



BOULDER PARKS AND RECREATION

Master Plan Update

Restore | Connect | Sustain



Engagement Window 1 Summary

March 12, 2021

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INTRODUCTION TO ENGAGEMENT

A critical component of the Boulder Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update is community engagement. The importance of community involvement in the decision-making process is a priority for the City of Boulder. The engagement plan should compel the community to be active in the development of the recommendations and priorities which should progress into support of the approval, and ultimately the implementation of the plan allowing the department to effectively deliver community-oriented park and recreation opportunities to its community members. An [overview of community engagement in the City of Boulder](#) was used for guidance and available for review.

Overall, the process must be equitable, open, and collaborative to build trust community-wide. The process is documented carefully to secure support for, and approval of, the Master Plan by city management, advisory groups, City Council, department staff, as well as the diverse user groups of the community.

COVID-19, the current pandemic, has heavily influenced the engagement to include a much higher level of online engagement than would traditionally be planned. We are Parks and Recreation and being out in the community is part of our heart and soul. As the pandemic evolves, tactics may include more in-person engagement (as public health orders allow). The safety of our community members and staff is the highest priority. Our decision is partly based on the 2018 ACS data (conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau) which shows that 96% of Boulder's population have a computer and 90% have broadband internet. Great care will be taken to safely reach out to populations that are most likely to have limited access.

Staff and consultants will remain flexible with resources to address any additional opportunities and needs that may arise throughout the process. In these unprecedented times, staff may be using new engagement strategies that are unproven and may need additional time or to pivot midstream as the effectiveness is evaluated.



ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

The engagement for the BPR Master Plan Update includes 4 windows of engagement designed to correlate with the project process to ensure the community voice has a role at each key decision-making point. Summaries of each engagement window will be available to demonstrate transparency and trust in the process. A visual timeline is available to demonstrate the alignment of the process phases and engagement windows with major touchpoints for information or discussion with boards and City Council.

- Engagement Window #1: Share a Foundation of Information and Inquiry**
February-March 2021

This engagement window focused on developing interest and awareness of the project. Staff presented a foundation of information for the community to develop common understanding of current mission and vision of the department, outcomes since 2014 plan and agree on future opportunities and challenges to be explored in the master plan process.

- Engagement Window #2: Identify and Evaluate Options**
March – June 2021

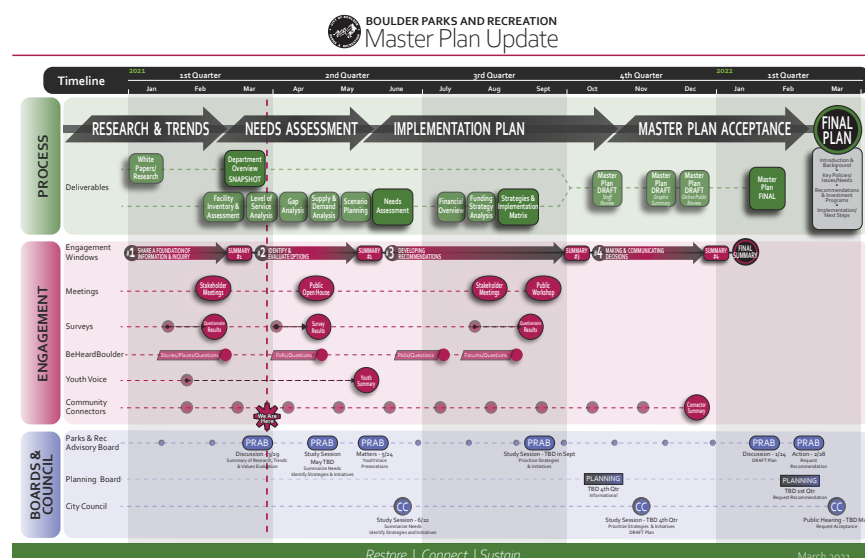
This engagement window will focus on collecting and evaluating feedback from the community using anecdotal and statistically valid methods to better understand the community needs and desires.

- Engagement Window #3: Developing Recommendations**
June – October 2021

This engagement window will focus on reviewing the high-level recommendations and prioritization to garner support for the plan and to verify it is representative of the community.

- Engagement Window #4: Making and Communicating Decisions**
October -December 2021

This engagement window will focus presentation of the draft plans highlighting values and recommendations to guide the next 5-10 years.



Click the timeline image above to view it in a full-size PDF.

ENGAGEMENT WINDOW #1: SHARE A FOUNDATION OF INFORMATION AND INQUIRY

Objectives

The first engagement window was designed to accomplish several key objectives:

- Develop community awareness of and interest in the BPR Master Plan.
- Inform the community and stakeholders of the master plan objectives, collect contact information for interested community members, provide an opportunity to verify existing community values and define emerging interests.
- Consult with stakeholders to understand the current opportunities and challenges for their interest groups.
- Integrate equity tools and practices to confirm a broad cross section of the community is engaged.

