



City of Fruita
PARKS, OPEN
SPACE, AND TRAILS
MASTER PLAN

DECEMBER 2009

“Honor the Past, Envision the Future”

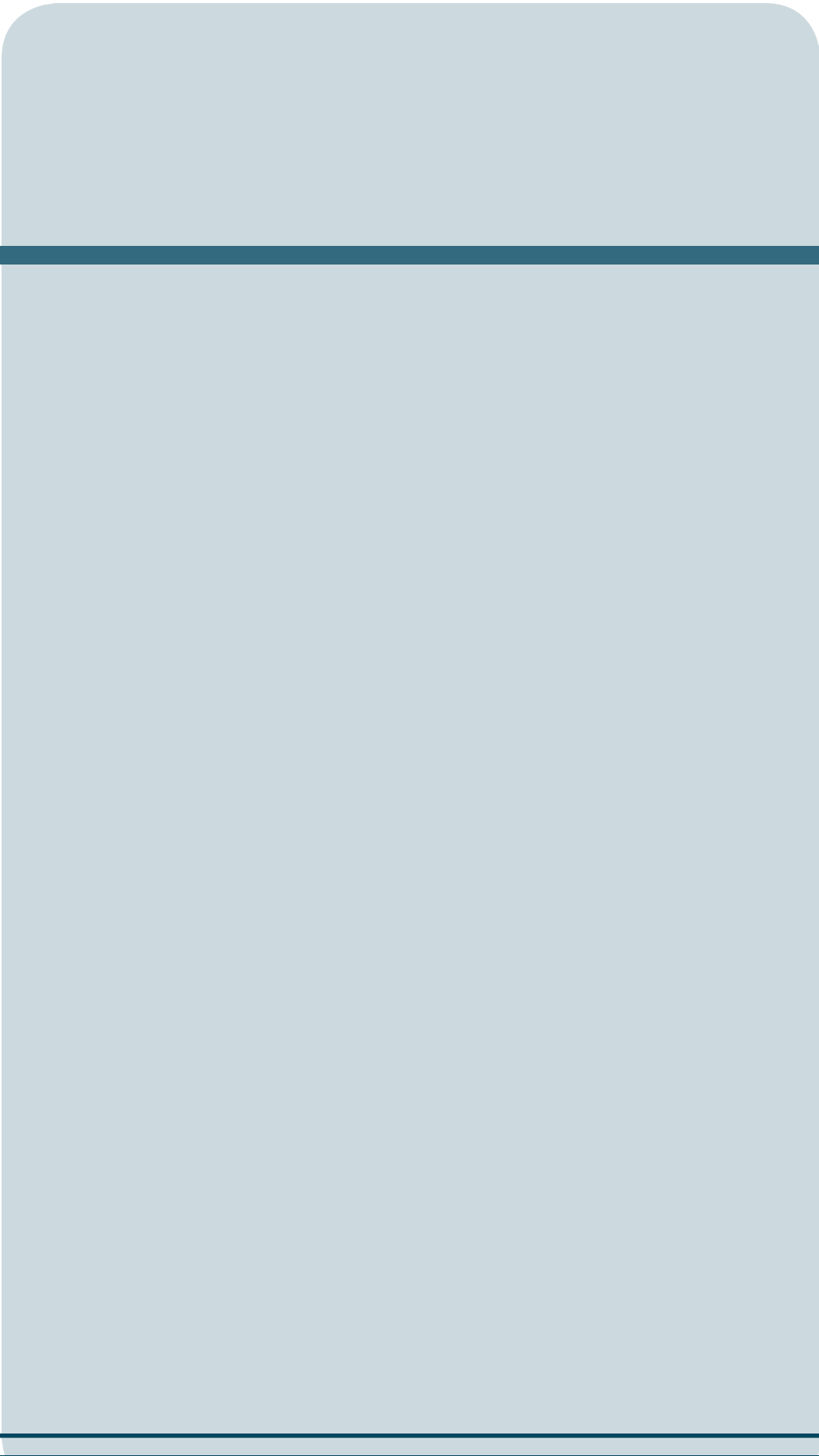
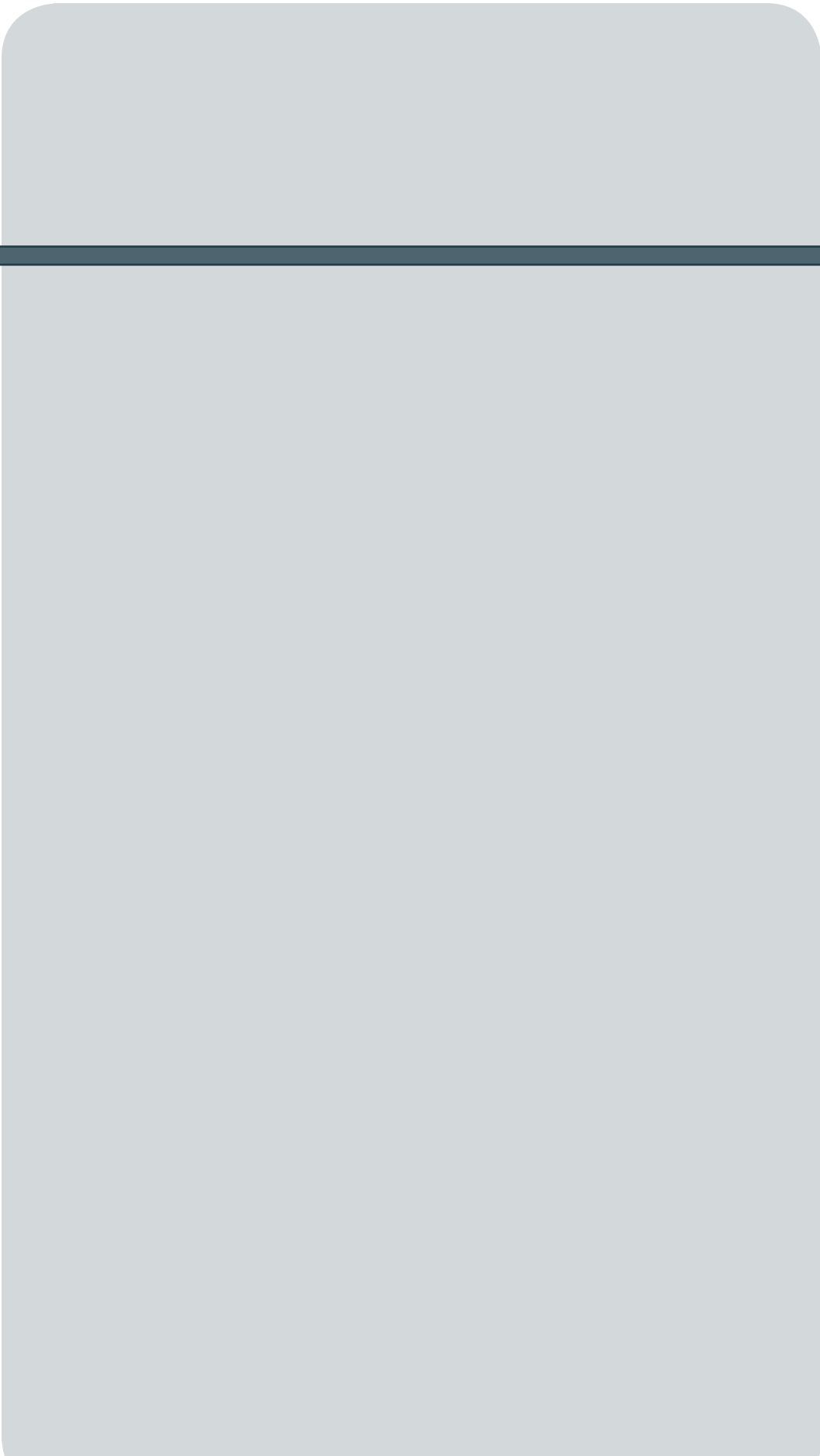


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01 PLAN FOUNDATION



1.1 PROJECT INTRODUCTION

As one of Colorado's small town gems, Fruita's history has been rooted in agriculture. It has worked hard to maintain an identity as both a gateway community of the state as well as a base from which to explore the surrounding majestic natural resources, including Colorado National Monument, McInnis Canyon National Conservation Area (NCA), and the North Fruita Desert. Over the years, the community has been successful in maintaining its small town character, while at the same time promoting and celebrating its great access to a wide variety of recreational resources. This celebration of recreation has helped create an identity for Fruita that has become world renown – a community that welcomes visitors and new residents alike who wish to share its small town values and enjoy its tremendous recreational opportunities.

Due to the strong attraction of the community, Fruita has experienced rapid growth over the last decade. As the recently completed 2008 Fruita Community Plan indicates, there has been nearly a 70% increase in population since the year 2000. This rapid population growth, combined with the ever-increasing awareness of Fruita as an internationally known recreation destination, particularly for mountain biking, has challenged the community to address these pressures.

As the Fruita community grows, the demand for additional recreational programs and activities has grown, especially the demand to have recreational services provided locally in the Fruita area as opposed to traveling to our neighboring com-

munities. To address these demands, the Parks and Recreation Department has worked to increase new recreational programs and services, including youth and adult athletic programs, outdoor programs (senior hiking, youth fishing, etc.), and additional special events. These new services are an attempt to provide residents and visitors alike the ability to stay and play in the Fruita area and truly enjoy our small town feeling. Because of these new services and the anticipation that these services will continue to grow, the demands on parkland, trails, and open space areas is also increasing.

Due to the increased pressures from population growth, the increased demand from residents, visitors to our community and the amount of services being offered through the parks and recreation department, community leaders have elected to be pro-active in assessing and addressing both current and future park, recreation, open space, and trail needs. This Parks, Open Space, and Trails Plan is a primary tool to do that.

1.2 WHY PLAN?

Fruita is growing, and with it, so is the need for parks, trails, open space, and recreation facilities. Abundant federal and state lands abut and surround the greater Fruita area, providing nearby access to world-class outdoor recreation for both visitors and residents alike. Yet, parks, trails, open space, and recreation facilities must be provided in the urban area in addition to these tremendous federal assets.

While the federal and state trails and parkland that surround Fruita are a critical contribution to the high quality of life Fruita residents enjoy, urban parks and trails within Fruita provide a different and separate function that improve quality of life. They provide places to play after school and during summer vacations and give individuals and families countless hours of recreation and relaxation. Parks are accessible by walking and biking versus getting in a vehicle. Parks provide green spaces for both scheduled and unscheduled activities and events. Park vegetation and water features produce clean air and protect cities from floodwaters. They help to increase property value, grow the local tax base, contribute to education, reduce crime, attract businesses, and create jobs. Parks are also elements that help make up the public realms of great cities; cities in which people desire to live, work, raise a family, and visit. Trails connect the community and provide spaces for people to easily access and enjoy nature. Trails provide the system by which people can access the parks and open space system. Trails also provide a transportation system for all ages to commute to school and work.

Parks and trails educate, protect, and enrich people of all ages. Increasingly, people look to parks, trails and open spaces as part of a community's infrastructure, a fundamental element of what makes a city a great place to be.

In 2008, the City of Fruita adopted the Community Plan, which developed a community-wide vision on a variety of topics including among others land use and growth, economic sustainability, transportation, and Open Space, Parks and Recreation. The vision and discussions in the Community Plan are on very broad level. It is the intent of the POST Plan to further define the guiding principles and policies on Open Space, Parks and Recreation as set forth in the Community Plan.

The City of Fruita has retained AECOM (formerly EDAA) to help develop a Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan (POST) to augment the Community Plan, and further define a long-term vision for parks, trails, open space, and recreation facilities as the community continues to grow. This master plan is an advisory document and while it does not carry the weight of law it is intended to guide the community's efforts to respond to ongoing growth, address existing and newly created needs for parks and recreation facilities, link the community together through an interconnected trail system, and identify critical open space enhancements and acquisitions.

As an official document for use by public officials, developers, and citizens, the specific focus of this plan is to:

- Develop a detailed inventory of all parklands and quantify the level of service for existing and future residents.
- Assess the current level of service of Fruita's parks, trails, open space, and recreation facilities.
- Analyze and determine Fruita's park and recreation needs through discussions with user groups; national, state, and local trends; benchmarking with similar communities in the Rocky Mountain region; and public outreach.

- Identify existing underserved residential areas in need of additional parkland.
- Assess existing open space in the community and identify any areas for future potential protection and recreational use.
- Define level-of-service standards, a classification system, and general design criteria for parks and trails.
- Create a vision, objectives, and policies to help achieve plan goals.
- Develop a plan that is flexible and implementable depending on Fruita's growth.
- Identify conceptual trail corridors that connect destinations within the city and beyond, especially connections to the Riverfront Trail system.
- Develop a list of priority projects and an action plan for implementation of the plan.
- Identify potential funding sources, acquisition strategies, and partnership opportunities while promoting sound development and growth opportunities.

The emphasis of this plan focuses on how Fruita can improve its existing parks, trails, open space, and recreation system to better meet the needs of Fruita's current and future residents. As part of this, the plan identifies opportunities for Fruita to increase its total parkland through the enlargement of existing parks, the construction of new parks where feasible, and joint-use agreements with outside partners. It also describes possible upgrades and enhancements to existing parks and open space, and provides recommendations on new trails and trail connections through the city and to nearby destinations.

The POST Master Plan should be revisited and updated periodically to ensure that it accurately reflects current/future needs and changing conditions, and to adjust priorities within the community as appropriate.

1.3 CREATING THE PLAN

The citizens of Fruita are well informed and knowledgeable about the planning process, having recently undertaken other planning efforts, namely the Community Plan. The POST Master Plan is intended to complement and build upon the 2008 Fruita Community Plan, seeking to refine and elaborate the principles and objectives that were created, and identify specific projects that realize the overall vision of the community. The planning process was structured with a series of tasks that build upon each other and ensure consistent and timely development of the plan.

The tasks and chapters in which they are described are as follows:

CHAPTER ONE – PLAN FOUNDATION

Establish the purpose of the plan and planning process. Document citizen input in the planning process. Describe the history of Fruita and the current community profile.

CHAPTER TWO – PLANNING CONTEXT

Conduct an inventory and develop a detailed database and maps of existing parklands, trails, and recreation facilities owned and operated by the City of Fruita and other publically accessible parklands. Identify the service areas associated with various types of parks (not including private pocket parks and other non-city owned lands). Develop classifications for various types of parks and trails, and standards for their locations, sizes, and other characteristics. Describe the surrounding recreational resources provided by other agencies. Identify issues and determine needs based on the results of the inventory; interviews with interest groups, recreation providers, and park and recreation staff; and input from the public, Technical Advisory Committee and Steering Committee. Analyze recreation

trends, population growth and distribution projections, and comparisons with other communities.

CHAPTER THREE – VISION, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

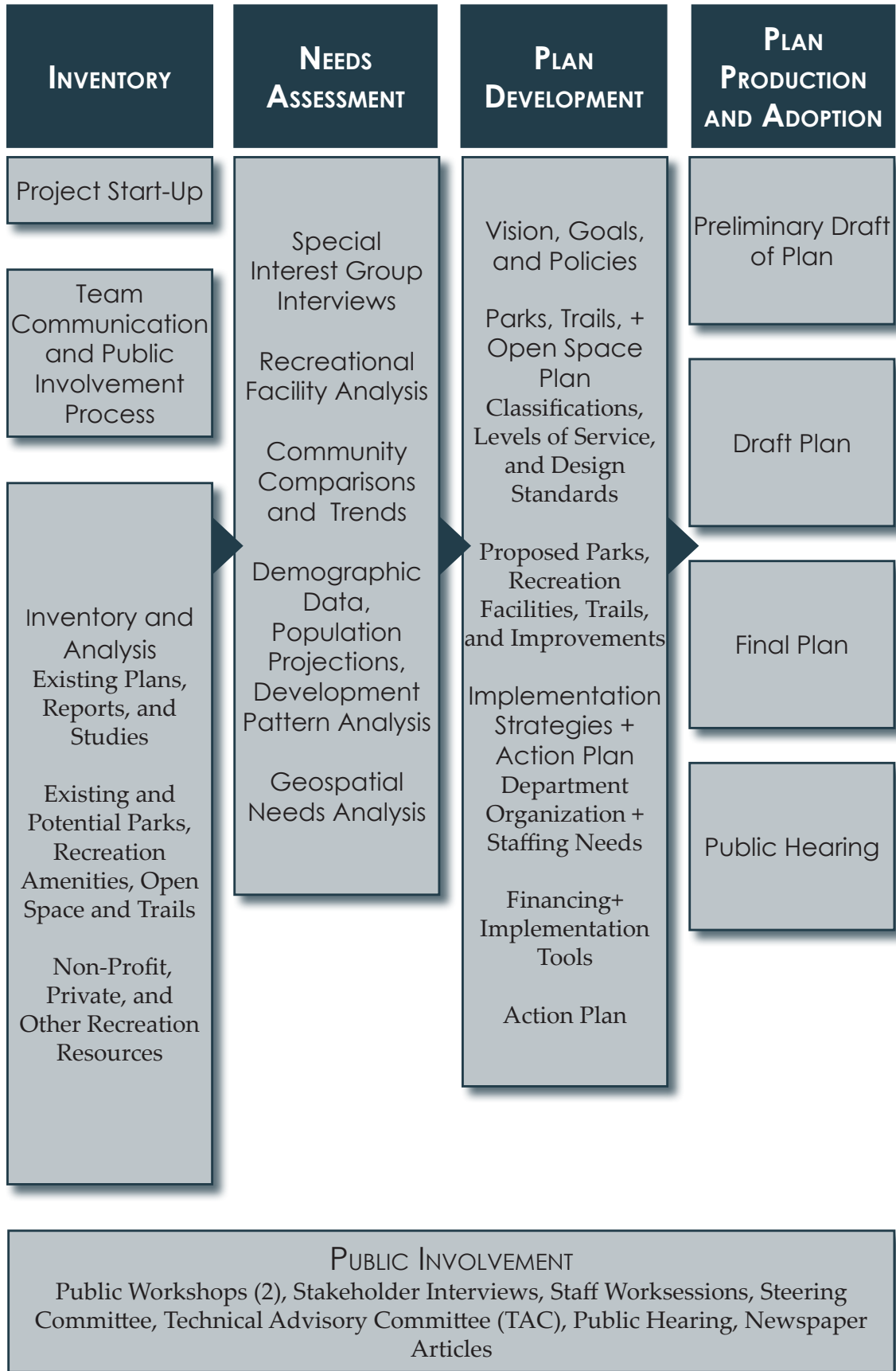
Define the vision for the plan, and describe the specific objectives and policies to support the vision, including the standards for acreage of parkland provisions based on total population.

CHAPTER FOUR – MASTER PLAN

Develop recommendations and actions for the POST Master Plan. Identify specific park, trail, and recreation enhancement and upgrade projects and potential locations for additional parkland, trails, and facilities.

CHAPTER FIVE – IMPLEMENTATION

Identify existing and potential tools for implementation (including regulations, funding sources, and partnerships) and specific actions with identified responsibilities and costs. Develop a list of priority projects and an action plan.



1.4 CITIZEN INPUT

The POST Master Plan was developed through a series of meetings with several groups, all of which provided insight, guidance, and advice. Citizen involvement is described by explaining the process of meetings, open houses, and outreach efforts that took place throughout development of the POST Master Plan. The 2008 Fruita Community Plan was also used as the foundation for development of the POST Master Plan. Much of the direction and input for the POST plan was taken from the 2008 Community Plan (including a citizen survey).

A. MEETINGS

A total of seven meetings were held with the **Steering Committee**, which was composed of members from the Parks and Recreation Board, Planning Commission, and City Council, all of which represent diverse interests, including the local business community, recreation and trail interests, and environmental groups. The Steering Committee's role was to act as a sounding board and provide feedback and advice on various elements of the planning process. The role of the Steering Committee was significant, and the meetings were instrumental in helping to determine the direction and priorities for the future of Fruita with respect to parks, trails, open space, and recreation.

The **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)**, which consisted of staff from the City of Fruita, Colorado State Parks, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Park Service, Mesa County, Mesa County Valley School District 51, and the Colorado Riverfront Commission, served as the primary advisory group on technical issues. The TAC also provided input to ensure that the planning efforts associated with the POST Plan were in alignment with planning efforts in the respective agencies and organizations. The group met three times during the process.



Circle Park

B. OUTREACH

Three public open houses were conducted throughout the planning process to gather input from the general public. The first open house was held on January 15, 2009, and provided information on why the plan was being produced and how the planning process was being conducted. It also described the current inventory and level of service for parks and recreation facilities in Fruita, and discussed some of the preliminary needs that were identified. Lastly, it solicited input from the public regarding what types of parks, trails, open space, and recreation facilities are needed for the community in the future. The second open house was held on June 4, 2009. This public meeting was held during a scheduled Thursday Night Concert at the Civic Center Park. The third public meeting was held on July 1, 2009 after a regularly scheduled Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting. The purpose and intent of these meetings was to present draft POST Master Plans to the public and solicit their input on the proposed the plan as well as attain feedback on proposed projects.

Another component of the public outreach effort was to interview special interest groups. These groups were identified by the City of Fruita and represented a diverse cross-section of the recreation community in Fruita. More than 20 groups were interviewed and included such organizations as



SH6/50 Trail Wayside

youth sports leagues, local businesses, historical associations, organized outdoor recreation associations, government agencies, outfitters, and land conservation groups. Results of these interviews are described in more detail in Chapter Two, Planning Context.

The City of Fruita also made efforts to keep the public informed on the progress of the planning effort and upcoming meetings and open houses through notices in the community's newsletter, *City Link*, as well as posting information on the City of Fruita's website. Articles and notifications were run in the following *City Link* newsletters: Fall 2008, Winter 2008, Spring 2009, and Summer 2009. Advertisements and/or press releases were also sent to the *Grand Junction Sentinel* and *Fruita Times* promoting the public meetings on January 15 and June 4. The public comment period began with the meeting on June 4 and was open for two weeks. The legally required public hearing process on the POST Master Plan followed the public comment period.

1.5 COMMUNITY PROFILE

Fruita is located in western Colorado, in Mesa County, approximately 12 miles west of downtown Grand Junction, Colorado and approximately 17 miles east of the Utah state line. Map 1, Regional Context, shows Fruita's location relative to neighboring communities, public lands, and other significant natural features. Fruita was established in 1884 by William E. Pabor, who formed the Fruita Town and Land Company for the purpose of selling town lots. Pabor understood the high quality agricultural value of the area and specifically recognized its fruit producing potential, hence the name he gave the community. The city's agricultural heritage remains strong today.

Interstate 70 transects the community from east to west, as does the Colorado River, running through the southern portion of the community. Fruita is graced with an abundance of high quality natural and recreational resources surrounding the community, including the Colorado National Monument to the south, McInnis Canyon NCA to the southwest, BLM lands to the north and south, and United State Forest Service Lands to the south. Specific recreational resources include the Colorado River, the James M. Robb Colorado River State Park, and hundreds of miles of multiple-use trails on federal lands, including the Kokopelli Trail which starts just west of Fruita and extends 144 miles to the Moab, Utah.

Fruita has experienced tremendous growth over the last decade. There has been nearly a 70% increase in population since the year 2000, growing from 6,478 residents to approximately 10,947¹ residents in 2008. As the 2008 Fruita Community Plan detailed, the average growth rate between the years 2000 and 2006 was 8.1%, with the highest growth rates in history occurring in 2004 (10.1%), 2005 (10.4%), and 2006 (10.2%). The community plan also indicates that the average annual growth rate over the last

¹ Colorado State Demography office, 2008.

four decades has been approximately 5%, which may be more indicative of the future. Projecting that growth rate forward, it can be expected that Fruita’s population will reach 25,735² by the year 2025.

The median age of the population in the City of Fruita in 2000 (the most recent year Census Data was available) is 36.5 years, slightly higher than the median age for the State of Colorado of 34.3 years. Approximately 15% of the population is age 10-19 – the predominant age of children who are most active in programmed recreational sports leagues. Approximately 16.1% of the population is over age 65. Table 1.1 illustrates these numbers in greater detail.

when done at a moderate level⁴. It should be recognized, however, that the demographic characteristics of the community will continue to shift over time. As the population and demographics of the community continues to evolve, the City of Fruita should continue to plan for amenities and recreation programs that are geared towards its current user public.

Table 1.1. Fruita Age Distribution.

LOCATION	MEDIAN AGE	UNDER 5 YEARS	5 TO 14 YEARS	15 TO 19 YEARS	20 TO 34 YEARS	35 TO 54 YEARS	55 TO 64 YEARS	AGES 65+
Fruita	36.5	7.1%	16.0%	7.0%	17.8%	27.8%	8.2%	16.1%
Colorado	34.3	6.9%	14.1%	7.1%	22.5%	31.4%	7.9%	9.7%

The population of Fruita is aging, as are many areas of Colorado and the U.S. By the year 2030, there will be more Americans over age 65 (20% of the total population) than under age 18. Parkland will continue to be an important element to neighborhoods and communities regardless of the age of residents, but the programs and facilities may need to adjust in the near term to meet the needs of an active, yet somewhat less mobile and athletic clientele. Being physically active is key to maintaining independence and a high quality of life, and our society and media are certainly emphasizing this in recent years. In general, people become less physically active as they get older; nearly 40% of people over the age of 55 report no leisure-time physical activity. Challenging exercises and physical activities, done regularly, can help many older adults improve their health, even

² 2008 Fruita Community Plan.

³ US Administration on Aging, website accessed January 2006.

⁴ National Institute on Aging – Exercise: A Guide from the National Institute on Aging, 2001.

MAP 1. REGIONAL CONTEXT

BACK OF MAP 1.

