

2024 Major General Plan Amendments

(GPA24-01, GPA24-02, GPA24-03 and GPA24-05)



Exhibit 5



Arts, Cultural, and Recreational Enrichment



The Arts, Cultural and Recreational Enrichment (ACRE) chapter of the General Plan recognizes that strong connections to the arts, culture, education and recreation are essential characteristics of a community that values everyone’s quality of life. These aspects not only help define and express who we are as community, they also significantly contribute to a more livable city by stimulating our economy, enriching our built environment, and celebrating the natural environment.

Peoria has made great strides in infusing arts, culture and recreation within its community fabric and strives to expand its standing as a place of distinction. Residents and visitors of all ages continue to enjoy access to meaningful enrichment opportunities that draw on Peoria’s artistic, cultural and recreational resources.

PURPOSE

This chapter is intended to enhance the availability and accessibility of the arts for all residents, preserve important historic and cultural elements that make Peoria unique, activate the human spirit through social and physical connections, and provide educational opportunities for lifelong learning.

6.1 INSPIRATION

The inspiration for the Arts, Cultural, and Recreational Enrichment (ACRE) chapter is the shared belief that the aspects of **arts**, **culture**, **education**, and **recreation** have a direct effect on the daily lives of Peoria residents. Currently though, *historic preservation* and *recreation* are the only state-required topics discussed within this chapter. Nevertheless, the City is committed to supporting and expanding its efforts in all four aspects in order to contribute and enhance Peoria’s character and vitality. This chapter represents an important step towards recognizing these aspects as essential components of civic life that merit investment, consideration, and incorporation into the City’s decision-making processes. Similar to the previous chapters, the ACRE chapter contains narrative, goals and policies that correlate with goals and policies presented in other chapters of the General Plan. In this instance, the ACRE chapter focuses on enhancing livability in Peoria, and frames the overall desired physical image of the city through infusing of art throughout the community, preserving cultural and historically significant elements, and conserving natural resources.

6.2 BRIEF HISTORY OF PEORIA

Peoria’s cultural heritage is very diverse, ranging from Native American sites estimated to be over 1,000 years old to post-World War II-era buildings. It is important to understand the history of Peoria in order to establish the historic context and stories of the area, as they continue to provide guidance for identifying the places and things that are important to Peoria’s culture and heritage.



Hohokam Village Rendering

Ancient Inhabitants

The prehistoric record of Peoria begins primarily with the Hohokam, the indigenous people who inhabited the Salt River Valley about AD 500 – 1450, although the area was inhabited as early as 10,000 B.C. The Hohokam created an elaborate irrigation system along the Salt River, the New River and the Agua Fria River before their population appears to have dwindled and disappeared. Hundreds of years later, it would again be irrigation and the promise of plentiful water for farming, this time from the Arizona Canal, which would draw settlers to the area.



Modern Peoria’s Beginnings

Peoria was established in the 1880s when William J. Murphy’s vision of fertile farmlands fed by water from the Salt River became reality with the completion of the Arizona Canal in 1885. Once this canal was completed, Murphy went east to interest people in settling in this new community. Mr. Murphy was successful in catching people’s attention - over 5,000 acres of land in the new district was purchased by citizens from Peoria, Illinois. Four families from Peoria, Illinois were among the first to move to Arizona to occupy and work their land.

Residences in the new community sprang up and a school and Post Office were established by 1889. More people followed the original families and Peoria continued to grow as a farming community. The farmlands were fertile and the people made a good living, despite having to battle swarms of red ants and the occasional rattlesnake in the kitchen.

The modern-day City of Peoria began near the current intersection of Peoria Avenue and Grand Avenue. The original town site was officially platted in 1897, and the early center of Peoria would begin to form on the south side of Grand Avenue where some of the earliest businesses and residences were constructed. However, most of Peoria’s early settlers actually lived outside of the town, spread out on large tracts of agricultural land. The young town was well served by its location along Grand Avenue, as a railroad line soon paralleled this major roadway, allowing for goods and people to flow into the town, and for the agricultural products of the area to make their way to larger markets.

Despite its location near Grand Avenue and the Santa Fe railroad spur line, day-to-day living conditions in the Peoria area were harsh and the little town grew slowly. There was not a lot of money to invest in elaborate, professionally designed homes and businesses. As a result, most of the buildings constructed in the area at the turn of the century did not have high architectural value or the durability to withstand years of harsh Arizona summers. The majority of the commercial buildings in Peoria that did survive the first decade of the twentieth century were destroyed by a fire in 1917 that consumed the business district along Washington Street, east of present-day 83rd Avenue.



Leading the Way by Ann LaRose



Original Town Plat



Early Entry into Peoria

Early Growth of the Town

Between 1891 and 1895, a spur line of the Santa, Prescott and Phoenix Railroad was placed in Peoria along with Phoenix, Glendale, Alhambra, Hesperla, and Marinette. A small depot was built on 83rd Avenue just off Grand Avenue. The depot was later sold to the city of Scottsdale in 1972, where it now resides at McCormick Stillman Railroad Park.

The Peoria Chamber of Commerce formed in 1919. It operated as the informal government body until Peoria was incorporated in 1954. The Peoria volunteer fire district formed in 1920 and remained a volunteer-based district until the mid-1950s. The three-story Edwards Hotel was built in 1918, followed by the Mabel Hood building in May 1920 at the southwest corner of Washington Street and 83rd Avenue. The John L. Meyer or “flatiron” building was completed in June 1920 and the O.O. Fuel’s Paramount Theatre, which served as Fire Station 1 from 1950-2004, was completed in July 1920. The town’s first newspaper, The Peoria Enterprise, was printed weekly from November 14, 1917, to April 1921.

Peoria’s first library was held at the Women’s Club in 1920 until it moved to the old Peoria City Hall in 1975 where the Peoria Center for the Performing Arts was constructed. The library eventually moved to the Peoria Municipal Complex. In May 1959, the Women’s Club gave the clubhouse to the City of Peoria.

Central School was built in 1906, and by 1910, three additional classroom buildings were built next to the central school. In 1918, another school building was opened, containing an auditorium and four classrooms. At this time, the attendance for Peoria schools was 190. School District Number Eleven was the regional elementary school district, while children going on to high school had to travel to Glendale High School. In 1919, the school board approved construction of Peoria High School.



