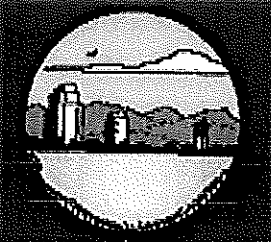


PARKS, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN



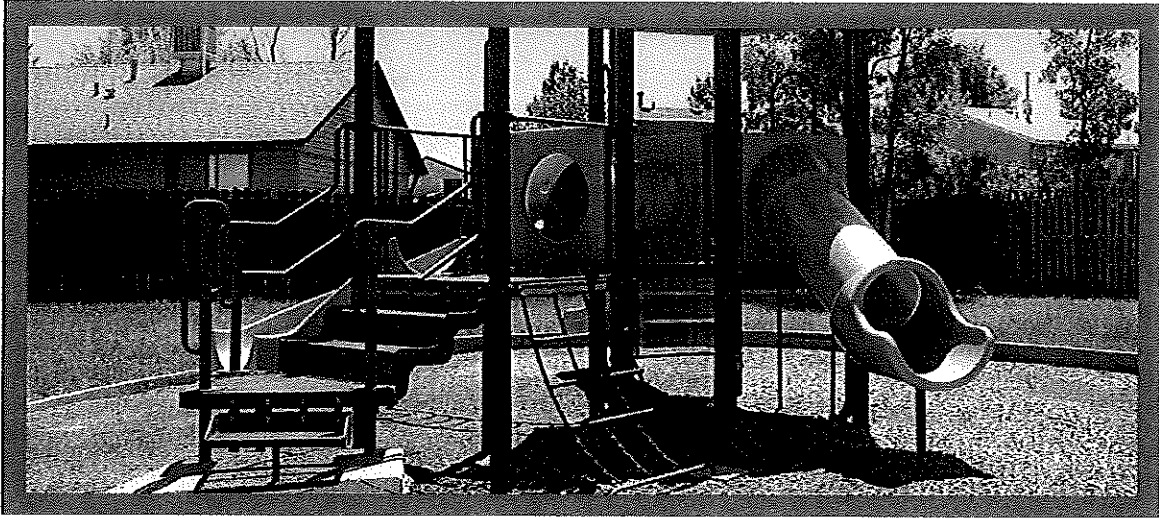
TOWN OF BENNETT, COLORADO
FALL/WINTER 2009

PREPARED BY:


NORRIS DESIGN
Planning | Landscape Architecture

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I. INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

PROJECT PURPOSE & VISION

The purpose of the Bennett Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan is to evaluate the Town of Bennett's (Town) existing facilities and assess the community's needs and desires in order to provide:

- Recommendations and a roadmap for the improvement of existing parks;
- The need for and location of additional outdoor recreational facilities; and
- Preservation of natural resources and development of additional trails.

This plan is intended to guide the Town in providing a balanced land use approach as it continues to grow and develop, so as to promote long-term sustainability and a high quality of life for the community. This goal is to be achieved by:

- Identifying the existing level of service and establishing prioritized recommendations in regard to outdoor recreation improvements;

- Park and Recreation Facility Development;
- Natural resource preservation;
- Operations and maintenance; as well as,
- The resources and funding associated with each action.

PROJECT SUCCESS INDICATORS

At project startup the Norris Design (Consultant Team) worked with members of the Town's staff and elected officials to identify the most important goals and outcomes that are critical to the success of this strategic planning process relating to parks, trails, and open space. These stakeholders 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 areas of focus were identified as project goals for the Town of Bennett Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan:

TABLE 1.1: BENNETT – PROJECT SUCCESS INDICATORS

PROJECT SUCCESS INDICATOR	OBJECTIVE
Determine what types of parks, open space, and trail opportunities should be offered to the community.	Identify Bennett's unique needs through community and stakeholder input and demographic analysis in order to assess demand for recreation amenities and activities.
Work with partnering organizations and agencies to avoid duplication of service when providing for leisure activities in the Town of Bennett.	Utilize the master planning process to develop and facilitate ongoing communications with organizations such as the Bennett Recreation District, Adams County, Arapahoe County and others to promote collaborative efforts.
Assess corridors that will increase the network of trails and opportunities for alternative transportation within the Town.	Identify trail development opportunities that link the Town from Antelope Hills to the Town Center.
Evaluate the need to increase level of service through capital improvements at existing parks and facilities.	Identify specific projects for equipment replacement, landscape improvements and facility development, and provide a prioritize plan for improvements.
Promote stronger parkland dedication and development requirements so as to increase control of park and open space development and dedication.	Identify mechanisms during development review to allow the Town to determine what types of park, open space and trail opportunities should be provided within proposed developments.

TOWN AND DEPARTMENT BACKGROUND

TOWN OF BENNETT HISTORY

The naming of Bennett, according to The Bennett Historical Society, has been debated for some time. Some believed that the Town was named after two sisters who were the wives of two train engineers when a flood washed away the train. However, research shows that the original homestead area belonged to four "Bennett" brothers who formed the Bennett Ranch in 1862. One of these brothers, Hiram Pitt Bennett, was elected the first Territorial Representative for Colorado in 1862 and was instrumental in obtaining statehood for Colorado. Through time, the name was "Americanized" to Bennett and the Town was incorporated in 1929.

Today, this growing, high plains community lies in eastern Adams and Arapahoe Counties. The Town now has approximately 2,700 people (2009 est.) and has an estimated build-out of 12,000 to 15,000.

Bennett residents enjoy the pleasures of small town western living, clean air, quiet times and friendly neighbors. While retaining these attributes, the residents can also enjoy the urban highlights of Denver (only 25 miles away) and the alpine recreation of the Rocky Mountains (only an hour's drive away). Bennett

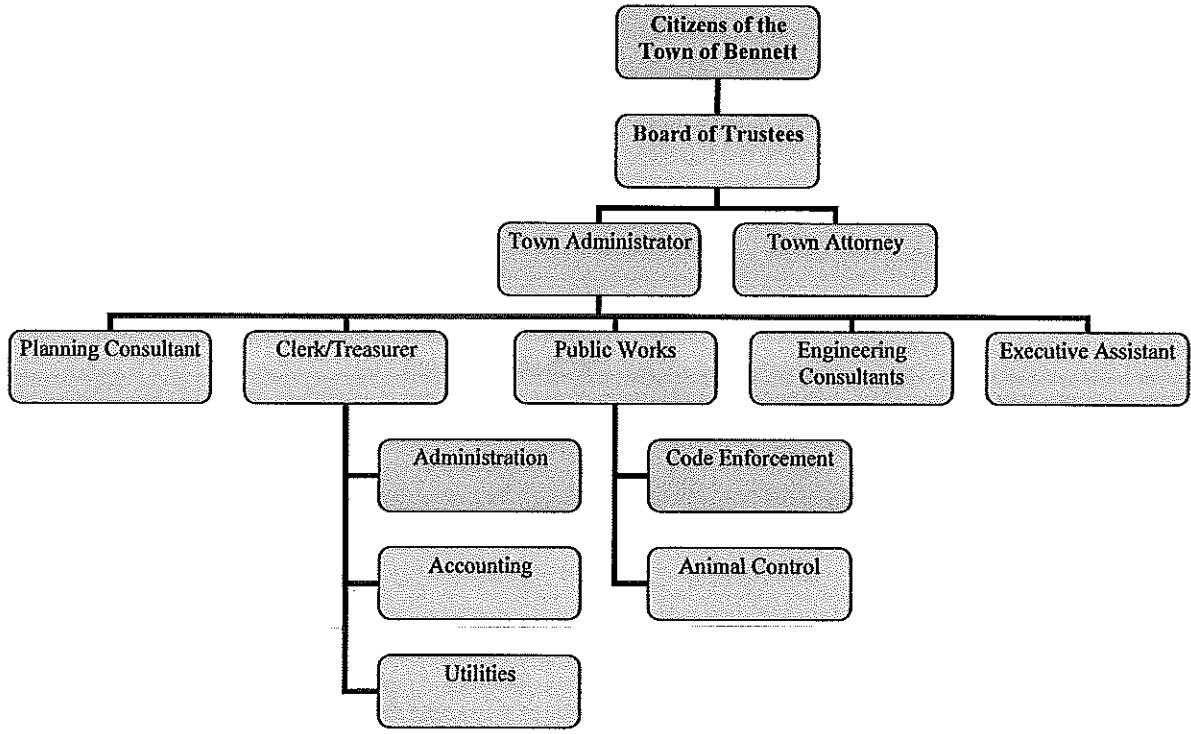
is committed to responsible planned development, economic vitality, a program for public service improvements, continued park expansions, as well as improving the quality of life for its residents.

TOWN OF BENNETT OVERVIEW

The Town of Bennett is a statutory Town located in both Adams and Arapahoe Counties. The format of government is a Town Administrator/Town Board of Trustees structure. The Town Board meets regularly on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month, with work study sessions held on alternate Tuesdays as needed. The location and division of the Town results in unique circumstances and governing operations, such as the need to coordinate with two law enforcement agencies; a fire district that covers 900 square miles; as well as a school district with a K-12 campus located in the Town; a regional recreation district; and a library district.

The Town's organizational structure consists of ten (10) departments, which are overseen by a Town Board of Trustees. These departments are staffed by a mix of both full-time and part-time staff, as well as a number of contracted consultants. **Figure 1.1** illustrates the organizational chart of the Town's staffing structure.

FIGURE 1.1: TOWN OF BENNETT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



The Town's parks, recreation facilities, and grounds are maintained by the Public Works Department. The operation, scheduling and coordination of these facilities are overseen by the Town's Public Works Director, assisted by the Executive Assistant. Recreation programming is provided primarily by the Bennett Recreation District, a formal partner of the Town. However, the Town also hosts and partners to provide a few special community events throughout the year, which include an Easter Egg Hunt, Fireworks Programs, Harvest Festival, Turkey Shoot, Breakfast with Santa, Parade of Lights and the Lighting of the Christmas Tree.

TOWN OF BENNETT PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Bennett's park system includes five (5) outdoor facilities/parks, one (1) trail, and a future planned park at Antelope Hills, distributed across the Town of Bennett. A variety of amenities are provided throughout the park system. Larger parks contain more amenities including picnic tables, shelters, playgrounds and athletic facilities. Active and passive spaces throughout the Bennett park system provide a variety recreation opportunities for public users.

TABLE 1.2: BENNETT – CONDITIONAL SCORES

CLASSIFICATION	NAME OF FACILITY	ACRES	PRIMARY ASSET SCORE	SUPPORT ASSET SCORE	OVERALL SCORE
Neighborhood Park	Antelope Hills Park	2.7	0.00%	0.00%	85.00%
Neighborhood Park	Brothers Four Park	2.9	90.00%	61.00%	83.00%
Neighborhood Park	Centennial Park	0.4	70.00%	45.00%	64.00%
Neighborhood Park	Community Park	1.7	45.00%	35.00%	43.00%
Community Park	Trupp Park	7.1	53.00%	33.00%	48.00%
Special Use Park	Field of Dreams	4.3	64.00%	43.00%	59.00%
Greenway	Trail	2.2			
	Total Acres	21.3			

RELATED PLANNING EFFORTS AND INTEGRATION

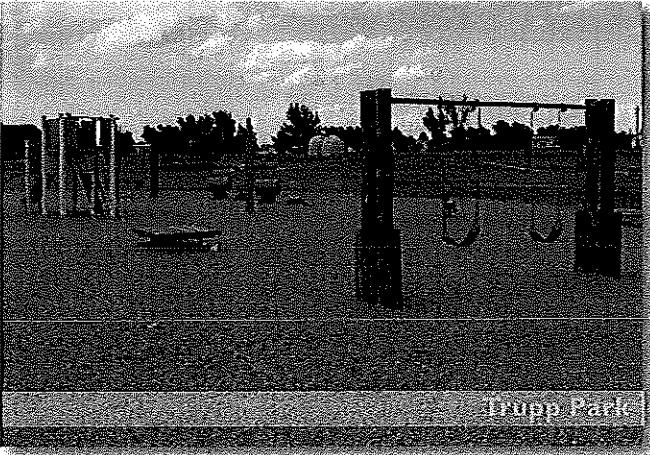
In the future, the Town of Bennett is expected to experience significant population growth, which has already significantly increased the demand for and the impacts on parks and recreation facilities. The use of and need for the Bennett parks and recreation amenities has increased dramatically since many of the facilities and parks were originally planned and developed. Therefore, the Town is currently challenged with the need to make improvements to existing parks, athletic facilities, and indoor facilities, as well as to develop new facilities and programs in order to meet the demands of the Town's constituents.

Considering the current economic challenges facing the Country and the Town, the timing of this master plan is optimal for sound planning, sustainable improvements, and operations. This plan will guide and position the Town in preparation for acquisition of additional parkland, preservation of open space, and the development of new facilities to meet the needs of a growing community. An important part of this process is to analyze and integrate the Master Plan with current and previous planning projects; enabling the Town and its partners to streamline planning efforts and maximize the use of resources.

Bennett's *Comprehensive Plan* (1999) currently notes several policies and strategies regarding open space, parks, and recreation. These encourage acquisition of open space and parkland properties and offer several strategies to achieve that policy. Another policy describes the forms parkland should take, as well as their size and service radius. These descriptions vary somewhat from the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines and no recommendations are made for mini parks, special use facilities, or indoor facilities.

The Comprehensive Plan encourages action in the core of the Town (Tier One – Stable Urban Area) prior to other areas of the Town. This includes developing vacant lands and redeveloping existing sites. However, the Plan recommends exempting develop in Tier One from parkland impact fees. Neighborhood parks and access to usable open space are to be provided through the development process in Tier Two (Developing Area/Urban Reserve). Development is discouraged in Tier Three (Rural Area). Key natural corridors such as Kiowa, Box Elder and Comanche Creeks in Tier Four (Environmental Area) should be used to develop trail systems.

Bennett’s *Land Development Regulations* further elaborate on the Comprehensive Plan. A minimum of 10% of the total land subdivided shall be dedicated to the Town for park or public space development. Parkland may be used for shallow detention and locations should be central to the development or enhance existing parkland. Circulation and connectivity should be enhanced by trails in all developments. The developer is responsible for the design and construction of neighborhood or smaller parks. However, no timeframe or threshold is set for the construction of parkland. Additionally, the Town may opt for cash-in-lieu of land dedication.



The Comprehensive Plan complements the *Adams County Open Space Master Plan* objectives. This master plan calls for the conservation of agricultural lands, natural resources, wildlife habitats, and the creation of regulations to encourage conservation and community buffers. Kiowa, Box Elder and Comanche Creeks are noted as medium priority areas for conservation. These corridors are also noted as trail corridors to be developed in the future. Bennett’s land use patterns and regulations

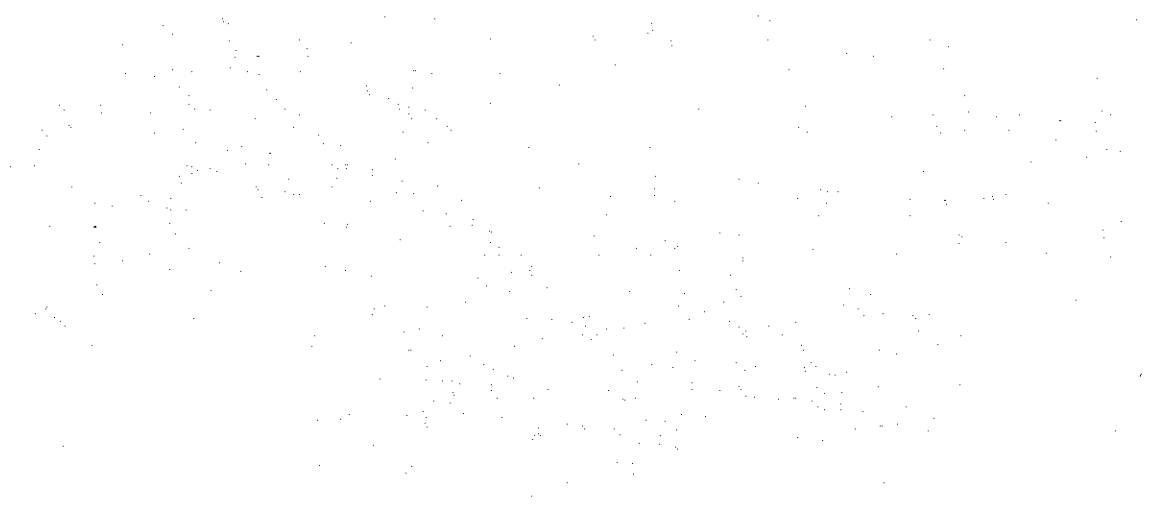
should follow the Adams County Open Space Master Plan and trail corridors mentioned in the master plan should be priorities for development by the Town of Bennett.

In 2003, the Town of Bennett initiated a study to assess and develop calculations for the implementation of developer *Impact Fees* in order to accommodate the expansion of community facilities to ensure that infrastructure is available to accommodate new growth. These fees are one-time assessments of residential and non-residential development and are periodically updated to account for the needs of additional infrastructure as the Town grows. It is important that these fees are aligned with needs of the Bennett community and can support the acquisition and facility development needed to meet the demand of the Bennett population.

The intent of this plan is to identify the needs for future parks and recreation facility development (and associate costs) in order to position and guide the Town in future updates of this ordinance for adequate funding of this growing community’s capital development needs.



2. DEMOGRAPHICS ANALYSIS & COMMUNITY PROFILE



DEMOGRAPHICS ANALYSIS AND COMMUNITY PROFILE

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

The Town of Bennett has undertaken this Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan as a strategic planning effort that will work hand-in-hand with the Town's other planning documents. One component of such a plan is to understand how local demographics affect 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.

The Town of Bennett is located east of the Denver-metro Area and straddles the Adams County and Arapahoe County border (I-70). The area is still relatively rural, despite its location along Interstate 70 and being on the eastern edge of the anticipated urban growth boundary. The rural setting of the surrounding area means that the service area for Town of Bennett parks and recreation facilities and services is larger than the just the population within the Town boundaries. Users of the Town's facilities may include those in the unincorporated parts of both Adams and Arapahoe Counties, as well as some of the smaller communities and towns in the vicinity that do not have any park or recreation services.

Note: Unless otherwise noted, the raw data used for the analysis that follows was provided by ESRI Business Solutions.

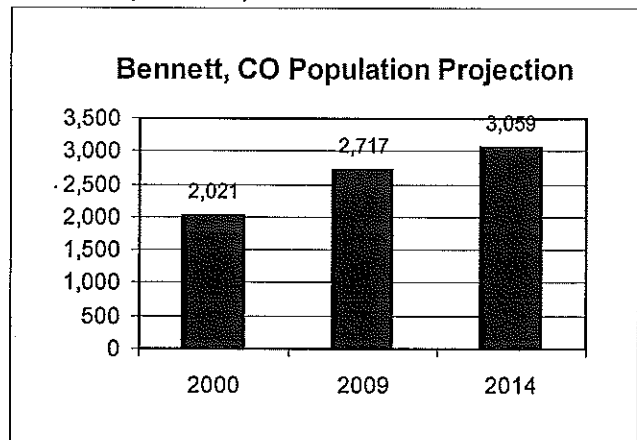
POPULATION FORECAST

Bennett, Colorado, is a developing community that is growing faster than both Colorado and the United States. It is projected that the community will experience a 2.48% annual population growth rate for the five (5) year period between 2009 and 2014. This rate of growth significantly exceeds the rate projected for Colorado (1.5%) and the US (0.91%) for the same period. The projected population of Bennett is illustrated in **Figure 2.1**. Additionally, as mentioned previously, consideration for the number of users of park facilities should take into account that Town services may also be used by nearby residents in unincorporated Adams and Arapahoe Counties and other small communities in the area. The 1999 Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Bennett also notes a three-mile radius growth boundary and a maximum capacity for sewer and water service for a population of 10,000 (with the caveat that if improvements were made to the system, it may be able to accommodate an additional population).