1.6 UPDATES TO THE POST MASTER PLAN

The Fruita POST Master Plan, much like the 2008 Community Plan, is built on a set of enduring values and goals. While these values are expected to represent the heart and character of the community for many years to come, the planning process is one that is ongoing and should adapt as the community evolves.

This plan is intended to be a living document, one that is flexible and fluid, so that as opportunities for land acquisition or easements and park and trail development become available, the city can immediately capitalize on these opportunities. This POST Master Plan will be reviewed and comprehensively updated periodically, as necessary. The purpose of periodic updates is to re-evaluate and modify the vision, objectives and policies, and proposed projects. Communities evolve and change over time, and an effective public parks, recreation, open space, and trails plan should be modified to accurately reflect these changes as they occur.



Fall Festival



Truck N Treat



02 PLANNING CONTEXT



2.1 INTRODUCTION

As discussed in the 2008 Fruita Community Plan, Fruita residents increasingly view parks and recreation as fundamental elements of what makes our city a great place to be. Urban parks enrich lives. They educate, protect, and enrich young people. They provide places to play after school and during summer vacations, and give individuals and families countless hours of recreation and relaxation. Parks produce clean air and protect cities from floodwaters and specifically for Fruita, parks contribute to our small town atmosphere.

As the 2008 Community Plan described, Fruita remains a highly desirable place to live, work, and play. Each year, increasing numbers of tourists, recreationists, retirees, and young families seek out Fruita as a place to either visit and recreate in or to establish a permanent residence. The wealth of amenities in our small town have a particular charm and draw that few other small towns in the country can offer. Of these amenities, Fruita's commitment to parks, trails, open space, and recreation facilities that reflect the character of our community are an invaluable resource for both residents and visitors alike.

CHAPTER ELEMENTS

This chapter has three primary elements: Existing Resources; Park Standards and Levels of Service; and the Issues and Needs Analysis. The Existing Resources element documents the parks, trails, open space, and recreational resources owned and operated by the City of Fruita. It also describes recre-

ational resources not owned or provided by the City of Fruita, but available for use by the city, its residents, and visitors, such as federal and state lands, school lands, and HOA maintained parks with public access agreements.

In the Park Standards and Levels of Service element, definitions of each park type are included, as well as standards for the desired level of service and types of facilities that should be included within the parks. An analysis is also included that identifies the availability of parks in relation to neighborhoods, as well as how accessible these parks are to residents.

The Issues and Needs Analysis element documents the issues and needs that influence the types and number of parks, trails, open space, and recreation facilities needed in the community. This section documents the estimated demand for services from current and future residents and, in association with the inventory of existing facilities, highlights potential areas of shortfall or oversupply. In turn, this will give direction to future master plan recommendations.

Identifying the user public's satisfaction, perceptions, use patterns, and priorities for parks, trails, open space, and recreation facilities is an important part of this process. Accurately assessing the needs of current and future residents requires a diverse approach, using many different techniques to gather information. Collectively, the data from these various sources creates a picture of what is needed within Fruita, and serves as the basis from which to develop a list of projects, priorities, and actions

(detailed later in Chapter Five - Implementation). Each technique used in this process provides valuable information, but the data from any one technique should not be viewed in isolation and without assessing it to the established vision, objectives, and policies of the community.

The Issues and Needs Analysis element synthesizes the analysis conducted on accessibility to parks; the population and growth projections and demographic characteristics described in Chapter One; and areas of planned residential growth, which may affect the locations and quantities of additional parklands, trails, and facilities. Communities in the Rocky Mountain region, similar to Fruita (and decided on by the Steering Committee), were also surveyed to determine the levels of service they provide for parkland and common recreation facilities. This database serves as a benchmark when determining the levels of service that are appropriate for Fruita.

Recreational preferences and the level of demand for additional parks and recreational opportunities are also addressed in the Issues and Needs Analysis element. Pertinent information from national databases on recreation participation levels and data from the 2007 Colorado State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) have been considered. Stakeholder interviews were also conducted with representatives of other public and nonprofit recreation providers in Fruita to assess any specific needs their organizations may have.

2.2 EXISTING RESOURCES AND CONDITIONS

The City of Fruita has a strong history of parks, recreation, open space and trails. Abundant park land in the Fruita and its vicinity are key elements to the quality of life currently enjoyed by residents. In Fruita, parks provide recreational opportunities for residents and have become central to the city's character and image. For example, Little Salt Wash Park provides recreational space for youth and adult athletic programs and the Civic Center Pavilion provides space for concerts in the park and special events including the Fat Tire Festival, Mike the Headless Chicken Festival, and the Fruita Fall Festival. The recently developed Big Salt Wash Trail provides residents the ability to enjoy the natural elements of the Big Salt Wash. Both parks and trails are providing opportunities for active and passive recreational activities within the City's boundaries which help define the character of our community.

The abundance of federal public land and world-class recreational opportunities surrounding Fruita help create an international draw for recreationists from around the world. The Colorado National Monument and the BLM McInnis Canyon NCA provide natural landscapes that attract recreationalists who enjoy hiking, biking, and nature viewing, among other things. The City of Fruita recognizes the critical role that these lands have and recognizes the tremendous benefits they bestow on the city. The role of these federal lands in the community are critical and clearly help supplement the parks needs of the community.

A. SUMMARY OF EXISTING PARKS

The City of Fruita owns, operates, and maintains a variety of types of parks within the community. The classification and a brief description of each are listed below. Detailed definitions of each classification and their subsequent standards are provided in

Chapter Four - Master Plan. Details of each individual park site follow this section.

Neighborhood Parks

- **Neighborhood Parks.** Neighborhood scale parks are intended to serve residents in the neighborhoods surrounding the park. These parks are typically designed primarily for informal and unorganized activities, such as pickup ball games. They are generally small in size at 2-8 acres of usable area. While it is not the rule, Neighborhood Parks sometimes provide space for programmed activities, such as practice spaces for organized athletics.
- **Pocket Parks.** Pocket Parks are smaller versions of Neighborhood Parks with fewer amenities, and serve a smaller radius of homes. In Fruita, these parks are found in most subdivisions with more than 25 units and have historically been privately developed and maintained, but have public access agreements allowing for public use. However, there are a few Pocket Parks that are owned and maintained by the city.

Community Parks

- **Community Parks.** Community Parks are larger, multi-purpose parks that serve the entire community. These parks are generally designed to provide active play opportunities for all ages. Community Parks can also provide indoor facilities to meet a wider range of recreation and interests. These parks should be designed to meet the active community, while providing a sanctuary for those individuals who also enjoy more passive, leisure-oriented activities.
- **Sports Complexes.** Sports Complexes are dedicated to specialized sports that serve the

entire community. They are often associated with Community Parks or school facilities.

Other Parks

- **Special Purpose Parks and Facilities.** These are parks and facilities that serve a single or focused community need, such as a historical park, environmental education center, or land occupied by major structures such as swimming pools, community centers, skate parks, etc.
- **Undeveloped Parkland.** Land that is owned by the city and reserved for future park development.

Open Space and Trails

- **Regional Open Space.** Lands that protect large areas with natural resource values of communitywide significance, and sometimes provide opportunities for nature-oriented outdoor recreation. In and around Fruita, a majority of the existing open space has been conserved through conservation easements on private land and, therefore, does not have public access.
- **Natural Areas/Corridors.** Lands that place emphasis on the protection of natural values. These are often, but not always, located along drainageways that provide opportunities for linear natural habitats and trails. They can also include other smaller areas (not along drainages) that have been protected for natural resource values.
- **Primary Multi-Use Trails.** These are trails that form the major trail spines throughout communities. They are destination trails and typically have a high recreational value for the entire community, including pedestrians, cyclists, and other non-motorized users. Primary multi-use trails have a particular

emphasis on continuity and are the major conduits for travel within trail systems, connecting to larger regional trail systems. They are intended to accommodate all types of trail users within the same trail corridor. In Fruita, many potential trail corridors occur near man-made irrigation canals and drainage ditches.

- Local Trails.** Local trails are lower volume trails that provide connectivity within residential or commercial developments, or parks and open space, as well as serving as connectors to the primary multi-use trails. Local trails encourage safe travel for pedestrians, cyclists, and other users by providing direct, off-street links to destinations in the community. They are typically paved and undivided trails, and are most often provided by residential developers. Detached or attached sidewalks should be used to serve local trail needs only as a last resort when no other options exist, and should be adequately wide to accommodate trail users.

Within the City of Fruita, there are a total of 39 individual sites that are public parks, private parks, or natural areas, totaling approximately 436.3 acres. Of this, 1 site is a Community Park (Little Salt Wash - 22.8 acres total), 4 sites are Neighborhood Parks (Heritage, Olga Anson, Prospect, Reed - 16.2 acres total), 3 sites are public Pocket Parks (Circle, Triangle, Dan Williams - 2.6 acres total), and 23 sites are private Pocket Parks (23.2 acres). The Community Park also serves as the Neighborhood Park for residents living nearby, which is generally considered within a 0.5-mile radius. Other park and recreation resources include 1 sports complex at the Fruita High School / Fruita 8/9 School, multi-use fields at Rimrock and Shelledy Elementary Schools and the Fruita Middle School, 2 special purpose parks (Fruita Civic Center Memorial, Orr - 6.3 acres total),

and 5 natural areas/corridors (Snooks Bottom, Kingsview, Fruita Mountain Properties, Little Salt Wash, Big Salt Wash - 365.2 acres total).

There are also several other sites that provide recreational resources for residents and visitors, including Mesa County Valley School District 51, which hosts the location of the city's tennis courts and sports complex, in addition to use of gym space for recreational programming; the Colorado Department of Transportation Welcome Center, which provides information to visitors on local resources and recreational opportunities; the Museum of Western Colorado's Dinosaur Journey, which provides entertainment and education on the history of dinosaurs in the Fruita area; and Adobe Creek National Golf Course, a public 27-hole golf course.

Map 2, Existing Resources, shows the location of various parklands, open space, recreation facilities, and primary trails within the City of Fruita. A detailed inventory of those lands and the facilities and amenities they contain is provided in Appendix A. Table 2.1 provides a summary of the types of parks within Fruita. Overall inventory based on this table shows 47.4 acres per 1000 residents of Parks and Open Space Lands. Overall, this is a tremendous number.

Table 2.1. City of Fruita Parks Inventory Summary

CLASSIFICATION	TOTAL ACRES	DEVELOPED PARK SITES
Neighborhood Park	16.2	4
Public Pocket Park	2.6	3
Private Pocket Park	23.2	23
Community Park	22.8	1
Sports Complexes	N/A	1
Special Purpose Parks	6.3	2
Natural Areas/Corridors	365.2	5
School Properties	37.4	6
Total Parkland and Open Space	473.7	69

In addition to the recreational resources listed above, there are also numerous other public recreational resources available to residents and visitors, which

MAP 2. EXISTING RESOURCES

BACK OF MAP 2

have helped give Fruita the natural resource recreation playground reputation it has today. These resources include the James M. Robb Colorado River State Park, the Colorado National Monument, the BLM McInnis Canyon NCA, and the BLM North Fruita Desert.

There are also numerous private organizations that offer recreation services and facilities to the community. These include health clubs, outfitters, and cycling shops, among others. Private youth sports organizations also offer recreational services to Fruita residents; however, Fruita Little League is the only organization based in Fruita. Other private youth sports organizations are based in Grand Junction (soccer, lacrosse, etc.), requiring Fruita residents to often times travel to both practices and games. The Fruita Parks and Recreation Department has been expanding its program offerings to include recreational soccer, basketball, and other youth and adult sports to better serve the local demand for these services such that residents can live, work, and play in Fruita thus contributing to the small town atmosphere.

While these private organizations provide valuable resources to the community, they are not always accessible and available to the public; therefore, they have not been included in the neighborhood or community parkland inventory and overall level of service calculations. The larger role of these organizations and groups within the Fruita community will be further addressed later in this document.

B. DESCRIPTIONS OF EXISTING RESOURCES

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks serve a residential neighborhood. They may be either full-size Neighborhood Parks or smaller public Pocket Parks. Pocket Parks are a subset of Neighborhood Parks and are often used in lieu of a full-size Neighborhood Park when space limitations or other constraints prohibit development a full-size Neighborhood Park. Full-size Neighborhood Parks are typically the backbone of a parks system, and serve as critical elements of healthy neighborhoods and places that provide relief from the built environment. They are primarily located in developed residential areas, and typically have landscaping and walking surfaces that can withstand high levels of use. They also often contain restrooms and parking as well. They are spaces where neighbors can gather, children can play, and people can socialize as well as engage in recreational activities. Generally, Neighborhood Parks provided by the City of Fruita are in good condition; however, some may require minor improvements, such as additional amenities, updated facilities and landscaping enhancements when resources become available.

While both public and private Pocket Parks are provided within the City of Fruita, only those that are publicly provided are described in detail in this plan. Most private Pocket Parks in the City of Fruita have been provided by developers through land dedications associated with a residential housing development and are maintained by the HOA for that particular development. Most private HOA Pocket Parks within the City of Fruita are open to the general public. The city maintains a policy requiring privately provided Pocket Parks, if used to satisfy park development requirements, to have a public access agreement allowing the general public use of these facilities. Whether or not Pocket Parks should be responsibility of a city versus a private

neighborhood HOA is a question that many communities face. The concern is that the HOA will not have enough money to properly maintain them, and they will become degraded over time. In spite of this possibility, most communities in Colorado do not desire to be responsible for transporting equipment and staff all over their city to maintain very small park areas. The preferred method is to have the maintenance company that is maintaining other HOA properties incorporate the small parks into their operations.

Although private Pocket Parks provide a valuable resource for the nearby neighbors that they serve, they are not developed and maintained by the Park and Recreation Department and are, therefore, not described in detail in this plan. The city does recognize the importance of Pocket Parks to neighborhoods and will continue to support the development of well-planned and maintained Pocket Parks.

Heritage Park

Heritage Park is located in south-central Fruita on Frontage Road, between South Mesa Street and South Maple Street. Heritage Park is 3.5 acres in size and contains a basketball court, playground, picnic tables, restrooms, and off-street parking lot. Heritage Park could benefit from some improvements and reconfiguration to better serve residents. The existing play equipment is located in a remote area of the park and should connect to the main part of the park in some manner to improve its function within the park and safety. The park also lacks a picnic shelter and vegetative screening for noise and aesthetics from fast-moving vehicles on the adjacent roadway and interstate. Other opportunities for this park include the addition of skate elements and establishment of future trailhead amenities. Heritage does not need to host a full skate park; however, providing some smaller ground level skate features, such as rails, would provide these increasingly popular park elements to residents on the south side of the city.



Heritage Park

Olga Anson Park

Olga Anson Park is located in east-central Fruita along Ottley Avenue, between Pine Street and Fremont Street. Olga Anson Park is 7 acres in size with limited amenities (a walking path and playground). Olga Anson has a linear shape with varying topog-



Olga Anson playground



Reed Park

raphy, preventing it from accommodating a full-size multi-use field. However, there is room for other limited amenities, such as a picnic shelter, half basketball court, and possibly bathroom.

Prospect Park

Prospect Park is located in northwest Fruita along Pioneer Drive, between Comstock Drive and Silver Plume Drive. Prospect Park is 2.4 acres in size and contains a multi-use field, playground, and paved walking path. Prospect Park would benefit from the addition of a picnic shelter and more seating benches.

Reed Park

Reed Park is located in central Fruita at the corner of Maple Street and McCune Avenue. Reed Park is 3.3 acres in size and contains the most amenities of any other the city Neighborhood Park. It hosts a multi-use field, basketball court, playground, tot lot playground, picnic tables, picnic shelter, drinking fountains, barbeques, horseshoe pits, restrooms, and off-street parking lot. Overall, Reed Park is in good condition; however, it could benefit from some minor landscaping improvements and building upgrades.

Public Pocket Parks

Circle Park

Circle Park is located in downtown Fruita at the intersection of Mesa Street and Aspen Avenue. Circle Park is approximately 0.84 acre in size and

contains picnic tables, a shelter, and public art. It also has a gazebo located in the center of the park. Circle Park is the center of the roundabout, which loops through downtown Fruita and helps to define its unique character. Circle Park is in good condition and is well used by residents and visitors alike.

Triangle Park

Triangle Park is located just west of downtown along SH6/50, between Aspen Avenue and Coulson Street. There are limited amenities at Triangle Park, including a few picnic tables, barbeques, and a piece of public art. Several trees also provide ample shade in this small park.

Dan Williams Park

Dan Williams Park is located north of downtown near Little Salt Wash, at the corner of Coulson Street and Roberson Avenue. Dan Williams Park is 1.33 acres in size and contains limited amenities, including picnic tables and horseshoe pits. Overall, Dan Williams Park is in good condition.



Dan Williams Memorial Park

Community Parks

Community Parks are larger parks that serve the entire community. They should be equitably distributed throughout the city and easily accessible by all residents. Ideally, they should also be connected via the core commuter off-street (primary) trail system to reduce the need to drive to the park. Sports complexes are also often associated with Community Parks. These are typically parks or areas of Community Parks that have dedicated sport facilities available for use by the entire community. While many Community Parks contain sports complexes, not all sports complexes are part of a Community Park or contain park-like facilities.

Little Salt Wash Park

Little Salt Wash Park is currently the only developed Community Park within the City of Fruita. Little Salt Wash Park is located in north-central Fruita along Little Salt Wash. Access to the park is provided from Pine Street, north of Ottley Avenue; however, access from the neighborhoods to the north is limited because there is no easy way to cross Little Salt Wash to get to the park. Little Salt Wash Park is the newest park in the city and is being developed in phases. When complete, the park will be a total of 22.8 acres. Currently, amenities in the park include 1 full-size baseball field; 3 full-size softball fields; 1 multi-use turf fields; 2 other turf areas in the outfields, which can be configured for multiple-use activities; paved walking path; 2 playgrounds; a 9-hole disc golf course; and off-street parking. Beginning in the fall of 2009, two restrooms will be installed, and remaining landscaping, irrigation, and seeding will be completed in the park.

Phases in future years include the installation of concessions in the core area; installation of picnic benches and a shelter in the core area; installation of parking lot lighting; completion of the core area (paving of central core area around restrooms, concessions, and shelters); installation of a maintenance



Little Salt Wash Park



Little Salt Wash Park

building for the park; installation of a pedestrian bridge across Little Salt Wash; and further field improvements.

Fruita High School Tennis Courts

The City of Fruita has an arrangement with Fruita High School for use of the tennis courts. The city built and owns the courts, but they are located on school property. The city has use of the courts when the school does not have them scheduled. In addition to 4 courts, there is also a drinking fountain and off-street parking lot.

Special Purpose Parks

Fruita Civic Center Memorial Park

Fruita Civic Center Memorial Park is located downtown along Aspen Avenue between Peach and Elm Streets, and is at the site of the Fruita Civic Center. Not including the civic center building, the park is approximately 1.9 acres in size and includes an amphitheater, public art, and off-street parking lot. Drinking fountains and restrooms are located inside Civic Center. Civic Center Park is primarily used to host communitywide events, such as Mike the Headless Chicken Festival, the Fruita Fat Tire Festival, and the annual summer concert series.

Orr Park

Orr Park is located just north of downtown along Cherry Street, south of Ottley Avenue. Orr Park has a total of approximately 2.4 developed acres out of a total footprint of 4.5 acres. Orr Park is the location of the new community center that will be constructed in the near future. Currently, Orr Park contains the city's outdoor pool, skate park, a few picnic tables, and off-street parking lot. Construction of the new community center will occupy much of this site; however, it is intended that the outdoor pool, skate park, and some passive space will remain at this location after construction.



Orr Park outdoor pool



Orr Park skate park



Orr Park outdoor pool

Undeveloped Parkland

Red Cliffs

The site of the proposed Red Cliffs Park is located in south-central Fruita along SH340 at Red Cliffs Drive. The site is approximately 2.4 acres in size. It is intended that this site will be developed as a Neighborhood Park.

Etchart Park (16 Road and L Road)

The City of Fruita and Mesa County School District purchased a 40-acre parcel of land located at the intersection of 16 Road and L Road in 2008. It is intended that 13 acres of this site will be developed for a future school and at least 20 of the 27 available acres be set aside for a future Community Park.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Site

The City of Fruita owns a large tract of land along the Colorado River, approximately 1 mile west of the city, which is intended to be the location of the city's future wastewater treatment facility. A large portion of the site will remain undeveloped, allowing for potential construction of a future park, such as a sports complex. The site is linear, with the eastern half of the site being the widest, ranging in width from 500' to 750' based on GIS parcel data. From a natural resource perspective, the site has already been disturbed, so new construction here would present minimal impact to natural systems compared to other locations. After development of the wastewater treatment facility, there will be approximately 55 acres available for park development.

Natural Areas and Corridors

Snooks Bottom Open Space

Snooks Bottom Open Space is located along the Colorado River in south-central Fruita at the end of Kingsview Road, and provides a tremendous open space resource for the community. The property is approximately 113 acres in size and currently contains minimal improvements, including a short section of a paved walking path; a small fishing pier in the pond on the property; and a portable toilet. The property was acquired in 2003 with the assistance of GOCO Legacy Grant funds. There is a conservation easement on the property, which stipulates how the property is to be managed. Generally speaking, the property shall be maintained in a natural state and managed as important riparian wildlife habitat, and for nonmotorized, natural recreation uses, such as hiking and fishing. Only limited improvements are allowed, such as a paved trail and a parking lot.

Kingsview Open Space

Kingsview Open Space is located adjacent to Snooks Bottom along the Colorado River and SH340. Kingsview is approximately 48 acres in size. Approximately 26 acres compose the only useable mainland portion along the river; the remaining 18 acres exist as an island in the river. Kingsview provides another high quality open space resource for the Fruita community and an ideal riparian location. While Kingsview is open to the public, there are no developed facilities and no formal parking. Unlike Snooks Bottom, no conservation agreement exists on the property, allowing for some level of development to occur if so desired. The size and location of Kingsview make it a good location for a potential mountain bike challenge track and disc golf course.

Little Salt Wash Greenway

Little Salt Wash Greenway is a linear natural area located along Little Salt Wash and consists of approximately 11.5 total acres. Little Salt Wash



Snooks Bottom Open Space



Kingsview Open Space

Greenway exists in several separate pieces, generally between Coulson Street on the west and Fremont Street on the east. While there are no developed facilities associated with Little Salt Wash Greenway, three sections of paved, multi-use trail traverse along it, totaling 0.85 mile. The longest section of this trail exists in Little Salt Wash Park.

Big Salt Wash Greenway

Big Salt Wash Greenway is a linear natural area located along Big Salt Wash and consists of approximately 19.7 total acres. Big Salt Wash Greenway exists in several pieces, generally between SH6/50 on the south and Celestite Drive on the north. A paved multi-use trail runs the length of the greenway total-



Big Salt Wash Trail

ing approximately 0.83 mile. There is a developed trailhead on the southern terminus of the trail at SH6/50, which can accommodate a few cars. There are no other developed facilities along the trail.

Regional Open Space

As described in the 2008 Fruita Community Plan, the pastoral landscape surrounding Fruita symbolizes the area's heritage and culture. The remaining rural landscape around Fruita is both an aesthetic and practical resource for the city. As such, a great deal of guidance and effort has been put into conserving these landscapes to provide for a green framework around Fruita's boundary. The Community Plan identifies a Community Separator between Fruita and Grand Junction, which is a one-mile wide band at the eastern edge of the Fruita Growth Management Area. This separator is targeted for private open space preservation by using a variety of con-

servation tools. To this end, the Mesa Land Trust has been instrumental in encouraging landowners to consider the option of conservation easements to ensure their properties remain undeveloped. To date, Mesa Land Trust has protected over 48,000 acres in Mesa County. Mesa Land Trust, Mesa County, and the City of Fruita have also utilized other mechanisms to assist in keeping other important portions of the area undeveloped, such as purchasing development rights, encouraging landowners to voluntarily transfer development rights, or using fee simple purchases and partnerships to protect lands. Other tools include the use of conservation-oriented development that allows developers to build the same number of homes (or more with bonus density incentives) while preserving large areas of contiguous open space. The integration of these tools for land conservation has become a critical component of the open space programs in and around Fruita, helping to ensure that its rich agricultural heritage and beautiful natural setting remain intact for future generations.

Fruita Mountain Water Properties

The City of Fruita owns and maintains approximately 173 acres of land surrounding its four water storage reservoirs in Grand Mesa National Forest, roughly 15 miles south of the city. The city is working to create an arrangement with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) whereby they share management and maintenance of the lands. Current recreational opportunities at the Mountain Water properties include mountain biking, hiking, fishing, and camping. ATV use and hunting also occur at the area. Recreational amenities include pit toilets, picnic tables, dispersed campsites, and fire rings. There are also informal trails in the area that cross between City of Fruita lands and USFS lands, and great potential for further developing mountain bike and hiking trails. Use of the Mountain Water properties

occurs primarily in the spring, summer and fall, and is heaviest on weekends.

Trails

The City of Fruita has been slowly establishing and expanding its trail system. The city maintains approximately 6.0 miles of primary, paved, off-street multi-purpose trails. Primary multi-purpose trails often form the major trail spines throughout cities, counties, and neighboring communities and are intended to accommodate all trail users, including walkers, joggers, wheelchair cruisers, in-line skaters, recreational and commute bicyclists, and equestrian users within the same trail corridor on separated trails.

Currently, most of these exist as separate segments and the trail system is not fully connected. The primary trail segments are Big Salt Wash (0.83 mile); Little Salt Wash (3 segments - 0.85 mile); SH6/50 (2.2 miles); SH340 (0.55 mile); Snooks Bottom (0.3 mile); and Sycamore Street (0.12 mile). There are also numerous trails throughout the city that serve as neighborhood connections. Local trails function as off-street sidewalks to promote connectivity within residential or commercial developments, or parks and open space. These are often provided privately as residential housing is developed throughout the city. They are not necessarily built to the same standards as the primary off-street trails, but provide essential connections between neighborhoods and to parks and primary trails. In total, there are approximately 4 miles of paved local trails.

