



CITY OF YUMA

# Parks, Arts, Recreation & Trails Plan

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JULY 2024



# Executive Summary

The Parks, Arts, Recreation, and Trails (PART) Plan is the functional plan for Yuma's Parks and Recreation Department and serves as the strategic plan for the next ten years. The Plan establishes a path forward for continuing to provide high quality, community-driven parks, trails, cultural experiences, and recreational opportunities across the city.

Developed with significant input and direction of Yuma residents, the PART serves as a blueprint for the management, enhancement, and growth of Yuma's park and recreation system and for other management considerations toward the continuation of quality recreation opportunities. It provides system inventories, a community profile, needs analyses, and a comprehensive capital project list. The Plan identifies parks and recreation goals and establishes a long-range plan for the Yuma parks and recreation system, including action items and strategies for implementation. The

result will be a park and recreation system that expands access for all, builds strong communities, innovates for the future, and protects the natural environment in Yuma.

## Mission-Driven Services

The Parks and Recreation Department's mission statement provides a framework for future planning and guided the development of goals and project recommendations for this Plan.

*"Enriching lives through quality programs, experiences, and facilities that preserve the past, provide for the present, plan for the future, and promote the spirit of fun."*

This mission provided the foundation for the goals, recommendations, and guidelines found throughout this Plan.

## Guiding Principals & Goals

This Plan includes goals and objectives intended to guide City decision-making to ensure the parks, arts, recreation, and trails system meets the needs of the Yuma community for years to come. These goals are framed within five guiding principals and were based on community input and technical analysis. They include the following:

### Guiding Principle 1: Maintain & Invest in the Existing Park & Recreation System.

- Goal 1. Provide the Yuma community with safe, well-maintained, and proactively managed parks and recreation facilities.
- Goal 2. Design and develop high-quality parks, trails, and recreation facilities throughout Yuma.
- Goal 3: Conserve, enhance, and provide access to natural resource lands for habitat conservation, recreation, and environmental education.

### Guiding Principle 2: Expand Access to Recreation for All.

- Goal 4: Ensure that the parks and recreation system is available, accessible, and varied to best serve the needs of Yuma's diverse population.
- Goal 5: Offer and improve healthy lifestyle choices and opportunities through park and recreation facilities and programs.
- Goal 6: Improve connectivity between parks, neighborhoods and public amenities to achieve a walkable, interconnected park and recreation system to serve the entire community.

### Guiding Principle 3: Respond to Growth & Development.

- Goal 7. Expand the City's park and recreation system through targeted investments to meet the needs of current and future residents and ensure a more equitable distribution and availability of park and outdoor recreation opportunities.

### Guiding Principle 4: Celebrate History, Art & Culture.

- Goal 8: Support the development and preservation of unique facilities which reflect and celebrate the cultural, artistic, and historic integrity of Yuma.

### Guiding Principle 5: Lead for the Future.

- Goal 9: Pursue sustainable funding mechanisms and continue to foster partnerships to improve and broaden the parks and recreation system.
- Goal 10: Encourage and support community engagement and pursue collaborative partnerships to strengthen and grow parks and recreation programs and services.

## Future Investments

The City of Yuma is anticipated to grow to approximately 136,300 residents by 2045, a nearly 43% increase over its 2020 population. Yuma's growth poses critical considerations for the City's park and recreation facilities, and serving existing and future residents will require improvements to existing parks and expansion of the parks, arts, recreation, and trail system.

To meet the strong demand for aquatics and recreation programming, this Plan recommends multiple improvements. The City will conduct more detailed feasibility studies to determine the best approaches to developing more capacity for indoor recreation and aquatics. It is anticipated that the City will build a new, multi-use recreation and aquatic center in east Yuma and that the feasibility studies will provide direction on facility space needs, staffing, operations, partnerships, and funding alternatives. Additionally, the City will consider replacing the Kennedy Pool with a large scale sprayground with multiple dynamic, interactive features to appeal to all age groups and include a smaller neighborhood pool for recreation

and swim lessons. Also, the City will explore options to install additional splash pads or spraygrounds in existing or future parks to improve access to water-based play, and each splash pad should be different in design and serve a variety of age groups.

