



# Sierra Vista

Strategic Plan

6 Month Update

# Invest: Responsible Stewardship

**Sierra Vista practices effective management of public resources to reach short and long-term goals for the benefit of our community.**

Goals:

1. Prioritize reducing the number of road miles of city-owned streets that fall into the Very Poor or Poor classifications on the Pavement Condition Index, and maintain higher classifications to the extent possible.
  - 1.1. Develop a strategy and financial plan for addressing street conditions including rebuilding and repaving city streets. (Sharon)

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff is currently pursuing planning funds through the SVMPO to update the original pavement condition study. An update is important since the existing study is already almost five years old, and both system needs and project costs are likely to have changed since the original study was completed. An updated study will put staff in the best position to develop a strategy and financial plan to address system needs moving forward.

While updating the existing study is in progress, staff continues to address current roadway repair needs. This year's annual streets maintenance project strikes a balance between roadways which are still in the "acceptable" range and those which are in "fair" or "poor" condition, as well as arterial roadways versus local streets. For example, Charleston Road from State Route 90 to City limits is on the list in the current fiscal year, as are streets in the Town and Country and Garden Canyon subdivisions. Most of these local streets rated as "fair" or "poor" in the last pavement condition study, so improvements to these roadways will have a big impact for residents in those areas. The Arizona Department of Transportation will also be funding improvements to approximately five miles of State Route 90 in the next year or two, which will have a positive impact on the community as a whole.

- 1.2. Evaluate and develop a complete streets program. (Matt)

**ON SCHEDULE.** Complete streets describe roads that are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including vehicles, people, walking, and people riding bikes or transit. People of all ages and abilities can move along and across streets in a community regardless of how they are traveling. Staff established an interdepartmental team to review the City's adopted street standards and specifications for compatibility with best practices for Complete Streets as outlined in Chapter 4 of the Sierra Vista MPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan. Recommended amendments will be drafted during the summer of 2022 for public hearing consideration in the fall. Staff identified and prioritized multi-modal improvements that will be

pursued through available state, local, and federal funding sources. The City received FTA grants to extend the City's shared use pathways along Buffalo Soldier Trail from Golf Links Drive to Fry Boulevard and along SR 92 from Avenida Cochise to Foothills Drive. The FTA will also fund sidewalk extensions in the Sulger subdivision along Bartow Drive, Marianne Drive, and Kayatan as well as solar street lights in Cloud 9 Ranch Estates and the Montebello neighborhood.

2. Explore best methods used to reduce or mitigate unfunded liabilities for the City's Arizona State Retirement System and Public Safety Personnel Retirement System. (David)
  - 2.1. Complete forecasting/modeling to identify best options.
  - 2.2. Recommend approach to Council and implement as directed.

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff is completing the analysis of the current status of the retirement systems, and plans to recommend an approach during the personnel budget work session scheduled on April 26.

3. Maintain a strong bond rating and general fund reserves. (David)
  - 3.1. Evaluate financial reserves and ASRS/PSPRS policies, and recommend changes as appropriate.
  - 3.2. Evaluate current management of long-term debt and associated financial policies.
  - 3.3. Identify acceptable future debt level.

**ON SCHEDULE.** Consideration of the reserves and ASRS/PSPRS policies is part of the annual budget process. ASRS/PSPRS will be covered on April 26 as mentioned in the previous goal. Discussion of the reserves and any presentation/recommendation of an updated policy will also be covered during a budget work session.

4. Effectively plan for and manage water resources. (Chuck/Victoria)
  - 4.1. Plan for the future use of effluent and continue to partner with public and private agencies such as the Cochise Conservation & Recharge Network, Upper San Pedro Partnership, and Sentinel Landscapes, and pursue funding through programs such as the DoD Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program (REPI), for projects benefitting the Upper San Pedro River watershed.

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff continues to participate in the CCRN and USPP and attend all regular meetings. Projects such as the Coyote Wash recharge project and the Riverstone effluent project are progressing. Fort Huachuca applied for REPI funding for Coyote Wash and expects to hear about the funding status in June 2022. Staff are currently working on an appropriations request to Congresswoman Kirkpatrick's office for the Riverstone effluent project.

5. Explore and leverage resources for identifying additional grant and funding opportunities.
  - 5.1. Partner with ADOT and the SVMPO to facilitate repair of state-owned roadways in Sierra Vista. (Sharon)

**ON SCHEDULE.** Unfortunately, the recently released 5-Year Work Program from the Arizona Department of Transportation did not include any projects within City limits. However, repeated inquiries from both staff and Councilmembers were successful in getting a project planned on approximately five miles of State Route 90 from Industry Drive to Moson Road. This segment of roadway, and particularly the section from State Route 92 to Colombo Drive, experienced significant deterioration in the last few years and has led to a lot of complaints from the community. With the Arizona Department of Transportation now investing in a repair, the limited amount of funding available through the SVMPO can be utilized elsewhere in the greater Sierra Vista area.