Other Park and Recreation Resources

James M. Robb Colorado River State Park

The James M. Robb Colorado River State Park is one park split into five sections. The Fruita section lies on the west end, followed by Connected Lakes, the Colorado River Wildlife Area, Corn Lake, and Island Acres sections moving east. The Fruita sec-

tion (the only section within the City of Fruita) is open year-round for camping and day use activities. The Fruita section is enjoyed by Grand Valley residents and tourists alike, as it is the first state park travelers can visit coming from the west into Colorado on I70. With magnificent views of both the Colorado National Monument and the Book Cliffs area, the Fruita section provides camping facilities, lake fishing, swimming and boating, picnic sites, seasonal birding, a multi-use off-street trail along the Colorado River, boat launch, and a large visitor center. The proposed Colorado Riverfront Trail will also eventually tie into the existing trail in the park. During the warm season, residents frequently park on the side of SH340 and across the street in the adjacent neighborhood to walk into the state park, avoiding the day use fee.

Colorado National Monument

Colorado National Monument is located south of Fruita and west of Grand Junction, lying almost parallel to I70. A winding road connects through the park from Fruita to Grand Junction, and is often used for road bicycling and running competitions. The monument preserves 32 square miles of incredibly scenic canyons, rock formations and mesas, and provides a variety of activities for a wide range of people. Facilities include a visitor center, day use areas, campgrounds, and numerous trails. Common activities in the park include scenic driving, nature/wildlife viewing, photography, hiking, horseback riding, picnicking, road cycling, and climbing. The park also hosts a variety of interpretive activities for families and kids.

McInnis Canyon National Conservation Area (NCA)

The BLM manages the McInnis Canyon NCA, which is located adjacent to the southwest part of the city. McInnis Canyon contains many nationally significant resources, including outstanding scenery, cultural and paleontological values, naturalness,

recreation values, wildlife, and geologic and scientific values. McInnis Canyon encompasses a diverse landscape ranging from salt bush desert to the deep canyons of the Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness. This landscape supports an equally diverse range of uses, including boating on the Colorado River; big-game hunting for mule deer, elk, mountain lion, and waterfowl; OHV use in Rabbit Valley; domestic livestock grazing; fossil viewing; sightseeing; wildlife photography; hiking; horseback riding; dispersed camping; as well as the internationally known Mary's Loop Trail and the Kokopelli Trail.

BLM North Fruita Desert

The North Fruita Desert is located approximately 8 miles north of the City of Fruita. North Fruita Desert offers a wide range of recreational opportunities, including a large and diverse trail system that is a popular destination for mountain biking and OHV use. The area's close proximity to the community of Fruita makes the North Fruita Desert an increasingly valuable resource for dispersed recreational opportunities. The area has traditionally been used by residents of Mesa County, but is experiencing increased visitation from throughout the region and out of state as recreational opportunities in the region are becoming increasingly popular. Recreational opportunities in the area include off-highway vehicle use, vehicle driving for pleasure, mountain biking, horseback riding, camping, hiking, hunting, shooting, and viewing scenery and natural features.

C. EXISTING LEVELS OF SERVICE

While all the outdoor amenities available to Fruita residents are critical, only parks, trail, and recreation facilities provided by the City of Fruita are considered in calculating and setting the level of service for each classification. Mesa County School District, Colorado State Parks, BLM, HOA provided and maintained Pocket Parks, and other public lands and facilities, while recognized as very important to our community, are not provided by the City of Fruita

and are therefore not directly considered in the City of Fruita level of service calculations. To understand numerically how these non-City of Fruita assets contribute to the overall parkland inventory, refer to Table 2.1.

Existing Neighborhood Park Level of Service

The City of Fruita owns and maintains a total of 7 Neighborhood Parks, 3 of which are Pocket Parks. The current population within Fruita boundaries is 10,947. Combined, the parks total approximately 18.8 acres, providing a level of service of 1.72 acres per 1,000 people (Table 2.2). The calculated level of service includes only parkland that is officially classified as Neighborhood Park acreage, and does not include school properties or HOA provided and maintained Pocket Parks. The acres of neighborhood parkland are slightly below the existing standard provided in the 2008 Fruita Community Plan, and approximately 0.5 acre less than the average when compared to the level of service that other communities are providing (discussed in the following section).

For analysis purposes, 5 acres from Little Salt Wash Park could also be included in the Neighborhood Park level of service analysis. Little Salt Wash Park serves as the local Neighborhood Park to those residents living within 0.5 mile. Five acres is roughly equivalent to the size of one typical Neighborhood



Little Salt Wash Park

Parks as defined above. If the acreage for Little Salt Wash Park is factored in, the overall level of service for neighborhood parkland in Fruita would increase to 2.17 acre per 1,000 people, compared to 1.72 acres if it were not included. The inclusion of this additional acreage raises Fruita's Neighborhood Park level of service to approximately that of the established standard, as well as that of communities in the comparison.

Table 2.2. Existing Parkland Level of Service

PARKS	NEIGHBORHOOD PARK LEVEL OF SERVICE 2008	COMMUNITY PARK LEVEL OF SERVICE 2008
Population*	10,947	10,947
Existing Parkland (acres)	18.8	22.7
Level of Service	1.72 acres/ 1,000 population	2.07 acres/ 1,000 population
Effective Level of Service**	2.17 acres/ 1,000 population	N/A

* 2008 population 10,947; CO State Demography Office.

**Effective level of service is calculated by factoring in 5 acres parkland for Little Salt Wash Park, which serves Neighborhood Park functions to residents within 0.5-mile radius. Actual Neighborhood Park acreage does not increase and acreage is not double counted between Neighborhood and Community Parks.

Existing Community Park Level of Service

Fruita has one Community Park, Little Salt Wash Park. Little Salt Wash Park meets the 20-acre desirable minimum standard discussed above. Little Salt Wash Park is approximately 22.7 acres in size and provides a level of service of 2.07 acres per 1,000 people based on a current population of 10,947 (Table 2.2 above). This level of service is significantly below the established standard of 4.0 acres per 1,000 people, as defined in the 2008 Fruita Community Plan and as refined through this POST Master Planning process. It is also significantly below the average of the communities in the comparison, of 4.4 acres per 1,000 people described below in the *Benchmarking* section, and illustrated in Table 2.9, *Community Comparison Analysis*. The estab-

lished standard of the communities in the analysis is 4.7 acres per 1,000 people.

D. ISSUES AND NEEDS ANALYSIS

This assessment documents the issues and needs that influence the specific types and number of parks, trails, open space, and recreation facilities needed in the community. The needs assessment phase of a parks and recreation master plan documents the demand (and potential demand) for services from current and future residents and, in association with the inventory of existing facilities, highlights potential areas of shortfall or oversupply. Identifying levels of satisfaction, perceptions, use patterns, and priorities for recreation programs and facilities through contact with the user public is an important part of this process. Accurately assessing the current and future needs of residents requires a diverse approach, using many different techniques to gather information. Collectively, the data from these various sources creates a picture of what is needed within the City of Fruita, and can serve as the basis from which to develop a list of projects, priorities and actions, which will be the next step in this planning process. Each technique used in this process provides valuable information, but the data from any one technique should not be viewed in isolation and without comparing the needs to overall vision, goals, and objectives of the community.

Current parkland levels of service for the existing system have been evaluated and in conjunction with growth projections, further help to project future park and recreation needs. Peer communities were chosen by the Steering Committee and were surveyed to determine the levels of service they provide for parkland and common recreation facilities. This database serves as a benchmark when determining the levels of service that are appropriate for Fruita. Recreational preferences and the level of demand for additional parks and recreational opportunities are addressed in this chapter as well. Pertinent informa-

tion from national databases on recreation participation levels and data from the Colorado SCORP have been considered. In addition, the consulting team conducted a review of participation trends in recreational programs provided by the city's recreation staff and nonprofit organizations (e.g., sports clubs).

The results of the various analyses, as well as through citizen input, lead to the identification of key issues and needs, and choices that the City of Fruita needs to make regarding how it plans to address these needs and move forward in the future.

Underserved Areas

A walkability analysis was conducted to identify areas of the community that are underserved by Neighborhood Parks. As per the standards identified earlier in this plan, Neighborhood Parks are typically intended to serve a population within a 0.5-mile walking distance. Community Parks can also serve as the Neighborhood Park for those residents within 0.5 mile. To conduct the analysis, a 0.5-mile buffer "as the crow flies" was placed around Neighborhood and Community Parks. To further identify underserved areas, a route analysis was conducted that represents a 0.5-mile distance on the ground from each park. This analysis more accurately represents the true distance a person would have to walk to reach any given park. Typically, the walking distance on the ground is not equal to that of "as the crow flies" because people must walk on sidewalks along roads. Modern neighborhood design, with cul-de-sacs and other features, has made more direct access to parks challenging.

Map 3, Walkability Analysis, reveals that only a few small residential areas of the city are underserved by neighborhood parkland. The walkability analysis shows the actual 0.5-mile distance one might have to walk on the ground to reach a Neighborhood Park from residential areas. The only slightly underserved areas include:

- A small area north of Ottley and east of Juniper Street – Santa Fe Ranch and Evening Breeze developments
- A small area between Maple Street and Mesa Street, south of K 6/10 Road – Elmwood Heights and Elmwood Estates developments
- A small area west of Pine Street, north of K 6/10 Road – Echo Canyon development
- A small area between Pine Street and Fremont Street, north of Grand Avenue – Cotton Woods development
- A small area west of Pine Street and south of East Kiefer Avenue – Cedar Park development
- A small area between Coulson Street and Maple Street, south of Kaley Street – Liberty Glen and Red Cliffs developments (this is the area of the proposed undeveloped Redcliffs Neighborhood Park)
- The area generally north of Little Salt Wash, east of Mesa Avenue, and west of Sabil Drive.
- The Kingsview and Red Cliffs neighborhoods in south Fruita.

It should be noted that in many of these slightly underserved areas, private Pocket Parks do exist, which help to offer some parkland to area residents, although they may not have access to a city-owned Neighborhood Park. The city requires public access easements on all newly developed private Pocket Parks so they are available for use by all city residents and visitors.

Growth and Development

Existing and Future Parkland Levels of Service

As described in the previous section, there is an existing deficit for both neighborhood and community parkland in Fruita. Based on the parkland standards set in the 2008 Fruita Community Plan, there is currently a deficit of approximately 3.2 acres of neighborhood parkland and a deficit of

approximately 21.3 acres of community parkland. As described earlier, for analysis purposes, 5 acres from Little Salt Wash Park could also be included in the Neighborhood Park level of service analysis. If the acreage for Little Salt Wash Park is factored in, the overall level of service for neighborhood parkland in Fruita would increase to 2.17 acres per 1,000 people, compared to 1.72 acres if it were not included. The inclusion of this additional acreage raises Fruita's Neighborhood Park level of service to approximately that of the established standard, as well as that of communities in the comparison. This is illustrated in Table 2.3 below.

The population of Fruita is also anticipated to steadily grow in the future, to a total buildout population in the Growth Management Area (GMA) of 25,735 residents. This represents an increase of approximately 14,788 residents beyond the current population. To meet this additional population and maintain the neighborhood and community parkland level of service as defined in the 2008 Fruita Community Plan and through this planning process, the city will need to develop an additional 60 acres of community parkland and an additional 30 acres of neighborhood parkland beyond current deficits. Combined with current parkland deficits, current and future parkland needs equal a total of 33.2 acres of neighborhood parkland and 81.3 acres of community parkland. This is illustrated in Table 2.4 below. The classifications and standards defined earlier in the plan indicate an ideal size for Neighborhood Parks of between 2-8 acres, and Community Parks of between 20-40 acres. This equals a total need of 4-12 Neighborhood Parks and 2-4 Community Parks by a projected population of 25,735 residents. The city, however, is in an advantageous position in that it currently owns approximately 84 acres of undeveloped land at three sites available for potential future park development. This significantly reduces both the amount and number of locations it will need to acquire additional land for park development.

INSERT MAP 3, WALKABILITY

BACK OF MAP 3

Table 2.3. Current Parkland Needs: 2008

PARKS	2008 TOTAL PARKLAND	CURRENT PARKLAND STANDARD (ACRES/ 1,000 POP)	2008 LEVEL OF SERVICE (ACRES/ 1,000 POP)*	ACREAGE NEEDED TO MEET CURRENT PARKLAND STANDARD	2008 PARKLAND DEFICIT*
Community Parks	22.7	4.0	2.07	44	<21.3>
Neighborhood Parks	18.8	2.0	1.72	22	<3.2>
TOTAL	41.5	6.0	3.64	66	<24.5>
Adjusted Neighborhood Parklands**	23.8	2.0	2.17	22	0

* 2008 population 10,947; CO State Demography Office.

** Includes 5 acres for Little Salt Wash Park.

Table 2.4. Future Parkland Needs Buildout
Projected Population Increase of 14,788 Additional Residents

PARKS	CURRENT PARKLAND STANDARD (ACRES/ 1,000 POP)**	ADDITIONAL ACREAGE NEEDED BY BUILDOUT TO MEET CURRENT PARKLAND STANDARD	BUILDOUT PROJECTED DEFICIT TOTAL
Community Parks	4.0	60	<81.3>
Neighborhood Parks	2.0	30	<33.2>
TOTAL	6.0	90	<114.5>

**Projected buildout population 25,735; 2008 Community Plan.

Future Development Areas

The 2008 Fruita Community Plan provided a Framework Plan, which outlined desired future development patterns in the community, including residential and mixed-use developments. These development areas were considered in identifying future spatial gaps in service for Neighborhood Parks. This gap analysis provides direction in locating future Neighborhood Parks as part of the POST Master Plan. The primary residential development areas identified in the Framework Plan, including community mixed-use and community residential are:

- A. Between 19½ Road and Fremont Street, north of I-70 to J Road
- B. Directly east of Rimrock Elementary, just south of K Road
- C. Between 19 Road and Fremont Street, north to approximately 0.5 mile north of K Road
- D. Central Fruita north of L Road, and between Coulson Street and Pine Street
- E. North of SH6/50 to M Road, from 16 Road west to 15 Road
- F. North of SH6/50 to M Road, from 15 Road west to Reed Wash

Within these community mixed-use and community residential areas, and based on the deficits and standards listed above, there is a need for a minimum of 6 new Neighborhood Parks (at an average size of 5.5 acres each) to accommodate future residential growth. These parks can be strategically located to address areas of the community that are currently underserved, as well as future development areas. In addition to Neighborhood Parks in future development areas, it is also recommended that the city complete development of Red Cliffs Park to provide parkland in an existing underserved area.

Benchmarking

A detailed benchmarking study was conducted that examined the parkland and facility provisions of other similar communities in Colorado, and the

average of those communities was calculated. The communities in the comparison analysis were suggested by the POST Steering Committee because they thought these were good cities with which Fruita to compare itself. The recommended comparison cities included Grand Junction, Palisade, Windsor, Louisville, Golden, Fort Lupton, Wheat Ridge, and Castle Rock. The communities of Montrose, Colorado and Lander, Wyoming were also contacted to participate in the analysis, but they declined to respond.

Table 2.5 provides a summary of the average number of facilities provided by the communities in the comparison. This table also indicates the amount of developed parkland they provide. The level of

Table 2.5. Community Comparison Analysis

	FACILITY OR ACRES PER POPULATION	FACILITY, ACRES OR MILES PER POPULATION
	AVERAGE OF OTHER COMMUNITIES PROVIDING FACILITIES	CITY OF FRUITA, CO
Recreational Facility	Avg. Population 23,811	Population 10,947
Population per Multi-Use Field	2,226	3,649
Population per Softball/Baseball Field	2,560	2,737
Population per Outdoor Basketball Court	3,826	5,474
Population per Tennis Court	2,901	5,474
Population per Skate Park	19,265	10,947
Population per Inline Hockey Rink	17,273	0
Population per Swimming Pool	12,587	10,947
Population per Gymnasium	18,220	0
Community Parks		
Developed Acres	107	22.7
Developed Park/Population (acres/1000 pop.)	4.4	2.07
Parkland Standard (acres/1000 pop)	4.7	4
Neighborhood Parks		
Developed Acres	54	18.8
Adjusted Neighborhood Parkland*	N/A	23.8
Developed Park/Population (acres/1000)	2.2	1.72
Adjusted Park/Population (acres/1000)*	N/A	2.17
Parkland Standard (acres/1000)	3.8	2.0

* Includes 5 acres for Little Salt Wash Park

service for neighborhood parkland in the City of Fruita is 1.72 acres per 1,000 people, which is somewhat below the established standard of 2.0 acres per 1,000 people. Compared with the communities in the comparison, this is also somewhat below the average of 2.2 acres per 1,000 people. However, as described above, if 5 acres from Little Salt Wash Park are included in the Neighborhood Park level of service analysis, the overall level of service for neighborhood parkland in Fruita would increase to 2.17 acres per 1,000 people. The inclusion of this additional acreage raises Fruita's Neighborhood Park level of service to approximately that of communities in the comparison. The overall provision of neighborhood parkland in Fruita should also be taken in context

with the overall distribution of Neighborhood Parks. Any deficit in neighborhood parkland compared to other communities can be addressed through the provision of additional Neighborhood Parks in a few key underserved areas and/or improved connectivity.

The level of service for Community Parks in the City of Fruita of 2.07 acres per 1,000 people is significantly below the established standard of 4.0 acres per 1,000 people. It is also significantly below the average of the communities in the comparison of 4.4 acres per 1,000 people. The established standard of the communities in the analysis is 4.7 acres per 1,000 people. Interestingly, most of these communities have not yet achieved their standards and are providing a level of service slightly lower than what they have adopted. This is very typical of communities across the U.S., as they are often in a catch-up mode and invariably struggle with implementation tools that allow them to achieve their targets.

The level of service for certain recreational amenities in Fruita is slightly lower than that of the average of other selected comparison communities. Fruita is currently providing approximately 2/3 of the number of multi-use fields, outdoor basketball courts, and tennis courts per 1,000 people compared to other communities. Also, Fruita currently does not provide an in-line hockey rink nor a gymnasium, popular facilities in many communities. It should be noted, however, that Fruita passed a bond initiative in 2008 for the construction of a new community center, which will include a full-size gymnasium.

National and State Trends

In addition to understanding local conditions and desires, it is important to understand trends around the nation that could have an influence on Fruita.

National Recreation Participation Trends

The Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association (SGMA) has commissioned an annual mail survey of American households to determine what activities they participate in at least one time per year. Approximately 15,000 completed mail surveys are received and responses are balanced to reflect U.S. Census parameters for age, gender, race, household income, and geographic region. The responses reflect people age 6 and above. The last few SGMA surveys have been more comprehensive than previous years; therefore, benchmark data is not available for many of the categories.

Table 2.6 Total National Participants by Activity – All Ages

ACTIVITY	PERCENT CHANGE SINCE 1987	2004 PARTICIPANTS (IN 1,000s)
Recreational Swimming	Na	95,268
Recreational Walking	Na	92,677
Free Weights	+ 131%	52,056
Recreational Bicycling	Na	52,021
Fishing	- 18%	47,906
Fitness Walking	+ 48%	40,299
Day Hiking	Na	39,334
Running/Jogging	0%	37,310
Basketball	- 4%	34,223
Golf	- 2%	25,723
Volleyball	- 38%	22,216
Tennis	- 13%	18,346
In-Line Roller Skating	+ 270%	17,348
Football	Na	16,436
Softball	- 24%	16,324
Soccer	+ 3%	15,900
Horseback Riding	Na	14,695
Yoga	Na	12,414
Skateboarding	- 3%	10,592
Baseball	- 36%	9,694
Artificial Wall Climbing	Na	7,659
Mountain Biking	+ 253%	5,334

Sports Participation Trends 2004, Sports Research Partnership, April 2005.

As shown in Table 2.6, the most popular activity is recreational swimming, followed by walking, free weights, biking, fishing, hiking, and running/jogging. Many activities have seen a decline in total numbers over the past 12 years, including many of the organized team sports. However, three relatively new activities have made large gains in popularity – inline roller skating, free weight use, and mountain biking. Data was not available by region, but it is highly probable that mountain biking involves a larger percentage of the population in this region than nationally.

According to a 1997 SGMA report¹ and as shown in Table 2.7, the most popular sports for youth based on “frequent” participation are:

Seven of the 10 most popular activities are team oriented; 8 of the 10 require specialized outdoor facilities. More recent data is not publicly available from this organization; but since 1997 when this study was conducted, it is well known in the parks and recreation industry that interest in in-line skating, skateboarding, disc golf, and rock climbing has increased dramatically, and lacrosse and BMX/hill jump biking are emerging in popularity.

State of Colorado Recreation Trends and Issues

According to the Colorado SCORP 2008-2012, more than 75% of Coloradoans participate in outdoor activities on a weekly basis. Furthermore, more than 45% travel fewer than 4 miles to recreate outdoors on Monday through Thursday. Figure 2.1 shows both the percentage and actual numbers of participants for the 30 most popular outdoor recreation activities among Colorado residents from 1995 through 2006. Figure 2.2 illustrates Colorado’s ten most popular activities as a percentage of the population. As indicated in both graphics, several activities have seen a drastic increase in participation over the last 10 years, including wildlife viewing, nature viewing/

Table 2.7 Total National “Frequent” Youth Participants

ACTIVITY		NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN U.S. (IN 1,000s)
Basketball	(25+ days/year)	12,803
Soccer	(25+ days/year)	6,971
Baseball	(25+ days/year)	5,229
In-Line Skating	(52+ days/year)	3,591
Touch Football	(25+ days/year)	3,590
Volleyball	(25+ days/year)	3,022
Running/Jogging	(100+ days/year)	2,824
Slow-Pitch Softball	(25+ days/year)	2,717
Tackle Football	(52+ days/year)	2,079
Fishing		2,021



photography, walking, picnicking, family gatherings, attending outdoor sporting events, and sightseeing. It is apparent that many of these activities are more passive in nature, and participants would be seeking places where they can participate in these activities. The more active recreation activities that have seen an increase in popularity include bicycling, day hiking, swimming, running, camping, and fishing.

¹ Sporting Goods Manufacturer's Association, study conducted annually by American Sports Data, Inc. 1997.

Activity	Millions of Participants (1995)	Millions of Participants (2003)	Millions of Participants (2006)	Percent Change in Participants (1995-2006)
Walk for pleasure	2.04	2.74	3.08	51%
Family gathering outdoors	1.81	2.54	2.79	54%
Visit nature centers	1.75	2.26	2.50	43%
Picnicking	1.68	2.14	2.35	40%
Attend outdoor sports events	1.59	2.09	2.28	43%
View wildlife (besides birds)	1.19	1.87	2.17	83%
Sightseeing	1.85	1.93	2.17	17%
Day hiking	1.28	1.59	1.85	45%
Visit historic sites	1.37	1.59	1.80	32%
Attend outdoor concerts, etc.	1.22	1.56	1.69	39%
Bicycling	0.96	1.51	1.67	75%
Yard games, e.g., croquet	1.09	1.45	1.59	46%
Pool swimming	1.12	1.17	1.33	19%
Swimming in lakes, streams, etc.	0.82	1.11	1.29	56%
Running or jogging	0.82	1.24	1.28	56%
Developed camping	0.81	1.14	1.27	58%
Coldwater fishing	0.77	1.00	1.15	50%
View birds	0.85	0.97	1.14	34%
Primitive camping	0.84	0.89	1.08	29%
Visit archeological sites	0.93	0.89	1.08	16%
Drive off-road	0.65	0.83	1.04	58%
Backpacking	0.48	0.69	0.80	68%
Golfing	0.45	0.66	0.80	76%
Motorboating	0.52	0.67	0.79	53%
Downhill skiing	0.53	0.66	0.72	37%
Sledding	0.33	0.59	0.63	90%
Warmwater fishing	0.34	0.55	0.62	81%
Softball	0.42	0.56	0.57	37%
Horseback riding	0.33	0.43	0.54	64%
Volleyball outdoors	0.44	0.48	0.52	18%

FIGURE 2.1. 30 MOST POPULAR ACTIVITIES IN COLORADO BY NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS (1995-2006)

Source: National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE), 2007.

