

Basalt Area Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan

NOTE: The Plan was adopted by the both the Basalt Planning and Zoning Commission and the Basalt Town Council on October 1, 2013. This version has not been laid out or formatted for final printing.

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The Basalt Area Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan was created by a large group of staff, stakeholders, and public input, guided by a specially-created consultant team. Thanks to all who participated.

Town Council

Mayor – Jacque Whitsitt
Mayor Pro Tem – Glenn Rappaport
Mark Kittle
Robert Leavitt
Herschel Ross
Rick Stevens
Karin Teague

Basalt Parks, Open Space and Trails (POST) Advisory Committee

Cindy Bruce
Julie Kolar
Ian Gray
Cathy Miller
Paul Hilts
George Trantow
Suzanne Jackson

Basalt Planning and Zoning Commission

Chair – Bernie Grauer
Vice Chair – Chris Touchette
Tracy Bennett
Dylan Johns
Patrick McAllister
Gino Rossetti
Eric Vozick
Gary Wheeler

Town Staff

Mike Scanlon, Town Manager
Judi Tippetts, Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director
Susan Philp, Planning Director
Denise Tomaskovic, Planning Technician
Dorothy Howard, Recreation Director
Lisa DiNardo, Town Horticulturalist
Bentley Henderson, Public Works Director

Consultant Team



GreenPlay LLC, Chris Dropinski and Allison Hamm
DHM Design, Laura Kirk and Charlie Kees
Brian McNellis, BMC Planning & Design and Master Plan Project Manager

For More Information Contact:

GreenPlay LLC, 211 North Public Road, Suite 225, Lafayette, CO 80026
303-439-8369 www.greenplayllc.com Email: info@greenplayllc.com

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Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
Table of Contents	iii
The Master Plan	1
Plan Goals and Action Steps.....	2
Implementation Plan – Parks, Open Space, and Trails Facilities	13
Planning Context	14
Methodology.....	14
Project Schedule.....	15
Vision and Mission	15
Project Vision	15
Critical Success Factors	16
Guiding Principles.....	16
Parks, Open Space and Trails Mission and Vision	16
Our Changing Community.....	17
Recreation Trends	18
Public Engagement	19
Inventory	21
Recreation Programming and Maintenance	32
Operational Analysis	34
Parks and Recreation.....	34
Trails	37
Environment	38
Land Use and Open Space.....	38
Funding Analysis	40
Town Structure for Parks and Recreation Service Delivery	40
2013 Funding.....	40
Key Findings	45
 APPENDICES	
Demographic Profile.....	52
Park and Recreation Influencing Trends	58
Community and Stakeholder Engagement	74

Executive Summary of the Master Plan

It is the intention of this Master Plan to inspire and communicate a visionary, yet realistic blueprint for the future recognizing the critical role that parks, open space and trails play in the economy, community vitality, public health, and creating healthy kids through exposure to the natural environment and opportunity for physical activity. This is done with attention to sustainability and “green” goals.

The result is a collaboration of citizens, Town Council, P & Z, POST Committee, staff, and consultants to create a plan that incorporates local knowledge and institutional history that only community members and Town employees can provide. It includes an inventory of assets, demographic profile, and trends research, and gathered citizen opinion and input from other jurisdictions through a variety of engagement strategies. Analysis identifies deficiencies, constraints and opportunities, establishes recommendations, and sets improvement priorities, including ongoing maintenance needs, and identified costs and potential funding sources. A vision statement emerged from the effort, and recommended goals and action steps follow.

Although funding streams exist currently, significant progress on plan recommendations to meet citizen

Basalt’s Vision for Parks, Open Space, and Trails

Striving to maintain its small-town character, diverse community and river-centric location, Basalt’s Parks, Open Space and Trails system is paramount for connecting three primary nodes — Old Town, Southside and Willits — while providing opportunity for recreational pursuits and minimizing travel by car. Vibrant, well-maintained and thoughtfully designed settings encourage community engagement and interaction. Welcoming parks and well-connected trails foster both physical activity and contemplative experiences. Access to rivers and the outlying natural landscape promote adventure while also encouraging stewardship for our natural landscape and area wildlife. Visionary leadership and action to continually improve Basalt’s natural and enhanced outdoor environment will ensure long-term participation and enjoyment for locals and visitors alike.

expressed needs is not possible without immediate key funding strategies including expanding the 1% Sales Tax for Open Space Fund to allow a maximum percentage use to be dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of existing and acquired parks and open space properties, and changing past Town policies from only buying or preserving open space to spending a significant portion of the Open Space Fund for park improvements each year. Additional progress can be made by leveraging Town funds with grant funds and by completing small projects that do not create large annual expenditures of Town funds. A separate Implementation matrix for capital improvements was prepared as an ongoing tool for use by the Town Staff, Council and POST committee. The matrix establishes the timeframe, estimated costs, and potential funding sources and partners, and can be updated as needed.

Plan Goals and Action Steps

1. BRAND THE UNIQUE IDENTITY OF BASALT

Goal: Encompass and highlight the unique features that make Basalt so special, including being the gateway to the Frying Pan River Valley, the rivers, and boating and fishing. Through marketing efforts incorporate signage and wayfinding as identifiers and to visually connect the three community nodes.

Action Steps:

- ✓ *Create better wayfinding for parks, trails, landmarks and commercial centers which entails creating official names for existing trails, and providing annual updates to the existing illustrative parks and trails map as a resource for both the community and tourists. Consider adoption of a parks and trails naming policy. Specifically address:*
 - *Confluence Park and Bridge – Provide a trail sign after the bridge.*
 - *Lions Park - Paint and upgrade the signs within the park.*
 - *Sopris Meadows River - Improve wayfinding and access if greater public use is desired.*
 - *Emma Underpass – Use signage to improve wayfinding at this location.*
 - *Basalt/Old Snowmass Trail and in areas north of town on federal lands - Improve signage.*
- ✓ *Redesign the Town’s website to be user friendly and with better aesthetic appeal as well as clearer designation between Town departments and the citizen interests (parks, pool schedule, trails, updates to the plans and amenities, etc.).*
- ✓ *Create a marketing plan (taking into account public input provided during the master planning process as well as the Master Plan recommendations) to include such strategies as:*
 - *Expand use of social media to target hard-to-reach population segments.*
 - *Expand cross marketing efforts such as using kiosks and trailheads in parks to promote other Basalt parks and recreation offerings.*
 - *Expand use of newsletter articles and e-mail blasts for distribution to existing networks, employing ideas such as: park or open space of the month; Basalt park factoids; natural, cultural, and historic resources information; as well as timely information and announcements about upcoming events and opportunities.*
 - *Actively participate in the statewide web site (Get Outdoors Colorado launched spring/summer 2013) to list and promote Basalt activities and opportunities.*
- ✓ *Create an appealing annual report to communicate accomplishments and progress on goals and objectives and to-be-established performance measures.*
- ✓ *Work with environmental groups in the valley to help preserve the valley’s natural heritage and make the valley’s environmental values known to its citizens and tourists.*

2. BEAUTIFY BASALT

Goal: Support funding of beautification efforts including gardening, public horticulture, conservation, and public art through experiential and education settings for the community and its visitors.

Action Steps:

- ✓ *Consider special garden features such as non-fruit bearing trees and plants in all town development planning.*
- ✓ *Institute a plan for securing temporary and permanent displays of public art.*

- ✓ Beautify the open space entrance from Highway 82 at Basalt Avenue.
- ✓ Improve and expand the Town arboretum throughout downtown.
- ✓ Locate bear-proof trash and recycle containers at Town parks and trails.

3. PROVIDE FOR PEOPLE OF ALL ABILITIES

Goal: Meet or exceed the ADA 2010 Accessibility Guidelines, which now address the complete recreational experience from accommodations for registering for programs and parking to activity and facility use, to meet the needs of people with disabilities.

Action Steps:

- ✓ *Coordinate with Challenge Aspen to determine the most advantageous types of improvements to increase accessibility for people with disabilities in the parks, open space, and trails system.*
- ✓ *Strive to provide an accessible facility within each park.*
- ✓ *Partner with Challenge Aspen to accomplish mutual goals through joint funding.*
- ✓ *Coordinating with nearby counties and other agencies, and in compliance with the ADA 2010 Accessibility Guidelines, help create policy regarding where OPDMD's (Other Power Driven Mobility Devices) are allowed, or allowed with restrictions, and work with these entities to ensure this information is included on area maps.*

4. PROVIDE APPROPRIATE ACCESS TO THE RIVERS

Goal: Increase enjoyment and understanding of the two rivers and their confluence by seeking opportunities to increase river corridor trails and water access points where possible and in a manner that is environmentally responsible.

Action Steps – large scale improvements:

- ✓ *Implement the outcomes of the River Master Plan for the Town-owned Riverfront Parks and Open Space.*
- ✓ *Begin to actively implement the Two Rivers Greenway Master Plan by constructing Phase I: the first leg of the trail system; and organizing access to the river.*
- ✓ *Provide trails along the rivers' edge of the Roaring Fork and Frying Pan where appropriate*
- ✓ *Grange River Parcel – Review the environmental and habitat constraints with all parties having an ownership interest, along with other stakeholders, and complete the trail connection allowing access from Emma Road to the river, if deemed appropriate.*
- ✓ *CDOT Parcel – Secure a licensing agreement with the State and add boat access, picnic areas, and other appropriate features.*

5. TAKE CARE OF WHAT WE HAVE

Goal: Assure a focus on better maintenance of what Basalt already has or adds to the system, through desirable maintenance standards and adequate funding. Protect and enhance the natural environment, including rivers, riparian area, and wildlife habitat, recognizing that it is the source of the community's physical and economic health.

Action Steps:

- ✓ *Expand the use of the 1% Sales Tax for Open Space Fund to allow a maximum percentage use to be dedicated to maintenance of existing and acquired parks and open space properties.*

- ✓ *Control noxious weeds on all Town-controlled parks and open space properties by maintaining and continually evolving the integrated pest management program to incorporate contemporary methods to emphasize biological controls, optimize cultural practices and minimize chemical use. Continue to ensure that the pesticides and herbicides used by the Town are not harmful to people or animals. Maintain existing historic structures in parks and reuse historic structures where possible in existing parks.*
- ✓ *Improve the maintenance program of town parks and trails, with particular attention to Arbaney, Triangle, Old Pond Park and CDOT Parcel as described further in Goal 11.*
- ✓ *Continue to improve the El Jebel underpass.*
- ✓ *Continue efforts with Pitkin County to improve and maintain the Emma underpass to provide a more inviting and safer feeling at this important location which serves to connect trails on either side of Highway 82, as well as the Emma area, to east and west Basalt. Ensure that underpass is kept swept and provide on-going monitoring to ensure that underpass is clean and that all light fixtures work properly.*
- ✓ *Confluence Park and Bridge - General clean-up of the area; add bear-proof trash and recycling containers.*
- ✓ *Create an appropriate balance between use of our natural areas and protection of natural resources, including wildlife, as improvements are considered in planning efforts.*
- ✓ *Inspect Town parks and remove any materials that could be considered toxic to make sure that Basalt provides a non-toxic, safe environment for people and animals.*
- ✓ *Install bio swales and other best management practices in Town parks.*
- ✓ *Enforce trail rules and closures to ensure that wildlife protection and other community goals are satisfactorily addressed and provide support to other governmental entities to ensure that enforcement occurs on trails within their jurisdiction.*

6. CONNECT BASALT INTERNALLY

Goal: Provide a bicycle and pedestrian system linking neighborhoods to schools, parks, transit systems, commercial areas and public lands that creates a safe and convenient alternative to vehicular transportation and serves as a recreational amenity.

General Principles:

- Make downtown pedestrian and bicycle friendly by adding these pedestrian and bicycle improvements: add bike racks in front of public buildings and other strategic locations throughout Town; add raised pedestrian crossings, park benches and signs to instruct motorists and bicyclists to share the road.
- Provide rustic walking trails along the river corridor while protecting the riparian habitat.
- Consider bike trail or sharrow markings in the roads where appropriate.
- Identify (and create if possible) parking locations in proximity to trailheads in Old Town Basalt.
- Aggressively pursue safe, convenient, and attractive pedestrian and bicycle crossings at all Highway 82 intersections between East and West Basalt. Establish more direct grade separated bicycle and pedestrians connections between the major intersections with Highway 82 to promote a more complete and convenient trail system and to make Highway 82 less of a barrier for pedestrians and bicyclists.

HIGH PRIORITY

Action Steps – large scale improvements:

- ✓ *Support the overpass/underpass at Highway 82 and Basalt Avenue (can be constructed without floodplain improvements), and at Highway 82 and Midland Avenue (potentially includes an extension of Midland Avenue or a roundabout at this intersection) as potential solutions to connect downtown to the Southside area.*



Action Steps – small scale improvements:

- ✓ *Rio Grande Trail – Work with Pitkin County Open Space and Trails to identify and install appropriate trailhead amenities potentially including but not limited to a shade structure; kiosk with trail map; and/or restroom facility at the trail intersection with Southside Drive.*

MEDIUM AND OTHER FUTURE PRIORITY

Action Steps – large scale improvements:

- ✓ *Ponderosa Park and Fisherman’s Park - Determine a possible location for a pedestrian bridge in this general area without displacing fishermen’s access or compromising use since the grant used to fund Fisherman’s Park has restrictions.*
- ✓ *Pan and Fork, Levinson, and Roaring Fork Conservancy properties - Construct new trails and high quality connections through these properties as those projects are developed.*
- ✓ *Designate locations for and construct a future bridge(s) to connect Two Rivers Road and Emma Trail.*
- ✓ *Work closely with RFTA to obtain state and federal grant funding to develop an intra-town transportation/shuttle service.*
- ✓ *Coordinate with RFTA and explore funding strategies to provide free bus service between East and West Basalt.*

Action Steps – small scale improvements:

- ✓ *Improve the trail/sidewalk connection between the bridge and the elementary school and between Highway 82 and the high school.*
- ✓ *Frying Pan Road - Pursue conversations with jurisdictional agencies for opportunities as they arise to create a safer route along the heavily traveled Frying Pan Road for bicyclists, including widening of the road, bike trails, striping, etc.*
- ✓ *Improve existing alley-trail connections in-town, particularly along Rebecca Alley.*
- ✓ *Improve the connection from the elementary school to the Emma Bridge to provide a safe and designated route separate from vehicular circulation.*
- ✓ *Improve connection along Hooks Bridge to create safer pedestrian route for pedestrians and bicyclists traveling from the Rio Grande Trail to the Willits Trail and vice versa.*
- ✓ *Improve the trail connecting Original Road with Two Rivers Road on the south side of Highway 82 to provide for a safer pedestrian route.*

7. CONNECT BASALT TO SURROUNDING PUBLIC LANDS

Goal: Provide better connections from the Town to the trail systems in the surrounding public lands; Action steps identified in this plan reflect the desires of the citizens of Basalt which, in some cases, include implications for trails or trail improvements within the jurisdiction of other public and private providers. Solutions, including trailheads, will require discussion to determine if mutual goals can be established, along with potential easements and negotiations with both private landowners and a variety of public agencies. The Town of Basalt is not empowered to make any improvements in other jurisdictional areas. However, the Town will work to influence fulfillment of action steps identified wherever possible.

HIGH PRIORITY

Action Steps – large scale improvements:

- ✓ *Arbaney Kittle Trailhead – Work with Pitkin County to improve wayfinding to the trailhead. Work with BLM and with Pitkin and Eagle Counties to create an expanded trail network for Arbaney Kittle trail to the north and east of Town on BLM land and to provide a high quality trail alternative to Arbaney Kittle road cut to allow for enjoyable ascending/descending mountain bike and multi-use experiences.*
- ✓ *Elk Run – Work with Pitkin and Eagle County to acquire additional trail easements to connect the Elk Run neighborhoods to BLM land and the Arbaney Kittle Trail.*
- ✓ *Red Ridge Ranch (Saltonstall) Open Space – Continue to participate in Pitkin County’s efforts to complete the current land management planning process to determine preferred multi-use trail alignment(s) along a sustainable grade and best management practices.*
- ✓ *Light Hill - Work with BLM to recognize the trail and create a more sustainable route with appropriate seasonal closures, if necessary.*

MEDIUM PRIORITY

Action Steps – small scale improvements:

- ✓ *Work with Eagle County, the Mid-valley Trails Committee, private landowners, and other governmental agencies to explore improvements for providing public recreational access along Cedar Drive and Stage Road.*

OTHER FUTURE PRIORITY

Action Steps – large scale improvements:

- ✓ *Rio Grande Trail to Crown Mountain Park/Willits – Work with Eagle County to add trail connection, including a bridge, over the Roaring Fork River.*

8. PROTECT LANDS AND WILDLIFE TO MEET COMMUNITY GOALS

Goal: Consider land and wildlife protection through annexation negotiations, redevelopment and development proposal approval, easements, or fee simple purchase, in order to better maintain the rural and aesthetic character of the area.

Action Steps – large scale improvements:

- ✓ *River Master Plan - Acquire parcels designated for park and open space on the 2002 River Stewardship Plan or the Future Land Use Plan Map.*

- ✓ *Two Rivers Parkway - Consider acquisition of additional parcels to complete improvements as an important extension of the River Front Park, Trail and Open Space System.*
- ✓ *Consider the acquisition of hillside parcels for their scenic, environmental, and recreational opportunities as funding becomes available.*
- ✓ *Maintain an open space buffer between East Basalt and West Basalt to prevent urban scale development which would merge these two developed areas, while providing convenient and safe vehicular and trail connections between the two.*
- ✓ *West Basalt – where possible and appropriate, acquire or protect parcels to maintain the character of the open agricultural properties to the south and west of the Willits trail.*

Action Steps – small scale improvements:

- ✓ *Require fishing easements along river frontage when reviewing development proposals, and provide adequate roadside parking and signage to inform anglers where access is allowed.*
- ✓ *Protect and enhance the riparian environment.*
- ✓ *Require seasonal closures in appropriate locations to protect wildlife.*

9. ACTIVATE PARK AREAS FOR PLAY AND EXERCISE

Goal: Maximize use of park space by activating and/or repurposing available areas promoting liveliness and a dynamic environment; consider a system wide approach to provision of tennis, volleyball, soccer and field sports, assuring that residents can access physical activity and fun close to home, with appropriate convenience features.

General Principle:

- When installing port-o-potties, include a proper platform and surround structure.

Action Steps – large scale improvements:

- ✓ *Pan & Fork Park - Develop the property as a public space, satisfying several goals for active living by providing fishing access to the Roaring Fork River, including natural climbing and off-channel water and other plan features to engage youth in healthy activities, constructing trails for all ages and abilities, and including a public multi-purpose lawn area to encourage informal active games as well as a space for community events.*

Action Steps – small scale improvements:

- ✓ *Arboney Park – Review existing program to better organize and fulfill unmet needs such as providing moveable goals for soccer/lacrosse, a sand volleyball court, and a permanent baseball diamond for smaller children in the south end. Replace and expand on existing play equipment, re-using existing play equipment by offering it to the School District. (H)*
- ✓ *Willits Linear Park - Explore opportunities for additional programming on the north side of the park. (H)*
- ✓ *Southside Park (M) - Enclose the port-a-potty.*
- ✓ *Willits Recreation Park (M) - Review existing program; reactivate fields by adding moveable goals for soccer and lacrosse.*
- ✓ *Willits Performing Arts Parcel – Continue to work to plan and establish the performing arts/cultural/community center, including identifying the components of the facilities, and*

seeking additional funding sources. Consider whether it makes sense to require developer to make interim park improvements as currently required until the center is ready to be developed.

- ✓ *Southside Park (M) - Review existing program and add moveable goals for soccer and lacrosse.*
- ✓ *Middle School Courts – Add shade structures.*

10. PROVIDE A DOG FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT WITHIN TOWN

Goal: Explore strategies to address citizen concerns about dog issues, including dogs off leash and dog waste, including the potential of a dog park or designated area for dogs off leash (dog training and exercise area).

