City of
Fort Collins

Parks and Recreation Policy Plan

City of Fort Collins Parks and Recreation
Policy Plan

City of
Fort Collins

October 2008

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

»TABLE OF CONTENTS

Appendices *(Please see referenced supplementary document)***:**
- **A. Ft. Collins 1990 Recreation Fee Policy**
- **B. GRASP® History and Level of Service Methodology**
- **C. Sample Sponsorship Policy**
- **D. Sample Partnership Policy**
- **E. The Pyramid Methodology: Core Services and Resource Allocation**

» TABLE OF FIGURES

» TABLE OF TABLES

»EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The citizens of Fort Collins have been enjoying their park and recreation system for nearly 100 years. Our current Policy Plan was completed in 1996. The proposed Plan Update will guide staff over the next ten years in the development and stewardship of the City's parks, trails, and recreation facilities and programs, and enable staff to provide exceptional service to the Fort Collins community.

The Update addresses the City's challenge to utilize limited resources to provide parks, trails, and recreation services (the System) to a growing community. With the increasing costs to operate and maintain the System, it is imperative that Fort Collins take into consideration the additional costs associated with building-out and operating planned future parks, trails, and indoor recreation facilities. Long term sustainability is dependent on prioritized decision-making, identification of core services, and maximized use of resources.

The Update includes new goals and objectives on enhanced sustainability and green practices for park, trail and recreation facility development, and operation and maintenance. Our goal is to design and develop parks, trails, and facilities in a way that minimizes negative impacts or damage to the environment. Environmental concerns are not secondary; the City will protect the environment as it continues to develop parks, trail, and recreation facilities.

GreenPlay LLC was hired by the City to lead the development of the Plan Update. GreenPlay conducted a thorough public engagement process, including meetings with user groups, City boards, a statistically valid mail-in survey, open houses, news releases, and use of the City's web page.

In September of 2007, staff presented to Council the findings from the community involvement process. The purpose of the work session was to also find out if Council had any specific questions or concerns staff should address. Council asked staff to prepare three options for building-out the park system, with different operation and maintenance needs.

In April 2008, staff presented an update on the planning process with an emphasis on the three park build-out options. At the work session, Council indicated it was in favor of the Current Build-Out Option.

The discussion on the build-out of the park system included the option of continuing the development of parks at the present rate of about one per year. The nineteen remaining parks would be constructed over a period of eighteen years. This option includes an increased emphasis on reducing operation and maintenance costs through creative design and irrigated turf area reduction. This "Current Build-Out Option" was supported by City Council and is included in the Update.

A "Reduced Build-Out Option" was considered that developed a park every other year and reduced the number of future parks to fourteen. This option would result in an operation and maintenance cost savings, but reduces parkland in developing sections of the community. This option was not supported by Council, partially due to the unfairness of the resulting reduced level of service for future residents.

An "Austere Build-Out Option" was considered that developed a park every other year and reduced the number of future parks to eleven. The option also included a severe reduction in the quantity of park features. This option saved the most operation and maintenance costs, but was not supported by Council due to its severe service level reduction.

The City's General Fund is recommended as the continued source for operation and maintenance funds for parks and trails. The use of additional Conservation Trust Funds (Lottery) for operation and maintenance needs was not supported by Council. Instead, Council was interested in including parks and trails operation and maintenance costs in a future discussion regarding unfunded needs.

The build-out of the City's very popular trail system is shown on the Master Plan map. New trails are shown to provide service to yet to be developed areas of the community. The Conservation Trust Fund (Lottery) is recommended as the source of funds for future trail development.

Future recreation facilities are identified in the Action Item section of the Update. Recreation centers are planned at Fossil Creek, Spring Canyon, and the Northeast Community Parks. Funding for development of the facilities would be from capital programs. Operation and maintenance costs would be covered by the General Fund and user fees.

GreenPlay used the GRASP tool to inventory the existing parks, trails, and recreation facilities. GRASP allows for the quantity and quality of facilities to be analyzed, resulting in a more complete review of our current level of service. The analysis shows we have a good distribution of parks and trails in the community, they are well maintained, and they contain a good mix of facilities and features. The analysis also confirmed a fairly obvious point, that we are lacking indoor recreation facilities in the south part of the city. GRASP will be used to help ensure the quantity and quality of our future facilities remains comparable with our existing service levels.

The Plan contains a community profile and demographics section. We expect continued steady population growth with a slightly higher than average population of teens and young adults and an increased older population. It is also important to note that the City's Hispanic community will continue to increase in numbers and as a percentage of our population.

GreenPlay provided an analysis of community recreation trends. The aging population and a more diverse population provide both opportunities and challenges for programming and participation. The City has the opportunity to provide additional active recreation facilities and programs to improve health and combat obesity.

GreenPlay also gathered information on various recreation fee policies that the City will use to develop a recreation fee policy.

A large event venue for large community gatherings (festivals for example) and for large group events received enough public support (from the survey) to indicate a large outdoor event facility should be explored as an action item. The annual demand for this type of facility has convinced staff it would be heavily used.

A multi-field sports park did not receive significant support during the public process and is not recommended as an action item.

The tennis court level of service need requires additional public input and studies to determine user counts, court rehab cost and options, and is therefore, listed as an action item.

A. INTRODUCTION

City of Fort Collins – Parks and Recreation History

The citizens of Fort Collins have been enjoying the City park and recreation system for nearly 100 years. Since 1911, Fort Collins residents have planned, protected, and treasured their parks and places of recreation. From a modest beginning of two parks, Washington and Lincoln (also known as Library Park), Fort Collins now has 45 developed parks, 61 miles of trails (including Natural Areas soft surface trails), and 11 recreation facilities. Majestic trees, colorful flowers, well maintained parks, trails and recreation facilities, specialty gardens and open spaces beautify the City and add to the quality of life for both residents and visitors.

The community has grown significantly in recent years, and the park and recreation system has done well to expand service to keep up with that growth. The landscape of the City and the surrounding area is changing rapidly, and the Parks and Recreation staff is making sure the community's parks and recreation system keeps pace. For this growing community, parks, trails, recreation facilities, and recreation events and programs encourage healthy lifestyles, benefit the local economy, and contribute to the safety and stability of Fort Collins neighborhoods.

Fort Collins was selected by Money Magazine in 2006 as the best small city in America. This recognition, in part, was based on the quality of life provided by the parks and recreation system. The City's approximately 800 acres of park land is equipped with a wide variety of recreation amenities. The 28-mile recreational trail system; 40,000 trees in our urban forest; and over 33,000 acres of preserved open space and natural areas adds to our quality of life. The 11 recreation facilities offer a myriad of leisure activities and golfers may choose from one 9-hole and two 18-hole championship city-owned courses.

Most residents have a park within walking distance of their neighborhood, and recreation facilities are a short 10 to 15-minute drive from anywhere in the City. Table 1 lists City-owned parks and Table 2 lists City-owned recreation facilities.

Funding Overview

Parks, trails, and recreation facilities are maintained with funding from the City's General Sales and Use Tax (the General Fund). The General Fund provides funding for many city services including police and transportation. User fees are also charged to support the operation of recreation and park facilities. After years of robust growth, General Fund revenues have slowed, causing the City to look closely at existing and new services. The areas of focus and priorities identified in this Plan will therefore be even more important in guiding future decision-making.

The City has recognized that with limited funding and a community that highly values the quality of life provided by its parks and recreation opportunities, the allocation of funds for the development of new parks and facilities must be matched with the dollars to operate and maintain the system to the high standards it has provided in the past.

City and Department Overview

Organizational Overview
The City of Fort Collins' mission is to provide exceptional service for an exceptional community. The City went through a reorganization during the spring of 2007, and at that time the City Natural Resources Department was placed under the supervision of the newly established Culture, Parks, Recreation, and Environment Service Unit. The departments and divisions within the Culture, Parks, Recreation, and Environment Service Unit work with citizens to provide exceptional service to enrich the community, enhance quality of life, and contribute to the economic viability of the City of Fort Collins through education, recreation, and beautification.

The Park Planning & Development Department is responsible for the long-range acquisition and development of parks and trails. The staff designs, oversees park construction, and reviews developments within residential and commercial areas. The Department is working hard to provide more parks and a more extensive trail system to bring residents closer to the beauty that inspired them to call Fort Collins home.

The mission of the Recreation Department is to provide services that promote health, well-being, personal growth, and life enrichment for the community. The Department maintains 11 facilities throughout the City and provides a myriad of activities for older adults, people with disabilities, young adults, teens, youths, and toddlers. The Adaptive Recreation Opportunities Program provides accommodations, inclusion and access information for participants with disabilities.

The Parks Department is divided into three sub-divisions, Parks and Cemeteries, Forestry and Horticulture, and Golf.

> The Parks and Cemeteries Division provides maintenance and stewardship for parks, cemeteries, streetscapes, trails, downtown public spaces, open areas and other public grounds in the community. The Parks Division has become known as a leader in maintenance, administration, and innovation.

> The Forestry and Horticulture Division staff is committed to maintaining the City's urban forest and operating the Gardens on Spring Creek horticulture center. Fort Collins has been an annual Tree City, USA award recipient for the last 25 years. The Forestry staff cares for more than 40,000 trees each year and provides the following services:
> - Tree planting, pruning, and removal
> - General information and literature on trees, plants and landscaping
> - Review of landscaping plans for new development
> - Arborist licenses
> - Tree work permits
> - Tree planting questions and requests
> - Hazard tree questions and inspections
> - Tree work permits
> - Insect and disease mitigation and protection

The City's Golf Division is responsible for the total management, operations, and maintenance of City Park Nine, Collindale, and South Ridge Golf Courses. This includes the contractual management of the three Golf Professionals and the Restaurant/Snack Bar Concessionaires, all of whom are independent contractors. All maintenance personnel are City of Fort Collins employees.

> The Natural Resource Department was created in 1985 in response to the City's desire to take a leading role in the development of programs which conserve the natural resources and improve the environmental quality of Fort Collins. The Department consists of four major program areas: air quality, natural areas, recycling and solid waste and environmental planning.

The Cultural Services Department manages the Lincoln Center, the Museum and the City's Art in Public Places program.

This plan update does not include Natural Resources or Cultural Services. These departments have their own adopted master plans.

Figure 1 provides a visual illustration of the Culture, Parks, Recreation, and Environment Service Unit's relationship with other City Departments and the internal structure of the city.

Figure 1: City of Fort Collins Organizational Chart

City of Fort Collins Organization Chart

LEGEND
- SERVICE AREA
- SERVICE UNIT
- SERVICE GROUP
- DEPARTMENT
- DIVISION

CITIZENS OF FORT COLLINS
- **CITY COUNCIL**
  - **BOARDS & COMMISSIONS**
  - **CITY ATTORNEY**
  - **CITY MANAGER**
  - **MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGE**

POLICE SERVICES
- INVESTIGATIONS
- INFORMATION SERVICES
- POUDRE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER
- PATROL
- OFFICE OF THE CHIEF
  - TRAINING
  - PUBLIC INFORMATION
  - PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

FINANCIAL SERVICES
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- FINANCE
- BUDGET
- AIRPORT

ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER/INTERNAL SERVICES
- MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SERVICES
  - APPLICATION SERVICES
  - INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES
- COMMUNICATION & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT
- HUMAN RESOURCES
- OPERATION SERVICES

UTILITY SERVICES
- **LIGHT & POWER OPERATIONS**
  - ELECTRIC SYSTEM DESIGN & IT
  - STANDARDS ENGINEERING
  - ELECTRIC SYSTEMS ENGINEERING
  - ELECTRIC FIELD SERVICES
    - SAFETY & TRAINING
    - FIELD OPERATIONS GROUP A
    - FIELD OPERATIONS GROUP B
- **WATER ENGINEERING & FIELD OPERATIONS**
  - WATER FIELD SERVICES
    - METERS
    - COLLECTION SYSTEM
    - DRAINAGE SYSTEM
    - DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM
    - CONSTRUCTION
  - WATER SYSTEMS ENGINEERING
  - DEVELOPMENT REVIEW
  - MASTER PLANNING & FLOODPLAIN ADMIN.
- **WATER RESOURCES & TREATMENT OPERATIONS**
  - WATER RECLAMATION/BIOSOLIDS
  - WATER PRODUCTION
  - ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
  - PROCESS & SUPERVISORY CONTROL
  - REGULATIONS & GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
  - WATER RESOURCES
- **CUSTOMER & EMPLOYEE RELATIONS**
  - FINANCE & BUDGET
  - UTILITIES TECHNOLOGY & CUSTOMER SERVICE

DEPUTY CITY MANAGER/COMMUNITY SERVICES
- **CULTURE, PARKS, RECREATION AND ENVIRONMENT**
  - NATURAL RESOURCES
    - NATURAL AREAS
    - ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
  - RECREATION
  - PARK PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
  - PARKS
    - FORESTRY AND HORTICULTURE
    - PARKS AND CEMETERIES
    - GOLF
  - CULTURAL SERVICES
- **CITY CLERK**
  - TRANSPORTATION GROUP
    - PLANNING
    - TRAFFIC
    - ENGINEERING
      - DEVELOPMENT REVIEW
      - INSPECTION
      - PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT
      - STREET OVERSIZING & CAPITAL PROJECTS
      - SURVEYING
    - STREETS
    - PARKING
- **PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT & TRANSPORTATION**
  - TRANSFORT/DIAL-A-RIDE
  - ADVANCE PLANNING
  - CURRENT PLANNING
  - NEIGHBORHOOD & BUILDING
    - ADMINISTRATION & CONTRACT LICENSING
    - BUILDING CODE
    - NEIGHBORHOODS

07/08

B. PARKS & FACILITIES

The following tables provide an inventory of city-owned parks (Table 1) and specialized recreation facilities (Table 2), along with school district recreation facilities (Table 3). A detailed summary of the Fort Collins Compiled Inventory Data is found in a separate document.

Table 1: City-Owned Parks			
Alta Vista Park	Fossil Creek Park	Leisure Park	Romero Park
Avery Park	Freedom Square Park	Library Park	Rossborough Park
Beattie Park	Golden Meadows Park	Miramont Park	Soft Gold Park
Blevins Park	Greenbriar Park	Oak Street Plaza Park	Spencer Park
Buckingham Park	Harmony Park	Old Fort Collins Heritage Park	Spring Canyon Park
City Park	Homestead Park	Overland Park	Spring Park
Cottonwood Glen Park	Indian Hills Park	Provincetown Park	Stewart Case Park
Creek Side Park	Jefferson St. Park	Rabbit Brush	Troutman Park
East Side Park	Landings Park	Ridgeview Park	Warren Park
Edora Park	Lee Martinez Park	Rogers Park	Washington Park
English Ranch Park	Legacy Park	Rolland Moore Park	Westfield Park
			Woodwest Park

Table 2: City-owned Specialized Recreation Facilities	
Edora Pool Ice Center	Pottery Studio at City Park
Northside Aztlan Community Center	Club Tico
Fort Collins Senior Center	City Park Pool (outdoor)
The Farm at Lee Martinez Park	City Park Railway
Youth Activity Center	Archery Range
Mulberry Pool	Rolland Moore Racquet Complex

Table 3: School District Recreation Facilities		
Bacon ES	Kruse ES	Moore ES
Bauder ES	Laurel ES	O'Dea ES
Beattie ES	Lesher JRHS	Olander ES
Bennet ES	Lincoln JRHS	Poudre SRHS
Blevins JRHS	Linton ES	Preston JRHS
Boltz JRHS	Lopez ES	Putnam ES
Centennial SRHS	McGraw ES	Riffenburgh ES
Dunn ES	Moore ES	Rocky Mountain SRHS
Ft Collins SRHS	O'Dea ES	Shepardson ES
Fossil Ridge SRHS	Olander ES	Tavelli ES
Irish ES	Linton ES	Webber JRHS
Johnson ES	Lopez ES	Werner ES
Kinard Core Knowledge JRHS (under construction)	McGraw ES	Zach ES

C. PARTNERING ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES

Staff works with several outside community partners to provide services. For example, the Recreation Department partners with the Poudre School District (PSD) for the use of facilities for athletic and recreation programs. The Parks and Cemeteries Department staff collaborates with PSD for maintenance of parks and playgrounds that are located adjacent to schools. The Department also works with Poudre School District to locate parks next to schools allowing the two entities to share costs A listing of Poudre School District schools can be found on the School's web-page: www.psd.k12. co.us/.

The City partners with Colorado State University (CSU) for the use of the gymnasium at the Student Recreation Center for youth basketball leagues. Recreation also partners with PV Health Systems, Fort Collins Baseball Club, Fort Collins Soccer etc.. With limited funding and an increasing number of facilities and services being provided, it will be important to continue to seek out partnership opportunities to maximize resources.

D. REGIONAL ALTERNATIVE PROVIDERS

There are a number of alternative recreation providers in the Fort Collins area including federal, state, and county agencies that provide water-based recreation, passive open space activities, and active sports facilities. The City of Fort Collins' Natural Area Program manages several large natural areas available for Fort Collins and area residents to enjoy including Soapstone, Bobcat, and Coyote Ridge Natural Areas.

Federal agencies include Roosevelt National Forest, Rocky Mountain National Park, and Pawnee National Grasslands. These areas are located within an hour and a half drive of Fort Collins, offer beautiful mountain and prairie scenery, and provide activities like hiking, backpacking, camping, wildlife viewing, and fishing.

Colorado State Parks manages a number of recreation areas including Lory State Park located directly west of the City in the foothills. Boyd Lake State Recreation Area located south of the City consists of 197 acres of land and 1,747 acres of water. The Colorado Division of Wildlife manages several lakes, and wildlife reservoirs in the area including Wellington Reservoirs #3 and #4, Smith Reservoir, Watson Lake, and the Wellington State Wildlife Area. These facilities provide opportunities for picnicking, backcountry camping, hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, rock climbing, waterfowl hunting, sailing, boating, and swimming.

Larimer County manages Horsetooth Reservoir and Horsetooth Mountain Park, which are immediately west of Fort Collins and provide numerous water-based recreation activities as well as hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, and picnicking. The County also manages large open space areas like Red Mountain Ranch west of Soapstone and smaller parks such as Strauss Cabin, Bingham Hill, and Lions Park. These parks include amenities such as historical structures, scenic views, and passive areas for fishing, picnicking and hiking.

Colorado State University (CSU), located in Fort Collins and home to 25,000 students, provides a number of indoor multi-use recreation facilities for students including basketball courts, boxing, a challenge course, group fitness rooms, indoor cycling, inline skating, a pool and spa, racquetball and volleyball courts, and weight/cardio equipment. However, with an increasing student population and need to use University-owned land for academic and administrative purposes, greenspace on campus has been declining in recent years, increasing use and wear on city parks.

Federal, State, and County parks and recreation areas are heavily used by residents and by visitors as well. With many of these parks at capacity on the weekends due to visitors, many locals choose to use city parks, which has a domino effect and results in increased use and need for maintenance.

Alternative recreation program providers include other government agencies, for-profit businesses and nonprofit organizations. Some area nonprofit organizations include:
- Boys and Girls Club of Larimer County
- City of Loveland Natural Areas
- Elderhaus Recreation Center
- Lambda Community Center
- Larimer County Parks and Open Lands
- YMCA of the Rockies

CHAPTER II
Project Purpose, Vision, and Integration

»CHAPTER II
Project Purpose, Vision, and Integration

A. PROJECT PURPOSE AND THE CHALLENGE

Purpose of this Plan
The purpose of the Parks and Recreation Policy Plan Update is to assess the park and recreation needs of the Fort Collins community, evaluate the City's current services, and provide clear and implementable recommendations to deliver the level of service needed to meet the community's changing needs for the next ten years.

The Challenge
The City's **challenge** is using limited resources to provide exceptional parks, trails, and recreation services (the System) to a growing community. In order to provide exceptional service for an exceptional community, the City needs to continue to provide park and recreation services, at least at current levels, as our community grows.

With the increasing costs to operate and maintain the System, it is imperative that Fort Collins take into consideration the additional costs associated with building out and operating planned future parks, trails, and indoor recreation facilities. Long-term sustainability is dependent on prioritized decision-making, identification of core services, and maximized use of resources.

B. VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

"Fort Collins' parks, trails, and recreation facilities give quality of life and beauty to our city. These essential assets connect people to place, self, and others. Fort Collins' residents treasure and care for this legacy and will build on the past to provide for future generations."

The Visioning Process
Input from a dedicated community and staff was used to establish this vision to guide the future work needed to maintain and develop the City's park and recreation system. Hundreds of concerned residents have made suggestions and recommendations showing their desire to continue to improve the community and create a legacy for future generations.

Guiding Principles

Community Benefit
The City's parks and recreation system provides essential services that benefit citizens by creating a livable, dynamic, and economically vibrant community.

Inclusive and Accessible
Residents have access to, feel safe and welcome in, and are equitably served by the system.

Stewardship
Residents value and care for public spaces and resources. They recognize they are stewards of the built and natural world and are responsible for sustaining them for future generations. Facilities are designed to minimize impacts on the environment and incorporate "green practices."

Excellence
A full spectrum of diverse, high-quality parks and recreation services brings wellness, fulfillment, and richness to the lives of Fort Collins' residents.

Beauty and Innovation
Beautiful and innovative public spaces provide places for a wide variety of experiences, ranging from quiet contemplation and relaxation to active recreation.

Future Needs
Lands are acquired and developed to provide a growing population with a wide variety of high-quality services and facilities, while balancing the operation and maintenance costs of these services with citizens willingness to fund them.

Civic Involvement
Residents are involved in the planning, development, and programming of the City's parks and recreation system.

C. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Ensure Fort Collins' parks, trails, and recreation legacy for future generations
- Fully programmed, fully operational, and well-maintained parks, trails, facilities and programs that meet both current and future needs.
- The current high public satisfaction levels (good or very good survey ratings) for overall quality of park and recreation services is standard.
- The public and local leaders are educated about the value, benefits, conditions, and needs of Fort Collins' parks and recreation system.
- Planning, management, development, and funding of the System is coordinated with other city planning efforts and needs.
- Residents are engaged users and stewards of Fort Collins' System.
- The System is durable and sustainable utilizing "green practices" to reduce environmental impacts and construction, operation and maintenance costs.

Provide a wide variety of high quality recreation services and opportunities for all residents
- Neighborhood parks are within walking distance of the neighborhoods they are intended to serve.
- Community parks serve large residential areas of the city.
- An appropriate level of service for parks, trails, and recreation facilities is established to meets changing needs that result from a growing population and changing demographics.
- Full-service community centers include a wide variety of passive and active recreation amenities and are well distributed throughout the community.
- Appropriate recreational uses are established on open lands.
- Partnerships with recreational user groups, Poudre School District, Colorado State University and others are continued and strengthened.

Create an interconnected regional and local trail system
- Trails are safe and convenient and are connected to residential areas, civic institutions and businesses, and to neighboring communities.
- The trail system is connected to the on-street bicycle and pedestrian network.
- The trail system is located and designed with the goal of minimizing or eliminating negative impacts or damage to the environment. This guiding principle applies to the location of new trails and to the location of renovated trail section, including the conversion of the trails from asphalt to concrete.
- During renovation, existing trail placements are reviewed for possible adjustments to lessen impacts to environmentally sensitive areas.
- The City's hard-surfaced trail system connects with the planned natural surfaced trails on open lands.

Develop parks and recreation facilities and programs that promote community in the City
- Parks, trails, and recreation facilities are integrated into neighborhoods.
- Staff partners with schools and others to provide maximum public benefit.
- Parks in the Old Town area are developed to add value and attract residents and visitors.

Parks, trails and recreation facilities and programs will focus on enhanced sustainability and green practices
- The development, operation, and maintenance of the Parks and Recreation System shall support the policies in the City's Air Quality Plan. Parks and Recreation shall proactively identify and implement actions that improve Fort Collins' air quality.
- The development, operation and maintenance of the Parks and Recreation System shall support the City's Solid Waste Reduction Program. Parks and Recreation shall proactively identify and implement actions that reduce, reuse and recycle.
- The development, operation and maintenance of the Parks and Recreation System shall support the City's Climate Action Plan. Parks and Recreation shall proactively identify and implement actions that reduce Fort Collins' contribution to total global carbon emissions.
- The development, operation, and maintenance of the Parks and Recreation System's buildings shall comply with the City's "Building Design Standards." Parks and Recreation shall proactively identify and implement actions so that new buildings over 5,000 gross feet meet LEED Gold Certification, and other buildings incorporate LEED recommendations. Where feasible, LEED principles will be applied to smaller buildings.
- The LEED Sustainable Sites Initiative (currently in development) will be applied to future park designs. The existing LEED green building rating system addresses some site issues, but does not fully address landscape sustainability. The Sustainable Sites Initiative will fill in this gap.
- Carbon footprint analysis will be a part of the design, and operation and maintenance planning process for new parks, trails, and facilities. Staff will work with Environmental Services to utilize best practices and emerging technology.
- Staff will develop an environmental/sustainability best practices use manual and will train Parks and Recreation employees to utilize these best practices. The manual will provide guidance on: fertilizers; pesticides and herbicides; application practices; low emission equipment; no-mow zones; water and energy conservation; and other best management practices and policies. In addition, the manual will be periodically updated to reflect current best practices.
- The City will continue to promote public art and other passive cultural activities to make spaces more attractive and usable.

D. VISION STRATEGIES

Partnership Strategy: Continue to develop and maintain effective public and private partnerships
- Joint-Use – Agreements are developed that ensure school grounds and other public land remains available for public use.
- Coordinated – Staff collaborates with other public agencies and private organizations to maximize opportunities.
- Consistent – Partnerships are managed in a consistent fashion, using effective and well-documented communications.

Development Strategy: Continue to design and build excellent parks, trails, and recreation facilities
- Appropriate – Each park, trail and recreation facility is developed according to its own characteristics and according to its role in the overall System.
- Environment – Developed facilities are durable/sustainable with "green practices."
- Unique – Special features of each site are utilized and built upon.
- Balanced – Appropriate balance of active and passive recreation within each park is provided.
- Accessible – Facilities are developed that are readily available to residents and meet or exceed the requirements of the Americans with Disability Act.
- Connected – The park and recreation system is connected and accessible to the community.

Management Strategy: Continue to develop Best Management Practices
- Environment – "Green practices" and durable/sustainable methods and materials are used to build and care for The System.
- Accurate – Data collection, monitoring and analysis provides accurate information to be the basis for decisions and management of The System.
- Effective – Criteria to monitor programs for relevance and effectiveness are developed to meet stated needs from the community.
- Consistent - A Pricing and Cost Recovery Philosophy for programs and services is established based on the value that is provided to the community.
- Staff continues to develop management plans for new parks.

E. INTEGRATION WITH THE EXISTING PLAN

The City of Fort Collins completed a comprehensive Parks and Recreation Policy Plan in 1996. This plan assessed existing parks, recreation facilities and trails as well as school district and regional resources. The plan also evaluated the participation rates and assessed the needs of the City's various recreational facilities. Policies and recommendations were provided for parkland standards, parkland classifications and guidelines, and improvements to the City's park and recreation system.

The Policy Plan update integrates the information provided in the 1996 Plan, assesses demographic changes, and identifies park and recreation trends over the past ten years. The inventory, assessments, and standards set in the previous plan are used as a benchmark and baseline for analysis. Based on extensive community input through numerous focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and a statistically-valid survey, a quantitative and qualitative inventory and assessment of Fort Collins' recreation resources, and the consultant team's local and national expertise, recommendations have been formed to identify priorities for funding and an action plan for the next ten years.

Evaluation of the Fort Collins 1996 Parks and Recreation Policy Plan

The Park and Recreation Policy Plan Update project was initiated in October 2006 with a start-up meeting with key department staff and the consultant team. This meeting began with a discussion about the strengths and weaknesses of the 1996 Policy Plan.

Staff has been satisfied with the direction and guidance provided by the 1996 Plan and shared perceptions and examples of what has worked well with the Plan over the past ten years. The service standards included effective park design guidelines and a level of service that has been well received by the community. The park classifications are defensible, and they guide and justify decisions made about park and component development and placement. Given the steady growth of the community from 100,000 in 1995 to 119,497 in 2000 to 130,681 in 2006, the 1996 Plan successfully guided the delivery of parks and recreation service to all areas of the City. One great example of this foresight has been the planning and setting aside of land for future recreation centers in both Fossil Creek and Spring Canyon Community Parks.

Staff also expressed that there are parts of the Plan that have not served the department and community's needs as well as hoped. For instance, in recent years the plans for park and recreation development have not been in balance with the declining financial resources needed to maintain them. The need to construct durable and sustainable facilities and reduce operation and maintenance costs was not a predominate area of discussion in the 1996 plan.

The consultant team lent its expertise stating that the plan was well-done, but is a reflection of its time and is very similar to most of the park and recreation master plans done during the 1990's. Some primary examples of a trend during that time are the use of park classifications with pre-determined components, dependent primarily on a capacities analysis (such as: how many do you need to serve 1000 people), and largely focusing on physical planning and development. The consultant team uses an enhanced approach, which includes a composite values analysis methodology called the **Geo-Referenced Amenities Standards Program (GRASP®)**. This methodology builds on the traditional capacity analysis, but can track not only the quantity or capacity, but also the quality of components of an entire system. The basis of this methodology is the measurement of components in parks and recreation facilities, an assessment of the mixture and quality of components, evaluation of how existing resources are meeting the needs of the community, and the identification of recommendations for allocation of funds based on these unique needs.

Another area of concern with the 1996 Plan was that it focused primarily on park and trail planning and there was little assessment of and consideration for indoor facilities and programming. The Recreation Department was provided limited guidance with regard to improvements to existing amenities and the development of new indoor recreation facilities. In addition, the Plan did not adequately address trends in recreation programming; it only assessed historical participation rates. It did not provide a formal policy or guiding principles nor provide a vision for providing programming for different demographic groups or management of these programs. Currently recreation programming is guided by program evaluations and community demands, which can bias toward building on historical trends and programs and is limited in its proactive approach to changing demographics.

The Plan did not specifically address the Park Department's operations; however, the Department does have a separate Park Maintenance Plan that addresses many operational issues. Park and recreation agencies across the country have discovered that as the economy has tightened, it is imperative to specifically identify resources necessary to support the increasing number and types of parks and recreation facilities to serve growing communities. In light of changes in the economy, operations and maintenance funding sources are not keeping pace with levels of service and maintenance funding has now moved to a higher priority.

F. PROJECT METHODOLOGY

The following task list provided the framework for this planning effort:
Task 1: Public Involvement and Goal Setting

- Orientation meeting with the project staff, discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the 1996 Plan.
- Meetings with the Park and Recreation Board, the Project Team, the Project Manager, and staff to review task status.
- Three public involvement focus group meetings with over 115 Fort Collins residents and stakeholders to gather broad-based community input, provide opportunity for discussion, and address pertinent issues. Invitees were the general public, park and recreation users, community representatives, and partner organizations from the following:
    - » Private sports associations
    - » Nonprofit recreation organizations
    - » Colorado State University & Poudre School District
    - » Local recreation businesses
    - » Youth
    - » Recreation program users and non-users
    - » Park and facility user groups
- Meetings with the City Council, Boards and Commissions were conducted to gather information on key issues, challenges, and opportunities.
- The initial findings were presented to the Parks and Recreation Board, city staff, stakeholders, and the public.
- The draft and final Master Plan Update documents were presented in public hearings and to the general public.

Task 2: Data Collection/Existing Conditions Inventory/User Survey

Demographic and Trends Analysis
The consultant compiled all information available from Fort Collins's past and current planning efforts, the U.S. Census Bureau, Colorado Demography Office, and ESRI Business Solutions. Additional information was provided on community trends, markets, and alternative providers.

Inventory of Services and Classification of Needs
The consultant developed a comprehensive assessment of City parks, recreation, trails, and special use facilities to determine current conditions, use patterns, and economic impacts. All mapping of facilities and open spaces was incorporated into a dynamic digital database that is now the property of the City.

Statistically-Valid Survey
RRC Associates, in conjunction with GreenPlay, administered a statistically-valid, random sampling needs assessment survey by mail, with a return of 444 completed surveys from the community, representing a statistically-valid response rate of approximately 12% percent. The survey was administered by mail. Overall results for the entire survey have approximately a 95% level of confidence with a margin of error of +/- 4.65% overall.

Task 3: Analysis

Facilities and Programs
A comprehensive assessment of the City's parks, trails, and special use facilities determined current conditions, use patterns, and economic impacts. In addition, similar services provided by other agencies were considered in the analysis. The assessment identifies general acquisition opportunities along with future parkland and trails development priorities.

Financial Resource Analysis
An analysis of the existing recreation and park facility fee policy considered several models regarding policies and philosophies for fees and revenue generation. The information was organized and formulated in a manner to provide recommendations on how future decisions can be made to meet budget needs. A variety of funding resources was explored with the staff, Board, and City Council.

Level of Service Standards
The composite values analysis methodology is a GreenPlay team innovation, called the Geo-Referenced Amenities Standards Program (GRASP®). This methodology builds on traditional capacity analysis, but can track not only the quantity (or capacity), but the quality of components of an entire parks and recreation system, including core program areas.

GIS-Based GRASP® Perspective Maps
The GreenPlay team developed GIS-based **GRASP® analysis perspectives** for the major components of the Master Plan determined through the planning process. A base inventory map is supplemented by level of service perspectives of the priority amenities of the community. This analysis mapping has been prepared using multiple perspectives including both neighborhood and community level service and addressing both indoor and outdoor amenities.

Task 4: Recommendations and Action Strategies

The recommendations address opportunities for property acquisition, preservation, conservation, and development, as they relate to the anticipated growth and subsequent recreational needs of the community. The consultant team identified the potential use of currently developed and undeveloped City properties.

CHAPTER III

Fort Collins Community Profile and Demographics

A. MARKET ANALYSIS

Community Profile/Demographic Information

Service Area and Population
The primary service area for this analysis is Fort Collins, Colorado. According to the City of Fort Collins website (http://www.fcgov.com/fcfacts.php), Fort Collins is nestled against the foothills of the Rocky Mountains and alongside the banks of the Cache La Poudre River, is approximately 5,000 feet above sea level, and enjoys a four-season climate with an average of 300 days of sunshine and 14.5 inches of precipitation a year.

