

# apple valley

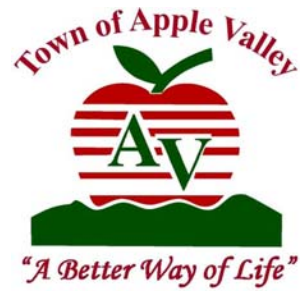


## parks and recreation master plan



Community Needs Assessment | February 2011





# **PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN**

## ***Community Needs Assessment***

**FINAL**

**February 2011**

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## INTRODUCTION

In February 2010, the Town of Apple Valley began updating its Parks and Recreation Master Plan to obtain community supported directions for developing a diverse and integrated park and recreation system. This Plan reflects the community's desire for high quality parks, recreation facilities, and programs, which are integral elements of a livable community.

As a critical part of this planning effort, the Community Needs Assessment (CNA) identifies needs for park land, recreation facilities, special events and programs in Apple Valley. This document presents the methods, data and trends used to analyze community needs, along with key findings from the analysis. More specifically, this document presents:

- An analysis of park land needs, based on a GIS access analysis and evaluation of comparable communities;
- An analysis of facility needs, including needs for basic recreation amenities and specialized facilities;
- An overview of programming needs, including specific needs for targeted populations, program service areas, and programming space; and
- Key findings and conclusions from the needs assessment.

### Purpose of the Needs Assessment

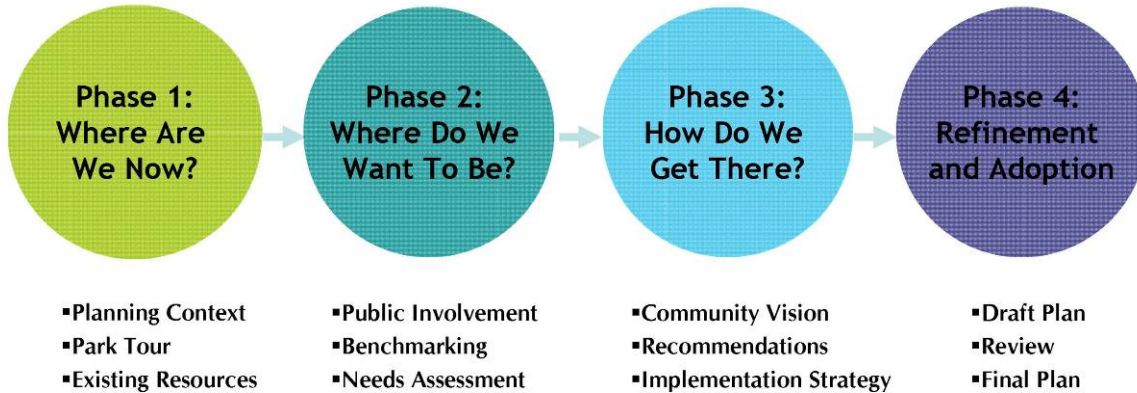
The purpose of the Community Needs Assessment is to evaluate alternatives regarding the community's desired level of service in order to identify park and facility needs. The discussion of community needs will provide a basis for Plan recommendations for system-wide improvements. These may include the acquisition and development of parks, the redevelopment of existing parks, the provision of programs and special events, and even the potential for partnerships with other service providers.

The Community Needs Assessment provides the information necessary to make informed decisions on how many parks and facilities are needed in Apple Valley, both now and in the future. Keep in mind that the Parks and Recreation Department may not be able to meet all these needs on its own. Some may be met by other agencies or through partnerships and collaborative efforts. Additionally, the community may also prioritize some needs above others, making compromises in order to implement them. Specific plans for meeting community needs will be discussed in the next phase of the planning process.

All needs in this report are discussed in terms of potential options, and are not recommendations at this time. Rather, the analysis is intended to spur

discussion about the desired policy directions and allow for informed decision-making about the question, “Where do we want to be?” in terms of parks and recreation. The results of this analysis will serve as a starting point of Phase 3, feeding into the recommendations and implementation strategy (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Planning Process



## PARK LAND NEEDS

The Community Needs Assessment identifies park land needs based on a level of service analysis that considers park access and comparisons to similar communities. Specifically, this section includes:

- An access analysis, addressing park service areas and gaps in service; and
- A benchmarking analysis, comparing the level of service in Apple Valley to other similar communities.

The analysis is based on service policies regarding the provision of park land. The policies were developed using key findings from the public outreach activities, which are presented in Appendix A.

### Access Analysis

The park access analysis evaluates park service based on the actual routes people travel to get to parks. It assesses current park service levels by identifying service area coverage provided by Apple Valley’s existing parks. The purpose is to determine if all residents have access to nearby recreation amenities at the desired level of service.

For most towns and cities, the desired level of service ranges from ½ to 1 mile from a nearby park (walking or biking distance). The Town of Apple Valley, however, is a unique community. The Town’s General Plan paints the vision of

Apple Valley as a partially rural community with unscarred mountain vistas and desert valleys, equestrian neighborhoods, large lots, a multi-use trail system, and specialized venues that help create a High Desert Destination.

Larger lot sizes are fairly typical in many parts of Apple Valley. However, there are some areas in town that have been zoned for smaller lots sizes, where close-to-home recreation opportunities would be highly utilized. Because of these differences in residential development, park access is analyzed in two ways. It includes access to:

- Basic recreation amenities that need to be more accessible (closer to residents) in higher-density residential areas; and
- Community parks that should provide specialized opportunities within a reasonable travel distance for all residents, regardless of residential lot sizes.

#### *Analysis Parameters*

A GIS -based access analysis was undertaken to determine how well each park serves the surrounding area. The full methodology and findings from this analysis are presented in Appendix B. Key point of the analysis include the following:

- ***Residential Density:*** Since the density of residential development varies in Apple Valley, residential areas were divided into two categories:
  - Residential Areas < 0.75 acres lot sizes (higher density residential): This includes areas zoned Residential-Single Family, Residential-Medium Density, Mobile Home Parks, and Specific Plan (Residential).<sup>1</sup> These residents are presumed to need basic recreation amenities closer to home.
  - Residential Areas > 0.75 acres lot sizes (lower density residential): This includes areas zoned Residential-Very Low Density (1 dwelling unit per 5 net acres), Residential-Low Density (1 dwelling unit per 2.5 to 5 net acres), Residential-Estate (1 dwelling unit per 1 to 2.5 net acres), and Residential-Estate  $\frac{3}{4}$  (1 dwelling unit per 0.75 to 1 acre). These residents are presumed to be willing to travel further to reach basic park amenities.
- ***Service Area:*** The size of a service area around each park is based on the distance people are willing to travel to reach those park amenities. Based on public comments, plus discussions with Town staff and the Park and Recreation Commission (PRC), service area sizes were noted to be

