



**Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan
Recreation and Park District**

Recreation, Trails and Parks Master Plan

AUGUST 2012

Acknowledgements

We want to specially recognize and thank the residents of Eastern Rio Blanco County for their ongoing support and for helping shape this Master Plan through their input at public meetings, focus groups, and the survey.

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I. Executive Summary

A. Introduction

Eastern Rio Blanco County abounds with natural beauty and recreation opportunities on public lands. In addition to many outdoor recreation options, residents are fortunate to have a wide array of parks and recreation facilities and services provided by the Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Park District. Residents place a high value on outdoor recreation as well as parks, recreation facilities, and programs. They recognize the importance of these services as an enhancement to the quality of life of the community. These services not only attract residents but also visitors from nearby towns and tourists.

B. Purpose of the Plan

This ***Recreation, Parks and Trails Master Plan*** provides a roadmap for the development of the parks, recreation, and trail system in Eastern Rio Blanco County for the next 5-10 years. The Plan includes decision-making tools to guide the Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Park District staff and leaders in making wise capital and operating investment decisions for the parks, recreation, and trails system, now and into the future. It also provides strategies for operations of the District and implementation of the plan, while being responsive to evolving community demographics, trends, needs, and interests.

*“The Recreation Center is one of the best things that has happened to Meeker”
-public meeting participant*

C. Overview of Master Plan

This master planning process began in November 2011 and has been shaped by the input of community members and District staff and Board members.

This Master Plan consists of six chapters.

- I. Executive Summary
- II. The Planning Context
- III. Our Community and Identified Needs
- IV. What We Have Now – Programs and Inventory
- V. How We Manage – Operations and Oversight
- VI. Recommendations and Implementation Plan

D. Community Input

A community needs assessment was undertaken to gain valuable insights to the needs and desires of the community. The public input process included:

- Four community focus group meetings
- One staff focus group
- Three public meetings (at different phases of the project)
- Statistically-valid survey

The parks and recreation services provided by the District have a positive impact on the social, environmental, and economic health of the community. As the District's facilities and services expand, so does its profile in the community and its responsibility to communicate its services, priorities, and future direction. The recommendations in this Master Plan are shaped by extensive input from public and will help guide the District in continuing to provide quality facilities and services.

E. Programs and Inventory

Programs

The District offers many recreation programs for all ages at the Meeker Recreation Center (MRC) and park sites. Programs are offered in a variety of categories including Active Adults 50+, Adults, Aquatics, Family/Community, Fitness, and Youth and Teens. The Master Plan Survey results showed the highest support for expanding and improving special events, fitness and wellness programs, and swimming programs. Key recreation program findings from the master planning process are summarized below.

Recreation Programs – There is a desire to continue and expand popular offerings such as special events, fitness classes, and swimming classes. Youth sport and non-sport programs will continue to be central to recreation offerings, based on current participation and public demand. There is also an interest in expanded family programs. Environmental/nature education is a new program area where the survey response indicated interest. River recreation was also identified by stakeholder input as an opportunity to develop.

Current Indoor Public Recreation Spaces – Strategic use of the Meeker Recreation Center (MRC) and other public buildings (including schools), through creative programming and partnerships, is needed to maximize these public resources. Many survey write-in comments expressed an interest in more programming during times convenient to working adults as well as longer weekend hours at the MRC. Public input also indicated support for expansion of the MRC and partnerships with schools. While expansion has merits, these projects need to be balanced with the community sentiment to maintain and improve current parks and recreation facilities.

Inventory and Level of Service

Serving a population of close to 4,000 residents, the District provides a wide variety of parks and recreation services and facilities. The Meeker Recreation Center offers a state-of-the-art facility and is widely-used by the community. In addition, the District offers some recreation programs at other facilities, mainly school sites. After recently taking over the management of the six parks owned by the Town of Meeker, the District's responsibilities have grown dramatically. Furthermore, two new parks – Sanderson Hills and Phillip and Dorcas Jensen Memorial Park – will contribute additional active and passive recreational opportunities.

Overall, many of the current Town-owned parks are in need of upgrades as well some of the school recreation facilities. The tennis courts at Sage Hills Park and Barone Middle School are not usable and are in poor condition. Although there are a few "social" trails around the Recreation Center and High School and new trails at Phillip and Dorcas Jensen Memorial Park, Meeker does not have a connected trail system for users.

F. Administration and Operations

District responsibilities and services have grown rapidly in the last several years and require continued diligence in efficiently and effectively managing the District's resources. Following is a summary of findings that helped shaped the Management recommendations of the Master Plan.

Customer Service and Work Ethic – It has been very evident throughout this master planning process that Board and Staff hold the residents of the District in high regard and that the customer's (taxpayer's) experience is a driving force for service excellence. This is apparent through the Board's sincere interest in transparency and through the staff's collective approach to making the Meeker Recreation Center a place where "everybody knows your name." Staff exhibits a "get it done" attitude, always showing a willingness to jump in when something needs to get done. It is also evident that residents appreciate this aspect of the operation. Intention for service excellence, efficiency, and effectiveness underlies all recommendations of this plan.

Growth of the District Operation – With the opening of the MRC, the added responsibility of six Town park sites in January 2012, along with transition in staff leadership, the Board and Staff have found focused attention on further developing appropriate policies and procedures. One example is efforts to establish clear partnership policies and guidelines. Much good work has been accomplished in that regard, yet there is a great deal more to be done. While missing documentation does not necessarily mean missing or inadequate practice, it does make for challenges with training, communications, and consistency.

Creating and Maintaining a High Level of Service – The District is in a strong financial position to support the current service level. However, increased operations and capital costs with recently added parkland and improvements may burden the existing financial structure over time if long-term organizational sustainability strategies are not put into place. Understanding and communicating the value/cost to operate and maintain the District's assets and services is also key, so if in the future the availability of funding necessary to continue this high standard diminishes, transparent choices can be discussed and alternatives sought.

Budgeting and Tracking of Costs and Revenues – Best practices call for the use of management tools that require and allow everyone to be accountable for the cost of doing business and aligning revenue sources to activities in appropriate and reasonable ways. This requires an approach to budgeting that starts at a zero base and uses metrics including cost recovery targets based on the type of program or service offered.

Leveraging the District's Resources – The District has found itself in the position of not always having adequate philosophy, policy, and/or procedure in place to be able to seek or respond to opportunities to leverage its resources, or to otherwise determine when it is appropriate to use the District's resources for certain purposes. Parks and recreation entities are often viewed as "catch all" entities, with a seemingly never ending mission, yet without the resources to support that view. With limited resources, there must be bounds, yet there must also be vision to make the most of the resources.

G. Plan Recommendations

There is a growing trend in the United States in which public leaders recognize that public recreation facilities and related “quality of life” amenities are not secondary services provided by governmental agencies, but are in fact integral to creating communities where people want to live and visit. These services should be seen as **investments** in the long-term vitality and economic sustainability of any vibrant and attractive community. The Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Park District recognizes these factors and seeks to continue making improvements to its park and recreation system and enhancing the community for years to come.

This **Recreation, Parks and Trails Master Plan** provides guidance to meet existing and future community needs. The strength of this plan stems from extensive research, community involvement, needs assessment, identification of key issues and findings, and a public review that forms the basis for the recommendations.

The Master Plan **Goals and Objectives** are summarized below. There are a total of eight recommended goals and 21 objectives in four categories:

- Parks and Trails
- Recreation Programs
- Communications and Community Engagement
- Management

Detailed actions steps for each of the objectives and an implementation plan that identifies responsibility, financial impact, and timing are found in **Chapter VI**.

Over the next 5-10 years, many influences will have an impact on the success of this plan. Funding availability, staff buy-in, and political and community support will play significant roles in the implementation process.

Parks and Trails

GOAL 1: Provide a quality, well-maintained park system.

Objectives:

- 1.1. Prepare new site master plans for key parks.
- 1.2. Plan for and implement improvements to existing parks. (Specific suggested improvements for each park are identified in **Chapter VI**.)
- 1.3. Complete new park construction of Sanderson Hills Park and Phillip and Dorcas Jensen Memorial Park.
- 1.4. Consider strategic partnerships with School District for mutually beneficial outdoor recreation facility upgrades.

GOAL 2: Promote walking/biking opportunities and trail connectivity within the District.

Objectives:

- 2.2. Utilize the Trails Recommendation Map to help guide collaborative planning efforts for a connected trail loop through Meeker. (See **Appendix G** for Trails Recommendations Map.)
- 2.3. Look for opportunities to add loop walks to parks, when appropriate.

Recreation Programs

GOAL 3: Strategically provide recreation programs and services in response to community interests.

Objectives:

- 3.1. Tailor program offerings in line with needs assessment and demand.
- 3.2. Fully utilize existing public spaces to serve community indoor recreation needs.
- 3.3. Explore opportunities to add indoor recreation spaces to meet community demand.

Communication and Community Engagement

GOAL 4: Raise awareness of District services through proactive communication and community engagement efforts.

Objectives:

- 4.1. Enhance marketing efforts through the development of a marketing plan. (Elements to include in the marketing plan include the following.)
- 4.2. Generate annual reports.
- 4.3. Develop and implement a park signage program.
- 4.4. Engage community residents and stakeholders in District planning efforts.

Management

GOAL 5: Incorporate best management and planning practices to ensure quality services and efficient use of resources.

Objectives:

- 5.1. Continue to incorporate the new 2010 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and guidelines in parks and recreation facilities.
- 5.2. Centrally maintain updated records of District owned and managed land, park, and facility inventory, along with planning documents to facilitate the ongoing management of District resources.
- 5.3. Fully utilize business practices to enhance operations.
- 5.4. Provide park facilities and services that promote environmentally sensitive design principles and practices.

GOAL 6: Increase District transparency and effectiveness.

Objectives:

- 6.1. Formalize efforts to develop the Board and improve and enhance Board/Staff relationship.
- 6.2. Prioritize staff orientation and training.

GOAL 7: Ensure that adopted District Policy and Procedure is driving operations.

Objectives:

- 7.1. Ensure that policy and procedure is easily accessible.
- 7.2. Develop and/or document District policy and procedures.

GOAL 8: Maximize opportunities to leverage District resources.

Objectives:

- 8.1. Enhance financial management tools to effectively track and manage costs to deliver services.
- 8.2. Expand partnerships to encourage joint development of facilities and programs.
- 8.3. Increase the use of alternative funding through sponsorships, volunteers, grants, and donations.
- 8.4. Expand revenue generation opportunities as appropriate at parks and facilities (e.g., rentals, concessions, etc.).

II. The Planning Context

A. Purpose of the Master Plan

The ***Recreation, Parks and Trails Master Plan*** provides a roadmap to the development of the parks, recreation, and trail system in Eastern Rio Blanco County for the next 5-10 years. The Plan includes decision-making tools to guide the Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Park District staff and leaders in making wise capital and operating investment decisions for the system, now and into the future. It also provides strategies for operations of the District and implementation of the plan, while being responsive to evolving community demographics, trends, needs, and interests.

B. Background

In January 2005, the Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Park District (District) completed a *Recreation Master Plan and Development Plan for a Family Recreational Facility*. Since that time, the Meeker Recreation Center (MRC) was opened in January 2008. The center functions as a community attraction with residents and visitors of all ages enjoying the many recreational offerings. The District took on additional responsibilities in January 2012 with a long-term lease to manage six Town of Meeker parks. With the opening of the MRC and the Town parks, the programs and services of the District have grown exponentially. This Master Plan will position the District to continue providing quality services by proactively planning for the current and future parks and recreation needs of the community.

C. Regional Context

The residents of Eastern Rio Blanco are surrounded by outdoor recreation opportunities. Public lands include the northwestern part of the White River National Forest, the Flat Tops Wilderness Area (Colorado's second largest wilderness area), and Bureau of Land Management. The White River runs through Rio Blanco County and offers an abundance of fishing, rafting, and wildlife viewing opportunities.

D. District Overview

The Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Park District was founded in 1981. The District is governed by a five-member Board of Directors who serve rotating four year terms. The District serves the residents of Meeker, Colorado, and Eastern Rio Blanco County by providing year-round recreational and leisure opportunities for children, youth, and adults.

E. Vision, Mission, and Values

The District is guided by the following vision, mission, and core values which provide a foundation for this Master Plan.

Vision

Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation & Park District is the leader in providing healthy lifestyles and a livable community.

Mission

To create opportunities for recreational, cultural and park activities for the residents of and visitors to Eastern Rio Blanco County.

Core Values

*Excellence
Leadership
Accountability
Fun/Sense of humor
People
Dedication
Accessibility*

F. Methodology and Timeline of Planning Process

This project has been guided by the District Executive Director, Board, and key staff, as well as by a public input process. The District's project team met with the GreenPlay consultant team and provided input throughout the planning process. This collaborative effort fully utilizes the consultant's expertise and incorporates local knowledge and institutional history. The project consisted of the following phases and tasks.

PHASE I: INFORMATION GATHERING

November 2011-March 2012

Community & Stakeholder Input Process

1. Conducted public meeting and focus groups
2. Held staff focus groups and interviews
3. Met with District Board
4. Received guidance from staff project team

Statistically-Valid Survey

1. Conducted survey of District residents
2. Provided additional open web-based survey

Inventory and Assessment of Existing Facilities

1. Conducted inventory and analysis of parks, open space, trails, and facilities
2. Generated concept plans for Town Park and potential addition to the Meeker Recreation Center

Organizational and Service Assessment

1. Assessed current service delivery to determine alignment with the desires of citizens as expressed through the public process
2. Met with District Board, staff, and public

Demographic and Trends Analysis

1. Analyzed Town demographics and population projections
2. Identified parks and recreation-related trends

PHASE II: FINDINGS & VISIONING**April-May 2012**

1. Presented key findings to staff, public, and District Board
2. Validated findings
3. Identified focus areas for recommendations

PHASE III: PLAN DEVELOPMENT & REVIEW**June-August 2012**

1. Developed Draft Master Plan
2. Worked with staff to refine plan elements
3. Draft Plan presentations and review by staff, District Board, and public

PLAN ADOPTION**September 2012**

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III. Our Community and Identified Needs

The Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Park District serves a population of close to 4,000 people, many of them long-time residents and some of them more transient, working in the oil and gas industry. This chapter of the **Recreation, Parks and Trails Master Plan** first highlights the public input process for the plan, including the statistically-valid survey. Then, a demographic overview of Eastern Rio Blanco County is provided. Next, parks and recreation trends impacting the Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Park District are summarized. The chapter concludes with a summary of key findings.

A. Community and Stakeholder Input

For this plan, it was important to gain community input about the current state and the future of parks and recreation in the District. The process that was undertaken to gain valuable insight to the needs and desires of the community included:

- Four community focus group/stakeholder meetings
- One staff focus group
- One public meeting
- Statistically-valid survey

"The Recreation Center is one of the best things that has happened to Meeker"
-public meeting participant

The community focus groups had a total of 41 participants, and the public meeting had an additional 14 participants. (The notes from these meetings are found in **Appendix A.**)

The following is an overview of the community opinions with regard to strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for District parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services.

Community Input

Focus group and public meeting participants were asked a variety of questions regarding the District's parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services. Responses to questions about current strengths, and issues/needs/problems, and opportunities that the District can address are in the boxes that follow.



Strengths

- Meeker Recreation Center
- Variety of quality programs for all ages
- Quality and responsive staff
- Partnerships
- Community building activities and special events
- Financial resources
- Parks
- Community health and economic benefits

Issues/Needs/Problems

- Demand for more indoor recreation spaces at peak hours
- Desire for enhanced transparency and communication
- Lack of trail system
- Parks need upgrades
- Unusable tennis courts
- Lack of adequate performing arts spaces

Opportunities for Improvements

- Facilitate partnerships and coordination between government agencies
- Expand trail system
- Expand indoor recreation spaces (e.g., Meeker Recreation Center)
- Enhance outdoor recreation opportunities, including water recreation
- Improve parks
- Add more drop-in activities
- Expand recreation offerings for teens, adults, and families
- Strengthen communication and enhance awareness of services

Residents were very appreciative of the recreation services provided by the District and felt they contributed to the quality of life in the community. They identified the following values of parks and recreation in the community:

- Promoting healthy lifestyles
- Building community
- Enhancing the local economy through jobs and increased property values

B. Statistically-Valid Survey

The purpose of the statistically-valid survey was to gather public feedback on parks, recreation, open space and trails, programs, and services provided by the Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Parks District in order to assist in the creation of this ***Recreation, Parks and Trails Master Plan***. Emphasis was put on providing critical information on satisfaction levels, needs, and priorities for District planning efforts.

The sample size for the random survey was 230, resulting in a response rate of 14.4 percent (of the estimated 1,594 households in the District that were mailed the survey). A majority of respondents live in Meeker (69%), while the remaining respondents live outside of Meeker in Eastern Rio Blanco County.

Following are some highlights from the survey results. Additional survey results are incorporated in relevant chapters of this Master Plan. The full Master Plan Survey Report is found in ***Appendix B***.

Reasons for not using District Parks, Facilities, Open Space, Trails, and Programs

Respondents that do not use District parks and recreation facilities and programs were asked why not. The most prominent reasons for not using ERBMRP District parks, facilities, open space, trails, and programs were:

- No time/other personal issues (44%)
- Price/user fees (26%)
- Don't have the programs I want (16%)
- Hours of operation (14%)

Future OUTDOOR Facilities to Add, Expand, or Improve

General Importance

Respondents were asked to indicate the importance for additions, expansions, or improvements to outdoor facilities in the next 5 or 10 years. The outdoor facilities given the highest importance ratings included:

- Playgrounds (62% rated this a 4 or 5, or “Very important”)
- Permanent restrooms (62%)
- Additional trails (59%)
- Community gathering spaces/outdoor event facility/amphitheater (56%)
- Picnic areas (53%)

Highest priority for Outdoor Facilities and Amenities to be Added, Expanded, or Improved

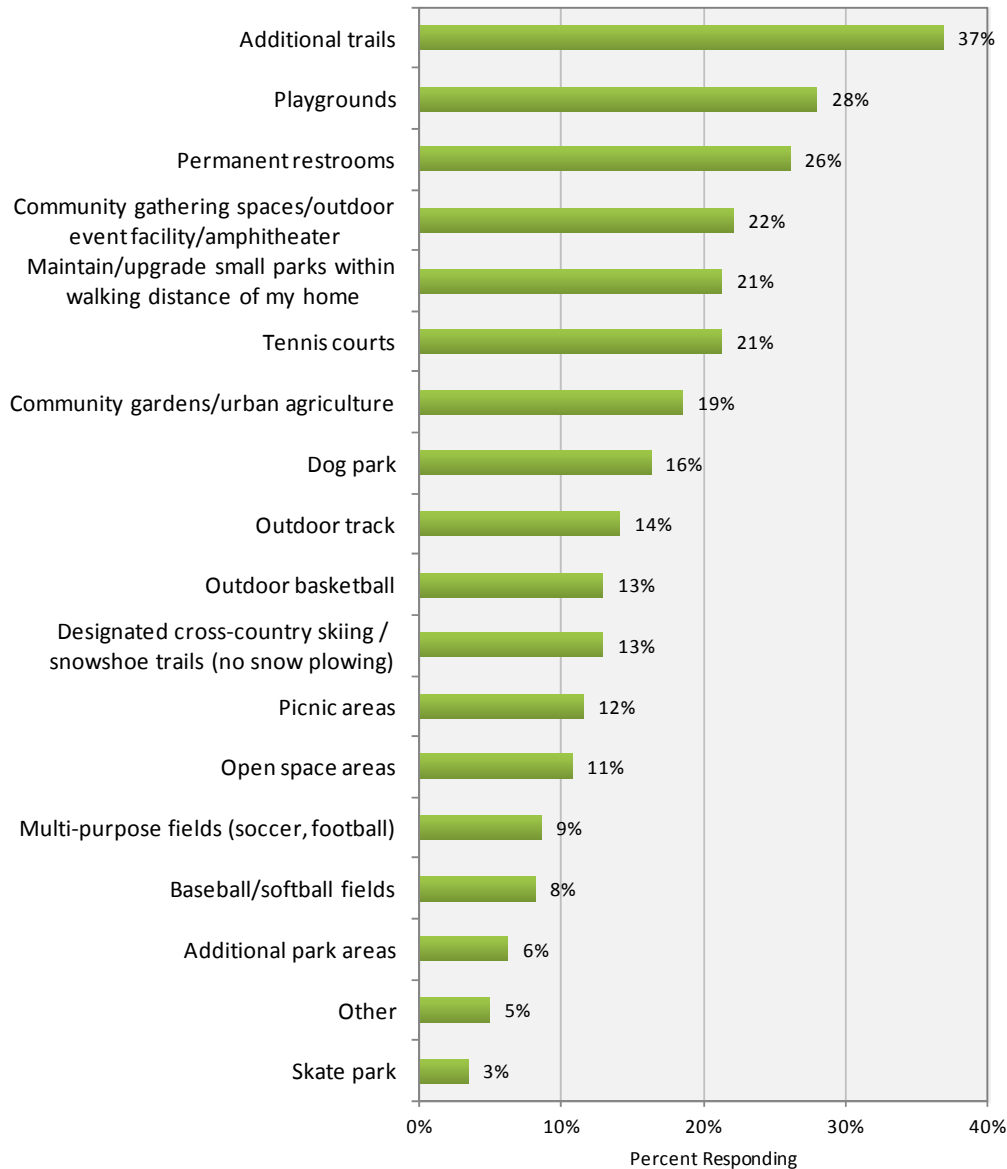
From the same list of outdoor facilities, respondents were asked to rate their top three priorities for additions, expansions, and improvements. The highest rated priorities included:

- Additional trails (37%)
- Playgrounds (28%)
- Permanent restrooms (26%)



Figure 1 shows the relative rankings.

Figure 1: Three Most Important Outdoor Facilities for Additions, Expansions, and Improvements



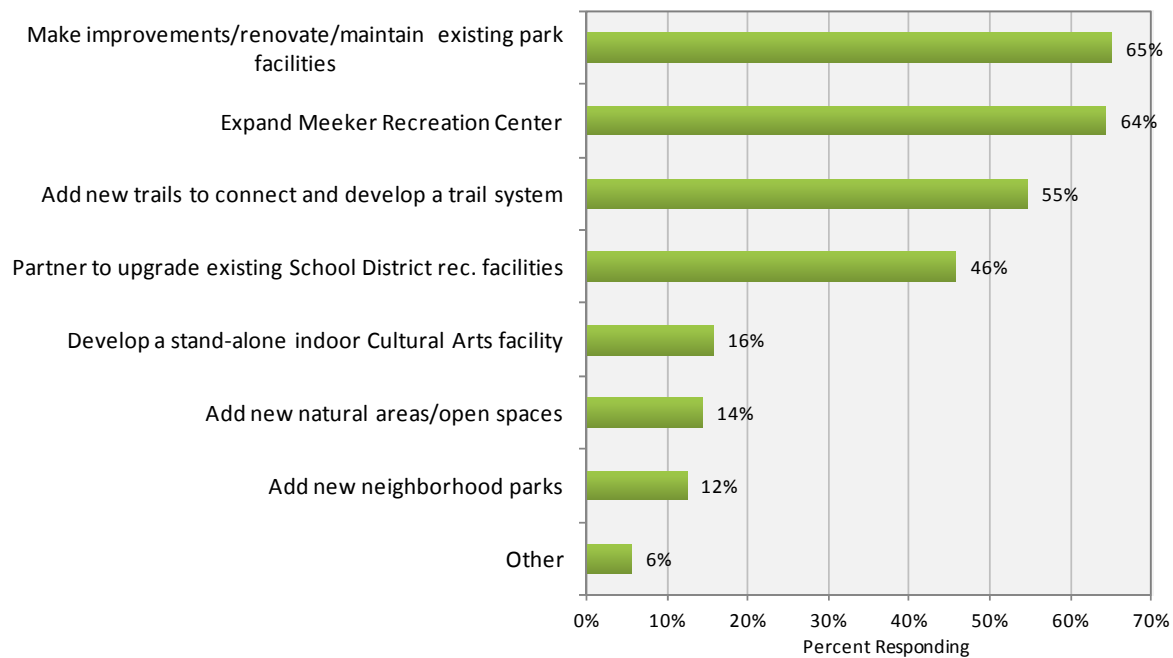
Future Funding Allocation

Respondents were then asked where future funding should be spent.

The highest ratings for where future funding should be spent included:

- Make improvements and/or renovate and maintain existing park facilities (65% of respondents selected this in their top three priorities)
- Expand Meeker Recreation Center (e.g., fitness space, gymnastics, class/meeting rooms, outdoor patio, etc.) (64%)
- Add new trails to connect and develop a trail system (55%)

Figure 2: Where Future Funding for Improvements Should be Spent



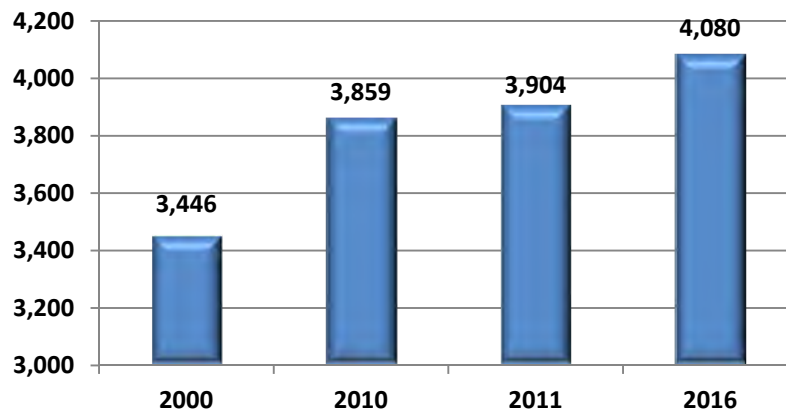
C. Demographic Analysis

An understanding of the demographic profile for the Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Park District helps decision-makers identify trends for future planning. The following demographic information was created using ESRI Business Information Solutions, Inc. based on the District's geographic boundary. This demographic analysis compares the District with the State of Colorado in the following areas – household income, age, race, and education.

Population

According to the U.S. Census, the District's 2010 population was 3,859. This population consisted of 1,594 households (1,102 owner occupied housing units and 492 renter occupied units) with average household size of 2.39.

Table 1: District Population Trend



Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions

Table 2 contains population estimates and percentage change for the District projected by ESRI. The population trend illustrates an increase of 4.5 percent from 2011 to 2016. A one percent annual growth rate has been the general population growth trend.

Table 2: Population projections and percent change- ESRI

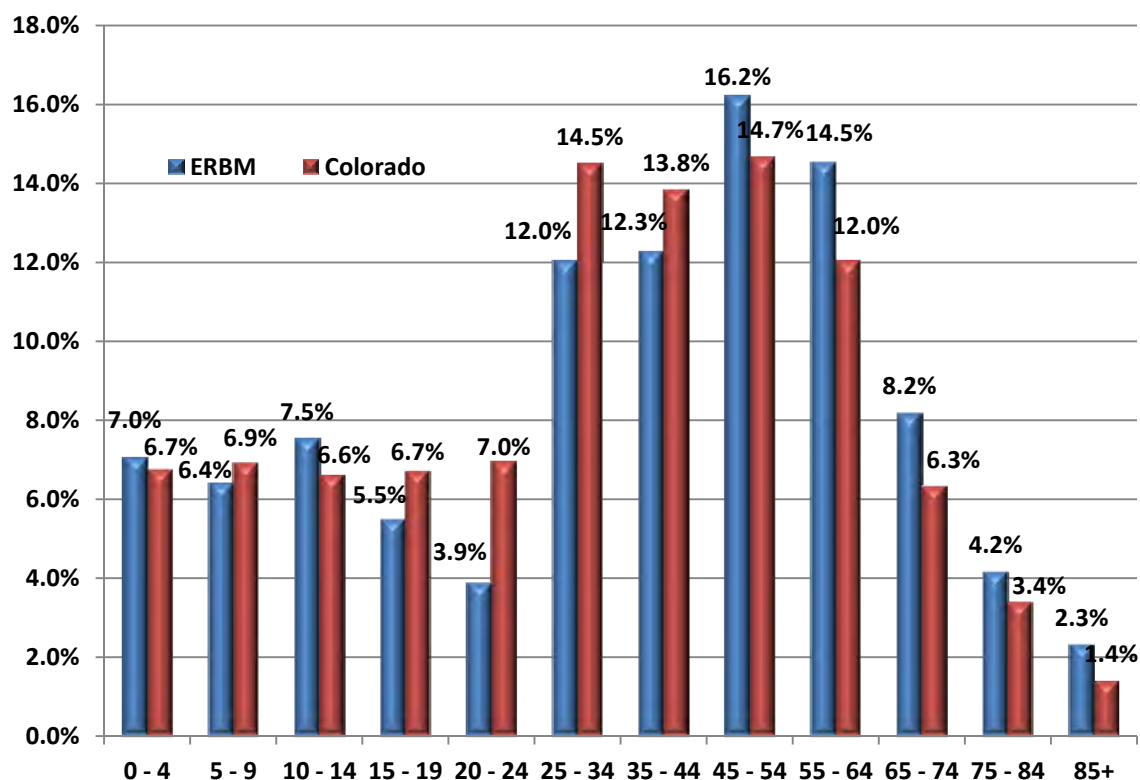
ESRI		Percent Change
2000 Population	3,446	
2010 Population	3,859	12%
2011 Estimated	3,904	1.2%
2016 Projected	4,080	4.5%

Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions

Age Ranges and Family Information

For planning purposes, we have shown how age in the District compares against the State of Colorado as a whole. As shown in **Figure 3** below, when compared to the State, the District has slightly higher percentages of population in the younger age cohorts (0-14) as well as the 45+ age cohort. The median age for the District is 41.1, higher than the State at 36.1. As the community ages, the District will need to design and plan facilities and programs with consideration to the needs and interests of older adults.

Figure 3: 2011 Age Distribution Comparison – District, Colorado



Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions, 2011 projections based on 2010 U.S. Census data

The following age breakdown is used to separate the population into age 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. Many are approaching retirement or already retired and typically enjoying grandchildren.
- 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.

Race

According to ESRI, there is less ethnic diversity in the District when compared to the State. **Table 3** illustrates the percentages of population in each race. White Alone is the highest ranking cohort for both geographic areas. Residents of Hispanic origin make up 10 percent of the District's population. Family-oriented park facilities, such as larger picnic areas with places to play and restrooms for longer stays, are often popular with Hispanic families. The District should continue to provide these opportunities that benefit both residents and visitors.

Table 3: 2011 Race/Ethnicity Comparison –District, Colorado

Race	District	State of Colorado
White Alone	91.9%	81.2%
Black Alone	.3%	4.0%
American Indian Alone	.8%	1.1%
Asian Alone or Pacific Islander Alone	.3%	2.8%
Pacific Islander Alone	.3%	.1%
Some Other Race Alone	4.4%	7.3%
Two or More Races	2.1%	3.4%
Hispanic Origin	10.6%	20.9%

Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions, 2011 projections based on 2010 U.S. Census data

Education

As shown in **Table 4** below, 20.6 percent of the population in the District possess a bachelor's degree or higher as compared to 35.6 percent of residents in the State of Colorado. The highest ranking cohort in the District earned their high school degree (33.2%).

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 Hispanic origin. This often translates to ability to pay for recreation services.

Table 4: 2010 Education Attainment Comparison – District, Colorado

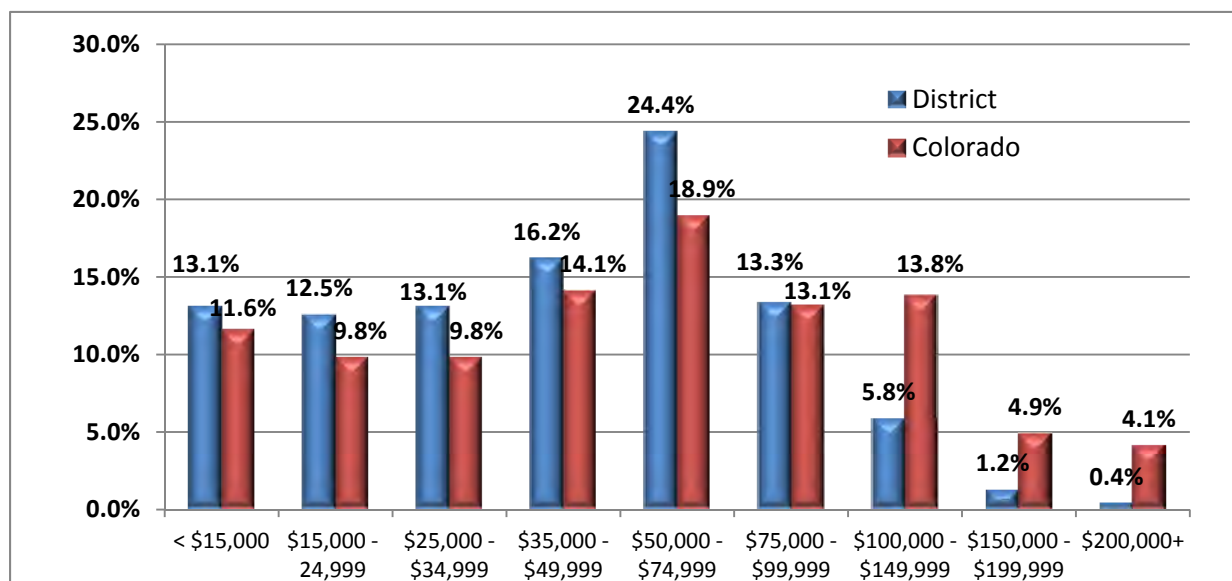
Education Attainment	District	State Colorado
Less than 9th grade	5.8%	4.8%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	6.1%	6.3%
High school graduate	33.2%	23.9%
Some college, no degree	27.6%	21.6%
Associate's degree	6.8%	7.8%
Bachelor's degree	13.9%	22.7%
Graduate or professional degree	6.7%	12.9%

Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions

Household Income

According to ESRI, the estimated median household income for the District is \$44,381; lower than the State (\$54,595). A comparison of household income, as shown in **Figure 4**, illustrates that residents in the District earn slightly lower incomes than in the State. According to ESRI, in 2010 the annual average amount spent on entertainment and recreation by household in the District was \$2,376 (note: includes travel). The District should continue to be sensitive to residents, ability to pay for services and offer scholarships based on financial need. The 2012 Master Plan Survey showed that 26 percent of respondents do not currently use District services due in part to the price/user fees of services.

