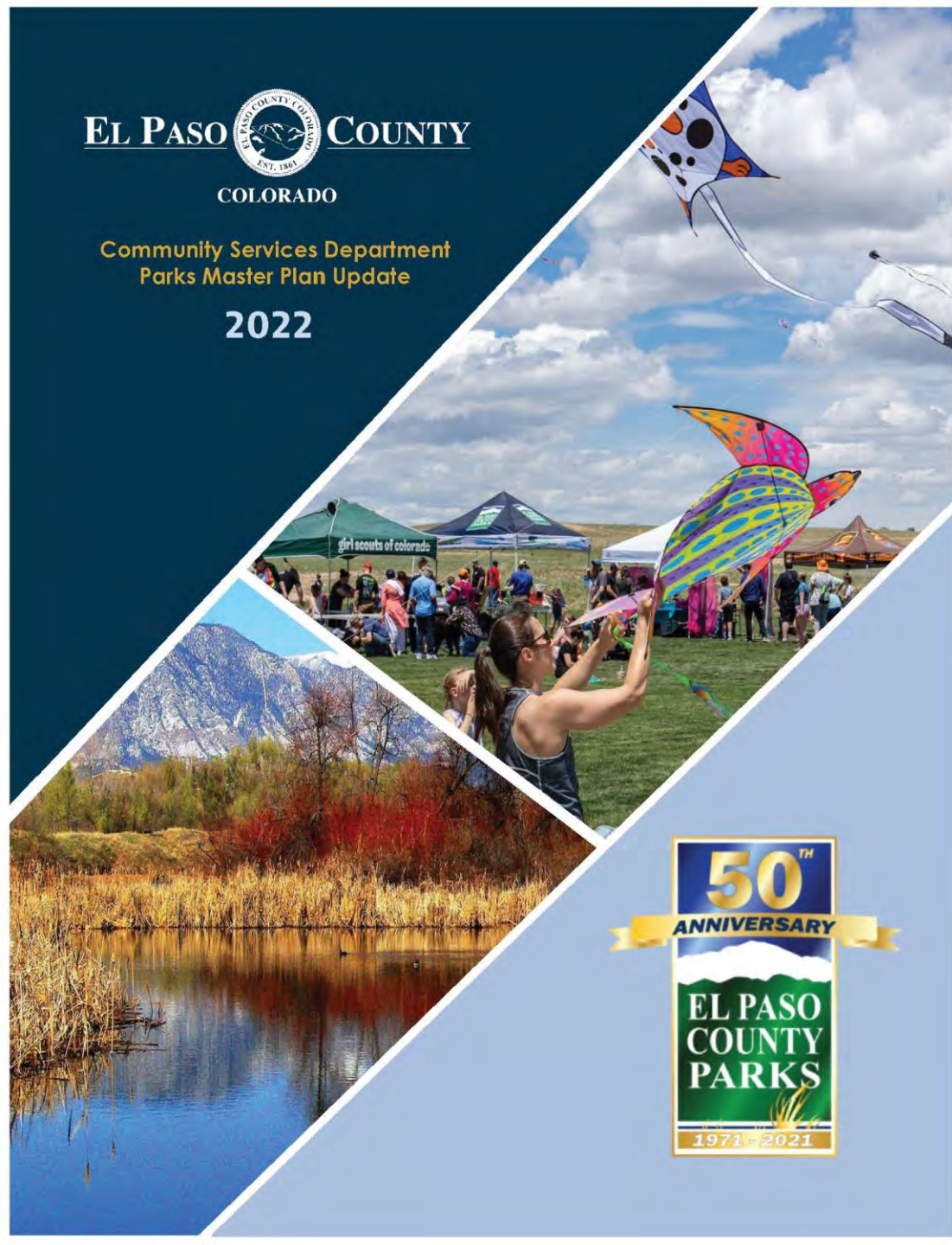




Community Services Department
Parks Master Plan Update

2022



El Paso County Parks Master Plan Update Presentation

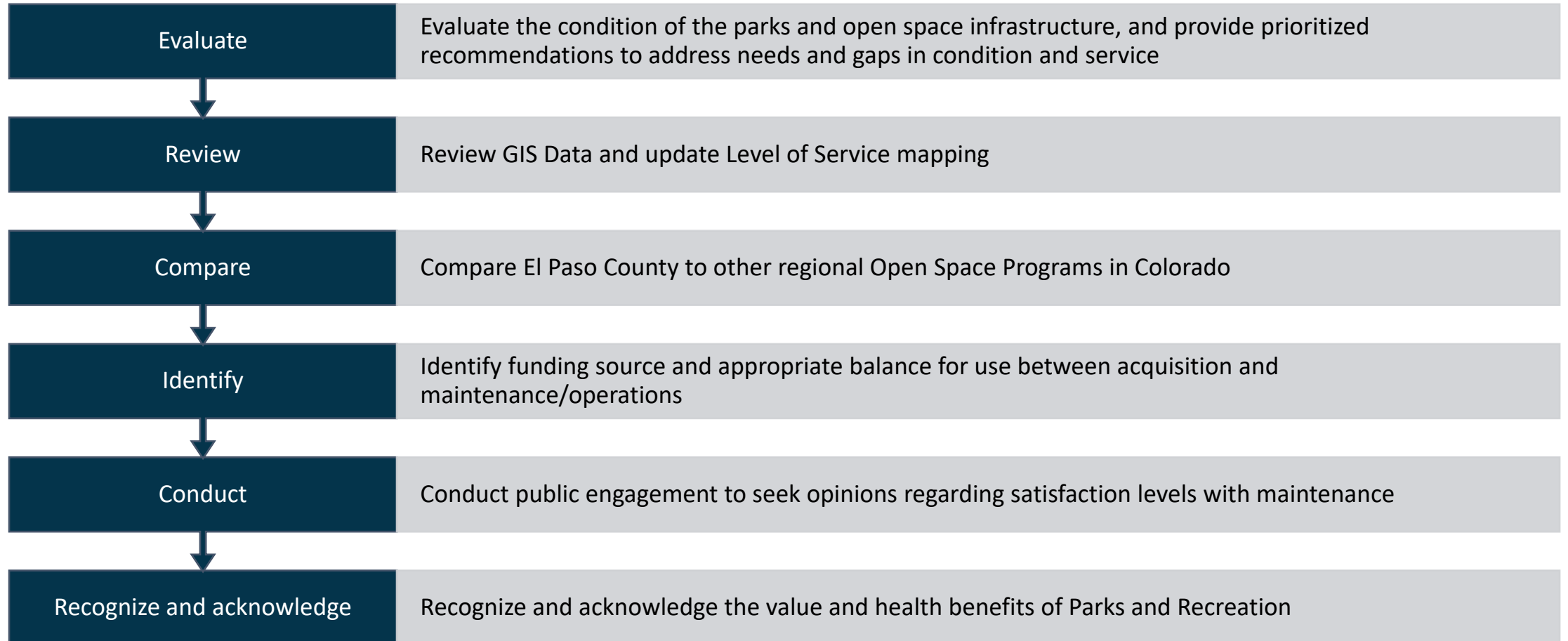
April 14, 2023

Project Vision

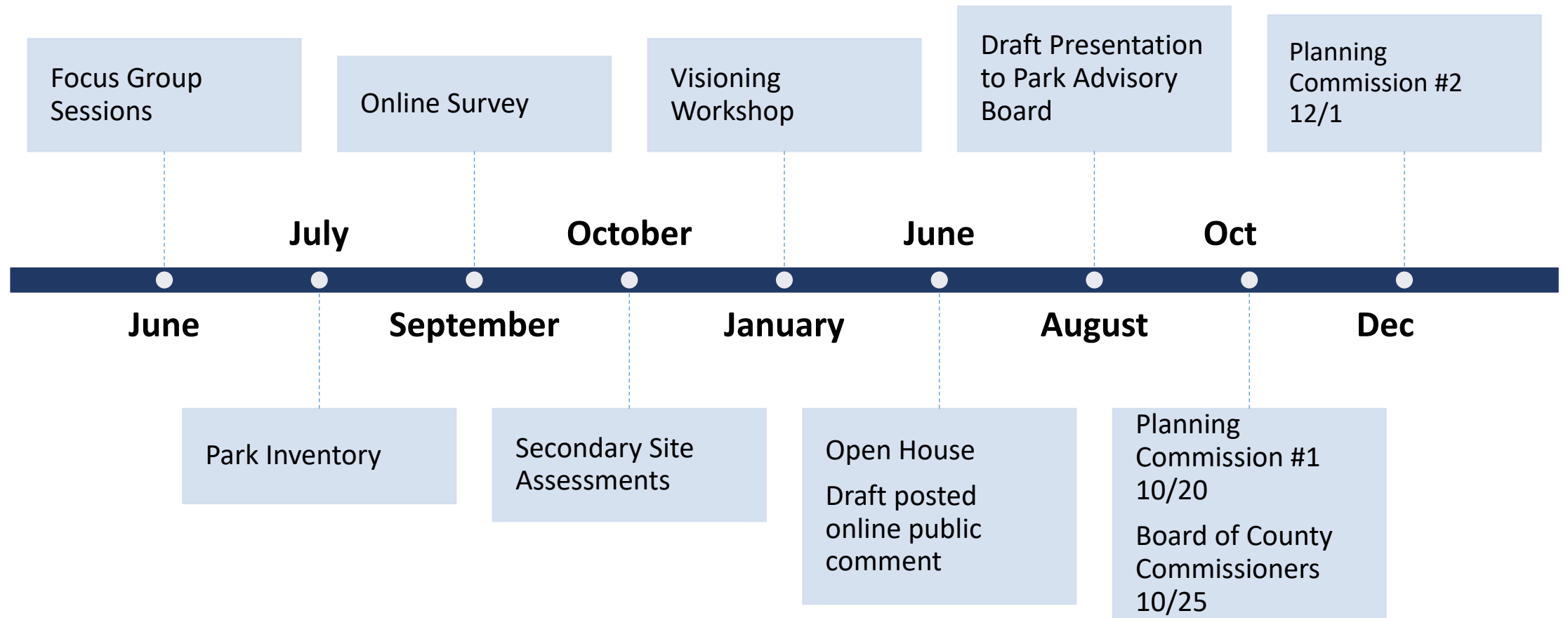
The Parks Master Plan will be a guiding document that works with other county plans to maximize recreation opportunities such as nature centers, parks, trails, and the long-term protection of open space. This process will reaffirm essential goals and objectives of the existing Master Plan, while incorporating needed changes and new ideas based on input by stakeholders and analysis of data and will continue to guide the County's efforts to provide high quality services that are valued by citizens.




Project Goals



Project Milestones



A photograph of two young women in a wooded area. The woman in the foreground is wearing a light blue hoodie and has a black trash bag on her back. The woman in the background is wearing a black hoodie with a graphic. The text "What We Learned" is overlaid in the center.

What We Learned

Focus Group Sessions

Strengths

- Nature Center Staff, Programs and Events
- Natural Resources
- Responsive and compassionate staff
- Ability to stretch a dollar
- Friends Group(s) and Stewardship Programs
- Strong Collaborators
- Variety of opportunities (programs/natural assets)

Weaknesses

- Lack of maintenance
- Inability to keep up with use of parkland
- Insufficient enforcement
- Low per capita Park spending
- inability to manage important or unique assets due to funding restrictions
- No dedicated funding (maintenance, acquisition, staffing)
- Amenities have exceeded their useful life (irrigation, bathrooms, playgrounds)
- Reactive vs. proactive due to funding challenges
- An aging system

ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED IN FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

- Trails and Open Space Coalition
- Black Forest Trails Association
- Fountain Creek Watershed, Flood Control and Greenway District
- El Paso County Park Advisory Board
- El Paso County Public Works
- Friends of El Paso County Nature Centers
- City of Manitou Springs
- Palmer Land Conservancy
- City of Monument
- City of Colorado Springs -Parks
- Town of Calhan
- Town of Ramah
- Town of Palmer Lake
- El Paso County Planning and Community Development