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<sup>1</sup> Note: These not “high-density areas” in planning terminology, but include specific zoning areas as defined for this Apple Valley analysis.

different for parks with basic recreation amenities (i.e., playgrounds, picnic shelter/tables, and open lawns) and specialized facilities (e.g., skate parks, pools, sports fields, amphitheater, BMX tracks, community centers, etc.). The travel distance to reach basic recreation amenities also varied with the lot size/zoning density in residential areas. For this reason, the desired service area reach in Apple Valley is:

- ***Approximately 1 mile for access to basic recreation amenities for residents in higher density residential areas.*** Basic recreation amenities include playgrounds, picnic shelter/tables, and open lawns. These features provide places to play and have small family gatherings. In areas with smaller lot sizes, residents are more dependent on these parks to provide play space. Sites with these amenities are noted in the inventory in Appendix B.
- ***2 – 2 ½ miles for access to basic recreation amenities for residents in lower density residential areas.*** In areas with larger lot sizes, residents are less dependent on parks to provide play and gathering space. However, basic recreation amenities are needed to supplement recreation opportunities at home.
- ***2-3 miles for access to community parks for all residents in the Town limits.*** Community parks, such as Civic Center Park, Lenny Brewster Sports Center, James Woody Park, and Horsemen’s Center, provide specialized facilities that draw people from greater distances. These are the types of recreation opportunities that cannot be provided at home, so lot size is not a factor.

As part of this discussion, staff and PRC members acknowledged that there may be some geographic areas in town where this desired service level is not achieved. In those areas, residents may travel an additional ½ mile to reach parks and recreation amenities.

#### *Access to Basic Recreation Amenities*

The access analysis for existing parks identified 12 unserved areas in Apple Valley. These areas lack access to basic recreation amenities (Map 3 in Appendix B). However for seven of these areas, plans are already in place to help meet needs. Specifically:

- Homeowners Associations are anticipated to meet needs in three areas: Area 3 (Bridle Path Estates); Area 7 (Sun City/Solera); and Area 8 (Deep Creek Estates).
- Improved road access is anticipated to support service in Area 12, around the Lenny Brewster Sports Center.

New public parks will be needed in eight areas. Of these:

- Two include Town-owned undeveloped properties. Stoddard Wells in Area 1 is anticipated to be developed as a neighborhood park. Standing Rock in Area 11 is suitable for development as a community park.
- Developers have plans to build parks in Area 2 (North Pointe) and Area 6 (Sitting Bull).<sup>2</sup>
- Further options should be evaluated to meet needs in Areas 4, 5, 9, and 10. This may include land acquisition, partnerships with schools, or other opportunities. These areas are described below:
  - **Area 4:** This area in western Apple Valley, south of Highway 18, is zoned for higher density residential development. Desert Knolls Elementary is located here.
  - **Area 5:** The area southwest of the Apple Valley County Club is unserved. While the Country Club provides a large green space, it does not provide basic recreation amenities.
  - **Area 9:** This area in south Apple Valley, northwest of Mendel Park, is zoned for higher density housing. It includes Sandia Elementary School and Apple Valley High School.
  - **Area 10:** The area in southeastern Apple Valley, south of Highway 18, is partially served by James Woody Park. However, Area 10 also includes unserved higher density residential areas. Willow Park High School and Vanguard Preparatory are located in this area.

### *Access to Community Parks*

The analysis of access to community parks revealed four service gaps in Apple Valley. These areas lack access to the community gathering places and specialized facilities typically associated with community parks (Map 4 in Appendix B). Gaps include:

- **Area 1:** North Apple Valley is unserved by park land. This area is planned to include industrial uses with some low-density housing. However, community park demands are anticipated to be minor in the 20-year planning horizon.
- **Area 2:** Northwest Apple Valley is unserved by park land. However, the planned North Pointe Park would help meet needs in this area. The proposed 60-acre community park is anticipated to be built by developers and include sports fields, sport courts, and basic recreation amenities.

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<sup>2</sup> Policies regarding the management of developer-built parks will be discussed and determined in the next phase of the planning process.

- **Area 3:** East Apple Valley is underserved by park land. Developing the 20-acre Standing Rock Site as a community park is an option to address these needs.
- **Area 4:** Southwest Apple Valley is unserved by community parks. Because of current and future higher density and lower density residential development here, this area has the greatest need for community park land and facilities.

### *Access Analysis Conclusions*

To improve park access, plus provide the desired level of service for residential areas, Apple Valley will need three new community parks and six new neighborhood parks within the 20-year planning horizon. These include:

- A new neighborhood park in north Apple Valley, where the undeveloped Stoddard Wells site is located.
- A new neighborhood park in the Sitting Bull area, which includes a potential park to be built by developers.
- Four new neighborhood parks in identified areas.
- A new community park in east Apple Valley, where the undeveloped Standing Rock site is located.
- A new community park in Northwest Apple Valley, where the North Pointe community/sport field park at is proposed to be built by developers.
- One additional community park in South Apple Valley.

The public park needs presume that Homeowners' Associations will meet needs in three areas through the development of private parks and facilities. In addition, needs for a community park in North Apple Valley should be monitored in the long-term, as the community continues to grow.

### **Level of Service Analysis**

One way to measure the level of service provided in Apple Valley is to compare the amount of park land provided by the Town to the amount provided by other comparable communities. For this analysis, Lancaster, Temecula, and Hesperia were chosen for comparison based on their geographic proximity, demographic characteristics, and similarities in providing a neighborhood/community park system with destination facilities. For reference, each of these communities is described below.

- **Apple Valley:** The Apple Valley Parks & Recreation Department provides 343 acres of park land to serve a 2009 population of 74,266 residents. This includes seven mini parks, two neighborhood parks, three community

parks, and two special use sites. Specialty facilities include an aquatic center, amphitheater, community center, recreation center, equestrian center, BMX track, skate park, sport field complex, golf course, and tent camping.

- **Lancaster:** The Lancaster Parks, Recreation and Arts Department provides 567 acres of parks and recreation facilities for 135,225 residents.<sup>3</sup> The City has 19 sites including five neighborhood parks, six community parks, one linear park, one conservation/open space and six special use facilities. The City provides many specialty facilities, such as the Lancaster Performing Arts Center, the Lancaster Museum/Art Gallery, the Western Hotel Museum, five indoor activity centers, a 35-field soccer complex, tournament quality adult softball complex, baseball stadium, high desert nature interpretive center, two pools, and four joint-use gymnasiums.
- **Temecula:** The Temecula Community Services Department, Recreation Division, provides 368 acres of park land to serve a 2010 population of 105,029 residents.<sup>4</sup> Their inventory includes 28 neighborhood parks, 12 sports parks, five specialty sites, and two linear/passive parks. Six of these sites (37.75 acres) are school parks (joint use sites). The City provides specialty facilities including a recreation center, community center, senior center, Children's Museum, library, Community Theater, History Museum, chapel, three swimming pools, an outdoor amphitheater, a skate park, and a gymnasium.
- **Hesperia:** The City of Hesperia and the Hesperia Recreation and Park District (HRPD) together provide a total of 644 acres of park land at 16 sites to serve a population of 88,184 residents.<sup>5</sup> These lands include four neighborhood parks, nine community parks, and three regional parks. The District and City support several specialized facilities, including four community centers, a youth activity center, roller rink, pool, country club/golf, fishing area, campground, museum/nature center, and slot car/RC car tracks.

