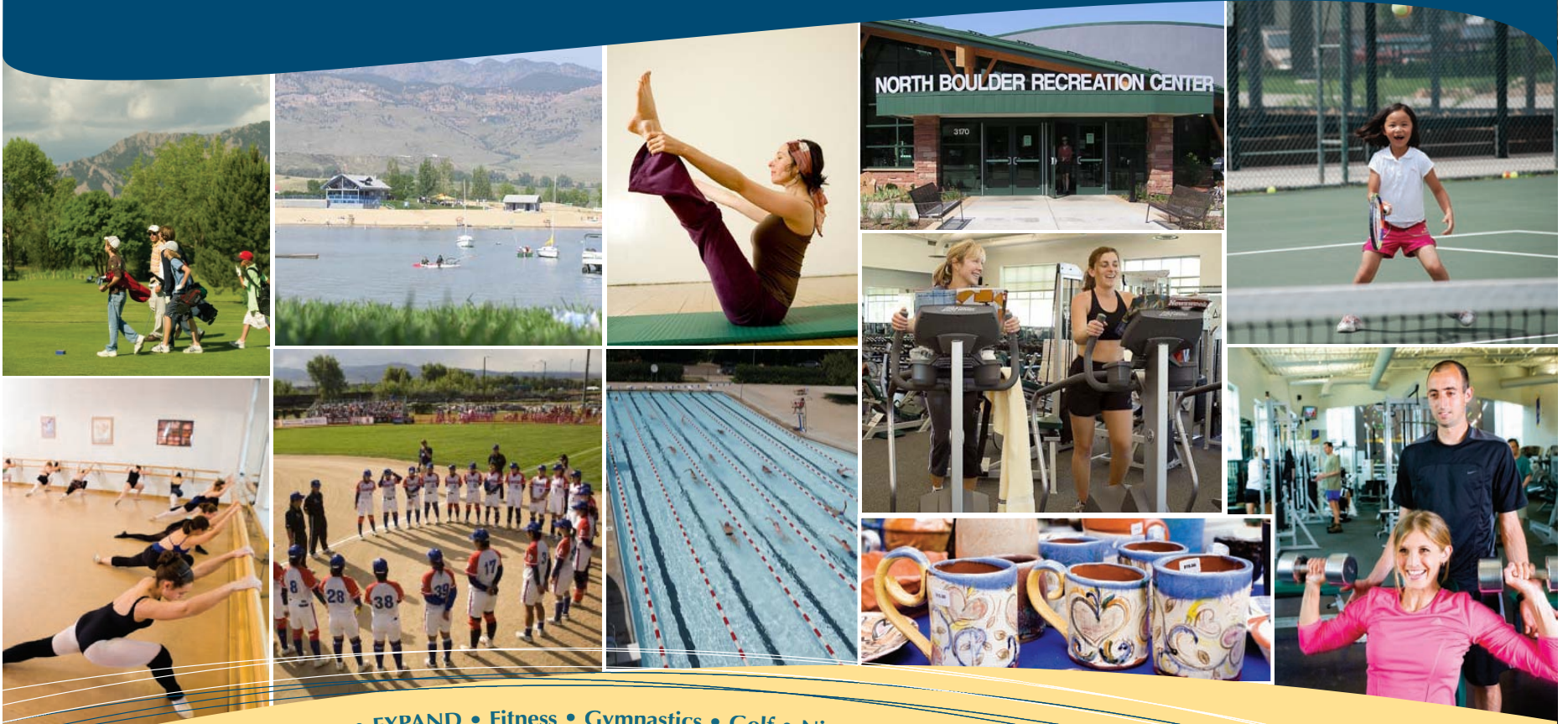




Recreation Programs & Facilities Plan



Art • Camps • Dance • EXPAND • Fitness • Gymnastics • Golf • Nia • Pilates • Sports • Swimming • Tennis • Yoga

www.BoulderParks-Rec.org

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Special thanks to the Boulder community who generously gave their time and ideas during the planning process.

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Executive Summary

Context for the Plan

The City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Department, with involvement from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) and the community, has developed this Recreation Program and Facilities Plan (RPFPP) to guide future decisions related to program offerings, facility management, facility renovation and development, and the allocation of available financial resources. The completion of the RPFPP is considered an industry “best practices” achievement.

The RPFPP provides current operational baseline and demographic data, identifies guiding principles, presents critical issues and trends in the community, establishes strategies for improving financing, outlines new and revised policies, and makes specific recommendations for implementing the plan.

Demographics and Community Values

To prepare this plan, the department reviewed the community’s profile (demographic and recre-

ation trends), funding and community values related to recreation services. Key demographic trends and their implications are discussed in Chapter One on pages 1-4. The Boulder community is very active and places an exceptionally high value on fitness, wellness, recreational activities, and the outdoors. These values were expressed in the responses to the 2009 Recreation Plan Survey (see Appendix A).

Guiding Principles

The Department developed the following guiding principles for the plan that will be used as a basis for decision making for recreation programs, services, and facilities in the future. The principles, listed in alphabetical order, are a synthesis of responses from the 2009 Recreation Plan Survey, various open houses, and website feedback; the Department’s mission and community values identified in the Master Plan; and recommendations from the City Manager’s Work Group on Recreation Financing.



Guiding Principles

- Champion diversity
- Contribute to personal health and wellness
- Ensure that youth are a priority
- Maintain and protect our facilities and programs
- Prioritize available subsidy to introductory level classes and programs
- Pursue a sustainable financial model for recreation programs and facilities



Recreation Programs

The entire set of Department offerings (the “Portfolio”) will be viewed holistically, with central management oversight that ensures a balanced set of programs and services is being offered to meet the needs and interests of the community and the Department’s mission and financial sustainability goals. Traditionally, the community need and support has been for fitness, aquatics, sports and gymnastics programs. New program proposals and current program evaluations will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. The portfolio will include Department programs that are Department run or contracted, or programs offered by partners and rentals.

Recreation Facilities

To achieve economic sustainability goals, the Department will focus on maximizing use of its facilities. An initial analysis of facility hours indicates that the recreation centers and other facili-

ties are not used fully at certain times. At peak times in the recreation centers, the lap pools, fitness and weight rooms are at or near capacity, and other rooms are used for classes. There are some facility spaces, such as gymnasiums and multipurpose rooms, where the demand exceeds availability at peak times. However, the facilities are underused during some off-peak times. A facility-use analysis showed the Department needs to create priorities for space, programs, and funding. The analysis showed the Department offers many of the same kinds of programs and classes, and that class minimums often are not met. The Department will have to structure the use of facilities so as to balance the need for revenue from programs and rentals to program partners with the community desire for drop-in (nonprogrammed) use.

Financial Sustainability

The RFPF lays the groundwork for achieving a balanced approach to providing programs and facilities. It includes strategies that will help the Department make decisions and develop a diverse portfolio of recreation programs and service offerings. Employing the funding strategies listed below (see Chapter Five, pages 39-50) will help the Department fill gaps and make changes in programs, services, and facilities that add to achieving a sustainable Department.

- Continue work to define service costs and set



fees that cover expenses.

- Determine which recreation services should be provided by the City and which should be provided by others.
- Determine how best to provide services with available resources, including partnerships and/or contracting services.
- Allocate resources (funding and staffing) appropriately within program areas.

The Department is anticipating that tax-supported funding for the Recreation Activity Fund (RAF) will be reduced and potentially eliminated. Through strategic program delivery, sustainable fund management, and leveraging resources, the Department can meet these reductions effectively. Strategies for achieving self-sustainability are as follows:

- Use a standard pricing method to calculate and analyze the total cost of service consistently for all recreation programs, services, and facilities.
- Apply an appropriate amount of indirect costs to user fees.
- Reinvest in recreation infrastructure, following industry standards, by establishing a facility investment fee in the pricing structure.
- Assign percentage of City cost allocations and capital expenses that would need to be included in the total cost of recreation, beyond operating costs.
- Pursue program and facility partnerships for the purpose of reducing expenses, increasing

revenues, or providing additional recreation services at no cost to the City or Department.

A cost-recovery policy was developed to ensure that subsidies, if any, are directed primarily to social core programs. This policy provides a systematic framework for determining appropriate fee structures and evaluating programs that do not meet designated minimum cost-recovery goals (see page 45).

Based on the RFPF guiding principles, three program types have been identified and will be offered by the City: social core, business core, and desirable programs. Funding for these programs comes from tax supported funding, user fees, or other programs. Currently, many desirable programs do not meet the new cost recovery goal. During the next 1-2 years, the department will implement actions such as reducing costs, raising fees and /or seeking external funding in order to meet the cost recovery goal. Ultimately, all Department programs will fall into either the social core or business core categories. The additional revenues generated by the majority of the programs will be channeled into subsidies for social core programs and into a capital fund that will fund renovation, replacement and capital construction.

Key Recommendations

Key recommendations from the plan are listed below. A comprehensive list of all the plan recom-





recommendations is in Appendix F.

- The Department will review the RPPF annually and update fully every five years. The Program Service and Facility Viability Assessment will also be updated annually.
- The Department will collaborate with other agencies and organizations to share resources, including developing a clearinghouse for recreation opportunities.
- The Department will pursue partnerships for programs and facilities for the purpose of reducing expenses, increasing revenues, or providing additional recreational services.
- The Department will update the existing Facility and Amenity Partnership Process to reflect emerging needs.
- The Department will follow the Program Delivery Model (see Chapter 3, page 23) to determine which programs or services should be provided by the Department.
- The Department will develop and implement a systematic and consistent approach to program management and evaluation.
- The Department will create priorities for use of facility space and work to increase facility use and revenues.
- The Department will coordinate with other departments and agencies to maximize the benefits to the City economy from special events.
- The Department will establish goals for managing the Recreation Activity Fund (RAF).
- The Department will develop and implement

changes to pricing and fee structures based on the need for the Recreation Division to become self-sustaining.

- The Department will develop and implement a marketing plan.
- The Department will complete or create business plans for specific facilities and program areas.

Implementation/Next Steps

As a result of developing the RPPF, the Department has already put some strategies into place for ensuring that available resources are allocated to meet identified community needs and priorities. The Department will prioritize high leverage recommendations and begin implementing them upon completion of this plan. It will be critically important for the Department to move forward with action steps in the next 1-2 years to create a sustainable model for recreation services.





Chapter One - Context for the Plan

The City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Department, with involvement from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) and the community, has developed this Recreation Program and Facilities Plan (RPFPP) to guide future decisions related to program offerings, facility management, facility renovation and development, and the allocation of available financial resources. The completion of the RPFPP is considered an industry “best practices” achievement, and is also a recommendation of the 2006 Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the 2008 City Manager’s Work Group on Recreation Financing. (See sidebar page 2).

As a result of developing the RPFPP, the Department has put strategies into place for ensuring available resources are allocated to meet identified community needs and priorities. The RPFPP also lays the groundwork for achieving a balanced and sustainable approach to providing programs and facilities.

The RPFPP provides current operational baseline and demographic data, identifies guiding principles, presents critical issues and trends in

the community, establishes strategies for improving financing, outlines new and revised policies, and makes specific recommendations for implementing the plan.

Population, Demographics and Social Issues

Population increases and demographic trends in the City and Boulder County will affect future planning for recreation programs, services, and facilities. Some population and demographic trends are not available for both the City of Boulder and Boulder County, but information that is available is included in this plan. These estimates are based on data from the City of Boulder and growth projections from the Denver Regional Council of Governments. Sources include the Community Foundation’s *Boulder County Trends 2009*; *The Status of Children in Boulder County 2008*; *City of Boulder: A Demographic Profile* (Department of Housing and Human Services, 2004); *City of Boulder Census 2000* (prepared by the City of Boulder Planning Department), Boulder County; the Denver Regional Council of Governments; the

Department Mission

The mission of the City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Department is to provide safe, clean, and beautiful parks and facilities and high-quality leisure activities for the community. These services shall enhance residents’ health and well-being and promote economic vitality for long-term community sustainability. We will accomplish this through creative leadership, environmentally sustainable practices, and the responsible use of available resources.



City Manager's Work Group on Recreation Financing

Following the adoption of the 2006 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the City Manager appointed a group of community members to make recommendations regarding pricing policy and methodology to provide a framework for the long-term sustainability of the City's recreation programs. The work group's report, published in April 2008, found that the majority of the Department's current practices are sound, but called for increased transparency to identify and communicate the true costs of providing recreation programs. The group provided suggestions for improving transparency and the sustainability of programs. The work group's report can be found online at

www.bouldercolorado.gov/index.php.

U.S. Census Bureau; and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

City of Boulder

Projected increases in population, from 103,650 in 2009 to 130,000 by 2030, will increase demands on facility and program use by up to 30 percent. This growth is predicted within current City Limits (Area I) and in future Area II (Gunbarrel) sections.

Within the City, the median age, minus the university student population, is expected to peak at age 51 by the year 2030. An increase in active lifestyle choices and an increase in the longevity of adults coupled with better overall economic prosperity (than prior generations) will require an increase in active adult programs over the next 20 years.

Households with children declined from 46 percent of all Boulder households in 1990 to 42 percent in 2000. Nearly one-quarter of families with children under age 18 are single-parent families. Most single parents (83 percent) are in the labor force. For children with two parents at home, 60 percent have both parents in the labor force.

Increases in residents with English as a second language are projected to continue as nearly 16 percent of Boulder residents speak languages other than English at home. Countywide, the non-English speaking population increased from approximately 10.5 percent in 2000 to approximately 13.4 percent in 2008.

Boulder County

The increased demand from Boulder County's population growth from 2009 to 2030 will likely have an impact on the City's recreational resources. This is due to the amount of nonresident use that makes up approximately 30 percent of the facility and program attendance of the Department.

In 2008, 12 percent of Boulder County residents were over age 60. By 2020, an estimated 21 percent of the County's population will be over 60. While older adults are significantly wealthier than earlier generations of similar age, the trend for the general population is a widening economic gap. Boulder County ranks 12th nationally in per capita personal income, and in 2008, nearly one third (32 percent) of all Boulder County households had incomes of more than \$100,000. On the other end of the spectrum in 2008, 37 percent of households lived on less than \$50,000 per year, while the median income was \$66,463 in the County. Contributing to this widening economic gap are high living costs, such as the median home price in the City of Boulder (\$538,000 in 2008), increased energy costs, an economic downturn, and limited wage increases.

In 2007, 21 percent of individuals, 12 percent of children, 6 percent of seniors (age 65-plus), and 5 percent of families lived below the federal poverty level in Boulder County. At the time of this report, the county unemployment rate was 5.5 percent (September 2009) but could continue to rise with the current recession. In 2000,



approximately 14 percent of the City of Boulder's population had incomes below poverty level, but within the Latino community, 27 percent of families had incomes below poverty level.

In 2008, 62,569 children under age 18 made up 21 percent of Boulder County's population. Between 2000 and 2007, the number of Boulder County children under age 18 in poverty increased from 8.2 percent to 12.6 percent, an increase of 53.7 percent. In 2007, over 40 percent of Latino children in Boulder County lived in poverty. The 2007 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, conducted by Boulder County Health Department and the Boulder Valley and St. Vrain school districts found that 43 percent of local high school students drank alcohol, and 28 percent were binge drinkers. Thirty percent used tobacco, 24 percent had tried marijuana, and 16 percent had considered suicide in the previous year.

Demographic Trends Will Affect Recreation Planning

Coupled with demographic changes, the expanding availability of various forms of communication technology and the social media phenomenon will require the Department to stay on the cutting edge of public information dissemination. Ensuring proper community outreach, notification of information, tracking program trends, surveying community interests and creating public awareness of programs will be essential to the Department's future success.

Current demographic trends point to the need for flexibility in dealing with future changes in recreation programs, facilities, and services. The Department will need to plan for changes that will accommodate increasing populations of children from single-parent families, families where both parents work, and an increase in active, healthier older residents. These changes and an increase in the non-English speaking resident population will require the Department to readily and easily adapt and create new programs that address these potential demands. Additionally, the Department will be faced with creating financial support mechanisms, such as a Recreation scholarship program (see Sidebar, page 21), that will help provide services to lower income individuals and families and help close the widening opportunity gap related to fee based services.

Given the increase in public desire to reduce governmental spending and the demand to continually enhance programs, the Department will focus on expanding current collaborative efforts and increasing operational efficiencies. As tax supported funding is reduced and demands for service increase, partnerships and additional opportunities to provide services will be pursued through cooperative efforts with organizations, and individuals. This increase in partnerships will help the Department facilitate and provide programs in a financially sustainable manner to meet current and future recreational needs.