- 5.2. Improve & streamline the capital improvement plan process. (Irene)

**ON SCHEDULE.** A Capital Improvement and Development Manager position was created in 2021, and engineer Irene Zuniga promoted into the position in summer 2021. Work is underway to review and revise the CIP process to better capture capital priorities. Staff is working through identifying the needs of the program, and goals to reach in the next 5-10 years. Some of these efforts include process improvements such as user-friendly interfaces for database input for projects, ways to relate the database to the existing Munis system, and creating user-friendly flow charts for submissions to the budget team.

- 5.3. Identify and design shovel-ready plans where feasible and appropriate. (Sharon)

**ON SCHEDULE.** In addition to improving the CIP process, the SVMPO recently completed its first major update to the Long Term Transportation Plan to identify and prioritize transportation priorities in the region. These efforts end up being even more important with the recent passage of the federal infrastructure bill. It is expected that far more funding will be coming the City's way for roadway projects over the next few years. Staff is currently working to prepare several projects for funding through either the SVMPO or new federal grants, including the future phases of the Fry/N Garden Redevelopment project, and a pavement rehabilitation project on Buffalo Soldier Trail from State Route 92 to Fry Boulevard. Staff is also working through the Cochise Conservation and Recharge Network to complete the design and apply for grants for a future recharge project on the Riverstone property.

# Ignite: Economic Development and Community Prosperity

**Sierra Vista facilitates the conditions for developing a strong workforce and retention, attraction, and expansion of businesses.**

Goals:

6. Enhance and improve Economic Development infrastructure.
  - 6.1. Explore different technologies and partnerships relevant to economic development and expand where appropriate, such as broadband and 5G availability, EV charging stations, and relevant emerging technologies. (Tony)

**ON SCHEDULE.** The Economic Development team engaged with Arizona Commerce Authority to create a roadmap supporting Sierra Vista moving towards “Smart City” technology. Unfortunately, that initiative was paused indefinitely due to a lack of personnel to coordinate the plan as well as higher priorities such as the Economic Development Commission. In the interim, the technologies mentioned have been considered in the second phase of the Schneider project with inclusion of EV charging stations and potential public Wi-Fi. Staff will continue to partner with UofA College of Applied Science and Technology (CAST) on leveraging technology for business growth, job creation, and overall improvements to the economic environment of Sierras Vista.

- 6.2. Continue ongoing efforts to revitalize the West End.
  - 6.2.1. Complete construction Phase 1 of Fry Boulevard improvements. (Irene)

**ON SCHEDULE.** The Sierra Vista Metropolitan Planning Organization (SVMPO) receives Highway User Revenue Funds (HURF) and Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds from the State of Arizona and the Federal Highway Administration. Through the HURF Swap program, funds were exchanged until enough accumulated to accomplish the project.

The project is currently under construction with substantial completion anticipated at the end of March 2022. Work at the intersection of Fry Blvd and South Carmichael Ave will continue through March, bringing the entire project to a close by end of April.

The project funding agreement requires the project to be substantially completed by June 30, 2022, with final acceptance by July 27, 2022. Staff expects no issues meeting this timeline.

6.2.2. Plan Phase 2 of Garden Avenue improvements, identify funding, and implement as appropriate. (Irene)

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff is actively seeking grant and other funding opportunities to help finance construction improvements along Garden Ave between Fry Blvd and Buffalo Soldier Trail. In the meantime, the cost of design is included in the current FY budget.

The work done by EPS Group over the past few years designed a master plan for the entire project (N Garden, and Fry Boulevard from Garden Avenue to 7<sup>th</sup> Street), which equates to a 25% design as well as construction plans (100% design) for Fry Boulevard from Garden to Carmichael which is what is currently under construction. Staff is close to awarding a contract to a design firm to develop construction plans for the Garden Avenue part of the project. Staff expects this bid package to be ready this summer, and expect to propose construction costs in next year's budget. If approved, the project would then go out to bid upon completion of construction documents.

6.2.3. Activate the West End entertainment district and begin programming events. (Laura W.)

**ON SCHEDULE.** Parks, Recreation and Library staff are currently working with Community Development and associated commissions to plan a West End ribbon cutting and event on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022. This event will be held from 3pm – 9pm and highlight West End businesses during the day and transition into a night scene with live music in the evening. Food trucks, music, activities for children and families will be available. The event will serve as the kickoff to activities in the West End. As the nearby parks projects are completed later in the year, more activities will be scheduled.

6.2.4. Expand the West End Redevelopment Area and West Sierra Vista Partnership Program as appropriate. (Matt)

**ON SCHEDULE.** On November 18, 2021, the Mayor and City Council approved Resolution 2021-078, authorizing the redevelopment area boundary to be expanded to include nearly all commercially zoned land west of 5<sup>th</sup> Street, covering 162 parcels comprising 111 acres excluding public rights-of-way. Staff has prepared the next amendments to the West Sierra Vista Redevelopment Plan to cover the expansion area. On February 14, 2022, the West End Commission met to consider the amendments and expressed unanimous support for the changes. On March 1, 2022, the Planning and Zoning Commission will evaluate the amendments for consistency with the City's General Plan, VISTA 2030. A public hearing before City Council has been advertised for March 10, 2022.

