

# CHAPTER 1

# OVERVIEW



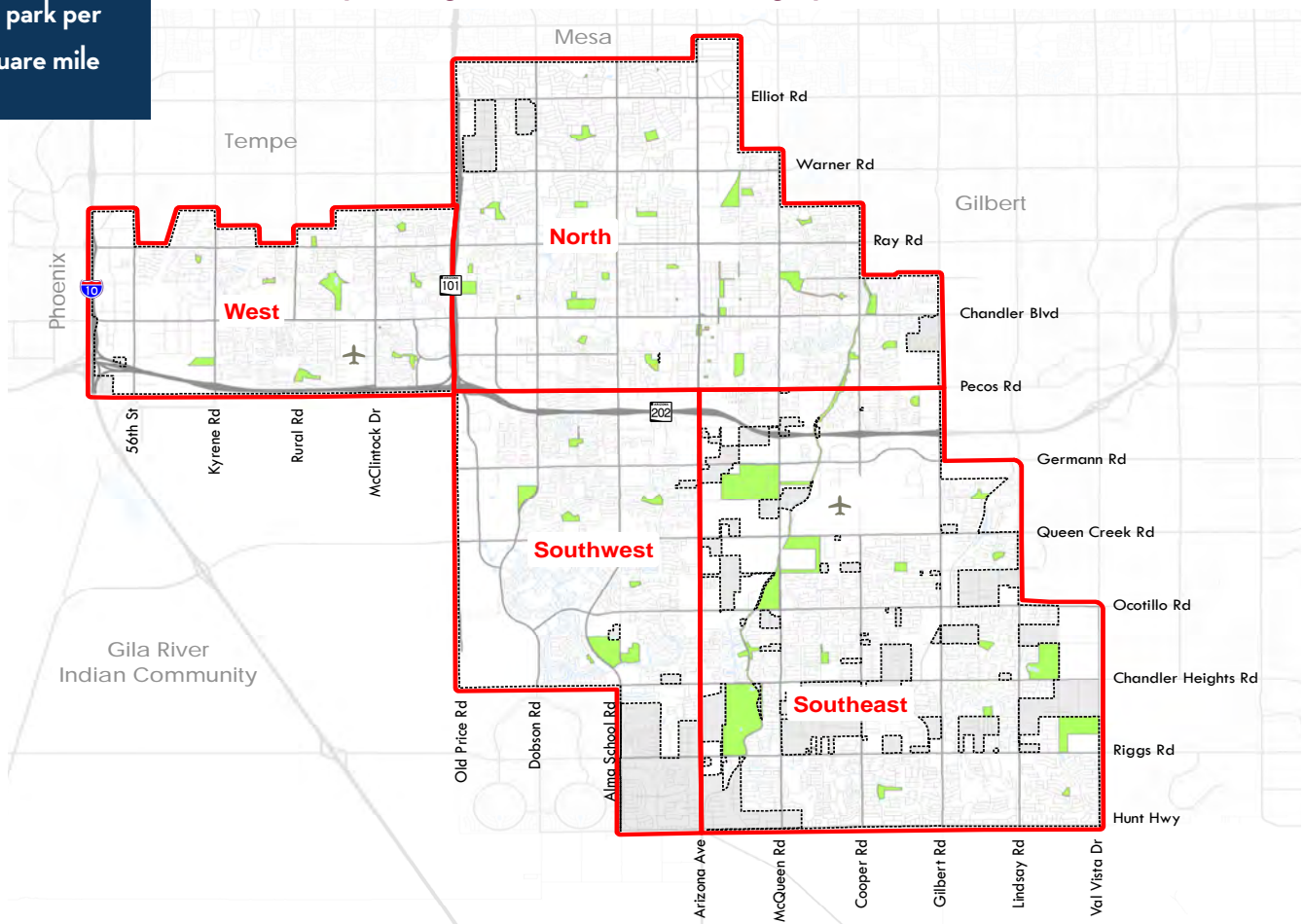


## INTRODUCTION

At nearly a quarter of a million residents, the City of Chandler (City) is the fourth largest city in Arizona. This population boom has led to a balanced diversity of parks and associated amenities throughout its history and growth. Per its mission, the City's Community Services Department (Department) 'champions everyday experiences that encourage the community to discover, imagine, and grow'. As the city has grown since its establishment in 1912 to encompass 64.90 incorporated square miles, the number of parks and facilities has equally grown with it. Currently, the Department manages 67 park assets, which equates to an average of more than one park per every square mile of the City's boundaries. The over 1,000 acres of parks and facilities, maintained by the City, offer an ample mix of traditional park types.

