

Parks & Recreation Master Plan Update



Chapter 5: Cultural Component



Town of
Yucca Valley

5.0 – CULTURAL COMPONENT

5.1 Introduction

The Cultural Component to the Yucca Valley Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan is intended to provide an overview of cultural services, programs, and facilities available to Yucca Valley residents and visitors and to provide recommendations for meeting the community's future cultural needs.

Yucca Valley has a rich and diverse cultural environment. There is a significant population of artists and musicians in the Morongo Basin, as well as, a very high interest in the programs, events and exhibits presented by the Hi-Desert Nature Museum, the Yucca Valley Branch Library, the Community Services Department and various cultural groups and organizations.

The Cultural Component provides an updated look at the condition of existing cultural facilities; analyzes the need and demand for cultural facilities and programs; and presents key findings for the Town's consideration to address future needs. There are a number of issues related to providing cultural arts in Yucca Valley, including the effect of two concurrent planning projects (Public Facilities Master Plan and Old Town Specific Plan) on the Hi-Desert Nature Museum and the San Bernardino County Branch Library in Yucca Valley.

Residents and visitors to Yucca Valley enjoy a number of cultural activities throughout the year. A variety of festivals, concerts, exhibits and events contribute to an emerging cultural image. Over the past five years, the Town has developed a public art program which is complemented by a growing number of private galleries.

While Yucca Valley's art organizations face financial challenges, public support for the arts has confirmed a community interest in expanding a diverse range of cultural opportunities.

The goal of this section is to provide Town leaders with a vision for developing and expanding these cultural

opportunities in Yucca Valley and strategies and options to accomplish that vision.

5.1.1 Hi-Desert Nature Museum Overview

As the Morongo Basin’s museum of natural history, culture, and art the Hi-Desert Nature Museum is the institution most directly charged with preserving, interpreting, and fostering stewardship of these resources. The Hi-Desert Nature Museum has served this purpose for more than 40 years.



The museum’s natural history and cultural collections number over 3,000 specimens and artifacts. These represent a library of Morongo Basin culture, history, art, animal life, and geology. The Hi-Desert Nature Museum offers a full schedule of natural history programs related to the High Desert’s unique natural elements. The museum features educational opportunities for visitors of all ages, including natural history dioramas displaying wildlife in the desert, an interactive “Kids Corner” with plenty of hands-on activities, a mini-zoo with live desert creatures, a gem and mineral collection, a Native American artifacts exhibit and a fossil collection.

The museum collaborates closely with the Joshua Tree National Park and plays a key role in supporting heritage organizations, educational programs, and community arts organizations throughout the high desert region.

5.1.2 Overview of Culture, Arts & Music in Yucca Valley

In addition to the exhibits and programs at the Hi-Desert Nature Museum and Yucca Valley Branch Library, several community organizations offer a wide variety of concerts, performing arts, festivals, and cultural events to the community.

It became very apparent during the public input process of this Master Plan that there is a vibrant art and music scene throughout the basin. And the need for venues for cultural events was widely expressed. Cultural arts activities scored

very high as a response to resident survey and interview questions regarding what they like about living in Yucca Valley and what they would like to see more of in the future.

Most respondents felt that it is important for Yucca Valley to be a year-round center for the arts, with “arts” defined to encompass all visual, literary, performing, traditional, dance, music, festivals, and cultural social events. Residents also felt that the arts should be sustained through increased collaborations between the Town, schools, library, local businesses, and community art organizations. Finally, residents surveyed felt that cultural facilities and programs are a key factor in Yucca Valley’s economic future and vital to the success of the Old Town Specific Plan.

5.1.3 Art in Public Places Program Overview

Public art is an important element in defining the quality of life in a growing community. The Yucca Valley Town Council adopted its first public art policy in the fall of 2002 and appointed the Public Art Advisory Committee shortly afterward. The Committee has cataloged the Town’s inventory of public art, identified locations for future placements and initiated dialogue with potential donors and contributors. The Committee continues to work with staff and the community to promote public art and to identify potential funding sources.