Figure 4: 2010 Households by Income Comparison – District, Colorado



Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions

Demographic Trend Analysis Summary

In summary, key demographic trends to reference for future planning efforts of the District are summarized below.

- According to ESRI, the estimated 2010 population in the District is 3,859.
- The median age for the District (41.1) is higher than the State (38.4).
- Age distribution in the District illustrates the cohort with the highest population is 45-54, (16.2%).
- Ethnicity in the District is 91.1 percent White Alone. The District is less racially diverse than the State (which is 81.2 percent White Alone).
- Median household income is lower in the District (\$44,381) than the State of Colorado (\$54,595).
- Education attainment for District residents indicates the highest cohort is those residents that possess a high school degree (33%).
- An increase in the District's population (4.5%) is projected in the five years from 2011 to 2016.

D. Current Recreation Trends

The following are key national parks and recreation trends. It will be important for the District to evaluate these along with local trends to help shape future planning efforts.

- Some of the top ten athletic activities ranked by total participation include exercise walking, exercising with equipment, camping, swimming, and working out at athletic clubs.
- The most common programs offered in communities are holiday events and other special events; fitness programs; educational programs; day camps and summer camps; mind-body/balance programs such as yoga, tai chi, Pilates, and martial arts; and youth sports teams.

- Fitness programs, educational programs, teen programs, mind body balance, and active adults were listed at the top of the ten programs parks and recreation departments are planning to add within the next three years.
- Adventure sports – including triathlon, adventure racing, backpacking, climbing, kayaking, and rafting – showed significant growth in 2010, up 2.3 percent in participation as a group.
- Sixty-eight percent (68%) of public park and recreation agencies offer nature-based programming, and 61 percent have nature-based facilities. The most common facilities include: nature parks/preserves, self-guided nature trails, outdoor classrooms, and nature centers.
- National trends in the delivery of parks and recreation systems reflect more partnerships and contractual agreements reaching out to the edges of the community to support specialized services.
- The District is effective with its current means of marketing; however, Web-based niche marketing tools are becoming more popular for agencies to use as a means of promoting programs and services, especially when targeting younger populations.

See **Appendix C** for more detailed trends information.

E. Summary of Key Findings from the Community Input and Trends

The parks and recreation services provided by the District have a positive impact on the social, environmental, and economic health of the community. The District is looked to as a leader in not only providing these services, but in strengthening the community by fostering collaborations and bringing people together. As a community with a lot of families and long-time residents, this role is appreciated and valued.

As the District's facilities and services expand, so does its profile in the community and its responsibility to communicate its services, priorities, and future direction. The recommendations in this Master Plan are shaped by extensive input from public, staff, and the District Board and will help guide the District in continuing to provide quality facilities and services.

IV. What We Have Now – Programs and Inventory

This Chapter of the ***Recreation, Parks and Trails Master Plan*** focuses on the services and parks and recreation facilities provided by the Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Park District. Residents are fortunate to have many indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities not only through the District, but through the federal public lands in the area.

The first section of this Chapter reviews current District programs and services as well as community interests from the survey. The second section consists of a thorough inventory and analysis of parks and indoor facilities.

A. Programs and Services

The District offers a variety of recreation programs for all ages at the Meeker Recreation Center (MRC) and park sites. Programs are offered in a variety of categories including Active Adults 50+, Adults, Aquatics, Family/Community, Fitness, and Youth and Teens.

The MRC is a 25,000 square foot center that features a family aquatics area with a 4-lane lap pool, a whirlpool, and a leisure pool with splash toys, a water slide, zero-depth entry, and a lazy river. There is also a fitness and exercise room with cardio and strength equipment, a studio for dance and fitness classes, a classroom for enrichment programs, locker rooms, and a lounge.

In addition, the District uses other public indoor facilities in Meeker to host recreation programs. These facilities include the Fairfield Center and the gyms at Meeker Elementary School and Barone Middle School, as well as the gym and auditorium at the Meeker High School. Additional outdoor sports programs are held at park sites as well as some school sites.

Participation Trends

The District has been expanding its program offering since the opening of the Meeker Recreation Center in January 2008. MRC and program usage trends are summarized below.

Meeker Recreation Center Membership and Pass Usage

The MRC offers a range of pass and membership options and fees. Programs, including fitness classes, are not included in the membership passes, although membership discounts are available for select programs.

The annual usage of the MRC by members and drop-in users was 33,874 in 2010 and rose to 36,010 in 2011. An average of 113 people visited the center daily Monday through Friday in 2011 (up from 103 in 2010). The average daily usage is slightly lower on the weekends with an average of approximately 70 visitors daily. MRC membership fees collected in 2011 from a range of membership packages totaled \$115,107.

The 2012 Master Plan survey results showed that the MRC fitness room had the highest frequency of use of parks and recreation facilities and programs (38 times used on average in the last 12 months; roughly 3 times per month), followed by the MRC pool (27 times; roughly twice per month).

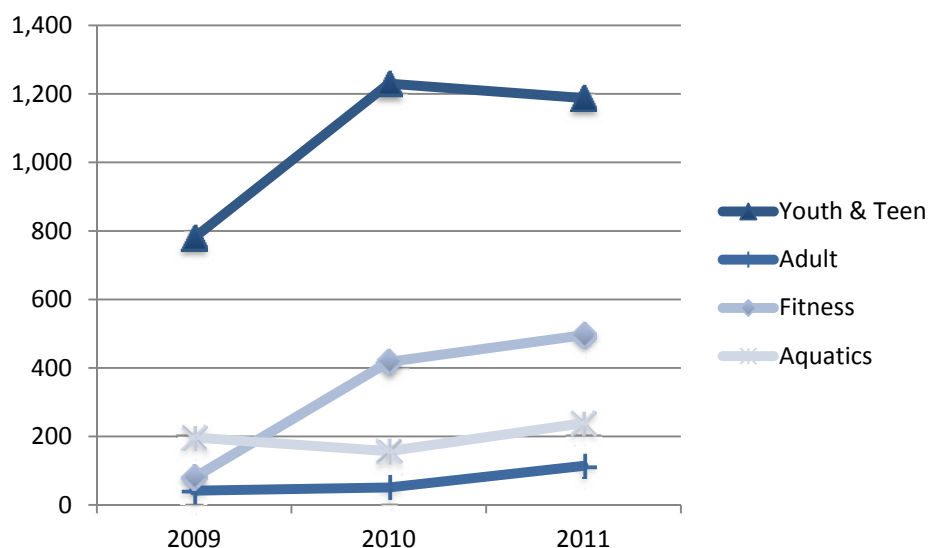
Registered Programs

A recommendation from the previous 2005 *Recreation Master Plan and Development Plan for a Family Recreation Facility* was to expand recreation programming beyond an emphasis on youth activities. While youth activities are still at the heart of recreation services, the District has expanded offerings to all ages.

Registered program participation trends from 2009 to 2011 are shown in **Figure 5** below. This information is tracked through the ActiveNet registration software managed by District staff. Online registration through the District's website is not currently available.

The total number of registered program participants has grown significantly from 2009-2011 with a total of 2,348 in 2011. By far, youth and teen programs have the highest participation, while adult programs have the lowest. However, all program categories have grown in participation during this three-year period. (*Note: Participation totals in Figure 5 do not include drop-in activities to the fitness and aquatics areas which are summarized above.*)

Figure 5: District Program Participation Trends (2009-2011)



Separate Family/Community and Active Adult 50+ program categories were added as program categories in 2010 and 2011 respectively. In 2011 a total of 170 participated in Family/Community programs, while 135 participants participated in Active Adult programs. (*Note: Family/Community program numbers do not include special events or non-registered events such as music concerts.*)

Fees collected in 2011 from all registered program areas totaled \$56,723. Youth and Teen programs followed by Fitness Classes generated the overwhelming majority of this revenue.

Survey Input

The 2012 Master Plan survey results illuminated community desires related to recreation programs. Below are highlights from the survey.

Programs

The survey shed some light on program preferences. Following are programs for which households indicated the highest need.

First tier:

- Special events (80%)
- Fitness and wellness programs (70%)
- Swimming programs (60%)

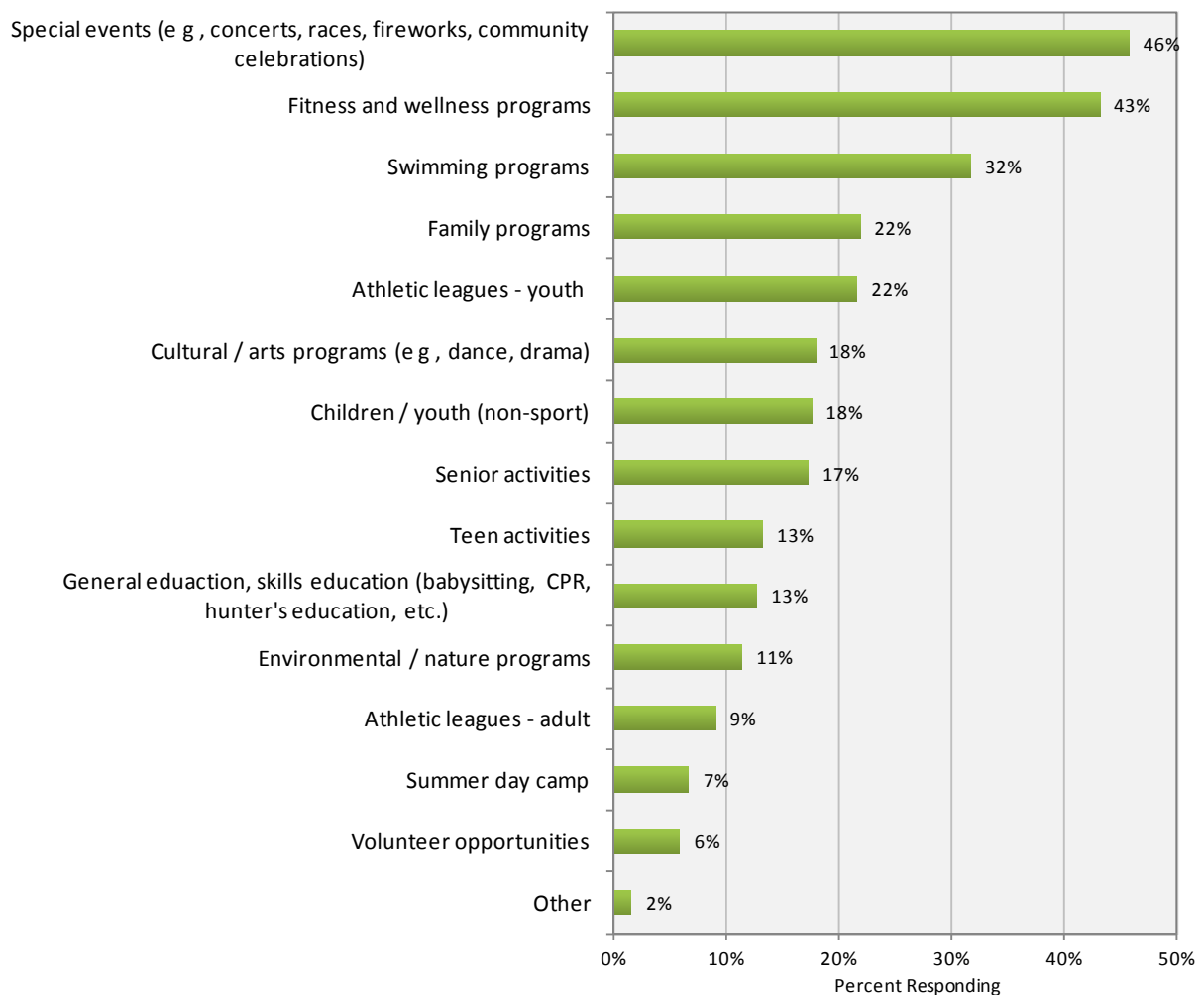
Second tier:

- Family programs (48%)
- General education (47%)
- Cultural/arts programs (46%)
- Environmental/nature programs (46%)

A couple of program areas stand out as needing some attention. Of the households that said they have a need for environmental/nature programs, a majority (59%) said that their needs were not being met. The District does not currently offer programs in this area. Fewer households said that they have a need for teen activities (21%), but almost half of these households (47%) said that their needs were not being met.

Survey respondents were also asked to rank their top three most important programs for additions, expansions, and improvements. The top programs were ranked similarly to the question about program needs above; however, youth athletic leagues and youth non-sport activities were included in the top seven program priorities and environmental/nature program and general education dropped lower as shown in **Figure 6** on the following page.

Figure 6: Three Most Important Programs for Additions, Expansions, and Improvements

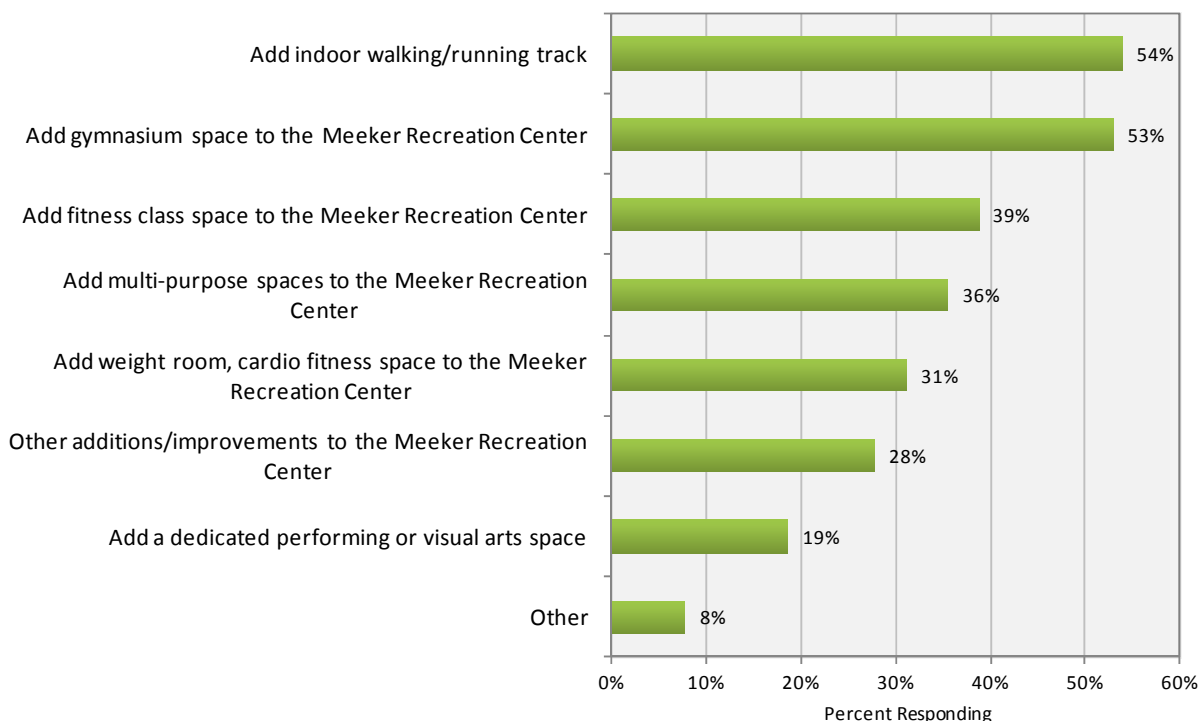


Indoor Recreation Spaces

The Meeker Recreation Center is a very popular community amenity. As mentioned above, the Master Plan Survey showed that the Meeker Recreation Center fitness room had the highest frequency of participation, followed by the pool. The frequency of use of parks and programs was much lower comparatively. It is a national recreation trend that drop-in recreation opportunities are popular and allow for more flexible use.

The survey also included a question about most important indoor facilities for additions, expansions, or improvements. An indoor track and a gymnasium at the MRC ranked the highest as shown in **Figure 7**.

Figure 7: Most Important Indoor Facilities for Additions, Expansions, and Improvements



Another survey question asked respondents to rank the top priorities for future funding out of a list of eight choices. Expansion of the Meeker Recreation Center ranked second (64%), closely following the top ranked choice of “make improvements/renovate/maintain existing park facilities” (65%).

Options for Expansion of Indoor Recreation Spaces

District residents in Eastern Rio Blanco County are fortunate to have a state-of-the-art recreation center, a unique amenity for a small community. Residents are actively making use of the many programs and amenities. The center has been so popular – especially the fitness center, pool, and many classes – that there is demand for expanded hours and an additional space. A closer study of strategies to maximize the use of the current center is important. However, additional options to expand or add indoor recreation spaces to meet growing demand is also needed. Following is a review of a couple options for potential expansion of indoor recreation spaces.

Potential Expansion of Meeker Recreation Center

As part of this master planning process, Barker Rinker Seacat (BRS), an architecture firm that was part of GreenPlay’s consultant team, was tasked with completing a concept plan for a potential addition to the Meeker Recreation Center. The concept plan and cost estimate for the recreation center expansion are included in **Appendix D**.

The expansion concept plan includes a 22,500 SF addition to the north of a gym with a 2nd floor walking track, and a separate option of another 4,700 SF addition to the east of two lap lanes added to the current pool. The concept plan also includes some renovations to the existing recreation center (which as a 25,164 SF footprint).

The costs and benefits of a potential center addition need to be weighed with other District priorities and available capital and operating funds prior to deciding on a course of action. A close evaluation of what program elements to consider in a possible expansion to the Meeker Recreation Center is needed. One of the most pressing impacts of the potential gym addition would be its encroachment onto the current ballfield. While there are benefits to co-locating a gym at the MRC, alternative ballfield locations would need to be explored. Beyond partnerships with the School District for use of existing athletic fields, land suitable for ballfields is limited in the Meeker area.

Other Options

Schools and Other Public Facilities

Other opportunities to expand indoor recreation spaces include expanding current facility use partnerships with the School District for use of gyms and multipurpose rooms for programming. The new Meeker Elementary School adjacent to the MRC is an ideal candidate for this type of partnership. Expanded use of the gym and multipurpose rooms at the School Administration building could also be pursued.

Main Street Building

Another opportunity that could be explored is to work with the Town of Meeker on potential future recreation uses of the currently vacant old Meeker Elementary School building on Main Street (referred to as the Main Street Building in the inventory in **Chapter IV** of this plan). This building in downtown Meeker has historical significance and could be considered for potential recreation uses.

The building was constructed in 1939 as a federally funded Works Project Administration (WPA) project. The building footprint is close to 24,000 SF. (The original building footprint was 10,450 square feet arranged in a U-shaped configuration. In 1950 a 13,470 square foot North Wing addition was built.)

The overall structural condition of the building is generally good according to a report to the Town of Meeker by Pattillo Associates Engineers, Inc., dated February 5, 2010. The report concluded that the "...building is worthy of preservation and improvement, depending to some extent on its intended occupation. Less historically significant portions of the building could be removed, such as the North Wing or Gymnasium, if it would benefit the plan for use of the building or the incorporation of other building additions." The report identified a series of repairs and improvements to be considered but does not identify cost estimates.

The interior of this building could potentially be reconfigured to accommodate multipurpose rooms appropriate for recreation uses. However, more detailed architectural study of the building is needed, including cost estimates for adaptive re-use of this building.

Program Analysis Summary

Key recreation program findings from the master planning process are summarized below.

Recreation Programs – Finding the right mix and balance of program offerings to align with community needs and interests is an ongoing endeavor of recreation professionals. There is a desire to continue expanding popular offerings such as special events, fitness classes, and swimming classes. Youth sport and non-sport programs will continue to be central to recreation offerings, based on current participation and public demand. There is also an interest in expanded family programs that bring families together for activities as well as offer simultaneous activities so children can be engaged in recreation activities at the same time as their parents. Environmental/nature education is a new program area where the survey response indicated interest.

River recreation was also identified by stakeholder input as an opportunity to develop. Furthermore, the 2005 *Recreation Master Plan* noted that the river is highly underutilized and recommended that the District “support and encourage river access for recreation programs as well as self directed recreational needs of the community.”

Current Indoor Public Recreation Spaces – Strategic use of the current Meeker Recreation Center and other public buildings including schools through creative programming and partnerships is needed to maximize these public resources. Many survey write-in comments expressed an interest in more programming during times convenient to working adults as well as longer weekend hours at the MRC. Public input also indicated support for expansion of the MRC and partnerships with schools. While expansion has merits, these projects need to be weighed with the community sentiment to maintain and improve current parks and recreation facilities.

B. Inventory and Level of Service Analysis

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 Meeker area. An all-inclusive inventory was conducted in January 2012. This was accomplished by visiting each property and facility, talking with personnel, and recording the quantity and functionality of each component. For the purposes of this plan, the inventory focused primarily on components at sites that are maintained by the Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Park District (District). It is recognized that other providers exist and that the facilities they operate are part of the overall level of service enjoyed by District residents. However, the purpose of this study was to inventory the amenities that are available to all residents and to create a complete inventory of facilities and services that the District provides.

Inventory Methodology

Composite Values Methodology using GIS (known as GRASP®, Geo-Referenced Amenities Standards Process) was used to inventory and assess the current park and recreation system.

Components

Each outdoor and indoor component (such as playgrounds, athletic fields, multi-purpose room, etc.) was located, counted, and assessed for its functionality for its primary intended use. A score was assigned to the component as a measure of its functionality as follows:

- **Below Expectations (1)** – The component does not meet the expectations of its intended primary function. Factors leading to this may include size, age, accessibility, or others. Each such component was given a score of 1.
- **Meeting Expectations (2)** – The component meets expectations for its intended function. Such components were given scores of 2.
- **Exceeding Expectations (3)** – The component exceeds expectations, due to size, configuration, or unique qualities. Such components were given scores of 3.
- If the feature exists but is not useable because it is unsafe, obsolete, or dysfunctional, it may be listed in the feature description and assigned a **score of zero (0)**.

Components were evaluated according to this scale from two viewpoints: first, its value in serving the immediate neighborhood; second, its value to the entire community.

Comfort and Convenience

Next, amenities that relate to and enhance the select components were evaluated. The setting for a component and the conditions around it affect how well it functions, so in addition to scoring the components, each **park site** or **indoor facility** was given a set of scores to rate its comfort and convenience to the user. This included such factors as the availability of restrooms, drinking water, shade, etc.

Design and Ambiance

Lastly, the overall design and ambiance of the facility or park was recorded as a part of the inventory. Characteristics such as overall layout, attention to design, and functionality inform the design and ambiance score.

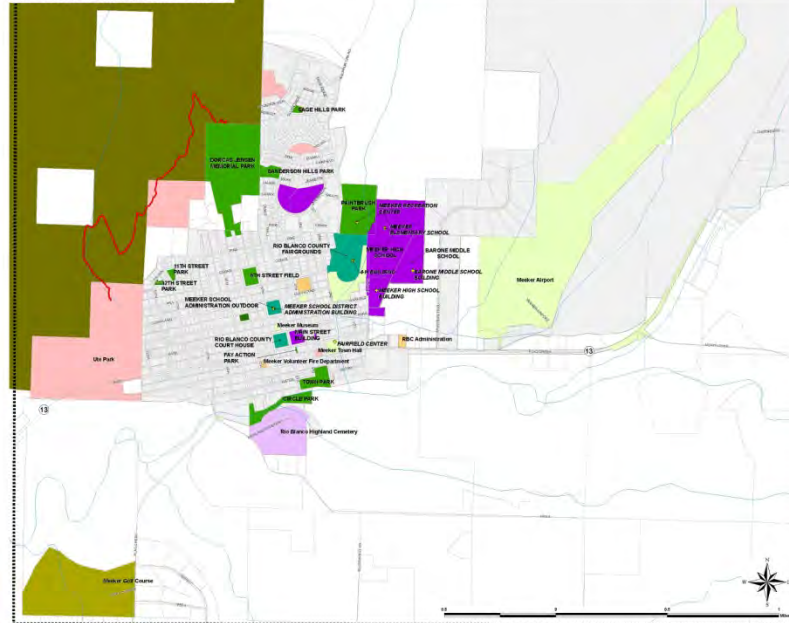
The compilation of the scores assigned in the inventory is called the GRASP® score.

Inventory Overview

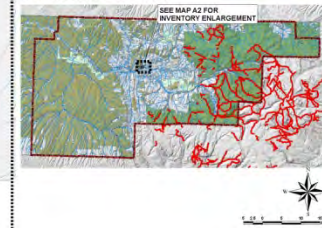
This System Map shows the location of existing parks, trails, and open spaces. In addition, schools, and landmarks are shown for reference. (The map shown here is for illustration only. A larger map can be found in **Appendix E.**)

EASTERN RIO BLANCO METROPOLITAN RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

A2: INVENTORY ENLARGEMENT



A1: ENTIRE DISTRICT



Map Produced For Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Park District Master Plan
By The GRASP Team
This Map is Intended For Planning & Informational Purposes Only
Please Note: 1. The Project District is a Map Overlay
Legend Elements May Vary Slightly In Size, Color And Transparency From Those Shown On Map
Colors are illustrative and not to scale
GIS Data Sources May Include: ERBM, Rio Blanco County, State of Colorado, CODOT,
US Census, USGS, USGS/NOAA, NOAA, USGS/NOAA
Copyright: 2011 GRASP



SYSTEM MAP

RESOURCE MAP: A

The District 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 the Meeker Recreation Center and Paintbrush Park, as of January 1, 2012, the District signed a 30-year lease with the Town of Meeker to manage, maintain, and improve (as needed) the following six parks – Town Park, Circle Park, Sage Hills Park, 6th Street Field, 11th Street Park, and 12th Street Park. This is typical of small communities, where resources must be pooled to achieve success.

The District inventory consists of nine parks that provide service throughout the community. Sanderson Hills Park and Phillip and Dorcas Jensen Memorial Park, both under construction at the time of this planning process, are included in this total. (Note: there are current plans for the library to purchase the land where the Fay Action Park is located. The use of this small area, which currently consists of skateboarding features, will change.)



Table 5: District Outdoor Inventory

LOCATION	OWNERSHIP	ACRES	Archery Range	Backstop, Practice	Ballfield	Basketball	BMX Course	Concessions	Educational Experience	Event Space	Fitness Course	Garden, Community	Garden, Display	Hockey, Ice	Horseshoes	Loop Walk	MP Field, Large	Multise Court	Natural Area	Open Turf	Open Water	Other - Active	Passive Node	Picnic Grounds	Playground, Local	Public Art	Restroom	Shelter	Shelter, Group	Structure	Tennis	Track, Competition	Trailhead	Volleyball
11TH STREET PARK	ERBM	0.8				1																												
12TH STREET PARK	ERBM	0.5																							1									
6TH STREET FIELD	ERBM	2.9		1													1										1							
CIRCLE PARK	ERBM	7.5												1						1	1						1	1						
DORCAS JENSEN MEM PARK	ERBM	57.3					1		1										1			1							1				1	
PAINTBRUSH PARK	ERBM	21.4	1		2			1				1	1						1	1	1				1				2					
SAGE HILLS PARK	ERBM	0.8																													2			
SANDERSON HILLS PARK	ERBM	3														1	1																	
TOWN PARK	ERBM	5.7				0.5									1					1	1			1	1				1					1
ERBM SUBTOTAL:		99.9	1	1	2	1.5	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	2	3	3	1	0	1	3	0	1	1	5	0	2	0	1	1
FAY ACTION PARK	OTHER	0.1																																
RBC COURT HOUSE	OTHER	2.3							1	1										1			3			1								
RBC FAIRGROUNDS	OTHER	17.7								1							1													2				
OTHER SUBTOTAL:		20.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
BARONE MIDDLE SCHOOL	SCHOOL	14.1				2					1						1	1		1											2			1
MAIN STREET BUILDING	SCHOOL	2.3				2														1					1									
MEEKER ELEMENTARY	SCHOOL	7.6				1											1								2									
MEEKER HIGH SCHOOL	SCHOOL	41.9				1											2			1				1								1		
Meeker School Admin Outdoor	SCHOOL	2.28				1														2					1									
SCHOOLS SUBTOTAL:		68.18	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	5	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	1
STUDY AREA TOTAL:		188.18	1	1	2	8.5	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	7	1	2	9	3	1	3	1	8	1	1	1	5	2	4	1	1	2

Parks are well maintained and provide a variety of amenities that appeal to many different age groups. Following are short descriptions and photos of the sites that make up the District inventory as well as those of other key providers of indoor and outdoor parks and recreation components in Meeker. (For park acreage, please refer the District Outdoor Inventory, **Table 5.**)

District-Managed Sites

11th Street Park

11th Street Park is located in the west side of Meeker, and its only amenity is a basketball court which serves adjacent residents.



12th Street Park

A block to the south of 11th Street Park sits 12th Street Park. Also known as Foothills Park, this narrow lot includes a small playground composite partially funded by GOCO. A small sidewalk meanders through the site to get you to the playground from the neighborhood streets and benches provide seating at the playground.



6th Street Park

Centrally located in the Town of Meeker is 6th Street Park which consists of a large multi-purpose field, practice backstop, and one set of bleachers. A couple of storage buildings, a permanently closed restroom facility, and an informal gravel parking lot providing spectator viewing sit along the western boundary of this park.



Circle Park

Located on the south side of the Meeker, Circle Park is a long slender park wrapping the southern edge of the White River. The park offers a warming hut which is also used as a picnic shelter, and a natural open turf area along the river. When the weather allows, a small portion of the park is flooded for ice hockey.



Town Park

On the north side of the White River and across from Circle Park sits Town Park. This park has mature evergreens, shade trees, and a large group picnic shelter that accommodates significant community celebrations. Overnight RV camping is allowed in the parking lot (and is still managed by the Town of Meeker) and other amenities available for users include: a playground, restrooms, picnic grounds, open water, sand volleyball, basketball, horseshoes, and open turf.



Phillip and Dorcas Jensen Memorial Park

This 57 acre parcel is one of the newest of District parks. This natural site is surrounded by BLM property and includes a great amount of topography and elevation changes.

Expected to be completed in the summer of 2012, the park offers trails, trailheads, natural areas, educational opportunities, views, and shade shelter.

***Paintbrush Park***

Sitting adjacent to the Meeker Recreation Center, this park is the District's second largest park. Amenities available for users include: a playground, picnic grounds and shade shelters, ball fields, concessions/restrooms, an archery range, open water, natural areas, open turf, community gardens, and garden displays.

***Sage Hills Park***

This park sits on the very north edge of Meeker and has two tennis courts (that at the time of this report were closed due to the poor condition). This neighborhood park offers spectacular views from the highest point.



Sanderson Hills Park

This neighborhood park is the gateway to Phillip and Dorcas Jensen Memorial Park and includes an open turf area and looped walking trail.



Other Providers

The inventory also includes other School District and County facilities that are available for public use for a variety of recreation uses. In many cases, the Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Park District offers some public programs or activities at these facilities in collaboration with these other public agencies.

Rio Blanco County Court House Lawn

Bountiful shade and open turf welcomes users to this historical court house that sits along Main Street and provides space for outdoor concerts, celebrations, and community gatherings. Due to its civic nature, public art, passive seating areas, and educational opportunities are available to all visitors.



Rio Blanco County Fairgrounds

Directly south of the recreation center sits the county fairgrounds, with one multi-use field used by groups from the community mostly for practices.



Barone Middle School

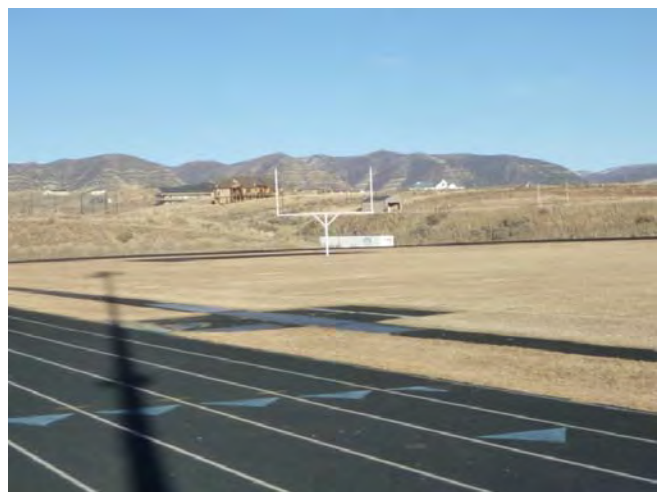
Meeker's middle school is a large site and provides tennis courts, a fitness course, volleyball, basketball, and large open turf areas.

***Meeker Elementary***

Meeker's elementary school is a new building and site and consists of playgrounds, basketball, court games, and open turf areas. (This school was temporarily closed and unavailable for public use at the time of this plan.)

***Meeker High School***

As do most high schools, the Meeker High School provides a football field and competitive track, basketball, and large open turf areas.



Main Street Building

As the name implies, this historical building sits across from the Court House along Main Street and is used to house the Meeker Elementary School. The grounds are used for outdoor community activities such as basketball and include small playgrounds and open turf areas.

**School Administration Building**

Centrally located in the Town of Meeker, this outdoor space allows community use of playgrounds, basketball, and open turf areas. Large, mature trees provide ample shade for the play areas and add to the “old town” feel of this site. Classrooms and the gymnasium are also available for community use.



Component Evaluation and Scoring

District parks have amenities that scored below expectations during the inventory. Those components are listed below.

Table 6: Inventory Components

LOCATION	OWNER	COMPONENT	QUANTITY	SCORE	COMMENTS
11TH STREET PARK	ERBM	Basketball	1	1	in need of repair, concrete heaving
CIRCLE PARK	ERBM	Shelter, Group	1	1	in need of repair or replacement
CIRCLE PARK	ERBM	Shelter	1	1	in need of repair or replacement
PAINTBRUSH PARK	ERBM	Shelter, Group	1	1	in need of repair or replacement
PAINTBRUSH PARK	ERBM	Shelter, Group	1	1	in need of repair or replacement
SAGE HILLS PARK	ERBM	Tennis	2	0	not functional, in need of replacement
TOWN PARK	ERBM	Playground,	1	1	needs updating
TOWN PARK	ERBM	Basketball	0.5	1	shared with parking, no striping
BARONE MIDDLE SCHOOL	School	Tennis	2	0	not functional in current condition
BARONE MIDDLE SCHOOL	School	Basketball	2	1	poor surface, other 2 hoops are scattered
BARONE MIDDLE SCHOOL	School	Multiuse Court	1	1	poor surface, access way
MEEKER HIGH SCHOOL	School	Track, Competition	1	1	in need of repair or replacement
MEEKER SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	School	Basketball	1	1	2 single hoops, in need of update

See the Outdoor Inventory Summary for a complete list of parks and inventoried amenities in **Table 5**.

