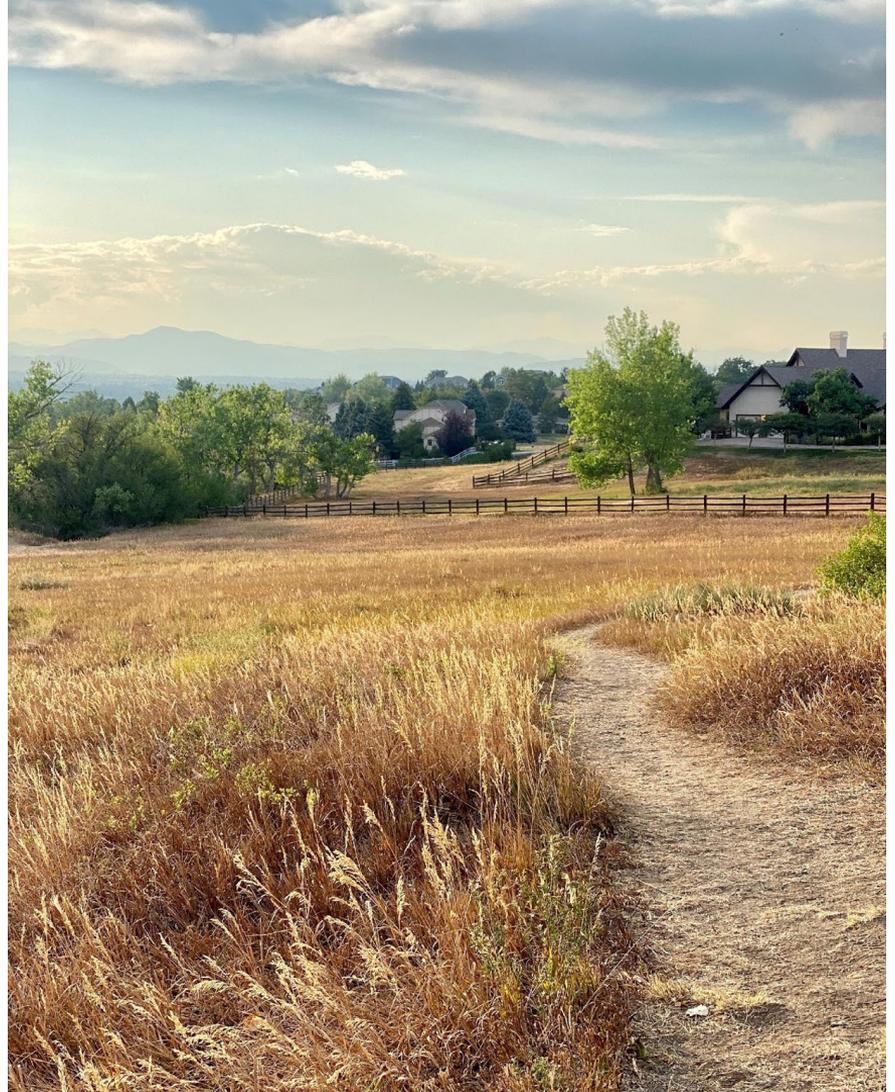


LITTLETON POST VISION PLAN

City Council

11/12/2024



Agenda

- Project Overview
- Engagement Phase 1 Summary
- Vision Plan - Vision, Themes, Goals
- Engagement Phase 2
- Next steps