Highlights

Total Visits	1.3 k
Max Visitors Per Day	102
New Registrations	0
Engaged Visitors	643
Informed Visitors	931
Aware Visitors	1.1 k

Ideas

Building a pump park/mtn bike skills park at the Pineries similar to Valmont bike park in Boulder!

A walking path extended from Fountain Mesa Park to Widefield Community Park via a path down S.Powers and Fontaine Blvd makes the connection

Open Forum

I wish our parks had more staff so that we could have, for example, bathrooms open year round and ***more regular trail patrol, etc.***

Survey Highlights



Most Popular Activities:

walking or hiking (36%)
dog walking (13%)
biking (12%)
wildlife viewing (11%)
court sports (7%).



Frequency of Use:

78% of respondents visit a facility 2 to 3 times a month or more



Drive Time:

36% of respondents drive 6 – 15 minutes to use a facility, while
38% drive 16 – 30 minutes



Most Used Regional Parks:

Bear Creek (16%)
Fox Run (9%)
Fountain Creek (6%)



Most used Trails:

Bear Creek (14%)
New Santa Fe (9%)
Fox Run (9%)
Fountain Creek (8%)

630 Respondents

Survey Highlights:

- 84% rated the maintenance of county parks, as either good (56%) or excellent (26%)
- 79% rated maintenance of trails as either good (58%) or excellent (21%)
- 36% of respondents feel park roads, parking lots, playgrounds and facilities need repair or replacement



Survey Highlights

- 59% of respondents feel improving trail maintenance and design of existing trails is a priority over building new trails
- When respondents were asked how they would allocate funding across five activities the ***maintenance of existing parks, trails and open space*** surfaced to the top.
- 47% reported a lack of sufficient security or park ranger presence
- 41% reported that at least one member of their household visited either the Fountain Creek Nature Center or Bear Creek Nature Center over the past year



A scenic view of a park featuring a wooden boardwalk that leads to a gazebo situated on a small island in a pond. The boardwalk is bordered by a wooden fence. In the foreground, a large pine tree is on the left, and a grassy area is on the right. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The text "Map and Drive Time Updates" is overlaid in the center of the image.

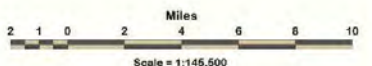
Map and Drive Time Updates

Local Access to Parks (5 Minutes)