For parks and recreation planning and programming, a high rate of population growth may provide some un-predictability in

park, facility, and program user rates and demands, with fluctuations due to changes in the sheer number as well as makeup of users. Therefore, it is important for Bennett to understand the demographics of its residents, as well as trends in parks and recreation that may cause programs and facilities to become more or less popular among users.

FIGURE 2.1: TOWN OF BENNETT POPULATION GROWTH (2000-2014)



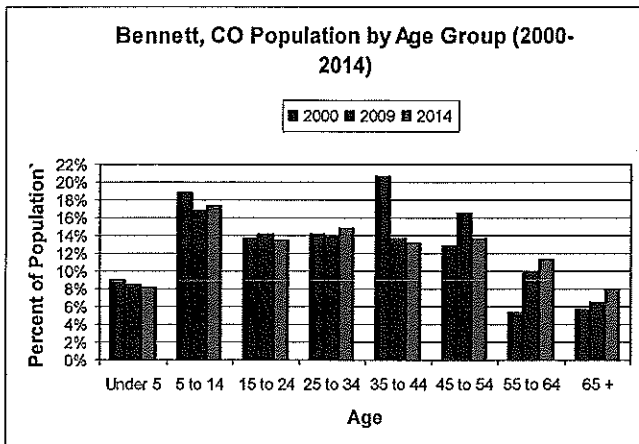
AGE DISTRIBUTION & BREAKDOWN

For the purpose of parks and recreation planning and based on the United States (US) Census Tract Data, seven (7) age groups are used to classify the Town's population. These age groups generally define how a group uses parks and recreation facilities, their physical abilities, types of programs they may be interested in, and the amount of time available to spend participating in recreational activities. These groups are:

- Under 5 – Persons with limited physical abilities and who need constant supervision and typically experience facilities and programs with an adult
 - Represents 8.5% of the population in 2009, and will decrease to 8.1% in 2014
- 5-14 – The largest users of youth programs and playgrounds, this is also a key time to create habits of being active
 - Represents 16.9% of the population in 2009, and will increase to 17.4% in 2014
- 15-24 – Young adults who use facilities and programs independent of their family, primarily with friends and as part of their social time
 - Represents 14.1% of the population in 2009, and will decrease to 13.5% in 2014

- 25-34 – those whose needs primarily center on relationships and starting families
 - o Represents 13.8% of the population in 2009, and will increase to 14.9% in 2014
- 5-44 and 45-54 – Persons whose recreation needs generally revolve around their family, that likely contains children ranging from toddlers to young adults, and who are highly active themselves
 - o Collectively represents 30.2% of the population in 2009, which will decrease to 26.7% in 2014
- 55-64 – Empty nesters, those focused on new grandchildren, and those often preparing for retirement. This group is considered “young” seniors and is more active, typically in individual unstructured activities
 - o Represents 10.0% of the population in 2009, and will increase to 11.4% in 2014
- 65+ - A group that is currently more active than at any point in history, has more leisure time, and whose abilities may be somewhat physically constrained
 - o Represents 6.5% of the population in 2009, and will increase to 8.0% in 2014

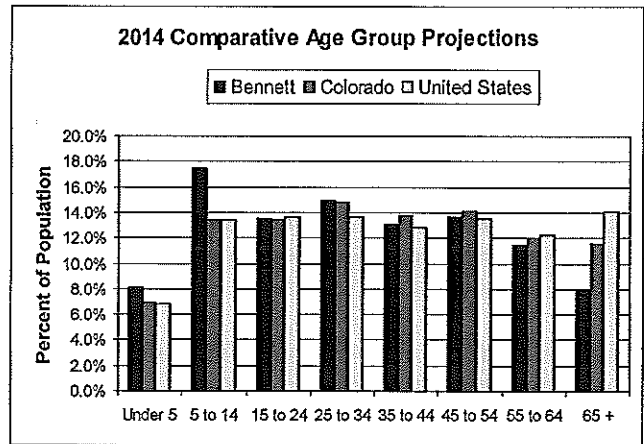
FIGURE 2.2: TOWN OF BENNETT - POPULATION BY AGE GROUP (2000-2014)



A profile of the Town’s population age is critical to parks and recreation programming since different age groups could have extremely different needs and desires for parks and recreation facilities. **Figure 2.2** illustrates the population trend of the Town of Bennett by the age groups described above. Except for a spike in 2000 of 35 to 44 year olds, the 5 to 14 age group is the largest segment of the population (currently at 14.1%) in all years evaluated. The trends for the various age groups are

not consistent over the 14 year study period and fluctuate from group to group, especially in the age groups between 5 and 54. It does appear, however, that the population 55 and above is increasing and combined will total 19.4% of the population in 2014. The numbers also show a decreasing under 5 age group, yet, combined, the children under 14 will still be greater (25.5% total) than the older portion of the population. Also, refer to **Figure 2.3** for comparison against national trends.

FIGURE 2.3: COMPARATIVE AGE GROUP PROJECTIONS – BENNETT, COLORADO AND THE US (2014)

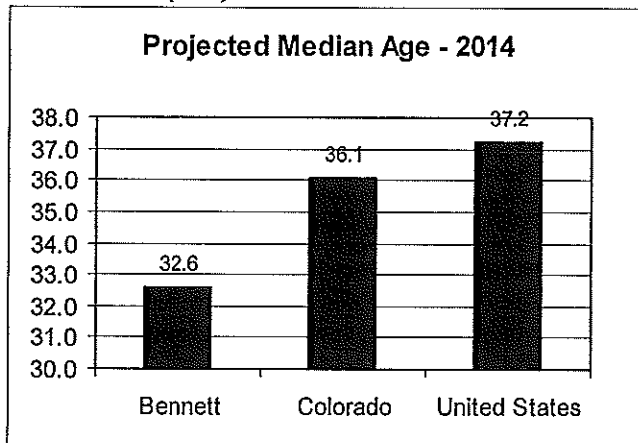


Figures 2.3 and **2.4** illustrate the unique characteristics of the Town of Bennett when compared to Colorado and the United States. **Figure 2.3** illustrates that the percentage of population in the two age categories under 14 years is projected to be greater in Bennett (under 14 in 2014 = 25.5%) than national averages (under 14 in 2014 = 20.2%). The reverse is true of ages 55 and above – Bennett is projected to have a lower percent of the population in the categories above age 55 (55 and over in 2014 = 19.4%) than the nation (55 and over in 2014 = 26.4%). This indicates the need to provide additional programming and facilities for both the children, though not ignoring the needs of the older members of the community.

Bennett's population is projected to be significantly younger over the next five years than both the nation as a whole and the State of Colorado. **Figure 2.4** illustrates the projected difference in median age - Bennett's projected median age in 2014 will be 32.6 years, which is 3.5 years younger than the projected median age of Colorado, and 4.6 years younger than the projected median age of the nation.

When compared to the State of Colorado and the US, Bennett's population segment of those 65 and older is growing at a slightly faster rate. Between 2009 and 2014, the 65 + population in the Town of Bennett will increase by 1.5%; in Colorado it will increase by 1.4% and in the nation it will increase by 1.3%. Relevant to parks and recreation planning and programming, a lot of attention nationally and statewide will be paid to meeting the need for recreational amenities for older adults, and Bennett's demand for programs and facilities serving the needs of those 65 and over should also increase, however, not at the expense of meeting the needs of it's younger than average population, as discussed previously (also see Figures 2.2 and 2.3).

FIGURE 2.4: BENNETT PROJECTED POPULATION BY MEDIAN AGE (2014)

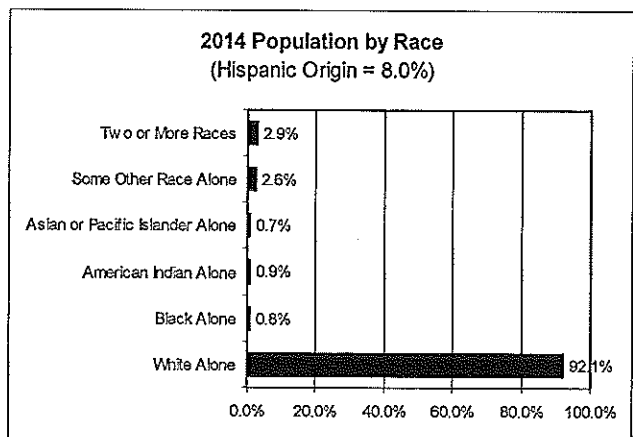
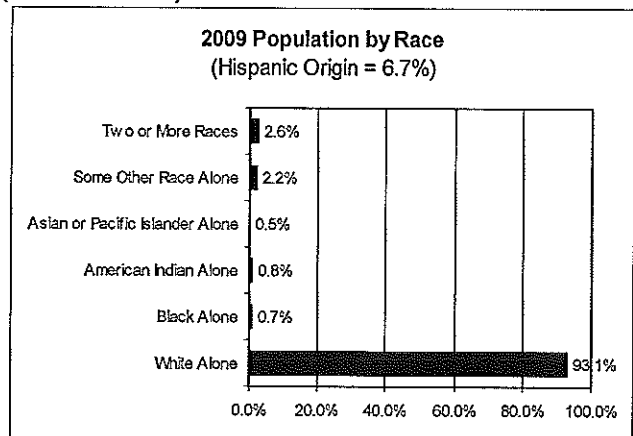


RACE/ETHNICITY

Race and ethnicity play a role in the population's parks and recreation needs and desires. Trends can be found in the ways that different races/ethnic groups use parks, recreation facilities, and the types of programs they seek. As Figures 2.5 and 2.6 illustrate, the Town of Bennett's ethnicity makeup is predominately "White Alone" and will remain so over the next five years. The Town of Bennett is less racially diverse than both Colorado and the Country, as a whole. The percentage of the population in 2014 that is "White Alone" will be significantly lower in both Colorado (79.6%) and the Country (70.3%) than in the Town (92.1%). Additionally, in 2014, the percentage of state residents projected to be of Hispanic origin is 21.9% and the percentage of US residents of Hispanic origin will be 17.5% - a significant difference from Bennett's 8.0% projection.

Despite the Town's 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 Town. Yet, the Town should also be aware that programming specifically geared towards minorities would likely have low participation numbers because of the low percentage of the population made up by minorities. Therefore, increased marketing to minorities may be a more effective use of resources instead of specific programs geared towards minority groups.

FIGURE 2.5 AND 2.6: BENNETT POPULATION BY RACE (2009 AND 2014)

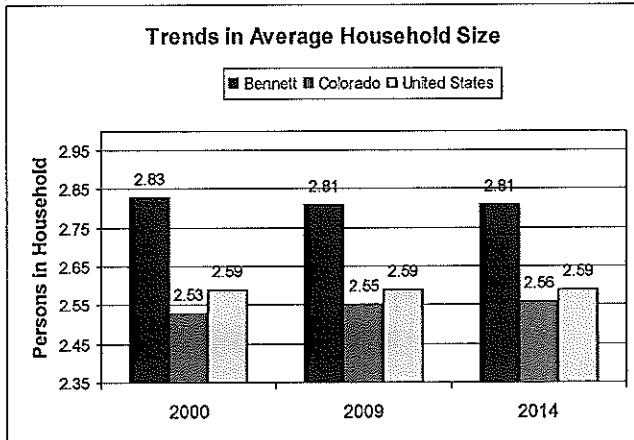


HOUSEHOLD MAKEUP

The Town's household makeup is significantly different from both Colorado's and the Country. In 2000, 51.7% of the households in Bennett had related children. This is 16.9% greater than the rate of households with related children in the State

of Colorado (34.8%) and 16.2% greater than the rate nationally (35.5%). Additionally, the average number of persons per household in 2009 is greater at 2.81 people than that of both Colorado (2.55 people) and the Country (2.59 people) and will maintain that number through 2014 (see **Figure 2.7**). In addition to the higher than average household size, household makeup is very important to parks and recreation programming – in 2000, 14.2% of households in Bennett had five (5) or more persons (compared to 9.7% in Colorado and 10.9% in the US). Programs aimed at families and children, such as additional community and special events will likely be successful in Bennett.

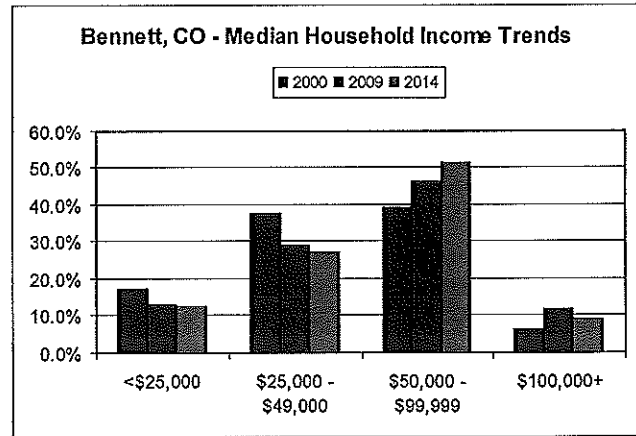
FIGURE 2.7: TRENDS IN AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE (2000-2014) – BENNETT, COLORADO AND US



HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Data show that income and physical activity are also positively correlated -- when one rises, the other rises. The number of households in Bennett with low income levels is expected to decrease and those within the moderate income level is expected to increase by 2014 (see **Figure 2.8**). However, the disparity in median household income between the Town of Bennett and the State of Colorado is expected to grow. In 2009, the median household income in Bennett is \$56,962, which is lower than the Colorado median of \$62,597. In 2014, median household income in Bennett is projected to increase to \$60,871, while Colorado's median household increase will grower at a slightly slower rate to \$65,813. The difference between Bennett's median income and Colorado's may also drive many Bennett residents to seek activities and entertainment in closer proximity to home, instead of traveling into the Denver Metro area where prices for such events and activities may reflect the higher level of income shown in the median Colorado number.

FIGURE 2.8: TOWN OF BENNETT MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME TRENDS

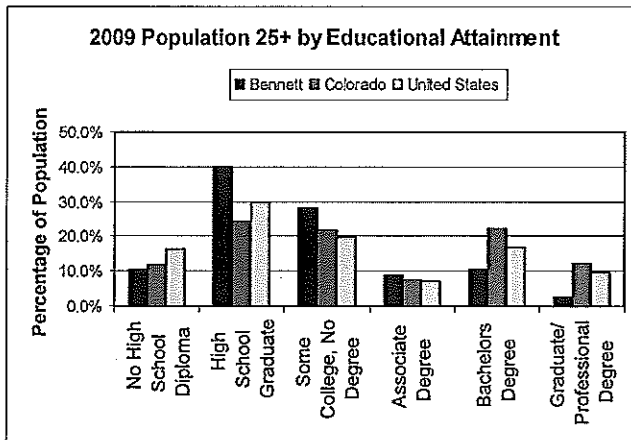


For parks and recreation, income levels often influence the service, facility and fee structures. However, as operations and maintenance costs increase and when considering fee increases, it will be important to evaluate pricing levels, as there are many residents within the community that may not have the ability to pay, but may be most in need of the Town's services. Additionally, it is important to keep in mind that income level is not a determining factor in level of interest in outdoor activities. However, while it may not decrease the interest level, income will impact the ability to pay for activities and events where fees are charged.

EDUCATION

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. ESRI Business solutions data illustrates that in 2009, 21.5% of the population in Bennett has an Associate's, Bachelor's or higher educational degree. By way of comparison, 42.2% of the population in the State of Colorado and 34.0% 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**. Considering that Bennett's education levels are significantly lower (10-20%) than state and national trends, the Town may need to focus its efforts in educating and increasing participation in health and wellness programs to counterbalance the impact that this may have on residents' physical activity levels.

FIGURE 2.9: TOWN OF BENNETT – 2009 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (AGE 25+)



programs. 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 to the park or open space is the greatest determining factor. Therefore, the Town of Bennett should focus efforts on continuing to improve walkable access to existing parks and recreation facilities, as well as strategically locate new facilities in close proximity to future population growth areas.

HEALTH AND OTHER RELATED FACTORS

Research shows that a person’s physical activity level, which by extension is 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 2009*:

- More than 50% of US adults do not get enough physical activity to provide health benefits;
- 25% of US adults are not active at all in their leisure time;
- Sufficient activity is less common among women than men;
- Those with lower incomes and less education are less active; and
- About two-thirds of young people in grades 9–12 are not engaged in recommended levels of physical activity.

Research has also shown that the availability of opportunities to participate in physical activity is positively correlated with the amount of physical activity in which people engage. Therefore, the availability of parks and recreation services are vital to increasing physical activity across all age sectors and plays a key role in reducing obesity rates. When evaluating the availability of these opportunities, one must 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 facilities and



3. COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER INPUT

COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER INPUT

INTRODUCTION

Close interaction with the public, Town staff, and key stakeholders was critical throughout the project process and resulted in the identification of residents' concerns, perceived needs, and priorities regarding the provision of parks and recreation facilities, programs and services. The project team worked to include a wide representation of interests, user groups, and geographic areas, to represent the diverse needs of the community's residents and stakeholders.

During the week of June 29, 2009, Bennett staff, elected officials and residents were provided a number of opportunities in which to provide input on this planning effort. These forums included a public meeting, interviews with Town Administration and Public Works staff, elected officials, partners and alternative providers. These efforts included facilitated meetings and discussions in order to gain input from residents and stakeholders so as to guide the identification of important issues and appropriate solutions.

GENERAL PUBLIC AND TOWN RESIDENTS

Strengths – Citizens of the Town of Bennett are proud of the rural character and feel of their community. They enjoy the scenic views of the Rocky Mountains and the natural setting surrounding the community. Citizens also appreciate the walkability of their town, specifically the trail from the center of Town to the commercial development near Interstate 70. Parks, including Trupp, Community, and Brothers Four, are seen as strong assets of the community. **Table 3.1** provides an overview of the key strengths or assets that stakeholders mentioned in the public input process.

TABLE 3.1: STRENGTHS OF THE BENNETT PARK & RECREATION SYSTEM & SERVICES

STRENGTHS
Town character: small, quiet, rural
Size of the Town makes it walkable
Natural setting and views
New library
Bennett Recreation Center (managed by Bennett Parks & Rec District)
Planned Facilities - Aquatics Center and Recreation Complex (managed by Parks & Recreation District)
Skatepark

Challenges – As much as rural character has its benefits it also has challenges. Bennett's development around the railroad tracks and major highways has created barriers to access, particularly via foot and bike, different parts of the Town. The Town's location on the high plains means limited trees and, therefore, limited shade available. It may also make weed management and abatement more difficult and contribute to the residents noticing thorns while biking and walking on the trail and in parks. There is also a feeling of a lack of recreation opportunities and options for the youth, which is a large demographic group in the community. Additionally, the restroom facilities within the parks are generally locked, except during special events, making it difficult for people to spend extended amounts of time within a park. **Table 3.2** illustrates other commonly mentioned challenges that the Town faces in providing parks, trails and open space.

TABLE 3.2: CHALLENGES OF THE BENNETT PARK & RECREATION SYSTEM & SERVICES

CHALLENGES
Railroad tracks
Major highways split the Town
Town in two counties
Lack of sidewalks and connectivity
Bennett community center
Lack of shade
Lack of recreation opportunities & athletic fields
Turf and weed management

Opportunities – Some of Bennett’s parks, such as Trupp Park, could be improved and with updated facilities and design would become an even greater asset to the community. Shade provided by trees or structures, equipment upgrades, and increased maintenance are some of the possible improvements that residents and stakeholder would like to see. Additionally, the extension of the Town’s trail is an opportunity to increase connectivity through the Town. On a larger scale, Bennett’s smaller size allows for the planning of amenities as the Town develops. Additional potential opportunities discussed during the public input process are listed in **Table 3.3**.

