

Meeting Minutes

City Council Work Session

June 7, 2021 | 4:00 p.m.
Council Chambers Conference Room
88 E. Chicago St., Chandler, AZ



Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Kevin Hartke at 4:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Council Attendance

Mayor Kevin Hartke
Vice Mayor Mark Stewart
Councilmember OD Harris
Councilmember Terry Roe
*Councilmember René Lopez
Councilmember Christine Ellis

Appointee Attendance

Josh Wright, Acting City Manager
Debra Stapleton, Assistant City Manager
Kelly Schwab, City Attorney
Dana DeLong, City Clerk

*Councilmember Lopez attended telephonically.

Absent / Excused

Councilmember Orlando

Staff in Attendance

Matt Burdick, Communications and Public Affairs Director
Andy Bass, Community Services Director
Mickey Ohland, Community Services Planning Manager
Jeff Kratzke, Kimley – Horn Consultant
Mike Svetz, PROS Consulting

Discussion

1. Presentation and discussion regarding the Parks Master Plan.

MAYOR HARTKE called for a staff presentation.

JOSHUA WRIGHT, Acting City Manager, introduced the discussion item and said this is the third time Council has had a touchpoint with this plan. Mr. Wright said in January 2020 and September 2020 and now they would be presenting final recommendations.

ANDY BASS, Community Services Director, noted how much the public was involved in the Parks Master Plan update despite COVID-19. There was a lot of feedback from the community.

JEFF KRATZKE, Kimley – Horn Consultant, presented the following presentation.

Parks Strategic Master Plan

- Agenda
 - Public Support
 - Park Assessments
 - Levels of Service/Contribution Strategy and Equity Mapping
 - Strategic Direction
 - Questions
- Project Website
 - www.planchandlerparks.com
- City of Chandler Parks Needs Assessment Survey
 - Statistically Valid Survey
 - Only scientific and defensible method to understand community needs
 - Administered by mail/phone/web
 - Developed in partnership with the City
 - Methodology allows high return rate (25%-35%)
 - Total of 652 completed surveys, 95% level of confidence with a margin of error of +/- 3.8%
 - Goal was 500
- Public Support
- Support for Actions to Improve System
- Actions Most Willing to Fund
- Park Assessments
- In general, the overall impression of the Department's parks are as follows:
 - Parks are clean, consistent and well-maintained
 - Good variety of types and amenities
 - Newer parks have unique character
 - More shade is needed
 - Minor drainage and erosion issues
 - Parking lots need of resurfacing
 - Restrooms are aging
 - Vehicular and pedestrian conflicts
- Chandler HOA Parks
 - In addition, staff and the consultant team inventoried the City's HOA parks and facilities
 - Over 800 acres of neighborhood parks were identified and inventoried

- Developed HOA parks provide 36% of the total of publicly accessible developed park acreage in Chandler

VICE MAYOR STEWART asked why sports lighting and fields were not counted.

MR. KRATZKE said they looked at all of the facilities offered and most of the facilities do not have lighted facilities in the HOA parks.

MIKE SVETZ, PROS Consulting Consultant, continued the presentation.

- Level of Service
- Level of Service and Contribution Strategy Methodology
 - Level of Service population based standards are developed using a combination of local, regional and national resources including:
 - Current Level of Service and Utilization
 - Current Inventory and its condition ratings
 - Opportunity to acquire and develop/redevelop park land
 - Recreation participation rates
 - Prioritization of Community Need
 - Operational and Financial Sustainability
- Trail and Conservation Park Assumptions
 - Population based standards are NOT developed for:
 - Conservation Park Acreage
 - Trail Miles
 - Conservation Park acquisition is based on resource location and opportunity to acquire this typology of park land rather than City population
 - Trail Miles is based on developing a connected network rather than City population

MAYOR HARTKE asked if Veteran's Oasis Park was considered a conservation park and if that was the only one that would fall in this category.

MR. SVETZ said yes.

MR. SVETZ continued the presentation.

- Current Inventory – Parks and Acreage
- Future Needs – Parks and Acreage

MAYOR HARTKE asked what number was associated with full build out.

MR. SVETZ said about 350,000 to show a projection far in the future and would be contingent on how the community builds out.

MR. SVETZ continued the presentation.