Fort Collins was founded as a military fort in 1864 and incorporated as a town in 1873. It is a home rule city with a Council/Manager form of government. The Council consists of six district council members who are elected on a non-partisan basis for a four-year term and a Mayor who is elected at-large on a non-partisan basis for a two-year term. This rapidly urbanizing community operates under a sophisticated and comprehensive development plan and is a full-service city. Fort Collins is home to Colorado State University, an outstanding public school system and is the county seat of Larimer County.

The population growth of Fort Collins, following City Plan methodology, will see the build-out of the City by approximately 2023, with a population of about 214,600. Demographic information over this time frame will help the City understand what recreational facilities and services should be provided to meet these changing demographics.

All auxiliary information for this report such as population, income, race, educational attainment, age and gender was derived from ESRI Business Information Solutions for Fort Collins, Colorado. Current and future population projections were also obtained from ESRI Business Solutions.

Population Forecasts
The population of Fort Collins is forecast to experience steady growth from 130,681 in 2006 to 141,566 in 2011, at a rate of 1.61% annually, which is slightly higher than the national average of 1.3% and slightly lower than the State of Colorado (1.75%) as depicted in **(Figure 2)**.

Figure 2: Population Projections 2000 to 2011
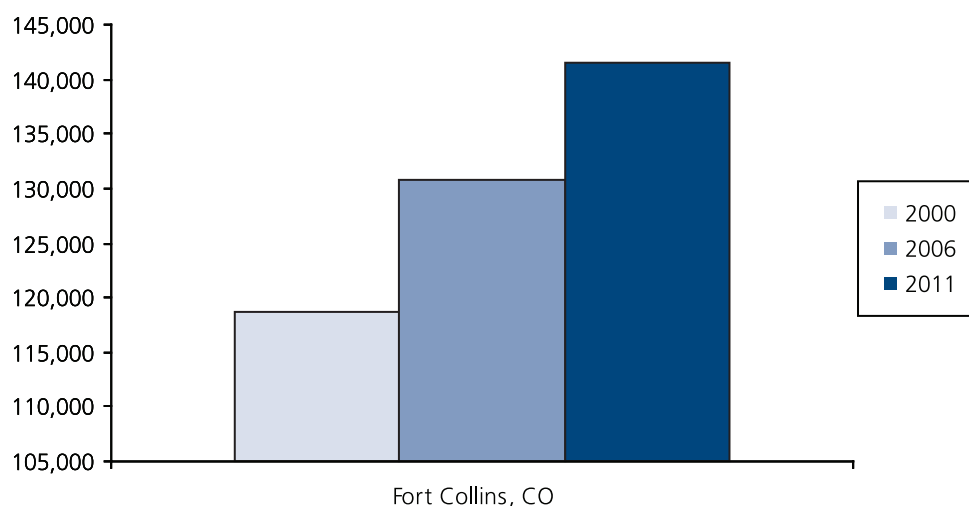
Age Distribution
The Fort Collins age breakdown is used to separate the population into age-sensitive user groups and to retain the ability to adjust to future age-sensitive trends.

- **Under 5 years:** (6%) This group represents users of preschool and tot programs and facilities, and as trails and park users, they are often in strollers. They are the future participants in youth activities.
- **5 to 14 years:** (10.8%) This group represents current youth program participants.
- **15 to 24 years:** (22.5%) This group represents teen/young adult program participants moving out of the youth programs and into adult programs. Members of this age group are often seasonal employment seekers.
- **25 to 34 years:** (19.9%) This group represents involvement in adult programming with characteristics of beginning long-term relationships and establishing families.
- **35 to 54 years:** (25.4%) This group represents users of a wide range of adult programming and park facilities. Their characteristics extend from having children using preschool and youth programs to becoming empty nesters.
- **55 to 64 years:** (7.7%) This group represents users of older adult programming exhibiting the characteristics of approaching retirement or already retired and typically enjoying grandchildren.
- **65 years plus:** (7.8%) Nationally, this group will be doubling in 14 years. Recreation centers, senior centers, and other senior programs can be a significant link in this group's health care system as the group ranges from very healthy, active to more physically inactive seniors.

Population distribution by age for Fort Collins is demonstrated in **(Figure 3).**

Figure 3: Population Age Distribution – Fort Collins, Colorado (2006)
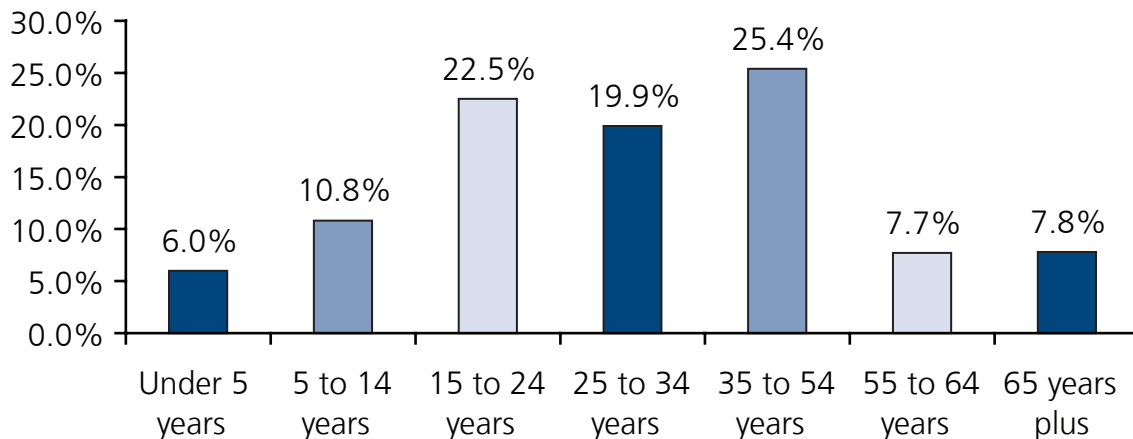
Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions

Population Comparisons
The State of Colorado is within 2 percentage points of national population percentages in all categories, except 65 years plus where the state has 2.6% less of the population. The population of Fort Collins is considerably different than the national averages in many age categories. It is slightly lower than the national averages in the younger age group categories (under 5 and 5-14). Yet, Fort Collins is significantly higher in the 15-24 (22.5%) and the 25-34 age groups (19.9%) compared to CO (14.1% and 14.5%, respectively) and the US (14.2% and 13.2%, respectively). The 35-54 and 55-64 age groups are notably lower than national averages by 5% and 3% respectively. It is also interesting to observe that the 65 and older group (7.8%) is remarkably smaller than national averages (12.5%).

Figure 4: Population Comparisons – Fort Collins, State of CO, and United States (2006)
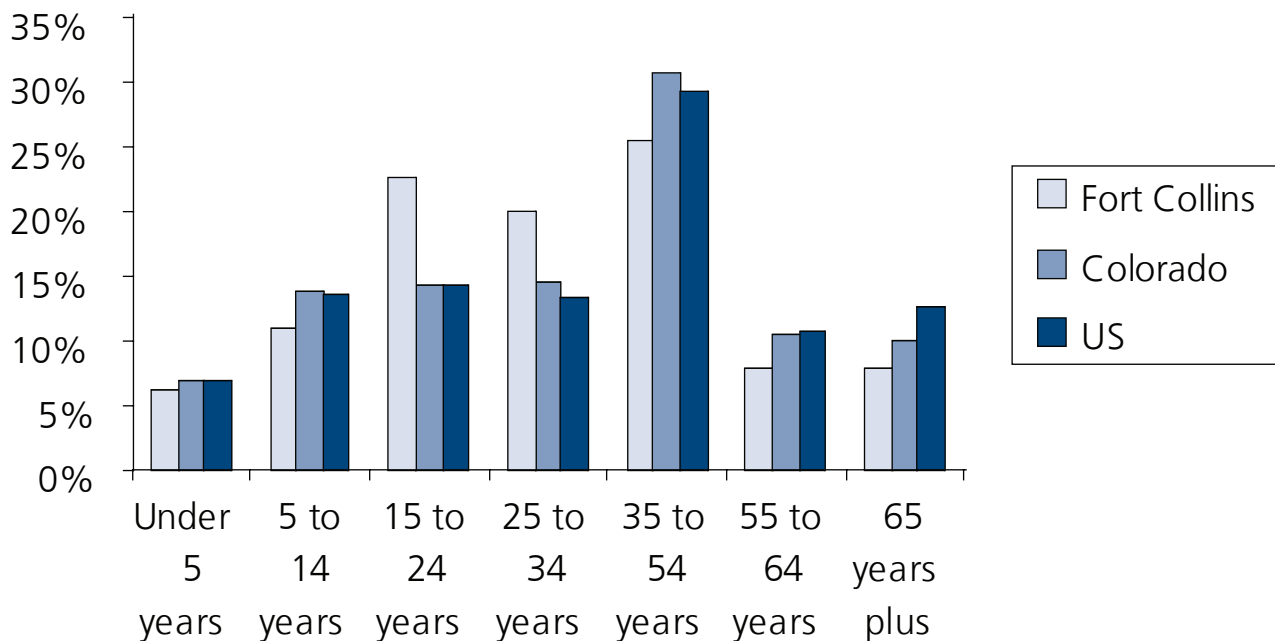
Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions

These statistics illustrate that Fort Collins has a high percentage of the population in the 15-24 age group as the result of the presence of Colorado State University. It appears that many of those students may stay in the Fort Collins area following graduation, considering the high percentage of the population in the 25-34 age range. This is likely associated with interest in participating in recreation activities that are available due to factors such as the geographic location and the high number and wide variety of parks, recreation facilities, and trails.

Based on the projections illustrated in (Figure 4), it is evident that Fort Collins' demographics will be changing over the next five years. The community's population will generally stay the same in the toddler (under 5) and youth (5-14) age groups. However, teens and young adults (15-24) and adults (25-34 and 35-54) will all decline by approximately a percentage point in each category. The aging of the Baby Boomers is illustrated in the 2.1% increase in the 65 and older age group.

These changes in demographics are important to consider in providing various types of adult programming. The City should be cognizant of a potential increase in need for older adult programming. However, it is important to consider that many in the 55 and older age groups are much more active and have more disposable income than the "senior" generations before them.

(Figure 5) provides a graphic illustration of the changes in age groups between 2006 and 2011.

Figure 5: Demographic Changes by Age Group (2006-2011)
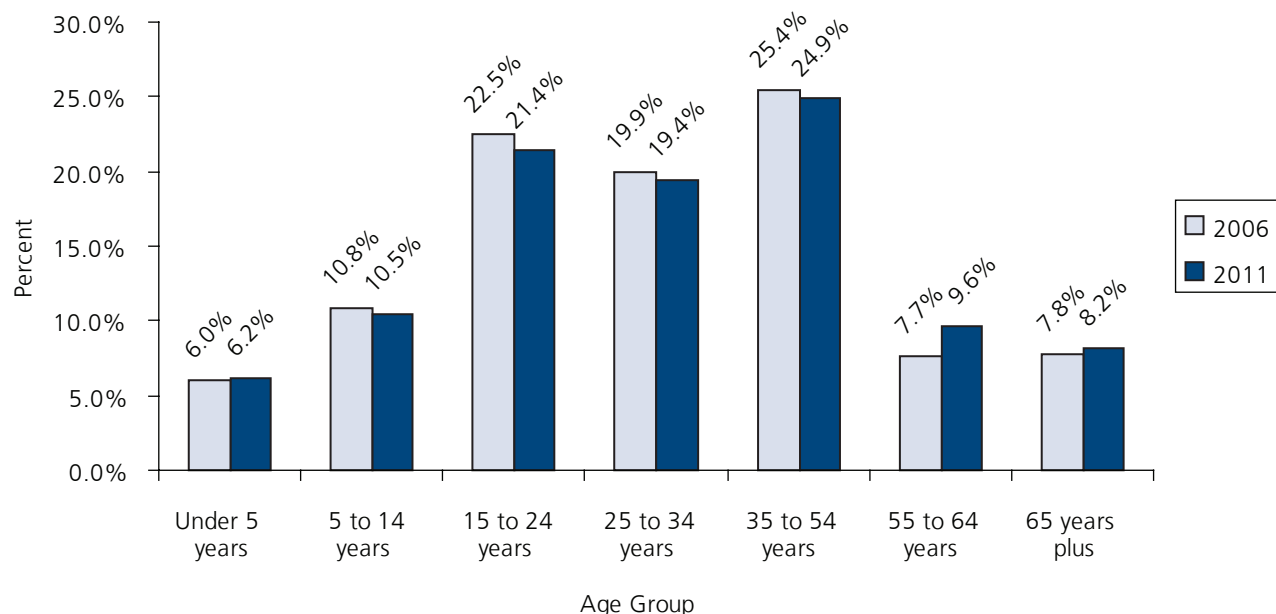
Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions
Gender
The 2006 population for Fort Collins consists of 50.2% male and 49.8% female. The state of Colorado consists of 50.3% male and 49.7% female, and the United States consists of 49.2% male and 50.8% female. Fort Collins' population, as well as Colorado's, has a slightly higher male population than the rest of the country, which is a common characteristic of mountain communities and should be taken into account in the provision of recreation services.

Race

Table 4: Race Comparisions for 2006			
Race	Fort Collins	State of Colorado	United States
White Alone	88.3%	81.3%	73.0%
Black Alone	1.1%	3.9%	12.6%
American Indian Alone	0.6%	1.0%	0.9%
Asian or Pacific Islander Alone	2.9%	2.8%	4.4%
Some Other Race (alone)	0.1%	8.1%	6.4%
Two or More Races	2.7%	3.0%	2.8%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	10.3%	19.3%	14.8%

Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions

(Table 4) shows the race with the largest population is white (88.3%). Those of any race identifying themselves as Hispanic make up 10.3% of the total population. The increasing percentage of Hispanic origin in Fort Collins and in Colorado is important to recognize because it is projected to increase an additional 1.4% by 2011. Providing recreation opportunities and amenities that celebrate Latino heritage, recreation, and culture may be very important in serving this portion of the population.

Education
A Bachelor's or a Master's degree is held by 48.4% of the Fort Collins population. By way of comparison, 32.7% of the population in the state of Colorado and 24.4% of the population in the US has a Bachelor's or a Master's degree. A large percentage of the population attending Colorado State University (and having lower incomes) as well as a significantly higher proportion of population having higher education degrees (and likely higher incomes than national averages) may correspond with the area's heaviest percentages in the extreme low and high income ranges. The educational attainment breakdown is shown in **(Table 5)**.

Table 5: Educational Attainment – 25 Years and Older (2000)			
Degree	Fort Collins	State of CO	United States
Less then 9th Grade	2.0%	4.8%	7.5%
9th-12th Grade, No Diploma	4.0%	8.2%	12.1%
High School Graduate	16.4%	23.2%	28.6%
Some College, No Diploma	22.7%	24.0%	21.0%
Associate	16.5%	7.0%	6.3%
Bachelor's	30.0%	21.6%	15.5%
Master's/Prof/Doctorate	18.4%	11.1%	8.9%

Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions

Household Income
The estimated 2008 median household income for Fort Collins is $58,723 and the per capita income is $29,482. The median household income for the state of Colorado is $62,469 and the US is $54,749, while per capita income for the state was $31,359 and the US was $28,151.

The largest share of households (20.2%) earns $50,000-$74,999 followed next by those earning more than $100,000 (19.8%). It is significant, however, to note that 19.7 percent of the population earns less than $24,999, which is likely the result of the high percentage of university students **(see Figure 6)**

Figure 6: Household Income – Fort Collins compared to CO and the US (2008)
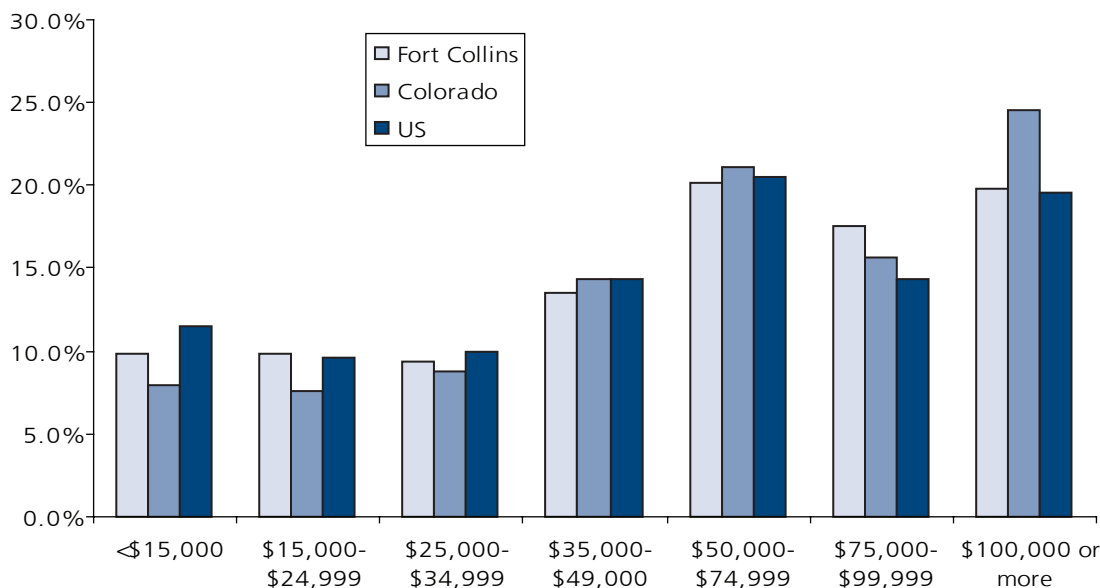
Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions

In addition to the shifting percentages of Fort Collins' age groups, it is important to analyze the community's shifting income levels. According to ESRI Business Information Solutions (based on the US Census) the median household income in Fort Collins will significantly increase from $58,723 in 2008 to $68,686 in 2013 as shown in Figure 7). We can assume, based on the trendline below, that Fort Collins will see an increased household income. However, due to the current state of the economy nationwide, it is difficult to predict or compare household income changes in the coming years.

Figure 7: Forecasted Household Income change in Fort Collins from 2000-2013
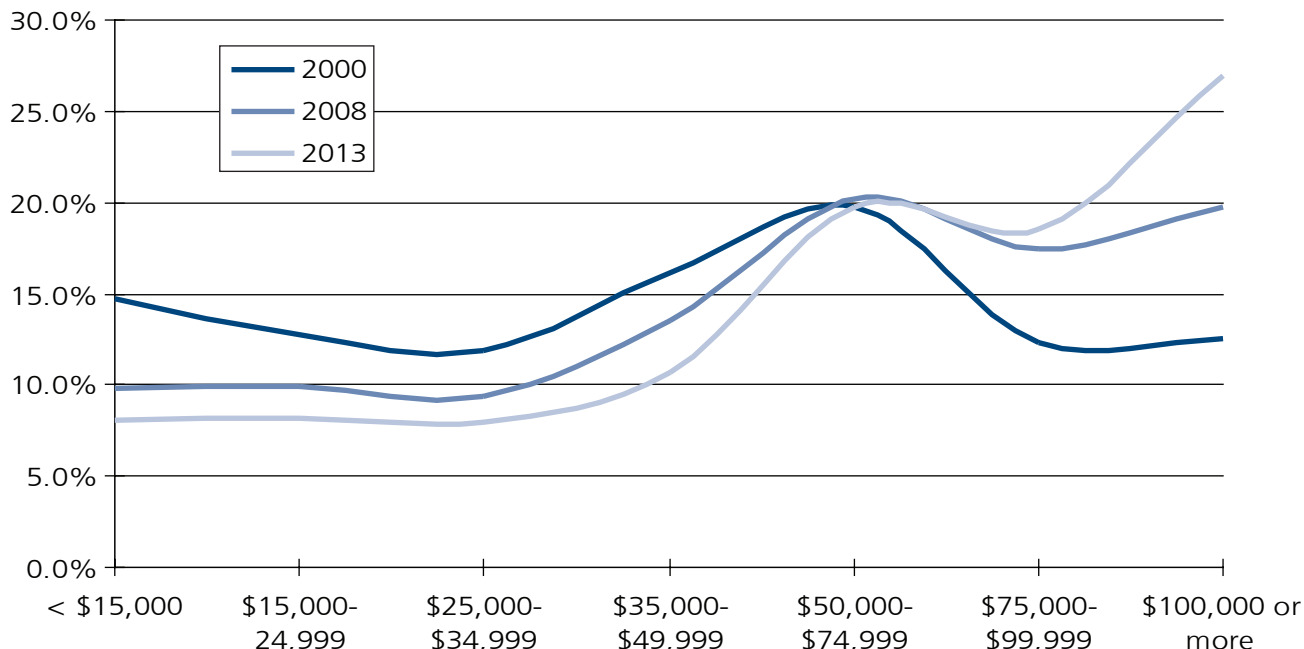
Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions

Size and Units

The 2006 average household size in Fort Collins is 2.45 people. Nationally, the average size is 2.59 and in the state of Colorado it is 2.54. Table 6 shows that the highest category of housing units (57%) is owner-occupied in Fort Collins, strongly followed by rental-occupied at 36.7%. These percentages generally stay the same at 56.4% and 36.7%, respectively, for 2011.

Table 6: Housing Units (2006)			
Degree	Fort Collins	Colorado State	United States
Owner Occupied Housing Units	57.0%	62.7%	61.6%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	36.7%	26.3%	28.9%
Vacant Housing Units	6.3%	11.1%	9.0%

Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions

Health and Obesity Trends
The United Health Foundation has ranked Colorado 16th in its 2007 State Health Rankings, unchanged from 2006. The State's biggest strengths include:

- Lower prevalence of obesity when compared with most states, with 18.2% of the population considered as obese. However, consistent with the national trends of increasing obesity rates, Colorado went from an obesity rate of 6.9% in 1990 to 18.2% in 2007. This increasing obesity rate in Colorado could therefore be considered a challenge more than a strength.
- Few poor physical health days per month at 2.9 days in the previous 30 days.
- Low rate of cancer deaths at 176.8 deaths per 100,000 population
- Low rate of preventable hospitalizations with 56.2 discharges per 1,000 Medicare enrollees.

Some of the challenges the State faces include:

- Limited access to adequate prenatal care with 68.6 percent of pregnant women receiving adequate care
- High rate of uninsured population at 17.2 percent
- Low per capita public health spending

Source: http://www.unitedhealthfoundation.org/media2007/shrmediakit/ahr2007.pdf

The presence of opportunities for physical activity has been found to have a positive effect on the number of people who are physically active, making park and recreation agencies significant contributors in the continuum of health care in our country.

RELEVANCE TO THE CHALLENGE
Demographic Findings

Fort Collins' Community Profile and Demographics provides key information in identifying the current and future needs of the City's residents for park and recreation services, facilities, and programs. The City is forecast to experience steady growth from 130,681 in 2006 to 141,566 in 2011, at a rate of 1.61% annually. The City will continue to serve a community that has a significantly higher population of teens and young adults. However, over the next 5 years there will be a slight decline (1%) in these age groups, as well as a slight increase (2.1%) in the 65 and older age group. This projection may correlate with the significant increase in the median income from $54,463 in 2006 to $64,344 in 2011. It is also important to note that the city's Hispanic community will continue to increase to 11.7% of the population by 2011.

These demographic findings relate directly to our "Challenge" by providing information as to what the community's needs, desires, and ability to pay are for recreation programs, existing facilities, and future facilities. For example, trends may indicate Fort Collins' young population may strongly demand more active, individual activities (i.e. - cycling, skateboarding, indoor rock climbing), whereas the aging population may desire more ways to maintain and enhance their health (i.e. – trails, natural areas, fitness classes and active social events). The City may also work to celebrate its diversity by providing more ethnic and cultural programs and special events. In addition, the increasing affluence of the community should be taken into consideration in establishing pricing and cost recovery goals.

A. PUBLIC INPUT

Community and Stakeholder Input

During the week of February 12-16, 2007, numerous meetings were conducted with focus groups, stakeholders, park and recreation facility users, Board members, and City staff. Information gathering and staff interviews were also held to identify key organizational and planning issues.

The City invited a wide variety of organizations to participate in the focus groups. Participants were asked a series of questions and contributed to a group discussion about their current relationship with the City, as well as their perspectives on the future.

Focus Group Findings

Over 115 citizens participated in three, two-hour focus groups that were open to the public. Participants represented parks and recreation users, non-users, parents of children who participate in programs, concerned residents, business representatives, and partnering organizations. The consultant facilitated the discussions and led the participants through a Strengths, Weaknesses, and Opportunities Analysis with a series of questions to gain input on a broad range of issues about or affecting services. The following are summaries of participant responses.

Residency and Demographics

It is evident that Fort Collins has a high number of long-term residents and these residents have a vested interest in and truly care about their community. There was a strong representation of people who have lived in Fort Collins for many years and many who have moved to Fort Collins in recent years for the amenities and quality of life it provides. Participants included a wide variety of demographic and interest groups, including program participants, seniors, cyclists, swimmers, youth, and tennis players. The following is the breakdown of the length of residency of the focus group participants:

- 14.8% = <5 years
- 20.4% = 5-9 years
- 11.1% = 10-19 years
- 53.7% = 20+ years
- 0%   = Not a resident, but uses programs/services, or works in Fort Collins

Strengths of Fort Collins' Parks, Recreation, Facilities, Programs, and Trails
The diversity of recreation resources, activities, and opportunities currently provided is highly valued by the community. Some of the parks and amenities that were mentioned often were Edora Park, City Park, tennis courts, outdoor education at Fossil Creek, the skate park, and dog parks, to name a few. The sheer number of parks, amenities, and facilities was brought up in all of the focus groups and residents expressed that this is part of the reason that they have chosen to live here. It was also stated that these facilities are consistently used and well-used by the community. The City was applauded for the high level of maintenance for outdoor facilities, such as the tennis courts, turf fields, and community parks.

A complete listing of the categories that were identified as strengths by the focus groups is provided in **Table 7**.

Table 7: Strengths of Fort Collins Parks and Recreation	
Category	Description
Diversity of the Park & Recreation System	Edora is a great park with a wide variety of activities
	Good incorporation of natural areas into parks
	Collaboration with school grounds and parks
	Great dog parks
	Tremendous and well maintained tennis facilities
	Community use of City Park
	Protection of habitat and wildlife viewing opportunities
	Fossil Creek Park as outdoor education space
	Skate park and activities for kids
	Diversity of facilities and activities provided is incredible
Maintenance	Maintenance of parks is very good
	Tennis courts are well maintained
	High maintenance of turf
	Parks are very clean and there is no litter
Quantity and Use	Sheer number and extent of parks and facilities
	Number of tennis courts and location has kept up with population
	High use of EPIC, Northside Aztlan Center, and the YAC
	High number of athletic fields
Facilities & Programs	Staff is very helpful
	Kids programs are great and affordable
	Great coordination of programs by staff
	EPIC, Northside Aztlan, Pottery Studio, and the pools are great facilities
	Diversity of programs for many ages
Trails	Great job expanding the trail system
	New paved and wider trails
	Trails are off main roads
	Well-maintained, good snow removal
	Great bike trails

Major Weaknesses that Need to be Addressed in the Policy Plan Update
Participants felt that some of the major weaknesses are user conflicts at Edora Park and the need for new facilities, as the result of overuse and the limited capacity, of existing facilities. There was also discussion about the accessibility of specific amenities, such as restrooms being locked. There were many requests for additional trail connections and signage. Residents also requested that the City be environmentally friendly, by using more drought resistant landscaping and protecting the water quality of the Poudre River.

A complete listing of the categories that were identified as weaknesses by the focus groups is provided in **Table 8**.

Table 8: Weaknesses of Fort Collins' Parks and Recreation	
Category	Description
User Conflicts	Too many activities at Edora Park result in conflicting use of space and safety issues
Need New Facilities/ Amenities	More restrooms and drinking fountains
	Large multi-purpose athletic complex
	Lack of swim lanes and diving facilities
	Cycling park
	Youth sports complex
	Indoor tennis courts
	Lack of outdoor swimming for adults
	Parks with multiple tennis courts (for tournaments)
	Larger dog parks
	Lighted ball fields
	Disc Golf Course is overused
	More multi-purpose indoor recreation facilities
	Closing the Youth Activity Center
Accessibility	Need restrooms open more of the time
	Lack of access to some school sites that used to be open
	Lack of parking at Rolland Moore Park for tennis
Trails	Better connections between bike lanes and trails
	Poor signage on trails
	Need bike paths in eastern part of town
	Senior Center is poorly connected to trail system
	Too many city divisions managing trails
Other Issues	Need for more cooperation with developers
	Need more drought tolerant landscaping
	Need additional funding for maintenance
	Water quality of Poudre River is poor
	Need more partnerships

Key Opportunities for the City of Fort Collins to Improve the Level of Service Provided to the Community

Participants' primary focus on opportunities included numerous additional programs and improvements to parks and facilities. In discussion about weaknesses, suggestions were made for the addition of new parks and facilities. Participants also felt that there are some facilities that are not currently meeting the needs of the community, and the City could better serve its residents if these facilities were repurposed.

A complete listing of the categories that were identified as Opportunities is provided in **Table 9**.

Table 9: Opportunities for Improvements to the Fort Collins System	
Category	Description
Additional Programs	Cross-country ski trips
	Indoor tennis
	Cycling programs
	Summer lacrosse programs youth and adult
	Model airplane program
	Youth Programs
	Programs to fight youth obesity
	Adaptive recreation opportunities
	Kayak lessons
	Allow use of golf course for disc golf at certain times
Improvements to Existing Parks	Message board at Edora Park on disc golf course
	Improvements to natural surface trails
	More indoor and outdoor swim lanes
	Improve lighting at tennis courts at Edora and Warren
	Nordic skiing at City Park
	More off leash dog areas
	Additional tennis courts at Rolland Moore
	Add shields to lighting at ballfields
	Edora Park disc golf course needs redesign
	Improve maintenance of soft surface trails
New Parks & Facilities	Outdoor special event facility
	More connections within trails system
	Recreation center on south side
	Nelson Farm neighborhood needs a park
	Northeast side of town needs parks
	Pools needed on south side of town
Repurposing Facilities	Legacy Park is underused
	Platform tennis is underused at Rolland Moore
	Add disc golf at Gateway Park in open space

Amenities Desired in Community and Neighborhood Parks

The City has documented the need for 19 new parks over the next 18 years. However, the funding to maintain these plans is no longer guaranteed. Input was sought to identify those amenities that residents want most in the development of new neighborhood and community parks. The information in **Table 10** illustrates those amenities identified in the discussion.

Table 10: Desired Amenities in Neighborhood and Community Parks	
Category	Description
Neighborhood Park Amenities	Natural areas, wetlands, streams
	Adequate trees, shrubs, benches, and passive areas
	Skate features for younger kids
	Tailor to neighborhood interests and input
	Dog bags
	Benches
	Shade trees
	Playgrounds
Community Park Amenities	A community cycling park
	Multi-use outdoor pool
	More disc golf
	More large open turf grass for active use
	Covered picnic areas
	More athletic fields
	"Alternative" sports (skateboarding, disc golf, BMX, etc.)
	Themes for community parks to make them unique
	Shade areas

Funding for Parks and Recreation: Taxes and/or Fees and Charges

Through this discussion, it became evident that residents are more supportive of subsidizing specific programs and activities than funding the operations and maintenance of City facilities. It is important to note that it was strongly emphasized by participants that fees need to be kept affordable, so that those of all income levels can participate. It was also stated that highly individualized activities should have fees that cover the cost of the program.

Participants also suggested looking at new funding sources, such as utility fees, property taxes, grassroots fundraising, and cooperative agreements. Residents understand that there is a cost to providing recreation services and maintaining facilities, but are resistant to raising user fees. Providing affordable recreation programming provides for a high quality of life in Fort Collins.

Priorities for the Parks & Recreation Policy Plan

Some common issues were identified to be taken into consideration in the Policy Plan. Participants were asked what the priorities should be for this Policy Plan Update to be a success. Participants expressed that there are high expectations for this plan and that it should not only provide priorities and an action plan for parks and recreation, but more broadly for the quality of life of the community. The top priorities that were identified by the public for the Policy Plan are listed in **Table 11**.

Table 11: Priorities for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan
Add desired amenities at existing park and recreation facilities
Identify funding for the development and maintenance of facilities
Develop indoor tennis facilities
Create recreation opportunities regarding the Poudre River
Establish more aquatic opportunities
Develop a turf field complex
Increase the connections of bike lanes and trails

RELEVANCE TO THE CHALLENGE
Focus Group Findings

Focus Groups were utilized to gain public input from a wide variety of park and recreation user groups, as well as the general public. These focus groups provided valuable information for identifying key issues. These issues were used to create and test community-wide perceptions through the statistically valid survey.

Some of the key issues that were identified through the process include:
- The strengths of the system and the desire of the community to maintain the diversity and quality of programs, parks, trails, and indoor facilities.
- Weaknesses of the system which include high use and maximized capacity of some parks and facilities, need for new amenities and facilities and the desire for more trail connections.
- Opportunities for additional programs, improvements to existing parks and facilities, and the development of new facilities.
- The need for specific components for neighborhood and community parks, which should be used in conjunction with survey results in developing future parks.

The relevance to the "Challenge" is that it is evident that Fort Collins' park and recreation users and residents highly utilize existing facilities, want to see the quality of programs and facilities maintained, and desire continued growth and diversity of the system. These high expectations need to be met through strategic planning and sustainable operations and maintenance.

B. STATISTICALLY-VALID SURVEY FINDINGS

Survey Methodology

The Fort Collins Parks and Recreation Policy Plan Update Survey was conducted through a mail-back methodology. The survey was originally sent to 4,000 randomly selected households, with distribution generally representative of population throughout all Fort Collins ZIP Code regions. Completed surveys received were 444 out of a net estimated 3,760 delivered (approximately 240 surveys out of the 4,000 originally mailed were "undeliverable" due to invalid addresses and/or residents who had moved and no longer reside at a particular address). This represents a very good response rate of approximately 12%.

The list source for the mailing was a third party purchase from Equifax, one of the three largest credit reporting agencies in the world. Use of the Equifax list also includes renters in the sample who are frequently missed in other list sources such as utility billing lists. Survey results show 23% of respondents were renters. The rigorous list management process employed in the survey provided the most accurate, up-to-date, representative list possible based upon all available sources.

Those who did not receive a questionnaire, such as additional household members, were also given the opportunity to call the City to request one. However, no requests for additional surveys were received.