TABLE 3.3: OPPORTUNITIES OF THE BENNETT PARK & RECREATION SYSTEM & SERVICES

OPPORTUNITIES
Improvements to existing parks
Acquiring additional land for open space and parks
Kiowa Creek and the Kiowa Creek Open Space
Acreage planned to be dedicated to the Town through planned developments
Connecting into existing county trail networks
Partnering with the Bennett Park and Recreation District, Adams County and Arapahoe County

Threats – Some residents felt that there was a lack of sense of community and volunteerism. Threats such as this can lead to difficulties in maintaining and improving facilities, especially in tough economic times when budgets are tightening. Volunteer time can often be used as a match for grants that could be applied for to improve facilities. Additional potential threats mentioned in this discussion are represented in **Table 3.4**.

TABLE 3.4: THREATS OF THE BENNETT PARK & RECREATION SYSTEM & SERVICES

THREATS
Challenge budgeting directly for park maintenance in Public Works
Maintaining the Field of Dreams with its high usage rate
Lack of funding
Lack of water
Fractured nature of lands annexed by the Town
National and local economic crisis

ELECTED OFFICIALS AND DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVES

Strengths – Similar to the citizens, representatives of the Town are also proud of the Town’s heritage, rural character and quiet feel of their community. The views of the Rocky Mountains and natural setting surrounding the community are also strengths they would like to maintain.

Challenges – Physical characteristics of the Town, such as highway and railroad locations and county boundaries, can make planning challenging. Currently the Town itself is not one contiguous entity, but separated by distances. These combine to create additional strain on various Town departments and services. For example, Public Works has significant windshield time in maintaining not only Town properties, but also often has to mow and plow CDOT rights-of-way.

Discussions with the consultant team also included the overall lack of quality outdoor recreation and exercise opportunities. They recognize that many of their existing facilities are quite dated and not up to current safety standards. While the Town does have an ordinance in place to require new developments to provide open space and park dedication, the ordinance does have a timeframe requirement for facility development and does guide how these spaces will work together as an overall system.

Opportunities – An advantage to being located in both Arapahoe and Adams Counties is that both counties have open space programs with funding opportunities. Arapahoe County recently purchased the Kiowa Creek parcel for open space, which if connected into the existing Town trail would be a wonderful asset for the Bennett community. Adams County also has a trail system that the Town would like to connect into, so as to promote more regional connections between the Town and the two counties. Additionally, the Bennett Recreation District was formed to serve residents in Town as well as some unincorporated areas of Adams County. This partnership has greatly benefited the community in the past and should continue to be strengthened to provide additional active recreation programming of current and future recreation facilities.

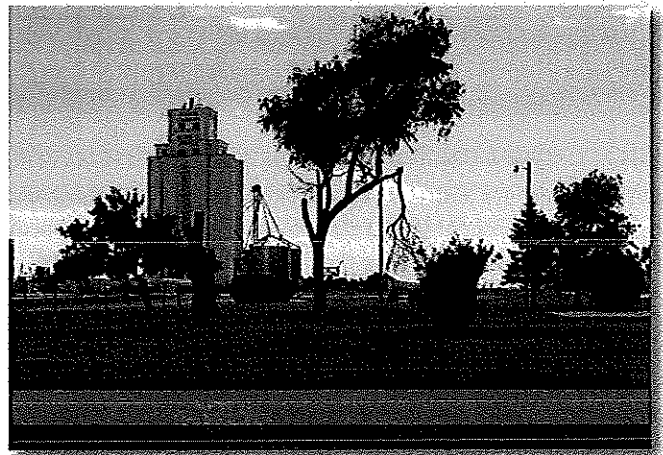
Approximately 150 acres will be required to be dedicated to the Town with the planned developments that are currently in the development process. These developments are in their early stages, giving the Town an opportunity to create a well-balanced

park system that ties the community together despite its fractured nature.

Threats – Similar to many communities, the Town of Bennett faces financial difficulties. Additionally, there is no department dedicated solely to parks and recreation development, operations or maintenance. Together, these threats make it difficult to focus on parks and recreation as a part of the Town’s infrastructure and to plan for improvements, acquisitions, and future developments.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES

The *Bennett Park and Recreation District* was formed in 2002. Since then, the District has constructed phase one of the recreation center including a gymnasium, weight room, fitness room, and common area. Several additional phases are planned with swimming, outdoor recreation (soccer fields, etc.), and additional indoor facilities. The recreation center currently offers a variety of programs including indoor sports leagues, cultural and educational activities, and fitness classes. The District does have an inter-governmental agreement with the Town. The Recreation District has taken over organization of the community Harvest Festival, and there is potential in the future for the District to collaborate with the Town to program, manage, and develop other facilities and activities.



Arapahoe County Open Space Program is a fairly new program that has made significant progress in open space acquisition, easements, and open space preservation over the past five (5) years. One recent accomplishment that directly impacts the Bennett community was the significant purchase of the Kiowa

Creek parcel. Future plans for this parcel include a parking area, trailhead, and trails. The County has also recently begun their master planning process for County open space and trails and would like to include the Town of Bennett as a key stakeholder in the process. Increased communications and collaboration may enable the Town to work more directly with the County to achieve shared goals, such as providing buffers for urban development and to maintain rural character, and to gain additional funding through their open space grants program.

Adams County Parks and Community Resources Department has a well-established open space program that utilizes a dedicated sales tax for open space acquisition, easements, and grant allocations for both active and passive recreation. The County currently has an open space master plan identifying certain key corridors for trails and preservation. Kiowa Creek is one of those key corridors. The Kiowa Creek parcel, riparian areas, and plans to develop trails presents the opportunity to create a regional trail network between Adams County and Arapahoe County, with Bennett acting as the connecting tie. The County also sees farmland, wildlife corridor, and view shed preservation as high priorities and opportunities to partner with the Town.



4. BUDGET & FUNDING ANALYSIS

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BUDGET & FUNDING ANALYSIS

FUNDING AND BUDGETING OVERVIEW

BUDGET PROCESS AND STRUCTURE

The Town of Bennett operates on a January 1 - December 31 fiscal/calendar year (FY) and budgets on a one year cycle. In regard to financial management, the Town is composed of thirteen (13) specific service area divisions: Water and Sewer, Road and Street Maintenance, Building Inspections, Environment, Animal Control, Sheriff Services, Municipal Court, Parks, Recreation, Senior Services, Transportation, Bennett Community Food Bank, and Public Services.



The Town's parks, recreation facilities, and grounds are maintained by the Public Works Department. The scheduling and coordination of these facilities are overseen by the Town's Executive Assistant. Recreation programming is provided primarily by the Bennett Recreation District, a formal partner of the Town that manages and operates the Town's Recreation Center. However, the Town hosts and partners to provide a few community special events throughout the year, which include an Easter Egg Hunt, Fireworks Programs, Harvest Festival, Turkey Shoot, Breakfast with Santa, Parade of Lights and the Lighting of the Christmas Tree. Funding for these facilities and services is allocated from the Town's General Fund, Conservation Trust Fund, General Capital Development Fund, Grants and the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Impact Fee Funds.

FUNDING SOURCES

The Town of Bennett uses a variety of revenue sources to fund its services and expenditures. These include general property taxes, sales taxes, building permits, water and sewer utility fees, grants, a 2% use tax and impact fees. Current circumstances have impacted the funding sources available to the Town, which

include the following:

- Property Tax – Projected increase by 15.5% for 2009, due to a \$32,311 increase from Adams County as a result of commercial development and a slight decrease from Arapahoe County by \$195
- Sales Tax – Projected increase of over 6.0% in 2009
- Building Permits – Decrease from 2008 projections to a level of five (5) new SFEs
- Water and Sewer – New utility fees and rates became effective on January 15, 2009, which will provide additional revenue to allow for increased maintenance levels and elimination of the sewer fund deficit
- Grants – Three (3) grants applied for and/or awarded to the Town in 2009 include:
 - Tony Hawk Grant – Renovation of the skateboard park which will be completed in 2009
 - CDOT Grant – Trail expansion from Brothers Four Park to the Bennett Marketplace/King Soopers site. An additional grant request was made to Adams County Open Space to fully fund the project
 - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – Funding for the Special Transit transportation and senior citizen nutrition programs
- 2.0% Use Tax – Decreased revenue due to a decline in construction projections for commercial and residential development, resulting from the economic recession
- Impact Fees - Decreased revenue for capital improvements due to a decline in construction projections for commercial and residential development, resulting from the economic recession

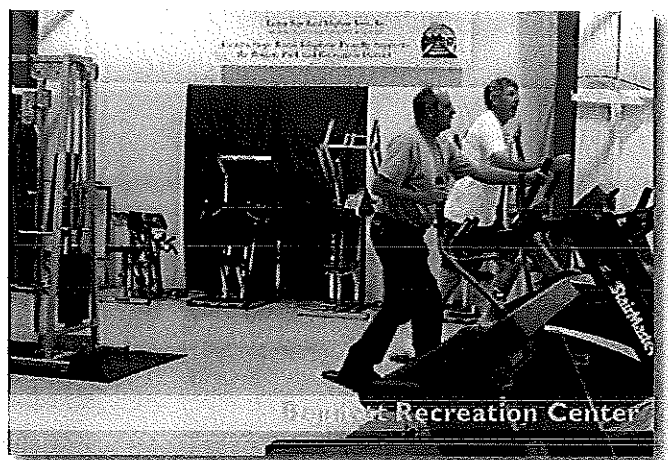


Table 4.1 is a comparative breakdown of the percentages of the Town's detailed revenue sources for the Town's FY 2009 budget. This includes not only the revenue generated from the previously listed funding sources, but also previous fund balances and additional alternative funding.

TABLE 4.1: TOWN OF BENNETT EXPENDITURES & REVENUES (FY 2009)

BENNETT REVENUES & EXPENDITURES	FY 2009
General Fund	\$1,530,575
Water Fund	\$735,212
Sewer Fund	\$280,409
Restricted Street Fund	\$6,606
Mount View Cemetery Fund	\$73,926
Bennett Community Food Bank Fund	\$6,242
Conservation Trust Fund	\$51,299
General Capital Development Fund	\$76,908
Water Capital Development Fund	\$86,910
Sewer Capital Development Fund	\$11,616
Debt Service Fund	\$51,350
Grants	\$6,000
Utilities Emergency Fund	\$8,714
Parks, Recreation & Open Space Impact Fee Fund	\$5,981
Public Facilities Impact Fee Fund	\$7,668
Police Facilities Impact Fee Fund	\$8,025
Storm Drainage Impact Fee Fund	\$11,87
Transportation Facilities Impact Fee Fund	\$24,069
TOTAL	\$2,983,386

BUDGET OVERVIEW

GENERAL FUND

The Town's proposed General Fund budget for FY 2009 is \$1,530,575 a decrease of 2% from FY 2008 (\$1,413,594). The decrease of funding to the Town's General Fund budget is most greatly due to significant decreases in Intergovernmental Revenue (-77%), Municipal Court Fees/Fines (-77%), and Town Building Revenue (-43%) from FY 2008. Table 4.2 illustrates the evolution of the Town's General Fund revenue from FY 2007 to 2009.

TABLE 4.2: TOWN OF BENNETT - GENERAL FUND (FY 2007 - 2009)

REVENUE	ACTUAL 2007	PROJECTED 2008	PERCENT CHANGE	BUDGET 2009	PERCENT CHANGE
Beginning Fund Balance	\$84,729	(\$21,145)	-301%	\$140,265	115%
Taxes	\$671,334	\$1,121,230	40%	\$1,178,903	5%
Intergovernmental Revenue	\$144,820	\$145,484	0%	\$82,275	-77%
Franchise/Royalty	\$41,482	\$45,677	9%	\$42,500	-7%
License/Permits	\$21,003	\$34,318	39%	\$28,924	-19%
Town Building Revenue	\$21,477	\$20,150	-7%	\$14,053	-43%
Swimming Pool	\$7,753	\$11,214	31%	\$10,175	-10%
Planning/Zoning	\$2,874	\$1,269	-126%	\$10,550	88%
Miscellaneous	\$28,497	\$13,970	-104%	\$11,300	-24%
Municipal Court Fines/Fees	\$12,270	\$19,926	38%	\$11,273	-77%
Interest	\$611	\$356	-72%	\$357	0%
TOTAL	\$952,121	\$1,413,594	33%	\$1,390,310	-2%

Table 4.3 illustrates the projected expenditures of the Town for FY 2009. Total projected Town expenditures equal \$1,530,575, with an emergency reserve of \$41,142. An Ending Fund Balance of \$140,265 is projected, remaining from excess revenue gained in 2008. Of this total expenditure amount, \$103,231 (6.75%) is allocated towards parks and recreation, swimming pool, and community center funding. The FY 2009 budget for parks and recreation illustrates a significant increase from FY 2007 (\$79,966) and 2008 (\$82,505). Despite steady increases in the past, the Town's Administration has indicated that the allocation of funds will likely level out in the foreseeable future due to the tight economic circumstances.

Public Works, which maintains the Town's parks and recreation facilities, was allocated \$257,258 (16.8%) of the budget for FY 2009, which increased by 18% from 2008, but was bouncing back from a 13% decline from 2007. Yet, due to a lack of detailed accounting, it is unknown as to how much of this budget is allocated toward maintaining specific park and recreation facilities vs. streets, buildings, etc. These fluctuations in funding and lack of expense tracking can often result in a reactionary approach to maintaining a parks and recreation system, which does not support the proactive planning for equipment replacement, material supplies, and labor assignments that is necessary to provide a high quality system.

TABLE 4.3: TOWN OF BENNETT - GENERAL FUND EXPENSES (FY 2007 - 2009)

EXPENSES	ACTUAL 2007	PROJECTED 2008	PERCENT CHANGE	BUDGET 2009	PERCENT CHANGE
Administrative	\$232,492	\$196,868	218%	\$278,169	29%
Board of Trustees	\$75,685	\$30,162	-151%	\$108,842	72%
Public Improvement Reimburse	\$0	\$307,923	100%	\$315,770	2%
Municipal Court	\$4,573	\$3,837	-19%	\$6,900	44%
Public Safety	\$311,919	\$338,674	8%	\$358,122	5%
Planning/Zoning	\$65,466	\$14,562	-350%	\$37,470	61%
Engineering	\$25,364	\$8,350	-204%	\$28,500	71%
Public Works	\$238,717	\$211,967	-13%	\$257,258	18%
Parks/Recreation	\$34,619	\$25,837	-34%	\$39,080	34%
Swimming Pool	\$33,285	\$32,441	-3%	\$35,311	8%
Community Center	\$14,601	\$21,688	33%	\$28,882	25%
Muegge House	\$4,159	\$4,149	0%	\$6,771	39%
Building Inspection	\$8,801	\$12,607	30%	\$18,500	32%
Code Enforcement	\$8,315	\$8,667	4%	\$11,000	21%
TOTAL	\$1,057,996	\$1,217,732	13%	\$1,530,575	20%

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUNDING

Capital improvement funds are intended for major physical improvements or a non-recurring betterment to the physical property of the Town, which differentiates from ordinary repairs or maintenance. These funds have fluctuated significantly over the past three years, starting at \$28,801 in FY 2007, peaking in FY 2008 at \$132,015, and then declining significantly in FY 2009 to \$76,908. Bennett's capital funds are primarily developed through the General Service Capital Fund and Impact Fee Funds. Specific to parks and recreation capital funding, the Town did not allocate and dollars for capital improvement funding in 2007, provided \$128,579 in FY 2008, which then decreased by 121% to \$58,248 in FY 2009. Table 4.4 illustrates the trends in revenues and expenditures for Capital Improvements from FY 2007 – 2009.

Given tight economic times, in the short-term there is expected to be a decline in development and the collection of impact fees. However, in order to adequately plan for future development and to meet this growing community's needs, it will be important to align and update impact fee levels with the funding required for recommended parkland acquisition, equipment, and facility development. Additionally, considering the Town's significant needs for Capital Improvements (see Inventory and Conditional Analysis Section of the report) it may also be appropriate to consider the potential of utilizing a bond referendum to establish additional revenue to support specific projects

TABLE 4.4: TOWN OF BENNETT - GENERAL SERVICE CAPITAL FUND (FY 2007 - 2009)

EXPENSES	ACTUAL 2007	PROJECTED 2008	PERCENT CHANGE	BUDGET 2009	PERCENT CHANGE
Beginning Fund Balance	\$9,905	\$56,533	471%	\$47,698	-19%
Adams County Open Space	\$20,083	\$119,901	497%	\$8,500	-1311%
Culture	\$208	\$4	-98%	\$0	-100%
Street Improvement	\$11,092	\$0	-100%	\$0	0%
2% Use Tax	\$8,994	\$9,769	9%	\$13,780	29%
AH 8% School	\$9	\$272	2922%	\$0	-100%
AH Administrative Service	\$59	\$337	471%	\$630	47%
Arapahoe County Open Space	\$7,244	\$7,474	3%	\$6,300	-19%
TOTAL REVENUE	\$57,594	\$194,290	237%	\$76,908	-153%
General	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
AH 8% School Fee Reimburse	\$0	\$267	267%	\$0	-100%
2% Use Tax	\$17,981	\$2,880	-84%	\$18,660	85%
Parks/Recreation	\$0	\$128,579	128597%	\$58,248	-121%
Culture	\$4,932	\$289	-94%	\$0	-100%
Street Improvement	\$5,888	\$0	-100%	\$0	0%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$28,801	\$132,015	358%	\$76,908	-72%

BUDGET AND FUNDING ANALYSIS

Despite the economically challenging times that the Country is facing, the Town has been fortunate to maintain fairly steady economic circumstances due the area's recent commercial growth. As described in the Demographic Analysis and Community Profile section of the report, Bennett is still expected to continue to experience significant population growth, which correlates with an increasing need for services such as retail, parks and recreation, providing property and sales tax dollars and impact fee revenue for the Town. However, given the nationwide economic decline the Town should continue to conservatively plan for the future and seek additional alternative funding.

It is important to recognize the many benefits that Bennett's parks, trails and recreation facilities provide the community, including economic (business attraction and increased property values), health, environmental and quality of life advantages. Considering these values, as well as Bennett's projected growing population and development potential, the Town needs to plan and budget for a balanced development approach that includes parkland and open space acquisition, as well as facility improvements and development.

A more detailed accounting approach is needed in order to understand exactly what revenue is intended to be dedicated to parks, trails, and open space funding for operations, maintenance, acquisition, and development. Additionally, detailed tracking of expenditures on specific park and recreation projects will assist the Town in budgeting for future operations, maintenance, and capital projects, as well provide for increasing transparency with its constituents and potential funders (e.g. grantees, donors, corporate sponsors, etc).

An additional area of concern is that the Town has not historically and does not currently charge user fees for use of its facilities, particularly the Field of Dreams. Given the heavy use of this facility by the school district and the community and declining Town revenues it is an unsustainable practice to continue to so heavily subsidize the use of this and other Town facilities. Furthermore, the lack of a structured fee program has resulted in misperceptions about ownership, user conflicts, and scheduling challenges.

It is also important to note that the Town's park acreage per thousand equates to a Level of Service (LOS) of 5.45 acres/1,000 residents, which is significantly lower than the NRPA minimum of 6.25 acres/1,000. The Town's current standard and aging

system elicit questions about the need for a dedicated funding source for parkland acquisition and facility operations and maintenance. Given the Town's many needs for capital improvements and development for new recreation facilities and amenities, it is going to be increasingly important to work to establish a steady stream of funding, such as a dedicated property and/or sales tax.

Although capital funding declined significantly in FY 2009, it is evident that in the future, in order to keep the Town on pace with other communities and park and recreation providers and to seize the opportunity to attract future growth and development, increases will need to be made to current funding levels. The Town periodically updates its Impact Fee ordinance and should use the recommendations of this plan to set fees at a level that supports the growing park and recreation needs of the community. The Town should also continue to be proactive in identifying, seeking out and supporting matching funds for grants and alternative funding (see Appendix).