***For the purposes of this assessment, the City has been separated into four distinct planning areas, as shown in the graphic below:***

The Department manages 66 park assets, which equates to an average of more than one park per every square mile



## UNDEVELOPED PARK LANDS

The City currently owns over 200 acres of undeveloped parklands. Land was previously acquired and set aside by the City to expand existing and/or create new facilities at the following locations:



### DEVELOPED PARKS

- ▲ Desert Breeze Park: 2.50 Acres
- ▲ Tumbleweed Park: 77.95 Acres

### UNDEVELOPED PARKS

- ▲ Homestead North Park: 7.60 Acres
- ▲ Lantana Ranch Park: 50.77 Acres
- ▲ Mesquite Groves Park: 98.40 Acres

## SYSTEM-WIDE AMENITIES AND QUANTITIES

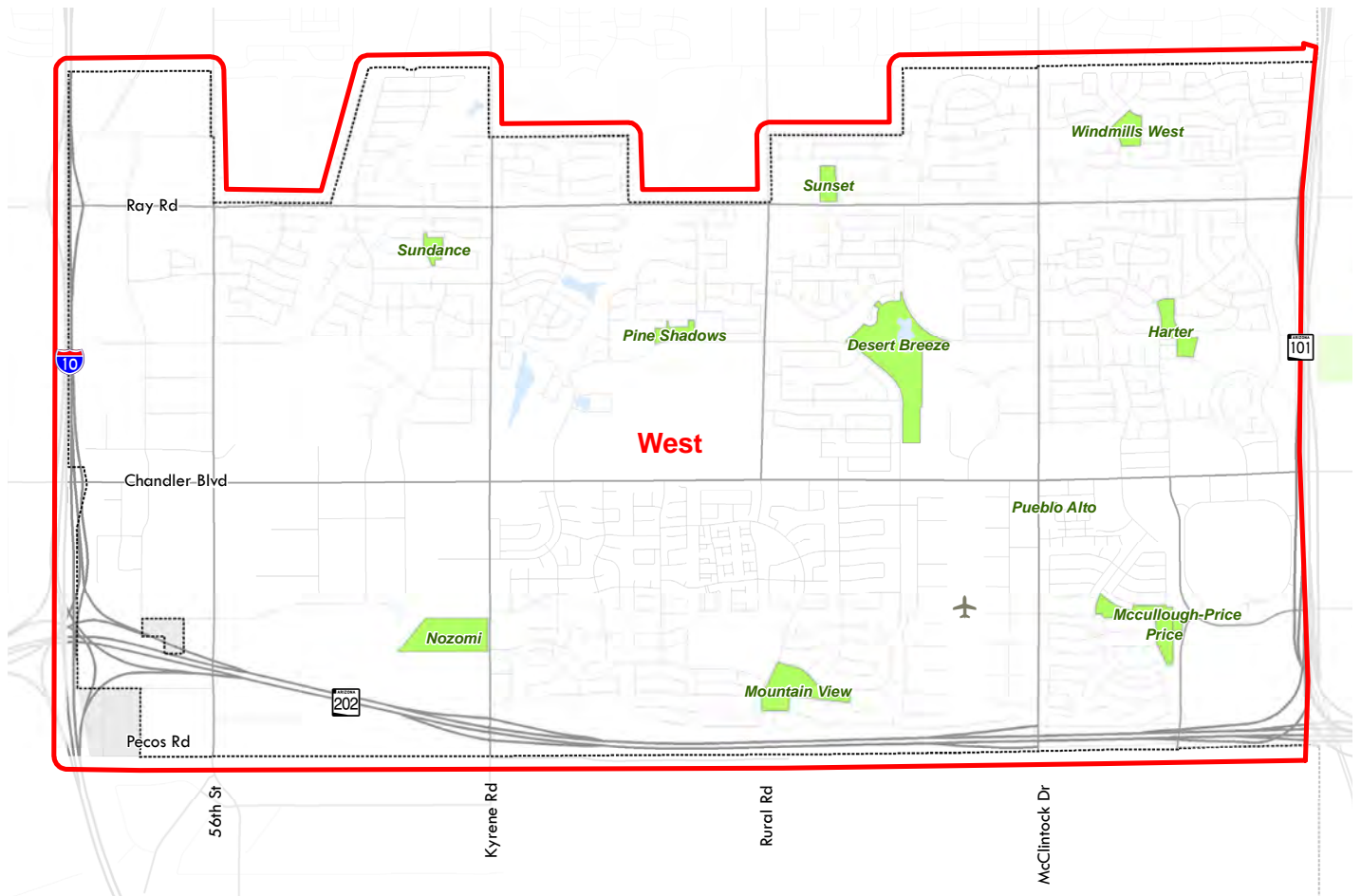
Amenity	Quantity
ARCHERY RANGE	1
BASEBALL FIELD (LIGHTED)	20
BASKETBALL COURT (LIGHTED)	40
BBQ PIT/ GRILL	162
BEAN BAG TOSS (CORNHOLE)	4
BENCH	852
BIKE RACK/ LOOP	72
BIKE/ SKATE PARK (SF)	60,000
BLEACHERS	48
BOCCE BALL COURT	3
CRICKET FIELD	1
DECORATIVE FOUNTAIN	3
DISC GOLF COURSE	1
DOG BAG STATION	252
DOG PARK	4
DRINKING FOUNTAIN	96
FENCING (LF)	1,888
FITNESS STATION	17
FLAG POLE	19
HORSESHOE PIT	11
IRRIGATION SYSTEM (AC)	1,066
KIOSK (INTERPRETIVE)	18
LAKE / POND	10
LIGHTING (SITE, SPORTS, PED, ETC)	2,950
MAINTENANCE YARD/ BUILDING	5
MULTIUSE COURT (LIGHTED)	2
MULTIUSE COURT (NON-LIGHTED)	1

