

CHAPTER ONE - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The City of Durango parks, open spaces, trails, and recreation facilities and programs provide a comprehensive mix of amenities, programs and services that the community embraces. They lend themselves to the quality of life and lifestyles that the residents of Durango have come to expect. Not only does the City provide a variety of park types, it also excels at park connectivity as evidenced by the success of the Animas River Trail and other trails passing through town. Beyond parks, trails and recreation facilities, Durango also excels at preserving unique landscapes that provide open spaces within and near the City limits that offer tremendous opportunity for passive recreation and wildlife habitat.

The amenities, programs and services that make Durango's system what it is today are the result of many decades of hard work and community support. The past decade, in particular, has brought with it great change since the adoption of the City's first Parks, Open Space and Trails Master Plan in 2001. The Durango Community Recreation Center opened in 2002; Chapman Hill Ice Rink and Pavilion opened in 2003; approximately 6.25 miles of the Animas River Trail has been completed including the Main Avenue Underpass in 2005 and the extension of the trail south to the Rivera Bridge in 2009; the Animas River Greenway has been enhanced by the preservation of natural lands, bank stabilization projects and in-stream improvements have been completed; in 2007, the City received a conditional Recreational In-Channel Diversion water right on the Animas River; the City utilizes a level-of-service methodology for parks planning and utilized the 2001 Master Plan to require developers to dedicate and fund the construction of park and trail improvements in new developments; the City identified locations for major sports field facilities in community parks by earmarking 75 acres for the future development of a sports field complex in Three Springs to include five multi-use fields, three softball fields and eight tennis courts; the City continues to work with Fort Lewis College to provide additional multi-use fields on the campus and make improvements to the existing softball complex; there has been an expansion of recreational programs offered; and the City's open space program has taken flight with 1,575 acres of land preserved for open space and park purposes, of which approximately 999 acres have been acquired or dedicated since the adoption of the 2001 Master Plan. Many of the initiatives recommended in the 2001 Master Plan have been accomplished. With these accomplishments and the passage of time has come the need to update the Plan and build upon past successes. In late fall 2008, the City contracted with PROS Consulting, LLC to develop a new Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation Master Plan for the community.

The purpose of the Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation Master Plan is to establish a ten year road map--2010 to 2019--that will provide direction and strategies to the City to assist with the development of parks, open space, trails, recreation programming and recreation facilities in the community in the coming decade. The Plan is aligned with the Parks and Recreation Department's mission and vision.

1.2 PARKS, OPEN SPACE, TRAILS, AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN PROCESS

The planning process included extensive community input, a statistically valid household survey, and a series of technical reports and assessments, based on site visits and meetings with staff. In addition, the process included involvement and review by a Master Plan Steering Committee and the Durango City Council. The Committee reviewed and responded to all of the technical reports. Durango staff members also met with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and the Natural Lands Preservation Advisory Board in order to further discuss elements of the Plan. In addition, the 2001 Parks, Open Space and Trails Master Plan and the 2007 City of Durango Comprehensive Plan were reviewed in order to build on work previously completed. All of this information created the basis for recommendations to position the Department for the future.

The Master Plan was completed in association with ETC Institute/Leisure Vision and Greenways, Inc. ETC Institute completed the household survey, and Greenways, Inc. completed the trails and open space segments of the Plan.

The Parks and Recreation Department manages the operation of Durango's parks, trails, open space, urban forest and the cemetery, as well as various recreation facilities and programs. The Department contributes to healthy lifestyles, community development, and the conservation of natural lands.

The Durango Parks and Recreation Department strives for excellence to make a difference in the community with important quality of life services. These services include 35 parks, approximately 95 miles of trails, 1,575 acres of open space, and active recreation including Chapman Hill, the Mason Center, and the Durango Community Recreation Center. There is great demand for the services offered by the Department, as noted throughout the Plan.