To ensure an equal comparison, the analysis looks at the amount of park land provided by each jurisdiction related to the number of residents who are served (i.e., more people need more parks.) This is called a level of service. In comparing Apple Valley's level of service to these cities, the following terms are used:

- **Existing Level of Service (LOS):** The existing LOS measures the amount of park acreage that is currently provided for residents. Existing LOS is expressed as a ratio of park acres per 1,000 residents. It is calculated

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<sup>3</sup> City of Lancaster, 2007 Parks, Recreation, Open Space & Cultural Master Plan.

<sup>4</sup> City of Temecula, 2009 Developed Park and Recreational Facilities.

<sup>5</sup> City of Hesperia, 2010 Hesperia General Plan.

by dividing the number of developed park acres in the current inventory by the town or city’s current population, and multiplying the result by 1,000.

- **Level of Service Standards:** Minimum park land standards can be adopted by the Town Council to serve as a guide for the development of the future park system. These standards are based on the desired level of service for the future, expressed in terms of acres per 1,000 residents. Many towns and cities adopt standards based on the total LOS desired for the entire park system. Some towns and cities set standards for individual park classifications.

For Apple Valley, park level of service is determined using population data provided in the Planning Context Report.<sup>6</sup>

*Existing Level of Service*

Table 1 summarizes the Town of Apple Valley’s existing level of service (LOS) by park type. As noted in the table, the Town’s existing LOS for developed park land is 4.6 acres per 1,000 residents. This LOS includes acreage associated with the on-going Country Club acquisition, but does not include Town-owned undeveloped acreage held for future planned parks.

Table 1: Park Land Level of Service (LOS) for Apple Valley (Including Country Club Acreage)

Park Type	Apple Valley # of Acres	Apple Valley Existing LOS (Acres/1,000)
Mini Parks	19.9	0.27
Neighborhood Parks	10.4	0.14
Community Parks	82.8	1.11
Special Use Parks	229.6	3.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>342.7</b>	<b>4.6</b>

\* The existing LOS for Apple Valley is based on a 2009 population of 74,266 residents.

Without the Country Club, Apple Valley’s existing level of service is only 2.6 acres per 1,000 residents. If the Town does not complete the Country Club purchase, the Town will have a dramatically lower level of service for special use parks (1.08 acres per 1,000) and park land as a whole.

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<sup>6</sup> The current population is based on a 2009 estimate of 74,266 residents within the town limits. The population used to calculate future park standards is based on a 20-year projection of 116,041 residents. This forecast represents a conservative 25% growth rate, which is higher than the 1990-2000 growth rate (17.7%), but much lower than the Town’s 36% growth rate noted in last 10 years.



### Comparable Communities

Table 2 compares Apple Valley’s existing park level of service to the three comparable communities. Overall, Apple Valley is in the midrange of these communities in the provision of park land—if the Country Club is included. Without the Country Club, the Town of Apple Valley provides a lower level of service.

Table 2: Park Land Level of Service for Apple Valley and Comparable Communities

PARK TYPE	HESPERIA <sup>AB</sup>	LANCASTER <sup>C</sup>	TEMECULA <sup>D</sup>	APPLE VALLEY (Without Country Club)	APPLE VALLEY (With Country Club)
Mini Parks	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.27	0.27
Neighborhood Parks	0.56	0.34	1.23	0.14	0.14
Community Parks	1.35	1.03	2.13	1.11	1.11
Special Use/Regional Parks	5.40	1.29	0.90	1.08	3.10
Other*	0.00	0.75	0.06	0.00	0.00
<b>TOTAL Existing LOS</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>4.6</b>

\* Other parks include conservation areas and open space, linear parks and trails.

<sup>A</sup> Source: 2010 Hesperia General Plan. Parks are provided by the City of Hesperia and Hesperia Recreation and Parks District (HRPD).

<sup>B</sup> The City of Hesperia also manages 2,137 acres of natural areas/open space, providing an existing LOS of 24.23 acres/1,000. This acreage is not included here.

<sup>C</sup> Data source: City of Lancaster 2007 Parks, Recreation, Open Space & Cultural Master Plan. Lancaster has 0.04 acres of linear parks/trails and 0.71 acres of conservation areas/open space included in the “other” category.

<sup>D</sup> Source: City of Temecula Parks and Recreation Department, 2009. For Temecula, Sports Parks are noted as Community Parks in this table, and Specialty Parks are counted with Special Use/Regional Parks. There are 0.06 acres of linear parks/trails included in the “other” category. The City also has a joint use agreement for use of school district facilities that are included as community parks.

In the provision of neighborhood parks, Apple Valley is very similar to Lancaster, somewhat lower in service than Hesperia, and significantly lower than Temecula.<sup>7</sup> For community parks, Apple Valley provides a lower level of service than Hesperia or Temecula, but more than Lancaster. However, the other cities all provide as strong or even stronger variety of specialized facilities. Also, Apple Valley does not provide developed trail corridors or natural parks, which adds to Temecula and Lancaster’s level of service.

<sup>7</sup> None of these cities provides mini-parks, so Apple Valley’s mini-park and neighborhood park acreage is added together for comparison

## Other Park Land Needs

The Parks and Recreation Department should be open to other land acquisition (or donation) opportunities that are consistent with the Town's vision for parks and recreation. For example, the Apple Valley 2020 vision calls for a Destination Development Plan to identify areas for a conference center and other amenities that would promote the Town as a premier destination in the High Desert. If that project moves forward, the Town should consider options to include plazas and open space in the development.

## Desired Level of Service

Based on the analysis discussed on the previous pages, Table 3 presents proposed standards and needs for park land in Apple Valley in the next 20 years. Assumptions are noted below.