The open spaces, changing seasons and natural beauty of the high desert all provide inspiration for a growing community of exceptional artists who have chosen to make their homes in Yucca Valley and the other Morongo Basin communities.

This treasury of artistic talent has advanced Yucca Valley’s awareness that public art is vital in defining the values and image of the community. A fledgling but well-crafted public art program is positioned to assist in promoting the town’s unique atmosphere and thus to heighten the local quality of life.

When Yucca Valley incorporated in 1991, the public art inventory consisted of three sculptures:

- ◆ Sabre-Tooth Tiger (Antoine Martin) – displayed at Remembrance Park
- ◆ Angel of Flight (Antoine Martin) – displayed in the Community Center rose garden
- ◆ Owls (Howard Pierce) – displayed in front of the Hi-Desert Nature Museum



Since the adoption of the Public Arts Policy in 2003, eleven additional pieces have been acquired through donation or commission:

- ◆ “Sunburst” 10-06-01 (Simi Dabah) – displayed on the California Welcome Center north-facing wall
- ◆ Unnamed sculpture 05-12-01 (Simi Dabah) – displayed at the Park and Ride facility
- ◆ “Gecko” steel sculpture (John Gleason) – donated by Hi-Desert Nature Museum Association, displayed on Museum wall
- ◆ Unnamed sculpture 4-4-04 (Simi Dabah) – displayed at the Community Development building
- ◆ “Eagle” metal sculpture (Ric Vigallon) – displayed on the east-facing wall of the Town Hall building

- ◆ “Nautilus” paper sculpture (Keith Anderson) – displayed in the Community Development building lobby
- ◆ Untitled Oil Painting (Irene Scoggins Bertrand) – on display in the Mesquite Room, Yucca Valley Community Center
- ◆ “Bloom Hill” Digital Photograph on Canvas (Geoffrey Fennel) – displayed in the Community Services Office
- ◆ Boys & Girls Club Statuette (Howard Pierce) – on display in the Yucca Valley Town Hall
- ◆ “Together We Can” sculpture (John Fisher) – temporarily displayed in the Yucca Valley Branch Library
- ◆ Unnamed sculpture 11-28-01 (Simi Dabah) – installation pending

The goals of the program are to create an artistic harmony between the buildings, land and open spaces in Yucca Valley, as well as, provide permanent, outdoor art work accessible to the general public throughout the Town in order to bring art into the community's daily life.

5.2 Existing Conditions

5.2.1 Hi-Desert Nature Museum

The Museum is currently housed in a 5,300 square-foot, single-story, reinforced concrete block and masonry building that is part of the Town of Yucca Valley’s Community Center Complex.



The museum building is over 30 years old and in need of upgrades to accommodate the long-term preservation of its collections. There is currently a need for environmental controls, additional office and work space, and modern collection storage facilities.

The museum has out grown the exhibition spaces which are not large enough to accommodate displays and exhibits requested by museum audiences. The museum offers permanent collection exhibits, which are rotated on a periodic basis in order to ultimately display all of the Museum's permanent collection; and temporary or traveling exhibits, that present short-term, topical education opportunities for all ages.



Additional storage space with environmental controls is needed for the permanent collection. There is currently a need for a receiving and shipping area so that traveling exhibitions can be inventoried and staged prior to installation.

The museum offers a multitude of education programs independently and also in cooperation with the Morongo Unified School District and the library. Additional rooms for educational programs are needed. The children's discovery and

educational corner is often filled to capacity and could benefit from additional space. It often doubles as a workshop, demonstration and lecture area.

In addition to providing indoor space for exhibitions and programs, the museum also does periodic outdoor events and programs in the available space adjacent to the facility.