Post-War Development

Increased economic activity, combined with the presence of Luke Air Force Base and tremendous growth throughout the entire Valley—coinciding with the mass-production of air conditioning in the early 1950s—led to an increase in residential housing in Peoria. A postwar construction boom set the stage for Peoria to become a suburb of Phoenix, providing housing for the capital city as growth moved west.

In 1954, Peoria was home to 1,925 residents, within an area of 1.13 square miles. Peoria incorporated on June 7, 1954. A seven-member city council formed and held its first organizational meeting on June 14. By 1966, Peoria grew to encompass 3.1 square miles with 36 miles of street. In 1968, the city passed a bond securing the money to build a sewer system, which was completed in 1969. In 1970, Peoria began to transition to paid firefighting staff. From a population of 4,792 in 1970, the city grew to 12,351 in 1980 and 50,675 in 1990. Construction of the \$30 million municipal complex began in 1988 at the edge of Peoria’s Old Town. The Police Department opened in 1989, the main city hall building and courts in 1991, and the library in 1993. The warm climate and small-town atmosphere of Peoria continued to attract people, and still do today.



6.3 HISTORIC PRESERVATION

One of the major themes of this General Plan is “protecting natural resources and community character.” Historic preservation is one means to achieve this goal. The preservation of Peoria’s historic resources, which includes archaeological sites, enriches the lives of Peoria residents by creating connections to the past. That is because no community can hope to understand its present, or even try to forecast its future if it fails to recognize its past. Only through tracing and preserving its culture and heritage, Peoria can gain a clear sense of the process by which it achieved its present form, values and substance.



Palo Verde Ruin

Historic Preservation Program

In 2002, the Peoria City Council passed several ordinances that laid the foundation for the City to become more directly involved with the preservation of its local heritage. Through these ordinances, the Historic Preservation Commission was established and the Zoning Ordinance was updated to authorize the designation and protection of local historic landmarks and districts. Since its inception, the Commission has undertaken a variety of tasks including the adoption of the City’s first Historic Preservation Plan in 2005. The Commission has also recommended several buildings for designation as local landmarks, all of which have been approved by the City Council.

The City has also entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the State Parks Department to become a Certified Local Government (CLG). This action teams the City and the State on important historical and archaeological policies. It also entitles the City to apply for federal grant monies made available through the State Historical Preservation Office. In February 2010, Peoria was designated as a Preserve America Community. Preserve America is a federal program that encourages and supports community efforts to preserve and enjoy America’s cultural and natural heritage. The designation provided national recognition of Peoria’s commitment to promoting and preserving its heritage.



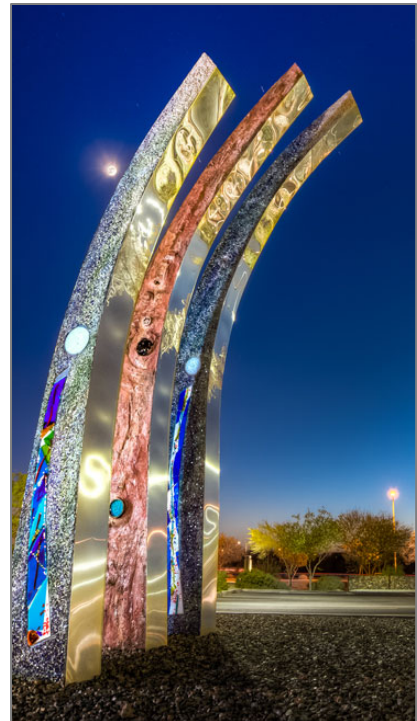
Peoria's historical and cultural resources include a variety of buildings, structures, objects, sites, landscapes, districts, archaeological sites, and traditional cultural properties that possess historical, scientific, architectural, aesthetic, or cultural significance. As the City continues to grow and new development flourishes, it is important to identify and conserve significant elements of our built environment in order to maintain a tangible connection to Peoria's history and identity. The goals and the policies within this General Plan are designed to help identify and protect Peoria's historic resources, and foster awareness and appreciation of Peoria's culture and heritage.

6.4 ARTS AND CULTURE

Peoria's offers a variety of arts and cultural events, institutions and programs aimed at promoting a sense of community identity and providing education and information about the city's heritage. Art and cultural activities, such as music, theater and dance provide alternatives to traditional outdoor recreational activities and create a positive social environment. These opportunities provide diverse cultural experiences to residents as well as visitors by celebrating local traditions and heritage in creative and inspiring ways by building connections. Additionally, arts and culture are also a competitive tool, strengthening many elements of civic life, including the economy, workforce development, education, youth development, neighborhood development, redevelopment projects, and sustainability.

Arts and culture are among a community's most powerful assets, as they assist residents in better understanding and celebrate the uniqueness of their lives. While the terms "arts" and "culture" and often interlinked, it is important to understand the differences between the two terms. For the purposes of the General Plan, art is a product of the culture that prevails within the community. In this setting, the "arts" includes items such as: high or fine arts, literary arts, as well as a range of visual and performing artists, craftspeople, designers, and educators. It also includes a range of cultural events, such as performances, exhibitions, festivals and celebrations. The arts enrich the quality of life for residents and visitors by creating spaces that invite contemplation while evoking a sense of community. The arts support cultural opportunities for both local artists and the general public through the acquisition and display of public art, art exhibitions, and performances and festivals.

"Culture" can be generally thought of as any form of human expression, traditions, historical resources, or any forms of expression that are valued, practiced, and preserved by a community. In this manner, culture shapes how we view the world and is integrated into all aspects of daily life. Thus, Peoria's culture comes alive through creativity, whether participating as an audience member, maker, creator, or patron.



Be Water by Tom and Jean Latka

Promoting Arts and Culture

In 2009, Peoria prepared and adopted the City's first *Arts and Culture Master Plan*. This document guided the development of the arts and cultural events in the city. Since that adoption, Peoria has developed a tremendous number of artistic and cultural assets, and each year the City of Peoria makes important investments in these resources for the benefit of its residents and visitors. With the city projected to continue to grow over the next 20 years, the City's next master plan will need to be updated to establish the recommend actions to achieve the City's long-term priorities. The updated plan will need to embrace the changing population dynamic and reflect the elevated role of the arts and culture within the community. Thus, the vision for the next master plan should be to foster an environment in which art and culture flourish for the sharing and benefit of all residents and visitors.