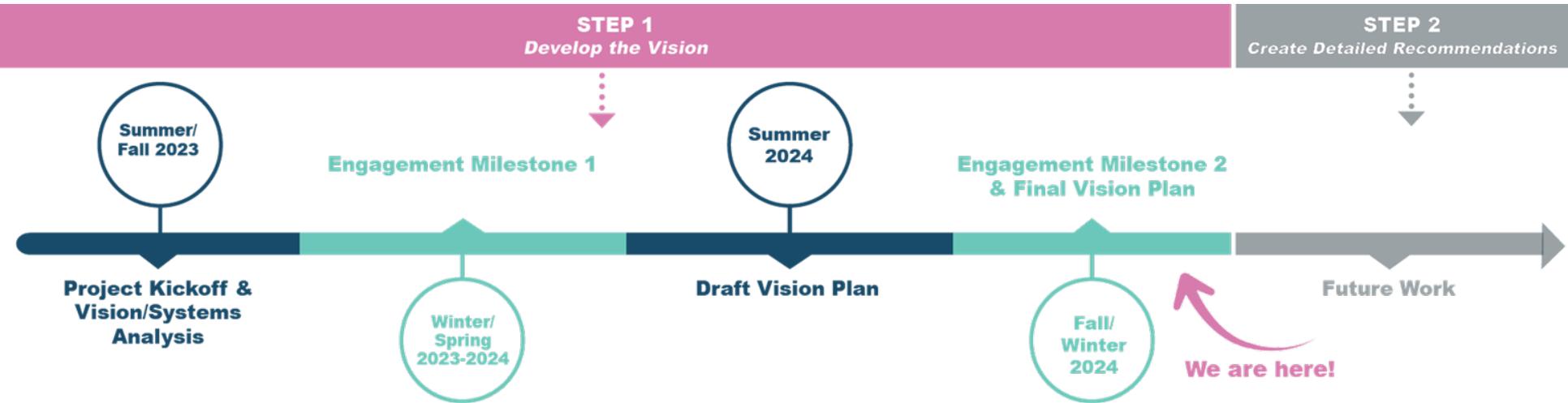
Project Overview

Vision Plan - Purpose

The City of Littleton is developing a **community-supported vision plan** (*Root and Renew*) to guide discussions with South Suburban Parks and Recreation about investment decisions related to **parks, open space, and trail improvements.**

While the City of Littleton's robust system currently provides residents with great access to parks, open space, and trails, the previous plan was completed in 2016 and *Root and Renew* is being undertaken to **ensure that current population needs and trends in parks and recreation are being addressed city-wide.**

Project Timeline



Importance of SSPRD to Littleton's Parks and Open Spaces

- Littleton & SSPRD partnership began in 1964
- SSPRD serves:
 - Town of Bow Mar
 - City of Centennial
 - Town of Columbine Valley
 - City of Littleton
 - City of Lone Tree
 - City of Sheridan