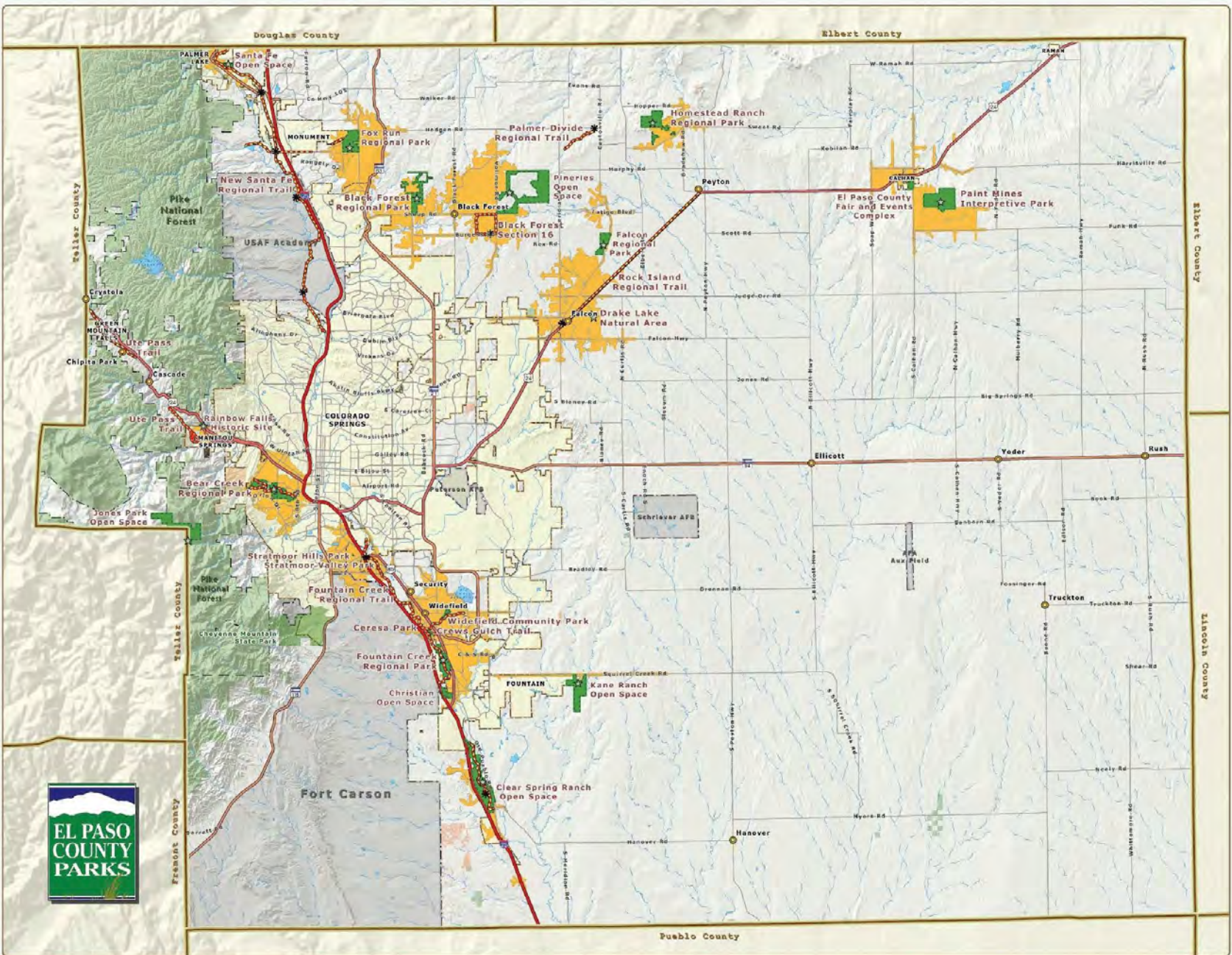
Legend

- 5 Minute Drive Time Area
- EPC Regional Parks
- EPC Major Trailheads
- EPC Regional Trails
- EPC Parks
- US Interstate Highways
- Major Highways
- Major Roadways
- Lakes & Reservoirs
- Creeks - Perennial
- Creeks - Intermittent
- Unincorporated Towns
- Military Areas
- Incorporated Cities
- Pike National Forest
- County Boundary

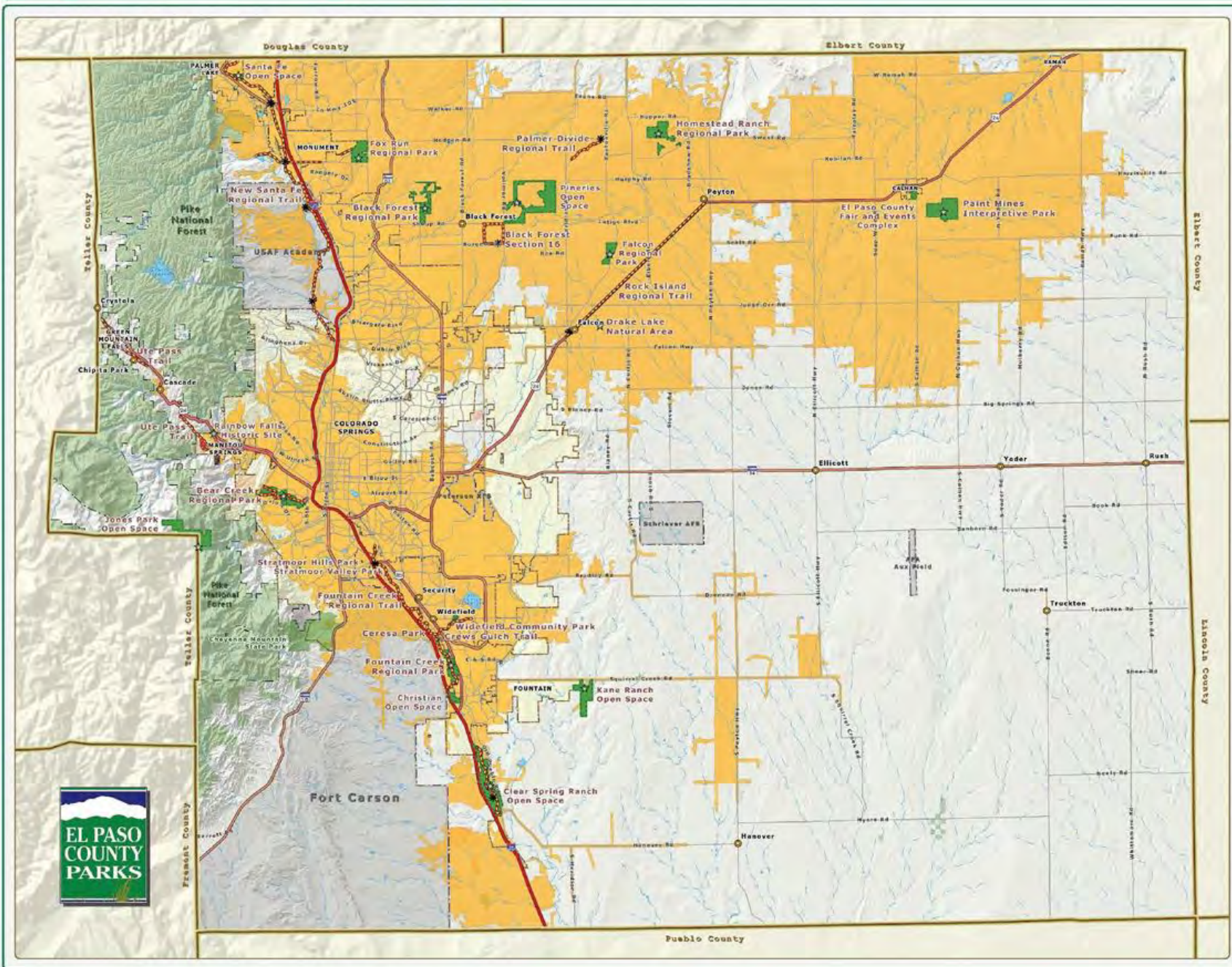
El Paso County wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Greenplay with the analysis that led to the development of this map.



June 2022
COPYRIGHT 2022 by the Board of County Commissioners, El Paso County, Colorado. All rights reserved. No part of this document or data contained herein may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or distributed without the specific written approval of the Board of County Commissioners, El Paso County, Colorado. This document was prepared from the best data available at the time of printing. El Paso County, Colorado, makes no claim as to the completeness or accuracy of the data contained herein.



Regional Access to Parks (15 Minutes)

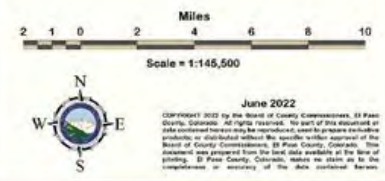


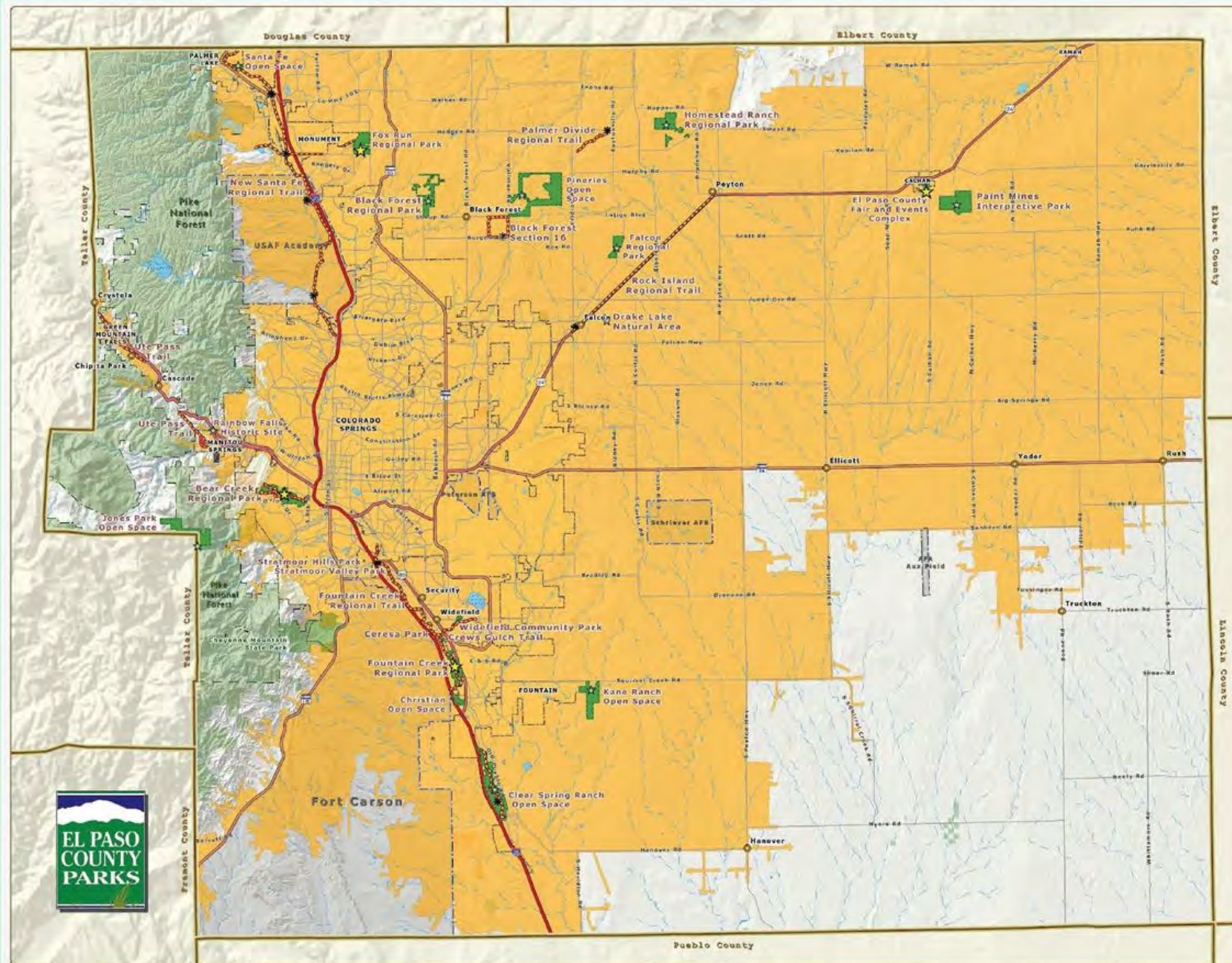
Regional Access to Parks (15 Minutes)