The use of social media mechanisms and the increased ability of the Department to capitalize

Public Input

To assess community opinions about recreation programs and facilities, the Department conducted the 2009 Recreation Plan Survey (see page 8 and Appendix A), held two public meetings, and sought feedback through recreation focus groups and input forms posted on the City's website and available at City recreation facilities. The Department also held study sessions with PRAB and City Council. The Department's recreation focus group meetings included the Boulder Valley School District, the University of Colorado, the Boulder Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Youth Opportunity Advisory Board, the Immigration Advisory Committee, Boulder Housing Partners, neighboring municipalities and private athletic clubs and sports organizations.





on new trends, by using developments in technology and improving marketing efforts to the public, will help ensure future success for programs and activities. In addition, understanding future shifts in trends and also increasing the adaptability of the Department to meet those changing program and facility requirements will help to ensure future sustainability.

Future Physical Resources Status and Changes

The City has a large parcel of land (191 acres) designated within the Boulder Valley Compre-

hensive Plan (BVCP) Area III-Planning Reserve that is identified for park and recreation facility development based on future needs. Prior to development, the parcel will require annexation into the City and must undergo an initial planning process. The initial stage of planning for this area is required to happen concurrently with a major BVCP update, which occurs every five years. If the Department is to begin the process of increasing future recreational and park availability in the City of Boulder system, then the City must include this parcel in the future BVCP updates.



The 2006 Parks and Recreation Master Plan

The Master Plan is a 10-year strategic guide for the Department through 2016. The Master Plan's major components include:

- The Department's mission, vision, goals and strategies.
- An analysis of the parks and recreation system's conditions and needs.
- A list of major challenges in funding and parks and recreation facilities management issues.
- Investment priorities for the Department.
- Recommendations for programs and facilities at three funding levels—fiscally constrained, action, and vision.
- Strategies for increasing the Department's financial sustainability.

The Master Plan vision calls for providing greater program and facility access to under-served populations and providing recreation facilities and programs that promote fitness, healthy lifestyles, and economic vitality for the City. The plan was adopted by City Council in 2006 and will be updated in 2010-2011. The plan and annual reports can be found online at www.bouldercolorado.gov, Parks and Recreation A to Z, Master Plan.

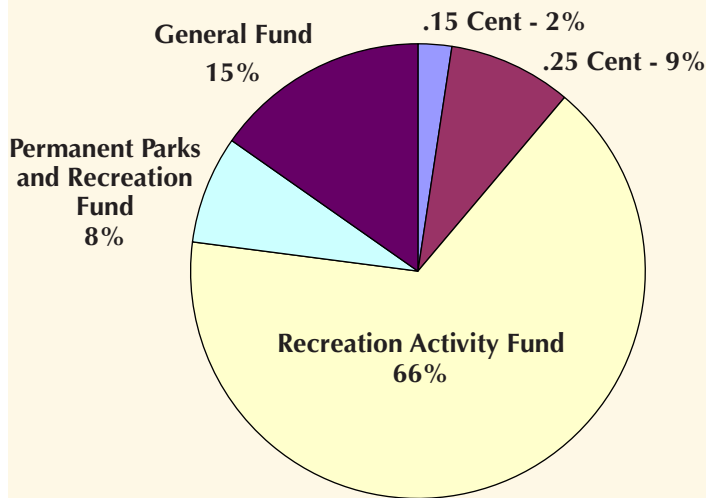


Recreation Division Funding

Funding for recreation is comprised of funding from the following five sources: the Recreation Activity Fund (RAF), the City's General Fund, the .15 Cent Sales Tax Fund, the .25 Cent

Sales Tax Fund, and the Permanent Parks and Recreation Fund. The Lottery Fund, a sixth source of funding for the Department, does not provide funds for recreation. Funding sources and uses for 2008 are as follows:

2008 Recreation Division Funding Sources
Total Funding: \$11.9 million



Recreation Activity Fund (RAF): \$7.9 million from user fees, grants, and donations.

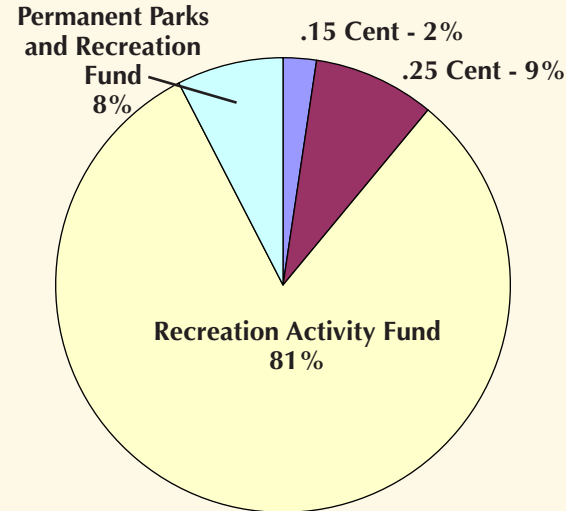
General Fund: \$1.8 million transfer to the RAF from sales tax.

.15 Cent Sales Tax Fund: \$287,000 from a dedicated sales tax that expires December 31, 2012.

.25 Cent Sales Tax Fund (capital funding): \$1 million from a dedicated Parks and Recreation Sales Tax that expires December 31, 2015.

Permanent Parks and Recreation Fund (capital funding): \$920,000 from a dedicated .9 mill property tax and development excise tax.

2008 Recreation Division Funding Uses
Total Budget: \$12 million



Recreation Activity Fund (RAF): \$9.8 million was budgeted for program and facility operations and recreation administration.

.15 Cent Sales Tax Fund: \$287,000 was budgeted for operations and maintenance of Pleasant View and Gerald Stazio athletic complexes.

.25 Cent Sales Tax Fund: \$1 million was budgeted for recreation-specific facility and infrastructure needs, including major maintenance and cleaning during recreation center shutdowns.

Permanent Parks and Recreation Fund: \$920,000 was budgeted for capital improvements.

Blue Ribbon Commissions I and II

The Blue Ribbon Commission (BRC) I was appointed by the City Manager to study the revenue policy issues confronting the city. The emphasis of BRC I was to establish a long-term, balanced and stable revenue stream for the City of Boulder that accomplishes public priorities while allowing flexibility to meet the varied and dynamic needs of the municipal corporation in the next twenty years.

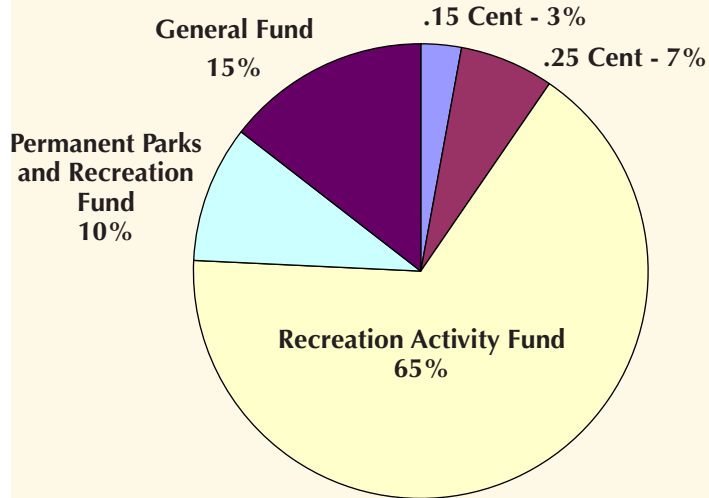
The emphasis of BRC II was to refine the revenue stabilization recommendations of BRC and to continue the implementation of the principles and policies proposed by BRC I. The group completed a review of city expenditures to ensure that public funds are being used effectively and efficiently.

Recommendations of the BRC II can be found at http://www.bouldercolorado.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=5925&Itemid=2421

Funding sources and uses for 2009 are as follows:

2009 Recreation Division Funding Sources

Total Funding: \$12.2 million



Recreation Activity Fund (RAF): \$8.1 million from user fees, grants, and donations.

General Fund: \$1.8 million transfer to the RAF from sales tax.

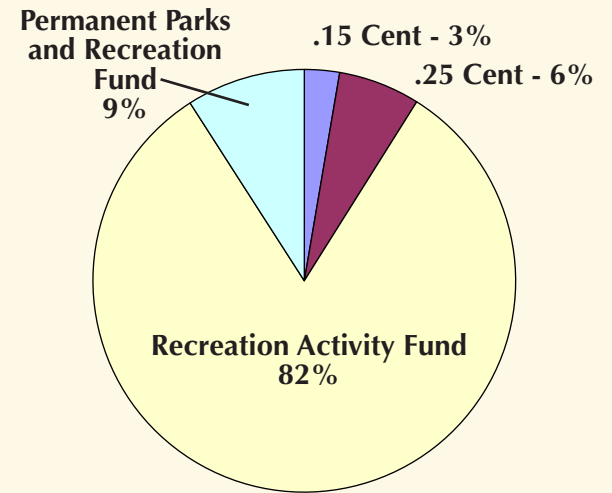
.15 Cent Sales Tax Fund: \$352,000 from a dedicated sales tax that has an indefinite expiration.

.25 Cent Sales Tax Fund (capital funding): \$818,500 from a dedicated Parks and Recreation Sales Tax that expires December 31, 2015.

Permanent Parks and Recreation Fund (capital funding): \$1.2 million from a dedicated .9 mill property tax and development excise tax.

2009 Recreation Division Funding Uses

Total Budget: \$13.1 million



Recreation Activity Fund (RAF): \$10.7 million was budgeted for program and facility operations and recreation administration.

.15 Cent Sales Tax Fund: \$352,000 was budgeted for operations and maintenance of Pleasant View and Gerald Stazio athletic complexes.

.25 Cent Sales Tax Fund: \$818,500 was budgeted for recreation-specific facility and infrastructure needs, including major maintenance and cleaning during recreation center shutdowns.

Permanent Parks and Recreation Fund: \$1.2 million was budgeted for capital improvements.



Funding Challenges

The RFPF includes strategies that will help the Department make decisions and develop a diverse and sustainable portfolio of recreation programs and service offerings. Employing the funding strategy outlined in the plan will help the Department fill gaps and make changes in programs, services, and facilities that add to achieving a sustainable Department.

Because the 2009 economic climate has caused a reduction in the City's sales and use tax revenues, the Department has seen a decline in tax-supported funding that supports and subsidizes recreation services. Since 2004, the long-term sustainability of the Recreation Activity Fund has been a concern. This is due primarily to the Department's increasing operating expenses and the restricted ability the Department currently has to raise fees. There is a need for the Department to remain competitive in its fee structure to cover increasing expenses. This can be accomplished using a mix of fee adjustments and efficiency changes to operations.

In response to the Blue Ribbon Commission II recommendations, the Department is working to define consistent service costs and set fees that to cover costs. As the Department moves forward, there will be a need to determine recreation services that should be provided by the City and those that should be provided by others in the community. To be successful, the Department will have to provide services with available resources and

allocate those resources to high-priority recreation services.

Political Atmosphere

Community leaders support the Department's efforts to improve and enhance operations and services to the public, and the Boulder community demonstrates broad support for recreation. This support includes City provided recreation services as well as those services provided by special-interest, non-profit and for profit recreation organizations. Boulder is an active, engaged community that is comprised of individuals and groups who are willing to partner with the Department in order to provide and enhance recreation offerings.

Community Values Related to Recreation Services

The Boulder community is very active and places an exceptionally high value on fitness, wellness, recreational activities, and the outdoors. The community, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB), and City Council agreed that recreation in a strong healthy community does the following:

- enriches family and social relationships
- provides resources for people of all ages to reach their full potential
- champions diversity and inclusion
- recognizes the importance of play in a balanced life

Recreation Division

The Recreation Division is the largest division of the department, with more than 75 standard and 750 seasonal staff members. Daily operations include the management of the East, North, and South Boulder recreation centers, Scott Carpenter and Spruce pools, East Mapleton and Stazio ballfield complexes, Pleasant View Fields, the Pottery Lab, Flatirons Golf Course, and the Boulder Reservoir. Recreation programs offered annually including visual and performing arts, team and individual sports leagues, tournaments and clinics, fitness classes, swim lessons and water activities, and other special programs and events.



The 2009 Recreation Plan Survey Key Priorities

Survey respondents identified the following priorities:

- Maintain and improve the physical health and mental well-being of the general population (78 percent).
- Provide positive activities for children and teens, ages 19 and younger (70 percent).
- Provide recreation opportunities for senior adults, ages 60 and older (58 percent).
- Provide recreation opportunities for adults, ages 20 to 59 (57 percent).
- Provide recreation opportunities to people who might not otherwise be able to participate in recreational activities, such as people with disabilities or low incomes (55 percent).
- Provide opportunities to make social connections, to strengthen the “social fabric” of the community (34 percent).
- Enhance the economic vitality of the community by offering special events that draw visitors from inside and outside the community (24 percent).

- contributes to a sustainable economy
- contributes to personal fulfillment, health, and wellness.

The community also expressed values about recreation through the Department’s 2009 Recreation Plan Survey and the 2005 City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Survey, which was conducted for the 2006 Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

The 2009 Recreation Plan Survey

In March 2009, as part of the public participation process for the RPPF, the National Resource Center conducted a community survey for the Department of a randomly-selected sample of 3,000 households in the Boulder Valley. The 2009 Recreation Plan Survey assessed opinions about the City’s recreation programs and facilities and how recreation resources should be allocated in the future. It sought responses on key priorities (see Sidebar this page), use of facilities, participation in programs and activities, fees, funding, communications, and demographic information. The complete survey results can be found in Appendix A.

Boulder residents who participated in the survey said they view the Department’s recreation programs and facilities as a resource for the entire community. Special emphasis was placed on recreation offerings for youth, and respondents indicated the Department should also serve those

residents who might not otherwise be able to participate in recreation activities. Residents also placed a high priority on active physical recreation and introductory-level programming. These findings were again validated through focus groups and follow-up contact through the Department’s website survey.

Guiding Principles

With community input, the Department developed guiding principles for the plan that will be used as a basis for decision making for recreation programs, services, and facilities in the future. The principles are a synthesis of responses from the 2009 Recreation Plan Survey, various open houses, and website feedback; the Department’s mission and community values identified in the Master Plan; and recommendations from the City Manager’s Work Group on Recreation Financing. The PRAB and City Council have endorsed these guiding principles for the Department (*in alphabetical order*):

Champion diversity

Contribute to personal health and wellness

Ensure that youth are a priority

Maintain and protect our facilities and programs

Prioritize available subsidy to introductory level classes and programs

Pursue a sustainable financial model for recreation programs and facilities



Recommendations Chapter 1

- 1 Continue to implement Master Plan recommendations related to recreation programs and facilities that align with the Recreation Program and Facilities Plan.
- 2 Review the Recreation Program and Facilities Plan annually and fully update every five years.
- 3 Explore planning process for Area III land, including identifying challenges and opportunities.



Chapter Two - Recreation in the Community



Additional Public and Private Recreation Programs

Some additional public and private recreation programs in the Boulder area include those offered by the following:

- **Local Municipal Governments:** Louisville, Longmont, Erie, Superior, Broomfield, Westminster
- **Local Organizations:** YMCA of Boulder County, Boulder Valley School District Lifelong Learning, University of Colorado (CU) Division of Continuing Education Personal Enrichment Program, Imagine, Association for Community Living
- **Private Sector:** fitness clubs (24-Hour Fitness, Flatirons Athletic Club, Rallysport, Lakeshore Athletic Club, Colorado Athletic Club), specialized facilities (yoga, Pilates, dance, gymnastics, climbing), and sports organizations (Boulder Valley Lacrosse, Boulder Youth Football, Flatirons Volleyball Club, Gold Crown Basketball).

Chapter 2 provides an overview of recreation in Boulder—what is happening, the trends, service providers, customer profile, gaps and overlaps in service, and how the City provides services.

Recreation In Boulder

Recreation is a key part of the “Boulder lifestyle” as the community places a high value on access to recreational activities that encourage fitness and wellness. According to the Master Plan, it’s important to the department to provide high-quality programs and services that are accessible to the community. Because the Department is seen as offering a variety of high quality recreation offerings (see Chapters 3 and 4), other local regional municipalities often set their recreation standards based on Boulder’s programs, facilities, and management practices. As a result of the quality and variety of programs, services, and facilities, participants are drawn from neighboring communities. In fact, approximately 30 percent of recreation patrons live outside of the City.