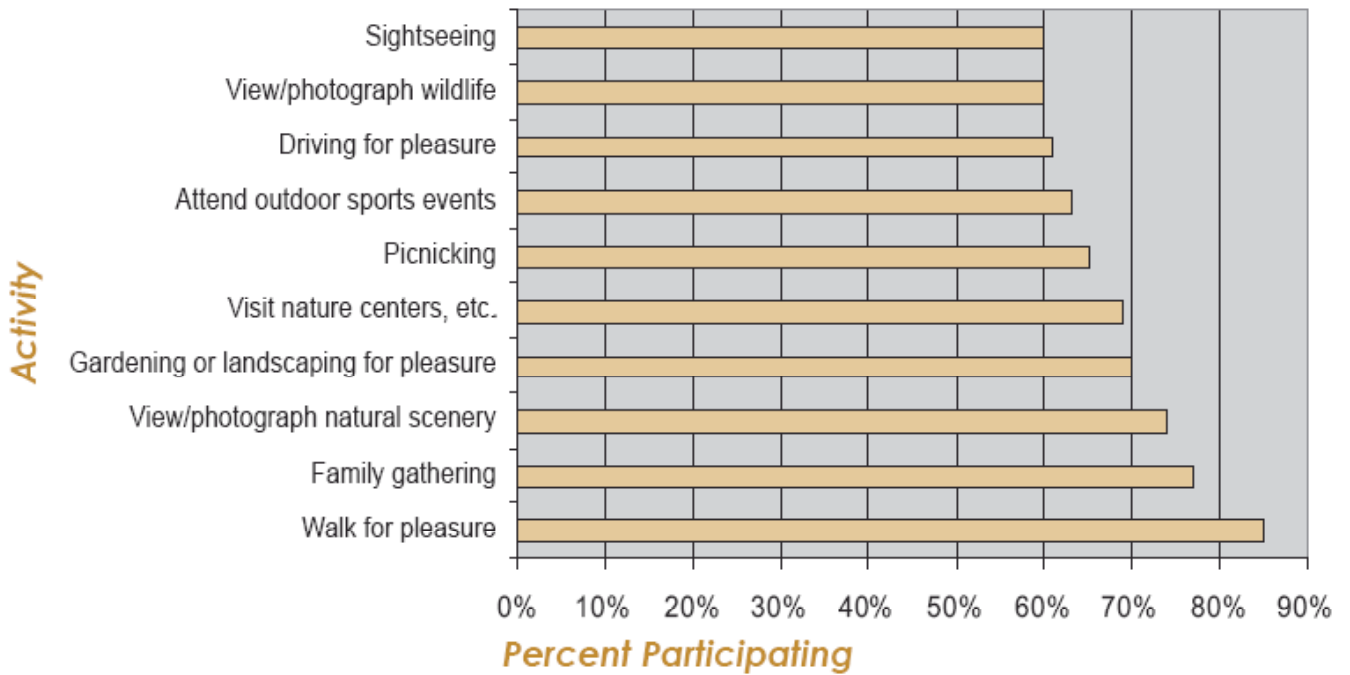


FIGURE 2.2. COLORADO'S TEN MOST POPULAR ACTIVITIES IN 2006 (AS A PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION)
 Source: National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE), 2007.

The SCORP also states that “Colorado’s proactive open space protection efforts provide the venues where the full range of Colorado’s outdoor recreation attractions are enabled to flourish for the enjoyment of residents and visitors alike. Yet today, Colorado faces a substantial challenge in satisfying the outdoor recreation demands of a rapidly expanding population, while meeting the responsibility to conserve the world-class outdoor resources for which Colorado is renowned. Millions of visitors to Colorado continue to enjoy a wide diversity of outdoor recreation activities, yet recreation management agencies across the community, state, and federal spectrum report difficulty keeping up with public expectations for quality outdoors experiences.”

As such, there are several social, economic, and environmental trends and influences that have shaped the strategic action elements of the SCORP and should be considered, many of which are relevant in Fruita. These include trends in the way Coloradans choose to recreate, demographic trends of popula-

tion growth, strong statewide open space protection efforts, recreation access, and unprecedented environmental conditions and stresses. The SCORP has identified five key issues affecting Colorado outdoor recreation that must be addressed to most effectively meet the challenge of satisfying the outdoor recreation demands of a rapidly expanding population, while meeting the responsibility to conserve the special outdoors resources for which Colorado is renowned. The following five issues and influences are considered the highest priorities:

- Issue #1: Effects of Environmental Change on Recreation and Tourism
- Issue #2: Population and Demographic Change and Related Recreation-Tourism Market Demands
- Issue #3: Connection Between Public Health and Recreation
- Issue #4: Funding Shortfalls for Recreation Management

- Issue #5: Improved Integration of Recreation Interests and Needs in land use and other relevant planning efforts

Fruita Recreation Programs Participation and Facility Usage

Many of the large, intensively used facilities in a parks and recreation system are used by participants or organized programs. Understanding how these programs use the parks allows a community to identify specific activities that may be underserved by facilities. Programs that are seeing an increase in participation may indicate a need for more facilities. In addition, different age groups, abilities, and skills often require different types and sizes of facilities. Understanding the differences in these user groups will help Fruita more specifically determine what needs to be provided in the system.

To determine facility usage, City of Fruita Parks and Recreation personnel, as well as local interest groups who provide recreational activities, were interviewed to determine how their organization and programs utilize Fruita facilities. The interest groups interviewed were also asked for information regarding the quality of facilities they use, the need for additional facilities, the size of their organization, and how it functions within the community.

The City of Fruita offers a variety of organized sports to the community, and a number of other programmed sports are available from nonprofit and private organizations in Fruita and the Grand Valley, including the Fruita Little League Association, the Grand Valley Lacrosse Association, Grand Mesa Youth Soccer, Grand Valley Disc Golf Association, Western Flyers Youth Project, Mesa County Junior Football Association, and the Dolphins Swim Club. Other private and nonprofit organizations and interest groups providing unique recreational opportunities and civic functions were interviewed as well, and include Colorado Plateau Mountain Bike Trail

Association (COPMOBA), Mesa Land Trust, Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW), USFS, Fruita Historical Board, Colorado Welcome Center, private equestrian users, and local businesses including Rimrock Adventures among others.

Organized Sports Programs

Providers report that there has been steady participation in youth baseball over the last few years in Fruita. Youth baseball, softball, and T-ball in Fruita are mainly provided through the Fruita Little League Association. Fruita Little League primarily utilizes the fields at Little Salt Wash Park, and reports the facilities to be in excellent condition. Over the last three years, Fruita Little League reports total participation of more than 500 players for all of their programs.

Youth tackle football in Fruita is provided through the Mesa County Junior Football Association and youth flag football is provided by the City of Fruita Parks and Recreation Department. Participation in flag football has remained steady over the last few years, averaging approximately 120 participants per season. In the past, fields at Fruita Monument High School have been used for games, however, the now that fields at Little Salt Wash Park are developed, they will be primarily used to host games. Local neighborhood parks and school lands are extensively used to host practices throughout the week. Practices are not held at the Little Salt Wash Park to protect the turf from overuse and wear.

Youth soccer in Fruita is provided through the Grand Mesa Youth Soccer program and now through the Fruita Parks and Recreation Department. Participation in soccer has remained steady over the last few years. Youth soccer, however, is a primary example of the community's desire to have athletic programming coordinated locally, instead of having to travel to Grand Junction and around the Grand Valley. In fall 2009, the Parks and Recre-



ation Department offered the first youth recreational soccer program and had approximately 130 participants. It is anticipated that demand for this program will grow, creating additional demands on parks and facilities throughout the community. The multi-use fields at Little Salt Wash Park are primarily used to host games. Practices are scheduled at the other local neighborhood parks, again to protect the turf at Little Salt Wash Park from overuse. Peewee soccer (for 4 and 5 year old) is provided through the Fruita Parks and Recreation Department.

Youth swimming in Fruita is provided through the Dolphins Swim Club; members swim in the summer season and utilize the outdoor pool at Orr Park. Swimming lessons are provided through the City of Fruita Parks and Recreation Department. Participation has been steady over the last few years. An average of 600 youth participate in swim lessons during the summer months at the Fruita Outdoor Pool. During the fall, winter, and springs seasons, swim lessons are offered at the Fruita Monument High School indoor pool, and registrations drop to approximately 120 participants.

The Fruita Parks and Recreation Department began expanded its organized youth basketball in 2007 and is offering separate leagues for boys' and girls' grades 3- 8. Leagues games are schedule with the Grand Junction Parks and Recreation Department and games are hosted around the Grand Valley,

including in Fruita. Practices are coordinated and hosted in gymnasiums at local elementary and middle schools, as well as the high school. Participation has been steady over the last few years.

Other Recreation Programs and Activities

There are several other organized and informal recreational programs and activities that occur with frequency in Fruita and the region. One of the more popular activities is organized disc golf. Organized disc golf is provided through the Grand Valley Disc Golf Association (GVDGA), which hosts weekly leagues as well as yearly tournaments, skills clinics, and charity events. The GVDGA utilizes courses throughout the Grand Valley, including the 9-hole course at Little Salt Wash Park. The GVDGA has coordinated in conjunction with the Fruita Parks and Recreation Department a disc golf league. Representatives from the GVDGA report that having more courses near the Colorado River or other bodies of water, as well as courses that play through wooded areas, would be ideal. They suggest that the construction and maintenance of courses is low cost, and that local clubs are very good about keeping them clean and willing to perform maintenance in exchange for use of the course for tournaments and other events. They also suggest that courses can often be designed into the underutilized areas of current parks.

Equestrian use is also another popular activity surrounding Fruita and the area. Organized trail rides are offered through Rimrock Adventures, as well as a weekly rodeo. There are also loosely organized citizen groups advocating more equestrian trails and improved access to surrounding trail networks. The majority of equestrian use occurs on public lands surrounding the City of Fruita, such as McInnis Canyon NCA. Interviews with local equestrian users suggest there is a lack of accessibility to trails in town and the ability to get to trails outside of town from within town. In general, they would like to see



soft surface shoulders for equestrians along some of the paved trails in town (i.e., Big Salt Wash, Little Salt Wash), and would like to see the community support trails for all uses.

Arguably, the most popular and well known activity in Fruita is mountain biking. Over the last 20 years, Fruita and the surrounding region have become one of the premier mountain biking destinations in the U.S., and people come from all over the world to participate in this activity. A number of private businesses, as well as the Colorado Plateau Mountain Bike Trail Association (COPMOBA), were contacted regarding mountain biking in Fruita. COPMOBA indicated it is likely there are more than 100,000 people per year who utilize the Kokopelli Trail as well as other trails on surrounding lands (primarily BLM lands), with spring and fall being the busiest times of year. From their perspective, they would like to see trail access to Loma from Fruita, which they consider to be a high priority. They indicate it is difficult to ride from Fruita to outlying trailheads. Improved access to the Colorado River would also be a great benefit.

Other popular activities in the area include rafting on the Colorado River; hiking; nature and wildlife viewing; scenic driving; and fishing and hunting for waterfowl along the Colorado River. Rimrock Adventures, in addition to equestrian rides and rodeo, also offer guided raft trips, equipment rental, and a shuttle service for white water and mountain



biking. Critical issues for Rimrock include the placement of a formalized crossing along SH340 for safer access to BLM trails on the west side of the highway; formalized parking along SH340; connection of the future Colorado Riverfront Trail to McInnis Canyon NCA; and repairing and opening the historical bridge, as it is critical to trail connectivity north and south of the river and to surrounding public lands.

E. SUMMARY OF NEEDS

Existing and Future Recreation Facilities Needs

Table 2.8 lists the current level of service for various recreation facilities that groups and individuals use in Fruita, as well as the average level of service for communities in the benchmarking exercise. Based on these levels of service, current and future recreation facility needs and deficits are shown.

According to this analysis, which uses a standard based on the average of communities in the benchmark analysis, there is a need for 2 additional multi-use fields, 2 additional tennis courts, 1 additional outdoor basketball court, an in-line hockey rink, and a gymnasium. The need for specific facilities to accommodate future growth should also be considered. As Fruita continues to grow, there will be continuing pressure to provide additional recreation facilities to meet new demands.

Table 2.8 Recreation Facility Needs

RECREATION FACILITY	CURRENT (2008) # OF FACILITIES IN FRUITA	FACILITIES PER POPULATION*		2008 NEEDS (POP. 10,947)		2025 NEEDS (POP. 25,735)	
		AVERAGE LEVEL OF SERVICE FOR FRUITA	AVERAGE LEVEL OF SERVICE FOR BENCHMARK COMMUNITIES	# OF FACILITIES NEEDED TO MEET AVERAGE LEVEL OF SERVICE**	2008 DEFICIT	# OF FACILITIES NEEDED TO MEET AVERAGE LEVEL OF SERVICE**	2008 DEFICIT
Population per Multi-Use Field	3	3,649	2,226	5	2	11	8
Population per Softball/Baseball Field	4	2,737	2,560	4	0	10	6
Population per Outdoor Basketball Court	2	5,474	3,826	3	1	7	5
Population per Tennis Court	2	5,474	2,901	4	2	9	7
Population per Skate Park	1	10,947	19,265	1	0	1	0
Population per In-line Hockey Rink	0	0	17,273	1	1	1	1
Population per Swimming Pool	1	10,947	12,587	1	0	2	1
Population per Gymnasium	0	0	18,220	1	1	1	1

It should be noted that the analysis above is only one tool in determining recreation facility needs. Other factors should be considered as well, including differences in the age, quality, accessibility, or other design characteristics of the facilities, as well as the needs expressed by Park and Recreation Department staff and local user groups.

Sports such as tennis, soccer, softball, baseball, football, and lacrosse are typically enjoyed by a significant percentage of the population, especially families with children. These facilities in developed parks are in demand by both city programs and nonprofit sports organizations.

When comparing the number of courts, gyms, and fields that the City of Fruita provides with the numbers provided by other similar communities, Fruita's level of service is only slightly lower. The number of tennis and basketball courts is half, and multi-use fields, tennis courts, and outdoor basketball courts is approximately 2/3 of the communities in the benchmark exercise. Additionally, Fruita is lacking an in-line hockey rink and gymnasium. However, a new gymnasium will be provided as part of the new community center to be built, and there has not been any expressed demand by either the public or through user groups for an in-line hockey rink.

When looking to the future and to accommodate growth, Fruita will have a need for all facilities, except a skate park. Currently, communities in

the benchmark analysis are providing skate parks at 1 per approximately 19,265 residents. While Fruita currently has a skate park, with the growing popularity of these amenities, the city may want to consider the addition of smaller skate elements in other parks. Also, due to the outdated nature of the amenities in the existing skate park and the fact that its current location (Orr Park) will be undergoing a large disturbance during construction of the future community center, now would be an ideal time to enhance and upgrade the skate park. Redesigning Orr Park and upgrading the skate park in conjunction with construction of the community center would allow the city to establish a “new” park, and place modern amenities in concert with the newly constructed building that more accurately meet the needs of the skating public.

Comments from the public and Park and Recreation Advisory Board members have indicated a need for additional recreation facilities to identify Fruita as a unique place to live, work, and play and that help contribute to our small town atmosphere. These types of amenities will not only provide variety for residents, but will also serve to attract visitors and capitalize on the tourist economy. Some of the demand has been for different types of facilities that are growing in popularity across the country, as well as in Fruita, including disc golf facilities and bicycle terrain parks. Disc golf is rapidly gaining popularity throughout the country, as well as in Colorado and the Grand Valley more specifically. Organized disc golf is very popular and the existing courses throughout the Grand Valley, including the 9-hole course at Little Salt Wash Park, receive heavy use. The Grand Valley Disc Golf Association reports the demand and need for an additional course in Fruita, preferably one that is near water and would play through wooded areas.

There is also a strong desire within the community for a bicycle terrain park. These types of facilities are

rapidly gaining popularity around the country as a unique amenity provided by parks and recreation departments. With the huge popularity of mountain biking and cycling in general in Fruita, the addition of such a facility would provide residents and visitors with an additional unique recreation destination in the community. Such a facility would blend well with Fruita’s cycling image and provide additional recreational opportunities not currently found here. This facility should be centrally located, preferably near the primary trail system, and with access to surrounding trail systems.

Another unique idea that could be incorporated into the park and recreation system in Fruita, which is not found in many places, is an “exurban” park. The city currently owns and maintains the Mountain Lakes properties south of town, surrounded by the Grand Mesa National Forest. Representatives of the USFS have expressed a strong interest in continuing to partner with the city in development of these lands as an extension of the municipal park and recreation system. There are currently limited facilities at these properties, including an informal trail network, pit toilets, dispersed campsites, and picnic facilities. The city should consider improving these facilities and incorporating other amenities to include a high ropes course, more campsites, and possibly an outdoor environmental education/interpretive facility.

Existing and Future Parkland Needs

As described earlier, there is an existing deficit for both neighborhood and community parkland in Fruita. Based on the parkland standards set in the 2008 Fruita Community Plan, there is currently a need for up to approximately 3.2 acres of neighborhood parkland and approximately 21.3 acres of community parkland. However, with the inclusion of acreage in Little Salt Wash Park that serves Neighborhood Park needs for those in the vicinity, the total acreage of neighborhood parkland seems



to be sufficient for the current population. Due to projected population growth, there is a need for both additional neighborhood and community parkland in the near future. To accommodate this additional population and maintain the neighborhood and community parkland level of service as defined in the 2008 Fruita Community Plan, the city will need to acquire an additional 60 acres of community parkland and an additional 30 acres of neighborhood parkland beyond what is currently needed today. As such, there is a total need (both today and by 2025) for 30 acres of neighborhood parkland and 81.3 acres of community parkland. This translates to a total need 4-12 Neighborhood Parks and 2-4 Community Parks by the projected buildout population of 25,735 residents.

Trail Needs

Time and again, Colorado residents indicate in surveys that the most frequent activities in city parks, trails, and open space systems are walking, nature observation, bicycling, picnicking, and jogging. This is also true in Fruita. Based on discussions with Fruita staff and with input from the Steering Committee, stakeholder groups, citizens at public open houses, and the recently completed citizen survey, there is a strong need and desire for additional primary-level trails and trail connections within the city. Currently, there is somewhat limited opportunity for residents to easily and safely travel or commute throughout Fruita via alternative transportation. While the city has taken steps to begin construction of individual segments of primary trails, many of these sections do not currently connect with each other, nor do they connect with key destinations, such as parks, schools, downtown, or the Colorado River. Many existing segments have taken advantage of existing corridors (such as along drainages), including Big and Little Salt Washes. This practice should continue by aligning trails as much as possible along these drainages. Other ideal locations would include canal and ditch corridors. Canals and ditches represent existing corridors, which make ideal locations for trails and often have the necessary width to accommodate them. The city should make every attempt to secure agreements with local canal and ditch companies to allow placement of trails along these corridors, as long as it would not interfere with the company's ability to operate and maintain them for water delivery. Specifically, trails should be located on the north-side of irrigation canals to avoid headgates. The current Fruita City Code also has guidance on appropriate buffering and setbacks along canals, washes, and the Colorado River. The code indicates that:

“Appropriate buffering and setbacks shall be used between environmental resources and proposed development to ensure that the proposed development does not degrade the existing habitat or interfere with other uses. At a minimum, the following buffer standards apply:

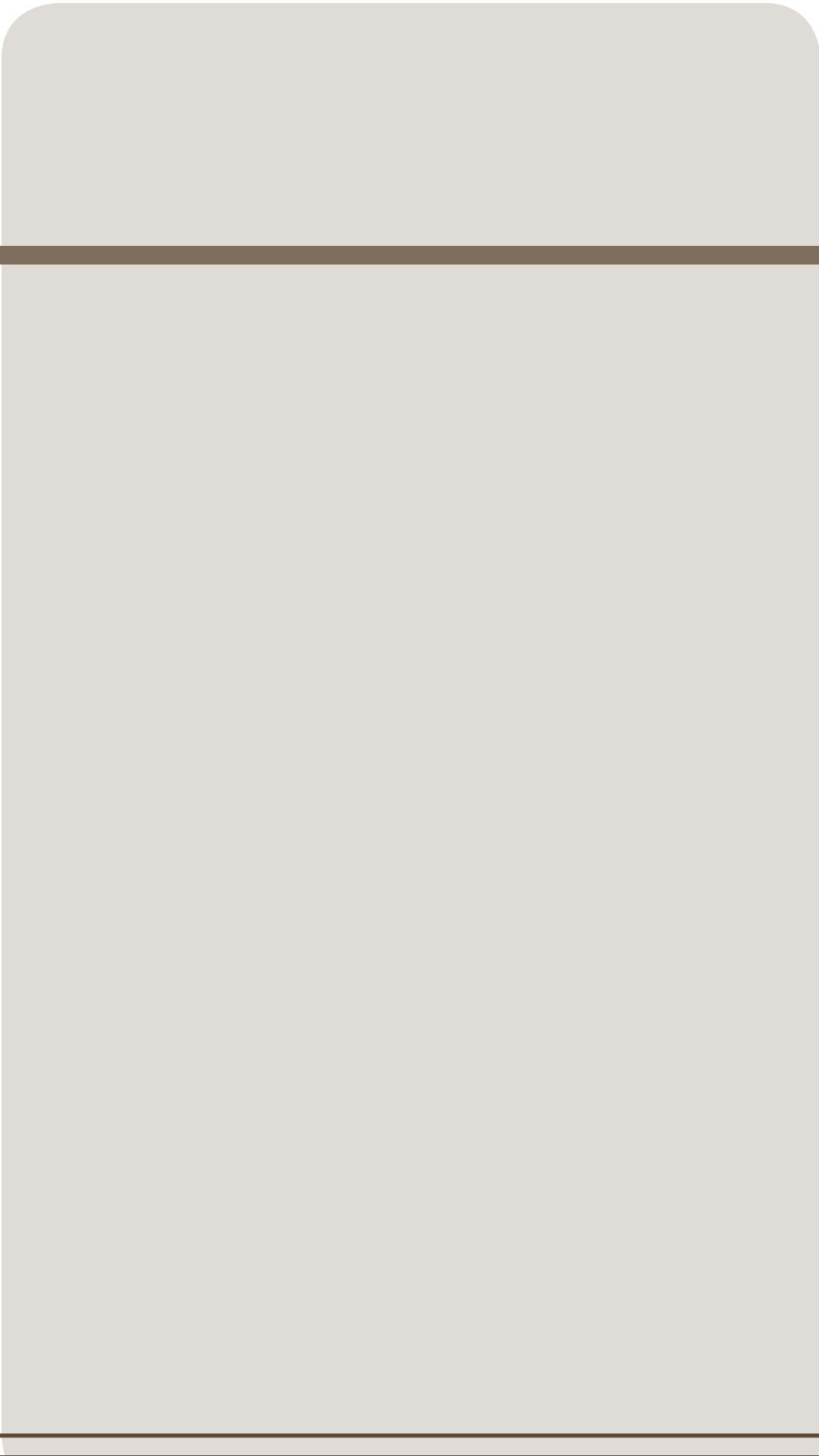
Canals – fifty (50) feet on both sides of the canal as measured from the centerline of the canal. At a minimum, there will be 20 feet in addition to the Grand Valley Irrigation Company Easement

Washes and creeks and wetlands – one hundred (100) feet

Colorado River – three hundred (300) feet”

Establishment of primary multi-purpose trails, based on the standards set forth earlier in this chapter, would also allow canal and ditch companies’ access for full-size vehicles on paved surfaces.

Another critical trail alignment in Fruita is the Colorado Riverfront Trail. The Colorado Riverfront Trail Commission, in conjunction with Mesa County and Colorado State Parks, has been working over the last several years to plan this trail and secure the necessary fee title properties and easements for its placement and construction. This practice should continue, with full involvement by the City of Fruita for establishment of the trail within city limits. When complete, the trail would provide a truly unique recreational experience along the Colorado River, connecting the communities of Loma, Grand Junction, and Palisade to Fruita. It would allow for uninterrupted travel between the communities and serve as a major destination for visitors to the area.



03 VISION, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES



As part of the process of developing the POST Master Plan, specific principles and policies were developed to guide the future development of parks, open space, trails, and recreation within the city. The mission, vision, principles, and policies directly support those of the city as defined in the 2008 Fruita Community Plan. The vision defines the desired outcome of the community in its provision of parks and recreation. The mission defines how the Parks and Recreation Department will achieve that vision. Principles and policies then provide specific direction to the community and its governing body in support of the vision, and provide the policy basis from which decisions can be made. Through these principles and policies, the City of Fruita is making the statement that its commitment to parks, recreation, open space, and trails in the community is one that will make the city's parks and recreation the best possible.

Vision

“Provide a comprehensive system of open space, parks, recreation facilities, and trails.”

Mission

To provide stewardship of open space, parks, trails and recreation facilities and experiences that promote a small town atmosphere, develop partnerships with local agencies and businesses, and enhance the quality of life for our community members and visitors.



Vista Valley Park



Vista Valley Park

Principle OPR 1. The City of Fruita, in cooperation with partners, shall work to preserve the natural character of the washes, creeks, and other environmental features in the planning area.

Policy OPR 1.1 - Natural Resources. Conserve water quality, natural hydrology and habitat, and preserve biodiversity through conservation of the Colorado River, major stream corridors and washes, as well as associated wetlands, floodplains, drains, and riparian areas as important green spaces, wildlife habitat, waterway corridors, and trail linkages.

Key corridors include:

- Adobe Creek
- Reed Wash
- Little Salt Wash
- Big Salt Wash
- Colorado River

OPR 1.1.1. Place greater emphasis on the use of nonirrigated landscapes, native species, and low water requiring plant materials.

OPR 1.1.2. Implement area-specific resource management plans for open spaces that define the appropriate level of public use and ecosystem management strategies.

OPR 1.1.3. Provide for integrated pest management when/where necessary.



OPR 1.1.4. Remove non-native invasive species, such as Tamarisk.

Policy OPR 1.2 - Buffer Criteria. Protect sensitive resources by preserving natural buffers from the edge of natural features or 100-year floodplain (whichever is greater). These buffers are intended for uses such as habitat protection, flood control, and trail alignments among others.

Recommended buffers include:

- Ponds, creeks, streams, drainages, canals, and wetlands: 50 feet
- Adobe Creek, Reed Wash, Little Salt Wash, Big Salt Wash, rare, threatened or endangered wildlife habitat: 100 feet
- Colorado River: 300 feet

Policy OPR 1.3 - Buffer Agreements. Protect buffer and setbacks in perpetuity through development agreements by donating or selling the land, or a conservation easement on the land, to an accredited land trust or relevant public agency.

Policy OPR 1.4 - Sensitive Areas. Protect sensitive areas and other important resource values within Fruita's GMA. These may include:

- Lands that are constrained due to environmental sensitivity or geologic hazards
- 100-year floodplains designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Lands with important scenic values or that contribute to the visual quality of Fruita
- Lands with important cultural values
- Rare vegetation
- Wetlands
- Severe slopes

- Lands with important wildlife habitat or other natural value, such as nesting and production areas
- Winter ranges, feeding areas, and concentration areas for threatened and endangered species, species of special concern, or indicator species
- Wildlife movement corridors
- Lands that have important recreational values
- Lands with important cultural or historic values

OPR 1.4.1. Where practical, avoid construction of active developed recreation areas and facilities in environmentally sensitive areas.