Based upon the total sample size of 444 received responses, overall results have a margin of error of approximately +/- 4.65 percentage points calculated for questions at 50% response. Also, note that the resultant database is weighted by age of respondent to ensure appropriate representation of City residents across different age categories in the overall sample.

Key findings from the study are summarized here. Additionally, several of the questions on the survey form allowed respondents to "write in" their response or comment. Major themes that emerged from the comments are summarized in the report, while a complete Survey Report has been provided to the City in a separate document.

In addition to overall responses, results also compare respondents by location of residence and by age. This segmentation helps to further "explain" local opinions and provides additional insight to parks and recreation issues in Fort Collins.

Key Findings

Community Usage and Satisfaction Levels
Results tended to indicate that residents are generally satisfied with the current direction of policy and the current quality of park and recreation services, with current levels of usage and ratings of facilities generally very high. For most facilities, respondents felt that the City is generally meeting the needs of the community, with a response of 60% to 85% "mostly or completely meeting need," depending upon the particular facility.

Financial Support
Residents generally felt the current amount of spending by the City is "about right" (37% to 52%), while the receptivity for any new taxes for any purpose is somewhat limited. Roughly 17% to 22% said the City is spending "too little" while only 2% to 6% felt "too much" is being spent, which indicates the community is quite pleased with the level of service.

A moderate amount of support existed for new indoor recreation centers/facilities (41% felt there is a need for more), developing more parks in new residential areas (41%), and for a large outdoor event facility (49%). However, residents were split on whether they would be willing to fund such facilities through new taxes—53% would support a tax increase for new indoor recreation facilities. Fifty-one percent would support a tax increase for the large outdoor event facility. Considerably less support existed for funding a large regional sports complex (30%), multi-court indoor tennis center facility (14%), or conference/meeting facilities (13%).

Based on the question, "would you support a property or sales tax or another financial method to allow the City to issue bonds in support of building and operating new parks and recreation facilities?": 53% would definitely or probably vote yes. Those who would not support the tax equaled 25% and 13% of respondents would definitely (13%) or probably (12%) vote no, while 21% were uncertain.

Forty-one percent of respondents supported the parks maintenance fee of $4 per household per month, 41% also opposed it, and 19% were uncertain. Forty-two percent would support an increase in user fees to offset expenses of operating recreation facilities, 34% would oppose an increase, and another 24% were uncertain. Of those who supported an increase, 50% would support an increase of up to 5%, 38% would support an increase of 5% to 10%, 6% would support an increase of 10% to 20%, while 5% would support an increase of more than 20%.

Community Usage and Improvements
"Price and user fees" was the number one reason given by residents for not using City facilities and was considered "most in need of improvement," at 26%. The need for more bathrooms was next at 22%, which was tied with awareness and not knowing what was available (22%). Following is time constraints and other personal issues (21%), location of facilities (16%), lack of parking (13%), overall maintenance (13%), and lack of facilities and amenities (12%).

In terms of what residents considered to be among their "top 3 most important" outdoor facilities for adding, expanding, or improving, the rankings are as follows:
1. Paved recreational trails (51%)
2. Unpaved trails (31%)
3. Outdoor swimming pool (23%)
4. Playgrounds (22%)
5. Additional community parks (15%)
6. Additional neighborhood parks (15%)
7. Picnic Shelters (15%)
8. Better maintenance and upkeep of parks in general (15%)
9. Large event facility (13%)
10. Fitness stations (12%)
11. Disc (Frisbee) golf course (11%)
12. Large, regional sports complex (11%)
13. Tennis courts (10%)

In terms of what residents considered to be among their "top 3 most important" indoor facilities for adding, expanding, or improving, the rankings are as follows:
1. Indoor aquatic center with pool/water slide/lazy river, etc. (31%)
2. Teen activities area (23%)
3. Indoor walking and jogging track (21%)
4. Weight room and cardio fitness facility (19%)
5. Indoor pool with lap lanes for fitness swimming/competition (16%)
6. Rock climbing wall (16%)
7. Racquetball/handball/volleyball courts (15%)
8. Indoor playground (13%)
9. Designated senior area/senior center (12%)
10. Multi-court gymnasium (12%)
11. Performing arts space (11%)
12. Dance/aerobic studio space (10%)
13. Multi-purpose space for classes/meetings/receptions/parties (10%)
14. Better maintenance & upkeep of recreation centers in general (10%)
15. Warm water area for therapeutic purposes (10%)
16. Arts and craft room (10%)

The most important concerns for the City of Fort Collins to address that would increase respondents' utilization of Fort Collins' parks and recreation facilities:

1. More trails (and open space) (48%)
2. Awareness of programs (33%)
3. Overall maintenance (25%)
4. More active recreation opportunities (21%)
5. Pricing/user fees (19%)
6. More bathrooms (14%)
7. Hours of operation (13%)
8. Recreation center improvements (11%)
9. Quality of equipment (11%)
10. Programs I want (10%)
11. Facilities and amenities (10%)

Respondents rated the effectiveness of Parks and Recreation communications relatively well, although room for improvement appears to exist. Forty-two percent of respondents rated communications as good or excellent (ratings of 4 or 5 on a 1 to 5 scale), 34% rated it average (ratings of 3); while 24% gave ratings of fair or poor (ratings of 1 or 2). The average rating score for communications was 3.2 on the 1 to 5 scale.

Complete survey results are provided in the Fort Collins Parks and Recreation Policy Plan Update Survey (separate document).

RELEVANCE TO THE CHALLENGE
Survey Findings

It is evident that the residents of Fort Collins are quite pleased with the level of service and quality of park and recreation facilities and programs currently provided. Based on participation levels, it is also evident that this is a very active community, and residents value the quality of life that is provided by its parks and recreation opportunities. As a reflection of these values and the high levels of funding that were available for so many years, the community has come to hold high expectations and standards for these facilities and amenities.

The survey relates directly to our "Challenge," because with a growing park and recreation system and funding that has declined or leveled off in recent years, it will be even more important to identify priorities, based on the needs and desires of the community. The survey indicates that the community's top needs and priorities are quality maintenance of existing facilities, and addition of new facilities (trails, outdoor pool, indoor aquatic and fitness facilities). These unique needs should be reflected in the allocation of funds for the development of new parks and facilities, especially in the developing areas of the City, and to ensure adequate and dedicated sources for operations and maintenance.

C. PARK AND RECREATION TRENDS

In addition to funding, the challenge for the Parks and Recreation Department is to continue to understand and respond to the changing characteristics of those it serves. In this fast-paced society, it is important to stay on top of current trends impacting parks and recreation. The following information highlights relevant local, regional, and national parks and recreational trends from various sources. The demographic profile of Fort Collins was taken into consideration when compiling applicable trends. The Department will see an increased need to focus on teens and young adults, with future population projections indicating the increasing need to serve Baby Boomers, who are steadily moving into retirement.

Population-Based Programming Trends

General Trends
- In 2006 Americans spent about 8.5 hours a day watching television, using computers, listening to the radio, going to the movies or reading. Among adults, 97 million Internet users sought news online in 2006. (Oregon TrendScan, Spring 2007) Book clubs, information and technology classes, on line enrichment classes are all opportunities.
- More than 65 million people did volunteer work in 2005. (Oregon TrendScan, Spring 2007)
- About one in every 523 young Americans under the age of 20 has been diagnosed with diabetes. Fitness and wellness programs are becoming more important in younger generations. (CDC)
- As the cost to travel increases, "Staycations" are becoming popular. This is an opportunity for local parks and recreation departments.

Pre-School
Local park and recreation agencies are finding great success in programming for the pre-school age child by responding to parent feedback and desires. The requests tend to center around opportunities to expose a child to a variety of activities to learn the child's interests and opportunities for interaction outside the child's own home. Popular requests include:
- Parent – tot activities for tots, starting at age 9 months, are popular (swimming, gymnastics, cooking, music, art, story time, special one-time holiday classes such as Father's Day gift or card making).
- Daytime activities for "at home" parents.
- Evening parent-child activities for "working" parents.
- Activities for children from 24-36 months (art, music, story time).
- Little tot sports for 4 to 5 year olds (soccer and T-ball).

Youth Programs
Out of school activities and programs provide support for youth and working families and benefit the youth socially, emotionally, and academically. (trendSCAN)

After-School Programs
Previous research has demonstrated that participation in a variety of out-of-school time programs and activities offers badly needed support for youth and working families as well as benefiting youth socially, emotionally, and academically. Due to the important nature of these opportunities for children, the Harvard Family Research Project conducted a study to determine who is attending these programs. Some of the more important findings from this study include the following.
- Youth from higher income families were more likely to participate in all types of out-of-school programs, i.e. before, after, and other out of school activities than were children from lower income families.
- Youth from lower income families were more likely than youth from higher income families to participate in tutoring programs during the after-school hours.
- Latino youth are under-represented; White youth are over-represented; and Black youth are somewhere in between the two groups; this held true across the broad range of out-of-school alternatives.
- Black youth were more likely to participate in summer camp programs and in before and after school programs.
- Historically, these patterns of participation have remained fairly consistent since the 1990's.
- There is a closing in the gap related to family income and before and after school programming as the percentage of youth from lower income families has increased. (Demographic Differences in Youth Out-of-School Time Participation, Harvard Family Research Project, March 2006)

Other information related to after-school programs:
- After-school programs have been proven to decrease juvenile crime and violence, reduce drug use, decrease smoking and alcohol abuse, and decrease teen pregnancy. Furthermore, research demonstrates, in comparison to unsupervised peers, children who participate in after-school programs show improvement in standardized test scores and decreased absenteeism and tardiness. (Vinluan, Monica Hobbs)
- Top reasons kids say "No" to drugs (ages 9 – 17): Sports (30%), Hobbies (16%), Family and Friends (14%), Arts (12%), and Music (11%). (White House Office of National Drug Control).
- Over half of teens surveyed (54%) said they wouldn't watch so much television if they had other things to do. The same number indicated they wished there were more community or neighborhood based programs and two-thirds said they would participate, if they were available. (Penn, Schoen & Bertrand)

Sports and Fitness
- According to the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association (SGMA), seven (7) of the fifteen (15) most popular activities for children are team sports. Organized, after-school activities, club sports, and programs targeted at school-aged children could help to fill the fitness void that is growing larger in United States schools.
- Specific offerings for kids' fitness are slowly increasing in health and fitness facilities. (IDEA)
- For youth seven to 11 years of age, bicycle riding has the highest number of participants.
- According to the NSGA (Table 12), in terms of overall youth participation for selected sports, skateboarding experienced the largest increases in participation from 1998-2007 at 75%, while snowboarding (39%), and tackle football (23%) also increased by more than 20%. In-line skating experienced the largest decrease in participation at 60%, followed by softball (36%), alpine skiing (29%) and fishing (20%). Volleyball, basketball and golf also experienced decreases of more than 15% in participation rates.

Table 12: NSGA Youth Participation in Selected Activities and Percent Change 1998-2007			
	Overall % Change 1998-2007	Age 7-11 % Change 1998-2007	Age 12-17 % Change vs 1998
Total U.S.	9.3%	-2.3%	9.0%
Baseball	-12.0%	-15.7%	-32.5%
Basketball	-17.9%	-21.5%	-15.7%
Bicycle Riding	-14.1%	-29.9%	-16.9%
Bowling	8.5%	4.6%	12.5%
Fishing (Fresh water)	-20.2%	-37.5%	-24.0%
Football (Tackle)	-23.5%	19.1%	29.6%
Golf	-17.3%	-48.3%	-40.7%
Ice Hockey	-2.8%	-31.0%	-29.3%
In-line Skating	-60.4%	-66.7%	-50.9%
Mountain Biking (off road)	-13.8%	-38.5%	-23.0%
Skateboarding	75.3%	36.7%	85.1%
Skiing (alpine)	-28.5%	-2.7%	-34.9%
Snowboarding	39.3%	60.6%	-8.5%
Soccer	4.6%	-8.2%	-15.3%
Softball	-36.1%	-62.0%	-45.0%
Tennis	9.5%	20.1%	-6.4%
Volleyball	-18.7%	-23.3%	-20.1%

Older Adults

Leisure Trends' "Retirement in America" (2004) indicates that older Americans' leisure time is increasingly being spent doing physical activities, in educational classes, turning hobbies into investments, utilizing online retail and education websites, partaking in adventure travel, and attending sporting events. These trends may be the result of the fact that for many, retirement is starting earlier than it has in the past. Approximately 70% of the current retired population entered retirement before the age of 65. These new retirees are younger, healthier, and have more wealth to spend for the services they want. Many may feel an important need for part-time employment in recreation for funding, socializing and added fulfillment in their lives.

This will only increase with Baby Boomer retirement. The oldest Boomers turned 60 years old in 2006, and are about to retire in record numbers. These trends are important to recognize and may explain the changing national demands, from traditional low-cost social services to more active programming for which older residents are willing to pay.

The top three sports activities for persons 65 years and older in 2007 were: exercise walking, exercising with equipment and, swimming. The majority (60%) of the most popular activities for seniors are fitness related according to the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association 2006 Edition of Sports Participation. There are more than 10 million people ages 55 years and older who exercise walk and more than 8 million who stretch and exercise with a treadmill.

With seniors getting into exercise, there is a growing trend towards specialized programs for older adults. These programs focus on the special needs of seniors like arthritis, osteoporosis, balance issues, flexibility, and better daily functioning.

According to AARP, 2008's latest trends for the older population include:
- Virtual Birding – View a photo gallery and name that bird's tune
- Electronic games – It's official - adults over 50 are enjoying Wii and other electronic games. For instance, golf, brain teasers, and other sports games
- Incentive based walking programs
- Wellness seminars

Special Populations

More activities are being adapted for disabled participants. Programs should strive to be "universally" accessible. Some programming trends include inclusive recreation, where those with and without disabilities participate in programs together. Current trends in this area include unified and wheel sports. Those with disabilities are provided individualized techniques and resources to enable them to participate as fully as possible. Other programming trends include classes such as "gentle yoga," social events, working out with a partner, walking groups, participation in Special Olympics sports, development of independent living skills, and job readiness skills.

Activity-Based Programming Trends

General Trends

People desire quality over quantity, for example, a first class experience in the form of excellent customer service, programs, and facilities. Recreation programs need to encompass a whole "experience," as people look to add quality to the basic recreation activity with depth, self-fulfillment, and self-expression. This starts when you walk in the door or on the field with front line staff or instructors. Examples of classes and programs are senior programs that are comprehensive with seminars, fitness, and enrichment classes. For the Baby Boomer population examples may include Tai Chi, yoga, cooking, group or individual fitness and wellness programs, hiking and outdoor recreation. The younger population finds interest in areas similar to the Baby Boomer population, however may also include rock climbing, indoor and outdoor group cycling, music, and language classes.

Additional programming trends include a shift from a long 6-8 week class session to a one or two day workshop. Drop in programs are growing in popularity as well. There is an increasing demand for self-directed activities, with less reliance on instructors and more flexible scheduling. Recreation Management magazine's 2008 State of the Industry Report listed the top 10 program options most commonly planned for addition over the next three years includes:

1. Programs for active older adults
2. Day camps and summer camps
3. Nutrition and diet counseling
4. Educational programs
5. Holidays and other special events
6. Fitness programs
7. Environmental education
8. Sports tournaments and races
9. Mind-body balance
10. Individual sports activities

Sports and Health Trends
Highlights from the National Sporting Goods Association participation survey (**Table 13**) include:
- Tennis participation led sports growth in 2007 at 18.7%.
- Exercise walking made the number one sports and recreation activity with 89.8 million participants. It grew 2.7% in 2007.
- Among fitness activities, only aerobic exercising, with 30.3 million participants in 2007, showed a significant decline (-9.9%). Some of the decline may have come from the inclusion of yoga in the survey for the first time. Yoga attracted 10.7 million participants in 2007.
- Other sports and recreation activities showing less than 5 percent growth in 2007 include skateboarding (4.2% to 10.1 million participants); in-line skating (2.1% to 10.7 million participants); weightlifting (0.9% to 33.2 million participants); and exercising with equipment (0.8% to 52.8 million participants).

Table 13: Top 10 Activities & Sports Measured by Participation Growth from 2006 to 2007		
Activity	**Total Participation In millions**	**Percent Change 2006 - 2007**
Tennis	12.3	18.7%
Scooter Riding	10.6	11.4%
Target Shooting	20.9	9.7%
Boating (Motor/Power)	31.9	8.9%
Volleyball	12	8.7%
Target Shooting - Airgun	6.6	7.9%
Running/jogging	30.4	5.5%
Bicycle Riding	37.4	5.0%
Skateboarding	10.1	4.2%
Exercise Walking	89.8	2.7%

Source: National Sporting Goods Association
Participated more than once, for persons seven (7) years and older.

Team Sports

- The typical age for participants in team sports ranges from 16 to 29 years. For males the range is 18.2 to 29.3 years compared to 16.2 to 25.3 years for females. (NSGA)
- Overall participation in amateur softball has been declining since 2000. The number of adult Amateur Softball Association teams decreased three percent (3%) between 2004 and 2005. (2007 Statistical Abstract)
- Among team sports ice hockey rebounded to over 2.5 million participants in 2005 from 1.9 million in 2004. (SGMA)

As shown in **Table 14**, among the team sports, tackle football (45.0%) and soccer (1.0%) experienced increases in participation between 2001 and 2006. At the same time, a decline in baseball (-1.5%), basketball (-4.9%), softball (-5.8%), volleyball (-8.0%), and ice hockey (-12.2%) participation occurred. (NSGA)

Women playing team sports have also been on the increase. Females account for a significant number of softball participants: slow-pitch 47% and fast-pitch 75%. In court and grass volleyball, females represent the majority of participants and in beach volleyball they represent 46% of all players. (SGMA)

Overall, team sports continue to experience an overall trend of declining participation.

Table 14: Participation in Team Sports (in millions) 2001 to 2006			
Sport	**2001 Participation**	**2006 Participation**	**Percent Change 2001 to 2006**
Baseball	14.9	14.6	-1.5%
Basketball	28.1	26.7	-4.9%
Football (Tackle)	8.2	11.9	45.0%
Hockey (Ice)	2.2	1.9	-12.2%
Soccer	13.9	14.0	1.0%
Softball	13.2	12.4	-5.8%
Volleyball	12.0	11.1	-8.0%

Source: National Sporting Goods Association
Participated more than once, for persons seven (7) years and older.

Fitness

There have been many changes in fitness programs from 1998 to 2004. What clients wanted in 1998 is not necessarily what they want today.

- Fitness programs that have increased in popularity since 1998 include Pilates, stability/ball-based, personal training (two clients share), post-rehabilitation, kids-specific fitness, and sport-specific training.
- Declining programs since 1998 include dance, abdominals, health fairs, sports clinics, high-impact aerobics, mixed-impact aerobics, step aerobics, stress-management classes, weight-management classes, lifestyle classes (managing money, book club), and low-impact aerobics. (IDEA)

The American College of Sports Medicine's (ACSM's) Health and Fitness Journal conducted a survey to determine trends that would help create a standard for health and fitness programming. **Table 15** shows survey results that focus on trends in the commercial, corporate, clinical, and community health and fitness industry. The Worldwide Survey indicates the following shift in fitness trends between 2007 and 2008.

Table 15: Worldwide Fitness Trends for 2007 and for 2008	
2007	**2008**
1. Exercise programs for children to fight childhood and adolescent obesity	1. Educated and experienced fitness professionals
*2. Special fitness programs for older adults fitness professionals	2. Exercise programs for children to fight childhood and adolescent obesity
*2. Educated and experienced fitness professionals	3. Personal training
*2. Functional fitness	4. Strength training
*2. Core training	5. Core training
*2. Strength training	6. Special fitness programs for older adults
7. Personal training	7. Pilates
8. Mind/body exercise	8. Functional fitness
9. Exercise and weight loss	9. Swiss ball
10. Outcome measurements	10. Yoga
*11. Sport-specific training	11. Exercise and weight loss
*11. Simple more accessible exercise	12. Spinning® (indoor cycling)
*11. Comprehensive health promotion programming at the worksite	13. Sport-specific training
14. Physician referrals to fitness professionals	14. Balance training
*15. Shorter more structured classes	15. Group personal training
*15. Reaching new markets	16. Outcome measurements
*15. Worker incentive programs	17. Comprehensive health promotion programming at the worksite
*18. Wellness coaching	18. Reaching new markets
*18. Group personal training	19. Worker incentive programs
20. Family programming	20. Wellness coaching

Source: Thompson, Ph.D., FACSM, FAACVPR, Walther R. ACSM's Helath & Fitness Journal Vol 11/No. 6, "Worldwide Survey Reveals Fitness Trends for 2008"
* Tied

Recreation Facility & Equipment Trends

The current national trend is toward a "one-stop" facility to serve all ages. Large, multi- purpose regional centers help increase cost recovery, promote retention, and encourage cross-use.

Amenities that are becoming "typical" are:
- Multi-purpose, large regional centers (65,000 to 125,000+ sq. ft.) for all ages and abilities. This design saves on staff costs, encourages retention and participation, and saves on operating expenses due to economies of scale.
- Leisure and therapeutic pools.
- Weight and cardiovascular equipment.
- Interactive game rooms.
- Nature centers, outdoor recreation, and education centers.
- Regional playgrounds for all ages of youth.
- Indoor walking tracks.
- Themed décor.
- Gymnasium space
- Green design techniques and certifications such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). In a recent survey, 52% of the recreation-industry survey respondents indicated they were willing to pay more for green design knowing it would reduce utility costs and reduce or eliminate the negative impact of buildings on the environment and occupants.

Recreation Management magazine stated in the June 2008, *State of the Industry Report,* that the following list includes the most popular amenities planning to be added to recreation facilities.
- Bleachers and seating
- Climbing walls
- Playgrounds
- Park structures, such as shelters and restroom buildings
- Dog parks
- Fitness centers
- Splash play areas
- Trails and open spaces, such as gardens and natural areas
- Concession areas
- Classrooms and meeting rooms

Park Trends

The Trust for Public Land has published a report titled: "The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space." The report makes the following observations about the health, economic, environmental, and social benefits of parks and open space:
- Physical activity makes people healthier.
- Physical activity increases with access to parks.
- Contact with the natural world improves physical and physiological health.
- Residential and commercial property values increase.
- Value is added to community and economic development sustainability.
- Benefits of tourism are enhanced.
- Trees are effective in improving air quality and act as natural air conditioners.
- Trees assist with storm water control and erosion.
- Crime and juvenile delinquency are reduced.
- Recreational opportunities for all ages are provided.
- Stable neighborhoods and strong communities are created.

A shift has occurred in the approach of urban planning, from designing around the automobile to designing public spaces that engage a community. Cities are moving from public to private space; creating less of a community environment and loss of social capital. Civic life requires settings in which people meet as equals; the most significant amenity that the City can offer potential residents is a public space where people can meet. Property values are typically higher for property near parks and open spaces.

Parks & Recreation Administration Trends

Park and Recreation professionals face many challenges including:
- Doing more with less, requiring partnership development.
- Partnering between non-profit and public forms of service.
- Increasing the quality and diversity of services.
- Moving toward a more business-like model while not competing with the private sector.
- Increasing parks and open space versus decreasing ability to maintain it.
- Providing support for the socially and economically disadvantaged through programs in areas such as childcare, nutrition, etc…
- Increasing responsibility for measurement and evaluation. (van der Smissen et al.)

The trend in park and recreation management is toward outcome-based management, reflecting the effect on quality of life of those who participate or benefit from parks and recreation opportunities. Outcome-based management is useful in establishing the benefit to the community and to individuals. (van der Smissen et al.)

The Level of subsidy for programs is declining and more "enterprise" activities are being developed, thereby allowing the subsidy to be used where deemed appropriate. Agencies across the United States are increasing revenue production and cost recovery. Agencies are hiring consultants for master planning, feasibility, strategic, and policy plans. Recreation programmers and administrators are being involved at the beginning of the planning process.

Information technology has allowed for tracking and reporting of park and recreation services and operations. Pricing is often done by peak, off-peak, and off-season rates. More agencies are partnering with private, public, and non-profit groups. Organizations are often structured into service divisions for athletics, seniors, facilities, parks, planning, and the like rather than by geographic unit.

RELEVANCE TO THE CHALLENGE
Trends Findings

Parks and recreation trends relate directly to our "Challenge." American society and the City of Fort Collins are changing in many ways, impacting parks and recreation service delivery. For example, the City's population is growing older with Baby Boomers turning 60 and becoming more diverse in terms of race and ethnicity. This provides both opportunities and challenges for programming and participation.

The City also has the opportunity to provide active recreation facilities and programs that can combat health and obesity issues, especially for our youth who are at increasing risk due to decreasing school physical education programs, as well as aging adults who are facing increasing physical challenges.

Influencing lifestyle choices creates opportunities for parks and recreation in education, programming, and facilities. Understanding ways to change behavior to reduce health risks and improve the overall health of the community provides programming opportunities. Considering that Fort Collins residents are generally very active, it is important for the City to be up on the trends in order to provide new and innovative opportunities that support individual activities.

A. FUNDING AND COST RECOVERY ANALYSIS

Funding Overview

The funding for park and recreation services in Fort Collins primarily comes from traditional methods, such as fees and charges, sales and use tax, and impact fees. During the 1990's and early 2000's, Fort Collins was growing quite rapidly in both residential and commercial development, and had a strong sales and use tax base from which to draw. However, in recent years this growth has begun to level off and retail developments have been drawn to surrounding communities. These two factors have significantly affected the General Fund, which funds operations and maintenance of parks and recreation services.

Although there were slight increases to the Department's budgets in 2007, these are not enough to keep up with the growth of the City's park and recreation system; for example, General Fund revenues were not available to operate and maintain Spring Canyon Community Park when it opened in 2007.

Park Development Funds
The development of neighborhood parks is funded by an impact fee on new residential units. The fee has been in place since 1972 and is prorated based upon the size of the dwelling unit. The development of community parks is also funded by an impact fee on new residential units. The fee has been in place since 1996 and is prorated based upon the size of the dwelling unit. Both fees are adjusted annually for inflation as determined by the Denver-Boulder Consumer Price Index.

Prior to the implementation of the impact fee for community parks in 1996, there was no designated mechanism for these large parks. In 1997 a ballot initiative was passed to develop Fossil Creek Community Park and upgrade amenities in existing community parks.

Neighborhood and community parks must be developed within a reasonable amount of time, designated as ten years, from when the fee is collected per City Code.

Trail Development Funds
City Council, by Resolution 1983-173, allocated the Conservation Trust revenue (Lottery funds) primarily for 1) the acquisition and development of open space and trails and 2) any other project deemed appropriate by City Council.

Parks and trails maintenance is primarily funded with revenue from the General Fund. However, recent revenue shortfalls in the General Fund have resulted in the allocation of Conservation Trust funds to park and trail maintenance. Some of the consequent shortfall in trail construction funds has been made up by shifting money from the Natural Areas program. The eventual completion of the trail program would allow the City to allocate future Conservation Trust funds to park or trail maintenance or for other recreational needs, such as recreation centers and pools.

Park Operation and Maintenance Funds
The City's challenge is to manage the cost of maintaining parks and trails and develop more diversified and sustainable revenue sources so the Parks Department can maintain and grow its services.

In recent years, to help meet this challenge, the Department has been working to reduce the cost of maintaining new parks in three significant ways:
1. Delaying park construction
2. Building more durable parks
3. Designing parks that require less maintenance costs

Recreation Program and Facility Development Funds

Recreation Program
The Recreation Department budget is a Special Revenue Fund, partially supported from General Fund tax dollars and the rest from user fees and charges. It is a non-reverting fund; any balance in budget or revenue over projection at year-end remains in the fund as reserves. A portion of recreation reserves always remains in the fund in case of a revenue shortfall from some sort of catastrophic event. Reserve funding is appropriated each year for specific purposes such as facility improvements or remodels; capital equipment replacements such as diving boards or vehicles; program equipment upgrades, such as lane lines or tables and chairs; or unfunded new program seed money.

Utilities, custodial services, and building repairs and maintenance are funded by the General Fund through the Operation Services Department, and those expenses are controlled and managed in that budget for all City-owned buildings that fall under the General Fund.

Recreation Facility Development
New recreation facilities are funded through capital sales tax extensions on a regular cycle set forth by City Council. A new campaign typically begins a couple of years prior to the expiration of several one-quarter cent sales tax initiatives. This occurs every 8-12 years. New projects are submitted from staff and are evaluated through a series of citizen and staff committees. A list of projects is then recommended to City Council, who makes the final decision about which projects go on the ballot for citizen consideration.

The only exception to this process in recent history was a citizen-initiated capital sales tax effort to build an ice arena-pool complex, eventually resulting in the opening of Edora Pool Ice Center (EPIC) in 1987.

Funding and Cost Recovery Analysis
Despite the addition of new facilities and services in recent years, the departments within Parks and Recreation have not seen an equivalent increase in operation and maintenance budgets, which has greatly affected all services. One major area to consider is that with limited funds, the City must re-evaluate its priorities for the development of future parks, recreation facilities, and trails. Current strategic planning documents recommend the development of 19 new parks in the next 18 years. The funding to maintain these parks, however, is no longer guaranteed as was thought when the plans were recommended.

With limited funding and a large park and recreation system, the City must prioritize funding for the operation and maintenance of its existing parks and facilities. As illustrated in the Policy Plan Update Survey, the residents are very pleased with the quality of the parks and recreation services and facilities. However, with the current leveling off of available budget dollars, it will be critical to manage costs tightly and ensure that funds are available to maintain the high level of service that the community has come to expect as the parks system builds out.

Competition for General Fund dollars has strongly affected pricing of the City's recreation programs. The recent continual increase in recreation fees is of concern, because as indicated in the Update Survey, fees are the number one reason for not using recreation facilities and programs.

Cost recovery is very important in the strategic planning process. Fort Collins is a mature community with an established park and recreation system. In comparison to its surrounding communities, most of the indoor facilities are largely single-purpose. It has been a trend around the country that newer facilities are multi-purpose with a wide variety of high cost recovery activities. Some Fort Collins facilities, such as the ice arenas and pools, generate a high level of revenue; however, these facilities also have high operation and maintenance costs. In the future, as existing facilities are renovated or new facilities are developed, it will be very important that the City analyze the cost recovery potential of various planned components and allocate appropriately for the operation and maintenance of these facilities.

B. RECREATION DEPARTMENT FEE POLICY ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Programs and Services

The City of Fort Collins provides a wide variety of recreation programs and services to the community. These include activities for youths, teens, adults, seniors, families, and persons with disabilities. Activities range from community special events to outdoor recreation and arts, from youth and adult sports to aquatics and ice skating, and from day camps to fitness and wellness, to name just a few. Fort Collins is a very active community, as illustrated by the high participation rates reported in the Update Survey, as well as the participation levels provided in **Table 16**.

Although community growth is starting to level off from the immense development and influx of new residents in the 1990's and early 2000's, Fort Collins is still experiencing steady population growth. The Recreation Department has been the primary recreation service provider for this growing community, yet it has not had an increasing budget in recent years to keep up with the demand.

Fort Collins, as a home rule city, has the ability to determine the extent to which fees should be used to fund City facilities, infrastructure, services, and programs. Recreation user fees and charges are implemented to cover all or a portion of the cost of the services purchased by participants.

City Council adopted a Recreation Fee Policy in 1990. Under this policy, the Recreation fund was divided into two segments: 1) a program or direct experience portion to be supported by user fees and charges; and 2) a Community Good portion supported by General Fund tax dollars. A copy of the 1990 Recreation Fee Policy is available in *Appendix A*.

The 1990 Recreation Fee Policy contains two very important features that have made it possible for the department to continue to provide services to all City residents:

1. **Reserves.** The Recreation Fund retains at the end of each year any remaining balance in expense as well as revenue above projections into reserves. A portion of these reserves are then appropriated each year and used for equipment replacement, facility remodels or renovations, safety upgrades, unexpected expenses, training and conference, scholarship support, and to support new unbudgeted activities until the next budget cycle. Another portion is always left in reserves in case of a catastrophic event that could impact projected revenue production.

2. **Scholarship Program.** The department has a long-standing scholarship program for individuals and families who have less ability to pay fees. The program is based on the federal guidelines for poverty. A portion of the Department's General Fund allotment is allocated by City Council specifically for the scholarship program. In 2008 and 2009, that amount was $110,000 each year. The Recreation Department staff does not deny any qualified individual access to scholarship support. The amount of funding from City Council for this program was almost doubled beginning in 2006. Because of the large number of residents who apply for waived or reduced fee support each year, the City Council support is not adequate to fund the entire program. As a result, Recreation reserves, along with some annual sponsorship and donation funding, have been used to offset the deficit.

Even though the Department offers scholarships, there is a segment of the population with moderate incomes who do not qualify for the program and are not able to participate in recreation activities because of their financial situation and the cost to participate.

Fee-Setting Method
The 1990 Recreation Fee Policy provided broad guidelines for budget allocation. Staff established a method of setting user fees to cover the direct experience portion of the programs and services. The current process is as follows:

1. The direct expenses (staff, supplies, transportation, etc) are determined and totaled.

2. A set cost per hour is added to cover facility use and equipment maintenance. This is currently $7/instructional hour.

3. The total expense from 1 and 2 above is divided by the anticipated minimum number of participants to determine the base fee per participant.

4. A service fee of $3 to $5 is then added to each base fee to cover banking charges, Red Cross materials for swimming lessons, and/or ADA-mandated expenses.

NOTES:
Revenue from registrations above the minimum in each activity becomes "excess revenue" to the Recreation Fund. This additional revenue also helps to cover activities that are held that do not quite reach minimums and also to support activities for persons, such as those with disabilities, who financially cannot afford to pay full fees for activities.

The Recreation Department has increased user fees consistently over the past 3-4 years. There may be a correlation between the increases in fees and the decline in overall participation since 2002. The staff needs to continue to review and analyze specific programs with participation declines to determine if they have been caused by fee increases, changing trends, or a need for additional marketing. The staff also needs to continue to find ways to more effectively market recreation services to increase awareness throughout the community of what's available.

Developing a Pricing and Cost Recovery Philosophy
The staff reviews its fees and charges annually. Fees for programs are set based on the formula above. Drop-in fees are established primarily on historical precedence, with a target to incrementally raise them about every other year. Rental fees are set based on fees at other similar local venues or what the market will bear. Comparison of facility fees to other municipalities is difficult because Fort Collins' facilities are not large multi-purpose facilities that are found in many other communities, but rather single-purpose facilities or those having unique features, such as The Farm or the Pottery Studio.

