



Parks and Recreation Master Plan November 2013

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Table of Contents

I. Executive Summary	5
A. Core Values, Vision for the Future, and Agency Mission	5
B. Master Plan Project Vision	6
C. Capital Improvement Plan.....	7
D. Conclusion	7
II. The Master Planning Process	9
A. Background	9
B. Existing and Related Planning Documents	9
C. Values, Vision, and Mission (Purpose) Statements	10
D. Value Statements	10
E. Vision Statement	10
F. Mission Statement.....	10
G. The DRD Core Team	11
H. Stakeholder Meetings	11
J. Leadership Summit.....	12
III. Community Needs Identified	13
A. Industry Trends	13
B. Community Profile.....	14
C. Survey Methodology and Respondent Demographics.....	16
D. District-wide Survey Results.....	17
E. Comparison between the Open Link and Random Survey Results	25
F. Raices Survey	27
G. Additional Stakeholder Input	30
IV. Inventory – Indoor and Outdoor Asset Review	37
A. Overview and General Description	37
B. Assets.....	37
C. Assets Context.....	38
D. Outdoor Facilities Overview.....	39
E. Rural Facilities.....	51
F. Indoor Facilities Overview	54
G. Outdoor Facility GRASP® Scoring	62
H. Strategies for Addressing Low-Functioning Components.....	64
I. Indoor Facility GRASP® Scoring	67
V. Alternative Providers and Collaborative Opportunities	69
A. City of Coachella	69
B. City of Indian Wells.....	69
C. City of Indio	70
D. City of La Quinta.....	73
E. City of Palm Desert	75
E. Other Providers	77

VI. GRASP® Level of Service Analysis	81
A. Asset Analysis	81
B. Park Development/Land Dedication Funds.....	81
C. CVM and GRASP® Overview	82
D. Perspective A: Access to All Recreation	83
E. Perspective B: Access to All Recreation from All Providers.....	90
F. Perspective C: Access to Multi-Purpose Fields	92
G. Perspective D: Access to Ballfields.....	93
H. More on Reading and Utilizing the GRASP® Perspectives	94
VII. The Findings Summary	95
A. Public Input Findings	95
B. LOS Analysis Findings	95
VIII. Consultant Observations and Considerations	97
A. Strategic Plan Considerations	97
B. Entrepreneurial Considerations	99
C. Funding Considerations.....	100
D. District Boundary Considerations	101
E. Staffing Considerations.....	101
IX. Recommendations and Analysis of Potential and Suggested Projects.....	103
A. Programmatic Priorities	103
B. Capital Component Priorities	103
C. Conclusions.....	103
D. Opportunities Perspective 1	104
E. Opportunities Perspective #2.....	109
F. Opportunities Perspective #3	111
G. Opportunities Perspective #4	118
H. Program and Service Expansions	127
I. Funding Recommendations.....	129
J. Inventory and GIS Recommendations.....	130
K. Low Functioning Components Recommendations.....	130
L. Other Existing DRD Park or Facility Improvements (not yet planned or funded).....	132
M. Pursue Future Cooperative Management Discussions to Existing Properties.....	134
N. General Recommendations and Considerations	134
X. SUGGESTED CAPITAL CAMPAIGN AND GOALS	135
Tier 1 Priorities – \$4.4 million over 5 years	135
Tier 2 Priorities – \$57.5-58.2 million	135
Tier 3 Priorities – \$55-75,000 studies plus capital and operating costs TBD	136
APPENDIX A: DISTRICT-WIDE SURVEY RESULTS	137
APPENDIX B: GRASP® PERSPECTIVES	201
APPENDIX C: GRASP® METHODOLOGY	233
APPENDIX D: SUMMARY OF OUTDOOR AND INDOOR INVENTORY TABLES	243
APPENDIX E: SPORTS TOURNAMENT VENUES	249

List of Tables

Table 1: Park GRASP® Scoring.....	64
Table 2: Indoor GRASP® Scoring	68
Table 3: List of Inventory Components that scored a “1” or Fell Below Expectation.....	131

List of Figures

Figure 1: Most Important Facilities to Add, Expand or Improve (in general)	18
Figure 2: Most Important Outdoor Facilities to Add, Expand or Improve	19
Figure 3: Most Important Indoor Facilities to Add, Expand or Improve.....	20
Figure 4: Importance of Parks and Recreation Services	21
Figure 5: Highly Important Unmet Facility Need	22
Figure 6: Highly Important Unmet Program, Activity and Special Event Need	23
Figure 7: Temperature Read on Level of Support for Additional Taxpayer Investment.....	24
Figure 8: Location of Support for Additional Taxpayer Investment Responses	25
Figure 9: Resource Map A: System Map	37
Figure 10: Sample Inventory Scoring	63
Figure 11: Sample Indoor Inventory Scoring.....	68
Figure 12: Lake Cahuilla Recreation Area	79
Figure 13: Recreation Access in the Urban Core.....	83
Figure 14: Recreation Access in Rural Areas.....	84
Figure 15: Urban Core Threshold Calculation: Park.....	84
Figure 16: Urban Core Threshold Calculation: Facility.....	85
Figure 17: Urban Core Threshold exhibit	86
Figure 18: Urban Area Threshold with Alternative Providers.....	86
Figure 19: Threshold Analysis with Schools	87
Figure 20: Rural Recreation Threshold Calculation: Park	88
Figure 21: Rural Recreation Threshold Calculation: Facility	88
Figure 22: Cummulative Threshold Data Analysis	89
Figure 23: Perspective Map A: General Access to All In-System Recreation	90
Figure 24: Perspective Map B: General Access to Recreation From All Providers	90
Figure 25: Population Density.....	91
Figure 26: Areas Lacking Service	91
Figure 27: Perspective Map C: Access to Multipurpose Fields	92
Figure 28: Perspective Map D: Access to Ballfields	93
Figure 29: Opportunity Map 1: Project Currently in Planning	104
Figure 30: Opportunity Map 2: Valley-Wide Trails Project.....	109
Figure 31: Opportunity Perspective 3: Sports Fields, Athletics Complexes, Tournament Venues	112
Figure 32: Opportunity Perspective 4: Potential Additions, Developments, Partnerships and Collaborations.....	118

I. Executive Summary

The Strategic Planning process, finalized in 2012, serves as the foundation for the District's Master Plan and its efforts to sustain services over both the short and long-term. As a result, the Desert Recreation District began an extensive process to create its five year implementation plan, the **Park and Recreation Master Plan**. This process included establishing the asset inventory of the District; a level of service and gap analysis in relation to the District's values, vision, and mission; a review and assessment of alternative providers for communities that the District overlays; and a District-wide needs assessment.

All of the components of these processes directly influence current resource allocation levels, the development of a capital campaign to address gaps in service and District-wide needs, the establishment of future cost recovery and subsidy allocation goals, and future provision strategies and methods. This comprehensive review and analysis guides the District in implementing the strategic direction for the next three to five years and sets the stage for service provision over both the short and long-term.

The District's Strategic Plan addresses these critical success factors, and the Master Plan outlines the specific and conceptual implementation steps:

- Affirm the District's role in the Coachella Valley as a parks and recreation service provider while addressing perceived service overlap or duplication with municipal providers within the District or the District's Sphere of Influence (SOI). The SOI includes areas that are outside of District boundaries (such as Palm Springs, the majority of the City of Rancho Mirage, Cathedral City, etc.), but contiguous to the DRD boundaries that have been officially designated as being within the DRD SOI through the Riverside County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). These areas may be provided for in the future by contract or agreement (for example – Desert Hot Springs).
- Affirm the District's role as a parks and recreation service provider for the unincorporated or underserved areas within the District boundaries.
- Ensure many opportunities for public engagement and education.
- Encourage candid participation and "buy-in" from leaders across the Valley, elected officials, municipal executives, park and recreation professionals, and District staff.
- Engage the District Board of Directors and support their role as a Visioning and Policy Board.
- Introduce new policy decision-making strategies and methods, and educate regarding new tools and resources (i.e. GRASP® Level of Service Analysis, etc.) to create a sustainable infrastructure system, address unmet needs of District residents, and to help weather the recent economic downturn.

A. Core Values, Vision for the Future, and Agency Mission

The Master Plan addresses the District's current **values, vision, and mission** as outlined in the Strategic Plan. The following statements were approved by the Board of Directors November 9, 2011.

Value Statements

The Value of Park and Recreation services to the Desert Recreation District's residents is (in no particular order):

- Provides a sense of connection and adds to the livability and desirability of a community.
- Celebrates our richly diverse community fabric.
- Encourages an appreciation for nature and environmental stewardship.
- Provides opportunities for the community to give back through volunteering, donating, and advocating.
- Enhances family unity, develops skills, and creates memories.
- Contributes to the local economy, helps to maintain healthy and productive workforces, and helps attract and retain businesses.
- Fosters healthy lifestyles, builds self-esteem, and reduces stress.
- Leverages available resources through collaborations, partnerships, and agreements.
- Provides positive and healthy alternatives for youth.

Vision Statement

Through a community collaborative approach DRD will: provide quality, barrier-free and safe recreational services that contribute to the overall wellness of the citizens of the Coachella Valley; encourage healthy lifestyles and positive out of school activities; facilitate, coordinate, and plan for recreation facilities and trails.

Mission Statement (Purpose)

The Desert Recreation District maintains quality park and recreation facilities, programs and services; and facilitates leisure opportunities so all residents will receive:

- **Personal Benefits** in the form of physical fitness, enrichment, relaxation, and revitalization
- **Social Benefits** in the form of stronger and healthier families; ethnic and cultural harmony; reduced anti-social behavior; and enriched lives for persons with disabilities
- **Economic Benefits** in the form of more productive and healthier citizens; and contributions to the quality of life sought by business and industry

B. Master Plan Project Vision

The Master Plan is intended to replace the 2006 Master Plan and build on the vision created by the Strategic Plan. Desert Recreation District sought a system-wide approach to evaluating all of its programs, natural areas, parks, facilities, amenities, and partnerships. The intent is to identify gaps in service and ensure that the system is meeting the needs of residents and those in the SOI in a strategic and location-specific manner. A goal of this plan is to develop a clear set of goals, policies, and standards for the District's park system, open space, trails, recreation facilities, and development for the next five years and to provide realistic and implementable recommendations to direct the District into the future.



C. Capital Improvement Plan

A specific capital improvement plan was not determined as a result of this Master Plan. Instead, the plan identifies the need to embark on a major strategic funding campaign to meet the identified needs for residents of the District. Concurrent to pursuing a taxation measure for both capital development and the resulting operations, the General Manager is encouraged to negotiate strategic partnerships for collaborative projects – opportunities that this master plan identifies. In addition, the leveraging of all traditional and alternative funding resources, structuring the referendum and investment, as well as conducting the necessary in-depth specific research (feasibility studies and additional community survey work), and gearing up the staffing to plan and manage the specific projects, are the priority recommendation of this plan to be achieved over the next three to five years.

D. Conclusion

The primary goal of the Desert Recreation District's **Master Plan** is to develop implementation steps to achieve the vision of the Strategic Plan for the next three to five years. This Master Plan details resident needs and gaps in service while considering alternative providers; identifies entrepreneurial, cooperative, and opportunistic ventures; consolidates existing infrastructure needs, life-cycle repair and replacement programs, and low scoring amenities; and outlines a capital campaign strategy/program to deal with growth and unmet needs across the District and the Coachella Valley.

Chapter X. – Suggested Capital Campaign and Goals outlines the consultant team's recommended project priorities and suggests a taxation package with big picture costs associated with a 3-tiered approach. Minimally, DRD should fund the **Tier 1 priorities**. These are the critical improvements needed to maintain assets and improve level of service (LOS), especially in the underserved areas. Available funding should be leveraged as possible and these projects phased over the next five years.

For **Tier 2 and 3** projects, there is still much for the DRD Board of Directors and General Manager to negotiate between partners, investors, and the taxpayers to determine which of the projects should be included in the final valley-wide funding initiative.

Tier 1 Priorities – \$4.4 million capital investment over 5 years

- Complete list of priority low scoring amenities and components detailed in this plan
- Complete bathhouse renovation at Mecca
- Re-do Pawley Pool
- Fill the recommended staffing positions

Tier 2 Priorities – \$57.5-58.2 million capital investment plus operating costs TBD

- Pursue other existing DRD park or facility improvements outlined in **Chapter IX - Recommendations and Analysis of Potential and Suggested Projects**.
- Fund, build, and manage the Thousand Palms Legacy Park.
- Cooperatively fund, build, and then manage the Whitewater Trail.
- Fund and build the Coral Mountain Discover Park; discuss cooperative management strategies with RivCo.
- Fund, build, and manage the North Shore Park (South Valley).
- Expand the afterschool program in an additional 10 sites of up to 100 children each at a sliding scale rate based on income.

Tier 3 Priorities - \$55-75,000 studies plus capital and operating costs TBD

- Conduct a feasibility study to determine extent of Action Sports Park project at the Desert Regional Park location (North Valley).
- Conduct a feasibility study to determine which type and location is optimal for a Baseball/Softball Tournament Venue or a Soccer/Multi-field Tournament Venue.
- Add REC Route.



II. The Master Planning Process

This chapter outlines the master planning process and sets the context for analysis. It identifies related planning efforts that were considered, District values, vision and mission statements, and stakeholder engagement strategies.

A. Background

In March of 2012 the District, aided by GreenPlay LLC, completed its Strategic Plan which outlined a comprehensive operational analysis that included a review of the District's complete operations, mission, vision, and value statements, and emphasized a positive future vision. A goal of this plan was to provide realistic and implementable recommendations to direct the District for the next five years and into the future. This plan also included a Leadership Summit and a detailed community profile analyzing the demographics and trends influencing the District. One recommendation of the Strategic Plan was to complete the District's inventory in GIS, conduct a community-reflective survey, and do a thorough needs assessment including a gap analysis. The results would update the previous Master Plan with capital project recommendations and identify collaborative opportunities that support the direction of the Strategic Plan.

The District's last master plan was completed in 2006 when the District was still known as the Coachella Valley Recreation and Park District. Since that time, an extensive re-branding and imaging campaign, as well as extensive community outreach, have ensued. In April 2012, the District once again engaged the services of GreenPlay to develop the Park and Recreation Master Plan. This fifteen month process began in April 2012 and concluded in October 2013 with adoption by the District Board and unveiling at a Leadership Summit.

B. Existing and Related Planning Documents

- 2012 Desert Recreation and Park District Strategic Plan
- 2010 Desert Hot Springs Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- 2010 Palm Springs Parks and Recreation Master Plan (not formally adopted)
- 2007 La Quinta Community Services Master Plan
- 2006 Coachella Valley Recreation and Park District Master Plan
- 2006 City of Coachella Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- 2005 Cathedral City Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- 2004 City of Palm Desert Comprehensive Plan – Parks and Recreation Element
- City of Rancho Mirage General Plan – Conservation and Open Space Element
- City of Rancho Mirage Chapter 19 – Specific Plan 2010
- Youth Participatory Action Research on Recreational Opportunities in the Eastern Coachella Valley – RAICES Cultura
- Indio Youth Master Plan
- Indian Wells Bikeway Map 2011
- Indian Wells Landscape Light District Map 2010
- Palm Desert Pro-forma and Business Plan 2006/7
- 2013 Riverside County Regional Parks and Open Space District – Comprehensive Park, Resources, and Recreation Service Plan

Several of these plans were previously completed by GreenPlay. As well, GreenPlay completed concurrent work for Riverside County Regional Parks and Open Space District developing its Comprehensive Park, Resources, and Recreation Service Plan. Any relevant references are cited in this Master Plan. Many of these documents have minimal influence or implication to reconcile with the DRD Master Plan suggested recommendations, and several of these planning documents concern agencies outside of the DRD Sphere of Influence (SOI) or service area.

C. Values, Vision, and Mission (Purpose) Statements

The Master Plan addresses the District's current **values, vision, and mission** as outlined in the Strategic Plan. The following statements were approved by the Board of Directors November 9, 2011.

D. Value Statements

The Value of Park and Recreation services to the Desert Recreation District's residents is (in no particular order):

- Provides a sense of connection and adds to the livability and desirability of a community.
- Celebrates our richly diverse community fabric.
- Encourages an appreciation for nature and environmental stewardship.
- Provides opportunities for the community to give back through volunteering, donating, and advocating.
- Enhances family unity, develops skills, and creates memories.
- Contributes to the local economy, helps to maintain healthy and productive workforces, and helps attract and retain businesses.
- Fosters healthy lifestyles, builds self-esteem, and reduces stress.
- Leverages available resources through collaborations, partnerships, and agreements.
- Provides positive and healthy alternatives for youth.

E. Vision Statement

The vision statement describes a future condition; it is where we want to be in the future. An agency's Vision can typically change as the socio-economic conditions and the values of the community change. Therefore, the vision should be revisited every five to ten years, and the agency's progress should be tracked toward achieving the vision.

DRD's Vision

Through a community collaborative approach DRD will: provide quality, barrier-free and safe recreational services that contribute to the overall wellness of the citizens of the Coachella Valley; encourage healthy lifestyles and positive out of school activities; facilitate, coordinate, and plan for recreation facilities and trails.

F. Mission Statement

The mission describes the reason the District exists – the who, what, where, and why. Typically, the agency's Mission does not often change.

DRD's Mission/Purpose

The Desert Recreation District maintains quality park and recreation facilities, programs and services; and facilitates leisure opportunities for residents to access:

- **Personal Benefits** in the form of physical fitness, enrichment, relaxation, and revitalization
- **Social Benefits** in the form of stronger and healthier families; ethnic and cultural harmony; reduced anti-social behavior; and enriched lives for persons with disabilities
- **Economic Benefits** in the form of more productive and healthier citizens; and contributions to the quality of life sought by business and industry



G. The DRD Core Team

A core team of staff members was formed to initiate the Master Plan process. This team was comprised of leadership staff from across the District. The team was also assisted by several support staff during various portions of the project.

Kevin Kalman, General Manager

Barb Adair, Assistant General Manager

Glenn Miller, Director of Foundation, Golf and Parks

H. Stakeholder Meetings

Stakeholder engagement was critical to collective “buy-in,” consensus, and endorsement of the process. Development of the **Master Plan** included a significant number of key stakeholder meetings over several months. These meetings shared progressive findings from each component of the process and engaged the governance and leadership from the municipalities that the District overlays, the County Supervisor’s office and various Riverside County agencies, the school districts, and other key partners in interactive dialogue that led to the development of each of the major implementation components of the Master Plan. In addition, the Leadership Summit was re-engaged as the Strategic Planning process was re-convened. This group consists of elected and appointed leaders and key staff from across the Coachella Valley.

A variety of participants representing diverse interests were invited to take part in the process:

Boys and Girls Club

City of Coachella

City of Indian Wells

City of La Quinta

City of Palm Springs

Coachella Valley Association of Governments

Desert Healthcare District

Desert Sands Unified School District

John Peña and Associates

Greater Palm Springs Convention and Visitors Bureau

Riverside County Regional Parks & Open Space District

Riverside County Supervisor Benoit's Office

City of Cathedral City

City of Desert Hot Springs

City of Indio

City of Palm Desert

City of Rancho Mirage

Coachella Valley Unified School District

Desert Recreation District Foundation

Family YMCA of the Desert

Mark S. Moran & Associates

The stakeholder input helped guide the development of the recommendations for this **Master Plan**.

J. Leadership Summit

At the reconvened Leadership Summit (a follow up from the Strategic Plan development) conducted in November 2013, the Desert Recreation District Board of Directors President, Mr. Rudy Acosta, and General Manager, Mr. Kevin Kalman, addressed opening remarks about the purpose of the Master Plan project and the importance of the attendees' involvement. GreenPlay made a short presentation detailing the project, explaining the findings of the process and recommendations.

III. Community Needs Identified

This chapter highlights the industry trends that influenced the Master Plan development. The DRD Strategic Plan provided a more in-depth analysis of these trends. In addition, the community profile of the District Recreation District service area is discussed and compared with the survey respondents. The community survey results and stakeholder input identifies unmet and high priority needs. These findings, along with the gap analysis from the inventory detailed in the next chapter, resulted in the key issues and themes that the capital improvement projects and recommendations are designed to address.

A. Industry Trends

A detailed look at the trends in parks and recreation influencing the District is available in Appendix D of the Strategic Plan and includes:

- Baby boomers—those born between 1946 and 1964, are devoted to exercise and fitness.
- Boomers will look to park and recreation professionals to give them the skills needed to enjoy many life-long hobbies and sports.
- The 2010 National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA) Survey on sports participation found some of the top ten athletic activities ranked by total participation included: exercise walking, exercising with equipment, camping, swimming, bowling, and working out at athletic clubs. Additionally, the following active, organized, or skill development activities remain popular: bicycle riding, hiking, running/jogging, basketball, golf, and soccer.
- Specific offerings for children’s fitness are slowly increasing in health and fitness facilities. Facilities are offering more youth-specific exercise equipment. Individualized youth sports training opportunities are becoming more popular.
- There is an increasing trend toward indoor leisure and therapeutic pools. Additional amenities like “spray pads” are becoming increasingly popular.
- The current national trend is toward “one-stop” indoor recreation facilities to serve all ages. Large, multi-purpose regional centers help increase cost recovery, promote retention, and encourage cross-use.
- The United Health Foundation has ranked California 26th in its 2010 *State Health Rankings*, down three ranks from 2009.

The State’s biggest strengths include:

- Low prevalence of smoking
- Ready access to early prenatal care
- Low infant mortality rate

Some of the challenges the State faces include:

- High incidence of infectious disease
- High levels of air pollution
- High rate of uninsured population

- The health care issue is front and center. Park and recreation agencies are finding that they are in a position to be a catalyst in creating healthy lifestyles and communities.
- The most common programs offered in communities are holiday events and other special events, fitness programs, educational programs, day camps and summer camps; mind-body/balance programs such as yoga, tai chi, Pilates, and martial arts; and youth sports teams.
- Fitness programs, educational programs, teen programs, mind body balance, and active adults were listed at the top of the ten programs that parks and recreation departments are planning to add within the next three years.
- Trails, parks, and playgrounds are among the five most important community amenities considered when selecting a home.
- The majority of Americans agree that preserving undeveloped land for outdoor recreation is important. A large percentage of outdoor participants also believe that developing local parks and hiking and walking trails are important and that there should be more outdoor education and activities during the school day.
- Research indicates that the success rate for festivals tends to be evaluated simplistically on the basis of profit (sales), prestige (media profile), and size (numbers of events), often translated into numbers of visitors. Large-scale, multi-city, valley-wide events, and regional athletic complexes for sporting event opportunities can directly benefit the entire Coachella Valley through tourism. However, the District’s mission is to serve its residents, not promote tourism and actualize financial contributions (TOT or bed tax coming to the District from overnight stays due to tourism). When the Desert Recreation District next updates its Master Plan, a community-wide interest and satisfaction survey could indicate the importance and unmet need ranking for festivals and special events in relation to other services for District residents.
- Multiculturalism park and recreation trends in marketing and providing leisure services continue to emerge and should be taken into consideration in all planning efforts.
- National trends in the delivery of parks and recreation systems reflect more partnerships and contractual agreements reaching out to the edges of the community to support specialized services.
- Park and recreation administration trends include increased partnerships, agency accreditation, and enterprising budgets.



