



5

CHAPTER IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

LAS CRUCES PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN



Pioneer Womens' Park

SECTION 1:

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM PARAMETERS

The Las Cruces Parks and Recreation Master Plan is the City's principal guide for providing parks and recreation services to Las Cruces' current and future residents in an efficient and equitable manner. This Plan is not a capital facilities plan, but rather an operational guide that provides suggestions on how to enhance parks and recreational service delivery while identifying future opportunities capital and non-capital investments.

This Plan's implementation program includes three (3) principal components. The **implementation action plan** categorizes and prioritizes the Plan actions that were introduced in **Chapter 4** to present an orderly framework for pending City initiatives. The **plan administration** section outlines the roles and responsibilities of City officials and implementing partners, while a section on **funding** highlights key funding sources that may aid in advancing implementation activities.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

Effective implementation of Las Cruces Parks and Recreation Master Plan recommendations will require a coordinated effort among community leaders and residents, elected and appointed officials, and external agencies. To offer superior parks and recreation services to the residents of Las Cruces, the City must also partner with local, state, and federal entities that can be of assistance in growing and improving the parks and recreation system now and in the future.

Key contributors in implementing this effort will include:

- *Las Cruces elected and appointed officials;*
- *City Management and staff;*
- *Doña Ana County;*
- *New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT);*
- *New Mexico State Land Office;*
- *United States Bureau of Land Management;*
- *Las Cruces Public Schools;*
- *Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance (MVEDA);*
- *Elephant Butte Irrigation District;*
- *Athletic leagues;*
- *Adjacent communities (on projects that benefit both communities);*
- *Area property and business owners and the development community;*
- *Community volunteers and stakeholders; and*
- *Additional affected agencies and entities.*

A comprehensive parks and recreation implementation action plan is introduced in **Figure 5.1, Prioritized Implementation Action Plan**, (page 207). Within the figure, all actions recommended in **Chapter 4** are categorized according to type of action and estimated timeframe within which the action will be initiated. **Figure 5.1** also identifies implementing partners, and whether a specific implementation initiative is estimated to be require ongoing effort and attention.

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

The actions recommended within this Plan are represented within **Figure 5.1** (facing page) by one (1) or more of the following five (5) categories:

- **Financial Investment.** *Capital improvements (for inclusion in a 5-year capital improvements plan) or general fund expenditures.*
- **Operational Change.** *New or altered programs, staffing, or operational procedures.*
- **Policy.** *Official procedures or policies used to make City decisions.*
- **Regulation.** *Council approved regulations used to direct growth or additional actions in the City.*
- **Study.** *Additional study or examination required to determine the best result.*

Some recommended Plan actions may meet the definition of multiple implementation categories.

PRIORITIZATION

The actions listed within the implementation action plan (**Figure 5.1**, facing page) are also divided among three (3) levels of prioritization:

- **High Priority Actions.** *Actions which should be initiated within the next one to two years (2019 - 2021) although completion may extend across a larger timeframe. These are the City's top priorities for implementation.*
- **Moderate Priority Actions.** *Actions which may be initiated within the next three to five years (2022- 2025).*
- **Long-Term Priority Actions.** *Most of these actions are projected to be implemented in the long term (2026+) and may be further prioritized in following Plan updates. These actions are therefore not listed in a numbered order.*

Regardless of suggested priority, it is presumed that many of this Plan's recommended actions will require ongoing effort and attention by the City. Ongoing actions are acknowledged in **Figure 5.1**.

PRIORITIZATION FACTORS

Any action listed in **Figure 5.1** could be initiated sooner than suggested if unique circumstances or opportunities occur. Nonetheless, implementation priority suggested in this Plan was informed by the following prioritization factors:

- *Level of need based on community input (online survey results, stakeholder meetings, public open houses, prioritization survey, etc.);*
- *Level of need based on the needs assessment; and*
- *Conditions assessments of current park facilities in the City.*

USING THE ACTION PLAN













As previously suggested, the Las Cruces Parks and Recreation Master Plan's implementation action plan is not include a comprehensive list of new capital improvements projects. This Plan serves as a guide for future operational adjustments and investments, and for potential future additions to the capital improvements plan. **Appendix G, GO Bond** and **Appendix H, Capital Improvements Plan**, lists both GO Bond and Capital Improvements projects.



In 2018, the voters of Las Cruces approved the General Obligation Bond (GO Bond) to fund capital improvements and improve the community.









Additional instructions regarding Plan administration are located in the "Plan Administration" section beginning on page 219.