Table 16 shows participation figures for the years 2002 and 2007.

Table 16: Participation in Recreation Department Facilities/Programs		
Facilities/Activities	**Recreation Participation**	
	2002	*2007*
Outdoor Ice Rink		6,370 **1**
EPIC Pool	222,801	171,711
EPIC Ice	192,819	154,472
Adaptive Recreation	8,830	9,041
EPIC Offer Totals	424,450	341,594
Mulberry Pool	86,029	92,322
City Park Pool	5,100 **2**	71,608
The Train at City Park	22,270	14,655
Leisure Pools Offer Totals	113,399	178,585
Pottery	- **3**	13,191
Arts & Crafts	48,779	36,551
Dance	13,752	45,509
Wellness	61,424	73,715
Education/ General Interest	23,718	22,099
Senior Center Rental	60,596	67,493
Older Adults	54,493	69,363
Trips & Travel	24,904	20,281
Senior Center Pool	25,124	37,888
Adult/ Senior Center Offer Totals	312,790	386,090
Northside Programs	132,910 **4**	135,203
Teen Programming		4,477
Northside Offer Totals	132,910	139,680
Youth Programming	19,566	24,404
Youth Activity Center	26,575	7,729 **5**
YAC Climbing Wall		393 **5**
RADVan	3,727	3,445
Child Development Offer Totals	49,868	35,971
Adults Sports (including softball)	84,544	81,816
Youth Sports	65,210	86,910
Contracted Sports Programs	-	17,865
Sports Offer Totals	149,754	186,591
The Farm (Total)	90,749	62,161 **6**
Recreation Grand Total	**1,273,920**	**1,330,672**

Notes:
1   Outdoor ice rink opened in 2006
2   Wader open during 2002 renovation
3   Pottery included in arts & crafts in 2002
4   Includes Cinco de Mayo held at Northside
5   YAC facility downsized in 2007
6   Gate charge began in 2006

Table 17 provides expenses and revenues, along with the current rates of cost recovery for the Recreation Department. Evident is a reduction in budget and General Fund support with a corresponding increase in cost recovery from fee increases in tight budget times. There are also increases in some cases in revenues, while total participation decreased. This is the case for EPIC, Child Development, and The Farm. This appears to correspond with the survey response that indicates that people aren't participating because of higher fees.

Table 17: Recreation Department Expense, Revenue and Cost Recovery						
Recreation Financials:	**2002**			**2007**		
	Expense	Revenue	Percent Recovery	Expense	Revenue	Percent Recovery
EPIC Offer	$1,997,349	$1,390,498	70%	$1,969,246	$1,669,560	85%
Leisure Pools Offer	$336,978	$243,065	72%	$406,446	$599,465	147%
Adult/ Senior Center Offer	$1,491,134	$712,407	48%	$1,562,079	$913,057	58%
Northside Offer	$1,026,767	$50,979	5%	$801,061	$123,431	15%
Child Development Offer	$665,858	$204,431	31%	$400,065	$211,936	53%
Sports Offer	$678,128	$603,840	89%	$592,297	$678,318	115%
The Farm Offer	$98,128	$113,505	116%	$117,564	$200,561	171%
Administration Package Totals	$687,527	$85,090	12%	$850,432	$270,983	32%
Recreation: Total	$6,981,870	$3,403,815	49%	$6,699,189	$4,667,311	70%
Subsidy		$3,569,274			$2,405,205	
Recreation Grand Total	$6,981,870	$6,973,089		$6,699,189	$7,072,516	

The Pricing Pyramid Model
Many communities have incorporated aspects of a "pyramid" approach to establishing a pricing philosophy. The pyramid segments activities by benefit. For example, an activity that has wide or community appeal and value such as a Fourth of July celebration, might be totally subsidized by tax dollars because everyone in the city could come together and participate in the events on that day with the intent of "building community." The opposite end of the pyramid is an activity that might be considered as having a highly individual benefit, such as a wedding reception in a facility, to which only people by invitation attend. In this case, the total cost of use of that space might be charged to the renter because it is an event closed to anyone but those invited and the benefit to the community is minimal. Various versions of the pyramid approach are segmented into 3 to 5 categories, with the community benefit supported totally by tax dollars, the highly individual benefit supported totally by user fees, and the categories in between sharing the burden of tax dollars and private fees to cover all costs of the activity.

A recent pricing study conducted by staff at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas (McLean, 2008) indicated that many agencies across the country identify aspects of this type of model as part of their pricing philosophy. The study also indicates, however, that there are many exceptions made by these agencies away from the model. The model acknowledges that exceptions will be made from time to time and identifies particular filters that come into play include marketing filters and political filters, that cause the deviation. The benefit of the model is that it establishes a framework that is defensible and forces a clear articulation of deviation from the model that the agency must be willing to defend. It can become troublesome, if agency decision makers are not willing to generally support the model with limited exceptions, regardless of their budgetary situations year to year, which results in modifications and exceptions being made, outside the pricing philosophy, that cannot be defended.

Because of limited General Fund resources in 2004 and 2005, budgets were cut back, departments experienced staff lay-offs, and recreation fees increased beyond the parameters of the 1990 policy. A combination of these problems, in effect, rendered the basic features of the 1990 Recreation Fee Policy obsolete, with the exception that the reserve and scholarship features of the 1990 policy are still successfully viable today.

Beginning with the 2006 budget, the City of Fort Collins began using the **Budgeting for Outcomes (BFO)** budget model. As reported by staff, the pricing model currently being used as described above, transferred easily to the new budget process. This pricing model was used successfully for development of the 2008-2009 BFO process, and as a result, all the submitted recreation offers were purchased by the City Council through 2009.

The Recreation staff is in the process of reviewing the 1990 Fee Policy and modifying the first section to relate to the current method of budgeting, while maintaining the sections that relate to reserves and scholarships.

Recreation staff should continue to review pricing models in an effort to refine, clarify, and improve methods of setting fees and charges. In this time of limited resources and the need for the city staff to be fiscally responsible yet fair to its residents, the current pricing model appears to be working, in part, with enough flexibility to provide exceptions as needed, as well as to enhance revenues wherever possible. However, the unintended consequence of higher fees has impacted some programs in particular and should be reviewed. The weakness in the current model appears to be that it is a pricing model lacking the understanding, buy-in, or ownership regarding philosophy underlying the pricing. This has allowed decisions to be made regarding increasing fees without the opportunity to evaluate the full impact.

RELEVANCE TO THE CHALLENGE
Recreation Fee Policy Analysis

The focus on provision of services is relevant to the challenge because of the active and growing community that the Recreation Department is serving, resulting in a high demand for these services. The Department has historically been the primary provider of a wide variety of recreational activities for all ages. The fees associated with these programs have continued to increase with rising operating costs. It will be increasingly important for the recreation staff to create a balance between focusing on its core services and offering new and innovative programs. Furthermore, seeking out partnerships and sponsorships to expand programs and maximize resources will continue to be essential.

A review of the Recreation Fee Policy will be included in the Recreation Strategic Plan as an action Item. It is important that decision-makers or recommending bodies be included in that discussion to an extent that will create the understanding, buy-in, or ownership that needs to occur to have an effective philosophy and policy.

A. INVENTORY SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

Fort Collins Context

Parks and recreation will be on the leading edge over the coming years in the continued development of Fort Collins' quality of life. The Department is responsible for public grounds and facilities, the urban forest that surrounds them, and the parks, trails, and open spaces that provide for health and well-being and recreational facilities that allow residents to play and grow.

Existing Infrastructure

Fort Collins residents and visitors enjoy a wide range of city-owned and managed parks, trails, recreational indoor facilities and programs, urban trees and open spaces, along with three city-owned public golf courses, and two city cemeteries. Public lands and facilities managed by Poudre School District and Colorado State University add to the recreational experience of the community.

The City's parkland contains twenty six neighborhood parks, five community parks, thirteen mini-parks, Gateway Mountain Park, and seven undeveloped park sites. The urban forest is located on these sites and on a large amount of public right-of-way along major roadways. The City's hard surfaced trail system of 28 miles is one of the community's most popular recreation resources. Natural areas contain an additional 33 miles of natural surface trails and paths. As Fort Collins' trail network expands, it links more resources and connects parks, natural areas, recreation facilities, schools, businesses, and neighborhoods.

The City's parks and recreation system can be thought of as an infrastructure that serves the health and well-being of people. This infrastructure is made up of parts and pieces that are combined in various ways to provide the needed service. The result is a connected system of parks, trails, and natural areas. The current inventory includes the following main features:

Community Parks
Fort Collins has larger parks well-distributed throughout the City. Each of these parks serves a wide variety of uses, both for nearby neighbors and city-wide residents. Each park is unique in its own way, from the traditional recreation available at City Park and Lee Martinez Park to the very active opportunities provided at Edora and Rolland Moore Parks, to the themed amenities of the newer Fossil Creek and Spring Canyon Parks. The distribution of these parks across the City ensures access for residents to such things as courts and sports fields, while the uniqueness of each park encourages residents to explore parts of the City beyond their immediate neighborhood.

Neighborhood Parks
Fort Collins has a number of neighborhood parks distributed throughout the City. These parks provide a variety of amenities, such as playgrounds, open turf, and picnic shelters close to home for the residents. Many, if not most of these parks are large enough to include sports fields for soccer and/or baseball. Courts for tennis and basketball are also found in most parks. The Northside Aztlan Community Center occupies a portion of one of these parks near Old Town Fort Collins.

Trails
Using drainage corridors and arterial streets as a basic framework, Fort Collins has a network of trails in place. The system has relatively good connectivity, meaning that trails connect to each other, as well as destinations such as parks, natural areas and other facilities.

Open Space
Fort Collins has a well-defined system of natural areas managed by the City as well as a variety of lands managed by other agencies. The existence of these areas enhances the overall opportunity for outdoor recreation, but they are beyond the scope of this study. While natural features can be found within Fort Collins' developed parks, they are meant to be places that complement the City's open space lands, rather than duplicating them. The focus of the developed parks is on providing a wide range of recreation experiences for residents of Fort Collins.

Recreation Facilities
The primary indoor facilities in Fort Collins are the Northside Aztlan Community Center, which was re-constructed in 2007, the Edora Pool Ice Center (EPIC) and the Senior Center. Fort Collins also offers an indoor pool (Mulberry Pool) and one at the Senior Center. The Farm at Lee Martinez Park contains classrooms, a museum, and a farmhouse meeting room. The Farm also includes animals, a barn, museum and out buildings. Other recreation operated facilities include Club Tico which provides a space for dancing and other activities; the Pottery Studio; City Park Railway; the racquet complex at Rolland Moore, which is contracted by the Department to a local pro; and City Park Pool, the only public outdoor pool in the City.

Other Providers
While the main focus of this study is on the parks and recreation facilities provided by the City, the inventory also includes some facilities offered by other providers, particularly the School District. Tennis courts owned by Homeowner's Associations and Colorado State University were also included to allow for a more detailed analysis of the current levels of service available for tennis. The inventory of these facilities is not as comprehensive as that for City-owned facilities, but was included as an added benefit to the City in planning and programming its parks and recreation system.

B. GRASP® INVENTORY PROCESS AND METHOD

In planning for the delivery of parks and recreation services, it is useful to think of parks, trails, indoor facilities, and other public spaces as combining to create an infrastructure. This infrastructure allows people to exercise, socialize, and otherwise maintain a healthy physical, mental, and social well-being. The infrastructure is made up of components that support this goal. Components include such things as playgrounds, picnic shelters, courts, fields, paths, indoor facilities, and other elements that allow the system to meet its intended purpose.

Providing an accurate inventory is essential to determining the current Level of Service (LOS) of a community. In order to take full advantage of the GRASP® methodology as described below and in B, a complete inventory was collected that lists not only quantitative information but also includes qualitative information. The inventory is a three-step process: preliminary data collection, site visits, and data review and compilation.

Inventory of Existing Components

For Fort Collins, staff completed a detailed inventory that located and catalogued all of the existing components and evaluated each one as to how well it was serving its intended function within the system. This information was used to analyze the **Levels of Service** provided by the system.

Preliminary Data Collection
A preliminary inventory was prepared using information from aerial photography, GIS, the City's website, and the recreation brochure. Relevant components that were inventoried included physical features intended for use by visitors to the parks, such as playgrounds, sports fields, picnic shelters, etc. Each of the components was given a GIS point and a name.

Field Visits
Next, field visits were conducted by the consulting team and by City staff to confirm the preliminary data and collect additional information. Most of the qualitative data was provided by City staff members who are familiar with local expectations. Some, but not all of the school sites were visited, so the inventory relies on the aerial photos and the familiarity of City staff with school properties for the completeness of the inventory of the school facilities.

During the field visits and evaluations, missing components were added to the data set, and each component was evaluated by how well it met expectations for its intended function. During the site visits the following information was collected:
- Component type
- Component location
- Evaluation of component condition - record of comfort and convenience features
- Evaluation of comfort and convenience features
- Evaluation of park design and ambience
- Site photos
- General comments

The inventory team used the following three-tier rating system to evaluate each component:

B = Below Expectations (1)
M = Meets Expectations (2)
E = Exceeds Expectations (3)

The scores were based on such things as the condition of the component, its size or capacity relative to the need at that location, and its overall quality.

Components were evaluated from two perspectives: first, the value of the component in serving the immediate neighborhood, and second, its value to the entire community.

The setting for a component and the conditions around it affect how well it functions, so in addition to scoring the components, each park site or indoor facility was given a set of scores to rate its comfort, convenience, and ambient qualities. This includes such things as the availability of restrooms, drinking water, shade, scenery, etc.

Information collected during the site visit was then compiled and corrections and comparisons were made to GIS. Following the comparisons and compilation, the inventory was sent to the City staff for corrections and comments.

The compiled inventory data is available in supporting documents.

C. LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS

Several methods were employed to analyze current facilities in relationship to the needs of the community. This relationship is often referred to as Level of Service or LOS and each method used in this analysis provides a different look at the community and addresses different aspects of the system. These tools allow for analysis of the inventory, location, distribution, and access to parks and recreation. When the results of each analysis are combined, a full view of the system and the LOS that is provided to each resident is created upon which recommendations can be formed.

NRPA Standards

Level of Service (LOS) is typically defined in parks and recreation master plans as the capacity of system components and facilities to meet the needs of the public. The traditional means of measuring Levels of Service (LOS), often called the **NRPA** (National Recreation and Parks Association) **Standards** method, was typically based on providing a set number of facilities or acres per 1,000 population (or "capacity"). This methodology was developed in the 1970's and 80's and it is now recognized as not accurate for the majority of public agencies because each community has different demographics and physical conditions that make national standards inappropriate. Even NRPA officials are now calling this standards methodology "obsolete." It has, however, been used extensively, and therefore we provide these historic comparisons for population based components as part of this plan. See the Capacities Analysis section of the report for this analysis.

Classification Schemes

Another traditional approach to planning that has not been relied upon in this inventory is the classification of parks into categories such as "Neighborhood Parks" and "Community Parks." In Fort Collins, as in many municipalities, parks serve on both levels, and do not always fall neatly into one category or another. For this reason, the GRASP® process assigns both a neighborhood and a community value to each individual component within a park, without regard to the "classification" of that park.

GRASP® Methodology

In order to find a way to standardize LOS that is accurate, implementable, and can be benchmarked, this plan includes an enhanced approach using the **Geo-Referenced Amenities Standards Program (GRASP®)**. This methodology builds on traditional community standards based on capacity, not only tracking the quantity, but also quality and distribution of amenities and components of a group of components. Another important distinction of the GRASP® method is the flexibility that it allows in determining standards for LOS. Standards are determined based on each community's unique circumstances which make them more accurate and more likely to be implemented.

GRASP® technology applies to individual components, such as basketball courts, as well as to overall facilities such as neighborhood and community parks. It replaces the traditional classification of parks with a classification of the individual components within parks and open space according to their functions to create a component based system. By thinking of the components within the parks, trails, and recreational facility system as an integrated whole that provides a service to residents, it is possible to measure and quantify the net Level of Service provided.

In the inventory stage of the plan, each of the various components found within the park and recreation system were evaluated for quality and condition, and assigned a score. The geographic location of each component was also recorded. The quantity of each component is recorded as well providing a look at capacity.

Comfort, convenience, and ambience characteristics that are part of the context and setting of a component were also evaluated and recorded in the inventory. These comfort and convenience features are items such as drinking fountains, seating, and shade. They are not characteristics of the component itself, but when they exist in proximity to a component they enhance the value of the component. In GRASP® terminology these are referred to as modifiers.

Using GRASP® methodology, a **Base Score** is calculated for each component using the following formula:

Component Score x Modifier Value x Design and Ambience Score = ***Base Score***

By combining the base scores of each component it is possible to measure the service provided by the entire park system from a variety of perspectives and for any given location. This was done, and the results are presented in a series of maps (Perspectives in GRASP® terminology) and tables that make up the GRASP® analysis of the study area.

GRASP® Level of Service Perspectives show how well the community is served by any given set of components by using maps to graphically display the GRASP® values, and with quantified measurement spreadsheets (as presented in the Summary Tables and the Capacities LOS Chart). This quantification system provides a benchmark against which a community can determine how well it is doing providing services in relation to the community's goals, presently and over time.

The GRASP® enabled dataset is "living" digital data. Fort Collins is encouraged to maintain and update this valuable resource, so that future analyses may be performed to measure progress in maintaining and enhancing levels of service for the community.

For each Perspective, each inventoried component has been assigned a service value, or GRASP® score, and a service area, (or buffer), based on a radius from the component. Components were scored two ways, first for their value to the surrounding neighborhood, and second for their value to the entire city (communitywide score). For example, a small tot-lot in a pocket park might have a high value to the immediate neighborhood and a low value to someone who lives across town. For the GRASP® mapping, only the neighborhood scores are used. The community scores are used to determine community levels of service for key components, which will be discussed in a later section.

The buffer is the distance from which getting to the component can be accomplished within a reasonable time frame. One mile buffers have been placed around each component and shaded according to the component's GRASP® score. This represents a distance from which convenient access to the component can be achieved by normal means such as driving or bicycling. In addition a one-third mile buffer has been plotted for each component. The one-third mile buffer shows the distance that a resident can reasonably walk in 10 minutes. Scores are doubled within the 1/3 mile buffer to reflect the added accessibility of walking, since almost anyone can reach the location on their own by walking, even if they don't drive or ride a bicycle.

When service areas with their scores for multiple components are plotted on a map, a picture emerges that represents the cumulative service provided by that set of components upon the geographic area. Where service areas for multiple components overlap, a darker shade results from the overlap. Darker shades indicate locations that are "served" by a combination of more components and/or higher quality ones. The shades all have numeric values associated with them, which means that for any given location on a GRASP® map, there is a numeric GRASP® Level of Service score for that location and that particular set of components.
The maps can be used to determine levels of service throughout the community from a variety of perspectives. These perspectives can show a specific set of components, depict estimated travel time to services, highlight a particular geographic area, or display facilities that accommodate specific programming.

In the completed maps, it is not necessary for all parts of the community to score equally in the analyses. The desired level of service for any particular location will depend on the type of service being analyzed, and the characteristics of the particular location. Commercial and industrial areas might reasonably be expected to have lower levels of service for parks and recreation opportunities than residential areas.

The maps can be used to determine if current levels of service are appropriate in a given location. If so, then plans can be developed that provide similar levels of service to new neighborhoods. Conversely, if it is determined that different levels of service are desired, and then new planning can differ from the existing community patterns to provide the desired LOS.

Reading the GRASP® Perspectives
Each Perspective shows the cumulative levels of service across the study area when the buffers for a particular set of components are plotted together. Where there are darker shades, the level of service is higher for that particular perspective. It is important to note that the shade overlaying any given point on the map represents the cumulative value offered by the surrounding park system to an individual situated in that specific location, rather than the service being provided by components at that location to the areas around it.

By reviewing the Perspectives, it is possible to see where higher and lower levels of service are being provided from a given set of components. Decisions can then be made regarding the appropriateness of the levels of service and whether or not to change the system in some way to alter levels of service in various locations. The study area is bounded by City limits and contains portions of the community that are not developed. Thus these areas of no, or limited, service influence the GRASP® scores.

D. GRASP® PERSPECTIVES AND DESCRIPTIONS

The included maps for this Plan's analyses are:

> **PERSPECTIVE A:** **GRASP® Inventory**
>
> **PERSPECTIVE B:** **GRASP® Barriers Limiting Pedestrian Access**
>
> **PERSPECTIVE C:** **Access to All Outdoor and Indoor Components & Trail Network**
>
> **PERSPECTIVE D:** **Walkable Access to All Outdoor and Indoor Components & Trail Network**
>
> **PERSPECTIVE E:** **Access to Recreational Trail Network**
>
> **PERSPECTIVE F:** **Access to All Outdoor Components and Trail Network**
>
> **PERSPECTIVE G:** **Access to All Indoor Components**
>
> **PERSPECTIVE H:** **Access to Outdoor Tennis Courts**

PERSPECTIVE A: GRASP® INVENTORY

The inventory map is intended to show where facilities are located within the study area. Components tend to be grouped within the larger parks, including Lee Martinez, City, Edora, Rolland Moore, and Fossil Creek Parks, as well as the recently completed Spring Canyon Park. However, neighborhood parks are well-distributed throughout the rest of the City, and these parks tend to be of adequate size to contain a selection of amenities that include large open turf areas (including some programmable fields), playgrounds, and picnic facilities.

Figure 8: GRASP® Inventory
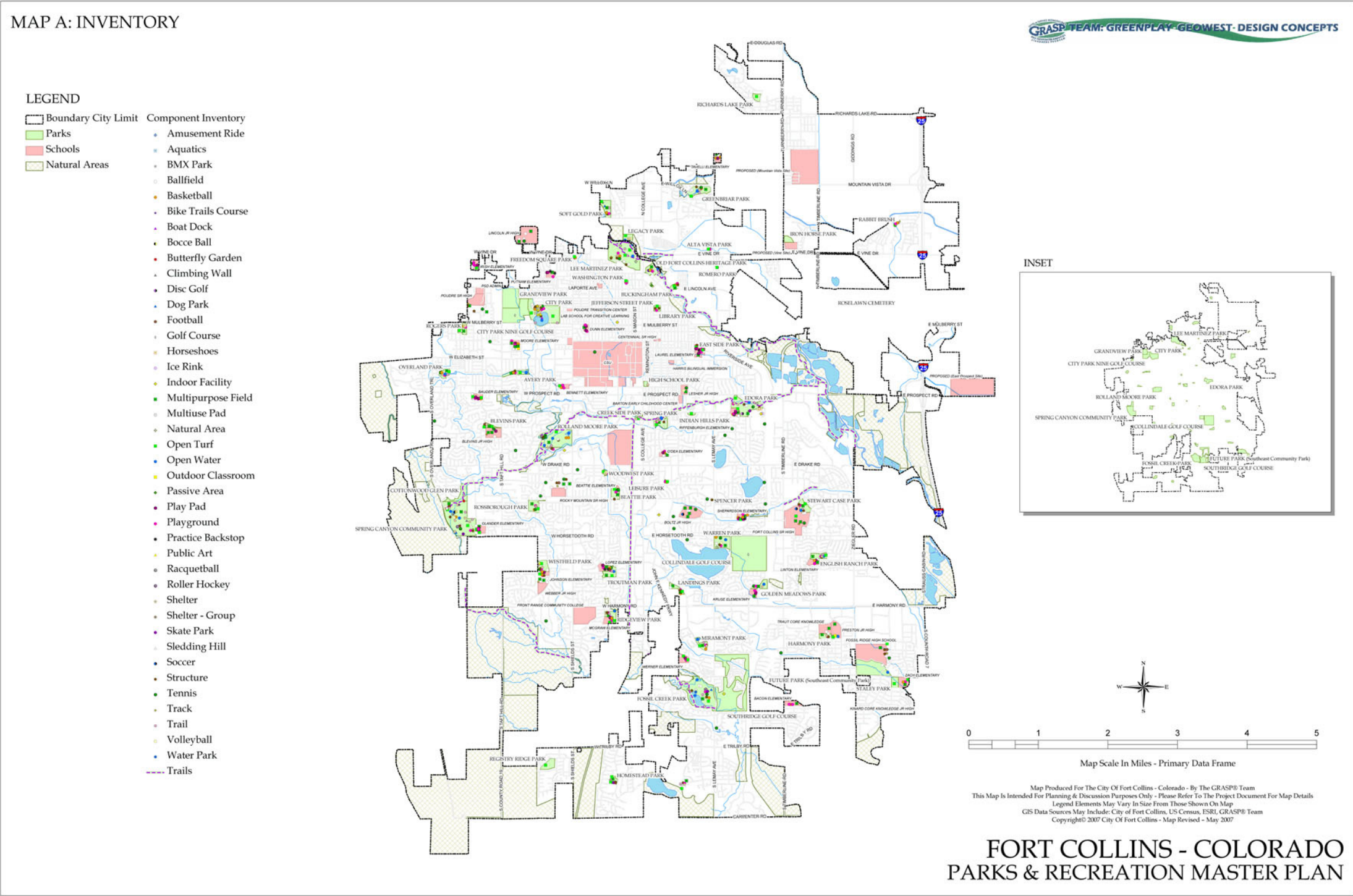
PERSPECTIVE B: GRASP® BARRIERS LIMITING PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

This perspective shows the areas in which the community has been divided for analysis purposes. These analysis areas are used for comparative purposes, and to determine targets, goals, and strategies for providing appropriate levels of service for different parts of the community.

Figure 9: Barriers Limiting Pedestrian Access
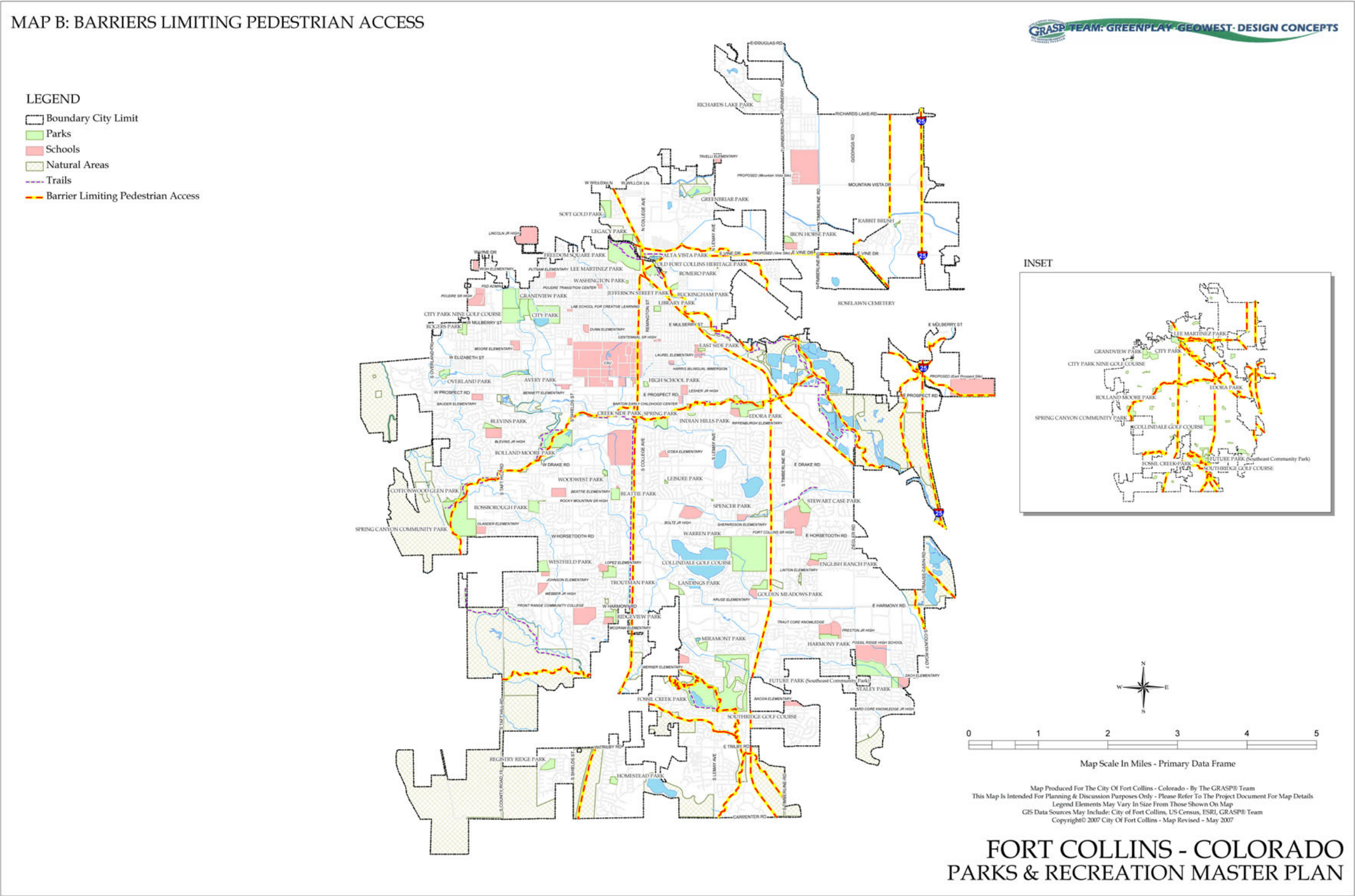
PERSPECTIVE C: ACCESS TO ALL OUTDOOR AND INDOOR COMPONENTS & TRAIL NETWORK

This perspective utilizes all components provided by all providers to give a picture of how the system of public spaces is serving the overall parks and recreation needs of Fort Collins. Each component is given both a 1/3 mile radius and a one-mile radius. The Neighborhood Score from the inventory has been used, along with the modifiers identified for each park, to derive GRASP® scores for each of the components and applied to the buffers as described below. **Table 18** is a summary table that shows the GRASP® scores and provides further analysis of the LOS.

Figure 10: Access to All Outdoor and Indoor Components & Trail Network
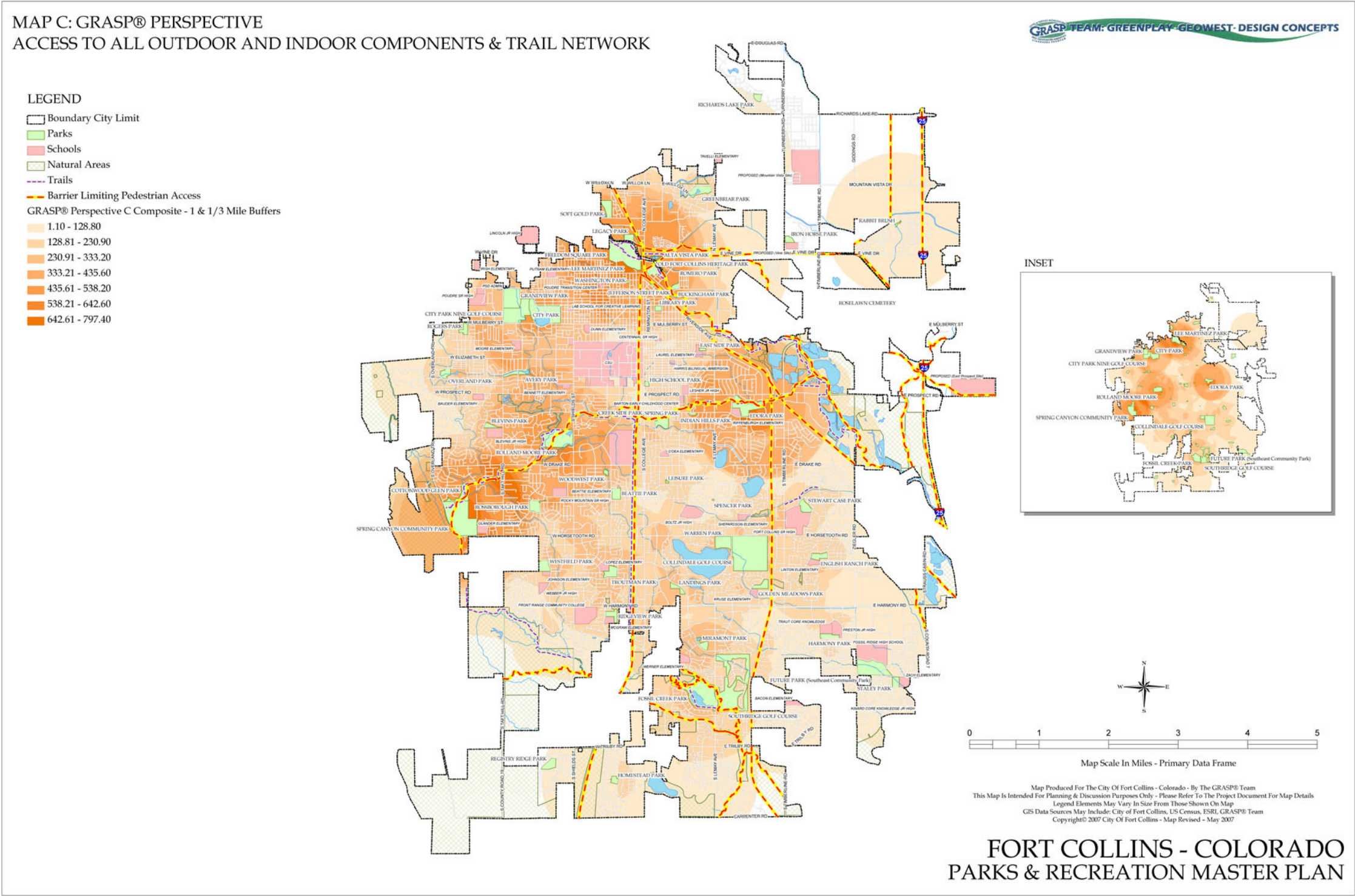
Table 18: GRASP® All Outdoor and Indoor Components & Trail Network LOS Summary Matrix					
Analysis Area	% of Fort Collins	Total Acres	Acres w/ LOS	% of Total w/LOS	Avg. LOS Score per Acre Served
Entire Area	100%	33,388	27,827	83.3%	217

Definitions

- Total Acres
  Total area within the designated analysis area as calculated from the GIS
- Acres with LOS
  Area within each analysis area that has some service (LOS = 1 or Greater).
- Percent of Total with LOS
  Percentage of the designated analysis area that has some service (LOS = 1 or Greater).
- Average LOS per Acre Served
  The average GRASP® score for any given acre within the designated analysis area.

