



# Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District

Park, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Master Plan

## **Final Master Plan**

March 2011







## **Master Plan Acknowledgements**

This Master Plan could not have been completed without the dedication and long hours of the District Board and many volunteers who gathered the information included in this report and guided the development of this document. Many of these volunteers are noted here, but a special thank you to Mia Pryce for being such a great resource for the consultant team with her invaluable insight and knowledge of the District, its historical context and its goals for the future.

### **Great Outdoors Colorado Master Plan Grant Application Committee:**

Linda Martin, Chairperson; Ursula Treves, Nancy Hollinger, Sara van Rensburg, Linda Lonnecker, Mia Pryce, Abbie Koorndyk

### **CCCPRD Master Plan Steering Committee:**

Mia Pryce, Project Manager; Jeffrey Konikowski, Chuck Musgrave, Joelle Dunaetz, Dennis Cox, Deborah Overmyer, Meghan Morrissey, Doug Pryce, Mike Overmyer, Jane Marsolek

### **CCCPRD Inventory Database Research:**

Sara Constantine, Ursula Treves, Barb Waldron, Mia Pryce

### **CCCPRD Board of Directors:**

Linda Martin, President; Jane Marsolek, Vice President; Jeffrey Konikowski, Secretary; Mike Overmyer, Treasurer; Mia Pryce

### **Consultant Team:**

Norris Design: Karen Ryan, Cynthia Pedrioli, Jeff Smith, Mitch Black, Jordan Dame, Brandi Hall and Katrina Kowalski  
Corona Insights: Leo Lewis

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# INTRODUCTION

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## Project Purpose & Vision

The purpose of Coal Creek Canyon's first Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Master Plan is to evaluate the area's existing recreation facilities, programs and services, assess the community's needs and desires and to provide recommendations for the establishment of facilities and services provided to residents of the District. This community-driven plan is intended to guide the Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District (CCCPRD or the District) by assessing the level of service (residents' access to existing recreation amenities and programs), and establishing prioritized recommendations in regard to facility enhancements, recreation programming, as well as identify the resources and funding associated with each action.

This Plan will provide an invaluable resource for identifying priorities, creating a package to present to the community for mill levy funding, coordinating potential partnerships, and creating new park, trails, facility and program development. Ultimately, the Master Plan will serve as a living document which will assist the District in finding affordable and long-term solutions which will meet the community's recreation, open space, trails and program needs over the next ten years.

# INTRODUCTION

## Area and District Background

### Coal Creek Canyon Area and District History

The CCCPRD is located in unincorporated Coal Creek Canyon, Colorado, southwest of Boulder. The District is a Title 32 Colorado Special District which was created in May 2009 after a grass roots effort lasting about 7 years. Although the creation of the District is quite new, the area has a long and rich history.

Native Americans camped in the area long before white settlement, as seen by teepee ring remnants found throughout the Canyon. As early as the 1860's, white settlers arrived. These early settlers supported the supply route to the mines near Blackhawk that followed the creek up the Canyon. Homesteaders that lived in the Canyon also ranched, farmed, and cut and milled timber for use throughout the region. Originally, the Denver Northwest & Pacific Railroad was intended to run the route planned by David Moffet through the Canyon, but due to costs was rerouted to South Boulder Canyon. Today, the current route of the Union Pacific Railroad, follows the original rail bed, and crosses Highway 72 via the trestle at the mouth of the canyon.

Similar to other near-mountain areas outside of Denver, the Coal Creek Canyon area was a popular destination for tourists and summer cabin residents around the turn of the century. Around the end of World War II, people began moving to the canyon to raise their families outside of the Denver metropolitan area. With the opening of Rocky Flats, the population in the Canyon increased again and the need for services increased. During this time, the Coal Creek Canyon Improvement Association (CCCCIA) was founded and was instrumental in helping to get electric service, daily postal service, the paving of State Highway 72, and organizing volunteer fire protection for the Canyon. Today, it is still a key private, member-based organization in the Canyon responsible for many community events and the management of a large community meeting facility where organizations and members are able to rent the building for meetings, classes and gatherings. Later, a Fire District was established and after various one-room school

houses, the Coal Creek Canyon Elementary School was built in 1963. The school now serves kindergarten through 8th grade. Mountain Phoenix, a Jefferson County charter school that serves K-8, has also opened. In May of 2009, the Park and Recreation District was voted into existence by canyon residents in order to provide desired parks, recreation and quality of life amenities.

### Park and Recreation District Overview

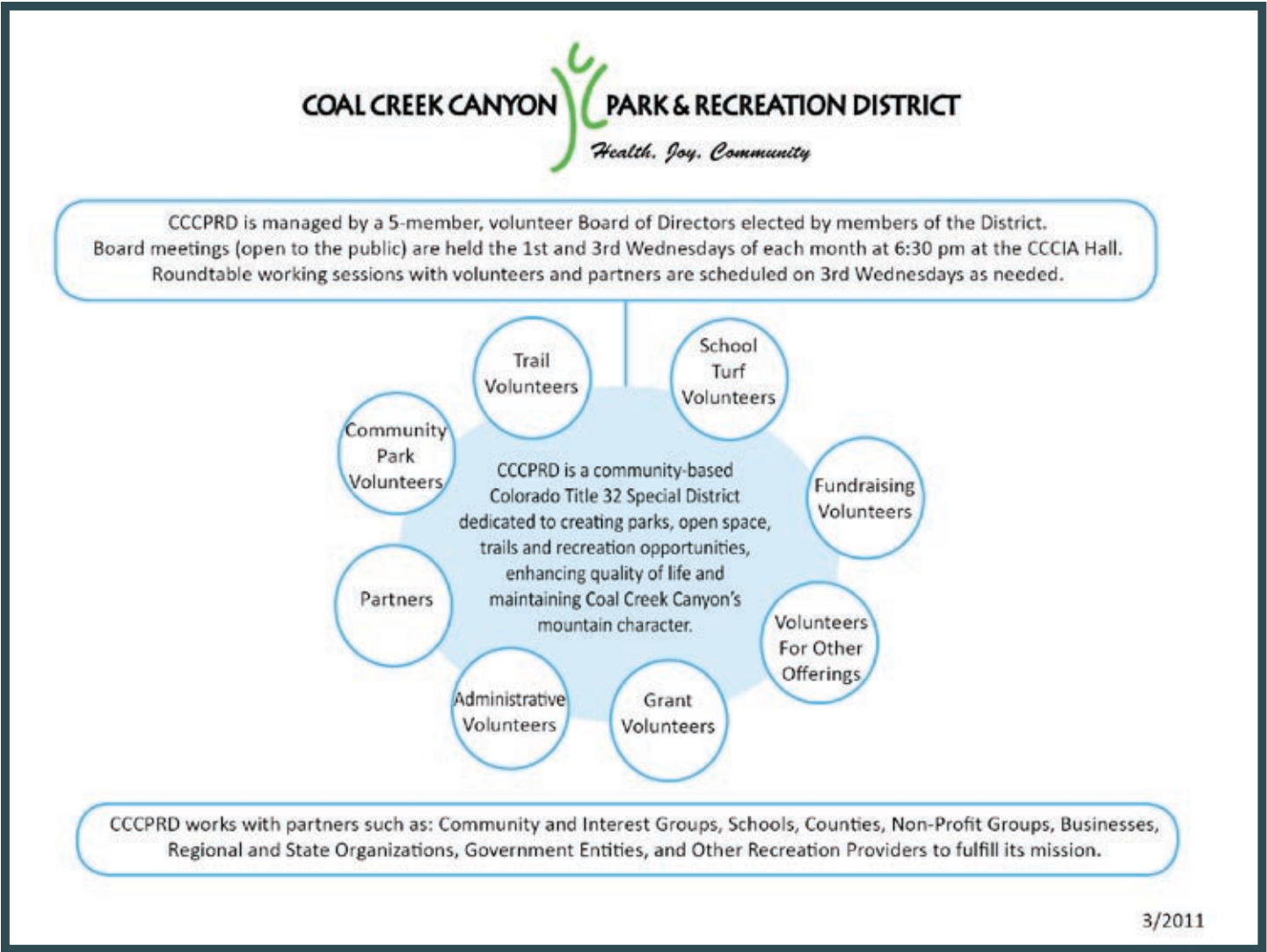
Founded in 2009 through a vote by area residents, the CCCPRD is in its infancy and currently does not own or manage any facilities of its own, with the exception of a 20'x40' tent that was purchased in partnership with Jefferson County and the CCCIA. The District is roughly bounded by the Gilpin County line to the west, Jefferson County Open Space and City of Arvada land to the east, Gross Reservoir and Walker Ranch/ Eldorado State Park Open Space to the north and Golden Gate State Park to the south. State Highway 72 runs through the central area of the rural, mountain foothills District. About two-thirds of the community lies within Jefferson County and about one-third is in Boulder County.

At this time, the District is 100% volunteer-run and led by a Board of Directors of the District which is comprised of dedicated residents, with a variety of professional expertise, from the area (see **Figure 1.1** for more detailed information). Currently, this group of volunteers works across a variety of entities to connect program users and alternative recreation providers (See **Alternative Recreation Providers & Programming** section) with area residents and is working to establish facilities and programs sponsored and supported by the District for residents.





Figure 1.1 - CCCPRD Organizational Chart



The District is approximately 14,000 acres, which is primarily characterized by residential use. There are some gaps within the District where landowners have chosen to exclude themselves from the District. However, generally the District covers land within both Boulder and Jefferson Counties (and is adjacent to Gilpin County) and includes land owned by private entities and public entities such as Colorado State Parks, both Jefferson County and Boulder County Parks and Open Space programs, Jefferson and Boulder School Districts, Colorado State Land Board, Bureau of Land Management and the City of Boulder.

Additionally, it is important to recognize that the District area has many affinity groups such as “Women Over Fifty,” Mountain Mamas (parenting), book clubs, The Environmental Group (TEG), dance, yoga, and quilting groups, Mountain Artisans’ Guild, the Coal Creek Canyon Improvement Association

(CCCIA), and church groups that provide residents with recreation programs and activities, which are primarily held at the CCCIA Hall.

**Situational Analysis**

CCCPRD and the Canyon lack community recreational facilities and amenities. There are no public recreational amenities in the Canyon, such as picnic areas, playgrounds, or a community gathering place that allows for drop-in or social activity. Hiking trails are available at State Parks to the north and south, but often have limited access and are typically not “family-friendly” walking trails. Trails that were once commonly used have been closed with changes in landowners’ trust and attitudes toward informal access. Additionally, walks on the area’s dirt roads are becoming more dangerous with increasing traffic.



Through the voter-approved creation of CCCPRD and the findings of this Needs Assessment, it is evident that the majority of the Canyon residents desire some additional recreation opportunities. This master plan is intended to assist the District in moving forward in the early stages to create a solid foundation in creating facilities and establishing services through a prioritized action plan, recommendations, and to assist with funding options and partnership opportunities.

### Project Success Indicators

At project startup, the consultant team worked with members of the CCCPRD Advisory Committee to identify the most important goals and outcomes that are critical to the success of this strategic planning process. These committee members were asked “What processes and results need to be accomplished in order to consider this plan a success upon completion of the project?” The following objectives were identified as project goals for the CCCPRD’s first Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Master Plan:



**Table 1.1: Coal Creek Canyon – Project Success Indicators**

Project Success Indicator	Objective
Create a thorough inventory of the recreation opportunities and amenities throughout the region.	Gain an understanding of what is currently available in the region and the level of service currently provided to the District residents by those opportunities and amenities.
Engage a diverse representation of the community through the public input process and community survey.	Providing ample opportunities through community stakeholder meetings for the public to get involved and have their ideas heard. Energize the District’s residents, so as to gain activist supporters.
Understanding the community’s willingness to pay and support for a mill levy.	Gain community survey results that will provide a clearer understanding of the community’s desires and willingness to support the District through tax dollars.
Identify actions that are achievable in the short-term.	Develop estimated costs for land acquisition, facility development and a prioritized action plan, with potential partnerships and funding sources to make plan priorities a reality.
Create a master plan that acts as a roadmap as well as guides the District’s decision-making.	Establish a prioritized action plan that embodies the values of the community, identifies specific action items, and is a “living” document that allows for any unforeseen opportunities to be taken advantage of as they arise.



# DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS & COMMUNITY PROFILE

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# DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS & COMMUNITY PROFILE

## Background Information

The Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District (CCCPRD or the District), located in both Jefferson County and Boulder County, Colorado, is creating its first Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Master Plan. One component of such a plan is to understand how local demographics affect the parks and recreation facility and program needs, as well as understanding how the local demographics are either similar or different from state and national trends.

For this analysis, demographic data was evaluated for only the geographic area within the District's boundary. It is important to recognize that prior to the District forming Coal Creek Canyon did not historically have strongly defined boundaries. Therefore, other sections of the report may refer to the region as a whole rather than the just the District.

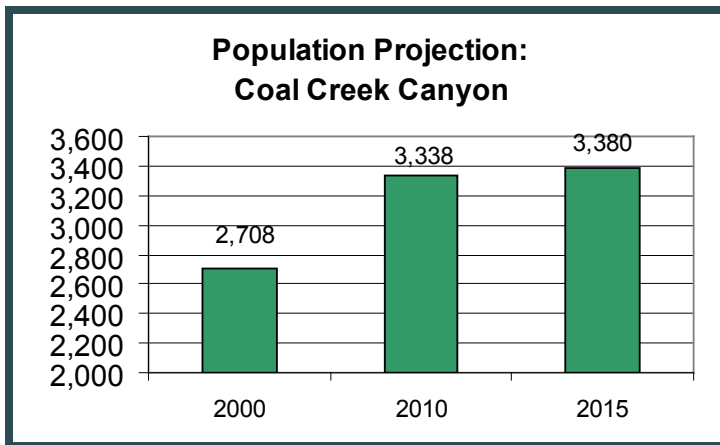
The District is located just west of the Denver Metropolitan area and is centered around State Highway 72, which runs east-west through the Coal Creek Canyon. The District is within both Jefferson and Boulder counties and is adjacent to Gilpin County. The District is adjacent to and west of the City of Arvada and a short distance from Golden to the southeast, Boulder to the northeast and Nederland to the northwest.

Note: Unless otherwise noted, the raw data used for the analysis that follows was provided by ESRI Business Solutions. 2010 data noted in this analysis is a projection of actual Census data, because at the time of this report 2010 US Census data had not been released.

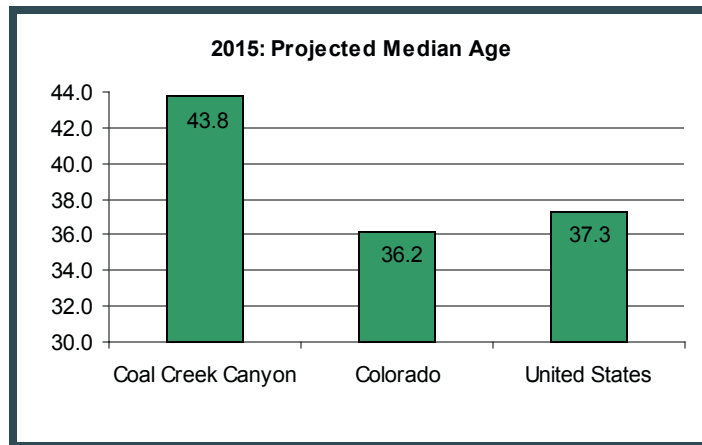
## Population Forecast

The Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District is a mature community that is growing at a much slower rate than both Colorado and the United States. The community will experience a 0.26% annual population growth rate for the 5 year period between 2010 and 2015. This rate of growth is significantly below the rate projected for Colorado (1.51%) and the U.S. (0.76%) for the same period. The projected population is illustrated in **Figure 2.1**.

**Figure 2.1: Population Projection 2000-2015**

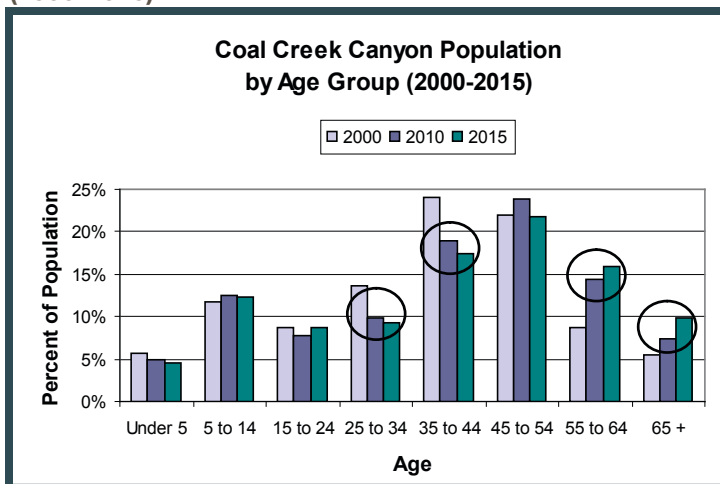


**Figure 2.3: Projected Median Age, 2015**

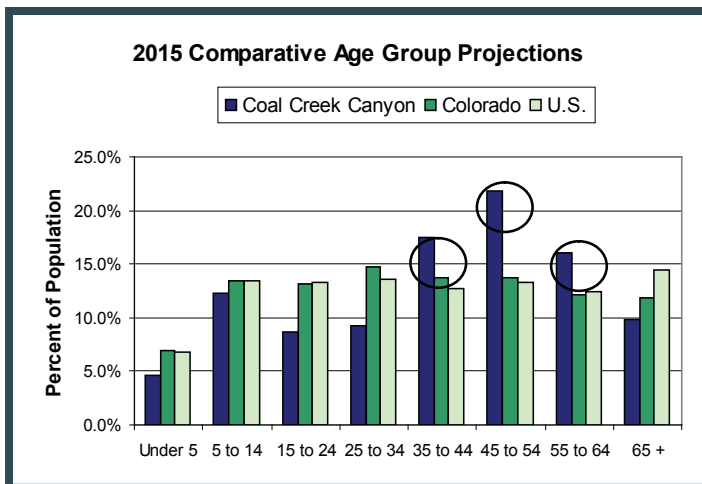


## Age Distribution

**Figure 2.2: Coal Creek Canyon Population by Age Group (2000-2015)**



**Figure 2.4: 2015 Comparative Age Group Projections**



A profile of the population's age is critical to parks and recreation programming since different age groups can have extremely different needs and desires for parks and recreation facilities and programs. **Figure 2.2** illustrates the population breakdown of the District by age groups. The percentages depicted in the chart indicate significant drops in the 25 to 44 age groups, and steady increases in those 55 and older (refer to circled areas for details). This indicates a decrease in the number of parents raising children in Coal Creek Canyon and an increase in those approaching or in retirement, which not only impacts the services of the District but partnering organizations such as the schools. This trend is also supported by **Figure 2.3** which shows a significantly older median age than both Colorado and the United States. **Figure 2.3** illustrates that the District's projected median age in 2015 will be 43.8 years, which is 7.6 years older than Colorado, and 6.5 years older than the nation.

**Figure 2.4** illustrates that the percentage of population in every age category under 35 years is projected to be smaller in Coal Creek Canyon (total % under 35 in 2015 = 34.8%) than in both the State of Colorado and the nation (48.3% (Colorado), 59.8% (United States)). The reverse is true of age 35 and above – Coal Creek Canyon is projected to have a higher percent of the population above age 35, (total % of 35 and over in 2015 = 65.1%) than both the State and the nation (total % 35 and over in 2015 = 51.7 (Colorado), 40.2 (United States)). This high percentage is attributed to the three categories that cover the 35 to 64 age group, which in 2015 includes Generation X and the majority of the Baby Boomer generation.



Coal Creek Canyon is also trending at a much faster rate than that of the Colorado and the nation when it comes to population growth of those age 65 and older. Between the years 2010 and 2015, the 65 and over population in Coal Creek Canyon will increase by 2.4%; in Colorado, it will increase by 1.4% and in the nation as a whole, it will increase by 1.3%. Due the aging of the Baby Boomers, a lot of attention nationally and statewide will be paid to meeting the need for recreational amenities for older adults. Similarly, the Coal Creek Canyon community's demand for programs and facilities serving the needs of those 65 and older is projected to increase, so any facility enhancements should give strong consideration to the needs of this age group but not at the expense of meeting the needs of the District's younger residents, who have been identified as a high priority by the community (see Community Survey Summary). It is also imperative that physical access to facilities is maintained or improved over time to accommodate this age group, which includes a greater portion that move slower and/or with assistance.



The following list (**Table 2.1**) indicates some of the characteristics of age groups that affect parks and recreation programming.

**Table 2.1: Coal Creek Canyon Demographic Groups and Recreation Needs**

Age Group	2010	2015	Characteristics and Recreation Needs
Under 5	4.90%	4.60%	Preschool and toddler programs
			Playground users
			Experience park and recreation facilities and programs with an adult
5 to 14	12.50%	12.30%	Youth athletics and after-school programs
			Growing interest in non-traditional, individual activities
15 to 24	7.80%	8.70%	Teen and young adult programs
			Extreme sports and adventure-related activities
25 to 34	9.90%	9.20%	Adult program participants
			Young families
35 to 44 and 45 to 54	42.90%	39.30%	Adult program participants
			Combined age groups - have similar needs and demands for recreation programs and facilities
			Families range from preschool to youth to early empty nesters
55 to 64	14.40%	16.00%	Active older adult programming
			Empty nesters approaching retirement
			Often have grandchildren who use facilities and programs
65 and older	7.40%	9.80%	Older adult programs
			Social networking and healthcare related programs
			Range from healthy and active to more physically inactive

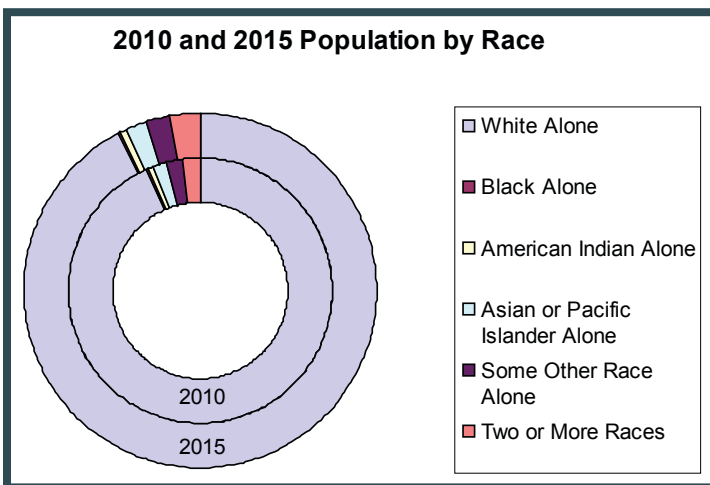
## Race/Ethnicity

Race and ethnicity often play a role in a community's park and recreation needs and desires. Trends can be found in the ways that different ethnic groups use parks, recreation facilities and the types of programs they seek. As **Figure 2.5** illustrates, the District's ethnicity makeup is predominately "white alone" and will remain so over the next five years. The District is less racially diverse than both Colorado and the Country as a whole. The percentage of the population in 2015 that is "white alone" will be significantly lower in both Colorado (78.9%) and the United States (70.7%) than in Coal Creek Canyon (92.1%). Additionally, in 2015, the percentage of District residents projected to be of Hispanic origin is 7.9%, which is significantly lower than the percentage of state residents (22.9%) and US residents (17.8%) of Hispanic origin.

*\*Note: It is important to note that Hispanic origin (also known as ethnicity) is independent of race, and that persons who report themselves as Hispanic may be from any of the racial categories noted. The Census Bureau defines "Hispanic or Latino" as "a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race."*

Despite the District's more homogenous character, it is important to consider in its parks and recreation services (e.g. community special events) any special needs or desires of the various races/ethnicities or other special groups within the District. Yet, the District should also be aware that programming specifically geared towards minorities might have low participation numbers. Therefore, increased marketing to minorities may be a more effective use of resources instead of specific programs geared towards minority groups.

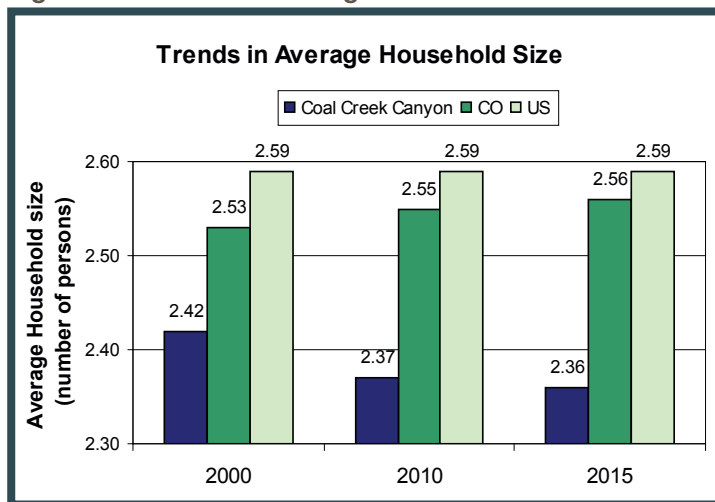
**Figure 2.5: Coal Creek Canyon 2010 and 2015 Population by Race**



## Household Makeup

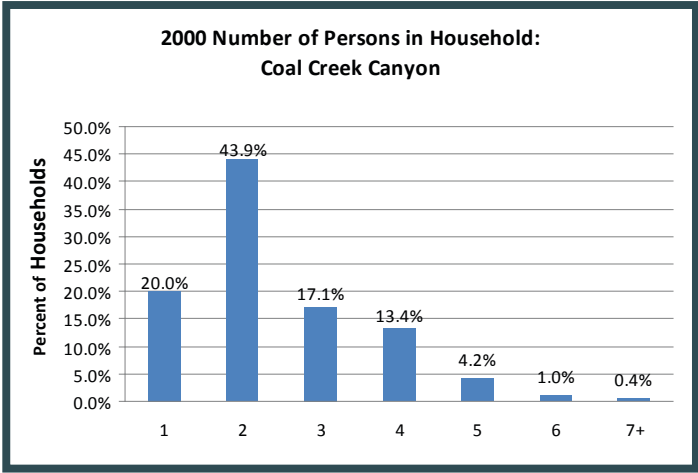
Coal Creek Canyon's household makeup is significantly different than both Colorado's and the Country. In 2000, 30.9% of the households in Coal Creek Canyon had children. This is 3.9% points less than the rate of households with related children in the State of Colorado (34.8%) and 4.6% points less than the rate nationally (35.5%). Additionally, **Figure 2.6** illustrates that the average household size within the District is significantly decreasing, going from 2.42 in 2000 to 2.36 people in 2015, compared to Colorado, which is increasing (2.53 to 2.56 people) during the same period. During this same period the US average is stable at 2.59.

**Figure 2.6: Trends in Average Household Size**



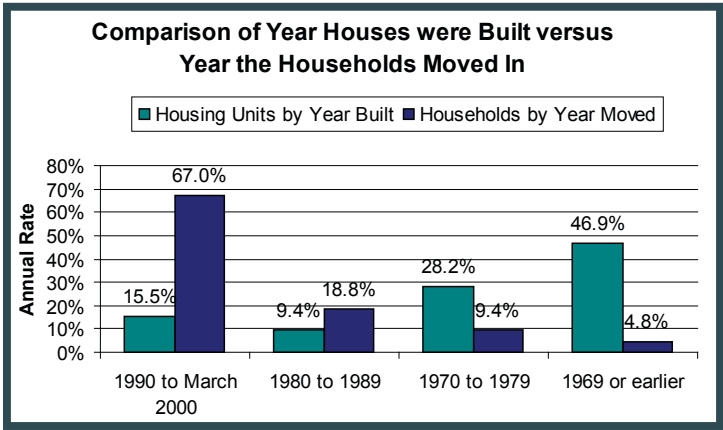
Household makeup is very important to parks and recreation programming – according to ESRI, in 2000, households with related children within the District made up 30.9% of all households (which is below the state and national percentages), and 43.9% of households were two person households (which is above the state and national percentages), see **Figure 2.7**. While a notable percentage of stakeholders have identified a need for facilities and programs for the community's children, this data illustrates that it will also be important to design facilities and programs that appeal to older adults and those without children.

**Figure 2.7: 2000 - Number of Persons per Household**



Another key finding, as shown in **Figure 2.8** is the differences between the year homes in the District were built and the year households moved in. Generally, the majority of homes were built before 1969 (46.9%), but the majority (67.0%) of households moved in between 1990 and 2000 (data is not available for years after 2000). This shows that while there are some long-time residents, most people have moved in to the area more recently, which may indicate a moderate to high turn-over rate of residents, especially families, which may be reflective of the climate and available amenities (as heard during the Public Input workshops). However, it appears that those who live there without children tend to age in place.

**Figure 2.8: Resident Longevity**



### Education and Income

In 2010, 58.5% of the population in Coal Creek Canyon has an Associate's, Bachelor's or higher educational degree. By way of comparison, 43.4% of the population in the State of Colorado and 35.8% of the population in the US has an Associate's, Bachelor's or higher degree. The educational attainment breakdown is shown in **Figure 2.9**.

This significantly higher level of educational attainment correlates to the increasing income projected for Coal Creek Canyon. In 2010, the median household income in Coal Creek Canyon was \$100,269 compared to \$62,326 in Colorado. In 2015, median household income in Coal Creek Canyon is projected to increase to \$111,682, while Colorado's median household increase will grow at a slightly higher rate to become \$71,434. As illustrated in **Figure 2.10**, the number of households with income levels under \$100,000 is expected to decrease and those with higher income levels are expected to increase by 2015. However, when reviewing household income data, it is important to keep in mind that the number of people in a household changes the amount of disposable income, and with a high number of households without children in the District, households may have additional disposable income.

Both high levels of educational attainment and the projected increase in income are positive news because data shows higher educational attainment and income are often correlated with better health and increased physical activity (discussed in further detail under Health & Related Factors).



Figure 2.9: 2010 Educational Attainment

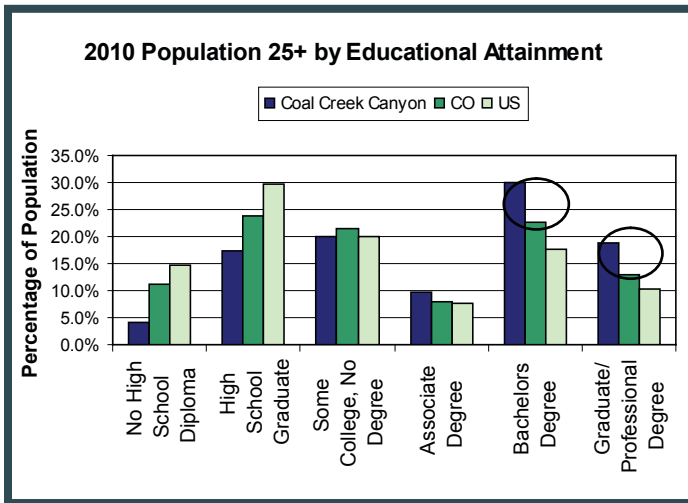
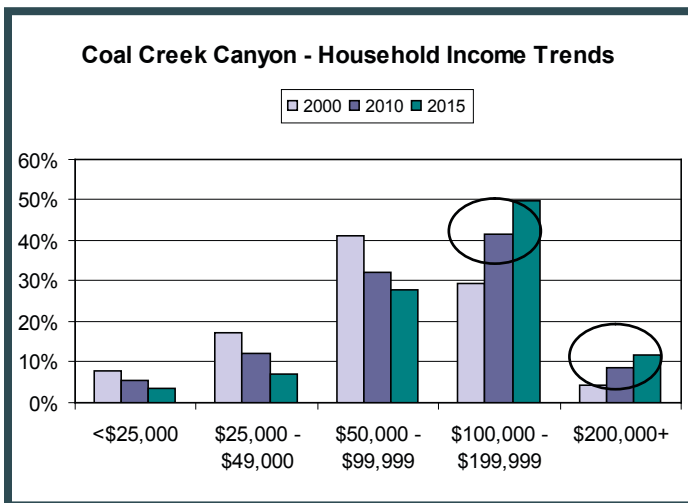


Figure 2.10: Median Household Income Trends



## Health & Related Factors

Research shows that a person's physical activity level, which by extension is a large determinant of their overall health, is determined by many factors, including education, income, number of household members, and gender. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Physical Activity and Good Nutrition: Essential Elements to Prevent Chronic Diseases and Obesity, At a Glance 2008:

"Despite the proven benefits of physical activity, **more than 50% of U.S. adults do not get enough physical activity** to provide health benefits; **25% are not active at all** in their leisure time.

**Activity decreases with age**, and sufficient activity is less common among women than men and among those with lower incomes and less education.

About **two-thirds of young people in grades 9–12** are not engaged in recommended levels of physical activity."

Specifically in Colorado, The Trust for America's Health reported positively that in a three year average from 2007-2009, the state ranked 49th in the nation for Adult Physical Inactivity. Meaning, while this is a positive attribute and Coloradoans are one of the most active states in the nation, it is important to recognize that there is still a significant number, 18%, of adults reporting they did not engage in any physical activity.

Research has also shown that the availability and access to opportunities to engage in physical activity is positively correlated with the amount of physical activity people participate in. Therefore, while the natural setting of the Canyon encourages physical activities such as hiking, the availability of parks and recreation services are also vital to increasing physical activity, health and wellness across all ages. When evaluating the availability of recreation opportunities in the Canyon, it is important to consider their accessibility and proximity to residents in addition to their mere existence. Physical barriers, safety concerns, and distance to parks and facilities

often prevent residents from using the recreation amenities and programs – all which are major issues facing Canyon residents due to its rural and mountainous characteristics, steep topography, and lack of walkable access to parks and facilities. Research has found that larger sizes of parks and open spaces do not increase how often or how much people use them, but rather the distance and walkable access to the park or open space is the greatest determining factor.

## Key Findings

Coal Creek Canyon is a small, mature community located in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, west of Denver and south of Boulder in Colorado. The rugged terrain of the area limits future land development and population growth. There are definite trends when looking at the demographic characteristics of those living in the Canyon. The community is characterized by older couples without children living at home that are more educated and more affluent than other communities in the state. Although a notable portion of residents do have children, it is 4-5% lower than state and national averages and projected to decline.

Coal Creek Canyon community's demand for programs and facilities serving the needs of those 65 and older is likely to increase, so any facility design should consider the needs of this age group but not at the expense of meeting the needs of the District's younger residents, who have been identified as a high priority by the community (see Community Survey Summary). While many stakeholders have noted a need for facilities and programs for the community's children, it will also be important to design facilities and programs that appeal to those without children because of the high number of single and two-person households in the district.





COAL CREEK  
CANYON COMMUNITY  
& STAKEHOLDER INPUT

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# COAL CREEK CANYON COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER INPUT

## Introduction

Close interaction with the public, Jefferson and Boulder County staff, and key stakeholders was critical throughout the master planning process and resulted in the identification of residents' concerns, perceived needs and priorities regarding the provision of parks and recreation facilities, programs and services. Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District (CCCPRD or the District) representatives and the project team worked to include a wide representation of interests and user groups, so as to embody the diverse needs of the community's residents and stakeholders. These efforts included a significant number of meetings and forums for residents to participate and to provide input, so as to guide the identification of important issues and appropriate solutions.

On September 20th, board members and Master Plan steering committee members for the District participated in a visioning session as part of the Master Plan project kick-off meeting. On October 11th and 14th, , four focus group meetings and an open public input meeting were held where residents and stakeholders of the District were provided a number of opportunities in which to provide input on this planning effort. Throughout November and December, numerous stakeholder interviews and meetings were held with Jefferson County Open Space and Community Resources staff, Boulder County Parks and Open Space staff, US Forest Service staff, Regional Transportation District representatives, the Coal Creek Canyon Fire Protection District, Golden Gate State Park, Camp Eden, Camp Wondervu and other alternative recreation providers and key stakeholders (see Alternative Recreation Providers and Programming section of the report).

## Coal Creek Canyon District Board & Master Plan Steering Committee – Visioning Session Summary

The consultant team met with the CCCPRD Board Members and Master Plan steering committee members and performed a SWOT Analysis (a strategic planning technique

used to assess the internal and external environment in which a organization operates and competes) to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats involved in the existing and potential parks and recreation facilities and programs within the District. This facilitated discussion was intended to identify what the board and key volunteers learned during their efforts to guide formation of the District, what their goals as a board are, and what vision residents have for the Canyon in regard to parks and recreation. During this SWOT (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats) discussion, some of the topics addressed were the identification of existing strengths of the Canyon, future parks and recreation opportunities, as well as internal and external challenges that may negatively impact the future of the District's programs and services.

A common theme discovered is that living in the Canyon is second to none when it comes to the quality of life for those who call the Canyon home. Some of the **strengths** that were identified tend to intertwine parks and recreation-oriented issues with lifestyle considerations. These include a love of the mountains and outdoors in both winter and summer, wildlife, varied terrain and trails for hiking, and numerous parks and outdoor recreation opportunities located nearby. Additionally, residents strongly tout the "sense of community," which is characterized by an abundance of volunteers, a close knit rural community where privacy is prized while also having the feeling of the Canyon as being one big neighborhood, as well as the benefit of being located close to the supporting urban amenities and employment opportunities. True to the independent-mindedness of residents living in the area, Canyon residents have relied almost exclusively on community-based volunteer efforts to accomplish most functions in the area. The impressive number of volunteer groups and organizations consistently provide opportunities for residents to help others in the community, while continuing to foster the Canyon's progress over time.

As there are many strengths associated with the District, some of the **challenges** that were identified by the Board generally focused on the long-term reliance on non-District facilities, current lack of funding, and anticipated needs for providing new or improved parks and recreation opportunities in the

District. Specific challenges noted include a lack of existing facilities, the challenge of getting people involved, residents' fear of change, severe winter weather conditions, geographic and topographic constraints, transportation limitations, potential auto-bicycle conflicts on a limited primary road network, and occasional burn-out as various efforts seem to rely heavily on an overburdened volunteer pool within the Canyon.

There are generally two groups of District residents – those who like to be involved in more community activities and those who have moved to the Canyon largely for privacy. A significant number of District residents are isolationists who do not desire additional amenities, or there may be those who want amenities but do not want to pay for them. One of the primary issues involved is having fairly limited means of communication among District residents. Other challenges identified for the District include lack of insurance, ever-present fire danger, fear of "flatlanders," and unwanted trespassing.

Some of the **opportunities** identified by the board members and steering committee members included engagement of the community through this planning process, as well as positive implementation of the Plan, which will provide the District the opportunity to develop a track record for success and a level of trust as it works to serve the residents. Other opportunities included the education of residents about the District's potential projects, consideration of controlled ways to leverage revenue from day-visitors to Canyon events, better promotion of existing programs and partnerships, promotion of a mill levy to support the Master Plan and pursuit of joint-venture grant opportunities that allow the District to pursue needed funding for future improvements.

One opportunity that has been consistently brought up by residents is a small centrally located park with amenities such as a sledding hill, ice skating and a multi-use activity center. The District has multiple related considerations that were identified in regard to this concept, including a location in easy access to the "Village" or central area of the Canyon, trying to locate a park within three miles of the highest population density in the Canyon, and to obtain land from private land owners through donations or county leases.