FIGURE 5.1, PRIORITIZED IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

ACTION ID	ACTION	INITIATION TIME FRAME (YEARS)				ACTION TYPE	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS
		1-2	3-5	6-10+	O*		
GOAL #1: PARKLAND ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT. PROVIDE AN INCREASED PARKLAND LEVEL OF SERVICE BY ADDING NEW PARK SPACE THAT IS WIDELY DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT THE CITY; AND BY ENSURING THAT THE PROVISION AND DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PARKLAND OCCURS CONCURRENT WITH NEW DEVELOPMENT.							
OBJECTIVE 1.1. EXPAND AND MAINTAIN A MUNICIPAL PARKS SYSTEM THAT INCLUDES VARIOUS PARKLAND TYPES TO ADDRESS DIVERSE INTERESTS AND IS WELL-DISTRIBUTED TO ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS FOR ALL LAS CRUCENS.							
1.1.1	Level of Service - Parkland. Utilize the acreage and proximity service standards presented in Figure 4.1, Parkland, Target level of service (2019-2045), as a guide for establishing a minimum city-wide level of service for community and neighborhood parkland.					POLICY	CITY COUNCIL/ CITY STAFF/ P&Z/ PRAB
1.1.2	Civic Parks. Incorporate civic park space into new mixed-use developments and similar development that is intended to promote a dense, urban, and pedestrian-friendly environment.					POLICY/ REGULATION	CITY COUNCIL/ CITY STAFF/ P&Z/ PRAB
1.1.3	East Mesa Community Park. Prepare a design for the East Mesa Community Park incorporating the recreational facilities identified as part of the publicly-approved general obligation bond. Work with the Mesilla Valley MPO and other City departments to include an alignment for an extension of E. Lohman Avenue.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT/ STUDY	CITY
1.1.4	Community Parks. Construct a new community park (in addition to the East Mesa Community Park in an underserved area.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	CITY
1.1.5	Open Space Lands Program. Establish and fund a municipal open space program to acquire, manage, and maintain natural areas and open space lands.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT/ POLICY	BLM/ CITY/ NEW MEXICO STATE LAND OFFICE
1.1.6	Extraterritorial Zone. Actively plan and coordinate with Doña Ana County for the acquisition of parks and open space within or near the ETZ.					POLICY	DOÑA ANA COUNTY
1.1.7	Non-Municipal Parkland. Work with Las Cruces Public Schools, Doña Ana County, and other entities to determine if some municipal recreational services can be provided on properties not owned by the City of Las Cruces.					POLICY	DOÑA ANA COUNTY/ LPS
1.1.8	Parkland Purchase Options. Pursue low-cost and/or non-purchase options to acquire parkland, including the use of conservation easements and development covenants.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	CITY
OBJECTIVE 1.2. UTILIZE THE LAND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS TO PROVIDE NEW PARKLAND AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES FOR LAS CRUCES' GROWING POPULATION.							
1.2.1	Ordinances – Parkland Dedication. Amend the Las Cruces Development Code to require the dedication of neighborhood park space as part of new development.					REGULATION	CITY COUNCIL/ CITY STAFF/ P&Z/ PRAB
1.2.2	Pocket Park Performance Criteria. Allow small pocket parks to be constructed in new developments in lieu of neighborhood parks only in accordance with specific performance criteria.					POLICY/ REGULATION	CITY COUNCIL/ CITY STAFF/ P&Z/ PRAB
1.2.3	Ordinances – Common Area. Amend the Las Cruces Development Code to require common areas and recreational amenities as part of new multi-family development, and public gathering space in large retail and commercial developments.					REGULATION	CITY COUNCIL/ CITY STAFF/ P&Z/ PRAB


















*O=Ongoing

FIGURE 5.1, PRIORITIZED IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN (CONT.)

ACTION ID	ACTION	INITIATION TIME FRAME (YEARS)				ACTION TYPE	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS
		1-2	3-5	6-10+	O*		
GOAL #2: COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY. PROVIDE A COMMUNITY-WIDE SYSTEM OF MULTI-USE TRAILS THAT SUPPORT RESIDENTS' AND VISITORS' FITNESS, RECREATION, AND TRANSPORTATION NEEDS, WHILE LINKING COMMUNITY DESTINATIONS SUCH AS PARKS, OPEN SPACE, SCHOOLS, AND OTHER COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTERS.							
OBJECTIVE 2.1. CONSTRUCT A COMMUNITY-WIDE MULTI-USE TRAIL NETWORK THAT LINKS PLACES OF RESIDENCE TO COMMUNITY DESTINATIONS.							
2.1.1	Level of Service – Multi-use Trails. Construct and maintain a city-wide multi-use trail network that is consistent with the recommendations of the City's Active Transportation Plan and Mesilla Valley MPO's Trails Priorities Plan.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	CITY COUNCIL/ CITY STAFF/ P&Z/ PRAB
2.1.2	Multi-use Trail Network. Amend land development regulations to require the dedication of multi-use trail easements as part of new development where a proposed trail route is depicted in the City's Active Transportation Plan or Mesilla Valley MPO's Trails Priorities Plan.					REGULATION	CITY COUNCIL/ CITY STAFF/ P&Z/ PRAB
2.1.3	United States Bicycle Route System. Coordinate with NMDOT, Doña Ana County, Adventure Cycling Association, and other stakeholders to establish the first segment of the United States Bicycle Route System in New Mexico. Ensure that the City's on-street bicycle routes and multi-use trails link to the system.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT/ STUDY	ADVENTURE CYCLING ASSOCIATION/ CITY/ DOÑA ANA COUNTY/ NMDOT
OBJECTIVE 2.2. DEVELOP A LOW-IMPACT RECREATIONAL TRAIL SYSTEM THAT PROMOTES CONNECTIVITY TO OPEN SPACE AND ACCESS TO LOW-IMPACT OUTDOOR RECREATION PURSUITS.							
2.2.1	Recreational Trails – Rio Grande Trail. Prioritize the construction of segments of the City's multi-use trail network that will also serve as a principal segment of the Rio Grande Trail.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	
2.2.2	Recreational Trail System. Work with the US Bureau of Land Management, State Land Office, and advocacy organizations such as the Friends of the Organ Mountains and Southern New Mexico Trails Alliance to develop a series of designated low-impact recreational trails that provide non-motorized connections between the developed areas of Las Cruces to the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks N.M.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT/ STUDY	
OBJECTIVE 2.3. PROVIDE SAFE ACCESS TO THE CITY'S MULTI-USE TRAIL AND RECREATIONAL TRAIL NETWORKS.							
2.3.1	Multi-use Trails – Connectivity. Amend land development regulations to require direct pathway connections between new development and the city-wide multi-use trail network.					REGULATION	CITY COUNCIL/ CITY STAFF/ P&Z/ PRAB
2.3.2	Multi-use Trails – Intersections. Prioritize the improvement of multi-use trail/roadway intersections to create safer network interconnectivity. Fund hand-actuated signalization and other traffic control enhancements for bicyclists and pedestrians at key intersections and at mid-block crossing points.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT/ POLICY/ STUDY	CITY
2.3.3	Trailheads. Improve trailhead accommodations. Distinguish between minor trailheads (those with basic accommodations such as seating, signage, and fix-it stations) and major trailheads (which may also include parking, restrooms, and pavilions).					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT/ POLICY/ STUDY	CITY/ DOÑA ANA COUNTY











*O=Ongoing

FIGURE 5.1, PRIORITIZED IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN (CONT.)