- **Mini Parks:** Current recreation trends find that few cities are providing mini parks because of their high per-acre maintenance costs (due to transporting, loading, and unloading equipment). In addition, the desired travel distance (of 1 or 2 miles) to basic recreation amenities suggests that the Town of Apple Valley should be providing neighborhood parks, rather than mini parks, since these smaller sites typically lack sufficient recreation opportunities to draw park users from greater distances. For this reason, this assessment notes no need for new mini parks. Based on Apple Valley's projected population in 2029 (116,041 residents), this creates a desired level of service of approximately 0.2 acres per 1,000 residents.
- **Neighborhood Parks:** Neighborhood parks provide access to basic recreation opportunities within 1-2 miles of most residents. A need for approximately 47 acres of neighborhood park land is based on the following:
  - Stoddard Wells Park: 5 acres
  - Sitting Bull Park: 10 acres
  - Four new parks: 8 acres each<sup>8</sup>

Based on Apple Valley's projected population in 2029 (116,041 residents), this creates a desired level of service of approximately 0.5 acres per 1,000 residents.

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<sup>8</sup> This is based on new parks in areas 4, 5, 10, and 11 on Map 3 in Appendix A.

**Table 3: Proposed Standards and Needs for Developed Park Land**

Park Type	Average LOS for Comparable Cities <sup>B</sup>	Apple Valley Existing LOS	Apple Valley # of Existing Acres	Proposed Standard	Additional Developed Acres Needed <sup>C</sup>	
					Current Population (2009)	Projected Population (2029)
Mini Parks	0.0	0.27	19.9	0.20	-5.0	116,041
Neighborhood Parks	0.71	0.14	10.4	0.50	26.7	47.6
Community Parks	1.35	1.11	82.8	1.80	50.9	126.1
Special Use Areas	2.53	3.1	229.6	2.00	0.0	2.5
Linear Parks	0.39	0.0	0.0	0.00	0.0	0.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>342.7</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>72.6</b>	<b>176.2</b>

<sup>A</sup> Some of these needs may be met by undeveloped park sites and partnerships with other providers. This number does not represent the amount of acreage that needs to be acquired for new park sites.

<sup>B</sup> Comparable cities include Hesperia, Lancaster, and Temecula.

- **Community Parks:** Apple Valley should increase its level of service for community parks, based on a need for diverse recreation opportunities, specialized recreation facilities, and social gathering spaces. Proposed park standards are based on a need of approximately 125 acres.<sup>9</sup>
  - North Pointe Park: 60 acres
  - Standing Rock Park: 20 acres
  - One new park in South Apple Valley: 45 acres

Based on Apple Valley’s projected population in 2029 (116,041 residents), this creates a desired level of service of approximately 1.8 acres per 1,000 residents.

- **Special Use Parks:** With the acquisition of the Country Club, the Town of Apple Valley provides a high level of service for special use parks. However, the Sitting Bull property (2.1 acres) could be considered as a trailhead/natural area park in the future. Also, Lion’s Park could be reclassified and developed to better support its function as a special use site. (See the discussion in the Facility Analysis).

Based on Apple Valley’s projected population in 2029 (116,041 residents), a level of service of approximately 2.0 acres per 1,000 residents, would maintain and slightly exceed the Town’s current LOS for this park type (by 2.5 acres).

### *Level of Service*

The acreage needs noted above are based on a minimum level of service of 4.5 acres per 1,000 residents for mini, neighborhood, community, and special use parks. This LOS represents a slight decrease from the Town’s existing LOS of 4.6 acres per 1,000 residents. However, it represents a substantial increase and investment in the acreage of neighborhood and community parks. This total park land LOS standard could be adopted as a guideline for the provision of park land in the next 20 years.

### *Acquisition Needs*

The acreage needs noted in Table 3 reflect the amount of developed park acres that area needed in Apple Valley. As noted previously, 97.5 acres have already been acquired or are expected to be provided by developers. However, the Town will need to acquire approximately 79 additional acres to meet these needs for developed park land.

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<sup>9</sup> This does not include a park for the identified unserved Area 1.

## RECREATION FACILITY NEEDS

To be more in line with Lancaster, Hesperia and Temecula, the Town of Apple Valley will need to enhance and expand its recreation facilities. This section of the document evaluates recreation facility needs to determine the level of service that is desired in Apple Valley. This assessment is based on an analysis of recreation participation and trends, guidelines for future park development, and desired service levels for specific amenities and facilities. Specifically, this section includes:

- A park adequacy analysis, evaluating needs for more park facilities at existing parks;
- An evaluation of needs for specific types of recreation facilities, such as restrooms, trails, and indoor recreation centers.

### Park Adequacy Analysis

Parks offer a variety of recreation opportunities by providing different amenities and facilities, ranging from basic support features to highly specialized indoor and outdoor facilities. A park adequacy analysis examines existing Apple Valley parks to see if amenities and facilities can be added to improve the park function. It is based on the following assumptions:

- All **mini, neighborhood, and community parks** in Apple Valley should provide playgrounds, picnic shelter/tables, open lawns, parking (on or off-street), shade (either a shelter or shade trees), and at least one active use amenity.
- All **community parks** in Apple Valley should include the features noted above, plus a community gathering place, permanent restrooms, trails/pathways, plus at least one additional active use amenity or specialized facility (so the park provides at least two different recreation opportunities).

Table 4 shows which parks are meeting minimum park requirements. The analysis revealed the following:

- **Minimum Resources:** Only six sites provide all of the desired minimum resources for basic recreation amenities.
- **Shade:** A lack of shade is an issue at four sites. However, remedies have been proposed at two sites. There is a plan in place to add a shade/picnic shelter near the playground at Civic Center Park. At Horsemen's Center, plans exist to combine shelters that were removed from Mendel, Corwin, and Thunderbird Parks and replaced with newer structures.
- **Sports Courts:** With the exception of Thunderbird Park, no mini or neighborhood park has sports courts (e.g., basketball courts, volleyball, tennis, or bocce). All active use amenities noted in the analysis consisted of

sports fields or multi-purpose back stops. Other types of active use amenities are needed to provide a variety of recreation opportunities. Sports courts can meet this need.

- **Restrooms:** Two mini parks have restrooms (Corwin and Cramer Family). The one at Cramer Family Park is in poor condition. Portable restrooms are provided at several other sites. While the Town is concerned that parks should provide restrooms because of the size of park service areas, it needs to consider a restroom policy that takes into account their needs/costs for development, operations, and maintenance.
- **Lion's Park:** This site is missing an active use amenity and playground, calling into question whether it serves general park purposes at all. While classified as a mini park, this site functions more like a special use site, appropriate for flea markets, farmer's markets, etc.

Table 4: Park Adequacy Analysis (Minimum Park Requirements)

Park Name	Provides Minimum Resources	Missing Minimum Resources	Additional Resources
<b>Mini Parks</b>			
Corwin Road Park		Active use feature	Restroom
Lion's Park*		Playground, active use feature	
Mendel Park	✓		
Cramer Family Park		Shade, active use feature	Restroom
Norm Schmidt Park		Parking	
Yucca Loma Park	✓		Exercise course
Virginia Park	✓		Extra sports fields
<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>			
Sycamore Rocks Park		Shade	
Thunderbird Park	✓		Basketball court and sport fields
<b>Community Parks</b>			
Civic Center Park		Picnic shelter/tables, shade	Multiple facilities
James Woody Park	✓		Multiple facilities
Lenny Brewster Sports Center		Shade	Multiple facilities
<b>Special Use Parks</b>			
Horsemen's Center	✓		Multiple facilities

\* There is a multi-use backstop adjacent to Lion's Park, but it is not part of the leased park area.