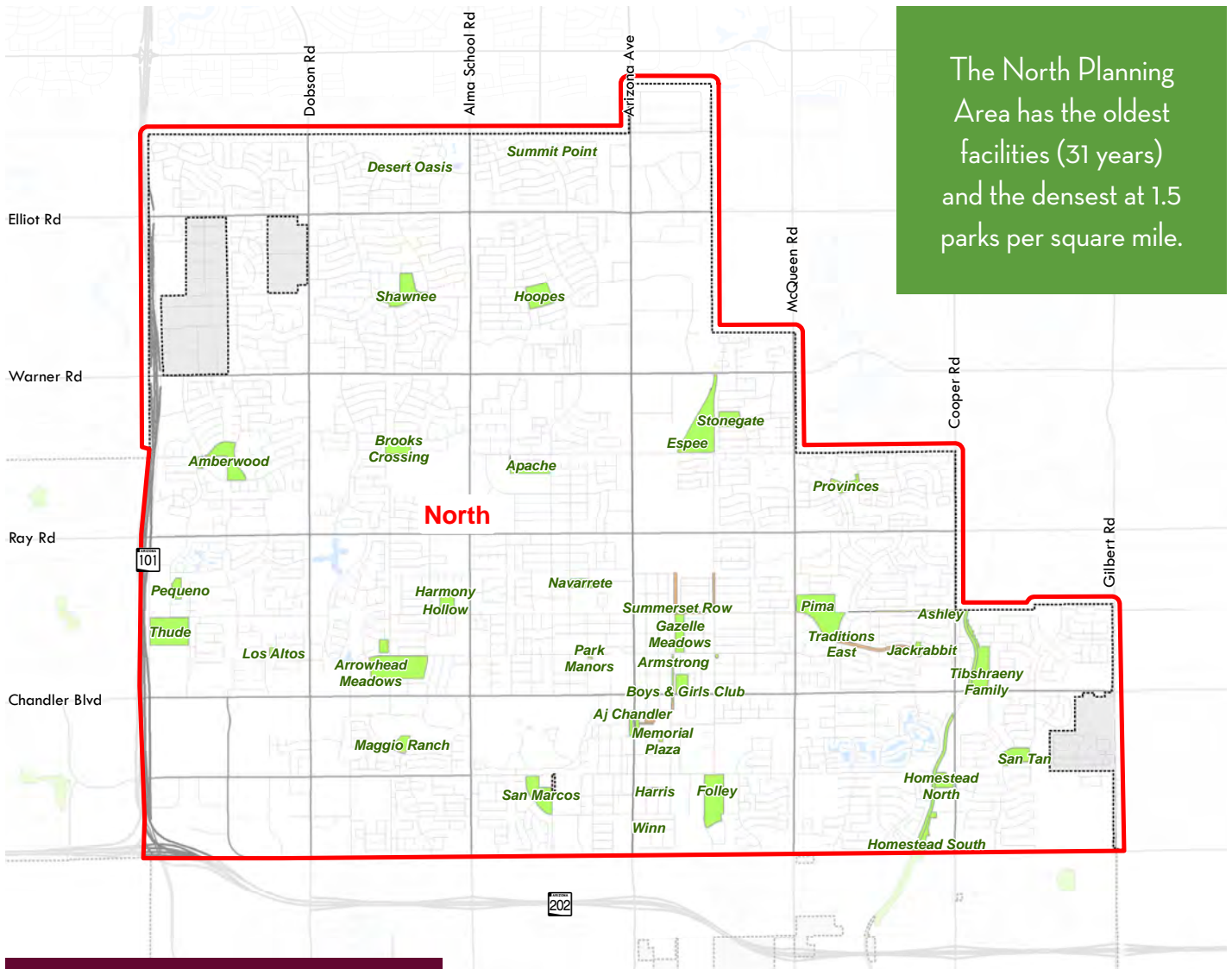
Amenity	Quantity
MULTIUSE FIELD (LIGHTED)	22
MULTIUSE FIELD (NON-LIGHTED)	7
OPEN TURF AREA (AC)	300
PARKING LOT (SPACES)	4,464
PICKLEBALL COURT	9
PICNIC TABLE	760
PLAYGROUND (NON-SHADED)	13
PLAYGROUND (SHADED)	82
PUBLIC ART	7
RACQUETBALL COURT (OUTDOOR)	2
RAMADA	155
RC AIRPLANE FLYING AREA	5
RESTROOM BUILDING	26
SHADE STRUCTURE (STAND-ALONE)	62
SIGNAGE (PARK ENTRY)	137
SIGNAGE (REGULATORY)	282
SOFTBALL FIELD (LIGHTED)	9
SOFTBALL FIELD (NON-LIGHTED)	2
SPRAY PAD	3
TENNIS CENTER	1
TENNIS COURT (LIGHTED)	25
TRAIL - NON PAVED (MI)	9.5
TRAIL - PAVED (MI)	53.9
TRASH RECEPTACLE	1,896
VETERANS MEMORIAL	1
VOLLEYBALL COURT (SAND)	35