B. Community Profile

The Strategic Plan detailed an extensive Community Profile for the District including demographic trends, socio-economic conditions, and a market analysis.

For planning purposes the Community Profile used four defined areas to represent the broad base of users in the Desert Recreation District (DRD). The geographic boundaries identify communities for those areas within the District boundaries. The “Sphere of Influence,” (SOI) encompasses other surrounding nearby communities on the outskirts of the District boundaries whose residents might use programs, services, and facilities in DRD. A brief definition of each of the areas analyzed is below.

- **Desert Recreation District (DRD) Boundaries** – Those people that reside within District boundaries. Five incorporated municipalities are identified as included in this area as well as those in the unincorporated areas as detailed below.

- **District Recreation District – Total Estimate 2010 Population** **326,941**

- **Incorporated Areas within the District** – People that reside in cities fully contained within the District boundaries.

- Coachella 38,892
 - Indian Wells 4,687
 - Indio (Indio zips = 92201, 92202, 92203 which includes unincorporated Bermuda Dunes within zips 92201 and 92203) 87,371
 - La Quinta 43,778
 - Palm Desert (Palm Desert zips 92240 and 92241 overlap with Desert Hot Springs which includes unincorporated Indio Hills) 49,228

Total Estimated 2010 Population **223,956**

- **Unincorporated Areas within District** – People that reside in areas inside of the District but in unincorporated areas. There is overlap within the zip codes of the smaller communities, so the population estimates are not exact, but are a close enough representation for planning purposes.

- Zip 92201/92203 (Bermuda Dunes within Indio Zips) 9,788
 - Zip 92240/92241 (Indio Hills/Desert Hot Springs) 41,781¹
 - Zip 92254 (Mecca/North Shore) 14,086
 - Zip 92274 (Thermal/Vista Santa Rosa/100 Palms/Oasis) 29,905
 - Zip 92276 (Thousand Palms) 7,425

Total Estimated 2010 Population **102,985**

- **Other nearby communities outside the DRD** – People residing in incorporated communities nearby DRD services, programs, and facilities.

- Cathedral City 53,756
 - Palm Springs 49,756
 - Rancho Mirage * 16,723

Total Estimated 2010 Population **120,235**

* Part of Rancho Mirage is within the District’s boundaries.

- **Sphere of Influence (SOI)** – Inclusive of communities outside but contiguous to the DRD boundaries that have been officially designated as being within the DRD SOI through the Riverside County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO).

¹ Less than 2,000 people reside in Indio Hills. Desert Hot Springs makes up the majority of this population number and it is outside of DRD Sphere of Influence.

Because detailed socio-demographic data for DRD boundaries is not available, as both the Census and ESRI use blocks and tracts which may not align with the District boundaries, the Community Profile used data from a representation of a majority of DRD's population and other available information. Demographic data was obtained using Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI). Please refer to Appendix C in the Strategic Plan for a more detailed look at the market profile for the District which includes:

- 2000-2015 Population Trend
- Age Distribution
- Race/Ethnicity
- Spending and Household Income
- Poverty and Discretionary Income
- Educational Attainment

C. Survey Methodology and Respondent Demographics

The survey was conducted using three methods: 1) a mail-back survey, 2) an online invitation only survey, and 3) an open link online survey for members of the public who did not receive a randomly selected survey in the mail. Unless stated otherwise, the analysis in the report focuses primarily on surveys received via the first two methods.

The primary list source used for the mailing was a third party list purchased from Crown Printers San Bernardino, a list provider and printer who has supplied the Desert Recreation District with mailing sources exclusively.

A total of 10,000 surveys were mailed to a random sample of Desert Recreation District residents in November 2012, with approximately 9,500 being delivered after subtracting undeliverable mail. A total of 10,000 follow-up, reminder postcards were also sent after the initial survey had been mailed to further encourage residents to participate in the survey. The final sample size for this statistically valid survey was 361, resulting in a margin of error of approximately +/- 5.2 percent calculated for questions at 50 percent response². Results from the open link survey generated an additional 186 responses.

The community-wide survey results, however statistically valid, were less than optimal. The underlying data for the random sample responses were weighted by age, ethnicity, and ZIP code to ensure appropriate representation of Desert Recreation District residents across different demographic and geographic cohorts in the sample.

² For the total sample size of 361, margin of error is +/- 5.16 percent calculated for questions at 50% response (if the response for a particular question is "50%"—the standard way to generalize margin of error is to state the larger margin, which occurs for responses at 50%). Note that the margin of error is different for every single question response on the survey depending on the resultant sample sizes, proportion of responses, and number of answer categories for each question. Comparison of differences in the data between various segments, therefore, should take into consideration these factors. As a general comment, it is sometimes more appropriate to focus attention on the general trends and patterns in the data rather than on the individual percentages.

Based on 2011 ESRI data for Desert Recreation District, the age, race, and ethnicity profile of residents is distributed as follows: Age: under 35 (25%), 35 - 44 (21%), 45 - 54 (23%), 55 - 64 (18%), 65 - 74 (7%), 75 and older (6%); Race: White (65%), African American (2%), Asian (2%), Native American (1%), Other (31%); and Ethnicity: Hispanic Ethnicity (58%). Based on the American Community Survey 5-year estimates for 2011, the population geographic profile is distributed as follows: ZIP 92201 (18%), ZIP 92253 (18%), ZIP 92260 (16%), ZIP 92211 (15%), ZIP 92236 (9%), ZIP 92210 (3%), ZIP 92270 (3%), ZIP 92274 (3%), ZIP 92276 (3%), ZIP 92241 (1%), ZIP 92254 (1%). These proportions were the basis for weighting of the survey data so that the resulting analysis reflects the conclusions and opinions of the underlying population.

The household size of the survey respondents was not reflective of what many leaders know to be the true household size of District residents; however, many of the survey responses are reflective of households of families with children.

D. District-wide Survey Results

Key highlights of the survey follow while the detailed survey results can be found in **Appendix A**.

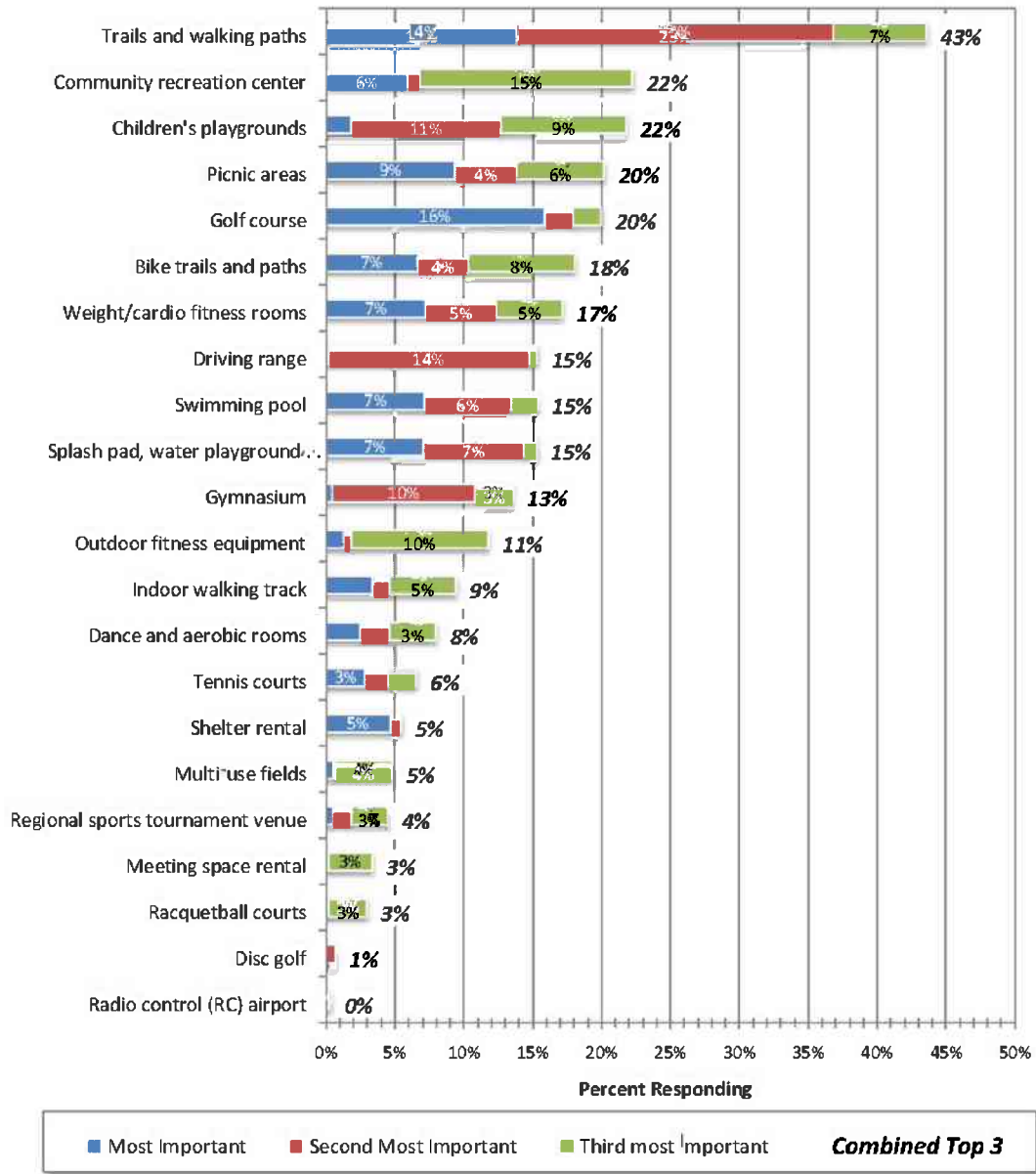
From the survey results, it appears that the needs are as different and varied as the demographics, cities, and unincorporated areas that the District serves. Some have a need for improved neighborhood and community level of service, while others have need for regional level of service and regional venues.

Topping most lists are a connected valley-wide trail system and alternative transportation. For some, and especially where the demand is greatest due to a lack of service and space, sports fields are also needed across the Coachella Valley. Activities for youth, and fitness and wellness programs and services are also greatly needed.

A connected valley-wide trails system is the number one priority related to unmet needs from the survey respondents (**Figure 1**). DRD along with CVAG has been involved in planning the Whitewater Trail, the beginning of an urban to rural connected trails system. Clearly, there could be a role for the District to play as the overarching management and planning coordinator for the Coachella Valley.

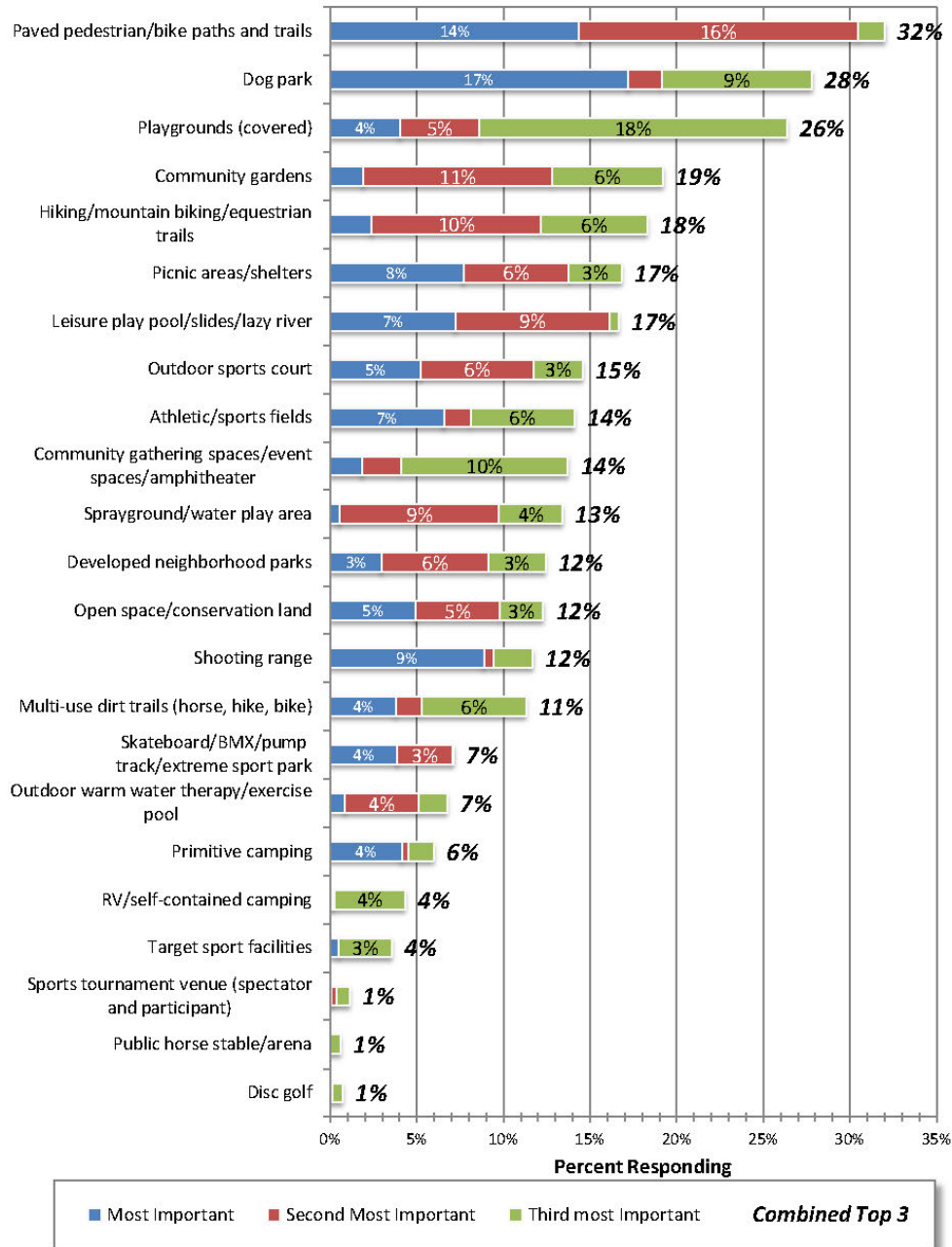


Figure 1: Most Important Facilities to Add, Expand, or Improve (in general)



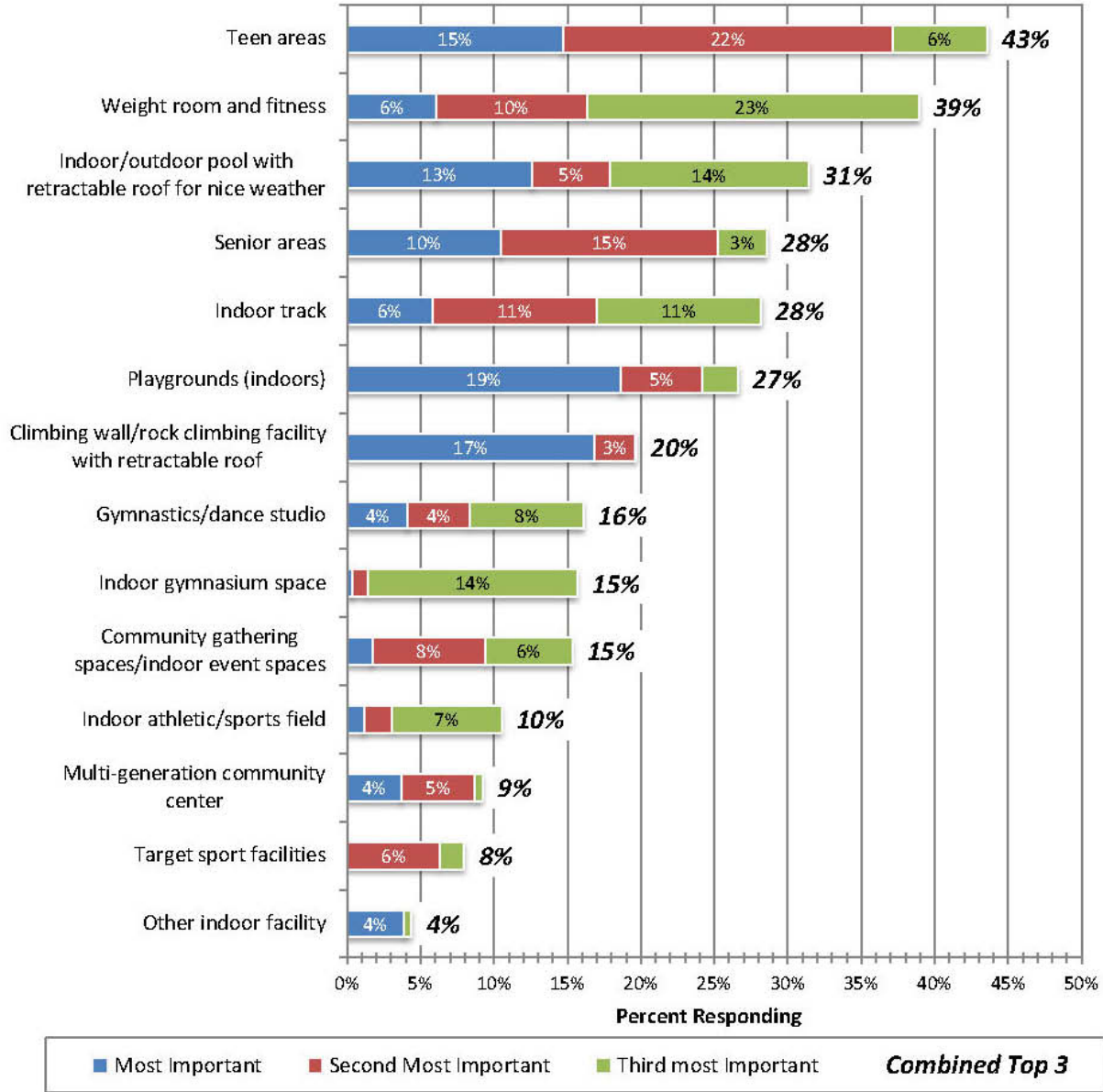
When asked just about outdoor facilities (**Figure 2**), trails still top the list, followed by more traditional neighborhood level of service components such as dog parks and playgrounds (although both of these can be larger scale destination components), community gardens, and picnic areas/shelters. Also in the top seven are hiking/mountain biking/equestrian trails and leisure play pool/slides/lazy river.

Figure 2: Most Important Outdoor Facilities to Add, Expand, or Improve



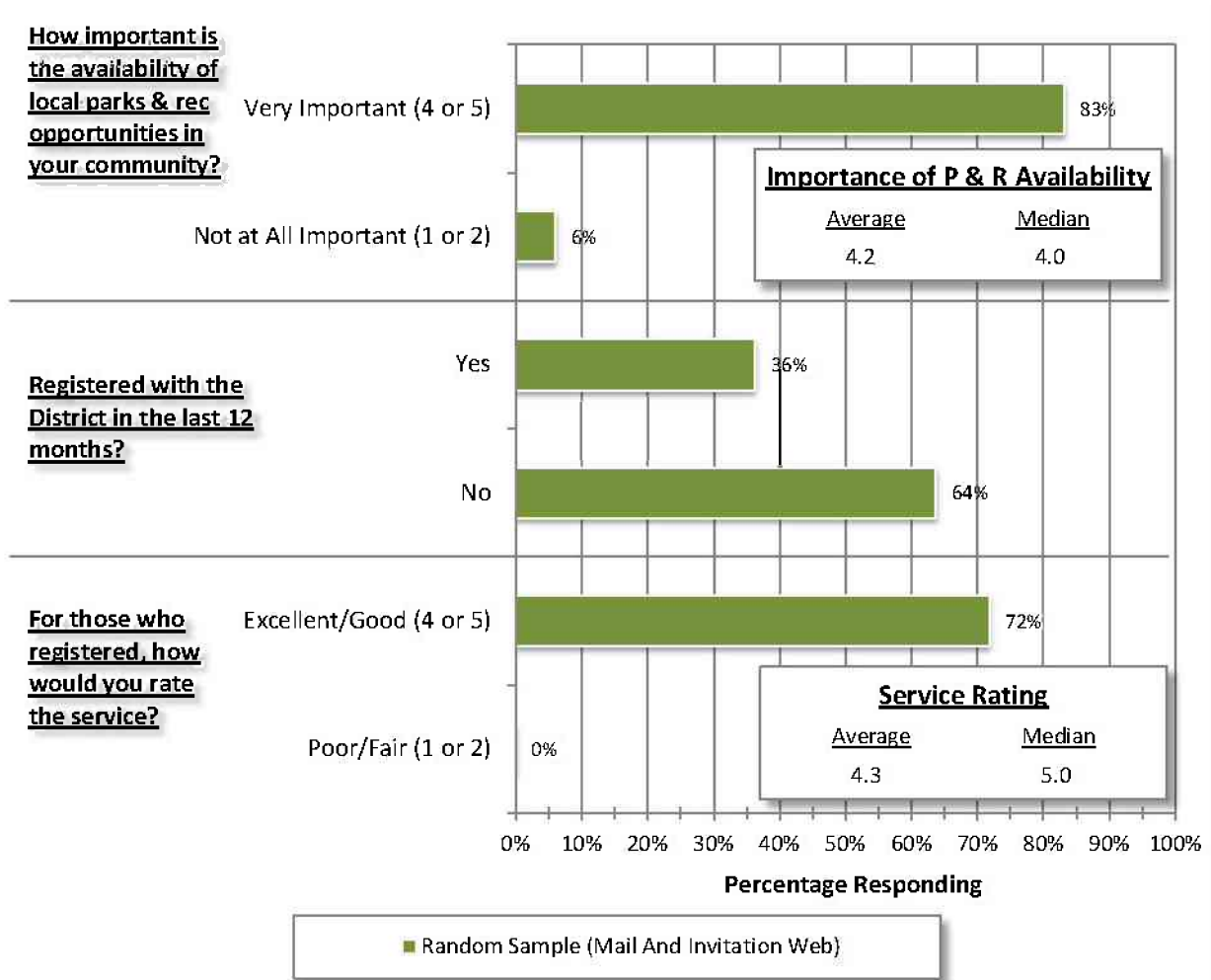
When asked just about indoor facilities (**Figure 3**), Teen areas and weight room and fitness areas top the list, followed by indoor/outdoor pool with a retractable roof for nice weather.

Figure 3: Most Important Indoor Facilities to Add, Expand, or Improve



Park and Recreation services are very important (**Figure 4**). Although only 36 percent of respondents indicated that they have registered for a program with the District in the last twelve months, 72 percent rated the service as excellent or good.