The following outlines the list of tasks and sequence of work for the Plan's development and completion. The steps in the process included:

- Community and Stakeholder Input
- Focus groups
- Key leader meetings
- Public meetings at the beginning and end of the process
- Community survey summary (full report included in Appendix A)
- Community profile
- Demographics and trend summary (full report included in Appendix B)
- Open Space Plan
- Land Conservation and Protection Strategies (full report included in Appendix C)
- Open Space Operations and Management Considerations
- Trails Plan
- Trails Operations and Management Considerations

- Parks Plan
- Site and Facility Assessment
- Maintenance Management Plan (entire report included as Appendix D)
- Recreation Plan
- Recreation Program Assessment
- Standards and equity mapping
- Facility standards
- Equity mapping/service area analysis
- Greenprinting
- Priority Needs Assessment
- Park and Facility Development Plan
- Capital Improvement Plan
- Master Plan Implementation
- Vision and mission
- Master Plan themes, initiatives and goals

1.3 TECHNICAL REPORT SUMMARY

The following section provides a summary of the technical reports prepared in developing the Plan and includes the key findings of each report. This is an overall summary of the Plan, followed by system wide findings and recommendations.

1.3.1 COMMUNITY INPUT SUMMARY

An important component of the Master Plan development was the community input process, which included 17 key leader meetings, five focus groups with 69 participants, and public meetings with 147 attendees at the beginning and at the end of the process. The input process included the facilitation of a series of questions relating to overall strengths, overall improvement areas needed, and residents' assessment of parks, trails, open space, and recreation programs. A consensus of comments relating to system strengths included the number of miles of trails, the quality of the parks and the Recreation Center, and the variety of program offerings. Recommended improvements included the need to renovate or relocate the Mason Center, development of an outdoor pool, four seasons of ice at Chapman Hill, and better connectivity of the trail system.

1.3.2 COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY

As part of the Master Plan process, a Community Attitude and Interest Survey was conducted during the winter and spring of 2009 to quantify resident household's priorities for parks, open space, trails and recreation facilities and programs. The survey was designed to obtain statistically valid results from households throughout the City of Durango. The survey was administered by a combination of mail and phone. ETC Institute/Leisure Vision

managed the survey process. ETC Institute mailed surveys to a random sample of 1,650 households throughout the City of Durango. The goal was to obtain a total of at least 325 completed surveys. This goal was far exceeded, with a total of 568 completed surveys. The results of the random sample of 568 households have a 95% level of confidence with a precision of at least +/-4.1%.

According to the results, high participation exists in recreation activities in Durango. Additionally, residents highly rated the condition of parks, open space, trails and recreation facilities. Open space most valued or desired included river and stream corridors and trails for biking and hiking. Facilities most supported or desired included neighborhood parks, biking and pedestrian hard surface trails, biking and hiking natural surface trails and indoor fitness space. Most supported programs included adult fitness and wellness, special events/festivals, youth learn to swim programs, and youth/teen sports programs. The Master Plan includes an overall summary of the Community Survey. The full Survey results are included in **Appendix A**.

1.3.3 DEMOGRAPHICS AND TREND REPORT

In a review of the demographics information, from the year 2000 to 2008, population growth was almost 11%. Population growth will continue in the future, though at a slower rate. The 2023 population projection is estimated to be 19,094. Currently 41% of residents are between the ages of 18-34 and will maintain this healthy percentage over the next 15 years. Active adults of 55 and over will represent 25% of the population in 2023. Durango is fairly homogeneous, as almost 87% are white. Median household income is \$48,529 and will increase to \$79,808 by 2023. In order to align programs, facilities, and amenities with changing demographics, the two aforementioned age segments will need to be an important component of the program and facility mix.

As for recreation trends in the Colorado region, indoor fitness activities have very high participation rates, including spinning and fitness classes. Outdoor recreation activities also have high participation numbers, including hiking, biking, camping, fishing, rafting, and climbing. The trends are reflected in the program offerings provided by Durango Parks and Recreation. The Master Plan includes an overall summary of the Report. **Appendix B** includes the full report.