ACTION ID	ACTION	INITIATION TIME FRAME (YEARS)				ACTION TYPE	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS
		1-2	3-5	6-10+	O*		
GOAL #3: PARK FACILITIES AND AMENITIES. INCREASE COMMUNITY-WIDE RECREATIONAL CHOICE BY INCORPORATING NEW INDOOR AND OUTDOOR FACILITIES INTO THE MUNICIPAL PARK SYSTEM PORTFOLIO.							
OBJECTIVE 3.1. EXPAND RECREATIONAL FACILITY OFFERINGS TO MEET THE DIVERSE INTERESTS OF LAS CRUCENS.							
3.1.1	Level of Service – Recreational Facilities. Construct, rehabilitate, and/or replace standard system-wide recreational facilities consistent with the level of service recommendations established in the parks and recreation master plan.					REGULATION	CITY
3.1.2	General Obligation Bond Projects. Amend the five-year capital improvements plan to incorporate the parks and recreation projects included in the general obligation bond approved by voters in 2018.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	CITY
3.1.3	Access – City Complex. Review access policies to the City Complex including the Archery Range and RC Model Airplane Field to allow for predictable access to both recreational amenities.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	CITY
3.1.4	Aquatics – Splash Pads. Replace the Apodaca Pool with a splash pad facility.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	CITY
3.1.5	Aquatics – Swimming Pools. Construct a new swimming pool east of Interstate 25.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	CITY
3.1.6	Inclusive Play Areas. Incorporate inclusive playground facilities into various regional, community, and neighborhood parks to provide a greater distribution of facilities to serve individuals with physical disabilities.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	CITY/ NON-PROFIT
3.1.7	Athletic Fields – Miracle League Field. Construct a baseball field consistent with Miracle League standards to enable the establishment of a local baseball league for children with disabilities.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	CITY/ NON-PROFIT
3.1.8	Conceptual Park Design and Improvements. Incorporate completed conceptual park design projects into the capital budget.					STUDY	CITY/ RESIDENTS
3.1.9	Apodaca Park Concept Design Plan. Prepare a master plan for an expanded Apodaca Park.					STUDY	CITY/ RESIDENTS
3.1.10	Indoor Recreation Facilities. Conduct a feasibility study for the addition of indoor recreation space with an emphasis on gymnasium and multi-purpose meeting room space.					STUDY	CITY
3.1.11	Pump Track. Construct a BMX pump track in the Hadley Avenue Recreation Complex to provide trick riders with a similar level of service as skaters a BMX track riders.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	CITY/ DONORS
3.1.12	Shade Structures. Invest in shade structures in conjunction with play scapes and adjacent seating areas in locations as identified in the parks conditions assessment.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	CITY
3.1.13	Shooting Sports. Expand the number of bays at the Butterfield Trail Shooting Range to support additional skeet and trap shooting.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	CITY/ DONORS
3.1.14	Skate Park – Renovations. Redesign and renovate the skate park at the Hadley Avenue Recreation Complex.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	CITY/ DONORS
3.1.15	Skate Park - Facility Additions. Increase skate park accessibility by incorporating “skate spot” features into selected parks that are distributed throughout the City.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	CITY
3.1.16	Teen Facility. Add indoor recreation facilities designed to meet the needs and interests of teenagers.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	CITY









*O=Ongoing

FIGURE 5.1, PRIORITIZED IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN (CONT.)

ACTION ID	ACTION	INITIATION TIME FRAME (YEARS)				ACTION TYPE	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS
		1-2	3-5	6-10+	O*		
GOAL #4: PARKLAND AND FACILITY MAINTENANCE. PROVIDE A HIGH LEVEL OF PARK LAND AND FACILITY MAINTENANCE THAT PLACES EQUAL EMPHASIS ON LANDSCAPES, HARD-SCAPES, AND STRUCTURES.							
OBJECTIVE 4.1. SCHEDULE SYSTEM-WIDE FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS THAT REDUCE AND ELIMINATE PARKLAND AND FACILITY MAINTENANCE DEFICIENCIES.							
4.1.1	General Park Enhancements. Utilize the park-by-park results of the park and recreation master plan’s conditions assessment to prioritize annual updates to recreational and accessory amenities within low-scoring parks.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	CITY
4.1.2	Conditions Assessment. Prepare a bi-annual update to the park and recreation master plan’s conditions assessment and prepare a supporting record of accomplishments report.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	CITY
4.1.3	ADA Accessibility Standards. Design and maintain parks and facilities to offer universal accessibility for residents of all physical capabilities, skill levels and age. Assess planned and existing parks and trails for compliance with ADA Standards for Accessible Design.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	CITY
4.1.4	Irrigation System Specifications. Incorporate standard specifications for irrigation systems into a parks system design standards manual.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	CITY
4.1.5	Irrigation System Upgrades. Commission a system-wide inspection of irrigation systems in City park properties and other municipal property.					STUDY	CITY
4.1.6	Public Art - Donation and Installation. Work jointly with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and the City Art Board to prepare a uniform policy for the donation and installation of art on public properties. The policy should link art installation to identified CIP projects to ensure maximum site integration.					POLICY	CITY COUNCIL/ CITY STAFF/ P&Z/ PRAB
4.1.7	Public Art – Collection Assessment and Maintenance. Conduct a collection assessment and prepare a corresponding and comprehensive maintenance plan to evaluate the condition and maintenance needs of the City’s existing public art collection. Work jointly with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and the City Art Board to establish a long-term maintenance and collection management policy.					POLICY/ STUDY	CITY COUNCIL/ CITY STAFF/ P&Z/ PRAB
4.1.8	Traffic Control. Add bollards at strategic park locations (such as Apodaca Park) to prevent park visitors from driving motor vehicles on locations other than designated driveways and parking areas.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	CITY
4.1.9	Urban Forestry. Work with the Community Development and Public Works Department to create standard street cross-sections that incorporate street trees. Update design standards in the Las Cruces Development Code related to the installation and management of trees planted in public street rights-of-way and on other public properties.					POLICY/ REGULATION	CITY
4.1.10	Volunteer Projects. Identify a series of facility maintenance or upgrade projects that are of a complexity and scale that special interest of volunteer groups can undertake with minimal Parks Section oversight.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	CITY/ NON-PROFIT

*O=Ongoing

FIGURE 5.1, PRIORITIZED IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN (CONT.)