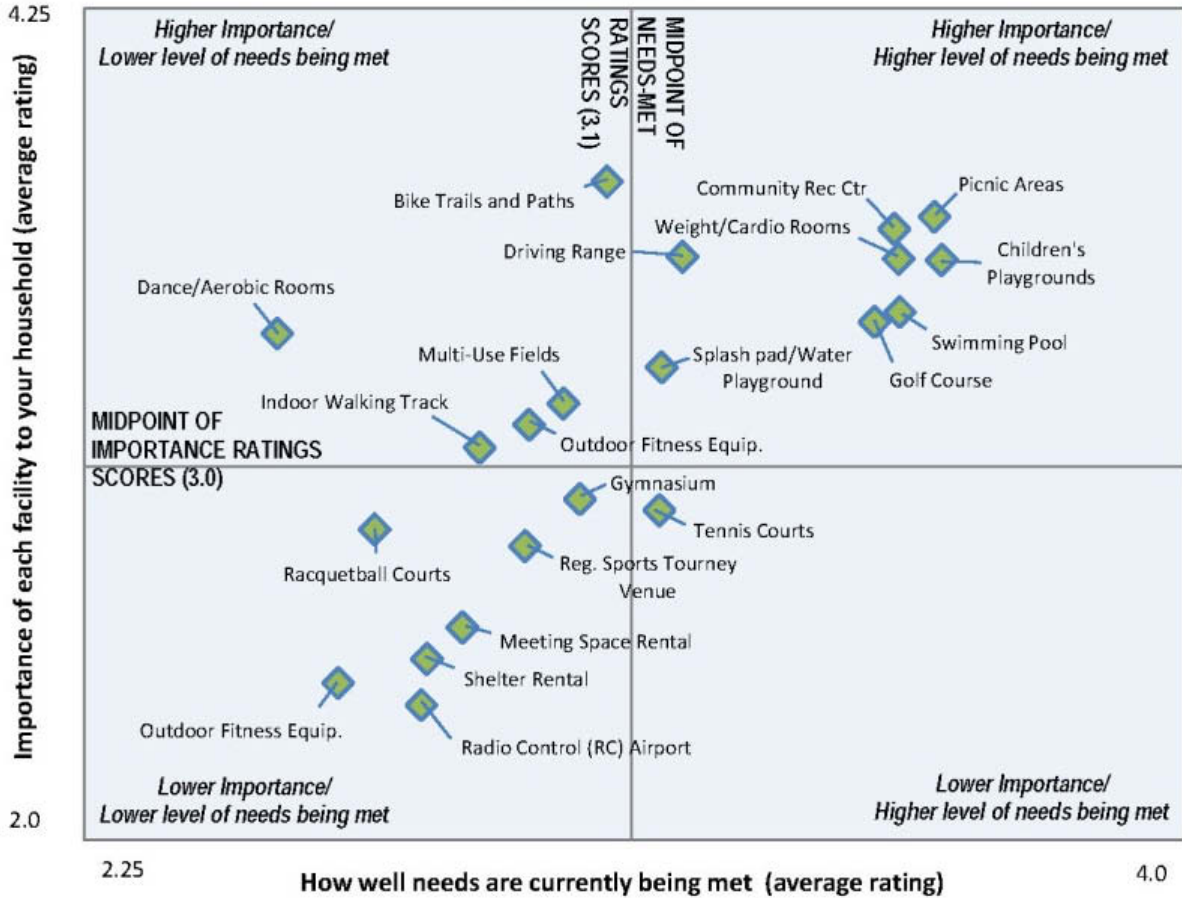
Figure 4: Importance of Parks and Recreation Services



In addition to the importance of trails, important facilities, amenities, or infrastructure include (Figure 5):

- Bike trails and paths
- Multi-use fields
- Indoor walking track
- Outdoor fitness equipment
- Dance/aerobics room

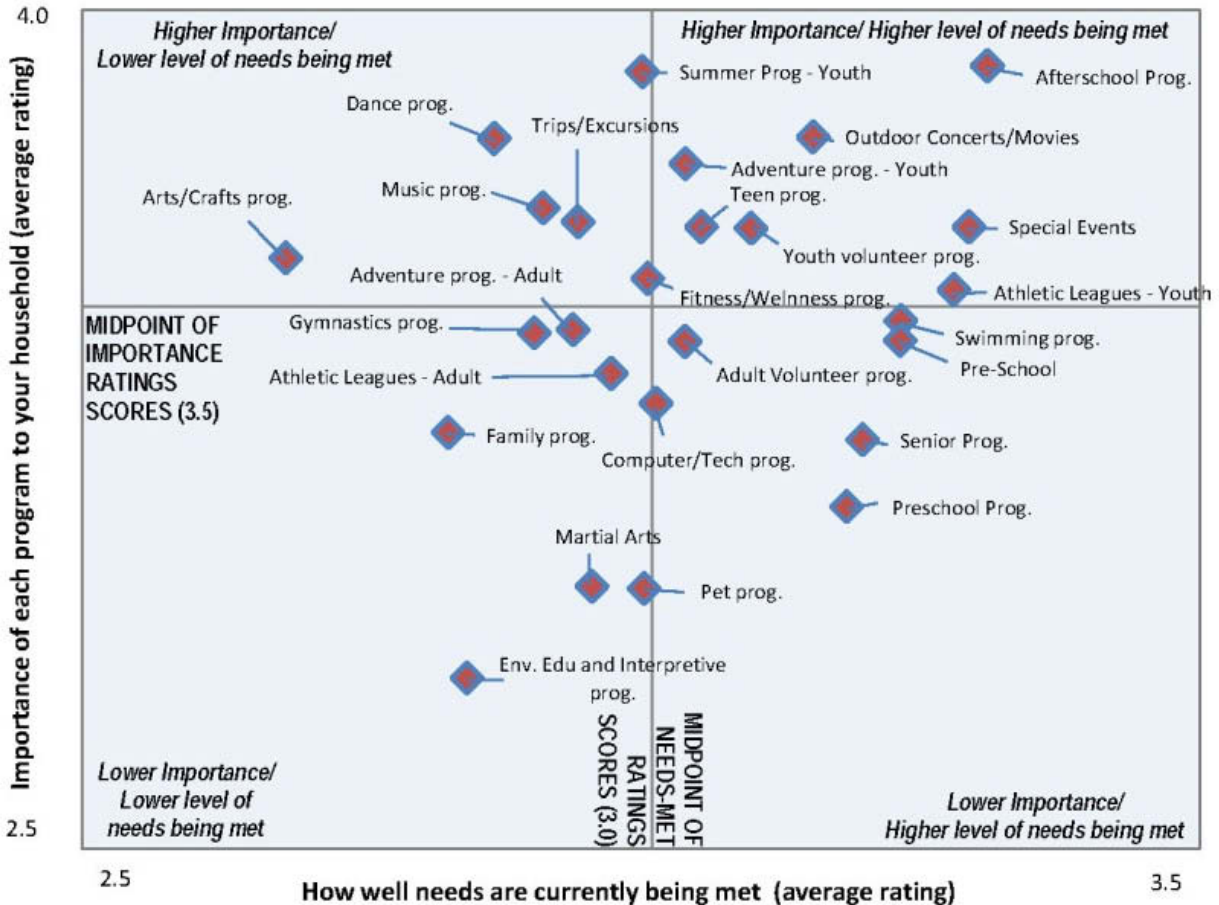
Figure 5: Highly Important Unmet Facility Need



Youth and teen programs and services are a high priority. Important programs to add or focus on (**Figure 6**) include:

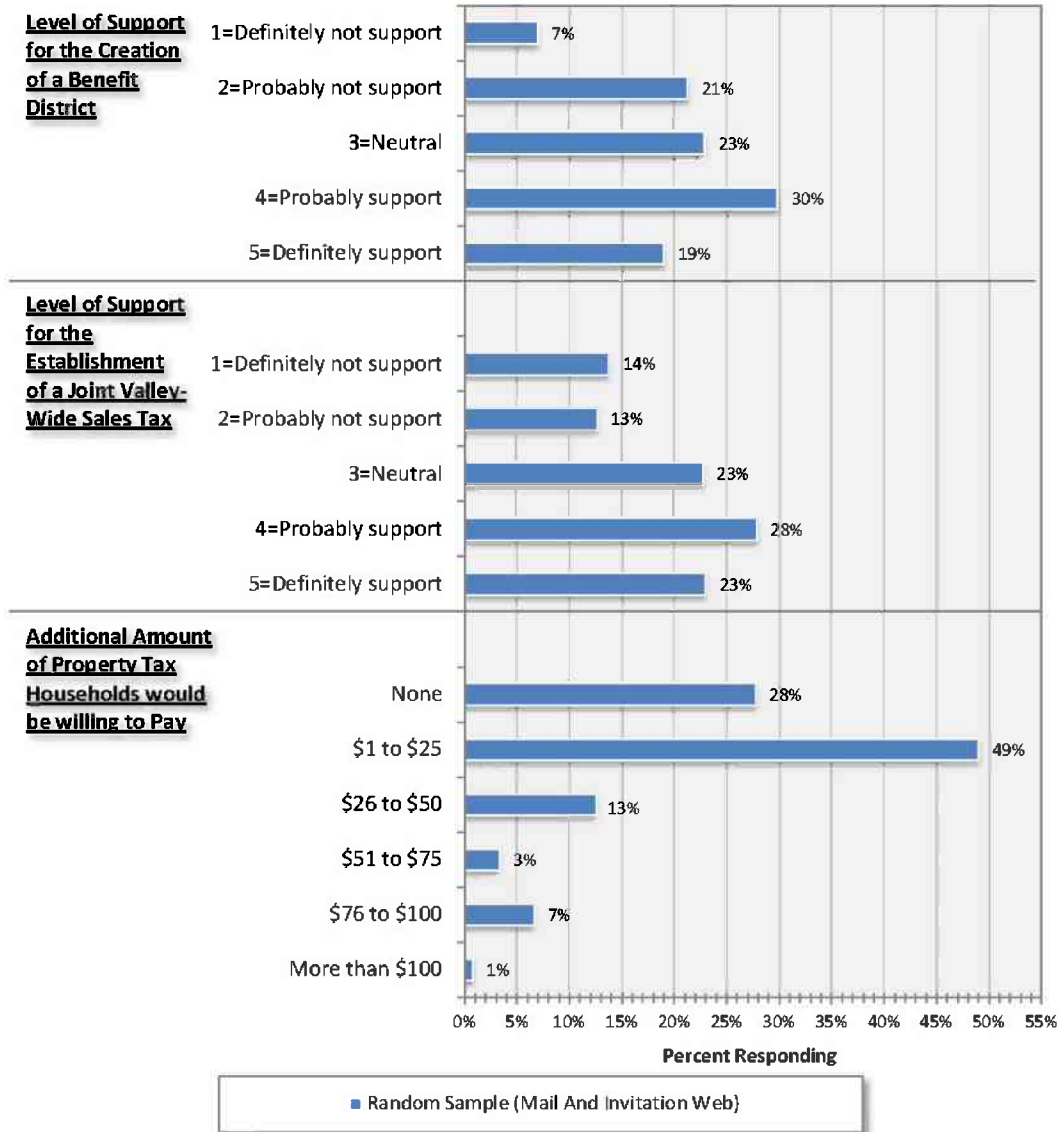
- Summer programs for youth
- Fitness and Wellness programs
- Dance
- Music
- Arts and crafts
- Trips and excursions

Figure 6: Highly Important Unmet Program, Activity, and Special Event Need



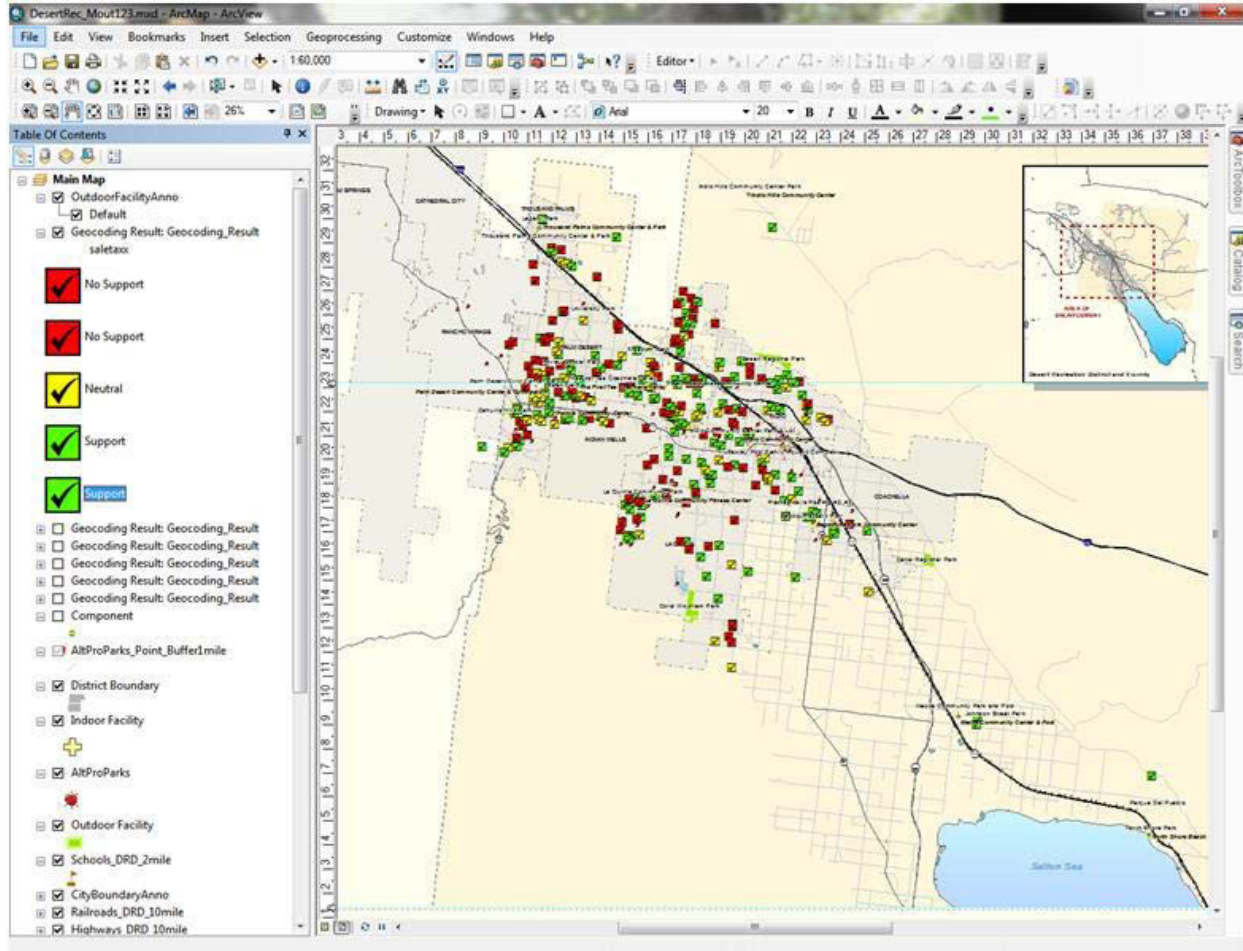
There appears to be significant support at this early stage to explore additional funding mechanisms in order for DRD to provide the desired services (**Figure 7**). Forty-nine percent (49%) would definitely or probably support a benefit improvement district, and 51 percent would support a tax measure, although it was later determined that a sales tax measure is not a District-wide option because many of the cities within are or may be at their statutory limit. A parcel tax would be a better choice for DRD, and it appears without knowing what the taxation measure would include at this stage at least 73 percent would support an additional \$1-25 per year.

Figure 7: Temperature Read on Level of Support for Additional Taxpayer Investment



The consultant team mapped the survey responses to see if there was a trend. No trend appeared evident, as support for additional tax investments was widely spread across the Valley. **Figure 8** shows the generalized location of the yes (green), no (red), and neutral (yellow) responses.

Figure 8: Location of Support for Additional Taxpayer Investment Responses



E. Comparison between the Open Link and Random Survey Results

Respondent Profile Comparison

The underlying demographics and resident profile comparing the random sample (RS) and open link (OL) web survey respondents are significantly different as the OL survey reflects self-selected respondents who are mostly likely already engaged with the District. As mentioned previously, the RS data has been weighted based on the underlying age, race/ethnicity, and geographic ZIP Code profile gathered from the Desert Recreation District Strategic Plan and the American Community Survey five-year estimates for 2011. Some of the most notable differences are highlighted below:

- OL respondents are much older than RS respondents—about 58 years of age on average versus 48 years in the random sample.
- 13% of the OL sample represented Hispanic ethnicity versus 58% of the weighted random sample.
- Consistent with the older profile, OL respondents are more likely to be empty nesters (41% versus 24% random sample).

Importance of Park and Recreation Functions

Despite the demographic differences, the top perceived values of park and recreation functions are the same between the two samples, including:

- Provide positive activities for youth (both samples 4.6 average rating)
- Promote healthy active lifestyles (both samples 4.6 average rating)
- Operate and maintain existing park facilities (4.6 RS versus 4.8 OL)
- Provide recreation programs and services for all age groups (both samples 4.5 average rating)

Current Usage of Facilities

The average use of trails and walking paths, weight/cardio fitness rooms, bike trails and paths, golf course, and swimming pool was much higher for OL respondents than the RS.

Importance of Facilities and Meeting Needs

The importance and degree to which facilities are meeting needs also had a few differences. The most notable differences are as follows:

- Following the indications of frequency of use, trails and walking paths (4.3 OL versus 4.0 RS) and weight/cardio fitness rooms (4.0 OL versus 3.6 RS) were of higher importance to the OL respondents than the RS.

Several facilities were also meeting the needs of the OL respondents better than the needs of the RS, including:

- Trails and walking paths (4.0 OL versus 3.7 RS), children's playgrounds (3.9 OL versus 3.6 RS), bike trails and paths (3.6 OL versus 3.1 RS), and gymnasium space (3.4 OL versus 3.0 RS).
- Weight/cardio fitness space was rated the same with respect to meeting needs when comparing the two samples (both 3.5).

Top Three Current Services and Facilities to Add, Expand, or Improve

When asked to rank the top three facilities that are important to their household to add, expand, or improve in their community, similar to RS respondents, OL respondents indicate that trails and walking paths are most important by far (47%). OL respondents then list weight/cardio fitness space (35%), bike trails and paths (27%), and the golf course (26%).

Why Facilities Are Not Used/Where Improvements Can Be Made

Some of the most significant differences in the results were apparent with respect to reasons why facilities are not used and where improvements are needed.

- "Don't have the programs I want" was a much greater issue for not using DRD facilities for OL respondents than it was for RS respondents (33% versus 8%).
- RS respondents, more often than OL respondents, feel that the hours of operation and customer service/staff knowledge are in need of improvement.
- OL respondents feel that improvements in lack of facilities and amenities (43% versus 32%), programs not offered at the times I want (28% versus 19%), condition/maintenance or safety of facilities (22% versus 15%), and price/user fees (26% versus 18%) are more important.

Future Indoor Facilities

Among top three priorities for future indoor facilities:

- Weight room and fitness (51%), indoor/outdoor pool (32%), and senior areas (28%) are most important to OL respondents.
- RS respondents listed teen areas first (43%), then weight room and fitness (39%), and indoor/outdoor pool (31%).

Future Outdoor Facilities

Among top three priorities for future outdoor facilities:

- Paved pedestrian/bike paths and trails were mentioned most frequently by both samples as the top priority (39% OL versus 32% RS).
- OL respondents then listed hiking/mountain biking/equestrian trails (34%), dog park (17%), and developed neighborhood parks (17%).
- After pedestrian/bike paths and trails, RS respondents mentioned dog park (28%) and covered playgrounds (26%) as priorities.

Current Programs, Activities, and Special Events Usage

- Special events, outdoor concerts/movies, and fitness and wellness programs were used by a greater percentage of OL households compared to RS.
- Similar percentages of both OL and RS use youth athletic leagues, although OL respondents do so with much greater frequency (4.7 times on average over the last 12 months versus 1.7 times RS).

F. RAICES Survey

In 2011/12 RAICES Cultura and Research Scholars prepared a report on **Youth Participatory Action Research on Recreational Opportunities in the Eastern Coachella Valley**. The ECV is composed of five communities the City of Coachella, and unincorporated communities of Mecca, Thermal, Oasis, and North Shore. The communities are largely low-income, young, and widely dispersed geographically. The report was the result of a year-long Youth Participatory Action Research project on the current recreational opportunities for youth in the Eastern Coachella Valley.

“Researchers utilized three tools to gather data: surveys, photovoice, and mapping. Youth gathered 635 youth surveys and 159 adult surveys from residents in the Eastern Coachella Valley.”

Youth Survey Statistics (635 youth surveys were collected)

- 56.9% were female participants, and 43.1% were male participants
- 95.1% identified as Hispanic, 1.4% identified as White, 1.1% identified as African American, .3% identified as Pacific Islander, and 2.2% identified as Other
- 9.3% were between 12-14 years of age, 76.2% were between 15-17 years of age, 14.3% were between 18-20 years of age, and .2% were between 21-23
- Grade level of youth participants were recorded as .08% in 7th or 8th grade, 40.5% in 9th or 10th grade, 57.4% in 11th or 12th grade, and 1.3% in college
- Surveys were collected from two high schools in the Eastern Coachella Valley – 356 surveys were collected from Desert Mirage High School, and 257 surveys were collected from Coachella Valley High School

- Youth participating in the survey live in Coachella (247 surveys), Mecca (114 surveys), Thermal (139 surveys), Oasis (17 surveys), and North Shore (64 surveys)

Youth Survey Findings

- *Research Scholars found that youth in **Coachella** saw a **need for more art and cultural opportunities**.*
 - **Finding #1:** When Coachella youth were asked “What type of activities or workshops would you like your community to host?”
 - ◆ *58.3% of youth stated that they would like to see cultural, performing, and visual arts such as dancing or painting.*
 - **Finding #2:** Coachella youth were asked “What problems do you face in your community?”
 - ◆ *42.7% stated that there is a lack of cultural spaces for visual and performing arts, film, cooking, etc.*
 - **Finding #3:** Coachella youth believe that there is a lack of employment opportunities.
 - ◆ *67.1% said that unemployment was also an issue faced in the community.*
 - **Finding #4:** When Coachella youth were asked “When you think about your community, what improvements are needed for the Eastern Coachella Valley?”
 - ◆ *Youth stated that they would like to see more recreational centers or opportunities for involvement.*
- The first recommendation the youth created was to work with the City of **Coachella** to develop youth lead community art projects as well as develop a sustainable art and cultural center.
- *Youth residents of **Thermal** stated that there is a **need for positive youth engagement**.*
 - **Finding #5:** When Thermal youth were asked “What type of activities or workshops would you like your community to host?”
 - ◆ *59.2% of the community wants to see youth-oriented workshops and environmental workshops and activities.*
 - **Finding #6:** When youth were asked “What problems do you face in your community?”
 - ◆ *54.3% of the youth said that there is a lack of positive youth engagement.*
- For the community of **Thermal** youth recommended developing positive youth activities as well as work with existing organizations to expand their activities to include a variety of youth interest within the community of Mecca.
- *For youth in **Mecca**, they would like to see more **activities pertaining to the environment**.*
 - **Finding #7:** When asked “What type of activities or workshops would you like your community to host?”
 - ◆ *56.2% of the youth in Mecca wanted to see more workshops related to the environment.*
 - **Finding #8:** When asked “Are you involved in any extracurricular activities?”
 - ◆ *65.4% of youth in Mecca stated that they are involved in extra-curricular activities.*
 - **Finding #9:** When Mecca youth were asked “What type of extra-curricular activity they participated in?”
 - ◆ *64.9% of Mecca youth were involved sports.*
 - **Finding #10:** When youth were asked “If you spent most of your summer in the eastern Coachella Valley, what did you do?”
 - ◆ *39.8% of Mecca youth respondents participated in sports during the summer.*

- *Lastly for youth living in the communities in **Oasis and North Shore**, access to recreational opportunities is greatly determined by their **access to transportation.***
 - **Oasis**
 - ♦ **Finding #11:** When asked “Are you involved in any extracurricular activities? If so what kind?”
 - *91.7% of Oasis youth stated that they are involved in sports.*
 - ♦ **Finding #12:** When asked “If you spent most of your summer in the eastern Coachella Valley, what did you do?”
 - *21.4% of Oasis youth responded that they participated in sports during the summer.*
 - ♦ **Finding #13** When asked “Is there any public transportation (such as a Sunbus stop) near you?”
 - *75% of Oasis participants responded that they do not have public transportation. Youth are not able to easily access recreational opportunities in other communities because of the lack of transportation.*
 - ♦ **Finding #14:** When asked “What problems do you face in your community?”
 - *81.3% of Oasis youth responded that they believe the lack of an athletic association is a problem they face in their community.*
 - ♦ **Finding #15:**
 - *58.8% of Oasis youth stated that money is an issue when participating in activities in their community.*
 - ♦ **Finding #16:** When asked “If you spent most of your summer in the eastern Coachella Valley, what did you do?”
 - *The research team identified that 71.4% of Oasis youth who spent their summer in the Coachella Valley worked.*
 - **North Shore**
 - ♦ **Finding #17:** When asked “Is there any public transportation (such as a Sunbus stop) near you?”
 - *100% of youth answered that there is no public transportation near them.*
 - ♦ **Finding #18:** When asked “What problems do you face in your community?”
 - *88.3% answered that transportation is a problem in their community.*
 - ♦ **Finding #19:** When asked “Are you involved in any extracurricular activities? If so what kind?”
 - *65.5% answered that they are involved in extra-curricular activities with 51.3% involved in sports and 48.7% involved in after school programs.*
 - ♦ **Finding #20:** When asked “Do you have a place to go to after school, besides home and school?”
 - *58.1% of youth answered that they do not have anywhere to go besides school and home during after school hours.*

Adult Survey Statistics (159 adult surveys were collected)

- 70.7% were female participants, and 29.3% were male participants
- 96% identified as Hispanic, 2.0% identified as White, 2.0% identified as Pacific Islander, and .7% identified as Native American
- 25% were between 24-34 years of age, 28.8% were between 35-45 years of age, 25% were between 46-56 years of age, 21.2% were aged 57 and over
- 50.6% were from Coachella, 10.8% were from Mecca, 6.3% were from Thermal, 3.2% were from Oasis, and 5.7% were from North Shore.

