



BOULDER PARKS AND RECREATION Master Plan Update

2022



Restore | Connect | Sustain



This page:
Paddlers enjoying Summer Kidz Kamp
at East Boulder Community Center.

Facing page:
A young reveler at the Chautauqua
Park playground renovation celebration.



Letter from the Director

Dear Boulder Community Members,

Thank you for the time, thoughts, and passion you shared to develop the 2022 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Boulder's parks and recreation system is a reflection of our community's long-held values and support for parkland, great public spaces and well-being.

For over 100 years, we have developed and cared for an incredible system of urban parks, recreation facilities and programs that is a major contributor to Boulder's nationally-acclaimed high quality of life and the result of community support and investment. We also acknowledge that prior to the city's establishment, the Boulder Valley was home to indigenous peoples who held deep and long-standing connections with these lands. As we work to honor the past, it is critical moving forward that this system is managed in a way that reflects the diverse voices and needs of our community.

This plan is based upon input from across Boulder and will help us prioritize our time and dollars for the next five years. Our "master plan promise" to you is that we will use this plan to guide our work: the values and priorities expressed in this plan will shape each decision we make to ensure that Boulder's Parks and Recreation system continues to take care of the community's hearts, bodies and souls.

Together, we dreamed of a parks and recreation system that is more welcoming and inclusive for all and that is more sustainable in the face of growing demand and climate change. As we implement this master plan, that dream will become closer to reality. We look forward to working with the community to accomplish the ambitious but necessary steps to ensure that we can truly promote the health and well-being of our entire community through an unparalleled system of parks, facilities and programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ali Rhodes".

Ali Rhodes
Director of Parks & Recreation



This page:
An aerial view of downtown Boulder. Boulder parks are an integral part of the community's outdoor recreation and sports opportunities.

Cover:
East Boulder Community Park Dog Park; Kidz Summer Camp nature play; Fitness class at East Boulder Community Center





Acknowledgments

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Indigenous Peoples who have traversed, lived in and stewarded lands in the Boulder Valley since time immemorial. Those Indigenous Nations include the: Di De’i (Apache), Hinono’iteen (Arapaho), Tsistsistas (Cheyenne), Nəmənən (Comanche), Kiowa*, Čariks i Čariks (Pawnee), Sosonih (Shoshone), Oc’eti S’akowin (Sioux) and Núuchiu (Ute).*

We honor and respect the people of these Nations and their ancestors. We also recognize that Indigenous knowledge, oral histories, and languages handed down through generations have shaped profound cultural and spiritual connections with Boulder-area lands and ecosystems — connections that are sustained and celebrated to this day.

The City of Boulder recognizes that those now living on these ancestral lands have a responsibility to acknowledge and address the past, and must work to build a more just future. Read the City of Boulder’s staff land acknowledgement- which is based on the city’s Indigenous Peoples Day Resolution, community input and guidance from American Indian Tribal Nations – at: <http://BoulderColorado.gov/projects/staff-land-acknowledgement>. Staff recognize that this acknowledgement will continue to evolve as we work to understand and address the legacy of the violent colonization of Indigenous lands.

** Names are based on guidance from American Indian Tribal Nation Representatives. Please note: The appropriate Kiowa Indigenous name has not yet been obtained from Tribal Representatives.*

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BOULDER COMMUNITY

A special thanks to community members, partners and stakeholders who participated in the engagement for this master plan.

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Junie Joseph	Adam Swetlik
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PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

Charles Brock, Vice-Chair	Sunny van der Star
Elliott Hood	Pamela Yugar, Chair
Mary Scott	
Anita Speirs	<i>Past PRAB Members</i>
Jason Unger	Raj Seymour, Chair

CORE PROJECT TEAM

Alison Rhodes, Parks & Recreation Director
Regina Elsner, Planning & Ecological Services Manager
Jackson Hite, Business Services Manager
Tina Briggs, City Senior Planner

ALIGNED CITY DEPARTMENTS & PROGRAMS

Climate Initiatives
Community Connectors
Facilities
Finance
Growing Up Boulder (501c3 city partner)
Housing & Human Services
Open Space & Mountain Parks
Racial Equity
Transportation
Youth Opportunities Advisory Board

CONSULTANT TEAM

Design Workshop, Planning & Design
Polco, National Research Center, Statically Valid Survey
Barker Rinker Seacat Architecture, Indoor Facilities Assessment
Ballard King, System Assessment

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Executive Summary

BOULDER'S PARKS & RECREATION SYSTEM IS A COMMUNITY TREASURE

Throughout this master planning process, BPR has heard from the public, stakeholders and staff that the Boulder parks and recreation system is a well-managed, essential community treasure.

The 2022 BPR Master Plan documents the work of community members, city leaders, Boulder Parks & Recreation Department (BPR) staff and our consultant team. The process began in the fall of 2020 and was completed in the summer of 2022.

The Boulder Parks and Recreation Master Plan will guide investments and strategies over the next five years, shaping the delivery of services in a manner that is consistent with city sustainability, resilience and equity goals and that meets the community's level of service standards.

The master plan will help BPR respond to three key questions:

1. **What do we do?**
2. **For whom do we do it?**
3. **How do we excel?**

Short-term strategies, those that can be completed over the next 5 years, are the primary focus of the master plan. These strategies will help build continued success over the long-term. The plan also focuses on high level initiatives, rather than more specific and detailed actions. These will be identified and assigned in BPR's annual Action Plan.

MASTER PLAN STRUCTURE

This plan includes four sections that together tell the story of BPR and its relationship to the Boulder community today and in the future.

SECTION 1: WHO WE ARE

The first section provides a brief overview of the BPR system and its services, along with a discussion of the 2022 Master Plan purpose, the planning process and the schedule and phases.

SECTION 2: WHERE WE ARE TODAY

Section 2 highlights community demographic and recreation trends that will impact BPR services, outlines the current state of Boulder's parks and recreation system, and provides an overview of the department's current financial situation. This data informs the master plan recommendations that BPR staff will work to accomplish in the next five years.

SECTION 3: WHERE WE ARE GOING

The third section lays out a roadmap to guide the department through the next five years, offering a strategic direction, which includes policies, goals and initiatives. The roadmap is based on the research, community engagement and policy direction highlighted in Section 2.

SECTION 4: HOW WE WILL GET THERE

The last section discusses how to make the future vision for Boulder's parks and recreation system a reality. It details how BPR will work to accomplish the master plan's goals and initiatives through the annual action planning process. It also lists Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will be used to measure progress over time in order to best meet BPR's commitment to serve the Boulder community with a world class parks and recreation system.

MASTER PLANNING PROCESS

A BLENDED APPROACH

The 2022 Master Plan outlines recommendations in the following ways:

- » **Polices**
- » **Goals**
- » **Initiatives**
- » **Plan Alternatives**

These recommendations are the result of a two-year strategic planning process, which utilized an integrated input model, weaving public engagement and research throughout the process.

The recommendations are also a result of a blended approach that included policy direction, research and community engagement. This approach was established in the 2014 Master Plan. It uses quantitative and qualitative data to determine recommendations. The approach was updated for the 2022 Master Plan to ensure the overarching lenses of equity and resilience were considered throughout the planning process.

FUNDING

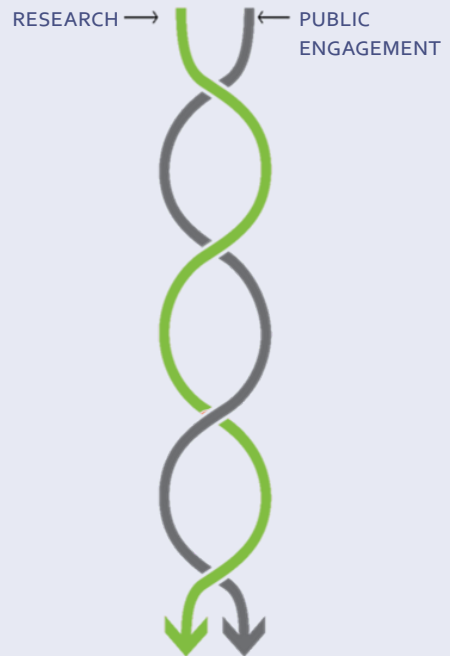
All of the recommendations included in the Master Plan were considered in relation to BPR budgets and funding.

BPR's funding from 2016 through 2021 has remained mostly flat, though expenditures have risen on an almost annual basis. Revenues have decreased, on average 0.4% since 2016 while expenditures, including capital, have increased on average 7.3%. Not including capital, expenditure growth averages approximately 1% per year for a total increase of 2.5% between 2016 and 2021.

While most BPR funds carry a cash balance enabling yearly expenditures to exceed yearly revenue, the significant imbalance between the annual growth of revenues and annual growth of expenditures is not sustainable. In addition to expenditure increases due to inflation, BPR is faced with the increasingly difficult challenge of managing rapidly rising personnel, maintenance, energy, materials, operational costs, aging infrastructure and facilities, and a growing demand for parks and recreational amenities.

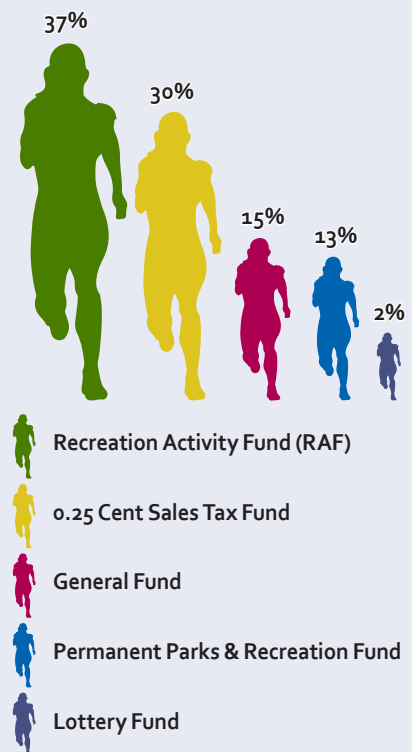
Revenues from BPR's funding sources are projected to remain mostly flat over the next 5-year period, increasing on average 2.8% annually through 2026. Behavioral changes brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic have altered retail spending, work habits,

INTEGRATED INPUT MODEL



2021 OPERATING BUDGET & PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES

\$29,936,362



recreational habits, and other fee and tax generating activities, negatively affecting funding streams for BPR. Both the city and the department have taken conservative approaches to budgeting and fund forecasting, prioritizing equitable service delivery of existing programs, maintenance of staffing levels to support needed levels of service and programming, and critical capital infrastructure projects.

CAPITAL & OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE (O&M) BUDGETS

BPR manages a \$29.9M yearly operating budget. The department is funded through a diverse set of city funds contributed on an annual basis.

The city's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) guidelines prioritize the maintenance of current assets over the development of new facilities. Through the planning process, the community has indicated strong support for this prioritization. Based on current economic conditions, revenue and expenditure projections, funding is not sufficient to maintain all existing system assets and build new park and recreation facilities unless comparable trade-offs occur.

BPR is currently not meeting the goal set by the 2016 Capital Investment Strategic Plan of spending between 2-3% of Current Replacement Value (CRV) annually on capital repairs and replacement.

BPR has experienced a similar shortfall of funds spent on annual O&M expenditures. Based on the 2021 CRV of \$298.4 million and the industry standard of allocating approximately 4% of CRV to O&M or ongoing preventative maintenance, BPR should be spending approximately \$11.9 million on O&M. Between 2016 and 2020 BPR spent on average \$8.6 million, or 2.9% of CRV on O&M, resulting in a \$3.3 million gap between current and recommended O&M expenditures.

To meet recommended spending goals for capital projects and O&M, BPR would have required, on average, an additional \$5.2 million annually between 2016 and 2020.

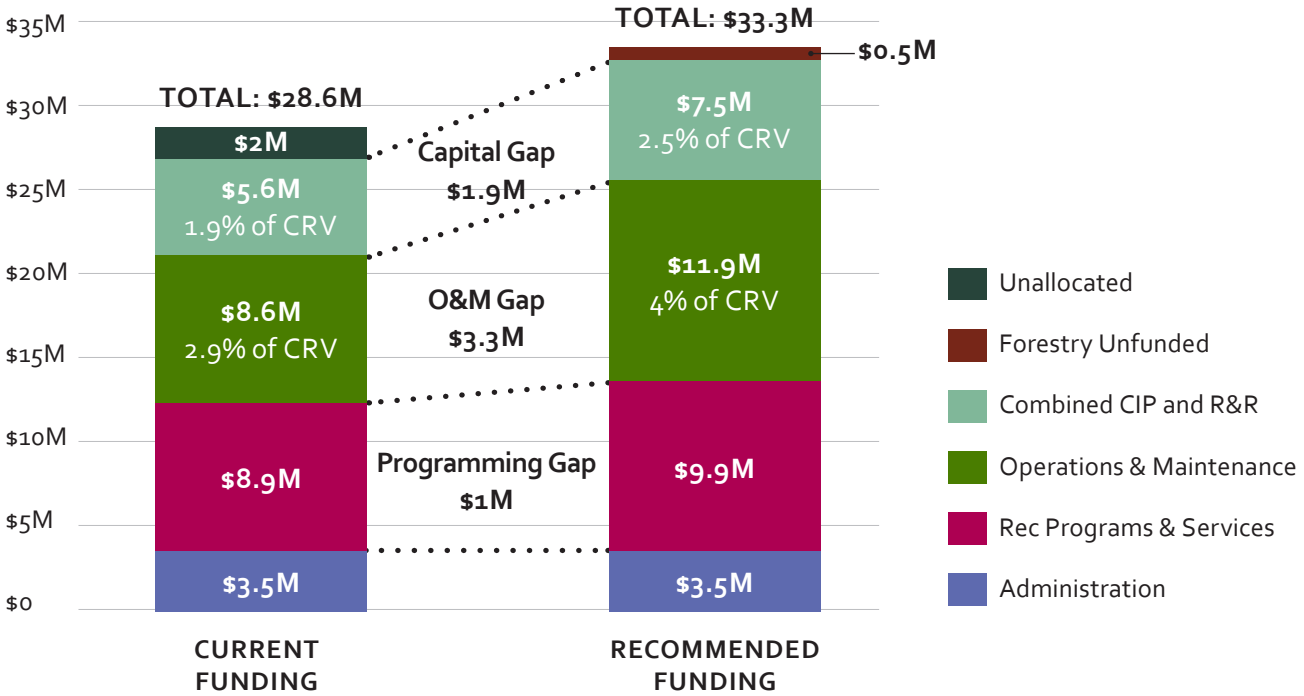
The figure on the next page illustrates the average of 2016 through 2019 funding levels for current practices and the recommended spending based upon the department's portfolio of assets and best practices in asset management, as well as providing ongoing and increased funding for community benefit programming. The total funding gap identified through data gathering and research is \$6.7 million annually, but with approximately \$2 million in currently unallocated funding, the unrealized funding gap is approximately \$4.7 million.

To quantify gaps in funding for targeted capital repair and replacement, an analysis was performed that looked at current projected capital expenditures from 2022 through 2027. For nearly every year through 2027, BPR requires additional funds to meet its capital repair and replacement goals. As BPR's asset portfolio continues to appreciate, and as assets continue to age, increasingly more funds will be required to maintain assets.

PROGRAMMING BUDGET

BPR has made significant strides since the 2014 Master Plan in improving the department's approach to cost recovery, capital planning, program prioritization and asset management. While BPR has consistently met the public expectations around programs and facilities, increased financial pressure from aging assets, deferred capital projects, increasing personnel and operating costs and unfunded capital projects will require increasing cost recovery and revenue generation wherever possible.

CURRENT FUNDING VERSUS RECOMMENDED FUNDING



A funding gap of approximately \$1 million for recreation programming was also identified, which is needed to maintain and sustain the current levels of community benefit programming while addressing affordability issues for lower income residents. Within this \$1 million gap, there are three specific priority areas. Based on community input about how programming and access should be funded for specific age groups (youth and older adults), there is a need for \$590,000 to fund these types of age-based discounts for these two groups. Providing financial aid to support affordability for individuals and families with low incomes requires an additional investment of \$250,000. Two extremely popular and important programs provided by BPR, EXPAND for individuals living with disabilities and the Youth Services Initiative (YSI) serving youth from low-income families, require \$212,000 to continue to support these community members.

BPR must continue to pursue cost recovery within its programs and creative means of revenue generation and/or strategies to supplement current funding sources to close funding gaps, remain financially sustainable, and provide services to the community.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The strategic plan (this master plan and implementation plan) is organized by six Key Themes. Each includes policies, goals and initiatives that provide the framework for BPR's future work.

POLICIES

Policies are driven by decision makers representing the Boulder community, including the Boulder City Council and PRAB. They provide direction and help set the framework within which BPR operates by supporting consistent operations and transparent decision making. They also lay the groundwork for the development of BPR goals and initiatives.

GOALS

Goals, which are influenced by the master planning process, are the long-term results BPR would like to achieve to fulfill its mission, vision, and policy. Feedback was gathering during public engagement efforts to guide BPR in how goals should be prioritized. Goals are listed in the priority order in which the community felt they should be pursued.

INITIATIVES

Initiatives are activities and/or projects BPR staff work on to meet the goals. They are specific and measurable.

POLICIES

Provide clear direction for what BPR will achieve within the intention of the key themes.

GOALS

Results that require time and planning.

INITIATIVES

Actions taken to accomplish goals.

KEY THEMES

Six key themes, identified through community input, provided the framework for the 2014 Master Plan. These themes remain important to the community and are integral to the 2022 Master Plan. They provide a framework to help organize the Master Plan policies, goals and initiatives and help shape the strategies that are the focus for future action and decision-making, outlined in Sections 3 and 4 of this plan.

The six key themes are:



Community Health and Wellness

Keep Boulder emotionally and physically healthy through its parks, facilities and programs.



Financial Sustainability

Balance the many demands with existing resources. Recognize the need to focus on core services and community priorities.



Taking Care of What We Have

Prioritize investments in existing parks and facilities.



Building Community & Relationships

Build a connected community through outreach programs and initiatives. Create social and cultural equity for healthy relationships across Boulder.



Youth Engagement & Activity

Engage youth with parks, facilities and programs that provide direct experience with nature, experiential learning and opportunities to close the educational achievement gap.



Organizational Readiness

Respond to changes over time by using new technologies and data-driven and collaborative decision making tools.

PLAN ALTERNATIVES

The master plan includes three scenarios, following the city’s business and budgeting planning approach that requires departments to prepare for a future without increased revenue. This approach acknowledges the need for an effective organization to rebalance priorities—and their associated expenditures—using three tiers of fiscal alternatives. Each alternative makes different assumptions about available resources (see Section 3: Where We are Going).

- » **Fiscally Constrained Alternative**
BPR’s commitment to the community over the next five years. This alternative plans for prioritized spending within existing budget targets.
- » **Action Alternative**
Aspirational projects and programs that may be accomplished if additional funding becomes available. This alternative describes the extra services or capital improvements that could be undertaken when additional funding is available.
- » **Vision Alternative**
An unfunded wishlist of projects and programs. This alternative represents the complete set of services and facilities desired by the community.

Through the master planning process, BPR has gathered feedback on desired facility and programming improvements from both individual members of the community and specific user groups. Balancing the community’s desires with BPR’s financial reality requires that the department prioritize what can be accomplished.

The Fiscally Constrained scenario reflects BPR’s commitment to the community, focusing on core services and those that benefit the greater community. The tables to the right describe the projects BPR will work to complete over the next five years.

PARKS	
FISCALLY CONSTRAINED PLAN ALTERNATIVE	
PROJECTS	
Park Maintenance - BPR Asset Management Program	Maintain Well at FCI .07, Develop Violet Park
Playgrounds	1-2 Parks/Playgrounds per year refurbished (25-30 year)
Restrooms - Pending LOS evaluation	Maintain current LOS, transitioning to universal restrooms as facilities are built or replaced
Valmont Park - 2015 Concept Plan	Phase 1 development of adventure and nature play elements
Urban Canopy - Urban Forest Strategic Plan	Focus on health of current canopy through IPM, Tree Safety, EAB response, and public tree protection— Some canopy growth through tax investment, philanthropy and partnership
Civic Area	Activation w/ Operations Focus
Area III	Complete Baseline Urban Service Plan and develop concept plan, but nothing is developed

FACILITIES	
FISCALLY CONSTRAINED PLAN ALTERNATIVE	
PROJECTS	
Athletic Fields - 2015 Athletic Field Study	Optimize usage through partnerships, maintenance and conversion to artificial turf
Recreation Centers - 2022 Facility Needs Assessment	EBCC & NBRC - Maintain Well SBRC - Retire past useful life facility but not replace; citywide facility feasibility study for SOBO area facilities
Courts - Study pending	Maintain Well. Court study to identify LOS— Seek opportunities to maximize community benefit through Joint Use Agreements/ partnerships
Aquatics - 2015 Aquatics Feasibility Study	Maintain current service levels and pools
Reservoir - 2018 South Shore Capital Strategy	Improve existing site connections and circulation

PROGRAMS & SERVICES	
FISCALLY CONSTRAINED PLAN ALTERNATIVE	
PROJECTS	
Facility Access Fees	Continued increases to base fees to keep up with cost escalation, maintaining discounts for youth and seniors
Financial Aid	Maintaining Financial Aid LOS reliant upon grants and philanthropy
EXPAND	Core Services for Target Population funded by GF subsidy and grants
Youth / Teens	Additional programming only possible through discontinuation of other services or market based programs

**BPR ANNUAL ACTION PLANNING
5-STEP PROCESS**



BPR'S FUTURE

With the acceptance of this master plan, BPR commits to fulfilling its mission and to implementing the initiatives and the Fiscally Constrained Plan. Through an annual action planning process, BPR will ensure that the 2022 Master Plan is a living document used to improve the overall system and achieve the goals of the community well into the future. BPR will utilize equity mapping, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and the city's Sustainability, Equity and Resilience framework to plan its work and measure success over time.

The department will collaborate with PRAB, City Council and aligned city departments to:

- » Ensure the goals and initiatives of each key theme are considered
- » Maximize resources and efficiency
- » Make sure BPR continues to deliver best-in-class parks, facilities and programs for the Boulder community

ANNUAL ACTION PLANNING PROCESS

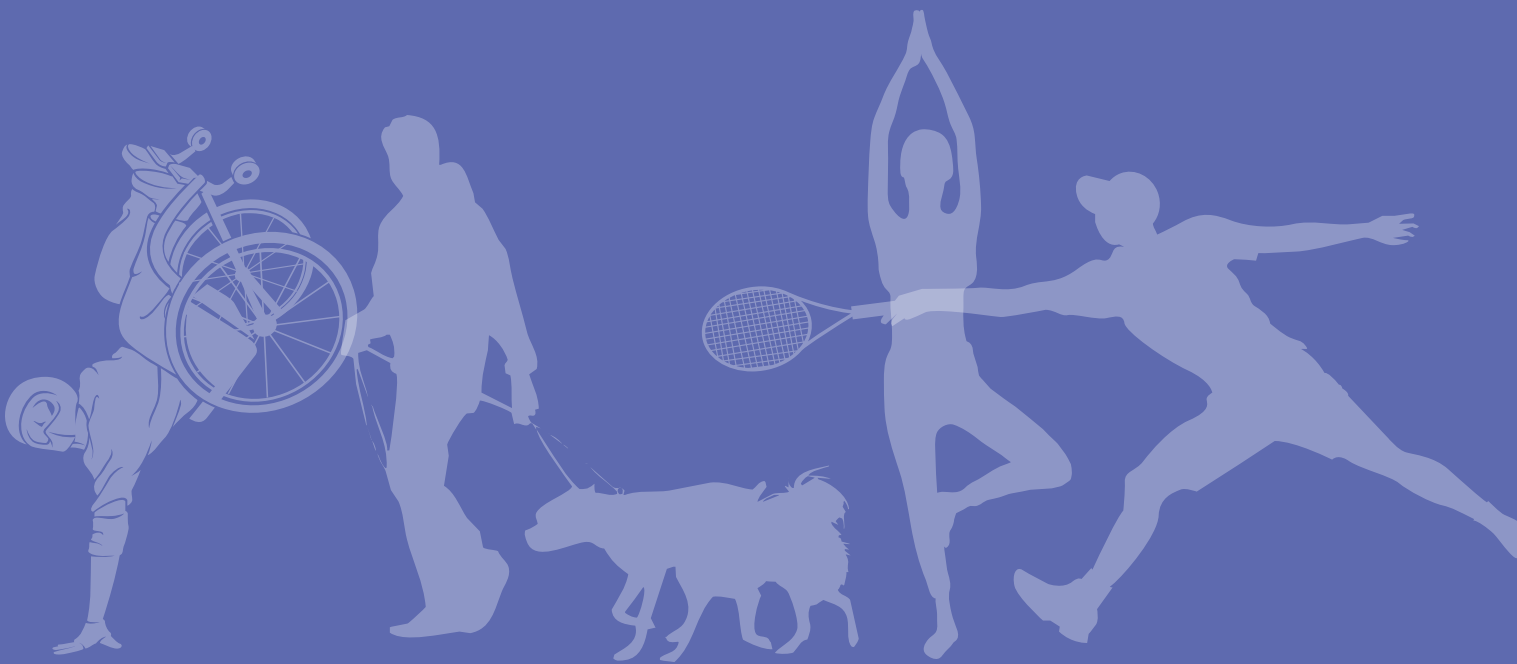
The Annual Action Plan process is how BPR will ensure the community's goals as outlined in the 2022 Master Plan happen. The Action Plan will include each year's committed goals to achieve Master Plan initiatives and Fiscally Constrained Plan Alternatives. BPR follows five steps to complete the annual Action Planning Process. The first involves reviewing the current state of the system and plan progress. BPR will then review the master plan goals and initiatives to identify areas of focus for next year. This step includes reporting out plan progress to the community. Third, staff will select projects to implement based upon resources, the current state of the system, and focus areas. The Action Plan will inform the development of the operating and capital budgets, which is the fourth step. Finally and most importantly, staff will implement the Action Plan.

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The Annual Action Plan is also informed by City Council's workplan and priorities, and citywide goals and priorities as outlined in the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) and various master plans. BPR has a well-defined set of tools used to plan, measure, and evaluate proposed projects and programs. Through this master planning process, staff realized they can simplify these tools to ensure work is intentionally designed and delivered and that investments are data-driven. New methods will support BPR's ability to address impacts relating to changing social, economic and environmental conditions. As the city finalizes climate and equity related targets, BPR will utilize recommended assessment tools to inform how BPR's work will contribute to achieving those targets and community-wide goals.



BPR Director Alison Rhodes and PRAB Chair Raj Seymour jump into the Scott Carpenter Pool opening celebration.



WHO WE ARE

- » Boulder Parks & Recreation (BPR) provides parks and recreation services to the entire Boulder community. We are extremely proud of the work we do, managing and operating parks, facilities and programming for a world-class city. The 2022 Master Plan will help guide decision making and our work for the next five years. This section describes our system and the master planning process.



BPR DIVISIONS

BPR includes seven main divisions with staff members who provide core services to community members to ensure a high quality of life and a healthy environment.