6.2.5. Plan for future use of the Fab Avenue property and implement improvements.  
(Matt/Sharon)

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff worked with Stantec through the Countywide EPA Brownfield Grant to prepare a reuse plan for the Fab Avenue property and right-of-way that will be incorporated into the updated West Sierra Vista Redevelopment Plan. The Concept Plan includes cost estimates that correspond with the proposed phasing plan. Staff will be submitting a budget request for developing the engineered plans in the FY 2022-23 budget and implementation of the first phase the following year.

6.2.6. Implement recommendations from the surface water master plan affecting the West End. (Sharon)

**ON SCHEDULE.** Although the Surface Water Master Plan identified a variety of potential improvements in stormwater management, since the West End is largely developed, some of the most promising opportunities are within the existing streetscape. In some cases, existing streets are overbuilt for current traffic volumes. In these situations, a “roadway diet” can be an effective way of managing vehicle speeds, incorporating stormwater features, and adding landscaping to what would otherwise be a wide expanse of pavement. Other older areas lack basic stormwater management features such as curbs to keep drainage contained within the right-of-way. For a relatively low cost, this simple improvement can help to channelize flow and avoid negative impacts to adjacent private property. Staff is currently working on several projects which incorporate these strategies including North Garden, Fab Avenue, and Theater Drive.

6.3. Enhance current redevelopment, abatement, and code enforcement efforts. (Matt)

6.3.1 Revisit annexation of Fry townsite and other areas as necessary and appropriate.

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff is currently focusing annexation efforts on the commercial properties along the east side of SR 92 between E. Golden Acres Drive and Glenn Road leveraging the sewer extension under construction to serve Veritas Christian Community School. Staff anticipates finalizing the interest survey this spring and bringing forward an annexation petition proposal this summer based on the pre-annexation agreements gathered.

6.3.2. Prioritize efforts and ongoing funding for citywide abatement/code enforcement.

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff is prioritizing the use of abatement funds on demolishing dangerous buildings and chronic nuisance properties as determined and ordered by the magistrate court.

6.4 Maximize the economic impact of the municipal airport. (Tony)

6.4.1. Complete the site preparation of city-owned property at the airport.

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff worked and awarded the contract to KE&G for \$852,400 to prepare the approximately 13 acres of undeveloped land at the municipal airport. Site preparation was ongoing and near completion at the end of January 2022, but was delayed as the concrete drainage pipes were unavailable. The project was paused awaiting material with expected completion in March 2022. Additionally, the Economic Development staff worked with Public Works on other projects to upgrade the look and feel of the airport with building upgrades and landscaping.

6.4.2. Market the airport.

**ON SCHEDULE.** As of February 2022, the City's marketing staff created a new ad highlighting the municipal airport and business opportunities available. This will be followed by additional marketing efforts to identify a potential business and relocate them to the municipal airport. Staff is exploring additional avenues such as utilizing a site selector at the annual AUSA conference. Future efforts may involve attendance and marketing at an aviation/airport conference.

6.4.3. Explore potential for grants to assist in development.

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff engaged the US Economic Development Administration and Arizona Commerce Authority on potential grants. There are options available, but there will need to be a potential business providing capital investment and new jobs before the City can successfully compete for the grant.

6.4.4. Develop approach for adjacent 200 acres.

**ON SCHEDULE.** This is a long-term strategy with Economic Development continually coordinating with Fort Huachuca on potential partnerships and opportunities that could lead to the successful development of the Federal property.

6.5. Expand sports tourism opportunities.

6.5.1. Complete the extension of Avenida Escuela and its connection to the City sports complexes at Domingo Paiz and Veterans Park. (Laura W./Irene)

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff completed design, opened construction bids, and recently awarded the construction contract to the low bid in the amount of \$1.7M. The Walmart Corporation has an



agreement with the City to pay for a portion of this project. The share from Walmart has been identified and staff is actively working to secure funding.

In addition, a pre-construction meeting was held February 15, 2022, and the contractor has requested a notice to proceed date of March 7, 2022. Staff anticipates the contractor will have the project completed this summer, dependent on material availability and weather.

6.5.2. Identify phases and the funding plan for improvements at the Veterans Memorial Park sports complex. (Laura W.)

**ON SCHEDULE.** The first phase of the plan at Veterans Memorial Sports Complex focuses on field rehabilitation and public usability. This will assist in capturing new revenue quickly in the space and will ensure that the public can utilize the space safely. New irrigation and well rehabilitation at Veterans Memorial Park and the Sports Complex will replace the aging infrastructure, artificial turf will be placed at the football field, and the surrounding track will be resurfaced. We will also be reorienting the softball field, refurbishing the baseball field, adding sand volleyball courts, adding two outdoor basketball courts, refurbishing the tennis court surface, adding ADA access, and lighting the entire complex. A potential Phase II Schneider Electric project along with LWCF grant funding, will be presented in April to Council for consideration to complete these projects in a single phase in the coming year. As plans come together to improve the Veterans Memorial Sports Complex in accordance with the Comprehensive Parks Master Plan, staff have engaged with community sports organizations to ensure that their input is considered in the final planning stages.

7. Increase and implement effective marketing efforts. (Judy)

**ON SCHEDULE.** In July 2021, a digital marketing contract was awarded to an external agency to place digital ads in target markets. The ads promote Sierra Vista as a premier destination for telecommuters, business, and tourism. Using an external agency ensures that ads are tightly targeted to geographies and demographics. This campaign is being run in cooperation with the Economic Development division.