OPR 1.4.2. Seasonally close areas and trails as warranted to protect sensitive resources, such as wildlife habitat areas, if necessary.

Policy OPR 1.5 - Floodplain. Discourage development within the 100-year floodplain as defined and mapped by FEMA or state or local floodplain management entity, whichever has been done most recently.

Policy OPR 1.6 - Wetlands. If sensitive resources are disturbed, such as wetlands, compensate by on-site or off-site wetland restoration of equal or greater amounts.

Policy OPR 1.7 - Visual Resources. Maintain the visual integrity of Fruita’s landscape by identifying distinctive scenic or topographic features, such as ridgelines or unique vegetation, and either avoiding them or using innovative design techniques to integrate them cohesively into new development.

Principle OPR 2. Protect the citizens of Fruita from the effects of man-made or natural hazards (geologic, soils, stormwater, air pollution, odor, noise, and wildfire).

Policy OPR 2.1 - Hazard Identification. Any proposed land use or development must identify

hazardous areas, i.e., floodplains, drainage areas, steep slope areas, geological fault areas, and other areas hazardous to life or property.

Policy OPR 2.2 - Restricted Development. Development will be restricted in hazardous areas, to minimize the risk of injury to persons and loss of property, unless appropriate mitigation measures



are taken. Recreational uses may be appropriate depending on the hazard, and will be evaluated by the city on a case-by-case basis.

Policy OPR 2.3 - Design. Proposed land uses will address soil, erosion, and surface geologic characteristics of the development site through proper design, engineering, and construction.

OPR 2.3.1. Use permeable pavements, recycled materials, locally manufactured products, locally available materials, and low energy requiring facilities and technologies to the greatest extent practicable.

OPR 2.3.2. Protect water quality through implementation of “Best Management Practices” in the design of stormwater conveyance and detention facilities.

Principle OPR 3. Working collaboratively with landowners and public and private agencies, the City of Fruita shall take the initiative in expanding its off-street trail system.

Policy OPR 3.1 - Regional Connectivity. Further connect the City of Fruita with adjacent recreational amenities, including the Colorado River and nearby public lands, through the development of a regional trail system. Integrate off-street trails with on-street trails and bike routes, in accordance with Principle MT-5 of the 2008 Fruita Community Plan. Recognize that trails are used as transportation and as such should be addressed in a transportation master plan.

Policy OPR 3.2 - Washes and Drainages. Link the major wash trails and drainage ways from the Colorado River and BLM lands to the south to the new community separators to the north. These washes include Adobe Creek, Little Salt Wash, Big Salt Wash, and Reed Wash.

Policy OPR 3.3 - Canals and Ditches. In cooperation with local canal and ditch companies, locate trails adjacent to canals and ditches where possible.

Policy OPR 3.4 - Regional Cooperation. Continue to cooperate with other agencies and organizations in implementing the Colorado River Greenway and Trail system. Such as, Mesa County's current land development code requires that trails for public use be provided in accordance with trails plans adopted by either the nearby municipality or Mesa County.

Policy OPR 3.5 - Advocacy. Continue to advocate for an expanded trail system in coordination with the Colorado Riverfront Trail Commission, the Urban Trails Committee, Great Outdoors Colorado, the local canal and ditch companies, and other agencies.

Policy OPR 3.6 - Trailhead, Parking, and Linkage Design. Provide carefully planned and attractively developed parking areas at trailheads and trail linkages to facilitate trail usage.

Policy OPR 3.7 - Trail Promotion. Promote trail connections between schools, parks, recreational areas, tourist areas, neighborhoods, centers, and downtown. Create a secondary non-motorized, on-street trail system to enhance trail choices. These trail connections are considered part of the overall transportation system in Fruita and should be treated similarly to roadway rights-of-way. As such, developers may not receive impact fee credit for their right-of-way dedication of undevelopable land but will receive impact fee credit for trail construction. Section C in Chapter 4 of this plan provides additional detail on trail standards and classifications for the community.



OPR 3.7.1. Locate trails to provide pleasant and safe user experiences.

OPR 3.7.2. Provide opportunities for trail loops with areas of interest along the routes.

OPR 3.7.3. Provide both paved trails to accommodate a variety of users.

OPR 3.7.4. Trails in Fruita are intended to provide facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other types of users of non-motorized

circulation so they may travel throughout the community in a safe manner. Trails should be separated from roadways in their own corridors, providing for continuous movement with minimal interruption from driveways and other vehicular areas. Chapter 4 of this plan provides additional detail on specific standards and classifications for trails in Fruita.

Policy OPR 3.8 - Multi-functional Design.

Encourage multi-functional, “grade-separated crossings” (bridges, roadway underpasses, and other means) at selected locations (such as I-70) for the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians.

Policy OPR 3.9 - Multi-use Design. Design and develop the primary off-street trail system for a diversity of nonmotorized uses, including, but not limited to, pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians.

Policy OPR 3.10 - Trail Dedication. Provide trail dedication or fees to maintain a high level of service for trails in the community. The city should build new primary trails in a manner that minimizes conflicts with vehicular traffic, utilizes existing corridors where possible, and provides for a safe and enjoyable user experience. Trails should be constructed in the classifications and to the standards provided in Chapter 4 of this document.

OPR 3.10.1. Provide 1.0 mile of primary trail for every 1,000 residents.

OPR 3.10.2. Neighborhood trails may receive credit towards dedication fees if they meet trail development standards and provide high quality connectivity to neighboring developments or to the primary trail system.

Policy OPR 3.11 – Land Acquisition. Acquire land or easements for future trails before or as development occurs but not use the power of eminent domain for the procurement of land or easements.

Principle OPR 4. *The City of Fruita will create a system of parks, which will include Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks, and recreation facilities, to provide a high level of access and amenities.*

Policy OPR 4.1 - Neighborhood and Community Parks. Residents should have convenient and safe access to a system of parks that includes Neighborhood and Community Parks.



Little Salt Wash Park field

OPR 4.1.1. Promote a balanced system of different sized parks; developed properties and natural conservation lands; specialized recreation, cultural, and arts facilities; and varied recreational programming.

OPR 4.1.2. Design parks to provide for a variety of experiences that appeal to a broad range of interests, abilities, and ages.

OPR 4.1.3. Provide accessible facilities and rehabilitate existing facilities to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Policy OPR 4.2 - Pocket Parks. Pocket Parks are desirable amenities in many neighborhoods. They can provide green space for people in the immediate vicinity and help contribute to small town atmo-

sphere by proving a place to congregate. When constructed, they should be of sufficient size to provide an appropriate neighborhood amenity.

If provided as an amenity in a new development, Pocket Parks should be maintained and owned by a homeowners association. They should allow for access by the general public. While they can be a nice amenity, Pocket Parks do not replace the need for Neighborhood or Community Parks.

Policy OPR 4.3 - Park Dedication. Continue to require park dedication or fees to maintain a high level of service. The city should build new Neighborhood and Community Parks in a manner that minimizes overuse and ensures easy access. Parks should be constructed at adequate sizes (excluding unusable land such as drainage corridors, floodplains, steep slopes, etc.) that provide amenities to serve the needs of a diverse population.

OPR 4.3.1. Provide 2.0 acres of neighborhood parkland and 4.0 acres of community parkland for every 1,000 residents.

OPR 4.3.2. Depending on the quality of Pocket Park development, credit may be given for meeting overall parkland or trail standards and needs.

Policy OPR 4.4 - Programs. Establish a range of recreation facilities and programs that serve all age groups, from the very young to the very old.

OPR 4.4.1. Keep abreast of current trends and changing demands for recreational activities by periodically conducting surveys and updating the POST Master Plan as needed.

Policy OPR 4.5 - Cooperation. Fruita, in cooperation with other entities, including the school district, county, BLM, and State Parks, continues to provide a variety of park facilities and programs to enhance recreational opportunities for residents of all ages.



Dan Williams Memorial Park

OPR 4.5.1. Fruita will pursue the use of intergovernmental and joint-use agreements with other agencies and entities, such as Mesa County School District and Mesa County, wherever possible to promote the development of parks, trails, open space, and recreation facilities.

Policy OPR 4.6 - Multi-use Facilities. When possible, the city should construct multi-use recreation facilities (e.g., school / recreation facilities etc.), especially within designated centers.

Policy OPR 4.7 - Land Acquisition. Acquire land for future parks and schools without the use of eminent domain before development occurs and land costs make it more difficult to acquire adequate sites.

OPR 4.7.1. The city should work towards the goal of providing larger Neighborhood Parks consistent with the classifications and standards provided in Chapter 4 of this document, and avoid acceptance of smaller incongruous Pocket Parks.

Policy OPR 4.8 - School and Trail Accessibility. The City of Fruita will promote future schools and parks to be located where they are accessible from the trail system.

Policy OPR 4.9 - Locations Along Washes. Since planned trails are primarily located along drainages and washes, land for future schools and parks should be acquired along washes and ditch and canal alignments wherever possible. This will allow not only safe access, but will provide nearby “outdoor classrooms” for study and exploration.

Principle OPR 5. Develop and maintain parks, trails, recreation facilities, and open lands at a high level of quality that is appropriate for the location, the type of use, and nature of the facility.

Policy OPR 5.1 - Historic and Cultural Resources. Incorporate historic and cultural resources and art into park designs to celebrate the unique aspects of the community of Fruita and provide distinctiveness between parks.

Policy OPR 5.2 - Maintenance and Design Standards. Establish maintenance and design standards and management plans for the various types of parks and other properties the city maintains.

Policy OPR 5.3 - Maintenance Assessment. Annually assess needed maintenance and renovation projects systemwide, including bringing existing facilities up to ADA standards.

Policy OPR 5.4 - Manage Use. Manage fields to prevent overuse and irreparable damage to playing surfaces.

Policy OPR 5.5 - Maintenance Funding. Adequately staff and fund maintenance and operations to increase the level of maintenance to acceptable standards, and adjust staffing levels to keep pace with the addition of properties to the system.

Principle OPR 6. Develop adequate land acquisition, development, operations and maintenance funding sources, and tools to realize the POST Master Plan vision.

Policy OPR 6.1 - Fair Share Funding. Ensure that new residential development contributes its fair share for parks, trails, and open space and recreation facilities to the extent allowed by state law. Clearly define developer responsibilities.

Policy OPR 6.2 - Partnerships and Grants. Seek public-private partnerships where mutually beneficial and appropriate, coordinate with other agencies,



and seek partnerships with these agencies to leverage available funding. Aggressively seek grants from available sources where possible.

Policy OPR 6.3 - Fund Departmental Growth. As resources are available, support funding for additional park and recreation staff positions as the open lands, recreation, parks, and trails system grows.

Policy OPR 6.4 - Update Standards as Necessary. Periodically update park design standards in subdivision, zoning, and other land use and development regulations to incorporate the POST Master Plan recommendations.

Policy OPR 6.5 - Special Improvement Districts.

Use residential special improvement districts or other special districts for park acquisition, development, and/or maintenance where other means do not exist.

Principle OPR 7. Monitor, assess, and adjust existing intergovernmental and joint-use agreements, tools, goals, policies, action plan, and priorities to meet changing or unforeseen conditions and/or needs in Fruita.

Policy OPR 7.1 - Monitor Effectiveness. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of past and current tools for providing parks, recreation programs, trails, conservation lands, and recreation facilities.

Policy OPR 7.2 - Periodically Review and Update. Review and, if needed, update the POST Master Plan for Fruita, and make updates to the Community Plan, transportation plans, sub-area plans, and state statutes to reflect changing needs and opportunities.

Policy OPR 7.3 - Monitor Progress. Monitor annual progress towards achieving the goals.

Principle OPR 8. The city's parks, trails, and open space system will promote tourism and economic development, serving to attract visitors to the community through the provision of recreational opportunities that are unique to Fruita and the surrounding environment.

Policy OPR 8.1 - Integrated Planning. Integrate parks, recreation, and trail planning with other city planning efforts.

Policy OPR 8.2 - Festival Space. Provide festival and performance spaces, as part of the parks system,



that are capable of hosting the unique national and international events Fruita has become famous for.

Policy OPR 8.3 - Connections with Surrounding Resources. Strengthen connections between the Colorado River corridor, surrounding public lands, and downtown.

Principle OPR 9. The Colorado River will be celebrated as one of the community's most important assets. The river corridor is a healthy aquatic resource that serves a variety of ecological functions, while also serving to attract visitors to the city, contributing to the overall economic vitality of the community and providing a variety of recreational opportunities for Fruita residents and visitors.

Policy OPR 9.1 - Riverfront Park. Fruita will begin to plan for the eventual development of a riverfront park along the Colorado River, preferably between the Old Historic Fruita Bridge and SH340. This park would be an important component of the overall Riverfront open space, trails, and park system in this area, and could contain a wide variety of amenities, including community festival areas, boat put-ins/take-outs, fishing areas, picnic and playground areas, turf grass for various field sports,

environmental education center, and other public uses compatible with the environment of the Colorado River.

OPR 9.1.1. A future riverfront park would serve as an amenity that encourages economic development and vitality within the community, serving to attract residents and visitors alike.

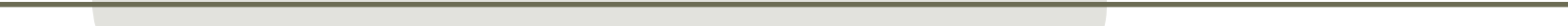
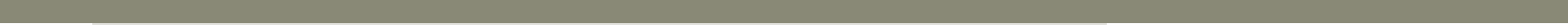
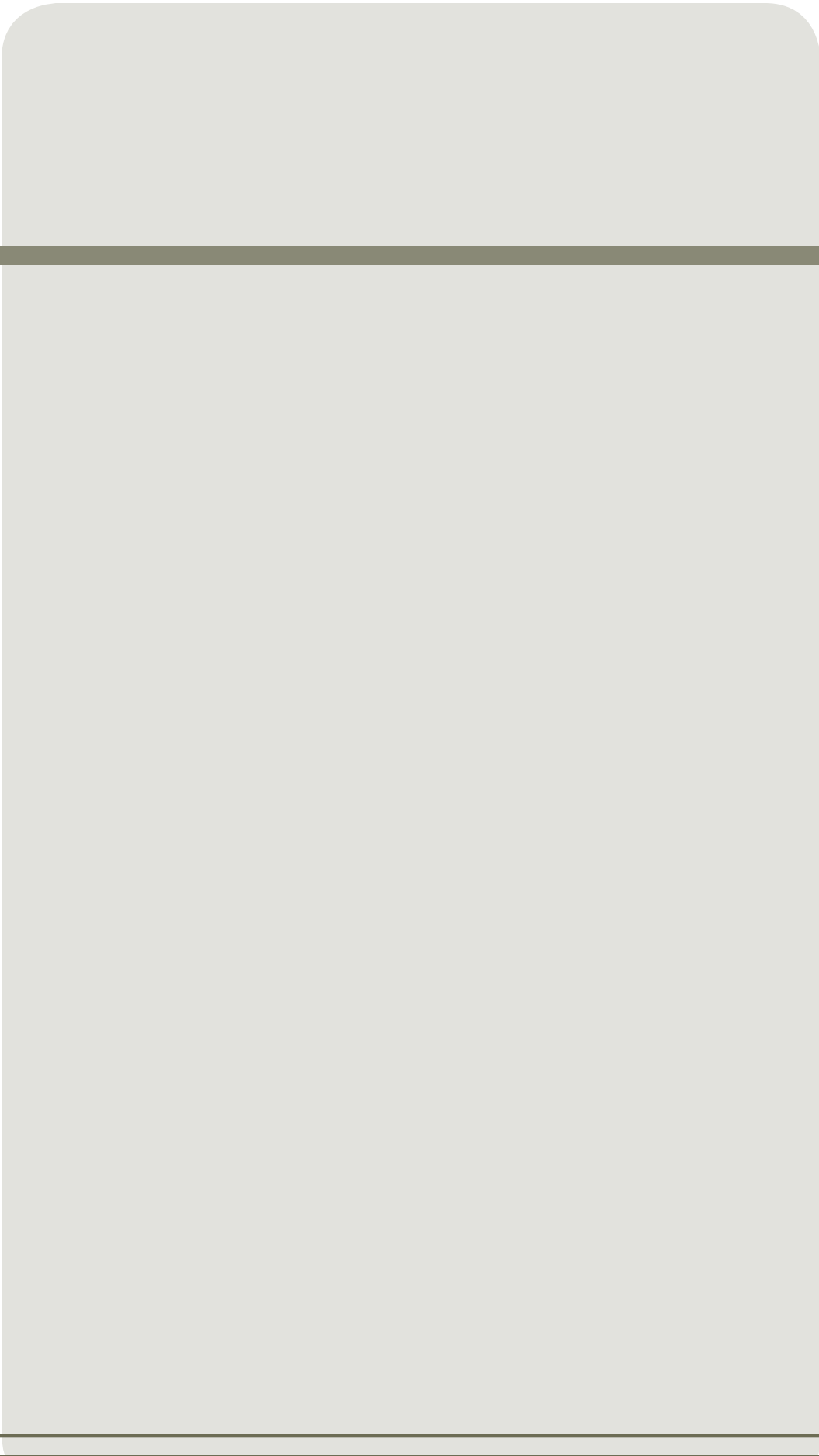
OPR 9.1.2. Complementary private redevelopment, and development adjacent to or near the Colorado River, would be encouraged to help define a unique sense of place for Fruita. However, any future development will be complementary to, and shall not compromise the natural values, integrity, character, and recreational experience of the area.

Policy OPR 9.2 - Trail Nexus. The area along the Colorado River, in the vicinity of the proposed Riverfront Park, will be encouraged and celebrated as a central trail nexus. This area will serve as a hub for the city's primary off-street trail system, a central point of entry for the future Riverfront Trail, and an important connection to the surrounding soft surface trail network.



Principle OPR 10. Fruita will continue to plan for the development of the Fruita Reservoirs mountain parkland properties, an "exurban" park experience. Community leaders in Fruita believe that mountain parks are a key to quality of life and economic advantage as urban Neighborhood and Community Parks. Having these lands as municipal parkland makes living in Fruita a priceless privilege, which can be attained in few communities throughout the country.

Policy OPR 10.1 - Mountain Park. Fruita will develop its reservoir mountain parklands to provide unique outdoor recreational opportunities for Fruita residents. A site-specific master plan will be developed to determine the exact type and size of facilities needed; however, facilities to consider include a campground, high ropes course, environmental education facility, archery course, mountain bike trails, and interconnection to the surrounding trail system on USFS lands.



04

MASTER PLAN



This chapter first defines specific standards, classifications, and design considerations for each park type, trail type, and open space type in the community. It also includes specific project recommendations that are needed to meet existing and future parks, open space, and trail needs in the City of Fruita. A master plan map and a more detailed trail master plan for the Riverfront Trail along the Colorado River are also included, and graphically depict the locations of specific project recommendations. *These maps depict recommended trail locations, however, the City of Fruita does not endorse any forms of use along these suggested trails; they are conceptual in nature only.*

These recommendations include ways to address existing deficiencies, projected needs, changes in recreational habits, and other issues identified through the inventory and needs assessment. The recommendations are grouped into categories: trails, parks, and open space. The recommendations in this plan represent a shift in the manner in which park dedication and development should occur in Fruita in the future.

Currently, and for the past many years, when new residential development occurs, there is a dedication requirement of 0.012 acre per resident for land the developer and the city determines adequate for parkland, open space, trail corridors, and riparian buffers. This results in a total parkland dedication requirement of 12.0 acres per 1,000 residents. Over time, this type of dedication requirement has resulted in the acceptance of numerous, small parcels of land (Pocket Parks and trail segments) at

the cost of not developing neighborhood parks and a primary trail system. This has limited the city's ability to develop a more comprehensive park and trail system.

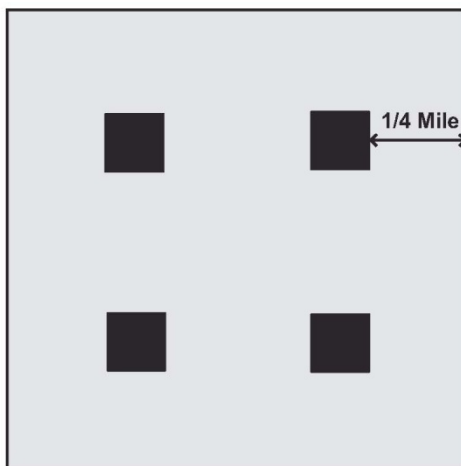
The new parkland standards outlined in Chapter Three of this plan suggest a standard of 2.0 acres of neighborhood parkland per 1,000 residents, and 4.0 acres of community parkland per 1,000 residents. As Figures 4.1 and 4.2 illustrate, amending the standard and associated impact fees will result in a process that allows for the development of a parks system that meets the overall needs of the community while reducing the land dedication requirement for developers. Figure 4.1 illustrates a model of how parks may currently be distributed throughout Fruita based on the existing parkland standard of 0.012 acre per resident. Figure 4.2 illustrates a model of how Neighborhood and Community Parks may be distributed throughout Fruita based on the 2.0 acres per 1,000 people neighborhood standard and 4.0 acres community standard (combined for 6.0 acres) outlined in Chapter Three of this plan.



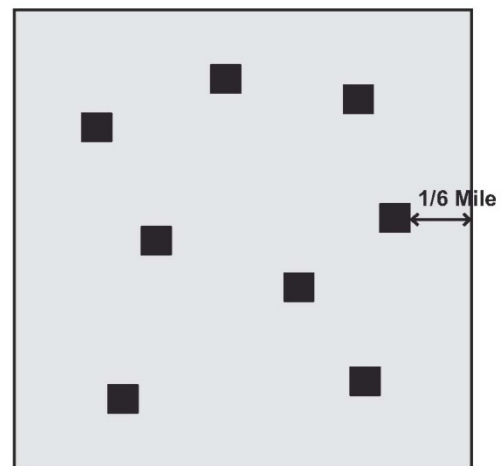
FIGURE 4.1. CURRENT PARKLAND DISTRIBUTION MODEL

This is a model of how parks may be distributed in a square mile under the current parkland dedication ordinance.

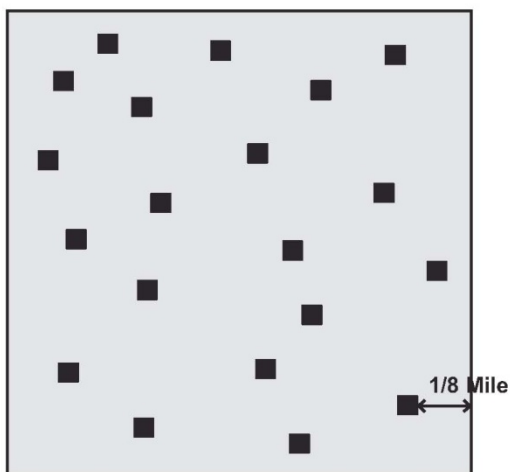
- The current population density in the City of Fruita, within city limits, is approximately 3.2 DU per acre, or roughly **4,000 people per square mile**.
- This model is based on the current parkland dedication of **0.012 acre of parkland per resident**, at the current average household size of 2.5 people per single family dwelling unit.
- This results in a total of **48 acres** of neighborhood parkland per square mile, or 12 acres per 1,000, which is approximately three or four times more than the average of most communities.



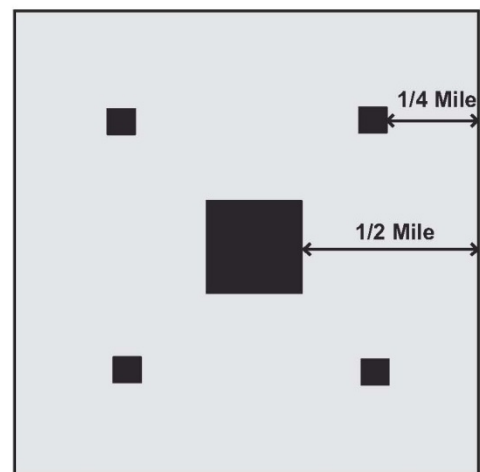
Four 12-acre parks



Eight 6-acre parks



Twenty 2.4-acre parks

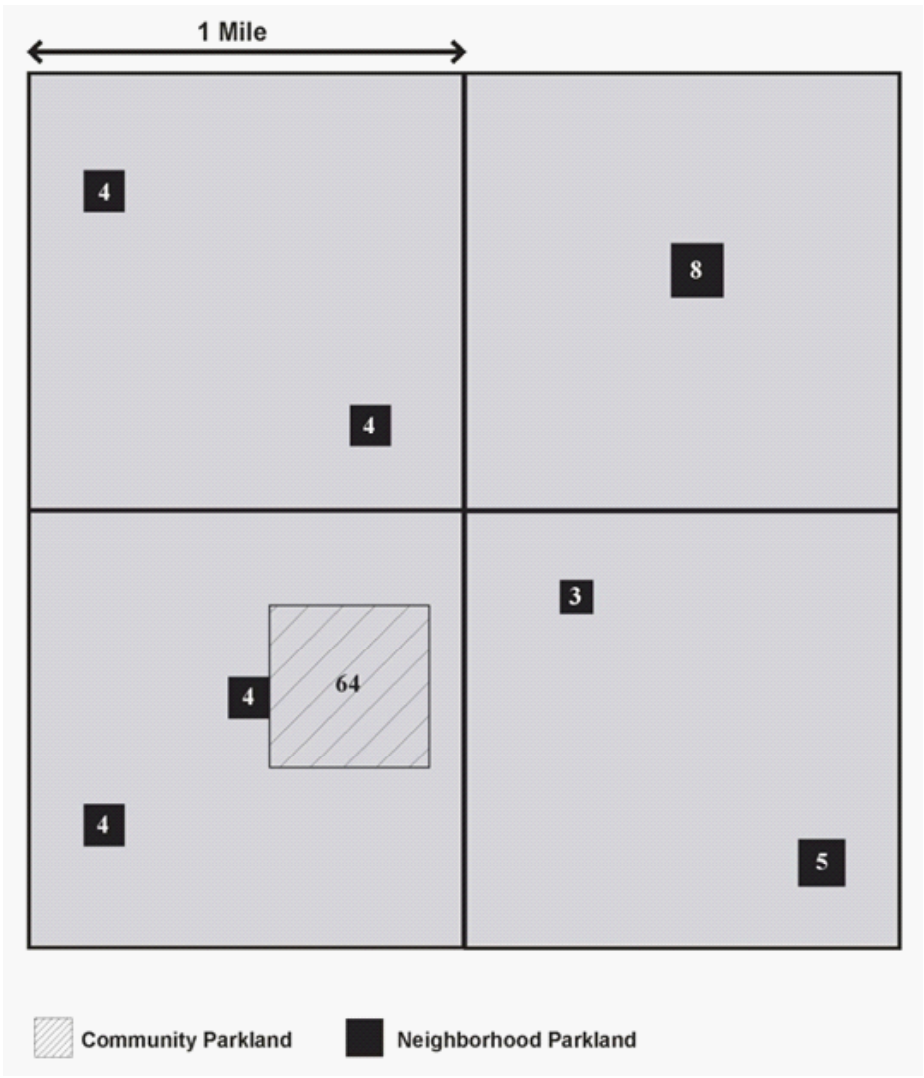


One 20-acre park and four 7-acre parks

FIGURE 4.2. NEW PARKLAND DISTRIBUTION MODEL

This is the recommended model of how parks could be distributed under a combined 6.0 acres per 1,000 people standard (2.0 acres/1,000 people for neighborhood parkland and 4.0 acres/1,000 people for community parkland).