Urban Parks

Performs day-to-day management of facilities and public spaces, including maintenance, programming and youth outreach

Planning

Manages capital project planning, design and construction, geographic information systems (GIS), historic and cultural resources, park renovation projects and community engagement related to planning

Natural Resources

Manages urban forestry and natural lands and provides urban park ranger services

Community Building

Supports accessibility and equity efforts, and manages camps, EXPAND, YSI and other recreation programming and volunteer efforts

Business Services

Functions include finance, information technology, staff training and development, business planning and process improvement analysis

Regional Facilities

Manages Boulder Reservoir, Flatirons Golf Course, Valmont Bike Park

Recreation

Manages North Boulder Recreation Center, South Boulder Recreation Center and East Boulder Community Center, along with sports, health and wellness, aquatic and general recreation programming

Getting some air at the Valmont Bike Park.

BPR System Overview



The iconic Flatirons, recognized throughout the world provide a stunning natural backdrop to the city and its parks and recreation system.

OUR SYSTEM

Boulder is known as a worldwide hub for supporting active lifestyles. An average of 300 days of sunshine per year give residents, workers, students and visitors many opportunities to participate in the wide variety of outdoor recreation options available in the local parks, which include natural areas, in and around Boulder.

Year-round, the city's three recreation centers and other facilities provide indoor and outdoor spaces for recreation activities, while a wide range of fee-based and subsidized programming provides education and recreational instruction for the community. BPR also manages several important historic and cultural resources.

MISSION: WHO ARE WE?

The City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Department promotes the health and well-being of the entire Boulder community by collaboratively providing high-quality parks, facilities and programs.

VISION: WHERE ARE WE GOING AND WHY?

BPR envisions a community where every member's health and well-being is founded on unparalleled parks, facilities and programs.

Visit our website at:

boulderparks-rec.org

OUR SERVICES

BPR works to make opportunities for recreation available to everyone, providing crucial services to help ensure a healthy and active community. The department operates and maintains many parks, natural areas, public trees, and three recreation facilities, and provides recreation programming for Boulder community members. BPR also owns and manages nine historic and cultural sites in Boulder, as well as three rolling railroad stock, leased to the Colorado Railroad Museum.

Daily, staff play crucial roles in providing community benefits, connecting people to physically active lifestyles and opportunities to improve mental health, and reconnecting people during recovery from events, including the COVID-19 pandemic and 2021 Marshall Fire.

The BPR Inventory Map on the facing page and the key below highlight the locations and numbers of parks, facilities and amenities that BPR staff operate and maintain.

BOULDER'S PARKS & RECREATION SYSTEM INCLUDES PARKS, FACILITIES & PROGRAMS

BPR oversees a parks and recreation system that includes parks, facilities and programs.

Department staff manage over 1,800 acres of urban parkland. They also oversee three recreation centers, five pools, the Boulder Reservoir, Flatirons Golf Course and the Pearl Street Mall. A sampling of programming includes aquatics, arts, sports, therapeutic recreation, wellness, camps and youth outreach.

COMMUNITY HUBS

BPR parks, facilities, programs, and historic and cultural resources provide places where community members can:

- » improve their physical and mental health;
- » access core services;
- » and gather together.

BPR INVENTORY LIST

 55 Parks	 3 Recreation Centers	 1 Cemetery
 6 Natural Areas (includes Boulder Reservoir)	 5 Indoor & Outdoor Pools	 6 Civic Spaces
 4 Gardens	 3 Skate Parks	 9 Historic & Cultural Resources in Boulder
 40 Playgrounds	 1 Bike Park	 <i>BPR Inventory includes approximately 50,000 trees located throughout the Boulder community.</i>
 4 Dog Parks	 28 Tennis Courts	
 46 Athletic Fields	 44 Other Sports Courts	
 1 Golf Course	 6 Undeveloped Properties	



Families enjoying the playground at Creekside Park.

PARKS

BPR maintains parks, natural areas and trees throughout the city where community members can gather, exercise, rest, build social relationships and enjoy the outdoors close to home. Staff manage, operate and maintain more than 1,800 acres of urban parkland (including 55 developed parks) and natural areas. This includes pocket parks, neighborhood parks, community parks and city parks, with just under 300 additional acres of undeveloped parkland.

BPR manages approximately 25% of the overall tree canopy in Boulder (approximately 50,000 trees). This includes trees in parks, as well as trees in public street rights of way. BPR also manages the Boulder Creek Path, Central Park & Civic Area, Andrews Arboretum, Columbia Cemetery and the Pearl Street Mall.



Pumping iron at North Boulder Recreation Center.

RECREATION FACILITIES

BPR recreation facilities offer community members opportunities to exercise and recreate in all four seasons. Staff manage 138,000 square feet of recreation center space, offering services across three recreation centers, two outdoor aquatic facilities, several sports complexes, a bike park, two outdoor skate parks, and other specialized and regional facilities including the Boulder Reservoir, Valmont Bike Park and the Flatirons Golf Course.

PROGRAMS

BPR partners with local organizations and groups to offer over 2,500 diverse types of recreation programs that promote physically and mentally active lifestyles for people of all backgrounds, ages and abilities. Some programs include a fee, while others are subsidized to ensure all members of the community have access to recreation.



Gymnastics program participants hanging out.

- » EXPAND programs provide opportunities for people with disabilities to improve and gain new recreation and leisure skills.
- » Youth Service Initiative (YSI) programs and activities give young people, whose circumstance would otherwise prevent them from experiencing many of the recreational and educational activities and options their peers enjoy, a chance to explore these opportunities.
- » SilverSneakers®, Silver & Fit®, Renew Active™ and other third-party programs give older adults opportunities to participate in subsidized programming.
- » Aquatics, dance, fitness, nutrition, biking, tennis, golf and pottery programs, in addition a variety of camps and sports programs round out BPR's suite of services.

Master Plan Purpose

STRATEGIC ROADMAP

The 2022 Master Plan serves as a guidebook to help BPR staff provide parks and recreation services that meet the needs of the Boulder community. It also acts as a roadmap for the management of the parks and recreation system, informing capital investment, programming, operations and maintenance priorities for the next five years.

Building on the success of initiatives from the 2014 Master Plan and recalibrating to ensure BPR services are tailored to meet changing needs, staff are strategically focusing on the aspects of BPR services that provide desired community benefits and meet citywide sustainability, resilience and equity goals.

The 2022 Master Plan helps BPR answer three important questions:

- **What do we do?**
- **Whom do we serve?**
- **How do we excel?**

Staff will use the content of this plan to respond to current needs, anticipate future challenges and identify policies, goals and initiatives to help meet the Department's mission and meet community needs today and in the future.

The mission, vision, goals and initiatives will be integrated into BPR's work so every employee plays a role in building success. The goals and initiatives should guide BPR's work over the next five years, at which point an update effort should be initiated. Department goals, initiatives and projects should be reviewed regularly to assess successful outcomes related to the mission and vision, and revised as needed to address roadblocks to success.

GUIDING FRAMEWORK

BPR used several citywide initiatives and plans as a framework to guide the 2022 Master Plan process. The principles of equity, resilience and sustainability are woven throughout each element of the plan to support community values and citywide goals.

BOULDER VALLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) guides long-range planning and other activities that shape the built and natural environments in the Boulder Valley. The plan provides policy guidance to ensure protection of the natural environment and support a livable, vibrant and sustainable community. The BVCP

2014 MASTER PLAN KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

BPR has achieved most of the goals identified in the 2014 Master Plan, including **decreasing backlog repairs by 41%, completing the new Scott Carpenter Pool, the Boulder Reservoir Visitors Center and restructuring the recreation pass.**

Other notable accomplishments since 2014 include:

21%

increase in financial aid enrollments

52%

increase in EXPAND participation between 2015-2020 (enrollment doubled during this 5-year timeframe)

26,300+

hours of volunteer time annually

Asset Management software was implemented



The Tree Giveaway is an important community event, encouraging community members to help add shade and decrease CO₂ in the atmosphere.

BOULDER VALLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN VISION

The Boulder Valley community honors its history and legacy of planning for a livable community surrounded by open space and rural lands while striving together to create and preserve a truly special place that is sustainable, resilient, equitable and inclusive—now and for future generations.

SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK VISION

A future with equitable access to health, prosperity and fulfillment; where our community adapts and thrives in response to emerging, and sometimes urgent, social, economic and environmental challenges.

acknowledges the role that parks and recreation plays in building community and improving the quality of life for Boulder Valley community members. The BVCP recommends that parks and recreation programs and facilities continue to provide for a well-balanced and healthy community by offering a range of activities that support mental and physical health through high-quality programs and services.

SUSTAINABILITY, EQUITY & RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK

The City of Boulder’s Sustainability, Equity & Resilience Framework provides a vision for an inspired future and aligns efforts across the city by establishing a common language for goals and priorities. This framework guides budgeting and planning processes by providing consistent goals necessary to achieve Boulder’s vision of a great community and the actions required to achieve identified goals.

The 2022 Master Plan policies, goals and initiatives have been developed to align with the following seven elements of the framework:

- » **Safe:** A welcoming and inclusive community that fosters personal and community safety and ensures that all residents are secure and cared for during emergencies and natural disasters.
- » **Healthy and Socially Thriving:** All Boulder residents enjoy high levels of physical and mental well-being and abundant recreational, cultural, and educational opportunities in an environment where human rights are respected.
- » **Livable:** High-performing, safe, well-maintained attractive buildings and infrastructure that accommodate a diverse set of community needs for working, playing and living.
- » **Accessible and Connected:** A safe, accessible and sustainable multi-modal transportation system that connects people with each other and where they want to go. Innovation, inclusivity and open access to information fosters connectivity and promotes community engagement.
- » **Environmentally Sustainable:** A sustainable, thriving, and equitable community that benefits from and supports clean energy; preserves and responsibly uses the earth’s resources; and cares for ecosystems.
- » **Responsibly Governed:** A local government that provides an excellent customer experience, responsibly manages the city’s assets, and makes data-driven decisions informed by community engagement.

- » **Economically Vital:** All residents and businesses can access and benefit from a healthy and sustainable economy that is innovative, diverse and collaborative.

PRINCIPLES

The principles of equity, resilience and sustainability were used throughout the master planning process to influence and guide the collection and analysis of data, community engagement efforts and policies, goals and initiatives to guide BPR’s work.

Equity

The City of Boulder is leading its equity work with racial equity. BPR is committed to this work and ensuring equity for all community members by focusing on equity as it relates to socioeconomic conditions, varying abilities, and ages of parks and recreation system users.

Resilience & Sustainability

Ensuring an environmentally, economically, socially sustainable and resilient future is an overarching priority for the Boulder community. BPR is committed to delivering reliable health and wellness services in a sustainable manner, and proactively planning and operating parks, facilities and programs to ensure resilience of the parks and recreation system.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

In 2017, the City of Boulder adopted an engagement strategic framework, designed by community members, that cultivates a two-way dialogue between city representatives and the community to encourage more meaningful public engagement. This framework is inclusive, consistent and transparent. In order to make better decisions and develop more responsive programs and services, the city has developed six strategies to guide community engagement efforts citywide. BPR is committed to using these strategies in all public engagement efforts.

- » **Learn Together**
- » **Help People Know What to Expect**
- » **Cultivate Relationships**
- » **Be Transparent**
- » **Use the Right Tools**
- » **Evaluate and Evolve**



Equity

Providing everyone the specific resources and opportunities they need to be successful and to ensure equal outcomes. This differs from equality, which is treating everyone the same.



Resilience

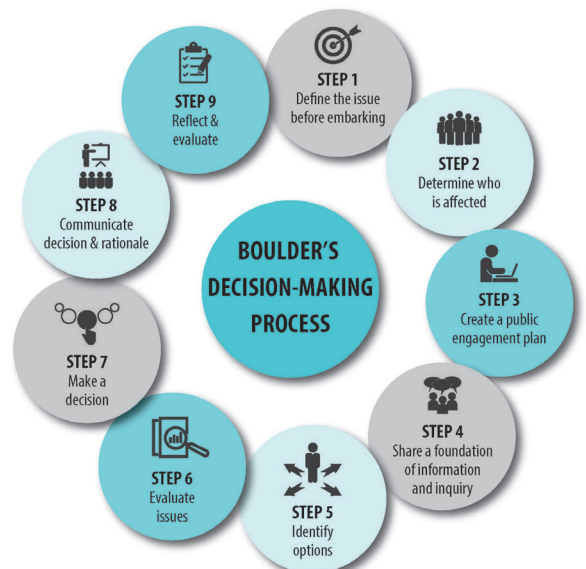
The capacity to prepare and plan for disruptions, to recover from shocks and stresses, and to adapt and grow from these experiences.



Sustainability

The ability to meet the needs of today in a way that does not inhibit future generations from meeting the needs of tomorrow.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: 9 STEPS TO GOOD ENGAGEMENT



Source: City of Boulder Engagement Strategic Framework

RACIAL EQUITY PLAN INTERNAL INFRASTRUCTURE STEPS

The plan outlines steps city departments need to take to adapt internal infrastructure and communication to meet the plan's five goals:

- » Everybody Gets It
- » Justly Do It
- » Community Commitment
- » Power to All People
- » Representation Matters

RACIAL EQUITY PLAN

The City of Boulder's Racial Equity Plan focuses on eliminating systemic and institutional racism in policies and practices. It states that:

"Race is often the greatest predictor of access to success in our current system. The creation and perpetuation of racial inequities is embedded into government at all levels. Initially focusing on racial equity provides the opportunity to introduce a framework, tools and resources that can also be applied to other marginalized groups based on gender, sexual orientation, ability, class and age, among others."

BPR is committed to taking the steps necessary to continue to address historic inequities and ensure equity is integral to all of the department's policies and practices, aligning with community priorities.

All plans referenced in this section can be found on the City of Boulder website.



Kidz Summer Camp attendees having fun in one of Boulder's many parks.

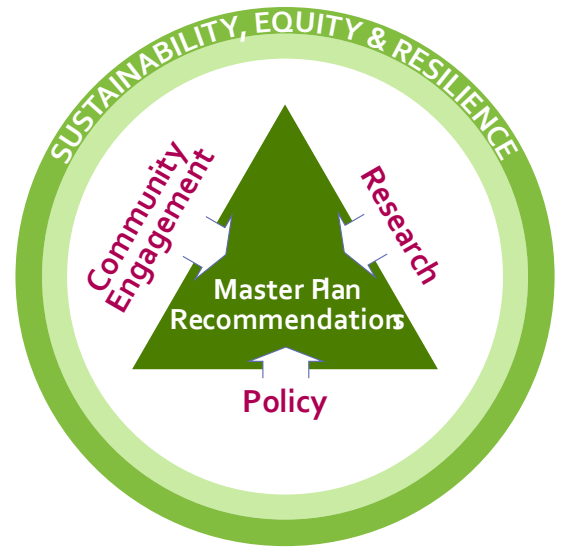
Master Plan Process

A BLENDED APPROACH

The 2022 Master Plan outlines recommendations in the following ways:

- » **Policies**
- » **Goals**
- » **Initiatives**
- » **Plan Alternatives**

These recommendations are the result of a two-year strategic planning process, which utilized a blended approach that included policy direction, research and community engagement. This approach was established in the 2014 Master Plan. It uses quantitative and qualitative data to determine recommendations. The approach was updated for the 2022 Master Plan to ensure the overarching lenses of sustainability, equity and resilience were considered throughout the planning process.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Engaging community members in a variety of ways throughout the planning process ensured that their voices were heard and considered in formulating BPR's strategic direction.

RESEARCH

Research was a key component of this master planning effort. BPR knows the Boulder community expects data-driven decision making and works to ensure this is a foundation of the department's work. For this project, research included reviewing relevant plans and reports, conducting a statistically valid survey, reviewing national and regional trends, conducting a facilities assessment, completing a financial analysis, and engaging BPR and other city department staff.

POLICY GUIDANCE

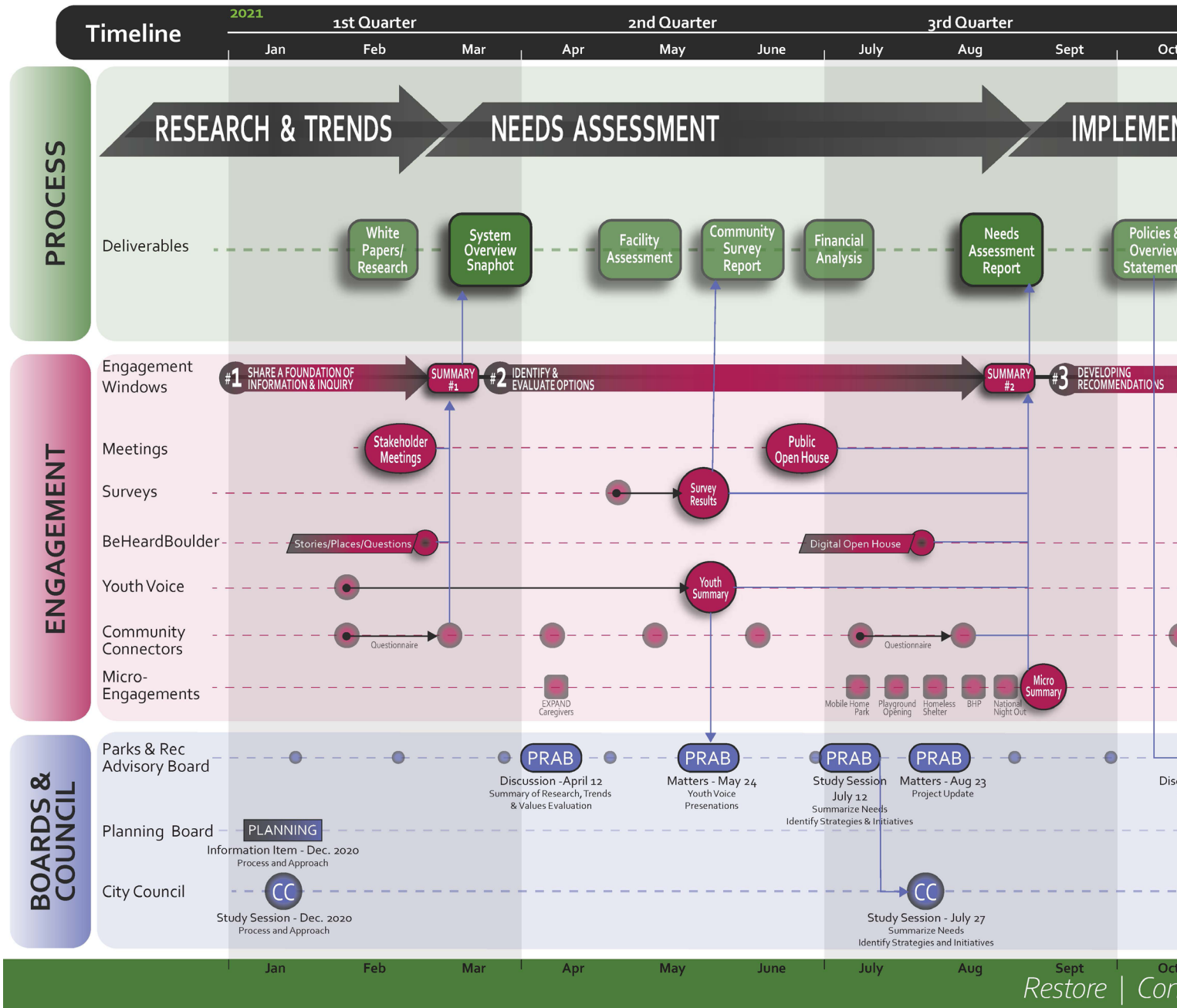
The City Council and the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) provided input at major milestones throughout the planning process. PRAB feedback was critical to successfully combining public feedback and research into meaningful recommendations that are in line with city policies. As the council's appointed community representatives for parks and recreation matters, the PRAB's guidance was critical for ensuring the 2022 Master Plan reflects community needs. Already approved city plans, BPR's service delivery model, asset management program and other pertinent guiding documents also helped guide the planning process.

Project Schedule & Phases

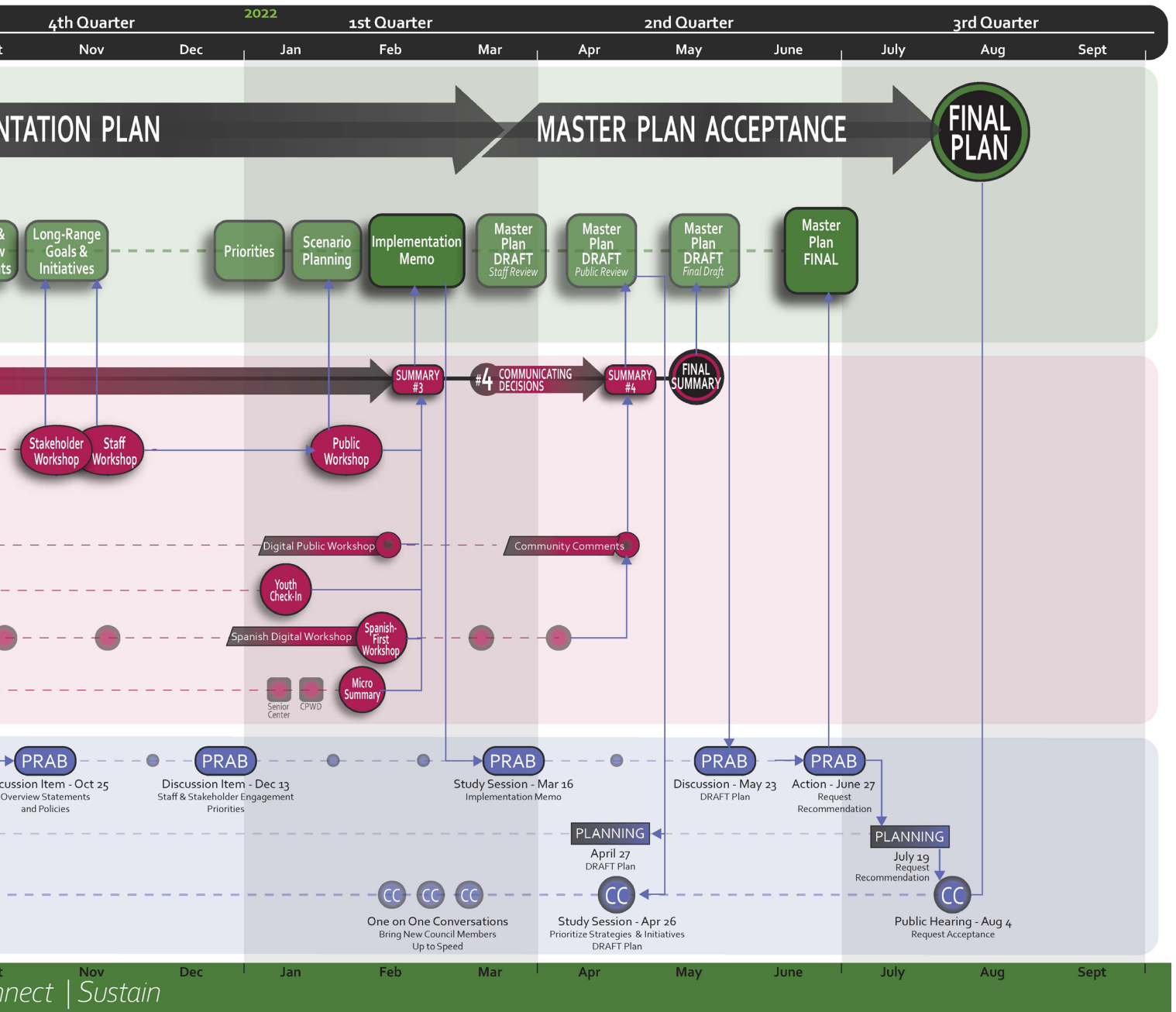
The 2022 Master Plan project schedule was broken into five phases, detailed in the timeline below. Each phase included extensive research, community engagement and direction from other planning documents and policy makers, including the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) and City Council.



BOULDER PARKS & RECREATION
2022 Master Plan



WORKS AND RECREATION Master Plan



Source: BPR

ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Interactive

BeHeardBoulder map exercise giving community members a chance to share memories about BPR parks or facilities

142

open participation survey responses

Bilingual

flyers, signage and door hangers advertising ways to participate

284

statistically valid survey responses

Social Media

campaigns on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter

ENGAGEMENT

A critical and ongoing component of the planning process is community engagement. An equitable, open and collaborative engagement process builds trust throughout the community in both the 2022 Master Plan document and how it was created. The engagement process provided opportunities for the community to be active in the planning process and influence the plan's findings and recommendations. BPR collected feedback through four engagement windows.

This feedback influenced all aspects of the 2022 Master Plan, including what types of community-oriented services BPR delivers, how these services are prioritized, and how to best deliver them with diverse needs and limited funding.

METHODS

BPR shared and followed the citywide engagement plan, which included efforts to reach less represented groups. Staff used a variety of engagement methods to provide meaningful opportunities for community input.

STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS & PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES

All engagement windows of the planning process included staff and community stakeholder workshops and public open houses. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, workshops and open houses shifted between in person and virtual based formats depending on public health orders. Open houses allowed community members to provide input regarding what was important to them and allowed for directed feedback on a variety of 2022 Master Plan process topics.



Community members enjoying the large variety of services BPR offers throughout Boulder.

CITYWIDE COORDINATION

Interviews were conducted with seven departments or workgroups throughout the city including Climate Initiatives, Open Space and Mountain Parks, Facilities, Equity, Transportation, Housing and Human Services and Finance. The interviews identified common policy and capital goals, shared community goals, and opportunities for collaboration and mutual benefit.

STATISTICALLY VALID SURVEY

Polco's National Research Center conducted a statistically valid survey of Boulder community members. A total of 4,000 paper surveys were sent to randomly selected addresses and 284 recipients completed the survey. The survey data was statistically weighted to adjust for certain demographic groups not responding. An open online community survey was available to all community members during the same time period. A comparison of results for both surveys indicated alignment between the statistically valid survey group and the general community.

BEHEARDBOULDER

To gather input from the community throughout the planning process, BPR used the city's online engagement platform, BeHeardBoulder. Community members could provide feedback on specific questions during each engagement window through various activities including quick polls, questionnaires, map activities and general comments. These opportunities were advertised through multiple print and digital communications channels.



ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

30,000
E-blast subscribers

Staff Charrette
full-day discussion of goals and initiatives

Spanish & English
community workshops were held to prioritize goals and initiatives

Micro Engagements
with youth, older adults and people with disabilities

MICRO ENGAGEMENTS

Micro engagements are small, targeted opportunities for the project team to interact with specific groups from the community. This includes meeting these groups where they already are, rather than having them come to the project team.

These engagement opportunities were utilized throughout the planning process to obtain targeted feedback from specific community groups including, but not limited to, low-income populations, people experiencing homelessness and Spanish-speaking community members.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

BPR coordinated with Growing Up Boulder (GUB) and the Youth Opportunities Advisory Board (YOAB) to administer surveys and collect feedback on the planning process from youth and teens throughout Boulder. Feedback from youth and teens was collected and incorporated into both the Needs Assessment Report and the Implementation Memorandum.

TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUPS (TAGS)

Comprised of staff from BPR, TAG members served as subject matter experts to verify information and research and provide input on specific projects and programs that should be prioritized. The TAGs include both the Management Technical Advisory Group (MTAG) and Working Technical Advisory Group (WTAG).



