



CARBONDALE PARKS, RECREATION & TRAILS MASTER PLAN

Carbondale, Colorado
April 28, 2015



DESIGNWORKSHOP

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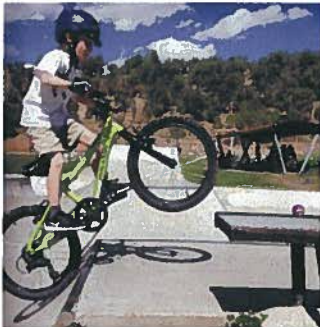
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





The Rio Grande Trail traverses through Carbondale, linking Glenwood Springs to Aspen

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Plan Purpose and Approach

The Town of Carbondale Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan Update provides direction for the Town's decision making over a long-term planning horizon of ten years. Most of the 2004 Master Plan recommendations have been completed or require a new approach, therefore an update to the plan is essential. The plan update also requires evaluation of potential financial strategies in order to address the shortfall in funding the Town has experienced over the past several years for maintenance and operations of existing Town parks, recreation and trails. While it is useful to imagine and aspire to a greater vision for the future, this plan acknowledges that additional funding is needed to complete many of the improvements identified in past planning documents such as the Gateway River Park Master Plan, and new concepts described in this document.

The plan proposes strategies customized to the area's unique sense of place and people, and has been formulated from an understanding of community values and priorities. The plan addresses the resiliency of the parks and recreation system and department operations in the changing fiscal environment where non-traditional strategies and creative solutions are needed to fulfill the community's ongoing needs and vision for parks and recreation.

Vision Summary

Carbondale is known widely for its premier outdoor environment and mountain defined by its strong bicycle culture, access to mountain recreation opportunities, healthy lifestyles, ranching heritage, diversity and its celebration of arts, culture and community events. The Master Plan vision supports Carbondale's high quality parks, trails and recreation programs, focusing on the following: connecting to the outdoors through trails, leveraging community-based solutions, welcoming visitors, providing sustainable parks and public spaces and accommodating the needs of changing demographics. Carbondale's park, recreation and trail opportunities connect people to the outdoors and celebrate what makes the community unique.

Why a Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan Update?

- To address services, management, maintenance, facilities and policies in a **fiscally responsible and sustainable manner**;
- To **propose customized strategies for Carbondale** that champion the role of recreation;
- To provide **realistic and clear recommendations** to guide the Town's decision making process during the next 10 years regarding parks, recreation and trails;
- To contribute to a **high quality of life**, new **economic opportunities** and an attractive destination for visitors.

Plan Update Process Summary

The plan update process was structured into three phases. Throughout the project, the consultant team worked closely with the Town's staff, Parks and Recreation Commission and the Bike, Pedestrian, and Trails Commission. The update process began in September, 2014. The first phase, Developing a Context of Understanding began with a day-long series of meetings with the various Committees and town staff to discuss the project approach and prepare for the steps ahead. The first phase also included review of foundational planning documents and site specific plans that currently frame the planning environment. The second phase, Creating a Shared Vision, included a focused public engagement process and needs assessment. This phase was critical to creating a planning document that is supported and championed by the community and depended on the time and effort of many citizens who took the time to respond to the online survey, participate in focus group meetings and public meetings that were the cornerstone of the planning process. In the final planning phase, Plan Documentation and Adoption, the project team synthesized and documented the findings to create a planning document with community based recommendations that build upon the town's strengths and address the needs of the community.

Master Plan Themes

This Master Plan proposes a vision and strategies to enhance the parks, trails and recreation features within Carbondale. Throughout the public and stakeholder engagement process, a broad range of topics were discussed, and eleven core themes for the Master Plan emerged. The themes reflect community values, the unique qualities and characteristics of the town, the evaluation of existing operations, the consideration of existing facilities and policies and the acknowledgement of recreation trends. These core themes make up the basis for the big ideas and new approaches that will help Carbondale continue to thrive and improve the quality of life for its residents and visitors over the course of the next 10 years.

- 1. Improve the Bicycle and Pedestrian Network** | Fill in the gaps in the bicycle and pedestrian network with priority given to creating connectivity to public buildings, parks and major trail networks.
- 2. Enhance Gateways** | Enhance and beautify the Town's gateway outdoor spaces, welcoming visitors and residents.
- 3. Celebrate the Rivers** | Highlight the rivers as community assets and recreation opportunities.
- 4. Address Financial Stability** | Secure the Town's fiscal health in order to maintain existing parks, trails and recreation amenities.
- 5. Maintain Existing Amenities** | Focus on enhancing existing parks before spearheading expansion to new locations.
- 6. Plan for the Future** | Upon securing fiscal health, create financial mechanisms to develop and maintain new projects. .
- 7. Distinguish Carbondale** | Promote and focus on becoming renowned for the unique assets that express Carbondale's identity.
- 8. Provide Sports Facilities** | Focus on providing sports practice fields and indoor recreation within the community, and partner with valleywide recreation providers for larger complexes and tournament spaces.
- 9. Build and Enhance Strong Partnerships** | Partner with local organizations, individuals and Town departments to generate community based solutions to address current challenges.
- 10. Broaden, Enhance and Promote Recreation Opportunities** | Develop strategic partnerships to increase program and activity offerings to underserved user groups.
- 11. Support the Creative District Plan** | Support the Creative District Plan by strategically utilizing public properties to their potential; positioning them as flexible space for community recreation, special events and the arts.

Recommendation Highlights

The recommendations within the Master Plan document provide guidance to direct decisions for the next decade, understanding that some flexibility and adjustments will be needed to fulfill the vision. Some steps and action items can be completed within a matter of months or in the near-term timeframe, while others will require community and regional solutions that may take a number of years to achieve. The Master Plan themes have been formulated into recommendations for solving the challenges Carbondale faces, along with visionary elements that reflect aspirations of what the town can become in the future.

The recommendations reveal community values captured from the public engagement process and meetings with the Town Staff, Town Trustees, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the Bike, Pedestrian and Trails Commission. The recommendations also consider the evaluation of current operations, analysis of existing facilities and policies and consideration of trends in recreation. The recommendations are organized around the core themes reiterated throughout this document. The following summarizes the core recommendations provided in Chapter 4.

Improve the Bicycle and Pedestrian Network

It is a priority to fill in the gaps that exist in the bike and pedestrian network, providing better connectivity to community facilities and other major trail networks, as well as connecting the east and west sides of town. Safety is also a big concern, so the town must continue to focus on creating safe crossings and well-connected and recognizable routes for bicycles and pedestrians. As the population of the town and region grow over the next 10 years, the trail system may also need to expand to address growing demands and increased recreational tourism.

Map 1: Map of Existing and Proposed Trail Connections identifies priorities for trail development linkages, extensions and improvements to connect to key municipal buildings, parks, schools and public amenities. As a basecamp to the great outdoors and mountain adventure, trails are also integral to getting

residents and visitors into the surrounding natural environment and extensive surrounding trail network.

Enhance Gateways

Gateway River Park and Nuche Park are well positioned to create memorable gateways into Carbondale at each end of Highway 133 at the town's boundary. Two regional trails, the Rio Grande and Crystal River trails, also expand opportunities to welcome visitors and residents into the community while highlighting Carbondale's connection to the outdoors. One location along the Rio Grande Trail that has potential to serve as a gateway is the Roaring Fork Transportation Authority's (RFTA) property across from the Highway 133 Park-and-Ride that has been identified by RFTA as a location for enhancement. These gateway locations are identified on Map 2. Recommendations in this plan include developing these locations to provide welcoming parks and gateways representative of the community's rich outdoor assets by providing amenities and signage, such as orientation and informational signs and kiosks that direct visitors to town facilities and promote upcoming events and celebrations.

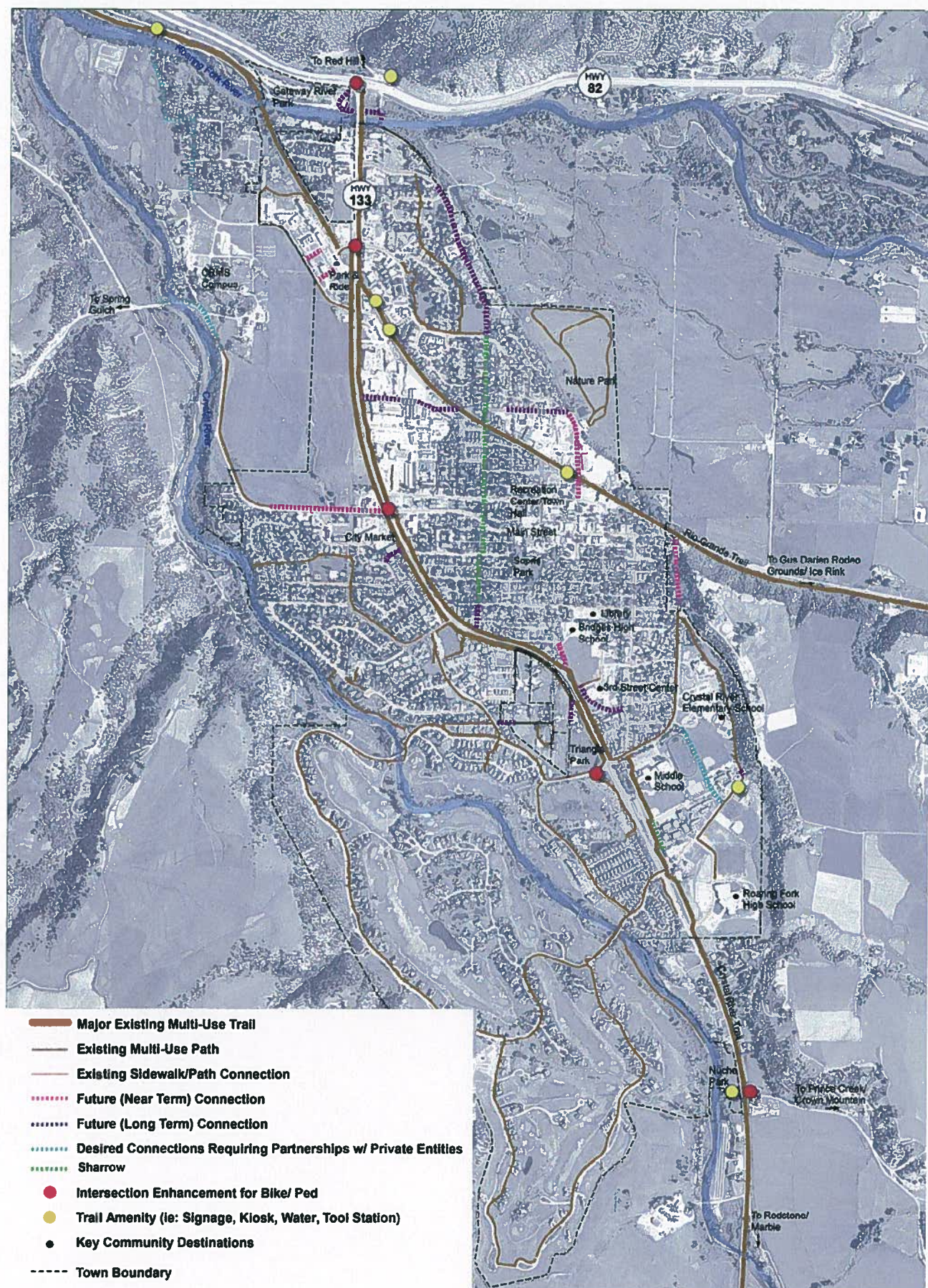
Celebrate the Rivers

The Roaring Fork River and the Crystal River are two unique assets to Carbondale that can be better highlighted and connected to in years to come and promoted as community assets and recreational amenities. The Master Plan recommends better visual and physical accessibility, increased river trail opportunities for everyone and encouraging conservation and restoration projects within the riparian corridors.

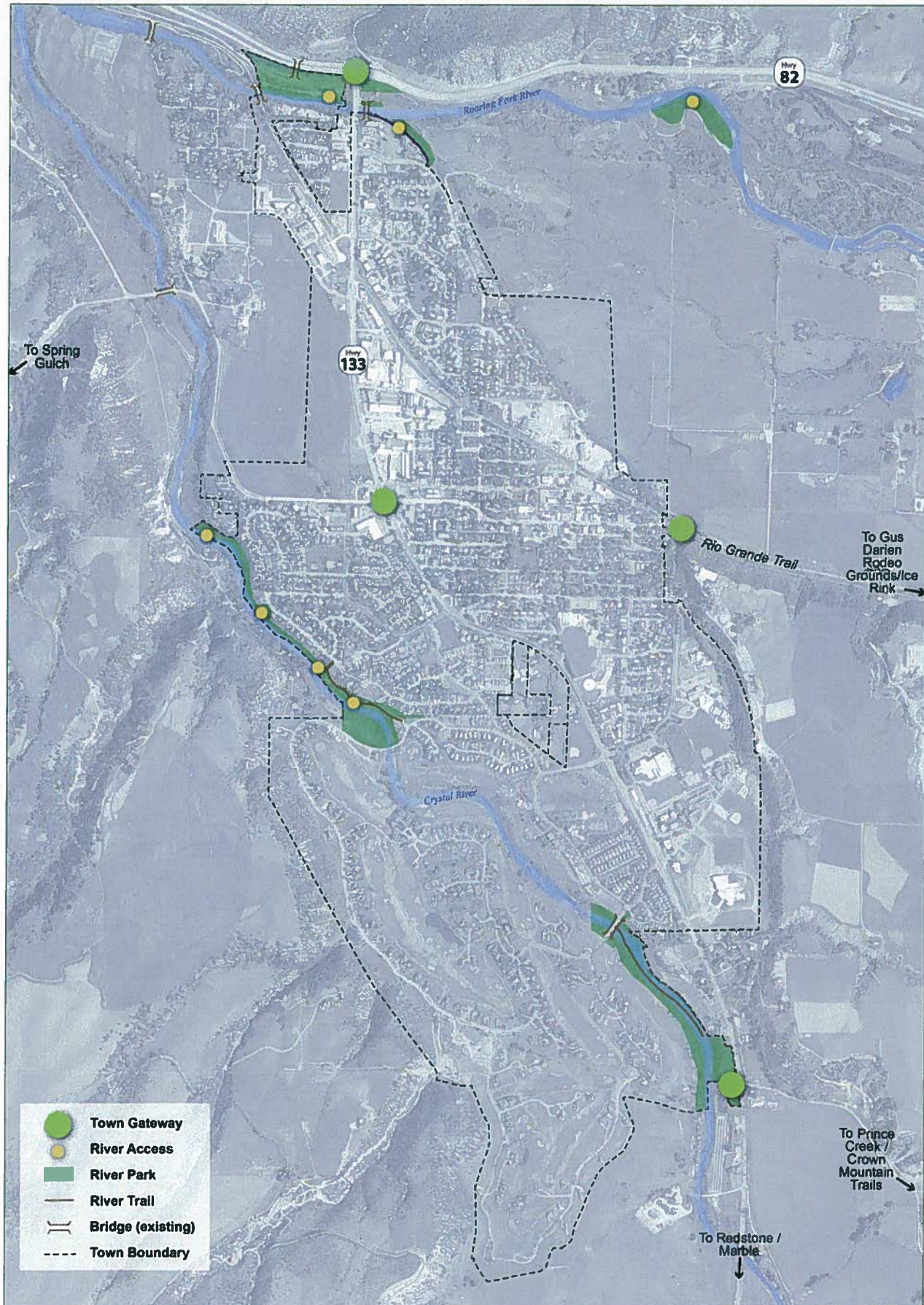
Address Financial Stability

Before the community can support long-term visions for Carbondale's parks, trails and recreation offerings, the town's current fiscal health needs to be secured to maintain existing parks, trails and programs to the current level of service that the community has come to expect. Goals of the Master Plan are to find funding solutions that will address the current deficiencies perceived by the majority of the community and prepare for future replacement, maintenance and operation's needs. Public sentiment gauged through this

Map 1: Proposed Trails



Map 2: Proposed Gateways and River Access



process indicates there may be community support for more boldly inspiring the community to financially support a larger vision and completing projects currently well outside of the town's financial reach such as upgrading and renovating the Town pool, completing trail linkages identified as long-term priorities and other significant projects. Recommendations include exploring a variety of funding strategies such as sales tax increase, a voluntary sales tax, enhancing the donation and fundraising process, strengthening strategic partnerships, designating funds for grant matches and increasing revenues from fee-based program. The recommendations provide guidance for the steps needed to explore these potential revenue sources and garner community support.

Maintain Existing Amenities

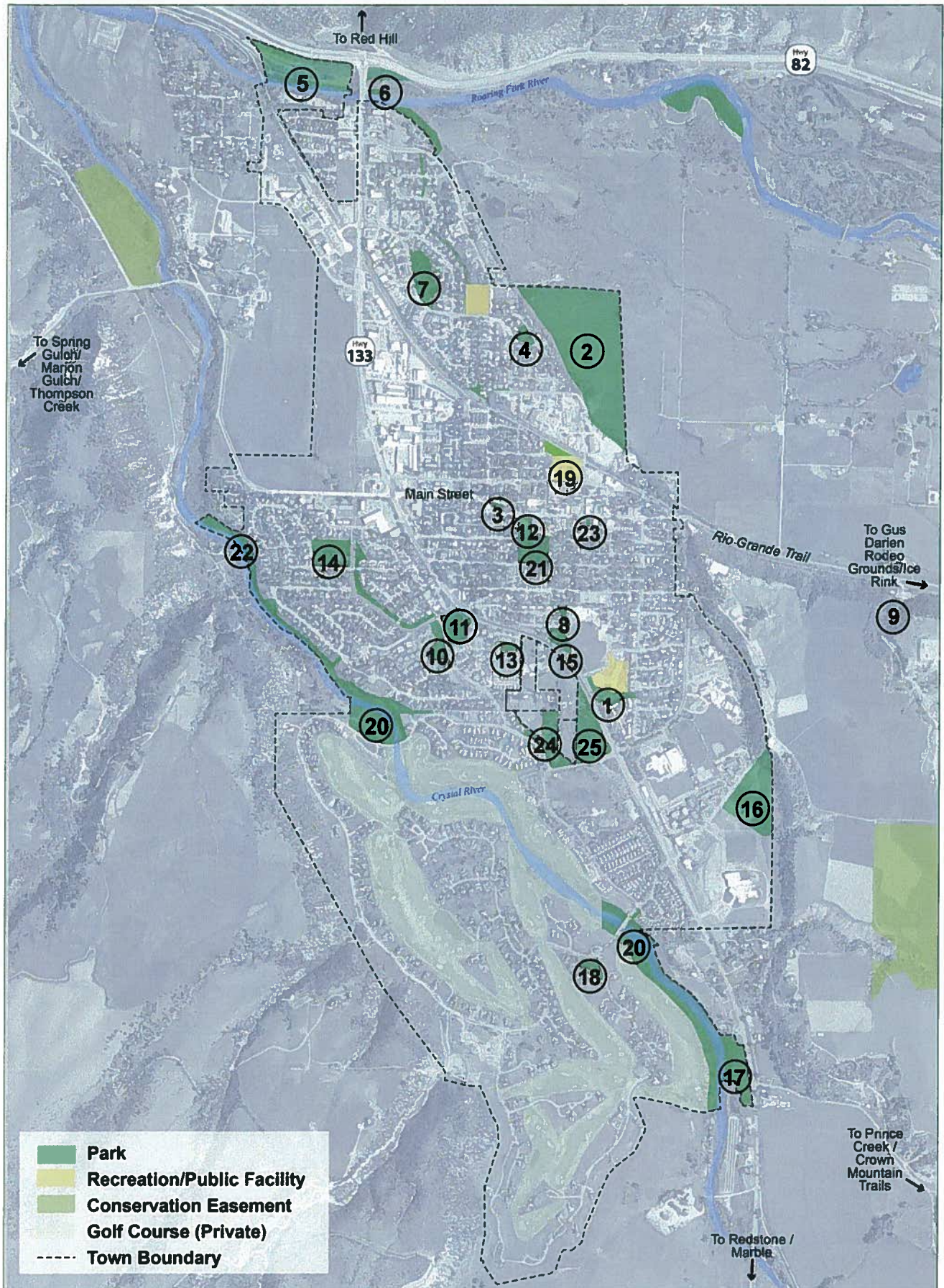
Given the lack of excess funds for acquisition, planning and design, development and operations and maintenance, the Town should focus on the enhancement of its many existing parks and completion of existing projects that are already on the boards, prior to spearheading expansion to new locations. See Map 3 for the locations of existing Town of Carbondale parks and facilities. The Master Plan emphasizes the following (not in priority order):

- addressing safety, compliance and ADA accessibility issues where possible within all park spaces,
- establishing and enforcing clear park and trail use policies and rules,
- balancing near-term improvements with long-term sustainability and suitability objectives,
- creating a culture of operation and care of what we have, and
- addressing existing maintenance needs and park improvements.

Town of Carbondale Park Properties

- 1.** Bonnie Fisher Park
- 2.** Carbondale Nature Park
- 3.** Centennial Sundial Park
- 4.** Colorado Meadows Park
- 5.** Gateway RV and River Park
- 6.** Gateway Park
- 7.** Gianinetti Park
- 8.** Glassier Park
- 9.** Gus Darien Riding Arena + Ice Rink
- 10.** Hendrick Dog Park
- 11.** Hendrick Ranch Park
- 12.** John M. Fleete Swimming Pool
- 13.** Keator Grove Park
- 14.** Miner's Memorial Park
- 15.** Mt. Sopris Historical Society
- 16.** North Face Park
- 17.** Nuche Park
- 18.** Orchard Park
- 19.** Recreation & Community Center/Promenade Park
- 20.** Riverfront Park
- 21.** Sopris Park
- 22.** Stairway Park
- 23.** The Plaza/Park at 4th and Main Street
- 24.** Thompson Park
- 25.** Triangle Park

Map 3: Existing Parks



Additional funding and staff resources will be needed to address the following community desires expressed as priorities throughout the plan process:

- Repair and replacement of existing park restrooms,
- Safety improvements of existing pedestrian road crossings,
- Pool facility modifications to address safety issues,
- ADA accessibility improvements,
- Nature Park maintenance such as weed management, and
- Minor renovation of the Recreation and Community Center to create a dedicated fitness room, thereby improving cost recovery.

Plan for the Future

The ability to create and focus on new projects relies on first stabilizing the Town's fiscal health. Upon securing sufficient funding for the maintenance of current facilities, the Town should begin saving money for future projects and grant matching directed at long-term improvements and additions. Several large projects have been identified as future long-term priorities, including:

- Implementation of existing park master plans, such as Gateway River Park
- Sidewalk network completion
- River accessibility and riparian enhancements
- Landscape and beautification projects in parks and along trails
- Adding infrastructure for event hosting in more existing park locations
- Addition of an ice rink facility
- Major improvements and renovations to the swimming pool

Distinguish Carbondale

Carbondale is a special community with a diversity of uses and characteristics that define its identity. The Master Plan goals are to promote and focus on becoming renowned for the unique assets that express Carbondale's identity through maintaining authenticity to place and not trying to compete with neighboring communities. Special events are one source of expression of the community's arts, diversity and historical culture. The Master Plan recommends upgrading event spaces to leverage flexibility, efficiency and diversity of programming opportunities. It also calls for celebrating all seasons in Carbondale with programming and recreational amenities throughout the year.

Provide Sports Facilities

Carbondale experiences a high demand for recreational fields to support youth and teen athletic programs, adult leagues and growing interests in new or alternative field sports and pick-up games. The field shortage is most notable amongst soccer fields, but it is also a logistical challenge with scheduling lacrosse, rugby, bicycle polo, Ultimate Frisbee and mountain bike team practice and other sports and activities that the residents of Carbondale participate in and value. In order to accommodate increased use and demand, the town must support partnerships with valley-wide recreation providers for larger complexes and tournament spaces, while continually improving the efficiencies of existing fields within town. Gym space also poses challenges within the community. Shared opportunities for indoor space must also be explored with the RE-1 School District and other private entities.

Build and Enhance Strong Partnerships

The Roaring Fork Valley and Carbondale are fortunate to have many non-profit organizations and motivated community members. As the town faces current and future challenges, leverage these partnerships and volunteers through concerted efforts to maintain and improve Carbondale's parks, trails and recreational offerings through community-based solutions. In addition, better align and coordinate efforts within the Town, including Town staff and commissions. Through these partnerships, enhance the town's natural land conservation and agricultural heritage

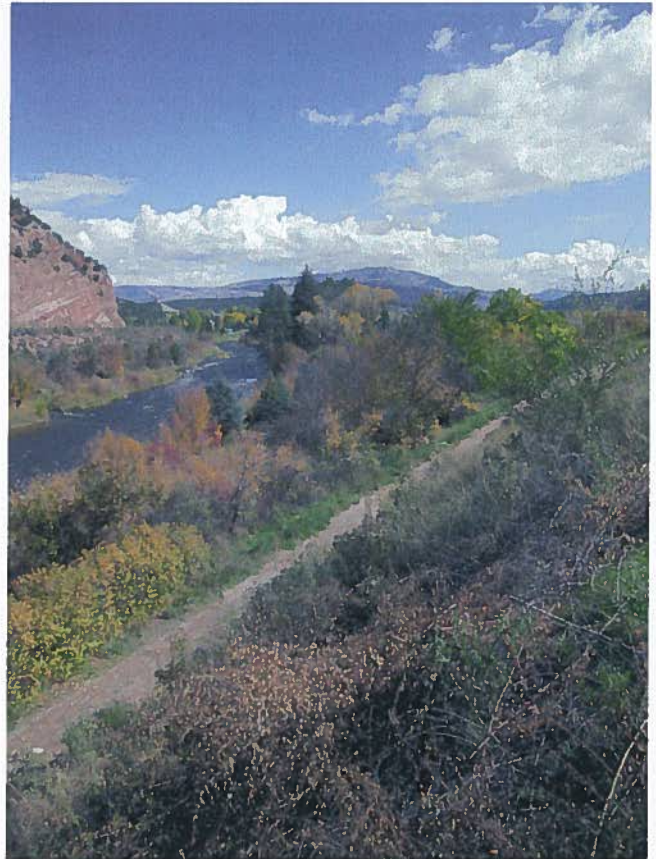
while maintaining and ever-improving the rich diversity of public spaces and activities already supported within the town.