Strategic partnerships can be strengthened to maximize value from the District's efforts and expenditure of District resources. The Board and Steering Committee identified opportunities for sharing in the costs for complementary improvements with the existing elementary school site or partnering with Jefferson County or Boulder County efforts to accomplish parks and recreation improvements or programs in the area. The District may also work with existing transportation providers such as Ride Provide to minimize District residents' travel time and costs while strengthening availability of existing and proposed facilities located nearby. Board and Steering Committee members also introduced the possibility of implementing an innovative program where small projects can be achieved primarily through efforts of volunteers while having the District support ideas with a mini-grant process to further leverage limited District funds.

It was also recognized by board members and key volunteers that although there are a number of great opportunities for the District to consider, there are a number of factors that need to come together in order to overcome some of the external **threats** that could impede the District's full formation, growth and progress. Some of these threats include the significant decline in the nation and region's economy, impacting the amount of traditional and alternative funding that is available. Economic circumstances will likely influence residents' willingness to support a dedicated funding mechanism for facility and program development. Additionally, program user fees determination needs to take into consideration income levels (see **Demographics and Community Profile**) so as to fully capture those users needed to assure the success of District facilities instead of losing them to alternative providers. Additionally, Coal Creek Canyon has historically placed a high community value on the preservation of open space. Although this value has helped preserve the natural setting and character of the community, these designations may place restrictions on the District for the development of certain kinds of recreation facilities.

## Public Meeting and Focus Group Input

Under the heading of "Participate, Plan, Play!" four focus groups and a public meeting were held on October 11-14th, 2010 consisting of various stakeholders, user-group representatives, individual users, community leaders and interested residents. These participants represented a range of residents who have lived in the Canyon for only a few months to over 40 years, as well as interest groups and organizations who are working to continually make Coal Creek Canyon a better place to live and play.

Some of the **strengths** that participants identified about the Canyon include the area's natural beauty, privacy, neighbors that are close and caring, diverse group of residents, sense of community, access to open space and hiking, as well as being the "best place in the world to live." Additionally, its location provides easy access to many desired regional natural and urban amenities. Fun activities participants mentioned they currently enjoy in proximity to the Canyon included kayaking at Gross Reservoir, hiking, interactive groups, quilting, book club, yoga, Mountain Mamas, CCCIA events and bible studies, to name a few.

Identified as **weaknesses** and apparently missing from the Canyon are facilities and programs such as classes for seniors, fitness-oriented offerings, art programs, Boy Scouts, multi-generational activities, and access to a facility for "drop-in" or unscheduled community gatherings, which might include opportunities for a picnic area, gardening, ice skating, amphitheatre, outdoor movies, a gathering place and meeting rooms. A significant challenge is balancing the needs for additional facilities and programs with available funds, as well as the concern of bringing unwanted traffic into the Canyon on a regular basis.

Furthermore, the geographically spread-out population of District residents presents unique challenges related to communication and proximity to any concentrated or centrally located planned facilities or programs. Since there are few facilities located in close proximity to District residents, extensive travel distances between existing parks



and recreation facilities outside of District was stated to cause stress for those who choose to participate in a variety of activities. Some expressed becoming tired of being a “Car Canyon.” Trespass issues were also mentioned by these groups as an ongoing concern for the private property owners. Potential solutions mentioned to address trespass issues include providing additional trailheads for public trail access and increasing signage and promotion of publicly accessible trails.

The participants expressed that there are a number of **opportunities** to introduce the parks and recreation projects in “small bits” in order to have the best rate of success for the Master Plan. For example, accomplishing smaller projects, improving what the District or Canyon already has, and increased and consistent communication in the near-term would help gain resident support. Following gaining that support, specific opportunities mentioned include having a community gathering place, providing a place for youth to gather, creating recreation facilities that can serve both summer and winter activities, improved trail system with better access, protecting open space, jointly supported improvements associated with the K-8 school facilities, and a variety of programs for all ages.

A general description for a desired community gathering place was described by these groups generally to include the following elements: multi-use fields, access via horseback, bicycle or hiking trails of varied levels of difficulty, dog park, snowshoeing, community garden, nature or discovery center, a drop-in building for social activities, programs and classes, outdoor amphitheater, restroom facilities, programs for the elderly, ice skating, after school and weekend activities for youth, sledding hill, playground, picnic tables, and other associated improvements. Various properties with a desired central location, as well as acquisition strategies were discussed for the placement of this community gathering space.

This Master Plan can be a uniting element since there are residents living in two counties that create this community. A continued reliance on the many volunteer organizations will

be crucial to achieving the goals of the District. Additionally, potential key partners identified for the District included CCCIA, churches, schools, the coffee shop, the gas stations, Boulder County, and Jefferson County. This approach meets with a common theme of keeping it simple, sustainable and low maintenance. Specific opportunities where this could be showcased include use of existing facilities while others are being funded and built, establishing access to existing properties for recreation purposes, construction of a playground, and supporting improvements to the existing gravel field at the K-8 school.

Some of the **threats** identified by the various participants include limited funding and resources available to the District. Also, the potential for miscommunication among residents of the District regarding goals of the Master Plan could result in uninformed or misinformed voters. Lastly, there is also concern that developing community facilities could increase the undesirable trend of trespassing and congestion of the highway access into the Canyon.



## Stakeholder Interviews

**Coal Creek Canyon Fire Protection District** - On November 22, 2010, a member of the consultant team held a brief phone conference with Joe Cuervorst, District Fire Chief.

As Fire Chief, the primary concern expressed by Mr. Cuervorst is providing adequate access to properties obtained by the District to minimize them becoming a challenge to possible search and rescue efforts.

**Camp Eden and Wondervu Conference and Retreat Center** - Camp Eden and Camp Wondervu are located within the Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District along Camp Eden Road on the southwest end of the District. CCCPRD representatives met with staff members of both camps in order to identify potential partnership opportunities. Both Camps are retreat/camp facilities for private faith-based kids' camps and group retreats. Both facilities have an extensive collection of amenities, and are under private ownership by the respective groups, but may be interested in hosting non-faith based events.

Camp Eden was founded in 1944 and is owned by the Beth Eden Baptist Church. They provide on-site caretakers, and offer summer camps for kids and teens as well as retreat opportunities for women and men. Indoor amenities include a full kitchen, a main lodge with a stage that seats over 100 people, lodging without connected bathrooms, indoor shower/bathroom facilities, gymnasium with loft with game tables, etc, and a second kitchen attached to the gym. Outdoor amenities include an 800' tube hill and Nordic area, small pond, and paddle boats access to Jebson and Thorodin trails. Typically, the summers are booked, but there is availability in the fall and spring as well as during the winter. They are currently open to working with the District on one-time or re-occurring events on their site and are developing a fee list and marketing plan.

Wondervu Conference and Retreat Center was founded in 1977 and has on-site caretakers as well as summer interns and staff that run operations for groups that attend throughout the summer months. Indoor facilities include a chapel with

capacity for 600 people with a changeable stage and high ceilings; cafeteria for 60-70 people; a lodge which includes a kitchen, all-purpose room, four bedrooms, a bunk room, indoor bathrooms and nurses clinic; a bunkhouse with private bedrooms, and a large bunk room for 60 people, as well as additional lodging buildings open in the summer months. Outdoor amenities include a 6-acre lake for canoeing and fishing, a central open area with a sand volleyball court, large field, and a few areas with blacktop. The facility is typically rented in its entirety for a week at a time, especially in the summer. However, there is more availability during the spring and fall and during the winter.





**Golden Gate State Park** - CCCPRD representatives met with Dan Weber, Park Manager, on November 22, 2010. A very small portion of the State Park (north edge) is located within the District. The State Park's management plan dates back to 1996 and is planned to be updated in the next 5 years.

Through discussions, it was stated that Colorado State Parks is willing to participate in regional trail connections, although there are fee issues with a connection to White Ranch since it is not a State Park. The concept of an Eldorado State Park to Golden Gate State Park trail could enter Golden Gate State Park in a rather steep and difficult area where there is little other development.

Consideration also included potentially marking off trails for winter use in the Aspen Meadows area, as well as plowing the road to keep that parking lot open in winter. Dan also provided contact information for an equestrian group, Boulder Horseman Association, that was interested in access to Thorodin and also referenced Boulder Area Trails Coalition (BATCO) as potential partners in reaching recreation goals in the area.

Seen as an opportunity for the Canyon, park representatives would like more users at the Harmsen Ranch facility (acquired in the last 2 years) on Gap Road where they have available meeting rooms and overnight stays facilities.

Yet, in regard to facility and amenity improvements, there are significant challenges, as the Park has seen a large reduction in funding from the State, which has resulted in an increase to Park pass fees. The GGC State Park is currently funded 85-90% by user fees.

**US Forest Service** - On December 3, 2010, representatives of the CCCPRD met with Christine Walsh (Boulder District Ranger) and Ed Perault (Recreation Staff Supervisor) with the US Forest Service. Within the District, a single parcel located off of Skyline Road is owned and maintained by the USFS. The area does not have good public access and is on the fringe of USFS land.

USFS has numerous trails and parcels to manage and noted that it is illegal to create "unofficial trails" on USFS land. The agency stated that there could be opportunities to work with other entities, such as the CCCPRD, but contend that parcel access and the sentiments of area neighbors were still lingering issues. Mr. Perault suggested the CCCPRD consider connectivity to the west to Gilpin County lands and trails. The USFS also suggested partnering with a number of other groups with common parks and recreation interests.



## Transportation Providers

**Ride Provide** (a non-profit contractor for the Regional Transportation District which operates the Coal Creek Express van) – A CCCPRD representative met with Shelley Cook (Ride Provide Manager) and Al Parsons (Coal Creek Express van driver) on December 6, 2010 to discuss issues related to the Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District Master Planning effort. The Ride Provide is willing to work with CCCPRD to increase ridership on the Express, especially when it positively impacts RTD routes and makes the RTD subsidy more sustainable.

A variety of options were discussed to encourage residents' use of the Express van for recreation purposes and Ride Provide is willing to prepare a cost analysis once the CCCPRD provides more detail regarding potential ridership impacts from the Canyon. A change in a fixed route requires PUC approval, but Ride Provide is willing to handle that when appropriate.

Another option that Ride Provide may consider is CCCPRD chartering the Express van for recreation outings. Also discussed was the possibility of in-Canyon transportation during the day between the existing morning and afternoon "commuter runs." This might apply if CCCPRD supported activities being held at locations such as Camp Eden or Camp Wondervu, the school, CCCIA, a community gathering place or other facility located in the Canyon.

Any agreements with Ride Provide would be enhanced by (or perhaps dependent on) some kind of subsidy from the CCCPRD which could come from the District's budget or grants. Overall, Ride Provide is very supportive of the CCCPRD and seems excited about working out solutions to help people take advantage of the recreation opportunities in the area. In reciprocation, CCCPRD has expressed its willingness to work with Ride Provide to help increase ridership on the Coal Creek Canyon route by encouraging use of the van to get to recreation destinations.

**Senior Resource Center** - A CCCPRD representative met with Hank Braaksma, Transportation Manager for the Urban Division of the Senior Resource Center (SRC) on December 6, 2010. SRC has 3 divisions: urban, mountain (Evergreen), and a volunteer driver program with 70 drivers. SRC contracts for transportation services with a variety of agencies and for all ages, not just seniors. SRC recently contracted to run the Gilpin County Connector (365 day/yr; 14 hr days (two 7-hour shifts). SRC also recently contracted to provide a 9-month fixed route service with Nederland for about \$100,000. Essentially, the SRC services currently cost about \$60/hour.

**Boulder Mountainbike Alliance (BMA)** – Representatives of the District spoke with Jason Vogel, BMA president on November 2, 2010. Jason indicated that the organization is strongly in support of trails in the Canyon. Some potential trail opportunities include a regional link between Doudy Draw and White Ranch, Crescent Meadows to Golden Gate State Park, Myers Homestead to Magnolia Road, as well as a link between Walker Ranch and Golden Gate State Park. BMA is also very supportive of developing an established partnership with the District to strengthen the voice for trails with the County, as well as through public processes, such as the Walker Ranch Management Plan update. BMA also offered their contacts and expertise in trail planning and design.





**Boulder County Parks and Open Space** – During November and December of 2010, the consultant team, District Board members, and trails volunteers held individual interviews with Ron Stewart (Director), Rich Koopmann (Planning Manager) and Jesse Rounds (Resource Planner) of Boulder County Parks and Open Space. These interviews were intended to identify potential partnership opportunities between the County and the District, as well as to seek out information on successful strategies and programs that the County has used in the development and management of their park and open space system.

The County manages a large system of open space, natural areas and trail networks. The majority of these lands are owned by the County, as well as some that are preserved through conservation easements and joint-ownership. The focus of the Department is primarily on open space conservation and passive recreation, rather than developed and programmed parks.

Two of the County's properties that fall within the District's boundaries include a significant amount of land between Eldorado Canyon State Park's Crescent Meadows and Inner Canyon and Walker Ranch. In regard to the lands between the State Park, these parcels are primarily owned by BCPOS, but there are a few parcels that are still held by BLM and private land owners. The County received the patent from BLM 2-3 years ago and is currently not doing much with that property, but it will be included in the 2011 Update of the Walker Ranch Management Plan. This property is characterized by rugged terrain and large mammals, such as black bear. Dependent on the route alternatives, there may be the possibility of creating a short, easy loop in the western section of Crescent Meadows.

Walker Ranch is scheduled for an update to the property's Management Plan starting in early 2011 and will take approximately a year to complete. Currently, this property is primarily utilized by mountain bikers and hikers. There are also currently portions of the property that are closed for safety reasons, due to a recent fire. It is important to recognize the public input portion of the Plan update could have a significant

impact on uses and management policies. Users have been pushing for connections from the property to Golden Gate State Park. Use of this property could also be impacted by a future study of sensitive areas and species that could result in some areas designated as conservation areas.

In regard to additional trail connections, opportunities may include promoting existing trails at Crescent Meadows that are ADA accessible and good for kids and seniors, trail connections between Eldorado State Park and Golden Gate State Park, trails within Jefferson County Open Space, and connections from Boulder County and City Open Space to White Ranch.. Additionally, the County offered to be a resource on trail design standards, which evolve based on classification.



County staff members also provided insight as to successful programs they can offer and have used for the purposes of land acquisition and conservation (see Map B and Map G in the GIS Mapping and Spatial Analysis of the Report). Some of these include the County Lease program, which is primarily for agricultural uses but has also been leased for recreation purposes. Additionally, the County has often purchased properties in conjunction with other partner, using an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) for management of the property. Staff also mentioned two Bureau of Land Management (BLM) programs and acquisition through the State Land Board that have been used by the County. Following is information provided by the County on those programs, as well as supplemental research by the consultant team:

- Recreation and Public Purposes Act** - The act authorizes the sale or lease of public lands for recreational or public purposes to State and local governments and to qualified nonprofits. Examples of typical uses under the act are historic monument sites, campgrounds, schools, fire houses, law enforcement facilities, municipal facilities, landfills, hospitals, parks, and fairgrounds. Counties, cities, or other political subdivisions of a State and nonprofit organizations may purchase up to 640 acres a year for recreation purposes, and an additional 640 acres for other public purposes. Applicants will be required to first accept a lease, or lease with option to purchase, to assure approved development takes place before a sale is made and a patent (government deed) is issued. The patent includes a \$250 filing fee.
- Land Exchange Program** - The BLM's authority for land exchanges derives from FLPMA as amended by the Federal Land Exchange Facilitation Act of 1988. The land exchange program enables the BLM to exchange the checkerboard pattern of federal, state, and privately owned lands in the West into consolidated areas that can be managed more efficiently and at lower cost for all parties involved. Land appraisals play an important role in

the land exchange process, where the parcels of land exchanged must be of equal value.

- The State Land Board**- was established in 1876 to manage more than 3 million acres of land and 4 million acres of mineral rights that the federal government gave to Colorado to generate revenue for public education and some of the state's institutions. The Board's activities generate significant revenue annually for its trust beneficiaries, primarily through agricultural leases for grazing and crop lands, mineral development and interest earned on invested funds. In recent years, the Board has expanded its efforts to increase revenue through commercial development activities and leasing lands for recreational activities.





## Jefferson County Open Space and Community Resources

– On November 30th, 2010 members of the consultant team and representatives of the District met with Tom Hoby (Director), Amy Ito (Open Space Planning and Development Director) and Frank Kunze (Environmental Planner) of Jefferson County Open Space and Community Resources Department. This meeting was intended to identify potential partnership opportunities between the County and the District, as well as to seek out information on successful strategies and programs that the County has used in the development and management of their park and open space system.

The County manages a significant system of open space lands, natural and cultural resources, parks, trails, and recreational facilities. The County emphasized the significant impacts that the economy has had on funding levels and discussed how this could greatly impact the monies that they have available for municipalities and special districts. The Department has approximately \$60 million over the next 20 years and \$105 million has already been requested, although not awarded, through its Joint Venture Program. The allocation of these funds could be greatly influenced by the County's current strategic planning effort, which will be completed by the spring of 2011. Past allocation of funds was approximately 60% for County projects and 40% to municipalities and special districts. However, current priorities include ADA accessible facilities, natural surface trails, introducing residents to nature and the outdoors, and passive recreation.

Some potential acquisitions and projects that were discussed included connecting White Ranch to Golden Gate State Park, Booth Cattle Company, preservation of the Coal Creek Corridor, connecting Eldorado Canyon to White Ranch, and other potential open space and trail projects.

The County is open to partnering and encouraged the District to tie into County plans for regional trail connections, identifying specific properties to lease from the County (which must be supported by capabilities to manage and maintain), promoting existing recreation programs and facilities so as to not duplicate services, partnering with local community organizations and

working to protect the rural, mountain characteristics of the Canyon. The County also stated that the results of this master planning effort and identified priority projects could influence their future strategic and facility planning efforts, such as the Coal Creek Canyon Park Management Plan update.

## Key Findings

Through these Stakeholder and Public meetings it is evident that there is strong support for the creation of a few community-based recreation amenities that fit within the context of the rural, mountain characteristics of the Canyon. Yet, there are also some significant concerns about changing the face of the community as well as the ability to fund and support such recreation amenities.

Some of those desired recreation amenities and opportunities most commonly heard throughout this public input process include a community gathering space, trails, fitness facilities and increased access to recreation opportunities. Overall, the challenge of gaining support among District residents could be best achieved through clearly communicating with and engaging residents in the planning and design of priority facilities and programs (which are to be outlined in the Recommendations phase of the project). In the mean time, maximizing the use of existing facilities and programs, further developing partnerships, and leveraging funding and resources will be important to continue to gain District residents' support.







# STATISTICALLY-VALID SURVEY SUMMARY

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## Introduction

The research conducted by Corona Insights produced noteworthy findings and analysis that will be beneficial to the Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District (CCCPRD or the District) as the agency moves forward with implementation of the District's first Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Master Plan. This statistical analysis illustrates residents' perceptions of existing parks and recreation facilities and programs (both within and outside of the Canyon), providing insight into what residents want and how much they are willing to pay. The analysis allows the District to know such things as, interest and participation in outdoor recreation activities, as well as priorities for creation of facilities and programs, design of new trails and greenways, open space conservation and natural resource management for the next ten years. This information will help guide the District on how to get the most out of any investment it makes in parks and recreation programs and facilities.

## Survey Methodology

In November 2010, a survey developed by Corona Insights was mailed, preceded by a post card, to all addresses associated with non-government and non-business parcels within the District area (to both physical and mailing addresses when the two were not the same), which totaled 1,829 successfully-sent surveys. The questions in the survey were compiled based on the key issues identified through stakeholder interviews, the community input process and input from the District Board and Master Plan Steering Committee. The final survey consisted of 28 questions in regard to activity level, use of alternative providers, desire for specific facilities, and willingness to pay, as well as demographic questions. It is important to note that the demographics of respondents very closely mirrored that of the Coal Creek Canyon Recreation District and minor weighting was used to reflect District demographic characteristics.

Four hundred and twenty six (426) surveys (23%) were returned to Corona Insights at the end of the survey period. This is considered to be a very strong response for a survey

# STATISTICALLY- VALID SURVEY SUMMARY

of this type (which typically yields a 15 percent response, the equivalent of 274 completed surveys in this case). Based on the total of 1,829 households, this response level is sufficient to achieve a maximum margin of sampling error of  $\pm 4.2$  percent and a 95 percent confidence level. This margin of error is considered to be generally strong for a survey of this type.

The following analysis summarizes the key findings of the survey and its relevance to this strategic planning effort. Please refer to Corona Insights 2010 Resident Survey Report (separate document) for the detailed response data and analysis.

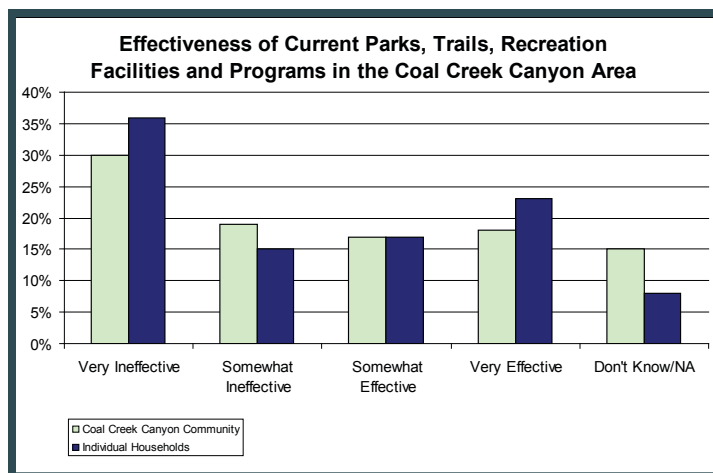
*\*It is important to note that the survey was administered at a time of severe economic crisis in the country. This economic climate may have had some impact on respondents' confidence in their financial future and may have influenced some of the answers. The following tables and figures provide a graphic representation of survey results.*

## Overall Assessment

### General Recreation Needs

Residents expressed a clear need for recreation services to be provided in Coal Creek Canyon. The majority of those expressing an opinion rate current services as generally “ineffective” for the community, as well as for members of their households (see **Figure 4.1**). Forty nine (49) percent rated current parks, trails, and recreation services as either “somewhat” or “very ineffective” for the broader Coal Creek Canyon population, including 30 percent who perceived these services to be “very ineffective.” When considering their own household member needs specifically, in a separate question, similar results were observed. Fifty-one (51) percent of respondents rated services either somewhat or very ineffective, with 36 percent indicating very ineffective. It is interesting to note, however, that 23 percent of respondents rated services as “very effective” for members of their household (see **Figure 4.1**). It is important to note that Respondents 55+ were significantly more likely than their younger age counterparts to rate services as “very effective” for their household. Source: Survey Questions 1 and 2.

**Figure 4.1: Effectiveness of Current Parks, Trails, Recreation Facilities and Programs in the Coal Creek Canyon Area**



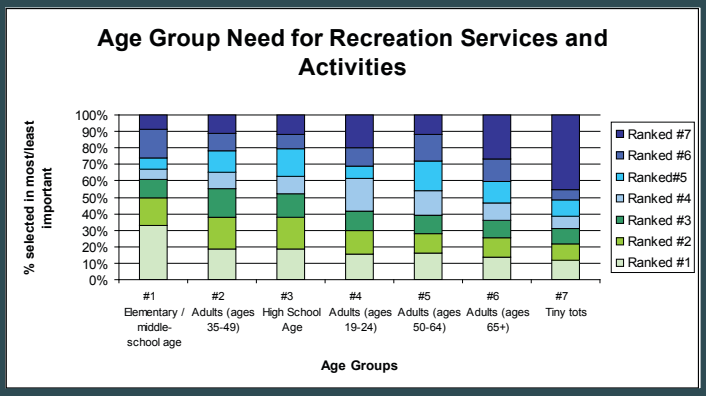
General perceptions are that there is a lack of recreation activities available, as well as a lack of amenities or features at parks, trails, or facilities in Coal Creek Canyon. Slightly more than half of respondents (52 percent) indicated a lack of (i.e. “not readily available or provided”) recreational activities as a moderate or major barrier to participation in Coal Creek Canyon. A similar proportion (51 percent) indicated a lack of developed amenities or features at parks, trails or facilities as at least a moderate barrier. Approximately 1/3 of respondents rated both of these barriers as “major.” To a slightly lesser extent, inconvenient location of recreational activities was cited as a significant barrier by respondents. Low quality of activities was cited either as a major or moderate barrier by approximately 40 percent of respondents. Source: Survey Question 3.

Not surprisingly, residents indicate that they are going outside of the Coal Creek Canyon area for their recreational activities. Relatively large proportions indicate visiting neighboring municipalities and unincorporated areas. In addition to visiting these areas because activities are not available in Coal Creek Canyon, they also cite the natural beauty of parks, trails or facilities they visit, as well as the overall quality of these facilities as “good.” When Coal Creek Canyon plans for its own future provision of recreation services, a majority of residents oppose deliberately attracting out-of-canyon visitors. Fifty-four (54) percent responded either “somewhat no” or “definitely no” with respect to attracting out-of-canyon residents.

### Specific Recreation Needs in Coal Creek Canyon

Specific needs were addressed on this survey, as they apply to various age groups and types of recreation activities. Interestingly, despite the Canyon’s older demographic characteristics, respondents indicated highest priority groups for recreational services to be elementary/middle school and high-school-age kids. Adults, ages 35-49, were the second-highest ranked group in need of recreation services and activities (see **Figure 4.2**).

**Figure 4.2: Breakdown of Age Groups’ Need for Services and Activities**



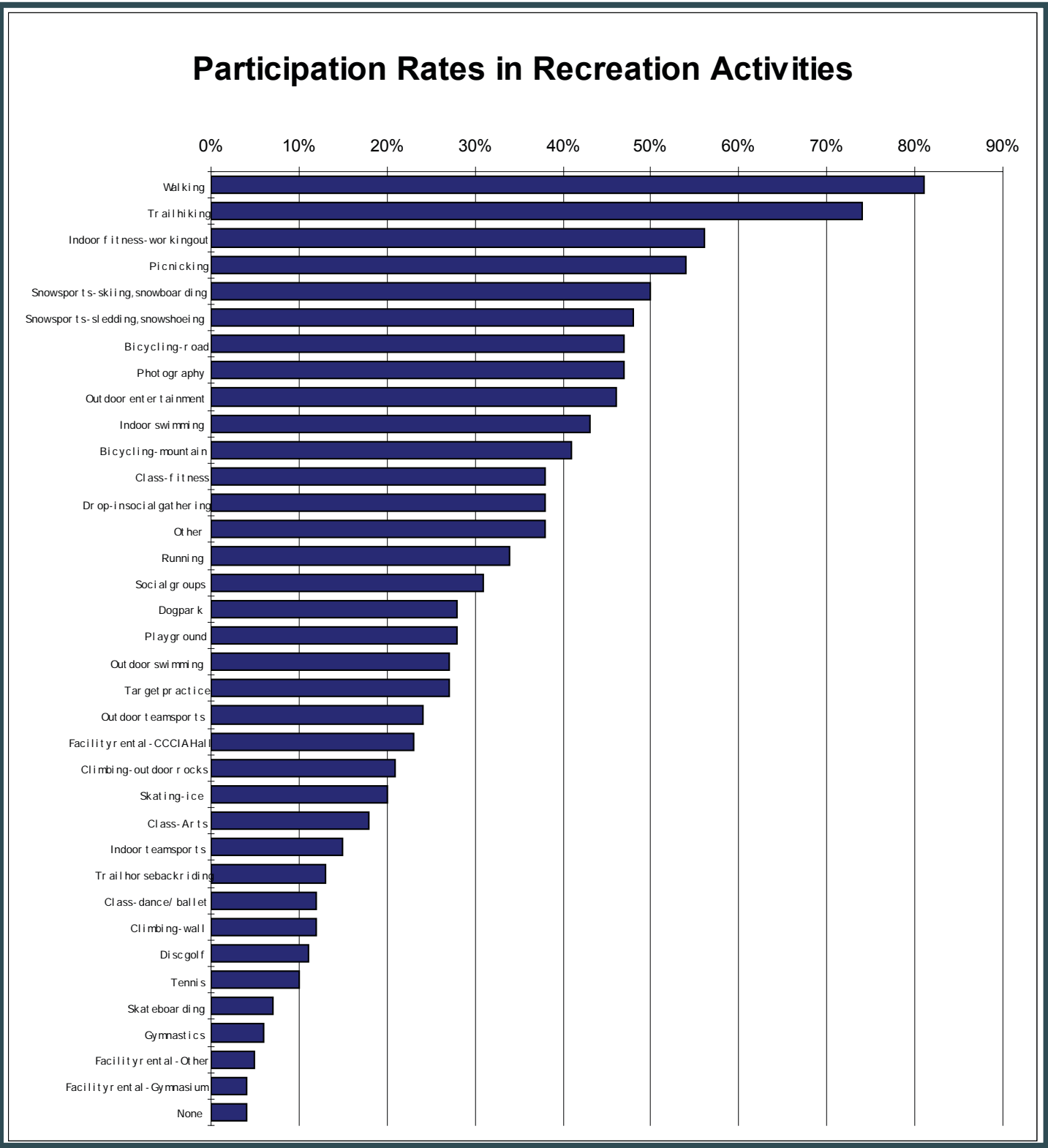
**Just about one-half (49 percent) ranked elementary-middle school age group as first or second (out of seven) group in need.**

Thirty-eight (38) percent ranked high-school-age children in their top two priority groups and 37 percent ranked adults, ages 35-49, similarly. Source: Survey Question 4a.

Across these age groups and most others, a combination of active and passive activities was highly desired, although opportunities for active recreation were more likely to be desired than passive varieties. (Note: The survey defined “active” recreational activities to be those requiring physical exertion – i.e. team or individual athletic activities, walking, etc. and “passive” to be those activities that do not – e.g. bird-watching, photography, arts classes, enrichment learning, social group meetings, etc.) Between 43 and 66 percent of respondents preferred a combination of active and passive activities for each age group. Respondents who chose between active and passive activities, however, were much more likely to choose active activities as a need for all age groups except seniors. Source: Survey Question 4b.

Coal Creek Canyon residents currently participate in a variety of recreational services, both active and passive. Walking (for recreation) and trail hiking were ranked as the top 2 activities, with a vast majority (81 percent) of households with a member who had walked for recreation in the past 12 months (see **Figure 4.3**). Similarly, ranked second, nearly three quarters (74 percent) of households had at least one member who had participated in trail hiking. Other common activities included indoor fitness, picnicking, snow sports (i.e. skiing, snowboarding, sledding and snowshoeing), bicycling/cycling, and photography (see **Figure 4.3**).

Figure 4.3: Participation Rates of Households in Various Activities

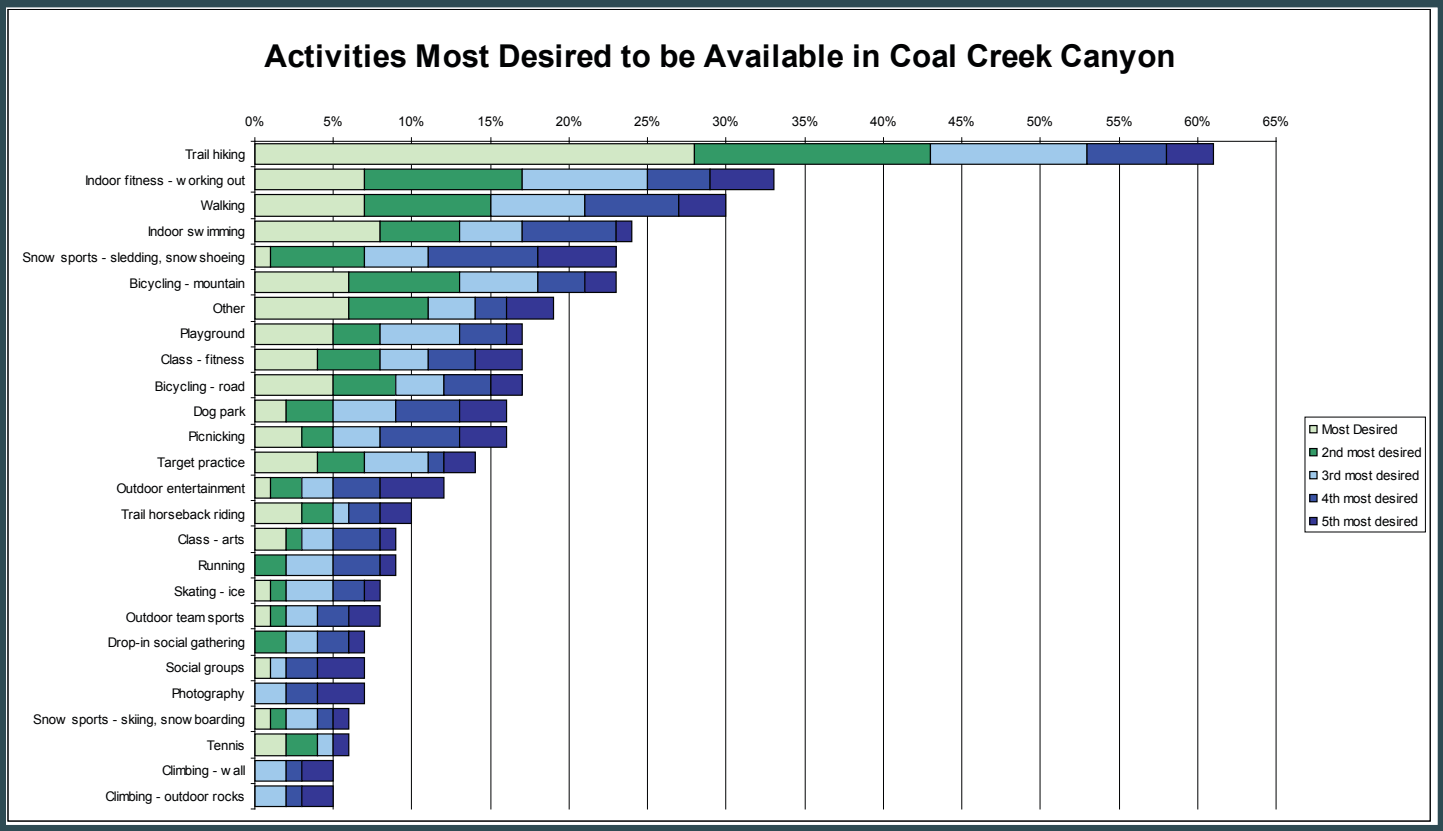


When asked to identify municipalities, towns, or locations where those activities took place, only 59 percent of respondents indicated they had participated in recreation in Coal Creek Canyon, which is interesting to note given that recreation is the reason that many residents moved to the Canyon but may also be reflective of the District’s aging population. The only location named by more respondents was “a Colorado State Park” (61 percent). Source: Survey Question 8. Other common locations where respondents had participated in recreational activities included:

- City of Golden (55 percent);
- City of Boulder (54 percent);
- City of Arvada (54 percent);
- Unincorporated Jefferson County (48 percent)
- Unincorporated Boulder County (45 percent).

In terms of desired recreation activities to be provided inside Coal Creek Canyon, twenty eight (28) percent of respondents indicated trail hiking as their top choice when choosing several activities from the list. The next closest top choice among respondents was indoor swimming at eight percent, (see **Figure 4.4**). In responses to a separate question, preferred attributes for trails indicated were: 3+ miles in length (one way), natural terrain (75%), and moderate difficulty level (i.e. medium grade, some hills) (78%). Roughly 1/4 of respondents each chose 1-2 mile, and 2-3 mile, one-way options. Source: Survey Question 10.

Figure 4.4: Most Desired Activities in the Canyon

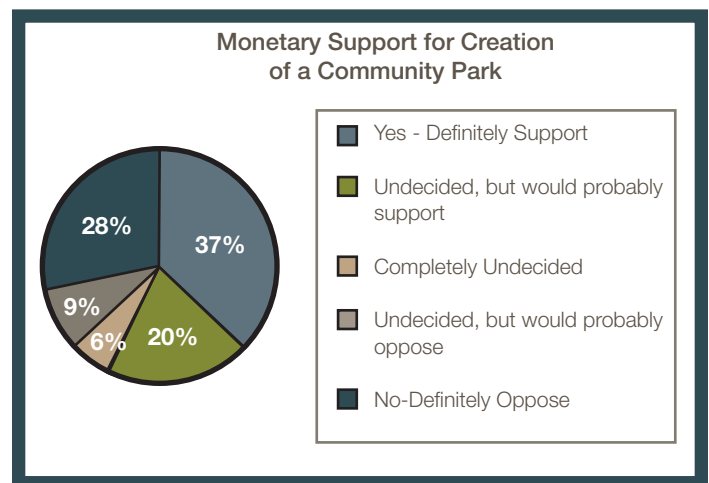


## Desires and Support for Recreational Services in Coal Creek Canyon

A general concept for a community park (as identified through the Community Input Process) was favorably received by a majority of respondents when asked about their level of support for a cost of \$72 per year (for the average \$300,000 home in Coal Creek Canyon.) The majority of District residents also support paying for the proposed cost for the park. Also significant for planning purposes, in both cases a notable proportion of residents (approximately one-quarter) were strongly opposed. Thirty seven (37) percent indicated they would definitely support the concept, and another 20 percent were undecided but indicated they “probably would.” Nine (9) percent indicated they would “probably oppose” the concept, and 28 percent indicated they would “definitely oppose” the concept. Six (6) percent were “completely undecided” (See **Figure 4.5**). It is also important to note that respondents in favor of CCCPRD and the community park concept, were significantly more likely than their counterparts to rank adults, ages 35-49, as number one in need of services and facilities.

The group of respondents “completely undecided,” “somewhat” or “very opposed” were asked at what level of cost they would support the proposed Community Park, the majority (75 percent) indicated they would not support it for any amount (i.e. \$0), and another seven (7) percent indicated they would support at a level just below the \$72 (i.e. \$50-\$71). It is also important to note that those opposed to CCCPRD and those not in favor of the Community Park Concept, were more likely than their counterparts to choose passive activities as a need. For example, these respondents were significantly more likely than their counterparts to desire a paved trail for walking/running, that is less than one mile in length, one-way. Source: Survey Question 17.

**Figure 4.5: Support for Community Park Concept**



Desired activities and attributes of the Community Park Concept were also explored. In terms of activities, hiking, walking and biking trails were relatively strongly preferred. Attributes and significantly desired support amenities included off-street parking, a central location, and opportunity for interaction and gathering among residents (see **Figure 4.6 and 4.7**).

Two-thirds (2/3) of respondents believed hiking or walking trails would be of high value, another 17 percent indicated these to be of moderate value. Bicycle trails were also chosen to be of high value by 40 percent of respondents, and moderate value by another 26 percent. When asked to rank their top priorities from a list of features or amenities for a community park, 68 percent of respondents ranked hiking or walking trails in their top three priorities (38 percent ranked trails as their first priority. Thirty three (33) percent ranked bicycle trails in their top three priorities. Twenty nine (29) percent and twenty seven (27) percent ranked playground and small fitness center, respectively, in their top three priorities. Other than picnic area, which received a ranking in the top three by 23 percent of respondents, most of the rest of features or amenities were selected in the top three priorities in proportions between 12-15 percent. Source: Survey Questions 12 and 13.