Public Art

Public art can serve as a key component of place-making by playing a significant role in defining the character of a community and contributing to the aesthetic quality of gathering spaces. These distinct visual elements can be either permanent or temporary, kinetic or stationary, stand-alone or integrated into the architecture and landscaping, and elevate a place into a destination, as well as serving as a wayfinding element. Public art in particular can serve as a point of reference and landmark, welcoming and orienting residents and visitors to Peoria. It accomplishes this by reinforcing gateways, signature streets, gathering areas and neighborhood centers. Public art also has the ability to strengthen critical pedestrian linkages and enliven the overall experience, and can take many forms including:



Blooming Spire

- **Signature Artwork.** Iconic artwork is significant, large-scale permanent artwork serving as defining landmarks at major gateways into Peoria, at civic centers, and on major boulevards and intersections.
- **Wayfinding Artwork.** Wayfinding artwork is permanent artwork located in active vehicular and pedestrian intersections, which serves to connect key locations, enhance pedestrian circulation, and guide passage to and from destinations.
- **Neighborhood Identity Artwork.** Neighborhood identity artwork are permanent artwork installations located within neighborhood centers and parks where people congregate and interact. It strengthens a sense of neighborhood identity and signals a community gathering place.
- **Temporary Artwork.** Temporary art installations are non-permanent artwork in a range of media and scale that are displayed for a limited amount of time. It serves to enliven and refresh the pedestrian experience, enhance tourism and pique awareness of the built environments.



Performing Arts

Performing arts are different from visual arts, which is when artists use paint, canvas or various materials to create physical or static art objects. Performing arts can include several disciplines, each performed in front of a live audience. The City of Peoria is home to two unique and special performing arts facilities:

Peoria Center for the Performing Arts

The Peoria Center for the Performing Arts (PCPA) opened its doors in 2007. Shortly thereafter the city entered into a joint venture with Theater Works to be the resident theater company to bring award-winning theater to the downtown area. As a destination, it features more than 200 events a year including: live theater, classical concerts, jazz, popular music, dance, comedy, cultural events, festivals, youth and adult education classes and much more. The Peoria Center for the Performing Arts has a 270-seat state-of-the-art Main Stage theater and an 80-seat Black Box theater, classrooms, set construction and costume shops and dressing rooms.

Arizona Broadway Theater

From the time construction began in 2004 to today, Arizona Broadway Theatre (ABT) has taken great care to create a beautiful, versatile performance space that allows for every type of theatrical production, special event, and musical extravaganza. ABT's main stage performance space includes a 6,300 square-foot house with table seating for 470 patrons, where every seat in the house has an unobstructed view of the stage. ABT's balcony section is also available for large party or private group rental, accommodating up to 40 patrons. There is tableside dining with a full menu that changes for each show, and themed towards the production itself.



Arizona Broadway Theatre

Old Town Arts and Culture Program

Peoria currently has an abundance of arts and cultural resources within Old Town. The Peoria Center for the Performing Arts, located in Old Town, was constructed in 2007 and is a joint venture between the City and the non-profit organization, Theater Works. The center brings award winning theater productions to downtown Peoria along with youth programming, summer camps, and special events. Additionally, there are two art galleries that are located nearby at the Main Library and at City Hall.

In addition to the Performing Arts Center and galleries being located in Old Town, there are also many historic and significant buildings that can be found in this area, including Fire Station No. 1, First Presbyterian Church, Peoria High School “Old Main”, the Edwards Hotel, and the Jail Building. Because this area is culturally enriched, there is an opportunity to create an Arts and Cultural Program for Old Town to capture these unique assets.

To foster arts and cultural facilities, the program should allow and encourage arts or cultural related uses, such as, but not limited to, studios, performance space, galleries, street performances, musical events, and festivals. The program should inform the desired scale of development, mixed-land uses, accessibility, and other factors that would be appropriate for arts-related uses. The potential for this program is described in the policies for arts in this chapter.



Artists: Charith and Michael Denson and Arnold Guerrero



Future Arts Opportunities

The lack of financial resources and financial stability is a constant and debilitating concern for the arts. The challenge continues to be identifying and developing new sources of funding and to strengthen existing sources of support for the arts. Peoria continues its legacy by financially contributing to the arts throughout the city each fiscal year. For example, the City has implemented the Percent for Arts Program to contribute 1% of costs for public projects towards public art. This program currently applies to capital improvement building projects funded by the City of Peoria. Art funded by this program is selected by the Arts Commission and approved by the City Council. Locations where public art has been funded through this program include the Peoria Art Gallery at City Hall, and the Library Art Gallery at the Main Library.

Future arts opportunities are also encouraged through the Art Grants Award, which is implemented through the Peoria Arts Commission. Through this program, non-profit organizations can apply for assistance in funding performing or visual arts installments, which could help fund programs, festivals, murals, or other projects that would contribute to the use of the space. As Peoria continues to grow, the City will continue to explore opportunities to increase public art in the community.

6.5 EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

Improving schools, enriching the education of youth, and expanding the role of career training, higher education, and lifelong learning are major priorities for Peoria. As a city, Peoria recognizes that having access to quality education for our youth and being able to continue that education as adults is a key factor in sustaining and enhancing our quality of life. For example, having a high-quality educational system can attract and retain a dynamic workforce, along with attract and retain businesses that bring skilled, high-wage jobs, which in turn enhance the local economy.

While schools are completely separate and distinct entities with their own mission, governing bodies, and revenue sources, the City continually looks for strategic and innovative ways to partner with them and other educational institutions and agencies to offer residents a variety of services and programs related to education and learning. By leveraging these relationships, the City desires to improve the quality of its schools, enhance the education and job skills of its residents, and develop into a recognized center of quality education and lifelong learning. The objectives of this section also closely correlate both directly and indirectly with other chapters of the General Plan including Economic Prosperity, Smart Growth and Healthy Neighborhoods.

Early Childhood Development

Childcare and early childhood development is vital to the success of Peoria's families and youth. At its most basic level, childcare makes it possible for parents to work and financially support their families. In addition, quality childcare and childhood development programs provide early experiences that play a crucial role in the future success of children. Results of studies show that early childhood development programs, such as preschool, also significantly increases a child's chances of graduating from high school and college.



Public Schools

The majority of the urbanized area of Peoria is within the Peoria Unified School District (PUSD); however, there are actually six school districts that include some portion of Peoria within their respective boundaries: Peoria Unified, Deer Valley Unified, Dysart Unified, Morristown Elementary, Nadaburg Unified, and Wickenburg. Each of the six are briefly discussed below and shown in Figure 7.