The campaign is on hiatus currently but will relaunch in early spring. Since its launch, the campaign delivered 682,858 ad views with 12,129 engagements (clicking on the ad), earning a click-thru rate of between 1.48% and 3.05% (depending on whether the ad was responsive or contextual). By comparison, the agency used during last fiscal year delivered more impressions but generated a much lower click-thru rate.

In partnership with Economic Development, the City purchased a two-year subscription to Buxton, a data mining tool. This tool will be used by the Marketing & Communications and Economic Development divisions, and by the Parks, Recreation and Library department. In addition to other rich data, the Marketing & Communications staff will be able to gain insight into

the demographic and psychographic information about event attendees, allowing for better marketing focus for future efforts.

7.1. Marketing efforts will prioritize the following areas:

- i. Business leads
- ii. Work from home/telecommuting/teleworking attraction
- iii. Tourism marketing
- iv. Shopping local
- v. Sharing successes of local partners - promote medical, education, jobs
- vi. Attraction of retirees

8. Expand support for, awareness of, and opportunity for military missions on Fort Huachuca.

8.1. Complete the Joint Resource Utilization Study. (Tony)

**ON SCHEDULE.** The JRUS remains ongoing through this reporting period with expected completion at the end of March 2022. There has been some conflict with scheduling the key players to meet and approve the final draft of the study along with recommended actions for the future. Staff is exploring another no-cost extension through April 30, 2022 which would require approval by OLDCC.

8.2. Continuously advocate for Fort Huachuca and the retention and expansion of its missions. (Chuck/Victoria)

**ONGOING.** This is an ongoing effort that will continue through existing partnerships with the Huachuca 50 and Cochise County, and the groups' consultant in Washington, DC. With the lack of a budget and the continuing resolution situation (plus pandemic restrictions still in place in DC), an in-person trip to Washington did not make sense but virtual meetings may be scheduled later this spring depending on federal budget development. Staff continue to seek ways to support projects through grants and appropriations requests.

9. Engage economic development stakeholders.

9.1. Explore the establishment of an Economic Development advisory group to enhance the efforts of the Economic Development division. (Chuck/Victoria)

**ON SCHEDULE.** Council voted to create an Economic Development commission on December 9, 2021. Two potential applications that met basic criteria were received so far, but neither met the established criteria of business owners/CEOs/leaders with a business/organization located within the city from representative sectors such as defense, retail, medical, hospitality, nonprofits, and professional services in partnership with education and workforce leaders.

- 9.2. Explore the meaningful engagement of additional community partners. (Tony)

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff continues to foster partnerships as well as seek new stakeholders to be included in the City's efforts. A recent partnership with UofA Tech Park and the IDA is ongoing (January – February 2022) to identify possibilities to energize tech-based businesses with the potential to scale into large enterprises.

- 9.3. Support Douglas Port of Entry improvements. (Chuck/Victoria)

**ONGOING.** A new port of entry in Douglas will benefit the entire region. Although not specifically a project the City will likely have a role in, staff maintains contact with Douglas and engages in regular stakeholder meetings. The last technical team meeting was held on 12/14/21 with staff attending. The topic of assistance on necessary infrastructure improvements was raised at the Rate Review Board meeting on 2/23/22.

## Innovate: Quality of Life

**Sierra Vista continues to foster an environment that will make our city a great place to live; work; raise a family; retire; and play.**

Goals:

10. Increase sports tourism revenue by \$3M over the next 2 years. (Laura W.)

- 10.1. Expand participation in existing sporting events, such as the Summit Challenge.

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff is working with the Marketing and Communications team to continue growing awareness of the Summit Challenge and other events. The return of events in 2021 saw many record breaking numbers. Building on that momentum is a high priority. Adding third party events, like the Tour de Zona in March 2022, will also help get the word out that Sierra Vista is an amazing special event and sports tourism destination.

- 10.2. Explore additional sporting event opportunities, especially cycling.

**ON SCHEDULE.** Several departments to include Parks & Recreation, Marketing and Communications, Police, Fire, and Public Works are working hand in hand with other county agencies to coordinate support for the 3-day cycling event, El Tour de Zona, from March 25-27, 2022. At the end of January 2022, the Tour has confirmed over 570 registrants which 41% are from out of state and from as far as Alaska and Canada. This number has already surpassed the inaugural goal and break-even point. The event organizers have been very pleased thus far

and hopes to continue to grow the event into the future. They will sell out after they reach 1,000 participants. It is possible they could sell out this year, which would be incredible.

Registered participants report to date that 308 will stay in a hotel, 148 will be staying in their RV's, 47 will tent camp, 35 will commute from home, and 21 will be staying with friends and family. This event is poised to bring in significant tourism dollars that will support local businesses and the hospitality industry while showcasing the very best of Sierra Vista and neighboring communities.

#### 10.3. Market facilities with intent to bring in additional revenue.

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff will work with Communications & Marketing and utilize social media to highlight facilities while utilizing self-serve options for rentals. The Rec Trac system received an update last year that allows customers to rent facilities such as lap swim lanes, sports fields, and park ramadas from the convenience of their homes. The update has relieved customer service congestion for patrons and makes it much easier to obtain information, make reservations, and pay for them which helps to increase revenue. Staff will continue to expand these services and market the process on a regular basis.