5. PARKS MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS



PARKS MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Bennett's parks maintenance operations are handled by the Town's Public Works Department. The Public Works Department is responsible for maintaining Bennett's five (5) existing parks and the ¾ mile trail along Highway 79 / 1st Street to King Soopers, as well as the streets, water and sewer lines, buildings, roadside ditches, the cemetery, and all other Town infrastructure. There is not a dedicated staff specifically for the maintenance and operations of parks, trails, and open space areas. The Public Works' one (1) part-time/seasonal and six (6) full-time employees are responsible for the upkeep of all of the Town of Bennett's infrastructure and facilities, throughout the summer and winter.

RESOURCE ANALYSIS

According to staff, the equipment included in the Public Works fleet varies from older run-down pieces to those in good condition (condition is mostly based on the age of the item). However, the Department makes an effort to maintain all equipment in order to extend its life. When new equipment is needed, thus far it has not been a significant problem to upgrade or acquire it.

Many of the conditional issues present in the existing park facilities may be partially due to the limited availability of water to irrigate new trees, turf, and to provide restroom facilities. The current lack of natural shade may also stem from a historic lack of water, deferred maintenance, and the typically dry climate of the area. Many of the trees that do exist within the facilities are damaged or stunted from harsh growing conditions and wind. Much of the turf in the park areas is more weeds than the turf grasses suitable for play; again, likely a result of a limited water source and the nature of the parks as a secondary priority to other infrastructure the Department maintains. While artificial turf could be a consideration with this limited resource, staff believes that it may not be well-received. In addition, years of deferred maintenance have created a lack of updated amenities in the existing parks, creating safety issues with play equipment, as well as facilities that are not highly used.

Please see the Budget and Funding Section for more information regarding budgeting for the Public Works Department and the maintenance of park facilities.

ANALYSIS AND BEST PRACTICES

The Public Works Department appears to have a more than adequate number of personnel to maintain the existing park system. The six (6) full-time employees (FTEs) currently maintain 16.4 acres of parkland plus the ¾ mile trail along Highway 79 / 1st Street (estimated to be approximately 1.75 acres). At a total of 21.3 acres of parkland acreage, this affords 3.55 acres of parkland for every employee. However, it is important to note that this does not take into account the other similar maintenance activities for the crew on the roadside ditches and the cemetery. This 3.55:1 ratio falls well below the average and best practices average of other agencies throughout the Country, which is a positive asset for the Town. The International City Management Association (ICMA) has indicated that best practice agencies fall within the 12:1 ratio; with the national average at 20:1.

However, it is important to take into account that while there is plenty of room to expand the park system and stay at or below the 12:1 ratio, consideration should be given that the same staff also maintains all of the other Town's infrastructure, which may affect the quality and time spent on park maintenance compared to a dedicated park maintenance staff the 12:1 ratio assumes. Staff sees the potential, as the Town expands, for Public Works to divide into sub-departments for Parks, Utilities, Roads, etc. If a group specifically dedicated to maintenance of the parks, trails, and open space areas were formed, then this ratio could accurately be measured.

While Bennett's ratio of park acreage to park maintenance workers is good, the consultant team's inventory and conditional analysis illustrates that the existing conditions of the Town's parks and facilities are at or below average (except for Brothers Four Park). The Department continues to be challenged by a significant amount of deferred maintenance and antiquated amenities. The most immediate remedy would be to track time doing routine tasks, establish standards for the Department, increase staff training to maintain the system more efficiently, as well as upgrade antiquated equipment and turf areas. Also, see the *Inventory and Conditional Analysis* Section for analysis of turf and existing facilities.

In order to program for maintenance, it is important to understand the time requirements for maintenance operations. One method to gain a better understanding of time requirements is to use established labor ratios. A chart of maintenance labor ratios developed by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is provided in **Table 5.1**.

TABLE 5.1 LABOR RATIOS FOR SELECTED PARKS MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES

TASK	LABOR HOURS
Mowing 1 acre, Flat Medium Terrain at Medium Speed	
20" walking	2.8 per acre
24" walking	2.2 per acre
30" riding	2.0 per acre
72" (6-foot) riding	.35 per acre
Bush Hog	.25 per acre
Trim	
Gas Powered (weed eater)	1.0 per 1,000 linear ft.
Planting Grass	
Cut and Plant Sod by Hand (1.5' strips)	1.0 per 1,000 sq. ft.
Cut and Plant Sprigs by Hand (not watered)	10.9 per 1,000 linear ft
Seed, by hand	.5 per 1,000 sq. ft.
Overseeding, reconditioning	.8 per acre
Fertilize Turf	
24" sifter/spreader	.16 per 1,000 sq. ft.
Hand-push spreader 36"	2.96 per acre
Tractor-towed Spreader, 12"	.43 per acre
Weed Control	
Spraying herbicide w/ fence line truck, tank sprayer, 2 ft. wide, 1" within fence	.45 per 1,000 sq. ft.
Leaf Removal	
Hand-rake leaves	.424 per 1,000 sq. ft.
Vacuum 30"	.08 per 1,000 sq. ft.
Planting Trees	
Plant Tree, 5-6 ft. height	.44 per tree
Plan tree, 2-3.5" diameter	1 per tree
Tree Removal	
Street Tree Removal	13 per tree
Street Tree Stump Removal	3.5 per tree
Park Tree Removal	5 per tree
Park Tree Stump Removal	2 per tree

Source: NRPA

One item to note regarding the Labor Ratio Table is that trash pick-up, lining infields before ballgames, and some of the other primary tasks typically performed by the Bennett Public Works Department are not included in this chart, and therefore, should also be considered in the calculation of labor hours for various maintenance activities.

MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

The Public Works Department does not currently have any formally defined maintenance standards or maintenance guidelines manual for the parks facilities. However, many practices have been established in the form of informal training between veteran and new staff. The Department does not have a formal training program for staff on basic turf maintenance, such as the proper way to mow a field, maintain native or dryland grass stands, or irrigation maintenance. Operating in this fashion, as well as the lower priority that parks maintenance receives over other Town infrastructure results in a system that is managed and maintained in a reactionary manner, instead of a proactive one.

The Department needs to consider developing a manual that establishes guidelines for maintaining assets and grounds, establishes schedules for mowing and equipment maintenance, and plans for long-term replacement issues such as ballfield fencing and playgrounds. This could also be applied across all infrastructure that Public Works is responsible for and not just within the parks and recreation system of Bennett. Currently, there is a lack of consistency in preparing schedules for maintenance and long-range funding needs or a standard for the development of the annual capital improvements plan. Another benefit of establishing standards is that they would allow for better projection of staffing needs and time commitments.

The creation of a life-cycle assessment for both maintenance equipment and park facility equipment (ballfield fencing, lighting, playground equipment, etc.) will enable the Department to evaluate and plan for anticipated replacement of that equipment. The life-cycle assessment on maintenance equipment should also include a depreciation schedule on the vehicles, mowers, etc. The life-cycle assessment of playground, ballfield and other park amenity features will allow the Town to budget for replacements of major facilities and minimize interruptions of service to park users.

Furthermore, standards eliminate surprises when new parks come on-line, a piece of equipment goes down, or when a new

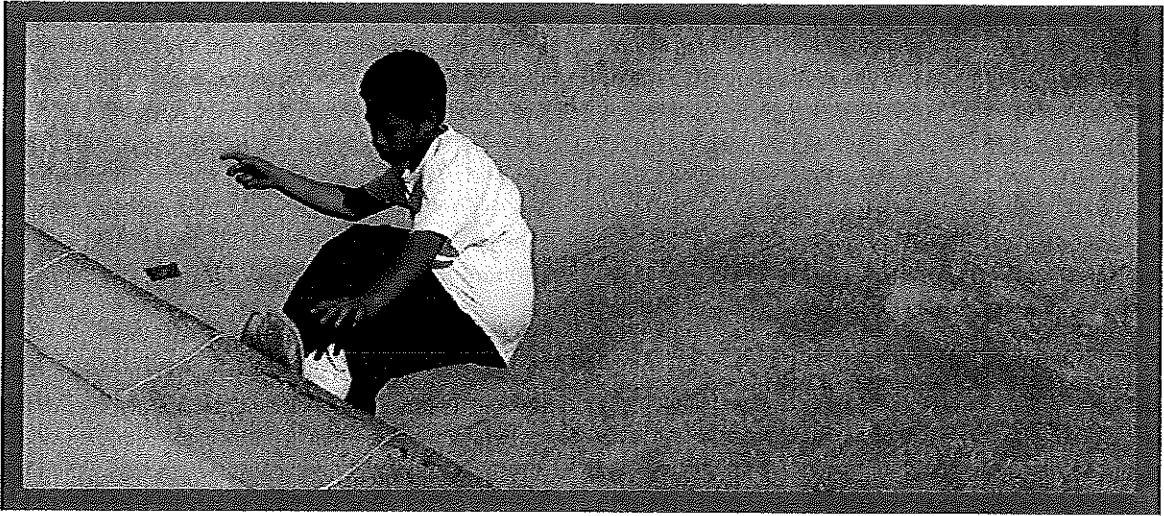
piece of equipment must be purchased. For example, if the Town's standard is to mow sports fields two times a week during the growing season and a mower breaks and an emergency purchase/lease order needs to be created, there are no questions related to this order, because standards are in place for the minimum number of mowers needed per acre of parkland being maintained.

Another item that would benefit the Department would be to annually update this Master Plan's maintenance scores for each of the parks and utilize these scores to allocate funding, resources, and staff time to maintain these facilities. For example, due to the high amount of play at the Field of Dreams, this park has a cumulative maintenance score of 24. In contrast, Centennial Park has a score of 7. These scores reflect the frequency and resources necessary to maintain the park, and not the importance of a property. If a sports field or additional ballfield was added to a park, it may actually increase the maintenance score.

MAINTENANCE STAFF AND TRAINING

As the Town's parks, trails, and open space system continues to grow and additional maintenance staff is hired, it will be important that the Department continue to train personnel in more than one facet of the job, especially as long as the Department is sharing park, infrastructure, and road maintenance responsibilities. For example, specific to parks and turf maintenance, it would be beneficial for more than one worker to be certified as spray technicians, in case another employee, who typically performs the task, is not available. Likewise, an employee who primarily mows should be able to prepare a ballfield, as well.

It is also important to consider staffs' training to maintain parks and facilities that may be developed and/or added to the system in the future (including the Antelope Hills Park). For example, if additional naturalized open spaces are added to the system, (which often include stands of dryland grasses and native vegetation) it will be important to have staff trained to understand proper mowing and weed management in order to maintain these unique resources as well as to operate necessary equipment and supplies.



6. INVENTORY & CONDITIONAL ANALYSIS

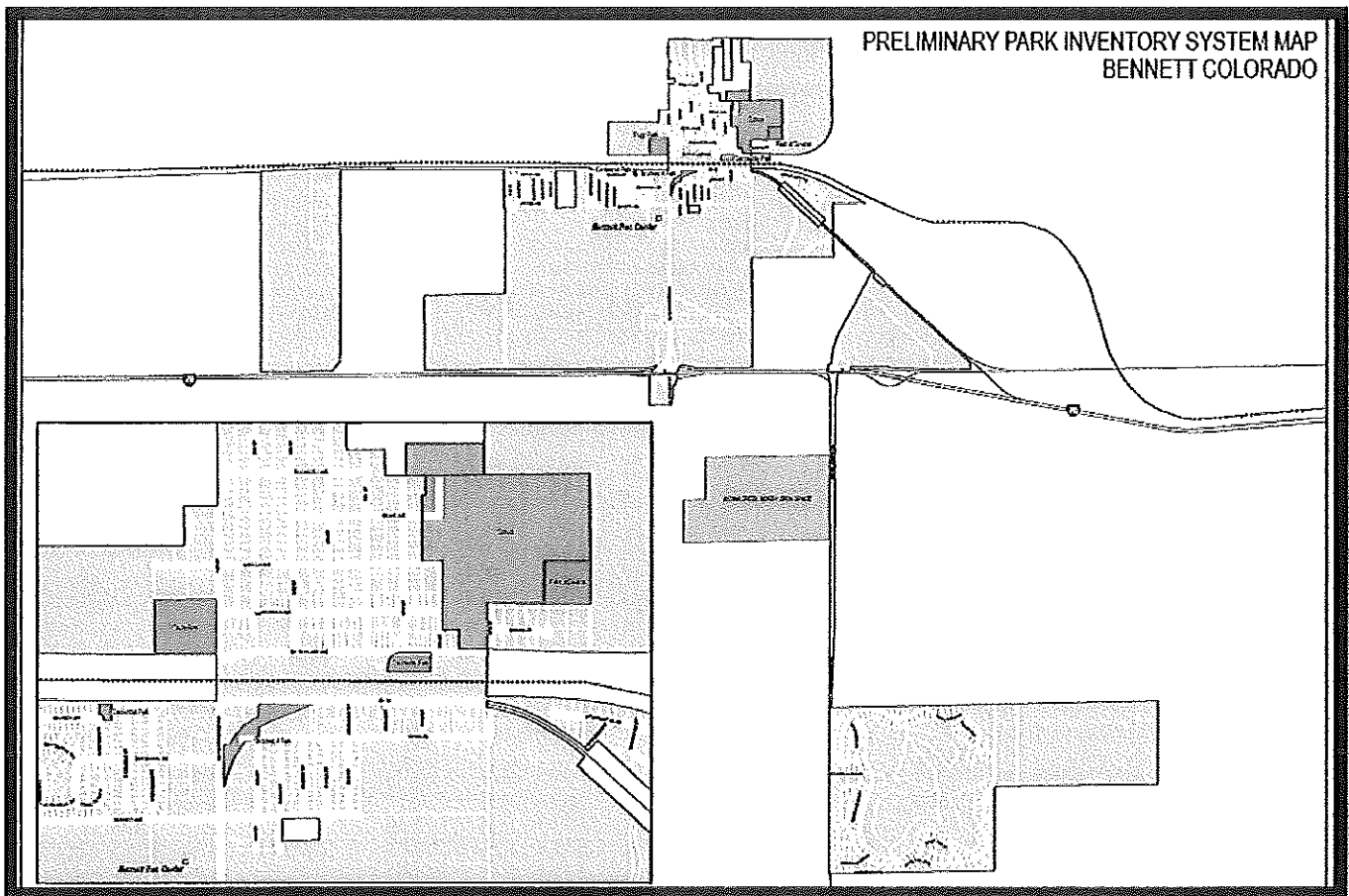
INVENTORY & CONDITIONAL ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

Bennett's parks and recreation system includes five (5) outdoor facilities/parks, one (1) trail, and a future planned park at Antelope Hills, distributed across the Town of Bennett. A variety of amenities are provided throughout the park system. Larger parks contain more amenities including picnic tables, shelters, playgrounds, and athletic facilities. Active and passive spaces throughout the Bennett park system provide a variety of recreation opportunities for public use.

Figure 6.1 depicts the geographic location of all of the parks and recreation facilities in the Town of Bennett.

FIGURE 6.1: MAP A - TOWN OF BENNETT – PARKS, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE INVENTORY MAP



INVENTORY PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

The Inventory of the Bennett Parks, Trails and Open Space system was completed and compiled in three steps:

- Preliminary mapping and identification of assets, based on aerial photography;
- Site visits and evaluation of the condition of outdoor recreation facilities (completed in June 2009); and
- Processing and evaluating the results of site visit evaluations, as well as an assessment of the maintenance resources required (provided by staff).

Conditional evaluations during the site visit in June 2009 looked at both primary assets (such as playgrounds, open turf areas, ball fields, etc.) and secondary assets (such as seating, bike racks, and restroom facilities) within each park and outdoor recreation facility. This visit included a comprehensive inventory, which verified the data of the preliminary inventory (based on aerial photography),

noting the removal or addition of any assets. Both the primary and secondary assets were evaluated on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being low and 5 high) resulting in primary asset and secondary asset scores and an overall score for each facility (See Table 6.1 for the composite scores of each park).

For a detailed description of the Inventory Process and Methodology, please refer to the Appendix.

TABLE 6.1: BENNETT CONDITIONAL ASSESSMENT SCORES

CLASSIFICATION	NAME OF FACILITY	ACRES	PRIMARY ASSET SCORE	SUPPORT ASSET SCORE	OVERALL SCORE
Neighborhood Park	Antelope Hills Park	2.7	0.00%	0.00%	85.00%
Neighborhood Park	Brothers Four Park	2.9	90.00%	61.00%	83.00%
Neighborhood Park	Centennial Park	0.4	70.00%	45.00%	64.00%
Neighborhood Park	Community Park	1.7	45.00%	35.00%	43.00%
Community Park	Trupp Park	7.1	53.00%	33.00%	48.00%
Special Use Park	Field of Dreams	4.3	64.00%	43.00%	59.00%
Greenway	Trail	2.2			
	Total Acres	21.3			

**PARKS AND FACILITIES - INVENTORY AND CONDITIONAL ANALYSIS
BROTHERS FOUR PARK**

Inventory – Brothers Four Park is a 2.9-acre parcel encompassing the trail that crosses the intersection of State Highway 79 and State Highway 36. Commercial and residential uses abut the park. Benches with trash receptacles are located periodically along the trail. The park also contains a playground and shelter with picnic tables. Turf covers the majority of the park with a few ornamental plantings near the playground. No parking is dedicated to this park, however there is direct access provided to the commercial parking lot to the northeast of the site.



Analysis – Brothers Four Park provides a good connection for the trail, but is not likely a destination park. The playground is appropriately placed in the middle of Town; closer to the residences and as far as it can be from the state highways. The play structure includes a transfer station, but it is not currently ADA accessible. All of the amenities are relatively new and in good condition. The shelter provides the only shade in the park. Several trees have been planted, but the majority of these are evergreens, which will aid in protection from wind, but deciduous trees should be added for shade.

CENTENNIAL PARK

Inventory – Centennial Park (0.4 acres) is located in a corner lot within a residential subdivision. The playground area includes a play structure, swing set and two benches. Two picnic tables are located on a concrete pad. A sidewalk connects the playground to the street and picnic tables. A small concrete swale bisects the park between the picnic tables and playground. There are a couple of deciduous trees at the north end of the park and the remainder is open turf.

Analysis – Centennial Park is appropriately sized for its intended purpose, contains the basic amenities needed to serve the neighborhood and is relatively new compared the rest of the Town's system. ADA access is mostly adequate in regard to walkways and transfers to the amenities, with the exception of the swing

set. The low tract of land used for drainage bisects the open turf area, limiting its use, and few sparse trees provide minimal shade.



COMMUNITY PARK

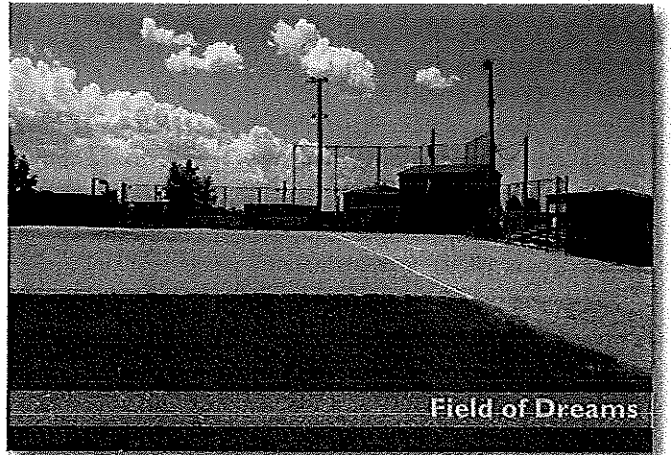
Inventory – Community Park is a 1.7-acre parcel that lies north of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks at the intersection of State Highway 79 and Palmer Avenue. The park includes a playground area containing a slide, swings, merry-go-round, and geodesic dome. An asphalt basketball court with two hoops is next to the playground. There is a restroom structure in the north central area of the park. The remaining area is open turf with several mature deciduous trees and shrubs. A chain link fence with several access points encompasses the park, which is surrounded by a soft surface drive that is wider at the east end for parking.



