



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL COVER SHEET & SIGNATURE PAGE

Date: March 21, 2014

Project Number: 14-023

Project Name: Analysis and Final Report for The Pueblo Natural Resources and Environmental Education Council “Plug in to Nature” Project
(Project No. and Name must be shown on outside of submittal package and on any email correspondence)

Submit Sealed Proposals to: City of Pueblo
Purchasing Department
230 S. Mechanic Street
Pueblo, CO 81003

Purchasing Contact: Naomi Hedden, CPPO
Director of Purchasing
purchasing@pueblo.us
www.pueblo.us/purchasing

RFP Submission Deadline: April 15, 2014 at 2:00 PM (MT)
Note: Late submittals will not be accepted.
Purchasing Office hours are 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM.
Proposers are responsible to ensure timely receipt within that time.

Project Manager: Scott Hobson
Assistant City Manager for
Community Development
719-553-2244
shobson@pueblo.us

Number of Copies To be submitted: Six (6) hard copies: One unbound and untabbed copy, **five (5)** bound and tabbed copies, **and** a copy in electronic format are required.

Purpose of Solicitation

The Pueblo Natural Resource Environmental Education Council - “Plug in to Nature” will complete an analysis of the 18 square mile low-moderate income census blocks within the City of Pueblo to determine the current levels of connectedness that youth and families have to the outdoors and nature. The goal of the project is to reveal gaps and barriers that may prevent such connections, and identify opportunities on which to build in order to link more people within the project area to nature.

The result of the study will be to develop strategies based on the residents’ satisfaction, accessibility, and suggested improvements needed to improve connections with the outdoors and nature. The plan will establish measurement tools to evaluate the performance of project implementation over time. Great Outdoors Colorado Trust Fund has awarded the City of Pueblo \$45,000 for professional services to complete the analysis and provide a Final Report and Recommendation regarding, “Access and Barriers,” “Partner Opportunities,” “Underserved Populations,” and “Suitable Lands” to increase participation in outdoor activities.

Proposer shall furnish all personnel, supervision, management, equipment, materials, and/or transportation, necessary to perform these services. A scored evaluation will be conducted for each submittal and award will be made to the Proposer whose proposal is determined to be the most advantageous to the City of Pueblo considering the evaluation factors set forth in Section 2.

Please be advised that electronic submissions (i.e. fax, emails, etc.) will not be accepted as a sealed proposal. Proposers are urged to read the attached solicitation documents thoroughly before submitting a proposal.

The City of Pueblo (City) reserves the right to reject any and all proposals for any or all items covered in the Request for Proposal, to waive informalities or defects in proposals or to accept any submittal as it shall deem to be in the best interest of the City. The procurement of these services shall be contingent upon appropriation of the necessary funds, and only after final approval and execution of an Agreement.

Disclaimer

The City of Pueblo (City) provides all non-construction solicitations for interested parties to download free of charge via the Rocky Mountain E-Purchasing System (RMEPS) and on the City's website, www.pueblo.us/purchasing. Consultants can also choose to register with RMEPS to get notifications automatically emailed to them for a nominal annual fee. Additionally, interested parties may visit the Purchasing Office during normal working hours and request hardcopies of any current solicitation at the same cost allowed for CORA requests. **If the Proposer cannot verify that the RFP documents were obtained from either of these two websites or our office, we cannot guarantee the validity of the document and their proposal may be rejected.**

Please confirm how your document was obtained:

Downloaded from RMEPS ____ or City Purchasing Website ____ ; Hardcopy or email from Purchasing Office ____

The undersigned, having carefully read and considered the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the above referenced project, does hereby offer to provide such goods and services on behalf of the City in the manner described and subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the attached RFP. All Services will be provided at the rates set forth in submitted proposal or as negotiated by all involved parties.

Proposer acknowledges that the company is qualified to provide these types of Services. At any time during the selection and award process, the City may request information substantiating the indicated requirements. Failure to provide this information may result in a Consultant's proposal being declared non-responsive.

Proposer acknowledges and accepts that all components of and responses to this RFP will be included and become a part of the final agreement by reference.

The undersigned further states that this Proposal is made in good faith and that the prices offered were independently developed and are not founded on, or in consequence of, any collusion, agreement or understanding between themselves or any other interested party.

By signing below, Proposer certifies that he/she is an officer or duly authorized agent of the Proposer's firm with full power and authority to submit binding offers for the goods or services as specified.

MANDATORY – RETURN BOTH PAGES WITH YOUR RESPONSE. UNSIGNED PROPOSALS WILL BE CONSIDERED NON-RESPONSIVE AND REJECTED. RESPONDER MUST ATTACH A CERTIFICATE OF GOOD STANDING FROM THE STATE WHEREIN RESPONDER WAS ORGANIZED.

Authorized Signature (required)

Company Name

Printed Name

Address

Title

City, State, Zip

Colorado (Sales) Tax License Number

Office Phone Number

Federal Employer Identification Number

Cell Phone Number

Company Email Address

Fax Number

For clarification of this Proposal contact:
(If different from above)

Contact Name

Email Address

Phone Number

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SECTION 1. ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS & INFORMATION

1.1 Bid Information, Requests for Clarification, and Addenda

All bid solicitation documents are posted on the City's Purchasing Department website and on Rocky Mountain E-Purchasing System. Any changes or revisions to our published solicitation documents will be through written addendum posted on both of these websites. It is entirely the Proposer's responsibility to check the City Purchasing website (www.pueblo.us/purchasing) for any Addenda that may be available in the event that any emailed notifications of addenda were not received.

It is also the Proposer's responsibility to make email, written or fax inquiries concerning this solicitation to obtain clarification of requirements; however, inquiries made by electronic mail are preferred. All inquiries must be made to the Purchasing Contact (with a "cc" to the Project Managers) listed on the first page of the RFP at least seven (7) days prior to the date of submittal openings and must indicate the Project Number on the subject line.

1.2 Allegation of Misunderstanding

Proposers shall inform themselves of the conditions of the project site and the requirements of the project's scope of work before submitting their proposal. No allowances shall be made by reason of any matter or thing concerning which they might not have been fully informed prior to the bidding. No Proposer will be heard after the opening of proposals to assert that there was any misunderstanding as to the nature of the operation expected in this solicitation. If a pre-bid meeting is held, Proposers should make every effort to attend. If the pre-bid meeting is mandatory and the Proposer cannot attend, it is imperative that someone else attend as a representative of the company, otherwise their bid will not be accepted at the time of bid opening.

1.3 Omissions

Should the City omit anything from the RFP which is necessary for a clear understanding of the work, or should it appear that various instructions are in conflict, the Proposer submitting the Proposal shall secure clarification from the Project Manager or Purchasing Contact at least three (3) business days prior to the time of the opening date given above.

1.4 Written Agreement

The selected firm shall be required to enter into an agreement with the City; in substantially the same form attached hereto as the City's Agreement (see "Sample Agreement" – Exhibit A). The firm will be required to comply with all applicable Federal and State Standards, orders and regulations. Proposers must identify in their responsive submittal any provisions of the contract form that they request be modified, together with the proposed modification language. Signature on the RFP Response Cover Sheet & Signature Page shall serve as an acknowledgement that the proposer is willing to enter into the referenced agreement with the City of Pueblo if their Proposal is accepted.

1.5 Colorado PERA Questionnaire

The Proposer shall fill out the questionnaire attached as Exhibit B and submit the completed form to the City as part of the bid whether PERA applies to them or not. In accordance with this PERA form, and if this applies to the Proposer, the Proposer shall reimburse the City for the full amount of any employee contribution required to be paid by the City of Pueblo to the Public Employees' Retirement Association ("PERA") for salary or other compensation paid to a PERA retiree performing contracted services for the City under this Agreement.

1.6 State-Imposed Mandates Prohibiting Illegal Aliens From Performing Work

By signing the Request for Proposal Cover Sheet and Signature Page, the Proposer acknowledges that they have read the following information and agrees that they are in compliance with these provisions.

1.6.1 At or prior to the time for execution of this Contract, Consultant shall submit to the Purchasing Agent of the City its certification that it does not knowingly employ or contract with an illegal alien who will perform work under this Contract and that the Consultant will participate in either the "E-Verify Program" created in Public Law 208, 104th Congress, as amended and expanded in Public law 156, 108th Congress, as amended, that is administered by the United States Department of Homeland Security or the "Department Program" established pursuant to §8-17.5-102(5)(c), C.R.S. that is administered by the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment in order to confirm the employment eligibility of all employees who are newly hired for employment to perform work under this Contract.

1.6.2 Consultant shall not:

1.6.2.1 Knowingly employ or contract with an illegal alien to perform work under this Contract;

1.6.2.2 Enter into a contract with a subconsultant that fails to certify to Consultant that the subconsultant shall not knowingly employ or contract with an illegal alien to perform work under this Contract.

1.6.3 The following state-imposed requirements apply to this Contract:

1.6.3.1 The Consultant shall have confirmed the employment eligibility of all employees who are newly hired for employment to perform work under this Contract through participation in either the E-Verify Program or Department Program.

1.6.3.2 The Consultant is prohibited from using either the E-Verify Program or Department Program procedures to undertake pre-employment screening of job applicants while this contract is being performed.

1.6.3.3 If the Consultant obtains actual knowledge that a subconsultant performing work under this Contract knowingly employs or contracts with an illegal alien to perform work under this Contract, the Consultant shall be required to:

a) Notify the subconsultant and the Purchasing Agent of the City within three (3) days that the Consultant has actual knowledge that the subconsultant is employing or contracting with an illegal alien; and

b) Terminate the subcontract with the subconsultant if, within three (3) days of receiving the notice required pursuant to subparagraph 1.6.3.3 (a) above, the subconsultant does not stop employing or contracting with the illegal alien; except that the Consultant shall not terminate the contract with the subconsultant if, during such three (3) days, the subconsultant provides information to establish that the subconsultant has not knowingly employed or contracted with an illegal alien.

c) The Consultant is required to comply with any reasonable request by the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (hereinafter referred to as "CDLE") made in the course of an investigation that CDLE is undertaking pursuant to its authority under §8-17.5-102(5), C.R.S.

1.6.3.4 Violation of this Section by the Consultant shall constitute a breach of contract and grounds for termination. In the event of such termination, the Consultant shall be liable for City's actual and consequential damages.

1.6.3.5 Nothing in this Section shall be construed as requiring the Consultant to violate any terms of participation in the E-Verify Program.

1.7 Rejection of Proposal

No Proposal shall be accepted from, or contract awarded to, any person, company or corporation that is in arrears to the City, upon debt or contract or that is a defaulter, as surety or otherwise, upon any obligation to the City, or that may be deemed irresponsible or unreliable by the City. Proposers may be required to submit satisfactory evidence that they have the necessary financial resources and experience to perform and complete the work outlined in this RFP. The City reserves the right to request any additional information as needed to make a sound evaluation decision.

1.8 Proposal Ownership/Confidentiality

All Proposals, including inquiries, correspondence, attachments, supplementary materials, addenda, etc. shall become the property of the City and will not be returned to the Proposer. The Proposer must state specifically what elements of the proposal are to be considered confidential or proprietary and must state the statutory basis for the request under the Public (open) Records Act. (Section 24-72-201 et seq., C.R.S.). Confidential or Proprietary information must be readily identified, marked and separated from the rest of the proposal. Co-mingling of confidential or proprietary and other information is not acceptable. Neither a proposal, in its entirety, nor proposal price information will be considered confidential and proprietary. Any information that will be included in any resulting contract cannot be considered confidential. Ref. Section 24-72-201 et. seq., C.R.S., as amended, Public (open) Records Act.

1.9 Debarment

By submitting this Proposal, the Proposer certifies that neither the company nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, in the process of debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal department or agency.

1.10 Equal Opportunity

The City of Pueblo is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Proposers will commit to and meet the nondiscrimination and equal employment requirements of Section 1-8-3, P.M.C. (copy provided on Purchasing website). Minority and Woman Owned Businesses are encouraged to submit Proposals.

The City of Pueblo will make every effort to ensure that all Proposers are treated fairly and equally throughout the entire solicitation, evaluation and selection process. The procedures established herein are designed to give all parties reasonable access to the same basic information.

1.11 Statement of Noncommitment

All costs related to the preparation of the proposals and any related activities are the sole responsibility of the Proposer. The City assumes no liability for any costs incurred by Proposers throughout the entire selection process or should the project be cancelled. Issuance of this RFP does not commit the City of Pueblo to award a contract. The City of Pueblo reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to readvertise should the need arise. All proposals will become property of the City.

1.12 Preparation of Proposals

The proposal **MUST** be signed by the Proposer as an officer of the company legally authorized to bind the company contractually. Signature must appear on the RFP Cover Sheet and Signature Page of this solicitation, signed in ink, preferably blue. Signature on this referenced form shall serve as acknowledgment that the Proposer is willing to enter into an agreement with the City of Pueblo and be governed by the Terms and Conditions set forth within this solicitation if their Proposal is accepted. Proposer acknowledges and accepts that all components of and responses to this RFP will be included and become a part of the final agreement.

Failure to read the RFP and these instructions will be at the Proposer's own risk. The person signing the Proposals must initial all corrections in ink. Corrections and/or modifications received after the specified bid closing time will not be accepted.

When approximate quantities or dollar amounts are stated, the City reserves the right to increase or decrease the quantity and/or amount as best fits its needs. No service shall be performed or become due unless a Written Agreement or Purchase Order shall first have been issued by the City's Purchasing Department.