Peoria Unified School District

PUSD encompasses the majority of the City of Peoria and also extends into Glendale, Surprise and Youngtown. Established in 1889, PUSD is one of the largest unified school districts in Arizona. There are 34 elementary schools, of which 22 are within the city's boundary, which are shown on **Figure 16**. Likewise, four of the seven PUSD comprehensive high schools, and the one non-traditional high school are located within Peoria. They are:

- Peoria High School – opened 1922
- Centennial High School – opened 1990
- Sunrise Mountain High School– opened 1996
- Liberty School – opened 2006
- Peoria Flex Academy – opened 2005

Deer Valley Unified School District

The Deer Valley Unified School District (DVUSD) boundary encompasses 367 square miles and extends into Phoenix, Glendale, Peoria, Anthem, New River, Cave Creek and unincorporated areas of Maricopa County. Of the 32 elementary and middle schools, only two are within Peoria city limits - Terramar School and West Wing Elementary. The residential communities of Pleasant Valley, West Wing, Rock Springs, Terramar, Sonoran Mountain Ranch, and Aloravita are within the DVUSD boundary.

Nadaburg Unified School District

Nadaburg Unified School District (NUSD) encompasses 154 square miles of northwest Maricopa County, which includes a portion of the northwestern portion of Peoria. Master planned communities such as Saddleback Heights and the western portion of Vistancia are within the Nadaburg school boundary; however, construction within these areas has not commenced to date.

Dysart Unified School District

A small portion of the 140 square miles served by the Dysart Unified School District (DUSD) boundaries extend into the City of Peoria. More specifically, the area between 115th Avenue and El Mirage Road, and from Beardsley Road to Harmony Lane is outside of the existing city limits; however, it is within the Peoria Municipal Planning Area boundary.

Morristown Elementary School District

The Morristown Elementary School District extends into the far northwestern portion of the city, outside of the existing city limits, but within the Peoria Municipal Planning Area.

Wickenburg Unified School District

The Wickenburg Unified School District (WUSD) spans from north of the Yavapai County line on the north end down to Bell Road within the City of Buckeye at its south border. Because the northern most portion of City of Peoria falls within Yavapai County, near Lake Pleasant, that area is within the WUSD school border

Other Schools

In addition to the traditional public schools, Peoria receives the benefit of other non-traditional schools, such as but not limited to charter schools, which are located throughout the city.

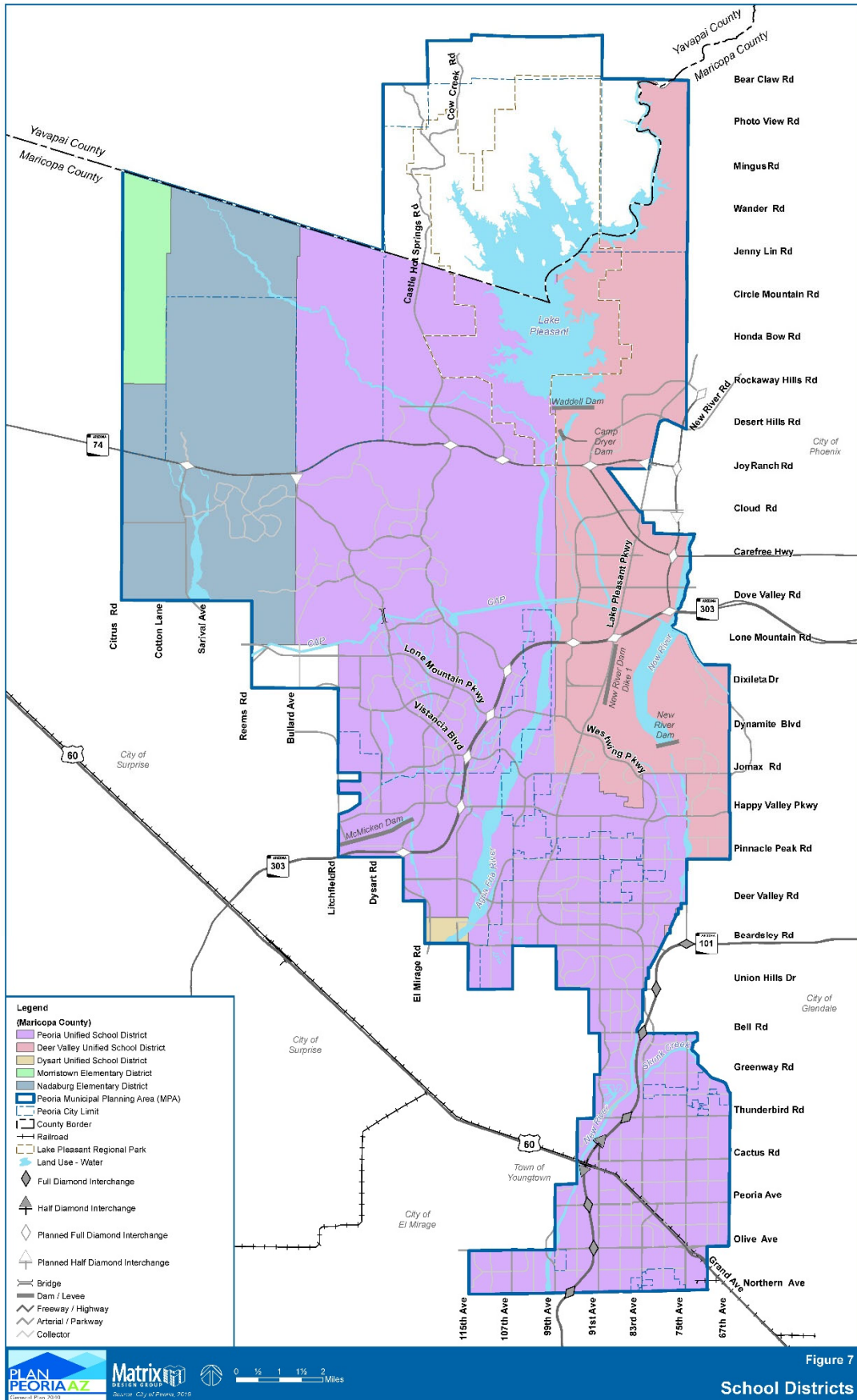
Higher Education

Higher education opportunities are vital for any community as they contribute to an educated workforce and can help with business attraction. In addition to the primary and secondary schools, Peoria is also home to Huntington University, which offers graduate and undergraduate programs in the emerging fields of digital media arts (DMA). DMA is a recognized Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) discipline that can impact all business and community organizations. As the City continues to grow, Peoria will continue to seek out opportunities to increase educational opportunities that correlate to the targeted growth industries. These higher education opportunities may include universities, community colleges, and career technical education (CTE).