The Hi-Desert Nature Museum staff is currently working on a five-year Strategic Plan, which will attempt to synchronize museum growth and activities with the master plans being developed for the Town. The Strategic Plan will articulate goals and objectives for the future that will allow it to increase its educational offerings, public programs, exhibits, storage of its collections, interactive technologies, marketing, and revenue development. The Museum Strategic Plan will recommend an expansion of the existing building to increase

in size from its current 5,300 sq. ft. to a final build-out of 15,000 sq. ft. The additional square footage is contemplated to provide a 5,000 sq. ft. gallery space for traveling and temporary exhibits; a 3,500 sq. ft. exhibition space for permanent collection display; a 1,000 sq. ft. of meeting room space; 2,000 sq. ft. of multi-purpose performance and event space; and the remaining 3,500 sq. ft. for offices, controlled climate storage, lobby/reception, and restrooms.

While the existing site at the Community Center Complex could accommodate an expansion of the Hi-Desert Nature Museum to the 15,000 sq. ft. required, the Strategic Plan will incorporate the flexibility to relocate to another site if necessary.

5.2.2 San Bernardino County Library - Yucca Valley Branch

The Library is located in the Town Hall building within the current Community Center Complex. In addition to typical library services, the library offers a number of cultural activities and coordinates education programs with the Hi-Desert Nature Museum. The library offers themed activities for children, youth, and adults and coordinates with the museum when school tours are scheduled through the Morongo Unified School District and other agencies.

The Public Facilities Master Plan currently being conducted by the Town indicates that the library should be a 20,000 square-foot facility at the town's build-out population. In its current location there is not enough room for expansion to accommodate a 20,000 sq. ft. facility. The library is in the same situation as the Hi-Desert Nature Museum, in that a different site might be necessary to accommodate future needs.

5.2.3 Festival & Events Space

The Community Services Department, several community organizations, and various community groups conduct a wide variety of cultural activities year round in Yucca Valley. From Holiday events to the annual Grubstake Community Faire, Starry Nights Festival, equestrian events, to the annual

Summer Music Festival, Yucca Valley residents and visitors can participate in community events all year long.

Because of the growth that has taken place over the past several years, the sites that the Town has traditionally used to stage community events have become less available. During the community input process it became very apparent that there is a great need for venues that can hold both small and large events within the Town.

A number of events are equestrian-related or otherwise draw large attendance for shows or festivals. The Needs Analysis contained in Chapter 6 indicates that a “Yucca Valley Show Grounds and Events Center” should be developed to accommodate these large scale events. The second type of facility needed for community events are places for small concerts/music presentations, local performing arts activities, art shows, community organization activities, and outdoor show space. If the Town does not create these two kinds of venues then its ability to continue to host large scale events and smaller community cultural activities will be severely hampered.

5.3 Facility Analysis

5.3.1 Hi-Desert Nature Museum

The ultimate goal for the Hi-Desert Nature Museum should be a 15,000 sq. ft. facility containing a permanent exhibit hall, traveling exhibition gallery, youth discovery/events space, secure patio exhibit/performance space, conference/meeting rooms, reception/lobby, secure climate-controlled storage, administrative offices, and restrooms.

There are two possible scenarios for obtaining this square footage requirement. The first scenario would be to expand existing museum at the Community Center Complex. There is space to the north of the existing museum building to accommodate the additional square footage. There has been discussion about adding a second floor to the existing building; but the financial feasibility of meeting retrofit requirements of the building is questionable.

A two-story museum building would allow exhibition and event space to have higher ceilings to accommodate taller exhibits and would provide sufficient wall space to project film and other media on. If the museum is expanded in its current location a two-story building should be designed to compliment the existing single story building and create the ceiling height necessary to implement the Museum's planned programming.

The second scenario would be for the Town to relocate the Hi-Desert Nature Museum into the area considered in the Old Town Specific Plan. This option would allow the design and development of a 15,000 sq. ft. museum building to specifically provide the type of spaces needed to allow the museum to implement its vision and mission. It would also put the museum in a desirable location to attract people into the Old Town District thus creating pedestrian traffic for adjacent Old Town commercial uses. Finally, moving the museum to the future Old Town area would allow the museum to coordinate with other planned cultural arts uses, such as private galleries, artist in residency development projects, and local businesses.