Broaden, Enhance and Promote Recreation Opportunities

A number of population groups have been identified as under-served within the Carbondale Community. These groups include the underprivileged, youth and teens, seniors, Hispanic/Latinos, special needs groups, families and commuters. The Master Plan recommends developing strategic partnerships to increase the program and activity offerings specific to these user groups while encouraging increased use of the Town's facilities. The Town also needs to improve its outreach and involvement of people of these demographic segments in order to develop programs, activities and advertisement that will effectively attract new participants. Some recommendations for bilingual advertisements and programs, digital and print advertisements and partnerships are included in this Master Plan, but the Town must seek continuous feedback in order to keep current with changing population needs. It is important for the Parks and Recreation Departments to be flexible and innovative over the next 10 years in order to respond to the ever changing needs and demands of a diverse community.

Support the Creative District Plan

Arts and cultural services are fundamental to the civic purposes of Carbondale and to the community's identity. Support of the 2014-2015 Creative District Plan should be continued by strategically utilizing public properties within the district to their potential and by celebrating opportunities for creative, flexible space for the community's benefit of recreation, special events and the arts. In addition, the Plan supports following a consistent wayfinding and signage program to help guide visitors to town amenities in a clear and easily recognizable manner.



Carbondale provides its residents with unparalleled access to outdoor opportunities.

1

INTRODUCTION



PLAN PURPOSE

The Town of Carbondale Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan Update will shape the Parks and Recreation Department's strategies and investments over the next 10 years by providing a framework for decision making based on a clear vision, goals and action steps. The plan seeks to provide guidance to the Parks and Recreation Staff, the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Bike, Pedestrian and Trails Commission to ensure that investments and services are provided in a manner that is consistent with the Town's established goals, identified needs and desires of the community. The Master Plan guides decisions that will contribute to a higher quality of life for the Town's residents and visitors. The Plan includes both short-term and long-term recommendations for funding, policies, operations, services, programming, maintenance and capital improvements.

There are a number of reasons and influences which make the timing for this plan update important for the future of parks and recreation within the Carbondale community, including:

- Many of the action items identified in the 2004 plan have been accomplished. Significant achievements include the construction of the North Face Skateboard and Bike Park and the Recreation and Community Center, as well as many smaller improvements to park facilities, trail connections and recreation amenities.
- There is a need to reevaluate community values and requirements due to shifting demographics and recreation trends. This requires an updated assessment of the Town's approach to planning, delivering and maintaining parks and recreation services.
- The Town's population is projected to grow over the next 10 years. From 2000 to 2010 the population increased by 24 percent (1,200 people) to a total of 6,427 people. Continued growth is anticipated within the Town's boundaries and within Garfield County, and the park and recreation amenities will need to serve a growing number of residents.
- New offerings in trails and recreation outside of the Town's boundaries require the Town to look at where strategic partnerships can be created to connect to regional assets.

Parks and Recreation Mission:

"The Town of Carbondale Parks & Recreation Department is dedicated to providing and maintaining parks, trails and recreational amenities. Through innovation and community cooperation, we will develop leisure services, programs and facilities that improve the quality of life for all citizens, and benefit the economic vitality of our community."
(adopted November 2003)

- The amount of sales tax the Town has received annually has been less than was anticipated when voters were asked in 2006 to support a bond to fund building the Recreation and Community Center and utilize the Recreation and Use Sales Tax to pay off the bond by 2024. The shortfall in sales tax has required the Town to utilize reserve funds to make annual bond payments and take a conservative approach to parks, recreation and trails maintenance, staffing levels and improvements. Economic conditions require a plan that reflects the fiscal realities that the Town is faced with and that prioritize investments to align with community values for long-term sustainability.
- These considerations require analysis and assessment, community education, an understanding of community needs and an action plan to ensure the Town's parks, recreation programs and trails continue to provide the level and quality of service the community has come to expect as a premier mountain town.

PLAN UPDATE PROCESS

The plan update process was structured into three phases:

Phase I: Developing a Context of Understanding

This phase included the project startup meetings, site visits and the existing conditions and future trends assessments. The team completed an inventory and analysis of existing parks, trails, and recreation resources and plans in addition to reviewing other resources provided by the Town.

Phase II: Creating a Shared Vision

Stakeholder and public engagement was critical to understanding the collective knowledge of the community, needs, vision and ultimately the success factors and implementation strategies necessary for this Master Plan to be successful. Parks, recreation and trail needs, priorities, issues and opportunities are often viewed differently by Carbondale's diverse population and user groups. The engagement strategy championed an inclusive process that sought to engage groups that typically have low levels of participation. These groups include youth and families, Latinos and Hispanics, as well as commuters and non-residents. Throughout the planning process, stakeholder engagement was designed to be transparent and educational in order to secure support for the adoption and implementation of the Master Plan.



A significant part of the planning process included a four day community workshop where focus groups gathered to provide valued input and ideas that helped shape the Master Plan.

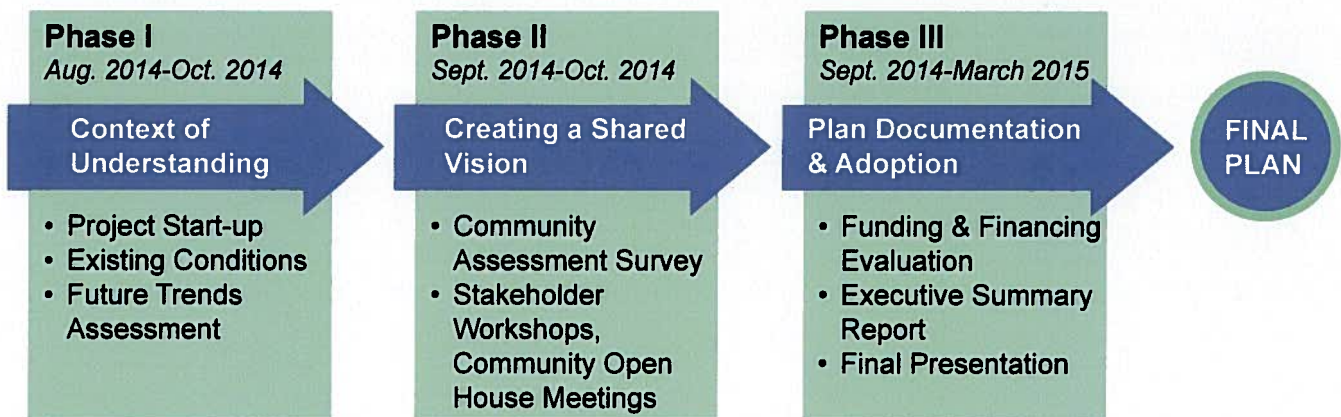


Figure 4: Master Plan Process and Timeline

The process included the following elements:

- **Commissioner Meetings** - The consultant team met extensively with Town Staff, the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Bike, Pedestrian and Trails Commission throughout the process.
- **Community Survey and Needs Assessment** - An online survey representative of the community as a whole provided an understanding of existing use patterns, preferences and needs and respondents' initial willingness to support increased taxes or funding for parks and recreation projects.
- **Stakeholder Workshops / Focus Groups** The workshops and focus groups were held over a four day period and provided an opportunity for community members and stakeholders to engage in open, facilitated discussions to delve deeper into subject areas that informed the final plan recommendations.
- **Community Open Houses** - Three community open house sessions were held as part of the four-day workshops, providing an additional outlet for the general public to provide feedback on issues and opportunities, plan recommendations and funding strategies.
- **Meetings with Town Trustees** - As the ultimate body responsible for adopting the Master Plan, the Town Trustees were engaged at key junctures in the planning process.

Phase III: Plan Documentation and Adoption

In this phase, the project team worked to evaluate, review and synthesize the work completed and feedback received in Phases I and II to create the recommendations and action steps central to this planning effort and plan implementation. The plan review and adoption process included review by key Town staff, the Parks & Recreation Commissioners, Bike, Pedestrian and Trails Commissioners and adopted by Town Trustees.

To create excitement and increase participation in the master planning effort, fliers and advertisements inviting the community to take the survey were distributed to a variety of frequently visited locations throughout Carbondale.



Carbondale Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan Survey

This online survey is an opportunity to tell us what you think about the existing parks, recreation and trails facilities and what improvements and new projects the town should prioritize over the next 10 years.

Please submit only one survey response per individual

Tell us what amenities you currently use and your thoughts about them.

1. How many times do you or members of your household use the following recreation facilities operated by the Carbondale Parks and Recreation Department when open for the season? (select one option in each row)

	Daily	Few times a week	Few times a month	Few times a year	Have't Used!
Recreation Classes and Programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation & Community Center	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Paved Bike & Pedestrian Paths	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Swimming Pool	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dog Park Facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gus Dierien Riding & Rodeo Arena	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gateway River Park Boat Ramp	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ice Rink (Riding Arena and/or Downtown)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
North Face Park (Skateboard Park and Bikes Park)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Outdoor Sports Courts (Basketball / Volleyball)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Frisbee Disc Golf Course at Gianinetti Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tennis / Pickleball Courts (Dierien Courts & RVR)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Athletic Fields (soccer, baseball, softball, lacrosse, rugby)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Picnic shelters and pavilions in Town parks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Playgrounds in Town parks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The Carbondale Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan Survey collected responses from 761 community members/

MASTER PLAN VISION

Carbondale's system of high quality parks, trails and recreation programs enhances the community's quality of life, creates opportunities for health and well-being, and supports the economic vitality of the town. The identity of Carbondale is founded on its unique ranching heritage, strong bicycle culture, access to mountain adventure and the diversity of arts, culture and community celebrations. The plan seeks opportunities to advance the established environmental ethos of the community through energy efficiency and environmental stewardship. Park, recreation and trail opportunities connect people to the outdoors and celebrate what makes Carbondale special.

Vision Statement

The Town of Carbondale's park and recreation facilities will be a destination for town and Roaring Fork Valley events and recreational opportunities. Its parks, trails, innovative use of public spaces and celebrations of the community's artistic values, culture and heritage will help the town to achieve its goal of providing exceptional amenities to its residents and generating revenue through its tourism base. Carbondale must use its strengths to continuously reimagine and build a future for the Town's facilities and programs through social, cultural and economic investments that keep pace with neighboring communities and distinguish Carbondale as a premier mountain town destination.

The Master Plan seeks to strengthen existing programs and amenities to address the challenges that the growing and evolving community will face in the future. The following summarizes the general concepts contained in the vision.

Connect to the Outdoors through Trails

The plan identifies corridors and linkages for trail development, extensions and improvements to connect key municipal buildings, parks, schools and public amenities to the trail network. As a base camp to the great outdoors and mountain adventure, trails are also integral to getting residents and visitors into the surrounding natural environment and public lands.



North Face Bike Park is an example of the many accomplishments the Carbondale Parks and Recreation Department has achieved, demonstrating how a vision can be transformed into a treasured community amenity.



Carbondale Nature Park hosts an archery range and popular dog walking loop in the northeast part of town.

Leverage Community-Based Solutions

Community-based solutions take the form of diverse partnerships between an array of Town, regional and nonprofit entities. Community-based solutions to park, recreation and trail improvements require that the Parks and Recreation Department maintain key relationships and partnerships with other Town departments, Garfield County and regional governmental agencies, local schools, surrounding communities, the local business community, nonprofit organizations and countless others. Carbondale is fortunate to have an engaged and active community and should leverage these partnerships for the betterment of the town and region.

Welcome Visitors

Welcome visitors and highlight recreational amenities through visibility, wayfinding and strong connections to parks, trails and town amenities. Feature parks and trails as gateways into Carbondale at Nuche Park and Gateway Park along Highway 133 and along the Rio Grande Trail and Crystal River Trail.

Provide Sustainable Parks and Public Spaces

Advance environmental sustainability by determining the design principles, management operations, funding, partnerships and policies needed to make parks and recreation facilities more environmentally, functionally and economically sustainable.

Accommodate Changing Demographics

Address population growth and demographic changes by responding with amenities that anticipate the needs of and serve these populations. Growing populations require additional services and program opportunities, while aging populations seek out greater accessibility and senior friendly recreation programs. A growing Hispanic and Latino population may warrant meeting demand for more cultural events and event spaces for large group gatherings. It is important for the Parks and Recreation Department to be flexible over the next 10 years in order to respond to the ever changing needs and demands of a diverse community.

2

EXISTING CONDITIONS & NEEDS ASSESSMENT



CARBONDALE CONTEXT

Town Description

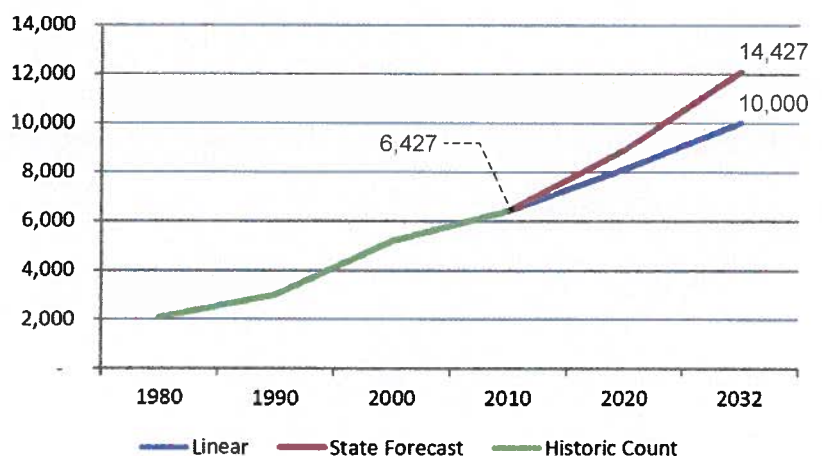
The Town of Carbondale is situated in the Roaring Fork Valley in the heart of Colorado's Rocky Mountains and at the confluence of the Roaring Fork and the Crystal Rivers. Carbondale is two square miles and sits at an altitude of 6,181 feet at the base of Mount Sopris, which serves as the iconic backdrop of the community. The town has evolved over the years as a compact walkable and bikeable community within Garfield County, located 30 miles from Aspen and 12 miles from Glenwood Springs. While many residents (more than two thirds) live in Carbondale and work in other communities of the Roaring Fork Valley, the Town attracts people seeking a high quality of life and draws its tourism economy from outdoor recreation, arts and cultural attractions.

Carbondale offers its residents a high quality of life through the protection of natural amenities, promotion of outdoor recreation, celebration of the Town's diverse population and maintenance of its small town character. The town is bordered by two river corridors, the Roaring Fork and the Crystal River and provides access to many adjacent public lands and recreation opportunities including the White River National Forest and BLM lands where a growing network of trails has developed, attracting both residents and visitors. There is a strong desire among residents to protect the small town charm and unique atmosphere that makes Carbondale stand out as a place that is unlike other communities.

Service Area and Population

The Town of Carbondale's parks, trails and recreational offerings are used by town residents, the Carbondale workforce, residents from the surrounding towns and unincorporated areas, residents of the Roaring Fork Valley and visitors. This Master Plan's study area and scope for recommendations is limited to the Town of Carbondale municipal boundaries, however, the primary users are generally considered to be the residents within the larger 81623 ZIP code (including the Town of Carbondale, Redstone, and Marble along with the residential areas of Blue Lake, Missouri Heights and El Jebel). Although the Crown Mountain Parks and Recreation District provides some neighboring recreation amenities within this primary service area, Carbondale addresses many of the service area's recreation needs. This service area description has been included for the purposes of analysis. The population within the 81623 ZIP code in 2010 was 17,736 according to the U.S. Census, a 27 percent increase since 2000. Within the Town of Carbondale the 2010 population reached 6,427, an increase of 24 percent since 2000.

Figure 5: Historic and Projected Population (2013 Comprehensive Plan)



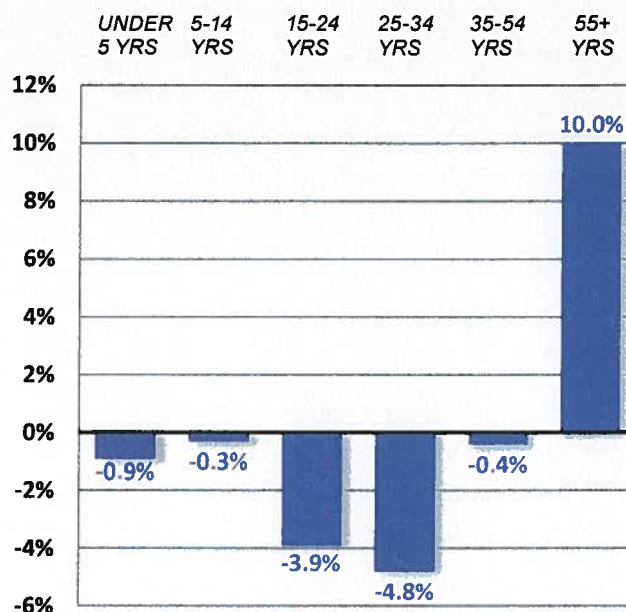
The Comprehensive Plan presents a town development approach and community emphasis on maintaining small town character and more moderate growth, which might more accurately reflect the linear estimates of a Town population of approximately 10,000 residents in 2032. The population of the ZIP code is projected to reach 18,874 from 17,736 in 2010.

Population Trends

It is important to anticipate population changes within the Master Plan's 10 year planning horizon that will require consideration for how parks, recreation offerings and trails will continue to meet the Town's needs. The Town's population increased by 24 percent between the year 2000 and 2010, reaching a population of 6,427. As shown in Figure 2, the State Department of Demography forecasts that Carbondale's population is expected to increase by 88 percent from 2010 to 2032 with 12,000 additional residents. The 2013 Carbondale Comprehensive Plan however points to a more conservative linear projection of 10,000 total residents by 2032, an increase of 3,600 people or 56 percent from 2010 to 2032. The Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan considers a slightly shorter planning horizon of the next 10 years (2015-2025), and similar to the Comprehensive Plan, acknowledges that while projections may be higher than the desired rate of growth, it is necessary to plan for a growing community. The Comprehensive Plan outlines land use and zoning strategies which seek to maintain and enhance Carbondale's small town character and compact, walkable and bikeable size. Recommendations for potential areas of change, especially those along the town's periphery, outline strategies for coordination with Garfield County, land conservation and conservation development. The established areas of Carbondale seek to manage change through infill and redevelopment while maintaining the existing scale and character, giving preference to single and multifamily dwelling units where they currently exist or are anticipated for the future.

Other changes the Town's population has experienced over the last decade that are anticipated to continue include an aging population, decreasing family households and increased diversity. The number of households with elderly individuals has increased in the last 10 years, likely fueled both by the aging of current residents as well as an influx of retirees relocating to this area. Family households and households with children have decreased in the same time period that non-family households have increased. Additionally, the Carbondale community continues to grow more diverse including an increase

Figure 6: Age Distribution Percent Change from 2000 to 2010 within the 81623 ZIP Code



in Latino/Hispanic and non-white populations of seven and eight percent respectively, while the white, non-Latino/Hispanic population has decreased by 17 percent (2013 Carbondale Comprehensive Plan). These population changes have implications for recreation program offerings and interests, as well as the use of the parks and town facilities.

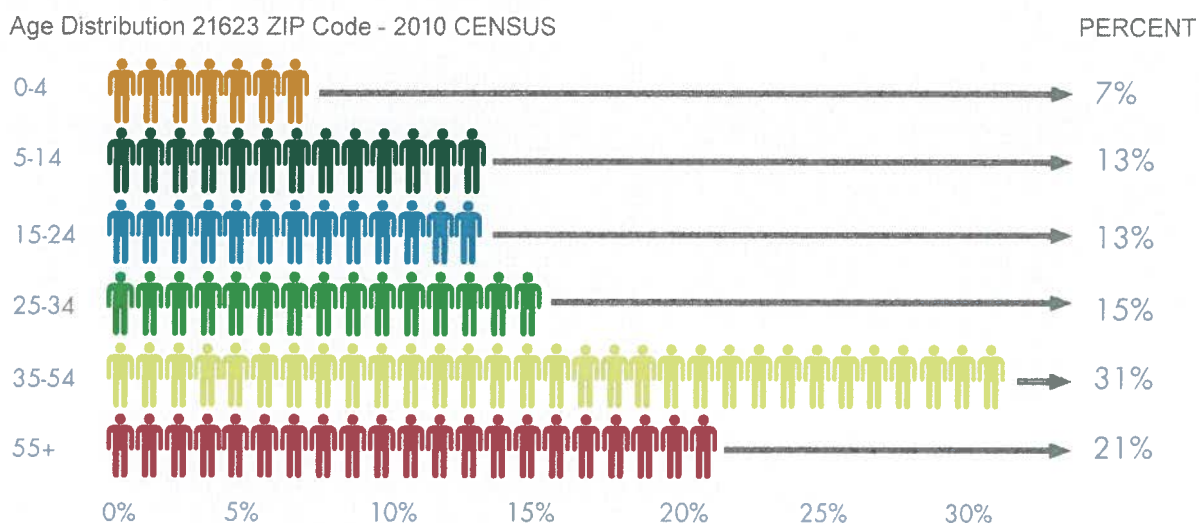
Age Distribution

The current distribution of age groups and the projected increase in these groups are important factors to consider for parks and recreation planning. The interests and activities of different age groups can vary widely and require different park services and recreation amenities. As summarized above and illustrated in Figure 4 the age group of those 55 years and over has grown substantially in Carbondale's primary service area, requiring the Parks and Recreation Department to anticipate and address the changing needs of this population as they age. More senior friendly recreation programs or improvements to the Town's trail network to meet ADA compliance and provide safe and usable facilities might be a consideration during this planning horizon and beyond. For a more complete explanation of how age distribution influence recreation need and current trends please refer to Appendix B – Recreation and Demographic Trends.

Table 1: Age Characteristics

Age Characteristics	
Age Range	Description
Under 5 years	This group represents users of preschool and tot recreation programs and facilities. These individuals make up the future users of youth recreation programs.
5 to 14 years	This group represents current youth program participants.
15 to 24 years	This group represents teen/young adult program participants moving out of the youth recreation programs and into adult programs.
25 years to 34 years	This group represents involvement in adult recreation programming with characteristics of beginning long-term relationships and establishing families.
35 to 54 years	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 years plus	This age group shows the most dramatic increase of 53 percent since 2000. This group represents users of older adult programming exhibiting the characteristics of approaching retirement or already retired and typically enjoying grandchildren. This group generally also ranges from very healthy, active seniors to more physically inactive seniors.

Figure 7: Age Distribution from 2000 to 2010 - 81623 ZIP Code



Ethnic Makeup

The 2010 U.S. Census data indicated the majority of the population (80.3 percent) in the 81623 ZIP code is Caucasian, of which almost 30 percent are of Latino/Hispanic ethnicity. Other minorities make up 19 percent of the population including Asians, Blacks, persons of two or more ethnicities and others as demonstrated in Figure 8. Within the town's boundaries there is a higher percentage of Latino/Hispanics than there is in the larger ZIP code area, representing almost 40 percent of the population according to the U.S. Census (an increase of almost 8 percent since 2000). The Latino/Hispanic portion of the local population typically uses the public parks and facilities heavily and contributes to the local economy, especially in the form of sales taxes. The Parks and Recreation Department plays a role in the identified Comprehensive Plan goals of embracing and welcoming diversity by providing programs and facilities that meet the needs of Carbondale's community.

Note: Anecdotally, it is known that Carbondale has a higher Latino/Hispanic population than the Census indicates, with the possibility that many of the Latino/Hispanic workers may be migrants and/or their families that may not have been identified in the Census process. The Roaring Fork School District cited that the 2014 enrollment for the five schools in Carbondale was 59 percent Latino/Hispanic, which has remained steady since 2004.