- The current population density in the City of Fruita, within city limits, is approximately 3.2 DU per acre, or roughly **4,000 people per square mile**.
- 2.0 acres/1,000 population (about 4,000 people in an average square mile at an average household size in Fruita of 2.52 people per household) equates to a parkland need of **8.0 acres** of neighborhood parkland per square mile.
- 8.0 acres of neighborhood parkland per square mile is consistent with what other communities are providing in both Colorado and the United States.
- 4.0 acres/1,000 population (about 4,000 people in an average square mile at an average household size in Fruita of 2.52 people per household) equates to a parkland need of **64 acres** of community parkland per 4 square miles.
- 64 acres of community parkland per 4 square miles is consistent with the standards in other communities in Colorado and the United States. Based on the standards provided in this POST Plan, a Community Park should be available within approximately 2 miles of residents' homes.



4.1 STANDARDS AND CLASSIFICATIONS

Parks are classified based on their existing amenities, location within the community, size, and proximity to residential areas. Each classification of parkland is accompanied by standards that describe their characteristics and desired level of service. These classifications and standards provide guidance in the development of a parkland system that offers consistent service to city residents.

A. NEIGHBORHOOD PARK STANDARDS AND CLASSIFICATIONS

Neighborhood Parks should be adequately sized to provide space for a variety of activities, and are ideally a minimum of 2.0 usable acres and up to 8 acres when complete. They should be centrally located within the residential area they serve and are often located adjacent to an elementary or middle school. Neighborhood Parks can be active or passive in nature, but most commonly provide a combination of both. League sports activities in Neighborhood Parks should be limited, as the need to be compatible with surrounding residential land uses limits the intensity of use. Exceptions may be necessary if no other facilities exist or if the use is not detrimental to the neighborhood. Table 4.1 describes the standards, site characteristics, and suggested level of service standard for Neighborhood and Pocket Parks.

While both public and private Pocket Parks supplement the Neighborhood Park system and provide places for children and families to gather near their homes, they are not substitutes for adequately sized Neighborhood Parks. They are typically smaller than Neighborhood Parks and may offer only a few Neighborhood Park amenities due to their limited size. In Fruita, Pocket Parks are typically no larger than 1.0 acre in size and are distributed throughout the community; however, most are found in association with individual residential housing developments.

The 2008 Fruita Community Plan and this POST planning process establish a standard of 2.0 acres of neighborhood parkland per 1,000 residents. As illustrated in Chapter Two, Existing Levels of Service, this standard appears to be adequate to serve the population of Fruita; however over time, without acquisition and development of additional Neighborhood Park properties, the level of service for Neighborhood Parks will drop below this standard. Implementing the proposed neighborhood park projects described later in this chapter will help to ensure the City of Fruita maintains a level of service of approximately 2.0 acres of neighborhood parkland per 1,000 people.

Table 4.1 Neighborhood Park Standards

CLASSIFICATION	DESIRABLE ACREAGE	PURPOSE/FUNCTION	SITE CHARACTERISTICS	LEVEL OF SERVICE
Neighborhood and Pocket Parks				
Neighborhood Park	2-8 acres; slightly smaller size may be acceptable if adjacent to other parkland/natural areas or greenway parks, while also accommodating larger neighborhood park purposes/functions. Larger sites are acceptable and provide space for additional amenities, features, etc.	Provides nearby recreation and leisure opportunities within walking distance (0.5 mile) of residential areas. Should serve as a common area for neighbors of all ages to gather, socialize, and play. Typically would include a paved, multi-purpose area for court games/in-line skating or tennis courts, a multi-purpose play field with backstop, play equipment, ADA accessible trails, and shaded areas for picnics and sitting within a landscaped setting that is a blend of full irrigation for active uses and xeriscape. Features such as interpretive signs, water bodies, and areas of natural vegetation may also be included where appropriate. In most cases, programmed sports activities should be limited to practices. On-street parking is typically adequate, and separate parking areas are not necessary. School/park facilities include many of the same neighborhood standards, except that school/parks should include game fields (preferably 2), off-street parking that is situated for school and park purposes, and a playground designed for age groups not served by school playgrounds.	Locate adjacent to greenway, open space, elementary or junior high schools when possible. Centrally located within area served. Accessible via walkway, neighborhood or urban trail. Portions of the site should be relatively flat to accommodate fields and facility development. Size, slope, and soil conditions should be considered for optimum development. At least half of the park (2 sides) should be bordered by a street to provide easy public access, visual surveillance, and parking. Surrounding the site with the rear property lines of residential lots is strongly discouraged. Site should not be encumbered with constraints that preclude development of the site for desired uses.	2.0 acres/1,000 pop.
Pocket Park	2 acres or less	From a communitywide standpoint, serves a neighborhood where opportunities for a larger park site are unavailable. Typically considered to serve residents within 0.25 mile of the park. Due to limited size, may only contain a few of the elements typical of a standard Neighborhood Park. Not a substitute for adequately sized Neighborhood Park. Developments may include Pocket Parks as amenities for residents.	Same as those required for Neighborhood Park.	N/A

B. COMMUNITY PARK STANDARDS AND CLASSIFICATIONS

Community Parks should be adequately sized to accommodate a variety of diverse activities, including passive uses. Table 4.2 lists the specific standards for Community Parks. Community Parks are ideally 20-40+ acres in size, and often combine developed parkland for self-directed or programmed activities (festivals, performances, fitness

trails, sports fields and courts, picnic shelters, etc.) with natural areas or other interesting elements (water features, forests, or gardens). They should be centrally located to geographical locations and accessible to everyone in the service area. An off-street trail system should also be connected to Community Parks, allowing for access not reliant on automobiles. Sports complexes are a subset of Community Parks and are intended to provide opportunities for communitywide, self-directed, or programmed activities

in higher intensity use facilities. Many larger Community Parks include sports complexes as part of a park, but not all sports complexes include full Community Park facilities and amenities.

The 2008 Fruita Community Plan and this POST planning process establish a standard of 4.0 acres of neighborhood parkland per 1,000 residents. As illustrated in Chapter Two, Existing Levels of Service, this standard appears to be adequate to serve

the population of Fruita; however, the city is currently not meeting this standard. The current level of service of 2.07 acres per 1,000 people is significantly below the established standard of 4.0 acres per 1,000 people. Implementing the proposed Community Park projects described later in this chapter will help the city achieve and maintain a level of service of approximately 4.0 acres of community parkland per 1,000 people.

Table 4.2. Community Park Standards

CLASSIFICATION	DESIRABLE ACREAGE	PURPOSE/FUNCTION	SITE CHARACTERISTICS	LEVEL OF SERVICE
Community Parks				
Community Park	20-40+ acres	Provides opportunities for communitywide activities and facilities. Should maintain a balance between programmed sports facilities and other community activity areas, such as urban forests, gardens, historic features, water features, performance areas, festival spaces, plazas, etc., and have features that appeal to the broader community. Sports complexes are not complete Community Parks as they are very special purpose in nature. However, they contribute to the overall level of service for Community Parks. See definition below. Community Parks should generally be located to provide all residents access to a Community Park within 1-2 miles of their home. Community Parks may also serve as the local Neighborhood Park for residential areas within 0.5 mile.	Portions of the site should be relatively flat to accommodate fields and facility development. Special site features, such as streams, lakes, forests, rock outcrops, historic or archeological sites, and other interesting elements may add to the unique character of the park. Sites should be centrally located to geographical locations. Ideally, will have good access from a collector or arterial street. Direct access to primary community trail system desirable. Site should not be encumbered with constraints that preclude development of the site for desired uses.	4.0 acres/ 1,000 pop.
Sports Complex	Varies	Provides opportunities for communitywide programmed and self-directed sports, such as baseball, softball, soccer, tennis, roller hockey, and skateboarding in higher intensity use facilities. Limited areas for passive recreation uses and other features that appeal to the broader community. Strategically locate to fill service gaps for specialized sports facilities.	Majority of site should be relatively flat to accommodate sports fields. Locate away from residential areas to avoid traffic, light, and noise conflicts. Direct access to primary community trail system desirable.	May be part of Community Park level of service standard.
Special Purpose Parks				
Special Purpose Park	Varies	Serves a singular or much focused community need, such as a horticulture center, environmental education center, working farm, performance area, festival area, fairgrounds, urban plaza, equestrian center, civic park, and children's theme parks.	Varies	N/A. Part of Neighborhood or Community Park level of service if site contributes to these types of needs.

C. TRAIL STANDARDS, CLASSIFICATIONS, AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Trails are intended to provide a facility for pedestrian, bicyclists, and many other types of non motorized circulation. They should be separated from roadways in their own trail corridors, which provide more continuous movement without interruptions from driveways and other areas that vehicles utilize. The City of Fruita is focusing its efforts on implementing primary trails, which are the higher volume, wider trails that connect with the larger

Mesa County regional trail system, and utilizing the subdivision process to obtain good pedestrian connectivity through a neighborhood local trail system.

Primary multi-purpose trails often form the major trail spines throughout cities, counties, and neighboring communities. They accommodate all trail users, including walkers, joggers, wheelchair cruisers, in-line skaters, recreational and commute bicyclists, and equestrian users within the same trail corridor on separated trails. Table 4.3 lists specific standards for primary multi-purpose trails and local

Table 4.3. Trail Standards

	PRIMARY TRAILS	NEIGHBORHOOD TRAILS
Uses	Connects community destinations, parks, and open space Recreation destination for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized users Intended primarily for transportation and recreation	Internal connection within neighborhoods Connects neighborhoods to Primary Trail system Connects neighborhoods to adjacent commercial developments or other properties
Preferred Location	Transit, open space, greenway, or drainage corridors Are ideally detached	Roadway corridors Other existing corridors and easements where possible Developer provided corridors to link neighborhoods/cul-de-sacs, etc. Detached or attached sidewalks only as a last resort when no other options exist; standard attached sidewalks are not considered local trails
Preferred Corridor Width	30 feet minimum; 50 feet preferred	Per development code
Trail Width	12 feet ideal; 10 feet minimum Parallel 3-foot jogging path	8 feet minimum
Trail Surface	Asphalt (preferred) or concrete Crushed gravel jogging path	Concrete
Vertical Clearance	8 feet	8 feet
Horizontal Clearance	Minimum bridge width 10 feet Minimum 3 feet clear both sides	Minimum bridge width 8 feet Minimum 3 feet clear both sides
Lighting	At trailheads and access points At underpasses At crosswalks and intersections	Utilize adjacent roadway lighting where possible At intersections with other trails
Trail Waysides	Major waysides 1 per mile or as utilities are available Combine with trailheads where possible	N/A
Grade	5% max.	5% max. or per adjacent roadway
Trailheads	At major access points Use parks and open space parking areas and facilities where possible Restroom, shaded seating, and picnic areas Regulatory, informational, and entry signs Drinking fountain where feasible	N/A

trails. The preferable location of primary multi-purpose trails should be along drainage ways, utility easements, or other linear features to connect parks, open space areas, recreation facilities, and major destination nodes. As much as is possible, trails should be located beside existing drainages, and canal and ditch easements. Trails that must be located adjacent to roadways should incorporate a 30-foot easement where feasible and appropriate. A 3-foot wide, soft surface shoulder on one side of the trail should be provided for joggers and walkers who prefer a softer surface. Figure 4.3 provides a cross-section illustration of what a typical primary multi-purpose trail might look like.

As these trails form key components of an interconnected regional trail system that provides an alternative mode of transportation, funding can often be acquired through regional, state, and federal agencies. Coordination with adjacent governmental entities and land management agencies is critical to ensure trail connectivity.

Trail corridor width greatly influences the user experience, especially when enclosed on both sides by development. Ideally, the trail corridor for trails should be a minimum of 50 feet in width, built on existing power line easements, railroad or abandoned rights-of-way, gas pipeline corridors, and floodplains to create wider trail corridors. It should include a main bi-directional trail with a width of 10 feet at a minimum. A separate but parallel soft-surface trail (approximately 3 feet wide) should be provided where equestrian use is anticipated to separate equestrian users from bicyclists. The distance between these trail types can vary, but a minimum of 6 feet from tread to tread should be provided. A far line of sight and turning radius is necessary for commuter speeds. Center lane striping should be provided to delineate direction of travel on paved trails that are anticipated to accommodate high volumes of use.

The primary trail should be considered as a main transportation feature just like any road system, and pedestrian underpasses should be incorporated

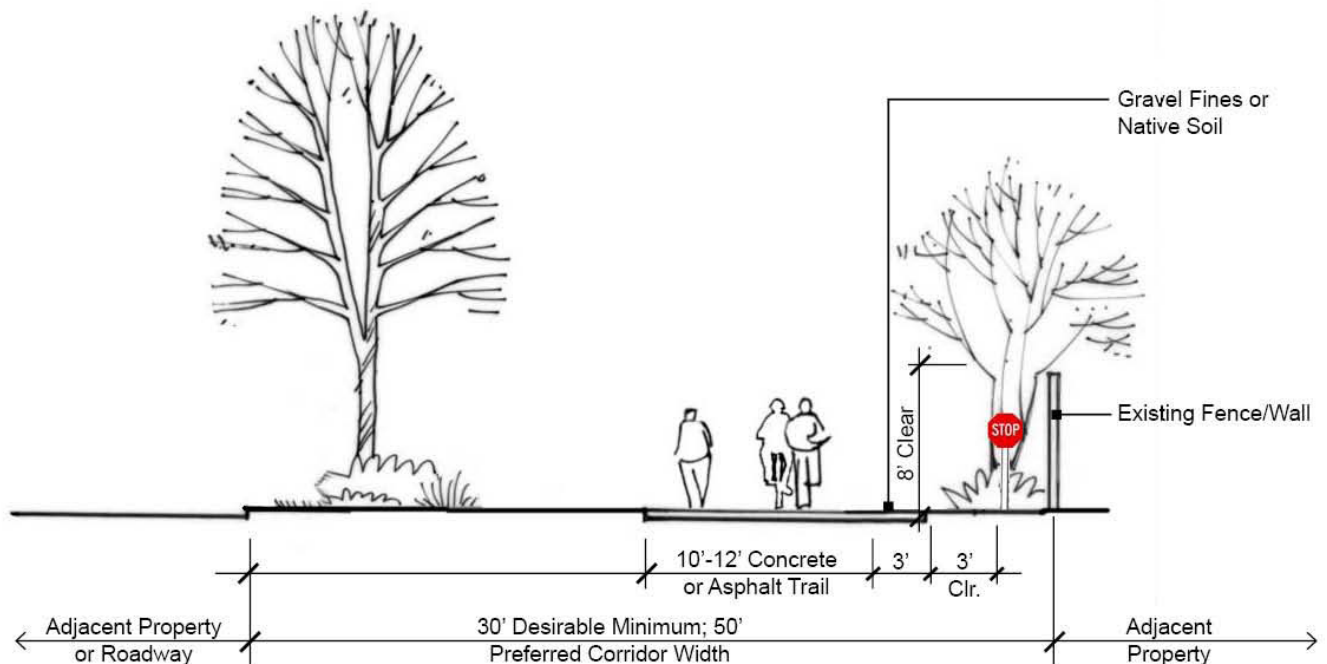


FIGURE 4.3. CROSS-SECTION OF TYPICAL PRIMARY TRAIL

into any planned roadway or bridge improvements. Strong connections to community destination points encourage non-vehicular travel to events, and trailheads should be conveniently located at activity centers. Trailheads should also have adequate parking and may contain certain facilities, such as information kiosks, drinking water, and restrooms. Intersections and other areas where users must stop or dismount should be minimized. Below-grade crossings with wide openings should be used as much as possible, especially at arterial streets, to minimize pedestrian-vehicle conflicts. Benches, overlooks, and interpretive areas at activity centers and other strategic locations should be provided throughout the corridor. Waysides, which provide resting points at approximate 1-mile intervals, should be provided and include seating, special paving, landscaping, lighting, trash receptacles, interpretive signage and, where feasible, a drinking fountain.

Local neighborhood trails are not shown on the Master Plan because they are to be provided as part of the subdivision process and their location is dependent upon the design and character of a development. Neighborhood trails are lower volume,

narrower trails that provide connectivity within residential or commercial developments, or parks and open space. These paved, undivided trails should be provided by the project developer and be an integral part of the circulation and open space system of the development. Neighborhood trails should be included in all developments where needed to provide direct access to destinations, avoiding circuitous routes that can result from disconnected road patterns. These connections are considered part of the overall transportation system in the community and, given proper design and appropriate connectivity, could receive trail impact fee credit but in essence should be treated in a similar manner as road rights-of-way. These paths should be a minimum of 8 feet wide, with paved concrete. Figure 4.4 provides a cross-section illustration of what a typical local trail might look like.

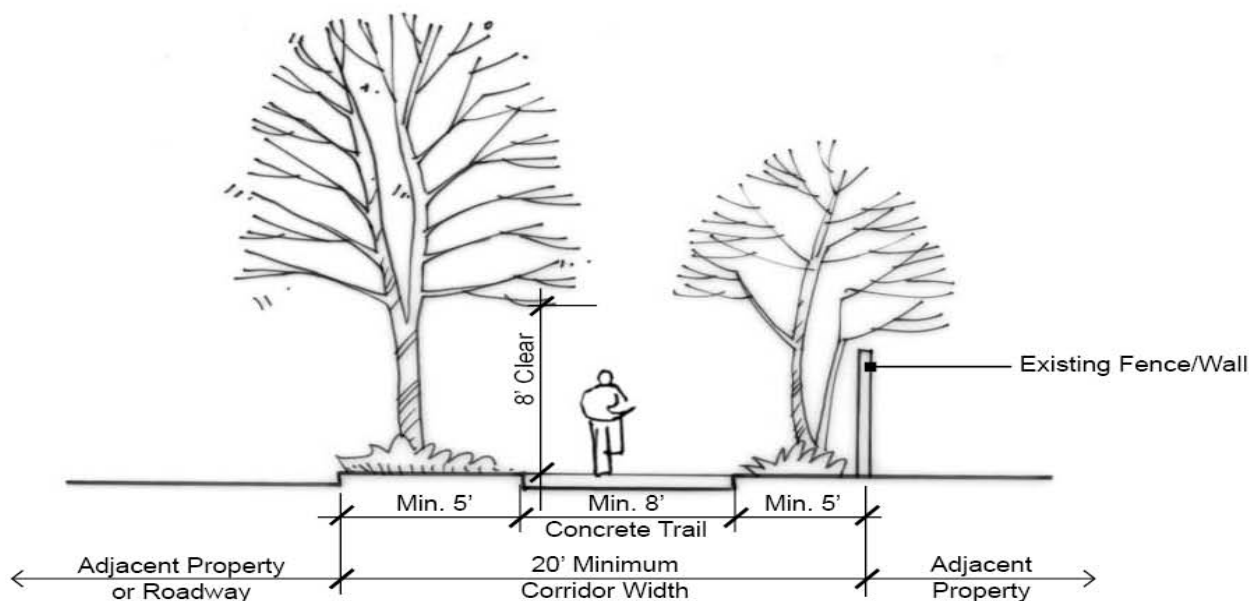


FIGURE 4.4. CROSS-SECTION OF TYPICAL LOCAL TRAIL

D. OPEN SPACE STANDARDS AND CLASSIFICATIONS

Table 4.4 lists classifications and characteristics of two different types of open space.

Regional open spaces are typically 100 acres or greater in size and protect large areas containing natural resource values of communitywide significance. Regional open spaces also provide opportunities for nature-oriented outdoor recreation. They typically place an emphasis on achieving an appropriate balance between resource protection and public use. As regional open space never has identical characteristics in two locations, there are no set standards for level of service.

and do not specifically serve park functions, there is no set level of service.

Fruita also utilizes other methods to help preserve open space in and around the community, such as transfer of development rights, bonus densities, acquisitions, right to farm, regional cooperation, and a community separator. These were all defined in the 2008 Fruita Community Plan and are critical tools for the community to use in realizing the green framework planned for the future. As each of these tools is used when appropriate and when land is available, there are no formal standards, classifications, or level of service.

Table 4.4. Open Space Standards and Classifications

CLASSIFICATION	DESIRABLE ACREAGE	PURPOSE/FUNCTION	SITE CHARACTERISTICS	LEVEL OF SERVICE
Regional Open Space/Park				
Regional Open Space/Park	100 acres or greater	Protects large areas with natural resource values of communitywide significance. Provides opportunities for nature-oriented outdoor recreation.	Emphasis on achieving an appropriate balance between resource protection and public use.	No LOS standard
Natural Area/Natural Corridor				
Natural Area/Natural Corridor	Varies, but typically 8 acres or greater	Protects natural values on smaller parcels. Often located along stream corridors. Provides opportunities for nature-oriented, outdoor recreation, which may include multi-purpose trails.	Emphasis on resource protection or preservation with some public access provided. Limited site area can be dedicated to leisure and nature-oriented recreation uses, such as roads, parking areas, trails, environmental education/interpretive areas, picnic sites, and visitor support facilities.	No LOS standard

Natural areas and corridors are other types of open space, typically on a somewhat smaller scale. There are no set site characteristics of natural areas and corridors; however, limited areas of the site can be dedicated to leisure and outdoor-oriented recreation uses and contain recreational amenities such as trails, benches, picnic sites, and environmental interpretation and education areas. As natural areas and corridors are usually provided when available

4.2 TRAILS PROJECTS

As described in previous chapters, the community would like to develop the Riverfront Trail, complete the trails along Little Salt Wash and Big Salt Wash, and also desires to continue to develop an extensive multi-purpose trail system throughout the community. Ideally, this should be addressed through both a network of off-street trails as well as on-street bike lanes and street crossing enhancements, which

INSERT MAP 4, MASTER PLAN

BACK OF MAP 4

INSERT MAP 5, REGIONAL TRAILS VISION

BACK OF MAP 5

INSERT MAP 6A, RIVERFRONT TRAIL PLAN

BACK OF MAP 6A

INSERT MAP 6B, RIVERFRONT TRAIL PLAN

BACK OF MAP 6B

allow people to walk and bicycle throughout the community. This master plan addresses the off-street trail system. Future on-street bike routes and pedestrian connections should be addressed through a more thorough communitywide plan that is integrated with the overall transportation plan for the city, and which includes specific design standards for on-street bike lanes and pedestrian walks.

The Riverfront Trail is considered a regional trail connecting communities and destinations together from one end of the Grand Valley to the other. The primary trail system proposed includes the Riverfront Trail through Fruita, but also provides for trail connections to the primary trail system within Fruita. The primary Trail system is then intended to link to local neighborhood trails within developments. This provides for a layered trail system and ultimately allows for people to access the Riverfront Trail via the primary and neighborhood trail systems. Meaning a family could access a trail from their neighborhood and travel to Palisade is desired.



Las Colonias Park

It would also allow visitors to the area to travel from the Colorado River State Park or a local hotel to various destinations, such as the Kokopelli mountain bike area.

Many of the proposed trails are adjacent to canals, ditches, and along utility easements owned and maintained by other area agencies. In the event trails are placed adjacent to these canals, ditches, and other utilities, it is the city's intention that maintenance of the trails will fall under the city's domain. The city fully recognizes the special purpose that utilities occupy and will work towards a coordinated design that allows utilities providers the ability to offer their services with minimal or no interruption.

Map 4: Master Plan, Map 5: Regional Trails Vision, and Maps 6a and 6b: Riverfront Trail Plan show the location of new proposed off-street trail connections. The following is a description of these proposed trail projects.

A. PRIMARY MULTI-PURPOSE TRAILS

Riverfront Trail

This is a primary multi-purpose trail that is proposed to run adjacent to the Colorado River through the City of Fruita, connecting to Loma and the Kokopelli Trailhead to the west and connecting to Grand Junction to the east. This concept has been evolving over the years, with active participation by the Colorado Riverfront Commission, Mesa County, and Colorado State Parks, among others. An illustrative Fruita-Kokopelli Greenway Link Colorado River Management Plan was created in 1996. The plan shows suggested alternative routes for a riverfront trail on either side of the river. Mesa County has also created a map with a general proposed alignment on the north side of the river.