Figure 4.6: Desired Features within the Community Park

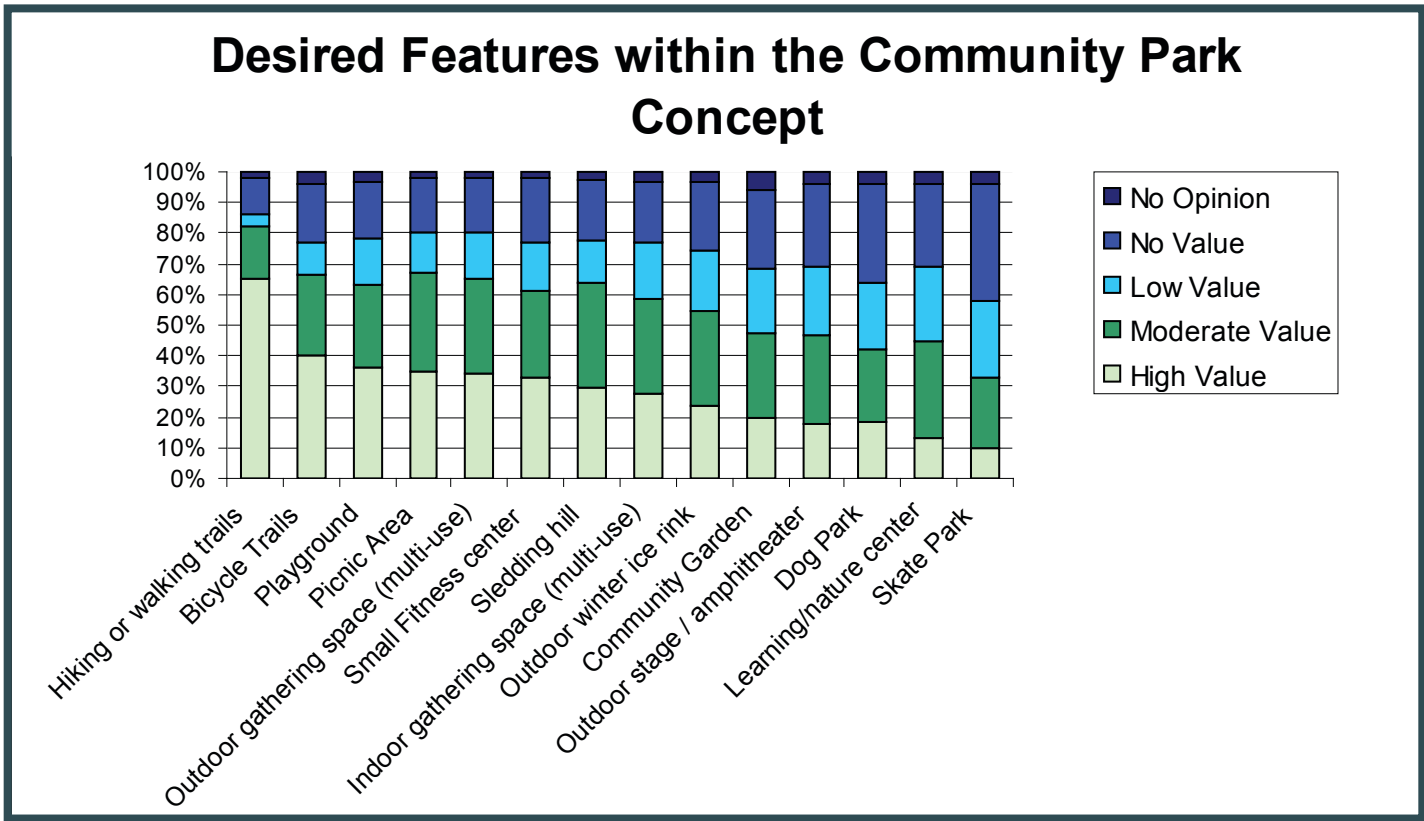
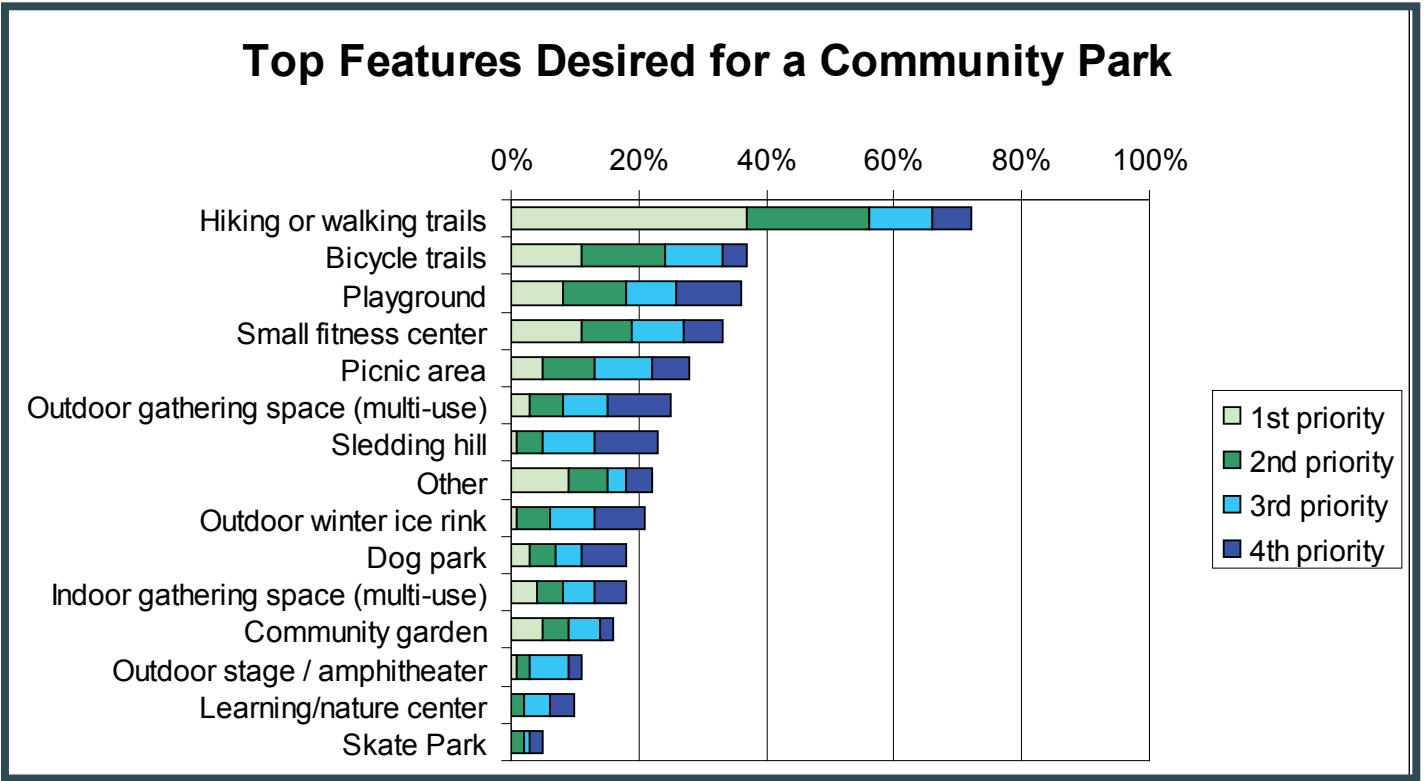


Figure 4.7: Desired Features within the Community Park – Top Four Priorities



For revenue generation, rental of facility space at the Community Park to individuals or to businesses or organizations was highly supported. Fifty eight (58) percent of respondents “strongly supported” rental of facility space for personal use, and 24 percent “somewhat supported” this source. Nearly identical proportions (58 and 23 percent, respectively) of respondents supported facility rental for business or organization use. Support was nearly as strong for cost-sharing with a public entity, such as Jefferson County or Boulder County, with 49 percent strongly supporting this arrangement. Source: Survey Question 18.

In addition to the Community Park Concept, residents also generally supported Coal Creek Canyon K-8 school facility improvements that are being considered. Approximately 60 percent of respondents were in support of converting the soccer field to artificial turf and updating the baseball field. (Opinions on both were somewhat split between “somewhat support” and “strongly support”). An even higher proportion of respondents were in support (70 percent “somewhat” or “strongly”) of creating a walking path that encompasses the site, soccer field, and baseball field. Source: Survey Question 16. This is particularly significant given the earlier finding that these school improvements would serve a priority age group for recreation services in the community.

## Key Findings

It is evident based on this data that a majority of the community feels that there is a need to develop additional recreation facilities and services for Canyon residents. However, there is also a significant portion of the community, more so those over the age of 55, that feel current recreation opportunities are adequate and want to keep the status quo. Respondents feel that priority programs should be focused on elementary through high school-aged youth, as well as adults 35-49. Two priority facilities identified through the survey are trails for hiking, walking and bicycling, as well as a “community gathering place” that includes amenities such as a playground, picnic tables, small fitness center, and sledding hill.

In order to gain voter support for the passage of a mill levy to establish a dedicated funding source for the District and for the creation of these priority programs and facilities, targeted communications will likely be needed. The District will need to illustrate the value that it can bring to those currently who are “undecided” in regard to CCCPRD and the Community Park Concept and how this funding will directly be utilized to meet their needs as well as the rest of the community’s.



# PLANNING INTEGRATION

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## Parks and Recreation – Local, State and Federal Planning Integration

In addition to current and past planning efforts completed by others within the Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District (CCCPRD or the District) and surrounding area, the consultant team for this Master Plan effort has reviewed pertinent local, state and federal park and recreation planning documents and supporting information as part of the information gathering process. The District is uniquely located in both Jefferson and Boulder Counties (see Map A in the **GIS Mapping and Spatial Analysis** Section of the report) and includes properties owned by various government entities, including the Colorado State Land Board, Colorado State Parks, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the National Forest Service. There are existing plans and conditions for each of these entities that have been taken into consideration in preparing this Master Plan. Documents reviewed include:

- Coal Creek Canyon Park Management Plan
- Boulder County Parks and Open Space Trails Map, Parks Map and Website
- Golden Gate State Park and Eldorado State Park Maps and Website
- Map and Website for Arapaho/Roosevelt National Forests

Reviewing these documents ensures that the efforts of this Master Plan are consistent with and complementary to the goals and strategies of the current or past planning efforts in the area.

**Coal Creek Canyon Park Management Plan (Jefferson County park)** – This Plan was prepared by Jefferson County Open Space in 2000, updated in 2010, and is scheduled for another update in the first quarter of 2011. There are eleven properties included in CCCPRD's boundaries that are included in the Coal Creek Canyon Park area within Jefferson County (please refer to Map B in the **GIS Mapping and Spatial Analysis** Section of the report for the location of this park). Information provided in this document is relevant to this Master Plan because it provides important insight into

# PLANNING INTEGRATION

the history, land resource characteristics, park and public lands, as well as planned resource management strategies.

The Coal Creek Canyon Park Management Plan is part of the Jefferson County Open Space system-wide effort to provide for protection and appropriate use of Jefferson County's recreational, natural and cultural resources. The Management Plan is issue-driven and significant management issues are identified at the Park, including uncertainties associated with other publicly owned properties in the area and lack of facilities to accommodate public use. The primary recommended management approach made to respond to these issues is to **postpone any development of park improvements** until land use issues in the area become clearer.

The vision identified for this Park area within Jefferson County incorporates the three primary values for which these properties were acquired: (1) protection and enhancement of critical habitats and designated Conservation Sites, (2) protection of scenic values associated with those areas in the Front Range Mountain Backdrop/Foreground Preservation area and (3) for development of trail opportunities. Another part of the vision for this Park is to construct trails that would accommodate a wide spectrum of non-motorized use where appropriate and create connectivity and linkages to other parks in the area, which include White Ranch Park and Golden Gate Canyon State Park to the south, City of Boulder Open Space and Parks to the north and the Rocky Flats Refuge to the east.

This document states that **none of the eleven parcels that comprise this Park currently have facilities to accommodate public use.** Use of the Park has historically been limited to unprogrammed, informal "social use" by residents or occasional visitors in the area, who park along the road and walk into the property or drive on old roads within the properties. Future visitation to the Park is difficult to predict because the final level of development is uncertain.

**Boulder County Parks and Open Space Trails Map, Parks Map and Website** – These documents and website provide an overview of existing and planned trails, parks and open space areas located in Boulder County that

are adjacent to the CCCPRD. Walker Ranch is the most significant County-owned property located adjacent to the CCCPRD that is included in Boulder County Parks and Open Space documentation. Walker Ranch is listed on the National Register for Historic Places. The existing management plan for Walker Ranch provides for key conservation strategies to be implemented on the property, including assessment and classification of Ranch resources and determining how each area achieves the goals for the Ranch to provide for low intensity recreation, cultural site preservation and wildlife habitat preservation. Currently, recreational activities existing at Walker Ranch include trails, a group shelter, fishing, preservation of a historical site at the original homestead and preservation of open space areas. Walker Ranch and other Boulder County parks and recreational areas will remain key destinations for the residents of the CCCPRD. The original Walker Ranch Management Plan written in 1985 began its update and public input process in January of 2011.

**Golden Gate Canyon State Park and Eldorado Canyon State Park Maps and Website** – With these Parks being under the jurisdiction of Colorado State Parks, the documents and website provide an overview of existing and planned trails and park improvement areas in Golden Gate Canyon State Park, which is located adjacent to the CCCPRD (with a small portion of the Park being located in the CCCPRD to the south), and Eldorado Canyon State Park, which is located partially within the CCCPRD boundary on the north.

Currently, Eldorado State Park does not collect fees at its Crescent Meadows trailhead. However, the agency indicated that this could change in the future since users are technically entering the State Park there. Although this facility is currently used by Canyon residents as a "community" recreation amenity, the longevity of this free access is uncertain.

The 1996 Golden Gate Canyon State Park Management Plan generally indicates key goals to protect the quality of the natural resources for the enjoyment of future generations while providing a wide variety of safe outdoor recreational experiences that are appropriate in a mountain setting. Since the visitation to the park reaches and exceeds planned capacity

at times, the 1996 Plan focuses on expansion of both facilities and land, trail management, managing capacity situations, managing vegetation, wildlife management, historical and cultural resources protection and Park interpretive and education programs. Beyond traditional State-provided funding allocations for the annual and seasonal operations of the Park, Golden Gate Canyon State Park employs a “special use permit” fee program. Using this program additional funds are generated by allowing the reserved use of Park facilities and areas for non-traditional purposes (weddings, equestrian events, parties, large gatherings, training exercises, guided hikers, etc.) where fees can be charged beyond standard entrance fees.

**Map and Website for Arapaho/Roosevelt National Forests** - These documents and website information provide an overview of existing and planned trails and recreation improvement areas located in the adjacent / included National Forest areas within the CCCPRD. Recreational opportunities for the general public and the residents of the CCCPRD are currently provided within this vast forest area, including hiking, camping, picnicking, fishing, scenic viewing and other associated activities.

## Key Findings

The previously mentioned documents and websites were reviewed during the information gathering efforts for this Master Plan in order to identify existing and future park and recreation opportunities for the CCCPRD (Please see Map A of the **GIS Mapping and Spatial Analysis** section of the report for the locations of these facilities). Much of the information provided in these documents and websites places the CCCPRD in a parks and recreational context with surrounding providers and is relevant to this Master Plan, as well as helps to identify partnership opportunities and streamline planning efforts. It is important to note that the parks and facilities reviewed in this portion of the report primarily provide individual and passive recreation opportunities. The majority of these facilities do not act as community parks or gathering places for Canyon residents. However, this is not to say that residents of the CCCPRD will not continue to include these parks and public

lands as key destinations in their recreational lives.

## Coordinate Partnerships and Fill Gaps in Service

The documents reviewed illustrate a record of several local, state and federal agencies providing various, mostly **nature-based** and passive park and recreation facilities. It is evident that Canyon residents are not provided adequate **developed and active** recreation opportunities in or directly adjacent to the Canyon. This information is insightful in developing policies, capital investment priorities, coordinating efforts for improvements and recommendations for existing and proposed park and recreation facilities for the CCCPRD.

## Connect Communities through Recreation and Conservation

Local, state and federal lands and other recreational facilities are currently a **primary** source of recreation for the residents of the CCCPRD. Significant strides have been made by these planning efforts to focus on recreational planning and protecting and conserving natural resources and areas of ecological and historical importance. These documents and websites define open space opportunities, connections and stewardship of resources as ways to provide recreation access and opportunities. Coordination with these agencies to support ongoing implementation and maintenance of these **regional** recreational amenities will help to promote and increase the quality of life for the CCCPRD residents and general public.

Specific **land management techniques** offered in these documents include creating interconnected trail systems to guide public access, establishing public trailheads and picnic areas, and preserving historic or sensitive areas by limiting human access, preserving wildlife habitat by locating visitor improvements in areas removed from key preservation sites. Especially important to the District and its residents (see the **Community Survey** section of the report), is enhancing and creating existing connections and links between and within communities are ways to provide better **access** to recreation amenities. Specifically, recreation **trails** provide an active use



through state parks, federal lands, conservation easements and other recreation areas.

Stewardship of resources is another way to connect the communities. Promoting healthy, green, and sustainable practices and solutions are ways to help conserve ecologically sensitive land areas and to protect wildlife and plant species. Promoting stewardship of resources will increase community awareness and create a better surrounding environment.

### **Grow and Diversify Recreation Offerings**

With an extensive amount of nearby regional parks and recreation opportunities available to the residents of the CCCPRD, ***growing and diversifying the local recreation offerings*** as well as ***increasing access to regional facilities*** will further enhance the recreational lifestyles and increase access for Canyon residents.



CONSERVATION &  
NATURAL RESOURCE  
ASSESSMENT

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# CONSERVATION & NATURAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District (CCCPRD or the District) lies within the rich and diverse Southern Rocky Mountain foothills. The foothills especially contain a wide range of ecosystems, as this is where the plains meet the mountains and the natural environment changes from one ecosystem to another as it adapts to higher elevations. This diversity and uniqueness provides for not only significant natural resources with inherent conservation values, but also a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities.

The preservation of these natural resources and the rural, mountainous characteristics of the Canyon were identified as a strong community value through the Community and Stakeholder Input as well as through the Community Survey. Therefore, this analysis along with the natural resource and wildlife evaluation in Maps H & I of the **GIS Mapping and Spatial Analysis** section of the report is intended to assist the District in identifying those sensitive areas most in need of protection and to balance new recreation opportunities with preservation efforts.

## Natural Resource Analysis

### Geology and Topography

Coal Creek Canyon lies within the Southern Rocky Mountains and more specifically, Colorado's Front Range. The Southern Rockies contain some of the oldest rocks in the region, formed from sediments and transformed into metamorphic rocks of gneiss and schists, over a billion years ago. Peaks in the Southern Rockies comprise the highest portion of the Rocky Mountains.

Mountains form slowly, over a period of millions of years of uplift and erosion. Plates collided and denser oceanic crust fell below the less dense continental crust. Erosion by wind and water transported rock. Glaciation also played a role in the formations seen in the Canyon today, having carved many of the cirques and valleys.

Coal Creek Canyon's elevation ranges from 6200 – 9400 feet. In general, along the Front Range, elevation climbs to 8,500

feet within five miles of the plains, and then climbs gently for the next eight miles to 9,000 feet. The next 2 – 3 miles climb steeply to reach elevations of 11,400 feet. In the foothills, most valleys are narrow and deep with a gentle climb to 6,000 feet, get steeper to 7,500 feet in narrow deep gorges. Valleys then become broader and gentler before deepening with large steps up to cirques (concave, amphitheatre-shaped rock formations).

## Soils

Due to its location in the foothills and its nature as a canyon, Coal Creek Canyon has a wide variety of soils. Lower elevations with moderately sloping to steep hill slopes and fans vary from shallow to deep soils depending on the parent material. The canyon slopes are nearly level with deep soils varying from sand and gravel to clay. Steep mountain slope soils are shallow to moderately deep loams (soil composed of sand, silt, and clay in relatively even concentration) with the amount of rock fragments varying widely.

Parent material ranges from igneous and metamorphic (granitic rock of 1,700 million year old age group; quartzite, conglomerate and interlayered mica schist; felsic and hornblende gneisses - separate and interlayered of volcanic origin) to sedimentary (Colorado Group - shale, limestone; Pierre Shale - shale, bentonite; Lyons, Lyons & Fountain Formations - siltstone, sandstone; Dakota Group - sandstone, mudstone; Mesozoic rocks – clastics). Specific soil associations vary throughout the study area. Additional information about these associations can be found through the USDA's Soil Survey program.



## Climate/Water Resources

The foothills lie within the rain shadow of the Rockies, resulting in a semi-arid environment. Compounding the rain shadow, storms over the Rockies tend to be drier to begin with since they lose a large portion of their moisture over the Sierra Nevada and Intermountain West. Most moisture is provided by air masses that arrive from the Gulf of Mexico or boreal regions and collide with the mountains, move upslope and drop their precipitation on the eastern mountains. Higher elevations tend to receive more precipitation.

Wind is a major factor in the climate. In the Canyon, the Continental Divide turns east forming a giant funnel that channels winds. Wind gusts near 90 miles per hour are common along the eastern foot of the Front Range. These winds, Chinook winds, can exceed 120 miles per hour near Boulder.

Elevation, slope and aspect affect climate locally. Precipitation, temperature, solar radiation and humidity are all affected. South facing slopes tend to be hotter and drier, while north facing slopes are cooler and have more moisture, which may be a consideration in the design of recreation facilities and amenities.

While not within the District's boundary, Gross Reservoir's proximity makes it important to the District not only for its recreation opportunities but also for the possible expansion that is currently proposed. Gross Reservoir provides storage for Denver Water's trans-mountain diversions through the Moffat Tunnel and a portion of South Boulder Creek. Approximately 59,675 acres of the South Boulder Creek drainage serves the reservoir. Water released from Gross Reservoir flows downstream to Ralston Reservoir for additional storage. The Gross Reservoir dam currently provides hydroelectric power secondary to its storage capacity function. Denver Water has proposed an expansion of the power generation facilities that will require raising the dam 131 feet, increasing the water surface area to 842 acres from its current 418 acres. An alternate proposal raises the dam 125 feet, increasing the water surface area to 818 acres. These proposals would

not only impact water resources, but could have additional environmental and recreational impacts due to increased road traffic, pollution, habitat loss and temporary closure of the reservoir to water sports, fishing, etc.

## Vegetation

Multiple ecosystems occur in the study area including shrublands, montane forest, and subalpine forest. Shrublands generally occur at elevations below forests. Montane forests typically occur between 5,000 and 9,000 feet. At the highest elevations in the study area and on some north facing slopes, subalpine forests may be found. Meadows and mountain riparian ecosystems occur within other ecosystems throughout the area.

Shrublands in the study area tend to have characteristics of montane shrublands, dominated by Mountain Mahogany and less often Gambel Oak. Skunkbrush, bitterbrush, ninebark, buckbrush, rabbitbrush and hawthorn are also found here. Deeper soils may grow plains grassland and mountain species. This ecosystem is a transition between the plains grasslands and Ponderosa Pine forests. It may extend to higher elevations on south facing slopes.

Montane forests of Ponderosa Pine occur between 5,600 and 9,000 feet. These forests vary based on elevation, exposure and soil. Stable stands are more open and park-like with abundant grasses and some wax currant. Drier, south facing slopes also have a more open structure, but with Blue Grama grasses and Rocky Mountain juniper. Stable stands at higher elevations and northern slopes may be denser and include Douglas Fir. Kinnikinnik, bitterbrush and common juniper. Quaking Aspen and Lodgepole Pine mark disturbed sites.

Subalpine forests occur between 9,000 and 11,000 feet and are dominated by Engelmann Spruce and Douglas Fir. These forests are dense, with patchy dense understory growth. Understory plants that occur in this area include blueberry, broom huckleberry, heart-leaved arnica, lousewort, elk sedge, wintergreen and wild rose.

Meadows occur within the previously described ecosystems. Meadows form where slopes become gentler and soils are deeper, these are less common at higher elevations. Members of the sedge and rush families primarily characterize wet meadows. Dominated by grasses and forbs, dry meadows typically have more species than wet meadows.

Mountain riparian ecosystems occur between 5600 and 11,000 feet on moist sites along streams and bodies of water. Alder, cottonwood, willow and birch typically dominate these ecosystems. Colorado Blue Spruce and White Fir may also be found here. Composition changes as elevation increases.

Aspen are a unique feature in montane forests. A successional species, it marks a site that has been disturbed, typically by fire or disease. Aspen do not grow from seed in the Front Range, but grow as shoots from existing roots creating clones consisting of multiple stems. Decline of aspen stands is a concern throughout the Intermountain West. Several factors may be contributing to this decline. Dense stands create shade, which allows shade-tolerant conifers to grow. Since aspen are not shade-tolerant, they will eventually succumb to their own shade as well as that of the conifers. These dense stands of aspen are often a result of a lack of natural fire occurrence. Decline is also affected by ungulate (hoofed animal) grazing as they eat the shoots, eventually allowing shrubs to grow in place of the new trees. Various diseases and fungi may also be contributing to the decline of aspen.





## Wildlife Habitat

The wide range of plant species and climate provide such a diversity of habitats that the number of animal species is also large and varied in the Canyon. In fact, the Rocky Mountains are home to the richest diversity of native ungulates of any region in North America. A number of species that occur in the Front Range are threatened or endangered.

According to the Colorado Department of Wildlife Natural Diversity Information Source, the following occur within the study area:

- Peregrine Falcon - Nesting Area (2)
- Turkey - Overall Range, Winter Range
- Abert's Squirrel - Overall Range
- Black Bear - Fall Concentration, Human Conflict Area, Overall Range, Summer Concentration
- Black-tailed Prairie Dog - Overall Range
- Elk - Overall Range, Severe Winter Range, Winter Range
- Moose - Migration Patterns
- Mountain Lion - Human Conflict Area, Overall Range
- Mule Deer - Migration Patterns, Critical Winter Range, Highway Crossing, Overall Range, Summer Range, Winter Concentration Area, Winter Range
- Preble's Jumping Mouse - Occupied Range, Overall Range
- White-tailed Deer - Overall Range

Animal species are sensitive to disturbance; however, the level of that sensitivity varies. Habitat fragmentation creates more edge, affecting species dependent on large blocks of uninterrupted forest cover. Recreational activities can also cause disturbance. Yet, impacts are varied and difficult to observe and interpret. Some animals initially retreat from disturbance, but may adapt over time. Others may alter their behavior permanently. Others yet, may not be able to avoid the disturbance and may be negatively affected. Obvious disturbance such as large groups of people, artificial feeding of wildlife and harassment can have severe and lasting effects on wildlife.

## Human Influences

### Extractive Resources

Colorado's geologic make-up has made it a prime area for extracting resources from the ground. There are more than 7,000 abandoned mines in Colorado, and several fall within the study area. Abandoned mines are of concern for a variety of reasons including acid mine drainage, which affects 1616 miles of streams throughout the state. Gold, uranium, copper, lead, zinc and molybdenum are a few of the metals that were mined. Sand and gravel continue to be mined throughout the area.

Forestry is also important to the region's history. By 1879, there were 70 sawmills in the South Platte River basin that could process as many as 7.5 acres of trees per day. By 1920, little old-growth forest remained. The forest industry is still active, but in a much reduced capacity from its peak.

### Fire

Fire is a natural occurrence in the foothills environment. Forest fires were generally left to burn until the severe fires of 1910. Those fires spurred the move to begin aggressive fire suppression. Suppression efforts were successful until the late 1900's, when large wildfires burned thousands of acres.

A necessary process, fire recycles nutrients, regulates plant succession, maintains diversity, reduces biomass, controls disease and insect populations, triggers and regulates chemical processes, and maintains biological and biogeo-interactions between vegetation and animals. Fire suppression can cause changes in forest composition and diversity and lead to fuel accumulation. Suppression can also change the forest from single layer canopy to multiple layer canopy, which creates ladder fuels that lead to crown fires. Lack of fire often leads to denser tree growth. Dense forests not only impact wildlife and vegetative habitat, it also restricts views and may have a negative impact on outdoor recreationists' experience. However, fires in the foothills and urban interface areas also greatly impact safety and property of residents who have settled in these forests and foothills.

Key Findings

Coal Creek Canyon is a diverse and complex environment that is sensitive to human impact. The District should continue to work to balance the preservation of these natural resources with context-appropriate enhancements (incorporating sensitive areas, considering water resources and community values) of recreation facilities and programs that celebrate, conserve and promote stewardship of these lands. For example, the District has been proactive in sponsoring Forest Stewardship and Pine Beetle workshops and is working to be a role model for Healthy Forest Stewardship. CCCPRD is also currently working with The Environmental Group (TEG), Boulder County, the Coal Creek Canyon Fire Protection District (CCCPRD), and other agencies for these purposes.

Planning of major trail corridors and greenways should take into account primary wildlife corridors, which can play multiple roles and also provide potential fire breaks. Therefore, thorough site and corridor analysis will need to occur in the programming and design process of any recommended recreation facilities or amenities. Protection of these resources and education is necessary to continue to provide recreation resources for residents and provide ecological benefit.







ALTERNATIVE  
RECREATION  
PROVIDERS &  
PROGRAMMING

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# ALTERNATIVE RECREATION PROVIDERS & PROGRAMMING

## Introduction

Coal Creek Canyon's geographic location in the foothills, just west of the Denver metropolitan area makes it central to many amenities, but requires vehicular transportation to attend events or access many recreation services and facilities. However, while formalized recreational amenities are not present in the Canyon for many team sports, indoor recreation or classes, many of the Canyon's residents move to the area to be close to outdoor amenities and tend to spend time hiking, biking, boating, rock-climbing and other outdoor recreational pursuits. Alternative providers for both formalized and informal recreation are important to evaluate through this Master Planning effort in order for the District to understand how and who to build relationships with, in order to maximize the recreation opportunities for District residents. In all cases, exploring joint-use or reciprocal agreements with the recreation facility and/or managing district or agency may be worth exploring.

The historical lack of a managing jurisdiction and the topography of Coal Creek Canyon have not been conducive to the establishment of formalized recreation facilities, both indoor and outdoor, including community gathering places and activity-based recreation destinations (private or public). Currently, based on public input, Coal Creek Canyon residents use a variety of alternative providers and their associated facilities, which are primarily located outside of the Canyon, including facilities located in Arvada, Boulder, Golden, Gilpin County and Nederland. The following are six indoor recreation facilities evaluated by the Norris Design team, based on selection by the District as primary recreation facilities used by Coal Creek Canyon residents. All information noted here is current as of November 2010.

**APEX Center** - This facility, located at 13150 W. 72nd Avenue in Arvada is operated by the Apex Park and Recreation District. This district is not affiliated with the City of Arvada or Jefferson County, but a stand-alone Title 32 Park and Recreation district serving the northern part of Jefferson County. The center, built in 2000, is one of the most extensive facilities in the Denver Metropolitan Area, as well as nationally

renowned. The building includes a leisure pool area (including vortex pool, slides, hot tub and picnic spot) and lap pool with four lanes, three gymnasiums, running track, workout/ cardio room, climbing wall, various class/rental/event rooms, an indoor playground (Clubhouse Adventure) and two ice skating rinks. The Apex Park and Recreation District also has other indoor facilities and runs Indian Tree Golf Course.

## Programs and Services

- *Aquatics* – programs include youth swim lessons, swim team, drop-in aquacise classes, lifeguard training, as well as open swim times.
- *Enrichment programs* – primarily occur at other Apex District facilities, including art, pottery, dance, painting, music, computer and game programs for adults and youth.
- *Fitness* – adult and youth weight room orientation classes, drop-in group fitness classes including bosu, cardio kickbox, and yoga, cycling classes, adult basketball, boot camp classes, personal training, and Pilates are offered at the Apex Center. Additional classes are held at other district facilities.
- *Inclusive Programs* – includes an Adapted Aquatics program at the Center. Other classes and events occur at other Apex District facilities and include, fitness, tennis, and nights out, to name a few.
- *Senior Programs* – includes Silver Sneakers Fitness programs and drop-in classes, cooking club, weight room orientation class, and Pilates.
- *Special Events* - include frequent Bonfils blood drives, Halloween Carnival, parent's night out, kids night out, story times, as well as the opportunity to customize a birthday party (including options such as bounce house, ice skating, swimming, or rock climbing). The District also offers various trips, hikes and clubs for adults through their other facilities.
- *Sports Leagues* – ice hockey leagues and basketball are offered at the Center, with other leagues also offered through the District.
- *Wellness* – the Apex Center includes a small spa that offers massage and other spa treatments. The

Center also offers information classes on nutrition, self defense, and personal training.

- *Youth Programs* – an extensive selection of classes occur throughout the District, while Apex Center offers youth yoga programs, young weight lifters, and various climbing wall classes.
- *Other Programming* – ice skating programs including public skating sessions, adult drop-in hockey, learn to skate lessons, and ice hockey programs.

## Fees and Use Agreements

In order to receive resident rates or to receive priority on registration, users must be within the Apex Park and Recreation District. Typically, Non-resident use fees run approximately 12-35% more. Daily rates are closer to 35%, while a family annual pass and public skating fees are closer to 12-20% more. Ice spectators wishing to sit in the arena are required to pay a daily fee, but can watch from the upper galleria for free. The Center includes a variety of rooms for rental; however, non-resident fees are 30% more.

Currently, Apex PRD offers another small recreation district, Prospect Recreation and Park District, resident discounts on all offerings except Apex Center annual passes. CCCPRD is currently in discussions with the District to create a similar arrangement for Canyon residents.



**Gilpin County Community Center** - As the sole facility for Gilpin County Parks and Recreation, the Gilpin County Community Center, centrally located at 250 Norton Drive outside of Blackhawk, provides a space for community meetings and events, for teens to gather, and residents to exercise and swim. Completed in 2003 with 100% gaming impact fees, for the residents of Gilpin County, the 43,000 square foot facility includes an art studio/wet crafts room, senior area, teen room, multi-purpose rooms, kitchen, lounge areas, gymnasium with running track above, fitness studio, free weights area, cardio area, locker rooms, activities pool with a slide and a 6-lane lap pool with a diving board.

### Programs and Services

- *Aquatics* – programs include swim lessons for both youth and adults. Adult lap swim, open swim times, and Dive-in Movies. Youth Swim tests are also available to allow children ages 10-12 to be in the pool without adult supervision.
- *Enrichment programs* – include adult classes such as Celtic music ensemble, dog agility, language classes, hunter education, and pottery classes and open lab times. Youth enrichment classes include dance classes such as Mommy & Me Movement, Ballet/Hip-hop, and martial art classes.
- *Fitness* – classes include body circuit, ski conditioning, Pilates, aquacize, kickboxing, and yoga. The center also offers personal training.
- *Senior Programs* – include senior lunches on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, free transportation and various tours to nearby attractions.
- *Special Events* - includes various seasonal festivals, including a Family Fun Halloween Night and a Winter Arts Festival. Birthday parties, including use of the pool and activity room are also available.
- *Sports Leagues* – youth basketball, adult co-ed volleyball, pick-up basketball and leagues are held at the Center, as well as adult softball, kickball and tennis in other locations in and around Golden.
- *Youth Programs* – include programs specifically for teens, including classes in babysitter train-

ing, Guitar Hero nights, the teen room, teen only times, Teen Trips, such as to go bowling, seasonal events and shopping trips into Lakewood. For younger kids, After School Youth Camps are provided four days a week with activities including arts & crafts, children's choir, children's theatre, and swimming.

- *Other Services* – includes times available for babysitting during parent's workout and self-defense for women. The Gilpin County CSU Extension office adjacent to the Community Center and offers classes on treating pine beetle trees, as well as forest, plant and environmental education sessions.

### Fees and Use Agreements

Proof of Gilpin County residency must be provided to receive resident rates. For both residents and non-residents, children under age 5 are free, and residents under 18 and seniors are free. Typically, membership rates for non-resident adults are 35-55% more, with the 10-visit punch cards and drop-in rates being 35% more, while 3-month and annual memberships are closer to 50%. Individual class registration rates are 20-30% more for non-residents. Family membership rates are also available and any individual who is a full-time employee of any Gilpin County employer is eligible to receive resident membership rates.





**Golden Community Center** - Located at 1470 10th Street in the heart of Golden, Colorado, the Golden Community Center provides a comprehensive facility for recreation programs and community events for the residents within incorporated areas of Golden. The Community Center includes an indoor leisure pool with slide, indoor lap pool, hot tub, dry sauna, gymnasium with running track above, free weight area, cardio and circuit training areas, climbing wall, community room, pottery and dry craft rooms, meeting rooms, a child care area with indoor tot lot, the Front Porch for seniors, and a daycare program. Golden also has Fossil Trace Golf Course, an outdoor aquatics park, soccer and ball fields and a batting cage available seasonally located on a different site in the Golden area.

### Programs and Services

- *Aquatics* – programs include youth swim lessons, private and semi-private lessons, infant swimming resource, kayaking and open pool classes, water fitness, youth swim team, and lifeguard training, as well as open swim and adult lap swim times.
- *Enrichment programs* – include vocal music theater for kids, dance classes for youth and adults, computer tutoring, adult hoop, Spanish for travelers, and hunter education.
- *Fitness* – options include youth, women's, and family climbing classes and clubs, personal training, weight room orientation, body composition testing, Body Fit and Line Dance classes, yoga, Pilates, and jazzercise.
- *Senior Programs* – includes Silver Sneakers programs, including aqua aerobics, line dancing, Fitball and Spinning classes. Other offerings at the center include Pottery, AARP Driver's Safety Program, Bridge, Mah Jongg and billiards clubs, softball, volleyball, basketball, and a walking group.
- *Sports Leagues* – CARA youth volleyball and inline hockey.
- *Wellness* – Celebrate Health! Program on the first Friday of every month - includes chair massage, foot care, reflexology, and free blood pressure screenings.

- *Youth Programs* – include a variety of dance classes including ballet, tap, hip-hop, and jazz. Offerings for kids under 6 include tumbling, Dino Dig, Fun-gineering, music, and art. Other offerings for youth of all ages includes Art Camp, Family Art Night, Pottery classes, JumpNrope, Hula Hooping, SPYBOTICS, Junior engineering using LEGO, Babysitting, CPR and First Aid classes, Kids Nite Out and Hunter Education.
- *Other Programming* – Community and meeting rooms are available for rent, as well as various packages for birthday parties that include use of the swimming pool. A Child Care Center is available for those working out or participating in programs.

### Fees and Use Agreements

"Per Visit" admissions to the Community Center are the same for residents and non-residents. However, stamp cards, annual passes and household member discounts include different rates for resident and non-resident users. Non-resident rates are approximately 11 to 14% higher than resident rates, with the 20-visit stamp cards 11-12% higher, while annual passes are 13.5% more. Fields throughout Golden as well as the batting cage can also be rented on an hourly or daily basis.