BPR staff and stakeholders offered invaluable information that informed the plan recommendations.

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD (PRAB)

The PRAB played a critical role in the development of the 2022 Master Plan by reviewing research and findings, providing input on content at critical junctures, offering policy direction and recommending the final plan to City Council. During the planning process PRAB held multiple study sessions dedicated to the Master Plan. The PRAB's guidance was instrumental in shaping the recommendations, policies, goals and initiatives of the plan.

CITY COUNCIL

As the governing body that accepts the final 2022 Master Plan, City Council engaged in the project and provided feedback and policy direction at key junctures. In December 2020, the council reviewed and approved the project approach and community engagement plan. In July 2021, project staff presented the findings of the Needs Assessment to City Council. In April 2021, a study session allowed City Council to review and discuss the draft plan and provide feedback that was incorporated into the final 2022 Master Plan.



BEHEARDBOULDER COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

"Making parks the centerpiece of the community will ensure that the community recognizes it is in their best interest to take care of parks in return."



"Focus on the community experience, including improving the registration system, marketing, public engagement, etc."



"Ensure that 'public' includes everyone in the community and think about long term benefits, especially for facilities/ programs that are adaptable as much as short term gains to be more resilient."



"Less prescriptive programming when designing facilities would allow for more flexible uses in the future."





WHERE WE ARE TODAY

- » Understanding changes in the Boulder community that have occurred since the completion of the 2014 Master Plan provides BPR with a foundation for decision making and planning for the future. In this section, community demographics and trends, the current state of Boulder's parks and recreation system, and an overview of today's financial situation provide useful data. This data informs the 2022 Master Plan recommendations that BPR staff will work to accomplish in the next five years.



The natural features in and around Boulder make it one of the most beautiful cities in Colorado.

Community Context

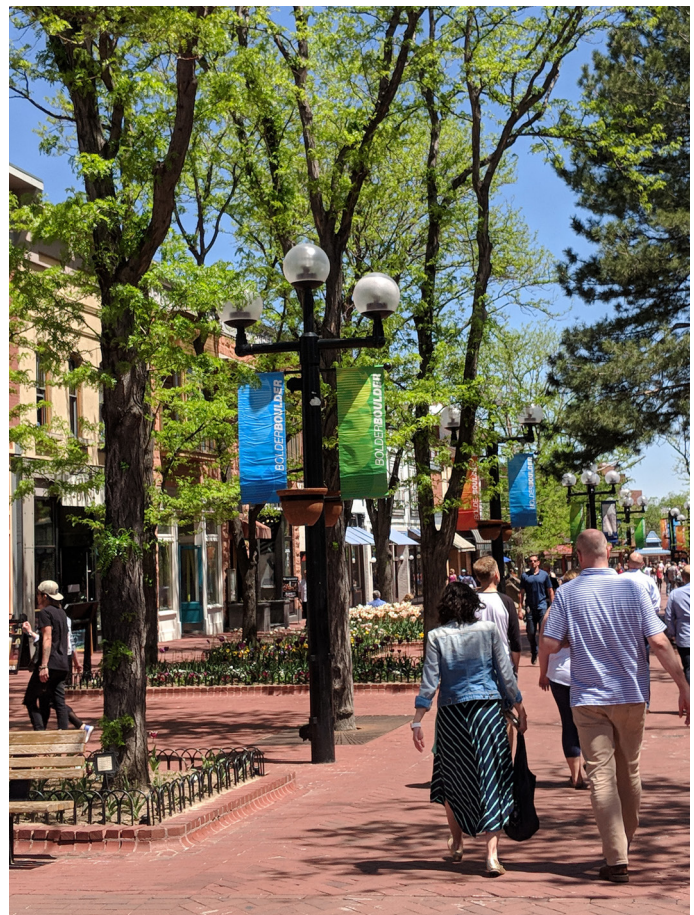


Spring at the Pearl Street Mall brighten the day for all who visit.

IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE

Communities throughout the country understand that urban parks, natural areas, recreation facilities, historic and cultural resources and recreation programs are community amenities that improve quality of life. Boulder has one of the premier parks and recreation systems in the country. BPR's services offer spaces where community members can recreate, connect with nature, spend time with family and friends, meet new people, and participate in programming year-round, both indoors and outdoors.

While BPR has been doing an excellent job of meeting the needs of the community, it will become increasingly challenging in the future, due in part to growing use of outdoor amenities by people who live in Boulder and in adjacent Front Range communities. The population BPR serves is changing as community members age and become increasingly more diverse.





Doing the “twist” at South Boulder Recreation Center.

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

BPR currently provides recreation to a city population of 108,091 (including the CU Boulder student population). While Boulder’s population growth is limited and less than statewide averages, the city population is expected to grow to approximately 123,000 by 2040. Not only is the population within city limits expected to increase, but about 1 million additional people are expected to move to the Denver region, with another 1 million moving to the northern Front Range, which includes Fort Collins, Longmont and other municipalities, by 2040. As an employment center drawing from the Front Range, Boulder is anticipating an increase of 14,000 employees in the community by 2040, which will increase usage and in turn create additional stress on Boulder’s parks and recreation system.

According to the U.S. Census American Community Survey, the majority of Boulder’s population is white (87.7%). The city has a higher percentage of Asian community members (7% total) than Boulder County and the state of Colorado. Black or African American community members make up 1.3% of the population, 0.2% are American Indian or Alaska Native, and 1.6% are other races. In terms of ethnicity, approximately 10% of community members are of Hispanic or Latinx origin (of any race).

Projections for changes to the composition of the population by race are not calculated for counties or municipalities; however, the Colorado State Demography Office developed a statewide forecast in October 2011 through 2030. Populations of Black, Asian/Pacific Islander, and American Indian remain relatively stable in proportion to all other races. Additionally, based on state-wide projections, there will be a significant increase in the Latinx community population – growing from 10% of the total population in 2019 to potentially just over 30% by 2040. The state forecast may not be realized in Boulder, but the nationwide trend of an increasing Hispanic population will very likely influence the city and BPR amenities, facilities and programs. Boulder County’s population is aging. By 2040, the current percentage of community members aged 60 and older will nearly double to make up 28% of the county’s total population.

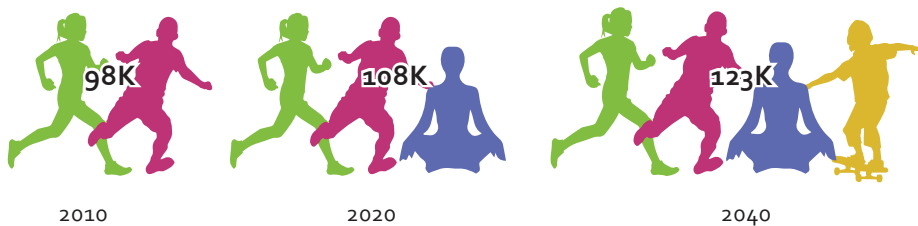
These trends will result in an increased demand for parks and recreation services. Population growth, as well as an increasingly diverse and aging population, will require a greater capacity for services and additional funding to meet community needs.

GROWING POPULATION PRESSURE

The growing population of Boulder and surrounding communities will result in an increasing demand for BPR services. This will require greater capacity, and specific services focused on older adults, the Latinx community and community members who require equitable access to services.

It will also result in increased environmental, social and economic strain on the parks and recreation system and will likely require additional funding to meet community needs.

CITY OF BOULDER POPULATION ESTIMATE PROJECTION



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

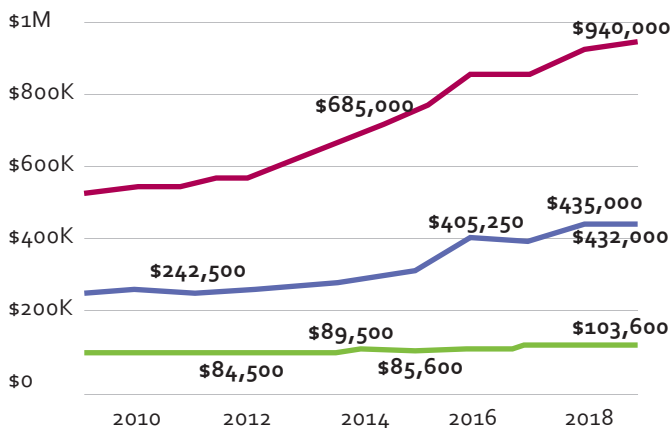
BOULDER COUNTY AGING POPULATION

By 2040, the current percentage of community members aged 60 and older will nearly double to make up 28% of the county's total population.



With increasing numbers of aging adults, BPR will likely see an increased demand for senior programs and facilities that have observed appeal from review of national and regional trends (e.g., Medicare health and wellness programs and facilities such as warm-water aquatics pools and pickleball courts).

CITY OF BOULDER HOUSING COSTS & INCOME



■ Median Detached Home Sales Price
 ■ Median Attached Home Sales Price
■ Median Household Income

With housing costs rising faster than income, and a higher than average renter population compared to the county and state, BPR will likely see continued or increased demand for low-cost to no-cost recreation options in Boulder.

BOULDER COUNTY CLIMATE TRENDS



Hotter Temperatures

All ten of the hottest years on record have occurred since 2005. Extreme drought and decreased snowpack have resulted from these hotter temperatures.



Extreme Weather

The City of Boulder is at the highest risk of flash flooding in the state of Colorado and the recent 2013 floods caused billions of dollars of damage.



Major Wildfires

Wildfires have become more common, especially in the American West. In Boulder County specifically, since 2003, there have been 7 major wildfires.

- 2003 Overland Fire
- 2009 Olde Stage Fires
- 2010 Fourmile Canyon Fire
- 2016 Cold Springs Fire
- 2020 Cal-Wood & Lefthand Canyon Fires
- 2021 Marshall Fire

CITY CLIMATE INITIATIVES TARGETS



These targets guide the city's actions to address the climate crisis.

- 70% reduction of city emissions by 2030
- Become a Net Zero city by 2035
- Become a Carbon-Positive city by 2040
- 85% waste diversion from landfills by 2025
- 100% renewable electricity by 2030

CLIMATE TRENDS

According to the City of Boulder's Climate Initiatives website *"the undeniable reality is that climate change is not just happening — but also accelerating and intensifying. All ten of the hottest years on record have occurred since 2005, and one does not have to look far to see these catastrophic impacts play out in Boulder in real time — whether it was the 2013 floods or the 2020 Calwood Fire."* When considering the *"urgency of the threat at hand, the City of Boulder declared a climate emergency in July 2019, triggering the development of several targets to guide city action."*

BPR is proactive as a department in the face of climate change and unexpected events, like the COVID-19 pandemic. The department can adjust and restructure quickly when needed. This approach helps staff deal with windstorms, destructive invasive species, like the emerald ash borer, droughts, wildfire and other climate emergencies. BPR has also begun updating irrigation systems, following organic turf management practices, and implementing a zero-waste program in parks.

Boulder's Climate Commitment helps align departmental goals around greenhouse gas emissions, non-electric vehicles and natural gas use. BPR participates in this commitment and has begun to reduce fuel use and exhaust emissions by phasing in electric vehicles and equipment.

BPR'S COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY, EQUITY & RESILIENCE

While BPR is a leader in sustainability, climate work and ecosystem services, the department needs to look even more holistically at programming, facilities, internal operations and transportation options to continue to lower the collective impact of these services on climate change.

To meet the city's climate goals, all aspects of BPR's day to day operations need to be monitored to measure and mitigate for the carbon footprint associated with parking, transportation, irrigation, turf versus natural grass treatments and energy use of facilities. Recreation centers, next to water utilities, are some of the largest users of energy in the city system. Staff are committed to continue to find ways to transition to more energy saving operations.

BPR staff have been, and will continue to be trained in the science of climate change so everyday decisions across the department can be informed by a consistent foundation of

knowledge and understanding through the city's Climate Leaders Program. In 2014, BPR's Youth Services Initiative (YSI) program participants were involved as a pilot group in the Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities Initiative - an initiative supporting cities that have experienced natural disasters.

BPR is also taking action by continuing to reconnect community members with nature, which is a critically powerful way to address climate issues. Focusing on values, along with quantitative data, like emissions reductions, can get people excited about making a difference.

Parks and open spaces are places to enjoy the outdoors, clean air, seasonal changes and "unplugging". Reducing emissions can be a byproduct of the other important services BPR offers and the choices community members make. Getting out of cars, utilizing parks and programming to live healthier lifestyles contribute to reductions in negative impacts on climate change, and have positive benefits to the environment, mind, body and spirit. BPR has an important role to play in helping improve environmental, social and health equity through a resilient and healthy parks and recreation system.

CLIMATE INITIATIVES COLLABORATION

As part of the master planning process, other city departments were consulted to understand how BPR can support citywide and interdepartmental initiatives. In terms of meeting citywide climate targets, focusing on the opportunities to work with staff from other departments to meet the city's targets can have big impact citywide.

Collaborating with all departments is important. Specifically, BPR will focus on working with Climate Initiatives, Open Space & Mountain Parks, Facilities, Transportation, Health & Human Services, Racial Equity and Finance to ensure the department's efforts are aligned with the work of other departments and integrated into the daily operations of the entire city to meet Boulder's climate initiative targets.

Sources:
bouldercolorado.gov/guide/boulder-guide-flooding
bouldercolorado.gov/future-climate-action
bouldercolorado.gov/government/departments/climate-initiatives

2018 URBAN FOREST STRATEGIC PLAN (USFP)

The 2018 Urban Forest Strategic Plan is a comprehensive assessment of, and 20-year plan for, the Boulder urban tree canopy. In 2013, Boulder had approximately 16% urban canopy, but due to invasive pests and climate stressors, this is expected to decrease. The UFSP plan provides a framework to reach Boulder's goal of restoring and maintaining the urban tree canopy. It includes long-term adaptive management goals to improve and preserve the health, value, and climate benefits of the urban tree canopy.

BPR INITIATIVES



Urban Tree Canopy
BPR has committed to a goal of maintaining 16% tree canopy through 2037.



Smart Irrigation
59 of 72 BPR irrigation systems have smart controls which continuously monitor systems for water savings or breaks that could create significant water losses.



Vehicle Fleet
Entire fleet of vehicles are either bio-diesel or E85 compatible



EV Charging Stations
Free Electric Vehicle charging stations are provided at all major recreation facilities, including all three recreation centers, Scott Carpenter Pool and Boulder Reservoir.



A Kidz Summer Camp participant "hangs" on at East Boulder Community Center.

Boulder Parks & Recreation System

THE BPR SYSTEM TODAY

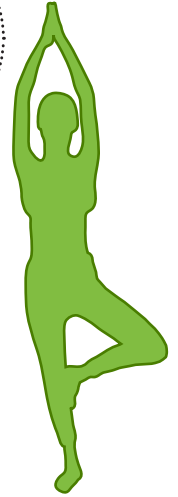
Since 2014, BPR has experienced several situations that require increased adaptability and resilience. Current departmental challenges include annual fluctuations in revenues, limited funding resources and decreasing staff capacity. Climate change events have become more common, including increasing temperature fluctuations, recent wildfires, floods, droughts, emerald ash borer damage and invasive species proliferation.

The community has also seen increasing rates of anxiety and depression, specifically among youth and teens. During 2020 and 2021, BPR saw firsthand the unprecedented impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on parks, facilities, programs and budget, forcing staff to make more on-the-fly operational decisions.

Amidst strained resources, the demand for park space and outdoor recreation was unparalleled during this time, as community members sought outdoor experiences that were socially distant but allowed them to continue to enhance their quality of life by recreating outdoors and remaining active. As public health restrictions lifted and communities adjust to post-pandemic life, demand on BPR's programs, parks, and facilities remains high.

To ensure BPR's system is able to best respond to increased user demand, a thorough baseline assessment was performed to assess the gap between where the parks and recreation system is today, and where it needs to go in the future to continue to deliver high quality parks, facilities, and programs to the community.

"Focus on existing parks and facilities and remove financial barriers to participation in existing programs rather than building new facilities."



Community Priorities

When asked about priorities via the statistically valid survey, community members consistently preferred focusing limited resources on existing parks and facilities, rather than building new facilities.

COMMUNITY HUBS

The City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Department's (BPR) parks, facilities, programs, and historic and cultural resources provide places where community members can:

- » gather
- » improve their physical and mental health
- » access core services

LOCAL TRENDS: PARKS

1 Parks and Natural Areas “Loved to Death”

BPR amenities are aging, and parks and natural areas are being “loved to death” due to the increasing popularity of outdoor areas. While higher use is positive in many ways, it is also has significant ecological and sustainability impacts, such as increased trash, erosion, people creating their own pathways through parks and natural areas, and the need to add additional fencing and signage. This use can also lead to decreases in biodiversity, loss of habitat and increases in invasive species.

Current staff are finding it difficult to keep up with recent user impacts. Boulder Reservoir North Shore visitation grew approximately 20% from 2019 to 2020.

2 Urban Tree Canopy Threats

The emerald ash borer continues to threaten the tree canopy in Boulder. Dying ash trees can pose a public safety risk because they are more likely to fall, as emerald ash borer disease dries the trees out quickly, making them very brittle. Along with the loss of ash trees, extreme weather events, drought, other invasive insects and tree diseases are also threats to the health of the urban forest and parkland.

It is estimated that ash trees comprise 25% of the total urban tree canopy, with a value of \$18 million. BPR has successfully slowed down the progression of emerald ash borer disease with biocontrols and pesticides.

3 Encampments & Illegal Use of Parkland

Like communities across the country, Boulder has seen an increase of encampments and illegal use of parkland, which strains limited resources and impacts uses of space.

BPR is working closely with partners across the city to support community members experiencing homelessness and ensure public spaces are safe for everyone.

PARKS

Parks are the land base that provides areas for active and passive recreation as well as the location of park and recreation assets. BPR’s system has a distinctive balance of developed urban park amenities and natural areas, as well as natural features throughout Boulder, including the urban tree canopy, which includes trees in city parks as well as those along public street rights-of-way.

PARKLAND INVENTORY

Per the 2018 Boulder Parks & Recreation Design Standards Manual, the Boulder Parks system is classified into eight distinct park typologies based on a variety of factors including: size, use, assets/ amenities, location, density of users, facilities and vegetation. These typologies help BPR determine how to prioritize management of existing parks, facility programming and the development of new parks. Staff strive to operate and maintain each of these areas in ways that are most beneficial to the community – offering a variety of opportunities for active and passive recreation.

PARKS & RECREATION ARE ESSENTIAL PUBLIC SERVICES

“Just as water, sewer and public safety are considered essential public services, parks are vitally important to establishing and maintaining the quality of life in a community, ensuring the health of families and youth, and contributing to the economic and environmental well-being of a community and a region.”

According to the National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA), the three values that make parks and recreation essential public services include:

- Economic Value
- Health & Environmental Benefits
- Social Importance

www.nrpa.org

Table 1: BPR Parkland Inventory

Park Type	# of Parks	Average Size	Current Acreage	Undeveloped Acreage	Total Acreage	Examples
Neighborhood Parks	46	7 acres	182	39	221	<i>Bear Creek Park</i>
Community Parks	10	45 acres	263	188	451	<i>Foothills Community Park</i>
City & Regional Parks	3	130 acres	316	57	373	<i>Valmont City Park</i>
Civic Spaces	6	4 acres	26	0	26	<i>Pearl Street Mall</i>
Recreational Facilities	6	15 acres	114	0	114	<i>Gerald Stazio Ballfields</i>
Specialized Facilities	2	5 acres	11	0	11	<i>Columbia Cemetery</i>
Natural Areas	6	100 acres	622	0	622	<i>Coot Lake</i>
Community Use Areas	10	10 acres	41	0	41	<i>Boulder Creek Path</i>
TOTALS			1575	284	1859	

Notes:

Recreational facilities in this context do not include the three recreation centers. Specialized facilities include Columbia Cemetery and the Pottery Lab.



Arts in the Park is a popular event held at Central Park & Civic Area.

NRPA Standard LOS Metric

The NRPA standard metric for measuring LOS is acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

The median LOS for agencies serving a population of 100,000 – 250,000 is 8.9 acres per 1,000 residents. Boulder well exceeds this average at 14.6 acres/1,000 residents.

LEVEL OF SERVICE

Level of service (LOS) establishes the standard by which parks and recreation facilities are provided, operated and maintained over time to best meet community needs. LOS standards also enable evaluation of progress over time. Numeric LOS metrics are used when analyzing parkland and recreation facilities to express acreage or availability in per capita terms. BPR currently uses the NRPA accepted standard of park acreage per 1,000 residents to measure parks LOS in Boulder.

When compared to national benchmark communities, NRPA Agency Performance Review data, and the Trust for Public Land (TPL) overall ParkScore® median, Boulder is keeping pace in parkland per capita, and in some cases provides above average amounts of urban parkland. If BPR develops all of its existing parkland (specifically undeveloped acreage), and 2040 population projections are on target, the city will maintain current LOS by 2040, providing the same amount of parkland per 1,000 community members.

Table 2: Park Level of Service (LOS) Comparison Table

Park Type (BPR DSM Classification) ¹	2014 LOS Benchmark Standard	2021 Current LOS ²	2040 LOS Projection ³	2040 Projection Acres Needed to Maintain 2021 Standard ⁴
Neighborhood Parks	3	1.7	1.8	If BPR develops all existing acreage, the city will maintain 2021 LOS for parkland.
Community Parks	1.5	2.4	3.7	
City/Regional Parks	1 - 3	2.9	3.0	
Other Parkland ⁵	n/a	7.5	6.6	
TOTAL	5.50 - 7.50	14.6	15.1	

Notes:

1. BPR Design Standards Manual

2. The 2021 Current LOS column does not include currently undeveloped acreage. Population: 108,000

3. The 2040 LOS Projection column does include currently undeveloped acreage (assuming it will be developed by this time). Population: 123,000

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

5. Other Parkland: the additional five DSM Park Types are grouped here because the classifications for each have changed since 2014.

With the high price of land in Boulder and the city’s growth boundary limiting development, and limited funding sources, adding new parkland is currently not feasible. Given the projected population growth, and limitations around adding parkland, each developed park will need to handle an increased number of users, requiring more amenities and higher levels of maintenance.

Moving forward, BPR will use additional metrics in tandem with acres per 1,000 residents to measure LOS. These additional indicators will be tailored to the Boulder community, and will consider, among other things, proximity and ease of access to parks and recreation services, proximity to Open Space & Mountain Parks (OSMP) land, the size and types of amenities serving various populations, equity, and tree canopy coverage.

These metrics will help BPR more accurately assess and monitor performance over time in more meaningful ways. Section 3: Where We Are Going, includes a discussion of how BPR will begin to measure LOS with layered equity mapping to ensure that parks and recreation services are distributed equitably across the community.

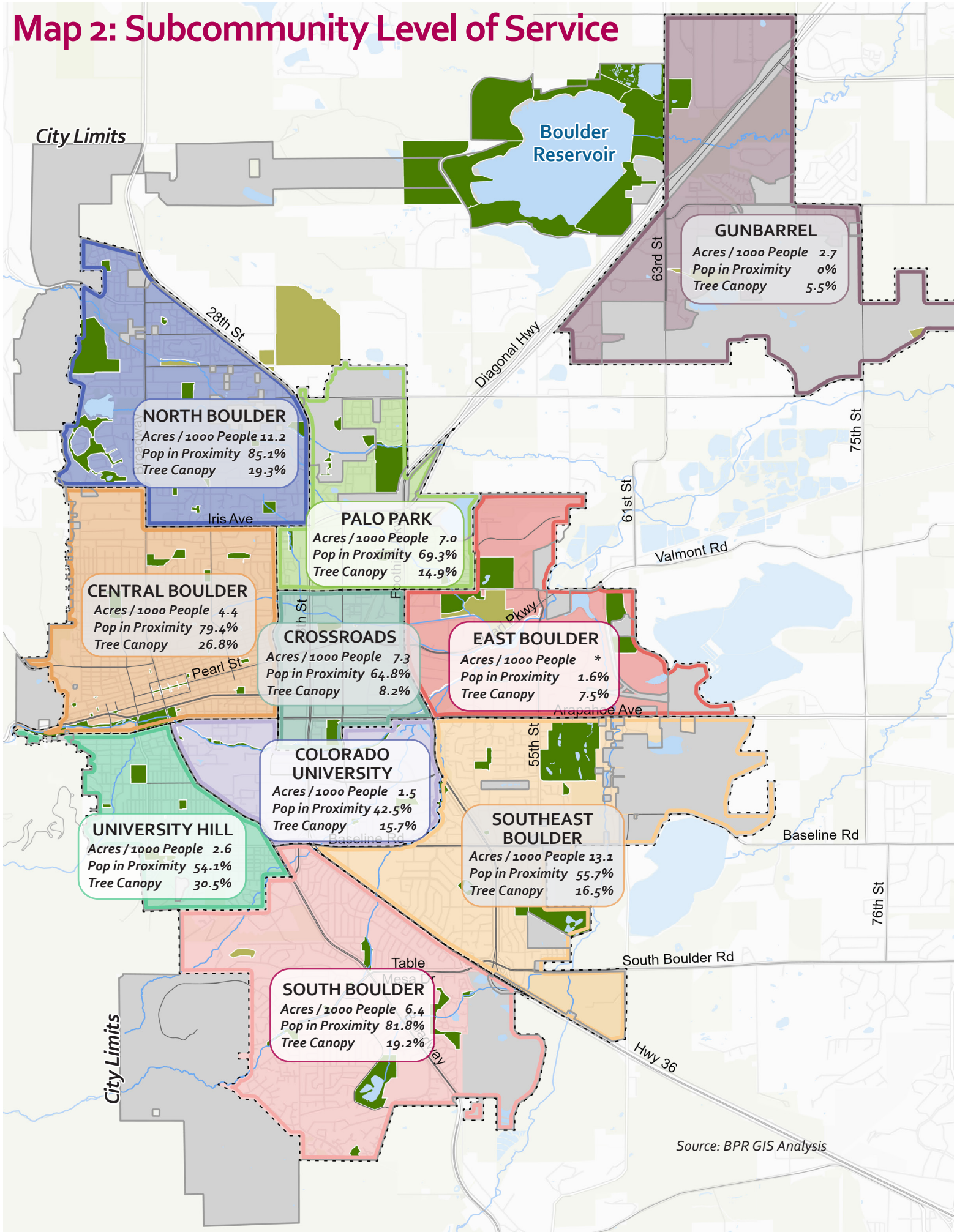
BOULDER OPEN SPACE & MOUNTAIN PARKS (OSMP)

The City of Boulder provides a significant amount of public lands for community members to experience nature. The Open Space and Mountain Parks Department manages over 45,000 acres of natural lands and 155 miles of trails, complementing the close-to-home experiences provided by BPR.



Playing a round of golf at Flatirons Golf Course offers opportunities for exercise, relaxation and taking in stunning views of the Rocky Mountains.

