



## STUDY SESSION MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor and Members of City Council

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**DATE:** July 27, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Study Session for July 27, 2021  
Boulder Parks and Recreation Master Plan Needs Assessment Results

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 5-year update to the Boulder Parks and Recreation Master Plan (Master Plan Update) officially kicked-off in the Winter of 2020 following a brief delay due to the COVID-19 response and recovery. The purpose of this item is to review the draft Needs Assessment, including findings from community engagement, research, and to discuss key areas where policy guidance is needed from council. Council was first introduced to the master plan initiative through an [Information Packet \(IP\)](#) that was included in the August 18, 2020 agenda and then consulted through a [Study Session](#) on December 8, 2020.

Figure 1 provides an overview of the planning process; a more comprehensive timeline and approach can be viewed [here](#). Since the previous Study Session, the project team has completed the Research and Trends phase of the project, culminating in a [System Overview Snapshot](#). The Research and Trends phase was an opportunity to look back at all that has been accomplished since 2014, identify growth and define areas for continued improvement. Much of the work of the Needs Assessment phase has also been completed. This item summarizes those findings and council will be asked to provide policy guidance related to the Key Themes utilized in the 2014 Master Plan and confirmed for this Master Plan Update.

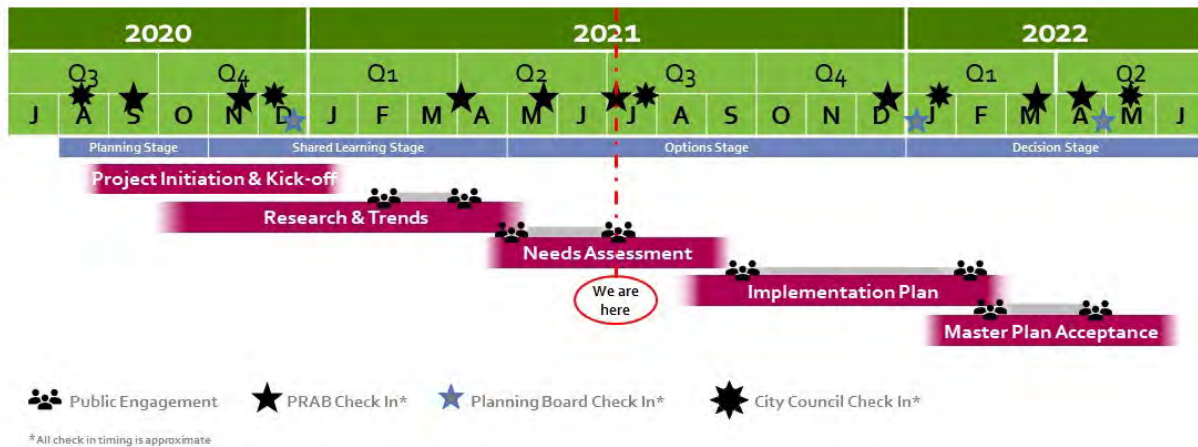


Figure 1. BPR Master Plan Process Timeline as of July 2021

## KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED

This memo and the Study Session are organized into three sections:

- [Overview of Research and Trends](#)
- [Needs Assessment Methods](#)
- [Key Findings, Questions and Discussion](#)

Below, is a preview of the questions for discussion with council. After each section, the questions are provided again to refresh the issues staff wishes to discuss.

### *Questions for Council (Needs Assessment Key Findings, Questions and Discussion)*

#### *Community Health and Wellness*

1. In assessing availability of parkland for Boulder, is a lower number of acres of parkland per capita metric acceptable? Should BPR focus on metrics related to equity of access considerations instead of parkland per capita (i.e., proximity to parks and playgrounds in neighborhoods, accessibility of facilities, and types of amenities)?
2. Given the increasing use of parks and demand for specific features, which of the following options for providing new park amenities are the most impactful or the most beneficial to the community?
  - a. Planning and potentially constructing future phases at existing parks (i.e., Valmont, Foothills, Eaton, Violet, Harlow Platts, Area III)
  - b. Repurpose existing park sites such as East Mapleton Ballfields in the heart of the city to include more or different types of amenities to fill the gaps.
  - c. Purchase additional land for parks to be built upon
  - d. Partner with private organization to develop facilities and programs and/or allow Boulder residents to use existing private facilities.

- e. Partner with other public entities, such as school districts or municipalities to develop joint use recreational facilities.
- f. Ensure existing facilities are more resilient and built to support higher use.

#### *Taking Care of What We Have*

- 3. Taking care of existing parks and facilities continues to be a priority for the community as costs for capital improvements, operations and maintenance continue to rise. At the same time, the community desires new and additional amenities. Does council agree that BPR should continue prioritizing maintaining and enhancing existing assets first, while providing new amenities as funding opportunities become available?

#### *Financial Sustainability*

- 4. Financial Sustainability – Revenues have remained flat and are projected to remain flat over the next several years while operational and capital costs are increasing and creating a gap in funding. While the next phase of the master plan process will address how BPR should address this challenge, are there any options presented below that should not be explored or those that should be specifically prioritized for further evaluation?
  - a. Increase fees for all.
  - b. Increase fees for select programs or demographics (e.g., adults)
  - c. Implement additional high-fee programs or facilities to provide subsidy
  - d. Re-evaluate to whom subsidies are provided and how allocations are determined (i.e., sliding scale for financial aid)
  - e. Reduce services (e.g., hours of operation and/or programming)
  - f. Seek a combination of new funding sources and fee adjustments
  - g. Other alternatives not yet considered
- 5. Resilience – BPR supports the city’s climate goals through a variety of methods as well as exploring new options to meet the goals. Does City Council have recommendations or preferences of funding sources for initiatives such as facility enhancements (such as transitions to electric HVAC/pool equipment) or promoting alternate modes of transportation to BPR programs and facilities (such as infrastructure for EV and parking incentives/fees)?
- 6. Who is served/Equity –
  - a. How should BPR consider serving those who do not live in the City of Boulder?
  - b. How should BPR ensure increasing fees do not create additional financial barriers?

#### *Youth Activity and Engagement*

- 7. Given the community support of youth engagement, should BPR continue to prioritize amenities for teens and youth in parks and facilities as they are renovated

or redeveloped? Staff will engage youth to determine appropriate and priority amenities.

#### *Building Community and Partnerships*

8. Does council continue to support partnerships and to what extent should BPR pursue public private partnerships to offset facility, maintenance, operations, and programming costs?

### **BACKGROUND**

Following a delay due to COVID-19 response and recovery, the 5-year update to the Master Plan Update kicked-off in September/October 2020. A Council [Information Packet in August 2020](#) provided a brief overview of the project process and approach. A first [Study Session](#) with council was held on December 8, 2020 to interact directly with council as a part of this process and to ensure alignment with city leadership on the engagement plan. This second study session is intended to share with council work completed to date and ask questions to guide the planning process moving forward. Guidance from council at the previous study session that has shaped the process and approach include:

1. Effectively engaging community members specifically in a time of isolation and distancing, including in-person alternatives as appropriate.
2. Working to reach unengaged and non-users of BPR's system and programs and focusing on a robust and well-rounded approach to engagement that hears and balances input from many members of our community, including unhoused individuals.
3. Confirming the continued relevance of the 2014 master plan's six key themes, as well as the need to ensure equity and resilience are addressed throughout the planning process.
4. Ensuring the impacts and lessons learned from COVID inform this process and the outcomes including, but not limited to, changes in how the community accesses and uses our programs, facilities and services – while keeping a long-term and forward-looking view to serving the community into the future.
5. Working in collaboration with other departments, not just through this planning process, but to also work together to address larger issues of equity and resilience in a more holistic approach.

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) has already been engaged several times for the Master Plan Update. At the December 2019 meeting, PRAB provided input on the overall approach for the update to ensure alignment between staff and PRAB. In April 2020, staff shared an update with the PRAB given COVID-19 impacts on timing and budget. Following successful consultant contract negotiation, PRAB participated in the project kick-off during the September 2020 meeting where they reviewed an updated schedule and high-level overview of the public engagement approach. In addition to these formal discussions, a PRAB member has been identified as a liaison to work with staff on a technical advisory group. At the November 2020 PRAB meeting, staff provided a progress report on the project and requested feedback on the public engagement plan as



well as the review of the 2014 white papers and new topics for consideration. In March 2021, staff shared the outcomes of the first window of community engagement and findings from research and trends. At the May 2021 meeting, PRAB heard the key results from targeted engagement with youth, including presentations from Growing Up Boulder and the Youth Opportunities Advisory Board. At the July 12, 2021, PRAB meeting, staff provided an overview of results from Needs Assessment and sought policy guidance from the PRAB on the key findings and discussions presented here as well.

## ANALYSIS

### *Project Process and Engagement*

The Master Plan Update is broken into five phases. The list below provides a high-level description of the milestone, deliverables or engagement for each phase that will result in a draft final Master Plan and provides an update of what has been completed to date:

#### *Project Initiation and Kick-off*

- ☒ Kick-off Meetings to confirm project critical success factors, schedule and risk management.
- ☒ Draft Public Engagement Plan outlining the four engagement windows.
- ☒ Formation and meetings with BPR staff Management Technical Advisory Group (MTAG) and Working Technical Advisory Group (WTAG)
- ☒ November 23 PRAB Meeting
- ☒ December 8 City Council Study Session
- ☒ Development of master plan graphic themes, templates, and table of contents
- ☒ [Informational video](#) to support community engagement.

#### *Research and Trends*

- ☐ Update of 2012-14 White Papers that provide information, research and best practices to inform the update – *In Progress*.
- ☒ Past Planning Efforts Review to pull out key takeaways and cross-reference planning efforts since the 2014 master plan to white paper topics.
- ☒ December 15 White Paper Charette with BPR staff and consultant team to identify research gaps and prioritize content to inform the current state snapshot.
- ☒ Four stakeholder focus groups in 2021 to uncover on-the-ground trends, challenges and opportunities.
- ☒ [System overview snapshot](#) to provide graphic, high-level overview of the current state of BPR parks and recreation facilities.

### *Needs Assessment*

- ☒ Review and update of BPR facilities inventory and assessment
- ☒ Gap analysis updates to the per capita level of service tables for 2020 and future population projection point
- ☒ New gap analysis map or analysis around equity
- ☒ Supply and demand trends memo and maps
- ☒ Statistically valid survey with Spanish version as well as open participation link
- ☒ Benchmark update of 2014 study
- ☒ Scenario planning and draft strategy matrix

### *Implementation Plan*

- ☐ Draft implementation plan
- ☐ Draft plan on a page that highlights big moves of master plan.
- ☐ Financial overview and funding strategies memo— *In Progress*

### *Master Plan Acceptance*

- ☐ Master Plan Draft #1 (word document)
- ☐ Master Plan Draft #2 (graphic, PDF document)
- ☐ Master Plan Draft #3 (PDF for online and stakeholder review)
- ☐ Master Plan Final Document

City Council will be engaged throughout the process, specifically:

1. Information Packet in Q3 2020 prior to kick-off (*Complete*)
2. Study Session in Q4 2020 for process buy-in, course correction, if necessary (*Complete*)
3. Study session in Q3 2021 to discuss Needs Assessment, following Engagement Window #2 (*Current Engagement*)
4. Study session in Q4 2021 to discussion plan recommendations and priorities, following Engagement Window #3
5. Public hearing in Q1 2022 for Master Plan Acceptance, following Engagement Window #4

### ***Overview of Research and Trends***

The [System Overview Snapshot](#) is the culmination of the Research and Trends phase of the project. The snapshot itself is intended to provide a highly visual overview of the research, information gathering and engagement findings to set the project on the right course moving forward. The full [Engagement Window 1 Summary](#) provides detailed information on the engagement and results from this phase of the project. Below is a brief description of what the project team is currently anticipating for the next five to seven years.

Community Health and Wellness: Based on staff, stakeholder and community discussions there is an anticipated demand for continued virtual fitness programs and flexible

programming that meets the needs of an evolving work/life balance. It is anticipated that the love for the outdoors and recreation that has been reawakened will not likely abate, but rather increase the need for access to a variety of programs and facilities. The intersection with equity and resilience will be evaluated to provide access to programs and facilities for all segments of the community with the intention of making them feel welcomed and heard.

Taking Care of What We Have: Predicted rise in facility use will increase the necessary maintenance to continue to provide the high-quality amenities that Boulder has come to know and expect of the department. There will be an ever-increasing demand that will need to be addressed through appropriate prioritization and balancing the needs of the community. Looking at the BPR system with a finer lens may be the first step in identifying imbalances within the system to address issues of equity, evaluate the need for new facilities or develop plans for undeveloped parkland to support the growing population of Boulder. Utilizing volunteers to care for the parks and facilities could potentially build the resilience both spaces and the community that cares for them.

Financial Sustainability: Financial sustainability continues to be a primary concern of the department and the community. Stakeholders and the community both recognize that without appropriate funding, the programs, services and facilities they use are in jeopardy. When considering inflation, the BPR budget has remained flat since 2000, yet the department has added services, increased pay by establishing a Living Wage, implemented sustainable practices that require additional resources, and increased contributions to financial aid. The department experienced budget reductions due to COVID-19. NRPA predicts that it will take longer to recover from COVID-19 than the Great Recession of 2007-2009, barring additional federal assistance. This will require a structured approach to funding projects and priorities to maintain existing facilities while providing additional opportunities for unmet needs.

Building Community and Relationships: Building partnerships and relationships across community organizations is identified as one potential opportunity to address some of the capacity and resource needs related to COVID-19 recovery. Pursuing these opportunities could promote equity and resilience goals by creating inclusive recreation programs and services, as well as facilities that meet the needs of underrepresented communities. Building relationships can leverage the expertise within the Boulder community to address the climate emergency positively impacting the larger community.

Youth Engagement and Activity: Recent national trends have shown a continuing downward trajectory in the time youth spend active and/or outside each day, only accelerated through the COVID-19 pandemic. Mental health of young people is a growing concern and research has shown that activity and time spent outdoors supports mental well-being. Continuing to offer programs and services that promote youth activity will be key to ensuring the long-term health and well-being of the community.

Organizational Readiness: Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, BPR staff has demonstrated a great capacity for adaptability to meet the current needs of the community. This has been accomplished in part because of the prior focus on staff development and

training to stay current on technology trends, with much of the credit due to the incredibly passionate, talented and dedicated public servants on the BPR team. Continuing to build staff capacity to react to future conditions is critical to ensuring community needs are being met. As funding continues to stretch, data-driven decision making will ensure decisions made are based on sound logic and judgement. The city's Racial Equity Plan identifies several goals for staff training and representation to help break down some systems of injustice.

Equity: Equity has been confirmed as an important issue to address within this Master Plan Update. The direction has come from decision-makers, as well as the input received from staff, stakeholders and the community. Equity was not listed as an explicit goal of the 2014 Master Plan but was rather captured implicitly within the guiding principles of the plan. BPR made some positive strides in beginning to address equity, from efforts to provide printed materials and communications in multiple languages to the expansion of subsidy programs for individuals with low incomes and providing programs specifically for people with disabilities.

The Racial Equity Plan calls out other short-term outcomes that impact departments citywide. Along with other departments, BPR staff is already participating in and facilitating equity trainings. The Master Plan Update also seeks to prioritize inclusive community engagement, another short-term outcome identified in the Racial Equity Plan. Other short-term outcomes include collaborating with institutional partners and developing a department-based equity team to lead BPR equity action items.

Conversations with stakeholders and community members echoed many of the strategies staff are already working to achieve related to racial equity. Specific suggestions include ensuring that programming, staffing and facilities create environments where people from all walks of life feel welcome, safe and supported. In fact, community members indicated that one of the worst things BPR could do is nothing, as it relates to equity. One of the most impactful ways BPR can advance equity issues is to actively seek, engage and listen to underrepresented communities, offer or develop the programs and services not currently available or accessible from other providers.

Members of Boulder's unhoused community are one of the underrepresented communities this project will include. Addressing homelessness and the symptoms of homelessness in Boulder's public spaces are consistent topics of concern. The relationship to equity, in this context, is determining BPR's role within the larger community and how to provide safe and welcoming spaces to all community members, including unhoused individuals.

Resilience: Adaptability and preparation to address sudden or extreme change was a constant theme in many discussions held throughout Research and Trends. This organizational attribute was linked to many components of the department's work, from the programs and services provided to the need to address the climate emergency. Staff expressed the need to be proactive as it relates to resilience within the department to ensure there is the capacity to adjust quickly in emergency situations, such as with extreme storm events, wildfire and even the COVID-19 pandemic. The prior investment in staff education

and development ensured that the department could quickly pivot to address these situations as they evolved.

Community members also highlighted the importance of local ecosystems and their continued preservation and management to ensure the continued high quality of life in Boulder. A concern expressed by community members was the loss of these urban greenspaces to overuse or development because these resources are viewed as nonrenewable once they are lost.

### *Needs Assessment Methods*



*Figure 2. Balanced Planning Process*

The Needs Assessment phase of the Master Plan Update includes data analysis and synthesis of engagement and research to date, leading to key findings and discussion topics. This phase is a true integration of research, policy findings and community engagement to gather a full picture of the scope of community needs and desires (see Figure 2 to the left depicting the triangulation process).

The project team has been working on several technical documents to support the next phases of the project. These documents include Needs Assessment Report, Community Survey Report, Facilities Assessment, and Financial Analysis.

### Needs Assessment Report

The [Needs Assessment Report](#) contains analyses that evaluate how the department is performing compared to peer organizations, including level of service, gap, and supply and demand analyses, as well as benchmarking. A level of service analysis looks at current and projected population numbers to understand and anticipate the demands that will be placed on the parks and recreation system. Level of service looks at acres of developed parkland, total parkland per 1,000 residents and number of major amenities provided (e.g., recreation centers, playgrounds, tennis courts, etc.). The gap analysis builds upon the level of service analysis to understand where there may be areas to focus resources to provide equitable programs, services and facilities to the entire community. Gap analysis was conducted at a [subcommunity level](#) to understand the distribution of parkland and amenities across the system. This includes developed parkland within each subcommunity and amenities available within each subcommunity.

Benchmarking is a process used to compare Boulder to peer communities within the state and nationwide. The communities were chosen in 2014 due to similarities to Boulder (e.g., population, university presence, etc.) and due to high performance (evidenced in Commission for Parks and Recreation Agency (CAPRA) accreditation and/or National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Gold Medal winners) that allow comparisons to be made. Boulder's benchmark communities are Broomfield, CO, Foothills Parks and

Recreation District, CO, Fort Collins, CO, South Suburban Parks and Recreation District, CO, Westminster, CO, Ann Arbor, MI, Asheville, NC, Bend, OR, Berkeley, CA, Bloomington, IN, Naperville Parks and Recreation District, IL, and Tempe, AZ. For the update, five key indicators were chosen to compare, include:

1. Form of organization
2. Urban parkland acres per resident
3. Urban parkland acres as percentage of total service area
4. Key facilities
5. General facilities & operations

The supply and demand analysis analyzes BPR's indoor facilities and programs to look at how they will continue to meet the needs of the community, given the trends in recreation identified within the larger industry. Findings are collated from indoor facility assessments conducted by Barker Rinker Seacat Architecture (BRS), trends, research of local, regional and national information, BPR staff interviews, and review of program registration data (where applicable and for this study 2020 numbers fluctuated wildly due to impact of pandemic restrictions).

Two additional technical documents support the overall Needs Assessment Report, a [Facilities Assessment](#) and [Community Survey Report](#). Those full reports are included as attachments to this memo. The Facilities Assessment was conducted by BRS and looked specifically at BPR's indoor facilities. The report synthesizes recommendations and work completed on these facilities since 2014 and makes high-level recommendations about improvements BPR could consider at each. The Community Survey Report analyzes the results of the statistically valid community survey, highlighting some key results and longitudinal analysis that compares results from the 2012 and 2021 surveys.

### Financial Analysis

The [Financial Analysis](#) provides a brief outlook of BPR's existing financial situation, including cost recovery, subsidization, fund management, and capital budget. The analysis looks at past trends in revenues and expenses, as well as looking forward to project anticipated budgetary needs.

### Community Engagement

Community engagement during the Needs Assessment phase has included a community survey, Be Heard Boulder polling, and a public open house.

The community survey was broken into two parts: a statistically valid, PIN-validated survey and an open community survey. A total of 4,000 addresses were randomly selected from a list of all residential addresses in the Boulder's ten subcommunities based on the United States Postal Service Delivery Sequence File. This list does not include addresses for those in group quarters such as dormitories or nursing homes. Each of these selected households was contacted two times with a half-page postcard survey invitation requesting that the household participate in the survey online, the first mailed the week of April 12,

2021. The open community survey was marketed starting on April 21, 2021, via press release and social media posts, both city-wide and department specific. A total of 284 survey recipients completed the survey, for a response rate of 7%. The margin of error for the statistically valid survey, with 284 respondents, is  $\pm 5.8\%$ . A total of 142 additional community members completed the survey via the open link. Both surveys closed on May 9, 2021.

Based on feedback received from the first anecdotal questionnaire and the length of the community survey, four weeks of quick poll questions were developed and posted to Be Heard Boulder with the community survey was open. Each week a set of 2-3 polls with visuals and multiple-choice questions was posted, supported by social media posts from the department and flyers posted at the recreation centers. Unfortunately, each week only 10-15 responses were received, making the results highly unreliable. The project team implemented this option to be responsive to feedback, but with the limited return on investment for staff's resources, it is unlikely to be used again in the future.

BPR hosted its first in-person public open house since COVID-19 impacted the community on June 24, 2021, at the Municipal Service Center. The event was marketed through a press release, social media posts, in the department's e-Blast (approximately 31,000 recipients) and through posters at the recreation centers. Approximately 40-50 community members turned out for this open house to learn what the department has learned to date and provide feedback through multiple targeted activities. To gather as much input as possible and recognizing there are still impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic, the [presentation](#) and [materials](#) were presented online for those community members unable or unwilling to participate in the in-person event. Those materials were posted the day following the open house and were available for responses through July 12, 2021. Community feedback from this open house and other on-going engagement is currently being evaluated and will be presented in Engagement Window 2 Summary later this summer.

### ***Key Findings, Questions and Discussion from the Needs Assessment***

From the Needs Assessment Report, Facilities Assessment, Community Report, Financial Analysis and Community Engagement to date, several topics emerge as important areas for discussion. These were the topics of feedback for the June 24<sup>th</sup> public open house. In earlier engagement, both the PRAB and City Council confirmed the current relevance of the 2014 master plan key themes, and those key themes frame the findings and emerging policy questions of importance: Community Health and Wellness, Taking Care of What We Have, Financial Sustainability, Youth Engagement and Activity, Building Community and Relationships, and Organizational Readiness. Woven throughout the six key themes are questions relating to equity and resilience. The PRAB's input at the July meeting will inform the next phases of policy and plan development.

#### **Community Health and Wellness**

Parks and recreation provide measurable health benefits, from encouraging direct contact with nature and a cleaner environment, to opportunities for physical activity and social



interaction. This focus area emphasizes the community's desire for BPR to focus on public health and wellness through parks, facilities and programs, emphasizing the important role parks and recreation services can continue to play in keeping Boulder healthy and vibrant.

#### *What's been done since 2014*

- BPR has developed a Service Delivery model to ensure that programs are designed and delivered to enhance the public health and well-being.
- Financial Aid enrollment was streamlined, with fewer forms and increased accessibility to enrollment.
- There has been significant success with the Recquity pass programs, building on pilots to allow free access for all who qualify.
- Boulder's EXPAND program for people with disabilities offered new summer camps and sites for participants, enhancing self-esteem and social skills.

#### *What we're hearing from the community*

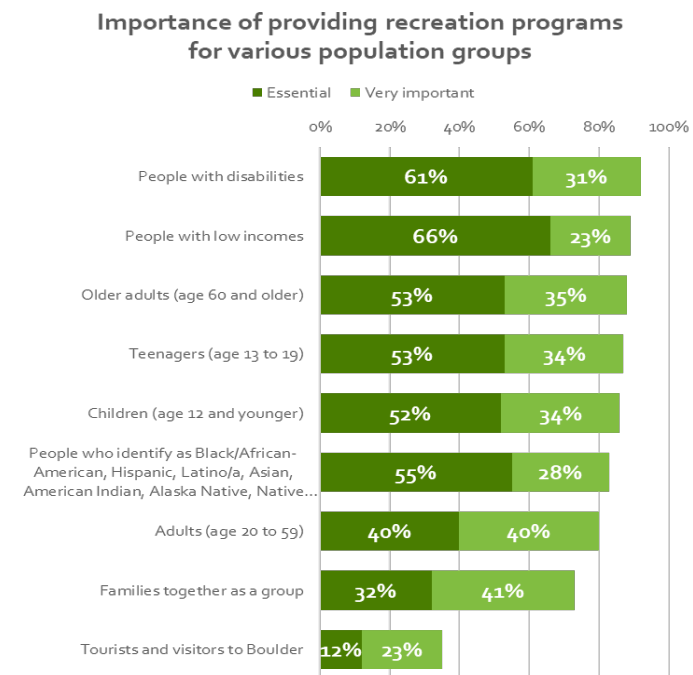


Figure 3. Survey Responses for Importance of Providing Programming

- Figure 3 below illustrates just how important it is that BPR provides programs to various groups within the community.

- There is agreement from community that access for certain groups should be supported by subsidy (percentage from community survey indicating taxes should pay at least somewhat more than user fees):

- Programs for children and teens from families with low incomes (82%)

- Programs for older adults with low-income (80%)

- Programs and/or inclusion for people with disabilities (77%)

- Programs for adults with low incomes (76%)

- Programs for underrepresented communities (69%)

- Lack of time and lack of parking were commonly cited among survey respondents as barriers to accessing parks and recreation facilities, most commonly among individuals renting their home, Hispanic respondents and respondents with children under 12 in the household. Respondents who identify as other than White or Hispanic commonly cited those parks or facilities do not feel safe as a reason for not participating.
- There is a continued preference for BPR programming to focus on serving many different skill levels (68%), providing drop-in use spaces (73%) and diverse recreation opportunities (67%), and a focus on programming desired by the community (61%).

*What we've learned from research*

- Older adults represent a growing segment of Boulder's population at 23.3% (65+).
- Some aspect of parks and recreation services, facilities and programs impact all social determinants of health and health equity outcomes.
  - Opportunities and resources impact community members' behaviors, choices, stress levels, feelings of safety, which in turn impact physical and mental health.
  - Having active living, fitness and passive recreation options is a crucial component to the health of the entire Boulder community.
- Additional equity mapping is required to effectively analyze the distribution of BPR facilities based on equity metrics (i.e., not location, population, etc.)
- Close to home parks and 15-minute neighborhoods promote community health. Boulder achieves park proximity standards, however, Level of Service (LOS) per capita will be impacted as Boulder reaches full build-out. Existing public lands are seeing high visitation and overcrowding.
- Boulder is growing. With that growth comes continuously dropping levels of service as it relates to per capita analysis.
  - 2021: 17.22 Acres/1,000 residents
  - 2040 Projected: 15.15 Acres/1,000 Residents
  - After full buildout of existing acreage, an additional 226 acres of land would be required to provide the same amount of parkland per 1000 residents as is available today. Even with a lower level of service in 2020, BPR will still exceed the overall

median level of service as published by the Trust for Public Lands.

- Parks promote social resilience by creating neighborhood gathering places and opportunities for diverse community members to interact, before and after a natural disaster.

*Feedback from PRAB*

- For this planning horizon, BPR should focus on ensuring the community is served by proximity to parks and equity of access with less focus on pure data of acres per capita.
- BPR should explore new and creative ways to serve the community, whether through partnerships or outside funding sources, to continue to meet the needs of the community while balancing funding limitations.
- Support for BPR shifting approach to look at facilities that serve a 15-minute neighborhood model to help address climate issues, even if this does create some duplication in services.

*What we need to know from Council*

1. In assessing availability of parkland for Boulder, is a lower number of acres of parkland per capita metric acceptable? Should BPR focus on metrics related to equity of access considerations instead of parkland per capita (i.e., proximity to parks and playgrounds in neighborhoods, accessibility of facilities and types of amenities)?
2. Given the increasing use of parks and demand for specific features, which of the following options for providing new park amenities are the most impactful or the most beneficial to the community?
  - a. Planning and potentially constructing future phases at existing parks (i.e., Valmont, Foothills, Eaton, Violet, Harlow Platts, Area III)
  - b. Repurpose existing park sites such as East Mapleton Ballfields in the heart of the city to include more or different types of amenities to fill the gaps.
  - c. Purchase additional land for parks to be built upon
  - d. Partner with private organization to develop facilities and programs and/or allow Boulder residents to use existing private facilities.
  - e. Partner with other public entities, such as school districts or municipalities to develop joint use recreational facilities.
  - f. Ensure existing facilities are more resilient and built to support higher use.

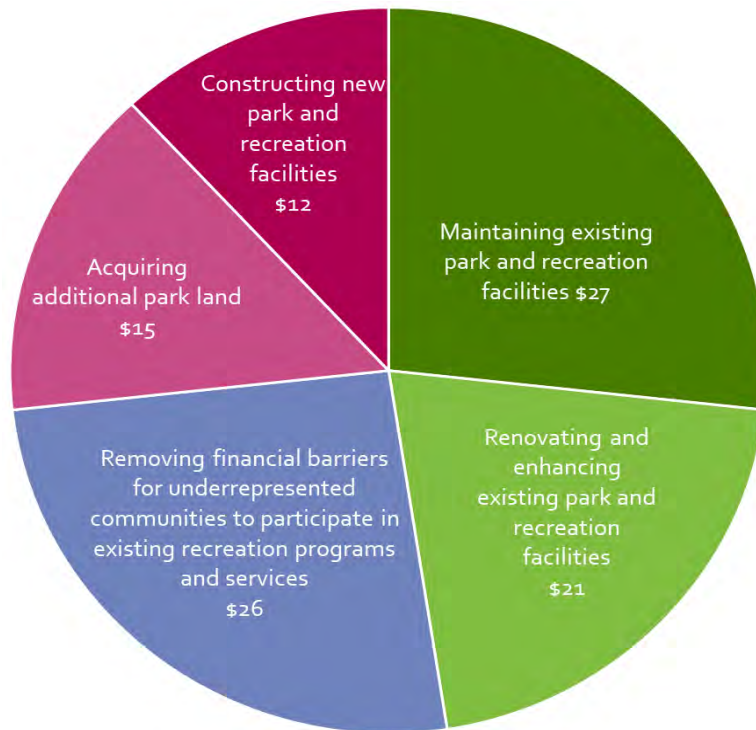
## Taking Care of What We Have

This theme concentrates on the need to ensure the long-term viability of the park and recreation system through comprehensive asset management practices. It captures a broad spectrum of work, ranging from daily operations to ongoing maintenance to the large capital projects that are completed each year as part of the Capital Improvement Program.

### *What's been done since 2014*

- Implemented a comprehensive asset management program and completed various studies and plans to identify key deficiencies and priorities for investments in parks and facilities.
- Delivered a comprehensive CIP process each year to invest in key facilities based on known deficiencies and prioritized with community values.
- Completed a General Maintenance and Management Plan to inform labor standards (e.g., mowing frequencies) and staffing levels.
- Voter approved financial support allowed us investments in neighborhood parks, with 15 renovated.
- Implemented a Zero-Waste program in all parks.
- Completed construction on two popular facilities and the sources of over half of BPR's maintenance needs – Scott Carpenter Pool and the Boulder Reservoir Visitor Center.
- BPR is a leader in sustainability, climate work and ecosystem services.
  - Completed the Urban Forest Strategic Plan and coordinated on city-wide efforts to identify and implement strategies to address the climate emergency through ecosystem services.
  - Facility Improvement Measures (FIMs) were implemented at the Recreation Centers as part of Energy Performance Contracting.

### *What we're hearing from the community*



*Figure 4. Survey Respondents' Allocation of \$100*

- Both the anecdotal survey and community survey place a high emphasis on TCWWH. In the community survey, respondents allocated \$48 of \$100 to maintaining and renovating existing facilities, versus \$27 to acquire parkland and construct new facilities.
  - Survey respondents agree that BPR's focus should remain on maintaining existing facilities, as well as renovating and enhancing existing facilities. Purchasing additional parkland and developing new facilities is not a large priority currently.
- Existing parkland in dense urban areas exists already but is underutilized and could be reimaged to better address the needs of the community. The desire was for a renewed commitment to well-maintained green spaces and enhanced programming in urban parks in high-density residential areas.

### *What we've learned from research*

- High levels of increased use including visitation from surrounding communities as all public lands are seeing high visitation and overcrowding.

- Current operations and maintenance (O&M) levels of service aren't keeping up with the existing needs in parks and public spaces and BPR must rely on volunteerism to bridge the gap. Many parks have unmaintained areas simply due to lack of capacity and resources.
- In addition to general overuse, BPR has seen increasing and continuous illegal use of parkland for parties, gatherings, camping creating a strain on the organization and impacts on the lands. Staff and volunteers are having to consistently clean up from vandalism and misuse. These difficult conditions can result in closing a park or facility, detracting from other essential park maintenance.
- Research and assessments during the Master Plan Update process have indicated that the overall condition of BPR parks and facilities are in good condition and staff are doing a great job given the constrained resources.
- In addition to recurring operational and capital costs, BPR has over \$90 million in unfunded capital projects.
  - Asset Management Program system in process of being implemented – blends quantitative data on an asset's condition with qualitative data on the asset's importance to the community.
  - 2016 Current Replacement Value (CRV) of BPR facilities: \$212,613,103
  - CRV has increased due to construction of new facilities, cost of inflation in the construction industry/materials and better understanding of our assets since 2016.
  - Current CRV estimated at **\$298,476,655 with a total backlog of \$20,579,515** which puts BPR's FCI around .068 which is considered "good to excellent."
  - BPR will need to spend 2% to 3% per year on capital which is approximately **\$6M to \$9M** on CIP each year (right now at \$4 to \$6M)
  - Also, industry standard says to spend approximately 4% of CRV each year on O&M or regular ongoing preventative maintenance (**approximately \$12M**), including all operations costs in both parks and recreation services (right now at \$7M to \$8.5M).
- Current BPR Assets: BPR is exceeding both the national and Colorado median LOS for most assets.

- Even though BPR meets and exceeds LOS for individual assets, existing assets are often overcrowded and overused. Figure 5 below illustrates some potential management alternatives for ensuring existing assets continue to meet the needs of the community.

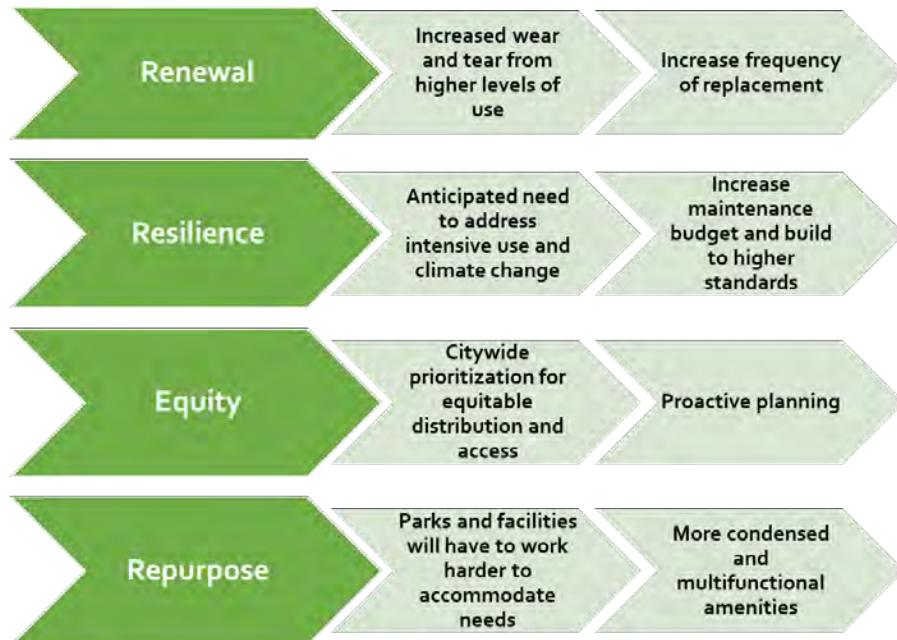


Figure 5. Alternative Solutions for Meeting Increased Needs for Parks

#### Feedback from PRAB

- Taking Care of What We Have is a priority and BPR should be investing in capital repairs and maintenance to ensure the department's assets continue to be in good to excellence condition, based on national standards.
- While meeting state and national benchmarks is good, it is important to weigh appropriately community feedback on the programs, services and amenities they need and desire. All inputs (data, policy guidance and community engagement) then must be balanced to determine the right number and mix of offerings from the department.
- There should be a priority on implementation strategies already identified, as well as new strategies, that push the department to address the very real impacts of the climate emergency. These include implementation of key strategies from the Urban Forest Strategic Plan, making energy efficiency improvements at BPR facilities and managing lands for their ecosystem services, as well as looking at data collection



to help support decision-making related to transportation to BPR programs and facilities.

*What we need to know from Council*

3. Taking care of existing parks and facilities continues to be a priority for the community as costs for capital improvements, operations and maintenance continue to rise. At the same time, the community desires new and additional amenities. Does council agree that BPR should continue prioritizing maintaining and enhancing existing assets first, while providing new amenities as funding opportunities become available?

Financial Sustainability

BPR is supported by several sources of revenue that fund operations and capital improvement projects. Effective stewardship of these resources means directing them toward parks, programs, and facilities that provide the greatest community benefit. Financial Sustainability efforts ensure the BPR considers the total cost of facility ownership and service delivery in resource allocation and fee setting.

*What's been done since 2014*

- Established costing definitions and a standardized method of activity costing to ensure consistency of data inputs and analysis.
- Developed the Recreation Priority Index to objectively determine the community benefit provide by a service, and then set associated fees.
- Appropriate and specialized programs are now run by community partners (e.g., boat rentals at the Boulder Reservoir, competitive dance/gymnastics programs for youth).
- Allocated funding to the Fiscally Constrained scenarios of the master plan, with new funding allowing for “Action” level initiatives.

Since 2016, BPR's funding has remained mostly flat, averaging a decrease of 0.4% annually. Also, since 2016, BPR's costs have continue to rise due to rapidly rising personnel, maintenance, energy, materials, and operational costs, aging infrastructure and facilities, and a growing demand for parks and recreational amenities. BPR has increased cost recovery targets and fees methodically to address overall cost increases, but still fees do not fund all expenses and community members increasingly express concerns about high fees. Projecting into the coming years, 2022 to 2026, the funding the department anticipates bringing in will only support slight increases to existing expenses at about the rate of inflation (approximately 4.3% annually). Through many planning processes, BPR has identified capital improvement projects that well exceed the projected funding anticipated over the next five years. Figure 6 below shows anticipated expenses and revenue for 2022-2026, as well as the identified unfunded capital projects currently identified by the department.

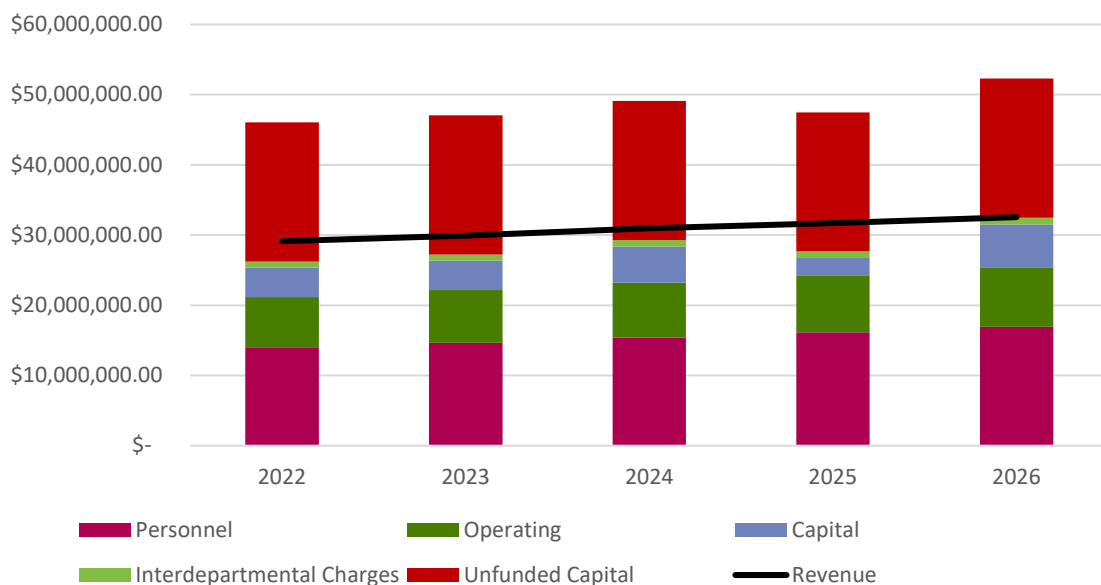


Figure 6. Projected Revenue and Expenses, 2022-2026

### *What we're hearing from the community*

- The community is split on how non-residents should be served by BPR programming, with only 51% preferring that non-residents pay higher fees, compared to 74% in the 2012 survey. While there is still a preference that non-residents who work or own a business in Boulder pay resident fees (68% in 2021), it is lower than the preference from the 2012 survey (80%).
- Survey respondents support the following funding source options:
  - 95% support maintaining current funding sources.
  - 92% support renewing existing sales taxes when they expire.
  - 91% support leveraging grants and donations, even if they require matching funds.

- 89% support partnering with other municipalities, school districts or nonprofits to develop joint use recreational facilities or programs.
- 67% support partnering with private organizations to develop recreational facilities or programs: and
- 45% support a new sale tax

#### *What we've learned from research*

- BPR has methodically increased fees to achieve target cost recovery levels, yet costs have escalated dramatically since 2014 and General Fund subsidy has remained the same (decreasing when inflation is considered).
- BPR generally provides residents a 25% discount on programming, with non-residents paying cost recovery plus (there are some exceptions, e.g., Flatirons Golf Course does not have non-resident fees).
- Differential pricing for non-residents can be used to address supply and demand (e.g., services that are at capacity can use increased fees for non-residents to ease congestion).
- Funding (revenue) has remained mostly flat between 2016 and 2021.
  - 2016-2021 Average Annual Funding Change: -0.41%

#### *Feedback from PRAB*

- Fees are an important component of BPR's financial sustainability, but it is a careful balancing act. Ensuring that BPR is not pricing out members of the community as the overall cost of living in Boulder also increases.
- Interest in examining how Financial Aid could be offered differently (i.e., sliding scale) to expand access to additional community members and overall improve access.
- Creative funding solutions are also important, whether that comes from partnerships, sponsorships, grants and/or donations.
- Achieving city-wide climate goals through department-specific actions and projects should be funded through varying and appropriate sources; capital sources where appropriate with larger projects, city-wide funding when investments benefit not just users of the facility.

### *What we need to know from Council*

4. Financial Sustainability – Revenues have remained flat and are projected to remain flat over the next several years while operational and capital costs are increasing and creating a gap in funding. While the next phase of the master plan process will address how BPR should address this challenge, are there any options presented below that should not be explored or those that should be specifically prioritized for further evaluation?
  - h. Increase fees for all.
  - i. Increase fees for select programs or demographics (e.g., adults)
  - j. Implement additional high-fee programs or facilities to provide subsidy
  - k. Re-evaluate to whom subsidies are provided and how allocations are determined (i.e., sliding scale for financial aid)
  - l. Reduce services (e.g., hours of operation and/or programming)
  - m. Seek a combination of new funding sources and fee adjustments
  - n. Other alternatives not yet considered
5. Resilience – BPR supports the city’s climate goals through a variety of methods as well as exploring new options to meet the goals. Does City Council have recommendations or preferences of funding sources for initiatives such as facility enhancements (such as transitions to electric HVAC/pool equipment) or promoting alternate modes of transportation to BPR programs and facilities (such as infrastructure for EV and parking incentives/fees)?
6. Who is served/Equity –
  - c. How should BPR consider serving those who do not live in the City of Boulder?
  - d. How should BPR ensure increasing fees do not create additional financial barriers?

### Youth Activity and Engagement

Youth are a priority for the community and there is a strong need to actively engage youth with place-based parks, facilities and programs. Parks offer children the daily benefits of direct experience with nature, experiential learning through play and shared experiences, and can be a resource for closing the opportunity gap and drive children’s participation in community development, citizenship and democratic processes.

### *What’s been done since 2014*

- Since 2014 master plan, staff have developed strategies for connecting kids to nature and youth experiences and implemented key partnerships to extend reach of youth programming.

- Over 1,800 youth were served from 2014 to 2019 through diverse & popular BPR and partner supported summer camp offerings.
- The Youth Services Initiative (YSI) program was awarded a grant to implement the SPARK After School Physical Activity Program. It offers after school and summer programming to enhance youth (6-18 years old) physical activity and fitness.

*What we're hearing from the community*

- BPR has a major role to play in programs, youth-focused amenities in parks and other opportunities to engage youth, build connections and relationships and get kids and teens back outside and interacting with one another.
- 86% of survey respondents felt that programming for teens was essential (52%) and very important (34%).
- 87% of survey respondents felt that programming access for teens was essential (53%) and very important (34%).
- There is a gap in teen/high school programming in the community, including among BPR's portfolio.
  - Survey respondents prioritized supporting programming for youth and teens with low-incomes highest, with other programming for youth and teens indicated as being funded by a mix of taxes and fees.
- Targeted youth engagement through Growing Up Boulder and the Youth Opportunities Advisory Board illustrates that teens are a distinct group with needs and desires unique from other youth.
  - Teens desire leadership opportunities to create and implement programs to serve their peers.
  - Teens have a desire for unstructured social connections.
- Youth Input:
  - Kids desire more challenging and active amenities in parks (e.g., obstacle courses).
  - Kids express an interest in Nature Play (areas to observe wildlife, play with dirt, sticks and water).

- Be Heard Boulder:
  - Important to have opportunities for youth to interact with each other and learn to value the outdoors, be good stewards, appreciate their community, and learn and discover through various experiences.

*What we've learned from research*

- National Trends:
  - Youth are struggling with challenges related to the pandemic and continued stress and anxiety.
  - Social media, video games and isolation continue to lead to mental health issues and physical health such as obesity.
- Continued gap in connection to “close to home” nature experiences due to limited opportunities, behaviors, safety, etc.
- A growing body of research suggests that increasing children’s nature interactions can have positive benefits for their health-related quality of life.
- Despite leadership in nature and healthy lifestyles, Boulder and Colorado are not exempt from the concerns about childhood inactivity and limited access to the outdoors.
- Numbers of teen suicide and depression are at staggering levels and the digital age has kids spending a lot of time indoors and plugged in constantly.

*Feedback from PRAB*

- Serving youth and especially teens should be a priority. It is important to have the discussion with these groups to understand what are the programs and amenities they desire.
- Especially amenities created for teens could also appeal to adults and help promote more physical activities.

*What we need to know from Council*

7. Given the community support of youth engagement, should BPR continue to prioritize amenities for teens and youth in parks and facilities as they are renovated or redeveloped? Staff will engage youth to determine appropriate and priority amenities.

## Building Community and Partnerships

Focusing on community engagement and cultural activities through outreach programs and initiatives is an important component of BPR's work, helping to build strong neighborhoods and increase social connections. Parks and recreation programs build social capital, promote healthy communities and address social and cultural inequities by providing programming and services for all.

### *What's been done since 2014*

- The Recquity Pass program, which offers subsidized facility passes, initiated over 5,000 visits in the first eight months of its operation.
- Boulder's EXPAND program for people with disabilities offered new summer camps and sites for participants, enhancing self-esteem and social skills.
- In the last five years, 2,424 volunteers have contributed 19,130 hours to serve BPR and the community.
- Strengthened the relationship and capacity of the PLAY Foundation with an approved-MOU that clarifies roles and departmental support for its official non-profit partner.
- BPR hired an employee to focus on community partnerships and fostering philanthropy. Grant funding has steadily increased since 2016:
  - 2016: \$292,962
  - 2017: \$269,811
  - 2018: \$303,879
  - 2019: \$681,262
  - 2020: \$543,406

### *What we're hearing from the community*

- Nine in 10 survey respondents supported applying for grants and donations, even though matching funds are often required.
- Nine in 10 supported partnering with municipalities, school districts or nonprofits to develop joint use facilities or programs.
- Two-thirds supported partnering with private organizations to develop recreational facilities or programs.
- A key value noted from Be Heard Boulder feedback considered important in establishing community equity was building community relationships through partnerships and diverse programming, which leads to inclusion and accessibility for all.



- Be Heard Boulder respondents feel BPR does a good job of offering events, programs, and spaces that allow socializing and connection.
- Respondents feel partnerships with other organizations helps improve access to BPR and other services across the board.
- Concern that a lack of new or improved partnerships will result in voices remaining unheard, the community continuing to divide, and those who couldn't access BPR services before still being excluded.

#### *What we've learned from research*

- Comparable parks and recreation organizations that were interviewed indicated that a full-time staff member is charged with continuously applying to private and public grant programs.
- In the last five years 2,424 volunteers contributed 19,130 hours to parks and recreation projects.

#### *Feedback from PRAB*

- Partnerships with other agencies and organizations continues to be an important component to filling in gaps in funding and service provision. Collaboration between organizations allows all to benefit from expertise and connections while not having to expend as many resources individually.

#### *What we need to know from Council*

8. Does council continue to support partnerships and to what extent should BPR pursue public private partnerships to offset facility, maintenance, operations, and programming costs?

#### Organizational Readiness

Many demands on budget and staff time are placed on parks and recreation departments, both locally and nationally. It is critical that BPR continue to support a talented, modern workforce and create more business management practices that leverage the use of new technologies, data driven decision-making, and collaborative decision-making tools to meaningfully respond to changes over time.

#### *What's been done since 2014*

- Implemented an Annual Action Planning Summit and internal communication strategies to inform yearly Master Plan initiatives and to ensure that all teammates are aware of BPR's important role in the community.

- Developed learning and growth competencies and fostering internal learning and growth through a mentoring program, annual position norming, and professional development standards.
- Beehive Asset Management Software was implemented to manage \$270 million in park assets more effectively.
- As part of the City of Boulder's Climate Leaders Program, the City is training leaders from parks and recreation in the science of climate change, so everyday decisions can be informed by a consistent foundation of knowledge.

*What we're hearing from the community*

- Being adaptable to change was indicated as an important reason for organizational readiness.
- Using data, making proactive decisions, and staying up to date on technology would significantly benefit the stability of BPR in the future. It will also help to ensure customer satisfaction.
- Strong internal organization and collaborative decision-making used to embrace new opportunities, as well as improved collaboration between BPR and other organizations and agencies are important.

*What we've learned from research*

- There continue to be outcomes and challenges that need to be addressed across land-based operations and services, as described in the General Maintenance and Management Plan.
- The COVID-19 pandemic had dramatic impacts on BPR's staffing and service levels. 10 full-time employees were laid-off and 5 retired - representing over 200 years of service to the department and institutional knowledge. In addition, over 400 non-standard employees were furloughed impacting service levels in park operations, recreation facilities and programs.
- Business acumen is required to serve Boulder well (a mix of technical skill with business skills like strong analytics and community engagement not necessarily required for other organizations).

*Feedback from PRAB*

- A PRAB member expressed concern that city staff are unable to afford to live in Boulder and that continued increased living costs will impact recruitment, retention and employees' ability to serve the city.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The project team will finalize the deliverables from the Needs Assessment phase to include the feedback received from the community, the PRAB and city council. Following the conclusion of the Needs Assessment phase, the project team will shift into the Implementation Plan phase. During Implementation Plan, specific strategies and initiatives will be identified to address the needs identified here. Engagement Window #3 later this summer and fall will focus on having the community provide input on prioritizing how BPR approaches the necessary trade-offs with limited resources.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

[Attachment A: DRAFT Needs Assessment Report](#)

[Attachment B: DRAFT Facilities Assessment](#)

[Attachment C: DRAFT Community Survey Report](#)

[Attachment D: DRAFT Financial Analysis](#)

## **Attachment A: DRAFT Needs Assessment Report**

## 2021 Needs Assessment Report

This Needs Assessment Report represents subject-specific research findings that will ultimately inform the content of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update. The information contained in this report does not necessarily constitute the final narrative that will be presented in the plan. During the process of conducting research for this Report, a number of other issues and questions were uncovered that merit additional discussion in the Needs Assessment phase of the planning process. The final content of the Master Plan may reflect significant portions of this report, but will not consist entirely of it.

## Contents

2021 Needs Assessment Report .....	1
Needs Assessment Inputs .....	2
Introduction .....	2
Trends Research & Related Plans and Reports Review .....	3
Financial Analysis .....	4
Engagement Feedback.....	4
Needs Assessment Analysis .....	6
Demographic Trends.....	8
Inventory and Levels of Service Analysis .....	13
BPR System Overview.....	13
BPR Parkland Level of Service .....	15
BPR Recreation Amenities and Facilities .....	19
Benchmark Communities Comparison .....	22
Engagement Findings .....	27
Supply and Demand Analysis .....	30
Purpose & Methodology.....	30
BRS Existing Facility Observations & Opportunities Report Highlights.....	30
Recreation Trends & Impacts on Supply and Demand .....	37
Engagement Findings .....	41
BPR Recreation Programs and Services Moving Forward .....	46
Gap Analysis .....	51
Purpose .....	51
BPR Distribution Gap Maps Methodology .....	51
Boulder Subcommunity Equity Gap Analysis Methodology.....	52
Engagement Findings .....	55

Considerations for Future Equity Mapping in Boulder .....	58
Key Issues & Next Steps .....	62
Appendices .....	69
A. BRS Existing Facility Observations & Opportunities Report.....	69
B. NRC/Polco Statistically Valid Survey Findings.....	69
C. Financial Overview and Funding Strategies Memorandum.....	69

## Needs Assessment Inputs

### Introduction

Nationally, regionally and within Boulder, communities recognize that parks, trails and natural areas and recreation are unifying amenities that improve quality of life. Boulder Parks and Recreation (BPR) facilities are where community members exercise, spend time with family and friends, and connect with nature. These amenities must meet the diverse needs of community members and visitors while balancing limited available resources and continuing to build key partnerships to help deliver high-quality services.



Accurately assessing the needs of the community is a fundamental part of a planning process, and the methods for evaluating the needs of each community are tailored to the needs of the study, the local community and the data available. A needs assessment establishes level of service (LOS) standards to evaluate amount of parkland, facilities and how a community's recreation demands are being met. The 2014 Master Plan established a triangulation approach using quantitative and qualitative data to determine recommendations. The three inputs, or sides of this 'triangle' include 1) research, 2) community and stakeholder engagement, and 3) policy direction.

The methods highlighted in Table 1: Needs Assessment Methods, are used to synthesize and assess accomplishments since 2014, to understand current and future needs, and to help lay the groundwork for prioritizing future efforts. The needs assessment looks within the community and compares Boulder's parks and recreation facilities, programs and administration to other regional and national communities of similar population size (benchmarking).

Measuring the quantity and quality of existing parks, parkland, indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, programs and services, and touching on maintenance and operations will help Boulder decision makers support policies that maintain, enhance and in some cases, improve the parks and recreation system.

*Table 1: Needs Assessment Inputs*

Needs Assessment Inputs	Parkland	Indoor Rec. Facilities	Outdoor Rec. Facilities	Programs
-------------------------	----------	------------------------	-------------------------	----------

Trends Research (White Papers)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Related Plans Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
Financial Analysis				
Engagement Feedback				
Per Capita Level of Service Analysis	✓	✓	✓	
Benchmark Community Comparison	✓	✓	✓	✓
Facility Assessments		✓		
Supply and Demand Analysis	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gap Analysis-Distribution Analysis	✓		✓	✓

## Trends Research & Related Plans and Reports Review

### *Trends Research (White Papers)*

White papers prepared for the 2014 Master Plan were reviewed and updated to reflect changes that have occurred since then. These white papers were used as the foundation for building the Needs Assessment. Related Plans & Reports Review

BPR has completed several related plans and reports – some based on recommendations from the 2014 Master Plan. For this needs assessment, the following were reviewed with a specific focus on policy and project recommendations. These are highlighted in the relevant sections of this document.

- 2020 Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan
- 2020 BPR 5-Year Progress Report
- 2018 Urban Forest Strategic Plan
- 2018 Asset Management Program Plan
- 2017 Public Participation Working Group Report
- 2015-2026 Capital Investment Strategic Plan
- 2015 Aquatic Feasibility Plan
- 2015 General Maintenance Management Plan (GMMP)
- 2012 Boulder Reservoir Master Plan
- 2010 Recreation Programs and Facilities Plan.

Two of these documents provide overarching direction, which has been incorporated throughout this master plan update process:

### **2020 Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan**

“[City] Parks and recreation programs and facilities will continue to provide for a well-balanced and healthy community by providing a range of activities that support mental and physical health through high-quality programs and services that meet the needs of the community. Such facilities and services will be designed in a manner that responds to the needs of the intended users.”

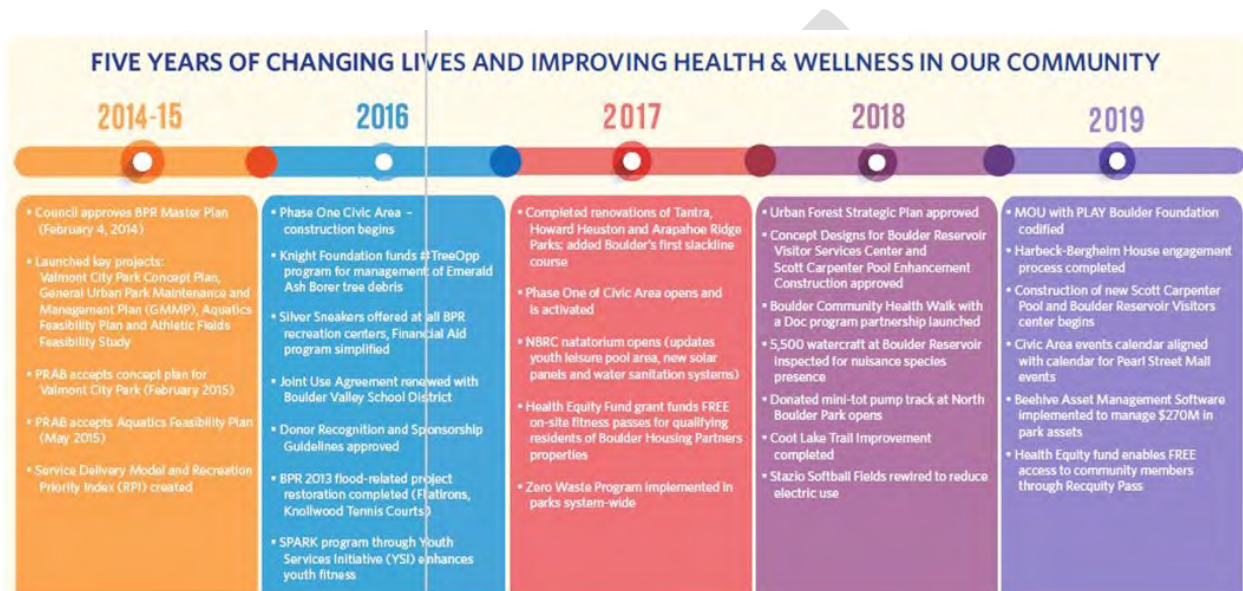
### **2020 BPR 5-Year Progress Report**

Since the 2014 Master Plan was completed, six key themes that resulted from engagement, research and the prior needs assessment have been carried through all BPR’s work. The recent 2020 BPR 5-Year Progress Report summarizes progress made under each of these areas of focus. A restructuring of the recreation pass, a 60% decrease in backlog repairs, construction of the new Scott Carpenter Pool and the Boulder Reservoir Visitors Center are key highlights.



**Key Themes:**

- Community Health and Wellness
- Taking care of what they already have
- Financial Sustainability
- Building Community and Relationships
- Youth Engagement and Activity
- Organizational readiness

**2020 BPR 5-Year Progress Report Accomplishments**

Research on benchmark communities and local, regional and national demographic and parks and recreation related trends was also used to inform this report.

**Financial Analysis**

As part of the Needs Assessment process, an analysis of BPR's financial position was performed and documented in the attached *Financial Overview and Funding Strategies Memorandum*, included as Appendix C. The analysis provides a brief outlook of the Department's existing financial situation, including cost recovery, subsidization, and fund management, its capital budget as it relates to the Department's portfolio of assets, as well as recommending funding and policy strategies to achieve the identified Master Plan outcomes.

The intent of the analysis is to provide background and information on the Boulder Parks and Recreation Department's current and projected funding sources, Departmental policies and management strategies, and financial outlook. In addition to providing an assessment of the Department's current and projected operating state, the memorandum evaluates alternative funding and revenue generating strategies that may be employed to support BPR's overall financial position.

**Engagement Feedback**

Engagement feedback is incorporated in the Needs Assessment to understand community needs and begin to develop initiatives and recommendations for the Master Plan update. Several methods were

used to collect community feedback, including four stakeholder focus groups, several staff conversations, two Be Heard Boulder online questionnaires/polling and a statistically valid online survey and open participation survey (related to the statistically valid survey). An open house was held on June 24, 2021, to get feedback from the community regarding Needs Assessment findings and additional opportunities for comment will be available throughout the planning process.

### *Highlights to Date*

- Fitness and recreation opportunities in Boulder are rated highly – with 82% of respondents rating fitness and recreation opportunities as excellent (82% and 77% respectively).
- The priority is to take care of what we have – while many user groups would like to see more or new facilities, survey respondents and focus group participants feel it is extremely important to take care of existing amenities.
- Nearly all survey respondents reported visiting a public park in the last 12 months before the pandemic and over 76% have used a Boulder recreation facility or service.
- A little more than half of respondents reported that lack of time was a barrier to using parks and recreation facilities.
- It is important to ensure sustainability of the system, especially with increasing climate change impacts.
- Community members are generally satisfied with all aspects of services provided by BPR staff – 9 in 10 statistically valid survey respondents are very or somewhat satisfied.

### *Stakeholder Focus Groups & Staff Discussions*

These focus groups were held to dive into topics around equity of access to recreation, programming, parks, indoor facilities and outdoor amenities.

Attendees came together from across Boulder and the surrounding areas to discuss parks and recreation trends. Most stakeholders were those that provide similar services and programs to BPR and others that frequently partner with BPR. This included stakeholders from underrepresented groups including aging adults, youth program providers, affordable housing and homelessness advocates, and nonprofits that work mainly with the Latinx community and other communities of color.

With the diversity of stakeholders and topics, it was important to see several main themes rise to the top. Overall, everyone involved feels that equity of access is important and all those using BPR spaces should feel welcome and included. The variety of stakeholders also agreed that diversity of program providers is valued and although some overlap is necessary, it is important to communicate with partners and competitors to make sure they are best serving the community members of Boulder. Participants in all groups cited the importance of partnerships for future viability and sustainability of all Boulder program providers. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the fact that organizations must help each other in times of uncertainty. Strengthening existing relationships with private providers, nonprofit advocates, and other public partners like the school district is also important. Many groups brought up the increased use of BPR outdoor parks and amenities and the need for increased maintenance, while at the same time, sharing pent-up desires for more courts/amenities and big ideas for large-scale new facilities (e.g., pool, tennis center). Participants also acknowledged the issue of a limited BPR budget coupled with demands for increased maintenance for existing facilities and the desire for new facilities.

### *Community Online Questionnaire/Polling*

BPR staff reached out to the community several times throughout the master plan process to date on Be Heard Boulder with online polling/questionnaires. Quite a few amenities or activities were requested, including more tennis and/or pickleball courts, more events (and especially culturally diverse events), more places to swim, more or improved dog parks and off leash areas, more mountain biking options, more personal exercise equipment in parks, more roller skating options, more cross-country skiing or snowshoeing options, and more trails.

Requests for additional amenities or new facilities were often related to crowded and inaccessible locations like tennis courts and classes. There were suggestions for more multiuse equipment, using spaces in creative ways, and better connecting the park system to be more walkable or accessible via public transit. More facilities and programs oriented toward youth and older adults was also suggested.

Many respondents discussed programming for community health and wellness – they wanted more great programs and quality instructors but noted these should be accessible and inclusive to meet all community members' needs. Suggestions for more subsidies for those who cannot afford services, and more programs for older adults and youth as well as more arts and EXPAND programs were also top of mind.

Multiuse spaces and family/group recreation center features were most popular. Community events and festivals and concerts and cultural performances received the highest ratings for activities community members would like to see in BPR parks.

### *Statistically Valid Survey Findings*

This needs assessment will help identify new and evolving areas of focus and lay the groundwork for recommendations to strategically address gaps in service. To do this successfully, community feedback is critical. Polco's National Research Center conducted a statistically valid survey on the City's behalf. A total of 284 survey recipients completed the survey, for a response rate of 7%. The margin of error for this survey, with 284 respondents, is  $\pm 5.8\%$ .

The fitness and recreation opportunities in Boulder are highly regarded by residents. About 8 in 10 residents rated the fitness and recreation opportunities as excellent, and nearly all rated them as at least good. About 9 in 10 felt that Boulder has excellent or good public places where people want to spend time and considered the city an excellent or good place to live. Ratings of the fitness and recreation opportunities were somewhat more positive on this survey than had been observed on the general community survey in 2018, when about two-thirds of respondents gave excellent ratings.

Most residents were satisfied with all aspects of the services provided by the Parks and Recreation Department employees. Nine in 10 respondents were very or somewhat satisfied with all aspects rated, including the ability of employees to provide quality programs and services and to care for the parks and recreation facilities.

