

PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN
APPENDIX
DECEMBER 2015

Appendix A – Park and Recreation Influencing Trends

The following information highlights relevant regional, and national outdoor recreation trends from various sources that may influence the City of Meridian’s recreation planning for the next several years.

A. Demographic Trends in Recreation

Adult – The Millennial Generation

The 25–34 age range represents potential adult program participants. Many in this age group are beginning long-term relationships and establishing families.

The Millennial Generation is generally considered to represent those born between about 1980 and 1999 (ages 16 – 35). Twenty-five percent (25%) of the population in Meridian is included within the Millennial Generation.

The highest ranking age cohort in Meridian in 2014 was 35–44 (15 percent of the population) followed by the 45–54 and 25–34 age cohorts (12.8% and 12.5% of the population, respectively). Planning for the next ten years suggests a growing demand for programs and services for Baby Boomers and seniors (the 55 – 74 age range is predicted to grow by 2.9% by 2019).

In their book, *Millennials Rising, the Next Great Generation*, authors William Strauss and Neil Howe identify seven Millennial characteristics.⁴ These characteristics were discussed in a 2010 California State Parks Bulletin article entitled, “Here come the ‘Millennials’: What You Need to Know to Connect with this New Generation”:

1. **Special:** Used to receiving rewards just for participating, Millennials are raised to feel special.
2. **Sheltered:** Millennials lead structured lives filled with rules and regulations. Less accustomed to unstructured play than previous generations and apprehensive of the outdoors, they spend most of their time indoors, leaving home primarily to socialize with friends and families.
3. **Team Oriented:** This group has a “powerful instinct for community” and places a “High value on teamwork and belonging.”
4. **Confident (and technologically savvy):** Upbeat and with a can-do attitude, this generation is more “optimistic and tech-savvy than its elders.”
5. **Pressured:** Millennials feel “pressured to achieve and pressured to behave.” They have been “pushed to study hard and avoid personal risk.”
6. **Achieving:** This generation is expected to do great things, and they may be the next “great” generation.
7. **Conventional (and diverse):** Millennials are respectful of authority and civic minded. Respectful of cultural differences because they are ethnically diverse, they also value good conduct and tend to have a “standardized appearance.”

The California State Parks article provides a broad range of ideas for engaging Millennials in parks and recreation.⁵

⁴ Howe, Neil, and William Strauss, (2000). *Millennials Rising, the Next Great Generation*. Vintage: New York, New York.

⁵ California State Parks, *Recreation Opportunities*. (2010) “Here come the ‘Millennials’: What You Need to Know to Connect with this New Generation,” <http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/795/files/millennials%20final>, accessed January 12, 2015, pages 4-6.

Adult – The Baby Boomers

Baby boomers are defined as individuals born between 1946 and 1964, as stated in Leisure Programming for Baby Boomers.⁶ They are a generation that consists of nearly 76 million Americans. In 2011, this influential population began its transition out of the workforce. As Baby Boomers enter retirement, they will be looking for opportunities in fitness, sports, outdoors, arts and cultural events, and other activities that suit their lifestyles. With varied life experiences, values, and expectations, Baby Boomers are predicted to redefine the meaning of recreation and leisure programming for mature adults. In the July 2012 issue of *Parks and Recreation* magazine, published by NRPA, Emily Sheffield, Professor of Recreation and Parks Management at the California State University, at Chico, write an article titled, “Five Trends Shaping Tomorrow Today.” In it, she indicated that Baby Boomers are driving the aging of America with Boomers and seniors over 65 composing about 39 percent of the nation’s population.⁷

In the leisure profession, this generation’s devotion to exercise and fitness is an example of its influence on society. When boomers entered elementary school, President John Kennedy initiated the President's Council on Physical Fitness; physical education and recreation became a key component of public education. As Boomers matured and moved into the workplace, they took their desire for exercise and fitness with them. Now, as the oldest Boomers are nearing 70, park and recreation professionals are faced with new approaches to provide both passive and active programming for older adults. Boomers are second only to Gen Y/Millennials in participation in fitness and outdoor sports.⁸

Jeffrey Ziegler, a past president of the Arizona Parks and Recreation Association identified “Boomer Basics” in his article, “*Recreating retirement: how will baby boomers reshape leisure in their 60s?*”⁹ Highlights are summarized below.

Boomer Basics:

Boomers are known to work hard, play hard, and spend hard. They have always been fixated with all things youthful. Boomers typically respond that they feel 10 years younger than their chronological age. Their nostalgic mindset keeps boomers returning to the sights and sounds of their 1960s youth culture. Swimming pools have become less of a social setting and much more of an extension of Boomers’ health and wellness program. Because Boomers in general have a high education level they will likely continue to pursue education as adults and into retirement.

In 2010, Baby Boomers represented 17 percent of the population in Meridian (those approximately 51 – 64 years of age).

Boomers will look to park and recreation professionals to give them opportunities to enjoy many life-long hobbies and sports. When programming for this age group, a customized experience to cater to the need for self-fulfillment, healthy pleasure, nostalgic youthfulness, and individual escapes will be important. Recreation trends will shift from games and activities that Boomers associate with senior citizens, as Ziegler suggests that activities such as bingo, bridge, and shuffleboard will likely be avoided because Boomers relate these activities to being old.

⁶ Linda Cochran, Anne Roshchadl, and Jodi Rudick, Leisure Programming For Baby Boomers, Human Kinetics, 2009.

⁷ Emily Sheffield, “Five Trends Shaping Tomorrow Today,” *Parks and Recreation*, July 2012 p. 16-17.

⁸ 2012 Participation Report, Physical Activity Council, 2012.

⁹ Jeffrey Ziegler, “Recreating Retirement: How Will Baby Boomers Reshape Leisure in Their 60s?” *Parks and Recreation*, October 2002.

Boomers are reinventing what being a 65-year-old means. Parks and recreation agencies that do not plan for Boomers carrying on in retirement with the same hectic pace they have lived during their years in employment will be left behind. Things to consider when planning for the demographic shift:

- Boomer characteristics
- What drives Boomers?
- Marketing to Boomers
- Arts and entertainment
- Passive and active fitness trends
- Outdoor recreation/adventure programs
- Travel programs

Youth – Planning for the Demographic Shift

Sheffield also identified that the proportion of youth is smaller than in the past, but still essential to our future. As of the 2010 Census, the age group under age 18 forms about a quarter of the U.S. population, and this percentage is at an all-time low. Nearly half of this population group is ethnically diverse, and 25 percent is Hispanic.

Multiculturalism

Our country is becoming increasingly racially and ethnically diverse. In May 2012, the U.S. Census Bureau announced that non-white babies now account for the majority of births in the United States. “This is an important tipping point,” said William H. Frey,¹⁰ the senior demographer at the Brookings Institution, describing the shift as a “...transformation from a mostly white Baby Boomer culture to the more globalized multi-ethnic country that we are becoming.” Cultural and ethnic diversity adds a unique flavor to communities expressed through distinct neighborhoods, multicultural learning environments, restaurants, places of worship, museums, and nightlife.¹¹

While the City of Meridian has an overwhelmingly Caucasian population (91.3 percent in 2014), its demographic profile indicates that two percent of the population is Asian and .8 percent is African American. Additionally, 7.5 percent of the population is of Hispanic origin (irrespective of race).

As the recreation field continues to function within a more diverse society, race and ethnicity will become increasingly important in every aspect of the profession. More than ever, recreation professionals will be expected to work with, and have significant knowledge and understanding of, individuals from many cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds.

¹⁰ Adam Serwer, “The End of White America,” Mother Jones, <http://www.motherjones.com/kevin-drum/2012/05/end-white-america>, May 17, 2012.

¹¹ Baldwin Ellis, “The Effects of Culture & Diversity on America,” http://www.ehow.com/facts_5512569_effects-culture-diversity-america.html, accessed on Sept. 20, 2012.

- **Outdoor Participation varies by Ethnicity:** Participation in outdoor activities is higher among Caucasians than any other ethnicity and lowest among African Americans in nearly all age groups.
- **Lack of interest reason for not participating:** When asked why they did not participate in outdoor activities more often, the number one reason given by people of all ethnicities and races was because they were not interested.
- **Most popular outdoor activities:** Biking, running, fishing, and camping were the most popular outdoor activities for all Americans, with each ethnic/racial group participating in each in varying degrees.

Recreational Preferences among Ethnic/Racial Groups (Self-Identifying):

Nationwide participation in outdoor sports in 2013 was highest among Caucasians in all age groups and lowest among African-Americans, according to the 2014 “Outdoor Recreation Participation Report.”¹² The biggest difference in participation rates was between Caucasian and African American adolescents, with 65 percent of Caucasians ages 13–17 participating and only 42 percent of African Americans in this age range participating.

African-Americans

African American youth ages 6–12 (52% participation), are the only age group in this demographic to participate in outdoor recreation at a rate of more than 50 percent. By comparison, Caucasians in four of the five age groupings participated in outdoor sports at rates of 60 percent or more, with only those aged 45+ (40% participation) participating at under 50 percent. According to the 2014 “Outdoor Recreation Participation Report,” the most popular outdoor activities among African-Americans are: running/jogging and trail running (18%); fishing (freshwater, saltwater, and fly) (11%); road, mountain, and BMX biking (11%); birdwatching/wildlife viewing (4%); and camping (car, backyard, backpacking, and RV) (4%).

Asian-Americans

Research about outdoor recreation among Asian-Americans in the San Francisco Bay Area (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Filipino)¹³ found significant differences among the four groups concerning the degree of linguistic acculturation (preferred language spoken in various communication media). The research suggests that communications related to recreation and natural resource management should appear in ethnic media, but the results also suggest that Asian Americans should not be viewed as homogeneous with regard to recreation related issues. Another study¹⁴ found that technology use for finding outdoor recreation opportunities is highest among Asian/Pacific Islander populations. Over 60 percent of these populations use stationary or mobile technology in making decisions regarding outdoor recreation.

According to the 2014 “Outdoor Recreation Participation Report,” the most popular outdoor activities among Asian/Pacific Islanders are: running/jogging and trail running (24%); hiking (15%); road, mountain, and BMX biking (14%); camping (car, backyard, backpacking, and RV) (11%); and fishing (freshwater, saltwater, and fly) (10%).

¹² “Outdoor Recreation Participation Report 2014,” Outdoor Foundation, 2014.

¹³ P.L. Winter, W.C. Jeong, G.C. Godbey, “Outdoor recreation among Asian Americans: A case study of San Francisco Bay Area residents,” *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 2004.

¹⁴ Harry Zinne and Alan Graefe, “Emerging Adults and the Future of Wild nature,” *International Journal of Wildness*. December 2007.

Caucasians

According to the 2014 “Outdoor Recreation Participation Report,” the most popular outdoor activities among Caucasians are: running/jogging and trail running (19%); fishing (freshwater, saltwater, and fly) (18%); road, mountain, and BMX biking (17%); camping (car, backyard, backpacking and RV) (16%); and hiking (14%).

Hispanics

In the United States, the Hispanic population increased by 43 percent over the last decade, compared to five percent for the non-Hispanic population, and accounted for more than half of all the population growth. According to Emilyn Sheffield, the growing racial and ethnic diversity is particularly important to recreation and leisure service providers, as family and individual recreation patterns and preferences are strongly shaped by cultural influences.¹⁵

Participation in outdoor sports among those who identify as Hispanic is at seven percent nationwide, according to the “2013 Outdoor Recreation Participation Report.”¹⁶ Those who do get outdoors, however, participate more frequently than other outdoor participants, with an average of 43 outings per year. Hispanic youth (ages 6–17) are the most likely age group to participate in outdoor recreation, followed closely by those in the 25–44 age range. The most popular outdoor activities among Hispanics are: running and jogging (22%); road, mountain, and BMX biking (17%); fishing (freshwater, saltwater, and fly) (14%); Camping (car, backyard, and RV) (11%); and hiking (9%).

Multiculturalism and Marketing

Today the marketplace for consumers has dramatically evolved in the United States from a largely Anglo demographic, to the reality that the United States has shifted to a large minority consumer base known as “new majority.”

The San Jose Group, a consortium of marketing communications companies specializing in reaching Hispanic and non-Hispanic markets of the United States, suggests that today’s multicultural population of the United States, or the “new majority,” is 107.6 million, which translates to about 35.1 percent of the country’s total population. The United States’ multicultural population alone could essentially be the 12th largest country in the world.¹⁷ Parks and recreation trends in marketing leisure services continue to emerge and should be taken into consideration in all planning efforts, as different cultures respond differently to marketing techniques.

¹⁵ Emilyn Sheffield, “Five Trends Shaping Tomorrow Today,” Parks and Recreation, July 2012 p. 16-17.

¹⁶ “Outdoor Recreation Participation Report 2013,” Outdoor Foundation, 2013.

¹⁷ “SJG Multicultural Facts & Trends,” San Jose Group, <http://blog.thesanjosegroup.com/?p=275>, posted October 25, 2010.

B. Facilities

According to *Recreation Management* magazine's 2014 "State of the Industry Report,"¹⁸ national trends show an increased user-base of recreation facilities (private and public). Additionally, parks and recreation providers responding to the survey indicated an average age of 23.8 years for their community recreation facilities. To meet that growing need, a majority of the parks and recreation survey respondents (69%) reported that they have plans to build new facilities or make additions or renovations to their existing facilities over the next three years. Nearly one-third (32.5%) of parks respondents said that they have plans to build new facilities, and 28.9 percent said that they plan to add to their existing facilities. More than half (52.2%) are planning renovations to existing facilities.

The current national trend is toward "one-stop" indoor recreation facilities to serve all ages. Large, multi-purpose regional centers help increase cost recovery, promote retention, and encourage cross-use. Agencies across the U.S. are increasing revenue production and cost recovery. Multi-use facilities versus specialized space is a trend, offering programming opportunities as well as free-play opportunities. "One stop" facilities attract young families, teens, and adults of all ages.

Also according to the 2014 "State of the Industry Report" (p. 56), "...parks and recreation departments continue to see a slow recovery from the lowest points of the recent recession." While 69 percent plan for construction for parks, the average amount planned for construction in the 2014 budgets saw a slight decrease of 4.5 percent from an average of \$3,973,000 in last year's survey to an average of \$3,795,000 for 2014. There was very little change in the types of features and amenities included in the facilities of the survey respondents from last year to this year. The most commonly found features include splash play areas, trails, dog parks, park structures (shelters and restroom buildings); playgrounds; disc golf courses, open spaces (gardens, natural areas), synthetic turf sports fields; and concession areas.

Aquatics/Water Recreation Trends

According to the National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA), swimming ranked third nation-wide in terms of participation in 2012.¹⁹ Outdoor swimming pools are not typically heated and open year round. Swimming for fitness is the top aspirational activity for "inactives" in 6 of 8 age categories in the SFIA "2013 Sports, Fitness and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report," representing a significant opportunity to engage inactive populations. Nationally, there is an increasing trend towards indoor leisure and therapeutic pools. Additional indoor and outdoor amenities like "spray pads" are becoming increasingly popular as well. In some cities and counties spray pools are popular in the summer months and turn into ice rinks in the winter months.

The 2014 Outdoor Recreation Participation Topline Report provided nation-wide trends for various outdoor activities, including the following water recreation activities: board sailing/windsurfing, canoeing, fishing, kayaking, rafting, sailing, stand-up paddling, and wakeboarding (**Table 11**). Among water recreation activities, stand up paddling has had the largest increase in participation in the past three years (23.9% increase) followed by several varieties of the kayaking experience: kayak fishing (20% increase), recreational kayaking (11.1%) and whitewater kayaking (6.6% increase).

¹⁸ Emily Tipping, "2014 State of the Industry Report, State of the Managed Recreation Industry," *Recreation Management*, June 2014.

¹⁹ National Sporting Goods Association, "2012 Participation – Ranked by Total Participation," 2013.

Fly fishing participation is up while other fishing activities are down in the past three years. Sailing participation has increased somewhat over the past three years, while rafting participation is down.²⁰

**Table 11: Water Recreation Participation by Activity (in thousands)
(6 years of age or older)**

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 3 Year Average Change |
|-----------------------------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----------------------|
| Boardsailing/Windsurfing | 1,128 | 1,607 | 1,151 | 1,593 | 1,324 | -2.4% |
| Canoeing | 10,058 | 10,553 | 9,787 | 9,839 | 10,153 | -1.2% |
| Fishing (Fly) | 5,568 | 5,478 | 5,360 | 6,012 | 5,878 | 2.4% |
| Fishing (Freshwater/ Other) | 40,961 | 38,860 | 39,071 | 39,135 | 37,796 | -0.9% |
| Kayak Fishing | no data | 1,044 | 1,201 | 1,409 | 1,798 | 20% |
| Kayaking (Recreational) | 6,212 | 6,465 | 8,229 | 8,144 | 8,716 | 11.1% |
| Kayaking (White Water) | 1,369 | 1,842 | 1,546 | 1,878 | 2,146 | 6.6% |
| Rafting | 4,318 | 4,460 | 3,821 | 3,690 | 3,836 | -4.6% |
| Sailing | 4,342 | 3,869 | 3,725 | 3,958 | 3,915 | -.5% |
| Stand Up Paddling | no data | 1,050 | 1,242 | 1,542 | 1,993 | 23.9% |
| Wakeboarding | 3,577 | 3,645 | 3,389 | 3,348 | 3,316 | -3.1% |

Source: Outdoor Foundation 2014 (numbers in thousands).

Dog Parks

Dog parks continue to see high popularity and have remained among the top planned addition to parks and recreational facilities over the past three years. In 2014, a new association was formed, dedicated to providing informational resources for starting and maintaining dog parks, the National Dog Park Association. *Recreation Management* magazine²¹ suggests that dog parks can represent a relatively low-cost way to provide an oft-visited a popular community amenity. Dog parks can be as simple as a gated area, or more elaborate with “designed-for-dogs” amenities like water fountains, agility equipment, and pet wash stations, to name a few. According to *Dog Fancy* magazine, an ideal dog park should include the following:

- One acre or more surrounded by a 4- to 6-foot fence
- Shade and water
- Adequate drainage
- Parking near the site
- A double gated entry
- Benches
- Pet-waste disposal stations with pickup bags and covered waste receptacles

Fitness Programming

There have been many changes in fitness programs in the last 15 years. What clients wanted in 2000 is not necessarily what they want today. The American College of Sports Medicine’s (ACSM’s) *Health and Fitness Journal*²² has conducted an annual survey since 2007 to determine trends that would help create a standard for health and fitness programming.

