

Appendix C - Master Plan Policies

References to the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Policies refer to the current 2005 plan.

1. General Policies

1.1 Planning Period - The planning period for the Master Plan shall be 10 years, which will sufficiently conform with that of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP). The BVCP is an approximately 15-year planning period with major updates every five years that extend the planning period an additional five years. The review process will be coordinated with the BVCP. (BVCP Policy 1.10 Plan Update)

1.2 Master Plan Flexibility - The city recognizes the Master Plan as a general guide to aid in projecting long-term needs, but not as a document to follow verbatim regarding service level projections. The Department most likely will revise specific service level provisions on an annual basis and will need to ensure flexibility to make such revisions. The Department, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, and the City Council will need to review these changes as they affect the overall program or direction of the plan. The plan should be evaluated annually for modifications before approval of the Capital Improvement Program. Changes affecting the BVCP will be dealt with during the five-year update.

1.3 Master Plan Review - Priorities will be reviewed annually by: (1) the Parks and Recreation Department staff prior to the development of the annual work program; (2) the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board in conjunction with their recommendation on the Annual Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Program (by which priorities primarily are set); (3) the Planning Board recommendation of the Six-Year Capital Improvement Program; and (4) the City Council in its annual goal setting and budget adoption. All meetings are open for public comment.

1.4 Needs - Future needs for park and recreation facilities should be determined through a continuing inventory, analysis, and evaluation of resources and resident needs (including resident surveys where feasible), to coincide with a five-year major update of the Master Plan. The Department will work to balance the mission of providing a broad spectrum of services to the population as a whole, building community connections by creating common ground for all residents, while targeting programs to meet the special needs of under-served and at-risk groups. (BVCP Policy 3.12 Parks and Recreation)

1.5 Plan Updating - The Parks and Recreation Master Plan will be updated regularly to be consistent with the most current Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan. (BVCP Policy 1.10 Plan Update)

1.6 Economic Vitality - The Parks and Recreation Department recognizes its ability to play a key role in supporting an economic environment of partnership, collaboration, and opportunity with the private and public sectors to assist in achieving a vibrant and healthy local economy. The Department will support initiatives that align with its mission and promote Boulder as the destination of choice for events and activities that benefit the community socially and economically. (BVCP Policy 5.01 Economic Vitality)

2. Operational Policies

2.1 Operational Effectiveness - The Parks and Recreation Department is funded from six funds and is managed for efficient use of facilities, personnel, and equipment. The Department is committed to using best-practice business processes for its business services. In addition, business processes are designed to ensure accountability to the public and protection for city assets, monies, and employees.

2.2 Operational Evaluation and Prioritization - The Department will evaluate its operational and management systems during its regular budget cycle. Evaluation will include an assessment of the relative cost and benefit of each program or facility, as well as its priority based on how it fits with the Department's mission. Budget recommendations and staffing adjustments will be based on these assessments.

2.3 Interagency Cooperation - The Department will cooperate closely and engage in joint planning efforts with the University of Colorado, the Boulder Valley School District, other city departments, other municipalities, Boulder County, and state and federal conservation and wildlife management agencies to coordinate land management policies, provide recreational opportunities, and develop a coherent system of public lands to serve area residents. Regional cooperation is key to providing services in an era of constrained budgets, limited opportunities for land acquisition, and increased interconnections among communities. (BVCP Policy 1.11 Regional and Statewide Cooperation)

2.4 School District Coordination - The city shall work with the Boulder Valley School District to plan and address the joint development, financing, and/or maintenance of parks and recreational facilities on city or BVSD sites, including the allocation of Educational Excise Tax funds for these purposes; and to provide joint or complementary programming at schools. (BVCP Policy 1.11 Regional and Statewide Cooperation)

2.5 Private/Nonprofit Sector Cooperation - The Department recognizes the contribution of private and nonprofit programs and facilities in meeting community recreation needs. The city will seek relationships with a variety of potential partners to enhance opportunities for joint facility development and program planning. The department will develop criteria for partnerships that will enable the assessment and evaluation of new recreation program and facility requests in alignment with the department's investment priorities, funding strategies and the city's business plan.

2.6 Parks and Recreation Foundation - The Department will work with the Boulder Parks and Recreation Foundation as well as other nonprofit and community-based organizations to establish partnerships and collaborations where feasible and appropriate. By actively pursuing these relationships, the Department seeks to provide the kinds of parks, recreation facilities, and programs that address community needs but cannot be supported through traditional Department funding mechanisms.