In addition, staff will work on creating a brochure and website enhancements to specifically highlight event and tournament sports facilities. These tools will then be used to work with promoters and organizers to court their events to consider Sierra Vista.

#### 10.4. Prioritize the implementation of the Parks Master Plan as funding permits.

##### 10.4.1. Ensure facilities meet the needs of the community they serve and reflect pride of place, especially restroom facilities.

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff is currently working with Engineering to install the first of many restroom facilities at the city complex ballfields starting at the Domingo Paiz complex and working our way up the street. During FY22, leach fields will be created at the Domingo Paiz fields due to a lack of sewer lines in the area and utilities stubbed out so that pre-fabricated restrooms can be dropped into the locations. Some of the other locations will be connected to available sewer lines up the street. Two to three locations will be completed during FY22 and a budget request will be made to continue this process during FY23.

##### 10.4.2. Ensure the environment is developed in a way that attracts more users.

**ON SCHEDULE.** Taking care to ensure that parks, sports fields, and public open spaces are designed and developed properly for their designated purpose is extremely important. For example, a neighborhood park should include a look and feel that enhances a neighborhood,

and larger parks meant for events should incorporate features that will appeal to our diverse community and portray a welcoming environment to visitors alike. Well-designed public restrooms with flushable toilets and baby changing stations should be a regular feature in our larger parks and sport complexes. Security lighting in dark places can be added which will make our open public spaces safer for users. Making sure that we are thinking about those thoughtful details will make public spaces much more attractive to users while portraying a positive image of the city.

As progress is made with the Consolidated Master Plan, these considerations will be applied when replacing and/or upgrading features to ensure they are convenient to use, serve a purpose, contain options for users of all abilities, and are visually appealing. For example, children's play areas could include sitting areas to allow multi-generational guardians to sit nearby while their children play. Combining adult and children's features will also be considered in some areas. Adult workout stations can be added near playgrounds and serve as dual purpose spaces which would allow adults the opportunity to exercise while their children play with friends nearby.

Staff are also evaluating the use of technology in public parks which will encourage the community to interact, especially options like workout stations that connect to apps, smart playgrounds that can be programmed to encourage group play games and challenges, and adding wi-fi to public spaces. Wi-Fi at sports fields would allow live streamed sports games to family members all over the world, a feature that could be marketed to help entice tournament organizers to hold their tournaments here.

On the West End, staff are working on adding a large, family sized embankment slide in Soldier Creek Park to move people from the upper side of the park to the lower side in a fun and unique way. Adding unique features will also draw people in from other areas and make parks destinations.

#### 10.5. Expand reach to the sports community.

**ON SCHEDULE:** Staff worked hard over the past few years to establish solid relationships with all sporting organizations in the area. Those relationships have given us access to other organizations throughout the state and the country. Staff will focus attention to this area and market future field improvements to these organizations so that they can use the information to expand their leagues and increase numbers of sanctioned tournament activity in Sierra Vista.

#### 10.6. Communicate with and/or visit other locations to conduct research on operations.

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff will visit the new Mesa Sporting Complex in early Summer 2022 to view its combined sports complexes, concert areas, concessions, gymnasiums, and e-sports facilities.

10.7. Support and encourage the growth of sports tourism partners.

**ON SCHEDULE.** The Parks, Recreation, & Library Department gave local non-profit sports organizations the opportunity to partner in a variety of ways to encourage their growth and increase participation in their programs and encourage tournament play.

All local sports organizations sign League Agreements with the city to schedule their games and tournaments in advance and pay for their field reservations on NTE 30-day terms. Staff ensures that all required field dressings are taken care of prior to their arrival and that reserved fields are open and available for their use. Staff is also available at night, on weekends, and during tournament play to act as Field Ambassadors and points of contact to support league and tournament activity.

Organizations also have an option to enter into Affiliate Agreements which permits the department to collect organizational registrations over its counters and to collect registrations on behalf of the sports organizations. When doing this, the department collects field usage fees for the season upfront by retaining a portion of the registration, described as a player participation fee. This takes care of all field usage fees and the leagues do not receive an invoice for their seasons. So far, the Sierra Vista Ponytail Softball program and the Coronado Athletic Club take advantage of this and have seen increases in participation. The benefit to the leagues is knowing that all of the fees from the City are satisfied up front, and parents and guardians have regular hours and larger registration windows to take advantage of registering their player(s) at times convenient to them.

10.8. Pursue strategic grant opportunities for growth.

**ON SCHEDULE.** The Parks, Recreation, and Library department is working on hiring a Management Analyst to pursue grant funding opportunities for facility improvements to support the Comprehensive Parks Master Plan and economic development efforts while enhancing quality of life. In the meantime, staff are evaluating a partnership with a local baseball organization to pursue grant funding to invert Arbenz Sports Field into a 4-Plex youth baseball complex, and grants to support existing partnerships with Cochise College and the Sierra Vista Unified School District to provide amenities and enhancements to our baseball, softball, and soccer fields.