1.13 Insurance and Indemnity.

1.13.1 Consultant agrees that it shall procure and will maintain during the term of this Agreement, such insurance as will protect it from claims under workers' compensation acts, claims for damages because of personal injury including bodily injury, sickness or disease or death of any of its employees or of any person other than its employees, and from claims or damages because of injury to or destruction of property including loss of use resulting therefrom; and such insurance will provide for coverage in such amounts as set forth below.

1.13.2 The minimum insurance coverage which Consultant shall obtain and keep in force is as follows:

1.13.2.1 Workers' Compensation Insurance complying with statutory requirements in Colorado and in any other state or states where the work is performed. The Workers' Compensation Insurance policy shall contain an endorsement waiving subrogation against the Client.

1.13.2.2 Commercial General Liability Insurance issued to and covering the liability of Consultant with respect to all work performed by Consultant and its subcontractors and subconsultants under this Agreement, to be written on a Commercial General Liability policy form CG 00 01, with coverage limits of not less than Six Hundred Thousand and No/100 Dollars (\$600,000.00) per person and occurrence for personal injury, including but not limited to death and bodily injury, and Six Hundred Thousand and No/100 Dollars (\$600,000.00) per occurrence for property damage, and One Million and No/100 Dollars (\$1,000,000.00) for excess umbrella liability.

1.13.2.3 Professional Liability Insurance with coverage of not less than \$1,000,000, and with a deductible of not more than \$5,000.

1.13.2.4 Comprehensive Automobile Liability Insurance effective during the period of the Agreement, and for such additional time as work on the Project is being performed, written with limits of liability for injury to one person in any single occurrence of not less than \$350,000 and for any injury to two or more persons in any single occurrence of not less than \$1,000,000. This insurance shall include uninsured/underinsured motorist coverage and shall protect the Consultant from any and all claims arising from the use both on and off the Project site of motor vehicles, including any automobiles, trucks, tractors, backhoes and similar equipment whether owned, leased, hired or used by Consultant.

1.13.3 Consultant agrees to hold harmless, defend and indemnify Client from and against any liability to third parties, arising out of negligent acts or omissions of Consultant, its employees, subcontractors and consultants.

SECTION 2. EVALUATION, SELECTION OF SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL AND CONTRACT AWARD

The City reserves the right to make an award on receipt of initial proposals. Proposers are encouraged to submit their most favorable proposal at the time established for receipt of proposals.

Proposals will be opened at the City's Purchasing Office then presented to the appointed selection committee for evaluation. Selection will be determined by the apparent capability of Proposer to meet all the requirements that best meet the needs of the City. The decision of the City's selection committee shall be final and conclusive. Award will be by means of a written Notice of Award to the selected Proposer.

The City shall evaluate and select Proposals to provide the required services based on the completed proposal responses. The City shall be the sole judge in determining how the evaluation process shall be conducted and what vendor shall be considered for award as deemed to be in the best interest of the City. The Evaluation Committee will make their final selections based on the submittals that receive a score of 75 percent or higher.

The City may conduct such investigations, as the City considers necessary to assist in the evaluation of any proposal to establish the responsibility, qualifications and financial ability of any potential Consultant to perform the services specified under this RFP within the prescribed time.

The evaluation criteria noted below are the criteria to be used for evaluation of this RFP. Based on the evaluation process, a rank ordered list of responsive Consultants shall be established. The Consultants shall be rank ordered with the first ranked Consultant being considered the most responsive and the second ranked Consultant being considered the second most responsive. This process shall be continued until all Consultants have been rank ordered.

Evaluation Criteria: The City of Pueblo shall evaluate proposals based upon an overall best value determination with the criteria listed below in relative order of importance:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| • Statement of Qualifications | 30% |
| • Project Approach | 30% |
| • Fee Schedule/Cost of Service | 30% |
| • Time Frame | 10% |

Interviews - Submittals will be reviewed and the committee will select a preliminary list of firms whose submissions appear to satisfy the requirements of this request. Preliminary listed firms will be notified of their selection and may be invited to personally interview, which will be scheduled as soon as possible after sufficient review of each submittal. Invited companies' key staff, including the proposed project manager must be in attendance at the interview.

Waiver and Release - By submitting a Prequalification Statement, the Consultant authorizes the City to obtain information concerning Consultant's performance on other projects it has completed during the prior ten (10) years, including those identified in the submission and those not so identified, of which the City may become aware. By submitting its Prequalification statement, the Consultant and sub-consultants also waives and releases all claims against owners, architects, and engineers, and their agents and representatives, relating to or arising from the furnishing of such information to the City concerning the Consultant's performance on prior projects. In order to effectuate the intent of this clause, each Consultant may be required by City to execute information release authorization forms, which specifically release all information providers from all claims that arise from or relate to the information provided.

The City shall then determine whether the vendor's proposal, with the highest ranking, can be accepted as is without negotiations. In the event the City determines that negotiation of the Consultant's proposal is necessary, the Consultant shall be notified and the negotiation process will begin. Should the City be unable to negotiate an acceptable service agreement with the highest ranked Consultant then the process described in this paragraph will begin with the second highest ranked Consultant. This process shall continue until a satisfactory service agreement is negotiated or until all negotiations with qualified ranked Consultants is exhausted. The City shall be the sole judge in determining when negotiations are to be concluded.

SECTION 3. OBJECTIVE, SCOPE OF SERVICE, AND MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Objective

The City of Pueblo is soliciting competitive proposals from qualified companies to provide an analysis of 18-square miles of low-moderate income census blocks within the City of Pueblo. The analysis will determine the current levels of connectedness that youth and families have to the outdoors and nature. The goal of the project is to reveal gaps and barriers that may prevent such connections, and identify opportunities on which to build in order to link more people within the project area to nature.

The project will be managed by the City of Pueblo Planning and Community Development Department in cooperation with an advisory committee including neighborhood associations, community organizations, and agencies.

3.2 Scope of Service:

The Plug into Nature Study will build off the experiences of the Larimer County project (a sample copy of their study is attached as **Exhibit C**) to specifically address questions by engaging youth and families in low income neighborhoods that experience barriers connecting with outdoor activities. Where appropriate, key questions from the Larimer County study will be used to understand neighborhood residents' satisfaction, accessibility, and suggested improvements needed to improve connections with the outdoors and nature. An advisory committee will be established to assist with the project. A survey utilizing similar methods included in the Larimer County study will be completed as part of the project. A survey utilizing similar methods included in the Larimer County study will be completed as part of the project. If possible, professional facilitators will be utilized to engage youth to find solutions to connect with the outdoors.

3.2.1 Review and Inventory of Nature Based Opportunities

Consultant will provide an inventory of programs, facilities, and land assessment for inclusion in the final report document.

3.2.2 Community Engagement

Consultant will develop and conduct a survey, within the project area, that addresses the goals and objectives of the study. The Consultant will also conduct meetings with youth and residents, key groups, and an Advisory Group within the study area. The Advisory Group will consist of representatives of the Pueblo City-County Health Department, the Pueblo Zoo, established Neighborhood Associations, Pueblo Active Communities and Environments (PACE), Pueblo County Economic Development and GIS Department, Mountain Park Environmental Center (MPEC), City Parks and Recreation Department, Pueblo Schools Safe and Healthy Schools Initiative, and the Nature and Raptor Center of Pueblo. Based on the survey and community meetings the consultant will analyze the data and feedback to provide a written report of the results.

3.2.3 Assessment and Analysis

Consultant will complete an assessment and analysis of data, inventory and interviews. Consultant will provide written Assessment and Analysis Report that focuses on:

- Access and Barriers
- Partner Opportunities
- Underserved Populations
- Suitable Lands

3.2.4 Final Report and Recommendations

The Final Report will identify Key Strategies and Recommendations similar to the Larimer County Study. The Consultant will complete a findings and recommendations chapter for the Final Report, which will include tools to measure future outcomes. The Final Report shall also include an executive summary, project report and appendices.

SECTION 4. PROPOSAL FORMAT AND REQUIRED RESPONSES

The information set forth in the paragraphs below must be included with all proposals. Make sure to provide six (6) copies of the complete Proposal, (one unbound and untabbed), as specified below, as well as one copy in electronic format. Responses shall be considered technical offers of what firms propose to provide and shall be incorporated in the contract award as deemed appropriate by the City. Please attach your responses to these items to the RFP Cover Sheet and Signature Page. Failure of firms to respond to any of the following technical submittal requirements may be grounds for considering a proposal non-responsive.

This is a qualification and cost based procurement process. Proposals will only be considered from firms that have documented experience of similar municipal or regional projects and qualified personnel who are capable of providing the required services.

4.1 RFP Cover Sheet

The RFP Cover Sheet and Signature Page must be completed and returned with the Proposer's proposal. Failure to return the signed Cover Sheet is grounds for the City to reject a proposal.

4.2 Table of Contents

The Table of Contents must indicate the material included in the proposal by section and page number. A proposal's table of contents should mirror this section of the City's Request for Proposal and must include all the items set forth in this section of the Request for Proposal.

4.3 Letter of Transmittal A letter of transmittal must be submitted with a Proposer's submittal. The letter must include:

- A statement of the Proposer's understanding of the goals of this project and the service required by the Request for Proposal listed in the Scope of Services.
- The names of the persons who are authorized to make representations on behalf of the Proposer (include their titles, addresses, fax number, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers).
- A statement that the individual who signs the transmittal letter is authorized to contractually bind the Proposer to contract with the City of Pueblo.

4.4 Disclosures. If applicable, disclose any professional or personal financial interest, which could be a possible conflict of interest in providing products and services to the City. If not applicable, please make a brief statement indicated that.

4.5 Statement of Qualification and Project Approach. Proposer's qualifications and intended approach to the project are a major portion of the evaluation process. Proposers are encouraged to submit their most favorable proposal and as much detail deemed necessary for the City to determine the qualifications of the consultant team.

4.5.1 Statement of Qualification:

4.5.1.1 The primary firm's name, address, phone and contact person. Basic firm information, including the year the prime consultant's firm was formed.

4.5.1.2 Identify the prime consultant and all sub-consultants, including their roles and responsibilities in the project.

4.5.1.3 Identify the key individuals from each of the firms who will be the key contacts for this project. Describe their professional qualifications, availability for this project, and experience on similar projects (similar in size and scope). Only individuals who will actually work on this project should be identified.

4.5.1.4 Describe similar (in size and scope) or recent (within the last five years) projects for which the prime consultant is responsible that demonstrate the firm's capability to meet schedule deadlines without delays, cost escalations or overruns and vendor claims. Submit references including the name current telephone number, and email for all clients and projects listed as a reference.

4.5.1.5 Firms must be familiar with the public process and coordinate with the City, key community groups, and the Advisory Group in facilitating surveys, interviews and public meetings. Please provide the names and locations of at least three (3) locations and projects at which the proposer has conducted similar services and had similar requirements. Provide the names and contact information of specific individuals who we may contact for reference.

4.5.1.6 If your company does business within the City of Pueblo, please provide a copy of your business license. If not currently licensed to do business within the City, the awarded firm will be required to apply for a business license upon award.

4.5.2 Project Approach

4.5.2.1 Provide information pertaining to how your firm intends on managing the project. Provide a brief statement of the Consultant's understanding of the goals of this project and the services required of the Consultant. Indicate a sound understanding of the adherence to the proposed timeframe, and demonstrate a clear methodology of approach to the completion of the project once final evaluation and update has been accepted by the City of Pueblo.

4.6 Fee Schedule - Submit a fixed fee schedule for providing the said services. The fee shall include all expenses incurred by the firm. The Fee schedule shall be in a written format and broken down into the following categories and provide any additional break down costs of all associated services/tasks as sub-categories:

- Review and Inventory of Nature Based Opportunities
- Community Engagement
- Assessment and Analysis
- Final Report and Recommendations

4.7 Time Frame - The proposal shall include the number of days that is needed for the firm to complete the Final Report and Recommendation. It is anticipated that the selected firm will have up to 12 months to complete the project, although proposals shall include a timeline that identifies the duration of each task included within the scope of services. The timeframe could be adjusted in the agreement (with any changes agreed upon by both parties). The time frame shall be broken down in the same Phase categories listed above.

AGREEMENT FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

THIS AGREEMENT is made and entered this _____ day of _____, 20____, by and between Pueblo, a Municipal Corporation ("Client") and _____ (hereinafter referred to as "Consultant") for Consultant to render professional _____ services for Client with respect to _____ and related ancillary services, hereinafter referred to as the "Project." In consideration of the mutual covenants hereinafter set forth, the parties agree as follows:

SECTION 1. GENERAL AND SCOPE OF SERVICES.

(a) Consultant shall satisfactorily perform the professional planning and consulting services for the Project described in more detail in Schedule 1 attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference (the "Basic Services"). Such services shall include all usual and customary professional _____ services including any required drafting or design services incident to its work on the Project. In the event this Agreement follows the selection of Consultant by Client pursuant to a Request for Proposals or RFP, all of the requirements of that Request for Proposal or RFP are incorporated herein by reference, unless any requirement is expressly excluded in Schedule 1.

(b) To the extent Consultant performs any of the Project work through subcontractors or subconsultants, Consultant shall be and remain as fully responsible for the full performance and quality of services performed by such subcontractors or subconsultants as it is for services performed directly by Consultant or Consultant's employees.

(c) To the extent Consultant requires access to private property to perform its services hereunder, Consultant shall be required to make arrangements to obtain such access. However, in the event Client has already secured access for Consultant to any such property through a right of entry agreement, access agreement, letter of consent or other instrument, Consultant shall fully comply with and be subject to the terms and conditions set forth therein. A copy of any such instrument will be provided to Consultant upon request.