Table 5 presents the results of the community park analysis in meeting community park requirements. Horsemen's Center is included here because of its similarity to a community park. Key findings are described below:

Table 5: Park Adequacy Analysis (Community Park Requirements)

Park Name	Provides Minimum Resources	Missing Minimum Resources	Additional Resources
<b>Community Parks</b>			
Civic Center Park		Playground, picnic shelter/tables, shade, restrooms, sufficient parking	✓
James Woody Park		Pathway	✓
Lenny Brewster Sports Center		Shade, restrooms, community gathering place, sufficient parking	✓
<b>Special Use Parks</b>			
Horsemen's Center	✓		✓

\*A restroom, shade shelter and dog park are planned at Civic center Park.

- **Minimum Resources:** Only Horsemen's Center currently provides all of the minimum resources desired at community parks, even though it is not classified as a community park. At this site, the group tent camping area constitutes a community gathering place. The site is also used for Movies in the Park, using a portable screen. While a picnic shelter is missing, plans are in place to provide one at this site.
- **Civic Center Park:** Development has not been completed at Civic Center Park, resulting in a great need for restrooms (outside the aquatic center) and a picnic shelter/shade structure. While on-site parking is inadequate for the scale of events held there, nearby parking addresses this need.
- **James Woody Park:** This site needs a pathway to link site features, connect ends of the park, and provide walking and trail-related recreation opportunities. Current restrooms are not large enough to address needs at this site.
- **Lenny Brewster:** While the Lenny Brewster Sports Center has ADA-accessible restrooms, the number of stalls is not adequate to support regular park use. Parking at this site is also insufficient for events (a neighboring field is borrowed for event parking). The site needs a community gathering place, such as a large-group picnic shelter and/or a concessions/snack area in the center of the fields. Currently, the horseshoe complex provides an additional facility resource, an opportunity not found elsewhere in Apple Valley. However, this may be removed during planned

development of a water reclamation facility at this site.

- **Additional Resources:** While all sites have additional resources, there are opportunities to enhance use at these sites by adding a variety of specialized facilities.

## Specialized Facility Analysis

The need for specialized recreation facilities varies from community to community, largely determined by local demand for various recreation opportunities based on participation levels and trends.

### *Recreation Participation*

In Apple Valley, public involvement findings present an understanding of desired recreation activities (Appendix A). According to results in the Community Questionnaire, the top five recreation activities in Apple Valley with the highest level of participation include:

- Walking for pleasure
- Exercising/Aerobics
- Swimming (pool)
- Bicycling
- Dog Walking/Dog Parks

Many of these are (or can be) trail-related. Most support health and fitness, which the community feels is the most important benefit of parks and recreation. While exercising/aerobic and swimming programs can be supported by indoor and outdoor facilities, the majority of the top activities require more outdoor facility support.

According to Community Questionnaire, residents would like to spend even more time camping, attending fairs/festivals/special events, picnicking, playing volleyball, and horseback riding if resources were available. However, the most desired activities still revolved around walking, biking, dog walking, and swimming.

On a national level, trends are very similar. Data presented by the National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA) shows that three of the top ten activities for people ages 7 and older (in 2009) were trail-related:

- Exercise walking (93.4%)
- Bicycle riding (38.1%)
- Hiking (34.0%)



Other top activities included:

- Exercising with equipment (57.2%)
- Camping (50.9%)
- Swimming (50.2%)
- Workout at club (38.3%)
- Weight Lifting (34.5%)
- Aerobic Exercising (33.1%)

As with local results for recreation participation, national trends indicate that trail-related activities, swimming, and fitness-related activities are popular.

The value of participation and trends data is that it allows us to better forecast future needs for specific type of recreation amenities and facilities. Public involvement feedback, combined with recreation participation data, can be used to assess demand for specific types of recreation facilities. Participation data reinforces a community need for several types of facilities that were noted in public involvement findings:

- Trails
- Indoor recreation/fitness space
- Swimming/water play opportunities
- Festival/event space

### *Trail Needs*

Because of the high community demand for trails, the Town of Apple Valley has adopted a planned trail system that provides for multiple forms of non-motorized transportation. In the General Plan, the Town has identified an interconnected, proposed system of Bike paths, Lifeline Trails and Bridle Easements to enhance connectivity.

- ***Bike Paths:*** Town plans include the development of Class I, II, and III bike paths, which include on-street and off-street routes.
- ***Lifeline Trails:*** Lifeline Trails are proposed multi-use trails, designated for walking, bicycle riding, horseback riding, and “for any other device moved by human propulsion.” The adopted Recreation Trail System Plan includes 102.67 miles of Lifeline Trails.
- ***Bridle Easements:*** While not developed or marked, these easements are mapped and in some cases known as available as bridle trails.

In addition, current and past planning efforts have identified significant trail corridors with opportunities for recreation. The 2004 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, as well as the current General Plan, identify a need for a Lifeline Trail along the Mojave River. As noted in the 2004 Plan, the Sitting Bull park property (2.1 acres) on the Mojave River at the end of Sitting Bull Road is well situated to serve as a trailhead. In addition, the Paraiso Road Wash between Sitting Bull and Yucca Loma has been identified as a potential recreation trail corridor. This one-mile Bridle Easement, if developed, could enhance access to proposed neighborhood parks in that area.

At this time, the Parks and Recreation Department does not play a role in implementing these adopted trails plans. However, the demand for these types of trails is great, and the Town needs a stronger strategy to create this interconnected trail system.

Some trail needs can be addressed within parks as well. Beyond ADA requirements for interconnected facilities, a variety of trails are needed. This includes soft-surfaced trails for jogging, hiking, mountain biking, nature interpretation, and equestrian use, as well as hard-surfaced trails for walking, biking, skateboarding, rollerblading, and scooter use. Since these trail needs will be addressed through design and development guidelines in association with other types of park development, no specific numerical need for trails is identified.

### *Community/Recreation Center Needs*

Community/recreation centers are indoor facilities that provide a focus for recreational, social, educational, and cultural activities within a neighborhood or community. The Town of Apple Valley currently provides opportunities for indoor recreation at the older James A. Woody Community Center at James Woody Park and the Town Hall Recreation Center at Civic Center Park. Meeting space/banquet space is also provided at the Apple Valley Country Club and the new Town Hall Annex/Conference Center.

