



Boulder Parks & Recreation 2013 Annual Report



Service excellence for a healthy community!



Boulder Parks & Recreation

2013 Parks and Recreation Advisory Board members:

- Bob Yates – Board Chair
(through March 2013)
- Richard Thayer – Board Chair
- Mike Conroy – Board Vice Chair
- Myriah Conroy
- Michael Guzek
- Michelle Estrella
- Kelly Wyatt
- Marty Gorce

City Manager’s Office:

- Jane S. Brautigam – City Manager
- Paul J. Fetherston – Deputy City Manager

Parks & Recreation Department:

- Jeff Dillon - Director

Mission

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

Vision

We envision a community where every member’s health and well-being is founded on unparalleled parks, facilities and programs.

The Boulder Parks and Recreation Department Master Plan

Delayed by the September flooding, the Department’s Master Plan was unanimously accepted by City Council in Feb. 2014. Implementation of the plan means the community will see a parks and recreation department that is modern, results driven, collaborative and where funding is focused on the highest community priorities.

To view the Master Plan, visit www.bouldercolorado.gov/pages/parks-recreation-master-plan.

City Council 2013



Back row (left to right): Matthew Appelbaum, Mayor; Sam Weaver; Andrew Shoemaker; Tim Plass; Suzanne Jones; George Karakehian, Mayor Pro Tem

Front row (left to right): Mary Young, Macon Cowles, Lisa Morzel

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Director's Message



Boulder's parks and recreation system is a reflection of our community's long held values and support for parkland, green space, fitness and wellness. Today's system of urban parks, trails, plazas, recreation facilities and programs is a result of the community's remarkable support and a major contributor to Boulder's nationally acclaimed quality of life. For over 100 years, the City of

Boulder has provided the community with the unparalleled access to nature, parks and fitness services that residents have supported.

We are proud to deliver the breadth and caliber of health and wellness opportunities Boulder seeks. Thank you for your continued support as we embark on the next 100 years of opportunities and challenges. We appreciate your vision, your passion and your contributions to making Boulder's Parks and Recreation system a national and international model.

On the following pages you'll learn about our efforts to focus on the six key themes from our recently completed Master Plan. These were the themes our community identified as the Department's priorities for the next several years: Community Health and Wellness; Taking Care of What We Have; Financial Sustainability; Building Community; Youth Engagement and Organizational Readiness.

We asked. You spoke. We listened and took note of your values and ideas. Now, with your input and an adopted Master Plan, we're moving forward with renewed passion, vision and enthusiasm. We're very excited to build the future Parks and Recreation Department of your dreams.

We look forward to seeing you enjoying one of our parks, sports fields, recreation centers or events this year!

-Jeff Dillon
Director, Parks and Recreation Department



Health & Wellness: Boulder Fire-Rescue staff stay fit alongside community members at one of Boulder's three recreation and fitness centers.



Capital Improvements: Many Boulder Reservoir infrastructure improvements and entry enhancements were completed in 2013 with funding from the 2011 voter-supported bond.



Youth and Adult fitness: Outdoor swimming at Scott Carpenter Pool.

Community Health and Wellness



East Boulder Community Center: Each city recreation and fitness center promotes health and wellness through a range of affordable fitness classes and programs for all ages and abilities.



Flatirons Golf Course: The city's golf course provides an environmentally-friendly way for residents to enjoy the physical and social benefits of golf.



Water sports: The Boulder Reservoir is a local attraction for special events and active, outdoor recreation, including running, swimming, triathlons, rowing, sailing, paddling, volleyball and more.

Green spaces, parks, playgrounds, sport fields, recreation facilities and multi-use paths all provide proven and measurable community health benefits. The physical benefits of safe, convenient access to walking, cycling, outdoor and indoor play and contact with nature have gained prominence over the past decade as obesity and a sedentary lifestyle have become part of a growing health epidemic.

We know our built environment plays a significant role in a community's physical and social activity. No doubt, Boulder's system of parks and recreation offerings contribute to the community's well-documented health and wellness. Through access to a network of quality parks, recreation facilities, camps, classes, and events we encourage community health and social interaction through physical activity.