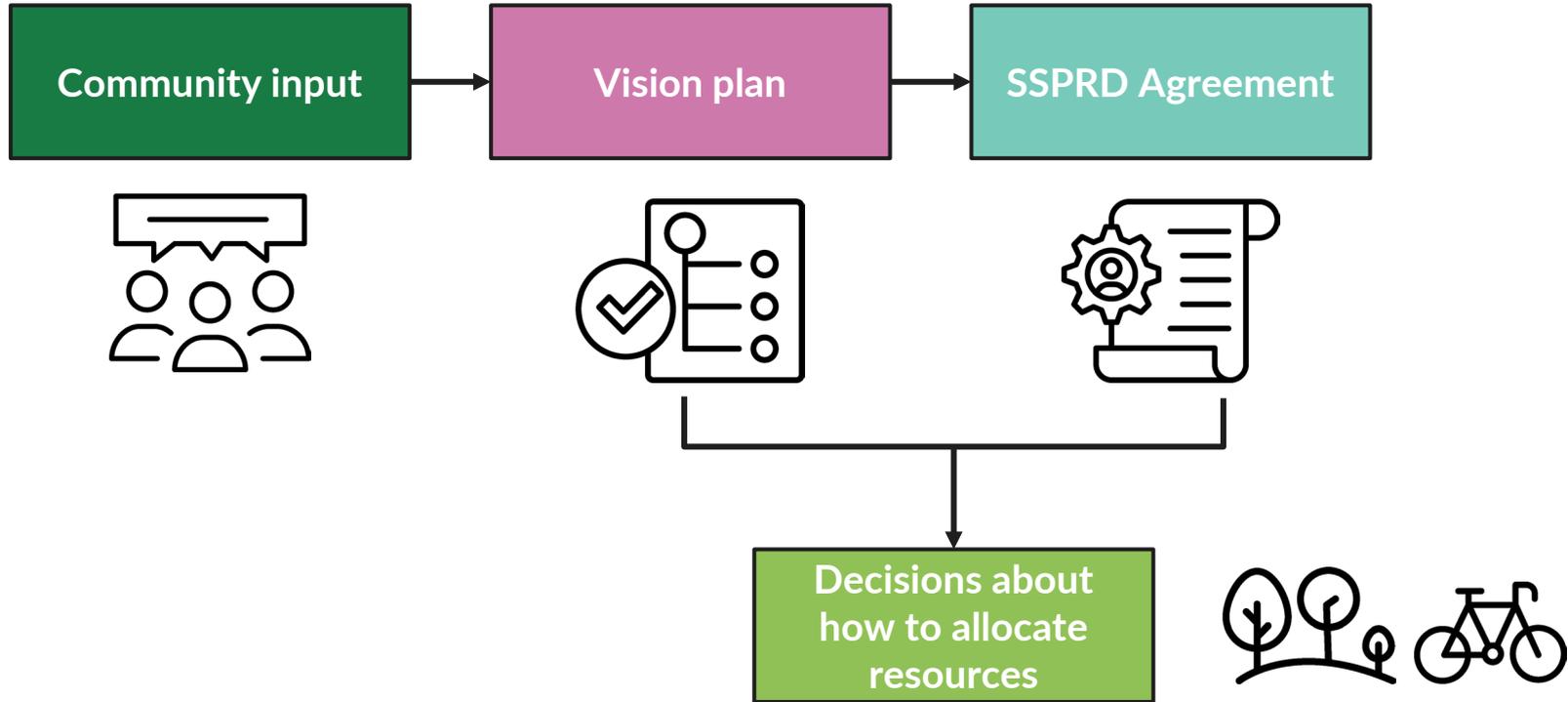
Ownership of Parkland



Maintenance of Parkland



Input Informing Vision



Engagement Phase 1 Summary

Outreach Overview

- **Community Meeting #1**

- January 25th, 2024
- *9 attendees*

- **Survey #1**

- January 25th, 2024 - May 27th, 2024
- *458 respondents*



640

total engagement touchpoints



1

virtual public meeting &

1

survey



6

pop ups at parks, rec centers, and trailheads



1

small group meeting

Pop-Ups

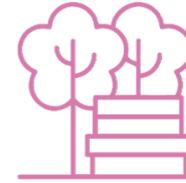
- **Pop Up Events (160 people reached total)**

1. Buck Recreation Center
 - April 24th, 2024 - 45 people reached
2. Berry Park
 - April 24th, 2024 - 15 people reached
3. Mary Carter Greenway Trail at Reynold's Landing
 - May 3rd, 2024 - 27 people reached
4. Carson Nature Center & Trailhead
 - May 18th, 2024 - 40 people reached
5. Powers Park
 - May 20th, 2024 - 8 people reached
6. Promise Park
 - May 22nd, 2024 - 25 people reached

- **Feedback**

- When asked “what are you excited to see more of in Littleton?” the following were the most popular
 1. Water play
 2. Natural areas exploration
 3. Trails

Of the 160 people reached at the pop ups, **53 were youth**



6

pop ups at parks, rec centers, and trailheads



Small Group Meeting

- **Small Group Meeting**

- May 2nd, 2024
- 9 attendees

- **Feedback**

- Residents are generally happy with the quality and quantity of amenities, but **the primary issue is getting there as a pedestrian and cyclist**
- **Other values** (more cultural elements, etc.) while interesting and important **should take a backseat to solving connectivity and accessibility issues**
- **Strong support for resiliency measures** including no irrigation landscapes, enhanced tree canopy, planting for pollinators, etc.



1 small group meeting

Key Themes

- **Activities/Amenities:**
 - Survey respondents said they'd be most excited about enhanced access to **trails, playgrounds, courts, and natural areas**
 - Strong support for increased access to **disc golf** and **pickleball**
 - Desire to prioritize **water play** emerged from pop ups
- Sentiment that the existing amenities and asset are in good condition and well-utilized, but **safe and easy connections between these amenities and assets are lacking**
- Strong **desire to prioritize resiliency** strategies including low-water landscapes, landscape conversions, and pollinator plantings
- **Desire to enhance maintenance and cleanliness** within parks
- **Support for more shade** along paths and within parks

Current Use

When asked
what currently prevents you from using parks, open space, and trails?*

While many indicated there are
no barriers preventing use

Others indicated that they are **prevented from using the assets due to lack of sidewalks and safe connections**

lack of shade

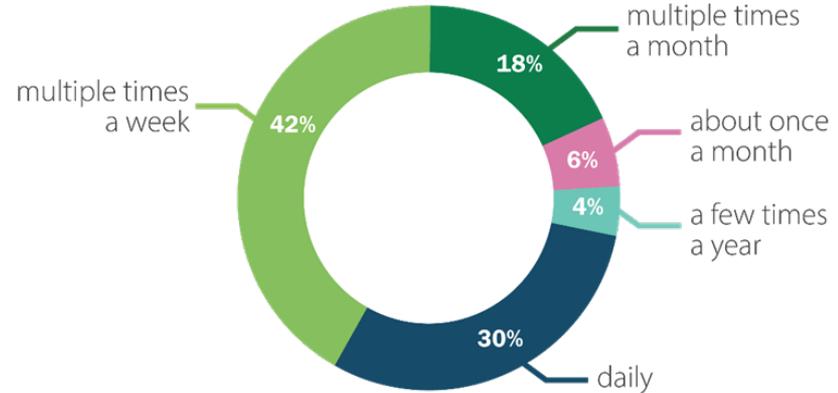
feeling unwelcome or unsafe

& lack of maintenance

* responses from survey



trails
were ranked as the
most used amenity
today*



parks, open space, and trails are
well utilized

with 72% of respondents reporting using them either daily or multiple times a week*

Current Experience



quality

of parks, trails, and
open space ranked

good or excellent

by 82% of respondents *



while many respondents reported that the quality
of amenities do not need work, many concerns
were expressed around a

lack of safe connections

between parks, trails, and open space *

Future Uses & Vision

the ranking when respondents were asked -
what is most important to you for the future? *



* responses from survey

when asked -

what should be the highest priority for investment?*



1 trails



2 playgrounds



3 courts



4 natural areas activities



strong additional support was voiced for **disc golf**

Vision Plan - Vision, Themes, Goals

Vision Plan Outline

1. Introduction

- a. Why now
- b. Benefits of access to parks
- c. The system today
- d. Planning process

2. Foundation

- a. Peer cities
- b. Benchmarking & Level of Service
- c. Amenities

3. The Vision

- a. Vision
- b. Themes & Goals
 - i. Parks and Open Space
 - ii. Activities and Trends
 - iii. Resiliency and Nature
 - iv. Community and Culture

These themes are the focus of tonight's discussion

4. Moving Forward

Vision

The City of Littleton aims to equitably serve all communities within Littleton with a focus on resilience, maintenance, and upgrading assets to meet trends.