SECTION 2. CONSULTANT'S RESPONSIBILITIES.

(a) Consultant shall be responsible for the professional quality, technical accuracy and timely completion of Consultant's work, including that performed by Consultant's subconsultants and subcontractors, and including drawings, reports and other services, irrespective of Client's approval of or acquiescence in same.

(b) Consultant shall be responsible, in accordance with applicable law, to Client for all loss or damage to Client caused by Consultant's negligent act or omission; except that Consultant hereby irrevocably waives and excuses Client and Client's attorneys from compliance with any requirement to obtain a certificate of review as a condition precedent to commencement of an action, including any such requirements set forth in Section 13-20-602, C.R.S. or similar statute, whether now existing or hereafter enacted.

(c) Consultant shall be completely responsible for the safety of Consultant's employees in the execution of work under this Agreement and shall provide all necessary safety and protective equipment for said employees.

(d) Consultant acknowledges that time is of the essence with respect to the completion of its services under this Agreement. Consultant represents that Schedule 3 attached hereto is the schedule by which Consultant proposes to accomplish its work, with time periods for which it will commence and complete each major work item. Except to the extent the parties agree to time extensions for delays beyond the control of Consultant, Consultant shall adhere to this schedule and perform its work in a timely manner so as not to delay Client's timetable for achievement of interim tasks and final completion of Project work. Consultant further acknowledges that its schedule has accounted for all reasonably anticipated delays, including those inherent in the availability of tools, supplies, labor and utilities required for the work, the availability of information which must be obtained from any third parties, and all conditions to access to public and private facilities.

(e) Before undertaking any work or incurring any expense which Consultant considers beyond or in addition to the Scope of Work described in Schedule 1 or otherwise contemplated by the terms of this Agreement, Consultant shall advise Client in writing that (i) Consultant considers the work beyond the scope of this Agreement, (ii) the reasons that Consultant believes the out of scope or additional work should be performed, and (iii) a reasonable estimate of the cost of such work. Consultant shall not proceed with any out of scope or additional work until authorized in writing by Client. The compensation for such authorized work shall be negotiated, but in the event the parties fail to negotiate or are unable to agree as to compensation, then Consultant shall be compensated for its direct costs and professional time at the rates set forth in Schedule 2 attached hereto.

SECTION 3. FEES FOR SERVICES; PAYMENT.

(a) Client will pay to Consultant as full compensation for all services required to be performed by Consultant under this Agreement, except for services for additional work or work beyond the scope of this Agreement, the maximum sum of U.S. \$ _____, computed as set forth in Schedule 2.

(b) Consultant shall submit periodic, but not more frequently than monthly, applications for payment, aggregating to not more than the maximum amount set forth above, for actual professional services rendered and for reimbursable expenses incurred. Applications for payment shall be submitted based upon the hourly rates and expense reimbursement provisions set forth in Schedule 2 attached hereto, and shall contain appropriate documentation that such services have been performed and such expenses incurred. Thereafter, Client shall pay Consultant for the amount of the application within 45 days of the date such application is received.

(c) No separate or additional payment shall be made for profit, overhead, local telephone expenses, lodging, routine photocopying, computer time, secretarial or clerical time or similar expenses unless otherwise provided and listed in Schedule 2.

(d) No compensation shall be paid to Consultant for services required and expenditures incurred in correcting Consultant's mistakes or negligence.

(e) Compensation for authorized work beyond the scope of this Agreement shall be governed by the provisions of Section 2(e).

(f) In the event services under this Agreement are phased and to be performed in more than one fiscal year or are subject to annual appropriation, Consultant acknowledges that funds only in the amount of initial appropriation are available and it shall confirm availability of funds before proceeding with work exceeding initial and subsequent annual appropriations.

SECTION 4. CLIENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES.

(a) Client agrees to advise Consultant regarding Client's Project requirements and to provide all relevant information, surveys, data and previous reports accessible to Client which Consultant may reasonably require.

(b) Client shall designate a Project Representative to whom all communications from Consultant shall be directed and who shall have limited administrative authority on behalf of Client to receive and transmit information and make decisions with respect to the Project. Said representative shall not, however, have authority to bind Client as to matters of governmental policy or fiscal policy, nor to contract for additions or obligations exceeding a value which is the lesser of \$5000 or 5% of the maximum contract price.

(c) Client shall examine all documents presented by Consultant, and render decisions pertaining thereto within a reasonable time. The Client's approval of any drawings, specifications, reports, documents or other materials or product furnished hereunder shall not in any way relieve Consultant of responsibility for the professional adequacy of its work.

(d) Client shall perform its obligations and render decisions within a reasonable time under the circumstances presented. Based upon the nature of Client and its requirements, a period of 14 days shall be presumed reasonable for any decision not involving policy decision or significant financial impact, when all information reasonably necessary for Client to responsibly render a decision has been furnished. A period of 46 days shall be presumed reasonable for Client to act with respect to any matter involving policy or significant financial impact. The

above periods of presumed reasonableness shall be extended where information reasonably required is not within the custody or control of Client but must be procured from others.

SECTION 5. TERMINATION.

(a) Client reserves the right to terminate this Agreement and Consultant's performance hereunder, at any time upon written notice, either for cause or for convenience. Upon such termination, Consultant and its subcontractors shall cease all work and stop incurring expenses, and shall promptly deliver to Client all data, drawings, specifications, reports, plans, calculations, summaries and all other information, documents, work product and materials as Consultant may have accumulated in performing this Agreement, together with all finished work and work in progress.

(b) Upon termination of this Agreement for events or reasons not the fault of Consultant, Consultant shall be paid at the rates specified in Schedule 2 for all services rendered and reasonable costs incurred to date of termination; together with any reasonable costs incurred within 10 days of termination provided such latter costs could not be avoided or were incurred in mitigating loss or expenses to Consultant or Client. In no event shall payment to Consultant upon termination exceed the maximum compensation provided for complete performance in Section 3(a).

(c) In the event termination of this Agreement or Consultant's services is for breach of this Agreement by Consultant, or for other fault of Consultant including but not limited to any failure to timely proceed with work, or to pay its employees and consultants, or to perform work according to the highest professional standards, or to perform work in a manner deemed satisfactory by Client's Project Representative, then in that event, Consultant's entire right to compensation shall be limited to the lesser of (a) the reasonable value of completed work to Client or (b) payment at the rates specified in Schedule 2 for services satisfactorily performed and reimbursable expenses reasonably incurred, prior to date of termination.

(d) Consultant's professional responsibility for its completed work and services shall survive any termination.

SECTION 6. SITE ACCESS.

In the event the Project will require access to property not under the control of Client, Consultant and Consultant's employees and consultants shall obtain all additional necessary approval and clearances required for access to such property. Client shall assist Consultant in obtaining access to such property at reasonable times but makes no warranty or representation whatsoever regarding access to such property. Notwithstanding the foregoing, Consultant understands and agrees that entry to some property by Consultant may be subject to compliance by Consultant with the terms and conditions of an access agreement in accordance with section 1(c) of this Agreement.

SECTION 7. USE OF DOCUMENTS.

(a) Plans, drawings, designs, specifications, reports and all other documents prepared or provided by Consultant hereunder shall become the sole property of Client, subject to applicable federal grant requirements, and Client shall be vested with all rights therein of whatever kind and however created, whether by common law, statute or equity. Client shall have access at all reasonable times to inspect and make copies of all notes, designs, drawings, specifications, and all other technical data or other documents pertaining to the work to be performed under this Agreement. In no event shall Consultant publish work product developed pursuant to this Agreement except (i) with advance written consent of Client, which consent may be granted or withheld in Client's sole and absolute discretion and (ii) in full compliance with the requirements of this Agreement and applicable federal regulations.

SECTION 8. INSURANCE AND INDEMNITY.

(a) Consultant agrees that it shall procure and will maintain during the term of this Agreement, such insurance as will protect it from claims under workers' compensation acts, claims for damages because of personal injury including bodily injury, sickness or disease or death of any of its employees or of any person other than its employees, and from claims or damages because of injury to or destruction of property including loss of use resulting therefrom; and such insurance will provide for coverage in such amounts as set forth in subparagraph (b).

(b) The minimum insurance coverage which Consultant shall obtain and keep in force is as follows:

(i) Workers' Compensation Insurance complying with statutory requirements in Colorado and in any other state or states where the work is performed. The Workers' Compensation Insurance policy shall contain an endorsement waiving subrogation against the Client.

(ii) Commercial General Liability Insurance. The Consultant shall secure and maintain during the period of this agreement/contract and for such additional time as work on the project is being performed, Commercial General Liability Insurance issued to and covering the liability of the contractor with respect to all work performed by him and all his subcontractors under the agreement/ contract, to be written on a comprehensive policy form. This insurance shall be written in amounts not less than \$1,000,000 for each occurrence and aggregate for personal injury including death and bodily injury and \$1,000,000 for each occurrence and aggregate for property damage. This policy of insurance shall name the City of Pueblo, its agents, officers and employees as additional insureds. This policy shall have all necessary endorsements to provide coverage without exclusion for explosion and collapse hazards, underground property damage hazard, blanket contractual coverage, as well as Owner's and Contractor's Protective Liability (OCP) coverage. The policy shall also provide coverage for contractual liability assumed by Contractor under the provisions of the Agreement/Contract, and "Completed Operations and Projects Liability" coverage.

(iii) Professional Liability Insurance with coverage of not less than \$1,000,000, and with a deductible of not more than \$ ____.

(iv) Comprehensive Automobile Liability Insurance. The Consultant shall procure and maintain during the period of the agreement/contract and for such additional time as work on the project is being performed, Comprehensive Automobile Liability Insurance. This insurance shall be written with limits of liability for and injury to one person in any single occurrence of not less than \$350,000 and for any injury to two or more persons in any single occurrence of not less than \$1,000,000. This insurance shall include uninsured/underinsured motorist coverage and shall protect the Consultant from any and all claims arising from the use both on and off the site of the project of automobiles, trucks, tractors, backhoes and similar equipment whether owned, leased, hired or used by Consultant.

(c) Consultant agrees to hold harmless, defend and indemnify Client from and against any liability to third parties, arising out of negligent acts or omissions of Consultant, its employees, subcontractors and consultants.

SECTION 9. SUBCONTRACTS.

(a) Client acknowledges that Consultant is the prime contractor and the only party with whom Client has a contractual relationship under this Agreement. To the extent Consultant performs any Project activities through subconsultants or subcontractors, Consultant shall contractually bind each of its subconsultants and subcontractors by subcontract agreement to all of the terms of this Agreement which are for the benefit of Client, and Client shall be a third party beneficiary of those subcontract provisions.

(b) Consultant shall indemnify and defend Client from all claims and demands for payment for services provided by subcontractors of Consultant.

(c) Consultant acknowledges that, due to the nature of the services to be provided under this Agreement, the Client has a substantial interest in the personnel and consultants to whom Consultant assigns principal responsibility for services performed under this Agreement. Consequently, Consultant represents that it has selected and intends to employ or assign the key personnel and consultants identified in its proposal submitted to Client prior to execution of this Agreement to induce Client to enter this Agreement. Consultant shall not change such consultants or key personnel except after giving notice of a proposed change to Client and receiving Client's consent thereto. Consultant shall not assign or reassign Project work to any person to whom Client has reasonable objection.

SECTION 10. REQUIRED FEDERAL PROVISIONS. [Delete if inapplicable.]

NOTE - THIS SECTION MAY REQUIRE REVISION

(a) Consultant understands that Client may be funding the Project in whole or part with funds provided _____. Consultant agrees it is subject to and shall comply with all applicable provisions of said _____, the Act under which the contract award has been made, and applicable regulations.

(b) Consultant shall comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws applicable to its activities.

(c) All records with respect to any matters covered by this Agreement shall be available for inspection by Client, _____ at any time during normal business hours and as often as Client, _____ deems necessary, to audit, examine and make excerpts or transcripts of relevant information, and otherwise to perform its official functions or duties.

SECTION 11. MISCELLANEOUS.

(a) Notices. Any and all notices or other communications required or permitted by this Agreement or by law to be served on or given to either Consultant or Client by the other party shall be in writing and shall be deemed duly served and given when personally delivered to the party to whom it is directed, or in lieu of such personal service, when deposited in the United States mail, first-class postage prepaid, addressed to the Client, Attention:

_____, Pueblo, Colorado, or to Consultant at _____.

Either party may change his address for the purpose of this paragraph by giving written notice of such change to the other party in the manner provided in this paragraph.

(b) Entire Agreement. This instrument contains the entire agreement between Consultant and Client respecting the Project, and any other written or oral agreement or representation respecting the Project or the duties of either Client or Consultant in relation thereto not expressly set forth in this instrument and its attachments is null and void. In the case of any conflict between the terms of this Agreement for Professional Services and terms of Schedule 1 or any other attachment hereto, the terms of this Agreement shall govern.

(c) Successors and Assigns. This Agreement shall be binding on the parties hereto and on their successors and assigns; provided, however, neither this Agreement, nor any part thereof, nor any moneys due or to become due hereunder to Consultant may be assigned by it without the written consent of Client, which consent may be withheld in Client's sole and absolute discretion. Any assignment or attempted assignment in violation of this subsection shall be void.

(d) Amendments. No amendment to this Agreement shall be made nor be enforceable unless made by written amendment signed by an authorized representative of Consultant and by Client in accordance with the requirements of Section 4(b) of this Agreement or upon authorization of Client's governing board.

(e) Choice of Law. This Agreement shall be governed and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Colorado. Any unresolved dispute arising from or concerning any breach of this Agreement shall be decided in a state court of competent jurisdiction located in Pueblo, Colorado.