Base of information and Inquiry

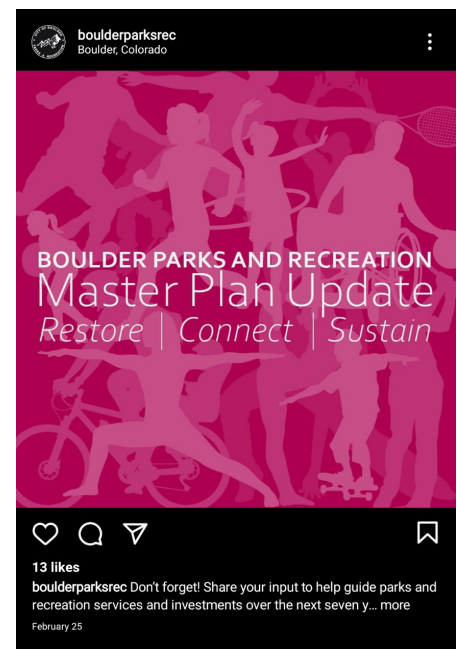
The [BPR Master Plan project web page](#) web page was the main conduit for providing the base information to the community including background, project approach and timeline. The base information is important to build a level of understanding to obtain more informed feedback. A 5-year progress report and video were included to help the community understand the parks and recreation system with key accomplishments driven by the previous master plan. Project updates and key documents are also located on the page to provide a transparent history of the project process and provide information about upcoming opportunities for engagement.

Closely linked to the project web page is [BeHeardBoulder.org](#), the City of Boulder's online engagement platform. Engagement opportunities are hosted at this location for multiple large projects within the City of Boulder, including the BPR Master Plan. It is an interactive site that allows the community convenient access to major City projects actively seeking community feedback.

Outreach Tactics for Awareness

Staff used a myriad of tactics to develop interest and awareness. BPR is fortunate to have a strong community following in several digital platforms. It was also imperative to reach community members across the community who may not be current users or connected to BPR through those digital platforms. A combination of digital platforms, traditional print media and community connection was used to reach a broad segment of the community.

- **Digital platforms** were used to drive the community to project information and engagement opportunity pages. The web pages received approximately 3,000 hits during engagement window #1.
 - A [press release](#) picked up by the [Daily Camera on Feb. 4](#) as a short news brief
 - Multiple BPR email blasts reaching approximately 30,000 subscribers for general BPR information.
 - The BPR Recreation Guide included a full-page bilingual announcement

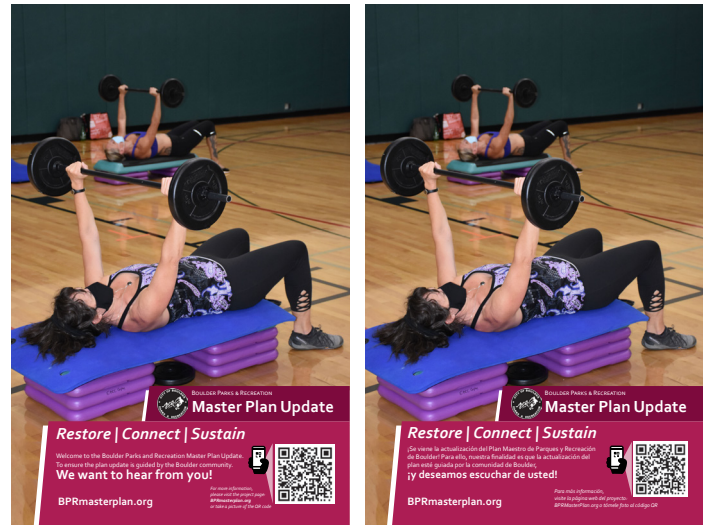


An Instagram post from February 25.



in the digital format that reaches approximately 45,000 subscribers

- Monthly updates are sent directly to approximately 300 email subscribers requesting project specific information.
- A [NextDoor post](#) that was distributed to 48,000 community members on the platform
- Multiple social media campaigns were posted on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook (BPR Facebook page, City of Boulder Facebook page and *Gobiernoboulderco*, a citywide Facebook page with exclusively Spanish content)
- Community connectors invited service providers working with under-served community members to re-share social media throughout their networks.
- Other City department with outreach methods such as the library and OSMP re-shared social media throughout their networks.
- An Inside Boulder News story on Boulder TV 8 (Channel 8) in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) that continues to live online.
- A staff newsletter was sent to all BPR staff providing project information to share with their direct contacts, partners and patrons to provide a more personalized invitation to engage in the project.
- Links to the BPR Master Plan are located on high traffic BPR web pages to help inform community member while they are visiting the site.
- **Print media** was used in combination with digital methods in effort to increase awareness for community members with less access to digital platforms.
 - A full page bi-lingual flyer was included in every utility bill mailed within the City of Boulder, reaching approximately 20,000 residents not participating in a digital utility billing system.
 - Bi-lingual signage has been posted at all facilities and at major park sites.
 - Door Hangars commonly used for forestry related messaging will include BPR Master Plan



English and Spanish versions of a flyer that was posted around the recreation centers and other facilities.

ENGAGEMENT METHODS FOR FEEDBACK

Several methods for engagement were used to encourage the community to participate and provide feedback about existing community values and define emerging interests. This early engagement also provides valuable information about current opportunities and challenges from the community perspective.

