

CHAPTER 9 OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

VISION STATEMENT

Open space within Camp Verde will protect sensitive natural areas and scenic vistas and provide a variety of recreational opportunities. Open space will be considered in future development as a means to preserve the community's rural character by providing buffers between different types of land uses and by working with developers to designate portions of new development as natural areas.

STATE REQUIREMENTS

The Open Space Element of the Town of Camp Verde's General Plan is mandated by Arizona Revised Statutes, which stipulates that communities larger than 2,500 inhabitants include an Open Space Element.

Arizona law further states that the Open Space Element specifically include:

- A comprehensive inventory of open space areas, recreational resources and designations of access points to open space areas and resources
- An analysis of forecasted needs, policies for managing and protecting open space areas and resources and implementation strategies to acquire additional open space areas and further establish recreational resources
- Policies and implementation strategies designed to promote a regional system of integrated open space and recreational resources and a consideration of any existing regional open space plans.

DEFINITIONS

Open space is defined by ARS as "land that is generally free of land uses that would jeopardize the conservation and open space values of the land or development that would obstruct the scenic beauty of the land."

The Growing Smarter Legislation stipulates that private land or state trust land cannot be designated as open space, recreation, conservation or agriculture unless the municipality receives the written consent of the landowner or allows at least one residential dwelling per acre.

Open space is described as:

Developed: Areas that may include turf-ed-parks, schools, golf courses, horse staging areas, trails, picnicking areas and bike paths and pathways.

Natural Environment: Includes forestland, riparian areas, wilderness areas, preserves, protected sites, and topographical areas that are unsuitable for development including steep slope and flood plain areas.

Limited Development: Scenic-drive corridors, vista corridors, and public recreational amenities that minimally impact the natural environment.

Agricultural Land: Lands that are used or can be used principally for raising crops, fruits, grains and similar farm products. For purposes of the general plan, Ranch land is also included in this category.

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INVENTORY

The list below meets ARS by citing an inventory of open space areas, recreational resources and designations of access points to open space areas and resources within and bordering the Town that are available for public access and/or use at the adoption of this General Plan. This list may not be all-inclusive.

Arturo Circle Neighborhood Park – ½ acre
Beasley Flat – Verde River Access Point
Butler Park – 7 acres
Camp Verde School District Fields and Playgrounds
Clear Creek Campground and Staging area
Clear Creek Cemetery and Church
Clear Creek Floodway in Verde Lakes
Copper Canyon Equestrian Trailhead (General Crook Trail)
Forest Service Airstrip and surrounding area
Fort River Caves River Access/Pathway
Fort Verde State Park, Parade ground and picnic area – 11 acres
Grief Hill Trailhead on Cherry Road
Heritage Pool
Heritage Skate Park
Jackson Flat
Middle Verde Cemetery
National Forest Service Prehistoric Salt Mine
Pecan Lane Pathway
Quarterhorse Pathway
Salt Mine Road Pathway
Sunnyside Park – 7 acres
Town Complex Soccer Field and Playground – 2 acres
Trail 119A by Overlook Acres
White Bridge Riverfront Park – 2 acres developed, 10 acres total
White Cliffs from sewer ponds to refuse transfer station
Wingfield Mesa

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FORECASTED NEED

Camp Verde Recreation Inventory and Evaluation*

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Goal/population**</u>	<u>Standard</u>	<u>Inventory</u>	<u>(Deficiency) or Surplus</u>
Amphitheater	1/ 25,000	0	0	0
Basketball – outdoor	1/ 2,500	4	4	0
Basketball – indoor	1/ 10,000	1	1	0
Baseball – - lighted	1/ 5,000 1/ 10,000	2 1	1 0	(1) (1)
Softball –lighted	1/ 2,500	4	1	(3)
Practice fields	1/ 5,000	2	2	0
BMX	1/ 25,000	0	0	0
Equestrian Arena	1/Community	1	1 (private)	0
Football	1/ 3,000	3	1	(2)
Hiking/walking/biking trails***	1/ 2,500	4	205.9	201.9
Horseback Riding***	1/ 1,000	10	205.9	195.9
Multi-use recreation facility	1/ 10,000	1	1	0
Picnicking – tables - shelters	1/ 500 1/ 2,000	20 5	21 5	1 0
Playground	1/ 2,500	5	3	(2)
River access points (designated)	1/ 2,000	5	3	(2)
Skateboard park	1/ 25,000	0	1	1
Soccer	1/ 3,000	8	3	(5)
Swimming	1/ 25,000	1	1	0
Tennis	1/ 5,000	2	1	(1)
¼ mile track	1/ 7,500	1	1	0
Volleyball	1/ 5,000	2	2	0

**During the Council's Public Hearing to Adopt the 2003 General Plan, racquetball courts were cited, as a community need.*

***Goal/Population determined by the Camp Verde Parks & Recreation Commission and based on an estimated 2002 population of 10,000.*

****Approximately 17 miles, located within the Town's boundaries, that do not include historic trails or non-dedicated trails on paved roads unless there is a marked area specifically for non-motorized use.*

A. GOAL: DEVELOP RIVERSIDE PARKS AND TRAILS TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO THE Verde River AND OTHER NATURAL WATERCOURSES.