The City of Chandler's parks and facilities are generally well distributed geographically and have a consistent variety of amenities at each location. However, due to planned development communities and home owner's associations maintaining their own recreational facilities in newer parts of the city, the west and north planning areas have more facilities than the southwest and southeast areas.

### WEST PLANNING AREA

Park/Facility	Built	Size
DESERT BREEZE	1991	44.40
HARTER	1993	8.65
MOUNTAIN VIEW	1989	18.07
NOZOMI	2004	21.36
PINE SHADOWS	1997	5.28
PRICE	1993	12.57
PUEBLO ALTO	1997	0.25
SUNDANCE	1993	3.52
SUNSET	1999	4.99
WINDMILLS WEST	1990	6.32
<b>Average Age - 25.4 Years</b>		
<b>Total Acres</b>		<b>125.4</b>





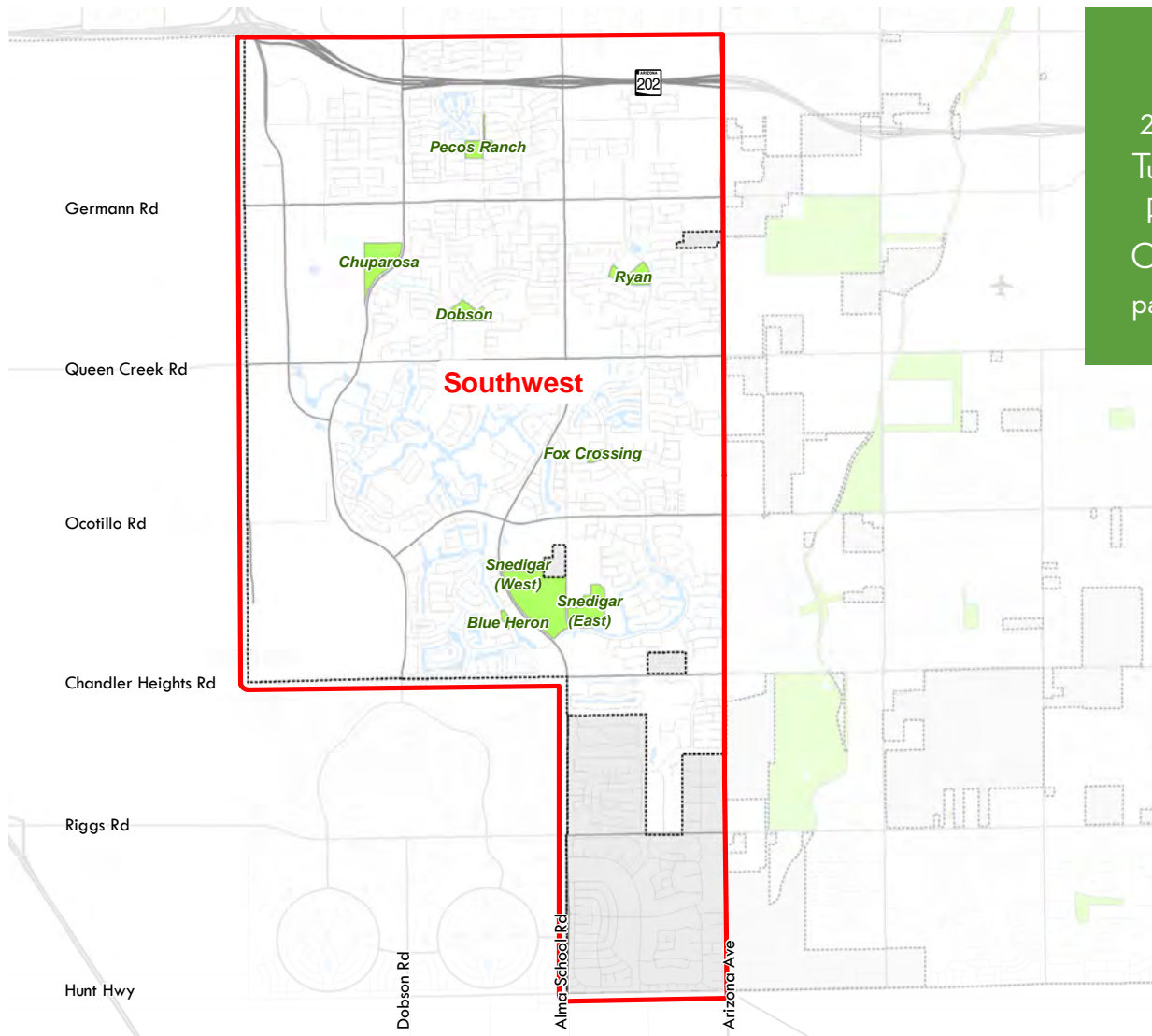
The North Planning Area has the oldest facilities (31 years) and the densest at 1.5 parks per square mile.

**NORTH PLANNING AREA**

Park/Facility	Built	Size