Action Steps – small scale improvements:

- ✓ *Plan for, endorse, and enforce dog related policy establishing designated dog areas well placed throughout the community, specific dog activity timeframes, and providing dog bag stations at each park.*
- ✓ *Specifically consider using the following park sites as a part of the solution for dog issues by developing and enforcing a policy for dog use in the park and/or providing additional dog stations.*
 - *Arboney Park (H) – Consider dog park on an area of the park*
 - *Lions Park (H)- Add dog station(s)*
 - *Willits Linear Park (H) – Consider dog park on an area of the park*
 - *Swinging Bridge Park (M) - Add dog station(s)*
 - *Southside Park (M) – Consider dog park on an area of the park*
- ✓ *With the Colorado Parks and Wildlife, review dog policies for Town Park locations near big game winter range to ensure support of wildlife protection goals.*

11. PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Goal: Consider site specific park improvements for high, medium, and future priority.

HIGH PRIORITY

- ✓ ***Pan and Fork Riverfront Park - Our vision:*** *Develop the Town-owned portion of the Pan and Fork Mobile Home Park as a river park that fulfills several Town goals. The east end of the park near Midland Avenue will be an active family park with water side channels creating safe playing areas for children and with a large open lawn for events and a potential stage for community events and productions. The west end of the park will be restored with wetland vegetation and native plantings to address Town environmental objectives and federal permitting requirements.*

Action Steps – large scale improvements:

- *Continue with planning and design effort.*
- *Remove mobile homes and existing infrastructure.*
- *Begin implementation of river corridor improvements in 2013/2014.*
- *Install wetland planting and mitigation in 2014/2015 beginning with riparian restoration and a small piece of wetland mitigation during 2014.*
- *Begin lawn improvements; water play features; trails and fishing access 2015/2016, coordinating construction with future private development.*

- ✓ **Arbaney Park – Our vision:** Revitalize Arbaney Park as an inviting and dynamic setting that is a good neighbor to the Middle and Elementary schools. Improve access by a pathway connecting to downtown and to lands outside of town, as well as providing a potential parking area to the west to allow for easy access to this multi-use area. Update recreational equipment and make accessible the historic kilns and barn that occupy the park. Enhance the pool as a desirable community amenity with an inviting and well shaded lounging area and fun water features that attract all ages.

Action Steps – large scale improvements:

- Continue to study and consider additional pedestrian and vehicular access to the park and implement when feasible.
- Enhance the pool setting by expanding the fenced-in area to allow for the addition of a grassy lawn, spray water features, or other types of amenities to expand opportunities for play and use; use more visually pleasing methods of securing the pool area instead of traditional fencing.
- Consider feasibility of moving solar panel to the roof.
- Replace outdated equipment; replace playground surfacing.
- Pursue phase two of restoration plan for historic kilns and address interpretation and access.
- Consider acquisition of additional land to the west to provide more direct pedestrian and vehicular access from downtown and, if feasible, additional parking or dog park.

Action Steps – small scale improvements:

- General clean-up of the park site.
- Improve existing grass area as practice fields.
- Increase area for picnic shelters and associated facilities (add covered tables and grills)
- Add additional shade in key locations including the pool, the tennis courts, near the play equipment, and by the grassy field area to encourage spectating.
- Complete safety improvements to the historic barn and integrate historic barn into the park program as a Town asset and consider ways to increase public use.
- Consider adding horseshoe pits.

- ✓ **Lions Park – Our vision:** Revitalize Lions Park to serve as a public gathering spot at the core of town near the crossroads of the two rivers. This “Village Green” will host concerts and other public events in an open and gracious setting with shade and available seating. Its obvious physical and visual connection to the Pan and Fork site will provide opportunity for the sites to work together as the two plans evolve, making downtown Basalt the gathering spot and encouraging community activity in this vibrant area.

Action Steps – large scale improvements:

- Continue to explore the feasibility of eventually removing/relocating the current buildings that occupy the Park (Town Hall and Wily Arts Center) to maximize the potential as a central open air gathering space.

Action Steps – small scale improvements:

- Coordinate proposed improvements with plans for the Pan and Fork Park to avoid undue duplication, yet meet the desires of residents for vibrant gathering spaces. Pursue low scale improvements in Lion’s Park that coordinate with Pan and Fork development.

- Complete implementation of the site plan for the stage and increase shade for the audience.
 - Consider lawn chairs and other portable seating options.
 - Provide handicap accessible access near the stage.
- ✓ **Triangle Park - Our vision:** Further development of Triangle Park will provide an inviting central gathering and concert setting for Willits and West Basalt.

Action Steps – large scale improvements:

- Continue to move the current planning effort forward which may include a stage, shade canopy and water feature.

Action Steps – small scale improvements:

- Improve landscaping and add lighting, shade trees and art.
- Add bear-proof trashcans.

✓ **Grace –Shehi Open Space**

Action Steps – small scale improvements:

- Continue to implement adopted Management Plan.
- Work with Pitkin County to complete the implementation of the Bike Park.

✓ **Light Hill Trail**

Action Steps – large scale improvements:

- ✓ Work with BLM and Pitkin County to formally recognize and realign the existing trail to create a more sustainable route to the top of the mountain; promote usage that supports protection of elk and mule deer winter range areas.

✓ **Confluence Park and Emma Bridge Phase I**

Action Steps – small scale improvements:

- Add a finished sidewalk around the northwest corner of Cottonwood Drive and Two Rivers Road; add a drinking fountain; add rock stairs and pathway to facilitate/delineate access into the park.

✓ **Gisella Fiou Skate Park**

Action Steps – small scale improvements:

- Implement Midland Park Phase I plans (see below) – add more open areas, picnic areas, and trails; consider adding a drinking fountain; and upgrade the skate facility.

✓ **Midland Park Phase I**

Action Steps – large scale improvements:

- Improve stairway entrances with accompanying ADA ramp access; story fort, benches, looped trail, BBQ/picnic area, fire pit, informational signage, trash/recycling receptacles,

portable toilet, and enhanced natural features (improvements encompass about one acre of the roughly three-acre Midland Park parcel).

✓ **Other Trail Needs**

Action Steps – small scale improvements

- *Work with Pitkin County to locate storage for Nordic and other park equipment in the vicinity of the High School and Rio Grande Trail.*

MEDIUM PRIORITY

Action Steps – large scale improvements:

- ✓ **Willits Linear Park**–*Activate the park from one end to the other while not encroaching upon the designated the wetlands area including consideration for a picnic shelter and grill, restrooms, and permanent vehicular calming method and pedestrian crossings for E. Valley Road.*
- ✓ **Midland Park Future Phases** - *Implement the remaining phases of the Midland Park Plan including a plaza with stairs, benches and trash and recycle receptacles as part of the entrance to the park. Build a raised trail platform that provides access from the Library to the river. Enhance natural features of the park to allow environmental education and passive recreation in accordance with the Town’s approved plan.*
- ✓ **Willits Recreation Park (AKA – Willits Soccer Park)** - *Improve pond shore and bank edge for a more gradual access; resolve conflict between public dedication from the developer and restrictions in the homeowner declarations. Add movable goals for soccer and lacrosse.*

Action Steps – small scale improvements:

- ✓ **Willits Linear Park**– *Consider additional tot lot facilities and a community garden with appropriate vegetation that does not attract wildlife. Consider a community garden with appropriate wildlife fencing.*
- ✓ **Southside Park** - *Add additional trees and shrub plantings; consider promoting temporary soccer and lacrosse goals.*
- ✓ **Swinging Bridge Park** - *Improve the existing trail by reducing the width of the prior access and parking area to a trail and add landscaping.*
- ✓ **Old Pond Park** – *Restore park areas used for construction access during river improvements; improve seasonal maintenance, particularly after high water events; improve the pond water quality; provide a different trail surface that can stand up to intermittent flooding during the high water events in an effort to reduce on-going maintenance requirements and supporting a finished park appearance; ensure pleasant pedestrian access from Two Rivers to the river through the development parcels.*
- ✓ **Ponderosa Park** – *Create a seed garden and food forest near the Emma Bridge if feasible to educate people about the life cycle of plants and inform and inspire residents about the value of revitalizing local seed systems as the foundation of local food systems.*



OTHER FUTURE PRIORITY

Action Steps – large scale improvements:

- ✓ **Confluence Park and Emma Bridge Phase II** – Implement the P&Z's concepts for Confluence Park and Emma Bridge by: closing off the vehicular access from 7-Eleven onto Basalt Avenue; and converting the current street in this area into a bicycle/pedestrian way and additional green space, with the potential parking on the east side of the road.
- ✓ **Two Rivers Road Master Plan** - Implement the Two Rivers Greenway Master Plan.
- ✓ **Lake Christine** – Discuss with Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) ways to create the optimal recreational opportunities and partnership and/or ownership arrangement for the Town, CPW, and the community.

Action Steps – small scale improvements:

- ✓ **Ponderosa Park** - Remove the bandit BMX track; re-vegetate and complete trail in this area; relocate benches to better use areas; better delineate and maintain walking pathway.
- ✓ **Grange River Parcel - If appropriate**, create trail as envisioned in original transaction . If the trail is built, provide fencing as required to protect other portions of the Ranch from trail activities.
- ✓ **CDOT Parcel** - Continue discussions with CDOT to secure a licensing agreement for a park and boat ramp; add a picnic shelter and a port-a-potty; clean-up weeds and trash.
- ✓ **Jadwin and Stott properties** - Construct new trails and high quality river connections through these properties if they are annexed into Town and developed
- ✓ **Lucksinger Park** - Consider repurposing of the current recycling center in the context of the overall master planning effort for the Pan and Fork and Lions Park.
- ✓ **Kayak Park** – Continue supporting planning efforts to locate a Kayak park and or features within Reach II of the Roaring Fork River.

12. PURSUE PARTNERSHIPS AND COST- EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

Goal: Invest in parks infrastructure in a cost-effective way based on the community's desire to provide all reasonably necessary facilities and services.

Action Steps:

- ✓ Continue to refine mechanisms to ensure that future development projects pay their own way through mechanisms such as land dedication and impact fees for parks, open space, trails and recreation fees.
- ✓ Identify an annual budget for capital maintenance and replacement costs based on life-cycle costing.
- ✓ Explore the development of a parks foundation to advocate for and financially support Town of Basalt Parks.

Cost Identification and Cost Avoidance

Action Steps:

- ✓ Develop parks with a higher percentage of land left in a natural vegetative state; convert existing areas in parks to accomplish this objective.
- ✓ Consider maintenance cost-saving measures in capital improvement projects (such as native grass, artificial turf for sports fields, sustainable trail building, etc.).

- ✓ *Consider maintenance and capital replacement costs in master plan development, identifying funding source, and adequately budgeting funding for this purpose.*

Partnerships

Action Steps:

- ✓ *Continue to coordinate with entities such as Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Pitkin and Eagle Counties, Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers (RFOV), Roaring Fork Mountain Bike Association, Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), CDOT, RFTA, the Mid Valley Trails Committee, and others.*
- ✓ *Have the POST Committee work with local and federal entities to facilitate and acquire appropriate access to public lands surrounding the Town.*
- ✓ *Coordinate and balance activities with the Crown Mountain Park and Recreation District as its programs continue to evolve; participate in the planning and implementation process to ensure that the needs of Basalt and other mid-valley residents are reflected in plans or modifications for the Crown Mountain Park property.*
- ✓ *Strengthen the partnership with the School District making school recreational amenities more available outside of school use.*
- ✓ *Schedule a meeting between POST and the Pitkin County Open Space and Trails Board to present the POST Master Plan and identify partnership opportunities.*
- ✓ *Schedule a meeting between POST and Eagle County Open Space Advisory Committee to present the POST Master Plan and identify partnership opportunities.*
- ✓ *Create maps that show the delineation between existing trails managed by the Town of Basalt and existing trails that are managed by other entities as well as maps that show jurisdictional delineations for the proposed trail improvements.*

Maps

Maps found in the Map section of this report illustrate the current resources and recommendations:

- *Basalt Parks Map – East*
- *Basalt Parks Map – West*
- *Basalt Future Trails Map - East*
- *Basalt Future Trails Map – West*

Implementation Matrix – Parks, Open Space, and Trails Facilities

An **Implementation Matrix** for capital improvements summarizes these plan recommendations in a chart form and identifies estimated cost, potential partnering or collaboration opportunities and funding options, and recommended timeframe for implementation. As a living breathing document, the Implementation Plan is subject to further refinement and will be used to develop annual work plans and budgets.

This Implementation Plan is intended to focus on priorities for the next 5 to 10 years. It is based on the following time framework for short, medium, and long-term priorities:

- Short-Term: 0-2 years
- Mid-Term: 3-5 years
- Long-Term: 6-10 years and beyond

Planning Context

In November 2012, the Town of Basalt issued a request for proposal to create a documented planning process resulting in recommendations to prioritize improvements to existing recreational amenities and open space, identify trail connections within Basalt and the surrounding areas, and provide the framework for the future acquisition of land. The Town of Basalt engaged the services of a team of consultants with national and local recreation planning experience, led by Colorado-based GreenPlay, LLC, a national management consulting firm, and including DHM Design of Carbondale, to assist in developing this Master Plan.

The project was overseen by the Basalt Town Council with advice from the Basalt Parks, Open Space, and Trails (POST) Committee to provide guidance on process, key issues, and the content of the Master Plan, and with planning staff as the project liaison. The Town Planning and Zoning Commission (P & Z) is also a critical part of the development and approval of this plan as parks, open spaces and trails are significant land use and infrastructure components for a vibrant and healthy community, contributing to the overall character of the Town of Basalt and the surrounding area.

This plan is intended to be an extension of the Town of Basalt Master Plan completed in 2007. Other previous and concurrent planning efforts were reviewed and considered for alignment and continuity.

Methodology

The project included collaborating with the Town Council, P & Z, and the POST Committee to refine the intent (goals and objectives) of the Master Plan. This effort has created a plan that incorporates local knowledge and institutional history that only community members and city employees can provide. The following methodologies were used to develop the plan:

- 1) Improving and updating the existing parks, open space and trails inventory for Basalt and the 3 mile planning area (including amenities at local schools and those offered at the Crown Mountain Recreation area).
- 2) Comparing the existing inventory with identified parks and open space improvement priorities (as defined by POST, 2007 Master Plan, Two Rivers Greenway Master Plan, etc.).
- 3) Compiling a demographic profile and relevant trends report, review of existing and current plans.
- 4) Identifying deficiencies within the existing parks, open space and trails system.
- 5) Identifying opportunities and constraints associated with the existing parks, open space and trails inventory and compiling recommendations into a “vision” document.
- 6) Collaborating with other entities and gathering feedback regarding potential recommendations within their respective jurisdictions.
- 7) Leading citizen input through the facilitation of a variety of input gathering strategies to obtain and compile the opinions of the community about the existing parks, open space and trails inventory and needs.
- 8) Identifying costs and funding sources for each of the identified priorities.
- 9) Defining maintenance needs of parks, open space, and trail assets.

- 10) Collaborating with POST and the Town Council to make recommendations and prioritize future parks, open space and trail improvements, including: essential connections, signage, wayfinding, ADA accessibility, maintenance and amenities within Basalt parks and key open spaces, including guidance and a framework for future open space acquisitions that would further the goals defined during the Master Planning process.

Project Schedule

Overall Basalt Area Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan Project Schedule

- ❖ Strategic Kick-Off Meeting – February 7, 2013
- ❖ Information Gathering – Community Engagement Meetings – April 29-30, 2013
- ❖ Findings and Visioning Meetings – June 6, 2013
- ❖ Draft Plan Presentations – July 11 and 25, 2013
- ❖ Final Adoption – August 20, 2013

Vision and Mission

The purpose of the Basalt Area Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan is to prioritize improvements to existing recreational amenities and open space, identify trail connections within Basalt and the surrounding areas, and to provide a framework to guide the future acquisition of land.

In developing the Master Plan, the Town of Basalt committed to encouraging a broad spectrum of residents to participate in an open and transparent public involvement process. This process was designed to provide citizens information about the purpose of the Master Plan and the facilities and services provided by the Town, and to solicit ideas and priorities related to existing and future parks, trails, open space, and recreation programs offered by the Town.

At the start of the planning process, GreenPlay Team members met with the Project Team and POST Committee to articulate the Project Vision and identify Critical Success Factors for the effort.

Project Vision

The Town of Basalt desires a Parks, Open Space and Trails Master Plan that will inspire and communicate a visionary, yet realistic, plan. The plan elements should address economic impact, community vitality, public health, healthy kids, and kids in nature, with attention to sustainability and green goals.

Critical Success Factors

- Input and buy-in from the public and Town Council creating credibility and promoting communication
- Engagement of staff providing professional input and knowledge regarding improvements
- Coordination with other planning efforts – signs and entry features; P & Z and other citizen boards and committees
- Focus on maintaining and improving what we have and minimizing waste
- Connections – one accessible community; east and west; north and south, promoting trails; expansion of mountain trails
- Integration with the rivers: confluence of two rivers; our unique aspects– two gold rivers; crossroads; river access; walking path along the river
- Clear implementation plan with short and long-term term projects that are affordable and feasible to maintain
- Realistic funding options including the identification of partnership opportunities
- Visually rich document with graphics, maps, photographs

Guiding Principles
Based on the Vision

and Critical Success Factors, the following Guiding Principles have helped focus the planning effort:



Highlighting the importance and role of parks, recreation, open space and trails in healthy living, physical activity, and wellness



Consideration of the impact of the parks, recreation, open space and trails system in the Town's overall economic viability



Ensuring that this plan represents the view of residents, yet is feasible from an operational and implementation standpoint



Employing concepts of balance and organizational sustainability

Parks, Open Space and Trails Mission and Vision

This Master Plan is intended to inform the Town's Master Plan, and to align with the City's overarching vision and goals for the community. The POST Committee has established its mission to *"conceive, design, and foster in the Town of Basalt, parks, open space and trails in accordance with the Basalt Master Plan."*

The Basalt 2007 Master Plan sets forth the following in terms of its vision for the community

The Town of Basalt's Vision

The Town is striving to maintain its small-town character and its diversity of people, both residents and workers, and keep Basalt from becoming stratified to the point that the Town loses its ability to function as a community. Its vision is to maintain and enhance diversity and self-sufficiency in the community; creating public spaces for citizens to interact (parks, trails, swimming pool, community centers, libraries, and cultural facilities); organizing land use in a manner so that people interact with each other (pedestrian-oriented vs. auto-oriented development patterns, requiring a mix of land uses rather than requiring segregated land use patterns); permitting, encouraging and/or preserving informal gathering places. Building a relationship of trust and cooperation between Town employees and the people we serve will build social capital.

(Created from language excerpts related to parks, recreation, open space, and trails taken from the Basalt 2007 Master Plan)

Our Changing Community

- Basalt is just slightly younger (median age 36.9) than the US as a whole (37.1). [2010 Census]
- Residents between the ages of 25 and 54 **dropped** from 61.2% in 2000 to 51.5% in 2010, and is predicted to drop further to 47.5% by 2017. From 2000 to 2010, the '55 and older' age cohort **rose** from 9.5% in 2000 to 18.6% in 2010, and is predicted to rise further to 21.7% in 2017.
- There has been a shift in households with children (down slightly from 34.6% to 32.6% of all Basalt households), and single households (increase from 24% to 29%). [2000 to 2010]
- Eagle, Pitkin and Garfield Counties are each expected to experience an annual population growth of 2% to 2.9% between 2010 and 2040.
- Basalt is expected to grow at a rate of 1.18% from 2012 through 2017.
- The median household income is higher than that for either Colorado or the United States and is expected to rise 18 percent from \$65,167 in 2012 to \$76,804 in 2017.
- Hispanics, of any race, represented 11.7% of the Town's population in 2000, rose to 20.3% in 2010, and is predicted to reach 32.4% in 2012 and 34.4% in 2017.

Appendix A provides a full demographic profile.

Recreation Trends

Keying into recreation trends relevant to Basalt’s geography and community interests has helped inform recommendations to meet future needs. Below are some highlights of the trends researched for this master plan. Appendix B provides a full trends report.

Demographic Trends in Recreation: Close to 26 percent of Basalt’s population are Baby Boomers and the Hispanic population has more than doubled from 2000 to 2012.