- Future City of Chandler Parks and Opportunities

- Future Needs – Athletic Fields
- Future Needs – Sports Courts

VICE MAYOR STEWART asked if the recommended service level for one court was based on total population or age groups.

MR. SVETZ said it is based on the primary age group associated with it for some specific amenities. For other amenities it may be all inclusive of the entire population.

VICE MAYOR STEWART asked where they got that basis.

MR. SVETZ said using the methodology and the demographic information that is broken down by age segmentation. Mr. Svetz said they have a good understanding of how many people are in the age group now and then what the projection is for the future.

VICE MAYOR STEWART asked if this was an internal number to create these numbers.

MR. SVETZ said this methodology is not quite an algorithm but it pretty close regarding establishing what that is. Mr. Svetz said they also take into consideration the current service level and meeting needs now and be realistic about the recommendations.

MAYOR HARTKE asked if this algorithmic number is just applied in recreational groups across regions.

MR. SVETZ said no, it is based on Chandler. Mr. Svetz said they take into account what norms are and use the community values and needs. Chandler is a balanced age group and would continue to be that way. Mr. Svetz said these service standards would not be the same for another City because their demographics are different and the way the community uses the parks are different.

MR. SVETZ continued the presentation.

- Future Needs – Traditional Amenities
- Future City of Chandler Parks and Opportunities – Impact on Need
- Equity Mapping
- Neighborhood Park Map – City Only
- Neighborhood Park Map – HOA
- Neighborhood Park Map – Combined
- Community Parks Map
- Regional Park Map
- Special Use Parks Map
- Baseball Fields – Lighted Map
- Softball Fields – Lighted Map
- Multi-Purpose Fields Lighted Map
- Outdoor Basketball Courts – Lighted Map
- Tennis Courts – Lighted Map

- Pickleball Courts Map
- Ramadas Map
- Off Leash Dog Parks Map
- Playgrounds Map
- Accessibility and Proximity Standards
 - Further service delivery analysis should be undertaken to ensure equitable access to parks and recreation facilities
 - Bike and Trails Master Plan
- Strategic Direction
- Areas of Focus
 - Improve Access to parks and trail and Maintain Quality
 - Increase Connectivity in alignment with Transportation Master Plan
 - Invest in Existing Resources
 - Create an Economic Catalyst
 - Ensure Operational, Environmental and Financial Sustainability

VICE MAYOR STEWART asked for more information on the economic catalyst piece.

MR. SVETZ said when they talk about special use parks it has an opportunity to become more than just a single use park. It has an opportunity to provide multiple experiences and some of that could be athletic fields. Mr. Svetz said they need to determine the highest and best use of the park and complete an economic analysis to determine what the park could be. Mr. Svetz said from there they should determine to see if there is the ability to drive tourism through the park system.

MR. SVETZ said feasibility studies are really the key part to making that happen.

VICE MAYOR STEWART said Chandler does not have a strong tourism and asked if sports tourism was popular.

MR. SVETZ said it can be, but you have to take into account if there is too much saturation in the area and that is where the economic impact analysis helps understand if it is worth doing.

MAYOR HARTKE said they have sports fields that bring in regional draws, but they are building a huge sports field in east Mesa. Mayor Hartke asked if there are niche type of economic drives that could work that aren't being overcapitalized in the Valley.

MR. SVETZ said the Valley is hard in that it is a very sport-oriented location in fall, winter, spring. Mr. Svetz said there are opportunities in the outdoor or adventure recreation. Mr. Svetz said they could do a request for interest to see the private development side of the equation. Mr. Svetz this could include ropes courses or ziplining and really take advantage of the nice weather. It is important to go through the process and see if it makes financial sense.

MAYOR HARTKE said cricket and badminton are popular and asked if those bring in people as well.

MR. SVETZ said he was not sure but thought there were pockets in the West, but not like it is in Florida and areas of the East Coast. They can use the Master Plan and then see if there is a way to expand the reach and see what potential niches are. This is market definition and competition analysis which then sets the stage to make a decision on something like that.

VICE MAYOR STEWART said that was not included in the RFP.

MR. SVETZ said that was correct.

MR. SVETZ continued the presentation.