**Nederland Community Center** - The Nederland Community Center, located just northwest of the heart of town at 750 Colorado Highway 72, provides a gathering place and recreation facility for the residents of the Nederland area. Originally built as a school, the town repurposed the building into a community center in 1997. After the roof collapse in 2002, which required the entire facility to be brought up to code and revealed hidden problems during renovation, the facility was remodeled using LEED green building parameters and reopened in 2007. Currently, approximately two thirds of the building is being used by the public, while the 1960's west addition awaits remodeling. The building includes a weight room, cardio deck, dance and yoga studio, gymnasium, meeting rooms, a kitchen, theater with a stage, concession stand, and a few private business offices. A teen center is located in a different building. "The Fitness Place" includes access to the gymnasium, cardio deck, weight room and dance/yoga studio (when not in use). Public input and efforts to develop a plan to reopen the west wing of the center are currently underway. The Community Center Foundation was also established to work on behalf of the Center to advise the Nederland Board of Trustees on capital projects and pursue grants and other funds for Center improvements and programming. Another important group is the Backdoor Theater Group, a non-profit operating movies on Fridays and Saturdays in the theater.

Backdoor Theater shows first-run movies in the theater.

- *Other Programming* – public meetings, including Planning Commission meetings are held in the large community room. Local artists display their art in the halls of the center. The large community room, kitchen and gymnasium can be rented for large gatherings or birthday parties, and the theater is often used for local music performances and live theater, in addition to the Backdoor Theater movie events.

### Fees and User Agreements

The Nederland Community Center currently only charges for Fitness Place access, including yoga and dance sessions, with "regular" and "senior (65)" rates. There are no rate differentials for resident and non-resident users and children can be added to the annual membership for an additional fee. Backdoor Theater Movie events cost \$6 for adults and \$3 for kids under 12. The center is currently only offering "drop-in" programs to eliminate liability issues and requires all users of the gym and fitness facilities to sign a waiver. This type of model may be one for the CCCPRD to consider if it is to ever manage an indoor recreation facility.

### Programs and Services

- *Enrichment programs* – include programs like Love and Logic parenting classes, as well as the dance classes noted in the fitness category.
- *Fitness* – classes include fitness circuit, tai chi, modern dance, international folk dancing, tap, ballet and creative movement, and yoga for both youth and adults. Fitness activities in the gym include adult tennis, drop-in adult floor hockey, and pick-up basketball.
- *Senior Programs* – includes senior lunches by the Nederland Area Seniors on Mondays and Wednesdays. Most other events by the group are held elsewhere.
- *Special Events* – every Friday and Saturday, the





**South Boulder Recreation Center** - One of three City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Department Recreation Centers, the South Boulder Recreation Center, located at 1360 Gillaspie in a neighborhood on the south side of Boulder provides a small facility for residents to exercise and swim. The facility, originally built in 1974 was renovated in 2007 to better accommodate the needs of the community. The building includes a cardio and weight area, hot tub, dry sauna, a 6-lane 25-yard lap pool with diving board, gymnasium, racquetball court, meeting room and a dance room. The Center is also surrounded by a park that includes multi-purpose fields, sand volleyball courts, tennis courts, Frisbee Golf course, inline hockey area, playground and trails. Due to the Center's small size, many of the City's classes and programs are offered at other facilities around Boulder; however, this facility is convenient for Coal Creek Canyon residents commuting in and out of Boulder for work or school.

### Programs and Services

- *Aquatics* – primarily available for open lap swimming, the South center also has a few drop-in water fitness classes. Additionally, all or part of the pool is often reserved for water polo; scuba diving and Fairview High School swim practice. All other registration classes are held at North and East.
- *Enrichment programs* – the department offers pottery and gymnastics at other facilities.
- *Fitness* – programs held at South include adult ballet, youth ballet, Kinder Tap, adult kickbox, bootcamp fitness, Nordic walking, Parent/Child Nia (ages 2-5), Mat and Reformer Pilates, yoga, personal training, F.I.T. workout, Lift for Life, Women's weight training
- *Inclusive Programs* – the EXPAND program offers a wide selection of programs at facilities around Boulder, including Friday Night Dances at the South Boulder Recreation Center.
- *Sports Leagues* – Adult basketball (men and women's) and co-ed dodgeball.
- *Wellness* – classes at South include a variety of First Aid classes, including Sport Medic, Wilderness and various Red Cross First Aid and CPR/

AED classes.

- *Youth Programs* – Teen Weight training, Sports Sampler for 3-4 year-olds, Gym Jam and Music with Dinah classes for those under 4, and middle school volleyball.

### Fees and User Agreement

Boulder Parks and Recreation Department charges fees based on resident and non-resident rates. The rates for non-residents range from 2.5 to 27% above resident rates, with punch card rates being between 2.7 and 7.8% higher and annual passes being around 25% higher. The City also offers some Boulder area employers discounts, such as on annual pass rates (i.e. University of Colorado employees save 20% off the resident rate on annual passes). Businesses that are part of the Chamber of Commerce also provide their employees a savings of 10% off of punch cards.



## Coal Creek Canyon Improvement Association (CCCIA)

- Coal Creek Canyon Improvement Association was originally founded in 1947 to bring infrastructure and services to the Canyon, including the Volunteer Fire Department, getting Coal Creek Canyon Road (Highway 72) paved and other key utilities and services for the residents of the Canyon. However, more recently the Association has served as the primary provider for activities within the Canyon, and its Community Center Hall is the primary destination for classes, community events and meetings (whether held by the Association or a private sponsor), as it is one of the largest community facilities in the Canyon for bigger events and gatherings. It is important to note that this is strictly a rental facility and does not provide for “drop-in” type activities.

### Programs and Services

- Special Events such as the Pancake Breakfasts, July 4th Festival, Santa Brunch, St. Patrick’s Day Celebration, Spa Day, Fish Fry, Fall Flea Market, Easter Eggstravaganza, and Thanksgiving Feast
- Classes including CPR and Pine Beetle Information
- Scholarships for canyon students under age 21 continuing their education
- Services provided at the Hall through rentals by other groups include scheduled yoga classes, circuit training, school special events, religious services, health screenings, game nights, scout meetings, dance practices and classes, kids clothing swap, concerts, and spaghetti dinners, to name a few.

### Fees and User Agreement

In order to reserve the hall for a meeting or event, an individual or group must also be a member of the Association. Annual membership fees are range from \$10 for seniors to \$40 for businesses, and \$500 for a life membership. Facility rental rates are \$10 per hour for weekly rentals (such as yoga classes), and \$25 per hour for events, with a maximum fee of 8 hours and a refundable cleaning deposit.

## Trails

Currently, there are no formalized trails owned, managed or maintained by the District, however, informal trail alignments do exist within the District. These trails are located within corridors that provide access to public lands within and surrounding the District. These trails are unpaved, primitive single tracks - often crossing rugged and complex terrain. Access is limited to those willing to accept the demands of the topography and lack of coordinated maintenance efforts. These unmapped trails provide access to various scenic locations including Walker Ranch Open Space along the northern edge of the District and Thorodin Mountain – a 10,540’ peak located 1.5 miles west of the District. Both of these trails have informal parking along roadways. The trail to Thorodin Mountain crosses a very short section of private property prior to accessing land owned by the National Forest Service (Arapaho National Forest).

Large, formal trail networks exist beyond the District within the public lands owned by the Colorado State Parks, Boulder County, Jefferson County and the City of Boulder. Again, due to the complex terrain common to this area, many of these trails are narrow single tracks that access various topographic features and vistas. However, these external networks benefit from organized maintenance, trailheads and additional amenities. Users of these formal networks also benefit from detailed mapping showing destinations, topography and connections.



## Outdoor Recreation Destinations

The Coal Creek Canyon Recreation District is surrounded by Bureau of Land Management, National Forest, State Land Board, State Park, Jefferson and Boulder County Open Space and City of Boulder Park lands. This conglomerate of lands provides a buffer around the District, limiting development and encroachment into the community, as well as provides significant opportunities for outdoor recreation within proximity to the Canyon. Within the District, except for key trail connections noted previously and biking or walking on area roadways, there are limited developed recreational opportunities on public lands, and leisure activities in the Canyon tend to occur on residents' private property or they choose to drive out of the Canyon to recreate. The following is summary of the public outdoor recreation areas located in proximity to Coal Creek Canyon (please refer to Map B in the **GIS Mapping and Spatial Analysis** section of the report for a visual reference of these properties).

### BLM, National Forest and State Land Board

**Bureau of Land Management** – a piece of land located south of the Boulder-Jefferson County line in the northeast part of the District. It is assumed that hiking and gold panning may be allowed in this area, per the allowed activities list on the BLM's website; however, a portion of it is impacted by the railroad that cuts through it as it winds up the slope.



**Arapaho Roosevelt National Forest** – primarily located west of the District, these areas are part of the Boulder Ranger District of the Arapaho Roosevelt National Forest. Activities allowed within the Forest include bicycling, camping, climbing, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, picnicking, nature viewing, target shooting and winter sports.

- **Gross Reservoir** – Built for water storage and overseen by Denver Water, the perimeter of the reservoir is within the Arapaho Roosevelt National Forest. Activities in and around the reservoir include canoeing, kayaking, fishing, ice fishing, hiking, camping, and picnicking. No water contact activities such as swimming or scuba diving are allowed, as it is a public drinking water supply.

**State Land Board** – One parcel named Blue Mountain (a separate property from the Blue Mountain subdivision), within the boundaries of the District is noted as a Designated Stewardship Trust, with surface ownership. According to the State Land Board's website, this category is land which is to "receive special stewardship attention, and are protected from sale or development unless four of the five Land Board members vote to take them out of the trust." This parcel of land is **not open to the public**. The Board's "first responsibility is to its beneficiaries, [therefore] state trust lands are not "public" in the same way that lands owned by the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management are. Unless a local of state agency or a private individual has come forward and offered to pay for the right to have recreational use of a particular piece of state trust land-and taken responsibility for managing that recreation, the land is just as off limits to the public as a piece of private land."





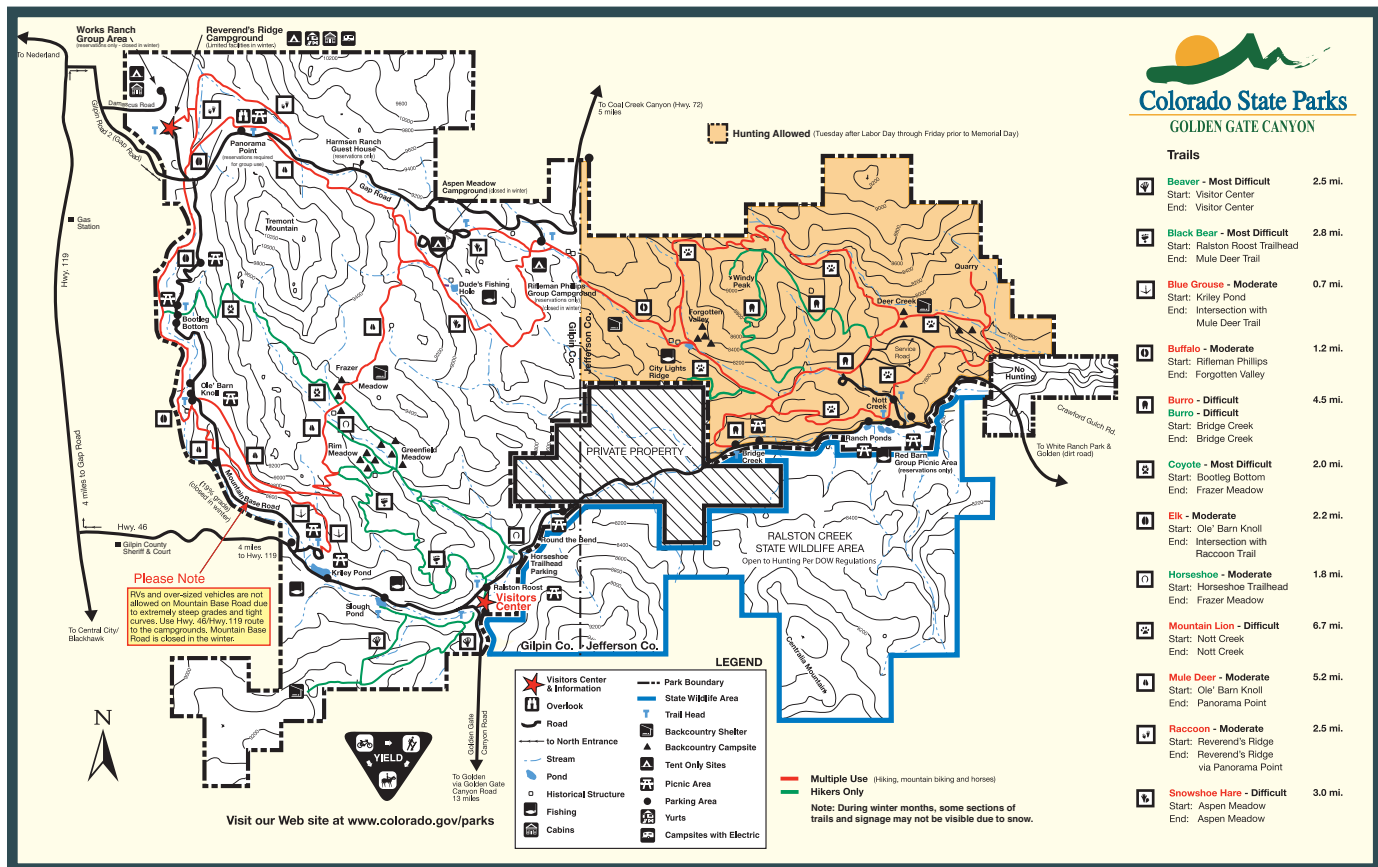
**Fees, Access and Restrictions** – Generally, some areas on national lands may require a fee to be paid at the entrance; this is typical of campgrounds or activity areas. Activities on BLM land typically do not require fees or permits, except gold panning, which requires a permit for mining. Some activities within the National Forest require fees and permits, including camping in campgrounds (fees) and harvesting firewood (permit), however, most lands are free to activities for day use. Fishing licenses are required for all fishing activity within the State of Colorado. The State Land Board parcel is not open or accessible to the public.

## State Parks

Sandwiched between Golden Gate Canyon State Park on the southwest, and Eldorado Canyon State Park on the north (in the District), residents in Coal Creek Canyon have convenient access to State Park Lands for a variety of recreation activities. Golden Gate Canyon is more easily accessible because Gap Road, goes to the campground areas of the park and connects to Highway 72. Part of Eldorado Canyon State Park (Crescent Meadows area) is accessible from Gross Dam Road.

**Golden Gate Canyon State Park** – From the District, Golden Gate Canyon is most easily accessible from Gap Road, which enters the park in the central-north side and is just a short distance from all of the campgrounds. The Park includes a large variety of facilities, miles of trails and many opportunities for year-round outdoor recreation. Facilities include campgrounds, picnic areas, trails, a visitor's center, cabins, yurts, a guest house, ponds, and scenic overlooks. Activities available in the park include camping (campgrounds, backcountry and group facilities), biking, winter activities, educational programs, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, hunting, ice fishing, ice skating, picnicking, rock climbing and sledding. Some areas of the park, primarily those in Jefferson County (see **Figure 7.1**), during specific timeframes are also open for hunting. Except for the Gap Road access, there is not currently any trail or dirt road connections into the Coal Creek Canyon Recreation District.

**Figure 7.1: Map of Golden Gate Canyon State Park**



**Eldorado Canyon State Park** – Divided into two parcels, with a Boulder County Open Space parcel and BLM lands between, Eldorado Canyon State Park includes the Crescent Meadows parcel on the west and the Inner Canyon area on the East. The Crescent Meadows parcel is directly accessible to the District via Gross Dam Road. This area includes trails for hiking and mountain biking, and trail connections that extend into Boulder County's Walker Ranch Open Space. The primary part of the park and the primary draw for visitors is the Inner Canyon, where rock climbing is very popular. This area also includes a visitor's center, areas for hiking, picnicking, and fishing (along South Boulder Creek). This parcel has limited access from a spur off of the Walker Ranch loop trail, and residents have expressed the desire for additional hiking and mountain biking access points.

**Fees, Access and Restrictions** – Colorado State Parks require an entrance fee (\$7) to enter the park either via vehicle or while on-foot or horseback. They offer an annual pass (\$70) and the Aspen Leaf Pass (for those Colorado residents over age 64), as well as daily passes for vehicles, and walk-in passes. Golden Gate Canyon State Park also has additional fees for camping sites, (which varies between backcountry and sites with Electric hook-ups for RV's), conference room rentals, cabins and yurts. Eldorado Canyon State Park also has fees for conference room rental.

### **Jefferson County Open Space Parks**

Jefferson County has acquired a variety of parcels throughout the Coal Creek Canyon area, including some new acquisitions labeled as Coal Creek Canyon Open Space, both inside and adjacent to the District. Also, within a hour drive from the Canyon to the southeast is White Ranch Park.

**Coal Creek Canyon Park** - there is currently a management plan in place for this land, but the Park has no recreation facilities and is not open to the public. The management plan classifies the park as including the following land-types, Parkland Recreation Area, Natural Area and Sensitive Area. It appears that the park will eventually include trailhead facilities in proximity to Highway 72 and trails that are designed to

minimize visual impacts of the mountain backdrop within the Parkland Recreation Area and potentially some trail opportunities in the Natural Area. The two western parcels, because of their topography will likely not include trails, but Jefferson County Open Space believes that the location of all of the parcels will offer opportunities to provide connections to adjacent public lands, including state park and county open space facilities. According to Jefferson County Open Space's website, this land was primarily acquired for the "protection of critical wildlife habitat areas in general and the Coal Creek riparian corridor in particular."

**White Ranch Openspace** – access into this park is approximately an hour drive, off of Highway 93 and 56th avenue on the east, or from the west/south from Golden Gate Road and Crawford Gulch Road. The east access provides only a parking lot area and trail easement, while the west side includes two parking areas and closer proximity to more trailheads and other amenities. Facilities at White Ranch include two hike-in and horse-friendly campgrounds, a picnic area, picnic shelters, and multi-use trails (hiking, biking and equestrian use). The northern-most boundary of White Ranch Park touches the southeast corner of the Coal Creek Park and Recreation District, however in the maps and management plan for the park, this area is noted as a Sensitive Area (because of its proximity to Ralston Creek) and does not include any trails nor is it open to the public.

**Fees, Access and Restrictions** – Access to all Jefferson County Open Space properties is free, but permits are required for various activities. Permits are required for special activities such as weddings or large group picnics for \$50, camping permits are free, and stays are limited to a maximum of 12 days in a 30 day period. Some seasonal closures may occur, either due to weather, wildlife (nesting or hunting seasons) or for maintenance, including to restrooms, water pumps or public access areas within the parks.



## Boulder County Open Space Parks

Boulder County has a wide assortment of open space lands, including many in the mountain areas outside of the City of Boulder, including two within close proximity to the District, including Walker Ranch and the Eldorado Mountain parcel.

**Walker Ranch Park** – Walker Ranch Park is located north of the Crescent Meadows portion of Eldorado Canyon State Park, and can be accessed via multi-use trail from the State Park. It can also be accessed on the north side of Flagstaff Road. The Park includes a group picnic shelter and multi-use trails, as well as parking and restrooms near the north entrance areas. Fishing is also allowed in South Boulder Creek. Special events are held each season at the Walker Ranch Homestead, including history tours and historic homestead activities, such as butter churning and shingle making. No camping is permitted in the park.

**Eldorado Mountain Open Space** – This area is located between the two areas of Eldorado Canyon State Park and falls within the north end of the Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District. While this area is not clearly defined as a Boulder County Open Space park, it is under the ownership of the County. However, there is no public access, except where trails from Eldorado Canyon State Park connect into the open space.

**Fees, Access and Restrictions** – It is free to park and use trail facilities in all Boulder County Open Space parks. Some seasonal closures may occur, either due to weather, wildlife (nesting or hunting seasons) or for maintenance, including to restrooms or public access areas within the parks. However, it is important to note that access to Walker Ranch Park via the Crescent Meadows trailhead could in the future have an associated fee, as users are technically entering the State Park there.

## City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks

The City of Boulder owns a substantial network of approximately 45,000 acres of open space and park areas with an extensive trail network northeast of the Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District. East of the northeast corner of the District, a large open space area south of Eldorado Springs Drive includes two major trailheads, and miles of trails. Doudy Draw trailhead is accessed off of Eldorado Springs Drive and is across from the South Mesa Trailhead. The Flatirons Vista trailhead is located off of Highway 93 across from the Greenbelt Plateau trailhead. These trailheads link to multi-use trails winding through this area as well as a single hiking-only trail on the west end of the City's property and the area is popular with equestrians as well as mountain bikers and hikers.

**Fees, Access and Restrictions** – Special Use permits are required for events drawing more than 25 people, however general access to this open space area is free. Parking fees do apply in some of the other City of Boulder sites, but not the one noted above.



## Facilities and Programs Key Findings

### Indoor Facilities

With the exception of Nederland, the facilities all include aquatic facilities of some shape or size. All facilities included cardio and weight rooms as well as a gymnasium, dance/yoga room and at least one room for community meetings. However, individual amenities make each stand apart from the others. Apex is the only facility to include indoor ice, while Nederland has an outdoor ice rink, tennis courts and a theater, Golden has a room dedicated to seniors, South Boulder includes an extensive park with outdoor fields and courts adjacent to the center, and Gilpin and Nederland have Teen facilities. Many of the facilities included “green” technologies within the facilities, from solar panels for energy to motion-sensor lighting in classrooms and gymnasiums, with Nederland following LEED requirements to achieve Gold status. Apex, Golden and South Boulder are all part of a larger recreation center system while Gilpin and Nederland are the sole facilities for their smaller communities. Apex and Gilpin are 10 or less years old, while Golden has recently expanded their facility, and Nederland and South Boulder have been renovated.

Generally, there appears to be sufficient facilities for aquatics and cardio/weight training in the region. However, there is a significant drive to reach them, which according to the Community Survey ranked #3 in barriers to participation (i.e. - locations not convenient/easily accessible – 47%). Based on community input, and the lack of facilities provided by alternative providers, additional facilities and programs for youth and teens within the Canyon would likely be successful and should be explored.



### Recreation Programming

All of the indoor recreation facilities included dance, yoga and Pilates programs, as well as opportunities for visitors to familiarize themselves with the weight rooms and cardio equipment, through either staff tour or a programmed class. Apex and Boulder districts/departments include programs for people with disabilities in their programming, and both Apex and Golden are part of the Silver Sneakers program for seniors. CCCPRD can partner with these agencies to meet the needs of district residents with disabilities. Due to limited space, both Nederland and South Boulder did not have an extensive list of classes and programs, or any art or culture classes at their facilities. However, Nederland has a theater and displays local art in the hallways. Golden and Gilpin both had pottery studios and Apex's focus was recreation with most of their enrichment programs occurring at the District's other facilities. Primarily, the focus at all of the facilities are more on fitness, exercise and group classes, and each of the districts/departments programming guides are mostly filled with recreation, rather than arts or cultural activities. The lack of immediate access to art and culture activities and classes may be a gap that can be filled by CCCPRD or an alternative provider within the District through programming and special events. The District should evaluate further, whether residents would support such programming.

Though many of the centers include similar amenities, each facility provides a unique set of amenities and programs which exude their own special character and style. This diversity of amenities in proximity to the Canyon allows Coal Creek Canyon residents to choose from a variety of programs and amenities to match their interests and needs. However, based on public input, there is significant demand for providing services (i.e. – indoor gathering space and fitness) within the Canyon in order to facilitate a greater sense of community, create a gathering place, as well as avoid driving to these facilities all together.

## Trails and Outdoor Recreation

Trails within the District are limited to a few informal alignments that do not have any additional support amenities such as formal trailheads with parking facilities, restrooms, mapping, ADA access, etc. Residents within the District have historically understood where these alignments are and have used them recreationally to access various public and private locations in and out of the District. However, these are informal trails with a mix of public and private ownership. Trails that were once commonly used have been closed with changes in land-owners' trust and attitudes toward informal access.

The District is surrounded by an extensive collection of Federal, State, County and City lands designated as park and open space areas. This collection of lands is indicative of the community and local government's desire to sustain mountain and foothill lands for the enjoyment of the public and the protection of wildlife and wildlife habitat. Options available to Coal Creek Canyon residents in surrounding jurisdictions is extensive, however, very few trail and roadway connections exist into these facilities, which in part may be due to topography, as well as a significant amount of private ownership in the Canyon. Additionally, it is important to note that these facilities support individual, passive recreation opportunities and have fees associated with their use, but do not facilitate community gathering and active recreation opportunities such as a community park does. It appears that generally the jurisdictions do have a history of working together to weave trail networks between facilities where possible, but this recently has become more of a challenge due to limited funding and resources. Yet, this bodes well for the District as the economy rebounds and they move forward with identifying key trail connections and working with the jurisdictions to make those connections a reality.

While this collection of publicly owned lands surrounding the District provides an extensive collection of trails, the area is not only lacking connections into those spaces, but based on Community and Stakeholder Input is also lacking paved, multi-purpose trail facilities that can accommodate a wider variety of users. Currently, residents use local roads

for walking and biking, which is a safety concern. Based on public input and the Community Survey, there is also high demand for soft-surface, multi-purpose trail facilities that can accommodate hiking, walking, mountain biking and cycling, which should be considered by the District, as these activities are the primary activities both desired and being participated in by District residents. Outdoor play facilities for the youth of the community are also considered important by District residents.











# PARK & RECREATION TRENDS

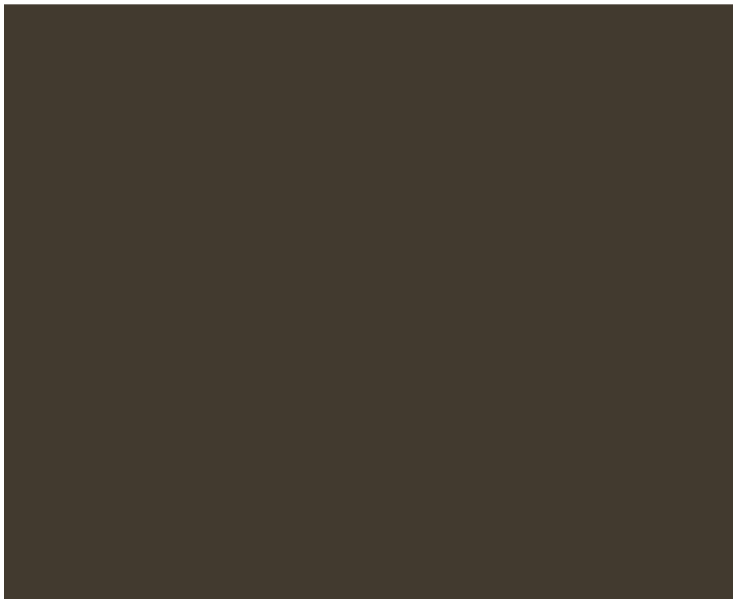
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## State and Local Participation Trends

As the least obese state in the country, Colorado residents are generally more active than the average American. Colorado may be the least obese, but the obesity rate has increased from less than 10% in 1990 to nearly 20% of the population today. One reason that Colorado may be deviating from national trends is that the state is known for its extensive recreation opportunities available to residents and visitors alike. Colorado's natural resources are preserved through thousands of acres of national forest, multiple National Parks, BLM lands and counties, and municipalities that have extensive collections of open space lands and parks. Additionally, trails (both paved and unpaved) abound throughout these lands, providing opportunities for people to walk, hike, bike, skate and horseback ride. The state's mountainous areas, specifically foothills regions draw rock climbing enthusiasts at not only natural climbing locations, but numerous indoor climbing walls in recreation centers and private companies throughout the state. Additionally, mountain biking, camping (RV and tent), and motorized off-road exploration are all common outdoor pursuits for Colorado residents. Winters in Colorado bring about snow and ice, making skiing (downhill and cross-country), snowboarding, sledding and snowshoeing popular activities during the winter months.

In 2008, Colorado State Parks and Colorado's Department of Natural Resources, in conjunction with a steering committee comprised of private, public-sector and non-profit stakeholders, prepared a five-year Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). According to the executive summary of the SCORP, the report was created to "provide information on recreation trends and demands and offers strategies to ensure that Colorado's outdoor recreation heritage is maintained and improved." The most recently completed plan provides action strategies for 2008 to 2013; and many of the findings of that plan have been incorporated into this section of the report.

# PARK & RECREATION TRENDS



In Colorado, recreation demand continues to increase, which impacts existing outdoor recreation lands and resources managed by federal agencies, the state, counties, cities and districts. Coloradans, as well as visitors to the state, use the public lands available to them year-round to hike or walk, camp, bicycle, picnic, ski and sled, to name a few. According to the Trends Section of the SCORP, the most popular outdoor activities in Colorado in 2006 were:

- Walking for pleasure (83%)
- Attend a family gathering (75%)
- View/photograph natural scenery (74%)
- Gardening or landscaping for pleasure (70%)
- Visit nature centers, etc. (69%)
- Picnicking (65%)
- Attend outdoor sports events (63%)
- Driving for pleasure (61%)
- Sightseeing (50%)
- View/photograph wildlife (50%)

According to a 2005 study by the Outdoor Industry Foundation (OIF) evaluating those who participate in “active” outdoor recreation, trail-related activities are the most popular among Coloradans; see **Table 8.1** for more information. The year-round nature of recreation in Colorado is also apparent when evaluating wintertime activities. Thirty-eight percent of Coloradans reported they participate in a snow or ice-based activity at least once a year (compared to only 26% of Americans). Twenty percent of residents spend time downhill skiing and 9% snowboarding, 17% go sledding (usually close to home), 8% snowmobile and 6% snowshoe.

**Table 8.1: Participation in Active Outdoor Recreation Activities (2005)\***

Activity	% of population participating
Trail Trail running on an unpaved trail Day hiking on an unpaved trail Backpacking Rock climbing (natural rock or ice)	41%
Bicycling (paved and off-road)	35%
Wildlife Viewing Bird watching Other wildlife	33%
Camping (RV, tent, and rustic lodging)	28%
Snow Sports Downhill skiing, including telemark Snowboarding Cross-country or Nordic skiing Snowshoeing	21%
Fishing (all types)	15%
Paddling (kayaking, rafting, and canoe)	11%
Hunting (all types)	4%

*\*Numbers taken from the 2008 SCORP report, page 66 as compiled from the OIF survey. Wildlife based numbers are based on residents in 2005 that were 16 years or older and non-wildlife numbers are based on those 18 and older.*

In regards to more local trends, the City of Boulder completed a Parks and Recreation Master Plan in 2006, which included a survey of residents and their use and activity interests in relation to Boulder’s facilities and programs. Similar to the Canyon, residents of Boulder are very active and place a high value on the parks and recreation facilities and programs. According to the survey, within the year respondents walked (98%), exercised (94%), jogged (91%), ran (90%), and bicycled (89%) the most, followed by relaxing at a park (86%), and swam, fished, relaxed, or socialized at a reservoir or lake (63%). Regarding program use, the most frequently attended activities were drop-in classes (53%) and fitness classes (51%).

## National Park and Recreation Trends

### Activity-Based Programming Trends

**Less Time for Recreation** – Americans have less leisure time now than ever before which has led to changes in recreation patterns. People have less unstructured time after taking care of their daily responsibilities, which means recreation activities are moving towards unstructured, individual, and drop-in programs. Participation in structured and commitment-based programmed activities has decreased, although fitness programs with both indoor and outdoor exercise continue to increase in popularity.

**Passive Recreation** - Passive outdoor recreation activities, such as picnicking, sightseeing or nature watching remain popular, with exercise walking being the number one activity for Americans. Walking is easily accessible, unstructured, inexpensive and can be done in groups of people of all ages and physical fitness levels. Most of these activities can be accommodated with parks, open space and trail facilities.

**Cold-weather Recreation** – Typically in the winter months Americans go inside and stay inside, specifically in colder regions of the United States. However, there are often a multitude of opportunities to recreate even during the coldest months of the year. However, only about 25% of Americans spent time recreating out in the snow or ice. Of those who are active outside during the snowy winter months, 14% went sledding and less than 10% participated in each of the remaining activities, such as skiing, snowshoeing or snowmobiling.

**Arts and Culture** - Art and cultural leisure experiences create a positive social environment and bridge differences in user groups. They also provide alternatives to traditional outdoor activities. Festivals offer opportunities to provide diverse cultural experiences to residents as well as tourists. According to the Americans for the Arts, arts, cultural and heritage tourists spend more and stay longer than other tourists.

**Extreme Sports and Activities** - Participation in recreation has shifted over the past couple of years and the demand for “extreme” sports has been increasing, especially with youth and young adults. Sports such as BMX, in-line skating, rock climbing, mountain biking, ATVing and skateboarding are favorites. Many of these types of opportunities can be accommodated within park and recreation facilities and programs.

**Fitness and Obesity** - Since we spend less time exercising and participating in outdoor recreation, the number of overweight and obese Americans has increased drastically. In 1990, there were only ten states where less than 10% of the population was obese and the remaining states had 10-14%. In 2008, not a single state has less than 15% obesity rate. In fact only Colorado has less than 20%, and 32 states have rates equal or greater than 25% and six states over 30% of the population are obese. These daunting statistics show the need for accessible parks and recreation facilities and for providing programs that teach and show our youth and young adults how to better integrate outdoor recreation and physical activity into their daily lives.





## Demographic-Based Programming and Participation Trends

As illustrated in the Demographics and Community Profile Section of the report, when compared to the State of Colorado and the United States, the Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District's population is projected to be significantly older than both. For example, the projected median age for the District in 2015 will be 43.8 years, which is 7.6 years older than the projected median age of Colorado, and 6.5 years older than the projected median age of the nation. This data indicates that the District needs to position its facilities, programs and services to accommodate an aging population. However, the District should not do so without also working to meeting the needs of the younger population, and as a means to keep younger residents in the area.

**Youth** - Participation in out-of-school activities and programs offer support for youth and working families, as well as benefiting youth socially, emotionally and academically. Youth involvement in recreation programs has been proven to decrease juvenile crime and violence, reduce drug use, cut smoking, and alcohol abuse and decrease teen pregnancy. According to the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association, 63% of youngsters aged 6 to 17 participate in team sports, with about two-thirds of that number participating frequently. The most popular of these team sports include basketball, soccer and baseball (2010), but it is important to note that participation levels are declining. Team sports that are increasing in participation include ice hockey, indoor soccer and lacrosse. Non-traditional and individual activities such as extreme sports, as well as after-school arts, culture and fitness programs are also increasing in popularity and could fill the arts and fitness void that is growing wider in schools.

### Favorite Outdoor Activities of American Youth (Age 6-17) by Number of Outings:

- Bicycling
- Running / Jogging / Trail Running
- Skateboarding
- Fishing
- Wildlife Viewing

Per the Outdoor Industry Foundation's (OIF) 2007 report, "The Next Generation of Outdoor Participants"

Although today's youth continue to participate in outdoor activities, they are still not meeting recommended weekly activity levels. Even with higher overall outdoor recreation participation and a higher percentage of participants that take part in an outdoor activity at least twice a week (37%) than other age groups, outdoor activity among youth makes up only a small portion of the CDC recommended "60 minutes of physical activity on most, preferably all, days of the week". Although the quantity of activity is low, the most popular types of outdoor activities that youth do participate in involve a vigorous amount of activity and often take place in community and regional parks, open space areas and on trails.

It is important to recognize that alternative providers provide the Canyon's youth with opportunities to participate in organized recreation opportunities, such as basketball, soccer and baseball over individual activities. However, more individual, non-traditional after-school activities, and outdoor recreation programs targeted to school-age children may be a gap in service that the District could fill to make up for the fitness void that is growing wider in schools.



**Young Adults** - Unfortunately, national trends for outdoor activity show that young adults are even less active than youth. The frequency of outdoor activity starts to drop off from youth to young adulthood (around age 18) – the percentage of young adults who take part in outdoor activities twice a week or more drops to 25% for young adults, a 30% decrease from youth rates. The types of activities young adults participate in are the same, but there is a drastic decline in the number of outings. Just as with youth participants, young adults are not meeting CDC recommended activity levels. Collaborations among state, county, local and community recreation providers in the Coal Creek Canyon area will be very important to engaging this portion of the population in healthy and active outdoor recreation opportunities.

**Favorite Outdoor Activities of Young Adult Americans  
(Age 18-24) by Number of Outings:**

- Running / Jogging / Trail Running
- Bicycling
- Fishing
- Skateboarding
- Wildlife Viewing

Per the Outdoor Industry Foundation's (OIF) 2007 report, "The Next Generation of Outdoor Participants"



**Older Adults** - Older Americans' leisure time is increasingly being spent doing physical activities, in educational classes, partaking in adventure travel and attending sporting events. These trends may be the result of the fact that for many, retirement is starting earlier than it has in the past. Approximately 70% of the current retired population entered retirement before the age of 65. These new retirees are younger, healthier, and have more wealth to spend for the services they want. These trends may explain the changing demands, nationally, from traditional low-cost social services to more active recreation experiences and programming for which older residents are willing to pay.

Those 65 and older are mainly interested in passive recreation activities (i.e. nature walks, bird watching), group social activities, and volunteering. In contrast, Baby Boomers (45-64) prefer small group or individualized active recreation opportunities (i.e. day trips, hiking, fitness). While older Americans leisure time is becoming more active, they are still the age group with the lowest percentage of people meeting the recommended activity levels. Therefore, targeted marketing and promotion of these types of activities should be considered when communicating with and working to engage older adults in outdoor recreation activities.

**Marketing and Communications** – As the result of the economic recession, most park and recreation agencies are facing tightening budgets and are looking for additional means to supplementing the revenue streams. Just like the private sector, it is important to strongly promote public programs and services so as to win customers as well as retain their loyalty. It is important to use effective marketing mediums as well as messaging to target various demographic and user groups. Following is a summary of some of the strategies to marketing to the different generational demographic groups within the District:

- The Matures/Silent Generation (born between 1921- 1945)
  - Mediums – direct mail, fliers, brochures, word of mouth and some email.
  - Messaging – simple, straight-forward and summarized communications.

- The Baby Boomers (born between 1946-1964)
  - Mediums – direct mail, email, web searches, word of mouth and print media.
  - Messaging – sell upscale facilities and programs, as well as unique experiences.
- Generation X (born between 1965-1980)
  - Mediums – sound bites, email, internet, texting, and word of mouth.
  - Messaging – straight-forward, interest and topic-based communications.
- Generation Y (born between 1981-1999)
  - Mediums – texting, social networking websites, internet, and through parents.
  - Messaging – sell trendy, exciting and adventurous activities.

### Parks and Recreation Facility Trends

The current national trend is toward a “one-stop” facility with a wide variety of amenities to serve all ages. Large, multi-purpose regional parks and centers also help park and recreation agencies to manage costs, retain customers, and encourage cross-use. Facilities and amenities that are becoming more common include:

- Walking paths and trails
- Nature centers, outdoor recreation and education centers
- Regional playgrounds for all ages of youth
- Dog parks
- Skateboard facilities
- BMX tracks
- Cultural art facilities
- Multi-purpose, multi-generational recreation centers
- Leisure and therapeutic pools
- Weight and cardiovascular equipment
- Interactive game rooms
- In-line hockey and skate parks
- Indoor walking tracks
- Climbing walls
- Indoor soccer

The Trust for Public Land’s report, “The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space,” 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.
- Increases both residential and commercial property values.
- Adds value to the community and economic development efforts.
- Enhances the benefits of tourism.
- Trees are effective in improving air quality and act as natural air conditioners.
- Trees assist with storm water control and erosion.
- Provides recreational opportunities for all ages.
- Creates stable neighborhoods and strong communities.