- ❖ Baby Boomers, born between 1946 and 1964, are predicted to redefine the meaning of recreation and leisure programming for mature adults – with a devotion to exercise and fitness.
- ❖ Popular outdoor activities across among Hispanics nation-wide are running/jogging, road and mountain biking, camping, and hiking. However, more locally, soccer, picnicking and other family gatherings and walking in the parks appear to be very popular.

Economic & Health Benefits of Parks: The economic and health benefits of parks are numerous.

- ❖ Physical activity makes people healthier and increases with access to parks.
- ❖ Trees, parks, and green spaces have profound impacts on people’s health and mental outlook.
- ❖ Parks add value to community and economic development sustainability.
- ❖ Tourism is enhanced.



Trails and Health: Basalt residents value the health benefits of a trails system.

- ❖ A connected system of trails increases the level of physical activity in a community, providing a wide variety of opportunities such as walking/running/hiking, using wheelchairs and manually-powered mobility aids as well as other power driven mobility devices (OPDMDs), bicycling, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, fishing, hunting and horseback-riding.
- ❖ Trails creating a ‘linear park’ make it easier for people to incorporate exercise into their daily routines, whether for recreation or non-motorized transportation. Urban trails need to connect people to places they want to go, such as schools, transit centers, businesses, and parks.

Increasingly, governmental agencies and professionals in the public health realm are realizing that parks and recreation agencies can be key public health providers.

Shade Structures: Communities around the country are adding shade structures and shade trees to their parks, playgrounds and pools, to reduce future cancer risk and promote exercise among children.

- ❖ Because of our altitude and high number of sunny days, Colorado has a relatively high level of skin cancer. Local governments can promote a healthy outdoor environment by providing public places, facilities, and open spaces that provide protection from sun.

Dog Parks: Off-leash dogs and dog waste are problematic in Basalt.

- ❖ Dog parks are a rising trend and can represent a relatively low-cost way to provide an often visited community amenity. They can be as simple as a gated area, or more elaborate with amenities like water fountains, agility equipment, and pet wash stations.

Public Engagement

Two stakeholder groups solicited to express interests in *Parks, Recreation and Athletics* and *Conservation, Open Space, and Trails* engaged individual residents as well as representatives of 15 organizations, associations and governmental agencies (see sidebar). The Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z) and the '82 or Bust' (Sign) Committee also met with the Project Team to provide input at the beginning of the planning process.

An initial Open House drew a crowd of over 40 participants of all ages, and included students from Basalt High School and representatives of Mountain Bike Review (MTBR), Roaring Fork Mountain Bike Association, and Wilderness Workshop.

A second Open House, attended by approximately 30 participants, allowed a presentation of key findings and the opportunity for the public to help envision the future by providing input to inform solutions to address the key findings.

Twenty-nine (29) individuals actively contributed to an online community dialogue site visited by nearly 150 Basalt area residents at www.BackyardBasalt.com. This site was available throughout the project, asking community members to respond to questions and submit ideas and photos regarding parks, open space, trails and recreation services in the Town.

An overarching theme of interest in **Connectivity** quickly became very apparent: connecting with each other in gathering spaces, connecting north to south and east to west, connecting Town to the river, connecting one park to another, connecting residents to public lands outside the Town boundaries, and connecting to the heritage of the area. An overall vision for Basalt's parks, open space and trails was also born from that input. Appendix C provides a full report of community engagement input.

In addition, a series of Planning Principles guides the Town.

ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED IN FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

- Aspen/Snowmass Nordic Council
- Basalt Planning, Recreation, Horticulture, Public Works and Park Maintenance
- Basalt Parks, Open Space, and Trails (POST) Advisory Committee
- Challenge Aspen
- Colorado Department of Parks and Wildlife (CPW)
- Colorado Wildlife Science, LLC
- Crown Mountain Park and Recreation District
- Eagle County Open Space Department
- Mid Valley Trails Committee (MVTTC)
- Pitkin County Open Space Department
- Roaring Fork Conservancy (RFC)
- Roaring Fork Mountain Bike Association (RFMBA)
- Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers (RFOV)
- Roaring Fork School District
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management

Planning Principles

Recreation, Parks and Open Space

1. Seek citizen engagement in the design process.
2. Determine appropriate park or open space dedication requirements for property annexed to the Town.
3. Meet or exceed current code requirements for parkland dedications: a dedication of two acres of parkland per 125 estimated residents should be provided unless fees in lieu of parkland or other options are negotiated as part of the annexation agreement.
4. Require active recreational facilities from developers when such facilities are identified in this master plan for the property being considered for development.
5. Continue to maintain the health and vitality of the rivers to the Gold Medal rating standard.
6. Aggressively pursue preservation of agricultural lands consistent with the Future Land Use Plan using a palette of methods including conservation easements, an open space fund, limited development regulations, density bonuses, clustering, etc.
7. Establish policies addressing the potential joint use of lands for parks and drainage detention. Address the level of credit toward parkland dedication that will be granted for lands that are also used for stormwater detention purposes.
8. Collaborate with the Crown Mountain Park and Recreation District to ensure that the parks and recreation needs of Basalt residents are met.

Trails

1. Where possible, separate trails from streets with trail alignments avoiding environmentally sensitive areas. The trail system should be designed for both commuting and recreational use.
2. Include a safe bicycle path or separate lane as standard cross sections for major streets where appropriate.
3. New development should provide for new trails at the time of development, in accordance with the trails plan and input from public groups, as appropriate. This should be a standard policy whether the project is in the counties or the Town.
4. Work with adjoining counties toward joint adoption of trail design standards to assure compatibility for interconnected trail segments and compatible maintenance and management.
5. Limit access and maintain appropriate setbacks to minimize negative impacts when planning trails in environmentally sensitive areas.
6. Take full advantage of underutilized highway rights-of-way, abandoned rail corridors, Stage Road above the Fryingpan River, historically utilized paths, the Two Rivers Road right-of-way, trails on public lands, and other opportunities to help facilitate development of new trails.

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Inventory

One essential part of this **Recreation, Parks and Trails Master Plan** is to establish a complete and accurate database of amenities related to the provision of parks and recreation services in the Town of Basalt three mile area. An inventory was conducted in April and May 2013. This was accomplished by visiting each property and facility, talking with personnel, and gathering input from the community through focus group meetings and a public community meeting. For the purposes of this plan, the inventory focused primarily on sites that are maintained by the Town of Basalt. It is recognized that other providers exist and that the facilities they operate are part of the overall level of service enjoyed by Town residents.

Inventory Overview

The inventory for this master plan builds on the parks/recreation/open space/trails components of the 2007 Basalt Master Plan. The inventory is described in narrative format as well as through a series of maps. The Inventory Maps shows the location of existing parks, trails, and open spaces for East and West Basalt areas. In addition, schools and landmarks are shown for reference. Maps can be found in the Map section of this plan.

Building on the 2007 Basalt Master Plan, the parks in Basalt and the surrounding area are broken down into the following categories: Town-owned parks and open space (non-riverfront); riverfront Town-owned parks and open space; other Town-owned committed parks; open space areas; and other-intergovernmental parcels in the three mile planning area.

The Town provides a variety of park and recreation opportunities through its facilities and through partnerships with other entities, such as the school district. In addition to managing these facilities, the community of Basalt is served by the Crown Mountain Park and Recreation District which is responsible for programming, maintenance and on-going development associated with Crown Mountain Park. The community also benefits from the use of school facilities through inter-governmental agreements.

The Town of Basalt enjoys a diverse range of parks and open spaces, from those that support a high level of organized activity to those that offer respite in an entirely naturalized environment. As is true for many communities, the Town has an overall interest in continuing to fix irrigation systems that may not be working, staying ahead of on-going weeding, repairing asphalt, and continuing with an active tree management program. Basalt is fortunate to have both a Public Works Department and a Town Horticulturalist with a dedicated staff to assist with maintenance. Going forward, the community will want to prioritize the need for continued maintenance with an expanding portfolio of recreational amenities, the desire for additions to the existing facilities, preservation and enhancement of the current parcels, and the wish for more trails.

Park acreage, and existing and proposed uses are detailed in **Table 1**. Following are short descriptions and photos of the sites that make up the Town inventory. Not all park facilities identified in the table were inventoried for this report; as the inventory focused on the primary use areas.

Table 1: PARKS IN BASALT AND SURROUNDING AREA

MAP #	NAME	ACRES	EXISTING & PROPOSED USES
Town-Owned Parks and Open Space (Non-Riverfront)			
A1	Arbaney Park	6	Pool, Active Recreation, Picnic, Gazebo, Kilns, Historic Barn
A2	Basalt Highlands Open Space	25	Open Space, Trail
A3	Cliff's Hillside Park	0.5	Playground Area
A4	Lions Park/Town Hall	3	Community Art Center, Stage, Picnic
A5	Gisella Fiou Skate Park	0.3	Skateboard Facilities
A6	Willits Recreation Park	12.9	Playing Field
A7	Willits Linear Park	6.9	Playgrounds and Landscaped Park
A8	Southside Park	1.6	Soccer Field 12U
A9	Swinging Bridge Park	0.1	Picnic
A10	Triangle Park	0.3	Landscaped Park
A11	Wilds Dedication	3.6	Open Space, Trail
A12	Wildwood Park	1.3	Playground and Picnic
A13	Lucksinger Park	1.3	Recycle Center, Trail to Homestead Dr.
A14	Fletcher Open Space	17	Open Space, Trail, Hydro-electric facility
Total		79.8	
Riverfront Town-Owned Parks and Open Space			
B1	Confluence Park and Bridge	1.21	Nature, Fishing, Landscaped Pedestrian Bridge
B2	Duroux Park	0.25	Boat Ramp, Fishing Access, Picnic
B3	Midland Park	3	Unimproved Future Family Park
B4	Midland Avenue Bridge Plaza	0.12	Public Plaza and Kayak Access
B5	Old Pond Park	4.14	Nature, Fishing, Kayak Access, Trails, Picnic
B6	Ponderosa Park	10.5	Unimproved Nature, Trail, Picnic
B7	Sopris Meadows River Park	3.97	Unimproved Nature, Fishing Access
B8	Emma Overlook and Trimble Open Space	8.7	Wildlife Viewing, Riparian Interpretation
B9	Pan & Fork Riverfront Park	2.3	Future River Park, Wetland Preserve, Trails & Community Space
Total		34.19	

PARKS IN BASALT AND SURROUNDING AREA

MAP #	NAME	ACRE S	EXISTING & PROPOSED USES
Other Town-Owned Committed Parks, Open Space Areas			
C1	Riverwalk Easement	0.4	River Trail
C2	Willits Town Center Pocket Parks	0.08	Pocket Parks
C3	Swinging Bridge Easement	0.04	Frying Pan River Crossing
C4	Ute Center River Easement	0.78	Fishing Access, Nature Trail, Pocket Park
C5	Valley Pines Park (Privately Owned)	0.54	Public Tennis Courts, Cabana, Picnic
C6	Residences at Roaring Fork Easement & Dedication	1.12	Fishing Access, Bench
C7	Foreign Accents	0.02	Pocket Park
C8	Southside IV Dedication	0.06	Unimproved Open Space
C9	Performing Arts/Park	0.74	Future Performing Arts Facility, Park
Total		3.78	
Other-Intergovernmental in Three Mile Planning Area			
E1	RE-1Middle School Courts (with Town IGA)	0.25	Tennis & Basketball Courts
E2	Crown Mountain Park Owned by Eagle County (formerly known as Mt. Sopris Tree Farm)	128	Soccer & Baseball Fields, Playground, Tennis Courts, Trail, Open Space
E3	Lake Christine at Basalt State Wildlife Area (CPW)	12	Fishing Pier, Picnic, Nature, Shooting Range
E4	Fisherman's Park (Owned by Pitkin County. Managed by Basalt)	5.67	River Access, Fishing, Picnic
E5	RE-1Basalt Community Track (with Town IGA)	0.96	Running, Walking, Jogging
E6	Grange River Parcel (Jointly owned by Town and Eagle County with a conservation easement held by the Roaring Fork Conservancy and Pitkin Count. Town has a trail easement through the Grange Ranch to provide future access)	16.66	Riparian Habitat, Protection of Conservation Values; Potential Future River Access
E7	Grace-Shehi Open Space (Jointly owned by Pitkin County and Basalt)	25	Community Gardens and Agriculture, Trail Access and Nordic Trails, Bike Park
E8	Red Ridge Ranch Open Space (Eagle County with Pitkin and Basalt holding Cons. Easement)	146	Community Agriculture, Wildlife Access; Future Access to Crown, Trails
Total		334.54	
Total Basalt Area Parks Acreage		452.31	

Source: Basalt Town Staff

Town-Owned Parks and Open Space (Non-Riverfront)

Arbaney Park

Arbaney Park is the primary park facility for the community in east Basalt. With the increased use of Crown Mountain Park, demands and use at Arbaney have changed over the last several years. The open grass lawn is no longer used for organized sports activities like club soccer. Without this intense level of activity, the condition of the lawn has improved greatly. The lawn area is now used for little kids soccer, coach pitch and t-ball with the addition of a backstop, and other informal recreational opportunities. The proximity of the park to the adjacent schools, allows Camp Chip-A-Tooth to use the park for its outdoor activities. Informal turf volleyball is possible in the park, but a sand court is desired by some residents.

The park is valued for its truly public nature and is not designated as an event venue that would result in closures for private use. The pavilion in the park can be used for parties and people can call ahead to request usage for a particular time but there are no formal reservations and no charge for that usage. The community seems to desire that this type of arrangement continue.

There is a well-used playground in the park. The equipment is sufficient but tending toward outdated and a desire for new equipment has been expressed. Additionally, while the gravel ground surface meets the intent of allowable play surfaces, there are more inviting and cooler play surfaces available.

The park also includes a year-round restroom facility maintained by the Town's public works department. The restrooms require regular and on-going maintenance. Long-term replacement with stainless steel fixtures might be a consideration to reduce maintenance needs.

The park includes two historic resources in the charcoal kilns and the barn. Both are important in defining the character of the park and the community as a whole. A separate design effort is underway to more fully integrate the charcoal kilns into the park so that visitors can view the ovens more easily. The goal for the barn is to use that facility for demonstrations and perhaps events with a holding capacity of up to 40 people. The Town is still evaluating those future uses and an appropriate program.

The outdoor swimming pool is located within Arbaney Park. The pool is a fun community gathering place particularly for families with small children. Several improvements to the pool have been suggested:

- Shade;
- Interactive water play amenities;
- Removal of visual barriers;
- Relocation of the existing solar panels so that they are not such a visual element in the pool experience;
- Improved landscaping so that the code required fencing feels more inviting;
- Improved accessibility (vehicular and pedestrian) to the pool.
- Extended hours.

Other concerns expressed for the park include:

- An interest in balancing the activities between Crown Mountain Park and Arboney Park with a sense that increasingly organized types of recreational opportunities are being handled by Crown Mountain.
- Better vehicular access to the park from Cottonwood Drive; the desire for this access is not necessarily consistent with concerns expressed by the adjacent neighbors.
- Improved pedestrian access.
- Dogs off leash presenting conflicts with other users/uses in the park.

Lions Park

Centrally located in downtown Basalt, Lions Park serves as a central gathering spot for the community for performances, farmers market, and other Town events. The park includes a stage, open lawn, gardens maintained by the Town, and the Town Caboose used by the Basalt Chamber. This park serves as an important setting for the Town Hall and the Wylly Art Center.

The stage as currently constructed is not finished. Original plans designs included dressing rooms which were not completed during the initial construction. Designated viewing areas would add to the appeal and functionality of the stage during performances. The park would also benefit from a shade structure and better ADA accessibility.

Programming for the Park may change with the development of the Pan and Fork Park and future improvements to Lions Park will want to be weighed against those improvements to avoid duplication. Additional dog stations as well as painting and upgrading signs within the park are small scale improvements that could be implemented in the short term.

Gisella Fiou Skate Park

A skate park is well used by an important cross-section of the recreational population in any given community. The proximity of this skate park to Midland Avenue helps to ensure visibility into this area to maintain a safe environment for all. Future improvements to Midland Park will provide an improved setting for the overall park experience.

Willits Recreation Park

This 13-acre park is located in the heart of the Willits neighborhood and includes both an open lawn and a small lake. The open lawn area in this park was used actively in the past for various soccer games. With the increased use of Crown Mountain Park, soccer games are no longer scheduled for this facility. One set of bleachers remains at this park; the other set of bleachers is being re-located to Lions Park. With a 24/7 restroom facility, parking, bleachers, and the open lawn area, this park is currently under-utilized and could be considered for future activities. The lake shore and bank edge could be improved to have more gradual access. There is a conflict between the public dedication of the lake by the developer and the restrictions included in the homeowner declarations concerning the activities permitted in the lake.



Willits Linear Park

The linear park provides informal play opportunities for adjacent neighbors and a pleasant park experience. With recently implemented traffic calming measures along the adjacent street, the setting for the park feels safer and more inviting. The south end of the park is more active in nature with the inclusion of the play equipment. Though there is a desire to introduce more activities into the northern end of the park, the location of wetlands in that area may preclude any significant additional development. Identified requests for additions to the park include:

- Picnic shelter
- Bathrooms
- A grill
- A community garden

Southside Park

This open green lawn sits in the center of the Southside neighborhood adjacent to Southside Drive. In the past, soccer games were held at the park, but those activities have moved to Crown Mountain Park. Organized activities, currently limited to lacrosse, could be increased at this facility. The park would benefit from a programming master planning effort. This park is well used by dog lovers and could be a good location for a more official dog park.

Triangle Park

With the recent opening of Whole Foods and other related retail operations, this area of Willits has seen a significant increase in activity. Triangle Park, though small in size, is viewed as an important gathering space for the surrounding activity. The park includes lawn, shade trees, and a couple of transformers. The park currently hosts music events every other Wednesday night during the summer months and is a rotating site for the farmers market. A master plan for Triangle Park has been prepared. The site as envisioned in the master plan would include a water feature, a stage, and formal gathering/seating areas. Short-term considerations for the park should include bear-proof trash cans and reconstruction of the turf.

Wildwood Park

Nestled within the Southside neighborhood, this small park provides a playground and picnic facility for the surrounding residents. This park appears to function as intended.

Lucksinger Park

As development along Two Rivers Road progresses, alternative locations for the recycling center are under consideration. A relocated recycling center would need to meet the needs of the community as well as Pitkin County but would free this space up to again be used as a park or be incorporated into the larger context of other improvements that are envisioned for the surrounding area.

Riverfront Town-Owned Parks and Open Space

Confluence Park and Bridge

The Emma Bridge is an example of what can happen when a community works together to accomplish a collective vision. The recently completed improvements on the bridge have turned an abandoned vehicular bridge into an inviting pedestrian linkage with overlooks of the river below and pleasant space to sit and pass through. That effort seems to be a source of community pride and may serve as a model for other endeavors.

Confluence Park offers an opportunity to engage with the river in a naturalized setting. The park is used by dog walkers and visitors alike. Proposed improvements to this park include:

- A general clean-up of the area;
- A trail sign adjacent to the bridge to provide better wayfinding;
- A finished sidewalk around the corner at Cottonwood Drive and Two Rivers Road;
- A water fountain;
- Bear-proof trash and recycling containers;
- Rock stairs to facilitate access into the park.

Duroux Park

The primary features at this location include a raft put-in, a port-a-potty, and a picnic table. Public access to the river is an important amenity to preserve for the community as other properties along the river corridor become more developed. This is a small facility but an important one within the overall context of the community open space facilities.

Midland Park

Plans for Midland Park have been completed and have the necessary Town approvals. Securing funds for staged development of the park will be the next critical step toward implementation of the community vision. The park is designed to be a more passive park for families in a setting that fits with the riparian river corridor on one side and the open passive views from the reading room in the Basalt library. When completed, this park will provide a nice new amenity for the Basalt community.

