

SECTION 8.0 CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

8.1 City Profile

The City of Palm Springs is the westernmost city in the Coachella Valley, situated just east of the San Gorgonio pass and San Jacinto Mountains. It is bordered by Cathedral City and Rancho Mirage to the east, unincorporated county lands to the north and south and the San Jacinto Mountains to the west. The City encompasses 96.2 square miles, with a Sphere of Influence that includes an additional 42.5 square miles (see *Figure 8.1, City of Palm Springs*). The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians owns approximately 6,630 acres within the incorporated boundaries.

The City provides a full range of municipal services, including public safety, highways and streets, sanitation, culture and recreation, aviation, public improvements, planning and zoning, community development and general administrative services. The Community Redevelopment Agency of Palm Springs, established in 1972, has several project areas where it is encouraging development of residential, commercial, industrial, recreational and public facilities.

**Table 8.1
Palm Springs Profile**

General Information	
City Hall Address:	3200 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way Palm Springs, CA 92262 (760) 323-8229 www.ci.palam-springs.ca.us
Date of Incorporation:	1938
Form of Government/Type of City:	Council-Manager/Charter
Area:	96.2 square miles
Population:	44,822 (Year 2005) / 60,839 (Year 2030) Average Annual Growth Rate = 1.4%
General Fund Operating Budget (FY 2006-2007):	Revenues: \$67,442,542 Expenditures: \$68,496,713
GANN Appropriations Limitation / Percentage:	\$52,924,719 / 52.14% (2005-2006)
General Plan	1993
Services included in this MSR	
Law Enforcement:	Palm Springs Police Department – 1 station, 92 sworn officers
Fire Protection:	Palm Springs Fire Department – 5 stations
Solid Waste/Recycling:	Palm Springs Disposal Services (franchise agreement)
Stormwater/Drainage:	Public Works, Riverside County Flood Control
Roadways/Circulation:	Public Works, 250 centerline miles
Recreation and Parks:	8 park sites/ 2 community centers, 33 staff

Library Services:	Palm Springs Public Library, 24 staff (approx.)
Animal Control Services:	Police/Special Services Department, 5 FT + 1 PT staff
Code Enforcement:	Building and Safety Department, 4 staff

Water and Wastewater Services: The Desert Water Agency provides water service within the city. The City of Palm Springs contracts with a private entity (Veolia Water North America – West) to manage the City’s wastewater system, including the City’s 10.9 million-gallon-per-day secondary wastewater treatment facility. These services are addressed in the *Coachella Valley Water and Wastewater Municipal Service Review* (2004).

8.2 Governance

The City of Palm Springs was incorporated in 1938 under the General Laws of the State of California. In 1974 the voters approved a charter for the City. Palm Springs has a Council-Manager form of government with 4 council members and a mayor elected at large. The City Council is responsible, among other things, for passing ordinances, adopting the budget, appointing committees, and hiring both the City Manager and City Attorney. The City Manager is responsible for carrying out the policies and ordinances of the City Council, for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the City, and for appointing the heads of the various departments (see *Figure 8.2, City of Palm Springs Organization Chart*). The City Council has regularly scheduled meetings on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall, 3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way. City Council meeting agendas and minutes are available on the City’s website (www.ci.palm-springs.ca.us).