A shift has occurred in urban planning from designing around the automobile to designing public spaces that encourage physical activity and engage a community. *The most significant amenity that a provider can offer residents is a public realm that creates a sense of community, “social capital,” and increases the quality of life, which in turn attracts and retains residents and businesses and strengthens a community’s economy.*



## Key Findings

Americans are less active today than ever before. In order to decrease the astronomical obesity rates, the emphasis should be on promoting outdoor activities in addition to traditional forms of exercise. The activity levels for adults of all ages in Colorado generally reflect nationwide averages, including the trend of decreasing physical activity with age. This is particularly relevant to the District with its aging population. In 2010, 14.2% of the District is over the age of 55 and projections show this number will increase to 25.8% by 2015. The projected median age for the District in 2015 is 7.6 years and 6.5 years older than the projected median age of Colorado and the nation, respectively.

Given the Canyon's demographics, it is especially important to consider older adults, a group with physical fitness levels that vary greatly between individuals and have conditions that vary in type and severity. When promoting physical activity and outdoor recreation for this population, a range of activities beneficial to all abilities should be included. Additionally, activities that can help promote specific health, fitness and wellness benefits should be incorporated. Regular physical exercise is inexpensive and can prevent or improve the illnesses many Americans suffer from, including heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, back pain, osteoporosis and psychological problems.

These efforts should not result in the neglect of the needs of the Canyon's youth and families, who are at a critical stage, where it is important to instill life-long, healthy habits that include regular physical activity. Both parents and children should be targeted in an informational communications strategy explaining the current state of affairs of health and how outdoor activities can help remedy and provide a fun, enjoyable way for youth to stay fit and healthy. Schools and the internet should be the primary avenues for distributing information.

It is also important to consider that the residents of the District currently have access to a wide variety of Alternative Providers that offer a significant number of indoor recreation facilities and programs. The District should consider acting as a central clearinghouse to promote information, transportation and/or access to these recreation opportunities in reciprocation for discounted and/or shared use with partnering jurisdictions. Targeted marketing strategies and mediums should be used based on the program, activity and user group.

Colorado's foothill communities, such as Coal Creek Canyon, attract residents who are looking for an amenity-rich and meaningful outdoor recreation experience, which increases the demand for facilities, programs and infrastructure. Lands, programs, services and facilities should be expanded and developed, within the context of the community's values (see the **Community Survey Summary** section) to accommodate the significant number of avid park and recreation users. Facilities will need to be flexible spaces, programmed to meet the varying demands of users as well. Accommodating multiple age groups at once will provide for family-oriented and older adult populations. Additionally, adaptive facilities that can accommodate varying forms of recreation activity such as outdoor recreation (walking, hiking, biking, wildlife viewing, etc.), environmental and nature programs, and arts and cultural activities will meet the desires of the Canyon's divergent population. Additionally, based on national research and the Canyon's community values, the most significant amenity that the Canyon can offer residents is a public space that brings residents together, creates a sense of community, develops "social capital," and increases the quality of life.







# RESOURCE & FUNDING ANALYSIS

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# RESOURCE & FUNDING ANALYSIS

## Introduction

The Coal Creek Park and Recreation District (CCCPRD or the District) is a Title 32 Colorado Special District that was created in May 2009. Due to statutory regulations, a mill levy question was not allowed on the ballot during that election. Therefore, the District does not currently have a dedicated revenue stream from taxes. After careful consideration, the newly formed Board of Directors decided to postpone the mill levy question in order to develop a comprehensive Master Plan with professional and community input.

The District is approximately 14,000 acres, primarily composed of residential use, as well as publicly owned lands and conservation easements that total approximately 4,500 acres or approximately 32% of the District's area (see Map B in the **GIS Mapping and Spatial Analysis** Section of the report). Currently, the District's population is 3,338, based on approximately 1,330 households and an average of 2.37 (DOLA) persons per household. The average value of a home in the District is about \$300,000.

Additional funding challenges and opportunities exist because about two-thirds of the community lies within Jefferson County and about one-third in Boulder County. The District represents only a fraction of Jefferson and Boulder Counties who must often direct resources to areas of larger populations. Property zoning is primarily residential with limited commercial (located primarily along Highway 72). The current estimated assessment valuation of the District is \$36,622,730 (\$24M Jefferson County; \$12M Boulder County).

The District Board plans to proceed to a mill levy election to help fund implementation of Master Plan projects at the earliest practical opportunity. Additionally, previous planning efforts have evaluated the construction and acquisition of facilities through a lease-purchase financing option, secured by the ad valorem taxing authority of the District and through user fees. In the meantime, the District has been successful in obtaining grants (2010: GOCO - \$42,500, Jeffco Open Space - \$3,605 and \$20,000) and alternative funds are

intended to be used to continue to move the District forward and to support the implementation of the recommendations of this plan.

## Goals

Given the unique situation of the District and its current lack of a dedicated funding source, it is important to understand the financial goals of this master plan, in order to identify the tools necessary to meet those goals. At the initiation of this project the District Board outlined the following financial goals for the Master Plan:

- Plan for the financial viability of the District while limiting the tax base levy.
- Identify the cost of projects being considered, identify tax and fee supported funding levels acceptable to District residents, and develop recommendations.
- Use the Master Plan as a solid foundation for seeking and winning funding from a mill levy, grants, private foundations and other funding sources.
- Present a District plan to the community, so that confidence in the Special District's ability to provide value is reinforced.

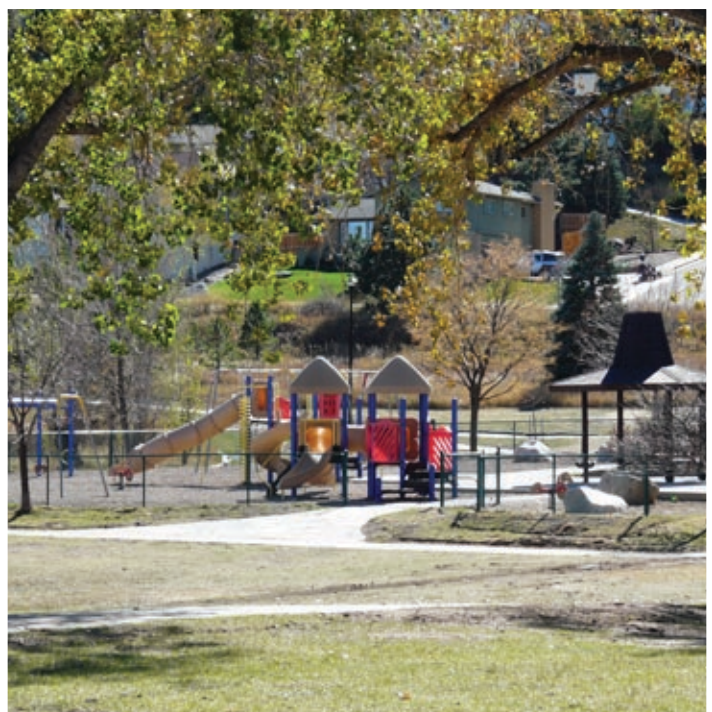
## Anticipated Funding Needs & Analysis

The District plans to provide for the acquisition, financing, construction, operations and maintenance of parks, recreation facilities, and trails, as well as support amenities and infrastructure within those facilities such as parking, lighting, landscaping, restrooms, etc. These specific amenities, priorities and costs are identified in the Recommendations phase of this Master Plan.

CCCPRD is in a unique situation given the fact that the District was approved to operate without a mill levy which would provide a dedicated funding source. Therefore, the District's current use of grants and alternative funding is critical to gaining support and establishing credibility with residents. The District has already made strong progress in this area by obtaining a GOCO Planning Grant for the development of this Master Plan, \$3,605 from Jeffco Open Space for the

purchase of a community tent, and a \$20,000 Jeffco grant to plan artificial turf field improvements at the CCC K-8. The Master Plan process will result in the development of a Prioritized Action Plan, based on the needs and desires of residents, which will identify the costs for priority projects over the next 10 years.

Based on the data gathered through the **Public and Stakeholder Input** and the **Community Survey** it is evident that the District is in need of significant Capital Funds, as well as a dedicated funding source for Operations and Maintenance in order to provide for the establishment of desired facilities and programs. For example, the **Community Survey** illustrates strong support for improved trails, a playground, fitness facilities, a turf athletic field and a community park. For example, 37 percent indicated they would definitely support a community park concept, and another 20 percent were undecided but indicated they "probably would." Nine (9) percent indicated they would "probably oppose" the concept, and 28 percent indicated they would "definitely oppose" the concept. Therefore, thorough communications, with detailed information about the plans for specific amenities and/or services, must be employed in order to secure a majority support for a mill levy.



Even with the passage of a mill levy, the District should consider that it is a “mature” community with little growth expected, as well as is characterized largely by publicly owned lands and conservation easements that total approximately 32% of the District’s area. Although this rural, mountainous nature is what draws many residents to the Canyon, it is also a limitation to the District in regard to any significant increases in the tax dollars and impact fees that the District can collect for the creation and maintenance of facilities and services. Therefore, the District needs to conservatively plan for the construction and operation of facilities that have low maintenance costs and are generally self-sustaining.

For example, as facilities and programs are designed, cost recovery policies, reporting, and tracking will need to be formalized with a pricing and cost recovery policy established specifically for the District. Each program area should track direct and indirect costs, establish a philosophy on a program’s benefit to the community, determine cost recovery goals, and set pricing based on the community’s values and District’s goals. In addition, users are more likely to agree to fee levels when they themselves can see the current fee versus the cost to provide the service.

Additionally, based on the District’s limited funding, it will be very important to allocate sufficient resources to track the District’s accounting down to the penny, as well as ensure the accuracy of projected budgets and expenses. For example, the District’s most current financial data is based on assumptions provided in August of 2008 for the District’s Service Plan. These numbers should be revised to account for the drastic downturn in the economy that have impacted factors such as interest rates, assessed valuations, increasing rents, etc. For example, assessed valuation figures should be updated to reflect the District’s current assessed value (\$36,622,730). Also, when the 2010 Census Data is released it will directly impact the District’s household counts and potential property tax revenue.

Lastly, due to the fact that obtaining traditional funding sources is not guaranteed, in order to develop quality District services, programs and facilities, the District should continue to be proactive in identifying, seeking out and supporting matching funds for grants and alternative funding.

Potential Funding Sources

The following is a list of potential funding sources the District can pursue to provide funding for services, programs and facilities. Both Traditional sources and Alternative sources are included.

Traditional Funding Sources

State and Local Funding

**Property Tax Mill Levy** - The property tax mil levy is the rate of tax applied to the assessed value of all the property within the District’s boundaries. The annual levy generates ongoing tax revenue the District will use each year to pay for providing the various services to its residents and to pay any debt service.

*The formula is: Mill Levy x Assessed Value = Tax Dollars*

*For example, if the total assessed value of all property in the CCCPRD is approximately \$36,000,000 and the District’s tax levy were 3.000 mills, the District would collect \$108,000 in annual property tax revenue.*

*(3.000 mills/1,000) x \$36,000,000 = \$108,000*

*For a house with a market value of \$300,000, this example mill levy would generate \$72 in annual property tax revenue for the District.*

*(3.000 mills/1,000) x (\$300,000 X 7.96%) = \$72*



**Lease-Purchase** - In cooperation with Wells Fargo, the Special District Association (SDA) of Colorado developed a pro forma lease-purchase arrangement for SDA Members. The program provides a ready and expeditious source of funding for districts to construct or purchase facilities or capital equipment on a lease-purchase basis. The lease-purchase concept has been approved by the Colorado Supreme Court, and provides a means for local governments to finance small to medium capital needs without the cost and difficulties surrounding the issuance of bonds for such projects. Capital needs ranging from a few thousand dollars to as high as \$10 million, may be ideal for lease-purchase financing.

It is important to note that with the economic downturn, banks have become significantly more risk averse, indicating that a debt service reserve fund (DSRF) may be needed for a lease-purchase. This is a set amount, deposited as a safe guard in the event the District cannot make its lease payment.

**General Obligation Bonds** – A general obligation bond is a common type of municipal bond in the United States that is secured by a state or local government's pledge to use legally available resources, including tax revenues, to repay bond holders. Most general obligation pledges at the local government level include a pledge to levy a property tax (for a limited period of time for a specific capital project, in addition to a mill levy) to meet debt service requirements, in which case holders of general obligation bonds have a right to compel the borrowing government to levy that tax to satisfy the local government's obligation.

Given these tight economic times, it may be challenging to gain support for a bond referendum. However, in the future the District may explore whether the community would be supportive of passing a bond issue. It will be important to consider what District priorities are and what capital dollars should be used for, given that voters are often hesitant to approve multiple bond referendums within a short timeframe.

**Impact Fees** – Impact fees are charges assessed by local governments against new development projects to attempt to recover the cost incurred by government in providing the public facilities required to serve new residential and/or commercial development. Impact fees are only used to fund facilities, such as roads, schools, and parks that are directly associated with the new development. They may be used to pay the proportionate share of the cost of public facilities that benefit the new development; however, impact fees cannot be used to correct deficiencies in existing public facilities.

The District is a mature community with little growth expected. Therefore, the use of impact fees would likely generate a small amount of revenue for CCCPRD. However, this strategy could be used as a means of controlling future development, so as to preserve the rural, mountain characteristics of the Canyon.

**Conservation Trust Funds**- Article XXVII, Section 3, as amended in 1992, states that the net proceeds of the Colorado Lottery are to be used for state and local parks, recreation facilities, open space, environmental education, and wildlife habitat.

The Conservation Trust Fund (CTF) is one of three funds established to accomplish these goals. CTF receives 40% of all net lottery proceeds. The Department of Local Affairs distributes CTF dollars from net Lottery proceeds to over 450 eligible local governments: counties, cities, towns, and Title 32 special districts that provide park and recreation services in their service plans. CTF funds are distributed quarterly on a per capita basis.

Funding can be used for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of new conservation sites or for capital improvements or maintenance for recreational purposes on any public site.\* New conservation sites are defined in statute as being interests in land and water, acquired after establishment of a conservation trust fund, for park or recreation purposes, for all types of open space, including but not limited to flood plains, green belts, agricultural lands or scenic areas, or for any scientific, historic, scenic, recreation, aesthetic or similar purpose (CRS 29-21-101).



**User Fees** - User fees are charges to those who utilize park and recreation programs, and may include facility admission, facility and equipment rental fees, athletic league fees, and program registration fees, etc. As the District develops programs and facilities, it should consider fee levels for admissions, programs and for rentals of facilities. It is important that District track both direct and indirect costs, so as to set fees to cover equipment, labor, and maintenance for the support services it is providing. Furthermore, being one of the few providers in the area, the District should look at the market demand for these facilities and programs and charge accordingly. The District should develop a tiered fee system for rentals which is structured by classification as non-residents, private residents, non-profit organizations, and seniors. This policy is quite progressive and reflects the philosophy that those who benefit should pay. Typically the greater the community benefit, the higher the subsidy.

**Marketing and Customer Service** - The goal is to win “customers” and retain their loyalty. Understanding the community’s needs and desires, as illustrated through the community survey, demographics and trends, the District can learn how to tailor its offerings to provide better services to its residents, as well as target marketing and communications. Another important aspect is the determination of appropriate user fees. Too high a fee could limit participation, whereas setting fees too low could mean passing up opportunities to defray costs and improve cost recovery.

**Private Concessionaires** - Contract with a private business to provide and operate desirable activities and services, such as food services, transportation, equipment rental, guided activities, etc.



## Federal Funding

**Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)** - Although the program funds housing, public facilities, economic development and community projects, recreation could be a minor component of the project. For example, a mini-park could be constructed on land purchased through the housing project which services primarily low to moderate income individuals. The program is administered through the Colorado Division of Local Affairs. As a Special District, CCCPRD would have to contract with either Jefferson or Boulder County to carry out project activities as provided for under statutes, ordinances and resolutions, and State and local financial management procedures.

**Land & Water Conservation Fund** - For many years since the mid 1960's, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program provided funds for outdoor recreation acquisition and development. However, over the last few years the funding has been extremely limited. The program is administered through the Colorado State Parks.

**Urban Park & Recreation Recovery (UPARR)** - program grants provide recreation opportunities for all ages, all ethnic groups and to people with and without disabilities, senior citizens, at-risk youth, latchkey children and young adults. Three types of grants are available through the UPARR program: 1) Rehabilitation grants provide capital funding to renovate or redesign existing close-to home recreation facilities. 2) Innovation grants usually involve more modest amounts of funding aimed to support specific activities that either increase recreation programs or improve the efficiency of the local government to operate existing programs. 3) Planning grants provide funds for the development of a Recovery Action Program plan. The program receives periodic funding. Contact the National Park Service, Pacific West Regional Office, early in the planning process. <http://www.nps.gov/uprr/eligibility.html>

**National Recreational Trails Program** - The program was initiated through the TEA-21 legislation. Funds are awarded for the construction of trails and support facilities. Emphasis is for the construction of multi-use trails such as biking, hiking, equestrian, motorized, etc. The program is administered through the Federal Highway Administration.

**Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement** - Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act of 2003 (SAFETEA) reauthorizes the U. S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration transportation programs for highways, highway safety and transit. As part of SAFETEA, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) grants provide funds for trail and other alternative transportation projects and programs in air quality non-attainment and maintenance areas. The CMAQ program encourages agencies to invest in projects that reduce air pollutants from transportation-related sources. Intermodal transportation connections are encouraged, including pedestrian and bicycle trails that connect to passenger transportation modes, i.e., to railroad or bus terminals or to rapid transit stations.

**Rehabilitation Service Programs** - This program is available through the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. The intent of the program is to provide individuals with disabilities with recreational activities and related experiences that can be expected to aid in their employment, mobility, socialization, independence, and community integration. Specific project activities may include: swimming, wheelchair basketball, camping, hiking, water skiing, hiking, camping, horseback riding, arts, and sports. Historically, applications are due in September of each year.

**Transportation Enhancement Funds and Safe Routes to School Funds** - These programs are related to transportation activities. The activities funded through Enhancement program are property acquisition, development of trails including hiking and biking, landscaping including trees, signage, and restoration of historic structures. The Safe Routes to Schools funds walking and bicycle facilities that connect residents to

schools. This grant program requires an educational outreach component as part of the grant funding however it is a 100% grant.

## Alternative Funding Sources

**Fundraising** - Local fundraising is a mechanism that has worked effectively for nonprofits and government agencies around the country. Although a vast amount of local effort is involved, this mechanism typically generates a vast amount of support and publicity. Local businesses, organizations, and private individuals can pledge funding over a specific period of time.

Fundraising volunteers can be proactive by initiating a variety of fundraising tasks, such as establishing a Friends of Parks nonprofit or collaborating with an existing nonprofit to send direct mail letters, promoting sponsorship of programs and naming rights, seeking in-kind donations, hosting special events (i.e. – charity concerts, golf tournaments, fundraiser dinners, events to honor volunteers, silent auctions, and themed socials), and soliciting charitable donations of money and in-kind services.

**Corporate Sponsorships** – Based on the evident demand by residents for the creation of future facilities (see **Community Survey Summary** Section of the report), corporate sponsorships, especially for local businesses, is a growing trend in the park and recreation industry and may be a viable option for the District that could greatly supplement existing funding and revenue sources. Corporate sponsorships may include financial or in-kind support for a specific program, event, facility or site, such as marketing opportunities, advertisement, dedicated product supply or name association. District should put efforts into designing corporate sponsorship program and naming rights for individual program areas within future facilities that would support these types of revenue generation. These sponsorship opportunities should be offered with a tiered level of benefits, should quantify marketing exposure for each level, bundle packages on a system-wide level, and bundle the assets of sponsors (i.e. - money, marketing, and product supply).

**Grants** - Grants are available to nonprofits and government agencies from both public and private sources. Grant opportunities exist for a wide variety of purposes including cultural, education and historic programs. The District should look for the alignment between their request and the objectives of the grant program. The request for funds should provide a solid basis for a positive response from the funder. There are numerous sources of information and assistance available to grant-seekers. Initial efforts should be on Colorado-based foundations and companies.

- *Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO)* - Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) - GOCO grants help preserve, protect, enhance and manage the state's wildlife, park, river, trail and open space heritage. GOCO has six grant categories: Open Space, Local Government, Planning, Trails, Conservation Excellence and Legacy & Special Opportunity Grants, all which may be of particular interest to CCCPRD given its limited capital funds. Additional information can be found at [www.goco.org](http://www.goco.org).
  - GOCO's Legacy & Special Opportunity Grant Program was created to ensure that Colorado's rich natural heritage is preserved for future generations. Legacy Grants are multi-year initiatives of regional or statewide importance to which GOCO makes multi-million dollar commitments. They are designed to preserve Colorado's land and water, enhance wildlife habitat, create state and local parks, construct trails, and help provide environmental education. Legacy projects typically hinge upon strong partnerships between federal and state agencies, non-profit organizations, landowners and the private sector. [http://goco.org.s57353.gridserver.com/?page\\_id=84](http://goco.org.s57353.gridserver.com/?page_id=84)
- *Jefferson County Joint Venture Program* - The Jefferson County one-half of one percent sales tax collected by the Open Space Program is allocated to cities and to the unincorporated areas of the county. Since 1972, over \$285 million have been spent in the cities and unincorporated areas of the county to acquire over 51,000 acres of land, water

and facilities. Voters in 1998 approved a bond issue of \$160 million provides funds for priority land acquisition. Through the Joint Venture Capital Program, more than \$28 million has been spent for parks, trails, golf courses, recreational improvements and development projects for cities and recreation districts located within Jefferson County. Between \$1.5 and \$2 million dollars are allocated each year through the Joint Ventures program. [http://www.jeffco.us/openspace/openspace\\_T56\\_R50.htm](http://www.jeffco.us/openspace/openspace_T56_R50.htm)

- *Boulder County Small Grants Program* - The Boulder County Parks and Open Space Department, through its Resource Management Division, is offering small grants for research and biological inventories on open space lands. Through these research projects and inventories the department can monitor management practices and improve resources and park visitor experiences. Two categories will be awarded: grants up to \$5,000 and grants up to \$10,000. The deadline for proposals is Thursday, January 27, 2011. <http://www.bouldercounty.org/find/library/environment/smallgrant.pdf>.



- *USDA Community Facility Grants*

- *Objectives:* Community Programs provides grants to assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 in population. Applicants located in small communities with low populations and low incomes will receive a higher percentage of grants. Grants are available to public entities such as municipalities, counties, and special-purpose districts, as well as non-profit corporations and tribal governments.
- *Fund Uses:* Grant funds may be used to assist in the development of essential community facilities. Grant funds can be used to construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities for health care, public safety, and community and public services.
- *Maximum Grant:* The amount of grant assistance for project costs depends upon the median household income and the population in the community where the project is located and the availability of grant funds. In most instances, projects which receive grant assistance have a high priority and are highly leveraged with other loan and grant awards. Grant assistance may be available for up to 75% of project costs.



- *Rural Community Development Initiative Grants*

- *Objective:* To develop the capacity and ability of private, nonprofit community-based housing and community development organizations, and low income rural communities to improve housing, community facilities, community and economic development projects in rural areas.
- *Uses and Restrictions:* Rural Community Development Initiative grants may be used for but are not limited to:
  - providing technical assistance to sub-grantees on how to effectively prepare a strategic plan;
  - provide technical assistance to sub-grantees on how to access alternative funding sources;
  - building organizational capacity through board training;
  - developing training tools, such as videos, workbooks, and reference guides to be used by the sub-grantee;
  - providing technical assistance and training on how to develop successful child care facilities; and
  - providing training on effective fundraising techniques.

**Contacts:**

*Cheryl Scofield*

Jefferson County Area Director

(970) 332-3107 ext 4

(970) 332-9801 fax

[cheryl.scofield@co.usda.gov](mailto:cheryl.scofield@co.usda.gov)



- *The GEO High Performance Building Integrated Design Process* – Participate in a collaborative process with the GEO that encourages interaction at every phase of construction, from planning, funding and design to construction, operations and maintenance. For more information on the High Performance Building Program, contact the GEO Commercial Program Manager at [conor.merrigan@state.co.us](mailto:conor.merrigan@state.co.us).
- *Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS)* - Colorado became the first U.S. state to create a renewable portfolio standard (RPS) by ballot initiative when voters approved Amendment 37 in November 2004. The original version of Colorado's RPS required utilities serving 40,000 or more customers to generate or purchase enough renewable energy to supply 10% of their retail electric sales. In March 2007, HB 1281 increased the RPS and extended a separate renewable-energy requirement to electric cooperatives, among other changes. HB 1001 of 2010 further expanded the RPS. Eligible renewable-energy resources include solar-electric energy, wind energy, geothermal-electric energy, biomass facilities that burn nontoxic plants, landfill gas, animal waste, hydropower, recycled energy,\* and fuel cells using hydrogen derived from eligible renewables. <http://www.dora.state.co.us/PUC>
- *Colorado State Trails Program*- Mapping projects, interpretive planning, trail and park planning. <http://parks.state.co.us/Trails/Grants/>
- *CO District of Wildlife* - Colorado Wildlife Conservation Grants - any project that protects and restores Colorado's wildlife resources. [www.wildlife.state.co.us](http://www.wildlife.state.co.us)
- *CO Garden Show, Inc.* – Horticulture and Environmental Education Grants - [http://www.gardeningcolorado.com/garden/pdf/Annual\\_Grant\\_Awards\\_Program.pdf](http://www.gardeningcolorado.com/garden/pdf/Annual_Grant_Awards_Program.pdf)
- *Gates Family Foundation*- Recreation, Parks and Conservation Grants. Parks, Recreation & Conservation focused on: protect natural areas from development especially agricultural & rangeland, open space, mountain and urban parks & trails, support youth education in recreation, environmental education & leadership, and research in preservation of natural habitat. [http://www.gatesfamilyfoundation.org/www/gates.php?section=grant\\_applications&p=how\\_to\\_apply](http://www.gatesfamilyfoundation.org/www/gates.php?section=grant_applications&p=how_to_apply)
- *CO Wildlife Heritage Foundation* – Wildlife Protection and Education Grants - <http://wildlife.state.co.us/About/FundingPrograms/>





**Community Partnerships-** It has been evident through the Master Plan process that due to the limited resources of the District, partnerships will not only be necessary, but critical to making the implementation of the plan a reality. In order to maximize the wide variety of potential resources found in and adjacent to the Canyon, CCCPRD should work to partner with the following local organizations and agencies (including, but not limited to):

- Schools – Coal Creek Canyon K-8, Mountain Phoenix Community School, Jefferson County R-1 School District, Boulder Valley School District, WeeCreekers
- The Coal Creek Canyon Improvement Association (CCCIA)
- Boulder County Parks and Open Space
- Jefferson County Open Space
- Colorado State Parks - Golden Gate Canyon and Eldorado Canyon State Parks
- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- US Forest Service
- Recreation providers in Gilpin County, Golden, Arvada and Boulder
- Ride Provide
- Local Businesses – Coal Creek Coffee & Books, etc.
- Homeowners Associations – Blue Mountain, etc.
- Coal Creek Fire Protection District
- The Environmental Group
- Church groups
- Parenting groups and volunteer organizations
- Youth organizations and recreation participants – Cub Scouts Pack 51, Canyon Daisies, Dance with Two Left Feet, etc.
- District Residents with Recreation and/or Technical Expertise (volunteers)



# GIS MAPPING & SPATIAL ANALYSIS

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# GIS MAPPING & SPATIAL ANALYSIS

A project of this nature lends itself well to a digital, geographic-based property, recreation asset and natural resources inventory. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) was utilized for this process and permits the rapid assembly of mapped materials and spatial analysis related to the properties, known assets, natural resources, etc.

## GIS Data Gathering Process

The Norris Design project team received limited GIS base data for the Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District (CCCPRD or the District), as the District was just recently formed in May of 2009 and is completely run through the volunteer efforts. The District was able to supply the team with the following GIS-based data layers:

- Assessors Parcels (Boulder County, Jefferson County)
- Parcel IDs for landowners within the District boundaries

The provided data layers were supplemented with a color, geo-referenced aerial image from the US Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Agriculture Inventory Program (NAIP). The imagery had a ground resolution of 1 meter and was captured in 2009. Additional base data was created and/or brought in by the Norris Design team to enhance the data provided by the District. The additional layers included:

- Public lands compiled from multiple resources that included the City of Boulder GIS, Boulder County GIS, Jefferson County Open Space GIS and Colorado Ownership and Management Protection (COMaP)
- Alternative recreation facility locations (geocoded from data supplied by CCCPRD)
- Known trail alignments (CCCPRD staff, Boulder County GIS, City of Boulder GIS)
- Public ownership and classifications (as identified in assessors' tables)
- Potentially undeveloped parcels (as identified in assessors' tables)
- Railroad centerline – including tunnels (digitized from 2009 NAIP aerial)

- Road network centerline (Colorado Department of Transportation)
- Surface waters (Colorado Department of Transportation)
- 100' riparian buffer
- Topographic contours (100' intervals derived from 10m National Elevation Dataset)
- Elevation analysis (derived from 10m National Elevation Dataset)
- Slope analysis (derived from 10m National Elevation Dataset)
- Wildlife occurrence data (Colorado Division of Wildlife)
- Flood plains – 100 and 500 year (Federal Emergency Management Agency Q3 data)
- Geology (USGS)

The additional layers created by the Norris Design team comply with the spatial data standards employed by local public agencies. At the completion of the Master Plan process, this data will be supplied to the District staff for acceptance and long-term use within their developing GIS network in ESRI's ArcGIS™ software data and layer format. A detailed database of this data gathering effort will be delivered in ArcReader and MS Office Excel workbook format.

The District supplied the Norris Design team with a Microsoft Office Excel table containing the names and addresses for a variety of alternative recreation providers under the following categories:

- Climbing walls
- Disc golf
- Dog parks
- Facilities in the District
- Fitness and recreation
- Miscellaneous recreation
- Pools
- Skate parks
- Tennis

These records were spatially located as points within the GIS dataset using ArcMap's geocoded location utilities.

The Norris Design team assembled all data layers and aerial photography within ArcGIS software. ArcGIS was employed for all data creation, base maps, and spatial analysis. Additionally, Photoshop and InDesign were used for standard map cartography. The use of this software is widely accepted and is standard for all GIS-based projects.

## GIS Analysis

Following the primary data gathering process, the GIS software and data was used to generate a series of analytical layers and maps used to develop an opportunities and constraints model. A dynamic, digital model of this type is very supportive to a developing district as a means of identifying opportunities for direct acquisition and partnerships with other agencies with land holdings in and around the District boundary. The GIS was also used to determine approximate drive times to alternative recreation providers in an effort to understand how far residents regularly travel, often beyond the District boundaries, to access recreation opportunities.

Additionally, the Norris Design team created a series of base maps that were used by District volunteers in an effort to locate previously unmapped, social trails known by hikers in the District. Existing trails, parking locations and desired alignments were detailed upon the maps and further digitized and transferred to the GIS data. The District trail inventory is current as of October 2010.

## Mapping and Spatial Analysis

### Overview – Opportunity and Constraints Maps

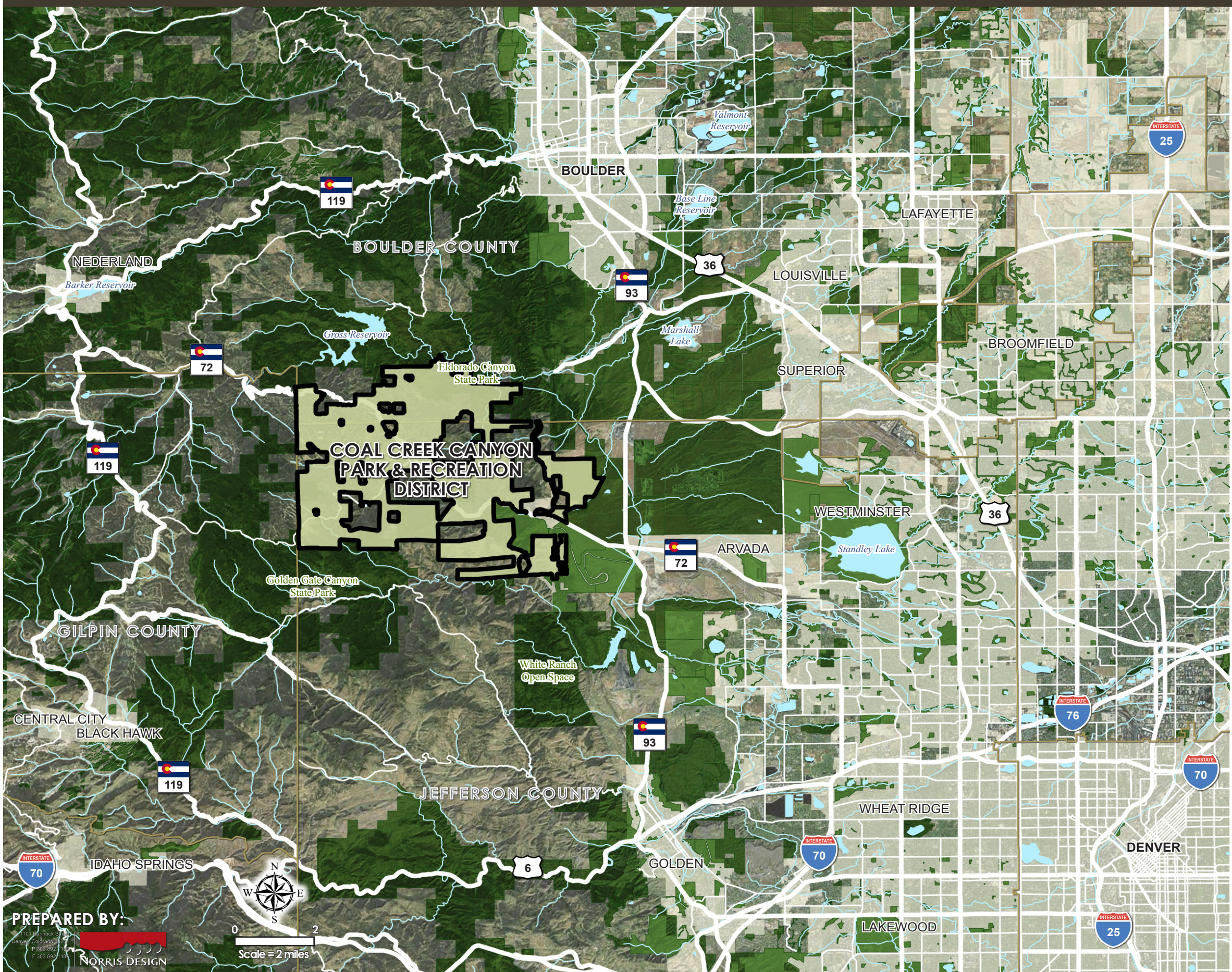
Maps A through J were created by graphically illustrating elements of analysis related to the access to existing park and recreation amenities, as well as the opportunities and constraints for the preservation and creation of facilities and resources. ArcGIS software and related utilities were used to develop and analyze these various subjects including elevation, slope analysis, distribution and overlap of select wildlife species, proximity to surface waters and floodplains.



## Map A – Regional Vicinity Map

Map A serves as a quick reference regarding the locations of the Coal Creel Park and Recreation District within the context of the northwest metropolitan Denver region. Generally, there are a large number of owners and providers of recreation lands and easements in the region. These properties and easements are cataloged within the Colorado Ownership Management and Protection (COMap) data, which are displayed on this map. The COMap data details lands and easements with an even regional distribution. Many of these are city parks and county open spaces. Concentrations of large, contiguous properties are within or adjacent to the District including city, county, state and federal lands. Significant properties in this region include Eldorado Canyon State Park and Golden Gate Canyon State Park. Other significant county-owned properties include White Ranch Open Space (Jefferson) and Walker Ranch Open Spaces (Boulder).





## REGIONAL VICINITY MAP

COAL CREEK CANYON PARK & RECREATION DISTRICT - OPPORTUNITY AND CONSTRAINTS MAPPING

### PRIMARY MAP DESCRIPTION

This map serves as a quick reference regarding the location of Coal Creek Canyon Park & Recreation District (CCCPRD) within a regional context. The map also details the locations of the publicly owned land holdings and conservation easements. These lands are cataloged within the Colorado Ownership Management and Protection (COMap) data.

### MAP DISCLAIMER:

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PARKS, TRAILS, OPEN SPACE & OUTDOOR RECREATION  
**COAL CREEK CANYON MASTER PLAN**  
PARK & RECREATION DISTRICT - COLORADO  
*Health. Joy. Community.*



## Map B – Public Properties & Conservation Easements

Map B serves as a quick reference regarding the locations, classifications and names of the large publicly owned land holdings and conservation easements within and adjacent to the Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District boundary. Trails – as available from various GIS departments are also displayed for reference. This map serves as a visual tool in displaying the classifications assigned to each of the publicly owned parcels, as well as a comprehensive view of the size and geographic locations of these properties.

Conservation easements are not graphically designated on the map due to legibility. The GIS database developed for this project includes attributes for properties that are designated as conservation easements. The GIS database will be provided to the District as a final deliverable.

