



Greeley

PARKS, TRAILS AND OPEN LANDS

– **MASTER PLAN** –

PREPARED FOR CITY OF GREELEY
MAY 10, 2016
PREPARED BY
DESIGNWORKSHOP



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MASTER PLAN LEADERSHIP

Andy McRoberts, Director of Culture, Parks, and Recreation
John Barnett, Long Range Planner
Sarah Boyd, Parks Planner
Ken Weaver, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Eric Bloomer, Park Superintendent
Dale Elder, Recreation Superintendent
Brad Mueller, Community Development Director
Roy Otto, City Manager
Becky Safarik, Assistant City Manager
Victoria Runkle, Assistant City Manager

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

Bert Garcia
Doris Gilreath
Kathleen Stewart
Kenneth Weaver
Richard Reeser
Sandy Magnuson
Scott Schuttenburg
Todd Hampton

CITY COUNCIL

Tom Norton, Mayor
John Gates, Mayor Pro Tem
Charles Archibeque
Michael Finn
Randy Sleight
Robb Casseday
Rochelle Galindo
Sandi Elder

CONSULTANT TEAM

Design Workshop, Inc
PROS Consulting, Inc
Alta Planning + Design
ETC Institute

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Projection: All maps are displayed in NAD 1983 State Plan Colorado Central FIPS 0502 Feet.

Additional Map Sources: Design Workshop, 120 East Main Street Aspen, CO 81611 970.925.8354

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Source: City of Greeley Flickr



PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF PARKS, TRAILS, OPEN LANDS AND RECREATION

The 2016 Greeley Parks, Trails and Open Lands Master Plan update reflects the mission and goals of the City of Greeley Culture, Parks and Recreation Department (CPRD) and provides direction for the City's decision-making over a planning horizon of 10 years. Most of the 2002 Master Plan recommendations have been completed or require a new approach. An evaluation of the Department's current offerings is required to ensure the needs of Greeley's growing population and changing recreation trends are accommodated. Changes in community demographics necessitate inquiries into current values and recreation needs. The primary goals of this master plan update are to ensure the City's parks, trails and open lands meet the needs of a growing community, enhance the quality of life for residents and visitors and add value to all of the ways that Greeley residents recreate and play. This plan update also provides recommendations for funding, policies, operations, services, programming, maintenance and improvements for short and long-term implementation.

WHY A MASTER PLAN?

- To address services, management, maintenance, facilities and policies in a **fiscally responsible and sustainable manner**;
- To propose **customized strategies for Greeley** that reflect the ways the community plays;
- To provide **realistic and clear recommendations** to guide Greeley's decision-making process over the next 10 years regarding parks, trails and open lands; and
- To contribute to a **high quality of life**, encourage new **economic opportunities** and promote Greeley as a **welcoming place for visitors**.

PARKS, TRAILS, OPEN LANDS AND RECREATION AMENITIES NEED TO KEEP UP WITH GREELEY'S GROWING POPULATION



VISION SUMMARY

The vision for the Parks, Trail and Open Lands Master Plan (PTOL) focuses on key ideas and new approaches that will help Greeley thrive and continually improve the quality of life for residents. This plan outlines a long-term vision and establishes the community's current values in order to guide decision-making and shape the future priorities of the CPRD.

Over the next 10 years, the City of Greeley will seek to:

1. Capture opportunities to protect open lands and to ensure residents have the chance to enjoy nature; partner for success in being stewards of the city's natural resources and beautiful landscapes; acquire high-quality properties in advance of development to connect open lands along river and stream corridors, retain scenic views and support agriculture.
2. Add to trail offerings and make them accessible to more people; diversify the types of trails available; connect gaps in the existing trail network and plan for expansion to underserved areas.
3. Continue to add new parks to the system to maintain a high level of service and accommodate Greeley's growing population.
4. Improve parks with features that meet the needs and desires of residents of all ages, abilities and interests.
5. Maintain programs that meet the needs and desires of the community and develop new ones to serve changing community needs, age segments and interests, such as active senior programs, nature and outdoor education for youth and programs that incorporate families.
6. Add to the City's capacity to care for parks, trails, open lands and recreation facilities in order to improve their condition and offerings. Provide the capital and staffing resources necessary to maintain a system which keeps up as Greeley's population expands.

Further detail and action steps to support, reinforce and define this vision are included in Chapter 3: Recommendations, beginning on page 21.

2016 CULTURE, PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS:

VISION

To be a premier provider of exceptional spaces and experiences for the entire community.

MISSION

To enhance our community through exceptional service and stewardship.



Photo Source: City of Greeley Flickr

Ensuring parks, trails and open lands meet the needs of a growing community, enhance quality of life and add value to all of the ways Greeley plays are the primary goals of this master plan update.

RECOMMENDATIONS OVERVIEW

MASTER PLAN:

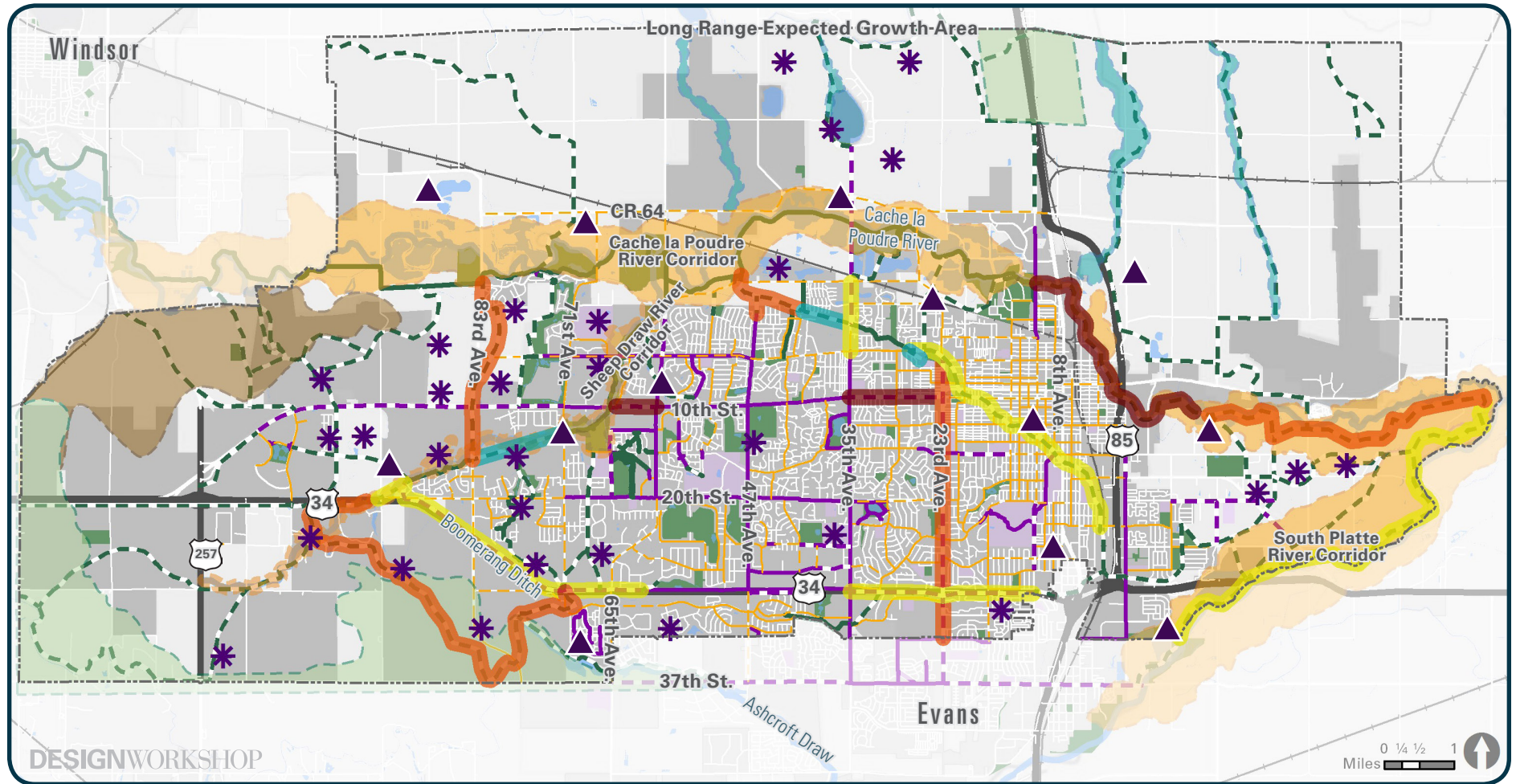
The Master Plan Recommendations Map on the facing page identifies the primary physical plan recommendations. These include proposed locations for future parks, priorities for trail system expansion and priority conservation areas to reinforce the connectivity of Greeley's open lands. When combined, the specific park system recommendations create a robust network of parks and open lands linked by the City's trails and bicycle network. Each of these elements are described in greater detail in Chapter 3, Recommendations (page 21).



Photo Source: City of Greeley Flickr

The Parks Division includes passionate, talented and service oriented individuals that make a strong and capable team who are responsible for the achievements accomplished since the last plan was completed. Division staff will be instrumental in advancing the recommendations of the Master Plan.

Map 1: Master Plan Recommendations (See Appendix E for Larger Map)



Existing Park or Open Lands	Park Priorities	Underway
Water Body	Potential Park Location (Identified in the 2002 Master Plan)	Short-Term
River	Potential Park Location (Identified through park service gap analysis)	Mid-Term
Stream	Priority Conservation Areas	Longer Term
On-Street Facility	River Corridors	Riparian Corridor / Greenway
Off-Street Trail	Bluffs	Agricultural Use/ Views/ Community Separators
Sidepath	Proposed	
	Proposed	

Date Produced: January, 2016

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PARKS OVERVIEW



The Parks findings are included on Page 23, with recommendations on Page 26.

1. Build new parks to accommodate community needs and growth.

- In order to continue to meet demands for a growing population, Greeley will need to develop approximately 450 additional acres of parkland. As funding is available, the following types of parkland should be added to the system to meet level of service standards specific to Greeley's needs:
 - » Increase the provision of neighborhood parks from the existing 3 acres parks per 1,000 residents to 3.25 acres per 1,000 residents. This equates to 89 Acres of new neighborhood parks by 2025 (or roughly 9 parks with an average size of 10 acres).
 - » Reduce the level of service goal from the 2002 Parks Master Plan from five acres of community parks per 1,000 residents to a more realistic 3.5 acres per 1,000 residents. Existing community parks provide a level of service of 1.14. To reach the 3.5 level of service goal 316 acres of community parks will need to be added by 2025 if population growth continues as projected (or roughly 8 parks with an average size of 38 acres).
 - » The level of service recommendation for sports complexes is 1.5 acres per 1,000 residents. Only a slight increase by 2025 of 48 acres of specialized facilities geared toward competitive use is anticipated to be in demand as the population increases (approximately 1 park or additions to existing parks).

2. Strategically locate new parks.

- Identify and prioritize new park locations systematically by prioritizing underserved areas. Underserved areas are identified in the gap analysis map (page 24 and further analysis included in Appendix C.1) showing existing housing that does not have a neighborhood park within a half mile walking distance or a community park within two miles.

3. Implement cohesive park design through site-specific master plans.

- Implement site-specific master plans to improve the utilization of existing parks including existing master plans

for Island Grove Regional Park and the Youth Sports Complex.

- Create updated site specific master plans for some of Greeley's older parks, including Monfort Park, Centennial Park, Bittersweet Park, Sunrise Park, East Memorial Park and Poudre Ponds.
- As new parks are planned for or renovated facilities should be provided according to identified community needs and recreation trends. Program parks to provide a diverse mix of amenities with cross-generational appeal.
- Integrate inclusive design elements to serve an aging population and those with special needs including accessibility and ADA renovations to existing parks and the incorporation of outdoor fitness equipment and other multigenerational and inclusive play elements.

4. Continue to support water conservation and sustainability goals.

- Continue to design new parks and integrate strategies into existing parks to support best practices in water conservation and irrigation efficiency with the implementation of the City's Landscape Policy Plan for Water Efficiency, replacement with non-potable irrigation sources, and other strategies.
- Evaluate where sports field turf could be replaced with synthetic turf fields.
- Incorporate native vegetation, natural grasslands and low-water-use landscapes in the planting design of parks.

5. Integrate park system additions and design improvements with neighborhood development.

- Adopt and implement the parkland dedication ordinance at the recommended level of service for new developments.
- Build community with the understanding of the importance of parks in the quality of life, identity and economic vitality of Greeley.
- Design streetscapes, linear parks and greenways as integral elements of the park system.

OPEN LANDS OVERVIEW



The Open Lands findings are included on Page 32, with recommendations on Page 35.

1. Strategically conserve open lands to create an interconnected system.

- Continue to strategically expand and connect open lands along Greeley's river and stream corridors to create a network of ecologically significant lands. Lands to consider for open space conservation priorities are identified on the Master Plan Map 1 and include:
 - » The Cache la Poudre River Corridor
 - » Sheep Draw Corridor
 - » South Platte River Corridor
 - » Ashcroft Draw, Boomerang Ditch and Ditch #3
- Ensure rare landscapes and lands important to Greeley's history and identity are protected including the geologic features that create the Bluffs in northwestern Greeley as well as agricultural lands that serve as important view corridors and community separators.
- Support the strategic preservation of smaller areas with open space value or reclamation potential within the city's established areas as redevelopment or other opportunities occur.
- Connect people to the river to accommodate community interest and water recreation trends. Two locations are identified that could provide access to the river for wading, boating or wildlife viewing.

2. Implement the Open Lands Management Plan.

- In order to support a broad vision for an interconnected system of preserved lands a dedicated team and management plan is required. Chapter 4: Implementation (page 89) includes recommendations for staff to manage the growing inventory of open lands and natural areas. Management approaches should be tailored to different types of protected lands and seek to balance the ecological services and environmental integrity of these spaces with passive recreational opportunities. Management approaches may include limiting access to certain areas or restricting use in areas with sensitive habitat or ecological services.

TRAILS OVERVIEW



The Trails findings are included on Page 39, with recommendations on Page 42.

1. Connect and expand the trail system.

- To achieve a connected and accessible trail system the City should strive to provide off-street trails within two miles and sidepaths within a 1/2 mile of all residences (alternatively can be achieved with a combination of a sidewalk and a protected bike lane). Greeley will need to focus on connecting gaps, adding new trails and diversifying trail offerings throughout the city. These trail segments are identified on Map 1 (page ix) and include the following priority trail segments as well as a comprehensive vision for conceptual trail alignments within and around the existing city limits:
 - 4.5 miles of short-term priority (2 to 4 years) projects (primarily closing trail gaps to improve connectivity),
 - 11 miles of mid-term priority (2 to 6 years) projects, and
 - 25 miles of longer-term priority (6 to 10 years) projects.

2. Expand and diversify Greeley's recreational trail offerings.

- Add natural surface or single-track trails where appropriate, to serve users such as mountain bikers, trail runners, equestrians and those seeking more primitive trail experiences.
- Look for opportunities to create trails of varying lengths and configurations.

3. Implement trail classification and design standards to create continuity throughout the trail system and accommodate all user types.

4. Enhance safety and usability for trail users.

Improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety by implementing enhanced trail-crossing design and traffic-calming strategies at key intersections identified in the City's existing trail network.

- To the extent possible, ensure that safe, enhanced crossings are identified where future trail crossings or roadway reconstruction is anticipated.
- Manage user conflicts along multi-use trails between bikes, pedestrians, dogs-on-leash and other trail users through rule enforcement and signage.
- Improve and install sidewalks in Greeley's established neighborhoods on highly used pedestrian routes to parks, open lands, multi-use trail corridors and recreation facilities.
- Add to a system-wide wayfinding and signage initiative with complementary trail amenities. This should be coordinated with the on-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities and routes recommended in the Bicycle Master Plan.
- Expand and diversify Greeley's recreational trail offerings.

FACILITIES OVERVIEW



The Facilities findings are included on Page 51, with recommendations on Page 56.

1. Satisfy existing and future facility needs as parks are added to the system or renovated.

- Prioritize adding or improving facilities within the parks system with high demand that are not meeting current (2015) level of service standards or community needs identified through community feedback.
- Over time, consider adding facilities to target the 2025 level of service recommendations.

2. Provide a diversity of facilities to accommodate a variety of group sizes and an increasing number of special events within the community.

- Continue to provide adequate facilities that meet the community's desire to host and attend special events.
- Provide additional picnic shelters and larger covered facilities with multiple picnic tables to accommodate a variety of group sizes according to individual park needs and anticipated uses.

3. Provide park access for dogs and their owners.

- Add geographically distributed off-leash dog areas to the system.
- Revise City ordinances regarding dogs in City parks.

4. Support youth athletic programs by providing adequate sports fields to accommodate current and future needs.

- Provide sufficient athletic fields to support youth sports by maintaining or exceeding the ratios identified in the recommended service levels.
- Design athletic fields to be flexible and able to adapt to sports trends over time.

5. Expand indoor aquatic and outdoor water recreation offerings.

- Construct a new competitive indoor aquatics facility in partnership with School District 6.
- Capture local opportunities for outdoor water sports recreation.

6. Pursue the development of community and neighborhood skate parks to satisfy existing demands and meet future needs.

- Develop a community skate park.
- Improve the two neighborhood skate parks.
- As population growth dictates, consider the addition of one neighborhood skate park.

7. Work with interest groups to establish a site and construct a new disc golf course.

- Move the disc golf course from its current location at McCloskey Park to a new site that does not interfere with wildlife corridors and natural areas.
- Consider tournament play in the design of a new disc golf facility. Hosting disc golf events has the potential to attract new visitors to the city.

8. In partnership with other entities, provide desired amenities that are not currently a part of Greeley's parks and recreation offerings.

- Add nature play and outdoor exploration opportunities as well as outdoor fitness equipment throughout the City.
- Support the co-location of community gardens within Greeley's parks.

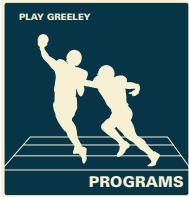
9. Enhance park facilities to meet user needs for parking.

Improve parking shortages (including exploring alternative transportation opportunities, alternative schedules and bicycle access and parking) at locations that are consistently over capacity and do not meet the needs of park users, including: Monfort Park, District 6 stadiums, Greeley West, Balsam Park, and Bittersweet Park.

10. Create a Recreation Facilities Study.

A combination of factors, including continued community growth, changes in recreation trends, recreation demands, and aging facilities, will require a focused evaluation of recreation facilities by 2020.

PROGRAMS OVERVIEW



The Programs findings are included on Page 64, with recommendations on Page 67.

1. Continue to provide a diversity of activities in the Core Program Areas being offered.

2. Advance the development of Supporting Programs that are important to the community, especially those with high demand that are not meeting current needs.

The following supporting program areas are popular in the community and should be developed further to meet current and future needs:

1. Adult fitness and wellness
2. Nature programs and environmental education
3. Programs for persons of lower economic means
4. Programs for persons with disabilities or special needs
5. Youth Learn to Swim
6. Outdoor fitness classes

3. Expand Core Program Areas and Supporting Program Areas in an effort to meet growing community needs and keep up with recreation trends.

Continue to adapt the recreational core and supporting program offerings to meet emerging needs and desires for the Greeley population. Specific areas identified include:

1. Wellness
2. Active Senior Programs
3. Therapeutic and Adaptive Recreation

4. Target Youth and Senior Programming

- Divide senior programming into two segments, 55-70 and 71 and over to better serve the current and future demographics Greeley.
- Add programs that focus on youth.
- Conduct an Age Segment Analysis as needed, to reassess the equity of program service delivery considering the entire population.

1. INTRODUCTION & PLAN UPDATE PROCESS

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Community Values and Priorities	11

Source: City of Greeley Flickr



PLAN PURPOSE

The Parks, Trails and Open Lands Master Plan (PTOL) serves as an update to the 2002 Greeley Parks and Trails Master Plan and builds on its accomplishments. This 2016 plan will shape the future of recreation in Greeley, directing the City's strategies and investments over a 10-year planning horizon. It provides a framework for decision-making and guidance to the Culture, Parks and Recreation Department (CPRD), to ensure the City's parks, trails and open lands reflect community values and vision, meet the needs of a growing population, and enhance residents' quality of life. Recommendations are provided for physical improvements and enhancements, facilities and programs, operations, maintenance, staffing and funding strategies.

There are a number of reasons that make the timing of this plan important to the future of parks, trails and open lands in Greeley:

- Many of the 2002 Master Plan recommendations have been completed. A number of accomplishments were made possible through the City's Quality of Life Sales Tax which was approved by the community in 2002 and goes through 2022. The Family FunPlex and the Ice Haus are examples of facilities that were made possible through this funding source. Recommendations that have not been completed, such as achieving the recommended level of service for Community Parks, need to be updated to reflect existing community needs and priorities. Other longer term recommendations, such as continuing to acquire rights-of-way for the trail system, are in process and are carried forth in this plan.
- Parks and recreation amenities will need to be re-evaluated and adjusted in order to serve a growing number of residents. Greeley's population is anticipated to increase by over 20% from a population of 101,048 in 2015 to almost 125,000 residents in 2025.
- The increasing diversity and aging of Greeley's population require a renewed look at values and recreation needs of key subpopulations. This requires an assessment of the City's approach to planning, delivering and maintaining parks and recreation services.
- Development patterns continue to show increased growth in western Greeley, which will require adequate access to parks, trails and open lands. It will be important to balance the needs of increasing community growth in western Greeley with the existing needs of residents in eastern Greeley.
- Community interest in sports and recreation has changed with time. Facilities, programs and management will need to adjust to reflect new recreation trends.

Significant achievements identified in the 2002 Greeley Parks and Trails Master Plan and the 1998 Open Lands System Plan include:

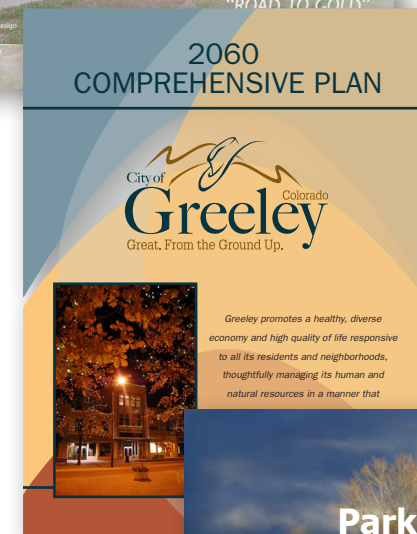
- Parks - The 2002 plan defined level of service goals for parks and identified locations where future parks were needed. New parks have been added in underserved areas, including Homestead Park, serving residents of South-Central Greeley, and Ramseier Park, serving North-Central Greeley.
- Trails - The 2002 plan defined a comprehensive, citywide recreational trail system and established classifications, design standards and performance criteria to guide trail construction. Key trail segments along the Poudre River Trail, which completed a paved trail connection between the Poudre River Ranch Natural Area and Island Grove Regional Park, have greatly enhanced the citywide recreational trail system. Partnerships with the Poudre River Corridor, Inc. and other agencies have been instrumental in adding trails to Greeley's system.
- Recreation - The City has completed the construction of the Greeley Family FunPlex and Twin Rivers Park, which provide recreation facilities to serve community growth in western Greeley.
- Open Lands - The City has purchased the Sheep Draw Natural Area and other significant open lands along the Poudre and Sheep Draw river corridors, pursuant to recommendations in the 1998 Open Lands System Plan.
- Poudre Learning Center - This non-profit, educational facility provides opportunities to connect residents to the Cache la Poudre River ecosystem has opened.

BUILDING ON PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

An important component of this master plan includes the review, inclusion of and alignment with other applicable planning documents, both past and present. The 2002 Greeley Parks and Trails Master Plan, which expanded upon the 1995 Master Plan, provided a starting point, informing the creation of this plan update. This plan will support the goals and strategies that have been established and agreed upon in previous efforts, listed below in Table 1: Previous Plans. A summary of each of the plans is included in Appendix A-1: Previous Planning Efforts.

Table 1: Previous Plans

PREVIOUS PLANS	
Plan Reviewed	Date of Plan
Bicycle Master Plan	2015
The City of Greeley Art Master Plan	2014
CPRD-Youth Needs Assessment	2014
Parks, Trails and Open Lands Plan – An Integrated Approach to Providing Open Space (encompasses previous planning documents from 1998 through 2009)	2013
Greeley 2035 Comprehensive Transportation Plan	2011
2060 Comprehensive Plan	2009
Greeley Parks and Trails Master Plan	2002
Conceptual Trails Plan	2002
Comprehensive Leisure Assessment	2001
Northern Colorado Community Separator Study	1999
Open Lands System Plan and Implementation Program	1998
Island Grove Regional Development Plan	1992



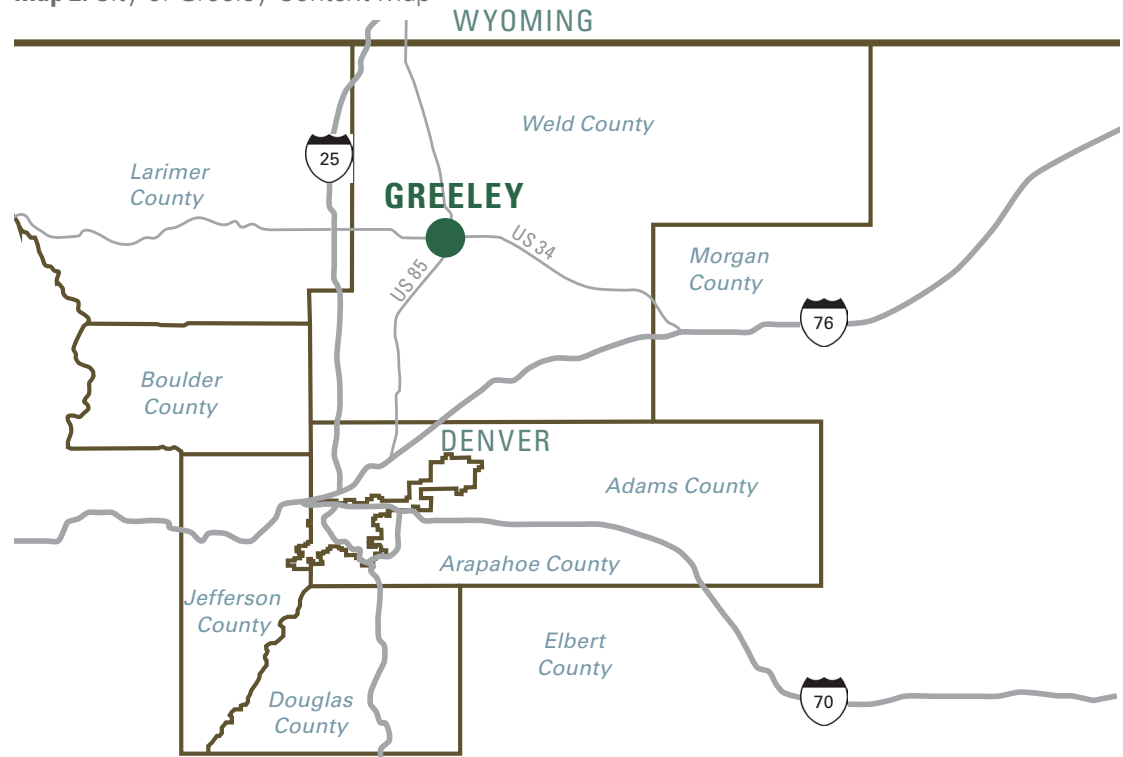
Greeley's previous planning documents were consulted as a part of the plan update process.

GREELEY CONTEXT

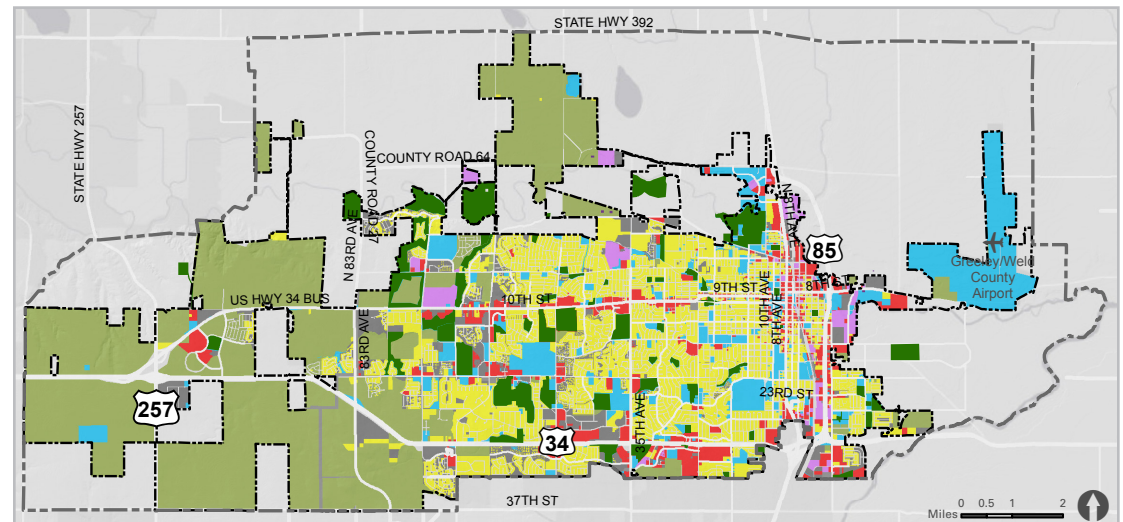
Greeley is one of Colorado’s northernmost cities on the Front Range, located an hour north of Denver and 30 minutes from the foothills of the Rocky Mountains (Map 2). Dramatic views of the mountains are captured from vantage points throughout the city. Major transportation routes include Highway 34, running east to west and Highway 257 and 85, traversing north to south. As Weld County’s largest city and county seat, Greeley has faced significant growth pressures, primarily from the oil and gas industry. Additionally, Greeley has become a cultural and academic hub, home to the University of Northern Colorado, IBMC College and Aims Community College. It has become a dynamic and diverse city, where the cost of living is affordable and the quality of life is competitive with other Front Range communities scattered along the Rocky Mountain foothills.

The City of Greeley is approximately 48 square miles and lies in the heart of the Colorado Great Plains, at the confluence of the South Platte and Cache la Poudre Rivers. It boasts a diverse array of natural areas. The landscape has been shaped by farming and residential development land patterns, spreading primarily to the west of Greeley’s historic downtown. The city remains largely encompassed by agricultural and grazing lands, which account for 43% of the land within city limits (Map 3). Parks and Open Lands, spread throughout the city’s developed area, amount to 7% of Greeley’s land use.

Map 2: City of Greeley Context Map



Map 3: Greeley’s Land Use



Source: Greeley GIS Department, June 2015

CITY DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

DEPARTMENT VISION

To be a premier provider of exceptional spaces and experiences for the entire community.

DEPARTMENT MISSION

To enhance our community through exceptional service and stewardship.

ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

- Inclusive
- Superior service
- Sustainability
- Transparency
- Continuous improvement

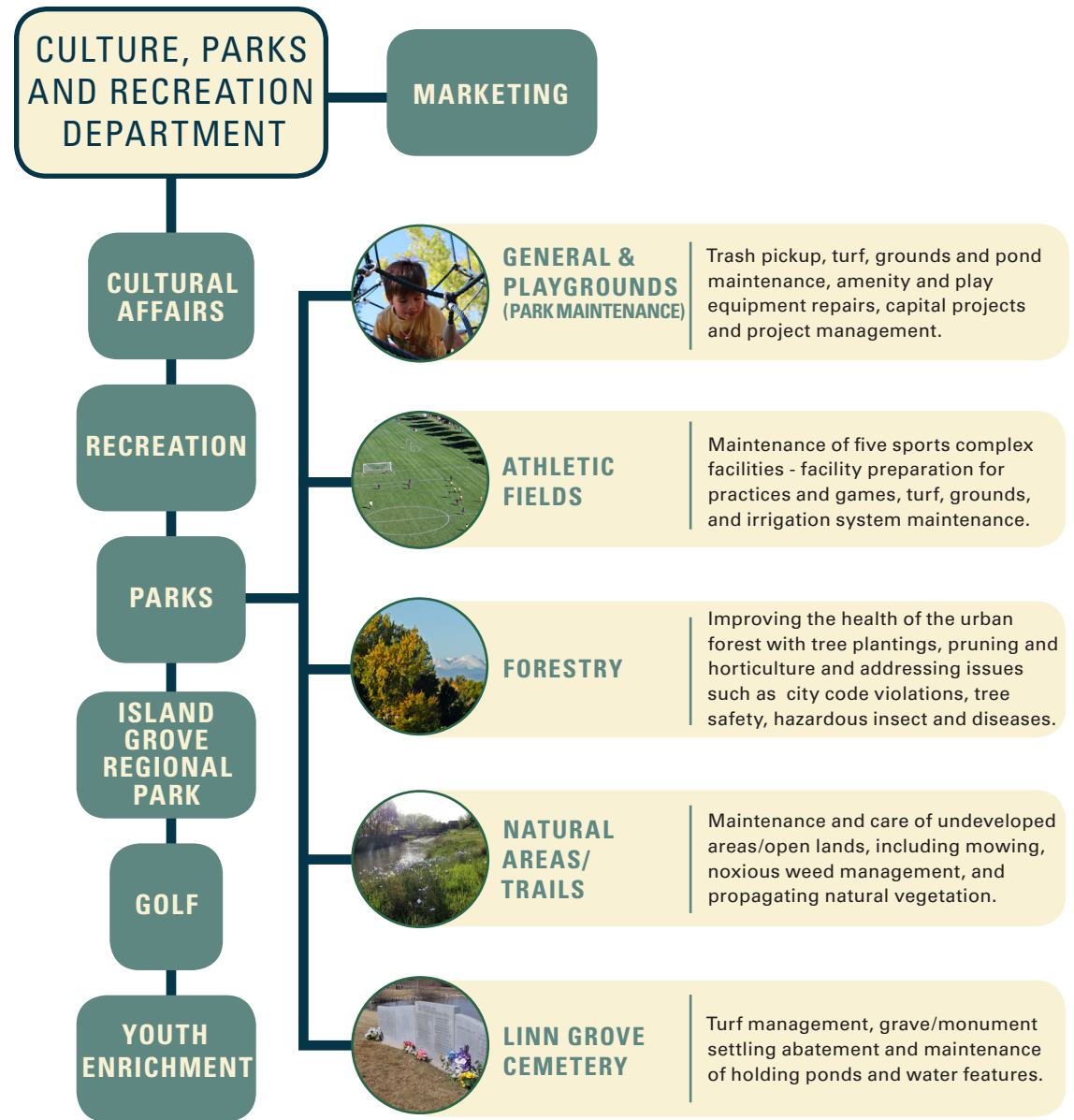
ORGANIZATION

The responsibilities and functions of the Culture, Parks and Recreation Department are divided among six divisions. The recommendations contained in this plan focus largely on the Recreation and Parks divisions.

The Parks Division is responsible for managing the City's parks, trails and open lands system. The Parks Division is managed by the Superintendent of Parks and is divided into five functional areas including: General and Playgrounds, Athletic Fields, Forestry, Linn Grove Cemetery, and Natural Areas/Trails (also referred to as Open Lands Management). The Parks Division's functional areas and a brief description of primary responsibilities are illustrated in Figure 1.

The Recreation Division is primarily responsible for recreation programs and activities and the City's indoor and aquatic recreation facilities. All of the divisions are overseen by the director of the CPRD.

Figure 1: Culture, Parks and Recreation Department Organization Chart



CURRENT OFFERINGS SUMMARY

Greeley has a wide variety of parks, trails, open lands and recreation facilities. Together, these facilities create a vital interconnected system that is essential to the quality of life, wellness and experience of Greeley’s residents and visitors. In total, the City owns and manages 41 park properties, 13 natural areas and 58 miles of off-street trails and sidepaths.

PARKS



Greeley has a total of 752.3 acres of developed parkland, in addition to three park sites and portions of Island Grove Regional Park which are undeveloped. The City’s park properties are classified according to their size and types of facilities offered, which are described in detail in Appendix A-2 and A-3. From largest to smallest, Greeley’s park types include: Regional Parks, Community Parks and Sports

Complexes, Neighborhood Parks, Special Purpose Parks and Pocket Parks. Table 2 provides an overview of the different park types and acreage currently available within Greeley. Additional properties that are not addressed in detail in this plan include City-owned golf courses, museum properties and the cemetery. Some park needs are fulfilled by School District 6 properties and have joint use agreements with the City. Other properties that offer public or semi-public amenities are not included within this plan, include the Weld County owned Missile Silo Park, State Wildlife Areas, and privately owned and managed parks within specific neighborhoods.

OPEN LANDS



Greeley has added 250 acres of open lands since 2010 and has a total of 13 natural area / open land sites totaling 613 acres. The City’s open lands/natural areas inventory is detailed in Appendix A-4. Five of the sites owned by the City, totaling 278 acres, do not currently provide public access. The other nine natural areas, totaling 335 acres, offer limited public access and provide areas where residents can experience and observe nature. During the course of this planning effort, CPRD staff has been actively pursuing additional conservation opportunities, such as a partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for properties along the Poudre River..