ACTION ID	ACTION	INITIATION TIME FRAME (YEARS)				ACTION TYPE	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS
		1-2	3-5	6-10+	O*		
OBJECTIVE 4.2. CONTINUE TO EXPLORE ALTERNATIVE FUNDING METHODS AND RESOURCE ALLOCATIONS TO AUGMENT ONGOING MAINTENANCE INITIATIVES.							
4.2.1	Fee Structure - Athletics. Adjust athletic programming fees to cover a higher percentage of the estimated long-term maintenance costs of publicly-approved major capital investments.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	CITY
4.2.2	Funding – Accessory Facility Replacement. Provide a direct annual funding source that will allow the Parks and Recreation Department to quickly replace non-recreational equipment such as garbage cans, benches, shade structures, signage, and more.					POLICY	CITY
4.2.3	Funding - Equipment Replacement. Create an equipment replacement fund to periodically replace treadmills, weight machines, aquatic equipment, outdoor athletic equipment, and more on an as-needed basis.					POLICY	CITY
4.2.4	Satellite Shop Facilities. Identify suitable locations in the northeastern part of the city to construct satellite shop facilities as a supplement to the central maintenance yard.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	CITY
4.2.5	Special Events. Measure staff hours and general City expenditures related to preparation, management, and post-event activities to determine costs related to event support.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	CITY/ CVB
4.2.6	Staffing Ratios. Adopt a ratio-based system whereby park maintenance staff is added at a uniform rate concurrent with parkland additions to ensure a proper level of maintenance.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	CITY
4.2.7	Technology Integration. Improve field staff’s access to handheld GPS and web-based equipment to improve field maintenance and inventory activities.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	CITY

*O=Ongoing

The play equipment at Henry Benavidez Community Center could benefit from equipment replacement funding.















FIGURE 5.1, PRIORITIZED IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN (CONT.)

ACTION ID	ACTION	INITIATION TIME FRAME (YEARS)				ACTION TYPE	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS
		1-2	3-5	6-10+	O*		
GOAL #5: PARK DESIGN AND PROGRAMMING. INCREASE RESIDENTS’ AND VISITORS’ ENJOYMENT OF EXISTING AND NEW PARK SPACES THROUGH THE APPLICATION OF STANDARD PARK DESIGN AND PROGRAMMING PRACTICES.							
OBJECTIVE 5.1. DEVELOP AND APPLY UNIFORM DESIGN POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR PARKS SYSTEM LANDSCAPE AND HARDSCAPE FEATURES AND FACILITIES.							
5.1.1	Branding and Signage Program. Prepare a system-wide branding plan and design manual. Develop consistent standards for identification, informational, regulatory, and way-finding signage, and banners.					POLICY	CITY
5.1.2	Conceptual Park Design. Formulate illustrative master plans for the development or redevelopment of each park, as appropriate, to take maximum advantage of grant or other funding opportunities.					STUDY	CITY/ RESIDENTS
5.1.3	Design Standards Manual. Prepare a parks system design standards manual to identify the intended character of preferred amenities and structures. Existing facilities may be replaced according to the recommendations of the standards manual beginning with non-permanent fixtures.					POLICY	CITY
5.1.4	Park, Facility, and Program Planning. Involve residents and stakeholders in conceptual site planning and programming for specific park properties and recreational facilities, and in recreational program development or modification, to facilitate project understanding and garner public support.					STUDY	CITY/ RESIDENTS
5.1.5	Lighting - Safety Assessment. Conduct a park-by-park safety assessment with the Police Department to identify locations where security lighting upgrades are most necessary consistent with the City's outdoor lighting ordinance (including compliance with "dark sky" guidelines), and appropriate City design standards manuals.					STUDY	PRAB/ POLICE
5.1.6	Lighting Technology. Incorporate lighting standards into a parks system design manual that promotes an appropriate amount of lighting for the use that is being illuminated and applies a BUG rating (backlighting, up lighting, and glare) that minimize the impact on adjacent properties and city-wide viewsheds.					POLICY	CITY
5.1.7	Low-Impact Design Practices. Work with the Las Cruces Sustainability Office to incorporate low-impact development and green building design practices into parkland and facility development and renovation projects.					POLICY/ REGULATION	CITY
5.1.8	Maintenance and Operation Estimates. Include a M.O.R.E. assessment and estimate (maintenance, operations, revenues, and expenditures) within all conceptual park design plans to ensure long-term maintenance and operations funds are incorporated into the Parks and Recreation Department budget following capital expenditure.					POLICY	CITY
5.1.9	Way-finding. Implement a multi-use trail way-finding system including directional signage, mileage markers, and location maps.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT/ REGULATION	CITY










*O=Ongoing

FIGURE 5.1, PRIORITIZED IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN (CONT.)

ACTION ID	ACTION	INITIATION TIME FRAME (YEARS)				ACTION TYPE	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS
		1-2	3-5	6-10+	0*		
GOAL #6: RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS. INCREASE PUBLIC ACCESSIBILITY TO RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BY OFFERING A DIVERSE SUITE OF PROGRAMS THAT CATER TO VARYING COMMUNITY INTERESTS, AGES, AND ABILITIES.							
OBJECTIVE 6.1. MONITOR AND REFINE THE METHODS BY WHICH RECREATIONAL PROGRAMING SERVICES ARE PROVIDED TO THE PUBLIC.							
6.1.1	Aquatics – Competition. Support competitive youth swimming programs upon completion of the 50-meter lap pool at the Las Cruces Recreational Aquatic Center. Consider sponsoring an instructional swim league catering to entry-level swimmers of varying ages.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	CITY/ YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS
6.1.2	Community Events. Continue to promote and expand family-oriented programming, special events, festivals and concerts, to enhance community identity, activity and education. Utilize the City’s parks, trails and recreation facilities as settings for community events where possible.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	CITY/ CVB/ NMSU/ NON-PROFITS
6.1.3	Athletic Programming. Continue to leverage City resources by forming and maintaining partnerships with other public, non-profit and private recreation providers to deliver athletics programming.					POLICY	NON-PROFITS
6.1.4	Programming Staff. Expand the relationship with NMSU to increase students’ opportunities to coach, instruct, or teach in conjunction with municipal recreational programs on a temporary or part-time basis.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	NMSU
6.1.5	Healthy Community. Review City policies regarding food and alcohol consumption and tobacco use at municipal properties.					POLICY	CITY
6.1.6	Program Reporting. Periodically undertake a comprehensive evaluation of existing recreation program offerings in terms of persons served, customer satisfaction, attendance, cost/subsidy and availability of similar programs via other providers.					STUDY	CITY
6.1.7	Cost Recovery. Review and update cost recovery guidelines for existing and planned recreation programs and services.					STUDY	CITY COUNCIL/ PRAB
OBJECTIVE 6.2. EXPAND PROGRAM OFFERINGS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF UNDER-SERVED USER GROUPS.							
6.2.1	Teen Programming. Work with youth organizations to identify and create a suite of programs that interest teens.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	YOUTH BOARD/ PRAB
6.2.2	Community Schools. Use the Community School platform to provide targeted after-school and other programming options to residents within specific neighborhoods and school attendance areas.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	CITY/ LCPS
6.2.3	Special Needs Programming. Continue to increase the City’s offerings of special needs programming to provide individuals with disabilities the opportunity to participate in a variety of physical, mental, and social activities.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	NON-PROFITS
6.2.4	Special Interest Sports. Add special interest sports instruction to the City’s recreational programs which take advantage of existing facilities.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	NON-PROFITS