Historically, the Department has added recreation programs and services in response to an

ever-expanding community wish list and, as a result, the Department has tried “to be everything to everyone.” Budget constraints and the need for financial standards related to Best Practice models now dictate that the Department carefully evaluate all of the recreation programs, services, and facilities it manages in a new financial light. The Department must now move to the development of a strategic financially sustainable plan of action. Such a plan will reshape and guide the future allocation of resources.

The City is not the only provider of recreation programs and services to the community. Boulder residents have opportunities to access a variety of sports, fitness and recreation programs and services similar to those offered by the City. These programs are offered through a variety of private, public and non-profit organizations. The Department researched recreation programs offered by the Boulder Valley School District, the YMCA, local sports organizations, hospitals, private entities and municipalities to gain perspective on where overlaps and opportunities for change occur (see page 12). The Department should explore developing a regularly updated clearing-



house of information on community recreation programs and services that are offered by various organizations and clubs. The clearinghouse would provide a valuable community service and help residents locate recreation programs and services that might not be offered by the City, but that are available in the area.

Local Recreation Trends

As part of the information gathering process for the Recreation Program and Facilities Plan (RPFPP), the Department conducted an analysis of recreation programming trends and issues that reflect the experience of nine Colorado Front Range Parks and Recreation Departments or Districts, six Parks and Recreation Departments in other states, and three local organizations offering recreation programs.

The analysis demonstrated a consistent theme of shrinking department, city and individual household budgets. Recreation programs are now under constant evaluation in every jurisdiction contacted, and budget worksheets or lists of evaluation criteria are being used to help determine future programs. Other findings from the trends research and community focus group meetings show the following:

- Continued popularity of fitness and wellness programs, youth and adult sports programs, youth summer camps, pre-school recreation programs, and senior fitness programs.
- Programs that achieve financial sustainability

include youth sports, adult sports, adult fitness, outdoor recreation, leisure, and equipment rental programs.

- An increase in contracting programs and establishing partnerships for services and space.
- The increasing importance of municipal government and school district partnerships for the provision of services (municipalities typically offer outdoor and sports/fitness programs while the school districts typically offer leisure classes through continuing education programs).

The Department's Customer Base

The demographic profile of the Department's recreation programs and facilities users reflects a cross section of Boulder's population. The Department currently meets some or all of the fitness and recreation needs of approximately 25,000 households in and around the City.

A 2009 analysis that was conducted by Marketing Solutions Group, Inc. determined that the users of the Department are reflected as follows:

- 72% own their home;
- 50% range in age from 35-55;
- 41% are married;
- 22% have children;
- 66% earn between \$50,000 - \$150,000 per year;
- 18% earn less than \$50,000 per year;
- 40% have lived in Boulder 10 or more years.

Recreation Programs Offered by Outside Organizations at City Facilities (alphabetical order)

- Boulder Aquateens Synchronized Swimming
- Boulder Aquatic Masters Swimming
- Boulder Community Rowing
- Boulder Valley Girls Softball
- Boulder County Force Soccer Club
- Boulder NOVA Soccer Club
- Boulder Rugby Club
- Boulder Tennis Association
- Boulder Swimming (year-round club swimming)
- Boulder Horseshoe Club
- Boulder Valley School District Sports
- Boulder Valley Lacrosse
- Grass Roots Ultimate Frisbee
- Harlequins Quad Rugby
- North Boulder Little League Baseball
- South Boulder Little League Baseball
- University of Colorado Club Sports
- YMCA Youth Soccer, Baseball, and Skate Park

Boulder Recreation Clearinghouse

Boulder residents have opportunities to access sports, fitness and recreation programs and services similar to those offered by the City. These programs are offered through a variety of private, public and non-profit organizations. The Department researched recreation programs offered by the Boulder Valley School District, the YMCA, and local sports leagues, hospitals, and municipalities to gain perspective on where overlaps and opportunities occur (see Appendix B). The Department will explore developing a clearinghouse of information about the recreation programs and services offered by various organizations and clubs in the region. The clearinghouse would offer a valuable community service by helping residents locate recreation programs and services that might not be offered by the City but are available in the area.

The Department's mission includes providing fitness and recreation opportunities and access for the whole community. The data in the customer demographic profile indicates that based on income levels alone, the Department serves a wide range of users in the community, while providing the greatest recreation access for the lower to upper middle income individuals and families in the community.

Recreation Providers

The Department provides the majority of its programs and services at City-owned recreation facilities. The Department also works with community organizations and agencies to provide recreation programs that are all valuable to the community. These relationships fall into the following categories and will be managed consistently within each category:

Contractor: a private or non-profit organization that provides a contracted revenue-sharing program for the Department at a City park or facility. In this situation, the Department markets the program through its recreation guide.

Facility Partner: a private or non-profit organization that shares in building and operational costs through fundraising and volunteer efforts for one or more City recreation facilities. Examples include the Boulder Mountainbike Alliance, that raised funds and partnered on grants to help build the Valmont Bike Park and may be providing learn-to-bike programs and some ongoing

maintenance services (see Sidebar page 13).

Program Partner: a private or non-profit organization that rents space on an ongoing basis for specific activities at recreation facilities. These rental arrangements are typically managed through contracts or Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between the program partner and the Department where both parties have a contribution. Examples include Boulder Aquatic Masters (BAM), a local organization of adult swimmers that regularly rents lanes at recreation center pools for the use of its members and provides some community programs.

Renter: an individual, group or organization (for-profit or non-profit) that rents space on a limited or one-time basis for specific activities at recreation facilities.

The Department's Partnership Philosophy

As noted in the 2010 Blue Ribbon Commission II (BRC II) report, the financial condition of the City has become increasingly constrained with the long-term trend showing that revenue growth will not keep pace with the growth in expenditures. The current economic trend indicates that the Parks and Recreation Department will need to reduce expenses again in 2010 and in future years. One of the key recommendations identified in the BRC II report relates to the efficient delivery of City services and emphasizes the need to coordinate services through community non-profits or outside organizations and, where appropriate,



consider a strategy to be a partner rather than a service provider.

Partnership Goals

In light of the current economic climate and in support of the efficient delivery of service recommendation of the BRC II report, the Department is pursuing program and facility partnerships that achieve one or more of the following goals:

- Increase Department revenues;
- Decrease Department expenses; and/or
- Provide additional, desired programs and services to the public that support the Department's mission, vision and values at no cost to the City or Department.

Facility Partnerships

While the Parks and Recreation Department has significant experience partnering with external groups on programmatic offerings for the community, it has more recently entered into partnering with outside organizations on the development of new facilities. In 2007, Department staff worked with community members to develop a Parks and Recreation Facility and Amenity Partnership Process (Partnership Process). Information on the process may be found at:

www.bouldercolorado.gov > Parks & Recreation > About Parks & Recreation > Parks & Recreation Facility and Amenity Partnerships

This process established clearly defined steps that enabled community groups or organizations

to propose future facilities and/or amenities that supplement the existing Parks and Recreation system. The Department has been contacted by several entities interested in pursuing facility or amenity partnerships. Unfortunately, many of the proposed partnerships have not been successful as they have involved significant financial commitments from the Department. As a result, the Department will update the existing Partnership Process in order to:

- Encourage and promote mutually beneficial program and facility partnerships that meet the Department's partnership and sustainability goals;
- Identify high priority partnerships for programs, facilities and/or amenities;
- Develop a RFP-based process for seeking program partnerships; and
- Simplify the application process.

While the Department has not entered into a partnership for the development of a facility not already identified in the Department's Capital Improvement Program (CIP), other partnerships are currently underway. Most notable is the Department's ongoing partnership with the Boulder Mountainbike Alliance (BMA) for the development of the Valmont Bike Park at Valmont City Park. As the result of the partnership with BMA, over \$400,000 of donated funds has been added to the project budget, thereby allowing the inclusion of additional amenities in the park design. Preliminary facility partnership discussions are oc-



Facility Partnership with the Boulder Mountainbike Alliance

The Boulder Mountainbike Alliance (BMA) is partnering with the Department to help fund facilities at the "destination" Bike Park under construction at Valmont City Park. BMA, a collaborative stewardship organization that designs, builds, and maintains trails for land management agencies in Boulder County, partnered with the Department resulting in an award of a \$200,000 grant from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) to help construct the bike park. As of January 2010, BMA had raised over \$380,000 in additional funding and is committed to partnering for an ongoing maintenance program for the Bike Park and developing learn-to-bike and other programs.



curing with a number of other organizations involving tennis and rowing. Staff will continue to work with these and other potential partners to achieve the Department's partnership goals.

Program Partnerships

The Parks and Recreation Department is currently partnering with a number of non-profit and outside agencies such as Skyhawks Sports Academy, Gonzo Tennis and the Boulder Nordic Club to provide programs and services to the Boulder community. These, and other partnerships, are helping the Department provide recreation services to the Boulder community with the City serving as a partner, rather than the provider of these services.

The Parks and Recreation Department strongly supports the program and facility partnership concept as a mechanism to make Department programs and facilities more effective and

more financially sustainable. The Department recognizes that in light of the new economic reality, more program and facility partnerships will need to be pursued in the foreseeable future.

The Department is committed to developing both program and facility partnerships now and in the future. The Parks and Recreation Facility and Amenity Partnership Process will continually be updated to meet changing economic and community needs.

Service Gaps and Overlaps

As part of the RFPF process, the Department conducted an analysis of recreation programs and services available to Boulder residents that are provided by the City, other leading recreation providers in the community, and neighboring municipalities (see Appendix B). The purpose of this inventory was to determine gaps and overlaps in services from organizations that offer similar

Performance Sports

Boulder is a mecca for sports, fitness and endurance athletes. These athletes are the nucleus of the fitness-based social networks that make up Boulder's unique social fabric. The city has become home (or at least temporary training ground) for many elite athletes, including Olympic medalists and World Champions who use Department facilities and programs to train. The city also is a popular venue for national and international sporting events like the Boulder Boulder. The Department has hosted events such as world class cycling competitions, International Irish Football Championships, national rugby, softball, volleyball, and ultimate frisbee tournaments, college recruiting tournaments in soccer and softball and the National Cross Country Championships and AVP Pro Beach Volleyball tournaments. The City's programs and facilities help attract hundreds of top athletes and athletic businesses/organizations. Together, these individuals and businesses build Boulder's positive image and contribute millions of dollars of revenue to the city annually. Recognizing and continuing to serve the needs of the fitness and endurance athletic community is valuable to ensuring Boulder's economic stability and future.



opportunities, and identifies opportunities that might exist to partner with these organizations.

This Boulder-area recreation inventory identified programs and services such as aquatics, dance, golf, gymnastics, pottery, leisure activities, sports, swimming, summer day camps, wellness, and programs for people with disabilities and/or low incomes. The inventory also included recreation facilities, such as gymnasiums, athletic fields, and pools provided by the City, the YMCA, the University of Colorado, the Boulder Valley School District, Boulder Community Hospital, local churches/places of worship, private sports organizations, and private health clubs. Neighboring municipalities included in the inventory were Louisville, Lafayette, Longmont, Erie, and Broomfield.

In addition to the inventory, a focus group of community organizations and clubs that provide recreation services met with the Department to discuss trends and program and/or facility needs in their sectors. The Department's recreation focus group included the Boulder Valley School District, the Town of Superior, the University of Colorado (CU Club Sports), the Boulder Chamber, the Youth Opportunity Advisory Board, the Immigration Advisory Committee, Boulder Housing Partners, and private athletic clubs (Lakeshore Athletic Club) and sports organizations (Boulder County Force Soccer Club, Boulder NOVA Soccer, Boulder Aquatic Masters Swimming Club, 5430 Sports, and Boulder Indoor Soccer/Cycling).

Combining these two sources of information with research on existing programs, the Department has identified the following gaps and overlaps in services and facilities:

Program and Facility Gaps

- Most neighboring municipalities do not provide nor are equipped to provide inclusion and specialized therapeutic recreation services similar to the Department's EXPAND program, and consequently non-residents come to Boulder to participate in the Department's programs.
- In Boulder, there has been an increase in youth interested in soccer and baseball compared to past years and as a result, field space is now at a premium.
- Lacrosse is a growing sport that has both indoor and outdoor space needs.
- In Boulder, demand for winter tennis facilities is not being met due to limited indoor courts in the community.
- Indoor gymnasium space is at a premium, especially in the after-school hours when Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) facilities are not available.
- Pool lap lanes are at a premium, especially in the after-school hours when high school and private swim teams use the lap lanes in the three recreation centers.



Program and Facility Overlaps

There is considerable overlap in services in the following program areas: yoga, Pilates, fitness, personal training programs, and indoor swimming.

- Other municipalities offer similar types of recreation programs, but generally offer fewer choices and levels.
- Many of the programs offered by the Department are offered by private entities, though the offerings are typically more specialized classes at a higher fee.
- Some programs offered by the Department are also offered through the Housing and Human

Services Department.

The recreation services inventory and the facility-use analysis (see Chapter 4) will help the Department determine those programs and facilities that meet the Department's mission and sustainability goal and can best be partnered, retained or expanded to meet community needs. The inventory also provides the foundation for a specific RFPF recommendation: to work with other organizations and create a clearinghouse of information on recreation programs, services, and facilities (See Sidebar page 12).

Recommendations Chapter 2

- 1 Collaborate with other agencies and organizations to share resources.
- 2 Develop a clearinghouse of information about community recreation opportunities.
- 3 Set up a regional roundtable with public recreation providers to explore resource sharing for services the City of Boulder currently provides to people with disabilities (EXPAND - inclusion and specialized programs).
- 4 Update the existing Facility and Amenity Partnership Process to reflect emerging needs.
- 5 Encourage and promote program and facility partnerships that meet the Department's partnership and sustainability goals.
- 6 Identify high priority, high leverage partnerships for programs, facilities, and amenities.
- 7 Develop a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process for seeking program partnerships.





Chapter Three - Recreation Programs

The Recreation Program and Facilities Plan (RPFPP) establishes a framework for making decisions on program offerings now and in the future. This chapter includes information on core programs, program classifications and delivery, program life cycle and evaluation, program partnerships, and other recreation program options.

Framework for Recreation Offerings

The Boulder lifestyle emphasizes being active and fit, and the community offers abundant opportunities to participate in a variety of recreation activities, including those offered by the Department. Boulder leads most Colorado Front Range municipalities in offering a wide variety of programs. The Department offers numerous types of programs, with over 3,800 different course offerings annually. The gymnastics program is among the most popular recreation programs offered by the Department, with more than 1,200 participants and is the largest municipal program in the

state. The aquatics program provides swim lessons to more than 3,000 participants each year, and more than 8,400 adults play softball annually on 649 adult softball teams.

Over time, the Department's recreation offerings have evolved into being all things to all people. The Department is now focused on becoming more efficient and economically sustainable and as a result is reevaluating its programs and services. This evaluation will help determine which programs are core to the Department mission and which are desirable, but should be offered at competitive rates. In addition, some programs may be better suited to be provided by other organizations within the community. Partnerships with other organizations will help the Department leverage resources and the types of recreation programs currently provided will change, as will the quantity and variety of offerings. Programs will be reduced to those that utilize resources (funding and staff) most efficiently and meet community priority demands.



City of Boulder Recreation Program Offerings

The Department's wide variety of program offerings includes the following
(see Appendix C for details on programs and chart on page 24):

Performing and Visual Arts Programs

- pottery classes
- drama camps
- youth and adult dance classes
- dance camps
- leisure enrichment classes (drama, cooking, photography, music, art)

Gymnastics Program

- recreation program
- competitive program

Health and Wellness Programs

- weight training
- fitness classes
- yoga, Pilates, and Swiss Ball classes and workshops

Golf Program

- instruction for youth and adults

Boulder Reservoir Programs

- sailing
- windsurfing
- sailboarding
- water sports
- camps

Aquatics Program

- swim lessons
- aquatic fitness
- and other programs

EXPAND and YSI Programs

Sports Programs

- adult softball teams
- adult soccer teams
- adult basketball teams
- adult and youth tennis lessons
- dodgeball leagues
- adult kickball teams
- adult volleyball teams
- youth sports camps
- youth football teams
- youth Sports Samplers and Mini-Sports programs
- youth basketball teams
- youth volleyball instruction and teams



What is EXPAND?

EXPAND (EXciting Programs Adventure and New Dimensions) received the National Recreation and Park Association's National Program of the Year award in 2004. EXPAND is a therapeutic recreation program that helps people with disabilities learn new recreation and leisure skills to enhance their well-being and quality of life.

