

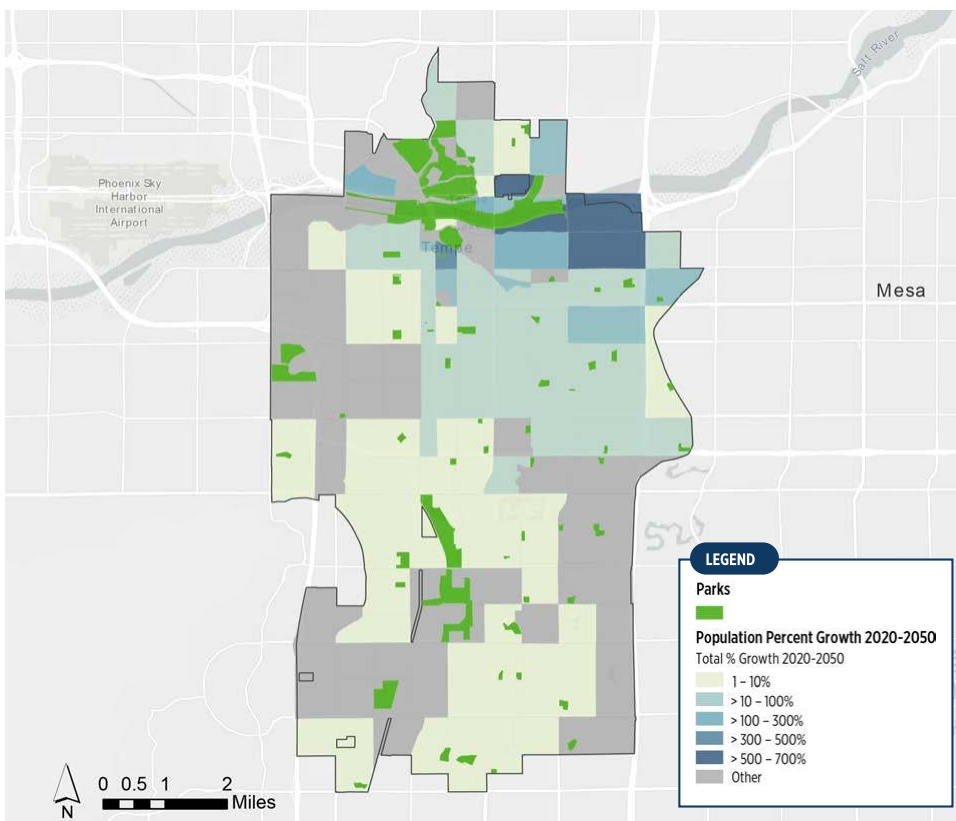
expanded access



Why is Expanded Parks & Recreation Access needed?

Approximately 70 percent of homes within Tempe can access a park or recreation center within a half-mile walk. The City of Tempe provides almost 79 acres of public park per 10,000 people according to Tempe's 2021 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The 2021 Plan notes this is slightly more than the average and median of parks per acre compared to other jurisdictions with similar urban form and density. Park acres metrics are relevant for understanding the feeling of abundance or lack of park acres city-wide, and the per population ratio is a simple way of identifying overcrowding.

Tempe is a city that has experienced immense growth over the past several decades. This growth is not expected to slow; Tempe's population is projected to grow by 21% in the next 10 years and 40% in the next 20 years. With a growing population, there is need to add new parks and recreation spaces to the City's inventory and increase the usability of City properties to meet the same level of service of park acreage as the population today receives.



"As the City's population increases, the acres of parks per capita will decline. Tempe's parks are already intensively used, and limited areas within existing parks are available to add new facilities."

- City of Tempe 2021 Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Figure 1: Tempe Acres of Parks per 10k People per Census Tract, 2020-2050.

As seen in Figure 2, most of Tempe's population growth is anticipated in the urban core, or area north of Broadway Road. Figure 1 shows this is an area that currently has 9.5 to 19 acres of park per 10,000 people. This level of service is significantly lower than the citywide metric of 79 acres of city parks per 10,000 people (2021 Parks and Recreation Master Plan) and can be considered an area with lower levels of parks provision than other areas of the city.

In fairly built-out and landlocked cities, there are often limited properties that are appropriate for park acquisition. High land costs add feasibility challenges. Strategies for expanding access require creativity beyond land acquisitions, such as adding park and recreation spaces through partnerships with public institutions and organizations, shared-use agreements, and management tactics for quasi-public spaces held by private development or homeowners associations (HOA).