TRAILS



Greeley has an on-street and off-street bicycle and pedestrian system that connects people throughout the community to both recreation and transportation. This plan focuses primarily on shared-use recreational and off-street trails and connections to and between existing and future parks and open lands. It does not directly address on-street bicycle facilities or sidewalks, though these facilities are important

connectors between off-street trails and between parks and other community destinations. Map 4 shows Greeley’s existing trails, including off-street trails, sidepaths and park trails. Table 2 summarizes the existing miles of each trail type within Greeley, with more detailed descriptions provided in Appendix A-5.

Table 2: Greeley Parks, Open Lands and Trails Inventory Summary

PARKS SUMMARY		
Parks Classification *	Number of Sites	Acres (2015)
Regional Parks	1	182
Community Park	3	115
Sports Complex	4	137
Neighborhood Park	28	308
Pocket Park	3	3.3
Special Purpose Properties (Dog Parks)	2	7
Parks Total	41	752.3

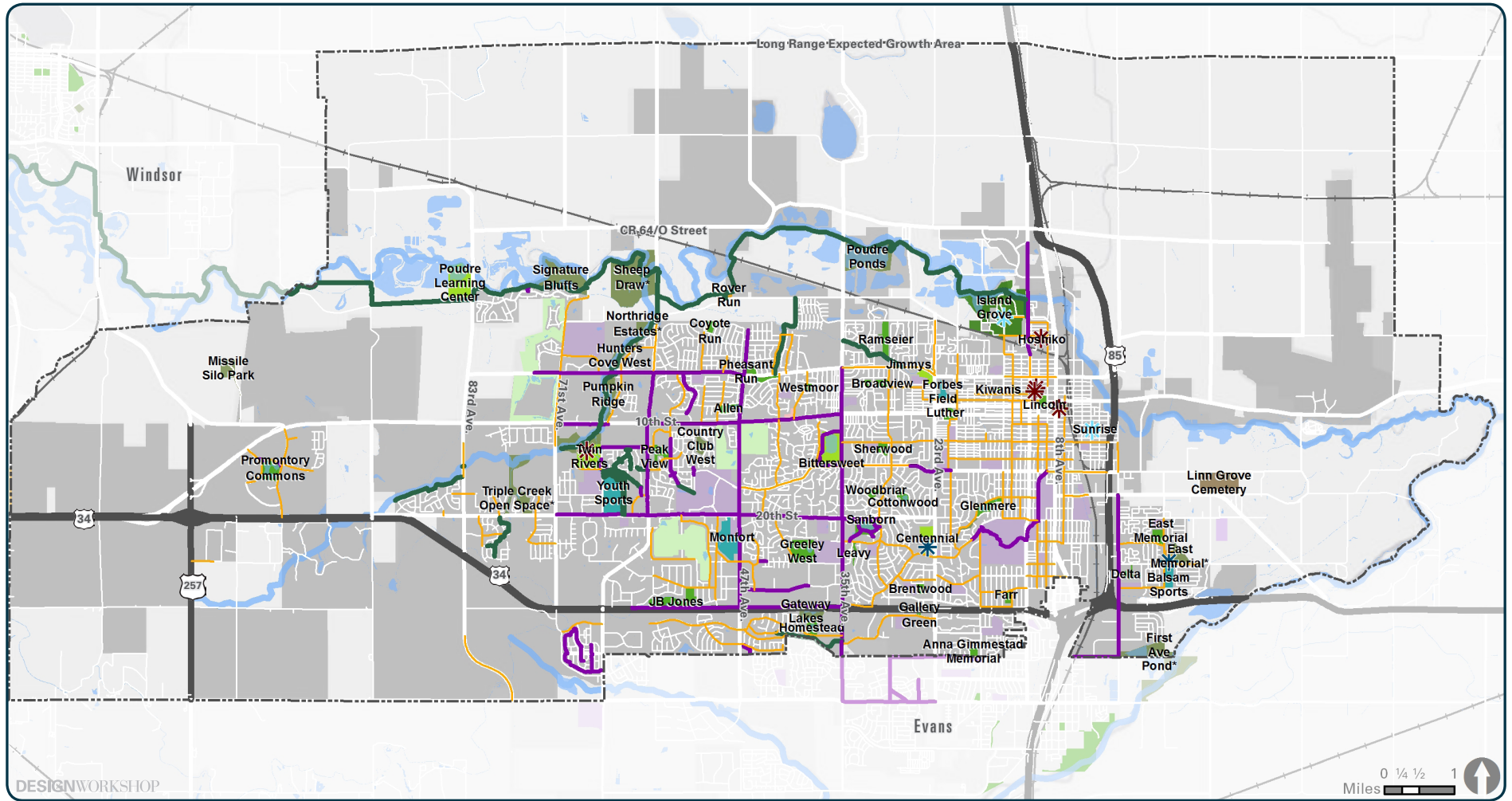
OPEN LANDS SUMMARY		
Open Lands Property	Number of Sites	Acres (2015)
Open Lands with Public Access	8	335
Open Lands without Public Access	5	278
Open Lands Total	13	613

TRAILS SUMMARY	
Trail Type	Trail Miles
Off-Street Trails	19.5
Park Trails	10.6
Sidepaths	30
Trails Total	60

Information current as of July, 2015.

** Additional Special Use Properties include golf courses, museum properties, and the cemetery are not included in the summary above.*

Map 4: Greeley Parks, Open Lands and Trails Inventory (See Appendix E for larger map)



City Limits	Regional Park	Dog Park	Existing Trail Network On-Street Facility	Indoor Recreation Facility
Schools	Community Park	Golf Course	Off-Street Trail	Outdoor Pool
Water Body	Neighborhood/Pocket Park	Natural Area (* = No Public Access)	Sidepath	Splash Park
River	Sports Complex	Museum		
		Cemetery		



RECREATION FACILITIES

Greeley CPRD owns or manages a number of recreation and special purpose facilities, including the following:

- **Family FunPlex** - is an indoor recreation center with a waterpark, fitness center, gymnasium, track, catering kitchen and multipurpose rooms. Adjacent outdoor amenities include a miniature golf course, softball complex, sensory playground, amphitheater, picnic shelters and trails.
- **Greeley Recreation Center (GRC)** - is a full-service community center located near downtown. The GRC includes two gymnasiums, an indoor pool, fitness center, racquetball courts, rock climbing wall, shooting range, pro shop, a commercial kitchen and multipurpose rooms.
- **Greeley Senior Activity Center** - has amenities including woodworking areas, billiards tables, shuffleboard courts, a craft room, computer lab, game room, table tennis, a commercial kitchen and classrooms.
- **Ice Haus** - is the indoor ice arena which offers a regulation size hockey/skating rink located near downtown. The facility offers skate rental and sharpening services, a pro shop, snack bar and multipurpose rooms. This facility has the potential to expand to two sheets of ice in the future. The Ice Haus is home to the University of Northern Colorado's Hockey Team, Colorado Bears Hockey Club and Mountain View Skating Club.
- **Rodarte Community Center** - amenities at the center include a gymnasium, boxing ring and spaces for after-school programs, summer camps and other recreational classes and events.
- **Aquatic Facilities** - in addition to the Family FunPlex Indoor Waterpark and the GRC Pool, the CPRD operates two additional swimming pools (Centennial Pool and Discovery Bay Waterpark) and two splash parks (Island Grove and Sunrise).
- **Golf Facilities** - The CPRD manages two public golf courses (Boomerang Links and Highland Hills), providing 36 holes of public golf with practice facilities, pro shops and restaurants.

More detailed information including the size of different facilities and admissions numbers is included on Page 51 under Facilities | Key Findings and in Appendix A-6: Facilities and Programs Inventory.



Photo Source: Design Workshop, Family FunPlex



Photo Source: Greeley Flickr

The Greeley Family FunPlex offers popular year round recreation amenities for the Greeley community.



RECREATION PROGRAMS

The CPRD offers approximately 250 recreation programs, which served 26,286 participants in 2014. Programs are currently offered in the following areas:

- **Adult Sports** – team softball, basketball, dodgeball, flag football, volleyball, inline hockey, kickball, dodgeball and tennis. A total of 698 teams were registered across all adult sports in 2014.
- **Aquatics** – physical fitness, water safety, competitive swimming/diving programs. A total of 1,962 individuals participated in swim lessons and water safety programs in 2014.
- **Boxing** – youth boxing programs for ages 8-17 are offered at the Rodarte Community Center.
- **Fitness** – group fitness classes to increase strength, endurance, knowledge and well-being. Fitness memberships are offered at the GRC and the Greeley Family FunPlex. There were 3,529 registered participants in 2014.
- **Golf** – lessons, clinics, junior programs, tournaments and camps are offered at the CPRD's two golf courses. Junior Golf participants in 2014 totaled 1,105
- **Ice Skating** – sessions for figure skating, public skating, cosmic skating, family skating and senior skating (Skate Café) are offered at the Ice Haus.
- **Ice Hockey** – public ice hockey programs include Skills & Drills, Stick n' Puck and Drop-In hockey. In 2014, registered participants totaled 1,938.
- **Senior (50+)** – activities include table games, travel programs, enrichment/educational classes, table tennis, sports, tournaments, SilverSneakers and annual sports and senior games. Many of the programs are offered at the Greeley Senior Activity Center.
- **Youth Enrichment** – recreational, educational and cultural programs for Greeley youth.
- **Youth Sports** – t-ball, hockey, football, soccer, swim club, basketball, volleyball, track and tennis. The CPRD manages youth sports for sixth and seventh graders in the Greeley-Evans Weld County School District 6. In 2014, there were 11,503 registered participants.



Photo Source: City of Greeley Flickr



Photo Source: www.greeleygov.com, Sweetheart Skate

Greeley's group fitness classes and skating program provide an important way for community members to stay healthy and fit.

PLAN PROCESS AND INPUT OPPORTUNITIES SUMMARY

A COORDINATED VISION

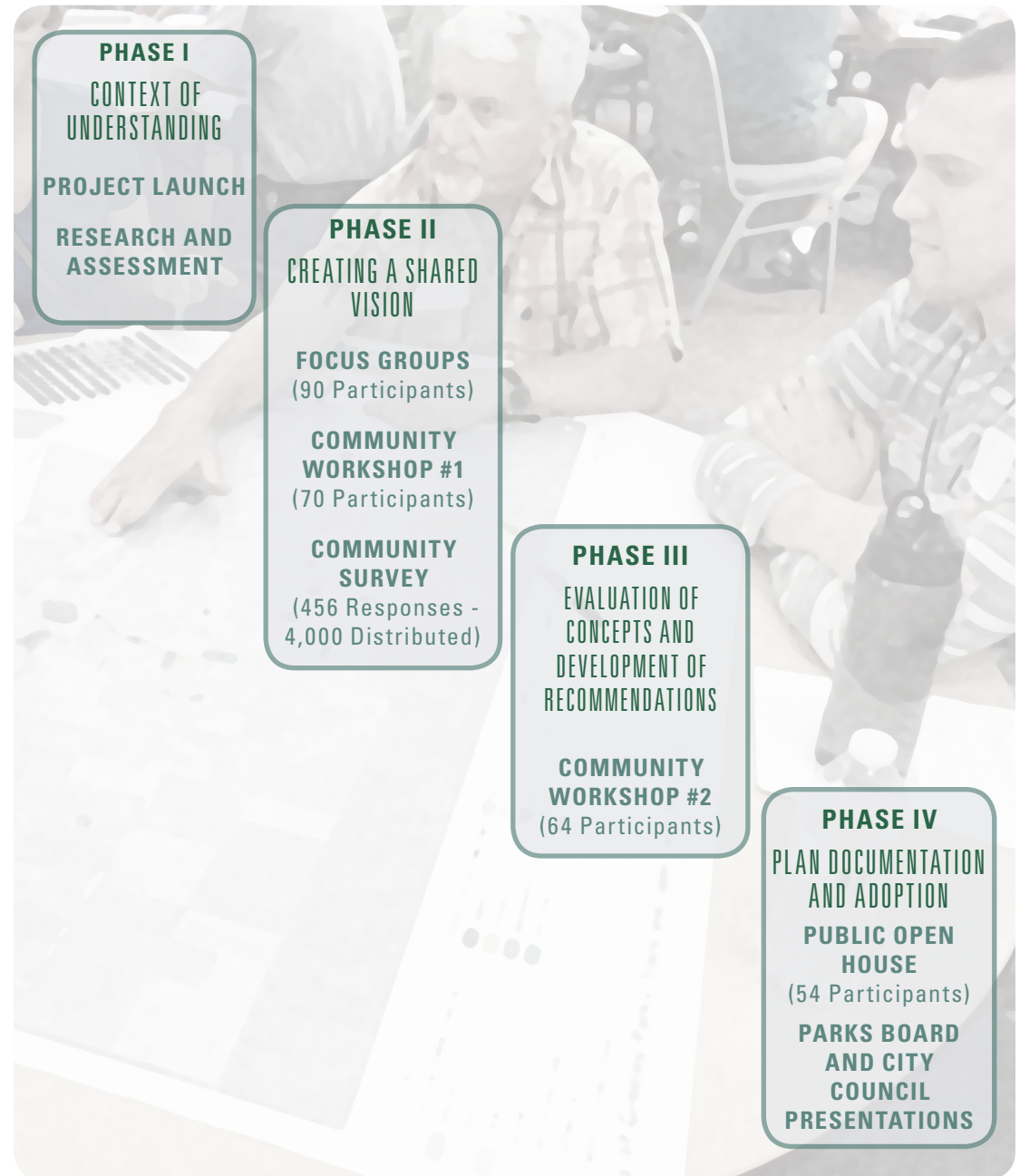
From April 2015 to February 2016, Design Workshop provided consulting services to the Greeley Culture, Parks and Recreation Department. A total of 685 community members participated in the community outreach process, providing valuable input and guidance regarding the current usage, values, preferences and priorities for the City's parks, trails, open lands and recreation amenities. Throughout the planning process, stakeholder engagement was designed to be transparent and educational, in order to secure support for the adoption and implementation of the master plan.

GETTING THE WORD OUT - PLAYGREELEY.COM

The CPRD launched the playgreeley.com website as a part of the outreach effort to inform people about the Master Plan process and engagement opportunities, as well as provide an outlet for people to submit their feedback. The site will continue to be used beyond the Master Plan adoption to inform the Greeley community about future CPRD efforts, including site-specific master plans.

PROJECT PHASES

The plan update process was structured into four phases leading up to plan approval and adoption by City Council. The four phases and outreach methods are described in detail in Appendix A-7.



COMMUNITY VALUES AND PRIORITIES

The following is a summary of current use, overall priorities and themes that emerged from the public engagement process. Specific community engagement findings are referenced in the applicable sections of the Recommendations Chapter under the Key Findings section, with the full results in Appendix A-8 and the PTOL Master Plan Community Survey Report (Community Survey).

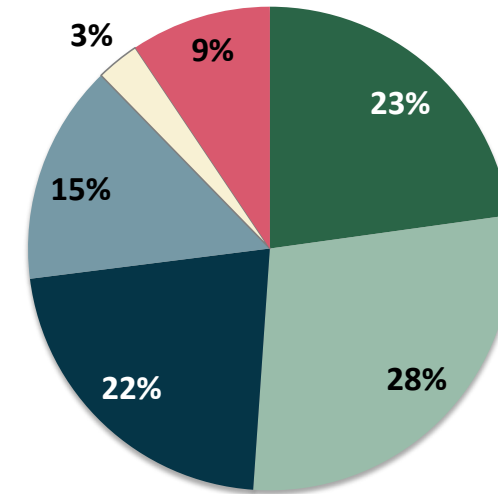
CURRENT USE

GREELEY RESIDENTS ARE MAKING USE OF THE PARKS, TRAILS, OPEN LANDS AND RECREATION PROGRAMS THAT ARE CURRENTLY AVAILABLE.

Generally, there are high levels of use of the City's parks, trails and open land facilities. According to the community survey, approximately 65% of households use Greeley's parks, trails and recreation facilities once a week or more (Figure 2). This is consistent with the statewide average, which reflects that 66% of Coloradans recreate, on average, at least one day per week (2014 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan).

A lower percentage of households (almost 40%) participate in recreation programs. Keypad polling results reflect that attending special events in the City's parks (such as performances, races, classes and festivals), visiting neighborhood and community parks and the off-street trail system are the most frequently used amenities, identified by over a third of meeting participants.

Figure 2: Typical Household Use of City Parks, Trails and Open Land Facilities: (Community Survey)



- Less than once per week
- 1 time per week
- 2-4 times per week
- 4 or more times per week
- Not sure
- Never

THE SURVEY SAYS...

65%

of Greeley households
recreate at least once
a week!

AND

37%

of Greeley households
participate in recreation
programs.

Source: Community Survey

OVERALL PRIORITIES

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT 10 YEARS

The community priorities for the next 10 years across the parks, trails and recreation system align with identified deficiencies or needs. Figures 3 and 4 illustrate some of the top priorities from the community survey and the public meetings. **The results show that improving and expanding walking and biking trails is a top priority for the community.**

Other highly ranked priorities include the need to focus on both small and large parks (including maintaining existing parks); conserving more open lands and natural areas; and developing nature/soft surface trails. Feedback from the community meetings reinforced the importance of investing in trails and parks over the next 10 years, with over 80% of participants agreeing or strongly agreeing with these needs.

KEYPAD POLLING RESULTS ARE IN...
 Given the pace of growth in Greeley, over
80%
 of participants agree or strongly agree
 that there is a need to add more **trails and parks** in the next 10 years.

Source: Keypad Polling Questions #1 and #10.

Figure 3: Top 10 Priorities for the Next 10 Years (Community Survey, Question 6)

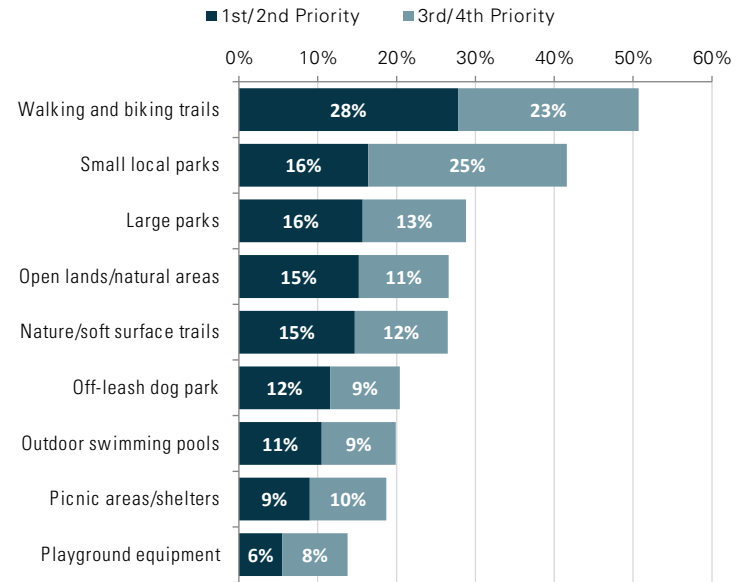
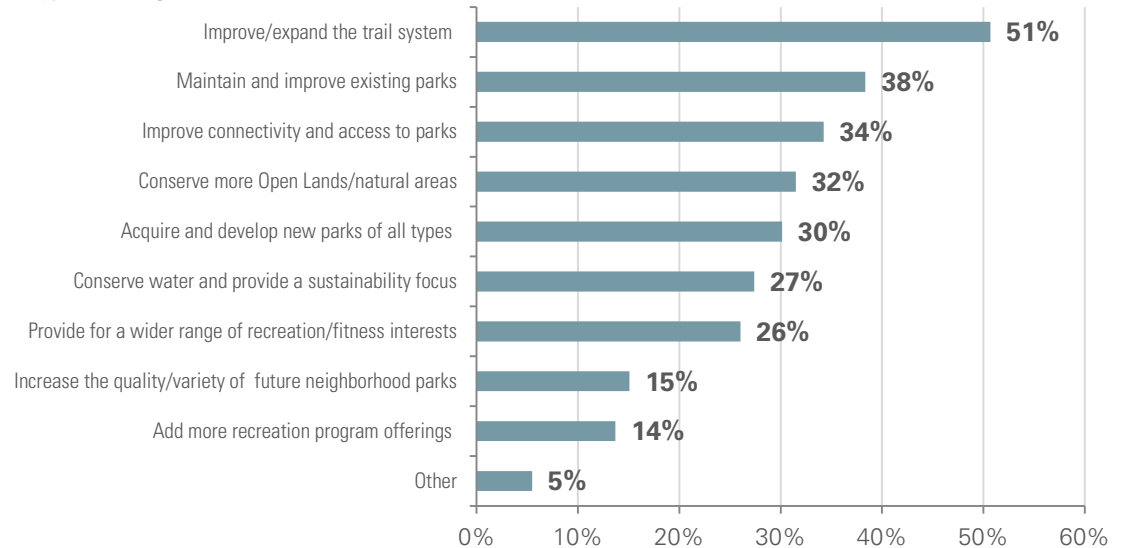


Figure 4: Master Plan Focus and Investment

Which of these ideas should the Master Plan identify as the greatest focus or investment over the next 10 years? (Keypad Polling Session #1)



2. INFLUENCES AND TRENDS - PROVIDING FOR CHANGING NEEDS

City Growth and Future Development Implications	14
Greeley's Population Composition	16
Community Health and Wellness	17
Recreation Trends Summary	18

Source: City of Greeley Flickr



CITY GROWTH AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

Planning for the future of parks, trails and open lands requires a keen understanding of the people who use the system today and anticipation of population changes in the future, including population and household growth, income levels, age group compositions and the community's racial/ethnic diversity. See Figure 5 for key demographic indicators. The significant trends and implications for parks and recreation in Greeley include:

- Population Growth - The population is anticipated to grow significantly, necessitating additional parks, recreation, open lands, and trails to maintain high levels of service.
- Increasing Diversity - The increasing diversification of the population means that the community's facilities and program needs will also diversify and change over time.
- Age Shifts - The age segmentation of Greeley suggests that family-friendly programs, events, and facilities will continue to remain important. However, an aging population will drive additional demand for both passive and active programs aimed at older residents.

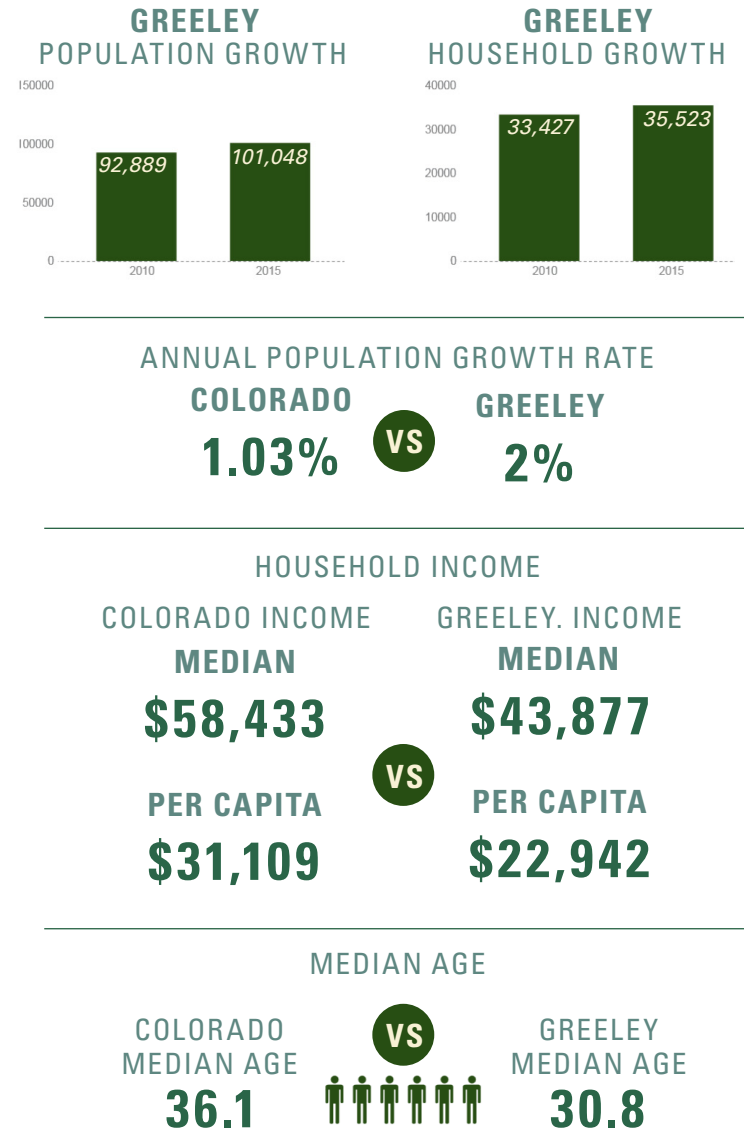
POPULATION GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Greeley's population has been growing in recent years, with an estimated 2015 population of 101,048. From 2010-2015, the city's annual population growth rate of 1.9% was above both the national and state average growth rates. **Projecting into the future, the population is expected to continue to increase over the next 10 years to a total of 123,225 residents in 2025.**

Similar to much of the country, construction of new homes in Greeley is on the rise after significant decreases in 2008. New home construction peaked most recently in 2002, with 1,300 new units. After years of significant declines in new development, construction is on the rise again, with 787 new household units added in 2014. **Parks and recreation amenities will need to anticipate and accommodate the population influx and the development impacts of new construction.**

New homes in Greeley are shifting away from historically popular single-family dwellings to more multifamily units. For example, in 2015, of the 941 building permits issued for new dwellings multifamily permits represented 52% or 492 of the permits issued. The 2015 numbers build on the trend in 2014 in which 54% of the 724 building permits were for multifamily projects (City of Greeley, Annual Growth and Development Projections Report, 2015). As multifamily units are proposed, the City will need to work with developers to ensure that adequate spaces for neighborhood and community parks and recreation facilities are provided.

Figure 5: Greeley Key Demographic Indicators



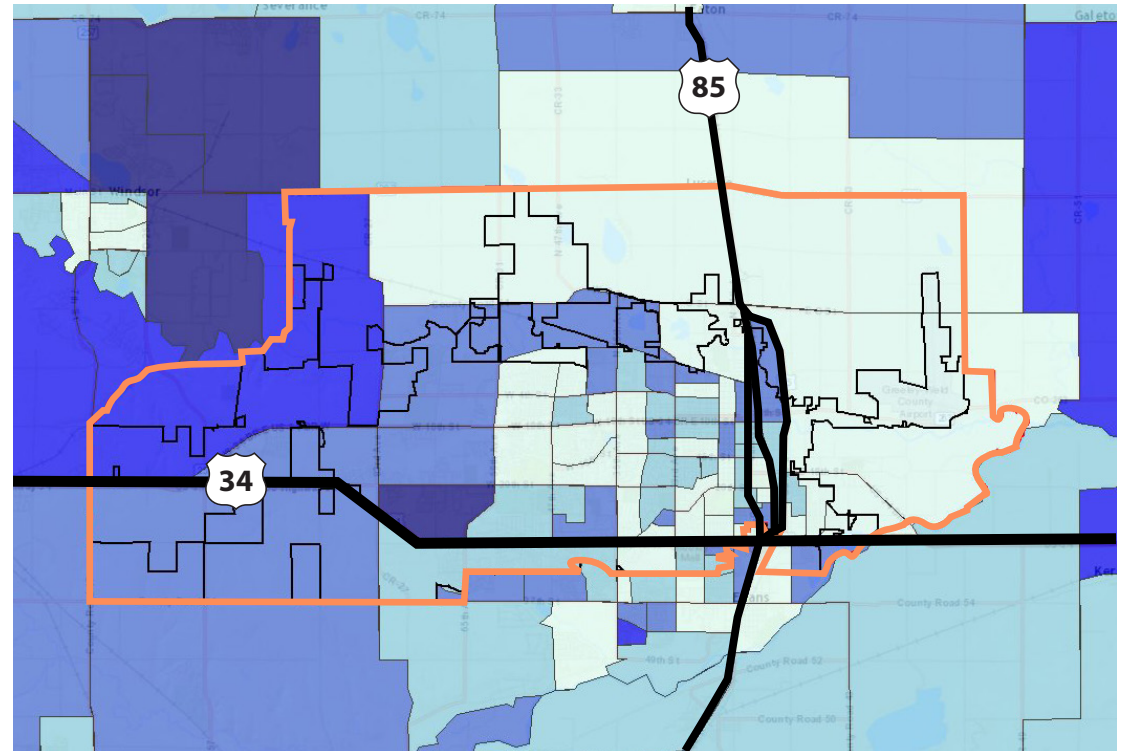
Demographic data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI), acquired in August 2015. The data reflects actual numbers reported in the 2010 Census, and City of Greeley estimates for 2015, 2020 and 2025.

Compared with other Metropolitan Statistical Areas in the state, the Greeley Weld County MSA has experienced high rates of labor force growth. For example, from 2013 to 2014, the Greeley Weld County MSA experienced a 9% increase in the civilian labor force and a 12.4% increase in the number of employed individuals, significantly exceeding MSAs throughout the state. At the same time, the number of unemployed individuals and the unemployment rate has experienced significant declines. This is an encouraging trend for the CPRD. With more residents in the workforce, there may be heightened levels of discretionary income available to spend on recreation. (City of Greeley, Annual Growth and Development Projections Report, 2015)

WHERE GROWTH IS ANTICIPATED

Providing recreation opportunities commensurate with population growth is an important element of this plan. Future growth will likely occur at higher rates in the western portions of Greeley. Map 6 illustrates projected rates of growth from 2015 to 2020 (Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI)). The highest population growth rate is expected in newer areas of the city, along Highway 34, between 83rd and 59th Avenues. Significant growth is also projected to occur from Greeley's western boundary to approximately 53rd Avenue. Lower rates of growth are expected to occur in the more established areas of the city.

Map 6: Locations of Future Greeley Growth: 2015 - 2020



- 6.3% - 9.6% Highest Rates of Growth
- 2.9% - 6.3%
- 1.4% - 2.9%
- 0.35% - 1.4%
- -1.8% - 0.35% Lowest Rates of Growth
- Long Range Expected Growth Area

Data Source: ESRI Community Analyst, 2015

GREELEY'S POPULATION COMPOSITION

INCREASINGLY DIVERSE

The 2015 population estimate for Greeley reveals the city's current population predominantly identifies as White (77.91%) with 13.5% who identify as Some Other Race. The projections for 2030 expect the racial distribution to remain relatively unchanged, with a slight decrease in the White demographic (74.82%), coinciding with a slight increase in population for all other race segments. Greeley has a highly diverse population, with over 60 different languages spoken. The city is home to a large number of refugee groups, primarily from countries in East Africa and Burma. The Hispanic ethnic distinction exhibits notable growth, representing 36% of the population in 2010 (can be attributed to any racial category) and expected to grow to 40% of the total population by 2030 (Figure 7).

The demographic shift, representing an increase in the Hispanic population, is consistent with trends throughout the state and other parts of the country and is an important factor when planning for parks. For example, the 2014 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) reported trends in California similar to those found in Colorado and Greeley. In California, park usage amongst the Hispanic population includes day-use visits to outdoor recreation sites close to home in order to spend time with nuclear and extended families. Average group sizes range from 8 to 15 people. Picnics can last anywhere from 6 to 10 hours at sites where families gather, such as historic sites, farm settings and parks.

MULTI-GENERATIONAL

Evaluating the population by age segments, Greeley exhibits skewed distribution among the four major segments, with the 55+ age group trailing the younger three segments. Currently, the city has a rather young population, with the average age of residents being just 30.8 years old. The overall composition of the population is projected to undergo a slight aging trend. While the younger age segments are expected to experience slight decreases in population, the 55+ age segment is projected to increase over the next 15 years.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Figure 5 shows that the city's median household income (\$43,877) and per capita income (\$22,942) are both well below the Colorado averages. These lower economic metrics are indicators that disposable income is limited and that Greeley residents are not as likely to be spending as much money on recreational activities compared with to the average Coloradan.

Figure 6: Race 2010 - 2020

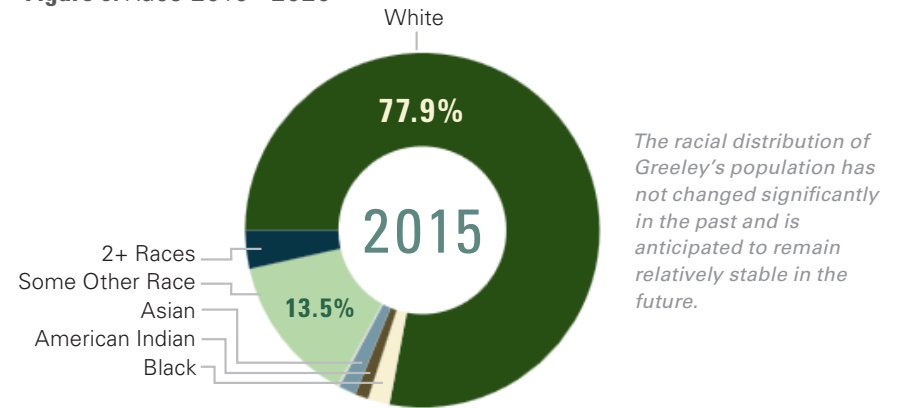
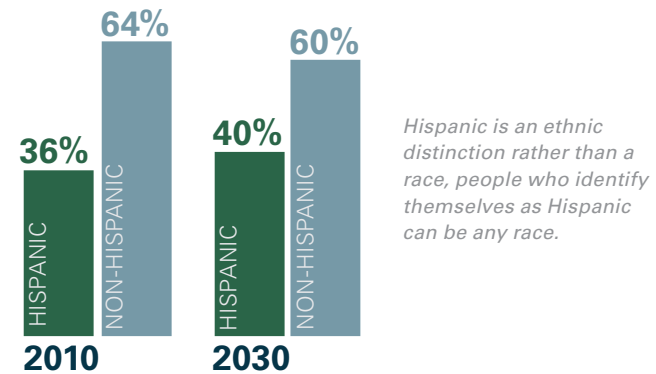


Figure 7: Hispanic Population Percentage: 2010 - 2030



RACE AND ETHNICITY DEFINITIONS

Categories and definitions for race and ethnicity used in the 2010 U.S. Census:

American Indian – A person having origins tied to the original peoples of North, Central and South America, and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment. **Asian** – A person having origins tied to the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent. **Black** – A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa. **White** – A person having origins tied to the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East or North Africa.

Hispanic or Latino – An ethnic distinction, a subset of a race; including Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, South or Central American or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS

COMMUNITY HEALTH INDICATORS

Greeley faces many of the health and wellness challenges common throughout Colorado and the nation. Obesity and its associated health risks, like diabetes, are linked to lack of physical activity and poor diet.

OBESITY RATES

The obesity rate in Weld County has increased in recent years. In 2015, one-third of the county's children and approximately 60% of adults are overweight or obese, resulting in one out of three Weld County residents considered obese. Diabetes is also on the rise, increasing by 40% between 2007 and 2013 (Weld County Health Survey Report, Community Health Assessment, 08/11/15).

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

2013 data indicates that residents of the Greeley/Evans area of Weld County get lower levels of physical activity than residents of other areas of Weld County. Less than half of Greeley/Evans residents (47.3%) meet the recommended moderate physical activity guidelines, which is significantly lower than the statewide average of 62% of residents who meet physical activity guidelines (www.weldhealth.org). Conversely, positive signs of change indicate that physical activity (measured as one hour of daily activity) among adolescents increased by 46% between 2011 and 2013.

Weld County has the second lowest level of active commutes for both children and adults compared to other Colorado counties and state averages. The county has, however, shown an increase (by nearly 50%) in the number of school aged children who use active modes to get to school, with 20% of students bicycling, walking or skateboarding. The addition of bike trails and lanes and programs like Family Fun Rides and Walk and Bike to School Days have had considerable positive impacts in raising awareness of walking and biking as both healthy and fun transportation choices.

According to the 2013 Weld County Community Health Survey, "Parks, trails and recreation centers can provide appealing venues for physical activity, and may reduce health disparities, stress, depression, and violence, and promote mental health, social cohesion, and general well-being." The survey revealed that the majority (60%) of Weld County residents are concerned about access to appealing areas for physical activity, access to affordable fresh foods, and overweight/obesity in their communities. The CPRD plays an important role in supporting healthy lifestyles by ensuring parks, trails and recreation amenities are distributed throughout the Greeley community and accessible to all residents.

HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PARTNERSHIPS AND GOALS

The City of Greeley is targeting ways to enhance the community's health through partnerships with Weld County and non-profits. In 2015, the City joined the Healthy Eating, Active Living (HEAL) coalition and is a partner in the "Make Today Count" community health initiative, created to combat

obesity and improve the population's general health and well being. The 2014 Annual Report of the Thriving Weld Community Health Improvement Plan outlined three priority goal areas including Healthy Eating, Active Living and Healthy Mind and Spirit. The plan suggests that parks, trails and open lands can play a role in each of these goal areas:

Healthy Eating

- Sustain and promote farmers' markets and community gardens

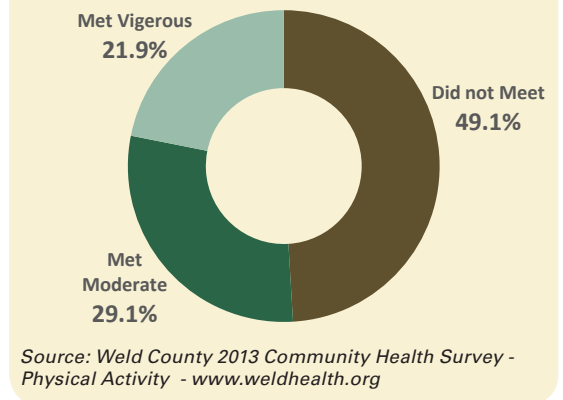
Active Living

- Provide the framework for alternative nonmotorized modes of transportation through the addition of trails
- Encourage design and development that promotes walkability and healthy lifestyles by providing accessibility for physical activity
- Facilitate access to safe, accessible and affordable places for physical activity
- Promote programs and facilities for physical activity
- Integrate community-wide messaging and education

Healthy Mind and Spirit

- Promote access to positive activities for teenagers and youth in order to decrease the use of alcohol, tobacco or illicit drugs
- Provide connections to nature to reduce stress

Figure 8: Percent of Weld County Residents who Met Physical Activity Guidelines, 2013



RECREATION TRENDS SUMMARY

An analysis of national, statewide, and local recreation trends helped to inform level of service recommendations for the facilities and programs provided by the CPRD.

NATIONAL TRENDS

Understanding national recreation trends is helpful in anticipating changing needs and informing decisions regarding future CPRD programs or facilities needs. The Sports & Fitness Industry Association's (SFIA) 2015 Study of Sports, Fitness and Leisure Participation evaluates several categories of recreation including General Sports, Aquatic Activity, General Fitness and Outdoor Recreation. Across all of these categories, the most popular activities include: fitness walking, running/jogging, and treadmill in addition to free weights and road bicycling (Figure 9). A more extensive list of national participatory trends in each of these categories is included in Appendix B-1.

GENERAL SPORTS: The sports with the highest participation rates in 2014 were **golf (24.7 million) and basketball (23 million)**. While both of these activities have seen declining participation levels in recent years, the number of participants for each activity remains well above other activities in the general sports category. Team sports that have experienced significant growth in participation are **rugby, lacrosse, field hockey, ice hockey, roller hockey and gymnastics** – all of which have experienced double-digit growth over the last five years (Figure 10). Squash has emerged as the fastest growing sport overall, as participation levels have risen by 100% over the last five years.

AQUATIC ACTIVITY: **Fitness swimming is the leader in multigenerational appeal with over 25 million reported participants in 2014.** Aquatic Exercise also has a strong participation base, with 9,122,000 participants in 2014. It has recently experienced an upward trend.

GENERAL FITNESS: Trends in fitness have reflected strong growth in recent years. Many fitness activities have become popular due to an increased interest among people to improve their health. The most popular fitness activity is **fitness walking, which had over 112.5 million participants** in 2014. Over the last five years, the activities that grew most rapidly were off-road triathlons (up 123%), road triathlons (up 92%), trail running (up 55%), high impact aerobics (55% increase) and yoga (up 33%).

OUTDOOR RECREATION: In 2014, the most popular activities in outdoor recreation included **road bicycling (40 million participants), freshwater fishing (38 million participants) and day hiking (36 million participants)**. Outdoor recreation activities that have undergone dramatic increases are adventure racing (up 136%), archery (up 33%), and BMX bicycling (up 27%).

Figure 9: Most Popular Sport & Recreation Activities in the US

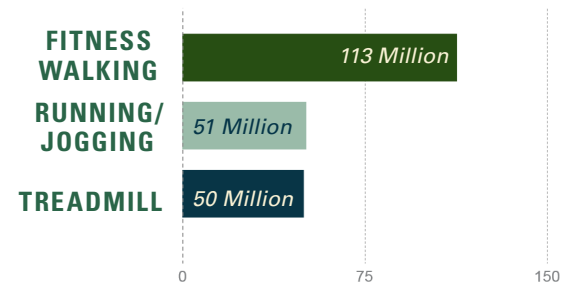


Figure 10: Highest Team Sport Participation in the US

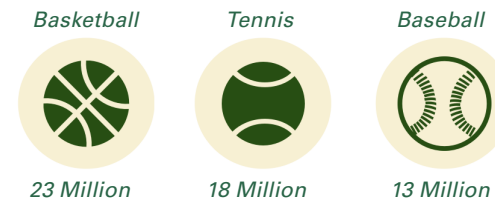
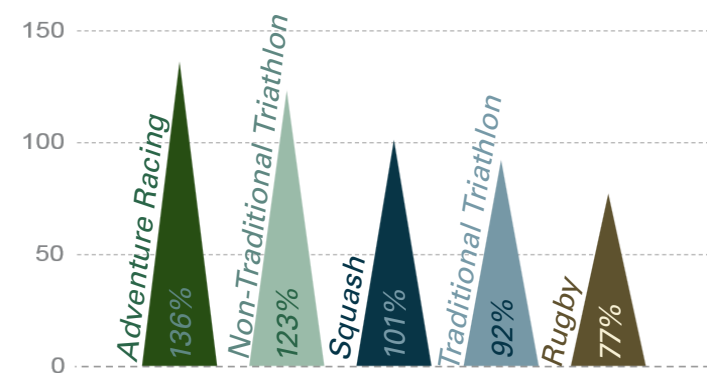


Figure 11: Activities Experiencing Rapid Growth in the US



Source: The Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) Sports, Fitness & Recreational Activities Topline Participation Report 2014. SFIA is the number one source for sport and fitness research. The study is based on online interviews carried out in January and February of 2015 from nearly 11,000 individuals and households.

COLORADO RECREATION TRENDS

Walking, hiking/backpacking, picnicking, fishing, jogging, camping and wildlife viewing were the most popular activities reported in Colorado, according to the 2014 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). Alternative sports are increasing in demand, such as triathlons (non-traditional/off road and traditional/road), multi-sport and adventure racing, kayaking (whitewater and sea/tour) and BMX bicycling. Additional trending activities, such as freestyle skiing and boardsailing/windsurfing, are not feasible to accommodate in Greeley due to geographic constraints.

The North Central region of Colorado, which includes Greeley, is the most popular area in the state for outdoor recreation, with almost 140 million days of activity. This area includes Rocky Mountain National Park and abundant outdoor recreation opportunities within Boulder and Larimer Counties, that draw significant numbers of visitors. Activities that rank high in popularity include swimming outdoors, fishing, wildlife viewing, golf, picnicking and playground activities.



More than 90% of Coloradans recreated outdoors in 2014.

LOCAL SPORT AND MARKET POTENTIAL

Table 3, a sport and activity based Market Potential Index (MPI) comparison, measures the probable demand for a product or service in Greeley. The MPI shows the likelihood that an adult resident of the city will participate in the identified activities compared to the national average. The Greeley service area is compared across four categories – General Sports, Fitness, Outdoor Activity and Money Spent on Recreation. The national MPI average is 100, therefore numbers below 100 represent a lower than average participation rate, and numbers above 100 represent a higher than average participation rate. MPI data also provide a comparison between the estimated percentage of the U.S. population and local population that participate in each activity.

Overall, Greeley demonstrates above average MPI numbers, especially in the General Sports category. The other three categories all show relatively high MPI numbers for Greeley, each with only a few activities below the national average. High index numbers (100+) are significant because they demonstrate that there is a greater potential that residents will participate in programs and have a need for related facilities. The likelihood that an adult resident of Greeley will participate in soccer, football, volleyball, softball, jogging/running, weight lifting, mountain bicycling, and backpacking is highest compared to the national average.

The MPI and estimated participant numbers are helpful tools for estimating resident participation in identified activities and projecting the need for facilities in the future.

Table 3: Local Participatory Market Potential Comparison (adult demographic)

Local Participatory Trends				
Activity	Estimated Participants	% of Population		Greeley's Market Potential Index (MPI)*
		Greeley	U.S.	
General Sports				
Soccer	3,255	4.5%	3.8%	119
Football	4,177	5.8%	5.0%	115
Volleyball	2,922	4.0%	3.5%	114
Softball	2,704	3.7%	3.4%	109
Basketball	6,323	8.7%	8.3%	105
Baseball	3,328	4.6%	4.5%	102
Golf	6,954	9.6%	9.5%	101
Tennis	3,122	4.3%	4.3%	101
Fitness Activities				
Jogging/Running	11,029	15.2%	12.8%	119
Weight Lifting	8,905	12.3%	10.6%	116
Aerobics	6,682	9.2%	8.9%	103
Pilates	2,050	2.8%	2.8%	101
Walking for exercise	20,232	27.9%	27.9%	100
Yoga	5,054	7.0%	7.2%	97
Outdoor Activities				
Backpacking	2,413	3.3%	2.9%	113
Bicycling (mountain)	3,093	4.3%	4.1%	106
Horseback Riding	1,831	2.5%	2.4%	103
Hiking	7,226	10.0%	10.0%	100
Bicycling (road)	6,920	9.5%	9.8%	97
Fishing (Freshwater)	8,365	11.5%	12.4%	93
Boating (Power)	3,565	4.9%	5.3%	93
Canoeing/Kayaking	3,604	5.0%	5.4%	92
Money Spent on Recreation				
\$1-199 on sports/rec equip	4,566	6.3%	6.0%	105
\$100 -249 on sports/rec equip	4,875	6.7%	6.5%	103
\$250+ on sports/rec equip	4,688	6.5%	7.0%	93

*MPI measures probable demand for the adult market.

Source: ESRI's Market Potential Index (MPI), accessed through ESRI Business Analyst. See Appendix B-3 for methodology.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

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Source: City of Greeley Flickr



RECOMMENDATIONS INTRODUCTION

The Master Plan recommendations provide direction to the Culture, Parks, and Recreation Department to guide decision-making and investments for the next 10 years. The plan supports a vision for the future of parks, open lands, trails, and recreation that can be accomplished over the planning period; however, the Department should continue to adapt to changes in the community and seek to capture opportunities as they arise. The recommendations represent a potential future based on the vision, not an absolute promise. While some recommendations can be completed within a matter of months, others will require coordinated community and regional efforts over a number of years that may exceed the life of this plan. The recommendations are based on an evaluation and analysis of the current state of the system and changing demographics, an understanding of community values and priorities, and contemporary trends in parks and recreation. The plan reflects the need to grow the system in response to population increases with the continued stewardship of the City's existing park, trail and open land assets.

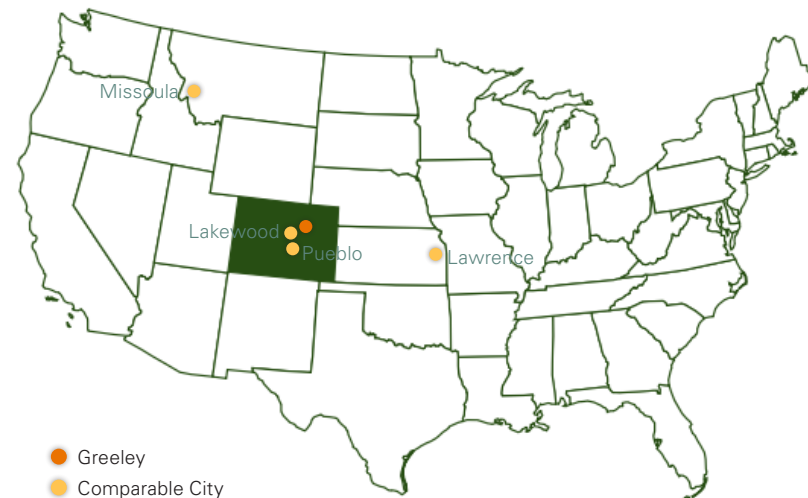
CHAPTER ORGANIZATION:

The Recommendations Chapter includes five sections: Parks, Open Lands, Trails, Programs and Facilities. Each section begins with a summary of Key Findings or highlights from the inventory, analysis and community input. More detailed information supporting the key findings including the complete inventory of properties and facilities, the results of different analyses, survey and community meeting results are included in the Appendix to this document. The Key Findings are followed by the Recommendations for each section. Primary recommendations are numbered and are followed by supporting details and action steps.

BENCHMARKS

Throughout the Recommendations and Implementation Chapters, comparisons to other communities provide a sense of where Greeley is moving ahead or falling behind other similar sized cities. Benchmarking is a useful tool to understand areas that need improvement to create and maintain a high quality and competitive park system to attract and retain residents. However it is important to note that each city has different assets and meets community desires in unique ways.

The benchmark cities were selected based on several similar criteria, such as regional location, size and demographic makeup as well as departments with comparable resources. Greeley is the second largest jurisdiction by land area, though the city has a comparatively lower population density. The complete benchmark analysis results and methodology are provided in Appendix F.



SYSTEM	STATE	JURISDICTION SIZE (SQ. MI)	POPULATION
Greeley	CO	46.5	101,048
Lakewood	CO	42.5	149,643
Lawrence	KS	34.3	92,763
Missoula	MT	27.7	69,821
Pueblo	CO	53.6	108,423

Note: Population source is July 2014 estimate from US Census, except for Greeley which is the City's 2015 estimate.



PARKS | KEY FINDINGS

The number and variety of parks in the City greatly contributes to the overall quality of life for Greeley residents who have a need for both small and large parks. More small local parks and large parks were rated as the community’s second and third highest priorities for the next 10 years in the community survey. Walking and biking trails ranked as the highest priority and are included under the Trails Section, page 42. The following is a summary of the key findings from the inventory and analysis which lead into the recommendations for parks within the City of Greeley.

PARK ACREAGE AND VARIETY

Greeley has 752.3 acres of developed parkland, with three park sites and portions of Island Grove Regional Park that are currently undeveloped. **The public input, benchmark and level of service analysis indicate Greeley has a need for more park acreage to serve the existing population for both neighborhood and community parks as well as sports complexes** (definitions of each park type are included in Table 8). The need for additional parks and park acreage will grow as Greeley’s population increases.

The benchmark analysis shows that Greeley has the lowest amount of both total park acreage and acreage per 1,000 people compared to the benchmark cities by a significant margin. **With three (3) neighborhood park acres per 1,000 people, the City has surpassed it’s level of service goal established in 2002 to provide 2.5 acres per 1,000 people. However, Greeley has fallen significantly short in reaching its level of service goal to provide five (5) acres of community parks per 1,000 people.** Greeley community parks include Bittersweet, Centennial, and Twin Rivers, equating to 1.14 acres of community parks per 1,000 (or 2.5 if sports complexes are included in this total). Weld County District 6 does provide school parks within the city that serve some community park needs. Greeley’s current level of service for community parks is low compared to similar communities. These findings illustrate that there is a need to reevaluate the past goals and set realistic standards to reach for in the next 10 years.

Community Input: The need for new parks is supported by both the community survey and keypad polling findings. Large and small parks were both among the top 10 recreation facilities that are falling short of meeting household’s needs. Over 80% of keypad polling participants either agree or strongly agree in the need to increase the number of parks over the next 10 years, with the greatest support for community (large), neighborhood (small) and speciality parks. Participants felt there was less of a need for additional sports complexes, pocket parks and regional parks. However, the Parks Division staff and focus group participants indicated that some sports are experiencing greater demand for fields and facilities than currently available.

Table 5: Benchmark Results for Park Acreage

CITY	# OF PARKS & GREENWAYS	ACRES OWNED OR MANAGED	PARK ACRES PER 1,000 POP.
Greeley*	41	1,493	14.78
Lakewood	101	7,177	47.96
Lawrence	64	3,953	42.61
Missoula	51	4,445	63.66
Pueblo	88	7,180	66.22

* Acreages include both developed and undeveloped parks, open lands and natural areas.

The benchmark analysis shows that despite being the largest geographically, Greeley ranks last in the number of park sites and both total acreage and acreage per 1,000 people included in its system. With only 14.78 acres per 1,000 people, Greeley’s park acreage per person is significantly lower than the next lowest jurisdiction, Lawrence, Kansas, which provides 42.61 acres per 1,000 people.

Table 6: Level of Service (LOS) 2000 - 2015

PARKS	2002 LOS Goal (acres per 1,000)	2000 LOS Inventory (acres per 1,000)	2015 INVENTORY	
			Inventory (acres)	Current Service Level (acres per 1,000 people)
Neighborhood Parks*	2.5	2.48	311.3	3.08
Community Parks	5.0	3.34	115	1.14
Sports Complexes**			137	1.36
Special Use Properties***	NA	NA	430	4.26
Regional Parks	NA	1.94	182	1.80

Notes:

* Neighborhood parks include 3.32 acres of “pocket parks”

** Sports complexes are generally listed separately because they are specialized facilities and geared towards competitive use; this differs from Community Park characteristics, however, these were included together in the 2002 level of service recommendations.

*** Special Use Properties include dog parks, golf courses, museums, and cemeteries.

(Population Estimates from the City of Greeley: 2015 - 101,048)

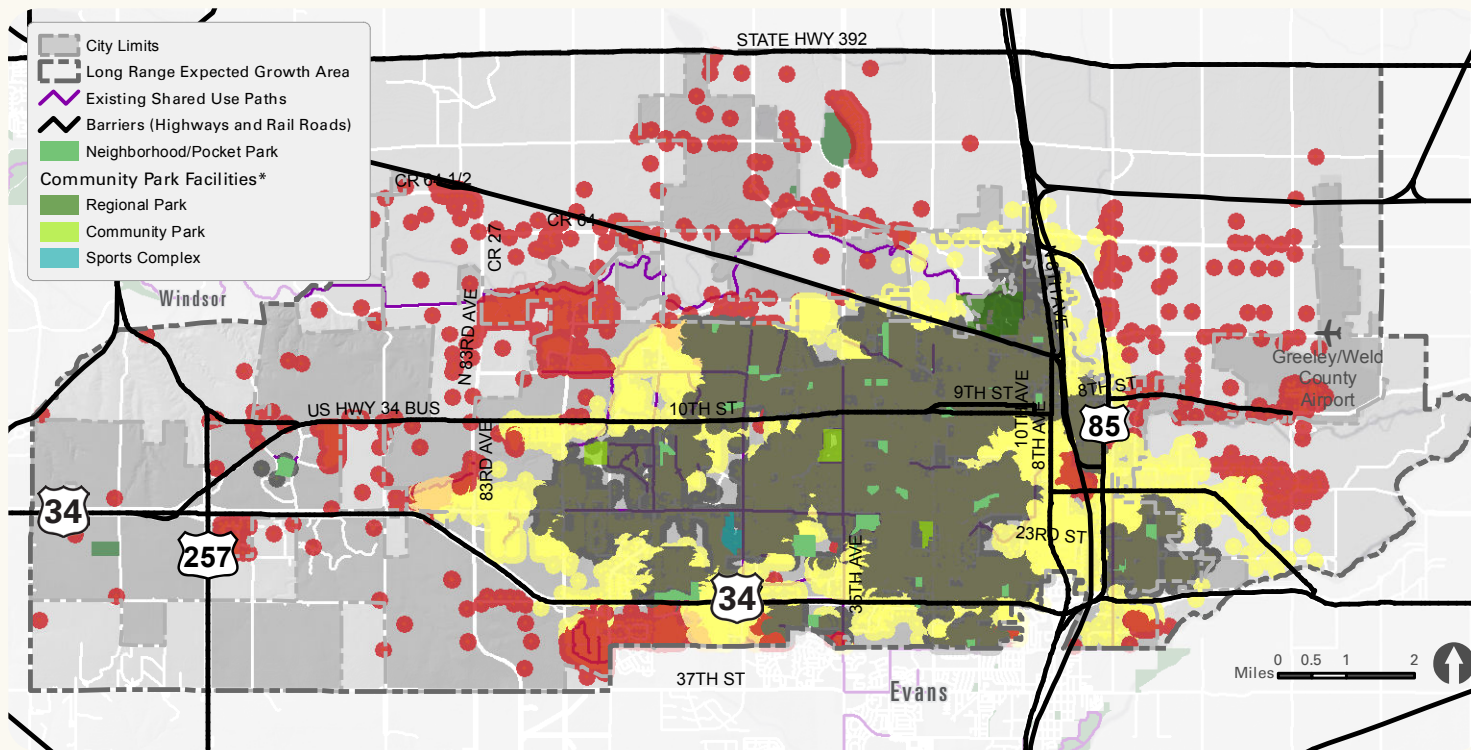
PARKS | KEY FINDINGS

EXISTING PARK DISTRIBUTION

A distribution and service area analysis was completed to answer the question of where residents are currently underserved. A complete description of the results is provided in Appendix C-1. Providing well distributed and accessible parks is important to facilitating use. Research demonstrates that people have a tendency to utilize facilities in close proximity to their homes. For example, the statewide statistics indicate that 36% of the State's population recreates within less than four miles from home on an average weekday (SCORP). In Greeley, the willingness to travel to participate in recreation activities starts to decline rapidly beyond two to six miles. Neighborhood parks are frequented more often if they are less than a 1/4 mile from residents' homes or less than a 10 minute walk.

Map 7 illustrates the service area gaps based on 2002 recommendations of a one mile service area for community parks and 1/2 mile for neighborhood parks). Many of the gaps in provision of parks serving existing residents are located on the western portion of the city which is also anticipated for future development. There are a few areas of more dense housing development that are not served by public park facilities, including clusters of homes in the northwest, east and southwest areas within the city limits. Households between 8th Avenue and the railroad and a small portion of development east of Highway 85 are also underserved areas. The areas where existing households lack adequate service identified on Map 7 are higher priority locations for future community or neighborhood parks. The keypad polling results also support the development of new parks, primarily to the west of 71st Avenue. As the city looks to add new parks to the system, these locations should be prioritized.

Map 7: Service Area Gaps (Neighborhood and Community Parks)



66% of residences are within 1 mile of a community park* and/or 1/2 mile of a neighborhood park

23% of residences are between 1 and 2 miles of a community park and 1 mile from a neighborhood park

10% of residences are beyond the service area of community and neighborhood parks

Community and Neighborhood Park Residences within Service Areas

- Within Service Area
- Within 1 - 2 Mile Service Area
- Outside of City Park Service Area (within HOA)
- Outside of Service Area

* Includes the southeastern portion of Island Grove and Monfort Park as these areas provide some neighborhood /community park amenities, though limited to areas of open lawn at Monfort Park.



PARKS | KEY FINDINGS

PARK ENHANCEMENTS

While new parks will be an important focus during the next 10 years, it is also essential to continue to implement standards in maintaining and updating Greeley’s existing parks. Community feedback indicated that the Parks Division does a good job maintaining parks and that there is a willingness of park staff to listen to and respond to resident concerns as they arise. When public meeting participants were asked what the focus of future investment should be, maintaining and improving existing parks was the second highest priority with support from almost 40% of participants. Some of the more specific improvements people support include:

- Increasing the amount of natural areas, plants and trees within parks and along streets
- Adding more amenities and variety of recreation opportunities
- Serving those with special needs or disabilities
- Providing for a diverse combination of activities to serve all age groups

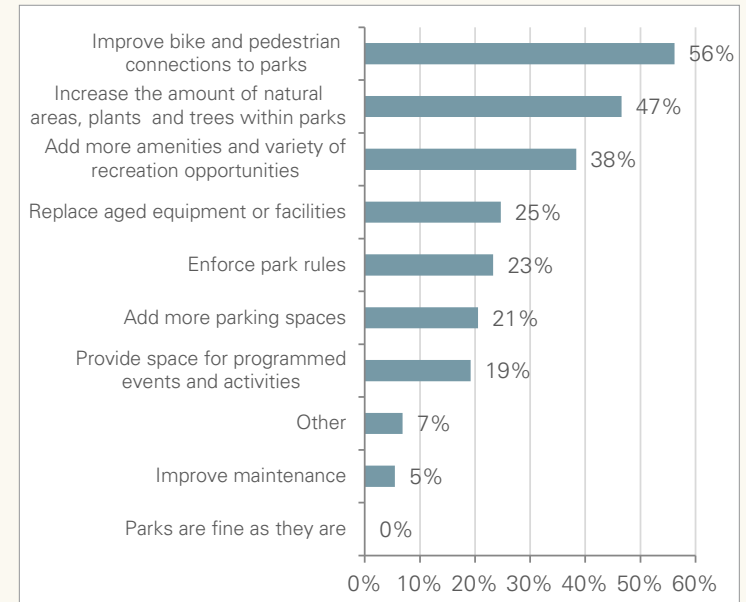


Photo Source: City of Greeley, Coyote Run Park

The City of Greeley has 30 playgrounds to maintain.

Figure 12: Priorities for Existing Parks

What do you think should be a priority to address in Greeley’s existing parks? (Keypad Polling Session #1)





PARKS | RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Build new parks to accommodate community needs and growth.

A. Continue to acquire parkland and increase park acreage to achieve the recommended level of service for each park classification as the population grows.

Recommended level of service (Table 7) and Park Classification and Characteristics (Table 8) define specific recommendations for each park type. Chapter 4, Implementation outlines the staffing and funding implications that additional park land will require.

B. Utilize the park classifications and standards to guide park location (size, access, and service area), programming, and site characteristics when acquiring land and designing new parks.

By 2025, approximately 450 additional park acres are needed to serve Greeley’s increasing population. Level of service recommendations for each park type have been adjusted based on community feedback, the existing number of acres, use of existing facilities and comparison to benchmark communities.

- Neighborhood Parks** - The recommended level of service for neighborhood parks is 3.25 acres/1,000 people. This level of service represents a small increase in the amount of neighborhood parks needed today. Approximately 89 acres of neighborhood parks will be needed to accommodate anticipated population growth by 2025.

Table 7: Recommended Level of Service

Park Type	2015 INVENTORY		Recommended Level of Service (acres per 1,000)	2015 STATUS		2025 ANTICIPATED	
	Greeley Inventory (acres)	Current Service Level (acres per 1,000 people)		Meet Standard/ Need Exists	Acres Needed	Meet Standard/ Need Exists	Acres Needed
Neighborhood Parks*	311.32	3.08	3.25	Need Exists	17	Need Exists	89
Community Parks	115.00	1.14	3.50	Need Exists	239	Need Exists	316
Sports Complexes**	137.00	1.36	1.50	Need Exists	15	Need Exists	48
Special Use Properties***	430.00	4.26	3.00	Meets Standard	-	Meets Standard	-
Regional Parks	182.00	1.80	1.50	Meets Standard	-	Meets Standard	-

* Neighborhood parks include 3.32 acres of “pocket park” acreage.

** Sports complexes are generally listed separately because they are specialized facilities and geared towards competitive use; this differs from Community Park characteristics

*** Special Use Properties include dog parks, golf courses, museums, and cemeteries. (Population Estimates from the City of Greeley: 2015 - 101,048 and 2025 - 123,225)

LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) RECOMMENDATIONS:

In a park master planning process a variety of means can be used to assess if enough of each type of park exists. Numeric LOS metrics are most commonly used when analyzing parkland and recreation facilities to express acreage or availability in per capita terms. A critical component of the LOS Analysis is to provide insight regarding how service levels should change over time given the context and trends of the community. Recommendations provide direction for the CPRD to plan and are also intended to ensure that a balance of facilities and services are provided uniformly across Greeley. LOS strategies can and will change over time as the demographics, economics and politics of a community change.



PARKS | RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 8: Parkland Classifications and Characteristics

PARKLAND CLASSIFICATIONS AND STANDARDS				
SIZE	PURPOSE AND FUNCTION	SITE CHARACTERISTICS	SERVICE AREA	ACCESS
Neighborhood Park				
4 to 25 Acres*	Provides both passive and active recreation and social opportunities geared towards those living within the service area. Should serve as a common area for neighbors of all ages to gather, socialize and play. Typically includes multi-purpose areas for court games, multi-purpose play field, play equipment, accessible trails, and shaded areas for gathering. In most cases, programmed sports should be limited to practices. Landscape setting is a blend of full irrigation for active uses and natural areas. Features such as interpretive signs, water bodies, and areas of natural vegetation may also be included where appropriate.	On-street parking is typically adequate. Ideally, these parks are linked by pathways and sidewalks and respond to the need for basic recreational amenities close to peoples' homes, ideally located adjacent to schools.	1/4 mile service area preferred to provide convenient walking distance for all age groups.	Centrally located within neighborhoods, along collector streets or along trail or drainage corridors, or in urban centers.
Community Park				
25 - 100 Acres	Serve as a focal point for community-wide activities and provide facilities that serve a broad purpose, balancing active and passive recreation needs. Allow for group activities and other recreational activities not feasible nor desirable at the neighborhood level due to noise, lights, traffic, etc. May include programmed sports facilities, large play structures, informal and formal fields for youth play, sports courts, trails, group picnic areas, gardens, water features, plazas, etc.	Portions of the site should have gentle topography to accommodate active sports fields and open turf areas. Special site features such as streams, lakes, reservoirs, rock outcrops, or historic sites may add to the park's character. Parking should be provided off-street or shared with other uses.	2 mile service area to account for the fact that people typically walk, bike or drive to these parks.	Direct access from an arterial street is ideal though parks may be located along collector streets. Access to regional trail system is desirable.
Sports Complex				
Varies	Provides opportunities for community-wide programmed and non-programmed sports such as: baseball, softball, soccer, tennis, or hockey in higher intensity use facilities. Frequently host youth or adult sports competitions and tournaments. Limited areas should be available for passive recreation uses that appeal to the broader community.	The majority of the site should be relatively flat to accommodate active sports fields and other facility development. Located away from residential areas to avoid traffic, light and noise conflicts.	Strategically located to fill service gaps for sports facilities.	Good access from arterial or major collector street.
Special Use Properties				
Varies	Serves a particular community need, examples include horticultural centers/ working farms, environmental education centers, performance areas, urban plazas, civic parks, skateboard parks, motor-cross tracks, mountain bike parks, or other specialized activity or recreation interests.	Varies based on requirements of the park purpose. Location of special use properties has to be carefully planned to ensure that access, traffic control, lighting issues and noise issues do not negatively impact neighborhoods.	Entire community	In most cases, good access from an arterial or collector street.
Regional Park				
100+ Acres	Provides facilities and recreational amenities intended to serve city residents as well as the surrounding region. Typically, regional parks protect large areas with natural resource values of regional significance. These areas should provide recreational opportunities for nature-oriented, outdoor recreation as well as features such as playgrounds, shelters, walking trails and athletic facilities	Emphasis is on achieving a balance between resource protection and public use. Portions of the site should be relatively flat to accommodate fields and facilities. Site features such as streams, lakes, reservoirs, rock outcrops or historic sites may add to the park's character. Parking should be off-street.	Entire community and greater region	Direct access from an arterial street and typically have direct access to regional trail systems.

* The recommended minimum park size is 4 acres, although the City's existing inventory includes a few smaller "pocket parks". These sites are generally discouraged due to the higher cost of maintenance, limited space for amenities and lack of appeal to a wide variety of user groups.



PARKS | RECOMMENDATIONS

- Community Parks** - The level of service recommendation has been adjusted from 5 acres/1000, established in the 2002 Parks and Trails Master Plan, to 3.5 acres/1,000 people. An additional 239 community park acres are needed to meet level of service recommendations and the needs of Greeley's existing population. An additional 77 acres will be needed to accommodate anticipated population growth by 2025.
- Sports Complexes** - A target of 1.50 acres/1,000 residents and the addition of 48 acres by 2025 is recommended for sports complexes. This modest growth should be sufficient to accommodate population growth and demographic changes and alleviate the crowding of existing sports fields.
- Regional Parks and Special Use Properties** - No additional acreage is recommended for regional or special use properties which are anticipated to meet future demand with the existing level of service. Recommendations for specific facilities (such as off-leash dog parks and skate parks) are included in the facility recommendations. Additionally, open lands with future public access and recreational use may serve a regional purpose.

2 Strategically locate new parks.

A. Consider accessibility and service areas in locating parks

Neighborhood parks best meet the needs of residents when located within a 1/4 mile walking distance. Greeley community parks best serve residents located within a two mile travel distance.

B. Provide parks in currently underserved areas.

Prioritize the acquisition or dedication of parkland for the development of new parks in areas where residences are not currently served by a neighborhood or community park within one mile or greater distance. Map 8 shows the potential park locations that fill existing service area gaps.

C. Locate parks to serve population growth and new development.

- Plan for parks in areas of the city experiencing new subdivision growth, higher density and multi-family development.
- Co-locate parks with school sites where possible to support shared use, create youth programming opportunities, and improve accessibility.

3 Implement cohesive park design through site-specific master plans.

A. Advance the completion of existing park master plan projects.

- Implement short and long-term projects identified in the 2016 Island Grove Regional Park Master Plan. This is Greeley's flagship park serving regional events and activities and reinforcing Greeley's community identity and heritage. The addition of elements at this site, including the construction of Aven's Village, will help to create a critical mass of activities and add to the park's regional offerings.
- Implement the phased Youth Sports Complex 2016 Master Plan to provide additional ballfields to support youth softball and baseball teams.

B. Create additional site-specific master plans for the redevelopment of existing parks.

Many of Greeley's older parks do not have master plans. Some of these parks lack a cohesive vision, no longer serve the surrounding neighborhoods or could better accommodate existing users through improved access or other enhancements. Master plans would be most beneficial to improve the functionality and usability of the following parks:

- » Monfort Park,
- » Centennial Park (see skate park recommendations),
- » Bittersweet Park,
- » Sunrise Park,
- » East Memorial Park, and
- » Poudre Ponds.

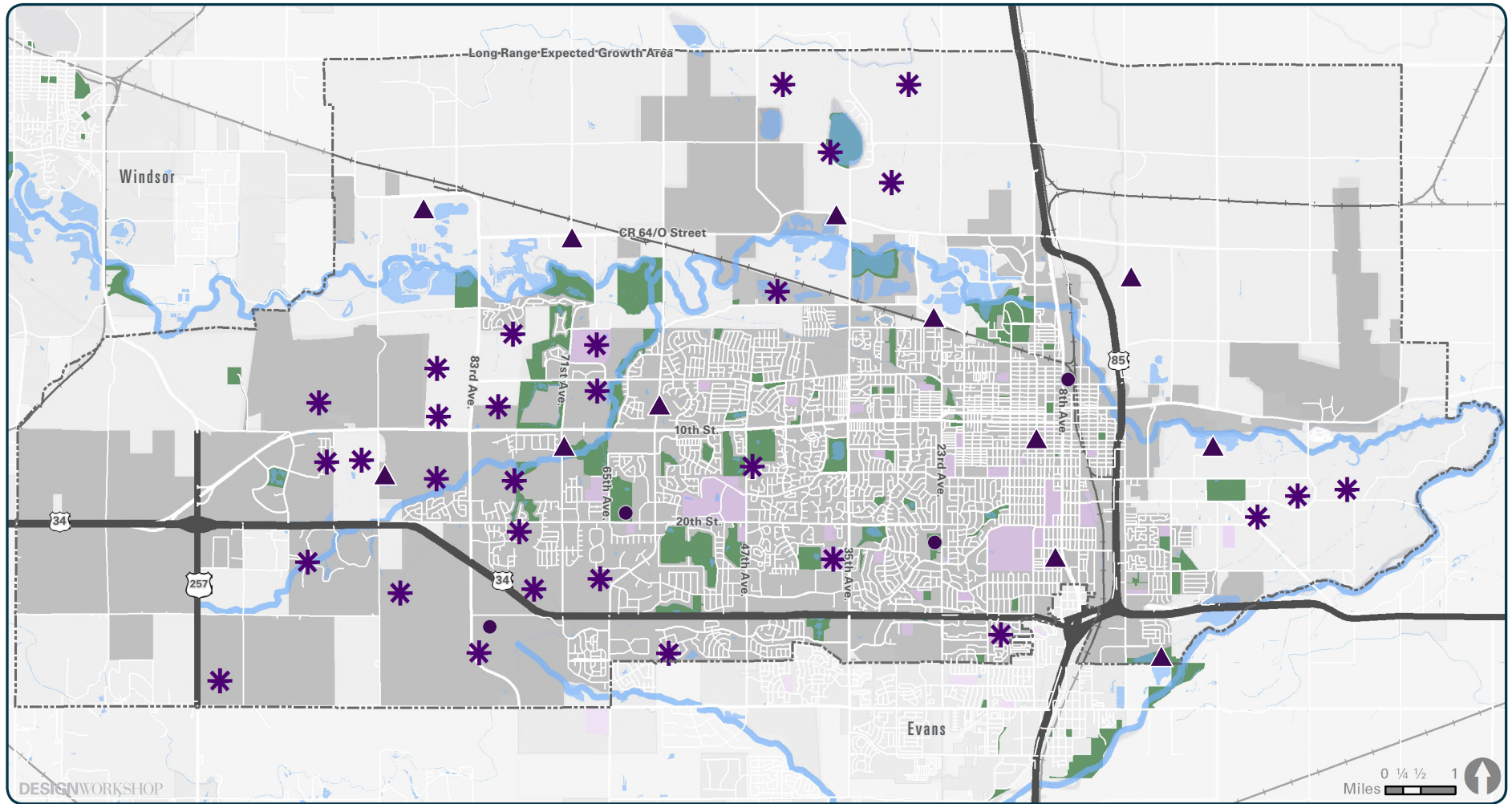
C. Design and renovate parks to accommodate Greeley's diverse population and respond to recreation trends.