The plan's recommendations are organized within four major themes inspired by the *Envision Littleton* recommendations and community feedback; **parks and open space, activities and trends, resiliency and nature, and community and culture**. Each theme includes specific goals and relevant case studies that can be used as inspiration.

Themes & Goals

Parks & Open Space



Maintain & enhance existing assets

Activities & Trends



Develop more opportunities for residents based on emerging trends

Resiliency & Nature



Prioritize protecting, preserving, and enhancing Littleton's natural environment

Community & Culture



Cultivate inclusive social spaces

Themes & Goals

Parks & Open Space *Maintain & enhance existing assets*



- i. Align with the SSPRD park classification system and enhance their definitions to define park classifications for the Littleton parks
- ii. Improve entrances to parks and create gateways that create a safe sense of arrival, utilizing the Littleton Linkages plan to make these types of changes in tandem with the plan's identified improvements
- iii. Identify parks that should be high priority to receive new amenities.
 1. Playgrounds should be added to District I, III, and IV
 2. Basketball courts should be added to District III
 3. Skate parks should be added to District II, III, and IV
 4. Dog parks should be added to District II, III, and IV
 5. Tennis courts should be added to District III
 6. Restrooms and water fountains should be implemented city-wide
- iv. Enhance capital maintenance and address issues with rundown equipment and amenities, prioritizing improvements to trails, playgrounds, and courts
- v. Prioritize cleanliness within parks and along trails
 1. Add waste bag stations for dogs city-wide
 2. Enhance naturalized habitats for geese to decrease concerns about goose poop
- vi. Identify properties for acquisition
 1. Additional parks should be prioritized in District IV
 2. Additional open space should be prioritized in District II
 3. Additional trails should be prioritized in District II

Park Classification

Parks & Open Space



- i. Align with the SSPRD park classification system and enhance their definitions to define park classifications for the Littleton parks

TABLE 6: Park Classification and Standards

Size	Purpose and Function	Site Characteristics	Service Area	Access
Regional Park				
Largest	Provides recreational programs and amenities intended to serve the community as well as park users throughout the surrounding region. Typically, regional parks provide lighted synthetic athletic complexes, lighted sports courts, large or multiple playgrounds, multiple shade pavilions, restrooms, walking trails, etc. Regional parks may also support specialty facilities, bicycle and skateboard facilities, public art, outdoor event spaces, plazas, and other unique amenities.	Emphasis on providing a wide array of outdoor recreation opportunities for a variety of user groups. Portions of the site should be relatively flat to accommodate recreational programs. Areas with natural resource values of regional significance are to be protected. Special site features such as streams, lakes, reservoirs, rock outcrops, historic or archaeological sites, and other sensitive areas may be preserved or enhanced to add to the unique character of the park.	Entire district and the greater region.	Typically have direct access from an arterial street and access to regional trail systems. Parking should be primarily off-street but may be supported by on-street parking. Access to regional trail system and public transit is desirable.
Community Park				
Medium to Large	Serve as a focal point for community-wide activities that serve a broad purpose and balance active and passive recreation needs. Allow for group activities not feasible nor desirable at the neighborhood level due to noise, lights, traffic, etc. May include multiple programmed bluegrass or synthetic turf athletic fields and courts with or without lighting systems, a large playground with multiple structures, community event spaces, walking trails, shade pavilions, public art, and restrooms. Should maintain a balance between programmed sports facilities and other activity areas to appeal to the broader community. Specialty park amenities may also occur within community parks.	Portions of the site should have minimal variation in topography to accommodate active sports fields and open turf areas for passive recreation. Areas with natural resource values of significance are to be protected. Special site features such as streams, lakes, reservoirs, rock outcrops, historic or archaeological sites, and other sensitive areas may be preserved or enhanced to add to the unique character of the park.	Local community and park users throughout the district.	Easily accessible to the community, and adjacent to recreation centers, schools, community-oriented facilities when feasible. Off-street parking should be provided but may be supported by on-street parking. Direct access from an arterial street is ideal, though parks may be located along corridor streets. Access to regional trail system and public transit is desirable.
Neighborhood Park				
Medium	Provide both active and passive recreation opportunities and serve as a common area for neighbors of all ages to gather, socialize, and play. Typically includes multi-purpose athletic field, sport courts, playground, shade pavilion, looped trails, non-flushing restrooms, etc. In most cases, programmed sports should be limited to youth sports games and practices.	Landscape setting is a blend of cultivated park spaces for active use and natural areas. Features such as water bodies, interpretive signs, and areas of natural vegetation may also be included where appropriate.	Accessible to neighborhood population with safe walking and bicycle access. Should generally be located within 1/2 mile walking distance, as most people are comfortable walking these distances to reach parks.	Centrally located within neighborhoods, along collector streets, along trail or drainage corridors, or in neighborhood centers. Ideally, these parks are accessed by pathways, sidewalks, and trails. On-street parking is typically adequate.
Mini Park				
Small	Specialized parks designed to serve a limited area or neighborhood. Park amenities may include a small shade pavilion, picnic area, playground equipment, park benches, and open turf areas for informal play. If space allows, mini parks may include a sport court.	Mini parks could be either active or passive but address a specific neighborhood need.	Accessible to the immediate neighborhood and generally located within high density residential areas. Should be located less than 1/4 mile to provide the convenient walking and biking distance for all age groups.	Centrally located within neighborhoods, along collector streets, along trail or drainage corridors, or in urban centers. Connected via sidewalks and pathways to residences. On street parking is adequate.