Indoor Facilities

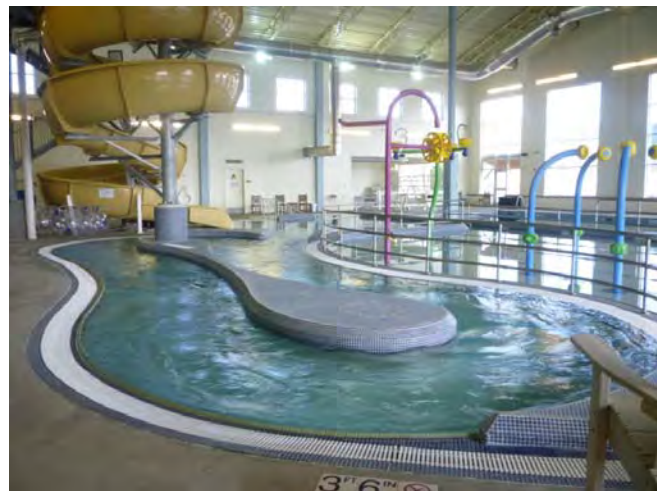
There are seven indoor facilities that provide service throughout the community. The District owns and operates the Meeker Recreation Center. The facilities owned by others are used for some public recreation programming by the District. All of these facilities are well-maintained and provide a variety of amenities that appeal to many different age groups. The following table (**Table 7**) shows the number of components in each indoor facilities included in the inventory.

Table 7: District Indoor Inventory

LOCATION	OWNER	Auditorium/Theater	Fitness/Dance	Food - Vending	Gymnasium	Kitchen - Kitchenette	Lobby/Entryway	Multi-purpose	Pool, Lap	Pool, Leisure	Weight/Cardio Equipment
MEEKER REC CENTER	ERBM		2	1		1	1	2	1	1	1
4H BUILDING	Other							1			
FAIRFIELD CENTER	Other					1		1			
BARONE MIDDLE SCHOOL Indoor	School				1						
MEEKER ELEMENTARY Indoor	School				1			3			
MEEKER HIGH SCHOOL Indoor	School	1			1						
MEEKER SCH DIST ADMIN	School				1	1		2			
TOTALS:		1	2	1	4	3	1	9	1	1	1

Meeker Recreation Center

This popular center is used by all age groups within the community, as well as by visitors outside of the Meeker area. The center offers a leisure pool, lap pool, therapy pool, weight room and cardio equipment, multi-purpose rooms, dance/fitness studios, and kitchenette.



Rio Blanco County Fairgrounds 4-H Building

As part of the County Fairgrounds, a 4-H community center provides space for gatherings, meetings, demonstrations, and events.



Fairfield Center

Indoor community events and celebrations are held at the Fairfield Center. The Center offers a large multi-purpose room with adjoining kitchenette.

***Meeker Elementary School***

The new Meeker Elementary School will provide a state-of-the-art gymnasium for community recreational events and a multi-purpose room for community gatherings. The school is conveniently located next to the Meeker Recreation Center. (This school was temporarily closed and unavailable for public use at the time of this plan.)

***Barone Middle School***

The gymnasium at Barone Middle School is available for school physical education and recreation uses. Based upon availability, the District has offered some youth recreation programs here.



Meeker High School

Along with a full size regulation high school gymnasium with bleachers, Meeker High School also provides an auditorium/theater for community performances.



School Administration Building

The gymnasium space with an adjacent kitchenette offers space for recreational fitness programs and classes.



Level of Service Analysis

Capacities Level of Service

A common way of determining Level of Service is to compare the quantity of an amenity to the population of the community. This comparison results in an “X per thousand” number for the amenity. This tool can be used in conjunction with demand studies, input from users and staff, and other information to project the quantities of certain amenities needed within the community. Often this is done by comparing the current ratio of amenities to “commonly referenced standards” that have been published by the National Recreation and Parks Association and others. **Table 8** shows the District’s current ratios for a variety of components. Given the population projections for the District, there are small or minimal improvements that will need to be addressed in order to maintain the current ratios. However, it may be determined that current ratios are either too high or too low for some amenities, and the ratio may be adjusted accordingly.

[illegible]

^aBased on ESRI projections.

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Measuring Level of Service with GRASP®

The traditional capacities LOS information described above looks only at the quantities of certain amenities provided by the parks and recreation system, and does not account for the quality of those amenities. The GRASP® methodology that was used to conduct the inventory for this project allows for a way of looking at LOS that combines quantitative with qualitative aspects, blending the quantity and functionality of components into a single number. **Table 9** shows numerical indices for LOS. The table shows the community GRASP® Index for each component, as well as the number of GRASP® points needed to maintain the current indices as the population grows.

The first part of the GRASP® Index shows the total GRASP® score for each component when all of the components in the dataset are included. During the inventory process, two sets of scores were assigned to each component, a Neighborhood score and a District-wide score. The District-wide scores are used to create this table.

Table 9: GRASP® Indices

Projected Community Components GRASP® Index 2015				
Current Population 2010			Projected Population 2015*	
			3,796	
			4,065	
	Total GRASP® Community Score per component type	GRASP® score per 1000 population (GRASP® Index)	Total GRASP® score needed at projected population	Additional GRASP® score needed
Ballfield	9.6	2.53	10.3	0.7
Basketball	33	8.69	35.3	2.3
Ed. Exp	11.6	3.06	12.4	0.8
Gardens, Community	4.8	1.26	5.1	0.3
Hockey, Ice	4.8	1.26	5.1	0.3
Loop Walk	4.8	1.26	5.1	0.3
MP Field, all sizes	28	7.38	30.0	2.0
Open Turf	44.8	11.80	48.0	3.2
Picnic Grounds	4.8	1.26	5.1	0.3
Playground, all sizes	37.4	9.85	40.1	2.7
Public Art	7.2	1.90	7.7	0.5
Shelter, all sizes	18.8	4.95	20.1	1.3
Volleyball	9.2	2.42	9.9	0.7

*Based on 2015 ESRI Population projections

The second column in the table shows the index that results when the GRASP® score is divided by the current population in thousands. This is the computed GRASP® Index for that component. The third column in the table shows the total GRASP® score that must exist to achieve the same GRASP® Index at the projected population, and the fourth column shows the additional number of GRASP® points needed to achieve that score.

This information can be used to plan for future improvements to the parks and recreation infrastructure to accommodate growth. Because GRASP® scores are a blend of quantity and quality, it is possible to increase them by either adding components or improving the quality of existing ones. For example, investing in repairs and/or replacements for items shown in **Table 9** will result in an increase in the GRASP® Index for those components because the individual scores for the repaired components will increase from one to two or three and this will be reflected in the GRASP® Index as an increase in LOS, even though there was no net change in the quantity of amenities. **In most cases, a combination of adding amenities and upgrading existing ones will be the best approach to increasing or maintaining LOS.** For this reason, both the Capacities LOS Table and the GRASP® Indices should be used when planning for improvements to the park and recreation system.

The GRASP® Indices also allow the community to benchmark its combined LOS for quality and quantity of service over time and measure its progress. For example, if a community's population stays the same over time, and components are neither added nor removed, the LOS will remain constant *as long as the quality of the components is maintained*. If the quality and functionality of components is allowed to decrease, resulting in lower GRASP® scores for those components, a decrease in LOS will show up in the GRASP® Index. Conversely, if the population remains the same and no components are added or deleted, but some components are upgraded in quality, and increase in LOS will show up in the GRASP® Index.

This is particularly useful as communities attempt to balance growth (i.e., adding components) with sustainability (maintaining what you have). The GRASP® Index is a good tool for tracking LOS as the components in the system begin to age and need replacing.

Summary of Key Level of Service Findings

Serving a population of close to 4,000 residents, the District provides a wide variety of parks and recreation services and facilities. The Meeker Recreation Center offers a state-of-the-art facility and is widely-used by the community. After recently taking over the management of the six parks owned by the Town of Meeker, the District's responsibilities have grown dramatically. In addition, the District offers some recreation programs at other facilities, mainly school sites. There appears to be opportunities to expand facility-use partnerships depending on demand and availability.

Overall, many of the current Town-owned parks are in need of upgrades as well as many of the school recreation facilities. The tennis courts at Sage Hills Park and Barone Middle School are not usable and in poor condition. Although there are a few "social" trails around the Recreation Center and High School and future planned trails at Phillip and Dorcas Jensen Memorial Park, Meeker does not have a connected trail system for users. This **Recreation, Parks and Trails Master Plan** will help guide the District as it meets these challenges and improves the park and recreation system in the coming years.

V. How We Manage – Operations and Oversight

Strategically speaking, how the District is positioned with its resources to manage its operations bears a direct result on its efficiency and effectiveness. This Chapter of the ***Recreation, Parks and Trails Master Plan*** first highlights aspects of the administration and management of the District through its human resources, then reviews marketing and communications and maintenance. Finally, the District's financial aspects are addressed. The Chapter concludes with a summary of key findings.

A. Administration, Management, and Organizational Development

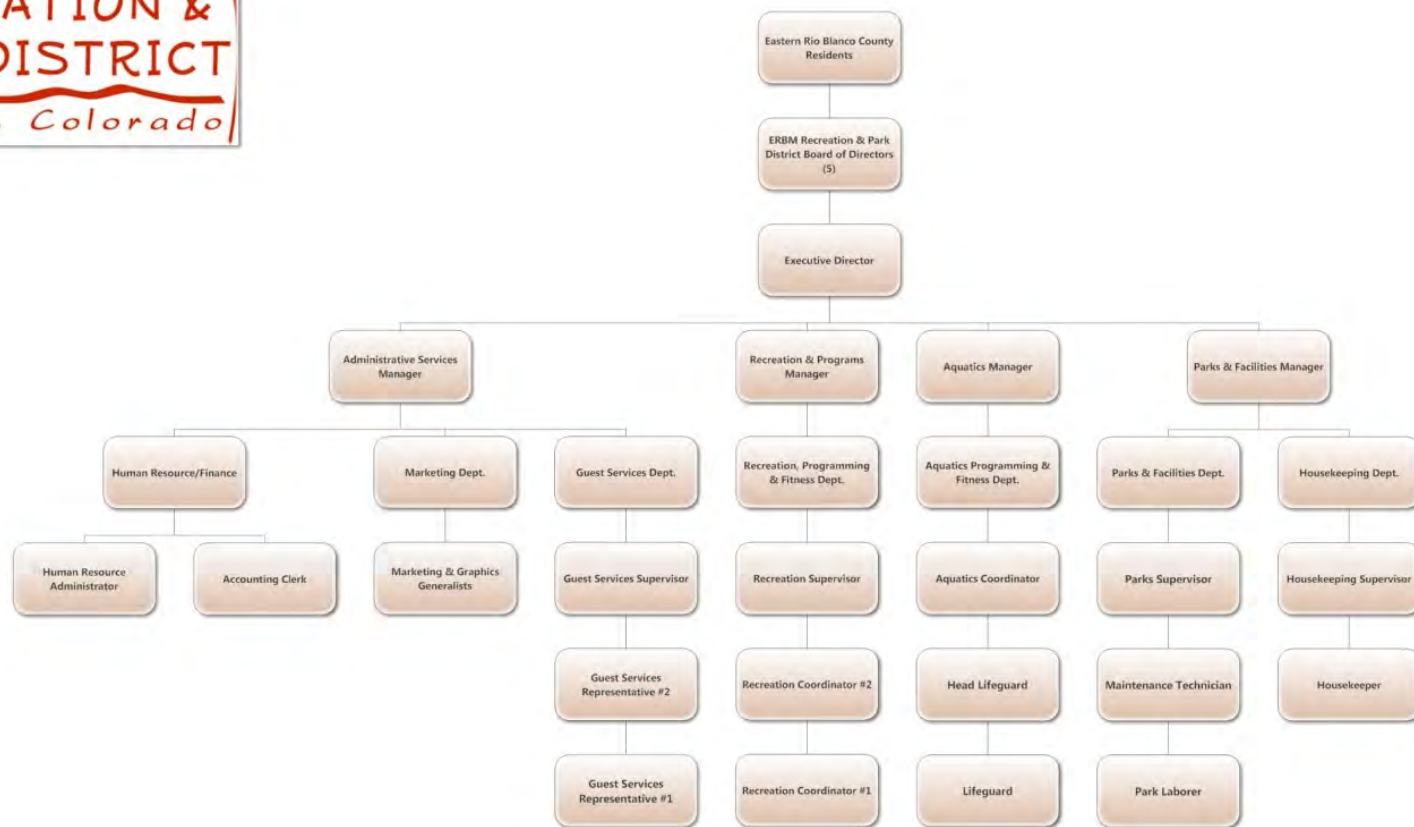
The Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Park District ("District"), established in 1981, is a quasi-municipal corporation and political subdivision of the State of Colorado. It is governed by a five member elected Board of Directors. Subject to the availability of revenues, personnel, equipment, and facilities, the Board is authorized to provide park, recreation, and leisure activities, facilities, and cultural programs to the citizens of and visitors to the District. An Executive Director, employed by the Board, serves as the administrative head of the District.

The District has recently reorganized into four divisions, each led by a full-time manager:

1. Administrative Services (Human Resources, Finance, Marketing, and Guest Services)
2. Recreation and Programs (Recreation, Programming, and Fitness)
3. Aquatics (Aquatics Programming and Fitness)
4. Maintenance (Parks, Facilities, and Housekeeping)

As of 2012, the District employs 3 full-time exempt staff, 13 full-time hourly, 5 part-time with benefits, and 21 part-time without benefits. In part, this reorganization was spurred by anticipation of the recent long-term lease agreement with the Town of Meeker providing the District exclusive recreational rights to use six existing Town-owned park sites in exchange for taking on responsibility for the development, operations, and maintenance of the sites. Considering the District's 30-year history, this comes on the heels of the opening of the Meeker Recreation Center in January 2008. Each of these events has significantly elevated the level of activity for which the District is responsible.

Figure 8: District Organizational Chart



Recent and current organizational development efforts are to be applauded and are soon to result in:

- A long-term staffing plan with well-defined job descriptions, clear areas of responsibility, and identification of appropriate levels of compensation for full and part-time staff.
- A volunteer program addressing recruiting, training, tracking, and rewarding District volunteers.
- A maintenance plan for each park and recreation facility identifying short and long-term maintenance requirements and standards. (Made possible with the hiring of a Parks and Facilities Manager position.)

Over the past two years, the primary focus of the District has been the continued management and improvement of the Meeker Recreation Center, the development of a connecting trail system from Phillip and Dorcas Jensen Memorial Park to Ute Park, and improvements at specific parks including Town Park and Paintbrush Park. The District intends to use information from the development of this Master Plan to develop actionable plans and a means to realize them efficiently and effectively within the next five to ten years. In addition, cultivating existing relationships with local stakeholders and initiating new partnerships will continue to be a top priority and an important aspect of District operating strategies, as well as attracting and retaining employees through improvements and more flexibility in the benefits package. Professional services, including accounting, legal, and information technology, will be used to produce cost effective results. Lastly, the District expressed interest and has periodically taken strides toward a more effective functioning of the Board and a more effective relationship between the Board and Staff.

GreenPlay evaluated current operational practices through Staff and Board information gathering meetings as well as a review of policies and procedures. This helped determine where written documentation is outdated or missing. Findings from this assessment were documented, and recommendations were subsequently identified based on industry best practices for categories including planning, administration, human resources, finance, program and service management, facility and land use management, risk management, and evaluation.

Documents used in the evaluation included:

- Recreation Master Plan and Development Plan for a Family Recreational Facility 2005
- Board Policy Manual
- Employee Handbook (2010)
- Financial Policies and Procedures Manual 2012
- District Activity Brochure Policy statements (p. 30)
- Various 2011 Activity Reports
- Guest Services Policy and Procedure Manual (2011)
- Meeker Recreation Center Emergency Action Plan (2011)
- Preventive Maintenance Agreement
- Town of Meeker Park Lease Agreement (Lease)

B. Marketing and Communications

The District's primary mode of communication and marketing to residents is through the Activity Guide which is mailed to households three times a year. This guide includes a schedule and descriptions of programs and special events, as well as information such as fees and hours of operation. The recent summer 2012 guide also includes information about the new park projects of Sanderson Hills Park as well as the Phillip and Dorcas Jensen Memorial Park and noted that the park plans were also on display at the Meeker Recreation Center.

The District on occasion uses mass mailings and e-mails to help get the word out about District programs and events. Social media has not been actively pursued to date.

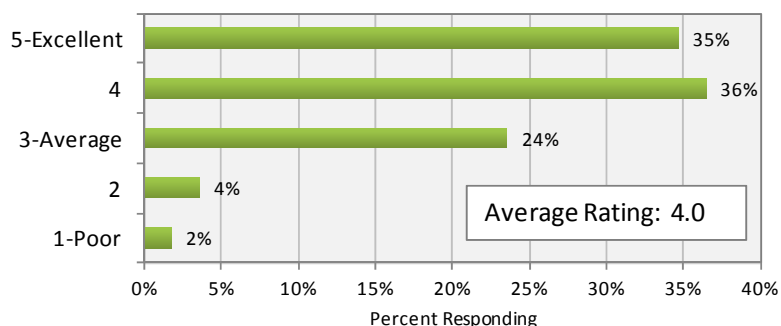
Survey

The 2012 Master Plan Survey included a question about how respondents currently receive information about the District and how they would like best to receive information in the future. A summary of the results follows.

District Communication Rating

Survey respondents were asked how good a job the District does in providing information about parks, recreation facilities, open space, trails, and/or programs. The ratings were quite favorable, with an average rating of 4.0 out of 5.

Figure 9: Customer Satisfaction with the District in Providing Information



How Residents Currently Receive Communication

Respondents indicated they currently receive their information about parks, recreation, services, and programs (whether ERBMRP District or not) from the following sources:

- District Activity Guide (72% of respondents indicated that they receive information this way)
- *Rio Blanco Herald Times* newspaper (60%)
- Direct mail to homes (55%)
- At the recreation facilities/program location (36%)

Best Way to Reach Residents of the District

The best way to reach residents of the ERBMRP District includes:

- District Activity Guide (42%)
- Direct mail to homes (24%)
- *Rio Blanco Herald Times* newspaper (17%)

Community Input

Input received from focus groups identified District facilities and services as a key community asset, attracting both residents and visitors. With expanding services of the District, the profile and leadership position in the community has been raised. This elevated position in the community comes with responsibilities that include proactive communication and transparency in how the District is managing taxpayer funds. Input from focus groups and public meetings indicated that the public would like more transparent communication from the District about operations and use of funds as well as current priorities and projects. The District does not currently generate an annual report or regular newsletter that could aid in this communication.

C. Park Maintenance & Design

Maintenance

The District as of 2012 had four full-time equivalent (FTE) park maintenance staff. Three of these were added with the expansion of park maintenance responsibilities for six Town parks in January 2012 and the addition of two newly developed parks.

According to the GIS data from the inventory completed for this plan, the District currently manages approximately 100 acres. About 57 acres of this total is open space land that makes up Phillip and Dorcas Jensen Memorial Park. The remaining 43 acres are developed parkland, making a ratio of one FTE staff per about 11 acres. Maintenance responsibilities for Phillip and Dorcas Jensen Park will be lower than a developed park.

Maintaining and improving the current park and recreation system was a key theme throughout the community input process. While residents in general expressed satisfaction with maintenance of parks and recreation facilities, 12 percent of survey respondents indicated that overall maintenance needed improvement. Survey comments expressed interest in fixing up the parks and keeping them clean. Since Town Park gets high use from District residents and visitors, particular interest was indicated in keeping the restrooms and park clean.

Design

In order to plan ahead, it is important to update or prepare a site master plan for all parks throughout the system. Key parks to consider are Paintbrush Park, Sage Hills Park, Circle Park, Town Park, and 6th Street Park. This could be accomplished in a phased approach over several years. All plans need to follow current ADA design guidelines and standards for accessibility.

D. Finances

The District is currently in a healthy financial position. This section provides an overview of traditional and alternative funding, followed by an analysis of the District's current cost recovery.

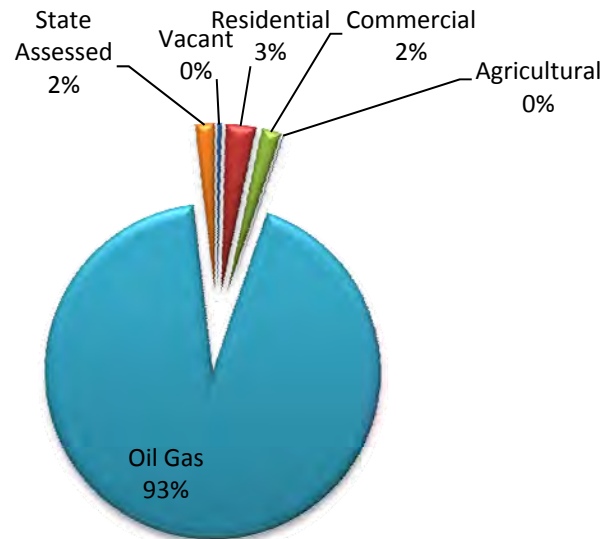
Traditional and Alternative Funding

District funding comes from a variety of funding sources, and its funding portfolio includes:

- District Property Tax
- Specific Ownership Tax
- Conservation Trust Fund (Colorado Lottery Proceeds)
- Recreation Fees and Charges
- Interest
- Grants

Of note, property tax is paid by property owners within the boundaries of the District. As allowed by state law, properties of 40 acres or more are exempt. (*Note: Colorado law states that these property owners may choose to not be included in the District*). In addition, unlike many districts in the state of Colorado, the oil and gas industry accounts for 93 percent of property tax collected. **Figure 10** below shows the property tax collected by the District by category.

Figure 10: District Property Tax by Category



Total District Revenues for 2012 from all sources is forecast at \$5,202,168. Offsetting projected expenses include:

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| • \$ 1,385,800 | Compensation and Benefits |
| • \$ 1,029,911 | Commodities |
| • \$ 1,588,180 | Capital Improvements |
| • <u>\$ 462,469</u> | Other Services |
| \$ 4,466,360 | Total Expenses |

This results in projected net revenue of \$989,459 for 2012.

This operation budget is supplemented by:

- \$ 133,991 Reserve Fund (3% FY Spending)
- \$ 2,500,000 Future Building Expansion Fund
- \$ 1,172,221 Beginning Fund Balance

The District plans for improvements through a five-year Capital Investment Program (CIP) Schedule, currently reaching out to 2016, that this Master Plan will help inform. This schedule includes categories for capital improvements, vehicle purchase, and equipment and technology replacement. Of particular interest is the \$2,500,000 building future expansion line item that is captured in 2016. Some community members may perceive this as “sitting on available funds”; however, the District is purposefully working its way through the community needs assessment and development of this Master Plan before a specific determination for this line item is reached.

The District has established and currently maintains financial reserves, creating a financial safety net for the existing system and ensuring that the immediate and short-term condition of District properties is secure.

Although the District has been successful in the alternative funding strategies it has employed, such as grants and fees and charges, it is important to recognize that there are other sources available that could enhance both capital expenditures for construction, and operating budgets for the District. Examples of these opportunities are identified later in this document.

Grant Awards

The District has sought and been awarded grant funding over the years. Most recently, the expectation for that source of funding has been growing:

- 2009 – \$5,285 (actual)
- 2010 – \$3,500 (actual)
- 2011 – \$12,500 (projected)
- 2012 – \$65,000 (projected)

The District received a planning grant from Great Outdoor Colorado (GOCO) to support the development of this Master Plan. Smaller grants have been received for sports equipment.

Grant seeking strategies include matching District funds, collaboration with other entities, evidence of public engagement and support for the grant project, tying into the grantors mission and interest, aligning with current issues attracting the attention of potential funders (obesity, nature deficit disorder, model programs, etc.), and having a master plan in place supporting the project.

Cost Recovery

Cost recovery refers to the amount of revenue received from fees and charges, and alternative funding sources in proportion to operational expenditures. In 2012, the District is budgeted to recover seven percent of operations and maintenance costs associated with providing parks and recreation services from fees and charges, grants, and Colorado Lottery proceeds. This correlates to an investment of subsidy of 93 percent from funding sources including property taxes, specific ownership tax, and related interest, to support the District’s operations and maintenance functions.

Examples from across the country show a wide range of subsidy levels or tax investment, from 15 to 80 percent, and higher. These levels largely depend upon the mission of the organization, operations funding availability, the community's philosophy regarding subsidy levels and user fees, and structure of agency budgets.

A 2011 District budget projection document which included 2009 actuals, and 2010 and 2011 *projections* was provided and used for some cost recovery analysis. This particular document provided a breakdown of revenues and expenses at the detail level of Recreation and Sports. Recreation (minus membership) and sports revenues, compared to recreation (minus capital) and sports expenses, yielded or projected cost recovery ratios of 37%, 32%, and 36%, respectively, for 2009, 2010, and 2011. Without specific definitions of direct and indirect expenses in place along with working with *projected* and not *actual* figures makes it difficult to assess the validity of this analysis. However, this assessment provides a starting point for the District in using cost recovery measurement as a management tool and realizing the benefit of this tool as a financial sustainability strategy.

The District does not have a cost recovery policy articulating a philosophy that establishes cost recovery expectations and the strategic use of subsidy. However, efforts can be made to develop amongst the Board, staff, and the public, a philosophical understanding of the balance between the benefit received by the user and the allocation of subsidy which benefits the community as a whole. Essentially, a cost recovery and subsidy policy answers the question, "where should subsidy be allocated?"

During the Master Plan project, staff and Board members were introduced to the Pyramid Methodology for Resource Allocation and Cost Recovery and encouraged to use this industry best practice to expand and develop its current resource allocation and cost recovery philosophy through objective methods and with public involvement. The use of this methodology can identify services that have potential for expanded alternative funding sources, while improving or enhancing overall organizational effectiveness.

Determining appropriate costs and values for recreational user fees and charges is a critical element of pricing services. When fees and charges are deemed fair and are based upon a sound and logical methodology, they are seen as value-based.

An opportunity exists for the District to analyze the prices charged for programs and services based upon market demand, competitor pricing (if applicable), and established cost recovery/subsidy goals. The District's development of a cost recovery/subsidy philosophy and a pricing methodology could strengthen its financial management practices and establish pricing methods based upon the values of the community.

E. Partnerships and Funding Opportunities

Following is a review of partnerships, sponsorships, volunteers, and other alternative funding opportunities.

Partnerships

The word “partnership” has become an umbrella term for arrangements or agreements including joint or cooperative ventures, alliances, and collaborations. Under that definition, the District has experienced limited, but relatively successful partnerships with the school district and the Fairfield Community Center for use of space for recreational activity as well as with the Town of Meeker for the long-term lease for management of the Town’s six park sites. The District has also been faced with requests for financial support or a “partnership”; however, the District has had no partnership policy in place to guide its response.

Partnership Guidelines:

Partners are defined as those key individuals, agencies, and organizations whose values, vision, and mission align with strategic community issues, initiatives, and services of the agency. It is important to analyze the cost to provide the identified partnership service and the Return-on-Investment (ROI). Partnership agreements should be in writing, have exit strategies, and be reviewed and renewed annually.

The 2012 Master Plan Survey respondents encouraged continue partnerships with the school district. Public input from focus groups and public meetings also supported collaboration and partnerships between government agencies to maximize public resources and minimize duplication of services.

Sponsorships

This revenue-funding source allows corporations or organizations to invest in the development or enhancement of new or existing facilities in park systems. Sponsorships are also used for programs and events.

GreenPlay has provided Sample Partnership Policy and Sample Sponsorship Policy documents to the staff and Board. These two sample documents are effective educational materials as well as useful sample tools for developing a partnership and sponsorship philosophy and policy, as well as a framework for proposals to be entertained. Staff is currently modifying the documents for Board adoption and District use.

Other Alternative Funding Opportunities

The following are other alternative funding strategies that have been employed by park and recreation agencies and may be of interest or spur other ideas for the District.

Philanthropy

Philanthropy is defined as the concept of voluntary giving by an individual or group to promote the common good and improve the quality of life in a community. Philanthropy generally takes the form of donor programs, capital campaigns, and volunteer and in-kind services.

The time commitment to initiate a philanthropic campaign can be significant. Current District resources that could be dedicated to such a venture are limited. However, the development of a foundation with an IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit designation may provide the necessary resources to seek out these types of contributions. The volunteer leadership of a foundation could lead grant application efforts and work to solicit financial support for District services.

Advertising Sales

This revenue source is for the sale of tasteful and appropriate advertising such as in the District's activity guide, on scoreboards, dasher boards, and other visible products or services that are consumable or permanent, exposing the product or service to many people.

Family Tree Program

Many entities have worked with local hospitals to provide cash to the parks system to buy and plant a tree in honor of every new born. The hospitals invest \$250 to \$300 and receive credit from the parents of the newborns. The parks system gets new trees of ample size.

Utility Roundup Programs

Some park and recreation agencies have worked with their local utilities on a roundup program whereby a consumer can pay the difference between their bill up to the even dollar amount and the difference is passed along to the parks and recreation entity. These monies are generally used to support utility improvements such as sports lighting, irrigation, and HVAC costs.

Naming Rights

This involves selling the naming rights for new buildings or rooms and parks, or renovation of existing buildings and parks for the development cost associated with the improvement, or for the exposure value.

Manufacturing Product Testing and Display

This allows specific manufacturers to test their products in parks, recreation facilities, and in program services. The parks and recreation entity tests the product under normal conditions and reports back to the manufacturer how their product is doing. Examples include lighting, playgrounds, tires on vehicles, mowers, irrigation systems, seeds and fertilizers, etc. The entity gets the product for free but must pay for the costs of installation and for tracking results.

Hospital – Rehabilitation Contracting

Entities contract with hospitals for their rehab patients' needs that can be provided at local recreation centers with their therapists overseeing the work. This provides a steady level of income for the fitness center and encourages patients after rehab to purchase memberships. Payments are made by health insurance companies.

Volunteers

Volunteers can play a significant role in the provision of parks and recreation services. The District and its residents currently realize many volunteer contributions through youth sports coaches and special event support to name a few. In fact, almost 1,000 volunteer hours were logged for District events and programs from January through May 2012. This is an impressive contribution to the District's work. The District holds an annual volunteer appreciation dinner to recognize the many dedicated individuals that volunteer their time and talents to the community through District programs and activities each year.

The value and benefit provided by volunteers to an agency are unlimited. Most notably are operational savings through their service contributions and public relations opportunities through community connection and altruism.

The District is building upon its current volunteer force by developing a formal volunteer management plan and tools that further promote volunteer opportunities, train prospective volunteers, and manage and reward their work and time. Volunteer contributions can provide significant operational savings when service hours and contributions are calculated.

F. Summary of Key Findings from Operations and Oversight

Following is a summary of findings that helped shaped the Management recommendations of the Master Plan.

Customer Service and Work Ethic – It has been very evident throughout this master planning process that Board and staff hold residents of the District in high regard and that the customer’s (taxpayer’s) experience is a driving force for service excellence. This is apparent through the Board’s sincere interest in transparency and through the staff’s collective approach to making the Meeker Recreation Center (MRC) a place where “everybody knows your name.” Staff exhibits a “get it done” attitude, always showing a willingness to jump in when something needs to get done. It is also evident that residents appreciate this aspect of the operation. Intention for service excellence, efficiency, and effectiveness underlies all recommendations of this plan.

Growth of the District Operation – With the opening of the MRC, and the added responsibility of six additional park sites in January 2012, along with transition in staff leadership, the Board and Staff have found themselves in a bit of a scramble over the past few years to have appropriate policies and procedures in place. Much good work has been accomplished in that regard, yet there is much more to be done. While missing documentation does not necessarily mean missing or inadequate practice, it does make for challenges with training, communications, and consistency.

Creating and Maintaining a High Level of Service – The District is in a strong financial position to support the current service level. However, increased operations and capital costs with recently added parkland and improvements may burden the existing financial structure over time if long-term organizational sustainability strategies are not put into place. Understanding and communicating the value/cost to operate and maintain the District’s assets and services is also key. If in the future the availability of funding necessary to continue this high standard diminishes, transparent choices can be discussed and alternatives sought.

Budgeting and Tracking of Costs and Revenues – Best practices call for the use of management tools that require and allow everyone to be accountable for the cost of doing business and aligning revenue sources to activities in appropriate and reasonable ways. This requires an approach to budgeting that starts at a zero base and uses metrics including cost recovery targets based on the type of program or service offered.

Leveraging the District’s Resources – The District has found itself in the position of not always having adequate philosophy, policy, and/or procedure in place to be able to seek or respond to opportunities to leverage its resources, or to otherwise determine when it is appropriate to use the District’s resources for certain purposes. Parks and recreation entities are often viewed as “catch all” entities, with a seemingly never ending mission, yet without the resources to support that view. With limited resources, there must be bounds, yet there must also be vision to make the most of the resources.



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VI. Recommendations and Implementation Plan

A. Introduction

There is a growing trend in the United States for public leaders to recognize that public recreation facilities and related “quality of life” amenities are not secondary services provided by governmental agencies, but are in fact integral to creating communities in which people want to live and visit. These services should be seen as **investments** in the long-term vitality and economic sustainability of any vibrant and attractive community. The Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation & Park District recognizes these factors and seeks to continue to make improvements to its park and recreation system and enhance the community for years to come.

This Master Plan is designed to serve as a decision-making tool for the District staff and Board to help set priorities for implementation. The following Implementation Chart summarizes the Plan recommendations and identifies timing and financial impact where appropriate. The Implementation Plan is subject to annual review and revisions. It should serve as a guide in the District’s annual budget development and work plan.

This Master Plan is intended to provide a long-term vision with a focus on short and mid-term priorities within the next 5-10 years. The Implementation Plan is based on the following time frame for short, mid, and long-term priorities:

- Short-Term: first 5 years (2012-2016)
- Mid-Term: 5-10 years (2017-2021)
- Long-Term: 10 years and beyond (2022 on)

The following **Goals, Objectives, and Actions** are outlined below. Over the next 5-10 years, many influences will have an impact on the success of this plan. Funding availability, staff buy-in, and political and community support will play significant roles in the implementation process.