The ideal scenario would incorporate both the Hi-Desert Nature Museum and the San Bernardino County Branch Library in a single project whereby the two entities would have separate facilities but share common amenities, such as reception/lobby area, conference/meeting rooms, receiving areas, restrooms, outdoor plaza/amphitheater area, and staff parking. This would promote visitation to both the library and the museum, allow for joint programming and joint marketing, and decrease both capital and overhead costs for development and operation of both facilities.

By combining the museum, the library, and an amphitheater/activities plaza space in the Old Town Specific Plan, the Town would not only realize an economic benefit for the Old Town commercial district but would also gain a venue that would enable the Town to implement its vision for establishing its cultural image.

5.3.2 San Bernardino County Library – Yucca Valley Branch

As stated above, the ideal scenario for the future of the Branch Library would be to combine it with the Hi-Desert Nature Museum in an Old Town Specific Plan project.

If the combined building scenario in Old Town cannot be implemented for the museum and library, it should be considered important that the two facilities continue to be located within a short walking distance of each other so that the two agencies can continue to coordinate education programs, lecture series, and themed events.

5.3.3 Yucca Valley Events Show Grounds

Yucca Valley has a strong sense of community ownership of the Town's special events. The annual Grubstake Parade and Community Faire, Rodeos & Equestrian Events, Summer Music Festivals, Art Shows, Shakespeare in the Park, Collector's Shows, and other events that attract regional audiences are an important part of the fabric that makes up the social and cultural environment throughout the Morongo Basin. Town leaders, community organizations and residents all recognize the importance of having a venue to host major events. Yucca Valley's location and climate allow for a year-round events schedule in a desirable weekend destination. By developing a facility specifically designed to host a variety of shows, festivals, and cultural events the Town can continue its tradition of community events and enhance the opportunities for increased tourism and economic benefit.

The ideal design for such a facility would accommodate equestrian events including rodeos, shows, and competitions; summer music festivals and concerts; outdoor performing arts; specialty collector shows; and holiday celebration events. This facility should also contain support amenities such as an RV Park, group picnic facilities, adequate restrooms, food concessions, and covered exhibition space. Such a facility would require 100-200 acres and should be located in an area of town that is easily accessible but does not impact residential neighborhoods.

The show grounds facility would be intended primarily for weekend events; however, it could also serve as meeting and activity space for local 4H Clubs, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, and other community organizations during the week. The RV Park could also serve in-transit visitors traveling to and from other areas in addition to those attending planned events.

Another use for this facility would be as a staging and/or sheltering area in the event of a local disaster or other emergency.

5.3.4 Performing Arts Center

During the community input process, particularly in the resident phone survey, there was a high degree of support and interest in developing a Performing Arts Center in Yucca Valley for both school related performing arts and community based performing arts programs. A large auditorium/performing arts facility in Yucca Valley could serve the entire Morongo Basin and become a visitor destination that would positively affect the local economy.

Performing Arts (i.e. plays, concerts, cabaret, lectures, etc.) were highly requested during the community workshops and stakeholder interviews conducted as part of the Master Plan process. The music scene in Yucca Valley and the Morongo Basin would be enhanced tremendously with the development of a Performing Arts Center.

The ideal scenario for developing a Performing Arts Center would be for the Town and the School District to partner together for the development and operation of a performing arts facility adjacent to Yucca Valley High School.

Other options could include a Performing Arts Center within the Old Town Specific Plan or a joint development project with the Copper Mountain Community College.

5.3.5 Amphitheater/Activities Plaza

In addition to large scale destination events, the Needs Analysis clearly indicated that residents are desirous of less formal venues for smaller events associated with the

performing arts, visual arts, music, social activities, and family-oriented cultural programs.