Household Income

The population residing within the Town limits has lower household incomes than those of the larger 81623 ZIP code. According to ESRI's Demographic and Income Profile and the U.S. Census 2010, the median household income for the 81623 ZIP code in 2014 was \$66,791, whereas within Carbondale's Town limits the median household income was \$59,941, slightly higher than the Colorado median of \$57,439. The Town of Carbondale also has a higher percentage of lower income households than are represented for the ZIP code as a whole, with households earning \$49,999 or less representing 41.8 percent of the total households. Almost 11 percent of the Town's households fall below the poverty line (ESRI American Community Survey Population

Figure 8: 81623 Service Area Ethnicity, 2010 Census

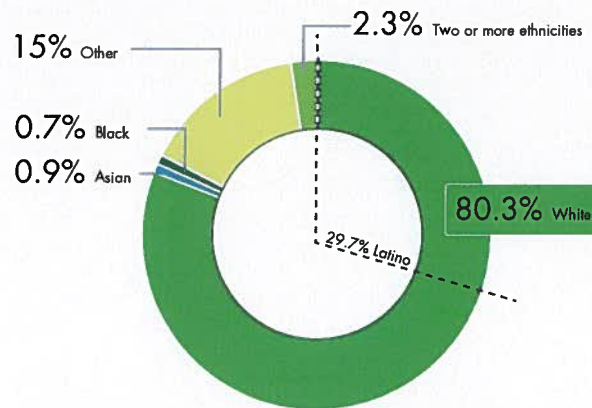


Figure 9: Town of Carbondale Ethnicity, 2010 Census

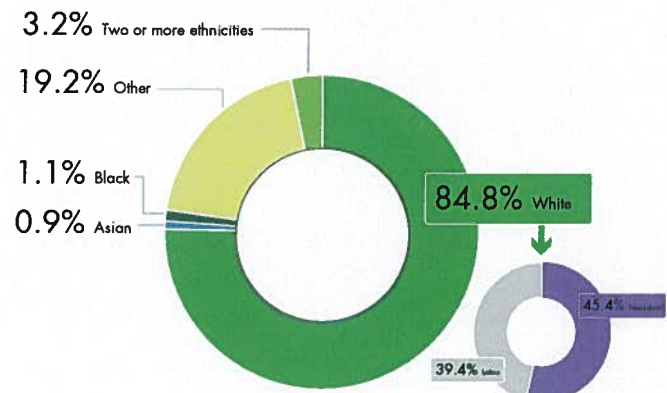
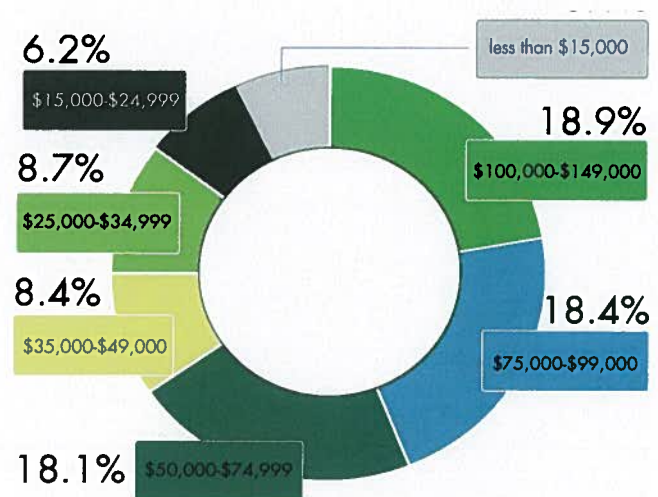


Figure 10: Median Household Income, 81623 ZIP Code, 2010 Census



Summary). The economic prosperity of the overall population has implications for thinking about funding, fees and programming for parks, recreation and associated services. The Parks and Recreation Department currently addresses the needs of lower income households by offering scholarships to the Recreation and Community Center and the provision of many low or no-cost activities. Several organized sports teams and clubs provide scholarships, as well.

Parks, Trails and Recreation Trends Summary

Appendix B provides useful data that sheds light on the overall demand for outdoor recreation, as well as a comparison of statewide trends to some of the broader national trends. Identifying emerging sports and recreation activities that are growing in popularity helps the Town understand where to focus resources and capitalize on these interests, anticipating the facilities and services that will be in demand in the future. The urban and natural areas of Carbondale provide opportunities for traditional recreation activities and sports, as well as the opportunity for the introduction of new recreation activities and more extreme sports. Anticipating the future recreation demands of citizens and visitors requires an understanding of both the most popular activities as well as emerging interests.

A few of the highlights in current parks, trails and recreation trends include the following:

- Colorado has a high rate of participation in outdoor recreation with about 66 percent of residents recreating outdoors at least one day per week.
- Walking, hiking, picnicking, jogging, fishing, biking, and camping are the most popular activities in Colorado (based on total activity days).
- Nearly 83 percent of the Colorado population participates in trail activities (walking, jogging, hiking, horseback riding, biking), making these the most popular way of enjoying the outdoors.
- National trends show that triathlon and adventure races are the outdoor activities that have grown the most in popularity over the past five years.



The community has expressed an interest in community gardens.

- Stand up paddle boarding had the highest number of new participants nationwide in the past year. Other sports with high first time participation include boardsailing/windsurfing, kayaking rafting and climbing. Carbondale has the opportunity to capitalize on some of these activities due to its prime location for outdoor adventure.
- Bicycling of all types including road, mountain, cyclocross and now even winter “fat” biking is a growing trend throughout Colorado. Bicycling was the most popular outdoor activity among youth in the U.S. in 2013. In 2014, the Colorado High School Cycling League (founded in 2009) experienced 20 percent growth in athlete participation and 38 percent increase in the number of teams throughout the state including teams in Aspen open to students throughout the Roaring Fork Valley and at CRMS. Cyclocross participation is another sub-sector that has seen participation raise.

Recreation Expenditures

The ESRI “Recreation Expenditures” (based on the 2010 and 2011 Consumer expenditure Surveys, Bureau of Labor Statistics) report estimates expenditures with a “Spending Potential Index (SPI) which is household-based, and represents the amount spent for a product or service relative to a national average of 100.

Carbondale's 81623 ZIP code exceeds the national average in many recreation categories including:

- Winter sports equipment
- Fees for participant sports
- Recreational lessons
- Rental/repair of sports and recreation/exercise equipment
- Recreational vehicles and fees (which include camping fees and rental of RVs or boats)
- Bicycles
- Membership fees for social/recreational/civic clubs
- Photographic equipment

Looking at the higher than average spending habits for recreation indicates that the Carbondale community values and chooses to invest in products and services related to parks, recreation and trail use and confirms the large community support for these services, as was reinforced through the community engagement process.

Community Events

Attendance at community events is popular nationwide, although participation has gone down slightly since the 1990s. Almost 40 percent of adults in the U.S. attended a visual arts event or activity, such as craft fairs or art museums in the last year, and 37 percent of adults attended a live performing arts event such as dance or music.

Community events are extremely popular in Carbondale and many have become destination events that people from throughout the Roaring Fork Valley and beyond attend regularly. A number of these events take place on the Town's park lands, most commonly at Sopris Park, the Gus Darien Rodeo grounds, and along portions of Main Street that can be closed to traffic. The Carbondale Chamber of Commerce cites that Carbondale's annual Mountain Fair, coordinated by the Carbondale Council on Arts & Humanities (CCAH), attracts more than 20,000 people each July. First Fridays, coordinated by the Chamber of Commerce, is held on the first Friday of each

month and brings hundreds of people downtown to enjoy and celebrate local galleries, shops, restaurants and live music. In the summer months, First Fridays attract more than 2,000 people each month. These and other community wide events have become central to the heart and soul of the Carbondale community and attract both locals as well as visitors. An important part of this master planning process is to better understand and anticipate how park facilities can be enhanced and maintained over time to accommodate existing and future community wide events.

Destination Events/Amenities

In Garfield County, spending tied to overnight travel totaled \$144.2 million in 2013 and accounted for 1,580 of jobs within the County (Colorado Tourism Office). Carbondale offers a few lodging options in addition to the RV facilities at Gateway Park and nearby camping opportunities which capture a portion of the County's overnight tourists.

As Carbondale continues to build its reputation as a destination for overnight visitors, the Town will reap benefits from sales tax and visitor spending. The parks and recreation infrastructure can help attract tourists and provide connections to adjacent recreation and amenities, advancing the "Basecamp Carbondale" attributes of the town. Recent improvements such as the North Face Park's skateboard and bike facilities and anticipated improvements to Gateway Park provide destination facilities to draw locals and tourists. They serve as ideal venues for local events such as the Cyclocross series which attracts participants from throughout the region or fly fishing and river based activities and events that take advantage of the Gold Medal waters of the Roaring Fork River.

Locations in Carbondale and surrounding public lands such as Red Hill, the Crown/Prince Creek, Thompson Divide and the Rio Grande Trail have filled a niche in the local and regional mountain and road biking scene. Carbondale's milder climate and warmer temperatures draw residents from the upper Roaring Fork Valley throughout the year, most notably in the Spring and Fall when trails in Carbondale dry sooner than locations up-valley, providing earlier opportunities to get out on the trails.

Sources:
Outdoor Foundation. "Outdoor Recreation Participation Report, 2013".
Survey of Public Participation in the Arts – National Endowment for the Arts,
2012
Colorado Tourism Office

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2003-2014

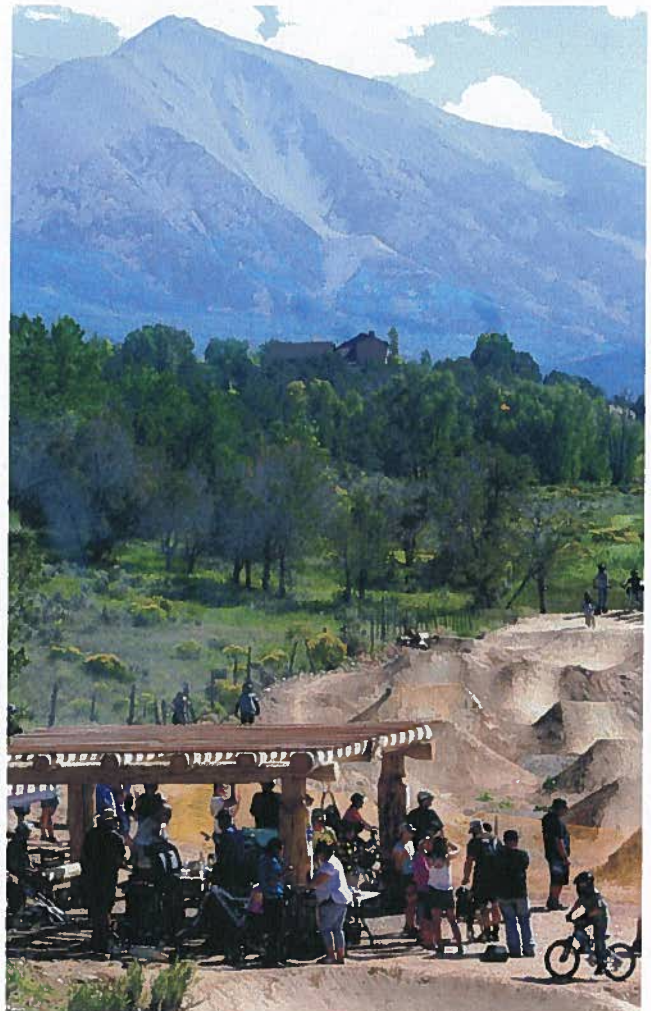
The Town of Carbondale has made substantial progress in realizing its goals since the 2004 Parks, Recreation and Trails Comprehensive Master Plan. Forward thinking projects such as master plans and feasibility studies were prepared for the Nature Park, Gateway River Park, North Face Park and Bonnie Fischer Park, providing direction for decision making for these specific assets. The Town has also partnered on additional planning efforts over the last 10 years such as the Roaring Fork School District Sports Complex Master Plan and Red Hill Recreation Area Pedestrian Transportation Study.

Other investments have been directed at park and recreation upgrades and trail extension projects. One of the most notable accomplishments was the construction of the Recreation and Community Center, opened in 2008. The Town has invested approximately \$699,000 to improve and expand the North Face Park, making it a community wide destination for tennis, pickleball, skateboarding and bike park activities. The acquisition and planning for the Gateway River Park has been another extensive project and site for the Town over the last 10 years. The Town has invested more than \$530,000 in trails development, completing the Rio Grande Trail and extending the Crystal Valley Trail 1.4 miles through Town to create a contiguous route to the KOA campground along Highway 133.

Town reserves and taxes have funded a number of projects, with additional contributions from approximately 18 grants and partnerships through Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), Roaring Fork Transit Authority (RFTA), Garfield County Federal Mineral Lease District, Safe Routes to School, and partnerships with the Carbondale Wild West Rodeo Board and the RE-1 School District. With the completion of so many of the 2004 Master Plan's goals, it's now time to look forward to the next 10 years.



The Recreation and Community Center, built in 2008 was a significant community achievement that resulted from the recommendations of the 2004 Maser Plan.



The North Face Bike Park, completed in 2014, provides a state of the art venue for children and adults to hone their skills. Located next to the town's schools, this amenity has quickly become a favorite among Carbondale residents.

Figure 11: List of Parks and Recreation Accomplishments, 2003 to 2014

2003

- Nature Park (Delaney property) Master Plan (\$30,000)
- North Face In-Line Roller Hockey Rink conversion to Tennis Courts (\$85,000)
- North Face Baseball Field Lighting (\$90,000)
- High School Synthetic Surface Running Track (\$230,000 - GOCO Grant & RE-1 assisted)
- Gus Darien Riding Arena Maintenance Service Building & New Well (\$95,000)
- RVR Triangle Park Picnic Shelter (\$25,000)

2004

- Gateway River Park Feasibility & Conceptual Design Study (\$35,000)
- Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan (\$35,000)
- North Face Skateboard Park (\$210,000)
- Gus Darien Arena Fencing, Irrigation & Bleacher Improvements (\$35,000)
- Tiny Nightingale Baseball Field Backstop Hood & New Fencing (\$15,000)
- Colorado Meadows Park New Playground (\$35,000)
- Recreation van purchase (\$25,000)
- North Face Park Landscape & Master Plan (\$22,000)
- Sopris Park Gazebo Renovation (\$16,000)
- Rio Grande Trail Completion (\$80,000 - RFTA funding assistance provided)

2005

- Thunder River Theatre Construction Contribution (\$50,000)
- Frisbee Disc Golf Course at Gianinetti Park (\$5,000)
- Highway 133 Bike Path - Hendrick Rd. to RVR Dr. (\$130,000 - Federal grant assisted)

2006

- Gianinetti Park ADA Playground & New Slide (\$30,000)
- Sopris Park Picnic Shelter New Solar Roof (\$12,000)
- John Fleet Swimming Pool Liner Installed (\$37,000)

2007

- Gus Darien Arena New Bleachers Purchased (\$40,000 - split with Rodeo Board)

2008

- Recreation Community Center (\$3,200,000 + \$700,000 grant assistance)
- Promenade Park & Recreation Center Landscape (\$340,000 - GOCO Grant assisted)

2009

- Crystal Trail - Meadowood Dr. to Prince Creek Rd. (\$210,000 - GOCO Grant assisted)
- Roaring Fork School District Sports Complex Master Plan (\$4,000 - RE-1 District Funded)

2010

- Tennis Court Crack Repair at Middle School (\$5,000 - split with RE-1 School District)
- Crystal Trail - Snowmass Dr. to Meadowood Dr. (\$112,000 - Safe Routes School Grant assisted)
- Gateway River Park Acquisition (\$500,000 (plus \$2,000,000 grant assistance)

2011

- North Face Tennis Courts & Skateboard Park Phase 2 (\$185,000 - GOCO Grant assisted)
- Third Street Center Community Partnership Park Master Plan (\$3,000)

2012

- Gateway River Park Master Plan (\$30,000 - GOCO Grant assisted)
- Archery Range at the Nature Park (\$3,000)
- Downtown Ice Rink (\$2,500)

2013

- Red Hill Recreation Area Pedestrian Transportation Study (\$160,000 - Federal Grant)
- Third Street Community Partnership Garden (\$60,000 - GOCO Grant assisted)
- Gus Darien Arena Relighting (\$117,000 - GarCo FMLD Grant assisted)

2014

- Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan Update (\$45,000 - GOCO Grant assisted)
- North Face Bike Park (\$105,000 - GOCO & GarCo FMLD Grant assisted)
- Pickleball Courts striped at North Face & RVR Tennis Courts (\$2,000)

ALIGNMENT WITH PREVIOUS / CURRENT PLANNING EFFORTS:

An important component of this Master Plan update includes the review, inclusion of and alignment with other applicable planning documents, both past and present. The 2004 Parks, Recreation and Trails Comprehensive Master Plan provided a starting point to inform the creation of this plan update. In addition, this plan update seeks to integrate and build upon the Town's recently completed 2013 Comprehensive Plan. The plan aims to support the goals and strategies that have been established and agreed upon by the community as a whole in previous efforts. These efforts include the following:

2014 Unified Development Code Update (to date)

The Unified Development Code is currently being updated to provide for comprehensive land development, make it easier for Carbondale to implement its vision for the future and to give direction to potential developers. This Code update will include recommendations that influence the Parks and Recreation Department, most notably revised park dedication requirements and a clear procedure for calculating developer requirements and fees to fund future park development needs and maintenance.

2013 Carbondale Comprehensive Plan

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan sets long-range policy for the Town of Carbondale and establishes goals for the use and development of land, preservation of open space, transportation systems, partnerships, economic growth, the expansion and maintenance of public facilities and services, and the relationship between land use patterns and fiscal policies. Recommendations that are directly relevant to the Parks and Recreation Plan Update include the goal of promoting Carbondale as an arts, festival, performance and recreation destination; implementing targeted multi-modal improvements; and protecting riparian corridors while promoting public recreation.

2013 Red Hill Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) Alternative Transportation Feasibility Study

This study identifies gaps in the non-motorized transportation network and provides a set of multi-modal recommendations to improve the pedestrian and bicycle experience in and around the Red Hill SRMA. The study also recommends ways to reduce the impact of recreation activities on the natural environment and ways to alleviate traffic congestion.

2012 Gateway River Park Site Plan & Report

This report defines the long-term vision for Gateway River Park, a 7.19 acre parcel that was annexed into the Town of Carbondale in 2011. The report provides schematic level design and programming to serve as the basis for more detailed construction documents that will make the vision of the park as a notable gateway and community resource a reality.

2011 Third Street Community Park Master Plan

In 2011, Carbondale developed a master plan for the Town's open space property south of the Third Street Center. The plan included a phased approach to implementing the proposed design. Phase One has been completed and includes an access road, community bread oven, community gardens, irrigation, fencing and temporary restrooms. Future phases will be completed when funding becomes available, including pedestrian sidewalks, a picnic shelter, playground and restrooms.

2004 Feasibility & Conceptual Design for the Carbondale Gateway River Park

This report evaluated the feasibility and conceptual design for the linear river corridor park along the Roaring Fork River from just upstream of the Highway 133 bridge to the confluence of the Crystal River (a larger area than addressed in the 2013 Gateway Park Master Plan). The plan elaborates on the idea of creating an ideal venue for attracting outdoor enthusiasts to Carbondale and supporting competition level freestyle slalom and kayaking events in order to increase tourism in the area.

Conceptual Stream Restoration Design for the Crystal River (2014 Draft)

The Aspen Valley Land Trust solicited a report for the Town of Carbondale that produced conceptual restoration design for the 1.4 miles of the Crystal River as it travels through town. The scope of the project includes public riverfront parks and deeded lands within five feet from the high water mark. Primarily, the study is concentrated along property owned by River Valley Ranch Master Association and Golf Course and Town of Carbondale parks. The goal of the restoration design is to improve aquatic and riparian habitat, increase and improve river access opportunities, protect the river stability from increased sedimentation and erosion and provide educational opportunities within the river corridor.

RE-1 School District Facility Master Plan Update (Anticipated 2015)

Align efforts as they pertain to outdoor fields and recreational facilities with the forthcoming RE-1 School District Master Plan update, anticipated completion in 2015.



In 2012 the Town developed a program and site plan to improve the Gateway River Park, providing improved access and recreation amenities along the Roaring Fork River.



The Town of Carbondale and the Roaring Fork School District renewed their Intergovernmental Agreement in 2012 which established shared facilities and responsibilities for outdoor athletic fields and facilities, such as the baseball field on the North Face Property.

INVENTORY OF PARKS, TRAILS AND RECREATION PROGRAMS

Parks

Carbondale's park, recreation and trail amenities create a system of public spaces that enhance the quality of life and daily experience of living in the Town of Carbondale. The Parks and Recreation Department currently manages 20 parks which boast a number of recreation amenities ranging from contemplative open space areas to lighted play fields and sport specific facilities, such as Disc Golf, skateboard park and bike park. The parks are classified as pocket parks, neighborhood parks and community parks. The definition of each of these park classifications is provided in Table 2.

Additional properties owned and managed by the Town's Park and Recreation Department include open space lands, trail corridors, the Town's cemetery, the John M. Fleet Swimming Pool, the Community Recreation Center, and the Gus Darien Rodeo Arena and Ice Rink. These properties help to collectively meet the diverse needs of the community. Additionally, public park and open space lands belonging to federal, state and county jurisdictions in close proximity to the town directly contribute to the offerings available. Private facilities such as those located within the River Valley Ranch neighborhood and other housing developments add to the quality of life and diversity of offerings for residents; however they are not included in the Town's public facility inventory.

Carbondale's park acreage is in line with the benchmarks established in the "Small Communities Parks and Recreation Planning Standards" publication in which similar mountain towns maintained a Level of Service (LOS) of 6.2 to 13.6 acres of parkland per thousand residents. The Town has added approximately 10.74 acres of parkland from 2000 to 2014, an increase of 20 percent. Town owned park lands represent eight percent of the total land area of the Carbondale. The 1997 Parks and Recreation Master Plan established a traditional LOS goal to achieve seven acres of park land per person. Using the 2010 population numbers, the Town's level of service has gone down by approximately twelve percent for the larger service area and nine percent within the town limits, as population growth has outpaced the acquisition of new parks. While falling short of reaching the service goal for

Carbondale Parks and Recreation manages the following parks, recreation amenities and trails:

- 1 Regional/Community Park
- 8 Community Parks
- 6 Neighborhood Parks
- 2 Pocket Parks/Plazas
- 4 Open Spaces/River Access
- 1 Swimming Pool Facility
- 1 Indoor Community Recreation Center
- 1 Historic Museum
- 1 Cemetery
- 12.2 Linear Miles of Multipurpose Trails
- 1.6 Linear Miles of Natural Surface Trails

Table 2: Parkland Classifications

Parkland Classifications	
Pocket Park	Provide basic recreation opportunities on small lots, amenities typically include playgrounds, benches, picnic tables and public art. Service area is typically a quarter mile, serving residents in the adjacent neighborhoods. Smallest park classification, typically under an acre
Neighborhood Park	Provide non-organized recreation and leisure opportunities for the individual neighborhoods. Serve as a common area for neighbors of all ages to gather, socialize and play. Typically provide playgrounds, sports courts, sports fields, picnic tables, pathways and multiuse open fields. Service area is typically a half mile, serving individual or adjacent neighborhoods. Typically 1 to 10 acres.
Community Park	Serve as a focal point for community wide active and passive recreation activities and provide facilities that are less appropriate for neighborhood parks due to noise, lights, traffic, etc. Often opportunities exist to reserve large group picnic areas. Should maintain a balance between programmed sports facilities and other community activity areas, such as gardens, plazas, etc. Serves a large portion of the town, typically a destination residents bike or drive to. Carbondale's community parks range from 1.5 to 33 acres in size and are classified as Community Parks based on the types of amenities offered rather than their size.
Regional Park	Protect areas with unique natural resource values or cultural facilities. These areas often provide opportunities nature-oriented, outdoor recreation. May accommodate large group activities and have infrastructure to support sporting events, festivals, and other revenue-generating events. Service area is typically a 45 minute driving time, thus serving a large portion of the Roaring Fork Valley.

the larger service area (LOS of 5.94), the Town well exceeds the seven percent goal for Town of Carbondale residents, with 16.4 acres of parkland per person. It is important to note that when shared properties that are used by the public, such as school lands and privately owned open space, along with Town owned trail corridor rights of way are considered, the Town exceeds the LOS goals for the service area with 11.33 acres per person. This is something the Town should take pride in. Adjacent public lands including The Crown, Red Hill, Thompson Creek, and Marion/Spring Gulch offer countless outdoor recreation opportunities within a 10 mile radius, which further enhance Carbondale residents' access to the natural environment.

Facility Needs

Recreational field availability does not meet community demand for organized youth and teen athletic programs, adult leagues and growing interest in new or alternative field sports and pick-up games. The shortage is most notable among soccer fields, but it also creates a logistical challenge with scheduling lacrosse, rugby, bicycle polo, ultimate Frisbee, pickleball and mountain bike team practice, among other events.

The Carbondale community has expressed frustration with the fact that the distance to practice fields is often too far for youth to safely walk or bicycle. Another logistical challenge is getting children who participate in games at different locations back and forth in a timely fashion.

A lack of gym space also poses challenges. While the Recreation Center has a gym, it is often booked and sometimes has multiple, incompatible uses occurring in it at the same time. The RE-1 schools also have gyms, but they are currently not shared with the Town and are not offered to supplement youth and recreational needs independent of school-sponsored activities.