B. Recommendations and Implementation

PARK & TRAILS RECOMMENDATIONS			
Goals, Objectives & Actions	Responsibility	Financial Impact	Timing
GOAL 1: Provide a quality, well-maintained park system.			
Objective 1.1. Prepare new site master plans for key parks prior to major park improvements.			
Action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare master plans for key parks throughout the system. Parks to consider are Circle Park, Paintbrush Park, Sage Hills Park, and 6th Street Park. This could be accomplished in a phased approach over several years. (When planning, consider re-purposing parts of existing parks to accommodate new needs and trends.) 	District Staff and Design Consultant	Design Consultant Fees (varies depending on design scope)	One Park per Year
Objective 1.2. Plan for and implement improvements to existing parks. <i>Specific suggested improvements for each park are identified below including suggested timing/priority as determined by need and public input. This list is intended to be flexible and dynamic, and may change as needed to address public sentiment or funding opportunities. (As indicated by Objective 1.1., site master plans are recommended for key parks. Note: additional park improvements may be identified in site master plans developed in the future.)</i>			
11th Street Park			
Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add a small shade shelter with picnic table. 	District Staff	\$28,000	Mid-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install park signage including park name and rules. 	District Staff	\$12,000	Mid-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove existing court. 	District Staff	\$2,000	Mid-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make landscape improvements – Plant with native seed, native and xeric plant material requiring minimal irrigation for establishment. 	District Staff	\$18,000 for soil prep. and native seed, \$5,000 for plant material	Mid-Term

PARK & TRAILS RECOMMENDATIONS			
Goals, Objectives & Actions	Responsibility	Financial Impact	Timing
12th Street Park			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relocate playground to a more visible location within the park. 	District Staff	\$5,000 for demolition, \$80,000 for new playground	Long-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add a small 12'x12' shade shelter with picnic table. 	District Staff	\$28,000	Long-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide accessible walks through the park from the surrounding neighborhood. 	District Staff	\$15,000	Long-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install park signage including park name and rules. 	District Staff	\$12,000	Long-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make landscape improvements – Plant with native seed, and native and xeric plant material requiring minimal irrigation for establishment. 	District Staff	\$10,000 for soil prep. and native seed, \$5,000 for plant material	Long-Term
6th Street Park			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace restrooms. 	District Staff	\$77,500	Mid-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add a group, gazebo style, 20'x20' shade shelter with picnic tables. 	District Staff	\$60,000	Mid-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade multi-use field to a Little League diamond. 	District Staff	\$40,000 for backstop, \$7,500 for skinned field	Mid-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install park signage including park name and rules. 	District Staff	\$12,000	Mid-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make landscape improvements – Plant shade trees, native and xeric plant material requiring minimal irrigation for establishment. 	District Staff	\$18,000 for trees and plant material	Mid-Term
Circle Park			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace 2 group, 20'x20' shade shelters and add 1 group 20'x20' shade shelter. Replace all picnic tables, and BBQ grills. 	District Staff	\$163,000	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide accessible walks through the park from Town Park and surrounding trails. Provide an interpretive river walk. 	District Staff	\$116,000 for concrete trails, \$15,000 for 2 interpretive waysides	Short-Term

PARK & TRAILS RECOMMENDATIONS			
Goals, Objectives & Actions	Responsibility	Financial Impact	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install park signage including park name and rules. 	District Staff	\$12,000	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make landscape improvements – Plant shade trees and native and xeric plant material requiring minimal irrigation for establishment. 	District Staff	\$10,000 for trees and additional plant material	Short-Term
Town Park			
<i>Make improvements using the Town Park Master Plan as a guide. (See Appendix F.)</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relocate playground to a more secure location within the park. 	District Staff	\$355,000 per master plan	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add a small 12'x12' shade shelter with picnic table near playground. 	District Staff	\$30,000	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade existing restrooms. 	District Staff	\$20,000	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add an interpretive River Walk along the White River. 	District Staff	\$40,000 for concrete walks, \$10,000 for 2 waysides	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide accessible loop walks through the park from the surrounding neighborhood, Circle Park and River walk. 	District Staff	\$85,000	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install park signage including park name and rules. Add concrete gathering plaza. 	District Staff	\$12,000 \$182,000	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade horseshoe pits. 	District Staff	\$7,500	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade volleyball pit. 	District Staff	\$13,000	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add a full size basketball court. 	District Staff	\$30,000	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make landscape improvements – enhanced landscaping at park entry, parking lot, and park perimeter to screen the roads and Town buildings. 	District Staff	\$15,000	Short-Term
Paintbrush Park			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade existing playground to a destination playground. 	District Staff	\$818,000 per master plan	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace group 20'x30' shade shelter and picnic tables. 	District Staff	\$63,000	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace second group 20'x30' shade shelter and picnic tables. 	District Staff	\$63,000	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade archery range with 12'x72' shade shelter, bow racks, 7 picnic tables, 7 benches, and enhanced entry. 	District Staff	\$74,000	Short-Term

PARK & TRAILS RECOMMENDATIONS			
Goals, Objectives & Actions	Responsibility	Financial Impact	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide soft surface loop walks within park. Provide walkable access from school and neighborhood. 	District Staff	\$250,000	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install park signage including park name and rules. 	District Staff	\$12,000	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make landscape improvements – Plant shade trees, and native and xeric plant material requiring minimal irrigation. 	District Staff	\$20,000 for trees and plant material	Short-Term
Sage Hills Park			
Actions:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove tennis courts. 	District Staff	\$57,000	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add a mid-size 16'x16' shade shelter with picnic tables. 	District Staff	\$15,000	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add benches for seating. 	District Staff	\$10,000	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add a multipurpose field. 	District Staff	\$21,000	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide accessible walks through the park from the surrounding neighborhood. 	District Staff	\$150,000	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install park signage including park name and rules. 	District Staff	\$12,000	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make landscape improvements – Plant shade trees, and native and xeric plant material requiring minimal irrigation. 	District Staff	\$15,000	Short-Term
Objective 1.3.			
Complete new park construction of Sanderson Hills Park and Phillip and Dorcas Jensen Memorial Park.			
Actions:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee final park construction. 	District Staff	(Funds Already Budgeted)	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop maintenance work plan. 	District Staff	Staff Time	Short-Term
Objective 1.4.			
Consider strategic partnerships with School District for mutually beneficial outdoor recreation facility upgrades.			
Actions:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue a joint agreement to refurbish or build new tennis courts at Barone Middle School. 	District, School District	Staff Time	Mid-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue a joint agreement to upgrade and resurface outdoor track at Meeker High School. 	District, School District	Staff Time	Mid-Term

PARK & TRAILS RECOMMENDATIONS			
Goals, Objectives & Actions	Responsibility	Financial Impact	Timing
GOAL 2: Promote walking/biking opportunities and trail connectivity within the District.			
Objective 2.1. Utilize Trails Recommendation Map to help guide collaborative planning efforts for a connected trail loop through Meeker. (See Appendix G for Trails Recommendations Map.)			
Actions: Priorities for trail advocacy include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue Dorcas Jensen trail through Ute Park to 10th Street. Continue trail from 10th Street through Circle Park and east along the White River. Develop a north-south trail connection from the White River to existing middle and high school trails. Enhance trail connections between the elementary and high schools and recreation center. Develop a west neighborhood trail connection to Sanderson Hills Park which is the gateway to Phillip and Dorcas Jensen Memorial Park. Develop trail connections to and between parks. 	District, Town of Meeker, Federal Land Agencies (as applicable)	Varies Based on Trail Type	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop trail design standards, usage policies, and maintenance procedures. Identify funding strategies. 	District, Partner Groups	Staff Time	Short to Mid-Term
Objective 2.2. Look for opportunities to add loop walks to parks, when appropriate.			
Action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add loop walk to Town Park (as identified in the Town Park Master Plan). 	District	See Town Park improvements above	Short-Term

RECREATION PROGRAMS RECOMMENDATIONS			
Goals, Objectives & Actions	Responsibility	Financial Impact	Timing
GOAL 3: Strategically provide recreation programs and services in response to community interests.			
Objective 3.1. Tailor program offerings in line with needs assessment and demand.			
Actions:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to offer and expand special events that appeal to District residents. 	District Staff, Partners (as applicable)	Staff Time, Program Costs	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add environmental/nature programs. Explore partnership opportunities with federal land agencies. 	District Staff, Partners	District and Partner Staff Time	Mid-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand programs that bring families together for activities as well as offer simultaneous activities so children can be engaged in recreation activities at the same time as their parents. 	District Staff	Staff Time	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refine teen recreation offerings based on teen interests. Teen focus group input identified interest in teen special events (dances, movies, karaoke) and sports (lacrosse, volleyball, etc.). Also see Objective 4.4. regarding recommended Teen Council. 	District Staff (with input from teen representatives)	Staff Time, Program Costs	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand adult fitness programs during peak hours to meet demand for working adults. Strategies could include offering classes at other locations with space to accommodate larger class sizes. 	District Staff	Staff Time, Program Costs	Short to Mid-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate current program offerings and modify to expand popular programs and eliminate or adjust less popular programs. 	District Staff	Staff Time	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities to expand river access for recreation programs as well as self-directed recreational needs of the community. 	District, Town	Staff Time, Program and Capital Costs, as applicable	Short-Term
Objective 3.2. Fully utilize existing public spaces to serve community indoor recreation needs.			
Actions:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider off-peak pricing to shift some usage of the Meeker Recreation Center from high usage times to lower usage times. 	District Staff	Staff Time	Short-Term

RECREATION PROGRAMS RECOMMENDATIONS			
Goals, Objectives & Actions	Responsibility	Financial Impact	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reevaluate hours of center operation to align with high demand times. Consider expanded weekend hours. 	District Staff	Staff Time	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to partner with the School District and Town for use of indoor facilities for recreation programs when demand cannot be met by the Meeker Recreation Center. 	District Staff	Staff Time	Ongoing
Objective 3.3. Explore opportunities to add indoor recreation spaces to meet community demand.			
Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the costs/benefits of an addition to the Meeker Recreation Center. Include a study of options including the feasibility of new ballfield locations. (See Appendix D.) 	District Staff and Board	Staff and Board Time	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore potential partnership opportunities for adaptive re-use of the historic Town-owned Main Street Building (former Meeker Elementary School) for recreation uses. 	District Staff and Board	Staff and Board Time	Mid-Term

COMMUNICATIONS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS			
Goals, Objectives & Actions	Responsibility	Financial Impact	Timing
GOAL 4: Raise awareness of District services through proactive communication and community engagement efforts.			
Objectives 4.1. Enhance marketing efforts through the development of a marketing plan. <i>(Elements of a marketing plan include the following.)</i>			
Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to print Activity Guides, but provide an option and incentives for residents to elect to receive electronic copies. 	District Staff	Printing & Mailing Costs	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance District's website. For example expand information provided such as posting of District Board meeting agendas and website links to area parks and recreation resources and other local websites such as Chamber of Commerce and Town. 	District Staff	Staff Time or Web Designer Fee	Short-Term

COMMUNICATIONS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS			
Goals, Objectives & Actions	Responsibility	Financial Impact	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a regular e-newsletter. Offer print copies for those that prefer them. 	District Staff	Staff Time	Short to Mid-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities for social media, including target marketing to teens. 	District Staff	Staff Time	Short to Mid-Term
Objective 4.2. Generate annual reports.			
Action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Report should communicate accomplishments, financial updates, and goals and priorities for the upcoming year. 	District Director, with Board Input	Staff Time	Short-Term
Objective 4.3. Develop and implement a park signage program.			
Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop sign standards. Signs should include park identifier signs and informational signs for park rules. Interpretative signage to communicate natural or historic site features should also be considered for key sites. 	District Staff	Staff Time (may want to consider using Sign Consultant)	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review park naming policy and formalize park names (e.g., 11th Street and 12th Street Parks). 	District Director, Board	Staff and Board Time	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement phased installation schedule. 	District Director, Board	Capital Costs - Varies	Short to Mid-Term
Objective 4.4. Engage community residents and stakeholders in District planning efforts.			
Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold public meetings to gain community input on any major new park project or initiative. 	District Staff	Staff Time	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider adding advisory groups to assist in guiding planning efforts (e.g., trails, teen programs, senior programs, etc.). 	District Staff	Staff Time	Short to Mid-Term

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS			
Goals, Objectives & Actions	Responsibility	Financial Impact	Timing
GOAL 5: Incorporate best management and planning practices to ensure quality services and efficient use of resources.			
Objective 5.1. Continue to incorporate the new 2010 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and guidelines in parks and recreation facilities.			
Actions: ▪ Complete ADA audit of facilities.	District Staff	Staff Time	Short-Term
▪ Create and implement a “Transition Plan” to meet the new standards.	District Staff	Staff Time, Capital Funding (as required)	Short-Term
▪ Identify an internal complaint process and designate an “ADA Coordinator/Responsible Employee.”	District Staff	Staff Time	Short-Term
▪ Require all contractors/vendors to provide products and services in compliance with the new standards for any facility or service.	District Staff, Contractors/Vendors	Staff Time	Ongoing
Objective 5.2. Centrally maintain updated records of District owned and managed land, park, and facility inventory, and planning documents to facilitate the ongoing management of District resources.			
Actions: ▪ Ensure that all assets are currently documented.	District Staff	Staff Time	Short-Term
▪ Update inventory annually.	District Staff	Staff Time	Annually
▪ Update the Master Plan every five years.	District Staff	Staff Time, Consultant Fee	Mid-Term
Objective 5.3. Fully utilize business practices to enhance operations.			
Actions: ▪ Create a Business Plan for the Meeker Recreation Center.	District Staff	Staff Time	Mid-Term
▪ Use Active Net recreation management system to its fullest, taking advantage of all functions including league scheduling, park reservations, point of sale, and registration through the internet.	District Staff	Staff Time	Mid-Term
▪ Develop a maintenance work plan and identify needed resources to support (e.g., staff and equipment).	District Staff	Staff Time	Short-Term

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS			
Goals, Objectives & Actions	Responsibility	Financial Impact	Timing
Objective 5.4. Provide park facilities and services that promote environmentally sensitive design principles and practices.			
Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt and implement Low Impact Development site design and maintenance standards and practices for parks. 	District Staff	Staff Time	Short-Term, Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt green building or LEED® Standards for new facilities or additions to the Meeker Recreation Center. (<i>LEED or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design rating system was developed by the U.S. Green Building Council to provide a framework for implementing green building design, construction, operations, and maintenance solutions.</i>) 	District Staff	Staff Time	Mid-Term
GOAL 6: Increase District transparency and effectiveness.			
Objective 6.1. Formalize efforts to develop the Board and improve and enhance Board/Staff relationship.			
Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure formal orientation for new Board members. 	District Staff, Board	Staff Time	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold a Board of Directors annual retreat to set annual goals. 	District Staff, Board	Staff Time	Annually
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a facilitator to lead board trainings. 	District Staff, Board	Facilitator Fee	Annually
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jointly develop and evaluate progress on annual goals. 	District Staff, Board	Staff and Board Time	Annually
Objective 6.2. Prioritize staff orientation and training.			
Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and make available training materials. 	District Staff	Staff Time	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule formal individual or group orientation within first two weeks of employment. 	District Staff	Staff Time	Ongoing
GOAL 7: Ensure that adopted District Policy and Procedure is driving operations.			
Objective 7.1. Assure that policy and procedure is easily accessible.			
Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a District Administrative Manual. 	District Director and Managers	Staff Time	Short-Term

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS			
Goals, Objectives & Actions	Responsibility	Financial Impact	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline a Table of Contents to include such categories as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency Authority, Role, and Responsibility Planning Organization and Administration Human Resources Finance (Fiscal Policy and Management) Programs and Services Management Facility and Land Use Management Evaluation and Research 	District Director and Managers	Staff Time	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inventory and assemble all existing adopted policy and procedures. 	District Director and Managers	Staff Time	Short-Term
Objective 7.2. Develop and/or document District policy and procedures.			
Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and document policies and procedures to be documented in the short-term (using the outline provided to staff, that aligns with the national parks and recreation accreditation process as a guide): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> process for formulating policies and procedures employee recruitment and selection training and career development disciplinary action fiscal policy procedures related to cash handling evaluate and improve current scholarship policy and program. 	District Director and Managers, Board	Staff and Board Time	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider mid-term focus on policies and procedures regarding marketing, management information systems, use of consultants and contract employees, inventory and fixed assets, program and services management, facility and land use management, risk management, park/facility naming policy, and relationships with other governmental agencies and non-profits. 	District Director and Managers, Board	Staff and Board Time	Mid-Term

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS			
Goals, Objectives & Actions	Responsibility	Financial Impact	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider long-term focus on community planning and evaluation and research. 	District Director and Managers, Board	Staff and Board Time	Long-Term
GOAL 8: Maximize opportunities to leverage District resources.			
Objectives 8.1.			
Enhance financial management tools to effectively track and manage costs to deliver services.			
Actions:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider pursuing a cost recovery model (like the Pyramid Methodology). 	District Staff, Board	Staff and Board Time, Consultant Fee (as applicable)	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand tracking of costs for all facilities and program areas to illustrate a more complete picture of the cost to operate and maintain parklands, facilities, and programs. 	District Staff	Staff Time	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify current cost recovery levels for all services, programs, and facilities. 	District Staff	Staff Time	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate the value/cost to provide services and facilities so transparent choices can be discussed or alternatives sought when financial resources dictate. These choices may include decreasing the level of service standard, exploring and securing alternative funding sources, or increasing fees and charges. 	District Staff	Staff Time	Short-Term, Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track ongoing operating and predictive/preventative/routine maintenance costs separately instead of including them with the lifecycle replacement costs. 	District Staff	Staff Time	Short-Term, Ongoing
Objective 8.2.			
Expand partnerships to encourage joint development of facilities and programs.			
Actions:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize a District Partnership Policy using the sample template provided. 	District Director, Board	Staff and Board Time	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand joint-use partnership agreements with the School District. 	District Director, Board	Staff and Board Time	Short-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to seek intergovernmental partnerships with the Town of Meeker (parks, special events), Rio Blanco County (trails and open space), and federal land agencies including the BLM (trails and open space), and School District. 	District Director, Board	Staff and Board Time	Ongoing

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MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS			
Goals, Objectives & Actions	Responsibility	Financial Impact	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider transferring excess revenue generated from high demand and revenue positive services into a scholarship fund to leverage other fundraising activities. 	District Staff	Staff Time	Short-Term
Objective 8.4. Expand revenue generation opportunities as appropriate at parks and facilities (e.g., rentals, concessions, etc.).			
Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider future concession facilities at major facilities. 	District Staff	Staff Time	Mid-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage rentals at existing and new facilities. (This may require expanded rental policies.) 	District Staff, Board	Staff Time	Short-Term

C. Acquisition Needs

The priority focus for this plan in the first five years is on maintaining and improving the current parks and recreation system. There is some interest in the mid to long-term in exploring opportunities for land for additional ballfields, although there are challenges to finding appropriate land to accommodate this use in a mountain community.

To realize a connected trail system in Meeker, the Town should work collaboratively with other jurisdictions on a trails plan that includes identification of opportunities for easements with private developers and landowners.

D. Capital Improvement Plan Projects

The proposed capital project recommendations for this Master Plan are summarized in **Table 10**. (Additional detail is found in the Implementation Chart included earlier in this chapter.) These estimates are based on 2012 dollars and include an approximate 15 percent contingency. *Note: Cost estimates are not included in this table for additional trails and potential expansion to the Meeker Recreation Center (see **Appendix D** for cost estimates for the MRC Addition Concept Plan).*

Table 10: Capital Improvement Plan Projects

Project	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Ongoing
11th Street Park		\$75,000		
12th Street Park			\$180,000	
6th Street Park		\$247,000		
Circle Park	\$364,000			
Town Park	\$920,000			
Paintbrush Park	\$1,495,000			
Sage Hills Park	\$322,000			
*Sanderson Hills Park	X			
*Phillip & Dorcas Jensen Memorial Park	X			
Barone Middle School		X		
Meeker High School		X		
Trail Connectivity				X
Add Loop walk to Town Park	X			
TOTAL	\$3,101,000	\$322,000	\$180,000	

**Projects under construction at the time of this Master Plan.*

Note: Before any park changes, such as additions, renovations and demolitions are made, a site master plan needs to be completed for each park and trail system. Ultimately, a public process should be followed to engage ownership for each project and typically includes additional coordination meetings with the Town, County, Bureau of Land Management, etc. Each park budget needs to take into consideration the design fees, including sub consultant fees such as architecture, civil engineering, geotechnical engineering, etc. to complete the master plan. Design fees are approximately 2-3% of the park/trail construction budget which can vary depending on the final design and associated decisions made throughout the design process.

Appendix A – Public Meeting and Focus Group Notes

Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation & Park District Recreation, Parks and Trails Master Plan Project

Focus Group & Public Meeting Notes

PUBLIC MEETING NOTES

January 11, 2012 – 6 pm
Meeker Recreation Center

Attendees: 14

Mickey Reagle
Anthony & Dee Weiss
Bobby Gutierrez
Laurie & Gary Zellers
Ellene Meece
Dian Dabney
Mindy Burke
Kellie & James Jex
Bob Amick
Joe Fennessy
Clara Dupire

How long have you been a resident of Rio Blanco County?

- a. 4 have lived here less than 5 years
- b. 1 for 5-9 years
- c. 3 for 10-19 years
- d. 7 for 20+ years

Values & Vision

1. What do you and other residents in Eastern Rio Blanco County value most about parks and recreation?
 - Involvement in community events: social gathering, connections, fall festival – District made a big difference
 - Availability of staff and accommodation of new ideas; responsiveness and quickness
 - Promoting healthy lifestyles, giving kids things to do
 - Improvement in property value
2. What is your vision for future of parks, recreation, trails, and open space services in Eastern Rio Blanco County?
 - More outside recreation such as trail systems: hiking, biking
 - More partnership between District and Scenic Byway, BLM, Forest Service
 - Promotion of what there is to do

- Activities that are consistent week by week: example – Country Western Dancing, dish to pass, fundraising (adult and family) – events like these can pay for themselves
- Partnerships – bring people together – County, Town, BLM, avoid duplicate administration and equipment
- River walk on south side of river (avoid the private owner issue)
- Trail connection to Yampa
- Bowling alley
- Ropes Course

Mission

3. How would you describe the mission or purpose of the District?
 - Create opportunities for people and entities to engage with the District; bring people together to partner
 - Wellness and balance for every age group
 - Family concept for a town of this size – we are all in this together
 - Continuing to enhance the creative side
 - Education – partner with Historical Society
 - Cultural offerings
4. Who is the District intended to serve?
 - Taxpayers
 - Visitors
5. Are there any services that the District should not be involved in?
 - Not retail type of business – tour company for example

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

6. What are strengths of the facilities and services of the Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Park District? What is working well?
 - The Recreation Center
 - Variety of activities for all ages; started out with a large focus on seniors, kids have really
 - Recreation Center is one of the best things that has happened to Meeker
 - Very consistent and very high level of staff customer service
 - Safe facility
 - Town Park, Paintbrush Park, other neighborhood parks
7. What are the District's weaknesses? What's not working well as well?
 - Keep in mind that not everyone can pay for services, trails are very important – need to keep in mind for this planning process
 - Saturday and Sunday, pool not open until 11 am
 - Need more room and equipment; need to enlarge parts of the facility
 - Too many rules for the kiddy pool
 - Pilates machines that were donated can't be fully used because of lack of dedicated space

- Too many handicapped parking spaces that go unused
 - Inadequate performing arts space. High School auditorium is a good space, but not in good shape. Not big enough for some events
 - Vacant, unusable tennis courts
8. What are opportunities for improvements or changes?
- Partnership opportunity with Chamber of Commerce
 - More indoor recreation spaces needed

Master Plan

9. Are there any other key issues in Eastern Rio Blanco County community that need to be considered while developing this update to the master plan?
- We are a boom and bust community – need to be responsive to changes
 - Hesitancy to increase taxes
 - Reach out to up river folks – especially those who are here for a short time each year. See what they could bring to us and what we could bring to them. (Could offer educational hikes with BLM.) Those individuals enjoy the Recreation Center. They have the capability to build a center up there. Elk Creek has a private club. Some have made donations to the District.
 - Reach out to oil and gas industry.
 - Performing arts are 5th largest economic engine in Colorado – Theater companies, drama schools. Current attendance in Meeker for these types of facility is very strong. Summer concert series is very well attended (upwards of 500). Program is also starting in the winter at the Meeker Café. Gypsum Days is a good example of an events program.
10. What are top priorities for the District to address in the future?
- Expansion of recreation center
 - Trails
 - Swimming pool – good teachers for the kids, need to add lanes for competition. Old swimming pool – can we partner with the schools for PE program so that all kids learn to swim. Eight lanes or more can be used for many more purposes, diving pool also allows flexibility – if you build it they will come.
 - Fitness studio space
 - Consistent activities all year long (1st and 3rd Friday for example), like Bingo
 - More programs for adults

FOCUS GROUP NOTES

Focus Group #1: Government Stakeholders

January 9, 2012 – 6 pm

Meeker Recreation Center

Attendees: 7 (plus staff and consultant team)

Sharon Day – Town of Meeker

Kimberly Bullen – Rio Blanco County

Susan Goettel and Iris Franklin – Meeker School District

Ken Harman – Pioneers Medical Center/Health Services District

Ken Coffen – Forest Service

Kent Walter – BLM

Anne Miller, Chris Dropinski – GreenPlay

Shanen Weber – Design Concepts

Mike Weinbrecht – ERBMPRD

1. What are the strengths of the Eastern Rio Blanco County Metropolitan Recreation and Park District services and facilities?
 - Full parking lot at recreation center
 - Opportunity to work with District to get people out on public lands – ski and hiking trails
 - Outstanding level of customer service, types of classes offered; Classes and programs are varied, free swim days, movie days
 - Outreach to community is great both for the center and programs outside of the center – sports, adult programs
 - Great opportunity for nexus – especially Dorcas Jensen property
 - Rec center not just important to Meeker, but also to Craig, Rifle, etc.
 - Opportunity for economic benefit through recreation center
 - Concert series, other opportunities to enjoy indoor and outdoor activities
 - Great aquatics center – my children like to come
 - Some other services could be added too
 - Work well with partners, go out of their way to be helpful
 - Strengthens the community; new people see the facility and want to locate here, a good neighbor
 - Activity tonight at center is testament to wonderful services
 - Partnership with school district
 - Town of Meeker partnership with park transfer; trails
 - District funding mechanism is strong with ability to grow programs and services
 - Target all age groups in the community
 - Swim team started again this past spring
 - Dr.'s have the ability to give a free pass to patients to use recreation center

2. What improvement/changes would you make to the parks and recreation system?
 - Building a trails system from the community out and within the Town; easily accessible from a variety of places in the community; ability to accommodate a variety of uses – multiple use or areas of different uses; defined trails; ability to host cross country meets; fun trail run, soft surface; bikers- mountain and cruiser bikes; metered for guidance; safe access to schools and center, cross walks, lighted trail heads/parking areas; signage; need to engage private landowners; could look at undeveloped alleys and easements; areas down near the river
 - River walk that could tie into the trail system
 - Alcohol and drug use among youth has been identified in a recent hospital assessment process. Teens won't drop in to the recreation center because there is not a gym. They can work out at the school. The Underground is a privately operated teen gathering space in town. Offerings are limited, maybe could start something with other recreation centers.
 - Town Park (near Pizza Hut) doesn't feel safe because of setting. Needs better fence.
 - (Mike identified 2012 improvements to be made to existing parks)

3. Are there programs/services or facilities you would like to see that are not currently offered?
 - Gym for pick-up games
 - Tennis for students and adults – failing tennis facilities now
 - Outdoor basketball court
 - Room for the donated Pilates machines that can't be used now because of lack of space
 - More fitness space
 - Have to be able to sustain programs that are the foundation for the recreation center. Concern about programs becoming too expensive if transportation has to be factored in.
 - Babysitting at the center – had to be turned over for fitness use – many mention that they would like to have this back
 - Transportation is a hardship for families; current collaboration between County, Hospital, and District – County has two busses, hospital drives the busses for senior program. Perhaps could use for youth programs to compete against other communities. Also brings other people to our community. Also room for partnership with the school regarding bus transportation.
 - Ski bus

4. What are the key issues and values to be considered while developing this Plan?
 - Funding and amount of taxes citizens pay to county, town, district, school district, etc.
 - Hospital is doing their master plan now. Can we add services without increasing taxes?
 - Maintain existing services at high quality level
 - Anything new requires new maintenance and operations expense – need to be sensitive to this
 - Communicate positive changes in the works – community needs to be aware. Go outside of recreation center users – others need to know about park improvements and how money is being used. Summer concerts gather a very different crowd – could improve that venue and use that to inform folks about what the District is doing
 - Track various age groups to see who is and is not being served
 - Connection to public lands – need to create connection (no child left inside) so that value remains intact for the next generation

5. What are some trends in Eastern Rio Blanco that will impact parks and recreation planning?
- Cost of living here is not low
 - Volleyball is very popular – especially for girls
 - Soccer is growing
 - Need for drop in activities is great
 - Games like ping pong, pool
 - Outdoor ping pong – like in Rifle
 - Fine arts are in need of space – town is equipped with expertise to instruct
 - More web users all the time
 - County completed travel management plan, USFS is gearing up to do comprehensive travel planning – lots of interest in this area
 - Informal network – groups like hunters – how do you reach them
 - Adopt a trail – BLM can help with addressing this
6. How can the District best partner or collaborate with your organization?
- Schools have early release one day per week – need to provide some programming
 - Schools for busses
 - Schools – use of school space
 - Schools – partnership with school (older kids) and district (young kids) drama programs
 - Schools – take advantage of co-location
 - Schools – once school facility is resolved, could be some opportunity to use admin building gym (limited because there are no locker room facilities)
 - Schools – trail system connections
 - Hospital and County Nurses – classes for healthy cooking, nutrition, health promotion
 - BLM and Forest Service – partner to connect kids to public lands like Trapper Lake and Canyon Pintado; educate about public lands – programs, kiosk in lobby, materials available
 - All – work together to communicate and provide marketing, messaging to the community. Chamber of Commerce is a good partner for this; notes to parents that go home to parents, web presence linkages.

FOCUS GROUP NOTES

Focus Group #2: Meeker Recreation Center Members/Facility Users

January 10, 2012 – 7 am

Meeker Recreation Center

Attendees: 9

Curtis Cooper

Marnell Bradfield

Anthony Mazzola

Georgann Amack

Joe Fennessy

Travis Mobley

Joan Overton

Pat Daggett

Rob Baughman

Meeker Recreation Center

1. What do you like best about the Meeker Recreation Center (e.g., facility, programs, staff, etc.)?
 - Nice, clean, modern facility
 - Something for everyone
 - Hours of operation (early)
 - Pilates machines
 - Pool
 - Kids and summer programs (e.g., dance, softball, etc.)
 - Recreation Center is also supportive other health-related programs (e.g., run event with hospital)
 - Staff is friendly, well-qualified, trained staff
 - Several choices of classes
 - Staff is open to new ideas and is willing to work with you to bring in a program (e.g., scuba diving)
 - Good meeting rooms (with a kitchen)
 - Yoga classes
 - Nice senior programs
 - 50% off the first month of January
2. What Recreation Center improvements may be needed for the future and why?
 - Like to see baseball four-plex near the MRC to have tournaments
 - Gym addition (basketball, handball/racquetball, indoor walking track)
 - Built too small – not big enough pool (would like six lanes), not enough multipurpose rooms (for multiple classes)
 - Need for a training facility for locals and oil and gas, other
 - More rooms for Pilates, yoga, etc.