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that municipalities make accommodations to allow people with disabilities to participate fully in community life. The EXPAND program has exceeded the intention of the law, building a national reputation with many "firsts" in recreation programs and services for people with disabilities. In 2009, some 600 people participated in EXPAND, nearly 90% of whom participated in multiple programs. Approximately 40% of EXPAND participants reside outside the City of Boulder.

EXPAND staff are Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists who assist people with disabilities in all aspects of recreation. They assist in two kinds of programs: inclusion and specialized programs. **Inclusion** is when an individual with a disability registers for a regular recreation program and wishes some assistance, or a recreation program staff identifies a person needing assistance. The goal of inclusion is to provide a person assistance, as little or as great as needed, to assure successful participation in the general recreation program. When an individual requests this service or staff identifies a need, staff initiates a process to help determine what level of assistance may be necessary. Accommodations are determined by staff and parents to allow the participant to participate in the least restrictive setting. They vary from participant to participant and depend upon the person's skills, abilities, and needs.

Specialized therapeutic programs offer a wide range of activities for all ages and disabilities, including aquatics, fitness, gymnastics, golf, outdoor adventures, community outings, and summer day camps. Some special programs include Special Olympics training, warm-water therapy, and unified sports programs that pair people with and people without disabilities on the same teams.

What is the Youth Services Initiative (YSI)?

The Department launched the Youth Services Initiative (YSI) in 2003 as a social service to support children from low-income families with recreation activities, homework help, and volunteer opportunities. YSI's mission is to provide opportunities, skills, knowledge, and resources to help participants make positive and informed life choices. The program is offered every day after school at community centers, recreation centers, and housing sites, and during the summer months through a day camp program.

The Department collaborates with Boulder Housing Partners (BHP) to serve more than 150 children ages six to 18 living in BHP housing. A teen program called Getting Fit is offered two days a week for youth ages 12 and older. The YSI program also partners with the Family Resource Schools (the City of Boulder Housing and Human Services Department program), the I Have a Dream Foundation of Boulder County, and the Watershed School, one of the program sites. YSI has worked with the Boulder Police Department on gang prevention activities that involve children and their families.





Core and Desirable Programs

Core programs are the Department's highest priority and are determined on the basis of the Department's mission, community need, and community priority interest. The 2009 Recreation Plan Survey indicated the community's top priorities included supporting programs that improve health and well-being, providing positive activities for children and youth, and offering recreation opportunities for people with disabilities or with low incomes who otherwise might not be able to participate.



Recreation in the Community

The Department provides core programs that fulfill *social responsibilities*, meaning they benefit the

public good, and *financial responsibilities*, meaning they help the Department become economically sustainable. The Department offers numerous programs and facilities, (business core), that help fund the core programs.

City of Boulder Core Programs

Social Core or "Public Good" Programs

Social core or "public good" programs generally include traditional youth programs, programs that target community members with disabilities or low incomes, and activities that enhance the health, safety, and livability of the community. Public good programs may require some level of subsidy to encourage the highest level of participation. They include: **Life/safety and community health programs** that engage youth and the community in healthful activities and help establish positive lifelong habits, such as learn-to-swim classes, introductory sports programs, and basic fitness, health, and wellness classes. In the past, learn-to-swim programs were offered as a partnership between BVSD and the Department, to teach all third graders how to swim. **Programs for people who are disadvantaged** that provide access to recreation programs, such as the Youth Services Initiative (YSI) for children and youth from families who live in low income housing (see Sidebar page 19) and EXPAND for people of all ages with disabilities (see Sidebar page 19).



Business Core or “Business Sustainability” Programs

Business core or “business sustainability” programs meet the needs of the market, and are offered at market rate. They include: Programs that produce revenues for the Department and are able to reduce tax-supported funding. These include golf programs, adult sports leagues, camps and various class offerings.

Desirable Programs

The Department offers a multitude of “desirable” programs that meet community interests and desires. These programs must meet the following criteria to be offered by the City of Boulder:

Required:

1. The program generates sufficient revenues to offset its costs (identified direct and indirect costs, such as instructor fees, class materials, and administrative costs).
2. Physical program space is available at a City of Boulder facility.
3. The program is in demand; classes often fill up and may have a waiting list.
4. The program serves a large population or identified community need.

Desired:

1. The program might provide a partnership opportunity to leverage city resources.
2. The program maximizes facility use; it might use a space that would otherwise be empty.
3. The program contributes to serving a diverse cross-section of the community.

The Department will be focusing on providing “core” mission programs and programs that will reduce the City subsidy as well as desirable programs with a competitive fee structure. Identifying those programs that are “core” to the Department’s mission allows the Department to focus on key recreation programs and determine how they will be funded in a sustainable way. Core and desirable programs will be reviewed during regular plan updates and a phased approach will be used to move the desirable programs into the business core category.

A large majority (84 percent) of 2009 Recreation Plan Survey respondents thought the Department should operate using a human services model, in which parks and recreation is valued for contributing to the physical, emotional, and social welfare of the whole community. The 2006 Parks and Recreation Master Plan notes that parks and recreation departments worldwide, as part of their mission related to human services, are

Scholarship Program

The Department is interested in establishing a scholarship program, which, in conjunction with the reduced-rate program that is currently offered, will greatly expand access to recreation programs and services to people that are economically disadvantaged. The Department will explore various methods for fundraising, such as a direct donation campaign, and create clear guidelines and procedures for applying and using these funds.





working to help young children and youth who are disadvantaged make healthy life choices. It also noted that in recent years society has acknowledged leisure as a right of all citizens and access to recreation as a necessary element for a community to achieve a high quality of life. The Department is committed to reaching out to residents to provide access to programs and services regardless of age, income, ability, or culture.

The human services model provides recreation services that are funded primarily through tax dollars. Given the current economic shift, use of this model is not sustainable either in the current or the anticipated future economic climate. The business model, in contrast, is designed to attract and serve users who can afford to pay for services. This plan recommends a mix of both models and defines which programs and services could receive taxpayer subsidy, as available, and which programs should be self funded (see Chapter 5).

The Program “Portfolio”

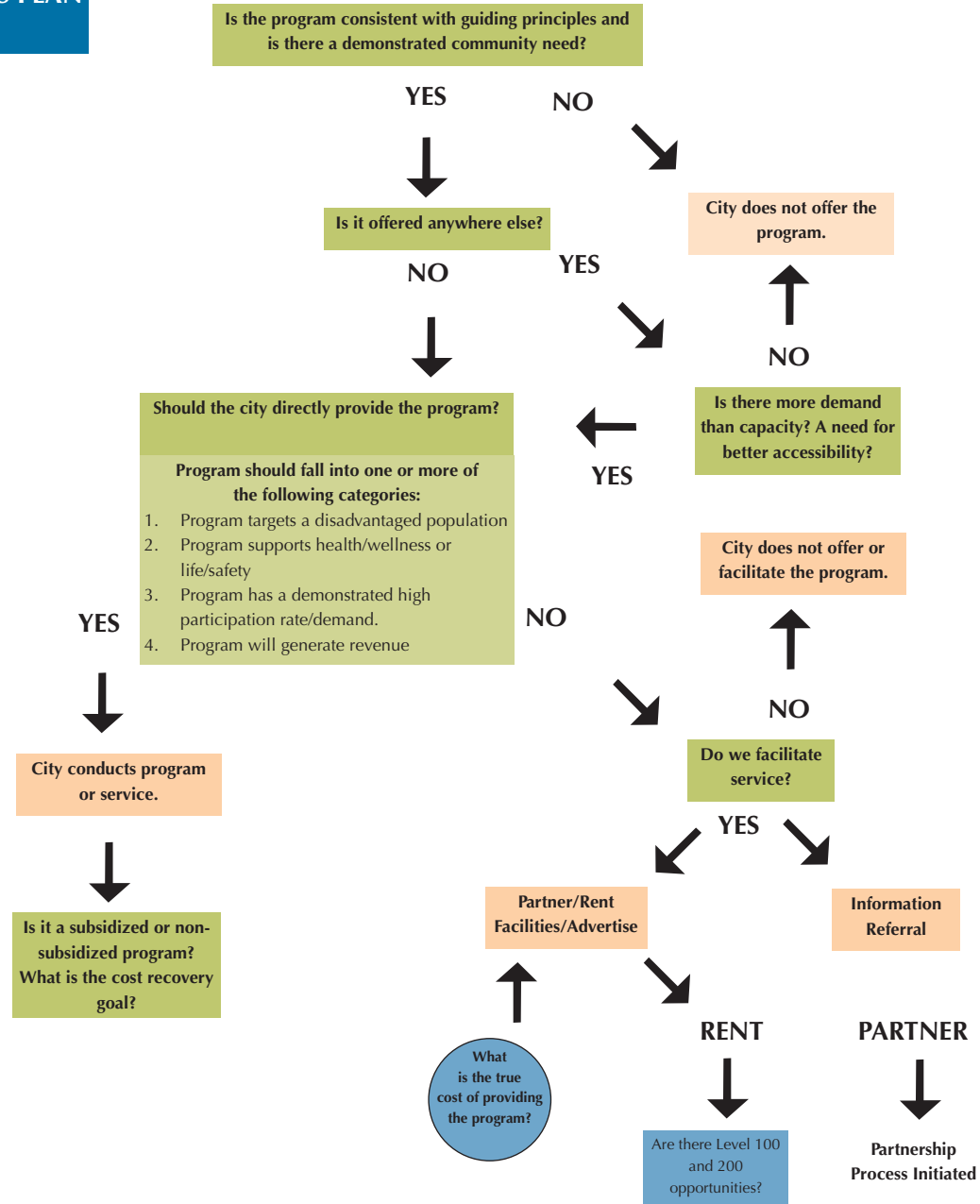
The entire set of Department offerings (the “Portfolio”) should be viewed holistically, with central management oversight that ensures a bal-

anced set of programs and services is being offered to meet the needs and interests of the community and the Department’s mission and financial sustainability goals. Traditionally, the community need and support has been for fitness, aquatics, sports and gymnastics programs. New program proposals and current program evaluations will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. Specific program evaluation criteria are being developed and will include the requirement to be consistent with the Department’s mission, program type (core or desirable), business and economic factors, and community interest and satisfaction. The portfolio will include Department programs that are Department run or contracted, or programs offered by partners and rentals (see page 12 for definitions of Recreation Providers).

The Program Delivery Model (see page 23) shows a series of questions and steps to help determine whether a program or service should be provided by the Department, and if not, whether the Department could facilitate the program or service through a partnership, rental, or clearinghouse opportunity.



**RECREATION PROGRAM AND FACILITIES PLAN
PROGRAM DELIVERY MODEL**



LEGEND

- Question
- Decision
- Pricing Determination

As part of the RPPF process, the Department inventoried recreation programs to identify service gaps by age group. The Summary of Departmental Age Group Offerings (see chart below) shows that the Department offers a wide variety

of recreation services for various age groups, including seniors. The chart also includes programs offered by the Senior Services Division and identifies an overlap in services and programs for seniors.

Summary of Departmental Age Group Offerings

	Preschool		Youth		Teen		Adult	Senior	Sr Services
	0-3 yrs	4-6 yrs	7-10 yrs	11-12 yrs	13-16 yrs	16-18 yrs	18+	50+	
Art		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Athletics	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
EXPAND	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X*	
Fitness	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Golf		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Gymnastic	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Pilates					X	X	X	X*	
Pottery		X	X	X	X	X	X	X*	
Reservoir Programs		X	X	X	X	X	X	X*	
Swimming	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Swiss Ball					X	X	X	X*	
Tennis	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X*	
Weight Training				X	X	X	X		X
Yoga	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
YSI			X	X	X	X			

* There are no specific programs for Seniors in these areas, but Seniors can participate in any adult programs.



Program Management

The Department is committed to a strategic process for determining which programs and services it can offer, recognizing that it cannot offer every program and service the community might desire. The process includes an assessment of all the programs and services now provided by the Department, an analysis of potential new programs and which programs could be offered by other groups or agencies. The Program Delivery Model flow chart (see page 23), combined with the descriptions of core and desirable programs (see page 20), explains how the Department will assess current programs and/or offer new ones.

Recreation programs will have identified goals and objectives in order to provide consistently high-quality programs. The Program Delivery Model will also be used to determine which programs the Department should continue to offer. These programs will be offered using best practices in management, ensuring they meet leisure education standards, and have evaluation goals that specifically assess customer satisfaction and other targets. A community needs assessment or gap analysis will be updated on a regular basis to help guide staff with the evaluation of program offerings.

As part of the program review process, recreation administrators will monitor program offerings and consider the life cycle of each program and modify class offerings accordingly. Class minimums will be set appropriately based on ex-

penses and approved cost recovery goals. To encourage efficient operations, staff will continue to promote online registration and will identify barriers that deter customers from using the system.

When the Department is financially sustainable, it could develop an “opportunity fund” during the budget process for use in developing new programs. This would allow for new program ideas related to trends to be tested to increase services and produce offsetting revenue.

New program proposals will be reviewed by staff using the Program Delivery Model and the associated criteria for new programs. The criteria addresses whether the proposed program targets people who are disadvantaged, supports health/wellness or life/safety, has a demonstrated high participant demand, and/or will generate revenue. A proposed program budget will be required to ensure identified cost recovery goals will be met.

Program Evaluation and Life Cycle

Programs, like any product, require periodic evaluation and assessment to maintain quality and relevance to the market. Dynamic instructors, quality equipment and facility space, excellent teaching materials, techniques and marketing all play vital roles in delivering program excellence. The department will be developing and implementing a systematic and consistent approach to program evaluation as a key component of this plan.

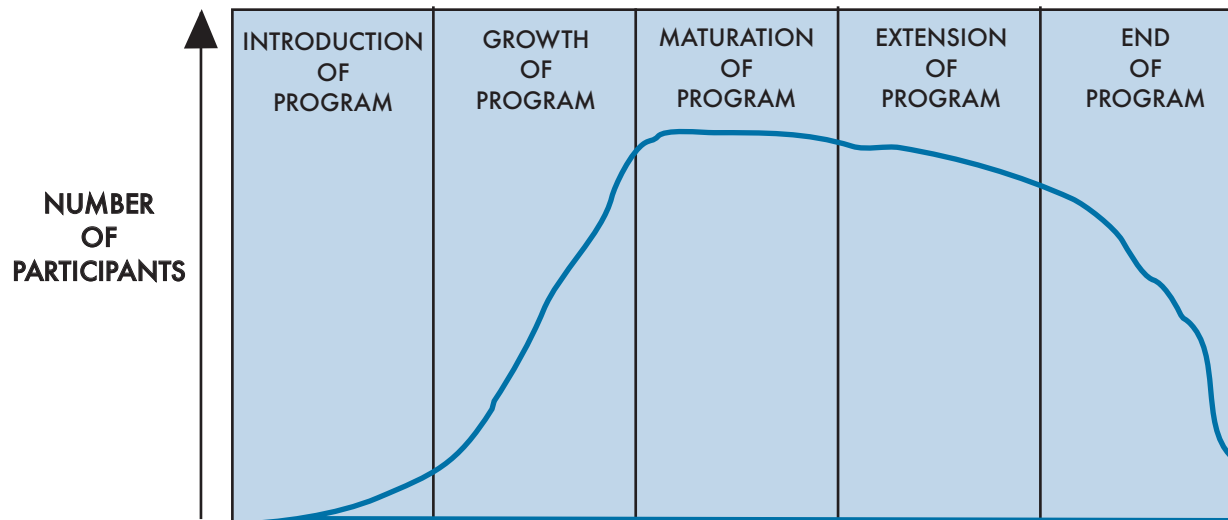


Program evaluation will include participant feedback, course enrollment and revenue trends, and product life cycle criteria. The goal of program evaluation is to ensure delivery of quality programs and optimal utilization of available facilities and resources. Programs that do not meet baseline evaluation criteria will be modified or discontinued.

Recreation programs typically follow a life cycle pattern from start-up, through high interest and participation and into decline. The Department is defining program life cycle stages -

planning and development, market introduction, growth, maturity, extension (or saturation) and decline - to provide useful program evaluation criteria. Ensuring the overall sustainability of recreation programs requires an understanding and assessment of each program's life cycle. Some programs may last only a few sessions or years, while others may last decades. Adjustments to program offerings based on awareness of program life cycle is critical for effective program evaluation.

Program Life Cycle



Source: Leisure Program Planning and Delivery. Ruth Russell and Lynn Jamieson. Human Kinetics. 2008. p. 132.

This chart is an example of the life cycle of a typical recreation program. There are some programs that have varied life cycles and are adjusted to reflect the market.



