

Chapter VI

Open Space Plan



Planning Commission Public Hearing
February 5, 2002

City Council Public Hearing/Adoption
February 26, 2002

Section I

VISION

Within the planning period, 2001 through 2020, increased pressure for development will occur. It is the City's responsibility to ensure that adequate Open Space is provided. Accordingly, the Open Space Residential (OSR) land use district, as specified in the Land Use Plan, will be retained as an area of limited development, and large parcel residential development will dominate the outlying areas of the City. As the City continues to develop through the planning period, importance will be placed on Open Space and its presence will be a noticeable asset to residents and visitors.

Section II

PURPOSE

The Open Space Plan is the City's principal planning document to ensure that adequate Open Space is provided in the City. The Plan embodies the City's Open Space policies for the planning period commencing at adoption and looking forward through the year 2020.

The purpose of the Open Space Plan is to provide safeguards for protection of Open Space and to establish a policy statement which advocates a balance between competing interests. Open Space resources of the community as well as a means of preserving these resources are identified in the Plan.

Section III

WHAT IS OPEN SPACE

Open Space is any unimproved parcel or area which is designated for either no development or very limited development, through contractual agreement, public ownership, or General Plan land use designation. Open Space will be visible to the community, preserved for future generations, in spite of economic pressures, in such a manner as to enhance the environment, promote the general welfare and provide a more suitable living environment. In the City of Twentynine Palms, Open Space includes:

- ! Developed City parks
- ! Passive or undeveloped park lands owned by the City or other government agency
- ! Undevelopable hillsides
- ! Areas of unique geological formation
- ! Water recharge areas
- ! Areas of unstable rock or soil formations such as along earthquake fault lines
- ! Mesquite Dunes Overlay

In many cases, Open Space will be comprised of lands owned by the City or other government agencies. However, privately owned lands can also be set aside to protect and preserve Open Space. The following methods represent some of the ways to accomplish this purpose:

- ! The use of cluster development which allows more intense development on portions of a property subject to the preservation of Open Space resources.
- ! Requirement for an offer of dedication to the City of an Open Space easement or preservation as a condition of approval of a subdivision or other discretionary project.
- ! Public acquisition (purchase) of development rights of Open Space resource areas.

Section IV
INVENTORY OF OPEN SPACE

Table I	
INVENTORY OF OPEN SPACE	
Open Space	Size
Open Space Residential	2,435 acres
Joshua Tree National Park Oasis	58 acres
Mesquite Dunes Overlay	347 acres
Road Runner Dunes Golf Course-Developed	50 acres
Road Runner Dunes Golf Course-Undeveloped	45 acres
Desert Winds Golf Course	105 acres
Luckie Park	26 acres
Knott Sky Park	20 acres
Other City Parks	24 acres
TOTAL OPEN SPACE	3,110 acres
OPEN SPACE PER 1000 POPULATION (26,400)	118 acres

In addition to the above Open Space resources, the following areas are generally undeveloped and are not likely to be extensively developed under current policy. The following do not meet the intended definition of Open Space contained in the General Plan, but they nonetheless contribute to the Open Space resources of the City:

- ! The hillside slopes of Campbell Hill, Donnell Hill and Chocolate Drop that are in visual exposure to the Community. Portions of these hills are suited to low density developments, but much will remain in natural area.
- ! Extremely rugged and steep hillsides generally found along the City's southerly border, adjacent to the Joshua Tree National Park.
- ! Floodways identified on the General Plan Land Use Map, and other secondary drainage courses.

Often these watercourses provide relief from the developed or developing areas of the City.

- ! Outlying areas of the City predominantly zoned as RuralLiving, with limited density development. This district encompasses 15,960 acres, or approximately 43% of the total land area in the City; of this approximately one fourth is limited to one dwelling unit per five acres.

Section V
GOALS AND POLICIES

A. Overview

The following goals are established for the Open Space Plan. The purpose of each goal is established in this section. To facilitate each goal, policies are established and each policy is executed by one or more programs.

B. Goal #1

Open Space shall be maintained in the City as a valuable scenic resource which contributes to the general welfare and enhances the environment.

Purpose

The purpose of Goal #1 is to ensure that the City continues to provide vast amounts of Open Space lands.

Policy 1.1

Approval of subdivisions will include an analysis of potential Open Space creation or preservation.

Program 1.1.1

Where practical and feasible, residential subdivisions shall include Open Space either on sight or in the form of an offer of dedication to the City of an Open Space easement or preservation.

Policy 1.2

The integrity of existing Open Space Residential (OSR) lands, as identified in the Land Use Plan, shall be preserved.

Program 1.2.1

Any proposed change in land use designation affecting land in the OSR district, shall include a proposal for an Open Space easement of equal or greater size.

Program 1.2.2

The minimum lot size in the OSR district shall be ten acres, with larger lots encouraged.

Program 1.2.3

Residential construction shall minimize grading impacts and structures shall not visually extend above a ridge line.

C. Goal #2

Open Space shall be prominently visible in the community.

Purpose

The purpose of Goal #2 is to ensure that Open Space resources benefit the community and provide noticeable aesthetic enhancements to the community.

Policy 2.1

Hillsides shall be preserved where possible to provide scenic vistas and Open Space.

Program 2.1.1

Development of single family dwellings may be allowed in the OSR district, but only with minimal disruption of the land.

Program 2.1.2

Public uses in the OSR district are to be focused on the natural qualities of the area, keeping as much open space as possible.

Program 2.1.3

As a means of minimizing wind and water erosion, grading and removal of native vegetation on parcels in the OSR district shall be limited to pad areas for structures, necessary driveways, and uses permitted in the district.