

CHARTER, MISSION & VISION

Summary Report

Status

	Notes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research Methodology Approved	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Research and Analysis Complete	
<input type="checkbox"/> Data Gaps Identified and Remaining Research Assigned	Ongoing discussion of current community need/resources available through public engagement process
<input type="checkbox"/> All Data Obtained	
<input type="checkbox"/> Analysis Complete	
<input type="checkbox"/> Technical (TAG) Review	
<input type="checkbox"/> Department Leadership Review	
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Plan Integration Review	
<input type="checkbox"/> Board (PRAB) Review	
<input type="checkbox"/> City Council Review	
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Draft Review	
<input type="checkbox"/> Final Draft Review	

Summary

The organizational purpose and intent of the City of Boulder’s Parks and Recreation Department (BPRD) are captured in several separate but complementary statements from different guidance and governing documents. The most fundamental guidance is found in the Boulder City Charter. Stemming from this foundation are the department’s mission, vision, and goal statements. Each is presented below.

City Charter, Article XI, Section 155

Under the direction, supervision, and control of the city manager, the department of parks and recreation:

- (a) Shall supervise, administer, and maintain all park property and recreation facilities.
- (b) Shall supervise, administer, and execute all park and recreation programs, plans, functions, and activities of the city.
- (c) Shall prepare and submit to the parks and recreation advisory board written recommendations on those matters where this article requires a recommendation from said board prior to council or department action.
- (d) May, at the request of the parks and recreation advisory board, prepare and submit to the board information and recommendations on such park and recreation matters as are not provided for by (c) above.
- (e) May request advice on any park and recreation matter from the parks and recreation advisory board. (Added by Ord. No. 2392 (1961), § 1, adopted by electorate on January 31, 1961.)

Mission statement

The mission of the City of Boulder's Parks and Recreation Department is to provide safe, clean, and beautiful parks and facilities and high-quality leisure activities for the community. These services shall enhance residents' health and well-being and promote economic vitality for long-term community sustainability. We will accomplish this through creative leadership, environmentally sustainable practices, and the responsible use of available resources.

Vision statement

Strive for excellence in our parks and recreation system to reflect and serve the unique values and qualities of our community. These services shall enhance residents' health and well-being and promote economic vitality for long-term community sustainability. We will accomplish this through creative leadership, environmentally sustainable practices, and the responsible use of available resources.

Department goals from 2006 Master Plan

- (1) Maintain and protect our parks and recreation facilities and programs
- (2) Become economically sustainable
- (3) Fill in the gaps in our parks and recreation system
- (4) Engage a broader range of the community, especially underrepresented populations
- (5) Be a community-wide leader in environmental sustainability
- (6) Enhance our quality of life

Analysis

An overarching goal of the 2012 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update is to investigate the department's existing role as a provider of public services in the Boulder community and to make recommendations to allow for greater effectiveness. A critical step in preparing such an analysis is understanding what is expected, both formally and informally, from the department as well as understanding how these expectations align with similar or related pursuits of other entities. The City Charter articulates the most fundamental expectations of the department in general, which could be summarized in abstract as these two charges: manage parks and recreation facilities and programs, and engage the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) by providing recommendations or requesting advice (in the case of and per the appropriate process). To that end, in order for the Master Plan Update to be successful, it must identify ways to maintain or enhance the department's management capacity and utilization of the PRAB.

A first step in achieving this success involves reviewing the organizational mission and vision statements to ensure that they fit within the framework created by the charter. Mission statements, which are typically stable, long-term and enduring, describe the general purpose of an organization using the charter framework as is updated by the community's contemporary needs. Mission statements answer the question, "What does the organization do?"

Vision statements, which are also long-term yet regularly reviewed, focus on the future and describe the desired accomplishment of the organization. Like mission statements, they align with charter mandates to achieve and maintain a desirable future which is shared by the

community, policy makers, advisory boards and the professional staff of the BPRD. Vision statements answer the question, "Where do we want the organization to be?" A best practice utilized by many park and recreation departments is to review and update these statements to reflect current conditions and changes in community need approximately every 3 to 5 years.

The Parks and Recreation Department's current mission and vision as found in the 2006 Master Plan are analyzed further below. The strength of each is found in their first sentence. See the table below (emphasis added). The mission is effective in stating that in order to fulfill its charter, the department will provide *parks, facilities, and activities*. The vision identifies the desired accomplishment as a *reflection and service* of Boulder's *values and qualities*.

Mission ("What do we do?")	Vision ("Where do we want to be?")
" ...provide safe, clean, and beautiful <i>parks</i> and <i>facilities</i> and high-quality leisure <i>activities</i> for the community."	" ...excellence in our parks and recreation system to <i>reflect</i> and <i>serve</i> the unique <i>values</i> and <i>qualities</i> of our community."

The remainders of each statement elaborate and portray specifics of *how* each will be fulfilled, which is generally beyond the purpose of a mission and vision. Furthermore, they are identical as shown in the table below.

Mission	Vision
These services shall enhance residents' health and well-being and promote economic vitality for long-term community sustainability. We will accomplish this through creative leadership, environmentally sustainable practices, and the responsible use of available resources.	These services shall enhance residents' health and well-being and promote economic vitality for long-term community sustainability. We will accomplish this through creative leadership, environmentally sustainable practices, and the responsible use of available resources.

Further analysis of the mission and vision statements suggests that some wording is not specific and difficult to operationalize (i.e., excellence) and that the content included in both statements appears to be goals, objectives, or methods to be used in attaining the mission. Generally, descriptions of *how* an organization will fulfill its mission and vision are not contained in the mission and vision statements but are expressed as goals, objectives, or actions. Operationally, statements of "how" (i.e., operationalize how something is to be done) tend to be nested and hierarchical. Goals are typically higher-order expressions, while objectives specify what is needed to achieve goals, and actions identify individual steps. The six goal statements from the 2006 Master Plan range in specificity, and by virtue of the passage of time since they were developed, arguably fall short in encompassing the array of areas of responsibility that befall the department.

Discussion

The Master Plan Update should include a fundamental review of the mission, vision, and goal statements of the Department. These should be revised to reflect the current needs of the community, current resources available in the community, and City Council, PRAB and

community expectations of the department. Specifically, revisions to be considered include focusing the mission and vision statements significantly, modifying them to succinctly and cogently fit the framework from the charter (mission), and create a shared desired future for parks and recreation in the community (vision) that includes the values and qualities of the community that the department can contribute to most.

Logically, BPRD goal statements will also be revised to reflect community needs in a comprehensive way. These goal statements operationalize how the mission will be served, and the vision attained. Similarly to the mission/vision statements, revisions to the goals should include foundational values of park and recreation including promoting public health, social capital, urban ecosystem awareness, physical connectivity, and community connectivity, in addition to the citywide established goals of promoting environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

Data gaps to explore relationships to other governing or guiding principles not covered in this research are being addressed (a companion chapter summary report is being developed on planning documents relevant to the parks and recreation master planning project). The public engagement process will provide opinion and consensus related to this data gap throughout the next six months in order to ensure that all pertinent guiding principles of city departments and external organizations are considered.