



PRIORITY GOAL: PARKS, OPEN SPACE & TRAILS

OVERVIEW

Arizona is recognized nationally for an integrated, connected, and accessible system of parks, open space, and trails that provide quality outdoor recreational opportunities. Our mission is to establish, protect, and manage significant regional parks and open lands while fostering a sense of community and appreciation for the natural and cultural heritage of Arizona.

VISION

The **Statewide Sustainability Roadmap** envisions a sustainable system of parks, open space, and trails that are valued and supported by a culture of stewardship, conservation, and respect for natural resources.

Overall Vision

- 1** Are managed to promote environmental quality and preservation of all open, natural park, and recreational lands.
- 2** Provide equitable access to the outdoors for all users regardless of ability, age, income, or race.
- 3** Use technology to promote and support access (wifi, trail, biking, and park finder apps).
- 4** Contribute to the health of residents and the economy.



Encanto Park - Phoenix, AZ



Dobbins Lookout, South Mountain - Phoenix, AZ

GOALS & METRICS

The **Statewide Sustainability Roadmap** identifies goals and metrics for parks, open space, and trails that are necessary to promote a culture of stewardship, conservation, and respect for natural resources.

Goals for Parks

1 All parks offer multi-generational facilities/amenities.

Objectives & Metrics:

- All counties and municipalities undergo park master planning processes that address the needs of multi-generational users by 2025.
- Standards for new parks and park renovations that address the needs of changing neighborhood demographics are developed and incorporated into parks by 2030.

2 All Arizonans have safe access to parks.

Objectives & Metrics:

- Every Arizonan should be within a safe, 10-minute walk of a recreational facility (park, school, playground) by 2030.
- All parks include signage to promote awareness and access by 2030.
- Where appropriate, crosswalks, including pedestrian activated traffic controls, are installed at major intersections and busy roadways to enable safe access to parks by 2030.
- Bike/pedestrian routes are provided to connect neighborhoods and nearby parks by 2025.
- Shared use agreements are developed with neighborhood schools where park access is limited to increase access to school recreational facilities (ball fields, tracks, green spaces, playgrounds).

3 Arizonans are recognized for being stewards of their city, county, state, and federal parks.

Objectives & Metrics:

- All municipalities develop stewardship programs to engage community members in taking care of parks by 2025.
- Park budgets increase by 25% by 2030 due to new funding from local organization/ business partnerships and sponsorships.

Goals for Open Space

1 Open Space is conserved and managed to protect natural and cultural resources.

Objectives & Metrics:

- Preserve and protect wildlife corridors to provide linkages between open spaces.
- All counties and municipalities formally identify opportunities for future open space protection by 2023.
- Land is managed with a focus on conservation of resources (water, habitat, migration corridors, native plants, and agriculture).

2 Maintain the region's defining landscapes and vistas.

Objectives & Metrics:

- Hold open space land conversion to 20% in the next 20 years (state trust land/agriculture).
- Build state support for the preservation of 30% land/water in Arizona by 2030.*

* Aligns with 2021 federal executive order (30 by 30).

GOALS & METRICS

3 An Accessible Open Space Network for all Arizonans.

Objectives & Metrics:

- Ensure 90% of future new development does not restrict/prohibit access to established open spaces.
- Public transportation systems provide equitable access to open space trailheads by 2025.

Goals for Trails

1 A statewide interconnected trail system.

Objectives & Metrics:

- Create a statewide map and database of trails by 2023.
- Public transportation systems provide equitable access to open space trailheads by 2025.

2 Regional trail partnerships exist to foster collaboration and cooperation.

Objectives & Metrics:

- Develop a statewide organization by 2023 to provide ongoing coordination of and support for all existing and future trail systems.*
- Work with private landowners to create and/or preserve open space areas and or linear strips of land connecting open space areas.

* Network for Arizona Trails and the Statewide Collaboration on Recreation Enhancement are two organizations working in this space.

3 An accessible trail system for all Arizonans.

Objectives & Metrics:

- Increase access to trails by 50% by 2030 through developing public transportation connections to trailheads.
- Increase the miles of trails or pathways near residential development so that 75% of the population can access a trail within a 15-minute walk from home by 2030.
- Increase way-finding signage at all trail heads, trail intersections, and multi-use paths so that 85% of trails are identifiable to users by 2030.
- Promote awareness of trails, trail heads, multi-use pathways, and bike/pedestrian trails and the urban canal system.



Mountain View Park - Phoenix, AZ



Trail marker - Superstition Wilderness Area,
Tonto National Forest

CHALLENGES & ISSUES

Key Challenges To Address

- Lack of proactive planning for future parks and trails in undeveloped areas.
- Insufficient coordination and collaboration in open space planning between federal, state, county, and municipal government agencies.
- Identification of opportunities for changes in public land designations and uses.
- Lack of equitable access to natural open space areas, parks, and trails throughout the state in both urban and rural areas.
- Need for increase in the ability for and awareness of people to access parks and open space (walkability).
- Provide opportunities to experience diverse forms of open space in urban and rural environment (infill lots, pocket parks, agricultural lands/agritourism, community gardens/farms, and similar uses).
- Degradation of parks and open space due to increasing number of users and lack of sufficient funding for maintenance and programming.
- Create balanced and sustainable management plans for open space and parks to enhance biodiversity and protect natural resources.
- Promote parks and open spaces development as heat mitigation strategy.

STAKEHOLDERS & PARTNERS

Contributors

- Laurel Arndt - Environmental Planner, Pinyon Environmental Inc.
- Kenneth Steel - Healthy Communities Programs Manager, Pinnacle Prevention
- Dean Brennan - Co-chair, Arizona Alliance for Livable Communities
- Liza Oz-Golden - Program Manager, ASU Healthy Urban Environments Initiative
- Mike Park - Senior Landscape Architect, EPG Design
- Michael Patrick - Senior Project Manager, The Trust for Public Land
- Dale Larsen - Professor & Director of Community Relations & Engagement, ASU Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions
- Ian Dowdy - Director, Progress Meters, Center for the Future of Arizona.