2.7 Resident Involvement and Public Process - The Parks and Recreation Department recognizes the rights of residents to participate in government decisions that affect their lives and property. The Department is committed to communicating effectively with the public, to providing opportunities for resident participation and neighborhood involvement, and to conducting business in an open and transparent manner. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board accepts public comment at its regularly scheduled meetings; other city advisory boards, the Planning Board, and the City Council may provide comment on the Department's plans and projects as mandated or desired. (BVCP Policy 1.05 Community Engagement)

2.8 Safety - Facilities and programs shall have operating plans that dictate safety procedures. Controlled-access areas such as recreation centers will have staff to ensure that they are safe to use. Staff will be trained to conduct their work assignments safely. Park and recreation facility design and construction shall be guided

by recommendations from the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission, National Playground Safety Standards, manufacturers' instructions, and other safety sources. Safety inspections of lands and facilities will be made according to the Department's procedures and in conjunction with the city's Risk Manager and Facilities Asset Management staff.

2.9 Accessibility and Inclusion - The Department is committed to providing all residents full access to its programs, services, and facilities. Structural modifications to existing facilities to comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) will be made on a priority basis as funds are available for renovation and refurbishment. Accessibility will be emphasized when designing, developing, and renovating facilities. The Department will consider the interests and needs of residents experiencing economic or social barriers in its efforts to provide equal access to leisure opportunities. Every reasonable effort will be made to accommodate residents who experience such barriers. (BVCP Policy 1.05 Community Engagement)

3. Program Policies

3.1 Pricing - The city of Boulder, in its citywide Financial and Management Policies, has established flexible User Fee Guidelines, which allow individual departments to determine how to establish user fees within general cost-recovery guidelines. The cost-recovery guidelines are consistent with established municipal best practices. Based on these guidelines, the Parks and Recreation Department determines cost-recovery levels and categorizes programs on the basis of the population served and the nature of service provided. Nonresidents of the city of Boulder pay higher fees for services. Reduced rates for certain services are offered to city residents who meet low-income and other eligibility criteria.

3.2 Use of Facilities And Park Lands By Not-for-Profit or Government Organizations for Special Events - Parks and recreation facilities and park lands may be used by not-for-profit and government organizations at a reduced rate if their event is in collaboration with the Department, assists the Department in its efforts to subsidize underserved populations, and is consistent with the Department's mission. A proposal outlining the event, its purpose, target audience, expected number of participants, fees, and staffing will be submitted to the Director of the Parks and Recreation Department a minimum of ten weeks before the event.

3.3 Fund Raising - The Department allows nonprofit agencies to sponsor fundraising events in approved locations. Agencies must comply with all city event policies.

3.4 Volunteers - The Department encourages the teamwork of paid staff and volunteers so that users of parks and facilities are offered the best possible service. The Department shall develop and administer programs to encourage and coordinate community participation in recreation programs and in the care and maintenance of parklands and recreation facilities, including an Adopt-A-Park program and coordination with community groups such as the Boulder City Improvement Association II.

3.5 Special Events - The Department works with groups and individuals to hold special events subject to the following guidelines:

- The frequency of events does not pre-empt regular public use of the area.
- The event is held in an appropriate area for the anticipated size of the event and expected attendance and does not affect a neighborhood on a continuing basis.
- Environmental, safety, and public health concerns are addressed.
- Requests by city of Boulder residents are given preference.

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- Other city departments are kept informed of or involved in events.
- Event holders must comply with all city special event policies.
- All events will be reviewed for environmental impacts.

Contracts may be required for special events not sponsored by the city. Contract fees should at least cover all direct costs to the city. The city may co-sponsor an event if it has reason to participate financially.

3.6 Use of Parks and Recreation Facilities for Private Profit/Gain - Facilities provided by city governments are for the public good and are not intended for private profit. Activities for private gain will not be allowed when they interfere with the conduct of city programs or general use by the public. Such activities may be allowed through a permit process with an appropriate fee. These activities will not be allowed if the city is already providing or sponsoring a similar program (e.g., private lessons will not be conducted in city swimming pools). The permit/rental fee for commercial (private gain) purposes will be at least two times the rate for a private rental, which is higher than a nonprofit rental.