Legend

- 15 Minute Drive Time Area
- EPC Regional Parks
- EPC Major Trailheads
- EPC Regional Trails
- EPC Parks
- US Interstate Highways
- Major Highways
- Major Roadways
- Lakes & Reservoirs
- Creeks - Perennial
- Creeks - Intermittent
- Unincorporated Towns
- Military Areas
- Incorporated Cities
- Pike National Forest
- County Boundary

El Paso County wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Greenplay with the analysis that led to the development of this map.





Special Facilities Access (30 Minutes)

Legend

- 30 Minute Drive Time Area
- Special Facilities
- EPC Regional Parks
- EPC Major Trailheads
- EPC Regional Trails
- EPC Parks
- US Interstate Highways
- Major Highways
- Major Roadways
- Lakes & Reservoirs
- Creeks - Perennial
- Creeks - Intermittent
- Unincorporated Towns
- Military Areas
- Incorporated Cities
- Pike National Forest
- County Boundary

El Paso County wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Greenplay with the analysis that led to the development of this map.



June 2022
 COPYRIGHT 2022 by the Board of County Commissioners, El Paso County, Colorado. All rights reserved. No part of this document or any information herein may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or distributed without the express written approval of the Board of County Commissioners, El Paso County, Colorado. This document was prepared from the best data available at the time of printing. El Paso County, Colorado, makes no claim as to the completeness or accuracy of the data contained herein.

A photograph of children playing in a snowy park. In the foreground, a girl in a red jacket is building a snowman. Two boys in blue and grey jackets stand next to it, smiling. In the background, another child in a yellow jacket is visible. The scene is set in a snowy area with trees and a building in the distance.

Great Things to Come Goals and Recommendations



Key Themes

Focus Area One: System and Resource Management

Goal 1: Provide a coordinated and connected system of parks, trails, and open space that is equitably distributed based on population and serves the needs of county residents.

Goal 2: Balance passive/active use of county parks and open space and determine what is most appropriate for individual sites based on community need and master planning processes.

Goal 3: Pursue best practices in the management and administration of all department operations.

Goal 4: Provide high quality and safe experiences for users of county park facilities and recreational areas.

Focus Area Two: Parks

Goal 5: Prioritize taking care of and maximizing current assets over acquiring new assets to better serve El Paso County Residents.

Goal 6: Maintain a consistent and equitable level of services by filling gaps in existing service levels and providing new facilities and services to meet future population demand.

Focus Area Three: Trails

Goal 7: Update trail standards and improve maintenance of existing trails.

Goal 8: Work collaboratively with other governmental agencies, private organizations and trail advocacy groups to create a continuous, connected system of regional trails.

Goal 9: Prioritize and locate trail connections using criteria and proposed actions items identified in this master planning process.

Focus Area Four: Open Space

Goal 10: Protect and enhance El Paso County's legacy of unique natural features and areas and cultural resources, working in collaboration with others to conserve high priority open space areas in the county.

Focus Area Five: Recreation and Cultural Services Programs and Facilities

Goal 11: Provide high quality recreation and educational experiences for users of county park facilities and recreational areas.

Goal 12: Expand partnering and collaboration as a programming strategy.

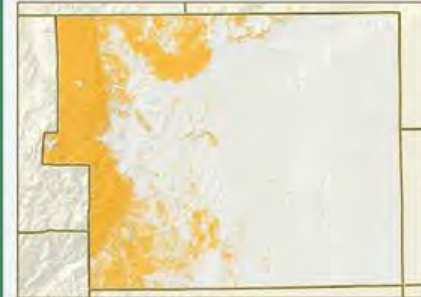
Focus Area Six: Implementation and Funding

Goal 13: Acknowledge the importance of parks and open space in El Paso County by providing adequate funding to develop, operate, and maintain these resources at a level commensurate with their importance.

Goal 14: Enhance El Paso County Parks through alternative funding sources.

A scenic landscape photograph featuring a pond in the foreground, a white-barked tree with heart-shaped carvings on the right, and a dense forest in the background. The text "Parks, Trails, Open Spaces" is overlaid in the center.