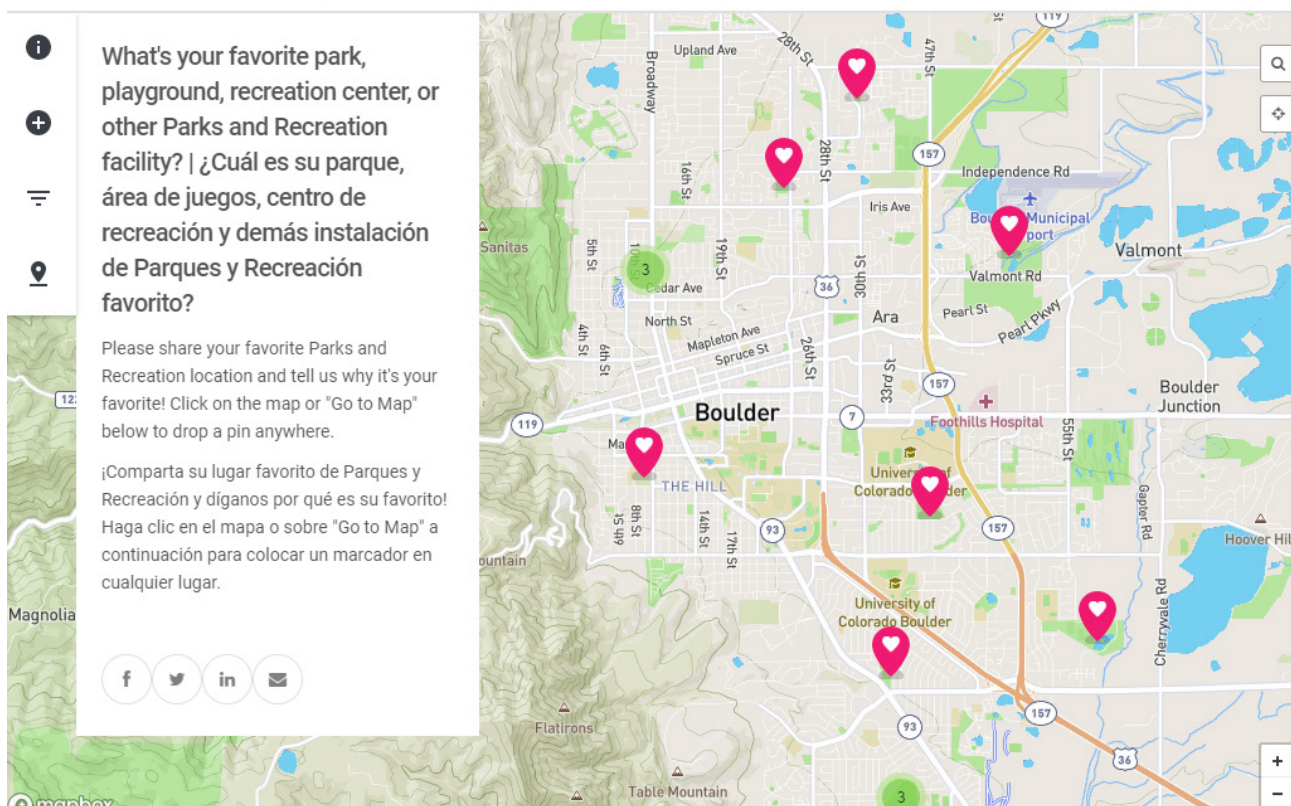
- **Be Heard Boulder** is the City of Boulder's online engagement platform. Four platform tools were used to accommodate different styles and preferences of providing feedback. Engagement window #1 included English and Spanish translations for all content.

- An Anecdotal Values Questionnaire was developed to verify community values and define emerging interests as they relate to BPR, which is aligned with similar questions discussed with PRAB and City Council in late 2020. The anecdotal questionnaire targeted the broad community and BPR staff to develop a high-level understanding of the project while providing an opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas.
- The digital and paper version of the questionnaire were available in English and Spanish from February 1-28, 2021. The digital questionnaire was posted on the Be Heard Boulder page with paper copies available at any BPR facility, such as recreation centers. The questionnaire was available for the community and staff. This opportunity has been closed for analysis of the feedback to inform this phase of the master plan.
- An interactive map exercise that lets the community drop a pin on their favorite park, playground, recreation center or other BPR facility and tell us why it is their favorite is still available. Check it out on the [map](#) tab to see what people are saying.



[Sign In](#) | [Register](#)

[Home](#) » [Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update](#)