AMBERWOOD	1986	16.47
APACHE	1977	9.97
ARMSTRONG	2009	1.57
ARROWHEAD MEADOWS	1974	30.84
ASHLEY TRAIL	1996	2.51
BOYS & GIRLS CLUB	2009	5.40
BROOKS CROSSING	1986	8.16
DESERT OASIS	1992	0.72
DR. AJ CHANDLER	1912	3.52
EAST MINI	1970	0.26
ESPEE	2004	32.77

Park/Facility	Built	Size
FOLLEY MEMORIAL	1974	22.86
GAZELLE MEADOWS	1985	8.39
HARMONY HOLLOW	2003	6.06
HARRIS	1967	0.66
HOMESTEAD SOUTH	2018	4.98
HOOPES	1984	12.54
JACKRABBIT	1995	2.79
LOS ALTOS	1999	1.17
MAGGIO RANCH	1994	5.28
NAVARRETE	1969	4.37
PARK MANORS	1999	0.29

Park/Facility	Built	Size
PASEO TRAIL*	2009	26.85
PEQUENO	2002	4.54
PIMA	1980	31.68
PROVINCES	1999	5.97
SAN MARCOS	1994	14.65
SAN TAN	1995	9.71
SHAWNEE	1983	17.55
STONEGATE	1984	8.32
SUMMIT POINT	1987	0.29
THUDE	1995	25.98
TIBSHRAENY FAMILY	2007	16.34
WINN	1986	0.80
<b>Average Age</b>	31.1 Years	
<b>Total Acres</b>	344.2	



At over 200 acres, Tumbleweed Park is the City's largest park by area.