### *Needs Assessment Analysis*

This report combines previous research and an evaluation of per capita Level of Service, benchmark community comparisons, facility assessments, supply and demand, gap and distribution analyses for the entire community and a gap analysis based on a Boulder Subcommunity Level of Service comparison.

The needs assessment analysis helps establish a set of standards to measure the current provision of parks and recreation services. It primarily addresses needs and layers in findings from community and stakeholder engagement and research to triangulate preliminary conclusions of BPR's park and recreation needs for the next five to seven years, and in some cases beyond.

DRAFT

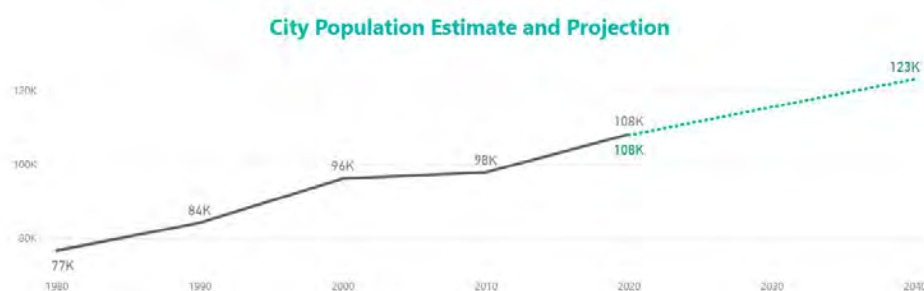
## Demographic Trends

Level of service and benchmarking analysis begins with establishing current and projected demographic trends. Reports of both the historical and projected population for the City of Boulder can vary depending upon the source of information used for analysis. On several occasions in past years, the city has questioned the findings of the U.S. Census bureau, claiming an undercount of both people and housing units. This report utilizes the 2020 Boulder Community Profile and the 2020 Boulder Economic Council's (BEC) Market Report (unless otherwise noted), which synthesizes the best available information from the U.S. Census bureau, the State Demographer's Office, and city data.

### *Current and Projected Population Growth*

BPR currently provides recreation to a city population of **108,091** (including the CU Boulder student population)<sup>1</sup>, but mirroring statewide growth, the City of Boulder is expected to grow to about **123,000 by 2040** (see Table 2). The needs assessment must describe how BPR can prepare for serving this anticipated increase in population. Not only is the population within city limits expected to increase, but about 1 million additional people are expected to move to the Denver region, with another 1 million moving to the north Front Range, which includes Fort Collins, Longmont and surrounding areas, by 2040. As an employment center drawing from both areas, Boulder is expecting an additional 14,000 employees traveling into the community by this time.<sup>2</sup>

*Table 2: Boulder Population Estimate and Projection. Source: 2020 Boulder Community Profile*



### **Needs Assessment Impact:**

*The growing population of Boulder and surrounding communities will more than likely result in increased need for services, parkland and programming. This in turn will result in increased strain on the parks and recreation system.*

### *Demographic Trends: Aging Adults*

Understanding community trends, like the impact of COVID-19 or the age distribution of the population, provides insight into how programs and offerings can be tailored to meet the needs of Boulder community members today and tomorrow. Boulder is facing an aging population. By 2040, Boulder County community members aged 60 and older will nearly double to 28% of the county's total population.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> State Demographer's Office, 2020 Boulder Community Profile

<sup>2</sup> State Demographer's Office, City of Boulder, 2020 Boulder Community Profile

<sup>3</sup> State Demographer's Office, Boulder County Population Projections 2040

**Needs Assessment Impact:**

With increasing numbers of aging adults, and feedback from the stakeholder focus groups, BPR will likely see an increased demand for senior programs that have observed appeal from review of national and regional trends (e.g., Medicare health and wellness programs for adults 65 and older including Silver Sneakers programs among others and facilities such as warm-water aquatics pools and pickleball courts). According to city data, those over the age of 65 make up 23.3% of the population, whereas the percentage of respondents in that age group to the Be Heard Boulder questionnaire respondents was 12% and the percentage of total respondents to the statistically valid survey was 15%. This is an area BPR should do further analysis on – targeting this age demographic specifically in outreach to understand needs and desires for the future.

**Demographic Trends: Proportion of Renters and Homeowners and Affordability**

Another interesting community trend is the makeup of renters proportional to homeowners. The 2020 BEC Market Report found that owner-occupied housing makes up 48% of occupied housing in the city, whereas renter-occupied housing represents 52% of occupied units. While this is split almost in half, percentages across Boulder County, the state and the nation lean more heavily toward owner-occupied versus renter-occupied, generally with an approximate 60% to 40% split (see Table 3). Renters tend to rely on public services and amenities like city parks and recreation departments more so than homeowners because they often lack private outdoor space like yards and homeowners are more likely to join private fitness clubs. With a median single-family home price of \$940,000 (compared to \$592,000 for the county, \$394,600 for the state, and \$240,500 for the nation) the City of Boulder's high-income sector of the community can afford increasing housing costs while lower-paid service and retail workers commute from more affordable communities along the Front Range. These high housing prices have also resulted in middle income families being priced out of the Boulder market. More workers, including those at the lower and middle ends of the pay scale are therefore commuting into Boulder for work and leaving the city after work.

**Needs Assessment Impact:**

The high renter population, shown in Table 3: Housing Occupancy Type, 2019, and increases in costs of living will likely maintain demand or increase demand for low-cost to no-cost recreation options in Boulder.

Table 3: Housing Occupancy Type, 2019. Source: 2020 Boulder Economic Council Market Report

	City of Boulder	Boulder County	Colorado	U.S.
Overall occupancy rate	92.4%	93.8%	90.7%	87.91%
Owner-occupied	48.0%	61.6%	65.9%	64.1%
Avg household size	2.22	2.38	2.52	2.61
Median value	\$795,000	\$592,000	\$394,600	\$240,500
Vacancy rate	1.2%	0.4%	1.0%	1.5%
Renter-occupied	52%	38.4%	34.1%	35.9%
Avg household size	2.28	2.35	2.32	2.44
Median gross rent	\$1,659	\$1,637	\$1,369	\$1,097
Vacancy rate	3.4%	3.2%	4.6%	6.0%

Source: US Census, 2019 American Community Survey.

**Demographic Trends: Race and Ethnicity**

According to the U.S. Census American Community Survey, the majority of Boulder's population is White (87.7%). The city has a higher percentage of Asian community members (7%) than the county,



the state and even the nation. Black or African American community members make up 1.3% of the population, 0.2% are American Indian or Alaska Native, and 1.6% are other races. In terms of ethnicity, approximately 10% of community members are of Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race). Most community members were born in the United States (91.2%), which is higher than the percentage for community members of Boulder County, Colorado or the U.S. (see Table 4).

*Table 4: Race and Ethnicity Distribution, 2019 Source: 2020 Boulder Economic Council Market Report*

Ethnicity				
Race*	City of Boulder	Boulder County	Colorado	U.S.
White	87.7%	89.5%	83.7%	72.0%
Black or African American	1.3%	1.2%	4.2%	12.8%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.2%	0.3%	1.0%	0.9%
Asian	7.0%	5.0%	3.3%	5.7%
Other	1.6%	2.4%	4.5%	5.6%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	10.1%	13.9%	21.5%	18.1%

Source: US Census, 2019 American Community Survey. \*Race alone or in combination with one or more other races.

**Place of Birth by Nativity and Citizenship Status**

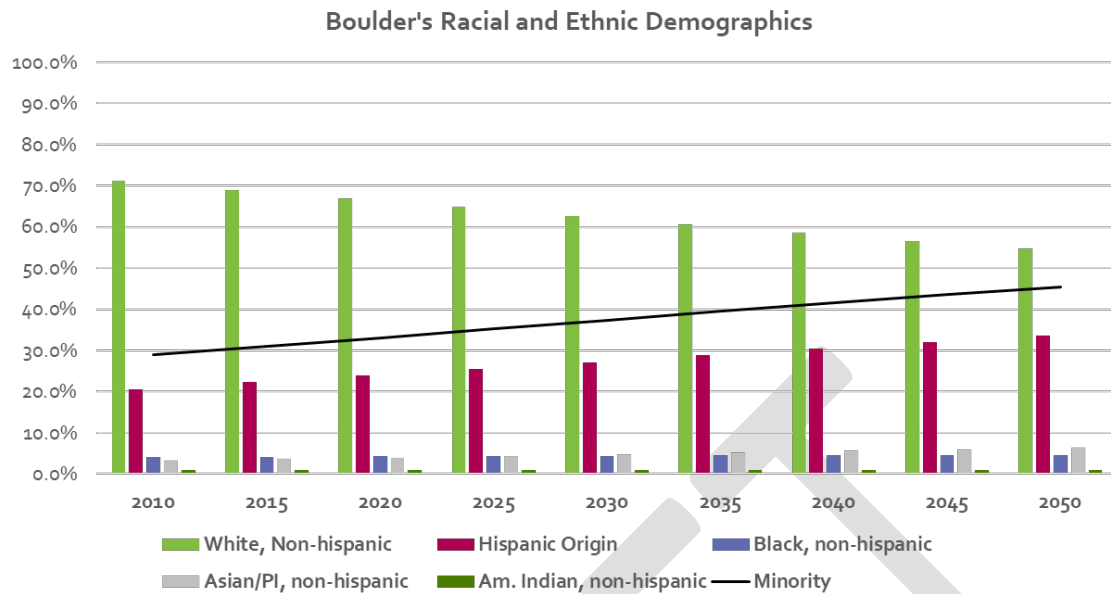
Place of Birth	City of Boulder	Boulder County	Colorado	U.S.
Born in United States*	91.2%	89.7%	90.5%	86.3%
Foreign born	8.8%	10.3%	9.5%	13.7%

Source: US Census, 2019 American Community Survey. \*Includes Puerto Rico, U.S. Island areas, or born abroad to American parent(s).

Projections for changes to the composition of the population by race are not calculated for counties or municipalities; however, the Colorado State Demography Office developed a statewide forecast in October 2011. Table 5 presents ethnic groups' share of the Colorado population through 2030. Populations of Black, Asian/Pacific Islander, and American Indian remain relatively stable in proportion to all other races. The share of individuals of Hispanic origin grows noticeably, outpacing the growth of all other races, including White/non-Hispanic. The same trend may not unfold in the same way in Boulder, but the nationwide trend of a burgeoning Hispanic population is undeniable and will very likely influence the city and BPR amenities, facilities and programs.

*Table 5: Race/Ethnic Distribution Forecasts, Share of Total Population, State of Colorado, 2010-2050. Source: Colorado State Demography Office*

Share of Total Population Group	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
White, non-hispanic	71.1	69.0	66.9	64.8	62.7	60.6	58.5	56.5	54.7
Hispanic Origin	20.6	22.3	23.9	25.5	27.1	28.8	30.5	32.1	33.5
Black, non-hispanic	4.1	4.1	4.3	4.4	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5
Asian/PI, non-hispanic	3.2	3.6	3.9	4.4	4.8	5.2	5.6	5.9	6.3
Am. Indian, non-hispanic	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Minority	28.9	31.0	33.1	35.2	37.3	39.4	41.5	43.5	45.3



#### *Boulder Racial & Ethnic Demographics Projections*

##### **Needs Assessment Impact:**

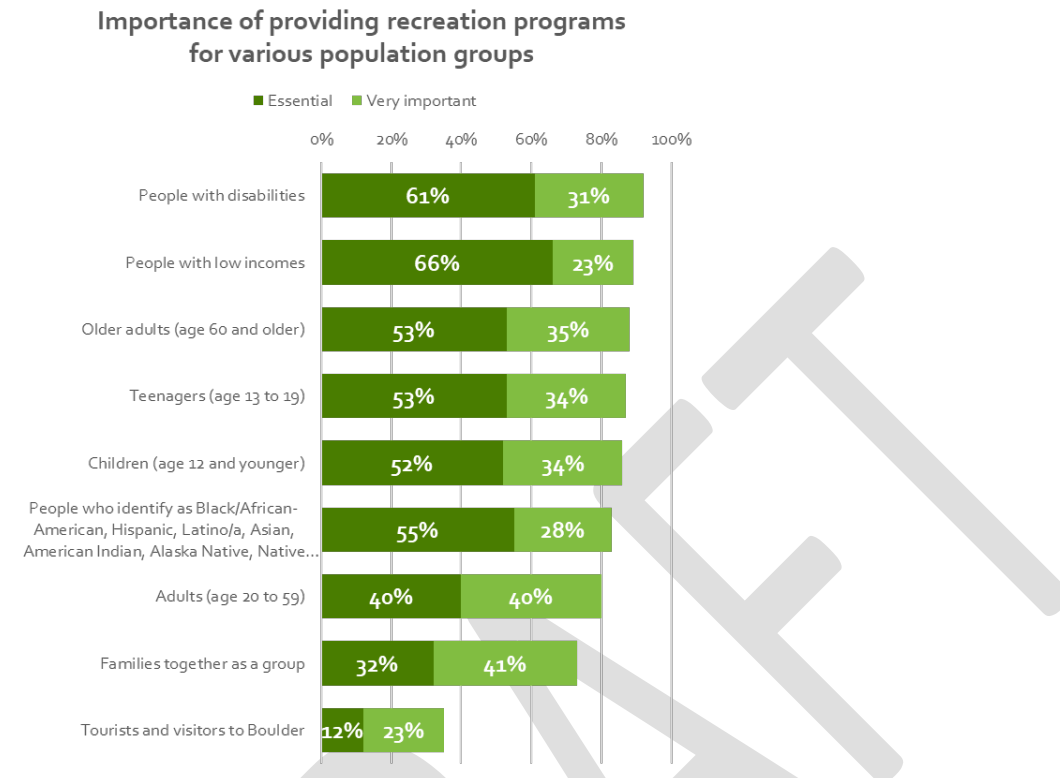
*Based on the demographic data above and considering the 2020 Boulder Racial Equity Plan and international best practices for parks and recreation equity, BPR could consider doing a more thorough analysis of how services are or are not provided differently to different racial/ethnic groups and prioritizing ways to deliver more resources in areas of historic inequity. With Boulder's high percentage of white, non-Hispanic community members and the limitations of current racial distribution data, this is an area for further study beyond the timeframe of this master plan.*

*Stakeholders believe that incentivizing permits and scholarships for underrepresented group involvement is important to promote. Programs like the Out Boulder softball team have proven successful in bringing new populations to BPR facilities. Stakeholders recommended offering programs with representation and bilingual communications opportunities.*

*Approximately 46% of statistically valid survey respondents have lived in Boulder five years or less with 21% living in the city for over 25 years. This may suggest that BPR needs to continue focusing on activities that satisfy the needs of older community members and those who have lived in the city for some time. It is also important to understand what newer community members want to see in terms of parks and recreation services and facilities.*



*Focusing on programming for people with disabilities, older adults and low-income individuals and families with children were common themes throughout the engagement process.*



*Statistically Valid Survey Results: Population Groups and Recreation Programs*

*Potential considerations for future mapping studies are discussed on page 58 of this report. Notably, BPR is following the City of Boulder's award-winning engagement standards that promote a bottom-up approach to understanding the needs of typically underrepresented groups (e.g., micro engagement with community connectors) as well as a statistically valid survey that can potentially cross-tabulate needs data by demographic factors.*

## Inventory and Levels of Service Analysis

### BPR System Overview

Boulder Parks and Recreation (BPR) promotes the health and well-being of the entire Boulder community by collaboratively providing high-quality parks, natural areas, facilities and programs (see Figures 1 and 2). BPR manages more than 1,800 acres of urban parkland and 138,000 square feet of recreation center space, plus many other recreation facilities, including the Boulder Reservoir, Valmont Bike Park and the Flatirons Golf Course. Several of these resources are historic and culturally relevant districts, buildings/structures, rolling stock (train cars), and an archaeological site. The Parks and Recreation Department owns and manages 12 culturally relevant and historically designated resources. Currently, BPR is preparing the Historic Places Plan (HiPP), which will include needs assessments and management recommendations for these resources that will provide outcomes aligned with the Master Plan update. The HiPP will include research and assessments to provide a base of information that will be used to evaluate each resource with strategies and initiatives to make financially sustainable and data-informed decisions.

For this report, the BPR system is analyzed in four major categories:

1. Parkland
2. Indoor Recreation Facilities
3. Outdoor Recreation Facilities
4. Programs

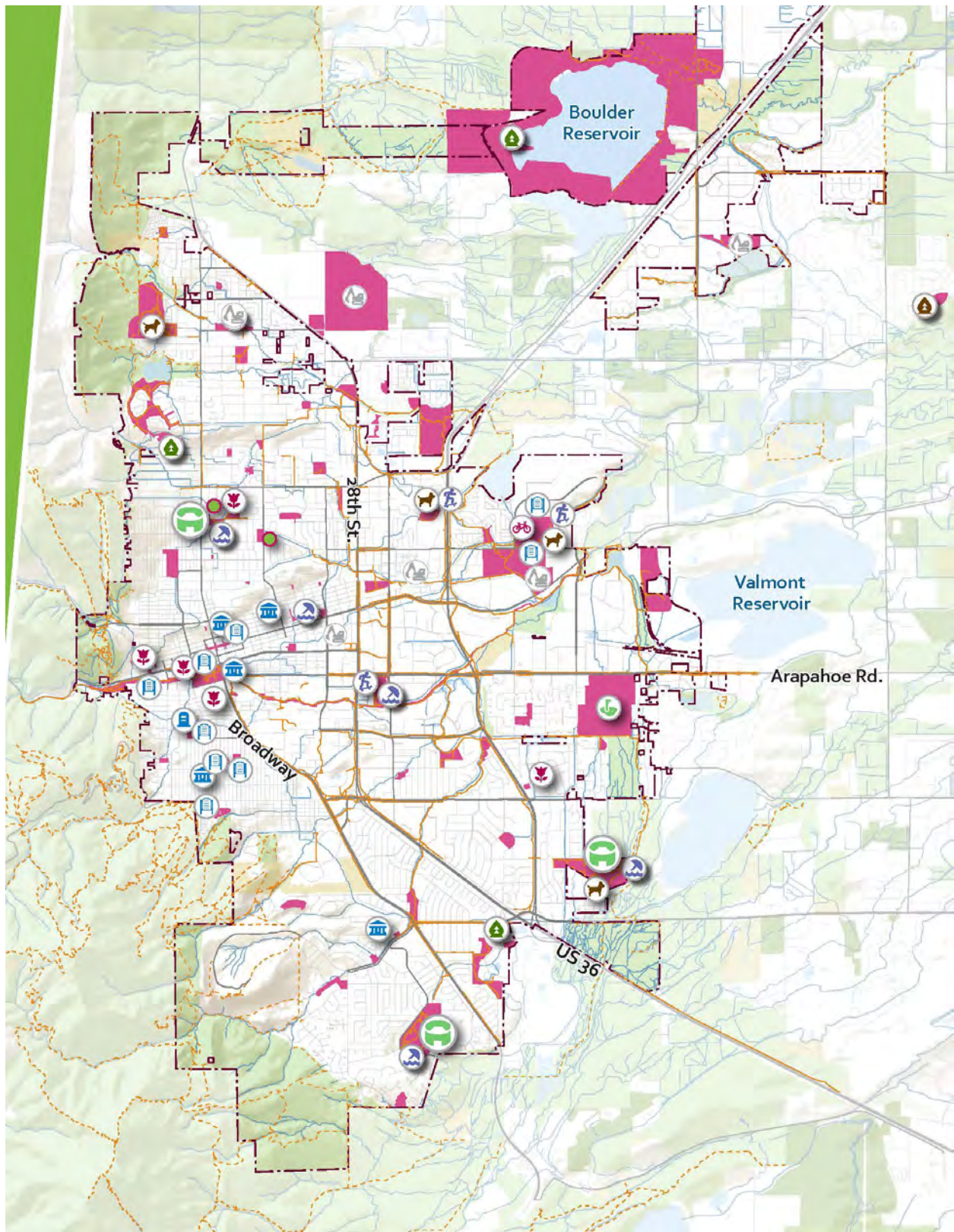
BPR is one of many providers of recreation programs in the Boulder community. Before the 2020 pandemic, BPR partnered with recreation and sports enthusiasts to provide over 2,500 different types of programs. Users pay fees for certain programs to support program and facility costs and some programs are provided in a way that supports the City's values of equity and service, ensuring all members of the community have access to parks and recreation.

Boulder Parks and Recreation manages:

	<b>1</b>	Cemetery		<b>3</b>	Recreation Centers
	<b>6</b>	Civic Spaces		<b>46</b>	Athletic Fields
	<b>4</b>	Gardens		<b>5</b>	Indoor & Outdoor Pools
	<b>1</b>	Golf Course		<b>4</b>	Dog Parks
	<b>9</b>	Natural Areas including Boulder Reservoir		<b>3</b>	Skate Park
	<b>55</b>	Parks		<b>1</b>	Bike Park
	<b>43</b>	Playgrounds		<b>36</b> <b>44</b>	Tennis Courts & Other Sports Courts
	<b>7</b>	Undeveloped Properties		<b>9</b>	Historic & Cultural Resources

*BPR System Overview Inventory. Source: BPR 2021.*

*Includes three dog parks and one off-leash area at Howard Heuston Park.*



*BPR System Overview Map*



## BPR Parkland Level of Service

Level of service (LOS) establishes the standard by which parks and recreation facilities are provided, operated, and maintained over time to best meet the needs of the community. Level of service evaluates current state as well as an aspirational standard for the future, each of which is defined through qualitative and quantitative measures such as number of amenities, distribution of amenities, access or public satisfaction. How it is defined varies depending on the type of amenity or service. Level of service standards also enable evaluation of progress over time. Numeric LOS metrics are most used when analyzing parkland and recreation facilities to express acreage or availability in per capita terms. However, effective assessments of recreation programs often rely more heavily on other factors, such as trends and community input.

In 2019, BPR prepared the Boulder Parks & Recreation Design Standards Manual which, among other things, lists common BPR system assets, which helps to inform new park development in the future. The manual standardizes assets to manage maintenance and lifecycle expectations more easily and efficiently. The inventories in this section are taken from this document.

### *Parkland Inventory*

Table 6: Parkland Inventory reflects BPR's park type categorization overall as of 2021, per the Boulder Parks & Recreation Design Standards Manual. In addition to the designated park type Natural Areas, many existing developed parks have areas that are in their natural condition or are adjacent to natural landscapes. This acreage is included in that specific park typology (e.g., Neighborhood Park), not the Natural Areas park type.

## RELATED PLANS

### **2019 BPR Design Standards Manual**

The Design Standards Manual (DSM) outlines how park projects are coordinated, developed, processed and built. This creates efficiency and predictability for staff as well as other users. The manual documents BPR's design process, lists common assets, and establishes consistency for materials, products and construction methods. The manual also outlines implementation steps to realize BPR Parks & Recreation Master Plan goals

The manual includes park typologies, and inventories of common assets found in Boulder parks. The goal of standardizing these is "not only to delineate a park aesthetic that is unique to Boulder, but also to standardize park assets for maintenance and life-cycle expectations."

### **2018 Urban Forest Strategic Plan**

The UFSP documents "long-term management goals for increasing community safety and preserving and improving the health, value, and environmental benefits of this natural resource." Key items relating to policies and projects include:

- Develop/implement 20-year planting plan for public trees to support 16% urban tree canopy cover by 2037
- Integrate ecosystem protection and monitoring across urban, agricultural and wildland systems
- Create Urban Forest Emergency Response Plan
- Preserve and grow tree canopy
- Develop citywide and neighborhood planting plans
- Set minimum requirements for species diversity/large stature trees
- Plant 600 public trees/year, monitor gains and losses
- Assist in planting 2,2025 trees per year on private land

Table 6: Parkland Inventory. Source: BPR 2021\*

Park Type	Current Acreage	Undeveloped Acreage	Total Acreage
Neighborhood Parks	213	8	221
Community Parks	264	188	451
City Parks	47	83	130
Civic Spaces	26	0	26
Recreational Facilities	116	0	116
Specialized Facilities	254	0	254
Natural Areas	615	7	622
Community Use Areas	41	0	41
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1576</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>1861</b>

\*Parkland was classified differently in the 2014 Master Plan. Any discrepancies are attributed to changes in how BPR designates and counts properties (e.g., acreage of P&R land attributed to Boulder Creek Path, etc.).

### Parkland Level of Service

To assess how BPR is meeting the recreation needs of the entire Boulder community with its parks, it is important to understand what level of service (LOS) the city is providing currently and to anticipate future needs based on demographic trends and the desires of community members. Table 7: 2014 Master Plan Parkland LOS for Comparison, provided for reference, shows the LOS comparison between the 2014 Master Plan and the analysis completed for 2006. Table 8: 2021 Parkland LOS, offers a comparison between current LOS and benchmark levels of service that were included in the 2014 Master Plan.

It is important to note the following:

- An apples-to-apples comparison between LOS from the 2014 Master Plan and 2021 data cannot be made here because the parkland classification system (park typologies) was changed via the 2019 Design Standards Manual. This yields lower or higher LOS for certain park typologies.
- The 2014 population projection for 2020 is roughly on point but the 2040 projection (123,000) is 7,000 more people than the 2014 future projection point. This yields a lower LOS in some park type areas for the future projection point.

Table 7: 2014 Master Plan Parkland LOS for Comparison

Park Type	Level of Service (LOS) (Acres per 1,000 residents)		Acres Needed by 2030 to Maintain 2006 Standard	
	2006 LOS Standard in Benchmark Cities	Current LOS in Boulder	2030 Projection (Full Development)	
Neighborhood Parks	3.00	3.15	2.71	+21.84 acres
Community Parks	1.50	1.54	1.45	+5.34 acres
City/Regional Parks	1.00 - 3.00	7.36	8.55	-643.56 acres
Total	5.50 - 7.50	12.05	12.71	-616.38 acres

Table 5.2: Parkland LOS. Given existing undeveloped parkland, BPRD will continue to provide more than enough parkland to meet demand through 2030.

Table 8: 2021 Parkland LOS. Inventory and Demographic Sources: BPR 2021 and 2020 Boulder Community Profile.

Park Type (By BPR DSM Classification*)	Level of Service (LOS) (Acres per 1,000 Residents)		Acres Needed by 2040 to Maintain Current Boulder LOS	
	2014 LOS Benchmark Standard	2021 Current LOS	2040 LOS Projection	2040 Projection (Acres Needed to Maintain 2021 Standard - including acreage already in system)
Neighborhood Parks	3	2.04	1.80	+27
Community Parks	1.5	4.17	3.67	+55
City/Regional Parks	1.00 - 3.00	1.44	1.27	+19
Other Parkland**	n/a	9.56	8.40	+125
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5.50 - 7.50</b>	<b>17.21</b>	<b>15.13</b>	<b>~226 additional acres</b>

\* Developed and undeveloped acres are included in the 2040 projection for acres needed to maintain 2021 LOS standard

\*\* Examples include Natural Areas, Recreational and Specialized Facility green space, Community Use Areas.

### Population Growth and Parkland Acres Comparison

Comparing Boulder 2021 to Boulder 2040, BPR would need to add 226 more acres after developing currently owned but undeveloped acreage, or close to two parks the size of Valmont City Park (127 acres), to provide the same amount of parkland per 1,000 community members if 2040 population projections are realized. Given the high price of land in Boulder and the growth boundary, adding new parkland is currently not feasible.



Comparison of Projected Population Growth to Total Parkland and Developed Parkland Acres LOS

When compared to the national benchmark communities and the Trust for Public Land (TPL) overall<sup>4</sup> ParkScore® median, Boulder is keeping pace in parkland per capita, as seen in Table 9: Urban Park Acres per 1,000 Residents Comparison. The surrounding 45,000 acres of Open Space and Mountain Parks lands are also an important contextual asset of access to public lands and nature.

*Table 9: Urban Park Acres per 1,000 Residents Comparison. 2019-2020 Data*

Entity	Urban Parkland Per Capita LOS
Trust for Public Lands Overall Median (2020)	13
<b>BPR Urban Parkland*</b>	<b>18</b>
All Benchmark Median	17
Regional Benchmark Median	20

\* BPR Urban Parkland includes all parks operated and maintained by BPR. There are two types of natural areas in the BPR system. BPR manages designated Natural Areas (620 acres) and urban forests along stream corridors and on open parcels that are either preserved as natural lands to blend in with the surroundings or are undeveloped and reserved for future park sites. These areas vary in size but are typically larger than 100 acres. In addition to these, many of the existing developed parks have areas that have been left natural or are adjacent to other natural landscapes. These allow parks to incorporate passive recreation, habitat for wildlife, sustainable landscape treatment, water use reduction and a cohesive border with either native landscape or Boulder OSMP lands. (BPR DSM)

#### **Needs Assessment Impact:**

*BPR continues to provide equivalent to above average amounts of urban parkland compared to benchmark communities. Given the projected population growth, each park will need to work harder (will most likely see an increased use due to more people living in Boulder and recent pandemic trends that have ignited higher use of outdoor parkland in Boulder and across the country) and require renewal and higher levels of maintenance.*

*Anecdotally, Boulder is one of the most popular cities in the state of Colorado. As home to the University of Colorado's main campus, and a place people come to play outdoors, the number of visitors is likely to have an impact on system usage and maintenance.*

*In most of the recent engagement processes related to park design, considerations and concerns about attracting unhoused people is always a key factor with the community. BPR has seen continuous encampments and illegal use of parkland, which strains limited resources. Certain types of unwelcoming or threatening behavior are having an impact on the community's use of parks and public spaces as welcoming. While this is the case, only 7% of survey respondents said they do not use parks and recreation facilities because they do not feel safe.*

*According to Longwoods International, a travel and tourism market research industry leader, Colorado welcomed 86.9 million visitors in 2019. Tourism also saved every Colorado household \$707 a year in taxes – the amount residents would have to pay if visitors did not spend \$1.5 billion in state and local taxes.<sup>5</sup>*

<sup>4</sup> TPL breaks out median by overall as well for 2020 data as high (6.7 LOS), medium (10.8 LOS), medium-low (13.4 LOS) and low (27.6 LOS) density cities. Using the TPL methodology, Boulder would be considered close to Arlington, TX in density and be classified as medium-low density city.

<sup>5</sup> [Tourism Pays | VISIT DENVER](#)

*Following this trend, the Boulder Convention and Visitors Bureau's Economic Impact of Tourism reported that "the economic impact of tourism in the City of Boulder topped half a billion (\$515.4 million) in 2015. The estimated number of jobs in the City of Boulder attributable to tourism is 7,105, including 5,731 jobs directly tied to the tourism industry. Estimated visitor-days (nights) totaled nearly 3.3 million in 2015, including 1.4-million-day visitors and 1.9 million overnight visitors, in 2015."*<sup>6</sup>

### BPR Recreation Amenities and Facilities

The recreation amenities and facilities listed in Table 10 provide a current inventory of the diverse recreation amenities the Boulder community enjoys. Several of these numbers are used in the Benchmark Communities Comparison section and may be divided into further detail in that study (e.g., ball fields divided into baseball fields and softball fields). While many of the recommendations of the 2010 Recreation Programs & Facilities Plan are still priorities, 11 years later, BPR may need to shift to and/or add focus areas including: older adult programming, teenage programming and offering a more diverse set of activities that focus on cultural meaning. In addition to recurring operational and capital costs, BPR has over \$90 million in unfunded capital projects.

### RELATED PLANS

#### [2012 Boulder Reservoir Master Plan](#)

This plan provides a vision for the future of this popular BPR facility. With increasing visitation and increasing demand for recreational services facilities, the plan highlighted several areas of focus related to operations, maintenance, user needs and goals, including:

- Address conflicts among users, increase traffic/parking lot capacity
- Maintaining adequate water quality and protecting plant and wildlife habitats, management strategies to reduce risk of aquatic nuisance species
- Meeting needs of increased demand for high quality services and facilities
- Coordination between OSMP, BPR and other City departments for land management
- Manage undesignated trails and access
- Support city sustainability objectives (carbon emissions, water conservation, reduction of single occupancy auto trips)

#### [2015 Aquatics Feasibility Plan](#)

This plan explored options for enhancing existing aquatic facilities, building new facilities and increasing the variety of programming offered. Ideas considered in the plan included: increasing the availability of open lap swimming and maximizing the utilization of lap pools, increasing entertainment offerings, increasing warm water wellness opportunities, creating an efficient and sustainable delivery system, and creating a more balanced schedule for pool utilization. The plan also looked at funding options to implement certain projects, including the recently completed Scott Carpenter Pool.

#### [2020 Skate Park Improvements & Pump Track Project](#)

Based on community feedback and to address the need for skating and biking in Boulder, BPR staff have been working on a project to design and build new skate and pump track features at Scott Carpenter Park with community input. The project creates a flexible, multi-use features that accommodate a variety of skill levels and abilities. As of June 9, 2020: new skate and main skate areas at Scott Carpenter Park are open and construction started on the bike pump track and new skate feature at Valmont City Park.

<sup>6</sup> Boulder Chamber [2020 Boulder Winter Market Profile](#)



Table 10: BPR Active Recreation Amenity Inventory

Recreation Amenities	2020 Inventory
Recreation Center	3
Programmable Studios	2
Historic District	3
Historic Sites	6
Premier Diamond Fields	11
Standard Diamond Fields	11
Premier Rectangular Field	12
Rectangular/Multi-Use Fields	16
Tennis Courts	36
Pickleball Courts (dedicated, non-dedicated)	7
Basketball Courts, outdoor	14
Sand Volleyball	19
Disc Golf	3
Roller Sport	3
Slacklining, # of allowed sites	9
Aquatic - Indoor Facility	3
Aquatic - Outdoor Facility	3
Skate Park	3
Bike Park	1
Dog Park	4
Playgrounds	39
Exercise Course	2
Picnic Shelters	58
Community Garden	4
Multi-Use Path Miles	0
Multi-Use Path, # of Properties Managed by BPR with multi-use path* (BPR manages 21 miles)	45
Number of Properties Managed by BPR	105
City Trees**	50,000
Trees on Park Land	0

## Table 10 Notes:

Updated per BPR staff June 2021 - AmenitiesSubCommunity2021

\*multiuse/shared-use paths provide low stress environments for bicycling and walking that are entirely separated from motor vehicle traffic (City of Boulder Transportation Master Plan)

\*\* City trees - approximate # - fluctuates given ongoing removals and plantings

*Recreation Level of Service*

Table 11 mirrors similar analysis as that conducted for the 2014 master plan and includes the 2014 level of service numbers for comparison to 2021 current numbers. In most cases, the 2021 numbers are slightly lower than 2014 numbers due to increase in Boulder population. Also of note:

- Two additional facilities have been included in 2021 that were not included in 2014: the Valmont Bike Park and dedicated and non-dedicated pickleball courts (on existing tennis courts).
- Trust for Public Land (TPL) data typically represents cities slightly larger in population to Boulder.
- Natural discovery areas and nature play are becoming increasingly popular and important activities for users of BPR facilities, especially for younger populations.

Table 11: Recreation Facility Level of Service. Orange fill shows LOS comparable standards that exceed BPR current LOS; green fill shows where BPR exceeds comparable LOS standards).

Facility Type	LOS per	Existing Quantity	BPR 2021 LOS	BPR 2014 LOS	Colorado LOS Median	National LOS Median	TPL LOS Median
Diamond Ball Field	10,000	22	2.04	2.46	2.89	2.45	1.55
Picnic Shelter	10,000	58	5.37	3.49	4.73	2.71	n/a
Playground	10,000	39	3.61	4.11	3.96	3.96	2.60
Rectangular Field	10,000	28	2.59	2.05	5.22	1.32	n/a
Tennis Court	10,000	36	3.33	4.11	2.44	2.44	1.70
Aquatic Facility (Outdoor)	100,000	3	2.78	2.05	1.79	2.49	n/a
Aquatic Facility (Indoor)	100,000	3	2.78	3.08	2.08	1.94	n/a
Community Garden	100,000	4	3.70	4.11	n/a	1.22	n/a
Dog Park	100,000	4	3.70	5.13	1.56	1.54	1.20
Golf Course	100,000	1	0.93	1.03	2.08	1.4	0.72
Recreation Center	100,000	3	2.78	3.08	n/a	n/a	3.50
Skate Park	100,000	3	2.78	1.03	1.33	1.24	0.60
Bike Park*	100,000	1	0.93	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Pickleball Court (Outdoors)*	20,000	3	0.56	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.60

\*Previously not included in LOS analysis for 2014 Master Plan

### Needs Assessment Impact:

Stakeholders who offer similar services to BPR highlighted the need for specialized areas like dog parks, nature areas and mountain bike parks. This group also suggested shared facilities between providers to split up maintenance costs. This would be especially beneficial for management of multicourt facilities or large softball and baseball complexes. Due to increased use of the pottery facilities, increasing the duration of lease for pottery lab providers could free up more staff time. Overall, stakeholder focus group participants communicated that parks play a crucial role in reconnecting the community during recovery from the COVID 19 pandemic.

Given the growing population in Boulder, the flat level of funding (discussed in the Financial Analysis), and resource draw to address stressors like storms and pandemic recovery, the level of service (quantity) and quality (from staff and stakeholder interviews) is at threat to decrease over time. Coupled with the generally increasing demand for recreation in Boulder (as observed anecdotally, from Google Earth data, and from staff and stakeholder interviews), the facilities and amenities within the parklands are extremely valuable to the community and are well-used and well-maintained given the system's age and facilities' condition. Ongoing conversations with the community and decision-makers will help shape how BPR responds to falling levels of service based solely on per capita numbers of parkland. A more nuanced approach that factors in a variety of metrics may be worth exploring. This will help determine appropriate aspirational LOS for areas that need improvement and identify strategies and next steps to achieve short and long-term goals that meet community needs and department financial scenarios. The following are potential options to inform aspirational LOS targets:

- *RENEWAL: Increase the frequency of renewal (e.g., playgrounds, tennis courts). In many cases, the same number of amenities will have to accommodate more people and expanded use. Increasing the rate of renewal for some amenities will help balance the increased wear and tear that results from increased intensity of use.*
- *RESILIENCE: Build amenities that have higher capacity and tolerance for intensive use and can weather the impacts of climate change. (e.g., artificial turf fields). Maintenance budgets need to increase to keep pace with the intensity of use but building to a higher standard is also an important factor for ensuring the needs of the community are being met in terms of capacity and quality.*
- *EQUITABLE ACCESS: Improve equitable distribution and access. Improving equity means improving access for those who need it most, improving the balance of services across the city, and being proactive in planning for future population increases and demographic changes.*
- *REPURPOSE: Change what is being provided based on trends and demand (e.g., Increased demand for pickleball). BPR is managing a system that is, for the most part, built out so adding to the overall inventory may not always be an option. Moving forward, this may mean conversion of existing spaces and amenities to accommodate new uses and increasing multifunctionality of existing parks and facilities.*

## Benchmark Communities Comparison

### *Purpose & Methodology*

Benchmarking allows parks and recreation agencies to compare various areas of operation with other agencies. The previous consultant team collected 93 data points from which the Boulder Parks and Recreation Department (BPR) could draw comparisons. The previous consultant analyzed a list of 93 questions and came up with 12 key benchmarks. For purposes of this Needs Assessment, we are focusing on five of the original 12 – for facilities and parkland comparisons.

Key benchmarks are those data points that have been selected as most important to focus on during the planning process to inform the Level of Service analysis (LOS) and future of BPR's facilities, which in turn will have an impact on programs and services.

These 5 key indicators, or benchmarks, include:

1. Form of organization
2. Urban parkland acres per resident
3. Urban parkland acres as percentage of total service area
4. Key facilities
5. General facilities & operations

Typically, cities use benchmarks to compare aspects of the organization (e.g., FTEs, park acreage per capita, facilities, etc.), and they choose a ranking (e.g., selecting a desired quartile to be in for each category) that they can use to assess current performance and to plan for the future.

The data included in the following tables are derived from the previous white paper, research to date, including stakeholder interviews, National Recreation & Parks Association (NRPA) reports, city website research, benchmark city personnel, and parks and recreation master plan reviews. Of these sources, the one providing the most current information was used to populate the tables.

*Key Benchmark #1: Form of Organization*

Table 12 lists the form of organization for parks and recreation services for the benchmark cities used for the analysis. Most of the parks and recreation services reviewed, including Boulder's, fall under municipal government (nine) with Tempe's services and facilities divided between three departments. Four cities' parks and recreation service and facilities operate as Parks & Recreation Districts. These districts are created by state law and act as quasi-governmental bodies or agencies with their own taxing authority. They can provide services to newly developed areas or in some cases offer specialized services higher levels of quality in some cases than those already provided by other agencies.

*Table 12: Form of Organization. Source: US Census 2019, city websites, Parks & Recreation staff*

Municipality	Scale	Population Served	Form of Organization
Boulder, CO	--	105,673	Municipal department
Broomfield, CO	Local	67,886	Municipal/County department
Foothills PRD, CO	Local	93,000	Parks & Recreation District
Fort Collins, CO	Local	170,243	Municipal department
South Suburban PRD, CO	Local	157,000	Parks and Recreation District
Westminster, CO	Local	113,166	Municipal department (Parks, Recreation & Libraries)
Ann Arbor, MI	National	119,980	Municipal department
Asheville, NC	National	92,870	Municipal department
Bend, OR	National	100,421	Parks & Recreation District
Berkeley, CA	National	121,363	Municipal department (Parks, Recreation & Waterfront)
Bloomington, IN	National	85,755	Municipal department
Naperville PRD, IL	National	147,100	Parks & Recreation District
Tempe, AZ	National	195,805	Community Services Department provides recreation Public Works Department provides urban parkland Open space is provided by other agencies

*Key Benchmark #2: Urban Parkland Acres Per Resident*

Urban parkland is developed and includes neighborhood, community and regional parks. Bloomington Parks and Recreation has 29 acres for every 1,000 citizens in the community (Table 13). Westminster Parks and Recreation and South Suburban Parks and Recreation District each have 25-26 acres of urban parkland per 1,000 community members in their respective service areas. Boulder ranks 5 out of 12, suggesting that the parkland per 100 residents is about average in the benchmark study. Berkeley Parks and Recreation has only 2 acres of parkland for every 1,000 community members in the city. It should be noted that Ann Arbor has, by far, the most square miles for total land area served.

Table 13: Urban Parkland Acres Per 1,000 Residents (in rank order). 2019 Data.

Municipality	Urban Parkland Acres	Population of Service Area	Per 1,000 Population
Bloomington, IN	2,273.32**	85,755	29.13
Westminster, CO	2,826.75*	113,166	26.52
South Suburban PRD, CO	2513.9 (natural areas) 1610.5 (total developed land) *	157,000	26.5
Boulder, CO	1,861	105,673	18.59
Foothills PRD, CO	1,600*	93,000	18.53
Broomfield, CO	678*	70,465	18.13
Naperville PRD, IL	2,419*	147,100	17.66
Tempe, AZ	1,519.7*	195,805	16.78
Asheville, NC	869	92,870	10.42
Ann Arbor, MI	2,109.77**	119,980	6.07
Fort Collins, CO	1,268*	170,243	5.82
Berkeley, CA	235	121,363	2

Sources: \*City of Westminster, SSPRD, City of Tempe, Foothills PRD, City of Broomfield, City of Naperville staff.

\*\*Parks & Recreation Master Plans.

### Key Benchmark #3: Urban Parkland as Percentage of Total Service Area

Table 14 shows urban parkland as a percentage of the total service area. Bloomington reported the highest percentage of parkland of total service area with 15.2%. Ann Arbor claims only 0.5%. Boulder ranks near the middle, with 11.0%.

Table 14: Urban Parkland as Percentage of Total Service Area (in rank order). 2019 Data.

Municipality	Urban Parkland Acres	Total Land Area of Area Served (sq. miles)	Total Land Area of Area Served (acres)	Percentage of Total Service Area
Bloomington, IN	2,273.32**	24	15,360	15%
South Suburban PRD, CO	2513.9*	41	26,240	14%
Westminster, CO	2,826.75*	33.7	21,568	13%
Foothills PRD, CO	1,600*	21.5	13,760	12%
Boulder, CO	1,810***	25.8	16,512	11%
Tempe, AZ	1,519.7*	40.1	25,664	11%
Naperville PRD, IL	2,419*	41	26,240	9.5%
Broomfield, CO	678*	34	21,760	5%
Berkeley, CA	235***	18	11,520	2%
Ann Arbor, MI	2,109.77**	710	454,400	0.5%
Asheville, NC	869***	unavailable	unavailable	unavailable
Fort Collins, CO	1268*	unavailable	unavailable	unavailable

Sources: \*City of Westminster, SSPRD, City of Tempe, Foothills PRD, City of Broomfield, City of Naperville staff.

\*\*Parks & Recreation Master Plans.

### Key Benchmarks #4 & #5: Key Recreation Facilities & General Facilities and Operations

BPR has identified specific facilities for benchmarking analysis – key facilities (Table 15) and general facilities and operations (Table 16). BPR ranks #1 when it comes to dog parks and #3 for indoor pools, but the number of softball fields is low compared to comparable communities. However, Boulder's 20 multiuse fields are around the median number benchmarked. Overall, BPR ranks higher in number of general facilities when compared to benchmark communities, and lower overall for key recreation facilities.

Table 15: Key Facilities (in rank order). 2014-2019 Data.

Playgrounds	Baseball Fields	Softball Fields†	Rectangular or Multi-Use Fields	Skate Parks	Dog Parks	Outdoor Swimming Pools	Indoor Swimming Pools	Recreation Centers	Outdoor Tennis Courts	Outdoor Pickleball Courts
Ann Arbor**	South Suburban*	South Suburban*	South Suburban*	Fort Collins**	Boulder	Westminster*	Fort Collins**	Ann Arbor***	Tempe**	Naperville**
79	80	80	162	6	4	5	6	14	51	12
Naperville*	Fort Collins**	Fort Collins**	Naperville*	Tempe*	Tempe	Foothills*	Foothills*	Asheville**	South Suburban**	Tempe**
75	37	37	64	4	6	4	4	10	50	12
Berkeley**	Broomfield*	Broomfield*	Fort Collins**	South Suburban*	Fort Collins	South Suburban*	Boulder	Fort Collins*	Fort Collins**	Asheville*
64	35	35	50	4	4	4	3	10	46	10
Broomfield*	Naperville*	Westminster*	Tempe*	Westminster	Westminster	Berkeley*	South Suburban*	Berkeley*	Boulder	Fort Collins**
64	31	31	45	4	3	4	3	7	36	8
South Suburban*	Westminster*	Ann Arbor**	Foothills*	Naperville	Broomfield	Tempe*	Broomfield*	Westminster*	Naperville**	Foothills*
62	31	30	42	3	3	3	2	7	36	6
Tempe*	Foothills*	Foothills*	Broomfield*	Foothills*	Ann Arbor**	Ann Arbor**	Ann Arbor**	Tempe*	Ann Arbor**	South Suburban*
44	24	24	40	2	2	3	1	6	31	6
Fort Collins**	Tempe*	Naperville*	Berkeley*	Boulder	Berkeley	Asheville**	Tempe*	South Suburban*	Bloomington**	Berkeley*
44	20	20	34	2	2	3	1	4	26	5
Foothills*	Asheville**	Tempe*	Boulder	Asheville***	Asheville	Boulder	Westminster*	Boulder	Asheville**	Boulder 7 (dedicated + non-dedicated)
40	17	17	30	1	2	3	0	3	24	Westminster*
Boulder	Bloomington**	Asheville**	Westminster*	Berkeley*	South Suburban	Bloomington**	Berkeley*	Foothills*	Westminster*	Westminster*
39	16	17	29	1	1	2	0	3	22	3
Bloomington**	Boulder	Bloomington**	Ann Arbor***	Bloomington**	Bloomington	Broomfield*	Asheville**	Bloomington**	Berkeley*	Ann Arbor
26	12	16	15	1	1	1	0	3	21	N/A
Asheville**	Berkeley*	Boulder	Bloomington**	Broomfield*	Foothills*	Naperville*	Naperville*	Broomfield*	Foothills**	Bloomington
22	7	10	8	1	0	1	0	2	20	N/A
Westminster	Ann Arbor**	Berkeley*	Asheville***	Ann Arbor**	Naperville*	Fort Collins	Bloomington	Naperville*	Broomfield*	Broomfield
N/A	3	9	7	1	0	N/A	N/A	2	12	N/A

## Notes:

\*Fort Collins does not clarify data on how many indoor/outdoor pools and baseball fields they have. Foothills does not specify softball fields.

\*\*South Suburban and Foothills Softball Field Data: It has been noted that softball fields may have been recorded with baseball fields in original data (denotes "N/A" responses as well).

\*\*\*Includes three dog parks (one at Howard Heuston off-leash area).

Sources: \* Map Asheville Park Finder Map (ashevillenc.gov), websites of City of Berkeley, Foothills, SSPRD, City of Westminster, City of Broomfield.  
\*\*Parks & Recreation Master Plans.



Table 16: General Facilities and Operations (first 6 columns in rank order). 2014-2019 Data.

Hard-Surface Trails (miles)	Soft-Surface Trails (miles)	Recreation Centers	Community Centers	Total Area of Recreation/Community Centers (sq ft)	Programs Offered	Joint-use or Maintenance of Facilities with Schools?	Joint-use or Maintenance of Facilities with other Entities?
<b>Broomfield*</b> 103 (multi-use paths) + 102 (8-foot detached sidewalks) + 83 (On-Street Bike Lanes) = 288 miles	<b>Fort Collins**</b> 481	<b>Ann Arbor***</b> 14	<b>Ashville**</b> 11	<b>Fort Collins***</b> 231,243	<b>Naperville*</b> Over 7,500 recreational classes, teams, events and performances annually	<b>Boulder***</b> JUA with Boulder Valley School District	<b>Boulder***</b> No
<b>Berkeley***</b> 105	<b>Boulder***</b> 93 (maintained by several city agencies), 146 (OSMP), 110 (Boulder County Open Space)	<b>Ashville***</b> 12	<b>Berkeley***</b> 6 + 3 senior centers	<b>S. Suburban***</b> 228,862	<b>Broomfield***</b> 6,900	<b>Broomfield</b> JUA with two school districts- maintain 12 acres of parkland at 4 school sites as part of this	<b>Broomfield***</b> No
<b>S. Suburban**</b> 100+ linear miles of local/regional trails	<b>Ann Arbor**</b> 38 (Nature Trails)	<b>Westminster***</b> 7	<b>Tempe</b> Included in Recreation Centers	<b>Westminster***</b> 228,225	<b>Westminster***</b> 4,741	<b>Foothills***</b> Yes	<b>Foothills***</b> Yes
<b>Ann Arbor**</b> 70 (Multi-Use Paths)	<b>Broomfield*</b> 28	<b>Berkeley**</b> 7	<b>Fort Collins</b> 4	<b>Foothills**</b> 213,500	<b>Boulder***</b> 4,500	<b>Fort Collins**</b> Partnerships withoudre and Thompson School Districts and Colorado State University	<b>Fort Collins***</b> Trails with Larimer County
<b>Westminster***</b> 63	<b>Foothills***</b> 3.44 (1.4 lighted trails)	<b>Tempe*</b> 6	<b>Broomfield*</b> 3 - 1 is Mental Health Service Center	<b>Broomfield*</b> 176,300	<b>Foothills***</b> 2,000	<b>South Suburban**</b> District planning partners- Southeast Metro Stormwater Authority and 4 other school districts	<b>South Suburban***</b> Yes
<b>Naperville*</b> 57-.63	<b>S. Suburban</b> Included in Hard-Surface Trails data	<b>Fort Collins**</b> 4	<b>Bloomington</b> Included in Recreation Centers	<b>Tempe**</b> 152,000	<b>Bloomington***</b> 1000, 12 category programs**	<b>Westminster***</b> Yes	<b>Westminster***</b> Yes
<b>Fort Collins**</b> 44	<b>Westminster**</b> *not designated	<b>S. Suburban*</b> 4	<b>Boulder***</b> 2 Senior Centers managed by Human Services	<b>Boulder***</b> 238,000	<b>Fort Collins**</b> 10 Core Programs	<b>Ann Arbor**</b> Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation Services/ Ann Arbor Public Schools Community Education and Rec. program	<b>Ann Arbor***</b> Yes (non-profits)
<b>Bloomington**</b> 35-39	<b>Ashville***</b> Included in Hard-Surface Trails data (1)	<b>Boulder***</b> 3	<b>Ann Arbor***</b> 2	<b>Bloomington***</b> 135,000	<b>S. Suburban***</b> No Programs	<b>Ashville***</b> JUA with city and county school systems and University of North Carolina at Asheville	<b>Ashville***</b> No
<b>Boulder***</b> 35 (maintained by BPR)	<b>Berkeley***</b> Included in Hard-Surface Trails data	<b>Foothills*</b> 3	<b>Foothills*</b> 1	<b>Naperville*</b> 103,665	<b>Ann Arbor***</b> No Programs	<b>Berkeley**</b> Berkeley Unified School District JUA with City	<b>Berkeley***</b> Yes
<b>Foothills***</b> 14.9, 1.06 looped trail**	<b>Bloomington*</b> Included in Hard-Surface Trails data	<b>Bloomington</b> 3	<b>S. Suburban**</b> 1	<b>Ashville***</b> 58,000	<b>Ashville***</b> No Programs	<b>Bloomington**</b> Indiana University/Monroe County Parks and Recreation Department	<b>Bloomington***</b> Yes (with other service providers)
<b>Tempe***</b> 13 miles / 170 miles of bikeways	<b>Naperville*</b> 21.43	<b>Broomfield*</b> 2	<b>Naperville*</b> 1	<b>Berkeley***</b> 47,000	<b>Berkeley***</b> No Programs	<b>Naperville*</b> Yes	<b>Naperville*</b> Yes
<b>Ashville***</b> 14 (6-78 Greenway Network/miles)**	<b>Tempe**</b> 14.5	<b>Naperville*</b> 0	<b>Westminster***</b> 0	<b>Ann Arbor***</b> 501-56	<b>Tempe***</b> No Programs	<b>Tempe</b> Yes*	<b>Tempe*</b> Yes

Sources: \*City of Broomfield and City of Naperville staff.

\*\* Parks &amp; Recreation Master Plans \*\*\* Data from BPR 2014 Master Plan. \*Pre-COVID-19 restrictions

## BPR LOS Compared to Benchmarks

The level of service for diamond ball fields has decreased slightly and is below the state and national LOS median, but above the TPL median.

Picnic shelters LOS has increased and is above the state, national and TPL median LOS. According to survey respondents, the current LOS is generally satisfying community need. Sixty-two percent of survey respondents feel there are enough group picnic shelters and 85% expressed satisfaction with these amenities.

LOS for playgrounds has decreased slightly since 2014 but is similar to the state and national median LOS and higher than the TPL median LOS.

Rectangular fields LOS has risen slightly and is above the national LOS median, but well below the state median. However, a majority of survey respondents felt there were enough rugby fields, lacrosse fields, football fields and soccer fields, and expressed overall satisfaction with these facilities.

Tennis court LOS has decreased, yet is still above the state, national and TPL LOS medians. A majority of survey respondents found there were enough tennis courts and expressed satisfaction with them. The LOS for pickleball courts (which were not considered in the 2014 Master Plan) is slightly lower than the TPL median. While some community members feel BPR needs more of these facilities, a majority of survey respondents feel there are enough courts.

Outdoor aquatic facilities LOS has decreased and is slightly higher than the state LOS median and lower than the national LOS median. About 59% of survey respondents feel there are enough swimming pools, and the majority expressed satisfaction with these facilities. Indoor aquatic facilities LOS has also decreased yet is higher than the state and national medians. Survey respondents are roughly split between feeling the city has enough swimming pools for laps and open swim, and thinking the community needs more. About 39% of respondents were very satisfied with these facilities and 43% of respondents were somewhat satisfied.

The LOS for community gardens has decreased yet is higher than the national LOS median. Survey respondents were least satisfied with these facilities. A majority feel there is a need for more of this facility type.

Dog parks have been increasing in popularity throughout the country. The dog park LOS for Boulder has decreased, but is higher than the state, national and TPL medians.

The golf course LOS has decreased and is lower than the state and national medians for this type of facility, but higher than the TPL median.

Recreation center LOS has decreased and is lower than the TPL median LOS.

Skate Park LOS has decreased and is lower than both the state and national median LOS. BPR LOS is higher than the TPL median and roughly 83% of survey respondents are satisfied with what is available, and a majority feel Boulder has enough skate parks.

## Engagement Findings

Stakeholders and staff are seeing the following trends when it comes to facilities in Boulder:

- Courts: Tennis has risen in popularity for the first time in many years and there is more staking up (waiting) for court time. Some courts are in poor condition. Pickleball is also rising in popularity, both locally and nationally - 3.46 million people played pickleball in 2019 (the average age of these players is 43.5). Of this player population, 1.3 million were "Core" players who play 8 or more times a year and 2.2 million were "Casual" players who play 1-7 times a year. The average annual growth rate for all players from 2016 to 2019 was 7.2%, for a total growth rate of 23% over three years<sup>7</sup>.

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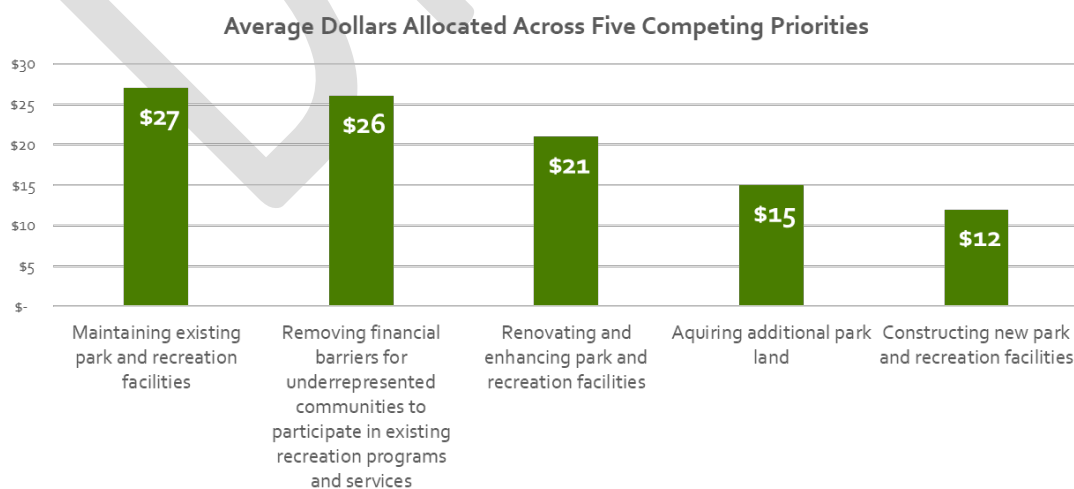
<sup>7</sup> Sports & Fitness Industry Association's 2020 Pickleball Participant Report



- **Aquatic Facilities:** There has been an increased demand for more access to family time in pools, and warm water pools are very popular with Boulder's older adult population.
- **Dog Parks:** Use is high and growing. Additional dog parks are a continually requested facility especially in more urban areas and for those living in multifamily housing. Some community members are becoming increasingly frustrated with the amount of dogs off-leash on trails and in parks.
- **Valmont Bike Park:** Fees (for groups, events and rentals) are helping to balance taking care of the park, providing new amenities and completing ongoing maintenance.

Community members who responded to the Master Plan survey had the following to share regarding BPR facilities and parks:

- Respondents agree that BPR's focus should remain maintaining existing facilities and renovating and enhancing existing facilities. Purchasing additional parkland and developing new facilities is not a large priority currently. There is a desire for BPR to partner with other municipalities, school districts or nonprofits to develop joint use recreational facilities or programs and a perceived need for BPR to design and maintain facilities to a higher degree to accommodate enhanced use.
- Fitness and recreation opportunities in Boulder are rated highly – with 82% of respondents rating fitness and recreation opportunities as excellent (82% and 77% respectively). They also feel that activities and programs at parks and facilities be mostly available for drop-in use as opposed to having to pre-register.
- Over 2/3 of respondents were somewhat or very satisfied with each type of recreation facility BPR manages. The most highly regarded facilities include paved paths, soft surface paths, fields, natural areas and lawns.
- While Boulder's LOS for diamond ballfields is below other benchmarks, and stakeholders expressed dissatisfaction with field quantity and quality, a majority of survey respondents expressed satisfaction with softball fields and Little League and baseball fields.
- Respondents expressed interest in balancing youth and adult programming at the Stazio and Mapleton complexes.
- Given a \$100 budget, survey respondents would allocate the funds as follows:



*Statistically Valid Survey: Average Dollars Allocated to Competing Priorities with Hypothetical \$100 Budget*

- Some user groups want more or new facilities. This desire for new facilities is due to crowded or inaccessible locations rather than the quality of existing facilities.
- The priority remains having BPR take care of what they have versus build new facilities.
- Over 50% of respondents would like to see more community gardens, scenic gardens, indoor ice arenas and natural areas.
- BPR fluctuates with how it stacks up with its peers in relation to certain metrics, but the community feels that BPR is adequately providing many of these resources.
- 67% of survey respondents felt that programming should include some popular sports and fitness activities, but also include diverse options like arts and crafts, and a variety of classes.

**Needs Assessment Impact**

*When considering the data, engagement finding and benchmark communities, Boulder's facilities LOS is higher or lower in some cases and on par in others. While comparisons can be made to get a general idea of how parks and recreation departments are doing, each community is so unique, understanding which metrics really matter and best reflect the needs of the Boulder community, is something BPR should be re-evaluating regularly.*

*The LOS for most facilities has slightly decreased since 2014. At the same time, a majority of survey respondents are generally satisfied with the quality and number of facilities. Population increase has had an impact on LOS and user desires can change over time. These factors reinforce the reality that developing LOS standards to measure how well BPR is serving the community is a complex process. BPR needs to understand how best to assess and monitor LOS in the future. Especially with the increasing inclusion of equity and resilience in all aspects of operations, new metrics with built-in flexibility may be worth exploring. While national standards and benchmark comparisons are generally accepted, BPR must address the needs of the Boulder community by tailoring LOS standards and metrics specifically to all Boulderites.*

## Supply and Demand Analysis

### Purpose & Methodology

This portion of the need's assessment report will help inform recreation supply and demand for the next five to seven years. Findings are collated from indoor facility assessments conducted by Barker Rinker Seacat Architecture (BRS), trends, research of local, regional and national information, BPR staff interviews, review of registration data (where applicable and for this study 2020 numbers fluctuated wildly due to impact of pandemic restrictions), stakeholder focus groups, community polling and a statistically valid community survey. The previous level of service and benchmarking also can help provide perspective to recreation demand trends and how other organizations are providing services comparably.

### BRS Existing Facility Observations & Opportunities Report Highlights

As part of the Master Plan update process, Barker Rinker Seacat (BRS) Architects were engaged to provide an Indoor Recreational Facility Assessment Report which provided a conceptual overview of BPR's primary indoor recreation facilities. The report focused on the following facilities:

- East Boulder Community Center
- South Boulder Recreation Center
- North Boulder Recreation Center
- Iris Studio
- Salberg Community Center
- Boulder Pottery Lab

The report is in part based on a review of previously completed assessments, a review of existing facilities with members of BPR staff, and an in-person visual assessment of each facility. While the report was not an exhaustive assessment of each facility, it identified conceptual infrastructure improvements and provided recommendations for potential renovations and expansion for each facility. The following section summarizes key data and findings from the Indoor Recreational Facility Assessment Report. The full report can be viewed in Appendix XX.

### *CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS METHODOLOGY*

The capital improvement opportunities identified in the report were not vetted through a community outreach effort that would be required for meaningful prioritization, nor have they been evaluated by a cost estimating professionals. For the purposes of the report BRS categorized each of the observed capital improvement opportunities according to a conceptual estimate of anticipated funding requirement defined as follows:

\$ - Make the most of existing resources through targeted, fiscally restrained upgrades that address maintenance issues.

\$\$ - Characterized as an 'extra' service or capital improvement that will likely exceed funding outside typical maintenance.

\$\$\$ - Represents a fiscally unconstrained goal meant to fully address community needs and desires.

### East Boulder Community Center

#### Overview

The East Boulder Recreation Center consists of recreation and aquatics facilities. This includes a gymnasium, weight room, fitness rooms for dance, yoga, spin and other activities. It also includes administrative offices and an attached area that is temporarily being used as a day care center. The

facility generally appears to be in good condition, clean and well maintained. The Facility Strategic Plan of 2016 identified a number of deficiencies that are in various states of repair. Based on conversations with staff, a significant number of those deficiencies have been addressed and there is a plan in place to address those that remain.

#### Architecture & Space Deficiencies

BRS notes the following deficiencies based on visual observations made during their site visit and comments provided by staff.

- **FRONT DESK:** The location and configuration of the front desk does not allow for adequate access control. When entering the building from the main entry, the desk is set well off to the left which allows visitors to easily access the corridor in front of the pool, the child watch area, and the 'age-well' area, without having to check-in and in some instances without being seen by staff. Recreation Center Staff mentioned that the configuration of the desk leaves them feeling vulnerable as there is not clear 'escape' path from behind the desk should there be a need to do so.
- **FINISHES:** While the facility overall is clean and well maintained, the material finishes, furniture, and lighting are dated, giving the space a feeling or sense of being from an earlier era.
- **MEETING SPACE:** There is inadequate meeting space for Rec Center Staff.
- **BREAK ROOM:** Staff break room is too small for the number of people who use it. This is further exaggerated by use of the space for staff meetings and temporary summer staff.
- **STORAGE:** The Center has inadequate storage, especially as it relates to the gym and summer program equipment. The awkwardly located storage in the pool area shares space with pool equipment and a makeshift office space.
- **ROCK CLIMBING:** This feature is largely unused. Staff suggested there may be a better use for the space.
- **FITNESS SPACES:** The Facility Strategic plan noted that EBCC has the largest dedicated fitness area of Boulder's three recreation centers. Use levels vary by season, with winter use (pre-Covid) requiring a sign-up sheet for equipment, but staff confirm it is inadequate to meet year-round peak demand times. Customer requests include an enhanced functional fitness area, more cardio equipment, and an expanded free weight area. The climbing wall, tucked into the east corner of the fitness area, is underutilized, and generally limited to youth attending summer camp. While removal would minimally increase floorspace, the lowered floor and angular walls do not support a simple expansion of the fitness area. Staff confirmed to BRS that these space deficiencies persist.
- **GANG SHOWERS:** Private showers are preferred by contemporary users.
- **LIFEGUARD ROOM:** Room is undersized though there is no obvious way to expand.
- **POOL:** Is well used and programming could support additional lanes if space were available for expansion. Staff noted that boilers are old and gas dependent.
- **POOL SLIDE:** There are signs of corrosion on the stair access to the slide.

CONCEPTUAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Cost to Implement
BPR may consider conducting a feasibility study of the Community Center to evaluate current offerings, and opportunities for how the 'age-well' area may best be utilized, and other spaces reconfigured to address the needs and desires of the community.	\$
A study of the front desk's relationship to the building entry may be undertaken to address security concerns. While the space available at the building entry is adequate, there doesn't appear to be an obvious way to relocate the front desk for optimal visual control of the building. It appears an addition to the front of the building may be a good option to enable this change. The space currently used for the front desk may be reconfigured to address other needs such as staff meeting spaces and storage.	\$\$
Convert gang showers to private showers	\$
Look for opportunity to switch older gas boilers to electrical system	\$\$
Outdoor play area associated with child-watch area could be enhanced to better support outdoor play.	\$
The rock-climbing area may be converted to another type of space like an eSports gaming area. These kinds of spaces offer opportunities for members of the community who may not otherwise come to the center to use the space, and because of their popularity generate revenue for BPR.	\$\$
The existing catering kitchen is underused. Partnering with a catering company to provide services to the center, or for rental events may be considered. The benefit of such use could lead to generation of revenue for BPR.	\$

## North Boulder Recreation Center

### Overview

Located in the densely populated downtown district, North Boulder Recreation Center (NBRC) was originally constructed in 1974. An addition completed in the early 2000's doubled the size of the facility to roughly 62,000 square feet. The addition boasts an 8-lane competitive pool and 3,300-gallon spa which were built adjacent to a large family-friendly leisure pool with waterslides, interactive features and zero-depth access. At that time, the center's popular gymnastics area was expanded, and yoga and multipurpose rooms were added. A family locker room was created, and existing showers and locker areas refurbished and expanded. Additional staff offices were built, and the center's entrance and drop-off area were redesigned to improve pedestrian and traffic flow. Notably, NBRC was the first community recreation center in the country to receive LEED Silver certification by the U.S. Green Building Council.

### Architecture & Space Deficiencies

BRS notes the following deficiencies based on visual observations made during their site visit and comments provided by staff.

- **FRONT DESK:** The size and configuration of the front desk are good, and the supporting administrative offices and meeting spaces meet the needs of the center's staff. The challenge is access control of visitors. There are two corridors that run alongside the front desk. The corridor to the south makes it possible for visitors to walk by the front desk without checking in. In fact, there are many visitors who stop in simply to use the bathrooms, which creates a security risk to both the staff and the users of the facility.
- **GYMNASTICS VIEWING:** The corridor outside the gymnastics area is used by spectators. Because there are only a couple windows into the space, the movable bleachers are full beyond capacity. While the corridor is large some parts of it go unused.
- **TOT LOT:** There is no shading for children when outside – the space gets full sun and is at times hot.

- **HOT TUB:** The hot tub has visibility issues. It is difficult for lifeguards to monitor the space from their stations, and there have been instances of inappropriate behavior in the space.
- **WEIGHT ROOM AND CARDIO:** The capacity of the weight room and cardio area is inadequate. There is work currently under way to combine the space with the existing dance room. This will provide additional area for fitness equipment. At the time of our visit, machines were spaced for Covid-19 related social distancing requirements. The adequacy of the space will be better known once restrictions are lifted.
- **GANG SHOWERS:** Private showers and more cabanas would be preferred by users.
- **PARKING:** There is inadequate parking for the users of the building. The center and its gymnastics program are so popular, the facility could support an expansion, but such a change would likely not be possible as there is no room for the center to grow.
- **FITNESS PROGRAMS:** Space constraints limits the types of programming possible at the center. Staff noted that more dance, fitness, and Zumba classes would be popular, but cannot plan for them because of parking. The spaces themselves also do not lend to the kind of atmosphere that would support these classes. Opportunities for indoor-outdoor style classrooms with better acoustics, lighting, and a sound system are desired.
- **ACOUSTICS:** Sound is a challenge in the corridor between the gymnastics area and the yoga room. A lot of excited noise is generated in the corridor which on occasion interrupts yoga classes.

CONCEPTUAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Cost to Implement
To solve the issue of control at the building entry, particularly at the south corridor, it may be possible to close the corridor and use it to capture some additional space for weights and cardio. A corridor could be continued through the center of the building. This would require that all visitors pass by the front desk at the control point.	<b>\$</b>
The tot lot would benefit from some protective shading.	<b>\$</b>
Additional viewing opportunities in the corridor outside the gymnastics area would help ease crowding around spectator seating. The unused space in the corridor may be used to accomplish this.	<b>\$</b>
The Boulder Parks and Recreation Department may consider conducting a full feasibility study with public outreach to identify whether an offsite gymnastics facility would best serve the community. If gymnastics were relocated to another facility, the space at NBRC could be repurposed to meet the demand for dance and group fitness programming that is desired by the community. Some aspects of the gymnastics space do not meet the standards of high-level competition, existing HVAC is challenged - filters replaced constantly due to chalk, the program continues to grow, making parking a bigger challenge. These issues may give further support to the idea of a dedicated off-site gymnastics facility.	<b>\$\$\$</b>
BPR Staff suggested a low sensory room for work with kids with ADHA and spectrum disorders is desired.	<b>\$</b>

## South Boulder Recreation Center

### Overview

The split-level South Boulder Recreation Center (SBRC), constructed in the early 1970s and partly renovated in the 1990s, is situated in Harlow Platts Community Park. Despite its age and numerous accessibility issues, the center is clean and staff report that customers view it as the heart of their surrounding community. The facility consists of aquatics, a gymnasium, weight rooms, a multi-purpose room for dance, yoga, and other activities, a racquetball court, Pilates studio and office and administrative areas. Overall, the facility is clean and well maintained. The 2-story building has been expanded and remodeled over time.

### Architecture & Space Deficiencies

BRS notes the following deficiencies based on visual observations made during their site visit and comments provided by staff.

- **CIRCULATION:** The South Boulder Recreation Center has a number of challenges with circulation throughout the facility. When visitors first arrive to the center, they encounter a large open stairwell that separates them from the front desk. They must navigate around the stair opening to get to the reception counter. Although staff has good visual control of the upper floor, it is relatively easy for visitors to move into the space without checking in. The most common challenge is visitors who stop in solely to use the restroom. This is a security concern for both the staff and members. Additionally, because the center was designed before the implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), accessibility is not ideal even in spite of good efforts to provide access. Visitors to the center must return to the vestibule to use the elevator after retrieving a key from front desk staff. Even with the accommodations that have been made, including an elevator, lift, and accessible ramps, a person in a wheelchair may find wayfinding difficult or circuitous. In the pool area, circulation is not laid out in a way that requires patrons to pass through the locker/shower rooms before entering the aquatics area which creates opportunities for potential health risks for those using the pool as well as congestion and noise.
- **FRONT DESK:** The location and configuration of the front desk does not allow for adequate access control. When entering the building from the main entry, the desk is set behind a large stair well opening which both demands that visitors navigate around it and prevents staff from adequately controlling the coming and going of visitors to the center.
- **MEETING SPACE:** There is inadequate meeting space for Rec Center Staff.
- **OFFICE SPACE:** There is inadequate office space for Rec Center Staff.
- **BREAK ROOM:** Staff break room is a sink with a small cabinet set within the laundry room and shared with janitorial equipment. There is no area to sit or store personal items.
- **FINISHES:** While the facility overall is clean and well maintained the overall feel of the building including ceiling heights, window units, and construction details feels dated and of a different era.
- **PROGRAM SPACES:** Most program areas are undersized and oddly configured.
- **WATER INFILTRATION:** There are issues with water infiltration that appear to be related to the building's proximity to the adjacent Viele Lake. The elevation of the adjacent lake water is said to be higher than the elevation of the recreation center's gymnasium, racquetball court, aerobics room, locker rooms, and aquatics area. There have been past occurrences of water entering the building at the floor level of the racquetball court/ gymnasium. While BRS was on site, remediation work was being done in the racquetball court. Staff noted that water with a chlorine smell had damaged the floor such that it needed to be replaced. The smell of chlorine suggests the pool itself may be leaking, though no source has been found. The concrete masonry wall of the natatorium adjacent to Viele Lake is painted. The paint on this wall regularly spawls due to moisture infiltration and is repainted as part of regular maintenance cycles.



CONCEPTUAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Cost to Implement
SBRC has served the Boulder community for nearly 50 years, a long-life for a recreation facility that Implement has not seen significant financial re-investment. The HVAC system appears to be failing and pool water is infiltrating the lower level of the building. Poor circulation and lack of accessibility for differently abled individuals creates an exclusive facility. The front desk is not designed to sufficiently serve as a control point, creating security concerns for both customers and staff. Given these visible deficiencies, the city may explore anticipated costs to begin addressing them. However, the most economical path forward with a facility of this age is generally replacement rather than renovation. This presents an opportunity for the city to re-engage the community surrounding this long-standing resource and determine the appropriate needs and architectural program to serve them for the next 50 years.	\$\$\$

## Iris Studio

### Overview

The Iris studio is a single dance space that accommodates roughly 20-25 students depending on the style of class. The studio currently occupies a space within the BRP administrative offices on the same site as the NBRC. The room has mirrors and barres on two sides. It has access to restrooms and a small storage space that is shared with HVAC equipment. Staff noted that the space is inadequate for the desired programming and level of interest, and it is difficult to maintain a comfortable room temperature. The flooring is not ideal for dance activities.

### Architecture & Space Deficiencies

In keeping with the recommendations associated with the NBRC, the popularity of the dance program may support adding more dedicated space. A feasibility study that includes public outreach is recommended to identify the needs and desires of the community as well as the appetite for expansion, and how that may best be accomplished.

## Salberg Community Center

### Overview

Located in a neighborhood park, Salberg Community Center (SCC) consists of a medium-sized, 285 occupancy room with a prominent stage at one end. At one time, Pilates were programmed in the studio but currently the space supports a summer drama camp. The building has some nice interior elements, such as the ceiling, but the remainder of interior finishes lack coherence and are of low quality. The kitchenette is too small to support catered events or events with minimal preparation. The bathrooms and flooring are outdated, making the space less desirable for potential renters. There is also no internet access or dedicated office-space, and storage is limited. The location of Salberg creates opportunities and challenges. To enhance and utilize the space, an expansion may be considered to include office space, storage and a kitchenette. Updating the finishes and upgrading the entry to enhance the curb appeal may attract private rentals. BPR would need to dedicate a staff person to oversee rental check-in and install internet access to have registration and check-in capabilities. The parking area limits the number of occupants if the building is used as a private rental.

### Architecture & Space Deficiencies

BRS notes the following deficiencies based on visual observations made during their site visit and comments provided by staff.

- **OFFICE SPACE:** There is no office or administrative space in the building. This limits ability to rent to a dedicated program or check-in temporary rentals for events.



- **KITCHENETTE:** The kitchenette is very small and does not have a sink. This limits the usability of the space for rental events like parties.
- **FINISHES:** Although the space has some nice elements, ad-hoc renovations and alteration to the space diminish its appeal. The VCT flooring is not suitable for all activities such as dance or fitness.
- **SERVICE:** WIFI or internet service are currently not available in the building.
- **HVAC:** There is no vestibule to the building, which makes it subject to the condition of outside air.
- **PARKING:** Limited parking space will limit the size of events that may take place.

CONCEPTUAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Cost to Implement
Consider expanding facility to provide areas that support proper use such as check-in area, offices, additional storage, and a functioning kitchenette.	\$\$\$
Consider opening south side of building for indoor/outdoor experience and support with new/modernized playground area, to create appeal for small events or parties.	\$
Addition parking capacity of 6-8 spaces appears possible to accommodate expansion.	\$
Upgrade all interior finishes to provide comprehensive color/materials palette. Upgrade flooring to accommodate dance and fitness activities.	\$

## Boulder Pottery Lab

### Overview

The historic old firehouse has long served as a pottery studio and continues to meet the community's needs through this service, which is now operated by a local non-profit. The non-profit tenant is expanding to a new space to meet demand but remains committed to continuing programs in the historic building. They serve 225 adults and 60 youth per week from the space. As a pottery studio, every inch of space is utilized, and programming operates 7 days a week.

A large door on the main floor opens to allow for ventilation. The HVAC system is inadequate for the kinds of activities occurring in this space, e.g., lots of particulates and kilns off-gas. The building does not have a sink or storage in the youth activity room on the second floor. Staff are constantly moving pieces in and out of rooms as programs and activities change. The building is not ADA accessible. The outdoor kilns need to be covered to prevent corrosion and the exterior exit stairs along the side of the building are rusting through, dangerous, and in need replacement. From a programming standpoint, the Pottery Lab is achieving a primary BPR goal to target and serve youth 18 years and under. The partnership with the non-profit appears to serve both parties and the pottery programming needs of the community.

### Conceptual Infrastructure Improvement Opportunities

Pottery Lab has plans in progress for the construction of a new facility to accommodate high demand for the services provided. Once that is complete it is recommended that a careful look at program offerings at the existing site be evaluated to ensure the public's needs and desires for program offerings are being met. The existing fire exit stair is rusty and worn, prompt replacement is recommended.

### Needs Assessment Impact:

In several cases (East Boulder and North Boulder Recreation Centers), BRS recommends further planning that could include feasibility studies, market analysis, public outreach and program space prioritization for future expansion and possible renovation. Alternatively, the report recommends replacement of South Boulder Recreation Center as the most economical option moving forward.

Future recreation center trends noted in the report include indoor adventure track for running/walking and fitness activities, indoor/outdoor fitness flexible spaces to accommodate functional fitness and shared games/ eSPORTS, and indoor elevated walk/jog track.

## Recreation Trends & Impacts on Supply and Demand

Over 2020, BPR has seen firsthand the impact of COVID-19 on their parks and facilities, their budget, but more importantly their community. BPR had to make on-the-fly operational changes and rely on the community for their support and commitment to stewardship. At the same time, the demand for park space and outdoor recreation was unparalleled during this time, as community members of all demographics sought outdoor experiences that were socially distant but allowed them to continue to enhance their quality of life.

### *COVID-19 Operational Impacts & Trends*

#### Usage

Generally, staff have seen an increase in outdoor activities including golf (college age through older adults), biking at Valmont Bike Park, swimming at both outdoor pools, and passive recreation in Natural Areas. The exception to this is sports activities, which were paused for most of 2020. Boulder Reservoir small watercraft permit requests are up – in 2020 BPR increased the number of permits available by 20% and sold out by mid-June. For 2021, they sold approximately 60% in the first two weeks they were made available and were completely sold out by mid-April. There is also increased interest in booking pool space (partly due to limited user allowance) and dance classes for middle schoolers. Youth and family programs are continually requested and special events like the Halloween Drive-In Movie have been popular. These higher usage rates may be artificially high due to COVID-19, so it will be important to monitor changes in the next few years to fully understand trends.

Because many facilities throughout the region have been closed, people who would not otherwise come to Boulder have been visiting BPR facilities because they are open. Conversely, some people who are now working from home do not use BPR facilities as often as they did, or not at all.

Since the vaccine roll-out, staff are seeing slow growth in visitation each month. Adults are the first group coming back to facilities and the older adult population is coming back faster than anticipated. While this is the case currently, in 2020, senior visitation was at 10% of total visitation (historic rates of participation are 20-30%). Youth numbers are still down because BPR does not have many youth activities back online (e.g., family leisure swim, children' drop-in activities, etc.).

#### Programming

Many programs and services were halted during most of 2020, some have switched to a virtual platform, and some have stopped altogether. While data from 2020 will be skewed, it is still important to look at what happened to programs during this time to help BPR understand if the department should bring them all back, only some or none. It will also be important to explore options for involving the community in helping to make these decisions, rather than just looking at the numbers.

In 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Age Well Center at the East Boulder Community Center (run by City of Boulder's Housing and Human Services department) was consolidated to the West Boulder Community Center. As resources allow and the community continues to recover from the

COVID-19 pandemic, the city is committed to evaluating the needs of the community that could be met in that space.

A bright point is the fact that, even given limitations of registration software, virtual programming has done far better than anticipated. Staff have worked to simplify the registration process and the user base is slowly growing (300-400 current registrations). While many people can take advantage of virtual programming, some population groups, including older adults and low-income households, may not have the means to access these programs and/or the understanding of technology to easily move through the process.

#### *NRPA Agency Performance Review Highlights*

The 2020 NRPA Agency Performance Review reports that the typical parks and recreation agency:

- Registers ~225,000 contacts each year
- Offers 187 programs each year (120 being fee-based)
- Generates 15,000 contacts per programming alone
- 83% offer summer camp programs, teen programming and after-school care
- 78% offer programming for older adults and 62% for those with disabilities
- 54% of parks and recreation agencies deliver STEM programming.

The top five key programming activities offered by cities include:

1. Themed special events (88% of agencies)
2. Team sports (87%)
3. Social recreation events (87%)
4. Fitness improvement classes (82%)
5. Health and wellness education (81%)

In terms of targeted programming, the NRPA reports that for cities with populations from 100,000-250,000, the top three include summer camps, senior programs and teen programs. As the statistically valid survey revealed, over 50% of respondents feel teenagers are a critical population in Boulder and BPR may need to increase programming for this population group to meet community needs.

*Table 17: NRPA Top Programming Activities by jurisdiction (town, city, county)*

Town	Percent of Agencies	City	Percent of Agencies	County	Percent of Agencies
Social recreation events	94%	Themed special events	92%	Social recreation events	79%
Themed special events	92	Team sports	91	Themed special events	78
Fitness enhancement classes	88	Social recreation events	89	Natural and cultural history activities	78
Team sports	87	Fitness enhancement classes	85	Health and wellness education	75
Health and wellness education	86	Health and wellness education	83	Team sports	73
Safety training	79	Aquatics	78	Fitness enhancement classes	68

Table 18: NRPA Targeted Programs for Children, Seniors &amp; People with Disabilities (% of agencies by jurisdiction population)

	Percent of Agencies	Population of Jurisdiction (Percent)				
		Less than 20,000	20,000 to 49,999	50,000 to 99,999	100,000 to 250,000	More than 250,000
Summer camp	83%	61%	89%	92%	88%	90%
Senior programs	79	68	79	86	87	78
Teen programs	67	49	64	74	76	79
Programs for people with disabilities	62	38	56	70	81	78
After-school programs	58	40	48	67	69	73
STEM programs	57	51	48	59	63	71
Preschool	36	26	38	44	38	36
Before-school programs	20	14	21	24	19	23
Full daycare	8	6	7	11	6	13

*BPR Performance & Participation and Use Analysis*

The following analysis looks at the main BPR program areas through activity department and category, rather than individual course types (activity name). According to the NRPA's 2021 Agency Performance Review, the top three programming activities for cities include themed special events, team sports and social recreation events. BPR has seen growing popularity in special events recently. The top three activities for cities may see increasing popularity as people are able to gather in groups and no longer need to socially isolate as COVID-19 vaccines increase the ability of community members to recreate together again.

When looking at enrollment numbers for BPR programs from 2017-2020, special events were more popular in 2017 and interest remained relatively steady for 2018-2019. 2020 numbers may have been higher if the COVID-19 pandemic had not become a factor in enrollment and attendance in events throughout the world.

Table 19: Program Area Enrollment shows that from 2017-2019, BPR experienced a decline in program enrollment overall. Two areas in particular, Gymnastics and Special Interest programming saw steady decline over these three years. This is due in part to the fact that BPR stopped providing competitive level gymnastics directly, and instead using Go Flyers to provide this service. Around this time, BPR switched the platform used to track teams. Even so, Gymnastics programming makes up 70% of the 3-year average enrollment numbers, which is the highest program percentage. This is followed by the Youth and Family Services Youth Services Initiative (YSI) programming at 53% and Aquatics at 50%. All remaining program areas were at 42% or below of the 3-year average.

Table 19: Program Area Enrollment

Program Area	2017	2018	2019	2020* COVID
Aquatics	2,551	2,843	2,748	786
EXPAND	2,359	2,211	2,341	1,575
Facilities	242	167	177	133
Gymnastics	4,961	4,023	2,499	1,131
Health and Wellness	885	1,019	955	315
Mind Body	1,066	1,218	1,024	279
Partnership Programs**				53
Special Events***	242	167	177	154
Sports	2,222	2,104	2,214	920
YSI****	2,825	3,240	2,668	639
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>17,353</b>	<b>16,992</b>	<b>14,803</b>	<b>5,985</b>

\*2020 enrollment numbers are not representative of an average year for BPR programs and services. They were heavily impacted by COVID-19 and subsequent state requirements and public concern relating to the pandemic.

\*\* Partnership program enrollment data is managed outside of BPRs enrollment system. Program managers and partners can be called on to help collect this if needed.

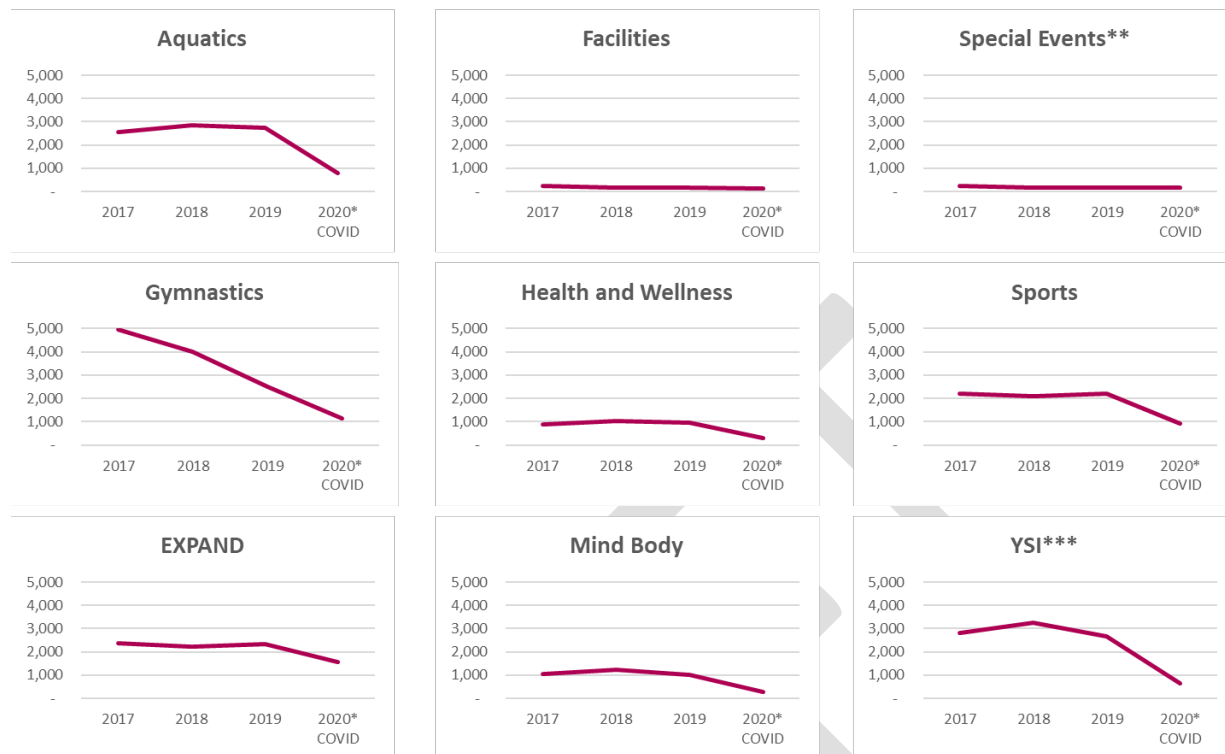
\*\*\*It is interesting to note that 2020 Special Events (Facilities and Special Interest Programs in table above) enrollment was higher than any of the previous three years – coming in at 287.

\*\*\*\*YSI offers after-school and summer programs to youth (6-18) living in low-income housing. The initiative also offers special events and trips.

Notes:

1. Drop-in programs such as Health and Wellness, Mind Body, Facility programs are captured in membership usage or daily admission fees.
2. The numbers reported are participants registered for the program/activity. The numbers are not multiplied off the number of classes offered for the registration. (Example of that would be 1 registration x8 class program = 8 total visits for the patron to participate in the program.) The numbers reported here are 1 registration for that patron in that program.
3. All Reservoir programming now falls under EXPAND or camps.

### Decreasing Program Enrollment



\* 2020 enrollment numbers are not representative of an average year for BPR programs and services. They were heavily impacted by COVID-19 and subsequent state requirements and public concern relating to the pandemic.

\*\* Partnership program enrollment data is managed outside of BPRs enrollment system. Program managers and partners can be called on to help collect this if needed.

\*\*\* It is interesting to note that 2020 Special Events (Facilities and Special Interest Programs in table above) enrollment was higher than any of the previous three years - coming at 287.

#### BPR Program Enrollment Number Decreases: 2017-2020

Even with decreasing enrollment, BPR's Gymnastics and Aquatics programs have the highest enrollment numbers, closely followed by EXPAND, YSI and Sports programs. While gymnastics and sports programs and services can be considered recreational and exclusive activities that should produce more revenue than programs like EXPAND and YSI, which are considered Community Benefit services.

#### Engagement Findings

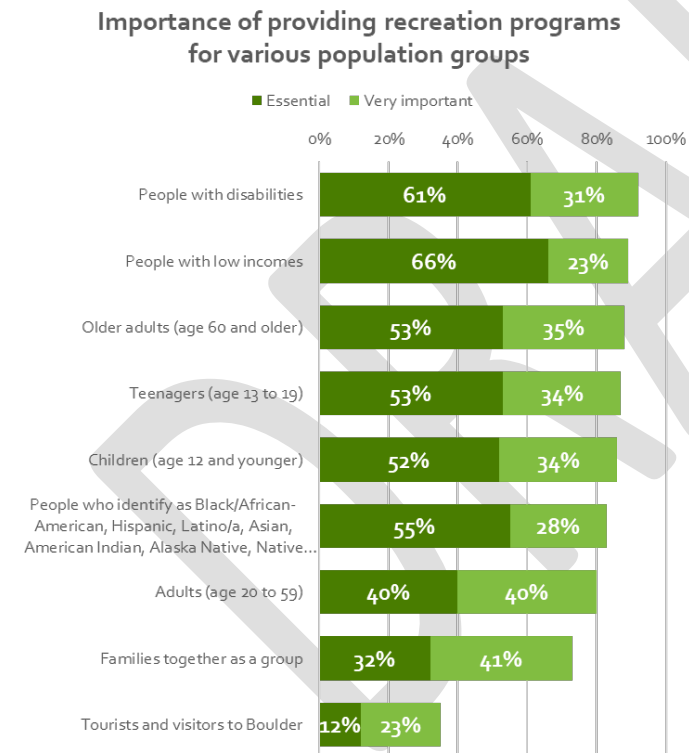
According to BPR staff and stakeholders, they are seeing the following in terms of desired community programming:

- Youth sports teams that have had flat participation are seeing increases
- Indoor fitness classes were on the rise before COVID-19
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, staff saw large demand for outside programs, especially youth sports
- Families were "begging" for things for children to do outside (e.g., baseball and other youth sports) during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Day and resident camps filling up fast
- High demand for small watercraft permits
- Childcare demand strong

- Pottery lab and arts program seeing high, growing demand pre- and post-COVID
- Increasing duration of lease for pottery lab provider could free up more staff time
- Demand is high for everyday activities within walking distance of community members and for youth outdoor recreation and sports with non-competitive or recreation level options
- Since the vaccine rollout, facilities staff have slowly seen growth in users, however the pools have seen a lot of interest, and an increase in the popularity of warm water pool activities for older adults.
- Noticeable rise in tennis popularity for the first time in many years along with increased wait times at the courts.
- Pickleball is rising in popularity both nationally and locally.

### Priorities

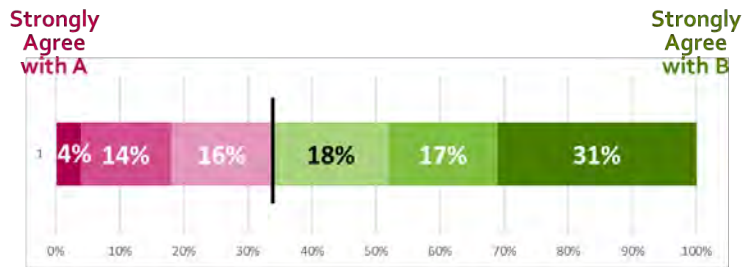
Survey respondents feel that serving low-income populations and people with disabilities should be priorities. Approximately 50% consider older adults, teenagers, and children as essential groups to serve. Only about 1/3 of respondents feel it is essential or very important to provide programs for visitors and tourists.



### Statistically Valid Survey: Population Groups and Importance of Providing Programming for Each

Programs that serve a variety of skill levels rather than specific skill levels are preferred. Diverse program opportunities are also important, as well as drop in use of facilities (over classes with registration requirements). Even if facilities and programs may be offered by other providers, respondents prefer that BPR also provide comparable facilities and programs.





**A.** Parks and recreation program offerings should focus mostly on popular sports and fitness (e.g., Pilates, yoga, softball, soccer, etc.)

**B.** Parks and recreation program offerings should offer some popular sports and fitness activities, but also include diverse opportunities like arts and crafts, and classes (e.g., cooking drawing, etc.).

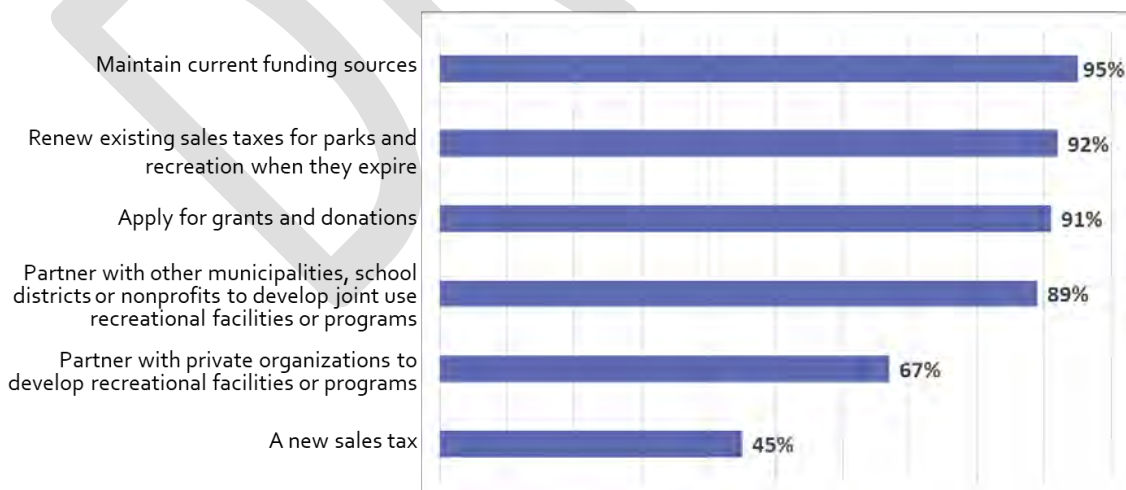
#### *Statistically Valid Survey Responses: Program Offerings Focus*

#### *Funding*

Survey respondents support the use of taxes to fund programs for children, low-income individuals and people with disabilities. Resident user fees were preferred to fund sports programs, general introductory classes, and special or advanced programs.

More respondents oppose a new sales tax to support BPR facilities and programs than those who support an increase. Yet, 9 in 10 respondents support renewal of existing sales taxes to support parks and recreation. About 95% support maintaining current funding sources to provide programs and services. Nine in 10 respondents also support partnering with municipalities, school districts, or nonprofits to develop joint use of programs and facilities. About 2/3 of respondents support forming partnerships with private organizations for development of recreational facilities or programs.

#### *Survey Findings: Support vs. Opposition for Funding for BPR*



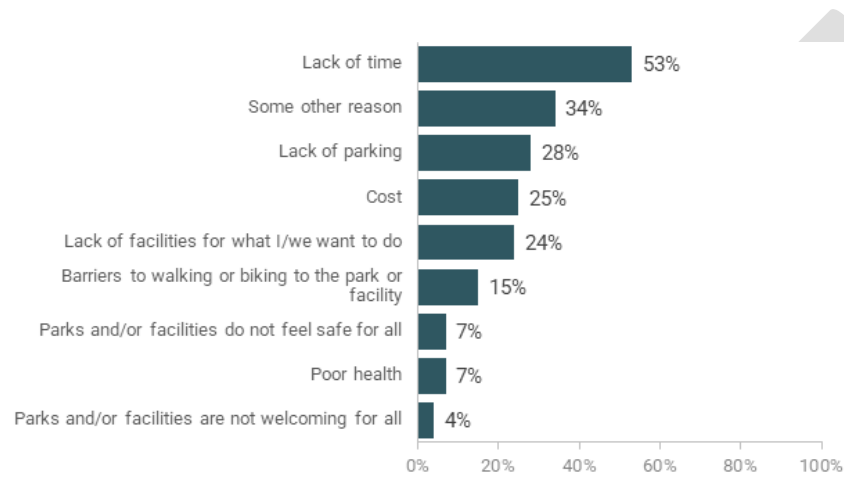
#### *Statistically Valid Survey: BPR Funding Options*



### *Facility Access*

BPR offers users a variety of ways to access facilities and services. Community members can purchase memberships, punch passes, participate in online offerings or just drop-in to one of the three recreation centers and certain classes. Survey respondents prefer that non-residents who work or own a business in Boulder pay resident fees, instead of higher non-resident fees. However, respondents are split on what nonresidents should pay (more or the same as residents).

The most common reason given for not using parks, recreation facilities or services was a lack of time. However, lack of parking and cost were each cited by about one-quarter of respondents.



### *Statistically Valid Survey: Barriers to Access*

Renters and those living in multi-family housing units were more likely to cite lack of time as a barrier than owners and those living in single family homes. Cost, lack of time, lack of parking, and lack of facilities for what they want to do were most often mentioned as a barrier by renters compared to owners.

Hispanic respondents were more likely to mention cost, poor health, lack of parking, and barriers to walking or biking to a park or facilities compared to White respondents. Those who identify as something other than White, or Hispanic were more likely to say parks and facilities do not feel safe for all than White or Hispanic respondents.

Cost was more often mentioned as a barrier by respondents in households with children under age 12 than in households without children, while lack of parking was more often cited by respondents in households without children than by respondents in households with children.

### *2020 Recreation Activity Fund Facility Pass Changes*

In 2020, a new facility pass structure was introduced, focusing on financial sustainability, simplicity and providing a wide service reach to ensure accessibility. It includes age-based subsidies for youth (40%) and older adults (25%), financial aid, worker fees in alignment with resident fees, and higher non-resident fees for those who do not live or work in the city. The department also instituted entry fee increases (average of 9%), and the continued inclusion of seasonal facilities in annual, monthly and punch card entry options. The number of punch card pass options was also reduced, and a more flexible monthly access option is now offered. It will be important to monitor the success of this program in the

coming years. With only three months of normal usage and corresponding data (due to the COVID-19 pandemic), it is difficult at this time provide a full picture of membership versus drop-in visits based on these changes. Participation during 2020 was mostly reservation based due to COVID-19 related capacity restrictions.

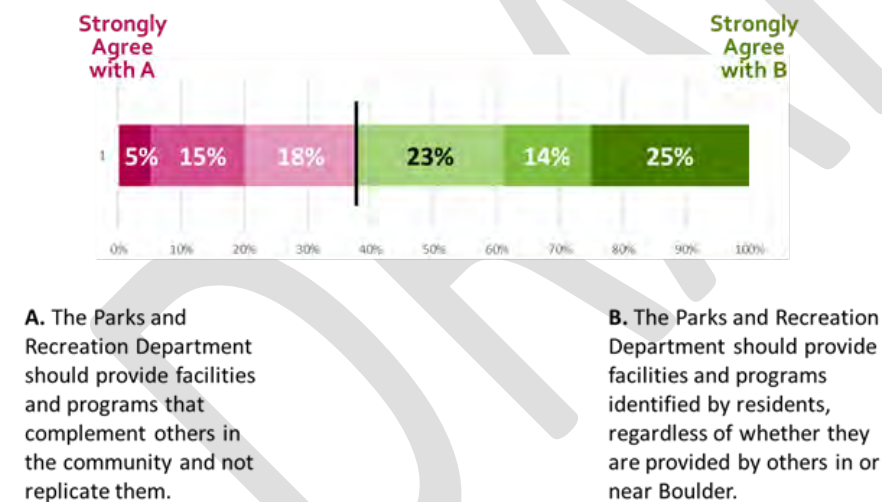
### *Drop-Ins & Rentals*

In addition to providing regular programming through memberships, BPR offers users alternative ways to use facilities. Users or user groups can rent facilities or drop in at recreation centers or for certain types of programming. It is increasingly difficult for some individuals to participate in regularly scheduled recreation activities due to personal reasons. Drop-in programs provide users the opportunity to come when it works for them. Facility rentals are available throughout the year.

### **Needs Assessment Impact:**

*Programming continues to be an important component of the services BPR offers. Looking to the future, a reevaluation of targeted programming with a focus on teen programs could help BPR engage a portion of the Boulder population considered very important to community members based on survey feedback. BPR could also look at competitive and dance program fee increases to help support more community benefit programming.*

*While community members are generally satisfied with BPR programming, more feel BPR should provide facilities and programs residents desire, regardless of whether they are provided by other entities.*



### *Statistically Valid Survey: Average Dollars Allocated to Competing Priorities with Hypothetical*

*This has implications for how BPR prioritizes and selects programming moving forward, in terms of how contracted programming and in-house programming is offered and prioritized.*

*Recquity and PLAY Pass programs have been essential to social service providers and the public during the stressful period of the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus group mentioned that recreation incentives were helpful for volunteer benefits. BPR internships and career development for underrepresented groups were recommendations from the meeting, along with providing information on how volunteers can participate in creating a welcoming and active community.*

*Statistically valid survey results suggest preferences for resident pricing for non-residents who work within Boulder. Findings also suggest that program funding should be split between tax revenue and fees, depending on the demographics of users and the type of program. Programs for children, low-income individuals, and people with disabilities should be subsidized through tax revenue while sports programs, general introductory classes, and other advanced programs should be funded through program fees.*

*When it comes to barriers to access, community members from different ethnic backgrounds, ages, subcommunities and those who rent versus own their own housing consider different barriers most limiting. BPR will need to continue to build a comprehensive approach to increasing equitable access for all community members based on a variety of demographic, socio-economic and health related factors.*

*Additional takeaways include offering programs for various user groups that are important to the community, especially with regards to opportunities offered for low-income populations and people with disabilities and continuing to expand programming related to themed special events for the community.*

## **BPR Recreation Programs and Services Moving Forward**

Keeping in mind the six key themes BPR has adopted for future actions and decision making will help the department successfully move forward by offering the most meaningful programs and services that adhere to these values.

- Community Health & Wellness
- Taking Care of What We Have
- Financial Sustainability
- Building Community & Relationships
- Youth Engagement & Activity
- Organizational Readiness

### **Cost Recovery/Budget/Viability**

BPR is a Social Enterprise and must remain financially viable. If only community benefit programs were offered, the Recreation Activity Fund would not be sustainable. It is important to communicate to the public that some programs, while popular, do not achieve cost recovery goals based on benefit provided. While BPR benchmarks programming and services and then takes community benefit services to the public for input, staff expertise should play a larger role in helping to determine what is working and where there is room for improvement. It is also important for BPR to develop a fuller understanding of program and service alignment to ensure the department stays competitive and its programming and services remain financially viable.

BPR has diversified its programs and services portfolio over the last several years and has made accomplishments in increasing cost recovery for recreation programs and facilities by intentionally designing and delivering program offerings. The department now needs to work on better capturing revenues from contracted services by managing registration of these and sharing partner customer data to better promote BPR programming.

### **Monitoring & Evaluation**

Based on recommendations from the previous Master Plan, in 2012, BPR created the Recreation Priority Index (RPI) to establish a systematic formative evaluation process to help policymakers, programmers, planners and decision makers decide which programs should be implemented and what

programs need to be modified or discontinued. The RPI places programs into one of three categories and then assigns a cost recovery range for these programs. Service Category definitions and where they fall on the benefit and subsidy spectrums are illustrated below. The index helps recreation staff and officials compare recreation programs to identify the relative importance of each. It uses a scorecard approach to determine the value of programming and helps make the case for setting certain fee structures and cost recovery rates based on collected data.



#### *BPR Service Categories*

Currently, the RPI is a good complement to the Service Delivery Model and seems to be working well. Coordinators take their programs through the index on an annual basis. One issue is that the RPI is only used to prioritize to assign subsidy value. It does not prioritize how space should be allocated, or how contracted programs should be handled. This sometimes results in imbalance. The RPI might suggest that every program should be subsidized at 20%, but BPR only has 10% to distribute. While it is a good tool, it focuses so much on the granular that the bigger picture can sometimes get lost. The Service Delivery Model is also used regularly by staff. While it is effective in most cases, facility staff agree that they need the ability to adapt the service delivery model to operate facilities based on preference, historical data, revenue generation, user profiles and programming (e.g., certain programs priorities at certain times). All these need to be flexibly integrated into operations. It would also be beneficial to understand how BPR can integrate flex space into operations based on usage.

#### *Registration, Programming & Usage*

Currently, activity registration (Seasonal Guide programs) starts at 8:30 a.m. online the day registration opens. While accessing registration online is convenient for many users, the ACTIVE Net system can be hard to navigate and if users are signing up for contracted programs, they often must visit more than one site to complete the registration process because ACTIVE Net is not used across the board for all partner programs. This increases the learning curve for newer or infrequent users and in some cases, may represent a barrier to access.

Historically, people want all services at all recreation centers, and they go to the center closest to them. BPR staff feel it would be beneficial to see how the community would want time divided for programming. For example, if BPR had 10 hours of space, how would users like time and money spent in relation to their access as well as other programming, even if the other activities do not serve them directly or take away from programming they use. Having a better understanding of which programs

and services people are using (not just those who report about their usage) would help staff organize programming and services more effectively.

During the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak and since, BPR staff has seen an increase in outdoor activities including golfing, biking, swimming and increased participation in youth dance classes. There is also high demand for small watercraft permits at Boulder Reservoir. BPR pool facilities have also been extremely popular in recent months. Conversely, recreation centers have not seen as much use as before. This can be attributed to a variety of factors, including state restrictions and an increase in the number of people working from home. Since the COVID-19 vaccine rollout, facilities have slowly started to see growth in user numbers.

### *Equity/Access*

BPR offers several options for community members who cannot afford to pay entry fees for through the Health Equity Fund (HEF). The scholarship program offers a 50% subsidy, along with grant funding from the HEF to provide 100% of fee for entrance into BPR facilities for those that qualify based on income. The Recquity Pass program is available, through Play Boulder, for households with children. This income-based option provides subsidies for program registration.

The Recquity Pass and scholarship programs are relatively successful, but the process for users and staff is complex. BPR needs to more fully understand if these offerings, along with the PlayPass provide enough of a reduction in multiple barriers to allow entry to all community members. Cultural barriers, transportation issues, lack of time to enjoy parks and recreation services are areas that financial aid does not fully address. Also, ensuring staff look like and understand community members who use facilities, programs and services can help to improve equity and not just provide access, but promote it through action. BPR could also look at how the scholarship awards are allocated to see if some of the subsidy could be redistributed if an original recipient does not use the full amount.

According to the 2019 City of Boulder Health Equity Fund Recquity Pass Program Final Report, the Recquity Pass program initiative “exceeded expectations both in terms of enrollment as well as attendance.” Participants visited 3 times more often (300% increase) than those who participated in the financial aid program.

Enrollment surveys revealed that:

- 29% of participants had never visited the recreation centers before this program; 42% had not visited for over one year.
- 69% of participants were unaware that the department had a financial aid program.
- 44% of participants anticipated utilizing the recreation centers 3-4 times per week; 37% anticipated 0-2 times per week, 9% anticipated 5-6 times per week, 9% anticipated 7-8 times per week, 1% anticipated more than 8 times.

Reaching out to populations that are not regularly using BPR facilities and services and those who could participate in programming that serves low-income community members but are not taking advantage of their options is extremely important. According to the HEF report, participation and physical activity increase significantly if the financial barrier is removed for low-income residents.

The 2020 City of Boulder Health Equity Fund End of Year Report reveals that COVID-19 had an impact on the Recquity Pass program, but enrollment numbers were higher than expected.

- As of Dec. 31, 2020, there were 3,458 active enrollees (1,394 youth, 326 older adults, 1738 adult passes) accounting for 15,933 total visitations.
- The program was expanded to include those who qualified for unemployment insurance benefits given the large community economic impacts due to the pandemic.
- Average visits per month per person: 3.05 for Jan through March 13 for 1142 unique individuals; 1.07 for the entire year for 1246 unique individuals. An increased number of individuals were not comfortable attending a gym during this timeframe due to the pandemic. Restrictions also limited gym use to reservation basis only.
- Visitation took a significant hit with gyms closed for a portion of the year. The target visitation number was 37,452 and the actual number of visitations was less than half at 15,933. This is higher than staff expected, considering the pandemic impacts.

Staff made it easier for current participants to move through the enrollment process by auto-extending expired passes through the end of the year, and through April 2021 for the re-application process. Community members who were receiving unemployment insurance during the early phases of the pandemic were able to qualify for the Recquity pass program. This was allowed to support immediate needs of residents. In terms of equity and access, the program application is now available online and it is available in Spanish and English, helping to remove potential barriers for current and future participants.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic skewing data, and decreased staffing and service levels, no year-end enrollment surveys were distributed. BPR only received partial HEF funding and lost approximately 4% of semi-enterprise fund revenues. Even with the surreal events of 2020, BPR is making operational decisions based on utilization data. This data can be reviewed biweekly to inform changes to the Recquity program. It helps the department better understand how best to serve pass holders and can look at reasons usage fluctuates at any given time.

Results from the community survey suggest preferences for resident pricing for non-residents who work in Boulder. The findings also reveal that respondents think funding should be split depending on demographics of users and types of programs. For example, programs for children, low-income individuals, and people with disabilities should be subsidized through tax revenue while sports programs, general introductory classes, and other advanced programs should be funded through program fees. Another key takeaway is that offering programs for various user groups is important to the community, especially regarding opportunities offered for low-income populations and people with disabilities.

Another group that has received attention recently is the “missing middle” population is not adequately served by BPR’s options. For example, some community members may not qualify based on income, but might struggle to pay entry fees for all family members. If they had an opportunity to apply for a subsidy for this, more families may use BPR facilities, programs and services. There is also no way to reallocate/redistribute fund balances to other programs if all funds for specific financial aid programming is not used.

### *Competition*

Since 2014, several large employers have moved to Boulder and several apartment complexes have been built. BPR should look at what facilities and programming they offer. There has also been an influx of super low-cost gyms (e.g., Crunch, Planet Fitness) popping up. Some of these gyms are open 24



hours/day. Competitors also include smaller yoga studios, Orange Theory, Pure Barre, etc. According to staff, there is leakage of users to this competition. There has also been an increase in home gym usage, the purchase of fitness equipment for personal use and online classes offered by other providers since the COVID-19 pandemic limited gatherings. While BPR faces competition, these other providers have been affected by COVID-19 also. BPR can reevaluate the best way to offer programming and services in this new landscape, adjusting now to how services are offered, when, what types to be more competitive in the future.

### *Partners/Contractors*

Contracted services are considered an extension of BPR's services – offering a breadth of more specialized services to allow the city to provide all types of recreation opportunities without having to become too specialized internally. The department should look at the feasibility of handling registration under one system for all partner programs, as the percentage split of fees is 70/30 if partners take it, and 40/60 if BPR does it. The user experience would also be streamlined. Currently, users may go to the BPR website to sign up, but then must go to a partner website to register. More oversight and control are needed to capture data that could be used for future marketing and to ensure level of revenue generated by partner services is tied to how visibility for these services is determined.

### **Needs Assessment Impact:**

*Throughout the country, the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak and subsequent vaccine rollout have impacted the way people use recreation resources. People have rediscovered the outdoors. Four Boulder, this means they are spending even more time in BPR outdoor facilities, which were already well loved before the pandemic. This increase in use impacts wear and tear on parks and can increase staff time dedicated to operations and maintenance. The recent decrease in use of indoor recreation centers impacts operations and gives BPR and the community an opportunity to reevaluate how these spaces are used for programming.*

*In terms of equity and access, continuing to partner with community organizations to build awareness of the Recquity Pass program and other aid options is key to ensuring BPR reaches the widest audience of community members. Ensuring staff members that speak Spanish or other languages are available to translate helps support community members who want to start using these options. Partnering with other organizations and having BPR employees who share commonalities with all user groups will help build the strength and success of these programs and all community members.*

*For contracted and partner services, BPR must insist on standard, simplified reporting methods, ideally under one system, to efficiently track and maintain records of these services to inform future decisions.*



## Gap Analysis

### Purpose

The purpose of this gap analysis is to discover any physical gaps in access or quantities of neighborhood parks and playgrounds – a key recreation amenity. Gap areas can be further evaluated to understand if prioritized effort is 1) feasible to close the barrier to access neighborhood parks and playgrounds and/or 2) if further study is warranted. These types of maps are also recommended by the National Recreation and Park Association for evaluating if there are locations of access inequity within a community's parks and recreation offerings.

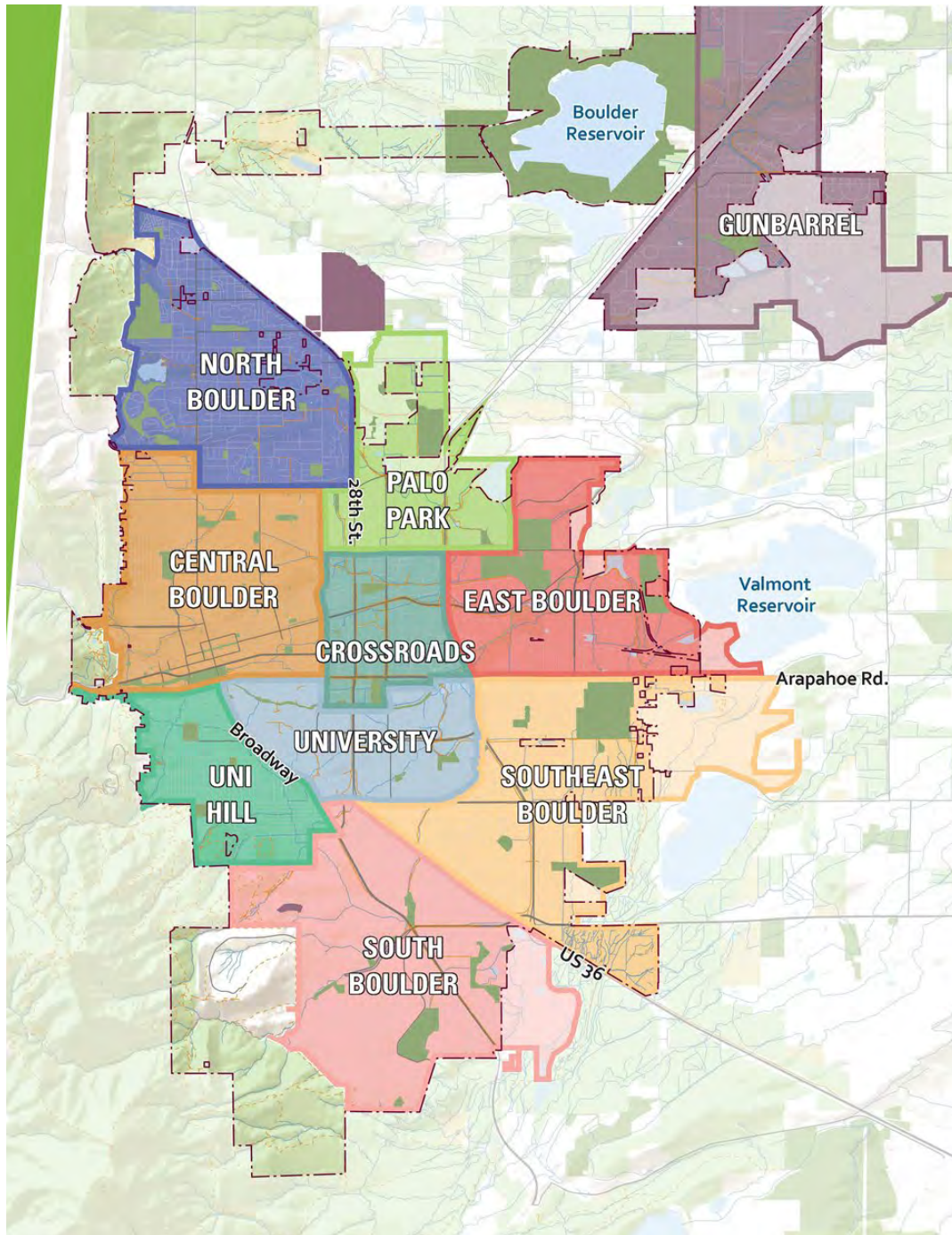
### BPR Distribution Gap Maps Methodology

Distribution maps utilize geographic information system (GIS) mapping to measure how much of the population can easily access at least one park on foot or by bike by using sidewalk data and park access points. Additional questions to dovetail to this analysis include does transportation infrastructure (sidewalks, greenways, bike lanes) provide adequate and accessible connections to parks? Are these routes safe?

These maps can show any gaps, or physical areas in a community, where parks or recreation amenities managed by BPR are not within the distance standard. While some public amenities might not meet this standard, there are school playgrounds and private parks (HOA sponsored) to help fill any gaps. BPR staff, guided by park distribution metrics included in the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan, have conducted GIS analysis mapping of the following metrics that also align with national standards of park access endorsed by the Trust for Public Lands and City Park Alliance: provide neighborhood parks a minimum of 5 acres in size within one-half mile of the population to be served; provide playground facilities for school-age children up through 12 within one-quarter to one-half mile of community members.

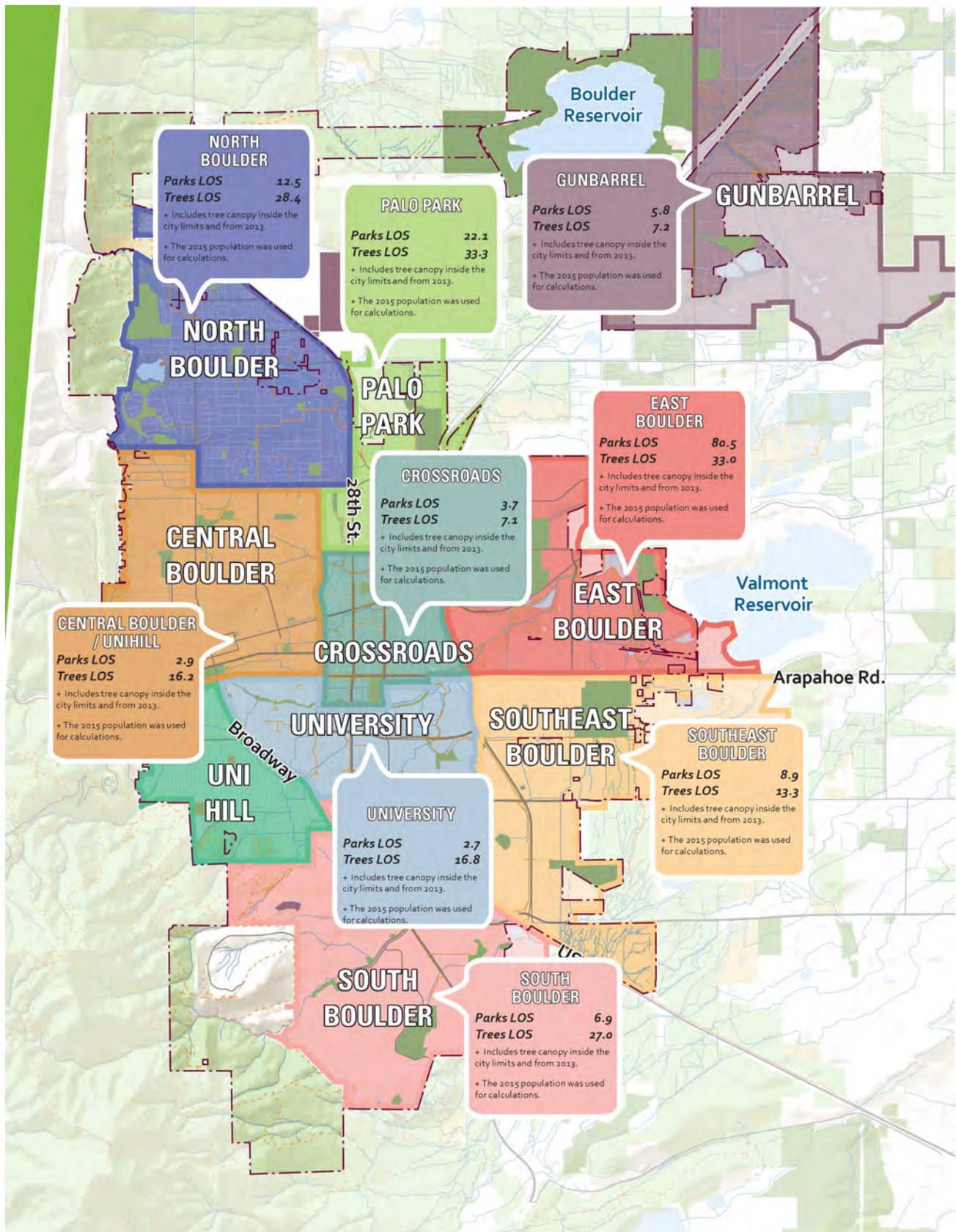
## Boulder Subcommunity Equity Gap Analysis Methodology

The 2021 Master Plan introduces a new gap analysis to see if there is any difference in the level of service for neighborhood parks within Subcommunities (see below for subcommunity boundary map) as a first step in identifying spatial inequity.



*BPR Lands and Subcommunity Boundaries Map*





BPR Subcommunity LOS Ma

### *Neighborhood Parkland Level of Service Comparison by Subcommunity*

The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) includes the following parks service metric for neighborhood parks:

*"Provide neighborhood parks of a minimum of five acres in size within one-half mile of the population to be served."*

BPR manages 45 neighborhood parks that each average approximately 7 acres. Table 17 compares each Boulder subcommunity amount of neighborhood parkland LOS to each other. The following preliminary findings can be made:

- East Boulder, Colorado University and Central Boulder have the lowest neighborhood parkland LOS. Other factors influence this analysis, including the low population of East Boulder, employment and industrial centers in these subcommunities, other types of park classifications).
- It should be noted that the 2021 systemwide LOS for neighborhood parkland is 2.04 (please see Table 8). Six of the subcommunities fall under this systemwide LOS.
- Gunbarrel, Crossroads and North Boulder subcommunities have the highest LOS for neighborhood parks.
  - The LOS for Gunbarrel includes the entire population, but only city parks within city limits. It does not include amenities managed/owned by other entities (e.g., HOA, private, County owned)

*Table 17: Subcommunity Neighborhood Parkland LOS Comparison. Source: GIS 2021 Data Layers and 2017 City of Boulder Subcommunity Population Data (2019 East Boulder Inventory & Analysis Report).*

Boulder Subcommunity	Neighborhood Parkland Acres within Subcommunity	Population of Subcommunity	Neighborhood Parkland LOS Per 1,000 People
East Boulder	0	466	0
Colorado University	10.21	17,820	0.57
Central Boulder - University Hill	16.53	10,550	1.57
Southeast Boulder	24.80	15,330	1.62
Central Boulder	35.49	19,200	1.85
Palo Park	21.39	11,450	1.87
South Boulder	47.16	15,440	3.05
Gunbarrel	60.78	11,750	5.17
Crossroads	18.48	3,550	5.21
North Boulder	76.82	12,590	6.10

### *All Types of Parkland Level of Service Comparison by Subcommunity*

To test how the subcommunity parkland level of service looks when other types of parks (i.e., community and city parks, as well as neighborhood parks less than 5 acres in size) are included, another LOS was calculated to compare and is shown in Table 18: Subcommunity All Parkland LOS Comparison.

- In this analysis, Colorado University and Central Boulder have the lowest parkland LOS.
- North Boulder continues to have a high LOS and Southeast Boulder and East Boulder move from mid-low to high LOS for all types of parkland.

- While East Boulder's LOS is low when looking strictly at Neighborhood Parks, when considering total parkland, it ranks very high.
- While East Boulder does not have neighborhood parks, Valmont City Park is in this subcommunity, and once developed, will include neighborhood types of amenities, like playgrounds and community use areas
- Additional analysis for projected population growth in subcommunities (especially East Boulder that has very low residential population) could help provide more clarity on the comparison of LOS between subcommunities.
- It should be noted that the 2021 systemwide LOS for urban parkland is 18 (see Table 9).

*Table 18: Subcommunity All Parkland LOS Comparison. Source: GIS 2021 Data Layers and City of Boulder Population Data (2019 East Boulder Inventory & Analysis Report).*

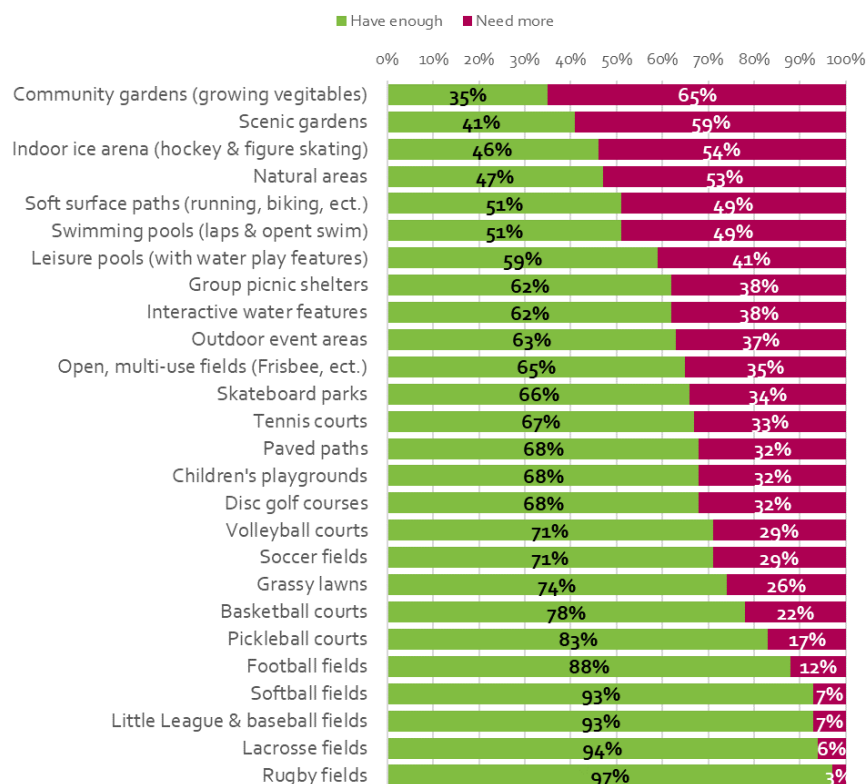
Boulder Subcommunity	Total Parkland within Subcommunity	Population of Subcommunity	Total Parkland LOS by Subcommunity
Colorado University	25.77	17,820	1.45
Central Boulder - University Hill	27.22	10,550	2.58
Central Boulder	83.63	19,200	4.36
Gunbarrel	60.78	11,750	5.17
South Boulder	104.05	15,440	6.74
Palo Park	79.74	11,450	6.96
Crossroads	34.04	3,550	9.59
North Boulder	144.89	12,590	11.51
Southeast Boulder	202.76	15,330	13.23
East Boulder	182.33	466	391

## Engagement Findings

### Facilities

Overall, most survey respondents (over 50%) feel satisfied with existing facilities and think there are enough of most types of facilities. However, there may be need for more swimming pools, community gardens, soft surface paths, natural areas, and outdoor event areas and an indoor ice rink.

### Perceived Need for More Recreation Facilities



#### Statistically Valid Survey: Perceived Community Need for More Recreation Facilities

When cross-tabulated, some differences between various demographic groups reveal themselves. For example, renters were more likely to feel more community gardens were needed than were those who owned their home, while those who owned their home were more likely to feel an ice arena was needed than those who rented their home.

Females were more likely to think more community gardens, scenic gardens, an ice arena, swimming pools, and leisure pools were needed than were males (see Table 94). Those who identified as something other than White were more likely to feel more swimming pools and leisure pools were needed than those who identified as White.

Those in households that did not have older adults or in households that did not have teenagers were more likely to feel there were not enough community gardens compared to households with older adults or households with teenagers (see Table 114). Households with children aged 12 or younger were more likely to identify a need for leisure pools than were households without children.