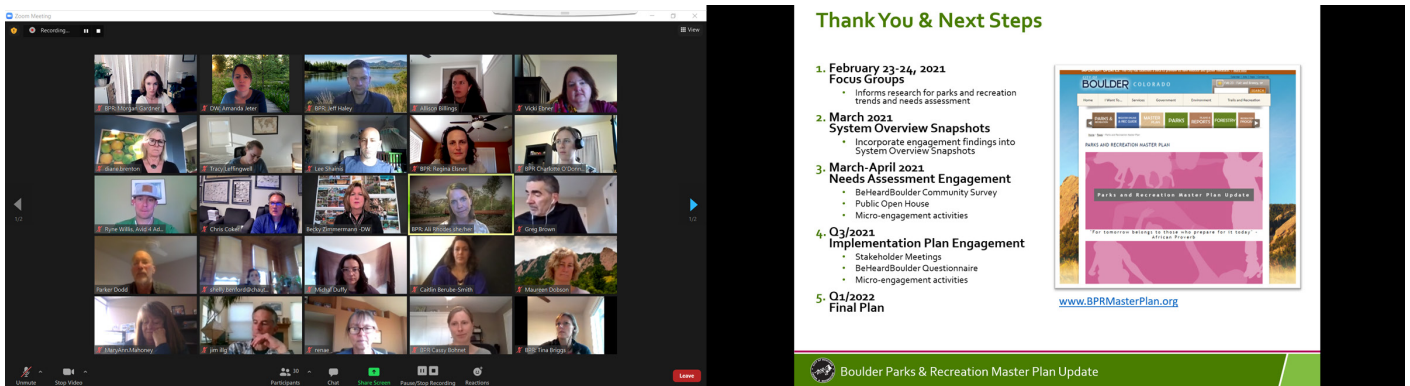


- The **memories** tab provides a place to share a story or memory about a BPR park or facility. Memories are posted by the community for other community members to enjoy. This opportunity is still available and open for community contributions. Check out on the [memories](#) tab to see what the community is sharing.
- The **questions** tab was an opportunity for community members to submit questions directly to staff with an anticipated response with 72 hours. This tab has been closed for engagement window #1 to include in the analysis.
- **Stakeholder Meetings** were conducted by staff and consultants to provide intimate discussions with



smaller groups of community leaders on specific issues and needs or desires. It provided an opportunity for community members to better understand other groups with similar or competing needs with transparent discussion of financial limitations, which leads to priority development.

Multiple sessions were scheduled to accommodate as many community leaders as possible. The sessions were designed to provide a base of information for the whole group with breakout sessions for a deeper dive with planned groups of stakeholders. Multiple sessions were scheduled to accommodate as many community leaders as possible. The sessions were designed to provide a base of information for the whole group with breakout sessions for a deeper dive with planned groups of stakeholders.



A screenshot from one of two stakeholder meetings held.

- **PRAB:** The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) has already been engaged multiple times for the Master Plan Update. At the December 2019 meeting, PRAB provided input on the overall approach for the update to ensure alignment between staff and PRAB. In April 2020, staff shared an update with the PRAB given COVID-19 impacts on timing and budget. Following successful contract negotiation, PRAB participated in the project kick-off during the September 2020 meeting. At the November 2020 meeting, PRAB reviewed the public engagement plan and helped staff prepare for a study session with City Council in December 2020.
- **City Council:** A study session was held with City Council on December 8, 2020. The primary goal of the session was to allow staff to present key process information early in the project to ensure alignment with City Council on the various aspects of the project including the overall process, approach to community involvement strategies and key topics that will be explored. Another goal was to remind City Council that the project is a comprehensive update to the current BPR master plan and not a completely new planning process. Staff presented the project approach and engagement plan, key themes from 2014, and brief overview and approach to equity and resilience. Council was supportive of the process and approach as presented and indicated that equity and resilience are appropriate topics for additional evaluation.
- **Staff:** On December 15, 2020, staff came together for a three-hour facilitated conversation focused on identifying specific accomplishments and areas for improvement related to the existing and new white papers. The charrette was kicked off with keynote speakers from Vancouver, San Diego and Denver discussing their lessons learned from incorporating equity into their master plans and everyday work. Breakout sessions then focused on conversations about asset management, recreation programs and services, resilience and equity. Staff identified specific accomplishments, areas for improvement, information or data gaps, areas for greatest impact, and big ideas for each of these topics. All BPR staff were also invited and encouraged to participate in the anecdotal values questionnaire.

OUTCOMES: QUESTIONNAIRE

463 Anecdotal Values Questionnaires were submitted, including 24 staff submissions and 3 submissions in Spanish. All of the submissions were read and analyzed to provide a summary of comments under each key theme as presented in the questionnaire. All of the questions were provided as open-ended questions requiring a qualitative analysis of the comments. The summary below provides a digestible overview of the feedback while providing enough detail to capture the true nature of, and common threads in, the community feedback. The full detail of all comments can be made available.

The key theme most community members chose to discuss was Taking Care of What We Have, indicating that this is still an important concept to the community. Following that, the key theme of Community Health and Wellness was the next most common theme chosen. Youth Engagement and Activity, Equity and Resilience all had similar number of community members desiring to discuss those topics.

There were a number of overarching ideas that community members repeatedly mentioned throughout their responses, within different contexts depending on the key theme. These ideas included concerns about homelessness and encampments, as well as the impacts a growing and changing population will have on the overall parks and recreation system.

Three questions were asked under each key theme.

- Why is this key theme **important** to you?
- What **hopes** do you have for the future?
- What **concerns** do you have for the future?