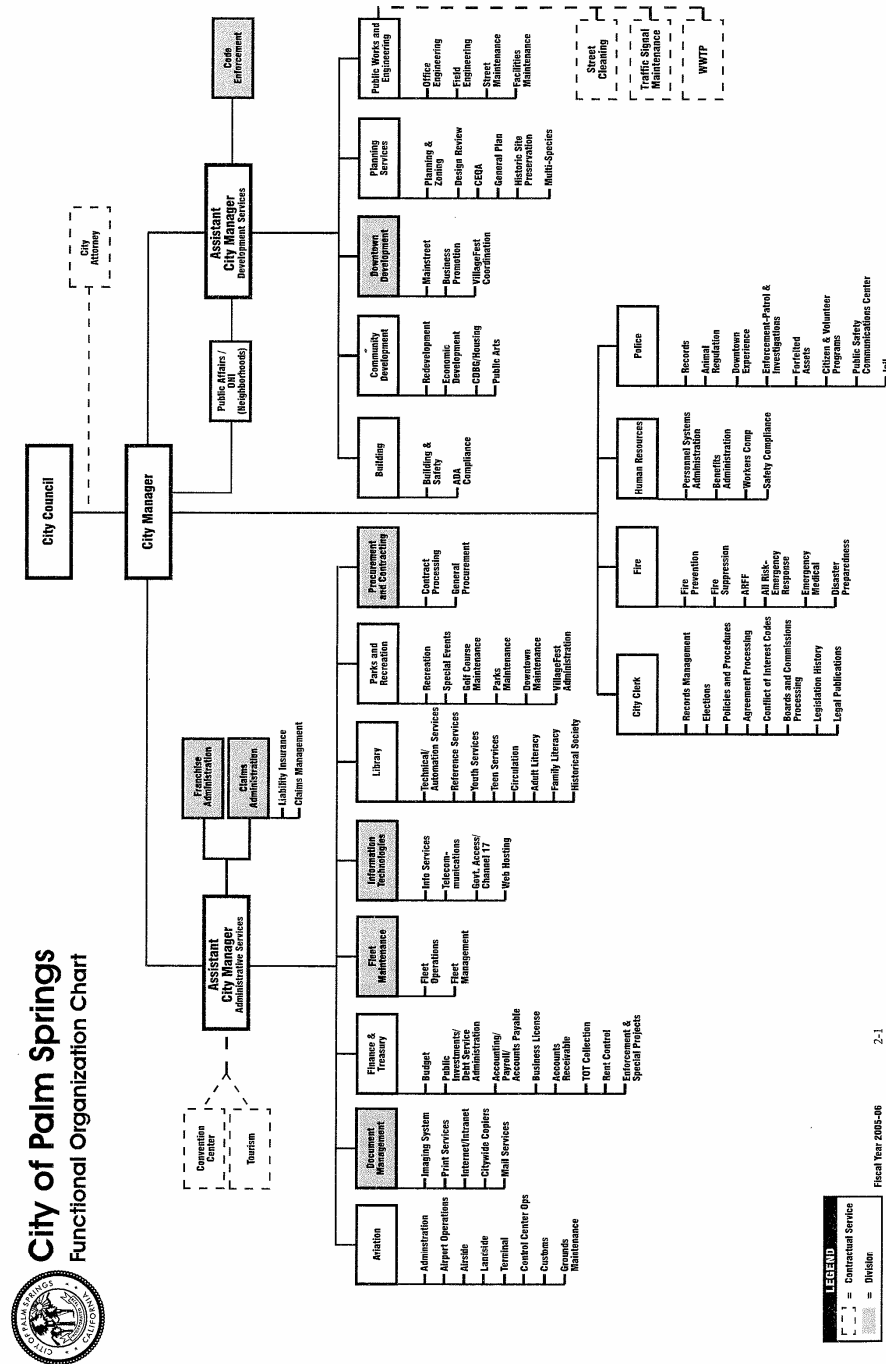
The City Council has established several boards and commissions to serve in an advisory role, to enable more attention to be given to specific issues and problems, to act as a channel between City government and the public, to provide greater opportunity for citizen participation in the affairs of City government, and to make decisions on matters where the City Council has granted them authority to act. These include the following: Airport Commission, Administrative Appeals Board, Board of Appeals, Historic Site Preservation Board, Human Rights Commission, Library Board, Parks and Recreation Commission, Personnel Board, Planning Commission, Public Arts Commission, Rent Review Commission, and the VillageFest Board.