Implementation Strategy:

- A. 1. Develop and implement a system of access and recreational trails associated with the Verde River and other natural watercourses and historic ditches.
- A. 2. Work with the Game and Fish Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and other private organizations to obtain voluntary conservation easements and development rights from landowners to secure access, protect sensitive areas from further development and to provide trail corridors.

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- A. 3 Purchase from willing sellers, high priority lands needed for riverside parks and trails.
- A. 4. Coordinate with Game and Fish Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other appropriate agencies or organizations to evaluate and maintain habitat for endangered species.
- B. GOAL: WORK COOPERATIVELY WITH THE LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM, U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE, GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT, AND PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS TO DEVELOP AND CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS THAT EXPLAIN THE VALUE OF RIPARIAN AREAS.**

Implementation Strategy:

- B. 1. The Town Parks and Recreation staff will work with schools, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Game and Fish Department, and other organizations to develop and carry out educational programs that enhance public understanding of open space values and build support for open space preservation.
- B. 2. The Town will work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Game and Fish Department, and other organizations to promote use of riparian areas for birding festivals and other similar recreational and educational events.
- C. GOAL: WORK COOPERATIVELY WITH OTHER VERDE VALLEY COMMUNITIES, U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE, GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS TO PREPARE AND IMPLEMENT A COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL OPEN SPACE PLAN THAT PROTECTS CRITICAL OPEN SPACE IN CAMP VERDE.**

Implementation Strategy:

- C.1. The town will work cooperatively with other jurisdictions, entities and private citizens in striving to have a regional open space plan and map indicating areas for desired preservation space completed by 2007.
- C. 2. Work with governmental agencies, private groups and non-profits to encourage the acquisition of Desired Preservation Space through voluntary sale or donation of properties or easements.
- C. 3. The Town will work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Game and Fish Department to assure that sensitive endangered species are afforded necessary protections.
- C. 4. The Town will work with the U.S. Forest Service to assure that National Forest lands crucial to preserve important view sheds, maintain sensitive natural areas, historic areas, and wildlife corridors are identified and protected.
- C. 5. Town to work with neighboring legislative bodies to preserve property between entities by utilizing conservation easements, acquisition of development rights, grants and other funding sources.

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- D. GOAL: INSTITUTE A COMPREHENSIVE OPEN SPACE PLAN THAT DESIGNATES AREAS FOR PERMANENT RETENTION AS DESIRED PRESERVATION SPACE.**

Implementation Strategy:

- D. 1. Prepare and implement a riparian overlay zone.
- D. 2. Establish community standards that ensure voluntary preservation of the natural environment and open space character of the Town.
- D. 3. Require developers to provide an open space plan.
- D. 4. Require new development to provide a buffer between residential property and the new development – be it commercial, industrial or higher density residential.
- D. 5. Designate a corridor system of recreation, trails and educational features related to historical uses and people.
- D. 6. Work with the Forest Service to develop agreements to cooperatively designate selected NF Land in and around the Town as desired preservation space.

- E. GOAL: IDENTIFY AREAS THAT ARE SUBJECT TO NATURAL HAZARDS AND ESTABLISH ZONING TO PREVENT INCOMPATIBLE DEVELOPMENT AND TO PROVIDE FOR PUBLIC SAFETY.**

Implementation Strategy:

- E. 1. Designate as open space/recreational areas natural wash areas that are subject to seasonal flooding.
- E. 2. Locate and identify flood plain, landslide areas, and steep slopes.
- E. 3. Establish guidelines for development near natural washes and flood plains.
- E. 4. Limit the use of public funds to restore properties that are damaged within the hazardous areas.
- E. 5. Encourage the relocation/removal of residences in areas that are prone to flooding in flood plains and washes.
- E. 6. Acquire, through voluntary efforts, conservation easements and development rights, to property in areas prone to flooding to provide natural riparian habitat.
- E. 7. Develop and implement slope, ridge, natural drainage, and vegetation and wildlife corridor protection guidelines.

- F. GOAL: PROTECT EXISTING “WILD LAND” CHARACTER OF NATIONAL FOREST AND STATE TRUST LANDS.**

Implementation Strategy:

- F. 1. Maintain existing zoning of one dwelling per two-acres for NF Land and State Trust Land within the Town’s boundaries.
- F. 2. Require land survey and marked boundaries for private development along Forest Service and State Trust boundaries prior to construction.
- F. 3. Maintain open space buffers on private lands between NF Lands and private development to prevent encroachments and conflicts with public lands.
- F. 4. Negotiate Inter-Governmental Agreements with U.S. Forest Service and State Land Department to help administer National Forest and State Trust land within Town’s boundaries, including delegation of enforcement authority to local police.

