



TO: Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

FROM: Yvette Bowden, Director, Parks and Recreation
Jeff Haley, Parks Planning Manager

SUBJECT: Consent Agenda

DATE: October 26, 2015

A. Minutes Approval of minutes from September 28, 2015

B. Parks and Recreation Development Update

Planning

The following projects are currently in the planning process that involves research, alternatives development, public involvement and development of planning documents to guide decision making and future capital improvements:

- **Facilities Strategic Plan (FSP):** The FSP will identify and provide recommended costs and actions for maintenance, repairs and deficiencies including data and recommendations for facility management based on conditions and life-cycle of assets.

The city has selected Farnsworth Group, a multi-disciplinary engineering and architecture firm, to provide asset management services for a variety of existing city buildings. The FSP project is a cross-departmental effort to inventory and assess the condition of over 20 city buildings across six different departments including Human Services, Library Services, the Fire Department, Police, P&R, and FAM. The project will yield information on building components, deficiencies and required improvements. Further, it will identify Current Replacement Values (CRV) and Facility Condition (FC) that will be used to inform a Capital Investment Strategy including life-cycle analysis and to develop a comprehensive operations and management plan.

The need to understand what facilities the city owns and the condition of these assets emerged out of recommendations from the 2015 Capital Investment Plan Peer Review Team (PRT) to the city's Executive Budget Team (EBT) with the 2016 CIP recommendations.

The following facilities will be inspected:

West Senior Center	Main Public Library
East Boulder Community Center and Senior Center	George Reynolds Library Branch
North Boulder Recreation Center	Carnegie Library Branch
South Boulder Recreation Center	Municipal Building
Boulder Reservoir Buildings	Municipal Services Center
Fire Stations 1 – 7	Fleet Services Building
Public Safety Building	

It is anticipated that that the initial condition assessments will be completed this fall and project completion will occur by first quarter 2016. The results of this work align with a larger city-wide effort to develop an asset management plan that is integrated with the current FAM and P&R asset management approach.

- Fourmile Canyon Creek Community and Environmental Assessment Process (CEAP) including Violet Park:** Public Works/Utilities staff is currently exploring flood mitigation and trail options for the upstream reach from Upland Avenue through Violet Park to the west of town. They will complete a CEAP process to evaluate the various alternatives available. As part of this effort, the department will evaluate concepts for Violet Park. CEAP alternatives affecting the future development of Violet Park may be presented as part of the city’s inter-departmental North Boulder Open House on November 18, 2015.

Design

The following projects are currently in the design phase involving the community in developing final plans for critical improvements to park amenities:

- Chautauqua Park:** The Chautauqua Pedestrian Safety, Access and Lighting Improvements Project is an inter-departmental project that honors the historic and natural character of the Chautauqua area while providing important safety improvements. This project fulfills the direction of the 2014 voter-approved Community, Culture and Safety Tax to improve pedestrian safety and incorporate Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant curbs and ramps along Baseline Road in the Chautauqua area.

The second component to the project will address the safety need for low-level lighting in the park along the walkway from the King’s Gate entrance to the parking lot east of the tennis courts. Feedback from the community meeting on October 15, 2016 will be posted by December on the [project web page](#). Planning and design efforts are expected through summer 2016 with construction anticipated to begin in winter 2016 and be completed by spring 2017.

Construction

The following projects were recently completed or are under construction and anticipated to be completed by 2016:

- **Harlow Platt Community Park:** Construction is nearing completion on two new picnic shelters, a playground shade cover and a restroom at this heavily used south Boulder park site. The final touches to be completed include a rock façade on the lower portion of the restroom and final lawn clean up and seeding. Work is anticipated to be completed by the end of October 2015.
- **Knollwood Tennis Courts:** Construction on the flood damaged tennis courts has begun. The renovated courts will provide an improved drainage system and two post tension concrete slab courts with new fencing and equipment. Improvements will also include a new ADA accessible walkway ramp and stairs will be installed to improve court access. Amenities not covered by FEMA will be supported by grants of \$25,000 from the United States Tennis Association (USTA) and an additional \$5,000 from the Colorado Tennis Association and Intermountain Tennis Foundation. Construction on this project is anticipated to be completed by spring 2016.

Urban Resources

The following initiatives are currently underway:

- **Foothills Prairie Dog Relocation** – A joint Parks and Recreation and Open Space and Mountain Parks Department prairie dog relocation project.

A lethal control permit for this site was issued by the City Manager’s Office and on August 6th, control was performed with a Pressurized Exhaust Rodent Controller (PERC), a carbon monoxide delivery system. Monitoring showed a few open burrows, but no prairie dogs. Follow-up treatment was performed on August 19. As of the beginning of October, no prairie dogs have been seen on site. Monthly monitoring and restoration of the area will continue.

- **Birds of Special Concern Closures** – An annual effort to protect nesting sites of bird species listed by various local, state and federal agencies as species of concern.

The annual [Boulder Reservoir Birds of Special Concern Monitoring Summary](#) has been completed. A summary is below.

- The marshes and grasslands surrounding Boulder Reservoir support more nests of Boulder County birds of special concern than any other comparably sized area in the county (Hallock and Jones 2010).
- During 2015, 32 volunteers devoted approximately 562 hours (118 hours in training, 444 hours of fieldwork and commuting) to this monitoring effort.