Unlike the comparable communities, Apple Valley does not provide other types of indoor facilities that support specialized programming, such as:

- Interpretive nature centers
- Neighborhood activity centers
- Cultural/fine arts centers
- Museums
- Indoor swimming
- Indoor fitness space/weight rooms

- Teen centers
- Senior centers

While the Town does not need to emulate Lancaster, Hesperia, and Temecula, Apple Valley does need to address its lower level of service for indoor facilities if it wants to be more in line with these comparable communities. Currently, Apple Valley lacks sufficient indoor space for recreation programming, and it lacks the capacity to expand as the community continues to grow.

Current trends for community/recreation centers include incorporating recreation opportunities for all ages in one center, rather than establishing separate senior or teen centers elsewhere. In addition, recreation centers should be of sufficient size (40,000+ sf) to incorporate a variety of different uses. The current community and recreation centers, as well as the proposed community center noted in the original master plan for Civic Center Park, are much smaller than current trends favor. Not only is more indoor space needed, but improvements are needed at the James A. Woody Community Center (or this space needs to be incorporated in a new larger center) to be able to continue to provide the current LOS as the community grows.

#### *Aquatics/Water Play Needs*

In Apple Valley, swimming is the third most popular recreation activity (according to questionnaire respondents) and one of the top activities in the nation (according to NSGA). Recreation programs data indicates that more than half of all participants annually in Apple Valley programs (22,843 in FY 08/09) are involved in Aquatics. The Civic Center Park Aquatic Center is currently meeting a high demand for swimming, including competitive swimming and programming needs. However, the pool is not yet meeting recreational needs as fully as possible. Plans to include a water spray ground/play area should be implemented to meet needs for water play opportunities in Apple Valley. In addition, the Town should consider the option of providing other water play areas in new community parks upon development. As the community continues to grow, it is anticipated that the demand for aquatics opportunities will grow as well. The Town anticipates that this need would be addressed by the Apple Valley Unified School District, who currently leases pool time at the Civic Center Aquatic Center.

#### *Festival/Event Space Needs*

Special Events is a highly successful program area in Apple Valley. The Town has a number of facilities that support community-wide special events and community rentals for large group events. As the Town grows, it will need to

continue to provide facilities that support this programming. These program-driven facility needs are discussed further in the next section of this document.

### Sport Field Needs

According to public involvement findings, sports participation in Apple Valley is strong. As noted in the Community Questionnaire, attending sports events and playing baseball/softball, basketball, and soccer ranked as the 8th, 10th, 11th, and 12th most popular recreation activities respectively for respondents. Feedback from focus group participants indicated that current fields are at capacity, and there is a desire for a multi-purpose sports complex with baseball/softball and soccer fields, as well as a desire for football fields.

To gauge sport field needs, Table 6 compares the level of service for sports fields in Apple Valley to Lancaster, Temecula, and Hesperia. Sports field level of service is presented in terms of the numbers of people served per field. As noted in the table, Apple Valley currently provides a much lower level of service for baseball/softball fields than Temecula and Hesperia, but higher than Lancaster. However, it provides a higher level of service for soccer fields than Temecula and Hesperia, but lower than Lancaster, which has a 35-field soccer complex.

Table 6: Sport Field Level of Service for Apple Valley and Comparable Communities

FACILITY	HESPERIA <sup>A</sup>	LANCASTER <sup>B</sup>	TEMECULA <sup>C</sup>	APPLE VALLEY <sup>D</sup>
Baseball /Softball Fields	1/ 4,899	1/ 7,954	1/ 5,001	1/ 6,751
Soccer Fields	1/ 7,349	1/ 3,756	1/ 9,548	1/ 4,951
Other Fields	N/A	1/ 45,075	1/ 35,010	N/A

<sup>A</sup> Hesperia's baseball/softball numbers include both lit and unlit baseball and softball fields. Sports fields are located at City parks and Hesperia Recreation and Parks District (HRPD) sites. Data source: City of Hesperia General Plan 2010.

<sup>B</sup> Lancaster uses the same LOS for multi-use fields and baseball fields (1/45,075), but has a 1/7,954 ratio for softball fields. Data source: City of Lancaster 2007 Parks, Recreation, Open Space & Cultural Master Plan.

<sup>C</sup> Temecula's baseball/softball numbers include both baseball and softball fields. The City of Temecula has a joint use agreement with Temecula Valley Unified School District - numbers include facilities at public schools. Data source: City of Temecula Parks and Recreation Department and 2010 US Census.

<sup>D</sup> Apple Valley's baseball/softball numbers include both baseball and softball fields.

Given this information, Apple Valley should consider increasing its level of service for baseball/softball to 1 field per 6,500 residents. At this level of service, Apple Valley has a need for nine new baseball/softball fields in the

next 20 years. In addition, the Town should at a minimum maintain its current level of service for soccer. At a service level of approximately 1 field per 5,000 residents, Apple Valley has a need for eight soccer fields in the next 20 years. Finally, Apple Valley should consider the provision of other field types, or multi-use turf fields that could support football, lacrosse, rugby, and soccer. A level of service of 1 field per 60,000 residents in Town creates a need for at least two multi-purpose turf fields in the next 20 years.

### *Needs for Other Facilities*

Needs for several types of facilities are discussed more specifically below.

- **Restrooms:** The need for permanent restrooms in parks should be addressed through park design and development guidelines that consider the costs, maintenance requirements, capacity, location, and safety considerations for providing restrooms in various types of parks.
- **Golf Course:** Given the decline in participation in golf nationally and the difficulty in managing municipal golf courses on a break-even basis, many communities are questioning the financial feasibility and strategies for operating municipal courses. The recent acquisition of the County Club significantly increases the level of service provided by Apple Valley for park land. However, it also presents some unique funding challenges in terms of addressing water costs, needed upgrades (e.g., the closed pool), and specialized maintenance needs. A business plan is needed for this facility, which should take into account revenue-generating opportunities and the competition that the new Conference Center creates in renting out meeting/banquet space.
- **Equestrian Center/Arena:** Apple Valley is considered to be an equestrian community, as evidenced by statements in its vision and General Plan. However, the Town does not provide equestrian trails and facilities at the same level of service as other equestrian communities, such as Norco, California. Although a large renovation at Horsemen's Park to improve equestrian/rodeo opportunities is desired, its cost is not warranted given the declining number of horse owners in Apple Valley.

However, horseback riding is one area with a high latent demand—where many questionnaire respondents would spend more time riding if the facilities and resources were available to do so. The development of multi-use equestrian trails and trailheads (with trailer parking) would help meet this need.

- **Skatepark:** The Three Diamond Skate Park at James Woody Park is well-used, and the site is well-located to meet needs in that vicinity. However, there have been conflicts with BMX freestyle bikers who want to use the facility, to the extent that the skatepark is being renovated in Spring 2011 to accommodate bike and skate use. However, skateboarding needs in other parts of town are not being met. In addition, skaters would like to

have additional skate elements for variety and challenge. More skating opportunities will be needed as the community continues to grow. This need could be met with an additional skatepark or the provision of skate spots (with a variety of skate elements) at new parks across town.