Summary of Comments for Key Themes

- **Community Health and Wellness** - *Ensure public health and wellness through parks, facilities, and programs to keep Boulder a healthy and vibrant community.*
 - Many people commented that it was important for its **impact on the overall community**: providing services that meet the community's needs, providing access to otherwise inaccessible facilities or programs, providing opportunities to meet others and strengthen community bonds, as well as the resulting impacts that health and wellness has on a community's healthcare system, crime, and taxes.
 - A significant number of people mentioned the importance of Community Health and Wellness for **individuals**: the benefits it provides for one's physical and mental health and its ability to improve resilience and provide strength in difficult times.
 - For some, Community Health and Wellness is an important key theme simply because **it's the main purpose of having a parks and recreation system**.
 - In looking forward regarding Community Health and Wellness, most people were hopeful that our parks, facilities, and programs **were well-maintained or even improved**. There were quite a few suggested **amenities or activities**: more tennis and/or pickleball courts, more events (and especially culturally diverse events), more places to swim, more or improved dog parks and off leash areas, more mountain biking options, more personal exercise equipment in parks, more roller skating options, more cross-country skiing or snowshoeing options, and more trails.



- There was a general **fear among many that the parks, programs, and facilities would be closed or not maintained** due to a lack of funding or lack of resources.
- It was also important to a large number of people that BPR facilities and programs show **improved accessibility and inclusion** so that everyone in the community can be healthy. “Diversity” and “inclusion” included references to age, socioeconomic status, race, and physical or mental abilities.
- Many people discussed **programming for community health and wellness** – they wanted more great programs and quality instructors, but they should be accessible and inclusive to meet everyone’s needs in the community. There should be **more subsidies** for those who can’t afford to join in, and **more programs for seniors and youth** as well as **more arts and EXPAND programs**.
- **Taking Care of What We Have - Prioritize investments in existing parks and facilities to ensure the long-term viability of the park and recreation system.**
 - The primary sentiment we heard from the responses about “Taking Care of What We Have” is that **we have a good thing going**, so we should continue to focus on keeping those parks and facilities clean and safe and upgrading only as necessary. It was stated in many different ways that “**quality over quantity**” was important here, and upgrading and maintaining what we have makes more sense financially than spreading ourselves too thin and building new.
 - When “**more**” was brought up, it was usually referring to the increasing user base and general growth of the city leading to issues with crowding and overuse. Requests for **additional amenities or new facilities** were usually relating to crowded and inaccessible locations like tennis courts and classes. There were suggestions for more multi-use and re-used equipment and space in creative ways, and better **connecting the park system** to be more walkable or accessible via public transit. More facilities and programs oriented towards youth and seniors was also suggested.
 - There was concern expressed around **camping** in the parks, **preparing for emergencies** such as wildfires, flooding, pandemics, and economic recession, and **ensuring that BPR does not spread itself too thin** or prioritize projects or services that are perceived to be too expensive or inefficient.
- **Financial Sustainability - Balance multiple and increasing demands within existing resources, recognizing the limits of public funding and the need to focus on core services.**
 - Overwhelmingly, Financial Sustainability was considered important because, quite simply, **it’s necessary to function**. In order to care of what we have, we must have stable finances.
 - Many mentioned that it is important for **planning for the future** – Financial Sustainability provides reliability for our services and operations and avoiding debt or crisis.
 - Many worried that without it, parks and facilities would decay or be lost and programming would suffer, until finally **BPR could no longer meet the community’s needs**.
 - Others hoped that financial sustainability would include responsible spending, balanced budgets, and creative funding strategies so that we would avoid loss of funding and be better prepared to withstand hardships.

- **Building Community Relationships** - *Build community engagement and cultural activities through outreach programs and initiatives. Promote a healthy community to address social and cultural inequities.*
 - Most responses regarding the importance of Building Community Relationships cited a stronger, more unified community that **benefited from a diversity of users through inclusion and accessibility**. BPR provides events, programs, and spaces that allow socializing and connection, which allows the community to support each other, and the partnerships that BPR builds with other organizations improves access to these services across the board.
 - The primary concerns around Building Community Relationships is a **fear that there will be little change in the diversity and accessibility** of BPR's services and partnerships in the future – that a lack of new or improved partnerships would result in voices remaining unheard, the community continuing to divide, and those who couldn't access BPR services before still being excluded.
- **Youth Engagement and Activity** - *Engage youth with parks, facilities and programs that provide direct experience with nature, experiential learning and opportunities to close the educational achievement gap.*
 - Most people mentioned that youth engagement and activity with BPR was important for the community's youth because of the **numerous benefits to the youth**: making friends and connecting with the community, teaching them to be proud stewards of our environment, providing short- and long-term health benefits, education and emotional development, learning new skills, and finding new passions and hobbies. It was frequently stated that BPR programs and amenities that serve the youth get them out of the house and off the internet, providing a safe place to keep them out of trouble and an outlet for stress.
 - However, there were **numerous benefits for the rest of the community** mentioned as well. **"The youth are our future"** was most frequently brought up, as well as the importance of reaching all ages through equitable services. It was brought up that family-friendly cities attract families and affect quality of life.
 - Many people hoped that the future would **bring a diverse community in which people of all ages, races, and socio-economic statuses could participate together**, but most especially through opportunities for youth to interact with each other and learn to value the outdoors and be good stewards, appreciate their community, and learn and discover through various experiences. Some worried about **a lack of programming for youth that would leave them disinterested and disconnected** from their community, or inequitable programming that would exclude some. A loss of programs and poor facilities would also affect youth engagement.
- **Organizational Readiness** - *Leverage the use of new technologies, data driven decision-making and collaborative decision-making tools to respond to changes over time within the industry.*
 - Organizational Readiness was stated to be important mostly because **change is inevitable and we need to face it thrive**. Using data, making proactive decisions, and staying up-to-date on technology would significantly benefit the stability of BPR in the future. It was also mentioned that staying on top of technology and processes is important to ensure customer satisfaction.
 - Many responses mentioned hopes for **staying up to date** with trends and technology, including a new system for the recreation centers and website. Others were hopeful that there would be **strong internal organization and collaborative decision-making** to embrace new opportunities, as well as **improved**



collaboration between BPR and other organizations and agencies.