This trend is growing in popularity nationwide. Towns and cities are incorporating small amphitheater/activity plazas in the design of their downtown redevelopments, community center projects, and within community park development. These venues primarily serve local neighborhoods or business districts and allow outlets for local performing and visual artists to present their talents to the community. These amphitheater/activity plazas also serve as a community gathering space, a place to relax and contemplate, and usually contain public art and unique landscaping to visually enhance the environment that they are located in. While design of these types of venues varies widely, the common elements include a seating area surrounding a platform or stage; a level plaza area that can be used for displays or activities; and public art, usually commissioned from local artists to enhance the cultural environment.

Within the recommendations in Chapter 9 of the Yucca Valley Parks, Recreation & Open Space Master Plan there are three sites where it would be appropriate to include an Amphitheater/Activities Plaza. The first would be in conjunction with the Hi-Desert Nature Museum and Library in the Old Town Specific Plan. The second venue could be designed into the Multi-Generational Community Center Complex; and the third venue could be included in the Community Park Design for the Yucca Mesa area.

These versatile, programmable spaces not only add to the ability to increase the number and frequency of community events, but also serve as passive open space in a cultural park-like setting. The amphitheater/activity plazas should also incorporate shade structures so that programming can take place during the warm summer months. Themed landscaping and public art can be added to discourage anti-social behavior and provide a comfortable upscale environment. Given the tremendous number of musicians, artists, and cultural organizations in Yucca Valley, these spaces will provide programming opportunities on a continuous year-round schedule.

5.4 Key Findings

5.4.1 Yucca Valley's Arts Strengths and Assets

An analysis of Yucca Valley's cultural strengths and assets, confirmed by the stakeholder interviews and surveys conducted during the Master Plan process are:

- ◆ The abundance of local creative talent
- ◆ The popularity and awareness of the Hi-Desert Nature Museum
- ◆ The high attendance and use of the Branch Library
- ◆ The large community support for festivals and town wide events
- ◆ A population interested in arts education
- ◆ A vibrant music and art scene in the region
- ◆ Local leaders with a desire to enhance cultural programming
- ◆ A diverse number of private sector commercial art establishments

5.4.2 Greatest Challenges

From the information gathered through the public input process and the consultant's analysis of the current cultural conditions in Yucca Valley, the following are the major challenges facing the arts community in Yucca Valley:

- ◆ Lack of sufficient funding for cultural facilities and programs
- ◆ The need for performance venues
- ◆ Insufficient space at the Museum & Library facilities to accommodate programs and events
- ◆ Lack of a dedicated staff position for marketing, promotion and audience development.
- ◆ Need for collaboration among community arts groups

- ◆ Need a Public Arts Master Plan to outline the future of public art in the Yucca Valley
- ◆ Consensus building among the diversity of lifestyles in the town
- ◆ Involving young people in arts and culture
- ◆ Enhancing Yucca Valley's cultural image in the region and beyond

5.4.3 Culture & Arts Contribution to Yucca Valley's Economic Growth

Measuring the impact of cultural and arts from a financial perspective is difficult and can be subjective; however, recent studies conducted on a national and local level by the Americans for the Arts shows that nationally, the art industry spends approximately \$134 billion annually. Federal tax revenue from these expenditures amounts to over \$10.5 billion dollars per year.

On a more local level, the revenue generated by restaurants, hotels/motels, retail stores, art galleries, and other businesses has a major impact on the economy in Yucca Valley. The impact is not only by patrons attending cultural facilities, Town events, and private galleries, but also by organizations that spend a significant amount of money locally in pursuit of their cultural interests.

Cultural facilities and events are a key to the economic growth of tourism in the Morongo Basin. Quality of life issues, including a community's cultural image, contribute significantly to businesses' site selection decisions. Cultural facilities available in the community act to attract and retain a creative work force and to generate pedestrian traffic that bring people into an area that who in turn partake of other retail opportunities. Finally, tourists who attend cultural events, museums, and performing arts functions spend nearly twice as much traveling as those who do not travel for cultural reasons.