- Highest Priority Recommendations
 - Prioritize lifecycle replacement of assets in parks
 - Provide significant renovations at aging parks
 - Complete a renovation of Folley Park
 - Continue improvements to Snedigar Sports Complex
- Highest Priority Recommendations
 - Consider the development of an updated site-specific master plan for Desert Breeze Park
 - Continue to implement the master plan for Tumbleweed Park
 - Complete the development of planned parks (Lantana Mesquite Grove and Homestead North Parks)
 - Continue to be a regional partner in Sports Tourism
- Other Priority Recommendations
 - Consider a pilot project of converting one athletic field to synthetic turf
 - Develop a Bike/Trails Master Plan in alignment with Transportation Master Plan
 - Conduct a sports tourism feasibility study to include current park assets and impact of new facilities being built in surrounding communities
 - Conduct a feasibility study and site-specific master plan for the redevelopment of South Chandler Regional Parks
 - Consider exploring options with private developers to meet park needs in north Chandler and other parks of the City as needed

COUNCILMEMBER ROE said he thought it was a good and they couldn't do it all but there are schools that have facilities as well.

MR. SVETZ said in Arizona a lot of the campuses are locked down, but the schools do provide opportunities.

COUNCILMEMBER ROE asked about the tennis courts and what it would take to have major tournaments.

MR. BASS said they do have major tournaments here and there, and there are three to four a year. Mr. Bass said there was a junior tournament where people from out of state and some out of the country came.

COUNCILMEMBER ROE asked if that was maxed out or if there was opportunity there to grow.

MR. BASS said there is a balance between how many tournaments there are and ensuring there is access for the residents. Mr. Bass said they take any tournaments requested from the US Tennis Association.

MICKEY OHLAND, Community Services Planning Manager, said they do have the ability to add three more courts there.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ said he thought there was further expansion than just the three.

MR. BASS said there is a spot to the southwest that would hold three courts.

MAYOR HARTKE said there were a lot of comments when the courts were shut down during COVID-19 so there is a large group of regular players.

VICE MAYOR STEWART said he thought it was good to find a niche, but they still need softball fields, soccer fields, pickleball courts, and more trails. Vice Mayor Stewart said he loved the analysis to better understand the HOA parks, but they need to continue to work on getting more lighted fields for the kids.

MR. KRATZKE said not all communities have what Chandler has as far as the extensiveness of the coverage.

MAYOR HARTKE said it does seem that Hamilton High School and Chandler High School is fairly open for public use but a lot of them are locked down. Mayor Hartke said he wished there was a relationship with the schools like before when they were open about 10 to 15 years ago but that is not the case anymore.

COUNCILMEMBER ROE thought there was an opportunity with the schools and just like with the aquatic centers they should have the same for this as well.

MR. BASS said he has been working on this for the past two years and they are starting to make some progress.

VICE MAYOR STEWART asked if that was the school board to decide.

MAYOR HARTKE said yes, the administration has not been in favor ever since the Colorado shootings. Before then there were no gates or fencing.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS said there are also human trafficking concerns.

MAYOR HARTKE said they are weak in indoor facilities. Mayor Hartke said there is Tumbleweed and some private solutions but asked if that is address in the study.

MR. SVETZ said no, the RFP focused on the outdoor facilities. The next step would be a recreation master plan which would look at programs to directly offer or facilitate and indoor space. Mr. Svetz said they had conducted the Senior Center Study and there were some options proposed in there as well.

MAYOR HARTKE said they are heading in a good direction.

MR. KRATZKE said there are always things that could be done better and using this Master Plan is a tool to prioritize and set the direction.

MR. BASS said staff had an update on the lighted fields and there is funding for design of some softball fields.

MR. OHLAND presented the following presentation.

- Chandler Sports Fields
- Field Map
- Tumbleweed Park – 1995
- Tumbleweed Park Master Plan Development 1998 – 2000
- Tumbleweed Park Master Plan 2004/05
- Tumbleweed Park Existing Development
- Tumbleweed Park Existing Master Plan

VICE MAYOR STEWART asked when the update to the Master Plan happened.

MR. OHLAND said it is carried over through the years. Mr. Ohland said this is conceptual park specific master plan.

VICE MAYOR STEWART asked if it could be baseball and softball fields.

MR. OHLAND said yes, they want to make them multiuse because they do not have the land to make it sports specific.

