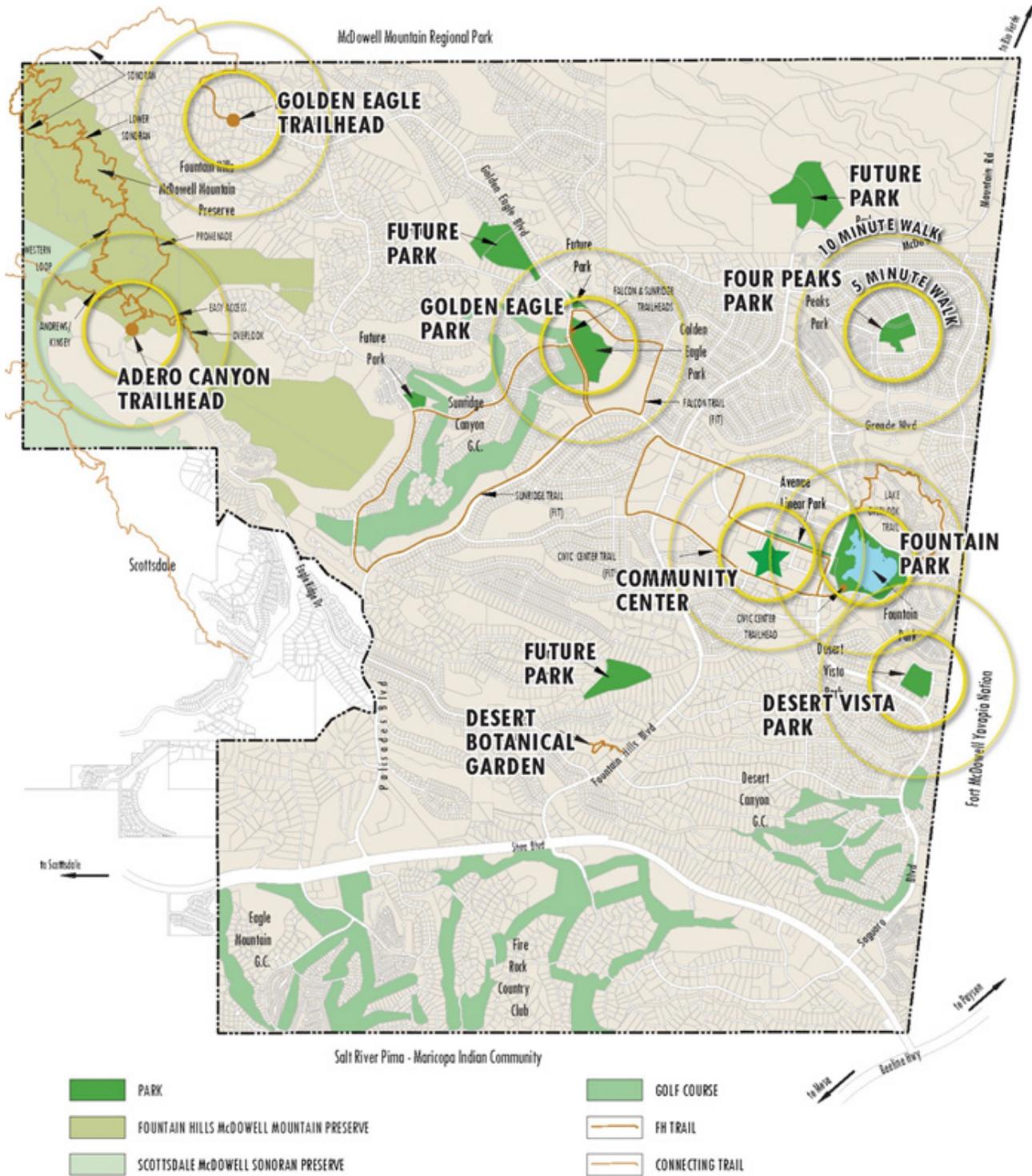
The quality of each park and associated facilities were assessed as a part of an on-site inventory. During the inventory, facility age, size, connectivity, use, and overall condition were assessed, photographed, and documented. This assessment summarizes our in-field findings.

For each park facility outlined, a score is assigned to the amenities and components within it. These scores are qualitative in nature and are determined based on the observations of the personnel conducting the field inventory and compared to opinions formulated during the user surveys. The following scoring system was used:

- (0) Poor – The asset or facility is not functional or able to function regarding program intended and should be prioritized for immediate improvement.
- (1) Below Expectations – The asset or facility does not meet the expectation in terms of intended function or existing condition. This can be influenced by equipment's age and intensity of use. Items that score a 1 may be a priority for improvement programs.
- (2) Meeting expectations – The asset is functional and in average condition. Elements scoring a "2", may either need no renovation or improvement, or were deemed sufficient, but could benefit from small improvement as a part of ongoing maintenance.
- (3) Exceeding expectations – The asset is of high level of quality, function and well above the baseline program requirements.

These categories were evaluated based on the individual asset's condition as opposed to the overall park system during the inventory. If the amenity and/or facility was noted to exist in a condition well below that of similar equipment within other parks, then it was noted as such. In addition, for each Park a summarized assessment is outlined providing more detail on specific elements within each facility.

Figure 33: Park Location Map





**DESERT SONORAN BOTANICAL GARDEN**

Size - 8 Acres (approx.)

Location - Fountain Hills Boulevard

Fountain Hills Botanical Garden was founded by Jane Haynes in 1975 as a wildlife preserve and garden. The Garden is 8 acres with elevation from 1696 to 1800 feet. It is maintained by the volunteers of Fountain Hills Botanical Garden Society.

On December 14, 2006, the Society and the Town of Fountain Hills agreed to restore the original garden trail as an educational and hiking destination. Sonoran Desert plants are identified along the half mile meandering trail that has been constructed on desert slopes. The trail allows for interesting views of rock formations, desert flora, animal life and abandoned P-Bar Ranch campsite next to the April 25, 1941 constructed dam wall.

**Table 20: Desert Sonoran Botanical Garden Asset Evaluation**

<b>DESERT SONORAN BOTANICAL GARDEN</b>			
<b>FACILITY / AMENITY / SITE ELEMENT</b>	<b>QUANTITY</b>	<b>CONDITION</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
Entry Monument Signage	1	3	Excellent Condition
Interpretive Signage	1	2	Normal wear
Sign Kiosk	1	3	New Signage
Parking Lot	1	3	Excellent condition
Benches	2	2	Normal wear
Walking Track / Trails	.6	3	Excellent condition

Figure 34: Desert Sonoran Botanical Garden Context Map

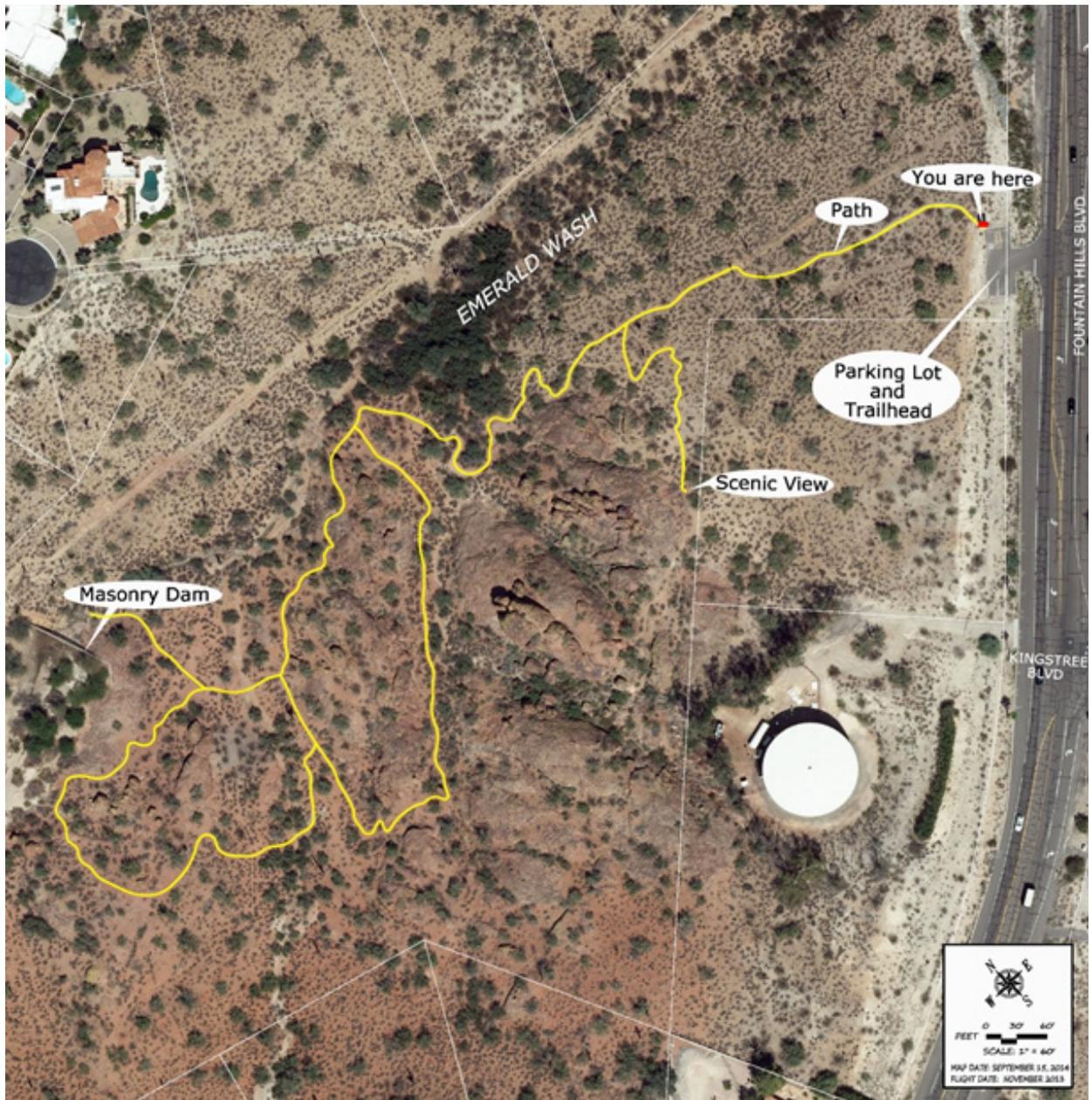
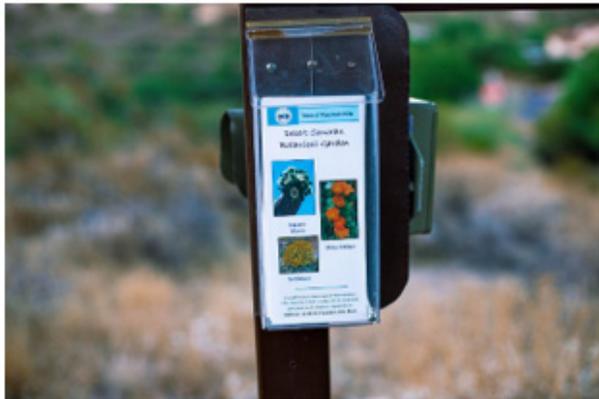


Figure 35: Desert Sonoran Botanical Garden Photographic Inventory



## **DESERT VISTA PARK**

Size - 12 Acres (approx.)

Location – 11800 N Desert Vista

Desert Vista Park is a well-used and unique neighborhood park in that it contains a dog park and skate park. Desert Vista likely attracts more teens than other parks because of the skate park. Although Desert Vista Park shows its age, it is generally well maintained though some elements noted need repair, replacement, or are nearing the end of their lifespan. There are some pedestrian connectivity issues with the park that are unfortunately somewhat unavoidable due to its physical location. The park is primarily bordered by non-residential uses and isolated from adjacent residential by a wash and major roadway (N. Saguaro Blvd) with no sidewalks or crosswalks. Because of this disconnect, most patrons must either bike or drive. To encourage pedestrians and biking, adequate bike lanes along N Panorama Drive and pedestrian crossings are encouraged as well as additional park bike racks as noted. Sidewalks are located from N. Panorama Drive to the park. Measuring at over a five minute walk to N. Panorama Drive would likely prove to be too far for most pedestrians.

Highest priority/most notable items to consider:

- Resurface skatepark
- New planting/plants throughout park interior
- Shade trees at skatepark and playground to provide western shade
- Cactus Wren ramada has structural damage to one of the supportive columns and should be repaired replaced immediately.
- Dog park fabric shade structures in need of repair/renovation/replacement. Steel support and support joints rusted.
- Dog park temporary fencing on retaining walls should be replaced with permanent solution.
- Park would benefit from bike racks at skatepark and near playground/dog park.
- Ramp railings throughout need repainted (chipping, fading, rust)
- Plantings & trees needed at alley parking
- Minor erosion at skatepark
- Some broken concrete blocks at bathroom planters
- Top dress decomposed granite – consider replacing with ‘desert pavement’ for erosion control and to minimize maintenance.
- Consider addition of skatepark lighting to extend usable hours.