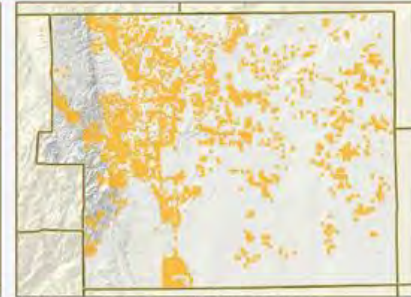
Parks, Trails, Open Spaces



A. Wildfire Hazard Areas



B. Existing/Proposed Parks/Trails - Varying Buffers



C. Vacant Lands - 1/8 Mile Buffer



D. Landmarks & Landforms - 1/2 Mile Buffer



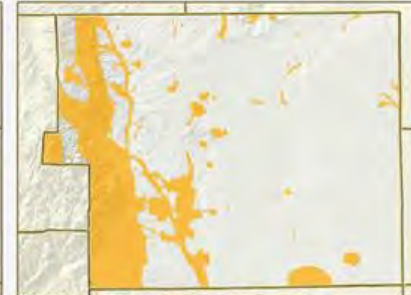
E. Slope > 30%



F. Colorado Natural Heritage Program



G. Federally Protected Wildlife - Prebles



H. Wildlife Impact - High & Very High



I. Upper Black Squirrel Creek Alluvial Aquifer



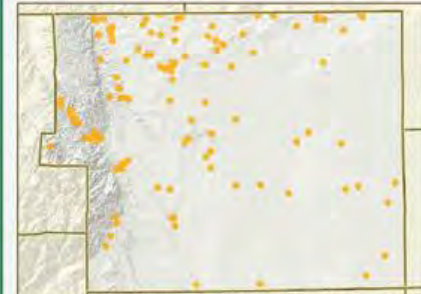
J. 100-Year Floodplain



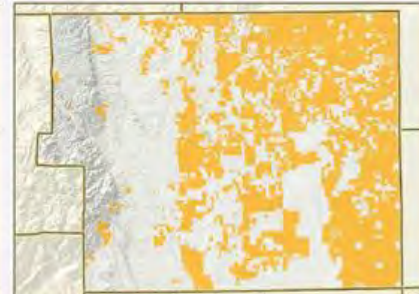
K. Surface Water - 1/4 Mile Buffer



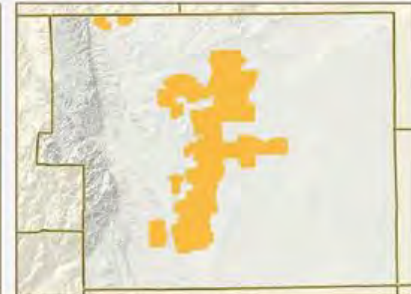
L. Wetlands - 1/4 Mile Buffer



M. Cultural and Historic Sites - 1/2 Mile Buffer



N. Existing Agricultural Lands



O. Projected High Growth Areas



P. Administrative Areas - Varying Buffers

Open Space Values Attributes

GIS Data Layers

- A. Forested and High Wildfire Hazard Areas
 - a. National Land Cover Dataset (NLCD)
- B. Existing Parks and Trails (1/4 & 1/2 Mile Buffer)
 - a. El Paso County Park Areas
 - b. El Paso County Trails
 - c. Colorado Springs Park Areas
 - d. Colorado Springs Trails
 - e. Colorado State Parks
- C. Vacant Lands (1/8 Mile Buffer)
 - a. Current Land Use Data
 - b. El Paso County Assessor Parcels
- D. Significant Landmarks & Landforms (1/2-Mile Buffer)
 - a. 2013 EPC Parks Master Plan
- E. Slope > 30%
 - a. 30% Slope Raster Dataset (2011 LIDAR Data)
- F. Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP)
 - a. CNHP Network Conservation Areas
 - b. CNHP Potential Conservation Areas
 - c. Conservation Easements
 - d. Nature Conservancy Lands
- G. Federally Protected Wildlife (200' Buffer)
 - a. Prebles Meadow Jumping Mouse Creek Buffer
 - b. Prebles Meadow Jumping Mouse Floodplain Buffer
- H. Wildlife Impact Areas (High & Very High)
 - a. Colorado Parks and Wildlife Impact Data
- I. Upper Black Squirrel Creek Alluvial Aquifer
- J. 100-Year Floodplain
 - a. FEMA FIRM Floodplain Data
- K. Surface Water (1/4 Mile Buffer)
 - a. Creeks and Streams
 - b. Lakes and Reservoirs
- L. Wetlands (1/4 Mile Buffer)
 - a. National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) Data
- M. Cultural & Historic Sites (1/2 Mile Buffer)
 - a. Elaine Freed: Historic Sites & Structures
- N. Existing Agricultural Lands
 - a. Current Land Use Data
 - b. NLCD 1992 Land Cover Dataset
- O. Projected High Growth Areas (1/2 Mile Buffer)
 - a. 2021 El Paso County Master Plan
- P. Administrative Areas
 - a. Military Installations
 - b. Federal, State, and County Lands
 - c. Political Subdivisions
 - d. Public School Property (1/2 Mile Buffer)

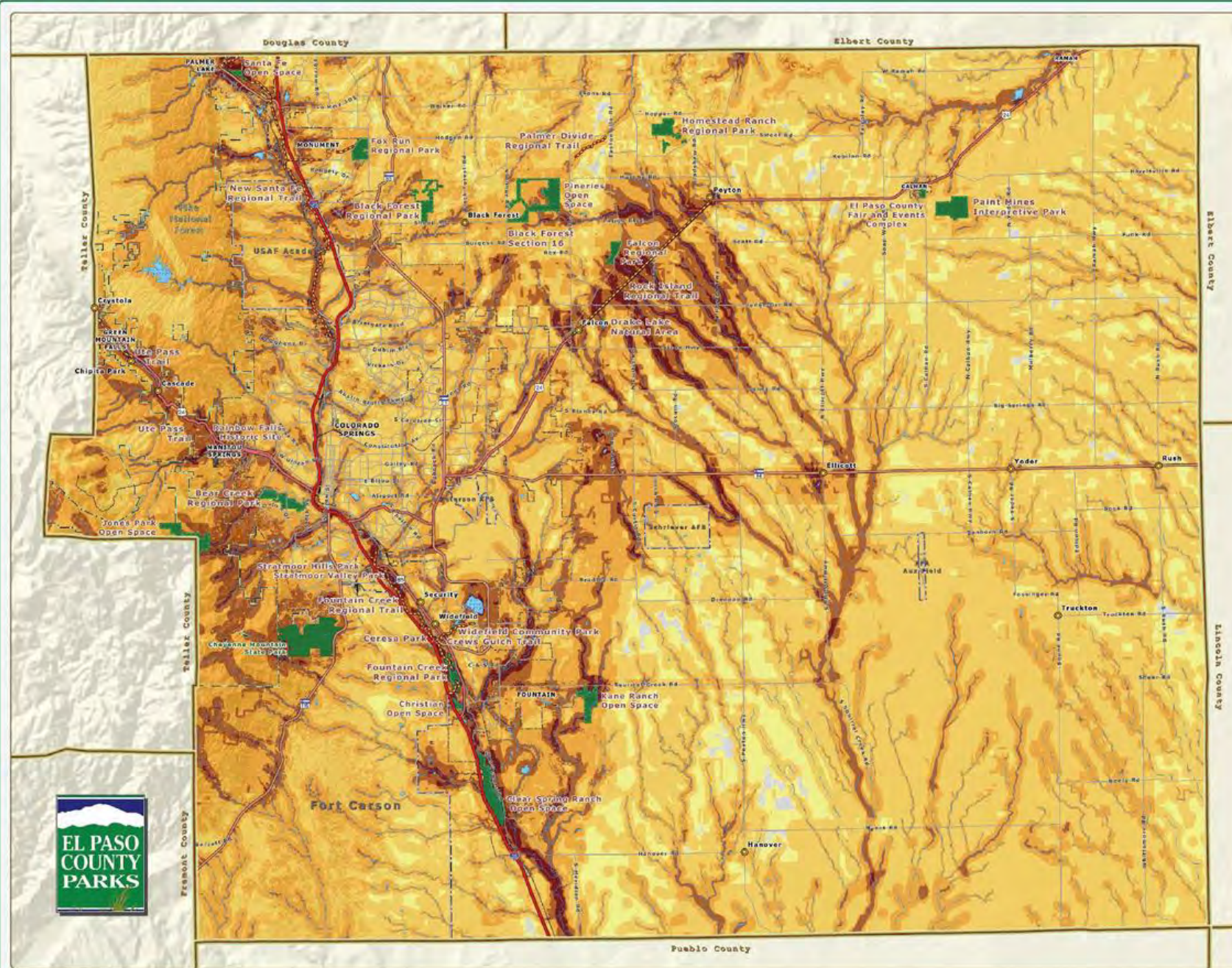
El Paso County wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Greenplay with the initial analysis that led to the development of this map.



June 2022

COPYRIGHT 2022 by the Board of County Commissioners, El Paso County, Colorado. All Rights Reserved. No part of this document or any information contained herein may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the Board of County Commissioners, El Paso County, Colorado. This map was prepared from the best data available at the time of printing. El Paso County, Colorado, makes no claim as to the completeness or accuracy of the data contained herein.