Recommendations Chapter 3

Scholarships/Reduced Rate

- 1 Create a formal scholarship program (in addition to the reduced rate program) that includes guidelines, criteria, and procedures. Increase outreach for all reduced rate options.
- 2 Develop a stronger relationship with the PLAY Boulder Foundation and other community groups and agencies to raise money for the scholarship program.
- 3 Implement a direct donation option for the scholarship program, such as a “check the box” idea of a \$5 donation at registration.

New Program Development

- 4 Establish an “opportunity fund” for creating new programs. (See also Chapter 5.)
- 5 Use the Program Delivery Model to determine which programs to include in the Department portfolio.
- 6 Develop incentives for patrons to try new programs.

Program Classification

- 7 Communicate the Department’s program model to provide an understanding of pricing and subsidy levels.
- 8 Continue to offer desirable programs that meet sustainability criteria. (See funding chart in Chapter 5.)

Program Management

- 9 Establish class participation minimums to ensure fees offset defined costs that must be recovered.
- 10 Achieve 90% online registration by the end of 2012 for efficient operations.
- 11 Centralize all programming oversight and evaluation, including program life cycles.
- 12 Create standards to ensure high-quality programs.
- 13 Standardize the ratio of program staff to program hours. (See also Chapter 5.)

Program Evaluation

- 14 Develop a standardized, qualitative process for evaluating programs, and adjust course offerings as appropriate.

Contracted Programs/Partnerships

- 15 Offer all future contracted programs at a City of Boulder facility.
- 16 Develop and pilot a program partnership process.





Chapter Four - Recreation Facilities

The City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Department owns and manages a variety of recreation facilities in addition to the City's urban parks. With an emphasis on sustainability, the Department is committed to leveraging resources in maintaining and improving recreation facilities. This chapter discusses the condition and needs of current recreation facilities, investment priorities for facilities, facility programming and operations, and the process for developing new facilities.

Existing Recreation Facilities

The Department's recreation facilities are discussed in the following section, along with some key needs and issues for each facility. The Department also owns and manages 72 urban parks that include a variety of outdoor amenities, such as tennis, basketball and handball courts, athletic fields, playgrounds, skate parks, walking paths, horticultural plantings, picnic shelters, and ponds.

Recreation Centers

During a period of facility growth from the

1970s to early 1990s, the Department built three full-service recreation centers.

North Boulder Recreation Center (NBRC), was built in 1972 and remodeled in 2002-2003 as a LEED-Silver certified, 61,656 square-foot structure. It includes a fitness and weight room, multi-purpose room, gymnastics center, yoga room, dance studio, gymnasium, leisure pool, lap pool, racquetball/squash courts, locker rooms, child-care center, meeting room, and lounge/reception area. The building has a solar thermal system, designed to provide heat to the lap and leisure swimming pools and to the domestic hot water system for showers and sinks. Annually, this provides roughly 50% of the thermal requirements of the pool and avoids the consumption of roughly 17,000 gallons per year of fuel oil equivalent. NBRC is designated as a Boulder County Office of Emergency Management shelter for people with special needs in the event of a major flood or other emergency.

Facility needs/issues: more parking; improved utilization of facility spaces such as gymnastics, dance, yoga and child care; larger fitness/weight area.



East Boulder Community Center (EBCC) was built in 1992, and includes a recreation center (41,000 square feet) and senior center (10,913 square feet). The recreation center includes a fitness and weight area, dance studio, gymnasium, fitness/yoga room, lap pool, leisure pool, locker rooms, child-care center and climbing wall. The senior wing includes crafts rooms, a multipurpose room, and a commercial kitchen.

Facility needs/issues: leisure pool improvements; fitness/weight area expansion; regulation-size basketball courts.

South Boulder Recreation Center (SBRC) was built in 1973 and renovated in 1999. Its 35,603 square feet include a fitness and weight room, dance studio, gymnasium, yoga/Pilates room,

racquetball court, lap pool, and locker rooms.

Facility needs/issues: overall facility renovation and expansion.

The community highly values the three existing Department recreation centers and data shows that attendance at the centers increased by an average of four percent from 715,909 visits in 2007 to 741,937 in 2008. The centers were constructed according to the service model from the 1970s and 1980s, in which recreation centers were built to serve a geographic area of the community. As such, each recreation center has some specialized elements, but all generally offer similar amenities. A variety of classes are scheduled at all centers (see Chapter 3). The centers also are available for

LEED-Certified North Boulder Recreation Center

As part of the City's focus on sustainable architecture in design and construction, the Department used the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) criteria for municipal buildings in renovating and expanding the NBRC in 2002-2003. The 61,000 square-foot center was certified as LEED-Silver for incorporating environmentally sustainable design elements and construction practices. A solar water-heating system provides about half of the energy needs for the pools. Heat-reflecting roof panels and low-insulating windows help keep the building cool in summer. Energy-efficient use of recycled materials included re-processing parking-lot asphalt. The recreation center is landscaped with drought-tolerant shrubs and maintained without pesticides.

The solar thermal water-heating system is designed to provide heat to the lap and leisure swimming pools and to the domestic hot water system for showers and sinks. Annually, this system provides roughly 50% of the thermal requirements of the pools and avoids the consumption of roughly 17,000 gallons per year of fuel oil equivalent, or 425,000 gallons over the lifetime of the system. The solar system consists of 142 4'x10' flat-plate collectors mounted on the roof of the lap pool and the gymnasium. A glycol anti-freeze solution is circulated through the collectors to absorb the solar energy. Heat is transferred to the swimming pools directly using a heat exchanger for each pool. To supply the domestic hot water, solar heat is absorbed in a 1,200 gallon hot water storage tank.



daily use through annual pass memberships, punch cards, or a daily fee that allows users access to fitness classes, weight rooms, gymnasiums, pools, hot tubs, saunas, and locker rooms. Facilities may also be rented for events or parties.



Athletic Complexes

The Department has four athletic field complexes that it schedules and maintains and one that is scheduled and maintained by BVSD: Gerald Stazio Ballfield Complex, East Mapleton Ballfields, Pleasant View Fields and Scott Carpenter Ballfield. These facilities are purpose-built athletic fields and are suitable for hosting tournaments and events. Major park sites that are appropriate

for future high-quality athletic fields (grass or synthetic turf fields) are Valmont City Park and the three community parks (East Boulder, Foothills, and Harlow Platts). The city and community park sites are also suitable for high weekly use and smaller regional athletic events.

The Department's athletic fields include the following specialized athletic complexes: **Gerald Stazio Ballfield Complex** (Stazio Fields) on 23 acres features seven lighted softball ballfields with bleachers, three concession/restroom/scorekeeper buildings, roads, parking lots, multiuse trail and a playground.

Facility needs/issues: additional fields, energy-efficient field lights, shade structures.

Valmont City Park Plan

In 1998, the City adopted a concept plan for development of the 132-acre Valmont City Park. At the time, the need for private partnerships was identified if the park was to be developed in the near future, though no partnership agreements were developed. In the intervening years, the Department constructed a multipurpose field and parking lot, a raw water irrigation system, a temporary dog park and the Wonderland Creek Path.

In 2007, a new concept plan for the park was developed based on extensive community input. The 2007 concept plan includes three phases of development:

Phase 1: Development of the north side of the park, including a permanent dog park, a purpose-built off-road cycling facility, the restoration of the Platt farmhouse, utility upgrades, infrastructure improvements and an 18-hole disc golf course on the southern side of the park (south of Valmont Road).

Phase 2: Development of the remaining outdoor facilities on the south side of the park, including artificial-turf multi-purpose fields, an adventure playground, amphitheater, park infrastructure, and parking.

Phase 3: Development of the indoor facilities (likely with public/private partnerships) and commercial area in the south side of the park.

Development of infrastructure, including a road and utilities, must precede development on the southern section of the site. Costs for those improvements are estimated at \$5-10,000,000 depending on type and number of facilities.

The Department in 2009 received a \$200,000 grant from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) that will be applied towards Phase I construction of the park's natural-surface Bike Park on the north side of Valmont Road. The Parks and Recreation Department applied for the grant in February 2009, in partnership with the Boulder Mountainbike Alliance (BMA). A groundbreaking for the Bike Park was held in October 2009, and included cyclocross races and a bike festival.



East Mapleton Ballfields on 11 acres features three lighted softball fields, bleachers, nine horse-shoe pits, a playground, and a restroom/concession stand/score-keeper building.

Facility needs/issues: energy-efficient field lights, additional parking, and shade structures.

Pleasant View Fields on 52 acres features a soccer and rugby complex with nine sand-based turf fields, parking lot, restrooms, and multiuse trail.

Facility needs/issues: additional parking; a playground; shade structures.

Scott Carpenter Park Baseball Field is a lighted Legion-size baseball field for high-school age and adult players. The facility includes bleachers, a score box building, and restrooms. The Department partners with BVSD, the primary user of the fields, who is responsible for facility improvements.

Facility needs/issues: This facility is located in the Boulder Creek Floodplain, which restricts most new construction.

Satellite Fields

The Department owns or manages 20 satellite athletic fields located in urban parks or at Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) sites. The fields are used for Little League baseball, youth softball, and field sports. All of the fields are rented to user groups for practices and games. These athletic fields are located within the following city, com-

munity and neighborhood parks: Valmont City Park; Foothills, East Boulder and Harlow Platts community parks; and Arapahoe Ridge, Columbine, Martin, North Boulder and Tom Watson parks. Since 1998, the Department has had a cooperative agreement with BVSD to maintain athletic/sports fields at Aurora 7 School (Aurora 7 Park), Columbine School (Columbine Park), Eisenhower Elementary School (Arapahoe Ridge Park), Flatirons Elementary School and Summit Middle School.

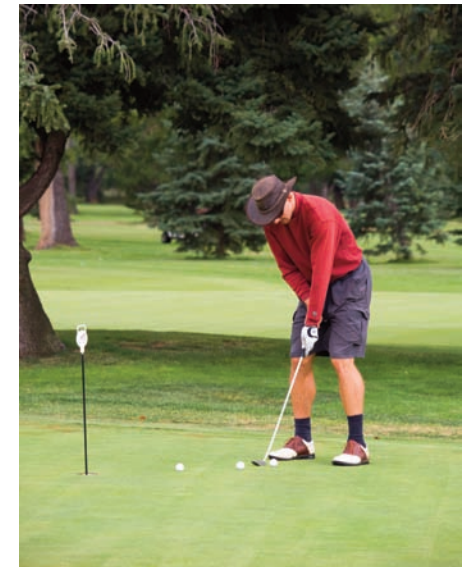
Facility needs/issues: artificial turf fields at community parks.

Specialized Facilities

The Department owns and maintains the following specialized facilities:

Flatirons Golf Course, owned by the City, opened for play in 1938 as the Boulder Municipal Sports Center. The City and Flatirons Country Club (FCC) entered into a 30 year lease agreement in 1956 where the Club would operate the golf course and turned it back over to the City in 1986 when the lease ended. It features an 18-hole course, driving range, clubhouse, event center, and parking lot. Revenues from the golf course support other recreation programs through the Recreation Activity Fund.

Facility needs/issues: A site master plan and strategic business plan are being developed to provide strategic long-term pro-





grammatic recommendations and identify golf course improvements and facility renovations. It will identify the funding needed to improve the golf course, clubhouse, and event center.

Boulder Reservoir was constructed in 1954 for water supply, storage, and delivery, and for recreational uses. Recreational uses and facilities at the 450-acre reservoir include swimming and boating, a boathouse, a bathhouse/concession/restroom building, picnic facilities, and hiking/biking trails.

Facility needs/issues: A site master plan is underway and is scheduled for completion in 2010. The plan will establish management objectives that will guide future investment at the Reservoir, including capital needs.

Skatepark, a 14,000 square-foot special facility for skateboarding located at Scott Carpenter Park, features a street course and deep bowls. The Skatepark is free and open to all, and programming is provided in a partnership agreement with the YMCA.

Facility needs/issues: accommodations for heavy use and different kinds of riders, such as a stand-alone BMX park.

Scott Carpenter Pool (outdoor), located in Scott Carpenter Park, is a 6-lane 50-meter (substandard length; slightly smaller than regulation size) pool with a diving well and a leisure slide.

Facility needs/issues: bath house improve-



ments; pool replacement; parking improvements.

Spruce Pool (outdoor), is an eight lane 25-yard pool, located in the Whittier Neighborhood. It also has a leisure pool with accessible ramp and play features including jets, fountains, and a slide.

Facility needs/issues: additional parking.

Salberg Studio, the 2,400 square-foot building at Salberg Park, was remodeled in 2001 and is used for Pilates, yoga, and summer camps.

Facility needs/issues: maximum use of facility.

Pottery Lab, located in a historic firehouse, includes 3,800 square feet on two floors used for instruction.

Facility needs/issues: maximum use of space and time; additional storage, alternate parking.

Iris Studio, remodeled in 2006, is a 2,285 square-foot dance and yoga studio located in the Iris Center administrative building.

Facility needs/issues: maximum use of space and time and compatible uses with the Department Administration offices during business hours.

Facility Use

The recreation centers are used for programmed classes, drop-in use (gyms, weight rooms, lap and leisure pools) as well as rentals of the pools, gyms, and multipurpose rooms. Peak seasons of use are the fall and winter months



(September to March). The NBRC experiences the most use, followed by EBCC and SBRC as shown in the Facility Use Chart.

Currently, the Department offers drop-in use and scheduled programs during both peak and off-peak hours. A majority of 2009 Recreation Plan Survey respondents agreed on the importance of being able to drop into recreation centers for unscheduled and nonprogrammed recreation activities such as leisure and lap swimming and basketball in the gym.

To achieve economic sustainability goals, the Department will focus on maximizing use of its facilities. An initial analysis of facility hours indicates that the recreation centers and other facilities are not used fully at certain times. At peak times in the recreation centers (generally 7 to 9 am, 11 am to 1 pm, and 4 to 7 pm), lap pools, fitness and weight rooms are at or near capacity, and other rooms are programmed. There are some facility spaces, such as gymnasiums and multi-purpose rooms, where the demand exceeds avail-



Facility Use Chart

	North Boulder Recreation Center			East Boulder Community Center		
	2007	2008	% Change	2007	2008	% Change
Course	112,650	123,726	9.83%	43,669	48,056	10.05%
Drop-in	62,450	57,016	-8.70%	31,004	28,601	-7.75%
Membership	165,185	170,167	3.02%	134,924	127,685	-5.37%
Total	340,285	350,909	3.12%	209,597	204,342	-2.51%

	SBRC			Scott Carpenter Pool		
	2007	2008	% Change	2007	2008	% Change
Course	31,039	32,046	3.24%	321	90	-71.96%
Drop-in	7,243	7,876	8.74%	20,634	17,338	-15.97%
Membership	60,236	61,903	2.77%	12,299	12,937	5.19%
Total	98,518	101,825	3.36%	33,254	30,365	-8.69%

	Spruce Pool			Overall Facility Use Totals		
	2007	2008	% Change	2007 Total	2008 Total	% Change
Course	8,334	26,212	214.52%	715,909	741,937	3.64%
Drop-in	10,822	14,103	30.32%			
Membership	15,099	14,181	-6.08%			
Total	34,255	54,496	59.09%			

ability at peak times. However, the facilities are underused during some off-peak times.

Athletic facilities are programmed or rented from March through early November, depending on the facility. The Stazio, East Mapleton and Pleasant View Fields are used by city programs

and other sports organizations from March through October and heavily programmed for tournaments and camps from May through August. The outdoor pools are open from Memorial Day through Labor Day, and are used by families, lap swimmers, and competitive swimmers as well



Events and Tournaments

The Department offers or facilitates different kinds of events, including:

Department Special Event – an event or activity primarily designed, organized, or sponsored by the Department to generate revenue while contributing to the individual, social, economic, and/or environmental health and well-being of the community. Department special events will reflect the mission and goals of the Department as well as the unique values and character of the community.

Promotional Event – an activity or event held at a Department facility for the purpose of promoting a Department program, facility or activity or the Department as a whole. Promotional events are designed to attract prospective new clients.

Programmatic Event – a one-time activity, event, or workshop held as part of the Department's recreation programs and meeting the pricing, enrollment, and policy criteria of a recreation program.

Public Engagement Event – a public meeting or event designed to gather input from and/or share information with the community about Department plans, opportunities, policies, or changes that could impact residents or user groups. Public engagement events are always free and open to the public, requiring subsidy for all associated event costs.