**Table 21: Desert Vista Park Asset Evaluation**

DESERT VISTA PARK			
FACILITY / AMENITY / SITE ELEMENT	QUANTITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Buildings	1	2	Restroom / maintenance
Dog Park	1	2	1 large dog / 1 small dog
Multi-Use Sports Field	3	2	Set up with soccer goals - not painted or striped.
Passive Lawn / Recreation	1	2	Small lawn west of skatepark
Parking Lot	0		All parking off alley or on-street
Ramada (Picnic Tables)	4	2*	Generally, in good condition, but Cactus Wren ramada has substantial cracks in column
Shade Structure (Benches)	3	2*	Structure at bathroom building in good condition, but dog park fabric structures rusting and need paint or replaced
Playground 2-5	1	3	1 structure (same playground) - excellent condition, needs western shade
Playground 5+	1	3	1 structure (same playground) - excellent condition, needs western shade
Restrooms (Men's & Women's)	2	3	1 Men's / 1 Women's - New fixtures recently installed, structure good, metalwork needs paint within 5 years, new planting needed
Skate Park	1	1	Fencing needs repainted, surfaces cracking and likely need resurfaced soon, needs western shade
Trash Cans	29	1	Some inconsistency in model and quality. Older cans function, but don't reflect quality of the park. Can in dog park bent / damaged
Recycle	3	2	
Benches	26	2	Some inconsistency in model and quality. Older benches likely need refinished / recoated in next 5 years.
Picnic Tables	9	2	Could use more picnic tables in dog park. People often bring items they need to set down somewhere.
Drinking Fountains	8	2	2 mounted on restroom in new condition, freestanding (6) throughout need repainted - rusted and/or faded
Pet Stations	7	2	
Bike Racks	0		No bike racks noticed. Recommend installing at skate park, playground / restroom building
Grill	3	2	
Soccer Goals	6	3	Temporary / movable - excellent condition
Walking Track / Trails	.94 mi	2	Generally good condition - would benefit from loop completion / connection at Tioga Dr

Figure 36: Desert Vista Park Map

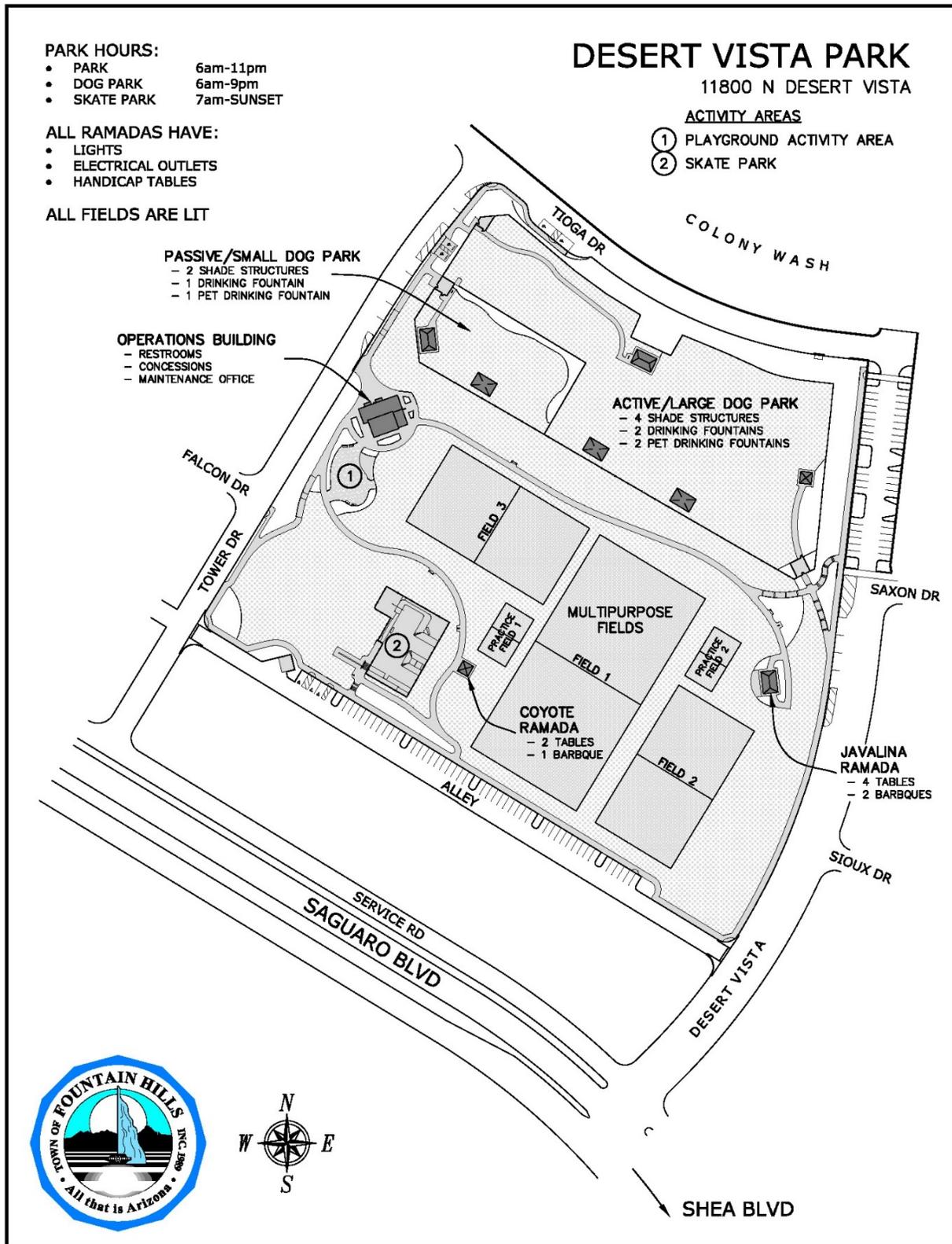


Figure 37: Desert Vista Park Photographic Inventory





## **FOUNTAIN PARK**

Size - 65 Acres (approximate)  
Location – 12925 N Saguaro Blvd.

Fountain Park is the largest and most well-known park in the Town of Fountain Hills park system. Visitors from throughout the Phoenix Metro area and beyond visit this Arizona icon. Primarily a passive recreation park with two miles of walking trails around the lake, Fountain Park also has playgrounds, a musical play area, splash pad, and disc golf course. In many ways, the park is the defining and unifying feature of Fountain Hills. Fountain Park serves as a community hub, offering not just recreation, but outlets for civic programs like movies, concerts, and community events.

While the park in general lives up to its standing in the community in terms of facility assets and quality, there are some areas in need of improvement outlined below. General improvements to consider include updates to plant material in sparsely planted areas and addition of more strategically placed shade trees primarily around the perimeter walkway. Consider the use of ‘shade zones’ that efficiently cluster trees around seating to provide shade throughout the day. Note, any new plant material should consider high salinity of non-potable irrigation. In comparison to other parks in the system, it appears that the park would benefit from more shaded bench seating both on and off the perimeter walk. New benches as well as existing seating (where applicable) should be paired with a tree planting program to provide shade zones at seating areas that can also shade the sidewalk. Many benches are currently in full sun which likely limits their use and usability. Consider placement of some benches and/or picnic tables under mature trees.

Other more specific areas of improvement largely fall within the activity core of the park. These elements are currently in relatively good condition and highly used but may be toward the end of their life cycle and in comparison, to other parks within the system, are due for update/replacement. The splash pad, though recently repainted, has worn components that are masked by the new paint. The components and play elements are somewhat dated and likely due for replacement in the coming years. The splash pad's surfacing is likely in need of a full resurfacing. There is inconsistency, chipping, cracking, and flaking due to improper surface material application. The playgrounds are in good condition and heavily used, but in comparison to other parks in the system, are simplistic and outdated. As the premier park in the Town, it seems that the playground should be equally impressive.

While there is room for improvement, there are many superb elements to the park. Two new restroom facilities have been recently completed and are a welcome addition. They are well situated and feature drinking fountains and pet fountains. With the added density in the Town's core, the park is walkable for some residents, but due to the adjacent single-family development patterns, Fountain Park is primarily a destination park to which people drive. However, proximity to the Town core including restaurants, shopping, and services as well as connectivity through the linear park do make the Town Center as a whole, a destination to which people can drive, bike, or walk and spend a significant amount of time in on foot. Fountain Park serves as an important anchor to draw residents and visitors to the Town Center for recreation or civic events.

#### Highest priority/most notable items to consider

- Shade – consider the use of 'shade zones' of clustered trees near walkways and around seating areas/benches and disc golf tees
- Consider the use of salt tolerant, broadleaf deciduous shade trees
- Sign kiosks need repainted/refinished – rust and faded paint visible
- Splash pad needs resurfaced, and equipment replaced
- Playgrounds are outdated and inferior to other parks in the system
- Additional trash receptacles needed at East parking lot
- Consider additional shaded seating areas/benches throughout



**Table 22: Fountain Park Asset Evaluation**

FOUNTAIN PARK			
FACILITY / AMENITY / SITE ELEMENT	QUANTITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Amphitheater	1	2	Some concrete staining / efflorescence, some electrical outlets rusted, and need replaced
Buildings	5	3	Includes 3 restroom buildings and pumphouses
Disc Golf Course (Holes)	20	3	Excellent course. Tees and baskets in excellent condition. Consider periodic shade trees at tee boxes.
Entry Monument Signage	3	2	Original entry signs showing signs of wear and cracking
Interpretive Signage	4	2	Metalwork likely needs repainted in next few years
Sign Kiosk	5	1	Structures rusted & faded. Paint / repairs needed
Lake	1	2	29 acres. Staff expressed challenges with ongoing maintenance and operations primarily due to salt content
Veteran's Memorial	1	2	Consists of memorial sculptures, memorial wall, paver plaza.
Passive Lawn / Recreation	6	2	Delineation/count from TOFH Park map, no physical delineation within park. Lake is surrounded by 35 acres of lawn on all sides
Parking Lot	2	2	Parking within two 'park' lots as well as the Plaza at Fountainside lot and on-street parking along Panorama Dr and El Lago Blvd
Ramada (Picnic Tables)	5	3	
Playground 2-5	1	1	Playgrounds are adequate and in good condition, in comparison to other parks seem dated and relatively small. Consider replacing
Playground 5+	1	2	Playgrounds are adequate and in good condition, but in comparison to other parks seem dated and relatively small. Consider replacing
Specialty Play	1	2	Music playground
Restrooms (Men's & Women's)	6	3	3 men's / 3 women's
Splash Pad	1	1	Splash Pad functions adequately and has been recently painted, structures dated and rusted under paint. Surface chipping / cracking. Consider resurfacing in next few years
Water Features	1	3	Primary central fountain.
Trash Cans	34	1	Most cans need replaced and not complementary with the quality of park facility
Recycle	20	2	
Benches	44	3	Many benches in full sun. Consider tree planting program to plant 1-2 shade trees at bench locations.
Picnic Tables	15	3	
Drinking Fountains	8	3	New drinking fountains at restroom facilities. Includes two pet fountains at bathroom facilities. No freestanding fountains, however restroom drinking fountains conveniently located and well situated.
Pet Stations	3	2	More pet stations would be convenient for pet owners and help ensure pet cleanup
Bike Racks	7	2	5 loop (7 bike) racks per structure count. Total bikes - 49. Need paint in next few years.
Grill	3	2	At shade ramadas
Light Bollards	278	2	Bollards all matching and in decent shape, but will paint starting to fade and will likely need paint in next few years
Concrete Pots (Large)	14	1	At amphitheater, some cracking, one needs replaced.
Sculptures	33	3	Mostly on western half of park but scattered throughout.
Fit Trail Trailhead	1	3	
Walking Track / Trails	2 mi.	3	Includes perimeter sidewalk along N. Saguaro Blvd where it abuts the park. Excludes roadside sidewalks along commercial frontage

Figure 38: Fountain Park Map

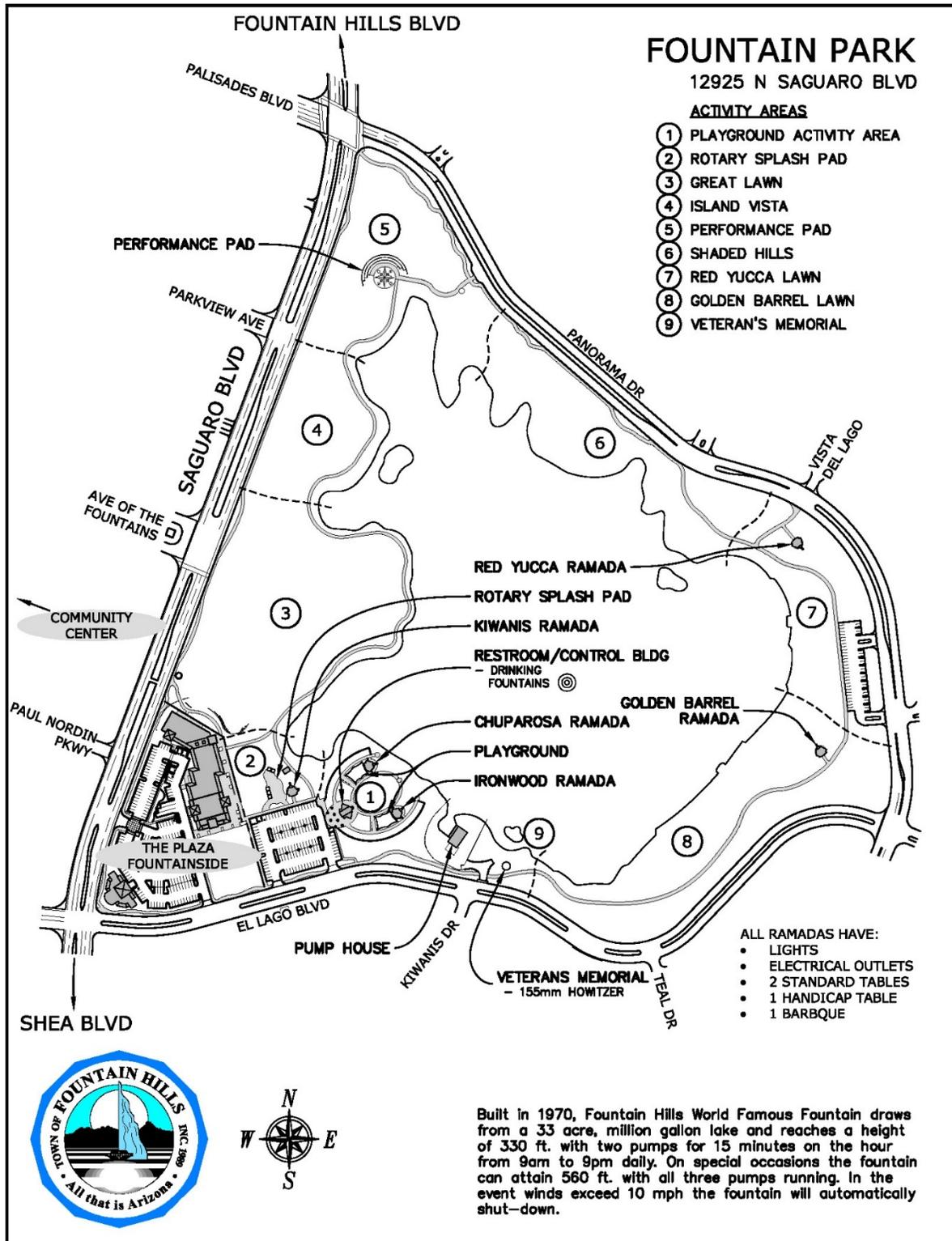


Figure 39: Fountain Park Photographic Inventory







## **FOUR PEAKS PARK**

Size - 16 Acres (approx.)