*O=Ongoing

FIGURE 5.1, PRIORITIZED IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN (CONT.)

ACTION ID	ACTION	INITIATION TIME FRAME (YEARS)				ACTION TYPE	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS
		1-2	3-5	6-10+	O*		
GOAL #7: COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND PARTNERSHIPS. CONNECT RESIDENTS AND VISITORS TO RECREATIONAL SPACE AND PROGRAMS THROUGH A ROBUST AND SUSTAINED PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORT, AND BY LEVERAGING PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER RECREATIONAL, EDUCATIONAL, AND SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS.							
OBJECTIVE 7.1. ACTIVELY MARKET THE AVAILABILITY OF MUNICIPAL PARKLAND, RECREATIONAL FACILITIES, AND CITY-SPONSORED RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES TO RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.							
7.1.1	Community Relations Plan. Coordinate with the Community Outreach Office and Public Information Office to establish clear policies and procedures for coordinating community outreach efforts related to park maintenance and programming.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	CITY
7.1.2	Community Outreach. Coordinate with the Community Outreach Office, Keep Las Cruces Beautiful, neighborhood organizations, homeowners' associations, service organizations, churches, and businesses to identify volunteer community service projects for basic park maintenance and improvement.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	CITY
7.1.3	On-line Parks App and Mapping Tool. Work with other City departments to provide improved access to interactive on-line parks system mapping features that identify the location of specific park properties and facilities in relation to specific queries including park name, facility type, addresses, and more.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	CITY
7.1.4	Marketing – General. Continue to develop and refine the Park and Recreation Department's marketing image (i.e. style, formats, message, etc.).					NON-CAPITAL INVESTMENT	CITY
7.1.5	Marketing – Tourism. Work with the Convention and Visitors' Bureau and the Chamber of Commerce to development information packets that promote municipal parks and recreational programs aimed at tourists and new residents.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	CHAMBER OF COMMERCE/ CONVENTION AND VISITORS' BUREAU
OBJECTIVE 7.2. EXPAND PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS TO MAXIMIZE ACCESSIBILITY TO RECREATIONAL SPACE AND PROGRAMS.							
7.2.1	Advocacy Group. Support community-initiated efforts to create a “friends” group that can provide volunteers, funding, or in-kind contributions, and oversee advocacy efforts to supplement municipal parks and recreation services.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	CITY
7.2.2	Funding Partners. Create partnerships with advocacy and special interest groups to access funding for various recreational activities such as youth leagues, special events, athletic competitions, special use facilities, and concerts.					POLICY	CITY
7.2.3	Conservation Organizations. Encourage the participation of community-based or non-profit conservation organizations to support development and management of a municipal open space lands program.					POLICY	CITY
7.2.4	Trail Organizations. Foster the development and capacity of local volunteer trail advocates (including the Southern New Mexico Trail Alliance) to help with trails planning efforts, garner community support, leverage community resources, and play a role in stewardship and maintenance of trail facilities.					POLICY	CITY

*O=Ongoing

FIGURE 5.1, PRIORITIZED IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN (CONT.)












ACTION ID	ACTION	INITIATION TIME FRAME (YEARS)				ACTION TYPE	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS
		1-2	3-5	6-10+	O*		
7.2.5	Healthcare Providers. Continue to explore partnership opportunities with regional healthcare providers and services, such as MountainView Regional Medical Center, Memorial Medical Center, and the Doña Ana County Health and Human Services Department, to promote wellness activities, healthy lifestyles and communications about local facilities and the benefits of parks and recreation.					POLICY	CITY
7.2.6	Las Cruces Public Schools. Continue to foster the partnership with Las Cruces Public Schools to utilize school sites for the placement of publicly-accessible recreation facilities and programs through cooperative joint-use agreements. Explore additional opportunities to co-develop facilities on school property or property adjacent to schools as the city grows.					POLICY	LCPS
7.2.7	Neighborhood Watch. Continue the Neighborhood Watch program to reduce vandalism and improve the sense of security at municipal parks.					POLICY	NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS/ POLICE
7.2.8	State and Federal Lands. Continue to foster partnership opportunities on state and federal lands promoting outdoor activities including shooting sports, hunting, hiking, camping, wildlife viewing, mountain biking, rock climbing, off-road sports and similar activities in a way that does not adversely affect other resources.					POLICY	BLM/ STATE
7.2.9	Tree City USA. Continue efforts with other City departments to obtain Tree City USA designation by preparing and adopting tree policies or ordinances.					POLICY	CITY

*O=Ongoing

The provision of senior programs promotes the City's efforts of being a healthy community.



FIGURE 5.1, PRIORITIZED IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN (CONT.)

