



# Boulder Parks & Recreation

## 2020 Progress Report



[BoulderParks-Rec.org](https://BoulderParks-Rec.org)









2020 was tough for communities across the globe.

In Boulder, impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic demanded sacrifices of us all to protect our most vulnerable community members and economic conditions forced our community to make hard choices - taking care of our physical and mental well-being was both harder and more important than ever. This report highlights some of the ways that Boulder Parks and Recreation adapted and responded to these challenges, lifted the spirits of the community, delivered services in all new ways and looks ahead to how we hope to thrive in a brighter 2021.

“

*We are in awe of the resilience of the Boulder Parks and Recreation Department, the hard work of the dedicated staff, and their ability to adapt to the constantly-changing dynamic.*

*- Parks & Recreation Advisory Board*

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# RESPOND





**We** provide safe, accessible public spaces, investing in parks and places that contribute to Boulder's unparalleled quality of life. During a worldwide public health crisis, this meant evaluating and promoting the safe use of parks, supporting emergent community needs, and reducing or realigning services for a highly constrained operating environment.

**Protect Community Health:** While the doors of our recreation facilities remained closed for 93 days, other doors opened with services shifting online where we developed a welcoming digital environment to keep the community moving and healthy.

**Prioritize Outdoors Spaces:** Our parks and outdoor spaces are more important than they've ever been. Despite reduced resources, Operations staff worked tirelessly to provide uninterrupted access to nearly 1,800 acres of urban parkland and natural lands as they experienced higher use than ever. They were assisted by 87 volunteers through our new Park Champs program, who contributed 1,466 hours to keep our parks beautiful and safe.



**Support Essential Community Needs:** We're proud of the integrity and respect of our incredibly dedicated team of professionals who provided emergency care, essential programming, and disaster response throughout a challenging year.

- **COVID-19 Recovery Center:** East Boulder Community Center was repurposed to serve some of the most vulnerable in our community by providing 71 people experiencing homelessness a place to isolate and recover from March into June.
- **Virtual Programming:** On-demand health and wellness, virtual services for people with disabilities, and online programming for youth and families from underrepresented communities helped keep Boulder active and engaged while at home.
- **Camps:** Eleven weeks of camp for 350 participants represented the first in-person programming offered to the community after closures, in support of both campers and working parents.
- **Severe Storm Cleanup:** A citywide effort to respond to early season storm damage included tree pruning, removals, curbside branch pickup and chipping – with over 50,000 cubic yards of waste hauled away and over 2,500 Parks & Recreation staff hours contributed.

**Responsible Fiscal Stewardship:** Reductions and savings were implemented to the budget over the 2020 fiscal year in response to significant declines in sales tax and fee-based revenues.

	2019	2020	Change 2019 to 2020	% Change 2019 to 2020
Earned Revenue (User Fees & Grants)	\$9.4M	\$4.3M	\$(5.1)M	-54%
Registered Programs	1750	615	(1135)	-65%
Registered Participants	13,410	3,830	(9,580)	-71%
Average Daily Usage	835	245	(590)	-71%
Standard Staff	142	119	(23)	-15%
Non-Standard Staffing Hours	198,019	95,040	(102,979)	-52%



# RECOVER





**W**e promote the health and well-being of the entire community through impactful, inclusive programming and outreach. In 2020, this meant figuring out how to prioritize activities that were the most safe, sustainable and equitable.

**Safe and Sustainable Service Delivery:** Our mantra in 2020 was simple: “how might we?” We were as creative as possible, despite reduced resources, to figure out “how might we” be able to safely restore services and programming.



**Focus on Equity:** We prioritized restoring services first for those that need them most:

- **EXPAND:** Delivered 72 unique programs and camps to people with disabilities and providing inclusion support for our general camp in the summer. Programs included both virtual and in-person options.
- **Youth and Family Services:** In Fall 2020, YSI combined virtual and in-person programs to provide activities for 134 youth and teens, meeting 133 times for 171 hours of programming. They also delivered gifts bags to 108 families this holiday season, including recreation equipment and games such as yoga mats, jump ropes and Jenga. These activity bags allow for increased impact during our virtual programs and also allow each family to have recreation time on their own.
- **Expansion of Financial Aid Program:** To respond to the economic challenges of 2020, we expanded our financial aid program to include unemployment benefits as a qualification for participation in the 100% free facility access program, contributing to over 15,900 visits by 3,458 community members with low incomes.



### **Maximize Opportunity:**

Throughout the year, we closely monitored usage, trends, and community interest to provide services where our community members showed interest and found comfort in participation:

- **Outdoor Pools:** Boulder LOVES to swim, so we prepared the outdoor Spruce Pool for summer operations, amidst constantly evolving public health guidance. As a result, we welcomed swimmers to Spruce the day after swimming became allowed on June 5th. Based upon the high demand, we opened the renovated Scott Carpenter Pool immediately upon completion of construction and extended the outdoor pool season by 44 days.
- **Recreation Centers:** Operating recreation centers meant a reimagining of services to align with public health guidance to make it as safe as possible. By November, all three recreation centers were open on reduced schedules.
- **Regional Facilities:** The Flatirons Golf Course, Boulder Reservoir and Valmont Bike Park hosted high levels of physical activity and participation -- with our community members' preference for being outdoors highlighted in a 14% increase in rounds of golf played despite the golf course being closed nearly 130 days. Small craft boat permits issued compared to a typical year also saw an increase of nearly 15%.