Old Pond Park

The Town has completed a series of focused improvements to this area over the last several years. The pond itself provides fishing opportunities for kids and others in an environment that is safer than the river corridor itself. The park provides opportunities for people to experience the riparian river corridor in a natural setting. Improvements to the Pan and Fork Park and the River Restoration Project should be



completed in a way that enhances the experience at Old Pond Park. Improvement to the water quality in the pond is a priority as well as trail construction that will limit maintenance requirements as a result of intermittent flooding during peak water run-off.

Ponderosa Park

This park serves as a trail head for a short walk upvalley along the riparian river corridor. Currently there is a bandit BMX track that has been built out of sight in a wetland area. With the new Bike Park improvements at Grace-Shehi, the intent would be to move BMX users to that location so that the Ponderosa Park and trail could function in an environmentally sustainable and undisturbed manner. Signage for the park, improvements to the irrigation system, picnic tables, as well as more and better located benches would add to the overall success of this park. The Town in May approved a resolution establishing the framework for the creation of a Basalt seed garden and food forest on the portion of Ponderosa Park nearest the roundabout.

Sopris Meadows River Park

This unimproved natural park offers fishing access for the community. On our inventory trip it was evident that wayfinding and access for this park could be improved.

Pan and Fork Riverfront Park

Conceptual plans for this park have been approved by the Town Council. Implementation for the first phase of the river restoration associated with this park is targeted for the winter of 2013/2014. As envisioned, this park will provide both passive and more active areas for the community from an event lawn to naturalized play areas and water features for children to a trail along the river corridor. The overall goal is to create an opportunity for the community to better engage with the river corridor in a way that embraces that amenity as it runs through the middle of downtown. Funding, final design, and construction of the park will be important next steps over the coming years.

Swinging Bridge Park

Improvements that have been identified for this pocket park include better maintenance by the Town, improvements to the existing trail, and a dog station.

Grange River Parcel

The Town jointly owns the Grange River Parcel with Eagle County. The Roaring Fork Conservancy and Pitkin County hold the conservation easement on the Grange River Parcel. In addition, the Town has an trail easement along the eastern boundary of the portion of the Grange Ranch between Highway 82 and the Grange River Parcel which could be developed in the future as a trail to allow access from Emma Road to the river. The development of the trail would require the construction of a fence to protect the Grange Ranch from trail activities, and consideration of the effect of the trail and fence on wildlife and the riparian environment is necessary. No dogs are permitted. The Town would need to coordinate with all the parties before any improvements are made.

Fletcher Parcel

The Town approved a site plan for the Fletcher parcel in 2010. The approval allowed the construction of a small micro hydro facility on the site. At some time in the future, the Town could fund other passive park and trail improvements included in the approved site plan.

Lake Christine, Basalt Highlands Open Space, Wilds Dedication

The Town obtained a grant from Colorado Parks and Wildlife and, with contributions from other entities, made improvements to the gun range at Lake Christine that were completed in 2012. The major impetus for the improvements was to reduce noise but handicapped accessibility was also greatly improved. The Lake Christine Wildlife area, including the Gun Range, is owned by Colorado Parks and Wildlife and is not within the Town limits.

In the past, the Town has advocated a land exchange whereby the Town would exchange some of the land it owns bordering Lake Christine Wildlife Area so that the Town could acquire and improve Parks and Wildlife land adjacent to the lake to develop it for more active recreation uses. In addition, a part of Sopris Drive is still owned by Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and while it is complicated, the Town would like to acquire this portion of the road from Colorado Parks and Wildlife and annex it into Town.

Other–Intergovernmental in Three Mile Planning Area

Middle School Courts

The Town of Basalt maintains an IGA with the Roaring Fork School District. The Town uses the tennis courts at the Middle School for Town sponsored tennis programs. The Middle School facilities also include an outdoor basketball court, a running track and field. The Town has provided soccer goals that the Middle School now uses on its field. The Town is interested in a gazebo or similar type of shade structure for the tennis courts. RE-1 was not supportive of this addition but there may be an opportunity to provide a gazebo through an agreement with the neighboring condo/HOA property.

Crown Mountain Park

The Crown Mountain Park and Recreation District has developed a variety of recreational amenities for the greater community over the last ten years including soccer fields, baseball fields, playground, and tennis courts and BMX track. Increasingly, these fields have become the primary location for organized sporting activities. Recently Crown Mountain took over responsibility for the Basalt Soccer Club. Crown Mountain has developed plans for an indoor recreation center including an indoor pool, fitness area, and gymnasium. Approval for the recreation center requires a vote by the community residing in the District; timing for that vote is yet to be determined.

Fisherman's Park

This parcel is owned by Pitkin County Open Space but managed by the Town. The parcel sits on either side of Two Rivers Road. The facility includes a bathroom which is open 24/7 and is used heavily. The park also includes a grill, picnic table and shelter. Boat access is available from this site. This site can become abused by people who use the trash receptacles here to dump their trash.

Basalt Community Track

Similar to the Middle School, the Town maintains an IGA for use of the track at the High School. The Town helped with the original installation of the track which is due for another resurfacing at a cost of \$80,000 as the Town's share. Other amenities at the High School include a soccer field, football field, and a softball field. The only fields that are leased out to the Basalt Recreation Program are the baseball and softball fields. From the Town's perspective, the fields and facilities at the Middle School are preferred because of their proximity to the downtown.

Grace–Shehi Open Space

This is a great addition to the Pitkin County and Basalt parks and open space systems. The Property is jointly owned by the Town of Basalt and Pitkin County and is in the unincorporated area of Pitkin County right outside of the Town’s limits. The recent formation of the community garden has been well received by the community. The gardens are self-sufficient, relying on efforts of the Mid-Valley Community Garden Committee, with only modest support from the Town. A small shed was recently installed for garden tools. Additional ADA accessible plots are desired as well as improvements to the pathways to make them easier to use by the people with disabilities.

There is also the need for storage for Nordic grooming equipment either on the Grace-Shehi parcel or nearby in order to easily access the Nordic trails in this area. A Bike Park was recently completed on the uphill side of the ditch. The Bike Park includes a pump track and dirt jumps. The Town and Pitkin County have coordinated with Crown Mountain Park which recently constructed a BMX track so that the two facilities complement one another. The proximity of the proposed Bike Park to the high school, and the Light Hill trail network make this an ideal location for this type of activity.

The Draft BLM Management Plan recognizes Light Hill Trail as an official trail and if the Plan is adopted recognizing that trail, there will be the opportunity to realign the trail for better long-term sustainability and seasonal (summertime) use.

Red Ridge Ranch Open Space

This parcel was recently purchased in conjunction with a number of entities including Eagle County, Pitkin County, Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), and the Mid-Valley Trails Committee. Pitkin County is currently in the process of developing a management plan for this site for adoption by Pitkin County, Eagle County, and the Town of Basalt. Community agriculture and wildlife protection are desired for this property. Also mountain bike and hiking trails are envisioned for the parcel to provide access to the Crown. The community will have ample opportunity to weigh in on the future development of this parcel.

CDOT Parcel

A license for trail access crosses the site helping to improve connections and linkages in the area. With access to the river, it appears that this parcel has untapped potential. Items for considerations include:

- Securing a license agreement with CDOT for a park.
- Clean-up of weeds, trash, etc.
- Providing vehicular access with a boat ramp.
- Addition of a picnic shelter.
- Addition of a bathroom or a port-o-potty.

Other

As a note: the parcels on the map not discussed in the above inventory are Cliff’s Hillside Park, Midland Avenue Bridge Plaza, and future committed parcels. The inventory does not address in specific an overall assessment of existing boat ramps, dog stations, maintenance, and trails, in terms of whether or not these are sufficient for the current need.

Trails

The Town has created an illustrative trails and recreation map which is an effective tool to easily communicate the location and breadth of facilities available for residents and visitors. This map was updated this year and serves as a companion piece to this master planning effort. Access to a wide variety of trails is an important amenity for the community. Overall there is a desire for more seamless river trails and better trail access to the surrounding mountain and open space amenities. Updates to the trail inventory that are not captured in the underlying 2007 document are discussed below.

Willits Trail

Completion of this trail was identified as a high priority in the 2007 Master Plan. The final segment of that trail has been completed and now serves as an active linkage between East and West Basalt.

Rio Grande Trail

The Rio Grande Trail connects the Roaring Fork Valley with a continuous trail from Aspen to Glenwood Springs. The Rio Grande Trail was built and is managed by Pitkin County Open Space and Trails from the Sopris Creek Bridge in Emma up to Aspen. The Roaring Fork Transit Authority (RFTA) owns from the portion of the trail between Glenwood and Woody Creek and Pitkin County owns the trail from Woody Creek to Aspen. The trail provides both summer and winter use for bikers, walkers, and cross-country skiers. Dogs on leashes are allowed on the trail. Winter closures occur on a section of trail deemed critical for wildlife habitat. Connections between downtown Basalt and the Rio Grande trail could be improved to create better defined and more direct linkages. There is a port-a-potty along with a small parking lot at both the Southside and the Hook's Lane locations.

Emma Trail

Work along this corridor has been completed since the 2007 plan. While well-used, wayfinding for this trail could be improved and safety fencing needs to be added. Additionally, ongoing maintenance of the Highway 82 underpass needs to be implemented.

Two Rivers Road Parkway Trail

Designs for this trail have been completed but implementation has not. As development projects along Two Rivers Road for the Roaring Fork Conservancy, Rocky Mountain Institute, and the Basalt Community Campus move forward, this may provide momentum for completion of this trail system.

Basalt/Old Snowmass Trail

Work with Pitkin County to explore improvements to wayfinding and other signage.

Recreation Programming and Maintenance

Although not a focus of this study, recreation programming and park maintenance efforts are an integrated component of the parks, open space, and trails operation.

Basalt Recreation

It is the mission of the Basalt Recreation Department to offer enjoyable, safe and accessible programs. The Town of Basalt Recreation Department relies on a volunteer-based organization of committed coaches and parents to provide recreational activities and to promote social capital through its efforts. The Basalt Recreation Department supplies diverse programs. The Department offers aquatics at the outdoor pool, and it provides a host of activities and programs taking place at a wide variety of places in

and around town, as it does not have its own indoor recreation space. The Recreation Director works collaboratively with the School District and the Crown Mountain Park and Recreation District which is actively seeking the addition of an indoor facility at Crown Mountain Park.

The year-round programs happening in the various sites include:

- Leagues and lessons in the following: tennis, soccer, basketball, baseball, gymnastics, and golf.
- Hiking, biking, rafting, and fishing trips and events.
- Workshops in babysitting, financial aid, dance, and skateboarding as well as arts and crafts classes.

Maintenance

Park maintenance is provided by the Public Works Department. While a detailed maintenance study is not part of the master plan inventory process, residents and staff are concerned about the level of proactive maintenance efforts and maintenance funding. The lack of maintenance or poor maintenance in the future can have a direct impact on level of service. A single component that falls into disrepair could easily plunge ratings from meeting expectations of users to not meeting expectations. Similarly, a poorly maintained park could project an image of an unsafe setting and undesirable place to be.



Operational Analysis

Parks and Recreation

Discussion

Basalt has a varied inventory of parklands from small pocket parks, to neighborhood parks and larger community parks. Citizens appreciate these amenities and identified desired improvements to existing sites range from updating, improving, repurposing uses, better maintaining and making sites more vital, interpretation of historical and cultural aspects (particularly the charcoal kilns), and creating a sense of place. This included the property as well as the facilities and equipment.

Desire for new amenities ranges from implementing park plans already in the works, safe places for kids to recreate, a focus on arts and culture, an arboretum, accessible amenities for adaptive sports, and kayak/wave and BMX parks. They indicated that flexibility is needed in park programming in order to respond to changing circumstances with focused attention on Arbaney Park, Lion’s Park, the existing soccer field at Sopris Meadows, and Triangle Park.



They have also expressed a desire to better engage with the river corridors in a way that embraces the rivers as they run through the middle of downtown through access and interpretive opportunities.

Residents are concerned about the level of maintenance funding and may support a referendum amending the Open Space 1% Sales Tax Fund to include a specific percentage to go towards maintenance. Currently it is restricted to capital improvements only

The Town recognizes a broad interpretation of the term “recreation,” applying to the body, mind, and spirit, and believes its responsibility is to serve both local residents and tourists. Recreation facilities and programs should be designed at a scale appropriate for the intended use and the surrounding environment and should be consistent with other Town goals and objective related to land use, transportation, and the environment.

As the population of the Town continues steady growth, the demographic makeup is shifting with the percentage of adults ages 25 – 54 decreasing while those age 55 and older is rising dramatically. The percentage of children is also getting smaller, although actual numbers are still growing. The community is also becoming more culturally diverse. Facility and program planning will need to acknowledge a more active aging population, and health and wellness, as it strives to serve all segments of the community. Expressed desires included more places for kids to go to have fun, stay out of trouble, and be safe; arts and culture: spontaneous temporary art wall for graffiti artist expressions; art in the gardens, flagship art piece in town center; central gathering place for concerts, open art, art on objects such as utility boxes; a kayak/wave park; arboretum, and promoting local foodshed/seed stock resources and tourism; and recreational accessibility for adaptive sports.

Park Type Definitions

Traditional park type definitions are provided here for reference. Most park systems do not fit easily into these traditional definitions and recently, more weight has been given to the purpose of each amenity within a park site and its service area rather than the “typing” of park sites. By size:

- Of the 14 town-owned park and open space parcels, nine fall into the pocket park definition, along with another nine “committed” parcels. Two are in the neighborhood park definition (Arbaney and Willits Linear), and three are in the community park definition (one is park- Willits Recreation, and two are open space – Basalt Highlands and Fletcher).
- Of the nine river parks and open space parcels, six are of pocket park size, two are of neighborhood park size (Old Pond Park and Emma Overlook and Trimble Open Space), and two are of community park size (Ponderosa Park at 10.5 acres).
- Of the “other-intergovernmental” parcels in the three mile planning area, two provide regional service (one is primarily park - Crown Mountain, and the other open space - Red Ridge Ranch).

Regional parks: generally over 100 acres in size, varied in activity and generally multi-purpose or mostly natural. Intended to have a broad reach and house facilities and amenities that have a large draw and/or are expensive to provide in multiple locations. This could be an indoor swimming pool or recreation center, a sports complex, unique natural area, trails and walking paths, large group picnic shelters, etc.

Community Parks: generally 10 to 100 acres and contain active and passive spaces that may include such amenities as gamefield complexes, indoor and outdoor recreation facilities and swimming pools, walking paths, picnic areas, playgrounds, tennis courts, special event areas, ponds, entertainment areas, concessions, restrooms, natural areas, a nature center, gardens, and/or fountains. A special attraction like a dog park, spray fountains skateboard park or horticulture center could also be included. Community parks generally serve a population residing in a three mile radius around the park.

Neighborhood Parks: range from 4 to 10 acres and typically include a picnic area, playground, outdoor courts for basketball or tennis, inline paths or walking paths, limited or no parking, low level lighting, and open turf practice areas for baseball, softball or soccer, and general park activity. Intended to serve the local residents within walking distance or generally one-quarter to one-third mile.

Pocket Parks: under 4 acres and may include an open grass area, picnic tables and/or bench, play equipment, walking path, or natural area. Usually provided within a park system to fill in neighborhood park gaps when a larger parcel of land is not available.

Developer Requirements

Sec. 16-70 of the Basalt Municipal code speaks to the conveyance of open space, recreational areas, and walkways, indicating that it is the responsibility of the property owner to provide an acceptable program for the continuing maintenance of private open space, recreational areas, and walkways and within a planned unit development and that open space restrictions must be permanent.

Sec. 17-15 speaks to the dedication of land for parks and payment of fees for park improvements requiring the subdivider dedicate and improve and develop as a park a parcel of land, chosen by the Town, from the subdivision area, based on the formula of one (1) acre for every one hundred twenty-five (125) potential residents. At the Town's option, the subdivider, in lieu of dedicating the land, shall pay a fee that is equivalent to the cost of acquiring and developing new land for parks or recreation areas in the vicinity of the developing area where the subdivision is located. This fee shall be based upon land values and cost of developing parkland within or adjacent to the subdivision in the Town. For any subdivision for which there is a requirement for dedication of land for park or recreational areas, the developer shall, in addition to dedicating a parcel of land (or paying a fee-in-lieu thereof), improve the parcel with municipal-type park improvements or pay a fee for amounts associated with improvements to parks and recreational areas based upon the costs experienced by the Town to improve parks (on a per acre basis) and shall be established by resolution of the Town Council each year.

These requirements are negotiated during the PUD approval process.

Maintenance Responsibility

Sec. 16-70 of the Basalt Municipal code speaks to the conveyance of open space, recreational areas, walkways indicating that it is the responsibility of the property owner to provide an acceptable program for the continuing maintenance of private open space, recreational areas, and walkways and within a PUD (planned unit development) and that open space restrictions must be permanent.

When jointly acquiring land with another entity, the determination of ongoing operations and maintenance responsibility should be negotiated, along with contributions toward the acquisition cost, prior to acquiring the land and based on the intended purpose and goals for the property.

In any case, as new lands or amenities are added to the system, it must be determined up front who is responsible for the ongoing care of the property and funding must be identified for that purpose.

Accomplishments since the 2007 Basalt Master Plan include:

- Initiation of this master planning process.
- Initiation of the River Parks Master Plan following the incrementally acquisition and improvement of property along the Roaring Fork River including Old Pond Park, Midland Park and the Pan & Fork property.
- An agreement with the Roaring Fork Club, in cooperation with the Pitkin Nordic Council, to establish and maintain public Nordic trails on their property has been implemented. The Nordic Council maintains Nordic tracks along the Rio Grande trail, on the Grace-Shehi property, and behind the High School, as snowpack allows.
- Solar panels installed at Arbaney Pool to help increase pool temperatures, while keeping energy consumption to a minimum, although this has not allowed for the pool to remain open year round.
- The Town becoming a referral agency on development items for the Crown Mountain Park and Recreation District to assure the needs of Basalt residents are met. Playing fields, tennis courts, a picnic and concessions shelter, playground, and trails have been built at Crown Mountain Park. The District is currently pursuing an indoor recreation center on the property.
- The Town being instrumental in the improvements to the Lake Christine Shooting Range in 2012.
- The BMX park at Grace-Shehi approved and anticipated to be constructed summer of 2013.

- Community gardens added in at the Homestead and Grace-Shehi park sites in 2010 and 2012 respectively.
- Previously established fishing easements re-identified along River Oaks subdivision.
- Approval of the BMX Park at Grace-Shehi, resulting in a reclaimed bandit BMX trail in a sensitive riparian area.
- “The River Center” nature center, working with the Roaring Fork Conservancy, approved adjacent to Old Pond Park and now awaiting a detailed plan review.
- The historic Arbaney Barn converted from Public Works storage to activities for the Basalt and Regional Heritage Society and the Community.
- Improvements to trails in Old Pond Park.
- Partial structural restoration of the Frying Pan Charcoal Kilns.

Trails

Discussion

An overarching theme of **Connectivity**, both locally and regionally, and also providing recreational opportunities for area residents, underlies many of the findings for the Parks, Open Space and Trails Master Plan. Trail and sidewalk connections can improve walkability and bike-ability. Overall there is a desire for more seamless river trails, better trail access to the surrounding mountain and open space amenities, and connections between community destinations.



Bandit trails lead to degradation of the resource making adequate legitimate trails very important. Trail heads and trails that are environmentally sustainable for both the physical environment and wildlife are highly desired.

With the exception of few areas (i.e. Southside Drive), the trail system through Basalt is good but difficult to navigate. With recent purchases, the ability to access trails from Town is improving. Wayfinding could be addressed to some degree through landscaping and planting of Town rights-of-way and open spaces.

Accomplishments since the 2007 Basalt Master Plan include:

- Rio Grande Trail improvements fully implemented in Basalt and the Mid-Valley.
- Recognition of the Light Hill trail by BLM and the purchase of the Saltonstall property to provide opportunity for connections.
- Bicycle/pedestrian bridge crossing the Roaring Fork River along the east side of the Lower CDOT Bypass Bridge constructed with the Willits Trail.
- The Willits underpass currently being constructed.
- Old Orchard Trail behind City Market built during improvements to Willits Trail to connect the Rio Grande Trail and Crown Mountain Park.
- Raised pedestrian crossings along Willits Lane built as part of the Willits Trail improvements.

