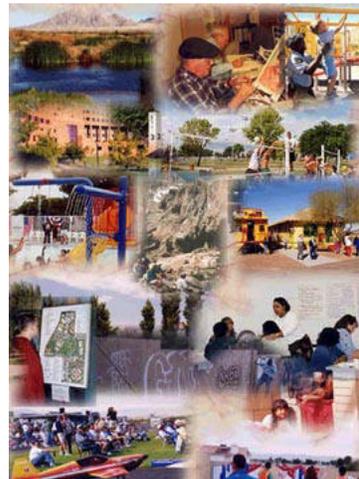


CLARK COUNTY PARKS, TRAILS, AND OPEN SPACE REPORT

Accepted
November 17, 2009



Clark County
Department of Comprehensive Planning
500 South Grand Central Parkway, Suite 3012
PO Box 551741 Las Vegas, NV 89155-1741
(702) 455-4314 Fax: (702) 385-8940
<http://www.accessclarkcounty.com>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

County Commissioners:

Rory Reid, Chair
Susan Brager, Vice-Chair
Lawrence L. Brown, III
Tom Collins
Chris Giunchigliani
Steve Sisolak
Lawrence Weekly

Office of County Manager:

Virginia Valentine, Manager
Jeff Wells, Assistant Manager
Phil Rosenquist, Assistant Manager
George Stevens, Chief Financial Officer
Don Burnette, Chief Administrative Officer

Department of Comprehensive Planning:

Barbara Ginoulas, Director
Rodney Allison, Assistant Director
Nancy Lipski, Planning Manager
Jon Wardlaw, Assistant Planning Manager

Clark County Parks and Recreation Department:

Jane Pike, Acting Director
Steven R. Corry, Assistant Director

Element Team:

Garrett TerBerg, Principal Planner, Lead
Jon Wardlaw, Assistant Planning Manager
Kathleen Staite, Administrative Specialist
Ann Bachir, Management Analyst
Anthony Azua, Senior GIS Analyst
Brandon Bouier, GIS Analyst
Tina Pierson, GIS Technician
Bruce Sillitoe, Planning Manager
Justin Williams, Senior Planner
Kathleen Blakely, Senior Management Analyst
Rose Broderick, GIS Analyst
Ron Gregory, Assistant Planning Manager
Scott Hagen, Senior Planner
Sandra Villatoro, Planner

Element Team Continued:

Dave Carlson, Senior Planner
Vanessa Alderson, Administrative Secretary
Nikki Marshall – Finance
Mindy Meacham – Southern NV Health District
Linda Perri – Clark County School District
Paulette Carolin – Regional Transportation
Commission of Southern Nevada
Johanna Murphy – City of North Las Vegas
Judy Currier – Southern Nevada Water Authority

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee:

Michael Dias, Chairman
Ron Newell, Vice Chair
David Berg
David Chestnut
Kipp Cooper
Greg Esposito
Chris Garvey
Dee Gatliff
Steve Hamilton
Marnie Hoffman
Dan Holt
Peggy Maze Johnson
Kathy Maciula
Deborah MacNeill
Helen Mortenson
Kristine Shattuck
Lisa Tsukiyama
Carroll Varner

TABLE OF CONTENTS

BACKGROUND

Population and Geography	2
Urban Areas (Unincorporated Las Vegas Valley and Laughlin)	2
Rural Area	2
Benefits of Recreation	3
Health	3
Social	3
Economic	3
Recreation & Leisure Time	3

PARKS

Current Conditions	7
Parks Inventory	7
Vacant Land Inventory	7
Current Use and Demand	7
Private Alternatives	8
State and Federal Lands	8
Current Costs	8
Current Funding	8
Forecast	9
Future Park Acreage and Costs	9
Future Funding	10
Strategic Issues	10
Recommendations	10
Work Program	10
Park Policies	11

TRAILS

Current Conditions	13
Trails Inventory	13
Current Use and Demand	13
Alternatives	13
Current Costs	14
Current Funding	14
Forecast	14
Future Trail Miles and Costs	14
Strategic Issues	15
Recommendations	15
Work Program	15
Trail Policies	15

OPEN SPACE

Current Conditions	17
Open Space Inventory	17
Current Use and Demand	17
Alternatives	18
Current Costs	18
Current Funding	18
Forecast	18
Future Open Space Acreage and Costs	18
Strategic Issues	19
Recommendations	19

Work Program	19
Open Space Policies	19

MAPS

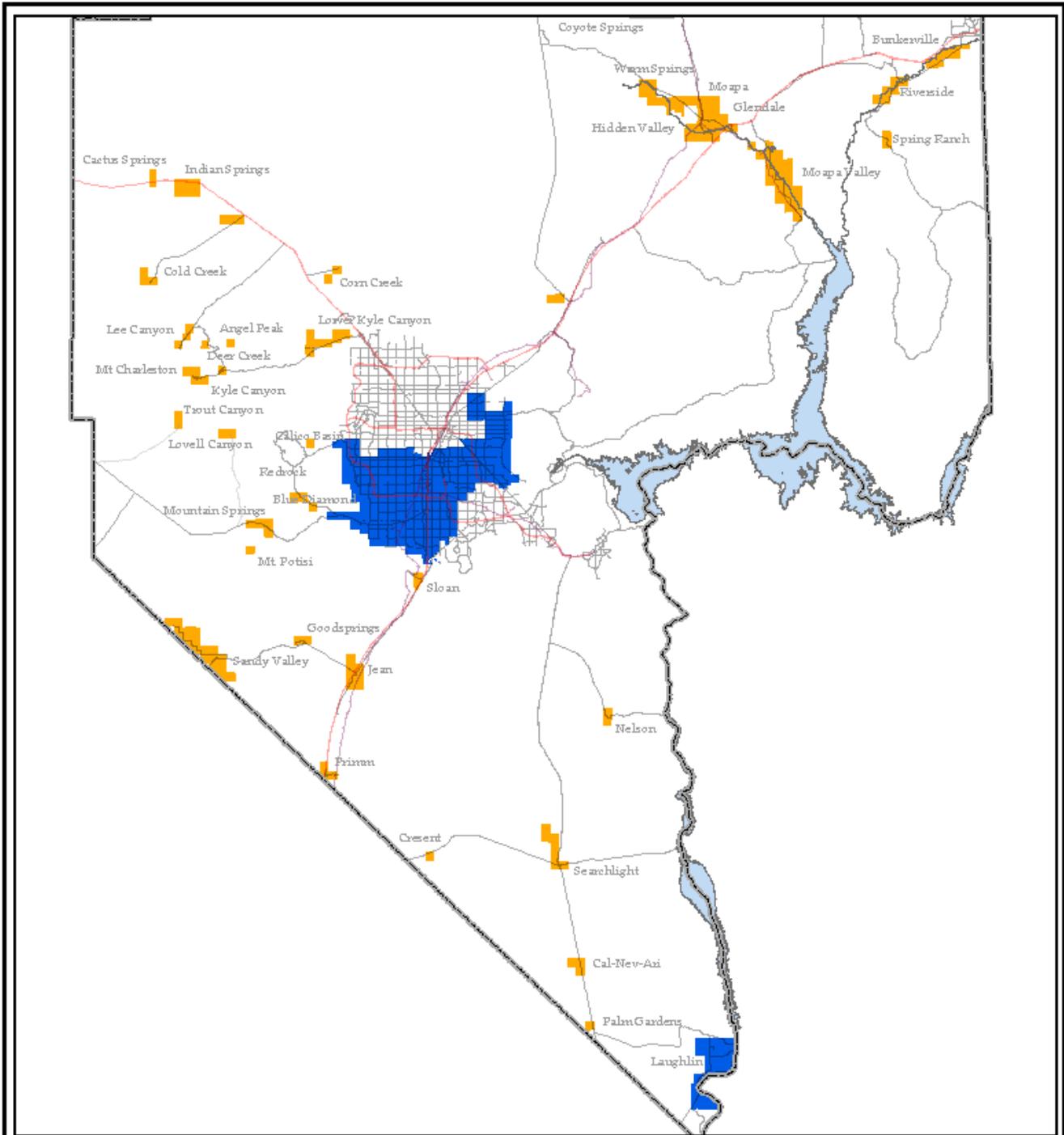
1. Clark County Parks Service Areas	1
2. Clark County Urban Park Sites 2010	5
3. Clark County Rural Park Sites 2010	6
4. Clark County Urban Open Space Sites 2010	16