Each year we strive to improve the quality of and access to options residents desire for enhancing health and wellness in Boulder. We encourage and welcome all residents and visitors to enjoy our parks, facilities and programs – and tell us how to make them even better.

It's our aim to make Boulder one of the most physically and socially active, healthy and well communities in Colorado.

Our community's activity in 2013 by the numbers:

- 736,138 visits to our recreation centers
- 75,175 visits to our seasonal pools
- 181,752 participants in our adult athletic programs
- 36,872 rounds of golf
- 227,935 visits to the Boulder Reservoir

Taking Care of What We Have

You love your parks, playgrounds, sports and recreation facilities. So we learned through our Master Plan process that keeping them maintained to a high standard of safety, beauty and functionality is a top community priority. Here's a high-level view of our assets and what we did to care for them in 2013.

Boulder's Parks and Recreation system currently includes:

- More than 1,400 acres of developed parklands
- More than 300 acres of natural area
- 44 sports fields (diamonds and multi-purpose)
- 3 recreation centers
- Flatirons Golf Course
- Boulder Reservoir

Annual Park Renovations

In addition to turf and building maintenance, snow removal and tree and shrub pruning, we renovate two or more parks per year. This commonly involves replacing and upgrading irrigation systems, updating playground equipment and renewing damaged or deteriorated walkways and structures. Each park renovation begins with a series of public meetings seeking neighborhood input on desired amenity updates and improvements.

In 2013, we improved, renovated or enhanced the following parks:

Renovations

Columbine Park
East Palo Park
Emma Martinez Gomez Park
Harlow Platts Park
Pineview Park
North Boulder Park

New Shelters Added

Columbine Park
East Palo Park
Foothills Dog Park
Valmont City Park
Pleasantview Fields

Comprehensive Asset Management

The Department is implementing a GPS-linked system for recording every asset in our extensive inventory. Soon we'll have an enhanced capability for tracking the life expectancy and replacement cost of every sprinkler head, park bench and piece of exercise equipment. Once completed, this system will enable the Department to more efficiently care for existing assets.

Capital Improvement Bond Projects

The Parks and Recreation Department received \$8.3 million from the city's 2011 Capital Improvement Bond initiative. These funds have allowed us to address several high priority maintenance and infrastructure deficiencies in high priority park locations. (See www.bouldercolorado.gov/bond-projects for more information)



Valmont City Park: Completion of Phase 1 and hiring of the park's first manager highlighted our major park improvements projects for 2013.

Major 2013 Achievements:

Valmont City Park – phase 1 completed

Phase 1 of Valmont City Park included development of a bike park, dog park and interim disc golf course. In 2013, we added two more bridges, a new maintenance shed, planted 200 trees and more than 700 shrubs, putting the final touches on Phase 1.

Boulder Reservoir – entry improvements

Boulder Reservoir received major entry gate enhancements, parking lot improvements, utility system upgrades, trail improvements and Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) monitoring enhancements.

East Boulder Community Park

Improvements were made to the water access within the dog park.

Chautauqua Park

Improvements to the parking lot, drives and bus pull-out were completed.

Columbia Cemetery

The west fence was replaced, the Anderson ditch was repaired, irrigation improvements, and ongoing historic headstone repair.

Elks Park

Construction of this new park (Elks) located at 3995 – 28th Street was well underway when the September floods significantly damaged improvements and setback the opening date.

Financial Sustainability



Partnerships: Expanding community opportunities for health, wellness and youth activities require creative partnerships such as those developed to build Valmont Bike Park.



Volunteers: Volunteers are vital for creating a sense of community and ownership of our public spaces and maintaining our parks and facilities.



Contracting: Seeking fiscal sustainability, the Department is engaging in new partnerships and contractual relationships to provide valued arts, recreation and fitness programming for the community.

Fiscal sustainability is a constant quest for all organizations. Escalating labor and material costs and increasing demands on general fund tax revenues are increasingly factors in the Department's fiscal sustainability efforts.

The Department is taking several steps to ensure Boulder residents continue to enjoy the many benefits of a healthy and robust system of parks, facilities and programs.