Parks & Open Space



ii. Improve entrances to parks and create gateways that create a safe sense of arrival, utilizing the Littleton Linkages plan to make these type of changes in tandem with the plan's identified improvements



while many respondents reported that the quality of amenities do not need work, many concerns were expressed around a

lack of safe connections
between parks, trails, and open space *

* responses from survey

Parks & Open Space

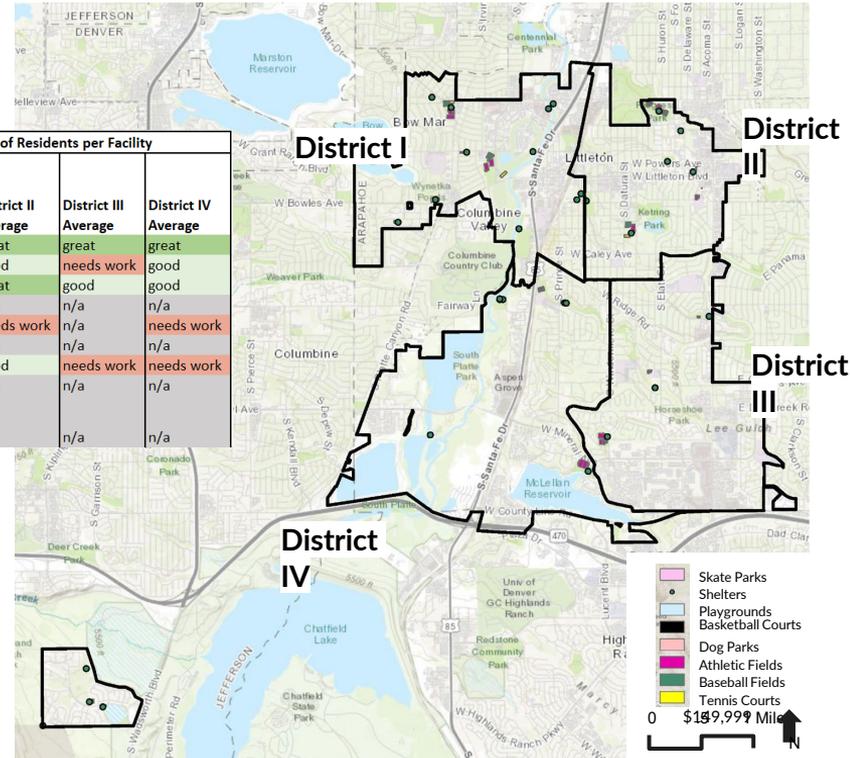


iii. Identify parks that should be high priority to receive new amenities

1. Playgrounds should be added to District I, III, and IV
2. Basketball courts should be added to District III
3. Skate parks should be added to District II, III, and IV
4. Dog parks should be added to District II, III, and IV
5. Tennis courts should be added to District III
6. Restrooms and water fountains should be implemented city-wide

Type of Amenity	Total # in Littleton	Median Number of Residents per Facility					
		National Average	City-wide Average	District I Average	District II Average	District III Average	District IV Average
Athletic Fields	20	7,674	great	great	great	great	great
Basketball Courts	8	7117	good	good	good	needs work	good
Baseball Fields	20	5033	great	great	great	good	good
Skate Parks	1	32,000	needs work	good	n/a	n/a	n/a
Tennis Courts	4	5,815	needs work	needs work	needs work	n/a	needs work
Dog Parks	2	28,000	good	great	n/a	n/a	n/a
Playgrounds	16	3,028	needs work	needs work	good	needs work	needs work
Pickleball Courts	0	9,257	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Shelters	32	No NRPFA National Average	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

- **Great** = below national average by 50% or more
- **Good** = below national average
- **Needs Work** = above national average
- **n/a** = 0 of these amenities in Littleton or no national average to benchmark against