(f) Equal Employment Opportunity. In connection with the performance of this Agreement, neither Consultant nor its consultants shall discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability or age. Consultant shall endeavor to insure that applicants are employed, and that employees are treated during employment without regard to their race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability or age.

(g) Severability. If any provision of this Agreement, except for Section 2, is determined to be directly contrary to and prohibited by law or the requirements of any federal grant or other Project funding source, then such provision shall be deemed void and the remainder of the Agreement enforced. However, it is the intent of the parties that Section 2 of this Agreement not be severable, and that if any provision of said section be determined to be contrary to law or the terms of any federal grant, then this entire Agreement shall be void.

SECTION 12. STATE-IMPOSED MANDATES PROHIBITING ILLEGAL ALIENS FROM PERFORMING WORK

(a) At or prior to the time for execution of this Agreement (which may be referred to in this section as this "Contract"), Consultant (which may be referred to in this section as "Contractor") shall submit to the Purchasing Agent of City its certification that it does not knowingly employ or contract with an illegal alien who will perform work under

this Contract and that the Contractor will participate in either the “E-Verify Program” created in Public Law 208, 104th Congress, as amended and expanded in Public Law 156, 108th Congress, as amended, that is administered by the United States Department of Homeland Security or the “Department Program” established pursuant to §8-17.5-102(5)(c) C.R.S. that is administered by the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment in order to confirm the employment eligibility of all employees who are newly hired for employment to perform work under this Contract.

(b) Contractor shall not:

(I) Knowingly employ or contract with an illegal alien to perform work under this contract;

(II) Enter into a contract with a subconsultant that fails to certify to Contractor that the subconsultant shall not knowingly employ or contract with an illegal alien to perform work under this Contract.

(c) The following state-imposed requirements apply to this contract:

(I) The Contractor shall have confirmed the employment eligibility of all employees who are newly hired for employment to perform work under this Contract through participation in either the E-Verify Program or Department Program.

(II) The Contractor is prohibited from using either the E-Verify Program or Department Program procedures to undertake pre-employment screening of job applicants while this Contract is being performed.

(III) If the Contractor obtains actual knowledge that a subcontractor or subconsultant performing work under this Contract knowingly employs or contracts with an illegal alien, the Contractor shall be required to:

A. Notify the subconsultant and the Client’s Purchasing Agent within three (3) days that the Contractor has actual knowledge that the subcontractor/subconsultant is employing or contracting with an illegal alien; and

B. Terminate the subcontract with the subcontractor/subconsultant if within three (3) days of receiving the notice required pursuant to subparagraph (c)(III)A. above the subcontractor/subconsultant does not stop employing or contracting with the illegal alien; except that the Contractor shall not terminate the contract with the subcontractor/subconsultant if, during such three (3) days, the subcontractor/subconsultant provides information to establish that the subcontractor/subconsultant has not knowingly employed or contracted with an illegal alien.

(IV) The Contractor is required to comply with any reasonable request by the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (hereinafter referred to as “CDLE”) made in the course of an investigation that CDLE is undertaking pursuant to its authority under §8-17.5-102(5), C.R.S.

(d) Violation of this Section 12 by the Contractor shall constitute a breach of contract and grounds for termination. In the event of such termination, the Contractor shall be liable for Client’s actual and consequential damages.

(e) As used in this Section 12, the terms “subcontractor” and “subconsultant” shall mean any subconsultant or subcontractor of Consultant rendering services within the scope of this Agreement.

SECTION 13. Reserved.

SECTION 14. PERA LIABILITY

Consultant shall reimburse the City for the full amount of any employer contribution required to be paid by the City of Pueblo to the Public Employees’ Retirement Association (“PERA”) for salary or other compensation paid to a PERA retiree performing contracted services for the City under this Agreement. The Consultant shall fill out the questionnaire attached as Exhibit A and submit the completed form to Client as part of the signed Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have made and executed this Agreement as of the day and year first above written.

CITY OF PUEBLO, A MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

CONSULTANT FIRM NAME

By _____
President of the City Council

By: _____

Attest: _____
City Clerk

Title: _____

[S E A L]

BALANCE OF APPROPRIATION EXISTS FOR THIS CONTRACT AND FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE.

Director of Finance

Sample Agreement

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

City Attorney

**COLORADO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION
SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE ANSWERED BY
ANY BUSINESS PERFORMING SERVICES FOR THE CITY OF PUEBLO**

Pursuant to section 24-51-1101(2), C.R.S., salary or other compensation from the employment, engagement, retention or other use of a person receiving retirement benefits (Retiree) through the Colorado Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) in an individual capacity or of any entity owned or operated by a PERA Retiree or an affiliated party by the City of Pueblo to perform any service as an employee, contract employee, consultant, independent contractor, or through other arrangements, is subject to employer contributions to PERA by the City of Pueblo. Therefore, as a condition of contracting for services with the City of Pueblo, this document must be completed, signed and returned to the City of Pueblo:

(a) Are you, or do you employ or engage in any capacity, including an independent contractor, a PERA Retiree who will perform any services for the City of Pueblo? Yes____, No____. *(Must sign below whether you answer "yes" or "no".)*

(b) If you answered "yes" to (a) above, please answer the following question: Are you 1) an individual, 2) sole proprietor or partnership, or 3) a business or company owned or operated by a PERA Retiree or an affiliated party?

Yes ____, No____. (If you answered "yes" please state which of the above listed entities (1, 2, or 3) best describes your business:_____.

(c) If you answered "yes" to both (a) and (b), please provide the name, address and social security number of each such PERA Retiree.

_____ Name	_____ Name
_____ Address	_____ Address
_____ Social Security Number	_____ Social Security Number

(If more than two, please attach a supplemental list)

If you answered "yes" to both (a) and (b), you agree to reimburse the City of Pueblo for any employer contribution required to be paid by the City of Pueblo to PERA for salary or other compensation paid to you as a PERA Retiree or paid to any employee or independent contractor of yours who is a PERA Retiree performing services for the City of Pueblo. You further authorize the City of Pueblo to deduct and withhold all such contributions from any moneys due or payable to you by the City of Pueblo under any current or future contract or other arrangement for services between you and the City of Pueblo.

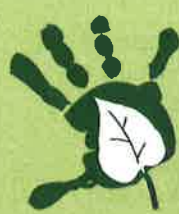
Failure to accurately complete, sign and return this document to the City of Pueblo may result in your being denied the privilege of doing business with the City of Pueblo.

Signed _____, 20____.

By: _____
Name: _____
Title: _____

For purposes of responding to question (b) above, an "affiliated party" includes (1) any person who is the named beneficiary or cobeneficiary on the PERA account of the PERA Retiree; (2) any person who is a relative of the PERA Retiree by blood or adoption to and including parents, siblings, half-siblings, children, and grandchildren; (3) any person who is a relative of the PERA Retiree by marriage to and including spouse, spouse's parents, stepparents, stepchildren, stepsiblings, and spouse's siblings; and (4) any person or entity with whom the PERA Retiree has an agreement to share or otherwise profit from the performance of services for the City of Pueblo by the PERA Retiree other than the PERA Retiree's regular salary or compensation.

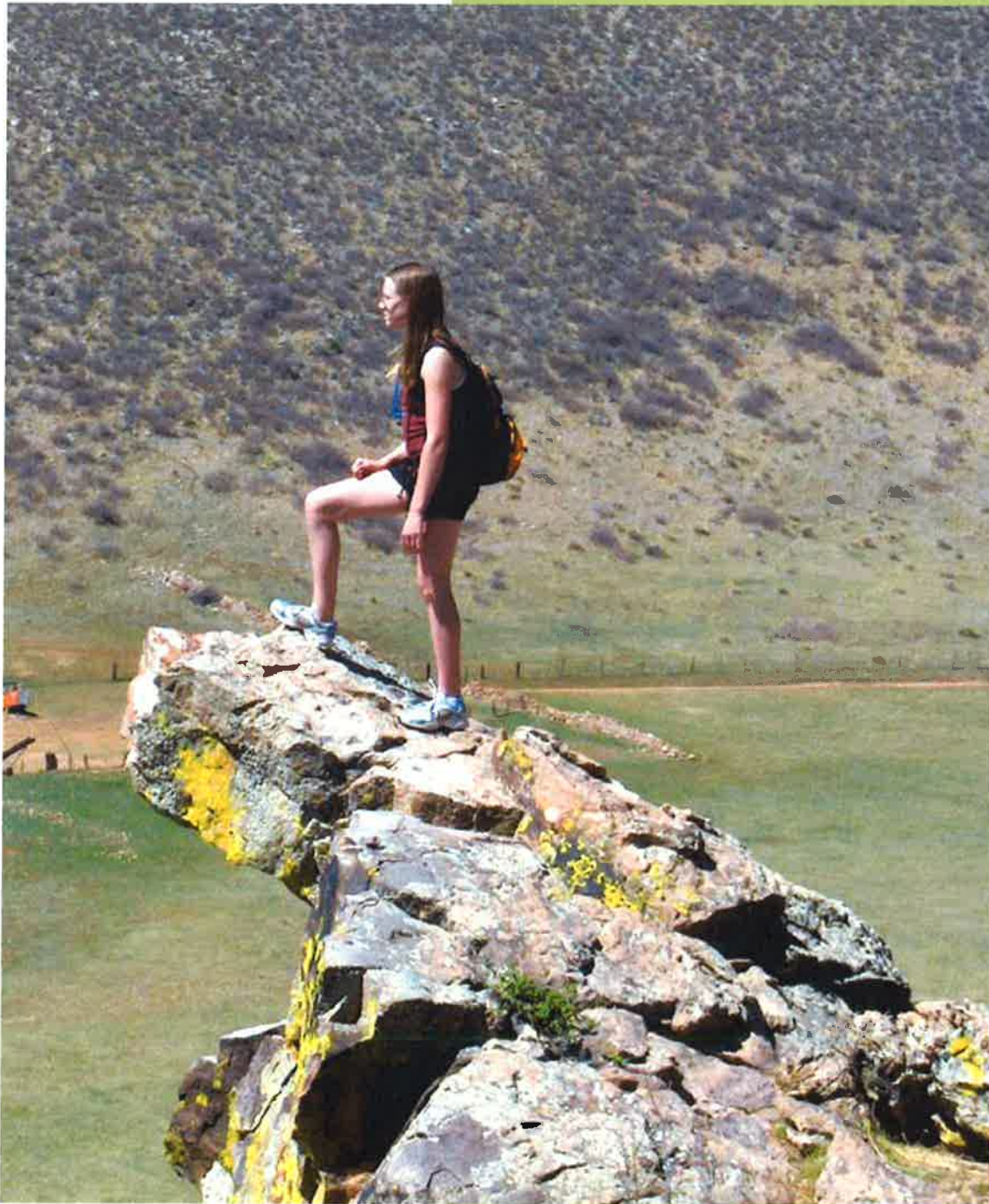
**Larimer County Plug into Nature Study Executive Summary
(Attached)**



Plug in to Nature

Finding Connections to the Outdoors
for Youth and Families in Larimer County

Executive Summary



Larimer County,
Colorado
March 7, 2012

Children's Connection to Nature

The connection that youth have to nature and the outdoors is in decline, drawing the attention of communities across the nation. This trend, sometimes referred to as Nature Deficit Disorder, affects a number of areas including student achievement, public health, children's social abilities, and their attitudes towards conservation and outdoor recreation.

In Great Outdoors Colorado's (GOCO) 2010 strategic planning process, the Board consistently heard from stakeholders across the State that there is a need for GOCO to "increase participation by youth and families in all areas of GOCO's mission." The GOCO Board's first step in fulfilling this goal was selecting Larimer County as a pilot area to conduct a study with the following goals:

1. determine current levels of connection between families and the natural world,
2. reveal gaps and barriers that may prevent such connections, and
3. identify opportunities on which to build in order to connect more people to nature.

The Board chose Larimer County because of its diverse communities and myriad of public lands as well as existing efforts such as the Children and Nature Connection – Northern Colorado, which has raised awareness about these issues in since 2006.

The study, entitled Plug in to Nature, addresses the perceived disconnect as well as a potential opportunity to use the best research methods available to focus on improving the connection between youth and families to nature through education, child care, and nature programming.

This comprehensive analysis goes beyond simply considering Nature Deficit Disorder, and includes how lands are conserved and outdoor programming is offered in order to provide easy access to families. A blend of public engagement and physical gap and recreational needs analyses provided a clear picture of the current connections families feel to the outdoors in Larimer County, and specific ways those connections can be improved.



The Devil's Backbone Open Space is a popular place for outdoor recreation and enjoying unique geological formations.

"According to recent research, kids are spending 50% less time outdoors than they did 10 years ago... During the same decade, per capita visits to national parks have declined. Couple these trends with increasing levels of child obesity, decreasing time of outdoor play in grade schools, and increasing need for support of public lands, and it's clear why reduced time spent outdoors is a national concern."

*- L.K. Harmon
Parks & Recreation June 2008 "Get out and stay out"*



The Community Meeting map exercise presented 21 activity choices that participants placed on locations within their city or throughout the County. The activities most frequently desired were bicycling, camping close to urban areas, and nature classes.

Engaging the Community

The project's extensive public engagement included:

1. County-wide surveys,
2. Community meetings,
3. Interviews focused on youth and underserved groups, and
4. Inventories and meetings with Youth and Family Program Providers and Nature Program Providers.

The public engagement strategy was designed to engage and represent all communities and groups within Larimer County.

"As a working, single mom, I probably haven't provided enough opportunities for my son to be in nature at a critical time of his life."