While generally, most respondents overall are satisfied with facilities, there were also differences between responses sorted by subcommunity. Less than 50% of Gunbarrel respondents feel the city has enough swimming pool, community gardens, soft surface paths, natural areas or outdoor event areas. Less than 50% of North Boulder and Palo Park respondents think there are enough natural areas, indoor ice arenas, interactive water features, community gardens or scenic areas. Under 50% of Central Boulder respondents feel there are enough open/multiuse fields, indoor ice arenas, community gardens, scenic gardens or natural areas. For Crossroads and East Boulder respondents, less than half



feel there are enough interactive water features, community gardens, scenic gardens or indoor ice arenas. Less than half expressed satisfaction with football and rugby fields or pickleball courts. Less than half of South Boulder respondents feel there are enough soft surface paths.

Poor health is considered as a barrier by 37% of Crossroads & East Boulder respondents, which is a larger proportion than all other subcommunities. Lack of parking is the barrier that 55% of Southeast Boulder respondents feel keeps them from using facilities. This is a larger percentage than all other subcommunities. Cost and poor health were more likely to be cited as reasons for not using recreation parks and/or facilities or using them more often by those living in Crossroads & East Boulder compared to those in other subcommunities. Lack of time was most likely to be cited by those Crossroads & East Boulder and University Hill & University than in other subcommunities.

### *Programming*

In terms of programming, Gunbarrel respondents are more interested in programs that focus on skill development at the beginning and intermediate levels than other subcommunities. South Boulder, and North Boulder and Palo Park respondents indicated strong support of partnering with private organizations to develop recreational facilities or programs. This support is significantly higher than support from Gunbarrel, Central Boulder, Crossroads and East Boulder and the University and University Hill respondents.

### *Funding*

Of a theoretical \$100 budget, Gunbarrel respondents were more likely on average to allocate more of their budget (\$36) to maintaining existing park and recreation facilities than the other subcommunities. University Hill and University and North Boulder & Palo Park respondents allocated \$24 to renovating and enhancing existing park and recreation facilities, which is more than Gunbarrel and Central Boulder respondents who allocated \$16 of a \$100 budget.

### **Needs Assessment Impact:**

*BPR could look at additional data and create GIS layers to analyze this information if it is deemed helpful in understanding gaps in service. For example, passive recreation is popular in Boulder and understanding where this is taking place could help better focus the importance of different types of amenities in city parks. Understanding actual usage on a deeper level will continue to help inform BPR's understanding of parkland use and how best to address equity and level of service gaps throughout the system.*

*To meet the city's climate goals, all aspects of BPR's day to day operations need to be monitored in order to measure and mitigate for the carbon footprint associated with parking, transportation, irrigation, turf versus natural grass treatments and energy use of facilities.*

*The barriers to access vary by subcommunity, but lack of time was cited by most survey respondents as one of the main barriers. Cost, poor health, not feeling safe and welcomed were also cited by several subcommunities based on ethnicity and being renters versus owners. This reinforces the need to revisit LOS metrics based on new mapping data, quantitative and qualitative data that provides a more comprehensive understanding of how BPR meets the needs of all community members. This will help ensure services, facilities and programming do not fall under a "one size fits all" parkland per capita approach.*



## Considerations for Future Equity Mapping in Boulder



*The Racial Equity Plan also includes a short-term objective that "City staff will collect relevant data, coordinate data systems to understand and track needs and impacts."*

BPR's accomplishments in providing services more equitably range from existing efforts like the Youth Services Initiative to close collaboration and participation with city departments on the ongoing Racial Equity Plan.

The community affirmed this is an important hope/concern for the master plan update to explicitly address. Coupled with the distribution gap maps/ analysis, citywide level of service standards, and community engagement, BPR can build off an existing equity framework that includes:

- Equity and resilience are already woven into BPR's operations and financial plans and practices. The department is guided in these areas through citywide efforts: Boulder's Racial Equity Plan and the City Resilience Framework.
- The National Parks and Recreation Association (NRPA) defines several categories of systemwide metrics to utilize when considering equity within a parks and recreation master plan: 1) systemwide metrics, 2) distribution metrics, and 3) population and outcome indicators.
- The Racial Equity Plan also includes a short-term objective that "City staff will collect relevant data, coordinate data systems to understand and track needs and impacts." BPR intends to participate in those conversations to ensure that data will help the department continue to hone an approach to equity within the department.
- BPR has committed to take the Department Equity Assessment outlined in the Racial Equity Plan which will (describe what this will accomplish).
- Health Equity Outcomes - Health and racial equity are closely linked. Some aspect of parks and recreation services, facilities and programs impact all social determinants of health and health equity outcomes. Analyzing health equity outcomes throughout the city will ensure BPR is meeting, and in some cases, hopefully exceeding racial and other equity goals. Doing this will also help the department focus efforts in areas with the most critical needs. Opportunities and resources impact community members' behaviors, choices, stress levels, feelings of safety, which in turn impact physical and mental health.



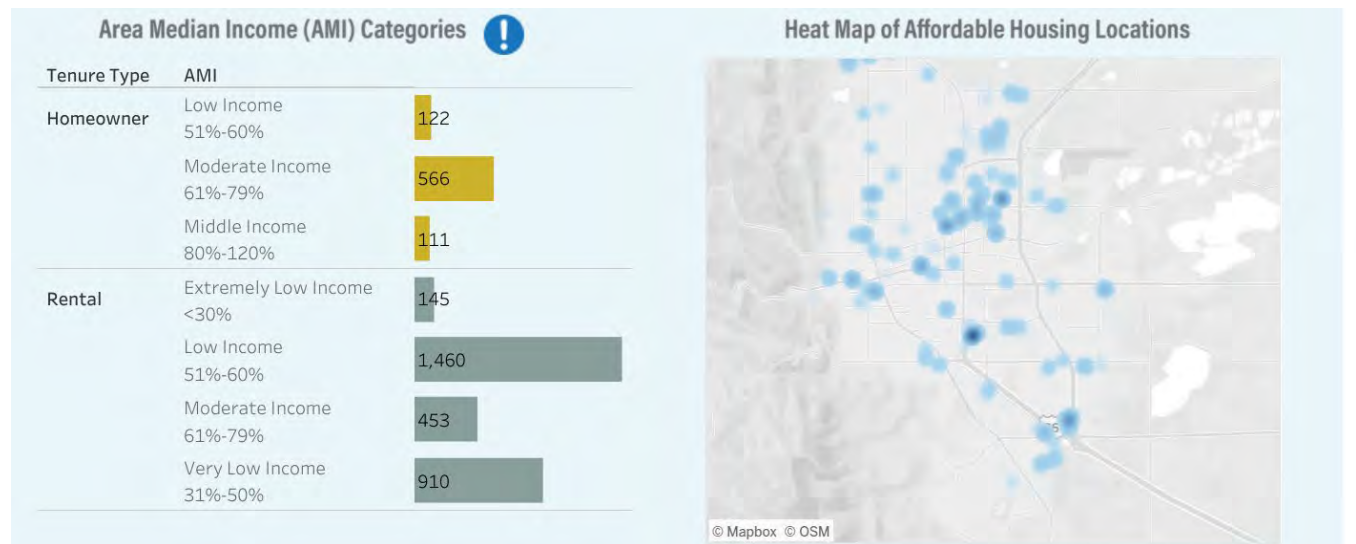
Having active living, fitness and passive recreation options is a crucial component to the health of the entire Boulder community. Parks, trails, paths and open spaces that accommodate everyone lifts us all.

In alignment with NRPA-endorsed equity metrics, the following data and mapping sources are recommended for further exploration and potential inclusion in future equity mapping layers the City of Boulder determines (timing currently outside this master plan effort).

- **Affordable Housing Hot Spots<sup>8</sup>**
  - Communities like Vancouver, B.C. have concluded through demographic analysis that there is a correlation between populations facing systemic barriers to resources and low-income.
  - The City of Boulder defines Area Median Income (AMI) through a federal calculation and the current 2019 AMI for a household of three in Boulder is \$102,300.
  - Boulder is smaller than many North American communities implementing equity mapping in their parks and recreation master plans and location-based data on low-income households could be extremely variable over time.
  - A potential way to still identify areas of the city with lower income is to look at affordable housing “hot spots” through existing heat mapping (see Figure 5).
  - These hot spots could be layered with other gap analysis mappings for a 1.0 version of an equity map to identify areas of overlapping gaps. These gap areas could be categorized as equity initiative zones with attendant policy actions and resources to augment parks and recreation services. Additional consideration to “the missing middle,” or middle-class demographic areas within Boulder should also be made as the cost of living and home ownership in Boulder continue to rise.
  - An alternative to this data is to track and map ZIP codes for Recquity, EXPAND, YSI and/or other unrepresentative group(s) who already use BPR and evaluate if that highlights an area of the city or demographic group that needs more resources to access parks and recreation; or an area of the city that is not using these services but could be.

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<sup>8</sup> [Affordable Housing in the City of Boulder](#) information provided by Boulder Housing and Human Services Department.



*Boulder AMI Categories and Heat Map of Affordable Housing Locations. Source: Boulder Housing and Human Services.*

### Low Canopy Coverage Indicators<sup>9</sup>

Tree canopy coverage has been proven to decrease air temperature, air pollution, ultraviolet radiation and carbon dioxide. Trees also offer humans and animals higher quality oxygen to breathe. According to a 2010 NRPA study<sup>10</sup>, trees in US urban parks provide:

- Structural value = \$300 billion
- Air temperature reduction = unknown, but likely in the billions of dollars per year
- Air pollution removal = \$500 million per year
- Reduced ultraviolet radiation = unknown, but likely substantial
- Carbon storage (trees): \$1.6 billion
- Annual carbon removal (trees): \$50 million per year

In an article titled “Measuring Equity Through City Trees” published in March 2020 by Yes! Solutions Journalism, Leslie Berckes, director of programs for Trees Forever notes that “Nationally, there’s a trend for trees to follow wealth”. She also shares those neighborhoods with more trees are often healthier. Without good canopy cover, impervious surfaces, namely concrete, create urban health islands with soaring temperatures. Utility bills are higher in these areas and more people get sick from heat related causes. Vancouver B.C. and other parks and recreation departments that manage urban forests or collaborate in that management, have found value in using tree canopy coverage as a data layer in identifying historic inequities within urban areas. American Forests states “A map of tree cover in any city in the United States is too often a map of race and income. Addressing socioeconomic and racial disparities in tree cover is one of the reasons to calculate your neighborhood’s Tree Equity score.”<sup>11</sup>

- The average tree canopy coverage for the City of Boulder is 16%. This analysis is further broken down by the recent Urban Forest Strategic Plan by Maintenance District (see

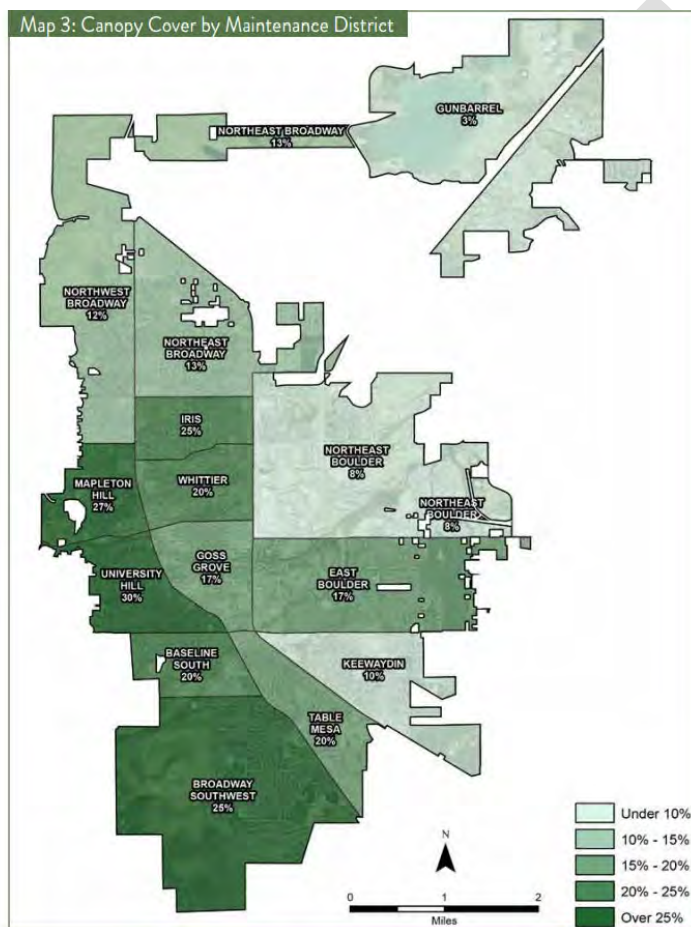
<sup>9</sup> City of Boulder Urban Forest Strategic Plan [Boulder\\_UFSP\\_v2018\\_06\\_06-1-201806111602.pdf \(bouldercolorado.gov\)](#)

<sup>10</sup> Air Quality Effects of Urban Trees and Parks. NRPA Research Series 2010. [nowak-heisler-research-paper.pdf \(nrpa.org\)](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Tree Equity Score Project - American Forests](#)

Figure 6) and shows a finer level of detail with canopy coverage ranging from 3% in Gunbarrel to 30% in University Hill.

- Creating a metric for minimum tree canopy coverage (e.g., start with the city's average of 16%) and mapping areas where that coverage is lower could be layered with other gap analysis mappings for a 1.0 version of an equity map to identify areas of overlapping gaps. These gap areas could be categorized as equity initiative zones with attendant policy actions and resources to augment parks and recreation services.
- Growing trees in the arid Front Range takes significant resources. Additional consideration to open space habitat characteristics (that may not support robust trees and urban forests) and other ecological considerations for increasing tree canopy or using tree canopy as an equity measure should be evaluated carefully in the future. Certain types of trees can also reduce overall landscape water usage, so this should also be considered as an equity initiative.



*Urban Forest Strategic Plan Canopy Coverage Comparison by Maintenance Area. Source: Analysis completed using 2013 LIDAR data.*

### Additional Community Findings Related to Evaluating Equity within the BPR System

Over half of statistically valid survey respondents (55% and 53% respectively) think it is essential to provide recreation programs for people who identify as a Non-White and teenagers (ages 13-19). The percentages were similar for older adults (53%) and children (52%). While BPR provides programs for adults and children, exploring specific programming that attracts people of different ethnicities,

teenagers and older adults will be critical for the future, especially considering the projected increase of these demographic groups.

Parks and recreation departments throughout the country need to understand what prevents community members from using parks and other recreation facilities or inhibits them from using them more often. Over half of Boulder survey respondents (53%) noted that lack of time is the major issue. While BPR cannot create time, looking at ways to make access to parks and recreation facilities easier and faster could potentially help increase usage. Also understanding how long it takes and by what means most people get to BPR parks and facilities could help staff understand how department operations and larger policy issues could help with this.

Mapping spatial disparities in parks and recreation amenities is extremely important to ensure future investments are made in the most critical locations. While the location of parkland and amenities is one of the pieces of the equity puzzle, it is also crucial that analysis goes beyond infrastructure. To ensure BPR properties are welcoming to all, other factors must be taken into consideration. Factors including what is available in parks, how staff interact with and relate to community members, transportation options and many more. BPR will need to continue to refine strategies to broaden the lens of equity.

## Key Issues & Next Steps



BPR does a very good job of ensuring parks and recreation facilities are safe and welcoming for all. While BPR properties are for everyone, O&M resources and capacity are constantly strained due to high usage and certain behaviors. Illegal activities and illegal use of parkland for camping are also issues. At times parks facilities must be closed due to misuse and vandalism. Addressing these problems often strains limited department resources, and in turn impacts its ability to provide core services.

Boulder is growing. With this growth comes continuously

### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK KEY THEMES

*Be Heard Boulder Questionnaire*

#### Community Health and Wellness

Important aspects of promoting community health and wellness into the future were clean, well maintained, and safe parks and facilities. The primary concern for health and wellness in the future was with failure of upkeep and poor conditions.

#### Taking Care of What We Have

A current priority is making sure existing parks stay safe, clean, and fun.

#### Building Community Relationships

A key value noted that was important in establishing community equity was building community relationships.

#### Youth Engagement and Activity

Youth engagement activities are beneficial to youth enrichment and development, and the future of the community.

#### Organizational Readiness

The majority of respondents indicated that improving recreation systems and website were hopes for the future in improving organizational readiness. Being adaptable to change was indicated as an important reason for organizational readiness.

#### Equity

Increasing inclusion, ensuring everyone feels welcome and making sure underrepresented voices are heard are important to community members.

#### Resilience

Resilience is important for adaptability and preparedness for inevitable change. It is also important for protecting assets including ecosystems, and the community along with improving recovery.



dropping levels of service as they relate to an acres/facilities per capita analysis. With growth boundaries limiting the ability to add parkland, Boulder must decide how to continue to best serve current and future community members. Building out planned phases of existing properties (Valmont, Foothills, Eaton, Violet, Harlow Platts, Area III), repurposing existing parks, partnering with organizations and schools, pushing existing facilities to work harder with the attached maintenance and operation cost increases are all options to consider. Reassessing how LOS is measured and what metrics are used to determine LOS are issues parks and recreation departments throughout the country face. Using a clear methodology that weaves equity and resilience into each standard is key to this and a more nuanced approach could serve the diverse needs of the community in a more meaningful way. It is also important to factor in the 43,000 acres of OSMP recreational space.

BPR has also recently seen high levels of increased use, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as increased use from surrounding communities. Throughout the country, most public lands are seeing high visitation and at times, overcrowding. This coupled with Boulder's popularity as an outdoor activity mecca for tourists from around the world adds complexity to how BPR properties are used.



Overall, community members feel BPR parks and facilities are in good condition and staff are doing a great job given constrained resources. They also feel that taking care of "what we have" is a high priority. Desires for any new facilities are due more to crowded or inaccessible locations as opposed to the quality of existing facilities. They also think there is room to repurpose or recreate spaces to accommodate shifting needs in real time. While community members are generally happy with facilities, current O&M levels of service are not keeping up with existing needs in parks and public spaces.

BPR relies on volunteerism to bridge this gap – especially when it comes to general park maintenance and cleanup projects through the Park Champs program. Even with this help, many parks have unmaintained areas due to lack of capacity and resources. In terms of asset management, BPR is currently exceeding both Colorado and national media LOS for most parks and recreation asset types. BPR's Asset Management Plan and Recreation Priority Index help to prioritize assets and programming to meet needs of the community, blending quantitative data on asset conditions with qualitative data on asset importance to the community. It is critical that the department keep reevaluating these tools with staff and community feedback to ensure they are being utilized effectively and provide meaningful results.

As part of the Capital Management process, BPR tracks individual assets' Current Replacement Value (CRV) to calculate an asset's total value. In addition to CRV, BPR also tracks each asset's total backlog of deferred maintenance. An asset's CRV and backlogged maintenance are used in conjunction to calculate an asset's Facility Condition Index (FCI) score. The FCI score is used to assess an asset's overall condition and prioritize limited funds for critical capital repairs and/or replacement.

BPR's Current Replacement Value (CRV) has increased from \$226,027,148 in 2016 to its current 2021 value of \$298,476,655. Increases to BPR's CRV are due to the construction of new facilities, the inflation of costs within the construction industry, increases to materials costs, and a better understanding of the Department's assets since the 2016 CRV numbers were developed. As of 2021,

BPR has a total maintenance backlog of \$20,579,515. Using the updated 2021 CRV and backlog maintenance numbers, an updated FCI of 0.069 was calculated. The 0.069 FCI places BPR in the Good to Excellent range of the Department's Facility Condition Scale.

While BPR is currently meeting the goal set by the 2016 Capital Investment Strategic Plan of spending between 2-3%, or \$4-6 million, annually on capital repairs and replacement, when updated to account for the Department's total 2021 CRV of \$298,476,655, BPR is falling behind targeted capital spending. Based on BPR's updated 2021 total asset CRV, the Department should be spending between \$6 million and \$9 million annually on capital repairs and replacement. Using the updated targeted spending range and averaging capital projects over a six-year period, BPR is only on track to meet capital repair and replacement goals in 2026. BPR should continue to annually assess the total CRV of its asset portfolio to assure that the Department is budgeting sufficient funds to adequately maintain its assets.



BPR continues to deliver high-quality recreational programming to the community despite the increasingly difficult challenge of maintaining a sustainable financial position. The implementation of the Recreation Priority Index (RPI) and Service Delivery Model allow the Department to prioritize the relative importance of programs and includes data that help set fee structures and cost recovery rates, setting clear goals for cost recovery that have boosted the recovery ratio overall. Since the implementation of the RPI BPR has been able to increase cost recovery significantly, from an average cost recovery of 83% between 2007 and 2011, to an average of 90% between 2017 and 2019. Grant support for EXPAND and YSI programming has helped bridge the gap between cost and revenues also, along with revenues from contracted partner programs. Despite offset revenues from high-cost recovery programs, BPR is still experiencing a negative gap between yearly program revenues and expenses. From 2017 through 2019, BPR experienced an average program revenue shortfall of \$846,115, meaning that supplementary funds that could be used for other purposes must instead be allocated to balance the program revenue shortfall.

While cost recovery has been improved, revenues from the Department's funding have remained relatively flat. Revenues from BPR's funding sources have remained mostly constant between 2016 through 2021 with an average annual growth rate of -0.4%. The lack of revenue increases creates a challenging operating environment for BPR as departmental overhead and expenditures rise on a near annual basis due to inflation, while the revenues used to support the department's operations remain mostly flat. The trend of fund revenues outpacing expenditures is projected to continue, with BPR's fund revenues project to grow on average 2.8% through 2026 while expenditures are projected to grow 5.8% during the same period.

Parks are having to work harder to serve a growing, diverse population as well as users from surrounding communities. As indicated by the imbalance of BPR's projected average annual expense growth rate (5.8%) and projected funding growth rate (2.8%), funds required to meet 2021 CRV repair and replacement goals and annual O&M spend goals, \$20,579,515 in backlogged maintenance, and \$177.9 million in unfunded capital projects, BPR is faced with the challenging task of continuing to serve the community and operate its facilities with an increasingly strained budget. Based off current funding and expenditures projections, BPR would require an additional \$1.7 million to accomplish all Fiscally Constrained projects, \$36.3 million to accomplish all Action projects, and \$130 million to accomplish all



Vision projects. BPR must be prepared to identify and implement other revenue generating activities and/or strategies in the coming years to supplement its current funding sources.

With parks working harder, funding staying flat, and increasing competition for limited resources, BPR must understand how the community wants to take care of what they have. Ninety-five percent of survey respondents support maintaining current funding sources, while only 45% support implementing a new sales tax. As is the case throughout the country, BPR will need to continue to try to find ways to creatively achieve financial sustainability.



Grant funding for BPR programming has steadily increased since 2016, when funding was at \$292,962. In 2019, grant funding totaled \$681,262 and 2020 saw \$543,406 in grant support. Community members want BPR to continue to foster current partnerships and look for new opportunities to partner with new organizations. Partnerships help ensure a broad range of community voices are heard and support increased access and equity throughout the parks and recreation system. Partnerships help build community relationships, increasing understanding and support for everyone. Community members also support partnering with municipalities, school districts or nonprofits to develop joint use facilities or programs. Two-thirds of survey respondents support partnering with private organizations to develop recreational facilities or programs. Comparable parks and recreation organizations interviewed as part of this planning process indicated that a full-time staff member is charged with continuously applying to private and public grant programs to cultivate these types of partnerships. Another important way to build community is through the work of the amazing volunteers who help BPR with various parks and recreation projects. In the last five years, 2,424 volunteers contributed 19,130 hours of their time to help ensure parks and recreation amenities are working well for the entire community.



It has become increasingly important to ensure youth are educated about and excited to spend time in the outdoors. A growing body of research suggests that increasing children's interactions with nature can have positive benefits throughout life. Connecting to nature provides tremendous physical, mental and spiritual benefits. The power of these benefits increases exponentially when started at a young age. While Boulder is known for its outdoor lifestyle and amazing natural landscape, there continues to be a gap in connecting to nature "close to home" across the country due to limited access, safety and other factors. Since 2014, BPR staff have developed strategies to address these issues by offering programming that better connects children to nature. Despite Boulder's and Colorado's leadership in appreciating nature and active lifestyles, no community is exempt from the concerns regarding childhood inactivity and limited access to the outdoors. According to recent studies, Colorado has the fastest growing rates of inactivity and obesity in the nation.

Youth are struggling with challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic and continued stress and anxiety. Mental health is an issue BPR can have a positive impact on through programming and services. Teen depression is at high levels and the digital age sees children spending a lot of time

indoors and constantly “plugged in.” BPR has a role to play in programs, youth-focused amenities in parks and other opportunities to engage youth, build connections and relationships and get children and teens back outside and interacting with one another. BPR has conducted engagement with youth and found that kids desire more challenging and active amenities in parks (e.g., obstacle courses) and have expressed interest in Nature Play (areas to observe wildlife, play with dirt, sticks and water). Eighty-seven percent of community members who took the survey feel programming for teens is important - 53% stating it is essential and 34% feel it is very important (34%). Currently, there is a gap in teen/high school age programming. Community members understand that it is important to have opportunities for youth to interact with each other and learn to value the outdoors, be good stewards, appreciate their community, and learn and discover through various experiences. Parks and recreation can play a critical role in supporting youth – and our future.

Nature play is an area that BPR can continue to focus on to provide opportunities for youth to enjoy nature and get creative. Nature play should be integrated wherever it is feasible, particularly near greenways and open spaces. Nature play is interaction with the natural environment that allows for hands-on contact, exploration, contemplation, and education. Nature play can take several forms, in natural area parks and greenways off-trail, in traditional play areas that incorporate or emulate natural materials and processes, and in our own backyards. One of the most important contributions BPR can make is to offer opportunities that promote community health and wellness for youth and to encourage youth and their families to engage in outdoor activities. Key topics from the 2015 Growing Up Boulder Nature Play Symposium Report that staff should continue to work on include:

- Risk and how to manage the “we can’t do it” mentality
- Helicopter Parents – how to initiate change
- Thinking Outside the Box approach
- Partnership Opportunities



## Organizational Readiness

### ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS

Being adaptable to change is critical for all organizations. Using data, making proactive decisions and staying up to date on technology can significantly benefit the stability of BPR in the future. It can also help ensure customer satisfaction. Strong internal organization and collaborative decision-making used to embrace new opportunities, as well as improved collaboration between BPR and other organizations and agencies are important aspects of organizational readiness according to community members. There is also concern that complacency may result in inefficient systems, lower customer satisfaction, lost opportunities, inability to recover from setbacks, and poor implementation. BPR has implemented a variety of initiatives to ensure staff are ready as an organization to meet operations, maintenance and programming needs. New software, service delivery models and asset management tools and training have been good steps to ensure the department is ready to meet current needs and is proactively looking to the future. With the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been major impacts to BPR, along with all city departments in Boulder and across the country. Staffing has been cut with furloughs and layoffs. The department must think creatively about how to rebuild, develop leadership, and be nimbler in the face of increased responsibility and less hands to do the work. Operationally, the

department needs to build in the ability to adapt models and facility operations based not only on data collected over time, but holistically, based on data, user preferences, revenue generation, and programming options to better integrate flexibility into day-to-day operations of programming and facilities.

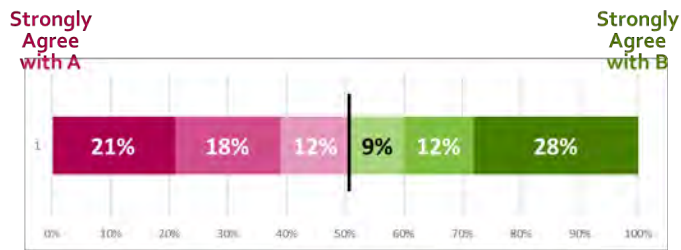
According to the 2015 GMMP, BPR provides a high quality of maintenance. Since the 2014 Master Plan was completed, the department has implemented asset management and capital investment strategies that are proving successful in managing assets more efficiently and effectively and investing in capital projects more strategically. While BPR has made strides, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted staff levels and current employees are often stretched beyond capacity. To maintain a high level of organizational readiness and a resilient workforce, BPR needs to continue to offer continuing education opportunities and implement organizational improvements (e.g., new technological innovations, updated management and maintenance software as it comes online, work order management integration with asset management). It might also be beneficial to conduct outside audits of management and maintenance practices at more regular intervals to proactively address any issues that arise. BPR needs to continue to collect asset, management and maintenance data – but analyze this data in meaningful ways to consistently improve performance. Having a robust GIS data library and adding more sophisticated analysis methods for spatial information can help with this effort.

### **EQUITY AND RESILIENCE**

Additional equity mapping is required to effectively analyze the distribution of BPR facilities based on equity metrics (i.e., not location, population, etc.). On average \$51,790 in grant funds between 2017 and 2019 were used for EXPAND/Inclusion programs (8% of overall program cost). Offering programs for various user groups is important to the community, especially with regards to opportunities offered for low-income populations and people with disabilities. Public sentiment is that the “missing middle” population is not adequately served by BPR’s options due the high price of certain programs.

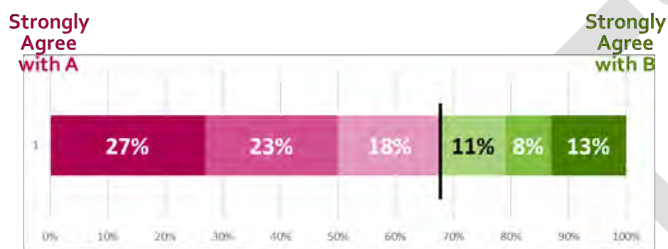
BPR has had significant success with the Recquity pass program and other financial aid programs. There is agreement within the community that subsidies should be provided for older adults, low-income community members, people with disabilities and underrepresented communities. In fact, older adults are now a prioritized service group due to their increasing proportion of the overall city population. While there are programs in place for these groups, concern that programming is out of reach for lower- and middle-class families who may need just a bit of help to access programs and services has been growing.

In terms of fees for people who do not live within city limits, survey respondents are split regarding having these individuals continue to pay higher fees versus equalizing fees between residents and non-residents. Conversely, a majority of respondents (68%) are in favor of eliminating higher fees for people who work or own businesses in Boulder, but are not city residents, allowing more equitable access for people, regardless of home address, who contribute to the Boulder community. Sixty-eight percent of respondents believe



**A.** Individuals living outside the city of Boulder should pay higher fees for using Boulder Parks and Recreation facilities and programs.

**B.** There should be no difference in fees between residents and non-residents of the city of Boulder for using Boulder Parks and Recreation facilities and programs.



**A.** Individuals who live outside the city of Boulder but work or own a business in Boulder should pay resident fees for using Parks and Recreation facilities and programs

**B.** Individuals who live outside the city of Boulder but work or own a business in Boulder should pay higher non-resident fees for using Parks and Recreation facilities and programs.

There are many barriers to access, and these can shift based on population demographics and can change over time. Currently, the most common reason given for not using parks, recreation facilities or services was a lack of time. Renters and those living in multi-family housing units were more likely to cite lack of time as a barrier than owners and those living in single family homes (see Table 75 in Appendix B). Cost, lack of time, lack of parking, and lack of facilities for what they want to do were most often mentioned as a barrier by renters compared to owners. Hispanic respondents were more likely to mention cost, poor health, lack of parking, and barriers to walking or biking to a park or facilities compared to White respondents (see Table 95). Those who identify as something other than White, or Hispanic were more likely to say parks and facilities do not feel safe for all than White or Hispanic respondents. Cost was more often mentioned as a barrier by respondents in households with children under age 12 than in households without children, while lack of parking was more often cited by respondents in households without children than by respondents in households with children (see Table 115). Cost and poor health were more likely to be cited as reasons for not using recreation parks and/or facilities or using them more often by those living in Crossroads & East Boulder compared to those in other subcommunities (see Table 55). Lack of time was most likely to be cited by those in subcommunities Crossroads & East Boulder and Uni Hill & University than in other subcommunities. Lack of parking was most likely to be considered a barrier by those in Southeast Boulder compared to those in other subcommunities.

While BPR is a leader in sustainability, climate work and ecosystem services, the department needs to look even more holistically at programming, facilities, internal operations and transportation options to continue to lower the collective impact of these on climate change. Coordinating with city-wide efforts to make positive strides to improve environmental health (e.g., soil carbon sequestration, parks as part of connected urban ecosystems providing refuge for native species of plant and animals, urban forest canopy increases to mitigate for heat island effect and provide shade for parks and recreation users, and continuing to utilize these methods to effect positive change and increase physical and mental health as indicators of equity – environmental, social and economic.

All BPR staff, in cooperation and coordination with other city departments need to continue implementing existing strategies and plans, as well as seek new, cutting-edge opportunities to work with a variety of partners to enhance and promote resiliency in all its forms. Resilience was identified by community members as important for adaptability and preparedness for inevitable change and improving recovery. Hopes for the future - continue to provide programs and amenities that last a long time and improve wildlife, forestry and ecosystem preservation. Concerns - being unprepared to handle crises including floods, drought and climate change.

## Appendices

- A. BRS Existing Facility Observations & Opportunities Report
- B. NRC/Polco Statistically Valid Survey Findings
- C. Financial Overview and Funding Strategies Memorandum

## **Attachment B: DRAFT Facilities Assessment**





# BOULDER PARKS AND RECREATION Master Plan Update

## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITY ASSESSMENT



**June 28, 2021**

This Report represents subject-specific research findings that will ultimately inform the content of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update. The information contained in this report does not necessarily constitute the final narrative that will be presented in the plan. During the process of conducting research for this Report, a number of other issues and questions were uncovered that merit additional discussion in the Needs Assessment phase of the planning process. The final content of the Master Plan may reflect significant portions of this report, but will not consist entirely of it.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE 2	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & STUDY PURPOSE
PAGE 3	FACILITY LOCATOR MAP
PAGE 4	CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS - COST TO IMPLEMENT METHODOLOGY
PAGE 5	BENCHMARKING STANDARDS
PAGE 8	EAST BOULDER COMMUNITY CENTER ASSESSMENT
PAGE 16	NORTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER & IRIS STUDIO ASSESSMENT
PAGE 24	SOUTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER ASSESSMENT
PAGE 32	SALBERG COMMUNITY CENTER ASSESSMENT
PAGE 35	BOULDER POTTERY LAB ASSESSMENT
PAGE 37	BOULDER PARKS AND RECREATION SYSTEM - ASSESSMENT SUMMARY
PAGE 39	TRENDS IN AQUATICS AND RECREATION
PAGE 47	APPENDIX 1 - PROGRAM ASSESSMENT CHECKLISTS - ALL FACILITIES
PAGE 63	APPENDIX 2 - BRS   BPR MEETING NOTES

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of their Boulder Parks and Recreation Master Plan, BRS was contracted by Design Workshop to provide this report, a conceptual overview of BPR's primary indoor recreation facilities. The six facilities reviewed are the East Boulder Community Center, South Boulder Recreation Center, North Boulder Recreation Center, Iris Studio, Salberg Community Center, and the Boulder Pottery Lab. The report is in part based on a review of previously completed assessments, a review of existing facilities with members of BPR staff, and an in-person visual assessment of each facility. While this overview is not exhaustive, it highlights the key observations and opportunities identified through our review.

### **The previously completed reports that were reviewed as part of this assessment include:**

- The Boulder Parks and Recreation Department Master Plan completed in 2014
- The Boulder Aquatic Feasibility Plan by Barker Rinker Seacat Architecture completed in 2015
- The BPR Capital Investment Strategic Plan 2016-2026 completed in 2015
- The City of Boulder Facilities Strategic Plan by Farnsworth Group completed in 2016
- The BPR Asset Management Program completed in 2018
- The Boulder Parks and Recreation 5-Year Progress Report completed in 2019

### **STUDY PURPOSE**

The City of Boulder is updating its parks and recreation master plan completed in 2014. In the 7 years since then, demand for indoor recreation facilities continued to grow with participation only diminishing in 2020 as a result of COVID-19 related facility closures and capacity limitations. As vaccination rates increase, and restrictions lessen, it is anticipated demand will return.

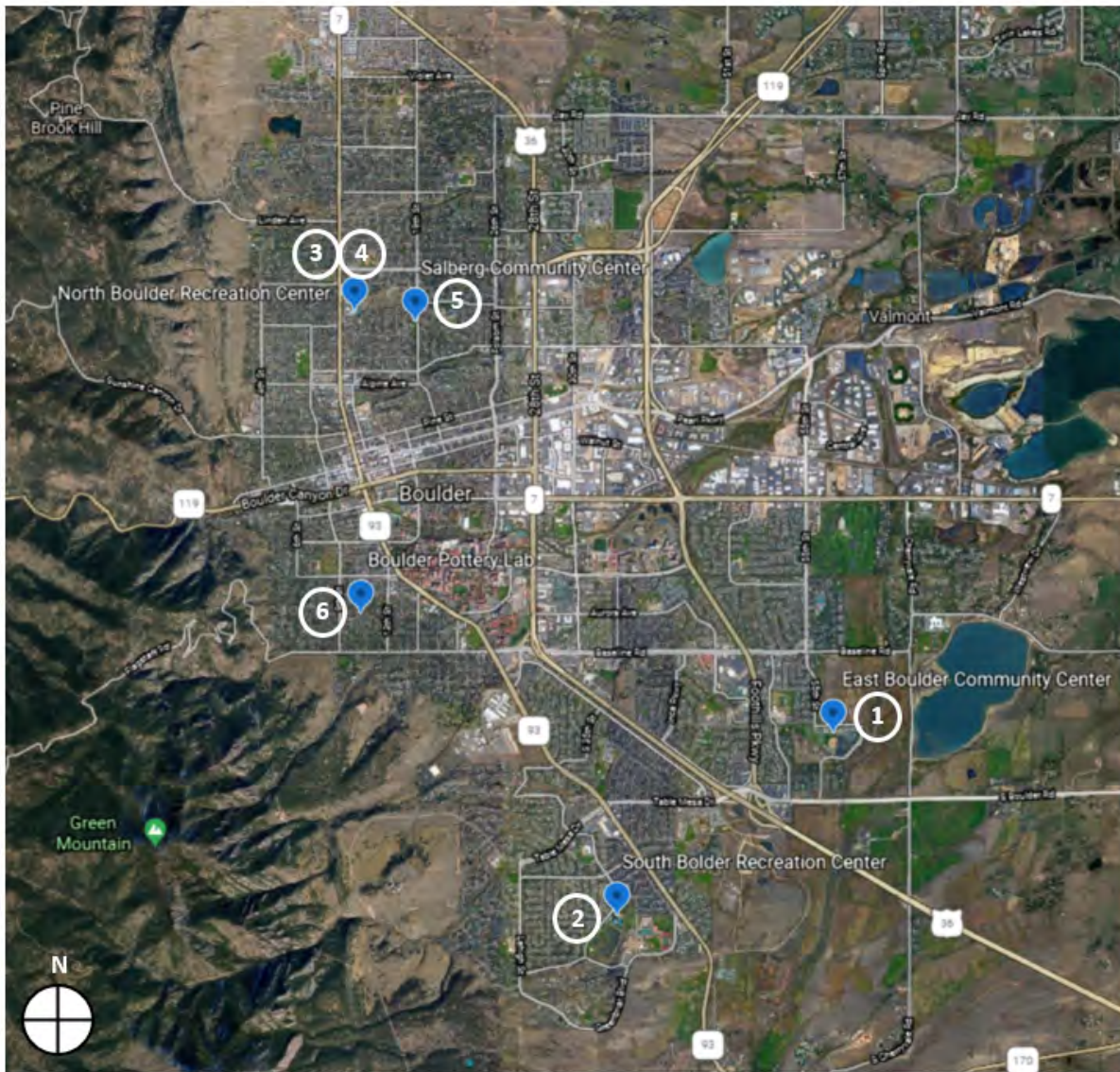
The purpose of this indoor recreation center needs assessment is to identify conceptual infrastructure improvements and provide recommendations for potential renovations and expansion. BRS findings are based on a review of previously completed assessments and site visits to BPR's three indoor recreation centers along with Iris Studio, Salberg Studio and the Pottery Lab.

Consideration of findings and priorities to renovate or add facilities should be aligned with community input and engagement strategies currently underway.

### **REPORT CONTENTS - The key content areas of this report include:**

- A summary of national Benchmarking Standards
- A visual assessment of existing facilities condition
- A facility needs assessment based on previous reports, site visits, and discussion with BPR Staff
- Identification of conceptual infrastructure improvement opportunities
- A discussion of current trends in Aquatics and Recreation

## LOCATOR MAP



1. East Boulder Community Center
2. South Boulder Recreation Center
3. North Boulder Recreation Center
4. Iris Studio
5. Salberg Community Center
6. Boulder Pottery Lab

**CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS - COST TO IMPLEMENT METHODOLOGY**

The current BPR CIP guidelines prioritize maintenance of current assets over the development of new facilities. This framework was confirmed through the 2014 master planning process. The 2021 master planning process, including robust public input, may reveal a different perspective has since emerged. The capital improvement opportunities identified in this report have not been vetted through a community outreach effort that would be required for meaningful prioritization, nor have they been evaluated by a cost estimating professional. For the purposes of this report we have categorized each of the observed capital improvement opportunities according to a conceptual estimate of anticipated funding requirement defined as follows:

- \$** Make the most of existing resources through targeted, fiscally restrained upgrades that address maintenance issues.
- \$\$** Characterized as an 'extra' service or capital improvement that will likely exceed funding outside typical maintenance.
- \$\$\$** Represents a fiscally unconstrained goal meant to fully address community needs and desires.

**PROGRAM ASSESSMENT CHECKLISTS**

BRS conducted in person visits to each of the 6 facilities addressed in this report. For each center, a detailed checklist evaluated both the physical condition of the spaces and the program use. They can be found in Appendix 1 of the Report.

**BPR & BRS MEETING NOTES**

Notes of BRS meetings with BPR Staff on-site, and over telephone can be found in Appendix 2 of this report.



## BENCHMARKING

The National Recreation and Parks Association's (NRPA) 2021 Agency Performance Review contains data from 1,000 unique park and recreation agencies across the United States, as reported between 2018 and 2020. The report notes that the typical agency with recreation centers has one facility for every 30,709 residents. Cities with a population of 100,000-250,000 have on average an indoor recreation center for every 53,550 residents. It is noteworthy the NRPA report does not provide a definition for "recreation center" and program spaces within indoor recreation facilities vary across jurisdictions.

Figure 1. Indoor Park and Recreation Facilities – Population Per Facility as reported by NRPA

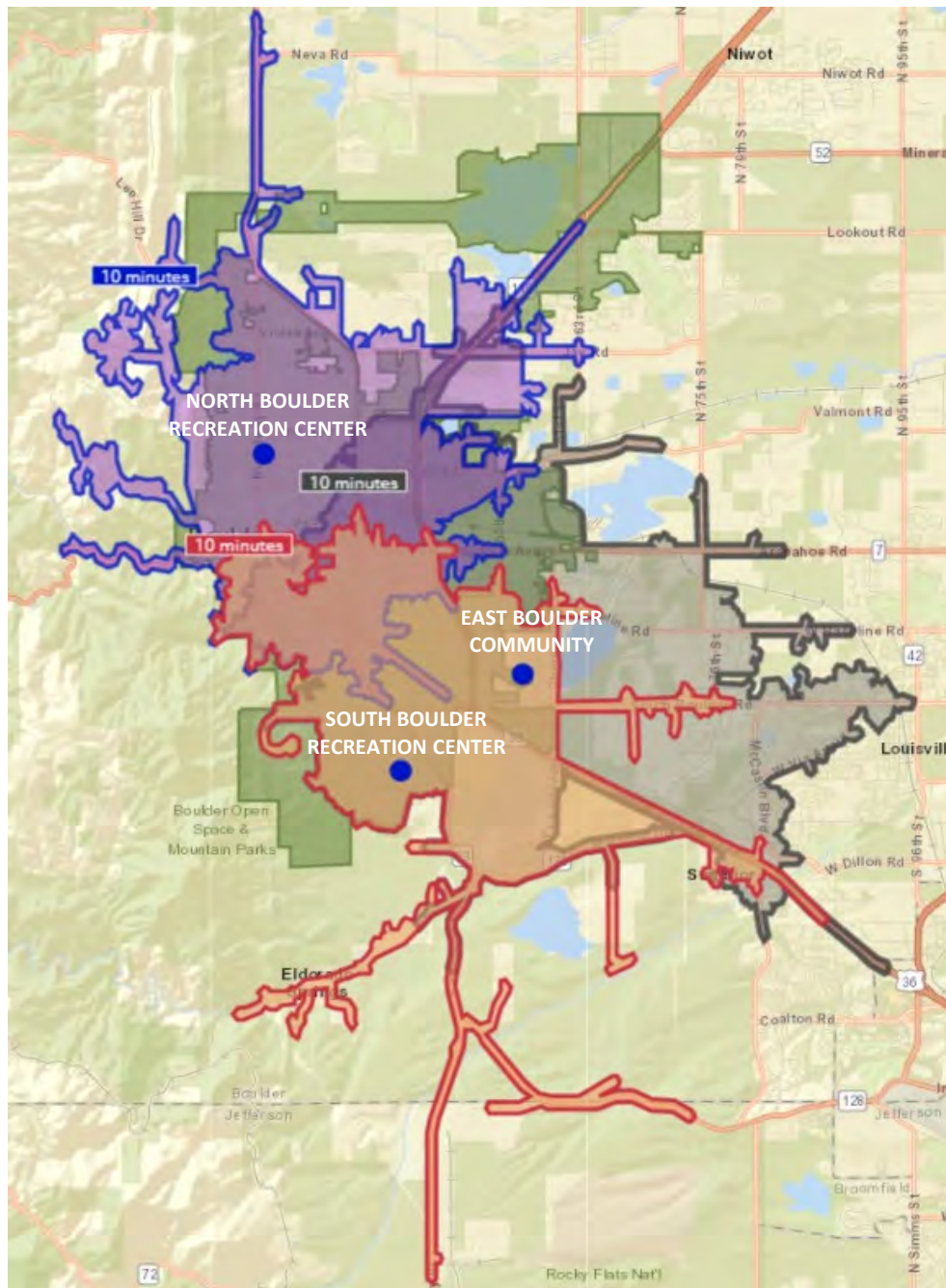
FIGURE 1: INDOOR PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES – POPULATION PER FACILITY (BY PREVALENCE AND POPULATION PER FACILITY)							
Type of Facilities		Median Number of Residents per Facility					
		Population of Jurisdiction					
	Percent of Agencies	All Agencies	Less than 20,000	20,000 to 49,999	50,000 to 99,999	100,000 to 250,000	More than 250,000
Recreation centers	63.9%	30,709	9,800	24,545	41,452	53,550	71,514
Community centers	58.6	29,000	9,045	26,099	41,245	56,025	109,089
Senior centers	39.0	61,975	12,304	34,674	68,540	122,000	275,401
Performance amphitheaters	35.1	62,927	11,000	31,115	59,294	113,221	341,294
Nature centers	31.6	109,212	11,704	33,164	69,250	125,000	361,613
Aquatics centers	25.0	49,024	11,000	29,790	62,313	85,500	235,760
Stadiums	18.0	64,800	9,126	27,192	62,682	135,323	330,868
Ice rinks	13.2	55,174	7,911	27,000	55,174	102,543	385,525
Teen centers	12.8	57,729	12,044	32,000	57,027	152,714	343,661
Arenas	6.5	53,236	7,102	24,413	66,215	118,271	499,500

The City of Boulder, with an estimated 2020 population of 107,800 as reported by Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI), has three recreation centers totaling approximately 144,000 square feet. Each of Boulder's three indoor recreation facilities offer amenities widely accepted as "full service" recreation center components: drop-in fitness area, gymnasium space, indoor aquatics space, community meeting spaces and programmed activities for residents across the spectrum of ages.

The NRPA report also shows that a quarter of reporting agencies have a dedicated indoor Aquatics center. For communities similar in population size as Boulder, the reporting agencies have an indoor Aquatics center for every 85,500 residents. The NRPA benchmarked "Aquatics Center" is a stand-alone indoor facility, not simply a leisure or lap pool within a recreation center. Given the active swimming community in Boulder, and the demand on pools located within the three indoor BPR recreation facilities, a facility of this type would likely be well utilized and potentially profitable. Continued analysis, public engagement and consideration of a funding mechanism for a dedicated Aquatics center would be first steps in determining viability of an Aquatics center. Recreation centers generally have a service radius of 10 to 15 minute drive. For most Boulder residents, an indoor recreation center is within a 10-minute drive as demonstrated by ESRI mapping and population data. Given the central location of North Boulder Recreation Center, all residents have access to a recreation center within a 15-minute drive.

## BENCHMARKING

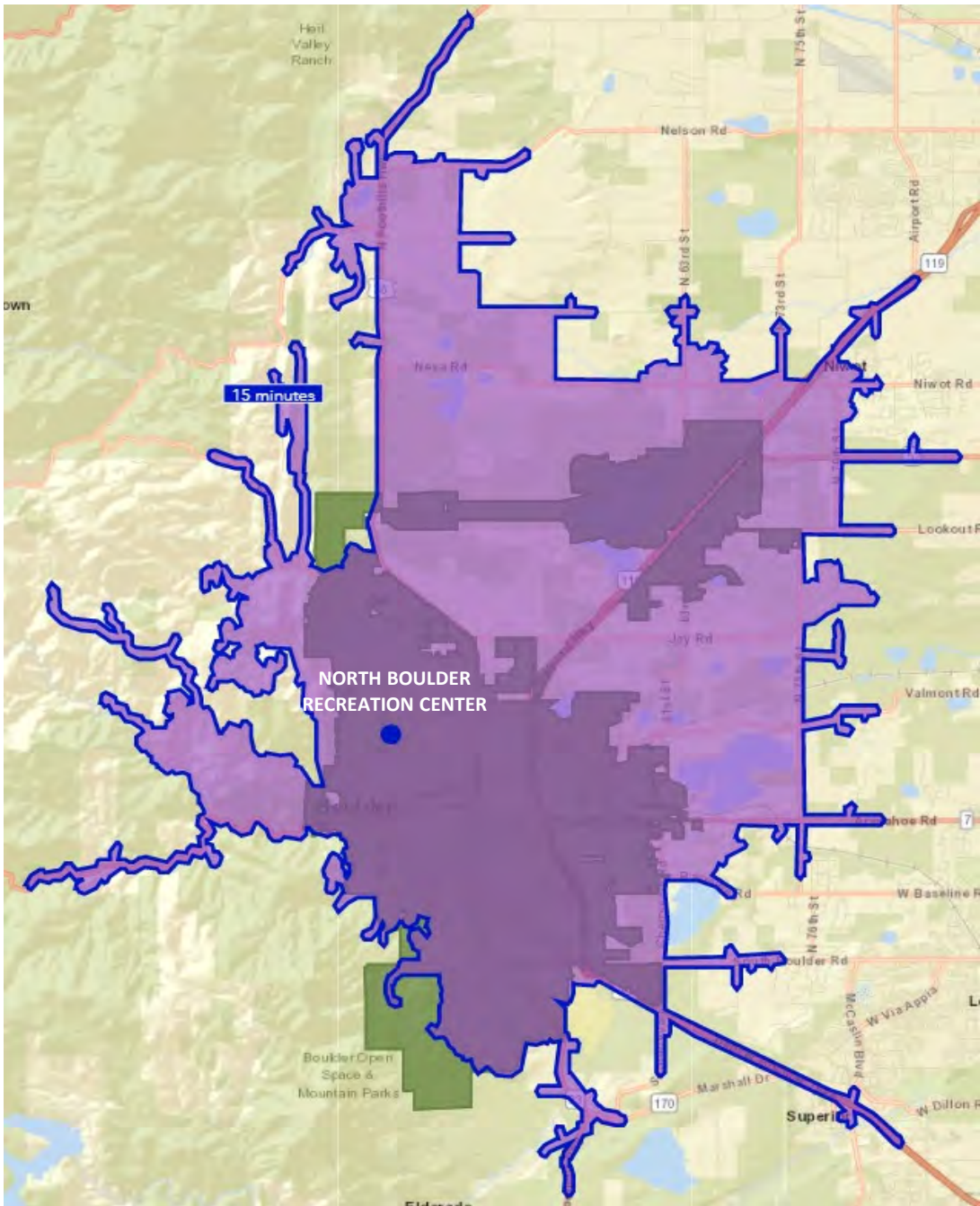
- Indoor recreation centers with 10-minute boundaries



While BPR's recreation centers are aging and in need of renovation or updates, the square footage of indoor recreation space provided to residents exceeds national indoor recreation center standards as reported by NRPA. Staff at each Center indicated that patrons are resistant to traveling to access another center despite the close proximity.

BENCHMARKING

- North Boulder Recreation Center with 15-minute boundaries



North Boulder's location provides 15-minute access to residents in the northern portion of the city.



## EAST BOULDER COMMUNITY CENTER

## EAST BOULDER COMMUNITY CENTER



### FACILITY INVENTORY

#### **Location**

5660 Sioux Drive, Boulder CO 80303

#### **Hours of Operation**

Monday - Friday 6:00 am to 7:00 pm

Saturday - Sunday 8:00 am to 1:00 pm

#### **Size**

55,000 s.f.

#### **Year Constructed**

1991

#### **2016 Facility Strategic Plan Summary**

Facility was given an **87%** (Green) rating which indicates the following: Sustainment or restoration as follows: minor repairs to several subcomponents; or significant repair, rehabilitation, or replacement of one or more subcomponents, but not enough to encompass the whole.

\$2,670,000 was allocated for remediation through 2025

#### **Flood Hazard; Determined to be in flood hazard zone**

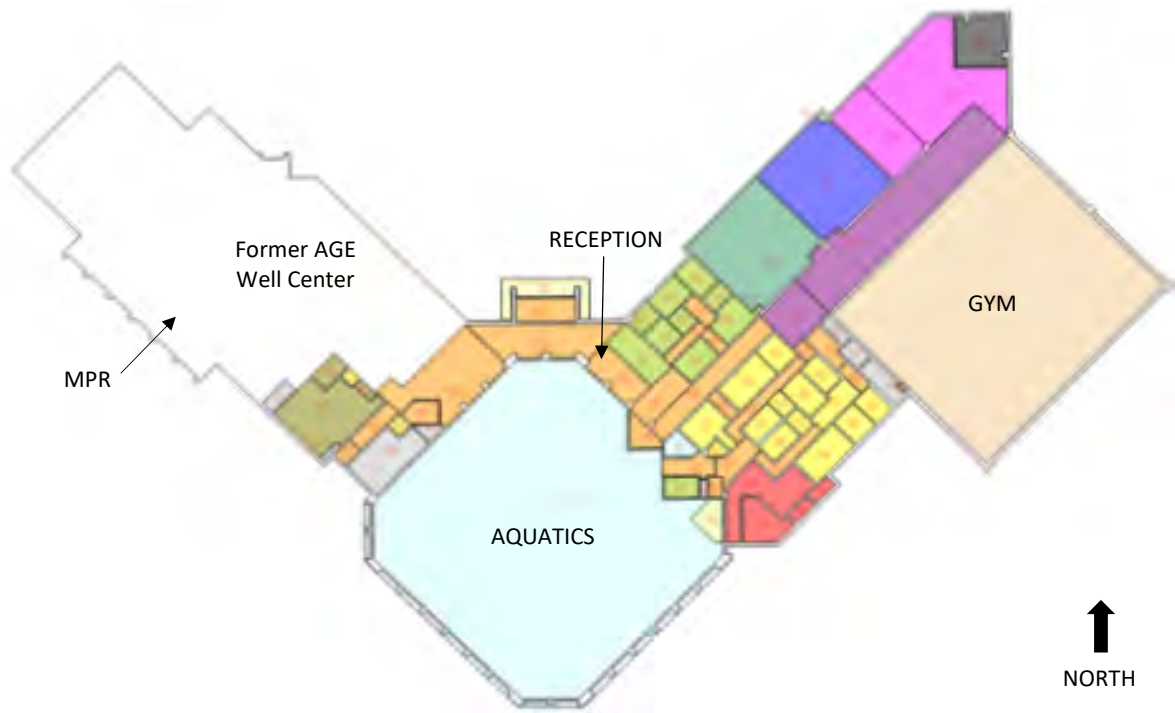
The East Boulder Recreation Center is located on the edges of the FEMA 500-year flood zone. It doesn't appear from observation that the East Boulder Recreation Center has ever sustained damage from flooding however, the potential does appear to exist.

#### **Primary Facility Program Areas**

<b>Aquatics</b>	<b>11,648 sf</b>
Leisure Pool with lazy river and waterslide	
eight-lane-by-25-yard swimming pool	
Aquafit Classes	
<b>Locker Rooms &amp; Restrooms</b>	<b>2,036 sf</b>
<b>Weights and Cardio</b>	<b>2,159 sf</b>
<b>Multipurpose Spaces</b>	<b>2,189 sf</b>
Includes event room with commercial kitchen	
<b>Aerobics</b>	<b>1,468 sf</b>
Fitness, Mind/Body, yoga	
<b>Dance</b>	<b>1,344 sf</b>
<b>Gymnasium/Pickleball</b>	<b>8,344 sf</b>
<b>Child Care</b>	<b>850 sf</b>
<b>Administration</b>	<b>1404 sf</b>
<b>Circulation</b>	<b>4,220 sf</b>
<b>Storage</b>	<b>823 sf</b>
<b>Mechanical</b>	<b>823 sf</b>

# EAST BOULDER COMMUNITY CENTER

Plan illustrating space allocations at the East Boulder Community Center



Color Legend

- |                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Aquatics                 | Multi-Purpose     |
| Child Watch              | Gymnasium         |
| Offices   Administration | Locker   Restroom |
| Yoga                     | Storage           |
| Weights & Cardio         | Mechanical        |
| Dance                    | Circulation       |



Reception Desk



Multi-purpose | Event Space

## EAST BOULDER COMMUNITY CENTER

### OVERVIEW

The East Boulder Recreation Center consists of recreation and aquatics facilities. This includes a gymnasium, weight room, fitness rooms for dance, yoga, spin and other activities. It also includes administrative offices and an attached area that is temporarily being used as a day care center. The exterior of the building is a combination of concrete masonry units and EIFS. The roof appears to be a mix of membrane roof and standing seam metal roof. The building interior is a mix of exposed concrete masonry and painted gypsum board walls with tile and carpet floors. The gymnasium is a wood floor, and fitness spaces have athletic flooring. The ceilings consist mainly of acoustic ceiling tiles with a number of painted gypsum board soffits.

The facility generally appears to be in good condition, clean and well maintained. The Facility Strategic Plan of 2016 identified a number of deficiencies that are in various states of repair. Based on conversations with staff, a significant number of those deficiencies have been addressed and there is a plan in place to address those that remain.

### ARCHITECTURE

East Boulder Community Center (EBCC) was originally constructed in 1991. A renovation and expansion in the early 2000s was so well received it set the tone for the renovations of the existing centers in Boulder. The facility has been well-maintained, and particularly in the context of the surrounding park and trail connections, it remains a beloved east Boulder asset.

The Community Center features large windows along the southern and western walls of the natatorium space, which offer incredible views and fills the space with natural light. Both a lap pool and a warmer leisure pool are present in the aquatic center, giving adults and children an enjoyable experience and creating a welcoming family atmosphere.

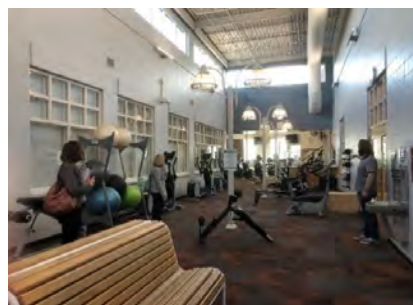
The gymnasium is in good condition and supports programmed sports in the evening, fitness during the day and evening, as well as drop-in use during the day. EBCC's gymnasium serves as the "hub" of BPR summer camp programs. The space is sufficient for camps, but the designation further limits the availability of drop-in use. Staff report the gym is often over-programmed and gym space in general is at a premium. Lack of storage is an issue given the multiple demands on this space and the varied equipment needed to run programs and classes. Locker rooms are adequately sized but private showers in both men's and women's locker rooms are desired by the community. Staff note the dry lockers outside of the men's locker room are underutilized. Two rooms support dance and fitness programs, as well as some summer camp activities. EBCC's main storage closet is located by the leisure pool and houses the pool mechanical systems along with program and pool equipment and general maintenance items, supplies and equipment. Staff note the hazard of operating the mechanical lift, stored in the space, which requires closing the pool to maneuver around the tight spaces.



Gang Showers



Fitness Area



Fitness Corridor

## EAST BOULDER COMMUNITY CENTER

### AGE Well Center/Childcare

The west wing of EBCC consists of the center's on-site childcare and a 200-person event hall with an attached commercial kitchen. The remaining west wing includes two activity rooms, lounge area, reception desk, staff offices and storage that previously supported a Senior Center. The Senior Center is no longer operating and BPR is currently leasing the space to a private childcare provider. The commercial kitchen is no longer operable and with senior meals occurring at other locations, no longer needed unless the city would like to rent the space to a commercial food vendor.

The space in the west wing is currently helping to alleviate staff support space needs (meeting rooms) and storage constraints on the east wing. However, given the vacancy created by the Senior Center, and BPR's intent to use the west wing in the future, the timing is right to fully examine the surrounding community needs and the constraints of the 30-year-old center.

### AQUATICS

The aquatics area dominates the view from the front entry. Large south and west-facing windows provide natural sunlight and create a nice setting. The 8-lane pool at EBCC is used for various learn to swim programs, lifeguard training, masters swim, open lap swim, and is rented to user groups for swim team. The attendance levels at EBCC lap pool are high, with more demand anticipated in the future. The waterslide into the leisure pool is nearing the end of its useful life. Its location in the middle of the pool obstructs sight lines and creates the need for additional lifeguards to monitor the leisure pool. In addition to the waterslide, the indoor leisure pool has a small lazy river, bubble bench, and tot slide. While the pool accommodates aqua fitness classes, the overall leisure pool lacks interactive features common today. The hot tub location is not visible from the guard office. The fenced outdoor patio off the aquatics area offers views of the adjacent lake and the Flatirons. The patio was intended to serve pool users, but it is not currently used by the public.

The venue supports a huge swimming population, with exceptional winter demand. Swim teams are given priority over public use, to the dissatisfaction of the public. The facility is significantly constrained on three sides due to the proximity of the lake, bike trail, and fire lane. Opportunities are limited as any expansion to the natatorium would require the lake edge to be modified along with the trail and fire lane. Due to the high water table, a very expensive excavation to increase site facility amenities is challenged. A desire for improved indoor-outdoor use of the pool was noted by the staff. A small addition to the area of the existing sun deck, along with operable garage-type doors might be an option. See the aerial photo for details.

### ADA | ACCESSIBILITY

BRS observations were limited to visual assessment of spaces, and ADA related compliance issues were not measured or verified as part of our work. The Facility Strategic plan completed in June 2016 evaluated ADA/Accessibility Issues. ADA requirements have not changed since then. It was called to our attention by staff that the administrative offices area has a rear door that can only be accessed by climbing a couple steps. While there is another route that allows for wheelchair access, the steps are not an ideal configuration.

### EQUITY & INCLUSION

EBCC's location, amount of program spaces and layout meet the spirit of equity overall. Changing demands in community wellness may involve reimagining spaces and program priorities to allow for greater flexibility and access. Anecdotal reports indicate opportunities to more broadly meet patron needs. The most important first step to achieving equitable program space is community engagement.

## EAST BOULDER COMMUNITY CENTER

### ARCHITECTURE & SPACE DEFICIENCIES

BRS Observations were limited to a visual assessment of the space. The deficiencies noted below are based on visual observations made during our site visit and comments provided by staff .

FRONT DESK: The location and configuration of the front desk does not allow for adequate access control. When entering the building from the main entry, the desk is set well off to the left which allows visitors to easily access the corridor in front of the pool, the child watch area, and the 'age-well' area, without having to check-in and in some instances without being seen by staff. Recreation Center Staff mentioned that the configuration of the desk leaves them feeling vulnerable as there is not clear 'escape' path from behind the desk should there be a need to do so.

FINISHES: While the facility overall is clean and well maintained, the material finishes, furniture, and lighting is dated, giving the space a feeling or sense of being from an earlier era.

MEETING SPACE: There is inadequate meeting space for Rec Center Staff.

BREAK ROOM: Staff break room is too small for the number of people who use it. This is further exaggerated by use of the space for staff meetings and temporary summer staff.

STORAGE: The Center has inadequate storage, especially as it relates to the gym and summer program equipment. The awkwardly located storage in the pool area shares space with pool equipment and a make-shift office space.

ROCK CLIMBING: This feature is largely unused. Staff suggested there may be a better use for the space.

FITNESS SPACES: The Facility Strategic plan noted that EBCC has the largest dedicated fitness area of Boulder's three recreation centers. Use levels vary by season, with winter use (pre-Covid) requiring a sign-up sheet for equipment, but staff confirm it is inadequate to meet year-round peak demand times. Customer requests include an enhanced functional fitness area, more cardio equipment, and an expanded free weight area. The climbing wall, tucked into the east corner of the fitness area, is underutilized, and generally limited to youth attending summer camp. While removal would minimally increase floorspace, the lowered floor and angular walls do not support a simple expansion of the fitness area. Staff confirmed to BRS that these space deficiencies persist.

GANG SHOWERS: Private showers are preferred by contemporary users .

LIFEGUARD ROOM: Room is undersized though there is no obvious way to expand.

POOL: Is well used and programming could support additional lanes if space were available for expansion. Staff noted that boilers are old and gas dependent.

POOL SLIDE: There are signs of corrosion on the stair access to the slide.