- Northern Harrier – Boulder County Rare & Declining- failed nest at Little Dry Creek
 - The 2015 nest failure was the eighth one observed within the study area since 2004. The total of only 18 young fledged from at least 13 nesting attempts since 2004 may not be enough to sustain a viable nesting population (Johnsgard 1990). Based on recent observations, Northern Harrier appears to be among the most endangered nesting bird species in Boulder County (see Hallock and Jones 2010).
 - It's likely that fragmentation of potential nesting habitat by roads, agriculture, and other human activities severely limits Northern Harrier nesting opportunities and nesting success in Boulder County. Therefore, every effort should be undertaken to protect and expand potential nesting areas.
 - Efforts to restrict all human traffic passing near the Little Dry Creek and Dry Creek wetlands to the existing road right-of-way would further limit disturbance of nesting harriers. Enforcement of parking prohibitions along N. 51st St. during triathlons and other major reservoir of events is crucial to protecting nesting harriers.
 - At Coot Lake, dogs should be leashed throughout the Northern Harrier April-August nesting season, or at least until it has been established that no harriers are nesting, on the trail encircling the wetlands west of the lake.
 - In instances when pairs may choose to nest within 400 m of existing trails or other recreational facilities, seasonal closures of those facilities will contribute to nesting success.

- American Bittern – Boulder County Isolated and Restricted- present in all closures
 - In Boulder County the species is still limited to only a dozen documented nesting sites, and eight of these are in wetlands adjacent to Boulder Reservoir, privately-owned Six-Mile Reservoir, and Coot Lake.
 - Strategies that increase the size of marshes and protect them from disturbance by humans and pets should benefit nesting bitterns. Therefore, it seems most prudent to continue to monitor sites from afar, limit human encroachment within 200 m of any active nests, and strive to expand the areas and diversity of protected cattail marshes and surrounding wetlands.

- Osprey – Boulder County Isolated and Restricted - Little Dry Creek fledged 2 young and Dry Creek area nest failed
 - Dry Creek - the abrupt transition from a productive nest to an unproductive one suggests that perhaps one of the original pair died and was replaced by a less fertile or less experienced adult, or that the resident female became too old to lay fertile eggs.

- Burrowing Owl – Boulder County Isolated and Restricted – none sighted

- Burrowing Owls have not been documented nesting successfully within the study area since 2004.
- Bald Eagle – Boulder County Isolated and Restricted - nest building but no other activity

The full report is attached and includes known disturbances or closure violations and detailed recommendations for management actions in each closure area.

- **Integrated Pest Management** – An annual effort to restore native areas, control noxious weeds and comply with regulations.

The Urban Resources group remains committed to complying with the Colorado Noxious Weed Act and providing quality natural habitat throughout the system. An integrated approach (biological, cultural, chemical and mechanical) is utilized to maximize effectiveness while working within the city’s ordinances and programs. Staff is currently working with the Mile High Youth Corp to remove non-native species such as Russian olive at various sites. Russian olive is a List B species which can out-compete native plants, interfere with natural plant succession and nutrient cycling and tax water reserves. Sites that were closed for species of concern are now open and able to be treated so staff is also focusing on those in order to provide the best habitat possible.

- **Fishing Regulations** – An effort to update regulations and ensure compliance with Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

Department staff is working with the city attorneys office to update current fishing regulations to bring them into alignment with the Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) regulations. This will involve:

- Repealing city Rule 8-3-3.C(86) “The daily limit on fish taken from the Kid’s Fishing Ponds is three fish, per child, per day.”
 - Change necessary in order to be consistent with CPW regulations regarding limits, species and size.
 - For example “Trout: -Daily Bag* 4 fish in the aggregate - Possession Limit* 8 fish in the aggregate “and as there is a clause that states the license requirements for youth as “Those under 16 can take a full bag and possession limit without a license.”
- Change 8-3-3.B(86) to read “No person **sixteen** years of age or older shall fish at the Kid’s Fishing Ponds located on the Park land on the North Bank of Boulder Creek between Sixth Street, Canyon Boulevard and Ninth Street.” rather than “thirteen”.
 - Change necessary in order to be consistent with other kids’ fishing ponds in the area.

- Change 8-3-3.B(86) to read “No person shall fish in areas within city parks, parkways, recreation areas, and **natural lands areas** designated by the city manager as no fishing areas.” rather than “open space areas” rather than “open space areas”.
 - Change necessary in order to be clarify difference between OSMP “open space” and parks and recreation “natural lands”.
- Department regulations are written so that fishing is allowed unless posted. The rule will update our delegation of authority to ensure that designation to post areas as no fishing is in place. This includes certain docks at the Boulder Reservoir for safety and certain natural areas for protection of resources such as species of concern.
- The department received written permission from CPW that live bait and take of fish is permitted at the Kids Fishing Pond despite different regulations for Boulder Creek.

C. Parks and Recreation Operations Update

- **East Boulder Community Center Expanded Warm Water Programming:** In response to community requests for more warm water programming, this fall the East Boulder Community Center added 12 hours of warm water fitness programming, including unmonitored access and instructor-led aquatics fitness classes. The classes are designed to allow options for a variety of needs and ability levels. Staff reports that attendance currently averages under five participants per class. The department will continue to host the new classes through the fall as program feedback indicates support for the class options and schedule. Staff anticipates attendance in these classes will continue to grow.
- **East Boulder Community Center Steam Room Refurbishment:** After undergoing a full refurbishment, the East Boulder Community Center steam room is scheduled to reopen this October 26 with a new glass door, all new tile finishes, improved lighting, a refurbished steam generator and infrastructure improvements.