Location – 14789 N Del Cambre Ave

Four Peaks Park is a neighborhood park primarily serving the Northeast corner of town. The Park shares a site with the Boys and Girls Club and repurposed elementary school. Many program elements of the park including playgrounds, tennis, and basketball have been newly installed or recently renovated and attract a wide array of patrons of all ages. While the park provides a variety of activities, elements are spread out and the 'main' portion of the park and restroom facilities are across a pedestrian bridge over a natural wash. This separation can be an asset for sense of privacy or when providing multiple events, but it also disconnects park elements and only allows for use of one park element at a time. This disconnect is likely most evident for families with a broad age gap in children. The disconnect could be partially mitigated by installing new wayfinding signage to familiarize patrons with the varying park elements. The newly installed playgrounds are superb but would benefit from shade structures, additional seating, trees, landscape, and a bathroom facility. The old school playgrounds, according to staff are likely to be removed/replaced. We agree with this assessment. The fixtures are outdated and in need of refinishing or replacing. The shade structures covering the old playgrounds need new fabric and structure paint. Consider replacing with alternate program elements in lieu of new playgrounds. Walking paths are primarily newly installed and would provide a substantial walking loop with the addition of new sidewalk along the southern park edge. Consider completing the sidewalk loop. Lastly, the connection of the Boys and Girls Club is a significant and mutually beneficial asset, but the connection of the two properties could be improved.

Of all parks within the Town of Fountain Hills Park System, Four Peaks Park has the best connectivity to adjacent residential development and truly functions as a 'neighborhood park.' The 'pedestrian shed' (5-10 min walk) of the park captures more homes than other parks and provides access from all sides. The only limitation for accessibility is the lack of sidewalks in adjacent neighborhoods. To encourage safer and more usable pedestrian access, consider addition of crosswalks, signage, and striping.

Highest priority/most notable items to consider

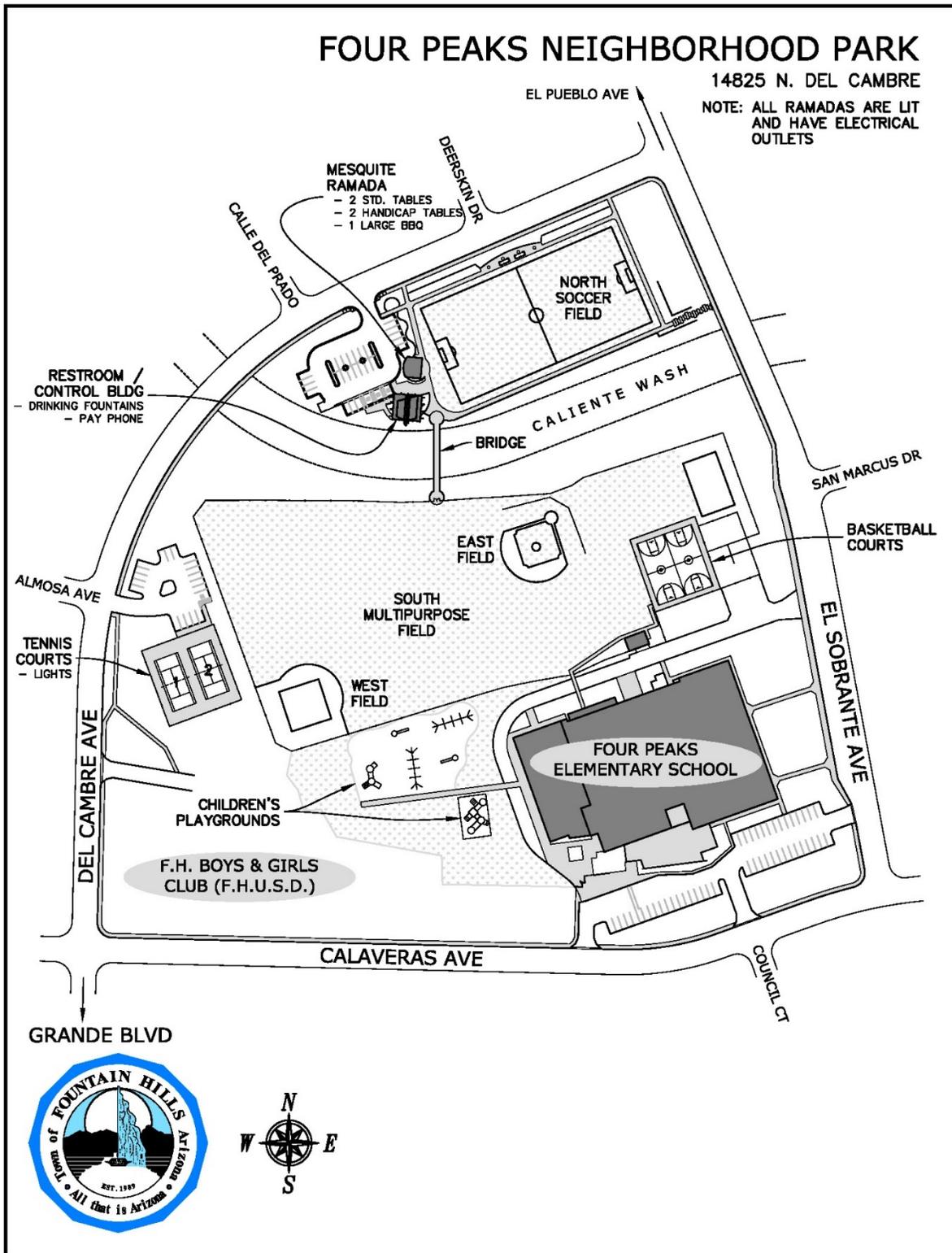
- Signage at West and East parking
- Complete sidewalk loop on Southern edge
- Wayfinding sign package
- Replace old playgrounds with new park program elements
- Shade trees and landscape on southern park section.
- Pave playground parking lot
- Bathroom at new playgrounds
- New plantings needed at southern half of park and parking lots
- Shade trees at southern half of park and parking lots
- Pathway lighting at southern half would extend usability and provide safety

- Shade needed at new playgrounds – structures or trees
- Fencing at Boys and Girls Club stairs damaged
- New/additional benches needed around new playgrounds and North lawn to help separate patron groups.
- Consider new landscape at bridge nodes
- Some pavers and curbing broken/buckled at bridge nodes

**Table 23: Four Peaks Park Asset Evaluation**

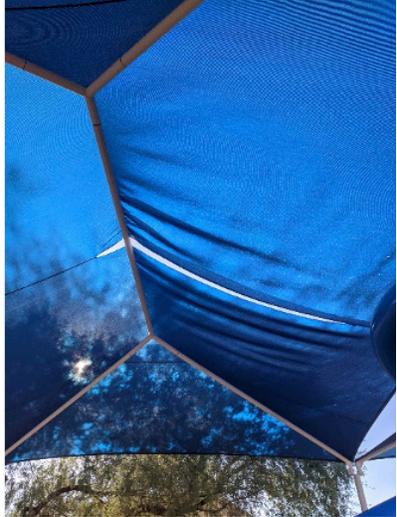
FOUR PEAKS PARK			
FACILITY / AMENITY / SITE ELEMENT	QUANTITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Baseball / Softball Fields	2	2	Fields, backstop, dugouts, & seating in good / very good condition
Basketball Courts	1	3	3 hoops
Bridge (Pedestrian)	1	3	Minor graffiti. Because bridge is rusted steel, graffiti maintenance is challenging.
Buildings	1	3	Restroom & maintenance.
Entry Monument Signage	1	3	Consider additional signage at East and West entrances
Interpretive Signage	0		Consider new wayfinding signage. Park elements are spread out - patrons and programming may benefit from signage
Passive Lawn / Recreation	2	2	1 'formal lawn' at North parcel & small lawn at new playground
Parking Lot	4	1	North Lot excellent. West lot needs landscape and signage. East lot needs signage, paving, and landscape.
Ramada (Picnic Tables)	1	2	Structure sound and in good condition, stone veneer 'foundation' walls missing stone veneer pieces. Consider repair / replace missing stone.
Shade Structure (Benches)	1	3	Structure within tennis courts
Playground 2-5	2	3*	New playground structures excellent. Old playground structures adjacent to old school dated and need replaced / removed. Shade structures in need of immediate repair
Playground 5+	2	3*	New playground structures excellent. Old playground structures adjacent to school dated and need replaced / removed. Shade structures in need of immediate repair
Restrooms (Men's & Women's)	2	3	1 Men's - 1 Women's. Consider additional restroom facility at new playgrounds
Tennis Court	2	3	Newly improved fencing. Surfaces in good condition
Trash Cans	20	1	Need replaced. Cans functional, but are old, dated, damaged and do not compliment the overall quality of the park
Recycle	1	2	Consider additional Recycle bins
Benches	2	3	2 within tennis courts. Seat walls function as benches in places, but no traditional benches in park - consider additional
Picnic Tables	8	3	
Drinking Fountains	3	3	2 within restroom facility. Consider additional at tennis / basketball and new playgrounds
Pet Stations	5	2	
Bike Racks	9	2	Consider additional at tennis / basketball and new playgrounds
Grill	1	3	
Bleachers	6	3	
Dugout Benches	7	2	
Walking Track / Trails	.6 mi	2	Generally good condition. Newly installed 10' sidewalks on southern parcel. Consider completing walking loop on Southern Park edge. Some buckling at El Sobrante Ave stairs

Figure 40: Four Peaks Park Map



**Figure 41: Four Peaks Photographic Inventory**







## **GOLDEN EAGLE PARK**

Size - 25 Acres (approx.)

Location – 15900 E Golden Eagle Blvd

Golden Eagle Park is primarily an active recreation park and the Western most of the Town parks. The park's facilities and amenities draw users from throughout the community and beyond. The facilities are generally in very good condition and most major elements need only superficial repair if any.

Golden Eagle Park consists of two playgrounds (2-5 yr. & 5 yr. +) in excellent condition with 'like new' and unique play equipment. The three shade structures in and adjacent to the playgrounds are in very good condition. The four tennis courts are in very good condition and their fencing has been recently repainted. The largest draw to the park are the 4 baseball/softball fields. The fields and associated facilities (benches, dugouts, shade structures, etc.) are in excellent condition and provide a very high-quality amenity for local league or tournament play. The volleyball court sand is new and netting and associated structure appear to be in very good condition, though the uprights may need paint in the next few years. The portion of wall and fencing removed from the rear of the volleyball courts should be replaced. It seems there is a very large quantity of trash cans for the size of the park. Generally, trash receptacles are old and need to be replaced. If replacing, consider less receptacles strategically located throughout. Planting is sparse and needs to be revamped, especially at the Southern Parking lot. Numerous trees are stunted and/or damaged. Consider replacement with canopy shade trees and additional plant material.

Of items that need attention, the pedestrian lights are the most critical. Most fixtures are rusted through at the base and should be replaced. Baseball/softball scoreboards need to be fully repainted and re-lettered. The ramadas and restroom/control building are in relatively good condition, but all metalwork will need repainted soon and porcelain bathroom fixtures may warrant replacement with stainless steel fixtures in the future. Similarly, most metalwork/metal components throughout the park need repainted. These include railings, bike racks, free-standing drinking fountains, and the pedestrian bridge. Consider a more contemporary color palette. Picnic tables at the Ocotillo and Saguaro Ramadas are haphazardly placed and need replaced soon. Consider periodic reorganization of picnic tables as part of the maintenance regime.

Although the park is technically centrally located within the Town's boundaries, its pedestrian accessibility is limited due to adjacent development patterns and topography. Trail connectivity does exist through the Falcon and Sunridge FIT trails, although their accessibility to the park for casual use is likely limited due to the travel distance required. In comparison to other parks in the system that lack trail access, this 'regional' pedestrian access is an asset.

Highest priority/most notable items to consider

- Replace light posts throughout
- South Parking lot needs new trees, parking stripes, and plant material
- Metalwork throughout needs repainted. Ramp railings, ramadas, bike racks, and bathroom building included.
- Repaint free-standing drinking fountains
- Sidewalk around outside of Field #1 has damaged edges and minor buckling near the wash.
- Areas between Fields 1 and 2 need fill dirt adjacent to walkway
- Consider landscape installation around perimeter loop walkway
- Debris in wash east of Field 4 should be cleaned up.
- Replace picnic tables
- Pedestrian bridge sidewalls buckling due to thin metal stock
- Refinish/replace horseshoe pit
- Replace rear wall of sand volleyball and paint uprights
- Volleyball approach ramp has chipping/flaking cement topping. Consider refinishing.
- Replace trash receptacles (less than current amount)
- Consider addition of removable bollards between south parking lot and Saguaro Ramada to prevent driving onto the lawn.

**Table 24: Golden Eagle Asset Evaluation**

<b>GOLDEN EAGLE PARK</b>			
<b>FACILITY / AMENITY / SITE ELEMENT</b>	<b>QUANTITY</b>	<b>CONDITION</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
Baseball / Softball Fields	4	3	Fields (infield and outfield) are in excellent condition
Basketball Courts	2	2	2 courts 4 hoops
Bridge (Pedestrian)	1	2	Side railings and wall panels need paint. Side wall metal panels wavy and may need replacing in next few years.
Buildings	1	2	Restrooms, concessions, storage, offices, multi-purpose room. Green metalwork needs paint
Entry Monument Signage	3	3	
Horseshoe Pit	1	1	In need of significant repair, possible backstop and sand replacement
Sign Kiosk	3	1	Wood kiosk at far NW corner of park beyond Field #1. Structure in decent condition - broken 'glass' should be replaced
Passive Lawn / Recreation	2	2	South lawn at Saguaro Ramada and at Ocotillo Ramada
Parking Lot	3	2	Parking lots need landscape / trees. South lot would benefit from removable bollards between parking and saguaro ramada lawn to prevent vehicles on lawn.
Ramada (Picnic Tables)	3	2	Ramadass need paint / some fading & rust showing. May consider more contemporary paint colors
Shade Structure (Benches)	4	3	Newly installed between fields 2,3, & 4
Playground 2-5	1	3	1 primary structure & 4 ancillary. Shade structures in good condition
Playground 5+	1	3*	3 structures. 3 shade structures (2 over play & 1 over seating) - 1 structure needs repaired / replaced
Restrooms (Men's & Women's)	2	2	1 Men's / 1 Women's - porcelain fixtures in decent condition
Sand Volleyball	2	3	New sand. Uprights need paint & removed section of back wall fencing / walls need replaced. Some damage to ramp surface entering court.
Tennis Court	4	3	Fencing recently painted
Trash Cans	52	1	Should be replaced. Functional as is, but not complimentary to the overall quality of the park
Benches	6	2	Numerous other seating options and seat walls
Picnic Tables	28	1	Many should be replaced soon. Placement in ramadas is haphazard and disorganized. May need periodic reorganization
Drinking Fountains	8	2*	2 at building recently replaced. Freestanding fountains need repainted or replaced
Pet Stations	3	2	
Bike Racks	19	2	Each loop can hold two bikes (38 total bikes). All need repainted
Grill	5	2	
Wayfinding Signage	4	2	Likely need paint soon. One 'fit' sign included
Bleachers	23	3	
Shower	1	1	
Dugout Benches	8	3	
Little Library' Kiosk	1	2	
Scoreboard	4	1	Need paint and re-lettering. Unsure of functionality
Exercise Equipment	1	2	Pullup bars on far Northwest corner of field 1
Fit' Trail Trailhead	1	3	
Walking Track / Trails	1.2 mi	1	Sidewalks generally in good condition. There is some buckling and edge damage along wash corridor behind and east of field #1