- Assess the suitability of integrating recommended facilities (identified under Facility Recommendations) into existing parks and upon acquisition of new park sites as a part of the master planning process and park design.
- Provide parks with cross-generational appeal that incorporate both active and passive recreation opportunities. Activate parks by concentrating program activities and amenities to ensure intergenerational appeal for children, teenagers, adults and seniors to support multiple interests and encourage families to enjoy park amenities together.



PARKS | RECOMMENDATIONS

Map 8: Potential Locations for New Park Development (See Appendix F for Larger Map)



City Limits	Existing Park or Open Land	Potential Park Location (Identified in the 2002 Master Plan)
Water Body	School	Potential Park Location (Identified through park service gap analysis)
River		Potential Skate Park Location



PARKS | RECOMMENDATIONS

D. Integrate inclusive design elements to serve an aging population and those with special needs.

1. Continue to address Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) / Universal Accessibility needs in the existing park inventory using the CPRD's internal review process and ADA compliance initiative to prioritize park improvements to enhance accessibility.
2. Accommodate the physical activity needs of seniors by addressing the comfort, safety and accessibility of walking surfaces.
3. Consider multigenerational play facilities and outdoor fitness equipment park amenities to address senior and adult recreation needs.

4 Continue to support water conservation and sustainability goals.

A. Continue to design new parks and integrate strategies into existing parks to support best practices in water conservation and irrigation efficiency.

1. Implement the City's Landscape Policy Plan for Water Efficiency adopted by City Council on December 15, 2015. This Policy Plan includes a clear set of goals and policies to ensure that the Parks Division is a leader in establishing and implementing best practices in landscape design and irrigation efficiency. These policies include establishing and maintaining adequate management and administration mechanisms for water reduction and efficiency measures as well as water-efficient design principles for all capital improvement projects. An important element of the plan includes publicizing information to help educate and inform the community about the strategies being implemented and their impacts on the natural environment.
2. Strive to provide non-potable irrigation.
3. Multipurpose irrigation ponds and detention areas for park benefits (visual amenity, activity space).
4. Consider site acquisition where there is access to non-potable water resources and co-locate with the Water and Sewer Department's acquisitions where possible.

5. Balance water and agricultural uses with safety and water-based recreation (diversion structures are a liability to using rivers for kayaking, tubing, etc.).
6. Support fisheries.
7. Coordinate city master planning efforts to be mutually supportive when addressing stormwater infrastructure and parks.

B. Evaluate where sports field turf can be replaced with synthetic turf fields.

The replacement of natural grass fields which are highly water consumptive with synthetic turf can play a role in water conservation. Synthetic turf fields should be evaluated for new and renovated sports facilities on a case-by-case basis. In evaluating where synthetic turf fields are appropriate, some of the considerations include the initial capital expenditure required, continued maintenance needs, the impact on the city's water budget, soil drainage and the duration, intensity, and seasonality of anticipated use.

LEADING THE WAY IN WATER CONSERVATION:

Even with essentially "free" water for parks irrigation, Greeley has led the way in tracking and conserving water use, as one of the first communities on the Front Range to implement water audits for each of its parks. The City has worked towards using non-potable water sources for irrigation and has established goals to further reduce water intensive landscaping through the use of native species and the proposed use of synthetic turf for some play fields. Greeley's Water and Sewer Department is also committed to building non-potable infrastructure as needed to provide irrigation for new parks without recovering water plant investment fees, as they have done for Monfort Park.



PARKS | RECOMMENDATIONS

C. Incorporate native vegetation, natural grasslands and low-water-use landscapes in the planting design of parks.

Promote more diverse landscaping in areas where available. Consider alternative plant material, like removing bluegrass and using synthetic turf. There are a number of benefits of planting native vegetation in public spaces including lower maintenance and irrigation needs (after they are established), supporting wildlife habitat, and the reducing the spread of invasive plants and weeds.

D. Park dedications must include water rights to support park irrigation.

5 Integrate park system additions and design improvements with neighborhood development.

Utilize parks to shape the community's character, the vitality of its neighborhoods and the visual character of the city's streets and public spaces.

A. Adopt and implement the revised parkland dedication policy for new developments to ensure that adequate and quality parks are provided in developing areas.

See Chapter 4: Implementation (page 61) for more information about private sector park dedications. The revised parkland dedication policies should result in meeting the recommended city level of service for neighborhood parks of 3.25 acres per 1,000 population and 3.5 acres of community parks per 1,000 population.

B. Build community with the understanding of the importance of parks in the quality of life, economic vitality and identity of Greeley.

Create lasting neighborhoods where amenability and livability are reinforced by the value of parks, trails, connectivity and open space through the best practices. Include these concepts in comprehensive planning and implementation.

1. Support the Healthy Eating, Active Living (HEAL) Initiative by encouraging design and development within parks that promotes healthy lifestyles by providing for physical activity.

2. Integrate parks within the community through trail corridors and safe walking routes. Avoid placement of parks in areas that would require users to cross major roadways without trail underpasses or overpasses.
3. Undertake a context-sensitive design approach for new parks that considers social, environmental, and historical precedents.
4. Approach neighborhood development through the lens of the National Recreation and Park Association's Three Pillars; Conservation, Health and Wellness, and Social Equity.

C. Design streetscapes, linear parks and greenways as vital elements of the park system.

1. Review subdivision regulations and future planning documents to ensure that new development is required to provide quality streetscape improvements and connections to parks and trails.
2. Assess opportunities to integrate greenspace within neighborhoods by pursuing partnerships with other City departments. For example, City maintained stormwater areas and unused right-of-ways may have the potential to serve a dual purpose as linear parks or enhanced amenities.
3. Explore opportunities to acquire lands historically affected by flooding events to serve as parks and open lands.

D. Require new neighborhood parks include the following minimum standard for park amenities:

- Pathways for walking and connections (ADA accessible)
- Playground
- Open multi-purpose play field/ manicured grass
- Hard service sports court
- Shelter/sun shade
- Trash receptacles
- Benches
- Trees
- Decorative planting
- Site signage
- Parking (may be provided by designated on-street parking and must include ADA accessible parking)
- Street frontage (with appropriate curb cuts for ADA accessibility)

OPEN LANDS | KEY FINDINGS

OPEN LAND OFFERINGS

City open land properties are comprised of native vegetation, agriculture and/or natural areas. With 13 open land or natural area properties totaling 613 acres, the City of Greeley offers 6.07 acres of protected open lands per 1,000 people. However, open lands within and surrounding Greeley do not compare to the established and extensive systems in nearby cities such as Loveland, Fort Collins, and places with similar natural resources such as Adams County. Anticipated growth over the next 10 years necessitates a framework to prioritize and preserve important lands before they are lost to development and maintain continuity and connections between open lands.

The City's existing open lands and natural areas are primarily focused along the Sheep Draw drainage and the Poudre River corridor along the northwestern edge of the city's developed area. These lands serve as conservation, outdoor recreation and educational sites within the City of Greeley. The following list identifies the primary purpose of the open lands system:

Protection of Natural Resources

- Wildlife habitat
- Significant vegetation
- Water resources

Provision of Recreational and Educational Opportunities

- Outdoor recreation
- Nature observation and environmental education

Supplemental Purposes of Open Lands

- Preservation of cultural resources
- Protection from environmental hazards
- Urban shaping and buffering
- Agricultural land preservation

Open lands should be planned for and conserved through a variety of methods based on the principles of environmental conservation and ecological integrity including: conserving large, contiguous areas of native vegetation, protecting rare landscape elements and significant natural features and maintaining open space corridors to connect a greater system. The open lands analysis identifies areas of high priority for consideration as open lands based on their environmental and ecological significance as well as community values.

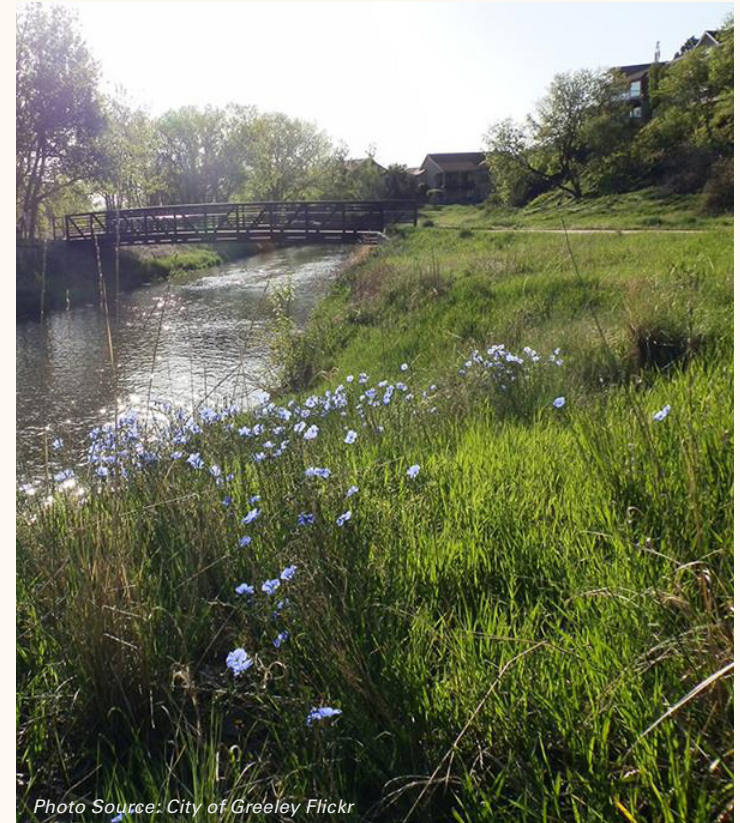


Photo Source: City of Greeley Flickr

The Cache la Poudre River corridor has many of the environmental and community values that support conserving land for future generations.



OPEN LANDS | KEY FINDINGS

COMMUNITY VALUES AND PRIORITIES

Throughout the planning process there was clear consensus that the public desired more natural areas and supported strategies to acquire and conserve open lands. Findings demonstrate that there is strong support for a proactive effort to acquire open lands. The greatest number of survey respondents indicated they are very supportive of the City “acquiring additional natural areas” with 73% of respondents being at least somewhat supportive of open land acquisition efforts (Figure 13). Almost 83% of the keypad participants are at least somewhat supportive of an active open lands program, only 3% were not supportive (Figure 14).

The community survey shows that almost all of the main reasons for acquiring open lands are considered important in and around Greeley, from preserving natural features to containing urban sprawl. Figure 15 demonstrates that a significant majority of survey respondents felt that preserving areas for many individual purposes is either very important or somewhat important. Although maintaining separation between neighboring communities scored on the lower end of the survey responses, this value was voiced as a priority by focus group participants who felt maintaining a distinct boundary with open lands was important to Greeley’s identity.

Greeley’s natural and cultural features including views of the mountains to the west and agricultural lands are also valued. A clear preference for natural areas along waterways and an interest in providing recreation opportunities (including water oriented opportunities) and trails was expressed. The Poudre River corridor was identified as the most important location for the City to work toward acquiring open lands. Sheep Draw corridor and community separators to the west of Greeley were expressed as a slightly lower priority for conservation.

Figure 13: Household support for the City acquiring additional natural areas (*Community Survey, Question 15*)

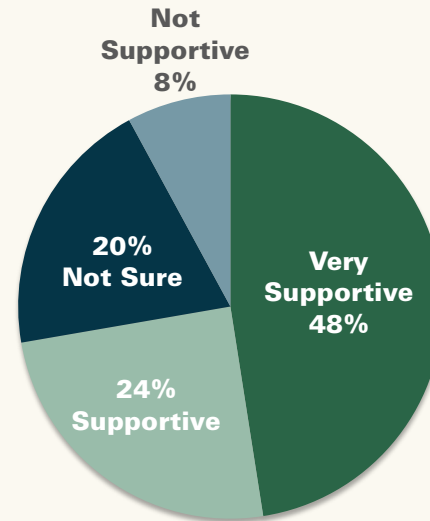
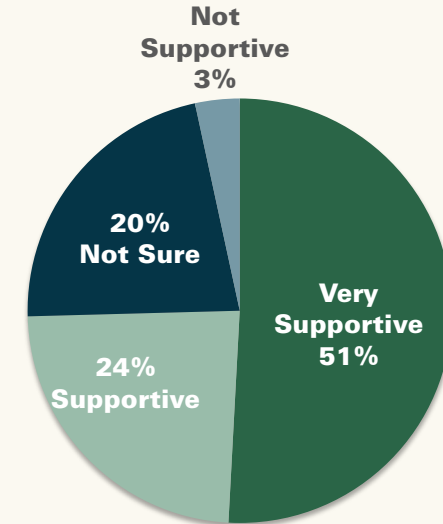
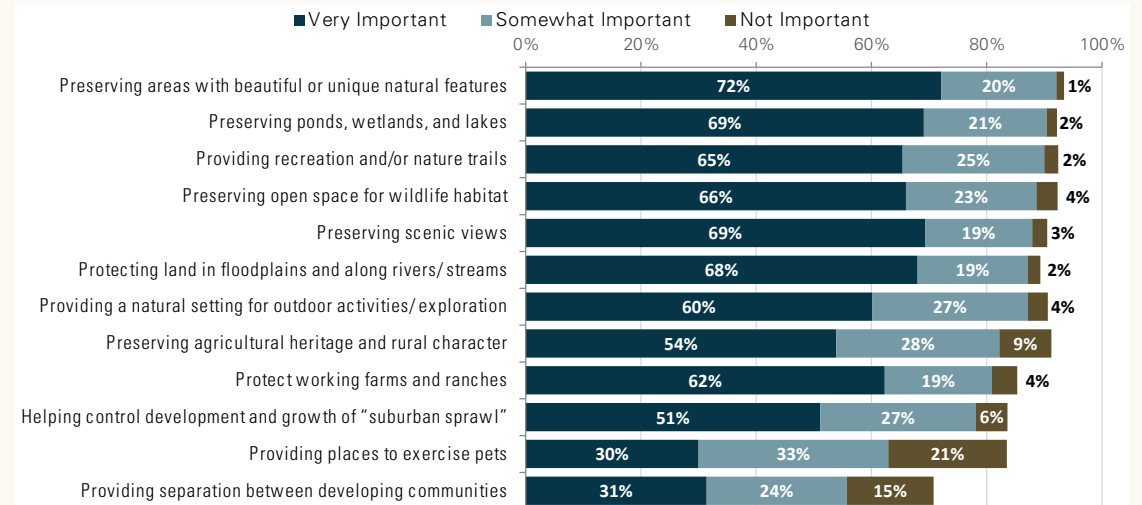


Figure 14: Support for an Active City Program to Acquire Lands (*Keypad Polling Session #2*)



**No response answers not included.*

Figure 15: Importance of Open Lands Purposes (*Community Survey*)



OPEN LANDS | KEY FINDINGS

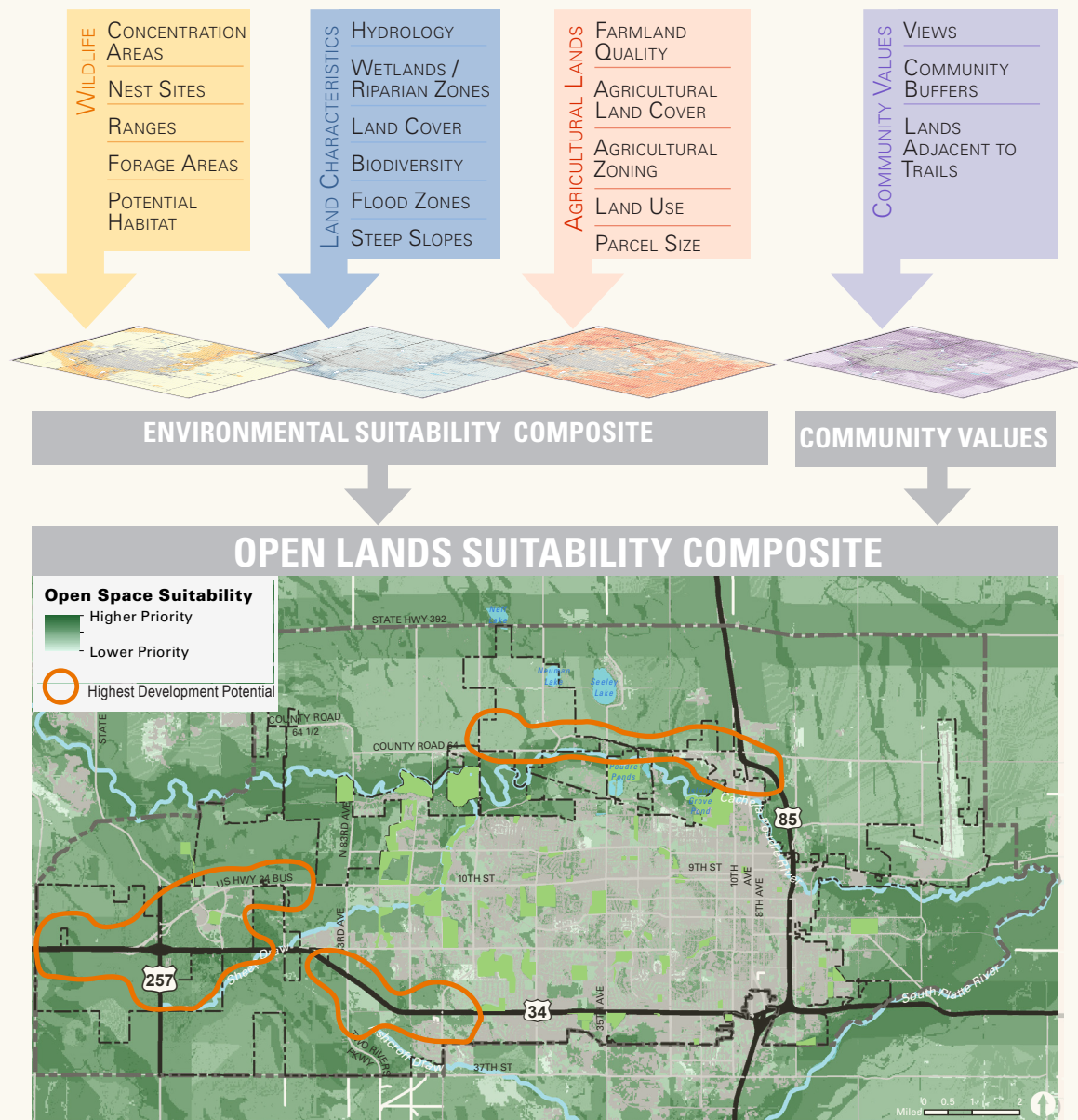
OPEN LANDS SUITABILITY ASSESSMENT

In order to guide future open land acquisition in Greeley a land suitability analysis was completed to identify areas that warrant preservation. Criteria including wildlife habitat, land characteristics, and agricultural values were overlaid to create an environmental suitability map identifying lands with qualities that make them desirable to conserve. A second overlay map identified community values regarding open lands, such as open views and community buffers between neighboring jurisdictions. The resulting analysis maps were combined to create a composite Open Lands Suitability Map which provides a framework for prioritization and decision-making for future open land acquisitions that benefits environmental systems and reflects the values of Greeley’s residents. A complete description of the methodology and analysis is included in Appendix C-2.

The river corridors along the Poudre and South Platte Rivers emerge as the most important lands for future open space with both the Sheep and Ashcroft Draws also having important conservation values. Other lands within the City’s Long Range Expected Growth Area (LREGA) particularly to the west have important features such as bluffs and agricultural lands.

An additional layer of the assessment evaluates the lands where development pressure is the highest. These areas, identified in the Open Lands Suitability Composite Map, were determined by overlaying areas where urban policies encourage or facilitate growth including the Land Use Guidance development areas, existing zoning and areas where Adequate Public Facilities are anticipated to be extended in the short-term. Strategic planning and policies are needed to ensure that as development occurs, open lands and their environmental and community values can be protected.

Figure 16: Environmental Value Identification Process





OPEN LANDS | RECOMMENDATIONS

1 **Strategically conserve open lands to create an interconnected system.**

Each parcel of acquired and preserved lands should fulfill a piece of the strategic long-term vision for open lands. With limited funds for land acquisitions, it is not anticipated that all the lands with open land potential will be conserved since land acquisition must be from willing sellers and may occur through donations. The Open Lands Priority Areas, identified on Map 9, represent areas that take precedence for conservation over other locations within the city which have been identified through the Open Lands Suitability analysis described in Appendix C-2.

It should be realized that some open lands may have no public access in the future, whereas other lands might have the potential to become regional destinations. Two such opportunities to create a publicly accessible destination include the Poudre River corridor and a nature focused regional park in the bluffs area.

A. Continue to expand and connect open lands along Greeley's river and stream corridors to create a preserved river corridor as an open space grand gesture.

Pursue conservation of lands that balance resource and wildlife protection and ecological restoration with the community's need for passive and active recreation. Greeley's significant river and stream corridors are one of the City's greatest assets and are both valuable for conservation as well as vulnerable to development impacts. These corridors provide important hydrological functions, wetlands and riparian zones that are important to maintaining the ecosystem and play an important role in flood management and water quality. The Poudre River, South Platte River and Sheep Draw corridors, in particular, provide valuable wildlife habitat for vulnerable species that have been identified by the Colorado Department of Wildlife as species of Special Concern.

1. **Cache la Poudre River Corridor** - Conserving lands along the Cache la Poudre River was identified as a strategic goal in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan and the city has made significant investments to achieve this goal. While the Cache la Poudre River corridor is subject to periodic flooding and has an extensive floodway where development is undesirable, the corridor has experienced pressure from agriculture, housing and industrial

growth. Even with these land use impacts, the Poudre River Corridor offers important ecological functions, wildlife habitat, water quality and recreation potential that make it ideal for conservation. The multiple demands on the river corridor will require balancing community needs, economic resources and ecological integrity and restoration. Staff feedback and the open lands analysis identified several areas of important lands that should be considered specifically for wildlife protection. These are identified in on Map 9.

2. **Sheep Draw Corridor** - The Sheep Draw Corridor is Greeley's most significant natural drainage, starting in southwest Greeley and joining with the Poudre River in the Sheep Draw Natural Area. Wetlands and herbaceous riparian areas make this an important ecological and recreational corridor. The City has conserved some significant parcels along this drainage and should continue to connect and expand open lands, as well as work with developers to ensure that the corridor is protected from development impacts. The Draw's headwaters are of specific conservation interest and should be a priority for connecting to the larger conservation corridor.

3. **South Platte River Corridor** - A portion of the South Platte corridor enters Greeley's City limits and continues along the southeast side of the City to the river's confluence with the Poudre River. This river corridor has been identified as one of the Colorado Conservation Partnership's 25 priority areas. Additionally, the corridor has been identified by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program as a potential conservation area because of its General Biodiversity Interest,

"Colorado's rivers and creeks form the living connection between our mountains, prairies and urban areas," Governor Hickenlooper.

The Sheep Draw Natural Area, adjacent to the Poudre River and more recently conserved tracts are examples of Greeley's significant conservation efforts which have been achieved in partnership with neighboring communities and with funding assistance from the Great Outdoors Colorado's River Initiative.



OPEN LANDS | RECOMMENDATIONS

which is primarily due to the presence of Bald Eagles and aquatic resources including rare plants (Colorado Natural Heritage Program, 2014, Level 4 Potential Conservation Area Report). The statewide significance of this river corridor may increase the access to funding, organization and partnerships for land conservation.

B. Ensure rare landscapes and lands important to Greeley's history and identity are protected.

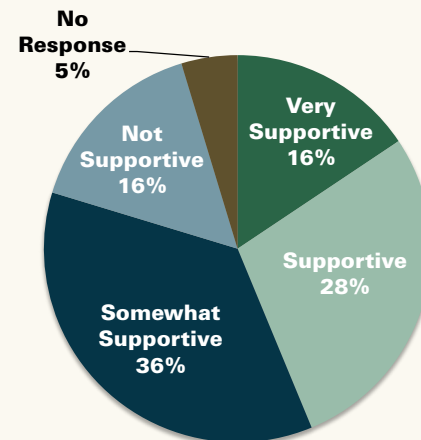
Grasslands, bluffs, rangeland, working farms and natural areas within urban development are representative of Greeley's diverse natural areas and productive landscapes and should be explored for conservation.

- 1. The Bluffs** - Located between US Highway 34 and the Cache la Poudre River to the east of State Highway 257, the bluffs are what remain of the topography that resulted from the historic meandering of the Poudre River. The bluffs have been identified by the community as a significant natural feature for protection. In addition to providing a unique geologic area, the bluffs also serve the function of providing separation from development between Windsor and Greeley.
- 2. Community Separators and Agricultural Views** - The City of Greeley values the character, heritage and sense of place derived from its views of agrarian lands and community separators that define the physical and visual boundaries between neighboring communities. Preserving and enhancing these landscapes can be effectively achieved using mechanisms such as conservation development, agricultural easements and conservation easements. The goal is to ensure that the lands continue to be working agricultural/ranch lands and provide a visual and physical separation of the developed area of the city from surrounding communities. The lands identified on Map 9, include important agricultural lands, grazing lands and grasslands that should be considered and pursued as working open lands. These lands are collectively part of Greeley's "food shed." The city should seek opportunities to conserve water rights in addition to conservation easements and fee-simple land purchases in order to further support continued agricultural uses. Additional lands beyond those specifically identified have open space value (see the Appendix Map 11 and pages 53-64) and may be considered

for conservation or planning strategies to preserve their value as view corridors, agriculturally productive lands or community separation. For example, the area along US 34 to the west of the Sheep Draw corridor is a place where open lands can exist with characteristics that contribute both to community separator goals and defining the city's entryway, for example, while still accommodating certain appropriate community development uses. A heightened level of development review is recommended along the Highway 34 and the 257 corridors to ensure that open land values are considered as development occurs. Strategies such as transitional lower density development, higher density cluster development that conserve open space/working lands, inclusion of industries that are supportive of regional agricultural/ranching practices, and open space buffer areas to development may be appropriate ways to achieve economic development goals and still fulfill the community's open space values.

KEY FINDINGS: The Community Supports Pursuing Conservation or Agricultural Easements to Conserve Open Lands

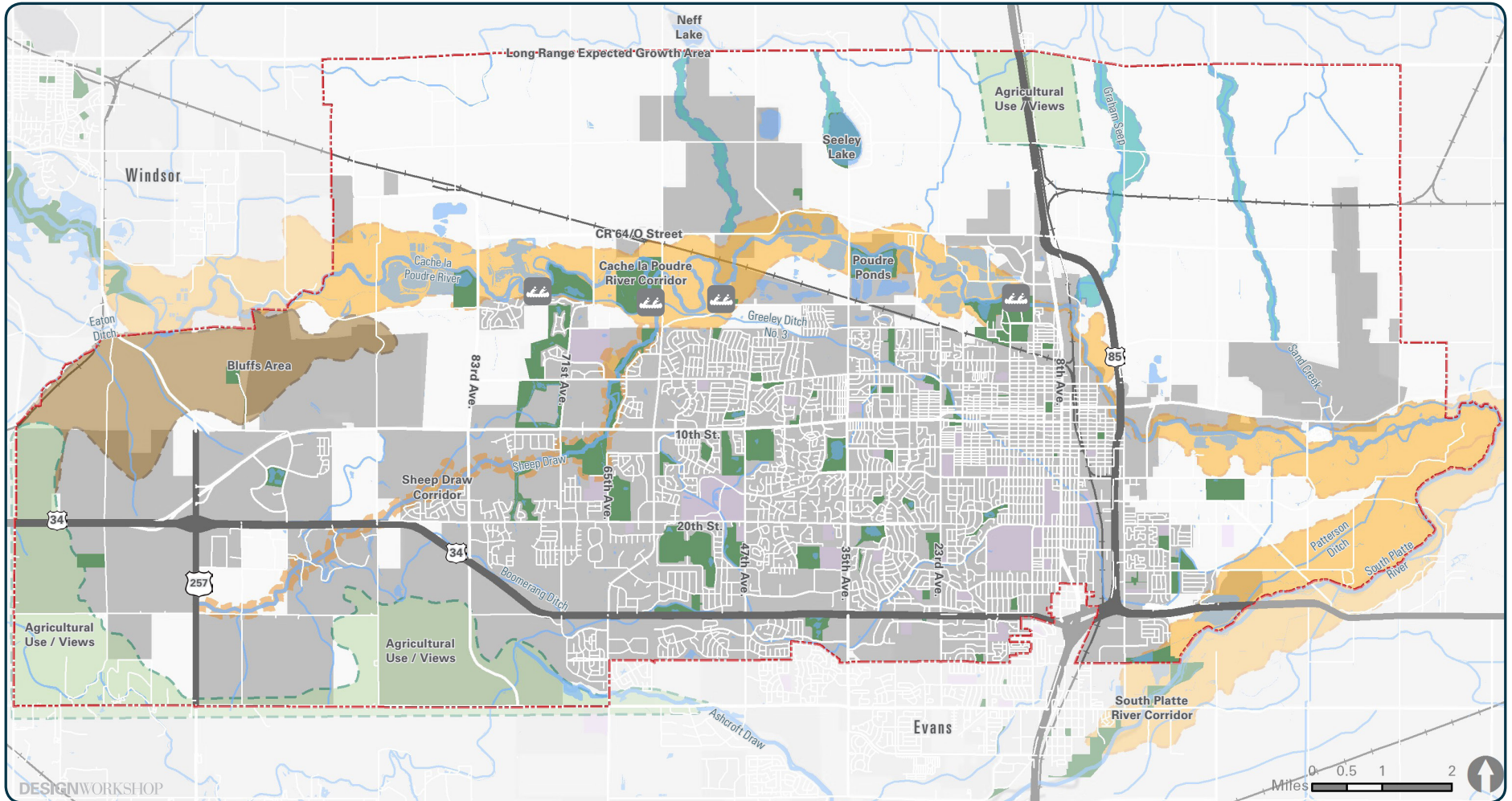
Would you be supportive the city pursuing conservation or agricultural easements to conserve land in its existing state even if those lands are not open to the public? (Select One) (Keypad Polling Session #2)





OPEN LANDS | RECOMMENDATIONS

Map 9: Open Land Priority Areas (See Appendix E for Larger Map)



Existing Park or Open Lands	Priority Conservation Areas	Potential Public River Connection
Water Body	River Corridors	Riparian Corridor / Greenway
River	Bluffs	
Stream	Agricultural Use/ Views/ Community Separators	



RECOMMENDATIONS

3. Support the strategic preservation of areas with open lands value or opportunities for reclamation within the city's established areas as redevelopment or other opportunities occur.

Urban Interface Lands, Stream Corridors and Drainage Ways

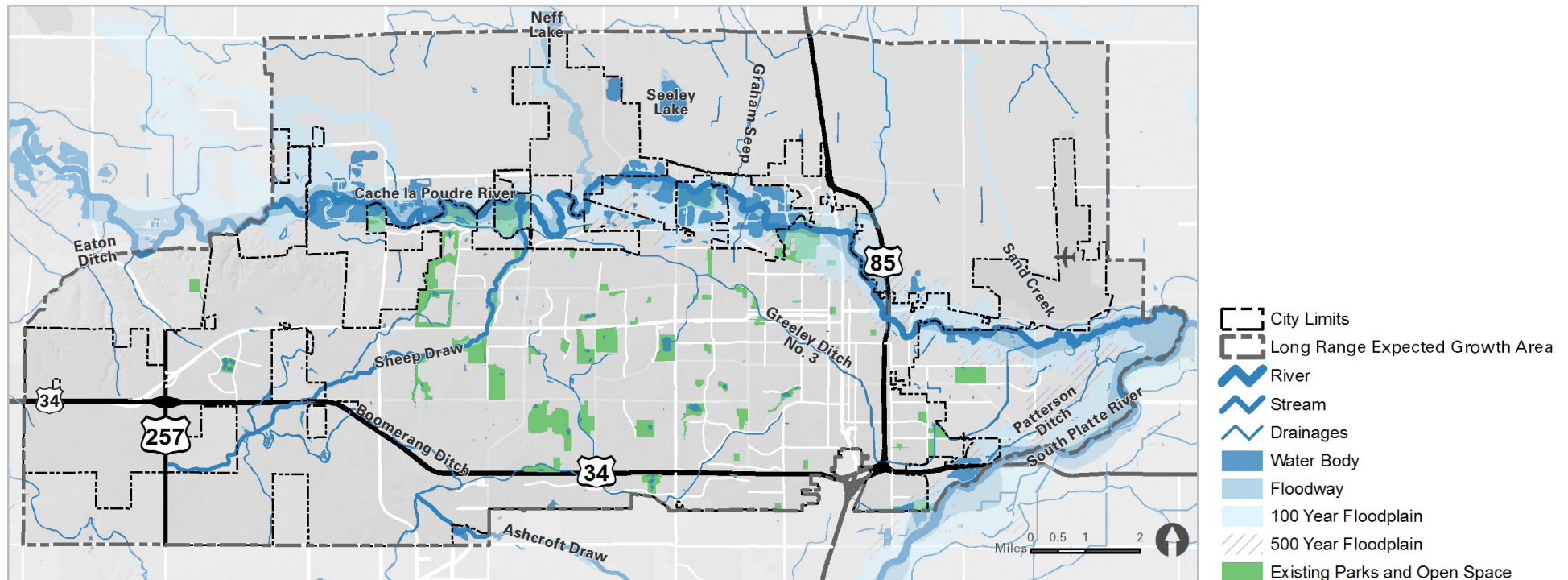
While it is important to protect a critical mass of resources and conserve large tracts of land for increased ecological services and habitat conservation, it is also important to ensure people have the opportunity to enjoy natural settings close to home. Smaller parcels ranging in size from 5 to 50 acres within the urban fabric may offer opportunities to experience nature as part of an everyday experience. As redevelopment occurs over time, opportunities may arise to integrate open lands into more established areas of the city. Additionally, some of the more significant drainages and stream corridors should also be considered for open space conservation because these areas have high open space value as well as recreation

potential as trail corridors and areas for bird and wildlife watching. Some of the areas to consider include lands along the Greeley Ditch #3, Ashcroft Draw, and Boomerang Ditch, as well as lands adjacent Graham Seep (to the north of Greeley's existing city boundary and within the LREGA) and other ditches and drainages where high open land suitability was identified.

C. Complete a Poudre River Greenway Master Plan.

The Poudre River Corridor is one of the most significant Priority Conservation Areas as it connects the eastern and western sides of the city. The prominence of this corridor and ecological/biological interconnections make it important to take a comprehensive approach in a master planning process. Some lands along the Poudre River may have the potential to serve as an opportunity for the public to experience the river water resources. Map 9 identifies potential locations in which public viewing or access to the river for recreation purposes should be considered.

Map 10: Hydrology of Greeley



2 Implement the Open Lands Management Plan.

The Open Lands Management Plan is included in the Implementation Chapter (page 86). This element of the plan outlines the management considerations and recommendations for CPRD staff to manage the growing inventory of open lands and natural areas. Customized management plans for each property or contiguous open lands area will help to ensure that the integrity of the natural environment and key features or qualities of the land are appropriately managed and balanced with other demands such as recreation; however, not all open lands will have public access. This section also includes staffing needs related to open lands management as it is a common belief that natural areas take care of themselves. Often intensive management is needed to restore and maintain the ecological value of impacted landscapes and / or manage public activities on open lands.



Photo Source: City of Greeley Flickr

Greeley's Open Land properties represent unique ecosystems and environments that require customized management plans.



TRAILS | KEY FINDINGS

A full inventory and description of each trail type is included in Appendix A-5. Greeley's off-street trails are primarily comprised of the Poudre River and Sheep Draw Trails and sidepaths within vehicular rights-of-way. This leaves a need for off-street shared-use trails throughout the community and connections between segments of disconnected trails. Trails represent an integral part of the system-wide strategic vision of a connected system of parks, providing essential linkages to facilitate recreation in addition to non-motorized transportation. Even though limited connections are available and trail miles are needed, the off-street trail system is one of the most frequently used City amenities.

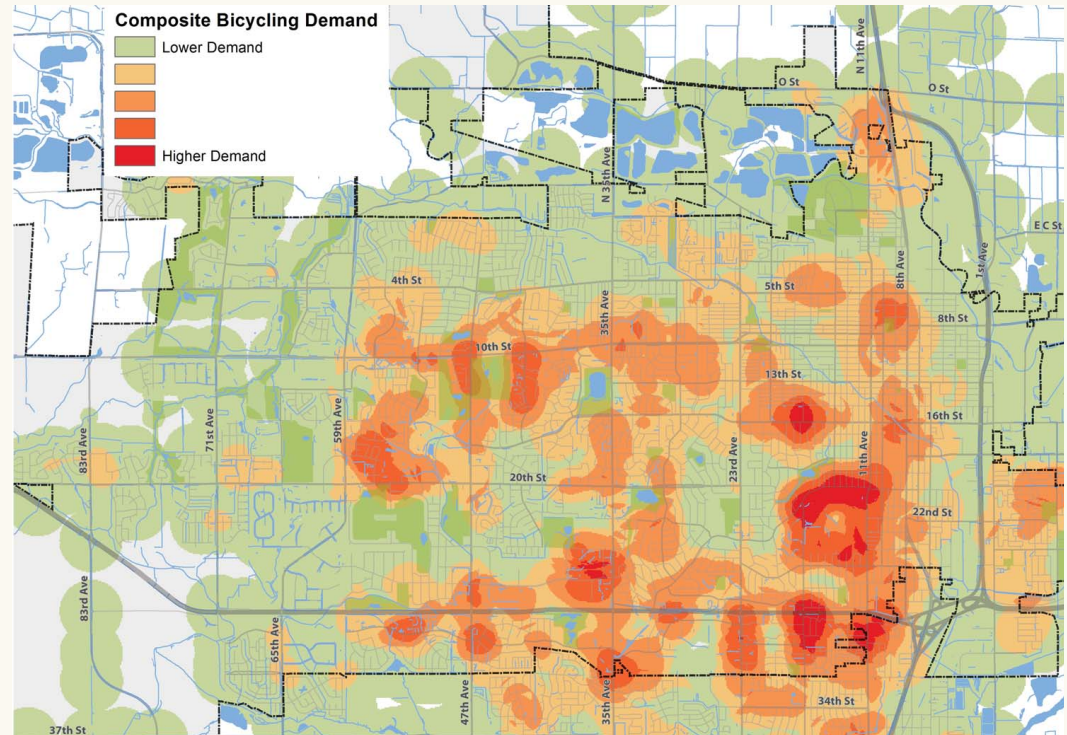
Additional benefits of a robust and connected trail network range from the economic benefits resulting from increased visitation and spending at local shops, increased property values and health benefits for individuals and the community as more people find it enjoyable and practical to replace vehicle trips with bicycle and walking trips. This trip conversion will ultimately lessen emissions, congestion and environmental impacts caused by automobiles and contribute to a healthier population.