Open Space Composite Analysis

Legend

Potential Open Space Values

Lower Attribute Value



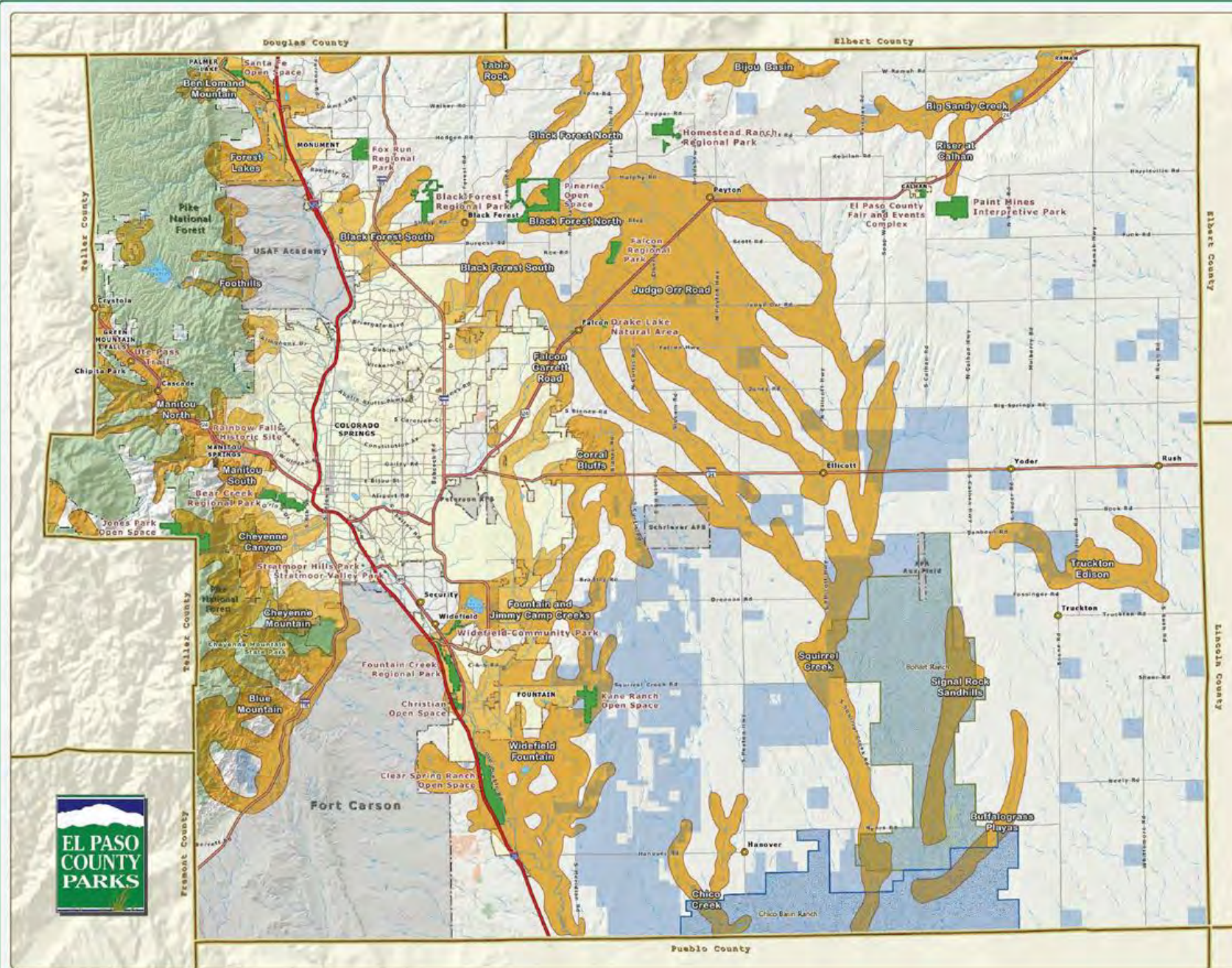
Higher Attribute Value

- EPC Parks
- EPC Regional Trails
- US Interstate Highways
- Major Highways
- Major Roadways
- Railroads
- Lakes & Reservoirs
- Creeks - Perennial
- Creeks - Intermittent
- Unincorporated Towns
- Incorporated Cities
- Military Areas
- Pike National Forest
- County Boundary

El Paso County wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Greenplay with the initial analysis that led to the development of this map.



June 2022
Copyright 2022 by the Board of County Commissioners, El Paso County, Colorado. All rights reserved. No part of this document or data contained herein may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, or otherwise, without the prior written approval of the Board of County Commissioners, El Paso County, Colorado. This document was prepared from the best available information at the time of printing. El Paso County, Colorado, makes no claim as to the completeness or accuracy of the data contained herein.

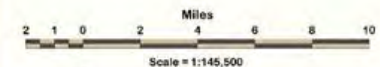


Candidate Open Space Areas

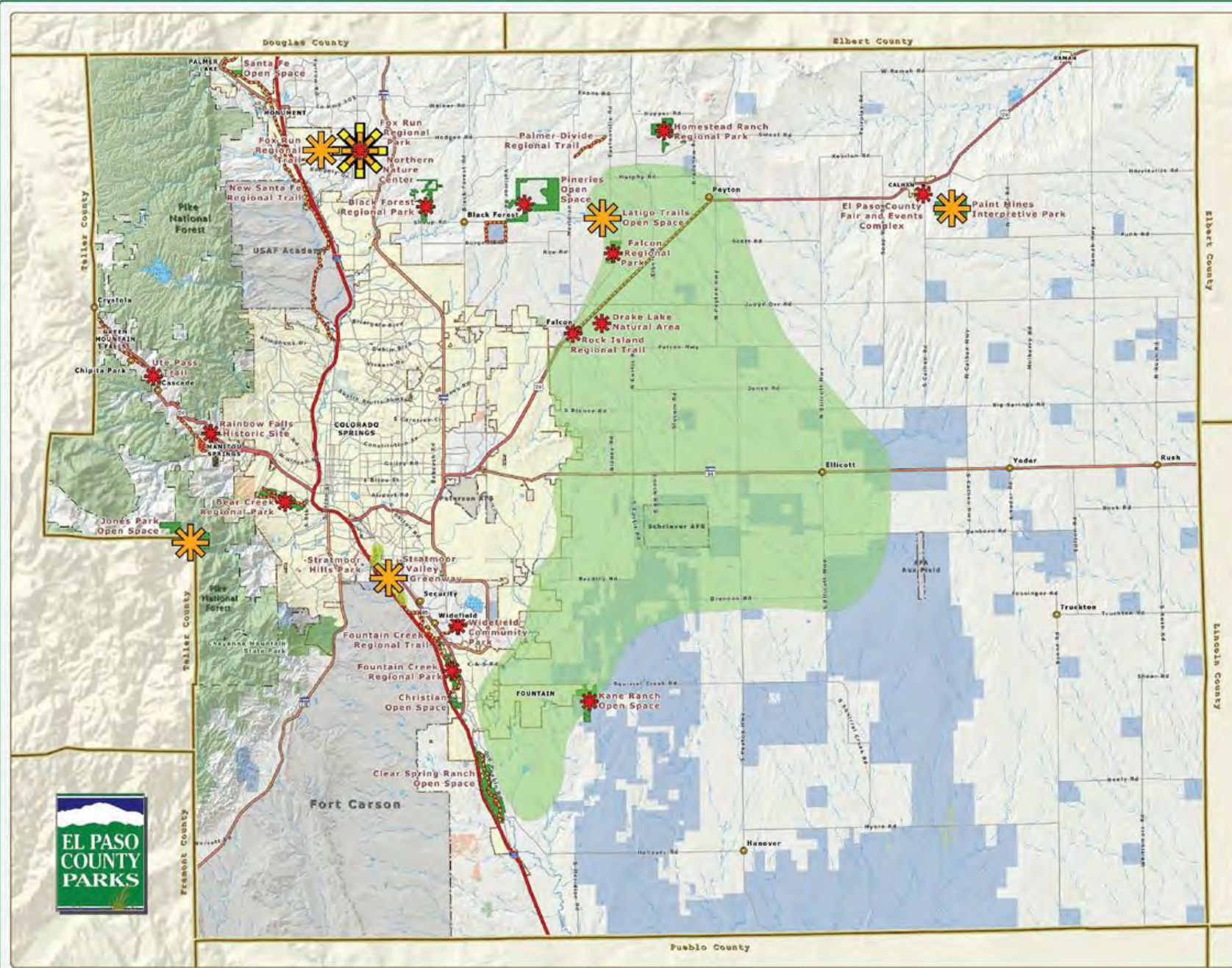
Legend

- Candidate Open Space Areas
- El Paso County Parks
- Military Areas
- County Lands
- Federal Lands
- State Lands
- Pike National Forest
- Incorporated Cities
- Nature Conservancy Lands:**
 - Bohart Ranch
 - Chico Basin Ranch
- Unincorporated Towns
- US Interstate Highways
- US Highways
- State Highways
- Major Roadways
- Railroads
- Lakes & Reservoirs
- Creeks - Perennial
- Creeks - Intermittent
- County Boundary

* Candidate Open Space Areas represent areas of medium to high open space values as calculated in the Open Space Composite Analysis.



June 2022
Copyright 2022 by the Board of County Commissioners, El Paso County, Colorado. All rights reserved. No part of this document or data contained herein may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the Board of County Commissioners, El Paso County, Colorado. This document was prepared from the best data available at the time of printing. El Paso County, Colorado, makes no claim as to the completeness or accuracy of the data contained herein.