1.3.4 OPEN SPACE PLAN

The purpose of this Plan element is to describe the actions that are required by the City of Durango and its partners to continue to preserve and care for valued open spaces throughout the community. As evidenced by the household survey, there is significant interest in the preservation of open space in Durango. One of the goals of this Plan is to define the major elements and programmatic objectives for the Durango open space program. To accomplish this, the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the 2001 City of Durango Parks, Open Space and Trails Master Plan have been evaluated and expanded upon as the foundation for the new Open Space element of the Master Plan. This Plan also includes an Open Space Operations and Management element. Land Conservation and funding strategies are included as **Appendix C** to the Master Plan.

1.3.5 TRAILS PLAN

The purpose of this Plan is to describe, in detail, the vision, structure, policies, priorities and actions that the City of Durango and its partners will need to undertake in order to expand upon and care for its interconnected network of trails, both hard and natural surface. Goals of the Plan include defining the major trail types; identify existing and future trail networks and locations; establishing programmatic objectives for developing the trail system; and to evaluate key operational and maintenance issues. To accomplish this, the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the 2001 City of Durango Parks, Open Space and Trails Master Plan were used as the foundation for the new Trails element of the Master Plan.

1.3.6 SITE AND FACILITY ASSESSMENT

The Master Plan also includes a thorough review of the parks and facilities within the system. City staff and PROS Consulting team members reviewed all of the parks and facilities and provided assessments of general conditions of each asset. Resident households expressed high levels of satisfaction toward the condition of parks and facilities. This was evidenced in the tour of the system as well. Noted in the assessment are examples of individual park improvements needed. This included general upgrades to irrigation systems, interpretive signage, restrooms, playground shade structures, parking, and trailheads. This information is supplemented by a Maintenance Management Plan as **Appendix D**.

1.3.7 RECREATION PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

This assessment includes a review of the core program offerings of the Department, including promotional efforts, financial review of program registrations, programming space requirements, and the relationship of household survey results and demographics to future program offerings. The assessment also includes a review of age segment distribution of offerings and lifecycle analysis. According to feedback during the public input process, residents greatly appreciate the variety of program offerings. The most significant challenge for recreation programs relates to recreation program space. While the square footage for indoor recreation space meets the standards for space needs, program demand is extremely high. All of the indoor spaces, including Chapman Hill, the Durango Community Recreation Center, and the Mason Center could be expanded, renovated, or relocated.

1.3.8 FACILITY STANDARDS

This section includes the listing and review of existing and projected inventory of park land and outdoor amenities such as playgrounds and indoor recreation space. The standards are specific to Durango and took into consideration community input results, national standards developed by the National Recreation and Park Association, comparisons to other communities in Colorado, and the PROS database of standards from communities across the country.

The information shows current service levels based on population, recommended service levels for 2009, and future recommended service levels for 2019 based on projected population growth. The standards show a need for more park land and amenities. Currently there is a need for 13 acres of neighborhood park land, 52 acres of community park land, two 200 foot baseball fields, three 300 foot baseball fields, two adult and two

youth softball fields, three regulation and one youth soccer fields, five multi-purpose fields, one outdoor basketball court, two tennis courts, and one outdoor pool. Indoor space requirements meet the standard and are fulfilled by the Durango Community Recreation Center.

1.3.9 EQUITY MAPPING/SERVICE AREA ANALYSIS/GREENPRINTING

This analysis includes maps of the park land and amenities included within the facility standards. The maps show the deficits of parkland, athletic fields, and other amenities. In addition to the maps, the Service Area Analysis includes narrative descriptions of the map details, describing deficiencies and duplication of amenities, based on geographical area and population density.

Greenprinting involves an analysis of geo-spatial data associated with a variety of landscapes around the community that have known preservation values such as viewsheds, watersheds, hillsides, wildlife habitat, recreation, riparian areas and other important features. Greenprinting assigns a numeric value to each data layer, and then parses the values into parcels. The parcels are then mapped thematically to show which ones host the most “green” features. The City should use greenprinting as one of the tools in its conservation toolbox to assist the City in determining the most important landscapes that should be focused on for preservation.