MAYOR HARTKE asked what the thought is for the top right area.

MR. OHLAND said the original thought was to have a commercial recreation area where a private developer would come in to develop it and part of the revenue would help maintain the park. Mr. Ohland said they have been holding it to see what the best use would be.

COUNCILMEMBER ROE said if they did something big it would be great but there would be parking issues for large events.

MR. OHLAND said when they started developing the park and as events started to come to the park, they knew a day would come where there would not be enough on-site parking. Mr. Ohland said they are not there yet but once those areas are developed they would need to look at other parking.

COUNCILMEMBER ROE said he could see additional downtown events coming down there and suggested having additional events to put to use.

MAYOR HARTKE said they could bus many people from downtown to the event in a matter of minutes using the existing structures in downtown.

MR. OHLAND said they have the infrastructure to make it happen and there is the railroad track that goes there as well.

COUNCILMEMBER ROE said they need to think about those things to get the big events at the park.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS said it would be great to have a holiday train.

MR. OHLAND said there were thoughts of having something like the Desert Breeze train or something that you would not see at a typical park.

VICE MAYOR STEWART asked about the full remodel at Folley Park.

MR. OHLAND said nothing is in concrete, but the thought was that the aquatic center needs to be renovated and see if there is a possibility to move the softball fields to Tumbleweed. This would make Folley Park a more general park.

MR. BASS said the aquatic center is driving the renovation and the parking lot has issues. Mr. Bass said that is what leads into the rest of the park.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ asked if the aquatic centers has had increased use since it was declining previously.

MR. BASS said he would need to look at the numbers but has not seen a decline in aquatics. Mr. Bass said at three of the pools there are at least 1,000 people coming through every day. Mr. Bass said there is a waitlist to all of the aquatic programs. Mr. Bass said Folley Park is the least attended but it is an old pool so there is nothing really to draw people there compared to the other pools. Mr. Bass said the hope is to alleviate Hamilton and Mesquite Groves because those pools are overrun. Mr. Bass said the highest zip code that uses Hamilton is the zip code for Folley Park.

MR. OHLAND continued the presentation.

- Mesquite Groves Park Site Master Plan
- Lantana Ranch Park Site Master Plan

MAYOR HARTKE asked what was left at Snedigar.

MR. OHLAND said Snedigar is built out, but the restrooms need to be updated and they need to maintain the baseball fields.

MR. BASS said there are funds to design softball fields and they had waited until the Master Plan was done to move forward to ensure there was a need. Mr. Bass said they need three fields. Mr. Bass said it was originally to be built at Tumbleweed Park and asked if that is still the way staff should move forward.

MR. OHLAND said it is a major project as they would also need to finish Pioneer Parkway and Ryan Road.

MAYOR HARTKE said Council has made promises to girls softball and thought they should move forward.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS agreed.

VICE MAYOR STEWART said he wanted to know more and wanted to understand the demographics and the data. Vice Mayor Stewart said if the plan is to change Folley and move the fields down then yes but if it's not the plan then no. Vice Mayor Stewart asked what the long-term plan was.

MR. OHLAND said in the bond election the plan is to renovate Folley and the pool and move the fields.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS said once they renovate the pool then it would encroach on the fields so they would have to be moved.

VICE MAYOR STEWART said they need eight multipurpose fields and asked when and where those would go.

MR. BASS said Lantana is the next area.

MR. OHLAND said for most of those large pieces of land to built it and maintain it would be six years out.

MAYOR HARTKE said Lantana and Mesquite seem like those are the places they would go.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS said the three would move to Tumbleweed.

MR. BASS said the baseball softball fields.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS was in agreement.

COUNCILMEMBER ROE was in agreement.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ said he was good with moving forward.

MAYOR HARTKE said the direction was to move forward with the plan.

MR. OHLAND said they would ensure baseball and softball would fit for adults as well.

COUNCILMEMBER ROE asked if there would be three or four fields.

MAYOR HARTKE said four.

VICE MAYOR STEWART thought they could add a concession area between the fields.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk

Mayor

Approval Date of Minutes: June 24, 2021

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Work Session of the City Council of Chandler, Arizona, held on the 7th day of June 2021. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

DATED this _____ day of June, 2021.

City Clerk