"Children in our neighborhood could use a natural park with trails and maybe educational activities."

"There are a lot of parks and open spaces in Larimer, and that's great. However, I would like to see some more WILD spaces available - bushes and trees and streams where the kids could run and hide and climb and build little forts and fairy houses."

- County-wide Survey comments



Plug in to Nature Findings

The public engagement process determined that County residents spend significant amounts of time accessing natural areas, open spaces, and parks and are generally satisfied with these facilities. Natural spaces close to home are important for convenience, and many families access areas within a 15 minute walk of their residences on a daily basis. On the weekends most families are willing to travel a half an hour or more by car to natural areas and parks.

According to parents surveyed in this process, the connections that youth have to nature and the outdoors are quite high but many parents want even more time outdoors with their kids. A lack of free time, the inconvenience traveling to outdoor locations, and the high costs typically associated with outdoor recreation were identified as major barriers to families connecting with the outdoors. Larimer County parents did not consider the time their children spend with technology, such as television and internet, as a barrier to their children playing outside.

Youth and Family Program Providers demonstrated an understanding of the benefits of connecting youth to nature. Many providers offer outdoor experiences at on-site or close-by facilities, however there is demand for increased opportunities and facilities. Organizational culture, regulations, lack of awareness to external opportunities, and lack of capacity all are challenges for teachers and providers to spending time with students outdoors. Time, location of natural areas, and liability are also major concerns.

The highest priorities for Youth and Family Program Providers to reduce barriers were funding for transportation, creating on-site natural areas, and additional natural areas within walking distance of facilities. Staff support and training were emphasized in focus groups with teachers and providers.

Awareness of programs, facilities, and opportunities were consistently cited among the top barriers for parents of all demographic groups as well as for Youth and Family Program Providers. Nature Program Providers expressed a need to increase coordination between providers and initiate a significant joint marketing effort to increase awareness of available services for parents and Youth and Family Program Providers.

There is a need for Nature Program Providers to offer additional opportunities for the entire family and to hold programs on a consistent basis (e.g. 2nd Saturday each month at 10 am), on weekends, and in the wintertime. Additional program offerings directly after school would also be a great help to working parents. Existing programs for children ages 0-5, programs for the entire family, and programs for kids with developmental and physical disabilities are limited and need to be expanded. Other desirable programs include those that integrate technology and highlight outdoor skills, such as camping, plant and wildlife track identification.



backyard



nature playground



wilderness

Youth can enjoy the benefits that nature provides in an array of places ranging from their backyard to wilderness.



79% of survey respondents want their children to spend more time in nature than they currently do.

Time, location, and cost are the three greatest barriers to families deciding to spend time outdoors.

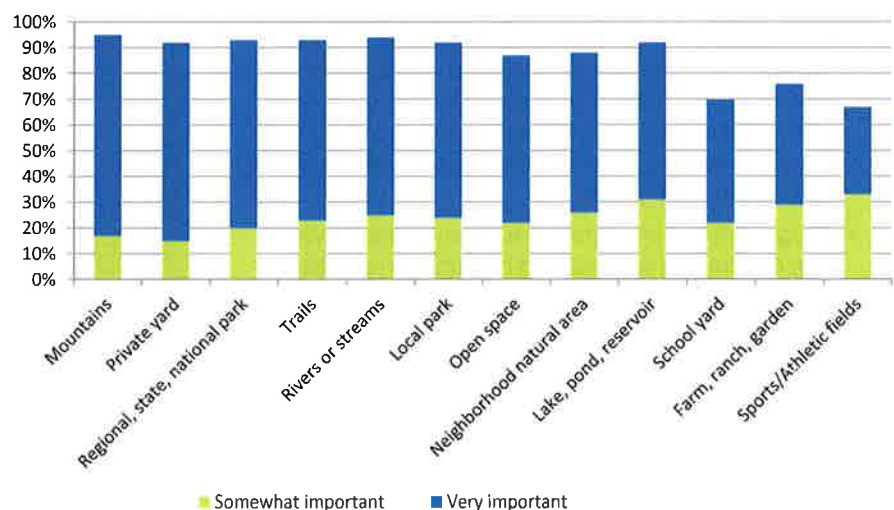
55% of parents said that a primary focus for connecting families and youth to nature should be increasing awareness of programs and places to enjoy the outdoors.

Parents listed mountains, trails, forests, and water resources as the land characteristics with the highest value for making connections to nature. Physical barriers to accessing nature identified in Larimer County included high volume roads separating parks and natural areas from neighborhoods, restricted access for the public to natural areas, reservoirs, and crowding or lack of amenities such as restrooms.

The project also considered factors such as income, population density, and racial diversity and found areas with medium to high population densities, and those with high densities of children both emerged as underserved in their access to natural areas and parks. No such disparities were identified with relation to income levels or racial diversity.

Other gaps identified in this project hindering connection to nature and the outdoors included more natural features such as rocks, trees, and water in park facilities and additional trails to link natural areas together and to neighborhoods. The public expressed a strong desire for nature centers and additional natural areas that provide for winter activities and increased access to water. Latino parents specifically expressed interest in recreational areas that can accommodate large multi-generational picnics and have access to fishing and hiking.

Percent of Survey Responses Rating the Importance of Different Settings as Places for Families to be in Nature and the Outdoors



Key Recommendations of the Study:

- Create a website containing comprehensive outdoor program and facility information that is aimed at and marketed to parents in the community. The website should include a query function where parents can solicit ideas about where to go and what to do.
- Establish additional partnerships between nature program providers and schools/child care providers to offer training in environmental education and provide much needed transportation funding. Schools and child care centers should also participate in partnerships with local governments and volunteer groups to enhance existing school yards and facilities with natural features and gardens.
- Encourage schools to integrate environmental education and outdoor activities that meet state education standards into existing curricula wherever possible and support the pending Colorado Environmental Literacy Plan.
- Implement a "safe routes to nature" program similar to the Department of Transportation's Safe Routes to Schools Program to increase accessibility for families to natural areas and open spaces. Comprehensive planning efforts amongst communities in the region should focus on linking sites with trails. Land managers are encouraged to increase access to water and facilities where winter sports can take place.
- Target priority areas for conservation that have been identified as meaningful areas for families to connect with the outdoors. Future conservation efforts aimed at providing access to youth and families should focus on high density population areas close to high value natural features as well as areas where future schools are planned (See the Priority Areas for Future Parks and Open Space Maps on the following page). Conserve lands in advance of development.
- Ease the burdens of cost and transportation for families in Larimer County with 'free days' to first time users, 'outdoor gear libraries', and shuttle services to natural areas and parks.
- Include "wild zones" and areas with natural habitat features that do not restrict activities or access. This would address interest in providing additional natural features for free play in local parks. Additionally, existing utility and storm water lands should be considered for public access close to residences.



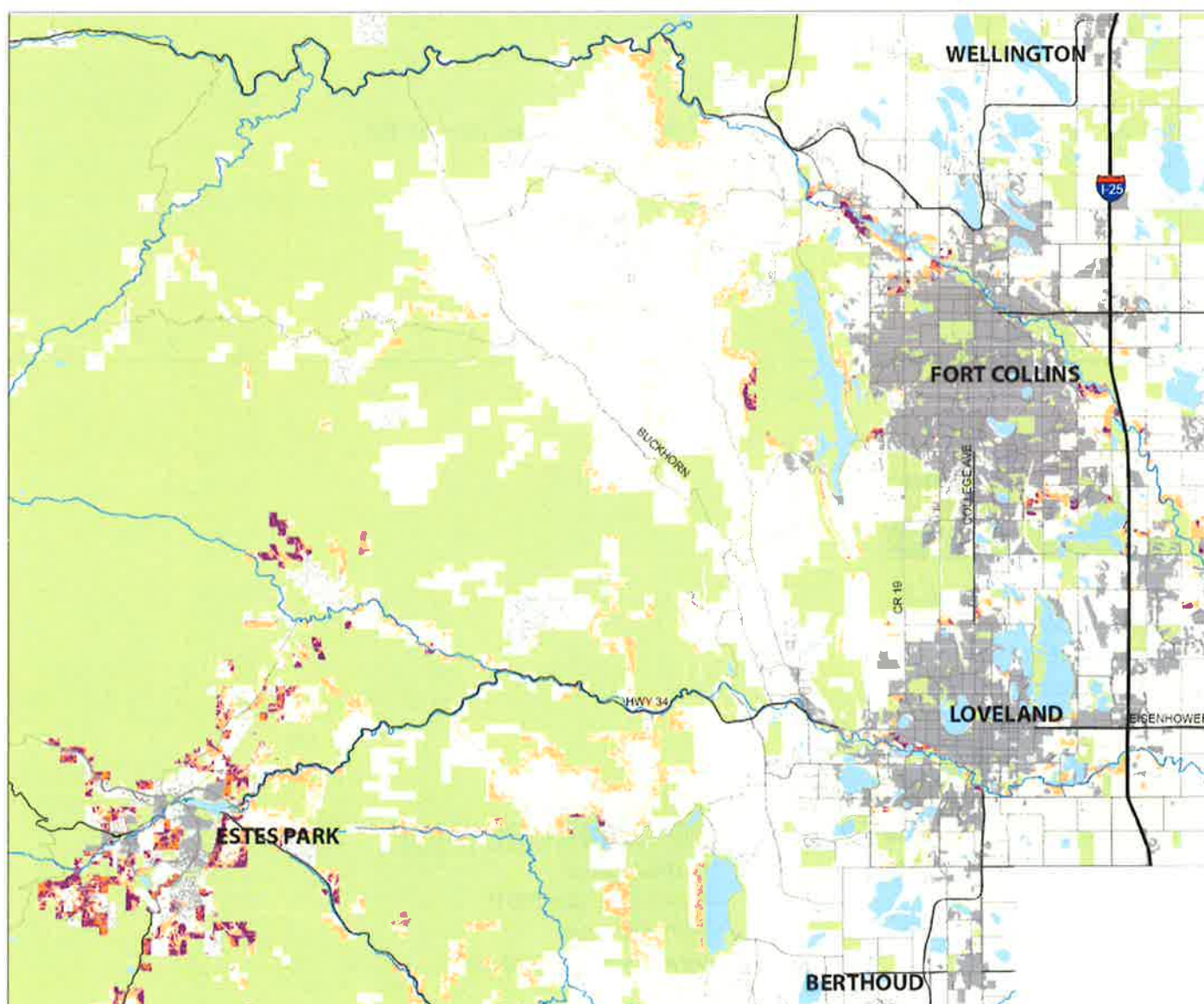
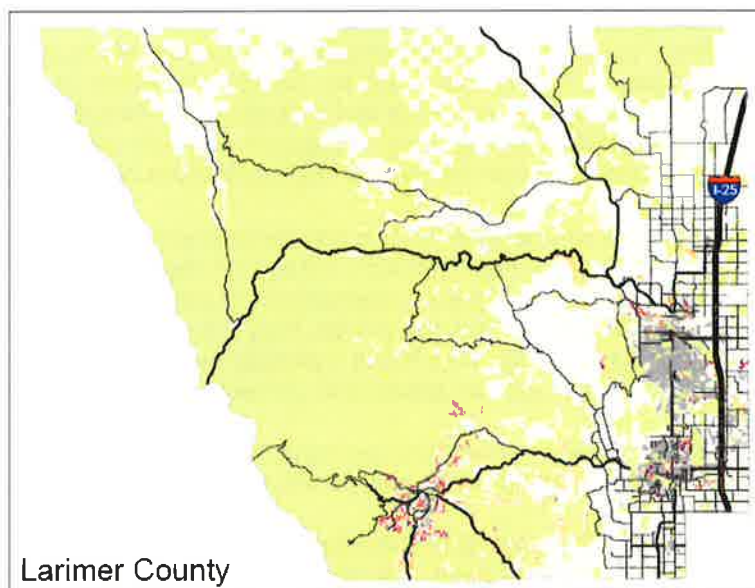
Education programs in conjunction with a nature center reinforces learning and provides ample opportunity to integrate technology into programs.



Boyd Lake State Park, Colorado Youth Outdoors, and the Poudre Learning Center provide programs for the entire family to participate.

Priority Areas for Future Parks and Open Space Maps

Important Settings to be in Nature/Outdoors and Focus Areas



Next Steps & More Information

The Plug into Nature project established a baseline of the connections that youth and families feel towards nature and the outdoors in Larimer County through a series of public engagement strategies and analyses. It is a unique approach to considering the values families have for lands they access with their children, and provides a wealth of information to further improve the vital connections of children to the outdoors.

The study, completed in 2012, is only the beginning. Local agencies, schools, and non-profits must take this information and build on the momentum generated to establish more effective practices and partnerships to connect families to nature and the outdoors in Larimer County. As a pilot project, Plug in to Nature can apply to other communities throughout the state. A technical replication guide is available for communities interested in discovering their own solutions to connecting youth and families to the outdoors.

More information about the project and the research that informed the project can be found in supporting documents, as well as at www.larimer.org/plugintonature.

Plug in to Nature would not have been possible without the support of Larimer County residents, the Core Team, and Advisory Committee. These groups were composed of members from all segments of the community, from agencies across all levels of government, staff and board members from school districts, to those representing the private sector.

For more information or a presentation about this project please contact the Larimer County Department of Natural Resources.