11. Increase reach of community events both in person and virtual. (Laura W.)

11.1. Partner with local businesses and organizations to expand the reach of already successful local events.

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff is exploring wi-fi capability options for its event locations for a few reasons. Offering wi-fi capability to vendors will assist with their electronic payment systems that are often slow on cellular networks. Wi-fi around sports complexes will be a draw for spectators, and would allow the City to offer live streaming services during games as a new revenue stream. Wi-fi could also be used during events to increase the use of social media to attract and invite people to participate.

11.2. Evaluate current events to identify those with potential to expand with a regional focus.

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff is currently working with El Tour de Zona and surrounding Cochise County municipalities to provide a successful event which will bring participants in from around the country and Canada to explore Sierra Vista and the surrounding communities of Tombstone and Bisbee. The Cochise County Sheriff's Office recognized the economic benefits of the event and will be closing Charleston Road to Tombstone during the ride to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for riders. The surrounding communities are very excited to welcome these bicycle enthusiasts and their families to their communities.

After having our first successful 2-day Christmas event, staff is exploring the feasibility of renting a large ice-skating rink and staffing it at Veterans Memorial Park to provide an attraction for neighboring communities to take part in the event and attend the annual Christmas Parade. Staff are also evaluating operating the rink through New Year's Day to draw people to Sierra Vista and patronize local businesses for holiday shopping and to support bars, restaurants, and hospitality industries.

11.3. Leverage social media to increase the reach of events.

**ON SCHEDULE.** The Parks, Recreation and Library Department now has a dedicated Facebook page. Staff are exploring live streaming possibilities utilizing this platform to reach people in real time to encourage their participation. Staff currently work with the Marketing and Communications division to ensure events are available to interested people utilizing all available platforms.

11.4. Evaluate how people are counted at events and research ways to better capture accurate attendance/participation.

**ON SCHEDULE.** The Marketing and Communications division recently acquired software that will help to capture participation numbers and other useful information for major events. This software will also tell us where our event goers are coming from, where they stay, and how much money they spend while in town.

11.4.1. Establish benchmarks on attendance/participation.

**ON SCHEDULE.** Utilizing the tool mentioned in 11.4, staff should be able to establish baseline attendance numbers to track into the future.

11.5. Utilize events as marketing opportunities for our area.

**ON SCHEDULE.** During events, the Parks, Recreation, and Library Department works with the museum curator and the Marketing and Communications division to engage with event goers and provide information about Sierra Vista. In addition, departmental staff understands that event spaces can also be someone's first impression about our city. The department has enhanced, and will continue to enhance, the customer experience by ensuring that staff is presented well and they are encouraged to interact with customers. Staff also makes sure that the event space is well maintained and that the entire event presents a welcoming atmosphere by ensuring trash is removed promptly, tables are cleaned regularly, and that the entire event has a welcoming appearance that demonstrates our community's spirit.

12. Fully fund the Parks Master Plan over the next 10 years. (Laura W.)

12.1. Prioritize improvements that ensure facilities meet the needs of the users they serve and reflect pride of place, especially restroom facilities.

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff is working through the plan and taking care of smaller items throughout the fiscal year. Staff are getting ready to purchase new modular restroom facilities to place at the ballfields with the first installation tentatively planned for later Spring 2022. The plan for the first 3 restrooms will include pre-fabricated restroom installations at Domingo Paiz Soccer Complex, restrooms/snack bar at the Domingo Paiz Softball field, and restrooms between the pickleball courts and Arbenz baseball field. Completing those projects will allow us to remove up to 6 port-a-pots in those areas and avoid their ongoing costs.

Construction of the artificial turfing and track project along with the new irrigation system at Veterans Memorial Sports Complex is scheduled to begin construction this spring if the Schneider Electric phase 2 project is approved. Included in the project are improvements to the softball and baseball fields, and sports field lighting for the entire complex. These improvements will allow staff to utilize the facility and collect revenue. Staff are seeking additional funding



opportunities to build the sand volleyball courts and add two outdoor basketball courts during the next year.

12.2. Continue to get public input on the Parks Master Plan.

**ON SCHEDULE.** The first public input process for Roadrunner Park is scheduled for Spring 2022 and will be held at the future park site at the corner of St. Andrews Drive and Canyon de Flores Drive. Residents can also give input online utilizing the City's public engagement platform.

13. Evaluate future facility needs. (Victoria)

13.1. Identify and prioritize future needs that are not currently fulfilled by existing facilities, such as the visitor's center, community center, and future parks, and develop an implementation plan.

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff are working on a few avenues to approach determining future needs including developing an asset management database, and considering facility assessments. Various master plans are under review, as well as the 6-10 year capital improvements plan.

14. Maintain properly staffed city departments including, but not limited to public safety to provide citizens with exceptional service and safety.

14.1. Reevaluate recruiting strategies city-wide and implement new methods. (Victoria)

14.1.1. Focus on high school students to educate them on growth opportunities and possible career opportunities within the city.

14.1.2. Offer internships / job shadowing opportunities to students and the military.

**ON SCHEDULE.** A staff team on recruitment and retention in general met multiple times in the past six months to discuss strategies and options. The team recognized that recruitment of both people who don't work for the City yet, and recruitment of existing employees particularly part-time staff, was important. A marketing plan is currently in development to target recent high school graduates, people in early to mid-career positions looking to move up, and those getting out of the military. Some steps were taken, such as adding a cost of living calculator to the website page with job postings, and specific information about City benefits.