OF THE 66 FACILITIES INVENTORIED AS PART OF THIS ASSESSMENT, THERE WERE:

- 51 Neighborhood Parks

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- 9 Community Parks

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- 5 Special-use Facilities

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- 1 Regional Park

**SOUTHWEST PLANNING AREA**

Park/Facility	Built	Size
BLUE HERON	2006	2.85
CHUPAROSA	2003	29.38
DOBSON	1994	12.45
FOX CROSSING	1999	5.16
PECOSA RANCH	1994	10.61
RYAN	2006	13.85
SNEDIGAR SPORTSPLEX	1991	90.83
Average Age	21.0 Years	
<i>Total Acres</i>		<i>165.13</i>

## NOTE

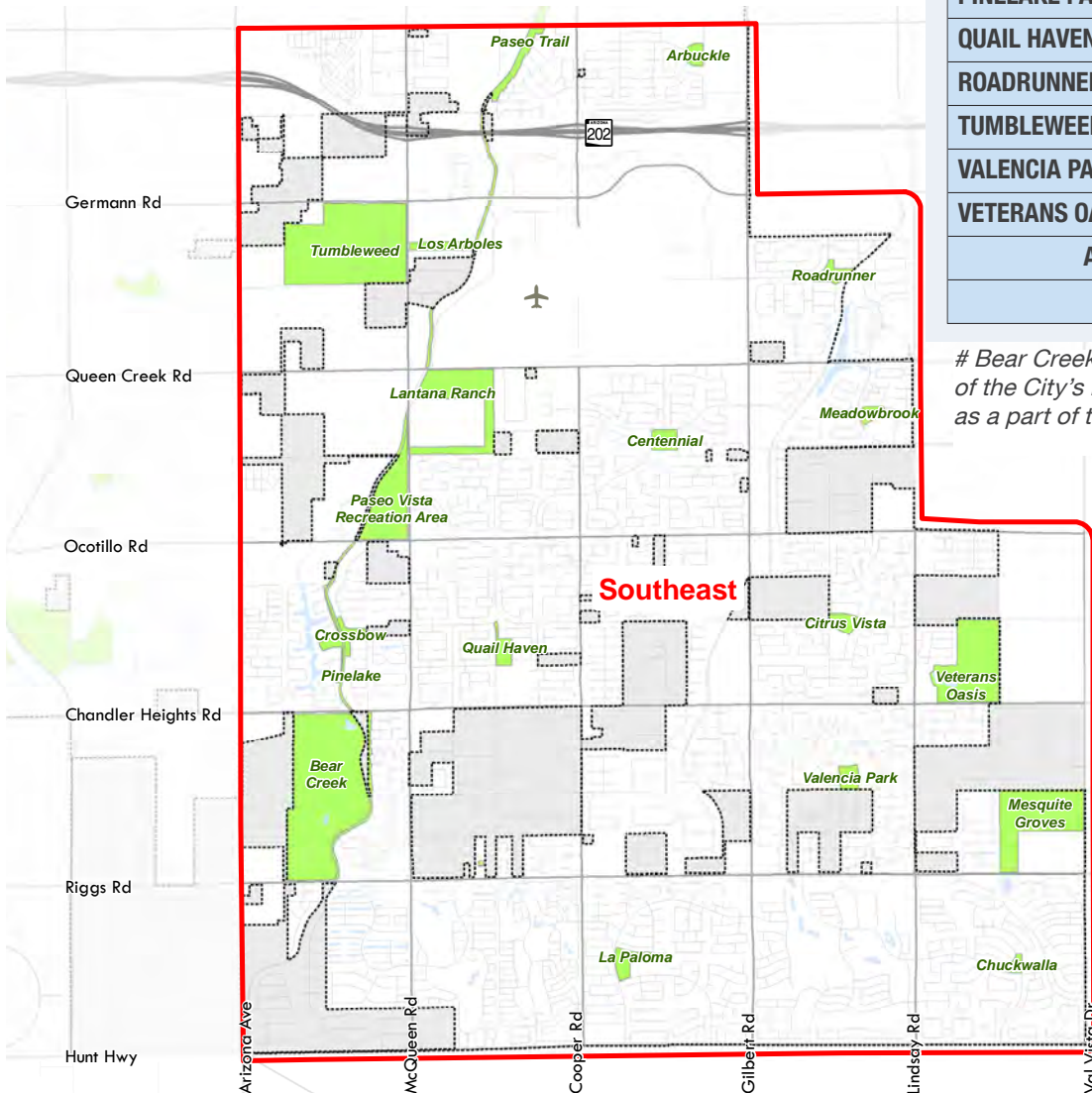
It is important to note that the on-site inventory and assessment process was performed May 4th through May 8th, 2020. During that time the global pandemic associated with the COVID-19 virus was ongoing, therefore the availability of certain facilities and amenities were not easily accessible given government mandates and social distancing measures being practiced at that time.