Lifelong Learning

Peoria recognizes that learning is not confined to formal education and job training, but takes place throughout life and in a range of situations. “Lifelong learning” can then be defined as ongoing, voluntary, and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge, primarily for personal enjoyment and satisfaction. Given the numerous benefits of continuing education, our community has the desire to be a center for lifelong learning. Accordingly, the goals and policies within this General Plan strive to create a variety of lifelong learning opportunities that extend beyond an individual’s formal education and career training. These opportunities may be offered through local colleges, museums, libraries, self-directed learning circles, senior centers, and community organizations.

Arts, Cultural, and Recreational Enrichment



6.6 LIBRARY SYSTEM

Currently, the library system in Peoria comprises two public libraries, the Main Library and Sunrise Mountain Library. However, the library system goes beyond its traditional role of being a place where residents check out books. Peoria libraries play a number of important roles in the social fabric of the community, as they are the educational, informational and cultural heart of the community. They offer a gathering place, provide valuable meeting spaces, foster and support community involvement, and provide a safe and central public space. In addition, library services support literacy, allow for personal and professional development, and offer free and enriching programs for individuals of all backgrounds.

The City of Peoria recognizes and understands the critical role that libraries play within the community, and have development goals and policies within this chapter to advance the library system, using the following strategies outlined below.

The Peoria Library System will:

- Be a community hub for the City of Peoria, enriching lives by providing a means of social and cultural interaction.
- Provide a flexible and adaptable physical space that is accessible to all residents and adequately supports collections and services.
- Enhance existing collections and services.
- Improve marketing, outreach, and communications with patrons, media, and stakeholders.
- Provide the highest level of customer service to all residents.
- Develop new offerings to patrons, as community needs change.
- Adapt services as new technology becomes available.





6.7 RECREATIONAL ENRICHMENT

Peoria residents recognize the importance of high-quality parks, and recreation facilities. In this manner, the city’s parks, natural areas and recreational programs are integral to creating a community that is socially and physically connected as discussed within the Healthy Neighborhood chapter. In this manner, the city’s recreational facilities, along with programs and services provide valuable opportunities to engage and enrich residents and visitors alike. Parks, paths and trails provide a variety of opportunities for recreation, social interaction, community-building and visual respite.



The City’s existing park system provides a solid foundation for creating a comprehensive and integrated network that strengthens neighborhoods, improves community image and supports a strong economy. A well-designed, quality and accessible park system contributes to the economic attractiveness of an area and helps to draw private sector investment into the community. Accordingly, the City of Peoria is committed to maintaining exceptional parks, plazas and recreational amenities for its residents.

Recreational Master Plans

Since 1996, the City of Peoria adopted of master plans to outline the need for future recreational facilities and services, and establish a framework for suture parks, trails and community centers throughout the community. While a number of recommendations have been implemented and the result is an impressive and expansive comprehensive recreational network as of today, our community is still young and growing. As we look to the future, the City will need to continually review and refine its master plans to maintain and enhance our recreational trail systems today and into the horizon.

The five areas of focus for enhancing the Peoria’s city-wide recreational system are:

- Park and Facility Development and Enhancement;
- Programs and Services Delivery;
- Partnerships and Collaborative Efforts;
- Internal Department Organization and Staffing Needs; and
- Funding Resources and Budget Allocations.

Park and Recreation Center Designation Classification Guidelines

Overtime, the City of Peoria has developed and maintained park and recreation classification guidelines which establish minimum expectations in order to deliver parks amenities that meet the needs of the community. Currently, Peoria utilizes ~~five-different~~ eight (8) classifications as below. Within this classification set, there is a range of both passive and active recreational activities and amenities that can occur within each designation park-classification. However, the designations generally do imply a type and size of facility and a level of service that corresponds to current public expectations.

Because recreational standards and best practices evolve to meet the changing needs of the community, the park and recreation designations classifications identified below should be regularly reviewed and modified as needed to maintain relevancy and effectiveness.

- **Mini Park:** ~~A-1-10~~ Typically these parks are under five (5) acres park-serving-in size and serve users within 0.25 mile radius. Visitation will generally arrange between 30 minutes to 1 hour in length. Additionally, ~~T~~ these parks are generally privately owned and operated by homeowner associations and provide needed recreational space and potential drainage areas for the ~~within~~ neighborhoods.
- **Neighborhood Park:** ~~A-10-40~~ Typically these parks are under twenty (20) acres in size and park serving serve users within a one (1) mile radius. Visitation will generally arrange from one (1) to three (3) hours in length. These parks serve the residents of the immediate and adjacent neighborhoods and may serve a dual role in acting as stormwater retention for the area. Neighborhood parks are generally maintained by the City of Peoria. Amenities may include: Playgrounds, ramadas, multi-purpose courts, usable turf areas, fitness stations, path/trail connections, restrooms, and parking. ~~Some examples of neighborhood parks include Deer Village Park, Parkridge Park, and Sunnyslope Park.~~
- **Community Park:** A 40-100 acre park that generally serve serving users within 3 to 5 miles; however, have a regional draw particularly during recreation tournaments. These parks include all the assets typical of neighborhood parks along with facilities to serve the larger area of the community. Peoria maintains ~~two~~ three community parks—Pioneer Community Park, ~~and~~ Rio Vista Community Park, and Paloma Community Park. Visitation will generally arrange from one (1) to five (5) hours in length. Amenities may include: Lighted baseball/softball fields, lighted multi-purpose fields and/or sport courts, shaded playgrounds, splash pads, skateboard park, concessions, path/trail connections, restrooms, and parking. ~~A third community park, Paloma Park, is currently under construction, with Phase I expected to be completed in 2020.~~
- **Regional Park:** A 100+ ~~400~~ acre park serving users within a 30 to 60-minute drive time. A regional park typically offers primary recreational opportunities that have a broad appeal on a regional basis. Patrons of regional parks are generally willing to drive to the facility and have an expectation that they will pay for use of the facility. Peoria contains ~~two~~ one regional parks—the ~~Peoria Sports Complex and~~ Lake Pleasant Regional Park. Visitation will generally arrange from two (2) hours to all day. Amenities may include: Marinas, lake/water features, nature centers, camping/camp grounds, restrooms, concessions, picnic areas, paths, trails, equestrian access, and open space.