Map 2: Subcommunity Level of Service



LEVEL OF SERVICE MAPPING

This 2022 Master Plan introduces an innovative gap analysis to identify differences in the level of service within specific geographic areas, or subcommunities, throughout the city. The purpose of this analysis is to discover physical gaps in proximity of neighborhood parks and playgrounds which are key recreation amenities. BPR can further evaluate gap areas to understand if it is feasible to close the barrier to access neighborhood parks and playgrounds, or if further study is warranted. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommends these types of maps for evaluating locations of access inequity within a community's parks and recreation offerings.

Using an inventory of all currently developed parkland, BPR added an overlay of subcommunity boundaries to understand variations in the distribution of parks and amenities throughout the city. Areas within city limits, but not included within a subcommunity, are areas without developed housing units, either existing or planned. To determine LOS for each subcommunity and compare them with each other, staff used three metrics:

- » Acres of developed parkland per 1000 people (NRPA standard metric)
- » Percent of population in each subcommunity that live within one-half mile of a neighborhood park or quarter-mile of a playground (Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan metric)
- » The amount of tree canopy in the area (Urban Forest Strategic Plan metric)

The subcommunity Level of Service (LOS) map is the first step in identifying spatial inequity in terms of parkland, proximity to parks and/or playgrounds, and tree canopy. Looking at LOS by subcommunity provides a more detailed understanding of the distribution of parks and amenities in different parts of the city. The maps include areas outside current city limits which may have limited or incomplete data. BPR should gather data for entire subcommunity areas to correct this issue in the future.

MAP NOTES

East Boulder Acres / 1000 People is invalid due to very low population. 2020 Population Estimates based on Dwelling Units.

Proximity based on being within one-half mile of a Neighborhood Park or quarter-mile of a Playground.

Tree Canopy from 2013, inside city limits only, some areas have incomplete data.

“Provide neighborhood parks of a minimum of five acres in size within one-half mile of the population to be served and playground facilities within one-quarter to one-half mile of residents .”

Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Neighborhood Parks service metric

BOULDER SUBCOMMUNITIES

The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan defines a subcommunity as: “an area within the service area of the city (Area I and II) that is defined by physical boundaries such as roads, waterways and topography. Each subcommunity is composed of a variety of neighborhoods and has distinct physical and natural characteristics.”

There are 10 subcommunities in Boulder:

Central Boulder

Central Boulder - University Hill

Crossroads

Colorado University

East Boulder

Southeast Boulder

South Boulder

North Boulder

Palo Park

Gunbarrel

Table 3: Subcommunity Neighborhood Parkland* LOS Comparison

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

* Neighborhood Parkland refers to type of park classification—Neighborhood Park

Table 4: Subcommunity All Parkland LOS Comparison

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

Notes:
For both Table 3 and Table 4, the populations for the entire subcommunities were used - including areas that are currently outside city limits. In the future, the LOS for subcommunities with a large population outside city limits must be examined with other factors, such as access to other greenspace.

SUBCOMMUNITY LEVEL MAPPING

BPR manages 45 neighborhood parks that average approximately seven acres in size. From an initial analysis, staff made the following preliminary findings when comparing the neighborhood parkland LOS between subcommunities:

- » East Boulder, Colorado University and Central Boulder – University Hill have the lowest neighborhood parkland LOS. Other factors influence this analysis, including the lower population of East Boulder, the university, and industrial centers within these subcommunities, and other types of park classifications.
- » When considering just parkland managed by the City of Boulder, the parkland LOS for Gunbarrel is low and the only neighborhood park in the subcommunity, Tom Watson Park, is separated from the residential areas of the subcommunity by a major barrier: the Diagonal Highway. The LOS for Gunbarrel would increase if lands that are managed by other entities such as HOAs are included as there is significant privately managed greenspace.

All Parkland Level of Service by Subcommunity

BPR also calculated a comprehensive LOS for all classes of developed parkland including community parks, city parks, and neighborhood parks owned by the BPR.

In this analysis:

- » Colorado University and Central Boulder have the lowest parkland LOS.
- » North Boulder continues to have a high LOS and Southeast Boulder and East Boulder improve from mid-low to high LOS for all types of parkland.
- » East Boulder’s LOS is low when looking only at Neighborhood Parks, but when considering total parkland, it has the highest LOS due to the inclusion of Valmont City Park and Gerald Stazio Ball Fields which are not classified as ‘neighborhood’ parks.

Proximity to Neighborhood Parks & Playgrounds Level of Service by Subcommunity

There are two subcommunities where less than 50% of residents are within a half-mile or quarter-mile of a neighborhood park or playground, respectively – Colorado University and Gunbarrel (not including East Boulder which is discussed in more detail later in this document). Ensuring residents of these subcommunities have the proximity recommended by the BVCP in the future is important to ensure equitable distribution of parks and playgrounds.

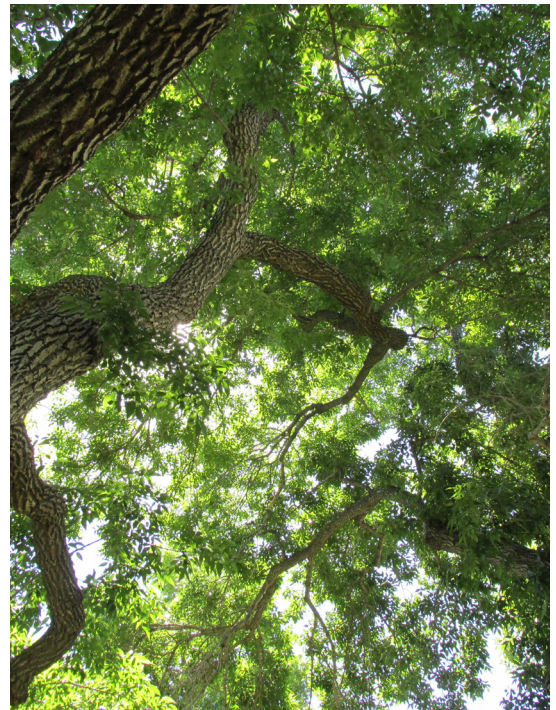
Tree Canopy Level of Service by Subcommunity

Today, the tree canopy in the Gunbarrel, Palo Park, East Boulder, Crossroads, and Colorado University subcommunities is below the citywide goal of 16%. While it is important to focus on increasing the canopy in these areas, the discrepancies in canopy coverage are partly due to the subcommunities’ characteristics.

For example, East Boulder is lacking tree canopy cover due to the industrial and commercial land uses of the subcommunity. With the current and proposed future land uses for East Boulder, it will be important to invest in tree planting on city-owned property in the subcommunity, such as Valmont City Park. BPR should also work with private landowners as parcels are developed and redeveloped to increase the overall urban tree canopy.



Kickball is one of the many sports programs BPR offers for community members to enjoy.



A healthy tree canopy can help mitigate the negative impacts of climate change.

LOCAL TRENDS: FACILITIES

1 Rising Court Sports Popularity

Tennis has risen in popularity for the first time in many years. At the same time Pickleball is also increasing in popularity, leading to additional demand for court access, and longer waits for court time for both types of court users.



2 Increasing Demand for Aquatic Facilities

There has been an increased demand for more access to family time in pools, and warm water pools are very popular with Boulder's older adult population.



3 Growing Dog Park Use

Dog park use has continued to increase throughout the community. Additional dog parks are a continually requested facility, especially in more urban areas and for those living in multifamily housing.



4 Increasing Use by Regional Visitors

An unexpected demand from a regional user population has placed additional strain on Boulder's parks and recreation amenities. Users who would not otherwise come to Boulder have been visiting BPR system more frequently recently, in part due to the COVID-19 pandemic and use restrictions in surrounding communities.



Top to Bottom: Gonzo Indoor Tennis; Kidz Summer Camp EBCC; East Boulder Community Dog Park; Gerald Stazio Softball Fields

FACILITIES

Recreation Facilities are major park assets that provide both active and passive recreation opportunities, from aquatics facilities to recreation centers.

FACILITIES AND AMENITIES INVENTORY & LEVEL OF SERVICE

The Boulder community enjoys multiple recreation facilities and amenities. Since the 2014 Master Plan, BPR has added two facility types to this inventory – Valmont Bike Park and non-dedicated pickleball courts.

In most cases, the 2021 level of service related to facilities are slightly lower than 2014 numbers due to an increase in Boulder’s population. Despite this, users often indicated satisfaction with those facilities and amenities that rate lower than benchmark levels of service. This reinforces the fact that each community is unique and strictly quantitative measures do not provide the full picture of a particular system’s success. For example, even though the LOS for tennis courts has decreased since 2014, it is still above state, national and the Trust for Public Land (TPL) LOS medians. At the same time, BPR recognizes the community’s desire for additional courts.

BPR facilities and amenities are extremely valuable to the community and are well-used and well-maintained given the system’s age and condition. Due to Boulder’s growing population, flat levels of funding, and increased stress on resources needed to address extreme weather events and pandemic recovery, LOS across the system is at risk of decreasing over time.

BPR can continue to use LOS to help identify gaps in provided amenities and make decisions about investments. The department should prioritize investments in areas where it is not meeting LOS benchmarks for amenities desired by the community.

Table 5: BPR Facilities Inventory

Recreation Facilities & Amenities	2020 Inventory
Recreation Centers	3
Programmable Studios	2
Historic Districts	3
Historic Sites*	6
Premier Diamond Fields	11
Standard Diamond Fields	10
Premier Rectangular Fields	12
Rectangular/Multi-Use Fields	13
Tennis Courts	28
Pickleball Courts (<i>non-dedicated</i>)	7
Basketball Courts - Outdoor	14
Sand Volleyball	21
Disc Golf	2
Roller Sports	2
Slacklining, # of allowed sites	9
Aquatic - Indoor Facilities	3
Aquatic - Outdoor Facilities	2
Skate Parks	3
Bike Parks	1
Dog Parks	4
Playgrounds	40
Exercise Courses	2
Picnic Shelters	58
Community Gardens	4
Total Miles of Paths, Sidewalks & Trails Maintained by BPR**	53
Number of BPR Managed Properties	105
City Trees***	50,000+

* *Historic Sites does not include rolling stock*

** *40%, or 21 miles of these are multi-use paths*

*** *Trees in parkland and public street rights-of-way*

Table 6: Facility LOS Comparison

Facility Type	LOS per	Quantity	BPR 2021 LOS	BPR 2014 LOS	Colorado 2014 LOS Median	National 2014 LOS Median	TPL 2014 LOS Median
Diamond Ball Field	10,000	21	1.94	2.46	2.89	2.45	1.6
Picnic Shelters	10,000	58	5.37	3.49	4.73	2.71	n/a
Playground	10,000	40	3.70	4.11	3.96	3.96	2.2
Rectangular Field	10,000	25	2.31	2.05	5.22	1.32	n/a
Tennis Court	10,000	28	2.59	4.11	2.44	2.44	1.8
Pickleball Court (Outdoor)	20,000	7	1.30	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Aquatic Facility (Indoor)	100,000	3	2.78	3.08	2.08	1.94	n/a
Aquatic Facility (Outdoor)	100,000	2	1.85	2.05	1.79	2.49	n/a
Community Garden	100,000	4	3.7	4.11	n/a	1.22	n/a
Dog Park	100,000	4	3.7	5.13	1.56	1.54	0.6
Golf Course	100,000	1	0.93	1.03	2.08	1.4	0.7
Recreation Center	100,000	3	2.78	3.08	n/a	n/a	3.5
Skate Park	100,000	3	2.78	1.03	1.33	1.24	0.4
Bike Park	100,000	1	0.93	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Notes:

In most cases, the 2021 BPR LOS numbers are slightly lower than 2014 numbers due to an increase in Boulder population. 2021 numbers that are higher than 2014 are noted in green. The only facility LOS that is lower than any of the comparison medians is Recreation Center LOS. Two additional facilities have been included in 2021 that were not included in 2014: the Valmont Bike Park and pickleball courts (on existing tennis courts). Trust for Public Land (TPL) data typically represents cities slightly larger in population to Boulder.



A disc golfer enjoying a toss at Valmont City Park.

INDOOR RECREATION FACILITY EVALUATIONS

As part of the 2022 Master Plan process, Barker Rinker Seacat (BRS) Architects provided an Indoor Recreational Facility Assessment Report which included a conceptual overview of BPR’s primary indoor recreation facilities. The text below is pulled directly from this report.

EAST BOULDER COMMUNITY CENTER (EBCC)

Overview

EBCC, which was built in 1992, consists of recreation and aquatics facilities. This includes a gymnasium, weight room, fitness rooms for dance, yoga, spin and other activities. It also includes administrative offices and the East Age Well Center, run by Housing and Human Services. The facility generally appears to be in good condition, clean and well maintained. The 2016 Facility Strategic Plan identified building deficiencies. A significant number of these have been addressed and those that remain will be addressed with the upcoming projected funding from the Community, Culture, Resilience and Safety Tax. This tax was approved in 2017 by voters and reapproved in 2021 for 15 years.

Equity & Inclusion

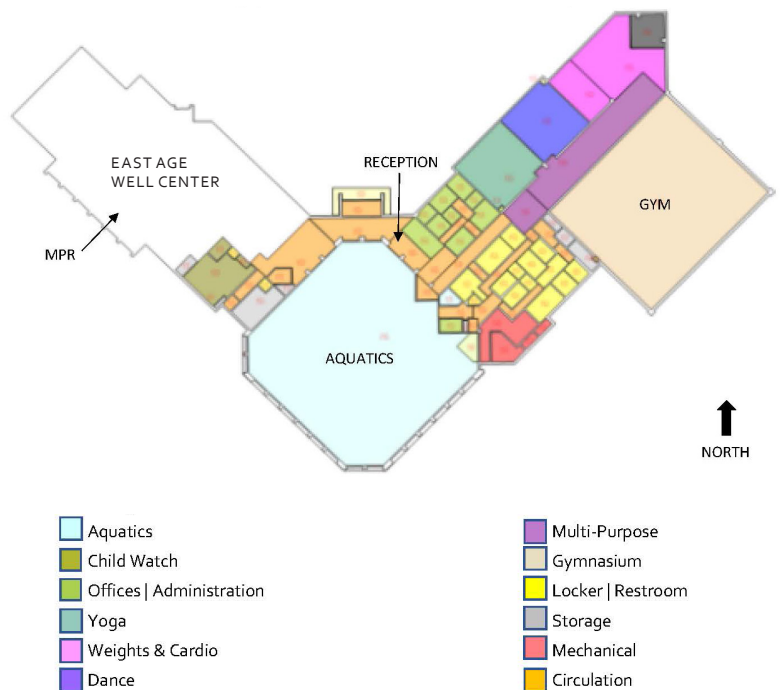
EBCC’s location, amount of program spaces and layout meet the spirit of equity overall. Changing demands in community wellness may involve reimagining spaces and program priorities to allow for greater flexibility and access. Anecdotal reports indicate opportunities to more broadly meet patron needs.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

Program Evaluation

The pool is popular with the community and heavily used, but priority is given to swim teams. Because of site constraints expansion is not an option. Satisfying the wider needs of the community for access to aquatics facilities may need to be addressed system-wide if a change in scheduling cannot improve access. Renovation plans include improving the warm water exercise pool. The gym is heavily used by pickleball and group fitness participants. Incorporating a trend like My Wellness Cloud, in which wearable technology syncs with in-class technology would elevate the fitness experience and provide a customer relationship management tool for staff with little impact on facility space.



East Boulder Community Center



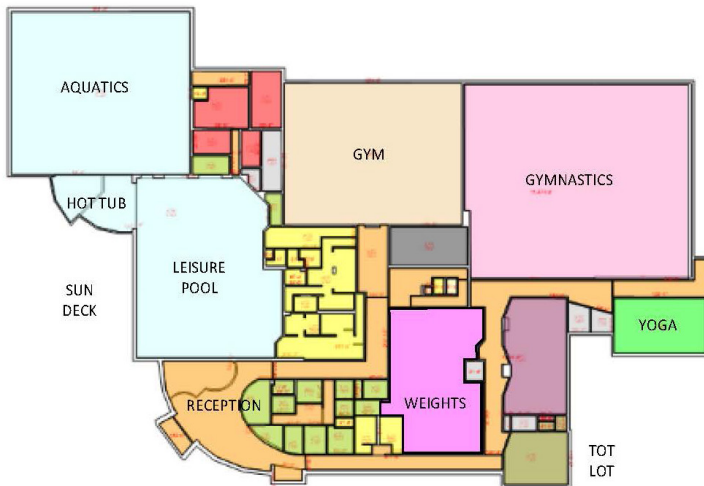


North Boulder Recreation Center

NORTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER (NBRC)

Overview

The most centrally located facility, NBRC was originally constructed in 1974. An addition completed in 2001 doubled the size of the facility to roughly 62,000 square feet. The addition includes an 8-lane lap pool and 3,300-gallon spa which were built adjacent to a large family-friendly leisure pool with waterslides, interactive features and zero-depth access. At that time, the center’s popular gymnastics area was expanded, and yoga and multipurpose rooms were added. A family locker room was created, and existing showers and locker areas refurbished and expanded. Additional staff offices were built, and the center’s entrance and drop-off area were redesigned to improve pedestrian and traffic flow. Notably, NBRC was the first community recreation center in the country to receive LEED Silver certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.



Color Legend

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

Equity & Inclusion

NBRC’s location and layout meet the spirit of equity overall. It is easily accessible by alternate transportation modes, is on major buslines, and served by a major north-south multi-use path connection. It was anecdotally noted 65% of fitness participants utilize NBRC for classes. Managing growing demand can unintentionally impact equitable participation by favoring tech savvy users familiar with the registration system and with online access.

Program Evaluation

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

SOUTH BOULDER RECREATION CENTER (SBRC)

Overview

The split-level SBRC, constructed in the early 1970s and partly renovated in the 1990s, is situated in Harlow Platts Community Park. The facility includes aquatics, a gymnasium, weight rooms, a multi-purpose room for dance, yoga, and other activities, a racquetball court, Pilates studio, and office and administrative areas. The center is clean and staff report that customers view it as the heart of their surrounding community. The center is very old and while clean and well maintained, has numerous accessibility and structural issues. Amenities and spaces within the facility have limited ability to meet community need. BPR needs to plan for its replacement in the next five years.

Equity & Inclusion

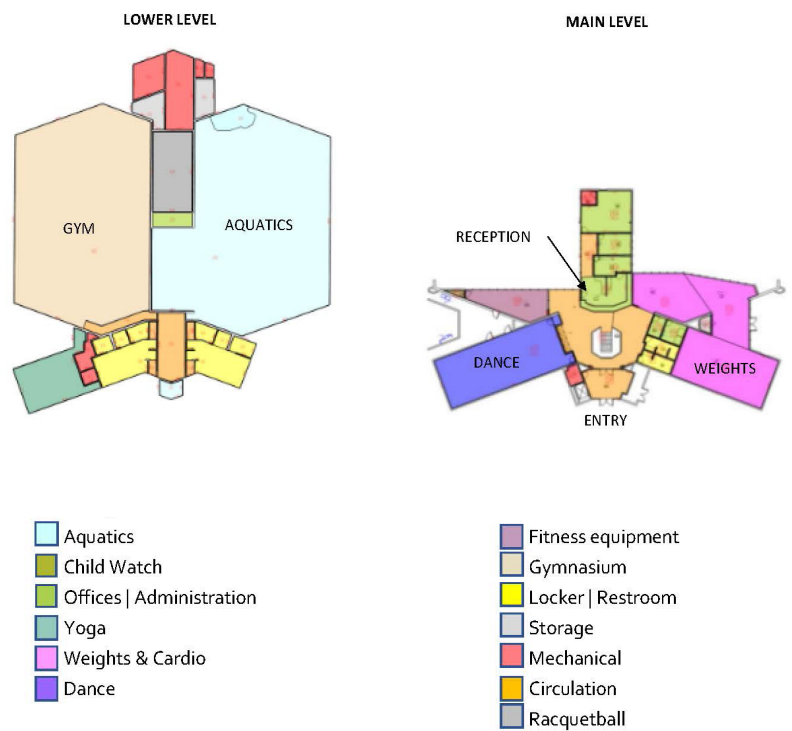
The community wants BPR to prioritize people with disabilities and youth – the SBRC cannot fully support achieving these goals. The social and physical needs of youth who want to access drop-in amenities at SBRC, specifically the lap pool, may be considered in addition to use by historically programmed user groups. The facility layout presents accessibility issues. Valid operating policies regarding security of elevator access further exacerbates these inequities. The confined spaces within the center would present a challenge even if someone has experience using a wheelchair.

Program Evaluation

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



South Boulder Recreation Center



LOCAL TRENDS: PROGRAMS

1 Youth and Family Programs are Popular

Youth and family programs are continually requested and special events, including the Halloween Drive-In Movie, Arts in the Park and Snow Much Fun have been more popular than expected. Parents in Boulder and surrounding communities are yearning to get their kids outside or in recreation programs/camps to interact with others.



2 Increasing Demand for Older Adult Programming

Demand is increasing, and older adults are coming back at unexpectedly higher rates because BPR provides opportunities for recreation activities and social engagement in a controlled environment.



3 Increasing Demand for Wellness Programs

Health and wellness programming interest (mind, body and spirit integration) is expected to trend upward, due to modern day stressors and anxiety about the post-COVID-19 pandemic landscape.



4 Increasing Volunteerism

Volunteer hours are up as the city and BPR invest in staff capacity to design and deliver quality volunteer programs. Volunteers are leaders within the community, providing valuable stewardship for public spaces while building community.



Top to Bottom: EXPAND Goat Therapeutic Recreation; Older Adult Cardio Class; Restorative Yoga; Valmont City Park

PROGRAMS

Recreation Programs are the planned activities in the BPR system that provide instruction, socialization, competition and learning to a wide range of community members and visitors to Boulder. In 2019, BPR welcomed 512,420 visitors to three recreation centers. Registration and usage fluctuated dramatically in 2020 due to public health orders and facility closures. Enrollment in all BPR program areas decreased and organized team sports were paused for most of 2020. With the first rollout of vaccines and as public health limitations eased in 2021, BPR has experienced a steady increase in program use at outdoor facilities, including pools and tennis courts, and indoor facilities.

RECREATION PROGRAMS INVENTORY & ENROLLMENT

BPR offers many programs and classes. While popular, from 2017-2019, there was a decline in program enrollment overall. Two areas in particular, Gymnastics and Special Events programming saw steady decline over these three years. For gymnastics in particular, the decrease in registrations is primarily due to a shift in how competitive-level gymnastics are provided and supported through a partnership with Go Flyers, a booster organization. EXPAND and YSI are unique programs offered by BPR. EXPAND provides recreation programming for people with disabilities. YSI provides recreation programming for youth from families with low incomes. Even with decreasing enrollment, BPR's Gymnastics and Aquatics programs have the highest enrollment numbers, closely followed by EXPAND, YSI and Sports programs. Gymnastics and sports programs and services can be considered recreational and exclusive activities that should produce more revenue than programs like EXPAND and YSI, which are considered community benefit services.

DESIRED COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING

BPR staff and stakeholders are hearing from community members that the following programming is desired:

- Outdoor programming, especially youth team sports and camps
- Childcare
- Pottery lab and arts programs
- Everyday activities within walking distance of where people live
- Warm water pool activities for older adults
- Tennis and pickleball

NRPA 2021 AGENCY PERFORMANCE REVIEW

According to the NRPA's 2021 Agency Performance Review, the top five programming activities most frequently offered by municipal parks & recreation departments include:

87%

Themed special events

87%

Team sports

87%

Social recreation events

82%

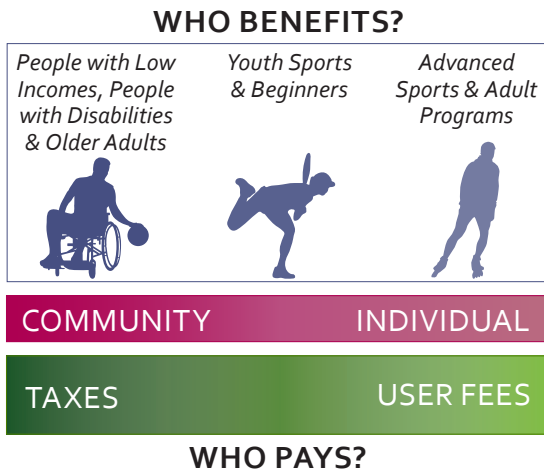
Fitness improvement classes

81%

Health and wellness education

PROGRAM BENEFIT & FEE BALANCE

Programming is funded through a combination of taxes and user fees. Taxes are relied on more when the community benefits and user fees pay more when the individual benefits.



PROGRAM PRIORITIZATION & COMMUNITY BENEFIT

Assessing programming relies heavily on qualitative data like trends and community input. It is important to look at what happened to programs during 2020, even though the data is skewed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This data helps BPR understand how and if BPR should bring back previous programming.

Community members are generally satisfied with BPR programming, but many feel BPR should provide programs residents desire, regardless of whether they are provided by other entities. This has implications for how BPR selects, prioritizes and offers contracted programming and in-house programming moving forward.

Community members confirmed that BPR should continue to prioritize programming that serves low-income residents, people with disabilities, older adults, and youth. Approximately 50% of survey respondents consider older adults, teenagers, and children as essential groups to serve, while only one third of respondents felt it was essential or very important to provide programs for visitors and tourists. When asked where they thought spending their tax dollars made the most impact, community members indicated that youth and older adults continue to be priorities. Spending tax dollars to support teens, people living with disabilities and income-based financial aid were also supported by community members.

Financial Aid Sources

Financial aid for BPR programming and services is available through General Fund subsidy and partially supported through an annual competitive grant from the city's Health Equity Fund. Additionally, BPR accepts the PLAY Boulder Foundation's PLAYpass. These sources help BPR provide core community benefit services.

- » **Financial Aid Program:** This program is funded through a BPR general fund subsidy to community members who qualify based on income, and covers up to 100% of fees for recreation facility access and 50% of program fees. The fees for recreation facility entry are partially funded through general fund subsidy (50%) and combined with a 'Recquity Program' grant from the Health Equity Fund (50%) to fully subsidize recreation facility access for low income community members.

» **PLAYpass Program:** The PLAY Boulder Foundation’s PLAYpass program aims to reduce barriers to fee-based participation in recreation and sport programs. It provides low-income youth with \$250 program credit annually towards reduced fees. To be eligible, individuals must be a City of Boulder resident, between the ages of 0-17 years, and must be able to provide proof of participation in an assistance program.

BPR Community Liaison staff help provide enrollment services, programming, and interpretation for Spanish speaking community members who qualify for aid. Both the PLAYpass and community liaison programs are funded through the Health Equity Fund (HEF).

While these programs are relatively successful, and financial assistance helps to reduce certain barriers, aid should strive to be coupled with methods to help reduce other types of barriers to access, including cultural and transportation obstacles.

Financial Aid Program and Process Improvements

Financial aid programs and processes can often be complicated. BPR has worked for several years now to streamline the process for community members who qualify. With room to continue improving, enhancements since 2014 include:

- » Automatic qualification for residents of Boulder Housing Partner low-income sites
- » Automatic qualification for participants of the PLAY Boulder Foundation’s PLAYPass program
- » The ability to apply and renew for the program via online formstack (provided in both English and Spanish)
- » Inclusion of the financial aid program in the citywide Boulder for Me/Boulder Para Mí services eligibility tool developed in partnership with Google.org
- » The creation of a process for partner agencies to assist in the verification of residency of clients in temporary or short-term residential programs.

IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING RECREATION PROGRAMS FOR VARIOUS POPULATION GROUPS

The top five groups statistically valid survey respondents think programming is **either essential or very important** for include:



92%

People with Disabilities



89%

People with Low Incomes



88%

Older Adults (60+ years)



87%

Teenagers (ages 13-19)



86%

Children (up to age 12)

Financial Overview

2021 BPR FUNDING SOURCES

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY FUND (RAF): \$10,126,789

A special revenue/quasi-enterprise fund that is specific to the Parks and Recreation Department. The fund is the primary funding mechanism used to support recreation centers and facilities, and subsidize fees for services related to the provision of recreation, reservoir and golf course services/programs that do not cover all their direct costs. The fund is supported through user and participation fees, grants and donations, and an annual subsidy transfer from the General Fund. In 2022, the General Fund provided a \$2.1 million subsidy.

0.25 CENT SALES TAX FUND: \$8,119,584

A special revenue fund that is specific to the Parks and Recreation Department. The fund is primarily supported through a designated sales tax that was approved by voters in 1995. In 2013 voters renewed the sales tax through 2035, with 85% of votes supporting the tax. The fund supports multiple aspects of the department, including operations and maintenance, administrative support services, renovation and refurbishment, and capital improvements.

GENERAL FUND: \$4,057,219


The city's largest fund that serves as the primary funding source for most governmental services. BPR uses its portion for park operations, forestry and department administration. The general fund is mostly supported through a blend of taxes, permits, fees, and intergovernmental transfers. As a result of the fund's heavy reliance on tax revenue and pressures from other city departments, the fund's revenues, and ability to contribute to the department's budget can fluctuate, although it has been relatively stable over the years.

PERMANENT PARKS & RECREATION FUND: \$3,625,061

A fund specific to the Parks and Recreation department, this source of funding is permanent according to the City of Boulder's charter and is supported through earmarked property tax revenues, with the Parks and Recreation Department receiving \$0.01 for every dollar of property tax collected by Boulder County. These funds are limited to the acquisition or permanent improvement of parkland, renovations, and refurbishment of recreation facilities, and is a source of funds for capital improvements.

LOTTERY FUND: \$428,000

A special revenue fund that accounts for State Conservation Trust Fund proceeds that are distributed to municipalities on a per capita basis. Money from the Lottery Fund must be used only for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of new conservation sites or for capital improvements or maintenance for recreational purposes on any public site.



The city tree canopy includes many large ash trees.

FUND OUTLOOK

Funding from the RAF is predicted to remain mostly flat over the next five-year-period. Because the RAF is funded primarily through fee revenues, the continued reduction of programs and services are likely to have a significant impact on the health of the fund moving forward, while the reintroduction of services will have positive impact of the health of the fund. Additionally, because the fund is supported in part through an annual transfer from the city's General Fund, changes in the city's economic position may result in decreased financial support.

FUND OUTLOOK

Funding from the 0.25 Sales Tax Fund is predicted to grow based on sales and use tax projections at a slightly higher rate than inflation. However, increases to sales tax revenue and growth of the fund account associated with population growth are minimal and remain mostly even with increases due to inflation.

FUND OUTLOOK

BPR's General Fund allocation is projected to increase minimally over the next five-years. While funding is anticipated to grow, there exists much uncertainty around the city's economic position and revenue streams. Because the General Fund is the primary funding source for most city services, the fund's ability to support BPR's budget may shift drastically on a year-by-year basis due to change in the city's economic position, pressures from other city departments, and City Council priorities.

FUND OUTLOOK

Funding from the Permanent Parks & Recreation Fund is projected to gradually grow over the next five-year-period. While the fund's reliance on property tax revenues makes it susceptible to regional and national economic shifts, property taxes in the city are projected to grow at an annual average rate of 3% from 2022-2026. Because this fund is a primary source of revenues for Capital Improvement Projects, any change in revenues may adversely impact the department's ability to address the safety, maintenance and accessibility needs of its assets.

FUND OUTLOOK

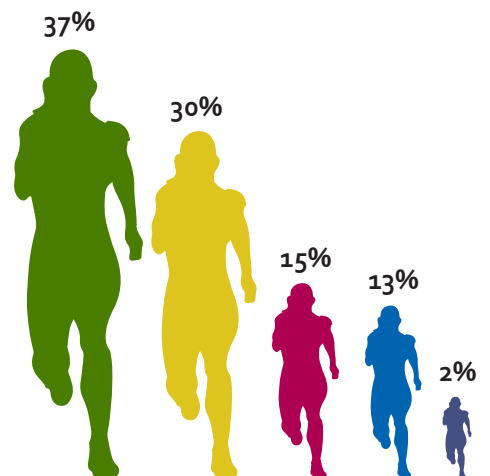
Lottery fund funding is projected to remain constant through 2026. Because funding allowances are calculated on a per capita basis, as the population of Boulder continues to shift, funding allocated through the lottery fund will continue to align with the population of Boulder.






DIVERSE FUNDING

BPR is funded through a diverse set of city funds that include capital project funds, special revenue funds, enterprise funds, and government funds. BPR maintains a balance of monies within each fund, meaning that expenditures from each fund may be higher or lower than the fund's annual revenues. Revenues from each fund are contributed on an annual basis to support BPR's operating budget.

2021 OPERATING BUDGET & PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES

\$29,936,362



-  Recreation Activity Fund (RAF)
-  0.25 Cent Sales Tax Fund
-  General Fund
-  Permanent Parks & Recreation Fund
-  Lottery Fund

FINANCIAL GLOSSARY

Asset Management Program (AMP): A proactive and systematic approach to managing the BPR's inventory of assets. Assets tracked under the AMP include only assets maintained, and purchased by BPR, and a large inventory of building and facility-related assets for properties like recreation centers and aquatic facilities.

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP): An internal BPR plan that identifies capital projects to be completed on a rolling five-year basis.

Current Replacement Value (CRV): The total value of an asset in present day dollars.

Operations & Maintenance (O&M): The functions, duties and labor associated with daily operations.

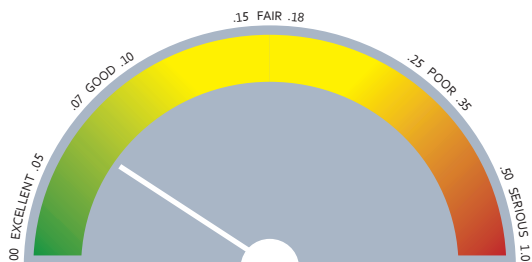
R&R (Restoration & Refurbishment): Expenses associated with the operation and maintenance of the city's parks and recreation facilities. These costs are incurred daily and include: staff; materials and supplies; financial, utilities and water fees; custodial services.

Capital Investment Strategic Plan: A strategic plan developed in 2015 that quantifies what assets BPR owns, the value of assets within BPR's portfolio, the condition of assets and their remaining service life, and any infrastructure funding gaps that may exist.

System Assets: The physical assets with the parks and recreation system.

Facility Condition Index (FCI): A scoring methodology used to assess an asset's overall condition and prioritize limited funds for critical capital repairs and/or replacement.

Asset Condition Value: Scoring criteria related to an asset's FCI. Values range from 0.00 (excellent) to 1.0 (terrible). The goal of BPR is to reach a desired FCI for built assets between 0.06 and 0.08.



BPR Facility Condition Index (FCI) Score of 0.07 is in the Good to Excellent range of the industry standard for asset condition values.

OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE (O&M) BUDGET

CURRENT STATE

As of 2021, BPR manages over 100 facilities and parks on 1,861-acres of land. As part of the 2022 Master Plan process, BPR assets were re-evaluated to determine their present-day Current Replacement Value (CRV). In addition to updating the CRV, each facilities' backlog of maintenance was calculated to determine the Facility Condition Index (FCI). This assessment and analysis was completed with the data and assumptions that are available now, but is not a detailed assessment of every asset. As BPR continues to implement the Asset Management Program (AMP) and complete more detailed condition assessments, the CRV and backlog values will be updated.

BPR's CRV has increased from \$226 million in 2016 to a 2021 value of \$298.4 million. Increases to CRV are due to the construction of new facilities, the inflation of costs within the construction industry, increases to materials costs, and a better understanding of assets since the 2016 CRV numbers were developed. As of 2021, there is an estimated total maintenance backlog of \$20.5 million. Using the updated 2021 CRV and backlog maintenance numbers, an FCI of 0.07 was calculated. This FCI places BPR in the Good to Excellent range of the industry standard for asset condition values.

OUTLOOK

The city's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) guidelines prioritize the maintenance of current assets over the development of new facilities. Through the planning process, the community has indicated strong support for this prioritization. Based on current economic conditions, revenue and expenditure projections, funding is not sufficient to maintain all existing system assets and build new park and recreation facilities unless comparable trade-offs occur.

BPR is currently not meeting the goal set by the 2016 Capital Investment Strategic Plan of spending between 2-3% of CRV annually on capital repairs and replacement. The target (between 2-3%) is a best practice recommendation by the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine, and also is the target established in the city's Facilities Master Plan. For analysis related to this Master Plan, a target of 2.5% of CRV was established as it is a midpoint between low and high recommended O&M expenditures.

This shortfall in capital is experienced only when BPR funds are considered, and does not include other one-time infusions of cash, such as the specific voter-approved tax initiatives, which are unpredictable and vary year-to-year. When updated to account

for the total 2021 CRV of \$298.4 million, BPR should be spending between \$6 and \$9 million annually on capital renovation and refurbishment projects. Between 2016 and 2020, BPR spent on average \$5.6 million, or 1.9% of CRV, on capital improvements through renovation and refurbishment of facilities. To meet the recommended level of spending, BPR would require an additional \$1.9 million to reach its targeted expenditure level of \$7.5 million, or 2.5% of CRV. When one-time infusions of cash are included in analysis, BPR does reach its targeted capital expenditure level of \$7.5 million, however, these one-time infusions support only action level capital improvements and not basic capital repairs and renovations. Simply, funds are dedicated toward enhancements before addressing backlog.

The urban canopy is not included in BPR's CRV because the city's public trees are an asset that appreciates over time – as trees mature and grow, they become more valuable whereas the rest of the built environment depreciates as it ages. Boulder's 2018 Urban Forestry Strategic Plan identified that for Boulder to invest in the urban canopy at per capita and per tree levels as recommended, an additional \$500,000 is required annually.

BPR has experienced a similar shortfall of funds spent on annual O&M expenditures. Based on the 2021 CRV of \$298.4 million and the industry standard of allocating approximately 4% of CRV to O&M or ongoing preventative maintenance, BPR should be spending approximately \$11.9 million on O&M. Between 2016 and 2020 BPR spent on average \$8.6 million, or 2.9% of CRV on O&M, resulting in a \$3.3 million gap between current and recommended O&M expenditures.

A funding gap of approximately \$1 million for recreation programming was also identified. This amount is needed to maintain and sustain the current levels of community benefit programming while addressing affordability issues for lower income residents. Within this \$1 million gap, there are three specific priority areas. Based on community input about how programming and access should be funded for specific age groups (youth and older adults), there is a need for \$590,000 to fund these types of age-based discounts for these two groups. Providing financial aid to support affordability for individuals and families with low incomes requires an additional investment of \$250,000. Two extremely popular and important programs provided by BPR, EXPAND for individuals living with disabilities and the Youth Services Initiative (YSI) serving youth from low-income families, require \$212,000 to continue to support these community members.

To meet recommended spending goals for capital projects and O&M, BPR would have required, on average, an additional \$5.2 million annually between 2016 and 2020.

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

Three additional sources contribute to BPR's annual funding. All three funds have been used for capital improvement projects for BPR facilities as well as land acquisitions for additional parks space throughout the city.

Capital Development Fund:

Accounts for development fee proceeds to be utilized for the acquisition, construction, and improvement of facilities necessary to maintain the current level of public amenities such as police, fire, library, human services, municipal offices, streets, and parks and recreation.

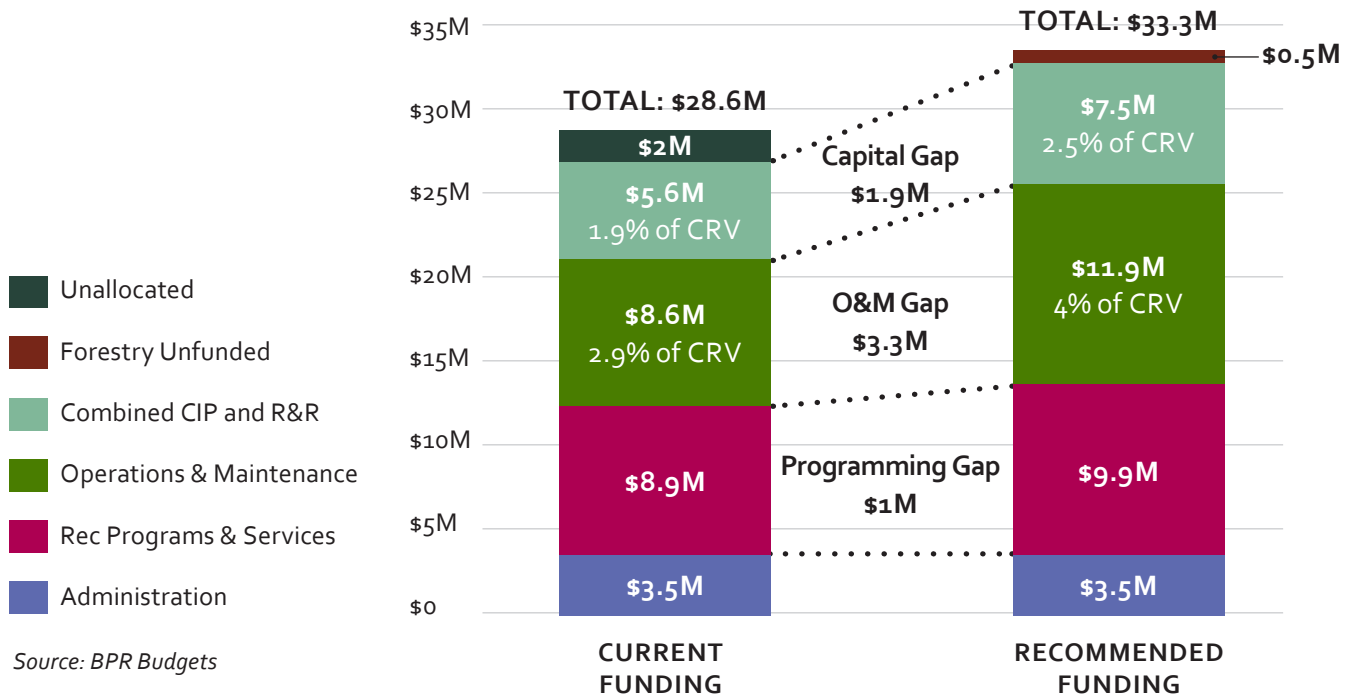
Community, Culture, Resilience and Safety Tax:

Ballot initiative approved in 2017 that extended 0.3% sales and use tax to raise funds for a specific list of city facility and infrastructure projects, including the Scott Carpenter Pool and Visitor Services Center at the Boulder Reservoir. This tax was reapproved by voters in 2021 for an additional 15 years.

Boulder Junction Improvement Fund:

Created in 2012 to fund land acquisition and facility development in the Boulder Junction area. The fund was supported through excise tax and construction-use tax. This funding will be used to build the Boulder Junction Pocket Park in the near future.

CURRENT FUNDING VERSUS RECOMMENDED FUNDING



The figure above illustrates the average of 2016 through 2019 funding levels for current practices and the recommended spending based upon the department’s portfolio of assets and best practices in asset management, as well as providing ongoing and increased funding for community benefit programming. The total funding gap identified through data gathering and research is \$6.7 million annually, but with approximately \$2 million in currently unallocated funding, the unrealized funding gap is approximately \$4.7 million.

To quantify gaps in funding for targeted capital repair and replacement, an analysis was performed that looked at current projected capital expenditures from 2022 through 2027. These expenditures were compared with updated targets for repair and replacement based off updated 2021 CRV estimates. The results of the analysis, illustrated in Table 10: Additional Funds Required to Meet Capital Repair and Replacement Targets, show that for nearly every year through 2027, BPR requires additional funds to meet its capital repair and replacement goals. Due to the method by which BPR tracks CRV, appreciation is based on the current replacement value for the same asset in present day costs, and as a result BPR’s assets appreciate over time. As BPR’s asset portfolio continues to appreciate, and as assets continue to age, increasingly more funds will be required to maintain its assets.

PROGRAMMING & CAPITAL BUDGET

CURRENT STATE

BPR has made significant strides since the 2014 Master Plan in improving the department’s approach to cost recovery, capital planning, program

prioritization and asset management. While BPR has consistently met the public expectations around programs and facilities, increased financial pressure from aging assets, deferred capital projects, increasing personnel and operating costs and unfunded capital projects will require increasing cost recovery and revenue generation wherever possible. BPR must continue to pursue cost recovery within its programs and creative means of revenue generation to close funding gaps, remain financially sustainable, and provide services to the community.

Revenues from BPR’s funding sources have remained mostly constant between 2016 through 2021. The lack of revenue increases creates a challenging operating environment for BPR as departmental overhead and expenditures rise on a near annual basis due to inflation. As BPR’s operating costs, list of backlogged maintenance, and unfunded capital projects continue to grow, BPR’s need for additional revenue from stable funding sources will continue to grow.

While BPR’s funding from 2016 through 2021 has remained mostly flat, expenditures have risen on an almost annual basis. Revenues have decreased, on average 0.4% since 2016 while expenditures, including capital, have increased on average, 7.3%. Not including capital, expenditure growth averages approximately 1% per year for a total increase of 2.5% between 2016 and 2021. While most BPR funds carry a cash balance enabling yearly expenditures to exceed yearly revenue, the significant imbalance between the annual growth of revenues and annual growth of expenditures is not sustainable. In addition to expenditure increases due to inflation, BPR is faced with the increasingly difficult challenge of managing rapidly rising personnel, maintenance, energy, materials, operational costs, aging infrastructure and facilities, and a growing demand for parks and recreational amenities.

OUTLOOK

Revenues from BPR’s funding sources are projected to remain mostly flat over the next 5-year period, increasing on average 2.8% annually through 2026. Behavioral changes recently brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic have altered retail spending, work habits, recreational habits, and other fee and tax generating activities, negatively affecting funding streams used for operations, maintenance, and capital improvements. Both the city and the department have taken conservative approaches to budgeting and fund forecasting, prioritizing equitable service delivery of existing programs, maintenance of staffing levels to support needed levels of service and programming, and critical capital infrastructure projects.

Table 7: Additional Funds Required to Meet Capital Repair and Replacement Targets

Recommended Expenditures	2% of CRV: \$6M 3% of CRV: \$9M
2022 Projected Expenditures	\$4.2M
<i>to meet 2% goal</i>	+\$1.8M
<i>to meet 3% goal</i>	+\$4.8M
2023 Projected Expenditures	\$4.1M
<i>to meet 2% goal</i>	+\$1.8M
<i>to meet 3% goal</i>	+\$4.8M
2024 Projected Expenditures	\$5.2M
<i>to meet 2% goal</i>	+\$793K
<i>to meet 3% goal</i>	+\$3.8M
2025 Projected Expenditures	\$2.4M
<i>to meet 2% goal</i>	+\$3.5M
<i>to meet 3% goal</i>	+\$6.5M
2026 Projected Expenditures	\$6.1M
<i>to meet 2% goal</i>	\$-
<i>to meet 3% goal</i>	+\$2.9M
2027 Projected Expenditures	\$3.6M
<i>to meet 2% goal</i>	+\$2.3M
<i>to meet 3% goal</i>	+\$5.3M

Source: BPR CIP Worksheet

Table 8: BPR Projected Funding & Expenditures, 2022-2026

PROJECTED SOURCE OF FUNDS						AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH RATE:
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2022-2026
General Fund	\$6,022,134	\$6,160,678	\$6,302,410	\$6,447,403	\$6,447,403	1.7%
Permanent Parks and Recreation Fund	\$3,768,701	\$3,814,229	\$3,999,724	\$4,037,548	\$4,246,162	3.0%
Recreation Activity Fund (RAF)	\$10,363,792	\$10,592,911	\$10,917,767	\$11,163,416	\$11,539,680	2.7%
0.25 Cent Sales Tax Fund	\$8,540,881	\$8,916,426	\$9,315,081	\$9,638,130	\$9,893,899	3.7%
Lottery Fund	\$428,000	\$428,000	\$428,000	\$428,000	\$428,000	0.0%
TOTAL	\$29,123,508	\$29,912,244	\$30,962,982	\$31,714,497	\$32,555,144	2.8%

PROJECTED USE OF FUNDS						AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH RATE:
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2022-2026
Personnel	\$13,939,444	\$14,636,416	\$15,368,237	\$16,136,649	\$16,943,481	5%
Operating	\$7,245,813	\$7,535,646	\$7,837,071	\$8,150,554	\$8,476,577	4%
Interdepartmental Charges	\$865,000	\$890,950	\$917,679	\$945,209	\$973,565	3%
Capital	\$4,178,000	\$4,180,000	\$5,177,000	\$2,436,000	\$6,092,000	N/A*
TOTAL	\$26,228,257	\$27,243,012	\$29,299,987	\$27,668,412	\$32,485,623	5.8%

PROJECTED AVAILABLE FUNDING	\$2,895,251	\$2,669,232	\$1,662,995	\$4,046,085	(\$69,521)	
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Source: City of Boulder Budget, 2021

NOTES: *Capital budget information extracted from the 2022 BPR Capital Improvement Plan. Due to significant fluctuations in year over year in capital expenditures, average annual growth rate for capital is not a reliable metric.

Table 11: BPR Projected Funding & Expenditures, 2022-2026 illustrates BPR’s projected funding and expenses through 2026. Based on these projections, BPR is anticipated to have a minor budget surplus through 2025 and a minor budget shortfall in 2026. It is important to note that while BPR is anticipated to have a minor surplus, projected expenditures do not account for the additional funds required to meet asset management targets for Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and Repair and Refurbishment (R&R) or to achieve goals established with the 2022 Master Plan.

As indicated by the imbalance of BPR’s projected average annual expense growth rate (5.8%) and projected funding growth rate (2.8%), funds required to meet 2021 CRV repair and replacement goals and annual O&M spend goals, \$20.6 million in backlogged maintenance, and approximately \$177.9 million in unfunded capital projects, BPR is faced with the challenging task of continuing to serve the community and operate its facilities with an increasingly strained budget. BPR must be prepared to identify and implement other revenue generating activities and/or strategies in the coming years to supplement its current funding sources.

Key Issues & Observations

Six Key Themes were developed for the 2014 Master Plan, based on community input. These themes are still important to community members, and BPR will continue to use them as a way to organize goals and initiatives for the future. The department will have to make difficult decisions around how to prioritize limited funding to be most impactful in each of these areas. The following key issues and observations helped guide the 2022 master planning process.

A summary of comments related to each Key Theme shared by community members on BeHeardBoulder during Engagement Window 1 is below.

COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLNESS

Benefits of parks and recreation include increased physical and mental health, which in turn helps decrease pressure on the healthcare system.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

At the most fundamental level, financial sustainability is necessary for the parks and recreation system to function well and is extremely important to future planning efforts.

TAKING CARE OF WHAT WE HAVE

Boulder has a good thing going. BPR should continue to focus on keeping existing parks and facilities clean and safe, and upgrading only as necessary. "Quality over quantity" should be BPR's focus

BUILDING COMMUNITY & RELATIONSHIPS

A focus on building community and relationships helps to strengthen and promote a diversity of users through inclusion and accessibility.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT & ACTIVITY

Participating in parks and recreation activities teach youth to be proud stewards of our environment and allow for the discovery of new passions and hobbies.

ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS

Change is inevitable and organizational readiness is important to face this change successfully and continue to thrive.





COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLNESS



Mind Body fitness programming is important for overall health.

KEY ISSUES & OBSERVATIONS

- » BPR is exceeding both national and Colorado median LOS for most parks and recreation asset types, and provides the community with accessible, flexible and safe services, engaging community members, encouraging physical activity and positively impacting social determinants of health.
- » Boulder is growing. With this growth comes continuously dropping LOS as they relate to an acres or facilities per capita analysis. Because growth boundaries limit the ability to add parkland, Boulder must decide how to continue to best serve current and future community members.
- » There is agreement in the community that subsidies should be provided for older adults, youth, low-income community members, people with disabilities and underrepresented communities.
- » BPR has recently seen high levels of increased use, as well as increased use from surrounding communities. O&M resources and capacity are strained due to high usage and certain behaviors including illegal activities and use of parkland for camping. At times parks facilities must be closed due to misuse and vandalism. These stressors impact BPR's ability to provide core services.
- » The cost of living in Boulder is high. While equity is critical to the BPR's mission, if affordability and accessibility are not meaningfully addressed at a higher level, many community members who are not currently being served adequately, will continue to be underserved, especially lower- and middle-income families. The cost of living also impacts BPR's ability to retain staff who actually live in the community they serve.
- » Reassessing the metrics used to determine LOS and how it is measured are issues parks and recreation departments are facing throughout the country. Using a clear methodology that weaves sustainability, equity and resilience into each metric is key to success and a more nuanced approach could serve the diverse needs of the community in a more meaningful way.
- » Expanding partnerships and looking at innovative ways to address trends and challenges can help BPR support equity of access to parks and facilities, and ensure Boulder remains a physically and mentally healthy community with a high quality of life.
- » Community members and staff have expressed interest in more flexibility in terms of scheduling classes, utilizing certain portions of recreation center facilities as flex spaces, and creating more targeted programming in real time as user interests change.



FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY



Creekside Concerts & Movies in the Park are great opportunities for people to get outside and get together.

KEY ISSUES & OBSERVATIONS

- » While cost recovery has been improved, revenues from funding have remained relatively flat. The lack of revenue increases creates a challenging operating environment as departmental overhead and expenditures rise on a near annual basis due to inflation. The trend of fund expenditures outpacing revenues is projected to continue, with BPR's fund revenues projected to grow on average 2.8% through 2026, while expenditures are projected to grow 5.8% during the same period.
- » Ninety-five percent of survey respondents support maintaining current funding sources, while only 45% support implementing a new sales tax. As is the case throughout the country, BPR will need to continue to try to find ways to creatively achieve financial sustainability. Closing the gaps in recommended funding levels for operations & maintenance and capital improvements is key to long-term financial sustainability and BPR's ability to fulfill its mission. Parks are having to work harder to serve a growing, diverse population, as well as users from surrounding communities. This means that amenities are being used more often and by more people than their planned for life cycles.
- » The implementation of BPR's methodologies to prioritize the relative importance of programs and include data that help set fee structures and cost recovery rates, allows the department to set clear goals for cost recovery that have boosted the recovery ratio overall. BPR has been able to increase cost recovery significantly, from an average cost recovery of 83% between 2007 and 2011, to an average of 90% between 2017 and 2019.



TAKING CARE OF WHAT WE HAVE



The public urban tree canopy is a critical component of the BPR system.