Analysis – Community Park is centrally located, but access to the park from the road is unclearly marked. The park's playground equipment is outdated and not ADA accessible, which generates concerns about safety and liability. The asphalt is cracked and the basketball hoops are lacking nets. Restrooms are locked, unless a special event is scheduled at the park. Connectivity and ADA accessibility throughout the park is limited, but the turf is in good condition. The chain link fence surrounding the park is in disrepair and needs to be replaced. When this fence is replaced it should include additional access points.

FIELD OF DREAMS

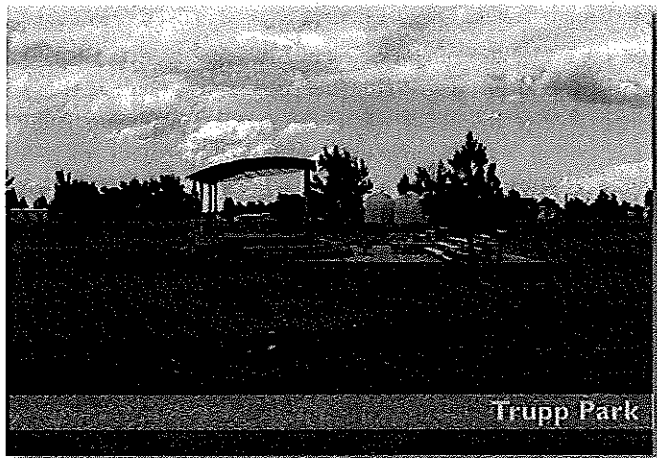
Inventory – The Field of Dreams is the Town's only baseball field and is located next to the school campus. The 4.3-acre site contains the ballfield, two enclosed dugouts, a scoreboard, four bleachers, a concession stand with scoring, batting cage and pitcher warm-up, storage building, and restrooms. There is also a lighting system for the field and soft surface parking is provided. The field was constructed in 2004 with grant money from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO).



Analysis – The field, including the turf, and facilities, are generally in good condition, but are heavily used by the community and school district. ADA access into the field is lacking, but once within the field area it is good. Parking spaces are limited and the majority of parking is on street. Shade is very limited except for a few medium-sized trees on the south side near the dugout. Restrooms are locked unless an event is scheduled for the field. Lighting is old and likely does not meet guidelines.

TRUPP PARK

Inventory – Trupp Park is Bennett's largest park at 7.1 acres and is located on the west side of the Town. The park is largely turf surrounded by a loop walk. Along Palmer Avenue, there are a few parking spaces next to the shelter and 16 horseshoe pits. Wood picnic tables are under the shelter with two grills nearby. A large play area is adjacent to the shelter with freestanding equipment and a small structure. To the north is a band shell with a concrete pad and bleachers. At the north central part of the park and next to the loop walk are two restroom structures that are adjacent to a sidewalk that connects the loop path back to the shelter. Along this walk is a skate park that includes a concrete pad with several amenities and a bowl that is currently under construction. Nearly the entire eastern half of the park is open turf, which also acts as a detention pond for the Town.



Analysis – Trupp Park has the elements needed to become a community park that is a strong asset and true gathering place for Bennett; however, it is currently underutilized. Generally, the park is very open and lacks shade. A few trees have recently been planted, but they are of a small caliper and will take some time to grow in order to provide adequate shade. The playground equipment is outdated and causes concern for safety due to the metal materials used and lack of shade. The band shell is in acceptable condition, but should be painted in order to make it a more aesthetically pleasing and desirable amenity. Restrooms are locked unless there is a scheduled event, which does not invite lengthy stays that a community park should invite. The open turf area could be better utilized as a multi-purpose field; however, a large percentage of the area is weeds rather than turf. Being a detention area, this part of the park can be under several feet of water after storms, which poses safety concerns.



TRAIL

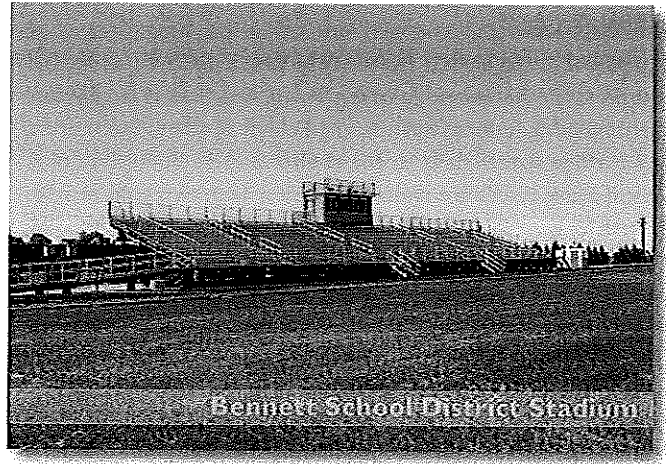
Inventory – The Town trail currently connects Brothers Four Park to the commercial development at the I-70 interchange with State Highway 79. This 8-foot wide asphalt trail has benches with trash receptacles located periodically along its length. Many residents use the trail to access the commercial development and for recreation purposes.

Analysis – Residents of all ages and abilities frequently use the trail. Benches provide resting places, however, there is no shade provided along the length of the trail. While the trail is well known in the community, it has not been named nor is there any signage relating to the trail. The opportunity to name this heavily used trail may be entice local businesses to act as corporate sponsors. Additionally, future continuation of the trail across the railroad tracks presents safety concerns, but is necessary to connect with other parks and the school campus.

ALTERNATIVE PROVIDERS

BENNETT PARKS AND RECREATION DISTRICT

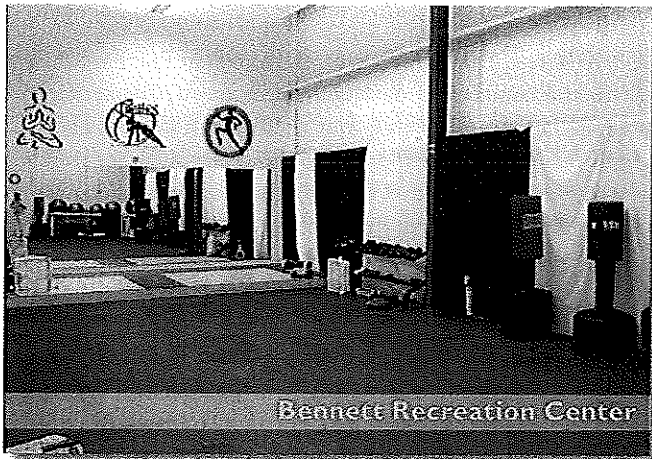
The Recreation District, formed in 2002, serves Bennett residents in Adams County. Fees are charged yearly or on a drop-in basis. The District has commenced construction of recreation facilities. Phase I of construction is complete and includes an indoor facility with a gymnasium, weight room, fitness room, common area with games and climbing wall, and office space. Future phases of construction will include pools, multi-purpose rooms, artificial turf practice field, tennis courts, basketball court, baseball field, playground, and group fitness rooms. Programs currently offered include dodge ball, basketball, volleyball, dance, and fitness classes.



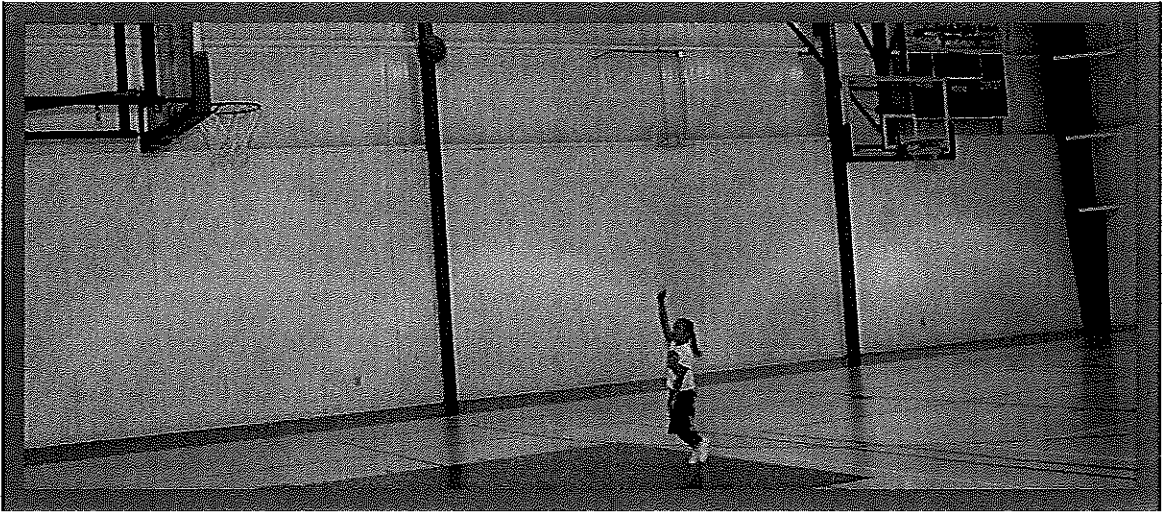
Bennett School District Stadium

BENNETT SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Bennett School District houses all grades from pre-school through high school on one campus, located in the heart of the Town. The campus contains recreation amenities that are accessible to the public when school is not in session. Amenities include a multi-purpose field, basketball courts, multi-use courts, playgrounds for multiple age groups, a shelter, and a track/football stadium. Three parking lots serve the campus.



Bennett Recreation Center



7. GIS MAPPING & LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) ANALYSIS



GIS MAPPING & LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) ANALYSIS

GIS-BASED INVENTORY AND LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

A project of this nature lends itself well to a digital, Geographic Information System (GIS)-based property and primary asset inventory. GIS permits the rapid assembly of mapped materials and spatial analysis related to the Town's parks and recreation facilities, properties, primary asset inventory, demographics, etc.

GIS DATA GATHERING PROCESS

The Norris Design project team received preliminary GIS base data through the Adams County and Arapahoe County GIS Departments. These departments were able to supply the team with the following primary GIS-based data layers:

- Assessors Parcels
- Corporate Limits (Bennett)
- Park Locations
- Public School Locations
- Road Centerlines

The data layers were supplemented with a color, geo-referenced aerial image received from Bing/Microsoft. The imagery had a ground resolution of one (1) foot and supplied the consultant team with enough spatial context to identify the majority of parks and facility assets.

Additional base data was created and/or brought in by the Norris Design team to enhance the data provided. The additional layers included:

- Railroad Centerlines
- Barrier Analysis Data Used within the Analysis
- Indoor Recreation Facilities

A detailed asset inventory database of this data gathering effort has been compiled and will be provided to the Town as a final deliverable of the Master Plan in MS Office Excel workbook format. The workbook contains the formulas required for future score and asset updates related to each location. Additionally, the Norris Design team created a park and recreation facility atlas, detailing the known primary assets and boundary of each outdoor recreation location. All primary assets were reviewed in the field for location accuracy, assessed in regard to condition and maintenance, and then were catalogued into the GIS data-

base. Once the inventory was deemed complete by the Norris Design team – it was submitted to Town staff for review and approval. The asset inventory is current as of July 2009.

The Norris Design team assembled the data layers and aerial photograph within ESRI's ArcMap™ 9.3.1 software. ArcMap was employed for all data creation, the Inventory Map Book, and spatial analysis. 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 data was used to generate a series of additional GIS-based analytical layers and maps used to determine radius-based Level of Service (LOS) coverage for outdoor recreation facilities for each location. The LOS analysis included the cumulative relationship of each facility's location, service area, and conditional assessment scores - resulting in a variety of maps detailing the Town's cumulative and average LOS.

Each park classification was assigned a radius service area, which were largely guided by NRPA standards, with customizations made based on input provided in regard to usage levels by Town of Bennett staff.

- Community Parks Two (2) Miles
- Neighborhood Parks Half (½) Mile
- Greenways/Trails Half (½) Mile
- School Parks Half (½) Mile
- Special Use Parks Two (2) Miles

MAPPING AND SPATIAL ANALYSIS

OVERVIEW – LEVEL OF SERVICE AND SPATIAL ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

Cumulative Level of Service Methodology

Cumulative Level of Service (LOS) maps were created by graphically illustrating the cumulative scores for each park in the conditional assessment and inventory performed by the Norris Design team. Public schools are also included in the mapping of services at a reduced conditional assessment (30%), since the public's access to their amenities is limited (with limited hours of access and fencing). The cumulative scores for each component were used to create a percent evaluation of each park or facilities' total maximum score (i.e. 60% out of 100% = adequate).

BENNETT PARKS, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN

These maps illustrate the cumulative Level of Service (LOS) provided to the different geographic areas of the Town based on the overall conditional assessment of parks and recreational facilities and the overlay of these facilities' service areas (see *GIS Analysis Section* of the report). Areas with higher LOS (green) have a greater quantity and quality of parks and recreational facilities. Areas with lower LOS (red) have less access to adequate parks and recreational facilities, based on their geographic location.

One item to note is that while a geographic area may have many facilities within proximity to it, if the cumulative quality (conditional assessment) of the multiple facilities is low then the overall area will have a lower level of service. The same also applies if an area has a higher density of adequate or above adequate parks, then the overall LOS in the area in proximity to those parks will be high.

Overview - Average Level of Service Methodology

The inset on the Level of Service (LOS) maps illustrate the average LOS across the various geographic areas of the Town based on the highest possible cumulative conditional assessment score in comparison with the actual cumulative conditional assessment of all indoor and outdoor facilities for each area. The analysis provides a simplified view of the general (average) LOS, regardless of concentrations from multiple neighboring recreation locations.

Areas where the average falls below the desired LOS should be targeted for potential improvements to existing parks and recreation facilities and/or creation of additional recreation locations. However, it is important to note that deficient areas may also fall within locations where improved or additional services are not required or justified – such as industrial or agricultural areas.

Table 7.1 illustrates the average conditional assessment provided to each park and facility within the Town's park and recreation system.

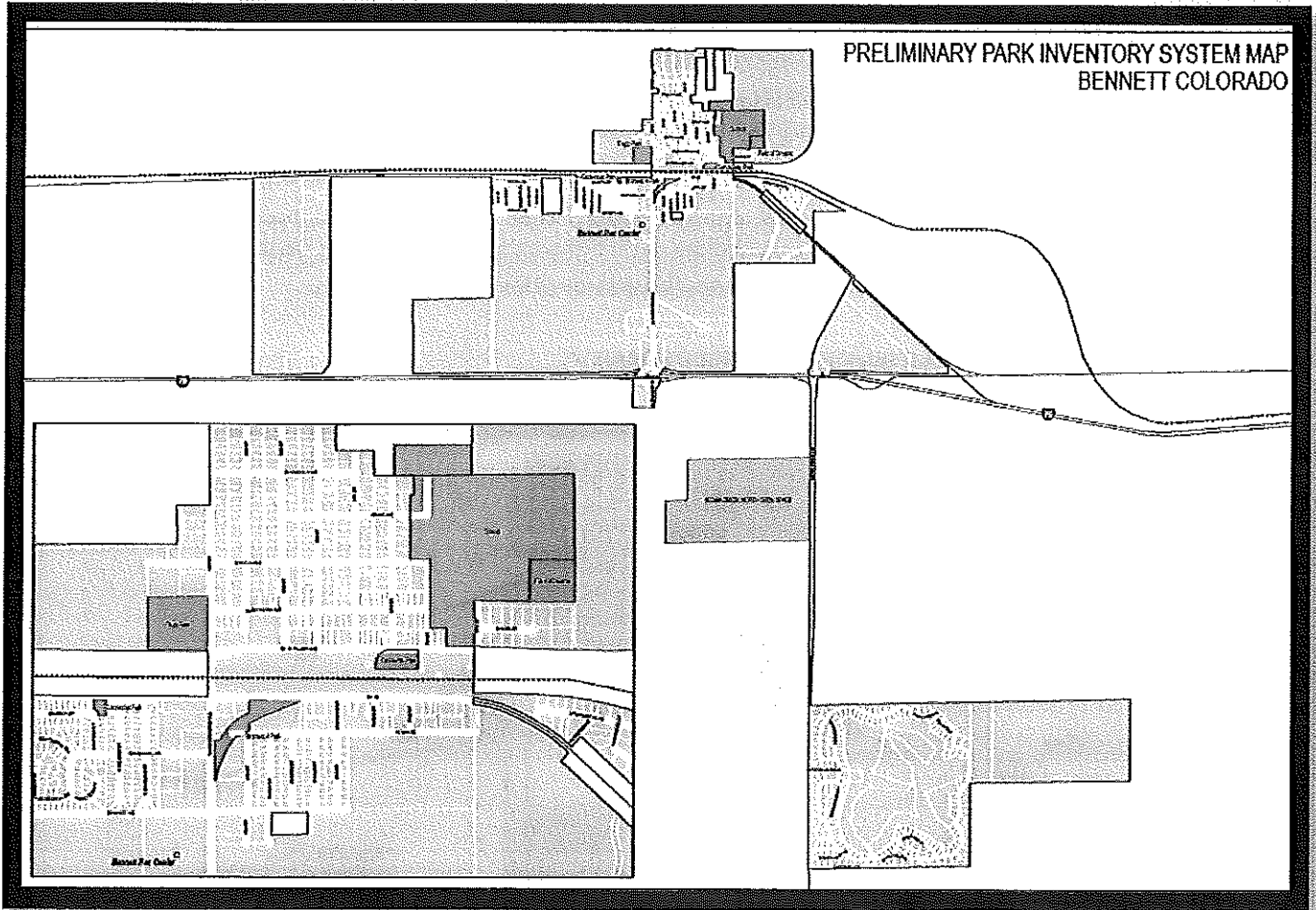
CLASSIFICATION	NAME OF FACILITY	ACRES	PRIMARY ASSET SCORE	SUPPORT ASSET SCORE	OVERALL SCORE
Neighborhood Park	Antelope Hills Park	2.7	0.00%	0.00%	85.00%
Neighborhood Park	Brothers Four Park	2.9	90.00%	61.00%	83.00%
Neighborhood Park	Centennial Park	0.4	70.00%	45.00%	64.00%
Neighborhood Park	Community Park	1.7	45.00%	35.00%	43.00%
Community Park	Trupp Park	7.1	53.00%	33.00%	48.00%
Special Use Park	Field of Dreams	4.3	64.00%	43.00%	59.00%
Greenway	Trail	2.2			
	Total Acres	21.3			

MAPPING – LEVEL OF SERVICE AND SPATIAL ANALYSIS

MAP A- BENNETT PUBLIC RECREATION LOCATIONS:

Map A serves as a quick reference regarding the locations, types, and names of the park and recreation facilities within the Town of Bennett's municipal boundaries. This map includes all of the facilities under the management of the Town, as well as the local schools and those recreation facilities managed by other entities (specifically the Bennett Recreation Center). This map also serves as a visual tool in displaying the classifications assigned to each facility, as well as a comprehensive view of the size and geographic locations of the facilities. In looking at both Town parks and facilities and those recreational facilities provided by Bennett schools, the Town has decent distribution of facilities throughout the municipal area. Yet it is important to consider that school facilities are only accessible to the public a fraction of the time. Furthermore, the majority of the Town's parks are neighborhood parks, which have significant limitations in accommodating the growing recreation needs of the community.

FIGURE 7.1: MAP A - TOWN OF BENNETT – PARKS, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE INVENTORY MAP



MAP B - OUTDOOR FACILITIES:

This map (Map B) provides a comprehensive analysis of the entire Bennett Parks and Recreation system. The highest LOS is located in the central portion of Bennett due to the quality and density of facilities. This geographic area has a high LOS based on the density of the area's six recreation facilities (five parks and the trail). Yet, it is important to recognize that a number of these parks include antiquated and non-ADA compliant equipment that is in need of replacement.