Project Website:

www.larimer.org/plugintonature



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**Larimer County Plug into Nature Replication Guide
(Attached)**



Plug in
to Nature

Finding Connections to the Outdoors
for Youth and Families in Larimer County

Replication Guide



June 14, 2012

Reasons for Communities to Address Connections to Nature

Nationwide, citizens and organizations are concerned about the growing disconnect between youth and the outdoors. Current research confirms this disconnect and demonstrates that children who interact regularly in the outdoors are more mentally acute, physically healthy and socially adept as well as more likely to maintain a positive disposition toward the environment and natural resources as adults. Additional studies suggest that societal trends including obesity, chronic disease and behavioral issues can be addressed by fostering healthy emotional, social and intellectual interactions with nature.

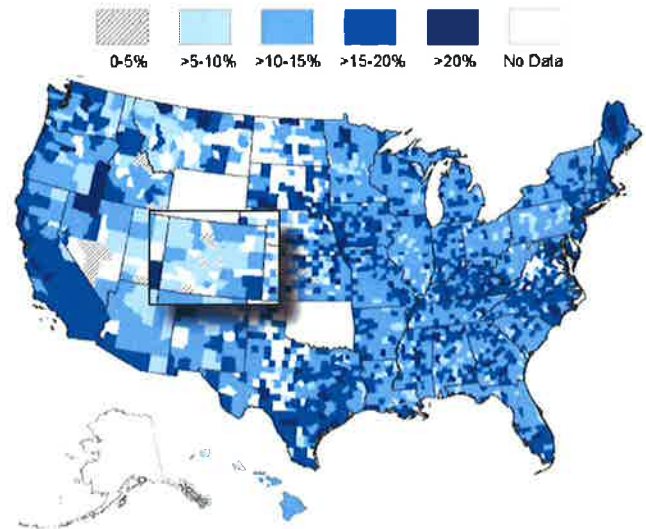
Local governments, recreation districts, non-profits, land trusts, state agencies and other entities have all made large investments in protecting and providing places with natural features. Increasingly, there is interest from these groups not only to ensure natural places and outdoor programs exist, but also that all people have access to experience them.

Providing an integrated and comprehensive approach which addresses the topic of nature connections on a city, county or regional scale has many benefits. Communities have unique challenges and opportunities engaging with nature; a generalized, one-size-fits-all approach is often not sufficient to create practical and effective strategies and initiatives. Understanding the particular values, opinions and behaviors of community members, in the context of the physical environment and demographic indicators, leads to identifying challenges and opportunities unique to a geographic area. The recommendations from a targeted study can have implications for policies, programs and the built environment that are grounded in the realities of each community and result in altered behaviors and attitudes.

"For a lot of folks, it's easy to go days without stepping on a single blade of grass. At times like these, we have to ask ourselves: What can we do to break free from the routine and reconnect with the world around us?"

- Remarks by the President on America's Great Outdoors Initiative. February 16, 2011

2007–2009 County Obesity Prevalence Among Low-Income Children Aged 2 to 4 Years



Physical inactivity is one of the factors impacting obesity levels in young children. Approximately 17% of children and adolescents aged 2-19 are obese. One of the strategies the Center for Disease Control recommends to states and communities is to create and maintain safe neighborhoods for physical activity and improve access to parks and playgrounds. (Source: Center for Disease Control)



backyard



nature playground



outdoor classroom



wilderness

Youth can enjoy the benefits that nature provides in an array of places ranging from their backyard to wilderness. The pilot study sought to include the full array of places and gateways for youth to connect to the natural world like playgrounds, school yards, and informal settings such as drainage areas and ponds.

Purpose of the Guidebook

This guidebook is designed to help communities, agencies, regional interest groups and recreation districts undertake studies to formulate ways to increase connections between youth and families to nature.

The full Larimer County *Plug in to Nature* report and appendices provide a detailed methodology and examples for similar projects with strategies that can be modified to accommodate other communities. Each step and product created from the *Plug in to Nature* project is documented and available for review on the website <http://www.larimer.org/plugintonature>. The following is not intended to be a step-by-step recipe for replication, but rather a compilation of important lessons learned from the pilot project that can aid in the execution and success of similar projects in different areas.

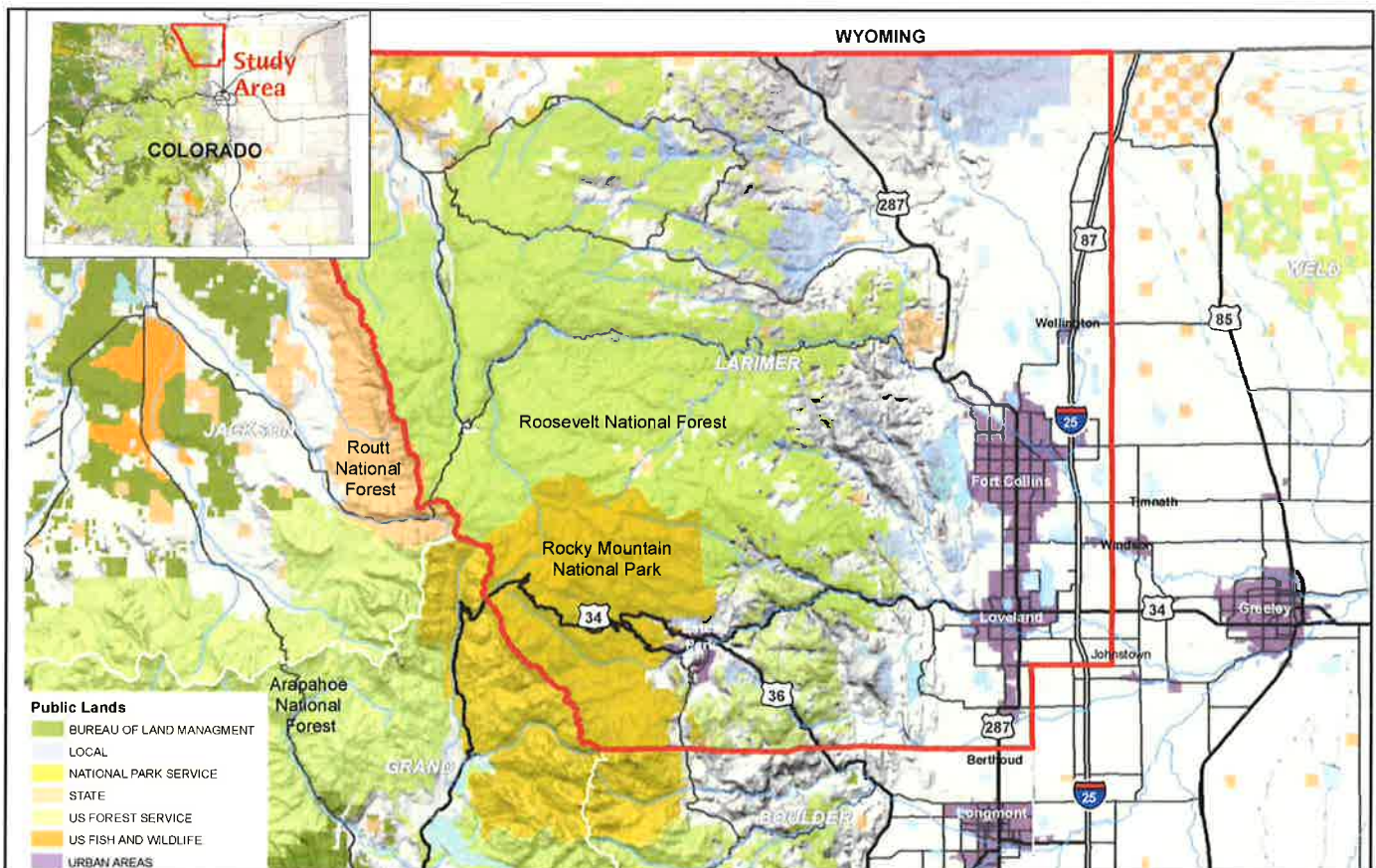
This guidebook provides ideas for how to:

- Develop partnerships and collaborations among decision-makers, the public sector, the private sector and non-profit groups.
- Select strategies to meet project goals and objectives.
- Minimize project costs.
- Evaluate the performance of project implementation over time.

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) undertook a pilot project in 2011/2012 in Larimer County that provides many lessons and examples that are transferable to other communities and regions. GOCO chose to start with Larimer County because it contains diverse communities including rural areas, small towns and larger urban population centers. The county contains a spectrum of landscape types from mountains to prairies and hosts a mix of private and public lands. The diverse composition of settings is an ideal demonstration project as portions of the approach as well as the recommendations can be useful for a variety of communities. Larimer County was also able to dedicate staff and organize volunteers to devote time to the project.

This guidebook builds off the experiences of the pilot project to suggest how similar studies can be carried out in other communities in Colorado who seek to increase the quality and quantity of interactions between youth and families and natural places. It may be desirable for communities to undertake portions of the project in stages or incorporate them into existing projects such as parks and open space master planning inventory of resources and identification of natural areas with public access.

Other groups within the state that are addressing similar issues include: the Lieutenant Governor's Colorado Kids' Outdoors Initiative, Colorado Kids Outdoors Group in the MetroDenver area, and the US Forest Service's Children's Forest Corridor initiative.

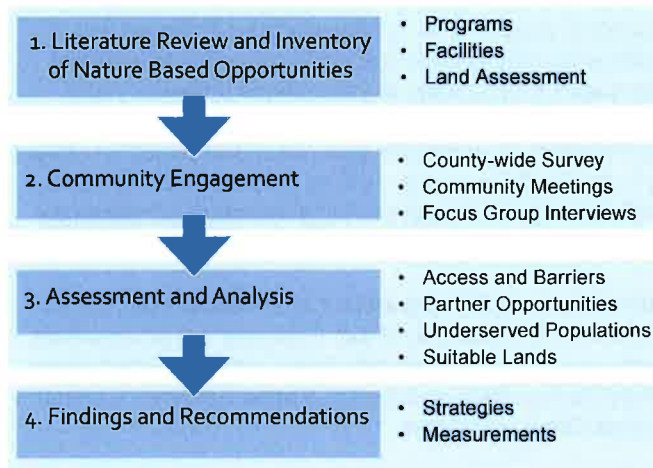


The Larimer County Context Map shows the wealth of natural areas available in close proximity to urban areas including Fort Collins and Loveland as well as rural communities like Estes Park and Wellington.

Pilot Study Project Approach

What are the perceived and actual barriers to youth and families interacting with nature? The *Plug in to Nature* pilot project specifically addresses this question by engaging the community and understanding the local geography. The study includes an inventory and recommends potential programs, facilities, partnerships and target areas for land conservation. The values articulated by the public are used to inform future funding and prioritize projects that fill identified gaps and eliminate barriers. The report includes strategies including programmatic changes, recreational amenity enhancement, and changes to the built environment that encourage connections to nature.

The steps utilized in this study include:

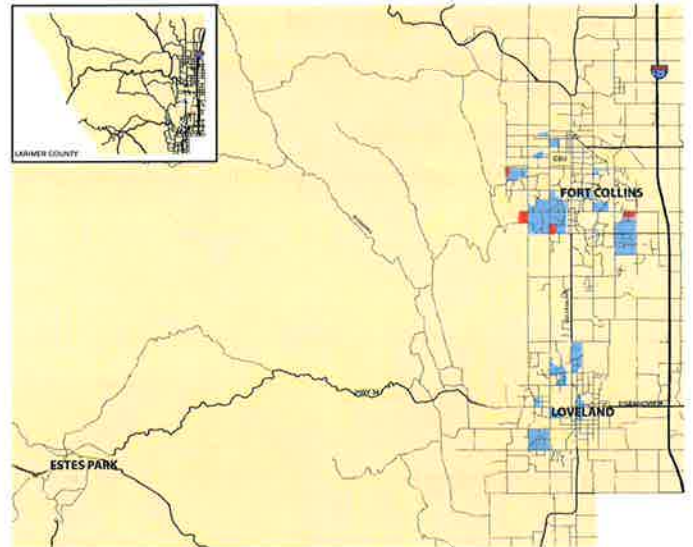


Among the topics addressed by the study, it was important to understand the following key questions:

1. How satisfied are residents with their connections to nature and the outdoors?
2. What is the current level of connection between youth and families to nature, and what barriers are discouraging these interactions?
3. Are there groups within the community that have less of a connection to nature than others and could be identified as underserved?
4. Do current outdoor facilities and programs in the region meet the needs of families, schools and youth program providers?
5. How can existing efforts to connect children and families to nature be improved through new partnerships and coordination between organizations?
6. Are the right types of open lands and facilities available and accessible to youth and families?
7. How can we better provide connections to nature for future residents as communities grow?



Public meeting participants give their feedback through an interactive mapping exercise in which they identify opportunities and barriers on maps of their communities.



Analysis of the relationship of parks and open space locations to demographic data was used to identify underserved populations.

Lessons Learned From the Pilot Project

General lessons learned from the Plug in to Nature project include understanding the importance of:

- Articulating the project scope, goals, desired outcomes and critical success factors to inform expectations and direct the project to completion.
- **Creating an Advisory Group** to involve local project champions and providing them with meaningful roles throughout the project. The Advisory Group may provide review of project documents, testing of survey questions, promotion of the project within social networks, and guidance to ensure all segments of the community are included.
- Encouraging local people to reach out to citizen groups, school administrators, program providers, agency contacts, etc. building on existing relationships.
- **Ensure timing of the project fits within the schedules of families and key stakeholders** (for example summer is not an ideal time to engage school administrators and teachers or contact parents through the schools).
- **Thinking creatively about how to reach out and involve busy families in a way that is convenient for them.** Strategies may include providing child care at the meetings, host meetings at libraries and other locations that parents visit, and conducting short surveys at family events.
- Capturing all viewpoints from those most interested in connecting youth and families to nature, to those who have particular challenges or are disinterested.
- Sequencing efforts so that one stage informs the next, moving the project from general, big-picture themes towards specific and unique applications.