The proposed alignment in this POST plan was created in consultation with the POST Master Plan Technical Advisory Committee and Steering Committee. The proposed alignment incorporates ongoing efforts to secure the right-of-way for the trail corridor. Colorado State Parks has been diligently working to acquire both easements and properties along the river that would allow for eventual

construction of the trail. Aerial photography and land use maps were also referenced to assess specific resources, such as proximity to existing and proposed recreational resources (i.e., parks) as well as connections to existing and proposed trail alignments. Generally, the alignment is intended to minimize the number of road and river crossings and maximize the potential use of other crossings, such as existing culverts, where necessary.

The Riverfront Trail corridor is proposed to be at least 150 feet in width where possible. In areas where urban development is adjacent to the corridor, the trail may run adjacent to this development, providing recreational users convenient access to services and amenities.

To complete the regional trail along the north side of the Colorado River through the Fruita Growth Management Area requires approximately 6 miles of trail construction, to 20 Road to the east and to 14 Road to the west.

The crossing of the Riverfront Trail on the north side of the Colorado River at SH340 requires future evaluation. Ideally, the trail would cross under the road. However, it may be more feasible to install an at-grade crossing with flashers to alert motorists of the trail crossing. This approach has been successful in many other locations across state highways throughout Colorado, including SH257 in Windsor and in downtowns such as Longmont and Boulder.

Fruita Riverfront Recreation Area Trail Loops

The opportunity exists to create a unique Riverfront Recreation Area that is linked by a trail system. The amenities that would be connected include the proposed Riverfront Park, Old Fruita Bridge, Dinosaur Hill, Kingsview and Snooks Bottom Open Space, James M. Robb Colorado River State Park, and Red Cliffs Neighborhood Park. This loop would ultimately include two new river crossings:



Old Fruita Bridge, and a new pedestrian bridge from Snooks Bottom to the state park. It would also include improvements to the existing SH340 bridge to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists, and a grade-separated crossing under SH340 on the south side of the river, either in a new underpass or under the existing bridge. The trail on the south side of the Colorado River would be approximately 1 mile in length, which when combined with the Riverfront Trail segments, would provide 1 or 2-mile trail loops to a variety of recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. This trail loop and river crossings would also provide links to existing BLM hiking trails and the Dugway Trail to Colorado National Monument. A hiking trail could also be provided along the utilities easement that runs from the Old Fruita Bridge area, around Dinosaur Hill to SH340, and connecting to the Dugway Trail.

Construction of the new pedestrian bridge between the state park and Snooks Bottom would require the greatest amount of coordination between several governmental agencies, and would likely be the highest cost. A similar bridge exists in Grand Junction, south of downtown, at the future Las Colonias Park site. The benefits of placing a crossing at this location are numerous. This crossing would provide a pleasant trail experience for users, free of traffic and noise. It would provide a direct connection between the state park and Snooks Bottom, which also allows for easy access to the McInnis Canyon

NCA trail system. Additionally, it offers a logical river crossing for users of the proposed Big and Little Salt Wash Trails, coming from central Fruita on the north side of I-70.

A trail on the historical Old Fruita Bridge would require special design consideration and renovation of the bridge itself. The recommendations also include adding a trail across the SH340 bridge to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians who wish to go directly south from the Welcome Center along the highway right-of-way. Construction of this would require coordination with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). CDOT should also consider widening shoulders on SH340 south of the bridge to Colorado National Monument, for road bicyclists and race events. Combined, these three river crossings and trails would create a comprehensive trail system in the community, providing loops for a diversity of users and a wide range of experiences.

Little Salt Wash Trail

Segments of trail exist along Little Salt Wash, north of Ottley Avenue between 17 Road (Coulson) and 18½ Road (Freemont), and through Little Salt Wash Park. These trail segments should be connected to complete the system and extended through the community, from the Grand Valley Canal Trail to the Colorado Riverfront Trail. Near the Fruita Community Center, the trail may need to be accommodated by a widened sidewalk along Coulson. Road crossings should be clearly delineated, with special paving at crosswalks and warning flashers with signs. A crossing of I-70 along Little Salt Wash would be necessary as well. Drainage culverts exist under US6/50, the railroad, and I-70, which can accommodate the trail connection to the Colorado River. Extension of the Little Salt Wash to the north to connect to BLM lands should be coordinated with Mesa County. A pedestrian bridge is also needed across Little Salt Wash from the park to the exist-

ing portion of the Little Salt Wash trail. This would provide access to the park for the neighborhoods to the north, which are currently underserved.

Big Salt Wash Trail

A segment of the Big Salt Wash Trail has already been constructed, from a trailhead near US6/50 on Ottley Avenue to Celestite Drive. A connection from this trailhead south to the Riverfront Trail should be constructed. The trail should also be constructed north along Big Salt Wash to a point where it would connect with a proposed trail along the Grand Valley Canal near 17½ Road, north of L Road. A trail could also eventually be extended north along the wash with the intent of connecting to the North Fruita Desert BLM lands, a popular mountain biking destination. Extension of the trail past the Grand Valley Canal should be coordinated with Mesa County, as it would be outside the city's urban growth area. The most feasible connection at this time to the BLM lands may be via widened shoulders on the county roads to the north.

Ranchman's Ditch Canal Trail

This canal runs diagonally southeast through Fruita, from Little Salt Wash to Adobe Creek and further east to Grand Junction. The canal corridor provides an opportunity for a trail that would connect to the 8/9 school, high school, and proposed trail along Adobe Creek. This trail would be approximately 2.75 miles in length along the north side of the canal. Maintenance requirements and water delivery issues associated with canal operations must not be negatively affected, and safety features installed if required. Although a significant capital expense, there should be consideration of piping Ranchman's Ditch to create an effective, safe, corridor.

Many other communities in Colorado have successfully partnered with irrigation companies to provide trails nearby irrigation canals in a safe and mutu-

ally beneficial manner. Currently, the City of Fruita requires a 50-foot buffer from all canals for new development.

Grand Valley Canal Trail

This canal runs across the northern portion of Fruita, from Big Salt Wash, through Little Salt Wash to Adobe Creek. The corridor around to this canal provides a great opportunity for a 4-mile trail that would connect to a proposed Neighborhood Park and the proposed trail along Adobe Creek. Maintenance requirements associated with canal operations must be maintained, and safety features installed if required. Many other communities in Colorado have successfully partnered with irrigation companies to provide trails along irrigation canals in a safe and mutually beneficial manner. Currently, the City of Fruita requires a 50-foot buffer from all canals for new development.

High School to Riverfront Trail

An overpass across I-70 near the high school is a high priority for the community. This bridge would allow students on the south side of I-70 to have direct access to the schools, as well as allow for a recreational trail connection to the Colorado River for residents in the northeastern portion of the community. A large drainage channel exists south of the frontage road to the river, providing a logical route for this trail. Design and construction of the I-70 pedestrian overpass should include provisions for bicyclists, and would require detailed design studies for its placement. Fruita will need to coordinate with CDOT for design, construction, maintenance, and funding for this bridge. An example of a similar bridge is located in Colorado Springs, across I-25 near the downtown.

I-70 South Frontage Road Trail

This 2.75-mile trail will start at the Welcome Center and travel east along the south I-70 Frontage Road to the Riverfront Trail near 19½ Road. The trail will be located in the right-of-way, detached from and parallel to the south side of the frontage road. The trail will provide access to Heritage Park and the proposed I-70 pedestrian bridge, and will create opportunities for trail loops of various lengths in the southern portion of Fruita.

Adobe Creek Trail

This 2.5-mile trail is proposed to follow Adobe Creek, a major drainage in the eastern planning area of Fruita. Near-term trail development would start upstream at the Grand Valley Canal, follow Adobe Creek southwest, pass under US6/50, the railroad and I-70, and join the Riverfront Trail near Adobe Creek Golf Course. It is recommended that Mesa County consider extending this trail from the Grand Valley Canal further to the northeast (beyond the Fruita planning area) to provide additional trail opportunities for Mesa County residents and visitors to the region.

Additional primary trail links are identified on Map 4: Master Plan. Additionally, the city owns approximately 12 acres of land around the Old Fruita Water Tank, just south of SH340 and just northwest of the entrance to the Colorado National Monument. This property may be useful as a trailhead to the Fruita Dugway Trail or other trails in the area.

B. OTHER TRAILS

Horsethief Road to Kokopelli Trail

A county road exists from the entrance to Snooks Bottom Open Space, approximately 5 miles to the west where it ends across the river from the Loma boat launch. This road could be used as an unpaved trail because vehicular traffic is very low. To connect to the Kokopelli Trail, a bridge would need to be constructed across the Colorado River at its west end.

Railroad Commuter Trail

An abandoned county road runs between the railroad and I-70 from the CoOp Grain Elevator to 20 Road. This 2.5-mile old road bed can be regraded and paved fairly easily for use as a commuter or higher speed recreational trail; however, some minor bridges and culvert crossings may be required. It would provide faster access for bicyclists towards Grand Junction than the Riverfront Trail, and could be extended by Mesa County beyond 20 Road.

4.3 PARK PROJECTS

Chapter Two outlines Fruita's current deficit in community parkland, as well as areas of the city that do not have walkable access to Neighborhood Parks for existing residents. Also, to meet the needs of a population of approximately 25,735 (as projected in 2025), a total of 33 acres of neighborhood parkland and 81 acres of community parkland will need to be developed.

To meet the needs of existing and future residents, several proactive steps will need to be taken by the city. These actions include developing an existing park site (Red Cliff), acquiring and developing 6 new Neighborhood Parks, completing development of existing parks (such as Little Salt Wash), providing improvements to existing parks, and developing 2 larger community-scaled parks.

A. IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING PARKS

Most of the parks in Fruita are in good condition; however, some may need minor improvements to modernize or upgrade them. Following is a description of suggested park improvements that are more extensive than minor landscaping, adding a few site furnishings, and basic facility upgrades and repair.

Little Salt Wash Park

The first phase of this park was recently constructed, and this plan recommends that the park be completed according to its approved master plan. The unfinished elements include:

- Pedestrian pavements, restrooms, concessions, picnic shelter, and benches in the core area
- Parking lot lighting
- Maintenance facility
- Scoreboards
- Pedestrian bridge across Little Salt Wash



Little Salt Wash Park

Heritage Park

The current configuration of Heritage Park does not provide an ideal park experience and presents some safety and vehicular circulation concerns. The City of Fruita is making some upgrades and redesigning the park's layout to improve the parking area. Due to the park's vicinity to I-70, there are also some visual and acoustic issues that affect the overall park experience. The addition of other park amenities would also improve its overall appeal, such as a picnic shelter, skate elements, sitting areas, and trail-head amenities for bicyclists and pedestrians who wish to use the proposed I-70 South Frontage Road Trail. Providing tree masses in select locations would help buffer the visual intrusions of fast-moving vehicles on I-70, and a low berm should be considered along the road between the proposed trail and the travel lanes. This berm should not be too tall in order to allow for visibility into the park. CDOT should be contacted to determine the feasibility of planting trees in the area between the frontage road and the interstate highway.

Orr Park

The city is in the process of constructing a community center that will occupy a large portion of the current Orr Park. However, the existing skate park and a small area of passive space remain. The current skate park appears outdated; many of the existing structures are not challenging and diverse compared to what is now available. It is recommended that a new skate park, appropriately sized for a city the size of Fruita, be designed and constructed, generally in the same location. A new facility does not necessarily need to be large or complex, but should include a diversity of skate elements. A site-specific design for the skate park should be completed to determine the most suitable type of skate elements and amenities that are appropriate for Fruita skaters.



Heritage Park

Circle Park

Circle Park is one of the most visible public spaces in Fruita because of its location in the center of a large roundabout in downtown. Access and usability of this park would be enhanced by the installation of crosswalks with special paving, landscaped islands that direct traffic, and the conversion of excessive pavement in the surrounding roadway to outdoor public spaces.

B. COMMUNITY PARKS

The needs assessment revealed that the City of Fruita is behind in the development of community parkland. Based on the current population of 10,947 and a parkland standard of 4 acres per 1,000 population, the city needs an additional 21 acres today. In the year 2025 when the population reaches approximately 25,735, the city will need 60 acres more, for a total of 81 acres. This equates to 2 larger or 3 smaller Community Parks in this time frame. The city owns 2 Community Park sites: Etchart Park, a 27-acre parcel west of town at the southeast corner of 16 and L, and approximately 85 acres of land on the wastewater treatment site further west and close to the Colorado River. However, approximately only 55 acres of this site will be available for future park use. Map 4 shows the locations of these sites, as well as a proposed Riverfront Park near the Old Fruita Bridge. Each is described below.

Etchart Park

The City of Fruita and Mesa County School District #51 own a parcel of land at the corner of 16 and L Roads. This parcel has been earmarked as a site for both a future school and future parkland. The total acreage dedicated for municipal use is 27 acres.

Based on the existing and projected community parkland deficits and needs (as described in Chapter Two), as well as future anticipated residential growth patterns, development of this site as a Community Park is advised.

This 27-acre site is large enough to accommodate a diverse array of programmed and self-directed recreational activities. Overall, the site has gentle topography, making it suitable for sports fields as well as many other recreational amenities. The park should not be developed solely as a sports complex, but should include large areas for unstructured play. It is recommended that this park include a minimum of 2 ballfields in addition to multi-use fields, which could be programmed for games as well as practice. The park should also accommodate other recreational amenities, including an outdoor performance area, accommodations for larger festivals, multi-use hard surface court, a large multi-age playground, group picnic shelters, outdoor climbing wall, and a spray pad. The city should also consider the inclusion of other recreational amenities, such as skate features. A primary multi-purpose trail should go through this park as described in previous sections.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Site

The City of Fruita owns a large tract of land along the Colorado River, approximately 1 mile west of the city. This site will be home to the future wastewater treatment facility the city will eventually construct. However, there is a large portion of the site that will remain undeveloped (approximately 55 acres). This site is ideally suited for construction of a future sports complex, which is a specialized Community

Park with a sports focus. The site is linear, with the eastern 1/2 of the site being the widest and most suitable for sports field development, ranging in width from 500' to 750' based on GIS parcel data. From a natural resource perspective, the site has already been highly disturbed, so new construction here would have less impact to natural systems than other locations with natural landscapes and ecosystems. It is also in an industrial oriented locale, so the presence of the necessary lighting for sports fields will not create visual disturbance issues to residential areas. The site is also located adjacent to the interstate, a benefit to hosting large sporting events, such as softball tournaments. A separate detailed master plan process should be conducted to determine the specific sports amenities and facilities that should be included in this park, and coordinated with the master plan for the park at 16 and L to determine the appropriate distribution of sports fields.

Riverfront Park

This POST plan recommends the establishment of a 20- to 40-acre Community Park situated along the Colorado River, ideally near the Old Fruita Bridge. Currently, there is no public land dedicated for this park and the land would have to be acquired. This park would be an important component of the overall riverfront open space, trails, and park system in this area, and could contain community festival areas, an amphitheater, boat put-ins/take-outs, fishing areas, picnic and playground areas, turf grass for various field sports, an environmental education center, and other public uses that are compatible with the environment of the Colorado River. Lighted sports facilities are not recommended for this location. Accessing this park by vehicle would require extending 17½ Road south. Trail users could access the park via proposed trails: the Riverfront Trail, and the trail connection on the south side of the Colorado River

that will connect the Riverfront Trail to Kingsview Open Space over the Historical Bridge.

It is recommended that the city encourage the development of a small commercial area, as depicted in figure ES 3 of the Community Plan (pg. 4-37) near this park, which would ideally include a restaurant and other retail services that support the needs of park and river users. This mix of uses would create activity year-round and add to the vitality of the park.

C. NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Map 4 shows where existing public land should be developed as a Neighborhood Park, as well as the conceptual locations of new Neighborhood Parks. The locations of the new parks are not specific and can be moved somewhat from where they are shown. However, their distribution correlates to existing underserved areas and planned future residential areas as indicated in the 2008 Community Plan. Where feasible, Neighborhood Parks should be located next to an activity center or elementary school. Pocket Parks, which are very small Neighborhood Parks of ½ to 2 acres, are desirable and should be included in neighborhood development plans, but they are not the city's responsibility to develop or maintain. The city needs adequately sized Neighborhood Parks to provide practice areas for youth sports groups, picnic areas, and other amenities described in the Neighborhood Park Standards in Chapter Two.

Red Cliffs Park

The City of Fruita currently owns a 2.4-acre parcel of land near Red Cliffs Road. This parcel is tentatively reserved for future use as a public park. Given the need for an additional Neighborhood Park in this area of the city, it is recommended that the city pursue acquisition of an additional 2.5 to 5 acres of adjacent vacant property. This would bring the total park site size to approximately 5 to 8 acres, which

would allow for development of the site as a full-scale Neighborhood Park with amenities, including a multi-use play field, playground, picnic shelter, restrooms, multi-use concrete court, and a small off-street parking lot. Inclusion of other unique park features could also be considered, such as skate elements or a spray pad.

SH6/50 and 19 Road Area

The Framework Plan from the 2008 Community Plan indicates that a major center of future mixed-use development will occur near SH6/50 and 19 Road. It is anticipated that significant residential development will occur in this location as part of this overall development. This is also the general location of a proposed Regional Center in the Framework Plan. As such, the city considers acquisition of a 5 to 8-acre parcel that could be reserved for future Neighborhood Park development. Any park provided should contain all typical neighborhood amenities including, but not limited to, a playground, picnic shelter, optional restroom, shade, multi-use hard court surface, and a multi-purpose playfield.

Rimrock Elementary Area

Per the Framework Plan from the 2008 Community Plan, it is anticipated that a significant residential growth area will occur west of Fremont Street. An optimal location for a needed future Neighborhood Park would be adjacent to or near Rimrock Elementary School. The city should pursue acquisition of an adequately sized parcel (ideally 5 to 8 acres) in this vicinity for the development of a needed future Neighborhood Park. This park should contain all typical Neighborhood Park amenities, including, but not limited to, a playground, picnic shelter, optional restroom, shade, multi-purpose hard court surface, and a multi-purpose playfield.

North Grand Valley Canal Area

The Framework Plan from the 2008 Community Plan indicates that future mixed-use development, including significant residential development, will occur along 19 Road north to approximately the area of the Grand Valley Canal. Based on future population projections and the ideal distribution of Neighborhood Parks at approximately 1 per every 0.5 mile, there will be a need for another future Neighborhood Park in this vicinity. This is also the general location of a proposed neighborhood center in the Framework Plan. The city should pursue acquisition of an adequately sized parcel (ideally 5 to 8 acres) along the Grand Valley Canal between 18½ Road and 19 Road for the development of a needed future Neighborhood Park. This location is well situated in that it would be adjacent to a proposed primary multi-purpose trail that would connect to the larger trail system within Fruita. This park should contain all typical Neighborhood Park amenities, including, but not limited to, a playground, picnic shelter, optional restroom, shade, multi-purpose hard court surface, and a multi-purpose playfield.

Maple Street and L Road Area

Another area of projected future mixed-use development, including significant residential development, is the northwest portion of Fruita. Based on population projections and the current distribution of neighborhood parkland, an additional Neighborhood Park will be needed in north-central Fruita. This is also the general location of a proposed Neighborhood Center in the Framework Plan. It is recommended that the city pursue acquisition of a parcel of land adjacent to the Grand Valley Canal near Maple Street and L Road. This location is well situated in that it would be adjacent to a proposed primary multi-purpose trail that would connect to the larger trail system within Fruita. This park should contain all typical neighborhood park amenities including, but not limited to, a playground,

picnic shelter, optional restroom, shade, multi-purpose hard court surface, and a multi-purpose playfield.

Northwest Fruita (15 Road, North of L Road)

Based on the Framework Plan, it is anticipated that there will be a significant new residential development in northwest Fruita in the general vicinity of 15 Road, north of L Road. Population projections and the desired distribution of Neighborhood Parks, based on the classifications described in Chapter Two, suggest that two such Neighborhood Parks will be needed to accommodate future residents in this area. As such, the city should proactively pursue acquisition of parcels of land suitable for future Neighborhood Park development, ideally 5 to 8 acres each. Upon development, these parks should contain all typical neighborhood amenities, including, but not limited, to a playground, picnic shelter, optional restroom, shade, multi-purpose hard court surface, and a multi-purpose playfield.



4.4 OPEN SPACE

The city owns several open space properties, which are described in previous sections of this plan. The following lists recommendations for improvements to selected existing open space properties as well as suggestions for additional land protection or acquisitions.

Kingsview Open Space

Kingsview Open Space is a 26-acre parcel of undeveloped open space owned by the city. It lies adjacent to the south bank of the Colorado River, west of SH340, and is also in close proximity to Snooks Bottom Open Space. Currently, Kingsview is not accessible to vehicles, but pedestrians are allowed access through a narrow opening near the gate. The site's proximity to the Colorado River and the presence of large trees, shrubs, and natural habitat suggest it should not be developed to accommodate active sports facilities, but rather in a manner that is more consistent with its surroundings. Kingsview makes an ideal location for an 18-hole disc golf course, which is needed in the City of Fruita. A disc golf course could be developed in a low cost manner with little disturbance to existing vegetation, creating a challenging and distinctly unique recreational experience. Kingsview Open Space is also a great location for a bicycle terrain park, where mountain bikers of all experience levels can hone their skills. Other recommendations for this property include an



established trailhead for the proposed primary off-street trail that would traverse through the property and connect with the existing trail in Snooks Bottom. Parking and access for Kingsview Open Space is intended to be provided through Snooks Bottom Open Space. Typical trailhead amenities should also be included, such as restrooms, bike parking, benches, picnic tables, and regulatory signage. Tamarisk has invaded the site, and an aggressive program to eliminate the noxious plant will be necessary to realize the full potential of the site.

Mountain Parks

The City of Fruita is fortunate to own a few properties associated with their water supply reservoirs located in the Grand Mesa National Forest, approximately 13 miles south of Fruita. These properties provide a resource unique to Fruita, similar to the mountain park systems of other communities, such as Denver and Boulder. They are an important component and provide a unique recreational experience to the overall park and recreation system within the community. Representatives of the USFS have expressed a desire to continue the close cooperation they have maintained with the city, and would support the city if it decided to pursue further development of these properties for use as an "exurban" park experience for its residents. Ideas for further development of these properties have included such amenities as added camping and picnicking,

tie-ins to surrounding mountain biking and hiking trails, a high ropes learning course, or an outdoor environmental learning center. The City of Fruita should conduct a full inventory of all amenities and resources located on these properties. They should also conduct a site-specific needs analysis and subsequent design process to determine precisely what should be provided and how these lands should be programmed and managed.

Open Space Corridors

Chapter Two suggests minimum corridor widths for trails. In addition to these corridors, it is recommended that the city acquire additional open space along the major drainages and potentially along the canals, to protect riparian areas and create more functional wildlife habitat corridors. Ideally, the open space corridor along Adobe Creek would be 150 feet in width, which would be wide enough for a trail and riparian habitat. Occasionally, areas that are wider than 150 feet should be provided to allow for a less linear trail experience and more variety.

It is recommended that the 100-year floodplain along Big Salt Wash be preserved as open space to protect natural ecosystems and provide adequate space for a meaningful open space experience. The appropriate minimum width of open space corridors associated with other drainages should be determined during the master planning process for adjacent lands, but at a minimum, these corridors should be 30 feet wide.

Colorado River Area Open Space

Lands along the Colorado River with sensitive wildlife habitat should be protected through development setbacks, conservation easements, purchase, or other means.



Snooks Bottom Open Space



Snooks Bottom Open Space



Fruita Loops Bike race



05 IMPLEMENTATION



This chapter lists prioritization considerations, costs, and implementation actions that will help achieve the vision of the Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan.

5.1 PROJECT PRIORITIZATION CONSIDERATIONS

Since future park, recreation, open space, and trail projects will compete for funding, it is helpful to define criteria that can guide the identification of highest priority actions. Chapter Four identified specific projects based on the outcome of the inventory and needs assessment process, and the community survey revealed that citizens of Fruita have interests and needs ranging from neighborhood to community scale. Large, high profile projects that affect a large number of people and contribute to current goals of redevelopment may generate great public support, but should be carefully balanced with projects that provide connections and park amenities to currently underserved residents. Ongoing upgrades to existing facilities and the addition of smaller scale amenities to enhance existing parks should also be considered.

This plan is intended to be flexible and fluid, so that as opportunities for land acquisition or easements and park development become available, the city can immediately capitalize on these opportunities without being committed to a predetermined project that was identified in an action plan.

Through the public process and workshops with the Steering Committee, it is clear that the city's highest priorities involve finishing park projects that have already been started (e.g., Little Salt Wash,

Orr Park, and Heritage Park), developing Red Cliffs Park, completing the Riverfront Trail, and filling in the gaps between existing trail segments to improve connectivity of the trail system through the city. In addition to these projects, there are some relatively low cost projects the city can do to enhance recreational opportunities in Fruita in the near term, such as construct a disc golf course and bike challenge course in Kingsview Open Space.

The following list presents criteria that should be carefully considered when attempting to prioritize projects. There should not be a numeric weighting of these criteria, as the importance of each varies with each situation, available funding, need, and opportunity. Projects that address immediate issues of public health and safety should certainly take precedence over other choices.

HEALTH, SAFETY, WELFARE, AND CODE COMPLIANCE

- Project involves upgrades to bring park in compliance with codes, and ensure the health, safety, and welfare of park users.