FIGURES

1. Clark County Resident and Visitor Population 1980 - 2035	2
2. U.S. Average Daily Leisure Hours	3
3. Park Development Past Funding Sources	8
4. Urban Parks by Type 2035	9

TABLES

1. Clark County Urban Park Inventory	7
2. Clark County Rural Park Inventory	7
3. Clark County Urban Park Forecast	9
4. Clark County Rural Park Forecast	9
5. Clark County Trails Inventory	13
6. Clark County Open Space Inventory	17

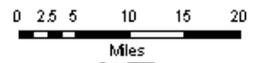


Vicinity Map - No Scale

MAP 1

Comprehensive Planning Parks Planning Service Area Map

- Rural Service Areas
- Urban Service Areas



This information is for display purposes only.
No liability is assumed as to the
accuracy of the data displayed hereon.



BACKGROUND

This document is a high level strategic plan for park and recreation facilities in unincorporated Clark County. The planning horizon is from the present to the year 2035. Analysis for this element will consider service provision, facility use, costs, and funding. Recommendations are included for policy and work program consideration. Throughout this document park, trails, and open space areas are separated by function and all acreages are assigned to the appropriate section of this report.

Providing parks and recreation services is one of the most basic functions of local government. It is well documented that recreational facilities help to promote public health and provide for an important sense of community.¹ The County's first park was opened in 1961 (Camp Lee Canyon), and the Clark County Department of Parks and Recreation was established in 1963. Since that time, the Department has worked to develop parks, trails, and open space to meet the community's needs. Map 1 shows the Department's Urban and Rural Service areas.

The setting for any discussion about public recreation is important. All recreational activities compete for the public's available leisure time. This means that people may choose any of the recreational opportunities provided by the private sector or local, state, and federal governments. The public's choices directly impact what facilities are provided. While Federal and State lands are not included, connections to these areas are important.

Population and Geography

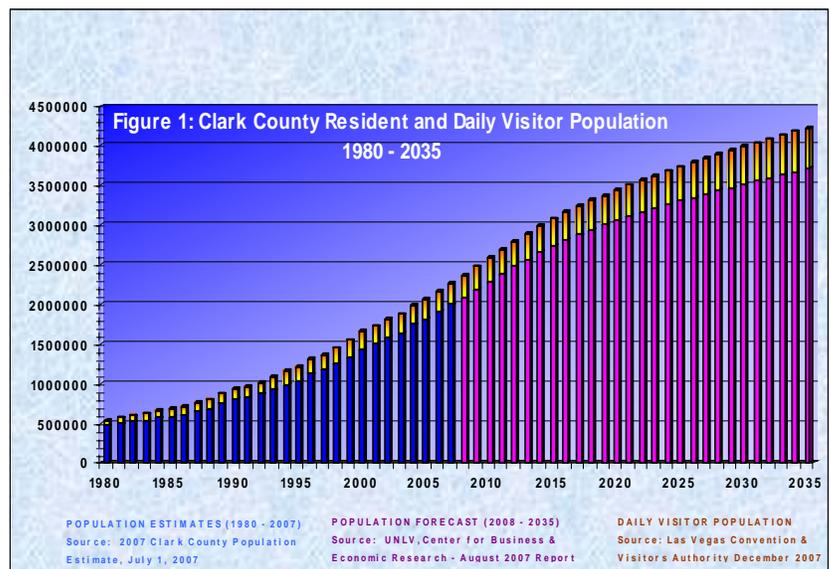
Over the past several decades, Clark County has been one of the fastest growing counties in the United States. By the year 2035, combined resident and average daily visitor population of Clark County is projected to approach 4 million. Figure 1 shows Clark County's projected population through 2035.

Urban Areas (Unincorporated Las Vegas Valley and Laughlin)

The average residential population density is approximately 20 people per acre. Total population of the unincorporated area is 837,458.² Mass transit is available. Private alternatives for leisure time are readily available as well.

Rural Areas

The average residential population density is 1.25 people per acre. Total population is 24,087.³ Mass transit is limited. Commercial alternatives for leisure time are very limited.⁴



¹ Centers for Disease Control, 2007; 1998 Recreational Trails Census Report, Lincoln Nebraska; National Recreation and Park Association, 2007; California Recreational Trails Plan, 2002; National Recreation and Park Association, 2007; Trust for Public Land, 2008.

² Clark County Comprehensive Planning Department, 2008.

³ Clark County Comprehensive Planning Department, 2008.

⁴ This is supported by the 2007 Moapa Valley Community Survey and the 2005 Urban Parks Community Survey. The use rate of those who visit a park at least twice a month in rural areas is approximately four times the urban rate. Source: Clark County Parks and Recreation Department, 2009.

Benefits of Recreation Facilities

Health

According to the Trust for Public Land and Centers for Disease Control, “Studies have shown that when people have access to parks, they exercise more, and...Americans living closer to parks are more likely to exercise regularly, leading to weight loss, increased energy, and better overall health.”¹ Clark County provides a variety of park, trail, and open space facilities located throughout the community for use by its residents.