ACTION ID	ACTION	INITIATION TIME FRAME (YEARS)				ACTION TYPE	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS
		1-2	3-5	6-10+	0*		
GOAL #8: ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT. IMPROVE THE EFFICIENCY OF PARK AND RECREATION SERVICE DELIVERY BY ALIGNING ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATIONAL PRACTICES WITH MASTER PLAN GOALS.							
OBJECTIVE 8.1. FOSTER AN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE THAT CAN ENHANCE THE DELIVERY OF PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES TO THE RESIDENTS OF LAS CRUCES.							
8.1.1	Accreditation. Achieve Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies accreditation from the National Recreation and Parks Association.					POLICY	CITY
8.1.2	Department Organization – Events and Outreach. Add a special events manager/coordinator and a social media/marketing position to the Recreation Section.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT/ OPERATIONAL CHANGE	CITY
8.1.3	Department Organization – Facilities. Assign a facilities manager to exclusively oversee the maintenance & renovation of buildings and structures operated by the Parks and Recreation Department. The dedicated facilities manager may be added to the Parks section of the Department or remain within the Facilities Management section of Public Works.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT/ OPERATIONAL CHANGE	CITY
8.1.4	Department Organization – Planning. Establish a permanent long-range planning position to oversee annual reporting and long-range planning activities in conjunction with CAPRA standards.					FINANCIAL INVESTMENT/ OPERATIONAL CHANGE	CITY
8.1.5	Department Organization – Public Safety. Establish a Park Ranger Section to be staffed by state accredited law enforcement officers to monitor municipal park properties and to oversee security at public events.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE/ STUDY	POLICE
8.1.6	Rights-of-way. Evaluate the transfer of alley and right-of-way maintenance to another City Department so that the Parks and Recreation Department can focus on their core mission of providing recreational services to the community.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE/ STUDY	PUBLIC WORKS
8.1.7	Professional Development. Promote professional development opportunities that strengthen the core skills and engender greater commitment from staff, Board members and key volunteers, to include trainings, materials and/or affiliation with the NRPA, the New Mexico Recreation and Park Association, the Sports Turf Managers Association, and other applicable organizations.					POLICY	CITY
OBJECTIVE 8.2. AUGMENT DATA COLLECTION METHODS TO CALIBRATE AND IMPROVE THE DELIVERY OF PUBLIC PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES.							
8.2.1	Annual Report. Prepare an annual report providing information to the public about parks and recreation funding and stewardship of tax dollars and fees & charges and distribute the report as widely as possible.					POLICY	PRAB
8.2.2	Board Coordination. Conduct periodic joint sessions between the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and other standing City boards and the City Council to improve coordination and to discuss policy matters pertaining to recreational resources, opportunities and funding.					POLICY	CITY COUNCIL/ OTHER CITY BOARDS/ PRAB
8.2.3	Historical and Cultural Resources. Partner with the Historic Preservation Committee and City Art Board to ensure that local historical and cultural resources on public properties are maintained.					POLICY	CITY ART BOARD/ HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
8.2.4	Performance Measures. Actively participate in the NRPA's Park Metrics program on a recurring basis including the input of annual agency updates into the Park Metrics program, and the evaluation of updated agency performance reports.					OPERATIONAL CHANGE	CITY

*O=Ongoing

SECTION 2:

PLAN ADMINISTRATION

The Las Cruces Parks and Recreation Department will oversee day-to-day management of this Plan. As evidenced by the growth of Las Cruces over the last decade, conditions in the City of Las Cruces will continue to change during the Master Plan's 10-plus year horizon. As the population of Las Cruces changes, the community could indicate a special need for a facility or program not prioritized in this Plan; an unexpected funding source could become available; or, implementation of recommended Plan actions could occur in an order or at a pace that is different from the priorities shown in **Figure 5.1, Prioritized Implementation Action Plan** (pages 207 - 218).

A review and update of this Plan should be conducted on a yearly basis, or when significant changes arise. For instance, Action 8.2.1 in **Chapter 4** recommends an annual report. These updates could be issued in short report format and attached to this Master Plan for easy use. Four (4) primary focus areas subject to periodic evaluation should consist of:

- **Facility Inventory and Conditions Assessment (Action 4.1.2, page 177).** *An inventory of new or improved City-owned facilities should be documented on an ongoing basis. In addition, this inventory should reference major changes or enhancements to the City's park properties and facilities.*
- **Community Involvement (Action 5.1.2, page 183; Action 6.1.5, page 189).** *This Master Plan reflects the attitudes voiced by the present community members of Las Cruces. Periodic surveys are suggested to provide a continuing account of resident attitudes. To make an accurate evaluation of the changes in opinions, it is suggested that upcoming surveys contain comparable questions to those contained within this Plan.*
- **Facility Use and Program Participation (Action 6.1.5, page 189).** *Facility use is an important factor in determining the need for additional facilities. Similarly, measures of program participation will help Las Cruces to determine how to adjust its recreational program and event offerings over time to best meet latent public demand. The City should continue to compile its "recreation and facility annual activity reports" and use the findings to adjust Master Plan recommendations as required.*
- **Implementation Program.** *As items from the Action Plan (Figure 5.1, Prioritized Implementation Action Plan) are implemented, updates should be made to each to sustain an up-to-date work program for City staff, and elected and appointed officials.*

PLAN REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

The 2006 New Mexico Statutes – Section 5-8-3 – Authorization of fee states the following:

"A municipality and county may enter into a joint powers agreement to provide capital improvements within an area subject to both county and municipal platting and subdivision jurisdiction or extraterritorial jurisdiction and may charge an impact fee under the agreement, but if an impact fee is charged in that area, the municipality and county shall comply with the Development Fees Act."

The City's Impact Fee Study states that impact fees can only be used for capital improvements. Therefore, improvements made to parks are effected by both the Development Fees Act and the City's Impact Fee Study.

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT AND AMENDMENT

Before to the beginning of the yearly budget process, Parks and Recreation Department staff should create and present a yearly progress report to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) on the status of the actions in the implementation action plan and other relevant topics (in accordance with Action 8.2.1 (Annual Report), page 199). Staff should also work with elected and appointed officials to determine if the implementation action plan should be amended.

Annual report preparation should also serve as an opportunity to update the PRAB and City Council on the department's status of attaining CAPRA (Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies).

FIVE-YEAR UPDATE

A five-year plan update should be conducted to update land use assumptions and parkland/facility inventories; and, providing current information needed to update parks and recreation impact fees in accordance with the State of New Mexico's Development Impact Fees Act. A five-year Plan update also serves as an opportunity to solicit additional public opinion about recreational preferences and target levels of service.

CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

Several actions listed under Goal #4, Parkland and Facility Maintenance, are related to this Plan's conditions assessment. Suggested actions include a bi-annual update to the park and recreation master plan's conditions assessment to ensure the adequate maintenance of the parks system. The conditions assessment can also be used to prioritize park enhancements, starting with the amenities in the lowest scoring parks first.

INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION

Responsibility for the day-to-day oversight and management of this Parks Master Plan will be shared among the Parks and Recreation Department, City Manager's Office, and Public Works Department. Other City departments will also be involved with assisting in Plan administration including: Community Development, Public Outreach, and Police.

The Parks and Recreation Department will also need to coordinate with the Mesilla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Doña Ana County to ensure that the Plan is being implemented consistently with the plans from these organizations.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Although the Parks and Recreation Department will be responsible for the oversight of this Plan, it is not the department responsible for establishing municipal park and recreation policy. Master Plan administration and implementation decisions must reflect the continuing direction of the City Council, and advisory boards. This section affirms the roles of important City boards and commissions in ensuring that the Plan - including upcoming revisions and implementation actions - remains the main guide influencing City park system growth.

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

The City of Las Cruces Code of Ordinances shows the responsibilities of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) for the City of Las Cruces. This section of code consists of the provision that the Board:

"...shall review all business and operations of the several parks and recreation areas and the recreation programs of the city; shall investigate any problems relating thereto; shall receive, review and present community recommendations; and shall ensure that the city council is fully apprised of parks and recreation matters at all times." (ch 2, § 2-348, City of Las Cruces Code of Ordinances)

The PRAB acts as the City's advisory body for preparing and executing the City's parks master plan. Yearly Plan reviews suggested in herein should be conducted in consultation with the PRAB, and all future revisions should contain Board approval. The PRAB should be consulted when creating parks and recreation policy in other City planning documents – including the City's comprehensive plan.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Las Cruces City Code establishes the duties of powers of the City's Capital Improvements Advisory Committee (CIAC). One of the CIAC's main responsibilities is to monitor and assess execution of the capital improvements plan. Continual coordination between the CIAC and PRAB will be important to ensure that capital improvement projects are consistent with this Plan.

The responsibility of the CIAC is to guide the city in adopting land use assumptions - consisting of an explanation of the service area and projection of changes and land uses, densities, intensities and residents in the service area in a minimum a five-year time frame - for purposes of recommending impact fees for various public services to the City Council.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

The responsibilities of the Las Cruces Planning and Zoning Commission are established in City Charter and the Las Cruces City Code. The review and oversight of a municipal comprehensive plan is included within the Commission's powers. Frequent coordination among the Commission and the PRAB will be essential to guarantee that comprehensive plan policies and recommendations align with this Plan.

The Planning and Zoning Commission is also responsible for managing the City's subdivision regulations and zoning ordinance. Their coordination with the PARB will be necessary to process land development regulation amendments recommended by this Plan.



The historic Pioneer Womens' Park was established by the first members of the Women's Improvement Association. The park was deeded to the City in 1942.

OTHER BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

The Historic Preservation Committee helps City staff create standards for a city-wide historic preservation ordinance. The Committee and the PARB will need to coordinate to guarantee that historic buildings are protected and preserved in the City. The responsibilities of the Historic Preservation Committee include creating local historic districts and the creation of design guidelines/standards.

CITY ART BOARD

The City Art Board makes official recommendations to the City Council relative to the acquisition and commissioning of municipal art installations. Coordination between the City Art Board and the PARB will be important to ensure that public art is commissioned and managed in a manner that is consistent with the recommendations in this Plan. The City Art Board will assume a primary role in assisting City staff in the creation of guidelines, programming, and management of policies, rules and regulations and recommendation for new art related projects and programs.

SECTION 3:

PARKS AND RECREATION FUNDING STRATEGIES

Investment in the Las Cruces parks and recreation system of a scale to maintain current levels of service and to match the aspirational targets proposed in this Plan requires the use of creative funding strategies. Although minor enhancements to current parks can frequently be completed by employing local funds, additional park, open space, and large facility projects may require other additional funding sources.

This section lists and describes some key (and common) funding implementation assistance opportunities. An extensive list of park and recreation funding opportunities is found in **Appendix E**.

KEY CITY-GENERATED FUNDING SOURCES

General Fund expenditures (i.e., non-capital expenditures) are mainly used for enhancements or repairs to existing parks and facilities. Typical general fund expenditures are for minor repair and replacement efforts. *(Note: Funding sources listed in this section are to prioritized.)*

MUNICIPAL BONDS

Debt financing through the issuance of municipal bonds is the most common method to fund park and open space projects. This kind of funding is an approach in which a city issues a bond, obtains an immediate cash payment to finance projects, and must repay the bond with interest over a set timeframe. General obligation bonds are the most common form of municipal bond and are the main bond type for park and open space projects.

BOND REFERENDUM

The Plan suggests immense capital needs, renovation and additional amenities, to meet the desires and demands of community members in Las Cruces. Following the completion of the recently approved 2018 GO bond, a new bond referendum could be held to fund an additional round of capital improvements that address needs referenced in this Plan. These bonds would be general obligation bonds introduced by City Council approval and resident vote. Similarly, a bond referendum or 1/4 cent sales tax referendum may provide funds for the creation of an open space lands program as recommended herein (Action 1.1.5, page 160).

REVENUE BONDS

A revenue bond is a municipal bond supported by the revenue from a specific project. Revenue bonds finance profit generating projects and are protected by a definite revenue source.

PROGRAM FEES AND FACILITY RENTALS

As referenced in **Chapter 3**, revenue generated directly by the Parks and Recreation Department through services, programs, special events, and other activities offered directly to the public accounts for almost 22 percent of all parks and recreation revenue. The City must continually evaluate how these fees can be calibrated to better share the costs of recreational programs while remaining affordable to those residents with the greatest need for public services (see Action 6.1.6, page 190).

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING/PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

These related tools permit a development district to divert part of its property taxes to fund infrastructure enhancements in its area including plazas, pocket parks, linear parks, and additional kinds of facilities. In New Mexico, this tool is referred to as a Tax Increment Development District (TIDD).

UTILITY PARTNERSHIPS

This type of partnership can be created for the purpose of providing and improving linear parks and trails in utility easements. This partnership usually does not include financial contributions. Although, through use agreements and/or easements, it makes property for trail corridors available at little or no cost to the public. Drainage corridors maintained by the Elephant Butte Irrigation District (EBID) are a principal example of where utility partnerships can be leveraged for public access.