8.3 Financial Condition

The City’s three most significant revenue sources are transient occupancy taxes, property taxes, and sales and use taxes. Property tax revenues are increasing due to sales of existing homes and property as well as new residential and commercial development. The opening of several big-box retail stores has significantly increased sales tax revenue; transient occupancy taxes are expected to increase due to the opening of the new Convention Center. In 2003, the voters increased the transient occupancy tax to 11.75

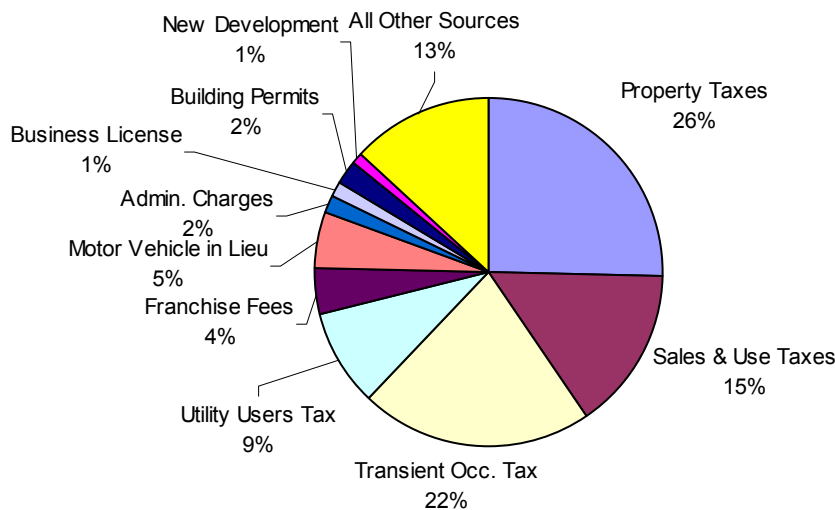
Insert Figure 8.1 – City of Palm Springs

Figure 8.2, City of Palm Springs Organization Chart



percent, the highest rate in the study area. In 2004, voters rejected a proposed increase in the utility users tax by nearly a 3:1 margin. The budgeted Operating Fund revenues for FY 2007 are shown below in Figure 8.3, City of Palm Springs Operating Fund Revenues, FY 2007 Budget:

Figure 8.3 – City of Palm Springs Operating Fund Revenues, FY 2007 Budget



The Operating Fund, which is a combination of the General Fund and Community Promotion Fund, has been in a deficit position for several years although the annual budgeted shortfall is shrinking due to economic and development growth. The deficit is covered by the General Fund balance.

**Table 8.2
Palm Springs Operating Fund Summary**

Operating Fund (General Fund + Community Promotion Fund)	2004-2005 <i>(actual)</i>	2005-2006 <i>(projected)</i>	2006-2007 <i>(budgeted)</i>
Revenues	\$61,957,221	\$64,673,864	\$67,442,542
Expenditures	\$61,984,002	\$66,315,147	\$68,496,713
TOTAL Surplus/(Deficit)	(\$26,781)	(\$1,641,283)	(\$1,054,171)

In order to address the demands for municipal services that accompany growth, the City established a Community Facilities Public Safety District for new developments in 2005 in order to provide funding for police, fire and other services. In FY 2007 funding from the District will allow for the addition of two police officers and partial funding of one fire captain.

As part of the annual budgeting process, the City prepares a three-year projection to allow for more long-term financial planning. The City uses a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to identify capital improvement needs and coordinate the financing and timing of addressing these needs in a manner that would benefit

the public. Projects on the FY 2007 CIP include General Plan Update, technology enhancements, library upgrades, park improvements, building maintenance and infrastructure and storm drain improvements.

At FY 2005 the City’s long term debt was \$190 million, including certificates of participation, tax allocation bonds, lease revenue bonds, and special assessment bonds. The City had no general obligation debt. The City accounts for the airport, wastewater system and golf courses through enterprise funds (the City owns 2 municipal golf courses). The Golf Course Fund had an accumulated fund deficit of \$7.4 million, an increase of \$386,000 from FY 2004. The City expects that losses will be recovered in future years.