Figure 42: Golden Eagle Park Map

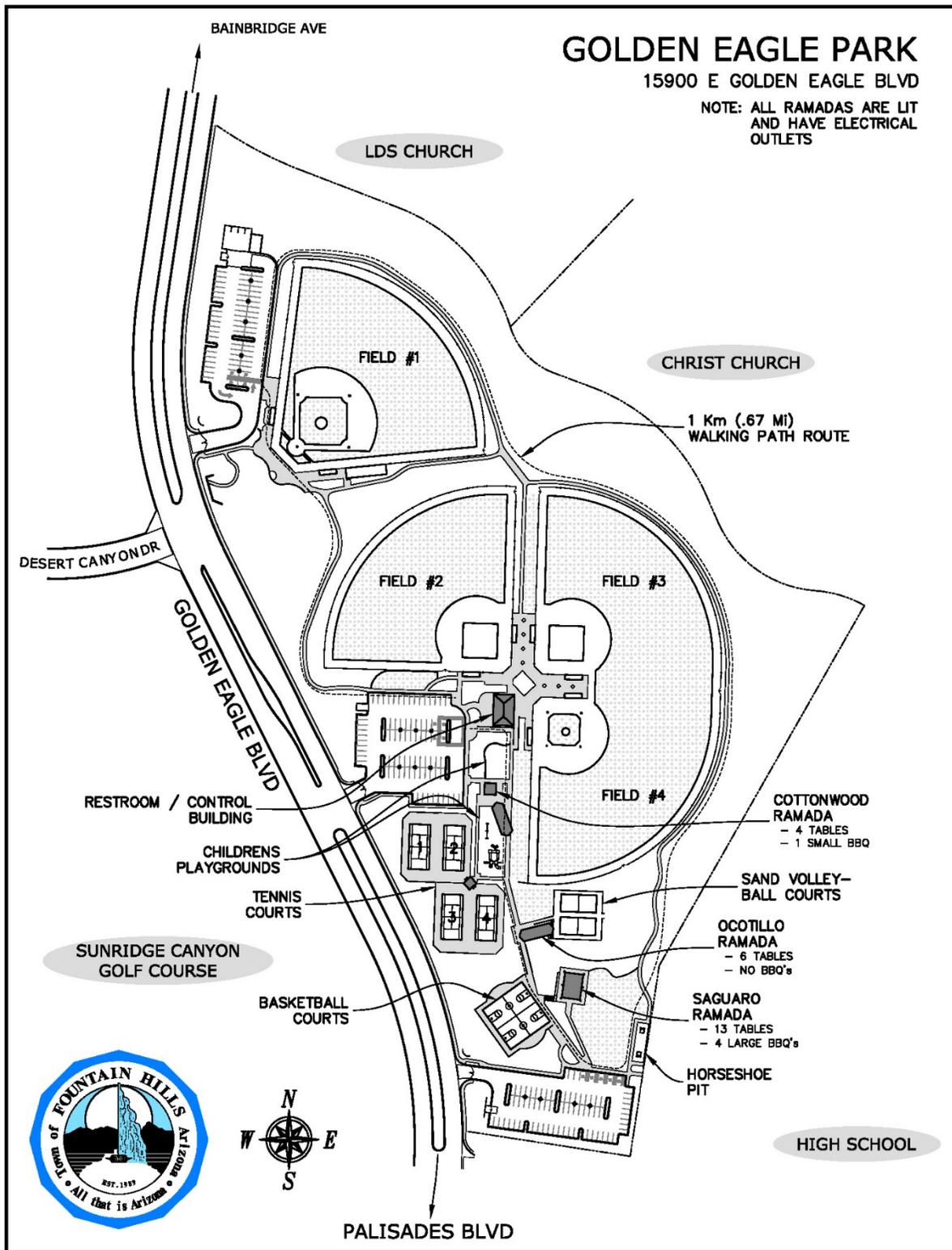


Figure 43: Golden Eagle Photographic Inventory





## **AVENUE LINEAR PARK**

Size - 3 Acres (approx.)

Location – E. Avenue of the Fountains, west of Fountain Park

The Avenue Linear Park is a boulevard median park within the E. Avenue of the Fountains Right of Way. The Park/Open Space is perfectly and strategically situated adjacent to mixed residential and commercial development and has a direct axial relationship with the fountain at Fountain Park. Stretching at over 1/3rd of a mile, this proximity to development and to Fountain Park greatly complement open space like the Avenue Linear Park and ensure regular use within the Town Center as passive recreation, a connectivity corridor, or potentially as civic event space.

The park is in excellent condition and serves its purpose and patrons perfectly for its intended use. It provides varied experiences and seating areas, a progression of 'outdoor rooms,' a series of fountains, and ample shade along pathways and for seating areas. Water features, light posts, sculptures, specialty site walls, and turf are all in very good condition.

Overall, minimal intervention is needed within the park. Paving is generally in good condition. There are small areas of paver buckling where pavers are next to Sissoo trees. These will likely get progressively worse and become tripping hazards with time. Electrical outlets, critical for event use and especially within turf areas, are rusting and should be replaced. The primary area of concern and in need of improvement are the tensile shade structures. Shade structure fabric is in good condition, but the metal structures themselves need refinishing. It is unknown whether the structures have an alternate finish and are intended to patina, or if they have powder coat that has failed. In either case, structures are faded appear in need of refinishing. Similarly, benches throughout will soon need to be refinished.

Due to the proximity to the adjacent higher density residential, consider additional pet stations to grassy areas in the park. It is assumed that if the residents of the adjacent developments have dogs, they regularly use the park for walks and may need additional stations. Generally, the park is well shaded in comparison to other parks within the system but consider additional shade trees at Morgan Plaza adjacent to the Fountain Park. The plaza feels somewhat exposed and would benefit from shaded tree canopy.

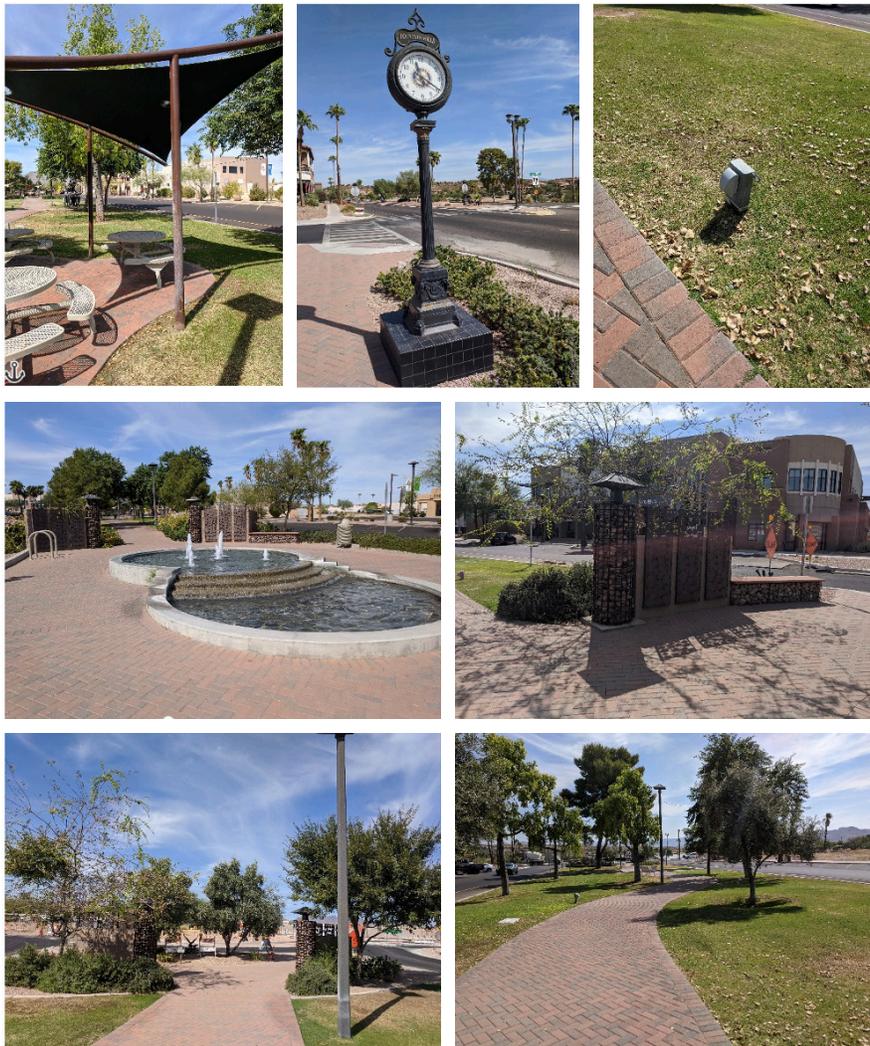
Highest priority/most notable items to consider

- Replace ground level electrical outlets
- Refinish shade structures
- Refinish benches
- Additional pet stations
- Addition of trees at far Eastern plaza adjacent to Fountain Park

**Table 25: Avenue Linear Park Asset Evaluation**

AVENUE LINEAR PARK			
FACILITY / AMENITY / SITE ELEMENT	QUANTITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Passive Lawn / Recreation	2	2	Lawn throughout each block
Shade Structure (Benches)	8	2	Powder coat is failing and needs to be resurfaced / recoated
Water Features	6	3	6 features in 5 plazas. One feature is split in two.
Trash Cans	9	2	Excellent condition
Benches	8	2	Benches in need of fresh powder coat / paint
Picnic Tables	16	3	
Drinking Fountains	2	3	
Pet Stations	2	2	
Bike Racks	8	3	
Walking Track / Trails	.35 mi.	2	Generally walks and plazas are in excellent condition, some buckling of pavers at Sissoo trees

**Figure 44: Avenue Linear Park Photographic Inventory**





**COMMUNITY CENTER**

Size – 3.75 Acres (approx./incl. partial parking lot and Centennial Circle)/30.000 sq.ft. facility  
Location – 13001 N La Montana Dr

The Town of Fountain Hills Community Center is an exceedingly important and well utilized facility for the residents of Fountain Hills. At around 30,000 sq. ft., with 4 large partitioned ballrooms, 7 classrooms, a commercial catering kitchen, and numerous offices, the Community Center is a hub for many services and programming provided by the Town. While providing services for a broad spectrum of the population’s needs is critical, this ‘all things to all people’ can be somewhat problematic and demands much from the facility and staff alike. Flexibility in facility program spaces such as classrooms is critical for offering so many varying programs, but limits specific uses and functions that may be desired by residents. An example of this challenge for the facility are exercise or fitness class ‘studio’ space. Currently, because there is no designated ‘fitness studio’ space, fitness classes must use classroom space that may not be best suited for fitness activities or classes. These ‘specific use’ facilities and/or programming are not currently provided by the Community Center but are likely desired by residents. These ‘specific use’ facilities residents may desire include true fitness facilities with exercise equipment, a public pool providing opportunities for water fitness, lap swimming, and swim lessons, and a teen center, among others.

At 20 years old, the facility itself is in relatively good condition though is showing its age. The exterior has been recently repainted. The interiors are in relatively good condition but show their age more in terms of ‘style’ and color palette than quality or condition. Paint, fixtures, floor coverings, furniture, etc. are all in generally good condition but look dated. An updated paint palette, refinished or replaced furnishings, and new floor coverings would help the facility to feel less dated, brighter, and potentially more inviting to a broader audience. The lobby and lounge feel more like a ‘conference center’ or even hospital lobby than a community center. Consider addition of amenities/elements in the lobby to liven up the space. The lobby should function more as an active space for pre and post function, or as an amenity itself. Consider expanding the lounge programming into the lobby space with tables and chairs, games, seating areas, reading nooks, etc.

As uses expand and demands on the facility increase, one opportunity to expand the Community Center, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, is to provide more outdoor spaces conducive to programmed events or outdoor classes. Centennial Circle can function for larger events, but smaller outdoor, shaded ‘classrooms’ would help alleviate demands on the building when weather permits.

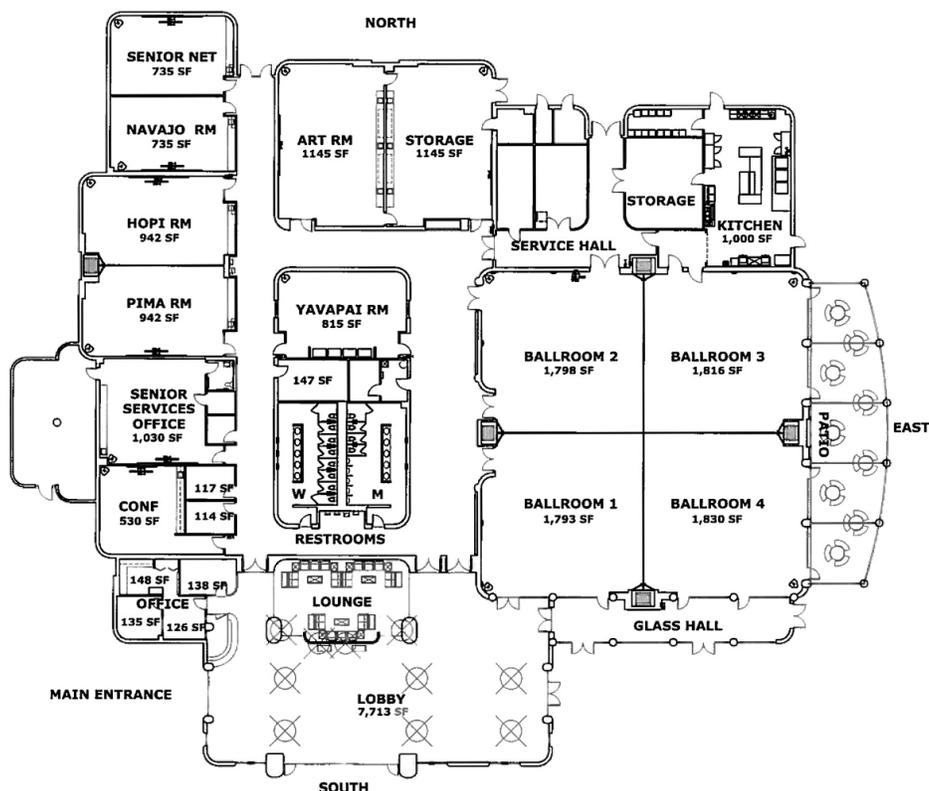
Centennial Circle is in relatively good condition with ample paved areas and shaded seating along the perimeter. The main plaza is nearly 1 acre and can accommodate sizable events. A few trees surrounding the plaza need to be replaced due to poor health or over pruning. There is minimal paver ‘buckling’ and the light posts as well as monument signs along the perimeter are faded and cracked and should be refinished.