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F. 5. Develop partnerships and coordinate with volunteer organizations and other groups that would assist in management activities and preservation of NF lands.

G. GOAL: PROVIDE FUNCTIONAL OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL AREAS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY FOR ALL RESIDENTS OF THE TOWN, SECURING PERMANENT INTERCONNECTED OPEN SPACE SYSTEM TO PROVIDE VISUAL AND FUNCTIONAL LINKS BETWEEN PARKS, SCHOOLS AND NEIGHBORHOODS.

Implementation Strategy:

- G. 1. Formulate and update a Town Trails plan on a regular basis.
- G. 2. Develop and implement requirements for new development to dedicate trails and trail heads within its property and along its borders.
- G. 3. Continue documenting existing trails and assure their public accessibility.
- G. 4. Provide for rights-of-way within easements designated for hiking, walking, bicycling, jogging, equestrian or other non-motorized forms of transportation to assure adequate opportunities for active and passive recreation for residents of all ages.
- G. 5. Enhance existing street frontages and rights-of-way for multi-use corridors.
- G. 6. Promote design considerations in open space areas that include low maintenance, natural design, low-water consumption, public safety, drainage management and multi-use.
- G. 7. Provide the maximum level of access consistent with the ADA and state laws.
- G. 8. Develop an equitable means for all developers to participate in the provision of open space and recreational needs of the community, ensuring the integration of existing and proposed trail-way systems and parks into all development.
- G. 9. Town and National Forest to financially coordinate trail mapping, building and trail relocating projects

H. GOAL: ACCOMMODATE A BROAD RANGE OF RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES ACCESSIBLE TO ALL NEIGHBORHOODS.

Implementation Strategy:

- H. 1. Develop community parks of three acres or more that are combined with other jurisdictions and/or organizations to minimize the cost of maintenance through joint use, accessible to all neighborhoods.
- H. 2. Promote the preservation of land for parks and recreational uses along the Verde River and along other natural watercourses and in close proximity to existing neighborhoods, by utilizing voluntary conservation easements, acquisition of development rights, grants and other funding sources.
- H. 3. Coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Game and Fish Department to develop/improve sport fishing of the Verde River.
- H. 4. Continue to cooperate with the Forest Service to gain additional improved access to the Verde River, Beaver Creek, and West Clear Creek for recreational activities.

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- H. 5. Establish guidelines to require new development to include mini-parks providing active and passive recreational opportunities such as barbecues, ramadas, picnic tables, children's playgrounds, horseshoes, volleyball areas, etc. in medium to high-density residential zones and encourage property owners associations to maintain existing or create new neighborhood/pocket parks.
- H. 6. Coordinate efforts with surrounding agencies to encourage development of large joint-use regional parks. Regional parks shall support, protect and enhance a comprehensive multi-use trail system, including equestrian, walking paths and other types of trails required to meet the needs of the community, while providing access to historic/proposed trail ways.
- H. 7. All parks and facilities will be designed, constructed and maintained in a safe, economical, aesthetic and functional manner.
- H. 8. Work closely with appropriate agencies and other organizations to protect, enhance and provide access to historic and proposed trail ways.
- H. 9. Annually review and update the parks and recreation 5-year master plan.
- H. 10. Dedicate a portion of the sales tax revenue to open space acquisition/preservation.
- H. 11. Coordinate with Arizona State Parks for funding opportunities and other partnership opportunities.

I. GOAL: PROVIDE WILDLIFE CORRIDORS TO ALLOW FOR THEIR NATURAL MIGRATION AND FEEDING PRACTICES THAT WILL HELP MAINTAIN HEALTHY AND DIVERSIFIED SPECIES.

Implementation Strategy:

- I. 1. Designate as natural open space, areas identified by governmental agencies and environmental organizations for habitat preservation.
- I. 2. Develop policies to prevent the enclosure of natural environment within town boundaries to maintain wildlife migration patterns.

J. GOAL: DESIGNATE HISTORIC ROUTES WITHIN THE TOWN'S BOUNDARIES.

Implementation Strategy:

- J. 1. Utilize the Trails Committee's work on designating historic routes.
- J. 2. Work with property owners to maintain trails/routes.

K. GOAL: ADD AGRICULTURAL USE PROPERTY TO THE TOWN'S OPEN SPACE INVENTORY.

Implementation Strategy:

- K. 1. Offer incentives to developers or property owners, who designate a portion of their property for agricultural use.
- K. 2. Encourage agricultural landowners to participate in federal and state programs that are designed to protect the land as open space.