### EVALUATION OF PROGRAMMING

The pool is popular with the community and heavily used, but priority is given to swim teams. Because of site constraints expansion is not an option. Satisfying the wider needs of the community for access to aquatics facilities may need to be addressed system wide if scheduling cannot improve access. Group fitness participation remains strong as does the utilization of weights and cardio area. Incorporating a trend like My Wellness Cloud, in which wearable technology syncs with in-class technology would elevate the fitness experience and provide a customer relationship management tool for staff with little impact on facility space. EBCC had one of the first climbing walls in a public recreation center. Though this trend has waned, and private climbing gyms accelerated, this kind of innovation can be realized again at EBCC though it will require financial resources and a thorough analysis of current community needs.



EAST BOULDER COMMUNITY CENTER

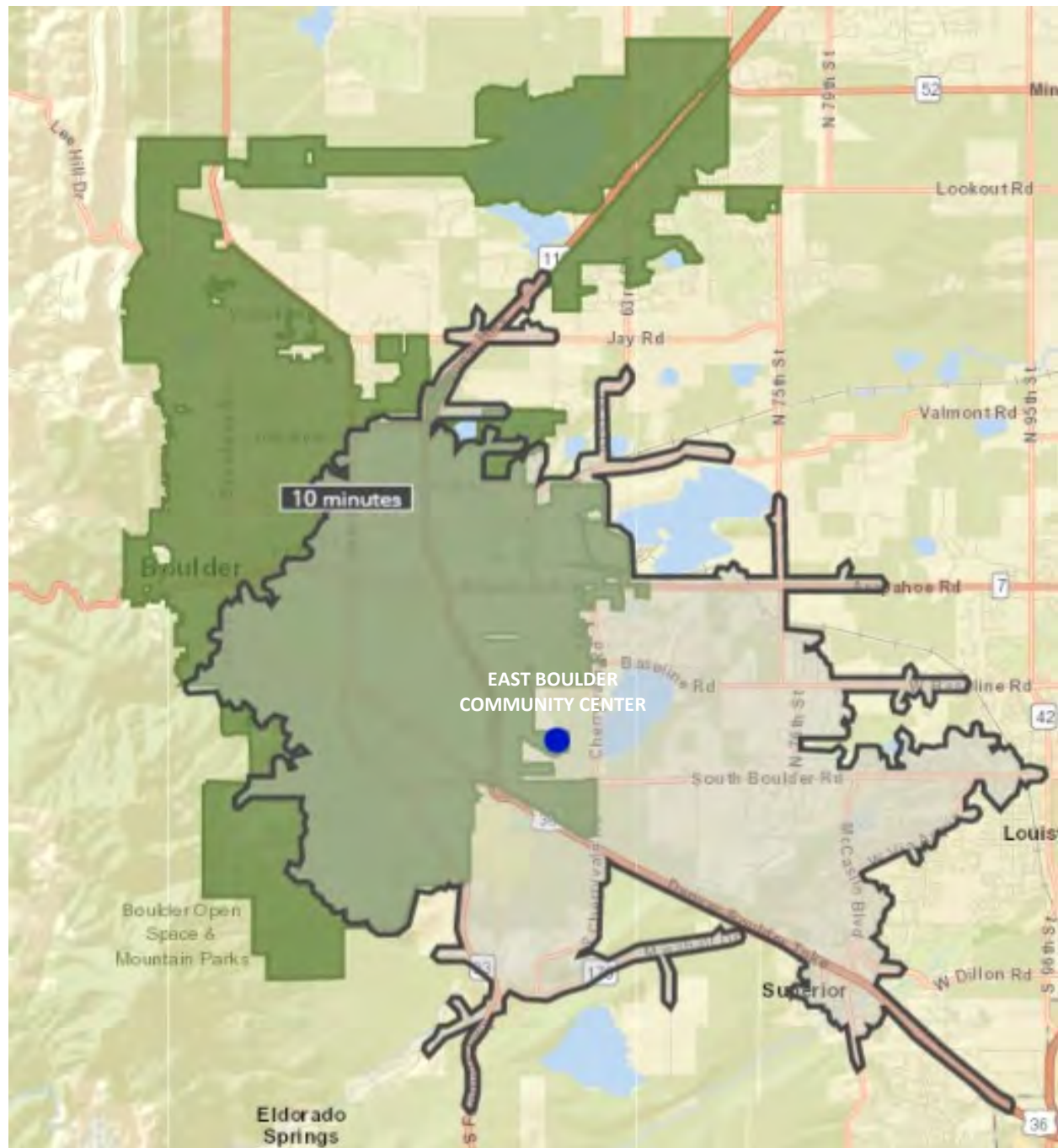


CONCEPTUAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES		Cost to Implement
BPR may consider conducting a feasibility study of the Community Center to evaluate current offerings, and opportunities for how the 'age-well' area may best be utilized, and other spaces reconfigured to address the needs and desires of the community.		\$
A study of the front desk's relationship to the building entry may be undertaken to address security concerns. While the space available at the building entry is adequate, there doesn't appear to be an obvious way to relocate the front desk for optimal visual control of the building. It appears an addition to the front of the building may be a good option to enable this change. The space currently used for the front desk may be reconfigured to address other needs such as staff meeting spaces and storage.		\$\$
Convert gang showers to private showers		\$
Look for opportunity to switch older gas boilers to electrical system		\$\$
Outdoor play area associated with child-watch area could be enhanced to better support outdoor play.		\$
The rock climbing area may be converted to another type of space like an eSports gaming area. These kinds of spaces offer opportunities for members of the community who may not otherwise come to the center to use the space, and because of their popularity generate revenue for BPR.		\$\$
The existing catering kitchen is underused. Partnering with a catering company to provide services to the center, or for rental events may be considered . The benefit of such use could lead to generation of revenue for BPR.		\$

# EAST BOULDER COMMUNITY CENTER

## BENCHMARKING

Population within a 10-minute drive  
82,146 (2020) / 85,292 (2025)



On the eastern edge of the city, East Boulder Recreation Center is easily accessible to residents within Boulder as well as surrounding communities.

## NORTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER



## NORTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER



### FACILITY INVENTORY

#### **Location**

3170 Broadway, Boulder CO 80304

#### **Hours of Operation**

Monday - Friday 6:00 am to 9:30 pm

Saturday - Sunday 7:30 am to 8:00 pm

#### **Size**

61,656 s.f.

#### **Year Constructed**

1974, with major renovation and addition in 2001

#### **2016 Facility Strategic Plan Summary**

Facility was given an **87%** (Green) rating which indicates the following: Sustainment or restoration as follows: minor repairs to several subcomponents; or significant repair, rehabilitation, or replacement of one or more subcomponents, but not enough to encompass the whole.

\$3,343,587 was allocated for remediation through 2025

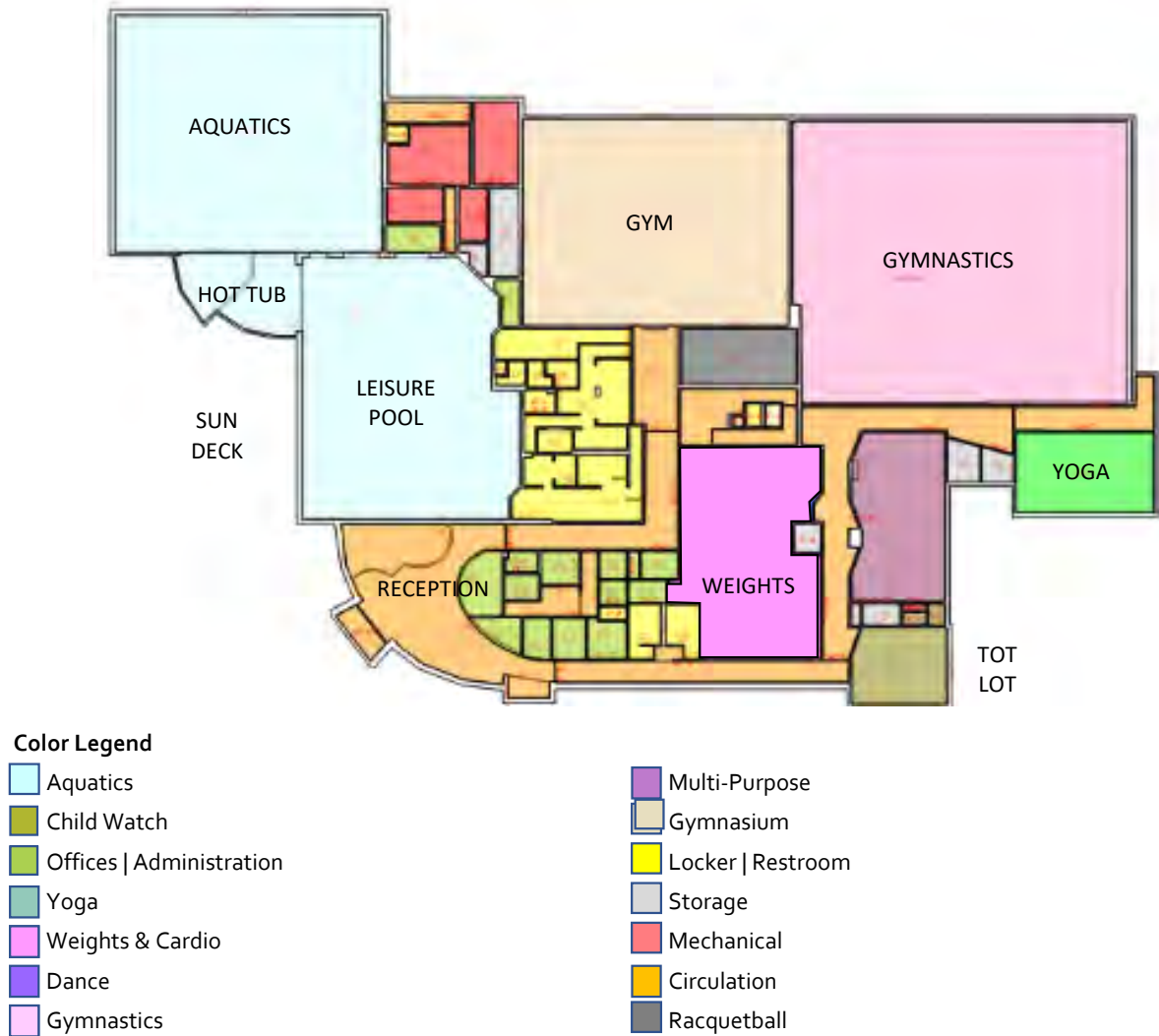
#### **Flood Hazard; Determined to be in flood hazard zone**

From the City of Boulder Flood Mapping Tool, it appears the North Boulder Recreation Center is located in an area that was affected by the September 2013 flood event. The NBRC sustained damage from flooding and the potential for damage from future events does appear to exist. Consideration should be given to site or landscape manipulation to divert potential flood waters.

#### **Primary Facility Program Areas**

<b>Aquatics</b>	<b>16933 sf</b>
Leisure Pool with zero depth entry, waterslide and spa	
eight-lane-by-25-yard swimming pool	
Aquafit Classes	
<b>Locker Rooms &amp; Restrooms</b>	<b>3,252 sf</b>
<b>Weights and Cardio</b>	<b>3,294 sf</b>
<b>Multipurpose Spaces</b>	<b>1,944 sf</b>
<b>Yoga</b>	<b>1,376 sf</b>
Fitness, Mind/Body, yoga	
<b>Gymnastics</b>	<b>11,691 sf</b>
<b>Gymnasium/Pickleball</b>	<b>6,855 sf</b>
<b>Child Care</b>	<b>882 sf</b>
<b>Administration</b>	<b>2,473 sf</b>
<b>Circulation</b>	<b>7,746 sf</b>
<b>Storage</b>	<b>1,060 sf</b>
<b>Mechanical</b>	<b>1,426 sf</b>
<b>Racquetball</b>	<b>800 sf</b>

NORTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER



OVERVIEW

Located in the densely populated downtown district, North Boulder Recreation Center (NBRC) was originally constructed in 1974. An addition completed in the early 2000’s doubled the size of the facility to roughly 62,000 square feet. The addition boasts an 8-lane competitive pool and 3,300-gallon spa which were built adjacent to a large family-friendly leisure pool with waterslides, interactive features and zero-depth access. At that time, the center’s popular gymnastics area was expanded, and yoga and multipurpose rooms were added. A family locker room was created, and existing showers and locker areas refurbished and expanded. Additional staff offices were built, and the center’s entrance and drop-off area were redesigned to improve pedestrian and traffic flow. Notably, NBRC was the first community recreation center in the country to receive LEED Silver certification by the U.S. Green Building Council.

## NORTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER

### ARCHITECTURE

Today the facility's footprint remains unchanged. In fact, perhaps the greatest change is the urban growth surrounding NBRC. Recreation center design has changed as well with operational impacts now having a larger role in the planning process. The industry knows more about efficient operations which can be applied to design.

The facility is clean and well-maintained. The expansive lobby and lounge were designed to be open and welcoming to all. Indeed, all can access the building and use the restroom facilities located to the right of the entrance. Front desk staff have good visibility to see who comes in but lack a control point to verify visitors do not continue down the hall and into program areas without checking in. An accessible ramp along the wall, separated from the front desk by several feet, makes it difficult to monitor visitors.

The front desk has customer service windows that are not well used. A wide corridor leads from the lobby along the south side of the center, passing by the fitness area, childcare and multipurpose rooms and winding around the gymnastic center and yoga room, ending at the far east end in an emergency exit.

The yoga room, which accommodates fitness and mind/body classes, has hardwood floors and large windows letting in soft natural light with views to the outdoors. It is a desired program space, but being located across from the gymnastic area it experiences acoustical challenges.

The expansive gymnastics area meets daily programming needs and enrolls hundreds of youths. Staff note the vaulting runway is short by seven feet, which is addressed during competitions by opening the loading door to gain extra length. Storage of equipment is an ongoing challenge, as is circulation with 40 to 50 youth passing and interacting in the ramped corridor leading in and out of the area. The space has no walls and is completely open, creating challenges with sensory overload when engaging preschool aged youth or youth with attention deficit disorder. An opportunity may exist given the depth and width of the hall corridor to create a separate, enclosed area as well as an extended viewing area for parents.

The multi-purpose room divides into three separate spaces and two rooms open into the outdoor plaza area. Rooms are programmed for some fitness classes and rented for youth birthday parties and smaller events. Multi-purpose room space meets the need, but many events and larger gatherings are declined due to NBRC's parking constraints. Programming of popular activities must also be planned around parking limitations.

The childcare program space is adequate and leads to an outdoor tot lot. Staff and parents request this area be covered to protect children from the sun.

Prior to the coronavirus, NBRC's fitness area was at capacity with equipment, machines and weights positioned close together. The adjacent dance room is being converted into additional fitness and cardio space to alleviate congestion. As customers return and capacity restrictions lift, it will be determined if this expansion is adequate.

The gymnasium is sufficient to meet customer drop-in demand for pickleball and basketball as most programmed activities are operated out of EBCC and SBRC. This is an operational decision based on parking limitations. NBRC's single racquetball court is well used for racquetball and handball.

### ADA | ACCESSIBILITY

BRS Observations were limited to a visual assessment of spaces, and ADA related compliance issues were not measured or verified as part of our work. The Facility Strategic plan completed in June 2016 evaluated ADA/Accessibility Issues. ADA requirements have not changed since then. The key item of note is that access to gymnastics coaches office and other second floor spaces is limited to a spiral staircase.

### EQUITY & INCLUSION

NBRC's location and layout meet the spirit of equity overall. It was anecdotally noted 65% of fitness participants utilize NBRC for classes. Managing growing demand can unintentionally impact equitable participation by favoring tech savvy users familiar with the registration system and with online access.



## NORTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER

### SECURITY

The main entry is a large area with good sight lines but limited control. Customers and the public can enter with little engagement from front desk staff, particularly if entering along the accessible ramp. Re-imagining the front entry and creating an extended control desk that reaches out to greet people, may solve the issue of security while still supporting the openness desired.



Entry / Reception Desk



Corridor



Weight Room

### AQUATICS

The 8-lane lap pool and separated leisure pool are popular amenities with demand peaking during the winter months. Aquatics staff note 65% of their users live near NBRC. Programs include lessons in the leisure pool, trainings, rentals to internal and external user groups, water aerobics and aqua fit classes. Spectator seating is very limited with portable bleachers that accommodate approximately 50 people. As with other programs offered in the facility, aquatics staff must be cautious about expanding programs, particularly those drawing spectators, due to the center's parking constraints.

The hot tub is tucked into the corner of the lap pool, requiring lifeguards be positioned to monitor its use. A blind spot exists between the slide and the windowed view into the lap pool, and must be continually checked for misuse when in operation. The garden-level sun patio receives little use. A sauna on the leisure pool deck is popular with pool users and can be a challenge for staff to manage its use and misuse.

The center offers a family changing area and men's and women's locker rooms with private and group showers.



Leisure pool with zero-depth entry



Hot Tub

## NORTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER

### ARCHITECTURE & SPACE DEFICIENCIES

BRS Observations were limited to a visual assessment of the space. The deficiencies noted below are based on visual observations made during our site visit and comments provided by staff.

FRONT DESK: The size and configuration of the front desk are good, and the supporting administrative offices and meeting spaces meet the needs of the center's staff. The challenge is access control of visitors. There are two corridors that run alongside the front desk. The corridor to the south makes it possible for visitors to walk by the front desk without checking in. In fact, there are many visitors who stop in simply to use the bathrooms, which creates a security risk to both the staff and the users of the facility.

GYMNASTICS VIEWING: The corridor outside the gymnastics area is used by spectators. Because there are only a couple windows into the space, the movable bleachers are full beyond capacity. While the corridor is large some parts of it go unused.

TOT LOT: There is no shading for children when outside. The space gets a lot of sun and is at times hot.

HOT TUB: The hot tub has visibility issues. It is difficult for lifeguards to monitor the space from their stations, and there have been instances of inappropriate behavior in the space.

WEIGHT ROOM AND CARDIO: The capacity of the weight room and cardio area is inadequate. There is work currently under way to combine the space with the existing dance room. This will provide additional area for fitness equipment. At the time of our visit, machines were spaced for Covid-19 related social distancing requirements. The adequacy of the space will be better known once restrictions are lifted.

GANG SHOWERS: Private showers and more cabanas would be preferred by users.

PARKING: There is inadequate parking for the users of the building. The center and its gymnastics program are so popular, the facility could support an expansion, but such a change would likely not be possible as there is no room for the center to grow.

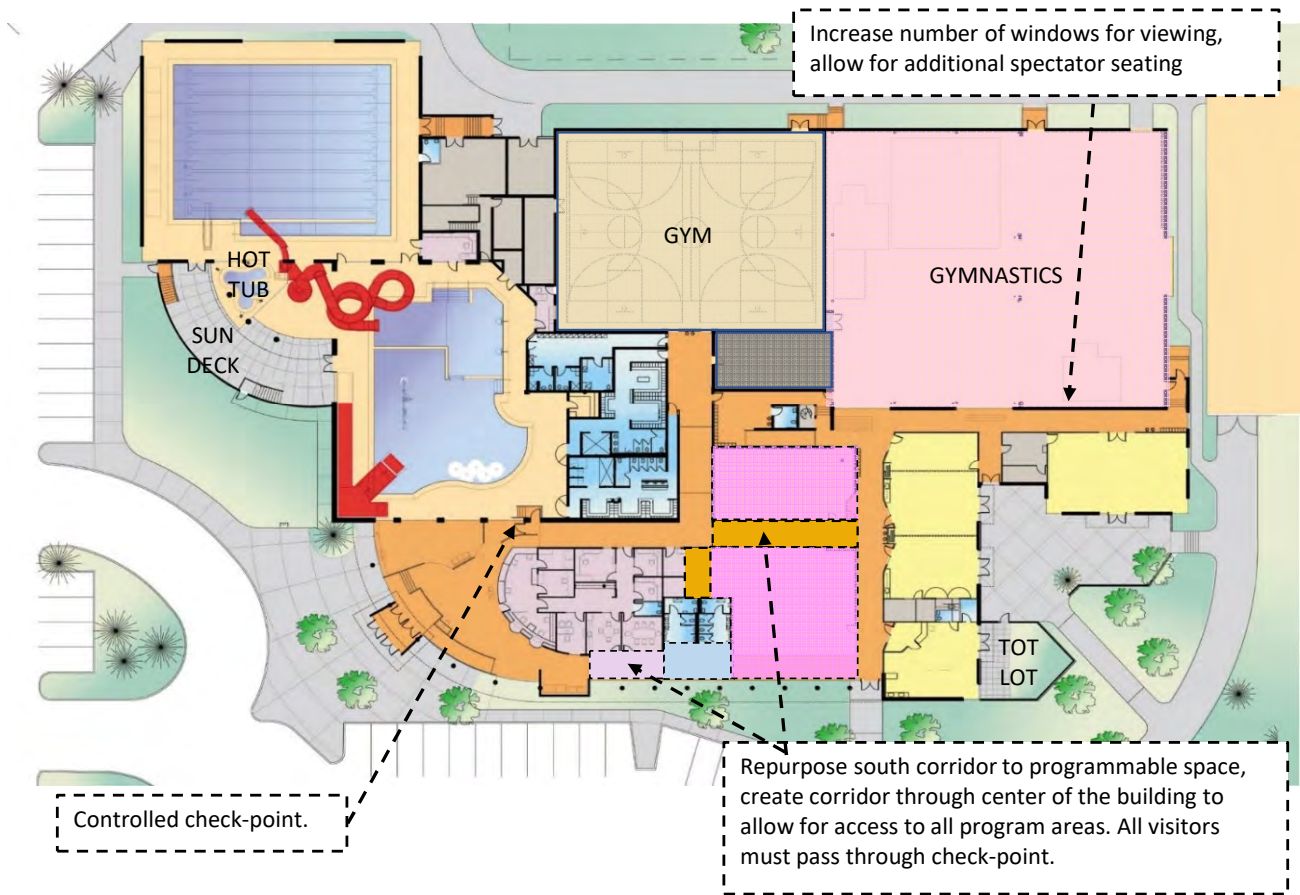
FITNESS PROGRAMS: Space constraints limits the types of programming possible at the center. Staff noted that more dance, fitness, and Zumba classes would be popular, but cannot plan for them because of parking. The spaces themselves also do not lend to the kind of atmosphere that would support these classes. Opportunities for indoor-outdoor style classrooms with better acoustics, lighting, and a sound system are desired.

ACOUSTICS: Sound is a challenge in the corridor between the gymnastics area and the yoga room. A lot of excited noise is generated in the corridor which on occasion interrupts yoga classes.

### EVALUATION OF PROGRAMMING

Demand is extremely high for programs at NBRC and in particular participation in group fitness classes and recreational drop-in sports like pickleball and volleyball. Gymnastics program participation also continues to soar. A weight room expansion was occurring during BRS' site visit, but staff indicate additional space is needed to meet demand. Patrons desire spaces to accommodate high-intensity interval training (HIIT) classes. The site footprint and inability to expand parking remains a limiting factor, and center staff must balance popular program offerings with parking availability.

NORTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER



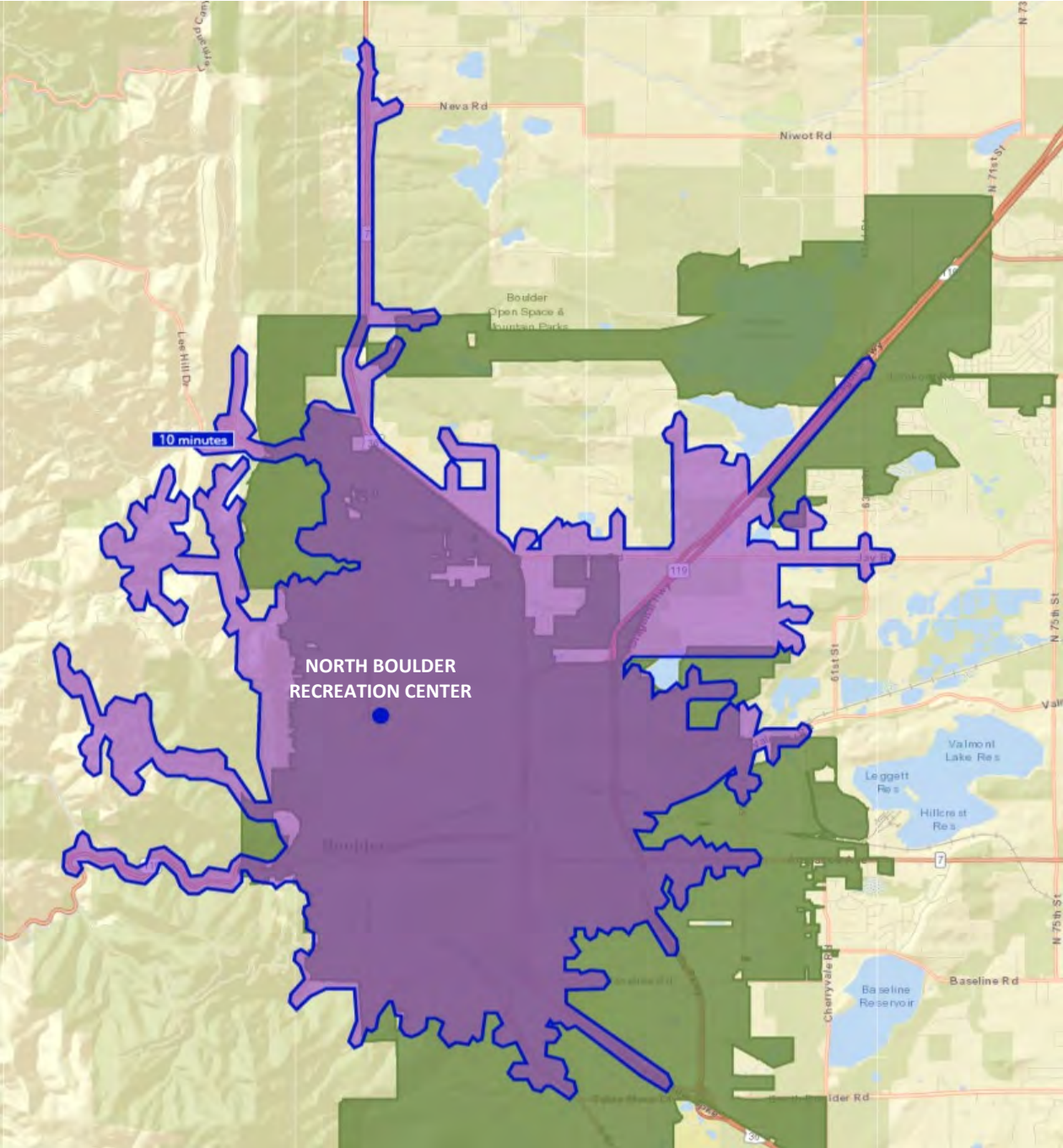
CONCEPTUAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Cost to Implement
To solve the issue of control at the building entry, particularly at the south corridor, it may be possible to close the corridor and use it to capture some additional space for weights and cardio. A corridor could be continued through the center of the building. This would require that all visitors pass by the front desk at the control point. (See diagram above)	\$\$
The tot lot would benefit from some protective shading.	\$
Additional viewing opportunities in the corridor outside the gymnastics area would help ease crowding around spectator seating. The unused space in the corridor may be used to accomplish this.	\$
The Boulder Parks and Recreation Department may consider conducting a full <u>feasibility study</u> with public outreach to identify whether an offsite gymnastics facility would best serve the community. If gymnastics were relocated to another facility, the space at NBRC could be repurposed to meet the demand for dance and group fitness programming that is desired by the community. Some aspects of the gymnastics space do not meet the standards of high-level competition, existing HVAC is challenged - filters replaced constantly due to chalk, the program continues to grow, making parking a bigger challenge. These issues may give further support to the idea of a <u>dedicated off-site gymnastics facility</u> .	\$
BPR Staff suggested a low sensory room for work with kids with ADHA and spectrum disorders is desired.	\$\$\$
	\$



# NORTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER

## BENCHMARKING

Population within a 10-minute drive  
58,845 (2020) / 60,100 (2025)



North Boulder Recreation Center is located close to the downtown business district. The center is accessible within a 10-minute drive to approximately 55% of Boulder’s population.

NORTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER - IRIS STUDIO



FACILITY INVENTORY

Location	Primary Facility Program Areas	
3170 Broadway, Boulder CO 80304	Dance Room	350 sf
Hours of Operation	Restrooms	
Dedicated Rental	Storage	
Size		
Approx 350 s.f.		
Year Constructed		
Unknown		

OVERVIEW

The Iris studio is a single dance space that accommodates roughly 20-25 students depending on the style of class. The studio currently occupies a space within the BRP administrative offices on the same site as the NBRC. The room has mirrors and barres on two sides. It has access to restrooms and a small storage space that is shared with HVAC equipment. Staff noted that the space is inadequate for the desired programming and level of interest, and it is difficult to maintain a comfortable room temperature. The flooring is not ideal for dance activities.

CONCEPTUAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

In keeping with the recommendations associated with the NBRC, the popularity of the dance program may support adding more dedicated space. A feasibility study that includes public outreach is recommended to identify the needs and desires of the community as well as the appetite for expansion, and how that may best be accomplished.

## **SOUTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER**



## SOUTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER



### FACILITY INVENTORY

#### **Location**

1360 Gillespie Drive, Boulder CO 80305

#### **Hours of Operation**

Monday - Friday 6:00 am to 1:00 pm

Saturday - Sunday Closed

#### **Size**

23,900 s.f.

#### **Year Constructed**

1973

#### **2016 Facility Strategic Plan Summary**

Facility was given an **86%** (Green) rating which indicates the following: Sustainment or restoration as follows: minor repairs to several subcomponents; or significant repair, rehabilitation, or replacement of one or more subcomponents, but not enough to encompass the whole.

\$2,670,000 was allocated for remediation through 2025

#### **Flood Hazard:**

The South Boulder Recreation Center does not appear to be in a flood zone. However, there are issues with water infiltration that appear to be related to the building's proximity to the adjacent Viele Lake.

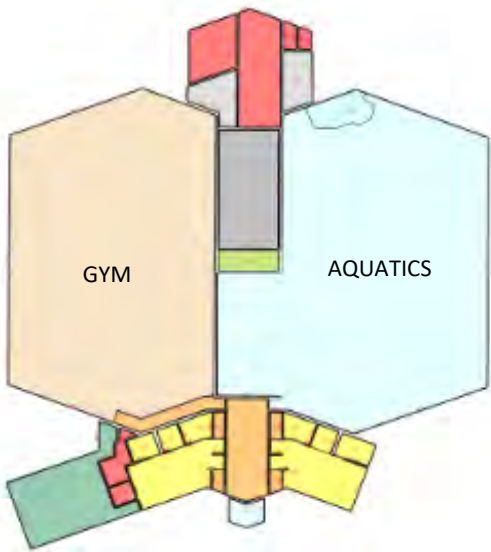
#### **Primary Facility Program Areas**

<b>Aquatics</b>	<b>6,778 sf</b>
Leisure Pool	
Six-lane-by-25-yard swimming pool	
<b>Locker Rooms &amp; Restrooms</b>	<b>1,339 sf</b>
<b>Weights and Cardio</b>	<b>2,264 sf</b>
<b>Multipurpose Spaces</b>	<b>462 sf</b>
Includes event room with commercial kitchen	
<b>Aerobics</b>	<b>683sf</b>
Fitness, Mind/Body, yoga	
<b>Dance</b>	<b>1,410sf</b>
<b>Gymnasium</b>	<b>5,665 sf</b>
<b>Child Care</b>	<b>0 sf</b>
<b>Administration</b>	<b>1,343 sf</b>
<b>Circulation</b>	<b>2,000 sf</b>
<b>Storage</b>	<b>351 sf</b>
<b>Mechanical</b>	<b>969 sf</b>

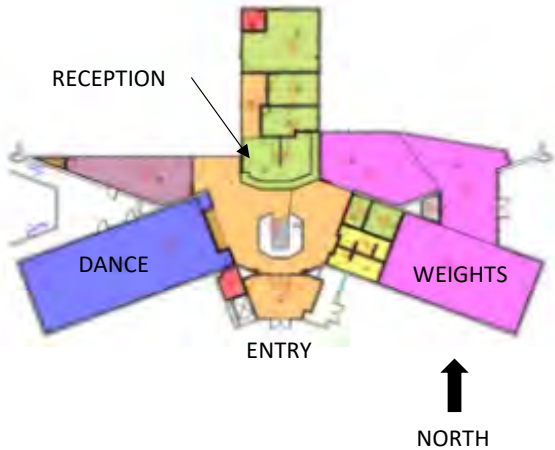
# SOUTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER

Plans illustrating space allocations at the South Boulder Recreation Center

LOWER LEVEL



MAIN LEVEL



Color Legend

- Aquatics
- Child Watch
- Offices | Administration
- Yoga
- Weights & Cardio
- Dance

- Fitness equipment
- Gymnasium
- Locker | Restroom
- Storage
- Mechanical
- Circulation
- Racquetball



Entry / Main Stair



Dance

## SOUTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER

### OVERVIEW

The split-level South Boulder Recreation Center (SBRC), constructed in the early 1970s and partly renovated in the 1990s, is situated in Harlow Platts Community Park. Despite its age and numerous accessibility issues, the center is clean and staff report that customers view it as the heart of their surrounding community. The facility consists of aquatics, a gymnasium, weight rooms, a multi-purpose room for dance, yoga, and other activities, a racquetball court, Pilates studio and office and administrative areas. Overall, the facility is clean and well maintained. The 2-story building has been expanded and remodeled over time. The exterior is mostly brick with some limited amounts of EIFS system. The roof consists mainly of standing seam metal with an EPDM membrane roof in the center of the facility. There are two small areas of EPDM roofing in other locations. The building interior is a combination of concrete masonry units, painted gypsum board and a combination of carpet, wood, resilient athletic, and various tiles on the floor. The ceiling finishes include gypsum board and suspended acoustical tile ceilings. The ceiling in the natatorium appears to be exposed painted metal structure.

### ARCHITECTURE

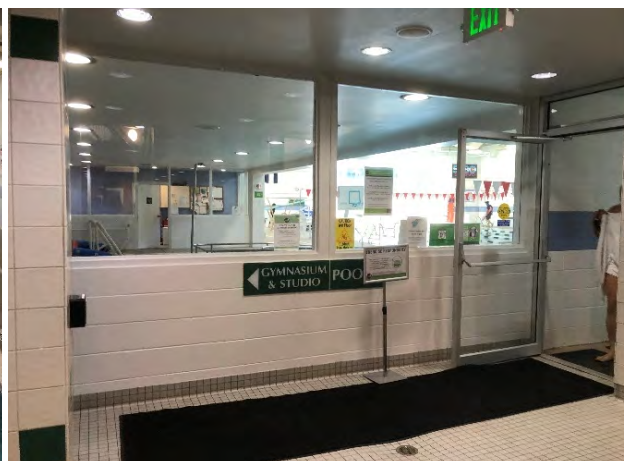
Entering the center there is a pinch point, where customers need to turn left or right to get around the railing protecting the staircase, to reach the front desk. To the left, prior to reaching the front desk, is a multi-purpose room with mirrored walls and ballet barres along one side that is used for dance, yoga and fitness. The ceiling height may limit dance classes, but the room is heavily programmed.

There is a small, carpeted space overlooking the gymnasium that is currently used as an area for stretching with stability balls, foam rollers and similar equipment. West of the front desk, the fitness area has cardio equipment positioned to overlook the second-floor lap pool. The fitness equipment continues around the corner and leads to the free weight area. Staff note the double doors off the fitness area help with overcrowding in the fitness area and weight room, as well as with regulating airflow. The HVAC system is inconsistent, and the area gets hot even when set to low heat. Customers take free weights outdoors or prop the doors open to let in cooling air, which is understandable but concerning if the doors are left propped open or unattended.

East of the aquatics area customers can access the gymnasium, racquetball court and multi-purpose room. The building is sloped so customers must use stairs or a mechanical lift to reach this lower level. Staff report the lift has malfunctioned and required customers to be physically lifted down into the gymnasium.



6 Lane Pool



Pool Entry

## SOUTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER

### ARCHITECTURE

The gymnasium is heavily utilized by internal sports leagues and scheduled user groups including men's basketball and pickleball users, which limits the availability for drop-in use by the public. Access to the racquetball court is from the gymnasium floor. Staff indicate they would like to convert the underutilized racquetball court into a fitness room or cycling studio. A large room with hardwood floors is also on this level and currently used as a Pilates studio. The size of the reformer machines limits the ability to program other activities in the room. Storage is limited and the boiler room is accessed from this room.

The administration areas are also inadequately sized. There are too few offices, and the space that would otherwise be the break room is used for a mix of office, drop down space, and storage and has no heat. The staff shares 'break room' space in a small laundry room that also houses janitorial and HVAC equipment. There are no staff meeting rooms. The bathrooms on the main level are clean and well maintained, but there are only two fixtures in each. This is likely inadequate when the center is full, and especially when visitors from outside come in to use them.

### AQUATICS

The South Boulder Recreation Center is a 40+ year old facility that is experiencing facility-wide infrastructure issues. Amenities and spaces within the facility have limited ability to meet community need. The aquatic wing is located on the southwest side of the facility and is built into the hillside. The lap pool and leisure pool area share the same body of water. The 6-lane lap pool is heavily utilized by the local high school swim team as well as other user groups. The water temperature is too cold for swim lessons though limited aqua fitness classes are programmed. A smaller pool with ramp access is adjacent, but because it shares the same cool water as the lap pool, it cannot function as a therapy pool and remains largely unused and unprogrammable. The pool, constructed into the hillside, has been leaking water into the lower-level racquetball court. During the site visit of SBRC, repairs were underway though the exact origin of the leak was not known.

At the bottom of the staircase, wood paneling from the sauna extends out and is the prominent feature. The sauna's location is not visible to staff and misuse has occurred in the past. Turning around from the sauna, customers can access the locker rooms, pool or the gymnasium. Neither locker room is co-located with aquatics, so customers entering and exiting the pool deck must pass through a shared space. Both locker rooms are small for programmed pool activity and lack private showers or family changing area.

A spa at far end of the lap pool is sufficiently sized with good visibility for lifeguards. Next to spa is a row of exterior doors leading to the west-facing sun deck that is infrequently used because of direct, excess sun and wind. The patio opens to the surrounding park, creating control concerns when it is in use. As with most of the center, the HVAC system is not well regulated in the aquatics area. With the proximity of the high school and surrounding neighborhood, the SBRC has requests from teens who want to use the lap pool for leisure activities. To accommodate requires staff to close the lap pool so teens may use the diving board and portable climbing wall. Staff indicates that they are generally unable to meet the requests because the lap pool is heavily programmed by user groups.

### ADA | ACCESSIBILITY

BRS Observations were limited to visual assessment of spaces, and ADA related compliance issues were not measured or verified as part of our work. The Facility Strategic plan completed in June 2016 evaluated ADA/Accessibility Issues. ADA requirements have not changed since then. It is worth noting again however, that in spite of efforts to meet the needs of all visitors, access is not fully realized. The elevator in the entry vestibule in particular does not meet the 'spirit' of ADA in that visitors must ask for access and a key. If a visitor found themselves on the lower level needing to use the elevator, the front desk can only be reached by the central stair.



## SOUTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER

### EQUITY & INCLUSION

BPR themes that guide the Recreation Priority Index criteria include goals of reaching youth 18 and under and targeting programs to serve people with disabilities in support of full participation. Disparities with achieving these goals exist at SBRC because of the facility's limited spaces, accessibility for people with mobility issues and the growing demands from community members and user groups.

The social and physical needs of youth who want to access drop-in amenities at SBRC, specifically the lap pool, may be considered in addition to use by historically programmed user groups. The facility layout presents accessibility issues. Valid operating policies regarding security of elevator access further exacerbates these inequities. Someone requiring its use is now put into the position of highlighting their disability by requesting a key. If an individual manages to get down the stairs, but after using the gym or pool do not feel they are safely able to get up the stairs, again it falls to them to request help and get the elevator key from staff. The confined spaces within the center would present a challenge even if someone has experience using a wheelchair.

### EVALUATION OF PROGRAMMING

Aquatics staff indicates systemwide a lack of a therapy pools and deep, warm water pools limit programming. SBRC's lap pool is heavily utilized so warmer temperatures would not necessarily mean expanded programs. The gymnasium is heavily utilized by pickleball. SBRC's dance room and multi-purpose room meet some of the growing needs for fitness classes. Staff desire to convert the racquetball court into a flexible fitness space. Modern cardio equipment is getting larger, requiring higher ceilings and more expansive areas, which the court area could support although the room aesthetic and acoustics may be a limiting factor.

### ARCHITECTURE & SPACE DEFICIENCIES

BRS Observations were limited to a visual assessment of the space. The deficiencies noted below are based on visual observations made during our site visit and comments provided by staff.

CIRCULATION: The South Boulder Recreation Center has a number of challenges with circulation throughout the facility. When visitors first arrive to the center, they encounter a large open stairwell that separates them from the front desk. They must navigate around the stair opening to get to the reception counter. Although staff has good visual control of the upper floor, it is relatively easy for visitors to move into the space without checking in. The most common challenge is visitors who stop in solely to use the restroom. This is a security concern for both the staff and members. Additionally, because the center was designed before the implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), accessibility is not ideal even in spite of good efforts to provide access. Visitors to the center must return to the vestibule to use the elevator after retrieving a key from front desk staff. Even with the accommodations that have been made, including an elevator, lift, and accessible ramps, a person in a wheelchair may find wayfinding difficult or circuitous. In the pool area, circulation is not laid out in a way that requires patrons to pass through the locker/ shower rooms before entering the aquatics area which creates opportunities for potential health risks for those using the pool as well as congestion and noise.

FRONT DESK: The location and configuration of the front desk does not allow for adequate access control. When entering the building from the main entry, the desk is set behind a large stair well opening which both demands that visitors navigate around it and prevents staff from adequately controlling the coming and going of visitors to the center.

MEETING SPACE: There is inadequate meeting space for Rec Center Staff.

OFFICE SPACE: There is inadequate office space for Rec Center Staff.

## SOUTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER

### ARCHITECTURE & SPACE DEFICIENCIES

BREAK ROOM: Staff break room is a sink with a small cabinet set within the laundry room and shared with janitorial equipment. There is no area to sit or store personal items.

FINISHES: While the facility overall is clean and well maintained the overall feel of the building including ceiling heights, window units, and construction details feels dated and of a different era.

PROGRAM SPACES: Most program areas are undersized and oddly configured.

WATER INFILTRATION: There are issues with water infiltration that appear to be related to the building’s proximity to the adjacent Viele Lake. The elevation of the adjacent lake water is said to be higher than the elevation of the recreation center’s gymnasium, racquetball court, aerobics room, locker rooms, and aquatics area. There have been past occurrences of water entering the building at the floor level of the racquetball court/ gymnasium. While BRS was on site, remediation work was being done in the racquetball court. Staff noted that water with a chlorine smell had damaged the floor such that it needed to be replaced. The smell of chlorine suggests the pool itself may be leaking, though no source has been found. The concrete masonry wall of the natatorium adjacent to Viele Lake is painted. The paint on this wall regularly spawls due to moisture infiltration and is repainted as part of regular maintenance cycles.



### CONCEPTUAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

SBRC has served the Boulder community for nearly 50 years, a long-life for a recreation facility that has not seen significant financial re-investment. The HVAC system appears to be failing and pool water is infiltrating the lower level of the building. Poor circulation and lack of accessibility for differently abled individuals creates an exclusive facility. The front desk is not designed to sufficiently serve as a control point, creating security concerns for both customers and staff. Given these visible deficiencies, the city may explore anticipated costs to begin addressing them. However, the most economical path forward with a facility of this age is generally replacement rather than renovation. This presents an opportunity for the city to re-engage the community surrounding this long-standing resource and determine the appropriate needs and architectural program to serve them for the next 50 years.

Cost to  
Implement

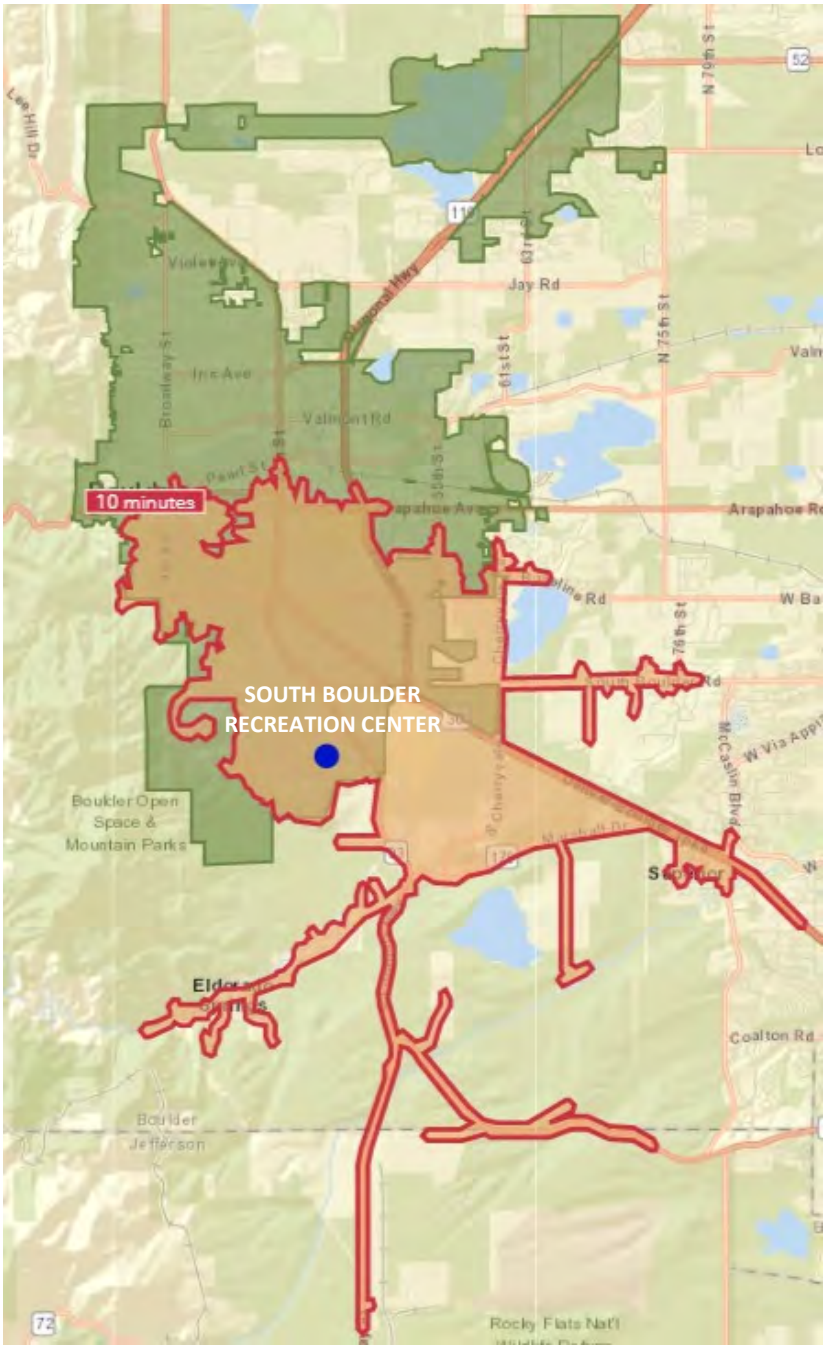
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# SOUTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER

## BENCHMARKING

Population within a 10-minute drive  
58,845 (2020) / 60,100 (2025)



South Boulder Recreation Center is located within a residential neighborhood in the southern portion of the city. It is less than 4 miles away from East Boulder Recreation Center and 5 miles south of North Boulder Recreation Center.

# SALBERG COMMUNITY CENTER

SALBERG COMMUNITY CENTER



FACILITY INVENTORY

Location	Primary Facility Program Areas	
3045 19th Street, Boulder CO 80304	Assembly Space	4,200 sf
Hours of Operation	Restrooms	
Not available for public reservations	Kitchenette	
Size	Stage	
Approximately 6,500 s.f.	Storage	
Year Constructed		
Unknown		

OVERVIEW

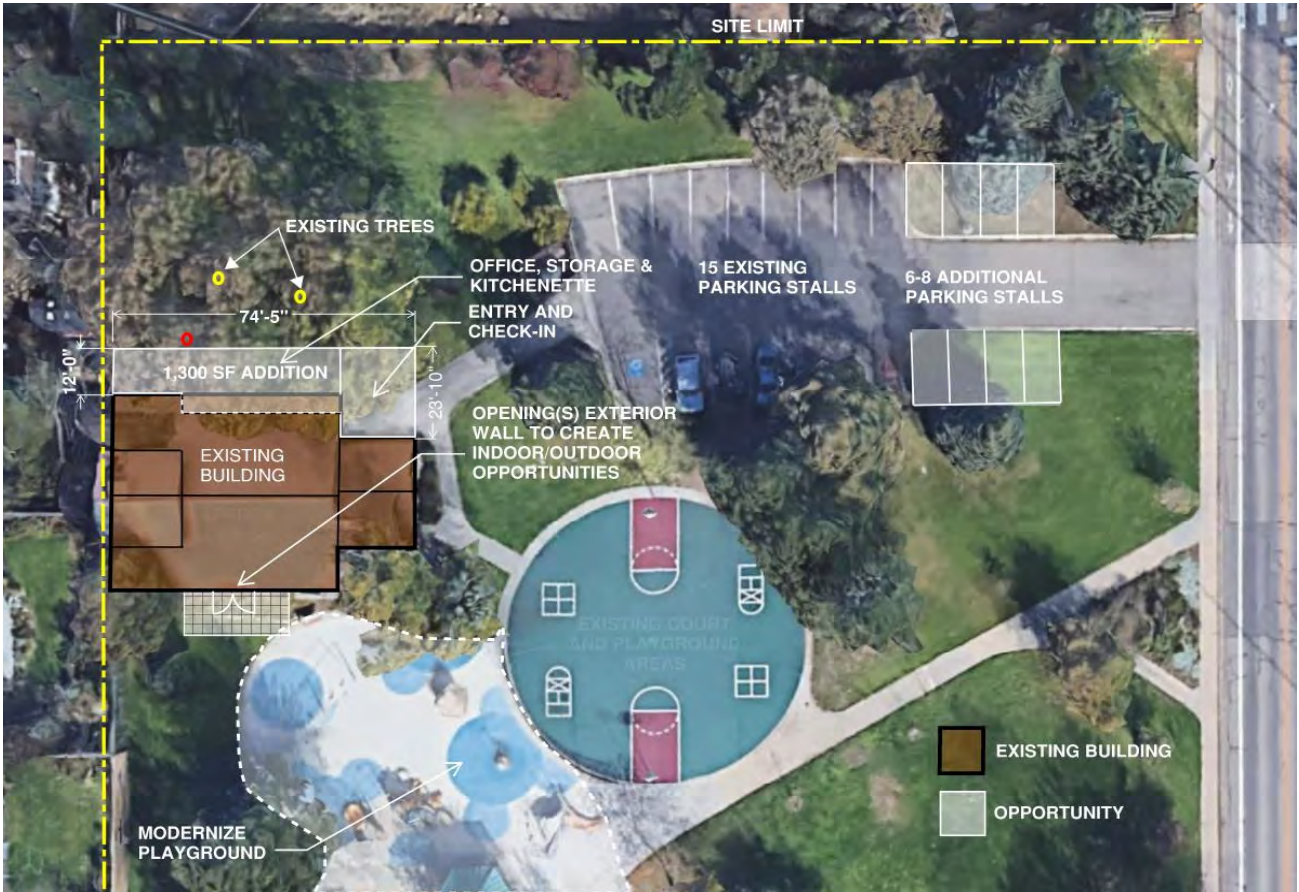
Located in a neighborhood park, Salberg Community Center (SCC) consists of a medium-sized, 285 occupancy room with a prominent stage at one end. At one time, Pilates were programmed in the studio but currently the space supports a summer drama camp. The building has some nice interior elements, such as the ceiling, but the remainder of interior finishes lack coherence and are of low quality. The kitchenette is too small to support catered events or events with minimal preparation. The bathrooms and flooring are outdated, making the space less desirable for potential renters. There is also no internet access or dedicated office-space, and storage is limited. The location of Salberg creates opportunities and challenges. To enhance and utilize the space, an expansion may be considered to include office space, storage and a kitchenette. Updating the finishes and upgrading the entry to enhance the curb appeal may attract private rentals. BPR would need to dedicate a staff person to oversee rental check-in and install internet access to have registration and check-in capabilities. The parking area limits the number of occupants if the building is used as a private rental.



SALBERG COMMUNITY CENTER

ARCHITECTURE & SPACE DEFICIENCIES

- OFFICE SPACE:** There is no office or administrative space in the building. This limits ability to rent to a dedicated program or check-in temporary rentals for events.
- KITCHENETTE:** The kitchenette is very small, and does not have a sink. This limits the usability of the space for rental events like parties.
- FINISHES:** Although the space has some nice elements, ad-hoc renovations and alteration to the space diminish its appeal. The VCT flooring is not suitable for all activities such as dance or fitness.
- SERVICE:** WIFI or internet service are currently not available in the building.
- HVAC:** There is no vestibule to the building, which makes it subject to the condition of outside air.
- PARKING:** Limited parking space will limit the size of events that may take place.



CONCEPTUAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Cost to Implement
Consider expanding facility to provide areas that support proper use such as check-in area, offices, additional storage, and a functioning kitchenette.	\$\$\$
Consider opening south side of building for indoor/outdoor experience and support with new/modernized playground area, to create appeal for small events or parties.	\$\$
Addition parking capacity of 6-8 spaces appears possible to accommodate expansion.	\$\$
Upgrade all interior finishes to provide comprehensive color/materials palette. Upgrade flooring to accommodate dance and fitness activities.	\$

# BOULDER POTTERY LAB

**BOULDER POTTERY LAB**



**FACILITY INVENTORY**

**Location**

1010 Aurora Ave, Boulder CO 80302

**Hours of Operation**

Monday - Friday 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Saturday Noon - 5:00

**Year Constructed**

1908

**OVERVIEW**

The historic old firehouse has long served as a pottery studio and continues to meet the community’s needs through this service, which is now operated by a local non-profit. The non-profit tenant is expanding to a new space to meet demand but remains committed to continuing programs in the historic building. They serve 225 adults and 60 youth per week from the space. As a pottery studio, every inch of space is utilized, and programming operates 7 days a week.

A large door on the main floor opens to allow for ventilation. The HVAC system is inadequate for the kinds of activities occurring in this space, e.g., lots of particulates and kilns off-gas. The building does not have a sink or storage in the youth activity room on the second floor. Staff are constantly moving pieces in and out of rooms as programs and activities change. The building is not ADA accessible.

The outdoor kilns need to be covered to prevent corrosion and the exterior exit stairs along the side of the building are rusting through, dangerous, and in need replacement.

From a programming standpoint, the Pottery Lab is achieving a primary BPR goal to target and serve youth 18 years and under. The partnership with the non-profit appears to serve both parties and the pottery programming needs of the community.

**Primary Facility Program Areas**

Main floor Pottery Lab

Restrooms

Drying Room

Finishing Room

Classroom

Office

Outdoor Kilns and Storage

**CONCEPTUAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

Pottery Lab has plans in progress for the construction of a new facility to accommodate high demand for the services provided. Once that is complete it is recommended that a careful look at program offerings at the existing site be evaluated to ensure the public’s needs and desires for program offerings are being met.

The existing fire exit stair is rusty and worn, prompt replacement is recommended.



## BOULDER PARKS AND RECREATION SYSTEM - ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Based on site observations and conversation with BPR staff, current program areas of growth include aquatics, fitness and weight training, gymnastics, and yoga.

### AQUATICS

A 2015 Aquatics Feasibility Plan noted the aquatic division has historically focused on meeting the training needs of user groups first and foremost. Aquatics staff confirmed this is still the case; however, they strive to meet drop-in and recreational swimming needs. Stated in the 2015 report is the assessment that overall demand for lap pools and lap lanes is outweighing supply and creating pressure on the system. This remains an ongoing challenge and staff prioritize use by looking at historical percentage of pool use and reviewing historical data on program trends. Staff acknowledge the two outdoor pools do provide a relief valve for demand in the summer. The three indoor recreation center lap pools are 80-82 degrees, a desirable temperature for lap swimming but generally too cold for other uses. Lap pools are also not ideal for instruction because of the depth. EBCC and NBRC swim lessons are held in the leisure pools.

Future BPR facility plans may consider an instructional pool, at a warmer temperature, as the system lacks a dedicated teaching space. An instructional pool would accommodate swim classes as well as meet the therapy or rehabilitation needs. This may also alleviate some of the demand for lap lanes.

### FITNESS

Overall, the three existing indoor recreation centers lack adequate space to meet growing demands for fitness classes, both drop-in and scheduled. Dedicated weight and cardio rooms are often at capacity during the peak after hours' timeframe. Fitness classes offered in multi-purpose rooms must compete with other programs. Fitness staff are acutely aware that to capture and retain health and wellness conscious members, they must continue to evolve their programs and stay on trend. Remaining relevant, and providing a blend of competitive and introductory classes, requires an investment in space, equipment and technology. From discussions, the biggest hurdle is dedicated space that supports the ability to secure and store items in these spaces. Similarly, staff indicate that gymnasium space across all three centers is at a premium. Fitness and sports frequently compete for the same space and time, and when summer camps begin it increases demand.

### PROCESS

As a result of the 2014 Master Plan, BPR implemented a service delivery framework and recreation priority index (RPI). The service delivery framework outlines the department's process for managing recreation programs, including establishing costs and setting fees. The RPI is a balanced scorecard approach that allows recreation managers and decision-makers to compare the relative importance of programs in relation to one another. Program staff indicated that, in general, they use the framework when making decisions. Fitness and mind/body programs are evaluated annually to drive cost recovery goals, and staff indicate market analysis of private providers is ongoing. Aquatics staff relies on historical data, such as a user groups historical percentage of pool use, as well as programming trends to drive decisions. The RPI looks at the relative importance of programs in relation to one another, but it is not clear that this process informs which programs should have priority over another given limited indoor space. Competition for program spaces exists across all three centers, particularly during key service times.

## **BOULDER PARKS AND RECREATION SYSTEM - ASSESSMENT SUMMARY**

### **PROGRAM DELIVERY**

Following a recommendation from the 2014 Master Plan, BPR contracts with private businesses and non-profits, to provide direct programming to customers at city facilities. This approach supports financial sustainability and makes sense given limited staffing and resources. Contracted partnerships allow specialized providers to meet specific user needs. BPR staff facilitate the program delivery by providing contractors with dedicated program space, managing registrations, marketing programs, ensuring the delivery of programs, and addressing issues as they arise.

Staff acknowledge they lack expertise and time to thoroughly manage contracts, noting contract management become a secondary job function. To alleviate the burden, contracted services are spread out among various staff to manage. While this method may be efficient, staff do not have capacity to evaluate if the contractor is aligned with the service delivery framework, or if they are performing as stated in the contract. Contracted providers, especially operating in satellite locations, must be properly trained and evaluated on procedures related to emergencies, facility opening/closing, etc. With a shift towards utilizing contracted providers, BPR may consider a dedicated position to oversee those contracts and ensure they are meeting terms of the contract and align with the department's mission. A threshold for contracts under a certain dollar amount, e.g., \$10,000, may be considered a rental rather than a contractor.

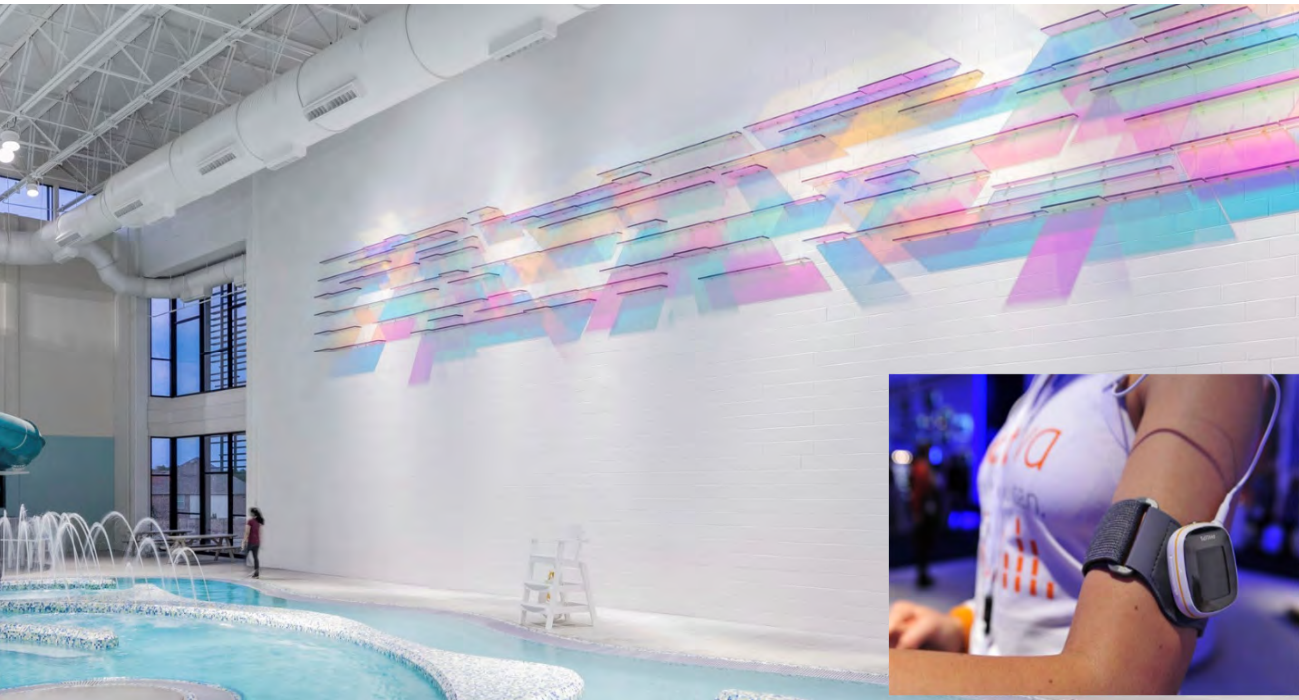
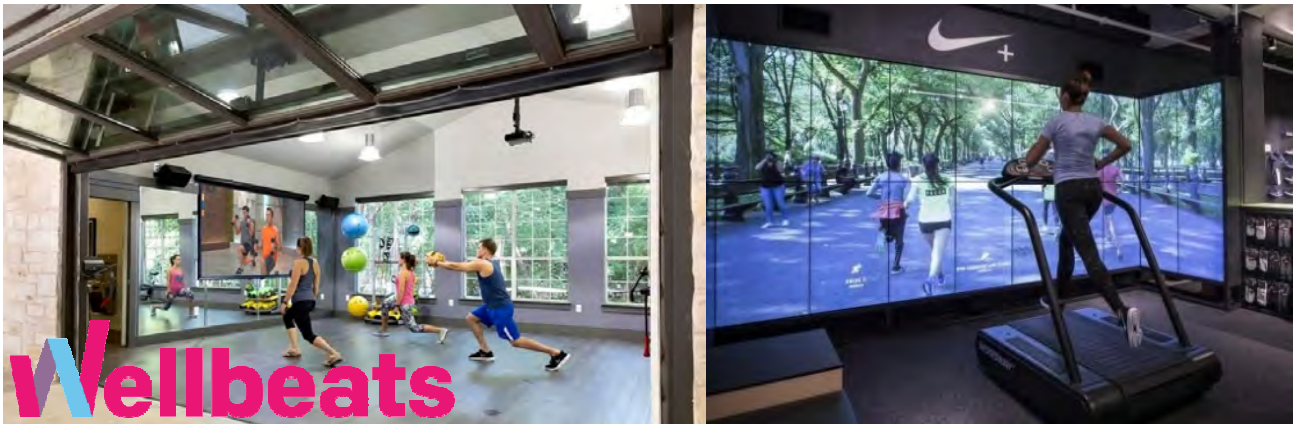
# TRENDS

## TRENDS IN INDOOR RECREATION

As BPR undertakes an evaluation of its program offerings, it is important to have an awareness of current recreation trends. Modern recreation center design can help solve key programming and operations challenges. Program spaces are designed for maximum functionality, while creating an overall user experience that appeals to more than the traditional fitness crowd. It is important to note that trends are often local and the extent to which BRP intends to implement them, first seeking thorough community input is highly recommended. The trends that follow are a sampling of the kinds of spaces and activities BRS has seen communities seek in the recreation centers that we've been involved with over the past 5 or 10 years.

### EXPERIENCES

Much has been examined and written about Millennials preference for experiences, and not surprisingly, this has found its way into recreation centers. Workouts that offers immersion, interface with wearable technology, track progress, and keeps people connected are increasingly popular.



Immersive environments

Wearable Technology



## TRENDS IN INDOOR RECREATION

### WELLNESS ESSENTIALS - FITNESS FOR ALL



Today's modern fitness program spaces are designed with expansive ceilings to accommodate the growing size of technology-based cardio equipment, a power curb to manage and hide unsightly cords, and lots of natural lighting which in turn promotes greater airflow. Rather than cramming as much equipment as possible, fitness areas are leaving plenty of room for stretching and personal training, as well as for customers who prefer more distance between other members. This open layout is also conducive for those with mobility issues and allows operators to bring in new equipment to keep things fresh.

### ADAPTABILITY

Fitness spaces that are designed to accommodate multiple activities are useful in solving programming challenges as they can be adapted to a wide variety of uses. Outfitting these spaces with access to technology, lighting, and sound systems allow for future uses that have not yet been thought of.