Table 18 is the summary table for the Access to All Outdoor and Indoor Components perspective and shows that 83.3% of Fort Collins is covered by at least some level of service (GRASP® score greater than zero). The average score for the served area is 217 points. This is due not only to the number and distribution of parks throughout Fort Collins, but also to the trail system, which has been incorporated into this perspective. It indicates that Fort Collins is doing very well overall in providing opportunities for its residents to get out and enjoy some form of recreation experience close to home. This score represents a system that minimally has fairly evenly spaced sites, an average of four components per site with standard modifiers (shade, drinking water, benches, etc.).

Table 19 is a summary of several comparable cities. The values in the table are intended to provide a context and comparison of the GRASP® Analysis, not to imply a set of standards. The score of 217 should be used as a benchmark for the City of a combination of quantity and quality of physical amenities provided to the community. Improvements or deterioration in the system, as well as additions will all have an impact on the score over time. The cities chosen for comparison are a combination of some university communities, communities close to Ft. Collins and similar in size to Ft. Collins. Data for these communities was collected through the same GRASP® process meaning they are reliable for an "apples to apples" comparison.

City, State	Total Population	Study Date	# of Park Parcels	# Parcels Per 1000 Population	# Components (outdoor)	Average Number of Components Per Site	Total GRASP Score	% Area w/LOS	Study Area Size (acres)	Components Per 1000 Population	Avg. Components Per Parcel	Average GRASP LOS Per Served Acre
Fort Collins,CO	130,681	2006	45	0.3	486	10.8	2675	83%	33,388	3.7	10.8	217
Ft. Lauderdale,FL	181,095	2007	91	0.5	483	4.5	2662	98%	23,230	2.7	5.3	221
Lakewood,CO	144,369	2007	105	0.7	738	7.0	6476	100%	27,494	5.1	7.0	295
Winter Haven,FL	100,000	2007	31	0.3	230	7.4	328	37%	42,191	2.3	7.4	175
Bloomington,IN	72,032	2007	45	0.6	258	5.7	2125	99%	15,001	3.6	5.7	197
Windsor,CO	16,178	2007	29	1.8	117	3.8	754	83%	14,691	7.2	4.0	142
Vail,CO	5,939	2006	20	3.4	85	4.3	580	100%	2,915	14.3	4.3	174

Table 19: GRASP® Comparison with Other Communities

Barriers have been taken into account in this analysis by clipping the 1/3-mile buffers when they cross a barrier. Barriers include major streets and waterways, as well as railroads.

The Perspective shows that service is highest in the areas around the larger parks, with their wide variety of features. It is also worth noting that the Spring Creek corridor tends to have relatively high levels of service along it, as does the Poudre River corridor, which points out the value of these corridors for Fort Collins.

PERSPECTIVE D: WALKABLE ACCESS TO ALL OUTDOOR AND INDOOR COMPONENTS

This perspective shows the level of service provided to the community at a walkable level. All components are shown and each has only a 1/3 mile buffer. These buffers have been truncated at the barriers. Scores within the buffers are equal to the base score for the components, calculated as described earlier, and doubled to reflect the walkable access, as was done on Perspective C. In a sense, this is Perspective C with the one-mile buffers removed.

Figure 11: Walkable Access to All Outdoor and Indoor Components
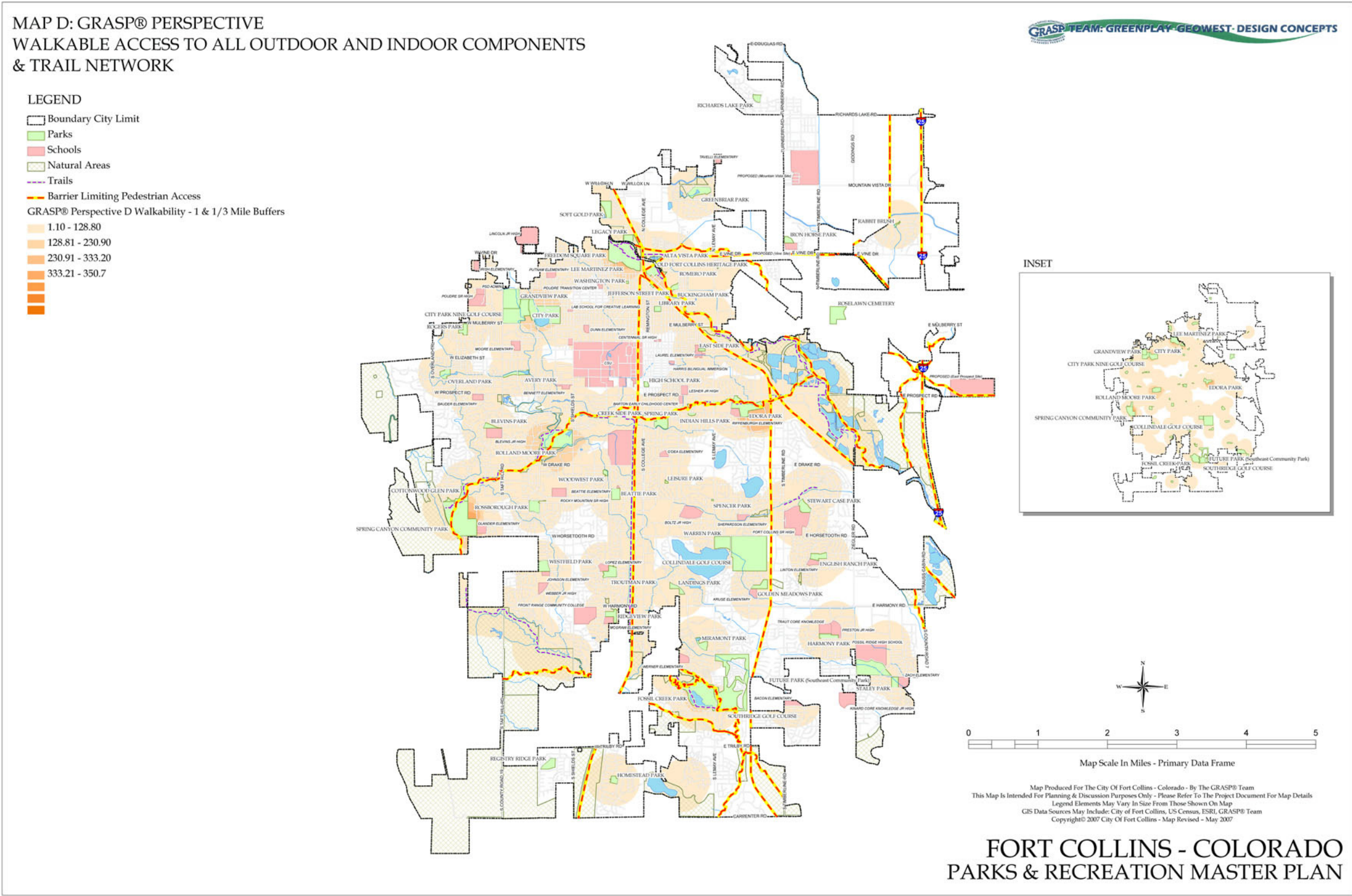
Table 20: GRASP® Walkable Access to All Outdoor/Indoor Components & Trail Network LOS Summary Matrix					
Analysis Area	% of Fort Collins	Total Acres	Acres w/ LOS	% of Total w/LOS	Avg. LOS Score per Acre Served
Entire City	100%	33,387	17,535	52.5%	41.8

Definitions
- Total Acres
  Total area within the designated analysis area as calculated from the GIS
- Acres with LOS
  Area within each analysis area that has some service (LOS = 1 or Greater). Percent of Total with LOS: Percentage of the designated analysis area that has some service (LOS = 1 or Greater).
- Average LOS per Acre Served
  The average GRASP® score for any given acre within the designated analysis area.

Table 20 shows that 52.5% of Fort Collins has at least some LOS (GRASP® score greater than zero) within walking distance of their home, and that the average value of service within this area is 41.8 points. Once again, this perspective indicates that Fort Collins is doing well in providing an overall LOS for residents within walking distance of homes, although there is room for improvement to increase the percentage of the community covered by walkable LOS. One means of accomplishing this goal would be extending the trail and greenway system, if possible, in areas without LOS at present. Another strategy would be to investigate areas without LOS to see if safe crossings of barriers exist or can be provided, to allow service to "flow" from nearby components that may have been cut off on this perspective.

PERSPECTIVE E: GRASP® ACCESS TO RECREATION TRAIL NETWORK

For this perspective, trails that offer significant recreational value, including amenities such as high scenic value, proximity to natural areas, and such things as benches, interpretive signs, etc. are scored at a higher value. Trails were scored with 1, 2, or 3 points depending upon how well they met the expectations for their intended purpose. This is because these types of trails function much like a park with a combination of active and passive components, and because of the high value that is typically placed on trails in the needs assessment process. The score for a given length of trail was assigned to a 1/3 mile buffer paralleling the trail along both sides. This perspective shows that a network of trails is taking shape in Fort Collins on a grid of approximately every two to three miles.

Figure 12: Access to Recreation Trail Network
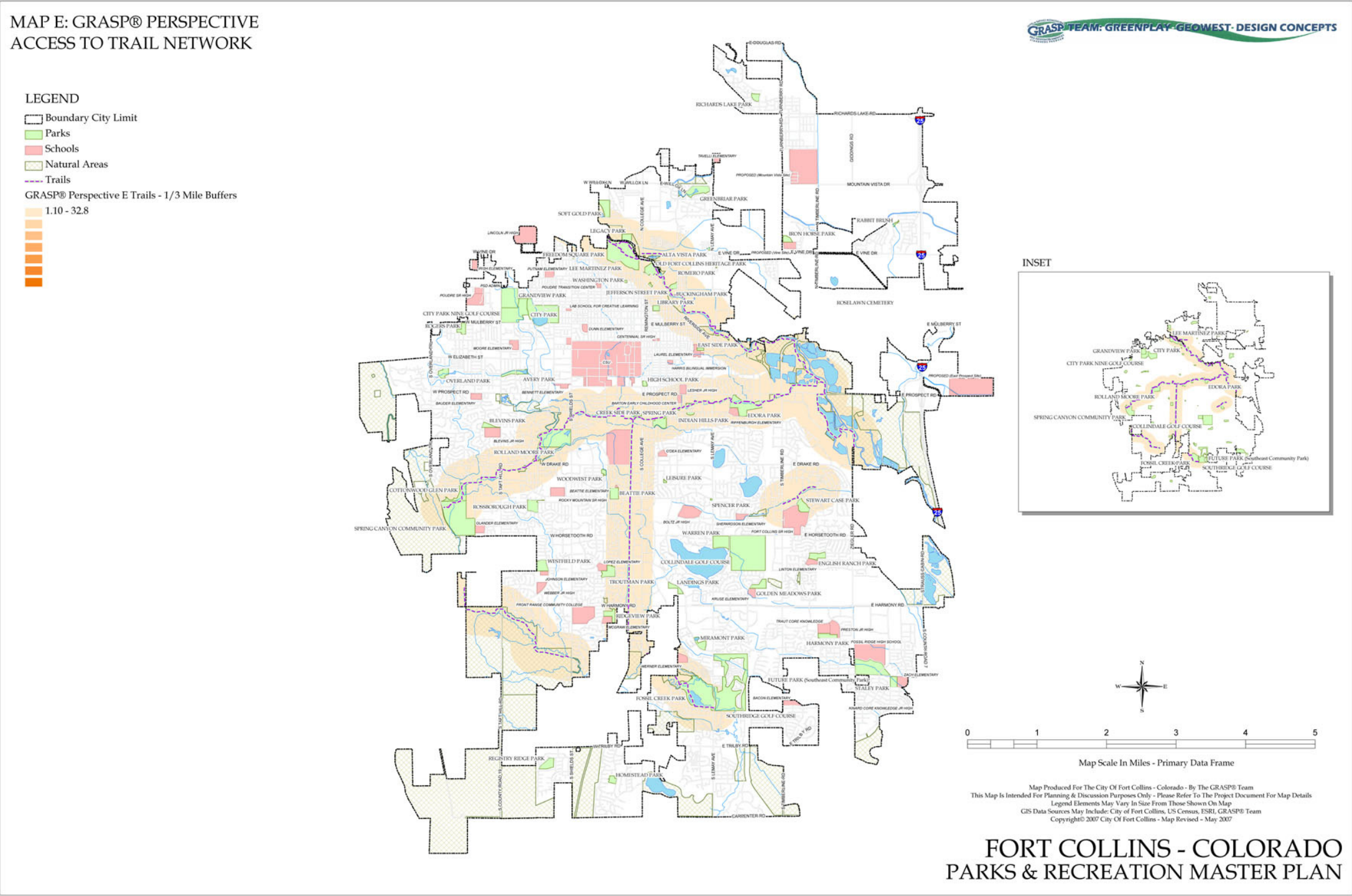
Table 21: GRASP® Access to Recreation Trail Network LOS Summary Matrix					
Analysis Area	% of Fort Collins	Total Acres	Acres w/ LOS	% of Total w/LOS	Avg. LOS Score per Acre Served
Entire Area	100%	33,388	8,119	24.3%	25.4

Definitions

- Total Acres
  Total area within the designated analysis area as calculated from the GIS
- Acres with LOS
  Area within each analysis area that has some service (LOS = 1 or Greater).
- Percent of Total with LOS
  Percentage of the designated analysis area that has some service (LOS = 1 or Greater).
- Average LOS per Acre Served
  The average GRASP® score for any given acre within the designated analysis area.

PERSPECTIVE F: ACCESS TO OUTDOOR COMPONENTS & TRAIL NETWORK

This perspective shows the level of service that is being provided to residents by outdoor components only (excluding indoor components). These components include outdoor facilities such as: open turf, shelters, loop walks, public art, natural areas, picnic grounds, memorials, and trails. It is important to note that significant open space and natural areas exist that are managed by other entities but were not included in the scoring for this analysis. In effect, this perspective is the same as Perspective C without the inclusion of indoor components.

Figure 13: Regional Inventory – Alternative Providers
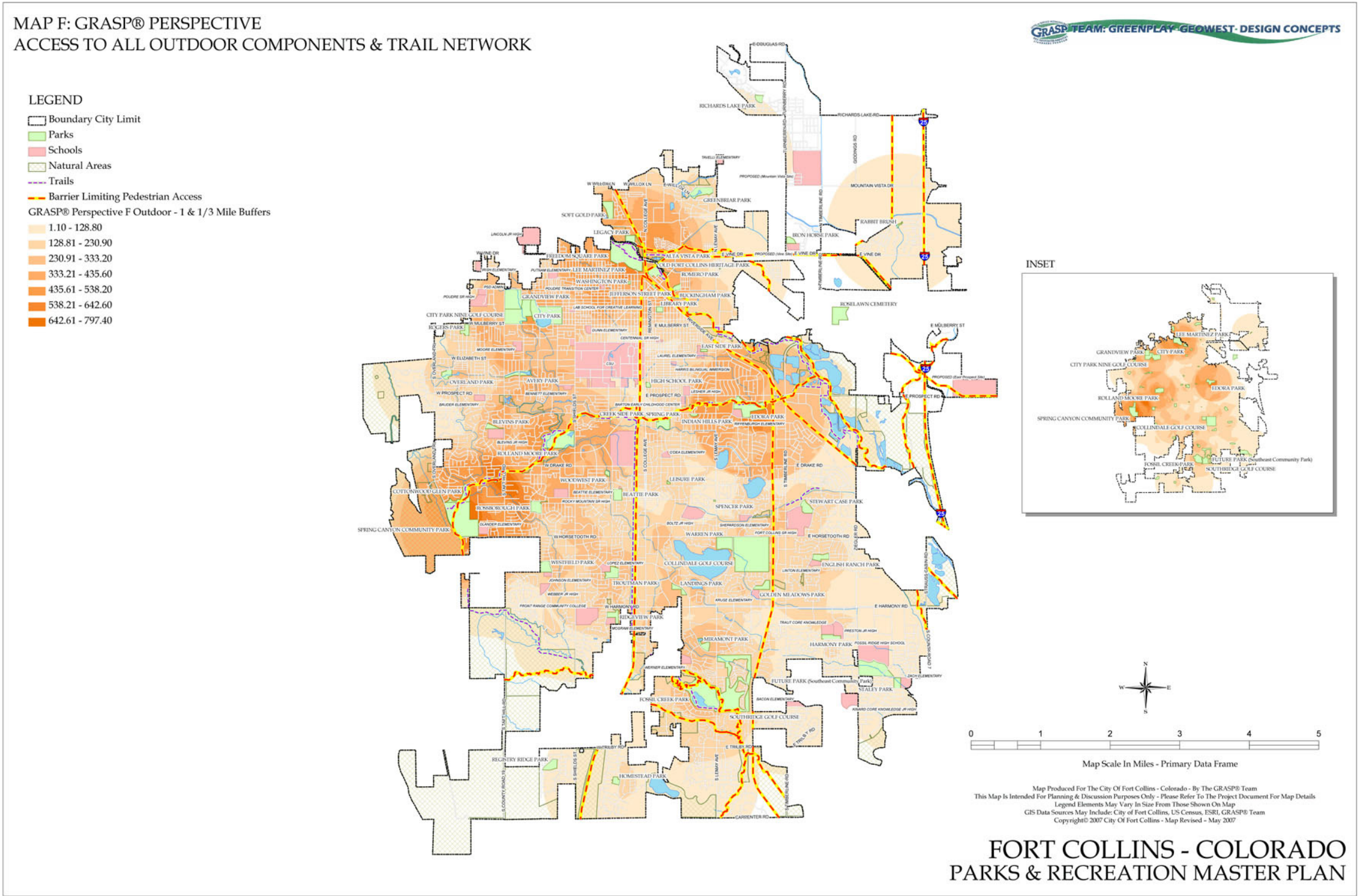
Table 22: GRASP® Access to All Outdoor Components & Trail LOS Summary Matrix					
Analysis Area	% of Fort Collins	Total Acres	Acres w/ LOS	% of Total w/LOS	Avg. LOS Score per Acre Served
Fort Collins	100%	33,388	27,827	83.3%	204.4

Definitions
- Total Acres
  Total area within the designated analysis area as calculated from the GIS
- Acres with LOS
  Area within each analysis area that has some service (LOS = 1 or Greater).
- Percent of Total with LOS
  Percentage of the designated analysis area that has some service (LOS = 1 or Greater).
- Average LOS per Acre Served
  The average GRASP® score for any given acre within the designated analysis area.

From the **Summary Table, Table 22**, it can be seen that removing the indoor components does not reduce the area of coverage for LOS within the City. This is because most of the indoor facilities are located in or near parks with outdoor components, so the service buffers are very similar. The average LOS score drops from 217 points in Perspective C to 204.4 points when only outdoor components are considered. It is likely that a closer analysis will reveal that some of the newer areas of Fort Collins may be falling short in coverage as they await development of future parks.

PERSPECTIVE G: ACCESS TO ALL INDOOR COMPONENTS

Indoor recreation components that provide both active and passive recreation opportunities are shown in this perspective. Typical components used on this perspective include gyms, pools, fitness and meeting rooms, and other specialized spaces.

The perspective shows that large areas of Fort Collins are beyond the walkable or short-drive distance of indoor recreation facilities. This may or may not be a problem, depending upon the expectations of residents and the philosophy of the City. Current trends are towards providing fewer indoor centers with a greater variety of components in each one. Currently, 30.5% of the City has access to at least some indoor LOS. Most of the areas without service are located around the perimeter of the City, in newer developments.

Figure 14: Access to All Indoor Components
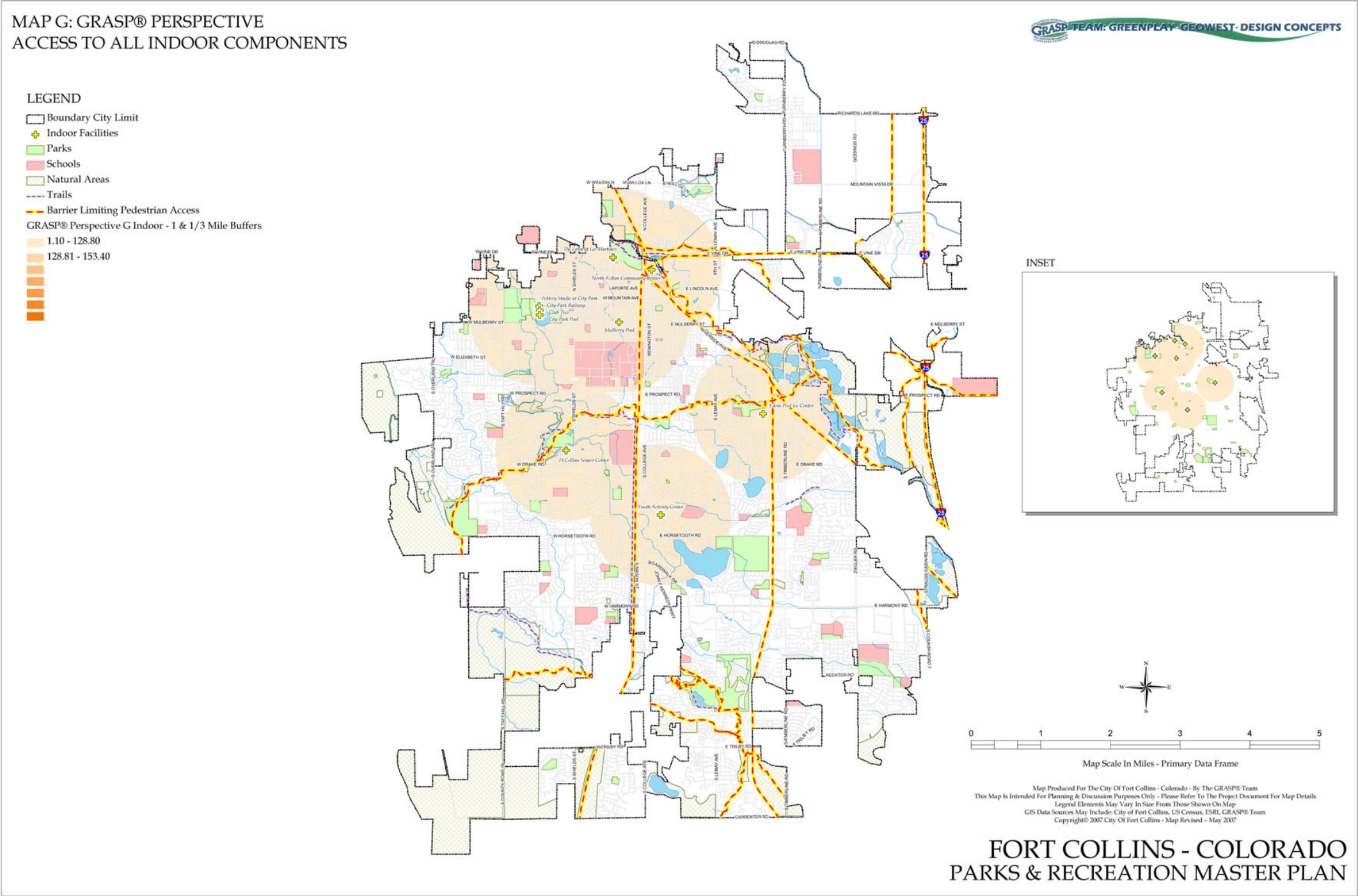
Table 23: GRASP® Access to All Indoor Components LOS Summary Matrix					
Analysis Area	% of Fort Collins	Total Acres	Acres w/ LOS	% of Total w/LOS	Avg. LOS Score per Acre Served
Fort Collins	100%	33,388	10,181	30.5%	34.4

Definitions
- Total Acres
  Total area within the designated analysis area as calculated from the GIS
- Acres with LOS
  Area within each analysis area that has some service (LOS = 1 or Greater).
- Percent of Total with LOS
  Percentage of the designated analysis area that has some service (LOS = 1 or Greater).
- Average LOS per Acre Served
  The average GRASP® score for any given acre within the designated analysis area.

PERSPECTIVE H: GRASP® ACCESS TO TENNIS COURTS

This perspective was prepared by using an inventory of all known public tennis courts. "Public" in this case includes private courts that are owned by Homeowner's Associations or other entities, but which are available for use by members and guests. Courts that are owned and used by private individuals have not been included.

Because it was not feasible to visit and evaluate the quality of private courts, all courts were given an equal value indicating that they "meet expectations," based on the assumption that these courts are being used for tennis play and therefore are likely to be meeting the set of expectations for playing tennis on private courts.

The map shows a relatively even distribution across the City for tennis courts, meaning that most of the residents of Fort Collins live in proximity to tennis courts, whether or not they are actually able to play on those courts. The main gap is seen in the northeast sector of the City. Additional courts may need to be provided as this section of Fort Collins is built out.

Larger court complexes which are provided by the City and completely open for public use are found at Rolland Moore and Edora Parks. These parks are centrally located along major streets and along the trail system.

MAP H: GRASP® PERSPECTIVE
ACCESS TO TENNIS COURTS

LEGEND
- Boundary City Limit
- Parks
- Schools
- Natural Areas
- Trails
- Barrier Limiting Pedestrian Access

GRASP® Perspective H Tennis - 1 & 1/3 Mile Buffers
- 1.10 - 128.80
- 128.81 - 129.60

INSET

Map Scale In Miles - Primary Data Frame

Map Produced For The City Of Fort Collins - Colorado - By The GRASP® Team
This Map Is Intended For Planning & Discussion Purposes Only - Please Refer To The Project Document For Map Details
Legend Elements May Vary In Size From Those Shown On Map
GIS Data Sources May Include: City of Fort Collins, US Census, ESRI, GRASP® Team
Copyright© 2007 City Of Fort Collins - Map Revised ~ May 2007

FORT COLLINS - COLORADO
PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

RELEVANCE TO THE CHALLENGE
GRASP® Analysis Findings

The findings of GRASP® are directly relevant to the "Challenge" because they provide insight into the level of service currently being provided throughout the City by various parks and recreation amenities, as well as areas where there are gaps in service. The GRASP® Perspectives and analysis illustrate that Fort Collins is providing a very high LOS to its residents, especially for outdoor recreation components. It is currently serving 83.3% of its geographic basis with access to parks, trails, and indoor recreation facilities, however, only 52.5% has walkable access (within 1/3 of a mile) to these facilities. In the development of future facilities, the City should work to increase this percentage of residential areas with walkable access to, at least, certain types of facilities. The analysis of indoor recreation is also relevant to the Challenge because there are large areas of the City that are beyond walkable access to indoor facilities. Keeping in mind it is currently a national trend to provide fewer indoor centers with more components in each one, Fort Collins must decide its own philosophy for the distribution of indoor recreation for the development of future facilities.

E. CAPACITIES LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) FINDINGS

Communitywide LOS

The GRASP® maps show how service is distributed within the community. For some components, location is less important than having an adequate quantity or capacity at an expected level of quality. Because GRASP® scores are a blend of quantity and quality; they can be used to create numerical indices for LOS that account for both characteristics. The **Community Components GRASP® Scores and Population Ratios Table, Table 24** shows these indices for key components in Fort Collins. The additional GRASP® score needed in the last column is an indicator of both quantity and quantity as the population grows, not a number of components needed. Adding components to the system will increase the score as will making improvements in quality. The reverse is also true, if components are removed from the system or in some manner deteriorate, it will have a negative impact on the GRASP® score.

Table 24: Community Components GRASP® Scores and Population Ratios				
	Current Population	130,681	Population	141,566
COMPONENT	Total GRASP® score per component type	GRASP® score per 1000 population (GRASP© Index)	Total GRASP® score needed at projected population	Additional GRASP® score needed
Ballfield	226.8	1.74	246	19
Basketball	224.0	1.71	243	19
BMX	10.4	0.08	11	1
Disc Golf	5.2	0.04	6	0
Dog Park	24.7	0.19	27	2
Hockey In-line	16.9	0.13	18	1
Multi-use Field	210.4	1.61	228	18
Outdoor Pool*	10.4	0.08	11	1
Picnic Shelter - Large Group**	323.3	2.47	350	27
Playground***	250.8	1.92	272	21
Racquetball	15.6	0.12	17	1
Skate Park	29.9	0.23	32	2
Sledding Hill	27.3	0.21	30	2
Tennis Courts****	330.3	2.53	358	28
Water Play *****	5.2	0.04	6	0
TOTAL	1,711.2	13.09	1854	143

* The scores for both the Leisure Pool and the Kiddie Pool at City Park were used.
** All picnic shelters from the database have been included.
***All playgrounds are included. Destination playgrounds were not inventoried separately.
****Only city-owned and school district courts have been included.
*****The interactive water feature at Fossil Creek Park

Capacities Analysis and Findings

For some components, the quantity needed is proportional to the population that will be served by that component. This is a fairly easy calculation when components are programmed for use. The programming determines how many people will be using the facilities over a period of time. Sports fields and courts fall into this category. For other components, the ratio of components to the population may vary, depending upon the size or capacity of the component and the participation levels within the community for the activity served by the component. Skate parks and group picnic facilities fall into this category.

The **Capacities LOS Table**, Table 25, represents the Capacity LOS for Fort Collins. This table closely resembles a traditional LOS analysis and shows how the quantities of certain park and recreation components supplied by the City, schools, and homeowner associations compare to population. For each component, the table shows the current quantity of that component on a "per-1000 persons" basis (referred to as the Capacity LOS) and the pro-rata number of persons in the community represented by each component. This kind of analysis can be used to show the capacity of the current inventory – in other words, how many people are potentially being served by park components.

RELEVANCE TO THE CHALLENGE
Capacities Analysis Findings

Capacities analysis relates directly to our "Challenge" because it is one tool, although not the only tool, that can be used to make final recommendations and establish budgets. The recommended components may be added to existing parks, or may be an expansion or upgrade of existing facilities, while others may require the purchase of additional land. In some cases, the prescribed additional components may be provided by partner agencies or other entities to the satisfaction of the community, and therefore there may be little or no cost to the City.

Using both the Capacities LOS and the GRASP® Indices, recommendations can be made that assure that the appropriate blend of quantity and quality will be maintained within the parks and recreation system over time.

Table 25: Capacity Levels of Service for Community Recreation Components
Fort Collins, Colorado

		Ball-field	Basketball	BMX	Disc Golf	Dog Park	Hockey In-line	Multi-use Field	Outdoor Pool		Picnic shelter Large (group)		Playgrounds, Destination		Raquetball	Skate Park		Sledding Hill	Tennis Courts		Water Play
INVENTORY																					
City Components		32	34	2	1	3	2	29	1	*	49	**	40	***	3	5	****	4	48	*****	1
Schools		36	23.5					40					32	***					32		
HOA																			52		
TOTAL		68	57.5	2	1	3	2	69	1		49		72		3	5		4	132		1
CURRENT RATIO PER POPULATION																					
CURRENT POPULATION 2006	130,681																				
Current Ratio per 1000 Population		0.52	0.44	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.53	0.01		0.37		0.55		0.02	0.04		0.03	1.01		0.01
Population per component		1,922	2,273	65,341	130,681	43,560	65,341	1,894	130,681		2,667		1,815		43,560	26,136		32,670	990		130,681
PROJECTED POPULATION - YEAR 2011	141,566																				
Total # needed to maintain current ratio of all existing facilities at projected population		**74**	**62**	**2**	**1**	**3**	**2**	**75**	**1**		**53**		**78**		**3**	**5**		**4**	**143**		**1**
Number that should be added to achieve current ratio at projected population		6	5	0	0	0	0	6	0		4		6		0	0		0	11		0

* The leisure pool and kiddie pool at city park were counted as one outdoor pool.
** This quantity includes all components labeled "Picnic Shelter" and "Picnic Shelter, Group" in the database.
*** This quantity includes all components labeled "Playground" in the database. Destination playgrounds were not separated out in the inventory.
****Includes the skate pad at Homestead Park
***** The platform tennis court was not included in this count.

1. FUNDING AND BUILD OUT OF THE PARK SYSTEM

Focus group participants, staff, and survey respondents all shared major concerns about the need for new park development. Furthermore, the City has strategic planning documents that recommend the development of 19 new parks over the next 18 years. The prioritization of development of future parks must be balanced with available funds to maintain parks to a high standard.

It is evident through input gained from the statistically-valid survey and focus groups that the residents of Fort Collins are quite satisfied with the level of service that they are currently being provided by the City's park system. However, with limited resources and a growing system, maintaining existing levels will be challenging. Therefore, the City will need to maximize its resources and strategically plan to meet the current level of service standards.

The Recommendation Chapter will present options for the build out of the park system that meet the needs of the community, are sustainable, maintain an acceptable level of service, and reduce operation and maintenance costs.

2. FUNDING FOR OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PARKS, TRAILS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

This Focus Area is linked to Focus Area No. 1 and deals with the ongoing operation and maintenance cost of new facilities.

The City has a large and diverse park system and recreation facilities that serve the many needs of this active community. The residents have come to expect the high level of service that has been provided over the years. Yet, with the leveling off of the tax dollars available from the General Fund, establishing new and significant funding sources will be critical to the sustainability of operations and maintenance of new and future parks and facilities and to continuing to meet the changing needs of the community.

In addition to regaining traditional funding, it will be important for the Department to actively seek out alternative funding sources. The Department will need to continue its efforts to gain grants, donations, and sponsorships.

The Recommendation Chapter will present options on new funding for park and trail operation and maintenance.

3. RECREATION DEPARTMENT PRICING AND COST RECOVERY

It is important for the Department to have an updated philosophy for resource allocation, cost recovery, and resultant pricing and fees that reflects the values of the community. This is invaluable for making tough resource allocation decisions, and creating pricing and cost recovery strategies. These strategies need to be equitable, defensible, and implementable at all levels, and should be based on the value of the services to the community. This philosophy is very important to providing for the sustainability of the Department.

The Recommendation Chapter will summarize one pricing and cost recovery system that can provide data for a future study to formalize a new pricing and cost recovery system for the Recreation Department.

4. LARGE OUTDOOR EVENTS

The large outdoor events facility for larger community gatherings (picnics for example) for such groups as corporate, civic, churches and others received enough public support to indicate large outdoor events should be explored as an action item.

5. SPORTS PARK

The sports park did not receive significant support during the public process. The City should continue to provide ballfield and turf fields for recreational needs. The City may choose in the future to participate in a partnership to explore the financial possibility of such a facility. The item will not be included as an action item.