Adult Survey Findings

Adult Finding: When adults were asked "Do you know of the extra-curricular programs and/or services that are being offered there?"

- *71.8% of adults surveyed stated that they do not know of the services available.*

G. Additional Stakeholder Input

In general, the municipalities that DRD serves, as well as other partners and stakeholders, seem supportive of where the District is heading; focusing on regional service provision and venues using a collaborative approach. Individual agency meetings were conducted in March and April 2013 to share the initial findings and discuss where these agencies see DRD heading. Their comments are reported below.

Riverside County Supervisor Benoit's Office

- Support for DRD's regional district-wide shift in focus.
- Support for regional trails concept and potential management and security role for DRD.
- Support for a large regional sports tournament venue.
- Support for coordinated service provision with the Riverside County Parks and Open Spaces District services at Lake Cahuilla.
- Support for Sunline route coordination for a Rec Route concept.

City of Cathedral City

- There is support for this regional valley-wide collaborative approach.
- Can DRD expand your service area? *Yes.*
- When you contract with others outside your service area do they pay you additionally for this service outside of the taxes you collect? *Yes.*
- If Cathedral City were to include, what would be the process and how long would it take? *It would be a fast track like that which Desert Hot Springs is currently looking at for DRD to provide services for them; it's about a 6-month process, but this is really dependent on a lot of factors; the main thing is that services can't be provided without a funding measure.*
- Want to have a follow up discussion on their new park development and what it would take for DRD to assist with the operations and maintenance in a collaborative approach; and we should also discuss other potential venues and collaborative opportunities that we currently have (with our soccer fields, and our agreements with Big League Dreams for some usage).
- The City has some field space and more field inventory being added now.....can this help; Panorama and Century Park has field space.

- Have a \$10M grant to build a park; need to determine a partnership for the operations and maintenance of it as they have no way to provide this in-house.
- Cathedral City is outside of the DRD taxation/service boundary but is inside the DRD SOI; therefore, DRD can provide service to the City by contract without including in the DRD boundary, but funds would be needed for this kind of expansion of service.
- Big League Dreams is in Cathedral City (private field/sports provider).
- Other private providers are also serving Cathedral City residents, but not all are being served by this; there is some interest in providing a public LOS that they are not providing now, because the private sector does not/cannot fulfill the public service mandate that government operates under.
- City has an old community center that could be used too.
- Old Senior Center (was on Highway 111; has been moved to a housing facility location).
- City has a new senior center too.

City of Coachella

- Support for DRD’s regional district-wide shift in focus.
- Support for regional trails concept and potential management and security role for DRD
 - Concern for concept because the Cities would be responsible for the operations and maintenance and Coachella has no money for this – how can DRD help with this?
- Support for a large regional sports tournament venue – will offload Coachella fields which are overrun with people other than Coachella resident users.
- La Entrada development in the “v” of Highway 111 and 86 – may have a planned private developer project for soccer stadium and field complex – this should be explored.
- The City has a new, 6-month old soccer park.
- Anything that will help the City to fund its local park and recreation needs is supported by the council. The trail security and management is a major concern, as they do not have resources to maintain what they currently have.

City of Desert Hot Springs (DHS)

- Leadership believes in regional solutions, but is not sure that the DHS community believes in this concept.
- Not in DRD boundaries currently but soon to be in the SOI; if they can pass a taxation funding initiative in the future, then DRD can provide services in DHS; DRD has no funds to absorb services there without new funding.
- Just opened a new \$17-18 million Wellness/Community/Aquatics Center with a collaborative project funded in part by the Desert Health Care District who will provide health care services in a section of the building; project included:
 - Gym
 - Fitness equipment
 - Multi-purpose rooms (used by the Coachella Valley B & G Club)
 - Outdoor pool (originally the pool was for the HS swim team, but they are not able to financially participate) (\$2.5 million capital budget = \$350 thousand annual operating budget)
 - Rehabbing of a park site (\$2 million)
 - New park site development (\$3 million)
- Negotiating with DRD to contract with them to operate the pool for summer 2013.
- School is fenced and next door.

- This community is in poor health and is mostly lower income, so the needs are many.
- \$20 million in developer fees were used for projects for a regional venue for AYSO and Little League.
- DHS needs \$20-25 million plus operating funds over the next five years for capital projects; need to include projects that appeal to seniors to see a bond or funding measure.
- The summer recreation budget is \$45 thousand, and now they add the summer pool operations.
- Parks and Recreation Advocates should be used to a strategy for dealing with crime prevention, health, education, and quality of life; tie parks and recreation to public safety issues.
- Hurdles may be “isolationist thinking” (metaphor is Alaska) and “victim thinking.”
- **Advice:** Engagement needs to begin.

City of Indian Wells

- Support for DRD’s regional district-wide shift in focus – hotel impact.
- Support for regional trails concept and potential management and security role for DRD.
- Add amenities to the six-mile stretch of the Indian Wells controlled portion of Highway 111 (four resort frontage).
 - Exercise equipment stations, educational wayfinding, historic and cultural education, and public art to develop this linear park.
- Support for a large regional sports tournament venue – hotel impact.
 - Volleyball was mentioned.
- Success in a capital campaign would mean something for everyone.

City of Indio

- Embrace the regionalism concept.
- Welcome a regional approach as long as it makes sense to Indio if they are to contribute funding – location, location, location.
- Support the regional park concept for the confluence of Coachella, La Quinta, and Indio – Vista Santa Rosa area is great.
- Have a new skatepark and some parks coming on line.
- They cannot use school fields – but they need to, as schools are part of the solution,
- Need fields on the north side of the City.
- North side of freeway where Palm Desert, Sun City, and Shadow Hills are – school uses.
- Football needs a home (field allocation).
- Need to serve kids who do not qualify for free/reduced rates for camp and afterschool needs.

City of La Quinta

- Good city return/representation on the survey results.
- Support for DRD’s regional district-wide shift in focus.
- Support for regional trails concept and potential management and security role for DRD.
- Support for a large regional sports tournament venue – will offload La Quinta fields which are overrun with people other than La Quinta resident users – fields at Washington and Fred Waring are impact by Indian Wells, La Quinta, Palm Desert, and Indio (where the four cities converge).
- Package the master plan recommendations in a manner that shows benefit to La Quinta for supporting an out-of-city sports park (for example: reduction of traffic on local fields, managing, and maintaining regional trails through the city, possible expansion, and management collaboration of Lake Cahuilla, etc.).

City of Palm Desert

- Support for DRD's regional district-wide shift in focus.
- Support for regional trails concept and potential management and security role for DRD.
- Support for a large regional sports tournament venue – will offload Palm Desert fields which are overrun with other than the Cove resident users (tri-cities of Palm Desert, Rancho Mirage and Indian Wells).
- Comment that perhaps DRD should do a destination and origination study for field use.
- Comments to remember that any development collaborations for DRD with Cal State and College of the Desert will result in charges for the public to park which could impact public joint use of facilities.
- Palm Desert has a 5-field soccer complex which is heavily used.
- Do not forget Big League Field of Dreams in Cathedral City/Palm Springs area (5 baseballs and 1 covered soccer – private).
- Prepare numbers that validate the savings to the city of regional sports venue as well as the trail management. Also, get some small, successful regional venues under our belt like camping at the Coachella Preserve. Suggested speaking with CVAG about this.

City of Palm Springs

- There are opportunities to work together with DRD to determine the collaborative approach and where the priorities are – because the City's priorities may be different than the District's, and the political climate would seem to support the collaboration.
- Would like to work on potential concept development projects for tournament venues in Palm Springs (possibility of using Quimby funding for this); DRD and Palm Springs should work collaboratively to determine who is the best provider and where is the best location to do these services – need an 8-10 baseball/softball field complex for a tournament venue.
- Status of Palm Springs Master Plan – it is scheduled to be updated, finalized, and adopted in early 2014.
- Last year the City passed a tax initiative to re-do the downtown with \$2 million per year dedicated to park improvements (this means that furloughed staff can return to full duty next year).
- Working with an architect for a development in the north side of Palm Springs at the old Palm Springs Country Club site that was sold to a developer to develop 400 residential units and a 25-30 acre park (like DeMuth Community Park) with a soccer emphasis.
- Also working on DeMuth Park re-design.
- California Parks and Recreation Society (CPRS) is also looking at supporting a state-wide \$.05 sales tax initiative for local parks and recreation.

City of Rancho Mirage

- Support for DRD's regional district-wide shift in focus.
- Some support for regional trails concept and potential management and security role for DRD; discussion regarding difference between an urban valley-wide trail connection and the good amount of existing hiking trails (especially in the mountains).
- Support for a large regional sports tournament venue.
- Potential partnership with the high school for a warm water therapy pool/fitness/wellness venue on the north and some sports.
- Questions regarding potential changes to the District boundary.

Desert Sands Unified School District (DSUSD)

- Support for where DRD is moving in the master plan.
- Need for summer programs, as there is no summer school anymore due to California budget cuts.
- Need youth athletics programs:
 - NFL PLAY 60 is the National Football League’s campaign to encourage kids to be active for 60 minutes a day in order to help reverse the trend of childhood obesity.
<http://www.nflrush.com/play60>
- There are collaborative opportunities at Shadow Hills High School and Middle School in the North Indio area.

“Our players recognize the value of staying healthy and it’s important that young fans also understand the benefits of exercise. NFL PLAY 60 is a significant tool in ensuring children get their necessary, daily physical activity.”

-- NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell

Coachella Valley Unified School District (CVUSD)

- Coachella Valley Unified School District (urban and unincorporated areas of valley) – DRD has no agreement currently in place for out-of-school programs – they do it all with their union teachers; most of the kids who qualify for the program participate, and they do not currently have a capacity issue or waiting lists to deal with.
- Interested in maximizing use of public facilities; like lighting fields so the public can use.
- The County may auction off land set aside for sports fields behind Boys and Girls Club. The soccer field is already built behind Mecca Elementary school, but is in poor condition. It is owned by CVUSD.

Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG)

- Support for DRD’s regional district-wide shift in focus.
- Support for regional trails concept and potential management and security role for DRD.
- Support for a large regional sports tournament venue.
- Trails are the cheapest operational service – best bang for investment dollars.
- Consider other special venues like BMX using a non-profit.
- Consider a Phase 2 water park for a regional sports complex.

Desert Health Care District

- DHCD has made a \$10 million pledge to the Whitewater Trail project.
- They see a valley-wide trail system and trailsheds as functioning as emergency egress, as an emergency service delivery option, and as an emergency evacuation option with potential supply hubs, if Interstate 10 is impacted – so for them, the Health Care District is interested in this for emergency preparedness.
- Funding options to leverage include FEMA and State Disaster Preparedness funds.
- DHCD also sees a trail system as improving safety through options for senior mobility transportation corridors – for access to health, retail, and social opportunities.
- DHCD is using the phrase *“collective impact”* to describe collaborative processes.
- They may also be interested in a partnership with DRD for the 13 acres in Rancho Mirage/1000 Palms area for a wellness initiative/project.

YMCA

- Youth focused service provider:
 - Offer basketball and flag football for 3-5-year-olds.
- In 44 sites – 21 after-school programs sites, called ASES; 9 Coachella Valley housing (Mecca, Palm Springs); 5 licensed DSUSD sites; 3 preschools (La Quinta, Indio, Palm Desert); YMCA Family Center and Aquatics Center (Palm Desert).
- Volunteer services/opportunities for adults is a priority.
- Does not currently operate like a typical YMCA model with adult services, but wants to move in that direction.
- Planning a \$5 million expansion to the YMCA Family Center in Palm Desert; including aerobics, cardio area, weights, performing arts, five classrooms, kitchen/cooking.
 - City of Palm Desert has given the go ahead for this expansion.
 - City also gave the nod to DRD for their potential expansion – similar components.
 - This needs to be resolved; both facility expansions would create duplicative services and competition.
 - DRD is mandated by Palm Desert to provide certain fee price points which would be significantly under what the YMCA would have to charge, giving DRD an unfair advantage for the market share.
- YMCA programs are state funded in California.
- The potential Rancho Mirage YMCA project fell through due to inadequate donor funding.
- Transportation is the valley's major issue.

Boys and Girls Clubs of Coachella Valley

- They are open to potential collaborations with DRD and feel the District is on the right track.
- They focus on kids and partnerships.
- Coachella Valley Boys and Girls Clubs have five locations: La Quinta, Indio, Desert Hot Springs, Coachella, and Mecca.
- The Mecca facility is next to the DRD community center, and there is great collaboration at that site.
- Issues include transportation and getting the word out.
- The Boys and Girls Clubs are in discussions to unite the various clubs around the valley (Coachella, Palm Springs, and Cathedral City – are all standalone right now).
- ACETS (the teen version of the ACES) program is an untapped potential.

Greater Palm Springs Convention and Visitors Bureau (PSCVB)

- Discussed suggestions and sites for regional venues of interest to the PSCVB:
 - Dam a portion of the whitewater wash for a whitewater park
 - ◆ Kayak course
 - ◆ X Games
 - ◆ Wake boarding
 - ROPEs Course at Coral Mountain Discovery Park
 - Berger Foundation Property on Cook and Interstate 10
- Discussed interesting models, agencies with ideas, and funding potentials:
 - Tempe Town Lake (AZ) – did a rowing basin venue (East Valley)
 - Morgan's Wonderland – disabilities play scape
 - San Antonio, TX – Riverwalk potential; Gordon Hartman Soccer Complex; Bear County – San Antonio Spurs

- Discussed recommendations from the last Master Plan:
 - Sports Venue
 - Water Park
 - Community Center (90-120K sq. ft.)

Riverside County Regional Parks and Open Space District (RivCoParks)

- Open to all collaborative efforts including discussions as to which agency makes sense to lead a specific service provision, operate, and manage a park or facility, etc.
- Support for continuing the regional work groups and collaborative approach that has begun.
- Economies of scale, “strategic abandonment,” values of outsourcing/contracting, efficiencies, all should be investigated and considered.
- There is support for this regional valley-wide collaborative approach.
- Lake Cahuilla is managed by RivCoParks and is owned by a collaborative: Coachella Valley Water District, Bureau of Land Management, and the RivCoParks; there are several issues with this property:
 - Location near high-end homes so there may be opposition to further development and expansion.
 - Location near a shooting range (law enforcement facility) with this non-relaxing noise happening all the time.
 - No water usage on lake; limited to camping – Water District is more concerned with water quality than recreational usage of lake.
- Ranger program, interpretation, regional provider, and land management are core RivCoParks services.
- Typically, RivCoParks does not do traditional recreation (indoor – gyms, programs, etc.).
- Effort to expand RivCoParks presence in the valley and expand into Blythe.
- Trails management across the valley would be the “sweet spot for DRD.”
- Serving the needs of Off Highway Vehicles (OHV) is another area for DRD, and RivCoParks may be able to help.
- RivCoParks may be able to help fund the mountain bike/sports adventure park.
- Interested in the potential of opening up a campground in the Thousand Palms area as a collaboration opportunity.
- RivCoParks and DRD need to continue to sort out which provider does what specifically in the Coachella Valley, who owns what property, who operates and/or manages what service – as they are both regional providers in the Valley and have expectations from the County Supervisors; there is room for both.
- RivCoParks is in the sports complex business now, not by design, but by default (the draft *2013 Comprehensive Park, Resources, and Recreation Service Plan* indicates that this is an opportunity for expansion, whether as a direct provider of services or a renter of space).
- RivCoParks could bring funding to the table, along with legislative and lobbying support, potential builder/owner role.
- **Advice:** Any taxation measure should include an inflation/escalation factor consistent with the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

IV. Inventory – Indoor and Outdoor Asset Review

A. Overview and General Description

Desert Recreation District (DRD) owns, manages, or maintains a variety of park and recreation facilities. The current system includes 23 outdoor recreation areas and 11 indoor facilities. While large community or regionally significant parks are the focus, the District also has numerous small neighborhood parks.

DRD is the primary provider of parks and recreation in unincorporated areas of the District and in cities that either do not have the capacity or expertise to offer these services, or prefer to contract with the District to be the provider. DRD, formerly Coachella Valley Recreation and Parkway District (CVRPD), was created in 1950. It was established under authority of the California Public Resources Code Sections 5780 et seq. The purpose of the organization was to administer park facilities and provide recreation program services. DRD is the largest recreation district in California (over 1,800 square miles). The District's broad territory stretches from Rancho Mirage (at Bob Hope Drive) east to the Salton Sea.

B. Assets

The purpose of this analysis is to evaluate how level of service is provided to the residents and users by Desert Recreation District facilities and parks.

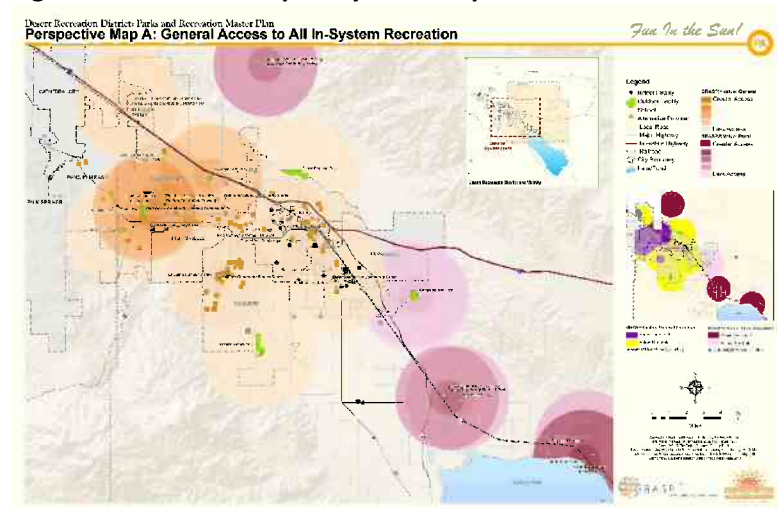
Background for Assets Analysis

The process used for this analysis included an inventory of recreation assets provided or maintained by the District for use by residents and visitors. These are further defined below.

Creating the Assets Inventory

Resource Map A: System Map (Figure 9) shows the study area and key locations of properties. Larger maps are located in **Appendix B**.

Figure 9: Resource Map A: System Map



Site visits were conducted in November of 2012. In addition to noting the presence and quantity of recreational elements included on a site or within a facility, this inventory also accounted for the functional quality of these elements.

C. Assets Context

Inventory of Existing Components

In planning for the delivery of parks and recreation services, it is useful to think of parks, trails, indoor facilities, and other public spaces as parts of an infrastructure. This infrastructure allows people to exercise, socialize, and maintain a healthy physical, mental, and social wellbeing. The infrastructure is made up of components that support this goal. Components include such amenities as playgrounds, picnic shelters, courts, fields, indoor facilities, and other elements that allow the system to meet its intended purpose. A description of this **Composite-Values Methodology (CVM)** process is included in **Appendix C**.

In the inventory of assets, the following information was collected:

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

The inventory team used the following three tier rating system to evaluate each component on such things as the condition of the component, its size, or capacity relative to the need at that location, and its overall quality:

- 1 = Below Expectation
- 2 = Meets Expectation
- 3 = Exceeds Expectation

The setting for a component and the conditions around it affect how well it functions, so in addition to scoring the components, each park site or indoor facility was given a set of scores to rate its comfort, convenience, and ambient qualities. This includes traits such as the availability of restrooms, drinking water, shade, scenery, etc.

This compiled inventory is included in the final Atlas and is provided as a staff level document with final deliverables.

D. Outdoor Facilities Overview

Outdoor Urban Core Facilities – Large Parks

Cahuilla Hills Park

Located in and owned by the City of Palm Desert, Cahuilla Hills Park offers a variety of amenities consistent with a “nature park” setting including picnicking, hiking, and interpretive signing. The park also includes two lighted tennis courts, one with pickle ball court overlay. The native desert setting and location allows for a quick escape from the surrounding, more urban areas. Cahuilla Hills is the western most part of the District.



Freedom Park

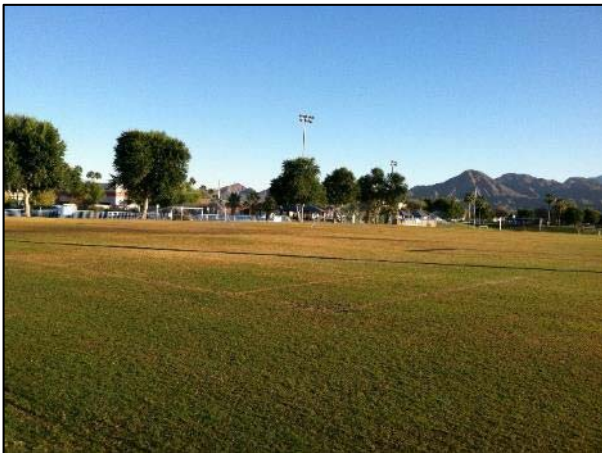
Located adjacent to Ronald Reagan elementary school in, and owned by, the City of Palm Desert, this facility provides a wide variety of recreational opportunities in a well-designed and maintained facility.