8.4 Projected Growth

Palm Springs is one of the largest cities within California in terms of land area. The City ranks third in population of the six cities within the study area, and has the second lowest projected growth rate. *Table 8.3, Projected Population Growth* compares the population growth within the City, in the western Coachella Valley incorporated areas¹, in the unincorporated Coachella Valley and Coachella Valley as a whole.

Table 8.3
Projected Population Growth

Area	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	Avg. Annual Growth Rate
Palm Springs	44,822	46,175	49,997	53,766	57,378	60,839	1.4%
Western Coachella Valley incorporated areas	186,707	211,028	237,540	263,684	288,742	312,772	2.7%
Unincorporated Coachella Vly	90,668	103,079	126,925	149,159	169,437	187,870	4.3%
Coachella Valley	419,338	470,827	540,105	607,149	670,378	730,001	3.0%

Source: SCAG 2004 Growth Forecast.

The California Department of Finance (DOF) estimates the City’s 2006 population to be 46,437 as of January 1, 2006, which is slightly higher than the SCAG projection. The DOF estimates that the City had 32,841 housing units, with 2.092 persons per household. In addition to the permanent population, the City experiences a seasonal influx of 29,000 to 32,000 residents. Per the 1993 General Plan, the City is estimating a permanent population of 70,810 residents at build-out, with a peak population of 134,698. *Table 8.4, Land Use Acreage Summary*, summarizes the land uses within the City and its SOI per the Land Use Element of the City’s General Plan (1993):

¹ Cathedral City, Desert Hot Springs, Indian Wells, Palm Desert, Palm Springs, Rancho Mirage

Table 8.4
Land Use Acreage Summary

Land Use Type	Acres at Build-out	%
Residential	19,055	19.9%
Commercial / Industrial	6,563	6.4%
Open Space	73,361	70.7%
Civic	1,080	1.0%
Streets	2,040	2.0%
Total	102,099	100.0%

Note: On January 29, 2007, the Coachella Valley Association of Governments adopted updated population projections for the SCAG Regional Housing Needs Assessment. Those projections are included in Section 2.0, Regional Population and Growth.

8.5 Law Enforcement

The Palm Springs Police Department operates out of the Palm Springs Station located at 200 South Civic Drive. A small substation is located at 105 South Indian Canyon, but it is unmanned at this time. Currently, there are 92 sworn officers on the Palm Springs police force and 60 civilian employees. The City added 4 new positions in FY 2007: 2 police officers, a crime analyst and an assistant community policy officer to assist with the City's homeless. The current staff provides the City with 2.0 officers per 1,000 residents (based on the 2005 population of 44,822). Annual emergency call volume is approximately 10,558 calls from within the city limits. The average response time was 5.7 minutes, which is over the Department's target response time of less than 5 minutes. Of the six cities in the study area, in 2005 Palm Springs ranked fifth in the property crime rate (66.4 incidents per 1,000 residents) and the violent crime rate (7.4 incidents per 1,000 residents).

Table 8.5
Law Enforcement Staffing

Personnel	# of Staff
Sworn Personnel	89
Civilian Employees	60.5
Reserve Officers	26
Non-sworn Volunteers	32
Total	207.5
Sworn Personnel per 1000 residents	2.0

Currently, the Palm Springs Police Department has four officers assigned to their K-9 Unit. These officers are assigned to regular patrol duties. In addition to the four patrol dogs, two bomb detection dogs are assigned to the Palm Springs International Airport.

The Palm Springs Police Department S.W.A.T. (Special Weapons and Tactics) Unit was formed in 1978 and is comprised of highly trained officers, each of whom can assume varied responsibilities with a high degree of expertise and proficiency. The team is consolidated from Palm Springs and Cathedral City Police Departments, and consists of 30 fully cross-trained officers, four full-time negotiators and two team physicians. Division of responsibility lies within two main elements: the Tactical Element, comprised of members who perform the entry work and hostage rescue, and the Technical Element, comprised of a four-man marksman team, two crisis negotiators, two gas specialists and the team doctor. S.W.A.T. duty is a secondary assignment and strictly voluntary. All members have primary assignments as Patrolmen or Detectives. The team also deploys an armored vehicle for hostage rescue and to enter “hot zones” under fire.