KEY ISSUES & OBSERVATIONS

- » Overall, community members feel BPR parks and facilities are in good condition and staff are doing a great job given constrained resources and that “taking care of what we have” is a high priority. Community members are generally happy with facilities, but current O&M levels of service are not keeping up with needs in parks and public spaces. BPR relies on volunteerism to bridge this gap, through programs like Parks Champs—especially when it comes to general park maintenance and cleanup projects. Even with this help, many parks have unmaintained areas due to lack of capacity and resources.
- » While BPR is currently meeting the goal set by the 2016 Capital Investment Strategic Plan of spending between 2-3 %, or \$4-6 million annually, on capital repairs and replacement, BPR is falling behind targeted capital spending when accounting for the total 2021 CRV of \$298,476,655. Based on the updated 2021 total asset CRV, BPR should be spending between \$6 million and \$9 million annually on capital repairs and replacement.
- » Operations and capital costs continue to rise, creating an ever-larger gap in BPR’s budget and ability to take care of assets for their complete life cycles.
- » Taking Care of What We Have includes stewarding the natural systems in the city and making strides to continually better manage native ecosystems, including riparian and wetland areas, and the urban tree canopy. It also means making facility upgrades that help meet citywide climate goals that are critical for future resiliency.
- » BPR is a leader in sustainability, climate initiatives and ecosystem services. Staff work to help mitigate against certain aspects of climate change through a variety of practices, including water wise irrigation practices, carbon sequestration and cooling through plant selection and maintenance and enhancement of the urban tree canopy. Staff still need to look even more holistically at programming, facilities, internal operations and clean energy transportation options in collaboration with other city departments to continue to lower the collective impact of these factors on climate change.



BUILDING COMMUNITY & RELATIONSHIPS



Volunteers, here at Valmont Park, are key BPR partners.

KEY ISSUES & OBSERVATIONS

- » Partnership opportunities with community organizations are becoming increasingly important, especially when considering BPR's increased focus on sustainability, equity and resiliency. Partnering with municipalities, school districts and nonprofits to develop joint use facilities or programs is seen as a way to fill current gaps in services and facilities. Community input reveals that people are highly supportive of partnering with private organizations to develop recreational facilities or programs.
- » Maintaining a resilient parks and recreation system is more difficult today with decreasing or flat budgets, less staff doing more work, climate change impacts and population growth. BPR cannot do it alone. Community relationships and partnerships are critical to creating a truly resilient and equitable system.
- » BPR has great relationships with community volunteers who are excited about helping maintain and improve the parks and recreation system. In the last five years, 2,424 volunteers contributed 19,130 hours to parks and recreation efforts (which equates to over \$500,000 according to the current estimated national value of each volunteer hour).
- » Comparable parks and recreation organizations interviewed as part of this planning process indicated the need for a full-time staff member to manage ongoing grant cycles and cultivate related partnerships.
- » Finding a more transparent avenue for community members and organizations to offer larger donations may help fill future funding gaps.



YOUTH ENGAGEMENT & ACTIVITY



Summer AVID₄ Adventure mountain biking camp puts smiles on the faces of these young bikers.

KEY ISSUES & OBSERVATIONS

- » Youth and teens are important, but teens identify as a separate group with unique needs that BPR's parks, facilities and programs should strive to serve. There is a gap in service for teens (14-18 years of age) who desire more volunteer and leadership opportunities through BPR services with their peers.
- » The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing anxiety and depression among Boulder teens and youth is a trend that is being seen across the country. Good mental and physical health are necessary for a high quality of life. BPR can help improve both through its services.
- » Access to nature is an important aspect of Boulder's parks and recreation system, especially for youth and teens. Since 2014, BPR staff have developed programming that better connects children to nature. Even so, while Boulder is known for its outdoor lifestyle and amazing natural landscape, there continues to be a gap in connecting to nature "close to home" due to limited access, safety and other factors.
- » Despite Boulder's and Colorado's leadership in appreciating nature and active lifestyles, no community is exempt from the concerns regarding childhood inactivity and limited access to the outdoors. According to recent studies, Colorado has the fastest growing rates of inactivity and obesity in the nation.



ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS



BPR staff members regularly check in on BPR's outdoor spaces.

KEY ISSUES & OBSERVATIONS

- » BPR has implemented a variety of initiatives to ensure staff are ready as an organization to meet operations, maintenance and programming needs. New software, service delivery models, asset management tools and training have helped ensure staff are ready to meet current needs and are proactively looking to the future. BPR has also been using capital investment strategies that are proving successful in managing assets more efficiently and effectively and investing in capital projects more strategically.
- » The department needs to build in the ability to adapt models and facility operations based not only on data collected over time, but holistically, based on data, user preferences, revenue generation, and programming options to better integrate flexibility into day-to-day operations of programming and facilities.
- » The COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on staff, including reductions in staffing levels, capacity and funding. With the pandemic impacts, keeping an engaged and motivated workforce is more challenging but remains a top priority.
- » BPR does a great job of delivering high quality parks, facilities and services to the Boulder community. Internally, there are many disparate resources that staff rely on, which at times are hard to find or provide conflicting information. This is in part due to recent staff reductions and retirements, creating an institutional knowledge gap that should be addressed.
- » Staff have expressed interest in creating standard operating procedures, cross-training, continuing education and more alignment across divisions. Team building exercises, continued learning opportunities and skill development are important to keeping staff engaged in and excited about their work.





WHERE WE ARE GOING

- » Using data collected from research, community engagement and policy direction from decision makers, including PRAB and City Council, and guiding planning documents, BPR has developed a roadmap to guide the department through the next five years. This section details BPR's strategic direction, including the policies, goals and initiatives that will be pursued over the next five years.

LOCAL TRENDS: FACILITIES

1 Increased Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Demand

Once people discover the outdoors and recreation, they are unlikely to return to the couch. While demand has fluctuated recently, local and national trends point strongly to increased, sustained demand for indoor and outdoor recreation over the long term with outdoor programs at or near capacity, especially at pools and tennis courts.



2 Change in Daily Habits

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way people work, recreate and exercise. Working remotely has become a standard practice for many. This impacts demand for and usage of BPR services. People may be hesitant to come back to indoor locations and may continue their increased use of outdoor parks and natural areas. At the same time, others may crave the social aspects of in-person indoor classes and fitness programs they have not had access to for months.



3 Balancing Equity with Financial Sustainability

With budget and space limitations, BPR needs to focus on prioritizing limited resources and capacity on services with the highest community benefit. Financial Aid provides access to BPR services to low-income residents, but middle-income community members wishing to access BPR services often face financial barriers – particularly for programs with high cost recovery goals.



Top to Bottom: Boot Camp at East Boulder Community Park; Summer Drama Camp; 2022 Master Plan Stakeholder Meeting

Strategic Direction & Decision Making



Young explorers discovering new adventures at the Crestview Park playground.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

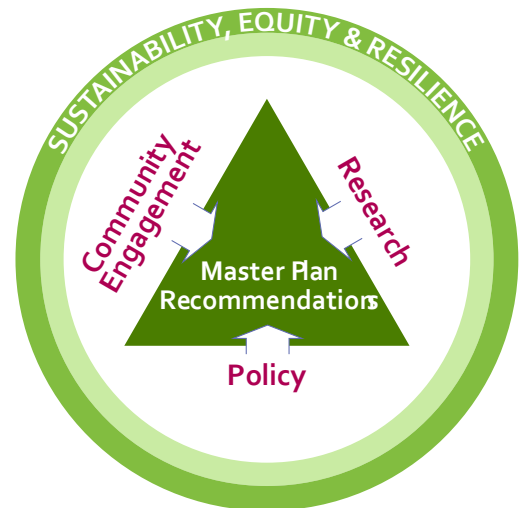
As mentioned in the first chapter, this planning process was a true collaborative effort that has enabled BPR to formulate a strategic direction for the next five years. Recommendations in this plan are a product of extensive community engagement, research and guidance from policy makers.

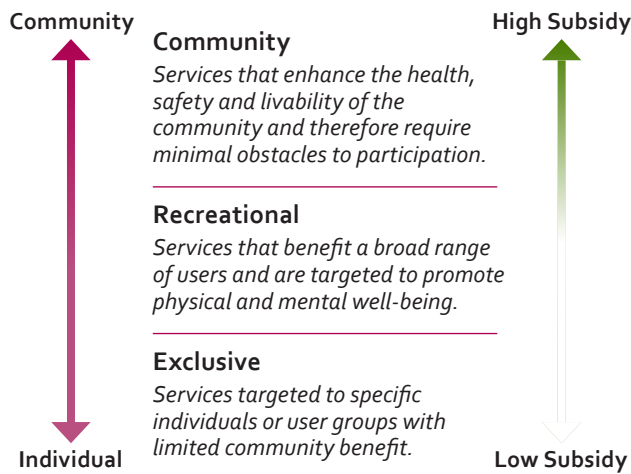
DECISION MAKING TOOLS

BPR utilizes a wide range of decision making tools for parks, facilities, and program planning. These tools ensure that decisions are data-driven and grounded in the needs of the community. The following section details the decision making tools utilized to provide guidance on how the department should prioritize its limited funds and staff capacity.

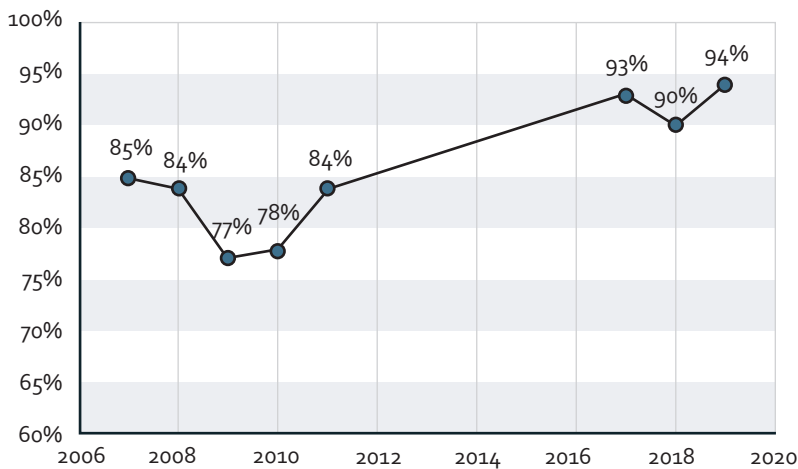
RECREATION PRIORITY INDEX (RPI)

The Recreation Priority Index (RPI) is a PRAB approved, master plan directed tool that allows program managers and decision makers to compare the relative importance of BPR programs in relation to one another. In addition to prioritizing programs, the RPI methodology allows BPR to set targets around cost recovery and pricing.





BPR Service Categories



BPR Cost Recovery: 2008-2019

Since implementing the RPI program and complementary Service Delivery Model, BPR has been able to increase cost recovery significantly, from an average cost recovery of 83% between 2007 and 2011, to an average of 90% between 2017 and 2019. This only considers direct costs and does not consider BPR's allocation of indirect expenses by a percent of total budget. When broken down by program, BPR is achieving revenues in excess of direct costs for both general and adult programming such as Pilates, the Reservoir, and gymnastics. Revenues from these programs offset revenues lost by community and recreational programs that are not intended to achieve higher levels of cost recovery, such as EXPAND/Inclusion, Fitness, Mind and Body, and YSI.

Despite offset revenues from high-cost recovery programs, BPR is still experiencing a negative gap between yearly program revenues and expenses. This shortfall is due in part to targeted low-cost recovery, community benefit programming such as EXPAND/Inclusion and YSI programs that are subsidized through the General Fund. These programs are not intended to be profitable and achieve intentionally low levels of cost recovery. BPR's program revenue shortfall of \$846,115 is primarily due to program expenses outpacing revenues, requiring BPR to consider one or more of three options: increase program fees, increase program subsidy, or adjust service levels.

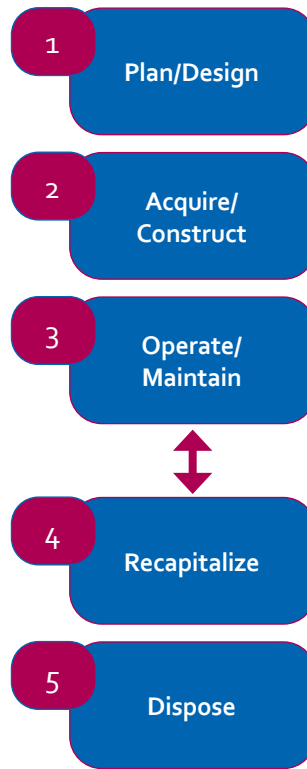
In addition to funds received through programs achieving high-cost recovery, BPR has successfully leveraged grants and other forms of financial support to deliver certain programs. Since 2017, BPR has successfully increased grant funding, allowing for facility access, EXPAND/Inclusion and YSI programs to continue to benefit the community.

ASSET MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (AMP)

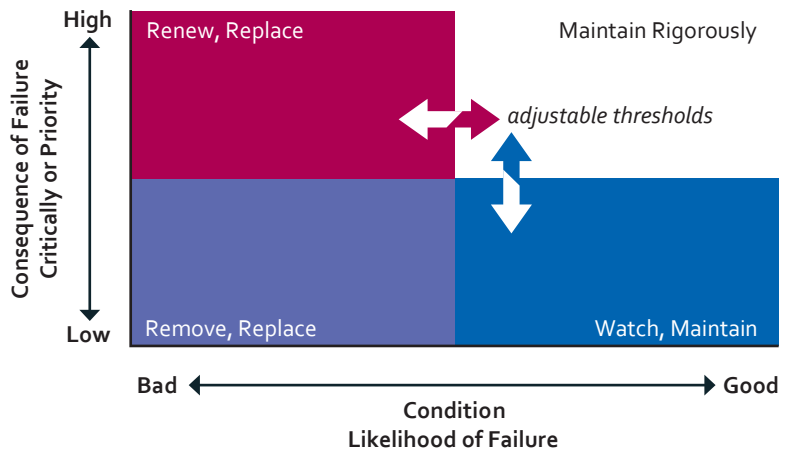
BPR utilizes its Asset Management Program (AMP) to promote effective use of financial and physical resources needed to manage the department’s inventory of assets while coordinating with other city departments on shared assets. Assets tracked under the AMP include only assets maintained, and purchased by BPR, such as park-related infrastructure (i.e., courts, playgrounds, and picnic/shade structures), secondary assets (i.e., park furniture, lighting, trails, and trees) and a large inventory of building and facility-related assets for properties like recreation centers and aquatic facilities.

The AMP uses a condition assessment that is performed every one-to-three years that catalogs the physical condition of an asset to determine its maintenance needs and remaining useful life. This condition assessment is used in tandem with an Asset Criticality Scoring System to establish a numeric score representative of an asset or facility’s criticality, or importance, to the community and to the overall parks and recreation system.

The combination of the Asset Criticality score and Asset Condition assessment score are used to identify funding priorities that focus on critical assets in less-than-ideal condition to bring the department’s overall asset inventory to a desired level of service.



AMP: 5 Step Asset Management Process



AMP: Asset Criticality Scoring



Throughout Boulder, BPR can use mapping to ensure parks, facilities and programming work for all community members.

USING MAPPING TO INFORM EQUITABLE DECISION MAKING

Boulder’s citywide Racial Equity Plan includes a short-term objective that “City staff will collect relevant data, (and) coordinate data systems to understand and track needs and impacts.” While this is an objective for internal processes, it also applies to how BPR provides services to the public. The department is committed to providing a parks and recreation system that meets the needs of the community equitably. In alignment with community feedback, citywide sustainability, equity and resilience goals and target metrics of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan, BPR will utilize equity mapping as a measurement and evaluation tool to fill gaps in service throughout the community.

Equity mapping will be part of decision making and priority setting moving forward, along with adherence to citywide initiatives, and the Asset Management Program (AMP) and Recreation Priority Index (RPI) processes. With equity mapping, BPR can analyze Level of Service (LOS) against several indicators, which when layered together reveal geographic locations that may need additional services. Adding this mapping will help prioritize investments, measure success and create a more equitable parks and recreation system far into the future.

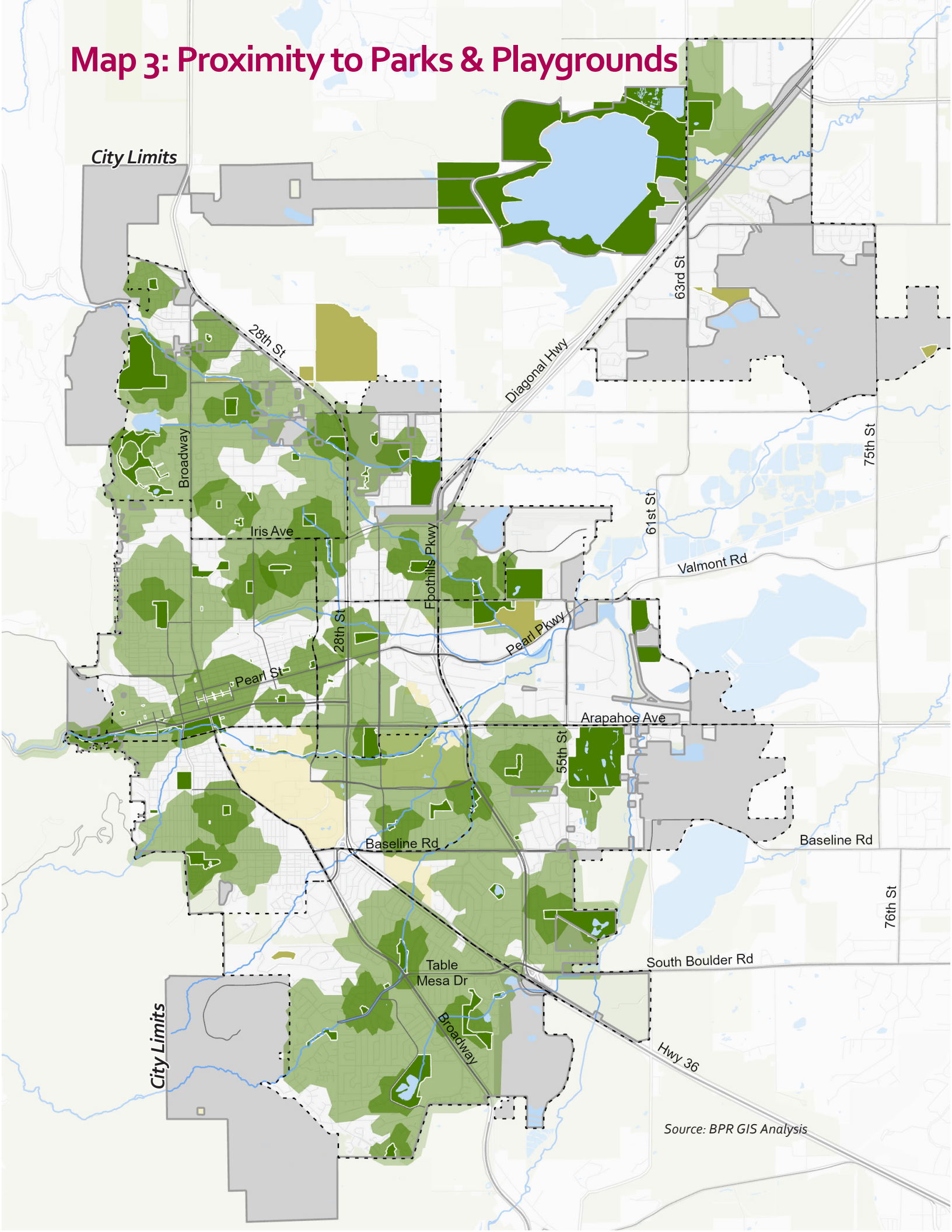
PRELIMINARY EQUITY MAPPING ANALYSIS

Measuring LOS based on qualitative as well as quantitative data through mapping is a new priority for BPR. As part of the master planning process, the department completed a preliminary analysis and created a framework and baseline for the inclusion of equity mapping in BPR’s work moving forward. BPR will update this analysis as the City of Boulder Equity Data Framework evolves and better data becomes available.



A gymnastics participant holds on tight while learning new skills.

Map 3: Proximity to Parks & Playgrounds



Source: BPR GIS Analysis

ACCESSIBILITY: PROXIMITY TO PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS

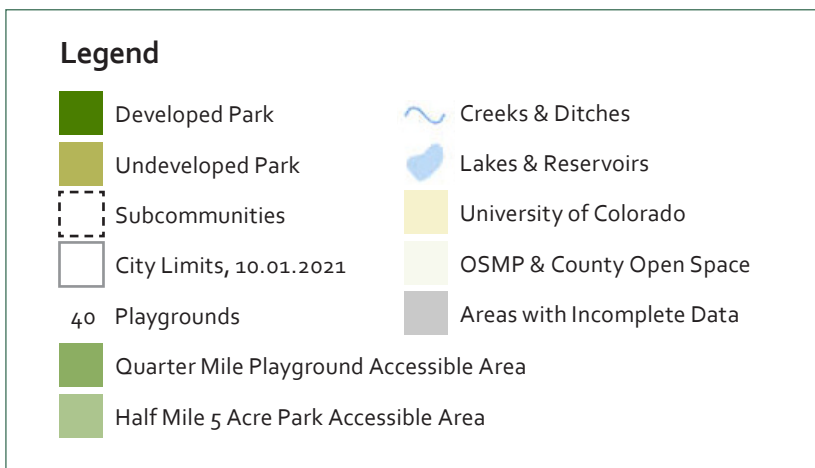
The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) outlines the following target parkland service metrics (specific to parks and playgrounds):

- » Provide neighborhood parks of a minimum of five acres in size within one-half mile of the population to be served.
- » Provide playground facilities for toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children up through age 12 within one-quarter to one-half mile of residents.

The map on the facing page illustrates the service areas according to the BVCP metrics. Areas not covered by green indicate gaps in BPR services, where the BVCP metrics are not met.

BPR can use this map, along with community feedback and policy direction, as a decision making tool to better understand service gaps. The department can also use it as a baseline for understanding how to meaningfully address these gaps for surrounding neighborhoods.

This analysis does not include services provided by other city departments, organizations, or private providers, such as City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks, Boulder Valley School District (BVSD), or neighborhood HOA parks and playgrounds.



NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

- Neighborhood Parks are the most common park type in the BPR system – 45 total
- 1 to 20 acres in size (average size = 7 acres)
- Often within an accessible distance of neighborhood residences
- Tend to serve neighbors within a mile radius
- Typical Assets: playground, park shelter, athletic court or field, natural areas, trees, open turf, multi-use trail, garden, seating, shade and bike racks

EQUITABLE ACCESS

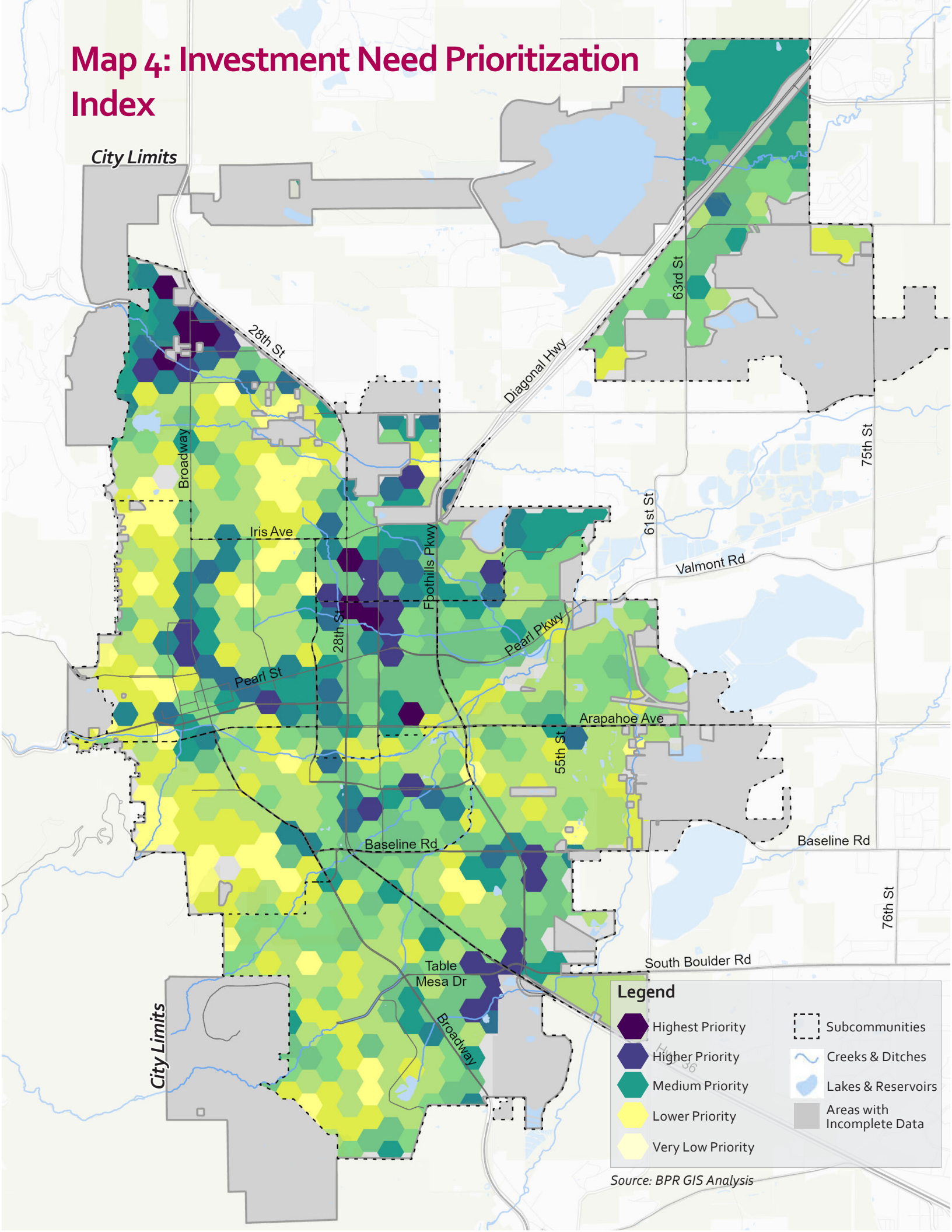
Improving equity means improving distribution and access for those who need it most, improving the balance of services across the city, and being proactive in planning for future population increases and demographic changes.

EQUITY MAPPING

With equity mapping, BPR can analyze level of service against several variables. These variables are indicators which when layered together, reveal geographic locations of need where additional service provision may be necessary.

Adding this mapping will help prioritize investments, measure success, and create a more equitable parks and recreation system far into the future.

Map 4: Investment Need Prioritization Index



Legend

- Highest Priority
- Higher Priority
- Medium Priority
- Lower Priority
- Very Low Priority
- Subcommunities
- Creeks & Ditches
- Lakes & Reservoirs
- Areas with Incomplete Data

Source: BPR GIS Analysis

NEEDS MAPPING

ENVIRONMENTAL & INCOME NEED INDICES

Using a similar equity lens, staff compiled data about environmental and income needs to create two maps. These maps illustrate how the city's parks and recreation system can improve responses to environmental and income-based needs.

The Environmental Need Index Map on this page identifies areas that have lower amounts of tree canopy cover and higher temperatures than the city average.