Social

As stated by the National Recreation and Park Association, “Parks provide a meeting place where community members can develop social ties, and where healthy behavior is modeled and admired. People gather to share experiences, socialize and to build community bonds in common green spaces. These public commons are often the glue that holds the community together and the means to maintaining and improving future positive social interactions.”²

Economic

According to the National Recreation and Park Association, “Park and recreation areas are economic engines that improve the quality of life and make communities livable and desirable for businesses and homeowners.”³

Environmental

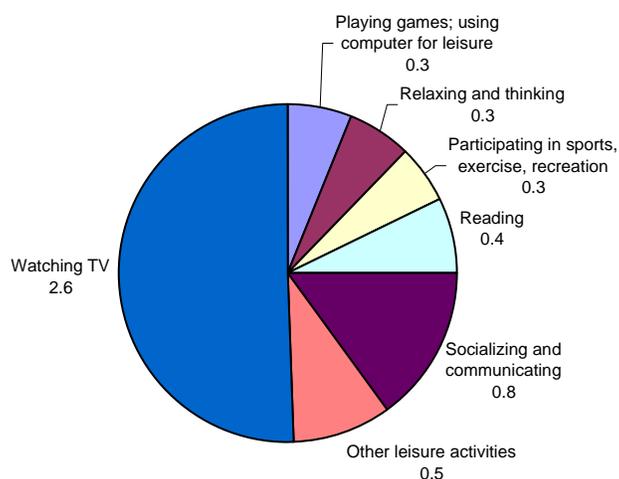
“Public places such as parks are a large contributor to the urban tree canopy. One acre of trees can produce enough oxygen for 18 people and absorb enough carbon dioxide to equal emissions from driving a car 26,000 miles. One tree over a 50-year period will provide \$62,000 worth of air pollution control and generate \$31,250 worth of oxygen. Trees have been proven to absorb airborne pollutants, as an average 12.5” diameter tree stores 897 pounds of carbon per year.”⁴

Recreation & Leisure Time

National statistics show that the average American spends approximately 5 hours per day on leisure activities (see Figure 2 for a breakdown of this time).⁵ Since the majority of those hours are spent inside the home, recreation facilities outside the home compete for the remainder. Local government also competes with the private sector and State and Federal government for that time.

There has been some confusion about the different recreational roles of the private sector, as well as federal, state, and local governments. The private sector provides direct recreational and leisure benefits to willing consumers. The fundamental difference between local public recreation facilities and

Figure 2: U.S. Average Daily Leisure Hours



¹ “No Place to Play”, Trust for Public Land, 2004 and “Increasing Physical Activity: A Report on Recommendations of the Task Force on Community Preventive Services”, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2001

²Richard J. Dolesh et al., “Top 10 Reasons Parks are Important”, National Recreation and Park Association, 2004.

³Richard J. Dolesh et al., “Top 10 Reasons Parks are Important”, National Recreation and Park Association, 2004.

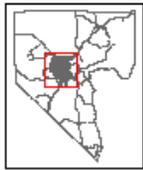
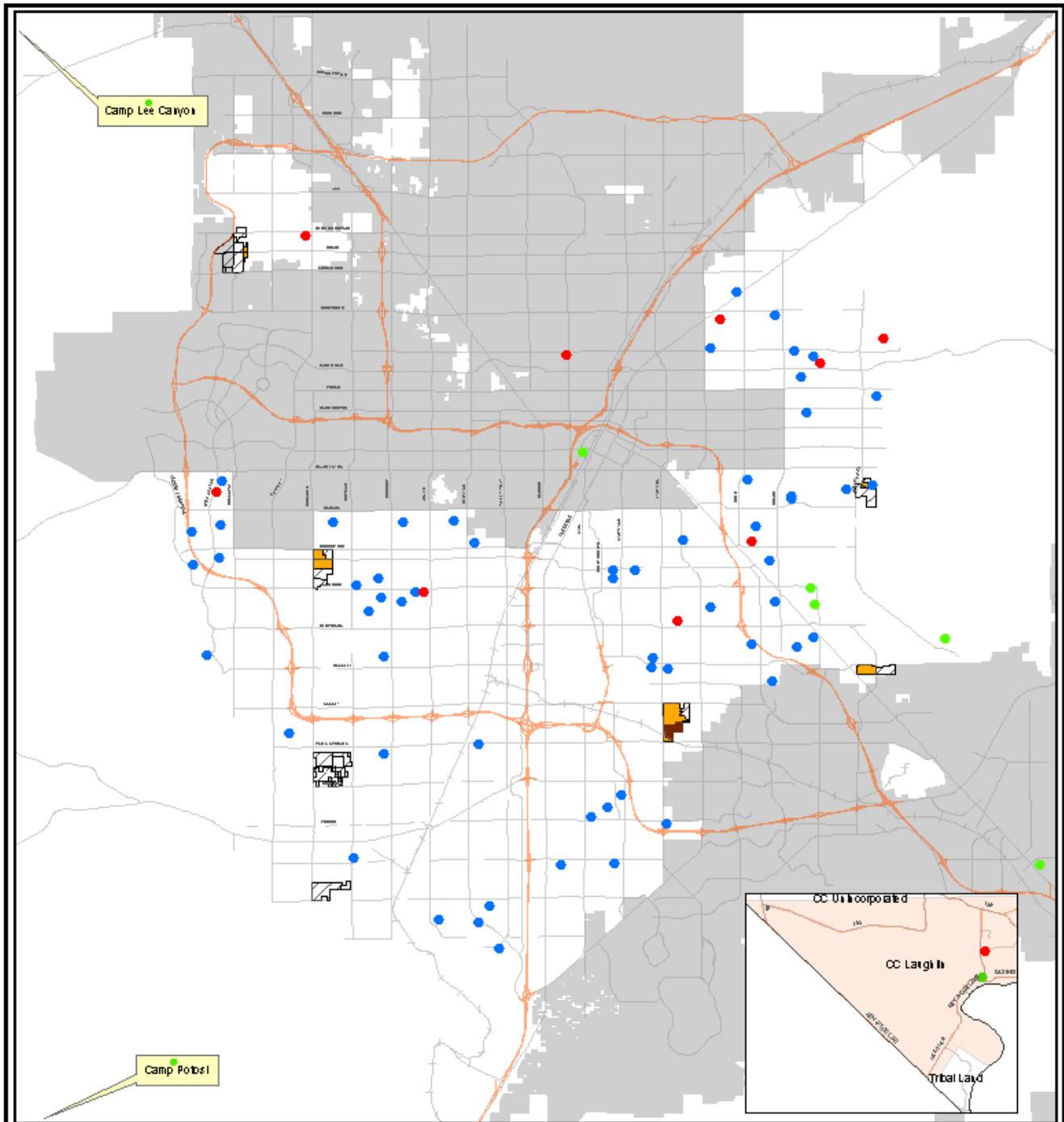
⁴Paul M. Sherer, “The Benefits of Parks”, Trust for Public Land, 2006 and U.S. Forest Service, 2003.

⁵ U. S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2006.

federal/state recreation facilities is the setting for activities. Local facilities are designed for activities in the built environment with convenient access from home, while federal and state facilities are designed to connect people in a great outdoor setting.

Public agencies provide a range of services according to their own missions. Federal and State agencies¹ typically support outdoor recreational uses such as hiking, rock climbing, picnicking, camping, fishing, boating, and hunting on their respective public lands. The cities and Clark County provide more formal settings for group activities such as baseball, football, soccer, tennis, swimming, shooting, and community, cultural and social events.

¹ In Clark County, the primary Federal agencies supporting recreation are the Bureau of Land Management, National Parks Service, and Forest Service. The Nevada Divisions of Parks and of Wildlife are the primary State service providers in Clark County.