**Table 10.1: District Property Ownership and Acreage**

PROPERTY CLASSIFICATION	ACRES IN DISTRICT
USFS	161.9
BLM	331.2
Colorado State Land Board	647.1
Colorado State Parks	779.1
Boulder County Open Space	474.7
Boulder County Open Space (Conservation Easement)	180.3
Jefferson County Open Space	1762.1
Jefferson County	5.3
City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks	1.5
City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks (Conservation Easement)	125.8

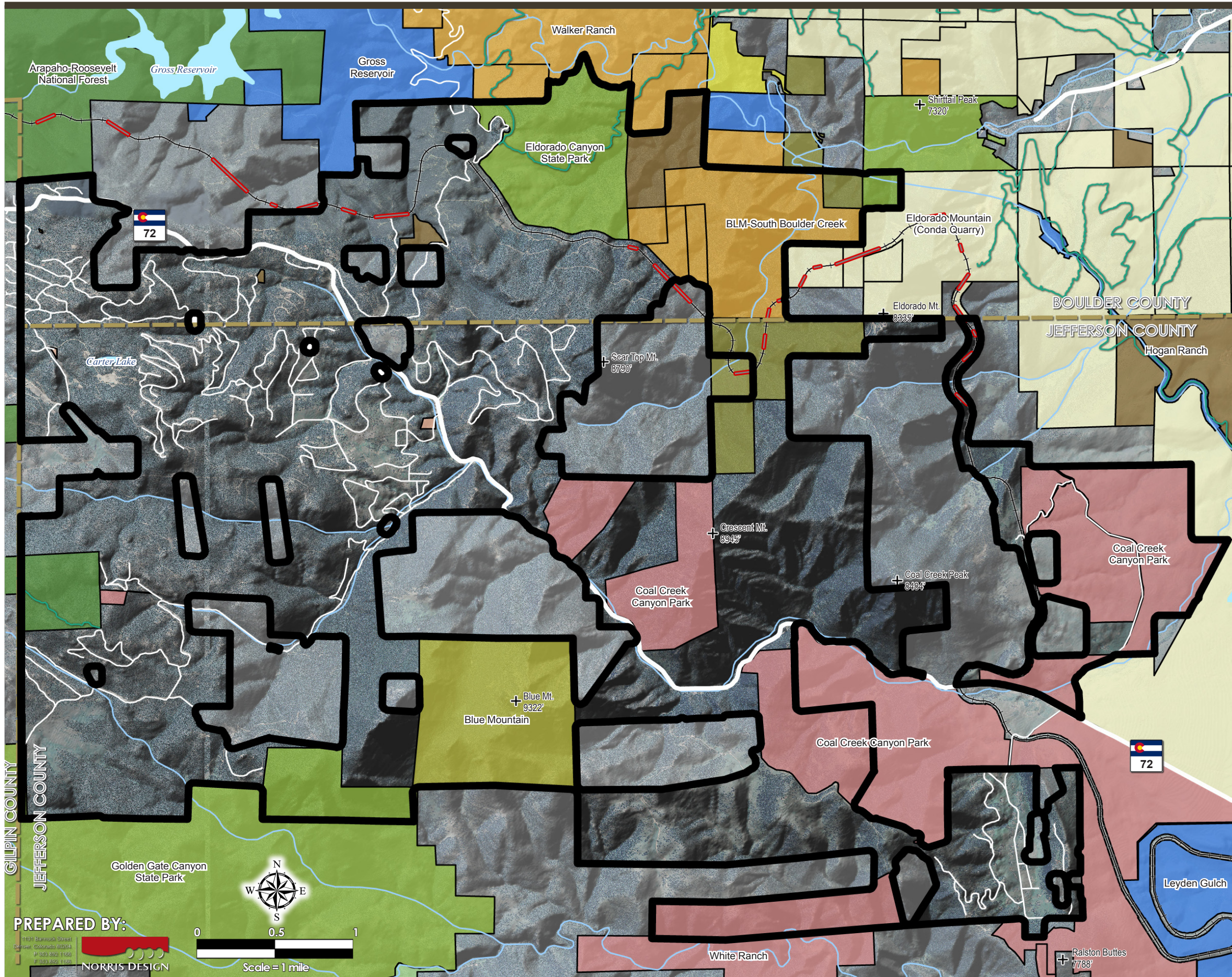
## Analysis

In looking at public lands, the CCCPRD has a good distribution of large, undeveloped public lands, which often serve as outdoor recreation destinations, in the sparsely populated areas of the District. Generally, the more densely populated areas of the District located in the northwest do not have immediate access to as many publicly owned properties. The properties do not serve the District at the traditional neighborhood level and are typically located in areas of complex, mountainous terrain. It should also be noted that several properties, including those listed as conservation easements are not open to the public.

Publicly owned lands and conservation easements within the District total approximately 4,500 acres of the nearly 14,000 acre district – or approximately 32% of the District's area, which provides a high Level of Service (LOS), but also limits the tax dollars that the District can collect for the creation and maintenance of facilities and services. The breakdown of these properties is detailed in **Table 10.1**.

Trails within the District are primitive and limited to only two significant locations. The Walker Ranch loop extends from Walker Ranch, south into Eldorado Canyon State Park in the north part of the district. The trail to Thorodin Mountain in the southwest crosses property within the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest. These single-track trails total approximately 2 miles in combined length within the District and primarily serve avid hikers and mountain bikers.





# PUBLIC PROPERTIES & CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

## OPPORTUNITY AND CONSTRAINTS MAPPING

### MAP LEGEND

- + PEAK WITH ELEVATION
- EXISTING TRAILS
- RAILROAD
- RAILROAD TUNNEL
- COUNTY LINE
- PUBLIC LANDS & CONSERVATION EASEMENTS (CE)
  - USFS - US FOREST SERVICE
  - BLM - BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
  - COLORADO STATE PARKS
  - COLORADO STATE LAND BOARD
  - COLORADO DIVISION OF WILDLIFE
  - BOULDER COUNTY OPEN SPACE
  - BOULDER COUNTY OPEN SPACE (CE)
  - JEFFERSON COUNTY OPEN SPACE
  - JEFFERSON COUNTY
  - CITY OF BOULDER OPEN SPACE & MOUNTAIN PARKS
  - CITY OF BOULDER OPEN SPACE & MOUNTAIN PARKS (CE)
  - DENVER WATER BOARD

### PRIMARY MAP DESCRIPTION

This map serves as a quick reference regarding the locations, classifications and names of the large publicly owned land holdings and conservation easements within and adjacent to the CCCPRD boundary. This map serves as a visual tool in displaying the classifications assigned to each of the publicly owned parcels. Publicly owned lands and conservation easements within the District total approximately 4,500 acres of the nearly 14,000 acre District – or approximately 32% of the District's area. Trails are also displayed for reference.

### MAP DISCLAIMER:

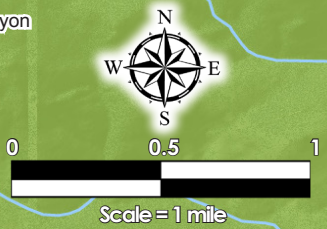
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PREPARED BY:

1101 Barnes Street  
Denver, Colorado 80203  
P 303.892.1100  
F 303.892.1100  
NORRIS DESIGN





## Map C – Regional Alternative Outdoor Recreation Providers

Map C serves as a quick reference regarding the locations of 40 *outdoor* alternative providers and many other public land holdings and easements at a regional scale. These locations were identified and entered into a database maintained by the District. Each location was placed in ArcGIS using standard geocoding analysis to locate the facility by address. The database focused on outdoor facilities with special interest amenities including, swimming pools, dog parks and disc golf courses (compared to the undeveloped recreation opportunities provided by through Public Properties and Conservation Easements – **Map B**). Most alternative providers, symbolized with a yellow point are located east of the District within the northwestern reaches of the Denver/Boulder Metropolitan Area. None of the outdoor alternative providers listed in the database exist within the District and only one is located west of the District in the Town of Nederland.

It should be noted that generally, there are also many outdoor providers with land holdings and easements in the region. These properties and easements are cataloged within the Colorado Ownership Management and Protection (COMap) data – displayed on this map. The COMap data details lands and easements with an even regional distribution. Many of these are city parks and county open spaces. Concentrations of large, contiguous properties are adjacent to the District including city, county, state and federal lands.

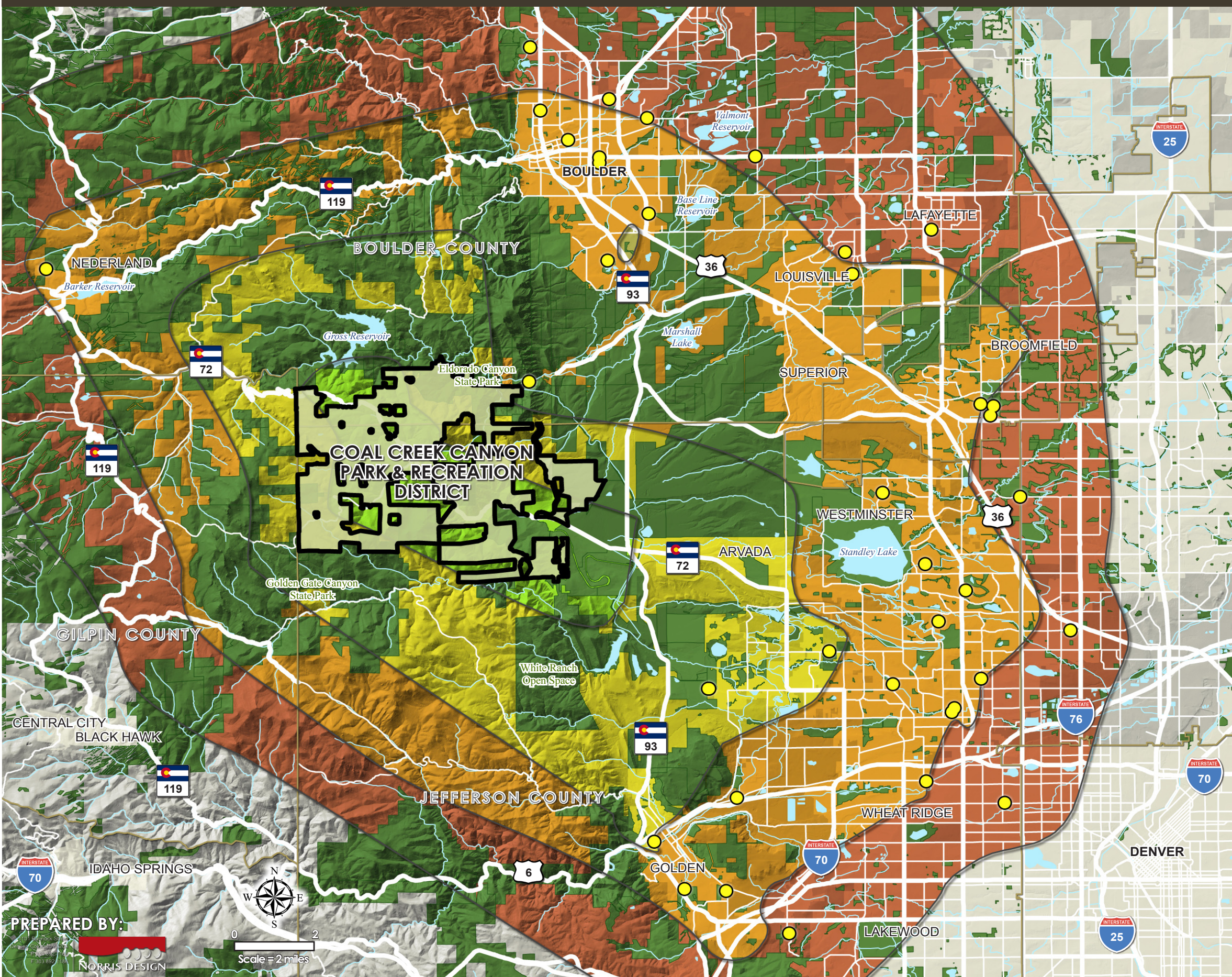
### Analysis

An additional analysis was generated by developing 10 minute contours based upon the estimated drive times from the District to each location. The drive time contours provide a visual reference to help understand the distance from the District as well as grouping the estimated drive times to alternative providers. Estimated drive times were generated using online mapping resources that produce this projected result. The length of drive times illustrates the mountainous terrain of the District and the significant variation that occurs due to a non-grid roadway system. Each alternative provider was analyzed for drive times based upon a well-known fixed

location within the Canyon – Coal Creek Coffee and Books.

- No alternative providers are within the 0-10 minute range
- Four providers are within the 10-20 minute range. The types of amenities available at these locations include disc golf, a dog park, and swimming pools.
- Twenty-three providers are within the 20-30 minute range. The types of amenities available at these locations include disc golf, dog parks, an ice rink, swimming pools, skate parks and tennis courts.
- Thirteen providers within the 30-40 minute range. The types of amenities available at these locations include disc golf, dog parks, swimming pools, a shooting range and skate parks.





# REGIONAL ALTERNATIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PROVIDERS

OPPORTUNITY AND CONSTRAINTS MAPPING

- MAP LEGEND
- ALTERNATIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PROVIDER
  - COUNTY LINE
  - PUBLIC LANDS & CONSERVATION EASEMENTS (CE)
- TIME FROM COAL CREEK CANYON PARK & REC DISTRICT TO ALTERNATIVE PROVIDERS  
APPROXIMATE TIME IN MINUTES
- 0 TO 10 MINS
  - 10 TO 20 MINS
  - 20 TO 30 MINS
  - 30 TO 40 MINS

**PRIMARY MAP DESCRIPTION**

This map serves as a quick reference regarding the locations of 40 outdoor alternative providers and many other public land holdings and easements at a regional scale. These are outdoor facilities with special interest amenities including swimming pools, dog parks and disc golf courses. Public properties and easements are cataloged within the Colorado Ownership Management and Protection (COMap) data – displayed on this map. An additional analysis was generated to provide a visual reference to help understand the relative distance from the District as well as the estimated drive times to alternative providers.

A series of 10 minute contours, or zones, based upon the estimated drive times from the District provide a visual reference to show the length of time required to drive from the District to alternative providers. Estimated drive times were generated using online mapping resources that produce this projected result. Each alternative provider was analyzed for drive times based upon a central, fixed location within the Canyon.

**MAP DISCLAIMER:**

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## Map D – Regional Alternative Indoor Recreation Providers

Map D serves as a quick reference regarding the locations of 62 *indoor* alternative providers at a regional scale. These locations were identified as primary recreation facilities by the District and entered into a database maintained by CCCPRD. Each location was placed in ArcGIS using standard geocoding analysis to locate the facility by address and is identified as a yellow point within the map.

Five (5) of these sites were physically inventoried and evaluated by the project team in order to better understand the quality of resources within these public alternative resources and include:

- Apex Recreation Center
- Gilpin County Recreation Center
- Golden Community Center
- Nederland Community Center
- South Boulder Recreation Center

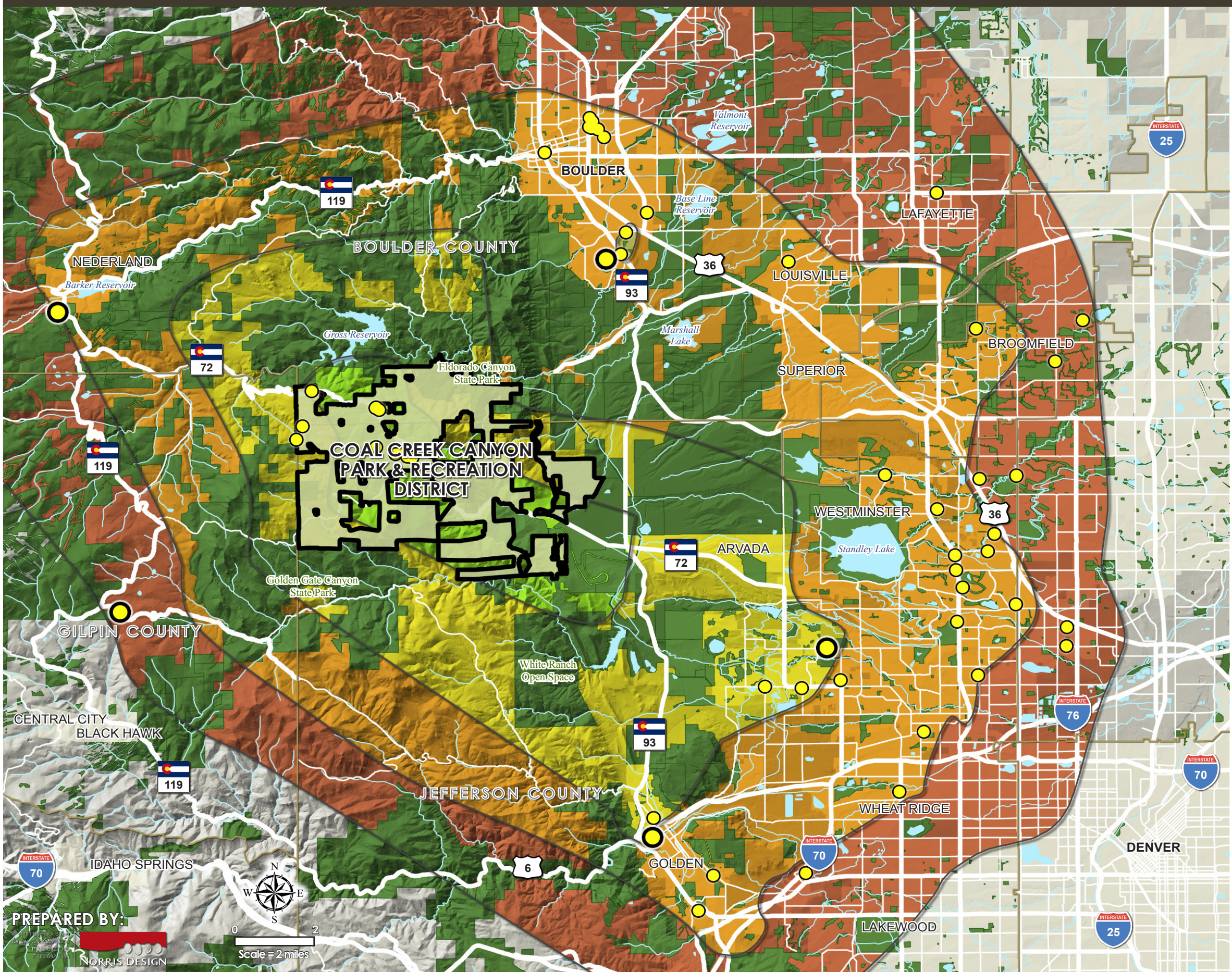
These sites are symbolized with a bold yellow point and have also been labeled for reference. Most alternative providers are located east of the District, within the northwestern reaches of the Denver/Boulder Metropolitan Area. Thirteen (13) indoor alternative providers exist within the District and two other facilities are located just west of the District in the towns of Black Hawk and Nederland (see the **Alternative Recreation Providers and Programming** section of the report for descriptions of relevant providers).

## Analysis

An additional analysis was generated by developing 10 minute contours based upon the estimated drive times from the District to each location. The drive time contours provide a visual reference to help understand the distance from the District as well as grouping the estimated drive times to alternative providers. Estimated drive times were generated using online mapping resources that produce this projected result. The length of drive times illustrates the mountainous terrain of the District and the significant variation that occurs due to a non-grid roadway system. Each alternative provider was analyzed for drive times based upon a well-known fixed location within the Canyon – Coal Creek Coffee and Books.

- Thirteen alternative providers are within the 0-10 minute range. These locations are indoor meeting locations.
- Ten providers are within the 10-20 minute range. The types of amenities available at these locations include indoor climbing walls, ice rinks, private fitness centers, and public recreation and/or community centers.
- Twenty-seven alternative providers are within the 20-30 minute range. The types of amenities available at these locations include indoor climbing walls, private fitness centers, and public recreation and/or senior centers.
- Twelve alternative providers are within the 30-40 minute range. The types of amenities available at these locations include indoor climbing walls, private fitness centers, and public recreation and/or senior centers.





# REGIONAL ALTERNATIVE INDOOR RECREATION PROVIDERS

## OPPORTUNITY AND CONSTRAINTS MAPPING

### MAP LEGEND

- ALTERNATIVE INDOOR RECREATION PROVIDER
- EVALUATED ALTERNATIVE INDOOR PUBLIC RECREATION PROVIDER
- COUNTY LINE
- PUBLIC LANDS & CONSERVATION EASEMENTS (CE)

TIME FROM COAL CREEK CANYON PARK & REC DISTRICT TO ALTERNATIVE PROVIDERS  
APPROXIMATE TIME IN MINUTES

- 0 TO 10 MINS
- 10 TO 20 MINS
- 20 TO 30 MINS
- 30 TO 40 MINS

### PRIMARY MAP DESCRIPTION

This map serves as a quick reference regarding the locations of 62 indoor alternative providers at a regional scale. Five of the sites were evaluated by the project team in order to better understand the quality of resources within these public alternative resources:

- Apex Recreation Center
- Gilpin County Recreation Center
- Golden Community Center
- Nederland Community Center
- South Boulder Recreation Center

An additional analysis was generated to provide a visual reference to help understand the relative distance from the District as well as the estimated drive times to alternative providers.

A series of 10 minute contours, or zones, based upon the estimated drive times from the District provide a visual reference to show the length of time required to drive from the District to alternative providers. Estimated drive times were generated using online mapping resources that produce this projected result. Each alternative provider was analyzed for drive times based upon a central, fixed location within the Canyon.

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PREPARED BY:

NORRIS DESIGN



## Map E – Elevation Analysis

This map provides an analysis that visually details the range of elevations within the District without the potentially difficult interpretation of standard elevation contour lines. Lower elevations are symbolized with lighter blues and greens. Intermediate elevations are symbolized with yellows and browns. The highest elevations are symbolized with grays and white. The lower elevations are located in the northeast sections of the District with a progression of increasing elevations along the south and west sides of the District. Elevations within the District range from 6,200' to 9,400'.

### Analysis

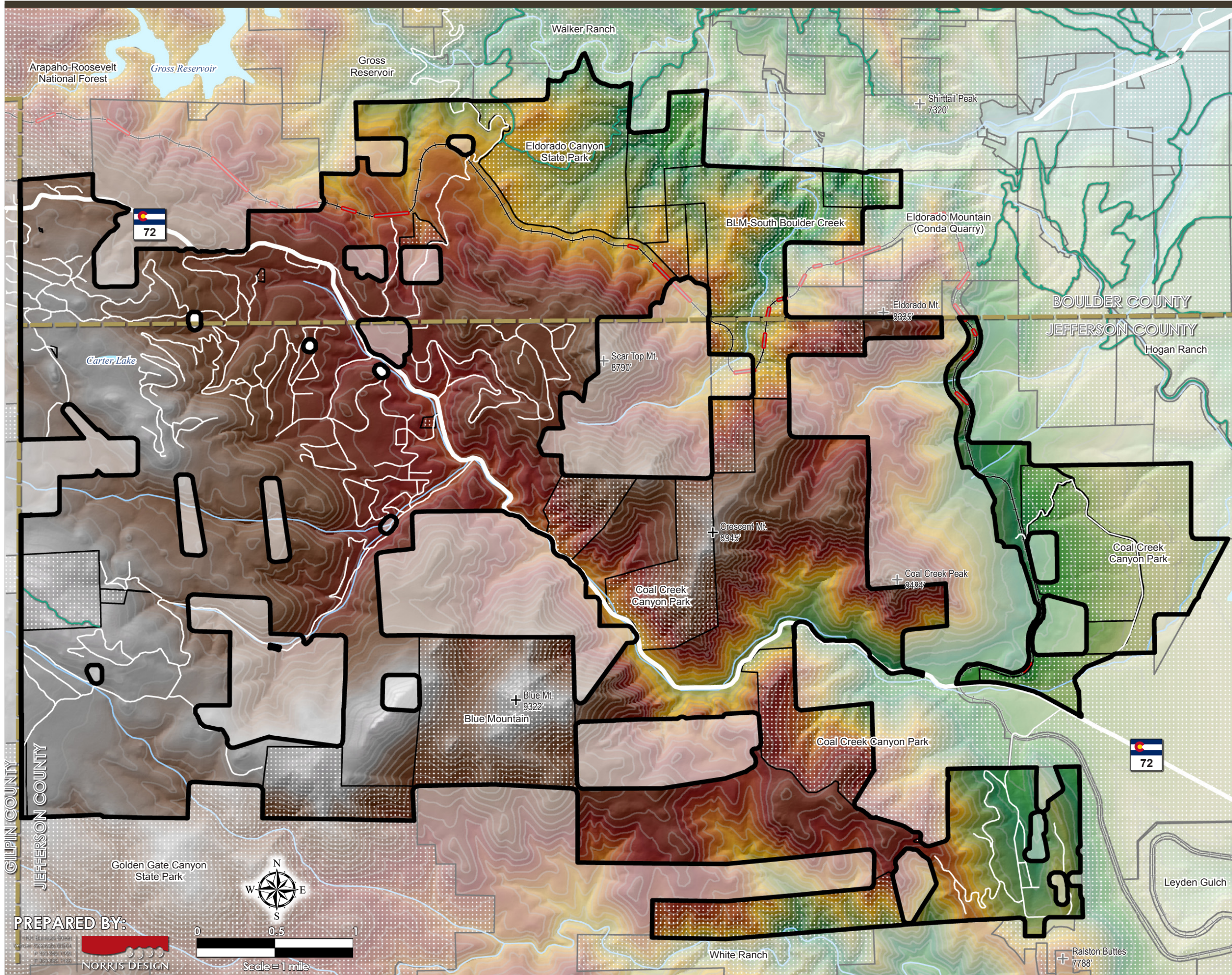
Noteworthy highpoints include the following summits.

- Blue Mountain (9,322')
- Crescent Mountain (8,945')
- Scar Top Mountain (8,790')
- Coal Creek Peak (8,484')

Clearly defined elevation ranges in the District help identify potential locations that should be preserved to protect natural vistas to the higher locations north, south and west of the District, such as Indian Peaks or the nighttime cityscape east of the District. One can use the color gradient to understand simple point to point views. High elevations shown with the gray to white gradients provide views over lower elevations shown with brown, yellow and green gradients. The map shows that Blue Mountain provides a point to point vista of Crescent Mountain.

The map provides an alternative reference to understand the slopes detailed in Map F, in particular the steep slopes that define the District. For instance, one can quickly understand how Blue Mountain and Crescent Mountain both rise sharply from the floor of Coal Creek Canyon within a very short horizontal distance. While these locations may have obvious value for recreation, the steep slopes may present a challenge when considering new trail alignments.

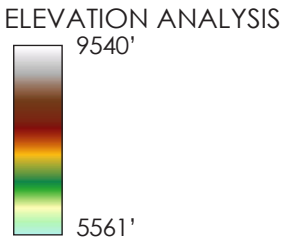




# ELEVATION ANALYSIS

## OPPORTUNITY AND CONSTRAINTS MAPPING

- MAP LEGEND**
- + PEAK WITH ELEVATION
  - EXISTING TRAILS
  - ==== RAILROAD
  - RAILROAD TUNNEL
  - COUNTY LINE
  - Public Lands & Conservation Easements (CE)



**PRIMARY MAP DESCRIPTION**

This map provides an analysis that visually details the range of elevations within the District. Lower elevations are symbolized with lighter blues and greens. Intermediate elevations are symbolized with yellows and browns. The highest elevations are symbolized with grays and white. The lower elevations are located in the northeast sections of the district with a progression of increasing elevations along the south and west sides of the district. Elevations within the District range from 6,200' to 9,400'.

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**PREPARED BY:**  
NORRIS DESIGN



## Map F – Slope Analysis

This map provides a topographic slope analysis of the entire District. The analysis was constructed using four NED 10 meter digital elevation model (DEM) tiles and the Spatial Analyst extension for ArcMap. Slope values are provided in “Percent Slope.” Additional categorization was developed to simplify the data into the following six groups:

- 0 – 5%
- 5 – 10%
- 10 – 15%
- 15 – 20%
- 20 – 25%
- 25% and greater

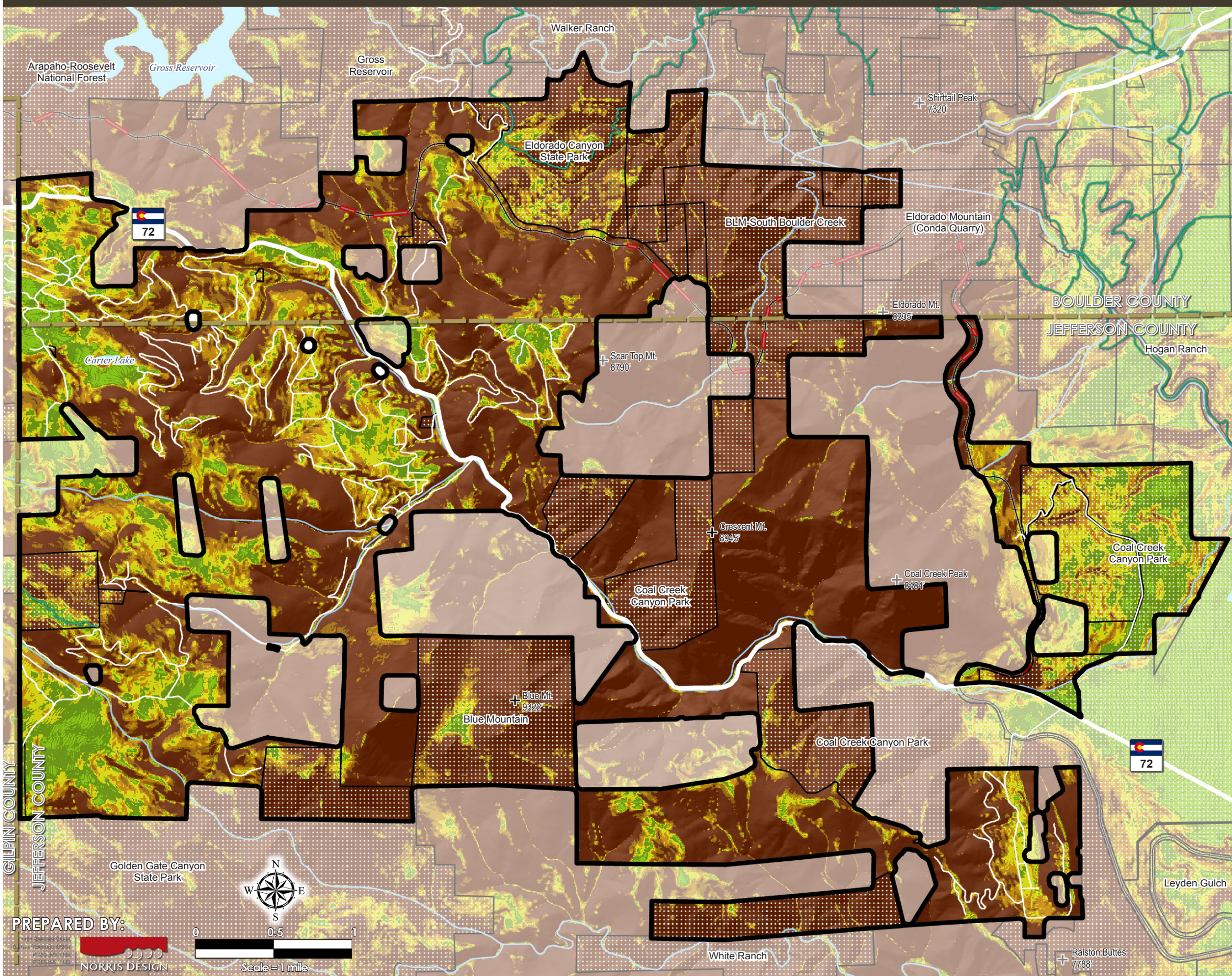
### Analysis

Complex, mountainous terrain presents a challenge in terms of design, construction and related costs.

This analysis shows that 18.8% of the District has gentle slopes classified in the 0 – 5% category and an additional 3.4% classified in the steeper, 5 – 10% category. However, much of this gently sloping property exists in areas that have already been subdivided for residential development. The analysis further shows that 6.9% of the District has slopes classified in the even steeper 10 – 15% category.

The remaining 70.9% of the District is made up of the steepest slopes of 15% and greater. These steepest areas are found throughout the District with the greatest concentrations located in a broad arc of canyons curving from the northeast corner along the southeast and west sections of the District.





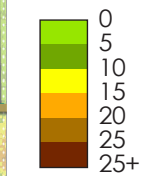
## SLOPE ANALYSIS

### OPPORTUNITY AND CONSTRAINTS MAPPING

#### MAP LEGEND

- + PEAK WITH ELEVATION
- EXISTING TRAILS
- ==== RAILROAD
- RAILROAD TUNNEL
- COUNTY LINE
- PUBLIC LANDS & CONSERVATION EASEMENTS (CE)

#### SLOPE ANALYSIS



## PRIMARY MAP DESCRIPTION

This map provides a topographic slope analysis of CCCPRD. The analysis was constructed using four NED 10 meter digital elevation model (DEM) tiles and the Spatial Analyst extension for ArcMap. Slope values are provided in "Percent Slope". Complex, mountainous terrain is a dominant and physically challenging development constraint of the District. Structure and trail development and related costs are both affected by the constraints of steeper slopes. 18.8% of the District has gentle slopes in the 0 - 5% category. An additional 3.4% classified in the steeper, 5 - 10% category. 6.9% of the District has slopes classified in the even steeper 10 - 15% category. The remaining 70.9% of the District is made up of the steepest slopes of 15% and greater.

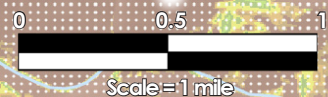
## MAP DISCLAIMER:

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PREPARED BY:





## Map G – Slope Analysis & Undeveloped Parcels

This map is similar to Map F and provides a topographic slope analysis of the entire District, but is overlaid with the Undeveloped Parcels in the area. The analysis was constructed using four NED 10 meter digital elevation model (DEM) tiles and the Spatial Analyst extension for ArcMap. Slope values are provided in “Percent Slope”.

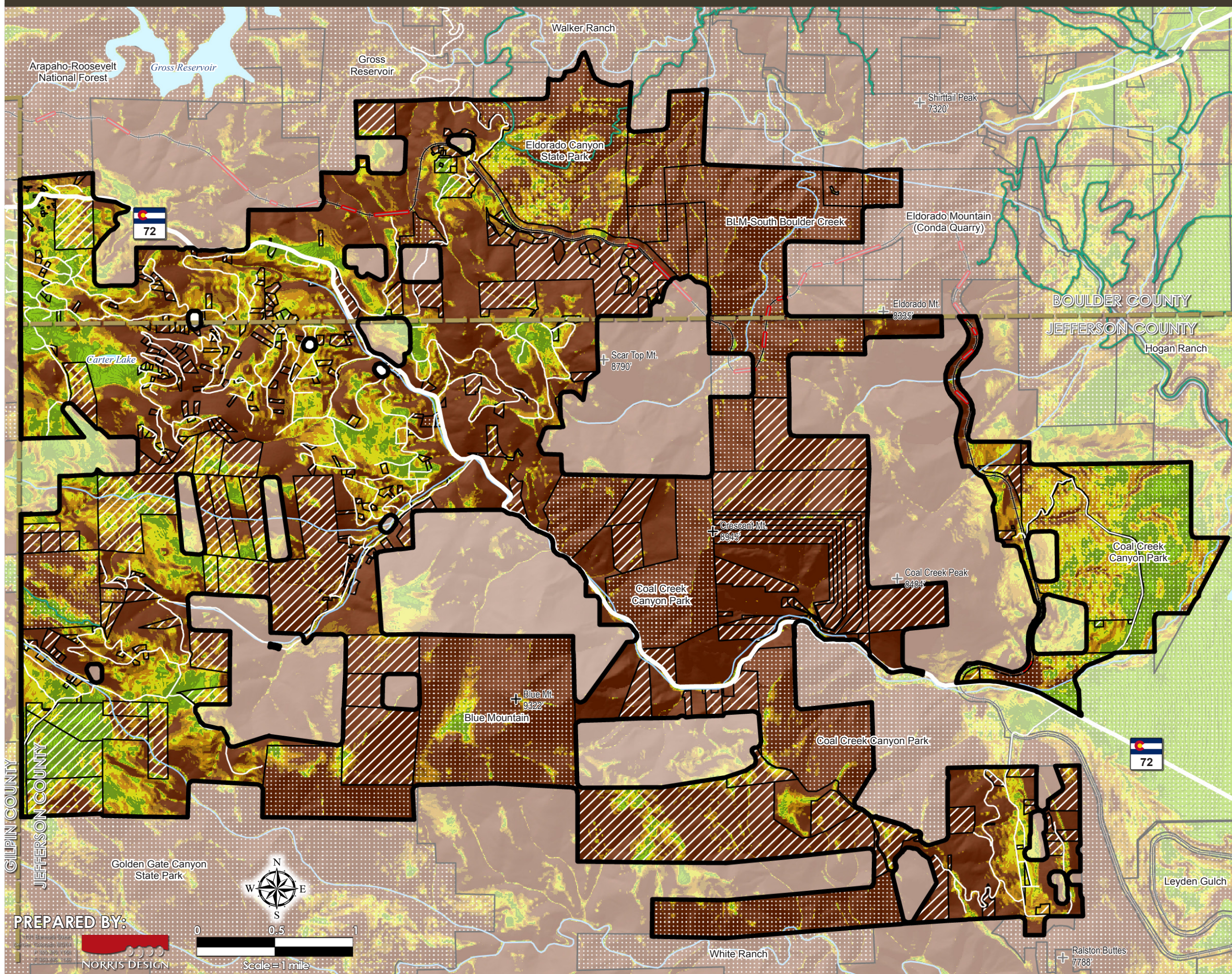
Additionally this map highlights parcels that are potentially undeveloped without a structure. This data was produced through a query of the current Boulder and Jefferson County tax assessors’ data – as supplied to the District.

### Analysis

Undeveloped properties may provide future opportunities for the District. The lack of (modern) structures may preserve the natural appeal of the Coal Creek area. Connecting adjacent undeveloped properties further supports this sort of preservation on a larger scale. Overlays of the slope analysis and undeveloped properties can work together to identify locations for District trail corridors, future District structures and other recreation facilities. However, it is important to note that the District intends to only work with willing land owners when the District is seeking property for facilities, eminent domain will not occur.

It should be noted that these are very high level analysis tools for conceptual planning. Further in the field investigation and surveys of sites would provide the details needed to support decision making.





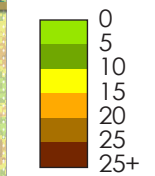
## SLOPE ANALYSIS & UNDEVELOPED PARCELS

### OPPORTUNITY AND CONSTRAINTS MAPPING

#### MAP LEGEND

- + PEAK WITH ELEVATION
- EXISTING TRAILS
- ==== RAILROAD
- RAILROAD TUNNEL
- COUNTY LINE
- PUBLIC LANDS & CONSERVATION EASEMENTS (CE)
- ▨ POTENTIALLY UNDEVELOPED PARCELS

#### SLOPE ANALYSIS



#### PRIMARY MAP DESCRIPTION

This map provides a topographic slope analysis of CCCPRD. The analysis was constructed using four NED 10 meter digital elevation model (DEM) tiles and the Spatial Analyst extension for ArcMap. Slope values are provided in "Percent Slope". Complex, mountainous terrain is a dominant and physically challenging development constraint of the District. Structure and trail development and related costs are both affected by the constraints of steeper slopes. 18.8% of the District has gentle slopes in the 0 - 5% category. An additional 3.4% classified in the steeper, 5 - 10% category. 6.9% of the District has slopes classified in the even steeper 10 - 15% category. The remaining 70.9% of the District is made up of the steepest slopes of 15% and greater. Potentially undeveloped parcels were selected from county assessors data and are highlighted on this map.

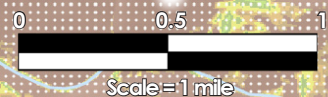
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PREPARED BY:





## Map H – Overlap and Distribution of DOW NDIS Species Habitat Ranges

This map provides an analysis of the distribution and overlap of species habitat data. The analysis was derived from the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) Natural Diversity Information Source (NDIS). The NDIS data provides a very general, digital resource to understand the spatial distribution of species habitat and ranges mapped and tracked within the NDIS data network.\*

The following species occurrences are incorporated into this overlay analysis.

- Aberts squirrel
- Black bear
- Black-tailed prairie dog
- Elk
- Moose
- Mountain lion
- Mule deer
- Osprey
- Peregrine falcon
- Preble jumping mouse
- Turkey
- White-tailed deer

Please note that the habitat range of many other species may be located within the District; however, their ranges have not been included in the CDOW NDIS.

### Analysis

Each species occurrence and range from the above list is displayed using an overlay technique that accurately illustrates the distribution and overlap of the individual ranges. Yellows and lighter green areas in the central and southwestern sections of the district indicate fewer coincident or overlapping species ranges. Areas with darker blues – in particular the area northeast of the District at the mouth of Eldorado Canyon - indicate areas of perhaps greater diversity as the species common to higher, mountainous elevations mingle with the species common to the lower high plains elevations. As many as nine species ranges overlap at this location. Identification of these various species ranges and their interaction with the

human interface is a critical factor in the District's interests in enhancing recreation opportunities and natural resource preservation as detailed in the **Conservation and Natural Resource Assessment** section of the report.