The department has 6 officers dedicated to providing airport security. Their primary roles are to respond to security screening alerts, traffic accidents, traffic control, security patrols, and investigating crimes which occur on airport property. In addition to the assigned officers, all sworn personnel have been trained or will be trained to FAA standards in case of emergencies. The Palm Springs Police Airport Detail, known as LEO (Law Enforcement Officer) under FAA regulations, are primarily responsible for the screening/checkpoint area where passengers and their bags and property are checked for any weapons, explosives and/or devices, and any item that is suspicious. The actual searching is conducted by the personnel of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), federal government employees under the umbrella of the Office of Homeland Security.

The Palm Springs Police Aero Squadron is a volunteer auxiliary unit of the Palm Springs Police Department. The objective of the squadron is to conduct aerial searches for downed or lost aircraft, lost or distressed persons, assist duly authorized members of the news media in time of disaster or need, at the call and direction of the Palm Springs Police Department, and assist any other governmental agency approved by the Chief of Police. Another volunteer group of the department is the Citizens on Patrol group who patrol the City to assist the department.

Challenges over the next 5 years include the following:

- Adding trained staff and continuing to provide services for growth and development;
- Continue to curb and respond to the issue of gang activity;
- Participate in the Coachella Valley Violent Gang Task Force to gain specialized enforcement techniques;
- Pursue alternative funding sources to continue the PAL and DARE prevention programs;
- Remain current on advances in Homeland Security techniques and activities;

- Address traffic control needs in response to growth and development; and
- Maintain advanced technological systems in radio communication systems, data, etc.

Funding for police services has remained consistent at 29 percent of the Operating Fund budget for the past three years.

8.6 Fire Services

The Palm Springs Fire Department provides fire protection and emergency medical services within the City’s incorporated area as well as unincorporated area to the north. The City has five fire stations as shown below on *Table 8.6, Palm Springs Fire Stations*.

**Table 8.6
Palm Springs Fire Stations**

Station	Location	Equipment / Staff
Station 441 (Downtown area)	277 N. Indian Canyon Drive	Ladder truck, brush truck, medic squad 1 Captain, 1 Engineer, 1 EMT firefighter, 1 Paramedic firefighter
Station 442 (Airport and City)	300 N. El Cielo Road	1 Command Vehicle, 1 Aerial platform, 1 Water tender, 1 Breathing support vehicle, 3 Airport crash trucks 1 Battalion Chief, 1 Captain, 4 Engineers, 1 Firefighter
Station 443 (northern section of City)	590 E. Racquet Club Rd.	1 Telesquirt, 1 Quantum pumper, 1 Quick attack 1 Captain, 1 Engineer, 1 Firefighter
Station 444 (southern area of City)	1300 Laverne Way	1 Quantum pumper, 1 Triple combo pumper, 1 Quick attack 1 Engineer, 1 Firefighter
Station 445 (southeastern area of City)	5800 Bolero Road	1 Quantum pumper, 1 Triple combo pumper 1 Engineer, 1 Firefighter

There are a total of 64 paid staff members for all five stations, including 54 suppression personnel and 6 volunteers. The fire department provides 1.5 fire fighters (paid and volunteer) per 1,000 residents (based on the 2006 population of 44,822). With the FY 2007 budget, the City has full year funding for a 3 person engine company at Station 443, which serves the northern end of the City.

The emergency call volume for 2005 was 6,537 calls of which 72.4 percent (4,733 calls) were for rescue and emergency medical service. The average response time was 6 minutes, one minute over the target response time of 5 minutes. Palm Springs has an Insurance Service Office rating of 3.