²⁰ “Outdoor Recreation Participation Topline Report 2014,” Outdoor Foundation, 2014.

²¹ Emily Tipping, “2014 State of the Industry Report, Trends in Parks and Recreation,” *Recreation Management*, June 2014.

²² “Walter R. Thompson, “Worldwide Survey of Fitness Trends for 2012,” *Health & Fitness Journal*, American College of Sports Medicine, 2011.

Table 12 shows survey results that focus on trends in the commercial, corporate, clinical, and community health and fitness industry. Some trends first identified in 2007 have stayed near the top of the list year after year, while others came and went in popularity. Zumba made a brief appearance on the top 10 in 2012, but has fallen off the list of top 20 in 2014. Body weight training appeared as a developing trend in 2014 and is projected to stay strong in 2015 as is high-intensity interval training. Yoga is regaining popularity after falling out of the top 20 in 2009 and staying out of the top 10 until 2014. Fitness programs for older adults will remain strong in 2014 and 2015.

Table 12: Top 10 Worldwide Fitness Trends for 2007 and Predicted Trends for 2015

| 2007 | Trends for 2015 |
|---|---|
| 1. Children and obesity | 1. Body weight training |
| 2. Special fitness programs for older adults | 2. High-intensity interval training |
| 3. Educated and experienced fitness professionals | 3. Educated and experienced fitness professionals |
| 4. Functional fitness | 4. Strength training |
| 5. Core training | 5. Personal training |
| 6. Strength training | 6. Exercise and weight loss |
| 7. Personal training | 7. Yoga |
| 8. Mind/Body Exercise | 8. Fitness programs for older adults |
| 9. Exercise and weight loss | 9. Functional fitness |
| 10. Outcome measurements | 10. Group personal training |

Source: American College of Sport Medicine

General Programming

One of the most common concerns in the recreation industry is creating innovative programming to draw participants into facilities and services. Once in, participants recognize that the benefits are endless. According to *Recreation Management* magazine’s “2014 State of the Industry Report,”²³ the most common programs offered by survey respondents include holiday events and other special events (78.1%), youth sports teams (69.1%), day camps and summer camps (64.7%), adult sports teams (61.3%), arts and crafts (60.9%), educational programs (60.5%), sports tournaments and races (56.8%), programs for active older adults (55.2%), fitness programs (61.4%), and festivals and concerts (53.2%).

The report also suggested that more than 3 in 10 (35.7%) respondents are planning to *add* additional programs at their facilities over the next three years. The most common types of programming they are planning to add include:

1. Programming for active older adults (up from No. 5 on the 2013 survey)
2. Fitness programs (up from No. 3)
3. Teen programming (down from No. 2)
4. Adult sports teams (did not appear in 2013)
5. Holiday events and other special events (up from No. 6)
6. Mind-body/balance programs – yoga, tai chi, Pilates, or martial arts (up from No. 7)
7. Environmental education (down from No. 1)
8. Educational programs (up from No. 4)
9. Festivals and concerts (up from No. 10)
10. Sports tournaments or races (down from No. 8)

²³ Emily Tipping, “2014 State of the Industry Report, Trends in Parks and Recreation,” *Recreation Management*, June 2013.

Older Adults and Senior Programming

The American Academy of Sports Medicine issues a yearly survey of the top 20 fitness trends.²⁴ It ranks senior fitness programs eighth among most popular fitness trends for 2015. Whether it's SilverSneakers, a freestyle low-impact cardio class, or water aerobics, more and more people are realizing the many benefits of staying active throughout life.

According to the National Sporting Goods Association, popular senior programming trends include hiking, birding, and swimming.

C. Economic Impact of Festivals and Events

In the context of urban development, from the early 1980s, there has been a process that can be characterized as “festivalization,” which has been linked to the economic restructuring of towns and cities, and the drive to develop communities as large-scale platforms for the creation and consumption of “cultural experience.”

The success rate for festivals should not be evaluated simplistically solely on the basis of profit (sales), prestige (media profile), or size (numbers of events). Research by the European Festival Research Project (EFRP)²⁵ indicates there is evidence of local and city government supporting and even instigating and managing particular festivals themselves to achieve local or regional economic objectives, often defined very narrowly (sales, jobs, tourists, etc.). There are also a growing number of smaller more local community-based festivals and events in communities, most often supported by local councils that have been spawned partly as a reaction to larger festivals that have become prime economic-drivers. These community-based festivals often will re-claim cultural ground based on their social, educational, and participative value. For more information on the values of festivals and events, see the CRC Sustainable Tourism research guide²⁶ on this topic.

In 2014, festivals grew in popularity as economic drivers and urban brand builders. Chad Kaydo describes the phenomenon in the January 2014 issues of *Governing* magazine: “Municipal officials and entrepreneur see the power of cultural festivals, innovation-focused business conferences, and the like as a way to spur short-term tourism while shaping an image of the host city as a cool, dynamic location where companies and citizens in modern, creative industries can thrive.”²⁷ Examples of successful festivals include:

- South by Southwest (SXSW) – this annual music, film, and digital conference and festival in Austin, Texas, is a leading example. Launched in 1987, the festival’s economic impact has grown steadily over recent years. In 2007, it netted \$95 million for Austin’s economy. In 2013, the event topped \$218 million.
- Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival in California – this two-week cultural event draws big-name bands, music fans, and marketers, attracting 80,000 people per day.

²⁴ “Survey Predicts Top 20 Fitness Trends for 2015,” American College of Sports Medicine, <http://www.acsm.org/about-acsm/media-room/news-releases/2014/10/24/survey-predicts-top-20-fitness-trends-for-2015>, Accessed January 2015.

²⁵ EFRP is an international consortium seeking to understand the current explosion of festivals and its implications and perspective, <http://www.efa-aef.eu/en/activities/efrp/>, accessed October 2012.

²⁶ Ben Janeczko, Trevor Mules and Brent Ritchie, “Estimating the Economic Impacts of Festivals and Events: A Research Guide,” Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism, 2002, <http://www.sustainabletourisonline.com/1005/events/estimating-the-economic-impacts-of-festivals-and-events-a-research-guide>, accessed October 2012.

²⁷ Chad Kaydo, “Cities Create Music, Cultural Festivals to Make Money,” *Governing*, January 2014, <http://www.governing.com/topics/finance/gov-cities-create-mucis-festivals.html>.

- First City Festival in Monterey, California – Private producer, Goldenvoice, launched this smaller music event in August 2013 with marketing support from the Monterey County Convention and Visitors Bureau, drawing on the city’s history as host of the Monterey Jazz Festival. Adding carnival rides and local art, furniture and clothing vendors to the live music performances, the event drew 11,000 attendees each of its two days.

D. Healthy Lifestyle Trends and Active Living

Active Transportation – Bicycling and Walking

Bicycle friendly cities have been emerging over the last ten years. Cycling has become a popular mode of transportation as people consider the rising cost of fuel, desire for better health, and concern for the environment. Some people also use cycling as a mode of transportation just for the fun of it.

The Alliance for Biking and Walking published its “Bicycling and Walking in the United States 2014 Benchmark Report,”²⁸ updating the one from 2012. The report shows that increasing bicycling and walking are clearly in the public interest. Where bicycling and walking levels are higher, obesity, high blood pressure, and diabetes levels are lower.

Design of a community’s infrastructure is directly linked to physical activity – where environments are built with bicyclists and pedestrians in mind, more people bike and walk. Higher levels of bicycling and walking also coincide with increased bicycle and pedestrian safety and higher levels of physical activity. Increasing bicycling and walking make a big impact on improving public health and life expectancy. The following trends as well as health and economic indicators are pulled from the 2012 and 2014 Benchmarking Reports:

Public health trends related to bicycling and walking include:

- Quantified health benefits of active transportation can outweigh any risks associated with the activities by as much as 77 to 1, and add more years to our lives than are lost from inhaled air pollution and traffic injuries.
- Between 1966 and 2009, the number of children who bicycled or walked to school fell 75 percent, while the percentage of obese children rose 276 percent.
- Bicycling to work significantly reduces absenteeism due to illness. Regular bicyclists took 7.4 sick days per year, while non-bicyclists took 8.7 sick days per year.

The economic benefits of bicycling and walking include:

- Bicycling and walking projects create 8-12 jobs per \$1 million spent, compared to just 7 jobs created per \$1 million spent on highway projects.
- Cost benefit analyses show that up to \$11.80 in benefits can be gained for every \$1 invested in bicycling and walking.

²⁸ 2014 Benchmarking Report, Alliance for Biking and Walking, <http://www.bikewalkalliance.org/download-the-2014-benchmarking-report>, Accessed on January 23, 2015.

National bicycling trends:

- There has been a gradual trend of increasing bicycling and walking to work since 2005.
- Infrastructure to support biking communities is becoming more commonly funded in communities.
- Bike share systems, making bicycles available to the public for low-cost, short-term use, have been sweeping the nation since 2010. Twenty of the most populous U.S. cities have a functional bike share system.

In November 2013, the Institute for Transportation & Development Policy published a Standard for Transportation Oriented Design, with accessible performance objectives and metrics, to help municipalities, developers and local residents design land use and built environment “to support, facilitate and prioritize not only the use of public transport, but the most basic modes of transport, walking and cycling.” The TOD Standard, along with its performance objectives and scoring metrics, can be found at www.itdp.org/documents/TOD_v2_FINAL.pdf.²⁹

National Healthy Lifestyle Trends

The population of the United States is becoming more diverse. As demographics are experiencing an age and ethnic shift, so too are landscapes, daily lifestyles and habits changing. The number of adults over the age of 65 has increased, and lifestyle changes have encouraged less physical activity; collectively these trends have created profound implications for the way local governments conduct business.

Below are examples of trends and government responses.

- According to the article “Outdoor Exercise ‘Healthier than Gym Workouts,’” published in February 2011,³⁰ researchers found that going for a run outdoors is better than exercising in the gym, because it has a positive impact on mental, as well as physical health. Levels of tension, confusion, anger, and depression were found to be lowered. This aligns with the trend of adult fitness playgrounds that are popping up all over the world.
- While Americans have been notoriously unhealthy, a recent survey found that 58 percent of Americans adults are paying more attention to their personal health than in the past; 57 percent seek to eat a healthier diet, 54 percent seek to achieve a healthy weight; and, 45 percent want to reduce stress in their lives.³¹
- The link between health and the built environment continues to grow as a trend for local governments. They are increasingly incorporating active living and physical activity into daily routines.

²⁹“TOD Standard, Version 2.0,” Institute for Transportation & Development Policy, November 2013, http://www.itdp.org/documents/TOD_v2_FINAL.pdf.

³⁰ “Outdoor Exercise Healthier than Gym Workouts,” Telegraph, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/outdoors/outdoor-activities/8306979/Outdoor-exercise-healthier-than-gym-workouts.html>, accessed March 2011.

³¹ Sy Mukherjee, “Are Americans inching their way to Healthier Lifestyles?” Think Progress, <http://thinkprogress.org/health/2013/08/02/2403921/americans-maybe-getting-heathier/>, Aug 2, 2013.

More and more, local governments are accepting the role of providing preventative health care through park and recreation services. The following facts are from an International City/County Management local government survey³²:

- Eight-nine percent (89%) of respondents believed P&R departments should take the lead in developing communities conducive to active living.
- Eighty-four percent (84%) had already implemented recreation programs that encourage active living in their community.
- The highest priority selected for the greatest impact on community health and physical inactivity was a cohesive system of parks and trails and accessible neighborhood parks.

Health and Obesity

According to the *Center for Disease Control (CDC)*, obesity continues to be a serious issue in America, growing at an epidemic rate—almost tripling since 1990. Overall, more than one-third (35.7%) of adults and 17 percent of children in the United States are obese.³³ These statistics illustrate the importance of intercepting the epidemic in youth.

As obesity in the United States continues to be a topic of interest for legislators and our government, there continues to be research suggesting that activity levels are stagnant among all age groups. The following are statistics that support this concern.

- Only 25 percent of adults and 27 percent of youth (grades 9-12) engage in recommended levels of physical activity.
- Fifty-nine percent (59%) of American adults are sedentary.
- Nationally, children spend 4.5 to 8 hours daily (30-56 hours per week) in front of a screen (television and/or computer).

Shade Structures

Communities around the country are considering adding shade structures as well as shade trees to their parks, playgrounds, and pools, as "...a weapon against cancer and against childhood obesity"³⁴; both to reduce future cancer risk and promote exercise among children. A 2005 study found that melanoma rates in people under 20 rose three percent a year between 1973 and 2001, possibly due to a thinning of the ozone layer in the atmosphere. It is recommended that children seek shade between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., but with so little shade available, kids have nowhere to go. Additionally, without adequate shade, many play areas are simply too hot to be inviting to children. On sunny days, the playground equipment is hot enough to scald the hands of would-be users.

Trees would help, as tree leaves absorb about 95 percent of ultraviolet radiation, but they take a decade or more to grow large enough to make a difference. So, many communities are building shade structures instead. The non-profit Shade Foundation of American is a good resource for information about shade and shade structures, www.shadefoundation.org.

³² "Active Living approached by Local Government: Survey," International City/County Management Association, <http://bookstore.icma.org/freedocs/Active%20Living%20and%20Social%20Equity.pdf>, 2004.

³³ "Obesity and Overweight - Facts," Center for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/facts.html>, accessed on October 3, 2012.

³⁴ Liz Szabo, "Shade: A weapon against skin cancer, childhood obesity," USA Today, June 30, 2011, usatoday.30.usatoday.com/news/health/wellness/story/2011/06/Shade-serves-as-a-weapon-against-skin-cancer-childhood-obesity/48965070/1, accessed 5/23/3013.

Trails and Health

That a connected system of trails increases the level of physical activity in a community has been scientifically demonstrated through the Trails for Health initiative of the (CDC)³⁵. Trails can provide a wide variety of opportunities for being physically active, such as walking/running/hiking, rollerblading, wheelchair recreation, bicycling, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, fishing, hunting, and horseback riding. Recognizing that active use of trails for positive health outcomes is an excellent way to encourage people to adopt healthy lifestyle changes, American Trails has launched a “Health and Trails” resource section in its website: www.americantrails.org/resources/benefits/.

The health benefits are equally as high for trails in urban neighborhoods as for those in state or national parks. A trail in the neighborhood, creating a “linear park,” makes it easier for people to incorporate exercise into their daily routines, whether for recreation or non-motorized transportation. Urban trails need to connect people to places they want to go, such as schools, transit centers, businesses, and neighborhoods.³⁶

E. Natural Environments and Open Space

Conservation

The top ten recommendations of the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) Conservation Task Force were published in the November 2011 issue of *Parks and Recreation* magazine.³⁷ These recommendations are a compilation of best practices used by trend-setting agencies.

- 1) Take a leadership role in the community to promote conservation. Park and recreation agencies have a unique opportunity to bring governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, community leaders, and the public together for the cause of working together on community wide conservation objectives – clean water, wildlife habitat preservation, reducing energy use and improving environmental quality. Park and recreation agencies must lead the way in promoting conservation to diverse and underserved audiences.
- 2) Lead by example in employing best management conservation practices in parks. Park and recreation agencies should become the catalyst in the community for conservation by showing how best practices can be adopted-not mowing what you do not need to mow; stopping wasteful energy consumption; and reducing pesticide use for example. Show the public how conservation practices can benefit everyone.
- 3) Engage volunteers in conservation and stewardship. Create a sense of belonging and stewardship for parks by creating a personal sense of ownership and value. Enable people to identify with their parks and natural resources, and to care about their future. Sustain stewardship by creating meaningful public participation in implementation of conservation principles and practices.

³⁵ “Guide to Community Preventive Services” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), <http://www.thecommunityguide.org/index.html>

³⁶ “Health Community: What you should know about trail building,” National Trails Training Partnership: Health and Fitness, <http://www.americantrails.org/resources/health/healthcombuild.html>, accessed on May 24, 2013.

³⁷ “Conservation Leaders in our Community,” National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), November 2011 *Parks and Recreation* Magazine, pages 85-101, <http://digital.parksandrecreation.org/launch.aspx?referral=other&pnum=&refresh=Fj302M1i0bE7&EID=8201df86-57c9-428c-b31c-18125a54265c&skip=>

- 4) Establish a strategic land acquisition strategy based on knowledge and awareness of significant natural and cultural resources (watershed protection, unique ecological characteristics, and sensitive natural areas deserving protection). As the largest owners of public land within most communities, park and recreation agencies should lead the way in developing a strategic vision for preserving open space and conserving important landscapes and natural features.
- 5) Engage youth in conservation. Get kids and teens outdoors and enjoying their parks. The experience of nature is inherently rewarding for youth. Set as a goal to connect kids in the community to nature and the outdoors. Children and youth will be fascinated by nature and will develop a lifelong affinity as well as a conservation ethic if they have early opportunities to enjoy nature and recreate outdoors in a safe, rewarding way.
- 6) Conserve energy in all ways. Park and recreation agencies must lead by example, showing the public how and why they should adopt practices that they can see demonstrated in parks and recreation facilities. Park and recreation agencies should adopt energy conservation measures that make sense and save public taxpayer funds.
- 7) Protect natural resources in parks and in the community. A core mission of public parks is to protect land and water resources and to be stewards of natural resources. This means committing personnel and resources to protect natural and cultural resources and creating sustainable long-term methods of funding this conservation mission. Parks and recreation agencies are entrusted with some of the most important public assets of a community and the conservation and long-term protection of this public trust is and should be a core component of every parks and recreation agency's mission.
- 8) Create sustainable landscapes that demonstrate principles of conservation. Utilize sustainable landscape practices to save taxpayer funds, to measurably improve conservation benefits, and to educate the public about conservation. For example, agencies can reduce turf grass and mowing frequency; replace turf with native plants; manage floodplains for multiple uses including conservation and public recreation; enhance wetlands for water filtration and groundwater recharge; plant model landscapes of drought tolerant native plants adapted to climate and culture; and promote parks as food sources through edible landscapes and community gardens.
- 9) Forge partnerships that foster the mission of conservation. The greatest and most beneficial conservation successes most often occur as a result of collaboration. Park and recreation agencies should partner with non-profit and community service organizations, universities and colleges, school systems, other governmental agencies, and non-traditional partners for conservation outcomes. Promote health, education, and other goals while working toward a common mission of conservation.
- 10) Utilize technology to promote conservation. Park and recreation agencies need to embrace technology to promote conservation. This is not only in applications such as GIS, but in utilizing social media to engage the public, especially youth. Technology is not to be feared as something that detracts from the conservation mission of parks agencies, but rather it is to be accepted as a means of sharing knowledge and connecting people to conservation and stewardship.