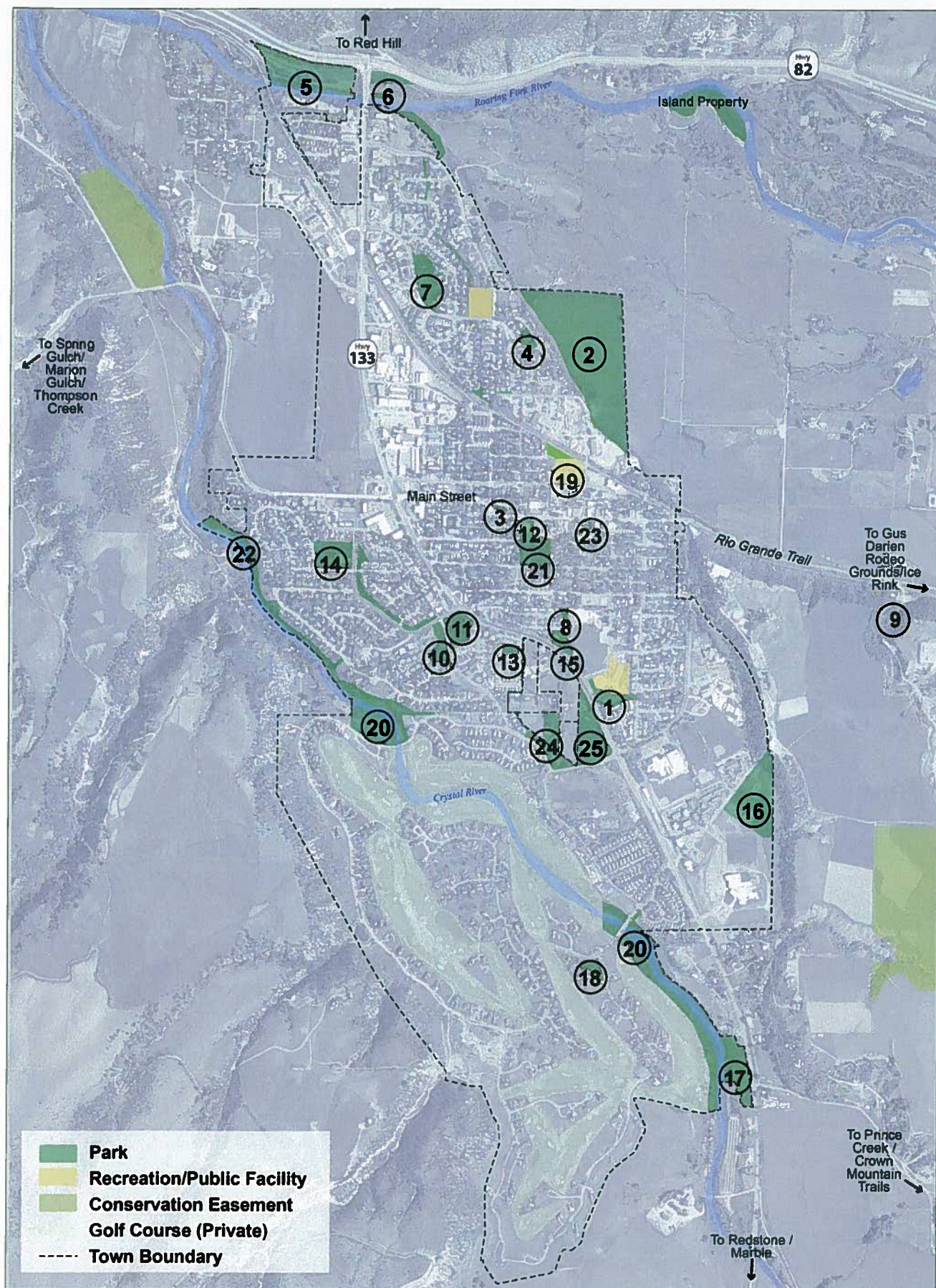
Table 3: Carbondale Park Acreage Level of Service

Level of Service - Past and Present			
	2000	2010	% Change
Acres of Parkland	87.8	98.54	12%
Service Area Population	13,000	17,736	36%
Town of Carbondale Population	5,196	6,427	24%
Acres per 1,000 residents (Service Area)	6.75	5.56	-18%
Acres per 1,000 residents (Town)	16.90	15.33	-9%

Town of Carbondale Park Properties

1. Bonnie Fisher Park
2. Carbondale Nature Park
3. Centennial Sundial Park
4. Colorado Meadows Park
5. Gateway RV and River Park
6. Gateway Park
7. Gianinetti Park
8. Glassier Park
9. Gus Darien Riding Arena + Ice Rink
10. Hendrick Dog Park
11. Hendrick Ranch Park
12. John M. Fleete Swimming Pool
13. Keator Grove Park
14. Miner's Memorial Park
15. Mt. Sopris Historical Society
16. North Face Park
17. Nuche Park
18. Orchard Park
19. Recreation & Community Center/Promenade Park
20. Riverfront Park
21. Sopris Park
22. Stairway Park
23. The Plaza/Park at 4th and Main Street
24. Thompson Park
25. Triangle Park

Map 4: Existing Parks



1

BONNIE FISCHER PARK**1.57 acres****Location:** Third Street Center**Type:** Community Park**Features:** Community garden, brick oven, outdoor entertainment

2

CARBONDALE NATURE PARK**33.43 acres****Location:** Merrill Ave. at 4th St.**Type:** Community Park**Features:** Historic log cabin, open pastures, archery, dog walking, parking

3

CENTENNIAL SUNDIAL PARK**.14 acres****Location:** North corner of Main St. & 8th St.**Type:** Pocket Park/Neighborhood Park**Features:** Sundial sculpture, picnic table, benches

4

COLORADO MEADOWS PARK

1.16 acres

Location: Mesa Verde Ave.

Type: Neighborhood Park

Features: Playground, basketball court, picnic table



5

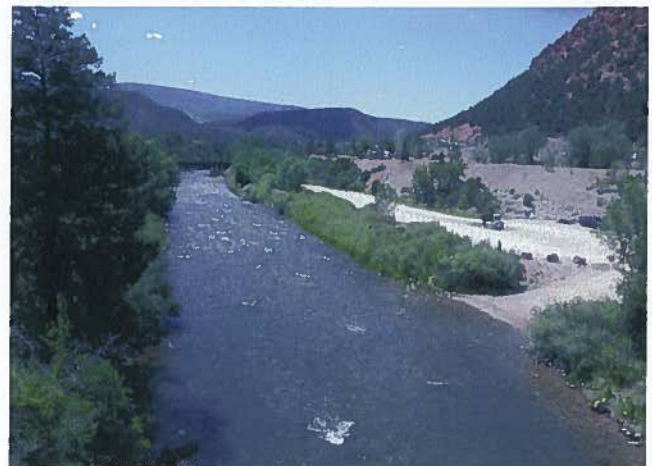
GATEWAY RV AND RIVER PARK

7.19 acres

Location: Highway 82 and Highway 133

Type: Open Space/Community Park/River Access

Features: Boat launch, fishing, RV campground, picnic table, wildlife viewing



6

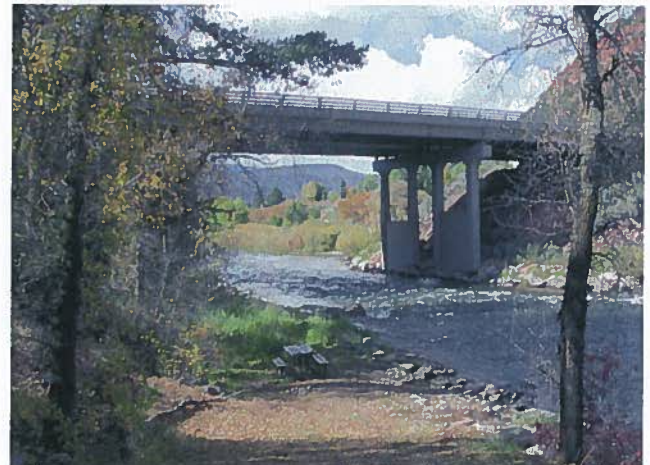
GATEWAY PARK

4.57 acres

Location: Highway 82 and Highway 133

Type: Open Space

Features: Fishing, wildlife viewing, natural surface trail, picnic table



7

GIANINETTI PARK**3.15 acres****Location:** Village Rd. between Surrey Rd. & Wheel Dr.**Type:** Neighborhood Park**Features:** Playground, basketball court, picnic table, disc golf, restrooms and drinking fountain

8

GLASSIER PARK**.51 acres****Location:** Weant Blvd. and Glassier Dr.**Type:** Neighborhood Park**Features:** Horseshoe pits, doggie station, picnic table, restroom

9

GUS DARIEN RIDING ARENA + ICE RINK**6.87 acres****Location:** 1151 County Rd. 100**Type:** Community Park/Regional Park**Features:** Riding arena, bleachers, press box, ice rink

10

HENDRICK DOG PARK**2.90 acres****Location:** Holland Dr. at Hendrick Rd.**Type:** Community Park**Features:** Dog agility course, fenced dog run, picnic table, community garden

11

HENDRICK RANCH PARK**2.49 acres****Location:** Corner of Hendrick Rd. & Holland Dr.**Type:** Community Park**Features:** Playground, picnic table, shade structure, soccer field, restrooms

12

JOHN M. FLEET SWIMMING POOL**.79 acres****Location:** 684 Main St. (in Sopris Park)**Type:** Recreation Facility**Features:** Swimming pool, wading pool, pool house

13

KEATOR GROVE PARK**.56 acres****Location:** Keator Rd.**Type:** Neighborhood Park**Features:** Gazebo, paths

*Privately Maintained with Public Access



14

MINER'S MEMORIAL PARK**3.68 acres****Location:** Corner of Hendrick Rd. & Barber Dr.**Type:** Neighborhood Park/Community Park**Features:** Miner's memorial (cultural/historic resource), basketball court, sand volleyball courts, soccer field, playground, barbecue grills, picnic shelter & tables, restrooms

15

MT. SOPRIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY**1.21 acres****Location:** Weant Blvd. and Highway 133**Type:** Historic Museum**Features:** Cultural/historic resources

16

NORTH FACE PARK

8.52 acres

Location: Meadowood Dr.**Type:** Community Park**Features:** Skateboard park, baseball field, bike park, tennis/pickleball courts, shelter, picnic tables, restrooms

17

NUCHE PARK

3.88 acres

Location: West of Highway 133, South of Crystal Bridge Dr.**Type:** Open Space/River Park**Features:** Wildlife viewing, bird watching

18

ORCHARD PARK

1.07 acres

Location: Crystal Bridge Dr. & Crystal Canyon Dr.**Type:** Open Space/Neighborhood Park**Features:** Playground, cultural/historic resource

*Privately Maintained with Public Access



19

RECREATION & COMMUNITY CENTER/PROMENADE PARK

.68 acres

Location: 567 Carbondale Ave.

Type: Recreation Facility/Community Park

Features: Recreation center, climbing wall, fitness classes, exercise equipment, promenade, demonstration garden



20

RIVERFRONT PARK

4.44 acres

Location: Adjacent to Crystal River, south of Stairway Park

Type: Open Space/River Access

Features: Soft surfaced trails



21

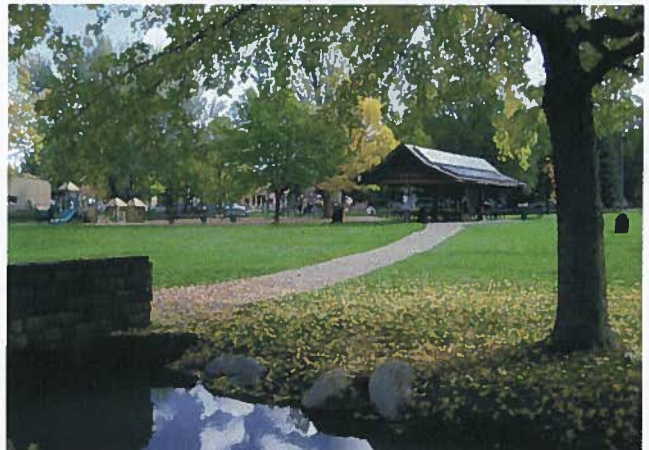
SOPRIS PARK

3.90 acres

Location: Snowmass Dr. at Second St.

Type: Community Park/Neighborhood Park

Features: Stage/bandstand, large picnic shelter, playground, sand volleyball court, picnic tables, restrooms, memorial



22

STAIRWAY PARK**3.93 acres****Location:** Along Crystal River, Oak Run Rd. between Crystal Rd. & Greystone Dr.**Type:** Community Park**Features:** Trail, picnic table, fire pits

23

THE PLAZA/PARK AT 4TH & MAIN ST.**.06 acres****Location:** 4th St. & Main St.**Type:** Community Plaza**Features:** benches, bicycle rack, farmer's market, special events, ice rink

24

THOMPSON PARK**7.04 acres****Location:** River Valley Ranch Rd.**Type:** Neighborhood Park**Features:** Cultural/historic resource

25

TRIANGLE PARK

7.4 acres

Location: Corner of Village Rd. & 8th St.

Type: Community Park/Neighborhood Park

Features: Baseball/softball, soccer field, playground, tennis/pickleball courts, picnic shelter and benches, barbecue grills, bike racks, restrooms, drinking fountain

*Privately Maintained with Public Access



Trails

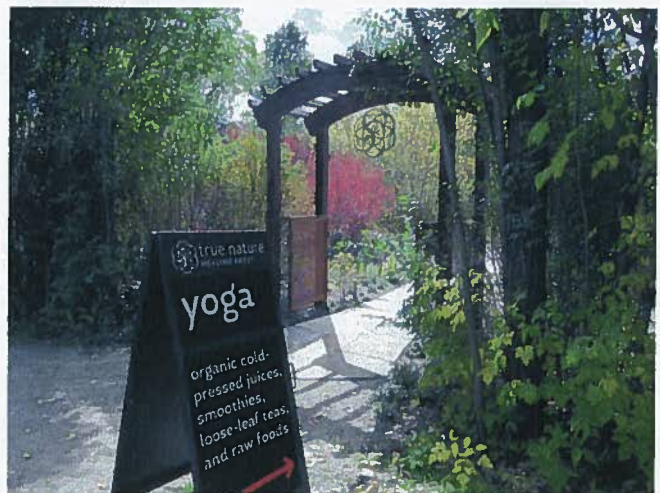
Carbondale's abundant trails are well loved and well used by the community and visitors. They are an important reason why people choose to live in and visit Carbondale, and they play a vital role in daily commuter patterns and seasonal tourist recreation. Carbondale statistics for Journey to Work cite 7.89 percent of residents currently bicycle to work, which is 6.6 percent higher than the Colorado average of 1.31 percent (ESRI – American Community Survey). Carbondale has more than 12 miles of multiuse trails within Town limits and 1.6 miles of natural surface trails within its parks.

Since 2004, the Town has implemented its portion of the Rio Grande Trail, completed two significant improvements on the Highway 133 trail, extended the Crystal Valley Trail from Snowmass Drive to Prince Creek (which in turn connects more than 4 miles farther out of town to the KOA Campground) and added the North Face Bike Park. Carbondale also achieved Gold Level designation as a Bicycle Friendly Community in 2014 from the League of American Bicyclists, an impressive improvement from its 2010 Bronze Level certification. In the past five years, Carbondale has hosted sanctioned bicycle races, the USA Pro Cycling Challenge, Ride the Rockies and the Tour of Colorado, a testament to the town's focus on providing trail amenities to enhance both residents' quality of life and to attract tourism and tourism dollars.

The Rio Grande Trail is a regional amenity and attraction connecting Aspen to Glenwood Springs. The multipurpose and multi-seasonal trail skirts the edge of Carbondale's downtown and traverses the RFTA Bus Rapid Transit station along Highway 133. Though not owned or managed by the Town, a number of additional recreational trails for hiking, running, biking and cross-country skiing/snowshoeing are found in close proximity to the town's limits, including trails at Red Hill, Prince Creek/The Crown, Thompson Creek, Spring Gulch and Marion Gulch.



A bike rests on the Rio Grande Trail, one of the trails that helped Carbondale earn the Bicycle Friendly Community designation.



Some Carbondale businesses have enhanced their entrance from the Rio Grande Trail, seeing it as a way to attract trail users.

Existing Trails:

There are seven primary trails or trail subnetworks within the Town of Carbondale. The following list describes how these trails are classified and their general locations which correlate with Map 5.

1. Hendrick Ranch/Crystal Village Trails

Classification: Local Trails, width varies from four to six feet

Location: These trails supplement the on street sidewalk connections in the western area of Town to the north of River Valley Ranch.

2. Highway 133 Trail – Along the eastern and western sides of Highway 133.

Classification: Local/Regional Trail, width is 10 feet with the exception of a few narrow sections. The narrow sections include one four foot section at RVR, another narrower piece as the trail snakes along the CDOT facility, firehouse and apartment complex on the east side of Highway 133 and a final segment at Hendrick Ranch Park.

Location: The eastern side is complete from the intersection of Highway 133 and Highway 82 to the KOA Campground four miles south of town. Much of the trail on both sides of Highway 133 along the north end of town was newly constructed or rehabilitated in 2014 as a part of the CDOT improvements to Highway 133.

3. Southeast Carbondale Trails

Classification: Local Trails, eight foot wide asphalt

Location: These consist of two trails in the southeastern area of Carbondale, between Snowmass Drive and Meadowood Drive.

4. Northern Carbondale Trails

Classification: Local Trails, varies in width and connectivity

Location: These trails connect throughout the residential neighborhood and the KayPUD area of Town in the northern area of Carbondale

5. River Valley Ranch Trail System

Classification: Local/Regional Trail, 10 foot wide asphalt surface multiuse path with four-foot wide concrete connector paths

Location: These multi-use trails are within the River Valley Ranch Subdivision with connections to the larger trail network.

6. Rio Grande Trail

Classification: Regional Trail, 10 foot wide asphalt surface multiuse path

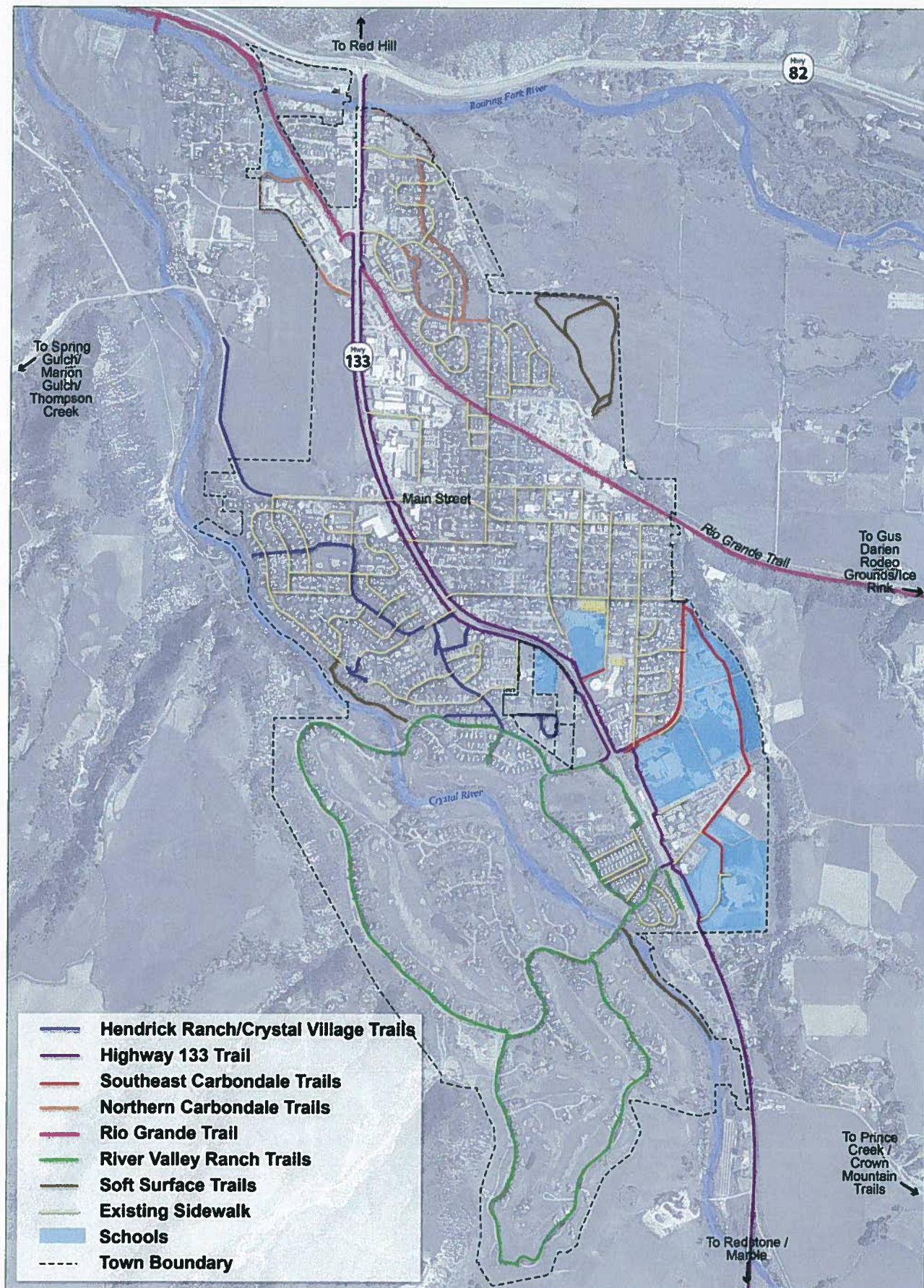
Location: Within the Roaring Fork Transit Authority (RFTA) rail corridor right of way. Since the 2004 Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan RFTA has completed the Rio Grande trail from Aspen to Glenwood Springs providing a regional amenity that is used in all seasons with the exception of seasonal closures (November 30th – April 30th) of the segment from Catherine Store Road east to Rock Bottom Ranch for winter wildlife preservation. Winter use exists from Snowmass Drive to the closure gates at Catherine Store Road for groomed cross country skiing.

7. Carbondale Soft Surface Trails

Classification: Local Trails – Rustic, single-track foot paths.

Location: Various locations, primarily within Carbondale's parks and open spaces including Nuche / Riverfront Parks, The Carbondale Nature Park, and The Gateway River Park.

Map 5: Existing Trails



Recreation Programs

The Carbondale Parks and Recreation Department offers a wide variety of programs throughout the community's facilities. There are adult, youth, preschool and senior activities, along with aquatics programs, special events and holiday programming. Programs and activities take place at various facilities in town, including the Carbondale Recreation & Community Center (CRCC), the Gus Darien Rodeo and Ice Arena, the John M. Fleet Municipal Swimming Pool and numerous athletic fields and parks throughout the community. The CRCC boasts a full size gymnasium, a 32 foot climbing wall, a fitness area with exercise machines and free weights and locker room facilities. A community room and childcare are also available within the center. Membership rates are available by the month or yearly and punch passes are also offered.

In addition to scheduled programming, residents of Carbondale can also join sports leagues throughout the year. Aside from typical programs like basketball, volleyball, swimming and yoga, the Town of Carbondale offers classes geared towards the mountain lifestyle, including wilderness and remote First Aid, climbing wall classes and HIIT (high intensity interval training) sessions to prepare participants for ski season.

The following is a comprehensive list of the programs offered year round by the Parks and Recreation Department (2014). If you are interested in learning more, please visit www.carbondalerec.com/programs.

Pre-School

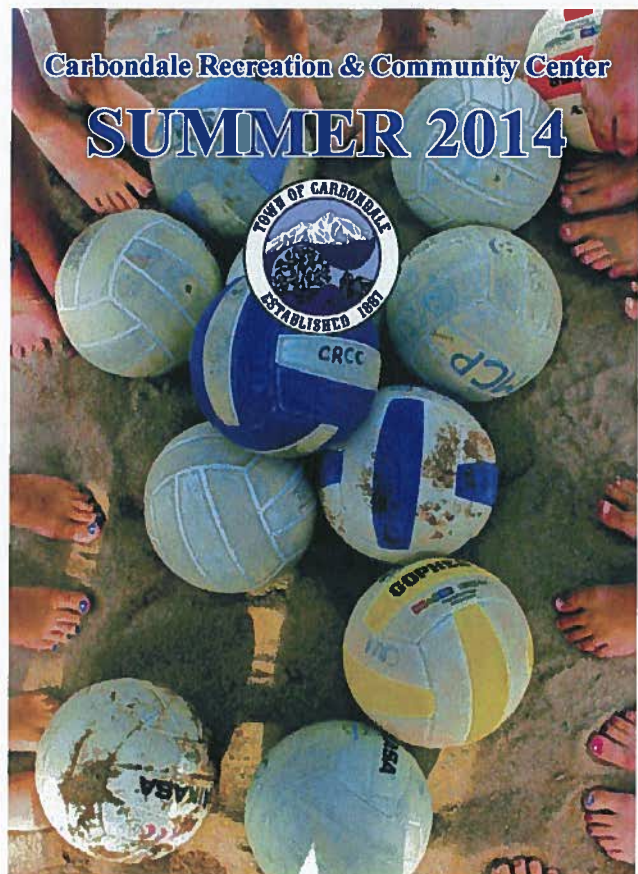
- Motion Mondays (ages 1-6)
- Wild-n-Wacky Wednesdays (ages 2-5)
- Drop-in & Play (ages 1-6)
- Start Smart Flag Football (ages 3-5)
- Start Smart Soccer (ages 3-5)
- Water Fun Day - total of 4 (ages 1-6)
- Start Smart Soccer (ages 3-5)

Recreation and Community Center Membership.

The July 2014 Recreation and Community Center active membership was 1,376 or 1,448 including the pool memberships. This represents an increase of 19 from 2013.

Membership Breakdown:

- 1,244 Resident Members
- 204 Non-resident members
- 152 Silver Sneakers Senior Fitness Program members
- 344 Annual memberships
- 30 Six-month memberships
- 100 Three-month memberships
- 154 Monthly memberships
- 810 Punch Passes



Summer 2014 Recreation & Community Center Brochure provide a listing of program offerings.