The Community Center parking lot appears adequately sized and surfaces are in relatively good condition. The parking lot and site in general are in need of plant material and tree cover. While planning new parking lot, plaza, or outdoor classroom trees, consider the use of desert adapted broadleaf, deciduous trees that provide ample shade that native desert trees often can’t. This ample shade around the Community Center can provide a ‘shade zone’ that can extend uses outdoors and generally create a more desirable destination in the warmer months.

Highest priority/most notable items to consider

- Expanded/re-programming and renovation of the lobby. The lobby should feel more like a ‘family room’ than a foyer.
- Paint, interior and exterior. Consider more contemporary color palette.
- Flooring. Consider more contemporary materials.
- Expansion/addition of shaded outdoor classroom spaces
- Some ceiling tiles broken in ‘back of house’ areas
- Storage inadequate. Heavy duty racks or shelving may help with smaller items
- Long range planning should consider a public pool, dedicated fitness facility, and teen/youth center to accommodate/attract a broader demographic and meet the needs of the facility inadequacies.

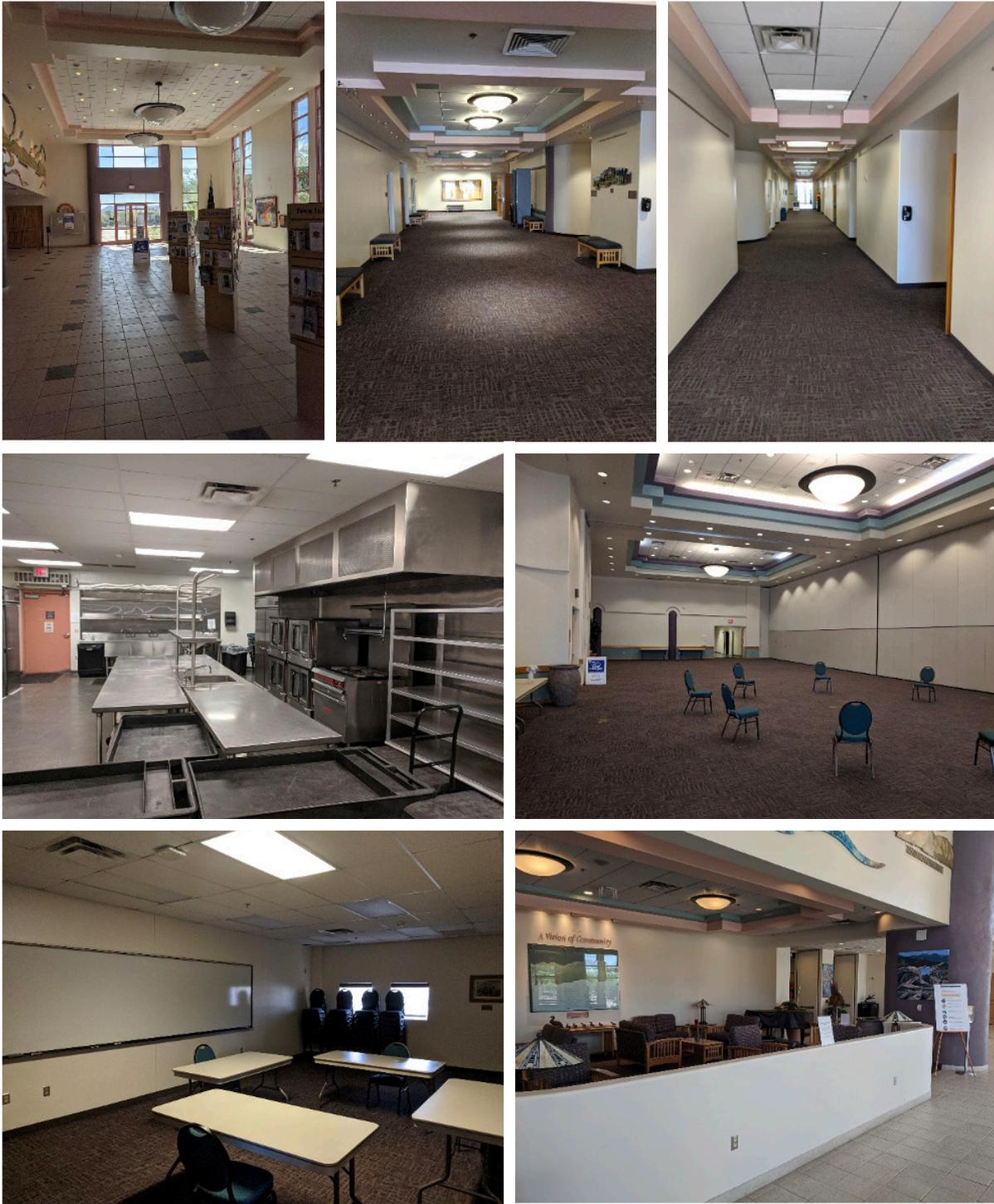
**Figure 45: Community Center Map**



**Table 26: Community Center Asset Evaluation**

COMMUNITY CENTER			
FACILITY / AMENITY / SITE ELEMENT	QUANTITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Lobby	1	1	Condition is fair but visually appears dated and sterile. Consider amenities / accessories to liven up the space and contemporary material palettes and accessories / fixtures. Flooring is functional, but likely needs replaced in coming years.
Lounge	1	2	Seating is in fair condition but is stylistically dated.
Offices	7*	2	Unsure of exact number. As / if programming, use, demand, & staffing increase, more office space will likely be needed, however space for office expansion is limited
Office Conference Room	1	2	
Classrooms / Multipurpose Rooms	7	2	Classrooms are in fair condition, but are dated and somewhat dark / heavy feeling. When remodeling, consider contemporary palettes that help to brighten rooms
Storage Rooms	2*	2	2 major storage rooms. 1 next to the art room and 1 next to the kitchen. Other janitorial and small-scale storage.
Kitchen	1	3	1,000 sqft 'commercial' grade catering kitchen. Also used periodically for cooking classes.
Ballrooms	4	2	4 - 1,800 sqft ballrooms can be quartered or combined into two or one large 7,000+ sqft room
Entry Monument Signage	1	2	Signage is in front of library and grouped with multiple uses. Consider stand-alone signage
Community Center' Building Signage	2	2	Signage adequate somewhat ineffective. 'Large' lettered sign faces Centennial Plaza and not the street and is partially obscured by trees. Consider monument sign to increase visibility.
Interpretive Signage	8	2	Sign monuments are faded and cracked. Need refinishing and signage repaired / replaced.
Passive Lawn / Recreation	1	2	Small lawn on East side of building.
Parking Lot	1	2	Shared with adjacent uses. Parking lot needs substantial amount of landscape and shade trees
Restrooms (Men's & Women's)	3	1	1 Men's / 1 Women's 'public' restrooms & 1 in 'senior services office'
Trash Cans	3	2	Outdoor cans. Consider additional receptacles in Centennial Circle Plaza
Benches	18	2	Benches partially shaded, but damaged, stunted, or underperforming trees should be replaced. Consider shade trees to extend plaza use
Picnic Tables	9	2	Tables on the East patio behind fencing.
Bike Racks	1	2	Unsure if actual bike rack... single loop to the left of entrance. Consider additional racks.
Sculptures	numerous	2	Sculptures throughout the site, near the Community Center entrance and in Centennial Circle.

Figure 46: Community Center Photographic Inventory





## **GOLDEN EAGLE TRAILHEAD**

Size - .4 Acres (approx.)

Location – Eagle’s Nest Sales Center & Gatehouse – E. Golden Eagle Blvd.

The trailhead at the gatehouse of Eagle’s Nest is one of two trailheads within the Town that provide access to the Fountain Hills McDowell Mountain Regional Park and McDowell Sonoran Preserve. Specifically, the trailhead provides parking, a restroom, and access to the Sonoran Trail and the Dixie Mine Trail.

The trailhead is incorporated with the Eagle’s Nest sales center and shares parking and restrooms with the center. This ‘shared use’ provides an incredibly beautiful environment for a trailhead. Though the parking lot is small, it appears adequately sized considering the trailhead’s somewhat remote location. Access, signage, visibility, and furnishings are excellent, although the trail sign will need to be repainted soon. No pet stations were visible and would likely be a benefit to hikers. If the neighborhood is averse to a pet station within their sales center area, consider adding one on the opposite side of the road where the trail/sidewalk begins.

Highest priority/most notable items to consider

- Repaint/refinish trail sign kiosk
- Add pet station

**Table 27: Golden Eagle Asset Evaluation**

<b>GOLDEN EAGLE TRAILHEAD</b>			
<b>FACILITY / AMENITY / SITE ELEMENT</b>	<b>QUANTITY</b>	<b>CONDITION</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
Sign Kiosk	1	2	Needs paint, especially at bottom of posts.
Restrooms (Men's & Women's)	1	3	Inside sales center building w/ separate entrance
Trash Cans	4	3	
Wayfinding Signage	4	3	Stone 'trail parking' & 'trailhead' signs. Unsure if signage is owned by eagle's nest

Figure 47: Golden Eagle Trailhead Photographic Inventory



## ADERO CANYON TRAILHEAD

Size - 2 Acres (approx.)

Location – Adero Canyon – North end of Eagle Ridge Dr.

At the time of assessment, the Adero Canyon Trailhead was not open to vehicular traffic or users. Currently, Eagle Ridge Drive within Adero Canyon is under construction and slated to be completed in the Fall/Winter of 2020.

The facilities at the trail head are completely new and superb. The site design, architecture, and parking all fit exceptionally well into this stunning site. Because the site is new, no deficiencies are noted, and parking is ample.

Similar to the Golden Eagle Trailhead, the site is somewhat remote for residents outside of Adero Canyon and will largely demand that hikers drive. While exceptionally convenient for residents within Adero Canyon, consider outreach programs within the community to promote the new facilities and trailhead use.

The trailheads and trail access within Fountain Hills are an incredible asset that should be promoted to current and prospective residents. The trailheads are less crowded than other access points and provide a unique experience in comparison to more frequented trails within the Preserve or Regional Park.

**Table 28: Adero Canyon Trailhead Asset Evaluation**

ADERO CANYON TRAILHEAD			
FACILITY / AMENITY / SITE ELEMENT	QUANTITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Entry Monument Signage	1	3	New, excellent condition
Sign Kiosk	1	3	New, excellent condition
Ramada (Picnic Tables)	1	3	New, excellent condition
Trash Cans	4	3	All fixtures new
Pet Stations	1	3	New, excellent condition
Bike Racks	2	3	New, excellent condition
Light Bollards	13	3	New, excellent condition

Figure 48: Adero Canyon Trailhead Photographic Inventory



## IV. KEY ISSUES SUMMARY



Key issues and themes for focus were identified using several tools, including review of existing plans and documents, virtual focus groups/stakeholder meetings, a community survey, inventory and level of service analysis, and staff/project team input.

The findings are summarized on the Key Issues Analysis Matrix, which captures all the key issues that surfaced during the Master Plan process and prioritizes them on one matrix. The key issues were placed into four categories on the matrix:

- a) Priority
- b) Opportunity to Improve
- c) Minor or Future Issue
  - Left Blank means the issue did not come up or was not addressed in that venue

The qualitative data planning tools used to determine the priority of key issues include:

- 1) Staff Input
- 2) Public input
- 3) Town Leadership input
- 4) Consultant team’s expertise

The quantitative data planning tools used to determine the priority of the key issues include:

- 1) Community Survey
- 2) Existing planning documents
- 3) Inventory Assessment and Level of Service

These issues and a summary of all findings were presented a series of meetings with staff, key stakeholders, and the public. During the discussions and visioning with staff, potential recommendations were vetted and examined for subsequent analysis, feasibility, and financial discussions.