- **Special Use Park:** Special Use Parks may be designed to be focused on a historic/cultural/social sites, or alternatively a specific function or an asset that meets a community or regional need and enjoyment. More specifically, these spaces do not fall within a typical park classification and will vary in size and service area depending on the amenities and recreational opportunities provided. It is possible for a special-use facility to be located either within or adjacent to another park. Alternatively, they may be located adjacent to another type of civic or institutional related facility. These parks can be provided or managed by the City, or through a partnership with not-for-profit or private entities with unique expertise directly related to the Specialty Park. Visitation time will vary based on the focus or specialty amenities of each park.

The Peoria Sports Complex is designated as a Special-Use Park, and there are up to two (2) future special use parks contemplated within the Vistancia Master Planned Community. Amenities may include: Multiple lighted baseball/softball fields, lighted multi-purpose fields and/or sport courts, shaded inclusive playgrounds, picnic areas with ramadas, restrooms, and regional path/trail connections. ~~A park dedicated to specific or limited purpose recreational activities. These parks vary in size and service area depending on the amenities and recreational opportunities provided. Special Use Parks generally fall within three categories:~~

- ~~Historic/Cultural/social sites~~
- ~~Recreational facilities~~
- ~~Outdoor recreation facilities~~

- **Community Recreation Center:** Also known as Recreation Centers, these are indoor facilities of varying sizes and service areas which provide local and area residents with a place to gather, recreate, and acquire / share public information. These centers are typically located in or near Neighborhood, Community or Regional parks.

They may specialize in services for adults, seniors, or youths. Amenities may include a gymnasium, classrooms, game rooms, meeting rooms, restrooms, kitchen area, staff offices, and storage areas. Programs and activities offered at Community Recreation Centers vary and may include items such as but not limited to arts and crafts, martial arts, exercise and fitness, dance, after school programs, education planning, senior citizen programs, youth organizations, organized clubs, community meetings, and special and cultural events.

- **Open Space / Conservation Lands:** Open space/conservation lands are undeveloped but may include natural or paved trails. Open space/conservation lands contain natural resources that can be managed for recreation and natural resource conservation values, such as a desire to protect wildlife habitat, water quality, and endangered species. Open space/conservation lands also can provide opportunities for nature-based, unstructured, low-impact recreational opportunities, such as walking and nature viewing. Amenities may include paved or natural trails, wildlife viewing areas, mountain biking, disc golf, and interpretation and education facilities.

- Conservation Park: Conservation parks are sites that preserve natural and/or cultural resources, including hillsides, areas containing native trees, areas containing native plants, grasslands, riparian areas, historic sites, and more. Typically, conservation parks are a minimum of five (5) acres in size in order to provide a habitat area of sufficient size to reasonably support native wildlife. Some conservation parks may be smaller and still retain this designation because of the unique natural or cultural resources located there. Conservation parks feature limited or no development and should provide a tranquil setting for experiences in the outdoors. Typical length of stay is two hours to all day. Amenities are limited or none, usually only trails



Paths and Trails

A comprehensive path and trail network will include a range of path and trail types. These vary from soft-surface trails in remote natural areas to shared use concrete paths adjacent to major roadways, river corridors and washes. It is preferential to have the paths and trails separated from vehicular roadways even if it is just a landscape buffer. These path corridors are enhanced when they include appropriate pedestrian amenities, aesthetic elements, enhanced landscaping and connections to desired destinations. The City should continue to seek pedestrian corridors that are separate from vehicles as a means to improve safety and the recreational experience as well as promoting functional alternative modes of transportation. For more information regarding this subject, refer to Section 4.3 within the Integrated Transportation chapter.



Recreational Centers

Large multi-purpose and multi-generational community recreation centers provide a “one-stop” facility with a wide variety of amenities to serve all ages. At present, the City of Peoria contains two recreation centers— Rio Vista Recreation Center and Peoria Community Center.

Rio Vista Recreational Center

The Rio Vista Recreation Center is designed to be a versatile, family-friendly facility. Its numerous amenities and programs are intended to engage residents and promote healthy lifestyles. The Recreation Center is home to a number of firsts in Peoria, including the first public gymnasium, the first indoor racquetball courts, the first climbing wall and so much more. The 52,000 square-foot facility was recognized by the Arizona Parks and Recreation Association as an Outstanding Facility of the Year in 2007 and in 2008.

Peoria Community Center

The Peoria Community Center is a 26,000 square foot, state-of-the-art facility located in the heart of downtown Peoria. The Center offers a broad range of activities and classes for all ages such as arts and crafts, dance, games, wellness, and more. It also serves as a multi-purpose space for community events, meetings, lectures, and activities. Designed by Gabor Lorant Architects of Phoenix, the building has been recognized with a LEED™ Gold certification for its environmentally responsible design.

Peoria Sports Complex

Spring training has a long history in Peoria starting in the 1970s when Peoria’s Greenway Sports Complex served as a minor-league training facility for the Milwaukee Brewers baseball team. The facility was located at 83rd Avenue and Greenway Road. As major league spring training (the Cactus League) developed in the Phoenix area, the Peoria Sports Complex was constructed in 1994 and developed into the first Major League Baseball spring training facility in Arizona shared by two teams.

In 2014, both teams re-signed to train in Peoria for another 20 years, causing the facility to undergo extensive renovations over a multiyear period. The team clubhouses were updated in 2014, and the stadium followed during 2015-16 with improvements and construction of concourses, outdoor group areas, an enlarged team store, an expanded ticket office, an indoor event space, shaded seating, and a youth playground. The 12,518 seat stadium and 13 baseball fields host a number of community events as well as professional and amateur baseball events, while serving as the year-round player development home of both Major League Baseball (MLB) teams.



Natural Areas

Peoria covers some of the most beautiful and biologically diverse natural desert lands in Maricopa and Yavapai counties. The area contains Lake Pleasant, is located in the foothills of the Hieroglyphic Mountains and is surrounded by some of the last vestiges of the Sonoran Desert in the Phoenix metropolitan area. The region is also distinctive from the standpoint that two major water courses – the



Agua Fria River and New River – run through the northern portions of the City. Along and between the river basins is a rich reserve of cultural resources. The region’s Sonoran Desert is also one of the most beautiful, unique and fragile environments on the planet. Although one of the hottest deserts in North America, it receives enough rainfall to support a diverse and lush environment including the distinctive Saguaro Cactus.