1.3.10 FACILITY PRIORITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Facility Priority Needs Assessment is a ranking of facility/amenity needs for Durango residents. The ranking includes an evaluation of both quantitative and qualitative data, included from the household survey and community input processes. The determination also includes a consultant evaluation and Steering Committee and City Council evaluation of the system as well. The findings show the top five facility/amenity items are:

- Natural surface trails for hiking and biking
- Hard surface trails for biking and pedestrians
- Neighborhood parks
- Indoor fitness
- River recreation

1.3.11 RECREATION PROGRAMMING PRIORITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

This assessment, similarly to the Facility Needs Assessment, is a ranking of recreation programming needs for Durango residents. The ranking includes an evaluation of both quantitative and qualitative data developed from the household survey and community input processes. The assessment also includes a consultant evaluation and Steering Committee and City Council review of the system as well. The findings show the top recreation program needs are:

- Adult fitness and wellness programs
- Before and after school programs

- Youth/teen sports
- Preschool programs
- Special events

1.3.12 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is a prioritized list of needed and desired park and recreational amenities based on the City's level-of-service standards, identified gaps in service, and community input. The CIP includes estimated project costs and is prioritized into short term (1-3 years); mid term (4- 7 years) and long term (8-10 years) projects. While the CIP does establish a road map for the life of the Master Plan, it should be recognized that the CIP will have annual evaluation by City staff, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Natural Lands Preservation Advisory Board and City Council and may be modified based on the changing needs of the community and available funding over time.

The City has dedicated funding for the development of parks, trails and recreation facilities and the preservation of open space. Over the next ten years, the Capital Improvement Plan includes the following distribution of four primary funding sources: (1) 2005 Open Space, Parks and Trails Fund; (2) 1999 Recreation Complex/Trails Fund; (3) General Fund; and (4) Grants. The revenue estimates are based upon historical averages and below is an illustration of the distribution of the funding sources:

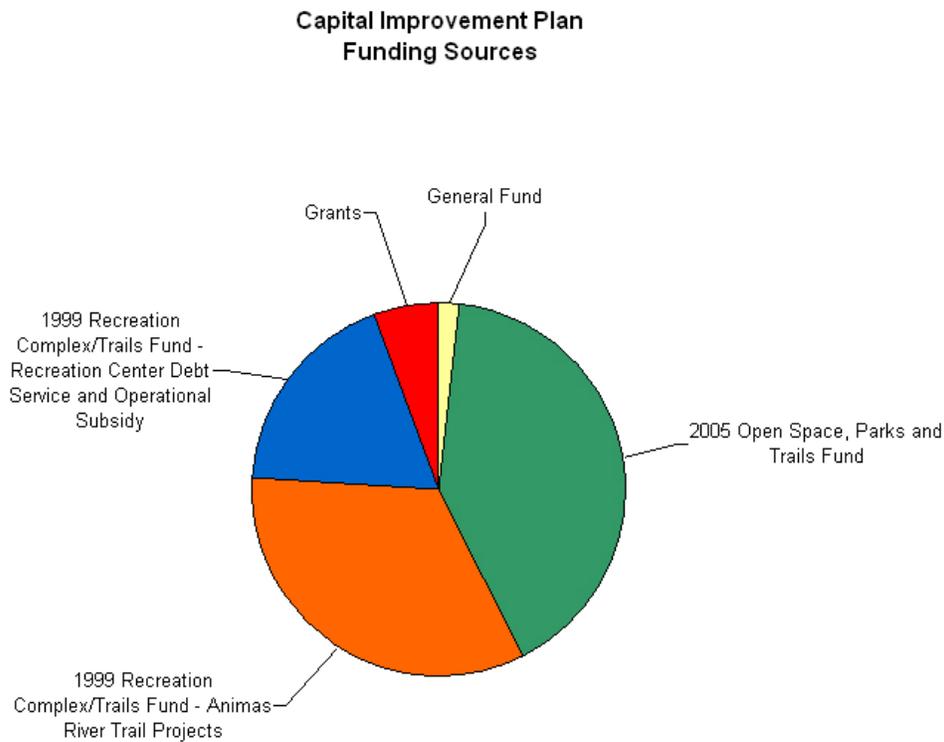


Figure 1 - Capital Improvement Plan Funding Sources

1.4 KEY MASTER PLAN FINDINGS

The following section consists of a bulleted list of key Master Plan findings, which represent overall significant findings from the planning process. The findings are categorized according to:

- Organizational
- Open Space
- Trails
- Parks
- Recreation
- Stewardship and Implementation

The key findings become the basis for the development of recommendations for the Plan.