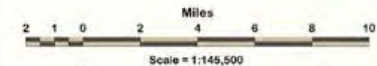


Parks Master Plan

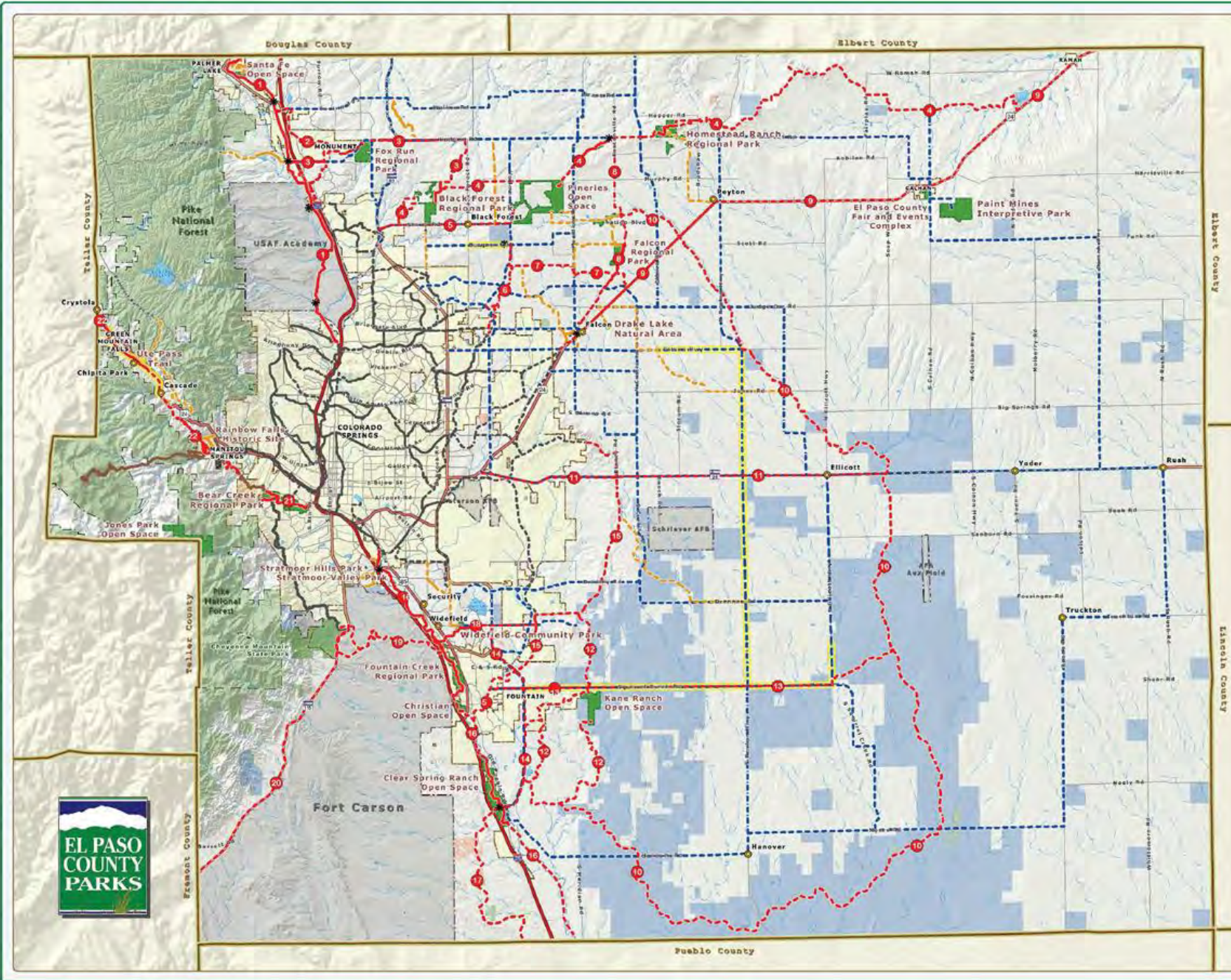
Legend

- Proposed Capital Project (2022-2026)
- Master Plan or Site Planning
- Special Facility Planning / Construction
- Stratmoor Valley Greenway
- Candidate Regional Park / Open Space Area

- EPC Regional Trails
- EPC Parks
- EPC Trailheads
- US Interstate Highways
- US Highways
- State Highways
- Major Roadways
- Railroads
- Lakes & Reservoirs
- Creeks - Perennial
- Creeks - Intermittent
- Unincorporated Towns
- Military Areas
- County Lands
- Federal Lands
- State Lands
- Incorporated Cities
- Pike National Forest
- County Boundary



June 2022
Copyright 2022 by the Board of County Commissioners, El Paso County, Colorado. All rights reserved. No part of this document or its contents may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the Board of County Commissioners, El Paso County, Colorado. This document was prepared from the best data available at the time of printing. El Paso County, Colorado, makes no claim as to the completeness or accuracy of the data contained herein.



Trails Master Plan

Legend

Existing & Proposed Regional Trails

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 New Santa Fe Trail | 12 Kane Ranch Trail |
| 2 Jackson Creek Trail | 13 Squirrel Creek Trail |
| 3 Fox Run Trail | 14 South Powers Blvd Trail |
| 4 Palmer Divide Trail | 15 Jimmy Camp Creek Trail |
| 5 Black Forest Trail | 16 Fountain Creek Trail |
| 6 Sand Creek Trail | 17 Fountain Creek West Trail |
| 7 Arroya Lane Trail | 18 Crews Gulch Trail |
| 8 Eastonville Trail | 19 Chamberlain Trail |
| 9 Rock Island Trail | 20 Highway 115 Trail |
| 10 Great Plains Trail | 21 Bear Creek Trail |
| 11 Highway 94 Trail | 22 Ute Pass Trail |

- Completed Primary Regional Trails
- Proposed Primary Regional Trails
- Completed Secondary Regional Trails
- Proposed Secondary Regional Trails
- Proposed Bicycle Routes
- Trails By Others
- Existing City Trails
- Proposed City Trails
- 2040 MTCP Multimodal Projects

Base Map Information

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| EPC Trailheads | Interstate Highways |
| EPC Parks | Major Highways |
| State Land Board | State Highways |
| Incorporated Cities | Major Roadways |
| Military Areas | Railroads |
| Pike National Forest | Lakes & Reservoirs |
| County Boundary | Creeks - Perennial |
| Unincorporated Towns | Creeks - Intermittent |

2 1 0 2 4 6 8 10
Miles

Scale = 1:145,500



June 2022

COPYRIGHT 2022 by the Board of County Commissioners, El Paso County, Colorado. All rights reserved. The part of the document or data contained herein may be reproduced without the express written permission of the Board of County Commissioners, El Paso County, Colorado. This document was prepared from the best data available at the time of printing. El Paso County, Colorado, makes no claim as to the completeness or accuracy of the data contained herein.



A scenic landscape photograph featuring a calm pond in the foreground, reflecting the sky and surrounding trees. A prominent birch tree with white bark and black lenticels stands on the right side of the frame. The background is filled with a dense forest of evergreen and deciduous trees under a clear blue sky. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

Capital Improvements and Critical Needs

Parks as Economic Drivers

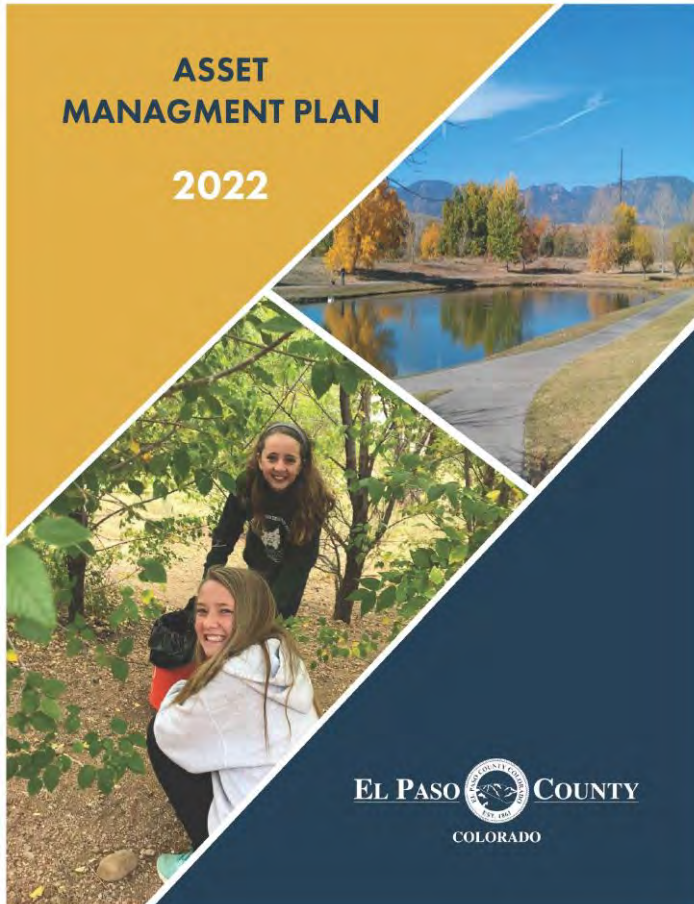
According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis the outdoor recreation economy accounted for 1.8 percent (\$374.3 billion) GDP for the nation in 2020.

Outdoor Recreation accounts for 2.5% of Colorado's GDP. **In 2020, nearly \$10 billion dollars of value was added to the Colorado economy from outdoor recreation.**

Over \$5.6 million in compensation was distributed from 120,063 jobs across the state.

Data from *Esri Business Analyst* estimate that **El Paso County residents collectively spend more than \$206 million on recreation expenditures in the area each year.**

County Parks Asset Management Plan



Black Forest Regional Park



Black Forest Regional Park includes 382 acres and is located in the Black Forest, approximately four miles east of Interstate 25 on Shoup Road. The Black Forest Fire in 2013 burned over 74 percent of the park destroying the forested canopy and leaving behind flood-prone soils. In 2019 dead-standing trees were removed, drainage improvements were completed, and a new stacked loop trail system was constructed. The developed area was not significantly impacted by the fire, and consists of turf playfields, tennis courts, and two picnic pavilions. A 14-mile, loop trail system (used for non-motorized recreation) winds through the park.