Parks & Open Space



iv. Enhance capital maintenance and address issues with rundown equipment and amenities, prioritizing improvements to trails, playgrounds, and courts

When asked
what currently prevents you from using parks, open space, and trails?*

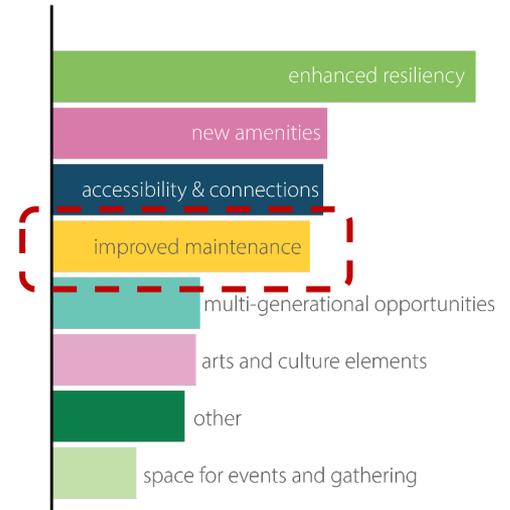
While many indicated there are
no barriers preventing use

Others indicated that they are **prevented from using the assets due to lack of sidewalks and safe connections**

lack of shade

**feeling unwelcome or unsafe
& lack of maintenance**

the ranking when respondents were asked -
what is most important to you for the future?*



* responses from survey

Parks & Open Space



v. Prioritize cleanliness within parks and along trails, related specifically to geese and dogs

“ The geese overpopulation makes the park unusable.

Survey 1

“ The trails have a lot of trash.

Survey 1

Parks & Open Space

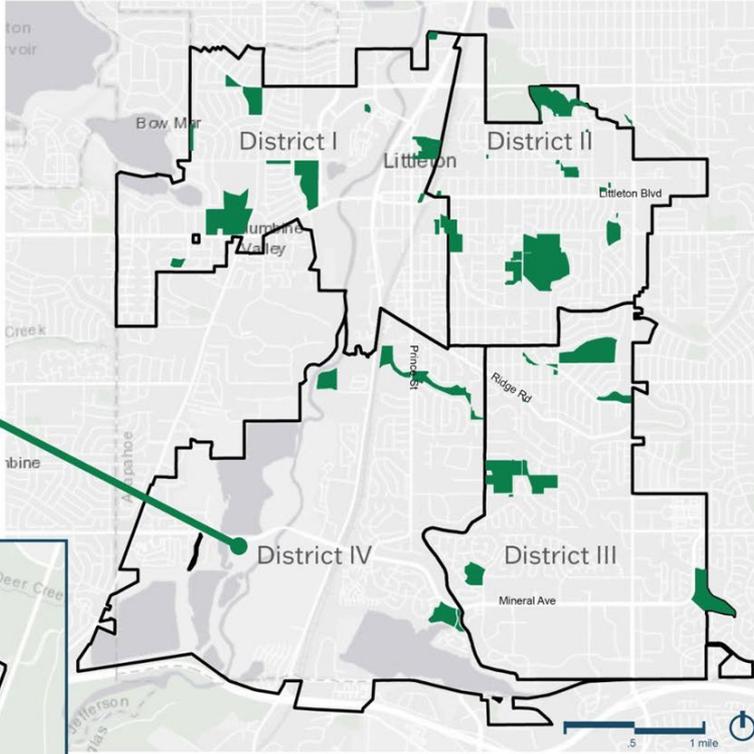


- vi. Identify properties for acquisition
 - 1. Additional parks should be prioritized in District IV

District IV

is
LACKING ACCESS TO PARKS

 Parks



Parks & Open Space



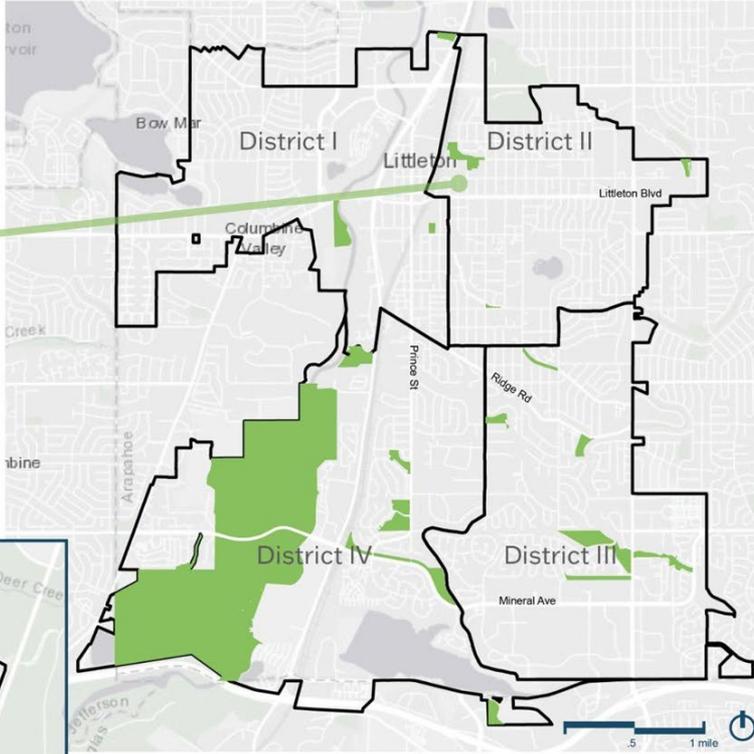
- vi. Identify properties for acquisition
- 2. Additional open space should be prioritized in District II