Advisory Group participation was key to the success of the pilot study, from kicking off the project, through the identification of project goals and desired outcomes, to providing important suggestions and feedback throughout the study.

Stakeholder Identification

Clearly identifying who should be involved and why is important for such a broad topic. Stakeholders are, by definition, **any person or group who has an interest in the project or could potentially be affected by its delivery or outputs.** The *Plug in to Nature* pilot project started out with identification of a group of 10 individuals who served as the core team, managed the project and made decisions. Stakeholder groups were identified and organized by categories such as:

- Land-use planning staff.
- Recreation/parks departments.
- Land trusts.
- Open space/natural resources staff.
- Youth organizations with an outdoor mission.
- Youth organizations compatible with an outdoor mission.
- Environmental education program providers (government, private and non-profit).
- Health, early childhood and parent organizations.
- Schools.
- Latino groups.
- Low-income providers.
- Major employers.
- Outdoor industry.

It was useful to identify the reasons for involving each group as well as to define their roles, establish communication methods and contact information, and identify an individual to represent the broad interests of each group as a member of the advisory committee. Stakeholder engagement was important for advertising to constituents, forming focus groups, building partnerships, and creating support and buy-in for implementing the plan recommendations.



County-wide Survey

The goal of the County-wide Survey was to gain input from a representative sampling of parents of school-aged children regarding nature and the outdoors. Conducting the survey early-on in the process provided the benefit of gaining information to inform an overall direction for the project and focus attention on the most significant factors.

Questions were informed by a literature review and developed based on similar surveys such as the "Children and Nature Network Project Grow Outside 2010" report, Wyoming Survey & Analysis Center (WYSAC) "Our Children and the Outdoors Wyoming Survey 2010," the Forest Service's "National Survey on Recreation and the Environment" and "Parents' Perceived Benefits and Fears about Experiences in Nature for Children" conducted by researchers at Colorado State University in 2011. The *Plug in to Nature* survey questions are available in the project book appendix. One lesson from the survey process was the importance of limiting the number and complexity of questions so that people would not find it overly time consuming. More in-depth questions were reserved for community meetings and focus groups.

The survey was made available on-line, and the link was advertised widely to the general public as well as to targeted groups. Traditional advertisement in newspapers and over the radio was utilized as well as advertisement in parent newsletters, family medical offices, and sporting good stores. Advertisement methods were adjusted mid-way through the survey period to ensure representation from all segments of the community. For example, responses to demographic questions indicated low survey completion from residents of rural communities and thus advertisements to newsletters with circulation in rural areas, town websites, and rural schools was increased to improve the rate of response.

While this method of soliciting survey responses is not random like a mail address or phone survey, the online version provides other benefits. The online survey is readily available to everyone within the county and provides a cost savings compared to the mail and phone survey options. Thirty-six (36) percent of survey responses were completed on-site from a variety of venues. The survey was translated into Spanish and made available by paper copy to specified audiences. The venues for paper copy distribution were selected to ensure the sample reflected Larimer County's geographic and racial diversity. On-site surveying with paper copies was conducted at three back-to-school nights in schools with high Latino student enrollment, three English-as-a-Second Language classes, two schools with high enrollment of rural families, and two community events in the southern portion of the county. Part of the success of this method came from hiring college students who had graduated from the local high-schools and were familiar with some

of the families to conduct the surveys. Volunteer groups, park rangers, neighborhood groups, sports interest groups, health organizations and high school students might be other sources to help distribute surveys.

The most useful survey questions addressed barriers, parents' desires for children to spend more time in nature and the importance of different settings (school yard, national parks, community garden, river, mountain, and etc.) for families to be in nature/outdoors. The question regarding barriers that influence children's connections to nature was useful in that the results directed recommendations to address the specific barriers. The question regarding parents' desire for children to spend even more time in nature helped to validate the importance of the study and support the implementation of the project's recommendations. Understanding the importance and satisfaction with outdoor settings provided valuable input used to inform the evaluation of potential parks and open space land priority recommendations.

12. Please rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements based on how you feel today.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Spending time in nature/outdoors provides worthwhile benefits for children.	1	2	3	4	5
The risks to a child while in nature exceed the benefits.	1	2	3	4	5
The effort to have children in nature/outdoors is not worth the benefits.	1	2	3	4	5
I would like my child/children to spend more time in nature/outdoors than they currently do.	1	2	3	4	5
My child would rather play with technology (i.e., computers, video games) than spend time in nature/outdoors.	1	2	3	4	5
Spending time in nature is something I like to do.	1	2	3	4	5
People who are important to me like to spend time in nature/outdoors.	1	2	3	4	5

13. Please indicate how much each of the following would influence your family's decision to spend time in nature/outdoors based on how you feel today.

	No influence	Minor influence	Some influence	A lot of influence	Very strong influence
Time	1	2	3	4	5
Cost	1	2	3	4	5
Transportation	1	2	3	4	5
Location	1	2	3	4	5

14. Please rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements based on how you feel today.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am familiar with the places we can go to spend time in nature/outdoors in Larimer County.	1	2	3	4	5
I am aware of the programs we can attend in Larimer County to experience nature/outdoors.	1	2	3	4	5
I am uncomfortable with my family being in nature/outdoors because we don't see other people who share our culture.	1	2	3	4	5
We would not attend a program if it was offered in a language different from the language we speak at home.	1	2	3	4	5

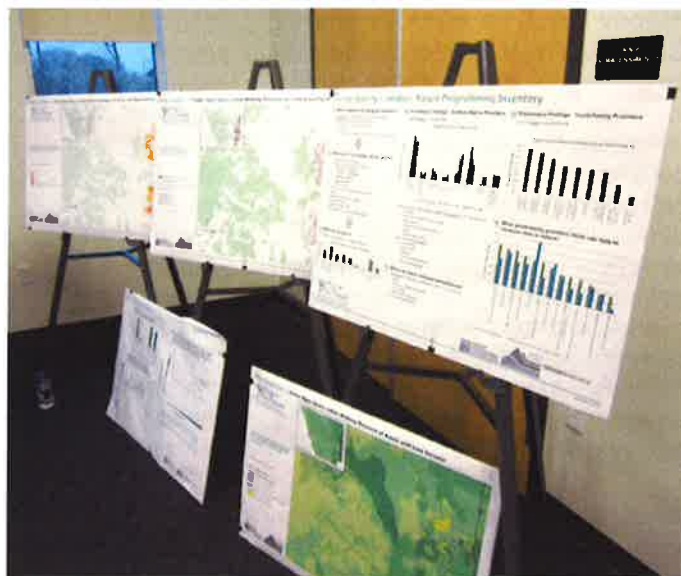
Example page from the survey questionnaire: the survey sought to understand individual's values and beliefs about spending time in the outdoors, their participation levels in outdoor and nature programs, as well as the importance of different types of natural settings.

Public Engagement

The importance of speaking directly with people about this topic must be stressed. Two national examples of similar outreach efforts include America's Great Outdoors Initiative and the Outdoor Nation Summits. America's Great Outdoors Initiative was launched by President Obama in 2010 and included a series of 21 listening sessions aimed at hearing from America's young people. During these sessions, facilitators inquired about how young people relate to the outdoors, what obstacles keep them from spending more time in the outdoors, and what ideas they had on how to overcome these obstacles. Similarly, since 2010, Outdoor Nation has hosted summits every summer in cities across the nation to organize youth to find solutions to the challenges to getting people outside. Outdoor Nation Summits are two-day events for 250 youth to discuss barriers, brainstorm creative ideas and even receive funding for the best project.

The *Plug in to Nature* focus groups and community meetings included many of the same questions as the national examples. The focus groups included more specific questions directed to capture the unique viewpoints of high school youth, parents of young children, parents of children with developmental and physical disabilities, rural and mountain community parents, Latino families, early care and education providers, school teachers and administrators, and outdoor program providers. The community meeting conversations were useful in developing practical solutions, such as understanding that many of the safety concerns that prevented children from walking to parks could be overcome by providing or improving sidewalks and trail connections in specific locations. The mapping exercise was particularly helpful in identifying place-based ideas. The meeting formats, keypad polling questions, mapping exercises and input collection methods utilized in the *Plug in to Nature* project are provided in the document report and appendix and can serve as an example to other engagement efforts.

One of the greatest challenges to gaining input from the public is that the topic may not present a pressing or controversial issue requiring immediate action or inspire a need for people to share their opinion. While the County-wide Survey presented a convenient and quick way for people to respond, the meeting attendance required the additional commitment of an hour of time. Attendance at meetings was greatest in settings that were already part of parents' routine, including libraries, recreation centers and an early childhood development meeting. Childcare and activities were provided by volunteers to encourage parent attendance. The meetings were advertised using the same low-cost methods as the County-wide Survey, with the addition of a list of email addresses generated from the 530 County-wide Survey responses.



Meeting rooms were set up with exhibits for the public to view prior to the formal presentation. The Community Meeting map exercise presented 21 activity choices that participants placed on locations within their city or throughout the County. The activities most frequently desired were bicycling, camping close to urban areas, and nature classes.

Programs and Facilities Inventory

Collecting information on all the outdoor program offerings and facilities for residents is a helpful step in evaluating what opportunities are available and identifying the gaps and overlaps. Most Colorado communities have a variety of agencies, parks and recreation departments, outdoor activity interest groups, non-profits, and property managers whose missions or objectives includes connecting youth and families with nature. However, coordination between these groups to provide comprehensive and efficient services often does not occur. Parks, open space and other outdoor facilities within a region are often owned and operated by an assortment of entities and a comprehensive inventory and evaluation of their offerings is not readily available.

Establishing and maintaining communication with the array of programs and facility operators is recommended prior to the project start-up meeting in order to identify the key contacts, understand the mission of the organization and develop support for the project. Ways to identify the different organizations and groups to contact include:

- Complete a web search for providers such as community gardening groups, outdoor volunteer groups, YMCA, girl scouts and boy scouts;
- Work with a local environmental education network to brainstorm a list of organizations they are aware of;
- Review Lt. Governor Barbara O'Brien's Colorado Kids Outdoors Initiative A Toolkit for Communities, Families & Youth for a list of potential partners and their contact information; and
- Contact outdoor recreation providers.

The facilities inventory data collection can begin before the project start-up by obtaining Geographic Information System (GIS) map data for existing and proposed parks, open space and trails from all entities within the study area and reviewing the information for accuracy.

The Colorado Ownership, Management and Protection (COMap) GIS map data is available for download from <http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/projects/COMap/> at no cost. The COMap data is a good starting point to initialize the identification of county, city, land-trust, federal and state protected lands, however this data must be vetted to ensure it is accurate, complete and up-to-date. It is also desirable to add school sites, libraries and other public facilities containing natural areas to the GIS dataset. This database can then be expanded upon with the project inventory to identify properties with public access and natural features. This data could be gathered from school facility managers, city GIS departments, and from evaluating aerial images.

The creation of an inventory questionnaire is best initiated after the community survey is complete. This will allow questions to be prioritized that address the specific topics in need of evaluation. The most useful questions in the *Plug in to Nature* inventory included:

- Variables of programs (where programs are offered and who attends by age, socio-economic information and place of residence);
- Types of programs (provide program categories for multiple choice questions);
- When programs are offered (weekdays, weekends, time of day, month)
- How program providers advertise their offerings;
- Total number of people that participate in each program (identified by type of audience and program); and
- Initial questions about barriers, needs and possible opportunities.

The *Plug in to Nature* appendix document contains a summary of the program inventory utilized in the analysis. The full database and analysis of program information is available by contacting the Larimer County Natural Resources department.

Larimer County Natural Areas Facilities Inventory List Example

	GIS Map	Natural Areas	Parking	Trail head	Trail System	Indoor Meeting	Outdoor Meeting	Interpretive Signs	Campground	Rest rooms	Main Attractions/Characteristics/ Uses	Public Access (1. Yes, 2. No, 3. Trail, 4. Seasonal, 5. Restricted, 6. Unknown)
Federal												
U.S. Forest Service												
Arapaho National Forest	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		yes, trail
Roosevelt National Forest	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		yes, trail
National Park Service												
Rocky Mountain National Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Scenery, Wildfire, Alpine Tundra, easy access	yes
State												
Colorado State Parks												
Boyd Lake	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Boyd Lake (boating, swimming, tubing, sailing, fishing, water skiing, PWC use), camping, picnicking, relaxing on the swim beach, winter activities, hunting	yes, trail

Analysis of Trends and Underserved Groups

Evaluating access to open space, parks and trails within a community is a way to assess the opportunities available for youth and families to get outdoors and experience nature. The assessment includes a gap analysis of underserved areas and identification of geographic disparities in facility distribution. The GIS dataset developed in the outdoor facilities inventory can be utilized much like a proximity analysis used in Parks and Open Space Master Planning projects. The major difference is that the goals of a project to better connect youth to the outdoors must evaluate the relationship specifically of children to outdoor facilities. Examining the proximity of parks and open space to schools, child care centers and areas of high concentration of children are unique to this evaluation. Understanding people's tolerance for travel is an important factor when evaluating accessibility. For example, the distance children are willing or allowed to walk to reach a park is often much less than an adult would travel. Also, parents may choose not to drive long distances to take their children to parks and open space during the week when time available for activities is limited. A helpful rule-of-thumb for proximity analysis is a five minute (quarter mile) walk or less is desirable and a 10 minute walk (half mile) is an acceptable distance to reach a park or open space. However, community expectations may vary greatly and it is best to gain feedback from the public regarding the proximity standards to apply.