## TRENDS IN INDOOR RECREATION

### FUNCTIONAL TRAINING AREAS



Grown out of the rehabilitation professions of physical and occupational therapy, functional training is a style of fitness that uses whole body exercises, using multiple muscles with an emphasis on core strength and stability that help with performance of activities in everyday life. The aim is to get better at everyday activities like carrying objects, bending and squatting, or a quick sprint after a toddler on the loose. Weight bearing activities and compound movements are typical and differ from isolation training that targets specific muscles in a way that doesn't always support our natural daily actions. In the past 5 - 10 years, BRS has observed more and more clients request functional fitness spaces and equipment to support this style of training.

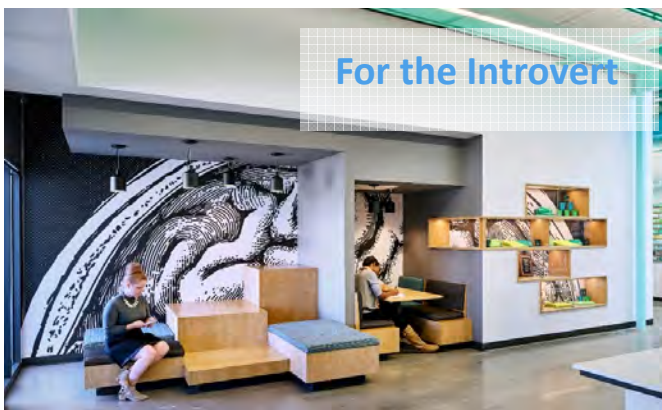


## TRENDS IN INDOOR RECREATION

### BRINGING THE OUTDOORS IN AND INDOORS OUT



A desire to experience the elements like sunshine and natural breezes while engaging in fitness activities is driving architectural solutions that open the indoors to the outdoors.



### INCLUSIVE SUPPORT SPACES

Traditional design focused primarily on active, physical programming pursuits while recreation centers today seek to also create a sense of place and belonging. Designers reimagine lobby spaces and others areas to serve as informal, comfortable settings for large and small groups to gather or nooks for individuals. This is accomplished by bringing in a variety of light levels and furnishings as well as changing the flooring material to indicate that it is a separate hangout zone. These inclusive spaces, strategically placed in good sight line of staff, are intended to accommodate everyone from introverts to teammates and are intentional in meeting the needs of today's connected customer, with power and USB connections, to allow for rejuvenation and repose.



## TRENDS IN INDOOR RECREATION

### ESPORTS



eSports draws user groups who might not otherwise come to a recreation center. Non-sports oriented tweens and teens in particular, but eSports is known to appeal to participants of all ages. In fact, many colleges throughout the US have robust eSports programs available to their students.



Projection Gyms are a relatively inexpensive way to transform a gymnasium space into an engaging interactive experience.



## AQUATICS TRENDS

Aquatics facilities are not one-size-fits-all. Over the past 20 years there has been a rapid evolution beyond the simple rectangular pools we grew up with. Pools today include a range of features that make use of water for fun and fitness and can accommodate a range of users beyond lap swimmers. While learn-to-swim programs and leisure and lap swim remain very popular and at the top of preferred programming in most communities, activities that expand the traditional concept of pool use are being widely sought. New opportunities for activities in the water help keep fitness routines fresh and extend the appeal that draws visitors to aquatics centers.

### LIQUID GYM



Floating yoga brings new meaning to the cultivation of balance and strength. It combines the pleasures of water with the ease and comfort of meditative practices to create a more immersive experience.



**BATTLESHIP**



**INFLATABLE OBSTACLE COURSES**



## AQUATICS TRENDS



The splash pad at The Core Recreation Center in New Mexico is an example of how an already popular amenity can be expanded through lighting, color, and sound to become an exciting and memorable experience. Splash play areas generally continue to be very popular, as do hot tubs, spas, and whirlpools.



A slackline can bring new dimension to a lap pool. It offers those seeking a greater challenge an opportunity to test their balance, and a new kind of playful competition.



# APPENDIX 1

## PROGRAM ASSESSMENT CHECKLISTS

# EAST BOULDER COMMUNITY CENTER

## PROGRAM ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

**PROGRAM ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST**

**PROJECT NAME:** East Boulder Community Center

**ADDRESS:** 5660 Sioux Dr. Boulder 80303

**DATE:** 2021.04.07

**REVIEWERS:** Connie Osborn, Jenna Katsaros

Maxen Jones, Facility Supervisor

Senior Wing - vacated, use by contracted preschool providers

NEW	5
GOOD	4
SATISFACTORY	3
POOR	2
URGENT	1

**ASSESSMENT OF PHYSICAL CONDITIONS**  
New or like-new condition: Reassess in 8-10 years  
Good condition- limited signs of wear or damage: Reassess in 6-8 years  
Average condition for building age: Reassess in 4-6 years  
Near end of anticipated lifecycle: Consider replacement within 2-4 years  
Very worn or damaged: Consider near-term replacement 0-2 years

EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	A
MEETS EXPECTATIONS	B
APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS	C
NOT MEETING EXPECTATIONS	D
UNUSABLE	E

**ASSESSMENT OF INTENDED PROGRAM USE**  
Space size/configuration exceeds  
Space size/configuration meets the requirements of the desired use or purpose  
Space size/configuration functions, but limits the desired use or purpose  
Space size/configuration does not permit desired use or purpose  
Space size/configuration is not capable of being used or fit for use

Hours of Operation:  
Mon-Fri, 7 am-7 pm, Sat/Sun, 8 am-1 pm

PROGRAM SPACE		INTENDED PROGRAM USE					PHYSICAL CONDITIONS					NOTES:
CENTER: EBCC		A	B	C	D	E	5	4	3	2	1	
Entry/Lobby				X					X			Front Desk configuration doesn't allow adequate view of visitors entering building.
												4 main check-in separate work stations
												Divided entry - left side main Control Desk, right side former senior area now contracted child care.
												Large volume of space with no purpose, esp as staff note limited work/admin space
												Check-in desk offset to one side of entry limiting staff ability to secure entry and ensure all visitors entering the center properly check-in
Offices & Admin				X					X			Small staff offices and breakroom, esp when temp programming staff also utilize space e.g. summer camp staff.
												BPR Inquired about standard office space sizes. No conference rooms for staff trainings. Breakroom insufficient during peak of summer.
												Some finishes were replaced in last 5 years, others are near end of life cycle.
												Ramps and stairs in admin area may not meet ADA standards of accessibility. Further study recommended.
												Staff identified sense of not being safe if there were a security risk in the facility, like an active shooter, currently no clear escape route or place to shelter.
				X					X			Laundry Room undersized, and currently not used for intended purpose during pandemic. May consider not offering towels to visitors in the future.
Support Spaces												Additional storage needed in admin area
												Not currently running but will bring back. This feature is popular during peak program times. 90-minute, parent/caregiver remains on-site during this licensed child watch. Lease to Thorn Outdoor preschool during non-peak times.
Child Watch			X									Space is clean with small patio. Outdoor patio area w/small picnic table, seems it could be better utilized esp given desire to create more "indoor/outdoor" areas.
									X			Space is somewhat outdated, and does not maximize indoor/outdoor opportunities
												Front entry area is quite large, needs updated and better space utilization. Vending tucked into corner, limited outlets, antiquated washer/dryer (towel service which may not come back), desire "modern conveniences" such as charging stations, more outlets.
Opportunities												West half of building may be accessed without checking in at front desk. Staff has limited ability to track and monitor visitors to center.
Constraints												

**PROGRAM ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST**

**PROJECT NAME:** East Boulder Community Center

**ADDRESS:** 5660 Sioux Dr. Boulder 80303

**DATE:** 2021.04.07

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New or like-new condition: Reassess in 8-10 years

Good condition- limited signs of wear or damage: Reassess in 6-8 years

Average condition for building age: Reassess in 4-6 years

Near end of anticipated lifecycle: Consider replacement within 2-4 years

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**Hours of Operation:**

Mon-Fri, 7 am-7 pm, Sat/Sun, 8 am-1 pm

EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS  
MEETS EXPECTATIONS  
APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS  
NOT MEETING EXPECTATIONS  
UNUSABLE

A
B
C
D
E

**ASSESSMENT OF INTENDED PROGRAM USE**  
Space size/configuration exceeds  
Space size/configuration meets the requirements of the desired use or purpose  
Space size/configuration functions, but limits the desired use or purpose  
Space size/configuration does not permit desired use or purpose  
Space size/configuration is not capable of being used or fit for use

PROGRAM SPACE	INTENDED PROGRAM USE					PHYSICAL CONDITIONS					NOTES:
	A	B	C	D	E	5	4	3	2	1	
AQUATICS											
8 lane indoor lap pool, 25 yards, 198,000 gallons		X						X			High demand for pool access and lap swimming by the community. Center manager notes, no problem filling pools. 2015 study shows 45-50% of population having need for regular open lap swimming.
											warm water pool strength of this center
Indoor Leisure Pool			X						X		Rated B as it meets the requirements, rating C or D for meeting demand
											Limited interactive features, large slide, small dinosaur slide, small current channel/lazy river
Slide feature near the end of it's life cycle, components are rusted through											
Steam Room/Sauna											Customers desire individual showers, currently have open gang-style showers
Locker Rooms			X					X			Finishes are adequate though outdated
Support Areas				X				X			Small lifeguard office (downsized) with locker expansion. Office does not provide full view of pool area/hot tub
Opportunities											Deck space/patio off of the pool generally only used for lifeguard trainings. BPR staff desire expanding the pool area, more "indoor/outdoor" complimentary spaces.
											Access to storage is limited, must skirt along liesure pool. More storage is needed. Consider moving to a more central location.
Constraints											Main storage closet is adjacent to leisure pool, difficult to access, potential hazard accessing Genie lift machine utilized when changing light fixtures.
											Older system operates on gas, consider switch to electric to take advantage of existing PV system
<b>FITNESS, CARDIO, WEIGHTS</b>											
Weight Room/Cardio Area			X				X				Largest fitness area of 3 centers, though still not adequate to meet peak demand and desire for enhanced functional fitness area and larger free weight area. Customer requests for more cardio equipment. Limited space during the peak after work hours and in the winter
Fitness corridor											Equipment located in corridor due to COVID spacing. This area can get congested during peak times, space is further congested by street lamp style lighting. Serves as a waiting area for classes.
Aerobics Room		X					X				Spinning is popular program w/bikes lining walls
											Storage is limited
Dance Room		X					X				small stage will be removed soon.
											Storage is limited
Massage room				X				X			Not used during pandemic - consider using for office space

**PROGRAM ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST**

**PROJECT NAME:** East Boulder Community Center

**ADDRESS:** 5660 Sioux Dr. Boulder 80303

**DATE:** 2021.04.07

**REVIEWERS:** Connie Osborn, Jenna Katsaros

Maxen Jones, Facility Supervisor

Senior Wing - vacated, use by contracted preschool providers

NEW	5
GOOD	4
SATISFACTORY	3
POOR	2
URGENT	1

**ASSESSMENT OF PHYSICAL CONDITIONS**  
New or like-new condition: Reassess in 8-10 years  
Good condition- limited signs of wear or damage: Reassess in 6-8 years  
Average condition for building age: Reassess in 4-6 years  
Near end of anticipated lifecycle: Consider replacement within 2-4 years  
Very worn or damaged: Consider near-term replacement 0-2 years

EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS  
MEETS EXPECTATIONS  
APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS  
NOT MEETING EXPECTATIONS  
UNUSABLE

**Hours of Operation:**

Mon-Fri, 7 am-7 pm, Sat/Sun, 8 am-1 pm

A
B
C
D
E

**ASSESSMENT OF INTENDED PROGRAM USE**  
Space size/configuration exceeds  
Space size/configuration meets the requirements of the desired use or purpose  
Space size/configuration functions, but limits the desired use or purpose  
Space size/configuration does not permit desired use or purpose  
Space size/configuration is not capable of being used or fit for use

**PROGRAM SPACE**

INTENDED PROGRAM USE					PHYSICAL CONDITIONS				
A	B	C	D	E	5	4	3	2	1

**NOTES:**

Climbing Wall				X			X			Climbing wall accommodate some youth programming but generally underutilized. Developed prior to expansion of private climbing gyms
Opportunities										Consider climbing wall area for alternate use. Size and configuration of space not clear what alternate use might be consider further study (e-sports?).
Constraints										EBRC serves an older community, as witnessed utilizing fitness area
GYMNASIUM		X				X				underutilized dry lockers outside of men's locker room Gym and EBRC in general serves as the "hub" of summer camp programs due to large parking lot, convenience of drop-off and access to safe outdoor features: trail system, lake
										Facility supervisor notes gym is often over-programmed, limiting drop-in availability
										Competition between BPR program staff for gym space - Adult Sports, Fitness
										More storage needed for big nets and summer camp equipment
SENIOR SPACES										
Senior Entry/Lobby - no longer used										Separate entry doors and front des.
Senior Fitness										None dedicated
Senior Multi Purpose Room 1										Both multi purpose rooms used as classrooms currently
										For current use, meets the needs but BPR staff should engage and evaluate community needs to determine best use of this space.
Ballroom (capacity 207)		X					X			Lots of rentals in this space, esp staff/city meetings
										Room can be divided and has nice views of lake
										Nice views, millwork outdated and near end of life cycle. Floor finish good, walls a little worn outdated colors, moving partitions worn, lighting outdated.
										Full catering kitchen, clean ok condition, not used often
Opportunities										Consider relationship with catering company who can use equipment to capacity
										Given the vacancy of Human Services and the 'senior' wing BPR staff are trying to determine best and most desired community use of this wing.
										Currently serving as contracted child care for Rainbow Kids, who do not operate at capacity. Lots of space to reimagine recreation for EBRC.
Constraints										EBRC Facility Supervisor notes a core programs/service that is lacking is teen activities and teen programming. Also roof leaks every year and parking lot needs attention due to potholes



# **NORTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER & IRIS STUDIO**

## **PROGRAM ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST**

**PROGRAM ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST**

**PROJECT NAME:** North Boulder Recreation Center

**ADDRESS:** 3170 Broadway St. Boulder

**DATE:** 4/7/2021

**REVIEWER:** Connie Osborn, Jenna Katsaros

Programs: Gymnastics, yoga, aquatics

Matt Gazdik, facility manager

NEW  
GOOD  
SATISFACTORY  
POOR  
URGENT

5  
4  
3  
2  
1

**ASSESSMENT OF PHYSICAL CONDITIONS**

New or like-new condition: Reassess in 8-10 years

Good condition-- limited signs of wear or damage: Reassess in 6-8 years

Average condition for building age: Reassess in 4-6 years

Near end of anticipated lifecycle: Consider replacement within 2-4 years

Very worn or damaged: Consider near-term replacement 0-2 years

EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS  
MEETS EXPECTATIONS  
APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS  
NOT MEETING EXPECTATIONS  
UNUSABLE

A  
B  
C  
D  
E

**ASSESSMENT OF INTENDED PROGRAM USE**

Space size/configuration exceeds

Space size/configuration meets the requirements of the desired use or purpose

Space size/configuration functions, but limits the desired use or purpose

Space size/configuration does not permit desired use or purpose

Space size/configuration is not capable of being used or fit for use

Mon-Fri, 6 am-6 pm Sat/Sun 9 am-4:30 pm

PROGRAM SPACE										NOTES:				
CENTER: NBRC	A	B	C	D	E	5	4	3	2	1	PROGRAMS			
Entry/Lobby											Staff at front desk unable to control visitors from accessing south corridor			
			X					X			significant control issues			
											sneaking into classrooms has been an issues			
											ramp leads to childcare area, not able to monitor who is coming/going			
Offices & Admin			X								Front desk has multiple stations, even during busiest times of year, all stations are rarely used.			
							X				Office spaces are adequate in number and size			
Support Spaces								X						
Child Watch		X									Adequate space pre-COVID, ages 6 mo - 9 yrs			
								X			outdoor area could be enhanced with shade structure			
Opportunities											Extremely large entrance, could be renovated to give the control desk better security			
Constraints											Public uses the restrooms which are near the child watch area, away from front desk staff.			
Lessons														
AQUATICS														
8 lane lap pool											very busy in the winter months, programming limited w/parking			
Indoor Leisure Pool		X						X			very busy in winter months, lessons in pool			
											leisure pool redone in 2017			
Sauna		X									popular sauna would be better located away from leisure pool			
											lifeguards have hard time monitoring sauna			
Spa/hot tub									X		Hot tub is not visible to guards, misuse has occurred.			
Aquatics support areas			X								Same lockers at other centers. Staff would prefer self-coding locker type.			
Locker rooms											3 family cabanas - more people want cabanas over gang showers			
FITNESS, CARDIO, WEIGHTS														
Weight Room/Cardio Area				X				X			cardio / free weights at capacity pre COVID			
Too small and will expand into former dance room											very tight, confined fitness area			
Yoga Room		X					X				well received by community, hardwood floor, lots of natural light, updated HVAC			
											operational impacts being near noisy gymnastics area			
Multi Purpose Room 1- Sage Room			X					X			Well used, in good condition. Finishes outdated			
											2 sinks in room, doors leading outside			
											holds birthday parties, any fitness class but not yoga			
Divides into 3 rooms											events turned down due to parking constraints			
Multi Purpose Room 2		X						X			most of NBRC programming is planned around parking and limitations w/it			
											parking lot expansion(?) would increase revenue w/rentals			
Opportunities														
Constraints											Existing lot is landlocked, limited or no ability to expand if desired			

## PROGRAM ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

**PROJECT NAME:** North Boulder Recreation Center

**ADDRESS:** 3170 Broadway St. Boulder

**DATE: 4/7/2021**

**REVIEWER:** Connie Osborn, Jenna Katsaros

**Programs:** Gymnastics, yoga, aquatics

**Matt Gazdik, facility manager**

### **ASSESSMENT OF PHYSICAL CONDITIONS**

**New or like-new condition:** Reassess in 8-10 years

**Good condition- limited signs of wear or damage: Reassess in 6-8 years**

**Average condition for building age: Reassess in 4-6 years**

**Near end of anticipated lifecycle:** Consider replacement within 2-4 years

**Very worn or damaged:** Consider near-term replacement 0-2 years

## **ASSESSMENT OF INTENDED PROGRAM USE**

**Space size/configuration exceeds**

**Space size/configuration meets the requirements of the desired use or purpose**

Space size/configuration functions, but limits the desired use or purpose

Space size/configuration does not permit desired use or purpose

Space size/configuration is not capable of being used or fit for use

Mon-Fri, 6 am-6 pm Sat/Sun 9 am-4:30 pm

[illegible]

**PROGRAM ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST**

**PROJECT NAME:** Iris Studio

**ADDRESS:** 3198 Broadway Boulder 80304

**DATE:** 4/7/21

**REVIEWER:** Connie Osborn, Jenna Katsaros

NW corner of parking lot for NBRC, enter up the ramp

Programs: Kinesis Dance partner

COB Summer Camps

Satellite location for BPR programs

NEW

GOOD

SATISFACTORY

POOR

URGENT



**ASSESSMENT OF PHYSICAL CONDITIONS**

New or like-new condition: Reassess in 8-10 years

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EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS  
MEETS EXPECTATIONS  
APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS  
NOT MEETING EXPECTATIONS

UNUSABLE



Administrative Office

PROGRAM SPACE		INTENDED PROGRAM USE					PHYSICAL CONDITIONS					NOTES:
CENTER: Iris Studio		A	B	C	D	E	5	4	3	2	1	
Entry/Lobby												Security is a big issue. Contractor run programs, responsible for security of space.
					X				X			Dance classes and some camps held here, would ideally like a room to serve 25 youth, currently able to serve 15 per class maybe
Support Spaces					X				X			Flooring type not idea for beginning level dancers
												Storage closet is a catch-all for supplies, includes janitor closet
												Storage space is inadequate
												Restroom facilities adequate
Multi-Use Room					X				X			Room is too small, offices are below, when programming occurs it is very noisy
												Incorporate into NBRC or other center?
Opportunities												
Constraints												HVAC, heating and cooling issues
												No one is watching this space, especially on weekends
												Inadequate parking, no room for expansion
												ADA accessibility needs review, ramp is adequate though not ideal

# **SOUTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER**

## **PROGRAM ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST**



## PROGRAM ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

**PROJECT NAME:** South Boulder Recreation Center

**ADDRESS:** 1360 Gillaspie Dr. Boulder 80305

**DATE: 2021.04.07**

**REVIEWERS:** Connie Osborn, Jenna Katsaros

**Closes at 1 pm (COVID hrs)**

Programs: Pilates Reformer lessons, indoor cycling

**Matt Pilger, Facility Supervisor**

## ASSESSMENT OF PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

**New or like-new condition:** Reassess in 8-10 years

**Good condition- limited signs of wear or damage: Reassess in 6-8 years**

**Average condition for building age: Reassess in 4-6 years**

**Near end of anticipated lifecycle:** Consider replacement within 2-4 years

**Very worn or damaged:** Consider near-term replacement 0-2 years

NEW	5
GOOD	4
SATISFACTORY	3
POOR	2
URGENT	1

EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	A
MEETS EXPECTATIONS	B
APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS	C
NOT MEETING EXPECTATIONS	D

## **ASSESSMENT OF INTENDED PROGRAM USE**

Space size/configuration exceeds

Space size/configuration meets the requirements of the desired use or purpose

Space size/configuration functions, but limits the desired use or purpose

Space size/configuration does not permit desired use or purpose

Space size/configuration is not capable of being used or fit for use

Mon-Fri, 6 am - 1 pm

Mon-Fri, 6 am - 1 pm												
PROGRAM SPACE		INTENDED PROGRAM USE					PHYSICAL CONDITIONS					NOTES:
CENTER: SBRC		A	B	C	D	E	5	4	3	2	1	
Entry/Lobby					X					X		Entry into facility immediately met with fenced stairwell, so must go left or right to access front desk staff. This pinchpoint at the front makes it difficult for staff to manage the coming/going of patrons
												Only multi-level center in Boulder system
												Does not meet ADA access standards. To use elevators visitors must request key from front desk. Does not meet spirit of accessibility.
										X		Accessibility through center is a challenge. Efforts to meet visitors needs have been made, but age and configuration of facility limit ability to upgrade to a more meaningful level.
												No individual offices or sufficient meeting room for staff. No heat in the back office. HVAC control in small closet.
Offices & Admin										X		Office and breakroom areas are inadequately sized for staff needs and use.
												No meeting or conference room, though identified as needed for staff.
Support Spaces										X		Staff breakroom is also the custodial closet and laundry room.
Child Watch												Not offered
Opportunities												South Boulder Recreation Center is at an age where replacement should be considered
Constraints												Stairs in the middle of the lobby, restrooms by front desk, but location them make it difficult to control/monitor. Restrooms are accessed easily by all park patrons, center users and staff. Elevator requires staff assistance to obtain physical key. This is a security issue with placement of the elevator in front of the control desk.
												45 year old building with insufficient accessibility and multiple failing systems, leaking pool, sporadically operating lift into gymnasium, etc
AQUATICS												
6 lane lap pool 25 yards				X						X		High demand for use by drop-in lap swimmers, high school swim team, water polo team, and local youth wanting to use the pool for leisure/climbing wall, diving board
												Lacking spectator space, HVAC not well regulated
												water temp limited program use - too cold. Lap pool and therapy pool share water
Therapy pool - adjacent to lap pool				X						X		Pool is leaking into adjacent racquetball court
												Storage is very limited esp as high school team also stores items at pool
												Guard office is sufficient in size, does not need the connection to the gym which creates an illusion they are monitoring the gym?
Aquatics support areas												Pool patio is not used, no shade and not secure/unable to control access as it connects to the park
												Community desires taller lockers, currently a mix of half and full size lockers
												Hot tub is sufficiently sized and good, visible location

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

PROJECT NAME: South Boulder Recreation Center

ADDRESS: 1360 Gillaspie Dr. Boulder 80305

DATE: 2021.04.07

REVIEWERS: Connie Osborn, Jenna Katsaros

Closes at 1 pm (COVID hrs)

Programs: Pilates Reformer lessons, indoor cycling

Matt Pilger, Facility Supervisor

NEW	5
GOOD	4
SATISFACTORY	3
POOR	2
URGENT	1

EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS  
MEETS EXPECTATIONS  
APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS  
NOT MEETING EXPECTATIONS  
UNUSABLE

A
B
C
D
E

ASSESSMENT OF PHYSICAL CONDITIONS  
New or like-new condition: Reassess in 8-10 years  
Good condition- limited signs of wear or damage: Reassess in 6-8 years  
Average condition for building age: Reassess in 4-6 years  
Near end of anticipated lifecycle: Consider replacement within 2-4 years  
Very worn or damaged: Consider near-term replacement 0-2 years

ASSESSMENT OF INTENDED PROGRAM USE

Space size/configuration exceeds  
Space size/configuration meets the requirements of the desired use or purpose  
Space size/configuration functions, but limits the desired use or purpose  
Space size/configuration does not permit desired use or purpose  
Space size/configuration is not capable of being used or fit for use

Mon-Fri, 6 am - 1 pm

PROGRAM SPACE		INTENDED PROGRAM USE					PHYSICAL CONDITIONS					NOTES:
		A	B	C	D	E	5	4	3	2	1	
Sauna/Hot Tub			x						x			Sauna is below the stairs, no visibility, creating opportunities for misuse. Hot tub (in pool area) adequately sized and good line of sight for guards.
Opportunities												Water temp too cold for swim lessons. To meet demand by local youth who want to use the pool for leisure requires closing the lanes. Facility manager notes unable to serve teens b/c of overprogrammed lap swim. Acoustical challenges as well. Limited aqua fit classes offered here.
Constraints												Therapy pool aka small pool cannot be programmed
												Windows above the pool - cleaning is challenge
FITNESS, CARDIO, WEIGHTS												Existing fitness space is adequate, especially when able to use outdoor area (connects to door, but this creates a security issue).
Fitness/Cardio Area									x			Doubling weight room size would meet the functional fitness needs
												Cardio area over looks the pool & users are blinded by the sun at certain times of year/times of day.
												Dance, fitness, yoga use this room. Low ceiling limits activities, connects to the outdoors, lacks appeal and is outdated
Dance Room - left of front entrance				x					x			3 space heaters b/c HVAC is insufficient, gets too hot
												Upstairs "studio" but not programmable space, staff have placed some equipment in this area, bosu balls, etc.
Multi Purpose Area "Stretch Area" next to front desk					x				x			Reformer equipment in room, access to boiler room from here.
Multi Purpose room - Pilates tower/lever, nano wood floor			x						x			As a Pilates room, it meets requirements but limits other uses
Opportunities												Accessibility - lift into gym and Pilates room is not functioning
Constraints												Storage is very limited
												Drop-in basketball popular, pickleball courts used heavily
GYMNASIUM			x						x			under construction due to leaking pool. Block walls being refinished due to water damage. Lots of echo/noise.
Racquetball Court				x					x			
Opportunities												
Constraints												Accessibility between floors

# **SALBERG COMMUNITY CENTER**

## **PROGRAM ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST**

**PROGRAM ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST**

**PROJECT NAME:** Salberg Community Center

**ADDRESS:** 3045 19th Street Boulder 80304

**DATE:** 4/7/21

**REVIEWER:**

Programs: Drama partner programs school break/summer camps

Plates reformer classes.

**ASSESSMENT OF PHYSICAL CONDITIONS**

New or like-new condition: Reassess in 8-10 years

Good condition- limited signs of wear or damage: Reassess in 6-8 years

Average condition for building age: Reassess in 4-6 years

Near end of anticipated lifecycle: Consider replacement within 2-4 years

Very worn or damaged: Consider near-term replacement 0-2 years

NEW	5
GOOD	4
SATISFACTORY	3
POOR	2
URGENT	1

EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS  
MEETS EXPECTATIONS  
APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS  
NOT MEETING EXPECTATIONS  
UNUSABLE

A
B
C
D
E

**ASSESSMENT OF INTENDED PROGRAM USE**

Space size/configuration exceeds

Space size/configuration meets the requirements of the desired use or purpose

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Space size/configuration is not capable of being used or fit for use

PROGRAM SPACE		INTENDED PROGRAM USE					PHYSICAL CONDITIONS					NOTES:
CENTER:		A	B	C	D	E	5	4	3	2	1	
	Medium size room w/ stage										X	Linoleum floor is dated and doesn't support use for programs like karate or dance
	285 occupancy			X								Programmed only 4 hrs/week
												No internet service is available in the facility, which would be required for most rentals
												No vestibule or check-in area. Lack of air-lock would likely make the space too cold in winter, and energy inefficient.
												Finishes are outdated and worn. Although ceiling is nice, there isn't a coherent palette of materials throughout and daylighting is inadequate.
												Exterior windows are outdated, unattractive, and cloudy
	Offices & Admin				X							No offices or admin areas provided, limiting potential contract use by activity providers.
	Support Spaces					X					X	Limited storage, already full with drama program props and costumes
	Restrooms, small sink w/ cabinets, no kitchen			X					X			Space seems adequate and accessible, but finishes are outdated
	Opportunities											Addition of office, reception, storage, and a proper check-in area could improve desirability of space for rentals
												Air-lock/vestibule is recommend for better temperature control during cold/hot seasons
												Consider opening south side of main space for indoor/outdoor experience during comfortable weather
												Consider updating playground area to support party rentals
												Replace flooring with material more suitable for variety of dance/aerobic or karate uses
												Consider increasing number of parking spaces
	Constraints											No support spaces, no ability to check-in, no internet, no indoor/outdoor relationships, no kitchenette to support events, poor lighting, limited storage, no curb appeal.
												Small number of parking spaces limits potential capacity

# BOULDER POTTERY LAB

## PROGRAM ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST



**PROGRAM ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST**

**PROJECT NAME:** Pottery Lab (Historic firehouse)

**ADDRESS:** 1010 Aurora Ave. Boulder 80302

**DATE:**

**REVIEWER:**

Long lease held by Studio Arts Boulder non-profit

Programs: morning/afternoon camps

NEW

GOOD

SATISFACTORY

POOR

URGENT



**ASSESSMENT OF PHYSICAL CONDITIONS**

New or like-new condition: Reassess in 8-10 years

Good condition- limited signs of wear or damage: Reassess in 6-8 years

Average condition for building age: Reassess in 4-6 years

Near end of anticipated lifecycle: Consider replacement within 2-4 years

Very worn or damaged: Consider near-term replacement 0-2 years

**ASSESSMENT OF INTENDED PROGRAM USE**

Space size/configuration exceeds

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Space size/configuration is not capable of being used or fit for use

EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS  
MEETS EXPECTATIONS  
APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS  
NOT MEETING EXPECTATIONS

UNUSABLE



PROGRAM SPACE		INTENDED PROGRAM USE					PHYSICAL CONDITIONS					NOTES:
CENTER:		A	B	C	D	E	5	4	3	2	1	
	Main Floor Work Space								N/A			Condition Assessment limited by this being a historical building
												Big doors allow for good ventilation in good weather
										X		HVAC system inadequate for activity in space. A lot of particulate in air.
										X		Indoor and outdoor storage inadequate
										X		2nd floor HVAC inadequate - indoor kiln offgassing can be felt
	Offices & Admin				X							Office/Admin area is inadequate for current use. Some space currently used for storage may be considered for use as office space when new facility is built and program offerings are offset.
	Support Spaces								X			A single accessible uni-sex bathroom is provided, finishes are acceptable, though additional fixtures are likely needed when facility is used at max capacity. Toilet on 2nd floor does not meet ADA.
	Outdoor Kilns and Storage				X					X		Outdoor kilns are exposed to weather
												Storage of completed projects is insecure and inadequate
	Opportunities											Outdoor kilns are currently exposed to the elements. Consider providing protective cover to protect from rust and extend life of kilns.
												Outdoor storage for completed projects is inadequate and inaccessible, consider reconfiguration.
	Constraints											Historic building is not ADA accessible. There is no elevator access to the 2nd floor, the interior stair is steep by contemporary standards, and the outdoor fire access stairs are rusted through.
												Because this is an historic building, opportunities for expansion and improvements are very limited.

## APPENDIX 2

### BRS | BPR MEETING NOTES

### **Attachment C: DRAFT Community Survey Report**

Survey report provided here is abridged. Full report is available [here](#).



# City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update Survey Summary of Results

June 2021

This Survey Report represents subject-specific research findings that will ultimately inform the content of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update. The information contained in this report does not necessarily constitute the final narrative that will be presented in the plan. During the process of conducting research for this Survey Report, a number of other issues and questions were uncovered that merit additional discussion in the Needs Assessment phase of the planning process. The final content of the Master Plan may reflect significant portions of this report, but will not consist entirely of it.

Prepared by:



Boulder, CO 80301 • [polco.com](http://polco.com)

2955 Valmont Rd, Suite 300,

## Table of Contents

<b>Highlights of Survey Results .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Appendix A: Full Set of Responses to Each Survey Question .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Appendix B: Comparisons of Selected Survey Results by Selected Respondent Characteristics .....</b>	<b>55</b>
Crosstabulations by Area of Residence .....	56
Crosstabulations by Length of Residency in Boulder, Type of Housing Unit and Housing Tenure (Rent or Own) .....	80
Crosstabulations by Age, Gender and Race/Ethnicity of Respondent .....	103
Crosstabulations by Presence of Young Children, Teenagers and Older Adults in Household .....	126
<b>Appendix C: Comparison of 2021 Results to 2012 Results .....</b>	<b>148</b>
<b>Appendix D: Full Set of Responses to Each Survey Question, Open Participation Survey .....</b>	<b>156</b>
<b>Appendix E: Comparison of Survey Results for Mailed Invitation to Online Probability Sample and Open Participation Survey Sample .....</b>	<b>182</b>
<b>Appendix F: Survey Methodology .....</b>	<b>196</b>
<b>Appendix G: Survey Materials .....</b>	<b>200</b>



## Highlights of Survey Results

### Survey Background

The 2014 Boulder Parks and Recreation Master Plan was adopted by City Council in February 2014. Since that time, the Master Plan has shaped the work of the Parks and Recreation Department through the delivery of services in a manner consistent with city sustainability goals and which meet the community's level of service standards.

In 2020, Parks and Recreation began the process to update the Master Plan. The Master Plan Update will identify new and evolving areas of focus and provide recommendations for strategic ways to address gaps in service within the existing framework of the 2014 Master Plan.

The Master Plan is a key implementation strategy within the city's primary planning document, the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP), and is intended to be strategic in focus to help the department respond to three important questions.

- What do we do?
- For whom do we do it?
- How do we excel?

One important part of updating the plan is to gather input from the public. A survey was undertaken as part of that public feedback process. Polco's National Research Center, conducted the survey on the City's behalf.

A total of 4,000 addresses were randomly selected from a list of all residential addresses in the Boulder's ten subcommunities based on the United States Postal Service Delivery Sequence File. (This list does not include addresses for those in group quarters such as dormitories or nursing homes.) Each of these selected households was contacted two times with a half-page postcard survey invitation requesting that the household participate in the survey online. A total of 284 survey recipients completed the survey, for a response rate of 7%. The margin of error for this survey, with 284 respondents, is  $\pm 5.8\%$ .

The survey data were statistically weighted to adjust for non-response among certain demographic groups, a survey research best practice. The dataset of survey responses were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Some of the major findings of the study are presented below. The full frequencies of responses to each survey question can be found in [Appendix A](#). Breakdowns of results of by respondent characteristics are provided in [Appendix B](#). Additional details about the survey methodology can be found in [Appendix F](#) while the survey materials and questionnaire are provided in [Appendix G](#).

An open participation survey was publicized to all Boulder residents after the postcard invitations were mailed to the randomly selected recipients. A total of 142 responses were received. These results can be found in [Appendix D](#), while comparisons to the results from the statistically valid survey can be found in [Appendix E](#).

## Key Findings

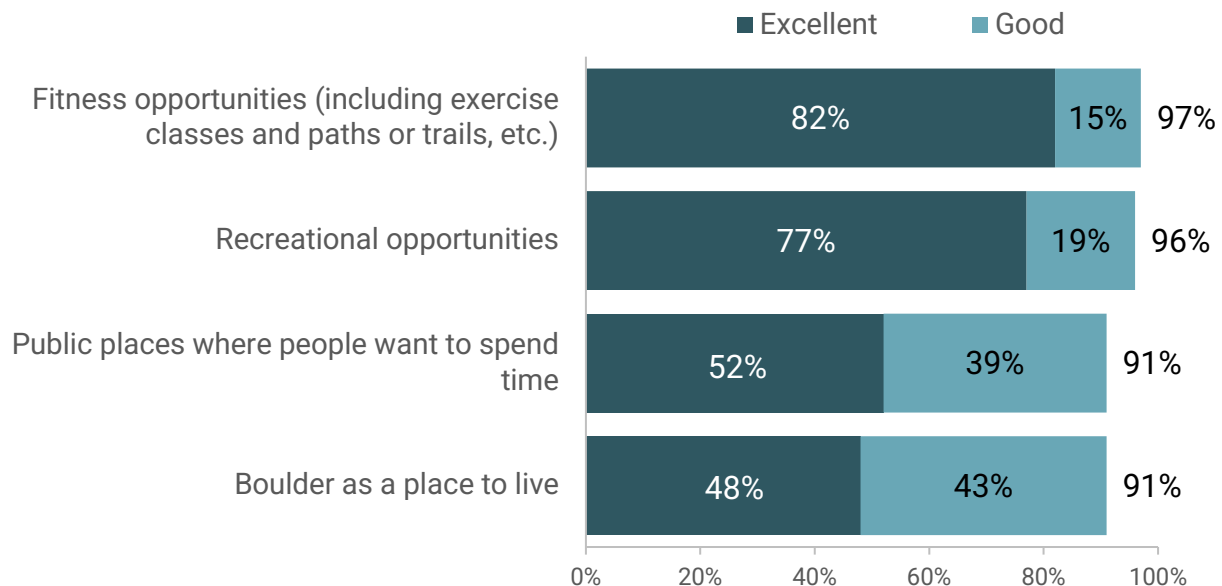
### ➤ The fitness and recreation opportunities in Boulder are highly regarded by residents.

About 8 in 10 residents rated the fitness and recreation opportunities in Boulder as excellent, and nearly all rated them as at least good. About 9 in 10 felt that Boulder has excellent or good public places where people want to spend time, and considered Boulder an excellent or good place to live.

Ratings of the fitness and recreation opportunities were somewhat more positive on this survey than had been observed on the general community survey in 2018, when about two-thirds of respondents gave excellent ratings. Ratings of Boulder as a place to live and public places where people want to spend time were similar to what had been seen on the 2018 community survey (see Table 119 in [Appendix C](#)).

### Figure 1: Ratings of the Boulder Community

How would you rate each of the following in the Boulder community?

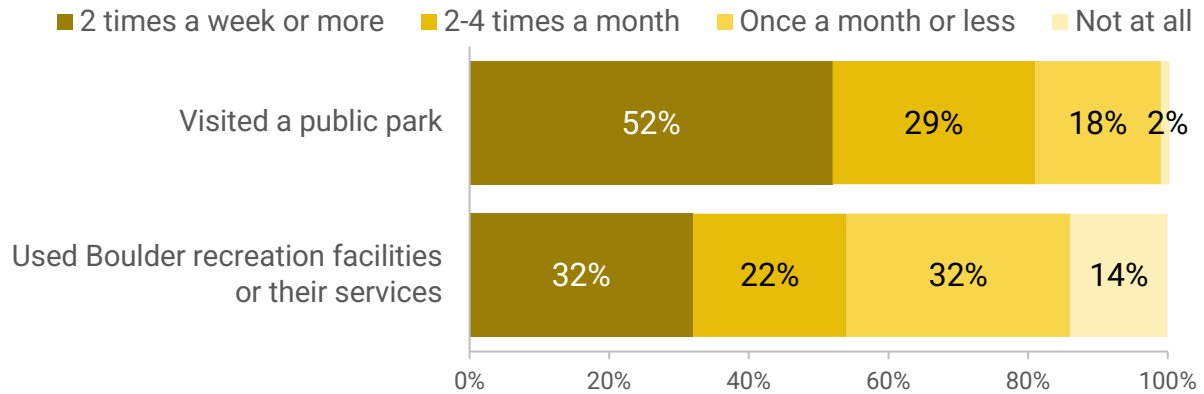


- **Nearly all residents reported having visited a public park in the 12 months prior to the pandemic, and over 8 in 10 (76%) had used a Boulder recreation facility or their services.**

About 3 in 10 respondents reported that they or a member of their household had registered for a recreation class or program with the City of Boulder in the previous 12 months (see Table 29 in *Appendix A: Full Set of Responses to Each Survey Question*).

**Figure 2: Use of Boulder recreation facilities or services and parks**

In the 12 months prior to the pandemic, about how many times, if at all, had you or other household members done each of the following in Boulder?

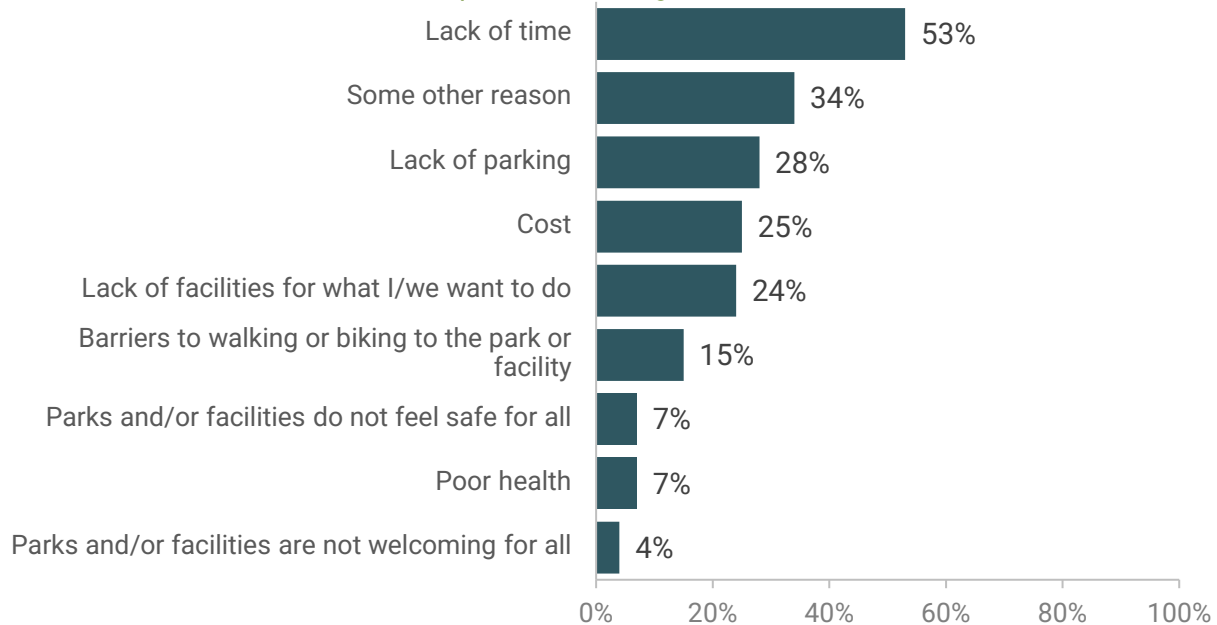


The most common reason given for not using parks, recreation facilities or services was a lack of time. However, lack of parking and cost were each cited by about one-quarter of respondents.

### Figure 3: Barriers to using recreation parks and/or facilities

What keeps you or members of your household from using recreation parks and/or facilities, or using them more often? Please check all that apply.

*Percents add to more than 100% as respondents could give more than one answer.*



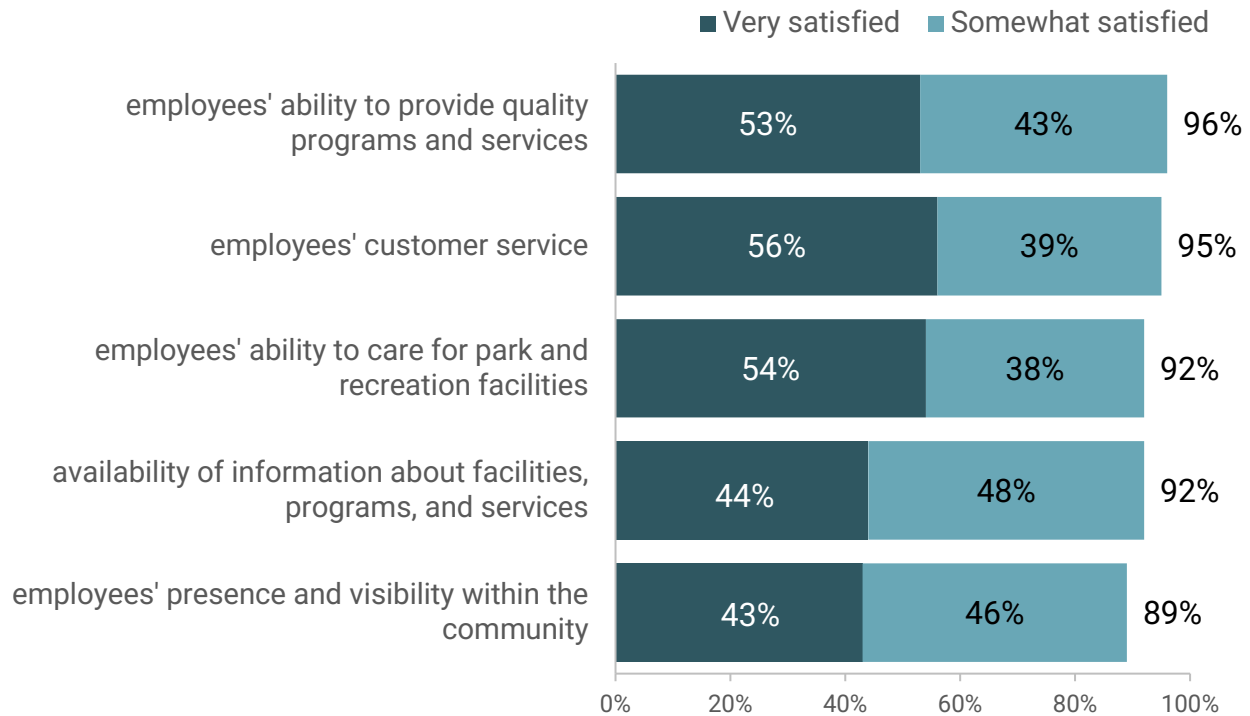
Renters and those living in multi-family housing units were more likely to cite lack of time as a barrier than owners and those living in single family homes (see Table 75 in [Appendix B](#)). Cost, lack of time, lack of parking, and lack of facilities for what they want to do were most often mentioned as a barrier by renters compared to owners. Hispanic respondents were more likely to mention cost, poor health, lack of parking, and barriers to walking or biking to a park or facilities compared to White respondents (see Table 95). Those who identify as something other than White or Hispanic were more likely to say parks and facilities do not feel safe for all than White or Hispanic respondents. Cost was more often mentioned as a barrier by respondents in households with children under age 12 than in households without children, while lack of parking was more often cited by respondents in households without children than by respondents in households with children (see Table 115). Cost and poor health were more likely to be cited as reasons for not using recreation parks and/or facilities, or using them more often by those living in Crossroads & East Boulder compared to those in other subcommunities (see Table 55). Lack of time was most likely to be cited by those in subcommunities Crossroads & East Boulder and Uni Hill & University than in other subcommunities. Lack of parking was most likely to be considered a barrier by those in Southeast Boulder compared to those in other subcommunities.

➤ **Most residents were satisfied with all aspects of the services provided by the Parks and Recreation Department employees.**

Nine in 10 respondents were very or somewhat satisfied with all aspects rated, including the ability of employees to provide quality programs and services and to care for the parks and recreation facilities. These ratings were similar to what had been observed in 2012 (see Table 120 in *Appendix C*.)

**Figure 4: Satisfaction with the Boulder Parks and Recreation Department**

Overall, how satisfied are you with Boulder Parks and Recreation Department's...



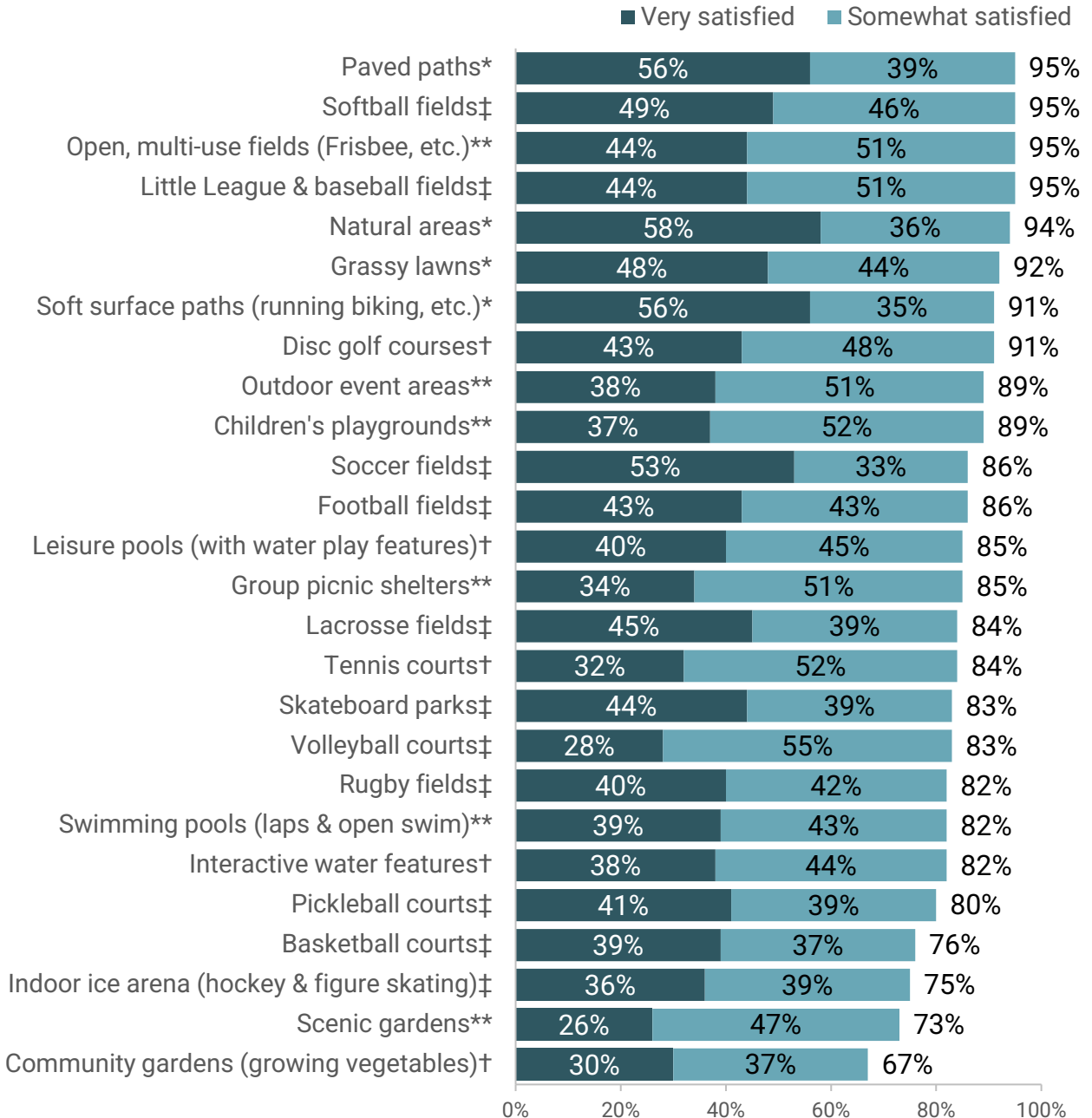


- **Two thirds or more of residents with an opinion were very or somewhat satisfied with each of the specific types of recreation facilities rated through the survey. Opinions were particularly positive for paved paths, soft surface paths, fields, natural areas and grassy lawns.**

It should be noted that between 4% and 80% of respondents answered don't know when asked about each of these items (see Table 20). The chart below is among those who had an opinion.

**Figure 5: Satisfaction with City of Boulder Recreation Facilities**

How satisfied are with the recreation facilities provided by City of Boulder Parks and Recreation?



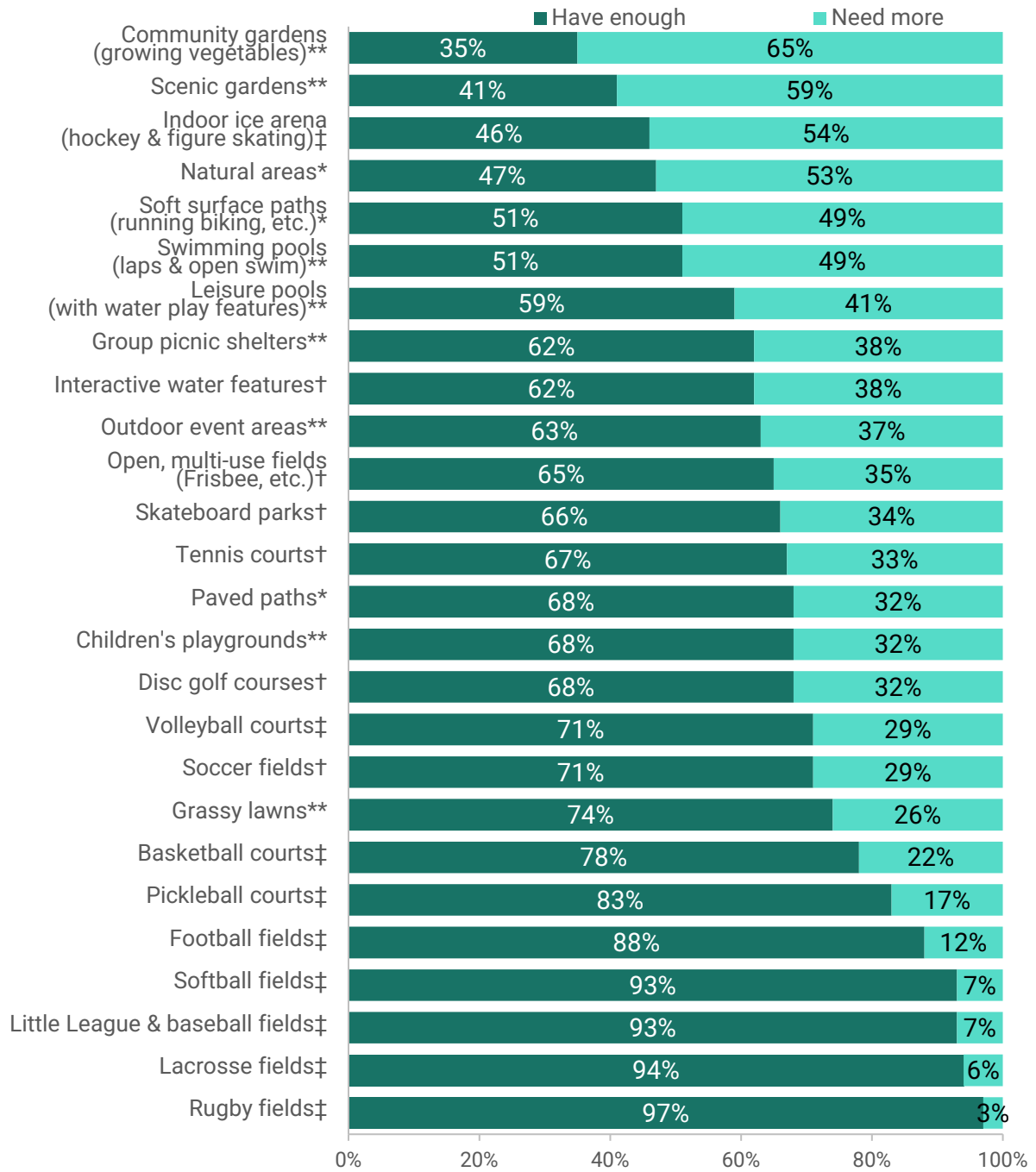
Legend: Percent of respondents answering don't know: \* <20% \*\* 20%-39% † 40%-59% ‡ 60%+

- **The specific types of facilities residents felt were most needed were community gardens, scenic gardens, indoor ice arena and natural areas, with more than half of those with an opinion feeling additional facilities were needed.**

It should be noted that between 17% and 71% of respondents answered don't know when asked about each of these items. The chart below is among those who had an opinion.

**Figure 6: Perceived need for more recreation facilities**

Do you think Boulder has enough of each of these recreation facilities, or are more needed?



Legend: Percent of respondents answering don't know: \* <20% \*\* 20%-39% † 40%-59% ‡ 60%+

Renters were more likely to feel more community gardens were needed than were those who owned their home, while those who owned their home were more likely to feel an ice arena was needed than those who rented their home (see Table 74 in *Appendix B*).

Females were more likely to think more community gardens, scenic gardens, an ice arena, swimming pools, and leisure pools were needed than were males (see Table 94). Those who identified as something other than White were more likely to feel more swimming pools and leisure pools were needed than those who identified as White.

Those in households that did not have older adults or in households that did not have teenagers were more likely to feel there were not enough community gardens compared to households with older adults or households with teenagers (see Table 114). Households with children age 12 or younger were more likely to identify a need for leisure pools than were households without children.

Those living in Crossroads & East Boulder and Uni Hill and & University subcommunities were more likely to feel like more community gardens were needed than those in other subcommunities (see Table 54). Those living in Central Boulder and Southeast Boulder subcommunities were more likely to feel like more scenic gardens were needed than those in other subcommunities. Those living in Crossroads & East Boulder were more likely to feel an ice arena was needed than those in other subcommunities.

➤ **The ways in which residents felt that the Boulder Parks and Recreation system overall contributes to the Boulder community were in helping Boulder to be a physically healthy community and a community with a high quality of life.**

About 8 in 10 residents felt that Boulder Parks and Recreation “greatly contributes” to the community in these ways. A majority also felt that it helps the community be accessible & connected, have a positive sense of place, be environmentally sustainable, economically vital, and socially thriving. These ratings were similar to what had been seen in 2012, with increases in the proportion who felt that Boulder Parks and Recreation help Boulder be accessible and connected, be economically vital and environmentally sustainable (see Table 121 in *Appendix C*).

- **When presented with a series of trade-off statements about parks and recreation offerings in Boulder, residents preferred that:**
  - **Parks and recreation programs serve many different skill levels as opposed to a focus on skill development at the beginning and intermediate levels.**
  - **Activities and programs at parks and facilities be mostly available for drop-in use as opposed to mostly pre-registered.**
  - **Program offerings include diverse opportunities rather than focus mostly on popular sports and fitness.**
  - **The Parks and Recreation Department provide facilities and programs identified by residents even if they are offered by other providers rather than take care to not replicate facilities and programs offered by others.**
  - **Individuals who live outside city limits but work or own a business in Boulder should pay resident fees rather than the higher non-resident fees.**
- **Residents were roughly split on whether individuals living outside of Boulder should pay more than residents or pay the same as residents.**

**Figure 7: Respondent preferences**

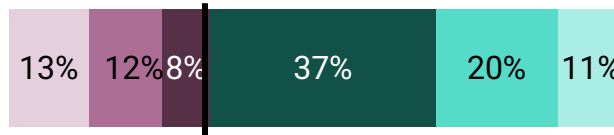
Please consider each pair of statements below. From your perspective, indicate which statement you agree with most and how strongly. We know that pandemic has disrupted much of our individual, family and community life; as you think about these statements, please consider Boulder's future AFTER the pandemic.

**Do you agree more with Statement A or with Statement B?**

A. Parks and recreation program offerings should focus primarily on skill development at beginning and at intermediate levels.

B. Parks and recreation program offerings should serve many different skill levels (i.e., beginner through very advanced).

■ Somewhat agree with A 
 ■ Agree with A 
 ■ Strongly agree with A 
 ■ Strongly agree with B 
 ■ Agree with B 
 ■ Somewhat agree with B

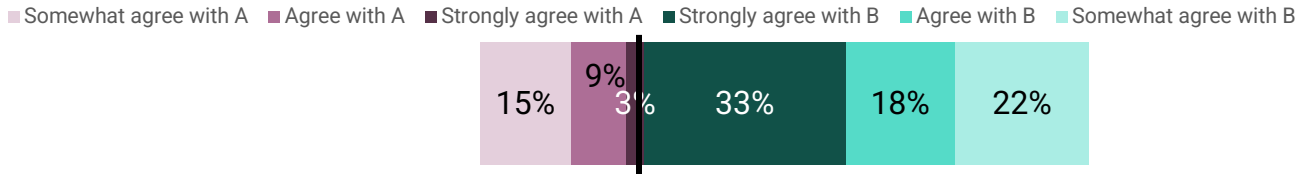


Results to this trade-off question were similar to what had been observed on the 2012 survey (see Table 122 in [Appendix C](#)).

**Do you agree more with Statement A or with Statement B?**

A. Activities and programs at parks and recreation facilities should be mostly pre-registered, with some drop-in use.

B. Activities and programs at parks and recreation facilities should mostly be available for drop-in use, with some programs and events

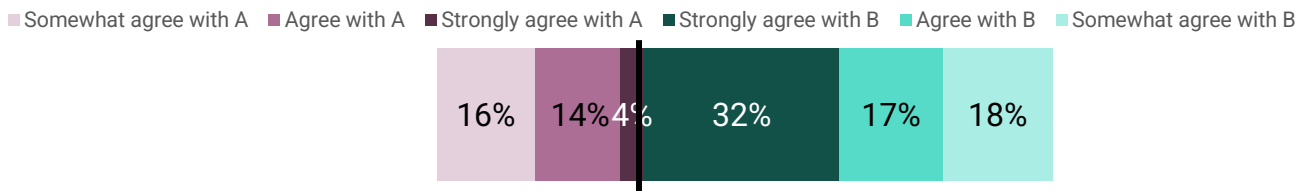


In 2021, respondents leaned much more toward drop-in uses rather than pre-registered uses compared to 2012, when respondents were evenly divided between the two choices (see Table 123).

**Do you agree more with Statement A or with Statement B?**

A. Parks and recreation program offerings should focus mostly on popular sports and fitness (e.g., Pilates, yoga, softball, soccer, etc.)

B. Parks and recreation program offerings should offer some popular sports and fitness activities, but also include diverse opportunities like arts and crafts, and classes (e.g., cooking, drawing, etc.).

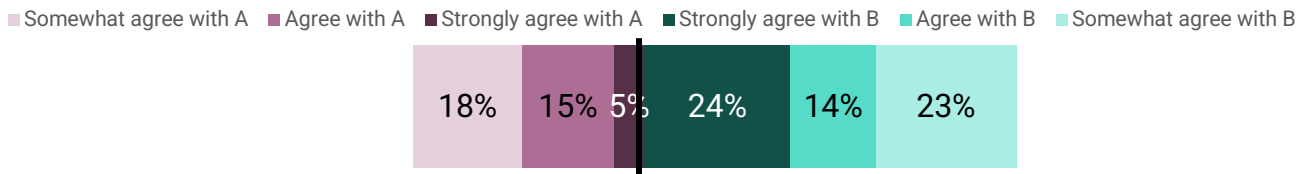


These results are similar to what had been observed in 2012 (see Table 124).

**Do you agree more with Statement A or with Statement B?**

A. The Parks and Recreation Department should provide facilities and programs that complement others in the community and not replicate them.

B. The Parks and Recreation Department should provide facilities and programs identified by residents, regardless of whether they are provided by others in or near Boulder.



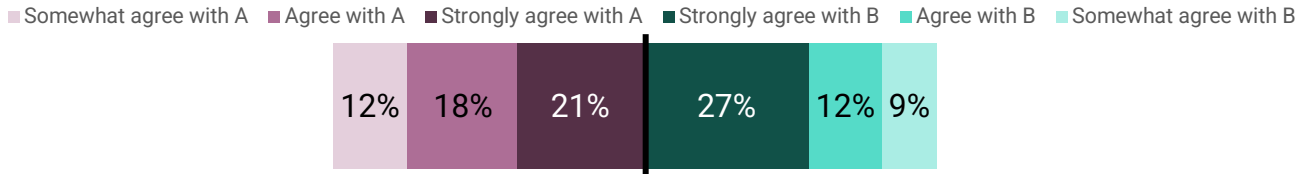
These results also are similar to what had been observed in 2012 (see Table 125).



**Do you agree more with Statement A or with Statement B?**

A. Individuals living outside the city of Boulder should pay higher fees for using Boulder Parks and Recreation facilities and programs.

B. There should be no difference in fees between residents and non-residents of the city of Boulder for using Boulder Parks and Recreation facilities and programs.

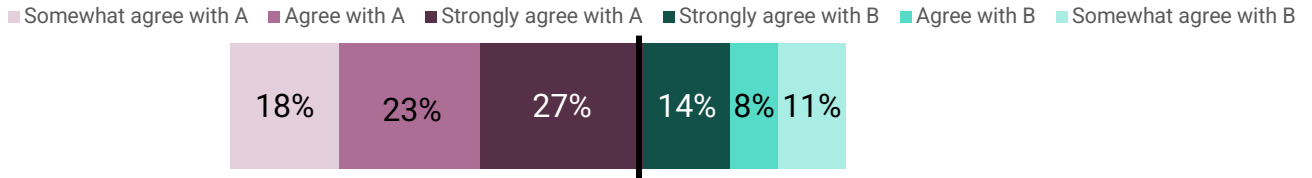


While in 2021 respondents were about evenly split between these two options, in 2012 there was a much greater preference for individuals living outside the city limits to pay higher fees than residents living in city limits (see Table 127).

**Do you agree more with Statement A or with Statement B?**

A. Individuals who live outside the city of Boulder but work or own a business in Boulder should pay resident fees for using Parks and Recreation facilities and programs.