Economic & Health Benefits of Parks

There are numerous economic and health benefits of parks, including the following:

- Trails, parks, and playgrounds are among the five most important community amenities considered when selecting a home.
- Research from the University of Illinois shows that trees, parks, and green spaces have a profound impact on people's health and mental outlook.³⁸
- U.S. Forest Service research indicates that when the economic benefits produced by trees are assessed, the total value can be two to six times the cost for tree planting and care.³⁹
- Fifty percent (50%) of Americans regard outdoor activities as their main source of exercise.⁴⁰

The Trust for Public Land has published a report titled: "*The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space.*" The report makes the following observations about the health, economic, environmental, and social benefits of parks and open space⁴¹:

- Physical activity makes people healthier.
- Physical activity increases with access to parks.
- Contact with the natural world improves physical and physiological health.
- Residential and commercial property values increase.
- Value is added to community and economic development sustainability.
- Benefits of tourism are enhanced.
- Trees are effective in improving air quality and act as natural air conditioners.
- Trees assist with storm water control and erosion.
- Crime and juvenile delinquency are reduced.
- Recreational opportunities for all ages are provided.
- Stable neighborhoods and strong communities are created.

Researchers have long touted the benefits of outdoor exercise. According to a study published in the *Journal of Environmental Science and Technology* by the University of Essex in the United Kingdom, "as little as five minutes of green exercise improves both mood and self-esteem."⁴² A new trend started in China as they prepared to host the 2008 Summer Olympics. Their aim was to promote a society that promotes physical fitness and reaps the benefits of outdoor exercise by working out on outdoor fitness equipment.

The United States is now catching up on this trend, as park and recreation departments have begun installing "outdoor gyms." Equipment that can be found in these outdoor gyms is comparable to what would be found in an indoor workout facility, such as leg and chest presses, elliptical trainers, pull down trainers, etc. With no additional equipment such as weights and resistance bands, the equipment is fairly easy to install.

³⁸ F.E. Kuo, "Environment and Crime in the Inner City: Does Vegetation Reduce Crime?" *Environment and Behavior*, Volume 33, pp 343-367.

³⁹ Nowak, David J., "Benefits of Community Trees," (Brooklyn Trees, USDA Forest Service General Technical Report, in review).

⁴⁰ "Outdoor Recreation Participation Report 2010," Outdoor Foundation, 2010.

⁴¹ Paul M. Sherer, "The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space," The Trust for Public Land, San Francisco, CA, 2006.

⁴² Cited in: Sally Russell, "Nature Break: Five Minutes of Green Nurture," Green Nurture Blog, <http://blog.greennurture.com/tag/journal-of-environmental-science-and-technology>, Accessed on November 14, 2012.

Outdoor fitness equipment provides a new opportunity for parks and recreation departments to increase the health of their communities, while offering them the opportunity to exercise outdoors. Such equipment can increase the usage of parks, trails, and other outdoor amenities while helping to fight the obesity epidemic and increase the community's interaction with nature.

Nature Programming

Noted as early as 2003 in *Recreation Management* magazine, park agencies have been seeing an increase in interest in environmental-oriented "back to nature" programs. In 2007, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) sent out a survey to member agencies in order to learn more about the programs and facilities that public park and recreation agencies provide to connect children and their families with nature.⁴³ A summary of the results follow:

- Sixty-eight percent (68%) of public parks and recreation agencies offer nature-based programming and 61% have nature-based facilities.
- The most common programs include nature hikes, nature-oriented arts and crafts, fishing-related events, and nature-based education in cooperation with local schools.
- When asked to describe the elements that directly contribute to their most successful programs, agencies listed staff training as most important followed by program content and number of staff/staff training.
- When asked what resources would be needed most to expand programming, additional staff was most important followed by funding.
- Of the agencies that do not currently offer nature-based programming, 90 percent indicated that they want to in the future. Additional staff and funding were again the most important resources these agencies would need going forward.
- The most common facilities include: nature parks/preserves, self-guided nature trails, outdoor classrooms, and nature centers.
- When asked to describe the elements that directly contribute to their most successful facilities, agencies listed funding as most important followed by presence of wildlife and community support.

"There's a direct link between a lack of exposure to nature and higher rates of attention-deficit disorder, obesity, and depression. In essence, parks and recreation agencies can and are becoming the 'preferred provider' for offering this preventative healthcare."

– **Fran P. Mainella**, former director of the National Park Service and Instructor at Clemson University.

⁴³ National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), "NRPA Completes Agency Survey Regarding Children and Nature," http://www.narrp.org/assets/Library/Children_in_Nature/nrpa_survey_regarding_children_and_nature_2007.pdf, April 2007.

Figures from the Association for Interpretative Naturalists, a national group of nature professionals, demonstrate that nature-based programs are on the rise. According to Tim Merriman, the Association's Executive Director, the group was founded in 1954 with 40 members. It now boasts 4,800 members, with research indicating that about 20,000 paid interpreters are working nationally, along with an army of more than 500,000 unpaid volunteers staffing nature programs at parks, zoos, and museums. The growth of these programs is thought to come from replacing grandparents as the teacher about the "great outdoors." It is also speculated that a return to natural roots and renewed interest in life's basic elements was spurred as a response to September 11, 2001.⁴⁴

In his book Last Child in the Woods: Saving Children from Nature Deficit Disorder,⁴⁵ Richard Louv introduced the concept of the restorative qualities of being out in nature, for both children and adults. This concept, and research in support of it, has led to a growing movement promoting connections with nature in daily life. One manifestation of this is the development of Nature Explore Classrooms in parks. Nature Explore⁴⁶ is a collaborative program of the Arbor Day Foundation and the non-profit organization, Dimensions Educational Research Foundation, with a mission of helping children and families develop a profound engagement with the natural world, where nature is an integral, joyful part of children's daily learning. Nature Explore works to support efforts to connect children with nature.

F. Sports and Recreation Trends

General Sports and Recreation Trends

The National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA) survey on sports participation in 2012⁴⁷ found the top five athletic activities ranked by total participation included: exercise walking, exercising with equipment, swimming, camping, and aerobic exercising. Additionally, the following active, organized, or skill development activities remain popular: hiking, running/jogging, bicycle riding, basketball, golf, and soccer. **Table 13** outlines the top twenty sports ranked by total participation in 2012.

⁴⁴ Margaret Ahrweiler, "Call of the Wild – From beautiful blossoms to bugs and guts, nature programs are growing as people return to their roots" *Recreation Management Magazine*, <http://recmanagement.com/200310fe04.php>, October 2003.

⁴⁵ Richard Louv, Last Child in the Woods: Saving Children from Nature Deficit Disorder, Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 2005.

⁴⁶ "What is the Nature Explore Program," http://www.arborday.org/explore/documents/NE_FAQ_002.pdf, accessed on August 12, 2012.

⁴⁷ 2012 Sport/Recreation Activity Participation," National Sporting Goods Association, 2013, <http://www.nsga.org>.

Table 13: Top Twenty Sports Ranked by Total Participation (in millions) in 2012

| Sport | Total |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Exercise Walking | 102.1 |
| 2. Exercising with Equipment | 57.7 |
| 3. Swimming | 48.6 |
| 4. Camping (vacation/overnight) | 45.2 |
| 5. Aerobic Exercising | 44.8 |
| 6. Hiking | 42.2 |
| 7. Running/Jogging | 40.0 |
| 8. Bicycle Riding | 39.3 |
| 9. Bowling | 35.5 |
| 10. Workout at Club | 35.2 |
| 11. Weight Lifting | 31.1 |
| 12. Fishing (Freshwater) | 30.8 |
| 13. Wrestling | 28.4 |
| 14. Basketball | 25.6 |
| 15. Yoga | 22.9 |
| 16. Billiards/Pool | 21.8 |
| 17. Target Shooting | 21.7 |
| 18. Golf | 21.1 |
| 19. Hunting with Firearms | 19.4 |
| 20. Boating, Motor/Power | 17.0 |

Source: NSGA 2012

The Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) produces a yearly report on sports, fitness, and leisure activities in the US. The following findings were highlighted in the 2013 Report⁴⁸:

- Overall participation in sports, fitness, and related physical activities remained relatively steady from 2011 to 2012.
- Fitness Sports had the largest increase in participation (2% increases to 61.1%).
- Racquet Sports participation also increased (1% increase to 12.8%), but still remains below the 2008 peak rate of 14%.
- Both team (21.6%) and water sports (12.5%) participation increased slightly while individual (36%) and winter sports (6.6%) participation decreased slightly.
- Outdoor Sports participation remained stable at around 49%.
- Spending on team sports at school and lessons/instruction/sports camp was expected to increase in 2013 as it has in 2011 and 2012.
- Twenty-eight percent (28%) of all Americans are inactive, while 33% are active at a healthy level (engaged in high calorie level sport/fitness activities in a frequent basis). Idaho ranked among the states with the highest among five activity levels measured (from 38% to 43.6%).

The Ten-year History of Sports Participation Report⁴⁹ published by NSGA shows national trends in team sports and individual sports. Overall participation trends indicate a general increase in 2011 for most team sports. However, softball and volleyball show a decrease in participation through 2011.

⁴⁸ "2012 Sports, Fitness and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report," Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association (renamed Sports and Fitness Industry Association in 2012, <http://www.sfia.org/reports/all/>).

⁴⁹ Ten-Year History of Sports Participation (2001-2011), National Sporting Goods Association, 2012, <http://www.nsga.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3346>.

Over the decade individual sports show a dramatic increase in aerobic exercising, exercise walking, exercising with equipment, hiking, kayaking, running/jogging, target shooting and target shooting with an airgun, tennis, weightlifting and working out at a club. **Table 14** illustrates a ten year change in participation for selected activities including both team sports and individual sports.

Table 14: Ten-Year History of Sports Participation (in millions) 2001-2011

| | 2001 | 2003 | 2005 | 2007 | 2009 | 2011 |
|--------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Aerobic Exercising | 24.3 | 28.0 | 33.7 | 34.8 | 33.2 | 42.0 |
| Archery (Target) | 4.7 | 3.9 | 6.8 | 6.6 | 7.1 | 6.3 |
| Backpacking/Wilderness Camping | 14.5 | 13.7 | 13.3 | 13.0 | 12.3 | 11.6 |
| Baseball | 14.9 | 14.6 | 14.6 | 14.0 | 11.5 | 12.3 |
| Basketball | 28.1 | 27.9 | 29.9 | 24.1 | 24.4 | 26.1 |
| Bicycle Riding | 39.0 | 36.3 | 43.1 | 37.4 | 38.1 | 39.1 |
| Billiards/Pool | 32.7 | 30.5 | 37.3 | 29.5 | 28.2 | 20.0 |
| Boating, Motor/Power | 22.6 | 24.2 | 27.5 | 31.9 | 24.0 | 16.7 |
| Bowling | 40.3 | 39.4 | 45.4 | 43.5 | 45.0 | 34.9 |
| Camping | 45.5 | 51.4 | 46.0 | 47.5 | 50.9 | 42.8 |
| Dart Throwing | 16.9 | n/a | n/a | 12.1 | 12.2 | 9.3 |
| Exercise Walking | 71.2 | 79.5 | 86.0 | 89.8 | 93.4 | 97.1 |
| Exercising with Equipment | 43.0 | 48.6 | 54.2 | 52.9 | 57.2 | 55.5 |
| Fishing (Freshwater) | 39.1 | 33.2 | 37.5 | 30.8 | 29.0 | 28.0 |
| Fishing (Saltwater) | 11.3 | 10.6 | 10.0 | 10.4 | 8.2 | 9.7 |
| Football (tackle) | 8.6 | 8.7 | 9.9 | 9.2 | 8.9 | 9.0 |
| Golf | 26.6 | 25.7 | 24.7 | 22.7 | 22.3 | 20.9 |
| Hiking | 26.1 | 25.0 | 29.8 | 28.6 | 34.0 | 39.1 |
| Hockey (ice) | .2 | 1.8 | 2.4 | 2.1 | 3.1 | 3.0 |
| Hunting w/Bow & Arrow | 4.7 | 5.0 | 6.6 | 5.7 | 6.2 | 5.1 |
| Hunting with Firearms | 19.2 | 17.7 | 19.6 | 19.5 | 18.8 | 16.4 |
| In-Line Roller Skating | 19.2 | 16.0 | 13.1 | 10.7 | 7.9 | 6.1 |
| Kayaking | 3.5 | 4.7 | 7.6 | 5.9 | 4.9 | 7.1 |
| Mountain Biking (off road) | 6.3 | 8.2 | 9.2 | 9.3 | 8.4 | 6.0 |
| Muzzleloading | 3.0 | 3.1 | 4.1 | 3.6 | 3.8 | 3.1 |
| Paintball Games | 5.6 | 7.4 | 8.0 | 7.4 | 6.3 | 5.3 |
| Running/Jogging | 24.5 | 22.9 | 29.2 | 30.4 | 32.2 | 38.7 |
| Skateboarding | 9.6 | 9.0 | 12.0 | 10.1 | 8.4 | 6.6 |
| Skiing (Alpine) | 7.7 | 6.8 | 6.9 | 6.4 | 7.0 | 6.9 |
| Skiing (Cross Country) | 2.3 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 2.3 |
| Snowboarding | 5.3 | 6.3 | 6.0 | 5.1 | 6.2 | 5.1 |
| Soccer | 13.9 | 11.1 | 14.1 | 13.8 | 13.6 | 13.9 |
| Softball | 13.2 | 11.8 | 14.1 | 12.4 | 11.8 | 10.4 |
| Swimming | 54.8 | 47.0 | 58.0 | 52.3 | 50.2 | 46.0 |
| Target Shooting | 15.9 | 17.0 | 21.9 | 20.5 | 19.8 | 19.6 |
| Target Shooting (Airgun) | 2.9 | 3.8 | 6.7 | 6.6 | 5.2 | 5.3 |
| Tennis | 10.9 | 9.6 | 11.1 | 12.3 | 10.8 | 13.1 |
| Volleyball | 12.0 | 10.4 | 13.2 | 12.0 | 10.7 | 10.1 |
| Water Skiing | 5.5 | 5.5 | 6.7 | 5.3 | 5.2 | 4.3 |
| Weight Lifting | 21.2 | 25.9 | 35.5 | 33.2 | 34.5 | 29.1 |
| Workout at Club | 26.5 | 29.5 | 34.7 | 36.8 | 38.3 | 34.5 |
| Wrestling | 3.5 | n/a | n/a | 2.1 | 3.0 | 3.2 |

Note: Participated more than once (in millions), seven (7) years of age and older.

Source: NSGA 2012

Youth Sports

The 2013 SFIA sports participation report indicates that in 2012, youth (ages 6-12) participation was highest for outdoor (63.1%), team (53.1%), and individual sports (49.8%). Children in this age group have increased interest in camping, while young adults ages 18–24 are becoming more interested in running/jogging.

The NSGA “Youth Sports Participation Report” from 2001 – 2011 indicates that specific offerings for children’s fitness are slowly increasing in health and fitness facilities. Facilities are offering more youth-specific exercise equipment. Individualized youth sports training opportunities are becoming more popular as well. In 2011, in-line roller skating experienced the largest percentage decrease in participation. For youth ages seven to 17 years, exercise walking, exercising with equipment, and swimming, followed by overnight/vacation camping had the highest number of participants in 2011.⁵⁰

In 2009, an article in the *Wall Street Journal* observed that lacrosse had become one of the country’s fastest growing team sports. Participation in high school lacrosse has almost doubled this decade. An estimated 1.2 million Americans over age seven played lacrosse in 2009.⁵¹ A 2011 report, “U.S. Trends in Team Sports,” finds that lacrosse and other niche team sports and volleyball are continuing to experience strong growth for youth and adults.⁵²

Adult Recreation: Pickleball

No adult recreational sport is taking off faster than pickleball.⁵³ Pickleball is a racquet sport played on a badminton court with a lowered net, perforated plastic ball and wood paddles. While it originated in the Pacific Northwest in the 1960s, it has grown exponentially since 2000. The USA Pickle ball Association (USAPA) estimates that there were about 500 pickleball players in 2000, with that number growing to 125,000 in 2013. It’s especially popular with the 50 plus crowd because it is low impact but gets the heart rate pumping.⁵⁴ Pickle ball is an attractive programming option for recreation managers because it is adaptable to a variety of existing facilities – four pickleball courts fit in one tennis court.

Outdoor Recreation

The Outdoor Foundation releases a “Participation in Outdoor Recreation” report, annually. According to the 2014 report,⁵⁵ while the actual number of outdoor recreation outings increased since 2012, the participation rate fell slightly, due to population growth. The foundation reports that the top outdoor activities in 2013 were running, fishing, bicycling, camping, and hiking. Birdwatching is also among the favorite outdoor activities by frequency of participation.

⁵⁰“2011 vs 2001 Youth Sports Participation,” National Sporting Goods Association, 2012, <http://www.nsga.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3494>.

⁵¹ Evans and Trachtenberg, “Lacrosse Muscles its Way West,” *Wall Street Journal*, May, 2009.

⁵² “2011 Preview: U.S. Trends in Team Sports, Fall 2011,” SMGA, 2011.

⁵³ Chris Gelbach, “Never Stop Playing: Trends in Adult Recreational Sports” *Recreation Management*, September 2013, http://recmanagement.com/feature_print.php?fid=201309fe02, Accessed January 2015.

⁵⁴ David Crumpler, “Pickleball a fast-growing sport, especially for the 50 and older crowd,” *Florida Times Union*, January 26, 2015, <http://jacksonville.com/prime-time/2015-01-26/story/pickleball-fast-growing-sport-especially-50-and-older-crowd>, Accessed January 2015.

⁵⁵ “Outdoor Recreation Participation Report 2014,” Outdoor Foundation, 2014.

The Outdoor Foundation’s research brought the following key findings.