Minority Map - No Scale

MAP 2

Comprehensive Planning Clark County Urban Park Sites

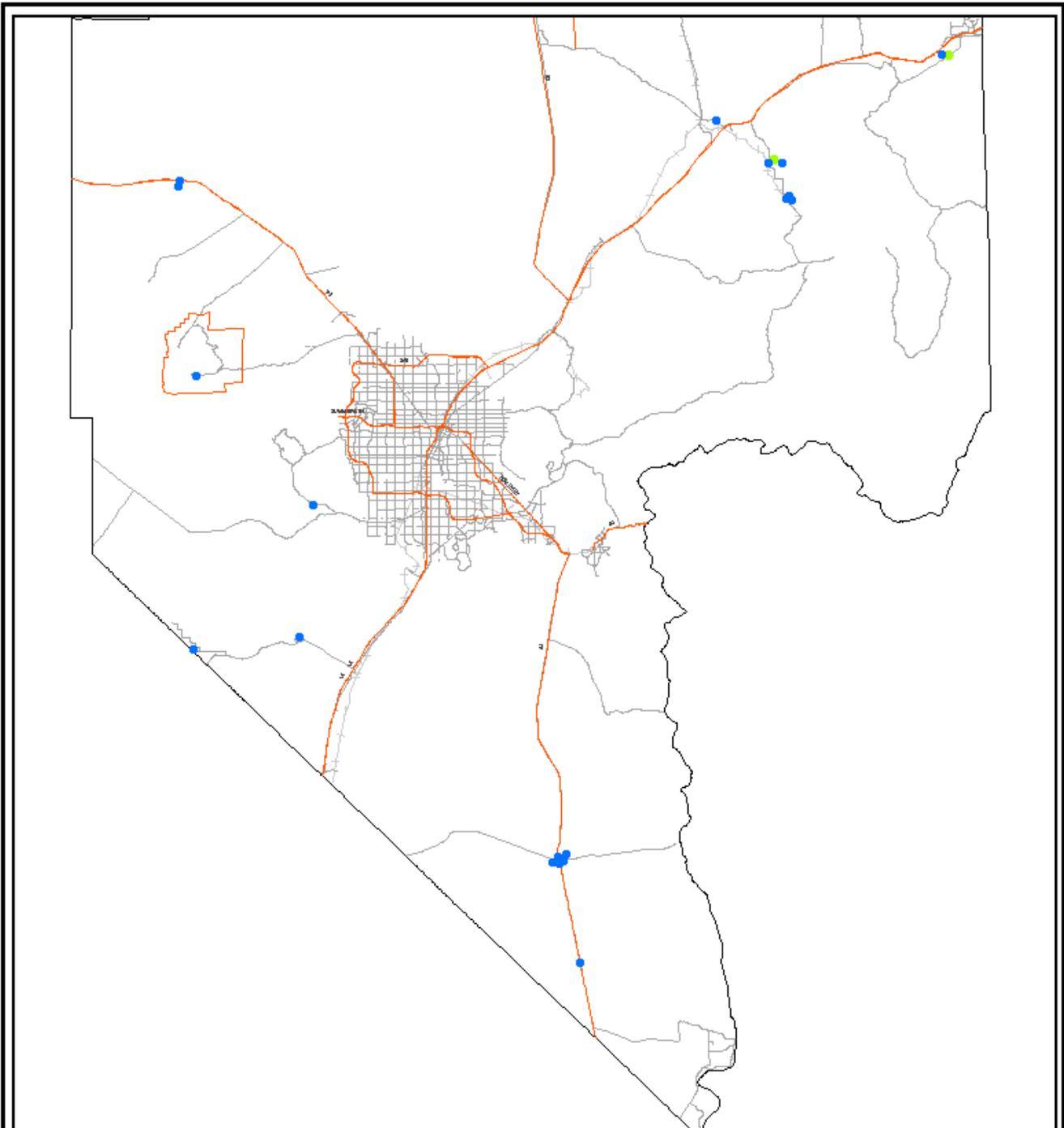
- Regional
- Undeveloped Regional
- Open Space
- Neighborhood
- Community
- Special Use

0 0.4 0.8 1.6 2.4 3.2
Miles

June 2009
This information is for display purposes only.
No liability is assumed as to the
accuracy of the data displayed herein.



Logo: 11/26/09 Urban Park Element APE/Final/11/26/09

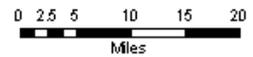


Vicinity Map - No Scale

MAP 3

Comprehensive Planning Clark County Rural Park Sites

- Rural Park
- Special Use



The information is for display purposes only.
No liability is assumed as to the accuracy of the data displayed herein.



Clark County Comprehensive Planning

PARKS

Current Conditions

As already mentioned, Clark County’s recreational needs are currently met by a combination of public and private facilities. While there is some crossover use between jurisdictions, County residents do not pay for City parks. The area’s cities provide recreational facilities for their residents, and those facilities are not considered in this analysis.

Parks Inventory

Clark County provides recreational services to its urban area residents through neighborhood, community, regional and special use parks.

In the rural areas, these services are provided through rural and special use parks. Tables 1 and 2 show developed parks and acreage under construction. Maps 2 and 3 show park locations. The year 2010 park distribution by type: Neighborhood 34%; Community 13%; Regional 30%; Special Use 23%.

Park Types	
Neighborhood Parks	– Moderate recreational opportunities. Best for neighborhood events and small active recreation areas.
Community Parks	– Expanded range of recreational opportunities. Best for organized sports (typically no more than 8 ball fields), small community events/meetings (less than 1,000 people) & medium active recreation areas.
Regional Parks	– Broad range of recreational opportunities. Best for organized sports (more than 8 ball fields), larger community events (more than 1,000 people), large active recreation areas; and large-scale cultural activities.
Rural Parks	– Expanded range of recreational opportunities. Best for small community events & medium active recreation areas. Tailored to meet local needs.
Special Use Parks	– Specialized range of recreational opportunities. Best for organized sports, community events, large active recreation areas; and large-scale cultural activities. Can serve the entire County.

Vacant Land Inventory

Clark County owns or controls of 4,414 vacant acres slated for parks of various types. Approximately 1,602 acres of the total are associated with an existing park. Of the remaining inventory, 2,643 vacant acres are in the urban area, and 169 vacant acres are in the rural area. This analysis assumes that this acreage will be used to help meet future demands.

Current Use and Demand

Park use has increased along with the area’s growth. There were nearly 500,000 museum visitors and over 3 million Participation Events¹ in the Clark County park system from July 2006 to July 2007. However, Clark County currently only measures participation events or activities, not casual park visitors. Planned future community surveys with revised questions from past efforts can help remedy this.² In the meantime, current use data and operational experience can be the basis for future forecasting. Once the facilities currently under construction in the urban service areas are opened in 2010, the delivered level of service will be projected at 2.08 acres per 1,000 residents (estimated at 2.0 acres per 1,000 at the end of 2009).

Table 1: Urban Park Inventory – population 860,614

Park Type	Number	Built Acres ¹
Neighborhood	58	512
Community	10	162
Regional	5	444
Special Use	8	315
Funded	6	359
Total	87	1,792

¹ Includes built acres through 2010, with acres of park area developed for use, programmable and non-programmable space.
Source: Clark County Parks and Recreation Department

Table 2: Rural Park Inventory – population 24,753

Park Type	Number	Built Acres ¹
Rural	19	104
Special Use	2	64
Funded	1	4
Total	22	172

¹ Includes built acres through 2010, with acres of park area developed for use, programmable and non-programmable space.
Source: Clark County Parks and Recreation Department

¹ Each time an individual participates in a single programmed activity it is counted as one Participation Event. For example, if one person plays one baseball game and then goes swimming, it is counted as 2 Participation Events.