*\*When looking closely at this data is important to understand the digital data disclaimer published by CDOW:*

*"The information portrayed on these maps should not replace field studies necessary for more localized planning efforts. Data discrepancies may become apparent at scales different than those at which data was created. The areas portrayed here are graphic representations of phenomena that are difficult to reduce to two dimensions. Animal distributions are fluid; animal populations and their habitats are dynamic."*







## Map I – Floodplain and Riparian Buffer

This map provides analysis related to the surface waters and drainage network in proximity to the District. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides digital data (Q3) that details the officially mapped floodplain – illustrated with areas of medium to dark orange. The analysis displayed on this map depicts both the 100 and 500 year floodplain as recognized by FEMA. An additional analysis was created in ArcGIS by generating a 100 foot buffer either side of all surface waters seen in the map to designate areas with riparian influence. This equates to a corridor 200 feet or more wide depending upon the width or area of the water body being analyzed. These areas are illustrated as blue corridors that parallel the drainages or surround the few bodies of water.

This map is intended to generally delineate the areas within the District where surface waters provide various opportunities and constraints as a resource. For instance, a riparian corridor can support recreation interests such as hiking trails that parallel the stream. In turn the corridor may have a valued natural resource such as a protected animal species that would not benefit from human activity. Similarly, the flood plain designation may limit structural development; however, hiking trail corridors may not have any limitations within the same flood plain.







## Map J –Trail Opportunities

This map illustrates multiple elements that influence trail network planning and creation in the District including: existing trails in and surrounding the District, planned and/or desired conceptual trail corridors, slope, and potential locations to cross the railroad where tunnels exist.

Existing, digitally mapped trails are symbolized with continuous, green lines. Trail alignments were provided by the City of Boulder, Boulder County and Jefferson County. A significant backcountry trail network exists within Golden Gate State Park; however, this alignment data was not available in an accurate digital format.

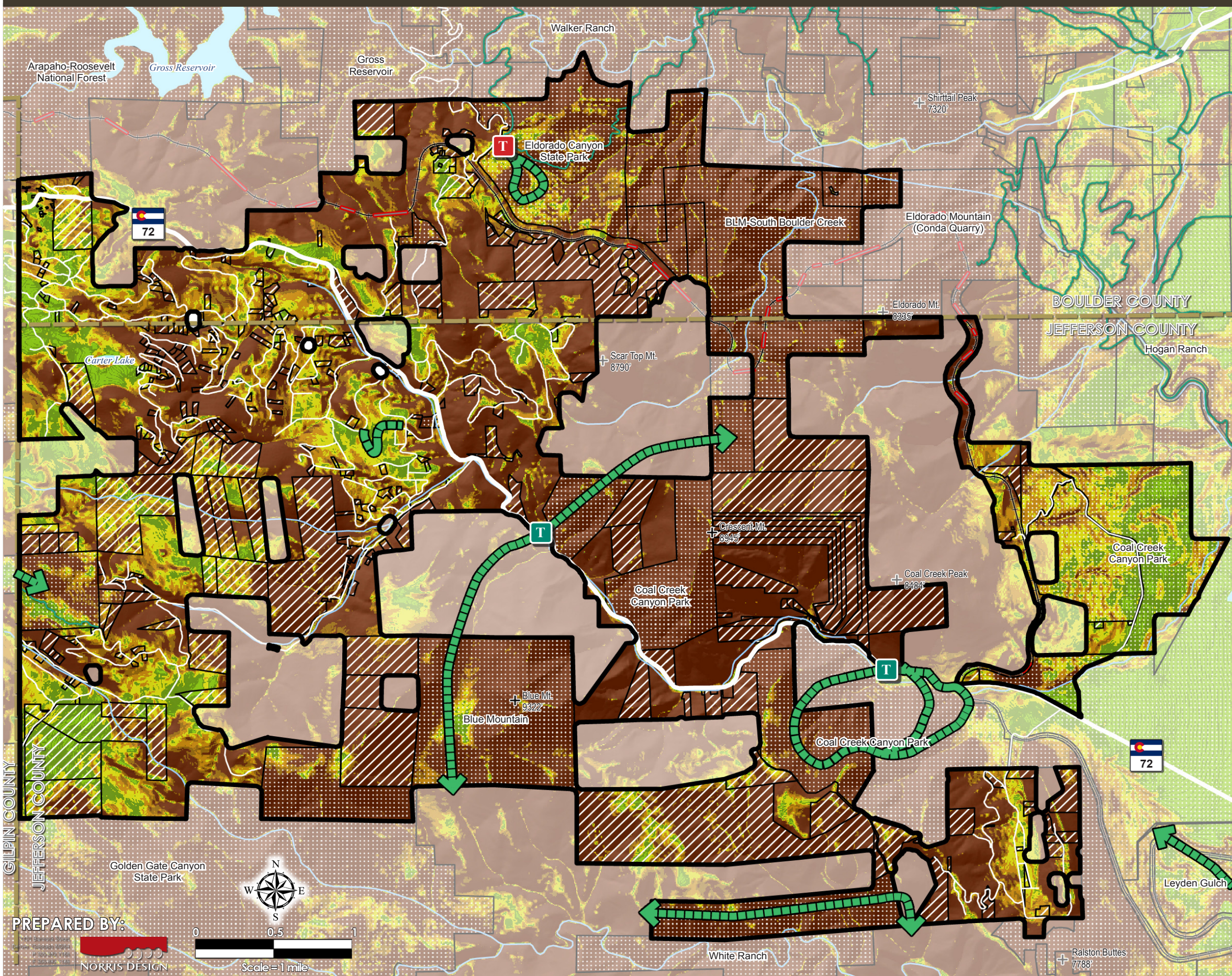
Conceptual trail connection corridors are displayed as bold, dashed green lines. These are unofficial, conceptual alignments interpreted from corridors illustrated in other agencies' long range planning studies, as well as from input provided by the Trail Volunteers from the District. Several trailheads are used by local residents to access the few trails within the District. These formal locations are marked with a "T" within a red square, while intended or informal trailheads are noted with a "T" within a green square.

**Analysis** - These alignments have been identified as potential connections between existing networks that stretch from Golden to Boulder and throughout the District. These outlying networks reside in Golden Gate Canyon State Park, Eldorado Canyon State Park, White Ranch Open Space, Walker Ranch Open Space and various other open space lands located northeast of the District.

Slopes play a very distinct role in the location of potential alignments in the District. The District is located in complex, mountainous terrain. Understanding the slopes between two locations can provide valuable answers to the decision-making process at a very basic level. Steeper, more complex areas require a greater effort for construction and maintenance of the trails. Slopes dictate trail grade and who the potential users may be (i.e. – avid hikers vs. young children).

A significant barrier to north-south connections is the existing railroad corridor that parallels the eastern boundary of the District before climbing the foothill grade along the northern extents of the District. Red areas along the corridor highlight sections where the railroad is located within tunnels. These areas provide natural crossing locations for wildlife and perhaps hikers as well.





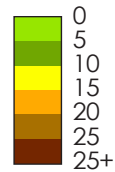
# TRAIL OPPORTUNITIES

## OPPORTUNITY AND CONSTRAINTS MAPPING

### MAP LEGEND

- + PEAK WITH ELEVATION
- EXISTING TRAILS
- ==== RAILROAD
- RAILROAD TUNNEL
- COUNTY LINE
- RECOMMENDED TRAIL
- T EXISTING TRAILHEAD
- T INFORMAL TRAILHEAD
- Public Lands & Conservation Easements (CE)
- POTENTIALLY UNDEVELOPED PARCELS

### SLOPE ANALYSIS



### PRIMARY MAP DESCRIPTION

This map illustrates multiple elements that influence trail network planning and development in the District including: existing trails in and surrounding the District, planned and/or desired conceptual trail corridors, slope, and potential locations to cross the railroad where tunnels exist. Slopes play a role in the location of potential alignments in the District. A significant barrier to north-south connections is the existing railroad corridor. Areas on the map are highlighted where the railroad is located within tunnels. These areas provide natural crossing locations for wildlife and hikers. Several informal trailheads are used by local residents to access the trails within the District.

### MAP DISCLAIMER:

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PARKS, TRAILS, OPEN SPACE & OUTDOOR RECREATION  
**COAL CREEK CANYON MASTER PLAN**  
 PARK & RECREATION DISTRICT - COLORADO  
*Health, Joy, Community*

PREPARED BY:

NORRIS DESIGN





# RECOMMENDED AREAS OF FOCUS

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## Partnerships

Currently, District residents heavily rely on adjacent communities and alternative providers for recreation programs and facilities. The District has already begun through this planning process to strengthen its relationships with the many managing agencies, facility managers, and recreation program providers in the region. However, these efforts should continue following the completion of the Master Plan, so as to streamline planning efforts and promote existing recreation opportunities to residents. Additionally, encouraging collaboration among groups will maximize the use of the District's resources, allow for leverage of funding, ease the burden of any one group, and may increase resident participation in recreation and wellness activities.

## Increased Access to Recreation Programs

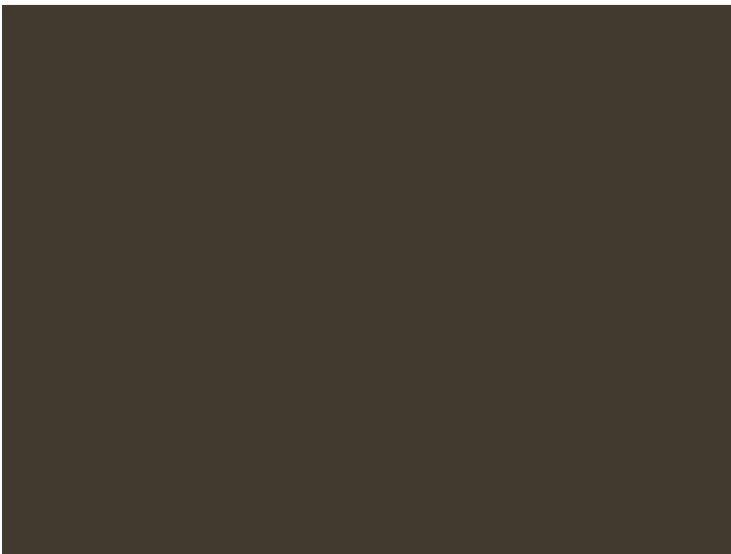
Based on the analysis of alternative providers and recreation programming, it is evident that District residents have access to a wide variety and number of programs provided at the CCCIA Hall, as well as through adjacent municipalities, such as Arvada, Golden, Gilpin County, Boulder and Nederland. However, a large number of these programs and services are on average a 30 minute drive from the Canyon. In addition to lacking ease of access, this distance may hinder participation for those with limited automobile access or driving capabilities, often the youth and older adults in the community. The District has the opportunity to work with these alternative providers to promote and increase access to existing services. This can be accomplished at little cost to the District and through a number of methods, such as through increased promotion, discounted rates and transportation options.

## Traditional and Alternative Funding

CCCPRD is in a unique situation given the fact that the District was approved to operate without a mill levy. Therefore, the District is operating without a dedicated funding source. Based on the data gathered through the Public Input Process and the Community Survey it is evident that the District is in need of significant capital funds, as well as a dedicated



# RECOMMENDED AREAS OF FOCUS



funding source for operations and maintenance in order to provide for the creation of desired facilities and programs. Consequently, in the short term, the District's current use of grants and alternative funding is critical to gaining support and establishing credibility with residents. This credibility is necessary to gaining a majority resident vote for the passage of a mill levy. This election will need to be prefaced with a strong communications strategy on exactly what residents will get for their tax dollars. However, even with the passage of a mill levy it will be important that the District continue to seek out grants and alternative funding in order to secure the capital funds necessary to meet the needs of the community.

## **Trails and Trail Connections**

The data collected through the Community Survey illustrates Canyon residents' high use of and demand for trails and trail access. Therefore, the District should work with partnering agencies, land managers and land owners in order to increase access to existing public lands, as well as the creation of additional trail connections. Preferred attributes for trails indicated were: 3+ miles in length (one way - 41% of survey respondents), natural terrain (75% of respondents), and moderate difficulty level (i.e. medium grade, some hills) (78% of respondents). The creation of trails is a means of increasing the level of service to the Canyon without significant costs to residents, as much of this work can be accomplished through volunteer efforts, low cost materials and little maintenance.

## **Recreation Facilities**

It is evident based on the findings of the Needs Assessment that a strong majority of the community feels that there is a need to create additional community-based (over neighborhood-based) recreation facilities and services for residents that fit within the context of the rural, mountain characteristics of the Canyon. Some of the priority desired recreation amenities and opportunities identified include a community gathering space, trails, playground, picnic area, and fitness facilities. These identified needs fall in line with residents' request to make any new recreation facilities simple, green, self-sustaining and low maintenance.





# RECOMMENDATIONS & PRIORITIZED ACTION PLAN

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# RECOMMENDATIONS & PRIORITIZED ACTION PLAN

## Introduction

The recommendations of the Coal Creek Canyon Parks and Trails Master Plan are the result of the consultant team's site visits, analysis, community and stakeholder input, the community survey, regional and national standards and best practices, and the opportunities and constraints identified in the Needs Assessment phase of the project. The following recommendations and each priority within the action plan were formulated based on the key findings of the planning process and finalized based on realistic timing and funding for the recommendations as well as thorough analysis and input from the District Board and key volunteers. It is the goal of this Plan to provide the Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District (CCCPRD or the District) with realistic and action-oriented strategies that best meet the needs of the community through funding and phasing recommendations that promote sustainable facilities and smart investments for improvements and additions to the system.

The following recommendations are organized based on categories: Partnerships, Increased Access to Recreation Programs; Traditional and Alternative Funding; Trail Connections and Development; and Recreation Facility Development. Within these categories, there are goals, objectives and strategies, and each action strategy is assigned a number in the outline format. This list of strategies is also organized into the **Prioritized Action Plan** chart, which is divided into short-, mid- and long-term timeframes and within those timeframes, there are high, medium and low priorities. The abbreviated recommendation descriptions in the chart can be cross-referenced with the number assigned to each detailed strategy description. The timeframes are divided into three to four year sections; short-term is 2011-2013, Mid-term is 2014-2017, Long-term is 2018-2020. This is formatted in this manner to assist the District in setting and implementing attainable goals for each of the next 10 years and providing a roadmap to establish funding sources for larger capital improvements.

## Partnerships

**Goal 1: Maintain or establish solid relationships with key partnering agencies, groups or individuals.**

**Objective 1.1: Maintain relationships with agencies outside the Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District (CCCPRD) to assist in expanding the services of the District.**

### Strategies:

- 1.1.1 Partner with Jefferson County Open Space and Community Resources (JCOSCR) to support and advocate for JCOSCR's implementation of the following:
  - 1.1.1a Land acquisitions including:
    - The purchase or lease of the State Land Board Blue Mountain Property
    - The purchase of the Booth Land and Cattle Company
  - 1.1.1b Trail development projects including:
    - Coal Creek Canyon Park trails and trailheads off of Highway 72
  - 1.1.1c Continue to partner with JCOSCR through current and future joint-venture grant opportunities for facility and trail development:
    - The Coal Creek Canyon K-8 artificial turf project
    - "Community Gathering" Park Concept development
- 1.1.2 Partner with Boulder County Parks and Open Space (BCPOS) to successfully complete trail connections and trailheads from within the District onto Walker Ranch and other Boulder County Open Space lands.
- 1.1.3 Partner with Colorado State Parks, specifically Golden Gate Canyon and Eldorado Canyon State Parks to successfully create the following:
  - 1.1.3a Trail connections and trailheads from within the District into Golden Gate Canyon State Park and Eldorado Canyon State Park.
  - 1.1.3b Promote the availability of facilities and providing year-round access to State Park facilities, including trails, campgrounds and other amenities.
  - 1.1.3c Promote the availability of Harnesen Ranch Guest House, meeting rooms and group camping facilities in Golden Gate Canyon State Park for rentals and programming opportunities.
  - 1.1.3d Promote the programming offered by the State Parks to CCCPRD residents.
- 1.1.4 Partner with Boulder Mountainbike Alliance (BMA) and Colorado Mountainbike Alliance (COMBA) and other trails groups to clearly understand the needs of mountain bike trail users.
  - 1.1.4a Develop trail design guidelines that work for multiple users and seek input from both Mountainbike Alliance groups.
  - 1.1.4b Work with the Mountainbike Alliance groups to understand common goals and coordinate messages to other agencies regarding needs at various facilities, especially during the management plan development and reviews (i.e. Walker Ranch, State Parks, Coal Creek Canyon Park).



## **Objective 1.2: Establish relationships with key personnel at agencies outside of the District to assist in expanding the services of the District**

### **Strategies:**

- 1.2.1 Establish a relationship with the City of Boulder Open Space to improve or create additional trail connections between their lands and properties within the District.
  - 1.2.1a Coordinate to provide trail connections between City of Boulder Open Space lands and Coal Creek Canyon Park (owned by Jefferson County Open Space).
- 1.2.2 Establish communications with key personnel at the US Forest Service, specifically the Arapaho-Roosevelt Forest to coordinate on appropriate trail connections onto Forest lands from areas within the District. This specifically includes:
  - 1.2.2a Access to trails accessing Thoridin.
  - 1.2.2b Explore appropriate trail use in and around Gross Reservoir on Forest lands.
  - 1.2.2c Promote recreation activities and uses allowed at Gross Reservoir to District residents (i.e. – water-based recreation, wildlife viewing, fishing, etc.).
- 1.2.3 Work with personnel at the Bureau of Land Management to provide public access and outline key use requirements for the parcels owned by the BLM located in the north part of the District.
- 1.2.4 Establish communications with personnel on the Denver Water Board to understand the restrictions or potential public access opportunities, this specifically includes:
  - 1.2.4a The Leyden Gulch parcel south of Highway 72 east of the District and adjacent to Coal Creek Canyon Park (owned by Jefferson County Open Space).
  - 1.2.4b Coordinate with the USFS to promote recreation activities and uses allowed at Gross Reservoir (also see **Strategy 1.2.2c**).

## **Objective 1.3: Coordinate with independent groups and agencies operating within the boundaries of the District to expand recreation opportunities for District residents.**

### **Strategies:**

- 1.3.1 Maintain open communications and work with Coal Creek Canyon Improvement Association (CCCIA) to provide and expand services and facilities that meet the needs of the community.
  - 1.3.1a Establish a formalized use agreement with partners (such as the CCCIA, schools, Camp Eden, Camp Wondervu, and others) for use of their facilities for programs and special events, especially after the District has insurance to offer programming.
  - 1.3.1b Work with the Association to offer new programs to residents, whether they are regularly occurring classes, special events or day trips.
  - 1.3.1c Understand the needs for maintaining or improving the CCCIA Hall due to its age. If the District has shared use of the building for programming, work to establish an agreement to assist in costs for such maintenance or improvements, as well as reciprocal use of any facilities constructed by the District.

- 1.3.2 Continue to work with representatives for Jefferson County Public School District and Boulder School District, specifically the Coal Creek Canyon K-8, Mountain Phoenix and Nederland schools, to understand the area youth's recreation program and facility use needs.
- 1.3.2a Work to implement the plans for the artificial turf field on the CCC K-8 school site (see **Strategy 6.1.1** for additional details regarding this project).
- 1.3.2b Understand the school's needs for recreation facilities, as well as the needs of the District for use of school facilities for programming and develop a joint-use or reciprocal use agreement with the schools to benefit both parties.
- 1.3.2c Develop programming in conjunction with Jefferson County and Boulder School Districts to meet the needs of the community's youth. This may include arts, culture and fitness programs, extreme sports, afterschool activities, and joint programming or transportation agreements.
- 1.3.3 Continue to communicate with representatives for Camp Eden to develop potential use agreements or facility partnerships.
- 1.3.3a Work with Camp Eden to understand the availability and access allowed to their facilities and property.
- Work to establish a use agreement for Camp Eden facilities for District activities, leagues or programming which will not conflict with the existing programs run solely for Camp Eden visitors or with the mission of the Camp. (i.e. - basketball leagues, father-daughter dances, movie nights, carnivals, and trail access.)
  - Shared use and assigned responsibilities for improvements and/or maintenance should also be part of these discussions/agreements.
- 1.3.4 Continue to communicate with representatives for Wondervu Conference and Retreat Center to develop potential program or facility partnerships.
- 1.3.4a Work with Wondervu Conference and Retreat Center to understand the availability and access allowed to their facilities and property.
- Work to establish a use agreement for Wondervu facilities for District activities, leagues or programming which will not conflict with the existing programs run solely for Wondervu visitors or with the mission of the Retreat Center.
  - Shared use and assigned responsibilities for improvements and/or maintenance should also be part of these discussions/agreements.
- 1.3.5 Continue to work with RTD/Ride Provide and Coal Creek Express Van to maintain existing bus service and expand transportation opportunities for recreational purposes for District residents.
- 1.3.5a Partner with RTD, Ride Provide and Coal Creek Express Van to increase promotion of available transportation services for recreational purposes to District residents and encourage residents to use these transportation services to access alternative provider's services.
- 1.3.5b Work with residents to understand unmet needs for transportation services for recreation needs both within the District and to destinations outside of the District.
- 1.3.5c Develop an agreement with one or more of the transportation providers to provide transportation services for recreation needs, either regularly or through a charter-type agreement for District programs and activities, both within the District and to destinations outside of the District, which may include but are not limited to the CCCIA hall, Coal Creek Canyon K-8, the Nederland Community Center, APEX Recreation Center, Golden Recreation Center, Gilpin County Recreation Center, or to the City of Boulder or Golden.
- 1.3.5d Work with transportation providers to establish a discounted rate for the youth and older adults of the Canyon.
- 1.3.6 Work with road entities, such as CDOT and County Highway Departments regarding the need for improved safety features on roads to accommodate the increasing number of walkers, bicyclists and equestrians. This could include widened shoulders, share-the-road signs, reduced blind curves, etc.

1.3.7 In addition to those noted in **Strategies 1.3.1 through 1.3.6**, in order to maximize the wide variety of potential resources found in and adjacent to the Canyon, CCCPRD should work to partner with the following organizations and agencies (including, but not limited to):

- Schools – Mountain Phoenix Community School, Boulder Valley School District
- Local Businesses – Coal Creek Coffee & Books, gas stations, restaurants, etc.
- Homeowners Associations – Blue Mountain, etc.
- Coal Creek Fire Protection District
- The Environmental Group (TEG)
- Church groups
- Parenting groups and volunteer organizations
- Youth organizations and recreation participants – Cub Scouts Pack 51, Canyon Daisies, Dance with Two Left Feet, etc.
- District Residents with Recreation and/or Technical Expertise (volunteers)

**Goal 2: Strengthen the visibility and involvement of residents in the District's activities and goals.**

**Objective 2.1: Develop an internal structure for the District Board that delegates key tasks to Master Plan implementation teams, which are led by Board members and include volunteer members and partnering organizations as team members.**

**Strategies:**

- 2.1.1 Identify “champions” for priority recommendations and assign roles, responsibilities and deadlines for board members and volunteers through an annual review of the prioritized action plan, goals and objectives.
- 2.1.2 Establish a team that focuses on grant-writing and tracking application dates and coordinates with partnering agencies. This group will be the decision-makers on grants to pursue, language for the grants, etc. with only final approvals required by the Board.
- 2.1.3 Establish a team whose primary focus is fundraising for projects and programs within the District. This team should provide updates and request any funds from the Board, but be ultimately responsible for the coordination and detail-oriented tasks to run fundraising efforts (i.e. – direct mail campaign, corporate sponsorships, naming rights, donor program, etc.).
  - 2.1.3a This team should establish a 501c3, not-for-profit “friends” of the Park and Recreation District, which would allow them to be eligible for nonprofit status and tax benefits.
- 2.1.4 Establish a team that oversees and coordinates directly with the design consultant(s) for development of the “Community Gathering” Park. This includes being the primary group involved in the land search, design details and overseeing construction progress, with regular updates to the Board.
- 2.1.5 Work with the Coal Creek Canyon Trails Volunteers to oversee, prioritize, plan and create trails in the Coal Creek Canyon community. This includes being the primary group involved in the corridor assessment, conservation easements, design details and overseeing construction progress, with regular updates to the Board.
- 2.1.6 Update the Recommendations and the Prioritized Action Plan of this Master Plan in 2015 to remove accomplished goals and add additional action items that may have developed since this document was completed in 2011.



## **Objective 2.2: Promote and celebrate the District's services, successes and partners in order to educate residents and encourage involvement in District projects**

### **Strategies**

- 2.2.1 Continue to promote and increase the visibility of the District to Canyon residents. This may include promoting board meeting locations and times, volunteer opportunities, upcoming programs and events, and projects.
- Methods may include the District and partners' websites, local publications, flyers at local schools and through local partners (such as CCCIA), Facebook or other social media, texts, etc.
- 2.2.2 At the time the "Community Gathering" park begins to take shape (both before and after land purchase and before construction), advertise public involvement opportunities and conceptual and final design presentations to encourage public interest and involvement in the success of the project through methods noted in **Strategy 2.2.1**.
- 2.2.3 The District should work to act as a "central clearinghouse" to promote information, transportation and/or access to District-offered and Alternative Provider recreation opportunities. For alternative providers, this could be in reciprocation for discounted and/or shared use. Targeted marketing strategies and mediums should be used based on the program, activity and user group.
- 2.2.3a Develop a Coal Creek Canyon Recreation Activities and Program Guide for distribution to residents via the District's website and at partner facilities.
- 2.2.3b Utilize data collected through this Master Plan and the District's GIS database (deliverable of the Master Plan) to develop a Canyon Park and Recreation Facilities Map for distribution to residents via the District's website and at partner facilities.
- 2.2.4 The District should assist in increasing signage and promotion of publicly accessible trails within the District, whether owned by the District or not. This may include developing additional directional signage or creating publicly available maps of trailhead locations and trail information and maps.
- 2.2.4a As the District creates and designates trails, they should be inventoried via GPS and included in the District's GIS database (deliverable of the Master Plan) in order to be as accurate as possible and included as part of the area's trail information.
- 2.2.4b Utilize the District's GIS data to develop a Canyon Trails Map to provide residents with information about trailhead locations, length, and difficulty of trails.
- 2.2.5 Develop programs that promote physical activity and outdoor recreation for the older adult population that include a range of activities beneficial to all abilities should be included (i.e. – wildlife viewing, outdoor education, hiking, backcountry camping, etc.).
- 2.2.6 Promotional efforts should be directed at the Canyon's youth and families, because they are at a stage where it is important to instill life-long, healthy habits that include regular physical activity. Both parents and children should be targeted in an informational communications strategy explaining how outdoor activities can help provide a fun, enjoyable way for youth to stay fit and healthy.
- 2.2.7 Schools and the internet should be the primary avenues for distributing information for youth-focused activities and events (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- 2.2.8 Convey the essence of this Master Plan to District constituents. This will include web and other forms of communication.

## Increased Access to Recreation Programs

### Goal 3: Provide additional recreational program and facility opportunities for residents

#### Objective 3.1: Work with key alternative providers to expand distribution of information on their services to District residents

##### Strategies:

- 3.1.1 Become a central clearinghouse for recreation-based and activity-based information for Canyon residents. This includes providing information from the following alternative providers to District residents as well as information on District-related activities.
- APEX Park and Recreation District
  - City of Golden and the Golden Recreation Center
  - City of Boulder Parks and Recreation
  - Nederland Community Center
  - Gilpin County Recreation Center
  - Coal Creek Canyon K-8 School
- 3.1.1a Provide links on the District's website to the alternative provider's website and/or activity guides.
- 3.1.1b Include alternative providers' key deadlines (league sign-up, etc.) and key event dates as part of a Canyon Recreation Activities and Program Guide and a calendar on the District's website (see recommendation **Strategy 2.2.3a**).
- 3.1.1c Coordinate with the alternative recreation providers to be one of their key locations or groups where hard copies of their program guides can be obtained by District residents.
- 3.1.1d Provide information on the District's website regarding in-canyon and out-of—canyon transportation options, including bus schedules, contact information and links to external websites.

#### Objective 3.2: Work with key alternative providers to provide benefits for use of facilities for District residents

##### Strategies:

- 3.2.1 Work with APEX Park and Recreation District to negotiate reciprocal use and/or discounted rates, increased accessibility, facility use or league agreements for CCCPRD residents.
- 3.2.2 Work with the City of Golden to negotiate reciprocal use and/or discounted rates, increased accessibility, facility use or league agreements for CCCPRD residents.
- 3.2.3 Work with the City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Department to negotiate reciprocal use and/or discounted rates, increased accessibility, facility use or league agreements for CCCPRD residents.
- 3.2.4 Work with Nederland Community Center to share programming, facility use, and/or advertising and to promote existing programs and facilities offered at the Nederland Community Center to District residents.
- 3.2.5 Work with Gilpin County Recreation Center to negotiate reciprocal use and/or discounted rates, increased accessibility, facility use or league agreements for CCCPRD residents.

### **Objective 3.3: Establish the groundwork for the District to offer programming both within and outside of the District**

#### **Strategies:**

- 3.3.1 Prior to offering programs and developing facilities, the District needs to obtain liability insurance that covers the use/rental of non-District facilities as well as limiting the liability of the District against participant injuries.
- 3.3.2 The District should provide or partner with agencies that provide programs that meet the need of a wide variety of groups and interests. This may include but is not limited to:
  - Activities for adults and older adults (i.e. – organized hiking or snowshoeing, fitness, outdoor entertainment, etc.)
  - Fitness-oriented offerings (i.e. – Zumba, yoga, Pilates, etc.)
  - Art and culture programs (i.e. – music, crafts, cooking, etc.)
  - Multi-generational, community activities and special events
  - Youth sports (i.e. – soccer, lacrosse, baseball, etc.)
  - Youth non-sport activities (i.e. – environmental education, music, arts, extreme sports)
  - Day-trips (i.e. – the mountains, Boulder, Denver, etc.)

### **Traditional and Alternative Funding**

#### **Goal 4: Identify potential funding sources**

##### **Objective 4.1: Establish a steady funding source for the District**

#### **Strategies:**

- 4.1.1 Plan and execute a Mill Levy vote on the November 2011 ballot. This will include money for operations and capital.
  - 4.1.1a Fundraise sufficient funds to support the 2011 District operation and the proposed Mill Levy election.
  - 4.1.1b Develop a targeted communications strategy to inform District voters about the Mill Levy's purpose and specific benefits (i.e. – facilities and programs) that residents will receive with the passage of the ballot measure.
  - 4.1.1c If mill levy and steady funding source is achieved, the first priority should be to obtain adequate insurance to offer programs off-site or in conjunction with alternative providers.
- 4.1.2 The District needs to conservatively plan for the development and operations of facilities that have low maintenance costs and are generally self-sustaining.
- 4.1.3 Allocate sufficient resources to track the District's accounting, as well as ensure the accuracy of projected budgets and expenses. (For example, assessed valuation figures should be updated to reflect the District's current assessed value (\$36,622,730)).
  - 4.1.3a When the 2010 Census Data is released, incorporate this data to maintain accurate District household counts and assess potential property tax revenue.



## Objective 4.2: Investigate additional traditional funding sources

### Strategies:

- 4.2.1 Evaluate the potential for a Lease-Purchase arrangement (through the Special District Association of Colorado) for any future capital needs.
- 4.2.2 Evaluate a bond referendum for future facility development against other methods and if it should be included as part of the November 2011 vote or left as a potential funding method in the future. It will be important to consider what District priorities are and what capital dollars should be used for.
- 4.2.3 As District programs and facilities are developed, utilize a market analysis to establish user fees, admissions, programs and for rentals of facilities. Consideration for appropriate user fees is also part of customer service-oriented funding. Fees should not be too high; otherwise, low participation occurs, though a low fee will affect the District's cost recovery and ability to defray costs.
- 4.2.4 As the District develops programs and facilities it will be important to track both direct and indirect costs, to set fees to cover equipment, labor, and maintenance for the support services it is providing. The District should develop a tiered fee system for rentals which is structured by classification as residents, non-residents, non-profit organizations, and seniors.
- 4.2.5 As facilities and programs are developed, cost recovery policies, reporting, and tracking will need to be formalized with a pricing and cost recovery policy established specifically for the District.
  - 4.2.5a Each program area should track direct and indirect costs, establish a philosophy on a program's benefit to the community, determine cost recovery goals, and set pricing based on the community's values and District's goals. In addition, users are more likely to agree to fee levels when they themselves can see the current fee versus the cost to provide the service.

## Objective 4.3: Pursue alternative funding sources

### Strategies:

- 4.3.1 The District should continue to be proactive in identifying, seeking out and supporting matching funds for grants and alternative funding.
  - 4.3.1a Top priorities should be grants which focus on trail development, transportation enhancements, facility development, conservation and/or green design.
- 4.3.2 The District should put efforts into developing corporate sponsorship program and naming rights for individual programs or facilities that would support these types of revenue generation. These sponsorship opportunities should be offered with a tiered level of benefits, should quantify marketing exposure for each level, bundle packages on a system-wide level, and bundle the assets of sponsors (i.e. - money, marketing, and product supply).
- 4.3.3 As facilities and programs are established, CCCPRD should consider contracting with private businesses to provide services such as food service, transportation, equipment rental, maintenance, and guided activities. Existing partners, volunteers or other community members can be key resources in establishing private concessionaires.
- 4.3.4 In the mid to long-term, the District should evaluate the potential of Federal funding opportunities, including the following funds: Land & Water Conservation Fund, National Recreational Trails Program and other key grant opportunities.

## Trail Connections and Development

**Goal 5: Develop trail corridors and trailheads throughout the District in order to create a trail network within the District and to connect to key areas outside of the District**

### **Objective 5.1: Promoting existing trails and trail connections**

#### **Strategies:**

- 5.1.1 Promote existing trails and trail connections with legal access, (including Star Peak, Thorodin, and connections in the Arapaho-Roosevelt Forest), through a variety of methods, including maps, available online and on paper, and work with the managing agency to establish trailhead signage if the site is within the District.
- 5.1.2 Provide links and information on the District's website to outside agencies' trail maps in proximity to the District.

### **Objective 5.2: Work to develop new trail connections to key destinations or trails on other agency's lands**

#### **Strategies:**

- 5.2.1 Planning of major trail corridors and greenways should take into account primary wildlife corridors and sensitive ecological areas (see **Maps H and I** in the **GIS Mapping and Spatial Analysis** Section). Therefore, thorough site and corridor analysis will need to occur in the programming and design process of any recommended recreation facilities or trail amenities.
- 5.2.2 Develop design standards for various trail types based on existing standards in Boulder County and Jefferson County Open Space and in coordination with the Boulder Mountainbike Alliance (BMA) and Colorado Mountainbike Alliance (COMBA) and other trail groups. This will minimize liability issues and establish consistency in design, no matter who designs or builds the trails (Open Space Departments, volunteers, private contractors, the District, etc.)
- 5.2.3 As trails are developed, incorporate preferred attributes for trails (indicated through community input): 3+ miles in length (one way) (41% of survey respondents), natural terrain (75% of respondents), soft-surface, and moderate difficulty level (i.e. medium grade, some hills) (78% of respondents) as well as for multiple types of users.
- 5.2.4 The District should continue to work with partnering agencies, land managers and land owners in order to increase access to existing public lands, as well as the development of additional trail connections. Specific trail corridors to explore include:
  - 5.2.4a Coal Creek Canyon Park
  - 5.2.4b Doudy Draw to White Ranch Open Space
  - 5.2.4c Eldorado Canyon State Park / Walker Ranch to Golden Gate Canyon State Park
  - 5.2.4d White Ranch Open Space to Coal Creek Canyon Park
  - 5.2.4e Crescent Meadow Loop within Eldorado State Park/Walker Ranch
  - 5.2.4f Connections to Gross Reservoir trails from public roads or lands within the District
- 5.2.5 Work with partnering agencies to provide input on any management or facility plans or plan updates that will directly address trail connections into and through the District. In 2011, this specifically includes the Walker Ranch Management Plan update.

### **Objective 5.3: Formalize trailheads on existing trails or proposed trails**

#### **Strategies:**

- 5.3.1 Coordinate with responsible agencies to add trailhead signage at the trailheads of public trails.
  - 5.3.1a When trails are owned by the District, trailhead signage should be consistent in style, materials, language and size and incorporated into any trail design standards adopted or used by the District.

## **Recreation Facility Development**

### **Goal 6: Meet the community's needs through facility development and improvement**

#### **Objective 6.1: Partner with other agencies to develop joint-use facilities that meet the recreation needs of the community**

#### **Strategies:**

- 6.1.1 Coordinate with Jefferson County School District to develop and implement the plans for artificial turf at the Coal Creek Canyon K-8 School
  - 6.1.1a Evaluate and plan for the maintenance requirements of the turf as well as the yearly maintenance costs.
  - 6.1.1b Coordinate with Jefferson County School District and the Coal Creek Canyon K-8 to formalize a joint use agreement that addresses maintenance, fees, use, availability and other logistics of operating and using the turf fields for both school and District programs and leagues.
  - 6.1.1c Submit additional grant applications or secure any alternative funding needed to complete the project prior to initiating construction.
  - 6.1.1d Finalize site planning, permitting, and construction documents for the chosen turf design and plan.
  - 6.1.1e Adjust insurance coverage of the CCCPRD to accommodate the agreements with the School District and any anticipated use for District programming.
- 6.1.2 In partnership with CCC K-8, develop (either in conjunction or independent of the turf project) a multi-purpose walking path at the Coal Creek Canyon K-8 School that is consistent with the planned turf field project. The trail should adhere to the recommended trail design guidelines (see recommendation **Strategy 5.2.2**) and meet all ADA requirements associated with slopes.
- 6.1.3 Coordinate with Jefferson County Open Space to establish funding and proceed with construction of trails and trailhead facilities for the Coal Creek Canyon Park, including trailhead facilities off of Highway 72.

#### **Objective 6.2: As the District grows, set the groundwork for providing priority facilities to meet the needs of the community.**

#### **Strategies:**

- 6.2.1 Establish agreements with alternative providers or partners to use their facilities for District events and programs until a time that District has facilities available for programs or resident use.
- 6.2.2 Understand the needs of the community and incorporate desired amenities noted in the Community Survey in any facilities developed for the District. This should include the following considerations:



6.2.2a Facilities will need to be flexible spaces that can accommodate varying forms of recreation activity such as outdoor recreation (i.e. - walking, hiking, biking, wildlife viewing, etc.), environmental and nature programs, and arts and cultural activities. They will also need to accommodate multiple age groups and provide for both family-oriented and older adult populations.

6.2.2b Prioritize facilities and amenities based on the survey to be created in a “Community Gathering” Park, including financial options and limits. Communicate those priorities, financial options and limits to the Conceptual Design team that is implementing the 2011 Joint Venture grant award. These may include:

- a playground, picnic tables, small fitness center, and sledding hill.

6.2.2c Work to develop priority facilities which may be independent of the Community Park, as identified through the survey, including:

- Trails for hiking, walking and bicycling
- Facilities for youth and teens.