TRAIL GAPS AND UNDERSERVED AREAS

COMMUNITY DEMAND

The Composite Bicycling Demand Analysis shows that the highest potential for bicycle travel demand areas based on land use, trip generation and destinations. High demand areas are near the UNC Campus, the North Colorado Medical Center, Aims Community College, the Weld County offices, neighborhoods east of US 85, downtown and along major commercial corridors such as US 34 (north and south sides) and 10th Street. Looking at ways to connect these demand centers identified on Map 11 to the parks and trails will help encourage use and activity of the parks and recreation facilities. These trail needs were reinforced in public meetings in which people identified priorities for trails to connect river corridors, natural areas, parks and underserved areas. Additionally, strong interest was expressed for trails to connect beyond city boundaries throughout the region.

Map 11: Composite Bicycling Demand Analysis





TRAILS | KEY FINDINGS

TRAIL GAPS

The 2014 Bike Master Plan looked specifically at the trail network serving Greeley’s more established neighborhoods and provided some recommendations regarding priority projects for off-street trail connections. In addition to specific gaps in the existing trail system, **the eastern part of the city is generally underserved** in comparison to the west in regards to walking paths and trails. The PTOL public meetings built on previous findings and recommendations and identified where trail segments, critical gaps or enhanced intersection crossings are most critical to improving the user experience and safety of the system for recreation. Participants weighed in on which of these identified trail segments were the highest priority. Findings identified the Poudre River Trail to the east of 11th Avenue, Sheep Draw Trail extension to Ashcroft Draw connection to Evans, the Sidepath connection along 10th Street and the connection along 83rd Avenue from the Sheep Draw Trail to the Poudre River Trail as higher priority trail segments.

LEVEL OF SERVICE AND BENCHMARKS

While trails are provided based on resources needs and opportunities that are appropriate for Greeley, understanding the number of trail miles per resident can be useful in providing an understanding of the extent of the current system and how Greeley compares to other communities. While unique circumstances exist in each community, trail level of service (LOS) best practices are generally between 0.5 and 1.0 mile per 1,000 residents. Currently Greeley’s level of service is in the middle of this range at 0.63 miles of trails per 1,000 people which includes off-street trails, park trails and sidepaths totaling 63 trail miles. If sidepaths are not included, the LOS drops to 0.33, indicating that continued emphasis on developing new trails and connections between existing trails is needed both to satisfy the needs of the current population as well as accommodate future growth.

TRAIL CLASSIFICATIONS:

OFF-STREET TRAILS - Off-street trails are shared use paths dedicated to non-motorized uses that are outside of the road right-of-way and are often along utility, railroad, drainage or natural corridors, or through parks. Greeley’s existing off-street trails are typically asphalt or concrete. However, in the future soft surface off-street trails may be added to this classification. Greeley currently has 19.5 miles of off-street trails. The off-street paths primarily run east to west and include the Poudre River Trail which connects to Windsor. Other off-street trails include the Sheep Draw Trail which parallels the Sheep Draw stream corridor from the Northridge Estates Natural Area through the Pumpkin Ridge and McCloskey Trail Natural Areas. A few other segments of off-street trails are scattered throughout the city. Trail projects are planned to complete both the Sheep Draw Trail and the Poudre River Trail.

PARK TRAILS - Park trails are trails that are internal to individual community or neighborhood parks within Greeley’s parks and trails system and are a sub-classification of the off-street trail network. There are currently 10.6 miles of park trails.

SIDEPATHS - Sidepaths are shared use paths dedicated to non-motorized users (bicycles and pedestrians) that are within or immediately adjacent to the road right-of-way but are separated from the street by a curb or median. They differ from sidewalks in that they are wide enough (10 to 12 feet) for bicycle and pedestrian use, are generally designed to slightly different standards than sidewalks and have been designated as bicycle facilities due to the critical connections they provide in the bicycle network. There are a total of 30 miles of sidepaths within Greeley, primarily located on major grid roads, such as 47th Avenue, 35th Avenue and 20th Street. Sidepaths provide important connections from north to south along 59th, 47th and 35th Avenues and east to west along 4th Street, 20th Street and a portion of Highway 34. Currently all of these facilities are either asphalt or concrete.

Figure 17: Benchmark Comparison - Trail Miles per Population

CITY	TOTAL TRAIL MILES	TRAIL MILES PER 1,000 PEOPLE
Greeley	63.2	0.63
Lakewood	107.3	0.8
Lawrence	37.0	0.4
Missoula	85.1	1.3
Pueblo	27.0	0.3



TRAILS | KEY FINDINGS

TRAILS - A TOP COMMUNITY PRIORITY

Trails were identified by the public as one of the greatest needs and a high priority for investment. Trails consistently rose to the top of the list of priorities when compared to other services and facilities within the CPRD. The themes that emerged from the planning process included emphasizing connections and continuity in the trail system, the need to focus on trails for their recreation and transportation value and enhance accessibility for all types of users. Focusing on completing gaps within the system and extending the network of paved as well as soft surface pathways were two more specific strategies the community wants to focus on over the next 10 years.

Some of the obstacles and challenges which were identified in the planning process included addressing conflicts among trail users, system wide wayfinding, unsafe trail crossings and interactions with traffic, and the need to define maintenance standards and responsibilities. The community's support for various improvements to Greeley's trail system are included in Figure 18.

Existing trails do not meet community expectations

Throughout the public input process people expressed that there are few safe travel routes for pedestrians and bicyclists to parks, trails and open spaces which was reinforced by the community meeting response in which only 8% of participants felt that trails and pathways provide good connections to Greeley's parks. Even when asked to rank strategies for improving parks, the community top priority, supported by more than half of the participants, was to improve bike and pedestrian connections to parks. Trails rather than sidewalks were the preferred access improvements (Figure 19).

Types of Trails

Greeley residents support providing more accessible walking loops and continuing to focus on the need to improve the maintenance and care of trails throughout the city. While there is a greater emphasis on paved trails, the community is also interested in seeing soft surface paths integrated into the trail system (Figure 18).

Figure 18: Support for Trails and Walkways over the Next 10 Years (Community Survey)

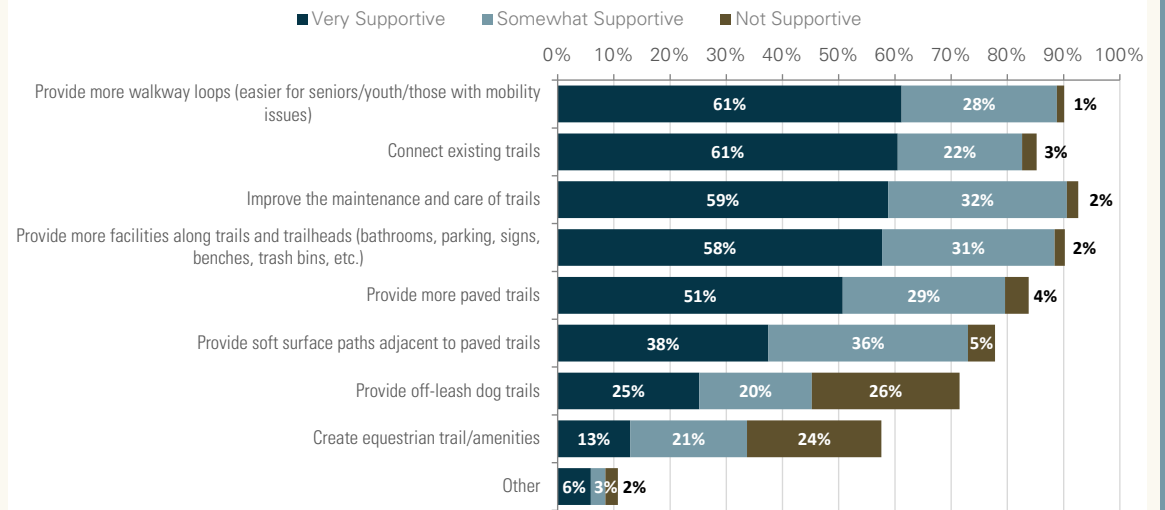
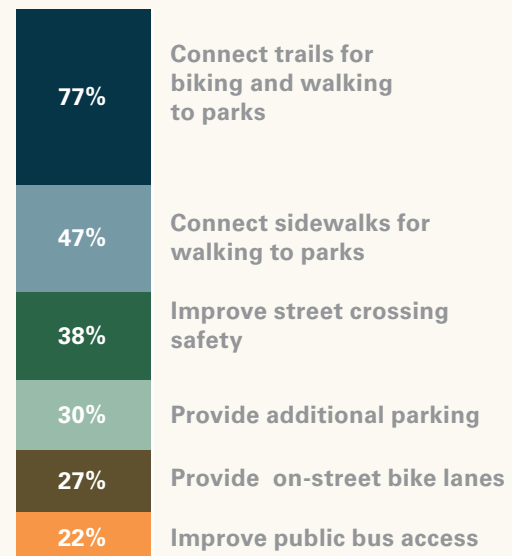


Figure 19: Park Access Improvements

Where should access to Parks be improved? (Keypad Polling Session #1)





TRAILS | RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Connect and expand the trail system.

To the extent possible, trails should be accessible to all areas and neighborhoods within Greeley. Acknowledging that Greeley is challenged by the limited off-street trail options within the City's established areas, the City should strive to provide off-street trails within 2 miles of all residences and shared use paths (including sidepaths) within 1/2 mile of all residences (alternatively can be achieved with a combination of a sidewalk and a protected bike lane).

To achieve these goals, Greeley will need to focus on connecting gaps, adding new trails and diversifying trail offerings throughout the city.

Hard surface trail projects have been prioritized according to the identified need and feasibility. Trail need was established through stakeholder input in the planning process and the potential demand analysis from the 2015 Bicycle Master Plan. The feasibility reflects considerations including the cost/funding requirements, the need for property acquisition and easements for the right-of-way and general constructability.

Trail projects are categorized in the following goals for phasing:

- » Short-term priority = undertake in the next 2 to 4 years
- » Mid-term priority = undertake in the next 2 to 6 years
- » Longer-term priority = undertake in the next 6 to 10 years

Planning and initial steps to obtain easements will be required in advance of these steps, which will require adequate staff resources.

A. Complete the short-term priority projects which represent missing links or trail gaps essential to improving the connectivity of the existing off-street and sidepath trail system:

Trails identified as "1", No. 3 Ditch Trail (from Larson Trail to 35th Avenue) and "2", Sheep Draw Trail (from 83rd Avenue to 71st Avenue) are two segments that are scheduled to be completed in 2017. The sidepath gaps along 10th Street, identified as "3" on Map 12, will complete an important route from 23rd Avenue all the way to the Sheep Draw Trail. These three short-term priority trails represent three (3) additional trail miles within Greeley's network.

B. Strategically add mid-term and longer-term priority trail miles to supplement the current system of hard surface, paved trails:

The mid-term and longer-term priority projects include the trail segments and additions that are identified on Map 12 and described in Table 9. They should be actively pursued and implemented in increments considering costs and other feasibility constraints. The Poudre River Trail East has been a long term goal of the Poudre River Trail Corridor, Inc and will fulfill an important need for recreational trails on the east side of Greeley where the existing neighborhoods are currently underserved by trails. This trail can be accomplished in segments, connecting Island Grove Regional Park towards the confluence of the South Platte River. The Mid-term trails would add 14 miles to Greeley's current system, while the completion of the Longer-term segments will add another 25 miles.



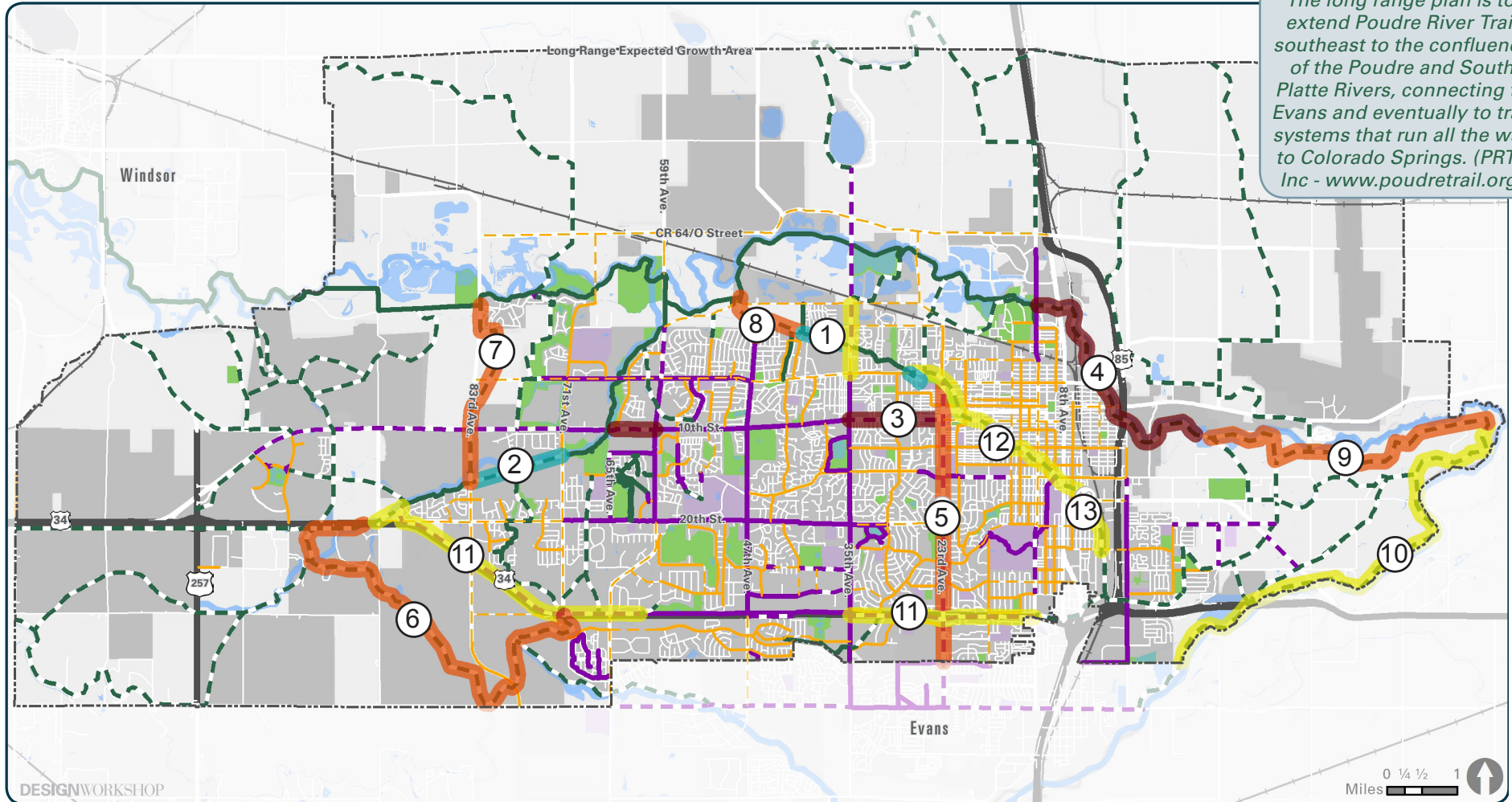
Photo Source: City of Greeley

Trails with bridge crossings often require additional planning time to acquire permits and approvals.



TRAILS | RECOMMENDATIONS

Map 12: Priority Trail Segments



The long range plan is to extend Poudre River Trail southeast to the confluence of the Poudre and South Platte Rivers, connecting to Evans and eventually to trail systems that run all the way to Colorado Springs. (PRTC, Inc - www.poudretrail.org)

City Limits	Existing Park or Open Land	Existing Trail Network	Proposed Trail Additions	Trail Priorities
Water Body	School	On-Street Facility	On-Street Facility	Underway
River		Off-Street Trail	Off-Street Trail	Short-Term
		Sidepath	Sidepath	Mid-Term
				Longer Term



TRAILS | RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 9: Recommended Trail Projects

RECOMMENDED TRAIL PROJECTS							
#	Project	Description	Mileage	Feasibility	Need	Priority	Comments
1	Number 3 ditch (Larson Trail to 35 th Avenue)	The off-street trail will follow an existing access road along the north side of the ditch from Larson Trail to F Street and provide a connection to the Poudre River Trail. ¹	0.52	Moderate	High	Underway	Off-street Trail gap closure.
2	Sheep Draw Trail (83rd Avenue to 71st Ave)	The paved off-street trail will fill the existing gap between 83rd Avenue and 71st Avenue in the Sheep Draw Trail, with a potential connection to 77th Avenue. ¹	1.04	Moderate	High	Underway	Off-street Trail gap closure.
3	10th Street Sidepaths	The sidepath will parallel 10th Street from 71st Avenue to Promontory Avenue. ¹	1.46	Moderate	Moderate	Short-term	Sidepath gap closure. Some difficult grades / right-of-way constraints exist.
4	Poudre River Trail East (Section 1)	The Poudre River Trail east of its current terminus near Island Grove Park has been in a number of planning documents for future development. The trail would roughly follow the Poudre River extending east from 11th Avenue, providing a recreational connection for Greeley's eastern residents.	2.93	Moderate	High	Short-term	Trail Extension. A number of major roadway crossings would be necessary and following the river creates environmental considerations.
5	23rd Avenue Sidepath	From 5th St. to 37th St., the sidepath will follow the western side of 23rd Ave. The project will include replacement of existing sidewalk, curb and gutter replacement, and additional signing and marking.	3.06	Low	High	Mid-term	New Sidepath. Several implementation challenges exist with this 10' side path including overhead utility poles and right-of-way constraints.
6	Sheep Draw to Ashcroft Draw (to Evans)	The trail will follow the northern banks of the exposed portions of Ashcroft Draw, north to US HWY 34 and south towards Evans before cutting north again. ¹	4.95	Moderate	Moderate	Mid-term	New Off-street Trail Connection.
7	83rd Avenue (Sheep Draw to Poudre)	The trail will parallel 83rd Avenue from the Sheep Draw Trail on the south to the Poudre Trail north of Greeley.	2.16	Moderate	Moderate	Mid-term	New Off-street Trail Connection. Will require grubbing and major roadway crossings., paving, etc.
8	Larson Trail to Poudre River Trail (along No. 3 Ditch)	Fills an important gap from the intersection of the planned extension of the No. 3 Ditch Trail to the Poudre River Trail.	0.86	Moderate	Moderate	Mid-term	Off-street Trail Connection



TRAILS | RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDED TRAIL PROJECTS (CONTINUED)							
#	Project	Description	Mileage	Feasibility	Need	Priority	Comments
9	Poudre River Trail East (Section 2)	The Poudre River Trail east of its current terminus near Island Grove Park has been in a number of planning documents for future development. The trail would roughly follow the Poudre River extending east providing a recreational connection for Greeley's eastern residents.	7.84	Moderate	High	Longer-term	Trail Extension. There are a number of major roadway crossings that would be necessary, and following the river creates additional environmental considerations.
10	South Platte River Trail	The off-street trail will follow the South Platte River on the southeast side of Greeley, serving an area of the city that is not served by any other trails. The north end of the trail would connect to the Poudre River Trail to provide a portion of a trail loop on the east side of Greeley.	9.1	Low	High	Longer-term	New Off-street Trail - Serves southeast Greeley, which currently has very little access to trails
11	US 34 Sidepaths (east and west)	The sidepath will utilize US 34 right of way to connect to the Sheep Draw Trail to the west, connecting businesses and residential areas to the east. This sidepath will connect a number of high demand areas and will provide regional connectivity to neighboring cities/towns.	5.06	Moderate	Moderate	Longer-term	Sidepath Gap Closure
12	No. 3 Ditch trail connection 5th Street to Meeker Museum	This stretch of proposed trail traverses from 5th Street southeast through the heart of the downtown and would provide an important connection between the established downtown area and the parks and open land amenities being added in the Sheep Draw area. This facility would also serve as a critical transportation connection.	2.11	Low	Moderate	Longer-term	Off-street Trail Extension - A prescriptive easement may be required to complete some stretches of trail in this heavily developed drainage as land ownership and grade/space challenges present the greatest challenge to completing a trail along this alignment. An additional possibility may be to pipe the ditch and build the trail on top. A cost and benefit analysis must be completed before such extreme measures are taken to ensure the investment and impacts are weighted.
13	No. 3 Ditch trail connection Meeker Museum to 22nd Street	This stretch of proposed trail continues from the Meeker Museum to connect to the currently underserved neighborhoods in southeast Greeley and could provide a desirable off-street trail connection for residents to the downtown core and connections to western Greeley as trails continue to be constructed. This facility would also serve as a critical transportation connection.	1.07	Low	Moderate	Longer-term	

¹ The project will include clearing, minor grading, and paving.



TRAILS | RECOMMENDATIONS

C. Maintain a comprehensive vision for future trails within and around Greeley.

The proposed trails on Map 12 that do not have an assigned priority identify proposed trail alignments that have been identified in previous plans or added as a result of this master planning process based on known opportunities or future development considerations. Many of these future trails stretch along major stream corridors and natural features in the periphery of Greeley's developed area where growth is anticipated. The conceptual alignments correspond with recommendations for open land conservation to create a complete network of greenways and recreation corridors.

1. These trail concepts should be incorporated into future planning documents and the alignments should be refined during land use development application reviews.
2. Incremental or phased improvements of these trail alignments can be pursued in order to facilitate important connections or extensions in advance of development. The proposed trails could be added to the system as soft surface trails and developed opportunistically when development takes place.
3. As development extends to the west, a trailhead should be provided at 10th Street and Highway 34 to provide a connection to the future trail system.

2 Expand and diversify Greeley's recreational trail offerings.

A. Add natural surface or single-track trails where appropriate, to serve users such as mountain bikers, trail runners, equestrians and those seeking more primitive trail experiences.

Construct natural surface trails according to the standards outlined in the trail guidelines (Appendix D-1). Area that have been identified with potential for these types of trails include the bluffs area to the north west of existing development, at Bittersweet Park, and at Monfort Park and other natural areas.

B. Look for opportunities to create trails of varying lengths and configurations.

Some initial opportunities may include:

- Create loops and out and backs signed with mileage markers, nature trails, park to park connections, mountain bike skills trails and other concepts.
- Extensions in the western part of the city to connect to the Poudre Learning Center to create a larger network of nature trails.
- Installation of a fitness equipment at Homestead Park.
- Explore the opportunity to install a fitness loop at Monfort and Bittersweet Parks.
- Evaluate the feasibility of adding equestrian trails in specific areas, including:
 - » The area to the south of Promontory Park.
 - » Island Grove Regional Park, and
 - » Along the Poudre River Trail.
- Where conditions allow, trails can be designed to accommodate multiple interests such as including a soft surface running trail adjacent to a paved off-street trail.



TRAILS | RECOMMENDATIONS

3 Implement trail classification and design standards to create continuity throughout the trail system and accommodate all user types.

A. Adopt and implement Trail Classifications and Guidelines identified in Appendix D-1 to ensure a standardized multi-use trail system.

Employing consistent trail standards can help to ensure public trust in the trail system, reduce maintenance costs and improve transparency and user experience. The 2015 Bicycle Master Plan provides a strong foundation for trail design guidelines for off-street trails and sidepaths, however it does not address recreation focused trails. Appendix D-1 summarizes these guidelines and adds recommendations for secondary pathways including park trails, connector trails and natural surface trails which are primarily recreational trails, though they do supplement non-motorized transportation options.

1. Separated trails should be employed to the greatest extent possible; although sidepaths through Greeley's established areas provide essential connections.
2. When roadways with existing or proposed sidepaths are reconstructed, work with the stakeholders to improve the trail user experience through enhancements such as greater vehicle separation through the use of planted medians, the addition of dual surface pathways (soft surface and asphalt or concrete) where feasible, signage, safer crossings, trees and landscape enhancements.

4 Enhance safety and usability for trail users.

A. Improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety by implementing enhanced trail-crossing design and traffic-calming strategies described in the Design Guidelines from the 2015 Bicycle Master Plan. Priority intersections are identified on Map 13 and described in Table 10 which establishes Essential and Important intersections based on need and feasibility.

Roadway crossings are generally the highest stress points in a trail network, often also acting as the trail segments with the most safety concerns and highest crash rates. Mid-block and intersection trail crossings should be designed to maximize trail and roadway users' ability to anticipate the potential for conflicting movements and increase visibility. The Design Guidelines from the 2015 Bicycle Master Plan provide recommendations for appropriate roadway crossing treatments.

B. To the extent possible, ensure that safe, enhanced crossings or underpasses are identified where future trail crossings or roadway reconstruction is anticipated.

Greeley's highways and railroads represent significant barriers and impediments to trail users. Anticipating the needs for a seamless system as new trails are constructed will help avoid increased expenditures in the future as demand along the trails increases and will minimize the need to retrofit facilities in the future. The Weld County Road 49 development project, occurring on the eastern side of Greeley, as well as other anticipated road and trail alignments, should be designed to consider safe and seamless trail crossings.



TRAILS | RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 10: Recommended Locations for Intersection Enhancements

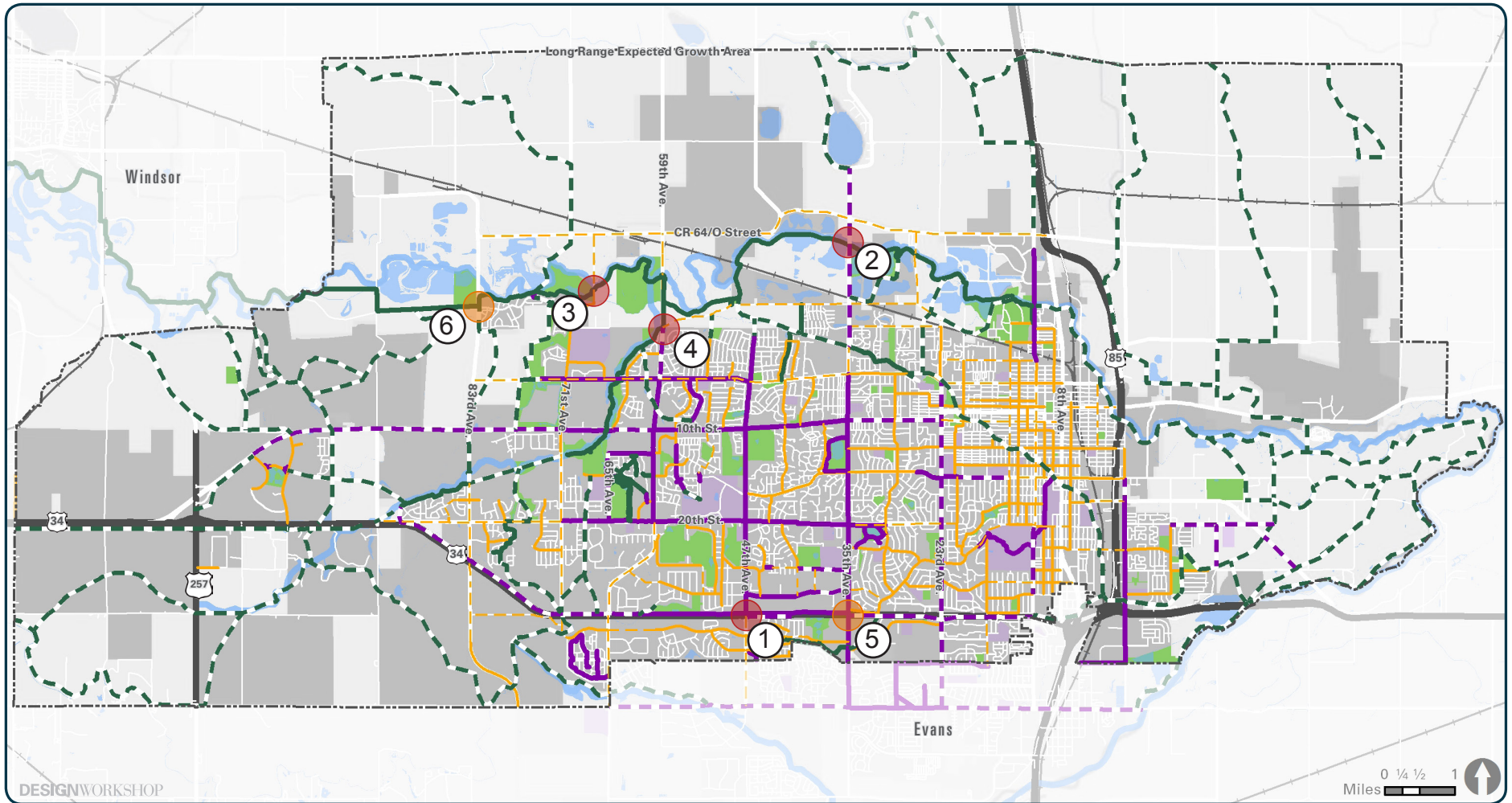
PRIORITY LOCATIONS FOR INTERSECTION ENHANCEMENTS					
	Intersection Project	Description	Feasibility	Need	Priority
1	47 th Avenue / US 34	Current crossing includes two pork chop islands and marked crosswalks. Improvements could include additional intersection signing/stripping/markings pork chop islands on the remaining two corners, pedestrian refuge islands on US 34, and/or signal timing modifications.	High	High	High
2	35 th Avenue / Poudre Trail	The Poudre Trail currently crosses 35 th Avenue at grade, marked by crosswalk markings and warning signs. Improvements to this crossing could include refreshing crosswalk markings, installing pedestrian bump-outs to reduce crossing distance (which currently includes shoulders), installing additional signage, installation of a pedestrian refuge island, and/or installation of a flashing beacon.	High	High	High
3	71 st Avenue / Poudre Trail	The Poudre Trail currently crosses 71 st Avenue at grade, marked by crosswalk markings and warning signs. Improvements to this crossing could include installing additional markings and signage, tree and brush clearing to improve sight distance, installation of a pedestrian refuge island, and/or installation of a flashing beacon. Evaluate the possibility of reducing the speed limit along 71 st Avenue to slow traffic.	Moderate	High	High
4	59 th Avenue / Sheep Draw Trail (F Street)	The Sheep Draw Trail currently crosses 59 th Avenue at grade across two legs of the intersection with C Street, marked by crosswalk markings and warning signs. Improvements to this crossing could include the installation of a pedestrian refuge island.	Moderate	High	High
5	US 34 / 35 th Avenue	Current crossing includes three pork chop islands and marked crosswalks. Improvements could include additional intersection signing/stripping/markings pork chop islands on the remaining corner, pedestrian refuge islands on US 34, and/or signal timing modifications.	High	Moderate	Moderate
6	Poudre River Trail Crossing at 83 rd Avenue	The Poudre Trail currently crosses 83 rd Avenue at grade, marked by crosswalk markings and warning signs. Improvements to this crossing could include installing additional markings and signage, installation of a pedestrian refuge island, and/or installation of a flashing beacon.	High	Moderate	Moderate

Additional or different enhancements may be appropriate for each of the intersections listed here. Further engineering study is recommended.



TRAILS | RECOMMENDATIONS

Map 13: Priority Intersection Enhancements



DESIGNWORKSHOP

0 1/4 1/2 1 Miles

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Limits Long Range Growth Boundary Existing Park or Open Land School 	<p>Existing Trail Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-Street Facility Off-Street Trail Sidepath 	<p>Proposed Trail Additions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-Street Facility Off-Street Trail Sidepath 	<p>Priority Intersection Enhancements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Priority Moderate Priority
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TRAILS | RECOMMENDATIONS

C. Manage user conflicts along multi-use trails between bikes, pedestrians, dogs-on-leash and other trail users.

Where trail volumes are high and supportive conditions are present (sufficient right-of-way, low environmental impacts), provide redundancy in the system with adjacent soft surface (crusher fine) and paved trail opportunities to accommodate different user types on both off-street trails and sidepaths. Education and enforcement are important methods to manage conflicts between different types of users along shared use trails, which will be especially important as population and use continue to increase.

D. Improve and install sidewalks in Greeley's established neighborhoods on highly used pedestrian routes to parks, open lands, multi-use trail corridors and recreation facilities.

1. Sidewalk connectivity is a critical component of improving access to CPRD properties and increasing physical activity and safety. While most newly constructed roadways in the surrounding areas will include sidewalks as they develop according to Greeley's standards, there remains a need to enhance the pedestrian network within Greeley's more urban center. Focus should be placed on improving sidewalks and hazardous gaps within the ¼ and ½ mile walking distances of Greeley's parks, open lands, trails and recreation centers as well as other community destinations. The walkable areas around Greeley's different park properties are identified in Appendix C-1.
2. Sidewalk improvements on 71st, 59th, and 35th connecting to Poudre Trail will enhance safety and access to this key recreation corridor.

E. Develop a system-wide wayfinding and signage initiative with complementary trail amenities.

A comprehensive signage system not only makes a trail system stand out but also increases the usability and safety of the network by keeping the public informed about the intended trail uses, difficulty, locations, distances and connections, as well as seasonal trail closures and trail etiquette.

1. Informational kiosks with maps at trailheads and other pedestrian generators should provide enough information for someone to use the trail system with little introduction
2. Utilize recently adopted park sign standards for trails. Signs and maps should be installed at key junctions in the trail system that communicate trail difficulty, season closures for wildlife or flooding, ADA accessibility, mileage and community destinations.
3. Signage to illustrate trail hierarchy and encourage "announce and slow" behavior for trail users passing on the left of slower travelers can help encourage responsible trail use.
4. Trail amenities at key points throughout the system can help encourage use and create a common identity along Greeley's trail corridors (examples provided in Appendix D-1 include seating, dog waste stations, water fountains and other elements that help attract users of all ability levels).

F. Develop trail usage policies for Electronic Assist Bicycles or other motorized vehicles.

1. The CPRD should further study the implementation of policy updates to allow for Electronic Assist Bicycles or other motorized vehicles on appropriate shared use, off-street trails. E-bikes are a growing trend and it is important for the City to be prepared for increased use of e-bikes for both recreation and transportation. The City should evaluate the trails where the use of e-bikes is compatible with existing uses and does not increase user conflict. Signage, speed limits, education and rule enforcement are important elements to consider along with any policy change.

Understanding existing and future needs for facilities is a crucial step in developing recommendations that ensure community demands will continue to be met for the next 10 years and beyond. An evaluation of facilities addresses existing needs and levels of satisfaction, priorities for the next 10 years, trends and comparison to benchmark communities.

OVERVIEW OF FACILITIES

Both the Parks and Recreation Divisions provide a wide variety of outdoor, indoor and aquatic recreation facilities. The Parks Division is largely responsible for outdoor facilities such as shade structures within parks, playgrounds, athletic fields and special purpose park facilities like skate parks and off-leash dog parks. The Recreation Division is responsible for the City's indoor and outdoor aquatic recreation centers. The daily facility admissions from 2014 for the City's indoor aquatic recreation facilities are listed in Table 11.

Table 11: 2014 Facility Admissions

2014 Facility Admissions	
Facility	Admissions
Family FunPlex	91,753 61,487 (waterpark only)
Greeley Recreation Center	15,812 1,039 (pool only)
Greeley Senior Activity Center	1,383 (active members)
Ice Haus	34,889
Rodarte Community Center	N/A
Aquatic Facilities	Admissions
Centennial Pool	11,500
Discovery Bay Waterpark	12,761
Island Grove Splash Park	6,563
Sunrise Splash Park	4,126

FACILITY LEVEL OF SERVICE

An inventory of existing outdoor, indoor and aquatic facilities revealed current service levels of facilities provided by the Parks and Recreation Divisions, based on populations estimates from 2015. The results of this inventory are listed in Table 12. Determining the current level of service of facilities in combination with facilities that are not meeting or exceeding recreation needs helps prioritize facility investments to support programming into the next ten years.