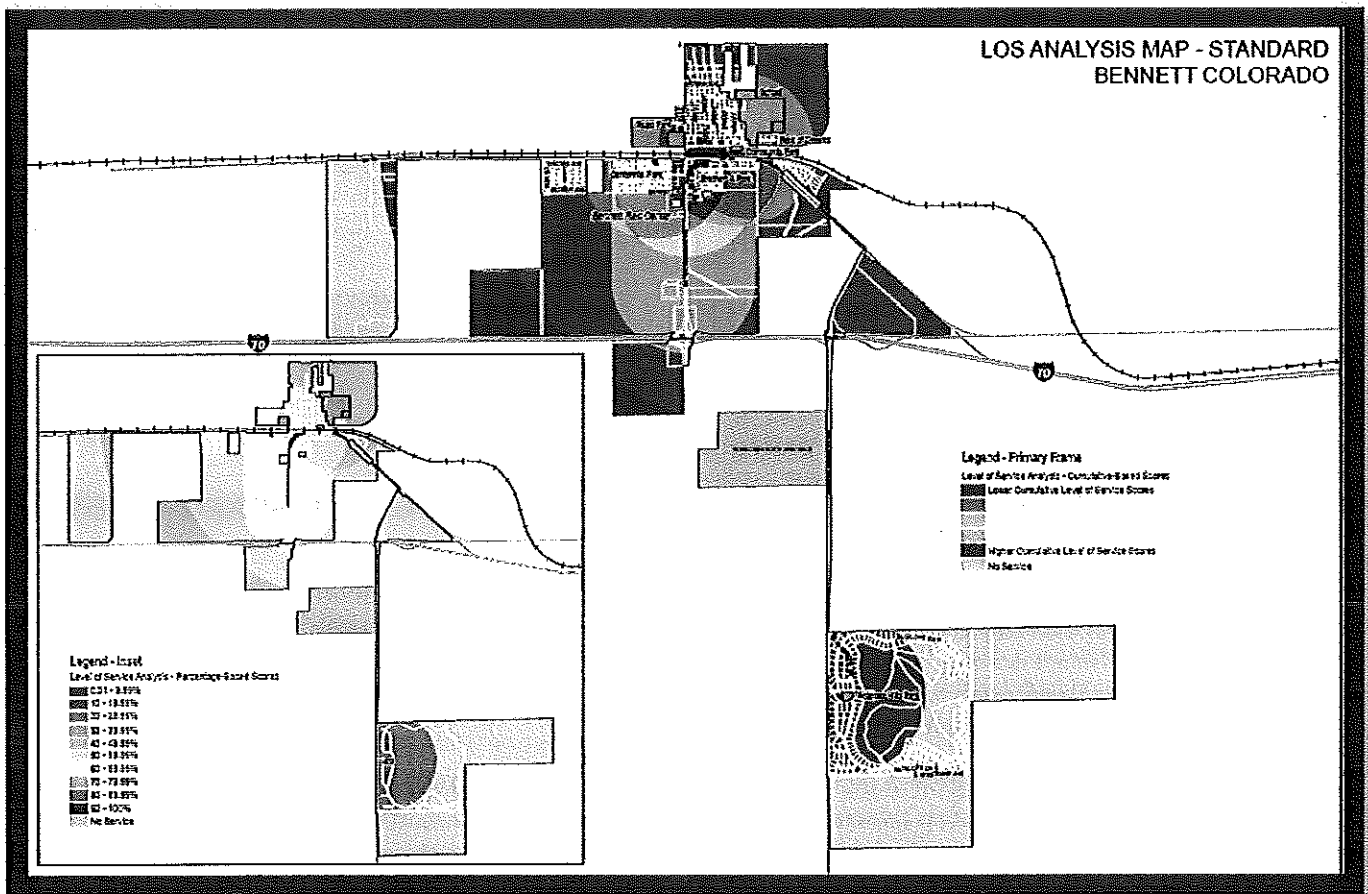
The map also provides a clear indication of those areas within and adjacent to the Town where additional facilities are lacking, specifically the corners and outlying areas (generally areas that are less developed). The most significant lack of services is apparent in the newest areas of development, south of the Town core. However, at this time development in this area is limited and mostly commercial in nature near the Interstate. The area near school campus in the northeast is also lacking sufficient service of park and recreation facilities, and is currently only being served by the school. East and south portions of the Antelope Hills area are also lacking service and are scheduled to receive a park due to developer requirements in the near future. However, additional facilities will be needed in order to provide an "adequate" LOS to this area.

MAP B – INSET:

This map illustrates that the average Level of Service for outdoor facilities across the various geographic areas of the Town. 67.5% of the Town is being served by at least one park or recreation facility. The average LOS across the Town provides 60.8% of the service area with an average score above 60.0% (the threshold for an adequate LOS). Therefore, the Town should work to increase the LOS to the remaining 39.2% of the service area by making improvements to existing facilities or adding new parks and/or facilities to the system.

Furthermore, the map illustrates that the LOS provided to the northeast portion of Town is an area that needs attention, as the score is below 60.0%. The parks in this part of Town contain older and out-of-code amenities, lowering the scores. The Town should consider focusing its resources and efforts to improve these existing parks to maximize their impacts.

FIGURE 7.2: MAP B - CUMULATIVE LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) MAP

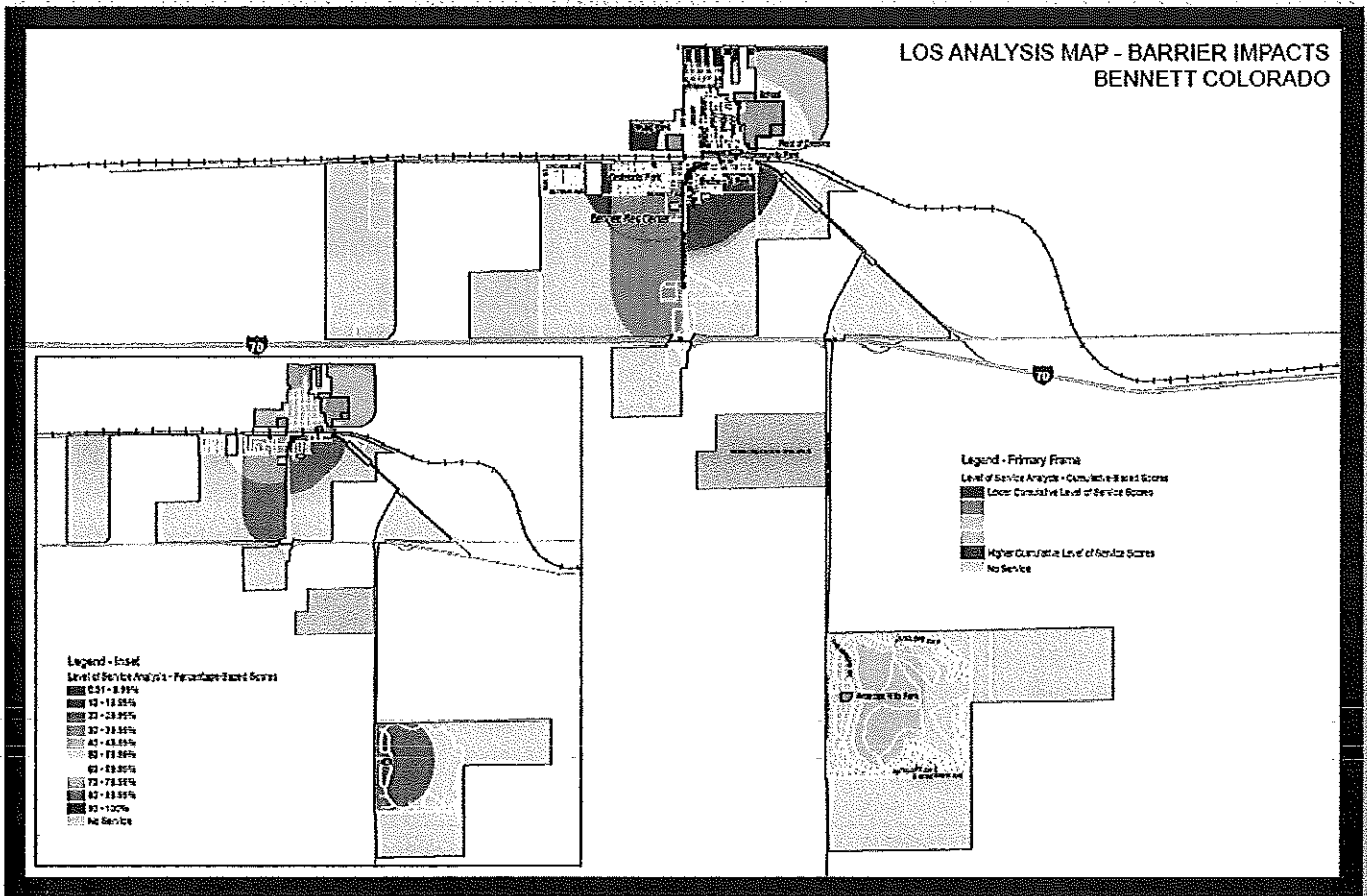


MAP C – PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLIST BARRIERS MAP:

This map illustrates the cumulative Level of Service (LOS) to pedestrian and bicyclists for the different geographic areas of the Town. Therefore, a line representative of each barrier clips the service area of each facility. Barriers may include major roadways, railroads, canals and interstates. These are determined as barriers because of their traffic and impacts to the comfort and safety of pedestrians and bicyclists to cross them. The consultant team based this barrier evaluation on input from staff as well as consideration of the community's children to safely cross these barriers in order to gain access to parks and facilities. While many of the streets noted as barriers have sidewalks along their length, crossing them remains a safety issue in many cases. Youth's primary mode of transportation to recreational amenities is by foot or bicycle and displaying this analysis allows for understanding of the primary barriers to youth (and other pedestrians and bicyclists) access to recreation opportunities.

Areas with higher LOS (green) have greater pedestrian and bicycle access to a greater quantity and quality of parks and recreational facilities. Areas with lower LOS (red) have less pedestrian and bicycle access to adequate parks and recreational facilities, based on their geographic location. Again, the density of parks in the core of the Town provides a greater opportunity to access to recreation opportunities without having to cross a barrier. Many areas of the Town receive adequate access to at least one amenity since the even distribution of facilities tends to provide one facility in each area surrounded by one or more barriers. However, the State highways have high traffic with minimal safe crossing opportunities. The railroad tracks also have minimal safe crossing opportunities and act as barriers that restrict safe access between different quadrants of the Town. As development occurs south of Interstate 70, it will also be considered a major barrier.

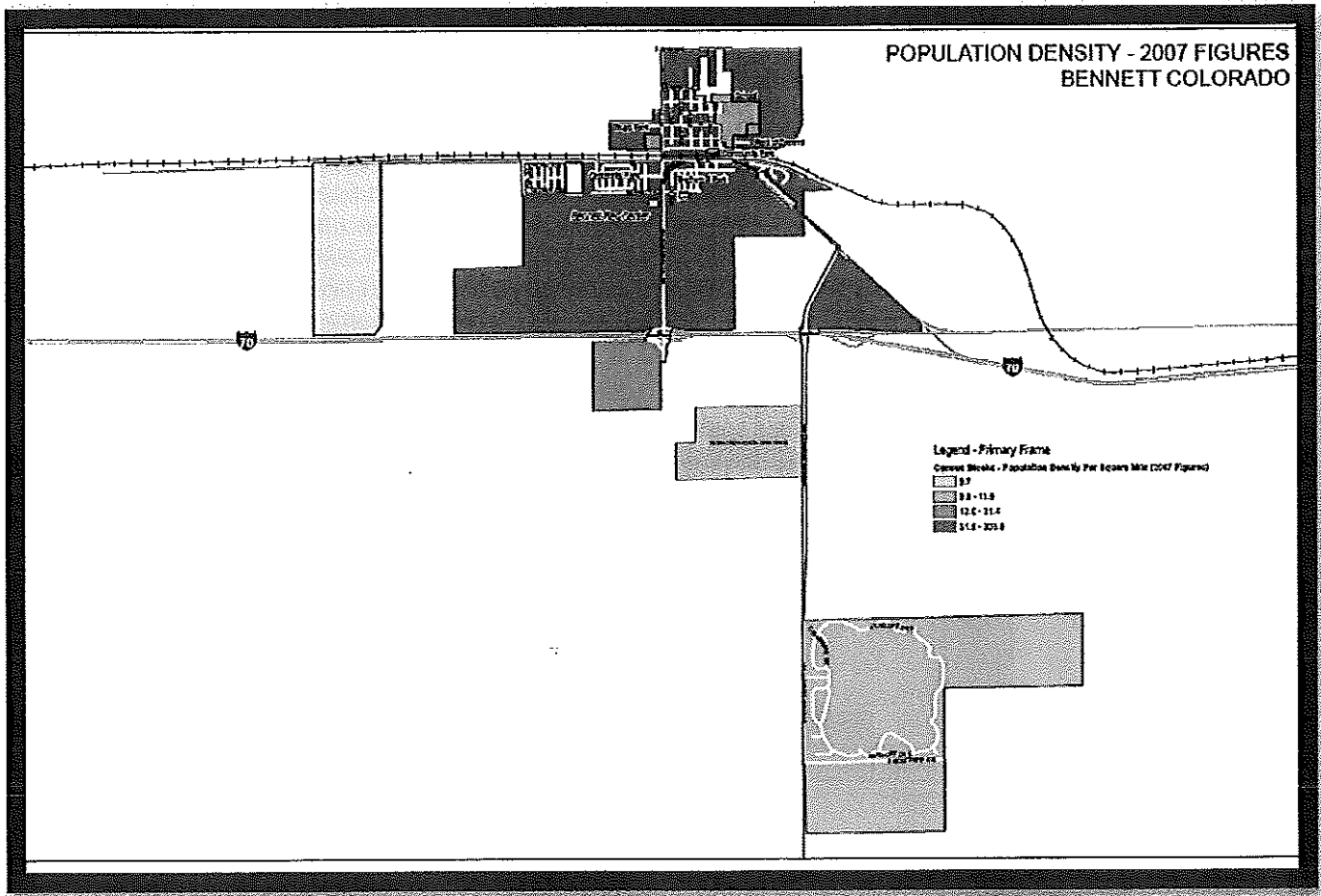
FIGURE 7.3: MAP C – PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLIST BARRIERS MAP



MAP D - POPULATION DISTRIBUTION:

This map illustrates the distribution of the Town's population to various geographic areas and census tracts, based on Census data from 2007 estimates. It is important to note that census tracts are not necessarily restricted to straight or clear physical barriers, but may be more arbitrary in nature and therefore some areas reflect a higher or lower level of density than anticipated as a result of the overall tract.

FIGURE 7.4: MAP D – POPULATION DISTRIBUTION MAP



LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) METHODOLOGY

During the 1980's, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) created Level of Service (LOS) guidelines to assist agencies in determining whether jurisdictions were meeting suggested "norms" with regard to types of parks, the amenities that should be in a park, and how many acres of parkland an agency should have. Although these guidelines are a starting point, these numbers do not take into account the unique qualities and needs of communities across the country.

Local trends, climates, and the popularity of some activities over others often dictate a greater need for particular facilities. The guidelines serve as a good baseline for determining a minimum standard for parks and primary amenities. These guidelines, coupled with input received from the community, analysis of usage levels for various facilities, and comparisons to similar communities, provide the necessary additional information for determining the number of facilities that are appropriate.

The consultant team used a "value-based" approach to assess the existing LOS. This model is not static. It evolves as the community changes. The consultant team incorporated all of the information gathered through the community input (focus groups, staff, and stakeholder meetings), inventory, conditional assessments, and spatial analysis to measure the Level of Service currently being provided to the Bennett community. The LOS analysis included the cumulative relationship of each facility's location, service area, and conditional assessment scores – resulting in data reflecting the cumulative and average LOS across the Bennett community.

In the recommendations phase of the project, population growth will be used to establish and prioritize improvements, potential re-purposing and new facilities that are recommended to increase the Level of Service and best meet the current and future needs of the community.

A list of policy criteria for these standards includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Population Served
- Accessibility (ADA, Bicycle, Pedestrian, Transit, and Automobile)
- Environmental and Natural Resources
- Land Use Requirements
- Park and Recreation Development and Maintenance
- Parks, Trails and Open Space System Connectivity
- Service Area

NRPA GUIDELINES

NRPA guidelines provide a template of typical park classifications, number of acres a system should have, and recommended service levels based on population. Strictly intended as a guideline, these do not take into account the unique character of each individual community.

For a public park provider the guidelines suggest, "A park system, at a minimum, should be composed of a 'core' system of park lands, with a total of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed open space per 1,000 population." The types of parks that can be included to meet the standards can be a combination of the following classifications as determined by the NRPA:

- Mini Park
- Neighborhood Park
- School Park
- Community Park
- Regional Park
- Special Use Park
- Natural Resource Area/Preserve
- Greenway

Critical to the service delivery system of any community is the provision of the four basic park categories:

- Mini
- Neighborhood
- Community
- Regional

Each is classified differently based upon the types of amenities, size, service area, and access to the facility.

For additional detailed information regarding the Level of Service Methodology and NRPA guidelines for each park classification, please see the Appendix.

PARK CLASSIFICATION AND DISTRIBUTION ANALYSIS

Utilizing the park categories as developed by NRPA and based on Bennett’s park use levels, existing parks in the Town were classified as Mini, Neighborhood, Community, Regional, or Special Use. **Table 7.2** shows the classification and acreage of the properties overseen by the Town.

TABLE 7.2: BENNETT PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

CLASSIFICATION	NAME OF FACILITY	ACRES
Neighborhood Park	Antelope Hills Park	2.7
Neighborhood Park	Brothers Four Park	2.9
Neighborhood Park	Centennial Park	0.4
Neighborhood Park	Community Park	1.7
Community Park	Trupp Park	7.1
Special Use Park	Field of Dreams	4.3
Greenway	Trail	2.2
	Total Acres	21.3

Overall, the parks and facilities that make up the Bennett system are centralized around the core of the Town. This pattern of park development is tied to the pattern of development in the Town, with the older portion containing more parks and newly annexed areas containing fewer, if any, parks. Additionally, newer parks are south of the railroad tracks with older parks north of the railroad tracks.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

The Town of Bennett park system includes four (4) parks classified as Neighborhood Parks:

- Antelope Hills Park (future)
- Brothers Four Park
- Centennial Park
- Community Park

The Town core is well served by neighborhood parks. Beyond the core, with the exception of the Antelope Hills development, the Town needs additional neighborhood facilities to serve those areas as they develop. Neighborhood parks consist of 7.7 acres of the total Bennett park facilities, which is currently 2.83 acres per 1,000 residents. This is above the maximum NRPA recommendation of 2.00 acres per 1,000 residents.

COMMUNITY PARKS

There is one community park in Bennett – Trupp Park. The two-mile service area radius for this park classification covers the majority of the developed land within the municipal boundaries. This park consists of 7.1 acres, which is currently 2.61 acres per 1,000 residents. This is below the minimum NRPA guideline of 5.0 acres per 1,000 residents.

SPECIAL USE PARKS

One special use park, the Field of Dreams, provides the baseball facilities for the town. With a 2-mile service radius, the core area of the Town is serviced. However, the furthest removed areas are not within the service area.

INDOOR FACILITIES

The Bennett Recreation Center is operated by an alternative provider and was not evaluated in this analysis.

SCHOOL PARKS

The school campus has limited public access and was evaluated at a discounted rate (30%), due to its restricted access during school hours. Public access is available to a variety of amenities when school is not in session. The campus is located in the northeast part of the Town. There is no NRPA standard for school parks, but these often contribute largely to the level of service provided to the community.

GREENWAY (TRAIL)

The Town’s Trail is classified as a Greenway and provides access from the central part of the Town to the commercial area along I-79. There is no NRPA standard for greenways, but given the linear nature of these amenities and diverse use for both passive and active recreation by all demographic and age groups within a community, they are an important component to a balanced park and recreation system.