Overcrowding, over capacity, and intensity of use can be evaluated in targeted ways and addressed with specific strategies, such as designing park facilities for greater intensity of use. The land use patterns and associated densities differ significantly between neighborhoods in northern and central areas of Tempe with those in the south; residential areas in southern areas of Tempe are larger lot single-family homes, while those in the north are typically higher density and have smaller lot sizes. Parks in urban areas may require higher levels of investment, programming, and facilities that are more flexible to meet diverse user needs.

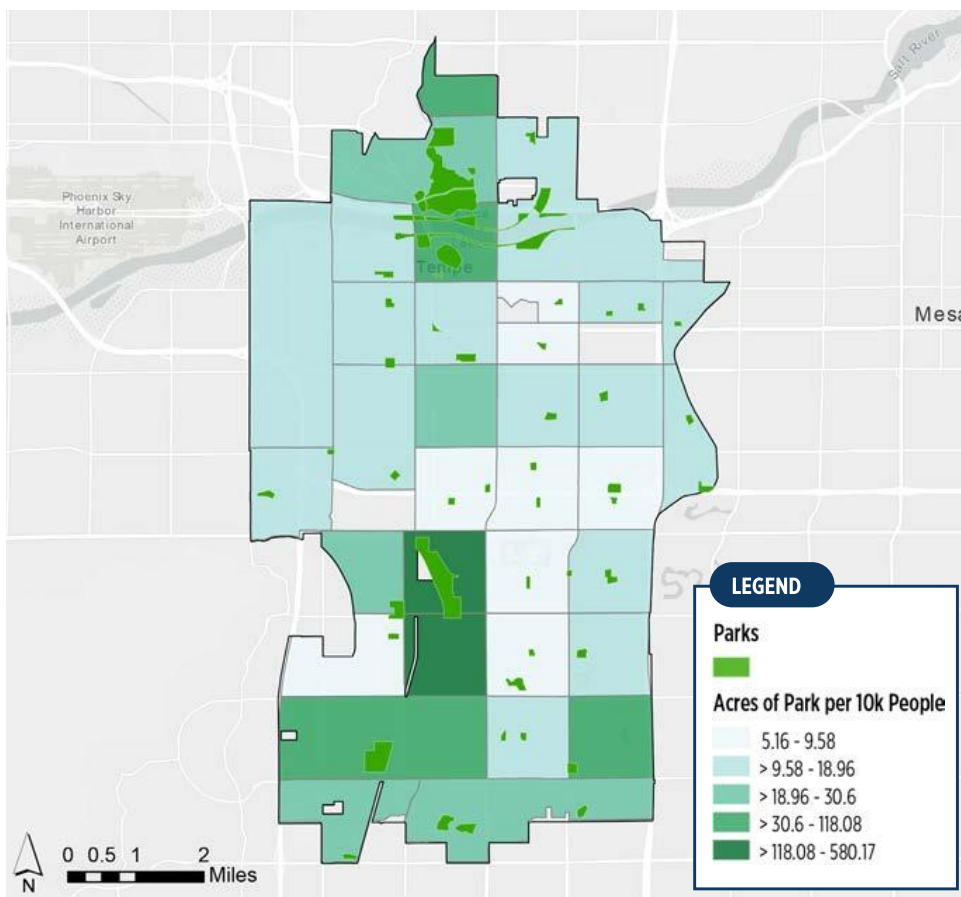


Figure 2: Population Percent Growth per Census Tract, 2050. Source: 2021 Parks and Recreation Master Plan

A Park Acres Per Capita Level of Service (LOS) Analysis for the Tempe Parks and Recreation Equity Study was performed at the Character Area level to compare park and recreation space distribution relative to population density. The City of Tempe has used the analysis to create the following goals for future Level of Service. These goals consider existing and future populations, neighborhood characteristics, and the diversity of park and recreation types within the area. This table should be used to advance strategies associated with Goal C1.

Expanding access can be accomplished through a variety of means:

- 1) acquiring new properties and/or partnering with other providers,
- 2) investing in parks and recreation spaces proportional to the number of people they serve, and
- 3) removing barriers to physically accessing park sites.

Character Area Name	Number of Properties (2021)	Acres/ 1,000 Population (2021)	Acres needed to meet Tempe's Park Acres/ 1,000 Population (2021)
Alameda	12	1.53	5.64
DT Tempe/ Rio Salado/ ASU/ NW Neighborhoods	14	13.22	0.00
Southwest Tempe	4	3.39	3.78
Kiwanis/ The Lakes	12	6.37	0.80
Corona/ South Tempe	7	3.63	3.54
Apache	6	1.38	5.79
Papago/ North Tempe	8	33.52	0.00
Double Butte/ Northwest Tempe	3	8.83	0.00
City of Tempe	65	7.71	0.00

Figure 3: Level of Service Analysis Summary