Participation in Outdoor Recreation

- **Return to Nature:** Nearly 50% of Americans ages six and older participated in outdoor recreation in 2013. That equates to a total of 143 million.
- **Top Five Biggest Participation Percentage Increase in Outdoor Activities in the Past three years (2014 Topline Report):** Adventure Racing, Triathlon (Off Road), Stand up paddling, Kayak fishing, Recreational Kayaking.
- **Recreation for Exercise:** More than 70 percent of outdoor participants were motivated to recreate outdoors as a way of getting exercise.

Youth Participation in Outdoor Recreation

- **Good News about outdoor participation rates of female youth:** Participation rates among girls and young women increased by two percentage points – bringing young women’s participation to the highest since 2006.
- **The Influence of Family:** Most youth are introduced to outdoor activities by parents, friends, family, and relatives.
- **Physical education in schools:** The importance cannot be understated. Among adults ages 18 and older who are current outdoor participants, 74% say they had PE in school between the ages of 6 and 12.

Outdoor recreation trends are also a recurring topic of study by the United States Forest Service through the Internet Research Information Series (IRIS). An IRIS report dated January 2012⁵⁶ provides the following recent nature-based outdoor recreation trends: Participation in walking for pleasure and family gatherings outdoors were the two most popular activities for the U.S. population as a whole. These outdoor activities were followed closely in popularity by viewing/ photographing wildlife, boating, fishing, snow/ice activities, and swimming. There has been a growing momentum in participation in sightseeing, birding, and wildlife watching in recent years.

Trail Recreation and Cycling Trends

For trail-related recreation activities such as hiking, bicycling, and running, the 2014 “Outdoor Recreation Topline Report” indicates a positive three-year trend for running/jogging, hiking, road biking, and BMX biking. Additionally, participation in trail running and mountain biking is up significantly over the past two to three years.

⁵⁶ “Recent Outdoor Recreation Trends,” USDA Forest Service Internet Research Information Series (IRIS) Research Brief, January 2012, <http://warnell.forestry.uga.edu/nrrt/nsre/IRISRec/IRISRec23rpt.pdf>, accessed August, 2012.

Table 15: Trail Recreation Participation by Activity (in thousands) (6 years of age or older)

| | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 3 Year Change |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------------|
| BMX Bicycling | 1,904 | 1,811 | 2,369 | 1,547 | 2,175 | 2,168 | 1.9% |
| Bicycling (Mountain/Non-Paved Surface) | 7,592 | 7,142 | 7,161 | 6,816 | 7,714 | 8,542 | 6.4% |
| Bicycling (Road/Paved Surface) | 38,114 | 40,140 | 39,320 | 40,349 | 39,232 | 40,888 | 1.4% |
| Hiking (Day) | 32,511 | 32,572 | 32,496 | 34,491 | 34,545 | 34,378 | 1.9% |
| Running/Jogging | 41,130 | 43,892 | 49,408 | 50,713 | 52,187 | 54,188 | 3.1% |
| Trail Running | 4,857 | 4,833 | 5,136 | 5,610 | 6,003 | 6,792 | 9.8% |

Source: Outdoor Foundation 2014.

Other Cycling Trends

- Bicycle touring is becoming a fast-growing trend around the world, including the U.S. and Canada. “Travelers are seeking out bike tours to stay active, minimize environmental impact, and experience diverse landscapes and cityscapes at a closer level.”⁵⁷
- Urban bike tours, popular in cycle-friendly cities in Europe, are taking hold in the United States as well. Bikes and Hikes LA, an eco-friendly bike and hike sightseeing company founded last September, offers visitors the opportunity to “see the city’s great outdoors while getting a good workout.” In New York, a hotel and a bike store are partnering to offer guests cruisers to explore the city during the summer of 2014.⁵⁸
- One of the newest trends in adventure cycling is “fat bike,” multiple speed bikes that are made to ride when other bikes can’t be ridden, with tires that are up to five inches wide run at low pressure for extra traction. Most fat bikes are used to ride on snow but they are also very effective for riding on any loose surface like sand or mud. They also work well on most rough terrain or just riding through the woods. This bike offers unique opportunities to experience nature in ways that would not be possible otherwise.⁵⁹

Therapeutic Recreation

Nationally, therapeutic recreation as a service is experiencing many struggles and challenges. The changing face of health care is having a dramatic effect on therapeutic recreation (TR) services in many rehabilitation settings and specifically in physical rehabilitation settings, thus affecting community recreation programs.

A secondary issue caused by the decreased stay is the need for a clinical facility to promote community reintegration. In the past, clinical facilities provided programs such as wheelchair basketball, but due to the reduction of expenditures, facilities no longer provide such services and expect communities to address these needs.

⁵⁷ Hope Nardini, “Bike Tourism a Rising Trend,” *Ethic Traveler*, <http://www.ethicaltraveler.org/2012/08/bike-tourism-a-rising-trend/>, Accessed on Marcy 24, 2014.

⁵⁸ Michelle Baran, “New trend: Urban bike tours in Los Angeles and New York,” *Budget Travel Blog*, <http://www.budgettravel.com/blog/new-trend-urban-bike-tours-in-los-angeles-and-new-york,11772/>, accessed on March 24, 2014

⁵⁹ Steven Pease, “Fat bikes, how to get the most out of winter cycling,” *Minnesota Cycling Examiner*, <http://www.examiner.com/article/fat-bikes-the-latest-trend-adventure-cycling>, February 1, 2014.

The fundamental goal of TR services is to enable participants to return successfully to their communities. This not only means they need to have the functional skill, but also that they have physical and social environments in the community that are receptive to the individual.

Another trend is the renewed focus on serving people with psychiatric disabilities. In 2004, The National Council on Disability (NCD) issued a comprehensive report, “Livable Communities for Adults with Disabilities.”⁶⁰ This report identified six elements for improving the quality of life for all citizens, including children, youth, and adults with disabilities. The six elements are:

1. Provides affordable, appropriate, accessible housing
2. Ensures accessible, affordable, reliable, safe transportation
3. Adjusts the physical environment for inclusiveness and accessibility
4. Provides work, volunteer, and education opportunities
5. Ensures access to key health and support services
6. Encourages participation in civic, cultural, social, and recreational activities

The right to enjoy services and programs offered to all members by both public and private entities is the essence of the elements. Unlike persons with physical disabilities, people with psychiatric disabilities face attitudinal barriers of those around them. Attitudinal barriers are exemplified by policies, programs, and beliefs about psychiatric disabilities. Fortunately, the mental health system is moving toward a model based on recovery. This model believes that everyone with a mental health diagnosis is able and capable of living independently within the community with supports.

G. Role and Response of Local Government

Collectively, these trends have created profound implications for the way local governments conduct business. Some local governments are now accepting the role of providing preventative health care through parks and recreation services. The following concepts are from the International County/County Management Association.⁶¹

- Parks & Recreation departments should take the lead in developing communities conducive to active living.
- There is growing support for recreation programs that encourage active living within their community.
- One of the highest priorities is a cohesive system of parks and trails and accessible neighborhood parks.

In summary, the United States of America, its states, and its communities share the enormous task of reducing the health and economic burden of obesity. While numerous programs, policies, and products have been designed to address the problem, there is no magic bullet to make it go away. The role of public parks and recreation as a health promotion and prevention agency has come of age. What matters is refocusing its efforts to insure the health, well-being, and economic prosperity of communities and citizens.

⁶⁰ National Council on Disability, “Livable Communities for Adults with Disabilities,” December 2004, <http://www.ncd.gov/publications/2004/12022004>.

⁶¹ www.ICMA.org, Accessed in 2012.

Administration Trends for Recreation and Parks

Municipal parks and recreation structures and delivery systems have changed, and more alternative methods of delivering services are emerging. Certain services are being contracted out and cooperative agreements with non-profit groups and other public institutions are being developed. Newer partners include the health system, social services, justice system, education, the corporate sector, and community service agencies. These partnerships reflect both a broader interpretation of the mandate of parks and recreation agencies and the increased willingness of other sectors to work together to address community issues. The relationship with health agencies is vital in promoting wellness.

The traditional relationship with education and the sharing of facilities through joint-use agreements is evolving into cooperative planning and programming aimed at addressing youth inactivity levels and community needs.

Listed below are additional administrative national trends:

- Level of subsidy for programs is lessening and more “enterprise” activities are being developed, thereby allowing subsidy to be used where deemed appropriate.
- Information technology allows for better tracking and reporting.
- Pricing is often determined by peak, off-peak, and off-season rates.
- More agencies are partnering with private, public, and non-profit groups.

Agency Accreditation

Parks and Recreation agencies are affirming their competencies and value through accreditation. This is achieved by an agency’s commitment to 150 standards.

There are currently 116 agencies around the nation that have received the **Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) accreditation.**

Accreditation is a distinguished mark of excellence that affords external recognition of an organization's commitment to quality and improvement.

Accreditation has two fundamental purposes; to ensure quality and to ensure improvement.

*The National Recreation and Parks Association administratively sponsors two distinct accreditation programs. The Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions (COAPRT) approves Academic institutions and **Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) approves agencies. It is the only national accreditation of parks and recreation agencies, and is a valuable measure of an agency’s overall quality of operation, management, and service to the community.***

Additional benefits of CAPRA accreditation include:

- Boosts staff morale
- Encourages collaboration
- Improves program outcomes
- Identifies agency and cost efficiencies
- Builds high level of trust with the public
- Demonstrates promise of quality
- Identifies best management practices

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) - Compliance

On September 14, 2010 the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) issued an amended regulation implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA 2010 Standards).⁶² On March 15, 2011 the amended Act became effective and, for the first time in history, it includes recreation environment design requirements. Covered entities were to be compliant with design and construction requirements and the development of three-year transition plan by March 15, 2012. Implementation of the three-year transition plan must be complete by March 15, 2015.

Funding

According to *Recreation Management* magazine's "2014 State of the Industry Report," survey respondents from parks and recreation departments/districts reporting about their revenues from 2011 through 2013 reveals the beginning of a recovery from the impact of the Recession of 2008. From 2011 to 2012, 82.6 percent of respondents reported that their revenues had either stabilized or had increased. This number grew to 84.8 percent of respondents when reporting on the 2012 to 2013 time frame, and by 2015, 95 percent of parks and recreation department respondents are expecting revenues to either increase (49.7%) or remain stable (45.4%).

Marketing by Parks and Recreation Providers

Niche marketing trends have experienced change more frequently than ever before as technology affects the way the public receives information. Web 2.0 tools and now Web 3.0 tools are a trend for agencies to use as a means of marketing programs and services. Popular social media marketing tools include:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- You Tube
- Pinterest
- LinkedIn

Mobile marketing is a trend of the future. Young adults engage in mobile data applications at much higher rates than adults in age brackets 30 and older. Usage rates of mobile applications demonstrate that chronologically across four major age cohorts, Millennials tend to get information more frequently using mobile devices such as smart phones. For example, 95 percent of 18-to-29-year-old cell phone owners send and receive text messages, compared to 82 percent of 30-to-49-year-olds, 57 percent of 50-to-64-year-olds, and 19 percent of 65 and older.

⁶²U.S. Department of Justice, Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA Home Page, <http://www.ada.gov/>, accessed on November 15, 2012.

It is also a fact that minority Americans lead the way when it comes to mobile internet access. Nearly two-thirds of African-Americans (64%) and Latinos (63%) are wireless internet users, and minority Americans are significantly more likely to own a cell phone than are their white counterparts (87 percent of Blacks and Hispanics own a cell phone, compared with 80 percent of whites).⁶³ By 2015, mobile internet penetration is forecast to grow to 71.1% for Hispanics compared to 58.8% for whites.⁶⁴

⁶³Aaron Smith, "Mobile Access 2010," Pew Internet and American Life Project, Pew Research Center, July 7, 2010, <http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2010/Mobile-Access-2010/Summary-of-Findings.aspx>, Accessed on November 15, 2012.

⁶⁴Erik Sass, "Minority Groups Heaviest Users of Mobile Net," *Media Daily News*, Nov. 18, 2011, <http://www.mediapost.com/publications/article/162699/minority-groups-heaviest-users-of-mobile-net.html#axzz2CK9zYGFw>, Accessed on November 15, 2012.

Appendix B – Community and Stakeholder Input

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Community and Stakeholder Input

Public process for the Meridian Parks and Recreation Master Plan was held January 26 – 28, 2015 and consisted of 125 participants in eight focus groups, eight stakeholder interviews, and a public forum.

The community input summary is categorized below with brief details from the many focus group meetings.

Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement

The residents of Meridian benefit from a good geographic distribution of parks throughout the City, with some pockets of underserved areas. Participants embrace the fact that their parks form the heart of the community and feel like the programs offered are well run, diverse, affordable, and operated by dedicated employees, and, as such, indicate that they feel the quality of programs offered currently are very good. Participants also recognized that the parks are well maintained and have unique and innovative features. When asked about areas for improvement, participants identified the disconnected pathway system, the need for a larger indoor recreation facility, and the need to keep up with the city's rapid growth as top priorities. Other general items, such as a perceived lack of parking, shade, field space for non-traditional sports, and off-leash dog areas were all identified as opportunities for improvement. Along with physical improvements, improvement of communication, and availability of information is also important to users.

Satisfaction

Residents are very satisfied with the programs, the quality of existing infrastructure, and maintenance. They also rated customer service and seeking community feedback as very good.

Programming and Activities, and Locations

Meridian residents love their programs and activities. They are very satisfied but do have an apparent demand for more year-round program offerings. Included among the additional programs are more offerings for seniors and teens, special events, performing arts, outdoor recreation and adventure programs, non-sports activities, and adaptive recreation. Two areas of the community were identified as being underserved, and may benefit from future park development. These were South and West Meridian. Certain demographics may also be underserved, including seniors and teens, as well as active adults and Millennials.

New Facilities

When asked for suggestions of new parks and recreation facilities in the City, participants identified:

- Pathway connectivity
- Fieldhouse/gym space
- Parks in South and West Meridian
- Additional athletic fields
- Large community center
- Exercise stations
- Performing Arts Center
- Iconic/Destination Parks

Values

The City of Meridian residents value their parks and recreation system and feel like they get very good service from staff. Participants' number one value was family-oriented programming and activities. They also want good communication about happenings and program offerings. Quality and affordable programming is a priority, while ensuring access to diverse offerings throughout the entire city. Providing a balance between passive and active recreation, as well as organized sports and unstructured activities, is very important to the community.

Focus Group Questions

- 1) How long have you been a resident of Meridian?
 - <5 years: 9
 - 5-9 years: 8
 - 10-19 years: 24
 - 20+ years: 12
 - Not a resident but use programs / facilities: 21

- 2) What are the strengths of the Parks and Recreation Department that should be continued over the next several years?
 - Partnerships*****
 - High Quality Programs (quality over quantity)****
 - High Quality Parks****
 - Park Maintenance*****
 - Parks well run and well maintained*****
 - Innovative Unique Parks*
 - Talented Forward Thinking Cooperative Staff***
 - Flexibility responsive and adapt to change**
 - Safety & Security**
 - Variety/Diversity of Activities*
 - Ability to keep up with growth*
 - Number of Parks
 - Customer Service
 - Friendly Atmosphere
 - Teamwork
 - Technology
 - Family Oriented***
 - Internal Expertise
 - Internal Support
 - Young Park System
 - Good geographic parks distribution
 - Keep developing open space into parks and activities
 - Responsive
 - Soliciting input and feedback from community
 - Community programs
 - Special Events
 - Commitment to Youth
 - Committed Leadership
 - Annual Investment in Infrastructure
 - Wise water use methodologies
 - Recycling Program
 - Availability of Land
 - Planning
 - Lots of open space

- Fishing Options
- Parking
- Playgrounds
- Volunteers
- Use funding well

3) Conversely, what are the major weaknesses that need to be addressed through the Parks and Recreation Master Plan?

- Disconnected Pathway System*****
- Lack of Parking at most parks during events***
- Lack of Communication- Internal and External (Marketing and Public Relations)***
- Lack of Facilities – open space, gymnasiums, ball fields, indoor classrooms, etc.***
- Growing Pains – Demand and Fast Growth**
- Need more Youth Programs and Facilities*
- Lack of Dedicated Funding to develop new facilities*
- Lack of Open Field Ball Field Space for Diversity of Sports**
- Lack of Funding**
- Need a Large Recreation Center***
- No year round disc golf*
- Lack of Off Leash Dog Parks**
- Lack of Shade and Mature Trees in Parks**
- Need indoor Aquatic Center*
- Need more splash pads*
- Need Indoor Performing Arts Center*
- Lack of Security
- Lack of Community Center Multipurpose Space for Community Organizations
- Short on Staff
- Lack of Capacity
- Opportunities for future park land diminishing
- Resting athletic field turf is challenging
- Need Asset Replacement Plan – Life Cycle of Capital Replacement
- Lack of quality of ball field lighting in parks
- Lack of Dedicated use facilities
- Need improved wayfinding signage and to trail connectivity
- Need Developers Impact requirement for trail connectivity
- Need more iconic parks (destination parks)
- Need a larger downtown park
- Need a Shade Policy for parks
- Lack of winter water availability – restrooms, irrigation, drinking fountains, etc.
- Traffic noise and shade around performance area in
- Need to add a vapor policy to the non-smoking policy
- Need better operational partnerships such as sharing school facilities
- Need Comprehensive Plans with all City Departments
- Poor maintenance of ball fields at Gordon Harris Park (school facilities)

- Over dependency on partnerships
 - Website needs ability for online registration and reservations
 - Need more seating in parks (shaded)
 - Need more non-bleacher seating at game fields
 - Rely of Volunteers
- 4) How satisfied are you with the quality of current programs offered? Why?
- 5 Excellent - 8
 - 4 Very Good - 28
 - 3 Good - 13
 - 2 Fair - 0
 - 1 Poor - 0
- 5) What additional programs or activities do you feel the Department should offer that are currently not available?
- Non-sports Activities****
 - Aquatic Programs – Swim Lessons, Water Aerobics, etc.***
 - Teen Programs***
 - Community-wide Special Events*
 - Senior Programs*
 - Pickleball**
 - Indoor Hockey*
 - Lacrosse*
 - Outdoor Recreation and Adventure Programs****
 - Continuing Education Programs for all ages
 - Mobile Rec – Traveling Programs
 - Adaptive Recreation Programs
 - Activities for Millennials
 - Youth Sports
 - More Leagues
 - More Tournaments
 - Drop-in Programs – Gym, walking, workout, etc.
 - Indoor Field House Sports
 - Fishing / Fly Fishing – need more stocking, instruction
 - Expand recreational equipment rental system at concession stands
 - Improved Farmer’s Market
 - Art in the Park
 - Volunteer Maintenance Program – “Love Your Parks”
 - Winter Programs for Youth
 - Flag Football
 - Hunter Education Classes
 - Arts and Crafts Classes
 - Performing Arts Programs*

- Year round walking group
- 6) How satisfied are you with the overall quality of the existing park and recreation facilities provided by the Meridian Parks and Recreation Department? Why?
- 5 Excellent - 19
 - 4 Very Good - 36
 - 3 Good - 6
 - 2 Fair - 1
 - 1 Poor - 0
- 7) How would you rate the overall level of maintenance at the facilities owned or operated by the Department? Please identify the location and specifics of any maintenance concerns.
- 5 Excellent - 35
 - 4 Very Good - 25
 - 3 Good - 4
 - 2 Fair - 0
 - 1 Poor - 0
- 8) What improvements are needed at existing facilities? Where are these improvements needed?
- More Parking*****
 - Shade in parks****
 - Upgraded and Renovate Community Center***
 - Upgrade lighting technology and modernization – timing, no bleed lights, etc.**
 - Better maintain and/or repurpose Legion Baseball Field into a Softball Field, re-grade, irrigation, lights, etc. – Storey Park**
 - Ballfield lights*
 - Pickleball markings on tennis courts*
 - Frost free drinking fountains, irrigation, restrooms, etc.*
 - Off leash dog areas in all parks*
 - Concession Opportunities - Upgrades
 - Parking at Settlers Park – Develop a Parking Plan
 - Beautify Pathways
 - Band Shell at Kleiner Park - Shade, Sound buffers, etc.
 - Replacement of Adventure Island Playground surfacing
 - Need more swings at parks
 - More Pathway connectivity
 - Air stations for bicycles in parks and on trails
 - Water bottle stations in parks and on trails
 - Healthy food and beverage options at concessions
 - Policy Signage in Parks – smoking, off lease dog areas (Kleiner Park), etc.
 - More dog pick-up bags stations in parks & trails
 - Electricity, Water and Sewer at Rodeo grounds
 - ADA Accessibility

- Conflict between neighborhood parks and sports events (parking, driving through neighborhoods, field designs, etc.)
- Better Quality Water Fountains in Parks
- Artificial / Synthetic Turf
- Website – Online registration and reservations
- Add restrooms at Settlers Park
- More shaded seating in parks
- More flowers and landscaping in parks
- Add security systems
- Flooding in Heroes Park
- Heavy grass clippings in some parks
- Renovate or repurpose the Community Center

9) Are there any portions of the community that are underserved? Please explain (i.e., where and what type of amenities are needed, what market segment needs more attention, etc.).