1.4.1 ORGANIZATIONAL

- The dedicated funding is scheduled to sunset with the expiration of the 1999 Recreation Complex/Trails Fund in 2019 and the 2005 Open Space, Parks and Trails Fund in 2026
- Planning should commence on the continuation of sustainable and dedicated funding for the preservation and stewardship of open space and the development and maintenance of parks, trails and recreation facilities

1.4.2 OPEN SPACE

- Durango has protected 1,575 acres of land including 1,510 acres as open space/natural lands, far exceeding national per capita averages
- 1,169 acres of land were purchased, and 406 acres were dedicated through land use planning or land donations
- Preservation of natural lands remains a high priority in the community and the most important open space opportunities includes trails for hiking and biking
- Key future preservation areas include the Animas River Greenway, ridgeline properties within and around Durango and Horse Gulch
- The Open Space Plan includes a revised definition of open space and uses
- The Plan includes specific management goals for scenic mountain backdrops, rivers/streams/lakes, meadows/mesas, urban interface, heritage and working landscapes
- The Plan includes an evaluation of community resource commitments to open space program stewardship for operations and maintenance

1.4.3 TRAILS

- The City of Durango trail system includes 95 miles of interconnected hard and natural surface trails, of this total 12 miles are hard surface and 83 miles are natural surface trails
- The most important park and recreation facilities to Durango residents are the natural surface trails for hiking and biking, and hard surface trails for bike and pedestrian use
- The Animas River Trail (ART) provides access to 12 City parks, hundreds of acres of open space, the Recreation Center, library, and other destinations
- The ART remains the north-south spine of the trail system, with both lateral connections and looped trails
- The Safe Multi-Modal Aesthetic Regional Transportation (SMART) 160 Trail will be the trail system's east-west spine
- Durango achieved the Silver Level Bicycle Friendly Community in 2008
- Integration of the trail system with on-road bicycle and pedestrian facilities is critical to the functionality of the community's multi-modal transportation system
- The completion of the Animas River Trail, including the extension of the trail to the north City limits and reconstruction of the substandard sections, is the top hard surface trail development priority

1.4.4 PARKS

- There are 286 acres of parkland in Durango
- There is currently a shortage of parkland to meet standards in Durango and an additional total of 110 acres are needed by 2019
- Lacking amenities in the parks acreage includes a shortage of irrigated turf for organized sports and by 2019 an additional 10 ball fields and 11 multi-purpose fields are needed to meet standards
- Parks and facilities are generally well-maintained
- Park usage demands outpace available facility supply, particularly with neighborhood parks with functional amenities
- Increased demands from aging facilities and population growth are outpacing available resources
- New development and growth within and around Durango will create additional demand on resources
- Maintenance yard and office complex at Greenmount Cemetery is inadequate

1.4.5 RECREATION

- There are three indoor recreation facilities including the Durango Community Recreation Center, Chapman Hill rink and pavilion and the Mason Center
- The demand for recreation programs outpaces the available facilities
- Mason Center needs to be renovated or relocate the gymnastics program due to space limitations and safety issues
- Chapman Hill is in need of renovation, including the replacement of the rope tow and ski lift system
- Recreation Center demand for facility use and program use suggests support for expansion of the facility
- During the last four years, Recreation Center programs have grown by 5% and Recreation Division programs have grown by 22%
- There is a 42% household participation rate in programs, as compared to 30% nationally, according to Leisure Vision's national database