Staff were active in Future Focus classes at Buena in the past six months, and are seeking other ways to educate students on career opportunities with the City.

Military internships and recruitment of separating active duty servicemembers proved to be an unexpected benefit to police recruitment, which is described more in the next goal. To date, the City hosted one military intern in 2020 at City Hall, and one starts working at the Nancy J. Brua

Animal Control Center in June. One is currently in the background check process and will be helping with employment background checks once that process is complete and he's available. One military applicant is currently working through the police recruitment process, and two prospective military applicants to the police department did not pass the selection and hiring process.

- 14.1.3. Implement strategies to test for police officer candidacy at military installations. (Adam T.)

**ON SCHEDULE.** COVID-19 variant outbreaks hampered the police department's ability to travel to military installations to test in other states. As a result, primary efforts focused on working with the Transition Assistance and Career Skills Programs on Fort Huachuca to recruit military members that are exiting military service. The department had several applicants to date through this process; however, a couple of the candidates were disqualified during the hiring process. One candidate is still currently moving through the hiring process. Focusing on local transitioning active duty servicemembers may result in a better overall recruitment strategy.

- 14.2. Continue to fund SEACOM at appropriate levels, and prioritize dispatcher recruitment. (Chuck)

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff began work on the FY23 SEACOM budget, and the SEACOM JPA board voted to increase dispatcher salaries by 6% at its January meeting based on market comparisons to assist in recruitment and retention.

- 14.3. Evaluate the classification/compensation plan and prioritize offering competitive salaries. (Barbara)

**ON SCHEDULE.** The evaluation of market salaries by HR is underway for the FY23 budget. Preliminary information showed City salaries slipping further behind market than expected, and a mid-year salary adjustment was proposed in February. Council passed at 4% mid-year adjustment on February 24, 2022. Staff is evaluating whether further adjustment will be needed for FY23.

15. Improve the current levels of service in programs, services, and amenities provided by Sierra Vista.

- 15.1. Continue partnering with Cochise College for training and education services. (Adam T/Brian J)

**ON SCHEDULE.** Law enforcement and fire department leaders held meetings with Cochise College regarding future training needs and plans. Cochise College is currently moving forward

with the development of a public safety training center at the Douglas campus. Plans have been developed for a scalable build out of the center. Bidding processes recently began related to building a pad for driver's training. Cochise College has also been exploring options to assist with dispatcher training.

- 15.2. Design an expanded animal shelter in FY22 based on priority needs assessed in the 2020 needs assessment, and construct the required expansion in FY23. (Chris H/Irene)

**ON SCHEDULE.** Due to the current construction environment and unstable construction costs, staff determined that this project was an ideal candidate for a Construction Manager At Risk (CMAR) contract. The goal of a CMAR procurement is for the architect/engineer and builder to work hand-in-hand to design and construct a facility that does not exceed the budget.

Procurement is currently in negotiations with the selected A/E Firm, while the selection of the CMAR is under review. Staff anticipates the design/CMAR process to kick off this spring.

- 15.3. Implement a 'clean up the city' initiative. (Matt)

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff is continuing to recruit volunteer groups to participate in the City's Adopt an Area Program. The program currently has 17 groups who have adopted various sections of the City such as streets, multi-use paths, parks, tennis courts, washes, and cleanups after special events. The volunteer groups pick-up trash around the community on a quarterly basis and average about 4 tons of trash removal per year.

- 15.4. Enhance work with providers and implement a plan to address homeless, mental health, and affordable housing issues. (Matt)

**ON SCHEDULE.** During Summer 2020, Community Development staff interviewed non-profit and government agency staff to determine any gaps in service or needed resources to more effectively address the needs of persons experiencing a crisis and/or homelessness. A key finding was the geographic dispersal of resources throughout the community can make navigating and accessing needed services challenging. Staff coordinated with the Cochise Coalition on Ending Chronic Homelessness (a subcommittee of the Balance of State Continuum of Care) to stand up a monthly One Stop Resource and Referral Center (Community Connect) during a six-month pilot program to test its effectiveness. The first event will be at the Ethel Berger Center on March 1 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 P.M. Cochise Housing Connection, Inc. will be overseeing the logistics and promotion of the event.

16. Improve the form, function, and character of the built environment of Sierra Vista. (Matt)  
16.1. Increase opportunities for public art.

**ON SCHEDULE.** The West End Commission encouraged and assisted the Hummingbird Stitchers Guild to start a “Barn Quilt Trail” in Sierra Vista. A barn quilt is a square piece of painted wood or metal that looks like a single quilt block. To date, 21 barn quilt squares have been placed on 11 buildings. The amended West Sierra Vista Redevelopment Plan recommends allocating \$15,000 per year towards public art installations on the West End.