EASE OF IMPLEMENTATION

- Project capitalizes on opportunities to be easily implemented (i.e., low cost with large gains, ready implementers, available property, etc.).

ECONOMICS

- Project provides and promotes economic development in the community.

COMMUNITY SIGNIFICANCE

- Project provides benefit to a large number of people within the community.
- Project contributes to larger community vision and goals.
- Project provides benefits to visitors to Fruita.

COMMUNITY BALANCE

- Project contributes to the balance of needs across the community (i.e., Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks, trails, open space, underserved neighborhoods).

PARTNERSHIPS FOR FUNDING

- Project leverages partnerships for funding (i.e., Mesa County, federal partners, irrigation companies, private industry, adjacent cities, nonprofits, etc.).

SATISFIES URGENT NEED

- Project satisfies urgent park and recreation needs within the community.
- Project serves underserved neighborhoods.
- Project addresses recreation facility/amenity shortages.

COMPLETES PHASING OF CURRENT PROJECTS

- Project completes ongoing phases of current projects that are yet to be completed.

Although there are myriad large-scale projects that could be addressed, the POST Steering Committee has expressed a need and desire to see that a few select projects be addressed first. The greatest of these is completion of the Colorado Riverfront Trail, and completion of other key trail segments, such as along Little Salt Wash and Ranchman's Ditch. Completion of already existing park projects was also identified as a high priority for the community. These include completing the phasing of Little Salt Wash Park and completing the improvements that

have begun at Heritage Park. Another large-scale project that was identified as important to the community is development of Kingsview Open Space with amenities such as a bicycle challenge course and an 18-hole disc golf course.

In the near term, it is recommended that the city select a few small projects that can be easily implemented across the community, while funding the planning and design of larger-scale projects. Smaller projects may include upgrades to playground equipment, shelter additions, and signage replacements.

While progress is being made on smaller projects, site master planning can begin on select larger projects, which will require a greater investment of capital and take a longer, often multi-year timeframe to accomplish.

5.2 ESTIMATED COSTS FOR PARKS, RECREATION FACILITIES, OPEN SPACE, AND TRAILS

The cost for trail and park construction varies widely, depending on the specific elements to be included in each project, the terrain, utilities, necessary road crossings, and other physical features that require more extensive design solutions. For the purposes of assigning an order of magnitude of cost to the master plan recommendations, general cost estimates have been assigned to each project. Costs have been assumed that are in order with the costs EDAW has experienced in designing and overseeing the construction of similar facilities throughout the Rocky Mountain region. The cost estimates are approximate and intended to illustrate order of magnitude, not detail. Actual costs for land acquisition (if needed) and development should be developed more specifically. Costs for some of the typical park amenities are listed below to provide an understanding of the basis for the estimates. These costs are in 2009 dollars and must be escalated yearly to compensate for inflation.

Table 5.1 Typical Park Project Item Costs

ITEM	UNIT COST
Neighborhood Park Typical Design and Construction	\$130,000 to \$160,000 per acre
Community Park Typical Design and Construction	\$150,000 to \$220,000 per acre
Asphalt Basketball Court	\$50,000 each
Small Skate Park	\$300,000 each
Neighborhood-Scale Playground	\$80,000 each
Community-Scale Playground	\$200,000 each
Single Picnic Shelter (20'x20')	\$35,000 each
Large Group Picnic Shelter	\$180,000 each
Small Restroom	\$120,000 each
Large Restroom	\$250,000 each
Parking Lot Light	\$3,500 each
Pedestrian Light	\$4,500 each
New Parking Lot	\$6.00 square foot
Picnic Tables	\$1,500 each
Bike Racks	\$650 each
Benches	\$1,500 each
Irrigation System Replacement	\$1.00 square foot
10' Concrete Multi-Purpose Trail (without major grading or landscape features)	\$80.00 linear foot
6' Gravel Trail	\$9.00 linear foot
Native Landscape Restoration	\$0.75 square foot
Irrigated Turf and Shrub Landscape	\$3.50 square foot
Deciduous Trees (2.5" caliper)	\$500 each
Primary Trail Wayside (bench, special paving, water fountain, trash container, signs, bike rack)	\$25,000 each

Other items specific to certain projects are not listed above, but may include demolition, utility relocation, entry plazas, signs, historical restorations, special recreation facilities, maintenance facilities, crossing enhancements, ballfield construction and design, engineering, and contingency fees.

It should be noted that additional staff, resources, and maintenance will be needed as more parks and facilities are added to the system within Fruita. Before new projects are started, consideration to operational and budgetary constraints should

be reviewed and planned. These on-going costs should be accounted for and included into overall budgets for any new projects. The city will need to consider the long-term costs associated with the operation and maintenance of additional parks, trails, and open space.

While it is not cheap to acquire and develop new facilities and amenities, the ongoing operation and maintenance costs for these facilities can accumulate over time, and if deferred, result in a significant burden on the community. Determining the ability to finance the ongoing operations and maintenance of new and existing facilities as the community continues to grow and expand needs to be as important as financing the initial capital construction.

Table 5.2 summarizes initial projects proposed in this plan for inclusion in the city's park and recreation system, and provides estimated costs associated with each project. Costs are estimated in 2009 dollars and will need to be adjusted relative to inflation as time progresses. They are listed in the order described in Chapter Four, which does not imply an order of priority. This table also includes a priority ranking for each of the projects listed. The priority ranking was developed by the Steering Committee and indicates if a project is of High, Medium or Low importance relative to other projects. A High ranking suggests that the completion of that project is of critical importance to the community and resources should be devoted to seeing that this project is planned and funded in the near term. A ranking of Medium indicates that completion of the project is important to the community and integral in the development of the parks, trails, and opens space system. Long range planning should begin for these projects and any opportunities that may arise for their immediate development should be considered relative to other priorities. A ranking of Low suggests that while completion of the project is important, resources and energies should be devoted to

other higher ranked projects first. However, projects with a ranking of Low are still important and should be considered in the long range visioning and planning of the community.

Table 5.2 Master Plan Projects

NAME	TYPE	COST	PRIORITY RANKING
Trails / Bridges (distances are approximate)			
Riverfront Trail	5 mile Primary (5 waysides)	\$2,237,000	High
Fruita Riverfront Recreation Area Trail Loops	1 mile Primary (1 wayside)	\$447,400	High
Little Salt Wash Trail	2 mile Primary (2 waysides)	\$844,800	High
Big Salt Wash Trail	1.75 mile Primary (1 wayside)	\$739,200	Medium
Ranchman's Ditch Canal	2.75 mile Primary (2 waysides)	\$1,161,600	Medium
Grand Valley Canal Trail	4 mile Primary (4 waysides)	\$1,689,600	Low
I-70 Bridge - High School to Riverfront Trail	0.25 Primary (0 waysides)	\$5,000,000	Medium
SH340 Bridge over Colorado River	Pedestrian Bridge parallel to roadway	\$3,000,000	Medium
Snooks Bottom State Park Bridge over Colorado River	Pedestrian Bridge	\$4,000,000	Medium
Old Fruita Bridge	Pedestrian Bridge	\$1,500,000	High
I-70 South Frontage Road Trail	2.75 mile Primary (2 waysides)	\$1,161,600	High
Adobe Creek Trail	2.5 mile Primary (2 waysides)	\$1,056,000	Low
Big Salt Wash to Etchart Park	2.5 mile Primary (2 waysides)	\$1,056,000	Low
Riverfront Trail to Etchart Park	1 mile Primary (1 wayside)	\$422,400	Low
Rimrock Elementary to Grand Valley Canal	1.75 mile Primary (1 wayside)	\$739,200	Low
North end of James M. Robb Colorado River State Park to Welcome Center	0.25 mile Primary (0 waysides)	\$105,600	Low
Horsethief Canyon Road to Kokopelli Trail	5 mile Soft Surface (0 waysides)	\$238,000	Medium
Railroad Commuter Trail	2.5 mile Paved Commuter (2 waysides)	\$1,056,000	Medium
Enhancements to Existing Parks			
Little Salt Wash Park	Existing Park (including pedestrian bridge)	Per master plan	High
Heritage Park	Existing Park	Allow \$400,000	High
Orr Park	Existing Park	Allow \$400,000	Medium
Circle Park	Existing Park	Allow \$200,000	Low
New Parks			
Etchart Park	27 acre Community Park	\$4,860,000	Low

Table 5.2 Master Plan Projects

NAME	TYPE	COST	PRIORITY RANKING
Wastewater Treatment Plant Site	55 acre Community Park	\$9,900,000	Low
Riverfront Park	20 to 40 acre Community Park	\$3,600,000 to \$7,200,000	Medium
Red Cliffs Park	2.4 acre Neighborhood Park	\$350,000	High
SH6/50 and 19 Road Area	5 acre Neighborhood Park (A)	\$725,000	Medium
Rimrock Elementary Area	5 acre Neighborhood Park (B)	\$725,000	Medium
North Grand Valley Canal Area	5 acre Neighborhood Park (C)	\$725,000	Medium
17½ Road and L Road Area	5 acre Neighborhood Park (D)	\$725,000	Low
Northwest Fruita (Between 15 and 16 Roads, North of L)	5 acre Neighborhood Park (E)	\$725,000	Low
Northwest Fruita (Between Reed Wash and 15 Road, North of SH6/50)	5 acre Neighborhood Park (F)	\$725,000	Low
Open Space			
Kingsview Open Space	Facility Development in Open Space	\$200,000	High
Mountain Parks	Master Plan for Improvements to Open Space	\$40,000 - construction costs TBD	High
Open Space Corridors	Open Space	\$0 – buffer areas	Low
Colorado River Area Open Space	Open Space	\$0 – buffer areas	High

5.3 IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

The following are specific actions that should be considered, which may assist in the implementation of the proposed projects. The actions are organized into planning, upgrades and maintenance, administrative and management, and funding categories, and are not listed in order of priority.

A. MANAGEMENT/PLANNING ACTIONS

- Work with the Community Development Department and developers in the acquisition of parkland, and trail and open space corridors associated with any new development.
- Identify specific parcels that are key for the development of Neighborhood Parks in underserved areas.
- Develop a site master plan and construction documents for Red Cliffs Park, and investigate the feasibility of adding acreage to the park.
- Develop a site master plan for Kingsview Open Space that includes analysis and recommendations for the grade-separated trail crossing under SH340.
- Update and clarify land dedication ordinances and implement a revised impact fee to cover the cost of design and construction of parks, trails, and recreational amenities for new residents, as well as to proactively secure land that is needed for Neighborhood Parks.
- Prepare an on-street bicycle/pedestrian master plan for the community that identifies on-street bike lanes, desired street cross-sections, areas in need of pedestrian walkways and enhanced pedestrian crossings, and ideal locations for trailheads for access to the primary trail system.

- Continue to work with the Riverfront Commission and other partners to implement the vision for the Riverfront Trail.

B. ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

- Prepare an annual report card on the progress toward achieving the POST plan.
- Regularly update the facility inventory and maps to reflect existing conditions.
- Establish clear mechanisms for interdepartmental and interagency coordination on planning and design issues, and to ensure consistency with the POST Master Plan.

C. UPGRADES AND MAINTENANCE ACTIONS

- Rehabilitate or replace existing playgrounds, restrooms, and other park facilities, including bringing existing facilities up to ADA standards.
- Evaluate existing parks for additional needed upgrades.

D. FUNDING ACTIONS

- Actively pursue granting and funding opportunities to provide underserved neighborhoods with parks.
- Explore the level of community support for additional funding sources, such as property or sales taxes, and development impact fees.

5.4 POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES FOR PARK AND RECREATION PROJECTS

The Fruita Parks and Recreation Department primarily receives funding through the City General Fund. The following list of strategies and funding sources should be considered when developing a specific implementation plan for city projects and programs.

A. SALES/PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

Most of the parks and recreation budget comes from the City General Fund, which is supported primarily through city sales/use and property tax. Table 5.3 shows the breakdown of current tax rates within the city. In November 2008, city residents voted in favor of a 1% tax increase to support the construction of a community center. This tax will last for 30 years and is specifically dedicated to the construction and operations of the Fruita Community Center. The City of Fruita could consider an increase in either city sales or property tax for other programs. Tax increases of this nature are most often passed as bond issues, which allows for the city to go into debt to finance construction and repay the bonds as revenues are collected.

Table 5.3. Current City of Fruita Tax Rates

RATE	TAX
2.9%	State
2.0%	City (General Fund)
1.0%	Community Center
2.0%	County
7.9%	Total

B. ESTABLISHMENT OF A SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

The city could consider the establishment of a Special Improvement District (SID) for specific park and recreation facility projects. City Council would have to establish the boundary to be set and the levy to be assessed, and vote by the residents of Fruita would be required. Typically, SIDs contain a sunset clause stating that once all projects are completed, the SID

and any associated taxes will be abolished. While this might not be practical for the entire city, it may be useful for park and recreation improvements associated with sub-area plans.

C. LODGING TAX

Fruita currently has a lodging tax of 3%. If so desired, the city could consider increasing this tax to help fund park, open space, and trail projects.

D. SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE REQUIREMENTS

Currently, the City of Fruita Municipal Code has two sections that address quantities of parks and open space/trail corridors that are required as part of the subdivision process. Chapter 19 of Title 17 states that there is an overall dedication requirement of 0.12 acre per resident, which translates to 12.0 acres per 1,000 population. Historically, the city has accepted small Pocket Parks as part of this dedication.

Chapter 29 requires that the subdivision be designed for parkland, with a total of 3.26 acres per 1,000 population provided in each development. This chapter states that “developments shall provide at least three quarters (3/4) of an acre of land for a public site, park, open spaces, and/or trail for each two hundred and thirty (230) residents.” A major challenge, however, is to get adequately sized parcels for a larger, full-service Neighborhood Park and avoid developments that only have very small parks. The code language also includes trail /open space lands as satisfying the 3.26-acre standard, which may result in no parkland at all. The city should continue to exercise its fee-in-lieu options when the land available is not in keeping with the intent of this plan.

The City of Fruita should revise its codes to reflect the best strategy for the city to implement the plan. Land dedication requirements should reflect the parkland level of service standards, desirable open space/trail corridors, and other recommendations in this POST plan.

The city's newly adopted subdivision ordinance requires preservation of buffers from drainages, creeks, canals, and the Colorado River. The code should be refined to define the purpose of buffers and determine if they are adequately sized to allow for trail development while also preserving habitat values. Developments should also be required to provide local trail connections to the primary trails and between developments as neighborhood connections.

The city should implement an impact fee for land purchase and development, rather than relying entirely on land dedication to achieve parkland, trail corridors, and open space objectives through the subdivision process. This is described below.

E. DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEES

An impact fee is an assessment on development used to pay for its proportionate share of the impacts to public facilities. The City of Fruita has the ability to collect impact fees for transportation, storm drainage, street chip seal surfacing, schools, and public sites, parks, trails and open space, and the city's code includes these.

The City of Fruita does not currently assign a standard dollar figure to the public sites, park, trails and open space development impact fee, but gives the developer an opportunity to arrive at a fee value based on projected impact, based on the cost of acquiring and developing parkland at a 12 acre per 1,000 population level of service.

In addition to the assessed fee to build parks, trails, and open space, the City of Fruita gives consideration to dedication of parkland, or fee-in-lieu, in place of the impact fee.

Some communities have abandoned the parkland dedication approach and choose to finance their parks and trails plans solely through collection of

residential development impact fees, which include both land acquisition and development. A full spectrum of leisure services which contain costs for recreation centers, trails and open space, in addition to parks, has been included in some communities' development impact fees. Currently, there is no dedicated funding source for trail construction or requirements for development to provide these within Fruita. A trail impact fee based on the level of service standard described in Chapter Three should also be incorporated into the overall park impact fee.

As described in Chapter Three, and throughout this document, Fruita is striving to provide parks, open space, and trails system that meet the needs of the Fruita community while providing a small town atmosphere and ensuring a quality of life for residents and visitors alike. It has been demonstrated that the current method for acquiring parkland through the existing dedication requirement is not providing the community with the needed parkland and trail development to adequately serve the community. As such, the city should adopt a standardized development impact fee to fully cover the cost of acquiring and developing the parks, trails, and recreation facilities needed to serve new residential development. This standardized approach assists both the city and the development community, providing a greater degree of predictability for both parties. A development impact fee should reflect the adopted level of service standard and cover the cost of acquiring and developing future parkland based on the adopted Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan. This would only apply to new residential developments, and be based on their proportionate share of impact. Impact fees cannot be based on making up deficiencies in an existing system.

Below is an example of parkland and trail dedication fees and is not the actual fee proposed. While this example fee is defensible as it accounts for the

entire cost of future park and trail development, it is an example of the proposed fee format using figures based on market analysis. The actual dedication fee will be developed through a re-write of the Land Use Code and must be adopted by City Council Ordinance. The Land Use Code will be revised to include a fee schedule for all parks, trails and open space fees and credits.

It should be noted that development impact fees are one method of providing funds to implement the Parks, Open Space and Trails Master Plan. Other methods mentioned in this implementation section that the city has actively pursued in the past and will continue to pursue in the future, include grant funding opportunities, use of conservation trust funds, and partnering opportunities with other public and private agencies where beneficial. A creative mixture of funding options will ultimately be employed and reliance on one source of funds for future park and trail projects is not the city's intention.

An example of the proposed method for assessing a fee on population-based standards is generated as follows:

The fee should reflect the adopted level of service standard (e.g., 2.0 acres/1,000 population for Neighborhood Parks, 4.0 acres/1,000 population for Community Parks, and 1.0 mile/1,000 population for Primary Trails). All three can be assessed as one fee for a combined Neighborhood Park, Community Park and primary trail fee.

Average household size in Fruita is 2.52 (2006 US Census Bureau's Colorado state-wide average). Parkland share per household is the product of the average household size multiplied by the standard:

- $2.52 \times (2.0 / 1,000) = .005$ acres per household for Neighborhood Parks
- $2.52 \times (4.0 / 1,000) = .010$ acres per household for Community Parks
- $2.52 \times (1.0 / 1,000) = .0025$ miles per household from Primary Trails

This responsibility can be translated into a land acquisition and park/trail development cost per residential unit as illustrated below:

- Acquisition cost of unsubdivided, development-ready land: \$40,000 per acre
- Neighborhood parkland development costs: \$140,000 per acre
- Community parkland development costs: \$180,000 per acre
- Primary trail development costs: \$420,000 per mile

1. Neighborhood parkland fee calculation

- $.005 \text{ acres} \times (\$40,000 + \$140,000) = \900 per household

2. Community parkland fee calculation

- $.010 \text{ acres} \times (\$40,000 + \$180,000) = \$2,200$ per household

3. Primary trail fee calculation

- $.0025 \text{ miles} \times \$420,000 = \$1,050$ per household

Maximum combined parkland and trail fee = \$4,150 per household

The above illustration is included as an example of the maximum fee allowed. The official fee calculation needs to be set by ordinance and should be based on a community average land value (annually adjusted) and data on recent park and trail construction costs in the region. The combined fee listed above is justifiable but needs to be set through the public hearing process, such that the City Council can take into account development costs, affordability issues, the goals of this plan and other community oriented issues. It is anticipated that the fee actually set by ordinance will be considerably less than this example.

F. CONSERVATION TRUST FUND

This is a revenue source from the Colorado lottery. Funds are distributed annually by the state, based on population. Many other communities dedicate their annual Colorado Lottery funds to trail corridor acquisition and trail construction projects. Currently, the city receives approximately \$96,000 annually, which has historically been used for new projects as well as maintenance projects to improve existing parks.

G. GREAT OUTDOORS COLORADO (GOCO) GRANT PROGRAM

This is a statewide pool of revenue from Colorado Lottery proceeds. Funds are available on a competitive grant basis for park and open space land acquisition and development, outdoor recreation, environmental education, and capacity building. The city regularly applies for these funds for various projects, but cannot rely on grants as a steady funding stream.

H. STATE TRAILS PROGRAM

Established in 1971, this program is funded with revenue from GOCO, TEA-21 Section 1112 Recreation Trails Program, and Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) registration fees. Funds are available for trails on a

competitive basis. A 25 to 50% match is required. Since the state funding pool is relatively small, this resource is proposed for a small component of the trails system. The city regularly applies for these grants.

I. SAFE, ACCOUNTABLE, FLEXIBLE AND EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION EQUITY ACT: A LEGACY FOR USERS (SAFE-TEA-LU)

This is the reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). Section 1202, "Enhancement Grants," is available on a competitive basis to fund bicycle transportation, wetlands improvements and historic preservation, among other things. These grants are a possible and supplemental source of revenue for some trail improvements. Specific funds have been allocated through SAFE-TEA-LU by the federal government for the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality program (CMAQ), which is jointly administered by the FHWA and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). This program, in conjunction with its umbrella entity, are intended to realign the focus of transportation planning toward a more inclusive, environmentally-sensitive, and multi-modal approach to addressing transportation problems, and its funds are allocated to CDOT, MPOs, and transit agencies to invest in projects that reduce air pollutants generated from transportation-related sources. This program may be a good funding source for trail and the I-70 pedestrian overpass. In the past, these funds have been used for SH6/50 trail improvements from the high school to Big Salt Wash.

J. STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY FUNDS

A portion of state gaming revenues are transferred to the State Historical Fund and administered by the State Historic Society. Grants are available for projects of historic significance.

K. SPORTS GROUPS OR COMPANY GRANTS

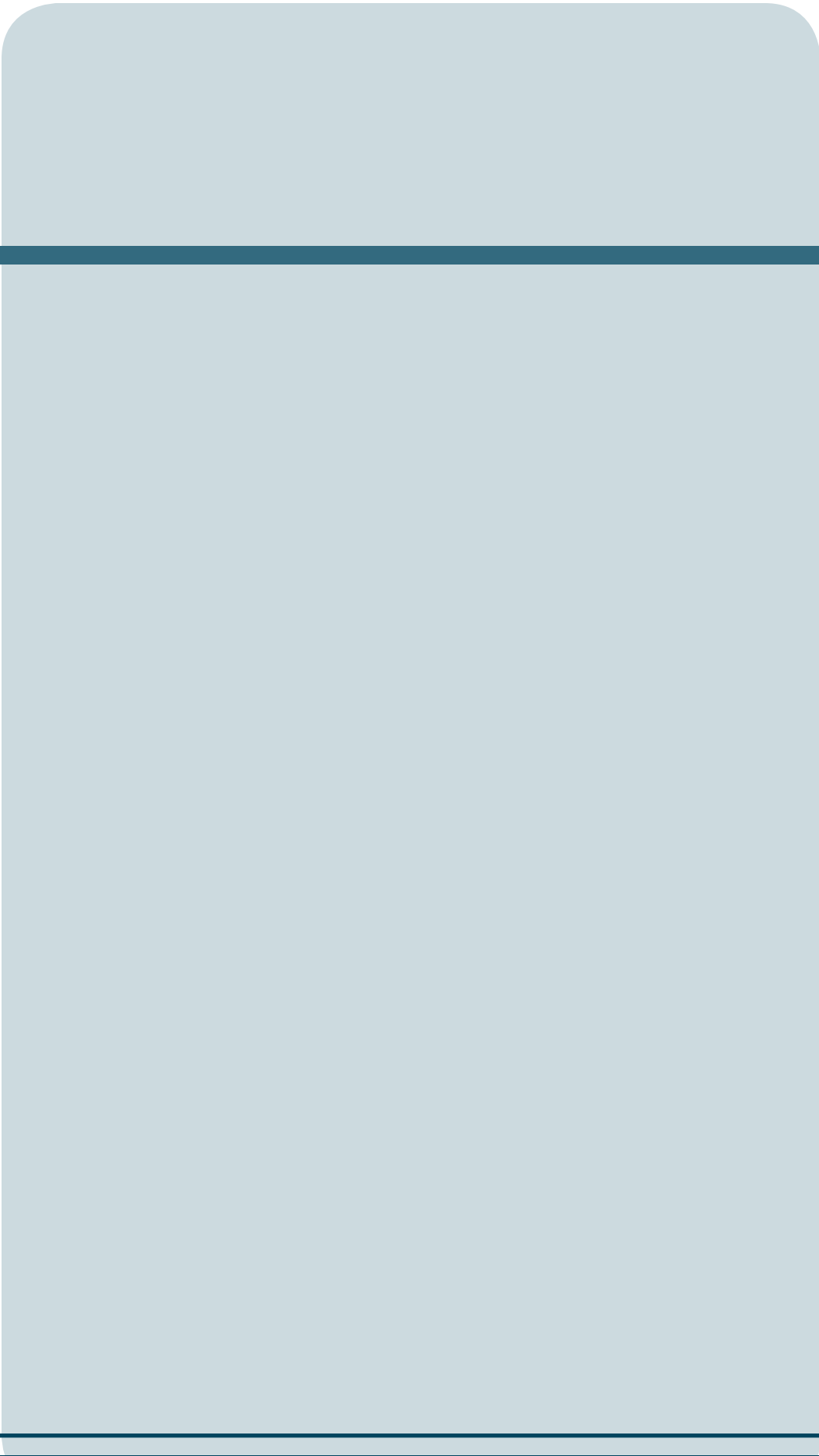
There are myriad sports association or specific company grants for projects that are related to their constituency or products. For example, skatepark.org provides grants for design and construction of new public skate parks.

L. OTHER GRANTS

Grants may be available through state or federal agencies associated with programs that promote community redevelopment and infill, tree programs, drainage and water quality improvements, environmental quality improvements, health and wellness, the arts, etc. Congestion Management and Air Quality (CMAQ) grants have been used by other communities for trail development, and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) for parks associated with urban renewal effort.

M. INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The City shall pursue intergovernmental agreements and / or partnerships with other agencies such as Mesa County Public Schools to develop parks, trails, open space lands and other facilities that can be shared use.



06

APPENDIX