4. Facility and Resource Policies

4.1 Adequate Facilities and Services - Parks and recreation facilities and services for existing and new urban residential development shall be designed, developed, renovated, refurbished, and maintained consistent with the adopted park services guidelines, park management plans, the recommendations and priorities of the Parks and Recreation Department Master Plan, and the financial priorities set in the Department's operating budget and Capital Improvement Program. To support the provision of services that meet the demands of community growth, the Department will work to ensure that Development Excise Taxes are set at levels commensurate with the costs of acquiring and developing park land and recreational facilities. Before approving the development of new parks and recreational facilities, funds for operations and maintenance must be identified. (BVCP Policies 3.01 Provision of Urban Services in the Boulder Valley, 3.02 Definition of Adequate Urban Facilities and Services, 3.05 Growth to Pay Fair Share of New Facility Costs and 3.12 Parks and Recreation)

4.2 Facilities Locations - Parks and recreation programs and facilities should be distributed throughout the community to the greatest extent possible so that all segments of the population have reasonable access to services. Facilities that do not require the full range of urban services may be located in Areas II and III subject to County review. (BVCP Policies 2.24 Support Services for Subcommunities and 2.27 Variety of Activity Centers)

4.3 Encroachments - The Department shall resist by all appropriate means, including legal action, any attempt by any public agency, group, or individual to destroy or encroach upon any park, historical site, natural area, or recreational facility under the control of the Department. The Department considers its responsibilities to the residents of Boulder as a public trust, requiring commitment to the preservation and protection of natural, cultural, horticultural, and recreational resources located on park lands. The Department shall enlist the aid of enlightened and alert residents to support this policy. Whenever possible, parkland boundaries should be prominently marked, fenced, or designed around natural features to prevent encroachments. Encroachments into park land from adjacent property owners will be examined and managed on a park-by-park basis.

4.4 Public/Private Partnerships - Proposals for the placement of recreational facilities or other amenities on public park land shall be subject to review based on the criteria outlined in the 2006 Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

4.5 Neighborhood Responsiveness - The Department shall weigh neighborhood concerns and community needs in the development of neighborhood parks and other neighborhood facilities. Activities and amenities generally will be limited to those appropriate for a residential area. Neighborhood facilities typically will be designed to encourage walking and biking and will not provide specialized facilities that would draw from a larger area. (BVCP Policy 2.42 Enhanced Design for the Built Environment)

4.6 Community Responsiveness - High-use facilities to serve the needs of larger groups shall be provided in community and city parks to lessen impacts on neighborhood facilities. In these designated areas, community needs will take priority over neighborhood concerns when necessary. Typically these facilities will be located for ease of automotive and alternative transportation access and be located to best serve a broader population.

4.7 Multi-Use - Flexible and multi-purpose use of public lands and facilities shall be emphasized in design and development. In evaluating the potential use of park and recreation lands, activities consistent with the original intent of acquisition shall be considered and analyzed based on current fiscal, development, and community priorities. (BVCP Policy 3.07 Multi-Purpose Use of Public Lands)

4.8 Design Consideration - Parks and recreational facilities shall provide a balanced range of recreational opportunities consistent with the sustainable and appropriate use of the site and shall be designed to respond to the needs of the intended users and the natural environment. The Department will strive for design excellence in all new and redeveloped facilities. Park design should be sensitive to the natural features of the site and the character of the surrounding built environment, incorporating natural features and integrating the local ecology whenever possible. Parks, playgrounds, and other facilities should provide unique features that help to define the neighborhood they serve and contribute to a "sense of place." (BVCP Policies 3.12 Parks and Recreation and 2.41 Design Excellence for Public Projects)

4.9 Sustainable Asset Development and Management - Department assets will be developed based on high-performance standards for sustainable building practices, such as those exemplified by LEED™ certification and sustainable park landscape designs. Department assets will be managed and maintained in accordance with site-specific management plans that will be developed for individual parks and facilities. These plans will be based on an assessment of existing uses, carrying capacity, management issues, and asset condition, and will include recommendations for sustainable management strategies, operational practices, and standards. Asset management plans will form the basis for funding recommendations to achieve a more sustainable park system. (BVCP Policy 1.07 Leadership in Sustainability)

4.10 Historic Structures and Landscapes - The Department is charged with managing, protecting, and preserving significant and sensitive historic resources in accordance with adopted municipal, state, and federal criteria and standards. The Department adheres to cultural-resource management guidelines set by the Landmarks Board so that resources may be preserved for future generations. The Landmarks Board will approve any proposed alterations to landmarked structures or landscapes. (BVCP Policy 2.33 Preservation of Historical and Cultural Resources)

4.11 Cultural and Arts Development - The Department, recognizing the opportunity to integrate the arts into public spaces, shall consider including art pieces in the design of new parks and recreation facilities, and shall involve the community in contributing temporary and permanent art installations. (BVCP Policy 3.18 Performing and Visual Arts)

4.12 Access Linkages - The Department will work with the Transportation Division, the Tributary Greenways Program, and neighborhood residents to assure safe pedestrian and bicycle access to park sites and recreation facilities and to reduce the barriers posed by heavily trafficked streets. (BVCP Policy 6.03 System Completion)