Key Issues Analysis Matrix									
Fountain Hills Community Services Master Plan			Qualitative Data			Quantitative Data			
 	<b>Key Issue - Rating Scale</b> a - priority b - opportunity to improve c - minor or future issue blank means the issue didn't come up or wasn't addressed		Staff Input	Public Input	Leadership	Surveys	Other Planning Documents	Assess/LOS	Consultant Team
			<b>Finance</b>						
Funding is insufficient for management of parks, trails and open space			A	A	A	A			A
Increase focus on funding for operations and on-going maintenance, repairs and replacements			A	B	A	A			A
A resource allocation philosophy /pricing model is needed to determine revenue opportunities vs. community services				B	A	A	A		A
Greater use of partnerships are beneficial and may help defray costs			B		A	A	A		
Scholarship policy is needed			A	B	A				A

Key Issues Analysis Matrix								
Fountain Hills Community Services Master Plan		Qualitative Data			Quantitative Data			
 	<b>Key Issue - Rating Scale</b> a - priority b - opportunity to improve c - minor or future issue blank means the issue didn't come up or wasn't addressed	Staff Input	Public Input	Leadership	Surveys	Other Planning Documents	Assess/LOS	Consultant Team
		<b>Organizational</b>						
Additional staff is needed to maintain and enhance services to the public								
		A	B			A	A	A
Increased communication about programs and recreational opportunities in a variety of methods is needed - Define brand and image								
		A	A	A	A	B	B	A
Volunteer programs and opportunities are in high demand								
		A			A	B		B
Ongoing program evaluation and needs analysis is needed to determine real demand for programs and services								
					A			A

Key Issues Analysis Matrix								
Fountain Hills Community Services Master Plan		Qualitative Data			Quantitative Data			
 	<b>Key Issue - Rating Scale</b> a - priority b - opportunity to improve c - minor or future issue blank means the issue didn't come up or wasn't addressed	Staff Input	Public Input	Leadership	Surveys	Other Planning Documents	Assess/LOS	Consultant Team
		<b>Parks and Facilities</b>						
Greater trail connectivity is requested by the community								
		A	A		A			A
A gathering place for teens is needed								
		A	A		B			A
New aquatic and recreation facility/facilities are requested by the community								
			A	A	A		B	A
A plan to create safe routes to parks for pedestrians and bicyclists is needed								
		A	A		A	A	A	A
Wayfinding signs will assist with connectivity								
			B			B	C	C
Park amenities & landscaping (including shade, picnic structures) provide a great opportunity for improvement								
		A			A		A	A
A new location for a new farmers market is needed								
			B		A			
Adventure park amenities (zip lines, nature obstacle course, etc.) are desired								
		B	C		B			B
Environmental Education Center is desired								
			B		B			B
Provide new park spaces in underserved areas of the town								
		A					B	
Some playgrounds require replacement or upgrade								
		A					B	A
Outdoor fitness equipment is needed in the parks								
		B	B		B	A	A	B
Fountain Park requires a specific capital improvement plan								
		B	A	A	B		B	B

Key Issues Analysis Matrix								
Fountain Hills Community Services Master Plan		Qualitative Data			Quantitative Data			
 	<b>Key Issue - Rating Scale</b> a - priority b - opportunity to improve c - minor or future issue blank means the issue didn't come up or wasn't addressed	Staff Input	Public Input	Leadership	Surveys	Other Planning Documents	Assess/LOS	Consultant Team
		<b>Programs and Service Delivery</b>						
New programs (teens, youth, pre-teen, adult, multigenerational, senior) are requested by the community								
		B	A	A	A	A		A
New events/festivals are requested by the community								
			A	A	A			B
Aquatic classes/programs are desired								
			A		B			A
A focus on year-round programs is requested by the community								
			B					B
Development of outdoor/environmental programs in the parks is needed								
			A		B	A		A
A strategic process is needed for purposefully scheduling classes and activities								
			B			A		A
Expansion of opportunities for fitness/wellness programs are important								
		B	A		A	A		A

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## V. RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLANS



## A. Recommendations

After analyzing the findings that resulted from this master planning process, including the Key Issues Analysis Matrix, a summary of all research, the qualitative and quantitative data, inventory assessment, Level of Service, and input assembled for this study, a variety of recommendations have emerged to provide guidance in consideration of how to improve parks and recreation services and facilities for the Town of Fountain Hills. This section describes ways to enhance the level of service and the quality of life with improvement through organizational efficiencies, financial opportunities, improved programming and service delivery, and facilities and amenities.

### I. Improve the Fountain Hills Community Services Organization

#### INCREASE STAFFING

The Fountain Hills Community Services Department must prepare for future staffing needs to perform those duties necessary to implement the Master Plan. Several of these potential areas have been identified through the master planning process and the identified below in a two phased approach.

After evaluating the observations and assessments, the consultant team has determined that the Community Services Department should look to increase FTE in operations and maintenance and administration to operate more effectively in the future. In total, to maintain the high-quality services and parks that Fountain Hills residents enjoy, the Department should look to hire a minimum of 3.5 additional FTEs within the fourth to sixth years of the plan and up to 6 additional FTEs in the last three years of the plan to maintain existing and new facilities, programs, and services at or above acceptable standards during the next ten years as the master plan is implemented. The suggested positions are listed below.

<u>First Minimum 3.5 FTEs Positions Suggested</u>	<u>Annual Budget Costs with Benefits</u>
1 Full Time Groundskeeper (+Benefits)	\$65,969
1 Full Time Park Attendant (+Benefits)	\$49,849
1 FTE Volunteer Coordinator	\$91,287
.5 FTE Community Center Executive/Support	<u>\$32,160</u>
3.5 FTE Total -	\$239,265

#### Suggested Positions to Reach 6 FTEs (in addition to above)

1.5 FTEs Recreation Leader and Site Supervisor	\$63,951
.5 Special Events Programmer	\$24,916
.5 Marketing/Communications Coordinator	<u>\$24,916</u>
6 FTE Total -	\$113,783

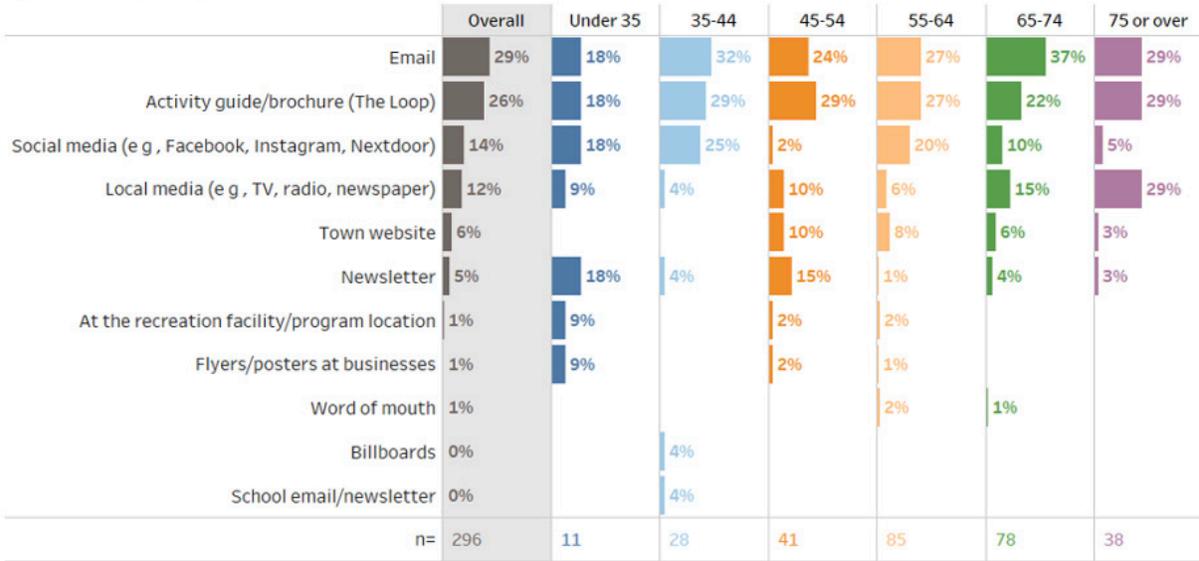
#### IMPROVE COMMUNICATION

One of the key findings from the survey and public input is that there was a lack of awareness about Community Services programs and services and suggests the top avenues for improvement in marketing communication and distribution include email, The Loop, social media, and local media.

Utilization of these top communication methods is broken down by the demographics of age groups by both the invite (statistically valid) survey in **Figure 47** as well as the open link (online) survey in **Figure 48** to assist with aligning with and implementing the best and most successful means of communication with the public.

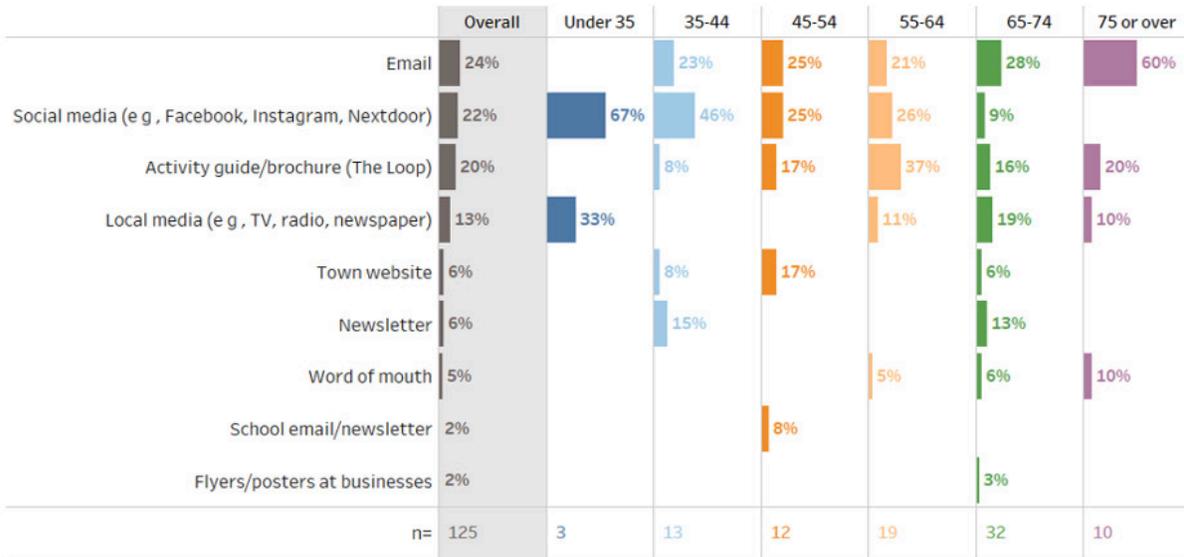
**Figure 49: Best Communication Methods by Age Groups (Invite Survey)**

Q: What is the best way for you to receive information on parks and recreation facilities, services, and programs?  
By "What is your age?" & "Invite Sample"



**Figure 50: Best Communication Methods by Age Groups (Open Link Survey)**

Q: What is the best way for you to receive information on parks and recreation facilities, services, and programs?  
By "What is your age?" & "Open Link"



The Community Services Department should continue to create a Marketing and Communications Plan that will guide its efforts in communicating and promoting its activities and facilities to residents of Fountain Hills, and those that visit the Town to use their recreational trails, parks, and amenities. This will create greater awareness and should include all recommendations in the Master Plan for programs, services, and facility upgrades. The plan should include all the marketing strategies previously mentioned as well as incorporating the efforts of partnerships and volunteerism. Additionally, the Marketing and Communications Plan should be reviewed and updated as needed.

The Department can also benefit from creating a strategic plan to define branding image and establish identity of Community Services in Fountain Hills. To be able to accomplish these recommendations within the life span of the Master Plan, the additional half-time Marketing/Communications Coordinator will be needed.

### **ENHANCE EXISTING VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

The Community Services Department already has a great formal volunteer program and will need to continue to market to and recruit volunteers to assist with the quality delivery of services expected within the Town. One important area of improvement includes the enhancement of communication with existing and potential volunteers that would include email, The Loop, social media, and local media.

The continual development of volunteer program goals and objectives that align with the Town of Fountain Hills mission and values will ultimately expand the service delivery resources to accomplish more quality activities that are facilitated through community involvement.

Areas to include in developing these goals and objectives include recruitment, training, scheduling, participation numbers, tracking hours, evaluations, logo apparel, reward/award system, annual celebration that thanks people for their help. These will all improve and enhance the retention and recruitment of volunteers and showcase the collective impact of volunteers.

Partnering with established volunteer groups to enhance volunteer programming and opportunities is another way to improve and increase the volunteer program.

To be able to accomplish these recommendations within the life span of the Master Plan, the potential of an additional full-time volunteer staff should be considered.

### **FORMALIZE A RECREATIONAL PROGRAM EVALUATION PROCESS**

A tool that can assist the Community Services Department in assessing the quality of services is to implement a standardized program evaluation process. A standardized process will allow the Department to hear from those current users through feedback on the quality of the programs, the registration process, facility conditions, instructors, and other pertinent information that will assist in making improvements to current programming. A formal program evaluation process can also be utilized to determine, track, and evaluate the trends, need, demand, participation levels, satisfaction rates etc. for all recreation and senior program offerings as well as gain feedback for suggestions on future programming needs, amenities, and other issues that affect the department.

## ***II. Improve Parks, Facilities and Amenities***

### **DEVELOP A LONG-RANGE TRAILS PLAN**

The community input revealed that trails and connectivity are identified as very important to the residents. The Community Services Department should act as the catalyst to develop a Long-Range Trails

Plan with input from relevant community organizations to establish connectivity to regional trails, parks, neighborhoods, schools, attractions, etc. The plan should also include trail standards and mapping for trail users. The promotion of healthy lifestyles, outdoor recreation, and connectivity should be a top priority for the Town through expansion and improvement of existing pedestrian paths and bikeway connections.

#### **CREATE PLACES FOR TEEN ACTIVITIES**

The Community Services Department should research availability to provide space for teen programs and activities within Community Services facilities at the days and times that work for most of the local teen population. The Department can utilize and support the formulation of a Teen Advisory Committee to create and support teen programs, activities, locations, days, times, etc. The Mayor Youth Council and youth commissioner on the CSAC Commission are great resources to assist with this objective.

#### **CONSIDER AN AQUATIC AND RECREATION CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY**

The community input revealed the importance and need for a new aquatic and recreation center to increase health, wellness, fitness, aquatics, and recreational opportunities in Fountain Hills. In the long term of this Master Plan, the Town should consider a Feasibility Study with a qualified, unbiased consultant team for determine need and support of this major venture including defining the appropriate owner, operator, amenities, size, location, capital costs, annual operational and maintenance costs, etc. to assist with future decision making for new recreational facilities.

#### **CREATE A SAFE ROUTES TO PARKS PROGRAM**

The Town of Fountain Hills should contribute to improving the overall community connectivity priority the public revealed by utilizing an implemented Safe Routes to Schools Program to create a Safe Routes to Parks Program. This can be done by reviewing the Safe Routes to Schools system to identify connections to Fountain Hills parks and recreation facilities from those existing routes. Typically grants are used to fund these projects and the Town has already applied for one. A great resource for this national program is GPRED ([www.gpred.org](http://www.gpred.org)), a non-profit parks, recreation, trails, and open space organization.

#### **FUND AND IMPLEMENT EXISTING WAYFINDING SIGNAGE PROGRAM**

In the long term, the Town of Fountain Hills should find funding to implement the existing wayfinding signage plan to improve directional signage to Community Services facilities.

#### **REPAIR, UPGRADE, AND/OR REPLACE LOW SCORING AMENITIES**

After review of the full inventory and level of service analysis, in alignment with the identified key issues and community input, a variety of recommendations arose for specific parks and facilities. A trending priority from the public input was for the Town to take care of what they have prior to adding new amenities and/or facilities. Through the inventory assessment process, each amenity within the Community Services Department's facilities were scored based on the current condition, are they functioning as intended, do they meet the Town's standards, etc. Several park amenities had low scoring components (a 1 on a 3-point scale). The low-scoring park components and amenities need to be addressed as priorities of the master plan and as funding allows. A full list of Low Scoring Components has been submitted as a staff resource document.

The Department needs to prioritize the existing amenities in need of repair, upgrade, and/or replacement by coordinating priorities on the Low Scoring Amenities list from the inventory assessment with those listed in the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan action items.

In addition to improving the low scoring amenities, the Town should implement a long-term town-side shade tree program and become Tree City certified.