It is apparent that the economic success of the Old Town Specific Plan will be tied to the Town's ability to develop and

implement cultural facilities and programs as a key component of the overall development plan for Old Town.

The economic benefits of pursuing cultural facilities and programs in Yucca Valley include:

- ◆ Increased Transit Occupancy Tax (TOT) from visitors attending festivals and events
- ◆ Increased sales tax revenue from spending by non-profit arts organizations and art related businesses for supplies, equipment and promotions
- ◆ Employment in both public and private arts related jobs
- ◆ Event related spending i.e. meals, lodging, souvenirs, retail, etc.
- ◆ Admission fees
- ◆ Donations and other financial support for the arts

5.4.4 Cultural Facilities and Venues Development Vision Plan

The results of the community surveys and interviews provide concrete evidence of the importance of cultural arts in Yucca Valley. The vision for Yucca Valley is to enhance its cultural image, provide quality of life cultural experiences for its citizens, and use cultural facilities and programs as an economic strategy for future financial health.

Therefore, the following objectives and strategies for reaching this vision should be pursued by the Town as funding and resources permit.

5.4.4a Cultural Facilities Development

- ◆ Support cultural groups with facilities in which to work, perform, exhibit, and teach. Examples would include a multi-purpose performing arts center with classroom and studio space, open amphitheaters in parks, use of lobby areas at the museum and library for galleries for local artists.
- ◆ Plan comprehensively for cultural facility development including the following:

- Pursue development of a new Hi-Desert Nature Museum and Branch Library, along with a amphitheater/activities plaza in the Old Town Specific Plan area
- Pursue development of a Yucca Valley Show Grounds and Events Center to provide a venue for large scale community events, equestrian activities, exhibitions, and specialty shows and festivals
- Include smaller amphitheater/activity plazas in the design of the future Multi-Generational Community Center Complex and the Yucca Mesa Community Park

5.4.4b Positioning, Marketing, and Promotion

- ◆ Position Yucca Valley as a major center known for quality art offerings by developing superior cultural facilities, hosting a variety of cultural events and including public and private art venues in the Old Town Specific Plan.
- ◆ Increase media participation in marketing cultural arts in Yucca Valley by establishing better relationships with regional and local press, getting sponsors to pay for radio spots, and working with local press and local businesses to develop a weekly or monthly advertising supplement promoting cultural activities with a calendar of events and offerings.
- ◆ Promote multi-cultural expression and participation in the arts by holding art fairs and festivals for local and regional artists; including native and ethnic food and dance in community events; hosting talent competitions open to all types of ethnic talent; and by hosting traveling exhibitions at the museum and library depicting cultural customs of different peoples.
- ◆ Advocate on behalf of Art in Public Places and take steps to expand and refine the Yucca Valley Art in Public Places Program to compliment Yucca Valley's natural beauty, involve local artists and promote tourism.

- ◆ Continue to expand online events calendar for cultural arts programs and activities by including non-profit and private art activities in the listings.
- ◆ Promote Old Town when it is developed as a “Cultural Corridor” by locating the Hi Desert Museum, Library, “Henge” amphitheater, private art galleries, art studios, restaurant/entertainment establishments and “artist-in-residency” housing projects within the Old Town corridor. Develop a cultural theme for advertising the Old Town area, such as, “Old Town Yucca Valley, the Cultural Corridor for Art Creation, Exploration and Collection” Consider devoting .05 percent of TOT tax to promoting cultural opportunities in Old Town. Define both east and west entries into Old Town with Public Art pieces. Consider establishing a Cultural Business Improvement District (CBID) to generate revenue and oversee cultural development and promotion in the Old Town area.