- Trail across Sopris Creek to connect the Emma Road Trail to the proposed pedestrian/bicycle bridge near the Lower CDOT Bypass Bridge completed and installed.
- Improvements to the Highway 82 underpasses.
- Off-street trails accomplished with the design and construction of the trail on Midland Avenue adjacent to the new library, and with the Willits Trail in 2009.
- New built trails that have resulted from development approvals since 2007? (Basalt Bluffs)
- Bike lanes recently created on Two Rivers Road.
- Trails within Crown Mountain Park.
- Funding secured for BMX park at Grace-Shehi.
- Intergovernmental agreement established with CDOT to take over the maintenance of the Emma/Hwy 82 underpass.

Environment

Discussion

The Town of Basalt desires to maintain the ecological integrity of the natural landscape, streams, surface waters and wildlife habitat areas, riparian areas, big game migration corridors and critical habitats such as critical winter range and production areas.

Accomplishments since the 2007 Basalt Master Plan include:

- Make the valley's environmental values known to its citizens and tourists by the Town of Basalt working closely with the BLM, Roaring Fork Conservancy and Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers.

Land Use and Open Space

Discussion

Steady population growth is continuing the demand on the system. Citizens have expressed interest in preserving open space, river frontage and agricultural land around the community through protection of the natural values that make Basalt such a wonderful area. Visitor use must be balanced with natural resource and wildlife protection to assure sustainability of the environment, the economy and the social fabric of the community.



The Town encourages land use policies that limit development and provide density bonuses on agricultural land purchased for conservation easements and through its referral comments to the counties on the redevelopment of Open Space agricultural properties. The Town has also participated with Pitkin and Eagle Counties to purchase agricultural properties for conservation purposes using the 1% sales tax open space fund.

The open space buffer between East Basalt and West Basalt is being maintained through a number of conservation easements.

Accomplishments since the 2007 Basalt Master Plan include:

- Purchase and acquisition of specific parcels:
 - Agricultural preservation - Acquisition of the Grange Conservation easement and the Grace-Shehi Open Space parcel (adjacent to the High School) adjacent to the Town boundary for the preservation of agricultural lands. The Saltonstall purchase - a joint effort between the Town of Basalt, Pitkin County, and Eagle County within the Basalt three-mile planning area.
 - Riverfront preservation - Midland (Park) addition, Pan & Fork, Basalt Commercial Park Lot K, and Old Pond Park.
 - Transit oriented premise with the installation of the BRT transit stops in the Willits development.
 - Social balance - acquisition of the library parcel allowing for its construction in 2008.
 - Open space preservation - Fletcher parcel above the Hill District acquired in 2010 with trails and a hydro-electric facility on the property.
- Determination that a transfer of development rights (TDR) program and regulations was not necessary as the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and building cap are adequate to manage development.

Funding Analysis

Discussion

Public investment in infrastructure should be achieved through compact and efficient development patterns and effective phasing. Infrastructure improvements and expansion should serve the Town's growth, land use, and environmental goals, not vice versa. Ongoing funding for operations and maintenance must be available to accommodate improvements and new facilities.

Residents are concerned about the level of maintenance funding and may support a referendum amending the Open Space 1% sales tax Fund to include a specific percentage to go towards maintenance. Currently it is restricted to capital improvements only.

One element of funding is through the effective use of partnerships. The Town of Basalt has intergovernmental agreements with the school district, counties, and state and federal land management agencies and a collaborative relationship with the Crown Mountain Park and Recreation District.

Accomplishments since the 2007 Basalt Master Plan include:

- Joint purchase of Grace-Shehi Open Space and the Saltonstall (Red Ridge) properties with Pitkin County Eagle Counties.
- Lake Christine improvements accomplished in cooperation with Colorado Parks & Wildlife.
- Crown Mountain Park improvements with the Crown Mountain Park District.
- Willits Trail and Old Orchard Trail improvements working with RFTA and the Mid Valley Trails Committee

Town Structure for Parks and Recreation Service Delivery

Planning for the parks and recreation effort in the Town of Basalt is provided through the Community Development Department of the Administration arm of the Town. The Gardens Department is also part of the Administration arm of the Town. Parks operations and maintenance is the responsibility of the Public Works Department and recreation programs, the outdoor pool and facilities development is the responsibility of the Recreation Department, both divisions of the Community Services arm of the Town. There is one full time and three part time seasonal employees dedicated to park operations and maintenance and one full time employee and a part time summer assistant dedicated to recreation.

In addition to the Town's recreation program, the Crown Mountain Park and Recreation District provides services in the Basalt area. These efforts are coordinated to avoid duplication and to fill service gaps.

2013 Funding

The 2013 budget message indicates that the Town will "need to be more careful in managing the dollars we have. It is a finite and slow growing revenue base that we are tied to that has a level of volatility that requires a higher level of fund balances."

Expenditures

General Fund 2013 Budget				
Expenditures	2010 Audit	2011 Audit	2012 Year End	2013 Budget
Cemetery Maintenance	0	0	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500
Recreation	\$ 161,430	\$ 174,086	\$ 175,145	\$ 230,202
Town Sharing/Discretionary	\$ 43,585	40,000	\$ 42,500	\$ 4,500
Parks	\$ 158,857	\$ 207,379	\$ 256,570	\$ 349,583
Swimming Pool	\$ 109,988	\$ 94,313	\$ 109,375	\$ 113,799
Public Gardens	\$ 150,903	\$ 150,750	\$ 149,828	\$ 152,913
Open Space Sales Tax	\$ 918,240	\$1,222,916	\$ 700,000	\$ 1,183,206

Revenues

General Fund 2013 Budget				
Revenues	2010 Audit	2011 Audit	2012 Year End	2013 Budget
Sales Tax Open Space & Trails	\$1,042,990	\$1,061,561	\$1,115,000	\$1,148,450
Lodging Tax	\$ 30,152	\$ 28,320	\$ 29,000	\$ 29,000
RETA Willits	\$ 45,428	\$ 66,635	\$ 23,000	\$ 40,000
Cemetery Fees	\$ 150	\$ 3,400	\$ 2,500	\$ 1,000
Recreational Fees	\$ 60,107	\$ 65,198	\$ 67,000	\$ 65,000
Swimming Pool User Fees	\$ 45,693	\$ 46,085	\$ 42,297	\$ 43,000
Swimming Pool Lessons	\$ 5,831	\$ 4,796	\$ 3,485	\$ 3,500
Swimming Pool Concessions	\$ 5,607	\$ 4,839	\$ 4,488	\$ 4,700

Culture and Recreation (including parks) makes up 30% of the 2013 projected expenditures for the Town.

Parks

The parks budget for 2013 is \$349,583 which includes \$135,000 of capital outlay leaving \$214,583 for operations and maintenance of 118 acres of Town-owned parks and open space properties or \$1,818 per acre. If the public gardens budget is added, this increases to \$3,114. Although it is challenging to compare apples to apples in types of lands maintained and community expectations, based on GreenPlay's knowledge of other small mountain communities in Colorado, this falls on the mid to low end of a range of \$1,600 to \$6,000 per acre. Community input and staff experience has indicated that maintenance is falling below expectations, although it is fair to say that staff is doing an admirable job with the resources available. This is a particularly important issue for the immediate future as more maintenance responsibilities are added to the workload with the addition of park and open space lands and new maintenance intensive amenities. Capital outlay includes \$100,000 dedicated to Midland Park improvements, \$25,000 for POST Committee projects and \$10,000 for Emma Bridge and Confluence Park enhancements.

Recreation

Basalt Recreation offers youth of the Valley an opportunity to get involved with many team and individual sporting activities. Parents get involved by volunteering to coach team sports such as baseball, softball, and basketball. Locals can share their talents by teaching youth a variety of recreational activities and participants can learn about the outdoors in the Rocky Mountains through field trips for hiking, skiing, and exploring. Fees collected for program registration are expected to generate \$65,000, offsetting 28 percent of the anticipated expenses of \$230,202.



Although it is challenging to compare apples to apples, this cost recovery level appears to fall in the mid to lower end of the range of other small mountain communities in Colorado.

Town Sharing/Discretionary

The Town grants funding to non-profit applicants to provide a variety of recreation and community services ranging from \$200 to \$2,500 each. The number of grants has steadily decreased from 82 to 47 since 2010 although the funding level has remained approximately the same indicating that the size of the average grant has increased over time.

Swimming Pool

Fees are collected for general use of the Arbaney outdoor pool, for swimming lessons and for concessions. Fees are expected to generate \$51,200, offsetting 45 percent of the operating expenses budgeted at \$113,799. The 2013 budget includes \$8,000 for a pool cover.

Public Gardens

The Town has maintained a stable budget of approximately \$150,000 annually from 2010-2013 supporting 85 gardens, with ten added this year. Efforts are further supported by the Roaring Fork volunteer group, and with school groups as well. Funding is being stretched currently and will become more critical as the program grows. The Town is very supportive of this exciting program and an arboretum is anticipated with the upcoming Pan and Fork development. \$152,913 is budgeted in 2013 for the care of trees on Town parks, trails and streets and key open space areas (e.g. roundabout, Lions Park).

Open Space and Trails

The Open Space and Trails One Percent Sales Tax 1% sales tax for Open Space and Trails, passed by election in November of 2006, went into effect January 01, 2007. In the past, that funding was used in the following manner:

- 2007-2010 – A large area around Town was preserved through the purchase of Conservation easements in partnership with Pitkin County, Eagle County, and Great Outdoors Colorado.
- 2011 – A large majority of the annual allocation for was for the Pan & Fork property.
- 2012 – A majority of the annual allocation was for the Saltonstall contribution, with the remainder used for Midland Park, Emma Bridge, River Parks, Pan & Fork, and POST projects.

For 2013, \$1,083,206 is allocated is for River Parks restoration (80/20 split with the bond fund). Other expenses include Pan & Fork planning and design \$50,000, this master planning effort \$30,000, and \$20,000 for construction of master plan recommended projects.

It is estimated that this funding source will generate \$1 million annually in 2014 and beyond. Continued allocation to the Pan and Fork or any other project will be determined by the Town Council.

Other Park Related Improvements

Park related improvements are also included under Streets and Municipal Building in the 2013 Budget.

- East Basalt Pedestrian Crossing – Design \$160,000
- Lions Park Storage - \$5,000

The Town has an IGA with the RE1 School District by which the Town has provided approximately \$3,400 - \$3,900 per year for the past three years, used for capital improvements or repairs. In 2013 this payment will be \$45,000 and includes a \$40,000 contribution for resurfacing of the high school track.

Conservation Trust Fund

Conservation Trust Funds are Lottery Funds received from the State distributed on a per capita basis. The Town has indicated that the amount received over the years has declined due to the presence of new eligible districts in the area and that amount has stabilized recently at around \$15,200. It is expected to continue at that level.

A beginning fund balance of \$60,526 provides a total of \$75,735 in 2013. \$25,000 is slated for park improvements, using \$9,791 from the reserves.

Parkland Dedication and Impact Fees

Communities throughout Colorado have used parkland dedication and park impact fees to help manage the increased demand for parks and recreation facilities and services created by population growth from new development. *Parkland dedication* requirements for new development or fees-in-lieu allow municipalities to acquire parkland to meet the increased demand for parks. Some communities have parkland dedication and open space dedication requirements. In addition to parkland dedication requirements, many Colorado communities also collect *park impact fees* to develop their park system based on increased needs from population growth. Park impact fees are a one-time fee per new residential dwelling unit.

Section 17-15 of the Basalt Municipal Code requires dedication of land for parks, chosen by the Town from the subdivision area, using the formula of one (1) acre for every one hundred twenty-five (125) potential residents, and improvement of that land as a park with municipal-type park improvements. The 2007 Master Plan advocates that properties being annexed to the town use the formula of two (2) acres for every 125 potential residents, twice that of in-town properties. At the Town's option, the subdivider, in lieu of dedicating the land, is required to pay a fee that is equivalent to the determined market rate cost of acquiring and developing new land for parks or recreation areas in the vicinity of the developing area.

The fund balance for Parks Land Dedication/Improvement \$254,728 and it is assumed that no new funding will be received in 2013.

Other Potential Funding

- The Southside Pedestrian Fund has a current balance at the end of 2013 of \$28,778 and it is assumed that no new funding will be received until potential developments south of Highway 82 receive final approval and proceed to development
- One half of the 2% Lodging Tax is used by the Town for general park maintenance. Revenues are accounted for in the parks allocation and are estimated at \$28,000 annually.
- Holy Cross Funds can be used for parks and are estimated at \$33,000 annually. Allocation of use is a Council decision. There are a number of other competing community enhancement uses for use of these funds.
- While the Roaring Fork Club RETA and the Willits RETA funds can be used for parks, this funding source is already committed to other uses for the foreseeable future.
- Bonds were issued in 2001 that in the past were used for the purchase of properties adjacent to the river and for implementation of the River Master Plan. Presently all bond funds are committed and not available.
- Grants from Great Outdoor Colorado, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and the State Historical Society have been used in the past to develop Town parks. Grant opportunities are very competitive and typically require fairly substantial matches (or see # which outlines grant opportunities.)



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Key Findings

An overarching theme of interest in **Connectivity** underlies many of the findings for the Parks, Open Space and Trails Master Plan. This ranges from connecting with each other in gathering spaces, connecting the Town north to south and east to west, connecting the Town to the river, connecting one park to another, connecting residents to public lands outside the Town boundaries, connecting



to the heritage of the area, and even connecting through mobile marketing.

Planning for Basalt's future population:

1. In 2000, 61.2% of the residents of Basalt were between the ages of 25 and 54. In 2010, this percentage dropped to 51.5%, and it is predicted to drop further to 47.5% by 2017. Additionally, from 2000 to 2010, the '55 and older' age cohort rose from 9.5% to 18.6%, and it is predicted to rise further to 21.7% in 2017. This trend will continue, requiring thoughtful consideration of dealing with an aging population, albeit a more active one than in the past.
2. From 2000 to 2010, Basalt households with children fell slightly from 35% to 33% of all Basalt households, and single households rose from 24% to 29%. Although the percentage of children is getting smaller, actual numbers are still growing for this important segment.
3. Basalt's projected population growth rate for 2012 through 2017 is 1.18 percent, slightly lower than Eagle, Pitkin and Garfield Counties (as projected through 2040), but still showing steady growth, continuing the growing demand on the system.
4. The median household income in Basalt is higher than that for either Colorado or the United States and is expected to rise 18% from \$65,167 in 2012 to \$76,804 in 2017, potentially leading to higher expectations for quality of maintenance and facilities.
5. Hispanics represented 20.3 percent of the Town's population in 2000, rose to 32% in 2010, and are predicted to reach 34% in 2017. The growing racial and ethnic diversity is particularly important to recreation and leisure service providers since family and individual recreation patterns and preferences are strongly shaped by cultural influences.

(The population data used in this demographic profile of the Town of Basalt largely comes from ESRI Business information Solutions, based on the 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census data as well as the American Community Survey for 2005-2009, also a U.S. Census report. Information was also obtained from the State Demography Office as detailed in Demographics section of this report.)

Meeting Expressed Desires:

1. Improvements to existing sites range from updating, improving, repurposing uses, better maintaining and making sites more vital, interpretation of historical and cultural aspects (particularly the coke kilns), and creating a sense of place. This includes the property as well as the facilities and equipment.
2. Desire for new amenities ranges from implementing park plans already in the works, safe places for kids to recreate, a focus on arts and culture, an arboretum, accessible amenities for adaptive sports, and kayak/wave and BMX parks.
3. Opportunity exists for the community to better engage with the river corridor in a way that embraces that amenity as it runs through the middle of downtown. Include appropriate river access, trails along the river corridor, and interpretation of integration with the rivers; confluence of two rivers; and unique aspects—two gold medal fishing rivers; entry to Frying Pan River Valley.
4. There is still interest in preserving open space and agricultural land around the community.
5. There is interest in protection of the natural values that make Basalt such a wonderful area. Visitor use must be balanced with natural resource and wildlife protection to assure sustainability of the environment, the economy and the social fabric of the community.

6. Trail and Sidewalk Connections can improve walkability and biking. Overall there is a desire for more seamless river trails, better trail access to the surrounding mountain and open space amenities, a connection between community destinations. Bandit trails lead to degradation of the resource making adequate legitimate trails very important. Wayfinding is currently challenging and needs to be addressed.
7. Programming in parks needs to change to respond to changes in circumstances and needs with focused attention on Arboney Park, Lion's Park, the existing soccer fields and Triangle Park.

How it gets done:

1. The Town of Basalt provides a variety of park and recreation opportunities through its amenities and through partnerships with other entities who are part of the overall level of service enjoyed by Town residents. Intergovernmental agreements exist with the school district, counties, and federal land management agencies. The relationship with the school district may need to be strengthened.
2. The community of Basalt is also served by the Crown Mountain Park and Recreation District which is responsible for programming, maintenance and on-going development associated with Crown Mountain Park. The Town strives to coordinate and balance activities with the District and there may be more opportunity in the future.
3. Basalt has the opportunity to capitalize on its unique brand and identity including being the gateway to the Frying Pan River Valley, the rivers, boating, and fishing, through its marketing efforts. Efforts need to expand to include mobile/social marketing.
4. There is clearly a desire to focus on better maintaining and improving what already exists and minimizing waste, however, there is also a desire to add new to the system. Going forward, the community will want to prioritize the need for continued maintenance with an expanding portfolio of recreational amenities, the desire for additions to the existing facilities, preservation and enhancement of the current parcels, and the wish for more trails.
5. Residents are concerned about the level of maintenance funding and may support a referendum amending the Open Space 1% sales tax Fund to include a specific percentage to go towards maintenance. Currently it is restricted to capital improvements only.
6. The POST Committee has expressed its need for better understanding the priorities of the public in the face of limited funding sources.
7. Dog issues, including off leash and waste are problematic, and need attention.
8. ADA (American's with Disabilities Act) compliance with the 2010 guidelines needs to be assured. There has been an expressed desire to make Basalt the most handicap accessible and friendly town in Colorado.
9. Arboney Park is in need of replacement of outdated equipment, upgrades to the pool, upgrades to the trails and sidewalks, and needs a strong maintenance program.

10. Programming for Lions Park may change with the development of the Pan and Fork Park and future improvements to this facility will want to be weighed against those developments to avoid duplication and meet the desires of residents for a vibrant gathering space.
11. Triangle Park, though small in size, is viewed as an important gathering space for West Basalt.
12. The soccer field site no longer being used for soccer fields needs to be reconsidered.
13. Mountain bike trail heads and trails that connect mountain communities, that are environmentally sustainable for both the physical environment and wildlife, are highly desired.
14. Connecting Town parks and trails could be addressed through landscaping and planting of Town rights-of-way and open spaces, which could also aid in wayfinding.



Appendix A: Demographic Profile

In order to do any kind of analysis and planning, it is important to have current data on the community, including an accurate profile of those who live there. The population data used in this demographic profile of the Town of Basalt largely comes from ESRI Business information Solutions, based on the 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census data as well as the American Community Survey for 2005-2009, also a U.S. Census report.

Summary

Key demographic trends for park and recreation planning efforts in Basalt include:

- The median age for Basalt in 2010 was 36.9, slightly lower than the median age (37.1) for the United States.
- The biggest changes from 2000 to 2017 are found in the '25-54' and '55 and older' cohorts. In 2000, 61.2 percent of the residents of Basalt were between the ages of 25 and 54. In 2010, this percentage dropped to 51.5 percent, and it is predicted to drop further to 47.5 percent by 2017. Additionally, from 2000 to 2010, the '55 and older' age cohort rose from 9.5 percent to 18.6 percent of the population, and it is predicted to rise further to 21.7 percent in 2017.
- From 2000 to 2010, Basalt households with children fell slightly from 34.6 to 32.6 percent of all Basalt households, and single households rose from 24 to 29 percent.
- Eagle, Pitkin and Garfield Counties are each expected to experience an annual population growth of 2 to 2.9 percent between 2010 and 2040.
- Basalt's projected population growth rate for 2012 through 2017 is 1.18 percent.
- The median household income in Basalt is higher than that for either Colorado or the United States and is expected to rise 18 percent from \$65,167 in 2012 to \$76,804 in 2017.