Collaborations, Partnerships, Sponsorships

By encouraging community collaborations, partnerships and sponsorships, the Department is developing a new strategy for providing desired community services. By seeking partnerships for new programs and encouraging groups seeking new facilities to contribute to the development of their ideas, a new economic model is emerging. From disc golfers to mountain bikers, partnerships are increasing sustainability and fostering greater community ownership of new programs and facilities.

Contracting

Entering into contractual arrangements to provide services the community desires is another economically sustainable approach the Department is implementing in some program areas.

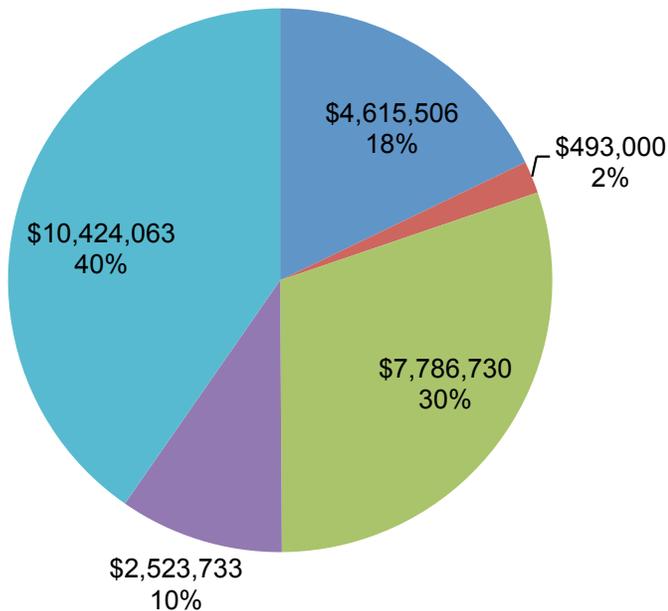
Engaging volunteers

Volunteers play a valuable role in maintaining and enhancing our parks and supporting our programs. Residents contributed more than 32,500 volunteer hours supporting programs, maintaining parks and cleaning up from the flood. This equates to more than \$300,000 in reduced costs AND a huge increase in community engagement and enrichment.

User fees and shopping local

While the efforts noted above contribute to economic sustainability and resilience, the largest contributions to our operations come from facility user fees and local sales tax collections. We are grateful for your support. By creating a healthy, vibrant place to live, we attract new businesses and residents which increases tax revenues and property values creating a cycle of health and prosperity.

Parks & Recreation 2013 Sources of Funding ▪ \$26.9 Million



General Fund, 18%

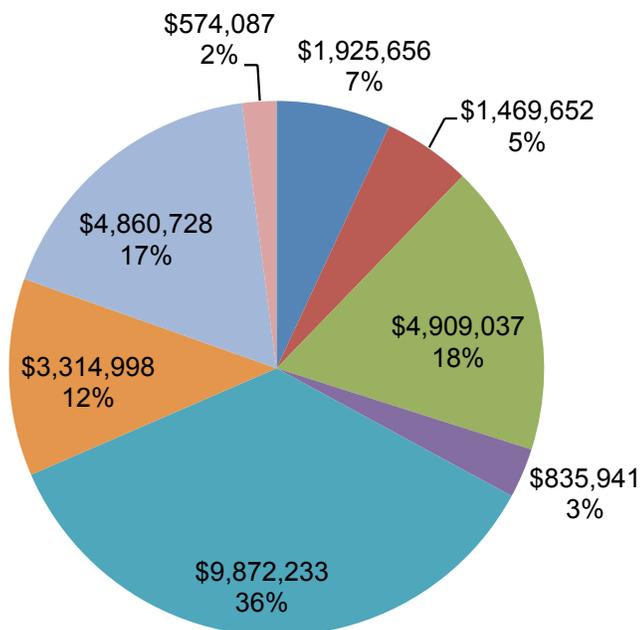
Lottery Fund, 2%

.25 Sales Tax Fund, 30%

Permanent Parks and Recreation Fund, 10%

Recreation Activity Fund, 40%

Parks & Recreation 2013 Uses of Funding ▪ \$27.8 Million



Department Administration, 7%

Urban Resources, 5%

Park Operations, 18%

Planning and Construction, 3%

Recreation, 36%

Capital Improvements & Refurbishments, 12%

Debt Service, 17%

Transfers to other Departments, 2%

Building Community and Relationships



Park Openings: Events, such as this park opening celebrating long-time community leader, Emma Gomez Martinez, build community.



