

## **CASE MGPA 15-05**

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

The City of Buckeye proposes amendments to general plan text related to parks, trails, open space, recreation and cultural resources and the General Plan's reference to the 2005 Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan. The amendments update language, exhibits and references to be in accordance with the 2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

### **BACKGROUND & HISTORY:**

In 2005, the City of Buckeye adopted the Parks, Trails and Open Space (PTOS) Master Plan, which served as the Open Space Element for Buckeye's General Plan adopted in January 2008. The PTOS Master Plan provided a comprehensive framework for Buckeye's parks, trails and open space relative to its natural resources and anticipated continued growth. The plan provided a comprehensive inventory, policy directives and level of service indicators for developing parks and recreation facilities. The plan also established a hierarchy of parks based on size with classifications for pocket, neighborhood, community and large sports/regional parks. The plan also developed a level of service of 7 acres of parks per 1,000 residents to guide the future provision of parks based on population size. Another element of the PTOS Plan was the baseline planning of trails with conceptual trail alignments and cross sections included to guide the development of trails. One recommendation from the PTOS Plan was to conduct a more detailed and comprehensive plan on the future trails in Buckeye, which was accomplished with the development of Buckeye's Trails Master Plan in 2008.

The 2008 Trails Master Plan established a planned network of paths along natural and man-made linear features that would connect major destinations in the City, including recreational amenities, commercial hubs and residential centers. The Trails Master Plan recommended trails along arterial roads, parkways, powerlines, major washes, flood control channel paths, canals and river corridors.

### **PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE GENERAL PLAN:**

The 2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan will serve as the Open Space and Recreation Element for the Buckeye General Plan 2008 and its 10-year update to be adopted in 2018.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2015-2025) addresses current trends and issues and will provide City officials and the public a vision and framework for an interconnected network of parks, trails and open space influenced by Buckeye's vast natural resources over the next ten years. The master plan provides goals and objectives for each element in the plan, including parks, trails, open space, recreation and cultural resources and recommends policies to assist towards implementation.

The following policy directives included in the General Plan shall be updated to be in conformance with the 2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

### **Goal 1: Aspire for Quality Neighborhoods**

- Policy 1.2 Maximize the interaction of residents between neighborhoods by the judicious placement and uniform distribution of public facilities, such as schools, libraries, public parks, recreational facilities, and government functions (satellite offices) that encourage citizen interaction.
- Policy 1.3 Encourage master-planned communities to integrate public facilities and civic spaces within their master plans.
- Policy 1.4 Design, develop, and maintain regional parks and public recreation facilities including off-street paths and trails throughout the Planning Area to maximize community interaction.
- Policy 1.5 Encourage openness in designs of neighborhoods that are both visually and physically integrated with the community at-large. Discourage walls along the perimeter of neighborhoods to avoid closing off and isolating communities from one another.

Policy 1.6        Manage the interface between the built and natural environments with compatible land uses and innovative site planning.

**Goal 9.0 Manage Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation**

Manage parks and recreational needs that reflect the Community Vision and bring to bear a balanced response to the local physical characteristics, landscape features, environmental conditions, and socioeconomic characteristics of the Planning Area.

**Objective 9.1: Implement a comprehensive system of parks, trails, open space and recreational offerings that both protect and integrate with the natural character while serving the active and passive recreational needs of the community as defined in the 2015 *Buckeye Parks and Recreation Master Plan*.**

Policy 9.1.1      Satisfy both the community's active and passive recreational needs by integrating natural systems, such as rivers washes, mountains, and environmentally sensitive desert environments, to that of man-made parks, trails, and recreational facilities.

Policy 9.1.2      Enhance areas with regional drainage facilities and flood control structures by creating recreational areas, community parks, and connecting trails.

Policy 9.1.3      Continue to identify locations, develop facilities, and connect with regional trails and regional recreational facilities to keep pace with growing demand.

Policy 9.1.4      Require open space, parks, and recreational amenities that is appropriately scaled to the number of housing units to be located within residential developments.

Policy 9.1.5      Coordinate with developers, local school districts, government agencies, and other entities for joint-use facilities where practical.