Population Projections and Racial Demographics

Table 2 illustrated the population forecast for the Town of Basalt based on the U.S. Census with ESRI estimates for years 2012 and 2017. The annual growth rate for Basalt, from 2000 through 2010, was 2.45 percent and the Town's projected growth rate for 2012 through 2017 is 1.18 percent. This compares to an annual growth rate prediction of 1.29 percent for the State of Colorado and 0.68 percent annual growth for the United States for 2010 to 2017.

Table 2: Town of Basalt Population Projections

US Census (2000 and 2010) and ESRI Projections

2000 Population	3337
2010 Population	3857
2012 Estimated	3958
2017 Projected	4198

Source: 2010 Census and ESRI Business Information Solutions 2012 Demographic and Income Profile.

The geographic boundaries of the Town of Basalt are divided between Eagle and Pitkin counties, with Garfield County a mile or so the west. In November 2012, the State Demography Office forecast that Eagle, Pitkin, and Garfield Counties would each experience an annual growth of 2 to 2.9 percent between 2010 and 2040.¹ It is reasonable to assume that the Town of Basalt would continue to experience steady growth from 2010 and 2040 as well.

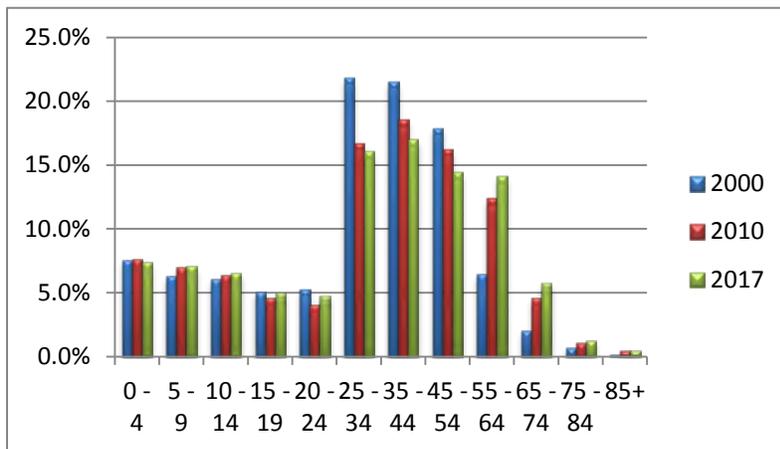
A significant majority of Basalt’s population is white only, dropping somewhat from 91.5 percent in 2000 to 86.1% in 2010. A measure of diversity in the community is represented by people who identify their origin as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish. By definition, these people may be any race and are persons of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture. Hispanics represented 11.7 percent of the Town’s population in 2000, rose to 20.3 percent in 2010, and was predicted to reach 32.4 percent in 2012 and 34.4 percent of the population in 2017.

Population Age Distribution

As part of the population trend analysis for Basalt, it is useful to review the Town’s age distribution shift over the period from 2000 to 2017. Basalt’s median age was 34.5 in 2000. It rose to 36.9 in 2010, settling between Colorado’s median age of 36.1 and that of the country as a whole, 37.1.

As illustrated in **Figure 1**, the ‘0-24’ age cohort does not reflect a significant change in the 2000 to 2017 timeframe. The biggest changes from 2000 to 2017 are found in the ‘25-54’ and ‘55 and older’ cohorts. In 2000, 61.2 percent of the residents of Basalt were between the ages of 25 and 54. In 2010, this percentage dropped to 51.5 percent, and it is predicted to drop further to 47.5 percent by 2017. This shift in age demographics is also illustrated with regard to the ‘55 and older’ population. In 2000, this age cohort represented 9.5 percent of Basalt’s population. In 2010, the population rose to 18.6 percent and it is predicted to rise further to 21.7 percent in 2017.

Figure 1: Population Age Distribution for the Town of Basalt in 2000 and 2010, and Projected for 2017



Source: 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census and ESRI Business Information Solutions 2012.

¹ Cindy DeGroen, “Population Forecasts”, Department of Local Affairs, State Demography Office, November. 2012, <http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite?blobcol=urldata&blobheadname1=Content-Disposition&blobheadname2=Content-Type&blobheadvalue1=inline%3B+filename%3D%22Population+Projections.pdf%22&blobheadvalue2=application%2Fpdf&blobkey=id&blobtable=MungoBlobs&blobwhere=1251833653289&ssbinary=true>, accessed 5/20/2013.

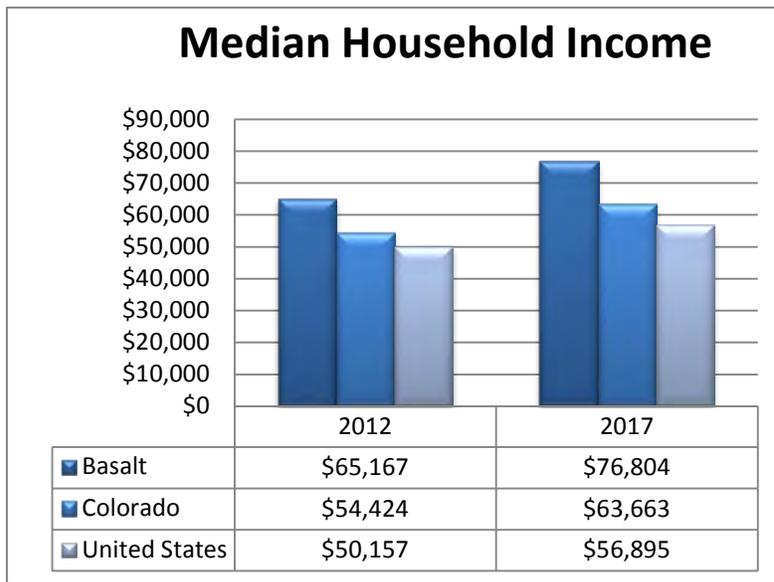
The following age breakdown is used to separate the population into age sensitive user groups.

- Under 5 years: This group represents users of preschool programs and facilities. As trails and open space users, this age group is often in strollers. These individuals are the future participants in youth activities.
- 5 to 14 years: This group represents current youth program participants.
- 15 to 24 years: This group represents teen/young adult program participants moving out of the youth programs and into adult programs. Members of this age group are often seasonal employment seekers.
- 25 to 34 years: This group represents potential adult program participants. Many in this age group are beginning long-term relationships and establishing families.
- 35 to 54 years: This group represents users of a wide range of adult programming and park facilities. Their characteristics extend from having children using preschool and youth programs to becoming empty nesters.
- 55 to 64 years: This group represents users of older adult programming exhibiting the characteristics of approaching retirement or already retired and typically enjoying grandchildren. This group may also be caring for older parents.
- 65 years plus: Nationally, this group will be increasing dramatically. Pew Research reports that by the time all Baby Boomers turn 65 in 2030, 15 percent of the nation's population will be at least that old. Recreation centers, senior centers, and senior programs can be a significant link in the health care system. This group ranges from very healthy, active seniors to more physically inactive seniors.

Household Size, Type, and Income Distribution

In 2010, Basalt's average household size was 2.41 compared with 2.49 for the State of Colorado, and 2.58 for the country as a whole. From 2000 to 2010, Basalt households with children fell slightly from 34.6 to 32.6 percent of all Basalt households, households of non-family members fell significantly from 39.4 to 13.4 percent, and single households rose from 24 to 29 percent. **Figure 2** illustrates median income in Basalt compared with that of the State of Colorado and the United States. The median household income in Basalt is higher than that for either Colorado or the United States and is expected to rise 18 percent from \$65,167 in 2012 to \$76,804 in 2017.

Figure 2: Median Household Income



Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions 2012.

The income distribution for the Town of Basalt is reflected in **Table 3**. The largest income level predicted for 2017 is the \$50,000 - \$74,000 level, at 21.2 percent, followed by the \$75,000 to \$99,999 income level at 20.3 percent.

Table 3: Town of Basalt Income Distribution for 2012 and 2017

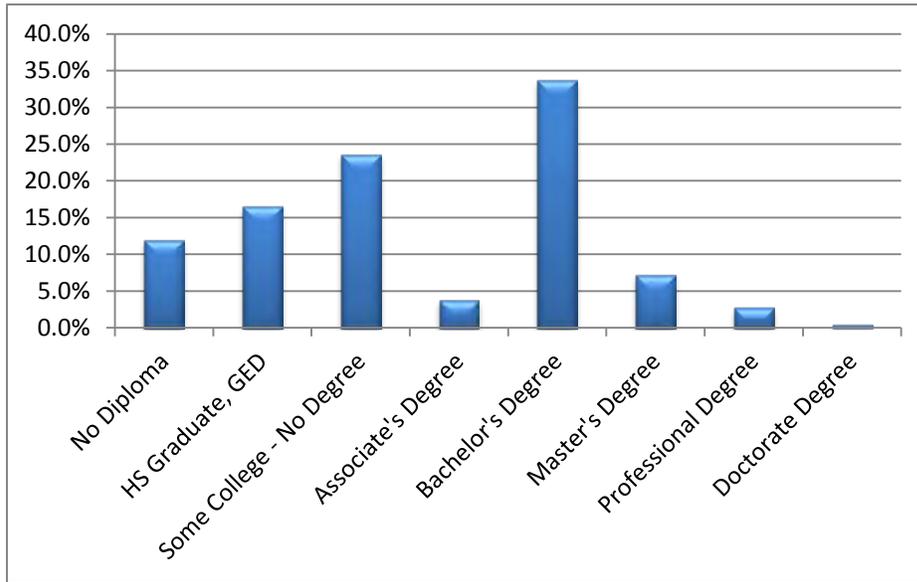
	2000	2012	2017
<\$15,000	3.5%	6.0%	5.4%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	6.5%	6.4%	4.6%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	7.6%	11.7%	8.4%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	14.7%	10.6%	8.3%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	26.9%	21.8%	21.2%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	20.6%	15.4%	20.3%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	11.5%	11.3%	12.8%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	4.5%	9.8%	11.6%
\$200,000+	4.3%	6.9%	7.5%

Education

According to a new U.S. Census Bureau study, education levels had more effect on earnings over a 40-year span in the workforce than any other demographic factor, such as gender, race, and ethnic origin.

As shown in **Figure 3**, the highest ranking educational cohort in the Town of Basalt is of those with a Bachelor’s Degree (33.8 percent), followed by those who have some college with no degree (23.6 percent). The next largest cohort is that of a High School Graduate/GED at 16.5 percent.

Figure 3: Educational Attainment for the Town of Basalt (ages 25+)



Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions, from the U.S. Census American Community Survey, 2005-2009.

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Appendix B: Park and Recreation Influencing Trends

It is challenging for a parks and open space agency to continue to understand and respond to the changing recreation interests of those it serves. The following information highlights relevant local, regional, and national outdoor recreation trends from various sources that may influence the Basalt parks, opens space and trails system for the next ten years.

The highest ranking age cohorts in the Town of Basalt are 25-34, 35-44 and 45-54, with 55-64 ranking a close 4th. Planning for the next ten years suggests a growing demand for programs and services for young adults and baby boomers.

Demographic Trends in Recreation

Adult – The Baby Boomers - Planning for the Demographic Shift

Baby boomers are defined as individuals born between 1946 and 1964, as stated in Leisure Programming for Baby Boomers². They are a generation that consists of nearly 76 million Americans. In 2011, this influential population began their transition out of the workforce. As baby boomers enter retirement, they will be looking for opportunities in fitness, sports, outdoors, arts and cultural events, and other activities that suit their lifestyles. With their varied life experiences, values, and expectations, baby boomers are predicted to redefine the meaning of recreation and leisure programming for mature adults. Emilyn Sheffield, Professor of Recreation and Parks Management at the California State University, at Chico, in the NPRA July 2012 *Parks and Recreation* magazine article titled, “*Five Trends Shaping Tomorrow Today*,” indicated that Baby Boomers are driving the aging of America with boomers and seniors over 65 composing about 39 percent of the nation’s population³.

In the leisure profession, this generation’s devotion to exercise and fitness is an example of its influence on society. When boomers entered elementary school, President John Kennedy initiated the President's Council on Physical Fitness; physical education and recreation became a key component of public education. As boomers matured and moved into the workplace, they took their desire for exercise and fitness with them. Now as the oldest boomers are nearing 65, park and recreation professionals are faced with new approaches to provide both passive and active programming for older adults. Boomers are second only to Gen Y/Millennials (born between 1980 and 1999) in participation in fitness and outdoor sports.⁴

Jeffrey Ziegler, a past president of the Arizona Parks and Recreation Association identified “Boomer Basics” in his article, “*Recreating retirement: how will baby boomers reshape leisure in their 60s?*”⁵ Highlights are summarized below.

Boomer Basics:

² Linda Cochran, Anne Roshchadl, and Jodi Rudick, Leisure Programming For Baby Boomers, Human Kinetics, 2009.

³ Emilyn Sheffield, “Five Trends Shaping Tomorrow Today,” *Parks and Recreation*, July 2012 p. 16-17.

⁴ 2012 Participation Report, Physical Activity Council, 2012.

⁵ Jeffrey Ziegler, “Recreating Retirement: How Will Baby Boomers Reshape Leisure in Their 60s?”, *Parks and Recreation*, October 2002.

Boomers are known to work hard, play hard, and spend hard. They have always been fixated with all things youthful. Boomers typically respond that they feel 10 years younger than their chronological age. Their nostalgic mindset keeps boomers returning to the sights and sounds of their 1960s youth culture. Swimming pools have become less of a social setting and much more of an extension of boomers' health and wellness program. Because boomers have, in general, a high education level they'll likely continue to pursue education as adults and into retirement.

Basalt's demographic profile indicates that 28.6% of the current population falls within the Baby Boomer age range (those approximately 45 – 64 years of age).

Boomers will look to park and recreation professionals to give them opportunities to enjoy many life-long hobbies and sports. When programming for this age group, a customized experience to cater to the need for self-fulfillment, healthy pleasure, nostalgic youthfulness, and individual escapes will be important. Recreation trends will shift from games and activities that boomers associate with senior citizens, as Ziegler suggests that activities such as bingo, bridge, and shuffleboard will likely be avoided because boomers relate these activities to being old.

Boomers will reinvent what being a 65-year-old means. Parks and recreation agencies that don't plan for boomers carrying on in retirement with the same hectic pace they've lived during their years in employment will be left behind. Things to consider when planning for the demographic shift:

- Boomer characteristics
- What drives Boomers?
- Marketing to Boomers
- Arts and entertainment
- Passive and active fitness trends
- Outdoor recreation/adventure programs
- Travel programs

Youth - Planning for the Demographic Shift

Sheffield also identified as one of the *“five trends shaping tomorrow today”* that the proportion of youth is smaller than in the past, but still essential to our future. As of the 2010 Census, the age group under age 18 forms about a quarter of the U.S. population, and this percentage is at an all-time low. Nearly half of this population group is ethnically diverse and 25% is Hispanic⁶.

Definition of Hispanic or Latino Origin Used in the 2010 Census: “Hispanic or Latino” refers to a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture. People who identify their origin as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish may be any race.

⁶ Emilyn Sheffield, “Five Trends Shaping Tomorrow Today,” *Parks and Recreation*, July 2012 p. 16-17.

Hispanic Trends – Outdoor/Nature

According to Emilyn Sheffield, in the United States, the Hispanic population category increased by 43 percent over the last decade, compared to five percent for the non-Hispanic portion, and accounted for more than half of all the population growth. 20.3 percent of Basalt's population in 2010 was Hispanic and this percentage is expected to rise to 34.4 percent by 2017. The growing racial and ethnic diversity is particularly important to recreation and leisure service providers since family and individual recreation patterns and preferences are strongly shaped by cultural influences.⁷

Participation in outdoor sports among Hispanics is at 6% nationwide, according to the 2012 Outdoor Recreation Participation Report.⁸ Those who do get outdoors, however, participate more frequently than other outdoor participants, with an average of 60 outings per year. The Basalt experience has been that the Hispanic Community desires parks with trails, soccer fields, and larger areas with grills and picnic tables for gatherings.

Festivals and Events

Economic Impact of Festivals

In the context of urban development, from the early 1980's there has been a process that can be characterized as "festivalization," which has been linked to the economic restructuring of towns and cities, and the drive to develop communities as large-scale platforms for the creation and consumption of 'cultural experience.'

The success rate for festivals should not be evaluated simplistically solely on the basis of profit (sales), prestige (media profile), size (numbers of events). Research by the European Festival Research Project (EFRP)⁹ indicates there is evidence of local and city government supporting and even instigating and managing particular festivals themselves to achieve local or regional economic objectives, often defined very narrowly (sales, jobs, tourists). There are also a growing number of smaller more local community-based festivals and events in communities, most often supported by local councils that have been spawned partly as a reaction to larger festivals that have become prime economic-drivers. These community-based festivals often will re-claim cultural ground based on their social, educational and participative value. For more information on the values of festivals and events, see the CRC Sustainable Tourism research guide¹⁰ on this topic.

There is much to be learned about trends and expectations each year in order to make the most of each event. FestivalsandFairs.Net¹¹, an online festival resource, listed the following 2012 trends:

- How the Economy Affects You - No matter what, the economy is always a factor. In 2012, people hoped to find gifts for themselves or loved ones at prices they could easily afford, suggesting that finding ways to making crafts cost a bit less can help pass the savings on to customers.

⁷ Emilyn Sheffield, "Five Trends Shaping Tomorrow Today," *Parks and Recreation*, July 2012 p. 16-17.

⁸ "Outdoor Recreation Participation Report 2012", Outdoor Foundation, 2012.

⁹ EFRP is an international consortium seeking to understand the current explosion of festivals and its implications and perspective, <http://www.efa-aef.eu/en/activities/efrp/>, accessed October 2012.

¹⁰ Ben Janeczko. Trevor Mules and Brent Ritchie, "Estimating the Economic Impacts of Festivals and Events: A Research Guide", Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism, 2002, <http://www.sustainabletourisonline.com/1005/events/estimating-the-economic-impacts-of-festivals-and-events-a-research-guide>, accessed October 2012.

¹¹ "2011 Fairs and Festival Trends", <<http://www.fairsandfestivals.net>, February 2011>, accessed August 28, 2012.

- “Tis the Season” – people prefer to put their money toward things that have a definite purpose, such as Christmas decorations or display items that can be used throughout the entire autumn season.
- Keep it Simple and Professional – keeping displays simple and well organized is appealing to customers.

Healthy Lifestyle

Colorado Trends

Colorado, which has long claimed bragging rights as the leanest state in the nation, received some bad news this year¹². The Colorado 2011 Health Report Card found that Colorado’s adult obesity levels recently jumped to the second-fastest rate in the country and that one in every five Coloradans is now obese. Adult obesity is greatest in the eastern plains and lowest in western mountain communities. Childhood obesity levels in Colorado are growing at the second fastest rate in the country, jumping from a ranking of third lowest in 2007 to 23rd in the nation for child obesity today.

The State of Colorado, along with non-profit partners such as the Colorado Health Foundation and Live Well Colorado, has invested in numerous programs aimed at countering the obesity epidemic. Efforts are directed at healthy eating and combating sedentary lifestyles. Policy makers want Colorado to be the first state in the country to start reducing obesity levels, which is actually happening in one Colorado County already. In Arapahoe County, the obesity rate has fallen from 20.3 in 2006 to a 2011 rate of 17.7.

Trails and Health

That a connected system of trails increases the level of physical activity in a community has been scientifically demonstrated through the Trails for Health initiative of the Center for Disease Control (CDC)¹³. Trails can provide a wide variety of opportunities for being physically active, such as walking/running/hiking, rollerblading, using wheelchairs and manually-powered mobility aids as well as other power driven mobility devices (OPDMDs), bicycling, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, fishing, hunting, and horseback riding. Recognizing that active use of trails for positive health outcomes is an excellent way to encourage people to adopt healthy lifestyle changes, American Trails has launched a “Health and Trails” resource section in its website: www.americantrails.org/resources/benefits/.