B. Individuals who live outside the city of Boulder but work or own a business in Boulder should pay higher non-resident fees for using Parks and Recreation facilities and programs.

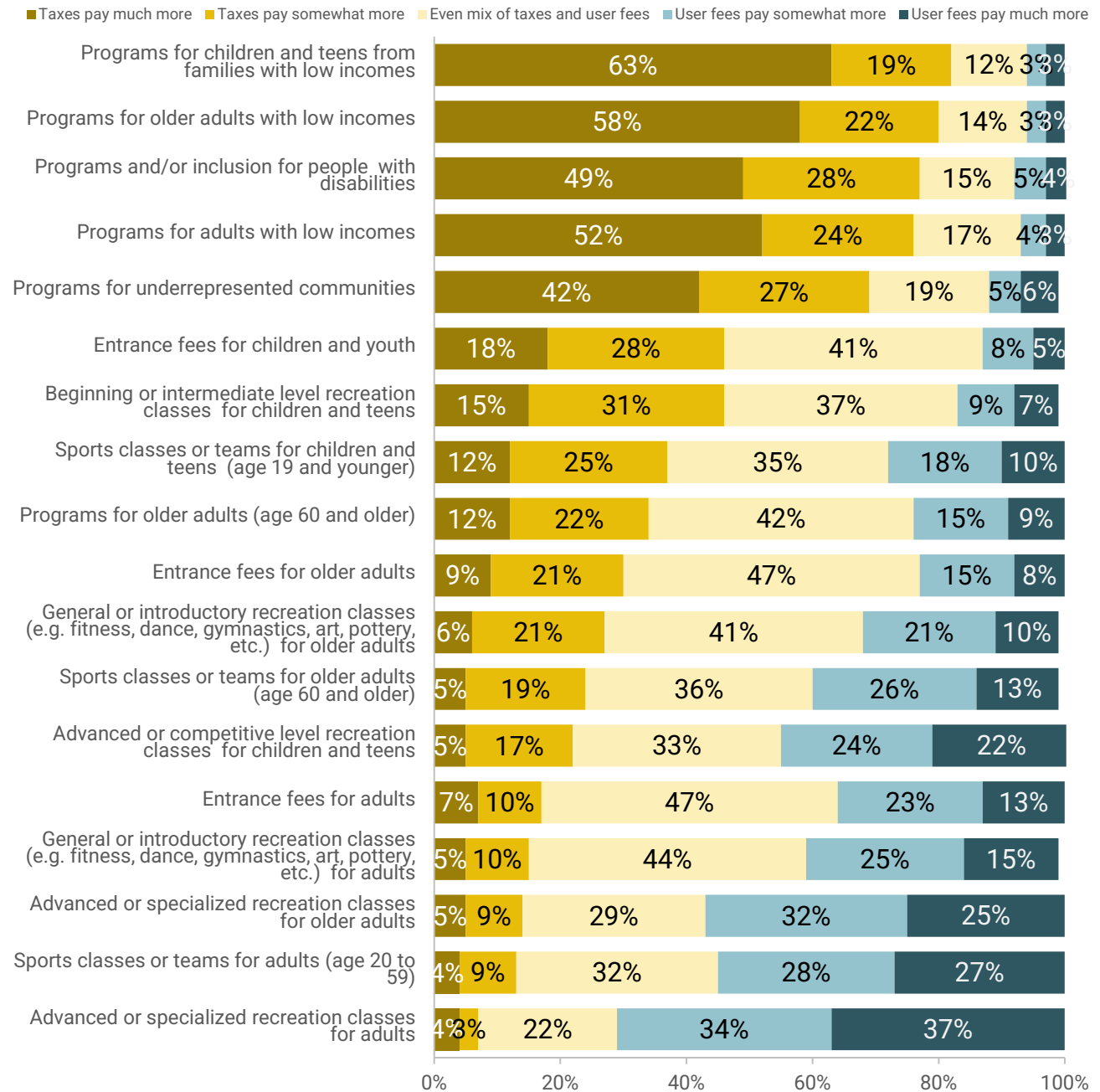


However, while there was a preference among respondents in 2021 for allowing those who live outside Boulder but who work or own a business in Boulder to pay resident fees, this preference was even greater in 2012 (see Table 127).

- **Residents generally supported the use of taxes for programs for children, people of lower income and people with disabilities, but preferred user fees to support sports programs, general introductory classes, or specialized or advanced programs.**

**Figure 8: Use of taxes or user fees for various Boulder recreation facilities and programs**

The facilities and programs offered by the City of Boulder include a fee to offset the cost of providing them. For each of the following items, please indicate what you believe is the appropriate mix of support from taxes versus user fees.



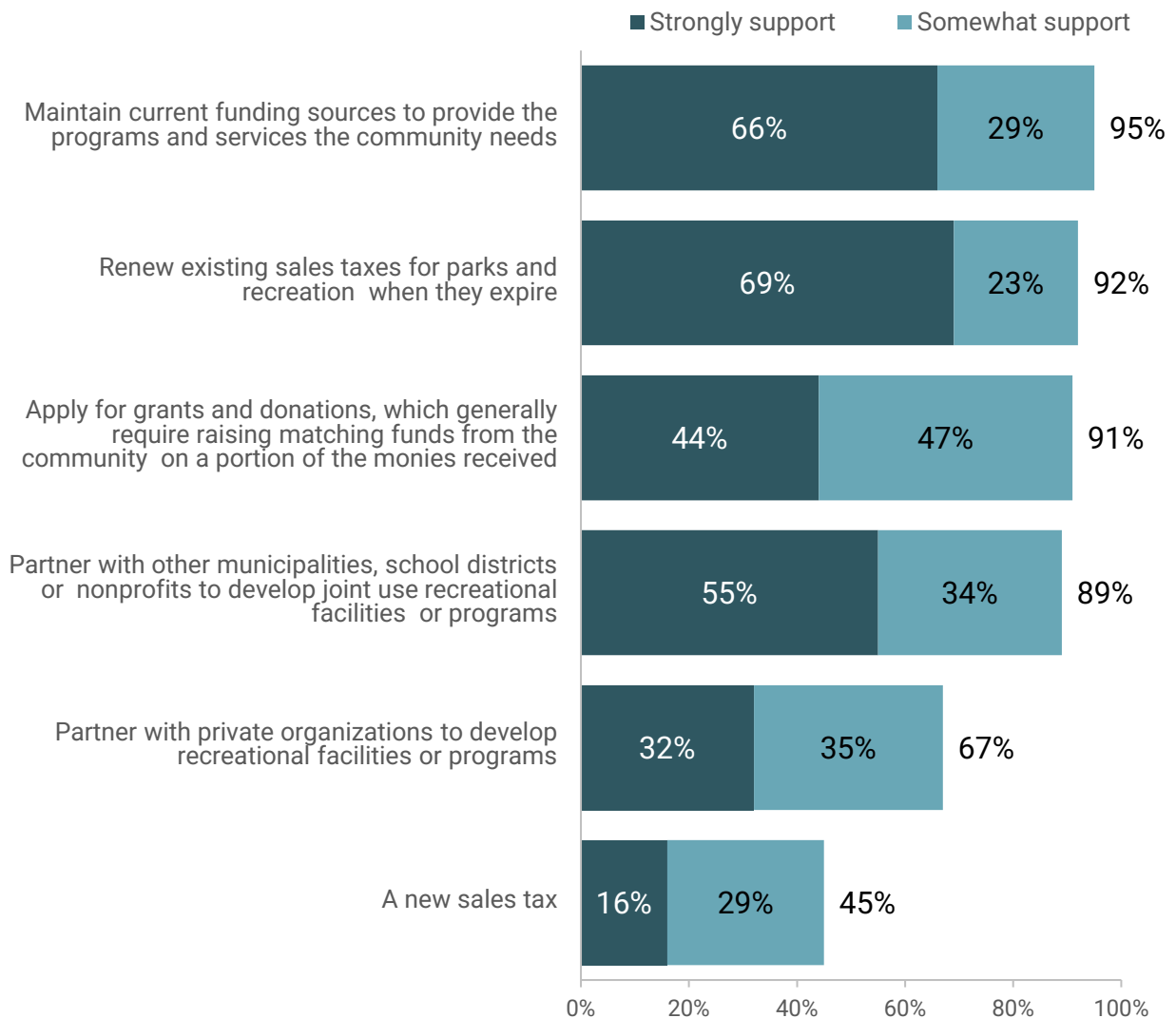
In 2012, where comparisons could be made, the preferences for taxes or fees were in the same direction (i.e., if more respondents preferred taxes over fees in 2012, the same was true in 2021). However, there were some cases where the strength of the sentiment was stronger for fees in 2021 compared to 2012. In 2021, respondents felt more strongly that fees should pay more for sports cases or teams for adults, and for advanced or specialized recreation classes for adults than in 2012 (see Table 130).

- **Slightly more residents opposed a new sales tax to support Boulder parks and recreation facilities and programs than supported this idea. However, 9 in 10 supported renewing existing sales taxes for parks and recreation when they expire.**

Nearly all (95%) of respondents supported maintaining current funding sources to provide the programs and services the community needs. Nine in 10 supported applying for grants and donations, even though matching funds are often required, and 9 in 10 supported partnering with municipalities, school districts or nonprofits to develop joint use facilities or programs. About two-thirds supported partnering with private organizations to develop recreational facilities or programs, but one-third opposed this idea.

**Figure 9: Support for funding sources to support parks and recreation facilities and programs**

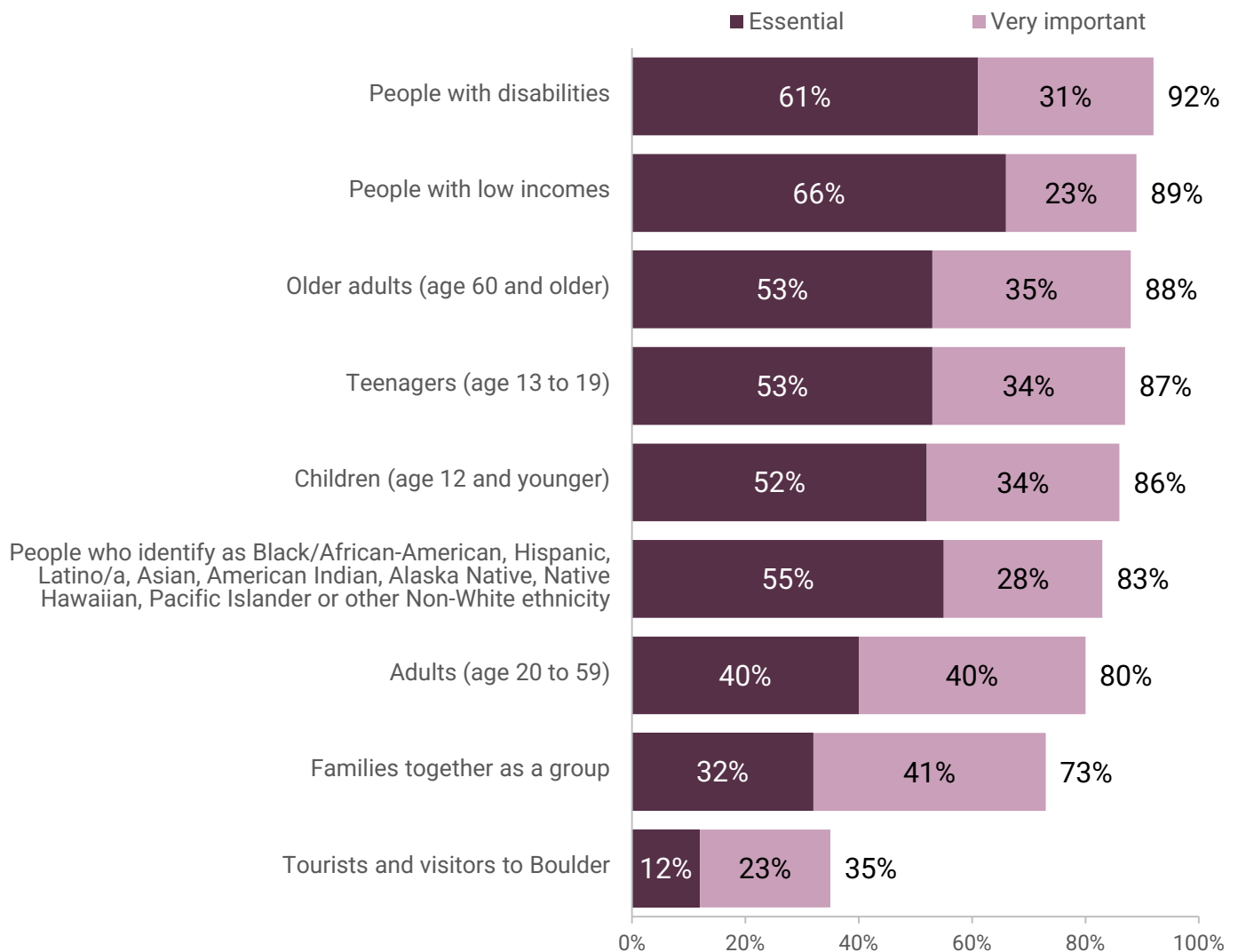
Please indicate your level of support for or opposition to the following sources of funding to help fund City of Boulder parks and recreation facilities and programs.



- **When asked how important it was for the City of Boulder to provide recreation programs for various populations groups, residents placed the highest priority on serving people with disabilities and people with low incomes.**

Six in 10 respondents felt it was very essential to serve these groups, and 9 in 10 considered at least very important to serve these populations. The next highest priority was placed on older adults, teenagers, and children, with about half of respondents considering these essential groups to serve, and nearly 9 in 10 considering it at least very important. Only about a third of respondents felt it was essential or very important to provide recreation programs for tourists and visitors to Boulder.

**Figure 10: Importance of providing recreation programs for various population groups**  
Please rate how important you think it is for the City of Boulder to provide recreation programs for each of the population groups below.



Results were fairly similar to what had been observed in 2012, but in 2021 greater importance was placed on providing programs for people who identify non-White, and for people with disabilities (see Table 128).



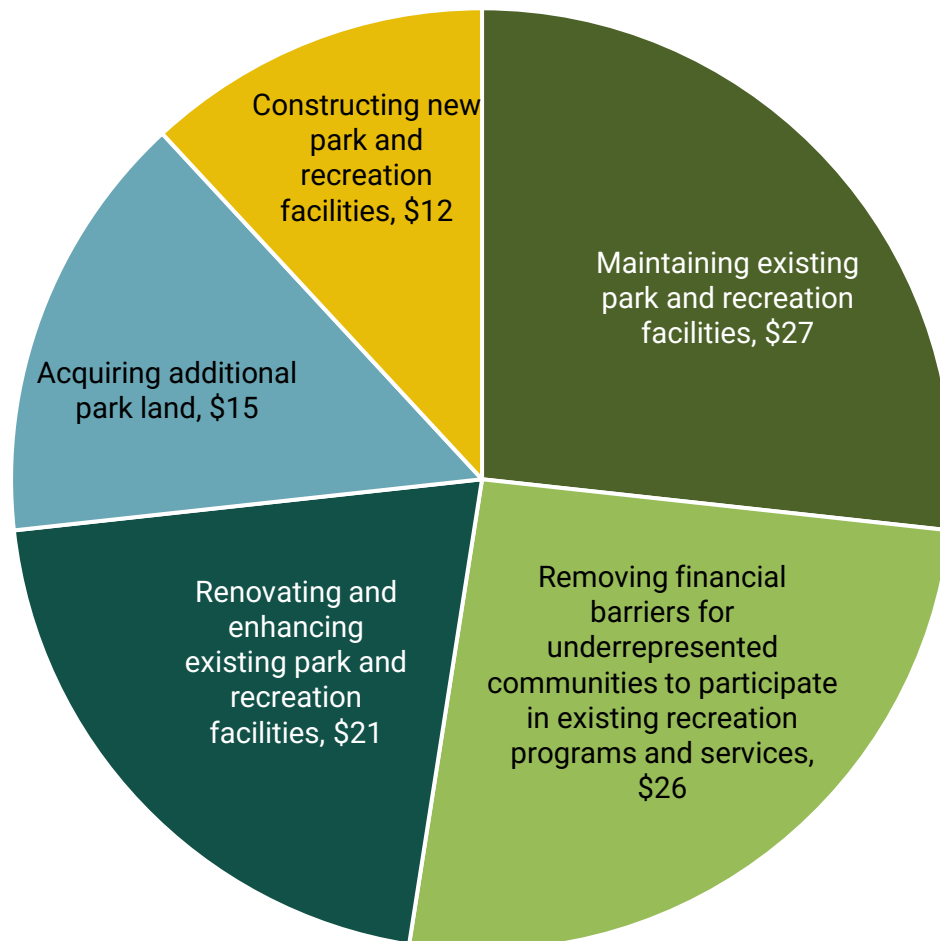
- **In choosing to allocate dollars across five competing priorities, residents gave the highest emphasis to maintaining existing park and recreation facilities and to removing financial barriers for underrepresented communities to participate in existing recreation programs and services.**

The next highest dollar amount was allocated to renovating and enhancing existing park and recreation facilities. Fewer dollars were allocated to new park land acquisitions or new construction of facilities.

These themes were echoed in other results, where survey participants placed a high priority on serving underrepresented communities (see Figure 8 and Figure 10), and on maintaining current funding but resisting a new sales tax (see Figure 9).

**Figure 11: Average dollars allocated across five competing priorities**

If it were up to you, how would you allocate \$100 across the following competing priorities? The chart below displays the average dollars allocated to each priority.



A similar exercise was undertaken by respondents to the 2012 survey, with slightly different categories. However, where categories aligned, results were similar (see Table 129).

- **Residents were most likely to use the Boulder Parks and Recreation Guide, the City of Boulder website or an email / listserve as a source of information about park and recreation programs.**

About half were very likely to use each of these sources (see Table 27 in *Appendix A: Full Set of Responses to Each Survey Question*).

**Table 20: Question #20 - Including Don't Know Responses**

How satisfied are with the recreation facilities provided by City of Boulder Parks and Recreation?	Very satisfied		Somewhat satisfied		Somewhat dissatisfied		Strongly dissatisfied		Don't know		Total	
Little League & baseball fields	13%	N=36	15%	N=42	1%	N=2	1%	N=2	70%	N=192	100%	N=274
Softball fields	16%	N=45	15%	N=42	1%	N=4	0%	N=0	67%	N=181	100%	N=271
Soccer fields	21%	N=57	13%	N=35	5%	N=15	0%	N=0	60%	N=161	100%	N=269
Football fields	11%	N=29	10%	N=29	3%	N=9	0%	N=0	76%	N=208	100%	N=274
Rugby fields	8%	N=22	8%	N=23	3%	N=9	0%	N=0	80%	N=219	100%	N=273
Lacrosse fields	10%	N=28	9%	N=24	4%	N=10	0%	N=0	77%	N=205	100%	N=268
Open, multi-use fields (Frisbee, etc.)	29%	N=79	34%	N=92	3%	N=8	1%	N=1	34%	N=92	100%	N=272
Tennis courts	17%	N=46	28%	N=76	8%	N=22	0%	N=1	47%	N=130	100%	N=274
Pickleball courts	10%	N=26	9%	N=25	4%	N=9	1%	N=3	76%	N=204	100%	N=268
Volleyball courts	11%	N=31	22%	N=59	6%	N=15	1%	N=3	61%	N=167	100%	N=274
Basketball courts	13%	N=36	12%	N=34	4%	N=10	5%	N=12	66%	N=180	100%	N=272
Indoor ice arena (hockey & figure skating)	8%	N=20	8%	N=22	3%	N=7	3%	N=7	78%	N=204	100%	N=261
Skateboard parks	18%	N=48	16%	N=42	6%	N=15	2%	N=4	60%	N=162	100%	N=272
Disc golf courses	19%	N=51	21%	N=56	3%	N=9	1%	N=2	56%	N=151	100%	N=269
Swimming pools (laps & open swim)	25%	N=69	28%	N=77	10%	N=28	2%	N=5	35%	N=94	100%	N=272
Leisure pools (with water play features)	23%	N=63	26%	N=71	7%	N=20	1%	N=3	42%	N=114	100%	N=271
Children's playgrounds	25%	N=68	35%	N=95	6%	N=17	1%	N=2	33%	N=91	100%	N=273
Interactive water features	18%	N=49	21%	N=57	7%	N=20	1%	N=4	52%	N=142	100%	N=273
Group picnic shelters	25%	N=70	38%	N=105	7%	N=20	4%	N=10	25%	N=69	100%	N=274
Community gardens (growing vegetables)	18%	N=50	22%	N=61	13%	N=36	6%	N=17	40%	N=108	100%	N=273
Scenic gardens	18%	N=48	32%	N=87	15%	N=40	3%	N=9	32%	N=88	100%	N=273
Paved paths	54%	N=147	37%	N=102	5%	N=13	0%	N=1	4%	N=11	100%	N=273
Soft surface paths (running biking, etc.)	52%	N=143	33%	N=89	6%	N=16	2%	N=5	7%	N=19	100%	N=272
Natural areas	55%	N=149	34%	N=93	4%	N=12	2%	N=5	5%	N=15	100%	N=274

How satisfied are with the recreation facilities provided by City of Boulder Parks and Recreation?	Very satisfied		Somewhat satisfied		Somewhat dissatisfied		Strongly dissatisfied		Don't know		Total	
Grassy lawns	43%	N=118	40%	N=110	6%	N=18	1%	N=2	9%	N=26	100%	N=273
Outdoor event areas	28%	N=76	37%	N=102	7%	N=19	2%	N=4	26%	N=72	100%	N=273

**Table 27: Question #25**

How likely, if at all, would you be to use each of the following ways to find out about park and recreation programs?	Very likely		Somewhat likely		Not at all likely		Total	
Boulder Camera newspaper	17%	N=47	34%	N=92	49%	N=132	100%	N=271
Channel 8 (municipal cable TV)	3%	N=7	5%	N=14	92%	N=248	100%	N=269
Informational flyers	19%	N=52	55%	N=147	26%	N=70	100%	N=269
City of Boulder website	48%	N=132	34%	N=92	18%	N=49	100%	N=273
Email / listserves	43%	N=115	40%	N=106	17%	N=45	100%	N=266
Boulder Parks and RecreationGuide (quarterly publication)	50%	N=137	33%	N=90	17%	N=47	100%	N=273
Facebook	21%	N=57	23%	N=61	56%	N=149	100%	N=267
Twitter	12%	N=32	19%	N=51	69%	N=184	100%	N=267

Other responses included:

- Advertise on Nextdoor App
- At the rec center
- Call an information number
- community partners
- Consolidated online calendar.
- CU Boulder emails, announcements, and flyers on campus
- Email news letter
- Friend
- friend
- Friend's recommendation
- google what info I need
- Instagram
- Local radio
- Next door
- Nextdoor
- radio
- Signage at rec centers
- Windows of rec center
- Word of mouth, apartment managers

**Table 28: Question #26**

About how long have you lived in Boulder?	Percent	Number
5 years or less	46%	N=124
6 to 15 years	19%	N=53
16 to 25 years	14%	N=38
more than 25 years	21%	N=58
Total	100%	N=273
Average length of residency	16 years	

**Table 29: Question #2**

Do you own or rent your home?	Percent	Number
Rent	51%	N=145
Own	49%	N=137
Total	100%	N=282

**Table 30: Question #3**

Which race or ethnicity do you identify with most?	Percent	Number
White	82%	N=226
Hispanic or Latino/a	6%	N=18
Asian	4%	N=11
Black or African-American	1%	N=2
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	N=0
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0%	N=1
Two or more races	3%	N=9
Other	4%	N=10
Total	100%	N=276



**Table 54: Question #21**

<b>Do you think Boulder has enough of each of these recreation facilities, or are more needed? Percent rating as "have enough"</b>	<b>Gunbarrel</b>	<b>North Boulder &amp; Palo Park</b>	<b>Central Boulder</b>	<b>Crossroads &amp; East Boulder</b>	<b>Uni Hill &amp; University</b>	<b>Southeast Boulder</b>	<b>South Boulder</b>
	<b>(A)</b>	<b>(B)</b>	<b>(C)</b>	<b>(D)</b>	<b>(E)</b>	<b>(F)</b>	<b>(G)</b>
Little League & baseball fields	82%	100%	94%	100%	93%	92%	89%
Softball fields	84%	100%	100%	100%	86%	96%	91%
Soccer fields	88% E F	64%	87% E F	84%	51%	52%	88% E F
Football fields	100% F	80% F	97% F	83% F	94% F	51%	98% F
Rugby fields	100%	100%	97%	90%	100%	92%	97%
Lacrosse fields	86%	91%	97%	90%	95%	92%	97%
Open, multi-use fields (Frisbee, etc.)	85% C E	76% C E	36%	90% C E	45%	70% C	68% C
Tennis courts	54%	64%	68%	88% E	59%	81%	63%
Pickleball courts	67%	83%	94%	76%	87%	80%	83%
Volleyball courts	71%	86%	92% D	52%	80%	59%	65%
Basketball courts	100% E	65%	70%	96% E	59%	94% E	85% E
Indoor ice arena (hockey & figure skating)	72% D	43%	46%	14%	50%	41%	65% D
Skateboard parks	74%	84% C D	51%	42%	68%	67%	83% C D
Disc golf courses	73%	76%	67%	80%	82% F	50%	61%
Swimming pools (laps & open swim)	37%	53%	64%	47%	42%	49%	56%
Leisure pools (with water play features)	73%	55%	59%	55%	63%	47%	67%

Do you think Boulder has enough of each of these recreation facilities, or are more needed? Percent rating as "have enough"	Gunbarrel	North Boulder & Palo Park	Central Boulder	Crossroads & East Boulder	Uni Hill & University	Southeast Boulder	South Boulder
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
Children's playgrounds	54%	74%	58%	60%	77%	68%	72%
Interactive water features	59%	38%	73% B D	29%	83% B D	84% B D	70% B D
Group picnic shelters	59%	57%	60%	68%	50%	70%	73%
Community gardens (growing vegetables)	32%	40%	38%	22%	20%	33%	54% D E
Scenic gardens	52%	41%	26%	32%	45%	29%	60% C F
Paved paths	68%	64%	62%	62%	68%	82%	65%
Soft surface paths (running biking, etc.)	39%	57% E	53% E	59% E	29%	71% A E G	47%
Natural areas	47%	47%	25%	54% C	61% C	40%	55% C
Grassy lawns	73%	56%	68%	76%	77%	81% B	82% B
Outdoor event areas	46%	55%	75% A	76% A	60%	59%	67%

**Table 55: Question #22**

What keeps you or members of your household from using recreation parks and/or facilities, or using them more often? Please check all that apply.	Gunbarrel	North Boulder & Palo Park	Central Boulder	Crossroads & East Boulder	Uni Hill & University	Southeast Boulder	South Boulder
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
Cost	28%	18%	7%	40% C	21%	32%	31%
Poor health	2%	1%	7%	37% A B C E F G	7%	3%	2%
Lack of time	53%	48%	44%	67%	74% G	52%	36%
Lack of parking	30%	23%	14%	48%	19%	55% C E G	20%
Barriers to walking or biking to the park or facility	15%	10%	30%	30%	0%	12%	12%
Lack of facilities for what I/we want to do	6%	27%	28%	6%	37%	23%	26%
Parks and/or facilities are not welcoming for all	0%	8%	11%	0%	2%	1%	4%
Parks and/or facilities do not feel safe for all	2%	11%	18%	2%	1%	4%	6%
Other	52%	28%	28%	44%	21%	31%	42%

**Table 74: Question #21**

Do you think Boulder has enough of each of these recreation facilities, or are more needed? Percent rating as "have enough"	5 years or less	6 to 15 years	16 to 25 years	more than 25 years	Single Family Home	Other	Rent	Own
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(A)	(B)	(A)	(B)
Little League & baseball fields	98% D	100%	85%	84%	89%	96%	99% B	86%
Softball fields	93%	100%	90%	88%	93%	93%	94%	91%
Soccer fields	61%	74%	84%	83%	73%	70%	67%	76%
Football fields	82%	94%	93%	90%	86%	89%	84%	93%
Rugby fields	100%	100%	92%	91%	97%	97%	98%	96%
Lacrosse fields	100% D	100% D	84%	78%	89%	97%	98% B	87%
Open, multi-use fields (Frisbee, etc.)	65% C	85% C	34%	67% C	58%	70%	73% B	57%
Tennis courts	76% C	66%	33%	60%	61%	73%	80% B	57%
Pickleball courts	96% C D	87% D	56%	52%	78%	88%	97% B	64%
Volleyball courts	62%	97% A	80%	70%	65%	74%	73%	68%
Basketball courts	78%	85%	76%	71%	85%	71%	77%	80%
Indoor ice arena (hockey & figure skating)	40%	59%	33%	51%	43%	48%	43%	51%
Skateboard parks	68%	52%	56%	72%	70%	63%	68%	64%
Disc golf courses	62%	68%	83%	72%	67%	69%	69%	66%
Swimming pools (laps & open swim)	53% B	23%	60% B	58% B	52%	49%	53%	49%
Leisure pools (with water play features)	64% B	40%	59%	62%	64%	55%	58%	61%
Children's playgrounds	74%	62%	61%	68%	66%	72%	75%	61%

Do you think Boulder has enough of each of these recreation facilities, or are more needed? Percent rating as "have enough"	5 years or less	6 to 15 years	16 to 25 years	more than 25 years	Single Family Home	Other	Rent	Own
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(A)	(B)	(A)	(B)
Interactive water features	68%	50%	51%	66%	72% B	53%	61%	63%
Group picnic shelters	72% B	46%	57%	57%	60%	66%	67%	57%
Community gardens (growing vegetables)	35%	29%	24%	41%	40%	31%	35%	35%
Scenic gardens	41%	42%	37%	44%	43%	41%	44%	39%
Paved paths	72% C	63%	45%	77% C	61%	72%	76% B	59%
Soft surface paths (running biking, etc.)	54%	44%	40%	59%	51%	51%	58%	45%
Natural areas	53%	41%	37%	43%	49%	45%	52%	42%
Grassy lawns	80% C	76%	59%	69%	76%	72%	74%	74%
Outdoor event areas	72%	59%	50%	56%	54%	73% A	68%	59%

**Table 75: Question #22**

What keeps you or members of your household from using recreation parks and/or facilities, or using them more often? Please check all that apply.	5 years or less	6 to 15 years	16 to 25 years	more than 25 years	Single Family Home	Other	Rent	Own
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(A)	(B)	(A)	(B)
Cost	26%	22%	21%	19%	21%	27%	34% B	16%
Poor health	10%	3%	2%	6%	4%	9%	9%	4%
Lack of time	58% D	51%	60%	35%	40%	64% A	60% B	47%
Lack of parking	36%	26%	15%	24%	28%	28%	36% B	20%
Barriers to walking or biking to the park or facility	18%	10%	22%	7%	11%	17%	18%	11%
Lack of facilities for what I/we want to do	31%	16%	20%	22%	25%	24%	32% B	17%
Parks and/or facilities are not welcoming for all	3%	0%	7%	6%	5%	3%	2%	6%
Parks and/or facilities do not feel safe for all	2%	4%	19% A	11%	11% B	3%	2%	10% A
Other	28%	30%	38%	48%	40% B	28%	20%	48% A



**Table 94: Question #21**

<b>Do you think Boulder has enough of each of these recreation facilities, or are more needed? Percent rating as "have enough"</b>	<b>18-34</b>	<b>35-54</b>	<b>55+</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Hispanic or Latino/a</b>	<b>Identify another way</b>
	<b>(A)</b>	<b>(B)</b>	<b>(C)</b>	<b>(A)</b>	<b>(B)</b>	<b>(A)</b>	<b>(B)</b>	<b>(C)</b>
Little League & baseball fields	100% B	87%	90%	94%	87%	94%	87%	83%
Softball fields	95%	94%	90%	97% B	84%	93%	83%	94%
Soccer fields	63%	72%	85%	67%	81%	68%	76%	93%
Football fields	90%	78%	93%	83%	98% A	89%	76%	88%
Rugby fields	100%	96%	92%	97%	98%	96%	100%	100%
Lacrosse fields	100% C	96% C	77%	95%	89%	95%	100%	100%
Open, multi-use fields (Frisbee, etc.)	72%	58%	58%	63%	67%	66%	69%	62%
Tennis courts	81% B	55%	62%	74% B	55%	66%	82%	49%
Pickleball courts	100% B C	69%	53%	89% B	64%	83%	78%	90%
Volleyball courts	65%	81%	77%	78% B	55%	74% B	41%	76%
Basketball courts	86%	72%	68%	79%	77%	81% B	39%	81%
Indoor ice arena (hockey & figure skating)	40%	53%	53%	56% B	30%	46%	41%	48%
Skateboard parks	65%	61%	72%	74% B	50%	72% B	34%	48%
Disc golf courses	64%	70%	80%	62%	81% A	69% C	100% A C	30%
Swimming pools (laps & open swim)	53%	44%	53%	58% B	41%	47%	85% A C	36%

Do you think Boulder has enough of each of these recreation facilities, or are more needed? Percent rating as "have enough"	18-34	35-54	55+	Male	Female	White	Hispanic or Latino/a	Identify another way
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)	(B)	(A)	(B)	(C)
Leisure pools (with water play features)	63%	52%	61%	68% B	49%	60%	68%	36%
Children's playgrounds	77% B	59%	62%	74%	61%	69%	63%	57%
Interactive water features	64%	58%	62%	71% B	50%	66% B	37%	54%
Group picnic shelters	76% B C	52%	50%	72% B	54%	64%	63%	47%
Community gardens (growing vegetables)	32%	39%	35%	49% B	19%	35%	31%	28%
Scenic gardens	40%	42%	41%	49% B	33%	41%	32%	27%
Paved paths	77% B C	57%	58%	67%	68%	68%	63%	71%
Soft surface paths (running biking, etc.)	59% B	42%	48%	54%	48%	54% C	63% C	18%
Natural areas	50%	47%	41%	47%	47%	46%	55%	40%
Grassy lawns	78%	73%	68%	70%	78%	73%	70%	94%
Outdoor event areas	74% C	58%	50%	68%	59%	62%	70%	73%

**Table 95: Question #22**

What keeps you or members of your household from using recreation parks and/or facilities, or using them more often? Please check all that apply.	18-34	35-54	55+	Male	Female	White	Hispanic or Latino/a	Identify another way
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)	(B)	(A)	(B)	(C)
Cost	27%	24%	21%	25%	25%	22%	69% A C	11%
Poor health	9%	2%	11%	2%	12% A	5%	41% A	0%
Lack of time	60% C	59% C	34%	55%	52%	50%	78%	73%
Lack of parking	39% B C	17%	17%	35% B	20%	26%	55% A	26%
Barriers to walking or biking to the park or facility	18%	12%	12%	12%	15%	11%	64% A C	14%
Lack of facilities for what I/we want to do	34% B	12%	20%	33% B	16%	27%	8%	6%
Parks and/or facilities are not welcoming for all	2%	3%	7%	4%	2%	2%	8%	17% A
Parks and/or facilities do not feel safe for all	2%	12% A	7%	4%	7%	4%	15%	15%
Other	26%	35%	47% A	21%	46% A	33%	57% C	11%

**Table 114: Question #21**

Do you think Boulder has enough of each of these recreation facilities, or are more needed? Percent rating as "have enough"	Child(ren) age 12 or younger in household	NO children in household	Teenager(s) age 13 to 17 in household	NO teenagers in household	Older adults age 60 or older in household	NO older adults in household
	(A)	(B)	(A)	(B)	(A)	(B)
Little League & baseball fields	89%	93%	86%	94%	93%	93%
Softball fields	95%	93%	91%	93%	92%	93%
Soccer fields	59%	74%	67%	72%	84%	68%
Football fields	91%	87%	70%	90%	83%	89%
Rugby fields	100%	97%	100%	97%	94%	98%
Lacrosse fields	100%	92%	94%	93%	81%	97% A
Open, multi-use fields (Frisbee, etc.)	67%	64%	76%	63%	68%	64%
Tennis courts	46%	71% A	49%	70%	59%	70%
Pickleball courts	81%	84%	71%	85%	70%	87%
Volleyball courts	82%	68%	79%	69%	76%	69%
Basketball courts	85%	77%	67%	80%	60%	83% A
Indoor ice arena (hockey & figure skating)	34%	47%	61%	43%	61%	41%
Skateboard parks	77%	65%	81%	64%	65%	66%
Disc golf courses	67%	68%	64%	68%	86% B	64%
Swimming pools (laps & open swim)	33%	53%	41%	51%	52%	50%
Leisure pools (with water play features)	39%	63% A	48%	61%	64%	58%
Children's playgrounds	69%	69%	59%	70%	64%	71%

Do you think Boulder has enough of each of these recreation facilities, or are more needed? Percent rating as "have enough"	Child(ren) age 12 or younger in household	NO children in household	Teenager(s) age 13 to 17 in household	NO teenagers in household	Older adults age 60 or older in household	NO older adults in household
	(A)	(B)	(A)	(B)	(A)	(B)
Interactive water features	64%	62%	59%	63%	65%	61%
Group picnic shelters	74%	62%	54%	64%	50%	68% A
Community gardens (growing vegetables)	33%	35%	49%	33%	35%	34%
Scenic gardens	61%	39%	51%	40%	50%	39%
Paved paths	60%	68%	72%	67%	65%	68%
Soft surface paths (running biking, etc.)	48%	52%	47%	52%	52%	51%
Natural areas	62%	44%	62%	45%	39%	49%
Grassy lawns	78%	73%	74%	74%	69%	75%
Outdoor event areas	73%	63%	55%	65%	52%	68%

**Table 115: Question #22**

What keeps you or members of your household from using recreation parks and/or facilities, or using them more often? Please check all that apply.	Child(ren) age 12 or younger in household	NO children in household	Teenager(s) age 13 to 17 in household	NO teenagers in household	Older adults age 60 or older in household	NO older adults in household
	(A)	(B)	(A)	(B)	(A)	(B)
Cost	40% B	22%	21%	25%	22%	25%
Poor health	3%	7%	0%	7%	9%	6%
Lack of time	62%	52%	61%	52%	27%	62% A
Lack of parking	9%	31% A	22%	29%	26%	29%
Barriers to walking or biking to the park or facility	12%	14%	8%	14%	6%	17% A
Lack of facilities for what I/we want to do	32%	23%	22%	25%	19%	26%
Parks and/or facilities are not welcoming for all	8%	3%	6%	3%	3%	4%
Parks and/or facilities do not feel safe for all	8%	6%	14%	5%	7%	6%
Other	28%	34%	33%	33%	46% B	29%



## Appendix C: Comparison of 2021 Results to 2012 Results

The full set of responses from the respondents to resident survey for each survey question are displayed in the tables in this appendix. Some questions included a “don’t know” response option. For these questions, two sets of tables are provided in this appendix: the first with the “don’t know” responses excluded, to show the proportion of respondents with an opinion giving a response and the second with the “don’t know” responses included, to allow examination of the magnitude of unfamiliarity with certain items.

Each table displays the proportion of respondents (% or Percent) and number of respondents (N or Number) who gave each response.

**Table 119: Question #6**

<b>How would you rate each of the following in the Boulder community? Percent excellent or good</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2018 (NCS)</b>
Boulder as a place to live	91%	83%
Recreational opportunities	96%	94%
Fitness opportunities (including exercise classes and paths or trails, etc.)	97%	95%
Public places where people want to spend time	91%	84%

**Table 120: Question #7**

<b>Overall, how satisfied are you with Boulder Parks and Recreation Department's... Percent very or somewhat satisfied</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2012</b>
availability of information about facilities, programs, and services	92%	94%
employees' ability to provide quality programs and services	96%	99%
employees' customer service	94%	95%
employees' presence and visibility within the community	89%	94%
employees' ability to care for park and recreation facilities	92%	94%

**Table 121: Question #8**

Think about the Boulder Parks and Recreation system overall. Regardless of how much or how little you use it, how much does the Parks and Recreation system contribute to Boulder's being... Percent "greatly contributes"	2021	2012
an accessible and connected community?	71%	56%
an economically vital community?	58%	37%
an environmentally sustainable community?	63%	52%
a physically healthy community?	85%	81%
a socially thriving community?	58%	55%
a safe community?	38%	37%
a community with a positive sense of place?	68%	70%
a community with a high quality of life overall?	80%	80%

**Table 122: Question #10**

Do you agree more with Statement A or with Statement B? A. Parks and recreation program offerings should focus primarily on skill development at beginning and at intermediate levels. B. Parks and recreation program offerings should serve many different skill levels (i.e., beginner through very advanced).	2021		2012
Strongly agree with A	8%	33%	30%
Agree with A	12%		
Somewhat agree with A	13%		
Somewhat agree with B	11%	68%	70%
Agree with B	20%		
Strongly agree with B	37%		

**Table 123: Question #11**

Do you agree more with Statement A or with Statement B? A. Activities and programs at parks and recreation facilities should be mostly pre-registered, with some drop-in use. B. Activities and programs at parks and recreation facilities should mostly be available for drop-in use, with some programs and events being pre-registered.	2021		2012
Strongly agree with A	3%	27%	50%
Agree with A	9%		
Somewhat agree with A	15%		
Somewhat agree with B	22%	73%	50%
Agree with B	18%		
Strongly agree with B	33%		

**Table 124: Question #12**

Do you agree more with Statement A or with Statement B? A. Parks and recreation program offerings should focus mostly on popular sports and fitness (e.g., Pilates, yoga, softball, soccer, etc.) B. Parks and recreation program offerings should offer some popular sports and fitness activities, but also include diverse opportunities like arts and crafts, and classes (e.g., cooking, drawing, etc.).	2021		2012
Strongly agree with A	4%	34%	39%
Agree with A	14%		
Somewhat agree with A	16%		
Somewhat agree with B	18%	67%	61%
Agree with B	17%		
Strongly agree with B	32%		

**Table 125: Question #13**

Do you agree more with Statement A or with Statement B? A. The Parks and Recreation Department should provide facilities and programs that complement others in the community and not replicate them. B. The Parks and Recreation Department should provide facilities and programs identified by residents, regardless of whether they are provided by others in or near Boulder..	2021		2012
Strongly agree with A	5%	38%	39%
Agree with A	15%		
Somewhat agree with A	18%		
Somewhat agree with B	23%	61%	61%
Agree with B	14%		
Strongly agree with B	24%		

**Table 126: Question #14**

Do you agree more with Statement A or with Statement B? A. Individuals living outside the city of Boulder should pay higher fees for using Boulder Parks and Recreation facilities and programs. B. There should be no difference in fees between residents and non-residents of the city of Boulder for using Boulder Parks and Recreation facilities and programs.	2021		2012
Strongly agree with A	21%	51%	74%
Agree with A	18%		
Somewhat agree with A	12%		
Somewhat agree with B	9%	49%	24%
Agree with B	12%		
Strongly agree with B	27%		

**Table 127: Question #15**

Do you agree more with Statement A or with Statement B? A. Individuals who live outside the city of Boulder but work or own a business in Boulder should pay resident fees for using Parks and Recreation facilities and programs. B. Individuals who live outside the city of Boulder but work or own a business in Boulder should pay higher non-resident fees for using Parks and Recreation facilities and programs.	2021		2012
Strongly agree with A	27%	68%	80%
Agree with A	23%		
Somewhat agree with A	18%		
Somewhat agree with B	11%	33%	20%
Agree with B	8%		
Strongly agree with B	14%		

**Table 128: Question #17**

<b>Please rate how important you think it is for the City of Boulder to provide recreation programs for each of the population groups below. Percent essential or very important</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2012</b>
People who identify as Black/African-American, Hispanic, Latino/a, Asian, American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander or other Non-White ethnicity	83%	59%
People with disabilities	92%	82%
People with low incomes	89%	83%
Tourists and visitors to Boulder	35%	19%
Children (age 12 and younger)	86%	89%
Teenagers (age 13 to 19)	87%	92%
Adults (age 20 to 59)	79%	65%
Older adults (age 60 and older)	88%	79%
Families together as a group	73%	71%



**Table 129: Question #18**

If it were up to you, how would you allocate \$100 across the following competing priorities? Average dollars allocated					
2021	2012	2021		2012	
Removing financial barriers for underrepresented communities to participate in existing recreation programs and services		\$26			
	Providing additional recreation programs			\$18	
Acquiring additional park land		\$15		\$14	
Constructing new park and recreation facilities	Adding new park and recreation facilities	\$12		\$9	
Maintaining existing park and recreation facilities	Maintaining or enhancing existing park and recreation facilities	\$27		\$31	
Renovating and enhancing existing park and recreation facilities	Remodeling park and recreation facilities so they are more accessible to people with disabilities or limited physical ability	\$21	\$48	\$9	\$40

**Table 130: Question #19**

<p><b>The facilities and programs offered by the City of Boulder include a fee to offset the cost of providing them. For each of the following items, please indicate what you believe is the appropriate mix of support from taxes versus user fees.</b></p> <p><b>Average rating where 2=taxes pay much more and where -2=user fees pay much more. A rating greater than 0 means that on average respondents thought taxes should pay more, and a rating less than 0 means that on average respondents thought user fees should pay more.</b></p>		
	<b>2021</b>	<b>2021</b>
Sports classes or teams for adults (age 20 to 59)	-0.66	-1.03
Sports classes or teams for older adults (age 60 and older)	-0.24	
Sports classes or teams for children and teens (age 19 and younger)	0.10	0.11
General or introductory recreation classes (e.g. fitness, dance, gymnastics, art, pottery, etc.) for adults	-0.34	-0.47
General or introductory recreation classes (e.g. fitness, dance, gymnastics, art, pottery, etc.) for older adults	-0.09	
Advanced or specialized recreation classes for adults	-0.97	-1.17
Advanced or specialized recreation classes for older adults	-0.65	
Beginning or intermediate level recreation classes for children and teens	0.38	0.42
Advanced or competitive level recreation classes for children and teens	-0.41	-0.34
Programs for adults with low incomes	1.18	0.98
Programs for older adults with low incomes	1.27	
Programs for children and teens from families with low incomes	1.35	1.26
Programs for underrepresented communities	0.94	
Programs and/or inclusion for people with disabilities	1.14	0.99
Programs for older adults (age 60 and older)	0.14	NA
Entrance fees for children and youth	0.44	NA
Entrance fees for adults	-0.26	NA
Entrance fees for older adults	0.09	NA

## Appendix F: Survey Methodology

### About the Survey

The 2014 Boulder Parks and Recreation Master Plan was adopted by City Council in February 2014. Since that time, the Master Plan has shaped the work of the Parks and Recreation Department through the delivery of services in a manner consistent with city sustainability goals and which meet the community's level of service standards.

In 2020, Parks and Recreation has begun the process to update the Master Plan. The Master Plan Update will identify new and evolving areas of focus and provide recommendations for strategic ways to address gaps in service within the existing framework of the 2014 Master Plan. The Master Plan Update will seek to incorporate strategic direction from city-wide initiatives such as the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan and other department Master Plans, such as climate initiatives and equity, among others.

The Master Plan is a key implementation strategy within the city's primary planning document, the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP), and is intended to be strategic in focus to help the department respond to three important questions.

- What do we do?
- For whom do we do it?
- How do we excel?

One important part of updating the plan is to gather input from the public. A survey was undertaken as part of that public feedback process. Polco's National Research Center, conducted the survey on the City's behalf.

Two efforts were undertaken to survey residents. The first was a statistically valid survey, in which survey recipients were randomly selected to participate. The second was an open participation survey, in which all residents were invited to participate.

### Selecting Survey Recipients for the Statistically Valid Survey

One of the first steps taken to ensure survey results are representative of the target population is to use a source from which survey recipients are selected that provides adequate to good "coverage" of the target population. This source is referred to as the "sampling frame" in survey research lingo. For a survey of residents, a list of addresses based on the United States Postal Service delivery sequence file is the most comprehensive list of households. For this survey, the list was purchased from Go-Dog Direct.

Since it is cost prohibitive to survey every household in Boulder, a random selection of records from the sampling frame was made. An example that may be familiar from a math or statistics class is the jar or bowl of marbles of various colors. If the jar has two-thirds red marbles and one-third blue marbles, a random selection of marbles from that jars should result in a similar proportion of red and blue marbles as in the original jar.

The addresses were geocoded (mapped to a specific latitude and longitude) and compared to the boundaries of Boulder's ten



subcommunities. (A map of these subcommunities can be found on page 56 of *Appendix B: Comparisons of Selected Survey Results by Selected Respondent Characteristics*). Addresses identified as being outside of these boundaries were excluded. A total of 4,000 households were selected to receive the survey. Multi-family housing units were oversampled to compensate for single-family housing unit residents' tendency to return surveys at a higher rate.

### Administering the Statistically Valid Survey

Households randomly selected to receive the statistically valid survey were contacted two times by mail in April 2020; each mailing consisted of a postcard with an invitation to participate in the survey online (see *Appendix G: Survey Materials* for a copy of the postcards). A total 284 completed surveys were received, for a response rate of 7%.

The 95% confidence interval (or “margin of error”) quantifies the “sampling error” or precision of the estimates made from the survey results. A 95% confidence interval can be calculated for any number of respondents, and indicates that in 95 of 100 surveys conducted like this one, for a particular item, a result would be found that is within a certain number of percentage points of the result that would be found if everyone in the population of interest was surveyed. The practical difficulties of conducting any resident survey may introduce other sources of error in addition to sampling error. Despite the best efforts to boost participation and ensure potential inclusion of all households, some selected households will decline participation in the survey (referred to as non-response error) and some eligible households may be unintentionally excluded from the listed sources for the sample (referred to as coverage error).

The margin of error for this survey, with 284 respondents, is  $\pm 5.8\%$ . In essence, this means that, 95% of the time, any statistic given in this report will be within 5.8 percentage points of what the entire adult population would have given had they all been surveyed.

### Administering the Open Participation Survey

Shortly after the randomly selected households were mailed their invitations, the City of Boulder publicized the survey link to all Boulder residents. A total of 142 residents completed the open participation survey.

## Analyzing the Results

### Weighting the Data

The primary objective of weighting survey data is to make the survey respondents reflective of the larger population of the community. This is done by comparing the demographic profile of survey respondents to that of the target population, which was all adults living in Boulder. Weighting is a statistical adjustment where more weight is given to groups who responded at a lower rate than other groups, and less weight is given to those who responded at a higher rate. For example, in almost all surveys, younger people respond at a lower rate than older people. Weighting rebalances the profile. The theory behind this weighting is that younger people (or other groups who tend to underrespond) who did participate in the survey are more like the younger

people who did NOT participate than they are like the older people who did respond to the survey. <sup>1</sup>

The statistically valid and the open participation survey responses were weighted separately. Even after the weighting scheme was applied to make both datasets demographically similar to the Boulder population, differences were observed in the responses of those who were randomly selected to participate and those who responded to the open participation invitations (see *Appendix E: Comparison of Survey Results for Mailed Invitation to Online Probability Sample and Open Participation Survey Sample*).

Initial weights were calculated using an Iterative Proportional Fitting model via a python raking algorithm plug-in to SPSS. The control variables used were housing tenure, sex, age, race/ethnicity and subcommunity. No adjustments were made for design effects. The results of the weighting scheme are presented in the table on the next page.

### Statistical Analysis

The electronic dataset was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). For the most part, frequency distributions are presented in the body of the report. The complete sets of frequencies for each survey question are presented in *Appendix A: Full Set of Responses to Each Survey Question* and *Appendix D: Full Set of Responses to Each Survey Question, Open Participation Survey*. Also included are selected survey results by selected respondent characteristics in *Appendix B: Comparisons of Selected Survey Results by Selected Respondent Characteristics*. Chi-square or ANOVA tests of significance were applied to these breakdowns of selected survey questions. A “p-value” of 0.05 or less indicates that there is less than a 5% probability that differences observed between groups are due to chance; or in other words, a greater than 95% probability that the differences observed in the selected categories of the sample represent “real” differences among those populations. Where differences between subgroups are statistically significant, they have been marked in the appendices.

<sup>1</sup> An example of how weighting works may be helpful. Hypothetically, suppose the population norm for gender was 50%/50%, but 70% of the surveys received were from females, and 30% were from males. The weights that would need to be applied to make the sample representative of the population would be 0.7143 for females (thereby giving each response **less** weight in the overall ratings) and 1.6667 for males (giving each response **more** weight overall). If it is further supposed that these two groups had very different ratings of streets; if for example, females felt very favorably, with 80% of females giving a positive rating, and males felt much less favorable, with only 40% giving a positive rating. Given that we had more responses from women, if we did NOT weight the results, we would be left with a rosier picture of the perception of streets by residents than if we did weight the data. The unweighted average rating is 68% ( $80\% \times 70\% + 40\% \times 30\%$ ), while the weighted average is 60% ( $80\% \times 50\% + 40\% \times 50\%$ ).

Characteristic	Percent in Population	Percent in Sample	Weight to bring to 50%	Unwt'd Rating of Streets	Streets rating with proper weights
Female	50%	70%	0.714	80	(80 * .50)
Male	50%	30%	1.666	40	(40 * .50)
TOTAL	100%	100%	----	68	60

**Table 188: Weighting Table 2021**

Characteristic	Population Norm	Random Sample Mailed Invitations		Open Participation	
		Unweighted Data	Weighted Data	Unweighted Data	Weighted Data
Housing Tenure <sup>1</sup>					
Rent home	52%	26%	49%	18%	49%
Own home	48%	74%	51%	82%	51%
Housing Unit Type <sup>1</sup>					
Detached single family	42%	55%	43%	76%	43%
Other	58%	45%	57%	24%	57%
Race/Ethnicity <sup>2</sup>					
Non-Hispanic White	85%	87%	85%	88%	84%
Hispanic	7%	2%	7%	4%	7%
Other	8%	11%	8%	9%	9%
Age <sup>2</sup>					
18-34 years of age	49%	15%	46%	17%	47%
35-54 years of age	28%	32%	27%	45%	29%
55+ years of age	23%	53%	27%	39%	23%
Sex <sup>2</sup>					
Male	52%	47%	52%	41%	51%
Female	48%	53%	48%	59%	49%
Subcommunity <sup>3</sup>					
Central Boulder North	17%	17%	17%	NA	NA
Uni Hill	8%	7%	9%	NA	NA
Colorado University	4%	4%	7%	NA	NA
Crossroads	8%	6%	8%	NA	NA
East Boulder	3%	2%	2%	NA	NA
Gunbarrel	10%	11%	10%	NA	NA
North Boulder	12%	14%	11%	NA	NA
Palo Park	3%	4%	2%	NA	NA
Southeast Boulder	20%	21%	20%	NA	NA
South Boulder	14%	13%	15%	NA	NA

<sup>1</sup>Source of Population Norm: 5-year estimates from the 2017 American Community Survey

<sup>2</sup>Source of Population Norm: 2010 U.S. Census, adult population in households

<sup>3</sup>Source of Population Norm: Geocoded list of addresses



## **Attachment D: DRAFT Financial Analysis**

## DESIGNWORKSHOP

Landscape Architecture  
Planning  
Urban Design  
Strategic Services

1390 Lawrence Street  
Suite 100  
Denver, Colorado 80204  
303.623.5186  
303.623.2260 fax  
designworkshop.com

## MEMORANDUM

To: City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Department

From: Design Workshop

Date: July 1, 2021

Project Name: Boulder Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update

Project #: 6444

Subject: Financial Overview and Funding Strategies Memorandum

This Memorandum represents subject-specific research findings that will ultimately inform the content of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update. The information contained in this report does not necessarily constitute the final narrative that will be presented in the plan. During the process of conducting research for this Memorandum, a number of other issues and questions were uncovered that merit additional discussion in the Needs Assessment phase of the planning process. The final content of the Master Plan may reflect significant portions of this report, but will not consist entirely of it.

### Introduction & Memorandum Purpose

This Financial Overview and Funding Strategies Memorandum is part of the 2021 Boulder Parks and Recreation Department Master Plan Update. This memorandum fulfills scope deliverable 4.2, providing a brief outlook of the Department's existing financial situation, including cost recovery, subsidization, and fund management, its capital budget as it relates to the Department's portfolio of assets, as well as recommending funding and policy strategies to achieve the identified Master Plan outcomes. The information contained in this memorandum will be used to inform the contents and recommendations of the Master Plan update. This memorandum provides background and information on the Boulder Parks and Recreation Department's (*BPR* or *the Department*) current and projected funding sources, Departmental policies and management strategies, and financial outlook. In addition to providing an assessment of the Department's current and projected operating state, this memorandum evaluates alternative funding and revenue generating strategies that may be employed to support BPR's overall financial position.

### Parks and Recreation Funding

The Boulder Parks and Recreation Department's ("BPR" or "the Department") 2021 approved budget was \$29,936,362. Figure 1 illustrates BPR's 2021 budget by funding source.

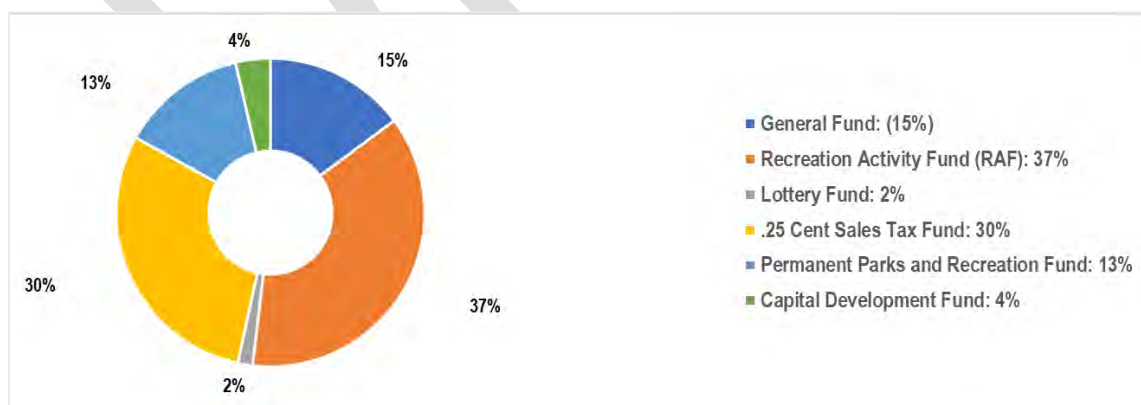


Figure 1. Boulder Parks and Recreation 2021 Budget. Source: City of Boulder 2021 Budget.

BPR is funded through a diverse set of city funds that include capital project funds, special revenue funds, enterprise funds, and government funds. Each fund provides revenues that BPR then utilizes to fund expenditures out of each fund. BPR maintains a balance of monies within each fund, meaning that expenditures from each fund may be higher or lower than the fund's annual revenues. The following section provides a summary of fund revenue sources, uses,

and fund goals/objectives. Revenues from each fund are contributed on an annual basis to support BPR's operating budget.

### General Fund

The general fund is the city's largest fund and serves as the primary funding source for most governmental services. The fund "accounts for the revenues and expenditures necessary to carry out basic governmental activities of the city such as public safety, human services, legal services, administrative services, and others which are not required to be accounted for in another fund."<sup>1</sup> The general fund is mostly supported through a blend of taxes (sales, use, marijuana, property, etc.), permits, fees, and intergovernmental transfers.<sup>2</sup> The General Fund is a critical source of funding for the Department, accounting for between 14% and 18% of the Department's budget between 2016 and 2021.<sup>3</sup> As a result of the fund's heavy reliance on tax revenue and pressures from other city Departments, the fund's revenues, and ability to contribute to the Department's budget can vary widely. In 2021, the General Fund is budgeted to contribute \$4,057,219 in revenues to the Department's approved budget.<sup>4</sup>

### Recreational Activity Fund

The Recreational Activity Fund (RAF) is a special revenue/quasi-enterprise fund that is specific to the Parks and Recreation Department.<sup>5</sup> The fund is the primary funding mechanism used to support recreation centers and facilities and subsidize fees for services related to the provision of recreation, reservoir and golf course services/programs that do not cover all their direct costs.<sup>6</sup> The fund is supported through user and participation fees, grants and donations, and an annual subsidy transfer from the General Fund and other funds when required. General Fund subsidy contributions accounted for between 13% and 16%, or on average \$1.5 million, of the RAF's total revenues between 2016 and 2021. The RAF is the primary source of funding for the Department, accounting for between 24% and 37% of the Department's budget between 2016 and 2021.<sup>7</sup> As a result of the RAF being reliant on user and participation fees, the fund has decreased by \$3.8 million, or 32%, in 2020 due to recreational programs and services impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, the RAF is budgeted to contribute \$10,126,789 in revenues to the Department's approved budget.<sup>8</sup>

### Lottery Fund

The Lottery Fund is a special revenue fund that accounts for State Conservation Trust Fund proceeds that are distributed to municipalities on a per capita basis. Money from the Lottery Fund must be used only for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of new conservation sites or for capital improvements or maintenance for recreational purposes on any public site.<sup>9</sup> BPR receives approximately 42% of the City's annual fund allocation, with the remainder of funds going to Open Space and Mountain Parks and the Tributary Greenways Program. The Lottery fund comprises a small portion BPR's annual funding, accounting for between 1% and 2% of the Department's budget between 2016 and 2021.<sup>10</sup> In 2021 the Lottery Fund is budgeted to contribute \$428,000 in revenues to the Department's approved budget.<sup>11</sup>

### 0.25 Cent Sales Tax Fund

The 0.25 Cent Sales Tax Fund is a special revenue fund that is specific to the Parks and Recreation Department. The fund is primarily supported through a designated sales tax that was approved by voters in 1995.<sup>12</sup> In 2013 voters renewed the sales tax through 2035, with 85% of votes supporting the tax. The fund supports multiple aspects of the Department, including operations and maintenance, administrative support services, renovation and refurbishment, and capital improvements.<sup>13</sup> The 0.25 Cent Sale Tax Fund is the second largest source of funding for BPR, accounting

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<sup>1</sup> City of Boulder 2021 Budget. Pg. 301.

<sup>2</sup> [Parks and Recreation Funds – 2021 Approved Fund Chart](#)

<sup>3</sup> City of Boulder Budgets, 2016-2021

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> [Parks and Recreation Funds – 2021 Approved Fund Chart](#)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> City of Boulder Budgets, 2016-2021

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> [Parks and Recreation Funds – 2021 Approved Fund Chart](#)

<sup>10</sup> City of Boulder Budgets, 2016-2021

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> [Parks and Recreation Funds – 2021 Approved Fund Chart](#)

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

for between 27% and 32% of the Department's budget between 2016 and 2021.<sup>14</sup> In 2021, the 0.25 Cent Sales Tax Fund is budgeted to contribute \$8,119,584 in revenues to the Department's approved budget.<sup>15</sup>

#### Permanent Parks and Recreation Fund

The Permanent Parks and Recreation Fund is a capital project fund that is specific to the Parks and Recreation Department. The fund is permanent according to the City's charter and is supported through earmarked property tax revenues, with the Parks and Recreation Department receiving \$0.01 for every dollar of property tax collected by Boulder County.<sup>16</sup> The fund is used to support the acquisition and development of park land, renovations, and refurbishment of recreation facilities, and is a source of funds for capital improvements. All appropriations of the fund must be recommended by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) and appropriated by City Council. The fund is a smaller, but critical component to the Department's funding, as most fund monies are used for capital improvement projects. Between 2016 and 2021 the fund contributed between 10% and 13% of the Department's approved budget.<sup>17</sup> In 2021, the fund is budgeted to contribute \$3,625,061 in revenues to the Department's approved budget.<sup>18</sup>

#### Other Funding Sources

In addition to the funds outlined above, there are three additional funding sources that have contributed to BPR's annual funding: The Capital Development Fund, the Community, Culture, & Safety Tax, and the Boulder Junction Improvement Fund. All three funds have been used for capital improvement projects for BPR facilities as well as land acquisitions for additional parks space throughout the City.

The Capital Development Fund "accounts for development fee proceeds to be utilized for the acquisition, construction, and improvement of facilities necessary to maintain the current level of public amenities such as police, fire, library, human services, municipal offices, streets, and parks and recreation."<sup>19</sup> Between 2016 and 2021 the fund contributed between 0% and 8% of the Department's budget. In 2021, the fund is budgeted to contribute \$1,000,000 in revenues to the Department's capital budget.<sup>20</sup>

The Community, Culture, and Safety Tax was a ballot initiative approved in 2017 that extended 0.3 percent sales and use tax to raise funds for a specific list of city facility and infrastructure projects including the Scott Carpenter Pool and Visitor Services Center at the Boulder Reservoir. The sales tax measure was approved for four years and in 2018 contributed \$4.2 million in revenues towards BPR's budget. The measure is anticipated to be on the ballot for reapproval by Boulder voters in the fall of 2021, renamed the Capital Renewal Tax. If approved, the measure would provide additional funding for a list of Citywide capital projects through 2036. In 2021 the tax did not contribute any funds to the Department.

The Boulder Junction Improvement Fund was created in 2012 to fund land acquisition and facility and development in the Boulder Junction area. The fund was supported through excise tax and construction-use tax. In 2016 the fund contributed \$750,000 to the Department's capital budget, with an additional \$350,000 in 2017.<sup>21</sup> In 2021 the fund did not contribute any funds to the Department. This funding will be used to build the Boulder Junction Pocket Park in the near future.