Table 12: 2015 Facility Level of Service

FACILITIES Amenity Type	2015 INVENTORY			
	Greeley Inventory	Current Service Level based upon population (#per 1,000)		
OUTDOOR AMENITIES:				
Shelters	40	1	site per	2,526
Multi-Purpose Fields†	37	1	field per	2,731
Ball Fields	22	1	field per	4,593
Basketball Courts	12	1	court per	8,421
Tennis Courts *	16	1	court per	6,316
Playgrounds**	30	1	site per	3,368
Sand Volleyball	7	1	site per	14,435
Off Leash Dog Parks	2	1	site per	50,524
Skate Park	2	1	site per	50,524
Outdoor Pools/ Splash Pads	4	1	site per	25,262
INDOOR AMENITIES:				
Recreation/Aquatic Centers (Square Feet)‡	218,712	2.16	sq.ft. per	person

Notes:

‡ Recreation/Aquatic Centers include the Greeley Recreation Center, the Family FunPlex and Rodarte Center

*Tennis Courts only include City owned courts, although this need is also fulfilled by 14 courts available to the public at high schools and 3 at Aims Community College

** Playgrounds only include City-owned structures although schools also fulfill the playground needs with 13 additional playgrounds within city limits

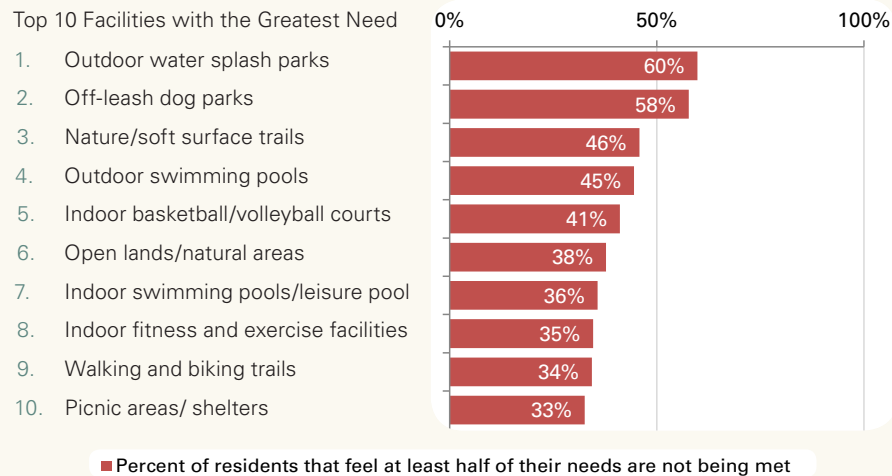
Population Estimates from the City of Greeley: 2015 - 101,048

FACILITIES | KEY FINDINGS

SATISFACTION WITH EXISTING FACILITIES

Today, residents of Greeley are somewhat satisfied by the facilities provided by the City that they have the greatest need for, according to the community survey. For example, as shown in Figure 20, some households expressed needs that are not being met for outdoor splash parks, dog parks, nature/soft surface trails, swimming pools and facilities to accommodate competitive swimming events and open lands.

Figure 20: Top 10 Facilities Greeley Households Have a Need For That Is Not Being Met



HOW DOES GREELEY COMPARE?

Benchmark comparisons of total number of facilities is useful to understand how Greeley’s offerings compare to the offerings of similar cities. Currently, the City provides six total aquatic facilities, which is fewer than Lakewood or Missoula provide (Table 13). A comparison of athletic fields, primarily to support youth sports programs, places Greeley only behind Lakewood for total overall number of athletic fields. However, all of the communities studied with the exception of Lawrence identified sports fields as facilities in their community with the greatest demand.

Table 13: Benchmark Comparison of Indoor Facilities

SYSTEM	COMMUNITY/RECREATION CENTERS			AQUATIC FACILITIES		
	Total Number of Centers	Total Square Footage	Square Feet per Population	Indoor Pools	Outdoor Pools	Outdoor Splash Pads
Greeley	3	218,712	2.16	2	2	2
Lakewood	5	189,302	1.27	4	3	2
Lawrence	4	253,700	2.73	3	2	0
Missoula	1	4,000	0.06	1	3	6
Pueblo	1	44,050	0.41	0	4	2

*Note: Pueblo’s square footage includes a 39,800 sq. ft. ice arena.

Table 14: Benchmark Comparison of Sports Fields

SYSTEM	YOUTH SOCCER FIELDS	YOUTH BASEBALL FIELDS	FOOTBALL FIELDS
Greeley	24	24	6
Lakewood	23	31	7
Lawrence	15	12	5
Missoula	10	13	1
Pueblo	14	2	6

FACILITIES | KEY FINDINGS

KEEPING PACE WITH FACILITY DEMANDS

Demands for City facilities will continue to increase with recreation trends and population growth. The facility prioritization analysis utilized a weighted scoring system using both quantitative and qualitative data to determine the priorities for parks and recreation facilities. This analysis utilizes the community survey findings reporting unmet facility needs, the importance rankings placed on various facilities, as well as trends and anecdotal information from interviews, staff feedback, and local demographics. The specific elements ranked and their weights are described in Figure 21)

FACILITIES WITH GREATEST DEMAND IN BENCHMARK COMMUNITIES

Greeley

- Gym Space
- Overlapping Soccer/Football Practice Field Space
- Overlapping Soccer/Baseball Practice Field Space
- Parking At Athletic Sites
- After-School Program Space

Lakewood

- Gym Space
- Senior Transportation And Congregate Dining Option
- Athletic Fields-Overlapping Uses And Needs

Lawrence

- Gym Space – Practice/Games
- Indoor Turf
- Racquetball Courts

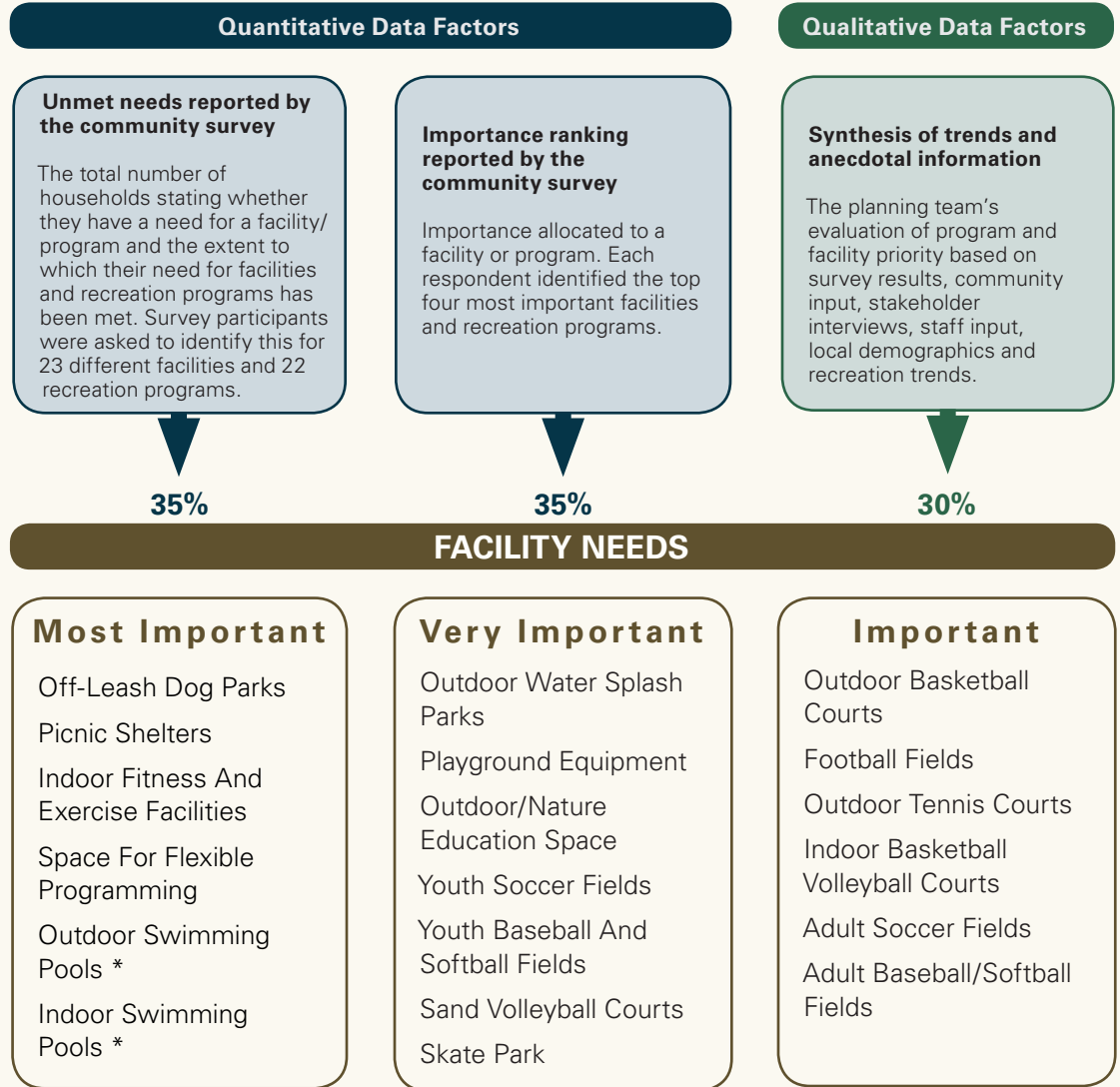
Missoula

- Sports Fields And Practice Space
- Lack Of Indoor Facilities

Pueblo

- Gym Use
- Softball/Baseball Field Use
- Soccer Field Use
- Parking

Figure 21: Facility Needs Assessment Methodology



System-wide facilities including trails, small and large parks, and open lands/natural areas all were identified as the top priorities. Each of these are addressed specifically in their respective sections, with more specific facilities within parks or special purpose park needs addressed in this section.

*Swimming pool needs expressed were primarily for competitive and lap swimming accommodation.

FACILITIES | KEY FINDINGS

OFF-LEASH DOG PARKS

The ability to bring dogs into some parks is highly desired by much of the community. There is a need to reconsider current management of dogs in parks. More than two-thirds of Greeley households support some changes to Greeley’s current dog policies and amenities, with a greater level of interest and slight majority (54%) of respondents supporting revising current policies to allow dogs to be on-leash in more city parks and natural areas.

Interest in developing more off-leash dog areas is strong in Greeley. Currently, the City provides two off-leash dog parks, which is generally consistent with the number provided in comparable cities (Table 15). The community survey showed that 40% of households support creating more off-leash dog parks to meet the needs of pet owners. Though the majority support changes to policies or more dog friendly facilities, 30% of households do not want to see changes to the current policies amended or more dog parks developed.

SKATE PARKS

Greeley currently has two skate parks, located at Centennial Park and Peak View. Although this number of parks generally aligns with the number provided in comparable communities (Table 15), Greeley’s skate parks are in poor condition and do not provide features that accommodate a wide range of user abilities and current skating styles. Both skate parks are less than 1/4 acre and are too small for the current number of users. The community survey showed that the quality of existing skate parks is generally lacking with lower levels of satisfaction compared to other recreation facilities.

A large number of residents expressed a desire to improve existing and adding new skate parks within Greeley. Two of the public meetings were well attended by youth and young adults that described how they felt the needs of this recreation group could be best met. The desires of this interest group were backed by Community Survey participants that supported the addition of either a single or multiple parks, with the highest preference for developing several smaller skate parks throughout the city (supported by 56% of households). The Youth Needs Assessment survey (2014) also indicates a strong need for improved skate park offerings.

54% OF HOUSEHOLDS SUPPORT ALLOWING DOGS ON-LEASH IN MORE CITY PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS.

40% OF HOUSEHOLDS SUPPORT CREATING MORE OFF-LEASH DOG PARKS.

30% OF HOUSEHOLDS DO NOT WANT TO SEE CHANGES TO THE CURRENT POLICIES OR MORE DOG PARKS DEVELOPED.

Table 15: Benchmark Comparison of Skate Park and Off-Leash Dog Parks

SYSTEM	SKATE PARKS	DOG PARKS
Greeley	2	2
Lakewood	3	1
Lawrence	3	2
Missoula	1	2
Pueblo	2	1

SKATE PARK QUICK FACTS

\$315,516

Average cost of a skate park in the Mountain West.

**16,184
sq. ft.**

Average *ACTIVE, PURPOSE-BUILT* skating area in the Mountain West.

\$22.81

Average cost per square foot of a skate park in the Mountain West.

A typical 10,000 square foot skate park will start to look full with about 50 people. At 65-70 people, it will be difficult to find a place to skate. A 10,000 square foot skate park’s capacity is 66.

Source: 2015 Skatepark Development Guide

FACILITIES | KEY FINDINGS

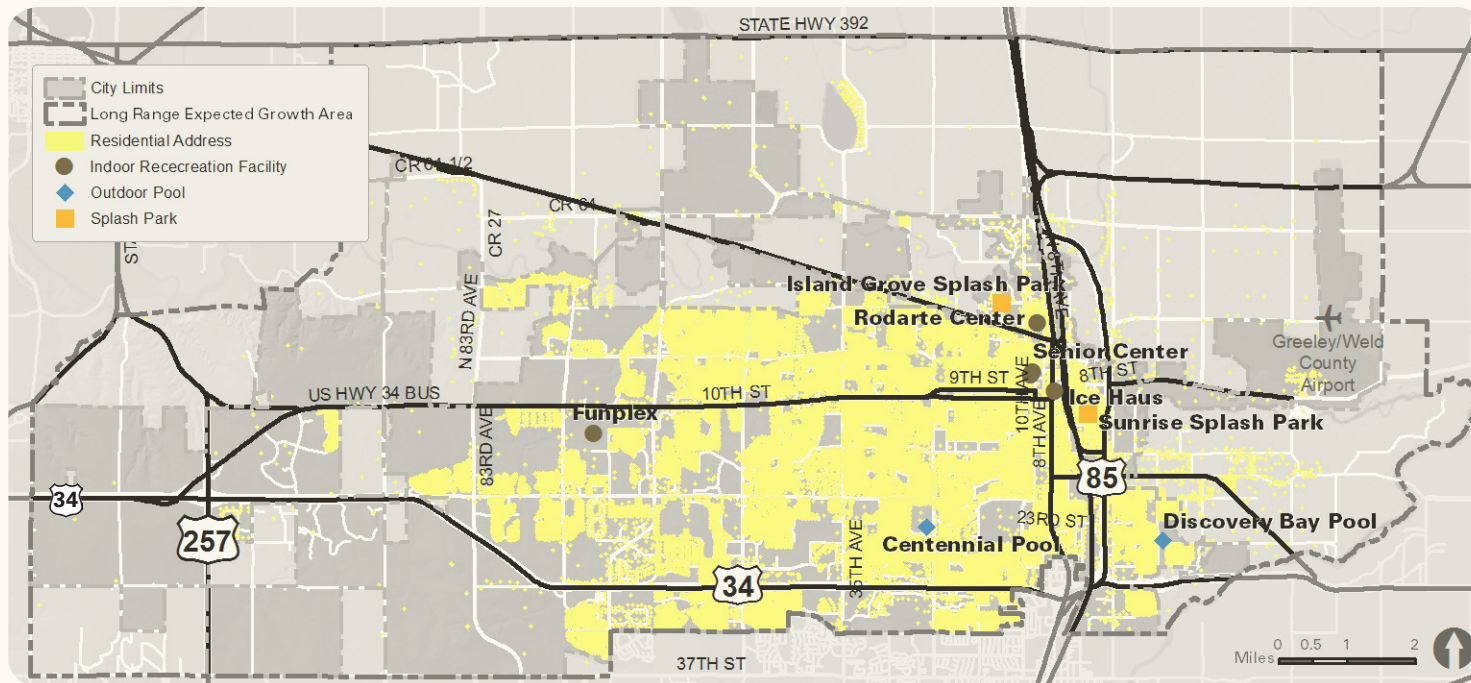
FACILITY INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

Community members provided direction for investments through feedback collected in the public meetings, and some of the important takeaways included:

1. Park shelters in community and neighborhood parks
 - » 62% of the public meeting participants expressed the need for more shade structures and spaces for gathering with friends and family.
2. Restrooms in community and neighborhood parks
 - » 62% of the public meeting participants would also like to see more restrooms constructed in community parks.
3. Existing recreation centers
 - » Indoor recreation facilities are primarily concentrated in the northeastern area of the city, clustered around the downtown core. Here, the Ice Haus, Senior Center, Recreation Center and Rodarte
4. Playgrounds
 - » Fifty-three percent (53%) of households in Greeley are within a 1/2 mile walk of a park playground (See Appendix C-1). However, a 1/4 mile distance is more desirable for families to travel to a neighborhood playground.
5. Senior Facilities
 - » Facilities to support an aging population with increasing differences in how adults (55+) participate in recreation programs and services will be important in the next 10 years.

Center offer various indoor recreation facilities for all ages. The Greeley Family FunPlex provides an important indoor recreation need in the western part of the city with activities and amenities serving children, teenagers, adults and seniors. A significant gap in indoor facilities exists from 59th Avenue to 23rd Avenue requiring residents in this area to travel greater distances to access indoor recreation facilities. Map 14 further illustrates the current distribution of public recreation facilities.

Map 14: Distribution of public indoor recreation, community center or aquatic facilities



31% of residences are within a 1 mile of an indoor recreation facility or pool



FACILITIES | RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Satisfy existing and future facility needs as parks are added to the system or renovated.

A. Prioritize adding or improving facilities within the Parks System with high demand that are not meeting current (2015) level of service standards or community needs.

The following recommendations for facility priorities are based on the needs identified through the level of service analysis, and the facility prioritization analysis, which incorporated the community survey and staff feedback regarding what facilities are critical to fulfilling demand as well as current trends and daily activity levels.

- Off-leash dog parks
- Multi-purpose fields
- Ball fields
- Picnic areas and shelters
- Splash pads and aquatic facilities (specifically pools to accommodate competitive swimming and lap swimming).
- Indoor fitness and exercise facilities (although others like the Boys and Girls Club and private fitness centers help fulfill this role)
- Park spaces/amenities that are appropriate for hosting soft programming (such as yoga-in-the park, electrical hook-ups etc.)
- Skate parks
- Playground equipment (designed to be accessible and inclusive wherever possible)

B. Over time, consider adding facilities to target the 2025 level of service recommendations contained in Table 16.

In order to continue to provide a high level of service for facilities as Greeley's population grows over the next 10 years, the recommended levels of service should be maintained. These standards should be utilized to guide decision-making for the development of new facilities according to established needs.

2 Provide a diversity of facilities to accommodate variety of group sizes and an increasing number of special event within the community

A. Provide additional picnic shelters and larger covered facilities with multiple picnic tables to accommodate a variety of group sizes according to individual park needs and anticipated uses.

Recreation trends analyses highlight the need for gathering spaces to accommodate growing Hispanic populations and their preference for spending time outdoors with nuclear and extended family members. Add picnic sites and shelters to accommodate larger groups at parks where typical use and duration of activities do not conflict with neighboring uses. Picnic areas and shelters should be designed as flexible space to accommodate different group sizes.

B. Continue to provide adequate facilities that meet the community's desire to host and attend special events

Special events are an important type of park programming. Events are likely to increase in frequency and size as the city grows. Special events play a role in activating the City's parks, celebrating the community's heritage, creating positive economic impacts and strengthening the City's social fabric. CPRD should strive to support events coordinated and delivered by other community organizations.

1. In order to facilitate special events, assess the potential for current and future parks to integrate community gathering and event spaces. These should be considered in areas where they complement other uses and where adequate parking is available. These spaces should be flexible and attractive to those wishing to rent them for diverse and varied uses (e.g., shade, utilities, accessibility, parking, etc.).
2. Concentrate facilities that serve a broad population and diverse events in Island Grove Regional Park rather than disperse these facility types throughout the community. Examples of regional facilities include event space, cultural attractions, recreation amenities and educational facilities. Synergy of activity at Island Grove, which already has the cultural and infrastructural underpinnings, will further contribute to the success of Island Grove as a community and regional destination.



FACILITIES | RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 16: Facility Level of Service Recommendations

FACILITIES	2015 INVENTORY				Recommended Service Levels				2015 FACILITY STANDARDS (population 101,048)			2025 FACILITY STANDARDS (population projected 123,225)		
	Amenity Type	Greeley Inventory (amenities)	Current Service Level (amenities per 1,000 people)						Meet Standard/ Need Exists	Additional Facilities/ Amenities Needed	Meet Standard/ Need Exists	Additional Facilities/ Amenities Needed		
OUTDOOR AMENITIES:														
Shelters	40	1	site per	2,526	1	site per	2,500	Meets Standard	-	Sites(s)	Need Exists	9	Sites(s)	
Multi-Purpose Fields†	37	1	field per	2,731	1	field per	2,500	Need Exists	3	Field(s)	Need Exists	12	Field(s)	
Ball Fields	22	1	field per	4,593	1	field per	4,000	Need Exists	3	Field(s)	Need Exists	9	Field(s)	
Basketball Courts	12	1	court per	8,421	1	court per	8,500	Meets Standard	-	Court(s)	Need Exists	2	Court(s)	
Tennis Courts *	16	1	court per	6,316	1	court per	6,400	Meets Standard	-	Court(s)	Need Exists	5	Court(s)	
Playgrounds**	30	1	site per	3,368	1	site per	3,500	Meets Standard	-	Site(s)	Need Exists	5	Site(s)	
Sand Volleyball	7	1	site per	14,435	1	site per	15,000	Meets Standard	-	Site(s)	Need Exists	1	Site(s)	
Off-leash Dog Parks	2	1	site per	50,524	1	site per	40,000	Need Exists	1	Site(s)	Need Exists	1	Site(s)	
Skate Park	2	1	site per	50,524	1	site per	35,000	Need Exists	1	Site(s)	Need Exists	2	Site(s)	
Outdoor Pools/ Splash Pads	4	1	site per	25,262	1	site per	25,000	Meets Standard	-	Site(s)	Need Exists	1	Site(s)	
INDOOR AMENITIES:														
Recreation/Aquatic Centers (Square Feet)‡	218,712	2.16	sq.ft. per	person	2.00	sq.ft. per	person	Meets Standard	-	Square Feet	Need Exists	27,738	Square Feet	

Notes:

† Soccer fields used for NRPA/Best Practice and PRORAGIS comparison.

‡ Recreation/Aquatic Centers include the Greeley Recreation Center, the Family FunPlex and Rodarte Center

*Tennis Courts only include City owned courts, although this need is also fulfilled by 14 courts available to the public at high schools and 3 at Aims Community College

** Playgrounds only include City-owned structures although schools also fulfill the playground needs with 13 additional playgrounds within city limits.



FACILITIES | RECOMMENDATIONS

3 Provide park access for dogs and their owners

A. Add geographically distributed off-leash dog areas to the system.

In addition to strategically locating dog parks through Greeley, a permanent dog agility course should be added to Island Grove Regional Park. Additionally, evaluate open lands to identify areas where an off-leash dog policy could be implemented without compromising natural resources, wildlife activity or current use patterns.

B. Revise City ordinances to allow more parks to have dogs on-leash.

Evaluate City parks and trails to identify where on-leash dogs would not have a negative impact on park user experiences. Consider allowing dogs on-leash in all the parks with few exceptions.

4 Support youth athletic programs by providing adequate sports fields to accommodate current and future needs.

A. Provide sufficient athletic fields to support youth sports by maintaining or exceeding the ratios identified in the recommended service levels (Table 16).

Identify suitable lands within the community to acquire and develop a new sports park facility. Considerations for such a facility include, but are not limited to, locations of population growth, property size, access, topography and impact to surrounding land uses. A possible location is at Greeley West Park in combination with Greeley West High School.

B. Design athletic fields to be multi-purpose and able to adapt to sport trends over time.

This may include lacrosse, ultimate frisbee, soccer, softball, and football for club play or junior level sports.

5 Expand indoor aquatic and outdoor water recreation offerings

A. Improve and increase the number of aquatic facilities available to residents.

1. Explore the opportunity to construct a new competitive indoor aquatics facility to provide a location to support swimming competitions and youth learn-to-swim programs. This should be pursued in partnership with School District 6 and could potentially be implemented through the extension of the Quality of Life Sales Tax.
2. Re-evaluate current user hours of existing aquatics facilities.
3. Increase the amount of splash parks over time. These should be co-located with other park or facility amenities and dispersed geographically throughout the city.

B. Capture local opportunities for outdoor water sports recreation.

1. Improve the Island Grove Pond to include a public beach and amenities to support small water crafts and fishing.
2. Adapt reservoirs and ponds created from past gravel mining operations to support water-based recreation activities such as canoeing, kayaking and fishing. Identify suitable areas for put-ins for small watercraft such as kayaks and canoes along the Poudre River.

6 Pursue the development of community and neighborhood skate parks to satisfy existing demands and meet future needs.

A. Develop one community skate park, improve existing neighborhood skate parks, and consider adding one additional neighborhood skatepark to keep pace with future growth.

There is a need today for a community skate park with the characteristics described in the skate park typologies (box to the right). Both Peak View and Centennial neighborhood park skate amenities are in need of improvements to continue to serve their current functions.

As Greeley's population increases over the next 10 years it is anticipated a third neighborhood skate park may be needed to serve this new population and geographically distribute neighborhood skate parks throughout the city. The following pages identify potential locations to consider for locating new facilities.

SKATE PARK TYPOLOGIES

Neighborhood skate parks are between 8,000 to 12,000 square feet (less than a quarter acre) and can adequately serve a population of 25,000 residents. A neighborhood skate park of average size has the capacity to serve as many as 60 simultaneous users. They are generally a mix of terrain styles and provide some comfort amenities such as shade and benches. Potential conflicts with the surrounding neighborhood should be explored before committing to lighting. These skate parks are the backbone of community skate park systems.

Community skate parks are between a quarter acre and a half acre in size and provide recreation for a wide-spectrum of ability levels. They are destinations within the city and are best served by amenities such as restrooms, lighting and parking that may be shared with other uses. Community skate parks typically host small tournaments and classes for area youth.

Regional skate parks are almost all larger than 20,000 square feet (roughly a half acre), though the largest ones are around 40,000 square feet. They have qualities that allow them to draw visitors from a large region and provide services beyond a place to skate. Regional skate parks will almost always have spectator seating, concessions, parking and lights for evening use.



Figure 23: Engagement with user groups through the master planning process helped identify desirable site criteria and suitable locations for future skate parks.



Figure 22: Photo above: Peak View Park. Existing features in Greeley's neighborhood skate parks do not accommodate a wide range of user from beginners to advanced. Additionally, improvements are needed to enhance the quality of user experience.

Neighborhood Skate Park Improvements

Centennial skate park is currently only large enough to serve as a neighborhood park, but park land is available to expand the skate area up to one acre in size to serve as a community skate park. Consultation with users should occur to understand the desired replacement of existing features. New features are needed to support beginner level users.

Peak View Park features are dated, in fair condition but do not serve a diverse set of user abilities or styles. There is not room for expansion of the skate park to the size needed to become a community park, but more of the park space could be used for additional skate features.

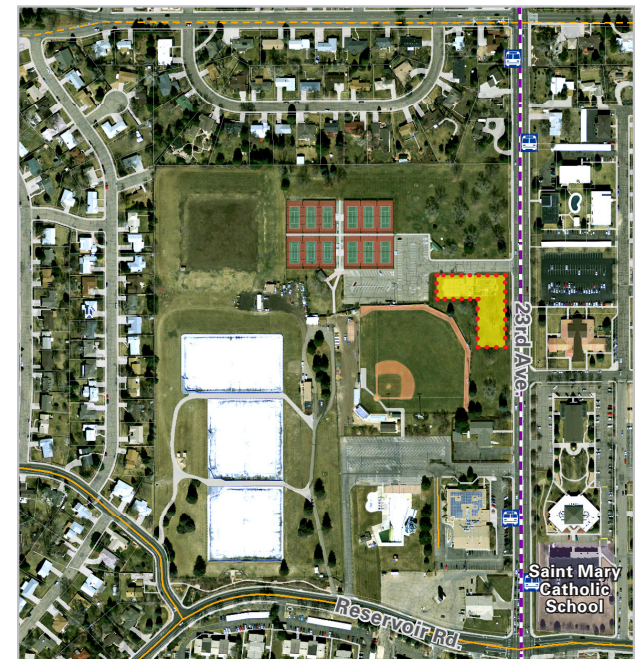
Potential Skate Park Locations

A community skate park will be a destination for people living throughout the city and serve a variety of skate styles (such as street plaza, half pipes, bowls and pools/transition and/or hybrid) and thus a suitable location will meet the following criteria:

- » Highly visible
- » Near restrooms
- » Near transit
- » Near collector or high traffic volume roads
- » Separated from residential neighborhoods to avoid conflicting uses
- » Near youth or family oriented hubs
- » Served by parking
- » Near convenience store/food

Consultation with members of the skate community and neighbors surround the site will be necessary to complete a master plan for any of these potential locations.

CENTENNIAL PARK	
CRITERIA	ASSESSMENT
Size	Existing site is approximately 1/4 acre in size (11,500 square feet) appropriate for a neighborhood skate park. Expansion potential is approximately one acre (43,419 square feet) appropriate for a community skate park.
Visibility	Centrally located within a popular city park and along a major vehicle thoroughfare.
Near convenience store/food	Approximately five minute walk to a convenience store and one restaurant chain
Near restrooms	Restrooms are located nearby, adjacent to the tennis courts.
Near transit	Located in walking distance to four bus stops
Near a major road	Adjacent to 23rd Avenue with Reservoir Road
Separated from residential neighborhoods	Located in close proximity to residential neighborhoods, but not embedded in it.
Near youth or family oriented hubs	Within walking distance of tennis courts, a ballfield, a public pool, library, three churches and a private school.
Adequate parking	Adjacent parking lot in Centennial Park can accommodate approximately 100 vehicles. Parking will be shared with the tennis community and adequate parking may not be available at times of overlapping use.



FACILITIES | RECOMMENDATIONS

YOUTH SPORTS COMPLEX	
CRITERIA	ASSESSMENT
Size	There is potential for 3/4 of an acre skate park to be located on the Youth Sports Complex site. Size potential is appropriate for either a community or neighborhood skate park
Visibility	Site is situated adjacent to a popular city park and near the Farr Library. It is highly visible from 20th Street.
Near convenience store/food	Approximately 15 minute walk to a convenience store and five minutes from one local restaurant
Near restrooms	Restrooms are located within the Youth Sports Complex and the Farr Library
Near transit	Located in walking distance to three bus stops
Near a major road	Adjacent to 20th Street
Separated from residential neighborhoods	Located in close proximity to residential neighborhoods, but embedded in it.
Near youth or family oriented hubs	Within walking distance of ballfields, a public pool, library, three private schools and Sheep Draw Trail.
Adequate parking	Adjacent parking lot at the library can accommodate approximately 140 vehicles. Expansion of the library parking lot would be needed to accommodate skate park users.



EASTERN GREELEY	
CRITERIA	ASSESSMENT
Size	Adjacent to the Refuge Northern Colorado Youth for Christ (NCYFC) site the city has property with room to accommodate 3/4 of an acre skate park. Size potential is appropriate for either a community or neighborhood skate park
Visibility	Located in a mixed residential and industrial area.
Near convenience store/food	Approximately 10 minute walk to a convenience store
Near restrooms	No public restrooms located nearby. Would need a shared use agreement with NCYFC.
Near transit	Located in walking distance to five bus stops
Near major road	Adjacent to 11th Avenue
Separated from residential neighborhoods	Residential properties on the opposite side for 3rd Street, but not embedded in a neighborhood.
Near youth or family oriented hubs	Next to the Refuge indoor skate park to best complement their operation a plaza or street style skate park is recommended. Near the Rodarte Community Center and Island Grove Regional Park.
Adequate parking	No city owned parking adjacent. Parking would need to be shared with NCYFC.



WESTERN GREELEY	
CRITERIA	ASSESSMENT
Size	Undeveloped property with potential for development to include a park of varying size. May be appropriate for a neighborhood or community skate park.
Visibility	Unknown as a location on the site is not currently selected but potential along two major roadways.
Near convenience store/food	Located in a currently undeveloped portion of the city that may include a mix of uses in the future. The Outback Restaurant and Pub is located within 3/4 mile. A supermarket is a mile from the site
Near restrooms	None currently
Near transit	None
Near a major road	Bordered by 83rd Avenue and W. 10th Street. Future regional trail connection planned nearby.
Separated from residential neighborhoods	Currently no residential uses adjacent
Near youth or family oriented hubs	City of Greeley Boomerang Links Golf Course, a church, and Banner Health are located within a half mile of the site. The Youth Sports Complex 1.5 miles from the site.
Adequate parking	No nearby parking available and would need to be added or shared with future development.

HEADWATERS OF THE ASHCROFT DRAW	
CRITERIA	ASSESSMENT
Size	Potential to contain a skate park within a future community park or co-locate with other community uses. Size could vary based on need to accommodate either a community or neighborhood skate park.
Visibility	Unknown as a location on the site is not currently selected.
Near convenience store/food	Located in a currently undeveloped portion of the city that may include a mix of uses in the future.
Near restrooms	None currently
Near transit	None
Near a major road	Near W. 37th Street and Highway 34 and Twin Rivers Parkway
Separated from residential neighborhoods	Currently no residential uses adjacent
Near youth or family oriented hubs	None currently
Adequate parking	None currently

7 Work with interest groups to establish a site and construct a new disc golf course.

Disc Golf participation is on the upswing in Greeley. The existing facility at McCloskey Natural Area is in need of a new location to better serve this user group.

- A. Move the disc golf course from its current location at McCloskey Natural Area to a new site that does not interfere with wildlife corridors and natural areas. Additional locations to explore include the Aims Community College campus.**
- B. Consider tournament play and the parking requirements in the design of a new disc golf facility, as hosting disc golf events has the potential to attract new visitors to the city.**



Photo Source: City of Greeley and CT

The Outback Disc Golf Course is located near the Greeley Family FunPlex. The natural environment contributes to the course charm and challenge.

8 In partnership with other entities, provide desired amenities that are not currently a robust part of Greeley’s parks and recreation offerings.

1. Add nature-play, inclusive or universal play and outdoor exploration/education opportunities throughout the city.
2. Support the co-location of community gardens within Greeley’s parks.
3. Include outdoor fitness equipment in parks.

9 Enhance park facilities to meet user needs for parking.

A. Address parking issues at locations that consistently pose an issue meeting the needs of park users:

1. Address parking shortages by exploring shared use parking arrangements, on-street opportunities, and better transit and bicycle access, including the provision of bicycle racks.
2. Look at alternative scheduling to spread out the parking load.
3. The parks with existing parking challenges that should be prioritized include: Monfort Park, Youth Sports Complex, District 6 stadiums, Greeley West, Balsam Park, and Bittersweet Park.
4. Address ADA parking to include larger spaces for van parking.

10 Create a Recreation Facilities Study.

A combination of factors, including continued community growth, changes in recreation trends, recreation demands, and aging facilities, will require a focused evaluation of recreation facilities by 2020.



PROGRAMS | KEY FINDINGS

An evaluation of the programs and services offered by the Parks and Recreation Divisions to help identify how program needs will have facility implications over the next decade. It also identifies strengths, weaknesses and opportunities regarding programming and helps align service offerings to the needs of the community. This evaluation provides an overview of the current programs, identifies existing needs as well as satisfaction with current offerings, priorities for the next ten years, trends and how Greeley's programs compare to benchmark communities. Further aspects of the evaluation are provided in Appendix C-4.

OVERVIEW AND EVALUATION OF EXISTING PROGRAMS

The Recreation Division provides a wide variety of activities and services, which fall into one of two categories: core programs or supporting programs. Division staff are responsible for the management and implementation of recreation programs, special community-wide events and the operation of multiple facilities.

In addition to the services provided directly by the CPRD, partnerships with other organizations are utilized throughout the community. Through cooperative relationships, partners assist with delivering select programs, training staff, granting access to specialized facilities and providing supplies and materials.

CORE PROGRAM AREAS

It is important to identify and prioritize Core Program Areas based on current and future needs to create a sense of focus around program areas of greatest importance to the community. Identification of Core Program Area assists staff, policy makers and the public focus on what is most important and what can be reasonably provided to the community given limited financial resources, physical space and personnel. Program areas are considered Core Program Areas if they meet a majority of the following categories:

- Provided for a long period of time (over 4-5 years) and/or is expected by the community.
- Consumes a relatively large portion (5% or more) of the agency's overall budget.
- Offered 3-4 seasons per year.
- Reflects wide demographic appeal.

- Offers tiered level of skill development.
- Has full-time staff responsible for the program area.
- Has facilities designed specifically to support the program area.
- Constitutes a significant percentage (20% or more) of the local market for the program type.

The following Core Program Areas currently meet community needs (based upon community trends, findings from the statistically-valid survey, and staff input, described in the Current Offerings Summary, Page 9):

- **Adult Sports** provide a variety of athletic activities to enhance the quality of life for adults and encourage a healthy and active social lifestyle.
- **Aquatics** programs are designed to encourage physical activity, water safety and a location for competitive swimming/diving programs.
- **Youth Sports** provide a range of athletic activities for youth in an effort to keep children active and encourage a healthy and active social lifestyle

The following current Core Program Areas do not meet community needs:

- **Fitness** programs provide residents with opportunities to increase strength, endurance, knowledge and general well-being in a social setting. It should be acknowledged that private fitness centers also serve a portion of the community.
 - » Adult fitness and wellness programs are strongly desired and despite the current offerings provided, many residents have an unfulfilled need for these activities.
- **Seniors** - Programs provide active and passive recreation opportunities to older residents through trips, social activities and events at the Greeley Senior Activity Center. Senior Sports offer passive and active recreation activities including athletic and fitness opportunities for individuals age 50 and over through the Senior Center, SilverSneakers and competitive games.
 - » While Greeley tends to have an active population of older adults, the **projected increase in the senior population** and the importance placed upon these programs in the survey, indicates a need to continue to grow the number and diversity of senior and active older adult programs.
 - » With the impending construction of the hotel and conference center across the street, the program offerings and facilities should complement visitors experiences, fitness access, conference space uses.