- South Meridian*****
- Dog Owners***
- Teens***
- Adventure Sports: Skateboarders, BMX
- Adaptive – Special Needs**
- Seniors / Active Adults**
- Biking Community**
- Youth Activities*
- Aquatics – Swimmers*
- Running Community
- Cat Owners
- Young Adults
- Homeless
- Competitive Club Soccer
- Equestrian Community
- New residents
- Lacrosse Community
- 10 mile and West
- East of Eagle (Industrial)

10) What additional park and recreation facilities would you like to see the community provide?

- Bike Pathway Connectivity*****
- Athletic Fields*****
- Fieldhouse including hard surface courts and indoor turf*****
- Indoor Aquatic Center (competitive and family leisure)*****
- Multipurpose Open Space to use for Athletic Fields****
- Dog Parks with water facilities to swim in & dog agility facility****
- Destination Softball Tournament Complex – 6 to 8 fields***

- Destination Baseball Tournament Complex – 6 to 8 fields***
- Destination Multipurpose Rectangular Field Tournament Complex***
- Large Community Center***
- Botanical Gardens**
- Splash pads***
- Indoor Tennis / Pickleball**
- Ice Rink**
- Pocket Parks, HOA parks*
- Lacrosse Fields*
- Exercise Fitness Trail*
- Year Round Disc Golf Course*
- Off leash dog areas**
- Multipurpose Parks (Active and Passive)
- Dedicated use facilities*
- Performing Arts Center*
- Natural Landscape Parks*
- Multipurpose Artificial / Synthetic Turf with Lights*
- Indoor Lacrosse (Box Lacrosse)
- Farmer's Market
- Concessions
- Art themed parks
- Need more iconic parks (destination parks)*
- Need a larger downtown park
- Need a park on the West side
- Nature Reserve*
- Additional Community Gardening
- Arboretum
- Special Event Space with Large Outdoor Performance Space
- Shade Structures
- Historical and Cultural Park
- Skate park**
- Convention Center
- Picnic Shelters
- Picnic Areas
- Outdoor Shooting Range
- Sledding Hill on Southside
- Children's Working Farm
- BMX
- Fishing pond south of the highway
- Climbing Wall, boulder area
- Wi-Fi access at parks

11) Are there any facilities and/or programs currently available that should be eliminated? If so, which ones and why?

- Adult Baseball at Story Park*
- Horseshoe Pits at Story Park
- Community Center
- Belly Dancing

12) How would you rate the quality of customer service provided by the Parks and Recreation staff?
Please elaborate.

5 Excellent - 42
4 Very Good - 14
3 Good - 0
2 Fair - 0
1 Poor - 0

13) How effective is the Department in seeking feedback from the community and users on improving its performance?

5 Excellent - 23
4 Very Good - 23
3 Good -
2 Fair - 2
1 Poor - 0

14) The Parks and Recreation Department's programs and facilities are currently funded through a combination of revenue sources, including General Fund, User Fees, Impact Fees, and Partnerships. Do you think this is an appropriate way to fund the department?

Yes: 38
No: 2
Do Not Know: 14

15) Who are the key partners and stakeholders in the community with regards to assisting with the implementation of this plan?

- School District*****
- Youth Sports Organizations*****
- YMCA*****
- Boys & Girls Club****
- Senior Center**
- Western Ada Recreation District – WARD**
- Service Clubs – Optimist, Lions Club, etc.***
- Developers (including non-residential property)***
- Local Corporations / Business Community***
- Library*
- Children's Theater*
- Irrigation Districts**
- Transportation Agencies – ITD, MDC, Railroad, ACHD, COMPASS**
- User Groups and Daily Users***
- PAL*

- Faith Based Community*
- Boys/Girl Scouts*
- Tax Paying Residents*
- State and Local Governments (Idaho Fish and Game, adjacent municipalities)**
- Foundations (Albertson's)
- Volunteers
- Community Clubs
- Meridian Arts Commission
- Meridian Downtown Business Society
- Regional Tennis Organizations
- Medical Community – Health Care, St. Luke's Hospital, Central District Health Department, etc.
- Other City Departments*
- City Council
- Non-governmental Organizations
- HOAs
- Land Owners*
- Speedway Owner

16) What are the key issues and values in the Meridian community that need to be considered while developing this Master Plan?

- Family Oriented*****
- Safety***
- Accessibility***
- Sustainability***
- Quality**
- Aesthetics**
- Connectivity**
- Fiscally Responsible*
- Develop in underserved areas*
- Traffic / Drive Time*
- Community
- User Friendly
- Fun
- Affordability
- Identity
- Active Lifestyles**
- Partnerships*
- Suburban Design
- Civic Minded
- Inclusive
- Leadership
- Balance Active and Passive Activities
- Balance organized sports and unorganized sports activities
- Growth

- Land Value
- Air Quality
- Historical & Cultural connection to farming and dairy
- Convenience
- Value of outdoor recreation*
- Economic Impact Value
- Key Identity for each park
- Destination amenities

17) Are there any political sensitivities we should be aware of that could impact the success of the city's planning efforts?

- Conservative - Do not raise taxes*****
- Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability**
- Government cannot fund and/or operate everything
- City of Meridian is not going to build Indoor Aquatic Center, Ice Rink, Performing Arts Center,
- Moore Brooks Legion Baseball Field Renovation
- Rodeo Grounds
- Trying to please all residents
- Sharing the open process to public
- City Council Support for Parks & Recreation
- Open Information Sharing of Future Needs
- Residents want it all but do not want to pay for it
- Educate public on benefits of new facilities
- Parks and Facilities West of 10 Mile
- Changing political landscape – elections
- Impacts to our providers*
- Diversity of the community
- Neighboring factors

18) During the next 5-10 years, what are the top priorities for the Parks and Recreation Department?

1-5 years

- Land Acquisition*****
- Pathway Connectivity****
- Recreation Center***
- Gymnasium Space**
- Field House****
- Outdoor Rectangular Field space**
- Outdoor Diamond Field space**
- Partner better with school facilities*
- Regional Park in South Meridian**
- New Dog Park**
- New Neighborhood Parks in CIP*

- Increase Development Impact Fee Policy In Lieu Of for Land Acquisition Endowment Fund*
- Maximize use of existing facilities****
- Implement Master Plan*
- More public space South of Interstate*
- Staffing Plans
- Outdoor Spaces
- Pickleball Courts*
- Equipment to maintain new park amenities
- Life Cycle Plans*
- Upgrade Ball field Lighting
- Upgrade Story Park
- City Christmas Tree
- Shade Policy
- Funding Sources*
- Public Relations and Marketing
- Endowment for park maintenance (1%) with donation of land
- Sell the Quality of Life message to the public
- Focus on the priorities
- Create a position to solicit grants, sponsorships, private donations, etc.
- Develop West of 10 mile
- Upgrade Landscaping*
- Outdoor Recreation and Adventure Trips

10 Years

- Pathway Connectivity**
- Outdoor Rectangular Field space*
- Outdoor Diamond Field space*
- Indoor Recreational Space
- Implement Master Plan
- Increase in Staff
- Increase Partnerships*
- Additional Parking
- Develop undeveloped parks
- Aldape Park
- Forestry Upgrade
- New Neighborhood Parks in CIP
- Two new dog Parks
- Botanical Gardens
- Indoor Aquatic Center
- Additional park in South Meridian and North West

Appendix C – Survey Results

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City of Meridian Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey Final Results

June 2015



Prepared for:

City of Meridian

Prepared by:

RRC Associates LLC

4770 Baseline Rd, Ste 360

Boulder, CO 80303

303/449-6558

www.rrcassociates.com



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INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to gather public feedback on City of Meridian parks and recreation facilities, services, and programs. This survey research effort and subsequent analysis were designed to assist the City of Meridian in the creation of a master plan for existing and possibly future enhancements, facilities, and services.

The survey was conducted using three primary methods: 1) a mail-back survey, 2) an online, invitation-only web survey to further encourage response from those residents already within the defined invitation sample, and 3) an open-link online survey for members of the public who were not part of the invitation sample. The analysis herein primarily focuses on responses from the invitation sample. However, open link responses are additionally analyzed and discussed, particularly when they differ from the invitation sample.

The primary list source used for the mailing was a third party list purchased from Melissa Data Corp., a leading provider of data with emphasis on U.S., Canadian, and international address and phone verification as well as postal software. Use of the Melissa Data list also includes renters in the sample who are frequently missed in other list sources such as utility billing lists.

A total of 3,500 surveys were mailed to a random sample of Meridian residents in March 2015. The final sample size for this statistically valid survey was 731, resulting in a margin of error of approximately +/- 3.6 percentage points calculated for questions at 50% response¹. The open link survey received an additional 661 responses.

The underlying data were weighted by age, ethnicity, and area of impact by neighborhood to ensure appropriate representation of Meridian residents across different demographic cohorts in the sample. Using the ESRI Demographic and Income Profile, which generates a 2014 population profile using 2010 Census data, the age distribution and ethnicity distribution within the respondent sample was matched to the 2014 demographic profile of the City of Meridian. In addition, the neighborhood distribution within the respondent sample was matched to the 2015 area of impact by region as provided by the City.

Due to variable response rates by some segments of the population, the underlying results, while weighted to best match the overall demographics of residents, may not be completely representative of some sub-groups of the population.

¹ For the total invitation sample size of 731, margin of error is +/- 3.6 percent calculated for questions at 50% response (if the response for a particular question is "50%"—the standard way to generalize margin of error is to state the larger margin, which occurs for responses at 50%). Note that the margin of error is different for every single question response on the survey depending on the resultant sample sizes, proportion of responses, and number of answer categories for each question. Comparison of differences in the data between various segments, therefore, should take into consideration these factors. As a general comment, it is sometimes more appropriate to focus attention on the general trends and patterns in the data rather than on the individual percentages.

DEMOGRAPHICS

This section of the report details the respondent and household demographics of the invitation and open link samples. By understanding how the characteristics of these two sample groups differ, we are in a better position to understand contrasting response patterns for various questions on the survey.

- Gender. Invitation sample respondents are predominantly female (76 percent), while roughly a quarter (24 percent) are male. Open link respondents also skewed female, though to a lesser degree (63 percent).
- Age. Almost half (47 percent) of invitation respondents are under age 45, compared to a slightly higher proportion of open link respondents (54 percent). Invitation respondents were generally older, with 18 percent age 65 or older (10 percent open link). Consistent with these findings, the average age of an invitation sample respondent was 49.9 and the average age of an open link sample respondent was slightly younger at 45.9.
- Household Profile. Most invitation respondents (61 percent) identify themselves as residents of family households, followed by empty nesters (25 percent), singles without children (7 percent), and couples without children (6 percent). Similarly, the open link sample was dominated by respondents with children at home (68 percent) and empty nesters (17 percent).

A majority of both invitation respondents (82 percent) and open link respondents (86 percent) reported being in a couple.

- Household Income. Seventy-three percent of invitation sample households earn an annual income of less than \$100,000, while only 60 percent of open link households fall within this income bracket. In a similar finding, eight percent of invitation respondents reported earnings of greater than \$150,000 per year, while 14 percent of open link respondents reported incomes in this range, indicative of a more affluent open link sample. Open link households also reported a higher average annual income (\$100,217) than invitation households (\$79,496).
- Ethnicity/Race. Eight percent of invitation respondents and 3 percent of open link respondents consider themselves to be of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. Diverse representation by race was limited, with 97 percent of invitation respondents and 95 percent of open link respondents identifying themselves as white. One percent of invitation respondents consider themselves to be Native American, 1 percent consider themselves to be African American, and 1 percent identify themselves as some other race.
- Own or Rent. A majority of both invitation respondents (87 percent) and open link respondents (85 percent) indicated that they own their residence.

- Voter Registration. Most respondents in both samples are registered voters in the City of Meridian (91 percent invitation, 83 percent open link).
- Years in the Meridian Area. Invitation sample respondents have lived in the Meridian area for an average of 16.5 years, somewhat longer than open link respondents (average 12.0 years). Most invitation respondents have been in the area for a considerable period of time, with 67 percent having lived there for over 10 years. Only 46 percent of open link respondents have lived in Meridian for more than 10 years. Few respondents in either sample are new residents of the area, with 0 percent of invitation and 7 percent of open link respondents having lived in the area for under a year.
- Area of Residence. Roughly a third (32 percent) of invitation respondents live in the Northwest area of the City (west of Meridian Rd. and north of Cherry Lane). An additional twenty-five percent live in the South area (south of I-84), followed by twenty-two percent each in the Central area (between I-84 and Cherry Lane/Fairview Ave.) and the Northeast (east of Meridian Rd. and north of Fairview Ave.). Similarly, the largest share of open link respondents live in the Northwest section (32 percent), followed by the Northeast (23 percent), South (20 percent), Central (11 percent), and other areas (14 percent).