3. Are there programs/services or facilities you would like to see that are not currently offered?
- Having knowledgeable staff on the fitness floor to help people how to use the equipment or have an equipment orientation program
 - Strengthening collaborations with the schools and other groups to use facilities
 - MRC taking on a performing arts program and center (proposal being discussed to upgrade the HS auditorium or have a separate center at the old Administration building)

Overall System

4. What are the strengths of the overall Eastern Rio Blanco parks and recreation services and facilities?
- Kids programs (e.g., activities during holiday breaks, summer, etc.)
 - Senior activities – provide social and exercise opportunities
 - Meeker Streaker – most towns don't have it (seniors and special needs population transportation – partnership between the County and hospital)
 - Moving forward with a trail system
 - 5-mile trail connector between U Park and Dorcas Jensen Park is planned – approved by Volunteers of Colorado to help build the trail
 - Have a separate funding source as a District; the taxpayers are aware of the funding that the District
 - Multi-use of the ballfields
 - Motivation of staff
 - Co-ed adult softball
 - Adult events – pool volleyball, triathlon, etc.
5. What are the key issues and values to be considered while developing this Plan?
- Fiscal responsibility of the districts in the community (on business owners and residents mind); public relations and being very transparent to keep people well-informed; use the grapevine because it's very strong in the community
 - Communication (once a week newspaper)
 - Most happens through the grapevine; District would like to improve website and increase e-communication; currently the website isn't effective; community still lags behind other communities with e-communication; mailings may be the best way to communicate
 - Don't know when meetings are; Chamber uses bulletin board at library; other ideas – Rifle has a streaming marquee with information
 - Family-oriented community, parents get involved with their kids
 - Important for District to play a big role in the health and fitness of the community
 - Up river (big houses – a lot are seasonal, couple donated Pilates machines, Elk Creek – have a clubhouse, Mike Walker is a contact); talk of a golf course up river; this part of the District needs to be acknowledged
 - Public building infrastructure concerns (e.g., school); communication is a key issue; Chamber of Commerce communicates well, Town and County have a difficult time with communication
 - Communication – don't know when meetings are, bulletin board at library; other ideas – Rifle has a streaming marquee with information
 - Patriotism is strong; BFW has a scholarship program (kids essay on patriotism) – MRC could help promote these values

6. What improvement/changes would you make to the parks and recreation system?
 - Signage at parks to let the people know that the District is responsible for maintenance, upkeep, and improvements; need to name some of parks
 - Improve road bike safety – in coordination with other agencies
 - Trails – ownership issues along the river
7. What partnership opportunities exist?
 - Chamber of Commerce – activities to bring in visitors
 - Trails
 - River walk – easement on north side of river, on the south side is a cliff, just need to carve out a trail; Steamboat Springs, Vail, etc. all have river walks
 - Trails using the topography, hills
 - Bird watching
 - Flyfishing – Division of Wildlife; trout fishing
 - Disc golf (is an add/alternate to Dorcas Jensen Park); used to have one at Paintbrush Park but it wasn't used a lot
 - Recreation District can help be a catalyst to bring together County, Town, etc.; changing of leadership – this may be a good time
 - Marketing director at hospital, active with Chamber of Commerce – good outreach to oil and gas

FOCUS GROUP NOTES

Focus Group #3: Active Adults/Seniors

January 10, 2012 – 9 am

Meeker Recreation Center

Attendees: 13

Mickey Tucker

Sharon Clapper

Chris Strate

Zubie Devish

Dorothy Chappell

Sherry Jordan

M. Elaine Jordan

Doris Walters

Doris Welle

Elaine Pearce

Dick Prosen

Red Leavith

Diana French

Meeker Recreation Center

1. What do you like best about the Meeker Recreation Center (e.g., facility, programs, staff, etc.)?
 - Senior programs: trips, explore the state
 - Friendliness of staff
 - Cleanliness of facility – even locker rooms; fitness equipment
 - Welcoming of spaces – lobby; time and hours
 - It is “ours”
 - Pool
 - Why mess with perfection – this is amazing for Meeker!
 - Variety of programs
2. What Recreation Center improvements may be needed for the future and why?
 - Equipment upgrades: it gets a lot of use – maintenance and servicing
 - Transportation – to the center (two more vans have been purchased)
 - Need ability to get into center through use of a wheelchair that is provided by the center (could use donations of chairs)
 - Lobby can be very cold unless there is a large group - card playing is chilly (some heating improvements were made in last year)
 - Larger classrooms to accommodate more people
 - Shades for the pool for east side
 - Shade for a door in the lobby
 - Outdoor lounge/picnic/patio area/deck with umbrellas/shade
 - Mini bowling lanes (closest is Craig or Rifle); Bocce

3. Are there programs/services or facilities you would like to see that are not currently offered?

- Add Tai Chi class
- Low impact exercise
- Pilates – put machines in use; need dedicated space
- Craft fair opportunity or craft work opportunity; stained glass classes
- Artisans market/demonstration to determine interest and followed by classes (don't interfere, but possibly partner, with CMCC classes)
- Tubing, ice fishing, canoeing, Meeker to Rangely canoe event
- Small tournaments: checkers, chess
- Youth volunteer program in exchange for use; mentoring
- BBQ facilities at parks
- Hut for checkout of small game equipment
- Dance for singles

Overall System

4. What are the strengths of the overall Eastern Rio Blanco parks and recreation services and facilities?

- 4 ballfields
- Playgrounds
- Experience of skepticism with initial concept of recreation center have turned very positive – it has created jobs, we use it everyday
- Hours center is open

5. What are the key issues and values to be considered while developing this Plan?

- Family – all ages
- History – gate at yellow jacket, Thornburg Battleground, and other locations (historical society – also has walking tour of Meeker)
- Communications
- Collaboration – not duplication
- Coordination among all government
- Community Center – very good investment

6. What improvement/changes would you make to the parks and recreation system?

- Ice skating (take donations of old skates)
- Trail system for bikes and walking; non-aggressive opportunities (easier, lower elevations)
- Tennis Courts – there is a demand and not usable courts now
- Outdoor basketball – old elementary school is heavily used
- Indoor basketball
- Dog park (have leash law currently, but it is not enforced; dogs are prone to chasing) – fenced, room to run; A lot of people walk their dogs every day
- Town parks – picnic area on the river at Circle Park; tubing on White River; canoe trips; kayaking
- Orient staff and community members how to work with people with disabilities to provide more access to center and outdoor activities

7. What partnership opportunities exist?
 - Historical Society
 - 4-H
 - Schools
 - CNCC – Colorado Northwestern Community College
 - Chamber of Commerce
8. Where do you get your information about events and activities? What the best way for the District to provide you information?
 - Need a community calendar
 - District brochure is wonderful
 - Mail
 - Newspaper
 - Radio?
 - Access for disabled desired – hearing, sight

FOCUS GROUP NOTES

Focus Group #4: Youth

January 10, 2012 – 11:30 am

Meeker Recreation Center

Attendees: 12

Reno Roybal

Reagan Pearce

Robby Jensen

Jordan Smith

Devon Pontine

Scott Smith

Sam Nieslanik

Nick Burri

Alex Smith

Faith Patterson

Lathrop Hughes

Amanda Kendall

1. When you have free time, where do you go for recreation?
 - Mountain bike – go to Keystone
 - Basketball – outdoor court at elementary school
 - Movies at home
 - Bowling in Rifle
 - Meeker Recreation Center (MRC) – workout
 - Snowboarding (Sunlight or Steamboat)
 - Dirtbiking
 - Snowmobiling
 - Drama at High School
 - Dance classes at MRC
 - Watch TV
 - Sports at High School
2. What parks and recreation facilities do you currently use (e.g., the Meeker Recreation Centers, parks, etc.)? Why?
 - MRC
 - Trails by Dorcas Jensen for cross country training
 - Sometimes use the Fay Action Park for skating (too small)
 - Hiking – Hanging Lake in Glenwood
 - Circle Park in the summer
 - Float the river
 - Golf

2.a. Do you or members of your household currently use Meeker Recreation Center? What do you like to do at the Center?

- Like the pool – slide, lazy river, diving board, basketball hoop
- When do you use? Afternoon
- Exercise equipment – four use (but don't take fitness classes); yes, it's available when they want to use it
- Use dance room for classes; can also drop in and use
- Use the vending machine

2.b. What other parks and recreation facilities in the area do you use?

- High School – gyms (have open gym at 6 am), weight room, organized sports

3. What are the key strengths of the programs and facilities operated by the Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation & Park District? What should we keep and celebrate?

- Natural areas – want to keep and preserve
- After school activities
- Community festivals and special events (e.g., movies, concerts)
- Playgrounds
- Baseball fields
- Swimming pools
- Teen dances (at Fairfield Center)

4. What needs to be improved or added (i.e., new recreation facilities, etc.)?

- MRC
 - indoor gym
 - Rock climbing wall
 - More equipment
 - 2 side towers with weights (pec fly machine)
 - Biometrics machines
- More places for basketball
- Interested in volleyball
- Lacrosse
- Dirt bike area
- Mountain biking
- More running trails
- Batting cages
- Dog park – exercise for the dog, fenced in, interact with other dogs
- Amusement park
- Archery range – better targets
- Better baseball fields so we can play games – bring them up to standards
- Track improvements
- Boxing area
- Ice hockey (can go to Craig, Glenwood)
- Game areas – pool, video; the Underground space is not big enough – only Friday nights; would like to see expanded times such as Saturday nights
- Larger skate park

5. If you could design an ideal park, what would it have in it?
 - Outdoor basketball
 - Mountain biking park
 - Batting cages
 - Go cart track
 - Laser tag
 - Rock climbing
 - Zip line
 - Slack line (balancing)
 - Dog park
6. What programs or special events would you like to participate in? (Also, see responses to question #4.)
 - Lacrosse
 - Volleyball
 - Tennis courts
 - Later night events for teens– dances, movies, midnight basketball, karaoke
 - Tournaments – baseball, basketball, lacrosse, water polo, etc.
 - Teen pool party
 - Teen nights
 - Chess club
 - Ping pong, games
7. Where do you get your information about events and activities? What the best way for the District to provide you information?
 - Texting
 - Email
 - Facebook, Twitter
 - Flyers and announcements at school
 - Banners

OTHER

What do you like about Meeker community?

- It's safe, know everyone, outdoor recreation, MRC

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Appendix B – Survey Report

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Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation & Park District Master Plan Survey



Spring 2012

Prepared for:

*Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan
Recreation & Park District*

Prepared by:

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METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to gather public feedback on parks, recreation, open space and trails, programs and services provided by the Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Parks District in order to assist the District in the creation of a Recreation, Parks, and Trails Master Plan. Emphasis was put on providing critical information on community values, satisfaction levels, needs and priorities for District planning efforts.

The survey was conducted using three methods: 1) a mail-back survey, 2) an online invitation only survey, and 3) an open link online survey for members of the public who did not receive a randomly selected survey in the mail. No responses were received to the open link survey, and as such, the analysis herein focuses on surveys received via the first two methods which represent the randomly selected sample of residents.

Two list sources were purchased and utilized for the mailing; 1) a third party list purchased from Melissa Data Corp., and 2) the Rio Blanco County tax assessors list, which identifies home owners who pay taxes into the District. The list purchased from Melissa Data also includes renters in the sample who are frequently missed in other list sources such as utility billing lists and the assessors list (Melissa Data is a leading provider of data quality solutions with emphasis on U.S., Canadian, and international address and phone verification). While efforts were made to build the most comprehensive list possible given the absence of a “master” list of residents from the District, anyone that did not receive a survey in the mail was able to call and have one mailed to them.

The final sample size for the random survey was 230, resulting in a response rate of 14.4 percent (of the estimated 1,594 households in the District) and having a margin of error of approximately +/- 6.5 percentage points calculated for questions at 50% response¹. The underlying data for the random sample responses were weighted by age to ensure appropriate representation of District residents across different demographic cohorts in the overall sample.

¹ For the total sample size of 230, margin of error is +/-6.46 percent calculated for questions at 50% response (if the response for a particular question is “50%”—the standard way to generalize margin of error is to state the larger margin, which occurs for responses at 50%). Note that the margin of error is different for every single question response on the survey depending on the resultant sample sizes, proportion of responses, and number of answer categories for each question. Comparison of differences in the data between various segments, therefore, should take into consideration these factors. As a general comment, it is sometimes more appropriate to focus attention on the general trends and patterns in the data rather than on the individual percentages.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Based on current US Census data from ESRI, the age profile of residents is distributed as follows (which served as the basis for the weighting of the survey data): 20 to 34 years (21 percent), 35 to 44 (17 percent), 45 to 54 (22 percent), 55 to 64 (20 percent), 65 to 74 (11 percent), 75 and over (9 percent). The following demographic information is displayed in figures 1 through 5.

Family Status

- 41 percent of respondents were living in households with children at home
- 40 percent were “empty nesters” or singles or couples living in households with children no longer home
- 19 percent were singles or couples in households with no children

Age and Gender

- The average age was 50.5 years
- There was a fairly equal distribution of residents among all age categories from 25 years to 65 years and older.
- 66 percent of respondents were female, 34 percent were male

Years Lived in the Area and Household Size

- Average number of years living in the area: 21.2
- Average number of people per household: 2.7
- Average number of dogs per household: 1.2 (66 percent had at least one dog)

Location of Residence

- 69 percent of respondents live in the town of Meeker, 31 percent live outside of town
- Among those living outside of Meeker, 72 percent live within 10 miles of the Town

Own or Rent

- 83 percent of respondents own their residence
- 16 percent rent their residence

Income

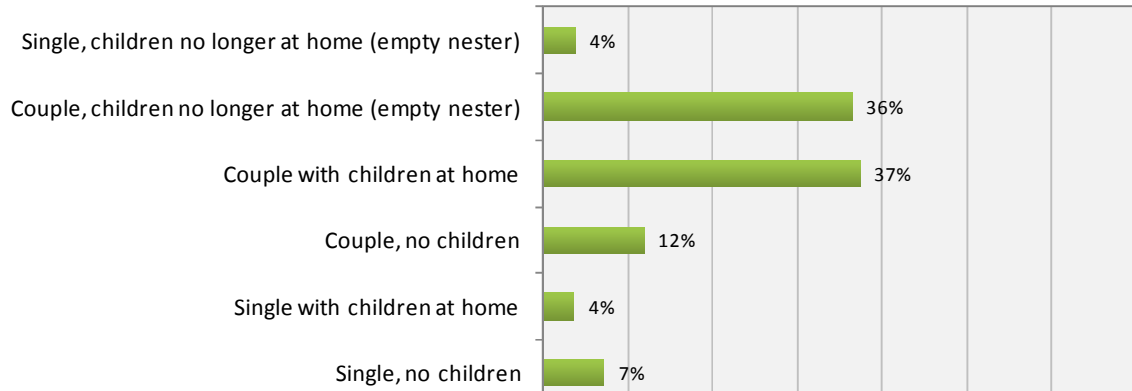
- 34 percent of households have an annual income of \$50,000 or below
- 49 percent between \$50,000 and \$99,999
- 17 percent \$100,000 or above

Other Household Characteristics

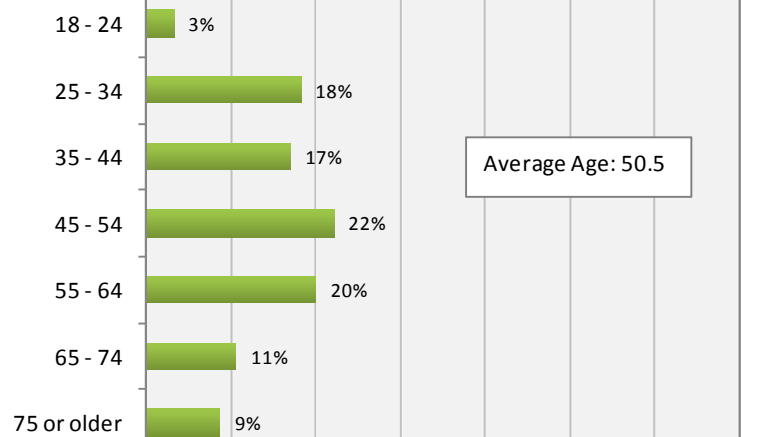
- 86 percent support the District with property taxes, 11 percent do not, and 3 percent don't know
- 3 percent have a need for ADA accessible facilities, services, and programs, 83 percent do not, and 14 percent don't know

Figure 1
Family, Age, and Gender

FAMILY STATUS



AGE



GENDER

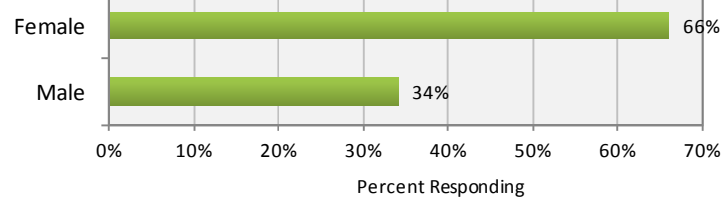


Figure 2
Years in Area, Household Size

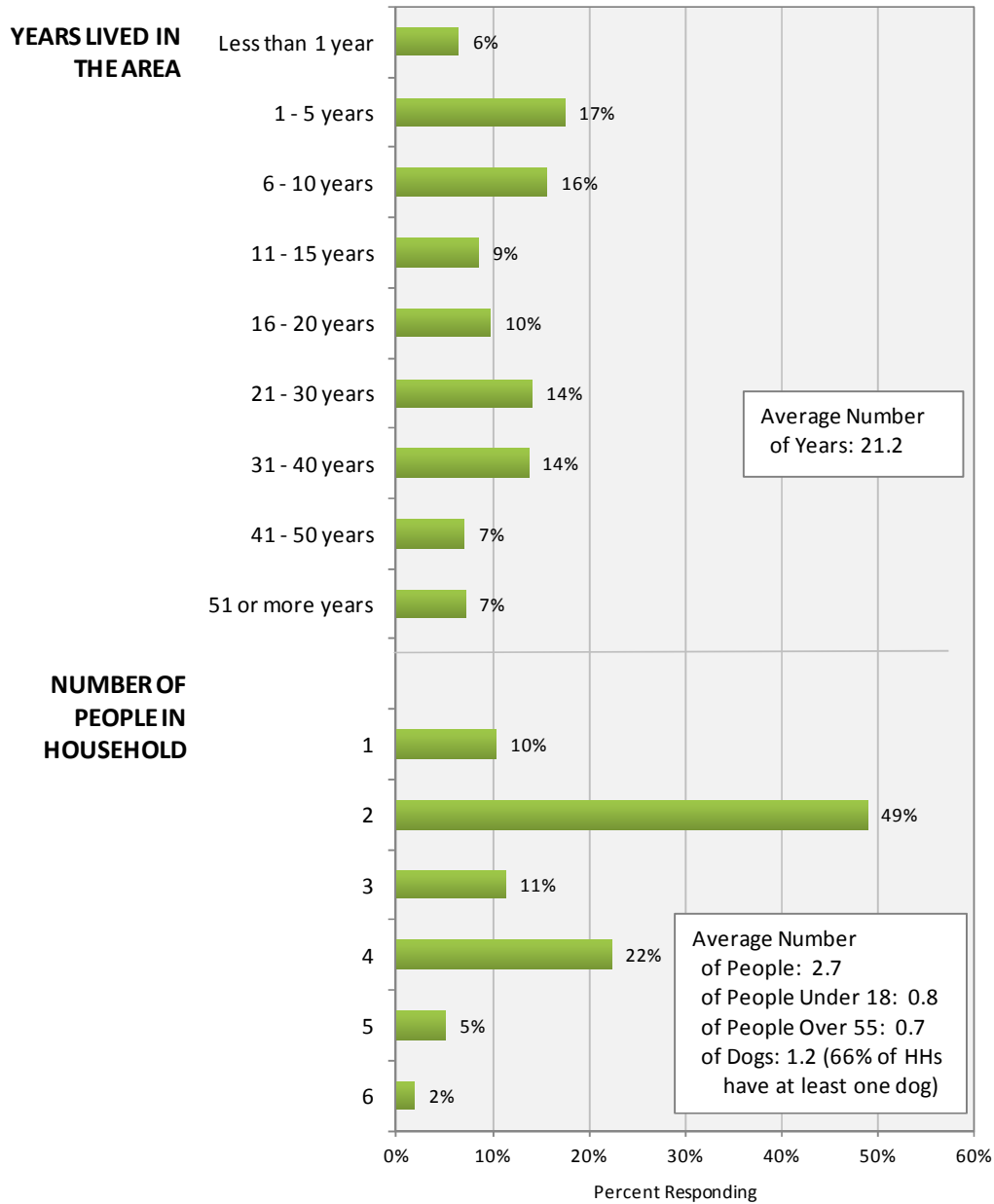


Figure 3
Location of Residents

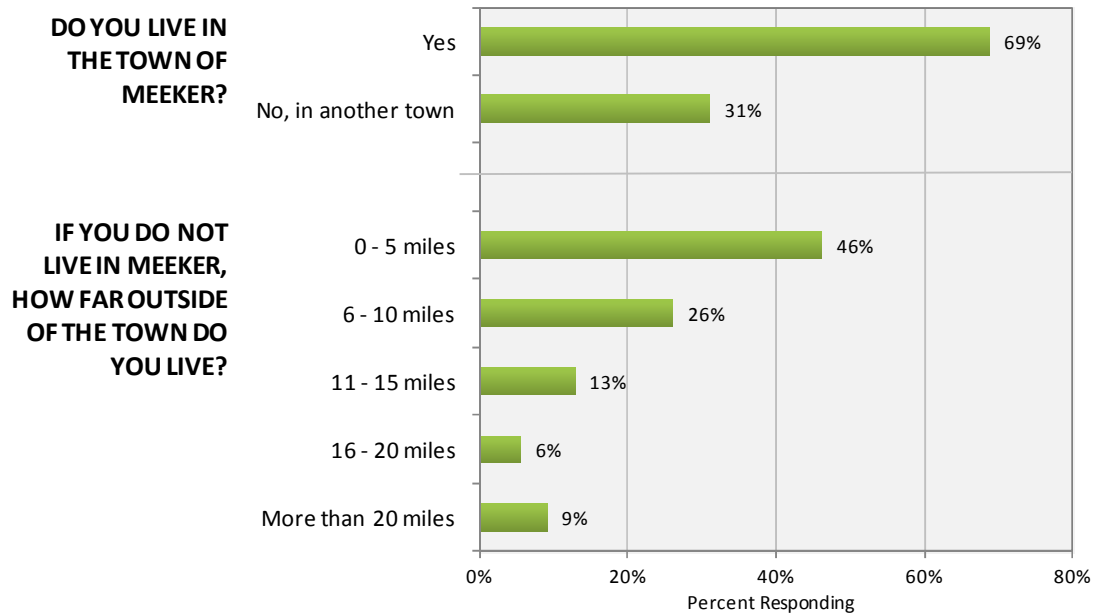


Figure 4
Ownership and Income

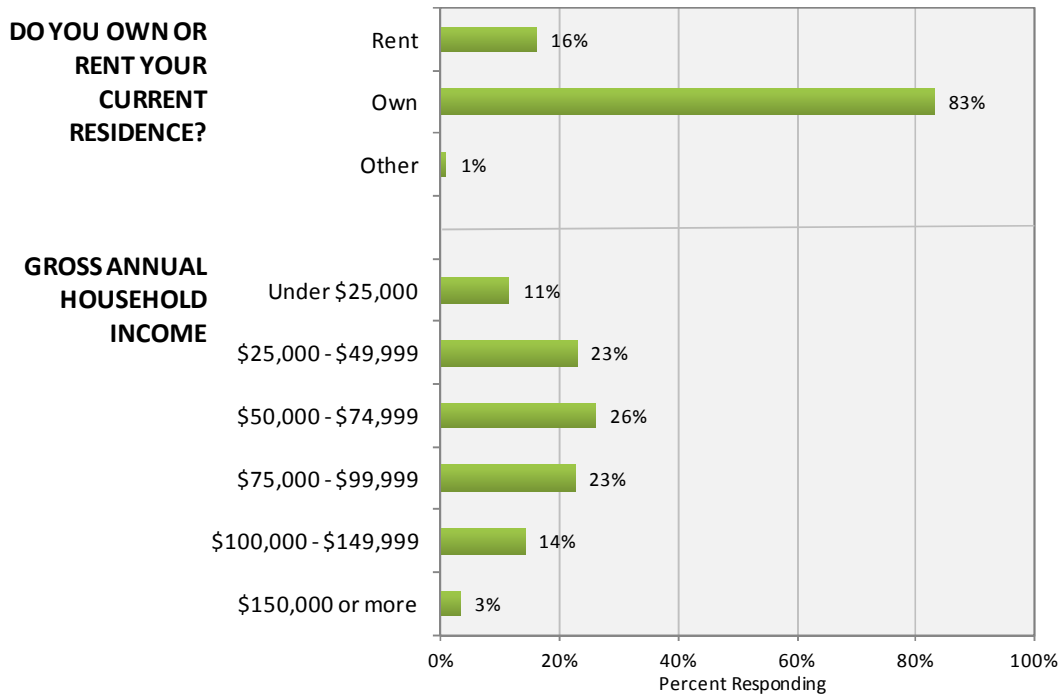
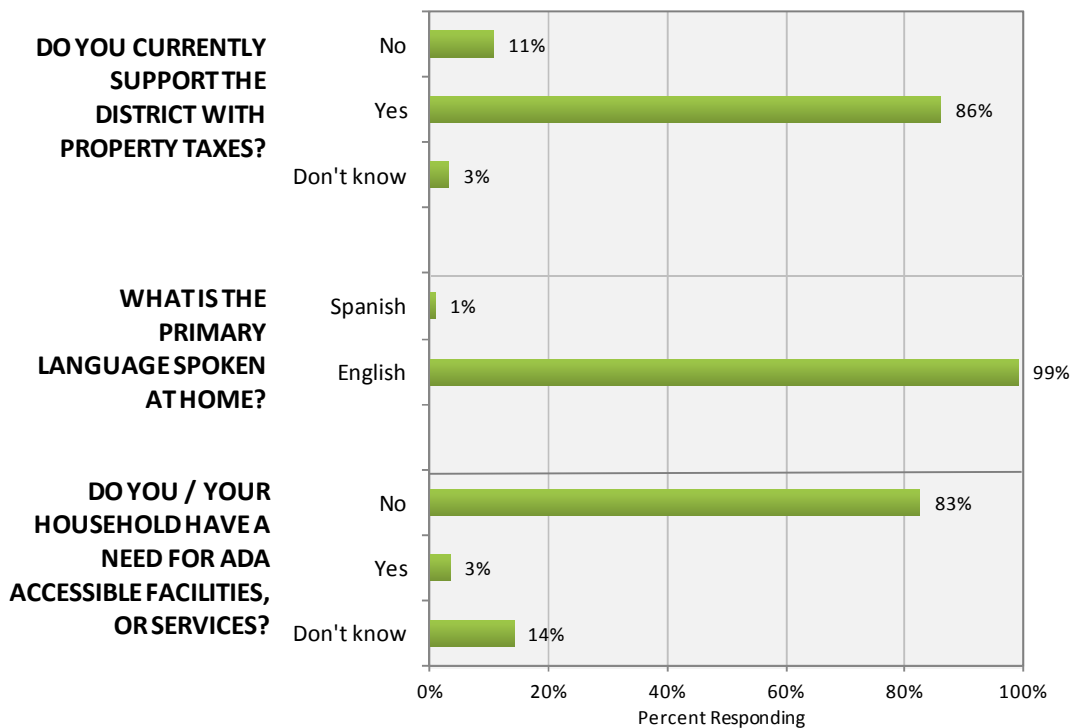


Figure 5
Taxes, Language, ADA



Highlights from the Analysis of Results

Key findings from the study are summarized in the sections that follow. Analysis focuses on the types of services and facilities residents want, level of current usage, alternative providers, quality and satisfaction levels with existing services and facilities, priorities for the future, and willingness to pay for new services and facilities. Additionally, several of the questions on the survey form allowed respondents to “write in” additional information or comments. Major themes that emerge from the comments are summarized in the report, while a complete set of the comments is provided as an appendix.

CURRENT PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

Usage Levels of Current Programs and Facilities

Respondents were asked approximately how many times in the last twelve months they (or someone in their household, including family members and guests) used specific facilities, amenities, and programs supported and managed by the District.

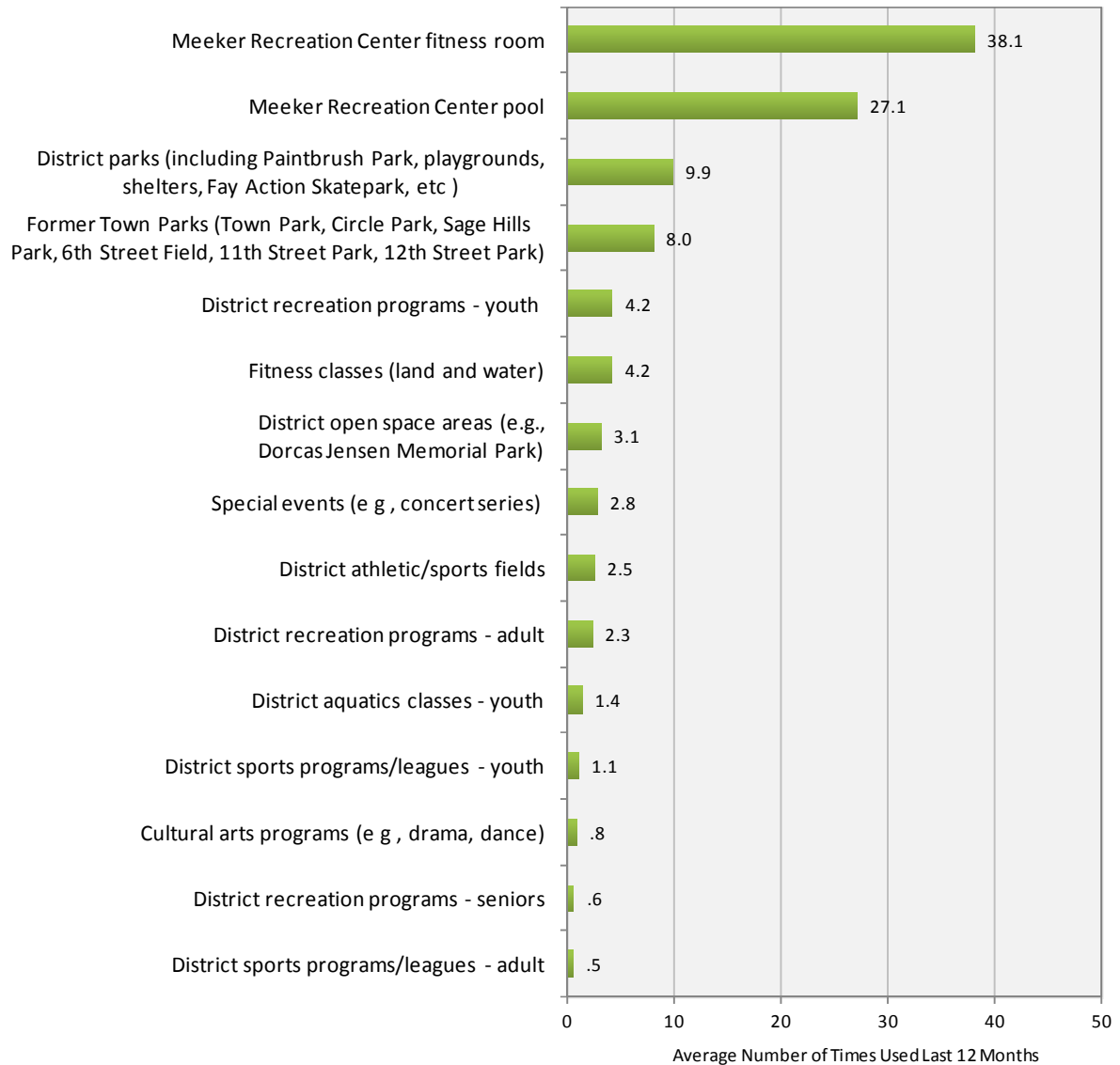
The following programs, facilities, and amenities were used most frequently over the past year by residents in the ERBMRP District:

- Meeker Recreation Center fitness room (38 times used on average in the last 12 months; roughly 3 times per month)
- Meeker Recreation Center pool (27 times; roughly twice per month)

Second tier of frequent usage:

- District parks (including Paintbrush Park, playgrounds, shelters, Fay Action Skatepark, etc.) (10 times)
- Former Town Parks (Town Park, Circle Park, Sage Hills Park, 6th Street Field, 11th Street Park, 12th Street Park) (8 times)
- District Recreation Programs – youth (4 times)
- Fitness classes (land and water) (4 times)
- District open space areas (e.g., Dorcas Jensen Memorial Park) (3 times)
- Special events (e.g., concert series) (3 times)

Figure 6
Current Program and Facility Frequency of Use



Importance of Current Programs and Facilities

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of each current program, facility and amenity to their household, using a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means “Not At All Important” and 5 means “Very Important.”

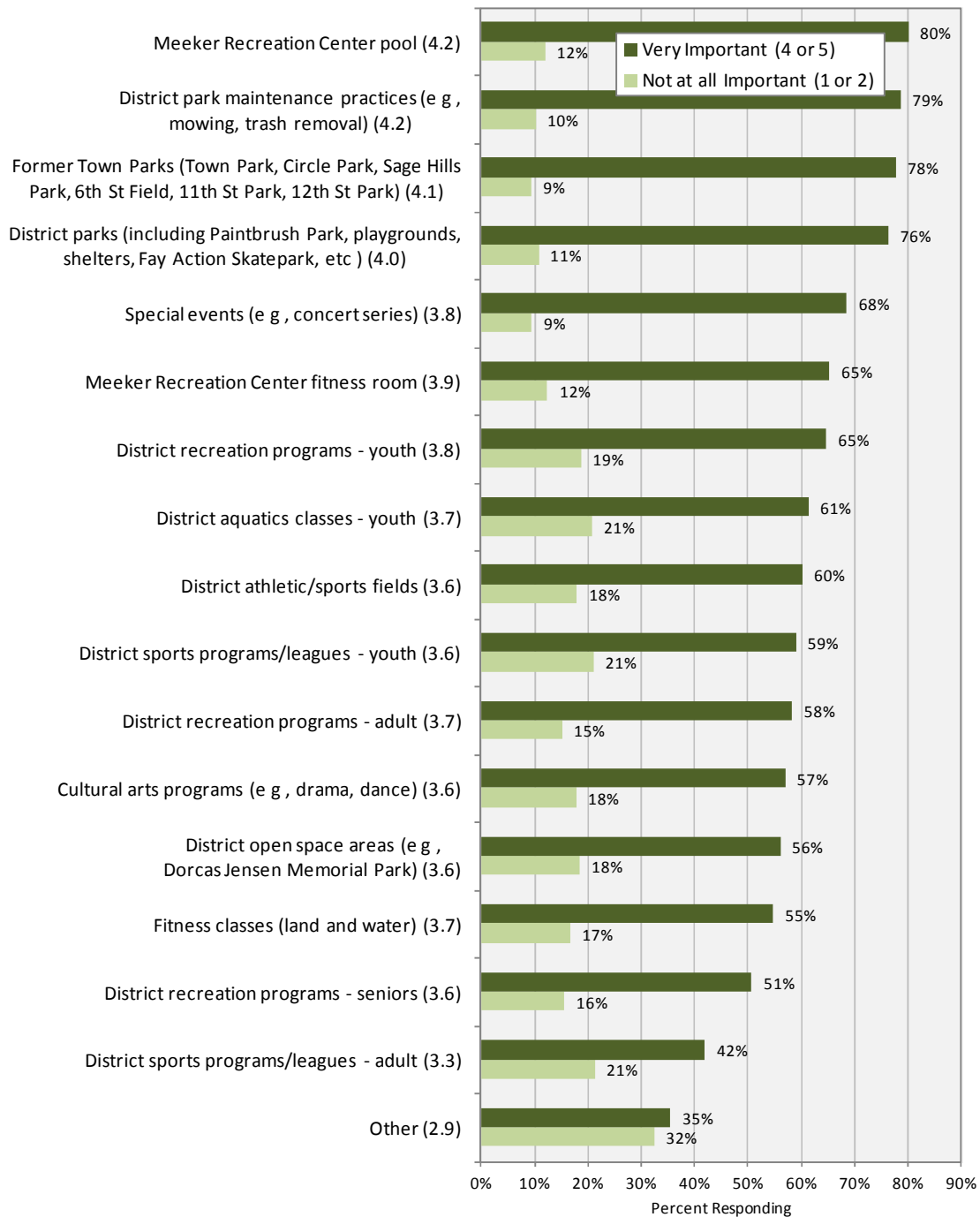
All but one of the programs and facilities were important to more than half of the community (the exception was the District sports programs / leagues – adult). The following were rated the highest in importance:

- Meeker Recreation Center Pool (80 percent of respondents rated this a 4 or 5 on a 5 point scale, or “Very important”)
- District park maintenance practices (e.g., mowing, trash removal) (79 percent)
- Former Town Parks (Town Park, Circle Park, Sage Hills Park, 6th Street Field, 11th Street Park, 12th Street Park) (78 percent)
- District parks (including Paintbrush Park, playgrounds, shelters, Fay Action Skatepark, etc.) (76 percent)

Second tier of importance:

- Special events (e.g., concert series) (68 percent)
- Meeker Recreation Center fitness room (65 percent)
- District recreation programs – youth (65 percent)

Figure 7
Importance of Current Facilities and Amenities to your Household



Degree to which Current Programs and Facilities are Meeting Household Needs

Respondents were then asked to rate the same list of current programs, facilities and amenities according to how well they meet the needs of their household.