The health benefits are equally as high for trails in urban neighborhoods as for those in state or national parks. A trail in the neighborhood, creating a “linear park,” makes it easier for

Obesity among Children and Adolescents

“Obesity now affects 17 percent of all children and adolescents in the United States. The percentage of adolescents and children who are obese tripled from 1980 to 2008. In 2008 alone, more than one third of U.S. children and adolescents were overweight or obese.

Obese children are more likely to become obese adults. Statistics show that children and adolescents who are obese have a 70% to 80% chance of becoming overweight or obese adults.”

Centers for
Disease Control

Trails are highly desired by Basalt residents, and they are also very important public health and economic development factors.

¹² Katie Kerwin McCrimmon, “Obesity levels spike in Colorado,” *Solutions*, <http://www.healthpolicysolutions.org/2012/03/22/obesity-levels-spike-in-colorado/>, Accessed November 17, 2012.

¹³ “Guide to Community Preventive Services” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), <http://www.thecommunityguide.org/index.html>

people to incorporate exercise into their daily routines, whether for recreation or non-motorized transportation. Urban trails need to connect people to places they want to go, such as schools, transit centers, businesses, and neighborhoods.¹⁴

Economic & Health Benefits of Parks

There are numerous economic and health benefits of parks, including the following:

- Trails, parks, and playgrounds are among the five most important community amenities considered when selecting a home.
- Research from the University of Illinois shows that trees, parks, and green spaces have a profound impact on people's health and mental outlook.¹⁵
- US Forest Service research indicates that when the economic benefits produced by trees are assessed, the total value can be two to six times the cost for tree planting and care.¹⁶
- Fifty percent of Americans regard outdoor activities as their main source of exercise.¹⁷

In a the 2005 Basalt Community Survey, 59% of business owners identified promoting and marketing the Town of Basalt and its amenities as an important measure for improving the local business climate.

The Trust for Public Land has published a report titled: *"The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space."* The report makes the following observations about the health, economic, environmental, and social benefits of parks and open space¹⁸:

- Physical activity makes people healthier.
- Physical activity increases with access to parks.
- Contact with the natural world improves physical and physiological health.
- Residential and commercial property values increase.
- Value is added to community and economic development sustainability.
- Benefits of tourism are enhanced.
- Trees are effective in improving air quality and act as natural air conditioners.
- Trees assist with storm water control and erosion.
- Crime and juvenile delinquency are reduced.
- Recreational opportunities for all ages are provided.
- Stable neighborhoods and strong communities are created.

Outdoor Environments and Open Space

Nature Programming

Noted as early as 2003 in Recreation Management Magazine, park agencies have been seeing an increase in interest in environmental-oriented "back to nature" programs. In 2007, the National

¹⁴ "Health Community: What you should know about trail building," National Trails Training Partnership: Health and Fitness, <http://www.americantrails.org/resources/health/healthcombuild.html>, accessed on May 24, 2013.

¹⁵ F.E. Kuo, "Environment and Crime in the Inner City: Does Vegetation Reduce Crime?" *Environment and Behavior*, Volume 33, pp 343-367.

¹⁶ Nowak, David J., "Benefits of Community Trees", (Brooklyn Trees, USDA Forest Service General Technical Report, in review).

¹⁷ "Outdoor Recreation Participation Report 2010", Outdoor Foundation, 2010.

¹⁸ Paul M. Sherer, "The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space," The Trust for Public Land, San Francisco, CA, 2006.

Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) sent out a survey to member agencies in order to learn more about the programs and facilities that public park and recreation agencies provide to connect children and their families with nature.¹⁹ A summary of the results follow:

- Sixty-eight percent of public parks and recreation agencies offer nature-based programming and 61% have nature-based facilities.
- The most common programs include nature hikes, nature-oriented arts and crafts, fishing-related events, and nature-based education in cooperation with local schools.
- When asked to describe the elements that directly contribute to their most successful programs, agencies listed staff training as most important followed by program content and number of staff/staff training.
- When asked what resources would be needed most to expand programming, additional staff was most important followed by funding.
- Of the agencies that do not currently offer nature-based programming, 90 percent indicated that they want to in the future. Additional staff and funding were again the most important resources these agencies would need going forward.
- The most common facilities include: nature parks/preserves, self-guided nature trails, outdoor classrooms, and nature centers.
- When asked to describe the elements that directly contribute to their most successful facilities, agencies listed funding as most important followed by presence of wildlife and community support.

Figures from the Association for Interpretive Naturalists, a national group of nature professionals, demonstrate that nature-based programs are on the rise. According to Tim Merriman, the association's executive director, the group was founded in 1954 with 40 members. It now boasts 4,800 members, with research indicating that about 20,000 paid interpreters are working nationally, along with an army of more than 500,000 unpaid volunteers staffing nature programs at parks, zoos and museums. The growth of these programs is thought to come from replacing grandparents as the teacher about the "great outdoors." It is also speculated that a return to natural roots and renewed interest in life's basic elements was spurred as a response to September 11, 2000.²⁰

In his book Last Child in the Woods: Saving Children from Nature Deficit Disorder²¹, Richard Louv introduced the concept of restorative nature, for both children and adults, of being out in nature. This concept, and research in support of it, has led to a growing movement promoting connections with nature in daily life. One manifestation of this is the development of Nature Explore Classrooms in parks. Nature Explore²² is a collaborative program of the Arbor Day Foundation and the non-profit

¹⁹ National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), "NRPA Completes Agency Survey Regarding Children and Nature," http://www.narrp.org/assets/Library/Children_in_Nature/nrpa_survey_regarding_children_and_nature_2007.pdf, April 2007.

²⁰ Margaret Ahrweiler, "Call of the Wild – From beautiful blossoms to bugs and guts, nature programs are growing as people return to their roots" *Recreation Management* magazine, [Http://recmanagement.com/200310fe04.php](http://recmanagement.com/200310fe04.php), October 2003.

²¹ Richard Louv, Last Child in the Woods: Saving Children from Nature Deficit Disorder, Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 2005.

²² "What is the Nature Explore Program", <http://www.arborday.org/explore/documents/>

organization, Dimensions Educational Research Foundation, with a mission of helping children and families develop a profound engagement with the natural world, where nature is an integral, joyful part of children’s daily learning. Nature Explore works to support efforts to connect children with nature.

Outdoor Fitness Programming

Researchers have long touted the benefits of outdoor exercise. According to a study published in the *Journal of Environmental Science and Technology* by the University of Essex in the United Kingdom, “as little as five minutes of green exercise improves both mood and self-esteem.”²³ A new trend started in China as they prepared to host the 2008 Summer Olympics. Their aim was to encourage a society that promotes physical fitness and reaps the benefits of outdoor exercise by working out on outdoor fitness equipment.

The United States is now catching up on this trend, as park and recreation departments have begun installing “outdoor gyms.” Equipment that can be found in these outdoor gyms is comparable to what would be found in an indoor workout facility, such as leg and chest presses, elliptical trainers, pull down trainers, etc. With no additional equipment such as weights and resistance bands, the equipment is fairly easy to install. Outdoor fitness equipment provides a new opportunity for parks and recreation agencies to increase the health of their communities, through offering the opportunity to exercise outdoors. Such equipment can increase the usage of parks, trails, and other outdoor amenities while helping to fight the obesity epidemic and increase the community’s interaction with nature.

Dog Parks

Dog parks are a rising trend. *Recreation Management* magazine²⁴ suggests that they can represent a relatively low-cost way to provide an oft-visited community amenity. Dog parks can be as simple as a gated area, or more elaborate with “designed-for-dogs” amenities like water fountains, agility equipment, and pet wash stations, to name a few. According to Dog Fancy Magazine, an ideal dog park should include the following:

- One acre or more surrounded by a 4- to 6-foot fence
- Shade and water
- Adequate drainage
- Parking near the site
- A double gated entry
- Benches
- Pet-waste disposal stations with pickup bags and covered waste receptacles

Shade Structures

Communities around the country are considering adding shade structures as well as shade trees to their parks, playgrounds and pools, as “a weapon against cancer and against childhood obesity”²⁵; both to reduce future cancer risk and promote exercise among children. A 2005 study found that melanoma rates in people under 20 rose three percent a year between 1973 and 2001, possibly due to a thinning of

NE_FAQ_002.pdf, accessed on August 12, 2012.

²³ Cited in: Sally Russell, “Nature Break: Five Minutes of Green Nurture”, Green Nurture Blog, <http://blog.greennurture.com/tag/journal-of-environmental-science-and-technology>, Accessed on November 14, 2012.

²⁴ Emily Tipping, “2012 State of the Industry Report, Trends in Parks and Recreation”, *Recreation Management*, June 2012.

²⁵ Liz Szabo, “Shade: A weapon against skin cancer, childhood obesity”, *USA Today*, June 30, 2011, usatoday.30.usatoday.com/news/health/wellness/story/2011/06/Shade-serves-as-a-weapon-against-skin-cancer-childhood-obesity/48965070/1, accessed 5/23/3013.

the ozone layer in the atmosphere. It is recommended that children seek shade between 10am and 4pm, but with so little shade available, kids have nowhere to go. Additionally, without adequate shade, many play areas are simply too hot to be inviting to children. On sunny days, the playground equipment is hot enough to scald the hands of would-be users.

Trees would help, as tree leaves absorb about 95 percent of ultraviolet radiation, but they take a decade or more to grow large enough to make a difference. So, many communities are building shade structures instead. The non-profit Shade Foundation of American is a good resource for information about shade and shade structures, www.shadefoundation.org.

Shade and Skin Cancer Protection

Skin cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in the United States. Because of our altitude and high number of sunny days, Colorado has a relatively high level of skin cancer. As part of creating a healthy and safe environment, local government can play a key role in providing the community with public places, facilities, open spaces, and services that provide protection from sun exposure.

Facts about Skin Cancer in Colorado

- **Sunburns:** A 2004 survey found that 45.1 percent of white adults in Colorado had at least one sunburn in the past year. Sunburns are a significant risk factor for the development of skin cancer.
- **New Cases of Melanoma:** Melanoma is responsible for 75 percent of all skin cancer deaths and is the 5th most commonly diagnosed cancer in Colorado.
- **The annual rate of new melanoma diagnoses in Colorado was 15 percent higher than the national average from 2002-2006 and was the 13th highest in the U.S.**
- **Deaths from Melanoma:** About 117 people in Colorado die of melanoma every year.

SunWise Web site at: www.epa.gov/sunwise/statefacts.html

Outdoor Recreation Participation

The Outdoor Foundation releases a “Participation in Outdoor Recreation” report, annually. According to the 2012 report²⁶, while there continues to be fallout from the recent economic downturn, outdoor recreation reached the highest participation level in five years in 2011. The Outdoor Foundation’s research brought the following key findings.

Participation in Outdoor Recreation

- **Return to Nature:** Nearly 50% of Americans ages six and older participated in outdoor recreation in 2011. That is a slight increase from 2010 and equates to a total of 141.1 million Americans.
- **Accessibility is Important Factor:** Activities that are affordable and accessible (Gateway Activities) have a contagious effect. 87% of hikers participate in one or more other activities. People with biking routes near their home get outdoors at a rate of 58% compared to a rate of 47% for those without easy access to biking routes.

²⁶ “Outdoor Recreation Participation Report 2012”, Outdoor Foundation, 2012.

Youth Participation in Outdoor Recreation

- **Downward Trend Reversed:** For the first time since 2006, the downward trend of participation in outdoor sports among young boys has reversed to the upward direction. Female teenager participation has grown to the highest rate recorded in the Outdoor Foundation's annual reports.
- **The Influence of Family:** Most youth are introduced to outdoor activities by parents, friends, family, and relatives.
- **Physical education in schools:** The importance cannot be understated. Among adults ages 18 and older who are current outdoor participants, 82% say they had PE in school between the ages of 6 and 12.

The Outdoor Foundation reports that the top outdoor activities in 2011 were running, fishing, bicycling, camping, and hiking. Birdwatching is also among the favorite outdoor activities by frequency of participation.

Outdoor recreation trends are also a recurring topic of study by the United States Forest Service through the Internet Research Information Series (IRIS). An IRIS report dated January 2012²⁷ provides the following recent nature-based outdoor recreation trends: Participation in walking for pleasure and family gatherings outdoors were the two most popular activities for the U.S. population as a whole. These outdoor activities were followed in popularity by swimming, sightseeing, viewing/ photographing wildlife and wild birds, picnicking, boating, bicycling, fishing, snow/ice activities, and developed or primitive camping. There has been a growing momentum in participation in sightseeing, birding and wildlife watching in recent years.

In the 2005 Basalt Community Survey, the top 5 recreational activities that residents wanted to see included in the Town's recreation programs are: Adult Cross Country Skiing, Hiking, Yoga, Mountain Biking and Nature Tours. Suggestions through the 2013 BackyardBasalt.com input opportunity include outdoor yoga, concerts, movie screenings, food vendors, ice skating, art installations, giant chess games, splash pads, markets, and festivals, among others.

²⁷ "Recent Outdoor Recreation Trends", USDA Forest Service Internet Research Information Series (IRIS) Research Brief, January 2012, <http://warnell.forestry.uga.edu/nrrt/nsre/IRISRec/IRISRec23rpt.pdf>, accessed August, 2012.

Adventure Programming and Extreme Sports

Extreme Sports

Extreme sports are not just a fad. Regardless of the time of year, extreme sports are increasing in participation²⁸. A 2008 SGMA report shown in **Table 4**, demonstrates this increase in participation.

Table 4: Most Popular Extreme Sports in the USA (U.S. population; 6 years of age or older)

Extreme Sport	# of Participants (participated at least once in 2007)
1. Inline Skating	10,814,000
2. Skateboarding	8,429,000
3. Mountain Biking	6,892,000
4. Snowboarding	6,841,000
5. Paintball	5,476,000
6. Cardio Kickboxing	4,812,000
7. Climbing (Indoor, Sport, Boulder)	4,514,000
8. Trail Running	4,216,000
9. Ultimate Frisbee	4,038,000
10. Wakeboarding	3,521,000
11. Mountain/ Rock Climbing	2,062,000
12. BMX Bicycling	1,887,000
13. Roller Hockey	1,847,000
14. Boardsailing/Windsurfing	1,118,000

Source: Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association, 2007

In recent years, mountain biking, and BMX biking have continued their upward trend while inline skating and skateboarding have trended downward in popularity according to the Outside Recreation Participation Topline Report 2012.²⁹

Zip Lines

According to a story by National Public Radio on August 28, 2012, zip line tours and aerial adventure parks are booming in the Northwest United States.³⁰ At least a dozen commercial zip line attractions have opened in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, plus an equal number in Alaska and British Columbia. While there have been some grumblings about bringing in private business to public parks, zip line purveyors point out that they're fun, not too expensive to make, and safe.

²⁸ Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association (SMGA), "Extreme Sports: An Ever-Popular Attraction", http://www.sgma.com/press/2_Extreme-Sports%3A-An-Ever-Popular-Attraction.

²⁹ "Outdoor Recreation Participation Topline Report 2012", Outdoor Foundation, 2012.

³⁰ Tom Banse, "Getting High in the Northwest...On Zip Lines", National Public Radio Story, August 28, 2012, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=160244351&ft=3&f=160244351>

Tacoma, Washington’s public park district, Tacoma Metro Parks, recently opened a publicly-run zip line at its Northwest Trek Wildlife Park, looking to set itself apart from other local recreational opportunities and seeking to attract a different demographic. Municipal park agencies around the country are looking at this booming trend and the potential revenue stream it can bring and are adding zip line attractions and aerial adventure parks to their public park offerings. Examples to consider are Coconino County’s Tree Top Adventure Course, “Flagstaff Extreme Adventure Course”, in Arizona: <http://www.flagstaffextreme.com>; the “Red Ore Zip Tour” at Red Mountain Park in Birmingham, Alabama: <http://www.redmountainpark.org/zip-line-trips>; and, “The Beanstalk Journey Zip Line and Canopy Tour” at Catawba Meadows Park in Morganton, North Carolina: <http://www.redmountainpark.org/zip-line-trips>

Cycling and Walking

Bicycle friendly cities have been emerging over the last ten years. Cycling has become a popular mode of transportation as people consider the rising cost of fuel, desire for better health, and concern for the environment. Some people also use cycling as a mode of transportation just for the fun of it.

The Alliance for Biking and Walking published *Bicycling and Walking in the United States 2012 Benchmark Report*.³¹ This report shows that increasing bicycling and walking are goals clearly in the public interest. Where bicycling and walking levels are higher, obesity, high blood pressure, and diabetes levels are lower. Higher levels of bicycling and walking also coincide with increased bicycle and pedestrian safety and higher levels of physical activity. Increasing bicycling and walking can help solve many serious problems facing our nation.

Input during the 2013 Focus Groups and Public Open House for the Master Plan project identified an overarching theme of **Connectivity**. Participants envisioned cycling and walking connections to community gathering spaces, connecting north to south and east to west, connecting town to the river, connecting one park to another, and connecting residents to public lands outside the town boundaries.

According to the 2012 Benchmark Report, public health trends related to bicycling and walking include:

- Bicycling and walking levels fell 66 percent between 1960 and 2009, while obesity levels increased by 156 percent.
- Between 1966 and 2009, the number of children who bicycled or walked to school fell 75 percent, while the percentage of obese children rose 276 percent.
- In general, states with the highest levels of bicycling and walking have the lowest levels of obesity, hypertension (high blood pressure), and diabetes and have the greatest percentage of adults who meet the recommended 30-plus minutes per day of physical activity.

³¹ The Alliance for Biking and Walking published *Bicycling and Walking in the United States 2012 Benchmark Report*.³¹

The economic benefits of bicycling and walking include:

- Bicycling and walking projects create 11-14 jobs per \$1 million spent, compared to just seven jobs created per \$1 million spent on highway projects.
- Cost benefit analyses show that up to \$11.80 in benefits can be gained for every \$1 invested in bicycling and walking.

National bicycling trends:

- Bike sharing and bike libraries allow people to rent bikes and tour communities using multiple pick up and drop off locations.
- Infrastructure to support biking communities is becoming more commonly funded in communities.
- The number of bike commuters in the United States rose by 64 percent from 1990 to 2009.
- Bike share communities rose from .4 percent to .6 percent.
- According to a white paper, *Analysis of Bicycling Trends and Policies in Large North American Cities: Lessons For New York*³², “Case studies cities have implemented a wide range of infrastructure and programs to promote cycling and increase cycling safety: expanded and improved bike lanes and paths, traffic calming, parking, bike transit integration, training programs and promotional events.” These trends have helped improve cycling in these communities.
- Cycling participation by age almost doubled in the age group 25-64 from 23 percent in 1995 to 42 percent in 2009.
- Cycling participation by ethnicity shows non-Hispanic whites have the highest bike mode sharing among ethnic groups, and cycling rates are rising faster among African Americans, Hispanics, and Asian Americans. Those three groups also account for an increasing share of total bike trips, rising from 16 percent to in 2001 to 21 percent in 2009. Cycling is dominated by non-Hispanic whites, who make 79 percent of all bike trips in the USA but account for only 66 percent of the population (American Community Survey, 2009).
- The League of American Bicyclists currently has 490 applicants for “Bicycle Friendly Communities” designation and has designated 190 communities in 46 states, up from 84 communities in 2008. The award recognizes education, engineering, enforcement, encouragement, and an evaluation plan.

Walkscore (www.walkscore.com) is a website that rates cities around the country based on average ability to walk to the most used community amenities (recreation, restaurants, schools, etc). It ranks communities on a scale of 1 – 100. According to Walkscore, Basalt is considered only a “somewhat walkable community,” reflective of the public comment received about the need for connectivity. Basalt scores a **54**, which is above average, but much lower than Aspen (91), Carbondale (86), Glenwood Springs (85), Edwards (80), and just below Avon (60).