Figure 1: Demographic Profile

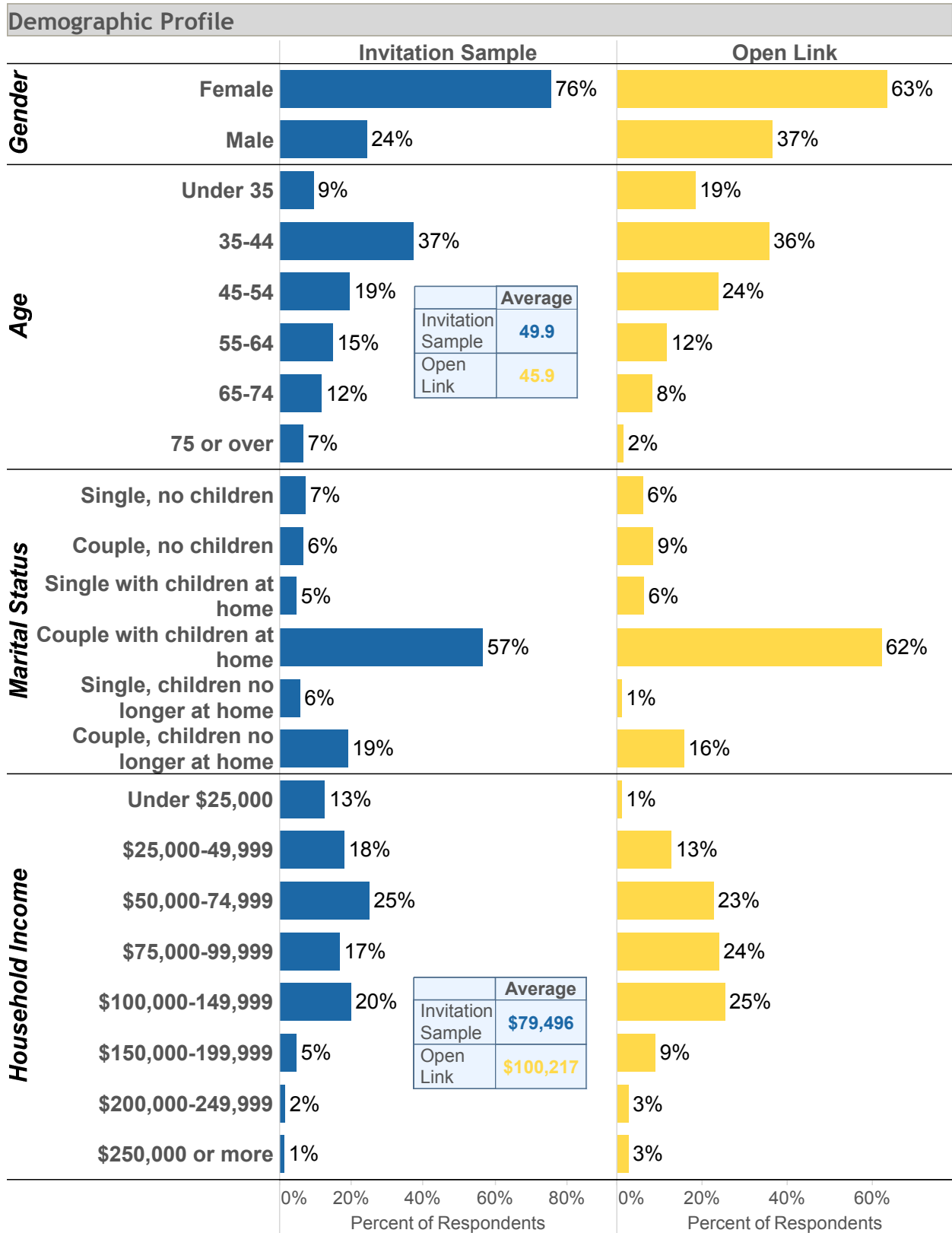
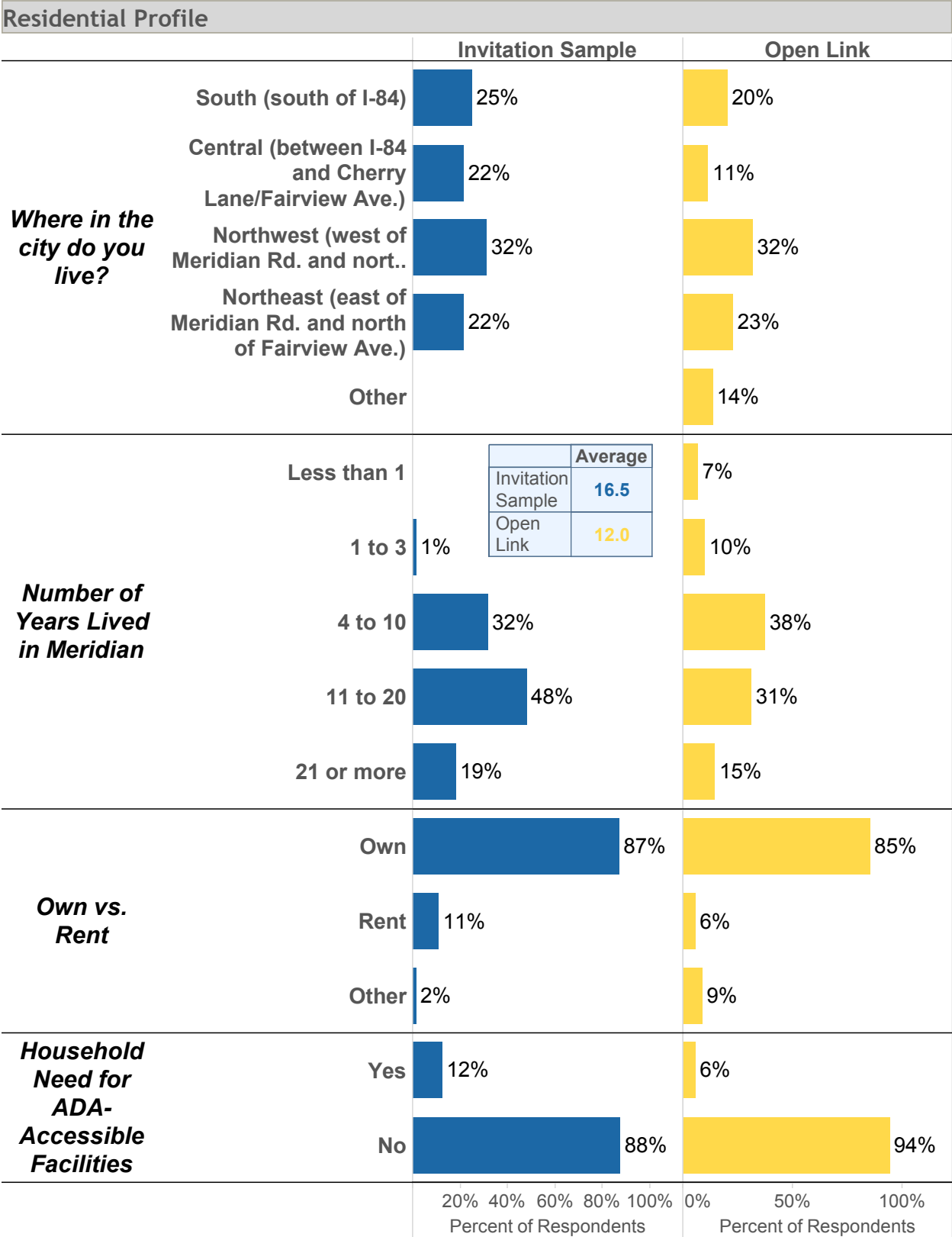


Figure 2: Residential Profile



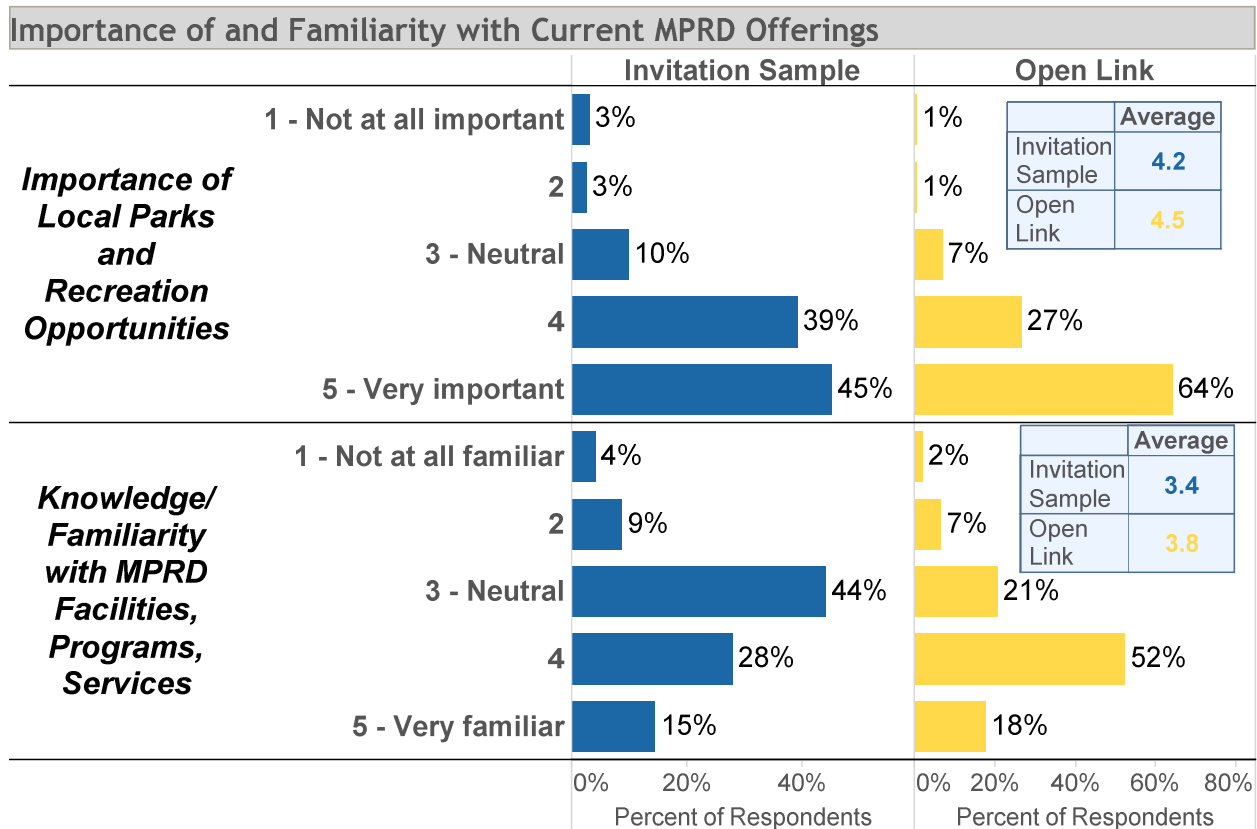
CURRENT FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS

Importance and Ratings of Parks and Recreation Opportunities

Importance of Local Recreation Opportunities. Respondents were asked to indicate the importance of the availability of local parks and recreation opportunities to their household on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning “not at all important” and 5 meaning “very important.” Respondents generally indicated that local recreation opportunities are very important to their household, with 84 percent of invitation respondents and 91 percent of open link respondents providing a 4 or 5 rating. Average importance ratings were similarly high in both the invitation (4.2) and open link (4.5) samples.

Knowledge/Familiarity with Current MPRD Offerings. Respondents were also asked to rate their level of familiarity with current Meridian parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means “not at all familiar” and 5 means “very familiar”. Ratings of familiarity were not as high as ratings of importance, particularly among invitation respondents. Forty-three percent of invitation respondents provided a 4 or 5 rating (average rating 3.4), compared to 70 percent of open link respondents (average 3.8).

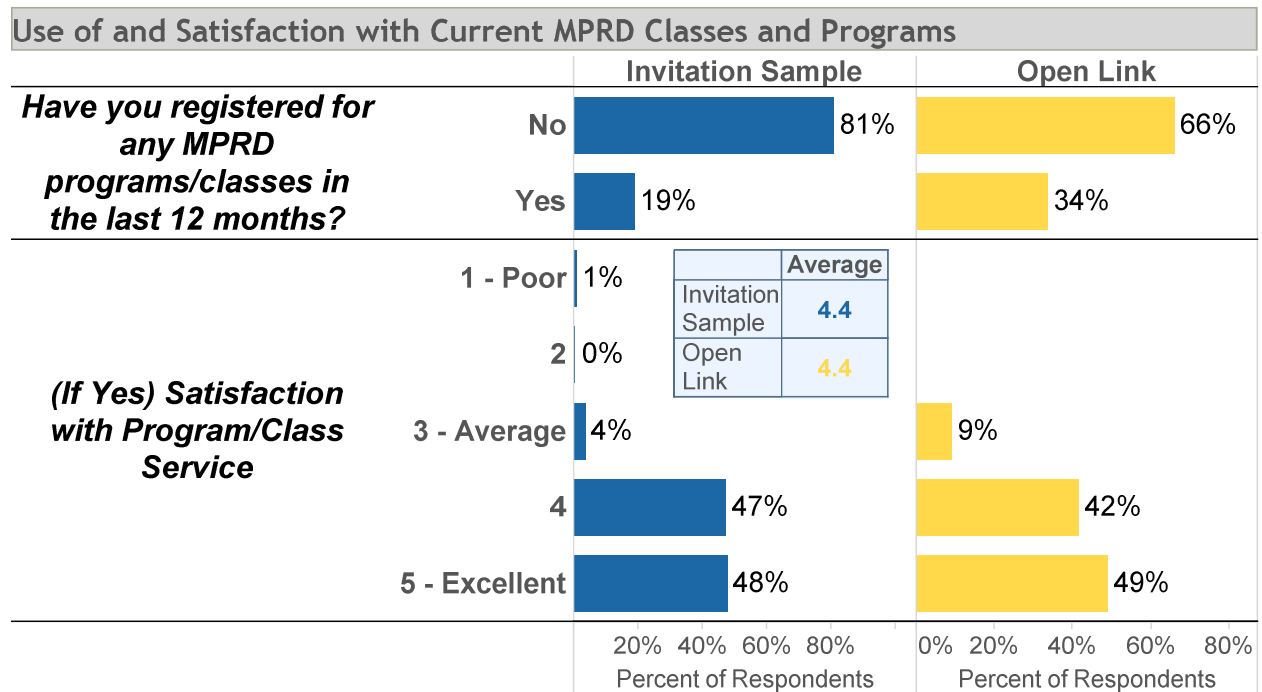
Figure 3: Importance of and Familiarity with Local Recreation Opportunities



Participation in Meridian Parks and Recreation Classes and Programs. Nineteen percent of invitation respondents and 34 percent of open link respondents indicated that they have registered for a MPRD program or class during the past year.

Ratings of Service Received. Respondents who indicated they had registered for classes or programs in the past year were asked to rate the service they received on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning “poor” and 5 meaning “excellent.” Satisfaction with their program or class was very high, with 95 percent of invitation respondents and 91 percent of open link respondents providing a 4 or 5 rating and an average satisfaction rating of 4.4 for both samples.

Figure 4: Use of and Satisfaction with Classes and Programs



Most Used Facilities and Parks

Respondents were provided a list of 18 facilities and parks operated by the City of Meridian. They were then prompted to indicate the three facilities they use most often:

Use by Sample. Figure 5 explores the top three most used facilities and parks by survey sample. The following facilities were used most commonly by invitation respondents: Settlers Park (70 percent), Storey Park (53 percent), Julius M. Kleiner Memorial Park (46 percent), Tully Park (39 percent), and Bear Creek Park (17 percent). Open link respondents also most frequently used Settlers Park (80 percent), followed by Julius M. Kleiner Memorial Park (58 percent), Tully Park (28 percent), Storey Park (26 percent), and Bear Creek Park (17 percent).

Invitation respondents are more likely to use Storey Park and Tully Park on a regular basis, while open link respondents have a higher likelihood of utilizing Settlers Park, Julius M. Kleiner Memorial Park, Heroes Park, and the Heritage Middle School Ball Fields.

Invitation responses were also analyzed by area of residence (Figure 6) and household profile (Figure 7):

Use by Area of Residence. Invitation respondents in Northeast Meridian reported that they are particularly likely to use the Julius M. Kleiner Memorial Park, Jabil Fields, and Community Center. Respondents living in the Northwest section of the City most frequently use Settlers Park, Tully Park, and Chateau Park; finally, respondents located in the South area most often use Bear Creek Park, Renaissance Park, Gordon Harris Park, and Heroes Park. Respondents from each neighborhood reported higher usage of parks and facilities located within their respective neighborhoods, which is logical given the close vicinity of residents to these amenities.

Use by Household Status. Settlers Park, Tully Park, Renaissance Park, Jabil Fields, Chateau Park, and Heroes Park are used more often by invitation respondents living with children at home than those in non-family households. Respondents living without children are more likely to use Julius M. Kleiner Memorial Park, City Hall Plaza, and Generations Plaza on a regular basis.