6. TENNIS COURT SERVICE LEVEL

Staff needs additional data on user counts, court costs and input from the community on this focus area to determine the number of and cost to replace aging asphalt tennis courts. This study is included as an action item.

There is a strong and growing trend in the United States for public leaders to recognize that parks, recreation, trails, and related "Quality of Life" amenities are not optional ancillary services provided by governmental agencies, but that they are integral to creating communities where people want to live. These services should be seen as **investments** in the long-term vitality and economic sustainability of any vibrant and attractive community. Private developers have long known that these amenities increase property values, invite residency, enhance health and safety, and create a positive quality of life for citizens. The City of Fort Collins recognizes these factors, and is poised to create improvements that will enhance the City for years to come.

The following **Goals, Objectives, and Strategies** are outlined to create a process for focus and implementation. An **Action Plan** follows.

»GOAL 1: *Maintain Appropriate Level of Service as the Community Grows*

A. Park System Objective: Fort Collins will facilitate the development of a well-balanced system of parks that includes active and passive recreational opportunities to meet a variety of needs for individuals, as well as groups of all ages and abilities.

Strategies - Community and Neighborhood Level of Service
- The City shall incorporate the 2007 Community Component GRASP® Scores as a guide for future planning efforts. The City shall strive to maintain the current overall GRASP service level.
- The City shall work to increase the GRASP® score for existing outdoor facilities by renovating facilities that scored below expectations on the GRASP® database, expanding or repurposing existing facilities, and adding additional recreational components where funding and space allow.
- The percentage of all residential areas served by a facility shall increase as new parks are added to the system.
- To meet the needs of the current and growing community, the City shall work to acquire and develop additional park acreage in expanding areas.
- The City shall strive to provide parks within walking distance of residents.
- The City shall work with the Transportation Planning Department to provide safe and enjoyable sidewalks and bike lanes as routes to parks.
- The City shall continue to collect impact fees for new park development to acquire land and develop parks needed as a result of population growth.

B. Trail System Objective: Maintain the level of service and connectivity that trails provide to residents
- The City of Fort Collins shall increase the number of acres served by trails. Ideally, all residents would be served by a recreational trail within walking distance of their home. Trails will continue to connect to public areas, neighborhoods, greenways and employment centers.

Strategies:
- Work with the Transportation Planning Department to continue to integrate the trail system into the City's most current Transportation Master Plan.
- Review bicycle parking needs at all park access points, prioritizing parks that connect to side paths, multi-use trails, or greenway trails.
- Continue making connectivity a priority in trail construction in the City's Trail system. Coordinate with the Transportation Planning and Administration Departments to provide bike and pedestrian connections.
- The City shall continue to fund the development of the trail system through the Conservation Trust Fund.
- Prioritize land acquisition for trail development and coordinate this effort to include other City departments.

FORT COLLINS PARKS & RECREATION POLICY PLAN MASTER PLAN
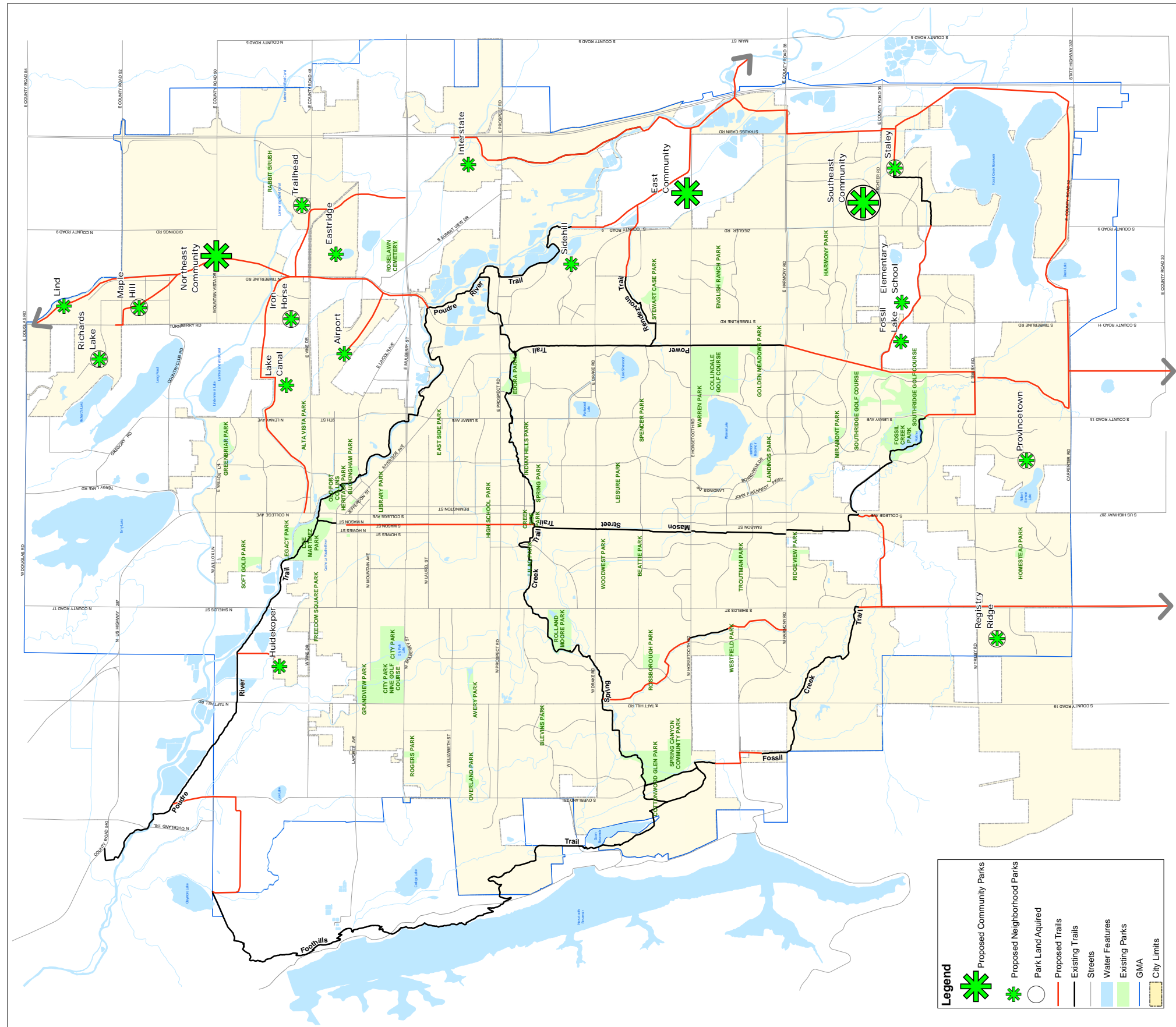
C. Recreation Facilities Objective: Develop recreation facilities
- The City of Fort Collins shall increase the number of recreation facilities to meet the needs of the community. Some of the types of recreation facilities that were identified by the community as desired for development include indoor programming spaces, such as walking/jogging track, a teen activities area, indoor aquatic center, weight/cardiovascular equipment, and therapeutic aquatics.
- Increase the percentage of all residential areas served by a recreation facility by adding new facilities to the system.

Strategies:
- Coordinate the development of recreation facilities with others (cultural in particular) to maximize the usefulness of a facility.
- Obtain land acquisitions in the community to fill in service gaps .
- Fund future recreation facilities with a combination of public funds, Capital Improvement revenues, and private partnerships, and grants, if feasible.

»GOAL 2: *Implement Buildout of the Park System, Trail System and Recreation Facilities*

The following recommendations address the development of future and improvements to existing parks and facilities. These recommendations are based on site visits, facility assessments, and input received from staff and members of the public. This list of capital projects should be incorporated into the Department's 10 year Capital Improvement Project (CIP) list.

Objective: Continue to Prioritize and Implement CIP Investments

Strategies:
- CIP Development – Continue to track and update CIP improvements including improvements to existing trails and parks, as well as the development of new parks, trails and indoor recreation facilities.
- Implement sustainable and prioritized development of the planned future parks based on the following preferred build-out schedule:
  1. Provincetown Park (9.0 acres) – 2008
  2. Registry Ridge Park (6 acres) – 2009
  3. Huidekoper Park (8 acres) – 2010 Recommendation - obtain land from PSD, make improvements when fee collection allows.
  4. Richards Lake Park (6 acres) – 2010
  5. Staley Park (10 acres) - 2011
  6. Iron Horse Park (6.5 acres) – 2012
  7. Maple Hill (7 acres) – 2013
  8. Southeast Community Park (53.4 acres) - 2014
  9. Side Hill Park (6 acres) - 2015
  10. Lind Park (4 acres) – 2016
  11. Fossil Lake Park (7 acres) - 2017
  12. Elementary School (7 acres) – 2018
  13. Trailhead Park (4 acres) - 2019
  14. East Community Park (50 acres) - 2020
  15. East Ridge Park (7 acres) 2021
  16. Lake Canal Park (7 acres) - 2022
  17. Airport Park (8 acres) - 2023
  18. Interstate Park (4 acres) – 2024
  19. North Community Park (100 acres) – 2025

The preferred build out schedule may change and is dependent on residential development in the areas to be served by the park, and on the availability of operations and maintenance funding.

- In the implementation of parks, involve the residents in the surrounding areas through a public input process to identify components and amenities for the park.
- Evaluate the cost savings associated with concentrating high maintenance facilities, such as ballfields in future community parks, rather than neighborhood parks.
- Continue dialogue with the Cultural Services Department with regard to the potential of partnering to construct a joint Recreation and Cultural Center. If community support and funding is gained, perform feasibility study and pro forma to identify components and construction costs, as well as operation and maintenance costs.
- Continue the development of the City's trail system.
- Plan for future recreation centers at Fossil Creek, Spring Canyon and the future Northeast Community Parks. Prioritize the Fossil Creek center first, followed by either the Spring Canyon or Northeast centers depending upon need.
- Complete the expansion of the Senior Center.

Objective: Reduce the Costs of Outdoor Facility Maintenance and Make Improvements to Existing Facilities

Strategies:
- Repurpose under-utilized facilities, such as some tennis courts in neighborhood parks to reduce maintenance costs.
- Based on the GRASP® database, identify all components that scored "below expectations," task staff with re-evaluating these components, and establish priorities for renovation or repurposing.
- Enhance the experience of users within existing parks by continuing to add comfort and convenience features such as shade, benches, picnic tables, loop walks, etc.
- As funds become available to make improvements to existing parks, utilize public input to gain residents' feedback on what components best serve their neighborhoods and the community.
- The City should continue to promote public art and other passive cultural activities to make spaces more attractive and useable.

Objective: The City Will Increase Its Focus on Green Practices and Sustainability

Strategies:
- Ideally, all parks shall provide a mix of developed recreation and passive recreation areas that contain durable/sustainable features. Environmentally sensitive areas in parks and along the trail system shall be protected or impacts mitigated and the areas enhanced.
- The City will continue to promote public art and other passive cultural activities to make spaces more attractive and useable.
- The Parks Department shall develop a Sustainable Practices Plan that incorporates specific, measurable goals, such as:
  » Reduce emissions from park maintenance vehicles over the next 5 years
  » Cut Department consumption of fuel over the next 5 years
  » Cut use of chemical applications over the next 5 years
  » Work to make City indoor facilities and office "zero waste," recycling all office and recreation materials
  » Incorporate a policy of recycling as much equipment as feasible associated with life-cycle replacement

»GOAL 3: *Address Issues Raised During the Public Process*

Objective: Develop Action Items for the Following:

- *Disc Golf* - Continue to work with the Disc Golf community to upgrade existing community courses and create more holes to reduce the impact to users at Edora Park. Examine the possibility for courses on other public and private lands as appropriate. Interest in disc golf has increased dramatically in the last 10 years, however, there is a need to return Edora Park to a functioning park for the community to enjoy without the overuse and safety concerns associated with the existing disc golf course. Public input regarding the need for disc golf has been strong. City Council has expressed support to provide a better level of service for disc golf.

- *Open Lands* (community separators) recreation opportunities - Continue to coordinate with the Open Lands separator program to explore opportunities to develop land for multi-use recreation opportunities. Recreational programs could include, for example, a model airplane, boat and car facility, hot air balloon launch site, and a large dog and park area.

- *Velodrome* - The Fort Collins Velodrome Association (FCVA) encourages the City to continue to examine the feasibility of a public/private partnership for a community cycling park in or near the Fort Collins downtown area, including recreational opportunities, competitive courses, and a site for a velodrome. Bicycle racing in general, and track cycling in particular, could be emerging sports that point to future support with appropriate facilities. This park could be a multi-use campus for other sports, such as tennis, volleyball, roller skating and skiing, running, walking, and perhaps ice skating, as well as other non-sport gatherings. This cycling park aligns with the City's objective of providing recreational opportunities for residents to promote their health and well being. Locating such a park in or near downtown Fort Collins could be an effective economic strategy, as Fort Collins brands itself with "Bicycling as a Way of Life."

»GOAL 4: *Address Issues Raised by City Staff*

Objective: Develop Action Items for the Following:

- *Irrigation ditch system study* - The drought conditions in 2002 to 2004 highlighted the need to better understand ditch operations and the resulting ability to bring irrigation water to City parks during dry weather conditions. The study would address the future of ditches in Fort Collins and their availability and ability to continue to deliver raw water to parks.

- *Emerging sports and activities* - The City must continue to research and understand emerging sports and activities. Skate parks and dog parks are two examples in recent years that have become standard recreational facilities needed by the community. Club sports such as lacrosse, rugby and field hockey are examples of sports that may move into the main stream of the school system in future years. Their popularity may result in the creation of recreational leagues that will need space in City parks.

- *Dog park master plan* - The development of dog parks in community parks is appropriate due to the need for a large parking lot (20 to 40 cars). Neighborhood parks are typically too small to accommodate dog parks. A master plan to determine the need for additional dog parks in future community parks should be created.

- *Skate park master plan* - The present program consists of offering a simple skate feature in neighborhood parks for learning to skate and a larger more challenging skate park in community parks. As new community parks are not scheduled to come on line within the first five years of this policy update, the recommendation is to evaluate service level and citizen interest as each new community park is developed to determine the need at that point in time.

»GOAL 5: *Seek Increased Funding*

Objective: Maximize Use of Traditional Funding Opportunities

Strategies:
- Continue to collect impact fees to help fund future capital improvements needed as a result of growth. Impact fees should be re-evaluated every 3-5 years to ensure they are keeping pace with increased land acquisition and construction costs.
- Evaluate potential options to increase the long-term sustainability and funding of park, trails, and facility operations and maintenance. Direction from City Council at the time of this Plan is:
  - » To include the discussion of funding of new parks and trails in the discussion the community will be having in the future related to funding for police, fire, street maintenance and park and trail maintenance.
  - » The potential to transfer additional Conservation Trust funds dedicated to trails over to parks operation and maintenance funding is not recommended. The Conservation Trust Fund is a valuable tool for partially or completely funding recreation facilities, particularly recreational trails. This use needs to be preserved to allow for maximum flexibility in the future. If an increasing portion of this funding is used for maintenance it diminishes the flexibility as a funding source for capital improvements. It should only be used in this manner as a last resort.

Objective: Pursue Alternative Funding to Implement the Policy Plan
In recent years, the City has experienced stagnation in the growth of the sales tax revenues which has heightens the need to pursue alternative funding strategies.

Strategies:
- Continue to identify opportunities to increase community support and revenue opportunities such as grants, partnerships, sponsorships, volunteers and donations.
- Continue to investigate the possibility of utilizing volunteer efforts or nominally paid student interns to apply for such funding (i.e. – Colorado State University Nonprofit Management Program or a retired Fort Collins resident).
- Consider creating a Sponsorship Policy (see **Sample Sponsorship Policy** in **Appendix C**)
- Consider creating a listing of sponsorship opportunities that creates a sense of urgency within the business community. This will also eliminate confusion, inequity in sponsorship opportunities, and potential duplication of effort to secure sponsorships.
- Continue exploration of the establishment of 501(c)(3) nonprofit Park and Recreation Foundation to facilitate the receipt of grant funds and other fundraising activities. Some of these might include:
  - » Create an Annual Fund Program that identifies and creates a relationship with donors that will give to the organization on an annual basis.
  - » Utilize a general direct mail campaign for "Friends of Parks" donor solicitation.
  - » Propose different types of charitable giving to potential major donors including, monetary gifts, planned giving, bequests, or annuities.
- Establish additional partnerships to increasing funding and to gain in-kind donations of time and money.

»GOAL 6: *Increase Partnerships and Collaborations*

Objective: Collaborate to Attract More Residents and Visitors to Utilize and Participate in Fort Collins's Park and Recreation Services and Facilities

Program and Service Strategies:
- Continue and establish relationships with the following partner organizations to implement the recommendations of this Policy Plan and to provide high quality recreation programs, activities, and services:
  - » Local volunteers
  - » Youth sports associations
  - » Poudre School District
  - » Colorado State University
  - » Local and regional nonprofit organizations
- Continue to increase partnerships with local medical and health organizations to increase fitness and health programming for the aging population and to also address the obesity problem in all age groups.
- Create new and formalize existing Partnerships (see Sample Partnership Policy in E).
- Create a "Park Ambassador" program where residents living adjacent to parks are trained to inspect parks and fill out a status report for a nominal fee or pass.
- Work with Fort Collins Transfort to continue to provide service and appropriate fees establish a "Recreation Rider" program that provides discount for youth and seniors in need of transportation to and from City recreation facilities.
- Continue to work with the Fort Collins Convention and Visitors Bureau and other organizations to attract regional or national tournaments and special events that will act as economic engines for the community.

Facility Strategies:
- Initiate discussions with the University about partnership opportunities and joint use agreements for possible future athletic facilities.
- Continue the Maintenance Adoption Program with local landscaping companies for small parcels. They maintain the park property to City standards which can be monitored with a small attractive sign "Maintained by _____" and their phone number. This is advertising for them and therefore tends to be properly maintained.
- Discuss with the Cultural Services Department potentially partnering to construct a joint Recreation and Cultural Arts Center.
- Continue to maintain open communications and relationships with organizations or government agencies within the region in regard to partnerships for potential future recreation facilities.

»GOAL 7: *Evaluate Pricing and Cost Recovery*

Objective: Update the Cost Recovery Philosophy and Policy

It is important for the City to update its **Pricing and Cost Recovery Philosophy** that reflects the values of the community and the responsibility it has to the community. This philosophy will be especially important if the City moves forward in the development of new programs, additional and/or expanded facilities, and as it strives for sustainability and determines how much it is willing to subsidize operations.

One way to assist in accomplishing this goal is applying the **Pyramid Methodology**. This methodology develops and implements a refined cost recovery philosophy and pricing policy based on current "best practices" as determined by the mission of the agency and the program's benefit to the community and/or individual.

Critical to this philosophical undertaking is the support and understanding of elected officials and ultimately citizens. Whether or not significant changes are called for, the agency wants to be certain that it is philosophically aligned with its residents. The development of the core services and cost recovery philosophy and policy is built on a very logical foundation, using the understanding of who is benefiting from parks and recreation service to determine how the costs for that service should be paid. For an overview of the Pyramid Methodology, see E.

> *Strategies:*
> - Continue to refine systems that help measure cost recovery goals and anticipate potential pitfalls.
> - Continue to adapt pricing and cost recovery strategies to the City's current budgeting method to successfully generate revenues to offset cost of recreation services for the benefit of the community and individual users.

Objective: Increase Participation and Revenue from Current Services

> *Strategies:*
> - Utilize the marketing strategies in Evaluate Marketing and Communications to work to increase participation numbers and user fee revenue.
> - Continue to evaluate participation numbers of current programming, so as to increase marketing and participation in programs that are not currently at capacity.
> - Continue to re-evaluate the provision of services of programs and activities that have a low cost recovery, are not core services, have a low demand and/or another service provider is providing effectively.

»GOAL 8: *Evaluate Marketing and Communications*

Objective: Increase Awareness and Feedback about Park and Recreation Offerings to the Public

Strategies:
- Formalize an evaluation and annual in-house benchmarking program to solicit participant feedback and drive programming efforts.
- Continue to collect feedback data to understand trends and needed improvements to programs and activities.
- Consider creating a "Mystery Shopper" program where secret shoppers evaluate services anonymously and results are tracked.
- Develop an evaluation process for marketing media such as newspaper, seasonal brochures, website, direct mail, targeted e-mails, radio, and television advertising to continuously determine effectiveness of marketing dollars.

Objective: Create a Seamless and Cohesive Customer Service Delivery System for the Provision of All Park and Recreation Programs and Services Regardless of the Location

Strategies:
- Network the registration system into all major Recreation facilities for ease of registration for patrons.
- Develop a comprehensive cross training program for all staff and instructors including knowledge of all program areas as well as customer service.
- Use program tracking and evaluation tools to capacity by designing reports to readily identify life cycles of programs, identify programs not meeting minimum capacity (review all program minimums for cost effectiveness), identify waiting lists, etc.

CHAPTER IX
Capital Improvement Plan

The following table includes capital projects and additional items that significantly impact the annual operational and maintenance budgets. The table is also an implementation schedule with priorities listed in timeframes. The items within each timeframe are not listed in a precise priority order and should be implemented as resources allow or based on immediate needs that may change from year to year. All cost estimates are in 2008 figures. Funding sources listed are suggested methods of funding and can be enhanced with additional methods of funding. Overall staffing cost projections are included in the annual operational and maintenance cost estimates.

»RECOMMENDATION				
Immediate Priorities	CAPITAL COST ESTIMATE	CAPITAL FUNDING SOURCES	ANNUAL OPERATIONAL & MAINTENANCE COST ESTIMATE (including overall staffing projections)	O/M FUNDING SOURCES
Adoption of this Plan	None	None	None	None

»RECOMMENDATION				
Mid-Term Priorities (2008 to 2013)	CAPITAL COST ESTIMATE (in 2008 dollars)	CAPITAL FUNDING SOURCES	ANNUAL OPERATIONAL & MAINTENANCE COST ESTIMATE (in 2008 dollars)	O/M FUNDING SOURCES
Recreation Strategic Plan	None	None	None	None
Park Maintenance Policy Plan Update	None	None	None	None
Develop Provincetown Park (2008)	$1,000,000	Impact Fees	$35,000	General Fund Conservation Trust
Develop Registry Ridge Park (2009)	$800,000	Impact Fees	$30,000	General Fund
Conservation Trust				
Develop Richards Lake Park (2010)	$800,000	Impact Fees	$31,000	General Fund
Obtain Huidekoper Park from PSD (2010) Add new facilities as funding is available	0	Impact Fees	$41,600	General Fund
Develop Staley Park (2011)	$1,000,000	Impact Fees	$46,000	General Fund
Develop Iron Horse Park (2012)	$800,000	Impact Fees	$31,800	General Fund
Develop Maple Hill Park (2013)	$800,000	Impact Fees	$35,400	General Fund
Develop Southeast Community Park (2014)	$5,000,000	Impact Fees	$364,000	General Fund
Expand Senior Center Phase One	$4,000,000	Capital Program BOB	$200,000	General Fund User Fees
Complete the Poudre River Trail including underpasses	$2,000,000	Conservation Trust Grants	$5,000/mile	General Fund
Complete the Power Trail including underpasses	$3,200,000	Conservation Trust Grants	$5,000/mile	General Fund
Study irrigation ditches for long term sustainability	$50,000	Impact Fees	None	None
Implement the results of the study to determine the number of City tennis courts	$200,000 to $300,000	Impact Fees Grants Capital Program	Reduced maintenance costs	Reduced General Fund need
Expand the Senior Center	$4,00,000	Capital Program (BOB)	$400,000	General Fund User Fees
Complete improvements at Lee Martinez Park	$300,000	Impact Fees	$10,000	General Fund
Complete improvements at Rossborough Park	$175,000	Impact Fees	$5,000	General Fund
Complete improvements at Golden Meadows Park	$175,000	Impact Fees	$6,000	General Fund
Complete improvements at Avery Park	$50,000	Impact Fees	$1,000	General Fund
Acquire land to expand Eastside Neighborhood Park	$1,300,000	Capital Program Impact Fees	$1,000	General Fund
Research the economic benefits of special facilities such as sports complexes or cycling parks	None	None	None	None
Develop an environmental/sustainability best practices use manual	None	None	None	None

Long-Term Priorities (2014 to 2018)	CAPITAL COST ESTIMATE	CAPITAL FUNDING SOURCES	ANNUAL OPERATIONAL & MAINTENANCE COST ESTIMATE	O/M FUNDING SOURCES
Develop Side Hill Park (2015)	$800,000	Impact Fees	$29,200	General Fund
Develop Lind Park (2016)	$400,000	Impact Fees	$20,800	General Fund
Develop Fossil Lake Park (2017)	$900,000	Impact Fees	$36,400	General Fund
Develop Elm. School Park (2018)	$900,000	Impact Fees	$35,400	General Fund
Acquire land for 8 future parks	$3,300,000	Impact Fees	$40,000	General Fund
Complete the Fossil Creek Trail	$11,800,000	Conservation Trust Grants	$5,000/mile	General Fund
Complete the Canal Trail	$800,000	Conservation Trust Grants	$8,5000	General Fund
Complete the Boxelder Trail	$2,400,000	Conservation Trust Grants	$13,500	General Fund
Complete the Lake Canal Trail	$1,500,000	Conservation Trust Grants	$11,500	General Fund
Continue work on the Northeast trail system	$3,300,000	Conservation Trust Grants Trust	$15,000	General Fund
Acquire land for 6 park sites	$1,500,000	Impact Fees	$1,500 each	General Fund
Develop the Southeast Community Center at Fossil Creek Park	$20,000,000	Capital Program	$1,000,000	General Fund User Fees
Develop the Southwest Community Center at Spring Canyon Community Park	$20,000,000	Capital Program	$1,000,000	General Fund User Fees

City of Fort Collins

Parks and Recreation Policy Plan
Appendices

City of Fort Collins Parks and Recreation
Policy Plan Appendices

City of
Fort Collins

October 2008

APPENDICES

CITY OF FORT COLLINS

CULTURAL, LIBRARY, AND RECREATIONAL SERVICES

RECREATION DIVISION

RECREATION FEE POLICY

I. PURPOSE OF THE RECREATION DIVISION.

The purpose of the Recreation Division is to enrich the quality of life of all persons in the community by

A. providing and promoting recreational, educational, and leisure activities;
B. advocating for health, well-being, and personal growth; and
C. facilitating the efforts of service providers in the community who share similar interests.

II. STRUCTURE OF THE RECREATION FUND.

The Recreation Fund is divided into two portions: 1) a Program Portion that is supported by user fees and charges; and 2) a Community Good Portion that is supported by the General Fund.

A. Program Portion - Supported by Fees and Charges

1. This portion is made up of those costs directly associated with the recreation activities and facilities used by the citizens.

2. These are the costs of providing an activity or maintaining a facility that can be directly identified with that activity or facility and that are a part of the users' direct experience.

3. Services associated with these costs include leagues; class instruction; drop-in activities at the pools, ice arena, gymnasium, and Farm; trips and tours; special events; concession operations; and facility and equipment rentals.

Appendix A

4. These costs include the following:
    a. Activity costs:
        1) Part-time staff-- cashiers, guards, officials, teachers, supervisors, custodians.
        2) Materials-- scoresheets, crafts supplies, food, handbooks, publicity fliers, t-shirts, table settings.
        3) Equipment-- balls, bats, football uniforms, tape recorders.
        4) Participant transportation.
        5) Any other costs directly associated with conducting activities.
    b. Facility costs:
        1) Minor repairs-- pumps, boilers, filters, chillers, carpet, windows, touch-up painting, keys, door hinges, maintenance contracts on equipment.
        2) Custodial equipment and supplies.
        3) Building utilities-- gas, electricity, storm water.
        4) Specialized items-- pool chemicals, freon, tools, light bulbs, plumbing and machine parts.
        5) Telephone costs associated with activities and facility use.
        6) Any other costs directly associated with operating the buildings.

5. This portion of the fund is under the same guidelines as a special revenue fund, with the ability to retain earnings.

B. Community Good Portion - Supported by General Fund

1. This portion is made up of those costs associated with the centralized management of the recreation division, not including the costs of activities and facilities. Those costs are usually not experienced directly by the users.

2. Services associated with community good costs include division management, planning, budget development and coordination, policy coordination and implementation, public relations, staff recruitment and management (ie., supervision, training, evaluation, etc.), information and referral, response to citizen concerns and ideas, and the financial support of those unable to afford full fees for programs.

3. These costs include salaries and benefits for all full-time recreation staff, computer costs, telephone charges associated with office operation, training costs, dues and subscriptions, insurance, and office supplies and equipment.

4. This portion is under the same guidelines as all other General Fund budgets.

Appendix A

III. REVENUE DISTRIBUTION.

   A. Revenue support from the General Fund will be allocated to cover the Community Good Portion of the Fund's costs.

   B. The General Fund will be responsible for setting up an operating reserve fund, phased in over a four-year period. Once established, this reserve will be maintained year to year by excess earnings in the Program Portion of the Fund.

   C. The General Fund will also support a reserve set aside to pay fees for those unable to afford full fees for programs.

   D. Fees and charges will be based on the actual costs to provide the activity or service to the users.

   E. Excess revenue will accumulate if program participation exceeds projections or if savings occur in expenditures for programs or facility operation.

   F. Excess revenue from fees and charges will be held in reserve in the Recreation Fund.

IV. RESERVES.

   A. Scholarship Reserve.

       A scholarship reserve shall be established to pay fees for participants who are unable to afford full fees for programs. The target of this reserve shall be 3% of the Program Portion of the Fund. This reserve shall be supported by the General Fund each year and phased in over four years.

   B. Operating Reserve.

       The Recreation Fund will maintain an operating reserve of 7% of the Program Portion of the Fund, excluding one-time capital items and lease-purchase payments. This reserve will not be used unless revenues in a given year cannot support expenses. This reserve will be established initially by the General Fund and maintained on an ongoing basis by excess retained earnings in the Program Portion of the Fund.

C. Excess Fund Balance.

Any excess fund balance will be distributed within the following priorities:

1. Maintain the operating reserve.

2. Equipment and Repair needs: used for improvements and upkeep of facility infrastructure and equipment over what is budgeted.

3. Capital needs: used for purchase of one-time expenditures over what is budgeted to maintain safety and improve service delivery.

4. New Program needs: used for the start-up of new or the expansion of existing activities and services which require additional investments.

V. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THIS POLICY.

The implementation of this policy shall be fully achieved in 1995. The funding balance required by this policy between user fees and charges and General Fund tax support shall be implemented in equal increments each year, beginning in 1991 and ending in 1995.

1990

Appendix A

GRASP® History and Level of Service Methodology

A. Level of Service Analysis

Analysis of the existing parks, open space, trails, and recreation systems are often conducted in order to try and determine how the systems are serving the public. A Level of Service (LOS) has been typically defined in parks and recreation master plans as the capacity of the various components and facilities that make up the system to meet the needs of the public. This is often expressed in terms of the size or quantity of a given facility per unit of population.

Brief History of Level of Service Analysis

In order to help standardize parks and recreation planning, universities, agencies and parks and recreation professionals have long been looking for ways to benchmark and provide "national standards" for how much acreage, how many ballfields, pools, playgrounds, etc., a community *should* have. As examples, in 1906 the fledgling "Playground Association of America" called for playground space equal to 30 square feet per child. In the 1970's and early 1980's, the first detailed published works on these topics began emerging (Gold, 1973, Lancaster, 1983). In time "rule of thumb" **capacity** ratios emerged with 10 acres of parklands per thousand population becoming the most widely accepted standard application. Other normative guides also have been cited as "traditional standards," but have been less widely accepted. In 1983, Roger Lancaster compiled a book called, "Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines," that was published by the National Park and Recreation Association (NRPA). In this publication, Mr. Lancaster centered on a recommendation "that a park system, at minimum, be composed of a core system of parklands, with a total of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed open space per 1,000 population (Lancaster, 1983, p. 56). The guidelines went further to make recommendations regarding an appropriate mix of park types, sizes, service areas, and acreages, and standards regarding the number of available recreational facilities per thousand population. While the book was published by NRPA and the table of standards became widely known as "the NRPA standards," for Level of Service Analysis, **It is important to note that these standards were never formally adopted for use by NRPA**.

Since that time, various publications have updated and expanded upon possible "standards," several of which have also been published by NRPA. Many of these publications did benchmarking and other normative research to try and determine what an "average LOS" should be. It is important to note that NRPA and the prestigious American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration, as organizations, have focused in recent years on accreditation standards for agencies, which are less directed towards outputs, outcomes and performance, and more on planning, organizational structure, and management processes.

The following table gives some of the more commonly and historically used "capacity standards".

Common Historically-Referenced LOS Capacity "Standards"

Activity/ Facility	Recommended Space Requirements	Service Radius and Location Notes	Number of Units per Population
Baseball Official Little League	3.0 to 3.85 acre minimum 1.2 acre minimum	¼ to ½ mile Unlighted part of neighborhood complex; lighted fields part of community complex	1 per 5,000; lighted 1 per 30,000
Basketball Youth High school	2,400 – 3,036 vs. 5,040 – 7,280 s.f.	¼ to ½ mile Usually in school, recreation center or church facility; safe walking or bide access; outdoor courts in neighborhood and community parks, plus active recreation areas in other park settings	1 per 5,000
Football	Minimum 1.5 acres	15 – 30 minute travel time Usually part of sports complex in community park or adjacent to school	1 per 20,000
Soccer	1.7 to 2.1 acres	1 to 2 miles Youth soccer on smaller fields adjacent to larger soccer fields or neighborhood parks	1 per 10,000
Softball	1.5 to 2.0 acres	¼ to ½ mile May also be used for youth baseball	1 per 5,000 (if also used for youth baseball)
Swimming Pools	Varies on size of pool & amenities; usually ½ to 2-acre site	15 – 30 minutes travel time Pools for general community use should be planned for teaching, competitive & recreational purposes with enough depth (3.4m) to accommodate 1m to 3m diving boards; located in community park or school site	1 per 20,000 (pools should accommodate 3% to 5% of total population at a time)
Tennis	Minimum of 7,200 s.f. single court area (2 acres per complex	¼ to ½ mile Best in groups of 2 to 4 courts; located in neighborhood community park or near school site	1 court per 2,000
Volleyball	Minimum 4,000 s.f.	½ to 1 mile Usually in school, recreation center or church facility; safe walking or bide access; outdoor courts in neighborhood and community parks, plus active recreation areas in other park settings	1 court per 5,000
Total land Acreage		Various types of parks - mini, neighborhood, community, regional, conservation, etc.	10 acres per 1,000

Sources:
David N. Ammons, Municipal Benchmarks - Assessing Local Performance and Establishing Community
    Standards, 2nd Ed., 2002
Roger A. Lancaster (Ed.), *Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines* (Alexandria, VA: National

Recreation and Park Association, 1983), pp. 56-57.