² 2007 Moapa Valley Community Survey, 2005 Urban Parks Community Survey

Private Alternatives

Private recreation facilities abound in the urban area and are limited in the rural area. Examples of private recreation facilities include: golf courses, bowling alleys, video arcades, skating rinks, auditoriums, fitness centers, pool halls, miniature golf courses, movie theaters, race tracks, and similar uses. In addition, other activities such as gaming compete for a portion of residents' leisure time. Private mini-parks are also located in Planned Area Developments. Overall, private recreation and other activities compete at some level for residents' leisure time. This substitution results in a somewhat lower use rate for public recreation facilities.

State and Federal Lands

County residents use and pay for both State and Federal parks (open space will be discussed later). Nearby State parks include Valley of Fire and Spring Mountain Ranch (a total of 36,520 acres). Nearby Federal "parks" include Lake Mead, Red Rock, Mt. Charleston/Lee Canyon (a total of 1,694,643 acres with several million visitors per year). State and Federal parks are mainly valued due to a setting in natural conditions. Overall, recreation at State and Federal facilities directly competes at some level for local park use. This competition results in a somewhat lower use rate for local recreation facilities.

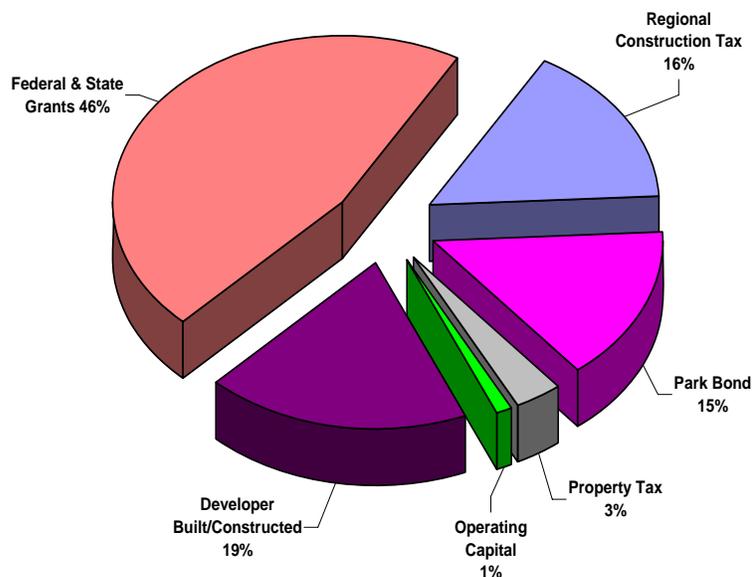
Current Costs

The largest cost associated with existing facilities is Operation and Maintenance (O & M). At some point, even with proper maintenance, facilities will require some amount of rehabilitation. However, rehabilitation can normally be delayed until overuse of the facility creates an unusable situation. The current average O & M cost for parks maintained by the County is \$8,668 per acre (total 2008: urban - \$12,421,244, rural - \$1,456,224). There is no park rehabilitation anticipated for fiscal year 2009-2010.

Current Funding

Figure 3 shows average 2000-2009 funding for Clark County park facilities¹. Funds come mainly from Federal and State grants, developer dedications, and County Funds (includes Park Bond, Property Tax, and Operating Capital). Developer dedications and construction cover a significant portion of non-grant funded park costs. Figure 3 also shows funding from the Residential Construction Tax (RCT). Housing unit growth (population increase) is a driving force for parks funding. The RCT is limited by NRS 278.4983(2) to 1 percent of the value of each new residential building permit up to \$1,000.² In addition, RCT funds can only be used to develop Neighborhood Parks or their equivalent.

Figure 3: Park Development Past Funding Sources



¹ Budget figures and projections are based on current conditions and are not intended to accurately reflect future needs.

² Mobile (Manufactured) Home lots are assessed at 80 percent of the average RCT paid per residential dwelling unit.

Forecast

Future Park Acreage and Costs

The following urban area forecast shows the acreage needed to achieve a Level of Service (LOS) of 2.5 acres per 1,000 population by the year 2035. The rural area forecast shows the acreage to achieve LOS 6.0 by the year 2035. Future costs include acquisition¹, construction², and O & M³. Acquisition costs are not calculated in this analysis, since the existing land supply is considered to be sufficient for the foreseeable future⁴. Tables 3 and 4 show the forecasted acreage for the urban and rural areas through 2035 (additional acres needed is not cumulative). Figure 4 shows the desired park type distribution by acreage in 2035.

Table 3: Urban Area Parks--Gradual increase to LOS 2.5

YEAR	Estimated Total Population	Estimated Uninc. Area Population	Uninc. Population Increase	Proposed LOS	Additional Acres Needed	Total Park Acres	Average Annual Costs*
2010	2,041,063	860,614	0	2.08	0	1,792	
2015	2,253,000	949,977	89,363	2.08	184	1,976	\$ 30,249,217
2020	2,649,000	1,116,950	166,973	2.12	392	2,368	\$ 48,486,151
2025	2,978,000	1,255,673	138,723	2.24	445	2,813	\$ 56,107,100
2030	3,243,000	1,367,410	111,737	2.35	401	3,213	\$ 56,437,063
2035	3,454,000	1,456,378	88,968	2.50	428	3,641	\$ 62,056,415

* Cost projections shown are estimates; includes construction and O&M for existing parks, and does not include rehabilitation.

Figure 4: URBAN PARKS BY TYPE 2035

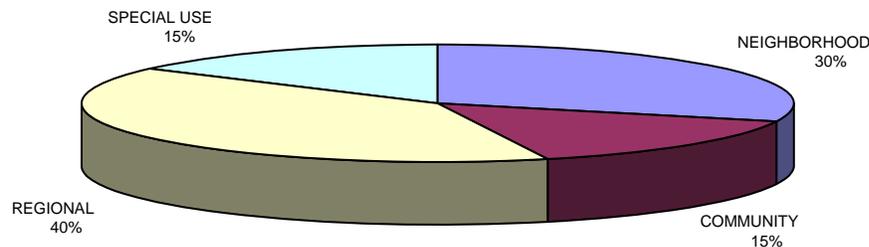


Table 4: Rural Area Parks--LOS 6.0

YEAR	Estimated Total Population	Estimated Uninc. Area Population	Uninc. Population Increase	Proposed LOS	Additional Acres Needed	Total Park Acres	Average Annual Costs*
2010	2,041,063	24,753	0	6.00	0	149	
2015	2,253,000	27,323	2,570	6.00	15	164	\$ 2,831,162
2020	2,649,000	32,126	4,802	6.00	29	193	\$ 4,302,525
2025	2,978,000	36,116	3,990	6.00	24	217	\$ 4,064,767
2030	3,243,000	39,330	3,214	6.00	19	236	\$ 3,806,580
2035	3,454,000	41,888	2,559	6.00	15	251	\$ 3,580,791

* Cost projections shown are estimates; includes construction and O&M for existing parks, and does not include rehabilitation.

¹ Most park land has been acquired from the BLM at virtually no cost. Private land has mainly been acquired through equal value trades (dedications). With the current land inventory, it is unlikely that the County will need to purchase land for parks in the foreseeable future.