Palm Desert Soccer Park

This City of Palm Desert-owned park serves as the main multi-purpose field complex in the area. Additional amenities provide a variety of other recreational opportunities.





Palm Desert Civic Center Park

Centrally located within the urban core of the District is the Palm Desert Civic Center Park, owned by the City of Palm Desert. Also within the boundaries of this park are the Palm Desert Aquatic Center (owned by the City and operated by the YMCA), the Palm Desert Community Center (owned by the City and operated by DRD), and the YMCA building, as well as many municipal buildings, making this a primary recreational and civic epicenter. This well maintained and designed park offers something for everyone.





Outdoor Urban Core Facilities – Smaller Parks (including Lighting and Landscape Maintenance District funded parks)

Thousand Palms Community Park

The Thousand Palms Community Park, owned jointly by the Palm Springs Unified School District and DRD, offers a wide variety of active recreation opportunities. The park is well positioned adjacent to the community center, library, and school. Immediately north of this park is undeveloped land planned for additional park amenities. Overall the park is in good shape but does show some wear and tear.





La Quinta Community Park

The La Quinta Community Park, owned and operated by the District, is adjacent to the La Quinta Community Center. The park is well designed and maintained. A large variety of recreational amenities are available.



Indio Community Center Park

Indio Community Center Park, owned by DRD, is adjacent to the Indio Community Center and provides local types of amenities such as a playground and loop walk. The park also serves as an important outdoor event space for community center functions and programs.



Placitas de la Paz

Placitas de la Paz is a series of neighborhood walkways parks and landscape areas, owned and maintained by the District. The main central park appears to function as planned; however, the smaller more hidden “parks” suffer greatly from gang activity, vandalism, and poor neighborhood planning to the point that the majority of equipment and furnishing have been removed.

- City does not want to invest in the sites.
- DRD also maintains landscape medians and detention ponds along perimeter.
- DRD also provides lights along with maintenance to the local park system through a Lighting and Landscape Maintenance District.





University Park

This small park in, and owned by, Palm Desert offers local recreation opportunities. Future residential developments in the area will make this park an important neighborhood feature.



Aquatics Centers

The Mecca Community Center and Pool, Pawley Pool Family Aquatic Complex and Bagdouma Park Pool are the District's three facilities that offer aquatics on the same site as either a community center and/or a regional park (regardless of ownership). Mecca Community Center and Pool is located in the southeastern, unincorporated area of the District, and Pawley Pool is located centrally in the District, in a park operated by the City of Indio. Bagdouma Park Pool is located in Bagdouma Park in the City of Coachella. With the exception of the Mecca facility these are primarily outdoor facilities.

Mecca Community Center and Pool

The Mecca Community Center and Pool is jointly owned by DRD, Coachella Valley Unified School District, and Riverside County. It is operated by DRD and is very actively programmed after school and on weekends. Children are transported here by a District van. It is located in Mecca Community Park and adjacent to the elementary school. This facility provides users access to both indoor and outdoor recreation, as well as aquatics on the same site. The indoor space offers a lobby area with front desk, two offices, a large multipurpose room and kitchen, as well as locker rooms for the pool. The locker rooms are in need of a major renovation.



Pawley Pool Family Aquatic Complex

The Pawley Pool Family Aquatic Complex is an outdoor, seasonal pool owned by DRD and located in the City of Indio's South Jackson Park. The complex includes a very outdated lap pool, wading pool, and splash pad which have been in continual need of repair. Two large slides enhance the fun in the lap pool, while a smaller frog slide is provided at the wading pool. There is plenty of shade provided by canvas structures on the pool deck. The building includes locker rooms and support spaces for pool operations.



Bagdouma Park Pool and Community Center

Coachella's Bagdouma Community Pool is a popular summer gathering place for families and residents of all ages in the surrounding East Valley communities. The facility owned by the City of Coachella contains a 25-yard pool, toddler pool, sun deck, and picnic area. Bagdouma Park Pool and Community Center is located within Bagdouma Park.

The District has arranged with the City to provide recreation programming out of the Coachella Community Center which is owned and maintained by the City and operated and programmed by DRD. While the park appears to be very popular, the amenities surrounding the pool are frequently vandalized and in need of repair.





Special Use Facilities

Canal Regional Park

While the name would imply a more developed regional park setting, Canal Regional Park is primarily home to a local model airplane facility. This park is owned by the Bureau of Reclamation and is sub-leased to Coachella Valley Radio Control (CVRC) Club. Access is somewhat limited to this rural facility.



Desert Regional Park location (North Valley)

This facility is located on the northern edge of the urban area and could be considered either urban or rural. This property is currently an equestrian facility, and home of the Coachella Valley Mounted Rangers (CVMR). It is owned by the Bureau of Reclamation and sub-leased to the CVMR. The facility has a variety of stables and temporary buildings that support the organization. There is an equestrian trails area accessible on the property.



Currently Undeveloped

Coral Mountain Discover Park Nature Center

This currently undeveloped but planned facility is located south of La Quinta and adjacent to the RIVCO'S Lake Cahuilla. It is owned by the Bureau of Reclamation. The current concept plan presents the site as a more passive interpretive experience. Access is not currently restricted, but no formal recreation is provided. Hiking or biking is probable.



Thousand Palms Legacy Park

Development of this site, owned by DRD would expand on the level of service provided by Thousand Palms Community Park and Community Center. This area currently is served by this existing park and community center.



E. Rural Facilities

Local Parks

Mecca Community Center Park

This site is jointly owned by DRD, Coachella Valley Unified School District, and Riverside County. Enhancement of level of service provided by this facility is warranted based on the current condition of many of the amenities in this rural recreation service area. Recent addition of the Boys and Girls Club and several municipal buildings has raised the standards in the immediate area and the park currently falls well short of these standards. In addition:

- Coordination with Boys and Girls Club of Coachella Valley is in place to avoid duplication of service and create collaborative programs.
- Phase 1 park improvements (including additional shade and tables to shelter) and a skatepark addition are in process. These are to be funded through a tribal grant application for an Indian Community Development Block Grant (ICDBG) on behalf of DRD.

Additional Site Visit Notes:

- Appears the south field renovation is complete





Parque Del Pueblo

Parque Del Pueblo is a small pocket park in the DRD system serving the residential community of North Shore and is owned by Riverside County. This local park provides a playground, basketball, public art, and two picnic shelters. It is located in North Shore.



Johnson Street Park

Johnson Street Park (this park is yet to be named and is owned by DRD) is also a recent addition to the DRD system. This local park provides picnicking, a multi-purpose field, and loop walk. It is located in Mecca.



Indio Hills Community Center Park

The Indio Hills Community Center Park is owned by Riverside County and offers a local level of service. The park is in need of some maintenance and upgrades to a few components, but overall, it is generally functional.



Outdoor Special Use Facilities

North Shore Beach and Yacht Club

This is primarily an indoor facility owned by Riverside County, and is discussed further in the Indoor Facility section. The outdoor amenities have very limited access and primarily support the indoor facility. Outside of the building, but within a fenced area, are a playground, fire pit, restrooms, and a water fountain. Also in this fenced area is a large terrace on the back of the building that provides ample space with spectacular views of the Salton Sea. General access and some seating is available outside of the fenced area.

F. Indoor Facilities Overview

Desert Recreation District (DRD) residents typically enjoy good access to indoor recreation and aquatics distributed throughout its boundaries, depending on where they live in the urban corridor. According to the survey, almost a quarter of all District residents indicated that they have used indoor DRD facilities in the past 12 months: swimming pool (23%), weight/cardio fitness room (22%), community recreation center (20%), and gymnasium (19%). Ninety-plus percent (>90%) of all respondents said that important functions for DRD to provide are to operate and maintain existing facilities (90%), to provide positive activities for youth (95%), and to promote healthy, active lifestyles (92%). Community recreation centers, weight/cardio fitness rooms, and swimming pools are among the top programs and facilities as meeting household needs, and are also considered the most important to DRD households.

Community Centers (large/multi-function)

DRD has three recreation or fitness centers, Indio Community Center and Gymnasium, La Quinta Community Fitness Center, and the Palm Desert Community Center and Gym. The centers offer a variety of programs and services to residents including fitness, children's programs, and recreation opportunities and are enhanced by access to outdoor park spaces on the same site.

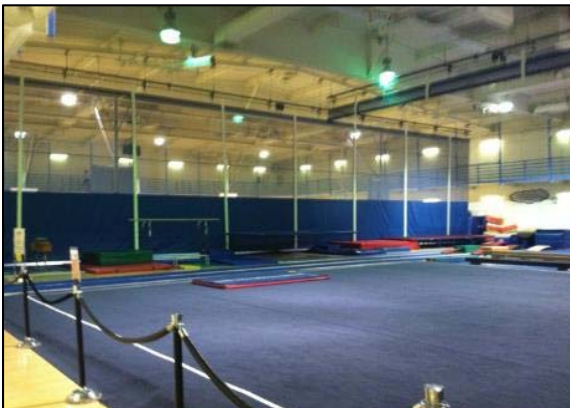
Indio Community Center

The Indio Community Center is a very active facility with several types of programs taking place simultaneously, and could use more space to meet demand. The building is very brightly lit with natural light, enhancing the indoor aesthetics.

The front door access to the building leads users immediately into a lobby area where they are greeted by front desk attendants, and have access to a small concession area. Programmed spaces are accessed from the lobby.

The building is showing its age, and internal flow between spaces is challenging. The District should move forward with renovation plans, including the Board room and old office space. The weight/cardio room is well used, and has a newer rubber floor, but needs updated equipment to replace older equipment that is breaking down. There is access to two nice racquetball courts with wood floors off of the weight/cardio room.

There are two multipurpose rooms, both with linoleum tile floors. The spaces are heavily programmed, and users enjoy direct access to a patio from one of the rooms. The other multipurpose room serves as the Board room, but is also used for programming such as piano instruction. Adjacent to the Board Room is a good sized area that is currently used primarily for storage. Plans exist to renovate this space. The gymnasium is large, with a wood floor double gymnasium and a curtain to divide the space. One side is used for basketball; however, the other side is permanently set up for gymnastics. The nearby City of Indio Teen Center (discussed below) does not have a gymnasium, and additional gymnasium space is needed in the area. There is an elevated track that encircles the entire gymnasium. The track is frequently used by walkers and runners alike; however, barrier free access is not available to the track level. The childcare/preschool area is set up well and includes access to a shaded, secure outdoor space with a playground.



La Quinta Community Fitness Center

The La Quinta Community Fitness Center is centrally located in the District, in the City of La Quinta. The building is located within a park surrounded by a residential area. It is situated well to be a hub of recreational activity for the community around it. The building is Spanish-style and aesthetically pleasing and blends with the neighborhood. The facility was repurposed from a neighborhood community center into fitness center through a collaborative effort of the DRD and City of La Quinta.



The exterior of the building has a roll-up door to access space that is currently used as storage. This space could be converted for additional specialized fitness space that can be flexible and responsive to trends such as spinning or suspension training. The inside of the facility is very nice and boasts bamboo floors throughout. There is state-of-the-art fitness equipment that is understandably well used by residents. The fitness area is enhanced by a public art piece – a very nice fountain – in the cardio-equipment area. There are a lot of windows that let in plenty of natural light.

The only concessions offered at the center are bottled water. There is a kitchen; however, it is currently used as storage, and includes a pass-through window into the fitness area. The window is unnecessary, and the space could be converted to office space to allow better supervision and assistance to users of the facility. The center previously included a multipurpose room which is currently used for weights and cardio. If and addition is considered, a multipurpose room would be useful for programming fitness classes.

Program offerings focus on fitness; however, there is also a “Tiny Tots” program at the center in a dedicated space. The area is set up very well for preschool, and includes dedicated restrooms for the children, which is essential to keep separated from the fitness space. There is also dedicated, secure outdoor space that includes plenty of shade, a water fountain, and an appropriate-sized playground with rubber surfacing.

Palm Desert Community Center and Gymnasium

The Palm Desert Community Center and Gymnasium is centrally located in the District, just north of State Route 111 in the City of Palm Desert. The building is owned by the City of Palm Desert and is operated by DRD. The center is situated within a large civic complex that includes a regional park, city hall, police department, portion of the parking lot covered with solar arrays, as well as a YMCA and a YMCA-managed aquatic center. Both YMCA services are discussed in the alternative providers section. When a user enters the facility, they are greeted by a front desk that sells concessions and lobby area that is enhanced by mirrored public art and tables for lounging. The large multipurpose room has a linoleum floor and is well lit by natural light from the windows. It also includes an adjacent kitchen with a pass through window to expand the types of uses possible for the space. The fitness room has a rubber floor and nice equipment, but it is too small to adequately serve users.



Active recreation includes two racquetball courts and a gymnasium. The large gymnasium is nice, and has a wood floor that includes plates for volleyball set up. The bleachers are tip and roll, so they can be moved for different activities. Windows provide natural light into the large space.

Community Centers (small/meeting rooms)

DRD has four small community centers located throughout the District: Bermuda Dunes Community Center, Indio Hills Community Center, Portola Community Center, and Thousand Palms Community Center. The Mecca facility also currently serves as a community meeting room that is addressed in the Aquatic Centers section. These community centers are small, and in general, are only open to the public when there is a program or rental.

Bermuda Dunes Community Service Center

Bermuda Dunes Community Center is centrally located in the District, south of Interstate 10. The building was repurposed from a Sheriff's substation, and still has parking surrounded by a pressed spear metal picket fence that is curved out at the top to prevent climbing. The building has nice design and ambiance. It is Spanish-style, and fits well in the area. The exterior is nicely landscaped, using appropriate low-maintenance vegetation for the area. The interior has two small conference rooms, restrooms, and a kitchenette. The acoustic ceilings are too low for some activities such as baton twirling, and the carpet should be replaced in one of the rooms with a multipurpose flooring to allow expansion of activity offerings.



Indio Hills Community Center

The Indio Hills Community Center is a small center located well north of the City of Indio. It is owned by Riverside County, but is operated by DRD. The building is newer and in great condition. It has a multipurpose room that is primarily used for community meetings, and a nice, large kitchen. There are also restrooms and two nice offices that are vacant. The center is only open for pre-scheduled events and rentals.



Portola Community Center

The Portola Community Center is centrally located in the District, in the City of Palm Desert. It is a historic building, which served as the first library in Palm Desert. There are two carpeted multipurpose rooms, a kitchenette (no stove), offices, and restrooms. The building is staffed by a full-time staff member, and office space is also rented by the city. No programming takes place, and the building is only available for rentals to nonprofits.



Thousand Palms Community Center

The Thousand Palms Community Center and Park is located just north of Interstate 10 in the unincorporated community of Thousand Palms. The building is very nice, and integrates well into the surrounding park. There is one large multipurpose room that is well lit by natural light. The building is primarily used for rentals; however, the kitchen lacks a range. Addition of a range could increase the functional use of the facility and increase rental revenue.



Indoor Special Use Facilities

DRD has several special use facilities located in the District. These facilities are The First Tee Coachella Valley and North Shore Beach and Yacht Club. The First Tee Coachella Valley is centrally located in the District, in the City of Palm Desert. The North Shore Beach and Yacht Club is located in the southeastern portion of the District, on the north shore of the Salton Sea. Both of these facilities serve a special purpose that adds to the value of the District.

The First Tee Coachella Valley

The following information is taken directly from the website: www.thefirstteecoachellavalley.org
“The First Tee of the Coachella Valley is a child development organization dedicated to the mission of impacting the lives of young people by providing learning facilities and educational programs that promote character development and life-enhancing values through the game of golf. The core values of The First Tee are: Honesty, Integrity, Sportsmanship, Respect, Confidence, Responsibility, Perseverance, Courtesy, and Judgment.

“Although there are Chapters in cities and communities across the country and in most major golf communities, the Coachella Valley Chapter of The First Tee was born through the work of the Desert Recreation District to bring The First Tee Chapter to the Valley. Beginning with an introduction and impetus to explore the national program from Bob Spiegel, Palm Desert city councilman, the Desert Recreation District began the application process in 2007. Notification came from The First Tee home office in the spring of 2007 that a The First Tee Chapter had been awarded to The District with an opening set for the beginning of 2008.”



The building was constructed of trailers that used to be at PGA West. It includes a proshop, restrooms, a snack bar, and a kitchen, and was recently renovated to add a classroom.

Even with the new classroom, there is still not adequate space for the 1,350 participants in the program. The participants often overflow into outdoor patio space on the south side of the building where it can be hot. The program partners with other golf courses in the area for extra space when it can. The golf course and driving range are well maintained and offer expected amenities for a public 9-hole par 3 golf course.



North Shore Beach and Yacht Club

The North Shore Beach and Yacht Club is historically and architecturally significant to California. The building was originally designed in the 1960s by architect Albert Frey who was known for modern architecture around Southern California called “desert modernism.” The building closed down in the 1980s and sat vacant and deteriorated until it was bought and restored by the County in 2009-2010. It was recently renovated, and is owned by Riverside County and operated by DRD.

The indoor facilities include two large multipurpose rooms, restrooms, a snack bar, and a kitchen. Upstairs there is office space and amazing sunset views over the Salton Sea. The DRD currently has a child care program operating out of one of the multipurpose rooms to serve residents of the North Shore area.



G. Outdoor Facility GRASP® Scoring

Scoring of Parks, Facilities and Components

Based on the inventory and scoring – the composite values methodology score (we call ours a GRASP® value) – for both neighborhood and community level of service was calculated for each site visited in the inventory. A complete description of this **Composite-Values Methodology (CVM)** process is included in **Appendix C. Figure 10**, a sample of an inventory page found in the Atlas, shows these calculated scores for Palm Desert Soccer Park. Similar reports were generated for each facility.

Figure 10: Sample Inventory Scoring

Desert Recreation District - Parks, Open Space, and Trails GRASP® Atlas						
Initial Inventory Date:			Hovley Soccer Park			
Updated:						
91.8	Total Neighborhood GRASP® Score	207	Total Community GRASP® Score	Approximate Park Acreage:		
			Owner:	City of Palm Desert		
			Operated by DRD			
Modifiers with Scores						
Drinking Fountains	2	Shade	2	Design and Ambiance		
Seating	2	Trail Connection		3		
BBQ Grills	2	Park Access	2			
Dog Pick-Up Station	2	Parking	2			
Security Lighting	2	Seasonal Plantings				
Bike Parking	1	Ornamental Plantings	2			
Restrooms	2	Picnic Tables	2			
General Comments						
Nice complex. Interesting concept of disc golf circuit around fields.						
Components with Score						
MAPID	Component	Quantity	Lights	Neighborhood Score	Community Score	Comments
L020	PARCEL	1		2	2	
C528	Boocoe Ball	2		2	2	Petanque courts
C527	MP Field, Large	5		3	3	
C526	Horseshoes	3		2	2	
C103	Shelter	8		2	2	
C102	Restroom	2				
C101	Playground, Destination	1		2	2	
C100	Loop Walk	1		2	2	
C099	Disk Golf	1		2	2	
C098	Concessions	1		3	3	
C097	Complex, MP Field	1	Y	3	3	

Table 1 presents the complete scoring of all outdoor facilities in the inventory. These scores can be used to rank parks and the level of service they provide to the community based on the GRASP® scoring system. For example, Palm Desert Civic Center Park provides the highest level of service of all facilities in the system while Placitas de la Paz #2 provides the least amount of service value. The table shows two GRASP® Scores: one each for neighborhood and community level of service.

Table 1: Park GRASP® Scoring

LOCATION	GRASP Neighborhood Score	GRASP Community Score
Bagdouma Park Pool	13.2	22
Cahuilla Hills Park	31.2	40.8
Canal Regional Park	8.8	15.4
Coral Mountain Discovery Park	13.2	13.2
Desert Regional Park	7.7	12.1
Freedom Park	220.35	341.25
Palm Desert Soccer Park	91.8	207
Indio Community Center Park & Lot	21.6	21.6
Indio Hills Community Center Park	19.2	19.2
Johnson Street Park	17.6	17.6
La Quinta Community Park	70.8	70.8
Mecca Community Park and Pool	26.4	30
North Shore Park	43.2	43.2
Palm Desert Civic Center Park	226.2	510.9
Parque Del Pueblo	22	19.8
Pawley Pool Family Aquatic Complex	24	48
Placitas de la Paz #1	19.2	19.2
Placitas de la Paz #2	4.4	4.4
Placitas de la Paz #3	17.6	17.6
The First Tee Coachella Valley	17.6	26.4
Thousand Palms Community Center & Park	93.6	122.4
University Park	36	36

H. Strategies for Addressing Low-Functioning Components

In general items should be fixed, upgraded, or repurposed based on the condition of the components within the asset. By raising the score of a component, the Level of Service in the community is also raised. However, deciding how to do this may seem daunting. A strategy for addressing the repair/refurbishment/replacement or re-purposing of low-functioning components should begin with the following steps. This should be done for each individual component in the inventory that is not functioning up to expectations.

- 1. Determine why the component is functioning below expectations.** Was it poorly conceived in the first place? Is it something that was not needed to begin with? Is it the wrong size, type, or configuration? Is it poorly placed, or located in a way that conflicts with other uses or detracts from its use? Have the needs changed in a way that the component is now outdated, obsolete, or no longer needed? Has it been damaged? Or, has the maintenance of the component simply been deferred or neglected to the point where it no longer functions as intended?

Another possibility is that the component was scored low because it is not available to the public in a way that meets expectations. For example, a facility might be rated low because it is leased to a private group, and access by the general public is limited. This may be a perfectly acceptable situation and appropriately scored – the service is at a lower value because of the limitations on access.

Another example would be when a component is old, outdated, or otherwise dysfunctional, but has historic or sentimental value. An example would be an old structure in a park such as a stone barbecue grill, or other artifact that cannot be restored to its original purpose, but which has historic value.

- 2. Depending on the answers from the first step, a strategy can be selected for addressing the low-functioning component.** If the need for that type of component in its current location still exists, then the component should be repaired or replaced to match its original condition as much as possible. Examples of this would be playgrounds with old, damaged, or outdated equipment or courts with poor surfacing or missing nets.

If the need for that type of component has changed to the point where the original one is no longer suitable, then it should be replaced with a new one that fits the current needs. For example, if a picnic shelter is too small for the amount of use currently demanded, it may be replaced with a new, larger one.

If a component is poorly located, or was poorly designed, consideration should be given to relocating, redesigning, or otherwise modifying it. An example would be an amphitheater next to a street that was once small and quiet but is now loud and busy. The noise from the street makes it undesirable to use the amphitheater for its intended purpose. If there is still a need for this type of facility at this park, then consideration should be given to relocating it or redesigning it to provide screening from traffic and other noise.