³² Dr. John Pucher and Dr. Ralph Buehler, “Analysis of Bicycling Trends and Policies in Large North American Cities: Lessons for New York”, Rutgers University White Paper, 2011, <http://www.utrc2.org/research/projects/analysis-bicycling-trends-and-policies-large-american-cities-lessons-new-york>, Accessed November 17, 2012.

Winter Recreation Trends

In a 2012 report³³, Snow Sports Industries America (SIA) uncovered the following snow sports participation habits:

- 6.9% of the total U.S. population (+6 years old) participates in at least one snow sport discipline.
- Alpine skiers (44%) and snowboarders (31%) make-up three-fourths of all participants.
- Snow sports are becoming more diverse; minority ethnic groups make up over twenty-five percent (25%) of all participants.

The Outdoor Foundation's *Topline Outdoor Recreation Report* for 2012³⁴ reflects a three-year increase in participation (from 2009 to 2011) in cross-country skiing (12.2%) and snowshoeing (40%). Additional winter sports to consider are extreme sledding, all the rage in Minnesota³⁵, as well as the new winter sports trends such as speed riding (skiing while attached to a paraglider), equestrian skijoring (skier pulled along by a pony), and dog sledding³⁶.

According to Global Industry Analysts, Inc.³⁷, the snowmobiling industry has recovered from the recession and registered positive growth in 2011. GIA expects the market to grow in coming years, "expected to be driven by the increased popularity of outdoor recreation, growing health consciousness, [and] the fun and adventure element of snowmobiling."

Adventure (extreme) sledding is one of the latest trends in Minnesota outdoor winter activities. The sport started with a few dare devils who took sledding to a new level with tricks, flips, and long treks up steep and long hills just for the thrill of a crazy ride down. The carving and tight turns required to do this are more than you would achieve on a snowboard. As you can imagine, a regular sled doesn't cut it when hitting the hills.
<http://www.minnesota-visitor.com/extreme-sledding.html>

Role and Response of Local Government

Collectively, these trends have created profound implications for the way local governments conduct business. Some local governments are now accepting the role of providing preventative health care through parks and recreation services. The following concepts are from the International County/County Management Association³⁸.

- Parks & Recreation departments should take the lead in developing communities conducive to active living.
- There is growing support for recreation programs that encourage active living within their community.
- One of the highest priorities is a cohesive system of parks and trails and accessible neighborhood parks.

³³Sports Industries America, "SIA Releases 2012 Participation Report", <http://www.snowsports.org/SuppliersServiceProviders/Resources/PressReleases/SIAPressReleases/PressReleaseDetail/content/id/2029/>, accessed on August 12, 2012.

³⁴"Outdoor Recreation Participation Topline Report 2012", Outdoor Foundation, 2012.

³⁵"Extreme Sledding in Minnesota," <http://www.minnesota-visitor.com/extreme-sledding.html>, accessed on August 12, 2012.

³⁶Winter-Sports.com, "New Winter Sports Trends", http://www.winter-sports.com/EN/Articles/new_winter_sports_trends.php, accessed on August 12, 2012.

³⁷PRWeb, "Global Snowmobiles Market to Reach 165 Thousand Units, and US\$1.3 Billion by 2017," http://www.prweb.com/releases/snowmobiles_utility/performance_touring/prweb9264472.htm, accessed on August 12, 2012.

³⁸www.ICMA.org, Accessed in 2012.

In summary, the United States of America, its states, and its communities share the enormous task of reducing the health and economic burden of obesity. While numerous programs, policies, and products have been designed to address the problem, there is no magic bullet to make it go away. The role of public parks and recreation as a health promotion and prevention agency has come of age. What matters is refocusing its efforts to insure the health, well-being, and economic prosperity of communities and citizens.

Parks and Recreation’s Fit in Public Health

Increasingly, governmental agencies and professionals in the public health realm are realizing that parks and recreation agencies can be key public health providers, as in most communities these agencies own and manage the majority of the public built and natural environment, and provide most of the recreation programs and facilities.

Benefits of Partnerships for Recreation and Parks

Municipal parks and recreation structures and delivery systems have changed, and more alternative methods of delivering services are emerging. Certain services are being contracted out and cooperative agreements with non-profit groups and other public institutions are being developed. Newer partners include the health system, social services, justice system, education, the corporate sector, and community service agencies. These partnerships reflect both a broader interpretation of the mandate of parks and recreation agencies and the increased willingness of other sectors to work together to address community issues. The relationship with health agencies is vital in promoting wellness.

The traditional relationship with education and the sharing of facilities through joint-use agreements is evolving into cooperative planning and programming aimed at addressing youth inactivity levels and community needs.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) – Compliance

On September 14, 2010 the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) issued an amended regulation implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA 2010 Standards)³⁹. On March 15, 2011 the amended Act became effective and, for the first time in history, includes recreation environment design requirements. Covered entities, including all municipal governments were to be compliant with design and construction requirements and the development of three-year transition plan by March 15, 2012. Implementation of the three-year transition plan must be complete by March 15, 2015.



³⁹ U.S. Department of Justice, Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA Home Page, <http://www.ada.gov/>, accessed on November 15, 2012.

Marketing by Parks and Recreation Providers

Niche marketing trends have experienced change more frequently than ever before as technology affects the way the public receives information. Web 2.0 tools and now Web 3.0 tools are a trend for agencies to use as a means of marketing programs and services. Popular social marketing electronic tools include:

- Facebook
- Whirl
- Twitter
- You Tube
- Tagged
- LinkedIn

Mobile marketing is a current trend. Young adults engage in mobile data applications at much higher rates than adults in age brackets 30 and older. Usage rates of mobile applications demonstrate chronologically across four major age cohorts, that millennials tend to get information more frequently using mobile devices such as smart phones. For example, 95 percent of 18-to-29-year-old cell phone owners send and receive text messages, compared to 82 percent of 30-to-49-year-olds, 57 percent of 50-to-64-year-olds, and 19 percent of 65 and older.

It is also a fact that minority Americans lead the way when it comes to mobile internet access. Nearly two-thirds of African-Americans (64%) and Latinos (63%) are wireless internet users, and minority Americans are significantly more likely to own a cell phone than are their white counterparts (87 percent of Blacks and Hispanics own a cell phone, compared with 80 percent of whites).⁴⁰ By 2015, mobile internet penetration is forecast to grow to 71.1% for Hispanics compared to 58.8% for whites.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Aaron Smith, "Mobile Access 2010", Pew Internet and American Life Project, Pew Research Center, July 7, 2010, <http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2010/Mobile-Access-2010/Summary-of-Findings.aspx>, Accessed on November 15, 2012.

⁴¹ Erik Sass, "Minority Groups Heaviest Users of Mobile Net", Media Daily News, Nov. 18, 2011, <http://www.mediapost.com/publications/article/162699/minority-groups-heaviest-users-of-mobile-net.html#axzz2CK9zYGFw>, Accessed on November 15, 2012.

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Appendix C: Community and Stakeholder Engagement

The community engagement process was comprehensive to both gather information and engage over citizens, staff, partners, and other key stakeholders. Participants were presented information and encouraged to provide their perspectives and insights.

Opportunities in April and May, 2013 included:

- Community and area focus groups/stakeholder meetings
- Town staff/Council/Board and Committee meetings
- POST Committee meetings
- Public Open House
- Participation in an online **MindMixer** community engagement site at www.BackyardBasalt.com

In June 2013, Findings Presentations and a Visioning Session were held to review the validity of initial findings and to hear opinions, suggestions, and input from residents, POST Committee members, and staff for potential recommendations and strategies and key priorities for the future.

In July 2013, the Draft Plan will be presented for review by staff, the POST Committee, Town Council, key stakeholders, and the public. A public presentation will be made, and comments and suggestions will be considered and incorporated as appropriate. In August, the plan will be presented for final adoption.

Focus Groups/Stakeholder Meetings

Two stakeholder groups were facilitated on April 29 and 30, 2013 soliciting interests in *Parks, Recreation and Athletics* and *Conservation, Open Space, and Trails*. Individual residents as well as representatives of thirteen organizations, associations and governmental agencies (see sidebar), participated in the discussions.

An overarching theme of interest in **Connectivity** quickly became very apparent: connecting with each other in gathering spaces, connecting north to south and east to west, connecting Town to the river, connecting one park to another, connecting residents to public lands outside the Town boundaries, and connecting to the heritage of the area.

Participants also agreed on values held for parks, open space, trails and recreation in the Basalt area:

ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED IN FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

- Aspen/Snowmass Nordic Council
- Basalt Planning, Recreation, Horticulture, Public Works and Park Maintenance
- Basalt Parks, Open Space, and Trails (POST) Advisory Committee
- Challenge Aspen
- Colorado Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPW)
- Colorado Wildlife Science, LLC
- Crown Mountain Park and Recreation District
- Eagle County Open Space Department
- Mid Valley Trails Committee (MVTC)
- Pitkin County Open Space Department
- Roaring Fork Conservancy (RFC)
- Roaring Fork Mountain Bike Association (RFMBA)
- Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers (RFOV)
- Roaring Fork School District
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management

- Small town character
- Family oriented, serving all ages
- Open space preservation, wildlife protection
- Pedestrian and bicycle friendly
- Accessible to people with disabilities
- Economically, environmentally and socially sustainable
- Diversity of park services and amenities for both active and passive use
- Unique resources to be proud of and share
- Rich history including historic main street, ranches, mountains, rivers
- Welcoming to visitors: gateway to the Frying Pan River Valley
- Easy to find and navigate
- Our rivers are highly valued amenities to enjoy responsibly – with especially strong connection to Old Town Basalt.

Suggestions (as detailed on the following pages) were made for improvements to existing parks, for new amenities, bike/pedestrian connections, maintenance funding and marketing.

Improvements to Existing Parks

- Shelters at park gathering places: protection for inclement weather, shade, benches.
- Lions Park and Midland core: gathering space; update, remove, or replace Town buildings; provide a sense of place; finish stage; add seating areas.
- Smaller, passive parks: make a vital part of town.
- Park at confluence of Frying Pan and Roaring Fork Rivers; family and dog friendly space, access to rivers.
- Under-utilized parks; repurpose for uses (e.g. “soccer” park no longer used for soccer).
- Skatepark: repaint or enlarge/redesign/relocate for more diverse age group.
- Arbaney Park: update, more user friendly, connect to the historic kilns with interpretation and access.
- Outdoor swimming pool: update.
- School District: strengthen partnership, make school recreational amenities more available outside of school use.
- Management: dogs running freely (scaring young children) at certain times of day and clean up.

New Amenities

- More places for kids to go to have fun, stay out of trouble, be safe.
- River accessibility to both Old Town and Willits areas.
- Arts and culture: spontaneous temporary art wall for graffiti artist expressions; art in the gardens, starting with a flagship art piece in town center; central gathering place for concerts, open art, art on objects such as utility boxes with the cooperation of the utility provider.
- BMX park (already in the works).
- Kayak/wave park.
- Arboretum, and promoting local foodshed/seed stock resources and tourism.
- Pan and Fork Park on the river.
- Implementation of “Two Rivers Greenway Master Plan.”
- Recreational accessibility: amenities for good adaptive sports for various types of disabilities; market for Basalt’s individuals, and families of individuals, with disabilities.

Trail and Sidewalk Connections

- Values enumerated: more trails and trail heads, ability to get to public lands from front door, partnering, consistency of access/rules of use along the same trail (e.g. regarding dogs, horses, mountain bikes) accessible to all ability levels, river access, sensitivity to wildlife and resource issues and travel corridors, planning for future allowing to take advantage of opportunity, conserving trail options, education of public to prevent human incursions into closed areas.
- East to west, both sides of the highway: better connectivity; improved safety.
- Unique/artistic pedestrian bridge in Old Town: overpass access for pedestrians and bicyclists to the river.
- Regional plan for trails with partners: numerous specific trail heads and areas for future trails were mentioned; trail connections from the town to bordering public lands.
- Trail heads for mountain biking purposes; more mountain biking and hiking amenities.
- Old Town; improve walkability.
- River corridor trails.

Maintenance Funding

- Basalt voters approved a 1% sales tax for capital improvements only, it does not include funding for park maintenance. That comes out of the Town's general funds. Participants expressed support for a referendum amending the fund to include a specific percentage to go towards maintenance. Participants stated that maintenance of the amenities we have is very important and there must be adequate funding for maintenance of existing and future park and trail amenities.
- Possible ways to fund maintenance include: charging to reserve picnic areas (but others raised concerns with insufficient staffing to handle this administratively); increasing marketing to attract visitors/tourists to Basalt, including those traveling on the Rio Grande Trail.
- Maintenance of trails on public lands: concern about maintenance funding by public land entities; offering of volunteer maintenance by user groups.

Marketing

- Our resources: unique position as Gateway to the Frying Pan River Valley.
- River boating: (kayaking, ducky, rafting) users, encouraging them to not just access the rivers, but explore the town.
- Wayfinding: from roads and trails; add information kiosks at important junctures.
- National events: fly fishing tournament coming in October, take advantage of opportunity to market all Basalt has to offer.

Master Plan Open Houses

An Open House was held on the evening of April 30, drawing a crowd of over 40 participants of all ages and including students from Basalt High School and representatives of Mountain Bike Review (MTBR), Roaring Fork Mountain Bike Association, and Wilderness Workshop.

A short presentation provided an orientation to the project and invited participants to comment by making notes on the many maps and plans provided around the room. In addition, a "wish list" thoughtfully put together by the POST Committee over the last year for site specific improvements was also available for comment. Specific suggestions, concerns, and ideas were made on the following sites,

plans, and maps, and were used in the development of recommendations for future improvements. A second Open House, attended by approximately 30 participants, allowed a presentation of key findings and the opportunity for the public to help envision the future by providing input to inform solutions to address key findings.

Sites

Arbaney Park
Confluence Park
Lions Park
Open Space around East Basalt
Open Space around West Basalt (Basalt and Eagle County)
Rio Grande rest stop
Willits Linear Park
Willets Soccer Park

Plans

Lions Park/Basalt Outdoor Theater Plan
Midland Park Master Plan
Pan and Fork River Park Conceptual Site Plan
Triangle Park Site Plan
Two Rivers Greenway Master Plan

Maps

Basalt POST Master Plan – Park Inventory Map
2007 Basalt Master Plan/East Basalt Trails
2007 Basalt Master Plan/West Basalt Trails Plan
Basalt Trails and Recreation Map/East Basalt and Downtown (2013)
Basalt Trails and Recreation Map/West Basalt and Willits (2013)



The participants also had the opportunity to comment regarding the vision and priority for the parks, open space, and trails system by answering questions and completing the following statements:

My **vision** for the future of parks and recreation in the Town of Basalt is...

- “Please consider the impact recreation on open space and nearby public lands will have on wildlife habitat”
- “A park/bridge connection to south side.”
- “Fishing and riparian park along ‘retired’ Two Rivers Rd. section to Hwy 82.”
- “Diversity of uses with simple landscaping that can be maintained affordably.”
- “Programming with entertainment that engages community with parks (concerts, movie screenings, ice skating, etc.)”
- “Coordinate Town of Basalt programs with Crown Mtn. Park’s programs.”

My **top priority** for the Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan is...

- “Better connectivity to downtown with easy access and signage for visitors and new community members.”
- “Improve the existing parks first!”
- “Multi-modal connections: bike share, transit, recreation, etc.”
- “Parks – improve what we have...could be a long time ‘til we have \$\$ to accomplish/create new parks (Midland, Old Pond)”
- “Ice skating, hockey in Old Town Basalt”
- “Better connectivity: mountain biking, commuting on Rio Grande, bike share”
- “Connections to existing and future trails valley-wide”
- “Ensure ecological values are considered and protected.”

Open Space Comments Page

Question: Should Basalt ever consider using Town resources to protect land outside the town boundary? If so, what parcel comes to mind?

“Yes, especially along the Frying Pan.”; “Agreed!”

“Yes to secure easements to other trails and lands.”

“Consider future shuttle bus if Senior Center is built, High School and activities—all could use this.”

“Yes! Key entrances to Basalt from Hwy 82 and Frying Pan Road.”

Parks Comment Page

Question: What specific park improvements would you suggest?

“Better skateboard park”

“Arbaney Park needs updated playground equipment and surfacing. Equipment is breaking and not being replaced.”; “Yes!!”

Recreation Comments Page

Question: What programmed sport amenities are missing from Basalt parks?

“Rock climbing gym and mountain biking.”

“Climbing gym Yes!” “Yes!” and “Double Yes!”

Comment: There is no space for me to do _____ recreational activity in Basalt.

“Hockey”

“Mountain biking”

“Dance pavilion”; “Dances on the weekend.”

“Hike right out of the town onto public land.”

“Indoor Rock Climbing”; “Yes!”

“Baseball, softball, soccer complex!”

“Climbing wall.”

Trails Comment Page

Question: What is the most essential missing pedestrian/bicycle link in Basalt?

“Connections to Basalt Mountain”

“Mountain bike trails from town to Basalt Mountain and Prince Creek Crown trail system”

“Connect downtown to Rio Grande Trail in more obvious and inviting manner.”

“Mountain bike connections to Basalt Mountain and the Crown”

“Crown and Basalt Mountain single track connections”

“Create connection to Basalt Mountain from Basalt via Lake Christine and CDOW”

“Create a semi-direct connection from Basalt to the Crown via Rio Grande Trail.”

Comment: Please improve the trail system by...

“Adding mountain bike connectivity to other land assets”

“Something along West Two Rivers Rd. for biking/jogging/walking.”

“A bike path up the Frying Pan and improving the connection between Holland Hills and East Two Rivers Road.”

“Develop Frying Pan/Stage Road to connect with Overlook Trail.”

“Mountain bike trail on Old Stage Road to Ruedi Upper Frying Pan.”

MindMixer Online Community Engagement

This project included creating an online community engagement site at www.BackyardBasalt.com. This tool was designed to enhance community involvement, and obtain additional feedback from people who may not necessarily attend meetings. Community members were asked to respond to questions and submit ideas and photos regarding parks, open space, trails and recreation services in the Town. **Twenty-eight (28)** individuals participated in the initial web-based community dialogue that has been up and running since the last week of April.



The majority of participants are women, and the average age is 45. Quite a bit of traffic has been generated on the site with **nearly 2000** page views through May 30, 2013. **Eighteen (18)** total ideas were discussed. Additional dialogue and comment is expected as the recommendations are formulated and made available to the public.



BACKYARD BASALT



www.BackyardBasalt.com

So what was all the on line talk about?

Topic: Park Perfection. If you could make one improvement to Basalt parks, what would it be?

Improve play equipment; improve gathering places; create separate space for people and dogs; gracious, modern indoor/outdoor pool; better maintenance, more equipment; programming & entertainment; a river walk all the way from the upper Bypass bridge to Willits

Topic: From Here to There. Where is the single most crucial trail link needed in the Town of Basalt?

Connect to southside via pedestrian bridge OVER 82; I wouldn't say trail linkage is a problem; we need "front door" access to offroad/singletrack trails; the crown – red ridge ranch; across the highway.

Topic: All Suited Up and No Place to Go. What recreational activities are missing from our parks?

Give us a bit more information, what's there now?; none, let's focus on what we already have; focus on the desired brand or identity of Basalt; Frisbee golf; water play features.

Topic: Put Basalt on the Map. What is Basalt's greatest outdoor attraction?

Rivers; fishing; biking, both mountain and road; Basalt market; soccer/playing areas like Crown Mtn Park.

Topic: Outer Space. Should Basalt ever consider using Town resources to protect land outside the town boundary?

Yes is the dominant response.

Topic: Room to Breathe. How do you feel about the amount of land dedicated to parks in Basalt? "Lacking park space" is running slightly ahead of "sufficient park space."

Topic Best: Investment. Of the following, which are most important and why?

- "Spend more money maintaining existing parks" and "upgrade existing facilities" are tied for first place followed by "build more river parks," with "build more trails" and "get pedestrians and bikers safely across Highway 82" running slightly behind.

MindMixer Instant Poll Results

How satisfied are you overall with the existing parks, recreation programs, open spaces, and trails in our system?

16% Very Satisfied

61% Satisfied

6% Neutral

5% Unsatisfied