What Assets are at this Park?

The following table summarizes the various types of park assets located at Black Forest Regional Park.

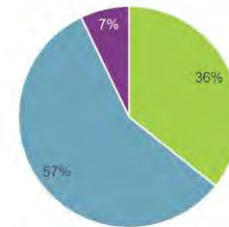
Table 7: Black Forest Regional Park Inventory

Black Forest Regional Park	
Unique Map ID	Component
C060	Basketball, Practice
C057	Horseshoe Court
C084	Playground
C072	Rectangular Field, Large
C110	Shelter, Large
C111	Shelter, Large
C701	Structure, Kiosk
C387	Structure, Restroom
C058	Tennis Court
C059	Tennis Court
C056	Trailhead

What is the Condition of the Assets?

During the asset inventory field visit, each asset was assessed and given a condition rating. The figure below summarizes the results of the condition assessment.

Figure 4: Black Forest Regional Park Condition Assessment Summary



- Health or Safety Concern (0)
- Below Expectations (1)
- Meets Expectation (2)
- Exceeds Expectations (3)

Black Forest Regional Park

What Actions Need to be Taken?

In total, there are 14 assets located within Black Forest Regional Park. The sum of all Capital Improvement needs is estimated, in 2022 dollars, to be approximately \$1.6 million. This estimate accounts for component replacement or repair, irrigation upgrades and hardscape need in the next 10 years. Short-term Capital Improvements are considered "Critical Need". These include Health or **Safety Concerns** and components identified as being **Below Expectations**.

Table 8: Black Forest Regional Park Capital Improvement Estimates

Facility	Sum of Subtotal
Mid-term	\$987,778
Playground	\$500,000
Playground, Resurfacing	\$213,378
Upper Drive/Parking Lot Pavement	\$274,400
Short-term	\$623,088
Turf (High Need on Rectangular Field)	\$162,000
Turf Condition (High Need on Rectangular Field)	\$162,000
Upper Parking lot Retaining Wall repair	\$15,000
Tennis Court and Basketball Court Renovation	\$274,998
Beds - Irrigation	\$9,090
Grand Total	\$1,610,866

- The playground is still functional but should be incorporated into a replacement schedule (this will alleviate the financial burden of having to replace multiple playgrounds at one time in the future).
- Tennis court surfacing is in significant need of repair.
- Basketball backboards are awkwardly located on tennis courts and should be considered for relocation.
- The gravel drive to the upper parking lot is in significant need of repair and should be paved for improved accessibility.



County Parks Capital & Critical Needs

\$44.6 MILLION NEED

Short-term Needs (1-3 years) = \$14.5 million

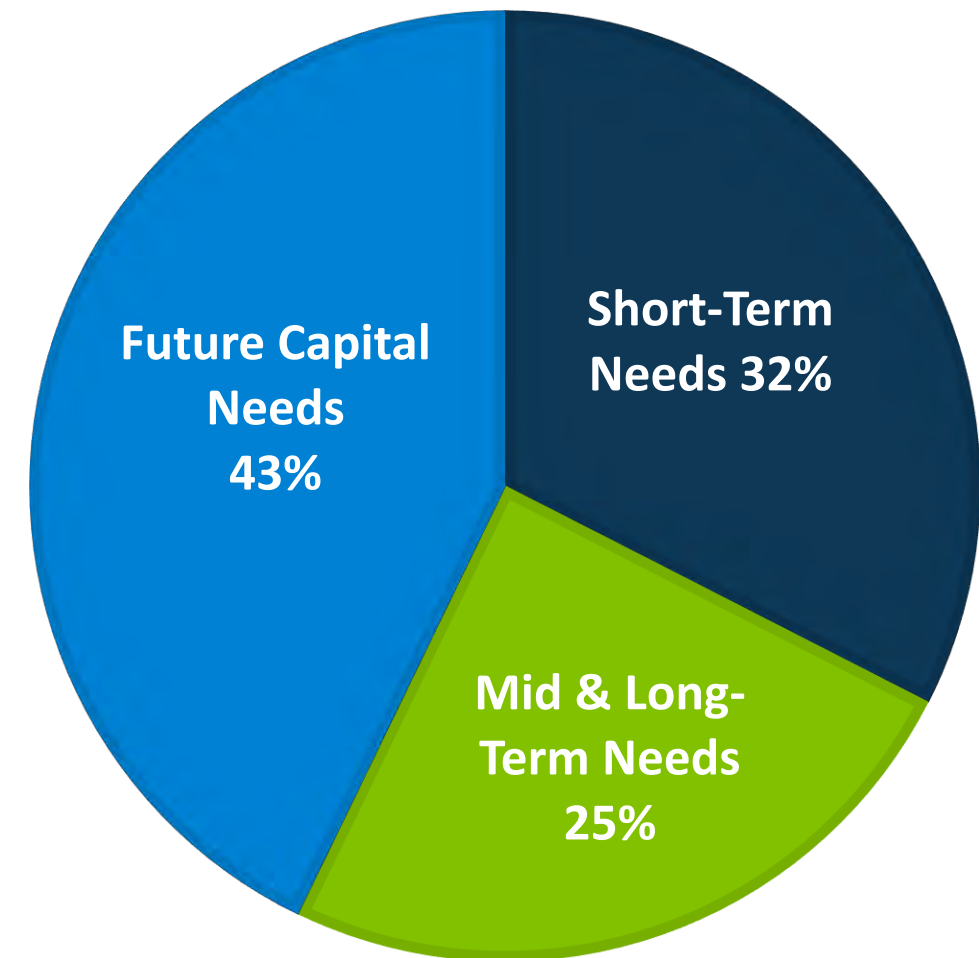
- Critical needs, ADA, facility repairs/replacements

Mid and Long-term Needs (4-10 years) = \$11 million

- Facility upgrades, playground replacements

Future Planned Capital Improvements = \$19.1 million

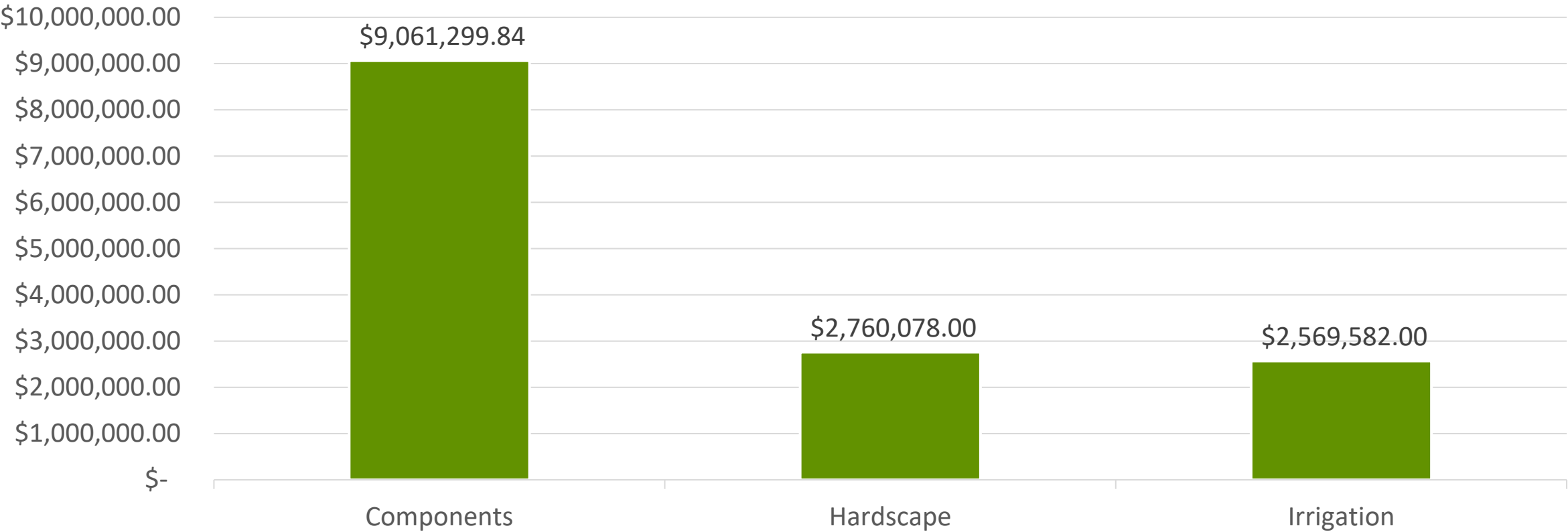
- Unfunded master plan identified improvements



Short-Term Needs \$14.5 million



Short-term Capital Needs





Questions?