James D. Mertes and James R. Hall, *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenways* Guidelines, (Alexandria, VA:

National Recreation and Park Association, 1996), pp. 94-103.

In conducting planning work, it is important to realize that the above standards can be valuable when referenced as "norms" for capacity, but not necessarily as the target standards for which a community should strive. Each community is different and there are many varying factors which are not addressed by the standards above. For example:

- Does "developed acreage" include golf courses"? What about indoor and passive facilities?
- What are the standards for skateparks? Ice Arenas? Public Art? Etc.?
- What if it's an urban land-locked community? What if it's a small town surrounded by open Federal lands?
- What about quality and condition? What if there's a bunch of ballfields, but they haven't been maintained in the last ten years?
- And many other questions….

B. GRASP® Composite-Values Level of Service Analysis

In order to address these and other relevant questions, a new methodology for determining Level of Service was developed. It is called a **Composite-Values Methodology** and has been applied in many communities across the nation since 2001, to provide a better way of measuring and portraying the service provided by parks and recreation systems. Primary research and development on this methodology was funded jointly by GreenPlay, LLC, a management consulting firm for parks, open space and related agencies, Design Concepts, a landscape architecture and planning firm, and Geowest, a spatial information management firm. While Composite-Values Methodology can be utilized by anyone, the proprietary trademarked name for the composite-values methodology **process** that these three firms use is called **GRASP® (Geo-Referenced Amenities Standards Process).** The **GRASP®** methodology for analysis is proprietary, but the software used is common and typical for most agencies, and the data and information collected is owned and can be updated and managed by the agency for ongoing usage.

For this methodology, capacity is only part of the LOS equation. Other factors are brought into consideration, including *quality*, *condition*, *location*, *comfort*, *convenience*, and *ambience*. To create GRASP® inventory and analysis, parks, trails, recreation, open space and any other relevant amenities and properties being studied are looked at as part of an overall infrastructure for a community made up of various components, such as playgrounds, multi-purpose fields, passive areas, etc. The methodology inventories characteristics that are part of the context and setting of a component. They are not characteristics of the component itself, but when they exist in proximity to a component they enhance the value of the component.

GRASP®
DESIGN CONCEPTS   GEOWEST   GREENPLAY

The characteristics of components include:

Quality – The service provided by anything, whether it is a playground, soccer field, or swimming pool is determined in part by its quality. A playground with a variety of features, such as climbers, slides, and swings provides a higher degree of service than one with nothing but an old teeter-totter and some "monkey-bars."

Condition – The condition of a component within the park system also affects the amount of service it provides. A playground in disrepair with unsafe equipment does not offer the same service as one in good condition. Similarly, a soccer field with a smooth surface of well-maintained grass certainly offers a higher degree of service than one that is full of weeds, ruts, and other hazards.

Location – To receive service from something, you need to be able to get to it. Therefore, service is dependent upon proximity and access. All components are geographically located using GPS coordinates and GIS software.

Comfort – The service provided by a component is increased by having amenities. For example, outdoor components are often enhanced by attributes such as shade, seating, and a restroom nearby. Comfort enhances the experience of using a component.

Convenience – Convenience encourages people to use a component, which increased the amount of service that it offers. Easy access and the availability of trash receptacles, bike rack, or nearby parking are examples of conveniences that enhance the service provided by a component.

Ambience – Simple observation will prove that people are drawn to places that "feel" good. This includes a sense of safety and security, as well as pleasant surroundings, attractive views, and a sense of place. For example, a well-designed park is preferable to poorly-designed one, and this enhances the degree of service provided by the components within it.

Capacity is still part of the LOS analysis and the quantity of each component is recorded as well. By combining and analyzing the composite values of each component, it is possible to measure the service provided by a parks and recreation system from a variety of perspectives and for any given location.

Typically this begins with a decision on **"relevant components**" for the analysis, collection of an accurate inventory of those components, analysis and then the results are presented in a series of maps and tables that make up the **GRASP®** analysis of the study area.

Data for Analysis and Making Justifiable Decisions

All of the data generated from the GRASP® evaluation is compiled into an electronic database that is then available and owned by the agency for use in a variety of ways. The database can help keep track of facilities and programs, and can be used to schedule services, maintenance, and the replacement of components. In addition to determining LOS, it can be used to project long-term capital and life-cycle costing needs. All portions of the information are in standard available software and can be produced in a variety of ways for future planning or sharing with the public.

It is important to note that the GRASP® methodology provides not only accurate LOS and facility inventory information, but also works with and integrates with other tools to help agencies make decisions. It is relatively easy to maintain, updatable, and creates easily understood graphic depictions (analysis maps and/or "Perspectives") of issues. Combined with a needs assessment, public and staff involvement, program and financial assessment, GRASP® allows an agency to defensibly make recommendations on priorities for ongoing resource allocation along with capital and operational funding.

C. Inventory Data Collection Process

A detailed inventory of relevant components for the project is conducted. The inventory locates and catalogues all of the relevant components for the project, and evaluates each one as to how well it was serving its intended function within the system. The planning team first prepares a preliminary list of existing components using aerial photography and the community's Geographic Information System (GIS). Components identified in the aerial photo are given GIS points and names according to the GRASP® list of standard components.

Next, field visits are conducted by the consulting and project team staff to confirm the preliminary data and collect additional information. Additionally indoor facilities are scored and for the purposes of this study, each relevant space is considered a component and is scored based on its intended function. During the field visits and evaluations, any missing relevant components are added to the data set, and each component is evaluated as to how well it meets expectations for its intended function. During the site visits the following information is collected:

- Component type and location

- Evaluation of component condition
- Evaluation of comfort and convenience features
- Evaluation of park design and ambience
- Site photos and general comments

After the inventory is completed, it is given to the project team for final review and approval for accuracy.

D. Standardized Process for Scoring Components

Component Scoring

The approved inventory is the basis for the creation of values used in the GRASP®
analysis. Each component received a functional score that is related to the
quality, condition, and ability of the space to meet operational and
programming needs.

The range of scores for each component is as follows:

- **Below Expectations (BE)** – The component does not meet the expectations of
  its intended primary function. Factors leading to this may include size, age,
  accessibility, or others. Each such component is given a score of **1** in the
  inventory.
- **Meeting Expectations (ME)** – The component meets expectations for its
  intended function. Such components are given scores of **2.**
- **Exceeding Expectations (EE) –** The component exceeds expectations, due to
  size, configuration, or unique qualities. Such components are given scores of **3.**
- If the feature exists but is not useable because it is unsafe, obsolete, or
  dysfunctional, it may be listed in the feature description, and assigned a **score
  of zero (0).**

If a feature is used for multiple functions, such as a softball field that is also used
for T-Ball or youth soccer games, it is scored only once under the description that
best fits the use that for which the component is designed.

Neighborhood and Community Scoring

Components are evaluated from two perspectives: first, the value of the
component in serving the immediate neighborhood, and second, its value to the
entire community.

> *Neighborhood Score*
> Each component is evaluated from the perspective of a resident that lives
> nearby. High scoring components are easily accessible to pedestrians in
> the neighborhood, are attractive for short and frequent visits, and are
> unobtrusive to the surrounding neighborhood. Components that do not
> have a high neighborhood score may not be located within walking
> distance of residents, may have "nuisance features" such as sports
> lighting, or may draw large crowds for which parking is not provided.

> *Community Score*
> Additionally each component is evaluated from the perspective of
> residents in the community as a whole. High scoring components in this
> category may be unique components within the parks and recreation
> system, have a broad draw from throughout the community, have the

capacity and associated facilities for community-wide events, or are located in areas that are accessible only by car.

Indoor Components
Indoor components are generally thought to be accessible to the entire community, partially because it is often not financially feasible to provide indoor facilities at a walking distance from every distance from each residence. Additionally indoor facilities often provide programs and facilities that are geared to the community as a whole, or in larger communities, are intended for a region of the community. For these reasons, unless a detailed indoor analysis is completed, indoor facilities are given only one score.

Modifiers (Comfort and Convenience Features) Scoring

Outdoor Modifiers
Besides standard components, this inventory also evaluates features that provide comfort and convenience to the users. These are things that a user might not go to the parks specifically to use, but are things that enhance the users' experience by making it a nicer place to be and include: drinking fountains, seating, BBQ grills, dog stations, security lighting, bike parking, restrooms, shade, connections to trails, park access, parking, picnic tables, and seasonal and ornamental plantings. These features are scored as listed above with the 1-3 system. In this case it is not important to get a count of the number or size of these components; instead the score should reflect the ability of the item to serve the park.

Indoor Modifiers
For indoor facilities the comfort and convenience features change slightly to reflect the characteristics of the building. Building modifier categories include: site access, setting aesthetics, building entry function, building entry aesthetics, overall building condition, entry desk, office space, overall storage, and restrooms and/or locker rooms.

Activity and Sports Lighting
This modifier accounts for lighting that allows for component use in the evening/night hours and is applied to the quantity of the component as it affectively expands the capacity of the component. This modifier does not apply to security lighting.

Shade
Like Activity and Sports lighting, shade can be added to outdoor components to extend use beyond normal hours or seasons.

Design & Ambience Scoring

Using the same rating system that is used for components and modifiers, the quality of Design and Ambience is scored. Good design not only makes a place look nice, it makes it feel safe and pleasant, and encourages people to visit more often and stay longer

Trails Scoring
Trails can be scored as independent parks or greenways or as individual components within another park. The former type of trail receives its own set of scores for modifiers and design and ambiance. The trail in the latter situation takes on the modifiers and design and ambiance of the larger park in which it resides. Multi-use trails are assumed to consist of 3 components including one active component, one passive component, and the parcel itself. Because traveling the length of any given trail is time consuming, trail information is often collected with the aid of staff.

Ownership Modifier

This modifier is generally weighted with a percentage that is applied to the GRASP® score after other modifiers have been applied. It accounts for access and control of components that are provided by alternative providers. For example, in most cases components that are owned and managed by schools are given a 50% weighted ownership modifier, which halves the GRASP® score to account for the limited access that the neighborhood has to school facilities (it's only open to the public outside of school hours).

E. Calculating GRASP® Functional Scores

Once the components are inventoried and scored, calculations can be made for any combination of components to derive average scores, scores per combinations of various components, scores per sub-areas, etc., depending on the key issues being studied and objectives for the project. These are very helpful for analyzing area comparisons and setting of target scores for component service and agency target standards.

For example, a total composite GRASP® score for each individual component is determined by using the following formula:

(total component score) x (adjusted modifier score) x (design and ambiance score) x (ownership modifier) = Composite GRASP® Score

These individual scores can be additively combined in various ways to examine service from various subsets of the agency's system.

F. GRASP® Perspectives and Target Scores

GRASP® scores are often used to create analysis maps, called **Perspectives**, to show the cumulative level of service available to a resident at any given location in the community service area. The scores provided blended quantitative values based on the number and quality of opportunities to enjoy an experience (or level of service) that exist in a reasonable proximity to the given location. Tables and charts are created along with the Perspectives to help provide quantitative and graphic analysis tools.

If a philosophy is adopted wherein the goal is to provide some minimum combination of opportunities to every residence, a GRASP® score can be calculated that represents this minimum. These scores can be used to create standards set for the agency to maintain a measurable level of service over time. A variety of Perspectives are created to analyze and depict the

communities LOS through a variety of combinations and composites, depending on the key issues being studied.

Typical and Standard GRASP® Perspectives
Often Perspectives are created that analyze the actual level of service being obtained as compared to a "standard" target.

Neighborhood Composite
> This Perspective depicts service from a neighborhood point of view. The target for analysis is that each resident will have access within 1/3 mile of their home to 4 recreation components and one recreational trail. Further expanded, the goal is to offer a selection of active and passive recreation opportunities (indoor or outdoor) to every residence, along with access to a recreational trail of which components, modifiers, and design and ambiance are meeting expectations.

Walkability (same as Neighborhood Composite but with only 1/3 mile buffers)
> The idea for this target score and Perspective is that each resident will have access within 1/3 mile of their home to **4** recreation components and one recreational trail.

Perspectives showing Neighborhood LOS for one component
> The target here is that each resident will have access within 1/3 mile of their home to the selected components of which the component, modifiers, and design and ambiance are meeting expectations.

Active (or Passive) Components
> This target evaluates if each resident will have access within 1/3 mile of their home to 3 active (or passive) components. Further expanded, the goal is to offer at least 3 components, which equates to roughly half of the components provided in the minimum neighborhood composite scenario. These components can be either indoor or outdoor and will be provided within walking distance to every residence and have scores that meet expectations.

Note: Aside from meeting this goal, the mix of components also needs to be considered. For example, a home that is within 1/3 mile of four tennis courts and no other amenities would meet the basic numeric standard, but not the intent of the standard. Based on this, it is recommended that the target be to provide the minimum score to as many homes as possible, but also to exceed the minimum by some factor whenever possible.

G. GRASP® Project Technical Standards for GIS Data

The GRASP® Team utilizes the most up to date computer hardware and software to produce and enhance project-based GIS data. The following technical details are standard with all GRASP® Team projects.

- All GRASP® Team GIS workstations employ Microsoft® Windows® operating systems. All project files conform to PC-based architecture and extension naming standards.
- The GRASP® Team employs ESRI® ArcGIS™ 9.x for all GIS applications. Final project GIS data is submitted to the client in Microsoft® Access™-based Geodatabase (*.mdb) Feature Class format and/or Shapefile (*.shp/*.dbf/*.shx) format. ArcMap™ Layer files (*.lyr) are submitted to ease client replication of all project map legend formats. The GRASP® Team will not resubmit original client source data that has not undergone enhancement.
- All final GIS datasets (deliverables) area submitted to the client using the geographic coordinate system(s) from the original client source data. The GRASP® team will assign a coordinate system that is most appropriate for the client location if the client does not require a predetermined standard coordinate system. Most GRASP® project data is submitted in State Plane Coordinates (Feet) with a NAD83/NAD83 HARN datum.
- The GRASP® Team employs Trimble® GPS units for all (spatial) field data collection. All data is collected with sub-foot and/or sub-meter accuracy when possible. All GPS data is post processed with Trimble® Pathfinder Office® software. All GPS data will be submitted to client as an ESRI®-based Geodatabase Feature Class or Shapefile.
- All GRASP® Perspectives and Resource Maps (deliverables) are submitted to the client in standard PDF and JPEG formats. The project PDFs are high resolution, print-ready files for scalable print operations. Most project map-based PDFs are 300dpi, 36″x24″ images. The project JPEGs are lower resolution digital presentation-ready files for insertion into Microsoft® Office® productivity suite applications – MS Word®, MS Power Point®, etc. Most project map-based JPEGs are 300dpi 4x6″ images.

H. Project Deliverables and Future Use

All information and deliverables described above are transmitted "as-is" to fulfill specific tasks identified in the scope of services for this contract. While these may be useful for other purposes, no warranties or other assurances are made that the deliverables are ready for such use.

The database can be modified to add, change, or delete information as needed by personnel trained in use of these standard software applications. For example, if new parks or facilities are constructed, the components of these may be added to the database to keep it current. The database may also be queried in a variety of ways to produce tables, charts, or reports for use in operations, management, and planning or other agency tasks. Such

modification, updating, reformatting, or other preparation for use in other purposes is the sole responsibility of the client.

Similarly, the database information can be used to prepare a variety of maps and analysis perspectives using GIS software. Such use by the client is beyond the scope of this contract, and no warranties or assurances are made that the deliverables are ready or intended for such future use. If desired, the GRASP® Team can make such modifications, and/or prepare additional or updated maps or Perspectives upon request for a negotiated fee.

SAMPLE

XX
Parks & Recreation Department

Sponsorship Policy

Created for XX by:

GREENPLAY LLC
*The Leading Edge In Parks, Recreation
And Open Space Consulting*

Appendix C

XX Parks & Recreation Department
Sponsorship Policy

Note: Terms in this document may need to be changed to directly reflect the terms used by and that are specific to the agency/organization, e.g. city, county, district, department, etc.

Introduction

The following guidelines in this Sponsorship Policy have been specifically designed for the XX Parks & Recreation Department, while considering that these guidelines may be later adapted and implemented on a city-wide basis. Some assumptions regarding this policy are:

- Partnerships for recreation and parks facilities and program development may be pursued based on the XX Partnership Policy, encouraging the development of partnerships for the benefit of the city, its citizens, and potential partners. Sponsorships are one type of partnership, and one avenue of procurement for alternative funding resources. The Sponsorship Policy may evolve as the needs of new projects and other City departments are incorporated into its usage.
- Broad guidelines are offered in this policy to delineate primarily which types of sponsors and approval levels are currently acceptable for the XX Parks & Recreation Department.
- The policy should ensure that the definition of potential sponsors may include non-commercial community organizations (for example: YMCA's and Universities), but does not include a forum for non-commercial speech or advertising.
- Sponsorships are clearly defined and are different from advertisements. Advertisements are one type of benefit that may be offered to a sponsor in exchange for cash or in-kind sponsorship.
- The difference between sponsors and donors must be clarified, as some staff and the public often confuse and misuse these terms.

Structure

Part A of this document gives the **Sponsorship Policy**
Part B gives the **Levels of Sponsorship Tiers and Benefits**
Part C provides the vocabulary and **Glossary of Sponsorship Terms**

Part A.
Sponsorship Policy
XX Parks & Recreation Department

I. Purpose

In an effort to utilize and maximize the community's resources, it is in the best interest of the City's Parks & Recreation Department to create and enhance relationship-based sponsorships. This may be accomplished by providing local, regional, and national commercial businesses and non-profit groups a method for becoming involved with the many opportunities provided by the Parks & Recreation Department. The Department delivers quality, life-enriching activities to the broadest base of the community. This translates into exceptional visibility for sponsors and supporters. It is the goal of the Department to create relationships and partnerships with sponsors for the financial benefit of the Department.

Sponsorships vs. Donations

It is important to note that there is a difference between a sponsorship and a donation. Basically, sponsorships are cash or in-kind products and services offered by sponsors with the clear expectation that an obligation is created. The recipient is obliged to return something of value to the sponsor. The value is typically public recognition and publicity or advertising highlighting the contribution of the sponsor and/or the sponsor's name, logo, message, products or services. The Sponsor usually has clear marketing objectives that they are trying to achieve, including but not limited to the ability to drive sales directly based on the sponsorship, and/or quite often, the right to be the exclusive sponsor in a specific category of sales. The arrangement is typically consummated by a letter of agreement or contractual arrangement that details the particulars of the exchange.

In contrast, a donation comes with no restrictions on how the money or in-kind resources are used. This policy specifically addresses sponsorships, the agreements for the procurement of the resources, and the benefits provided in return for securing those resources. Since donations or gifts come with no restrictions or expected benefits for the donor, a policy is generally not needed.

II. Guidelines for Acceptable Sponsorships

Sponsors should be businesses, non-profit groups, or individuals that promote mutually beneficial relationships for the Parks & Recreation Department. All potentially sponsored properties (facilities, events or programs) should be reviewed in terms of creating synergistic working relationships with regards to benefits, community contributions, knowledge, and political sensitivity. All sponsored properties should promote the goals and mission of the Parks & Recreation Department as follows:

Appendix C

NEED SPECIFIC MISSION STATEMENT
Sample **XX Parks & Recreation Mission Statement:**

NEED SPECIFIC GOALS
Sample **Goals of the Park & Recreation Department:**

III. Sponsorship Selection Criteria

A. Relationship of Sponsorship to Mission and Goals
The first major criterion is the appropriate relationship of a sponsorship to the above outlined Parks & Recreation Department's Mission and Goals. While objective analysis is ideal, the appropriateness of a relationship may sometimes be necessarily subjective. This policy addresses this necessity by including Approval Levels from various levels of Agency management staff and elected officials, outlined in Section B, to help assist with decisions involving larger amounts and benefits for sponsorship.

The following questions are the major guiding components of this policy and should be addressed prior to soliciting potential sponsors:
- Is the sponsorship reasonably related to the purpose of the facility or programs as exemplified by the Mission Statement and Goals of the Department?
- Will the sponsorship help generate more revenue and/or less cost per participant than the Agency can provide without it?
- What are the real costs, including staff time, for procuring the amount of cash or in-kind resources that come with the generation of the sponsorship?

Sponsorships which shall NOT be considered are those which:
- Promote environmental, work, or other practices that, if they took place in the Agency, would violate U.S. or state law (i.e. - dumping of hazardous waste, exploitation of child labor, etc.), or promote drugs, alcohol, or tobacco, or that constitute violations of law.
- Duplicate or mimic the identity or programs of the Parks & Recreation Department or any of its divisions.
- Exploit participants or staff members of the Department.
- Offer benefits which may violate other accepted policies or the Sign Code.

B. Sponsorship Plan and Approval Levels
Each project or program that involves solicitation of Sponsors should, PRIOR to procurement, create a Sponsorship Plan specific to that project or program that is in line with the Sponsorship Levels given in *Part B*. This plan needs to be approved by the Management Team Members supervising the project and in accordance to Agency Partnership, Sponsorship and Sign Code policies. In addition, each sponsorship will need separate approval if they exceed pre-specified limits. The Approval Levels are outlined as follows:

Under $1,000	The program or project staff may approve this level of Agreement, with review by their supervising Management Team Member.
$1,001 to $10,000	The Agreement needs approval of a Management Team Member.
$10,001 to $25,000	The Agreement needs approval of the entire Senior Management Team and Department Director
Over $25,000	The Agreement needs approval by City Council.

C. No Non-Commercial Forum is Permitted

This criterion deals with the commercial character of a sponsorship message. The Agency intends to create a limited forum, focused on advertisements incidental to commercial sponsorships of Parks & Recreation facilities and programs. While non-commercial community organizations or individuals may wish to sponsor Department activities or facilities for various reasons, no non-commercial speech is permitted in the limited forum created by this policy:

Advertisements incidental to commercial sponsorship must primarily propose a commercial transaction, either directly, through the text, or indirectly, through the association of the sponsor's name with the commercial transaction of purchasing the commercial goods or services which the sponsor sells.

The reasons for this portion of the Policy include:

- The desirability of avoiding non-commercial proselytizing of a "captive audience" of event spectators and participants;
- The constitutional prohibition on any view-point related decisions about permitted advertising coupled with the danger that the Agency and the Parks & Recreation Department would be associated with advertising anyway;
- The desire of the Agency to maximize income from sponsorship, weighed against the likelihood that commercial sponsors would be dissuaded from using the same forum commonly used by persons wishing to communicate non-commercial messages, some of which could be offensive to the public;
- The desire of the Agency to maintain a position of neutrality on political and religious issues;
- In the case of religious advertising and political advertising, specific concerns about the danger of "excessive entanglement" with religion (and resultant constitutional violations) and the danger of election campaign law violations, respectively.

Guidelines for calculating the **Levels of Sponsorship Tiers and Benefits** are provided and outlined in **Part B**.

IV. Additional Guidelines for Implementation

A. Equitable Offerings

It is important that all sponsorships of equal levels across divisions within Parks & Recreation yield the same value of benefits for potential sponsors.

Appendix C

B. Sponsorship Contact Database
A designated staff person or representative of the Parks & Recreation Department will keep an updated list of all current sponsors, sponsored activities, and contacts related to sponsorship.

Purpose of Maintaining the Database:
- Limit duplicate solicitations of one sponsor
- Allow management to make decisions based on most appropriate solicitations and levels of benefits offered
- Keep a current list of all Department supporters and contacts
- Help provide leads for new sponsorships, if appropriate

For staff below Management Team level, access to the database will be limited to printouts of listings of names of sponsors and their sponsored events. This limited access will provide information to help limit duplicated solicitations, and will also protect existing sponsor relationships, while allowing the evaluation of future sponsorships to occur at a management level.

If a potential sponsor is already listed, staff should not pursue a sponsorship without researching the sponsor's history with the most recently sponsored division. If more than one division wishes to pursue sponsorship by the same company, the Management Team shall make a decision based on several variables, including but not limited to:

- History of sponsorship, relationships, and types of sponsorship needed
- Amount of funding available
- Best use of funding based on departmental priorities.

C. Sponsorship Committee
A committee consisting of the supervisors of each program using sponsorships and other management team designees shall meet twice per year to review the database, exchange current contract samples, and recommend adjusting benefit levels and policy as needed. Changes shall not take effect before approval by the Management Team.

Part B.
Levels of Sponsorship Tiers and Benefits

The following tiers are presented as a guideline for types of benefits that may be presented as opportunities for potential sponsors.

Each sponsorship will most likely need to be individually negotiated. One purpose for these guidelines is to create equity in exchanges across sponsorship arrangements. While for the sake of ease the examples given for levels are based on amount of sponsorship requested, the level of approval needed from Agency staff is really based on the amount of benefits exchanged for the resources. The levels of approval are necessary because the costs and values for different levels of benefits may vary, depending on the sponsorship. It is important to note that these values may be very different. Sponsors typically will not offer to contribute resources that cost them more than the value of resources that they will gain

and, typically, seek at least a two to one return on their investment. Likewise, the Agency should not pursue sponsorships unless the total value the Agency receives is greater than the Agency's real costs.

A hierarchy of Sponsors for events, programs, or facilities with more than one sponsor is listed below from the highest level to the lowest. Not all Levels will necessarily be used in each Sponsorship Plan. Note that the hierarchy is not dependent on specific levels or amounts of sponsorship. Specific levels and amounts should be designed for each property before sponsorships are procured within the approved Sponsorship Plan. Complete definitions of terms are included in **Part C**.

Hierarchy of Sponsorship Levels (highest to lowest)

Parks and Recreation Department-Wide Sponsor ⇒
Facility/Park Title or Primary Sponsor ⇒
Event/Program Title or Primary Sponsor ⇒
Presenting Sponsor (Facility, Event or Program) ⇒
Facility/Park Sponsor ⇒
Program/Event Sponsor ⇒ Media Sponsor ⇒ Official Supplier ⇒
Co-sponsor

This hierarchy will help decide the amounts to ask various sponsors for, and determine what levels of benefits to provide. It is important to build flexibility and choice into each level so that sponsors can have the ability to choose options that will best fit their objectives. Note that the benefits listed under each level are examples of value. The listing does not mean that all of the benefits should be offered. It is a menu of options for possible benefits, depending on the circumstances. These are listed primarily as a guideline for **maximum** benefit values. It is recommended that each project create a project-specific Sponsorship Plan for approval in advance of Sponsorship procurement, based on the benefits available and the values specific to the project.

I. Sponsorship Assets and Related Benefits Inventory

TO BE DETERMINED FOR EACH AGENCY BASED ON OFFERINGS (PROPERTIES), VALUATION, AND DETERMINED BENEFITS

A tiered structure of actual values and approval levels should be determined as part of a Sponsorship Plan.

Appendix C

Activation
The marketing activity a company conducts to promote its sponsorship. Money spent on activation is over and above the rights fee paid to the sponsored property. Also known as leverage.

Advertising
The direct sale of print or some other types of City communication medium to provide access to a select target market.

Ambush Marketing
A promotional strategy whereby a non-sponsor attempts to capitalize on the popularity/prestige of a property by giving the false impression that it is a sponsor. Often employed by the competitors of a property's official sponsors.

Audio Mention
The mention of a sponsor during a TV or radio broadcast.

Business-to-Business Sponsorship
Programs intended to influence corporate purchase/awareness, as opposed to individual consumers.

Category Exclusivity
The right of a sponsor to be the only company within its product or service category associated with the sponsored property.

Cause Marketing
Promotional strategy that links a company's sales campaign directly to a non-profit organization. Generally includes an offer by the sponsor to make a donation to the cause with purchase of its product or service. Unlike philanthropy, money spent on cause marketing is a business expense, not a donation, and is expected to show a return on investment.

Cosponsors
Sponsors of the same property.

CPM (Cost Per Thousand)
The cost to deliver an ad message to a thousand people.

Cross-Promotions
A joint marketing effort conducted by to or more cosponsors using the sponsored property as the central theme.

Donations
Cash or in-kind gifts that do not include any additional negotiated conditions in return. Synonyms: Philanthropy, Patronage.

Editorial Coverage
Exposure that is generated by media coverage of the sponsored property that includes mention of the sponsor.

Emblem
A graphic symbol unique to a property. Also called a mark.

Escalator
An annual percentage increase built into the sponsorship fee for multi-year contracts. Escalators are typically tied to inflation.

Exclusive Rights
A company pays a premium or provides economic benefit in exchange for the right to be the sole advertised provider, at the most competitive prices, of goods purchased by consumers within Parks & Recreation Department facilities and parks.

Fulfillment
The delivery of benefits promised to the sponsor in the contract.

Hospitality
Hosting key customers, clients, government officials, employees and other VIPs at an event or facility. Usually involves tickets, parking, dining, and other amenities, often in a specially designated area, and may include interaction with athletes.

In-Kind Sponsorship
Payment (full or partial) of sponsorship fee in goods or services rather than cash.

Licensed Merchandise
Goods produced by a manufacturer (the licensee) who has obtained a license to produce and distribute the official Marks on products such as clothing and souvenirs.

Licensee
Manufacturer which has obtained a license to produce and distribute Licensed Merchandise.

Licensing
Right to use a property's logos and terminology on products for retail sale. Note: While a sponsor will typically receive the right to include a property's marks on its packaging and advertising, sponsors are not automatically licensees.

Mark
Any official visual representation of a property, including emblems and mascots.

Appendix C

Mascot
A graphic illustration of a character, usually a cartoon figure, used to promote the identity of a property.

Media Equivalencies
Measuring the exposure value of a sponsorship by adding up all the coverage it generated and calculating what it would have cost to buy a like amount of ad time or space in those outlets based on media rate cards.

Media Sponsor
TV and radio stations, print media and outdoor advertising companies that provide either cash, or more frequently advertising time or space, to a property in exchange for official designation.

Municipal Marketing
Promotional strategy linking a company to community services and activities (sponsorship of parks and recreation programs, libraries, etc.)

Option to Renew
Contractual right to renew a sponsorship on specified terms.

Philanthropy
Support for a non-profit property where no commercial advantage is expected. Synonym: Patronage.

Perimeter Advertising
Stationary advertising around the perimeter of an arena or event site, often reserved for sponsors.

Premiums
Souvenir merchandise, produced to promote a sponsor's involvement with a property (customized with the names/logos of the sponsor and the property).

Presenting Sponsor
The sponsor that has its name presented just below that of the sponsored property. In presenting arrangements, the event/facility name and the sponsor name are not fully integrated since the word(s) "presents" or "presented by" always come between them.

Primary Sponsor
The sponsor paying the largest fee and receiving the most prominent identification (Would be naming rights or title sponsor if sponsored property sold name or title).

Property
A unique, commercially exploitable entity (could be a facility, site, event, or program) Synonyms: sponsee, rightsholder, seller.

Right of First Refusal
Contractual right granting a sponsor the right to match any offer the property receives during a specific period of time in the sponsor's product category.

Selling Rights
The ability of a sponsor to earn back some or all of its sponsorship fee selling its product or service to the property or its attendees or members.

Signage
Banners, billboards, electronic messages, decals, etc., displayed on-site with sponsors ID.

Sole Sponsor
A company that has paid to be the only sponsor of a property.

Sponsee
A property available for sponsorship.

Sponsor
An entity that pays a property for the right to promote itself and its products or services in association with the property.

Sponsor ID
Visual and audio recognition of sponsor in property's publications and advertising; public-address and on-air broadcast mentions.

Sponsorship
The relationship between a sponsor and a property, in which the sponsor pays a cash or in-kind fee in return for access to the commercial potential associated with the property.

Sponsorship Agency
A firm which specializes in advising on, managing, brokering, or organizing sponsored properties. The agency may be employed by either the sponsor or property.

Sponsorship Fee
Payment made by a sponsor to a property.

Sports Marketing
Promotional strategy linking a company to sports (sponsorship of competitions, teams, leagues, etc.)

Supplier
Official provider of goods or services in exchange for designated recognition. This level is below official sponsor, and the benefits provided are limited accordingly.

Title Sponsor
The sponsor that has its name incorporated into the name of the sponsored property.

Venue Marketing
Promotional strategy linking a sponsor to a physical site (sponsorship of stadiums, arenas, auditoriums, amphitheaters, racetracks, fairgrounds, etc.)

Web Sponsorship
The purchase (in cash or trade) of the right to utilize the commercial potential associated with a site on the World Wide Web, including integrated relationship building and branding.

Sample

Partnership Policy
and
Proposal Format

Created By:

GREENPLAY LLC

*The Leading Edge In Parks, Recreation
And Open Space Consulting*

www.greenplayllc.com
3050 Industrial Lane, Suite 200
Broomfield, CO 80020
303-439-8369 or Toll Free: 1-866-849-9959
Fax: 303-439-0628
Email: info@greenplayllc.com

Sample Parks and Recreation Department
Partnership Policy
And Proposal Format

Table of Contents

I. Sample Parks and Recreation Department Partnership Policy

A. Purpose

This policy is designed to guide the process for Sample Parks and Recreation Department in their desire to partner with private, non-profit, or other governmental entities for the development, design, construction and operation of possibly partnered recreational facilities and/or programs that may occur on City property.

Sample Parks and Recreation Department would like to identify for-profit, non-profit, and governmental entities that are interested in proposing to partner with the City to develop recreational facilities and/or programs. A major component in exploring any potential partnership will be to identify additional collaborating partners that may help provide a synergistic working relationship in terms of resources, community contributions, knowledge, and political sensitivity. These partnerships should be mutually beneficial for all proposing partners including the City, and particularly beneficial for the citizens of the community.

This policy document is designed to:

- Provide essential background information,
- Provide parameters for gathering information regarding the needs and contributions of potential partners, and
- Identify how the partnerships will benefit the Sample Parks and Recreation Department and the community.