- **BMX Facilities:** Despite efforts to redesign the Three Diamond Skate Park to accommodate bike use, a separate BMX Freestyle Facility is needed in the long-term to minimize the safety concerns associated with increased conflicting uses at the skatepark. Other BMX biking needs can be met at the BMX Track at the Horsemen's Center and through the development of soft-surfaced trails in Apple Valley.

## RECREATION PROGRAM NEEDS

Apple Valley is a strong provider of recreation programming, despite the fact that many facilities are at capacity. As the community grows, the Town will need to increase the level of recreation programs and special events to address this new demand. This means that new facilities will be needed to support this increased programming. Key programming needs for the Apple Valley Parks and Recreation Department are identified in the following areas:

- Target Populations
- Program Service Areas
- Programming Space/Facilities

### Target Populations

The Apple Valley Parks and Recreation Department provides programs and events for people of all ages. Specific programs target seniors, adults, 'tweens/teens, youth, and preschool/toddlers. In addition to these age groups, there are specific parent/child and family programs, as well as adaptive recreation programs especially for special needs children. Examples of specific activities provided for each population group are presented in the Existing Recreation Resources Summary, available under a separate cover.

### *Program Strengths*

According to public involvement findings, one of Apple Valley's strengths in recreation is the Town's success in providing multi-generational programming. Focus group participants in particular cited Apple Valley's special events, which promote community connections, provide community-building and family activities, and meet diverse needs. Since the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) projects two demographic groups to dominate the Town's population (middle-age and school-age population) in the next several years, there will continue to be a strong need for parent/child, family, and multi-generational programming. The Town should continue to

assess needs for special events over time and maintain or exceed its current level of service.

In addition to the success of special events, the Town's after school programs for youth are also successful in meeting youth needs. The After School Activities Program (ASAP) currently offers homework club, music, dance, games, arts and crafts and cooking at six school sites:

- AAE Lewis Center (Corwin Road Campus)
- AAE Lewis Center (Thunderbird Campus)
- Desert Knolls Elementary
- Sitting Bull Elementary
- Sitting Bull Middle
- Vanguard Prep

In FY 08-09, programs were also offered at Mojave Mesa, Rancho Verde, and Sandia Schools. These programs were closed after similar afterschool programs were opened at those sites. Needs for these types of programs should be periodically re-assessed to determine if other providers are meeting these needs.

### *Underserved Groups*

While many groups are believed to be well-served by recreation programming, public involvement findings suggest that several groups have distinct needs that should be addressed. Needs for the following groups were specifically noted:

- **Youth:** While youth development is a key focus of Apple Valley's current programs, public involvement findings suggest that programs supporting youth integration, safety, and positive outcomes/behavior are still needed. Expanded youth skills programs and volunteer opportunities may help address this need. Another possibility is to bring programs to kids who otherwise would not be involved through the use of a Mobile Recreation Program, offering free recreation activities (e.g., games, crafts) at park and school sites.
- **Teens:** Teens are in need of both unprogrammed and programmed recreation time. The youth focus group noted a desire for drop-in opportunities to play, socialize, and be entertained. Desires were also noted for programs, such as drop-in, organized sports (e.g., indoor/outdoor soccer or basketball), volunteer opportunities, computer classes, safe parties and social events, and tours/travel (bus excursions). Also, improved communication with teens is desired. Suggested opportunities included a Facebook youth page and Teen Zone webpage on the Town's website. While needs for teen drop-in space may be partially addressed in an

expansion of the PAL Center, a youth/teen room integrated into a multi-purpose community/recreation center would provide a higher level of service.

- **Seniors/Active Adults:** Nearly one-quarter (24.2%) of Apple Valley's population is over age 55. SCAG expects these baby boomers to continue to increase over the next several years. While the Del Webb Solera/Sun City planned community caters to this demographic with recreation facilities and programs, the Town should still address needs for older adults living in Apple Valley. In particular, needs for fitness, healthy living, and active programs are anticipated to grow.
- **Younger Workers:** The population of young adults who are primarily focused on jobs is expected to increase in Apple Valley, according to SCAG data. These residents often have less free time for recreation because of job-related commutes and a focus on work productivity. However, active and social evening programs, such as sport leagues and social events, or flexible drop-in programs, such as open gym time, often appeal to this demographic. This includes both traditional sports programs, such as softball, as well as emerging adult sports, such as kickball and dodge ball. From FY 07/08 to FY 08/09, adult sports grew 81% in terms of participation, from 605 participants to 1,096. The sudden level of increased participation suggests a high unmet demand for similar activities.

## Program Service Areas

Apple Valley recreation programs are organized and described in their Recreation Activities Guide in nine program areas: Adult Sports, Youth Sports, Pee Wee Sports, Programs and Classes, After School Activities Program (ASAP), Aquatics, Special Events, Senior Programs, Volunteer Opportunities. Programming in each of these areas will need to be expanded to meet the needs of a growing community.

### *Service Area Strengths*

According to public involvement findings and recreation participation data, two of Apple Valley's strongest program areas include aquatics and special events.

- **Aquatics:** In FY 08/09, over 22,800 people participated in aquatics at the Civic Center Park Aquatic Center, in open and lap swimming, swim lessons, water aerobics, scuba and lifeguarding courses and special events. This number grew from 19,200 in FY 07/08, representing a 19% increase in one year. Given limited pool space, the Town will have to consider ways to maximize pool time and programs to meet growing community needs.



- **Special Events:** Apple Valley's special events are one of the things that set the Town apart as a premier destination in the High Desert. Nearly 26,100 people participated in Town special events in FY 08/09. Seasonal events such as the Fall Festival, Easter Eggstravaganza, Freedom Festival, and Winter Wonderland draw the community together. Activities such as Concerts in the Courtyard, Apple Valley Idol, the Sunset Concert Series, Mud Fest and Mud Run provide a variety of leisure-related options for residents. The many running events sponsored by the Town also contributes toward it goal of supporting community healthy living. There is a need to continue to support these types of events and increase the number of events as the community continues to grow.

### *Program Area Needs*

In addition to expansion in the nine service areas, there was one program area called out in public involvement findings where additional services are needed.

- **Fine/Cultural/Dramatic Arts:** While Apple Valley provides programs and classes that include youth and adult opportunities in arts, crafts, dance, and music, fine and cultural arts is not a major service area for the Town. With the new Civic Center Park Amphitheater, there is an opportunity to increase outdoor theater programs, and use the James A. Woody Community Center stage for associated rehearsals and drama programs. If the Town wants to be more in line with comparable communities, it will consider an expansion of this program area and the development of specialty indoor facilities to meet these needs. The facility could include specialized activity rooms such as a theater/stage, art studios, music studios, dance studios, art gallery, coffee shop, etc. This would allow the Town to provide a higher level of service for arts programming.