District II

is
**LACKING ACCESS
TO OPEN SPACE**

A green circular callout box containing a white icon of a park (tree, bench, sun) and the text "District II is LACKING ACCESS TO OPEN SPACE". A green line connects this callout to District II on the main map.

Open Space



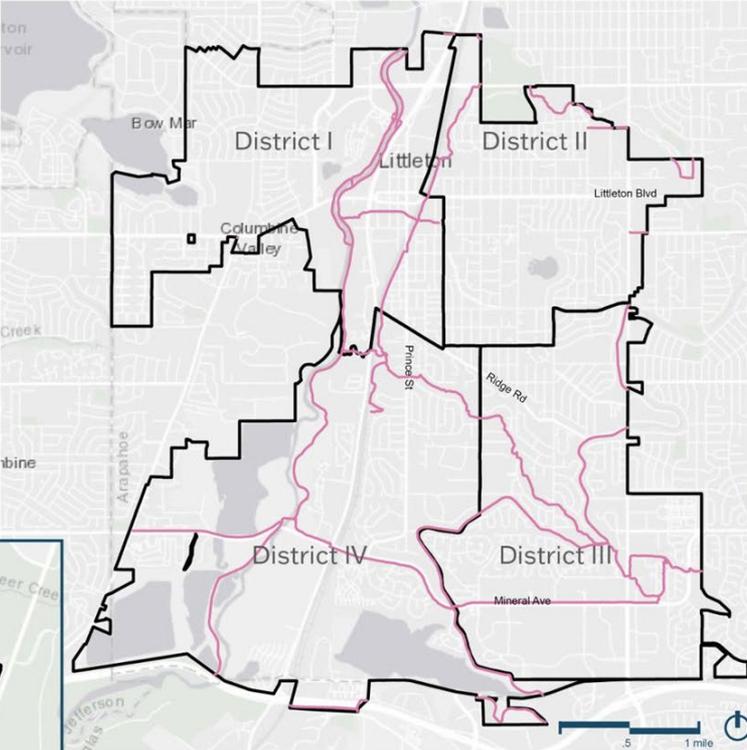
Parks & Open Space



- vi. Identify properties for acquisition
- 3. Additional trails should be prioritized in District II



Trails



Themes & Goals

Activities & Trends *Develop more opportunities for residents based on emerging trends*



- i. Provide additional recreation opportunities for residents based on emerging trends
- ii. Evaluate recreation trends every 5 years to align ensure alignment of new recreation with resident desires
- iii. Improve resident access to active water recreation, such as fishing and non-motorized water sports, such as kayaking and paddleboarding
- iv. Add more more water play and splash pads city-wide with a focus on District II part of the city

Activities & Trends



- i. Provide additional recreation opportunities for residents based on emerging trends
- ii. Evaluate recreation trends every 5 years to align ensure alignment of new recreation with resident desires

In 2024, we are seeing a strong desire for enhanced access to **disc golf** and **pickleball**



Themes & Goals

Resiliency & Nature *Prioritize protecting, preserving, and enhancing Littleton's natural environment*