To ensure existing parks provide desired recreational amenities and offer safe and accessible opportunities to play and gather, the Plan includes investments in the development and improvement of City parks. Renovations and replacements of playgrounds, shade structures, ramadas, and restrooms will provide fresh experiences at many City parks. Renovations to existing sport fields including lighting and fencing, plus the development of new soccer fields, will expand playability, capacity, and utilization of sport fields for local sport teams and leagues. The Plan also proposes smaller improvements throughout the park system to enhance accessibility, safety, and usability of park amenities.

The Plan includes a modest acquisition program to secure strategically located sites for future parks and/or trail corridors. The Plan includes a focused land acquisition program to ensure sufficient land for outdoor recreation as City population grows and fill gaps in park access. To connect Yuma's residents to destinations throughout the City and provide healthy and safe options for walking and bicycling, the Plan proposes development of miles of linear parks and trails, and many of these connections will help fill existing gaps in the path and trail network to make a more connected and comprehensive system.

Overall, the current costs for projects identified in the ten-year Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) total approximately \$200 million. Near-term projects in the CIP focus primarily on

improving existing facilities through timely repairs, replacements, and upgrades to ensure an ongoing, healthy, and safe recreation system for Yuma.

### **Near-Term (1-3 years) Project Recommendations**

- Renovate and replace playgrounds, ramadas & restrooms
- Develop East Mesa Community Park
- Renovate Kennedy Skate Park
- Conduct an Aquatic Facility Feasibility Study
- Conduct an Indoor Recreation Center Feasibility Study
- Develop Kennedy Aquatic Center (large sprayground, neighborhood pool)
- Replace irrigation system and restore turf at the Desert Hills Golf Course and Desert Hills Par 3 Course
- Renovate the heating, air conditioning, and other mechanical systems at the Yuma Civic Center

### **Mid-Term (4-5 years) Project Recommendations**

- Continue to renovate and replace playgrounds, ramadas, and restrooms
- Upgrade athletic field lighting, irrigation, and fencing
- Install additional sport courts and park walking paths
- Replace the heating and air conditioning system at the North End Community Center

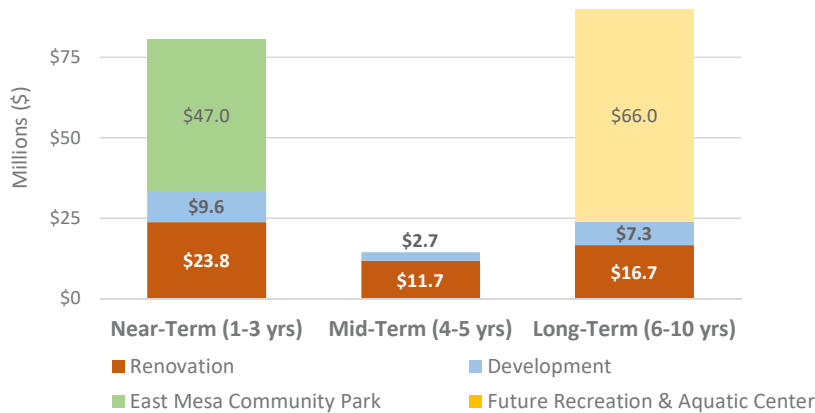
### **Long-Term (6-10 years) Project Recommendations**

- Develop an east Yuma recreation center with aquatics
- Plan and develop additional parks in east Yuma
- Install additional sport courts and dog parks
- Continue to upgrade athletic field lighting, irrigation, and fencing
- Complete additional renovations to art, civic, and community center facilities

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The following chart illustrates the proposed CIP investments by two major project types: renovation and development. Additionally, the chart shows the proposed and significant investments for two specific projects: the East Mesa Community Park and a future indoor recreation and aquatic center.

Figure ES1. 10-Year Capital Improvements Plan Expenditures by Type



A number of strategies exist to enhance and expand park and recreation service delivery for the City of Yuma; however, clear decisions must be made in an environment of competing interests and limited resources. A strong community will be necessary to bring many of the projects listed in this Plan to life, and the Yuma City Council has demonstrated its willingness in the past to support parks and recreation initiatives, new land acquisitions, facility expansions, and a high quality of life.

The recommendations noted in this Plan will trigger the need for funding beyond current allocations and for additional staffing, operations, and maintenance responsibilities. Given that the operating and capital budgets for park services is finite, additional resources may be

needed to leverage, supplement, and support the implementation of proposed objectives, initiatives, and projects. While grants and other efficiencies may help, these alone will not be enough to realize all of the investments requested by the community, and enhanced local funding, additional partnerships, and updated park development fees may be necessary.



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