- Concerns about the future typically revolved around **dealing with an increasing population**, including an increasing senior population, as well as **complacency** resulting in inefficient systems, lower customer satisfaction, lost opportunities, inability to recover from setbacks, and **poor implementation**.
- **Equity - Provide safe, inclusive, culturally relevant and welcoming parks, facilities and programs in a way that works to address systemic and historic inequities.**
 - Overwhelmingly, the most important thing mentioned about Equity as a Key Theme is the importance of ensuring **everyone has equal access and feels welcome in BPR facilities and programs**. It was mentioned often that Boulder still has significant issues with diversity, equity, inclusion, and access, and in order to fix it, it must be deliberately and proactively addressed. Despite the existing problems, it was clear in these responses that a diverse and inclusive community was desired, and that BPR could help by listening to typically unheard voices and offering unique services to low-income and underrepresented families that private entities cannot offer.
 - Many people mentioned that access could be helped by **preserving and increasing the amount of inclusive programs and accessible amenities** BPR offers, and ensuring equitable access by providing **more free or subsidized programs and facilities**, as well as **improving park connectivity** through walking/biking connections and public transit.
 - Several suggested by **increasing staff's awareness of privilege and equity issues**, as well as increasing representation in leadership and staff, BPR's system could become much more welcoming and inclusive. Many emphasized that **the worst thing we could do is nothing**, leaving people unheard and disconnected. Some worried that this issue is bigger than BPR, and we can only do so much.
 - There was concern that the increasing population in Boulder would **force low- and middle-income families out**, making the city more unaffordable and unwelcome, and distancing current users. Funding and resource limitations that result in a **reduction of important inclusive programs was also a big concern**.
- **Resilience - Create a parks and recreation department that is prepared to absorb the shocks and stressors of environmental and societal changes.**
 - Resilience was considered an important key theme because **change (or crisis) is inevitable and we need to be prepared**. Being proactive and adaptable would help improve recovery and protect our assets and the community.
 - The primary hope cited for Resilience in the future is that **BPR continues to serve the community** and that its programs and amenities last a long time, as well as **the preservation of the ecosystem and wildlife**. Others mentioned hoping that sustainable tools and methods would be included in future projects and operations, as well as a better connected park system through walkability and public transit alternatives. There was **concern that overcrowding and overuse would ruin our greenspaces**, or that parks and facilities would be neglected or lost.
 - Many also mentioned a hope that through past experiences, studies, available data, and smart planning, BPR could be **better prepared to deal with emergencies** like wildfire and flooding. The biggest concern

was that BPR would be unprepared in the future to handle such emergencies, and others worried that **funding or resource limitations would affect response and recovery** or that BPR would not do enough to prevent impacts.

- **“Big Ideas” and Other Comments**

The last two questions provided an opportunity for the community and staff to share insights on what would be most beneficial to the department in the next 1-3 years and an open-ended opportunity to share any additional thoughts.

- **Summary of “Big Ideas” and “Additional Thoughts”**

- By far the most common “big idea” that was heard were suggestions for **more facilities and amenities**. Of those requests, pickleball and tennis stood out drastically, likely because some tennis courts have been converted to allow both sports in recent years, but neither sport has seen new single-use courts added to match the growing users. The third most common ideas were related to increasing less-specific facilities such as “outdoor recreation”, “parks”, “trails”, “playgrounds”, and “track”.
- Of the various categories of big ideas that were suggested beyond Additional Facilities, the remaining categories each had roughly one-fourth (or less) the number of comments. Nonetheless, quite a few suggestions for **additional programming** centered around the arts or the Pottery Lab, and then youth-oriented programming.
- Comments related to the administration and management of BPR included **pursuing more partnerships, opportunities for communication or feedback**, and other miscellaneous suggestions.
- There were ideas related to various community-wide issues such as addressing BPR’s **climate resilience** and our **functioning urban ecosystem**, transportation access, addressing homelessness in parks, equity, and pandemic recovery.
- Less frequently mentioned but still important were ideas centered around **renovating facilities** (mostly focused on renovating current recreation centers), **safety concerns** (mostly surrounding encampments), **additional engagement opportunities** (mostly for youth), **improving affordability and inclusion** of BPR facilities and programs, and maintenance.
- There were quite a few ideas categorized as “Other” that involved OSMP property or programming, no suggestions, Reservoir management, no categorization, or general appreciation for BPR.