Ceremonial Event – a public event designed to celebrate, honor, or commemorate achievements or individuals related to the mission and goals of the Department. Ceremonial events are generally free and open to the public, requiring support/subsidy for all associated event costs.

Special Events organized by non-city groups - an activity or event held at a Department facility organized by non-profit or for-profit organizations. The organization rents the facility and is responsible for arranging and paying for logistical support (i.e. Police, Risk Management). The organization may contract with the Department for various support services.

Athletic Tournament - an athletic event managed by the Department or another recreation provider at one or more athletic complexes. Tournaments typically attract a blend of teams from Colorado and other states.



as programmed classes.

A preliminary facility-use analysis showed the Department needs to create priorities for space, programs, and funding. The analysis showed the Department offers many of the same kinds of programs and classes, and that class minimums often are not met. This prompted questions about whether the Department's facilities were used efficiently in terms of space and scheduling, and open versus programmed times. The community survey indicated that respondents valued drop-in use the most (see Sidebar on this page). The Department will have to structure the use of facilities so as to balance the need for revenue from programs and rentals to program partners with the community desire for drop-in (nonprogrammed) use.

The Department's facilities are rented by several types of groups, including non-profit organizations, BVSD, for-profit businesses and service clubs. The facility use fee that is charged depends upon whether the use is a one-time use or an on-going use (i.e. for an on-going program). Currently, there are historic agreements between the city and several groups for use of the lap pools and athletic fields. The Department has policies that address the priority for renting tennis courts and field space (multipurpose and baseball fields) to independent sports organizations. However, the policies should be expanded to include all outdoor and indoor facilities. In addition, the basis for rental fees for all facilities should be standardized and will be determined based on ac-

tual operating and maintenance costs and market rates. (See Appendix D for Policies).

Special Events

There is an existing requirement that groups over a specified size must obtain a permit for group use of Department parks and facilities. The criteria for needing a permit relate to group size, and type and frequency of use. A fee is charged to off-set maintenance costs and on-going impacts due to the use. The Department will work to educate all users regarding the criteria related to permit requirements and work to equitably enforce regulations.

City facilities have historically been utilized for special events. These events may be one or

Survey Responses on Allocating Recreation Facility Time

The 2009 Recreation Plan Survey respondents assigned the following percentages of time for recreation opportunities provided at City recreation facilities:

Recreation Opportunity	% Use
Drop-in Use <i>Such as lap swimming, basketball, and weight room</i>	29%
"Learn-to" Skill Development <i>Such as beginner and intermediate classes</i>	22%
City-sponsored Leagues <i>Such as softball, youth football and adult soccer</i>	19%
Community Group Use <i>Such as youth soccer, masters swimming, Little League</i>	17%
Advanced or Elite Programs <i>Such as advanced classes and competitive programs</i>	12%

New Facilities Development Criteria

The Department's process for determining whether a new recreation facility can be built, as identified in the Master Plan, includes meeting the following criteria:

- 1) Little or no funding is required from the Department for capital improvements.
- 2) There is an operations and maintenance agreement.
- 3) Major infrastructure is in place allowing for facility development (such as a new road in Valmont City Park that will open the park to recreation facility development).
- 4) The facility is compatible with a park site master plan.



more days, and may or may not require exclusive use of a specific facility. (See Sidebar page 34.)

Large events, such as the Boulder Creek Festival or the 4th of July softball tournament attract out-of-town visitors and result in additional sales tax from lodging, restaurants and shopping.

Department facilities that host special events include Pleasant View Fields, Stazio Ballfields, the Boulder Reservoir, Flatirons Golf Course and the Central Park area. At times, portions of community and neighborhood parks may also be utilized for special events. The city has a Special Events Committee that reviews all applications, identifies concerns and meets with applicants as necessary. For most large events, a contract between the city and the organizer or organization is required. Fees often include a facility rental fee, a damage deposit and costs for public safety and environmental enforcement staffing.

In order to continue to support special events in Boulder, the Department will review its facilities and scheduling to maximize the benefits to the City economy from special events. The Department will coordinate with other departments and the Boulder Convention and Visitor's Bureau to determine the types and sizes of events that would be the 'best fit' for Boulder.

Facility Issues: Identified Needs or Deficiencies

In addition to physical deficiencies in recreation facilities, the Department must address some programming and operational issues:

Maximizing facility use: The Department's facility-use analysis indicates the Department owns a range of recreation facilities. Some are not used to their fullest capacity, and others are subject to more demands for space and time than is available.

The cost of operating and maintaining recreation facilities: Utility costs have increased significantly in recent years as heating, electricity, and staffing costs have risen.

Balancing the scheduling of facility space for programs and rentals with space and time availability for drop-in use.

Facility crowding at peak times and parking problems at NBRC.

Funding for facility renovations, including upgrading facilities.

Ensuring all facilities meet ADA compliance.
Duplication of programs beyond market carrying capacity.

Capital Needs

Funding is currently available for ongoing facility maintenance and a limited amount of upgrades each year. Additional funds will be needed for major facility renovations. The funding comes from three sources: the Permanent Parks and Recreation Fund, the .25 Cent Sales Tax Fund and the .15 Cent Sales Tax Fund.

The Department's investment priorities for recreation facilities, identified in the Department's Master Plan, build upon the Department goals to "Maintain and protect our parks and recreation



facilities and programs” and “Become economically sustainable.” The Department’s priorities for investing in existing recreation facilities and developing new facilities are tied to funding. The current priorities for investment in facilities include:

- Priority 1** – Invest in existing revenue-producing facilities.
- Priority 2** – Invest in improving substandard facilities.
- Priority 3** – Invest in existing facilities.
- Priority 4** – Invest in new facilities with demonstrated need and community support (through partnerships).

(See Master Plan for more information.)

Facility Renovation

The Department’s recreation facilities need periodic renovation and upgrades to protect the City’s investment in these facilities, make safety improvements, and stay current with industry trends and standards. In the past, the Department’s process for determining priorities for capital spending on recreation facilities has focused on community needs, safety issues, and retrofits needed to meet legal requirements.

The Department’s current priority for renova-

tion is for energy efficiency upgrades and retrofits, such as boiler replacement at EBCC and athletic field lighting replacement at East Mapleton Ballfields. The City is conducting audits of the recreation facilities to identify improvements for energy efficiency. The City will evaluate and create priorities for improvements and will pay for the improvements through savings from reduced energy costs as well as by leveraging existing capital funds through loans and grants. By investing in energy efficiency, the Department will reduce its utility and ongoing maintenance costs over the long term.

Development of Future Facilities

The development of any future facilities will be determined through regularly conducted needs assessments and feasibility studies. Concept plans for Valmont City Park (see Sidebar page 30) and Foothills Community Park identify areas for future recreation facilities and athletic fields. The Department also has a large parcel of land (191 acres) within the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) Area III-Planning Reserve that is set aside for potential future park and recreation facility needs. Before development could occur, the parcel would need to be annexed into the City and undergo a planning process.



Recommendations Chapter 4

Facility Management

- 1 Continue to implement Master Plan recommendations related to recreation facilities.
- 2 Create business plans for specific areas, such as aquatics, athletic fields, and sports, to analyze the existing facilities and program offerings, identify needs, and develop future options.
- 3 Complete in-process master plans and business plans for the Boulder Reservoir and Flatirons Golf Course.
- 4 Explore the concept of themed recreation centers to maximize facility design and use.
- 5 Implement priorities for facility use. The priority order is recreation programs, drop-in facility use, City programs, and rentals.
- 6 Create priorities for Department programs to use program space, based on identified criteria.
- 7 Create an asset replacement and maintenance schedule.
- 8 Create priorities for renovation projects that will increase facility use and revenues.
- 9 Ensure that all facility renovations and development meet industry or sport standards. For example, enlarge the substandard pool at Scott Carpenter and the gymnasium at EBCC.
- 10 Implement energy efficiency and water conservation measures and upgrades.
- 11 Explore partnerships for facilities, both developing new and renovating and operating old facilities.
- 12 Explore the concept of a café or food service at appropriate facilities, such as NBRC and EBCC.
- 13 Install artificial turf fields at community and City parks.
- 14 Revise and/or develop policies, guidelines, and a pricing structure for facility rental by partners, non-profit groups, and businesses.
- 15 Educate, implement, and enforce the existing permit system for group use of Department parks and facilities.

Events and Tournaments

- 16 Conduct rental, tournament and event analysis to understand current rates in the region.
- 17 Maximize event opportunities at current facilities. Work regionally to gain referrals for “Boulder-sized” events.
- 18 Ensure that events meet department’s financial goals.
- 19 Strategically expand or enhance outdoor facilities to attract more events.



A photograph of the North Boulder City Building with a green awning. The text "NORTH BOULDER" is visible on the awning.

Chapter Five - Funding Challenges and Pricing

The Recreation Program and Facilities Plan (RPPF) includes strategies that will help the Department make decisions and develop a diverse and sustainable portfolio of programs and facilities. Employing the funding strategy outlined in this plan will allow the Department to make changes in programs, services, and facilities while improving financial strength.

The Department's Current Financial Challenges

The current economic climate has caused a reduction in the City's sales and use tax revenue collections, which resulted in a decline in the tax-supported funding to subsidize recreation services. The Department must establish a decision-making framework to ensure it operates strategically and effectively. The Department is utilizing the following strategies to address financial challenges:

- Continue work to define service costs and set fees that cover expenses.
- Determine which recreation services should be provided by the City and which should be

provided by others.

- Determine how best to provide services with available resources, including partnerships and/or contracting services.
- Allocate resources (funding and staffing) appropriately within program areas.

Recreation Funding

The Recreation Division's budget is composed of funding from the following five sources: the Recreation Activity Fund, the City's General Fund, the .15 Cent Sales Tax Fund, the .25 Cent Sales Tax Fund, and the Permanent Parks and Recreation Fund (see pages 5 and 6). The Lottery Fund, a sixth source of funding for the Department, does not provide funds for the Recreation Division.

The Recreation Activity Fund

The Recreation Activity Fund (RAF), the main source of funding for the Recreation Division, was created in 2001 as a special revenue fund to provide flexibility in financing recreation operations. The RAF provides an accounting mechanism for

Sales Tax Sunsets and Reductions

The City's General Fund and the .15 Cent and .25 Cent sales tax funds contribute to the Department's funding.

With declining sales tax revenues, the tax supported funding for recreation services will continue to be reduced.

The .15 Cent Sales Tax will sunset or expire in 2012.

Boulder voters in November 2009 approved putting the sales tax on the November 2010 ballot.

This extension of the tax could be allocated for general parks and recreation maintenance, not for Pleasant View and Gerald Stazio sport complexes, which currently are earmarked for funding from the tax.

The Department faces significant challenges in maintaining current maintenance levels at those athletic complexes without secured funds.

The .25 Cent Sales Tax will sunset in 2015.

The ballot language will be revised based on the Department's needs and will be proposed to voters as early as the 2012 ballot.

fund balance that can be used to offset declining revenues or weather impacts at facilities. As a quasi-enterprise fund, its intent is to retain revenues in excess of expenses from recreation activities and reinvest them in recreation services. Prior to the creation of the RAF, all excess revenues from recreation programs and facilities fees were added to the City's General Fund. The majority of recreation funding (approximately 66 percent) is derived from user fees, which are accounted for through the RAF. Since inception, the RAF receives tax-supported funding to subsidize programs and services that are not self-sufficient (do not cover the operating costs to provide the service) through fees charged. The RAF is currently reliant on the subsidy since the Department's community outreach recreation programs do not charge cost recovery fees for services and funding for those areas is accounted for within the RAF.

Before 2002, the number and range of recreation program offerings grew as the Department experienced increases in demands for program services. From 2002 through 2008, recreation programming continued to be reactive but the Department was beginning to respond to budget reductions and declining tax-supported funding. As a result of the decline in sales tax revenues, in 2004, the long-term sustainability of the RAF became a concern. This was due to the Department's increasing operating expenses, the limited ability to adjust fees and projected RAF deficits.

Recreation Fund Management Challenges

Given the current economic climate and the likelihood that it will be ongoing, the Department needs to become more entrepreneurial and needs greater flexibility in managing funds. Additional revenue collected in the same calendar year could be used to enhance operations if the Department was on target to meet budget goals. An increase in the Council-approved budget that utilizes such revenues is one idea. The current mechanism that provides for additional appropriations to the base budget is permitted twice annually; but this may not provide enough flexibility for the Department (i.e. fundraising efforts for the Pottery program could be accepted and allocated only by means of an adjustment to the base budget).

Another challenge the Department experiences is how funding is managed. Revenues collected through fees for all recreation programs and facilities, contribute to the RAF fund balance. All revenue earned throughout the year goes to the RAF "bottom line," similar to a balance sheet. Revenues generated by programs and facilities are not reinvested directly into the budgets of the recreation activities or areas in which they were earned. For example, the golf course fees provide revenue in excess of the amount required to operate golf services, but these additional revenues are not specifically reinvested in golf course improvements.



Recreation Cost and Revenue Definitions

The Department currently utilizes the following definitions when calculating and analyzing recreation costs.

1. **Program costs** include personnel and non-personnel expenses specific to a recreation program. These costs are incurred only when a program is provided and include instructor salaries and program-specific supplies required for participation. There are both fixed and variable program costs.
 - a. **Program direct costs** include expenses that are relative to the program scope and size. The costs adjust according to program participation or demand and are expended as needed for instructors, referees/umpires, lifeguards and some program specific material (items such as camp shirts and individual pottery supplies).
 - b. **Program facility costs** are costs for facilities that include program space. There are two types:
 - i. exist solely for specific programs at Iris Studio, Salberg Studio, and the Pottery Lab. These facilities are programmed and not rented. The costs are incurred daily, including utilities and custodial services, and are incorporated into fees paid by program users.
 - ii. exist for mixed use. These facilities are programmed, open for general public use and rented (e.g., recreation centers). The costs are associated with facility operations (see 2. Facility direct costs). A portion of these costs are incorporated into fees paid by program users.
 - c. **Program indirect costs** include costs that remain unchanged and must be paid when the course is offered or service is provided, regardless of the number of participants. These costs are incurred during hours of operation and include: program administration, class/program supervision, program expenses (includes mileage/business travel, training, professional certifications, cell phone, some program-specific materials, equipment, uniforms, and advertising).
2. **Facility direct costs** include the total of all direct personnel and non-personnel expenses associated with the operation and maintenance of the City's recreation facilities (North, South, and East Boulder recreation centers, Flatirons Golf Course, Scott Carpenter and Spruce outdoor pools, Boulder Reservoir, aquatics operations, and sports fields). A portion of facility costs is incorporated into fees paid by users. These costs are incurred daily and include: recreation center administration and supervision (administrator and supervisors, customer service team members); registration staff; facility drop-in, childcare, and climbing wall-related oversight and instruction; maintenance and office supplies; utilities and water fees; and financial and custodial services. *Note: Indoor aquatics operations are included as part of the respective recreation center.*
3. **Recreation indirect costs** include the overhead personnel and non-personnel expenses associated with the day-to-day operation of the Recreation Division. These costs are incurred daily and include: administration (recreation superintendent, CLASS registration system management, recreation administrative specialists); marketing and promotions (media specialist, recreation guides, camp guides, program advertisement and promotions). *Note: Department and City overhead expenses, such as Parks and Recreation Director, Business and Finance, Human Resources, City Attorney's Office, Risk Management, Information Technology, and capital expenses are not included in RAF indirect costs.*
4. **Program, service, and facility revenues** include the total amount of money received by the Department and accounted for within the RAF which are paid by users for: program registration; admissions (sale of annual passes, punch cards, drop-in fees); and point of sale items (locks, fruit bars).
5. **Nonoperating revenues** include funding received from sources other than user fees or goods purchased for resale that supplement the RAF to subsidize recreation operations. Sources include: funding transfers from other City funds (including the General Fund, Worker's Compensation Fund, and Transportation Fund); monies from grants, donations, and fundraising; and interest income.



Pricing Methods

The Department is changing its pricing method for recreation fees to **service-based pricing**, in which fees are set based on the full or defined cost to provide the service.

Other kinds of pricing, which the Department also considered but found inappropriate, include the following:

Marginal: Fees are set at the point of the minimal cost of providing a single unit of service (also known as cost per person).

Average: Fees are set to include the full cost of providing the service.

Differential: Fees are set at different levels for different types of use.

Traditional: Fees are set based on historical precedence.

Comparative: Fees are set to match the fees of other agencies.

Equity: Fees are set at a point that is fair, reasonable, and equitable for all users.