Policy 9.1.6      Coordinate with the Bureau of Land Management, Flood Control District of Maricopa County, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department, Arizona State Land Department, Arizona Game and Fish Department, and other agencies to identify sites for open space or recreational amenities that could be mutually beneficial.

**Objective 9.2: Parks. Provide quality parks and recreation facilities that are convenient to all neighborhoods and that meet the needs of local residents.**

Policy 9.2.1      Tailor the recreational amenities by implementing the park-type hierarchy: pocket parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, large municipal parks and sports complexes and regional conservation parks and desert preserves.

Policy 9.2.2      Prioritize new park land acquisition and improvements in areas where there are low levels of service and deficiencies. Master plan, design and construct new park and recreation facilities in areas underserved to meet unmet demand.

Policy 9.2.3      Require new residential developments to meet or exceed established level of service (LOS) standards for both open space and active park space as defined in the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2015.

Policy 9.2.4      Ensure residential development provides quality amenities in parks to meet the recreational needs of their residents.

- Policy 9.2.5      Develop active parks and recreation facilities that provide varied recreational opportunities but also meet the needs for specific user groups and can respond to new and emerging recreation trends.
- Policy 9.2.6      Ensure the functional design of common open space and usable park space in communities with pocket parks located within a ¼ mile, neighborhood parks within a ½ mile pedestrian-shed.
- Policy 9.2.7      Provide consistent branding and theming in city parks and facilities with architectural, landscape and signage standards. Theming can also be distinct and reflect and respond to local identities throughout the city.
- Policy 9.2.8      Provide both indoor and outdoor park and recreation facilities that provide relief from weather and climatic extremes, thereby promoting year-round play and park use.
- Policy 9.2.9      Integrate additional shade into parks, pathways and trails through landscaping and shade structures.
- Policy 9.2.10     Encourage non-residential developments, such as commercial and industrial developments to provide open space amenities, such as outdoor plazas, forecourts, and green space for customers and workers.
- Policy 9.2.11     Provide facilities that can support tournaments, league play and community events to enhance opportunities to generate revenue.
- Policy 9.2.12     Ensure any required dedication of land for neighborhood, community, and regional parks is completed at the subdivision approval stage.
- Policy 9.2.13     Facilitate discussions with outside agencies and organizations on the development of special use parks and active and extreme adventure parks that could provide recreation amenities not typically found in parks, such as BMX parks, motorized recreation vehicle parks, rock climbing, zip lines, water parks, etc.
- Policy 9.2.14     Require private maintenance of association parks and open spaces less than 15 acres located in large or high-density residential developments.

**Objective 9.3: Pathways & Trails. Develop a comprehensive network of trails and natural linear features connecting all the passive and active recreational sites into a distinctive feature that is a model of stewardship of the desert ecosystem.**

- Policy 9.3.1      Require connections between open spaces, parks and trails within new residential developments and to adjacent communities. Ensure that the design and layout of connections provide visual and functional links to parks, schools, neighborhoods, and other activity centers.
- Policy 9.3.2      Prohibit new land uses or developments that eliminate connections to the City of Buckeye's trail plan and linkages to the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department's regional trail system.
- Policy 9.3.3      Establish hiking, mountain biking and equestrian trails where appropriate and ensure their compatibility with surrounding development.
- Policy 9.3.4      Ensure local trails connect to the regional trails network that provides adequate corridor width to buffer trail users from homes, roads, businesses, etc.

- Policy 9.3.5 Partner with land agencies, such as BLM and motorized trail advocates on finding suitable locations for motorized recreation that are outside of Buckeye's PM-10 non-attainment area.
- Policy 9.3.6 Ensure connections to the Maricopa Trail throughout Buckeye's jurisdiction.
- Policy 9.3.7 Develop IGA's and MOU's with utility companies, irrigation districts and the Flood Control District of Maricopa County to establish trails along their corridors.
- Policy 9.3.8 Coordinate the Parks and Recreation Master Plan with the City's Transportation Master Plan to establish linkages to paths and bike lanes located along parkways, arterials, and collector streets to off-street paths and trails.
- Policy 9.3.9 Utilize trail designs with various levels from natural surface trails to hard structural paved paths to meet the needs of different users.
- Policy 9.3.10 Encourage trail links and access nodes every ¼ mile along pathways and trails.
- Policy 9.3.11 Ensure private developments are dedicating right of way for pathways and trails and granting public access easements that mutually benefit to all residents living in the City.