² The current average cost for construction of park facilities is \$400,000 per acre, urban and \$500,000 per acre, rural.

³ Clark County Parks and Recreation does not maintain all acreage in the park system (private developers share the task).

⁴ Clark County Parks and Recreation Department, 2009.

Future Funding

Existing land inventory for future parks is believed to be adequate (but not evenly distributed). As previously discussed, additional planning is needed to determine the specific facility and acreage needs for each park type. A funding analysis should be included as a part of that planning process. This is an important point because funding sources are directly linked to the park type.

If park districts are used as a funding mechanism, their boundaries should be optimized to maximize revenue. In addition, it might make it easier to administer if district boundaries coincided with another fundamental tax district. For example, aligning park tax districts with town boundaries may streamline administration of funding and communications at all levels within the County.

Strategic Issues

The following parks facilities issues have been identified for Clark County:

- The park design process could be improved through the use of an integrated system that considers safety (defensible space), health, sustainability, economic efficiency, and trail/open space connectivity.
- Demand for parks is higher in the rural areas because its population does not currently support commercial alternatives.
- Demand for organized recreation/sports is higher in the urban area than current supply.
- Development dedications and the RCT have accounted for approximately 1/3 of total funding in the past ten years for park development. These sources are directly related to local population growth, and cannot be relied upon in times of economic downturn.
- There are missed opportunities for co-location of public facilities at some County parks.
- The current park district structure does not facilitate community-based service levels. Organizing park districts around other administrative boundaries could help communities choose alternative funding/service levels.
- In the past, park facilities were determined by one overall level of service. This practice should be replaced by preparing service plans for each park type as they relate to the needs of the area (urban or rural).

Recommendations

Work Program

- Develop designs that improve public safety (defensible space), sustainability, economic efficiency, and trail/open space connectivity for all new parks, as well as retrofits and additions to existing facilities.
- Work with appropriate agencies to conduct an assessment of urban park demand by park type.
- Prepare long-range facility/funding analysis plans for each park type.
- Evaluate alternative park district alignments periodically.
- Provide up-to-date information about parks (including funding) to the public via the County's website and other media.
- Improve site co-location of non-recreation public facilities, and participation processes with other departments/agencies, including a plan for co-location of facilities.
- Explore public/private partnerships for parks facilities (e.g. "Adopt-a-Park").
- Prepare park location and timing criteria (including sensitive or key growth areas) for approval by the Board of County Commissioners.
- Conduct a survey of unincorporated area residents to determine demand by park type.

Park Policies

- Consider health benefits, impacts, and service population needs in the design, location, and prioritization of County parks.
- Design parks to improve public safety and enforcement (defensible space), sustainability, economic efficiency, and trail/open space connectivity for all new parks, as well as retrofits and additions to existing facilities.
- Use the following park Levels of Service and definitions:
 - Urban – 2.5 acres per 1,000 population by 2035.
 - Rural – 6.0 acres per 1,000 population by 2035.

Urban Park Definitions

Class	Optimal Size	Critical Services and Facilities
Neighborhood	10 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day Use Only • Family/small group activities • Picnics • Exercise • General play
Community	30 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day / Evening Use • Small recreation centers (20,000 square feet optimum size) • Small day/night sports complex (4 fields maximum) • Outdoor play pool or convertible indoor/outdoor lap pool • Community events for less than 1,000 participants
Regional	250 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day / Evening Use • Large recreation centers (20,000+ sq. ft.) • Large day/night sports complex (more than 4 fields) • Aquatic complex with indoor and outdoor pools • Regional events for more than 1,000 people
Special Use	60 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Varies • Fairgrounds • Equestrian facilities • Livestock facilities • Shooting facilities • Nature preserves • Museums • Public Art

Rural Park Definitions

Class	Initial Size	Optimal Size	Critical Services and Facilities
Rural	2.5 acres	10 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day / Evening Use • Small recreation centers (20,000 square feet maximum) • Small day/night sports complex (4 fields maximum) • Outdoor play pool or convertible indoor/outdoor lap pool • Community events for less than 1,000 participants
Special Use (applies to total Rural area)	5 acres	25 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairgrounds • Equestrian facilities • Livestock facilities • BMX Track

- Meet the following park distributions by 2035:
 - Urban: Neighborhood 30%; Community 15%; Regional 40%; Special Use 15%.
 - Rural: Rural Community 80%; Special Use 20%.
- Provide park facilities in an efficient and cost-effective manner, with all potential costs for acquisition, construction, O & M, and park safety factored into the budget for each new park.
- Minimize park operation and maintenance costs through efficient location, design, and construction.
- Support public/private partnerships for provision, maintenance, and operation of park facilities.

- Incorporate sustainability concepts in all new parks, as well as retrofits and additions to existing parks.
- Partner with other jurisdictions and agencies for joint use and co-location of public facilities where practical.
- Ensure park districts effectively meet community service needs.
- Locate and develop parks based on developed criteria.

TRAILS

Current Conditions

During the last decade, local governments have worked with developers to create a recreational trail system. While some trails are located within the urban area of the Las Vegas Valley, many are found on federal and state lands in areas such as Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area, Spring Mountains National Recreation Area, Lake Mead National Recreation Area, Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area and non-designated Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands. While this report does not address trails located on federal or state lands, it will address the local connections to them.

Clark County is responsible for recreational (off-street) trails in the unincorporated urban and rural areas. These types of trails are essentially linear rights-of-way disbursed throughout the community located on public land (or easements) along natural washes, flood control facilities, and public utility corridors which allow people to walk, run, bike, horseback ride, and connect to other recreational uses. It is important that parks are included as stopovers and/or destinations within the trail system. Outside the Las Vegas Valley, there are several trails planned for Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) use.

Trail Types

Multi-Use Trails – Accommodates several types of use including walking, running, and biking.

Park Trails – Trails located within parks.

Equestrian Trails – Accommodates equestrian use in Rural Neighborhood Preservation Areas and/or provide connections to various public use areas on Federal lands.

Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Trails – Accommodates motorized vehicle use.

Trailheads – Provide off-street areas where the general public can access trail systems. They may be as simple as a parking area adjacent to a trail, or can also include more elaborate facilities.

On-Street Facilities – Include bike lanes, sidewalks, and school paths (separated from the actual street). These facilities are part of the transportation network, and not considered a part of this plan.

Trails Inventory

The recreational trails provided by Clark County through 2010 are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Trails Inventory

Trail Type	Built Miles
Urban	
Equestrian	2.5
Multi-Use Non-Equestrian	33.5
Multi-Use Equestrian	1.5
Park	2.0
Rural	
Multi-Use Non-Equestrian	17.0
Multi-Use Equestrian	8.0
Total	64.5

Current Use and Demand

It is difficult to measure trail facility use because typical trails do not have specifically controlled access points. However, indirect feedback from trail users and user groups is positive about the facilities provided to date. Unofficial surveys and on-site visits report that use of established trails is increasing. An official survey would help provide improved use data.

Alternatives

Recreational trails are used by people to satisfy physical and social/environmental needs at the same time. Trails are unique in that they combine the outdoor experience with various levels of physical activity. There are virtually no substitutes for this combined experience. For example, activities such as walking

(running/biking) around malls and using gyms do not offer the outdoor part of the combined hiking experience.