The two programs and facilities that were the most important also received the most positive ratings for the degree to which needs are being met (the pool and park maintenance).

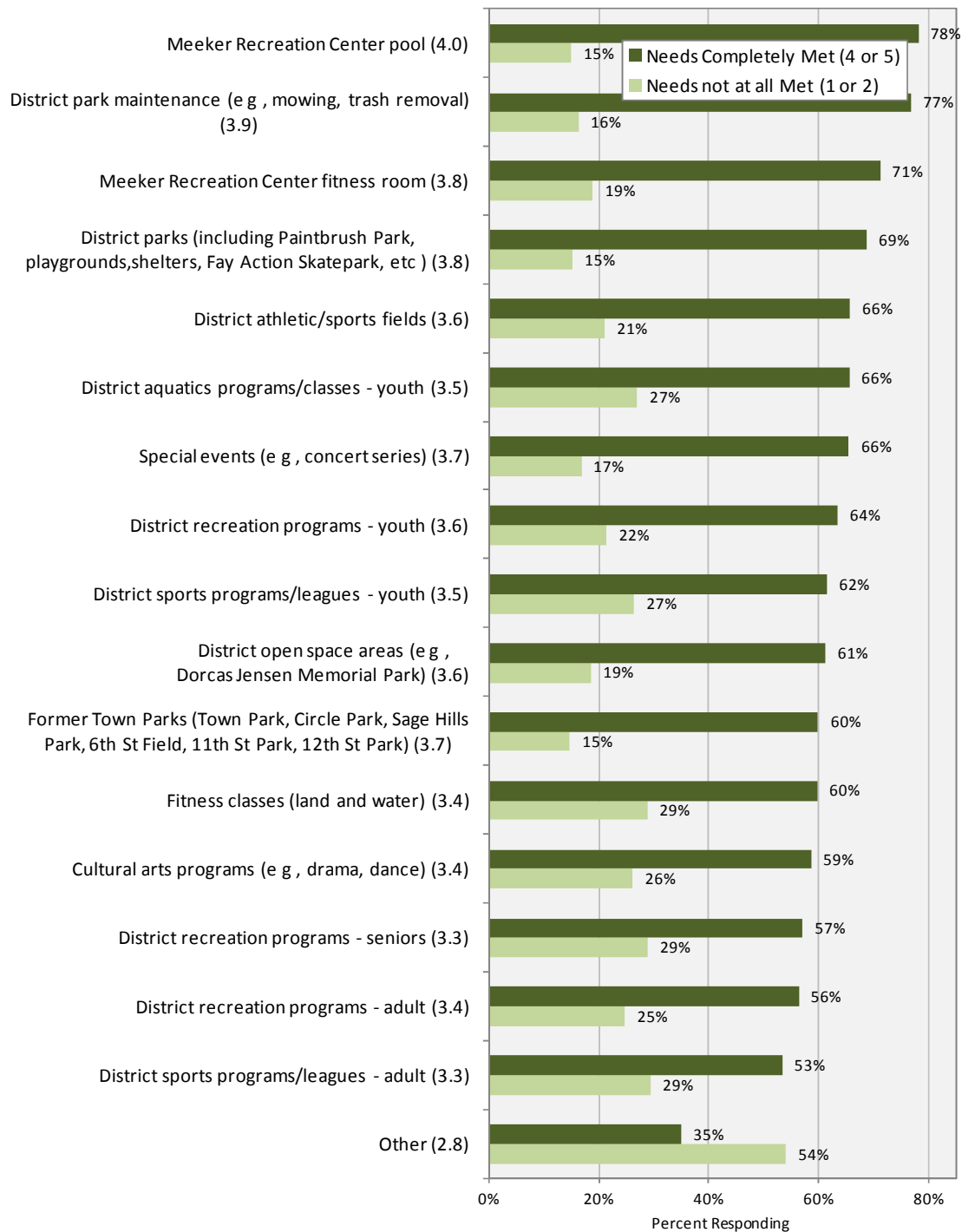
Programs, facilities and amenities rated highest in the degree to which needs are being met include:

- Meeker Recreation Center Pool (78 percent of respondents rated this a 4 or 5 on a 5 point scale, or “Needs completely met”)
- District park maintenance (e.g., mowing, trash removal) (77 percent)
- Meeker Recreation Center fitness room (71 percent)
- District parks (including Paintbrush Park, playgrounds, shelters, Fay Action Skatepark, etc.) (69 percent)

For all programs and facilities, the proportion of the community that indicated their needs were being met was larger than the proportion whose needs were not being met. However, there were some programs and facilities in which roughly one quarter to one third of respondents indicated their needs were not at all being met:

- District sports programs/leagues – adult (29 percent of respondents rated this a 1 or 2 or “Needs not at all met”)
- District recreation programs – seniors (29 percent)
- Fitness classes (land and water) (29 percent)
- District aquatics programs/classes – youth (27 percent)
- District sports programs/leagues – youth (27 percent)
- Cultural arts programs (e.g., drama, dance) (26 percent)
- District recreation programs – adult (25 percent)

Figure 8
Degree to which Current Facilities and Amenities are Meeting Household Needs



Current Programs and Facilities – Importance vs. Performance Matrix

It is instructive to compare and plot the importance scores against the performance scores in an “importance-performance” matrix. All of the programs and facilities listed in the survey fell into the “higher importance / higher level of needs being met” quadrant (when divided into quadrants using the 5 point scale midpoint of “3”). Thus, as illustrated in Figure 9, it is more revealing to look at the matrix using the midpoint of responses to both questions to divide the quadrants (importance scale midpoint was 3.7; needs-met midpoint was 3.6). This allows us to better ascertain the position of each location relative to each other.

The top programs and facilities listed previously as meeting the needs of the community and those having high importance are found in the top right quadrant. Maintaining these important assets is an essential function of ERBMRP District:

- District park maintenance practices (e.g. mowing, trash removal)
- Meeker Recreation Center pool
- Former Town Parks (Town Park, Circle Park, Sage Hills Park, 6th Street Field, 11th Street Park, 12th Street Park)
- District parks (including Paintbrush Park, playgrounds, shelters, Fay Action Skatepark, etc.)
- Meeker Recreation Center fitness room
- Special events (e.g. concert series)
- District recreation programs - youth

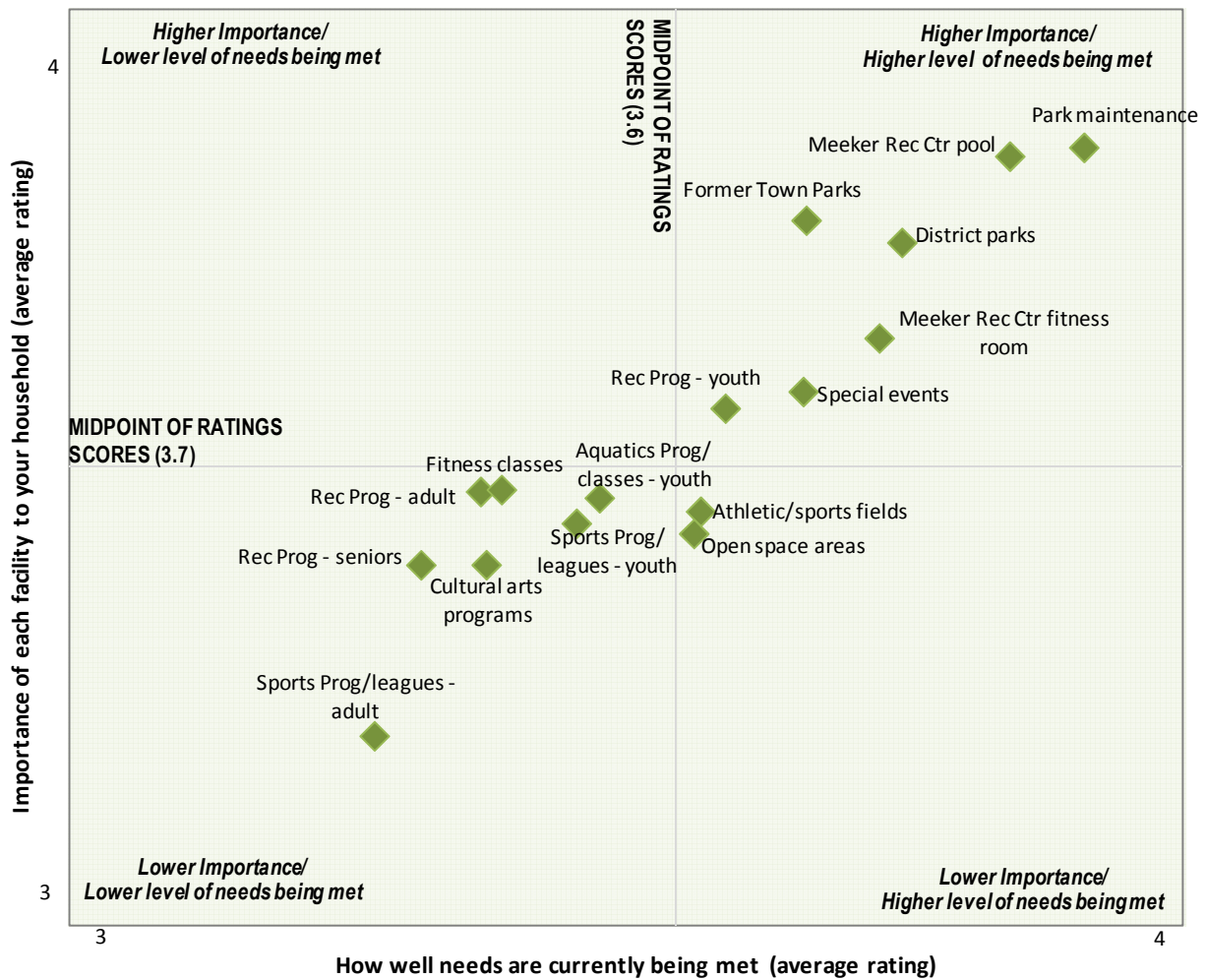
Programs and facilities located near or to the left of the needs-met midpoint (vertical) in Figure 9 and close to the importance midpoint (horizontal), indicate programs and facilities with the potential for making improvements of relatively high importance and that could have a strong impact on the degree to which needs are being met. These include:

- District recreation programs – adult
- Fitness classes (land and water)
- District aquatics programs/classes – youth
- District sports programs/leagues – youth
- Athletic/sports fields
- District Open Space Areas

Further below the importance midpoint (horizontal) and left of the needs-met midpoint (vertical), are programs not meeting needs particularly well, however, they are important to fewer members of the community. These “niche programs” may receive a small but passionate following; therefore, there is merit to measuring participation and planning for potential future enhancements accordingly.

- District recreation programs – seniors
- District sports programs/leagues – adult
- Cultural arts programs (e.g., drama, dance)

Figure 9
Current Facilities and Program - Importance vs. Needs-met matrix



Open Ended Comments

Responses that were written in to identify other important current facilities and programs included:

- *Gym availability; Archery; Playground; Lobby area for meetings and games*

Respondents were also asked how current programs, facilities and amenities can be improved to better meet the needs of the community. Table 1 lists the most prominent themes. The percent indicates the proportion that mentioned the topic (positive or negative). For specific examples of comments, see the quotes below and note that all comments are included in the appendix.

Table 1
Current Programs and Facilities – Suggestions for Improvement – General Themes

	Percent
Classes (types, space)	12%
Parks	11%
Maintenance/Cleaning	10%
Pool	10%
Times (Classes offered)	8%
Playgrounds	7%
Equipment	5%
Lower fees/taxes	4%
Access	3%
Gym Space	3%
Seniors	3%
Trails	3%
Childcare	2%
Concerts	2%
Dogs	2%
Ice rink	2%
Restrooms	2%
Tennis	2%
Archery	1%
Drugs	1%
More info	1%
Schools	1%
Softball	1%
Track	1%
	100.0%

Example Comments

- *It is hard to understand when a popular class like yoga has to be put into a small room and people turned away*
- *I would like to see more adult fitness classes offered and at a time when a working person could use them, for example 5-7PM*
- *More evening fitness classes (6-7 start) for people who work*

- *More picnic areas, more walking trails, more restrooms, more fitness classes or more room for them - always a waiting list*
- *12th St. Park needs maintenance and cleaning*
- *Better maintained and equipped parks would improve community*
- *Ice rink maintained*
- *Enlarge pool so swim meets can take place, brings revenues into town. Add to workout center with new weight machines and larger open space workout.*
- *Many more activities to engage senior citizens. They are a social group with limited mobility and may lack independence - much greater emphasis on cards, board games, pool table, shuffle board, etc.*
- *No summer programs of yoga, Pilates, strength training. Hours of availability and more variety of classes.*
- *These former town parks have been neglected – equipment*
- *More fitness programs! At night! More/better weight equipment.*

Improvements Needed for Parks, Facilities, Open Space, Trails, and Programs

Respondents that use ERBMRP District parks, recreation facilities, open space, trails, and programs were asked which aspects are most in need of improvement. Respondents identified the following aspects as most in need of improvement:

- Price / user fees (27 percent)
- Crowding / not enough space (24 percent)
- Lack of facilities and amenities (23 percent)
- No time / other personal issues (18 percent)
- Hours of operation (18 percent)

Reasons for not using District Parks, Facilities, Open Space, Trails, and Programs

Respondents that do not use District Parks & Recreation facilities and programs were asked why not. The most prominent reasons for not using ERBMRP District parks, facilities, open space, trails and programs were:

- No time / other personal issues (44 percent)
- Price / user fees (26 percent)
- Don't have the programs I want (16 percent)
- Hours of operation (14 percent)

Open Ended Comments

Respondents were given the opportunity to write in additional information.

Don't have the Programs I want, such as...

- *Yoga; softball; spinning; trails (hiking, skiing, horses); dance; kickboxing; racquetball and painting*

Lack of facilities and amenities, such as...

- *Tennis; gym space; equipment/machines; restrooms; trails; basketball; racquetball; handball; spinning bikes; and restrooms*

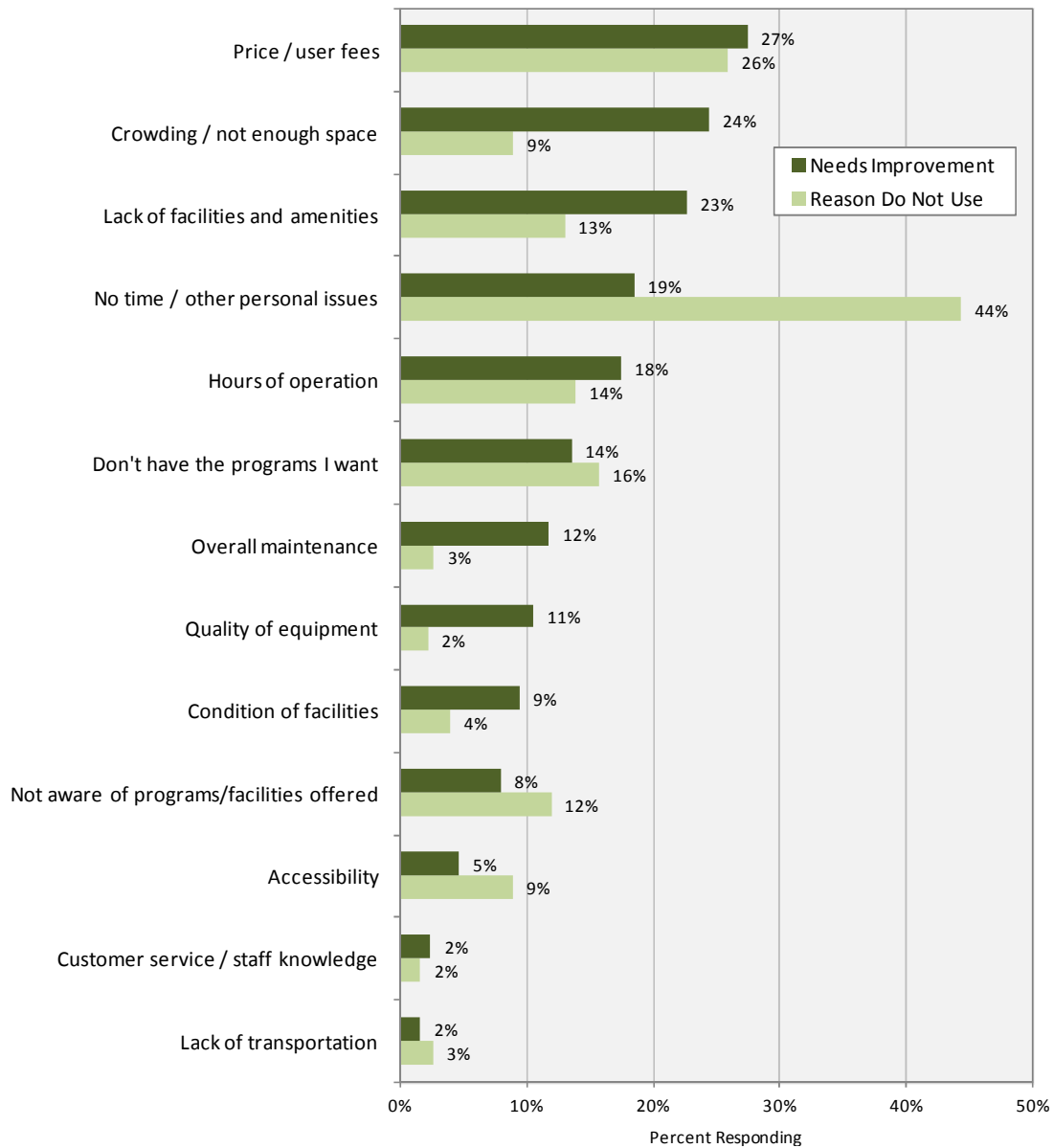
Accessibility, explain...

- *Live too far away; fences; too crowded; parking; times and availability*

Reasons do not use - other...

- *Childcare; not important; prefer the outdoors; class maximums are too small; basketball courts; machines; and class times*

Figure 10
Improvements Needed and Reasons Do Not Use Parks, Recreation Facilities, Open Space, Trails and Programs



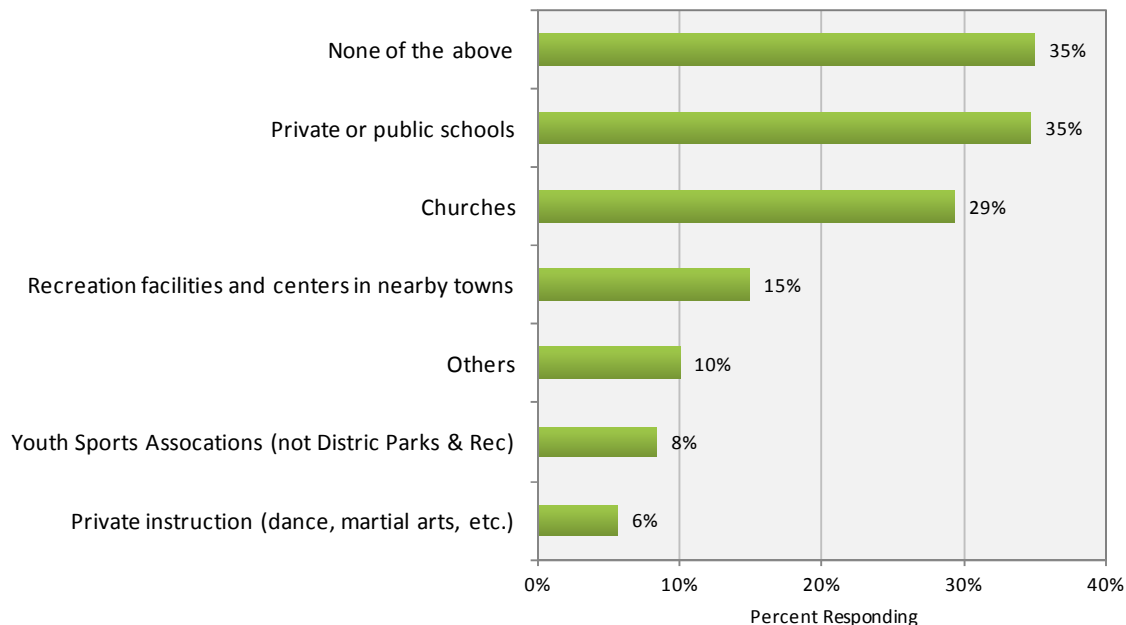
Other Parks, Recreation, Facilities, Open Space, Trails, and Programs Used

Respondents were asked to indicate what other parks, recreation facilities, open space, trails, and programs they use that are not provided by ERBMRP District.

One third of residents do not use any others and one third use schools. The greatest proportion of respondents use the following non-District provided recreation facilities:

- Private or public schools (35 percent)
- Churches (29 percent)
- Recreation facilities and centers in nearby towns (15 percent)

Figure 11
Other Parks, Recreation Facilities, Open Space, Trails and Programs You Use



Open Ended Comments

Respondents were given the opportunity to write in additional information.

Other parks, recreation facilities, open space, trails and programs you use:

- *BLM; USFS; Public land; Sportsman's Club rang;, Sulphur Creek Rd; other towns*

FUTURE FACILITIES, AMENITIES, AND SERVICES, TO ADD, EXPAND, OR IMPROVE

Future INDOOR Facilities to Add, Expand, or Improve

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of improving indoor and outdoor facilities. Nearly all indoor facility improvements were given high importance.

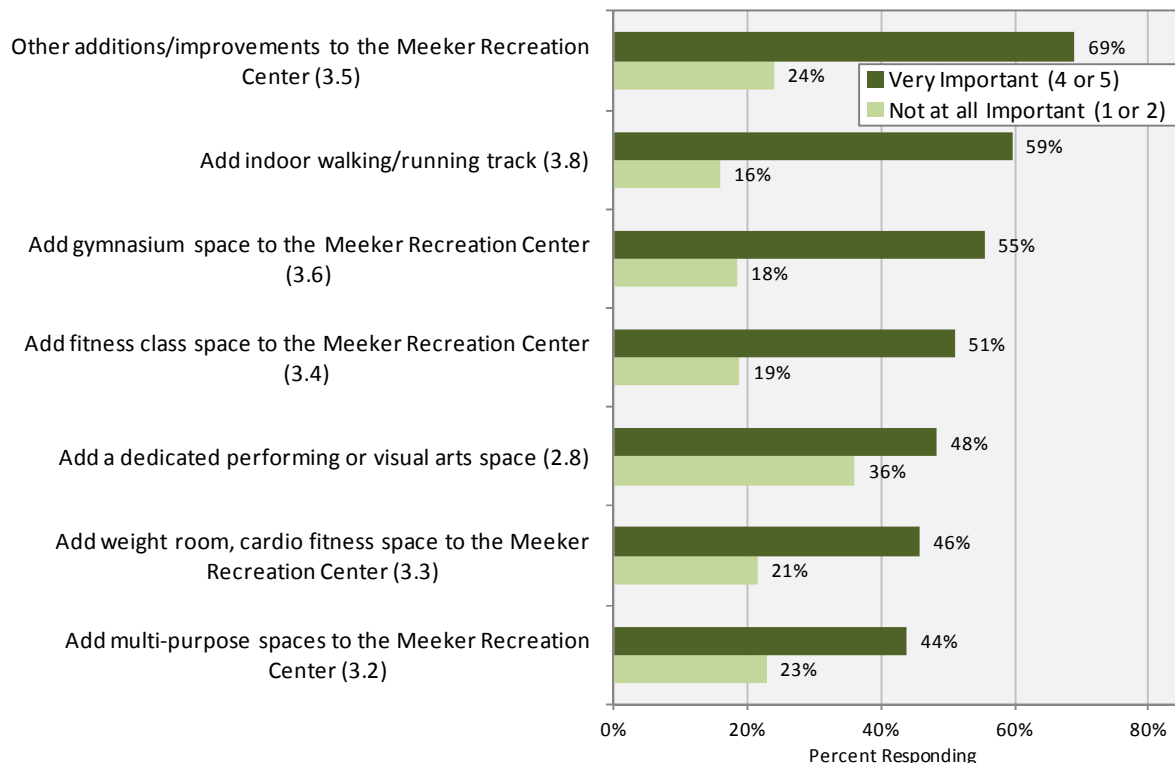
General Importance

Respondents indicated that the following Indoor facilities were the most important be added, expanded, or improved in the ERBMRP District in the next 5 or 10 years:

- Other additions/improvements to the Meeker Recreation Center (69 percent indicated a 4 or 5 on a 5 point scale, or “Very important”) *Note: respondents could write in specifically what “other additions/improvements to the MRC”; details follow Figure 12.
- Add indoor walking/running track (59 percent)
- Add gymnasium space to the Meeker Recreation Center (55 percent)
- Add fitness class space to the Meeker Recreation Center (51 percent)
- Add a dedicated performing or visual arts space (48 percent)
- Add weight room, cardio fitness space to the Meeker Recreation Center (46 percent)
- Add multi-purpose spaces to the Meeker Recreation Center (44 percent)

Figure 12

Future Indoor Facilities, Amenities, and Services – Importance of Adding, Expanding or Improving



Open Ended Comments

The major “Other additions/improvements to the Meeker Recreation Center” from the write in responses included:

- *Enlarging the pool; racquetball court; more play areas for kids*

The major write-ins for “Other” indoor facilities to be added, expanded, or improved included:

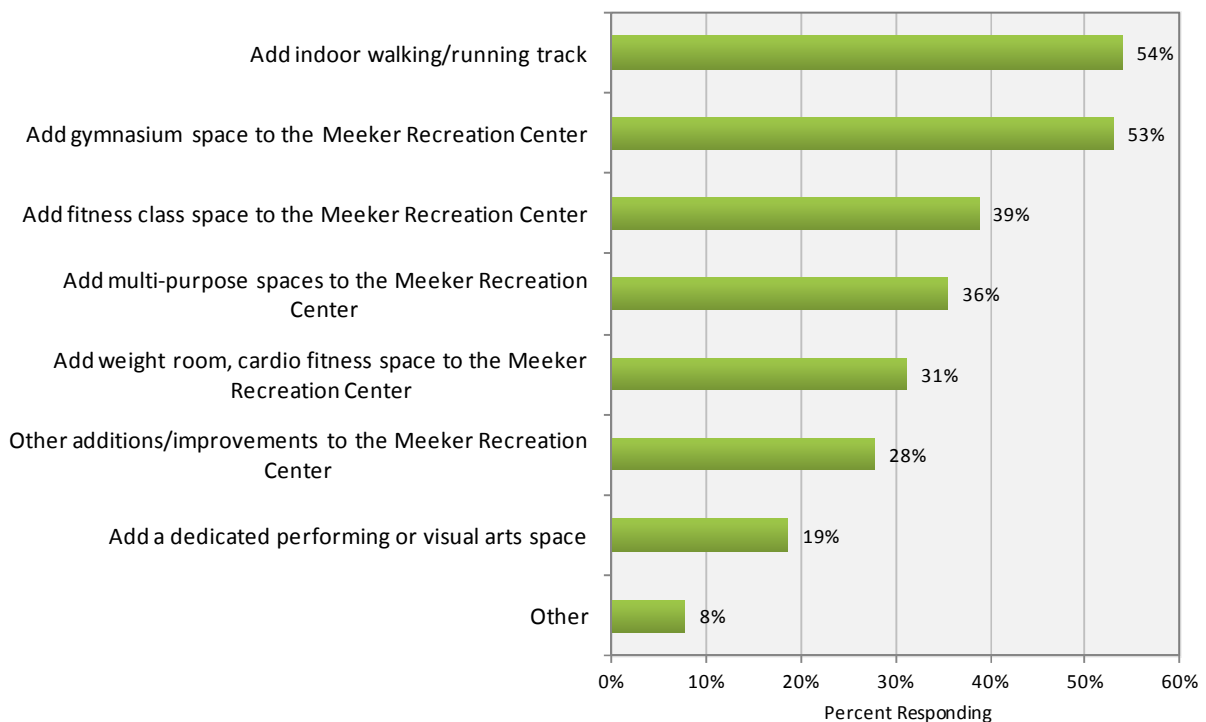
- *Childcare; a bowling alley; a bigger pool; racquetball; tumbling/gymnastics space; a large gym space for organized sports competitions*

Highest priority for Indoor Facilities and Amenities to be Added, Expanded or Improved

From the same list of indoor facilities, respondents were asked to rate their top three priorities for additions, expansions, and improvements. The highest rated priorities included:

- Add indoor walking/running track (54 percent)
- Add gymnasium space to the Meeker Recreation Center (53 percent)

Figure 13
Three Most Important Indoor Facilities for Additions, Expansions, and Improvements



The following table provides the opportunity to recognize differences in rank when respondents indicate how important each facility is individually vs. when they indicate their priorities from the entire list.

	Percent indicating that it is <u>Very</u> <u>Important (4 or 5)</u>	Percent indicating that it is <u>among their</u> <u>Top 3 Priorities</u>
• Add indoor walking/running track	59 percent	54 percent
• Add gymnasium space to the Meeker Recreation Center	55 percent	53 percent
• Add fitness class space to the Meeker Recreation Center	51 percent	39 percent
• Add multi-purpose spaces to the Meeker Recreation Center	44 percent	36 percent
• Add weight room, cardio fitness space to the Meeker Recreation Center	46 percent	31 percent
• Other additions/ improvements to the Meeker Recreation Center	69 percent	28 percent
• Add a dedicated performing or visual arts space	48 percent	19 percent

Residents of Meeker vs. Outside of Town

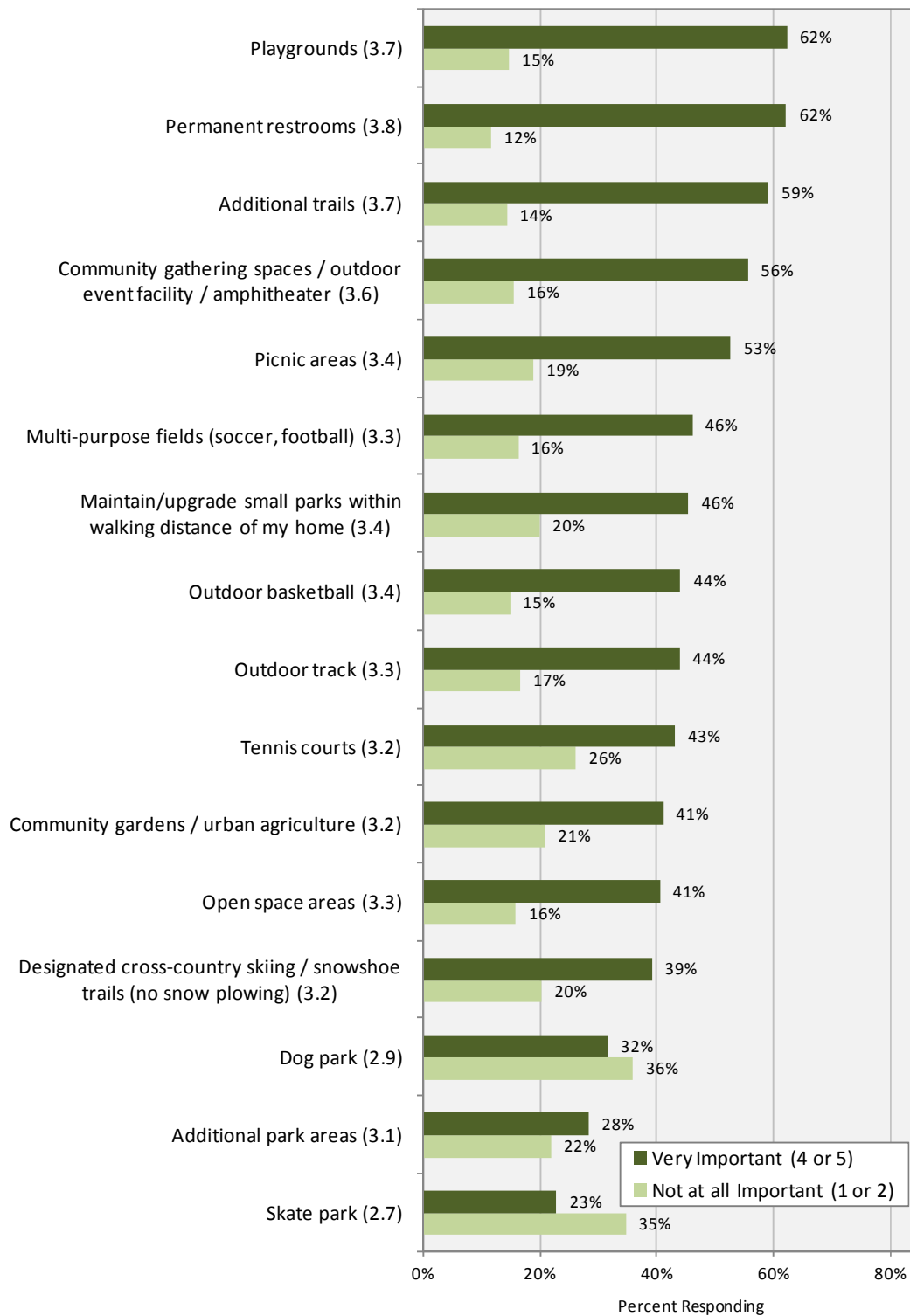
When looking at responses by area of residence, the average scores for importance for all indoor facilities are higher for those living in Meeker than those living outside Meeker. For example, residents of Meeker gave an average importance rating of 3.9 for “Add other additional improvements to the Meeker Recreation Center” while those living outside of Meeker gave this an average rating of 3.0.