The assessments used reasonable efforts to review these amenities. Facilities, such as restrooms and maintenance buildings were reviewed from the exterior and the Department's knowledge and input was utilized to fill in the remaining assessment items, such as restroom interior conditions, as needed to provide a complete and thorough inventory of the existing system.

## SOUTHEAST PLANNING AREA

Park/Facility	Built	Size
ARBUCKLE PARK	2007	7.89
BEAR CREEK GOLF COURSE #	2000	234.3
CENTENNIAL PARK	2014	10.88
CHUCKWALLA PARK	2006	4.46
CITRUS VISTA	2015	11.21
CROSSBOW PARK	2008	7.95
LA PALOMA PARK	2002	15.64
LOS ARBOLES PARK	2003	11.37
MEADOWBROOK PARK	2018	7.09
PASEO TRAIL*	2009	53.7
PASEO VISTA RECREATION AREA	2009	62.50
PINELAKE PARK	2006	7.80
QUAIL HAVEN PARK	2004	9.77
ROADRUNNER PARK	2013	10.24
TUMBLEWEED PARK	2002	211.10
VALENCIA PARK	2014	9.35
VETERANS OASIS PARK	2007	113.0
<b>Average Age</b>	11.4 Years	
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>788.2</b>	

# Bear Creek Golf Course is considered part of the City's inventory but was not assessed as a part of this study.



The Southeast Planning Area has nearly 150 acres of undeveloped park land which are currently owned by the City of Chandler.

## **Growth**

The additional expansion or growth of the City is extremely limited given its existing geographic and political boundaries with the Gila River Indian Community and the Cities of Tempe, Mesa, Gilbert, and Phoenix. Any realistic growth opportunities for improvement to parks and amenities will be through the development of expanded connections, such as greenways, bike paths, and trails along existing transportation corridors and public infrastructure. The current Paseo Trail along the Consolidated Canal is an excellent resource serving a wide variety of users and linking the entire city north to south. The City should make it a priority to maximize opportunities with Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects, such as roadway/street improvements to develop additional paths, trails, and other methods of safe bike and pedestrian transportation to assist in closing ‘gaps’ and expanding access to existing park facilities. The expansion of these connections will only further help in providing that “last mile” for both citizens and visitors alike to experience the City’s park assets.

## **Condition**

While there are a few parks and facilities in the southeast area, which are relatively new and in good condition, in general the parks and amenities visited were observed to be in an average state of condition. This is primarily due to the age of amenities within the park system and current maintenance practices. While, nothing was noted as being in complete disrepair or a safety hazard, there are a number of amenities, that due to their age, will soon need accelerated maintenance plans and/or complete replacement. Typically, these assets involve amenities, such as ramadas/shade structures, benches, or playgrounds, which have been highly used and are exceeding their lifecycle. Due to these aging amenities, improvements will be needed to upgrade the existing parks to meet modern recommendations for playground equipment and access. While many amenities have been noted as aging, the Department’s commitment to high-quality maintenance is clearly evident throughout the entire system. The City clearly recognizes the key role its parks system plays in providing a high quality of life for its residents.

The inventory and assessment of the existing park system is a vital step in this planning process to understand the physical condition of the Department’s assets. This inventory is intended to build off the City’s previous parks and recreation master plans and studies by evaluating past recommendations, current geographic information databases, and physical on-site assessments by looking at each asset in terms of location, number, size, and quality.

## **Maintenance**

The Department has done a good job with routine maintenance and general upkeep of its parks, so much in fact, that many amenities appear to have far exceeded the manufacturer’s recommended lifecycle. With that in mind, the upgrade and/or full replacement of these amenities will need to be addressed in the very near future. As these amenities continue to age, additional challenges in maintaining them will arise for the Department if not upgraded or replaced soon. The Department should be aggressive in implementing a plan to identify existing park and amenity upgrades for future CIP projects.