**Objective 9.4: Open Space. Preserve the desert ecosystem, which is the interconnected network of protected land and water resources that supports native plant and animal species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources and contributes to the community's health, welfare, and quality of life.**

- Policy 9.4.1 Focus resources on the enhancement of the rivers to ridges concept with greenways that connect the White Tank Mountains, Buckeye Hills, Maricopa Mountains, and the Gila and Hassayampa Rivers.
- Policy 9.4.2 Coordinate with the Bureau of Land Management and Arizona State Land Department on the preservation of open space.
- Policy 9.4.3 Examine the feasibility of purchasing additional State Land surrounding the White Tank Mountains and other open space areas for the long-term preservation of high quality natural resources.
- Policy 9.4.4 Ensure developers are conserving significant resources in their development, such as wash corridors, hillsides, and mature vegetation stands and utilizing buffers to protect such resources from adjacent development.
- Policy 9.4.5 Develop and implement the Buckeye Lake project as well as the expansion of trails in Skyline Regional Park. Connect the lake area to Downtown Buckeye through trails and multimodal transportation links.
- Policy 9.4.6 Develop a consistent strategy for developing compatible land uses at the edges of the built and natural environments. Explore legal mechanisms to establish permanent buffers at the interface between the built and natural environments.
- Policy 9.4.7 Make Buckeye the recreational gateway to the National Monument, White Tanks, and Buckeye Hills as well as the Gila and Hassayampa Rivers. Develop a coordinated strategy with the Bureau of Land Management, Arizona State Land Department, Arizona Game and Fish Department and Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department for tourist traffic, portals, and trailheads to these important desert and riparian environments.

- Policy 9.4.8 Maximize land use compatibility with the Sonoran National Monument, White Tank Mountains Regional Park, Skyline Regional Park and other parks to enhance community recreational opportunities.
- Policy 9.4.9 Use regional drainage corridors as land use buffers, wildlife corridors, and multi-use trails. The Maricopa County Flood Control District established these corridors in the El Rio Water Course Master Plan, Sun Valley Area Drainage Master Plan, Rainbow Valley Area Drainage Plan, Gillespie Area Drainage Plan, White Tanks Area Drainage Master Plan, and the Buckeye Area Drainage Master Plan.
- Policy 9.4.10 Partner with the White Tank Mountains Conservancy, agencies and private developers on the identification and preservation of wildlife linkages from the White Tank Mountains to other habitat blocks, including the Hassayampa River and other mountain ranges.
- Policy 9.4.11 Stress the connectivity of open space as opposed to fragmented open space by collaborating with developers and land agencies.
- Policy 9.4.12 Participate in Bureau of Land Management's Resource Management Planning activities to ensure mutually compatible plans for their lands in Buckeye.

**Objective 9.5: Recreation. Offer comprehensive programs that satisfy varying age levels, physical abilities and special interests.**

- Policy 9.5.1 Determine the overall types of services and programs the department should provide based on the identification of core, secondary and support programs.
- Policy 9.5.2 Develop diversified programs that reflect the level and types of play, activities and needs the community desires.
- Policy 9.5.3 Periodically survey residents to determine the types of programs and events they would like to see offered in the City.
- Policy 9.5.4 Develop and implement adaptive recreation programs.
- Policy 9.5.5 Provide programs and services that have a regional appeal for purposes of economic development.
- Policy 9.5.6 Pursue and develop viable partnerships with other service organizations and schools for development opportunities.
- Policy 9.5.7 Develop a marketing strategy that promotes the City's recreational offerings and special events at the community, state and national levels.
- Policy 9.5.8 Develop a cost recovery strategy for city-wide programs and events based on program type.
- Policy 9.5.9 Offer programs and opportunities that interpret the significance of the natural, cultural, and historic resources of the city.

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# Buckeye Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2015