If a component is no longer needed because of changing demands, then it should be removed unless it can be maintained in good condition without excessive expense, or unless it has historic or sentimental value. A trend across the country involves once-popular inline hockey rinks, which are now falling into this category. Some rinks have been allowed to deteriorate, because a community no longer demands inline hockey. In such cases, rinks should be repurposed into some other use such as a basketball or tennis court, multi-use play-pad, or perhaps a skate park. It could even become a something unusual, like a trike-track course. Or it could become the surface for a large group picnic shelter. Another possibility might be to install outdoor fitness stations and make it an “outdoor gym.”

An example for DRD might be the Petanque courts at Palm Desert Soccer Park. These could be repurposed if not used, but it would be speculative to suggest another use without public input; maybe sand volleyball, bocce, or lawn bowling. At this point, we are not suggesting that DRD currently has anything that needs to be repurposed, but if they did find something in the future, this is an example of repurposing.

The choice of what to put in the rink's place should be made with input from the community. This could be done with a simple intercept survey, door-hung questionnaire, or by contacting a neighborhood organization. The point is that it makes no sense to replace something that the neighborhood no longer needs with something else it does not need.

If no appropriate alternative use for the rink or the space it occupies is identified, it should be removed to avoid a blighted appearance, and the space should be integrated into the rest of the park with landscaping.

- 3. It is possible that through ongoing public input, and as needs and trends evolve, new needs will be identified for existing parks.** If there is no room in an existing park for new needs, the decision may be made to remove or re-purpose an existing component, even if it is quite functional. An example of this could be found in many communities over the past couple of decades. As the popularity of tennis declined and demand for courts dropped off, perfectly good courts were sometimes converted into skate parks or inline rinks. In most cases this was an interim use, intended to satisfy a short-term need until a decision could be made to either construct a permanent facility or let the passing fad fade. The need for inline rinks now seems to have diminished, while temporary skate parks on tennis courts have been moved to permanent locations of their own and become more elaborate facilities as skateboarding and other wheel sports have grown in popularity and permanence.

Another example of this can be found in the re-purposing by one community of a ball diamond into a dog park. The ball diamond is well-suited for use as a dog park because it is already fenced, and the combination of skinned infield where the dogs enter and natural grass in the outfield where traffic is spread out is ideal.

It is likely that in time this facility will either become a permanent facility designed specifically to meet the needs of people recreating with their dogs, or such a facility will be constructed elsewhere to suit that purpose. Or, it could turn out that dog parks fade in popularity like inline hockey rinks, or are replaced with some other facility that dog owners prefer even more than the current dog park model. Meanwhile, the use of the ball diamond for this purpose is a good interim solution.

- 4. Trends to keep an eye on while deciding what to do with low-functioning facilities, or determining how to make existing parks serve the needs of residents as highly as possible, include things like the following:**

Dog parks continue to grow in popularity. This may have something to do with an aging demographic in America, with more "empty-nesters" transferring the attention they once gave to their children, who are now grown, to their pets. It is also an important form of socializing for people who may have once socialized with other parents in their child's soccer league, and now that the kids are grown they are enjoying the company of other dog owners at the dog park. And for singles, a dog park is a good place to meet people.

Skateboarding and other wheel sports continue to grow in popularity. Making neighborhood parks skateable and distributing skating features throughout the community provides greater access to this activity for younger people who cannot drive to a larger centralized skate park. A desire for locally-grown food and concerns about health, sustainability, and other issues is leading to the development of community food gardens in parks and other public spaces. Events in parks, from a neighborhood “movie in the park” to large festivals in regional parks, are growing in popularity as a way to build a sense of community and generate revenues. Providing spaces for these could become a trend.

Sprayparks are growing rapidly in popularity, even in cooler climates. A wide and growing selection of products for these is raising the bar on expectations and offering new possibilities for creative facilities.

New types of playgrounds are emerging, including discovery play, nature play, adventure play, and even inter-generational play. Some of these rely upon movable parts, supervised play areas, and other variations that are different from the standard fixed “post and platform” playgrounds found in the typical park across America.

Integrating nature into parks by creating natural areas is a trend for a number of reasons. These include a desire to make parks more sustainable and introduce people of all ages to the natural environment. An educational aspect is an important part of these areas.

I. Indoor Facility GRASP® Scoring

Scoring of Indoor Facilities and Components

Similar to outdoor facilities, an indoor inventory also was compiled using the GRASP® methodology and a GRASP® value for was calculated for each site (**Table 2**). **Figure 11**, a sample of an indoor inventory page found in the Atlas, shows the calculated scores for Indio Community Center. Similar reports were generated for each facility.



Figure 11: Sample Indoor Inventory Scoring

Desert Recreation District - Parks, Open Space, and Trails GRASP® Atlas			
Inventory Date:		Indio Community Center	
Updated:			
62.4	Total Indoor GRASP® Score	Owner:	Owned & Operated by DRD
Modifiers with Scores			
Site Access	2	Entry Desk	2
Aesthetics	2	Office Space	2
Entry	2	Overall Storage	3
Entry Aesthetics	2	Restrooms	2
Building Condition	2	Locker Rooms	2
Design and Ambiance			
2			
General Comments			
Indoor Facilities: large multi-purpose room, small multi-purpose room, kitchen, tables, chairs, indoor H.S. regulation basketball court, indoor walking track, volleyball court, children's play area, weight room and 2 racquetball courts, and gymnastics program. Building in need of renovation.			
Components with Score			
Component	Quantity	Dimensions	Indoor Score
Multi-purpose	2		1
Food - Cafe/Concessio	1		2
Patio/outdoor seating	1		1
Weight/Cardio Equipm	1		2
Specialty Training	1		2
Racquetball	2		2
Multi-purpose	1		2
Lobby/Entryway	1		2
Kitchen - Kitchenette	1		2
Track - Indoor	1		2
Gymnasium	1		2
Childcare/Preschool	1		3
			Comments
			Serves as board room + piano classroom
			Coffee drinks
			Rubber floors. Equip eeds to be updated, breaking down.
			Permanent gymnastics set-up
			Off of weight room; wood floors
			Adjoining patio, linoleum floor.
			No ADA access
			Wood floor; basketball divided from gymnastics.
			Access to secure playground

Table 2: Indoor GRASP® Scoring

LOCATION	GRASP® Score
Bagdouma Park Community Center	4.8
Bermuda Dunes Community Center	25.2
Indio Community Center	62.4
Indio Hills Community Center	21.6
La Quinta Community Fitness Center	36
Mecca Community Center & Pool	3.6
North Shore Beach & Yacht Club	64.8
Palm Desert Community Center & Gymnasium	36
Portola Community Center	12
The First Tee Coachella Valley	8.4
Thousand Palms Community Center & Park	13.2

A more comprehensive explanation of the inventory process is included in the following sections. Refer to the **Summary of Outdoor Inventory** and **Summary of Indoor Inventory** tables in **Appendix D** for a complete inventory of parks and facilities. The inventory of assets was created to serve the District in a number of ways, including this study. It can also be used for a wide variety of planning and operations tasks, such as asset management and future strategic and master plans.

V. Alternative Providers and Collaborative Opportunities

The Desert Recreation District boundary overlaps five municipalities: the Cities of Coachella, Indian Wells, Indio, La Quinta, and Palm Desert, the census designated place of Thousand Palms, as well as unincorporated areas of Riverside County. In addition, the Riverside County Parks and Open Space District, several YMCAs and Boys and Girls Clubs provide additional service in or near the DRD Sphere of Influence (SOI). Due to this, there are many alternative providers to DRD offering services throughout the District.

A. City of Coachella

The City of Coachella is the easternmost city in the District, bordered on the west by Indio. It is approximately 20 square miles, has a population of about 42,000, and has 43.3 total acres of parks.

Coachella has one community park, Bagdouma Park, which is 34 acres. It includes a pool, one ballfield complex, one basketball court, a large multipurpose field, open turf, local playground, restrooms, a shelter, and tennis courts.



The City has seven neighborhood parks:

- Rancho Los Flores
- Dateland Park
- De Oro Park
- Sierra Vista Park
- Veterans Park
- Shady Lane Park
- Tot Lot Park
- Ye'we'vichem Park.

These neighborhood parks have a variety of amenities including a pool, two ballfields, basketball, one large multipurpose field, several areas of open turf, picnic grounds, four local playgrounds, two restrooms, and one skate park.

B. City of Indian Wells

The City of Indian Wells is centrally located in the District between La Quinta on the east and Palm Desert on the west. It is approximately 14.6 square miles, has a population of about 5,000, and does not have any public parks. There are two private facilities in the City of Indian Wells, the Indian Wells Tennis Garden, and Indian Wells Golf Resort.

C. City of Indio

The City of Indio is centrally located in the District between La Quinta on the west and Coachella on the east. It is approximately 29 square miles and has a population of about 77,800. The city owns and manages a golf course that includes a driving range.

Indio has eleven parks:

- South Jackson Park
- Yucca Park
- Dominguez Park
- North Jackson Park
- Miles Avenue Park
- Shields Park
- Cahuilla Park
- Patton Park
- Dr. Carreon Park
- York Plaza
- Mulligan Dog Park

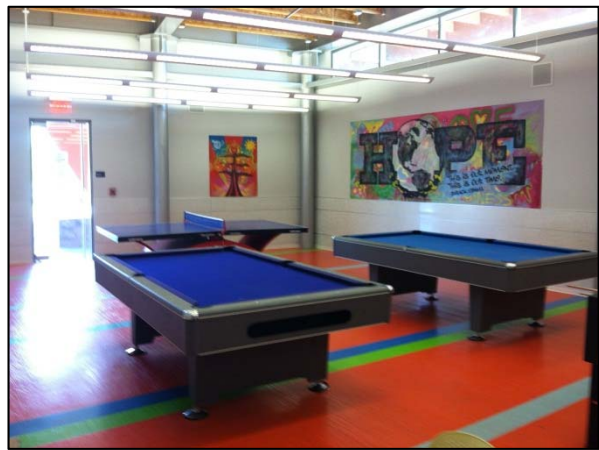
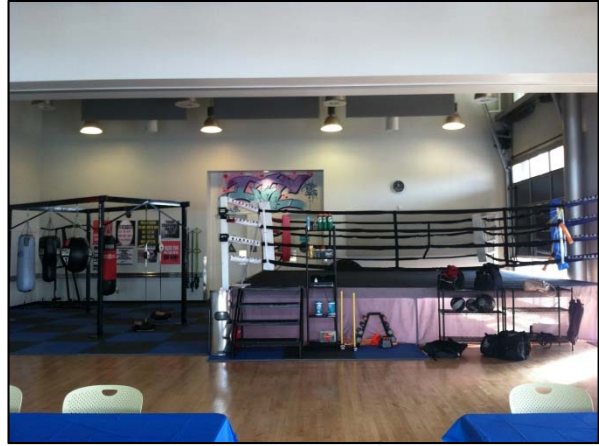
These parks have a variety of amenities including six spray aquatic features, two ballfields and two ballfield complexes, four basketball courts, one dog park, three loop walks, eight picnic grounds, eight local playgrounds, two racquetball courts, two restrooms, one group shelter, and three tennis courts.

The City of Indio also has two special use facilities: the Indio Teen Center and Indio Senior Center. The two facilities are less than a half-mile from each other, and blocks from the DRD Indio Community Center. The City of Indio runs an intergenerational program coordinated between its two facilities to help break down barriers between the generations.

Indio Teen Center

The Indio Teen Center is a new 12,500 square foot facility. It serves approximately 100-120 teenagers a day. These numbers have decreased because teens used to be bussed from another high school and are not any more. The center was designed with input from teens. There are roll-up garage doors, exposed rafters, a custom “graffiti” sign, and solar panels that make up many of the unique features of the building.

The center is staffed during operating hours (Monday through Friday from 2:30-6:30pm during the school year, and 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. during the summer). It is clear that the teens have developed a trusting relationship with staff. There are many different activity options for users including a multipurpose room, game room, video games, pool tables, computer lab, boxing ring, ping pong, vending, kitchen, meeting space, and a confidential counseling area. Outdoor space includes basketball, open space, BBQ grill, and a fire pit surrounded by benches.



Indio Senior Center

The Indio Senior Center is dedicated to serve people 50 years and better. It is a very active facility that offers a lot of programs and services to users. Many clubs have formed and meet at the center.

There is a game room affectionately called, “The Man Cave.” There is also nice use of flexible, multipurpose space for programs such as craft classes and exercise classes. There is a warming kitchen used by Meals on Wheels for its operations, as well as the Sunshine Café that serves lunches a few days a week for a modest fee. A computer lab includes both PCs and Macs, as well as regular computer classes. The fitness room offers appropriate equipment and instruction for seniors. A library offers a quiet space of respite that is enhanced by decorative lighting and a fireplace.



The Senior Center has a very nice “backyard.” There is a patio with tables and chairs off of the multipurpose room, that overlooks open space, landscaping, and a walking path where 14 laps equals a mile. There is also a piece of public art and a BBQ grill.



D. City of La Quinta

The City of La Quinta is centrally located in the District, bordered by Indian Wells on the West and Indio on the east. It is approximately 32 square miles and has a population of about 38,000. The residents are served by 14 parks with 213 developed acres, one 40 acre undeveloped site at SilverRock, 126 acres of open space and natural areas owned by the city, and the Lake Cahuilla County Park of 710 acres (with a swim pool, camp sites, fishing, and spaces for horses). La Quinta is also served by BLM land behind the Top of the Cove.



La Quinta City Hall and Civic Center Campus

The 17.5 acre campus contains indoor facilities within an attractive park. The indoor facilities include the senior center, library, and city hall. The campus is host to many pieces of community art through the Art-In-Public Places and the Civic Center Art Purchase programs.

La Quinta Senior Center

The 10,000 square foot facility features a kitchen and dining area and several classrooms. The center is open for seniors 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday – Friday, and then youth and adult programming takes over with leisure enrichment programs. The center may need more classrooms and a fitness facility. The facility is heavily programmed from September to April.

Aquatic Center

The 10,000 square-foot facility features a rectangular outdoor pool. The City of La Quinta contracts with the YMCA of the Desert to operate, manage, and program the pool during the summer months.

La Quinta Public Library

This 20,000 square foot facility was designed for expansion and opened in summer 2005. The existing unused section of the library is used for recreation and community events. At the time of the 2007 master plan, the Library was issuing 500 new cards per month with 5-8,000 items in circulation at any time. The facility currently has room for events. The classroom at the library is used by the library, by the City of La Quinta, and by the University of San Bernardino for continuing education.

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

La Quinta Historical Museum

This facility was under design and construction at the time of the 2007 master plan for a \$2.5 million addition of 9,000 sq. ft. and was scheduled to open in 2008. It is located on the south side of La Quinta Community Park and was to be managed by the Community Services Department. Fundraising, volunteering, and some programming will be done by the La Quinta Historical Society.

SilverRock Resort

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

La Quinta Skate Parks

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

Outdoor Active Facilities and Sports

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

Parks and Natural Resources Facilities

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

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

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

Fritz Burns Park contains a dog park, picnic areas, playground, tennis courts, skatepark, and the City of La Quinta’s municipal outdoor pool (operated by the YMCA of the Desert). The park’s location makes it an important amenity for a part of the City of La Quinta that does not have any private parks or other facilities. Situated between Old Town and the Cove and easily accessible from Washington Street, the park offers a lot of activity in a small amount of space. This fits well with the demographics of this part of the City of La Quinta, which is influenced by a Hispanic culture and heritage that enjoys opportunities for everyone in the family to be together and have a good time.

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

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

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

E. City of Palm Desert

The City of Palm Desert is the westernmost city in the District, boarded on the east by Indian Wells. It is approximately 24.6 square miles, has a population of about 50,000, and has 211.9 total acres of parks. The City of Palm Desert and DRD partner to bring facilities and activities to people of all ages.

Many amenities in City of Palm Desert parks are managed and scheduled by DRD. Palm Desert has one regional park, Civic Center Park, which is 70 acres. It includes a 4-ballfield complex, one dog park, one destination playground, four pieces of public art located throughout the site, a skate park, six tennis courts, four volleyball courts, and an amphitheater.

There are six community parks and six neighborhood parks. The community parks are:

- Cahuilla Hills Park
- Cap Homme/Ralph Adams Park
- Freedom Park
- Palm Desert Soccer Park
- Ironwood Park
- Magnesia Falls City Park

The neighborhood parks are:

- Joe Mann Park
- The Community Gardens
- Palma Village Park
- University Dog Park
- University Park East
- The Washington Charter School Park that is open after school and on weekends to the public.

The community and neighborhood parks offer a variety of amenities including: a Petanque area, four ballfields, six basketball courts, one concession area, a disk golf course, three dog parks, two driving ranges, one community garden and two display gardens, three horseshoe pits, four loop walks, eight large multipurpose fields and one multipurpose field area, two natural areas, three open turf, one open water, four other active areas, three picnic grounds, eight local playgrounds, one piece of public art, six restrooms, six shelters, two skate features, three tennis courts which are also used for pickle ball, two multiuse trails and five trail heads, one volleyball court, and one water feature.

Palm Desert YMCA and Palm Desert Aquatic Center

The Palm Desert YMCA and the Palm Desert Aquatic Center are both owned by the City of Palm Desert, and operated by the YMCA, and are on the same site as the Palm Desert Community Center operated by DRD. The YMCA is right next door to the community center, and does offer some competing programs, although the two facilities do also partner on programs as well.

The YMCA does have a gymnasium; however, they do not have a weight room and do not offer any adult programming. It is also more expensive to use than the community center. The Palm Desert Aquatic Center is not immediately adjacent to the two buildings, and users would either have to walk through a portion of the park to access it, or park in its dedicated parking lot. The parking lot provides a very welcoming entrance to the facility, because it is lined with palm trees.



The large, outdoor facility has three year-round pools available for both exercise and recreational use. The 50-meter by 25-yard Olympic-sized competition pool provides long course and short course options for lap swimming or competition events. It is equipped with one and three-meter diving boards. The family friendly, 25-yard, recreation pool is shallow, warm, and features two waterslides and a wade-in entry. There is also a splash playground pool for children. The area is enhanced with sodded open space.

The building has indoor locker rooms, and offices, and a full-service concession stand that has outdoor, covered seating.

E. Other Providers



Lake Cahuilla Recreation Area

Boys and Girls Clubs of Coachella, Palm Springs and Cathedral City (ASES and potentially ASSETS)
Family YMCA of the Desert Centers (Preschool and ASES)
Coachella Valley Unified School District (ASES and ASSETS)

Riverside County Regional Parks and Open Space District (RivCoParks)

The following information was taken directly from the draft *2013 Comprehensive Park, Resources, and Recreation Service Plan* for RivCoParks, which members of the consultant team also developed.

Lake Cahuilla Recreation Area

Approximate Acreage: 710

Location: 58-075 Jefferson St., La Quinta, CA

Ownership: Coachella Valley Water District Bureau of Land Management, and the District

Operator: District

Status: Developed

Constructed: 1960s/70s

Season: Open all year with seasonal operation of Friday through Monday only from May to September due to the extreme summer heat.

Facilities:

- Tent Camping (electric/water)
- RV Camping (electric/water)
- Group Camping
- Primitive Camping (self-contained)
- Handicap Site
- Dumping Station
- Barbeques
- Special Events
- Hiking Trails
- Equestrian Trail access
- Biking Trail and Mountain Biking Trail access
- Restrooms
- Showers
- Playground
- Fishing
- Swimming Lagoon (zero-depth, walk-in)
- Equestrian Camping/Water Trough
- Picnic Areas

Number of Campsites: 71 RV/Tent sites 20 Equestrian Camp

Deficiencies: Campgrounds require renovations to upgrade RV sites and restroom facilities. Swim lagoon requires annual resurfacing. Renovation of the lagoon is needed. An ADA Accessibility Survey is recommended.

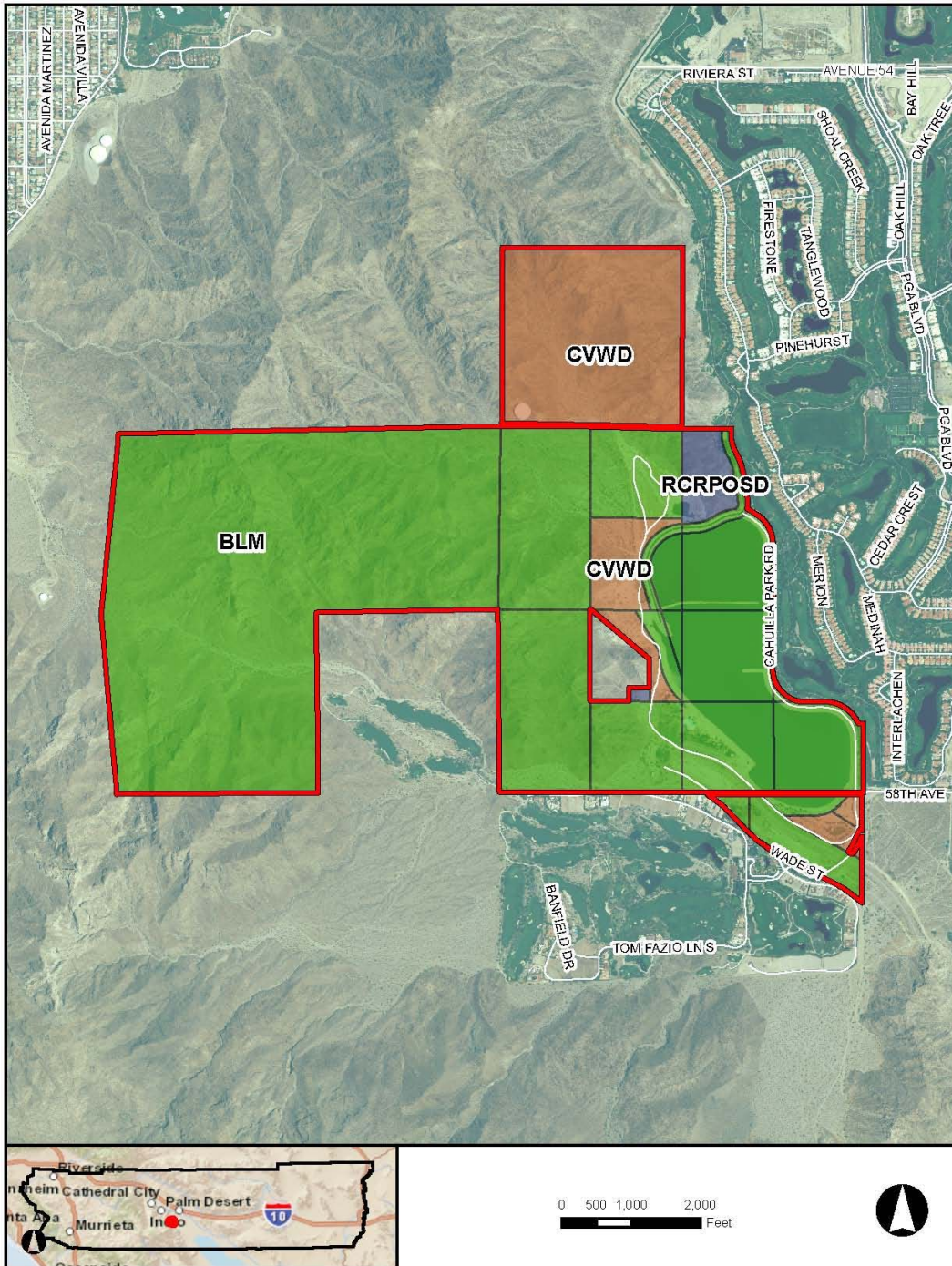
Comments: Lake Cahuilla Recreation Area is a stunning park situated at the base of the Santa Rosa Mountains. It is located six miles south east of Old Town La Quinta and offers a delightful experience in the Coachella Valley. Lake Cahuilla is set in the midst of expansive lawns and picturesque mountaintops making it a spectacular destination.