Summer Festival: Music, magic, fun and games bring families and residents together to make Boulder's downtown Civic Area a more vibrant place.



Special Events: Events like the 4th of July at Boulder Reservoir bring diverse people together to celebrate our common culture through sports, food, music and more.

Whether gathering to plant a tree; meeting at a playground for the kids to play; enjoying a summer concert at a neighborhood park; or chatting after a recreation center workout – these are the granular moments of community. Parks and Recreation aims to build both healthy bodies and a healthy, vibrant community by providing quality green spaces, fitness facilities, programs and events where healthy relationships flourish.

From sharing food and laughter in the Civic Area during a Boulder County Farmer's Market to pulling weeds for Community Clean-up Day; from sharing your thoughts about your neighborhood park at a public meeting to enjoying a summer day at Boulder Reservoir, we strive to create more meaningful opportunities to bring people together. In an effort to enhance our connected community, we collaborated with a variety of civic and nonprofit partners to host new cultural, volunteer and family-oriented events and programs in 2013.

Achievements:

Emma Martinez Gomez Park

Canyon Park was re-named Emma Martinez Gomez Park, honoring an outstanding activist and member of the Boulder Community on October 12, 2013.

4th of July at the Boulder Reservoir

In 2013, the Department initiated a successful family-friendly 4th of July celebration at the Reservoir. It included a 5K run, volleyball tournament, live music, boating, food vendors and a wide-range of games and activities for youth, which attracted more than 1,200 visitors.

Summer Festival

The Department partnered with the Boulder Library to provide a free, youth-oriented event in the Civic Area. The event included live music, fun outdoor games, magic acts and educational offerings. It attracted several hundred participants.

Holiday Park

City of Boulder park staff joined the Holiday Neighborhood to celebrate their community and the development of the North Boulder sub-community plan.

2013 Community Volunteer Involvement:

- 3,700 total volunteers, contributed to;
- 32,583 volunteer hours, valued at;
- \$302,723 for the public sector.

For volunteer opportunities, visit www.BoulderParks-Rec.org

Youth Engagement and Activity

Like much of the nation, Colorado's youth participation in sports and physical activity is declining and our children are increasingly obese.

In 2013, Boulder Parks and Recreation refocused our attention on providing a spectrum of programs, camps and amenities tailored to the needs of today's young people. Creating more opportunities and access for young people to develop their appreciation for physical activity, sports and nature emerged as some of our top priorities. Striving to cultivate a life-long enjoyment of health and fitness, we actively engage youth through parks, fitness activities and progressive skill development.

An emerging feature of our youth engagement is nature play: providing safe, interesting activities and explorations of our natural world (from bugs to plants; water to wildlife). We're now incorporating this into planning for new programs, special events and even playground renovations.

Here are several other key ways we increased our emphasis on youth engagement and activity in 2013.

Achievements:

Admiral Arleigh Burke Park and Horizons K-8 School

The Department was awarded a \$100,000 grant from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) to expand and enhance the neighboring Horizons K-8 School playground (for the benefit of the school and surrounding community).

Youth Services Initiative (YSI)

YSI provides youth from low income families the opportunities and resources necessary to make positive recreational, educational and lifestyle choices. YSI provides youth living in subsidized housing with meaningful social, academic and cultural after-school activities. These have included producing a participant art show, providing volunteer support for community events like the Bolder Boulder, and participating in the annual Lights of December parade.

Let's Move!

Parks and Recreation continued its involvement with the Let's Move! Campaign. Let's Move! is a national campaign aimed at solving the problem of childhood obesity by providing nutritional guidance and physical activities for young people.

The National League of Cities - Let's Move! Cities, Towns and Counties

The City of Boulder was awarded the Gold, Silver and Bronze medals recognizing achievements in addressing childhood obesity through Let's Move! Cities, Towns and Counties.