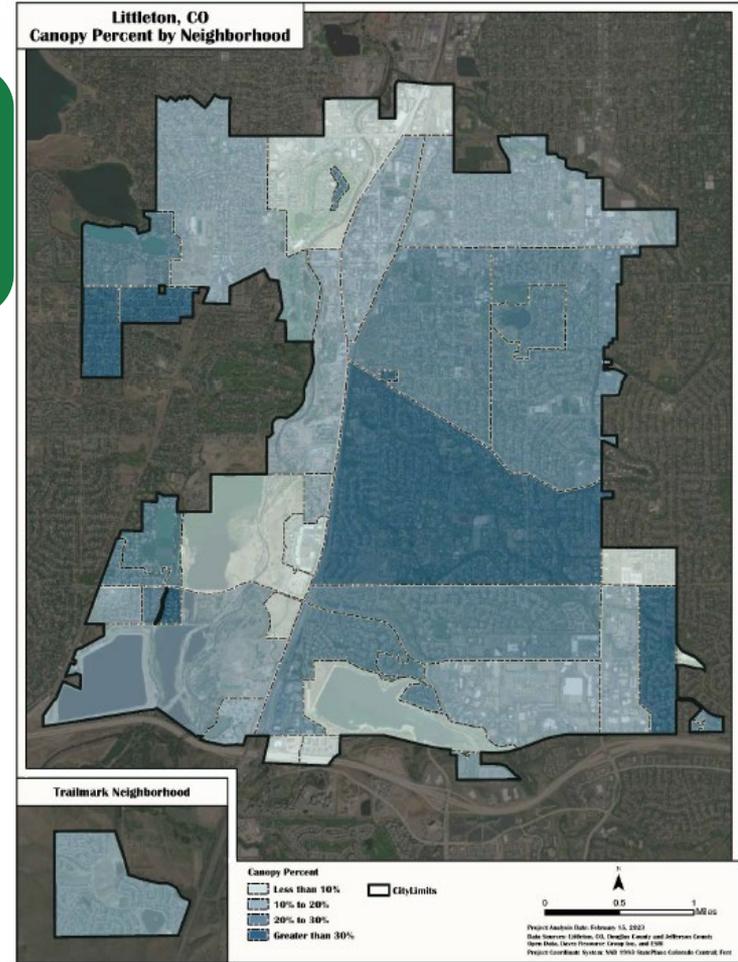
- i. Prioritize enhancing tree canopy within existing open space and parks city-wide with a focus on District II
- ii. Enhance shade around play areas and within parks and open space city-wide
- iii. Assess parks to determine where there can be turf conversions away from high water-use turf grass while maintaining turf grass for high-use active areas
- iv. Evaluate landscaped areas that can be transitioned to pollinator gardens with low water-use plants
- v. Provide demonstration educational garden as a pilot project in a high traffic / easily accessible area

Resiliency & Nature



- i. Prioritize enhancing tree canopy in District II within existing open space and parks

District II has a lower tree canopy and more diverse population



Map 4. Littleton, Colorado, neighborhoods, and general neighborhoods.

Resiliency & Nature



- ii. Enhance shade around play areas and within parks and open space city-wide

“ We never go to our closest park because it is outdated and there are no shade structures.

Survey 1

[Enhance] parks with more shade over equipment.

“ *Survey 1*

Resiliency & Nature



- iii. Assess parks to determine where there can be turf conversions away from high water-use turf grass while being intentional about maintaining turf grass for high-use active areas
- iv. Evaluate planting areas that can be transitioned to pollinator gardens with low water-use plants
- V. Provide demonstration educational garden as a pilot project in a high traffic / easily accessible area



Native planting area



Demonstration gardens

Themes & Goals

Community & Culture *Cultivate inclusive social spaces*



- i. Establish partnerships with community organizations to encourage volunteer programs
- ii. Engage residents with park improvements that are culturally responsive including public art installations and language inclusive signage and wayfinding
- iii. Provide multi-generational activities within parks and open spaces
- iv. Activate parks through community events and educational activities
- v. Enhance maintenance of existing community gardens and consider implementing new gardens in District I and District III

Community & Culture



- i. Establish partnerships with community organizations to encourage volunteer programs

“ We need need volunteer coordinators.

Survey 1



Volunteer days in parks

Community & Culture



- ii. Engage residents with park improvements that are culturally responsive including public art installations and language inclusive signage and wayfinding
- iii. Provide multi-generational activities within parks and open spaces
- iv. Activate parks through community events and educational activities



Culturally relevant art elements



Multi-generational activities

Community & Culture



V. Enhance maintenance of existing community gardens and consider implementing new gardens in District I and District III

“ Maintenance of community gardens has fallen off dramatically.

Survey 1

Engagement Phase 2

Engagement Phase 2 Approach & Themes

Purpose- Share draft vision, themes, and goals and ask for feedback do these capture your desires? Are we missing anything?

Key Themes that Emerged Early

- Shade remains a major concern
- Desire for more age/inclusive play elements
- Support for more lighting to enhance safety
- Related to Community & Culture - most support for:
 - Community events in parks
 - Multi-generational activities
 - More volunteer opportunities
- Related to Resilience - most support for:
 - Enhanced tree canopy
 - Converting high water use turf grass to low water use native areas
 - Increased tree diversity

Pop ups at existing community events (3)

- 10/5/24 - Craft Fair
- 10/12/24 - Harvest Festival
- 10/27/24 - Littleton Stride

Survey #2

- Open from 10/3/24 - 10/31/24

Next Steps

Next Steps

- Additional Project Management Team meetings
 - 11/20/24
 - 1/7/25
- Completing vision plan by February 2025
- Presentation of final recommended vision plan to City Council: March 2025
- Presentation of Environmental Stewardship Board environmental practices recommendations: March 2025
- Sharing both products with SSPR: April-May 2025
- City Council direction to staff on operating and project priorities: April 2025
- Negotiation of updated operations agreement and future capital project priorities with SSPR: Summer 2025

Thank you!

Project Contacts

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