Figure 5: Most Used Facilities/Parks

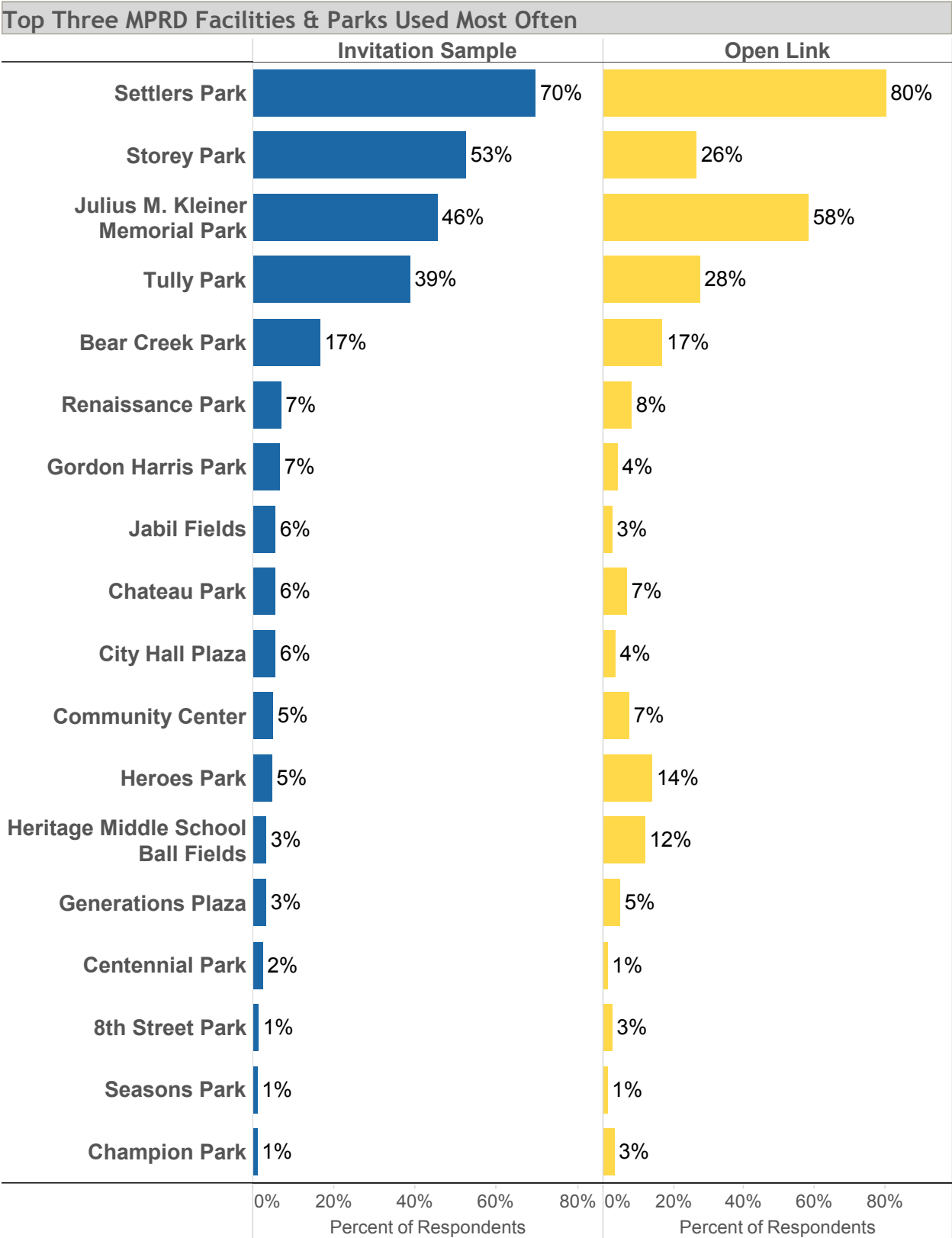


Figure 6: Most Used Facilities/Parks by Area of Residence
Invitation Sample Only

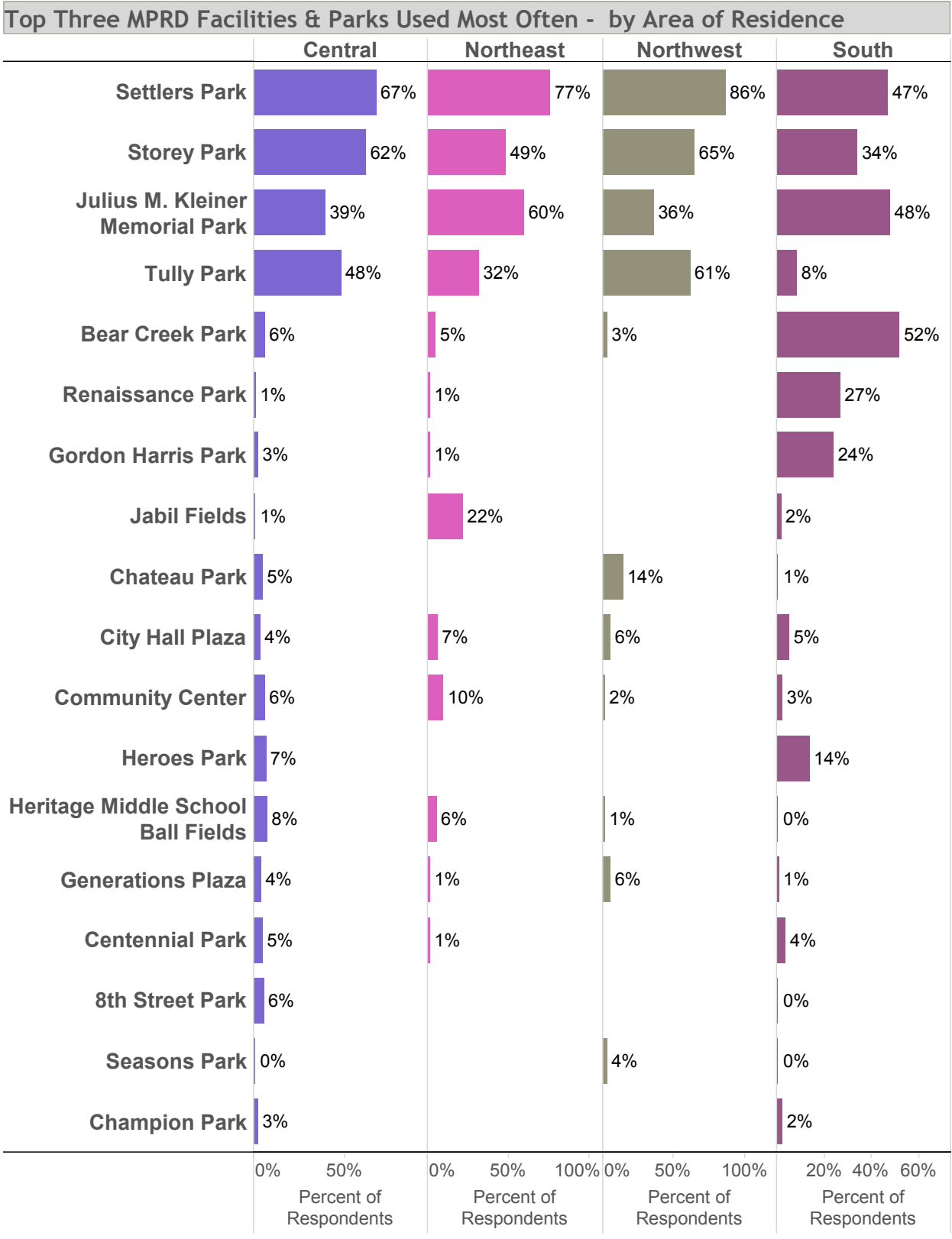
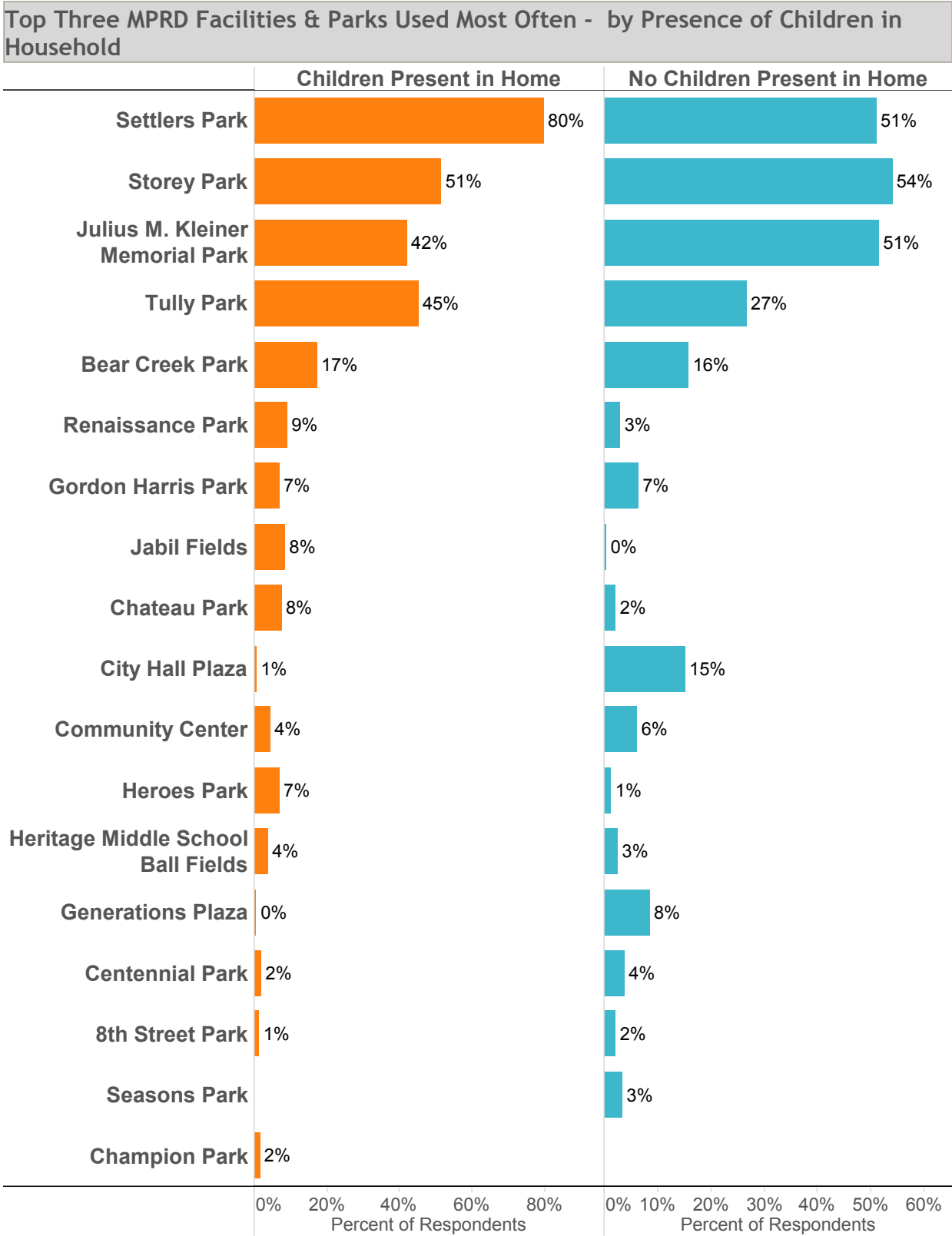


Figure 7: Most Used Facilities/Parks by Household Status
Invitation Sample Only



Respondents were provided a list of current Meridian Parks and Recreation facilities and programs and asked to rate the importance of each amenity to their household as well as identify the degree to which each amenity meets their household's needs. The results from each of these questions are discussed in turn below.

Importance of Facilities to Household

On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is "not at all important" and 5 is "very important", respondents rated the importance of Meridian Parks and Recreation facilities to their households. Figure 8 to follow illustrates the percentage of "4" and "5" responses (indicating that the respondent feels the facility is important) versus the percentage of "1" and "2" responses (indicating that the respondent feels the facility is not important) among invitation respondents. Figure 9 depicts the average importance rating provided by invitation respondents for each facility. The highest average ratings and largest shares of "4" and "5" responses were given for the following facilities:

- Pathways/trails (average rating 4.2; 82 percent provided a 4 or 5 rating)
- Playgrounds (4.1 average; 77 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Picnic shelters (3.8 average; 69 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Swimming pools/aquatic facilities (3.7 average; 56 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Community/recreation center (3.6 average; 56 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Indoor gym space (3.3 average; 49 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Splash pads (3.3 average; 48 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Athletic fields (3.3 average; 43 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Outdoor basketball courts (3.1 average; 43 percent rated 4 or 5)

Facilities that received considerably lower ratings include ball fields (2.9 average), tennis courts (2.9), dog parks (2.9), and rodeo grounds (2.2). Dog parks and rodeo grounds also received a higher share of respondents providing a "1" or "2" rating than the share of those providing a "4" or "5" rating, indicating that the majority of respondents feel that these facilities are unimportant.

Figure 9 compares average importance ratings between invitation respondents and open link respondents. Ratings were generally fairly similar among the two samples, though open link respondents rated several items higher in importance on average, including athletic fields, ball fields, picnic shelters, pathways/trails, community/recreation center, dog parks, and indoor gym space.

Figure 8: Importance of Facilities Operated by MPRD – Percent Important vs. Not Important Invitation Sample Only

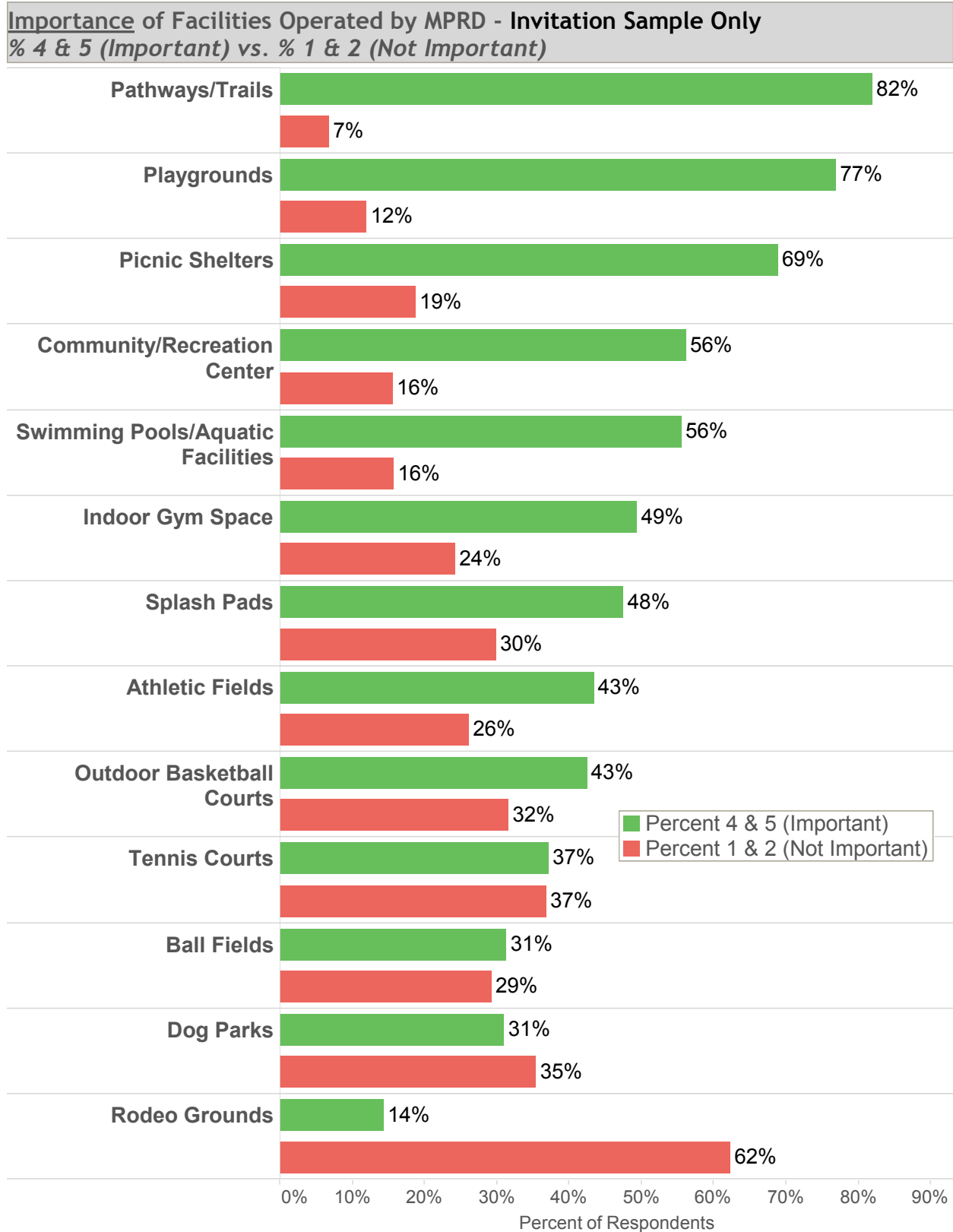
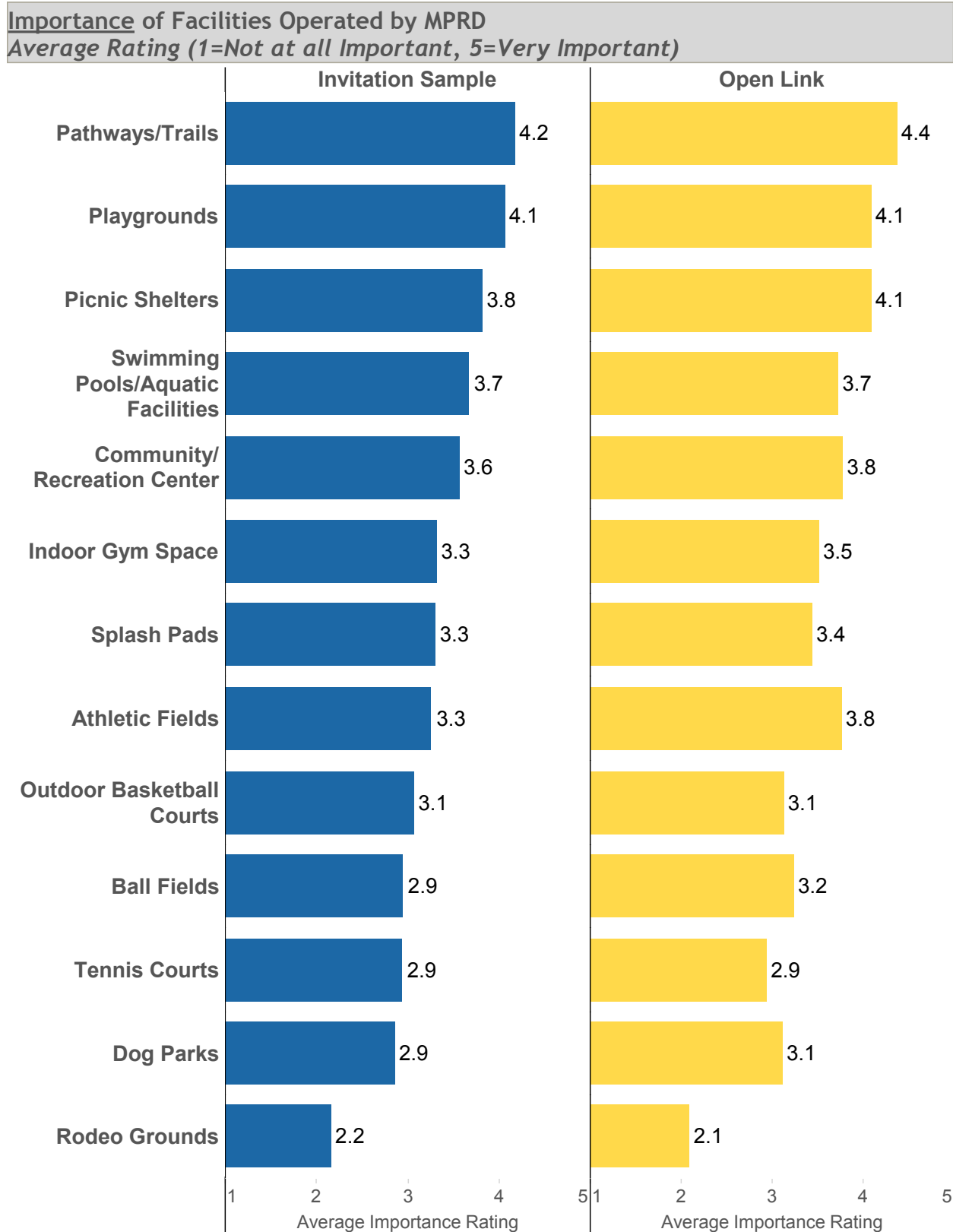


Figure 9: Importance of Facilities Operated by MPRD – Average Rating



Degree to Which Household Needs are Met by Facilities

Using the same list of facilities, respondents also rated the degree to which they feel their household's needs are met by current Meridian Parks and Recreation facilities on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means "not at all" and 5 means "completely." Figure 10 shows the percentage of "4" and "5" invitation responses (indicating that the respondent feels their household's needs are met) relative to the percentage of "1" and "2" invitation responses (indicating that the respondent feels their household's needs are unmet). Figure 11 immediately following depicts average ratings. Overall, respondents indicated that their needs are generally well met by current facilities. The following facilities received the highest average ratings and the highest proportions of "4" and "5" ratings among invitation respondents:

- Playgrounds (average rating 4.3; 84 percent provided a 4 or 5 rating)
- Picnic shelters (4.0 average; 67 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Athletic fields (3.8 average; 73 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Ball fields (3.8 average; 69 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Splash pads (3.6 average; 59 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Outdoor basketball courts (3.5 average; 57 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Tennis courts (3.4 average; 38 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Pathways/trails (3.4 average; 50 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Community/recreation center (3.3 average; 55 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Dog parks (3.1 average; 41 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Swimming pools/aquatic facilities (3.1 average; 44 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Rodeo grounds (3.1 average; 38 percent rated 4 or 5)

Only one facility, indoor gym space, did not receive a relatively high needs met rating. Forty-seven percent of respondents provided a "1" or "2" rating, while only 25 percent provided a "4" or "5" rating for this item. The average rating was 2.6, indicating that indoor gym space is a facility that, for a majority of respondents, is not meeting the needs of their households and therefore should be considered in future facility improvements.

Figure 11 also illustrates the average ratings given by open link respondents for each listed facility. Invitation respondents gave higher ratings on average to playgrounds, dog parks, and rodeo grounds. Meanwhile, open link respondents provided higher needs met ratings for tennis courts and indoor gym space.