PROGRAMS | KEY FINDINGS

SUPPORTING PROGRAM AREAS

Supporting Program Areas, such as Camps, Enrichment Classes, Outdoor Exploration, and Special Events, are an important part of the overall program portfolio but are not offered frequently or consistently enough to be considered Core Program Areas. If demand grows, they may eventually be considered Core Program Areas.

AGE GROUPS SERVED BY CORE AND SUPPORTING PROGRAMS

Table 17 depicts each Core Program Area and the age segments served. Recognizing that many Core Program Areas serve multiple age segments, Primary (noted with a 'P') and Secondary (noted with an 'S') markets are identified. This analysis shows that:

- Overall, the Recreation Division provides a good balance of general programs across all age segments, though most programming is directed at teens, adults, and seniors.
- The CPRD serves Preschool and Elementary segments only through Aquatics and Youth Sports.
- Opportunities exist to expand Fitness programming to younger age segments.

- Opportunities also exist to offer new programs to multiple age segments such as:
 - » Outdoor and Nature Programming / Environmental Education,
 - » Life Skills/Nutrition Education, and
 - » Adaptive/Therapeutic Recreation

MULTI-GENERATIONAL PROGRAMMING

The CPRD currently offers a wide range of programs, activities and events that cater to all age segments and activity levels including everything from core athletic programs to the annual Arts Picnic. The diversity of active and passive recreation that Greeley offers is increasingly becoming more important as differences in how the active adults (55+) participate in recreation programs grows. The national trend is moving towards dividing the sector in two - ages 55-74 and 75 plus.

CPRD partners with the Colorado Senior Sports Development Council each year to provide an opportunity for senior athletes to participate in active recreation events at the Rocky Mountain Senior Games. This annual event held in Greeley over five days attracts hundreds of senior athletes from Colorado and across the country.

Table 17: Core Program Areas Age Segment Analysis

CORE PROGRAM AREAS	PRESCHOOL	ELEMENTARY	TEENS	ADULT	SENIORS	ALL AGES
	(5 & under)	(6-12)	(13-17)	(18-49)	(50+)	
Adult Sports			S	P	S	
Aquatics	P	P	P	P	P	P
Fitness			S	P	P	
Senior					P	
Senior Sports				S	P	
Youth Sports	S	P	S			

P = Primary Market; S = Secondary Market



PROGRAMS | KEY FINDINGS

KEEPING PACE WITH PROGRAM DEMANDS

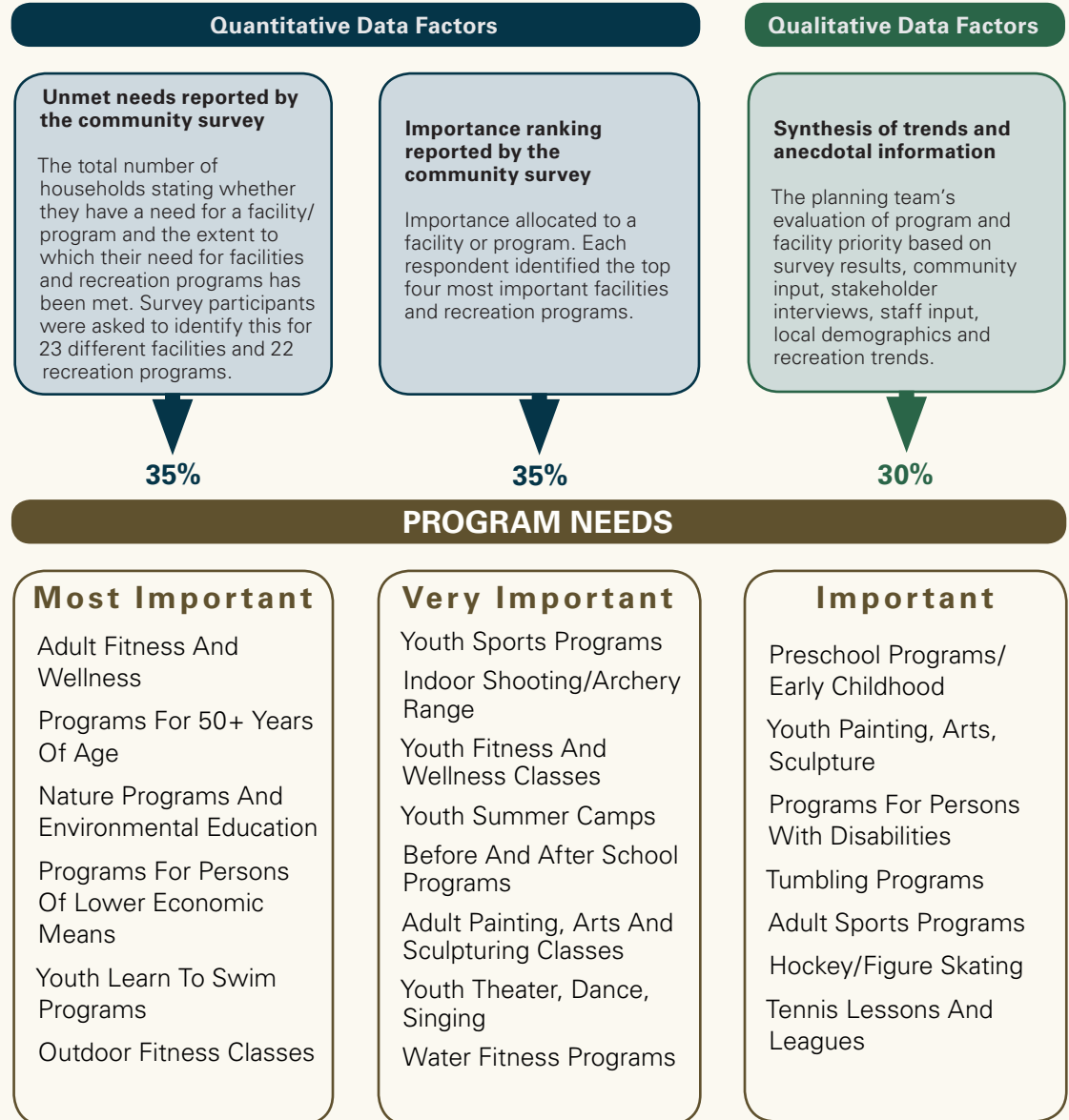
Similar to the analysis of Facilities, the program prioritization analysis utilized a weighted scoring system using both quantitative and qualitative data to determine the priorities for recreation programs. The specific elements ranked and their weights are described in Figure 24. There is alignment between where the community identified needs and where they would like to focus improvements over the next 10 years.

- Survey results show that residents have a desire and unmet need for nature and environmental education programs.
- Findings also reflect a need for expanded life skills and nutrition education.
- Equity in recreation accessibility is important to residents. There is a need to integrate adaptive and therapeutic recreation program offerings across the Department.

Looking to the future, the types of programs that are the highest priority include adult fitness and wellness, programs for seniors (50+); nature programs and environmental education, outdoor fitness classes, and youth learn to swim and sports programs. In addition, the community supported facilitating access to programs for persons of lower economic means including persons with disabilities. The

The 2014 Youth Needs Assessment complements these findings and are considered in the youth program recommendations.

Figure 24: Facility Needs Assessment Methodology





PROGRAM | RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Continue to provide a diversity of activities in the Core Program Areas being offered (Adult Sports, Aquatics and Youth Sports).

Results from community survey and public meeting feedback positively reinforce the core programming that exists in the city. The CPRD should continue to build on these successful programs.

2 Advance the development of supporting programs with high demand that are not meeting current needs and those that are important to the community.

The following supporting program areas are popular in the community and should be developed further to meet current and future needs:

1. Adult fitness and wellness
2. Nature programs and environmental education
3. Programs for persons of lower economic means
4. Programs for persons with disabilities
5. Youth Learn to Swim
6. Outdoor fitness classes

3 Expand Core Program Areas and Supporting Program Areas in an effort to meet growing community needs and keep up with recreation trends.

Continue to adapt the recreational core and supporting program offerings to meet emerging needs and desires for the Greeley population. Specific areas identified through the research and public outreach feedback to integrate into core and supporting programs include:

1. Wellness,
2. Active Senior Programs, and
3. Therapeutic and Adaptive Recreation.

4 Target Youth and Senior Programming

- A. Divide senior programming into two segments, 55-70 and 71 and over to better serve the current and future demographics of the community.**
- B. Add programs that focus on the preschool segment and teenager segment, with complementary programs for the elementary segment. Program areas that may be effective for these segments and also reflect community priorities and recreation trends include:**
 - Nature programs and environmental education
 - Special events that are specifically designed and advertised as family-oriented
 - Adventure and non-traditional sports
 - Youth-oriented fitness and wellness classes
 - Indoor archery and shooting activities
- C. Conduct an Age Segment Analysis, as needed, to reassess the equity of program service delivery in consideration of the full population, including youth.**
- D. Evaluate the use of the Senior Center and the adjacent Recreation Center as a campus and explore a combination of senior and adult programs.**

Programming should reference the findings for adult fitness and wellness for ages 50 and greater.



Photo Source: City of Greeley

Regular assessment of recreation interests and participation is needed to ensure program offerings reflect trends.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

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Source: City of Greeley Flickr



IMPLEMENTATION INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses details of the resources needed and the means to accomplish the recommendations of the Master Plan. Input from the public regarding functions of the Culture, Parks, and Recreation Department, such as maintenance and communications are also addressed. The evaluation takes into consideration the context and challenges currently facing the management of the system using data and information collected through staff interviews and workshops, a park system tours, and analysis of existing operating procedures, staffing structures, performance indicators, management policies and budget documents.

The last several decades have seen the City significantly grow and change, as well as earn a reputation as a desirable community to live and do business. A substantial amount of the park system was developed over 20-30 years ago and requires additional maintenance attention. Given these factors, **it is increasingly important to balance expansion and development of the system with the maintenance and care of existing assets, facilities and lands.** Recommendations in this Chapter also ensure that maintenance and operations are primed for continued success through the provision of adequate staff and resources.

Ensuring the long-term and sustainable care of Greeley's parks, trails and open lands is critical, particularly in terms of maintaining financially sound programs and services which meet the ongoing needs of residents. Greeley has been successful in cultivating a variety of funding sources in order to sustain a high quality parks system and recreation programs. Funding recommendations identify opportunities to support visionary elements of the Master Plan over the next decade.



Photo Source: City of Greeley Flickr

Ensuring the long-term and sustainable care of Greeley's parks, trails and open lands is critical.

OPERATIONS AND STAFFING | KEY FINDINGS

The management analysis provides an understanding of the resources required to operate and maintain the CPRD system as well as to providing insight regarding anticipated needs in the future to ensure the efficient management of the system as it grows and changes. This analysis reviews and evaluates the operations and maintenance activities of the Parks Division within the Culture, Parks and Recreation Department, which is responsible for the routine and ongoing care of Greeley’s parks, trails, and open lands.

STAFFING CHANGES AND POPULATION GROWTH

In 2007, prior to the economic downturn, Parks Division staffing totaled 34 full time employees. In the following two years, staffing levels dropped 18% to 28 full time employees. Since that time, personnel totals have slowly returned to and exceeded pre-recession levels. As the population of Greeley has continued to increase and the amount of facilities/land to maintain has increased, the ratio of Parks Division staff to the general population has declined. Figure 25 displays the staffing levels relative to changes in Greeley’s population.

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE STAFFING COMPARISON

The number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employees relative to total population and branches of the Department is useful to understand where shortcomings might exist and make recommendations for future staffing levels. The results of the comparative analysis of staffing levels in benchmark communities are highlighted in Table 20. When comparing staffing levels to the overall population of each service area, Greeley ranks near the middle of all benchmarks in terms of operations and maintenance staffing, including the areas of parks operations, maintenance, and planning and development. It should be noted that these categories are defined by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and do not necessarily reflect the functional areas defined and in use by each agency.

Figure 25: Parks Division Staffing Levels 2007 - 2016

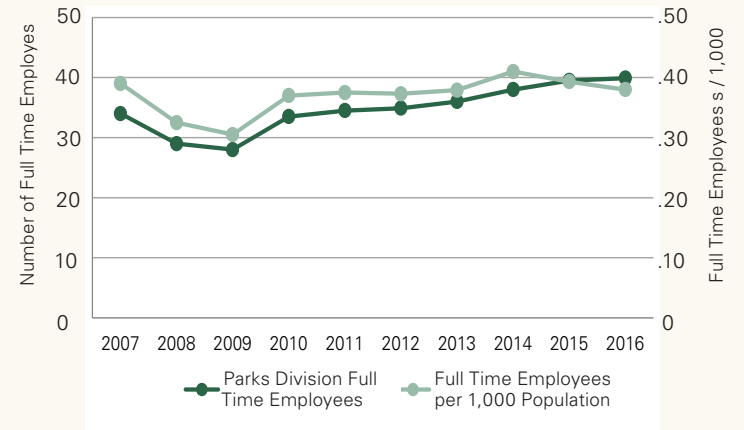


Table 18: Benchmark Comparison of Parks Division Staffing Levels - FTEs per 1,000 Residents.

SYSTEM	PARKS OPERATIONS	MAINTENANCE	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
Greeley	0.52	0.23	0.01
Lakewood	0.59	0.14	0.02
Lawrence	0.53	0.51	0.00
Missoula	0.59	0.30	0.03
Pueblo	0.31	0.00	0.00

OPERATIONS AND STAFFING | KEY FINDINGS

DIVISION ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONAL AREAS OVERVIEW

For administrative and budgetary purposes, the Parks Division is organized into five functional areas which are described under Chapter 1: Introduction and include: General & Playgrounds, Athletic Fields, Natural Areas and Trails, Forestry, and Linn Grove Cemetery. These five functional areas do not align with the contribution staff are making to the Parks Division. In order to better evaluate staffing levels the CPRD staff re-conceptualized the responsibilities of the Division and identified 10 functional areas that provide a better distinction of duties.

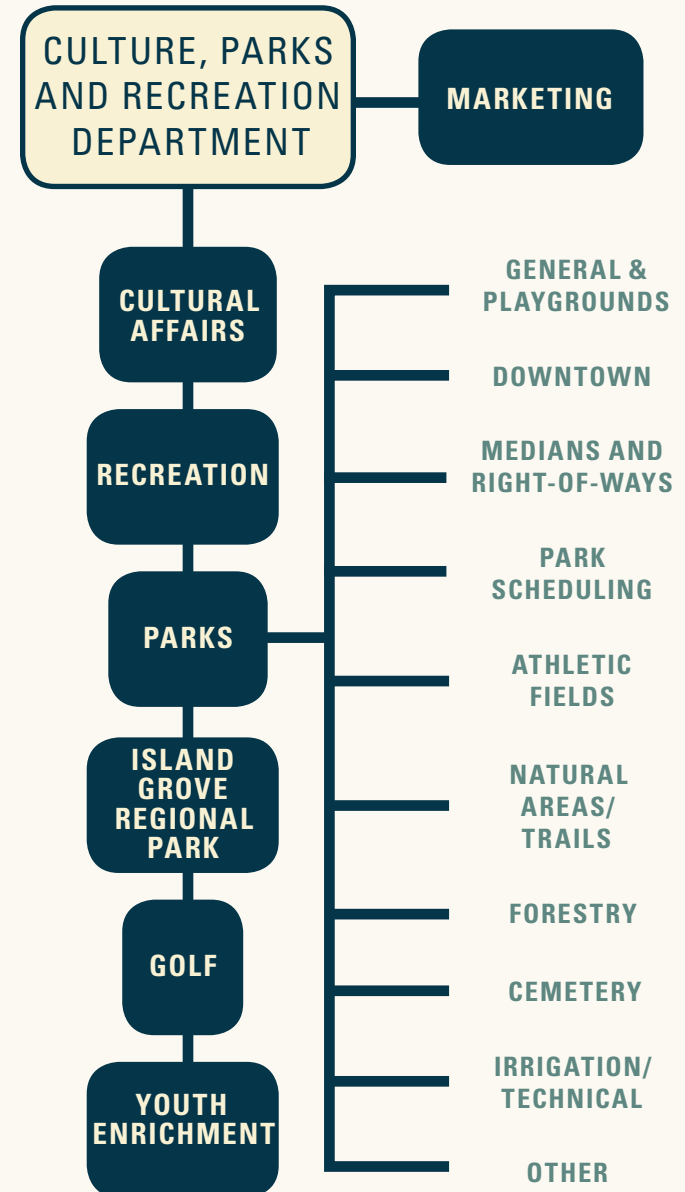
Existing functional areas to remain:

- General & Playgrounds
- Athletic Fields
- Natural Areas & Trails
- Forestry
- Cemetery (Linn Grove)

Additional functional areas:

- Downtown
- Medians & Rights of Way
- Park Scheduling
- Irrigation Technical
- Other (Includes Planning and Construction)

Figure 26: Parks Department Functional Areas Chart



OPERATIONS AND STAFFING | KEY FINDINGS

CURRENT STAFFING LEVELS BY FUNCTIONAL AREA

As of October 2015, the Parks Division employs a total of 61.45 Full Time Equivalents, including 39.75 full time positions and 21.70 Full Time Equivalents in seasonal positions. Currently, the CPRD incurs an estimated \$2,803,491 in annual personnel expenses for both full time and part time staff for park operations and maintenance salaries (including benefits and Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) contributions).

The staffing analysis uses these 10 functional areas, which are better aligned to the staff contributions, to more adequately identify the current staffing levels, hours and position salaries. Table 21 summarizes the functional areas of the Parks Division and how hours and the division budget is distributed to fulfill these roles.

Of the estimated 127,816 hours worked annually by Parks Division employees, the greatest number fall under the General & Playgrounds function and account for nearly 54,000 total paid hours annually and approximately 40% of the personnel costs. The next largest functional area is Athletic Field operations and maintenance, which account for nearly 21,000 staff hours and 16.6% of personnel costs.

For a complete description on how each position currently contributes to each functional area (see Appendix C-5 Operations and Maintenance Evaluation). This evaluation also includes the Classification of Services which assessed all the activities and services provided by the Division and what staffing needs are required to meet the current institutional mission, mandates, and community expectations.

Table 19: 2015 Summary of Functional Areas

	FULL TIME FTE	NON-FULL TIME FTE	TOTAL FTE	TOTAL PAID HOURS	TOTAL POSITION SALARIES	PERCENT OF DIVISION BUDGET
General and Playgrounds						39.9%
Subtotal	15.0	10.9	25.9	53,768	\$1,118,685	
Downtown						7.6%
Subtotal	2.9	2.2	5.1	10,546	\$213,674	
Medians and Right-of-ways						6.8%
Subtotal	3.1	1.1	4.2	8,705	\$190,933	
Park Scheduling						0.4%
Subtotal	0.2	0	0.2	312	\$9,951	
Athletic Fields						16.6%
Subtotal	6.8	3.3	10.1	20,914	\$464,651	
Natural Areas and Trails						5.2%
Subtotal	2.3	0.2	2.5	5,235	\$145,949	
Forestry						11.0%
Subtotal	4.3	3.0	7.3	15,159	\$307,354	
Cemetery						11.5%
Subtotal	4.8	1.1	5.9	12,241	\$323,777	
Irrigation Technical						0.4%
Subtotal	0.2	0.0	0.2	312	\$11,343	
Other						0.6%
Subtotal	0.3	0.0	0.3	624	\$17,174	
Total	39.8	21.7	61.5	127,816	\$2,803,491	



OPERATIONS AND STAFFING | RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Enhance operations utilizing the updated Functional Organizational Structure (Figure 27) which responds to the current division of responsibilities.

The organizational analysis and recommended functional organization structure (Figure 27) addresses the Department’s capacity to fulfill the agency vision and implement required operations with existing staff. While the Department currently operates in an efficient manner, some small changes can help position the Parks Division to meet the demands of a growing system, aging assets, and limited financial resources.

The recommended organization structure is functionally based to align the duties and responsibilities of the Parks Division with the expectations of the City and to achieve the financial sustainability goals outlined in the PTOL Master Plan. **The functional organizational chart is not intended to change reporting lines or replace the traditional department organizational chart.** Instead it identifies roles and opportunities for cooperative efforts and support.

The functional organization structure shows the entire Department, but focuses on the Parks Division. Ten functional areas within the Division are recommended and identified; this represents a change from the five currently in place (i.e., General & Playgrounds, Athletic Fields, Natural Areas & Trails, Forestry, and Linn Grove Cemetery) and provides additional detail and recognition of the functions related to Downtown maintenance, Medians & Rights-of-Way, Park Scheduling, Irrigation Technical, and Other (which includes planning and construction).

In Figure 27, **lead functions are indicated by dark blue boxes; support functions are indicated by light blue boxes.** Each functional area, has staff associated with it which are detailed in Recommendation #2. **Lead staff, which should be responsible for managing the work processes within the functional area, are indicated by brown boxes.** **Support staff, which are responsible for carrying out the work, are indicated in teal blue.**

Figure 27 also provides a staffing plan for each. Recognizing that positions are split among multiple functional areas (e.g., the Parks Program Manager has responsibilities in seven of the 10 areas), the chart also helps illustrate how each of those positions should distribute their time (according to the identified FTE), and in the management of other positions.

The functional organization structure should be updated periodically to reflect personnel changes. The process of updating the chart should also be used as an exercise in validating staffing levels assigned to each functional area, as well as lead and support roles.

LEGEND

Lead Function

Support Function

Lead Position

Support Position

Recommended Position

Abbreviations

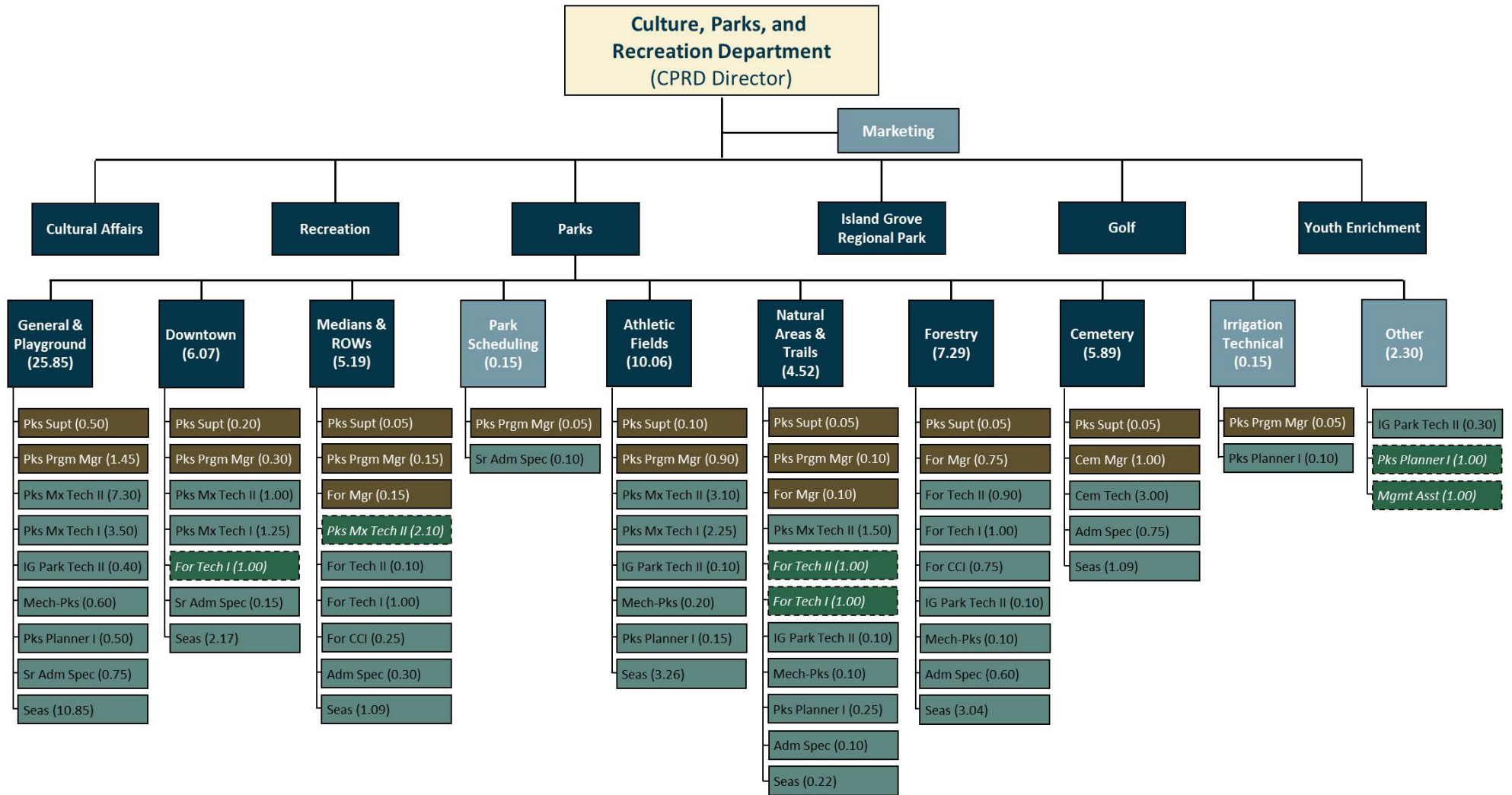
- Pks Supt:** Parks Superintendent
 - Pks Prgm Mgr:** Parks Program Manager
 - Pks Mx Tech II:** Parks Maintenance Tech II
 - Pks Mx Tech I:** Parks Maintenance Tech I
 - IG Park Tech II:** Island Grove Park Tech II
 - Mech-Pks:** Mechanic-Parks
 - For Mgr:** Forestry Manager
 - For Tech II:** Forestry Technician II
 - For Tech I:** Forestry Technician I
 - For CCI:** Forestry Code Compliance Inspector
 - Cem Mgr:** Cemetery Manager
 - Cem Tech:** Cemetery Technician
 - Pks Planner I:** Parks Planner I
 - Sr Adm Spec:** Senior Administrative Specialist
 - Adm Spec:** Administrative Specialist
 - Mgmt Asst:** Management Assistant
 - Seas:** Seasonal
- (Parentheses) represent FTE levels.

Note: The Functional Organization Structure is intended to supplement, not replace, the traditional CPRD organizational chart.



OPERATIONS AND STAFFING | RECOMMENDATIONS

Figure 27: Functional Organization Structure - Greeley Culture, Parks and Recreation Department - Parks Division





OPERATIONS AND STAFFING | RECOMMENDATIONS

2 Provide adequate staff and resources to meet existing needs and continue to provide high quality parks, trail and open lands.

A. Add staff members over the next five to 10 years to bring staffing levels in line with existing needs.

Although staffing levels are returning to pre-recession levels, the ratio of park maintenance staff to residents is on a downward trend. In order to maintain the existing park system to industry-recommended standards, additional staff (approximately 6 FTE over the next 5 years) are needed.

Natural Areas and Trails is one of the functional areas that necessitates additional staffing as management is already stressed, and will be exacerbated as more open lands are added to the system. Currently, Greeley manages the City's natural areas and trails with a total FTE of 2.52 (2.30 full time and 0.22 non-full time staff) and requires an additional 1.15 FTE to bring them up to the recommended 3.06 FTEs needed for natural resource management of the City's 613 acres of open lands, while trail maintenance necessitates an additional 0.30 FTE.

The functional organization structure recommended in Figure 27 reflects all of the needed positions, further detailed in Figure 28 with intended responsibilities or purpose and the number of FTEs needed. The recommended positions include:

- » Forestry Technician I (2.0 FTE)
- » Forestry Technician II (1.0 FTE)
- » Parks Maintenance Tech II (1.0 FTE)
- » Parks Planner I (1.0 FTE)
- » Management Assistant (new position, 1.0 FTE)

The shortfall of personnel costs, including benefits, is equivalent to approximately \$371,162 (2015 dollars) for additional staffing to operate the existing system.

Inclusive staff needs are provided in Appendix C-5.

Figure 28: Staffing Requirements

REQUIRED POSITION	PURPOSE	ADDITIONAL REQUIRED FTE
Forestry Technician I	Trails and open space maintenance Downtown horticulture	2.0
Forestry Technician II	Open space protection; ranger duties	1.0
Parks Maintenance Tech II	Right-of-way and median maintenance	1.0
Parks Planner I	Project management	1.0
Management Assistant (new position)	Grant writing; compliance; management plan development; community education; and administrative support	1.0
TOTAL		6.0
Approximate Personnel Cost (Includes all salaries and benefits)		\$330,261

PROS Consulting worked with the Parks Division staff to determine the requirements for operating and maintaining the existing system in order to meet the institutional mission, mandates, and general community expectations. It is important to note that the requirements identified do not represent a level of care higher than or beyond what is mandated by law, regulation, or policy or to accommodate unrealistic community demand; rather, these requirements represent the resources necessary to sustain the current system at an optimized and economical level as designed over the long-term.

OPERATIONS AND STAFFING | RECOMMENDATIONS

B. Expand the resources for the operations and maintenance of the Parks Division proportionately as the system grows to accommodate population increases and changing public demand.

Currently, 68.03 FTE (benefited and hourly staff) are required to operate the system, or the equivalent of approximately 0.036 FTE per acre. **Generally, 1.0 FTE should be added for every 28 acres added to the system.** Each FTE should be funded at approximately \$1,693 per acre (2015 dollars).

C. Continue to strengthen the natural areas and trail functional area within the Parks Division.

The community’s desire for continued growth of Greeley’s trails and open lands offerings will necessitate additional staff support. As open lands are added to Greeley’s holdings it is recommended to provide approximately **1 FTE for every 335 acres** to ensure the lands can be adequately managed and maintained, ensure compliance with management plans, and meet the requirements of conservation easements. See the Open Lands Management Plan for details about the roles and needed skill sets of these positions.

D. Explore the opportunity to dedicate staff resources for grant writing and administration.

Current staff levels are not sufficient to dedicate time to pursuing viable grant opportunities. Many Colorado communities similar to Greeley are finding a strong return on investment and community benefits in having a park department staff member fulfill the role or dedicated part of their time to pursuing grants. The Management Assistant new position identified as a need for Greeley could contribute to this role. Other options to consider include dedicated consultant contributions or a city-wide staff position.

E. Perform a cursory review of the Master Plan by 2020-2023 to align Master Plan goals and community changes as well as prepare for the Quality of Life Tax expiration.

F. Create a Recreation Facility Master Plan to address the opportunities and needs for indoor recreation.

Figure 29: Future Staffing Requirements

REQUIRED FTE	CURRENT SYSTEM ACRES	REQUIRED FTE/ACRE	ADDITIONAL ACRES PER NEW FTE
68.03	1,875	0.036	28

REQUIRED SALARY COSTS	CURRENT SYSTEM ACRES	REQUIRED SALARY/ACRE
\$3,174,652	1,875.0	\$1,693



Photo Source: City of Greeley

Twin River Ballpark was named the “2015 Rocky Mountain Sports Field of the Year” by the Colorado Sports Turf Managers Association. To qualify, maintenance costs, processes and challenges are taken into consideration, in addition to the field’s public usage and amount of annual events.

MAINTENANCE | KEY FINDINGS

PARKS DIVISION MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

The Parks Division has the responsibility of providing park and playground maintenance, sports field maintenance, open lands and trail management, some facility management, park planning, park construction and special projects. The Division is also responsible for a variety of other public areas and facility grounds throughout the city. Table 20 summarizes the variety of these areas.

MAINTENANCE ASSESSMENT

The system’s parks, trails, and open lands have been consistently maintained at relatively high quality while facing the challenges of fluctuating staffing levels and uncertain economic times, aging infrastructure and limited financial resources. However, many aspects of operations lack sufficient maintenance standards that inform activities such as mowing, trash removal, janitorial services, etc. Development expansion throughout the City and spread of park, open lands and trails is not currently supported by sufficient geographic spread of maintenance facilities and staff offices, particularly to the west.

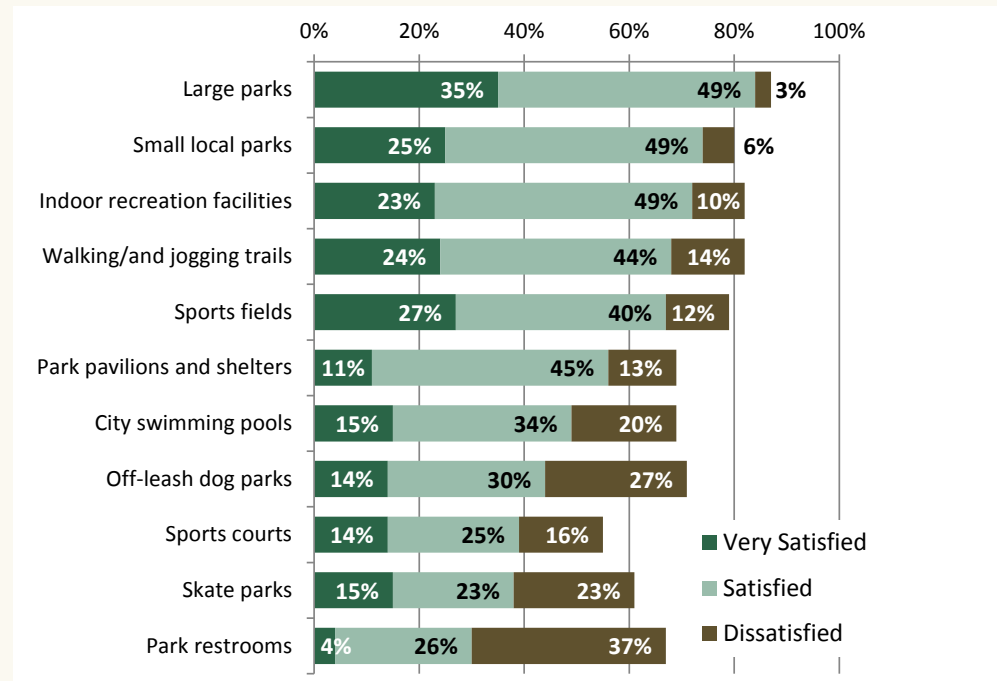
COMMUNITY PERCEPTION OF MAINTENANCE

The community survey indicated that Greeley households are generally satisfied with the overall quality of parks, trails, and recreation facilities. Some of the categories of facilities that have the greatest levels of satisfaction with the overall quality include large parks, small local parks, indoor recreation facilities, walking and jogging trails, and sports fields. Lower levels of satisfaction were expressed for the quality of park restrooms, skate parks, sports courts, and off-leash dog parks. Two-thirds of public meeting participants are either very satisfied or satisfied with the maintenance of the system (Figure 30). Continued maintenance at current levels and existing park and trail improvements are strongly desired.

Table 20: Parks Division Responsibilities

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	ACRES
Parks	41 parks and 4 sports complexes	752
Open Lands	13 natural areas and other sites	613
Cemetery	Linn Grove Cemetery	66
Non-Departmental Public Areas	18 sites including City Hall, Police Headquarters, museums, multiple Fire Stations and Downtown Plazas	22
Rights-of-Way	18 parkways and medians, 13 miles of trails	40
Golf Courses	Boomerang and Highland Hills Municipal Courses	312
TOTAL		1,805

Figure 30: Satisfaction Levels with Overall Quality





MAINTENANCE | RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Document standards for maintenance of quality parks, trails and open lands

Maintenance standards should be documented and communicated to staff to ensure consistency and efficiency in caring for the diverse City lands and facilities. Maintenance tasks should be strategically scheduled to account for park utilization factors to optimize the use of limited resources.

Maintenance activities in particular need of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) documentation and review include:

- » Aquatic facility maintenance
- » Athletic field maintenance
- » Horticulture and landscaping
- » Indoor recreation facility maintenance
- » Natural resource maintenance and protection
- » Park facility maintenance
- » Playground maintenance
- » Snow removal
- » Streetscape and hardscape maintenance
- » Trail maintenance
- » Turf maintenance

Regularly review both short- and long-term goals for parks, trails, and open lands to ensure maintenance and operations standards support achievement of these goals.

2 Provide adequate maintenance facilities and shops.

Provide adequate maintenance support facilities to support the growing number of City assets by adding locations using the following criteria:

- » On the north and west side of the city, where lack of adequate facilities currently exist,
- » In locations of anticipated future park development,
- » On sites that allow ample space for satellite facilities and with room for future expansion,
- » With geographic distribution that limits inefficiencies of travel time between sites

3 Ensure continued investment is dedicated to repairing and updating existing amenities and facilities.

Park facilities, infrastructure and equipment are generally cared for, but given their age many components are susceptible to malfunction or failure and will require additional funding and adjustments in how they are currently planned for and prioritized.