### **Trends in Fund Revenues & Expenditures**

#### Boulder Parks and Recreation Fund Revenue Contributions: 2016-2021

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<sup>14</sup> City of Boulder Budgets, 2016-2021

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> [Parks and Recreation Funds – 2021 Approved Fund Chart](#)

<sup>17</sup> City of Boulder Budgets, 2016-2021

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Boulder 2021 Budget, pg. 301

<sup>20</sup> City of Boulder Budgets, 2016-2021

<sup>21</sup> City of Boulder Budgets, 2016-2017

Revenue By Fund Source	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Approved	Average Annual Growth Rate: 2016-2021
General Fund	\$ 4,756,495	\$ 4,947,886	\$ 4,941,554	\$ 5,374,180	\$ 5,101,605	\$ 4,057,219	-2.6%
Permanent Parks and Recreation Fund	\$ 2,788,813	\$ 2,885,822	\$ 3,368,238	\$ 3,556,124	\$ 3,676,718	\$ 3,625,061	5.6%
Recreation Activity Fund (RAF)	\$ 10,071,525	\$ 10,051,124	\$ 10,441,586	\$ 10,697,934	\$ 6,716,806	\$ 10,126,789	3.9%
.25 Cent Sales Tax Fund	\$ 9,251,802	\$ 8,872,324	\$ 9,244,567	\$ 9,453,084	\$ 9,300,057	\$ 8,119,584	-2.4%
Lottery Fund	\$ 428,000	\$ 428,000	\$ 428,000	\$ 428,000	\$ 428,000	\$ 428,000	0.0%
Other Sources	\$ 750,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 730,922	\$ 7,897,425	\$ 2,869,767	\$ 1,000,000	
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$ 27,296,635</b>	<b>\$ 27,185,156</b>	<b>\$ 28,423,945</b>	<b>\$ 29,509,322</b>	<b>\$ 25,223,186</b>	<b>\$ 26,356,653</b>	<b>-0.4%</b>

Table 1. BPR Revenue by Source, 2016-2021. Source: City of Boulder Budgets, 2016-2021.

Revenues from BPR's funding sources, illustrated in Table 1 have remained mostly constant between 2016 through 2021. The lack of revenue increases creates a challenging operating environment for BPR as departmental overhead and expenditures rise on a near annual basis due to inflation, while the revenues used to support the department's operations remain mostly flat. As BPR's operating costs, list of backlogged maintenance, and unfunded capital projects continue to grow, BPR's need for additional revenue from funding sources will continue to grow.

#### Boulder Parks and Recreation Expenditure Trends: 2016-2021

Expenditures by Fund Source	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Approved	Average Annual Growth Rate: 2016-2021
General Fund	\$ 4,578,314	\$ 4,622,802	\$ 4,924,220	\$ 5,274,365	\$ 4,972,526	\$ 4,057,219	-1.9%
Permanent Parks and Recreation Fund	\$ 2,155,153	\$ 1,557,196	\$ 1,301,910	\$ 5,918,450	\$ 2,637,767	\$ 6,401,761	79.5%
Recreation Activity Fund (RAF)	\$ 10,109,628	\$ 10,022,566	\$ 10,875,866	\$ 10,985,374	\$ 6,816,875	\$ 9,625,921	2.4%
.25 Cent Sales Tax Fund	\$ 6,721,028	\$ 8,485,336	\$ 7,541,144	\$ 7,844,869	\$ 12,802,820	\$ 8,423,460	9.6%
Lottery Fund	\$ 229,907	\$ 788,034	\$ 283,932	\$ 798,623	\$ 399,978	\$ 428,000	63.4%
Other Sources	\$ 750,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 30,922	\$ 7,322,425	\$ 2,169,767	\$ 1,000,000	
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$ 24,544,030</b>	<b>\$ 25,825,934</b>	<b>\$ 24,957,994</b>	<b>\$ 38,144,106</b>	<b>\$ 29,799,733</b>	<b>\$ 29,936,361</b>	<b>6.7%</b>

Table 2: BPR Expenditures by Fund Source, 2016-2021. Source: City of Boulder Budgets, 2016-2021.

Expenditure by Category	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Approved	Average Annual Growth Rate: 2016-2021
Personnel	\$13,248,981	\$13,505,323	\$14,393,997	\$14,891,500	\$12,319,471	\$13,275,661	0.5%
Operating	\$7,041,703	\$6,480,862	\$7,204,891	\$6,586,798	\$6,299,473	\$6,967,128	0.2%
Interdepartmental Charges	\$587,529	\$596,281	\$1,073,375	\$1,103,327	\$1,030,431	\$1,153,573	17.9%
Capital	\$2,915,817	\$4,891,467	\$2,285,822	\$15,562,480	\$10,150,358	\$8,540,000	108.9%
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 23,794,030</b>	<b>\$ 25,825,934</b>	<b>\$ 24,958,086</b>	<b>\$ 38,144,106</b>	<b>\$ 29,799,733</b>	<b>\$ 29,936,361</b>	<b>7.3%</b>

Table 3: BPR Expenditures by Category, 2016-2021. Source: City of Boulder Budgets, 2016-2021.

While BPR's funding from 2016 through 2021 has remained mostly flat, the Department's expenditures, illustrated in Table 2 and Table 3, have risen on an almost annual basis. The Department's revenues have decreased, on average 0.4% since 2016 while the Department's expenditures have increased, on average, 6.7%. While most BPR funds carry a balance enabling yearly expenditures to exceed revenue sources, the significant imbalance between the annual growth of revenues and annual growth of expenditures is not sustainable. In addition to expenditure increases due to inflation, BPR is faced with the increasingly difficult challenge of managing rapidly rising personnel, maintenance, energy, materials, and operational costs, aging infrastructure and facilities, and a growing demand for parks and recreational amenities.

#### Funding Source Outlook: 2022-2026

Revenues from BPR's funding sources are projected to remain mostly flat over the next 5-year period, increasing on average 2.8% annually through 2026.<sup>22</sup> Projections of revenues by funding source were sourced from the City of Boulder's 2021 fund projections generated by the City's Central Budget Department. Behavioral changes brought on by the coronavirus pandemic have altered retail spending, work habits, recreational habits, and other fee- and tax-generating activities, negatively affecting funding streams used for BPR's operations, maintenance, and capital improvements. Figure 2 depicts BPR's total projected revenues from 2022 through 2026. Both the City and the Department have taken conservative approaches to budgeting and fund forecasting, prioritizing equitable service delivery of existing programs, maintenance of staffing levels to support needed levels of service and programming, and critical capital infrastructure projects.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> City of Boulder 2021 Budget

<sup>23</sup> PRAB 2022 Budget Strategy Meeting Slides. April 12, 2022.

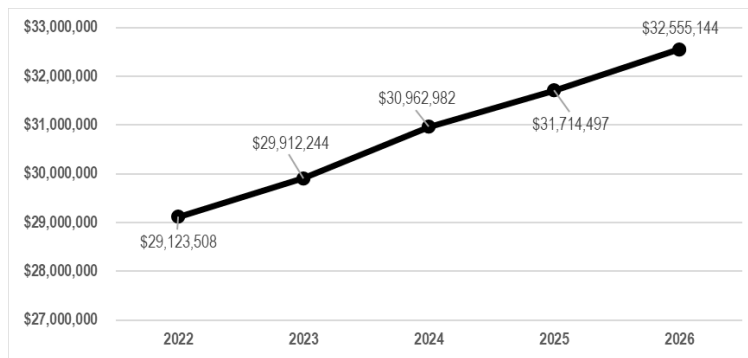


Figure 2. BPR Projected Revenues, 2022-2026. Source: City of Boulder 2021 Budget.

### General Fund

BPR's General Fund allocation is projected to increase minimally over the next five-year period, with an annualized growth rate of 1.7% through 2026.<sup>24</sup> While funding is anticipated to grow, there exists much uncertainty around the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the City's economic position and revenue streams. Because the General Fund is the primary funding source for most city services, the fund's ability to support BPR's budget may shift drastically on a year-by-year basis due to change in the city's economic position, pressures from other city Departments, and City Council priorities.

### Permanent Parks and Recreation Fund

Funding from the Permanent Parks and Recreation Fund is projected to gradually grow over the next five-year-period, increasing on average, 3% annually through 2026. While the fund's reliance on property tax revenues makes it susceptible to regional and national economic shifts, property tax within the City of Boulder is projected to grow at an annual average rate of 3% from 2022-2026. Because the fund is a primary source of revenues for Capital Improvement Projects, any change in revenues may adversely impact the Department's ability to scale to the needs of Boulder's growing population.

### Recreation Activity Fund

Funding from the RAF is predicted to remain mostly flat over the next five-year-period, with an average annual increase of 4% through 2026.<sup>25</sup> The COVID-19 pandemic has created uncertainty around the future of recreation programs and services. Because the RAF is funded primarily through fee revenues, the continued reduction of programs and services are likely to have a significant impact on the health of the fund moving forward, while the reintroduction of services will have positive impact of the health of the fund. Additionally, because the fund is supported in part through an annual transfer from the city's General Fund, changes in the city's economic position may result in decreased financial support.

### 0.25 Sales Tax Fund

Funding from the 0.25 Sales Tax Fund is predicted to grow through 2027 based on sales and use tax projections. With an annualized growth rate of 3.7% based on city projections, the fund is growing at a slower rate than inflation, meaning that the fund's purchasing power is decreasing over time.<sup>26</sup> The projections used to calculate growth of the fund account for future population growth within Boulder, however, increases to sales tax revenue associated with population growth are minimal and remain below increases due to inflation. Because the fund is driven by sales tax revenues, the coronavirus pandemic's impact on consumer spending and the undetermined timeline of when the economy may fully reopen is likely to impact the fund's revenues and ability to support, ongoing operations and maintenance, capital improvement projects, and refurbishment projects.

<sup>24</sup> City of Boulder 2021 Budget.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.



### Lottery Fund

Funding from the lottery fund is projected to remain constant through 2026.<sup>27</sup> Because funding allowances are calculated on a per capita basis, as the population of Boulder continues to shift, funding allocated through the lottery fund will continue to align with the population of Boulder,

## **Departmental Policies and Management Strategies**

### BPR Service Costing Methodology

The 2014 Boulder Parks and Recreation master plan provided policy direction related to the use of community resources. As Boulder Parks and Recreation implemented the master plan, staff identified a standard methodology for calculating the total cost of providing services, including identifying direct and indirect costs. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) informed the development of this methodology and approved the definitions and assumptions as part of developing BPR's Recreation Priority Index.

#### Cost Definitions:

BPR uses the following definitions when calculation and analyzing costs:

- *Capital costs* include expenses over \$50,000 for major maintenance and enhancing public infrastructure by correcting current facility deficiencies and constructing new service-delivery infrastructure
- *Direct facility costs* include the personnel and non-personnel expenses including department R&R (restoration and refurbishment) associated with the operation and maintenance of the City's parks and recreation facilities. These costs are incurred daily and include: staff; materials and supplies; financial, utilities and water fees; custodial services
- *Direct program costs* include the personnel and non-personnel expenses specific to a department program. These costs are incurred only when a program is provided and include instructor salaries and program-specific supplies required for participation. These costs adjust according to program participation or demand and are expended as needed.
- *Indirect costs* are those that department incurs regardless of whether or not it provides a specific service to the community. Overhead personnel and non-personnel expenses associated with the day-to-day operation of the department may include:
  - Administration
  - Business Services
  - Internal Support Services (Human Resources, Information Technology, City Attorney, Risk Management, Finance)
  - Service Management/Coordination/Supervision
  - Operating costs include expenses to provide community services. There are indirect and direct operating costs.

### Service Delivery<sup>28</sup>

To create clarity on how and why recreational programs are offered as well as how BPR should prioritize its limited funds available for programming, the Department created the Service Delivery Framework. The framework acts as a methodology to evaluate how and what programs and services BPR should pursue and how to best offer those services. BPR programming is evaluated using the Service Delivery Framework. Components of programming are evaluated both on an ongoing basis and every two to three years to assess if a program should change, continue, or be discontinued. The framework is broken into eight components that aim to answer specific questions about the program being evaluated:

- Organizational Philosophy: How does the program align with BPR's themes, long-range goals, and initiatives?

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Parks and Recreation Service Delivery Handbook

- Identify Customer Needs and Interests: Why is BPR offering the service? Who is BPR providing the service for? What is BPR's target audience expecting from programming?
- Identify Market Niche/Partner Opportunities: Are there like services in the service area? What is BPR's market position? How much competition exists? Are there opportunities to invest in programs to increase revenue or exit programs to decrease expenses? What opportunities exist to collaborate with outside partners?
- Consider Available Monies, Staff, and Infrastructure: What resources are required for program? How much will the program cost to operate? What are the staffing requirements?
- Design & Plan Service: What is required for the management of the program (i.e., supplies, marketing, registration, contingency plan, service flow, risk management, etc.)?
- Deliver Service: How is the program viewed within the three phases of participation (anticipation, participation, reflection)?
- Evaluate Service: How successful and/or enjoyable did participants feel the program was?
- Implement Changes: What are the opportunities to enhance revenue or expand service?

#### Program Prioritization, Subsidization, and Cost Recovery

In response to the 2014 Parks and Recreation Department Master Plan, BPR developed the Recreational Priority Index (RPI) as a simplified method to allow recreation program managers and decision makers to compare the relative importance of BPR programs in relation to one another. In addition to prioritizing programs, the RPI methodology enables BPR to set targets around cost recovery and pricing relative to a program's RPI score<sup>29</sup>

The RPI methodology is based off a 100-point scale developed around the three factors of BPR Themes, Sustainability, and Delivery Method and Reach. Within the three factors are six criteria for rating BPR programs, including: substitutability, community health and wellness, building community and relationships, targeted goal, reach, and delivery method. Scoring is intended to be performed within a program or program group to allow for an even and accurate comparison between and ranking of similar program types. The RPI scoring process examines:

- Delivery Method and Reach Factors: How many registrations does the program receive during its peak season (e.g., whichever season registrations are highest for that program)?
- Delivery: Is the program delivered by the Department or facilitated by a non-BPR entity?
- Substitutability Factor: In Boulder County, is the program executed exclusively by BPR or do other program providers exist?
- Community Health and Wellness: To what degree does the program equitably impact the community's health and wellness?
- Builds Community Relationships: To what degree does the program impact and build relationships within the community?
- Targeted Goals: Does the program accomplish goals established through the 2014 Parks and Recreation Master Plan?

Scoring is completed using an internal scoring matrix. A program's score is used to impartially assign subsidization amounts to individual programs. The RPI utilizes a three-category scoring system illustrated in Figure 3.

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<sup>29</sup> BPR Recreational Priority Index Internal White Paper



Figure 3. BPR Categories. Source: Boulder Parks and Recreation.

Based on the category and RPI score, each program is assigned cost recovery goal. The cost recovery goal is used to set program fees, ensuring that BPR has justification in assigning subsidy level. However, the RPI methodology does not ensure that total program revenues earned are sufficient to balance the Department's budget.

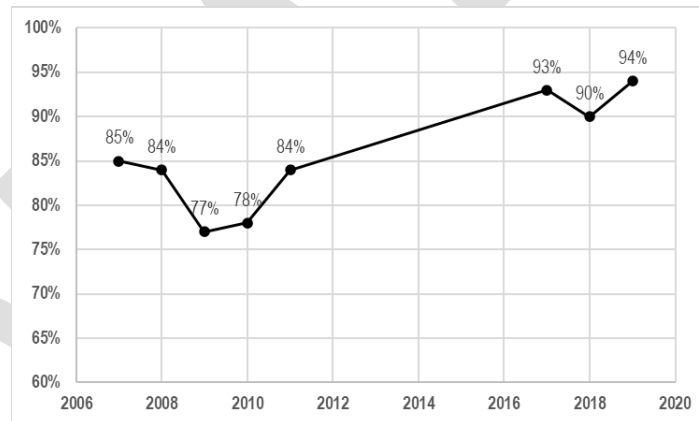


Figure 4: BPR Cost Recovery by Year. Source: Boulder Parks and Recreation

Program Area	2017			2018			2019			3 Yr. Average		
	Revenue	Cost	Actual Cost Recovery	Revenue	Cost	Actual Cost Recovery	Revenue	Cost	Actual Cost Recovery	Revenue	Cost	Actual Cost Recovery
Aquatics	\$ 651,575	\$ 1,328,481	49%	\$ 630,075	\$ 1,440,197	44%	\$ 491,755	\$ 1,381,337	36%	\$ 591,135	\$ 1,383,338	43%
Contracted Programs (Dance/Sports)	\$ 34,155	\$ -	N/A	\$ 22,435	\$ -	N/A	\$ 38,555	\$ -	N/A	\$ 31,715	\$ -	N/A
Camps (Includes Contracted Camp Programs)	\$ 368,254	\$ 257,772	143%	\$ 512,339	\$ 264,429	194%	\$ 565,426	\$ 331,269	171%	\$ 198,221	\$ 650,105	30%
EXPAND/Inclusion	\$ 186,168	\$ 627,404	30%	\$ 184,464	\$ 661,446	28%	\$ 224,030	\$ 661,465	34%	\$ 204,999	\$ 470,889	44%
Fitness	\$ 170,363	\$ 433,553	39%	\$ 213,193	\$ 485,568	44%	\$ 231,441	\$ 493,546	47%	\$ 1,306,262	\$ 1,334,338	98%
Golf	\$ 1,334,060	\$ 1,233,072	108%	\$ 1,260,757	\$ 1,327,668	95%	\$ 1,323,970	\$ 1,442,275	92%	\$ 745,274	\$ 644,562	116%
Gymnastics	\$ 742,145	\$ 599,949	124%	\$ 723,160	\$ 667,302	108%	\$ 770,517	\$ 666,436	116%	\$ 101,555	\$ 234,208	43%
Mind & Body Programs	\$ 104,315	\$ 216,640	48%	\$ 109,552	\$ 240,163	46%	\$ 90,798	\$ 245,822	37%	\$ 62,848	\$ 30,939	203%
Mind & Body Pilates	\$ 65,463	\$ 32,392	202%	\$ 58,140	\$ 29,529	197%	\$ 64,942	\$ 30,897	210%	\$ 84	\$ 1,522	6%
Pottery	\$ 250	\$ 250	100%	\$ 1	\$ 991	0%	\$ 1	\$ 3,326	0%	\$ 2,812,354	\$ 2,561,337	110%
Recreation Centers	\$ 2,693,565	\$ 2,529,187	106%	\$ 2,710,376	\$ 2,571,682	105%	\$ 3,033,120	\$ 2,583,141	117%	\$ 1,058,729	\$ 941,444	112%
Reservoir	\$ 996,116	\$ 866,418	115%	\$ 1,065,727	\$ 988,847	108%	\$ 1,114,344	\$ 969,066	115%	\$ 1,121,641	\$ 643,708	174%
Sports	\$ 1,085,392	\$ 658,100	165%	\$ 1,163,309	\$ 677,179	172%	\$ 1,116,222	\$ 595,844	187%	\$ 183,460	\$ 463,940	40%
YSI	\$ 54,955	\$ 315,630	17%	\$ 186,044	\$ 468,790	40%	\$ 309,381	\$ 607,400	51%			
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 8,486,776</b>	<b>\$ 9,098,849</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>\$ 8,839,572</b>	<b>\$ 9,823,791</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>\$ 9,374,502</b>	<b>\$ 10,011,824</b>	<b>94%</b>			

Table 4: Cost Recovery by Program, 2016-2021. Source: Boulder Parks and Recreation

Since Implementing the RPI program, BPR has been able to increase cost recovery significantly, from an average cost recovery of 83% between 2007 and 2011, to an average of 90% between 2017 and 2019. Figure 4 illustrates BPR's

total cost recovery between 2007 and 2019. When broke down by program, as shown in Table 6, BPR is achieving beyond full cost recovery for both general and adult programming such as Pilates, Recreation Centers, the Reservoir, and Gymnastics. These programs successfully offset revenues lost by community and recreation programs such as EXPAND/Inclusion, Fitness, Mind and Body, and YSI. While sports programs appear to achieve a high level of cost recovery, most adult softball and soccer maintenance expenses are allocated to the 0.25 Cent Sales Tax Fund, while revenues are allocated the Recreational Activity Fund. This split in expenses versus revenues for sports programming results in the overall cost recovery of programs appearing higher than they are.

Despite offset revenues from high cost recovery programs, BPR is still experiencing a negative gap between yearly program revenues and expenses. From 2017 through 2019, BPR experienced an average program revenue shortfall of \$846,115, meaning that supplementary funds that could be used for other purposes must instead be allocated to balance the program revenue shortfall.

In addition to funds received through programs achieving high cost recovery, BPR has successfully leveraged grants and other forms of financial support to deliver certain programs. Table 7 details grants support from 2017 through 2019 for facility access, EXPAND/Inclusion, Sport, and YSI programming. Since 2017, BPR has successfully increased the grant funding, allowing for facility access, EXPAND/Inclusion, and YSI programs to achieve year over year increases in grant funding.

Program Area	2017			2018			2019			Average Support
	Program Cost	Grant Support	Percent Grant Support	Program Cost	Grant Support	Percent Grant Support	Program Cost	Grant Support	Percent Grant Support	
Facility Access	\$ 2,529,187	\$ 115,900	4.6%	\$ 2,571,682	\$-	0.0%	\$ 2,561,337	\$150,000.00	5.9%	\$ 132,950
EXPAND/Inclusion	\$ 627,404	\$ 61,658	9.8%	\$ 661,446	\$ 55,292	8.4%	\$ 650,105	\$90,212.00	13.9%	\$ 69,054
Sports	\$ 658,100	\$ -	0.0%	\$ 677,179	\$ 2,375	0.4%	\$ 643,708	\$ -	0.0%	\$ 2,375
YSI	\$ 315,630	\$ 54,955	17.4%	\$ 468,790	\$ 186,044	39.7%	\$ 463,940	\$301,303.00	64.9%	\$ 180,767
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 4,130,321</b>	<b>\$ 116,613</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>\$ 4,379,097</b>	<b>\$ 243,711</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>\$ 4,319,090</b>	<b>\$391,515</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>\$188,554</b>

Table 5: Grant Support by Program. Source: Boulder Parks and Recreation

### Asset Management

In 2018 BPR implemented its Asset Management Program (AMP) in response to themes developed in the Department's 2014 Master Plan. The purpose of the AMP is to "promote effective use of financial and physical resources by developing a proactive and systematic approach to managing [BPR's] inventory of assets."<sup>30</sup> Assets tracked under the AMP include only assets maintained, and purchased by BPR, such as park-related infrastructure (i.e., courts, playgrounds, and picnic/shade structures), secondary assets (i.e., park furniture, lighting, trails, and trees) and a large inventory of building and facility-related assets for properties like recreation centers and aquatic facilities.<sup>31</sup> Facilities and Fleet are separately responsible for tracking systems within buildings and vehicle assets.

To objectively assess an asset's overall condition, BPR developed a unique condition assessment to be performed every one-to-three years that catalogs the physical condition of an asset to determine its maintenance needs and remaining useful life. The assessment employs a "pre-determined asset scorecard which simplifies asset inspections by providing a user-friendly visual rating scale for each inspection topic."<sup>32</sup> The scorecard uses a rating scale with the following categories:

- Serious: Very poor condition = missing components, immediate safety concern and must be removed from public use until repaired.
- Poor: Fair condition = no safety concerns but condition is below our expectation or is showing rapid deterioration.
- Fair: Decent condition = asset's condition is what we would expect but requires regular assessments to ensure proper maintenance.
- Good: Good condition = asset's condition is better than our expectation.
- Excellent: Excellent condition = new asset.

<sup>30</sup> Parks and Recreation Department – Asset Management Program, 2018

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. Pg. 17

The Asset Management Program is currently in the process of assessing the condition of all BPR assets. While the scoring method for each asset varies, the assessment process enables an even level of comparison of all BPR assets.

To allow for further clarity around how the Department should prioritize investment strategies that “incorporate preventative maintenance, repairs, and replacement of assets within annual and long-term budgets and resource Constraints,” BPR has developed a proposed scoring system named the Asset Criticality Scoring System. While the Asset Criticality Scoring System has not been finalized or implemented, the system is intended to be used in tandem with an asset’s condition assessment and “attempts to establish a numeric score representative of an asset or facility’s criticality, or importance, to the community and to the overall parks and recreation system.”<sup>33</sup> The asset critically score is based off a 0-to-100-point scale calculated by averaging two sub scores:

- Property Score: Intended to determine the importance of the property where the asset is installed. The Property Score is comprised of the following:
  - Master Plan Designation Score: based on the property’s BPR Master Plan category.
  - Property Usage Score: based on observed use as compared to property capacity.
  - Audience Score: based on observed user groups who interact with the property.
- Asset Score: Intended to determine the value of the specific asset to the property’s operations. The Asset Score is comprised of the following:
  - Asset Utility Score: based on the level of impact an asset has on the property’s ability to function.
  - Asset Usage Score: based on observed use of an asset.

Figure 5 illustrates how the sub-scores work together to produce an overall asset criticality score.

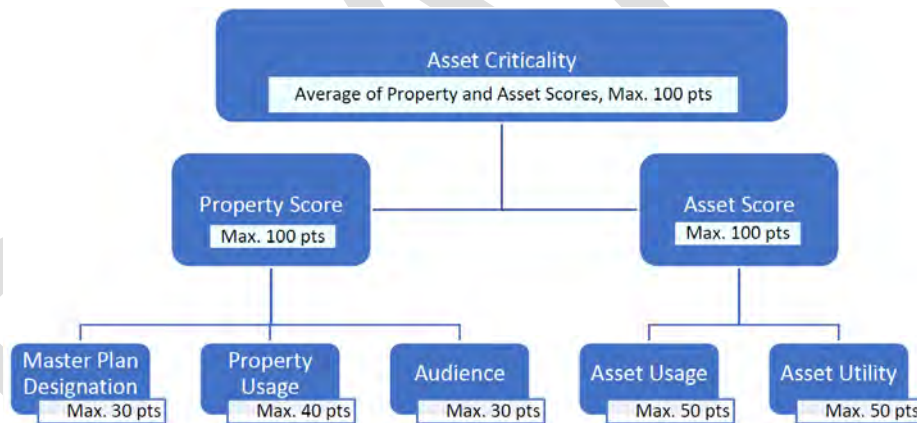


Figure 5. Asset Criticality Scoring Methodology. Source: Parks and Recreation Asset Management Program, 2018.

The combination of the Asset Criticality score and Asset Condition assessment score are used to identify funding priorities that focus on “highly critical assets in less-than-ideal condition to bring the Department’s overall asset inventory to a desired level of service.”<sup>34</sup> Scores should be interpreted using the quadrants illustrated in Figure 6, where the “top right quadrant, shown in green, as well as the bottom right column in yellow, illustrate assets of various criticality to the Department that are also in relatively good condition, not likely requiring prioritization for immediate resource allocation” while the “the bottom left quadrant of this chart, in red, represents assets in poor condition that are not comparatively critical to the BPR mission.” Funding and resource allocation should be prioritized for assets falling in the top left quadrant of the graph, indicating “assets that are highly critical to the Department, but are also in comparatively lesser condition.”<sup>35</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. pg. 24

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. pg. 30.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. pg. 30

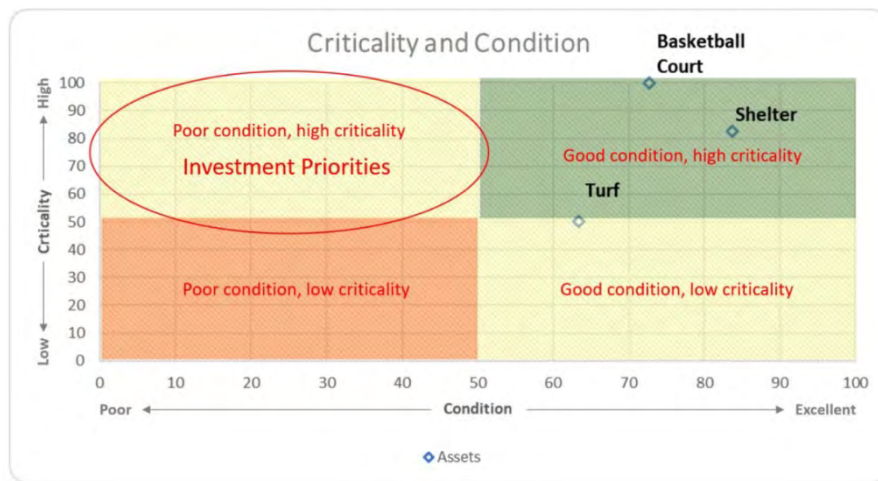


Figure 6. Asset Criticality and Condition Scoring Quadrants. Source: Parks and Recreation Asset Management Program, 2018.

### Capital Management & Capital Investment

In 2015 BPR developed the Capital Investment Strategic Plan for 2016-2026 that provided answers to five key questions critical to the financial sustainability of the Department:

1. What assets does BPR own?
2. What are the assets worth?
3. What condition are the assets in?
4. What is the asset's remaining service life?
5. What is the infrastructure funding gaps?

BPR defines assets "to include all physical built infrastructures necessary to support the social, economic and environmental services provided by the Department to meet the park and recreation needs of the community."<sup>36</sup> As of 2021, BPR manages over 100 facilities on 1,861 acres. As part of the Capital Management process, BPR tracks individual assets' Current Replacement Value (CRV) to calculate an asset's total value. In addition to CRV, BPR also tracks each asset's total backlog of deferred maintenance.

An asset's CRV and backlogged maintenance are used in conjunction to calculate an asset's Facility Condition Index (FCI) score. The FCI score is used to assess an asset's overall condition and prioritize limited funds for critical capital repairs and/or replacement. BPR uses the scale shown in Table 8 to measure the condition an asset. The goal of BPR is "reach a desired FCI for built assets between 0.06 and 0.08."<sup>37</sup>

Facility Condition Index Score	Asset Condition
0.00 – 0.05	Excellent
0.07 – 0.10	Good
0.15 – 0.18	Fair
0.25 – 0.35	Poor
0.50 – 1.0	Terrible

Table 6. Asset Condition Scorecard. Source: BPR Capital Investment Strategic Plan 2016-2026.

To maintain assets in their current good to excellent condition and align with industry standards on facility maintenance and best practices, BPR established that they must invest approximately 2-3 percent each year of the total CRV. Investments at the lower end of the range allows repairs and replacement critical to health and safety concerns, while the higher end of the range allows for more frequent replacement assets and more modern parks system.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>36</sup> BPR Capital Investment Strategic Plan 2016-2016, Pg. 7.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. Pg. 11

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. 14



## **Summary of Policies Enacted to Support 2014 Master Plan Recommendations**

BPR has implemented multiple strategies and policies in response to financial sustainability policy recommendations made by the 2014 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The following section summarizes BPR's actions in response to the 2014 Master Plan's recommendations.

### Policy One

BPR shall categorize service using a recreation priority index based on the organizational mission, target population served, service outcomes, contributions to the Boulder sustainability framework, partnership value and redundancy with services provided by others in the community in order to guide offerings.

### Actions in Response to Policy One

- In 2015, with consultant input and PRAB support, BPR adopted the Recreation Priority Index (RPI), enabling a subject methodology to determine community benefit and inform subsidy levels and cost recovery targets.
- BPR implemented a Service Delivery Model whereby programs are evaluated annually to assess minimum enrollment levels, monitor private recreation programs in the community, and consider eliminating programs with poor enrollment and ample competing private options.
- Since 2015, the department has spun off to partners several services including Dance, Pottery Lab, specialized camps and select competitive sports.

### Policy Two

BPR shall determine the actual cost of an activity or service using a standardized method that encompasses consistency of data inputs and analysis methods.

### Actions in Response to Policy Two

- BPR adopted standard costing definitions to ensure a consistent and standard methodology for calculating the total cost of providing services, including direct and indirect costs.
- BPR used a third-party software to assign all direct and indirect costs to services.

### Policy Three

BPR shall establish cost recovery rates and associated pricing. Fees shall be based on the recreational priority index, community versus individual benefit, cost to provide services and the prevailing market for comparable service.

### Actions in Response to Policy Three

- In 2020, the RAF Chart of Accounts was updated to identify all direct revenues and expenses associated with programs and facilities.
- Programs for people with disabilities and those with low-income are highly discounted, afforded by subsidies from the General Fund and Health Equity Fund.
- Recreation facility fees increased in 2016, 2018 and 2020 with adults nearing full cost recovery, and discounts off of that fee for youth, older adults, multi-visit passes. Financial Aid is available for those who qualify.
- Since the implementation of the RPI and Service Delivery Model, cost recovery for programs has increased from an average of 82% between 2007 and 2011 to an average of 92% between 2017 and 2019.
- PRAB supported fees that market will bear. For services that are categorized recreational or exclusive that charge a fee in excess of the cost, market fees are continued.

## **BPR Financial Outlook**

The following section provides a forward-looking assessment of the BPR's financial outlook through 2026.

### Current Replacement Value, Maintenance Backlog, and Facility Condition Index

As of 2021, BPR manages over 100 facilities and parks on 1,861 acres of land. As part of the 2021 Master Plan update process, BPR assets were re-evaluated to asset their present-day Current Replacement Value. In addition to updating the CRV, each facilities' backlog of maintenance was calculated to determine each facility's Facility Condition Index.

BPR's CRV has increased from \$226,027,148 in 2016 to its current 2021 value of \$298,476,655. Increases to BPR's CRV are due to the construction of new facilities, the inflation of costs within the construction industry, increases to materials costs, and a better understanding of the Department's assets since the 2016 CRV numbers were developed. As of 2021, BPR has a total maintenance backlog of \$20,579,515. Using the updated 2021 CRV and backlog maintenance numbers, an updated FCI of 0.069 was calculated. The 0.069 FCI places BPR in the *Good to Excellent* range of the Department's Facility Condition Scale.

#### Operations & Maintenance (O&M) and Planned Capital Improvement Projects

Between 2022 and 2027 BPR has \$25,708,500 in planned capital improvement projects currently scheduled. Table 9 delineates planned capital projects by year into BPR's four capital categories: Capital Enhancement, Capital Maintenance, Planning Studies, and New Capital.

While BPR is currently meeting the goal set by the 2016 Capital Investment Strategic Plan of spending between 2-3%, or \$4-6 million, annually on capital repairs and replacement, when updated to account for the Department's total 2021 CRV of \$298,476,655, BPR is falling behind targeted capital spending. Based on BPR's updated 2021 total asset CRV, the Department should be spending between \$6 million and \$9 million annually on capital repairs and replacement. Using the updated targeted spending range and averaging capital projects over a six-year period, BPR is only on track to meet capital repair and replacement goals in 2026.

Based off the Department's 2021 CRV of \$298,476,655 and the industry standard of allocating approximately 4% of CRV to O&M or ongoing preventative maintenance, the Department should be spending approximately \$11.9 million of O&M. Because O&M is not tracked as individual line item within BPR's budget documents, it is not possible to calculate the delta between the Department's current O&M spend and targeted spend of \$11.9 million. In the future, BPR should track O&M related expenses as additional budget category to the Department's existing categories (i.e., personnel, operating, interdepartmental charges, and capital) to ensure that sufficient funds are being spend on O&M annually.

Project Type	2022 Projected	2023 Projected	2024 Projected	2025 Projected	2026 Projected	2027 Projected
Capital Enhancement	54% \$ 2,238,000	60% \$ 2,510,000	57% \$ 2,945,000	34% \$ 821,500	18% \$ 1,100,000	32% \$ 1,150,000
Capital Maintenance	43% \$ 1,790,000	38% \$ 1,570,000	37% \$ 1,932,000	61% \$ 1,495,000	32% \$ 1,932,000	68% \$ 2,495,000
Planning Studies	4% \$ 150,000	2% \$ 100,000	1% \$ 60,000	5% \$ 120,000	1% \$ 60,000	0% \$ -
New Capital	0% \$ -	0% \$ -	5% \$ 240,000	0% \$ -	49% \$ 3,000,000	0% \$ -
<b>Total Capital Expenditures</b>	<b>100% \$ 4,178,000</b>	<b>100% \$ 4,180,000</b>	<b>100% \$ 5,177,000</b>	<b>100% \$ 2,436,500</b>	<b>100% \$ 6,092,000</b>	<b>100% \$ 3,645,000</b>

Table 7. BPR Planned Capital Projects 2022-2027. Source: BPR CIP Worksheet.

To quantify gaps in funding for targeted capital repair and replacement, an analysis was performed that looked at current projected capital expenditures from 2022 through 2027. These expenditures were compared with updated targets for repair and replacement based off updated 2021 CRV estimates. The results of the analysis, illustrated in Table 10, show that for nearly every year through 2027, BPR requires additional funds to meets its capital repair and replacement goals. Due to the method by which BPR tracks CRV, appreciation is based on the current replacement value for the same asset in present day costs, and as a result BPR's assets appreciate over time. As BPR's asset portfolio continues to appreciate, and as assets continue to age, increasingly more funds will be required to maintain its assets.

	2022 Projected	2023 Projected	2024 Projected	2025 Projected	2026 Projected	2027 Projected
<b>Total Projected Capital Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 4,178,000</b>	<b>\$ 4,180,000</b>	<b>\$ 5,177,000</b>	<b>\$ 2,436,500</b>	<b>\$ 6,092,000</b>	<b>\$ 3,645,000</b>
<b>Additional Funds Required to Meet 2% Goal</b>	<b>\$ 1,791,533</b>	<b>\$ 1,789,533</b>	<b>\$ 792,533</b>	<b>\$ 3,533,033</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 2,324,533</b>
<b>Additional Funds Required to Meet 3% Goal</b>	<b>\$ 4,776,300</b>	<b>\$ 4,774,300</b>	<b>\$ 3,777,300</b>	<b>\$ 6,517,800</b>	<b>\$ 2,862,300</b>	<b>\$ 5,309,300</b>

Table 8. Additional Funds Required to Meeting Capital Repair and Replacement Targets. Source: BPR CIP Worksheet.

#### BPR Financial Projection: 2022-2026

Table 7 illustrates BPR's projected funding and expenses through 2026. Data on funding sources was collected from the City of Boulder's fund balance and allocation projections within the City's 2021 Approved Budget document.

Assumptions used to calculate BPR's projected uses of funds were developed through a review of past year over year shifts in expenditures, living wage increases for both employees and contractors, competition with other front range communities for residents and employees, data available from the Department's 2022 CIP Plan, and feedback received from BPR finance staff.

Based on these projections and as illustrated in Table 11, BPR is anticipated to have a minor budget surplus through 2025 and a minor budget shortfall in 2026. It is important to note that while BPR is anticipated to have a minor surplus, the projected expenditures within Table 11 do not account for unforeseen capital or operating cost expenditures, or the additional funds required to meet 2021 CRV repair and replacement goals or to achieve goals established with this master plan.

As indicated by the imbalance of BPR's projected average annual expense growth rate (5.8%) and projected funding growth rate (2.8%), funds required to meet 2021 CRV repair and replacement goals and annual O&M spend goals, \$20,579,515 in backlogged maintenance, and \$17791 million in unfunded capital projects, BPR is faced with the challenging task of continuing to serve the community and operate its facilities with an increasingly strained budget. BPR must be prepared to identify and implement other revenue generating activities and/or strategies in the coming years to supplement its current funding sources.

Projected Source of Funds	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Average Annual Growth Rate: 2022-2026
General Fund	\$ 6,022,134	\$ 6,160,678	\$ 6,302,410	\$ 6,447,403	\$ 6,447,403	1.7%
Permanent Parks and Recreation Fund	\$ 3,768,701	\$ 3,814,229	\$ 3,999,724	\$ 4,037,548	\$ 4,246,162	3.0%
Recreation Activity Fund (RAF)	\$ 10,363,792	\$ 10,592,911	\$ 10,917,767	\$ 11,163,416	\$ 11,539,680	2.7%
.25 Cent Sales Tax Fund	\$ 8,540,881	\$ 8,916,426	\$ 9,315,081	\$ 9,638,130	\$ 9,893,899	3.7%
Lottery Fund	\$ 428,000	\$ 428,000	\$ 428,000	\$ 428,000	\$ 428,000	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 29,123,508</b>	<b>\$ 29,912,244</b>	<b>\$ 30,962,982</b>	<b>\$ 31,714,497</b>	<b>\$ 32,555,144</b>	<b>2.8%</b>
		2.71%	3.51%	2.43%	2.65%	
Projected Use of Funds	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Average Annual Growth Rate: 2022-2026
Personnel	\$ 13,939,444	\$ 14,636,416	\$ 15,368,237	\$ 16,136,649	\$ 16,943,481	5%
Operating	\$ 7,245,813	\$ 7,535,646	\$ 7,837,071	\$ 8,150,554	\$ 8,476,577	4%
Interdepartmental Charges	\$ 865,000	\$ 890,950	\$ 917,679	\$ 945,209	\$ 973,565	3%
Capital	\$ 4,178,000	\$ 4,180,000	\$ 5,177,000	\$ 2,436,000	\$ 6,092,000	N/A*
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 26,228,257</b>	<b>\$ 27,243,012</b>	<b>\$ 29,299,987</b>	<b>\$ 27,668,412</b>	<b>\$ 32,485,623</b>	<b>5.8%</b>
<b>Projected Available Funding</b>	<b>\$ 2,895,251</b>	<b>\$ 2,669,232</b>	<b>\$ 1,662,995</b>	<b>\$ 4,046,085</b>	<b>\$69,521</b>	

Table 9. BPR Projected Funding & Expenditures, 2022-2026. Source: 2021 Boulder City Budget

### BPR Unfunded Capital Projects

As part of its capital planning strategy, BPR tracks all unfunded capital projects. Unfunded capital projects are sorted into three alternative plans based on the City's financial planning approach:

- Fiscally Constrained: plans that prioritize spending within current budget targets.
- Action: plans that include extra services and/or capital improvements that should be pursued when additional funding becomes available.
- Vision: plans that include the complete set of services and facilities desired by the community.

Table 12 illustrates BPR's total unfunded capital projects and annual operation and maintenance (O&M) costs associated with each plan's projects. As of 2021, BPR has \$177,935,000 in unfunded capital projects. As BPR's facilities continue to age and demand for parks and recreation resources continues to rise, BPR's ability to allocate funding for unfunded projects is likely to become increasingly challenging. While these projects vary regarding critical need and purpose, there is a clear need for additional funding to accomplish the replacement, repairs, and new development necessary for BPR to meet the full expectations and needs of the community.

Plan Type	Capital Cost	Annual O&M
Fiscally Constrained Plan	\$ 11,935,000	\$ 232,000
Action Plan	\$ 43,000,000	\$ 945,000
Vision Plan	\$ 123,000,000	\$ 3,600,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 177,935,000</b>	<b>\$ 4,777,000</b>

Table 10. BPR Unfunded Capital Projects by Plan Type. Source: BPR 2021-2026 Ongoing Unfunded Project List.

### Funding Gaps Based on Unfunded Capital Needs

To demonstrate the amount of funds required for BPR to accomplish its unfunded projects outlined by the Fiscally Constrained, Action, and Vision Plans, a *What if* analysis was performed based on the Department's current funding and expenditure projections. The analysis examined what types of funding would be required if BPR desired to implement all unfunded Fiscally Constrained, Action, and Vision projects, along with their respective increases in annual operating and maintenance, over the next five-year period.

The analysis, illustrated in Table 13, produced the order of magnitude of additional funding by year, that would be required to accomplish each plan as well as fund each plan's reoccurring annual maintenance. The analysis demonstrated that, based off current funding and expenditures projections, BPR would require an additional \$1.7 million to accomplish all Fiscally Constrained projects, \$36.3 million to accomplish all Action projects, and \$130 million to accomplish all Vision projects.

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Projected Funding	\$ 29,123,508	\$ 29,912,244	\$ 30,962,982	\$ 31,714,497	\$ 32,555,144
Projected Expenditures	\$ 26,228,257	\$ 27,243,012	\$ 29,299,987	\$ 27,668,412	\$ 32,485,623
Balance	\$ 2,895,251	\$ 2,669,232	\$ 1,662,995	\$ 4,046,085	\$ 69,521
Unfunded Capital Projects					
Fiscally Constrained Plan	\$ 2,619,000	\$ 2,619,000	\$ 2,619,000	\$ 2,619,000	\$ 2,619,000
Action Plan	\$ 9,545,000	\$ 9,545,000	\$ 9,545,000	\$ 9,545,000	\$ 9,545,000
Vision Plan	\$ 28,200,000	\$ 28,200,000	\$ 28,200,000	\$ 28,200,000	\$ 28,200,000
Funding Gaps by Plan Type					
Fiscally Constrained Balance	\$276,251	\$50,232	\$956,005	\$1,427,085	\$2,549,479
Action Balance	\$6,649,749	\$6,875,768	\$7,882,005	\$5,498,915	\$9,475,479
Vision Balance	\$25,304,749	\$25,530,768	\$26,537,005	\$24,153,915	\$28,130,479
Total Funding Gap	\$31,678,248	\$32,356,303	\$35,375,015	\$28,225,745	\$40,155,437

Table 11. Funding Gaps Required to Meet Unfunded Project Needs. Source: 2021 Boulder City Budget, 2021-2026 BPR Ongoing Unfunded Project List.

### **Comparative North American Parks and Recreation Summary**

As part of the Master Plan update process, three comparable North American Parks and Recreation Departments were interviewed to better understand how other Departments are maintaining consistent levels of service for their communities, despite budgetary constraints, capital needs, and cost increases.

#### Fort Collins Recreation Department - Fort Collins, CO

The Fort Collins Recreation Department operates 971 acres of parkland and serves a population of 165,000 people. Over the past several years, the Fort Collins Recreation Department has been developing funding increases through revenue generation. The goal of the Department is to be mostly self-sufficient, generating enough revenue to cover operating costs. Prior to 2020, the Department was averaging between 70% and 74% cost recovery through program fees alone. The remaining 25% to 30% of staff and daily operating costs are funded through the City's General Fund. To meet their self-sustaining financial goals, the Department has worked diligently to increase participation in their facilities and membership passes.

The Department does not have a formal approach to cost recovery; however, they plan on establishing a formal cost recovery strategy for each program to help programmers better understand the overhead costs associated with their individual programs. Some programs, like their adaptive recreation programs, are subsidized by higher revenue programs like recreational sports programs. Membership and pass sales constitute a key part of the Department's funding strategy. Passes are sold in one month, six month, or annual increments and allow the passholder to use any facility. Passholders also receive discounts on fitness classes which drives fitness participation. There are daily fees for facility use by non-pass members, however, pass fees do not differ between residents and non-residents.

Program fee increases are staggered incrementally every two to three years between programs. Fee increases for certain sets of programs with more cost-sensitive participants, such as seniors, are staggered over longer periods of time to avoid significantly impacting a participant's ability to pay. The Department takes a market approach to fee structuring, regularly comparing internal fees within the area to private operators offering similar services. Fees for certain programs for key user groups, such as seniors and low-income residents, are subsidized directly from the City's General Fund.

During the past five-years, program capacity has been mostly flat. Due to budget constraints, the Department has been prioritizing programs that generate more revenue, with programs that do not qualify for a General Fund subsidy and do not recoup their costs being phased out. The Department's highest revenue-generating activities are from their indoor ice rink. Because the ice rink is only one of a few in the northern Colorado area, it attracts competitive skating, coaching, the Colorado State University hockey team, and adult and youth hockey teams from throughout the region. Fee based rink access amongst these groups provides the Department with significant excess revenue. Other revenue drivers for the Department come from their seasonal outdoor water parks and from third-party sports leagues that operate in their facilities.

Capital funding for the Department is generated through voter-approved tax measures while program expansions have typically been funded through sales tax initiatives. While all major maintenance projects for their facilities are funded through a dedicated operations and services fund, smaller everyday repairs and lifecycle replacement of equipment and amenities are funded through a recreation reserve account that the Department has built up over time. The City of Fort Collins has a policy in place preventing the Recreation Department from allowing advertising in all facilities except for the Ice Rink. The Department's marketing and communications team reaches out to potential sponsors each time they host special events and large community events in the facility.

#### South Suburban Parks and Recreation District – Littleton, CO

The South Suburban Parks and Recreation District serves approximately 157,000 residents in the Town of Bow Mar, Town of Columbine Valley, City of Littleton, City of Sheridan, City of Centennial west of 1-25, City of Lone Tree, and unincorporated portions of Douglas County, Jefferson County and Arapahoe County. The Department manages 125 parks and multiple facilities on 3,800 acres of land.

Over the past 15 years, the South Suburban Parks and Recreation District (SSPRD) has increased their allocated funds for capital projects from \$2 million to \$10 million. While the Department previously operated with substantial deferred maintenance, a voter-approved 2 mil tax levy increase approved in 2014 within their service area in combination with a rapid rise in property taxes has enabled SSPRD to allocate significant funds towards reduction of deferred maintenance and implementation of capital projects.

The 2-mil tax levy generates between \$6 million and \$7 million per year, all of which is dedicated to the Department's operations and maintenance. To manage deferred maintenance and capital replacement each year, SSPRD allocates \$8-10 million for capital expenditures annually. In addition to generating \$40 million in revenue, bond proceeds have been used to fund the construction of a new \$63 million recreation facility. This facility has the capacity to hold more year-round programs, and in turn generate more revenues for the Department.

Each year SSPRD performs an evaluation of trending recreational programs to capitalize on new revenue generating projects. Individual programmers have the authority to make decisions on fee increases for individual programs as well as program prioritization. For programs that are typically found in the private sector, there are generally less fee increases due to increased competition. However, fee increases are more common amongst programs where SSPRD has limited area competition. The only programs within SSPRD that are subsidized are senior programs and a portion of the youth programs. The Department uses a market approach to determine which programs to subsidize, and to what extent, through surveying program participants' willingness to pay at other providers. In total the department generates roughly \$28 million in revenues from fees annually.

In addition to traditional revenue sources, each year SSPRD also applies for public and private grant programs, including scientific and cultural arts grants to fund some specific programs and offset costs for redevelopment. The Department has an employee whose primary job function is to apply for grant programs each year. Most recently, three ice rinks in their new recreation facility were funded through a grant matching program. In addition to grants, SSPRD also pursues naming rights and sponsorship opportunities from area businesses.

#### Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation Department - Ann Arbor, MI

The City of Ann Arbor's Parks and Recreation Department operates 163 parks and 15 park facilities. Currently, the Department is receiving funds from a six-year millage approved by voters in 2016. The millage provides funding for

large scale capital projects and operating costs to maintain a consistent levels and quality of service for the community. Language within the millage states that 60% to 80% of revenue will be budgeted toward maintenance, and the other 12% to 40% of revenue shall be allocated toward capital projects, including rebuilds of existing facilities.

To preserve millage revenues, the Department strategically targets local non-profit partners to raise funds for capital projects and maintenance. Recently, the Department partnered with a local non-profit to fund the development of a skatepark, with 10% of each dollar raised being allocated to an endowment used for annual maintenance costs. As the endowment has received additional fund contributions and gained earning from interest, it has grown to be capable of covering most maintenance costs.

The Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation department also works with local developers to solicit cash contributions for parks related projects. Non-mandatory contributions are stated in the development agreement prior to the developer receiving a certificate of occupancy. The cash contribution is determined by the costs associated with maintenance from increased use and demand for facilities. The funds from these contributions are allocated towards parks nearby the development, or larger parks used by most Ann Arbor residents. Despite the fact that the cash contribution is voluntary, many developers still choose to participate.

The Department's program revenues have grown over the last ten years. Resulting revenue from programs is used to offset the program costs, however, often time the Department is unable to achieve full cost recovery. None of the Department's programs are entirely funded through their General Fund as program revenues are sufficient to cover many program costs. Added amenities offset expense increases and help subsidize losses associated with the subsidized communities and facilities, such as the City's senior centers. One of these amenities includes Michigan's largest livery operation which has grown from bringing in \$10,000 per year to over \$1 million.

The Department's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) includes a scoring matrix where projects are scored against each other to identify improvements for discussion. Additional criteria they consider are use levels and popularity. The department references a model of their assets where they can see what assets are beyond their useful life. Because of the high number of facilities and capital needs, the Department follows a strategic plan for all capital improvements and unexpected projects. Capital projects are funded through the city's capital improvements budget. The department allocates funds into certain categories of capital improvements instead of specific projects, and acts in accordance with that plan. This provides flexibility for fund allocation and approval from the city.

The Department has considered the idea of partnering with sponsors; however, they do not have the staff to support soliciting corporate sponsors. Additionally, facility sponsorships are not abundant in Ann Arbor and can be seen as outside of the communities' values with regards to community parks and recreation.

## Funding and Revenue Generating Strategies

### Additional Funding Opportunities: Grant Programs

Multiple public and private grant programs exist that can be used to fund park programs, operations, and capital development. While the Department has been successfully in raising grant funds over the past several years, additional public and private grant opportunities are available.

2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
Grant / Donation Source	Grant / Donation Amount	Grant / Donation Source	Grant / Donation Amount	Grant / Donation Source	Grant / Donation Amount	Grant / Donation Source	Grant / Donation Amount	Grant / Donation Source	Grant / Donation Amount
Forestry (Community)	\$ 1,330	Forestry (Community)	\$ 2,575	Forestry (Community)	\$ 9,800	Forestry (Community)	\$ 8,330	Forestry (Community)	\$ 2,513
EXPAND/Inclusion	\$ 5,776	EXPAND/Inclusion	\$ 61,658	EXPAND/Inclusion	\$ 55,292	EXPAND/Inclusion	\$ 94,129	EXPAND/Inclusion	\$ 63,450
YSI	\$ 36,639	YSI	\$ 54,955	YSI	\$ 186,044	YSI	\$ 311,353	YSI	\$ 147,211
Memorial Bench	\$ 15,000	Civic Area	\$ 97,075	Sports (PLAY Donation)	\$ 2,375	Golf- Clock Donation	\$ 11,000	Boulder Reservoir (PLAY)	\$ 147,036
Knight Foundation	\$ 201,400	Natural Lands Lois Webster Grant	\$ 1,308	Volunteer Services	\$ 1,500	EV Station Reservoir	\$ 18,000	History Colorado	\$ 101,196
Special Events Winter Skate	\$ 2,500	Memorial Bench	\$ 18,000	Donations for North Boulder Park	\$ 34,319	EV Station Scott Carpenter Pool	\$ 18,000	Memorial Benches	\$ 6,000
Columbia Cemetary Donation	\$ 317	Special Events Lights	\$ 9,940	Health Equity Fund- Facility Access	\$ 650,105	Rotary Club Peace Garden	\$ 42,750	Health Equity Fund- Facility Access	\$ 75,000
		State Grant Columbia Cem	\$ 24,300	Community Outreach (PLAY)	\$ 999	Health Equity Fund- Facility Access	\$ 150,000	Special Events	\$ 500
				Memorial Bench	\$ 6,000	Memorial Bench	\$ 9,000	Natural Lands	\$ 500
				NBRC Platform Tennis (PLAY)	\$ 6,800	Special Events	\$ 2,500		
				Special Events	\$ 750	State Grant Columbia Cem	\$ 16,200		
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 262,962</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 269,811</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 953,984</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 681,262</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 543,406</b>

Table 12: Grant and Fundraising Contributions, 2016-2020. Source: Boulder Parks and Recreation.



The following section provides a summary of grant programs that are applicable to BPR and could provide additional funding opportunities for both programming and capital projects.

*Transportation Alternatives Fund:*

Any local or regional governmental agency engaging in transportation or recreational trails are eligible to apply to this program. The program is administered through the Colorado Department of Transportation and provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation, recreational trail program projects. There is a required minimum match of 20% of funds. Applicants must meet the requirements for both general eligibility and demonstrate benefits to the community through enhanced safety, improvements to transportation investment, improvements to state and regional economy, expansion of recreational opportunities, improvements to transportation equity. The project must hold a low risk and be at the regional or local level. The minimum request is \$50,000 and the maximum is \$1,851,289 for CDOT Region 4 (Boulder) in 2021.

*Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program:*

This program, administered by the U.S. Department of the Interior, is open to state and local government agencies who represent a jurisdiction of at least 50,000 and are listed as one of the 497 urbanized areas set by the U.S. Census Bureau. This grant funds acquisition and/or development of public parks and recreational areas in underserved neighborhoods. The award amount ranges from \$250,000 to \$750,000. There must be partners involved and funds are expected to be matched at a 1:1 ratio or more.

*Kubota Hometown Proud Grant Program*

This program is open to any city, town, municipality, or nonprofit for the purpose of renovating public space for a community project. The grant provides \$100,000 and use of Kubota equipment.

*Non-Motorized Trails Grant Application:*

This program, administered by Colorado Park & Wildlife, supports the construction, maintenance, or planning and support for non-motorized trails in Colorado. Applicants must be local, county or state governments, recreation and metro districts, and non-profit organizations. Projects are awarded up to \$250,000 in construction, \$250,000 in maintenance, and \$45,000 in planning and support. All projects are expected to match funding at a minimum ratio of 1:3 with 30% of matched funding in cash.

*Colorado Great Outdoors Program:*

The Colorado Great Outdoors Program offers grants for outdoor recreation and land conservation in Colorado. Some of these grants include:

- Community impact grants – Funding the development and revitalize parks, trails and other outdoor projects connecting the community to the outdoors.
- Stewardship Impact Grants – Funding land and recreation projects that improve ecological and recreational spaces.
- Local Park and Outdoor Recreation Grants – Funding up to \$60,000 for park development, land acquisition and park maintenance.
- Land Conservation Grants – Funding for improvements to landscapes, waterways, habitat on publicly accessible land.
- RESTORE Colorado Grant – Awarded to programs that restore natural habitat including river corridors, wetlands, grasslands, sagebrush, big game migration routes, and forests.
- Conservation Service Corps - \$1,000,000 is annually awarded to hire conservation service corps for trail maintenance and natural land improvements. Cities, counties, and parks and recreation districts are eligible to apply.

*Land and Water Conservation Fund State Grants:*

This program provides matching grants for state, county, and local governments who develop public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. This includes land acquisition, facility development, facility reclamation, and analytical studies on opportunities. The maximum request is \$750,000 and requires a matching ratio of 1:1.

#### *National Endowment for the Arts:*

The National Endowment for the Arts offers grant opportunities for projects that provide artistic and cultural opportunities to the community. These grants include:

- Grants for Arts Projects – Funding is provided for projects including events and activities. Funds range from \$10,000 to \$100,000 and require cost share/matching.
- Our Town – Funding is provided for integrating arts, culture, and design into projects to strengthen communities. Funds range from \$25,000 to \$150,000 and require cost share/matching.
- Challenge America – Funding is provided for projects that provide arts opportunities to underserved populations. Funds are set at \$10,000 and require cost share/matching.

#### *Gates Family Foundation Parks and Recreation Grants*

This program funds projects that build parks, trails, and open space for public recreation. Funds are also allocated to environmental education programs and conservation of water resources and habitat. Previous awards have ranged from \$10,000 to \$150,000. The Gates Family Foundation also offers strategic grants and impact investments.

#### *Colorado Watershed Restoration Grants:*

Funds are allocated to projects restoring watersheds and streams along with flood mitigation and stream management.

#### *Department of Interior – Bureau of Land Management, Colorado State Office, Fisheries and Aquatic Resource Management:*

Funding ranges from \$5,000 to \$50,000 for this program aimed at land and aquatic resource conservation and protection of biodiversity.

#### Revenue Generating Development Opportunities

As parks and recreation Departments throughout the country continue balance increasing costs with decreasing funding, many have pursued new development opportunities to create additional streams of revenue for their Department. The following section summarizes emerging revenue generating opportunities within parks and recreation.

#### *Ropes Courses / Adventure Parks*

Ropes courses & adventure parks have grown in popularity throughout the past decade due to their high profit margin and ability to attract visitors.<sup>39</sup> Ropes courses can attract a variety of user groups depending on the height of the course. “Low” ropes courses are generally 1 to 10 feet in height and meant for younger, less experienced, participants. “High” ropes courses are generally 15 to 60 feet in height and are designed to provide more mentally and physically challenging environments for older, more experienced participants.<sup>40</sup> High ropes courses are divided into two categories: belayed and non-belayed. Belayed high ropes courses allows visitors to move around the course while wearing a harness that attaches to a belay system while non-belayed rope courses do not require the use of a harness.

Depending on design and level of difficulty, ropes courses can appeal to a wide variety of user groups including individual adults, families, and corporate users leveraging the course for teambuilding activities. This wide range of user groups can enable continuous facility usage both during the week and on the weekend, with high/low ropes course providers reporting an average of 216.5 operating days in 2019. Ropes course programming can also be supplemented by a variety of additional programming options including, but not limited to, ground-based team building activities, zip lines, climbing walls, nature walks, retail, concessions, and picnic/pavilion space.<sup>41</sup> Space requirements for ropes course will vary depending on the design and additional amenities chosen for the course.

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<sup>39</sup> [State of the Industry Preliminary Report - Adventure Park Insider](#)

<sup>40</sup> [Tips for Starting a Ropes Course Business, Softplay LLC](#)

<sup>41</sup> [State of the Industry Preliminary Report - Adventure Park Insider](#)

### *Performance Amphitheater / Event Lawn*

An amphitheater and event lawn can be an excellent way to further activate park space while also generating additional revenue and entertainment opportunities for the community. While the Boulder Bandshell and Sunrise Amphitheatre (operated by Open Space and Mountain Parks) provide opportunities to host smaller outdoor events, Boulder currently lacks a larger pavilion / event lawn that could be used to attract regional concerts and performances. Additionally, the Boulder Bandshell is limited in what activities are permitted due to it being a historic resource.

Amphitheaters can vary regarding design and complexity, ranging from minimalist shells or pavilions to technology infused sound and lighting stages. Seating is normally limited to a surrounding event lawn which can range in size between one and forty acres, though some amphitheaters have an enclosed pavilion with fixed seating. Outdoor amphitheaters can be located on either flat or sloped land, with the opportunity to leverage changes in grade to create tiered seating and improved sightlines for guests located further away from the pavilion.

Pavilions have become a popular programming element of parks spaces. Red Butte Gardens in Salt Lake City, Utah holds more than 30 events per year, ranging from symphony performances and community theater to national touring performers and musicians.<sup>42</sup>

### *eSports Facility/Space*

eSports is a type of competitive sporting event using video games. Over the past decade, eSports has become a \$1.1 billion dollar industry, with teams and individuals competing globally in web-based and in-person competitions. As the popularity of eSports has grown, so have the spaces used to facilitate competition. Recently, dedicated eSports facilities have begun to be developed throughout the U.S., with municipalities and colleges and universities developing their own dedicated competition spaces. Currently, Northern Colorado and the Denver Metro area is lacking a defined eSports competition space. With a captive market in the CU Boulder eSports Team and other area amateur teams, BPR may have an opportunity to dedicate and rent out space within one of its facilities for eSports competitions.

### Fundraising Resources

Parks and recreation Departments throughout the country often rely on community fundraising and support to supplement funding and drive community backed initiatives. While the PLAY Boulder Foundation has become increasingly sophisticated as it relates to community fundraising, additional opportunities exist to further raise financial support from within the community. The following resources provide best practices and strategies around fundraising for parks and recreation Departments.

- *The National Recreation and Park Association: Park and Recreation Professionals' Guide to Fundraising*<sup>43</sup>
- *Parks Pride: A Manual for Community Based Fundraising*<sup>44</sup>

### **Findings & Recommendations**

BPR has made significant strides since the 2014 Master plan in improving the Department's approach to cost recovery, capital planning, program prioritization, and asset management. While the Department's planning methodologies have become more sophisticated, they have also become more cumbersome and time consuming to understand, update, and use. In addition, while BPR has consistently met the public expectations around programs and facilities, increased financial pressure from aging assets, deferred capital projects, increasing personnel and operating costs, and unfunded capital projects will require the Department to increase cost recovery and revenue generation wherever possible. BPR must continue to pursue cost recovery within its programs and creative means of revenue generation to reduce reliance on tax funded support.

The following are findings and recommendations related to Department's financial position and operating strategies:

- Reduce reliance on the city's General Fund and other tax supported funding streams. Three of BPR's five funding sources are supported primarily through tax revenues. Because tax revenue sources are susceptible to shifts in

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<sup>42</sup> [Concerts, Red Butte Garden](#)

<sup>43</sup> [National Recreation and Park Association: Professional's Guide to Fundraising](#)

<sup>44</sup> [Park Pride: A Manual for Community Based Fundraising](#)

the economy, as exhibited by the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, BPR should continuously evaluate alternative revenue sources and opportunities to recuperate costs through user fees and other avenues.

- While BPR has developed a clear methodology to plan, prioritize, and evaluate programming, the current Service Delivery Framework is cumbersome to use and difficult to understand. A simplified version of the framework should be developed to enable program managers to plan, evaluate, and modify their programs on an annual basis.
- BPR should track facility cost recovery to determine to what degree membership rates cover overhead operating costs.
- Simplify the RPI scoring system and number of tiers of cost recovery. Currently, the number of tiers tied to cost recovery is both confusing and difficult to keep track of if a program manager is managing multiple programs. Additionally, while the RPI suggests a cost recovery rate, that does not necessarily correlate to the amount of subsidy available and BPR should ensure available subsidy dollars matches target cost recovery rates.
- Annually update the Department's CRV numbers to ensure the appropriate funds are being spent on capital repair and replacement activities.
- Track O&M related expenses as additional budget category to the Department's existing categories (i.e., personnel, operating, interdepartmental charges, and capital) to ensure that sufficient funds are being spend on O&M annually as determined by the Department's CRV.
- Continue to develop a strong relationship with the PLAY Boulder Foundation. The PLAY Boulder Foundation has made significant strides in fundraising over the past several years. BPR should continue to grow its relationship with PLAY to ensure alignment between the two organizations to best facilitate community fundraising.
- Evaluate innovative revenue generating programming and facility development on an annual basis. Cost/benefit analysis and financial assessments should be used to evaluate new programming and development.
- Investigate alternatives to the PASS recreational that enables a simplified costing process.
- Pursue both private and public grant funding on an annual basis to supplement Departmental revenues and identify funding opportunities for currently unfunded projects.