### **Programming Space/Facilities**

For recreation programming, the greatest need called out in public involvement findings was not related to particular demographic groups or service areas. According to focus group participants, some of Apple Valley's most pressing park and facility needs are as follows:

- Current facility capacity
- Ability to address overcapacity of all facilities
- Increased number of facilities to meet future demand

In three different ways, focus group participants were able to emphasize that most of the existing programmed recreation facilities in Apple Valley are used to capacity. Data provided by staff supports these findings. This level of use is creating user conflicts, overcapacity concerns (such as turf damage, building wear and tear, and maintenance concerns), a cap on the types of programs that

can be provided, and the inability to meet future programming needs (because no additional time slots are available).

Although facility needs were discussed previously in this document, this section looks at facility needs to support specific program areas:

- ***Indoor Programming Space:*** A great need in Apple Valley is for indoor recreation space. The James A. Woody Community Center is too small and in need of improvements. It needs to be expanded, rehabilitated or replaced to improve services. In particular, participants noted desires for more opportunities and venues to gather with friends, as well as flexible programming space, indoor gymnasium and fitness space, quiet space for activities such as chess, and specialty rooms for arts programming. A new or renovated indoor center should incorporate room for teen and senior activities, plus be of sufficient size to meet diverse recreation needs.
- ***Outdoor Programming Space:*** In addition to indoor needs, the Town of Apple Valley has a need for facilities to support outdoor recreation programs. Needs for sports fields, sport courts, and trails were addressed in the previous section of this document. In particular, lighted fields and courts would increase programming time and play. Additional needs include accessible facilities to allow seniors and people with mobility issue to participate in outdoor activities, and upgrades to special events areas to allow the Town to continue to provide high-quality special events.
- ***Equestrian Program Facilities:*** While the equestrian facilities at the Horsemen's Center need improvements, no great need for equestrian programs was noted in public involvement findings. More seating and other improvements at the Horsemen's Center would allow a greater participation in and attendance at equestrian events. However, facility use is not in high demand, in comparison to other recreation opportunities. However, the Town should be open to potential partnerships with an equestrian group who is willing to fund improvements and program these facilities.
- ***Golf/Tennis Facilities:*** Apple Valley has a need for increased active programs and facilities. With the acquisition of the Apple Valley Country Club, the Town may explore its ability to increase golf and tennis programs. This programming may be provided by the Town or in conjunction with partners and private providers.

## CONCLUSIONS/NEXT STEPS

This Needs Assessment Report provides a foundation for the development of recommendations in the next phase of the planning process. Key findings from the Needs Assessment are summarized below.

## Key Findings

- Including the Country Club, the Town of Apple Valley provides approximately **4.6 acres per 1,000 residents**.
- In **comparison to Lancaster, Temecula, and Hesperia**, Apple Valley is in the midrange of these communities in the provision of park land—if the Country Club is included. However, Apple Valley provides a lower level of service for neighborhood and community parks than comparable communities.
- To improve park access in all residential areas, Apple Valley will need to develop **six new neighborhood parks** (approximately 48 acres) in the next 20 years. These needs for public parks presume that Homeowners' Associations will help meet needs by providing private parks and facilities in three areas.
- Apple Valley will need **three new community parks** (approximately 126 acres) within the 20-year planning horizon. This includes a new community park at the Standing Rock site, the proposed North Pointe area, and in South Apple Valley.
- To achieve a total park land standard of **4.5 acres per 1,000 residents**, approximately 79 acres of new park land will need to be acquired.
- Even though Apple Valley is in line with Lancaster, Hesperia, and Temecula in the provision of park land, **Apple Valley provides fewer specialized facilities**, such as theaters/performing arts centers, museums, art galleries, indoor recreation/community centers, major sport complexes and stadiums, nature centers, and gymnasiums
- Apple Valley has a great **need for specialized facilities**, including more sport fields, indoor recreation space, and active recreation opportunities.
  - A **large multi-purpose recreation center** is needed to provide gymnasiums, fitness space, senior and teen space, classrooms, specialty rooms for fine/dramatic arts programming.
  - Two **water play areas**, such as spraygrounds, are needed to enhance existing aquatic opportunities. These can be developed at the Civic Center Park Aquatic Center and at another community park site.
  - By increasing its baseball/softball field LOS to 1 field per 6,500 residents, **nine new baseball/softball fields** are needed in the next 20 years.
  - By maintaining its current soccer field LOS at 1 field per 5,000 residents, **eight new soccer fields** are needed in the next 20

years.

- Multi-use fields to support football, lacrosse, and rugby are needed to address changing recreation needs in the next 20 years. At a level of service of 1 field per 60,000 residents, **two multi-purpose sport fields** are needed in the next 20 years.
  - **Skate spots** are needed to address skate park needs in different parts of town, especially as Apple Valley continues to grow. These elements can be integrated into new community parks.
  - **A BMX freestyle facility** is needed to address future needs and minimize future conflicts between bike and skate park users.
- Trail demand is high in Apple Valley, and there is a **strong need for hard and soft-surfaced trails**. The Town has existing plans for bikeways and lifeline (equestrian/multi-purpose) trails, but the Parks and Recreation Department is not anticipated to play a role in their development. A variety of **trails within parks** are needed, including fitness, equestrian, nature interpretation, walking and biking trails.
  - In terms of park development, mini and neighborhood parks need more **active use amenities**, such as sport courts, to improve recreation opportunities and support active recreation. **Shade** is also needed at several sites.
  - Community parks need a higher level of development to include a variety of **specialized features, community gathering places, and support amenities**. Most sites have several of these elements, but not all components together.
  - To meet the demands of a growing population, Apple Valley will expand its **recreation programming in all service areas**. Programs are especially needed in fine/dramatic/cultural arts, and for teens, seniors, and younger adults.
  - Apple Valley is very successful in providing **special events programming and activities that serve multiple generations**. The provision of family and multi-generational activities will be increasingly important given population estimates and growth trends in Apple Valley in the next 20 years. To maintain or increase the current level of service for special events, support facilities and continued investment will be needed.

## **Next Steps**

Preliminary findings from the Draft Needs Assessment Report were presented to key Town staff and members of the Parks and Recreation Commission in October 2010. Based on their feedback, the report was refined and key findings were added. Specific questions were addressed by staff and Commissioners at meetings in February 2011. These comments were used to refine the final report.

The final Needs Assessment provides a foundation for the development of recommendations to improve Apple Valley's park and recreation system. These recommendations will include a proposed conceptual plan for the future park system. Recommendations are anticipated to be presented for Staff and Commissioner review in Spring 2011.

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