5. Environmental Management and Maintenance Policies

5.1 Environmental Sustainability - The Department considers the goal of environmental sustainability in all its decisions regarding planning, development, and maintenance of park lands and facilities. (BVCP Policy 1.02 Principles of Sustainability)

5.2 Process Compliance - The environmental effects of parks and recreation projects shall be considered in the public decision-making process. Local, state, and federal environmental review processes will be followed when required or appropriate, and consideration of ecological systems will be incorporated into the planning process through completion of the Community and Environmental Assessment Process (CEAP). (BVCP Policies 1.08 Consideration of Environmental, Economic and Social Impacts and 4.03 City Leadership in Resource Conservation)

5.3 Resource Protection and Conservation of Landscapes - The Department shall protect and restore significant ecosystems and habitats for native plant and animal species on lands managed for these purposes. Promotion of biological diversity and protection of endangered species and their associated habitat will be emphasized. The Department is committed to maintaining a healthy, safe, diverse, and extensive urban tree cover to perpetuate the environmental benefits provided by the urban forest. Degraded habitat may be restored and trails may be provided to limit resource damage. On lands managed for their natural and cultural resources, a balance will be maintained between low-impact recreational opportunities and the need to ensure the long-term protection and stewardship of these resources. Natural lands provide opportunities to provide environmental education for visitors, to enhance their understanding of resource conservation issues. (BVCP Policies 4.06 Natural Ecosystems and 4.13 Urban Environmental Quality)

5.4 Wetlands - The Department recognizes that natural and human-made wetlands are valuable, rare, and protected habitat for plant and wildlife communities, provide recreation amenities, and enhance water quality. The Department is committed, where possible, to preserving and protecting wetlands associated with properties under the Department's jurisdiction. In cases where wetland destruction cannot be avoided, wetlands shall be restored or replaced. The Department shall comply with the city of Boulder Wetlands Ordinance and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 Permit requirements. (BVCP Policy 4.09 Wetland Protection)

5.5 Wildlife - The Department shall employ a full range of wildlife management techniques, using best management practices based on experience, research, effectiveness, and ecological responsibility. Cooperation with other jurisdictions and public involvement in management decisions will be emphasized. (BVCP Policy 4.12 Management of Wildlife-Human Conflicts) The Department will comply with all municipal, state, and federal regulations, rules, and administrative policies regarding wildlife management and habitat protection while balancing the value of preserving recreation opportunities provided by urban park lands. Landscapes and facilities must also incorporate goals of minimizing attractants (trash, compost, fruit trees) for wildlife that live in urban interface areas. Minimizing attractants reduces the potential for conflict between wildlife and humans, encourages a policy of co-existence with wildlife species that inhabit urban interface areas, and enhances public safety.

5.6 Water Conservation - The Department shall promote water conservation through the use of alternate sources of water, including ditch water; improved plumbing, and outdoor irrigation methods and fixtures; water-efficient landscaping and site design; and exploration of the potential for the installation of synthetic turf. The Department is committed to reducing water use by planting drought-tolerant and native species where appropriate, and installing and maintaining efficient irrigation systems. The Department will work with the Utilities Division to ensure compliance with city water conservation efforts. (BVCP Policy 4.38 Water Conservation)

5.7 Stormwater Management – The Department follows best-management practices established by the Environmental Protection Agency and complies with all local and state regulations governing the discharge of stormwater during the construction phase of all projects to protect water quality and prevent erosion. Project design will also address the appropriate management of the rate and quantity of stormwater discharge from the developed site. (BVCP Policy 4.30 Storm Water)

5.8 Pesticides - The Department is committed to integrated pest management (IPM), which emphasizes environmentally sound approaches to pest management, with the goal of reducing, and where possible eliminating, the dependence on chemical pest-control strategies. The Department is a full partner in the city's IPM program and complies with municipal, state, and federal regulations governing the use of pest-control measures. The Department will develop an integrated pest management plan that reduces or maintains pest problems at non-damaging levels and that emphasizes prevention and cultural, mechanical, and biological controls over chemical usage. (BVCP Policy 4.45 Integrated Pest Management)

5.9 Recycling - The Department encourages and supports recycling efforts in its facilities and at special events and promotes the use of products and services that are durable, repairable, reusable, recyclable, or otherwise represent a low-waste solution, including the recycling of organic waste. The Department complies with city purchasing guidelines that promote the purchase of recycled and recycled-content products. (BVCP Policies 4.42 Waste Minimization and Recycling and 4.43 Promoting the Use of Recycled Materials)