6.2.2d Physical access to facilities should be maintained or improved over time to accommodate the 65+ age group.

6.2.2e The District should work to balance the preservation of natural resources with context-appropriate design (incorporating sensitive areas, considering water resources and community values) of recreation facilities and programs that celebrate, conserve and promote stewardship of ecologically sensitive lands.

- Continue to work to be a role model for Healthy Forest Stewardship.

6.2.2f Assure that the site and any structures are created to be sustainable and low maintenance in order to minimize the annual maintenance and operations costs of the facility as well as the impact on Canyon resources (also see **Strategy**

**6.2.5a** for sustainable design recommendations).

6.2.3 Per the JCOS Joint Venture grant awarded, create conceptual graphics for a structure on the “Community Gathering” Park and develop a list of attributes needed (i.e. square footage for a building, parking area size, size and character of area needed for trails, sledding hill, picnic area, etc.) in order to clearly understand the parcel size and site attributes needed prior to the purchase of land for the park.

6.2.3a Identify and obtain a suitable parcel to accommodate those attributes determined in the preliminary concept plan

6.2.4 Once a parcel is purchased for the “Community Gathering” Park, a detailed Final Concept Plan, including site and building design, should be developed to understand realistic site and facility design based on the final site’s opportunities and constraints.

6.2.5 Finalize site planning, permitting and construction documents in order to begin construction of “Community Gathering” Park site.

6.2.5a Incorporate the use of green energy and sustainable approaches and ideas into the design where appropriate.

- *For the building*, this may include but is not limited to structure or materials re-use, low flow fixtures, motion-activated lighting, low-VOC furnishings and paint.
- *For the site*, this may include but is not limited to minimizing site disturbance for facility improvements, creative drainage and water quality solutions, minimizing mature vegetation removal, creative parking solutions, night-sky friendly light fixtures, recycling/zero waste operations, renewable energy and locally sourced materials.

6.2.5b Begin construction on a “Community Gathering” Park by either renovating or constructing an indoor structure and starting preliminary site work for exterior amenities.

6.2.5c When the funding or site planning requires separate phases, project the additional phases and funding needed into the mid to long-term goals of the Master Plan.



Action Strategies and Recommendations								
Refer to the Recommendations narrative for additional details regarding these strategies. In some cases, the strategies description has been shortened for ease of reading in this chart.								
Short Term Priorities 2011-2013								
Priority	Strategy Number(s)	Category	Strategy Description	Estimated Goal Initiation Date	Estimated Completion Date	Champion	Group / Strategy Team	Cost Estimate
high	1.1.1a	Partnerships	Partner with Jefferson County Open Space and Community Resources (JCOSCR) to support and advocate for JCOSCR's purchase of the Booth Land and Cattle Company				Partnerships	District/Volunteer Time
high	1.1.1c	Partnerships	Continue to partner with JCOSCR through current and future joint-venture grant opportunities for facility and trail development including the Coal Creek Canyon K-8 artificial turf project.				Trails/Turf/Facilities	District/Volunteer Time
high	1.1.1c	Partnerships	Continue to partner with JCOSCR through current and future joint-venture grant opportunities for facility and trail development including the “Community Gathering” Park Concept development				Park	District/Volunteer Time
high	1.1.4a; 5.2.2	Partnerships	Partner with Boulder Mountainbike Alliance (BMA) and Colorado Mountainbike Association (COMBA) and other trails groups to clearly understand the needs of mountain bike trail users including to develop trail design guidelines that work for multiple users.				Trails	District/Volunteer Time and/or consultant fee: \$2,000 to \$5,000
high	1.1.4b	Partnerships	Partner with Boulder Mountainbike Alliance (BMA) and Colorado Mountainbike Association (COMBA) and other trails groups to clearly understand common goals and coordinate messages to other agencies regarding needs at various facilities, especially during the management plan development and reviews (i.e. Walker Ranch, State Parks, Coal Creek Canyon Park).				Trails	District/Volunteer Time
high	1.3.2a; 6.1.1; 6.1.1a	Recreation Facility Development	Coordinate with Jefferson County School District to develop and implement the plans for artificial turf at the Coal Creek Canyon K-8 School. Evaluate and plan for the maintenance requirements of the turf as well as the yearly maintenance costs (see 6.1.1 for additional details regarding this project).				Turf	Excavation/site prep: \$2-4/sf; \$7- 7.25/sf for turf product = \$237,000-\$297,000. Not including site plan approval fees and other facility improvements.
high	2.1.1	Partnerships	Identify “champions” for priority recommendations and assign roles, responsibilities and deadlines for board members and volunteers through an annual review of the prioritized action plan, goals and objectives.				Volunteers	District/Volunteer Time
high	2.1.4	Partnerships	Establish a team that oversees and coordinates directly with the design consultants for development of the “Community Gathering” Park. This includes being the primary group involved in the land search, design details and overseeing construction progress, with regular updates to the Board.				Park	District/Volunteer Time
high	2.1.5	Partnerships	Work with the Coal Creek Canyon Trails Volunteers to oversee, prioritize, plan and create trails in the Coal Creek Canyon community. This includes being the primary group involved in the corridor assessment, conservation easements, design details and overseeing construction progress, with regular updates to the Board.				Trails	District/Volunteer Time. TBD - costs based on need for consultants on reports, layout of trails, design documents and construction.
high	2.2.1	Partnerships	Continue to promote and increase the visibility of the District to Canyon residents. This may include promoting board meeting locations and times, volunteer opportunities, upcoming programs and events, and projects. Methods may include the District and partners’ web sites, local publications, flyers at local schools and through local partners (such as CCCIA), Facebook or other social Media, texts, etc.				Communications	District/Volunteer Time and TBD costs for printing/advertising



Priority	Strategy Number(s)	Category	Strategy Description	Estimated Goal Initiation Date	Estimated Completion Date	Champion	Group / Strategy Team	Cost Estimate
high	2.2.8	Communications	Convey the essence of this Master Plan to District constituents. This will include web and other forms of communication.				Communications	District/Volunteer Time
high	4.1.1	Traditional and Alternative Funding	Plan and execute a successful Mill Levy vote on the November 2011 ballot. This will include money for operations and capital.				Election	TBD - depending on type of debt financing
high	4.1.1a	Traditional and Alternative Funding	Fundraise sufficient funds to support the 2011 District operation and the proposed Mill Levy election.				Election	District/Volunteer Time
high	4.1.1b	Traditional and Alternative Funding	Develop a targeted communications strategy to inform District voters about the Mill Levy's purpose and specific benefits (i.e. – facilities and programs) that residents will receive with the passage of the ballot measure.				Communications	District/Volunteer Time, In-kind donations
high	4.2.1	Traditional and Alternative Funding	Evaluate the potential for a Lease-Purchase arrangement against other methods after the Mill Levy vote for any future capital needs.				Administration	\$27,000 - \$40,000
high	4.2.2	Traditional and Alternative Funding	Evaluate a bond referendum for future facility development against other methods and if it should be included as part of the November 2011 vote or left as a potential funding method in the future. It will be important to consider what District priorities are and what capital dollars should be used for.				Election	\$21,000 - \$28,500
high	4.3.3	Traditional and Alternative Funding	As facilities and programs are established, CCCPRD should consider contracting with private businesses to provide services such as food service, transportation, equipment rental, maintenance, and guided activities. Existing partners, volunteers or other community members can be key resources in establishing private concessionaires.				Partnerships	District/Volunteer Time and TBD costs based on needs and contract costs for concessionaires, etc.
high	5.2.4a	Trail Connections and Development	The District should work with partnering agencies, land managers and land owners in order to increase access to existing public lands including the development of additional trail connections in Coal Creek Canyon Park				Trails	District/Volunteer Time
high	5.2.4e	Trail Connections and Development	The District should work with partnering agencies, land managers and land owners in order to increase access to existing public lands, as well as the development of additional trail connections including Crescent Meadow Loop within Eldorado State Park/Walker Ranch.				Trails	District/Volunteer Time
high	5.2.5	Trail Connections and Development	Work with partnering agencies to provide input on any management or facility plans or plan updates that will directly address trail connections into and through the District. In 2011, this specifically includes the Walker Ranch Management Plan update.				Trails	District/Volunteer Time
high	6.1.1b	Recreation Facility Development	Coordinate with Jefferson County School District and the Coal Creek Canyon K-8 to formalize a joint use agreement that addresses maintenance, fees, use, availability and other logistics of operating and using the turf fields for both school and District programs and leagues.				Turf	District/Volunteer Time and Legal fees/consultation - TBD, Insurance - TBD
high	6.1.1c	Recreation Facility Development	Submit additional grant applications or secure any alternative funding needed to complete the artificial turf project prior to initiating construction.				Turf	District/Volunteer Time, Matching Funds - TBD
high	6.1.1d	Recreation Facility Development	Finalize site planning, permitting, and construction documents for the chosen turf design and plan on the artificial turf project at the Coal Creek Canyon K-8 school.				Turf	Coordination - District/Volunteer Time; \$8,000 to \$20,000 for consultant to coordinate application w/ County and complete CD's.

Priority	Strategy Number(s)	Category	Strategy Description	Estimated Goal Initiation Date	Estimated Completion Date	Champion	Group / Strategy Team	Cost Estimate
high	6.1.2	Recreation Facility Development	In partnership with CCKK-8, develop (either in conjunction or independent of the turf project) a multi-purpose walking path at the Coal Creek Canyon K-8 School that is consistent with the planned turf field project. The trail should adhere to the recommended trail design guidelines (see recommendation 5.2.2) and meet all ADA requirements associated with slopes.				Trails	\$4.00/sf - hard surface; \$1.75/sf - soft surface
high	6.2.2a	Recreation Facility Development	Understand the needs of the community and incorporate desired amenities noted in the Community Survey in any facilities developed for the District. Facilities will need to be flexible spaces that can accommodate varying forms of recreation activity such as outdoor recreation (i.e. - walking, hiking, biking, wildlife viewing, etc.), environmental and nature programs, and arts and cultural activities. They will also need to accommodate multiple age groups and provide for both family-oriented and older adult populations.				Community Park	TBD based on finalized programming, user fees and associated cost recovery.
high	6.2.2b	Recreation Facility Development	Prioritize facilities and amenities based on the survey to be created in a “Community Gathering” Park, including financial options and limits. Communicate those priorities, financial options and limits to the Conceptual Design team that is implementing the 2011 Joint Venture grant award. These may include a playground, picnic tables, small fitness center, and sledding hill.				Community Park	District/Volunteer Time - prioritization. Cost TBD based on finalized site plan and building.
high	6.2.2c	Recreation Facility Development	Work to develop priority facilities which may be independent of the “Community Gathering” Park, as identified through the survey, including trails for hiking, walking and bicycling; facilities for youth and teens.				Community Park	TBD based on scope/design of amenity, trail or facility
high	6.2.3	Recreation Facility Development	Per the JCOS Joint Venture grant awarded, create conceptual graphics for a structure on the “Community Gathering” Park and develop a list of attributes needed (i.e. square footage for a building, parking area size, size and character of area needed for trails, sledding hill, picnic area, etc.) in order to clearly understand the parcel size and site attributes needed prior to the purchase of land for the park.				Community Park	Cost covered by JCOS Joint Venture grant
high	6.2.3a	Recreation Facility Development	Identify and obtain a suitable parcel to accommodate those attributes determined in the preliminary concept plan				Community Park	TBD based on size and location of property. Average \$44,500/ac; approx. \$13,500 to \$79,500/acre
medium	1.1.1b; 6.1.3	Partnerships	Partner with Jefferson County Open Space and Community Resources (JCOSCR) to successfully complete the Coal Creek Canyon Park trails and trailheads off of Highway 72.				Trails	District/Volunteer Time; TBD cost to construct
medium	1.1.3d	Partnerships	Partner with Colorado State Parks, specifically Golden Gate Canyon and Eldorado Canyon State Parks to successfully promote the programming offered by the State Parks to CCCPRD residents.				Partnerships	District/Volunteer Time
medium	1.2.2c; 1.2.4b	Partnerships	Establish communications with key personnel at the US Forest Service, specifically the Arapaho-Roosevelt Forest, and Denver Water Board to coordinate on promoting recreation activities and uses allowed at Gross Reservoir to District residents (i.e. – water-based recreation, wildlife viewing, fishing, etc.).				Partnerships	District/Volunteer Time
medium	1.3.1; 1.3.1b	Partnerships	Maintain open communications and work with Coal Creek Canyon Improvement Association (CCCIA) to provide and expand services and facilities that meet the needs of the community, including offering new programs to residents, whether they are reoccurring classes, special events or day trips.				Partnerships	District/Volunteer Time
medium	1.3.2	Partnerships	Continue to work with representatives for Jefferson County Public School District and Boulder School District, specifically the Coal Creek Canyon K-8, Mountain Phoenix and Nederland schools, to understand the area youth’s recreation program and facility use needs.				K-8 School	District/Volunteer Time

Priority	Strategy Number(s)	Category	Strategy Description	Estimated Goal Initiation Date	Estimated Completion Date	Champion	Group / Strategy Team	Cost Estimate
medium	1.3.2b	Partnerships	Understand Coal Creek Canyon K-8's needs for recreation facilities, as well as the needs of the District for use of school facilities for programming and develop a joint-use or reciprocal use agreement with the school to benefit both parties.				K-8 School/IGA	District/Volunteer Time and Legal fees/consultation - TBD
medium	1.3.5	Partnerships	Continue to work with RTD/Ride Provide and Coal Creek Express Van to maintain existing bus service and expand transportation opportunities for recreational purposes for District residents.				Transportation	TBD based on community interest, partnerships, grant funding, etc.
medium	1.3.5a	Partnerships	Partner with RTD, Ride Provide and Coal Creek Express Van to increase promotion of available transportation services for recreational purposes to District residents and encourage residents to use these transportation services to access alternative provider's services.				Transportation	TBD based on community interest, partnerships, grant funding, etc.
medium	1.3.5b	Partnerships	Work with residents to understand unmet needs for transportation services for recreation needs both within the District and to destinations outside of the District.				Transportation	District/Volunteer Time
medium	1.3.5c	Partnerships	Develop an agreement with one or more of the transportation providers to provide transportation services for recreation needs, either regularly or through a charter-type agreement for District programs and activities, both within the District and to destinations outside of the District, which may include but are not limited to the CCCIA hall, Coal Creek Canyon K-8, the Nederland Community Center, APEX Recreation Center, Golden Recreation Center, Gilpin County Recreation Center, or to the City of Boulder or Golden.				Transportation	Charter-type vans: approx. \$16-22 per person or \$160-\$220 per van for a 3-4 hour trip. Other options TBD based on partnerships, grant funding, etc.
medium	1.3.5d	Partnerships	Work with transportation providers to establish a discounted rate for the youth and older adults of the Canyon.				Transportation	District/Volunteer Time; cost or cost savings TBD
medium	1.3.6	Partnerships	Work with road entities, such as CDOT and County Highway Departments regarding the need for improved safety features on roads to accommodate the increasing number of walkers, bicyclists and equestrians. This could include widened shoulders, share-the-road signs, reduced blind curves, etc.				Communications/ Trails	Signage, road improvements, TBD based on extent of engineering or construction improvements
medium	2.1.2	Partnerships	Establish a team that focuses on grant-writing and tracking application dates and coordinates with partnering agencies. This group will be the decision-makers on grants to pursue, language for the grants, etc. with only final approvals required by the Board.				Grants	District/Volunteer Time
medium	2.1.3	Partnerships	Establish a team whose primary focus is fund-raising for projects and programs within the District. This team should provide updates and request any funds from the Board, but be ultimately responsible for the coordination and detail-oriented tasks to run fund-raising efforts (i.e. – direct mail, corporate sponsorships, naming rights, donor program, etc.).				Fund-raising	District/Volunteer Time
medium	2.1.3a	Partnerships	The "Fund-raising" team should establish a 501c3, not-for-profit "friends" of the Park and Recreation District, which would allow them to be eligible for nonprofit status and tax benefits.				Fund-raising	District/Volunteer Time plus state and federal fees and legal fees - \$1000-1500
medium	2.2.2	Partnerships	At the time the "Community Gathering" park begins to take shape (both before and after land purchase and before construction), advertise public involvement opportunities and conceptual and final design presentations to encourage public interest and involvement in the success of the project through methods noted in Strategy 2.2.1.				Communications	District/Volunteer Time



Priority	Strategy Number(s)	Category	Strategy Description	Estimated Goal Initiation Date	Estimated Completion Date	Champion	Group / Strategy Team	Cost Estimate
medium	2.2.3; 3.1.1; 3.1.1a	Partnerships	The District should work to act as a “central clearinghouse” to promote information, transportation and/or access to District-offered and Alternative Provider recreation opportunities. This includes providing links or direct information from the following alternative providers to District residents as well as information on District-related activities: APEX Park and Recreation District; City of Golden and the Golden Recreation Center; City of Boulder Parks and Recreation; Nederland Community Center; Gilpin County Recreation Center; Coal Creek Canyon K-8 School. For alternative providers, this could be in reciprocation for discounted and/or shared use. Targeted marketing strategies and mediums should be used based on the program, activity and user group.				Communications	District/Volunteer Coordination Time
medium	2.2.3a	Partnerships	Develop a Coal Creek Canyon Recreation Activities and Program Guide for distribution to residents via the District’s website and at partner facilities.				Communications	District/Volunteer time and printing/distribution costs - TBD
medium	2.2.3b	Partnerships	Utilize data collected through this Master Plan and the District’s GIS database to develop a Canyon Park and Recreation Facilities Map for distribution to residents via the District’s website and at partner facilities.				Communications	District/Volunteer time and printing/distribution costs - TBD
medium	2.2.4	Partnerships	The District should assist in increasing signage and promotion of publicly accessible trails within the District, whether owned by the District or not. This may include developing additional directional signage or creating publicly available maps of trailhead locations and trail information and maps.				Trails	District/Volunteer time and \$50/sf, total will be based on type/size of sign constructed
medium	2.2.4a	Partnerships	As the District creates and designates trails, they should be inventoried via GPS and included in the District’s GIS database in order to be as accurate as possible and included as part of the area’s trail information.				Trails	District/Volunteer Time
medium	2.2.4b	Partnerships	Utilize the District’s GIS data to develop a Canyon Trails Map to provide residents with information about trailhead locations, length, and difficulty of trails.				Trails	District/Volunteer time and printing/distribution costs - TBD
medium	3.1.1b	Increased Access to Recreation Programs	Include alternative providers’ key deadlines (league sign-up, etc.) and key event dates as part of a Canyon Recreation Activities and Program Guide and a calendar on the District’s website				Communications	District/Volunteer Time
medium	3.1.1c	Increased Access to Recreation Programs	Coordinate with the alternative recreation providers to be one of their key locations or groups where hard copies of their program guides can be obtained by District residents.				Communications	District/Volunteer Coordination Time
medium	3.1.1d	Increased Access to Recreation Programs	Provide information on the District’s website regarding in-canyon and out-of-canyon transportation options, including bus schedules, contact information and links to external web sites.				Transportation	District/Volunteer Time
medium	3.2.1	Increased Access to Recreation Programs	Work with APEX Park and Recreation District to negotiate reciprocal use and/or discounted rates, increased accessibility, facility use or league agreements for CCCPRD residents.				IGA	District/Volunteer Time, additional legal/contract fees may also be applicable.
medium	3.2.2	Increased Access to Recreation Programs	Work with the City of Golden to negotiate reciprocal use and/or discounted rates, increased accessibility, facility use or league agreements for CCCPRD residents.				IGA	District/Volunteer Time, additional legal/contract fees may also be applicable.
medium	3.2.3	Increased Access to Recreation Programs	Work with the City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Department to negotiate reciprocal use and/or discounted rates, increased accessibility, facility use or league agreements for CCCPRD residents.				IGA	District/Volunteer Time, additional legal/contract fees may also be applicable.

Priority	Strategy Number(s)	Category	Strategy Description	Estimated Goal Initiation Date	Estimated Completion Date	Champion	Group / Strategy Team	Cost Estimate
medium	3.2.4	Increased Access to Recreation Programs	Work with Nederland Community Center to share programming, facility use, and/or advertising and to promote existing programs and facilities offered at the Nederland Community Center to District residents.				Partnerships/IGA	District/Volunteer Time, additional legal/contract fees may also be applicable.
medium	3.2.5	Increased Access to Recreation Programs	Work with Gilpin County Recreation Center to negotiate reciprocal use and/or discounted rates, increased accessibility, facility use or league agreements for CCCPRD residents.				IGA	District/Volunteer Time, additional legal/contract fees may also be applicable.
medium	3.3.1; 4.1.1c	Increased Access to Recreation Programs	Prior to offering programs and developing facilities, the District needs to obtain liability insurance that covers the use/rental of non-District facilities as well as limiting the liability of the District against participant injuries.				Insurance	Insurance cost - TBD
medium	3.3.2	Increased Access to Recreation Programs	The District should provide or partner with agencies that provide programs that meet the need of a wide variety of groups and interests. This may include but is not limited to: Activities for adults and older adults (i.e. – organized hiking or snowshoeing, fitness, outdoor entertainment, etc.); Fitness-oriented offerings (i.e. – Zumba, yoga, Pilates, etc.); Art and culture programs (i.e. - music, crafts, cooking, etc.); Multi-generational, community activities and special events (i.e. Fall Festival, Summer Concerts, etc.) ; Youth sports (i.e. soccer, lacrosse, baseball, etc.); Youth non-sport activities (i.e. - environmental education, music, arts, extreme sports); Day-trips (i.e. - the mountains, Boulder, Denver, etc.)				Partnerships	District/Volunteer Time, Program Space and Materials - TBD
medium	4.1.2	Traditional and Alternative Funding	The District needs to conservatively plan for the development and operations of facilities that have low maintenance costs and are generally self-sustaining.				Administration	N/A
medium	4.1.3	Traditional and Alternative Funding	Allocate sufficient resources to track the District's accounting, as well as ensure the accuracy of projected budgets and expenses. (For example, assessed valuation figures should be updated to reflect the District's current assessed value (\$36,622,730).				Administration	District/Volunteer Time or Accounting Fees - TBD
medium	4.1.3a	Traditional and Alternative Funding	When the 2010 Census Data is released, incorporate this data to maintain accurate District household counts and assess potential property tax revenue.				Administration	District/Volunteer Time
medium	4.2.5	Traditional and Alternative Funding	As facilities and programs are developed, cost recovery policies, reporting, and tracking will need to be formalized with a pricing and cost recovery policy established specifically for the District.				Administration	District/Volunteer Time or Consultant Fees \$3000-\$8000
medium	4.3.1; 4.3.1a	Traditional and Alternative Funding	The District should continue to be proactive in identifying, seeking out and supporting matching funds for grants and alternative funding. Top priorities should be grants which focus on trail development, transportation enhancements, facility development, conservation and/or green design.				Grants	District/Volunteer Time, Matching Funds - TBD
medium	5.1.1	Trail Connections and Development	Promote existing trails and trail connections with legal access, (including Star Peak, Thorodin, and connections in the Arapaho-Roosevelt Forest), through a variety of methods, including maps, available online and on paper, and work with the managing agency to establish trailhead signage if the site is within the District.				Trails	District/Volunteer time and printing/distribution costs - TBD
medium	5.1.2	Trail Connections and Development	Provide links and information on the District's website to outside agencies' trail maps in proximity to the District.				Communications/Trails	District/Volunteer Time
medium	5.2.1	Trail Connections and Development	Planning of major trail corridors and greenways should take into account primary wildlife corridors and sensitive ecological areas (see Maps H and I in the GIS Mapping and Spatial Analysis Section). Therefore, thorough site and corridor analysis will need to occur in the programming and design process of any recommended recreation facilities or trail amenities.				Trails	Environmental Impact Reports - TBD based on size and scope of project

Priority	Strategy Number(s)	Category	Strategy Description	Estimated Goal Initiation Date	Estimated Completion Date	Champion	Group / Strategy Team	Cost Estimate
medium	6.1.1e	Recreation Facility Development	Adjust insurance coverage of the CCCPRD to accommodate the agreements with the School District and any anticipated use for District programming on the artificial turf fields.				Insurance	Insurance cost - TBD
medium	6.2.1	Recreation Facility Development	Establish agreements with alternative providers or partners to use their facilities for District events and programs until a time that District has facilities available for programs or resident use.				Partnerships	Agreements - TBD legal fees; Cost for facility use/rental depends on agreements with alternative providers
medium	6.2.2e	Recreation Facility Development	The District should work to balance the preservation of natural resources with context-appropriate design (incorporating sensitive areas, considering water resources and community values) of recreation facilities and programs that celebrate, conserve and promote stewardship of ecologically sensitive lands. Continue to work to be a role model for Healthy Forest Stewardship.				Preservation	N/A unless "official" certifications such as LEED or Healthy Forest Stewardship are desired. Program space and materials - TBD.
medium	6.2.2f; 6.2.5a	Recreation Facility Development	Assure that any <i>structures</i> at the "'Community Gathering Park'" are created to be sustainable and low maintenance in order to minimize the annual maintenance and operations costs of the facility as well as the impact on Canyon resources. Incorporate the use of green energy and sustainable approaches and ideas into the design where appropriate. This may include but is not limited to structure or materials re-use, low flow fixtures, motion-activated lighting, low-VOC furnishings and paint.				Community Park	TBD - Capital Costs. Long-term Cost Savings - TBD.
medium	6.2.2f; 6.2.5a	Recreation Facility Development	Assure that the "Community Gathering" Park <i>site</i> is created to be sustainable and low maintenance in order to minimize the annual maintenance and operations costs of the facility as well as the impact on Canyon resources. Incorporate the use of green energy and sustainable approaches and ideas into the design where appropriate. This may include but is not limited to minimizing site disturbance for facility improvements, creative drainage and water quality solutions, minimizing mature vegetation removal, creative parking solutions, night-sky friendly light fixtures, recycling/zero waste operations, renewable energy, and locally sourced materials.				Community Park	TBD - Capital Costs. Long-term Cost Savings - TBD.
medium	6.2.4	Recreation Facility Development	Once a parcel is purchased for the "Community Gathering" Park, a detailed Final Concept Plan, including site and building design, should be developed to understand realistic site and facility design based on the final site's opportunities and constraints.				Community Park	TBD
medium	6.2.5	Recreation Facility Development	Finalize site planning, permitting and construction documents in order to begin construction of "Community Gathering" Park site.				Community Park	Consultant fees - TBD based on scope of work. \$60,000 to \$120,000
medium	6.2.5b	Recreation Facility Development	Begin construction on a "Community Gathering" Park by either renovating or constructing an indoor structure and starting preliminary site work for exterior amenities.				Community Park	TBD based on materials and design and new versus remodel



Priority	Strategy Number(s)	Category	Strategy Description	Estimated Goal Initiation Date	Estimated Completion Date	Champion	Group / Strategy Team	Cost Estimate
low	1.3.1a	Partnerships	Establish a formalized use agreement with partners (such as CCCIA, schools, Camp Eden, Camp Wondervu, and others) for use of their facilities for programs and special events, especially after the District has insurance to offer programming.				Partnerships	District/Volunteer Time and Legal fees/ consultation - TBD
low	1.3.1c	Partnerships	Understand the needs for maintaining or improving the CCCIA Hall due to its age. If the District has shared use of the building for programming, work to establish an agreement to assist in costs for such maintenance or improvements, as well as reciprocal use of any facilities constructed by the District.				Partnerships	District/Volunteer Time and Legal fees/ consultation - TBD
low	1.3.3; 1.3.3a	Partnerships	Continue to communicate with representatives for Camp Eden to develop potential use agreements or facility partnerships and work with Camp Eden to understand the availability and access allowed to their facilities and property.				Partnerships	District/Volunteer Time
low	1.3.3a	Partnerships	Work to establish a use agreement for Camp Eden facilities for District activities, leagues or programming which will not conflict with the existing programs run solely for Camp Eden visitors or with the mission of the Camp. (i.e. - basketball leagues, father-daughter dances, movie nights, carnivals, and trail access.) Shared use and assigned responsibilities for improvements and/or maintenance should also be part of these discussions/agreements.				Partnerships	District/Volunteer Time and Legal fees/ consultation - TBD
low	1.3.4; 1.3.4a	Partnerships	Continue to communicate with representatives for Wondervu Conference and Retreat Center to develop potential program or facility partnerships and work with Wondervu Conference and Retreat Center to understand the availability and access allowed to their facilities and property.				Partnerships	District/Volunteer Time
low	1.3.4a	Partnerships	Work to establish a use agreement for Wondervu facilities for District activities, leagues or programming which will not conflict with the existing programs run solely for Wondervu visitors or with the mission of the Retreat Center. Shared use and assigned responsibilities for improvements and/or maintenance should also be part of these discussions/agreements.				Partnerships	District/Volunteer Time and Legal fees/ consultation - TBD
low	1.3.7	Partnerships	In order to maximize the wide variety of potential resources found in and adjacent to the Canyon, CCCPRD should work to partner with other organizations and agencies (including, but not limited to): Schools – Mountain Phoenix Community School, Boulder Valley School District; Local Businesses – Coal Creek Coffee & Books, gas stations, restaurants, etc.; Homeowners Associations – Blue Mountain, etc.; Coal Creek Fire Protection District; The Environmental Group (TEG); Church groups; Parenting groups and volunteer organizations; Youth organizations and recreation participants – Cub Scouts Pack 51, Canyon Daisies, Dance with Two Left Feet, etc.; and District Residents with Recreation and/or Technical Expertise (volunteers)				Partnerships	District/Volunteer Time
low	5.2.2	Trail Connections and Development	Develop design standards for various trail types for trails managed by the District based on existing standards in Boulder County and Jefferson County Open Space and in coordination with the Boulder Mountainbike Alliance (BMA) and Colorado Mountain Bike Association (COMBA) and other trail groups. This will minimize liability issues and establish consistency in design, no matter who designs or builds the trails (Open Space Departments, volunteers, private contractors, the District, etc.)				Trails	District/Volunteer Time and/or consultant fee: \$2,000 to 5,000 for Pricing Policy
low	5.2.3	Trail Connections and Development	As trails are developed, incorporate preferred attributes for trails (indicated through community input): 3+ miles in length (one way) (41% of survey respondents), natural terrain (75% of respondents), soft-surface, and moderate difficulty level (i.e. Medium grade, some hills) (78% of respondents) as well as for multiple types of users.				Trails	N/A
low	5.3.1	Trail Connections and Development	Coordinate with responsible agencies to add trailhead signage at the trailheads of public trails.				Trails	District/Volunteer time and \$50/sf, total will be based on type/size of sign constructed

**Mid-Term Priorities 2014-2017**

Priority	Strategy Number(s)	Category	Strategy Description	Estimated Goal Initiation Date	Estimated Completion Date	Champion	Group / Strategy Team	Cost Estimate
high	1.1.3b	Partnerships	Partner with Colorado State Parks, specifically Golden Gate Canyon and Eldorado Canyon State Parks to successfully promote the availability of facilities and providing year-round access to State Park facilities, including trails, campgrounds and other amenities.				Partnerships	District/Volunteer Time
high	1.1.3c	Partnerships	Promote the availability of Harmsen Ranch Guest House, meeting rooms and group camping facilities in Golden Gate Canyon State Park for rentals and programming opportunities.				Partnerships	District/Volunteer Time
high	1.3.2c	Partnerships	Develop programming in conjunction with Jefferson County and Boulder School Districts to meet the needs of the community's youth. This may include arts, culture and fitness programs, extreme sports, after school activities, and joint programming or transportation agreements.				Partnerships	District/Volunteer Time, cost of programs TBD based on program. Insurance - TBD.
high	2.2.7	Partnerships	Schools and the internet should be the primary avenues for distributing information for youth-focused activities and events, (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, etc.)				Communications	District/Volunteer Time
high	4.2.5a	Traditional and Alternative Funding	Each program area should track direct and indirect costs, establish a philosophy on a program's benefit to the community, determine cost recovery goals, and set pricing based on the community's values and District's goals. In addition, users are more likely to agree to fee levels when they themselves can see the current fee versus the cost to provide the service.				Administration	District/Volunteer Time
high	6.2.2d	Recreation Facility Development	Physical access to all District facilities should be maintained or improved over time to accommodate the 65+ age group.				Administration	N/A for new facilities as it will be built into the design. Existing facilities: costs TBD associated with retrofitting existing structures or sites
high	6.2.5c	Recreation Facility Development	When the funding or site planning for the "Community Gathering" Park requires separate phases, project the additional phases and funding needed into the Mid to Long-term goals of the Master Plan.				Community Park	N/A additional costs
medium	1.1.1a	Partnerships	Partner with Jefferson County Open Space and Community Resources (JCOSCR) to support and advocate for JCOSCR's purchase or lease of the State Land Board Blue Mountain Property				Partnerships	District/Volunteer Time
medium	1.2.2; 1.2.2a	Partnerships	Establish communications with key personnel at the US Forest Service, specifically the Arapaho-Roosevelt Forest to coordinate on appropriate trail connections onto Forest lands from areas within the District. This specifically includes access to trails accessing Thorodin.				Trails	District/Volunteer Time
medium	2.1.6	Partnerships	Update the Recommendations and the Prioritized Action Plan of this Master Plan in 2015 to remove accomplished goals and add additional action items that may have developed since this document was completed in 2011.				Administration	District/Volunteer Time
medium	2.2.6	Partnerships	Promotional efforts should be directed at the Canyon's youth and families, because they are at a stage where it is important to instill life-long, healthy habits that include regular physical activity. Both parents and children should be targeted in an informational communications strategy explaining how outdoor activities can help provide a fun, enjoyable way for youth to stay fit and healthy.				Communications	District/Volunteer Time, Marketing Materials cost TBD based on type and number
medium	4.2.3	Traditional and Alternative Funding	As District programs and facilities are developed, utilize a market analysis to establish user fees, admissions, programs and for rentals of facilities. Consideration for appropriate user fees is also part of customer service-oriented funding. Fees should not be too high; otherwise low participation occurs, though a low fee will affect the District's cost recovery and ability to defray costs.				Administration	District/Volunteer Time. If consultant is used - \$20,000 for Fee & Charges Policy Development
medium	4.2.4	Traditional and Alternative Funding	As the District develops programs and facilities it will be important to track both direct and indirect costs, to set fees to cover equipment, labor, and maintenance for the support services it is providing. The District should develop a tiered fee system for rentals which is structured by classification as residents, non-residents, non-profit organizations, and seniors.				Administration	District/Volunteer Time

Priority	Strategy Number(s)	Category	Strategy Description	Estimated Goal Initiation Date	Estimated Completion Date	Champion	Group / Strategy Team	Cost Estimate
medium	4.3.2	Traditional and Alternative Funding	The District should put efforts into developing corporate sponsorship program and naming rights for individual programs or facilities that would support these types of revenue generation. These sponsorship opportunities should be offered with a tiered level of benefits, should quantify marketing exposure for each level, bundle packages on a system-wide level, and bundle the assets of sponsors (i.e. - money, marketing, and product supply).				Fund-raising	District/Volunteer Time
medium	4.3.4	Traditional and Alternative Funding	The District should evaluate the potential of Federal funding opportunities, including the following funds: Land & Water Conservation Fund, National Recreational Trails Program and other key grant opportunities.				Grants	District/Volunteer Time and Matching Funds - TBD.
medium	4.3.4	Traditional and Alternative Funding	The District should evaluate the potential of Federal funding opportunities, including the following funds: Land & Water Conservation Fund, National Recreational Trails Program and other key grant opportunities.				Grants	
low	1.1.2	Partnerships	Partner with Boulder County Parks and Open Space (BCPOS) to successfully complete trail connections and trailheads from within the District onto Walker Ranch and other Boulder County Open Space lands.				Trails	District/Volunteer Time; Construction cost TBD based on type and location of trail
low	1.2.1	Partnerships	Establish a relationship with the City of Boulder Open Space to improve or create additional trail connections between their lands and properties within the District.				Trails	District/Volunteer Time; Construction cost TBD based on type and location of trail
low	1.2.1a	Partnerships	Coordinate with two agencies to provide trail connections between City of Boulder Open Space lands and Coal Creek Canyon Park (owned by Jefferson County Open Space).				Trails	District/Volunteer Time; Construction cost TBD based on type and location of trail
low	2.2.5	Partnerships	Develop programs that promote physical activity and outdoor recreation for the older adult population that include a range of activities beneficial to all abilities should be included (i.e. – wildlife viewing, outdoor education, hiking, backcountry camping, etc.). See recommendation 2.2.6 for youth-focused recommendation.				Programs	District/Volunteer Time and Insurance - TBD
low	5.2.4d	Trail Connections and Development	The District should work with partnering agencies, land managers and land owners in order to increase access to existing public lands, as well as the development of additional trail connections including White Ranch Open Space to Coal Creek Canyon Park				Trails	District/Volunteer Time; Construction cost TBD based on type and location of trail
low	5.2.4f	Trail Connections and Development	The District should work with partnering agencies, land managers and land owners in order to increase access to existing public lands, as well as the development of additional trail connections including exploring connections to Gross Reservoir trails from public roads or lands within the District				Trails	District/Volunteer Time; Construction cost TBD based on type and location of trail



Long-Term Priorities 2018-2020

Priority	Strategy Number(s)	Category	Strategy Description	Estimated Goal Initiation Date	Estimated Completion Date	Champion	Group / Strategy Team	Cost Estimate
high	1.1.1c	Partnerships	Continue to partner with JCOSCR through future joint-venture grant opportunities for facility and trail development.				Partnerships	District/Volunteer Time and Matching Funds - TBD.
high	1.1.3a	Partnerships	Partner with Colorado State Parks, specifically Golden Gate Canyon and Eldorado Canyon State Parks to successfully create trail connections and trailheads from within the District into Golden Gate Canyon State Park and Eldorado Canyon State Park.				Trails	District/Volunteer Time; Construction cost TBD based on type and location of trail
high	1.2.2b	Partnerships	Establish communications with key personnel at the US Forest Service, specifically the Arapaho-Roosevelt Forest to coordinate on appropriate trail connections onto Forest lands from areas within the District. Explore appropriate trail use in and around Gross Reservoir on Forest lands.				Trails	District/Volunteer Time
high	1.2.4a	Partnerships	Establish communications with personnel on the Denver Water Board to understand the restrictions or potential public access opportunities for the Leyden Gulch parcel south of Highway 72 east of the District and adjacent to Coal Creek Canyon Park (owned by Jefferson County Open Space).				Partner	District/Volunteer Time
high	5.2.4b; 5.2.4c	Trail Connections and Development	The District should continue to work with partnering agencies, land managers and land owners in order to increase access to existing public lands, as well as the development of additional trail connections including between Douly Draw and White Ranch Open Space and Eldorado Canyon SP/ Walker Ranch and Golden Gate Canyon State Park				Trails	District/Volunteer Time
medium	1.2.3	Partnerships	Work with personnel at the Bureau of Land Management to provide public access and outline key use requirements for the parcels owned by the BLM located in the north part of the District.				Trails	District/Volunteer Time
low	5.3.1a	Trail Connections and Development	When trails are owned by the District, trailhead signage should be consistent in style, materials, language and size and incorporated into any trail design standards adopted or used by the District.				Trails	District/Volunteer Time; signage will be approx. \$50/sf, final cost will vary based on size and type of sign.