As part of the City's budget process, revenue and expense projections are allocated annually as the year begins. Revenue generated in 2009 is applied to the fund balance and is not available in the current year. Once the annual budget is set, there is no mechanism to access additional revenue generated from fees during the same year. The fund balance cannot be used unless funds are appropriated through the City budget process. This can restrict program flexibility. The Department has limited flexibility to make adjustments that respond to emerging needs and trends.

Recreation Cost Analysis

In April 2008, a key recommendation of the City Manager's Workgroup on Recreation Financing was that the Department gain a better understanding of and formalize the costs associated with operating recreation programs, services and facilities. Staff defined recreation costs, determined the total cost of recreation operations, and analyzed revenues in order to understand how much of the total cost of each program was recovered through user fees. The Department completed a financial analysis to determine the total costs of operating recreation programs, services and facilities. Based on revenues earned from fees, cost recovery rates were calculated and subsidy amounts were identified. (See Program, Service, and Facility Viability Assessment, Appendix E.) Determining the total cost of operations is important because it will provide the foundation for the Department's fee-setting methodology.

Program, Service, and Facility Viability Assessment included findings as follows:

- The total cost of providing recreation services includes the direct and indirect expenses currently accounted for in the RAF;
- a baseline for the current costs accounted for in the RAF includes direct program and facilities expenses;
- recreation indirect expenses that are proportional to each program area and facility, based on total direct costs; and
- revenue earned that is associated with programs and facilities.

The RAF does not account for the total cost of recreation. Recreation-related expenses and indirect expenses not accounted for in the RAF are not factored into the total cost of recreation. These expenses include city cost-allocation, capital, and Department overhead.

Current Pricing and Fee Types

Historically, fees and charges have been assessed on individual users or groups that receive a benefit from specific recreation services. Corresponding to the City's budget guidelines, these recreation services have been assigned partial, full, or enterprise cost recovery expectations. The pricing method for recreation services was set using the market and historical precedence to match fees of other agencies in the region, or set fees at a point that was considered fair, reasonable, and equitable for users.



Currently, fees and charges are evaluated on an annual basis by recreation staff. The Department adjusts program fees on the basis of the current costs of providing programs and competitive market rates, and these fees are approved by recreation management staff. The Department offers City residents discounted rates for classes and facility entrance fees to acknowledge that residents already contribute to recreation facilities through property taxes. The Department offers additional discounts through multi-use punch cards, and for residents with low incomes, people with disabilities, and members of the Boulder Chamber and employer groups within the city.

Facility entrance fees for the recreation centers, the Boulder Reservoir, outdoor pools, and Flatirons Golf Course are adjusted as part of the City budget ordinance approval process. These fees are charged according to the Department's age-based pricing method. Because these fees are identified in the city's municipal code, City Council must approve the increase. Allowable increases are generally minimal (less than 10%), adjusted in an effort to account for the increased cost to do business. However, this can limit the Department's ability to raise fees in order to cover true expenses or to meet market rate.

Pricing Goals

The Department is anticipating that tax-supported funding for the RAF will be reduced and potentially eliminated. Through strategic program delivery, sustainable fund management, and

leveraging resources through partnerships, the Department can meet these reductions effectively. Strategies for achieving this goal are as follows:

- Use a standard pricing method to calculate and analyze the total cost of service consistently for all recreation programs, services, and facilities.
- Apply an appropriate amount of indirect costs to user fees.
- Reinvest in recreation infrastructure, following industry standards, by establishing a facility investment fee in the pricing structure.
- Assign percentage of City cost allocations and capital expenses that would need to be included in the total cost of recreation, beyond operating costs.

Service-based Pricing

The purpose of using a consistent pricing method is to ensure the creation of a sustainable fee structure that reduces the Department's reliance on tax-supported funding; therefore, the Department is implementing service-based pricing for recreation programs and facilities. Fees, including codified fees, will be established based on the defined cost to provide recreation services and the market rate, when appropriate. Using this method will ensure that all programs and facilities are priced appropriately and fees are set at the point at which each program and facility will recover the identified cost recovery amount. Understanding and defining the cost to provide the

Program Classifications

The Department is implementing a classification system to define skill and experience levels, simplify the registration process for programs and individual classes, and help determine program and class fees. This model is based on the university course-level model, which ranges from beginning to advanced or elite. Level 100 classes would receive tax-supported funding, if available, and Levels 200, 300, and 400 classes would receive no subsidy. The categories include:

Level 100: introductory or basic level class or program targeted to any age group.

Level 200: advanced beginner/intermediate class or program targeted to any age group, with a prerequisite class or equivalent related experience.

Level 300: advanced, elite, or competitive class or program for youth.

Level 400: advanced, elite, or competitive class or program for adults, or a private class or program for any age.



Support for Programs with Community Benefits

Some important questions for recreation funding are:

- Should recreation program and facility users be the only ones paying for programs that provide community-wide benefits?
- Should the community as a whole support these programs?

Recreation programs that focus on life and safety, community health, and disabled and low-income participants, including the Youth Services Initiative (YSI), EXPAND inclusion, learn-to and drop-in swim, and First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), are offered as a community service and have little or no opportunities to cover their costs.

service will assist the Department in establishing a cost recovery goal for all recreation services. The Department plans on phasing the implementation of service-based pricing beginning with programs and rentals and eventually applying it to admission fees. Ultimately, subsidy that is applied to admission fees will be eliminated.

The service-based pricing process will include the following steps:

1. Establish a baseline through identifying direct costs for each program / class.
2. Calculate the following overhead (indirect) costs:
 - a. all program indirect and recreation indirect costs;
 - b. all recreation facility costs for operations and maintenance;
 - c. all Department-related indirect costs;
 - d. all City cost-allocated costs (including the City Manager's Office, City Attorney's Office, Finance Department, Information Technology, and Human Resources); and
 - e. all capital-related costs, including major maintenance, replacement of existing recreation facilities, and development of new facilities.
3. Determine and apply an appropriate amount of indirect cost that will be consistently passed onto user through fees.
4. Identify and understand the City cost-allocated costs and all capital-related costs, but do not pass these on if they cannot be accommodated by the market.

5. Determine what the market will bear by conducting market research on fees and assessing participation levels and customer satisfaction.

Subsidization

The Department's recreation programs are funded within the RAF Recreation funds, which are derived from two general sources: user fees for services and subsidy from other City funds (General Fund, Transportation and Workers Comp). Programs that generate more revenue than is required to cover expense also help subsidize the recreation programs and facilities that do not cover 100 percent of their costs. Programs and services within the RAF recover varying amounts of expenses through user fees. The average cost-recovery rate for recreation operations was 82 percent in 2008.

Although offerings for programs and services have expanded, the tax-supported funding has remained fairly constant. This poses a challenge, as the costs of providing services have increased, causing a gap between revenues earned from fees and the expenses required to provide services. To respond to this gap, the Department has established a new process for applying subsidies based on program classifications, which includes the following steps:

1. Identify the program level based on the newly established criteria.
2. Apply a subsidy, if available, to social core programs only.



Cost Recovery Types

Recreation Services	Cost Types						
	Program Direct*	Program Indirect	Facility	Recreation Indirect	Department Indirect	City Cost-Allocation	Capital
Programs (Classes, Teams, Leagues, Camps)	X	X	X	X	Δ	Δ	Δ
Contracted Recreation Services	O	O	X	X	Δ	Δ	Δ
Facilities (Admissions)	O	O	X	X	Δ	Δ	Δ
Rentals	O	O	X	X	Δ	Δ	Δ

* Cost baseline

X = City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Costs

O = Costs paid by user but collected by outside program provider

Δ = Costs not presently recovered via user fees

Cost Recovery Goals

Program	Cost Recovery Goal
Social Core Programs	
YSI	0% cost recovery (100% tax supported)
Inclusion	0% cost recovery (100% tax supported)
EXPAND Specialized Programs	75%-100% cost recovery
Learn-to-Swim Programs	90%-100% cost recovery
Certification Programs	90%- 100% cost recovery
Level 100 "Learn-to" Programs	90%- 100% cost recovery
Desirable Programs	
Level 200-300 Programs	100% cost recovery <i>(achieving 100% plus cost recovery would move the program from "Desirable" into the Business Core category)</i>
Business Core Programs	
Level 400 programs, summer camps, private lessons, tournaments	Cost recovery exceeds 100%
* Cost recovery goals relate to the program direct, program indirect, facility, and recreation indirect costs, but will likely not recover department-related indirect costs, City cost-allocation, and capital costs.	





Cost Recovery

Cost recovery is the portion of a program, service, or facility expense that is paid by user fees. Recreation programs and facilities are funded through a combination of admission fees and City revenue sources, including sales and property taxes. A cost-recovery policy was developed to ensure that subsidies, if any, are directed primarily to social core programs (see Appendix D). This policy provides a systematic framework for determining appropriate fee structures and evaluating programs that do not meet designated minimum cost-recovery goals.

Direct costs are identified as specific identifiable expenses associated with providing recreation services. On a fund level, this includes all expenses from the Recreation Activity Fund, partially supplemented by the Department's other funds. Indirect costs are identified as Department and City overhead expenses.

Cost Recovery Expectations

The Department completed an analysis based on operating costs to determine current cost-recovery rates for programs and services. Fees will be determined based on the identified costs that are required to be recovered and cost recovery goals. The charts on page 45 identify general cost recovery types and goals according to whether they are programs, contracted recreation services, facilities, or rentals and include program direct, program indirect, facility, and recreation indirect

costs. A potential future phase will analyze department-related indirect costs, City cost-allocation, and capital costs.

How Recreation Programs and Services Should Be Funded

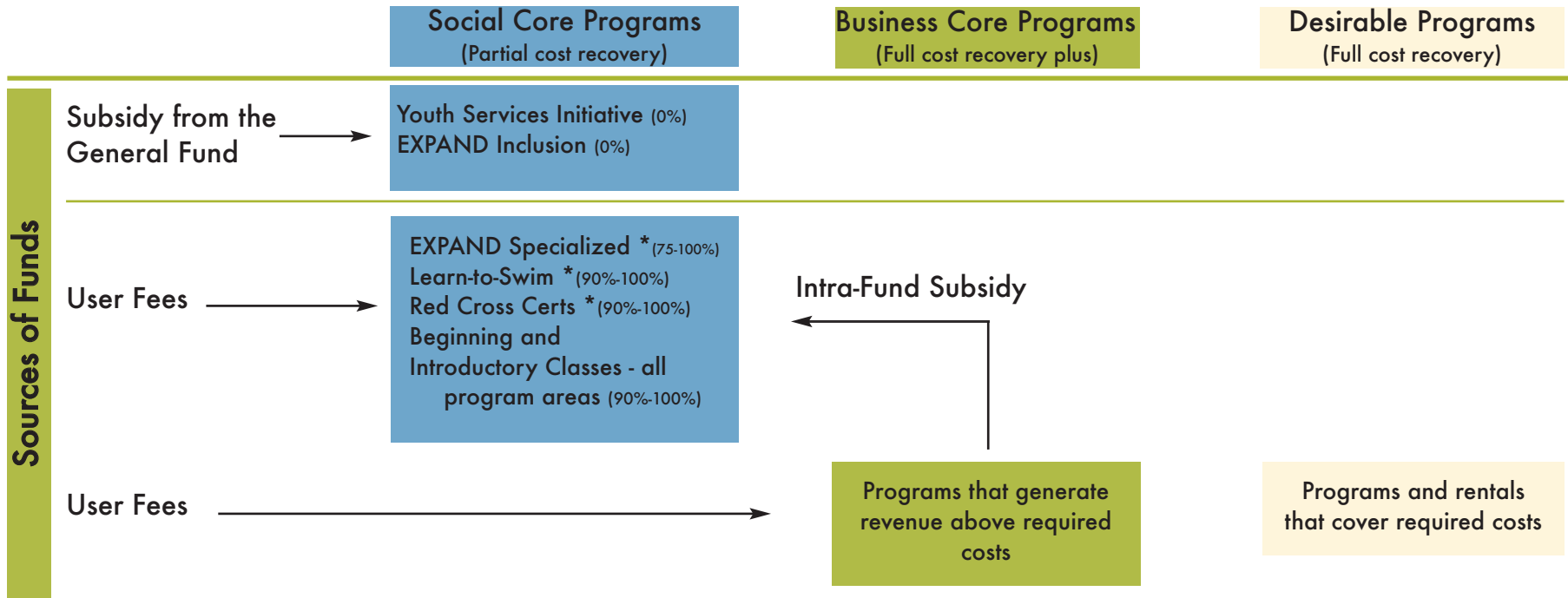
Based on the RPPF guiding principles, three program types have been identified and will be offered by the City: social core, business core, and desirable programs. Funding for these programs comes from tax-supported funding, user fees, or other programs.

Social core or "public good" programs have partial cost-recovery expectations of between zero and 90 percent, and have user fees that are supplemented by tax supported funding or RAF subsidy. These programs generally are traditional municipal youth programs, programs that target disadvantaged populations, or activities that enhance the health, safety, and livability of the community and therefore require the removal of a cost barrier for optimum participation. There are two types of social core programs: 1) life and safety and community health programs that engage youth and the community at large in healthy activities and help achieve lifelong healthy habits; and 2) programs that serve disadvantaged populations.

Business core programs have full cost recovery expectations and beyond, or cost recovery expect-



Recreation Programs and Services Funding - Phase 1



Social Core programs (Public Good programs) are generally accepted as traditional municipal youth programs, programs that target disadvantaged populations, or activities that enhance the health, safety and livability of the community and therefore require the removal of a cost barrier for optimum participation. There are two types of social core programs: Life/Safety and Community Health Programs (Programs that engage the youth and the community at-large in healthful activities and help achieve lifelong habits) and Programs targeted to Disadvantaged Populations (Programs that serve disadvantaged populations).

* EXPAND Specialized, Learn-to-swim and Red Cross Certifications are supplemented with user fees for these programs.

Business core programs provide revenue support for the Department's entire portfolio of recreation services. Business core fees are generally set at market rate and are required to cover identified direct and indirect (overhead) costs.

Desirable programs are programs that meet priority community interests. These programs must meet the following criteria in order to be offered through the City of Boulder:

Required:

1. Program covers required direct and indirect costs (instructor fees and class materials and administrative costs).
2. Physical program space is available.
3. Program is in demand - classes often fill up and may have a waiting list.
4. Program serves a large population or identified need of the community.

Desired:

1. Program might provide a partnership opportunity to leverage city resources.
2. Program maximizes facility use - might use a space that would otherwise be empty.
3. Program contributes to serving a diverse cross-section of the community.

tations of more than 100 percent. They meet the needs of the market, at market rate pricing. These programs generate revenue in addition to expenses, which can be used to offset the costs of social core programs and thus lower the tax-supported funding.

Desirable programs have full (100 percent) cost-recovery expectations and respond to expressed priority community needs.

The chart on page 47 illustrates this “Phase 1” funding scenario. Currently, many desirable pro-

grams do not meet the new cost recovery goal. During the next one to two years, the department will implement actions such as reducing costs, raising fees and /or seeking outside funding for facility or program partnerships in order to meet the cost-recovery and expense-reduction goals. Ultimately, all Department programs will fall into either the social core or business core categories. The additional revenues generated by the majority of the programs will be channeled into subsidies for social core programs and into a capital fund that will fund renovation, replacement and capital construction.

City of Boulder Cost Recovery Philosophy

In 1994, City staff completed the Comprehensive Fee Study, which formalized general expectations for fee setting and City cost recovery. Cost recovery categories were defined as follows and are adopted annually as part of the budget process.

No Cost Recovery

- Tax dollars should support essential City services that are available to and benefit everyone in the community.

Partial

- User fees may recover less than full cost for those services for which the City desires to manage demand.
- User fees may recover only partial cost from those individuals who cannot pay full cost due to economic hardship.
- A user fee may not recover full cost if competitive market conditions make a full cost fee undesirable.

Full

- User fees should recover the full cost of services which benefit specific groups or individuals.
- User fees should recover the full cost for those services provided to persons who generate the needs for those services.

Enterprise

- User fees could recover more than the full cost for a service in order to subsidize other services provided to the community.



Fee Adjustments

Implementing a consistent pricing method will impact the current fees for recreation services. Adjusting fees for programs and facilities will involve considerations such as:

- analyzing all the impacts of the new pricing method and cost recovery goals;
- considering a phased approach to modify fees (fees may increase or decrease depending on

the current market rate);

- communicating the rationale for fee changes to users and the community; and
- adjusting fees as needed to implement consistent pricing while maintaining market-supported fees. If the market bears the fee, the Department would price the program accordingly, regardless of the cost to provide the program.