Summer Camps: We get hundreds of kids active and playing together during summer vacations and BVSD school days off.



Youth opportunities: Engaging young people in healthy, physically challenging activities including sports, performing arts and athletics is core to our mission of fostering a healthy community.



Access for all: Through our reduce rate and Youth Services Initiative programs, we seek to provide every child and family with access to healthy activities and recreation options in our community.

Organizational Readiness



Emerald Ash Borer: The arrival of this destructive, non-native insect highlights the need for organizational flexibility in order to address health, environmental, and social challenges as they arise.

Emerald Ash Borer

During the fall of 2013, the Department's Forestry staff determined an ash tree in Boulder had been killed by emerald ash borer (EAB), a federally quarantined insect and tree pest. Boulder was the first location in Colorado where this insect has been found.

Moving swiftly to address what could become an epidemic among the city's ash trees, the Department has added staff and increased training on how to combat this potentially devastating infestation.

How can we prevent the spread?

Several steps are being initiated to prevent the spread of EAB within Colorado. These include an aggressive public education and tree-replacement campaign as well as the Colorado Department of Agriculture's (CDA) imposition of a quarantine on the movement of ash tree products and hardwood firewood out of Boulder County. The quarantine took effect Nov. 12, 2013.

For more information, visit www.bouldercolorado.gov/pages/emerald-ash-borer.

Organizational readiness is a critical factor in successfully navigating the types of challenges, uncertain service demands and change the Department has recently encountered. These challenges have included staging wildfire operations, enduring an economic downturn, re-aligning our work around a new Master Plan and weathering one of the most devastating floods in recent history.

Organizational readiness seeks to create greater resiliency and flexibility among staff and resources to better meet community needs. Organizational readiness is both an on-going commitment to training and preparedness and a culture that focuses on teamwork for results.

The flood of September 2013 was simultaneously the best teacher and toughest test of organizational readiness – and the Department came through with flying colors! Within hours, every available Park staff person and piece of equipment was mobilized in an effort to reduce flood impacts, assess or begin restoring flood damages. There was little business as usual in the days following Sept. 11, 2013.

Despite the scope of damages, the department recognized the community's need to play, stay fit and enjoy our parks, programs and facilities. Staff worked diligently to repair and re-open facilities as quickly as possible. Thanks to the amazing assistance of 780 volunteers, contributing more than 2,300 hours of labor, the Department was able to re-open 95% of our flood impacted facilities by December 2013.

Volunteers participated by clearing debris from trails, creeks, paths and parks; filling in eroded curbs and banks with road base materials; spreading sand on beaches and volleyball courts; rebuilding trails with pea gravel; and the list goes on! For the Department staff, it was great to meet all the volunteers, share stories, work hard and make huge strides towards restoring our facilities.



2013 Flood: The 2013 flood illustrated both our vulnerability and our resilience. Learning from our recovery efforts underscored the need for organizational readiness.



Help when we needed it: Despite the hundreds of personal properties and lives impacted by the flood, staff and residents rallied to restore most of our parks to near pre-flood conditions within 90 days.



A Glimpse Ahead

Bill Bower Park, formerly known as Mesa Memorial Park

Construction of the long-anticipated Mesa Memorial Park (near Table Mesa and Yale) will begin in 2014.

Elks Park

Nearing completion in September 2013, Four Mile Creek's rushing flood waters devastated more than \$100,000 worth of new landscaping and park infrastructure. Rebuilding efforts will commence in 2014 with a target opening date of fall 2014.

Valmont City Park

Public and stakeholder input will be sought for the next phase of Valmont City Park development, with a revised site plan for the remaining 92-acres developed in 2014.

Civic Area – Park at the Core

A vision plan for the redevelopment of downtown Boulder's Civic Area was approved by City Council in September 2013. The vision established broad themes and ideals for the area (roughly located between Arapahoe and Canyon and between 9th and 13th Streets). This vision maintains the concept of a park at the core with enhancements featuring Boulder's commitment to the arts, culture, food, nature, health and recreation.

Look for more Civic Area events and improvements in the near future.



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