**Lift Spirits:** Community connection has been vital in supporting the mental well-being of the community and fighting loneliness in a pandemic. We were able to provide over 400 attendees with a special Halloween Drive-in movie, recognize the efforts of 9,548 hours of service by volunteers with their own drive-in viewing *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*, decorate the Civic Area with over 800,000 LED holiday lights for a 'Snow Much Fun' partnership with Downtown Boulder, and sponsor a Virtual Duck Race that raised nearly \$25,000 from over 2,000 sponsored ducks with the PLAY Boulder Foundation.



# REVITALIZE





We continue to invest with you in Boulder's bright future and the ongoing support of the entire community. Join us in representing your passion, vision and enthusiasm as we build the next generation of parks and recreation in Boulder together.

**Master Plan Update:** The department launched an update to the 2014 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, which will help prioritize investments and services over the next five to seven years. We look forward to hearing from the community in 2021, with expected completion in Spring 2022.

**Celebrate and Welcome:** Completion of construction projects at Scott Carpenter Pool and the Boulder Reservoir Visitor Service Center delivered on the promises made through the 2017 Community, Culture and Safety Tax initiative, supported by the PLAY Boulder Foundation. We look forward to opportunities in 2021 to celebrate these projects and welcome the community to the new facilities in addition to other recent renovations like at the Chautauqua Park Playground.

**Flatirons Golf Course Facility Design:** This project will support the long-term viability of the city's only public golf course and replace core infrastructure destroyed in the 2013 flood with an energy-efficient building that includes accessible and gender-neutral restrooms, space for a family-friendly neighborhood restaurant, and takes advantage of the setting and iconic Flatirons views with an outdoor events space. The project is being designed and construction will begin in late 2021.

**Developing and Retaining Top Talent:** Incredible efforts in 2020 to support BPR's team of subject matter experts in things from Customer Service to Forestry to Asset Management to Swim Instruction to Park Construction to Therapeutic Recreation to Agronomy (the science of soil management!). We work hard to create a culture of communication, safety and transparency to keep our team engaged and motivated amidst an environment of furloughs, layoffs and uncertainty and will continue to work hard to ensure our team has the tools it needs to deliver high quality parks, facilities and programs.

**Come Back Better:** Services in 2021 will focus on restoring and creating services that can be offered safely within public health guidelines - while also being responsive to community needs. We will provide community benefit by prioritizing programming that serves youth, individuals with disabilities, and under-resourced community members.





# Everyday Excellence

Thank you for entrusting the care of our community's parks, facilities and recreation resources to Boulder Parks and Recreation (BPR). **We maintain, operate and care for:**



**3** FULL SERVICE  
RECREATION  
CENTERS

DROP-IN CLASSES  
CARDIO & WEIGHT ROOMS  
LAP & LEISURE POOLS  
PERSONAL TRAINING



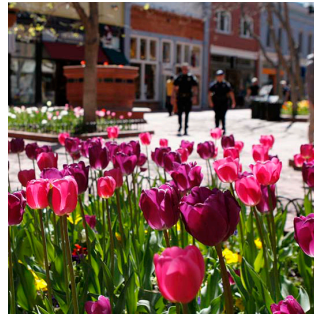
**86**  
PARKS, PLAZAS  
& PROPERTIES  
**43**  
PLAYGROUNDS



**15,000+** FREE FACILITY  
ENTRIES THROUGH FINANCIAL AID



**100** OUTDOOR  
BALL COURTS  
**2** OUTDOOR  
POOLS  
**44** MULTI-USE  
SPORTS FIELDS &  
BALL DIAMONDS



**5** OTHER SPECIAL  
PROPERTIES:

- PEARL STREET MALL
- VALMONT BIKE PARK
- COLUMBIA CEMETERY
- FLATIRONS GOLF COURSE
- BOULDER RESERVOIR

**\$25,000**

RAISED FROM OVER  
2,000 SPONSORED  
DUCKS FOR A VIRTUAL  
DUCK RACE WITH  
THE PLAY BOULDER  
FOUNDATION.

**1,800+ ACRES**  
OF URBAN PARKS  
& PLAZA SPACE



**51,000**  
TREES CARED FOR  
& **300**  
FLOWERBEDS




**4** DOG PARKS  
9 ACRES TOTAL

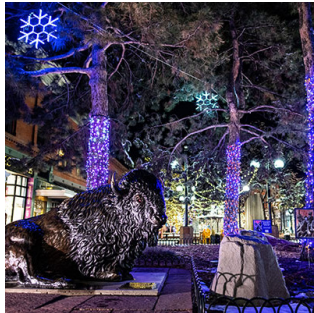


**236 MILES**  
OF MULTI-USE PATHS  
FOR SAFE YEAR-ROUND  
CONNECTIVITY

**326**  
YOUNG CAMPERS  
SERVED THROUGH  
SUMMER CAMP  
OFFERINGS



**50,000**  
ROUNDS OF GOLF  
AT FLATIRONS  
GOLF COURSE IN  
2020!



**30** VOLUNTEERS SPENT **508** HOURS  
MONITORING BIRDS OF CONCERN,  
WINTER RAPTOR AND PRAIRIE DOG  
CENSUS PROGRAMS IN ADDITION TO THE  
NEW OUTREACH VOLUNTEER PROGRAM.





### **Vision Statement**

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

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