Recommendations Chapter 5

Fund Management

- 1 Establish a target RAF fund balance.
- 2 Achieve recreation industry standard of 40 to 65% of total operating budget for standard personnel costs. (See also Chapter 3.)
- 3 Determine which programs and services are most appropriately funded by taxes and which should be supported by user fees.
- 4 Apply available subsidy to social core programs.
- 5 Establish an “opportunity fund” that allows new programs to be piloted without impacting or reducing the funding for existing programs. (See also Chapter 3.)
- 6 Develop controls and criteria that permit flexibility in using revenues earned for services provided in the same fiscal year.

Pricing and Fees

- 7 Revise list of codified fees to include facility entry fees only, as facilities were constructed with taxpayer monies.
- 8 Once the appropriate rate is charged, develop an annual fee adjustment mechanism or market rate adjustment to accommodate the cost of providing service.
- 9 Explore a “facility investment fee” that is incorporated into the pricing structure so there is an opportunity to reinvest in recreation facilities.
- 10 Maximize facility use through peak/off-peak pricing and agreements (e.g., inter-governmental agreements, memorandums-of-understanding) with other providers of recreation services and facilities.
- 11 Standardize and simplify admission categories, fees, discounts and rentals.
- 12 Create a “youth” category by combining child and teen to serve children ages three to eighteen.
- 13 Revise “adult” category to include participants ages nineteen to sixty-one.
- 14 Revise “senior” category to include 62 and over, aligning with minimum Social Security Administration age requirement.



Chapter Six - Achieving Financial Sustainability

One of the guiding principles of the Recreation Program and Facilities Plan (RPFPP) is for the Department to develop and implement a financially sustainable operating model for recreation services within the next three to five years. Given the recent and dramatic downturn in the economy and the over arching impact the downturn is having on the City's financial health, it is evident that the Department must develop mechanisms to reduce the reliance on tax-supported funding. One method is to implement the RPFPP that will move the Recreation Division towards a healthier and stronger business model. This plan is designed to help achieve the goal of fiscal sustainability without eliminating recreation opportunities within the community. The key elements of this effort will include reducing overall high overhead, program direct and indirect expenses, improving program and facility efficiency, enhancing marketing to increase the customer base and pursuing partnerships and sponsorships as well as strategically leveraging key facilities and opportunities to generate additional revenue.

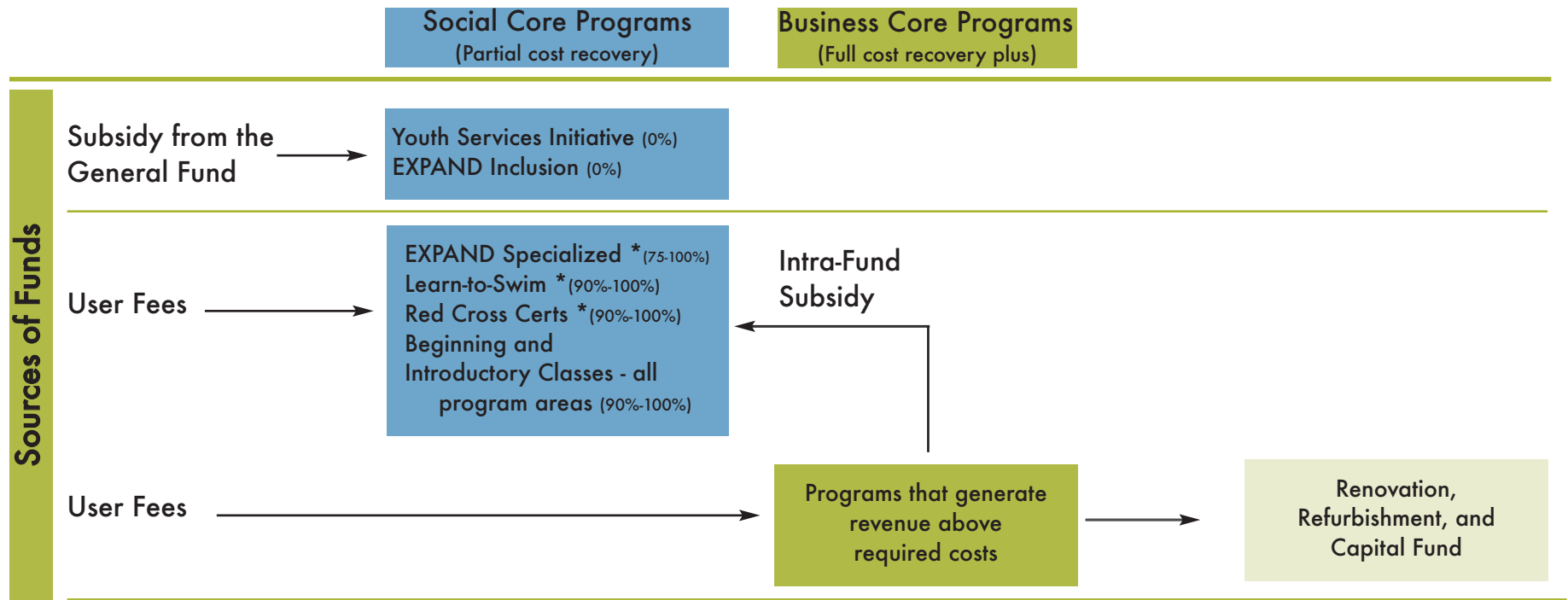
This five-year plan is intended to achieve Phase 1 funding scenario (see page 47) and begin Phase 2 funding scenario of the Department's financial sustainability goals. Creating a financially sustainable Recreation Division would involve eliminating the tax-supported funding to the Recreation Activity Fund (RAF) for recreation programs (exclusive of support for YSI and EXPAND inclusion efforts) and establishing a capital reinvestment funding source from the revenue proceeds of recreation programs and services. Achieving this level of independence will take time, but can be accomplished through a series of strategic steps over the next five years. Phase 2, as shown on the next page, would align all programs in their appropriate areas.

The key strategies that will be used to achieve financial sustainability include the following:

- 1. Prepare business plans for facilities and program areas**

All major program areas and facilities will undergo a strategic planning process that will identify the elements needed to become financially sustainable. These elements will identify potential

Recreation Programs and Services Funding - Phase 2



Social Core programs (Public Good programs) are generally accepted as traditional municipal youth programs, programs that target disadvantaged populations, or activities that enhance the health, safety and livability of the community and therefore require the removal of a cost barrier for optimum participation. There are two types of social core programs: Life/Safety and Community Health Programs (Programs that engage the youth and the community at-large in healthful activities and help achieve lifelong habits) and Programs targeted to Disadvantaged Populations (Programs that serve disadvantaged populations).

* EXPAND Specialized, Learn-to-swim and Red Cross Certifications are supplemented with user fees.

Business core programs meet the needs of the market, often at market rate. These are programs that are financially successful and are able to help lower the subsidy from the general fund by generating revenue that can be used to help offset the costs of Social Core programs.

All recreation programs offered by the Department will generate revenues that meet assigned revenue targets for the defined program and Department.



future operational efficiencies, facility investment needs as well as other actions, such as marketing plans.

Planning efforts of this nature are already moving forward for the Boulder Reservoir and Flatirons Golf Course. These plans align with other planning efforts, including the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan, the 2006 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and the 2010 Recreation Programs and Facilities Plan (see diagram next page).

2. Enhance Marketing and Communication

Following approval of the RPPF in 2010, the Department will develop an overall Marketing and Communications Plan. The intent of this plan is to provide a “blueprint” for successfully implementing the necessary changes to the methods currently employed by the Department to market and communicate to customers. Components of the Department’s Marketing and Communications Plan include: how the Department follows trends, adapts programs, determines program life cycles and achieves revenue, service delivery and customer service goals.

The marketing plan will provide marketing and communication goals and strategies to achieve the overall goal of fiscal self-sustainability. Key elements of the plan will include strategies for increasing participation in programs, generating revenue through advertising and sponsorships, promoting new or cost-saving programs and communicating significant program,

and pricing or policy changes (stemming from the RPPF) to the community. Above all, a Department Marketing and Communications Plan will identify key opportunities and implementation strategies for attracting new patrons and increasing recreation revenues.

3. Assess Market Prices

Service-based pricing will be utilized to determine the actual cost of providing Department programs, services, and facilities. However, after the defined cost of service is calculated, market rates and trends must be assessed to ensure the Department fees are set to achieve financial sustainability, as well as meet the changing demands and challenges of serving the community. The pricing of recreation programs and facilities is subject to the pressures of supply and demand within the Boulder market. Market rates should be a regular consideration when establishing all fees in the recreation and program marketplace.

Assessing market pricing will help enable the Department to provide high quality recreation and fitness options while achieving the Department’s fiscal goals.

4. Create Efficiencies and Improve Revenues

A number of operating efficiencies can be employed to reduce the cost of providing recreation programs and services. These include setting appropriate class minimums, ensuring that classes that do not meet minimums are cancelled; maximizing facility use through comprehensive sched-



How Plans Relate

GUIDING DOCUMENT FOR CITY

BOULDER VALLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Scheduled for major update in 2010

GUIDING DOCUMENTS FOR DEPARTMENT

2006 PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

Scheduled for update in 2011

2010 RECREATION PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES PLAN

Underway - scheduled for completion in 2010

GUIDING DOCUMENTS FOR SPECIFIC FACILITIES OR PROGRAMS

SITE MASTER PLANS AND BUSINESS PLANS

BOULDER RESERVOIR

FLATIRONS GOLF COURSE

Underway - scheduled for completion in 2010

ATHLETIC FIELDS

AQUATICS

SPORTS

OTHER PROGRAM AREAS

FUTURE - recommendation from the RPPF



uling and implementing peak and off-peak pricing; ensuring an appropriate level of program, facility and administrative staffing to programs offered; and reducing operating costs through energy efficiency upgrades.

5. Leverage Resources

As described in previous chapters, the Department will actively seek out program and facility partnerships to reduce expenses, increase revenues or provide additional recreation services at no cost to the City or the Department.

6. Invest Strategically

Business plans will likely include a number of recommendations for investing strategically in aging or inadequate amenities at facilities. These investments would be designed to provide superior customer experience and increase revenues. In some cases, the Department may seek out investment partners.

7. Assess Community Needs

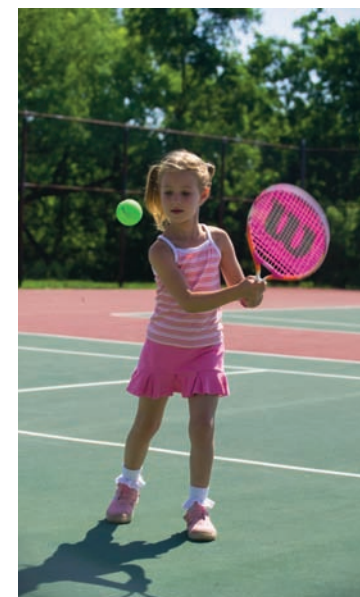
Ongoing monitoring of the marketplace and community needs will occur through needs assessments, surveys, and market research designed to provide the community with the right mix of

programs and services with a high level of customer service.

8. Acquire Additional Funding

Once business plans are completed with recommendations for facility investment priorities, funding sources to make the improvements a reality must be identified. Because capital funding is limited from the existing sources of recreation funding, new monies would need to be identified to address the extensive backlog of facility renovation needs. Depending on the scope of the facility improvements, revenue bonds may be one source of funding, if approved by voters.

The Department also needs to ensure the .25 Cent Sales Tax Fund, a dedicated Parks and Recreation ballot initiative approved by voters in 1995 and set to expire in 2015, is renewed. An assessment was completed in 2006 that determined that almost all ballot requirements have been met. (One additional neighborhood park is scheduled to be completed by 2015.) Outreach to evaluate current community needs coupled with recommendations from this plan will be considered when formalizing the ballot renewal language. It is anticipated that the proposed, revised initiative could be on the ballot as early as 2012.





Recommendations Chapter 6

Marketing and Communication

- 1 Develop a marketing plan for programs and services (core programs and facilities and desirable programs).
- 2 Create an advertising and promotion strategy.
- 3 Develop communication plan to convey RFPF recommendations and their impacts (e.g., fee changes, participation rates, facility use, class offerings).
- 4 Explore advertising opportunities to fund recreation guide.
- 5 Revise customer service guidelines to enhance customer experience.
- 6 Develop early registration incentive program within marketing plan.

Business and Funding

- 7 Prepare business plans for major facilities and program areas.
- 8 Evaluate appropriate funding mechanisms for facility renovation and/or new facility construction.
- 9 Actively pursue program and facility partnerships to enhance the financial sustainability of the Department.

Implementation

- 10 Develop quantitative measures to continually monitor and improve recreation programs and services.



A Brief History of Boulder Parks and Recreation

Boulder's cultural history is closely linked to its residents' love for recreation, as Suzanne Hudson reveals in *A History of Boulder's Parks and Recreation*. By 1868, 10 years after gold miners arrived at the mouth of Boulder Canyon, Boulder had its first park with a baseball diamond. A year later, recreation-minded residents bought 40 acres south of Valmont Road between 28th and 30th Streets, and erected a grandstand for horse races and a county fair. A roller-skating craze beginning in 1878 led to a roller rink at 14th and Spruce. "High-wheelers" in the 1880s and "safety bicycles" in the 1890s were favored by Boulder's early cyclists.

Beginning in 1903, Boulder acquired land for urban parks to complement recreation opportunities in its mountain parks. By 1920, recreation programs administered by the Department of Public Welfare included a summer playground program with more than 4,300 children. The tri-towered Hygienic "natatorium," or indoor swimming pool, privately built in 1923 on the Spruce Pool site, featured slides, rings, and a trapeze for the "athletically inclined."

During the Great Depression, a men's night softball league proved a popular source of entertainment; in 1931, there were 26 teams with 10 employees to umpire and do field maintenance, funded by the federal Works Progress Administration (WPA). Another WPA project was a nine-hole precursor to the Flatirons Golf Course. The recreation program's success led to the formation of the Community Recreation Association, sponsored by the City Council, the school board, and the YMCA. The Pay Dirt Pow Wow, started in 1934 on what is now the East Mapleton Ballfields, featured a parade, a bike race to Longmont and back, and the Hard Rock Drilling Championship of the World.

Recreation programs were curtailed during World War II, though the City in 1945 purchased the Hygienic pool, renaming it Municipal Pool and holding swimming classes for 10,000 participants. Public swimming was curtailed the following summer due to a polio outbreak. Attempting to make the pool building more useful year-round, the City began leasing it as a roller rink, with wooden planks laid across the pool that were removed in summer. Softball continued to be a main source of entertainment; leading to the formation in 1948 of the Boulder Softball Association (BSA).

Postwar expansions began with the City's first full-time recreation director, Willard N. Leuthauser, who was hired in 1951 with an annual salary of \$3,600 from a \$5,000 recreation program appropriation. Residents in 1952 voted for \$2 million in bonds to construct the Boulder Reservoir. In 1957, the Recreation Department began sponsoring a day camp for children with developmental disabilities. In 1958, Fire Station #2 was converted into the Department's Pottery Lab, which was the first city-supported pottery program in the country and has been recognized as an innovative recreational program. The city in 1960 founded the Parks and Recreation Department and formed the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

Voter support for recreation continued in 1971 with approval of \$1.6 million for construction of the North and South Boulder recreation centers. A 1981 bond issue pumped \$2.4 million into improvements at the Boulder Reservoir and paid for completing the original Gerald Stazio Ballfield Complex. Voters in 1981 also approved the Colorado State Lottery, which gave 14 cents of every dollar spent on lottery tickets to local parks and recreation districts. In 1983, Boulder used lottery funds to build the 5,000-square-foot gymnastics center addition at the North center. The Department in 1986 took over operation of the Flatirons Country Club and has maintained the golf course ever since.

In 1993, voters approved the .15 Cent Sales Tax that pays for maintenance at Pleasant View Fields and Gerald Stazio Ballfields and will expire in 2012. The 1995 approval by Boulder voters of the dedicated .25 Cent Sales Tax for parks and recreation allowed the Department to proceed with a major land acquisition effort, including the land for Valmont City Park and Foothills Community Park, both of which feature multipurpose sports fields and other recreation facilities (see Sidebar page 40). Since 1996, the Department has developed, upgraded, and refurbished numerous recreation facilities (see Chapter 4).