COMPARISON WITH NRPA GUIDELINES

While the NRPA guidelines are intended to be a guide, they do serve as a helpful benchmark in which to evaluate the service being provided in a geographic area, in this case, within the municipal boundaries of the Town of Bennett. The NRPA recommends a service level between 6.25 (minimum) and 10.5 (optimal) acres per 1,000 residents. **Table 7.3** shows NRPA recommended minimum and maximum standards as well as the current level of service being provided by the Town of Bennett.

TABLE 7.3: BENNETT LOS COMPARED TO NRPA GUIDELINES (2009 POPULATION)

2009 POPULATION - 2,717						
	BENNETT'S CURRENT SERVICE LEVEL		MINIMUM NRPA GUIDELINE		MAXIMUM NRPA GUIDELINE	
	Current ac/pop	Acres provided	Min ac/1000 pop	Acres required	Max ac/1000 pop	Acres required
Mini Parks	0.00		.25		0.50	
2009 Total Ac		0.00		0.7		1.4
Neighborhood Parks	2.83		1.00		2.00	
2009 Total Ac		7.7		2.7		5.4
Community Parks	2.61		5.00		8.00	
2009 Total Ac		7.1		13.6		21.7
School Parks	18.40		0.00		0.00	
		50.0		0.0		0.0
Regional Parks	0.00		0.00		0.00	
		0.00		0.0		0.0
Greenways/Special Use Facilities	2.39		0.00		0.00	
		6.5		0.0		0.0
	26.24/1000 pop	71.3	6.25/1000 pop	17.0	10.50 / 1000 pop	28.5

In addition to the Mini, Neighborhood and Community Park classifications evaluated under NRPA guidelines, Bennett also has an additional 56.5 acres of School Parks, Greenways and Special Use Facilities that equals the total 71.3 acres.

Both Table 7.4 and 7.5 will be used for the development of recommendations for new facilities and renovation projects. Deficiencies in current service patterns, facility distribution, and community demand for improved service and specific amenity needs will result in facility recommendations for both existing facilities and future development.

LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) ANALYSIS

Table 7.3 uses the 2009 population and Table 7.4 uses the projected population for 2014 to determine where the shortfalls and overages in the park system exist. This does not take into account school properties, church properties, private schools, other independent recreation providers (such as the Bennett Recreation Center), or those outside the boundaries of the Town of Bennett. Including those facilities would bring the service level above the minimum recommendation. The Town currently maintains 21.3 acres of park and facility land (excluding the school park acres noted in Table 7.3). This puts the Town-owned facilities at a service level of 7.83 acres per 1,000 residents, which is above the NRPA minimum of 6.25 acres/1,000. However, this includes the Field of Dreams, which is classified as a special use facility. If evaluating only the Mini, Neighborhood and Community park classifications, then the level of service is at 5.45 acres/1,000, below the NRPA standards. It is also important to note that the Town is lacking in facilities in the Mini Park category and below the recommended amount of acres in the Community Park category, but are above the required number of acres for Neighborhood Parks. If no additional park facilities are acquired, these scenarios are still applicable in the analysis for the projected population in 2014 (See Table 7.4).

Although facilities found in private neighborhoods and on church and school properties alleviate the need for some amenities, they can have limited or restricted access, and therefore do not provide the same opportunities for the community as public park facilities. Due to their limited access, these acres are not incorporated into the methodology and analysis of the level of service.

TABLE 7.4: BENNETT LOS COMPARED TO NRPA GUIDELINES (2014 POPULATION)

2014 PROJECTED POPULATION - 3,059

	BENNETT'S PROJECTED SERVICE LEVEL (W/ EXISTING FACILITIES)		MINIMUM NRPA GUIDELINE		MAXIMUM NRPA GUIDELINE	
	Projected ac/pop	Acres provided	Min ac/1000 pop	Acres required	Max ac/1000 pop	Acres required
Mini Parks	0.00		0.25		0.50	
2009 Total Ac		0.00		0.76		1.53
Neighborhood Parks	2.52		1.00		2.00	
2009 Total Ac		7.7		3.06		6.12
Community Parks	2.32		5.00		8.00	
2009 Total Ac		7.1		15.30		24.47
School Parks	16.35		0.00		0.00	
		50.0		0.0		0.0
Regional Parks	0.00		0.00		0.00	
		0.00		0.0		0.0
Greenways/Special Use Facilities	2.12		0.00		0.00	
		6.5		0.0		0.0
	23.31	71.3	6.25	19.12	10.50	32.12

In addition to the Mini, Neighborhood and Community Park classifications evaluated under NRPA guidelines, Bennett also has an additional 56.5 acres of School Parks, Greenways and Special Use Facilities that equals the total 71.3 acres.

PARK AND RECREATION ASSETS

In addition to acreage for park facilities, programmed assets (a.k.a. – amenities) within the parks have also been evaluated against general NRPA guidelines. This allows the consultant team and Town staff to evaluate where the shortfalls and overages in amenities are in the current system, weigh it against community needs and desires, and plan for additional facilities as existing parks are updated and new parkland is acquired (see **Table 7.5**).

Based on NRPA guidelines, the Town is generally providing the number of facilities recommended for the population level. Bennett does not currently have any outdoor tennis or volleyball facilities, which are recommended. The shortfall of tennis courts was not mentioned as a need during stakeholder input meetings. However, indoor volleyball was mentioned as being popular at the Recreation Center. Planned continuation of the Trail will bring the Town above the recommended level of service.

TABLE 7.5: TOWN OF BENNETT-OWNED PROPERTIES (EXCLUDES SCHOOL FACILITIES)

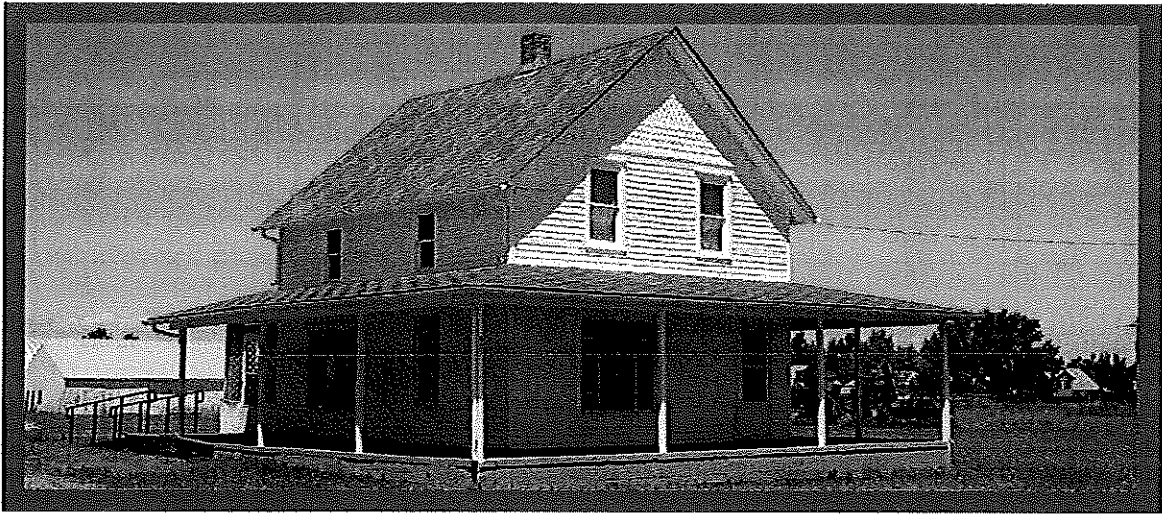
AMENITY	NRPA RECOMMENDED LEVEL OF SERVICE (1 PER X RESIDENTS)	EXISTING NUMBER OF FACILITIES	CURRENT FACILITY SHORTFALL/OVERAGE (USING NRPA RECOMMENDED LEVEL OF SERVICE)	TOTAL FACILITY NEED BASED ON BENNETT ESTIMATED 2014 POPULATION	
Outdoor Basketball*	1 per 5,000	2	1	1	
Tennis	1 per 2,000	0	(2)	2	
Volleyball	1 per 5,000	0	(1)	1	
Baseball/Softball	1 per 5,000	1	0	1	
Football	1 per 20,000	0	(0)	0	
Soccer	1 per 10,000	0	(0)	0	
Swimming Pool	1 per 20,000	0	(0)	0	
Running Track	1 per 20,000	0	(0)	0	
Trail System	1 mile per 3,000	0.9	(0.12)	1.02	miles
Playground	1 per 1,000	5	2	3	
Cultural Center	1 per 100,000	0	(0)	0	
Community Center	1 per 50,000	1	1	0	
Picnic Pavilion	1 per 2,000	3	1	2	
Skate Park**	1 per 100,000	1	1	0	

*Includes both full and half-size courts.
 ** Standard developed to respond to recreation trends and growth in certain sports.
 These numbers do not include facilities located at schools.

ANALYSIS AND KEY FINDINGS

Existing park facilities within the Town of Bennett vary in condition and provide adequate amenities to serve the neighborhood or larger community as intended. However, the Town of Bennett is below the NRPA guidelines on acres per 1,000 residents at 5.45 acres/1,000. Additionally, mini and community parks are significantly below the requirements needed to match the level of service being provided with neighborhood parks and to appropriately serve the community. Neighborhood parks are the only park category exceeding the minimum NRPA guidelines. The Town is falling behind on acquiring and constructing mini and community parks to meet the growing needs of the community. With a developing town and growing population, infill of parks, specifically larger parcels of land, will be increasingly difficult to acquire.

The Town should consider balancing the existing park system with the development of mini and community parks near and within the current town core. That balance should extend to the south of Interstate 70 as the Town continues to develop. The Town should also consider increasing the level of service being provided by existing parks through improvements and equipment replace. The Land Development Regulations should also be strengthened and expanded to help achieve these goals.



8. BENNETT AREAS OF FOCUS

BENNETT AREAS OF FOCUS

FACILITIES - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

Findings from the Level of Service Analysis and Public Input process illustrate the need for acquisition of additional parkland and development of facilities. The top needs for facilities and services include: park equipment replacement (e.g. – play structures and youth athletic facilities); improvements to support amenities (restrooms, shade structures, etc.); trail development and connections; and additional parkland and open space acquisition. Capital improvements and facility development is critical to providing highly quality and well-maintained facilities, as well as addressing access and functional limitations. Furthermore, capital investments are necessary to address the community's desires for safe and accessible bike and pedestrian routes to parks and facilities.

PARKLAND DEDICATION ORDINANCES

This plan is intended to guide the Town in providing a balanced land use approach as it continues to grow and develop, so as to promote long-term sustainability and a high quality of life for the community. One area of focus that will be important to achieving this goal is to strengthen parkland dedication and development requirements so as to increase control of what park and recreation assets the Town is receiving, as well as, establishing a timeframe and threshold for the development of parkland.

OPERATIONS, MAINTENANCE & STAFFING

Through the master planning process, park maintenance and staffing levels were evaluated for effectiveness and areas which may need improvement. The Public Works Department has stated that currently they have limited resources and have to function in a reactionary manner. In order to increase the LOS provided to residents, the Town will need to provide staff with the resources, training, policies and procedures to effectively and proactively maintain the facilities in the system, both for the short-term and the long-term. The development of a life-cycle assessment program and striving to meet NRPA recommended staffing ratios will also be important in the future as the Town grows.

FUNDING AND RESOURCES

Through the public and stakeholder input process and the consultant's inventory and conditional assessments, it was identified that increasing maintenance and capital improvements for existing facilities should be a high priority of the Town. Additionally, given significant expected population growth it will be important to identify adequate funding to meet this growing community's

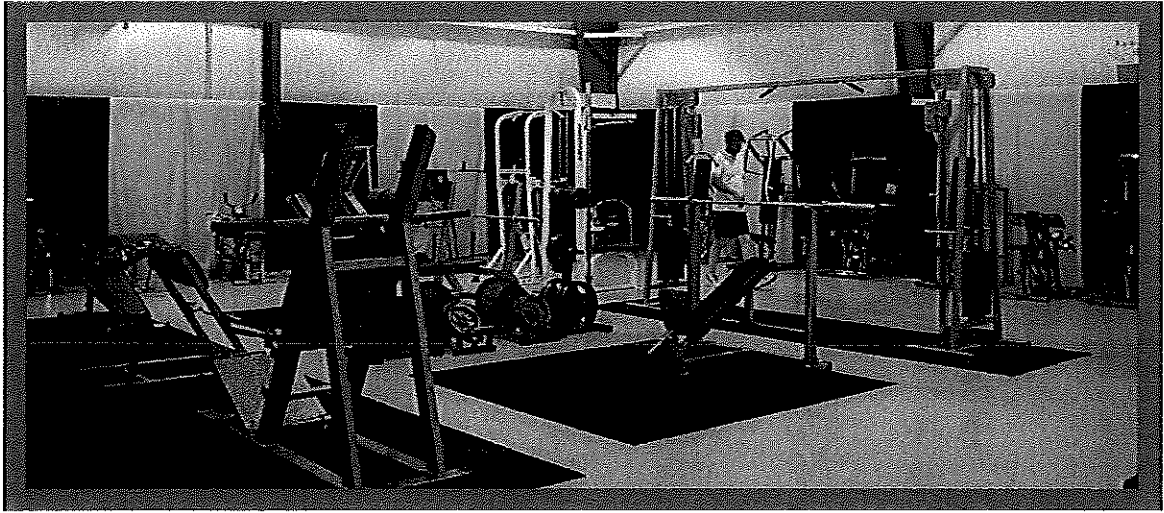
needs. The Town needs to focus on setting itself up to gain additional traditional funding, such as through a dedicated percent sales or property tax, as well as periodically updating impact fees to align with identified needs. In addition to increasing traditional funding, it will be important for the Town's to continue to actively seek monies from alternative funding sources, including grants, donations, and sponsorships in order to provide for the sustainability of the park and recreation system.

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

The Town of Bennett has done a great job partnering with other government agencies, community organizations, and nonprofits to develop facilities and provide services. It will be extremely important that the Town continue this trend and increase communication and partnerships with other service providers in order to avoid duplication of services, to maximize the use of resources, gain alternative funding, and to promote park and recreation facilities and services.

Throughout the public and stakeholder input process, it was stressed that the most feasible strategy for the development of facilities and expansion of services will be through collaborative efforts between the Town of Bennett, Bennett Parks and Recreation District, Adams County, Arapahoe County, the school district, and other community organizations, as well as the private sector. These collaborations will be especially important to developing regional trail networks and connections. Additionally, there is an increasingly successful trend for park and recreation providers to sell the naming rights of facilities to private businesses as well as partner with schools on adjacent land so recreation amenities can be shared for usage, capital expenditure, operational costs, and scheduling. Bennett should continue to research and investigate these types of opportunities in order to increase the LOS within the community.





9. RECOMMENDATIONS

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DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

GOAL 1: IMPROVE THE MANAGEMENT AND PROCEDURES WITHIN THE TOWN OF BENNETT (THE TOWN) AND THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (THE DEPARTMENT) TO INCREASE EFFICIENCY AND PROMOTE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MASTER PLAN.

Objective 1.1: Integrate the priority recommendations of this Master Plan into the Department's and Staff's annual Goals and Objectives.

Strategies:

- 1.1.1 Upon approval of the Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan by the Town's Board of Trustees and staff, present the plan to the Town Board for adoption and implementation.
- 1.1.2 Establish an Implementation Advisory Committee consisting of Town staff from different departments, elected officials, residents, and partner organizations (Arapahoe County, Adams County, Bennett Recreation District, Bennett School District, etc.) to assist in putting the recommendations of the master plan into action.
- 1.1.3 Identify "champions" on the Committee for priority recommendations and assign roles, responsibilities, and deadlines for staff through the annual review, goals, and objectives process.
- 1.1.4 Provide staff the necessary professional development, equipment, and tools to put the recommendations of the Master Plan into action.

FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS AND DEVELOPMENT

GOAL 2: MEET BENNETT'S GROWING COMMUNITY NEEDS FOR FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS AND DEVELOPMENT.

Objective 2.1: Develop new facilities which are complementary to the Town's existing parks, trails and open space system.

Strategies:

- 2.1.1 Balance the existing park system with the development of mini- and community parks near and within the current Town core.
 - 2.1.1a The balance of the existing park system should extend to the south of Interstate 70 (I-70) into Arapahoe County as the Town continues to develop that direction.
- 2.1.2 The Land Development Regulations should be strengthened and expanded to help achieve the goal of a balanced park, trail, and open space system throughout the Town.
 - 2.1.2a Create and approve language within the Land Development Regulations to identify the types of facilities needed and to support a threshold for private construction of park, trail and open space requirements (See Design Guidelines document)
 - 2.1.2b Actual thresholds and/or date deadlines for construction of improvements should be negotiated with and included in individual annexation or development agreements.
 - 2.1.2c Require developers to dedicate right-of-way and easements to the Town for development of trail corridors.
 - 2.1.2d In lieu of land dedication, encourage developers to contribute cash-in-lieu to provide for more "Town-wide" or regional facilities.
- 2.1.3 The Town needs to plan and budget for a balanced development approach that includes parkland and open space acquisition, as well as facility improvements and development.
 - 2.1.3a Partner with Adams and Arapahoe Counties to acquire and/or utilize conservation easements to preserve additional open space that would act as buffers for the Town from developing and industrial areas, in order to preserve the rural characteristics of the community.

- 2.1.3b Take advantage of the grant application processes provided by Arapahoe County, Adams County, GOCO, and others to provide funding for parks and open space (see Funding Recommendations).
- 2.1.3c Work with partners to provide passive recreation opportunities such as trail use, wildlife viewing, bird watching, etc.
- 2.1.3d Partner with the Bennett Park and Recreation District to provide the community active recreation opportunities, such as organized athletics, fitness activities, etc.
- 2.1.3e Work with partners to provide Bennett and the surrounding regional community with outdoor facilities; such as tennis, volleyball, basketball, skate boarding, etc.
- 2.1.4 Track the level of service (LOS) as the Town grows to work to achieve National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines and goals for the population of the Town. (See **Table 7.3**)
 - 2.1.4a Work to increase the level of service to **7.0 acres per 1,000** population by 2014 = total **21.4 acres** (based on the 2014 projected population of 3,059).
 - 2.1.4b Work to increase the level of service to **9.0 acres per 1,000** population by 2019. This 9.0 acre per 1,000 recommendation is in the middle of the NRPA recommended service levels (6.25 and 10 acres/1,000).
- 2.1.5 Create regional trail connections with Adams and Arapahoe Counties.
 - 2.1.5a Create trail connections to planned County and Town improvements in the Kiowa Creek corridor (i.e. - Antelope Hills to Kiowa Creek Open Space)

Objective 2.2: Improve access to facilities through the development of pedestrian and bicycle pathways and trails.

Strategies:

- 2.2.1 The Town of Bennett should focus efforts on continuing to improve walkable access to existing parks and recreation facilities, as well as strategically locate new facilities in close proximity to future population growth areas.
 - 2.2.1a Improve pedestrian and ADA access to and within Community Park, the Field of Dreams and Trupp Park and other public facilities (i.e. - Recreation Center, Library, Bennett School Campus, Town Hall and retail locations).
 - 2.2.1b Coordinate with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to ensure the appropriate rights-of-way are provided to accommodate trails that follow roadway alignments, as roadway improvements are made.
 - 2.2.1c Construct trails according to federal, state, and local regulations.
- 2.2.2 The Town should also consider methods for crossing major barriers such as I-70 and the railroad tracks, such as grade separated crossings.

Objective 2.3: Increase the level of service for the entire system through improvements to existing facilities.