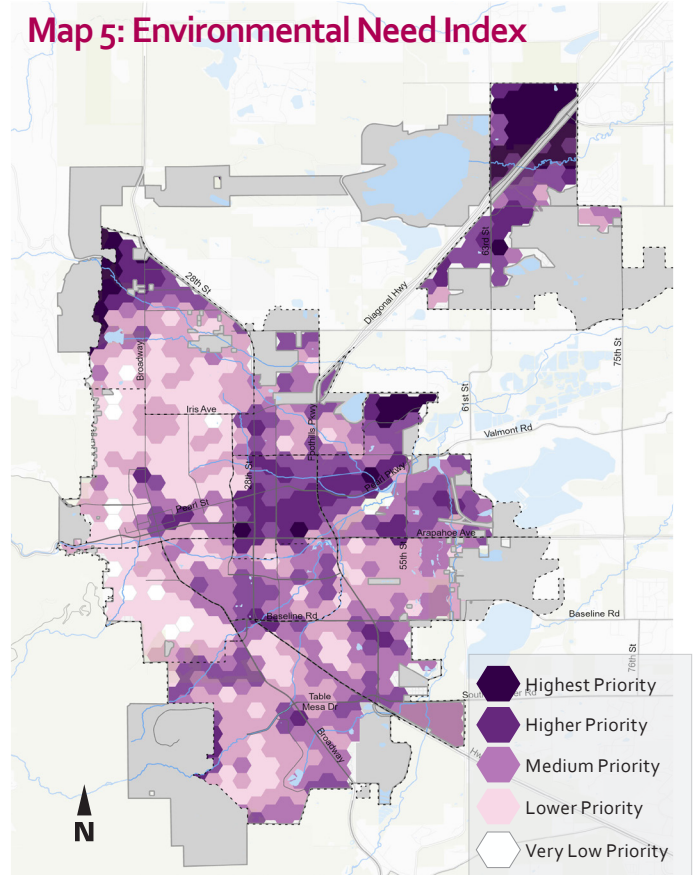
The Income Need Index Map, also on this page, shows areas where community members are receiving some form of income-based financial aid from the city in recent years (i.e., Affordable Housing, Parks and Recreation financial aid, Food Tax Subsidies). The darker the colors on these maps, the greater the need. These two maps, when combined with the analysis of proximity to parks and recreation resources, provide significant insight into how BPR should prioritize services to best meet community needs.

INVESTMENT NEED PRIORITIZATION INDEX

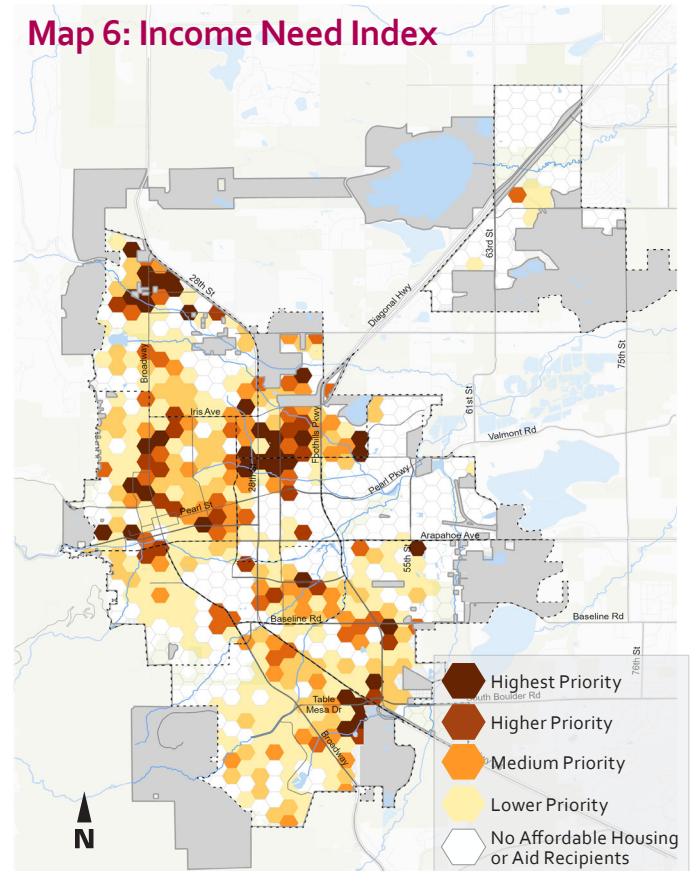
Combining the environmental and income need index maps can help identify areas with greater need of BPR investment. This provides an easy-to-understand visual and geographic representation of investment need across the city.

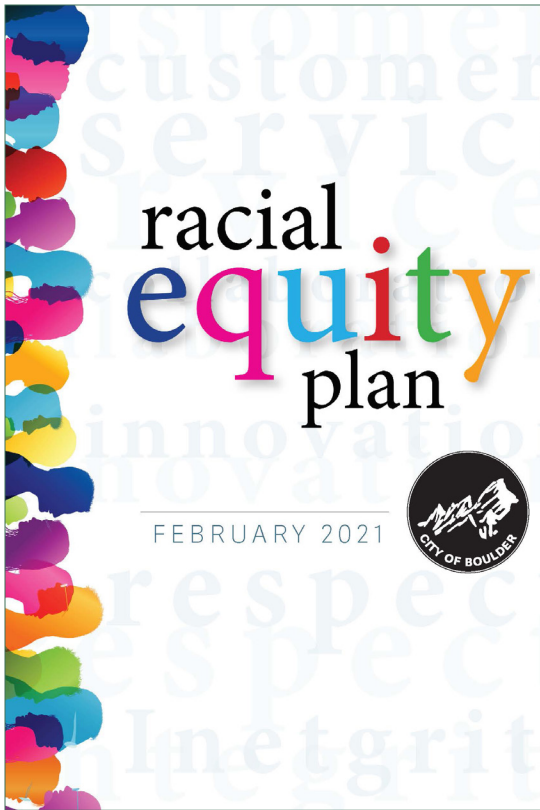
For the Investment Need Prioritization Index map on the facing page, areas of highest need for investment are darker in color, while light yellow indicates areas of lower need according to the variables used for this analysis. This map can help BPR determine how to prioritize future investments to best meet specific needs throughout the Boulder community.

Map 5: Environmental Need Index



Map 6: Income Need Index





City of Boulder Racial Equity Plan

RACIAL EQUITY INSTRUMENT

To ensure that BPR's commitment to equity is integrated into its decision making process, the citywide Racial Equity Instrument will be integrated as one of the department's decision making methodologies. Developed as part of the City of Boulder's Racial Equity Plan, the Racial Equity Instrument actively inserts racial equity into decision making processes with a particular emphasis on public engagement. While the instrument can be helpful when used at any decision making phase, it has the most impact when used at the forefront of planning for a program, project, or budgeting process.

Using the best practices from the Racial Equity Instrument, BPR will facilitate public engagement processes that focus on those in the Boulder community who have been historically left out or have not participated in planning processes. Using the Racial Equity Instrument and feedback gathered through engagement, BPR will ensure budget and operating decisions consider who benefits and who is impacted.

BUDGETING FOR RESILIENCE

To incorporate better performance metrics, higher levels of collaboration, and a more transparent approach to the budgeting process, the city has begun implementing the Budgeting for Community Resilience Framework. Budgeting for Community Resilience encourages the city and BPR to build greater resilience, with more robust and flexible systems for budget decision making, service delivery model optimization, and to create a framework for the continuous measurement and evaluation of services and programs over time through key performance indicators with an emphasis on resilience.

Beginning in mid-year adjustments in 2020, the city began classifying programs and services into the four Budgeting for Community Resiliency categories: essential, important, helpful and amenity. Funding is prioritized for essential and important services, while more work and discussion is needed to understand and define all services and service levels.

Strategic Plan

KEY THEMES

The six Key Themes that guide BPR’s work are derived from the 2014 master planning process and provide the framework for the work ahead. In addition to these Key Themes, efforts to ensure the work considers sustainability, equity and resilience are woven throughout the plan – reflecting that in all of the work ahead, BPR must consider who benefits and who is impacted, and also how the work contributes to or mitigates against addressing the climate emergency.

This section describes each Key Theme with overview and policy statements. A set of long-range goals and initiatives for achieving these goals are also described, giving BPR a clear picture of the desired future condition of Boulder’s parks and recreation system.

STRATEGIC PLAN ELEMENTS

The strategic plan (this master plan and implementation plan) is organized by six Key Themes. Each includes policies, goals and initiatives that provide the framework for BPR’s future work.

POLICIES

Policies are driven by decision makers representing the Boulder community, including the Boulder City Council and PRAB. They provide direction and help set the framework within which BPR operates by supporting consistent operations and transparent decision making. They also lay the groundwork for the development of BPR goals and initiatives.

GOALS

Goals, which are influenced by the master planning process, are the long-term results BPR would like to achieve to fulfill its mission, vision, and policy. Feedback was gathering during public engagement efforts to guide BPR in how goals should be prioritized. Goals are listed in the priority order in which the community felt they should be pursued.

INITIATIVES

Initiatives are activities and/or projects BPR staff work on to meet the goals. They are specific and measurable.



QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

Community members who responded to the BeHeardBoulder questionnaire emphasized “quality over quantity” when considering BPR facilities.

POLICIES

Provide clear direction for what BPR will achieve within the intention of the key themes.

GOALS

Results that require time and planning.

INITIATIVES

Actions taken to accomplish goals.



COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLNESS

KEEP BOULDER EMOTIONALLY AND PHYSICALLY HEALTHY THROUGH ITS PARKS, FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS.

OVERVIEW

Nationally, regionally and in Boulder, people recognize that parks, recreation programs, trails and natural areas improve quality of life. They provide many measurable personal and community health and wellness benefits, including increased physical and mental health, direct contact with nature, increased opportunities for social interactions, and an understanding of environmental stewardship. Caring for the environment that sustains us also promotes individual health and wellness.

Community feedback indicates that BPR is doing a good job of providing accessible and safe parks, facilities and programming and encouraging physical activity. BPR has seen increased use of parks and recreation resources in recent years. This, coupled with the city's popularity as an outdoor destination for visitors from across the region and around the world, adds complexity to how BPR maintains its properties and offers recreation activities, health and wellness programs and community services. Equitable access to parks, programming and facilities and building a resilient system in the face of population growth and climate change are essential to keeping Boulder a healthy, vibrant and inclusive community.

POLICIES

1. BPR shall continue to support the overall health and wellness of every member of the Boulder community through equitable programs, facilities, parks and services.
2. BPR shall serve as a facilitator, collaborator and leader with local organizations and partner with other city departments and local and regional agencies to improve the community's health and wellness and increase positive outcomes in public health.
3. BPR staff shall refer to the Health Equity Fund Theory of Change model to strategically consider cause and effect to track activities, measure short and long-term outcomes and make logical connections between the activities of the department and targeted outcomes.
4. BPR shall prioritize thoughtful planning and management of outdoor public spaces and natural ecosystems to achieve overall community health goals and improve outcomes.

ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 2014

- ✓ BPR collaborated with "Healthy Together," a grant funded program that provides low-income youth with physical activity, education and mentors in their neighborhoods.
- ✓ Facilities offer specialized classes designed for older adults.
- ✓ Walk With a Doc and Be Well Saturdays expanded wellness programs in partnership with Boulder Community Health.
- ✓ BPR currently exceeds both national and Colorado median LOS for most parks and recreation asset types.
- ✓ 21% increase in financial aid enrollments between 2014 and 2021.

Goals & Initiatives

GOAL 1: IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE PROGRAMMING AND REDUCE BARRIERS TO ACCESS

INITIATIVES

1. Create programming where people already gather and solicit feedback about meaningful and culturally relevant services
2. Enhance the user experience for the registration system, flexible services, and marketing for programs and services
3. Explore programming that unites people of different generations, abilities and cultures
4. Encourage behaviors to reduce the collective citywide carbon footprint
5. Develop a 5-year plan to continue program improvements
6. Continue progress on the existing ADA Transition Plan and establish an appropriate interval to update the plan for alignment with community needs and funding

GOAL 2: ENSURE BPR SERVICES AND ASSETS SUPPORT THE TOTAL PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF THE COMMUNITY

INITIATIVES

1. Ensure that new and renovated parks and facilities support population growth, diverse needs, and climate resilience
2. Identify opportunities to repurpose underused parkland and/or facilities
3. Facilitate community conversations about park behaviors to ensure public spaces are welcoming for all
4. Track user satisfaction with services over time

GOAL 3: ALIGN COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS WITH AVAILABLE RESOURCES FOR PARKS, FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS

INITIATIVES

1. Clearly communicate core services that can be provided with the current level of stable funding, along with priorities in case additional funding is available
2. Use data and community input to ensure equitable distribution and prioritization of resources
3. Increase the number of community members that have access to quality parks, facilities, programs and services within a 15-minute walk



FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

BALANCE THE MANY DEMANDS WITH EXISTING RESOURCES. RECOGNIZE THE NEED TO FOCUS ON CORE SERVICES AND COMMUNITY PRIORITIES.

OVERVIEW

Boulder's parks, facilities and programs provide many positive community benefits and are funded by a mix of sources. While most park services are fully supported by taxes, most recreation services are funded by user fees. Stakeholders and community leaders recognize the limits to public funding and the need to focus on ensuring community dollars are directed towards services that provide the most community benefit. BPR has continued to provide high levels of service while revenues have remained mostly flat and expenditures have continued to rise. BPR should consider prioritizing services and identifying alternative funding sources as current funding will not meet the demand and expenses to achieve the community's goals if trends continue. Staff must determine the best use of services and facilities, set maintenance priorities, and provide appropriate financial support to those who need it most. Balancing multiple and increasing demands with limited resources is difficult.

BPR is committed to finding creative ways to achieve Financial Sustainability, while delivering high quality programming and facilities, constructing, operating, and maintaining the built and natural environments that sustain the community, and providing equitable access to these resources.

ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 2014

✓ Since 2015, 12,085 volunteers have contributed their time to BPR projects and maintenance efforts, allowing staff to focus on other issues, helping ensure financial sustainability.

✓ BPR outsourced dance, pottery, competitive gymnastics and some summer camps to community partners, allowing BPR to focus more resources on recreation programming with the greatest community benefit.

✓ From 2016-2020 BPR received approximately \$2.7 million in grant and donation support.

POLICIES

1. BPR shall continue to categorize services using the PRAB-approved Recreation Priority Index (RPI), which objectively determines community benefit of a service to inform its appropriate subsidy level and cost recovery target.
2. BPR shall determine the actual cost of an activity or service using a standardized method that emphasizes consistency of data inputs, analysis methods, and measurement of financial performance.
3. BPR shall explore all feasible funding strategies to manage existing assets while fostering key partnerships to secure donations, sponsorships, foundational support and philanthropy to achieve community goals and expectations.
4. BPR shall develop strategies to close the gap between revenue and escalating expenses by increasing funding through a variety of means to meet the community goals and expectations outlined in the master plan.
5. BPR shall use the Asset Management Program to ensure limited funding is prioritized annually to sustain the most critical assets while considering retirement of assets if feasible to reduce expenses.
6. BPR shall complete an annual budget process founded on transparency, key funding priorities, results achieved, and the health of all dedicated funds critical to delivering the department's mission.

Goals & Initiatives

GOAL 1: INCREASE NON-TRADITIONAL FUNDING AND RESOURCES

INITIATIVES

1. Evaluate and pursue non-traditional funding sources like grants, philanthropy, and sponsorships
2. Define a transparent and streamlined process for receiving donations
3. Identify resources needed to develop and maintain non-traditional funding sources

GOAL 2: CLOSE THE FUNDING GAP

INITIATIVES

1. Identify and resolve existing inefficiencies
2. Employ Budgeting for Resilience and Racial Equity tools and principles in budget development and execution to ensure that resource allocation aligns with community priorities
3. Pursue investments in technology and innovation that provide efficiencies
4. Prioritize technologies and projects that positively impact the city's climate goals
5. Regularly assess total cost of service for all programs and facilities to inform budgeting and fee-setting
6. Identify, track and compare annual cost recovery targets against actuals
7. Collaborate with the Central Budget Office on how tax revenues can be used to fund future capital projects
8. Identify services that can generate funds to support other programs

GOAL 3: DIRECT EXISTING STABLE FUNDING TOWARDS THE MOST IMPORTANT WORK

INITIATIVES

1. Establish a transparent process for financial decisions to communicate to staff and the community
2. Prioritize a sustainable approach to financial aid
3. Evaluate sliding scale financial aid
4. Streamline the financial aid application process
5. Streamline and simplify BPR's current Service Delivery Framework and Recreational Priority Index
6. Identify, track and compare annual cost recovery targets against actuals



TAKING CARE OF WHAT WE HAVE

PRIORITIZE INVESTMENTS IN EXISTING PARKS AND FACILITIES.

OVERVIEW

Boulder currently cares for over 100 parks and facilities and must carefully manage these amenities to ensure community members have access to enjoy the outdoors and to recreate. In fact, a recent trend of public lands being “loved to death” is evident at both national and local levels due to the increasing demand for parks and recreation services and is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. Beyond the built parks and facilities, taking care of the land, water and air in the BPR system is critical for the community’s long-term sustainability. Boulder residents feel that existing assets are sufficiently maintained and BPR is doing a good job of continuing to maintain its parks and facilities given constrained resources and aging infrastructure. Community members want BPR to continue to prioritize maintaining and enhancing existing assets over building new facilities.

Taking Care of What We Have now requires a more strategic approach to prioritize maintenance needs and develop more flexibility around programming and services. BPR will need to ensure decisions promote equitable access and help maintain a resilient parks and recreation system.

POLICIES

1. BPR shall prioritize financial resources to manage all assets to ensure safe, clean and accessible parks and facilities. A life cycle approach will guide investment in preventative, regular and capital maintenance based on condition assessments, asset criticality, community input, sustainability, equity, resilience, and feasibility.
2. BPR shall recognize living systems as infrastructure and strategically focus on an integrated ecosystem approach to operations and management related to the urban forest, natural lands and parks that supports citywide climate goals through implementing new best practices, new technology and innovative strategies. BPR shall prioritize ecosystem services to achieve immediate results specified in relevant plans such as the Urban Forest Strategic Plan (UFSP), natural lands management plans and the Capital Investment Strategic Plan, among others.
3. While planning and implementing capital maintenance and enhancements to existing assets, BPR shall recognize the importance of providing relevant and meaningful parks and facilities that inspire the community to continue active lifestyles and respond to latest trends in recreation.
4. BPR shall actively work to minimize the contribution of BPR facilities, programs, and operations, total emissions of climate-warming pollutants, including carbon dioxide, methane, ozone and soot. These efforts should include consideration of the total life cycle emissions due to materials and equipment used by BPR and the emissions that programs and policies create via induced travel.

ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 2014

- ✓ Voter approved financial support allowed BPR to invest in and renovate 15 neighborhood parks.
- ✓ BPR completed the Urban Forest Strategic Plan (USFP).
- ✓ BPR staff has implemented a Zero-Waste program in select parks.
- ✓ BPR completed construction on two popular facilities (Scott Carpenter Pool and the Boulder Reservoir Visitor Center) and finished several plans that outline future priority infrastructure improvements.

Goals & Initiatives

GOAL 1: PROVIDE WELL-MAINTAINED AND MULTI-USE PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

INITIATIVES

1. Develop plans to ensure Boulder's recreation centers can serve the community for the next 50 years
2. Update maintenance standards and procedures to align with available labor and resources and to focus on highest priority assets
3. Explore opportunities and planning scenarios for desired improvements
4. Collaborate with other departments during the project planning process to identify efficiencies and cost saving opportunities
5. Clarify process and prioritization of projects to address deficiencies in existing parks
6. Conduct a needs-based mapping process to inform where in the community additional facility and/or program investments should be made
7. Define criteria and collect and analyze data to measure the success of parks, facilities, and programs

GOAL 2: ENSURE BPR'S ASSET MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (AMP) IS CONSISTENTLY AND CLEARLY IMPLEMENTED

INITIATIVES

1. Develop a standardized process to define maintenance responsibilities, asset-specific service and maintenance plans and schedules for inspection and replacement of components and/or assets
2. Develop training curricula to educate staff on an ongoing basis
3. Collaborate with OSMP and other city and regional partners to research and develop common best practices and align our program with industry standards
4. Conduct assessments on all major assets on a regular basis and have a full digitized plan for regular maintenance
5. Continue to expand utilization of data-driven decision making and investments
6. Finalize and regularly use criteria to prioritize assets based upon consequence of failure

GOAL 3: BUDGET FOR THE OPERATION, MAINTENANCE AND REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING ASSETS

INITIATIVES

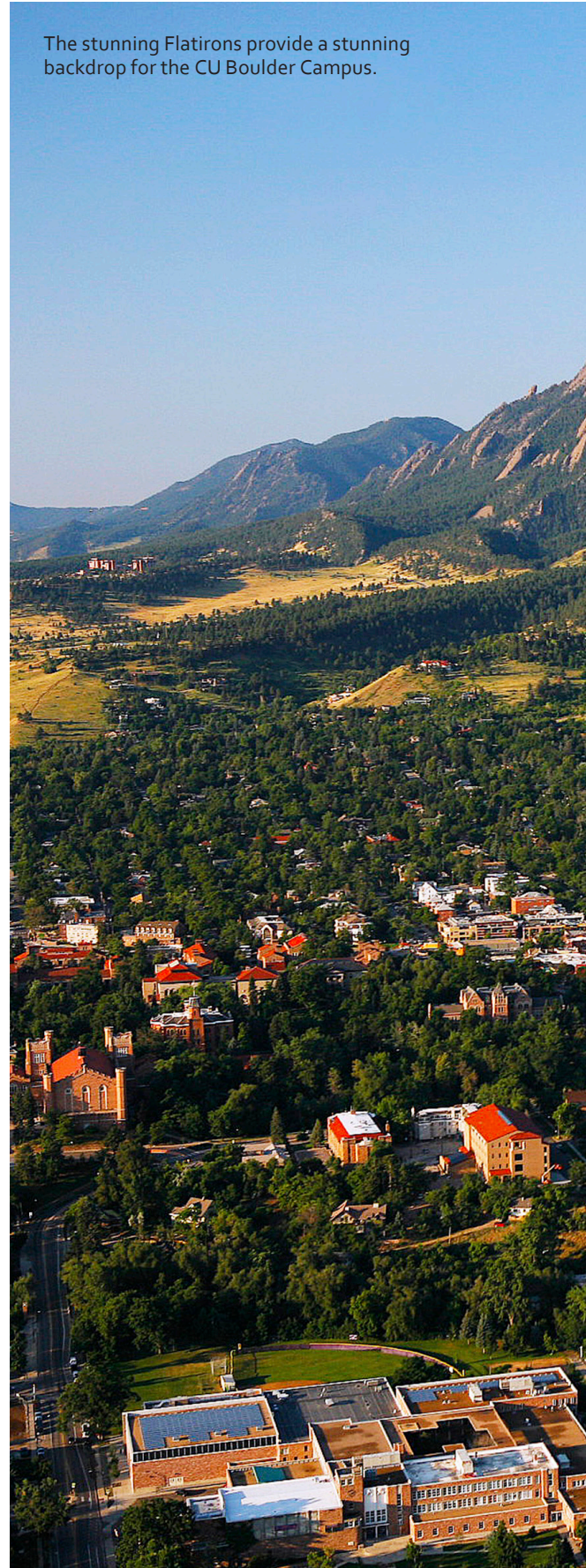
- » Calculate and analyze the Total Cost for Facility ownership by tracking expenditures for O&M and capital replacement to ensure sufficient funding is available for the full life of the park or facility
- » Annually update the CRV of department assets
- » Annually identify O&M related expenses to ensure that sufficient funds are being spent for upkeep
- » Utilize all relevant plans, such as the UFSP, to inform budgeting
- » Develop a long-term strategy to close gaps in O&M and capital funding and address critical asset needs

GOAL: IMPLEMENT ECOSYSTEM AND FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS THAT SUPPORT ACHIEVING THE CITY'S CLIMATE COMMITMENTS

INITIATIVES

- » Ensure that capital projects use sustainable building materials and processes and improve energy efficiency where feasible and appropriate
- » Implement the recommendations of the USFP to support a safe, healthy urban tree canopy
- » Develop a Natural Lands Strategic Plan
- » Develop a Water Assets Strategic Plan

The stunning Flatirons provide a stunning backdrop for the CU Boulder Campus.







BUILDING COMMUNITY & RELATIONSHIPS

BUILD A CONNECTED COMMUNITY THROUGH OUTREACH PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES. CREATE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL EQUITY FOR HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS ACROSS BOULDER.

OVERVIEW

Parks and recreation facilities, programs and services promote a healthy, engaged community and use environmental health to help address social and cultural inequities. BPR offers a variety of programs, spaces, events and services that foster socializing and help people learn from, understand and support each other. BPR's relationships within the community improve and expand access, creating a more equitable and resilient parks system. Partnerships with volunteers, community organizations, non-profits and private entities, and other city departments are necessary for long-term success, especially when considering constrained budgets, staffing challenges, climate change impacts and increasing usage.

Building Community & Relationships encourages a stronger, more diverse, and more unified community, benefitting from a variety of viewpoints and life experiences. Working together, the Boulder community can collectively propose and implement workable solutions that care for Boulder's parks and recreation system, helping it to be resilient in the face of environmental, economic and social change.

POLICIES

1. BPR shall ensure all community members feel welcome by providing safe, accessible, and meaningful services available to all.
2. BPR staff shall use inclusive, equitable, transparent, and consistent communication and engagement practices. Government makes better decisions and creates more responsive programs when the community it serves has a meaningful voice.
3. BPR shall build community through partnerships that foster sustainability, equity, resilience, and innovation, and are mutually beneficial, mission-focused and grounded in City of Boulder values. Partnerships are intended to maximize the impact of each partner's funding, knowledge, and expertise through collaboration.
4. BPR shall partner with other departments to advance citywide goals related to sustainability, equity and resilience to serve the Boulder community and proactively prepare for the future.
5. BPR shall prioritize ecosystem services and meeting climate goals as well as sustainability in all aspects of the department.

ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 2014

- ✓ The Recquity Pass program, which offers subsidized facility passes, initiated over 5,000 visits in the first eight months of its operation.
- ✓ Boulder's EXPAND program for people with disabilities offered new summer camps and sites for participants, enhancing self-esteem and social skills.
- ✓ BPR has seen a 52% increase in EXPAND enrollment.