5.4.4c Arts Education: Audience Development and Advocacy

- ◆ Work to increase public awareness of the value of arts and culture in Yucca Valley and the region
- ◆ Build participation in cultural arts programs and activities
- ◆ Increase collaboration with the schools and library to provide targeted programs and outreach tied to broad educational themes

5.4.4d Organizational Development

- ◆ Support the organizational development efforts of community arts organizations.
- ◆ Consider facilitating the evolution of the current Public Arts Advisory Committee into a Cultural Arts Commission with representation from the many cultural organizations now established in Yucca Valley. The Commission should be responsible to oversee and encourage collaboration between public arts and community arts organizations, and to facilitate the acquisition and care of public art

- ◆ Pursue development of a Yucca Valley Cultural Foundation as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization with the specific purpose of raising funds for implementation of the Cultural Master Plan

5.4.5 Community Arts Partnerships

The key to successfully implementing the Cultural Master Plan will be the Town's ability to develop greater resources within public and private sectors to support the arts. The Town will have to broaden partnerships beyond Town boundaries to become a part of a regional arts community. The Town will need to work to support the efforts of Yucca Valley's art organizations to help them sustain each other through collaborations and by sharing information, resources, and facilities.

Keeping arts leaders in the community together and focused will be a challenge for the Town. In addition to the establishment of a Cultural Arts Commission and non-profit Arts Foundation, the Town should formalize its intent and future direction by developing and adopting a Public Arts Master Plan. With a Master Plan in place, the Town can work through the Commission and Foundation to pursue collaborative grants, develop re-granting programs, develop a sense of community ownership of the arts, create a strong arts representation in educational settings, strengthen communication among cultural groups, and create effective partnerships between arts organizations and the business community.

Two specific ways to accomplish the above would be to strengthen partnerships with higher education, arts educators and arts resource providers such as colleges, universities, libraries, and other regional cultural institutions; and to recruit local artists as resources for art curriculums and activities. Although there are currently limited resources for this, expansion of Copper Mountain College, greater partnerships with the National Park Service and possible satellite operations from regional agencies, such as California State University San Bernardino, should be explored.

Expansion of Yucca Valley’s Art in Public Places program will make it possible for talented artists of local and national renown to enhance public spaces throughout the Town with works of art ranging from outdoor sculptures and murals to functional works integrated into architecture. Art in Public Places can create cultural landmarks that will become cornerstones of Yucca Valley’s cultural identity and it can promote Yucca Valley’s image as the premier arts community of the high desert.

In summary, the emerging cultural themes developed from this planning process include:

- ◆ Yucca Valley is uniquely defined by its history of diverse lifestyles, natural beauty, high desert terrain, desirable climate, small town atmosphere and community support for the arts
- ◆ Arts and culture, as part of the mix of “quality of life” factors, can be a powerful tool for economic development
- ◆ Arts and culture are key to passing on traditions. Involving young people in arts and culture can build audiences, enhance learning and communication skills, build self esteem, foster community involvement, and train potential artists and arts appreciators
- ◆ Building a dynamic program to raise the awareness of Yucca Valley’s cultural offerings throughout the Morongo Basin will not only build audiences in Yucca Valley but will enhance Yucca Valley’s image in the region and beyond
- ◆ A “state of the art” Hi-Desert Museum, Branch Library, Amphitheater/Activities Plaza and Show Grounds/Events Center will provide the following benefits:
 - Cultural and artistic resources that enhance the quality of life for individuals living in, working in and visiting the city

- A balanced development of cultural and artistic resources for programming the diverse cultural demands of the community
 - Improved image of Yucca Valley making it a marketable commodity as a destination place
 - Facilities that will promote the general welfare through balancing the community's physical growth and revitalization and its cultural and artistic resources
- ◆ It will be critical to the success of the Old Town Specific Plan to include development of both public and private arts and cultural venues
 - ◆ Significant effort will be required to resolve the space and facility requirements of the Hi-Desert Nature Museum and the Branch Library
 - ◆ Little of this plan will be implemented without additional human and financial resources

Strategies for funding and implementing the Cultural Component are contained in *Chapter 9* of this document.