Another important factor that may differ from traditional Parks and Open Space Master Planning is the importance of identifying open space properties that provide public access. Conservation easements, for example, provide many open space benefits but often are privately owned and do not allow the public to enter. Evaluating proximity only to the parks and open spaces that allow public access creates an analysis related to the project goals.

Disparities in the provision of open space, parks and trails may exist for different demographic groups. These potential disparities can be analyzed using US Census data incorporated into GIS maps. Low income areas and areas of high concentration of minority race populations can be identified using US Census data maps to determine if they are underserved by parks and open space. Community meetings and focus groups that include these populations can verify these relationships to determine if more open space and parks are needed to serve the population equitably.



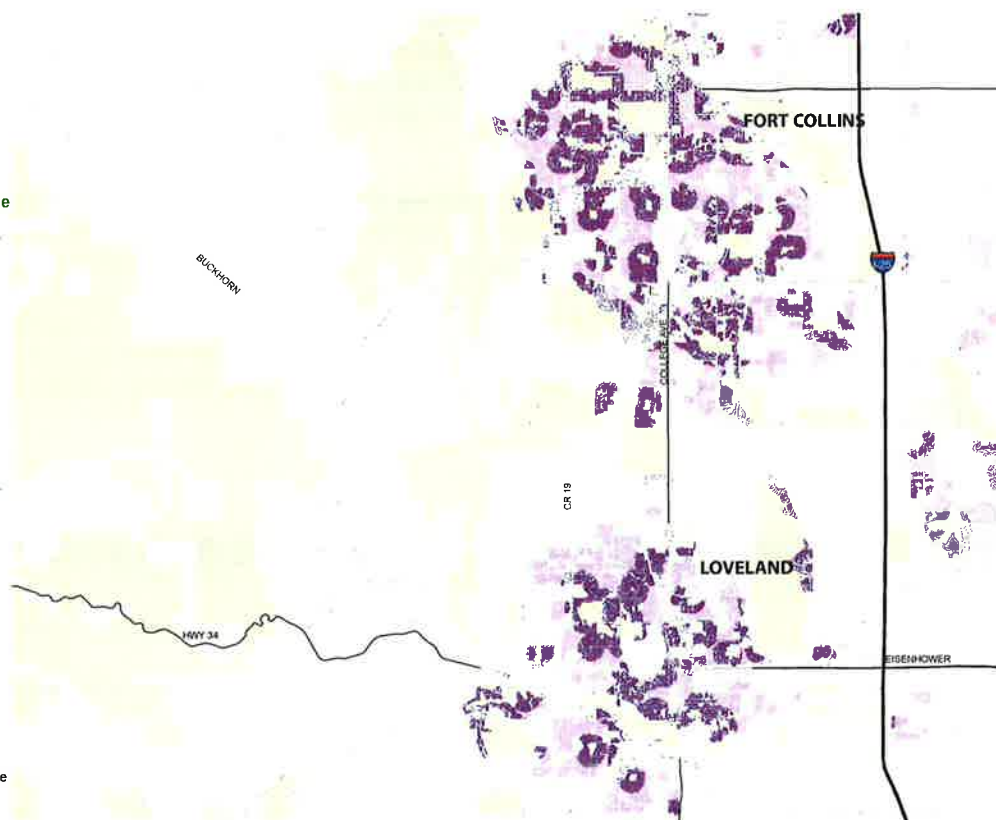
Within incorporated areas, 51% (46,214 residences out of 89,751) have access to parks and open space within walking distance of 1/4 mile.

Fort Collins: 69% (28,786 residences out of 49,108)
Loveland: 49% (13,363 residences out of 27,109)
Estes Park: 65% (2,625 residences out of 3,909)
Berthoud: 0% (0 residences out of 2,085)
Wellington: 16% (46 residences out of 2,911)
Windsor: 62% (1,413 residences out of 2,692)
Timnath: 2% (26 residences out of 1,178)
Johnstown: 7% (61 residences out of 760)

Within incorporated areas, 52% of units (51,458 out of 99,454) have access to parks open space within walking distance.

Fort Collins: 58% (32,463 out of 55,453)
Loveland: 49% (14,765 out of 30,074)
Estes Park: 64% (2,686 out of 4,171)
Berthoud: 0% (0 out of 2,176)
Wellington: 2% (45 out of 2,941)
Windsor: 63% (1,419 out of 2,698)
Timnath: 2% (28 out of 1,183)
Johnstown: 7% (61 out of 760)

- Residences with access within 1/4 mile
- Residences without access within 1/4 mile
- Public Access to Parks and Open Space



Public Parks and Open Space within Walking Distance of City Residences - Fort Collins/Loveland

Identification of Lands that Present Future Outdoor/Nature Opportunities

Recommendations that come out of the study may include suggestions for acquisition of lands to become parks, open space, and trails. Within a small town or a place with limited natural resources these potential sites may be readily identifiable and land analysis to identify the sites may not be necessary. Regional scale study areas or within a community with many potential sites, a land suitability analysis is a useful tool for site identification. GIS mapping software allows for land features, such as rivers, forest, and wildlife habitat to be overlaid to identify locations that have the greatest number of features. In addition to natural features, social variables such as locations of future schools and areas of high concentration of children can be added into the map analysis. The result is a targeted understanding of lands that are best suited to become places for nature based experiences in the future.

Sources for information that could be included in a similar analysis include:

- Colorado Parks and Wildlife Natural Diversity Information Source Server
<http://ndis.nrel.colostate.edu/ftp/index.html>
- US Geological Survey Land Cover Data
<http://nationalmap.gov/landcover.html>
- US Fish and Wildlife Data Services
<http://www.fws.gov/gis/data/regional/index.html>
- Natural Resource Conservation Service Prime Farmland Maps <http://www.co.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/soil/important-farmlands/prime-farm-lands.html>
- Colorado Wetland Inventory
<http://www.cnhp.colostate.edu/wetlandinventory/>
- Bureau of Land Management
<http://www.geocommunicator.gov/GeoComm/>
- US Census Bureau
<http://www.census.gov/geo/www/maps/>
- City and County GIS mapping offices and assessor's office

Developing Recommendations

A set of recommendations must clearly relate to the community input and information analysis to be effective in addressing community needs. Recommendations should include actions that can be implemented immediately or within a short time frame along with those that are substantial undertakings that may take years to complete. Addressing the complex topic of connecting youth and families to the outdoors requires recommendations which touch on a variety of topics; such as programs, partnerships, land policies, public awareness building and more. Including an expansive list of topics allows for the exploration of new initiatives and partnerships. It is useful to vet the recommendations with the many stakeholders that will be responsible for implementation to ensure existing policies are understood and feasibility is evaluated.

Metrics are also an important part of the recommendations. Performance metrics allow for the measurement of progress towards achieving goals. The metrics were selected to address identified deficiencies, such as places without parks and open space within a five minute walk and gaps in outdoor/nature programs. Anticipation of development and population growth was also considered in the metrics to ensure community design and planning for access to outdoor/nature places addresses future resident needs. Developing baseline data associated with the metrics allows for quantitative comparison to other communities. Once other communities develop metrics and baseline calculations similar to Larimer County this information can be used to understand what makes a community particularly successful in encouraging youth and families' to connect with nature.

Metrics and Standards for Improvement Example

	Indicator	Baseline Condition	Measurement Method	Target for the Future
1	Increased citizen satisfaction with family connections to nature	87% of survey respondents reported their child's nature connection as very high.	Survey every other year	Maintain or increase reported satisfaction from all demographic groups and communities.
2	Annual number of people participating in Larimer County outdoor/nature programs	67,000 people participated in Larimer County outdoor programs in 2011.	Program providers annual reporting	On a per-capita basis, participation numbers are maintained or increased.
3	Number of new programs to fill needs identified in this study	65 program providers as of 2011.	Program providers annual reporting	More comprehensive programs offered with coordinated effort among providers. Increase by 20%, the number of programs which focus on needs that are currently unfulfilled in young children age groups, winter focused programs, and those for outdoor skills.
4	Total publicly accessible parks and open space in Larimer County	944,551 acres of publicly accessible parks and open space in Larimer County as of 2011.	GIS calculations of lands with public access.	A growth of publicly accessible lands per-capita that is equal to the proportion of population growth plus five percent.
5	Parks and open space within a five minute walk of schools, child care facilities, and residences	51% of residential address points, 57 out of 91 (63%) of schools, and 182 out of 363 (or 50%) of child care facilities are located within a five minute walk of parks and open space.	GIS calculations, Assessor Data	Improve the amount of parks and open space within existing developed areas by 10 percent to improve nature based access.

Elements of Project Success

1. Cohesiveness – pulling all the pieces together into the final products, having each step inform the next.
2. Inclusiveness – including all appropriate audiences in focus groups and adequately representing the entire community. Communicate and network with other groups that have similar goals and interests.
3. Focus – selecting the right things to measure, analyze and report. This project covers many facets. Requiring the energy and resources of the project to be focused in the right places to meet clearly defined project goals.
4. Applicability – making sure the project applies to all the diverse parts of the study area. Recommend the right tools for the situation.
5. Measurable – Convert recommendations into measurable indicators. This will allow for evaluation of near-term and long-term success.
6. Inspirational – The message should inspire others so they see the benefits of the project.



A presentation of the study conclusions is a good way to inspire stakeholders to involve themselves the implementation steps.

For more information or a
presentation about this project
please contact the Larimer County
Department of Natural Resources.

Project Website:
www.larimer.org/plugintonature



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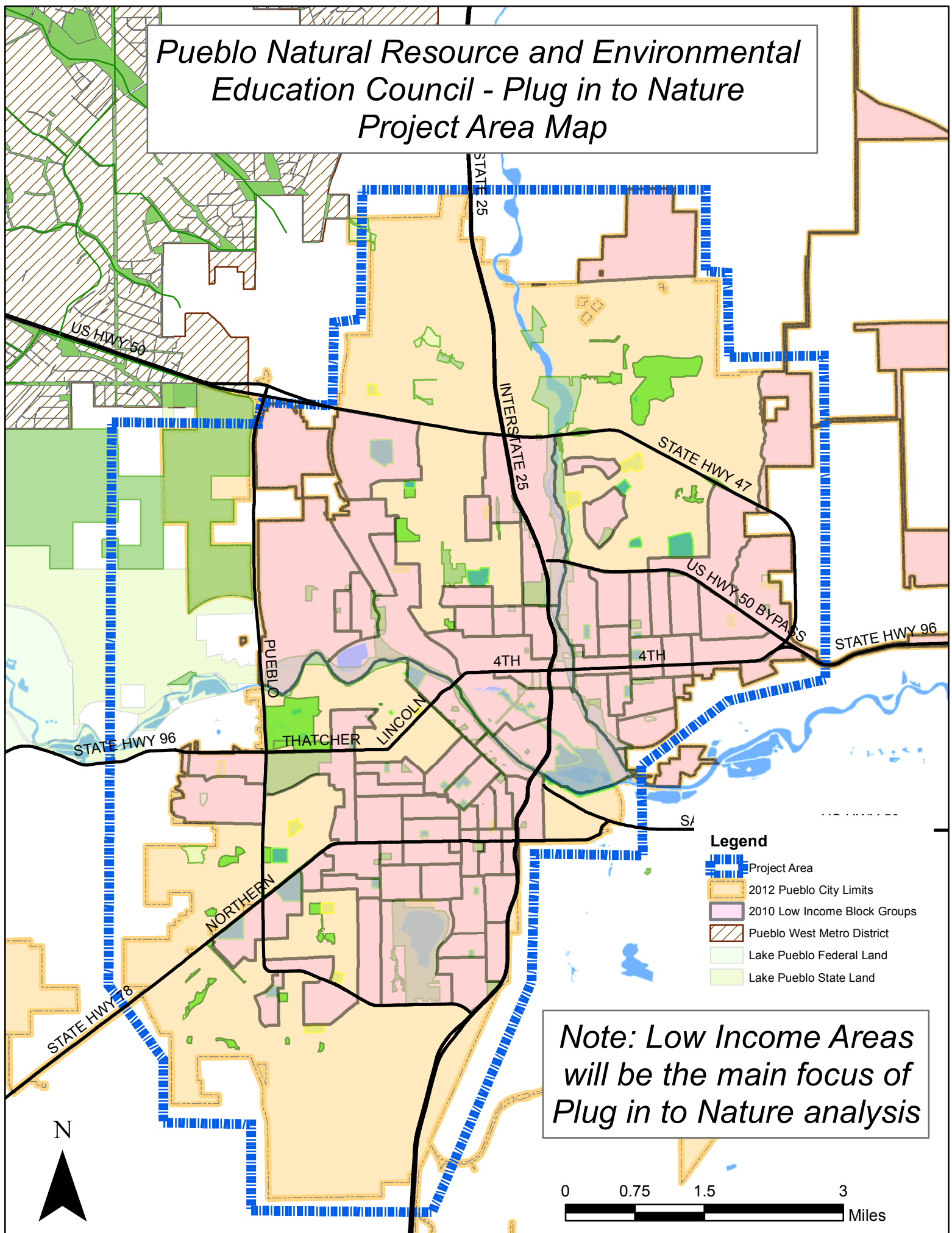


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**Project Area Map
(Attached)**

Pueblo Natural Resource and Environmental Education Council - Plug in to Nature Project Area Map



Legend

- Project Area
- 2012 Pueblo City Limits
- 2010 Low Income Block Groups
- Pueblo West Metro District
- Lake Pueblo Federal Land
- Lake Pueblo State Land

*Note: Low Income Areas
will be the main focus of
Plug in to Nature analysis*