PARK DEVELOPMENT FEES (AND IMPACT FEES)

The City of Las Cruces currently collects impact fees as part of new residential development for the acquisition and improvement of new parkland. Whether assessing impact fees or not, many communities require direct parkland contributions through their land development regulations. Land development regulation requirements for parkland often include a fee-in-lieu provision that allow the community to collect a fee instead of parkland where necessary. Still other provisions may require a separate park development fee in addition to land dedication.

UTILITY BILL CONTRIBUTIONS

In several communities, community members are permitted to add a minor amount to their utility bills to fund specific park enhancements. For example, the City of Colleyville, Texas, offers a Voluntary Park Fund, which permits residents to contribute \$2.00 per month through their water utility bills. This results in around \$150,000 per year, which is used to fund park enhancements in their city.

PRIVATE DONATIONS

Private donations from involved residents, businesses, and organizations can support the parks and recreation system development. An official park contribution and donation program can be used to gather property and financial contributions for use in the City.

SPECIAL REVENUE FUND

A special revenue fund is an account set up by a government entity devoted to funding a specific project. This account is sponsored by taxpayers and offers assurance that funding will go to an identified need.

REAL ESTATE TRANSFER FEES

Since parks increase value to neighborhoods, some municipalities have turned to real estate transfer fees to assist in paying for required renovations.

SALES TAX

The income source is extremely popular for funding park and recreation agencies either in part or entirely. The typical sales tax rate is one cent for operations and one half cent for capital.

KEY GRANT FUNDING SOURCES

Grants can provide a substantial source of further funding for parks, but should not be used as the main source for park creation since funding is not guaranteed and local matches are often required.

- **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)** - *This National Park Service fund is broken out in two (2) funding types: state grants and federal acquisition. State grants are dispersed to all 50 states, DC, and other territories based on factors such as number of residents. State grant funds can be used for park development and for purchase of parkland or easements.*
- **Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Grants** - *The Urban Park and Recreation Recovery (UPARR) program was started in November 1978 to offer matching grants and technical support to economically distraught municipal communities for restoration of critically desired recreation facilities.*
- **Community Development Block Grants** - *These funds are projected to create practical municipal areas by offering decent housing and an appropriate living location, and by increasing economic opportunities, primarily for low and moderate income individuals.*
- **National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council (NUCFAC) Grant** - *For 2009, the National Urban and Community Advisory Council has fixed their standards for the US Forest Service's Urban and Community Forestry challenge cost share grant program. Grants will be divided into two groups: innovation grants and best practices grants.*
- **Foundation and Company Grants** - *Can help in direct funding for projects, whereas others exist to assist resident efforts get established with small seed funds or technical and promotional support.*
- **Trust for Public Land Action Fund** - *This nonprofit corporation activates community support for measures that generate public funds for land conservation.*

LAND ACQUISITION TOOLS/METHODS

This Plan's recommended actions include measures to acquire property for parkland, trails, and open space. Property acquisition need not be limited to outright fee-simple purchase of property. Multiple methods of property acquisition can be exercised to provide greater public access to parkland and open space.

DIRECT PURCHASE METHODS

MARKET VALUE PURCHASE

By means of a written purchase and sale agreement, Las Cruces buys property at the current market price based on an independent assessment. Timing, purchase of real estate taxes and further contingencies are negotiable.

PARTIAL VALUE PURCHASE (OR BARGAIN SALE)

In a bargain sale, the property-owner decides to sell for less than the land's fair market value. A property-owner's choice to continue with a bargain sale is unique and private; property-owners with a solid sense of community pride, extensive public past or worries around capital gains are likely contenders for this method. In addition to cash profits on closing, the property-owner could be eligible to a charitable income tax deduction based on the difference among the property's fair market value and its final cost.

LIFE ESTATES & BEQUESTS

If a property-owner wants to stay on the land for an extended period or until death, many differences on a sale agreement exist. In a life estate agreement, the property-owner could remain to live on the property by giving a remainder interest and retaining a "reserved life estate." In a bequest, the property-owner entitles in a will or trust document that the land is to be shifted to Las Cruces after death.

OPTION TO PURCHASE AGREEMENT

This is a binding agreement among a property-owner and the City that would only apply according to the circumstances of the selection and restricts the seller's authority to withdraw an offer. When in place and signed, the option agreement could be activated at a upcoming, definite day or on the conclusion of chosen circumstances. Option agreements can be made for any period of time and can contain all of the language related to concluding a property sale.

IRREVOCABLE REMAINDER TRUSTS

Irrevocable remainder trusts allow persons to leave a part of their wealth to a public entity in a trust fund that permits the fund to increase over a time and then is accessible for recipient to use a part of the interest to support exact park and recreation amenities or programs that are selected by the executor.

RIGHT OF FIRST REFUSAL

In this arrangement, the property-owner grants the City the initial opportunity to obtain land for sale. The contract does not determine the sale amount for the land, and the property-owner can refuse to sell it for the amount offered by the purchaser.

SUBORDINATE EASEMENTS – RECREATION / NATURAL AREA EASEMENTS

This is offered when Las Cruces allows utility companies, businesses, or residents to create an upgrade above ground or below ground on their land for an established amount of time and an established price to be received by Las Cruces on a yearly basis.

CONSERVATION AND/OR ACCESS EASEMENTS

A property-owner willingly decides to sell or give specific privileges associated with their land (usually the right to divide or develop), and a private group or public agency decides to hold the right to implement the property-owner's promise not to exercise those rights. Conservation easements could result in an income tax deduction and reduced property taxes and estate taxes. Usually, this method is used to provide trail corridors where only a minor part of the property is required or for the protection of natural resources and habitat.

LANDOWNER INCENTIVE MEASURES DENSITY BONUSES

Density bonuses are a development means used to inspire a variety of public land use purposes, typically in urban settings. They offer the incentive of being able to develop at densities past existing regulations in one location, in return for concessions in another.

TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

The transfer of development rights (TDR) is an incentive-based development means that permits property owners to trade the right to develop land to its fullest in one area for the right to develop past rules in another location. Local governments could create the precise locations in which development could be restricted and the locations in which development of past regulation could be permitted.