OUTCOMES: STAKEHOLDER MEETING

With the diversity of stakeholders and topics, it was significant to see several main themes rise to the top. Overall, everyone involved feels that equity of access is important and all those using BPR spaces should feel welcome and included. The variety of stakeholders also agreed that diversity of program providers is valued and although some overlap is necessary, it is important to communicate with partners and competitors to make sure they are best serving the residents of Boulder. Participants in all groups cited the importance of partnerships to recovery efforts and strengthening existing relationships with private providers, nonprofit advocates, and other public partners like



the school district. Many groups brought up the increased use of BPR outdoor parks and amenities and the need for increased maintenance, while at the same time sharing pent-up desires for more courts/amenities and big ideas for large-scale new facilities (e.g., pool, tennis center). Participants also acknowledged the limited budget of BPR for the increasing demands for increased maintenance and new facilities.

From the discussion groups, specific highlights on trends and big ideas are listed below:

Parks and Outdoor Amenities

- Trends
 - More use of almost all amenities due to COVID-19, especially those close to home (walkable/bikeable from home) and for youth and active adults
 - Dog park use is high and growing
 - Tennis has risen in popularity for the first time in many years and there is more stacking up (waiting) for court time. Some courts are in poor condition.
 - Pickleball also rising in popularity nationally and locally
 - Could continue to see more indoor events taking place outside, demand for outdoor event spaces rising
 - Increased demand for more access to family time in pools
 - Sports teams that have had flat participation seeing increases
 - Increased use has led to increased waste
 - Valmont Bike Park usage fees are helping to balance taking care/providing new and the ongoing maintenance
 - Also increased demand for resources to support people experiencing homelessness in parks
- Big Ideas
 - Desire for specialized areas like dog parks, nature areas and parks for mountain biking
 - Desire for improvements to recreation centers, pools (participants cited success of Scott Carpenter Pool) and outdoor sports facilities
 - Some parks with youth sports fields are in parks that are perceived as less safe and welcoming
 - Strong desire for more streamlined partnerships and collaboration

Recreation, Programming & Indoor Facilities

- Trends
 - Indoor fitness classes on the rise before COVID-19
 - Warm water pools are more popular now due to the increase in aging adults
 - Older adult participation increasing
 - Size limitations during pandemic recovery likely to be barrier to access
 - Families “begging” for things for kids to do outside (e.g., baseball and other youth sports)
 - Day and resident camps filling up fast
 - Childcare demand strong
 - YMCA has had successful Public/NGO partnership-taxpayers paid for construction but YMCA pays for operations-nimbler funding mechanisms than BPR.
 - Tracking 10% increase in use each year regardless of COVID-19
 - Mixture of public and private providers important for providing full spectrum of access
 - Outdoor recreation (tennis, baseball, soccer) seeing increase of use
 - Challenges to maintenance, especially if used by dogs or after weather events

- Many discussions on how to extend recreation facility use (e.g., lights and bubble over Scott Carpenter pool for cool weather use)
- Pottery lab and arts program seeing high, growing demand pre- and post-COVID
 - Increasing duration of lease for pottery lab provider could free up more staff time
- Big Ideas
 - Shared facility between providers so that they could split maintenance cost would be great – especially for costly multicourt facilities (tennis/pickleball) or large baseball/softball complexes
 - New tennis facility (10-12 courts)
 - Incentivize permitting and scholarships to get underrepresented groups involved
 - Recreation that is accessible to all - PlayPass is great start
 - Acknowledgment of role BPR has played in supporting community over last year with pivoting and reduced cost facilities
 - Streamlining bureaucracy for recreation registrants and recreation program providers (lease and facility agreements)

Equity

- Trends
 - Requity and PLAY Pass programs have been essential to social service providers and general public during this stressful time
 - o Recreation incentives helpful for volunteer benefits
 - Demand high for everyday activities within walking distance of residents and for youth outdoor recreation and sports with non-pro, low-key options
 - Programs like Out Boulder softball team successful in bringing new populations to BPR facilities
 - Offering programs with representation and bilingual communications an opportunity
 - Boulder experiences more socio-economic diversity than cultural diversity
- Big Ideas
 - During recovery, parks have special role in being real humans together again
 - Welcome home parties at recreation centers
 - Direct outreach to underrepresented groups to participate
 - BPR internships and career development for underrepresented groups
 - o Information on how volunteers can play a role in creating a welcoming and active community

PRAB and City Council Outcomes

Discussions from PRAB, City Council, the community, stakeholders and staff demonstrated support of the continued importance the 6 key themes and for weaving equity and resilience as guiding principles with explicit strategies and initiatives under each key theme.

Staff Outcomes

24 BPR staff responded to the anecdotal questionnaire. Overall, staff responses mirrored the community responses and were included as part of the questionnaire outcomes previously presented in this document. The key themes of Taking Care of What We Have and Community Health and Wellness were the most popular themes to discuss for staff respondents. Staff then focused on Financial Sustainability, while the community focused on Youth Engagement and Activity, Equity, and Resilience before Financial Sustainability. This is an understandable difference given how invested staff is in the ongoing financial wellness of the department.



SUMMARIZED OUTCOMES

Below is a highly condensed summary of the engagement discussions and responses.

Overarching Themes

There were several overarching ideas commonly mentioned within different contexts depending on the key theme.