## **ADA Compliance**

While a full Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance review was not part of this assessment process during on-site investigations, it was noted that several playground structures and surfacing appear to need review to ensure a continued commitment to safety. The Department is currently undertaking such an effort to inspect existing facilities, conduct self-evaluations, and update its transition plan as needed to continue meeting the standards and regulations for ADA compliant accessibility. Several parks have sidewalk panels that show some vertical separation exceeding 1/4 inch (the maximum vertical difference allowed under ADA). The department should develop a plan to sawcut, dowel and replace any panels in question.



### **Maximizing Programming**

During the on-site assessments, it was noted that the smaller open turf areas were not in nearly as good of condition as the larger more active turf spaces, which is mostly due to lack of proper irrigation maintenance. In addition, most open turf areas, regardless of size, are in need of general grading and drainage improvements to minimize low spots, address slope erosion, and improved or replaced irrigation systems to maximize healthy turf growth. The Department should focus on strategic turf improvements, as they will ultimately increase the usability and future programming opportunities for these spaces.

### **Mature Trees**

Most of the trees within the west, north, and southwest areas of the city are large and mature, as well as provide incredible shade from the sun in the harsh desert environment. While these trees are a great asset due to their size and aesthetic appeal, some of them are declining in health due to age and other environmental factors. In addition, some of these larger trees create situations of poor turf quality due to the dense shade they project, as well as sidewalk cracking and heaving. It is recommended that the Department undergo a tree lifecycle analysis at all of its parks to understand the impacts the trees age may have on future maintenance. An inventory, analysis and recommended best practices will be critical for establishing a plan for systematic removal and replacement. Removing all mature trees at one time would be devastating to the character of several facilities and should be avoided when possible. Additionally, developing a plan for sidewalk replacement and relocation should be considered to provide sufficient root zone separation.

### **Sports Fields**

The Department's sports fields (baseball, softball, multi-use, and soccer) are generally well maintained. There are signs of inconsistent turf growth and bare spots which are a direct result of poor irrigation maintenance. Overall, the turf playing surfaces are in above average condition at most fields. The fencing, dugouts and backstops at several softball and baseball fields is noticeably aging, bowing and in need of replacement. Additionally, all fields should be upgraded with LED lighting.

### **Parking Lots**

The asphalt-concrete pavement is showing signs of cracking due to age and surface ponding in many of the park parking lots. Most cracks range from a half to an inch in width. It is recommended that the Department seal coat all surface cracks with, at the most, every three years for ease of maintenance and to increase the surface's life expectancy. In most cases the existing parking pavement and subbase have significant life remaining before replacement will be required. Proper sealing and treatment of cracks, along with proper drainage conveyance, limiting the infiltration of moisture, can prolong the life of the parking lots.

### **Irrigation Systems**

Due to the age of many parks and the apparent inconsistencies of existing irrigation coverage and maintenance, particularly in turf areas, it is recommended that the Department undertake a system-wide irrigation audit to fully inventory and assess the existing irrigation systems and maintenance practices at all parks and facilities. The audit should evaluate the existing equipment, available supply and demand, perform hydraulic analysis and provide prioritized recommendations and costs for necessary improvements. As noted above, identifying deficiencies in the irrigation systems and fixing them will lead to consistent, quality turf and open space areas that will in turn strengthen the number of programming opportunities.

### **Lighting and Electrical Systems**

Similar to irrigation mentioned above, both the system and many individual parks display inconsistencies in lighting types. While some parks have been converted to LED and standardized equipment, others have not. Existing lighting and electrical systems have been repaired and replaced on a case by case, as needed, basis. It is recommended that the Department undertake a system-wide lighting and energy study to develop alternatives and solutions for improving lighting by retrofitting existing fixtures for greater efficiency and energy savings. Additionally, the incorporation of smart emerging technologies can be planned and incorporated into new infrastructure implementation.



## SUMMARY

In general, the overall impression of the Department's assets are as follows:

Parks are clean, consistent and well-maintained, at or near a NRPA Level III

There is a good variety of park types and amenities

Facilities are clearly valued by residents given their visible use

Higher density of city facilities in the north and west areas

Recommendations from the recent ADA audit should be implemented

Parks contain many mature trees, many of which are exceeding their lifecycle

Decomposed granite in planting areas has weathered and washed away

Several irrigation maintenance issues on turf slopes

Quality maintenance has prolonged the lifecycle of many amenities

Park signage is consistent but small and not instantly recognizable

Newer parks have a uniqueness and individuality which older parks lack

Parking lots are generally in need resurfacing and restriping

Many restroom facilities are original and need renovation/replacement

Many turf areas are in poor condition and lack usability

Miscellaneous grading and drainage improvements are needed