Youth

- Sk8 Lessons - Skate Park (ages 5-12)
- Youth Volleyball (ages 8-12)
- Dodgeball Derivatives (ages 8-11)
- Dinky Dunkers Basketball (1st and 2nd graders)
- Youth Basketball League (3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th graders)
- Youth Baseball (ages 7-8, 9-10, 11-12)
- Youth Softball (ages 8-10, 11-12, 13-15)
- Youth Flag Football (1st, 2nd graders)
- Quick Start Tennis (ages 5-8)
- 10 & Under Tennis (ages 8-10)
- Pre-Competition Tennis (ages 11+)
- T-Ball (ages 5-6), Girls Only T-Ball (ages 5-7)
- Volleyball Skills Camp (ages 7-10)
- Basketball Skills Camp (ages 7-10)
- Youth Hikes - 4 total (ages 8=)
- Friday Field Trips - 6 total (ages 8+)
- Spring Break Babysitting Training (ages 11-15)

Early Release Wednesday (fall only)

- Open Gym (ages 11 & up)
- Youth Only Facilitated Climbing (ages 11 & up)
- Youth Summit Conditioning - HIIT (ages 12-17)

Adult

- Adult Volleyball League (ages 18+)
- Men's Basketball League (ages 18+)
- 4x4 Coed Sand Volleyball (ages 18+)
- Adult Coed & Men's Summer Softball (ages 18+)
- Pickleball Doubles Double Elimination Tournament (ages 16+)
- Ladies Tennis Clinic
- Cardio Tennis
- Men's Tennis Night
- Winter Adult Volleyball (ages 18+)
- Pickleball Doubles Double Elimination Tournament (ages 18+)
- Adult Coed & Men's Summer Softball (ages 18+)
- 4x4 Sand Volleyball (ages 18+)
- Adult Open Gym Volleyball (ages 18+)
- Open Gym Basketball (ages 18+)
- Open Gym Soccer (ages 18+)
- Pickleball (ages 18+)

SilverSneakers + Seniors

- SilverSneakers Classic Exercise Class (Fall)
- SilverSneakers Yoga (Fall)
- "Over the Hill" Hiking Group - 3 total

Swimming

- American Red Cross Learn to Swim Class (ages 6+)

- Pre-School Aquatics (ages 3-5)
- Parent/Child Aquatics Itty Bitty (ages 6 months - 3)
- Spring Board Diving Lessons (ages 6+)
- Lifeguard Training - Levels 1-6 (ages 15+)
- Child/Youth Mini Triathlon Summer Series (ages 3-15)
- Morning Jump Start Water Aerobics
- Hydro Conditioning Aerobics
- SilverSplash Shallow Water Exercises for Seniors
- American Red Cross Lifeguard Training (ages 15+)

Downtown ice rink

- Open Skate - daily
- Family Skate Event (Jan 3)

Gus Darien Ice Rink

- Family Skate Event (January 2nd)
- Ice Rink Rentals
- Pick-up Hockey
- Intro to Ice Hockey for Kids (ages 6-9, 10-14)
- Intro to Ice Hockey for Adults (ages 18+)
- Adult Broomball League (ages 18+)

Fitness

- Core Cardio
- Power Ball
- Hatha Yoga Classes

Speciality Classes

- Sahn Tae Kwon Do (ages 6 + up)
- American Red Cross Babysitter Training (ages 11-15)
- Adult Tennis Clinics
- Summit Conditioning - HIIT
- Base Building for Cyclists
- Wilderness & Remote First Aid (ages 17+)

Climbing Wall

- Facilitated Climbing (by appointment only)
- Private/Semi-Private Lessons
- Mommy (or Daddy) and Me Climbing Clinics (ages 4-6)
- Open Gym | Facilitated Climbing
- Climbing Wall Private Lesson or Semi-Private Belay Certifications
- Youth Climbing Class (ages 7-12)
- Advanced Youth Climbing Class (ages 7-12)
- Climbing Club (ages 7-17)
- Rock Warriors Camp, Rock Warriors Wednesdays & Weekend Rock Warriors (ages 9+)
- Adult Beginning Climbing (ages 16+)
- Adult Intermediate Climbing (ages 16+)
- Adult Advanced Climbing (ages 16+)

FINANCIAL STATUS | HIGHLIGHTS

Planning for parks, recreation and trails for the next decade requires an understanding of the funding to support existing programs, facilities and operations. While anticipating all the potential opportunities to enhance Carbondale's parks, recreation and trails in the future is important, being realistic about what can actually be accomplished is critical to making this Master Plan meaningful and actionable. The following highlights the important aspects of the Town's financial status as related to parks, recreation and trails.

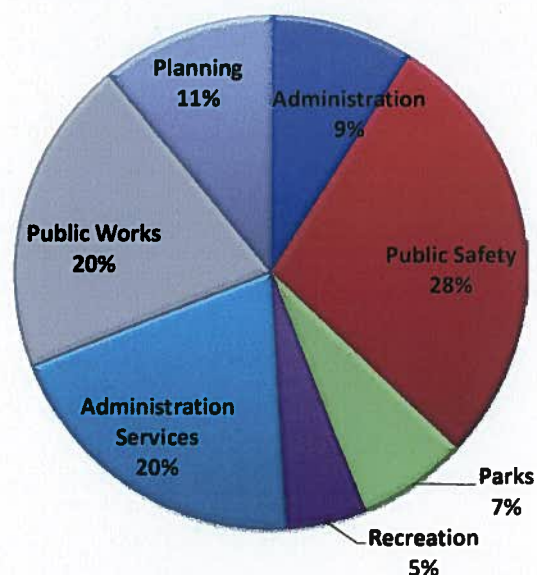
General Fund

Overall, the Town of Carbondale is in good financial standing. The general fund balance at the end of 2014 is approximately \$4 million, which is considered to be a healthy reserve. The Town receives 70 percent of its revenue from sales tax. In 2014, the amount collected from this tax increased by nearly nine percent from 2013 levels. Approximately 15 percent of the remaining revenue comes from intergovernmental sources such as Federal Mine Leasing and Severance Taxes. Property tax provided seven percent of the Town revenue with \$213,309 received in 2014. Property taxes continue to decline and in 2014 there was a decline of 0.5 percent in assessed values.

The Recreation Department received five percent of the General Fund revenue in 2014 and the Parks Department received seven percent as shown in Figure 14. Combined the Recreation and Parks Departments received \$760,230 of the approximately \$5.5 million Town General Fund budget. The resources required for these services must be balanced with the funding needs of other Town services (i.e., Public Works, Public Safety, Administration, Administration Services and Planning). Other taxes and fees that fund parks, recreation and trails include: building permit use tax, Garfield County vehicle use tax, swimming fees, recreation center fees and recreation facility rental fees.

Currently, there is no money earmarked for improved parks and trails capital improvements. This creates a challenge for Carbondale, especially with the increasing costs associated with providing existing services and amenities.

Figure 12: 2014 General Fund Expenditures by Service



**Note: General Fund Parks and Recreation Budget does not include the Recreation Sales & Use Tax Fund*

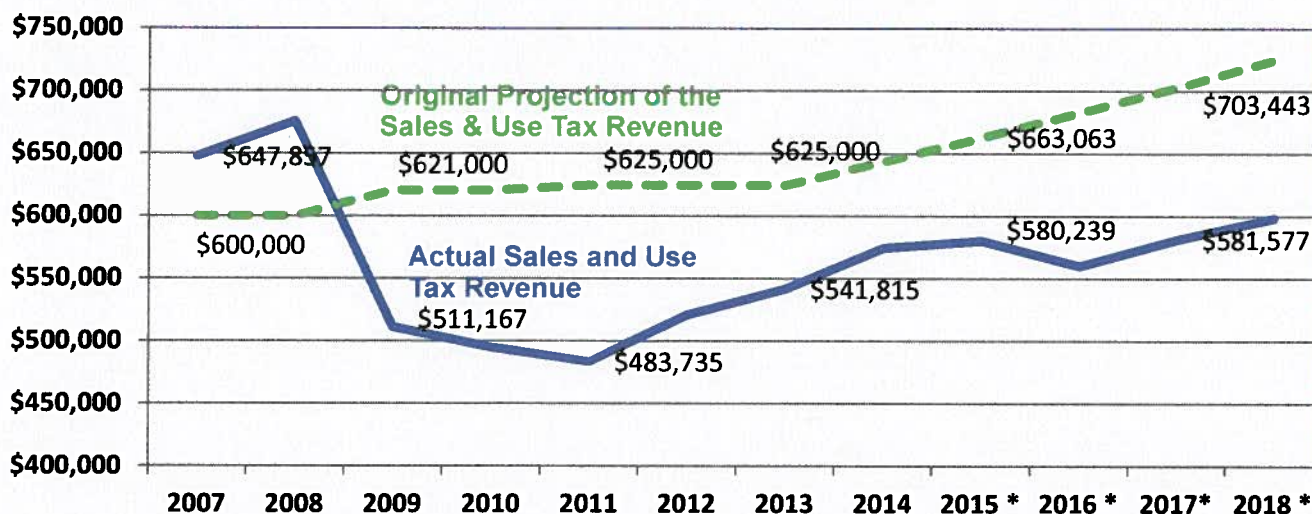
*Source: Town of Carbondale Financial Report
October 16, 2014.*

Recreation Sales & Use Tax (RSUT)

In addition to the general fund and the additional funding mentioned on the preceding page, Carbondale utilizes a voter approved half cent Recreation Sales and Use Tax (RSUT). The half cent tax equates to 50 cents contributed to the RSUT fund for every \$100 spent in Carbondale. This has been an additional source of revenue for the Parks and Recreation Department since 1996. In 2006, the sales tax timeframe was extended in perpetuity by voters. A few other funds contribute to the RSUT fund to a lesser extent including a building permit use tax, Garfield County vehicle use tax, swimming pool fees, Recreation and Community Center fees, and recreation facility rentals. In 2013 \$474,289 was generated from the Recreation Sales Tax Revenue, \$19,893 from the Use-Tax-Building Permits, and \$47,663 from the GarCO Vehicle Use Tax.

While the RSUT has helped take pressure off the general fund, actual revenue collected has been approximately \$100,000 dollars less than original projections each year since 2009, due to the recent recession (see Figure 15). It is anticipated that from 2015 through 2019, the shortfall between expenditures and revenue will continue, although with a smaller gap of between \$31,000 to \$80,000 annually.

Figure 13: Recreation Sales & Use Tax Revenue



Source: Original Projection of the Sales and Use Tax developed in 2006 for the Recreation Center Bond Ordinance. Actual Sales and Use Tax Revenue provided by the Town of Carbondale Financial Report January 2015. * Financial projections provided by the Town of Carbondale.

The RSUT annual expenditures in 2014 are shown in Figure 14 and totaled \$1,094,634. The Recreation and Community operations, maintenance and salaries combined require the majority of this fund (55 percent) but it also should be noted that the fees collected by the Center result in 65 percent cost recovery, a considerable percentage of return for a town recreation center. Similar, the pool operations, maintenance, staff salaries and benefits equate 11 percent of the use of this fund, with a cost recovery of 55 percent from pool fees. Debt service to pay off the Recreation and Community Center construction makes up 23 percent of the annual expenditures. Special Events and Accounting/Administration utilize the remainder of the fund in 2014.

In 2004, a \$2.2 million dollar Recreation Bond was taken out by the Town to build the Recreation and Community Center, and \$450,000 dollars was added to this amount in 2006. Surplus collected from the RSUT tax prior to 2006 and the annual revenues have been used to pay off the bond. The RSUT fund balance did grow from the time it was started in 1996 to \$2.3 million by 2007 (see Figure 17).

Figure 14: 2014 Recreation Sales & Use Tax Expenditures

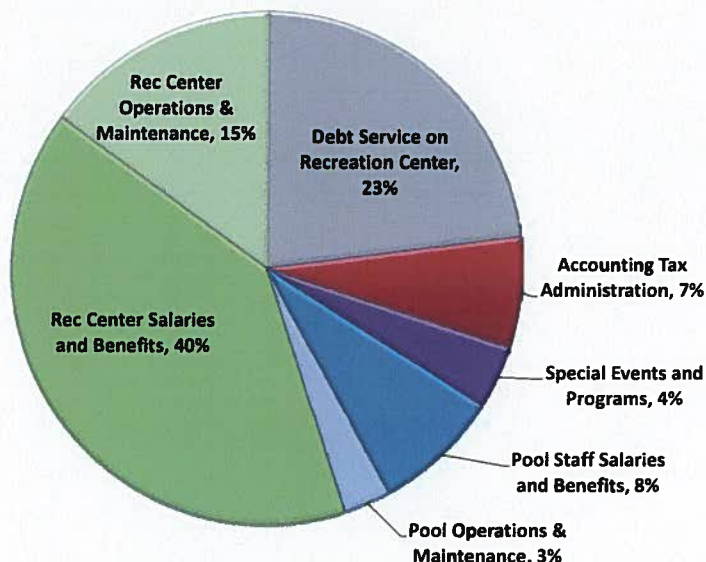
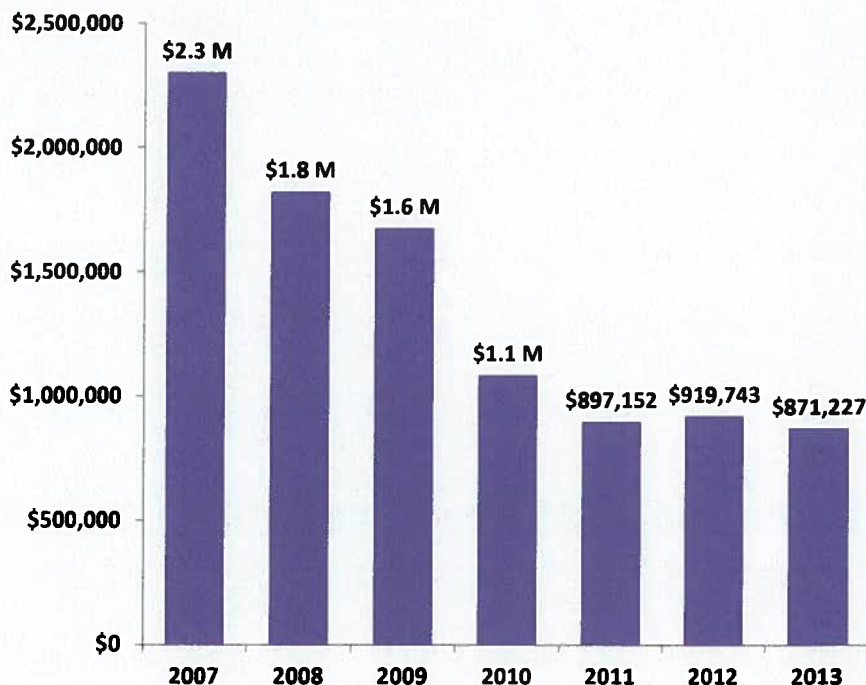


Figure 15: RSUT Fund Balance Reserves



Source: Town of Carbondale Financial Report October 16, 2014.

While this was a positive beginning, the difference between sales tax revenue and the amount needed to pay off the bond has been depleted from the reserve since 2007, leaving only \$871,227 in reserve by 2013 (see Figure 18). While the Town plans to pay off the Recreation Bond in 2024, the current rate of depletion of the RSUT fund will leave a very small cushion of reserve funds if revenue and expenditures continue at the same rate as the past few years.

How will Carbondale continue to fund the bond payback, needed improvements and the increasing cost of providing parks, recreation and trails services, operations and maintenance to a community that prioritizes time spent outdoors? It has been suggested that one way to address future funding deficits is to increase the RSUT sales tax percentage an additional $\frac{1}{4}$ cent to remain steady (approximately \$250,000 annually in revenue at the current sales tax rate), or a $\frac{1}{2}$ cent increase as Crested Butte and Basalt have done to maintain existing parks and programs, and begin to build up reserves for future projects and grant matching. Figure 19 illustrates the projected additional revenue that could be derived from either a half cent or a quarter cent sales tax increase option.

The recommendations chapter provides additional assessment of this method and others for increasing funding along with suggestions for additional funding methods that could be utilized.

Figure 16: Recreation Sales & Use Tax Fund Projections

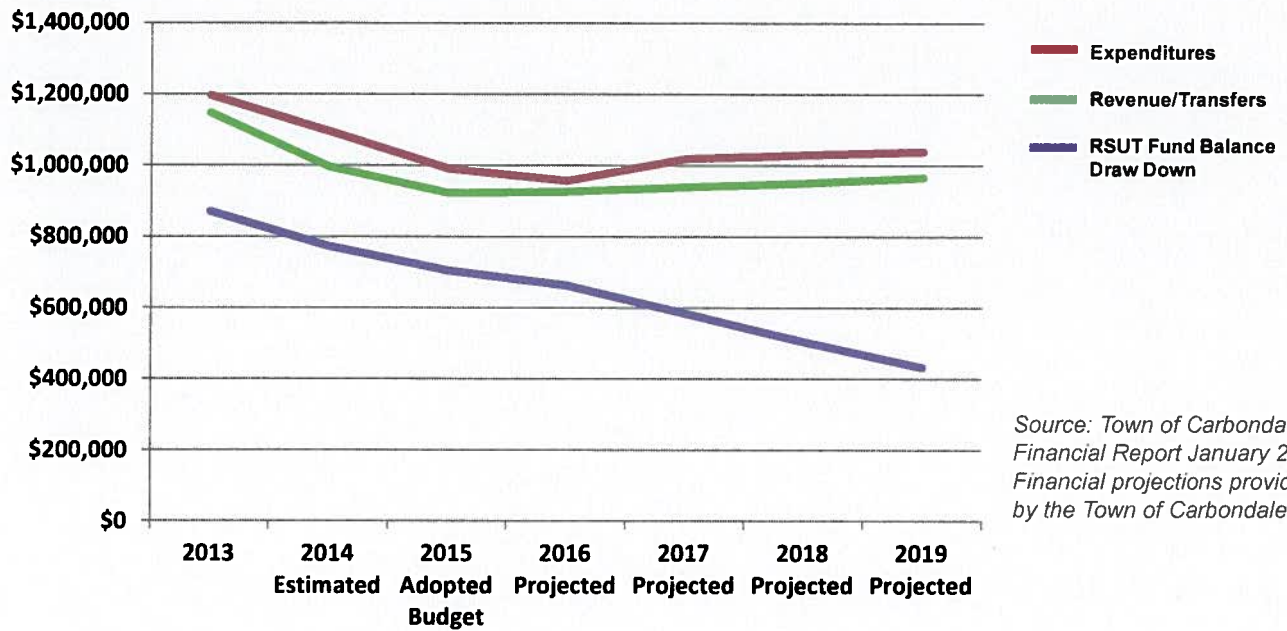
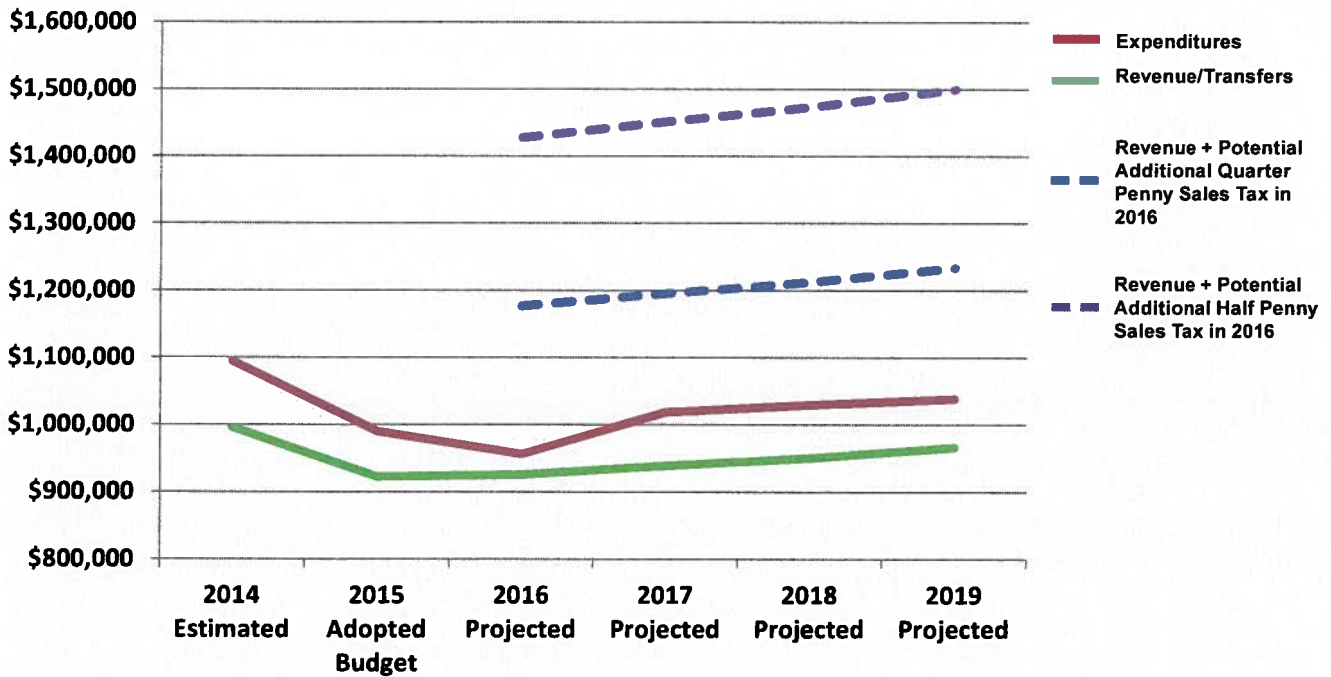


Figure 17: Projected Alternatives for Recreation Sales Tax Increase



Source: Town of Carbondale Financial Report January 2015.
Potential revenue based on Town projections.

COMMUNITY INPUT FINDINGS





The Master Plan Survey was advertised widely to the community.

COMMUNITY INPUT FINDINGS

Community Survey

Methodology

With the growing use of computers and “smart” devices, the project team determined that an online survey was the appropriate tool to generate the highest rate of community participation. The online survey was made publicly available and widely advertised from September 29 through October 20, 2014. The survey focused on gathering public feedback on use and perceived quality of recreational amenities, prioritized needs of community members, financial decisions and funding options, and the overall areas of focus the updated Master Plan should address. The survey was advertised and promoted through the Town’s website, newspaper and radio, social media outlets such as Facebook and email lists including Recreation Center members, local homeowners associations and recreation interest groups. Fliers were also distributed around town and through the school district for students to take home to their parents. The survey was made available in both English and Spanish and was also available at specific locations around town in a hardcopy format for those unable to complete the survey online.



Carbondale Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan Survey

This online survey is an opportunity to tell us what you think about the existing parks, recreation and trails facilities and what improvements and new projects the town should prioritize over the next 10 years.

Please submit only one survey response per individual.

Tell us what amenities you currently use and your thoughts about them.

1. How many times do you or members of your household use the following recreation facilities operated by the Carbondale Parks and Recreation Department when open for the season? (select one option in each row)

	Daily	Few times a week	Few times a month	Few times a year	Haven't Used/ None
Recreation Classes and Programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation & Community Center	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Paved Bike & Pedestrian Paths	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Swimming Pool	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dog Park Facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gus Dierien Riding & Rodeo Arena	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gateway River Park Boat Ramp	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ice Rink (Riding Arena and/or Downtown)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
North Face Park (Skateboard Park and B&B Park)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Outdoor Sports Courts (Basketball / Volleyball)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Firebee Disc Golf Course at Gianinetti Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tennis / Pickleball Courts (Dierien Courts & RVR)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Athletic Fields (soccer, baseball, softball, lacrosse, rugby)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Picnic shelters and pavilions in Town parks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Playgrounds in Town parks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Carbondale Encuesta Plan Maestro Parques & Recreación

Esta encuesta es una oportunidad para que nos digas lo que piensas sobre los parques, áreas recreativas y senderos que existen en Carbondale y que mejoras/ proyectos la ciudad debería priorizar durante los próximos 10 años.

Por favor solo contesta una encuesta por persona.

Español: Parques y Recreación

1. Cuántas veces tu o miembros de tu familia usan los siguientes lugares/ programas que ofrece el departamento de Parques y Recreación de Carbondale? (selecciona una respuesta por línea)

	Todos los días	Algunos días a la semana	Algunos días al mes	Pocas veces al año	Nunca lo he usado/ Nunca
Clases y programas recreativos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Centro Comunitario y Recreativo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Senderos para caminar y de bicicletas (pavimentados)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Piscinas/ Alberca	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parques para perros	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rodeo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rampa para botes en Parque Gateway River	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pista de patinaje en hielo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parque North Face (para skateboards y bicicletas)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Canchas exteriores de deportes: básquetbol/ voleibol	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cancha para Disc Golf en Parque Gianinetti	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Canchas para tenis/ Pickleball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Canchas exteriores de deportes: fútbol, béisbol, softball, lacrosse, rugby	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Áreas de picnic en parques	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Áreas de juegos infantiles en parques	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The Carbondale Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan Survey was provided in English and Spanish.

Results

The survey received 761 responses. This response rate well exceeded the number of responses required to be statistically significant and to provide a 99 percent confidence level that the responses are representative of the Carbondale community as a whole. The surveys not only provided valuable input to the specific questions posed, but the general public took time to write in comments, giving great depth of feedback on various topics that were expressed as important to the community. Themes emerged that were not initially considered, providing new content that was discussed in the public workshops and focus groups that followed.

Goals for representation of various age groups, Carbondale voters, and residents in the 81623 ZIP code were met through the survey, as well 27 surveys were filled out in Spanish, and 66 people identified their ethnicity as Latino or Hispanic (nine percent). Though the Latino/Hispanic community makes up almost half of the Carbondale population and a higher percentage of Latino/Hispanic responses were sought, nine percent of the total responses represent a substantial increase in the number of Latino/Hispanics traditionally engaged in this type of a planning process and the quality of the feedback received provided important insight into the plan. Targeted efforts such as Spanish language surveys and directed advertising as well as outreach to local English as a Second Language (ESL) courses were important to receiving input from this traditionally underrepresented demographic.