The distinctive beauty of the Sonoran Desert draws both residents and tourists to these rugged open spaces. This unique ecology and biodiversity, significant cultural sites, and beautiful, scenic landscapes that the City of Peoria desires to preserve for its citizens and future generations to enjoy and appreciate. Peoria residents and business leaders recognize the challenge and the importance of planning for an appropriate balance in conservation and preservation of significant desert lands in balance with future growth. Accordingly, the City will continue to take proactive steps to conserve and protect these natural and open spaces while allowing for their passive and active use.



6.8 GOALS AND POLICIES

GOALS

1. **Community Strengthen Through Enrichment:** Integration of art, culture, and education as vital aspects of community life, providing enrichment to residents and visitors.
2. **Accessibility to Art:** Improve livability by increasing accessibility to the Arts through a variety of avenues for expression and creativity.
3. **Enhanced Economic Opportunities:** Encourage and promote opportunities for the arts and artists to contribute to the economic development of Peoria.
4. **Arts and Culture Funding:** Establish a broad range of public and private funding sources to support the arts and cultural goals.
5. **Arts in Old Town:** Create a cultural and artistic center of interest within Old Town.
6. **Celebrate Culture:** Protect, promote, and celebrate the City's rich heritage and diverse culture.
7. **Historic Resources:** Foster protection and preservation of Peoria's historic and cultural resources, and educate residents and visitors about the city's history.
8. **Educational Facilities and Programming:** Educational facilities and programming in Peoria provide exceptional learning environments and opportunities that give all citizens a strong sense of community pride.
9. **Lifelong Learning:** Libraries act as a focal point of civic engagement and activity that encourages community interaction and life-long learning.
10. **An integrated recreational system:** Expand the network of open space and community facilities while linking them together along natural washes, pedestrian-friendly streets and multimodal corridors for multiple benefits.
11. **Diverse Recreational Programs:** Promote health, physical fitness, leisure, creativity and entertainment with programs and services for residents and visitors with a diverse range of abilities and interests.
12. **Safe and High-Quality Recreational Facilities:** Provide safe, high-quality, distinctive parks and community facilities that support secure places for social interaction, community identity, beauty and livability.



POLICIES

Arts and Culture

- AC-1** Regularly review and update the Arts and Cultural Master Plan to provide a framework that advances the arts as a key element in enhancing quality of life, promoting economic development, enhancing education, and celebrating our community.
- AC-2** Enhance public awareness of arts and culture in Peoria through education, communication, and marketing strategies.
- AC-3** Provide access to the arts and cultural resources for all neighborhoods and segments of the community so that all people may create and enjoy the arts.
- AC-4** Foster an environment of active participation in and attendance at artistic and educational programs and activities by residents and visitors.
- AC-5** Enhance cultural and social connections through opportunities for volunteerism and civic engagement; more public gathering places, family-friendly activities, and public art; and more events that connect residents to one another.
- AC-6** Develop guidelines to prioritize support for artists, institutions, programs or projects that increase awareness and visibility of diverse, relevant and historic arts in Peoria, and involve citizens in art form expressions related to social and cultural themes.
- AC-7** Promote cooperative arrangements with other public and private agencies that facilitate the temporary or permanent display of art within or upon public or private facilities and land.
- AC-8** Where possible, provide interim spaces within existing facilities or businesses for arts and arts education opportunities.
- AC-9** Support cultural tourism and the creative economy by investing in and expanding multi-cultural programs that enhance arts and cultural programs, services, organizations, and artists to ensure their long-term vitality and continued benefits to all residents.
- AC-10** Connect arts with science and technology as a catalyst for innovation.
- AC-11** Provide financial assistance through a variety of dedicated city and contributed sources to groups or individuals who provide public arts programming to residents.
- AC-12** Allocate funding for the acquisition, maintenance, and conservation of public art within or upon public or private facilities and land.
- AC-13** Explore opportunities and funding strategies for developing dedicated arts-oriented gathering places and venues that ensure wide availability and accessibility to arts and arts education opportunities.
- AC-14** Acknowledge and support local artists and creatives as a foundation for the expansion of the community's cultural development.

- AC-15** Cultural facilities such as theatres, museums, and galleries are a visible component of the community's cultural identity, and are elevated through thoughtful management and strategic investment.
- AC-16** Promote arts and culture as a key component of the revitalization effort within Old Town.
- AC-17** Identify site specific opportunities to develop, attract, and retain a *Creative Economy* within Old Town.
- AC-18** Build on previous improvements, such as upgraded streetscapes and public gathering areas to further enhance the Old Town environment.
- AC-19** Promote the creation of greater partnerships between the city, businesses and education to help develop additional arts programs for students.

Historic Preservation

- HP-1** Strengthen and enhance the historic, natural, and cultural character of Peoria while promoting long-term sustainable economic development.
- HP-2** Maintain and update the Historic Preservation Master Plan to guide preservation efforts.
- HP-3** Recognize opportunities to partner with non-profits and similar organizations to highlight the City's living history and enhance the historic preservation program.
- HP-4** Continue to manage the local Peoria Register of Historic Places.
- HP-5** Update and expand the City's Historic Resources Survey to inventory additional geographic areas where buildings are at least 50 years old or archaeological resources are present.
- HP-6** Maintain the City's designation as a Certified Local Government (CLG) by adhering to the responsibilities outlined in the CLG agreement with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), in order to retain local control of historic preservation decisions as delegated by the SHPO.
- HP-7** Utilize the CLG program grant funding available from the SHPO to nominate buildings to the National Register of Historic Places, preserve Peoria heritage, and educate the community on Peoria's history.
- HP-8** Encourage the adaptive re-use of historically significant properties through incentive and education programs.
- HP-9** Encourage new development to be compatible with adjacent historical structures in scale, massing, building materials, and general architectural treatment.
- HP-10** Through the design review process, encourage the adaption of and compatible reuse of historic buildings in order to preserve the historic resources that are a part of Peoria's heritage.