16.2. Prioritize methods to reduce blight, clean up dilapidated buildings, and neighborhood revitalization.

**ON SCHEDULE.** This emphasis is engrained in the Community Development Department’s standard operating procedures. Staff continues prioritizing abatements according to the severity and gravity of the violation. The PY 21 CDBG Annual Action Plan provides \$50,000 for making emergency home repairs to low-income, owner-occupied homes. Staff has completed and submitted the requisite broad-tier environmental review for HUD’s acceptance and authorization to use the awarded grant funds. Staff anticipates opening the application process by April 1, 2022.

16.3. Identify and create more low-stress bike routes/lanes/paths.

**ON SCHEDULE.** This initiative will be covered under the Responsible Stewardship focus area, and goal 1.B pertaining to developing a complete streets program.

16.4. Prioritize public safety visibility at community events and gatherings. (Adam T/Laura W)

**ONGOING.** The Parks, Recreation, and Library Department works closely with the Police Department to plan oversight and close patrol of community events and gatherings hosted in the city when necessary and feasible. These patrols can be limited depending on staffing and call loads. Certain events will necessitate dedicated officers working on overtime or hired off-duty by event organizers to ensure public safety coverage.

16.5. Evaluate the creation of a neighborhood partnership program similar to the West Sierra Vista Partnership Program.

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff is preparing options to present to the City Council to consider in connection with the FY 22-23 budget.

16.6. Evaluate the creation of a street tree planting program.

**ON SCHEDULE.** Staff secured the donation of trees from Ace Hardware to offer to the public at West Fest, a city special event planned for April 30, 2022. The free tree giveaway will tie in with Arbor Day. Residents will be encouraged to plant the tree in their front yard to beautify the streetscape.

16.7. Review and evaluate access and design standards for city streets for complete streets and community character objectives.

**ON SCHEDULE.** This initiative will also be covered under the Responsible Stewardship focus area, and goal 1.B pertaining to developing a complete streets program.

## **Include: Citizen Engagement**

**Sierra Vista promotes transparent two-way citizen interaction and participation about community issues.**

Goals:

17. As the media landscape is changing, we will continue to leverage traditional and new methods of communication to provide opportunities for improved citizen engagement.

17.1. Reinvigorate non-regulatory commissions by evaluating how they could work more effectively. (Laura W/Matt/Sharon/Judy)

**BEHIND SCHEDULE.** The Marketing & Communications division has promoted opportunities to serve on commissions to help bolster membership. There has been mixed success to date finding interested residents willing to serve on commissions.

There is currently one member of the Tourism Commission, two members of the Library Commission, and two members of the Youth Commission.

The Arts & Humanities Commission was tasked with completing the community mural project. Unfortunately, the commission's membership has suffered and currently has only two members. Community volunteers have taken on the mural project and are working toward its completion. Staff will continue to work with the membership and invite opportunities for involvement.

The Cultural Diversity Commission successfully reinvigorated and has been meeting regularly again. The commission was invited to participate in the upcoming West Fest scheduled for April 30. They are looking for a group to provide a cultural dance during the event. They are also

working with staff on other ideas on how to highlight and celebrate our community's rich cultural heritage through programming and participation in other events. Fort Huachuca reached out to inquire about greater collaboration on cultural events and activities, and staff are exploring that opportunity.

17.2. Develop and implement a communication plan. (Judy)

**ON SCHEDULE.** The first step in developing a communications plan is to conduct a discovery exercise to better understand how the community receives their information and how it wishes to receive information. To that end, a survey was launched on Engage Sierra Vista in late October 2021. The survey is still active. Once closed, staff will complete a discovery summary, then begin an internal audit of current communications tools.

17.3. Increase how the many great stories of Sierra Vista are shared with both staff and residents. (Judy)

**ONGOING.** The Marketing & Communications division requested assistance from department directors to help identify stories, and includes this topic in monthly economic development team meetings.

17.4. Establish a more visible Council presence in media efforts and community outreach. (Judy)

**ON SCHEDULE.** The Marketing & Communications division is considering ways in which Council members can assist with outreach efforts, to include Public Service Announcements.

18. Increase capabilities and resources to expand the communication reach and impact of the City. (Judy)

**ON SCHEDULE.** This topic will be included in the Communications Plan (17.2).

Staff is working to redevelop both the municipal and tourism websites using external contractors, who aim to increase search engine optimization (SEO). Once launched the existing indexing used by current search engines will no longer function, so an optimized SEO is important. The new design is developed with the end user in mind, to highlight most-requested information, and to improve searchability. The tourism website will be folded into the municipal site as a microsite, but retain its well-known URL (VisitSierraVista.com), which will function as a redirect.

Staff researched additional communications tools, to include a website chat bot, which would be

populated with responses to frequently asked questions. The first-year fees for the service were quoted at \$13,434, with an annual subscription fee of \$7,825 in year two; the fee increases about 6% annually, in perpetuity.

- 18.1. Prioritize and communicate an emphasis in the organization on Economic Development, Marketing, and Public Information.

**ON SCHEDULE.** These areas will further emphasized with the new website launch. Marketing & Communications staff works closely with the Economic Development division to produce editorial content. Local communications efforts, to include social media, print media, digital media, podcasts, and media opportunities (interviews) emphasize the holistic approach the City takes to bolster economic development efforts.

Any additional emphasis needed, and opportunities uncovered, that impact these areas will be examined during the Communications Plan discovery phase.