5.10 Energy Conservation - The Department will promote energy conservation through its choices of high-performance building and landscape designs, building materials, and renewable energy sources wherever possible, such as those used in achieving LEED™ Silver Certification for the remodeled North Boulder Recreation Center. The Department will purchase fuel-efficient hybrid vehicles when appropriate, and will pursue the latest in technological advancements in furthering the use of renewable energy sources. (BVCP Policies 4.39 Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy and 4.41 Energy Efficient Building Design and Construction Waste Minimization)

5.11 Light Pollution - The Department will comply with municipal ordinances governing light pollution in new lighting design and replacement of existing outdoor lighting systems. (BVCP Policy 4.46 Outdoor Lighting / Light Pollution)

5.12 Air Pollution - The Department seeks to contribute to reducing air pollution by selecting power equipment that is energy-efficient and produces lower emissions.

5.13 Environmental Education - The Department supports numerous public education programs that promote an environmentally aware and sensitive attitude among visitors and encourage a strong stewardship ethic towards natural and cultural resources. To build understanding of natural processes and human interactions with nature, the Department strives for excellence in its environmental education programs and educational information provided at events and local park sites. (BVCP Policy 4.04 Environmental Education and Technical Assistance)

5.14 Public Access to Public Lands - Public access to public lands shall be provided except where necessary to protect such areas from unacceptable degradation or impact to habitat or to protect public safety. The Department strives to balance long-term protection of natural resources and functions with appropriate visitor access for education, enjoyment, and low-impact recreational opportunities consistent with resource protection goals. The Department also will collaborate

with the Open Space and Mountain Parks Department to develop collaborative strategies for recreation opportunities in urban areas that relieve pressure on passive park uses and natural lands. (BVCP Policy 4.11 Public Access to Public Lands)

5.15 Alternate Transportation Modes - The Department seeks to increase the use of non-automotive transportation to parks and recreation facilities. The Department is committed to helping meet citywide goals related to increasing the use of biking, walking, and mass transit, improving Boulder Valley air quality, relieving traffic and parking congestion around parks and recreation facilities, and reducing traffic burden in neighborhoods around facilities. The Department will coordinate with the Regional Transportation District (RTD), GO Boulder, and bicycling and pedestrian groups to incorporate alternative mode opportunities in future park designs and to develop specific programs that could include education, information, design features, and guided bicycle or bus tours of parks and recreation facilities. (BVCP Policy 6.01 All-Mode Transportation System)

5.16 Carrying Capacity - The Department may establish carrying capacities, or maximum numbers of visitors, for both indoor and outdoor built facilities to prevent deterioration through overuse, maintain safety, and provide for a high-quality visitor experience. In natural areas and urban parks, a wide range of management actions, including possible limitations on use, may be instituted to ensure the long-term protection of natural resources and functions and preserve the quality of the visitor experience. (BVCP Policy 1.02 Principles of Environmental Sustainability)

5.17 Asset Maintenance - The Department shall strive to provide high-quality maintenance of park lands, street trees, and recreation facilities. The Department shall establish a classification system and associated standards for maintaining its parks and recreational facilities. These standards shall be applied consistently throughout the city as funding permits. In the event of budgetary constraints, the Department will create priorities for reducing maintenance levels for park lands and facilities. The Department will provide preventive maintenance to public trees and other landscapes to keep them in healthy condition and to reduce susceptibility to storm damage and infestations of insects and disease. The Department will select plant materials that are low-maintenance. The Department provides routine inspections, removals, and maintenance of public trees following standards established by the International Society of Arboriculture, the American Nurserymen's Association, and the American National Standards Institute. The Department shall coordinate with the city's Facilities and Asset Management group to ensure appropriate maintenance, renovation, and refurbishment of facilities and other assets, and to develop an asset inventory and asset management plan. The fiscal plans and annual budgets of the Department shall reflect the requirements for maintenance of landscapes, facilities, and equipment.

5.18 Wildfire - The Department works cooperatively with the city's Fire Department and fire protection districts to reduce wildfire hazards, suppress wildland fires and support efforts to protect wildland-urban interface areas from the danger of uncontrolled wildfires. The Department is strongly committed to processes that mimic natural processes, including the use of prescribed fire, to maintain ecological functions in natural areas. (BVCP Policy 4.19 Wildfire Protection and Management)

5.19 Dogs - The Department recognizes the important relationship between park visitors and their canine companions. Through educational and training programs, educational signs, and regulatory policy, the Department is committed to a citywide effort requiring responsible guardianship and well-behaved dogs. Policies on dogs that protect the land, visitors, and wildlife in both natural and maintained park lands are supported by local ordinances. The Department will continue to advocate interagency and resident participation in policies related to dogs.