Future OUTDOOR Facilities to Add, Expand, or Improve

General Importance

Respondents were asked to indicate the importance for additions, expansions or improvements to outdoor facilities in the next 5 or 10 years. The outdoor facilities given the highest importance ratings included:

- Playgrounds (62 percent rated this a 4 or 5, or “Very important”)
- Permanent restrooms (62 percent)
- Additional trails (59 percent)
- Community gathering spaces / outdoor event facility / amphitheater (56 percent)
- Picnic areas (53 percent)

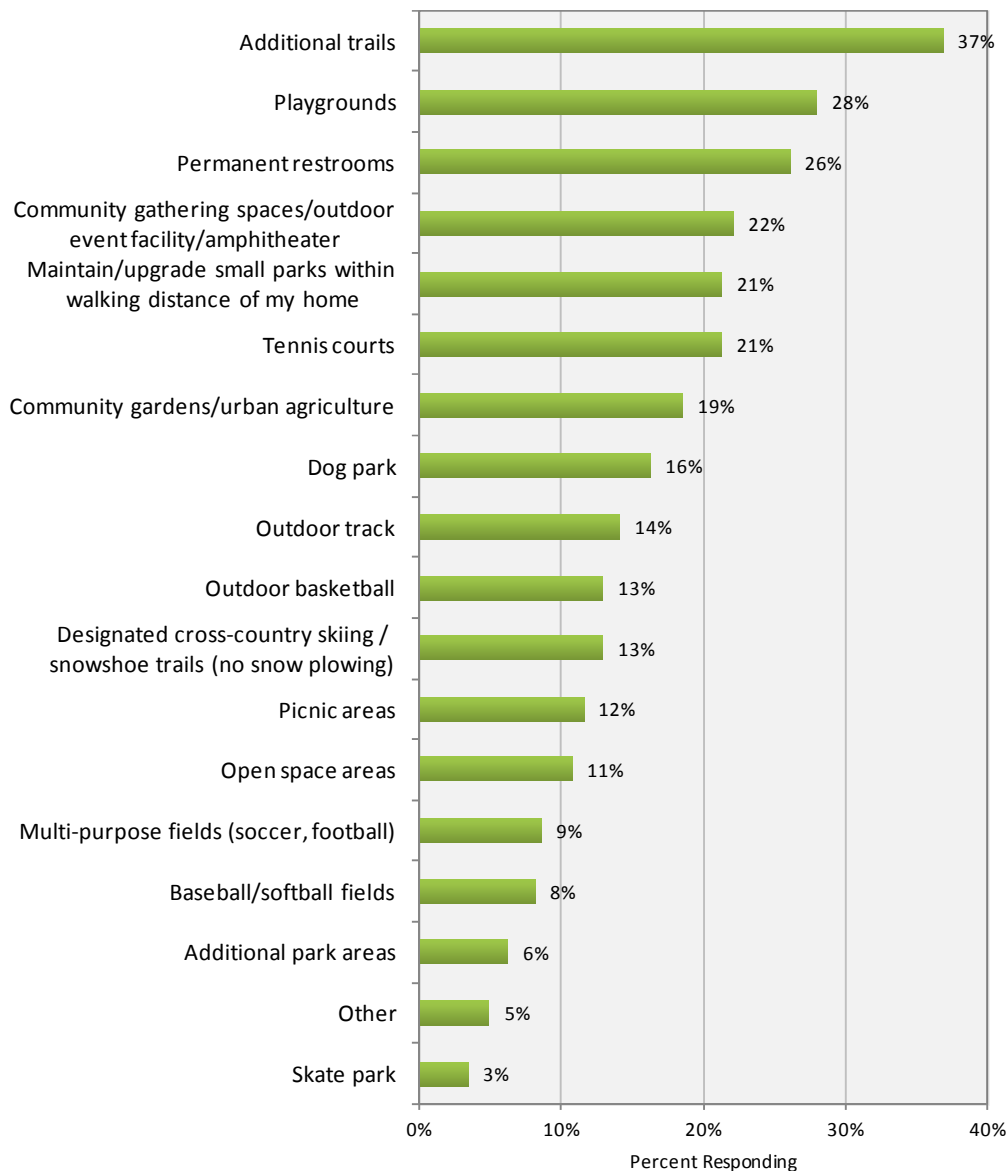
Figure 14***Future Outdoor Facilities, Amenities, and Services – Importance of Adding, Expanding or Improving***

Highest priority for Outdoor Facilities and Amenities to be Added, Expanded or Improved

From the same list of outdoor facilities, respondents were asked to rate their top three priorities for additions, expansions, and improvements. The highest rated priorities included:

- Additional trails (37 percent)
- Playgrounds (28 percent)
- Permanent restrooms (26 percent)

Figure 15
Three Most Important Outdoor Facilities for Additions, Expansions, and Improvements



The following table provides the opportunity to recognize differences in rank when respondents indicate how important each facility is individually vs. when they indicate their priorities from the entire list. The outdoor facilities that were important to the greatest proportion of the community were not exactly the same as the highest priorities for additions, expansions or improvements.

	Percent indicating that it is <u>Very</u> <u>Important (4 or 5)</u>	Percent indicating that it is <u>among their Top 3</u> <u>Priorities</u>
• Additional trails	59 percent	37 percent
• Playgrounds	62 percent	28 percent
• Permanent restrooms	62 percent	26 percent
• Community gathering spaces/ outdoor event facility/ amphitheater	56 percent	22 percent
• Maintain/ upgrade small parks within walking distance of my home	46 percent	21 percent
• Tennis courts	43 percent	21 percent

Open Ended Comments

Respondents were given the opportunity to write in additional information.

Additional trails (if you know where, please specify...)

- *Along the river; Black Sulphur; paved trails; Suphfur Creek; China Wall; Ute Park*

Residents of Meeker vs. Outside of Town

When looking at responses by area of residence, the average scores for importance for all outdoor improvements were higher for those living in Meeker than those living outside Meeker. For example, residents of Meeker gave an average importance rating of 4.0 for “Additional trails” while those living outside of Meeker rated this average of 3.3. Additionally, residents of Meeker gave an average importance rating of 3.7 for “Maintain/upgrade small parks within walking distance of my home,” while those living outside of Meeker rated this an average of 2.6.

PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES, AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Need for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Programs

Respondents were asked to indicate if they or any member of their household had a need for parks, recreation, and open space programs.

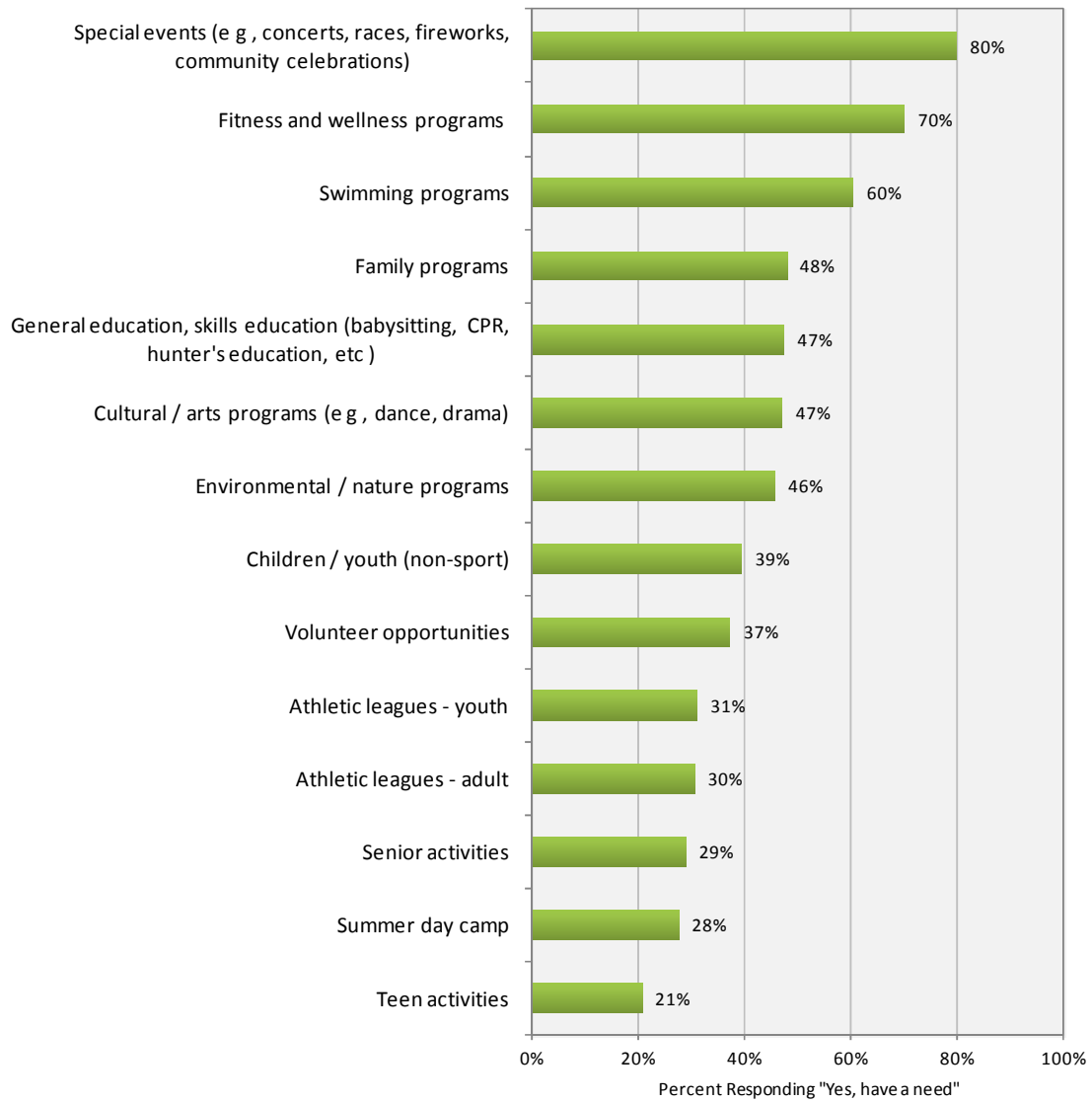
The majority of respondents have a need for the following:

- Special events (e.g., concerts, races, fireworks, community celebrations) (80 percent responded, “Yes, I have a need”)
- Fitness and wellness programs (70 percent)
- Swimming programs (60 percent)

Second Tier of need with the community:

- Family programs (48 percent)
- General education, skills education (babysitting, CPR, hunter’s education, etc.) (47 percent)
- Cultural / arts programs (e.g., dance, drama) (47 percent)
- Environmental / nature programs (46 percent)

Figure 16
Have a Need for Programs, Activities, and Special Events



Degree to which Programs are Meeting the Needs of the Community

Respondents that indicated they have a need for a program or activity were asked how well their needs are being met by the programs currently available from the District.

Programs, activities, and special events best meeting household needs include:

- Athletic leagues – youth (67 percent indicated a 4 or 5; “Needs 75 to 100 percent met”)
- Special events (e.g. concerts, races, fireworks, community celebrations) (65 percent)
- Swimming programs (64 percent)

The proportion of the community that indicated their needs were not being met at all was smaller than the proportion whose needs were completely met for all programs except “Environmental / nature programs” and “Teen activities.” These types of programs may represent areas in which expansion and/or improvement may be warranted.

Programs with the highest proportion of respondents that indicated their needs were not at all being met include:

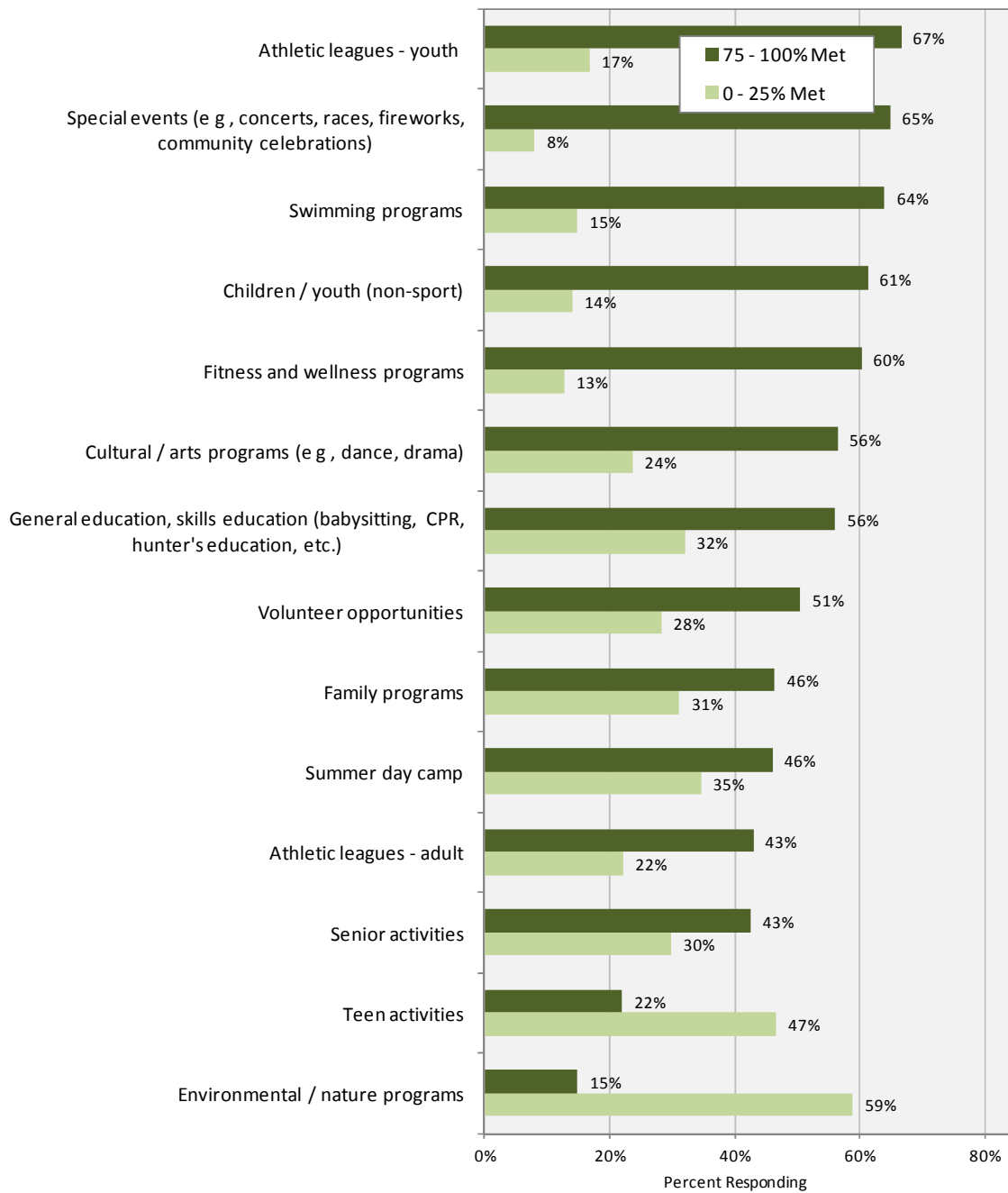
- Environmental / nature programs (59 percent indicated “Needs met 0 to 25 percent”)
- Teen activities (47 percent)
- Summer day camp (35 percent)
- General / skills education (babysitting, CPR, hunter’s education, etc.) (32 percent)
- Family programs (31 percent)

Open Ended Responses

Other parks, recreation, and open space programs:

- *Bike/walking trails; Women-only classes after 4:00*

Figure 17
Degree to which Programs and Activities are Meeting Needs



Three Most Important Programs

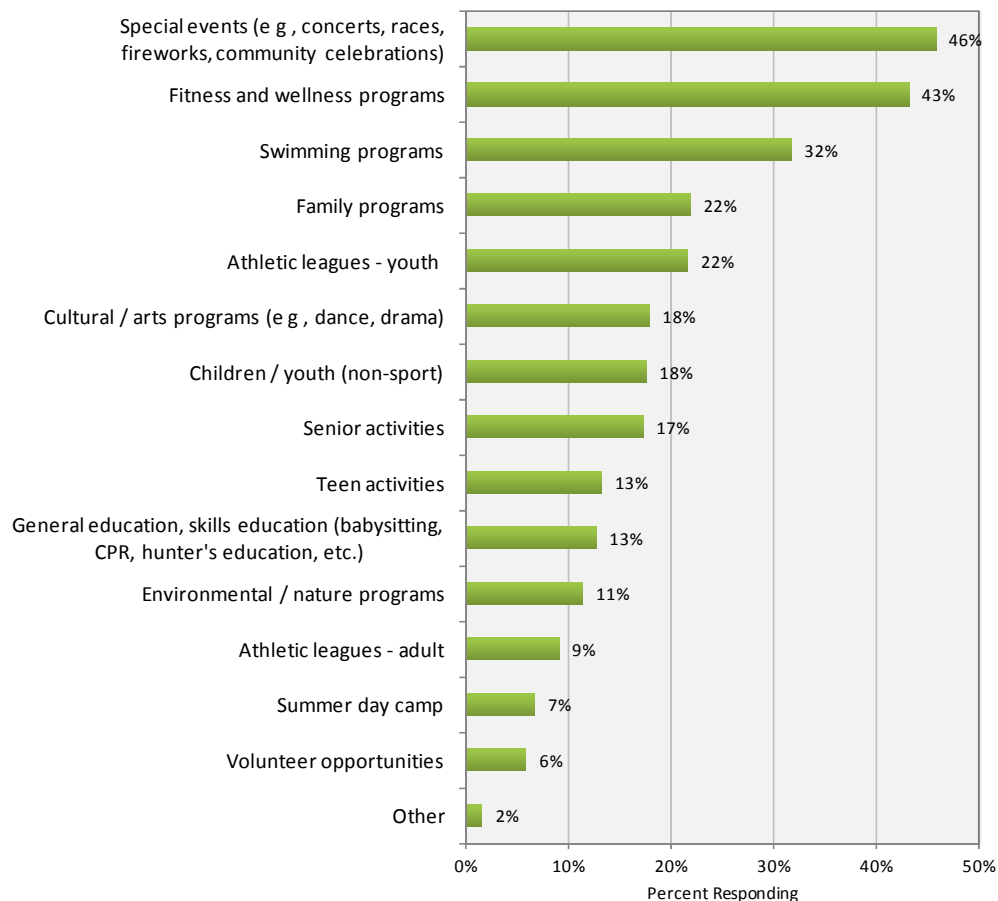
From the same list of programs, respondents were asked to indicate the three programs that were among the most important to their household. The most important programs included:

- Special events (e.g., concerts, races, fireworks, community celebrations) (46 percent)
- Fitness and wellness programs (43 percent)
- Swimming programs (32 percent)

Second tier of important programs:

- Family Programs (22 percent)
- Athletic leagues – youth (22 percent)
- Cultural/arts programs (e.g. dance, drama) (18 percent)
- Children / youth (non sport) (18 percent)
- Senior activities (17 percent)

Figure 18
Three Most Important Programs



The following table provides the opportunity to recognize differences in rank when respondents indicate whether or not they have a need for a program vs. how well their needs are met vs. what they consider to be most important given the entire list.

	Have a Need (Yes)	Needs Not Being Met (0 - 25 %)	Needs Being Met (75 – 100%)	Among Top 3 Most Important
• Special events (e.g., concerts, races, fireworks, community celebrations)	80 percent	8 percent	65 percent	46 percent
• Fitness and wellness programs	70 percent	13 percent	60 percent	43 percent
• Swimming programs	60 percent	15 percent	64 percent	32 percent
• Family programs	48 percent	31 percent	46 percent	22 percent
• General education, skills education (babysitting, CPR, hunter's education, etc.)	47 percent	32 percent	56 percent	13 percent
• Cultural/ arts programs (e.g., dance, drama)	47 percent	24 percent	56 percent	18 percent
• Environmental / nature programs	46 percent	59 percent	15 percent	11 percent
• Teen activities	21 percent	47 percent	22 percent	13 percent

FINANCIAL CHOICES

Respondents were given the following background information: *The Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Park District funds the development, operations, and maintenance of facilities and services with user fees and tax dollars. As you answer the following questions, please keep in mind that additional funds may be required for the building, operations, and maintenance of new parks, recreation, open space, and trail facilities.*

The District manages Meeker Recreation Center and Paintbrush Park, and recently signed a 30-year lease with the Town of Meeker to manage, maintain, and improve six parks: Town Park, Circle Park, Sage Hills Park, 6th Street Field, 11th Street Park, 12th Street Park. The District will also be adding the following new parks: Sanderson Hills Park (at Sanderson Drive and Mark Circle) and the Phillip and Dorcas Jensen Memorial Park, and open space areas with trails.

Future Funding Allocation

Respondents were then asked where future funding should be spent.

The highest ratings for where future funding should be spent included:

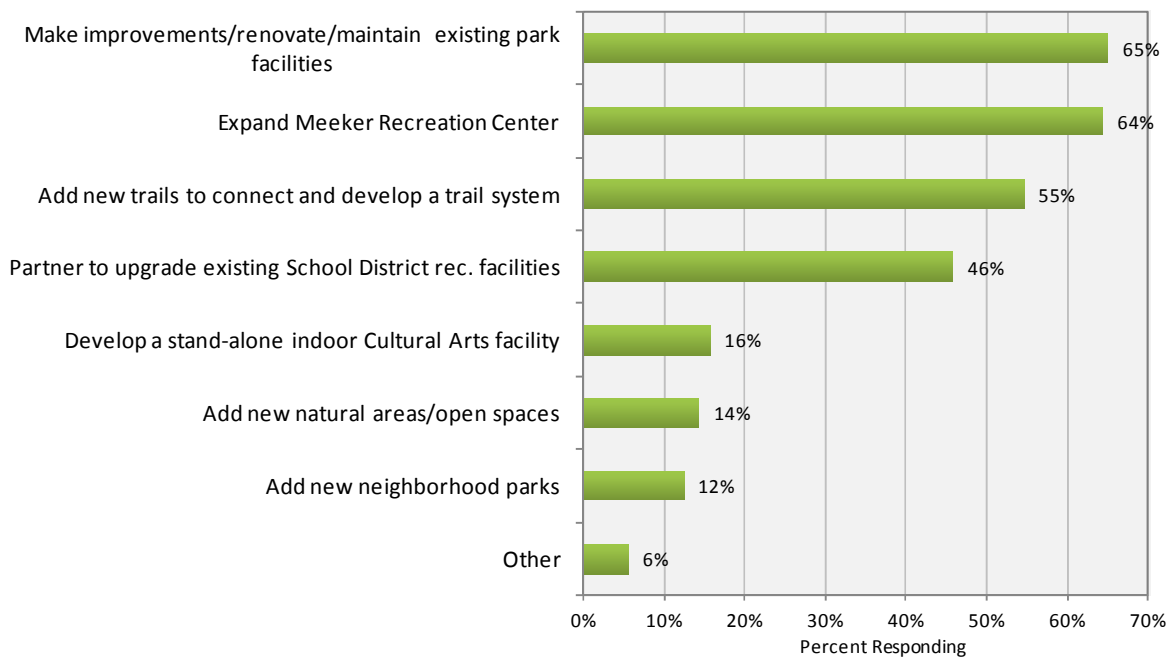
- Make improvements and/or renovate and maintain existing park facilities (65 percent of respondents selected this in their top 3 priorities)
- Expand Meeker Recreation Center (e.g., fitness space, gymnastics, class / meeting rooms, outdoor patio, etc.) (64 percent)
- Add new trails to connect and develop a trail system (55 percent)
- Partner to upgrade existing School District recreation facilities (e.g. outdoor track, gyms, auditorium, etc.) (46 percent)
- Develop a stand-alone indoor Cultural Arts facility (e.g. performance, visual arts spaces) (16 percent)
- Add new natural areas / open spaces (14 percent)
- Add new neighborhood parks (12 percent)

Open Ended Responses

Respondents were given the opportunity to write in other areas for future funding to be spent:

- *Maintain/repair tennis courts; Bowling alley and mini golf - source of incomes; Community garden; Develop gymnastics program; Outdoor amphitheater; Save money if something needs repaired; Senior activities*

Figure 19
Where Future Funding for Improvements should be spent



COMMUNICATION

How Receive Communication

Respondents indicated they currently receive their information about parks, recreation, services and programs (whether ERBMRP District or not) from the following sources:

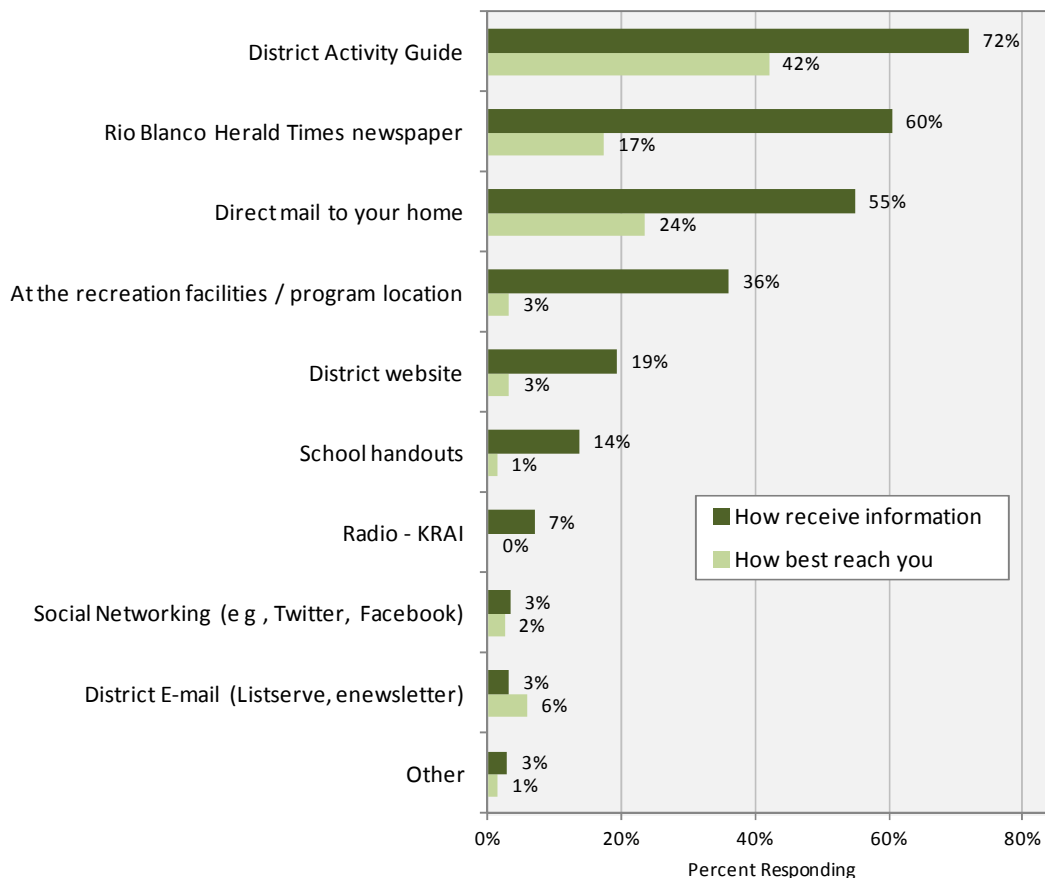
- District Activity Guide (72 percent of respondents indicate they receive information this way)
- Rio Blanco Herald Times newspaper (60 percent)
- Direct mail to homes (55 percent)
- At the recreation facilities / program location (36 percent)

Best Way to Reach Residents of the District

The best way to reach residents of the ERBMRP District includes:

- District Activity Guide (42 percent)
- Direct mail to homes (24 percent)
- Rio Blanco Herald Times newspaper (17 percent)

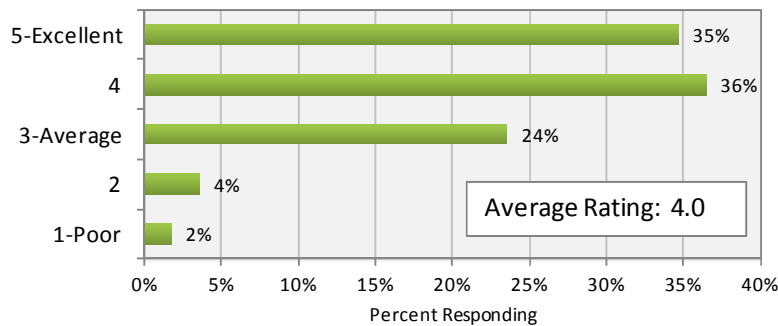
Figure 20
How Currently Receiving Information and How to Best Reach You



ERBMRP District Communication Rating

Respondents were asked how good a job ERBMRP District does in providing information about parks, recreation facilities, open space, trails, and/or programs. The ratings were quite favorable, with an average rating of 4.0 out of 5.

Figure 21
Customer Satisfaction with ERBMRP District in Providing Information about Parks, Recreation, Facilities, Open Space, Trails and Programs



ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Respondents were asked, “Do you have any additional comments or suggestions that you would like to offer regarding parks, recreation facilities, open space, trails, and programs in the ERBMRP District?” Table 2 lists the most prominent themes. The percent indicates the proportion that mentioned the topic (positive or negative). For specific examples, see the quotes below and note that all comments are available in the appendix.

Table 2
Additional Comments and Suggestions

	Percent
Reduce spending/taxes	26%
Good job	10%
Trails	7%
Parks	7%
Seniors	5%
Schools	5%
Gym space	4%
Pool	4%
Classes	4%
Programs	4%
Fees	4%
Clean	2%
Cultural center	2%
Softball/baseball	2%
Teens, entertainment	2%
Tennis	2%
Dogs	2%
Discounts	1%
Restrooms	1%
Tot spot	1%
Transparency	1%
Website	1%
	100.0%

Example Comments

- *Any spending or additional taxation should be suspended indefinitely. We have enough problems to deal with and the economy is not doing that well.*
- *Every house/ranch no matter size should pay taxes not just town area*
- *The population here is approx. 2500. The ERBM is too big already - stop wasting tax payer dollars. Stop trying to create an empire! Run it as a business and collect money at the door.*
- *The rec. district is the single most wasteful use of tax revenue in the County. Meeker has great opportunities from nature, and taxing the many for the pleasure of the few is*

completely unnecessary. The pool should be privatized, and funding directed to more important issues, like a jail.

- *The Wed. bridge group would like the lobby warmer. We appreciate the coffee and donuts. The cleanliness is superb (entire facility) and staff is great.*
- *A river trail for walking would be awesome. The tennis court in Sage Hills needs to be taken over by the district and fixed up. Must be doing a good job - Rec. Center seems to be well-used.*
- *I think that the ERBMRP is responsible for making Meeker such a great place to live. We love the activities at the courthouse lawn and all the programs for kids.*
- *Bike trails would be a really nice addition*
- *Expedite the trail system in Ute Park, add bike trails*
- *I am very surprised at the 30 year lease of some of the smaller parks. 12th St. Park is a disgrace! And it has more than likely the most children in area. Town Park is just nasty. I didn't know these were under the district.*
- *Appreciate the trips for seniors - need more vans*
- *Fixing current facilities and partnering with schools is best use of money. More baseball/softball.*
- *I would love to see a trail system (paved and unpaved); ideally it would connect important locations like MRC, elementary school, high school, Dorcus Jensen, White River)*

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Appendix C – Trends

Park and Recreation Influencing Trends

A challenge of parks and recreation departments is continuing to understand and respond to the changing recreation interests of those it serves. In this fast-paced society, it is important to stay on top of current trends impacting parks and recreation. The following information highlights relevant local, regional, and national parks and recreation trends from various sources that may influence the District for the next ten years.

Athletic Recreation National Trends

Sports Participation

The 2010 National Sporting Goods Association, (NSGA) survey on sports participation found some of the top athletic activities ranked by total participation included: exercise walking, exercising with equipment, camping, swimming, bowling, and working out at athletic clubs. Additionally, the following active recreation activities remain popular: bicycle riding, hiking, running/jogging, basketball, golf, and soccer. **Table 11** further outlines the top twenty sports ranked by total participation in 2010 and the percent change from 2009.

Table 11: Top Twenty Sports Ranked by Total Participation 2010

Sport	Total	% Change*
Exercise Walking	95.8	2.6%
Exercising with Equipment	55.3	-3.4%
Swimming	51.9	3.4%
Camping (vacation/overnight)	44.7	-12.0%
Bicycle Riding	39.8	4.3%
Bowling	39.0	-13.3%
Aerobic Exercising	38.5	16.3%
Hiking	37.7	10.9%
Workout at Club	36.3	-5.3%
Running/Jogging	35.5	10.3%
Fishing	33.8	2.8%
Weight Lifting	31.5	-8.8%
Basketball	26.9	10.1%
Billiards/Pool	24.0	14.8%
Golf	21.9	-2.0%
Yoga	20.2	28.1%
Boating, Motor/Power	20.0	-16.2%
Target Shooting (net)	19.8	0.3%
Hunting with Firearms	16.3	-13.5%
Soccer	13.5	-0.3%

*Percent Change is from 2009

Source: NSGA 2010

The Ten-year History of Sports Participation Report published by NSGA shows national trends in team sports and individual sports. Overall participation trends indicate a decrease in general. Team sports such as basketball, soccer, tackle football, softball, and volleyball had an increase in participation through 2008; however, by 2010 they show a decline. Since the report, lacrosse has become one of the country's fastest growing team sports. Participation in high school lacrosse has almost doubled this decade. An estimated 1.2 million Americans over age seven have played lacrosse within the previous year. Individual sports show an increase in backpacking, swimming, boating, camping, and exercising with equipment. **Table 12** illustrates a ten year change in participation for selected activities including both team sports and individual sports.