1.4.6 STEWARDSHIP AND IMPLEMENTATION

- The growth of the parks, open space, trails and recreation system has identified the need to refine stewardship activities and establish Best Management Practices for the parks, open space, trails and recreation facilities
- The Parks, Open Space, Trails and Recreation Master Plan will be implemented using two primary strategies: (1) the annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP) process; and (2) an incremental approach of requiring dedication and/or development through the Planning and Community Development project review process

1.5 MASTER PLAN THEMES, OBJECTIVES, AND INITIATIVES

The final section of the Plan lists the Strategic Themes, Objectives, Measurements, and Initiatives for the years 2010 to 2019. These strategic recommendations support the accomplishment of the Parks and Recreation Department's mission and vision. Strategic Themes are broad-brushed descriptions of major areas included in the recommendations. The Themes are as follows:

- **Trails:** Connecting People to Places
- **Open Space:** Preserve and Care for Special Places
- **Parks:** Provide Quality Areas for Community Gatherings and Activities
- **Recreation:** Provide Quality and Diverse Recreation Programs
- **Facilities:** Provide Quality Facilities for Recreation Activities
- **Organizational:** Strategic Use of Resources

Within the final section of the Plan, the Themes, Objectives, and Strategic Initiatives are listed, according to a timeline priority of short term, mid term, and long term initiatives. The Initiatives relating to all of the technical elements of the Plan are included in a

combined section at the end of the Plan. The Initiatives also identify the staff members responsible for the completion of the Initiatives. For the purposes of the Executive Summary, just the Themes and Initiatives are listed as follows.

1.5.1 TRAILS: CONNECTING PEOPLE TO PLACES

- Complete the Animas River Trail as the north-south spine of the hard surface trail system
- Develop the SMART 160 Trail as the east-west hard surface trail spine through the City
- Continue planning for separated-grade trail crossings of US Highway 550/160, Camino del Rio and North Main Avenue
- Revise the 5 and 15 Year Capital Improvements Plan to reflect trail priorities established in the Plan
- Expand the trail system as opportunities occur to new and existing developments
- Prioritize and secure trail easements needed for planned trails and to fill missing links on both the hard and natural surface trail system
- Reconstruct substandard sections of the Animas River Trail
- Continue to modify and expand on-street bike and pedestrian facilities and linkages to the off-street trail system to provide a network of core urban trails that connect people to places
- Enhance partnerships with the Colorado Department of Transportation, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, private landowners, La Plata County, Fort Lewis College, Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, Tri-State, La Plata Electric and Trails 2000 to ensure connectivity and a regional approach to trail development
- Encourage La Plata County to recognize the City's Trails Master Plan by incorporating trail connectivity and multi-modal transportation into the County Comprehensive Plan
- Continue working with Trails 2000 to develop and maintain the natural surface trail system in the community
- Establish and adopt trailhead design standards
- Develop safe multi-generational opportunities for the use of trails
- Establish operations and maintenance Best Management Practices for the trail system

1.5.2 OPEN SPACE: PRESERVE AND CARE FOR SPECIAL PLACES

- Preservation of open space/natural lands in the Animas River Greenway, ridgeline properties, and Horse Gulch should be the City's highest priority

- Continue to preserve land that protects the mountain backdrop and viewsheds surrounding Durango
- Other preservation opportunities should be prioritized based on preservation value, threat of loss and available resources
- Develop a regional approach to better manage open space lands with Ft. Lewis College, open space conservancies, La Plata County, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, Colorado Division of Wildlife, Durango Fire and Rescue Authority, Bureau of Reclamation and private land owners
- Continue to refine the stewardship activities and establish Best Management Practices within the open space system
- Management practices should include addressing potential human impacts to wildlife in open space and appropriate education on living with wildlife
- Establish and implement a healthy forest management plan
- Continue to enhance volunteer opportunities within the City open space system
- Consider placing open space lands having separated and viable mineral rights into conservation easements as an additional control measure against possible surface disturbance associated with potential future mineral extraction activities
- Evaluate other strategies to minimize surface disturbance associated with potential future mineral extraction activities
- Evaluate all undeveloped city-owned parcels to determine purpose of ownership and whether they should be designated as open space