The efficiency and value of fire protection services have been enhanced in several ways. First, the Palm Springs Fire Department and Cathedral City Fire Department have an Automatic Aid agreement which results in sharing dispatch requirements between the two agencies. Second, the City has enacted very

strict fire protection ordinances which require built-in fire protection systems to reduce property loss and improve life safety in new developments. Third, the City has implemented a proactive fire prevention education program with monthly Public Safety messages and programs in local schools. As a result of these efforts, the number of fire incidents has been reduced, yielding an estimated fire loss in 2005 of \$2.48 million.

Equipment and staffing needs include the following:

- Upgrade 2 person engine companies to 3 person staffing (additional 9 firefighters);
- Acquire a 105-foot aerial ladder truck and 2 1,500 gallon per minute fire engines;
- Construct a new sixth station and staff with 9 firefighters to serve the northeastern portion of the City;
- Develop a mobile GIS mapping and mobile data terminals in engines for emergency response, and to improve coordination with the Riverside County Fire Department;
- Replace the fire training classroom; and
- Hire one Fire Prevention Supervisor.

Funding for fire services has remained consistent at 13 percent of the Operating Fund budget for the past three years.

8.7 Solid Waste

The City has a franchise agreement with Palm Springs Disposal Services (PSDS) to provide solid waste services throughout the City. The contract was approved in July 2003. PSDS serves approximately 15,700 residential accounts. There are four options for waste collection, low volume to high volume. Additionally, a number of recycling programs are offered, including:

- Curbside recycling
- Curbside greenwaste collection
- Curbside bulky item pickup
- Used oil collection
- Bi-annual City cleanup events
- Drop off location for recyclables at the Palm Springs Disposal yard
- Free bi-annual e-waste events
- Free bi-annual shredding events
- Free curbside HHW/Medical Waste/Sharps program
- Free telephone book recycling
- Composting workshops and education

Solid waste is hauled to the Edom Hill Transfer Station where it is then transferred to landfills such as the Badlands or Lamb Canyon Disposal Sites. The City's reported diversion rate under AB 939 is 60 percent

for 2004, which exceeds the 50 percent requirement. The City has begun an outreach program to large venue sites in response to AB 2176, Recycling at Large Venues.

8.8 Stormwater Drainage

The City maintains the local stormwater drainage system. Larger storm drains (greater than 36-inch diameter) are part of the City's Master Drainage Plan and maintained by Riverside County Flood Control District. The City's drainage system is currently financed by area drainage fees assessed to new developments in the amount of \$4,117 to \$8,212 per acre depending on the zone. However, dramatic increases in the cost of new construction are outstripping the drainage acreage fee which provides the majority of funding for drainage projects. To be consistent with today's construction costs, Flood Control has initiated a process of reassessing the fee structure to address revenue needs.

The City participates in the Community Rating System (CRS) as part of the National Flood Insurance Program. The City has a higher than average rating and participation in the CRS has resulted in a reduction in insurance premiums for property owners in special flood hazard zones within the City. Palm Springs is the only City in the Coachella Valley to participate in this program.

The City also requires new development to retain the incremental run-off due to the development with on-site retention structures. By doing so, added burden to the storm drainage system is minimized. The City also advocates for the most efficient systems of storm water control, including infiltration and percolation where feasible. These approaches are acknowledged as the best means of controlling both solid and liquid pollutants.

8.9 Roads and Circulation

The City's Public Works Department maintains approximately 250 centerline miles of pavement in the City with an average Pavement Condition Index (PCI) of 65. The City also has a pavement management master plan to manage roadway maintenance. The City has 10 FTE's for road related services and spends \$5,000 per centerline mile per year for annual road maintenance expenditures. The City appropriates approximately \$1 million annually for slurry sealing and asphalt rubber hot mix (ARHM) overlay projects. ARHM is a recycled tire product which provides benefit to solid waste programs. The City contracts with outside agencies for signal maintenance and street sweeping. The City has added equipment to its fleet for the removal of blow sand from roadways.