Lake Cahuilla (**Figure 12**) is the ideal nature getaway with 91 individual and group campsites near the gorgeous Santa Rosa Mountains. It is an easy destination for anyone looking to quickly escape the city life and become immersed in unparalleled views and all the outdoor activities available. Fun-filled fishing in the 135 acre lake, hiking and horseback trails nearby, and a cooling swimming pool are just a few of the great adventures campers can experience. Open grass areas with picnic tables and barbecues are splendid for special events from company gatherings to birthday parties.

Lake Cahuilla no longer accepts any type of watercraft on the lake. Swimming is also not allowed.

Recommendation of the Plan: RivCoParks should continue to work with other parks and recreation agencies and land management organizations within the County with an eye toward filling service gaps and the avoidance of service duplication.

Figure 12: Lake Cahuilla Recreation Area



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VI. GRASP® Level of Service Analysis

A. Asset Analysis

Level of Service Standards

The parks and recreation industry has realized that the capacity standards (x units/1,000) alone do not work for most communities and create challenges when trying to evaluate special assets such as open space, sensitive lands, trails, and indoor amenities, as well as historic and cultural assets.

GreenPlay and the GRASP® (Geo-Referenced Amenities Standards Process) planning team have been integral in transforming the use of standards for planning parks, trails, recreation, and open space for agencies throughout the United States. GreenPlay has worked with and presented to the NRPA, state associations, the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), and other organizations to clarify accepted methods for standards analysis.

The team has created a way to standardize this variable information that is accurate, community-specific, and can be benchmarked and implemented based on the unique assets of the DRD. It is currently being utilized by more than 80 communities nationwide. This methodology is called composite-values methodology (CVM), and the branded version being used in this document is known as “GRASP®.” This CVM also helps with setting standards and ordinances for equitable growth and development in the future. In addition, this analysis can help to measure aspects of the Parks and Recreation system that can influence public health, such as walkability and trail access.

B. Park Development/Land Dedication Funds

The park dedication requirements are set forth in the **Quimby Act** which states that all residential subdivisions of land, with some exemptions, are to provide for parks by either dedicating land, paying an in-lieu fee, or a combination of the two. The requirement formula is three acres of land per one thousand people calculated by multiplying the number of dwelling units times the average density per dwelling unit in each municipal boundary according to the latest U.S. Census. In-lieu fees are based on the fair market value of land within a subdivision. Development impact fees are one-time charges imposed on development projects to recover capital costs for public facilities needed to serve those new developments and the additional residents, employees, and visitors they bring to the community. California law, with a few minor exceptions, prohibits the use of impact fees for ongoing maintenance or operations costs.

The previous master plan suggested that DRD consider increasing its parkland per capita standard. As the community-wide survey indicated trails and outdoor recreation opportunities were among the amenities and services of greatest importance to the residents, it is recommended that DRD adopt the five acres per one thousand (5:1000) standard, working in collaboration with other municipal providers.

Based on a quick estimate using available GIS data to calculate “park” acres and ESRI based US Census data for 2012, it appears DRD current per capita parkland is at or above the five acres per one thousand people standard when analyzing based on district-wide service. Using the current data for DRD at 897 acres (this includes a few other providers like Davis Sports Complex) in addition to 639 acres from the 2007 La Quinta master plan including RIVCOS Lake Cahuilla, there are approximately 1,536 acres of parkland in the district. ESRI estimates the 2012 population at 267,937. This calculates to 5.7 acres per 1,000 people.

C. CVM and GRASP® Overview

“Perspectives” were generated to evaluate the assets available to residents, along with charts provided to provide quantitative data.

To produce the Perspectives, each inventoried component has been assigned a service value, or GRASP® score. Computer software is used to calculate two level of service values: neighborhood and community. Neighborhood level of service scoring, in general, addresses access to a facility with the value based primarily on the number of unique components and quality of those components. While community level of service also addresses these two factors, it also uses the quantity of each component in the final scoring. Next, a catchment area (or buffer) is applied to each component and to the parcel boundary. The catchment area is the distance from within which a majority of people using the facility might reasonably be expected to come. Scores for individual components within a park are cumulative in calculating an overall park value. Therefore, the more recreation opportunities and the higher the quality of those components within a park directly impact its level of service.

When service areas, along with their overall level of service scores for each park or facility, are plotted on a map, a picture emerges that represents the cumulative service provided by that facility upon the geographic area. Where service areas for multiple parks overlap, a darker shade results from the overlap. Darker shades indicate locations that are served by a combination of more parks and/or higher quality ones. The shades all have numeric values associated with them, which means that for any given location on a GRASP® Perspective, there is a numeric GRASP® Level of Service score for that location and that particular set of components. Larger Perspectives have been provided to the District as part of a separate Staff Resource Document.

Each Perspective is a model of the service being provided across the study area. The model can be further analyzed to derive statistical information about service in a variety of ways. The results of these are described in the text that follows.

Composite-Values Level of Service (LOS) Analysis – This is the process used to inventory and analyze the assets, including quantity, location, and various qualities of each. The process utilizes MS Excel, MS Access, and common GIS software. The composite-values based LOS analysis process used by GreenPlay and Design Concepts is proprietary, and known as “GRASP®” (Geo-referenced Amenities Standards Process). It has been somewhat automated through creation of additional software code and template design for efficiency in data collection and analysis. See *Appendix C* for a detailed history and overview of Composite-Values Based Level of Service Analysis.

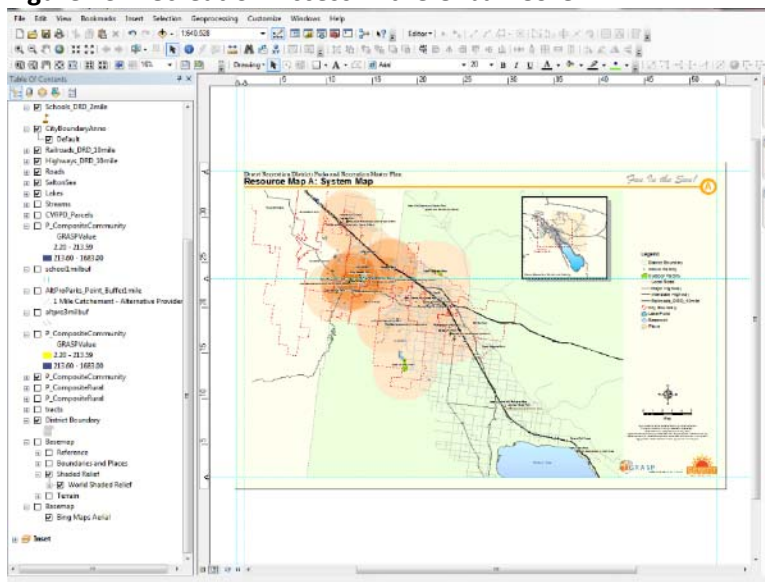
GRASP® Perspectives

An analytical technique known as *Composite-Values Methodology* (CVM) was used to analyze levels of service (LOS) provided by assets in DRD based on the previously presented scoring tables. The proprietary version of CVM used is known as GRASP®. The process used analytical maps known as *Perspectives* to study LOS across the District. Level of Service Perspectives show how well the district is served by any given set of components by utilizing maps to graphically display values, along with quantified measurement spreadsheets. This quantification system provides a benchmark against which an agency can determine how well it is doing providing services in relation to the agency's goals, both presently and over time.

D. Perspective A: Access to All Recreation

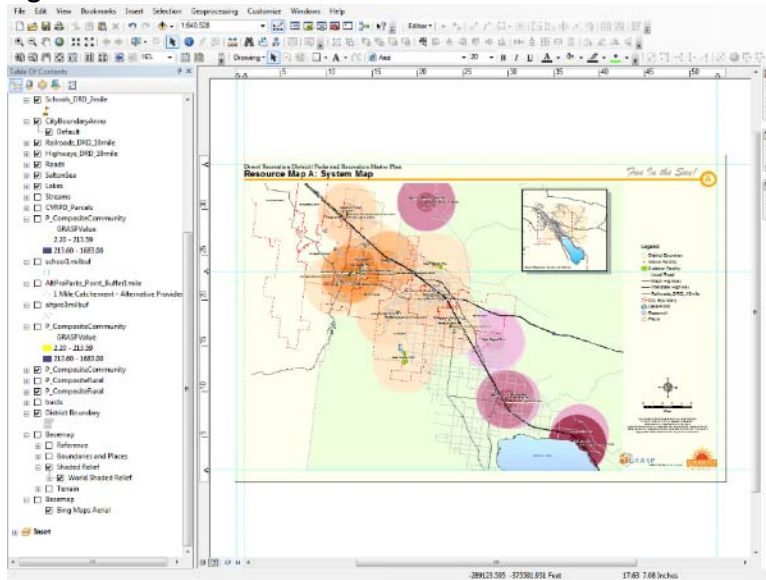
The process of analysis for a system like DRD can include multiple steps and inclusion of a number of factors. The following images are included to illustrate those steps with the final analysis presented in a formal map. **Figure 13** shows access to recreation amenities provided by DRD in areas considered the urban core of the District. Darker orange gradients indicate a higher level of service.

Figure 13: Recreation Access in the Urban Core



The magenta gradient in **Figure 14** shows access to recreation amenities provided by DRD in rural areas.

Figure 14: Recreation Access in Rural Areas



While the gradients in these maps are informative as to level of service across the system, they fall short in making a determination of what should be the level of service goal. Based on the site visits, the consultant team felt that the facilities at La Quinta Community Park were a good baseline standard for the urban core area. **Figures 15** and **16** shows the calculated scores for both the indoor and outdoor facilities. Using La Quinta Community Park score of 70.8 and the Fitness Center score of 36 the desired LOS Threshold of 213.6 is determined.

$$(70.8 + 36) * 2 = 213.6$$

*Scored is doubled to add premium for proximity

Figure 15: Urban Core Threshold Calculation - Park

LOCATION	SumOfGRASP_C
Bagdouma Park	109.2
Bagdouma Park Pool	22
Cahuilla Hills Park	40.8
Canal Regional Park	15.4
Coral Mountain Park	13.2
Davis Sports Complex/South Jackson Park	148.8
Desert Regional Park	12.1
Freedom Park	341.25
Hovley Soccer Park	207
Indio Community Center Park & Lot	21.6
Indio Hills Community Center Park	19.2
Johnson Street Park	17.6
La Quinta Community Park	70.8
Legacy Park	
Mecca Com	
North Shore	
Olsen Field	
Palm Deser	
Palm Deser	
Parque Del Pueblo	19.8
Pawley Pool Family Aquatic Complex	48
Placitas de la Paz #1	19.2
Placitas de la Paz #2	4.4
Placitas de la Paz #3	17.6
The First Tee Coachella Valley	26.4
Thousand Palms Community Center & Park	122.4
University Park	36
University Park Dog Park	16.8
Whitewater Park	202.8

Figure 16: Urban Core Threshold Calculation - Facility

The screenshot shows the Microsoft Access interface for a database named 'Indoor_Scoring'. The 'All Access Objects' pane on the left lists various tables, queries, forms, and reports. The main window displays a table with two columns: 'LOCATION' and 'SumOfComp_N'. The table contains the following data:

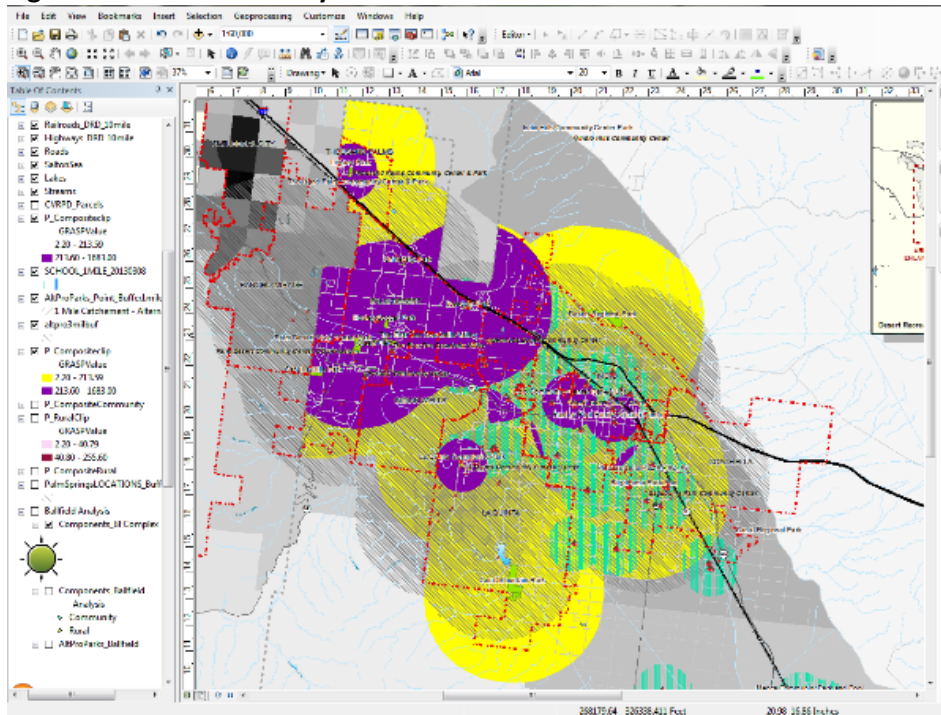
LOCATION	SumOfComp_N
Bagdouma Park Community Center	4.8
Bermuda Dunes Community Center	25.2
Indio Community Center	62.4
Indio Hills Community Center	21.6
La Quinta Community Fitness Center	36
Mecca C	
North SH	
Palm De	
Portola C	
The First	
Thousan	

A blue callout box highlights the row for 'La Quinta Community Fitness Center' with the text 'La Quinta Community Fitness Center = 36'. The status bar at the bottom indicates 'Record: 1 of 11'.

Figure 17 displays the overall level of service if the values are bracketed using the above determined threshold. The implication here is that those residents within the purple shade have access to a facility the equivalent of the La Quinta Community Park and Fitness Center within one mile. Areas shown in yellow have some level of service, but that level does not meet the threshold.

Schools also provide limited access to recreation opportunities although perhaps more localized. The teal hatch in **Figure 19** adds a one mile service area to schools in the urban area.

Figure 19: Threshold Analysis with Schools



Similar to the urban area, rural recreation threshold can also be determined. Level of service provision and expectations differ from the urban areas that have access to sometimes multiple opportunities to the rural recreation areas that have very limited opportunities. The consultant team felt that Indio Hills Community Center and Park were appropriate measures of level of service in these rural areas. **Figures 20** and **21** show the calculated scores for both the indoor and outdoor facilities. Using Indio Hills Community Park score of 19.2 and the Community Center score of 21.6 the desired LOS Threshold of 40.8 is determined.

$$19.2 + 21.6 = 40.8$$

A premium for proximity was not included in the rural recreation analysis.

Figure 20: Rural Recreation Threshold Calculation - Park

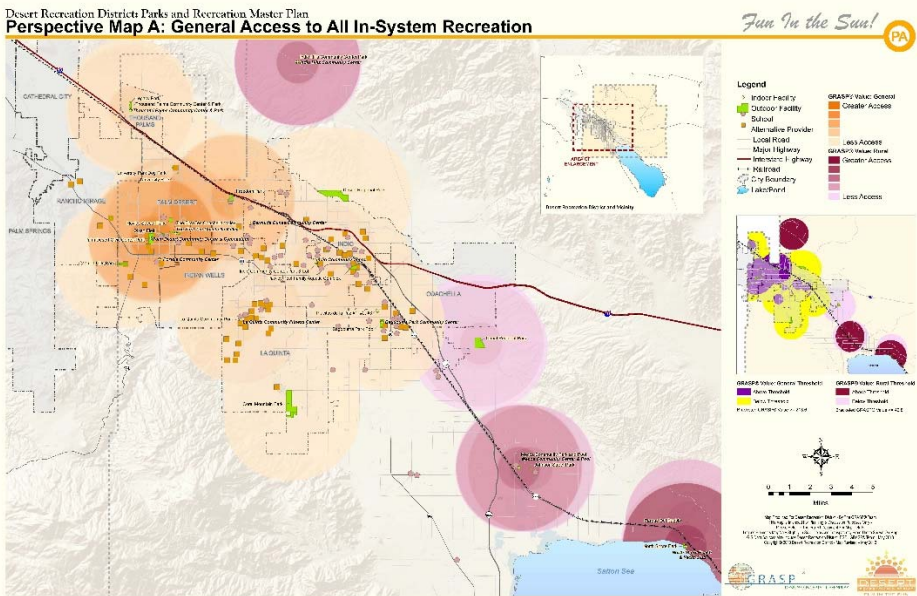
LOCATION	SumOfGRASP_C
Bagdouma Park	109.2
Bagdouma Park Pool	22
Cahuilla Hills Park	40.8
Canal Regional Park	15.4
Coral Mountain Park	13.2
Davis Sports Complex/South Jackson Park	148.8
Desert Regional Park	12.1
Freedom Park	341.25
Hovley Soccer Park	207
Indio Community Center Park & Lot	21.6
Indio Hills Community Center Park	19.2
Johnson St	
La Quinta C	
Legacy Park	
Mecca Com	
North Shore	
Olsen Field	8.4
Palm Desert Aquatic Center	68.4
Palm Desert Civic Center Park	510.9
Parque Del Pueblo	19.8
Pawley Pool Family Aquatic Complex	48
Placitas de la Paz #1	19.2
Placitas de la Paz #2	4.4
Placitas de la Paz #3	17.6
The First Tee Coachella Valley	26.4
Thousand Palms Community Center & Park	122.4
University Park	36
University Park Dog Park	16.8
Whitewater Park	202.8

Figure 21: Rural Recreation Threshold Calculation - Facility

LOCATION	SumOfComp_N
Bagdouma Park Community Center	4.8
Bermuda Dunes Community Center	25.2
Indio Community Center	62.4
Indio Hills Community Center	21.6
La Quinta Com	21.6
Mecca Commu	
North Shore B	
Palm Desert C	
Portola Comm	
The First Tee C	
Thousand Palms	

Figure 22 shows the accumulation of all threshold data analysis.

Figure 23: Perspective Map A: General Access to All In-System Recreation

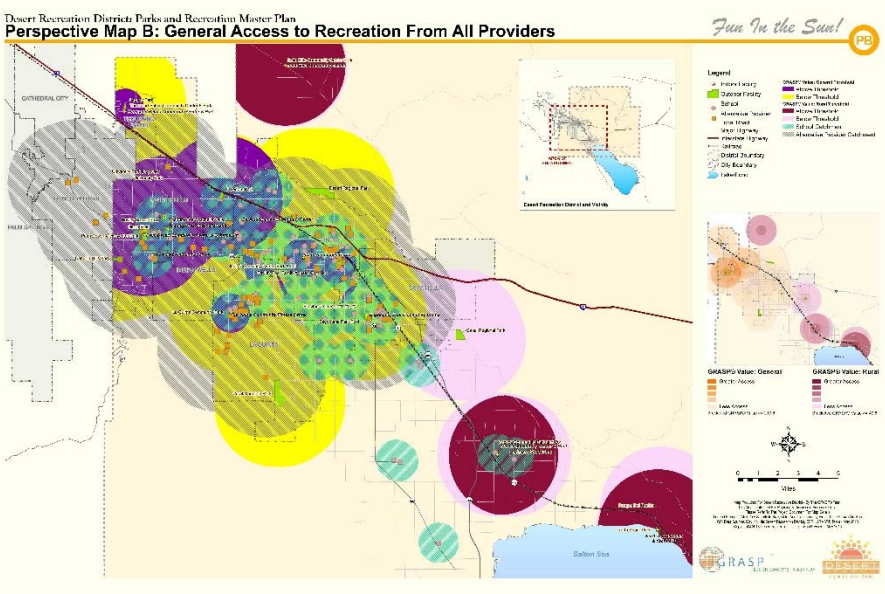


This formal map shows access to recreation based on those services provided by Desert Recreation District. The inset map shows the urban versus the rural areas bracketed as described above. Larger maps can be found in **Appendix B**.

E. Perspective B: Access to All Recreation from All Providers

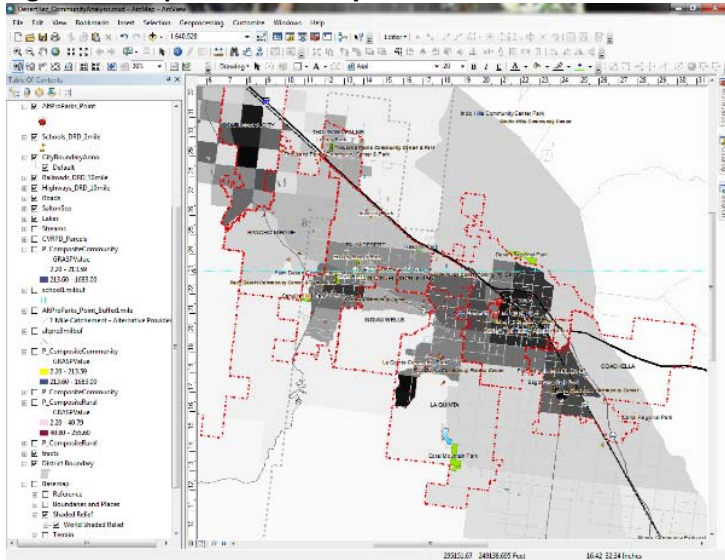
Perspective Map B (Figure 24) shows bracketed access to recreation based on those services provided by Desert Recreation District with overlays of alternative providers and schools. The inset map shows the original un-bracketed analysis. Larger maps can be found in **Appendix B**.