1.5.3 PARKS: PROVIDE QUALITY AREAS FOR COMMUNITY GATHERINGS AND ACTIVITIES

- Acquire additional parkland according to the standards by 2019 (5 acres mini parks, 20 acres neighborhood parks, 64 acres community parks and 21 acres linear parks)
- In consideration of overall priorities for park projects, remain flexible and allow for opportunities and adjustments based on changing conditions
- Evaluate adding amenities to existing parks and develop new parks with a variety of amenities, such as playgrounds, ball fields and picnic shelters, in one location
- Update parks and facilities to address changing needs of the community
- Address design issues at parks that impede efficient maintenance in a phased approach as outlined in the Maintenance Management Plan
- Develop a future staffing plan to correlate with a growing number of parks and facilities
- Develop a long term capital repair and replacement schedule for parks and park amenities through tracking assets, their condition, and their lifecycle

- Develop a priority maintenance list and expand the use of maintenance standards, including items such as mowing height and frequency, litter control, and graffiti removal
- Utilize Best Management Practices to improve natural areas and increase biodiversity by including native landscaping, rain gardens, and bio swales when developing parks and facilities
- Develop Best Management Practices to reduce the use of pesticides and herbicides
- Integrate animal resistant trash containers and recycling in the park system
- Develop chemical free parks through an “Adopt a Park” program with volunteers taking responsibility for manual caretaking of weeds
- Continue to enhance volunteer opportunities within the parks system
- Include a maintenance practice educational section on the Web site in order to inform residents of the Department’s commitment to sustainable park maintenance practices
- Develop an Animas River Management Plan to address the impact of high recreational use of the river in collaboration with La Plata County
- Upgrade river put-ins and stabilize river banks
- Develop an urban forest management plan
- Complete improvements to improve access to the off leash area
- Evaluate and update policies for naming park facilities and gift giving, such as memorial benches and trees

1.5.4 RECREATION: PROVIDE QUALITY AND DIVERSE RECREATION PROGRAMS

- Use recreation standards to ensure consistency in program offerings
- Complete a needs assessment survey within five to seven years
- Formalize customer feedback to measure overall satisfaction, repurchase intent, and referral rates through program evaluations and surveys
- Complete an access review process every two years to solicit customer feedback regarding attitudes and satisfaction levels toward registration system, telephone access, web site ease of use, program guide layout and distribution, and staff quality of service
- Complete a program lifecycle and age segment review every two years to ensure an appropriate percentage of programs are in the introduction, take off, and growth stages of the lifecycle and to be consistent with the demographics of the City
- Develop a systematic process to measure customer satisfaction including program evaluations, focus groups, transactional surveys, mystery shopping, and customer defect research
- Develop an overall Departmental marketing plan with strategies and timelines

- Increase household participation in recreation programming to 50% or more through identification of potential customer barriers to participation
- Identify alternative program spaces to assist with current demand of programs
- Expand high priority programs, as listed on the Needs Assessment, including adult fitness and wellness, before and after school programs, youth/teen sports programs, preschool programs, special events, youth learn to swim, youth/teen fitness and wellness, and nature and wildlife interpretive programs
- Develop a process to strengthen partnerships including an annual review of existing partnerships and identification of new partners, including a process to identify the level of partner satisfaction toward working with the Department
- Dedicate staff resources toward acquiring alternative revenues such as grants, corporate support, and more use of volunteers and interns
- Develop customer requirements and brand and image for core program areas
- Expand upon the City employee wellness program
- Promote employee wellness programs to other organizations in the community
- Expand scholarship availability and ensure access to programs for all, including those lacking the ability to pay
- Expand program offerings for people with disabilities
- Expand active adult and senior programming to coincide with aging population trends in Durango
- Collaborate with other community groups and promote partnerships to enhance recreation program offerings

1.5.5 FACILITIES: PROVIDE QUALITY FACILITIES FOR RECREATION ACTIVITIES

- Develop a business plan for the Recreation Center to determine the feasibility of adding space to accommodate fitness needs, family locker room expansion, maintenance and storage space, youth area upgrades and service desk improvements
- Develop a plan to renovate or relocate the gymnastics program from the Mason Center
- Refurbish Chapman Hill, including increased parking capability, re-grading the bottom of the ski hill, repair/replace maintenance storage building, and upgrade rope tow ski lift, embrace bicycling activities such as a natural surface trail system trailhead, jump park, and other activities to increase summertime utilization of facility
- Renovate or replace maintenance shop and offices at Greenmount Cemetery
- Develop a long term capital maintenance schedule for ongoing replacement of items such as roofing, parking lot repaving, heating and air conditioning systems, etc.