The City uses a Cartographic Pavement Management System which allows them to prioritize street maintenance and repairs in a systemic approach. The City also prioritizes curb repair by keeping an ongoing list of curbs in need of repair and addresses these improvements in a sequential manner. This not only keeps the infrastructure in good repair, but it is also leading to an effective elimination over time of

standing water, a prime breeding habitat for mosquitoes, which in turn leads to the control of insect-spread disease such as the West Nile Virus.

8.10 Parks and Recreation

The City has approximately 152 acres of developed park land consisting of nine parks, and over 225 acres of city-operated golf courses, open natural land areas, conservation areas and open desert. The City currently provides 3.3 acres of park land per 1,000 residents (based on the 2006 population of 44,822), which satisfies the goal of 3 acres of park land per 1,000 residents established in the Quimby act.

Table 8.7
Palm Springs Park Facilities

Park Name	Acreage	Amenities
Baristo Park	1.4	Playground, picnic tables, basketball court, turf and mature trees
DeMuth Park	62.0	4 lighted ball fields, 4 lighted tennis courts, 1 multipurpose field, 3 playgrounds, 2 restroom facilities, off street parking, group picnic facilities, mature trees
Desert Highland Park	17.6	Picnic facilities, open grass field, mature trees
Frances Stevens Park	3.6	Public arts centers and theater, shuffleboard courts, picnic tables, mature trees, turf
Ruth Hardy Park	21.3	Lighted tennis courts, 2 playgrounds, basketball court, volleyball courts, off street parking, picnic and restroom facilities, mature trees
Sunrise Plaza	37.2	Baseball stadium, senior center, swim center, leisure center complex, boys' club and library center, picnic tables, basketball court, exercise circuit, mature trees
Victoria Park	7.7	Volleyball court, picnic shelter and facilities, restrooms, playground, large multipurpose field
Palm Springs Dog Park and Municipal Co-generation Complex	1.5	Active community park designed specifically for canine usage
Total Acreage	152.3	

The City is considering ways to expand recreational opportunities in the northern portion of the City, including a regional sports park with athletic fields and a community center. The City has adopted industry standards set forth by the State Department of Parks and Recreation for all operational areas. Furthermore, the City has completed a strategic plan that serves as a comprehensive capital improvement program as well as provides direction on providing park services in the future.

The City receives some Measure Y funding for capital needs. Funding remains a challenge in order to meet the diverse needs of the City's residents. The City is seeking alternative funding sources to augment operational revenues as well as develop sources for capital improvements and long-term facility improvements.

Funding for recreation services has slightly increased, from 7 percent of the Operating Fund budget in FY 2005 to 8 percent of the budget for FY 2007.

8.11 Library Facilities

The Palm Springs Public Library, located at 300 S. Sunrise Way, is an independent City library and contains 172,387 volumes. The library is staffed by 24 full time employees and is open Mondays and Tuesdays from 9 am to 8 pm; Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 9 am to 5:30 pm and Fridays from 10 am to 5:30 pm. The City recently received grant funding for technology upgrades and a literacy grant from the State. The building systems in the existing library (electrical, HVAC and plumbing) are at or beyond their useful life span, and system reliability issues are causing increased interruptions.

There is an increasing shortage of space for meetings, events, reading and quiet study areas. As an interim solution, the Library collaborates with other city entities such as the Mizel Senior Center and the Police Department Center to maximize use of existing space in city facilities. The City completed a study in 2005 which identified the need to renovate and expand the existing library by 25,000 square feet in order to meet the needs of the city for the next 20 years. The City is exploring funding options for the expansion. The City notes that a satellite facility is needed in north Palm Springs as that area is underserved due to a lack of transportation.

8.12 Animal Control

The City provides animal control services and owns a shelter located at 4810 Camino Parocela. Currently there are 5 full time employees and 1 part time employee. The City has 1 sedan, 1 walk-in freezer, and 1 truck w/animal control box.

Best practices used by the City's animal control agency include providing micro chipping of all adoptees for identification and public education on benefits of the micro chipping program, and altering all animals prior to adoption (i.e. spay and neuter). Licensing responsibilities are now handled at the shelter, which improves management and efficiency related to license renewals and administration.