Summary of Survey Key Findings

The following is a summary of the public opinions collected through the survey. The full summary of responses is provided in Appendix A.

Paved bike and pedestrian paths are the most used amenity on a daily basis

People are recreating outdoors and using the Town's facilities quite often. A significant percent of respondents (42 percent) use paved bike and pedestrian paths on a daily basis, while 31 percent use these facilities a few times a week. Playgrounds, dog parks, athletic fields and the recreation center are also used by a significant majority a few times a week. On the other hand, there are several places that appear to be underutilized or not used as often, including the Gateway River Park boat ramp, the outdoor sports courts, the tennis and pickleball courts and the disc golf course at Gianinetti Park.

Recreation services are extremely important for the community

Eighty-three percent of the survey respondents feel that providing opportunities to maintain and improve health and well-being through Parks and Recreation services is very important. People also feel that it is important to provide bike and pedestrian paths, parks and outdoor spaces that allow people to enjoy and learn about nature. There is general agreement (79 percent) that having good recreation facilities and programs helps promote a more beautiful community and the small town character that is unique to Carbondale (Figure 20).

Need for maintenance

Although 55 percent of respondents are satisfied with the overall maintenance and care of parks, recreation amenities and trails, there is a clear need for increasing maintenance of specific facilities. The swimming pool, park bathrooms and sidewalks were identified as the facilities most in need of maintenance. On the other hand, people are generally satisfied with the variety and quality of parks and the recreation features within the parks, as well as the overall customer service that the recreation department offers as illustrated in Figure 21.

Figure 18: Survey Responses to Question #5 - How important are the following types of services provided by Carbondale Parks and Recreation Department to you?

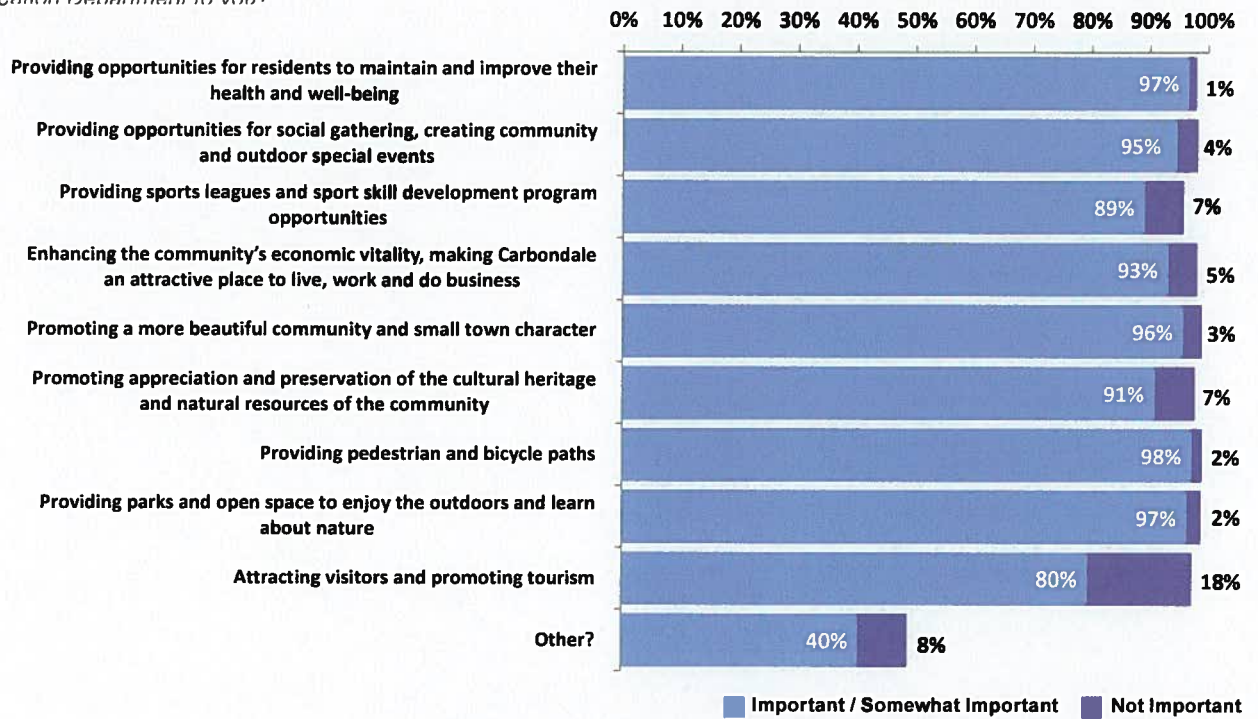
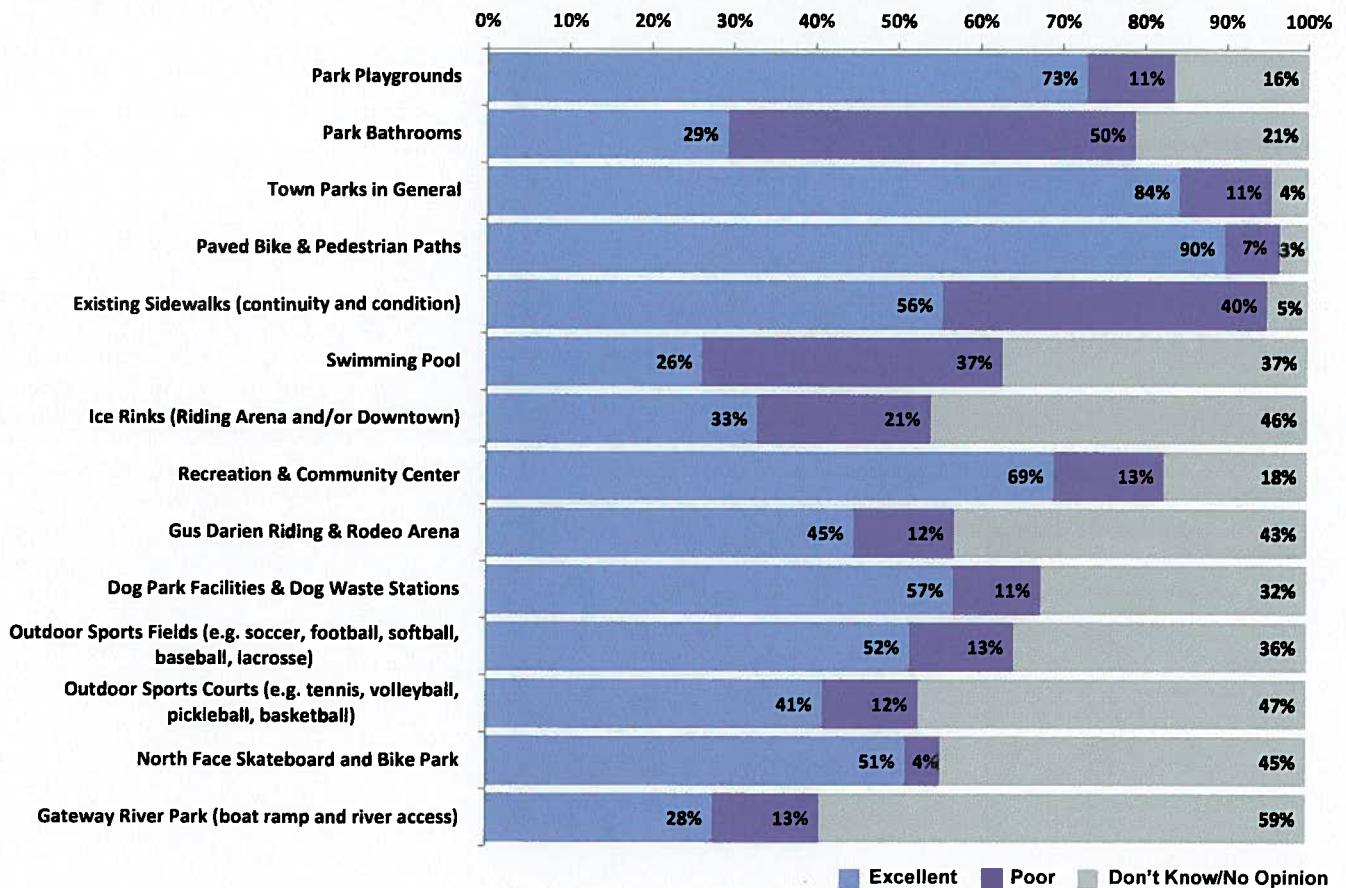


Figure 19: Survey Responses to Question #3 - How would you rate the quality and condition of the following facilities?



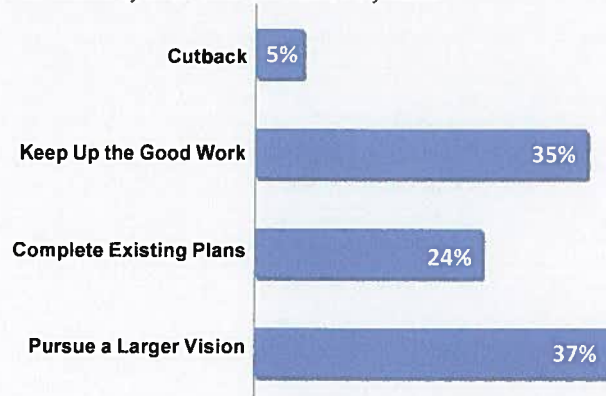
Willingness to pay for parks, recreation and trail amenities

The survey reminded participants that in 2004, voters within the Carbondale town limits approved extending a half (1/2) cent Recreation Sales & Use Tax in perpetuity to assist in funding the Carbondale Recreation and Community Center that opened in 2008. A shortfall has resulted due to the national recession, and this tax has annually averaged approximately \$150,000 less than what was anticipated when voters approved the tax. As a result, the Town has resorted to utilizing past savings within the parks and recreation fund to make up the difference. At the current use rate, it is expected that parks and recreation savings will be depleted by 2020, and remaining funds will be insufficient in funding existing facilities and programs.

With this in mind, responses were divided amongst those who feel that the Town's approach to funding the Parks and Recreation system into the future should be to "pursue a larger vision" and those who felt the Town should focus more modestly on "keeping up the good work." A total of 37 percent of respondents would support more aggressively seeking additional funding sources to pursue this larger vision and expand and improve what the Town currently offers, as they feel Carbondale's economy depends on recreation and tourism. Another 35 percent of respondents think that seeking a modest amount of additional funds to better care for existing parks and recreation facilities and continue funding small projects to meet citizen needs is the preferred option.

As illustrated in Figure 23, the idea of having a small tax increase of ¼ of a cent to help fund the Parks & Recreation system is strongly supported by 46 percent of the respondents, while an additional 29 percent somewhat supported the idea, pending on additional information.

Figure 20: Survey Responses to Question #6 - Which of these statements most closely reflects your opinion of what the Town's approach should be to funding the parks and recreation system over the next 10 years?



Survey defined these statements as:

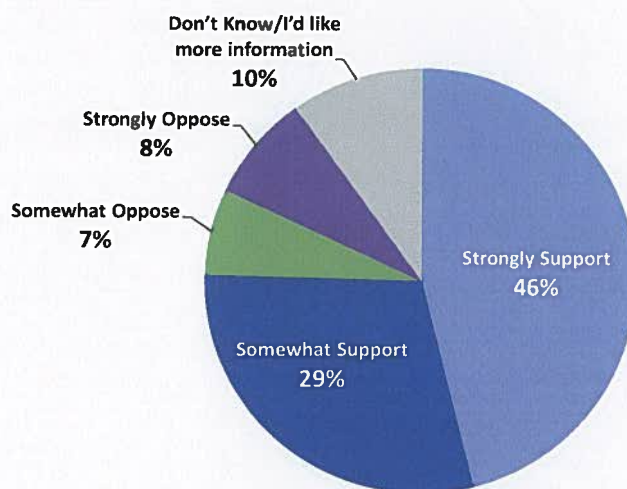
Cutback: The anticipated shortfall in funds for future parks, recreation and trails development should be addressed with significant cutbacks to current programs, services and maintenance.

Keep up the Good Work: Seek a modest amount of additional funds to better care for existing parks and recreation facilities and continue funding small projects to meet citizen needs.

Complete Existing Plans: There are many desirable projects that require significant funds to complete. The Town should seek additional funding sources to complete these.

Pursue a Larger Vision: Carbondale's economy depends on recreation and tourism. We must aggressively seek additional funding sources to expand and improve what we have to offer.

Figure 21: Survey Responses to Question #7 - Would you support a sales tax increase of a quarter (1/4 cent) to the Recreation and Sales Use Tax Fund to maintain the current level of service into the future?



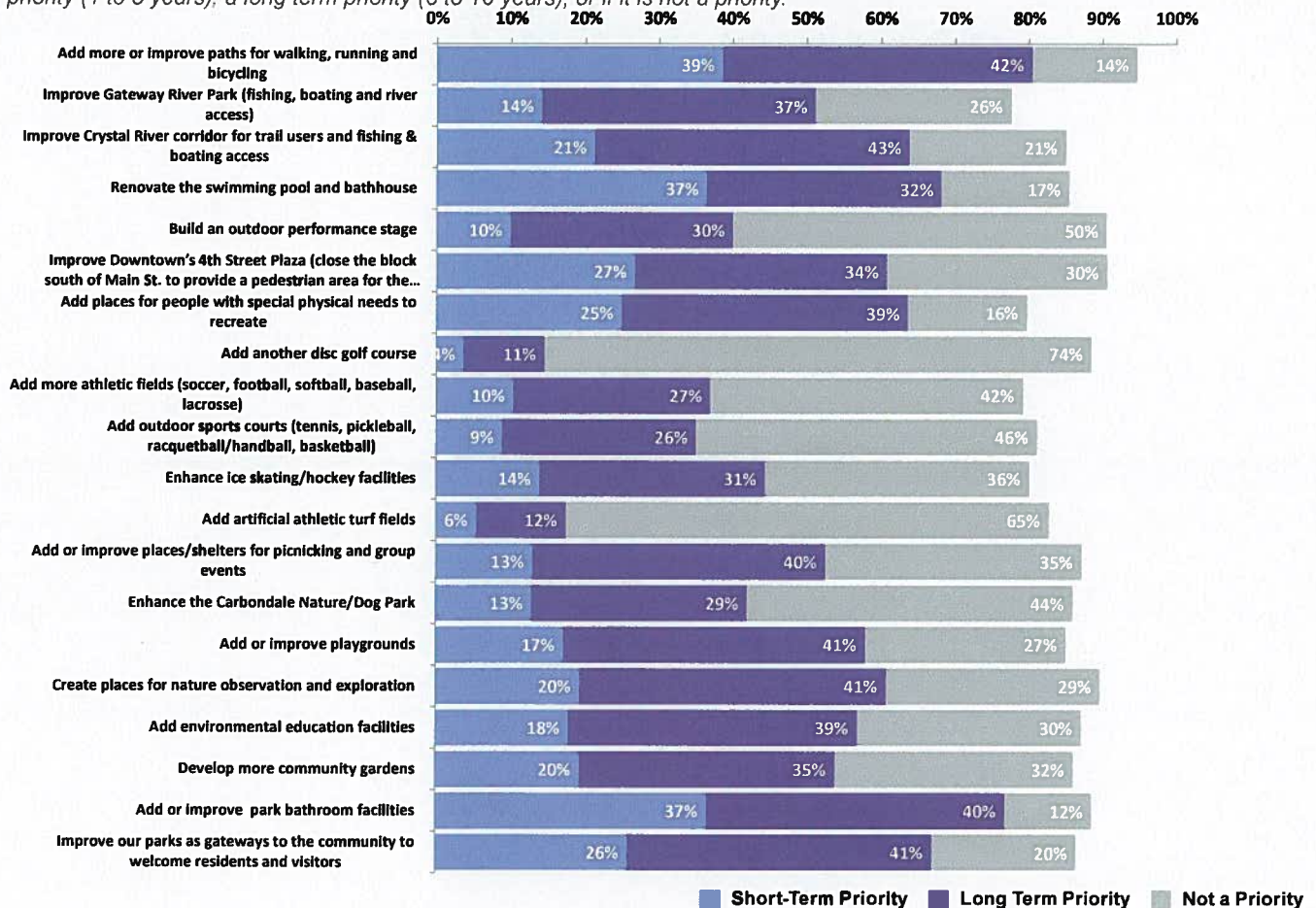
Paths, swimming pool, bathrooms and gateways the main priorities

When asked about what future projects should be prioritized by the Town in the short-term, most people identified adding or improving paths for walking, running and bicycling as the first priority (39 percent), followed by adding or improving park bathroom facilities (37 percent) and renovating the swimming pool and bathhouse (also 37 percent). Improving Downtown's 4th Street Plaza, improving existing parks as gateways to the community and adding places for people with special physical needs to recreate were also identified by 25 percent of respondents as short-term priorities.

On the other hand, when looking at long-term priorities, improving the Crystal River corridor for trail users and fishing and boating access were chosen by a large number of respondents (43 percent). Other projects that were identified as long-term priorities include adding or improving picnic shelters and gathering spaces for group events, playgrounds and creating places for nature observation and exploration (Figure 24).

When asked about prioritizing specific trail projects, extending the Snowmass Drive sidewalk from Main Street and the Rio Grande Trail to the elementary and middle schools was selected as the highest priority by 57 percent of respondents. People also felt that completing the gaps in the sidewalk network in old town/downtown was a high priority. These responses show the need to create a continuous sidewalk network within town that connects public buildings, parks, infrastructure and neighborhoods in a safe way.

Figure 22: Survey Responses to Question #8 - Projects or facility improvements that should be an essential/short-term priority (1 to 5 years), a long term priority (6 to 10 years), or if it is not a priority.



Stakeholder Workshops

Methodology

A primary focus of the engagement strategy was creating meaningful opportunities for stakeholders to be involved in the plan creation process in order to create a shared community vision. A focused four day workshop, held October 22-25, 2014, included a series of small focus groups and three public open houses. More than 100 stakeholders and community members attended. The focus groups and small group meetings were strategically organized to capture input from specific user groups, stakeholders and Town staff pertaining to over-arching themes. Facilitated discussions and interactive mapping activities provided important feedback and infused the planning process with dynamic ways to discover new and creative solutions for physical improvements, define programmatic needs, examine conceptual land uses and general development standards and establish the vision and long-range aspirations that helped inform the recommendations of the Master Plan. The focus groups and small group meetings were structured around the following interest groups and themes:

Focus Groups

- Youth – Ages 1-12
- Youth – Teens
- Young Adult Recreation
- Seniors and Special Needs Recreation
- Latino/Hispanic Recreation
- Development Community
- Visitors / Tourism Enhancement
- Recreation Programs
- Special Events
- Sports Complex Master Plan
- Sustainability
- Trails, Regional Connections
- River Access/Natural Areas
- Funding

Small Group Meetings (Town Staff):

- Recreation Coordinators
- Operations and Maintenance
- Planning Department
- Town Finance
- Community Safety

Summary of Stakeholder Workshops

While there was fair turnout for the public open houses, the focus and small groups were very well attended and provided the most in-depth feedback regarding the successes and failures of current park, recreation and trail efforts and the needs and desires looking to the future. As a result of the four days of discussions, the following ideas, trends and concerns became apparent:

Public feedback regarding **parks and recreation programming** was both positive and reflected the fact that there is room for improvement in several areas. Special events are a very successful component of programming, as is the variety of programming offered for youth (ages 1-12) and adults. On the other hand, attracting teens has proven difficult. Providing more age appropriate activities could boost the participation of this age group. Participants feel the Town could do a better job of advertising and promoting all programs, events and field trips and more Spanish speaking events and classes should be included. The fees for league sports is often too high, forcing some people to opt out, even though they would like to take advantage of the opportunity to participate in team sports.

Sustainability is important to the Carbondale community in terms of parks and recreation facilities, and the community also values balancing recreational use with wildlife protection. Property owners are generally supportive of conservation easements, which is a positive in terms of providing open spaces throughout the community.

As in many communities, **funding for parks, recreation and trails facilities, amenities and programs** is a challenge for Carbondale. Encouragingly, many of the public workshop participants are in favor of an increase in the Recreation Sales & Use Tax to support recreation programming and maintenance. Along with this

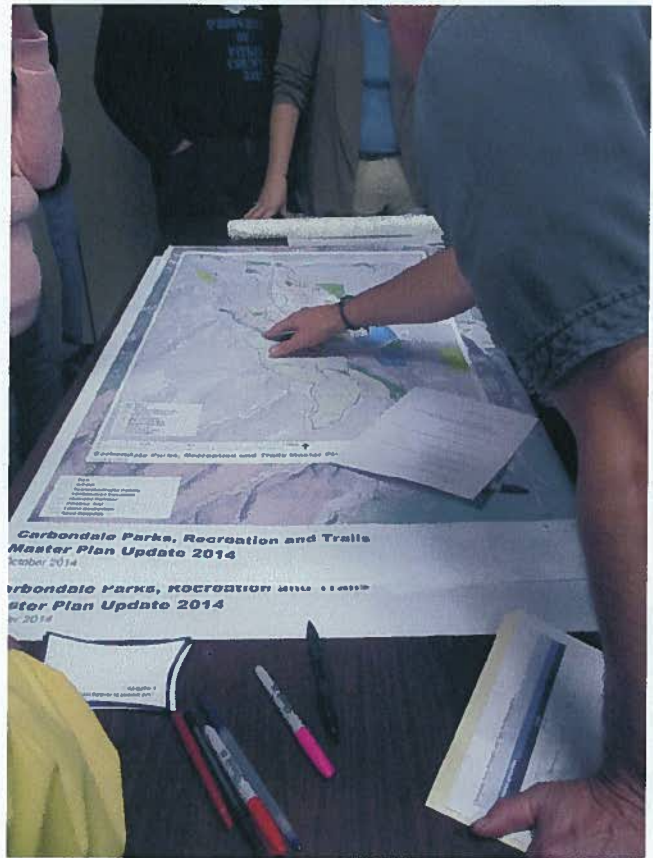
option, there is a consensus that the Town should take advantage of collaboration opportunities, e.g. with the school district, private groups, businesses, non-profit organizations and other municipalities to share the responsibility of providing recreation opportunities to the community. Participants agreed that focusing on more small cost projects that improve current offerings is preferred over larger projects that may need additional funding that the Town does not already have.

Parks and recreation facilities and maintenance was another important topic of discussion. The pool was mentioned time and again as the facility most in need of an update. Participants also mentioned that they would like to see more athletic fields. Town staff reported that current maintenance efforts are just band-aid approaches, which is not sustainable in the long-term. Many maintenance activities are labor intensive, and the department is currently under staffed.

While there are a sufficient number of parks and trails in Carbondale, the **parks and recreation amenities offered could be enhanced**.

Participants most often cited the need for better and more consistent directional, pedestrian and bicycle safety signage and additional restrooms. The infrastructure to support hosting events and the locations of events in parks is another topic of importance to Carbondale residents. Town staff would like to see better parkland dedication standards for developers in the Town Code, in order to provide the right kinds and amounts of parks and recreation space with appropriate amenities.

Enjoying the outdoors is very important to the Carbondale community and **trails and access** are critical issues in the minds of many. While participants value and utilize Carbondale trails daily, they feel that better connections between trails in Carbondale and adjacent trail networks are critical to both residents and visitors. Access to these trails and pedestrian safety at road and highway crossings can be improved. A series of maps along trails is also desired, in order to help residents and visitors navigate their way along the extensive networks of Carbondale and the Roaring Fork Valley.



Focus groups participated in map activities to identify the town's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints related to parks, recreation and trails.



Open House participants were invited to participate in keypad polling sessions to get instant feedback on a variety of questions pertaining to recreation needs and desires.

4

RECOMMENDATIONS



TOWN OF CARBONDALE, COLORADO

PARKS, RECREATION & TRAILS MASTER PLAN

CHAPTER 4 - RECOMMENDATIONS

(Board of Trustees Approved & Adopted on April 28, 2015)

Recommendations Overview

The Recommendations Chapter provides guidance and offers suggestions for addressing the challenges and opportunities that the Town of Carbondale Parks and Recreation Department faces today and into the future regarding meeting the recreation, leisure and park needs of the community. The Master Plan will provide direction for the next 10 years, and contains recommendations that can be completed within a few months or years, along with recommendations that will require community and regional solutions that may take a decade or longer to accomplish. To be successful, the Master Plan will require the focused energy, commitment and resources of the Town, other government agencies, regional partners, local businesses, nonprofit organizations, user groups and the general population.

The recommendations reflect community values captured from the public engagement process and from input and suggestions collected during meetings with Town Staff, Town Trustees, the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Bike, Pedestrian and Trails Commission. The recommendations also considered the evaluation of current parks and recreation operations, an analysis of existing park and recreation facilities and policies, and considerations of future industry trends. Eleven (11) core themes emerged as the basis for the Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan, which will serve as a guiding document for future parks, recreation and trails actions and decision-making over the next 10 years. Listed below, in no priority order, are those core themes:

1. **Improve the Bicycle and Pedestrian Network** | Fill in the gaps in the bicycle and pedestrian network with priority given to creating connectivity to public buildings, parks and major trail networks.
2. **Enhance Gateways** | Enhance and beautify the Town's gateway outdoor spaces, welcoming visitors and residents.
3. **Celebrate the Rivers** | Highlight the rivers as community assets and recreational opportunities.
4. **Address Financial Stability** | Secure the Town's fiscal health in order to maintain existing parks, trails and recreation amenities.
5. **Maintain Existing Amenities** | Focus on enhancing existing parks before spearheading expansion to new locations.