Part Two: The "Proposed Partnership Outline Format", provides a format that is intended to help guide Proposing Partners in creating a proposal for review by Sample Parks and Recreation Department staff.

B. Background and Assumptions

Partnerships are being used across the nation by governmental agencies in order to utilize additional resources for their community's benefit. Examples of partnerships abound, and encompass a broad spectrum of agreements and implementation. The most commonly described partnership is between a public and a private entity, but partnerships also occur between public entities and non-profit organizations and/or other governmental agencies.

Note on Privatization:
This application is specific for proposed partnering for new facilities or programs.
This information does not intend to address the issue of privatization, or transferring existing City functions to a non-City entity for improved efficiency and/or competitive cost concerns. An example of privatization would be a contract for a landscaping company to provide mowing services in a park. The City is always open to suggestions for improving services and cost savings through contractual arrangements. If you have an idea for privatization of current City functions, please call or outline your ideas in a letter for the City's consideration.

In order for partnerships to be successful, research has shown that the following elements should be in place prior to partnership procurement:

- There must be support for the concept and process of partnering from the very highest organizational level – i.e.: the Board or Trustees, a council, and/or department head.

- The most successful agencies have high-ranking officials that believe that they owe it to their citizens to explore partnering opportunities whenever presented, those communities both solicit partners and consider partnering requests brought to them.

- It is very important to have a Partnership Policy in place before partner procurement begins. This allows the agency to be proactive rather than reactive when presented with a partnership opportunity. It also sets a "level playing field" for all potential partners, so that they can know and understand in advance the parameters and selection criteria for a proposed partnership.

- A partnership policy and process should set development priorities and incorporate multiple points for go/no-go decisions.

- The partnership creation process should be a public process, with both Partners and the Partnering Agency well aware in advance of the upcoming steps.
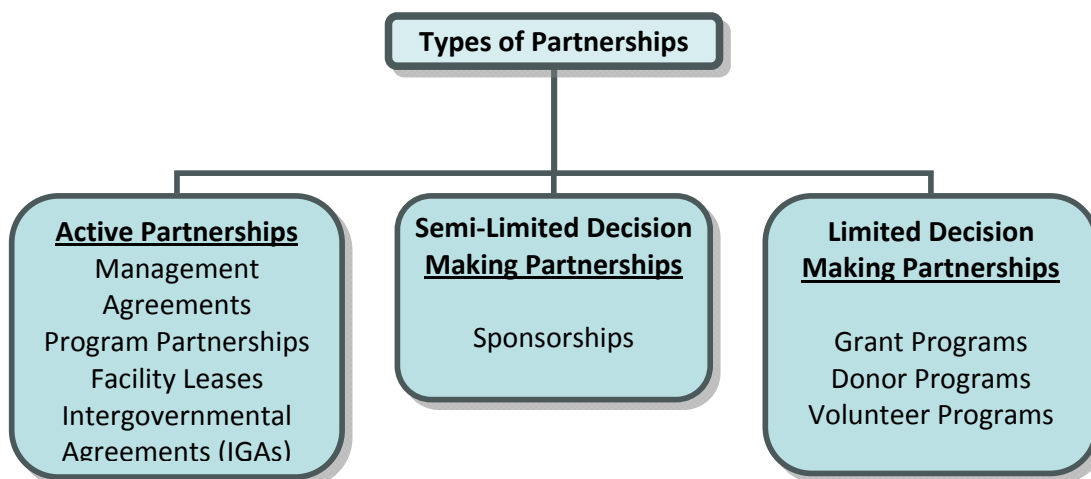
C. Partnership Definition

For purposes of this document and policy, a Proposed Partnership is defined as:

"An identified idea or concept involving Sample Parks and Recreation Department and for-profit, non-profit, and/or governmental entities, outlining the application of combined resources to develop facilities, programs, and/or amenities for the City and its citizens."

A partnership is a cooperative venture between two or more parties with a common goal, who combine complementary resources to establish a mutual direction or complete a mutually beneficial project. Partnerships can be facility-based or program-specific. The main goal for Sample Parks and Recreation Department partnerships is enhancing public offerings to meet the mission and goals of the City. Sample Parks and Recreation Department is interested in promoting partnerships which involve cooperation among many partners, bringing resources together to accomplish goals in a synergistic manner. Proposals that incorporate such collaborative efforts will receive priority status.

Partnerships can accomplish tasks with limited resources, respond to compelling issues, encourage cooperative interaction and conflict resolution, involve outside interests, and serve as an education and outreach tool. Partnerships broaden ownership in various projects and increase public support for community recreation goals. Partners often have flexibility to obtain and invest resources/dollars on products or activities where municipal government may be limited.

Partnerships can take the form of (1) cash gifts and donor programs, (2) improved access to alternative funding, (3) property investments, (4) charitable trust funds,
(5) labor, (6) materials, (7) equipment, (8) sponsorships, (9) technical skills and/or management skills, and other forms of value. The effective use of volunteers also can figure significantly into developing partnerships. Some partnerships involve active decision making, while in others, certain partners take a more passive role. The following schematic shows the types of possible partnerships discussed in this policy:

Types of Partnerships

Active Partnerships
Management Agreements
Program Partnerships
Facility Leases
Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs)

Semi-Limited Decision Making Partnerships
Sponsorships

Limited Decision Making Partnerships
Grant Programs
Donor Programs
Volunteer Programs

Appendix D

D. Possible Types of Active Partnerships

Sample Parks and Recreation Department is interested in promoting collaborative partnerships among multiple community organizations. Types of agreements for Proposed "Active" Partnerships may include leases, contracts, sponsorship agreements, marketing agreements, management agreements, joint-use agreements, inter-governmental agreements, or a combination of these. An innovative and mutually beneficial partnership that does not fit into any of the following categories may also be considered.

Proposed partnerships will be considered for facility, service, operations, and/or program development including associated needs, such as parking, paving, fencing, drainage systems, signage, outdoor restrooms, lighting, utility infrastructure, etc.

The following examples are provided only to illustrate possible types of partnerships. They are not necessarily examples that would be approved and/or implemented.

Examples of Public/Private Partnerships

• A private business seeing the need for more/different community fitness and wellness activities wants to build a facility on City land, negotiate a management contract, provide the needed programs, and make a profit.

• A private group interested in environmental conservation obtains a grant from a foundation to build an educational kiosk, providing all materials and labor, and is in need of a spot to place it.

• Several neighboring businesses see the need for a place for their employees to work out during the work day. They group together to fund initial facilities and an operating subsidy and give the facility to the City to operate for additional public users.

• A biking club wants to fund the building of a race course through a park. The races would be held one night per week, but otherwise the path would be open for public biking and in-line skating.

• A large corporate community relations office wants to provide a skatepark, but doesn't want to run it. They give a check to the City in exchange for publicizing their underwriting of the park's cost.

• A private restaurant operator sees the need for a concessions stand in a park and funds the building of one, operates it, and provides a share of revenue back to the City.

• A garden club wants land to build unique butterfly gardens. They will tend the gardens and just need a location and irrigation water.

Examples of Public/Non-Profit Partnerships

• A group of participants for a particular sport or hobby sees a need for more playing space and forms a non-profit entity to raise funds for a facility for their priority use that is open to the public during other hours.

• A non-profit baseball association needs fields for community programs and wants to obtain grants for the building of the fields. They would get priority use of the fields, which would be open for the City to schedule use during other times.

• A museum funds and constructs a new building, dedicating some space and time for community meetings and paying a portion of revenues to the City to lease its land.

Examples of Public/Public Partnerships

• Two governmental entities contribute financially to the development and construction of a recreational facility to serve residents of both entities. One entity, through an IGA, is responsible for the operation of the facility, while the other entity contributes operating subsidy through a formula based on population or some other appropriate factor.

• Two governmental public safety agencies see the need for more physical training space for their employees. They jointly build a gym adjacent to City facilities to share for their training during the day. The gyms would be open for the City to schedule for other users at night.

• A school district sees the need for a climbing wall for their athletes. The district funds the wall and subsidizes operating costs, and the City manages and maintains the wall to provide public use during non-school hours.

• A university needs meeting rooms. They fund a multi-use building on City land that can be used for City community programs at night.

E. Sponsorships

Sample Parks and Recreation Department is interested in actively procuring sponsorships for facilities and programs as one type of beneficial partnership. Please see *the Sample Parks and Recreation Department Sponsorship Policy* for more information.

F. Limited-Decision Making Partnerships: Donor, Volunteer, and Granting Programs

While this policy document focuses on the parameters for more active types of partnerships, the City is interested in, and will be happy to discuss, a proposal for any of these types of partnerships, and may create specific plans for such in the future.

G. Benefits of Partnerships with Sample Parks and Recreation Department

The City expects that any Proposed Partnership will have benefits for all involved parties. Some general expected benefits are:

Benefits for the City and the Community:
- Merging of resources to create a higher level of service and facility availability for community members.
- Making alternative funding sources available for public community amenities.
- Tapping into the dynamic and entrepreneurial traits of private industry.
- Delivering services and facilities more efficiently by allowing for collaborative business solutions to public organizational challenges.
- Meeting the needs of specific groups of users through the availability of land for development and community use.

Benefits for the Partners:
- Land and/or facility availability at a subsidized level for specific facility and/or program needs.
- Sharing of the risk with an established stable governmental entity.
- Becoming part of a larger network of support for management and promotion of facilities and programs.
- Availability of professional City recreation and planning experts to maximize the facilities and programs that may result
- Availability of City staff facilitation to help streamline the planning and operational efforts.

II. The Partnering Process

The steps for the creation of a partnership with the Sample Parks and Recreation Department are as follows:

A. Sample Parks and Recreation Department will create a public notification process that will help inform any and all interested partners of the availability of partnerships with the City. This will be done through notification in area newspapers, listing in the brochure, or through any other notification method that is feasible.

B. The proposing partner takes the first step to propose partnering with the City. To help in reviewing both the partnerships proposed, and the project to be developed in partnership, the City asks for a **Preliminary Proposal** according to a specific format as outlined in *Part Two - Proposed Partnership Outline Format.*

C. If initial review of a Preliminary Proposal yields interest and appears to be mutually beneficial based on the City Mission and Goals, and the Selection Criteria, a City staff or appointed representative will be assigned to work with potential partners.

D. The City representative is available to answer questions related to the creation of an initial proposal, and after initial interest has been indicated, will work with the proposing partner to create a checklist of what actions need to take place next. Each project will have distinctive planning, design, review and support issues. The City representative will facilitate the process of determining how the partnership will address these issues. This representative can also facilitate approvals and input from any involved City departments, providing guidance for the partners as to necessary steps.

E. An additional focus at this point will be determining whether this project is appropriate for additional collaborative partnering, and whether this project should prompt the City to seek a **Request for Proposal (RFP)** from competing/ collaborating organizations.

   Request for Proposal (RFP) Trigger: In order to reduce concerns of unfair private competition, if a proposed project involves partnering with a private "for-profit" entity and a dollar amount greater than $5,000, and the City has not already undergone a public process for solicitation of that particular type of partnership, the City will request Partnership Proposals from other interested private entities for identical and/or complementary facilities, programs or services. A selection of appropriate partners will be part of the process.

F. For most projects, a **Formal Proposal** from the partners for their desired development project will need to be presented for the City's official development review processes and approvals. The project may require approval by the Legal, Planning, Fire and Safety, Finance and/or other City Departments, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Planning Board, The Board of Trustees, and/or the City Supervisor's Office, depending on project complexity and applicable City Charter provisions, ordinances or regulations. If these reviews are necessary, provision to reimburse the City for its costs incurred in having a representative facilitate the

partnered project's passage through Development Review should be included in the partnership proposal.

G. Depending on project complexity and anticipated benefits, responsibilities for all action points are negotiable, within the framework established by law, to assure the most efficient and mutually beneficial outcome. Some projects may require that all technical and professional expertise and staff resources come from outside the City's staff, while some projects may proceed most efficiently if the City contributes staff resources to the partnership.

H. The partnership must cover the costs the partnership incurs, regardless of how the partnered project is staffed, and reflect those costs in its project proposal and budget. The proposal for the partnered project should also discuss how staffing and expertise will be provided, and what documents will be produced. If City staff resources are to be used by the partnership, those costs should be allocated to the partnered project and charged to it.

I. Specific **Partnership Agreements** appropriate to the project will be drafted jointly. There is no specifically prescribed format for **Partnership Agreements**, which may take any of several forms depending on what will accomplish the desired relationships among partners. The agreements may be in the form of:

- Lease Agreements
- Management and/or Operating Agreements
- Maintenance Agreements
- Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs)
- Or a combination of these and/or other appropriate agreements

Proposed partnership agreements might include oversight of the development of the partnership, concept plans and project master plans, environmental assessments, architectural designs, development and design review, project management, and construction documents, inspections, contracting, monitoring, etc. Provision to fund the costs and for reimbursing the City for its costs incurred in creating the partnership, facilitating the project's passage through the Development Review Processes, and completing the required documents should be considered.

J. If all is approved, the Partnership begins. The City is committed to upholding its responsibilities to Partners from the initiation through the continuation of a partnership. Evaluation will be an integral component of all Partnerships. The agreements should outline who is responsible for evaluation, the types of measures used, and detail what will occur should the evaluations reveal Partners are not meeting their Partnership obligations.

III. The Partnership Evaluation Process

A. Mission Statements and Goals

All partnerships with Sample Parks and Recreation Department should be in accord with the City's and the Parks and Recreation Department's Mission and Goals to indicate how a proposed partnership for that Department would be preliminarily evaluated:

SAMPLE MISSION STATEMENT

The Sample Parks and Recreation Department will provide a variety of parks, recreation facilities and program experiences equitably throughout the community. Programs will be developed and maintained to the highest quality, ensuring a safe environment with exceptional service while developing a lifetime customer. Services will demonstrate a positive economic investment through partnerships with other service providers, both public and private, ensuring a high quality of life for citizens of Sample.

(Sample) <u>GOALS</u> –

- Promote physical and mental health and fitness
- Nourish the development of children and youth
- Help to build strong communities and neighborhoods
- Promote environmental stewardship
- Provide beautiful, safe, and functional parks and facilities that improve the lives of all citizens
- Preserve cultural and historic features within the City's parks and recreation systems
- Provide a work environment for the Parks & Recreation Department staff that encourages initiative, professional development, high morale, productivity, teamwork, innovation, and excellence in management

---

B. Other Considerations

1. Costs for the Proposal Approval Process

For most proposed partnerships, there will be considerable staff time spent on the review and approval process once a project passes the initial review stage. This time includes discussions with Proposing Partners, exploration of synergistic partnering opportunities, possible RFP processes, facilitation of the approval process, assistance in writing and negotiating agreements, contracting, etc. There may also be costs for construction and planning documents, design work, and related needs and development review processes mandated by City ordinances.

Successful Partnerships will take these costs into account and may plan for City recovery of some or all of these costs within the proposal framework. Some of these costs could be considered as construction expenses, reimbursed through a negotiated agreement once operations begin, or covered through some other creative means.

2. Land Use and/or Site Improvements

Some proposed partnerships may include facility and/or land use. Necessary site improvements cannot be automatically assumed. Costs and responsibility for these improvements should be considered in any Proposal. Some of the general and usual needs for public facilities that may not be included as City contributions and may need to be negotiated for a project include:

- Any facilities or non-existent infrastructure construction
- Roads or street improvements
- Maintenance to specified standards
- Staffing
- Parking
- Snow removal
- Lighting

- Outdoor restrooms
- Water fountains
- Complementary uses of the site
- Utility improvements (phone, cable, storm drainage, electricity, water, gas, sewer, etc.)
- Custodial services
- Trash removal

3. Need

The nature of provision of public services determines that certain activities will have a higher need than others. Some activities serve a relatively small number of users and have a high facility cost. Others serve a large number of users and are widely available from the private sector because they are profitable. The determination of need for facilities and programs is an ongoing discussion in public provision of programs and amenities. The project will be evaluated based on how the project fulfills a public need.

4. Funding

Only when a Partnership Proposal demonstrates high unmet needs and high benefits for City citizens, will the City consider contributing resources to a project. The City recommends that Proposing Partners consider sources of potential funding. The more successful partnerships will have funding secured in advance. In most cases, Proposing Partners should consider funding and cash flow for initial capital development, staffing, and ongoing operation and maintenance.

The details of approved and pending funding sources should be clearly identified in a proposal.

For many partners, especially small private user groups, non-profit groups, and governmental agencies, cash resources may be a limiting factor in the proposal. It may be a necessity for partners to utilize alternative funding sources for resources to complete a proposed project. Obtaining alternative funding often demands creativity, ingenuity, and persistence, but many forms of funding are available.

Alternative funding can come from many sources, e.g. Sponsorships, Grants, and Donor Programs. A local librarian and/or internet searches can help with foundation and grant resources. Developing a solid leadership team for a partnering organization will help find funding sources. In-kind contributions can, in some cases, add additional funding.

All plans for using alternative funding should be clearly identified. The City has an established Sponsorship Policy, and partnered projects will be expected to adhere to the Policy. This includes the necessity of having an Approved Sponsorship Plan in place prior to procurement of sponsorships for a Partnered Project.

C. Selection Criteria

In assessing a partnership opportunity to provide facilities and services, the City will consider (as appropriate) the following criteria. The Proposed Partnership Outline Format in Part Two provides a structure to use in creating a proposal. City staff and representatives will make an evaluation by attempting to answer each of the following Guiding Questions:

- How does the project align with the City and affected Department's Mission Statement and Goals?
- How does the proposed facility fit into the current City and the affected Department's Master Plan?
- How does the facility/program meet the needs of City residents?
- How will the project generate more revenue and/or less cost per participant than the City can provide with its own staff or facilities?
- What are the alternatives that currently exist, or have been considered, to serve the users identified in this project?
- How much of the existing need is now being met within the City borders and within adjacent cities?
- What is the number and demographic profile of participants who will be served?
- How can the proposing partner assure the City of the long-term stability of the proposed partnership, both for operations and for maintenance standards?
- How will the partnered project meet Americans with Disabilities Act and EEOC requirements?
- How will the organization offer programs at reasonable and competitive costs for participants
- What are the overall benefits for both the City and the Proposing Partners?

Additional Assistance

Sample Parks and Recreation Department is aware that the partnership process does entail a great deal of background work on the part of the Proposing Partner. The following list of resources may be helpful in preparing a proposal:

- Courses are available through local colleges and universities to help organizations develop a business plan and/or operational pro-formas.

- The Chamber of Commerce offers a variety of courses and assistance for business owners and for those contemplating starting new ventures.

- There are consultants who specialize in facilitating these types of partnerships. For one example, contact **GreenPlay, LLC**, toll free at **1-866-849-9959** or **www.greenplayllc.com**.

- Reference Librarians at libraries and internet searches can be very helpful in identifying possible funding sources and partners, including grants, foundations, financing, etc.

- Relevant information including the *City of Sample Comprehensive Plan*, the *Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, site maps, and other documents are available at the _____. These documents may be copied or reviewed, but may not be taken off-site.

- The Sample Parks and Recreation Department Web Site (*www.XXXX.com*) has additional information.

- **If additional help or information is needed, please call 000-000-0000.**

Sample Proposed Partnership Outline Format

Please provide as much information as possible in the following outline form.

I.   Description of Proposing Organization:

- Name of Organization
- Years in Existence
- Contact Name, Mailing Address, Physical Address, Phone, Fax, E-mail

- Purpose of Organization
- Services Provided
- Member/User/Customer Profiles
- Accomplishments
- Legal Status

II.   Decision Making Authority

Who is authorized to negotiate on behalf of the organization? Who or what group (i.e. Council/Commission/Board) is the final decision maker and can authorize the funding commitment? What is the timeframe for decision making?

Summary of Proposal   (100 words or less)

What is being proposed in terms of capital development, and program needs?

III.   Benefits to the Partnering Organization

Why is your organization interested in partnering with the Sample Parks and Recreation Department? Please individually list and discuss the benefits (monetary and non-monetary) for your organization.

IV.   Benefits to the Sample Parks and Recreation Department

Please individually list and discuss the benefits (monetary and non-monetary) for the Sample Parks and Recreation Department and residents of the City.

V.   Details (as currently known)

The following page lists a series of *Guiding Questions* to help you address details that can help outline the benefits of a possible partnership. Please try to answer as many as possible with currently known information. Please include what your organization proposes to provide and what is requested of Sample Parks and Recreation Department. Please include (as known) initial plans for your concept, operations, projected costs and revenues, staffing, and/or any scheduling or maintenance needs, etc.

Guiding Questions

Meeting the Needs of our Community:
- In your experience, how does the project align with park and recreation goals?
- How does the proposed program or facility meet a need for City residents?
- Who will be the users? What is the projected number and profile of participants who will be served?
- What alternatives currently exist to serve the users identified in this project?
- How much of the existing need is now being met? What is the availability of similar programs elsewhere in the community?
- Do the programs provide opportunities for entry-level, intermediate, and/or expert skill levels?
- How does this project incorporate environmentally sustainable practices?

The Financial Aspect:
- Can the project generate more revenue and/or less cost per participant than the City can provide with its own staff or facilities? If not, why should the City partner on this project?
- Will your organization offer programs at reasonable and competitive costs for all participants? What are the anticipated prices for participants?
- What resources are expected to come from the Parks & Recreation Department?
- Will there be a monetary benefit for the City, and if so, how and how much?

Logistics:
- How much space do you need? What type of space?
- What is critical related to location?
- What is your proposed timeline?
- What are your projected hours of operations?
- What are your initial staffing projections?
- Are there any mutually-beneficial cooperative marketing benefits?
- What types of insurance will be needed and who will be responsible for acquiring and paying premiums on the policies?
- What is your organization's experience in providing this type of facility/program?
- How will your organization meet Americans with Disabilities Act and EEO requirements?

Agreements and Evaluation:
- How, by whom, and at what intervals should the project be evaluated?
- How can you assure the City of long-term stability of your organization?
- What types and length of agreements should be used for this project?
- What types of "exit strategies" should we include?
- What should be done if the project does not meet the conditions of the original agreements?

CORE SERVICES AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION: THE PYRAMID METHODOLOGY

The creation of a core services identification, resource allocation, and cost recovery philosophy and policy is a key component to maintaining an agency's financial control, equitably priced offerings, and identifying core programs, facilities and services.

Critical to this philosophical undertaking is the support and buy-in of elected officials and advisory boards, staff and ultimately of citizens. Whether or not significant changes are called for, the organization wants to be certain that it is philosophically aligned with its constituents. The development of the cost recovery philosophy and policy is built upon a very logical foundation, using the understanding of who is benefiting from the parks and recreation service to determine how that service should be paid for.
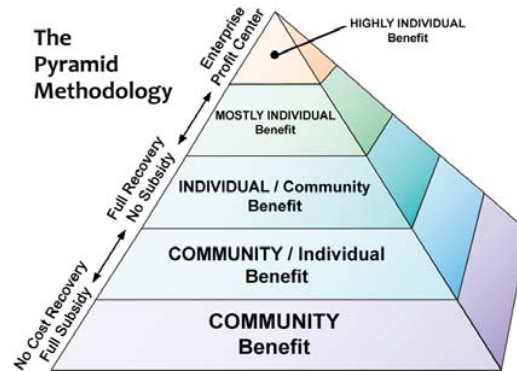
The development of the cost recovery philosophy can be separated into the following steps:

Step 1 – Building on Your Organization's Values, Vision, and Mission

The entire premise for this process is to align values, core services and resources to fulfill the Community's vision and mission. It is important that organizational values are reflected in the vision and mission. Often mission statements are a starting point and further work needs to occur to create a more detailed common understanding of the interpretation of the mission. This is accomplished by involving staff in a discussion of a variety of Filters.

Step 2 – Understanding the Pyramid Methodology, the Benefits Filter, and Secondary Filters

Filters are a series of continuums covering different ways of viewing service provision. The **Primary Filters** influence the final positioning of services as they relate to each other and are summarized below. The **Benefits Filter**, however, forms the **foundation** of the **Pyramid Model** and is used in this discussion to illustrate a cost recovery philosophy and policies for parks and recreation organizations. The other filters are explained later.

Filter	Definition
Benefit	Who receives the benefit of the service? (Skill development, education, physical health, mental health, safety)
Access/Type of Service	Is the service available to everyone equally? Is participation or eligibility restricted by diversity factors (i.e., age, ability, skill, financial)?
Organizational Responsibility	Is it the organization's responsibility or obligation to provide the service based upon mission, legal mandate, or other obligation or requirement?
Historical Expectations	What have we always done that we can't change?
Anticipated Impacts	What is the anticipated impact of the service on existing

		resources? On other users? On the environment? What is the anticipated impact to not providing the service?
	Social Value	What is the perceived social value of the service by constituents, city staff and leadership, and policy makers? Is it a community builder?

THE BENEFITS FILTER

The principal foundation of all the filters is the **Benefits Filter.** It is shown first as a continuum and then applied to the Core Services and Resource Allocation Pyramid model.

Conceptually, the base level of the pyramid represents the mainstay of a public parks and recreation program. Programs appropriate to higher levels of the pyramid should only be offered when the preceding levels below are full enough to provide a foundation for the next level. This foundation and upward progression is intended to represent the public parks and recreation core mission, while also reflecting the growth and maturity of an organization as it enhances its program and facility offerings.

It is often easier to integrate the values of the organization with its mission if they can be visualized. An ideal philosophical model for this purpose is the pyramid. In addition to a physical structure, *pyramid* is defined by Webster's Dictionary as "an immaterial structure built on a broad supporting base and narrowing gradually to an apex." Parks and recreation programs are built with a broad supporting base of core services, enhanced with more specialized services as resources allow. Envision a pyramid sectioned horizontally into five levels.

COMMUNITY Benefit

The foundational level of the pyramid is the largest, and includes those programs, facilities, and services that benefit the **COMMUNITY** as a whole. These programs, facilities, and services can increase property values, provide safety, address social needs, and enhance quality of life for

residents. The community generally pays for these basic services and facilities through taxes. These services are offered to residents at minimal or no fee. A large percentage of the tax support of the agency would fund this level of the pyramid.
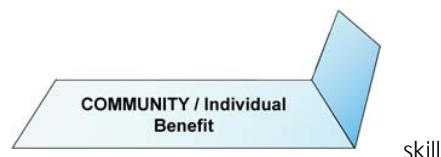

COMMUNITY Benefit

Examples of these services could include the existence of the community parks and recreation system, the ability for youngsters to visit facilities on an informal basis, development and distribution of marketing brochures, low-income or scholarship programs, park and facility planning and design, park maintenance, or others.

NOTE: All examples are generic - your programs and services may be very different based on your agency's mission, demographics, goals, etc.

COMMUNITY / Individual Benefit

COMMUNITY / Individual Benefit

The second and smaller level of the pyramid represents programs, facilities, and services that promote individual physical and mental well-being, and provide recreation skill development. They are generally the more traditionally expected services and beginner instructional levels. These programs, services, and facilities are typically assigned fees based on a specified percentage of direct and indirect costs. These costs are partially offset by both a tax subsidy to account for the **COMMUNITY** Benefit and participant fees to account for the **INDIVIDUAL** Benefit.

Examples of these services could include the ability of teens and adults to visit facilities on an informal basis, ranger led interpretive programs, and beginning level instructional programs and classes, etc.

INDIVIDUAL / Community Benefit

The third and even smaller level of the pyramid represents services that promote individual physical and mental well-being, and provide an intermediate level of recreational skill development.
This level provides more **INDIVIDUAL** Benefit and less **COMMUNITY** Benefit and should be priced accordingly. The individual fee is set to recover a higher percentage of cost than for programs and services that fall in the lower pyramid levels.

Examples of these services could include summer recreational day camp, summer sports leagues, year-round swim team, etc.

MOSTLY INDIVIDUAL Benefit

The fourth and still smaller pyramid level represents specialized services generally for specific groups, and may have a competitive focus. In this level programs and services may be priced to recover full cost, including all direct and indirect expenses.

Examples of these services might include specialty classes, golf, and outdoor adventure programs. Examples of these facilities might include camp sites with power hook-ups.

HIGHLY INDIVIDUAL Benefit

At the top of the pyramid, the fifth and smallest level represents activities that have a profit center potential, and may even fall outside of the core mission.   In this level, programs and services should be priced to recover full cost plus a designated profit percentage.

Examples of these activities could include elite diving teams, golf lessons, food concessions, company picnic rentals and other facility rentals, such as for weddings, or other services.

Step 3 – Sorting Services

It is critical that this sorting step be done with staff, and with governing bodies and citizens in mind. This is where ownership is created for the philosophy, while participants discover the current and possibly varied operating histories, cultures, missions, and values of the organization. It is the time to develop consensus and get everyone on the same page, the page you write together. Remember, as well, this effort must reflect the community and must align with the thinking of policy makers.

Sample Policy Development Methodology Language:

XXX community brought together staff from across the department to sort existing programs into each level of the pyramid. This was a challenging step. It was facilitated by an objective and impartial facilitator in order to hear all viewpoints. It generated discussion and debate as participants discovered what different staff members had to say about serving culturally and economically different parts of the community; about historic versus recreational parks; about adults versus youth versus seniors; about weddings and interpretive programs; and the list goes on. It was important to push through the "what" to the "why" to find common ground. This is all what discovering the philosophy is about.

Step 4 – Determining Current Subsidy/Cost Recovery Levels

Subsidy and cost recovery are complementary. If a program is subsidized at 75%, it has a 25% cost recovery, and vice-versa. It is more powerful to work through this exercise thinking about where the tax subsidy is used rather than what is the cost recovery. When it is complete, you can reverse thinking to articulate the cost recovery philosophy, as necessary.

The overall subsidy/cost recovery level is comprised of the average of everything in all of the levels together as a whole. Determine what the current subsidy level is for the programs sorted into each level. There may be quite a range in each level, and some programs could overlap with other levels of the pyramid. This will be rectified in the final steps.

Step 5 – Assigning Desired Subsidy/Cost Recovery Levels

Ask these questions: Who benefits? Who pays? Now you have the answer; who benefits – pays! The tax subsidy is used in greater amounts at the bottom levels of the pyramid, reflecting the benefit to the **Community** as a whole. As the pyramid is climbed, the percentage of tax subsidy decreases, and at the top levels it may not be used at all, reflecting the **Individual** benefit. So, what is the right percentage of tax subsidy for each level? It would be appropriate to keep some range within each level; however, the ranges should not overlap from level to level.

Again, this effort must reflect your community and must align with the thinking of your policy makers. In addition, pricing must also reflect what your community thinks is reasonable, as well as the value of the offering.

Examples

Many times categories at the bottom level will be completely or mostly subsidized, but you may have a small cost recovery to convey value for the experience. The range for subsidy may be 90-100% - but it may be higher, depending on your overall goals.

The top level may range from 0% subsidy to 50% excess revenues above all costs, or more. Or, your organization may not have any activities or services in the top level.
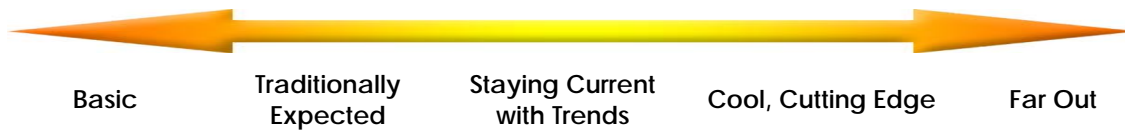
Step 6 – Understanding the Other Factors and Considerations

Inherent in sorting programs into the pyramid model using the Benefits Filter is the realization that other factors come into play. This can result in decisions to place programs in other levels than might first be thought. These factors also follow a continuum form however do not necessarily follow the five levels like the Benefits Filter. In other words, the continuum may fall totally within the first two levels of the pyramid. These factors can aid in determining core programs versus ancillary programs. These factors represent a layering effect and should be used to make adjustments to an initial placement in the pyramid.

THE COMMITMENT FACTOR: What is the intensity of the program, what is the commitment of the participant?

Drop-In Opportunities	Instructional – Basic	Instructional – Intermediate	Competitive – Not Recreational	Specialized

THE TRENDS FACTOR: Is the program or service tried and true, or is it a fad?

Basic   Traditionally Expected   Staying Current with Trends   Cool, Cutting Edge   Far Out

THE POLITICAL FILTER: What is out of our control?

This filter does not operate on a continuum, but is a reality, and will dictate from time to time where certain programs fit in the pyramid

THE MARKETING FACTOR: What is the effect of the program in attracting customers?

Loss Leader   Popular – High Willingness to Pay

THE RELATIVE COST TO PROVIDE FACTOR: What is the cost per participant?

Low Cost per Participant   Medium Cost per Participant   High Cost per Participant

THE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS FACTOR: What are the financial realities of the community?

Low Ability to Pay   Pay to Play

FINANCIAL GOALS FACTOR: Are we targeting a financial goal such as increasing sustainability, decreasing subsidy reliance?

100% Subsidized   Generates Excess Revenue over Direct Expenditures

Step 7 – Adjust Fees and Other Funding Resources to Reflect Your Comprehensive Cost Recovery Philosophy

Across the country, ranges in overall cost recovery levels can vary from less than 10% to over 100%. Your organization sets your target based on your mission, stakeholder input, funding, and/or other circumstances. This exercise may have been completed to determine present cost recovery level. Or, you may have needed to increase your cost recovery from where you are currently to meet budget targets. Sometimes just implementing the policy equitably to existing programs is enough, without a concerted effort to increase fees. Now that this information is apparent, the organization can articulate where it has been and where it is going – by pyramid level and overall - and fees can be adjusted accordingly.

Step 8 – Implementation and One Year Pilot

The process results in implementation of your new philosophy which includes:
- Education and training of all staff on the new philosophy;
- Brainstorming with stakeholders to determine alternative funding option;
- Development of implementation strategies including alternative funding and fee adjustments;
- Continuing to foster "buy-in" from staff, governing bodies and citizens;
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the new philosophy during the next budget cycle; and
- .Making adjustments as necessary.

This **Core Services and Resource Allocation: The Pyramid Methodology** Outline is provided by:

GREENPLAYLLC
The Leading Edge In Parks, Recreation
And Open Space Consulting

GreenPlay, LLC, 3050 Industrial Lane, Suite 200, Broomfield, CO 80020
(303) 439-8369; Toll-free: 1-866-849-9959; Info@GreenPlayLLC.com; www.GreenPlayLLC.com
All rights reserved. Please contact GreenPlay for more information.
Copyright 2001

City of Fort Collins