- **Annual Lifecycle Assessments and Total Cost of Facility Ownership:** In order to effectively track the lifecycle of an asset or facility, it is necessary to collect and track data such as deferred maintenance (DM) and recurring maintenance (RM). CityWorks software is recommended as a useful tool. While the Department adequately tracks repair and capital costs, as well as costs of needed repairs or improvements, this data should be used to calculate the Total Cost of Facility Ownership (TCFO) and to develop a lifecycle assessment updated annually. This helps determine the overall system's lifecycle. Because of the age of existing facilities, the Department should consider investing slightly more than the 2% set aside to ensure that assets are adequately maintained over time. Ideally the Division should strive to slightly increase the percent of funding dedicated to repairing and updating existing amenities and facilities.
- **Repairs:** The Department utilizes a work order management system (CityWorks), but it could be better utilized to organize and prioritize maintenance repairs. The work order management system should be utilized to track both asset criticality and asset condition, and using these two measures, provide staff with information on how to prioritize repairs and other maintenance tasks.
- **Capital Improvements:** While several capital improvements have occurred in recent years, additional funding from the City for rehabilitation, replacement or new construction will be required to keep the system safe, operational and inviting. The Department's financial situation allows for limited investment in capital, but the enhanced funding of a capital improvement program for the Department should be a priority for the City of Greeley over the next several years in order to provide adequate facilities and services to the public and avoid more costly expenditures over the long-term. For example this includes playground and restroom repair/replacement. Funding allotments should be prioritized annually in the CIP process. This includes reviewing prioritization for use of Quality of Life funds, Food Tax funds and any specific facility improvement funds.



SAFETY | KEY FINDINGS

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON SAFETY / RULE ENFORCEMENT

Generally the community feels safe using park and recreation facilities and crime and security are not perceived as significant. The majority (almost 60% of the survey respondents) were either satisfied or very satisfied with the level of safety at parks and recreation facilities. Only 13% were dissatisfied with the safety. The results show that residents in the lower income brackets (under \$25,000 and \$25,000 to \$49,999) have higher percentages of respondents who are dissatisfied with the level of safety in parks and facilities. Focus Group input identified the concern that some parks in more urban areas may require greater rule enforcement as the number of park users increases. Most specific safety issues expressed were for safety from motorized vehicles for pedestrian/bikers accessing parks.

Most keypad polling participants supported strategies to improve safety within parks and enforce park rules (Figure 31). Just under half of the participants (48%) would like to see funding for a city park ranger program, while 45% feel strategies to reduce homeless and transient populations as well as issuing fines for rule violations is needed.

SAFETY | RECOMMENDATIONS

1 **Maintain minimal security concerns by continually assessing risks and community member perceptions.**

The Parks Division should keep in routine contact with City law enforcement to identify any security issues or troubled areas. Neighborhood outreach associated with major improvements to existing parks or additions of parks in low-income neighborhoods should include gaining an understanding of perceived safety issues and identify design or programming opportunities to reduce risks.

A policy change, such as a revision to park access for dogs, may require rule education and pro-active steps to address user conflicts. One example program is the “Bark Ranger” volunteer programs used by the National Park Service and some Colorado communities such as Colorado Springs. The program trains and engages volunteers and their canine companions to provide assistance and education to park and trail users.

COMMUNICATIONS | KEY FINDINGS

PUBLIC AWARENESS OF PARK OFFERINGS

Residents' lack of knowledge or awareness of existing park facilities was a common concern in the focus group meetings which was reinforced by the community feedback. The survey showed that the top reasons why residents don't utilize Greeley's recreation amenities more often include not knowing what is available or where to find information, high fees or costs, and inconvenient program times. However, 64% of respondents indicated it was very or somewhat easy to find information about recreation, park amenities, trails and community events. Only 19% believed it was not easy to find information and 17% didn't know.

Community feedback regarding future improvements supported activities such as promoting and making information accessible (supported by 58% of keypad polling participants) and encouraging volunteerism and stewardship (supported by over 50% of keypad polling participants). Focus group participants suggested that a strategy is needed to spread information about recreational offerings and public events of the CPRD.

CITY COMMUNICATIONS

The CRPD has robust and modern communications strategies and continuously seeks opportunities to further community reach. The expectation that the number of new residents will grow at a fast rate and that awareness will need to be raised about new parks, trails and recreation offerings indicates that **resources will need to be available for marketing and communications efforts to expand.**

Figure 31: Top 3 Reasons Households Are Not Using The Parks, Trails, Natural Areas and Recreation Facilities More Often

COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS:

Top 3 reasons households are NOT using CPRD facilities more often:

- 37%** don't know what is offered
- 29%** think fees are too high
- 27%** think program times are not convenient

COMMUNICATIONS | RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Enhance focused outreach to the following growing demographic groups in Greeley that typically require unique and targeted outreach.

1. Active seniors
2. Minority populations
3. Persons with disabilities

Seek partnerships with organizations and groups that currently do outreach to these groups to collaborate in building awareness of parks, trails and recreation offerings.

2 Encourage volunteerism and stewardship of existing resources.

A. Investigate opportunities to partner with volunteer organizations and service clubs, examples include:

1. Increase the presence of Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado in Northern Colorado by partnering with this organization, which promotes memorable, family-oriented volunteer experiences.
2. Explore partnerships with University of Northern Colorado programs, such as the University's sustainability program.
3. Facilitate partnerships with the skateboard community to provide opportunities for users to help design and become stewards of future skate parks.
4. Encourage partnerships with local schools to reinforce the importance getting youth outside and engaging in physical activity.
5. Facilitate opportunities for senior groups to volunteer with the CPRD through the Greeley Senior Center.
6. Schedule presentations and programs with the 100+ active service clubs in the community to increase awareness of volunteer events.
7. Continue to create opportunities for volunteers to help construct and install amenities identified in individual park master plans and participate in continued maintenance.
8. Scouting group projects and 4-H.



COMMUNICATIONS | RECOMMENDATIONS

3 Apply for / maintain certifications to acknowledge and enhance the quality of the parks system.

A. Maintain Tree City USA status.

Tree City USA status (established in 1980) is maintained by continuing to meet the four core standards of sound urban forestry management: maintaining a tree board or department, having a community tree ordinance, spending at least \$2 per capita on urban forestry, and celebrating Arbor Day.

B. Apply for and maintain Playful City USA recognition.

Playful City USA is a national recognition program that honors cities and towns across the country for taking bold steps that make it easy for all kids to get the balanced and active play they need to thrive. These communities are recognized for their efforts to create more playable, family-friendly cities.

C. Apply for National Parks and Recreation Association (NRPA) Gold Medal Awards and other NRPA awards and designations. .

The NRPA Gold Medal Award honors communities throughout the United States that demonstrate excellence in long-range planning, resource management and agency recognition.

D. Apply for Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) Agency Accreditation.

CAPRA recognizes park and recreation agencies for excellence in operation and service. Charged with providing high quality services and experiences, park and recreation agencies across the United States turn to CAPRA Accreditation as a credible and efficient means of achieving these goals, while providing assurance to the public that the agency meets national standards of best practice.

CITY ASSETS | RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Explore opportunities to utilize city/public assets for recreation and natural lands purposes.

Review City property holdings and collaborate with City departments and public entities to explore opportunities to design and adapt lands for public recreation. There may be opportunities for public right-of-way, streets, utility easements, stormwater retention sites, and other public properties to serve multiple purposes. Examples of potential opportunities include:

- » “Play Streets” designation policies and signage to encourage activity in the streets and restrict vehicle access;
- » Trails located within utility easements or drainage ways;
- » Festival streets that are designed and contain infrastructure for public gatherings and activities and temporarily block off vehicle access;
- » Parking lots used to host events such as community runs;
- » Stormwater retention sites, rain gardens and bio swales can provide integrated areas of natural ecology; and
- » Green alleys that are unpaved and vegetated to provide a nature trail-like environment.

FUNDING AND BUDGET | KEY FINDINGS

FUNDING IMPORTANCE

Compared to other priorities for the City of Greeley, survey participants expressed that a high degree of importance should be placed on funding parks, trails, recreation services and natural areas, as shown in Figure 32.

EXPENDITURES

The majority of the CPRD’s annual budget (52%) supports parks and recreation. The remaining 48% is divided among the other CPRD divisions. Figure 33 shows the break down of CPRD expenditures by major activity across all divisions. Maintaining current levels of service as the population grows will require increased of expenditures for parks and recreation, along with support services such as marketing and administration.

COST RECOVERY AND FEES

CPRD leads benchmark communities in cost recovery, as the Department’s non-tax revenues recoup 46% of its operational expense. Nearly 30% of survey respondents indicated that fees were a reason they do not use facilities or programs more often. The City seeks to balance cost recovery goals with fair pricing strategies to ensure fees do not become a barrier to participation goals.

FUNDING SOURCES

CPRD has a diverse set of funding sources and is not overly reliant on any one source (see the Funding Sources Summary on the following page and Appendix C-6 for more information). Currently, the Department’s capital budget is much lower than the average of other benchmark cities.

Greeley’s Quality of Life sales tax has been a major contributor to many facility and park investments since the dedicated levy originated in 2002. Sales tax returns have slowed compared to the rate that was anticipated when the Quality of Life sales tax was initiated in 2002. As a result, the projected amount of sales tax from this source is expected to be \$30 million less by 2022 than originally anticipated. In 2014 the original list of projects was adjusted and readopted to reflect a lesser amount of funds anticipated to be available. The Quality of Life sales tax sunsets in 2022 and without an extension the City will lack the revenue, that has ranged between \$3.5 to \$4.8 million annually, to fund projects.

Figure 32: Importance of Funding Parks, Trails and Recreation, and Natural Areas Services

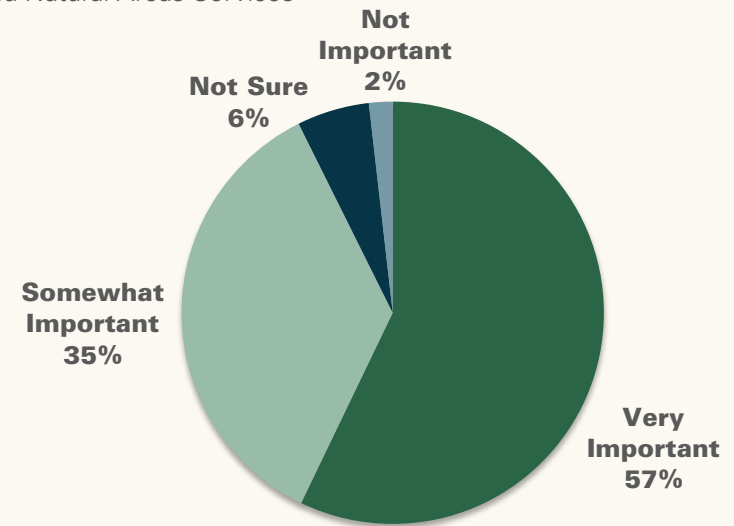
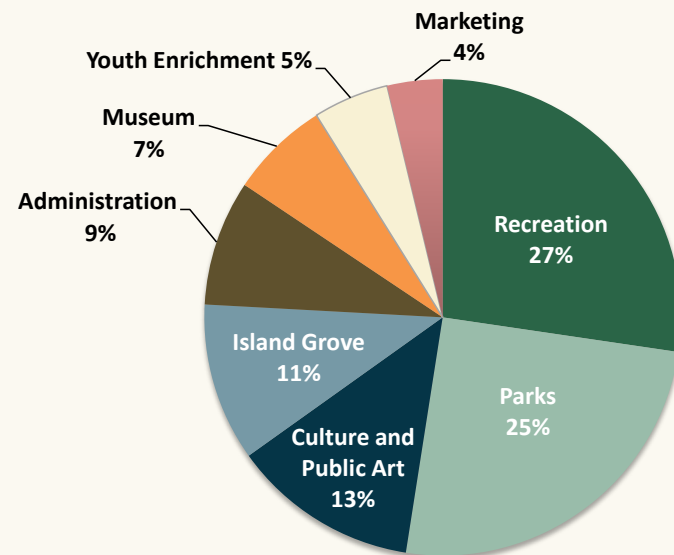


Figure 33: 2015 CPRD Activity General Fund Expenditures



Source: City of Greeley Preliminary Biennial Budget 2015-2016, Budget total \$16,693,200.



FUNDING AND BUDGET | KEY FINDINGS

SUMMARY OF CURRENT FUNDING SOURCES

The CPRD's funding is derived from multiple sources. Existing funding sources for the Department's Operating Budget include the general fund, dedicated levies, earned/generated revenue, impact fees, grants and a variety of funds from outside sources. See Appendix C-6 for more detail.

GENERAL FUND TAX SUPPORT

As the largest funding source of the CPRD, the General Fund supports the ongoing maintenance and operations of parks and open lands, recreational facilities and programs, administration and cultural services.

DEDICATED LEVIES – QUALITY OF LIFE SALES TAX

Revenue generated from this levie are used for the specific purpose of funding parks, trails and open lands. The Quality of Life Fund is supported by a dedicated portion of Greeley's sales tax (0.30% of the total 3.46% sales tax) which was approved in 2002 and is scheduled to sunset in 2022.

FOOD TAX

The food tax has a five year sunset funds capital improvements for park shelter, restroom, and playground repair and replacement.

EARNED/GENERATED REVENUE

Earned and generated revenue sources include all revenues collected from user fees/charges including admissions, program fees, rental fees, etc.

IMPACT FEES

New developments are charged impact fees for additional capital costs imposed on the community. The CPRD benefits from park and trail impact fees. These fees are updated on an annual basis according to the economic adjustment factor.

Park Development Impact Fee (PDIF): In 2015, PDIFs, for the development of single-family detached homes, totaled \$2,721 per home. These fees are transferred to the Quality of Life Fund as a supplement to fund new park development.

Trail Development Impact Fee (TDIF): In 2015, the TDIF requires \$377 for each detached single-family home developed. Funds from this fee are used primarily for right-of-way acquisition, design and development off-street trails in general. These funds have been used for the Broadview Acres Trail and spurs to connect to the Sheep Draw Trail.

GRANTS

The City has pursued a variety of grant sources to supplement funding for projects including planning studies, park design and construction, recreation facilities and amenities, and museum services. Examples of grants that have been awarded to the CPRD in recent years are included in Appendix C-6:

OUTSIDE FUNDING SOURCES

Conservation Trust Funds: Colorado Lottery proceeds are constitutionally mandated to be distributed to local governments through the Conservation Trust Fund (CTF). Funds are allocated based on each jurisdiction's number of residents, and fluctuate year to year with population changes. Greeley primarily uses CTF funds supplement the general fund for annual maintenance as well as the acquisition and development of parks, trails, open lands and recreational facilities. A small percentage is used to support matching grants and special projects.

Special Reserve Funds: Special reserve funds include donations and specified portions of user fees or registration allocated to specific CPRD facilities. Funds include the Softball Improvement Fund, Union Colony Civic Center Facility Improvement Fund, Adventure Golf Improvement Fund, Youth Enrichment Fund, Youth Assistance Fund, and various "600" Funds.

Additional Outside Funding Sources: The 1% for Public Art Fund, Island Grove Improvement Fund, Cemetery Endowment Fund, Senior Center Club Fund, Friends of the Greeley Museums, Union Colony Civic Center Guild are some of the funding sources that contribute to the CPRD.

WATER POLICY

Although not a funding source, the Parks Division is the beneficiary of a significant financial advantage in that it does not pay for irrigation water (the Division is still responsible for water use associated with restrooms, drinking fountains and other non-irrigation uses). This policy, in which payment for the irrigation water to service Greeley's parks, street right-of-ways, golf courses and cemetery is absorbed by the water rate payers, has served as a subsidy for Greeley's parks system, defraying what is traditionally one of the highest costs of maintaining facilities in communities across Colorado. Greeley's Water and Sewer Department also maintains the park system's non-potable irrigation pumping stations, further benefiting the Parks Division.

FUNDING AND BUDGET | KEY FINDINGS

FUNDING STRATEGIES EXPLORED

Compared to other priorities for the City of Greeley, 57% of community survey respondents felt it was very important and 35% felt it was somewhat important to fund parks, trails, recreation services and natural areas.

Funding mechanisms and options were explored in the public meetings to initially test preferences with this small group. Willingness to pay a dedicated tax for park maintenance and trail expansion was the funding mechanism most strongly supported by meeting attendees as shown in Figure 34.

Because open lands are important to residents of Greeley, support for increased funding for open land acquisitions and options for open land conservation was tested. An additional tax to fund the acquisition of open lands was generally supported by 63% of participants, with a preference for a sales tax (Figure 35). Additional funding sources, partnerships, and expansion of the Quality of Life Tax beyond 2022 will need to be explored to discover means of continuing to provide for parks, trails and recreation needs.

SAMPLE PROJECTS FUNDED THROUGH THE QUALITY OF LIFE TAX (2002-2015):

- Greeley Family FunPlex
- Greeley History Museum
- Ice Haus
- City swimming pool improvements including Island Grove and Sunrise Park splash pads
- Rodarte Center expansion
- Lincoln Park Master Plan improvements
- Island Grove multi-purpose field conversion
- Twin Rivers Community Park
- Sheep Draw Trail and Poudre River Trailhead improvements
- District Six Stadium and District Six Soccer Fields
- City Entryway Corridor & Neighborhood Improvements

Figure 34: Support for Parks, Trails and Recreation Funding Mechanisms

Which of the following funding mechanisms would you support in order to provide more and better quality parks, trails and recreation? (Select all that apply) (Keypad Polling Session #2)

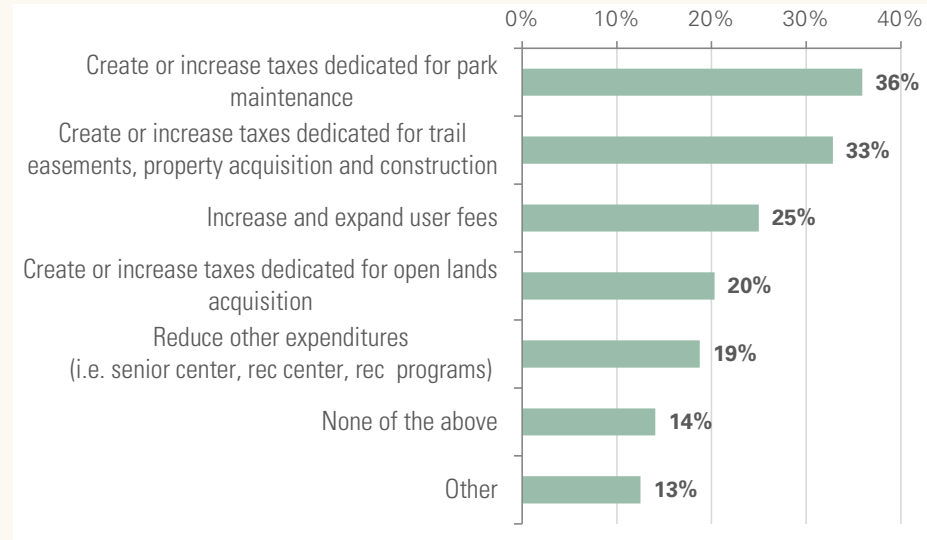
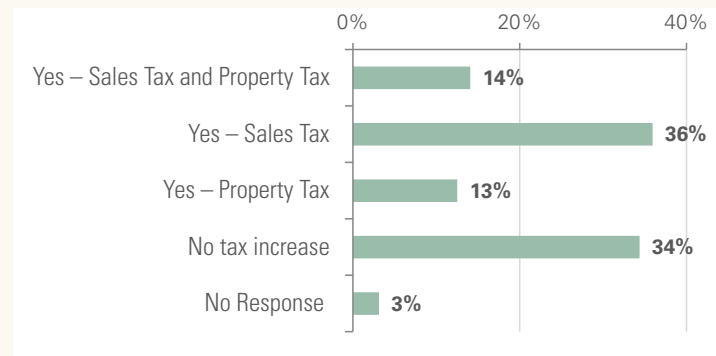


Figure 35: Funding Support for Acquisition of Open Lands

Would you generally be supportive of an additional dedicated sales or property tax to fund acquisition of open lands? (Select One) (Keypad Polling Session #2)





FUNDING AND BUDGET | RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Update the Quality of Life Fund project list 2016-2023 to include capital projects envisioned in the Master Plan. The following priority projects should utilize revenues exceeding current budget projections:

- **316 acres of new community parks** (approximately 4 to 10 total parks depending on their size and expansion opportunities of existing parks). The need for community parks is currently strong and budgeting to fulfill the majority of this need should primarily occur in the next three to five years. Land acquisition should be a priority even if the funds are not currently in place to develop a park at the same time.
- **89 acres of neighborhood parks** (amount of neighborhood parks depends primarily on the anticipated growth rate). The average Greeley neighborhood park size is 11 acres, equating to the anticipated need for roughly a total of eight new parks. Five future neighborhood parks are currently identified in the Quality of Life budget from 2017- 2023. Three more parks should be anticipated in the budgeting for the next five to ten years depending on the population growth rate and dedication of lands through new development.
- **Existing skate park improvements and new skate parks.** The Quality of Life funds currently have budgeted \$1.8 million to accomplish one or more skate parks by 2018, as identified under the Facilities Recommendations, page 59. In addition, the two existing skate park improvements should be budgeted and anticipation of population growth may necessitate the funding of a third neighborhood skate park in the next five to 10 years.
- **Island Grove Park** improvements as identified in the Master Plan to be adopted in 2016.
- Replace the **parks naintenance shop/facility**. An optional location is at Island Grove Park.
- **Sports complexes or facilities** to fulfill the need for multi-purpose fields and ball fields (may be combined with community park lands).
- **Additional indoor pool/recreation center space** is anticipated in the next 10 years and beyond if population growth continues at the current rate.
- **Trail projects** including 11 miles of mid-term priority trails and 25 miles of long-term priority trails.
- Dedicated funds for **open lands acquisitions**.
- Continue to fund the **playground, shelter/restroom and park facility** replacements currently budgeted.

2 Renew the Quality of Life Tax and blend parks and recreation project funding with other City priorities.

Prior to the sunset of the tax in 2022 campaign for the renewal of this tax to fund incomplete parks projects. Strategies include:

- Take a long-term approach to build community support by showing the results and benefits for projects through branding, advertising and press releases to keep the successes and services offered by the CPRD at the forefront of people’s minds.
- Identify projects that require funding beyond 2022 that are likely to receive the greatest public support such as trails and open lands conservation.
- Funding for the maintenance of existing facilities should be included in future tax measures to ensure the continued quality of CPRD facilities.

3 Seek funding/support from the following sources that have provided funds for past projects:

- » Century 21
- » Colorado Creative Industries
- » Community Foundation of Weld County (including Littler Youth Fund)
- » Daniels Fund
- » Development Impact Fees
- » El Pomar Foundation
- » Excel Energy Tree Grant
- » Food tax
- » Great Outdoors Colorado Grants
- » Greeley Urban Renewal Authority
- » KaBoom! Foundation
- » Monfort Community Foundation
- » Private sector- donors/sponsors
- » Safe Routes to School
- » State Farm Neighborhood Assistance
- » The Land and Water Conservation Fund
- » Tony Grampas Fund
- » Tony Hawk Foundation
- » Transportation Enhancement Funds
- » United Way Youth Assistance FUND
- » Water and Sewer Department (joint project efforts/shared space)



FUNDING AND BUDGET | RECOMMENDATIONS

4 Explore the feasibility of gaining funding from new sources and developing partnerships to accomplish trail expansion and open lands conservation.

- A. When a road project is funded in other City departments, include pedestrian safety improvements. Include trails expansion and safe pedestrian crossing improvements in capital improvements projects.**
- B. Build relationships with land owners and pursue alternative conservation strategies in addition to fee-simple purchases.**

CPRD staff should work with regional and state land trusts and non-profits to reach out to land owners who may be interested in the benefits of conserving their land in a conservation or agricultural easement. Owners may consider placing a portion of their land under an easement rather than an entire parcel. Building relationships is a critical element in working with the private sector to conserve land. The third party relationship with a land stewardship organization can hold and support conservation easements and monitor these open lands.

- C. Apply park land dedication policies to new development.**

New development and growth in population will require additional investment in parks and trails to maintain current levels of service, therefore proportionate contributions by developers will be essential. The Development Impact Fees for transportation, parks, trails, stormwater, fire and police services will increase annually according to the Economic Adjustment Factor (EAF). In 2014, the City adopted a methodology to annually change fees based on EAF which is considered to be representative of economic growth, the cost of materials and services associated with constructing capital projects, and general economic conditions. In 2016, the EAF increased 4.07%.

Proposals for residential subdivision development must include the provision by the subdivider of land dedication or cash-in-lieu for parkland dedication. Additional dedication of open space may be required to preserve areas of special citywide significance. Parks and Trail Development Impact Fees are also applied to new residential development to pay for improvements. The lands and funds collected through the development process should be used to accomplish recommendations identified within the PTOL Master Plan.

- D. Seek funding opportunities specific to off-street trail improvements and construction including the following resources developed from the 2015 Bicycle Master Plan:**

- » BB - Bikes Belong
- » CMAQ - Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement
- » DOLA - Department of Local Affairs
- » GOCO - Great Outdoors Colorado
- » HSIP - Highway Safety Improvement Program
- » LWCF - Land and Water Conservation Fund Act
- » NHPP - National Highway Performance Program
- » RTP - Recreation Trails Program
- » RTT - Rails to Trails
- » STP - NFR MPO Surface Transportation Program
- » TAP - Transportation Alternatives Program
- » W&W - Walk & Wheel – Kaiser Permanente

- E. New development within Greeley and the Long Range Expected Growth Area should be reviewed by the CPRD at the initial planning stages to ensure that trail corridors and connections identified within this plan are provided under the City’s current code requirements for subdivisions.**

The review of proposed plans will contribute to the CPRD’s goal of providing a transparent, connected and continuous network of multi-use trails, sidewalks and pathways. Elements like trail corridors, open lands, and park locations can be reviewed based on recommendations provided in this Master Plan.

- F. Work with The Poudre River Trail Corridor, Inc., the local non-profit which manages the Poudre River Trail, to potentially expand their support for trail funding and maintenance to new trail initiatives, such as the eastern expansion of the Poudre Trail.**



FUNDING AND BUDGET | RECOMMENDATIONS

- G. Explore opportunities for partnerships/volunteer opportunities through the Colorado Trails Initiative, AmeriCorps, VOC and District 6 and UNC or other local college student organizations.**
- H. Explore the opportunity to create a new severance tax dedicated to trails and open lands projects. Quantify the relationship of the impact to the need for a new tax and the subsequent benefits.**

Tax revenues (severance and federal mineral royalties) from mineral activities may be an appropriate source of funding with population growth anticipated. The appropriateness for open lands or trails funding is explained by the State of Colorado currently capturing revenue through severance tax that is used for funding natural resources-related programs and localized negative impacts. Explore this opportunity on both a local and regional basis in partnership with Weld County.

- I. Explore new dynamic partnerships with State of Colorado and national agencies and organizations toward the cooperative development of natural and cultural amenities which could potentially enhance Greeley’s park and recreation opportunities.**

For example, work jointly and closely, to obtain federal resources, with the federally designated Cache La Poudre River Corridor National Heritage Area.

5 Pursue grant opportunities related to Master Plan goals and recommendations

Some of the projects, programs or other improvements recommended in this Master Plan are appropriate for competitive grant applications. The following topics are additional types of grants that Greeley might be eligible for as plan implementation is pursued:

- » Healthy places/healthy communities
- » Healthy Eating / Active Living (HEAL)
- » Wellness for minority or low income groups
- » Active seniors
- » Sustainability or water conservation
- » Tourism enhancement
- » Outdoor/nature education
- » Duck/Trout/Pheasants Unlimited
- » Hazard planning and flood damage repair
- » Skate Park construction

6 Fund additional programs and departmental resources identified in this Master Plan.

Commensurate with population growth and expansion of the CPRD offerings, provide appropriate services and support including:

- Increases in staffing personnel to fulfill current deficiencies and accommodate additional responsibilities and services.
- Modestly increasing marketing/advertising expenditures to better inform the public about opportunities and services available.

OPEN LANDS MANAGEMENT PLAN



Photo Source: City of Greeley Flickr

Protecting water quality and the ecological services of natural river corridors is a community priority for open lands. Image: Cache la Poudre River



Photo Source: City of Greeley Flickr

Addressing wildlife needs is a critical element of managing Greeley's open lands. Image: Poudre Ponds.

INTRODUCTION

Continued urban growth in Greeley is placing significant pressures on land and resources in the community. One of the consequences of growth and development is the loss of accessible open lands and degradation of sensitive habitat areas. As the amount of open lands within Greeley decreases, both the value of these resources and amount of effort needed to preserve these lands will increase. Planning for open lands in Greeley must consider how to accommodate growth while also preserving valuable lands for wildlife, recreation and community character. The purpose of this general management plan is to act as a guide for acquiring and managing areas that warrant consideration for open lands preservation or conservation. This plan looks at individual open lands in the context of the community system to further the goal of an interconnected and interdependent open lands system.

SYSTEM-WIDE ISSUES

This management plan addresses system-wide issues that require new approaches or policies. Specific sites, corridors and conservation areas will require detailed and individualized management plan strategies. Over time, the recommendations within this management plan will need to be revisited and updated to address changing environmental and community needs. The purpose of this Management Plan is to highlight the overall strategies currently employed and provide recommendations for future management. This plan does not describe the specific policies and activities for individual open land properties. Implementation of this plan will assist the CPRD in its efforts to preserve and enhance these areas for present and future generations.

INDIVIDUALIZED MANAGEMENT

Each distinct open lands or natural area should have a specific management plan in place. Table 21 updates the open lands designations from the 1998 Open Lands Plan, which identifies the primary open land types and some general guidelines for planning and managing these areas. **Public access should not be allowed until a property has a management plan in place. The plan creation process should involve surrounding neighbors, stakeholders and the general public.** The public process will serve as an important opportunity to educate the community about the parcel's natural resources and arrive at a plan through mutual understanding and collaboration. Plans for larger areas may have different character or management areas where the types of use and strategies vary (such as sensitive areas, natural areas, parkland recreation areas, water resources and seasonal special protection areas). The individualized management plans will address public safety, public education about the property (including informational and interpretive signage and/or kiosks), public access and use rules, long-term maintenance budgeting, improvement projects, staffing needs, volunteer opportunities and management accountability.

Table 21: Open Land Designations

OPEN LAND DESIGNATIONS			
DESIGNATION	PURPOSE/FUNCTION	RECREATIONAL USES	FACILITIES
Preservation	Protection of areas with fragile environmental and ecological conditions, areas with irreplaceable wildlife habitats, and areas which are subject to flood hazards. Opportunities for nature-oriented, outdoor recreation may be limited to protect the resource. Generally corresponds to corridors along rivers and drainages as well as the bluffs area. Continuity and connectivity of lands should be emphasized.	Varies, based on the sensitivity of the resource. Typically, recreation uses occur on publicly owned land only. Where appropriate, uses may include: nature study and observation, picnicking, hiking, fishing	Varies, based on the sensitivity of the resource. Typically, recreation facilities occur on publicly owned land only. Where appropriate, may include: parking, nature centers, multi-purpose trails, restrooms/port-a-lets, bike stations and bike racks, docks/piers, and boat ramps.
Wildlife Corridors	To provide a barrier free travel route which animals follow during daily, periodic or seasonal movements. May remain in private ownership.	Limited and seasonal watchable wildlife opportunities, bird watching, and educational activities that do not interfere with wildlife activities.	None
Resource Conservation (Community Separators / Agricultural Views)	Separates urbanizing portions of the city and adjacent communities. May also be in agricultural production, gravel mining or used for oil and gas extraction. These areas are strategically located, contributing to the open space feeling of the area, including important viewsheds. Where possible, these lands should continue to be working lands serving as economic assets. They will likely remain in private ownership and be conserved through agricultural or conservation easements.	Varies. In most cases public access will be prohibited and lands will be privately owned.	None
Urban Interface / Greenways	Areas which are vacant but in the path of urbanization in the community or adjacent to existing and planned trail facilities. Site plans should be reviewed for sensitivity to open space opportunities associated with the specific tract and the chance to provide trail access to destinations in and around the community.	Varies. Recreation uses may be public or private. Paved and natural surface trails.	Any facilities provided primarily for the benefit of the residents of the surrounding area or trail users. Where appropriate, may include: restrooms/port-a-lets, bike stations and bike racks, docks/piers, and boat ramps.

KEY MANAGEMENT ISSUES

A. EXPANDING OPEN LANDS SYSTEM

The recent increase of open lands owned and managed by the CPRD, along with strong community emphasis placed on expanding these resources in the next 10 years, necessitates an Open Lands Management Plan to ensure efficient and effective management. The additional acreage and the recommendations to continue this momentum will impact the Department's ability to manage various priorities and properties. The CPRD will need to adapt its operational model to look more specifically at the growing natural resource management needs within the city. This plan builds on some of the recommendations and classifications from the previous plan adopted in 1998, the 2013 Comprehensive Plan and feedback from current CPRD staff members who have been stewards of Greeley's lands and are familiar with local challenges and opportunities.

B. BALANCING ECOLOGICAL PROTECTION AND RECREATION POTENTIAL

There is a growing concern that people around the country, and especially youth, no longer experience nature and the outdoors as often or intimately as previous generations. Interacting with the natural environment has numerous benefits for physical and mental health and well-being for people of all ages. It is also important in encouraging the next generation of land stewards, by instilling an understanding for the complexity and importance of natural systems. Open lands and natural areas should be managed according to site-specific management plans and the primary focus should be on sustaining and enhancing the natural and ecological functions of the land; however, it is important to also seek opportunities to promote and support low impact recreation opportunities for Greeley's residents and visitors where appropriate and to better connect them to local natural systems. Creating opportunities for wildlife viewing may be an alternative means of allowing public enjoyment without having an impact on wildlife activities.

C. ENHANCING LAND FUNCTION

While natural areas do not necessarily need the same level of day-to-day care as sports fields or other intensely used landscapes, they do need long-term and focused management in order to sustain the flora and fauna, provide healthy habitat for wildlife and to protect them from fires and misuse. Natural areas are complex living systems that cannot be installed in a single season. These areas need ongoing maintenance and a long-term commitment to stewardship. They may require the eradication of noxious/invasive weeds and insect control, including the exploration of alternative weed management strategies. Effective natural resource restoration should be carried out over the long-term. Many sensitive plant species should not be planted until high levels of stability have been achieved. In some areas, this will take many years because native canopy and understory layers need to be established before enhancement of more fragile ground layer vegetation can be undertaken.



Photo Source: City of Greeley Flickr

Sheep Draw Natural Area was acquired by the City in 2014 as a natural area, protecting the confluence of Sheep Draw and the Cache la Poudre River, an important riparian area.



Photo Source: City of Greeley Flickr

Sheep Draw Natural Area signage illustrates current efforts to manage dogs.

In addition to maintaining the condition of natural areas, site-specific management plans should identify opportunities for enhancements that provide environmental, economic, aesthetic or community benefits. These improvements may require investments or projects that improve biodiversity, wildlife movement and habitat, water quality, air quality, storm water management, educational opportunities, trail and outdoor recreation infrastructure and more.

D. STAFFING AND OPERATIONS

Staffing expertise includes the ability to monitor resources, control noxious weeds, conduct annual mowing, vegetation restoration or native plant introduction, erosion control, trail maintenance, controlled burn, stormwater management and pruning operations. Staff must also be well versed in educating the public and neighboring properties on why areas are maintained with a more wild appearance than manicured parks. In Greeley, the Natural Areas and Trails staff must be attentive to hazardous conditions that arise from high water tables and flood hazards, as well as the need to create fire breaks and address illegal activities that may occur within these spaces. The best model appropriate for management of these areas is a specially trained team supplemented with volunteers and targeted outside contractors.

E. STEWARDSHIP ENGAGEMENT

Management of natural areas is not only a great opportunity for volunteers but also presents a platform for developing the notion that maintenance is more than just cutting grass. Long-term management of natural areas is as much about stewardship as it is maintenance. Stewardship of natural areas is an opportunity for both adults and children. The long-term sustenance of native habitats in the urban environment requires greater public sensitivity and awareness, which is best fostered by education, with every age group. Building a sense of stewardship for natural areas through ecological restoration, good maintenance practices and engendering responsibility through education will be fundamental

to a comprehensive long-term stewardship effort. In addition to volunteer opportunities for improvement/maintenance projects and fundraising, there may be a role for Open Lands Ambassadors to advocate for and raise awareness of open lands and natural areas.

F. EDUCATION/AWARENESS BUILDING

In addition to stewardship engagement opportunities, more passive awareness building/education is needed for Greeley's open lands. This includes educating the public about the unique features and interesting aspects of the properties along with posting of rules, regulations and enforcement. Signage, websites, brochures, directed tours, and educational programs are all ways to disseminate information. Some of the issues that need to be addressed in the short-term include trespassing, the creation of social trails, dog use, user conflicts, vegetation management, seasonal closures, hazards and safety risks, illegal dumping and encroachment. Providing information to neighbors about property management strategies, rules and regulations of open lands is important to establishing cooperative relationships.

Public awareness of open lands ownership should also be facilitated through continuity in signage and branding to indicate funding sources (GOCO, City of Greeley, land trusts and others), protections in place, and public access and restrictions when applicable.