6. **Plan for the Future** | Upon securing fiscal health, create financial mechanisms to develop and maintain new projects.
7. **Distinguish Carbondale** | Promote and focus on becoming renowned for the unique assets that express Carbondale's identity.
8. **Provide Sports Facilities** | Focus on providing sports practice fields and indoor recreation within the community, and partner with valley-wide recreation providers for larger complexes and tournament spaces.
9. **Build and Enhance Strong Partnerships** | Partner with local organizations, individuals and Town departments to generate community based solutions to address current challenges.
10. **Broaden, Enhance and Promote Recreation Opportunities** | Develop strategic partnerships to increase program and activity offerings to underserved user groups.
11. **Support the Creative District Plan** | Support the Creative District Plan by strategically utilizing public properties to their potential; positioning them as flexible space for community recreation, special events and the arts.

The Master Plan themes have been formulated into recommendations for solving the challenges Carbondale faces, along with visionary elements that reflect aspirations of what the Town can become in the future.

1. Improve the Bicycle and Pedestrian Network

Fill in the gaps in the bicycle and pedestrian network with priority given to creating connectivity to public buildings and parks and major trail networks.

Overview

The recommendations below focus on continued investment and partnerships to maintain the quality of the Town's trails, increase connectivity by addressing critical linkages and crossings, better connect the east and west sides of town, improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and expand the system to address growing demands.

Recommendations

In general, paved asphalt or concrete trails are preferred over crusher fines or dirt trails for new trail development or expansion, as they require less long-term continuous maintenance and weed control as soft-surface trails. Reference Map 6: Proposed Trails to identify the locations of connection improvements described below. Numbered recommendation items relate to numbers identified on the map.

Proposed Near-term Trail Connections:

Based on funding commitments, partnership opportunities and community identified priorities; the following projects are recommended to be completed in the near-term (one to three year) period because they connect key community destinations, not in order of importance:

- (1) Complete a paved trail along Snowmass Drive connecting from Main Street and the Rio Grande Trail to the existing Snowmass Drive multiuse trail leading to the elementary and middle schools (approximately 900 feet).
- (2) Extend the paved trail along Main Street connecting Highway 133 roundabout and Colorado Rocky Mountain School CRMS (approximately 1,420 feet). This could be a joint project between Garfield County and the Town of Carbondale and may be applicable for a Garfield County Federal Mineral Lease District (FMLD) grant.
- (3) Complete the sidewalk along 4th Street from Colorado Avenue to the Nature Park (path to park) to provide a connection to/from the Rio Grande Trail (approximately 1,100 feet).
- (4) Complete sidewalk connection on Weant Boulevard between Historic Museum/Bridges High School and the Crystal Valley Trail (from Grace Drive to Highway 133). This is an incomplete portion of the Safe Routes to School network (approximately 325 feet).
- (5) Create a bicycle/pedestrian connection from the Roaring Fork Transit Authority (RFTA) Highway 133 Park and Ride facility to Dolores Way (approximately 200 feet). Half of this connection exists in the form of a 10 foot paved spur pathway that runs from the Rio Grande Trail to the northwest corner of the RFTA parking

lot. RFTA should be required to complete this connection upon their expansion of the existing BRT parking lot. Two alternative locations are shown on the proposed trails map. On-street markings and signage for pedestrians may be an acceptable alternative.

Total Near-Term Trail Connections: Approximately 3,945 Linear Feet (0.74 miles)

Proposed Long-Term Trail Connections:

Based on funding availability, the following are bicycle/pedestrian trails that are recommended to be completed as long-term priorities (within the next 10 years), not in order of importance:

- (6) Extend sidewalks along 8th Street between Village Road and Cowen Drive to complete path network along 8th Street (approximately 2,000 feet). Widen the 8th Street sidewalk from Village Way to Main Street and address on-street parking management (approximately 2,020 feet).
- (7) Add a paved sidewalk along Merrill Avenue from 8th Street to connect to the Nature Park (path to park) (approximately 770 feet).
- (8) Add a paved trail connection through Industry Place to the Rio Grande Trail (approximately 1,215 feet). Involves privately held lands and will require an easement or property purchase.
- (9) Complete the paved pedestrian/bicycle trails identified on the Community Park Master Plan for Third Street Center to connect to the Crystal Valley Trail (approximately 650 feet).
- (10) Add a path connection from the Highway 133 trail south of City Market to Barber Drive (approximately 350 feet). Involves privately held lands and will require an easement or property purchase.
- (11) Designate with sharrows on 8th Street the bike connection to the Crystal Valley Trail, and also provide a sidewalk connection along 8th Street between Sopris Avenue and Highway 133 (approximately 280 feet).
- (12) Improve connections along the bike/pedestrian path located behind the Orchard Church and Crystal River Elementary School. The creation of a smoother transition from this path to the Elementary School should be encouraged. Also, a short break (60 feet) in the pathway connecting to North Face Park should be filled but also involves privately held parking and drive space that must be negotiated.
- (13) Connect Snowmass Drive and Meadowood Drive through the Roaring Fork School District Campus to better connect the school campuses (approximately 1,100 feet). This desired connection was identified in the 2013 Carbondale Comprehensive Plan. Involves the Roaring Fork School District.

- (14) If funding becomes available, construct a bicycle/pedestrian bridge across the Roaring Fork River with a trail to the Gateway River Park and Highway 82 intersection.
- (15) Complete a paved spur connection from Thompson Park/Thompson House Museum to Holland Drive. This is a developer requirement (approximately 250 feet).
- (16) Complete a multi-use paved trail from the Triangle Park parking lot to Highway 133 (approximately 300 feet).
- (17) Improve a narrow section of the Crystal Valley Trail from Roaring Fork Drive to the Fire Station (approximately 400 feet long). Add sharrows to the street and signage to provide an alternative to the five foot wide sidewalk.

Total Long-Term Trail Connections: Approximately 9,115 Linear Feet (1.73 Miles)

Additional Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Recommendations:

- Provide trail amenities that improve comfort and make for a more enjoyable experience along existing trails including wayfinding and signage, doggie stations, bench seating, water bottle filling stations and bike tool stations. Prioritize amenities at trailheads and key convergent points, such as the convergences of the Rio Grande Trail and Crystal Valley Trail with Highway 133, Main Street and County Road 100.
- Explore opportunities for intersection enhancements for bicycles and pedestrians as identified below (not in order of importance):
 - Support improvements and partnerships for the realization of the Highway 133/Highway 82 crossing improvements to provide safer access to the Red Hill Recreation Area. Interim at-grade improvements including traffic calming may be appropriate.
 - Maintain and improve crossing safety and accessibility to bus stops in town.
 - Connect the multiuse path that follows River Valley Ranch Road and adjacent to Triangle Park to the path extending south along Highway 133. The path picks up at the intersection to the RVR maintenance facility, but no formal crossing is provided connecting the two trails (approximately 12 feet).
 - Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety crossing between Nuche Park and the Crystal River Trail.
- Add path lighting along the Rio Grande Trail corridor from Highway 133 to Main Street
- Within Town boundaries it is important to provide connections to mountain recreation opportunities that provide recreation and tourism activity. Support the efforts of public

and private entities that provide trails outside of the Town boundaries by completing connections in-town, and providing signage and trailheads in town:

- Support efforts of the neighboring community to create a connection from Satank Bridge and the Rio Grande Trail to the trail extension south of CRMS.
- Support opportunities with Garfield County to create a safer pedestrian/bike access route along County Road 107 to access the BLM Red Hill Special Recreation Management Area trailhead.
- Support efforts to provide a multi-use path along CR 106 connecting to CRMS and the Crystal River. This portion of path will improve safety of bicycle and pedestrian travel to Spring Gulch.
- Support opportunities with the Aspen Valley Land Trust and other partners to create a single track trail connection along Prince Creek Road. Consider creating a trailhead location within the Town of Carbondale.
- Support efforts to connect our local trails to other trails throughout the region.
- Provide more directional and wayfinding signage (see Support the Creative District Plan section):
 - Provide kiosks or overview trail maps for Red Hill and major trail gateways into Town, including at trailheads and key convergent points, such as the intersections of the Rio Grande Trail and Crystal Valley Trail with Highway 133, Main Street and County Road 100.
 - Develop a mobile mapping application and website for town trails. Link website to signs throughout the trail system that will help visitors navigate through Carbondale. Provide up-to-date trail closure and opening information, rules and regulations and event announcements.
 - The Highway 133 multiuse trails paralleling both sides of the highway creates confusion surrounding the official route of the Crystal Valley Trail. Designate the Crystal Valley Trail's official route through signage and pavement markings.
 - Reinforce signage along Crystal Valley Trail as it jogs behind Highway 133 to the Middle School.
 - Coordinate and collaborate with RFTA on signage developed for the Rio Grande Trail through town to ensure that key community destinations and amenities are highlighted.
- Celebrate the Rio Grande Trail as a key corridor through town, and coordinate with RFTA to support aesthetic improvements that highlight the trail as a source of community pride to visitors.
- Create a Native Birding Trail and Preserve in partnership with River Valley Ranch and the Roaring Fork Audubon Society along the Crystal River and Riverfront Park. Provide interpretive, directional and regulatory signage. A trail connection to Nuche

Park via a pedestrian bridge spanning the Crystal River should be considered dependent on funds or partnership availability.

- Focus on connectivity and wayfinding to public buildings, parks and major trail networks including the Third Street Center, Library, Town Hall, Schools, Sopris Park, Fourth Street Plaza, bus stops and the Crystal Valley and Rio Grande Trails.
- Increase the Town's offerings of soft-surfaced trails within walking distance of the town core.
 - Designate an official recreation path on the west side of White Hill, eliminating the number of various social trails that currently exist.
 - Provide additional nature paths within parks with scenic or natural qualities.
 - Look for opportunities to create single-track trails for alternative walking, running and biking experiences.
- Increase the Town's winter use trail opportunities.
 - Continue to collaborate with the County on winter use opportunities on the Rio Grande Trail east of town.
 - Coordinate and facilitate with cyclocross race organizers their use of North Face Park for all fall and/or wintertime race series with assurances that park damage will not occur.
- Collaborate with local schools to leverage grant programs like Safe Routes to School to assist with funding pedestrian/bicycle multiuse trail and sidewalk improvements.
- Leverage partnerships with RFTA and their goal to connect pedestrians and bicycle commuters to the Carbondale Connector bus route stops and the Highway 133 Park and Ride lot to help fill in gaps in the trail system.
- Bike, Pedestrian and Trails Commission to evaluate lighting needs for commuters along town trails.
- Provide community education on pedestrian and bicycle rules and safety. Leverage local events such as Bonedale Bike Week, the Wild West Rodeo, Mountain Fair, etc. and engage the local police department and Bicycle, Pedestrian and Trails Commission to help educate the community and visitors about various recreation opportunities, surrounding trails and Town regulations. Make educational events applicable to all levels of bicycle users, including children and adults and beginners to experts.
- Maintain the 2014 Bicycle Friendly Community Gold Level designation and pursue recommendations to expand to Platinum status by doing the following:
 - Adopt a Complete Streets policy and offer implementation guidance. This policy will direct decision-makers to consistently fund, plan for, design, construct, operate and maintain community streets to accommodate all anticipated users (including people walking, bicycling, utilizing public transportation, personal and

commercial vehicles). Gain commitment from all Town leaders and staff to adopt this policy and implement.

- Continue to work with CDOT on making Highway 133 more bike and pedestrian friendly including recommendations for calming vehicle traffic.
- Continue to expand the bike network and to increase network connectivity. Ensure smooth transitions for bicyclists between the local and regional trail network, and the street network.
- Work with the responsible entities, such as the Town of Carbondale and RFTA, to ensure that all transit vehicles that operate in or through the community accommodate cyclists, particularly during peak hours.
- Offer bicycling skills training opportunities for adults through Town Recreation Center programming.
- Ensure that police officers are initially and repeatedly educated on traffic law as it applies to bicyclists and motorists. Continue to encourage police officer patrolling to occur on foot and bicycle.
- Encourage local businesses, agencies and organizations to promote cycling to their employees and customers and to seek recognition through the Bicycle Friendly Business program. For example, local businesses could provide discounts for customers arriving by bicycle or promote existing bicycle discount programs.

2. Enhance Gateways

Enhance and beautify the Town's gateway outdoor spaces, welcoming visitors and residents.

Overview

Carbondale's key gateways into the community include access points at the intersection of Highway 133 and Highway 82 to the north and Highway 133 to the south, both of which already possess dedicated park lands with Gateway River Park and Nuche Park. Gateway River Park could be utilized to enhance the welcoming experience into Carbondale through future park development and amenities, while Nuche Park will remain as a passive park. In addition, many of the town's visitors arrive via bicycle, and the Rio Grande and Crystal Valley trails also provide opportunities to welcome visitors and showcase Carbondale. Refer to Map 7 Proposed Gateways and River Access for the locations of features identified in the following recommendations.

Recommendations

- Implement the 2012 Gateway River Park Master Plan.
- Enhance wayfinding, signage and art along trails, specifically the Rio Grande Trail and Crystal Valley Trail.
- Work with RFTA in the development of Rio Grande Trail gateway features on their property across from the Highway 133 Park-and-Ride. This location was identified in the RFTA Transit Oriented Development Master Plan as a promising location for a gateway.
- Designate locations for banner placement to advertise events at or near the major identified gateways.
- Expand Main Street light pole banners all the way to the Highway 133 and Main Street roundabout.

3. Celebrate the Rivers

Highlight the rivers as community assets and recreation opportunities.

Overview

Carbondale has rich natural resources including two rivers running through town - the Gold Medal designated Roaring Fork River and the Crystal River. The rivers are used recreationally by fishermen and boaters. However, physical and visual access to the rivers and acknowledgement of these assets as key natural features of Carbondale is lacking, and therefore, the rivers are not widely utilized by all members of the community. Many of the following recommendations must be completed in partnership with groups working to improve the river and to gain financial support or grant money. Refer to Map 7 Proposed Gateways and River Access for the locations of features identified in the below recommendations.

Recommendations

- Consider development of “sitting areas” along an appropriate section of the Crystal or Roaring Fork River if concluded from river ecology experts that it will not undermine the environmental quality of the river riparian area. Suggest this be taken under consideration within the 2014 Crystal River Conceptual Stream Restoration Design Plan produced for the Aspen Valley Land Trust and Town of Carbondale.
- Provide a pedestrian bridge crossing over the Roaring Fork River on the east side of Highway 133, connecting to Gateway River Park.
- Leverage partnerships to improve and maintain existing riverfront trails, such as partnering with the Roaring Fork Audubon Society to implement a Native Birding Trail and Preserve along Riverfront Park.
- Partner and collaborate with Colorado Parks and Wildlife Department (CPWD) for improvements to the boat launch ramp area at Gateway River Park that is partially funded through a boater required launch put-in fee or take-out fee.
- Promote the conservation of all riparian areas, support riverbank restoration projects within critical riparian areas and contribute to watershed planning projects.
- Partner with the Carbondale and Rural Fire Protection District, Colorado Parks and Wildlife and ecological/native bird experts to periodically conduct fire hazard assessments of trails along the Crystal River, in those areas where overgrown vegetation has led to the trails becoming inaccessible and a fire hazard.
- Employ naturalized stormwater treatment techniques such as naturalized detention, bio-swales, rain gardens, native vegetation and trees, terracing and porous pavements to improve water quality.
- Organize river clean-up days and gather volunteers through partnerships with organizations such as the Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers, Roaring Fork Conservancy, Roaring Fork Audubon Society, river guides and outfitter companies and other community volunteer groups.

- The Town owned island parcel on the Roaring Fork River should be preserved in its natural state with no camping permitted, and only one sign (if needed) should be permitted on the island.
- Support the 2015 Crystal River Conceptual Stream Restoration Design Plan produced for the Aspen Valley Land Trust and Town of Carbondale. The plan addresses approximately 1.4 miles of river within town, and makes the following recommendations:
 - Improve aquatic habitat, including natural reproduction, rearing habitat, holding cover and winter low flow and high flow refugia.
 - Provide a diversity of fishing opportunities and access.
 - Provide a trail system that provides ADA access to the river, small off-channel streams and oxbows for a variety of fishing and recreational opportunities.
 - Create a stable stream by emulating the stable channel morphology to reduce the sediment deposition (mid-channel bars) and land loss from streambank erosion.
 - Reduce the flood stage for normal floods by increasing sediment transport capacity.
 - Protect bridges and other infrastructure from erosion damage.
 - Improve the streamflow diversions at the Carbondale, Weaver and Leonhardy canals to promote stream stability and reduce the sediment being transported into the diversion canals.
 - Improve the recreational boating and provide an access area for boating.
 - Provide an educational opportunity explaining the various river system components, including restoration structures, the riparian community, and the various habitats associated within the river corridor.

4. Address Financial Stability

Secure the Town's fiscal health in order to upkeep and maintain existing parks, trails and recreation amenities.

Overview

Maintenance and upkeep of existing parks, trails and recreational amenities is dependent upon the financial stability and fiscal health of the Town to adequately budget for staff and equipment resources to meet those needs. Within this objective is the ability to improve operations and cost recovery practices of the parks and recreation department, as well as create fundraising opportunities.

Recommendations

Fundraising, Donations and Volunteers:

- Develop an advertising and awareness campaign that encourages people to shop locally, thus supporting parks, recreation and trails through the existing half (½) cent recreation sales tax.
- Develop and identify fundraising strategies for assisting with upkeep and maintenance of existing parks, trails and recreation amenities.
- Utilize volunteers for efforts that provide opportunities to engage the public in park and trail improvement projects. Prior volunteer labor efforts have helped in the establishment of park amenities and features, but typically dwindle over the life span of the improvements. If there are unsustainable maintenance needs created from volunteer led projects, then volunteer help is better suited for efforts that have finite schedules.
- Create a "Gifts for Parks" catalogue that outlines and provides information on how citizens can provide vital support to Carbondale parklands through a variety of gift donations that can be donor earmarked toward purchasing small park amenities such as a commemorative tree, park bench, picnic table, drinking fountain, etc., or to larger capital park beautification or renovation projects.
- Provide protocol for how individual donors, organized groups, local and regional businesses and corporations can honor a person or event; memorialize a family member or colleague; or celebrate a birthday, anniversary, or other special event through a commemorative gift to the Parks and Recreation Department.
- Acknowledge all donors through a dated certificate commemorating the gift, a map recording the placement of the gift, and recognition with a plaque or sign at the site, along with an annual notice in the Recreation Department program brochure.
- Create special capital fundraising opportunities through a special recognition program. Special signage programs can be useful tools for attracting sponsorships, donations, grants and other types of funding that help to enhance the parks and trails

system. Provide opportunities for naming a newly constructed recreational facility after a corporate business, organization or individual donors who make a significant monetary contribution to funding the capital construction costs of the facility.

Developer Created Parks and Trails:

- Adopt policies and requirements within the Unified Development Code that discourage reliance on Town financial and staff resources for the creation and maintenance of parks to serve development projects.
- Require new development to construct and maintain trail and sidewalk connections within their development to the larger Town sidewalk/trail system.
- Strengthen the local food system through promoting community garden space as open space that contributes to development and subdivision park exactions.

Recreation and Community Center Operations Cost Recovery:

- Implement modifications to the Recreation and Community Center to improve cost recovery by providing services that will attract and retain members, guests and participants. Modifications include renovating existing space, or adding to this space, to provide dedicated areas for both fitness classes and cardio equipment.
- Study the membership price point to see if costs are competitive within the Roaring Fork Valley and value-added for user groups including children, adults, seniors and families.

Town Facilities Operations Cost Recovery:

- If funding for pool operations and maintenance becomes a financial subsidy burden for the Town, consider closure of the pool.
- If the pool is closed, consider construction of a children's splash pad area that will reduce staff and resource costs incurred by the Town.
- Consider charging event organizers or event sponsors standard overtime labor costs of Town employees who are associated with hanging banners, closing and blocking of streets, facility setup/breakdown, etc.
- Study the financial costs or benefits of outsourcing the Gateway RV Park Campground operations to a private commercial vendor rather than continuing as a Parks and Recreation Department function.
- Study the financial costs or benefits of outsourcing cemetery operations. Compare the Town's fee schedule to other cemetery offerings within the Roaring Fork Valley to determine if cemetery charges and rates are optimal and maximized. Determine if obtaining additional land for future community cemetery burial needs is cost effective.
- Require park rental fees from all private vendors and instructors (i.e., yoga, tennis, Crossfit classes) who utilize Town parks for profit-making fitness classes or lessons.

- **Develop a fee structure and rental agreement for short-term boarding of horses at the Gus Darien Riding Arena.**
- **Consider acquisition of adjacent land to the Gus Darien Riding Arena to secure future parking needs of the Carbondale Wild West Rodeo and to eliminate yearly lease of private land for parking purposes.**

5. Maintain Existing Amenities

Focus on enhancing existing parks before spearheading expansion to new locations.

Overview

Carbondale's neighborhood parks are abundant for a community of its size, and offer parklands for passive recreational use and active recreational use. The enticement to expand the Town's park system to create new recreational amenities and offerings, and fill voids and gaps within it can be great. Given the lack of funds available for new parkland acquisition, planning and design, development, and operations and maintenance the Town may want to consider that its focus be on the enhancement of its existing parks system, and completion of projects that are already on the drawing board, prior to spearheading expansion of new park projects and locations. Town emphasis should focus and be on the operation and care of parklands already in place. Completion of existing park projects, including certain element features of the Nature Park, Gateway River Park, and Bonnie Fischer Park should become the priority. However, if opportunities arise to acquire park dedicated properties through residential or commercial land-use development, through a joint public and private partnership, through a property gift to the Town, or through other affordable options, then the Town should determine the long-term maintenance care costs of the park property being considered within their decision making to acquire the property. Several ways the Town can exemplify their focus on caring for existing parklands, both for passive recreational use and active recreational use, is through the following means:

- Continue a culture of pride in the operation, maintenance and care of existing parks.
- If appropriate, advance the completion of existing park master plan projects.
- Establish clear policies of park and trail use, with rules and regulations, and enforce these policies.
- Continue to address park safety issues and ADA compliance accessibility issues, and if possible meet the standards of Universal Design.
- Wherever feasible, and fiscally possible, the Town should strive for designing and developing parks and recreation facilities to meet standards of Universal Design, but at a minimum, will comply with ADA requirements.
- Balance short-term park improvements to meet long-term sustainability and suitability objectives.
- Address existing park maintenance needs and park enhancement improvement needs.

Recommendations

Continue a culture of pride in the operation, maintenance and care of existing parks:

- Implement crowdsource mapping to identify maintenance needs, trails/bike connections, etc.
- Continue to fundraise, develop a park gifts catalog, and apply for grants to fund park improvements.
- Ensure park and bathroom closures at designated times to prevent public use when park grounds and facilities are not adequately monitored.
- Create a “Bark Ranger” volunteer program such as used in Colorado Springs to enforce rules and regulations within the Nature Park and Hendrick Dog Park (Doggie Park).
- Create a neighborhood “Adopt-a-Park” program.
- Seek solutions to provide greater organizational structure and resources for growing food, permaculture and community gardens on public properties. Look to examples such as the Mid Valley Community Garden Collective.

Advance the completion of existing park master plan projects:

- Before constructing additional parks or larger scale facilities, and as funding becomes available, prioritize and advance the completion of financially feasible recreational amenities outlined within existing approved master plans.

Establish clear policies of park and trail use with rules and regulations, and enforce these policies:

- Park signage with rules, regulations, opening/closing hours, and user expectations are needed to maintain quality of facilities, eliminate park user conflicts, and provide means for law enforcement to regulate and enforce rules. Park signage should be bilingual and easily visible.
- Park hours of permitted use should be clear regarding seasonal extended hour usage in specific parks where lighting exists such as North Face Park or the Gus Darien Riding Arena.
- Consider prohibiting use of tent stakes in parks for events, as they have the potential to puncture and damage park irrigation water lines. Use of water drums, sand bags or a built-in system to secure tents should be considered.
- Develop and adopt by Town Ordinance an updated set of park rules, regulations and policies that address new park user conflicting issues (i.e., driving golf balls, operating drones, bike and skate park helmet requirements, private vendors, etc.) Engage the public in determining appropriate rules and regulations for the community and gain buy-in before adopting.

Continue to address park safety and ADA compliance accessibility issues:

- Conduct a restroom facility review at each park site to determine and prioritize a plan to renovate, repair, enlarge, or build a restroom where rented portable toilets are currently located. This review should consider ADA compliance and accessibility issues, along with adequate restroom size to accommodate spectator and public usage needs at large athletic and/or special community events (i.e., North Face Park, Sopris Park, Bonnie Fischer Park, Nature Park and etc.).
- Explore the opportunities for minor and major outdoor public swimming pool improvements (see additional recommendations in the “Plan for the Future” section).
- Provide activities and/or amenities within Town parks, on trails and within recreation programs to assist both the general and special needs population to build strength and fitness.
- All new construction and renovation projects for existing facilities should meet or exceed the requirements and specifications of the ADA (for reference see Department of Justice compliance table for ADA.)
- Update an ADA facilities compliance list.
- Wherever possible, the Town will also strive to meet standards of Universal Design.

Balance short-term park improvements to meet long-term sustainability and suitability objectives:

The Town's Comprehensive Plan provides many objectives for creating a sustainable future, aligning community, environment and economy. The following are only some of the recommendations in this plan designed to support the sustainability goals for protecting natural assets, reducing impacts on climate, and aspiring to a sustainable lifestyle.