- Research the feasibility of adding a climbing facility at an indoor location, including a return on investment analysis to determine its projected financial performance and determination of resident interest
- Develop best practices in energy efficiency of recreational buildings by conducting an audit of existing facilities and implementing energy efficiency improvements
- Develop standard design and specifications for amenities, such as fencing, water fountains, and trash receptacles to reduce design costs and develop consistency among parks
- Research the opportunity of developing a year round ice rink facility
- Develop additional amenities according to the standards by 2019 (2 picnic shelters, two 200 ft. baseball fields, three 300 ft. baseball fields, 3 adult softball fields, 2 youth softball fields, 4 regulation sized soccer fields, one youth soccer field, 6 multi-purpose fields, one outdoor basketball court, 3 tennis courts, one outdoor aquatics facility)

1.5.6 ORGANIZATIONAL: STRATEGIC USE OF RESOURCES

- Develop a smart growth approach to planning with all cities in La Plata County
- Exercise leadership through the Southwest Colorado Council of Governments to ensure a regional approach to planning
- Develop a plan to continue dedicated funding sources through dedicated sales tax funding
- Revise public amenity (parks, trails, open space) dedication and impact fee requirements for new development
- Develop a long term financial plan to assess the Department's ability to sustain new park, open space, trails and recreation facilities and amenities
- Complete an economic impact study to determine the financial impact of the Department on the local economy in regards to property values, sales tax revenues, tourism dollars, and sports tournaments
- Develop a revenue policy to guide the Department in cost recovery goals, desired financial performance of programs and facilities, and pricing of services
- Develop and approve an environmental and sustainability policy that outlines the Department's commitment to sustainable practices
- Complete a sustainability audit and develop an action plan with recommendations and timelines for improvement
- Develop relationships with youth, consistent with the goals of the La Plata County Children, Youth and Family Master Plan to promote interest in helping the City with parks and recreation initiatives
- Develop and implement an organizational performance measurement system, including specific measures such as cost recovery, customer satisfaction

percentages, workload, and facility capacity measurements. The measures are included in the Master Plan Strategy Map

- Expand communication practices with the public to include use of the web, surveys, focus groups and the local media
- Recognize the recreation potential of Lake Nighthorse and encourage other agencies to develop future facilities to meet the community's needs

1.6 CONCLUSION

The Parks, Open Space, Trails and Recreation Master Plan, in support of the overall mission and vision of the City of Durango, encompasses the following mission and vision statements:

The Mission is to promote and provide a full range of parks, trails, natural lands, recreational facilities, programs and amenities that enrich the quality of life for all residents and visitors. These services shall enhance the health and well-being of those we serve in a financially responsible and environmentally sustainable manner.

The Vision is to promote and establish Durango as a leading community with a focus on health, wellness, vitality, safe access to amenities and an exceptional quality lifestyle.

It is within the spirit of the Parks, Open Space, Trails and Recreation Master Plan that the elements contained within the mission and vision are deployed throughout the 10 year period of the Plan.

The Durango Parks and Recreation Department contributes to healthy lifestyles, community development and the conservation of natural lands. The Plan's intent is to continue this legacy and to build greater strength in the service delivery system as a result of having engaged the public in the development of the Plan and reviewing all elements of the operation, based on best industry practices. The commitment to public input is summarized in the next section of the Plan. Having this input ensures alignment among future actions, resource allocation, and resident need. The Plan positions the Department for an exciting future and provides opportunities for resident engagement in future endeavors and participation in successful programs, activities, and recreation opportunities.