- HP-11** Discourage the demolition of structures and buildings identified as historic resources on the City's Historic Resources Surveys.
- HP-12** Include historic properties in the City's programs and partnerships to develop an array of housing options.
- HP-13** Pursue designation as a Preserve America Community to support efforts to preserve Peoria's historic resources.
- HP-14** Enforce the standards and guidelines for signage intended to identify, describe, and commemorate Peoria's historic resources.
- HP-15** Continue to develop interpretive/informational materials to promote Peoria's heritage as well as general information pamphlets discussing the City's historic preservation program.
- HP-16** Create and distribute handouts and applications available for programs such as state and federal tax incentives, and any local incentives for residents and developers.
- HP-17** Provide information to developers and the public regarding preferred approaches for handling the historically significant buildings on their properties.
- HP-18** Encourage owners of properties deemed historically significant by Historic Resource Surveys to support the nomination of their properties to the City's Local Register of Historic Places.
- HP-19** Recognize individuals, groups or businesses that have made a significant effort or contribution to the preservation, protection or restoration of historical or cultural resources.
- HP-20** Work with educational institutions in preservation programs and activities.
- HP-21** Encourage active community involvement in preservation efforts through city supported initiatives such as resource sponsorship programs.

Education and Library

- EL-1** Continue coordination with school districts and charter schools through the exchange of information regarding upcoming and ongoing development proposals.
- EL-2** Continue to encourage communication between school districts, charter schools and developers of projects with residential components.
- EL-3** Collaborate with school representatives regarding expansion of existing facilities and future school placement within the community.
- EL-4** Encourage connectivity between schools and surrounding developments through the use of sidewalks, bicycle lanes, multi-use paths, and trails that minimize crossings of collector and arterial streets.
- EL-5** Coordinate with local school districts, charter schools, and other public facilities, such as local libraries, to explore opportunities for complementary educational programs such as literacy programs, language-learning programs, and computer and technology programs.

- EL-6** Provide educational services that identify and respond to changing demographics and the needs of the citizenry, which address elements such as workforce resources and outreach, business training, etc.
- EL-7** Conduct a needs assessment with existing and future higher education institutions to develop or expand undergraduate, graduate, and certification programs that meet community and employer base needs.
- EL-8** Explore performance-based incentives for attracting post-secondary institutions that align with the target growth sectors in Peoria.
- EL-9** Host regular education seminars with regional partners, such as the Peoria Chamber of Commerce, Small Business Development Center, etc.
- EL-10** Partner with local school districts and charter schools to conduct regular Career Fairs that inform high school students of the types of careers that are available to them in Peoria after high school and the necessary steps to help prepare for those careers.
- EL-11** Inventory educational and skills training programs, and engage the business community to help funnel local skilled labor to growing fields within Peoria to accommodate any gap in skills-to-employment needs.
- EL-12** Peoria libraries should partner with local schools to provide offerings that are in line with the established curriculum of the schools in the area.
- EL-13** The Community Services Master Plan shall establish review time frames and methods for assessing technology related needs and programming that provide modern technologies, and training for the community on the use of those technological elements.
- EL-14** Conduct annual assessments of the physical and programming needs of libraries to quantify capacity shortages in programming or physical space and work to adjust future budgetary needs as appropriate.
- EL-15** Identify opportunities for the expansion of library programs and events into parks and other community facilities to increase accessibility to these programs.
- EL-16** Expand the Friends of Peoria Public Libraries as well as other for-profit, and non-profit coordination as a means for programming activities and fundraising for the City's public libraries.
- EL-17** Expand library volunteer services programs to leverage volunteer expertise in supporting daily operations, programs, and engagement.
- EL-18** Design physical and environmental factors exterior to the library that draw people to communal gathering spaces such as exterior patio areas.
- EL-19** Ensure residents of all ages and physical- and learning- abilities have access to existing and new public libraries and programming.
- EL-20** Program additional library related facilities in the Capital Improvement Program based on needs assessments and programming specified within the Community Services Master Plan.



- EL-21** Build in flexibility to the programming and physical structure of libraries to accommodate a future array of uses such as makerspaces, meeting rooms, etc.
- EL-22** Accommodate makerspace with sufficient resources and bandwidth to address user needs.
- EL-23** Evaluate the feasibility of creating joint use facilities when planning for additional library locations or services. Joint uses can include school library media centers, academic libraries, and museums.
- EL-24** Coordinate with the elementary and higher education schools to increase the utilization of cultural and recreational opportunities available in the community by children and youth.

Recreational Enrichment

- RE-1** Develop strategies that will expand the system of large and small open spaces and community facilities linked together along natural washes, pedestrian-friendly streets and multimodal corridors.
- RE-2** Coordinate park development and upgrades with pedestrian and bicycle improvements to safely and comfortably connect residents to valuable recreational destinations.
- RE-3** Create a system of parks that equitably serves diverse community needs, offers a range of park types, facilities and activities and highlights natural features wherever possible.
- RE-4** Provide more transit opportunities to improve access to parks and recreation facilities.
- RE-5** Provide safe, high-quality, distinctive parks that support secure places for social interaction, community identity, beauty and livability.
- RE-6** Base park designs on the unique cultural, historic and environmental setting of an area so that each park is distinctive.
- RE-7** Promote safety and activate parks by programming for broad appeal, encouraging flexible spaces to accommodate a wide range of experiences and utilizing natural and technological surveillance measures.
- RE-8** Use efficient and sustainable design and maintenance practices to conserve natural resources and support environmental stewardship.
- RE-9** Where possible, highlight natural features, retrofit streets as “green streets”, expand urban greenery, utilize natural systems to manage stormwater, and improve pedestrian and bicycle connections to encourage non-vehicular modes of transit.
- RE-10** To enhance public enjoyment, provide public health benefits, and offer convenient opportunities for hands-on experiences in nature, provide appropriate access to natural environments with varying habitats.
- RE-11** Foster environmental stewardship and ongoing support for open space preservation through improved access and enjoyment of Peoria’s natural open spaces.

- RE-12** Increase opportunities for contact with nature on a smaller scale by designing urban parks and play areas to incorporate natural features.
- RE-13** Contribute to raising public awareness of natural and cultural resources and the value of connecting people to nature by encouraging interpretive features in the landscape.
- RE-14** Develop and expand recreational services and enrichment opportunities to best serve people of all incomes, cultural backgrounds, ages and levels of physical capability.
- RE-15** Provide a range of conveniently accessible, stimulating programs and services that meet the diverse needs of the community and improve the quality of life of all residents.