- Concerns about homelessness and encampments
- Impacts of a growing and changing population on the overall parks and recreation system

Equity and Resilience

There was a general acknowledgment that the City of Boulder has done significant work to address diversity, equity, inclusion, and access. These issues must continually be addressed proactively and deliberately. Overall, equity and resilience were expected to explicitly weave into every key theme rather than becoming additional new key themes.

- Ensure that everyone in Boulder has access to parks and recreation programs and services and feels welcome and included in those spaces
- Leaving people unheard and disconnected would be a detrimental non-action
- Ensure that BPR and its staff are ready and able to adapt and respond to future change and/or crises
- BPR has a role to play in the preservation of urban ecosystems promoting resilience throughout the community

Key Themes

Key themes were used to organize the responses and discussions to evaluate the continued importance and validity of those key themes for the master plan update. Outcomes of those discussions indicated the six key themes identified in the previous master plan are still important and valid for this update.

The key themes most discussed were *Taking Care of What We Have* and *Community Health and Wellness*. Other themes with a higher level of discussion included *Youth Engagement and Activity* along with *Building Community and Relationships*.

Financial Sustainability and *Organizational Readiness* sparked less engagement with the realization that there are considered internal-facing core functions of BPR, an expectation without either of which none of the other key themes could be addressed.

- *Taking Care of What We Have*
 - Continue to maintain the high-quality facilities already within the system, while focusing new facilities to address increased demands from a growing population.
- *Community Health and Wellness*
 - This is the core role of Parks and Recreation. These services offered need to meet the community's needs, provide access to otherwise inaccessible facilities or programs and provide opportunities to strengthen community bonds.

- *Youth Engagement and Activity*
 - Parks and recreation play an important role in youth health, wellness, and engagement to maintain a high quality of life and address the challenges faced by youth today.
- *Building Community and Relationships*
 - The community cited the importance of partnerships in recovery efforts
 - Strengthen existing relationships with private providers, nonprofit advocates, and other public partners like the school district.
 - Partnerships should be leveraged to improve all the other key themes.
 - The diversity of program providers is valued and although some overlap is necessary, it is important to communicate with partners and competitors to make sure they are best serving the residents of Boulder.
 - Partnerships allow the department to foster social resilience and promote equity within its programs and services.
- Financial Sustainability
 - Continued financial health of the department.
 - Department and its staff continue to be flexible and adapt to future conditions
 - Continue to use department resources to meet the needs of the community.
- Organizational Readiness
 - Respond to the increased use of BPR outdoor parks and amenities and the need for increased maintenance
 - Balance maintenance with pent-up desires for more courts/amenities and big ideas for large-scale new facilities (e.g., pool, tennis center).
 - Acknowledged the limited budget of BPR for the increasing demands of maintenance and new facilities.

ENGAGEMENT METHODS UNDERWAY

- **Growing Up Boulder (GUB):** BPR and GUB have partnered on the master plan to engage youth in the process. GUB has in turn partnered with several schools and youth organizations with interest in the plan. Each class and organization will engage in a customized program to fit the organization or curriculum with varied level of length and detail based on age and length of engagement. For the longer programs, they are in the early stages of providing students a base of knowledge as a building block to gain insightful feedback. Each class prepares a share-out presentation to staff, providing the opportunity for discussion and questions about the ideas. GUB will collect and analyze the youth feedback from all of the classes and organization to provide a useful summary for the community and PRAB at the end of engagement window #2.
- **Youth Opportunities Advisory Board (YOAB):** YOAB has provided a team of four high school students to act as a liaison between BPR and the students in Boulder's high schools. In a three-part, semester-long project, the team has sent out a shorter version of the Anecdotal Values Questionnaire to their classmates to determine high-school youth priorities for the key themes. They then plan to provide a follow-up video with the results as well as an explanation of their second survey, which will ask about preferred goals and action items for the top three key themes chosen in the first survey.



NEXT STEPS

Engagement Window #2: Identify and Evaluate Options (March – May 2021)

This engagement window will focus on collecting and evaluating feedback from the community to better understand the community needs and desires. Four thousand statistically valid surveys, similar to the survey for the 2014 master plan, will be distributed to for longitudinal comparisons and analysis. The survey will also be available for all community members, even if not selected to receive a PIN number.

In response to feedback from the first questionnaire, staff is developing a set of shorter and more visually engaging polling questions to compliment the survey throughout the second engagement window.

Engagement window #2 will wrap up with a Virtual Open House. It is envisioned that a station/board-based approach will be used to gather input regarding research validation and workshop planning. Multiple stations/boards, staffed with department staff or consultant team members if in person or in Zoom rooms, will be set up to facilitate focused input on specific topics and to allow for small group interaction. Public comment will be recorded and integrated into the overall public engagement findings. Specific objectives for the second engagement window would be to:

- Present findings from research conducted to date, including mission/vision reviews, the organizational assessment, facility inventory, program inventory, financial analysis, stakeholder interviews, public survey, and other public engagement findings.
- Gather input regarding each of the research topics mentioned above to confirm and validate findings.
- Gather input regarding the format and content of the public issues workshop / summit to be conducted in the fall.