- Consider employment of an environmentally friendly park wide naturalized stormwater drainage management system.
- Create a replacement schedule for existing parks and recreation infrastructure.
- Partner with the Carbondale and Rural Fire Protection District to conduct fire assessments in Town parks and trails every two years to ensure they are firewise and not creating unnecessary threats. Direct efforts at Stairway Park and the Crystal Riverfront Park.
- Seek solutions to weed management and noxious weed controls within parks, along open-space corridors and trails. Work with the Town of Carbondale Environmental Board and others to seek solutions to the weed problems within parks.
- Add filtration systems for park irrigation to reduce annual costs of sprinkler irrigation head replacement.
- Address existing park maintenance needs and park enhancement improvement needs:

Take care of existing park amenities and improvement needs as described in the breakdown of the following specific park sites (park locations identified on Map 8: Carbondale Parks):

Carbondale Nature Park

- Develop a park “Friends Group” to assist with special projects and encourage volunteer efforts.
- Install a high capacity portable spray irrigation system for purposes of weed reduction.

Gateway River Park

- Renovate or rebuild the bathroom and shower facility and upgrade ADA accessibility.
- Make upgrade improvements to the water and sewer infrastructure serving the RV Campground.
- Make improvements to the lower boat launch parking lot and widen the boat ramp launch area.
- Upgrade electrical service within the RV Campground from the existing 30 amp service to 50 amp service in order to meet the demands of today’s RV users.
- If funding becomes available, implementation of additional amenity features outlined within the 2012 Master Plan should be considered.

Gianinetti Park

- Expand park ADA playground equipment and park features.
- Park playground bench installed for parents watching their children.
- Renovate and remodel the restrooms.

Gus Darien Riding Arena

- Construct a covered roof over the bleachers.
- Improve the announcer’s booth through a renovation and reconstruction project so that it meets Town code.
- Acquire adjacent property if financially feasible for current and future parking needs.
- Expand bike, pedestrian and alternative transportation incentives.

Hendrick Dog Park

- Replace the irrigation pump.
- Monitor weed issues in periphery areas.

Miner's Park

- Complete the sidewalk network in concrete or asphalt, replacing the section that is currently a soft surface.
- Park playground bench installed for parents watching their children.
- Repair cracks and/or replace concrete basketball court surface.
- If funding becomes available, the construction of designated Pickleball and Platform Tennis Courts could occur at this park location.
- Explore opportunities to add infrastructure to utilize this park for events.

North Face Park

- Enlarge existing or add an additional restroom facility.
- Pave and stripe the parking lots to address the maintenance issues associated with highly-use parking area. Address increased stormwater runoff with best practices for stormwater management.
- Replace crusher fines path walkways with an asphalt surface to decrease manual weed maintenance needed.
- Repair concrete surfaces.
- Explore and consider options to utilize the park for large community events, adding needed event infrastructure including an outdoor bandshell or covered stage. Assess the electrical power availability and needs for larger events.
- Collaborate and partner with the RE-1 School District on developing elements of the park site as proposed within the 2009 Sports Complex Master Plan.
- Phase 2 improvements and/or expansion of the Bike Park.
- If funding becomes available, add lights to the Bike Park and Skateboard Park for evening nighttime recreational use. Provide lights on existing tennis/pickleball courts for extended evening play.
- Consider construction of designated Pickleball and Platform Tennis Courts where the existing 12 & under soccer practice field now exists.

Nuche Park

- Be mindful of the RVR protective covenants when determining improvements.
- Provide interpretive signage regarding historical information on the park's name, and that also provides information on the natural environment, habitat, and ecology of the site.
- Improve the ecology and environmental habitat.

- Other than the minor park improvements listed above, the park should be preserved in its natural state as much as possible.

Promenade Park

- Modify the existing demonstration wild flower gardens currently overrun with weeds, and redo in grass turf, along with creating a community vegetable garden along the Rio Grande Trail.

Sopris Park

- Replace the older components within the playground area and provide for ADA accessibility.
- Park playground bench installed for parents watching their children.
- Add trees in locations that do not conflict with circulation or event setup.
- Pave with asphalt the existing crusher fine trail leading to the picnic shade shelter to avoid current weed and vegetation growth issues that impact these trails and to improve ADA accessibility.

Stairway Park

- Maintain safe stairway access into the park by providing a non-slip surface on the stairs.
- Initiate streambank restoration to prevent shoreline erosion.

Bonnie Fisher Park

- Implement those amenity features outlined within the 2011 Master Plan that are financially feasible with available funds, and are relevant to enhancing the needs of current and future park users.

RVR Triangle Park

- Park playground bench installed for parents watching their children.

Hendrick Park

- Park playground bench installed for parents watching their children.

6. Plan for the Future

Upon securing fiscal health, create financial mechanisms to develop and maintain new projects.

Overview

The ability to create and focus on new projects relies on obtaining significant additional funding. Community-wide survey results provided insight that voters may be likely to support a sales tax increase to support new recreation, park and trail efforts. The Town of Carbondale's total sales tax is 8.40 percent with 0.5 percent of it resulting from the existing recreation and use sales tax. Table 1 shows that Carbondale's current tax is not the highest or the lowest in the region as compared to similar mountain communities in Colorado. This suggests it may be reasonable for Carbondale to increase its sales tax, but keep in mind that local voters and business owners may be less likely to support an increase as Carbondale reaches the upper thresholds of the tax range. Several communities similar to Carbondale have been successful in passing a recreation, open space, and/or trails sales tax. Carbondale has a lower percent sales tax for this purpose than the communities of Basalt, Snowmass Village, Crested Butte, Gunnison and Avon. Further steps are needed to determine if a half cent increase for recreation would be supported by voters. If approved by voters, it would allow the Town to complete the more expensive priority projects within the next 10 years. If a more conservative quarter cent increase for recreation is supported by voters, it would meet some smaller priority project needs, but would be mainly used for more improved maintenance and enhancement of existing facilities.

Table 1: Sales Tax Comparison

Town/City	Town/City Tax Rate	Special Districts	County Tax Rate	State Tax Rate	TOTAL TAX	Lodging Tax	Specially Earmarked
Carbondale	3.50%	1.00%	1.00%	2.90%	8.40%	2.00%	.5% Recreation and Use Sales Tax
Glenwood Springs	3.70%	1.00%	1.00%	2.90%	8.60%	2.50%	1.5% Capital, .2% Transit & .5% Streets
Basalt (Eagle County)	3.00%	0.80%	1.50%	2.90%	8.20%	4.00%	1% Open Space Tax
Basalt (Pitkin County)	3.00%	0.80%	2.60%	2.90%	9.30%	4.00%	1% Open Space Tax
Snowmass Village	3.50%	0.40%	3.60%	2.90%	10.40%	2.40%	2.5% for Marketing
Crested Butte	4.00%	0.60%	1.00%	2.90%	8.50%	4.00%	Additional Voluntary 1% Open Space Sales Tax
City of Gunnison	4.00%	0.35%	1.00%	2.90%	8.25%	4.00%	1% Recreation sales tax
City of Rifle	4.25%		1.00%	2.90%	8.15%	2.50%	1% Parks and Recreation sales tax
Avon	4.00%	0.50%	1.00%	2.90%	8.40%	4.00%	1.5% Open Space & Trails, .15% Parking Structure & .45% Housing & Daycare
Breckenridge	2.50%	0.88%	2.00%	2.90%	8.28%	3.40%	.5% Open Space & 1.46% Marketing

Sources: City/Town websites as of December 2014

Upon securing sufficient funding for maintenance of existing facilities, consider a strategy to save and earmark a percent of Recreation Sales and Use tax dollars for the local match required to apply and seek Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) and Garfield County Federal Mineral Lease District grants needed for high cost improvement projects. Citizen voter approval to secure bonds may also be required for larger projects that include improvements to the following:

- John M. Fleet Swimming Pool
- Sidewalk network completion (see *"Improve the Bicycle and Pedestrian Network" section*).
- Completion of the Gateway River Park (see *"Improve and Enhance Gateways and Celebrate the Rivers" sections*).
- Crystal River accessibility and restoration and riparian enhancements (see *"Celebrate the Rivers" section*).
- Landscaping and beautification projects in our parks and along trails (see the *"Bicycle and Pedestrian Network" section*).
- Covered Ice Rink Facility (possibly enclosed, and private funding needed).

Recommendations

Pursue a Tax Increase to Support Long-term Priority Projects:

- Engage the local business community in a discussion of the implications of a tax increase.
- Evaluate alternative tax options and their potential revenue, such as:
 - A quarter-cent sales tax increase to the Recreation Sales and Use Tax to support some of the lower-cost improvements identified in this plan (could result in a \$250,000 annual increase to this fund if current sales tax return rates continue).
 - A half-cent sales tax increase to the Recreation Sales and Use Tax to support some of the greater cost projects long-term identified in this plan (could result in a \$500,000 annual increase to this fund if current sales tax return rates continue).
 - Sunset period for sales tax increase.
 - A property tax increase designated for park and trail maintenance purposes. A property tax increase would require voters to approve a property tax mill levy for a specific service or purpose (if the existing Town property tax levels were doubled it could result in approximately \$213,000 annually if current property tax return rates continue). The creation of a property tax for a service area beyond the Town boundaries could be introduced if a Parks and Recreation District or Subordinate Agency and Area were established.

- A voluntary sales tax program (similar to the Town of Crested Butte's 1% Open Space program).
- Tax limited to recreation product sales (similar to the City of Colorado Springs Bicycle Sales Tax).
- Conduct a voter study and possible poll to determine the projects and ballot language that would lead to voter support.
- Develop a ballot issue for inclusion as early as autumn 2015 or for a spring or autumn 2016 election.

Swimming Pool:

There are five tiers of pool improvements that can be evaluated and phased over time, ranging from small safety and accessibility upgrades to a long-term funded newly built pool facility. An aquatic facility and financial feasibility study will need to be conducted concerning all future options for the John M. Fleet Pool that was built in 1978 and is now 37 years old. This study should examine all the various cost options ranging from renovating/remodeling the existing pool facility to building a new swimming pool facility.

- Tier 1: Recreation Sales Tax Increase to address Safety and Accessibility Upgrades (near-term needs):
 - Renovate the existing bathhouse to meet accessibility and safety standards. Improve safety access for emergency responders by improving vehicular access to the gate.
 - Consider changes to the perimeter pool fence that are visually more aesthetic than chain link, yet allow better visibility into the pool during evening hours by patrol officers to deter illegal trespass activity. Fencing must also meet the desires of pool users for privacy during pool hours.
 - Create a zero depth sloped entry into the pool for improved accessibility.
 - Provide a temporary pool shade canopy or covering.
 - Renovate and remodel pool exterior and interior spaces to improve appearance and user comfort.
- Tier 2: Recreation Sales Tax Increase to address the Bathhouse and Minor Pool Improvements:
 - Replace the bathhouse with a new structure that meets today's accessibility and comfort needs.
 - Create a larger lawn area adjacent to the pool for sunbathing.
 - Replace the filtration system and upgrade mechanical systems.
 - Replace the wading pool with a splash pad.
 - Replace the pool slide and consider other poolside amenities.

- Install a permanent shade structure.
- Tier 3: Recreation Sales Tax Increase to address the Bathhouse and Major Pool Renovation Improvements:
 - Bathhouse and other improvements as described in Tier 2 approach.
 - Rebuild the pool with improved layout and amount of pool features such as an outdoor lap pool, children's play pool and outdoor therapeutic spa.
- Tier 4: Recreation Sales Tax Increase and Bond Referendum to address Construction, Operation and Maintenance of:
 - Year-round tent or bubble structure over the existing pool
 - (OR) a Year-round heated outdoor lap pool
- Tier 5: Recreation Sales Tax Increase and Bond Referendum to address Construction, Operation and Maintenance of:
 - Year-round Indoor Aquatic Center that incorporates play features into the design.

Ice Rink:

A community interest group of members expressed and advocated interest for building an indoor or covered ice rink facility. The Town would need to work with this organized interest group to assist them in finding available land, study local market conditions, and determine financial implications regarding operations and maintenance requirements, along with participation as a partner in fundraising efforts. To satisfy the short term desires and to enhance the existing ice rinks, methods of extending the ice season should be investigated (i.e., shade structure over the downtown rink, and or the cost of temporary refrigeration options and compressors allowing for a more traditional refrigerated surface that could extend the season by two to three months).

7. Distinguish Carbondale

Promote and focus on becoming renowned for the unique assets that express Carbondale's identity.

Overview

Carbondale has a reputation and identity grounded in several themes, including its ranching heritage, strong bicycle culture, access to mountain adventure as a basecamp to the great outdoors and a diverse community of arts, culture and community celebrations. In addition, Carbondale holds a high status for being a leader in energy efficiency and environmental stewardship. Carbondale should promote and focus on being renowned for these assets unique to the community.

Recommendations

Special events are well celebrated within the community and can generate community excitement and support for the parks, generate revenue for the local economy, and attract visitors and enhance tourism opportunities.

- Identify, enhance and promote sites that are suitable for hosting recreation events. Many of Carbondale's existing parks and open spaces are excellent choices and well suited for hosting local, regional and national events. Sites such as Sopris Park, North Face Park, Miners Park, Bonnie Fischer Park, Gus Darien Riding Arena, and the Downtown Fourth Street Park and Plaza all should be considered. Amenities and services for events should include water, electrical and adequate restroom facilities.
- Advertise and utilize both the North Face Bike Park and the North Face Skateboard Park, which will draw out-of-town visitor users. Host events centered in these facilities including competitions and community festivals.
- Consider the opportunities to host winter events in parks, such as snow sculptures, sledding, ice skating, hockey, winter bike races, etc.
- Rotate events throughout Town parks in order to allow sites to recover from use impacts, and to lessen neighborhood impacts with increased noise and traffic, and to keep events unique and special. The Town may want to consider the purchase of a portable bandshell with stage for use in hosting events in a variety of locations.
- Consider the conversion of Fourth Street between Main and Garfield, where the CCAH Launchpad is located, into a Downtown Festival Street Plaza. Utilize traffic calming measures like removable bollards and mountable speed tables to occasionally, seasonally or permanently close the street off to automobile traffic. This one block also lends itself to becoming a permanent pedestrian mall between downtown and the CCAH Launch Pad for Special Event festivals, the farmers market, concerts and First Friday activities.
- Calendar/Schedule of events: Collaborate across Town departments to manage a Parks Calendar of Events. A well-managed event calendar balances park events with non-

event days to maintain the intended use of the system and allow for grounds recuperation after events. This calendar should also be used to coordinate various departments on extra labor needs leading up to and after events, such as Public Works and Police/Public Safety.

- Encourage the creation of a signature food event or festival celebrating Carbondale's Food Heritage, Ranching Heritage, and proximity to educational farms like Sustainable Settings and Rock Bottom Ranch.
- Carbondale is a diverse and bilingual community. Highlight the diversity within events that appeal to both Latino and Anglo populations to bridge the differences within the community and focus on the commonalities. Music acts that appeal to English and Spanish speakers is one opportunity to embrace the diversity, as are events highlighting food.
- Encourage and support emerging recreational activities such as Pickleball that offer unique opportunities for hosting tournaments that bring visiting players into the community.
- Maintain all Town events as green and environmentally friendly that promote zero waste. Utilization of revenues from the City Market plastic bag fee could be considered as a means to support and/or subsidize this effort.

8. Provide Sports Facilities

Focus on providing sports practice fields and indoor recreation within the community, and partner with valley-wide recreation providers for larger complexes and tournament spaces.

Overview

The Town of Carbondale experiences a higher demand than availability exists for recreational fields to support organized youth and teen athletic programs, adult leagues and growing interest in new or alternative field sports and pickup games. The shortage is most notable amongst soccer fields, but it is also a logistical challenge with scheduling lacrosse, rugby, bicycle polo, ultimate Frisbee and mountain bike team practice, to name a few.

The community has expressed challenges in having practice fields out of the proximity required for youth to safely walk or bicycle to the field locations. Another challenge is when parents have children participating in games at different locations and the logistics of going back and forth.

A lack of gym space also poses challenges within the community. While the Recreation Center has a gym, it is often booked and sometimes has multiple, incompatible uses occurring within it. The RE-1 schools also have gyms, but they are currently not shared with the Town to supplement youth and recreational needs independent of school-sponsored activities.

Recommendations

- Work with the RE-1 school district to encourage a maximization of the number of sports athletic fields within their properties by implementing all or some of the proposals outlined within the School District 2009 Sports Complex Master Plan.
- Look for shared opportunities for fields and indoor gym use that are compatible uses for user groups.
- Continue the close relationship with the RE-1 school district to share facilities. Consider Recreation Department coordination of all scheduling of athletic field and gym use after school hours, removing the burden from the schools, if they are interested.
- Develop partnership cooperation with schools to utilize their gymnasiums to supplement demand for indoor space during peak seasonal times.
- Consider opportunities to add sports lighting to the Tiny Nightingale fields for baseball and soccer play. These fields are located on school district properties and therefore coordination with the schools and a revised Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) would be needed.
- Focus on providing youth team practices in town, so that it's convenient for parents to drop off and pick up children and/or they can bike or walk to the fields.
- Consider reconfiguration of the North Face ballfield into a high school baseball field if it will result in additional community ballfields and soccer fields where the existing

Ron Patch Baseball Field is located, as outlined within the School District 2009 Sports Complex Master Plan. Seek opportunities for multi-use sports offerings to expand programming into the evening hours.

- Maintain the multipurpose nature of many of the Town's parks in order to provide locations for up-and-coming activities such as bicycle polo, mountain bike team training, cyclocross races, Frisbee disc golf, etc. Allow these activities to happen only when assurances are in place that park turf damage will not occur.
- Collaborate, if the opportunity presents itself, with neighboring communities, such as Glenwood Springs or the Crown Mountain Park and Recreation District, to develop a shared Sports Complex for league and tournament athletic play.
- Coordinate with local youth and adult athletic organizations and leagues to ensure shared equipment purchases meet the standards and requirement needs of both the Town and organizations to reduce the need to duplicate equipment purchase investments.
- Provide storage space at athletic field locations where needed to accommodate equipment storage needs and to reduce set up and tear down required at each use.

9. Build and Enhance Strong Partnerships

Partner with local organizations and individuals to enhance Carbondale's natural land conservation, agricultural setting and connection to its heritage.

Overview

The Carbondale and Roaring Fork Valley has an abundance of wonderful nonprofit organizations and community minded individuals and businesses to collaborate in partnership with. Leverage these partnerships and volunteers through concerted efforts to maintain and improve Carbondale's parks, trails and recreational offerings. In addition, better align and coordinate these efforts internally, involving Town staff and commissions. While the Town currently has many strong partnerships and collaborations throughout the community, a number of new opportunities or areas to focus on were identified in the Master Plan process including:

- Senior Services (recreational opportunities and programming)
- Special Needs (recreational opportunities and programming)
- Environmental Education Programming
- Community Safety (park rule enforcement)
- Special Events and Festivals
- Hispanic/Latino Organizations
- Trail Advocacy
- Schools (RE-1, CRMS, CMC, etc.)
- Mt. Sopris Historical Society
- LiveWell Garfield County

Recommendations

- Hold periodic meetings between the Recreation Department staff and other Roaring Fork Valley recreation coordinators to discuss program and activity schedules, address conflicts caused by overlap, agree to consistent rules and regulations within league play, and discuss best practices and lessons learned with one another. Use these meetings to identify opportunities for shared resources.
- Develop collaborating partnerships between neighboring communities, other agencies, land trusts and environmental education providers when working on common goals and issues.
- Develop collaborating partnerships with LiveWell Garfield County, physical therapists, special needs providers and health care groups to enhance the recreation and health/well-being offerings on Town properties.
- Develop a list of community service projects for when volunteers become available and want to organize a workday.

- Provide Town support for organizations with resources to complete outdoor projects that benefit Carbondale citizens (i.e., BLM, RFMBA, RFOV, Audubon Society, Red Hill Council, Roaring Fork Conservancy, Pitkin County, Garfield County, etc.).
- Develop relationships with local Hispanic/Latino organizations and support agencies (i.e., Club Rotario Roaring Fork, English in Action, Latino/Hispanic Rodeo Series organizers and more) to keep community members informed about recreation programs offered by the Town and to better understand the recreation needs and desires of all community members.
- Develop a relationship with the Mt. Sopris Historical Society on the future planning, development, and community use of the Thompson Park property. There has been interest expressed regarding developing agri-heritage tourism themed activities centered around the historic Thompson Home museum, along with a proposed agri-heritage-learning center that would include a heritage demonstration orchard and garden.
- Continue working in partnership collaboration with the local U.S. Forest Service office in Carbondale, and also with the local Colorado Parks and Wildlife Department office.
- Continue working in partnership collaboration with RFTA Transit and Trails.
- Encourage collaboration between Town departments, including Parks and Recreation, Planning, Public Works and Public Safety.

10. Broaden, Enhance and Promote Recreation Opportunities

Develop strategic partnerships to increase program and activity offerings to underserved user groups.

Overview

The Town of Carbondale seeks to provide services, programs and provide amenities that encourage all segments of the population to use them. The following groups have been identified as needing additional focus to serve their recreation and activity needs:

- Youth and Teens
- Seniors
- Hispanic/Latinos
- Special needs groups
- Low Income/Underprivileged
- Families
- Commuters

Recommendations

Youth and Teens

- Create more nature education opportunities in and surrounding Carbondale. Promote partnerships with the Aspen Center for Environmental Studies (ACES) and Rock Bottom Ranch and Sustainable Settings.
- Provide activities geared toward teens. For example, have at least one outdoor bike-in movie in the summer that appeals to teens as the target audience.
- Engage school leaders to help organize an intramural league for teens utilizing CRCC gym space for sports such as volleyball, basketball, soccer and more.
- Encourage Teen representation on the Parks and Recreation Commission.
- Encourage Teen representation on the Bike Pedestrian and Trails Commission.
- Encourage and provide opportunities for teens to participate in the Community Gardens.
- Partner with schools to determine how the Recreation Center offerings could be better suited to Teen's interests and schedules.

- Trends in teen recreation include Parkour and Gymnastics, including ski and snowboard training. These require seasonal indoor space. Provide activities that appeal to teens as the target audience.

Seniors

- Provide opportunities to partner with other valley-wide and Garfield County providers and share senior programming and marketing opportunities throughout. An example of this is fieldtrips where vans may leave from up valley and pick down valley seniors up along the way.
- Focus on increased advertisement for senior activities. Regular advertisements in local papers are a better means to reach this population over digital and online updates.
- Pickleball is a popular sport amongst the older adult and senior populations. Demand for facilities currently exceeds space. In order to promote this growing sport and the health benefits it provides to the population, accommodate regular Pickleball times in the recreation center, particularly in colder weather months where outdoor play is prohibitive. Promote recreation center memberships to these users.

Hispanic/Latinos

- Provide contracts, literature and advertisements in Spanish.
- Host enrollment events that have a Spanish translator present to translate important information and answer questions that may arise.
- Recruit Latino volunteers to assist with children's programming and build involvement and leadership within the Latino community.
- Provide information in Spanish regarding the Community Garden to encourage Hispanic/Latino participation.
- Encourage Latino/Hispanic representation on the Parks and Recreation Commission.
- Encourage Latino/Hispanic representation on the Bike Pedestrian and Trails Commission.
- Provide at least one fitness class in Spanish, and advertise it in Spanish.
- Provide more opportunities for drop-in activities that appeal to Hispanic/Latino populations.

Special Needs Groups

- Consult with local professionals engaged in special needs services to provide input regarding parks and recreation design and facility improvements.
- Seek partnership with special needs providers to support recreation activity offerings.

Promote Recreational Activities

- **Add a master list of all programs and local recreation-based opportunities available within the region to the Parks and Recreation website for easy-to-find information.**
- **Advertise and better connect with schools regarding opportunities for youth participation scholarships. Create clear requirements to qualify for scholarships, including proof of residency, income bracket and monetary matching commitments. Scholarships can be used to supplement program fees and personal equipment needs. Partner with local organizations such as the Elks or Rotary Clubs, banks/businesses and others to help fund scholarships.**

11. Support the Creative District Plan

Support the Creative District Plan by strategically utilizing public properties to their potential; positioning them as flexible space for community recreation, special events and the arts.

Overview

Arts and cultural services are fundamental to the civic purposes of Carbondale and to the community's identity. Support of the 2014-2015 Creative District Plan should be continued by strategically utilizing public properties within the district to their potential and by celebrating opportunities for creative, flexible space for the community's benefit of recreation, special events and the arts. Parks and the arts collectively encourage economic development and tourism within the community.

A significant component of the Carbondale Creative District Plan relates to a well-designed signage and wayfinding system. Signs help guide visitors and residents to key destinations, linking trails to major amenities like parks, gateways, and Town services like the library, Town Hall and Carbondale's many performance spaces. They also are able to create and narrate educational opportunities and serve as branding that is continuous throughout the community, easily recognizable and consistent.

Recommendations

- Coordinate and follow signage guidelines defined by the Creative District Plan for all parks. Consider signs that enhance connectivity and aid in navigation, provide opportunities for natural or cultural educational interpretation, and communicate parks and trails rules and regulations.
- Create guidelines for appropriate memorials and art placement in Town parks and along Town trails.
- Seek opportunities to enhance cultural, historic and arts offerings within parks. One example is a park amenity that provides interactive musical outdoor percussion instruments.