However, there are substitutes for leisure time use. These substitutes are the same as with parks (e.g. golf courses, bowling alleys, video arcades, skating rinks, auditoriums, fitness centers, pool halls, miniature golf courses, movie theaters, race tracks, gaming, and similar uses). This substitution most likely results in a somewhat lower use rate for trails.

The use of trails provided by local governments is directly impacted by trails located on State and Federal lands, as well as trails in private developments such as Summerlin. Private recreation areas and trails are not considered part of the public trail system.

Current Costs

Local governments have located the majority of trails in existing public rights-of-way. Therefore, land acquisition costs are minimized. Construction costs depend on the type of trail. Current known average costs per mile are:

- Multi-Use—\$500,000 to \$1,000,000
- Equestrian—\$100,000 to \$250,000

Since construction of County trails began in the late 1990's, operation and maintenance data is limited. However, it is estimated that annual O & M costs would range between \$6,000 and \$10,000 per mile depending on the type of trail.

Current Funding

Funding for construction of Clark County trails to date has come from the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act (SNPLMA). Funds are also available for trails in the Las Vegas Valley through Question 10 (Q-10) funds for the maintenance of trails at a rate no greater than \$8,000 per mile per year.¹

While SNPLMA funds can be used for the construction of trails, this funding source cannot be used for the operation and maintenance of those trails. Opportunities exist for an Adopt-a-Trail system to allow trail user groups or interested citizens to adopt trails for general maintenance.

Forecast

Future Trails

In early 2007 the Las Vegas Valley Trails Map was adopted. The map includes roughly 120 miles of County trails that are planned for the Las Vegas Valley and the map is periodically updated as new trail opportunities become available. It is projected that substantial progress will be made over the next 25 years and most of the trails shown on the Map should be completed by 2035.

The construction of future trail segments will depend on available funding. The primary funding source continues to be SNPLMA. Because this funding varies from year to year, the County will have to explore public and private partnerships for funding and developing future trail facilities.

¹ Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada, 2009.

Strategic Issues

The following trails facilities issues have been identified for Clark County:

- The trail design process could be improved through the use of an integrated system that considers safety and security (defensible space), health, sustainability, economic efficiency and park/open space connectivity.
- Operation and Maintenance responsibilities for all trails should be clearly defined.
- Priorities for trail construction should be established.
- While SNPLMA funds can be used for the construction of trails, other funding sources are lacking for the operation and maintenance of those trails.
- Trail security and legal liability has not been fully considered during trail location and design.

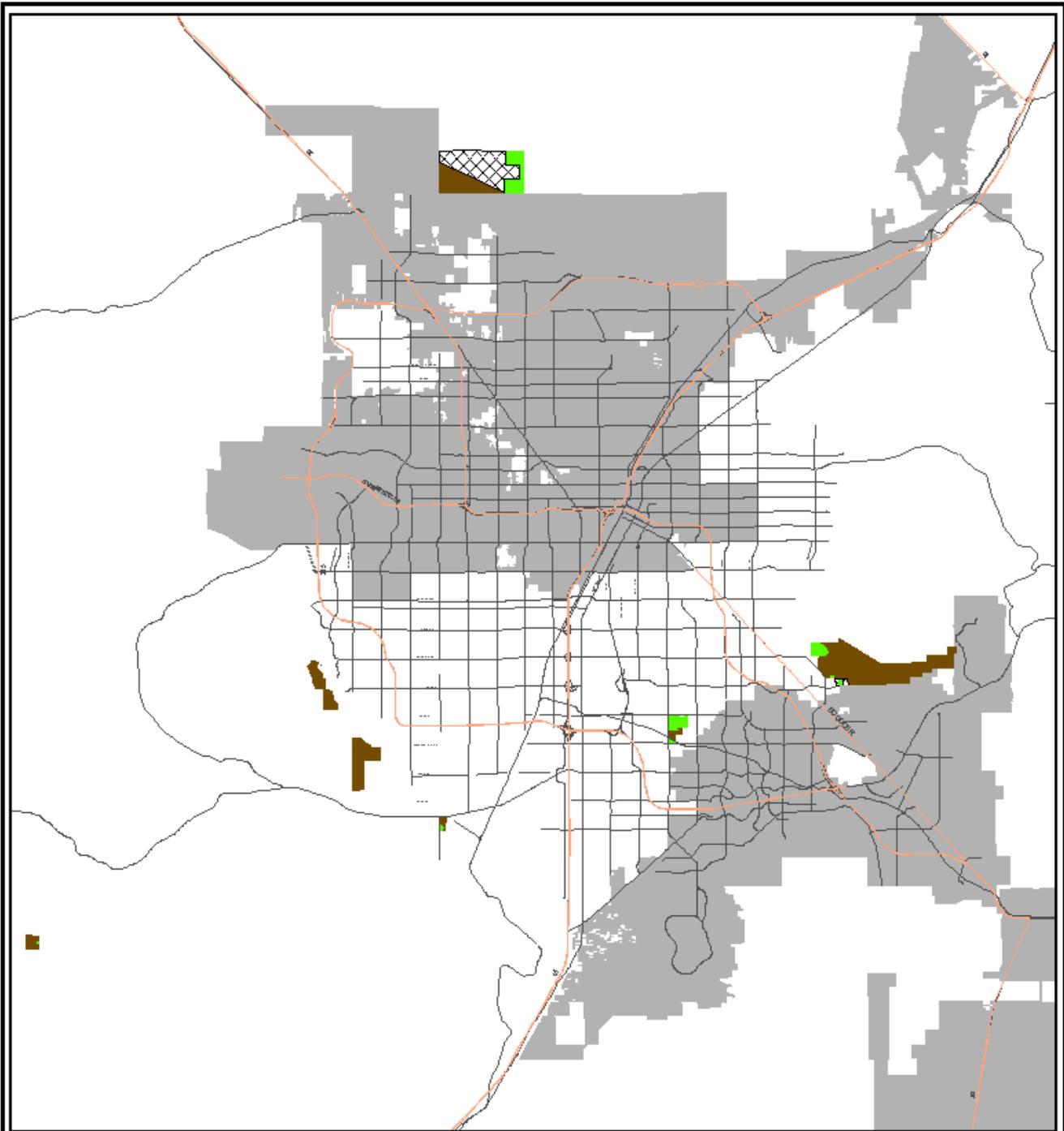
RECOMMENDATIONS

Work Program

- Prepare long-range facility and funding plans for each trail type.
- Adopt design standards for each trail type.
- Conduct a survey of unincorporated area residents to determine demand by trail type.
- Provide up-to-date information about trails to the public via the County's website and other media.
- Share and coordinate trails information with local, state, and federal partners.
- Explore public/private partnerships for funding and development of trail facilities.
- Prepare updated trail location and timing criteria for approval by the Board of County Commissioners.
- Work with communities and State and Federal agencies to plan and construct OHV trails where appropriate.