Goals & Initiatives

GOAL 1: BUILD A STRONGER PARKS AND RECREATION SYSTEM THROUGH MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS WITH THE COMMUNITY

INITIATIVES

1. Prioritize equitable and inclusive outreach methods
2. Engage people in existing gatherings and solicit feedback through meaningful public dialogue
3. Expand virtual engagement tools and techniques
4. Foster informal relationships with like-minded organizations
5. Coordinate with the citywide Volunteer Collective to enhance community connections through volunteerism
6. Engage community groups in activity-specific volunteer opportunities and/or fundraising efforts
7. Collaborate with local organizations and agencies to activate parks through art, cultural and social community events

GOAL 2: STRENGTHEN BPR ADMINISTRATION OF PARTNERSHIPS WITH EXTERNAL ORGANIZATIONS

INITIATIVES

1. Develop a clear and transparent approach to forming and maintaining partnerships including goals and objectives
2. Allocate appropriate resources to manage partnerships
3. Develop a community interface to promote partnerships and share available resources

GOAL 3: STRENGTHEN AND BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

INITIATIVES

1. Develop and maintain a database of like-minded organizations
2. Identify priority gaps in services that could be filled through partnerships
3. Prioritize partnerships that address barriers to access
4. Expand and improve partnerships with BVSD, local universities and other schools
5. Work with the Health Equity Fund and community partners to measure positive health equity outcomes



YOUTH ENGAGEMENT & ACTIVITY

ENGAGE YOUTH WITH PARKS, FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE DIRECT EXPERIENCE WITH NATURE, EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND OPPORTUNITIES TO CLOSE THE EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT GAP.

OVERVIEW

BPR plays a vital role in enhancing the mental and physical health of younger members of the Boulder community through Youth Engagement & Activity. A growing body of research suggests that increasing children's interactions with nature can have positive physical, mental and spiritual benefits throughout life. These benefits increase exponentially when started at a young age. While Colorado is considered one of the healthiest states in the country and is a national leader in appreciating nature and active lifestyles, serious physical and mental health issues are impacting youth. Nearly one quarter of Colorado children are overweight or obese, and less than half get the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity. Between 2013 and 2019, the number of high school students reporting sadness or hopelessness increased by more than 40% and in 2019, 18% of teens participating in the Healthy Kids Colorado Survey reported seriously considering suicide. In May 2021, Children's Hospital Colorado declared a state of emergency for youth mental health, citing 90% increase in demand for behavioral health treatment in the previous two years. BPR can help reverse these trends by working with youth mental health providers to offer programming and services targeted to children's and teens' specific needs, supporting physical and mental health, civic pride, community belonging, environmental stewardship and healthy living for life.

POLICIES

1. BPR shall enhance the health, safety, resilience and overall development of Boulder's youth through parks, facilities and services.
2. BPR shall support family activities that benefit youth and build a strong sense of community and place, encourage a culture of environmental stewardship, and promote their perseverance.
3. When considering capital improvements, BPR staff shall use all data and metrics available to prioritize amenities and features that encourage youth activity, participation and healthy lifestyles such as nature-based play spaces and innovative teen areas for children and youth in parks and public spaces managed by BPR.
4. BPR shall engage youth and align departmental efforts with their needs.
5. Given the increasing health challenges facing youth and teens, BPR shall prioritize parks and facility upgrades, programs and services that support positive health outcomes for these specific populations in Boulder.

ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 2014

- ✓ Over 1,800 youth have been served through BPR and partner-supported summer camp offerings.
- ✓ With grant funding YSI programming increased to serve additional sites and has partnered with BVSD to offer recreation opportunities for youth attending the extended school year program.
- ✓ 141% increase in daily participation of youth in BPR programming.
- ✓ Through a partnership with First Tee at Flatirons Golf Course, youth have deepened their understanding of life skills by seamlessly integrating the game of golf with character building.

Goals & Initiatives

GOAL 1: ENHANCE THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH OF TEENS

INITIATIVES

1. Explore programs for the physical and mental health needs of teens
2. Ensure programming keeps teens occupied and engaged
3. Create programming that focuses on entry-level sports, health and wellness skills for teens
4. Make engagement and decision making opportunities available to all teens
5. Implement more volunteer and leadership opportunities

GOAL 2: UTILIZE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS TO EXPAND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH

INITIATIVES

1. Create a list of existing service providers focused on youth and teens and serve as a convener for collaboration on potential programming and shared resources
2. Establish, maintain and prioritize community partnerships, including collaboration with the Boulder Valley School District, that supplement capacity and resources and create innovative pathways to engage youth and teens
3. Work with local organizations to develop youth recreation services and volunteer opportunities that focus on culture and include family activities
4. Work with PLAY Boulder Foundation to enhance the PlayPass program

GOAL 3: INTEGRATE MORE PASSIVE AND ACTIVE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH INTO EXISTING SERVICES

INITIATIVES

1. Encourage kids to be active and develop healthy lifestyles to support their total physical, mental and social well-being
2. Continue to explore and develop nature play opportunities to build confidence and resilience
3. Collaborate with OSMP and other city departments to improve access to nature and develop projects and programs that connect youth to nature, such as nature clubs or climate awareness programs
4. Consider 'drop-in teen times' at the recreation centers and pools and teen nights with teen-focused special events



ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS

RESPOND TO CHANGES OVER TIME BY USING NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND DATA-DRIVEN AND COLLABORATIVE DECISION MAKING TOOLS.

OVERVIEW

Keeping an engaged and motivated workforce remains a top priority for the department. BPR's employees are resilient and have ensured its ability as a department to pivot in the face of economic, social and environmental uncertainties. A variety of initiatives have been planned and implemented to support staff in meeting changing user, operations, maintenance and programming needs and address community goals related to sustainability, equity and resilience. New software, service delivery models, and training are helping with this effort.

The workforce is also challenged by reductions in staffing levels, capacity and funding. Continuing education, team building, skills development and streamlining internal processes are opportunities to support staff growth and morale and to foster deeper connections with each other. Organizational Readiness is paramount to BPR's continued success in serving the Boulder community.

POLICIES

1. BPR shall ensure that the department workforce, structure and culture are designed and prepared to respond to community needs and positively impact the community's health and well-being.
2. BPR staff shall continue to use and implement accepted plans and reports to guide all aspects of the department and allow informed decision making.
3. BPR shall develop Key Performance Indicators to measure successful delivery of services, facilities and programs to meet the community goals outlined in this master plan.
4. BPR shall support employee well-being through citywide efforts to address cost of living and multi-modal transportation issues that create barriers to living, working and playing close to home.
5. BPR shall prioritize ecosystem services and meeting climate goals as well as sustainability in all aspects of the department.

ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 2014

- ✓ Beehive Asset Management Software was implemented to manage \$270 million in park assets more effectively.
- ✓ As part of the City of Boulder's Climate Leaders Program, leaders from parks and recreation are being trained in the science of climate change, so everyday decisions can be informed by a consistent foundation of knowledge.
- ✓ Reports that used to take weeks to produce now take minutes with the addition of new software.

Goals & Initiatives

GOAL 1: IMPROVE INTERNAL PROCESSES

INITIATIVES

1. Establish role clarity, streamlined processes, and standard procedures and documentation
2. Apply for accreditation by the Commission for the Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA)
3. Ensure that staff have the knowledge, resources, technology, and tools to effectively perform their roles
4. Collaborate with the city's IT department to develop a central information repository where staff can request and/or receive data, information, support, and resources
5. Improve the annual work plan process to clearly identify priorities, establish realistic allocations for staff time, and a framework for being able to decline projects or programs clearly and transparently
6. Create a budget allocation and process to support innovation
7. Encourage behaviors to reduce the collective citywide carbon footprint

GOAL 2: BUILD OUR TEAM

INITIATIVES

1. Recruit, hire and retain a highly competent and capable work force
2. Ensure hiring practices dismantle institutional racism

3. Develop clear and consistent onboarding and training processes
4. Build plan to recruit and retain frontline positions
5. Implement a paid internship program

GOAL 3: SUPPORT OUR TEAM

INITIATIVES

1. Provide opportunities for cross-training and cross-teaming
2. Support a culture of learning and development
3. Support supervisors in managing their teams holistically
4. Invest in formal succession planning to support future leaders
5. Continue to strive for livable and competitive wages and/or benefits

Plan Alternatives

Using the City of Boulder’s budgeting strategy of defining outcomes for the Fiscally Constrained, Action and Vision budgeting scenarios, BPR has developed three plan alternatives based on variable levels of funding.

Fiscally Constrained

BPR’s commitment to the community over the next five years

Action

Aspirational projects and programs that may be accomplished if additional funding becomes available

Vision

An unfunded wishlist of projects and programs

FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK

Through the master planning process BPR has gathered feedback on desired facility and programming improvements from both individual members of the community and specific user groups. Balancing the community’s desires with BPR’s financial reality requires that the department prioritize what can be accomplished over the next five years. Adopted in 2006, the City of Boulder’s budgeting strategy requires each department to acknowledge and plan for multiple revenue scenarios. These scenarios are intended to enable departments to proactively plan for outcomes in which revenues remain flat or increase. The following section summarizes the three budgeting scenarios in which future projects and programs are assigned.

PLAN ALTERNATIVES

Using the city’s budgeting strategy of defining outcomes for the Fiscally Constrained, Action, and Vision budgeting scenarios, BPR has developed three plan alternatives based on variable levels of funding.

FISCALLY CONSTRAINED

The Fiscally Constrained alternative plans for prioritized spending within existing budget targets. The intention of this alternative is to refocus and make the most of existing resources with the primary goal being for the department to maintain services. The actions associated with the Fiscally Constrained alternative require limited or no funding to accomplish and are focused on providing or enhancing core and/or existing services. The fiscally constrained scenario reflects BPR’s commitment to the community over the next five years, focusing on core services and those that benefit the greater community.

ACTION

The Action alternative describes the extra services or capital improvements that could be undertaken when additional funding is available. This includes strategically enhancing existing programs, beginning new alternative programs, adding new positions, or making other strategic changes that would require additional operational or capital funding. In coordination with the Central Budget Department, PRAB, and City Council, BPR would evaluate and analyze potential sources of additional revenue, including but not limited to capital bond funding, program income, grants and existing or new taxes.

VISION

The Vision alternative represents the complete set of services and facilities desired by the community, without regard to resources or viability. While the Vision plan is fiscally unconstrained and unfunded, the intent is to provide high-level policy guidance by illustrating the ultimate goals of the community and by providing an aspirational look to the parks and recreation system, without considering feasibility.

PARKS

PLAN ALTERNATIVES

PROJECTS	FISCALLY CONSTRAINED	ACTION	VISION
Park Maintenance -BPR Asset Management Program	Maintain Well at FCI .07, Develop Violet Park	Enhance and add trending amenities	Full concept plan implementation for all planned parks
Playgrounds	1-2 Parks/Playgrounds per year refurbished (25-30 year)	Playground enhancement accelerated (20 year)	N/A
Restrooms - Pending LOS Evaluation	Maintain current LOS, transitioning to universal restrooms as facilities are built or replaced	Add more to appropriate parks, accelerate transition to universal restrooms	N/A
Valmont Park - 2015 Concept Plan	Phase 1 development of adventure and nature play elements	Phase II development, including disc golf, athletic fields	Full concept plan implementation, including infrastructure for community recreation facilities
Urban Canopy - Urban Forest Strategic Plan	Focus on health of current canopy through IPM, Tree Safety, EAB response, and public tree protection— Some canopy growth through tax investment, philanthropy and partnership	Improved rotation for street trees, increased planting to support 16% canopy cover by 2027. Carbon credits could create additional funding source.	Industry standard rotation for all public trees, sufficient planting to achieve urban canopy goals.
Civic Area	Activation w/ Operations Focus	Phase II development	N/A
Area III	Complete Baseline Urban Service Plan and develop concept plan, but nothing is developed	Build core elements	Full park development



Could the Summer Olympics skateboarding competition be in this skater's future? If he keeps practicing his skills at Valmont City Park, it just might become a reality.

FACILITIES

PLAN ALTERNATIVES

PROJECTS	FISCALLY CONSTRAINED	ACTION	VISION
Athletic Fields - 2015 Athletic Field Study	Optimize usage through partnerships, maintenance and conversion to artificial turf	8th Field at Stazio, Redevelopment at Mapleton and Tom Watson to optimize usage	Build fields at Valmont City Park
Recreation Centers - 2022 Facility Needs Assessment	EBCC & NBRC - Maintain Well SBRC - Retire past useful life facility but not replace; citywide facility feasibility study for SOBO area facilities	Enhance Facilities	Modernize EBCC & NBRC; Design/Build South Boulder facility
Courts - Study pending	Maintain Well. Court study to identify LOS—Seek opportunities to maximize community benefit through Joint Use Agreements/ partnerships	Enhance for increased durability, some additional facilities	Additional new facilities may be developed
Aquatics -2015 Aquatics Feasibility Study	Maintain current service levels and pools	Enhance Spruce Pool	Build aquatic training facility at Valmont City Park
Reservoir -2018 South Shore Capital Strategy	Improve existing site connections and circulation	Additional shade structures and group picnic areas, children’s play and outdoor education	Marina facility includes meeting/event space, boat storage/maintenance facilities



Balancing is key to success when taking the BoulderLift class at East Boulder Community Center.

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

PLAN ALTERNATIVES

PROJECTS	FISCALLY CONSTRAINED	ACTION	VISION
Facility Access Fees	Continued increases to base fees to keep up with cost escalation, maintaining discounts for youth and seniors	Increase base fees and increase discounts for youth and seniors	Free for target populations (youth & seniors)
Financial Aid	Maintaining Financial Aid LOS reliant upon grants and philanthropy	Funding supports increased aid and sliding scale for maximum access	Sliding scale supports full participation
EXPAND	Core Services for Target Population funded by GF subsidy and grants	Service levels increase	N/A
Youth / Teens	Additional programming only possible through discontinuation of other services or market based programs	Programming for youth and teens grows with additional donations, grants or subsidy programs	N/A



Young explorers taking advantage of nature play opportunities during an annual BPR summer camp program.





HOW WE WILL GET THERE

- » The 2022 Master Plan establishes BPR's commitment to the community over the next five years. The following chapter discusses how to make the future vision a reality, using BPR's annual action planning process, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and metrics to measure progress over time.



Implementation



Boulder community members of all ages can enjoy the many recreation activities offered by BPR.

IMPLEMENTING THE 2022 MASTER PLAN

With the acceptance of this master plan, BPR commits to fulfilling its mission and to implementing the initiatives and the Fiscally Constrained Plan Alternative. Through an annual action planning process, the department will ensure that the 2022 Master Plan is a living document used to improve the overall system and achieve the goals of the community well into the future.

BPR will utilize equity mapping, key performance indicators (KPIs), and the city's Sustainability, Equity and Resilience Framework to plan its work and measure success over time.

The department will collaborate with PRAB, City Council and aligned city departments to:

- » Ensure the goals and initiatives of each key theme are considered
- » Maximize resources and efficiency
- » Make sure BPR continues to deliver best-in-class parks, facilities and programs for the Boulder community

BPR ANNUAL ACTION PLANNING 5 STEP PROCESS



ANNUAL ACTION PLANNING PROCESS

The Annual Action Plan process is how BPR will ensure the community's goals as outlined in the 2022 Master Plan happen. The Action Plan will include each year's committed goals to achieve Master Plan initiatives and Fiscally Constrained Plan Alternatives.

BPR follows five steps to complete the annual Action Planning Process. The first involves reviewing the current state of the system and plan progress. BPR will then review the master plan goals and initiatives to identify areas of focus for next year. This step includes reporting out plan progress to the community. Third, staff will select projects to implement based upon resources, the current state of the system, and focus areas. The Action Plan will inform the development of the operating and capital budgets, which is the fourth step. Finally and most importantly, staff will implement the Action Plan.

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The Annual Action Plan is also informed by City Council's workplan and priorities, and citywide goals and priorities as outlined in the BVCP and various master plans.

BPR has a well-defined set of tools used to plan, measure, and evaluate proposed projects and programs. Through this master planning process, staff realized they can simplify these tools to ensure work is intentionally designed and delivered and that investment decisions are data-driven.

In addition, new methods will support BPR's ability to address impacts relating to changing social, economic and environmental conditions. As the city finalizes climate and equity related targets, BPR will utilize recommended assessment tools to inform how BPR's work will contribute to achieving those targets and community-wide goals. Equity mapping will be part of BPR's decision-making and priority setting toolkit moving forward, along with adherence to citywide frameworks, and the Asset Management Program and Service Delivery Model.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

BPR has identified Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure success in accomplishing this Master Plan. The KPIs are informed by the goals and community values expressed in the Master Plan; leading practices, research, and data systems also shaped the selection of the KPIs.

During the annual Action Planning process, staff will document progress measured against each KPI to track BPR's success in achieving community goals.

COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLNESS		
KPI	Components	Sustainability, Equity & Resilience Framework Goals
Recreation Contacts	Programs offered, Registered participants, and all visits: centers, pools, Reservoir, rounds of golf (3 data points)	Healthy & Socially Thriving
Financial Aid Contacts	FA total visits, value, and percentage of total visits (3 data points)	Healthy & Socially Thriving
Direct Financial Support to Lower Barriers	FA Scholarship dollars spent (1 data point)	Healthy & Socially Thriving
Inclusion Across Demographics	All Financial Aid participants, by age (3 data points: 1 data point for youth, senior, adult)	Healthy & Socially Thriving
Pass Utilization	Average visits per member (1 data point)	Healthy & Socially Thriving

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY		
KPI	Components	Sustainability, Equity & Resilience Framework Goals
Community Financial Support	Total financial contributions from donations, philanthropy, grants (1 data point)	Responsibly Governed

TAKING CARE OF WHAT WE HAVE

KPI	Components	Sustainability, Equity & Resilience Framework Goals
Comprehensive Maintenance	Total number of work orders completed (later could include: average time between creation and completion)	Responsibly Governed Livable
Investment in Parks and Facilities	Total \$ spent on Repair and Renovation (R&R) and CIP. Then, that dollar amount as a % of Current Replacement Value (CRV) (2 data points)	Safe Responsibly Governed Livable
Carbon Footprint	Carbon footprint for the 3 recreation centers, combined from electricity and gas usage minus PV savings (1 data point)	Environmentally Sustainable Livable

BUILDING COMMUNITY & RELATIONSHIPS

KPI	Components	Sustainability, Equity & Resilience Framework Goals
Volunteer Contributions	Total \$ value of volunteer contributions, along with total volunteer participants and total hours (3 data points)	Accessible and Connected Healthy & Socially Thriving

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT & ACTIVITY

KPI	Components	Sustainability, Equity & Resilience Framework Goals
Community Benefit Programming	EXPAND + YSI: Hours of programming, participants (2 data points)	Healthy & Socially Thriving
Youth Engagement	Youth participation visits (youth portion of "Recreation Contacts") (1 data point)	Healthy & Socially Thriving
Camp Participation	Camps offered and total participants (2 data points)	Healthy & Socially Thriving

ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS

KPI	Components	Sustainability, Equity & Resilience Framework Goals
Streamlining Systems	CAPRA standards met (SOPs/policies approved by Director)	Responsibly Governed
Workforce Strength	Turnover, vacancy, average tenure among Standard Employees. Final data collection will depend on new HR systems (3 data points)	Responsibly Governed
Seasonal and Temporary Support	Non-Standard Hours Worked (1 data point)	Responsibly Governed Economically Vital



A summer camp hula hooping class learning to spin their way into the future.

Works Cited

Plans

BPR 2014 Master Plan

BPR Design Standards Manual

City of Boulder Urban Forest Strategic Plan

City of Boulder Sustainability, Equity & Resilience Framework

Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan

City of Boulder Racial Equity Plan

City of Boulder Engagement Strategic Framework

Benchmark Cities Parks & Recreation Master Plans

Reports (available upon request)

BPR Needs Assessment Report - Design Workshop, September 2021

BPR Financial Assessment - Design Workshop, June 2021

BPR White Paper Updates - Design Workshop, Jan 2021

BPR Indoor Recreation Facilities Needs Assessment - Barker Rinker Seacat Architecture, June 2021

City of Boulder Parks & Recreation Master Plan Update Statistically Valid Survey Summary Report - Polco & National Research Center, June, 2021

Balancing Community Needs with Financial Realities - Ballard King, Feb 2022

BPR Snapshot Overview - Current State, Key Themes & Trends, June 2021

Other relevant plans, reports and documents were consulted where appropriate.

Sources

BPR Recreational Priority Index

BPR Asset Management Program, 2018

BPR Capital Investment Strategic Plan 2016

BPR 2021-2026 Ongoing Unfunded Project List

BPR 2021 and 2020 Boulder Community Profile

BPR Funds – 2021 Approved Fund Chart

City of Boulder Budgets, 2016-2021

BPR Service Delivery Handbook

State Demographer's Office, 2020 Boulder Community Profile

State Demographer's Office, City of Boulder, 2020 Boulder Community Profile

State Demographer's Office, Boulder County Population Projections 2040

Trust for Public Land

City of Westminster, SSPRD, City of Tempe, Foothills PRD, City of Broomfield, City of Naperville staff, all other cities - Parks & Recreation master plans

Sports & Fitness Industry Association's 2020 Pickleball Participant Report

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

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

Acronyms List

AMP: Asset Management Program

API: Asset Priority Index

BPR: Boulder Parks & Recreation
Department

BVSD: Boulder Valley School District

BVCP: Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan

CAPRA: Commission for the Accreditation
of Parks and Recreation Agencies

CRV: Current Replacement Value

DSM: Design Standards Manual

EBCC: East Boulder Community Center

EXPAND: Program to help people of all
abilities enjoy life through recreation and
leisure activities

FCI: Facility Condition Index

GUB: Growing Up Boulder

HEF: Health Equity Fund

KPI: Key Performance Indicators

LOS: Level of Service

NRPA: National Recreation & Park
Association

NBRC: North Boulder Recreation Center

NRPA: National Recreation & Park
Association

OSMP: Boulder Open Space & Mountain
Parks

PLAY: Parks & Leisure for Adults and Youth
(Boulder Foundation)

PRAB: Parks & Recreation Advisory Board

RPI: Recreation Priority Index

SBRC: South Boulder Recreation Center

TAG: Technical Advisory Group

- **MTAG:** Management Technical Advisory
Group

- **WTAG:** Working Technical Advisory
Group

UFSP: Urban Forest Strategic Plan

YOAB: Youth Opportunities Advisory Board

YSI: Youth Services Initiative

Glossary of Terms

Assessment: process of comparing and evaluating an entity against established standards, and documenting the differences.

Asset: real or personal property which organizations desire to track and manage as a distinct identifiable entity. It may be a physical structure or grouping of structures, land features, or other tangible property that has a specific service or function. The term “asset” can also be applied to movable items, such as vehicles and equipment.

Asset deficiency: a facility defect that occurs when maintenance and repair tasks are not performed in a timely manner. When allowed to accumulate uncorrected, they inevitably lead to deterioration of performance, loss of asset value, or both. An accumulation of such uncorrected deficiencies is a backlog that represents a liability (in both physical and financial terms) for an asset.

Asset management: a systematic process of maintaining, upgrading, and operating physical assets cost-effectively.

Asset Priority Index (API): an asset evaluation process that quantifies the value of an asset in relation to the mission of the organization. The API ranks assets according to a numeric rating system.

Backlog: The unfunded deficiencies work required to bring facilities to a condition that meets accepted codes, laws, and standards to achieve expected life.

Benchmark: A well-defined, widely accepted standard of performance used to measure progress toward a specific state or level of competency.

Benchmarking: The continuous process of measuring a product, service, or process against the best practices of recognized leaders in the field in order to achieve superior performance.

Blue line: result of 1959 Boulder City Charter amendment that limited water extensions above an elevation of 5,750 feet to preserve the mountain backdrop.

Business core program: program comparable to private market offerings and offered at market rates.

Capital improvement: new construction or an alteration that helps an asset better meet its intended purpose.

City park: park classification type representing sites that are generally 100-300 acres in size. Designed to serve the entire community, they generally provide a mix of natural beauty and developed facilities.

Community benefit: a good that is shared for all (or most) members of a society or social group.

Condition assessment: The inspection and documentation of the condition of the features of an asset as measured against the applicable maintenance or condition standards. It provides the basis for long range maintenance planning, as well as annual work plans and budgets.

Cost recovery: recoupment of the financial expenditure associated with providing a service.

Critical system: a collection of components that typically operate in conjunction to provide an essential service and whose failure, removal, or non-operation may result in loss or harm.

Current acres: as used in this plan, the number of acres that are developed and open for use at this time.

Current replacement value (CRV): the dollar amount needed to pay to replace an asset at the present time according to its current worth.

Deferred maintenance: maintenance that was not performed when it should have been or was scheduled to be completed and then put off or delayed.

Diamond ball field: athletic field used for baseball or softball.

Dog parks: areas in which dogs can play without leashes.

Equity: Providing everyone the specific resources and opportunities they need to be successful and to ensure equal outcomes. This differs from equality, which is treating everyone the same.

Equity mapping: Measuring LOS based on qualitative as well as quantitative data through

mapping, including various layers of demographic data to geographically identify system gaps.

Excise tax: a tax that is paid when purchases are made on a specific good (e.g. gasoline, sporting goods)

Facility: see “asset”

Facility condition index (FCI): A measure of a facility’s relative condition at a particular point in time compared to similar facilities. The FCI rating is a ratio of the cost of repair of an asset’s deficiencies divided by the current replacement value for the asset.

Feasibility study: an evaluation and analysis of the potential of a proposed project or venture that objectively explores costs versus benefits. Costs and benefits can be financial, social, environmental, or political.

Individual benefit: a good that is excludable and yields benefit only to one individual or group.

Infill development: development of vacant parcels of land within the city which were not developed when initial development occurred, or were cleared of substandard structures and are ready for new development.

Latino, Latina, Latinx: Latino is currently the most used noun or adjective for a person from, or whose ancestors are from, Latin American. The feminine form of this word is Latina. Latinx is a recently coined term proposed as a gender-neutral alternative when communicating in English. There has been much debate around the term, particularly around its grammatical correctness. Use of the term varies highly depending on the population and is more commonly used by individuals who are non-binary and/or identify within the LGBTQ+ community and who feel that the male/female (Latino/Latina) dichotomy does not encompass them. In the spirit of being a welcoming and inclusive place, the City of Boulder currently uses the term Latinx when referring to a group that has not wholly and exclusively self-identified as either Latino or Latina. In the near future, the city will be convening a group of residents that are more

directly affected by the use/non-use of this term to co-create a set of directives for staff, based on what the community wants to hear and see.

Level of Service (LOS): an expression of the minimum recreation and park infrastructure capacity required to satisfy the needs of residents of the community. Unless otherwise specified, LOS is expressed as per 1,000 population.

Life Cycle: all stages of providing a facility or service including conception, planning, design, implementation, evaluation, monitoring, retirement, and/or disposal.

Life Cycle asset management: systematic process of maintaining, upgrading, and operating physical assets cost effectively.

Millage: an ad valorem tax that an owner is required to pay on the value of a taxable property.

Multi-use field: typically rectangular, areas consisting of either sand-based engineered soils or artificial turf used for playing surfaces for athletics.

Needs Assessment: a systematic process for determining and addressing gaps between current conditions and desired conditions.

Preventive maintenance: regularly scheduled periodic maintenance activities (within a year) on selected equipment.

Private good: see “individual benefit.”

Recreation facility: major sport or leisure complexes that house many formal and informal athletic events.

Recreation Priority Index (RPI): a service evaluation process that quantifies the value of a recreation program or service in relation to the mission of the organization. The RPI ranks programs or services according to a numeric rating system.

Resilience: The capacity to prepare and plan for disruptions, to recover from shocks and stresses, and to adapt and grow from these experiences.

Sustainability: The ability to meet the needs of today in a way that does not inhibit future generations from meeting the needs of tomorrow.