### **ASSIST COMMUNITY IN IMPROVING FARMER'S MARKET**

A trend that came out of the community input included the need to improve the existing Farmer's Market in the Town of Fountain Hills including needing a new location. There are many different conditions and challenges in determining how to improve the current situation or if any improvement will satisfy the overall community.

There are several Farmer's Markets in the immediate area that appear to saturate the market and on the prime days of Saturdays and Wednesdays these markets are much larger with many more vendors. This makes it difficult to compete with the standards local customers are accustomed to plus many of the vendors will not participate in the smaller markets on other days. Finding a suitable day, time, and location/size of the venue for the Town of Fountain Hills to successfully host an additional Farmer's Market may be very challenging.

The current Farmer's Market is operated by a private promoter and any future improvements should include an evaluation of potential operators. It is a big challenge to find a qualified and dedicated operator as well as dedicated and willing vendors.

The Community Services Department can assist the community in improving the Farmers Market by working with community organizations to determine if there is a good location, day, time, vendor support, operator, etc. to improve the Farmer's Market in Fountain Hills with the current saturation in the area. One way to achieve this is to conduct a local survey to poll vendors and potential customers for participation desires.

### **EXPLORE ADVENTURE PARK AMENITIES IN PARKS**

Fountain Hills Community Services Department should explore programming options and site layouts that use available parks to the full extent. Some parks provide an opportunity for adventure park amenities such as zip lines, nature playgrounds, skateparks, nature obstacle courses, mountain bike skills park, bike pump track, etc. This will create positive local and regional economic impact to the Town.

The Department should investigate, prioritize, and design adventure park amenities and determine where these new trending options should be located to add new and different outdoor recreational perspective and opportunities and become a regional leader.

### **CONSIDER AN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY**

The community input revealed the importance and potential need for a new environmental education center to increase the outdoor recreational opportunities in Fountain Hills including Dark Sky initiatives and surrounding natural areas. In the long term of this Master Plan, the Town should consider hiring a qualified, unbiased consultant team to conduct a Feasibility Study to determine need and support of this major venture including defining the appropriate owner, operator, amenities, size, location, capital costs, annual operational and maintenance costs, etc. to assist with future decision making for new outdoor recreational and environmental education facility.

### **RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES FOR EQUITABLE ACCESS TO PARKS**

The Town should continue to monitor and improve access to parks for all demographics in Fountain Hills including potentially providing new park spaces in the underserved portions of town.

### **UPDATE PLAYGROUND REPLACEMENT PROGRAM**

The Town needs to update the current playground replacement program including the prioritization and timeline to replace or upgrade the immediate playground equipment needs based on the low scoring amenities list and life expectancy. Currently the playground replacement program is underfunded, and resources should be identified to maintain these assets to the Town's standards.

### ***III. Enhance Program and Service Delivery***

#### **CREATE NEW PROGRAMMING OPPORTUNITIES**

The Town of Fountain Hills will benefit by exploring opportunities to provide additional program spaces for teens, youth, pre-teens, adults, multigenerational, that meet the demands of the community and creates equity throughout the Town. Seniors make up a large percentage of the population in Fountain Hills and the Department should continually explore additional activities and special events that cater to this age group although the public input supported the need for more programming for teens, youth, pre-teens, and adults, as well as multigenerational programs.

The Department should continue to research, document, and track available capacity in existing and potential new program spaces for opportunities to expand recreational programs and activities based on community demand and current trends. The Department should also continue to monitor recreational trends and community needs to stay current with programming and demand. As new programs and services are developed and implemented, continue to create a balance between passive and active recreation.

Evaluating and implementing the best potential additional recreational programming opportunities will allow the Department to improve and provide programming that responds to the demographic demand while making sure they have the resources and staffing necessary.

#### **INCREASE ADDITIONAL SPECIAL EVENTS AND FESTIVAL OPPORTUNITIES**

The Town currently has well-respected special events which are popular in the community. These events provide a unique experience and address programming for both the full and part time residents. The events should be evaluated on a regular basis, identifying opportunities to make improvements to continue growing the diversity of participants and the level of service provided.

Increasing community events was a priority for focus group participants and survey respondents. The Department should continue to look for opportunities to expand community special events by working to create local partnerships and recruit event organizers to collaborate to offer as many events as can be staffed. The Department can help facilitate the growth of community events with local and/or regional draw that reflect the diversity of the community while engaging the community in event development. This does not mean that the Department needs to be "in charge" of the events but can include focus on providing spaces and support services for others in an organized and proactive way. The indirect economic benefit for the community should be acknowledged as these services are provided and staffed, as the direct financial benefits may not always be apparent.

#### **ENSURE FULL RANGE OF AQUATIC CLASSES/PROGRAMS IF/WHEN AQUATIC CENTER IS DEVELOPED**

Public comments included the need for aquatic programs although the Town of Fountain Hills does not own or operate any aquatic facilities. If a Feasibility Study supports and the Town secures funding for developing an aquatic center, the Department should research, evaluate, and implement the best potential aquatic programming opportunities for all age groups and include the resources and staffing necessary to implement them.

### **ENHANCE YEAR-ROUND RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMING**

As a one of the programming priorities, the public would like to see an increase in the number of indoor recreation programs to offer additional experiences 12 months a year. The Town does not own or operate a recreation center. If a Feasibility Study supports and the Town secures funding for developing a recreation center, the Department should research, evaluate, and implement the best potential recreational programming opportunities for all age groups and include the resources and staffing necessary to implement them.

### **INCREASE OUTDOOR/ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN APPROPRIATE PARKS**

Outdoor recreation opportunities were identified as a need for the community and the Department can expand programming in this area through administering their own programs, as well as seeking partnerships and cross promoting activities that would meet these needs.

The Town benefits by having many natural resources and trails located throughout the community and surrounding area. Developing outdoor opportunities by capitalizing on these resources provide a unique opportunity to explore partnerships and collaborative efforts with other organizations, allowing the Department to work cooperatively in meeting the demands of the residents. The Department should research, evaluate, and implement the best potential recreational programming opportunities for all age groups and include the resources and staffing necessary to implement them.

### **STRATEGICALLY SCHEDULE ACTIVITIES TO ENSURE ACCESS TO ALL RESIDENTS WHEN THEY ARE AVAILABLE**

The public input supported the need for more evening adult program opportunities for the working and commuting portion of the Fountain Hills community. The Department should research, evaluate, and test additional times/days for appropriate recreational programs to accommodate the working public including the resources and staffing necessary.

### **EXPAND FITNESS/WELLNESS PROGRAMMING**

The community would like to see fitness and wellness programs expanded, as well as additional programs for special needs, teens, and seniors.

The Town would benefit by the Department researching, evaluating, and implementing additional fitness/wellness trends that would enhance existing programs as well as introducing new programs while ensuring the resources and staffing are available.

## ***IV. Improve Financial Position***

### **CONSIDER ADDITIONAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

Lack of funding for the Community Services Department is a key issue and theme brought forward throughout the master planning process by many of the information gathering tools. Current staffing levels as well as overall funding for operations and capital budgets must be addressed. Creating a financial plan to address this situation will be important in continuing to fund the Department and meet the future demands recommended in the Master Plan. The Town will benefit by identifying opportunities for additional funding options for operations as well as capital needs. Developing strategies to seek alternative funding sources identified in the Master Plan will benefit the town.

The Town Council should consider increasing the Community Service portion of the General Fund when possible as supported by 75% of the community according to the survey. This would align the Department's annual budget with the actual operations and maintenance costs to provide the maintenance standards expected by the public and the town and ensure the annual budgets keep pace with the increasing costs of staff, utilities, supplies, etc. of improvements and new development.

The Town should consider a bond referendum by the vote of the town for specific future capital projects is supported by community by 71% on the online survey and 51% of the invite survey.

Floating a bond referendum is the single most popular method of funding the large costly capital projects in Master Plans. If the timing is right within the community, successful bond referendums can be passed as long as a well-publicized plan that includes exact facilities, location, total project capital cost estimates, annual O&M cost projections, cost benefit, economic impact for Fountain Hills, and conceptual plans are presented to educate the voting public. Of the surveyed public, 55% supported increasing user fees as a way to increase funds for the Community Services Department.

### **INCREASE FUNDS FOR ONGOING DEFERRED MAINTENANCE, REPAIRS, REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING AMENITIES/FACILITIES**

An ongoing theme of the master planning community input included the public wanting the Department to fix up the existing facilities and amenities before building anything new. The Town needs to verify all facilities are future funded to ensure repairs and/or replacement that will improve the quality as well as increase the longevity and safety of existing resources. The Department should continually update a deferred maintenance and equipment replacement plan based on expected life cycle.

### **ESTABLISH A COST RECOVERY AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION PHILOSOPHY AND POLICY**

The Department should pursue a formal resource allocation and cost recovery philosophy, model, and policy that is grounded in the values, vision, and mission of the Department. The GreenPlay team conducted a workshop for staff on the Pyramid Methodology and provided resource materials for the Department. The Department should consider developing a pricing methodology that reflects the community's values, while generating revenues to help sustain Fountain Hills facilities, parks, programs, and services. As part of the policy, the current scholarship program should be expanded and publicized to allow for inclusion and equity for all participants and families.

### ***Utilize Partnerships with Other Service Providers***

The Community Services Department does not have the resources to provide all the recreational services needed by Fountain Hills community. It is important that they work with a variety of other potential partners to collaborate in service delivery for the public. A list of key potential partners was created with significant input from stakeholders and the public that included non-profits, businesses, government agencies, health-related organizations, and others. This list, located in the focus group summary, can serve as a foundation for a resource/contact list for all likely partners within the community.

Many programs and services are provided by youth organizations or other service providers. The Department should continue to evaluate programs and services and continue to improve the development of partnerships with other service providers to provide recreational opportunities and services for town residents.

New partnerships with other service providers in the community need to ensure that the partnership reduces duplication of services and maximizes resources. Equitable agreements to benefit both partners need to be developed and should be reviewed annually for relevance and equity for all parties while still aligning directly with the mission and vision of the Town. This opens the opportunity for any agreement addendums that might benefit both parties moving forward.

## DEVELOP A SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM TO ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ALL FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES

A scholarship program should be created during the detailing of the cost recovery policy to allow for inclusion and equity for all participants and families. Currently, there are inequities in income, resources, levels of service, and access to facilities/amenities/programs across the Town.

A funding source will need to be dedicated to allow for funding participation which is typically from the business community. The Department should implement an objective, user-friendly process that allows for participation from all residents, regardless of ability to pay, through an informed and easy to use scholarship system. A membership card can help with this through simplification of the registration process and justification paperwork which is typically partnering with schools on their free or reduced lunch process.

## B. Action Plan, Cost Estimates and Prioritization

The following Goals, Objectives, and Action Items for the recommendations are drawn from the public input, inventory, level of service analysis, findings feedback, and all the information gathered during the planning process with a primary focus on maintaining, sustaining, and improving the Town of Fountain Hills Community Services, Parks, Trails, and Recreation. All cost estimates are in current year (2021) figures where applicable. Most costs are dependent on the extent of the enhancements and improvements determined or known at this time.

Timeframe to complete is designated as:

- Short-term (up to 3 years)
- Mid-term (4-6 years)
- Long-term (7-10 years)
- Ongoing (continuous improvement)

**Table 29: Action Plan**

### Goal 1: Improve the Fountain Hills Community Services Department Organization

#### Objective 1.1:

Increase staffing levels between 3.5 and up to 6 Full Time Equivalent (FTEs)

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
1.1.a Consider hiring 3.5 FTEs potentially including: 1 Full Time Groundskeeper (+Benefits), 1 Full Time Park Attendant (+Benefits), 1 FTE Volunteer Coordinator, .5 FTE Community Center Executive/ Support	N/A	\$239,265 (estimated)	Mid Term

1.1.b Consider hiring additional 2.5 FTEs potentially including: 1.5 FTEs Recreation Leader and Site Supervisor, .5 Special Events Programmer, .5 Marketing/ Communications Coordinator	N/A	\$113,793 (estimated)	Long Term
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**Objective 1.2:**  
Improve all Community Services communication avenues with the public

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
1.2.a Improve marketing communication and distribution including email, The Loop, social media, and local media	N/A	Staff Time .5 FTE Marketing \$24,916	Long Term
1.2.b Continue to create a marketing plan that focuses on full and part time residents	N/A	Staff Time	Short Term
1.2.c Create a strategic plan to define branding image and establish identity of Community Services in Fountain Hills	\$30,000	Staff Time	Long Term

**Objective 1.3:**  
Enhance existing Volunteer Program

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
1.3.a Continue to market and recruit volunteers	N/A	Staff Time 1 FTE Volunteer Coordinator \$91,287	Ongoing
1.3.b Enhance communication including email, The Loop, social media, and local media	N/A	Staff Time	Ongoing

Objective 1.4:

Formalize a recreational program evaluation process

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
1.4.a Determine, track, and evaluate the trends, need, demand, participation levels, satisfaction rates etc. for all recreation and senior program offerings.	N/A	Staff Time	Ongoing

**Goal 2: Improve Parks, Facilities, and Amenities**

Objective 2.1:

Develop a long-range trails plan

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
2.1.a Develop a long-range trails plan with input from relevant community organizations to establish connectivity to regional trails, parks, neighborhoods, schools, attractions, etc. The plan should also include trail standards.	If outside consultant \$25,000	Staff Time	Long Term Ongoing

Objective 2.2:

Create places for teen activities using local teens as advisors

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
2.2.a Provide space for teen programs and activities within Community Services facilities	N/A	Staff Time	Ongoing
2.2.b Utilize Mayor Youth Council and youth commissioner on the Park and Recreation Commission to formulate a Teen Advisory Committee to create and support teen programs, activities, locations, days, times, etc.	N/A	Staff Time TBD Supplies Instructors	Ongoing

**Objective 2.3:**

Conduct a Feasibility Study to determine the need and support of a new aquatic and recreation center

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Capital Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Operational Budget Impact</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
2.3.a Consider a feasibility study by a qualified, unbiased consultant team to determine need and support as well as the appropriate owner, operator, amenities, size, location, costs, etc.	Potential Grants as available and appropriate	Staff Time	Ongoing

**Objective 2.4:**

Create a Safe Routes to Parks Program

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Capital Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Operational Budget Impact</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
2.4.a Utilize an implemented Safe Routes to Schools Program and identify connections to Fountain Hills parks and recreation facilities	Potential Grants as available and appropriate	Staff Time	Ongoing