Strategies:

- 2.3.1 Work to increase the level of service to the remaining areas of the Town that are currently without service by making improvements to existing facilities or adding new parks and/or facilities to the system to provide connectivity and park accessibility throughout the entire Town (see **Figure 7.2 – Map B**)
 - 2.3.1a Increase the level of service being provided by existing parks through improvements and equipment replacement. (See Facility Specific Strategies – **2.4.1 through 2.4.6**)
 - 2.3.1b Plan and budget for quality landscape design, beautification, and maintenance of existing parks and facilities; e.g. turf maintenance, seasonal plantings, public art, etc. (See Design Guidelines Document)
- 2.3.2 The level of service provided to the northeast portion of Town is an area that needs attention. The parks in this part of Town contain older and out of code amenities. The Town should consider focusing its resources and efforts to improve these existing parks to maximize their impacts.

Facility Specific Strategies:

2.4.1 Brothers 4 Park

- 2.4.1a Provide ADA accessibility to the transfer station from the sidewalk.
- 2.4.1b Consider adding one (1) dog station.
- 2.4.1c Consider additional deciduous trees to be incorporated to provide shade.
- 2.4.1d Security lighting is needed.
- 2.4.1e Maintain appropriate number of trash receptacles.
- 2.4.1f Refresh safety surfacing at existing playground.
- 2.4.1g Add bike racks.
- 2.4.1h Implement consistent park signage.

2.4.2 Centennial Park

- 2.4.2a Consider realigning the concrete swale to provide a larger use area for the open turf area or bury pipe in the swale for stormwater drainage.
- 2.4.2b Additional deciduous trees should be added for shade.
- 2.4.2c Add ADA access to swings.
- 2.4.2d Bike racks are needed.
- 2.4.2e Consider one (1) dog station at park entrance.
- 2.4.2f Implement consistent park signage.
- 2.4.2g Consider adding seasonal/ornamental plantings for interest and improving the existing aesthetic.
- 2.4.2h Maintain appropriate number of trash receptacles.
- 2.4.2i Refresh existing safety surfacing at the playground and replace missing/damaged tiles on the transfer station walk.
- 2.4.2j Double-check the safety zone distance around the existing swings to ensure Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) guideline compliance.

2.4.3 Community Park

- 2.4.3a Implement appropriate park signage so access to and through the park is clearly marked. Include signage for the trail when the planned extension is completed.
- 2.4.3b Replace existing playground equipment and safety surfacing with more updated and ADA accessible components in order to eliminate concerns regarding safety, and liability.
- 2.4.3c Repave the existing basketball court surfacing and add new backboards.
- 2.4.3d Rework existing pathways in order to make the entire park ADA accessible.
- 2.4.3e Consider removing or replacing existing chain link fence. If replacing, consider adding additional access points into the park.
- 2.4.3f Consider replacing existing restroom facility with a facility that is more vandalism proof and ADA accessible.
- 2.4.3g Improve existing parking lot.
- 2.4.3h Consider adding one (1) dog station and one (1) drinking fountain.
- 2.4.3i Add one or two (1-2) picnic tables and two (2) benches.
- 2.4.3j Consider leveling out the uneven grading in the turf area.
- 2.4.3k Consider adding seasonal/ornamental plantings for interest and improving the existing aesthetic.
- 2.4.3l Add bike racks.
- 2.4.3m Continue to maintain and monitor existing trees for storm damage.
- 2.4.3n Consider planting new trees in advance of the removal of existing trees.
- 2.4.3o Consider adding a public art component to the park.

2.4.4 Field of Dreams

- 2.4.4a Provide ADA access to the fields from the street and parking area.
- 2.4.4b Consider adding shade structures near seating areas.
- 2.4.4c Consider replacing existing restroom facility with a facility that is more vandalism proof and ADA accessible.
- 2.4.4d Consider replacing existing lighting with fixtures that meet current guidelines. Consider energy efficient fixtures.

- 2.4.4e Bike racks and drinking fountains are needed.
- 2.4.4f Clearly define the park entrance with consistent signage.
- 2.4.4g Consider adding additional defined parking.
- 2.4.4h Consider adding one or two (1-2) picnic tables outside field area.
- 2.4.4i Consider adding seasonal/ornamental plantings for interest and improving the existing aesthetic.

2.4.5 Trupp Park
Short Term

- 2.4.5a Develop a master plan for Trupp Park that considers re-design of the park and addition of amenities (as listed in recommendations 2.45a-r) to better fulfill its role as a community park as defined by NRPA.

Mid Term

- 2.4.5b Consider adding an additional shelter or deciduous shade trees for shade in clusters adjacent to existing program areas (i.e. – playground, amphitheater, skatepark, etc.) as well as around the periphery of the park.
- 2.4.5c Replace existing playground components to eliminate safety concerns due to the existing metal components.
- 2.4.5d The band shell is in acceptable condition, but should be painted in order to make it a more aesthetically pleasing and desirable amenity.
- 2.4.5e Consider replacing existing restroom facilities with a facility that is more vandalism proof and ADA accessible.
- 2.4.5f Utilize the open turf area as a multi-purpose field, reseed the area, and implement an irrigation and weed management program in order to establish a lush stand of turf.
- 2.4.5g Add signage to the multi-purpose field area that signifies a possible hazard since this area of the park is a detention area. The signage should note that this part of the park can be under water after storms.
- 2.4.5h Add bike racks.
- 2.4.5i Consider adding one (1) dog station.
- 2.4.5j Maintain appropriate number of trash receptacles.
- 2.4.5k Add paved access from existing shelter to playground area.
- 2.4.5l Add additional seating areas.
- 2.4.5m Add consistent signage to the park entrance.
- 2.4.5n Expand existing parking area.
- 2.4.5o Plan on replacing the existing picnic tables within the next five (5) years.
- 2.4.5p Supplement existing security lighting with additional light fixtures.
- 2.4.5q Consider replacing existing safety surfacing at playground area to meet current standards.
- 2.4.5r Consider replacing seating at the band shell.
- 2.4.5s Consider sectioning off a portion of the playground area to create a 2-5 year old play area separate from the 5-12 year old play area.

2.4.6 Trail

- 2.4.6a Implement a policy that requires developers to plant deciduous trees periodically along the trail to provide shade.
- 2.4.6b Consider establishing corporate naming rights to name the trail in order to gain funding for ongoing operations and maintenance.
- 2.4.6c Add signage to signify access points.
- 2.4.6d Consider connecting trail with Adams and Arapahoe County Open Space trails, particularly the Kiowa Creek parcel in Arapahoe County.

OPERATIONS, MAINTENANCE AND STAFFING

GOAL 3: MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE LEVEL OF MAINTENANCE AT ALL PARKS AND FACILITIES.

Objective 3.1: Provide staff with the resources to appropriately and effectively maintain all park, trail, and open space facilities in the system.

Strategies:

- 3.1.1 Train staff proper plant care, mowing, and weed management in order to maintain the Town's facilities, as well as, to operate necessary equipment and supplies.
 - 3.1.1a Utilize resources and training at the county level (Adams County Open Space, Arapahoe County Open Space), the Colorado State University Extension Service, and the Colorado Recreation and Park Association workshops.
- 3.1.2 Develop guidelines, establish standards, and life-cycle assessment that establishes standards for maintaining assets and grounds, establishes schedules for mowing and equipment maintenance, and plans for long-term replacement issues such as ballfield fencing and playgrounds. Standards should be applicable to the soils, climate, and facilities located in Bennett. (Please refer to the **Appendix** for an example of maintenance standards that would be applicable for the Town.)
 - 3.1.2a The life-cycle assessment on maintenance equipment should also include a depreciation schedule. Update equipment when the life-cycle of the asset has passed in order to ensure efficiencies.
 - 3.1.2b Inventory park facility equipment annually, assess the condition, and establish a timeframe for replacement or renovation.
- 3.1.3 Annually update the Master Plan's maintenance scores for each park, trail, and open space area and utilize the scores to allocate funding, resources, and staff time to maintain the facilities.
- 3.1.4 Town personnel will maintain park, open space, and trails. The Town should work toward a target of one person dedicated per 18 acres of parks and open space. By 2015, the Town should strive to achieve a ratio of one person per 12 acres. Seasonal staff would supplement full-time personnel.
- 3.1.5 Training additional staff will be required to maintain parks and facilities that may be developed or added to the system in the future.

Objective 3.2: Provide staff and the Town with the necessary guidance to maintain, staff, and fund the parks, trails, and open space system.

Strategies:

- 3.2.1 Create a policy and procedures manual that provides for proper guidance on day-to-day operations. When policies and procedures are created, staff needs to ensure that they are in compliance with existing human resources, financial, and other management policies held by the Town.
- 3.2.2 As the Town population approaches 10,000 and acreage is added to the parks, trails, and open space system (as recommended in Strategy 2.1.4), consideration should be given to creating a parks maintenance division that would manage and/or maintain Town-owned parks, open space, and trails. This would allow the Town to better maintain facilities and infrastructure and determine what staffing ratio best suits maintaining Town assets.
 - 3.2.2a If a division specifically dedicated to maintenance of the parks, trails, and open space areas is formed, then this ratio could accurately be measured.
 - 3.2.2b Evaluation would allow the Town to determine whether in-house personnel could better provide maintenance or should some aspects of maintenance be outsourced. Some maintenance activities that could be examined include tree trimming, trail maintenance, and trash pickup. Criteria should include evaluating drive time between parks, personnel costs with benefits versus contract labor, or cost to purchase equipment in comparison to having contractor purchase capital.

- 3.2.3 When staff is hired and dedicated to maintain the parks, trails, and open space system, do a "Time and Motion Study" to determine how long specific tasks take to complete. Efficiencies may be gained from such an analysis. The analysis could include work order creation/retrieval, drive time to parks, trail trash removal, and fleet maintenance. Each could be benchmarked and used to gauge current and future productivity.

FUNDING AND FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

GOAL 4: IDENTIFY AND SEEK OUT ADEQUATE FUNDING SOURCES TO MEET THE GROWING NEEDS OF THE BENNETT COMMUNITY.

Objective 4.1: Investigate potential Traditional Funding Sources

Strategies:

- 4.1.1 Focus Town efforts on setting itself up to gain steady stream of funding through additional traditional funding, such as dedicated percent sales tax or property tax mill levy to fund a bond referendum to support identified needs.
 - 4.1.1a Further explore through a community survey the support for dedicated park and recreation tax (sales or property tax).
 - 4.1.1b If support is shown, consider the potential of utilizing a bond referendum to establish additional revenue to support specific projects.
- 4.1.2 Look at the market demand for all Town-owned parks and recreation facilities and consider charging accordingly.
 - 4.1.2a Develop user fees for the Field of Dreams, to establish sustainable operations and maintenance of the field.
 - 4.1.2b Develop a tiered fee system for facility use that is structured by classification as non-residents, private residents, non-profit organizations, and seniors.
- 4.1.3 When considering fee increases, it will be important to evaluate pricing levels, as there are many residents within the community that may not have the ability to pay, but may be most in need of the Town's services.
 - 4.1.3a Develop a Scholarship Program to assist those who qualify as "low-income."
- 4.1.4 Align and update impact fee levels to support the Town's growing population and the associated park, trail, and open space needs of the community with the funding required for recommended parkland acquisition, equipment, and facility development.
 - 4.1.4a Based on the Town's 2003 Impact Fee Study, Parks and Recreation Impact Fee levels were calculated based on "Current Service Standards." This study should be reevaluated and impact fees should be updated based on the capital improvement needs identified in this plan.
 - 4.1.4b In the 2003 study, impact fees were recommended at \$361/residential unit. An update to this study should include a comparative benchmark analysis of similar size Front Range communities, so as to gain a greater understanding of the funding levels of similar providers and to guide potential fee increases.

Objective 4.2: Pursue Alternative Funding Sources

Strategies:

- 4.2.1 Continue to be proactive through utilizing staff and volunteer time to identify and seek out grants and alternative funding.
- 4.2.2 Seek monies from alternative funding sources, including grants, donations, and sponsorships and supporting matching funds in order to provide for the sustainability of the park and recreation system.
 - 4.2.2a Pursue grants for parks and recreation facility development and enhancements; i.e. Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), Department of Local Affairs (DOLA).
 - 4.2.2b Explore grants for trails and alternative transportation development; i.e. Colorado State Trails Program, TEA-21, Safe Routes to Schools, etc..
 - 4.2.2c Investigate grants for environmental and natural resource protection; i.e. Adams County Open Space Program, Arapahoe County Open Space Program, Colorado Department of Wildlife, Colorado Wildlife Heritage Foundation, Colorado Garden Show, etc.

Objective 4.3: Investigate and implement partnership opportunities to reduce costs or share expenses for the development of new facilities or programs to sustain existing facilities and programs.

Strategies:

- 4.3.1 Put efforts into developing a corporate sponsorship program and naming rights for the development of new and existing facilities and programs.
 - 4.3.1a Create an annual Sponsorship Manual listing all of the opportunities and benefits of sponsoring Town facilities and programs and distribute widely.
 - 4.3.1b Sell the naming rights of existing and future facilities to private businesses.
 - 4.3.1c Solicit local businesses to act as corporate sponsors for the naming rights of the Town trail.
- 4.3.2 Develop an Adopt-a-Trail and Adopt-a-Park program, where local residents and businesses provide monetary or in-kind (materials and/or volunteer hours) donations to assist the Town with park maintenance and beautification.
- 4.3.3 Partner with schools to develop new recreation facilities on adjacent land so recreation amenities can be shared for usage, capital expenditure, operational costs and scheduling.
- 4.3.4 Partner with Bennett School District and Bennett Recreation District to share maintenance costs, responsibilities and equipment to maintain community recreation facilities.

Goal 5: Evaluate financial and budget policies in order to maximize the efficient use of funds and to gain additional funding.

Objective 5.1: Develop policies and procedures for documenting program and task-specific costs, revenue, and cost recovery.

Strategies:

- 5.1.1 Develop and adopt a detailed accounting approach to understand exactly what revenue is intended to be dedicated to parks, trails, and open space funding for operations, maintenance, acquisition, and development.
 - 5.1.1a Detailed tracking of expenditures on specific park and recreation projects will assist the Town in budgeting for future operations, maintenance, and capital projects, as well provide for increasing transparency with its constituents and potential funders; i.e. grantees, donors, corporate sponsors, etc.
 - 5.1.1b Track all expenses and revenues for all facilities and services to understand their contribution to overall cost recovery.
 - 5.1.1c Establish fees for all programs and services; i.e. facility use, special events, etc. that consider the full cost of providing that program or service. Fees should be set to recover a portion of that cost, based on the level of benefit to the community.

PARTNERSHIPS

GOAL 6: INCREASE PARTNERSHIPS AND REGIONAL COLLABORATIONS IN ORDER TO PROVIDE THE BENNETT COMMUNITY WITH THE FACILITIES AND SERVICES NEEDED TO SERVE A GROWING POPULATION.

Objective 6.1: Maintain and foster cooperative and collaborative efforts to maximize resources and funds to expand programs and services to meet growing demands.

Strategies:

- 6.1.1 Establish formal, documented partnerships and facility agreements to provide for the increasing and changing demands of the community. Partnerships should be based on equity and not create a burden for either group.

- 6.1.2 Establish relationships and formal partnerships with the following partner organizations (and others as opportunities arise) to implement the recommendations of the master plan and to provide additional facilities, programs, and services to the Bennett community.
 - 6.1.2a Bennett Parks and Recreation District – athletics, special events, and active recreation opportunities.
 - 6.1.2b Arapahoe County Open Space – Kiowa Creek Open Space, conservation easements, and park and trail development.
 - 6.1.2c Adams County Open Space – open space preservation, conservation easements, and park and trail development.
 - 6.1.2d Bennett School District - develop Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) for use of athletic facilities and multi-purpose spaces.
 - 6.1.2e I-70 Chamber of Commerce / Regional Economic Advancement Partnership / High Five Plains Foundation / youth and adult athletic leagues / cultural and art organizations – community support, volunteer recruitment, facility and services promotion, fundraising, etc.

Goal 7: Partner to provide programs and activities to serve the diverse needs of the Bennett community.

Objective 7.1: Maintain quality of program and special event offerings while adapting to changing trends and interests for a diverse and comprehensive selection of options for all ages and interests.

Objective 7.2: Coordinate with alternative providers and partners to provide and promote youth and family-based recreation programming to the Bennett community.

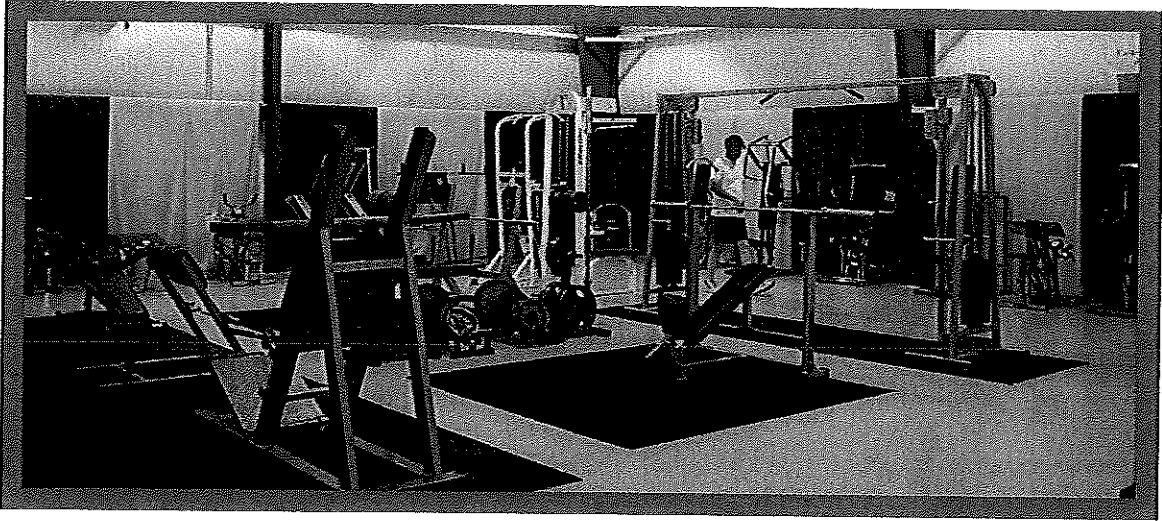
Strategies:

- 7.2.1 The partnership between the Bennett Park and Recreation District and the portions of the Town that fall in unincorporated Adams County has greatly benefited the community in the past and should continue to be strengthened to provide additional active recreation programming of current and future recreation facilities.
 - 7.2.1a Work with the Bennett Parks and Recreation District Recreation Center to make the development of affordable new programs and facilities a reality.
 - 7.2.1b Support the District's efforts to expand its boundaries to include portions of the Town that are within Arapahoe County.

Objective 7.3: Periodically evaluate the wants and needs of the Town's residents to work with partners to ensure provided programs, facilities, and resources match those desired.

Strategies:

- 7.3.1 Utilize the plan's demographics analysis, as well as trends in parks and recreation to evaluate programs and facilities which may become more or less popular among users, to develop new facilities, programs, and services.
 - 7.3.1a Develop programs and community special events that are geared toward youth and young families.
 - 7.3.1b Develop programs to encourage physical activity levels, health, and wellness.
 - 7.3.1c Develop marketing efforts that focus on increased use of technological mediums that appeal to the youth and young adults of the community; i.e. website, social media sites, email blasts, blogs, text messaging, etc.
 - 7.3.1d Partner with the Bennett School District to promote programs and activities that provide positive outlets for the youth of the community's growth and development.
- 7.3.2 In five years (2014) partner with the Bennett Park and Recreation District to perform an update of this master plan that includes a community statistically-valid survey to identify the unique needs and desires of the growing Bennett community in regard to parks, recreation, trails and open space facilities and programs.
- 7.3.3 Findings from the Level of Service Analysis and Public Input process illustrate the need for acquisition of additional park land and development of facilities that serve youth and young families. (See *Facility-Specific Recommendations, sections 2.4.1 through 2.4.6*).



10. ACTION PLAN

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