Trail Policies

- Trails should be located to connect existing parks and recreational facilities.
- Consider health benefits, impacts, and service population needs in the design, location, and prioritization of County trails.
- Recreational trails should be located on public land (or easements) along natural washes, flood control facilities, and public utility corridors.
- Locate trailheads to encourage multiple use and access to public lands.
- Provide interconnectivity to trails in other municipalities and federal lands where appropriate.
- Locate equestrian trails to promote connection to similar facilities on federal lands.
- In urban RNP areas, locate equestrian trails on streets built to rural standards and discourage development of equestrian trails on arterial and collector streets.
- Minimize trail operation and maintenance costs through efficient location, design, and construction.



Neighboring Map - No Scale

MAP 4

Comprehensive Planning Clark County Urban Open Space Sites

- Existing Park Site
- Open Space
- Undeveloped



June 2009
This information is for display purposes only.
The liability is assumed as to the
accuracy of the data displayed herein.



Google Earth/Clark County GIS/Clark County GIS/Clark County GIS

OPEN SPACE

Current Conditions

The Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition (SNRPC) defines open space as: “Land that remains largely unaltered by urban activities...”¹ Note: open space is not vacant land being held in anticipation of future development.

Clark County uses intense and non-intense methods to provide open space. Through its intense methods, the County administers (owns, leases, or secures rights-of way) the land and develops appropriate facilities. In non-intense management, the County uses planning, zoning, and education to encourage appropriate land uses. The County takes these actions to protect people and natural processes such as: aquifer recharge, surface water filtration, habitat preservation², archaeological and paleontologic resource protection, hazards mitigation, flood control, or air pollutant reduction. Open space is also provided to protect aesthetic resources and to provide informal recreation (off-trail walking and hiking).³

Intense management functions are typically performed in areas adjacent to existing development on public land (or easements). Non-intensive methods are practiced throughout the unincorporated County. Clark County also supports the provision of private open space areas. Open space and habitat areas owned and maintained by non-profit organizations are not included in this element.

Open Space Types	
Mountain and Desert Backdrop Open Space	– Preserves viewscales and wild lands.
Corridor Open Space	– Transitional area between the Backdrop and urban areas.
Wash & Drainage Open Space	– Preserves and enhances drainages with attractive landscaping and trails where appropriate.
Regionally Significant Open Space	– Preserves environmentally sensitive lands, high value habitats, and areas of scenic and geologic value.
Park Special Use Open Space	– Areas designated within active parks.

Open Space Inventory

With the creation of the 2,500 acre Wetlands Park in 1995, Clark County began to acquire and develop open space. In 2003, Clark County acquired the 1,200 acre Gypsum Ridge Open Space area. Prior to that, open space was considered only a component within active use parks; for example the dune area in Sunset Park. Table 7 shows the 2010 Clark County public open space inventory (note: only the open space part of any park is included). In addition, open space on private land is not considered part of the public open space system.

Table 6: Open Space Inventory

Open Space Type	Acres
Park Special Use	3,063
Regionally Significant	3,666
Total	6,729

¹ Includes open space acreage through 2010.
Source: Clark County Comprehensive Planning Department

¹ SNRPC Regional Open Space Plan, 2006.

² Habitat preservation is addressed by the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) and implementation measures.

³ See Clark County Environmentally Sensitive Lands Report, 2004 for additional information.

Current Use and Demand

Since the function of open space centers around aesthetics, conservation, and informal recreation (off-trail walking and hiking), use rates are not applicable. However, feedback from citizens and interest groups is positive about the facilities provided to date. An official opinion survey could help educate and provide guidance regarding additional acquisitions.

Alternatives

There are no land use alternatives or substitutes for open space.

Current Costs

Due to transfers of open space from other public agencies, acquisition costs are minimized. Construction costs depend on the facilities placed within open space areas. Since acquisition of County open space began in 1995, operation and maintenance experience is limited; thus, O & M costs are as yet undetermined. The Parks and Recreation Department does not fund the operation and maintenance of relatively remote unimproved open space (i.e. Gypsum Ridge). Operation and maintenance of open space has not resulted in any significant cost issues to date.

Current Funding

Funding for Clark County open space comes from the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act (SNPLMA). In addition, minor funding comes from the County's General Fund, developer contributions and grants.

While SNPLMA funds can be used for the acquisition of open space, this funding source cannot be used for operation and maintenance costs.

Forecast

Future Open Space Acreage and Costs

Clark County, in association with other jurisdictions, completed the SNRPC Regional Open Space Plan, with primary project planning area in and around the Las Vegas Valley. In addition, the Las Vegas Valley Perimeter Open Space Plan was developed as an implementation phase of the overall regional plan. This plan identified and assigned open space values to all existing and potential major land areas at the urbanizing periphery of the Las Vegas Valley, including federal lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) currently outside the congressionally designated disposal boundary. In the future, the disposal boundary could be expanded. It is up to the decision makers in these jurisdictions to determine if lands will be designated as open space so they may be held in trust. This action is important to preserve future opportunities and minimize future costs of acquisition.

The importance of open space connections and/or wildlife corridors from the rural to urbanized areas will continue to be assessed. In the future, other components of the plan will address large tracts containing high value natural habitat and may be used through the Desert Conservation Program and environmental protection groups. The County does not anticipate significant public land transfers within the next few years. This situation is subject to change as opportunities present themselves, but from a budgetary standpoint there will not be a significant need to use County resources for acquisitions within the next 5 years.

In rural areas, Clark County is developing a comprehensive open space plan. The plan focuses on BLM disposal lands that are adjacent to towns within rural areas. The character of the plan will be very different from its urban counterpart.

Strategic Issues

The following open space facilities issues have been identified for Clark County:

- The open space designation process could be improved through the use of an integrated system that considers safety and security (defensible space), health, sustainability, economic efficiency, and park/trail connectivity.
- Operation and Maintenance costs and responsibilities for all open space should be clearly defined.
- Acquisition of federal lands will require significant steps to transfer into County ownership.
- Priorities for open space acquisition should be established.
- Cooperative funding for regional open space facilities is difficult to obtain. A regional group to oversee those functions could improve effectiveness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Work Program

- Prepare long-range facility/funding analysis plans for each open space type.
- Continue to look for opportunities to acquire open space areas in accordance with adopted policies.
- Provide up-to-date information about open space to the public via the County's website and other media.
- Share and coordinate open space information with local, state, and federal partners.
- Show open space areas in the County's land use plans.
- Prepare open space location and timing criteria for approval by the Board of County Commissioners.
- Conduct an official opinion survey to help educate and provide guidance regarding additional acquisitions.
- Prepare open space plans for specific areas of the County.

Open Space Policies

- Consider health benefits, impacts, and service population needs in the design, location, and prioritization of County open space areas.
- Recreational open space should be located on public land (or easements).
- Provide interconnectivity to open space in other municipalities and federal lands where appropriate.
- Limit motorized vehicle use on open space in air quality non-attainment areas.
- Minimize open space operation and maintenance costs through efficient location.
- Indicate open space areas in County Land Use Plans.
- Encourage interconnection of open space with trail systems and public park facilities where possible.
- Pursue funding sources and/or authority to acquire and maintain open space.
- Open space lands should be acquired to serve one or more of the following specific purposes: conservation of natural resources and environmental features; provision of opportunities for outdoor education and recreation; shaping of the urban form; provision of trail corridors; and public protection from natural hazards.
- Neighborhood open space areas should tie into other open spaces to create an open space network.
- Consider support for a regional authority to manage and fund the operation and maintenance of open space facilities.