**Objective 2.5:**

Fund and implement existing wayfinding signage program

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Capital Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Operational Budget Impact</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
2.5.a Implement the existing wayfinding signage plan to improve directional signage to Community Services facilities	\$50,000	Staff Time	Long Term

Objective 2.6:

Repair, upgrade, and/or replace the Low Scoring Amenities from the inventory assessment (staff document)

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
2.6.a Fix the existing amenities by coordinating priorities on the Low Scoring Amenities list from the inventory assessment with those listed in the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan action items	\$283,000 - \$605,000 (see low scoring amenities staff document for ranges for individual amenities)	Staff Time	Ongoing
2.6.b Implement long-term town-side shade tree program and become Tree City certified	TBD	Staff Time	Ongoing

Objective 2.7:

Assist the community in improving the Farmer’s Market

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
2.7.a Work with community organizations to determine if there is a good location, day, time, vendor support, operator, etc. to improve the Farmer’s Market in Fountain Hills with the current saturation in the area	N/A	Staff Time	Short Term
2.7.b Conduct a local survey to poll vendors for participation desires	N/A	Staff Time Volunteers	Short Term

Objective 2.8:

Create adventure park amenities in parks to create positive local and regional economic impact

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
2.8.a Design adventure amenities such as zip lines, nature playgrounds, skateparks, nature obstacle courses, mountain bike skills park, bike pump track, etc. and determine where they should be located	TBD Dependent on what is built	TBD Dependent on what is built	Mid Term

Objective 2.9:

Conduct a Feasibility Study to determine the need and support of a new environmental education center

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
2.9.a Consider a feasibility study by a qualified, unbiased consultant team to determine need and support as well as the appropriate owner, operator, amenities, size, location, costs, etc. Include Dark Sky initiatives and natural areas	\$30,000	Staff Time	Long Term

Objective 2.10:

Research opportunities for equitable access to park amenities by all residents

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
2.10.a Continue to monitor and improve access to parks for all demographics in Fountain Hills	TBD	Staff Time	Ongoing

Objective 2.11:  
Update the Playground Replacement Program

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Capital Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Operational Budget Impact</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
2.11.a Replace/Upgrade immediate playground equipment needs based on the low scoring amenities list and life expectancy	\$1-1.5 Million over 10 years	Staff Time	Long Term Ongoing

Objective 2.12:  
Install outdoor fitness equipment in parks

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Capital Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Operational Budget Impact</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
2.12.a Determine park/trail locations and types of outdoor fitness equipment to install	TBD	Staff Time	Mid Term

Objective 2.13:  
Finalize a Fountain Park Capital Improvement Plan

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Capital Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Operational Budget Impact</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
2.13.a Finish the Fountain Park CIP to include priorities, costs, and timelines for needed repairs, upgrades, replacements, deferred maintenance items, etc.	TBD Dependent on 10-year CIP	Staff Time	Ongoing

**Goal 2: Enhance Program and Service Delivery**

Objective 3.1:

Increase additional program spaces, staffing, and resources to create new programming opportunities for teens, youth, pre-teen, adult, multigenerational, and seniors

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Capital Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Operational Budget Impact</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
3.1.a Research, document, and track available capacity in existing and potential new program spaces	N/A	Staff Time	Ongoing
3.1.b Evaluate and implement the best potential additional recreational programming opportunities including the resources and staffing necessary	N/A	Staff Time	Ongoing

Objective 3.2:

Increase opportunities for additional special events/festivals

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Capital Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Operational Budget Impact</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
3.2.a Create and recruit partnerships with event organizers, community organizations to bring additional events to Fountain Hills	N/A	Staff Time Volunteers TBD based on event(s)	Ongoing

Objective 3.3:

If/when an aquatic facility is developed, ensure a full range of aquatic classes/programs

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Capital Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Operational Budget Impact</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
3.3.a Research, evaluate, and implement the best potential aquatic programming opportunities for all age groups including the resources and staffing necessary	N/A	Staff Time	Long Term

Objective 3.4:  
Enhance year-round recreational programming as a priority

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
3.4.a Increase the number of indoor recreation programs, or partner with other organizations, to offer additional experiences 12 months a year if/when a new recreation center is developed	N/A	Staff Time	Ongoing Long Term

Objective 3.5:  
Increase outdoor/environmental education programs in appropriate parks

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
3.5.a Research, evaluate and implement the best potential outdoor/ environmental education programming opportunities in parks for all age groups including the resources and staffing necessary	N/A	Staff Time	Ongoing

Objective 3.6:  
Strategically schedule classes and activities to ensure access to all residents during times/days they are available

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
3.6.a Research, evaluate, and test additional times/days for appropriate recreational programs to accommodate the working public including the resources and staffing necessary	N/A	Staff Time	Ongoing

Objective 3.7:  
Expand fitness/wellness programming

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
3.7.a Research, evaluate, and implement additional fitness/wellness trends for both enhancing existing programs as well as introducing new programs including the resources and staffing necessary	N/A	Staff Time	Ongoing

**Goal 4: Improve Financial Position**

Objective 4.1:  
Consider additional financing opportunities for capital and operational funding, future growth, and improvement projects

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
4.1.a Consider increasing general fund budget annual allocation from Town Council	TBD	TBD	Short Term
4.1.b Consider bond referendum for specific future capital projects	TBD	Staff Time	Mid Term
4.1.c Increase user fees equitably utilizing cost recovery policy	N/A	Staff Time	Long Term

Objective 4.2:

Establish increased funds for ongoing deferred maintenance, repairs, and replacement for existing amenities/facilities

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
4.2.a Continually update a deferred maintenance and equipment replacement plan based on expected life cycle	TBD	Staff Time	Short Term Mid Term Long Term
4.2.b Verify all facilities are future funded to ensure repairs/replacement to improve quality and increase longevity/safety of existing resources	TBD	Staff Time	Short Term Mid Term Long Term

Objective 4.3:

Establish a cost recovery and resource allocation philosophy and policy

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
4.3.a Create a cost recovery and resource allocation philosophy and policy to create equitable and defensible user fees based on benefits and value	\$40,000 if contracted	Staff Time	Long Term

Objective 4.4:

Utilize partnerships with other service providers in the community

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
4.4.a Improve existing partnerships	N/A	Staff Time	Ongoing

4.4.b Create new partnerships with other service providers	N/A	Staff Time	Ongoing
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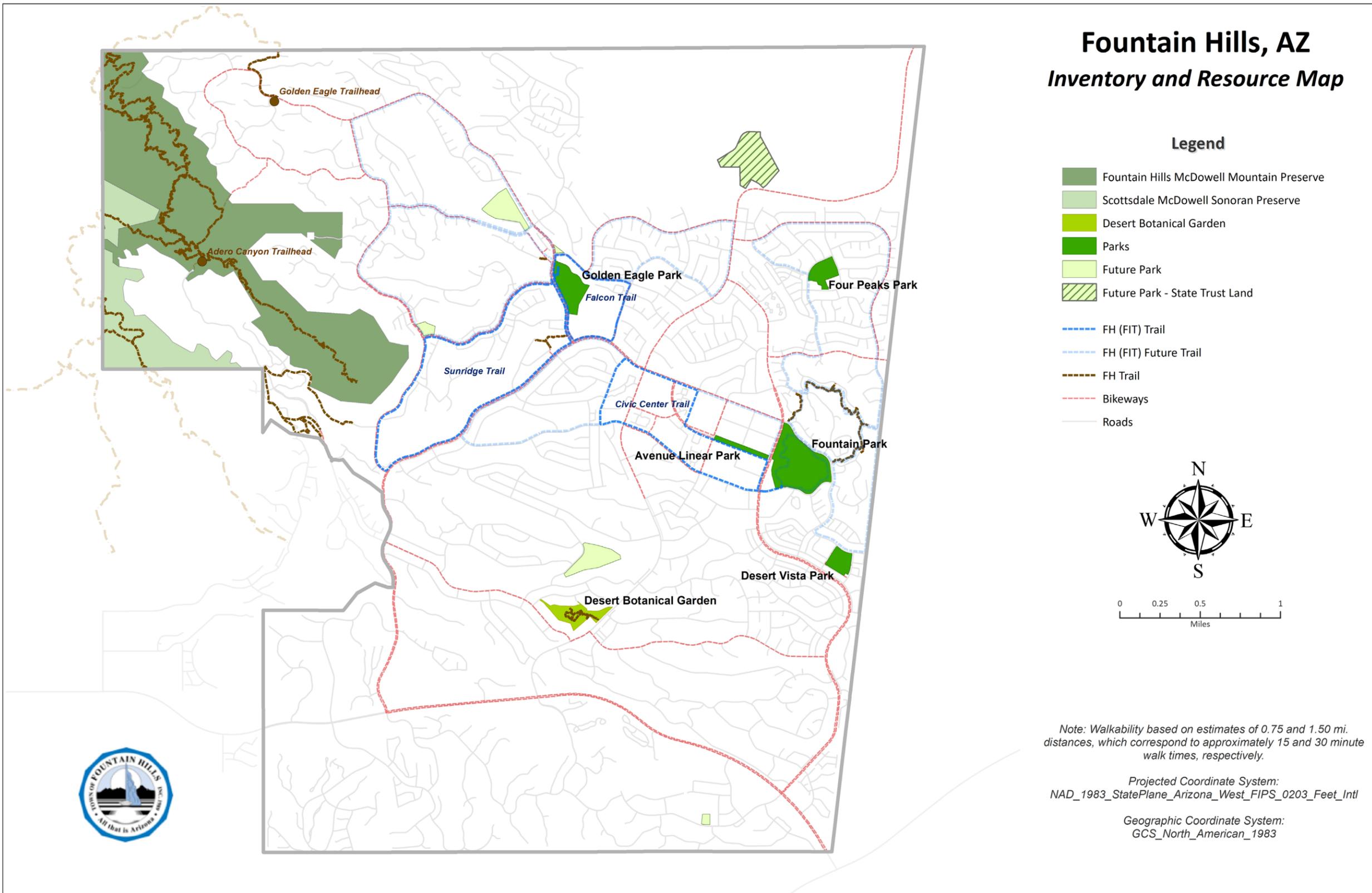
Objective 4.5:  
Develop a Scholarship Program to ensure equitable access to all facilities and activities

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
4.5.a Develop and support funding of a Scholarship Program within the business community to ensure affordability to all residents	N/A	Staff Time	Mid Term

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# APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SERVICES INVENTORY RESOURCE MAP

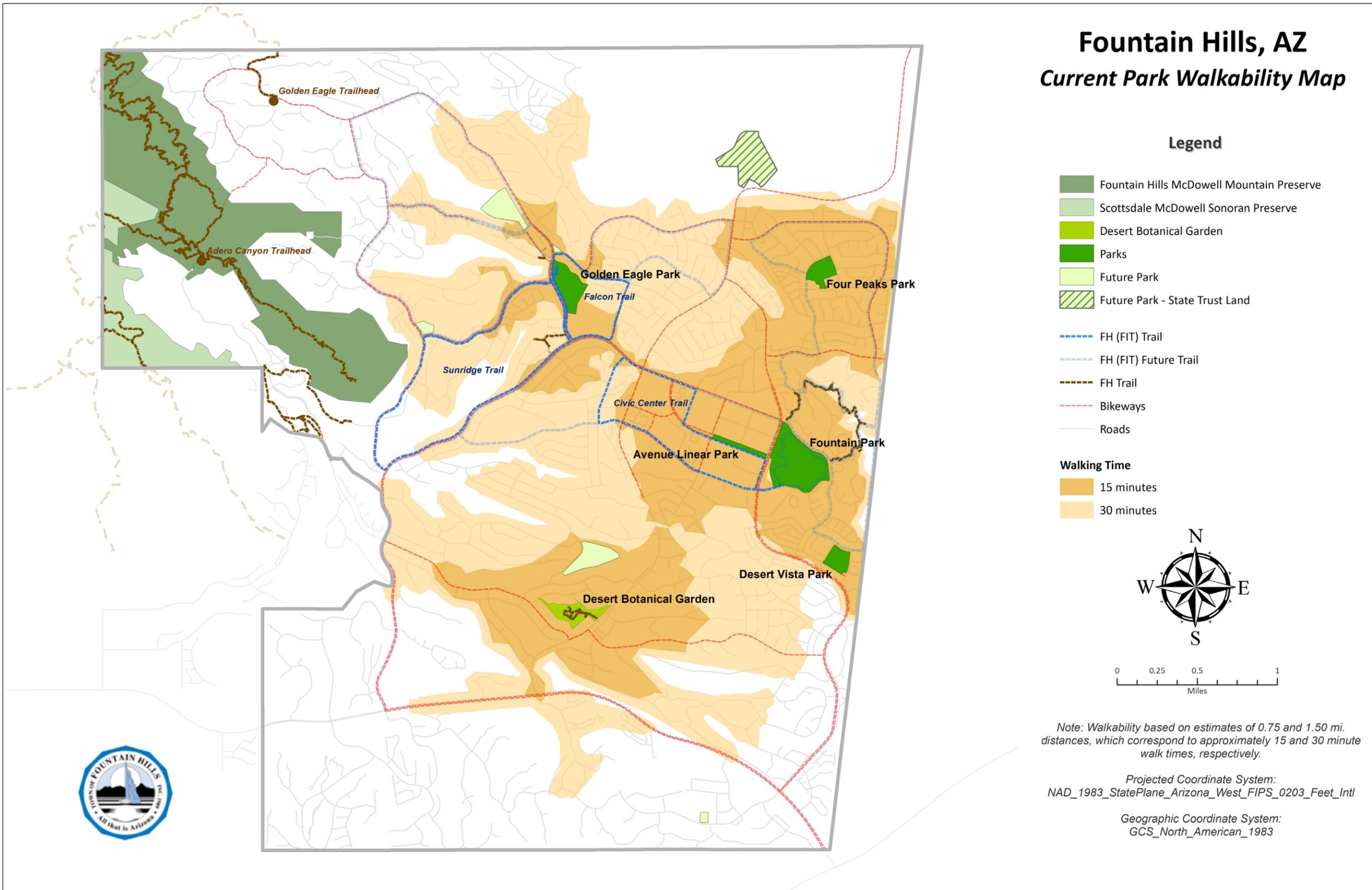
## Fountain Hills, AZ Inventory and Resource Map



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# APPENDIX B: CURRENT WALKABILITY LEVEL OF SERVICE MAP

## Fountain Hills, AZ Current Park Walkability Map



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# APPENDIX C: FUTURE WALKABILITY LEVEL OF SERVICE MAP

## Fountain Hills, AZ Future Park Walkability Map