Figure 24: Perspective Map B: General Access to Recreation From All Providers



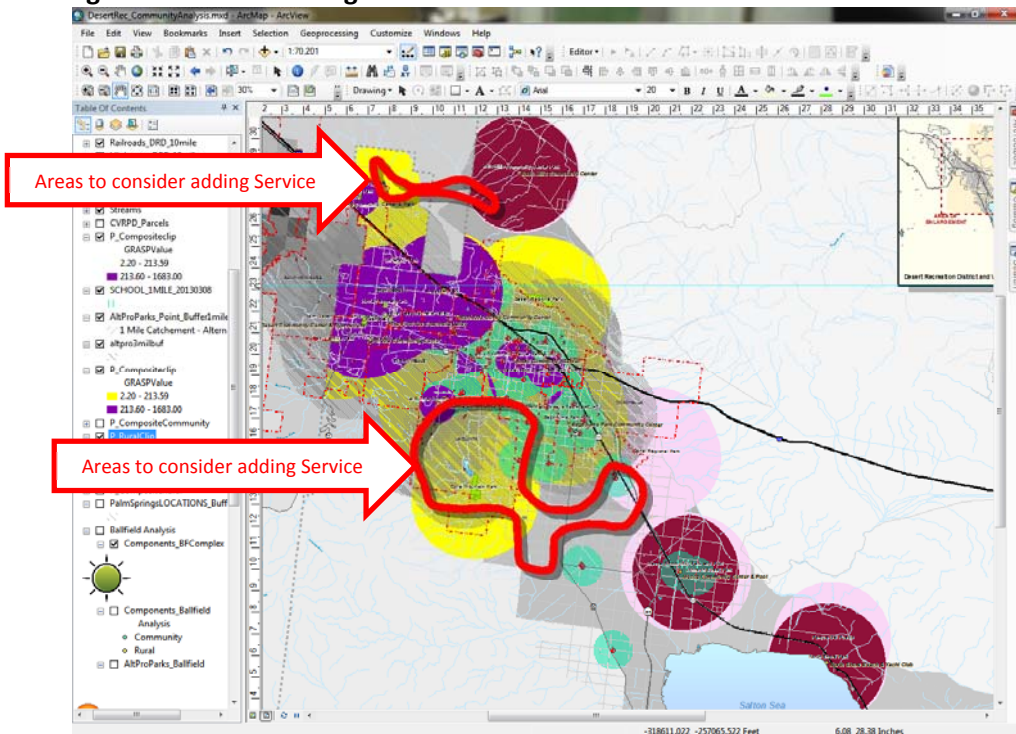
It is also important to note that not all areas that are under served or lack service actually warrant service. Further analysis revealed that many of these areas have very low populations. **Figure 25** shows population density for areas considered the urban core. In this case the areas of higher population density appear darker.

Figure 25: Population Density



The next illustration, **Figure 26** is a hybrid of the two analyses. The areas that have been outlined in red indicate populations that currently lack service.

Figure 26: Areas Lacking Service



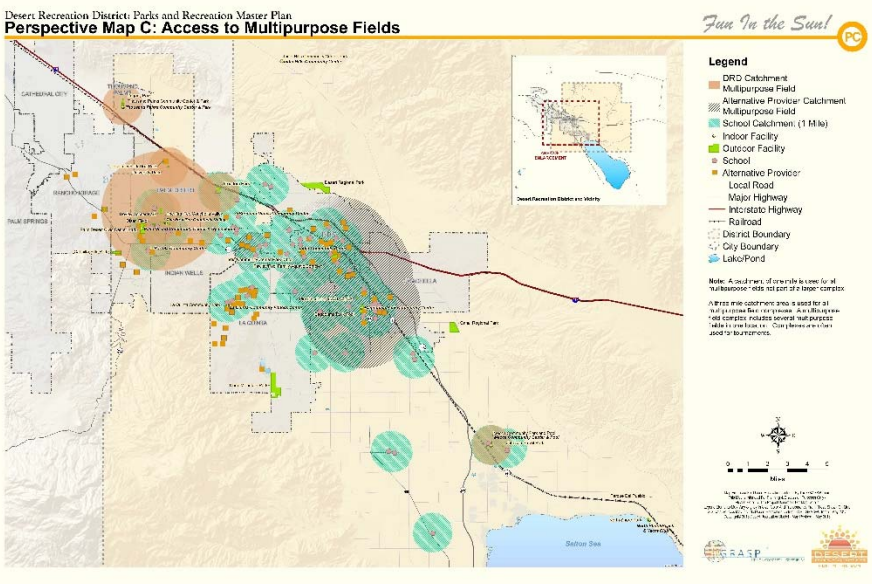
Assets Key Conclusions

A key conclusion from the Asset Perspectives is that density and transportation are factors in the provision of service. The per-capita provision of assets is reasonably equitable across DRD, which works fine if everyone has equitable and adequate access to motorized transportation. Even so, wherever the population is spread out, the net service received is lower than in more densely populated areas with the same ratio of assets. This situation is compounded if the opportunity to be driven to a destination is not available. This creates a paradox in which the way to increase overall LOS is to add assets where there are fewer people. However, a more realistic approach is to increase service in areas where localized population density is high but service is low. Further analysis, and a review of the information received from surveys, focus groups, and other sources may be needed to identify these locations.

F. Perspective C: Access to Multi-Purpose Fields

Perspective Map C (Figure 27) shows access to multi-purpose fields in the District. In this analysis, a multi-purpose field complex received a three mile catchment area, and single fields a one-mile catchment area. Fields associated with DRD are shown with associated GRASP® scoring gradients as discussed previously. Other providers have a grey hatch, while school fields are represented by a teal hatch.

Figure 27: Perspective Map C: Access to Multipurpose Fields



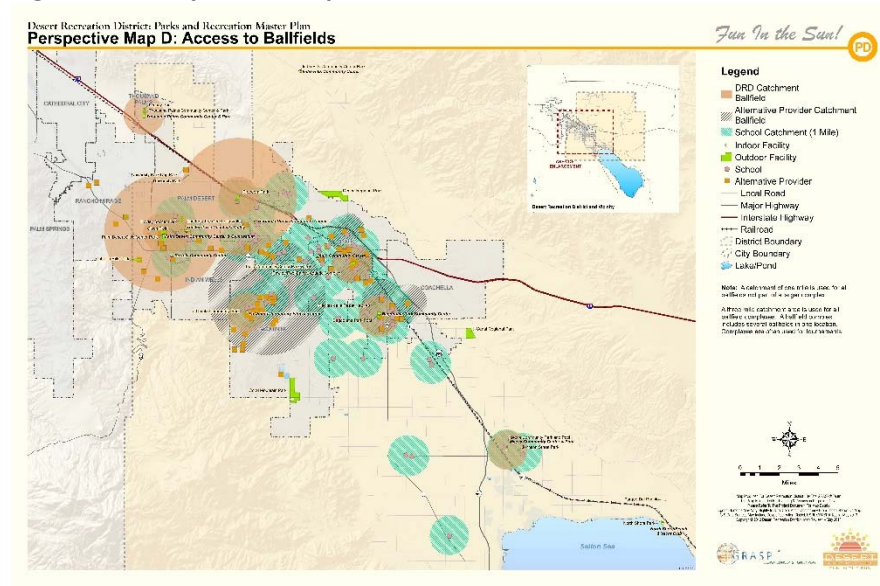
The analysis shows that there is relatively good access to fields through most of the urban core, but when moving away from the populated area, limited access to fields exists. This analysis does not address capacity of these existing fields. Several focus group meetings, as well as the consultant team's experience working across the Valley, indicates that field capacity is an issue, especially at peak times.

As before, not all areas that are underserved or lack service warrant multi-purpose field service, but opportunities to add fields in these areas may require additional investigation.

G. Perspective D: Access to Ballfields

Perspective Map D (Figure 28) shows access to ballfields in the District. In this analysis, a ballfield complex received a three-mile catchment area, and single fields a one-mile catchment area. Fields associated with DRD are shown with related GRASP® scoring gradients as discussed previously. Other providers have a grey hatch, while school fields are represented by a teal hatch.

Figure 28: Perspective Map D: Access to Ballfields



The analysis shows similar coverage as multi-purpose fields, and that there is relatively good access to ballfields through most of the urban core, but when moving away from the populated area, limited access to fields exists. This analysis also does not address capacity of these existing fields. Again, capacity has been identified as an issue through the public involvement process and the consultant's experience working in the Coachella Valley.

An additional note in regards to both field perspectives: much of the coverage in the outlying areas is provided by schools. It is typical that school fields are not as well designed or maintained as District fields. In addition, field access at schools can be limited depending on school programming and details of agreements with the school districts.

H. More on Reading and Utilizing the GRASP® Perspectives

Different *Perspectives* can be used to determine levels of service throughout the district from a variety of views. These *Perspectives* can show a specific set of components, depict estimated travel time to services, highlight a particular geographic area, or display facilities that accommodate specific programming. It is not necessarily beneficial for all parts of the District to score equally in the analyses. The desired level of service for any particular location will depend on the type of service being analyzed and the characteristics of the particular location. Commercial, institutional, and industrial areas might reasonably be expected to have lower levels of service (LOS) for parks and recreation opportunities than residential areas. Levels of service for retail services in high density residential areas should probably be different than those for lower density areas.

Used in conjunction with other needs assessment tools (such as needs surveys and a public engagement process), *Perspectives* can be used to determine if current levels of service are appropriate in a given location. If so, plans can then be developed that provide similar levels of service to new neighborhoods. Conversely, if it is determined that different levels of service are desired, new planning can differ from the existing District patterns to provide the desired LOS.

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



VII. The Findings Summary

A. Public Input Findings

Key highlights from the District-wide statistically-valid survey include:

- It appears that the needs are as different and varied as the demographics, cities, and unincorporated areas that the District serves. Some have need for improved neighborhood and community level of service, while others have need for regional level of service and regional venues.
- Topping most lists are a connected valley-wide trail system and alternative transportation. For some, and especially where the demand is greatest, sports fields are also needed across the Coachella Valley. Activities for youth, and fitness and wellness programs and services are also greatly needed.
- When asked just about outdoor facilities, trails are followed by more traditional neighborhood level of service components such as dog parks and playgrounds (although both of these can be larger scale destination components), community gardens, and picnic areas/shelters. Also in the top seven are hiking/mountain biking/equestrian trails and leisure play pool/slides/lazy river.
- When asked just about indoor facilities, teen areas and weight room and fitness areas top the list, followed by indoor/outdoor pool with a retractable roof for nice weather.
- Youth and teen programs and services are a high priority.

Key highlights from the RAICES survey on *Youth Participatory Action Research on Recreational Opportunities in the Eastern Coachella Valley*:

- Youth in Coachella saw a need for more art and cultural opportunities.
- Youth residents of Thermal stated that there is a need for positive youth engagement.
- Youth in Mecca would like to see more activities pertaining to the environment.
- Youth living in the communities of Oasis and North Shore indicated that access to recreational opportunities is greatly determined by their access to transportation.

Additional stakeholder input:

- In general, the municipalities that DRD serves, as well as other partners and stakeholders, seem supportive of where the District is heading – focusing on regional service provision and venues using a collaborative approach.

B. LOS Analysis Findings

Through site visits and subsequent analysis, it can be said that DRD provides a wide variety of recreational opportunities. Offerings in the urban core tend to be more community-wide or regionally-based, while rural areas focus on more neighborhood or localized service. This trend in offerings seems consistent with the needs of both populations.

The District in general does an excellent job of maintaining the facilities it owns and manages. It was obvious during initial inventory visits and subsequent site visits that DRD maintains its parks and facilities equal to and often at a much higher level than other providers in the District.

Maintenance of several of these properties is not without its challenges. For example, the small parks in Placita de la Paz are consistently vandalized. Due to the poor planning of this neighborhood, development and the location of these small parks in isolated areas behind homes it will be a continuous challenge to maintain quality facilities without neighborhood buy-in and self-policing.

As with any infrastructure, it is important to maintain facilities and keep up with current trends. Inventory visits revealed some current concerns and other suggested upgrades that should be considered.

The ability to partner on coordination of services with other providers is key to the provision of recreation services in the Valley. Communication and strengthening these partnerships will help ensure minimal overlap in similar services or competing services being offered by the many different providers.

In general, it seems that DRD is equipped to offer its services and facilities at these two different levels (regional and neighborhood) which correlates with the urban and rural levels well. Continuing to focus on larger community or regionally based facilities in areas where neighborhood level of service is available through another provider is an appropriate function.

The use of CVM and the GRASP® methodology is very appropriate for DRD, where not only is the quantity of recreation amenities important, but quality and geographic distribution as well. The ability to map alternative provider facilities also helps create a better sense of the overall level of service provided to District residents. As **Perspective A** shows, the urban core has an excellent level of service in and around the Palm Desert Civic Center Park area. Based on population density analysis this is appropriate. The other high population density areas occur in Indio, Coachella, and La Quinta. When considering DRD's level of service and the service provided by other sources it shows that these areas also have a high level of service. Providing neighborhood or localized level of service in areas without a local provider appears to be a strong position for the District.

Perspective A addresses rural areas and shows a good level of service in general, considering the lower population density in some areas. Where service is provided, it generally meets the chosen threshold and is centered in more populated areas thus providing service to the highest number of people most efficiently.

Analysis reveals that there are opportunities to expand level of service for both the urban core and rural area within the Valley. Several areas have been identified as areas in possible need of additional amenities while other areas lack any service at all.

Two main areas were identified as potential gaps in service and these should be considered as opportunities as new facilities are investigated (**Figure 26**). **Perspectives B** and **C** both show generally good access in the District to multi-purpose fields and ballfields when taking into consideration fields provided by alternative providers.

While trails were not specifically addressed in the inventory or analysis phase of this project, they do rank as the most important recreational amenity. DRD can play a significant role in current planning efforts in regard to trails. Access by means of transportation also appears to be a key issue within the Valley. While the Valley is heavily motor vehicle dependent, public transportation does offer some access to District facilities.

VIII. Consultant Observations and Considerations

GreenPlay has been in the parks, recreation, and open space management consulting business since 1999, and is staffed with a team of professionals boasting over 160 years of combined experience in the field. We have worked with over 300 communities on various plans, using these tools and methodologies, yet treat each one as unique, providing customized community-specific results.

The GreenPlay Project Manager for both the DRD Strategic and Master Plans was one of the first to become a Certified Parks and Recreation Executive, the new advanced certification administered by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA). Karon Badalamenti, a Principal with GreenPlay, brings over 25 years in Parks and Recreation administration, and senior management experience.

It is from this perspective, as well as considerable planning experience with DRD and within the Coachella Valley, and extensive national expertise, that the consultant team provides the following observations and suggestions which are offered for DRD consideration.

A. Strategic Plan Considerations

The following best practices and strategies were suggested in the 2012 Strategic Plan to enhance the operations and management of the District and have been addressed through this master planning process:

- Barrier-Free Access
- Collaborative Service Provision Strategies
- Communication and Return on Investment

Barrier-Free Access

Suggestions include: conduct equity reviews to ensure that all citizens have equal opportunity to participate in sport and physical recreation programs regardless of sex, age, race, income level, or ability; take extra steps to ensure that vulnerable populations have access to the same choices and opportunities for recreation and active living as the population at large; and ensure that those that have limited means or ability to pay issues have funded support systems for barrier-free access including a scholarship or financial assistance program.



Additionally: support sport, active living, and cultural organizations and partner with them in programs that aim to build social cohesion while increasing opportunities for recreation and physical activity; support the development of a comprehensive campaign to promote recreation that involves all municipalities and unincorporated areas within the District, and many industries and businesses in multiple interventions; sponsor and encourage special events that involve recreation and physical activity and engage all social groups; celebrate multiculturalism and diversity; identify and work with various cultures and religions in the community to promote physical recreation and active living opportunities and to find the best solutions for overcoming common barriers.

Collaborative Service Provision Strategies

Strategies include: avoid duplication of services and market saturation; over extending or expanding services, or trying to be all things to all people often results in mediocre or low-quality service so instead, focus on delivering higher-quality service in a more focused (and perhaps limited) way; consider selectively expanding services through partnerships in the Sphere of Influence (SOI) and abutting areas with healthcare providers, overlapping municipalities, and pursuing cross-marketing or complementary service development strategies; focus on areas where there is an unmet need for health and wellness and after school activities; coordinate services with public transportation, greenways, and trail systems; continue to further facilitate the valley-wide parks and recreation needs assessment and discussion through the DRD Master Plan development process; consider a community-wide, statistically-valid unmet needs and satisfaction survey and seek other municipalities/agencies to financially partner in this process in exchange for their applicable results; provide target market information by mapping survey responses and demographic overlays; consider additional web-based options and target survey options to reach selected groups like teens.

In addition to these considerations from the Strategic Plan, additional collaborative considerations and concepts should include:

- “Strategic Abandonment” – “Peter Drucker called this systematic abandonment, the deliberate process of letting go of familiar products in favor of the new or as yet unknown.”
<http://www.heinzmarketing.com/2007/06/strategic-abandonment/>
- “Collective Impact” – “Large-scale social change requires broad cross-sector coordination, not the isolated intervention of individual organizations.”
http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/collective_impact
- Which agency is the right one to provide specific service where – niche
- Negotiate and trade lands, operation and management, development, etc.

Communication and Return on Investments

Suggestions include: improve transparent communication with the public; demonstrate where and how public funds and taxpayer investments are used; use graphics to help explain the value/cost of providing desired and necessary services; communicate the connection of services to the community issues by discussing the outcomes, benefits, and results from what the District does, not just the numbers of participants; engage the community and the municipalities within the SOI in the planning process.



Additionally: evaluate the Return on Investment (ROI) of the “free” or major special events as these are a huge financial commitment, and while “sexy” or public relations friendly, they are a labor drain; visitor and tourism attraction is more closely aligned as a function of municipalities and the County, rather than a special district whose focus is parks and recreation services for residents of the District; perhaps place less emphasis here in the future, and reallocate resources elsewhere.

B. Entrepreneurial Considerations

The following regional enterprise ventures could provide revenue positive funding sources to assist DRD in improving local level of service in the more sparsely populated, rural, and unincorporated county areas that the District is also tasked with serving. The ability to pass a district-wide taxation measure to fund these necessary local improvements in areas with the greatest socio-economic challenges seems highly unlikely. Adding revenue positive entrepreneurial endeavors, pursuing collaborative opportunities, and leveraging resources must all be a part of the development campaign which may include a parcel taxation question for operating and development.

Sports Tournament Venues

Athletic field availability throughout the Coachella Valley is at a premium according to youth and adult sports organizations, and District and City recreation staff across the valley. In addition, sports programs are in high demand, boasting a lot of participants. Many cities find their local fields at capacity and used by many non-city residents.

Currently there is neither a *public* multi-field softball/baseball sports complex, nor a *public* soccer/football sports complex in the Valley appropriate for tournaments. Big League Dreams, a private entity in Cathedral City, provides five baseball/softball fields, three soccer/football fields, sand volleyball courts, and an indoor pavilion. Use of the facility seems to be focused around competitive youth baseball and softball leagues and tournaments, along with adult recreational and competitive sports leagues and tournaments. There is a cost to field a team in a league and an additional entrance fee to get into the facility.

Several high profile or regional agencies across the nation have considered for the future, or currently offer, sports tournament venues including:

- The City of Palm Springs (potential collaborative venture as this was explored in its Master Plan)
- Charleston County Park and Recreation Commission in South Carolina (considering a soccer collaboration with the Charleston Battery)
- Cary, North Carolina (currently has the USA Baseball National Training Complex, Wakemed Soccer Park, Cary Tennis Park)
- Commerce City, Colorado (Dick's Sporting Goods Soccer Park - The city of Commerce City owns the stadium and Kroenke Sports and Entertainment operates the venue for the Colorado Rapids)

Please refer to **Appendix E** for details on these agencies' future considerations and current services.

Action Sports Park – BMX/Pump Training Track

To be located at the **Desert Regional Park location (in North Valley)**, this action sports park could include a BMX park and training facility with private non-profit group and include a mountain bike pump track. The City of Fresno created such a park at Woodward Regional Park.

OHV Park

The Riverside County Parks and Open Space District (RivCoParks) is actively collaborating with partners to locate, plan, and implement an Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) park within the County. A demonstrated need (based upon the OHVR Business Plan completed in 2012) has been identified for an OHVR park within Riverside County. RivCoParks has been identified as a logical leader for development of such a park given the alignment of the type of park with the District's vision and mission. There may be interest in collaborations with DRD on this venture.

C. Funding Considerations

DRD uses the following funding mechanisms to fund the current level of service:

- Percent of the dedicated 1% property tax (without inflationary measures)
- Benefit Assessment Districts (for example: \$54/year in Indio; a Light District in Thousand Palms for operations and maintenance of the community center and medians, etc.)
- Fees for service through IGAs (for example: with the City of Palm Desert)
- School Board funding (for example: for the ASES program)
- Fees and charges for participation
- Alternative Funding Sources (grants, sponsorships, in-kind and monetary donations, volunteers, etc.)

DRD should consider a joint parcel taxation measure to fund a capital development and operational funding package which includes something for everyone that may or may not be owned, operated, or managed by DRD. The taxation measure should include an inflation/escalation factor consistent with CPI. The package could include funding used by DRD as well as a development and operating measure divided between DRD as a valley-wide service provider, cities for local service provision, and another agency for acquisition and land holdings.

For instance, a portion could be distributed on a per capita basis to cities for their local service provision. Funds passed through to others could be for services:

- To the various cities for:
 - Operating and maintenance funding for municipal portions of a valley-wide trail system
 - Funding to improve or enhance the provision of park and recreation within the cities whether contracted back to DRD or others, or provided in-house
- To other providers for:
 - Transportation funding for a "REC" Route to existing services to Sunline or the school districts

There is current consideration for a legislative measure that would decrease the voter threshold from a super majority to a simple majority on parcel tax measures. This could be beneficial for the passage of a major district-wide or valley-wide taxpayer investment question.

Additional items for further exploration, consideration, and development include:

- Other tax funding considerations:
 - TOT tax implications, especially on a regional venue which might attract tourism.
 - License Plate funding (for example: "Save the Sea" for the Salton Sea)

- Other funding mechanisms to leverage:
 - California Endowment (Maria Shriver) for the East Valley
 - Currently \$50M raised for the Whitewater Trail project (of the \$80M project)
- Additional cost recovery issues to address through the resource allocation and cost recovery project:
 - Understand the per person tax computation.
 - Understand the per household tax computation.
 - Allocation of a percent off the top for infrastructure re-investment.
 - Allocation of a percent off the top for low income initiatives throughout the valley.
 - Pro-rata share of tax investment to cities for a percentage of operating services for the potential initiative share previously described.

D. District Boundary Considerations

Several cities have asked about either expansion of the DRD service area boundaries to include more or all of their municipality, or contracting for DRD to provide services on their behalf. Inclusion into the District will necessitate additional tax funding or a proportional operational commitment to add services to the complement of existing DRD parks, facilities, programs, and services.

E. Staffing Considerations

DRD cannot pursue the regional venue growth through development, contract/agreement, collaborations, etc. without additional resources. Through the Strategic Plan implementation and re-organization, DRD has actualized and will be freeing up between \$800,000 and \$1,000,000 annually in operating funds. This fiscal year – 2013/14 – DRD elected to use these funds for smaller-scale capital projects and deferred maintenance needs.

Next fiscal year (2014/15), it is recommended that DRD focus on creating and filling staffing key positions to accommodate this Master Plan and the future development and taxation growth recommendation. These positions include (not in priority order):

- Finance Director to better monitor investments, internal accounting, and budget development and manage the resource allocation and cost recovery project scheduled.
- Programming staff for service expansion as this occurs.
- Special skills or consultants for: bond structuring and strategy, political advisement, legal and contract negotiations, etc.
- Engineers, Planners, and Project Managers, as well as potential marketing assistance.
- A focused liaison (in succession plan) to further develop the efforts of the Foundation to expand its purview to capital campaigns and major District fundraising (above and beyond their current successful efforts of \$300,000 for the First Tee program).

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