Table 12: Ten-Year History of Sports Participation (in millions) 2000-2010

	2010	2008	2006	2004	2002	2000
Aerobic Exercising	38.5	36.2	33.7	29.5	29.0	28.6
Backpack/Wilderness Camp	11.1	13.0	13.3	15.3	14.8	15.4
Basketball	12.5	15.2	14.6	15.9	15.6	15.6
Bicycle Riding	26.9	29.7	26.7	27.8	28.9	27.1
Billiards/Pool	39.8	44.7	35.6	40.3	39.7	43.1
Boating, Motor/Power	20.0	27.8	29.3	22.8	26.6	24.2
Bowling	39.0	49.5	44.8	43.8	42.4	43.1
Camping	44.7	49.4	48.6	55.3	55.4	49.9
Canoeing	NA	10.3	7.1	7.5	7.6	6.2
Cheerleading	NA	2.9	3.8	3.8	NA	NA
Exercise Walking	95.8	96.6	87.5	84.7	82.2	86.3
Exercising with Equipment	55.3	63.0	52.4	52.2	46.6	44.8
Fishing	33.8	42.2	40.6	41.2	44.2	49.3
Football (tackle)	9.3	10.5	11.9	8.6	7.8	7.5
Golf	21.9	25.6	24.4	24.5	27.1	26.4
Hiking	37.7	38.0	31.0	28.3	27.2	24.3
Hockey (ice)	3.3	1.9	2.6	2.4	2.1	1.9
Hunting w/Bow & Arrow	5.2	6.2	5.9	5.8	4.6	4.7
Hunting with Firearms	16.3	18.8	17.8	17.7	19.5	19.1
In-Line Roller Skating	7.4	9.3	10.5	11.7	18.8	21.8
Mountain Biking (off road)	7.2	10.2	8.5	8.0	7.8	7.1
Muzzleloading	3.1	3.4	3.7	3.8	3.6	2.9
Paintball Games	6.1	6.7	8.0	9.4	6.9	5.3
Racquetball	NA	NA	4.0	NA	NA	3.2
Running/Jogging	35.5	35.9	28.8	26.7	24.7	22.8
Scooter Riding	7.4	10.1	9.5	12.9	13.4	11.6
Skateboarding	7.7	9.8	9.7	10.3	9.7	9.1
Skiing(alpine)	7.4	6.5	6.4	6.3	7.4	7.4
Snowboarding	6.1	5.9	5.2	6.6	5.6	4.3
Soccer	13.5	15.5	14.0	13.3	13.7	12.9
Softball	10.8	12.8	12.4	12.5	13.6	14.0
Swimming	51.9	63.5	56.5	53.4	53.1	60.7
Target Shooting	19.8	20.3	17.1	19.2	18.9	14.8
Target Shooting – Airgun	5.3	5.0	5.6	5.1	4.1	3.0
Tennis	12.3	12.6	10.4	9.6	11.0	10.0
Volleyball	10.6	12.2	11.1	11.8	11.5	12.3
Water Skiing	5.2	5.6	3.6	5.3	6.9	5.9
Weight Lifting	31.5	37.5	32.9	26.2	25.1	24.8
Workout at Club	36.3	39.3	37.0	31.8	28.9	24.1
Wrestling	2.9	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Source: NSGA 2010

Nationally, participation in tennis has been increasing since 2004. Currently, there are no functioning tennis courts in Meeker. The public process and survey for this Master Plan have indicated an interest in tennis courts.

Youth Sports

Specific offerings for children's fitness are slowly increasing in recreation facilities. Facilities are offering more youth-specific exercise equipment. Individualized youth sports training opportunities are becoming more popular as well. For youth ages 7 to 11, bowling, bicycle riding, and fishing had the highest number of participants in 2010; however, ice hockey, mountain biking, and tennis saw the highest percent of increase of the sports in 2010 according to the NSGA. It is important to note that of the six mentioned sports above, ice hockey is the only team sport. In-line skating experienced the largest percentage decrease in participation followed by scooter riding and fishing.

Aquatics National Trends

According to the NSGA, swimming ranked third in terms of participation in 2010. There is an increasing trend towards indoor leisure and therapeutic pools. Additional amenities like "spray pads" are becoming increasingly popular as well.

Swimming is a popular recreational activity in Meeker. The community survey indicated that swimming ranked first (80%) in terms of importance and first in needs that are met (78%).

Baby Boomer/Older Adult Trends – Planning for the Demographic Shift

Baby boomers are those born between 1946 and 1964, as stated in *Leisure Programming for Baby Boomers*, authored by Cochran, Rothschild, and Rudick in 2009. They are a generation that consists of nearly 76 million Americans. Beginning in 2011, this influential population will begin 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.

In the leisure profession, this generation's devotion to exercise and fitness is an example of their 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 over 60, park and recreation professionals are faced with new approaches to provide both passive and active programming for older adults. 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?" in *Parks and Recreation Magazine*, published in 2002.

Boomer Basics:

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.

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 their 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. Ziegler suggests 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 need to adapt programming to these trends.

The District's demographic profile indicates a shift in Baby Boomer age ranges. The two highest ranking age cohorts are ages 45-54 and 55-64, totaling 37 percent.

Recreation Facility National Trends

According to *Recreation Management* magazine's "2011 State of the Industry Report," national trends show an increased user-base of recreation facilities. To meet that growing need, a majority of the 2011 State of the Industry Survey respondents (60.3%) reported that they have plans to build new facilities or make additions or renovations to their existing facilities over the next three years. Nearly a quarter (24.2%) of respondents said they have plans to build new facilities, and just over a quarter (25.9%) said that they plan to add to their existing facilities. Another 43.6 percent are planning renovations.

Also according to the report, parks and recreation respondents said that the average amount planned for construction for parks fell by 12.7 percent from an average of \$3,907,000 in last year's survey to \$3,411,000 this year. There was very little change in the types of features and amenities included in the facilities of the survey respondents from last year to this year. The most commonly found features include locker rooms (57.5% of respondents have locker rooms); classrooms and meeting rooms (57.4%); bleachers and seating (56.8 percent); outdoor sports courts for basketball, tennis, etc. (54.1%); and concession areas (53.9%).

The current national trend is toward "one-stop" indoor recreation facilities to serve all ages. Large, multi-purpose regional centers help increase cost recovery, promote retention, and encourage cross-use. Agencies across the U.S. are increasing revenue production and cost recovery. Multi-use facilities versus specialized space is a trend, offering programming opportunities as well as free-play opportunities. "One stop" facilities attract young families, teens, and adults of all ages. The Meeker Recreation Center fits with the trend.

Amenities and specialty parks that are still considered “alternative” but increasing in popularity include the following:

- Climbing walls
- Cultural art facilities
- Green design techniques and certifications such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). A recent Building Commissioners Association (BCA) survey indicated that 52 percent of the recreation industry survey respondents indicated they were willing to pay more for green design knowing that it would significantly reduce or eliminate the negative impact of buildings on the environment and occupants.
- Two of the emerging specialty parks include skate parks and adult fitness parks. The Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association estimates there are about 1,000 skateboard parks in the United States.

Outdoor fitness equipment provides a new opportunity for park and recreation departments to increase the health of their communities, while offering them 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.

Fitness and Health National Trends

There have been many changes in fitness programs in the last ten years. What clients wanted in 2002 is not necessarily what they want today. Fitness programs that have increased in popularity in the last ten years include outdoor exercise, boot camp, personal training, post-rehabilitation, dance fitness, and sport-specific training. Declining programs include health fairs, sports clinics, aerobics, stress-management classes, and weight-management classes. (*IDEA Health and Fitness Association*)

The American College of Sports Medicine’s (ACSM’s) *Health and Fitness Journal* conducted a survey to determine trends that would help create a standard for health and fitness programming. **Table 13** shows survey results that focus on trends in the commercial, corporate, clinical, and community health and fitness industry. The Worldwide Survey indicates the following shift in fitness trends between 2011 and 2012.

Table 13: Worldwide Fitness Trends for 2011 and for 2012

2011	2012
1. Educated and experienced fitness professionals	1. Educated and experienced fitness professionals
2. Fitness programs for older adults	2. Strength training
3. Strength training	3. Fitness programs for older adults
4. Children and obesity	4. Exercise and weight loss
5. Personal training	5. Children and obesity
6. Core training	6. Personal training
7. Exercise and weight loss	7. Core training
8. Boot camp	8. Group personal training
9. Functional fitness	9. Zumba and other dance workouts
10. Physician referrals	10. Functional fitness

Source: American College of Sport Medicine

Zumba and other dance workouts and group personal training were added to the top ten fitness trends in 2012.

Health and Obesity Trends

The United Health Foundation has ranked Colorado 9th in its 2011 *State Health Rankings*, up four ranks from 2010.

The State's biggest strengths include:

- Lowest percentage of childhood obesity
- Lowest percentage of stroke among adults
- Second lowest percentage of high blood pressure among adults
- Second lowest percentage of diabetes among adults

Some of the challenges the State faces include:

- Ranked 45th in early prenatal care
- Ranked 45th in premature births
- Ranked 30th in binge drinking

In the last decade the annual improvement in America's health has declined 69 percent compared to the 1990s (comparison is based on the annual growth rate from 1990 to 2000). Obesity continues to be a serious issue in America, growing at an epidemic rate—almost tripling since 1990. In fact, about every 1 in 3 adults is currently considered obese. This statistic illustrates the importance of intercepting the epidemic in youth. Currently 27.5 percent of people in the United States are obese.

Healthy Lifestyle Trends

The health care issue is front and center. Park and recreation departments are finding that they are in a position to be a catalyst in creating healthy lifestyles in communities. Steps such as assessments, policy creation, financial analysis, and management process are occurring around the country to create and validate a method for building healthy communities and gaining credibility as a public health provider.

According to a study published in the journal *Environmental Science and Technology*, in February of 2011, "...research indicates outdoor exercise is healthier than gym workouts." Researchers found that going for a run outdoors is better than exercising in the gym because it has a positive impact on mental, as well as physical health. Levels of tension, confusion, anger, and depression were found to be lowered. This aligns with the trend of adult fitness playgrounds that are popping up all over the world. There is also a link between health and the built environment that continues to grow as a trend for local governments. Communities are increasingly incorporating active living and physical activity into daily routines.

Events and Festivals

Beginning in the early 1980s, a process that can be characterized as “festivalization” has occurred, which has been linked to the economic restructuring of towns and cities and the drive to develop communities as large-scale platforms for “cultural experiences.” There is an interest in Eastern Rio Blanco County area in special events which are not only attractive to residents but often to visitors as well.

The District ranked special events at the top of *Need for Programs*, and at the top of *Most Important to Expand or Add* in the 2012 Community Survey.

General Programming Trends – National Trends

One of the most common concerns in the recreation industry is creating innovative programming to draw participants into facilities and services. Once in, participants recognize the many benefits. According to *Recreation Management* magazine’s, June 2011 “State of the Industry Report,” the most popular programs, offered by more than half of the survey respondents, include holiday events and other special events (64.3 %); fitness programs (61.1%); educational programs (60.4%); day camps and summer camps (56.3%); mind-body/balance programs such as yoga, tai chi, Pilates and martial arts (51.4%); and youth sports teams (50.7%). Sports training was not in the top ten; however, golf instruction and tennis lessons are a fast paced trend.

The report also suggested slightly less than a third (31.9%) of respondents indicated that they are planning to add additional programs at their facilities over the next three years. The most common types of programming they are planning to add include:

- Fitness programs (planned by 26.8% of respondents planning to add programs)
- Educational programs (25%)
- Teen programming (24%)
- Mind-body/balance programs (22.5%)
- Active older adults (20.9%)
- Day camps and summer camps (20.8%)
- Environmental education (20.3%)
- Individual sports activities (18.9%)
- Holiday events and other special events (18.6%)
- Sports tournaments or races (18%)

Intergenerational programming is still in demand – while parents are finding themselves hitting the gym, they are in need of programs for children at the same time.

Marketing

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
- Twitter
- You Tube
- Tagged
- LinkedIn

Mobile marketing is a trend of the future. 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 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% of African-Americans and Hispanics own a cell phone, compared with 80% of whites).

Natural Environments and Open Space

Economic and 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. US Forest Service research indicates that when the economic benefits produced by trees are assessed, total value can be two to six times the cost for tree planting and care.
- Fifty percent of Americans regard outdoor activities as their main source of exercise.

According to the 2012 District Community Survey, trails ranked at the top of the list of the Most Important Outdoor Facilities to Add or Expand.

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 space:

- 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.

Nature Programming

The National 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. A summary of the results follow:

- Sixty-eight percent of public park and recreation agencies offer nature-based programming and 61 percent 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.

Outdoor Recreation

Local parks and recreation departments are a common place for residents to look when getting outside for leisure activities. It is often the mission of parks departments as well as private or non-profits to get more people outdoors.

The Outdoor Foundation released the *2011 Participation in Outdoor Recreation Report*. The report highlights participation in outdoor recreation in 2010 remained steady for a third year in a row, matching levels seen in 2008. Notably in 2010, ethnically diverse participants made up a significantly higher percentage of participants than in previous years, up over four percentage points since 2007 to 29.5 percent of participants. Adventure sports – including triathlon, adventure racing, backpacking, climbing, kayaking, and rafting – showed significant growth in 2010, up 2.3 percent in participation as a group. Compared to 2009, youth participation in outdoor activities was flat among ages 6 to 12, but increased slightly among ages 13 to 17 and 18 to 24. Running, biking, and camping were popular among young people, ages 6 to 24, though bicycling and backyard, car, and RV camping continued to see participation decreases in 2010, part of a three-year trend.

Recreation and Park Administration National Trends

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.

Listed below are additional administrative national trends:

- Level of subsidy for programs is lessening and more “enterprise” activities are being developed, thereby allowing subsidy to be used where deemed appropriate.
- Information technology allows for better tracking and reporting.
- Pricing is often determined by peak, off-peak, and off-season rates.
- More agencies are partnering with private, public, and non-profit groups.

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). On March 15, 2011 the amended Act became effective and, for the first time in history, included recreation environment design requirements. Compliance with the regulations was to be effective March 15, 2012. This includes design and construction requirements and the development of three-year transition. By March 15, 2015 implementation of the three-year transition plan must be complete.

Trend Analysis Summary

The following are key national parks and recreation trends. It will be important for the District to evaluate these along with local trends to help shape future planning efforts.

- Some of the top ten athletic activities ranked by total participation included: exercise walking, exercising with equipment, camping, swimming, and working out at athletic clubs.
- The most common programs offered in communities are holiday events and other special events; fitness programs; educational programs; day camps and summer camps; mind-body/balance programs such as yoga, tai chi, Pilates, and martial arts; and youth sports teams.
- Fitness programs, educational programs, teen programs, mind body balance, and active adults were listed at the top of the ten programs parks and recreation departments are planning to add within the next three years.
- Trails, parks, and playgrounds are among the five most important community amenities considered when selecting a home.
- National trends in the delivery of parks and recreation systems reflect more partnerships and contractual agreements reaching out to the edges of the community to support specialized services.
- The majority of Americans agree that preserving undeveloped land for outdoor recreation is important. A large percentage of outdoor participants also believe that developing local parks and hiking and walking trails is important.

- The District is effective with current means of marketing; however, Web-based niche marketing tools are becoming more popular for agencies to use as a means of promoting programs and services, especially when targeting younger populations.

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Appendix D – Meeker Recreation Center Addition Concept Plan

Meeker Recreation Center Addition Study Overview

This Meeker Recreation Center expansion study focused on solutions aimed at minimizing construction cost, site impacts, and maximizing operational efficiency.

Given the proposed program space requirements, there are three practical directions in which the facility can expand.

Option 1 places the 22,500 s.f. building addition to the west of the existing building and consumes a considerable amount of existing parking. Depending on the current parking demand, parking capacity may need to increase with the expanded facility. The current site plan does not have capacity for parking expansion without consuming some of the adjacent playing field.

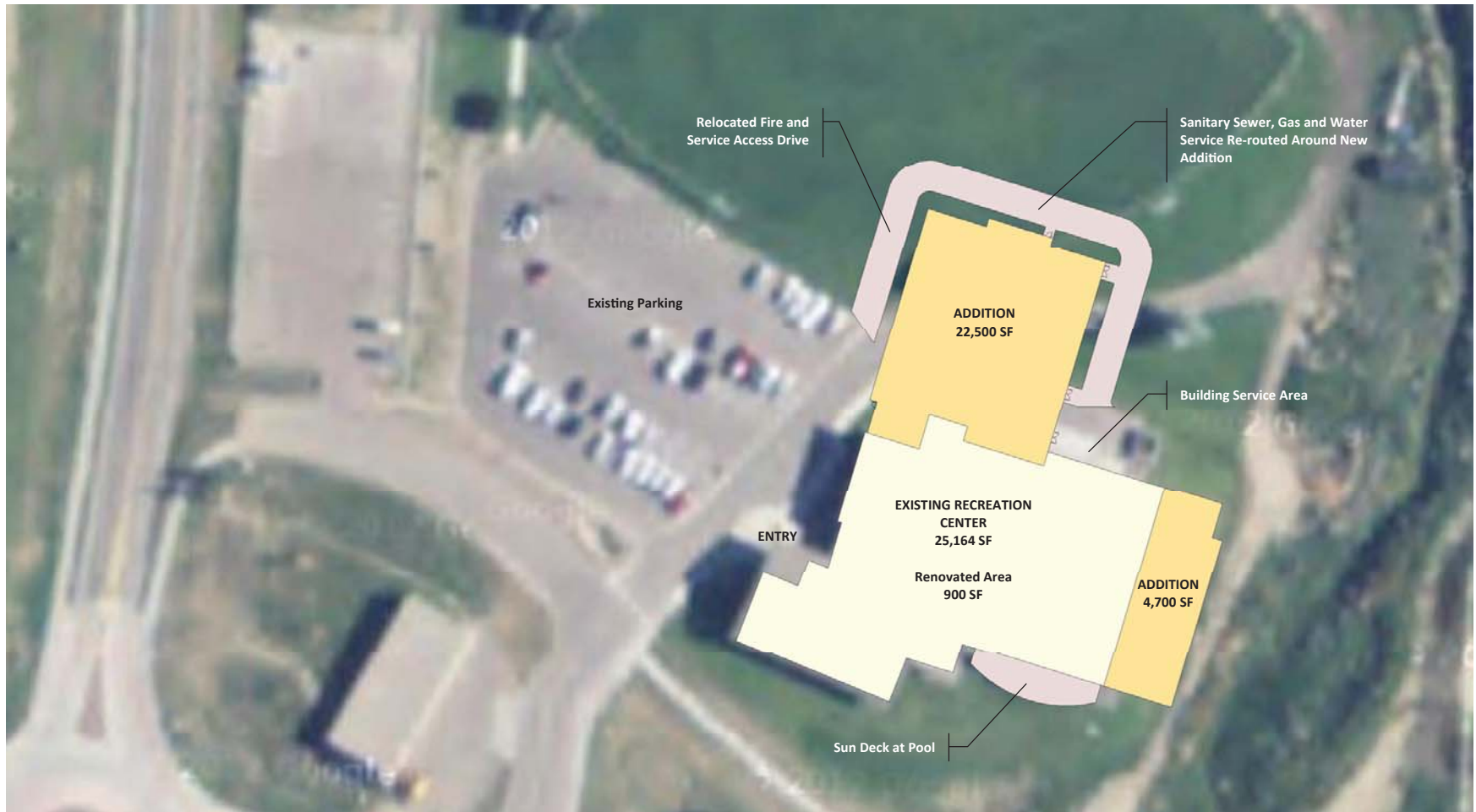
Option 2 places the expansion to the north of the existing building. This allows for a very efficient plan layout, preserves parking, but renders the playing field in its current configuration unusable.

Option 3 places the expansion to the northeast. Potentially, this allows the parking and playing field to remain unchanged. Challenges with this option include a less efficient plan layout, costly regarding of the site, limited emergency vehicle access to the rear of the building, and increased environmental impacts to the drainage way.

Option 2 seemed to offer the most practical approach and was developed to a conceptual level for community feedback and reaction. Response to the building layout was positive but it was also clear that the sacrifice of the playing field was felt to be significant. Through discussions with staff and the consulting team, a fourth option was then discussed.

Option 4 includes placing the expansion to the west as described in Option 1, but also considers incorporating adjacent land currently occupied by a maintenance building shared by Meeker Sanitation District and the Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Park District. If the existing maintenance building could be relocated to the north end of the existing recreation center parking lot, land would be available to expand the displaced recreation center parking. Conceptually, this could improve access to the maintenance building, preserve the existing playing field and drainage way, and provide the needed space for expansion.

This, or other similar options looking beyond the existing recreation center property lines, will require further investigation and discussion beyond the scope of this report but may offer viable alternatives that minimize environmental impacts and maintain existing assets as much as possible.



Overall Site Plan

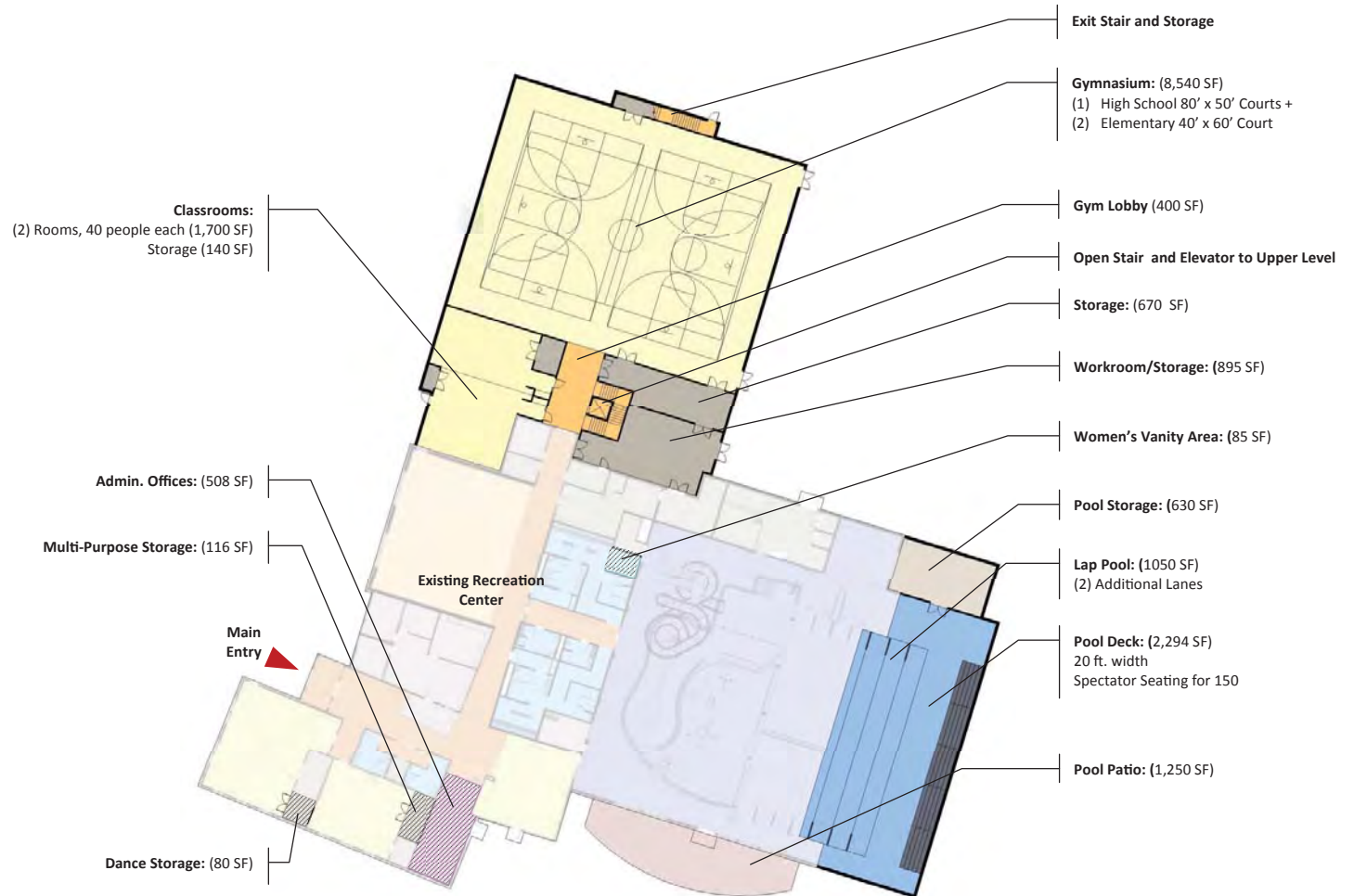
Eastern Rio Blanco Recreation Center Expansion Project



BARKER RINKER SEACAT
ARCHITECTURE



May, 2012



LEGEND

- EXISTING SPACES
- RENOVATED AREAS
- RECREATION SPACES
- PROGRAM SPACES
- LOCKER ROOMS
- ADMINISTRATION SPACES
- CIRCULATION SPACES
- STORAGE / SUPPORT SPACES

Conceptual drawing, details may vary

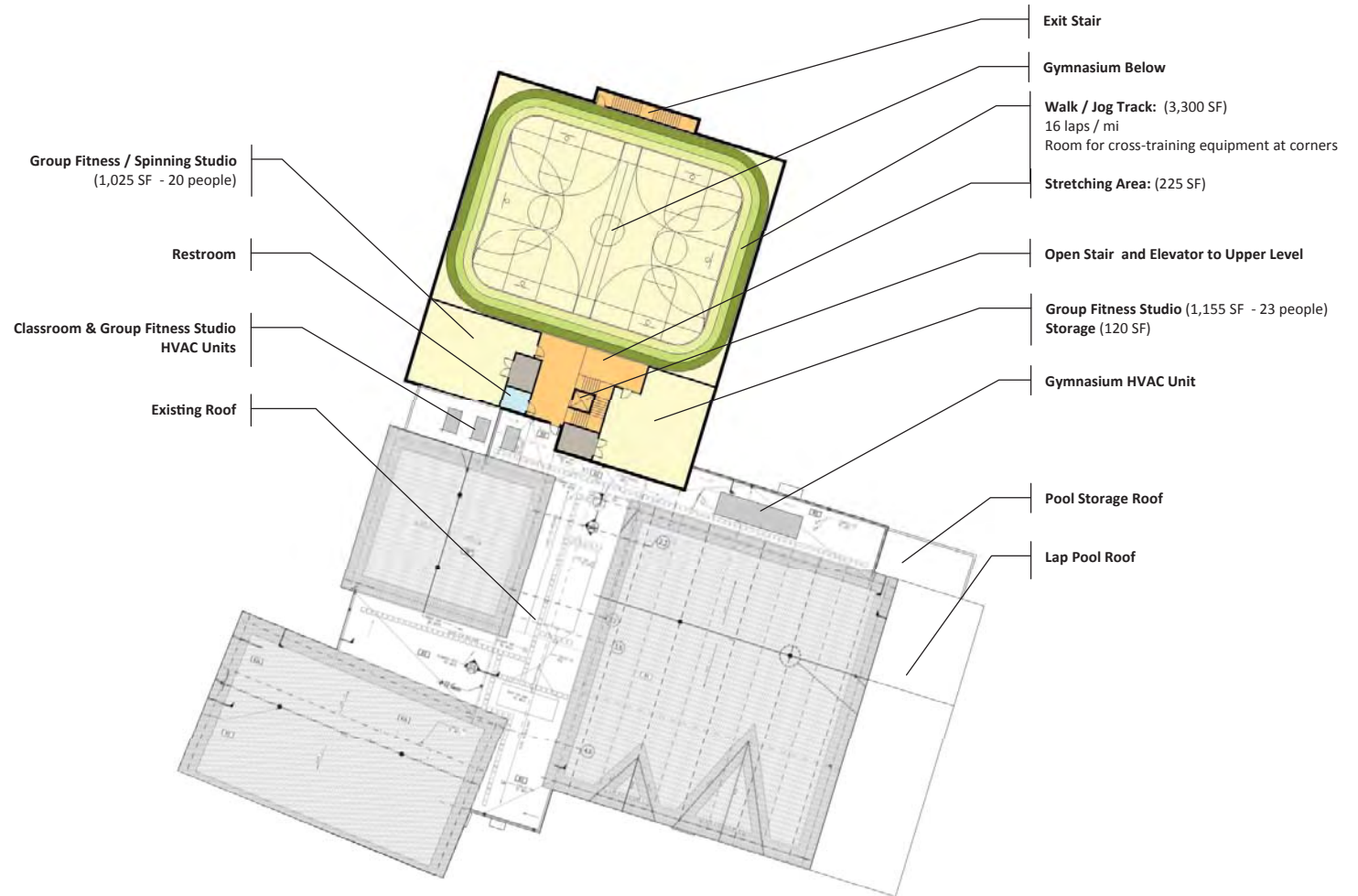


Lower Level Master Plan

Eastern Rio Blanco Recreation Center Expansion Project

BARKER RINKER SEACAT
ARCHITECTURE

May, 2012



LEGEND

- EXISTING SPACES
- RECREATION SPACES
- PROGRAM SPACES
- LOCKER ROOMS
- ADMINISTRATION SPACES
- CIRCULATION SPACES
- STORAGE / SUPPORT SPACES

Conceptual drawing, details may vary



Upper Level Master Plan

Eastern Rio Blanco Recreation Center Expansion Project



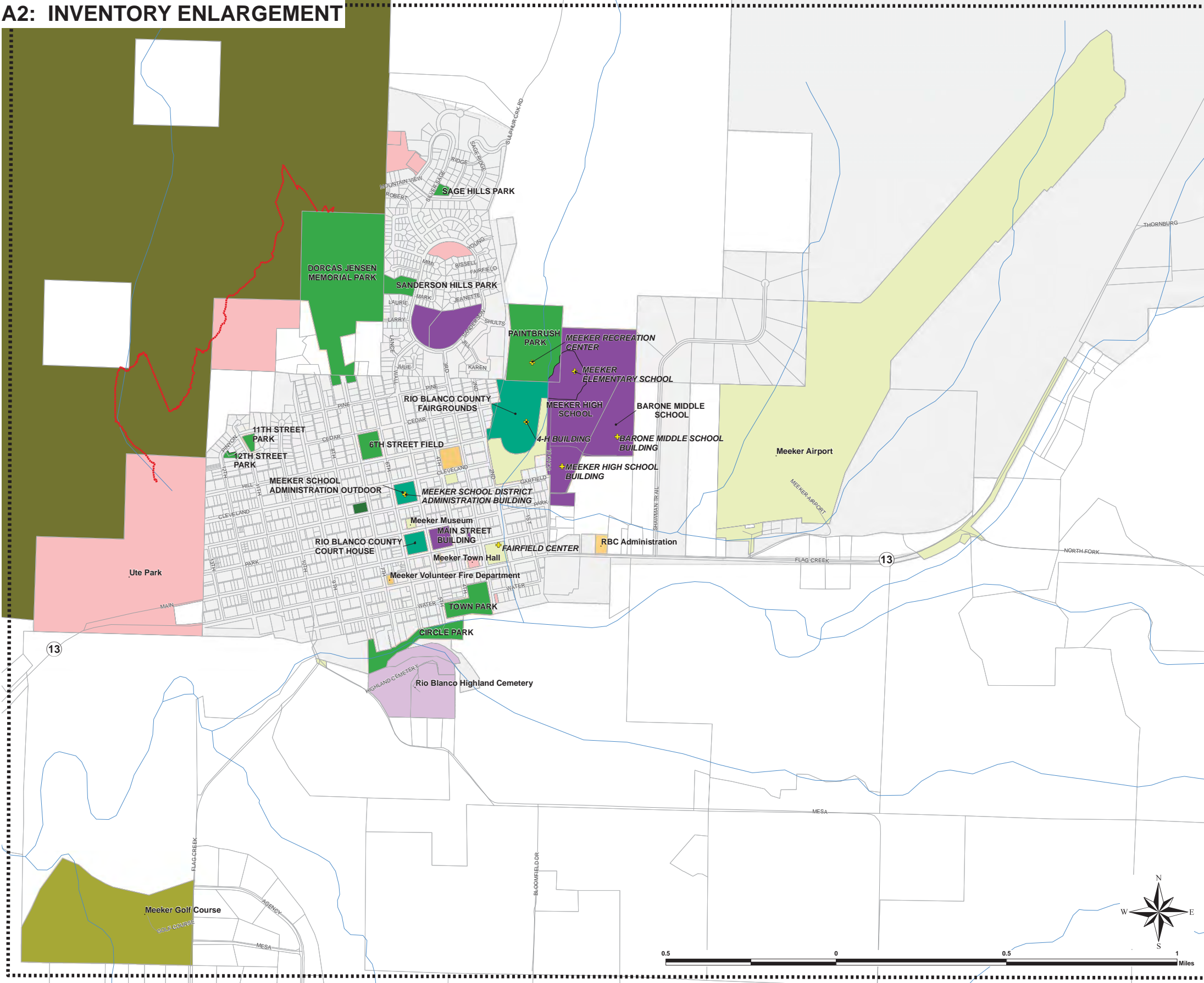
May, 2012

Appendix E – District System Map

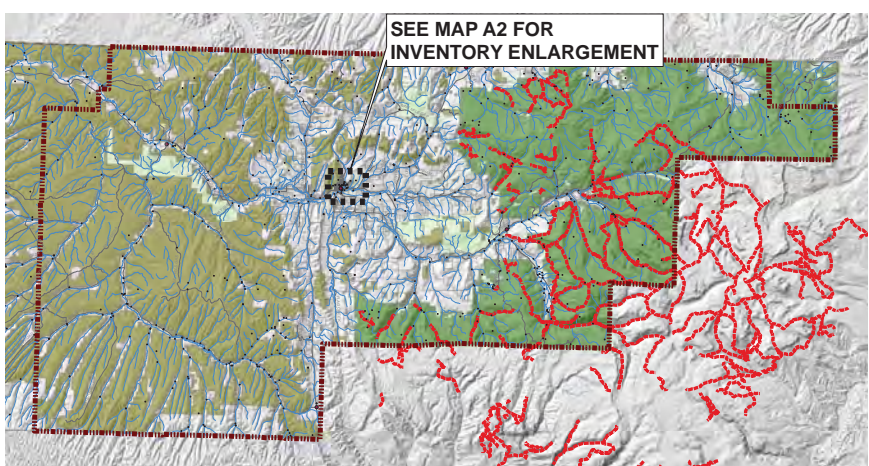
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EASTERN RIO BLANCO METROPOLITAN RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

A2: INVENTORY ENLARGEMENT



A1: ENTIRE DISTRICT



Legend

- Inventory Enlargement Area

ERBM Indoor Recreation Facilities

ERBM Outdoor Recreation Locations

 - Park
 - School
 - Other
 - Trail
 - Streets and Roads
 - River, Streams and Lakes
 - Parcel
- Public Lands**

 - Bureau of Land Management
 - Cemetery
 - County
 - Colorado Division of Wildlife
 - Golf
 - School
 - Town
 - United States Forest Service
 - Wilderness Land Trust
 - Other Public Facility Parcel

Park District Boundary

 - Eastern Rio Blanco

Map Produced For Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Park District Master Plan
- By The GRASP® Team.
This Map Is Intended For Planning & Discussion Purposes Only
- Please Refer To The Project Document For Map Details
Legend Elements May Vary Slightly In Size, Color And Transparency From Those Shown On Map.
Labels are limited to ensure legibility.
GIS Data Sources May Include: ERBM, Rio Blanco County, State of Colorado, CDOT,
US Census, ESRI, GRASP® Team - December 2011
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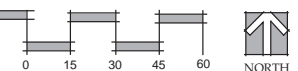


Town Park

Final Master Plan • July 2012

DESIGN CONCEPTS
Community and Landscape Architects

Meeker, Colorado



Appendix G – Trails Recommendation Map

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EASTERN RIO BLANCO METROPOLITAN RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT **PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN**