**Figure 10: Degree to Which Household Needs are Met by Facilities Operated by MPRD – Percent Needs Met vs. Needs Unmet
Invitation Sample Only**

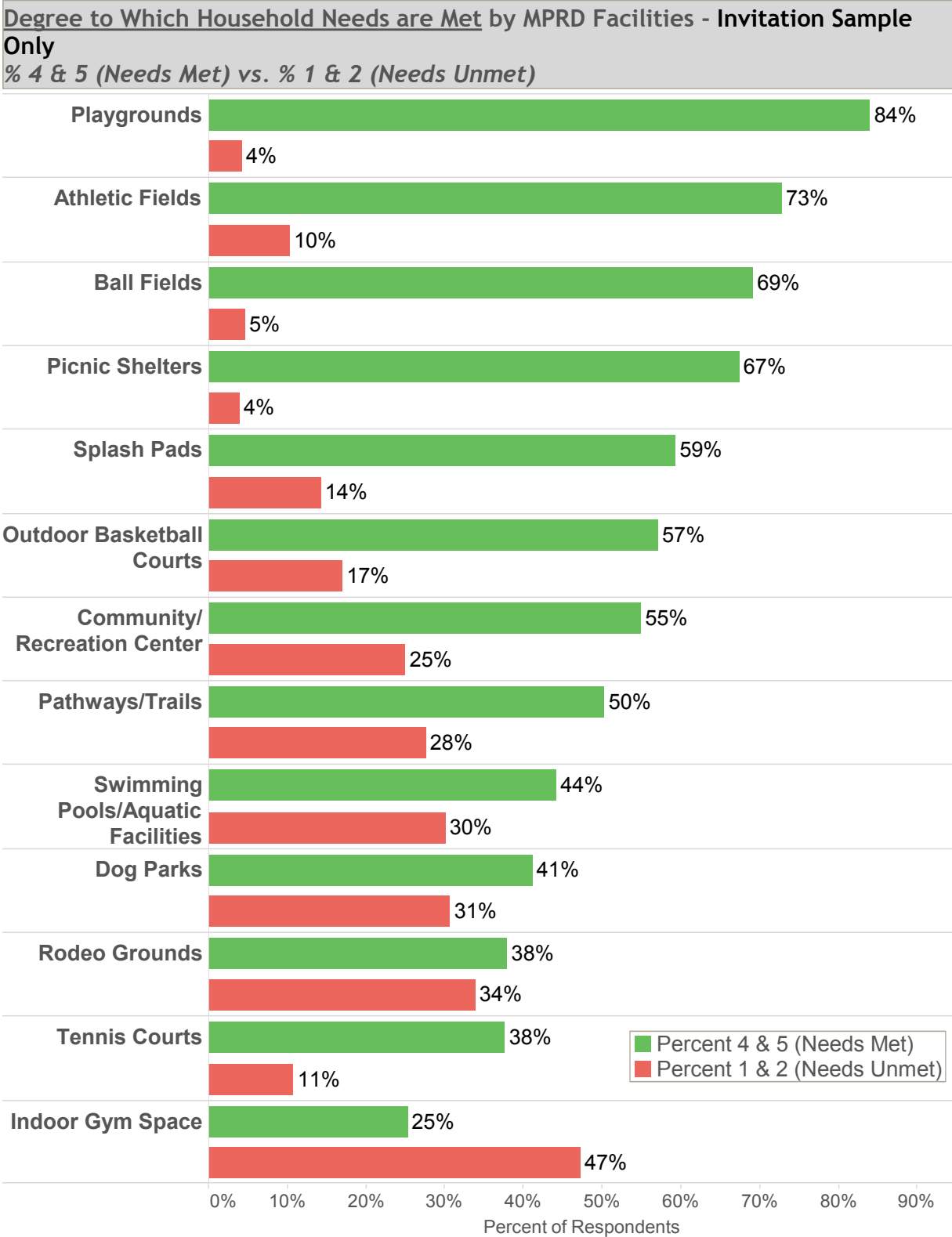
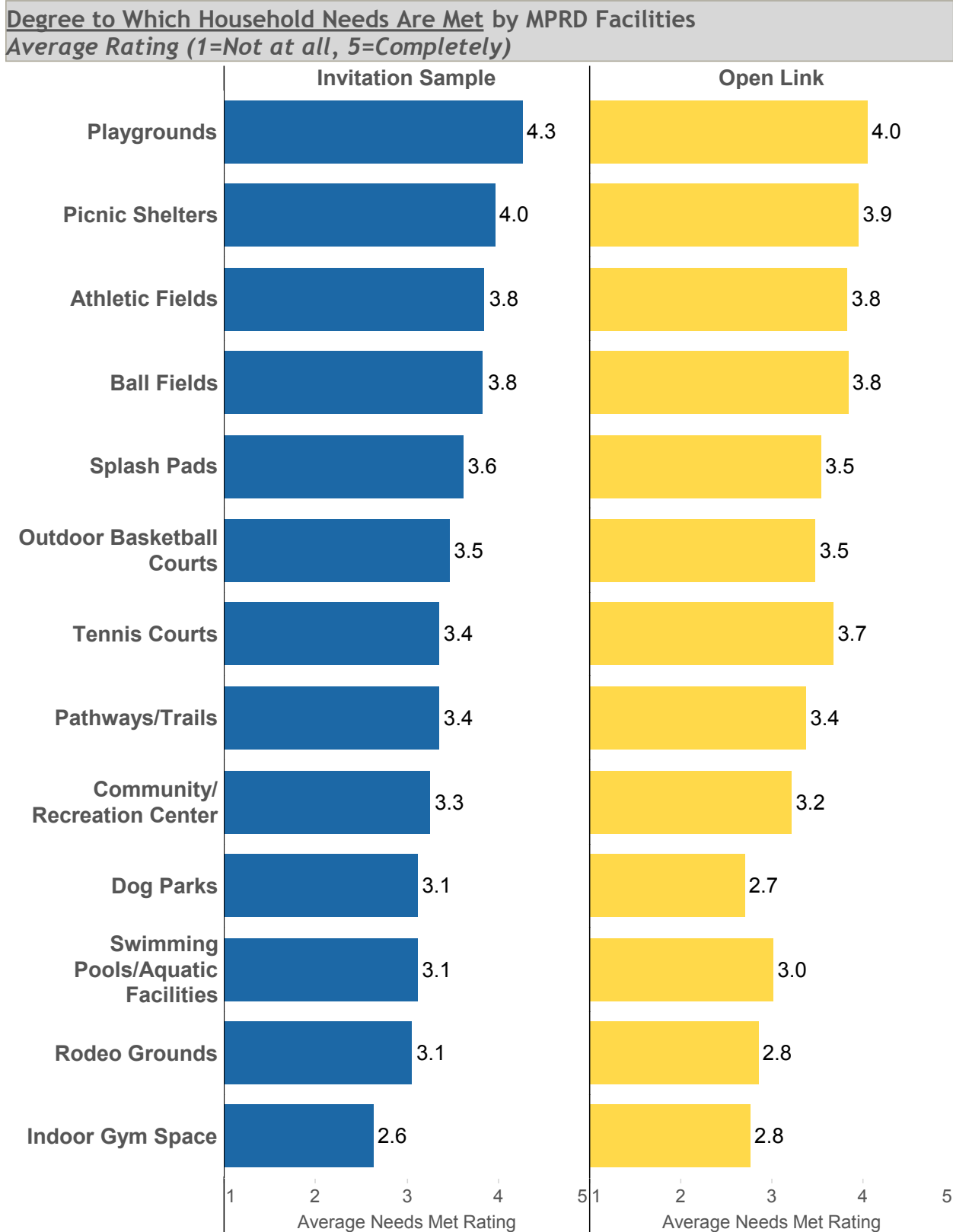


Figure 11: Degree to Which Household Needs are Met by Facilities Operated by MPRD – Average Rating



Importance vs. Needs-Met Matrix – Current Facilities

It is informative to plot and compare the facility scores for level of importance and degree to which needs are being met by these facilities using an “Importance vs. Needs-Met” matrix. Scores are displayed in this matrix using the mid-points for both questions to divide into four quadrants. The Importance scale midpoint was 3.3 (the median importance rating across all facilities); the Needs-Met midpoint was 3.4.

The upper right quadrant shows the facilities that have a high average rating of importance as well as a high level of needs being met. These amenities are less of a priority for improvement since needs are currently being met, but are important to maintain in the future as they are perceived to be important by respondents:

- Playgrounds
- Picnic shelters
- Splash pads (on the cusp of low importance)

Facilities located in the upper left quadrant have relatively high importance but a lower level of needs being met, which suggests that these facilities could be improved. Improving these facilities would positively impact the degree to which household needs are being met overall:

- Pathways/trails
- Swimming pools/aquatic facilities
- Community/recreation center
- Indoor gym space (on the cusp of low importance)

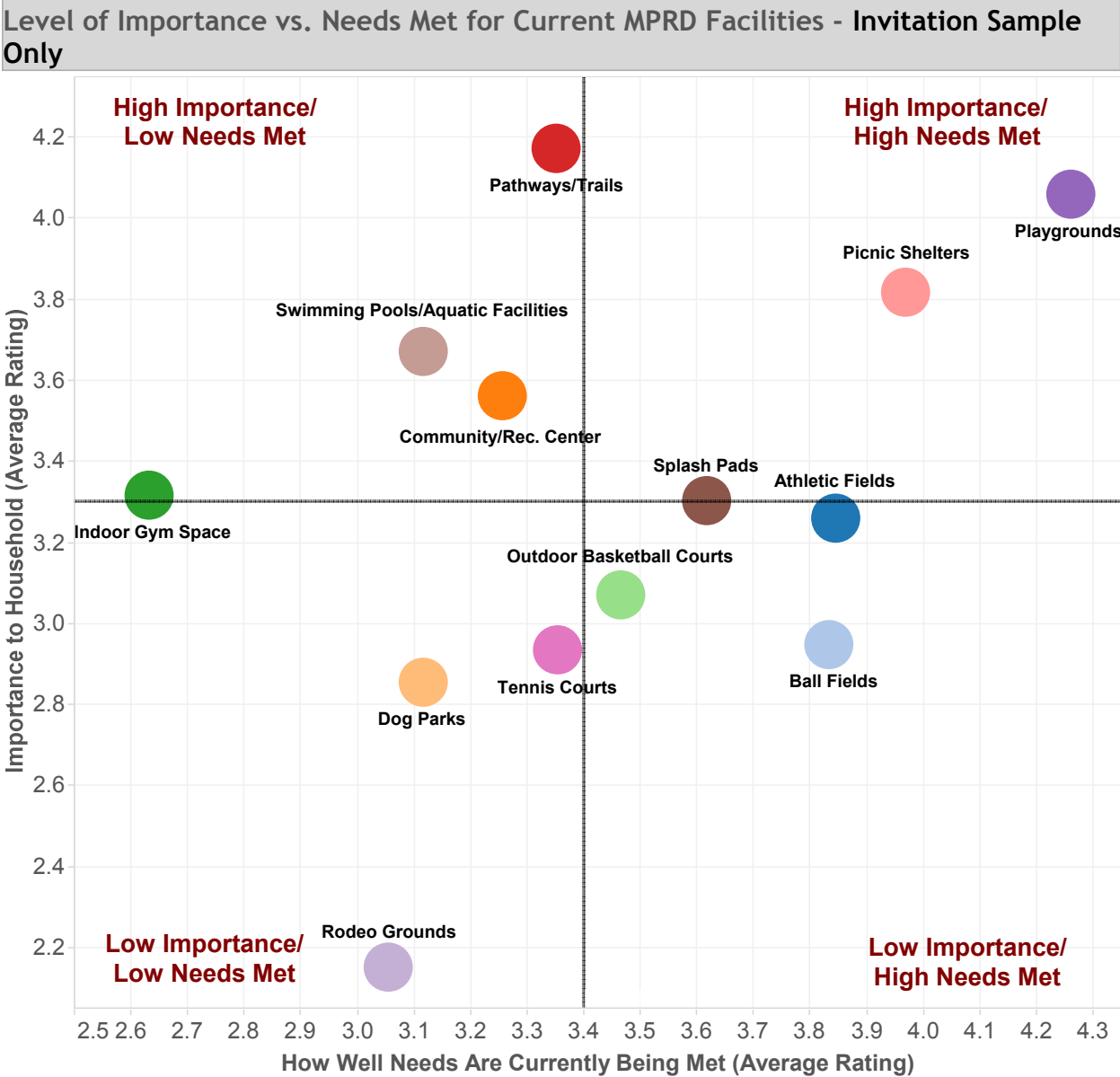
The lower right quadrant shows facilities that are not important to many households, yet are meeting their needs very well. It may be beneficial in the future to evaluate whether the parks and recreation resources supporting these facilities outweigh the benefits:

- Athletic fields
- Outdoor basketball courts
- Ball fields

Finally, facilities in the lower left quadrant are not meeting needs adequately; however, they are important to a smaller group of community members. These “niche” facilities may have a small but passionate following; therefore, there may be merit in measuring participation and planning for future improvements accordingly:

- Tennis courts
- Dog parks
- Rodeo grounds

Figure 12: Current Facilities – Importance vs. Needs Met Matrix
Invitation Sample Only



Importance of Programs to Household

Similarly, on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is “not at all important” and 5 is “very important”, respondents rated the importance of Meridian Parks and Recreation programs to their households. Figure 13 to follow depicts the percentage of invitation respondents providing a “4” or “5” rating (indicating that they feel the program is important to their household) compared to the percentage providing a “1” or “2” rating (indicating they feel the program is unimportant to their household). Figure 14 shows average importance ratings for each program. The programs that received the highest average ratings and greatest proportion of “4” and “5” ratings from invitation respondents include:

- Youth sports (average rating 3.7; 64 percent provided a 4 or 5 rating)
- Family programs (3.7 average; 69 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Outdoor adventure programs (3.5 average; 50 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Youth programs (3.5 average; 57 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Senior programs (3.3 average; 50 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Adult programs (3.2 average; 36 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Youth camps (3.2 average; 41 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Teen programs (3.1 average; 40 percent rated 4 or 5)

Adult sports were rated slightly lower in importance, with an average rating of 2.9. In addition, the number of respondents identifying the program as unimportant (34 percent) outnumbered those identifying the program as important (31 percent), indicative of a lower priority for program offerings.

Overall, open link respondents generally placed a higher importance on programs than invitation respondents did. They were particularly likely to give higher importance ratings on average to youth sports, youth programs, teen programs, and adult sports.

Figure 13: Importance of Programs Operated by MPRD – Percent Important vs. Not Important Invitation Sample Only

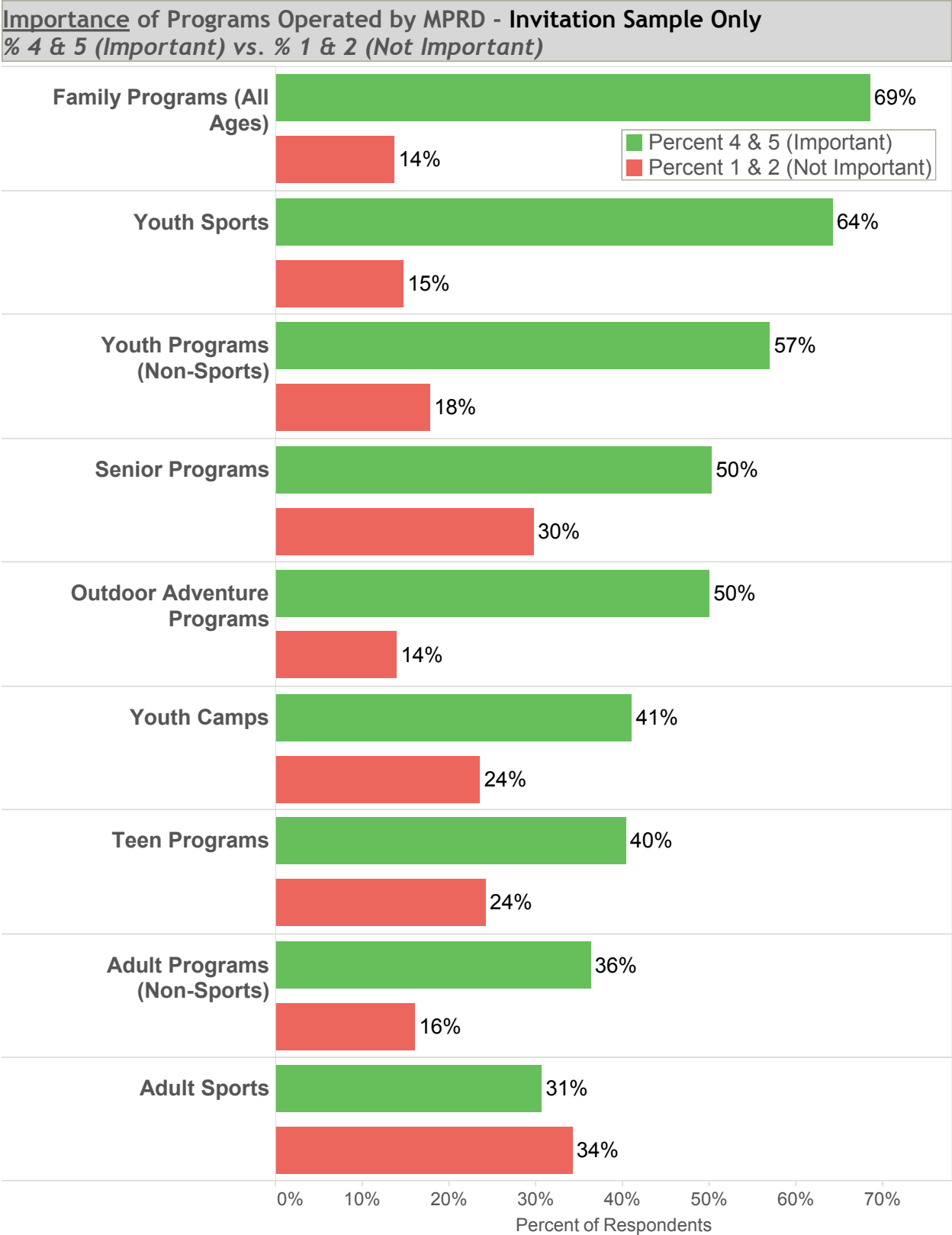
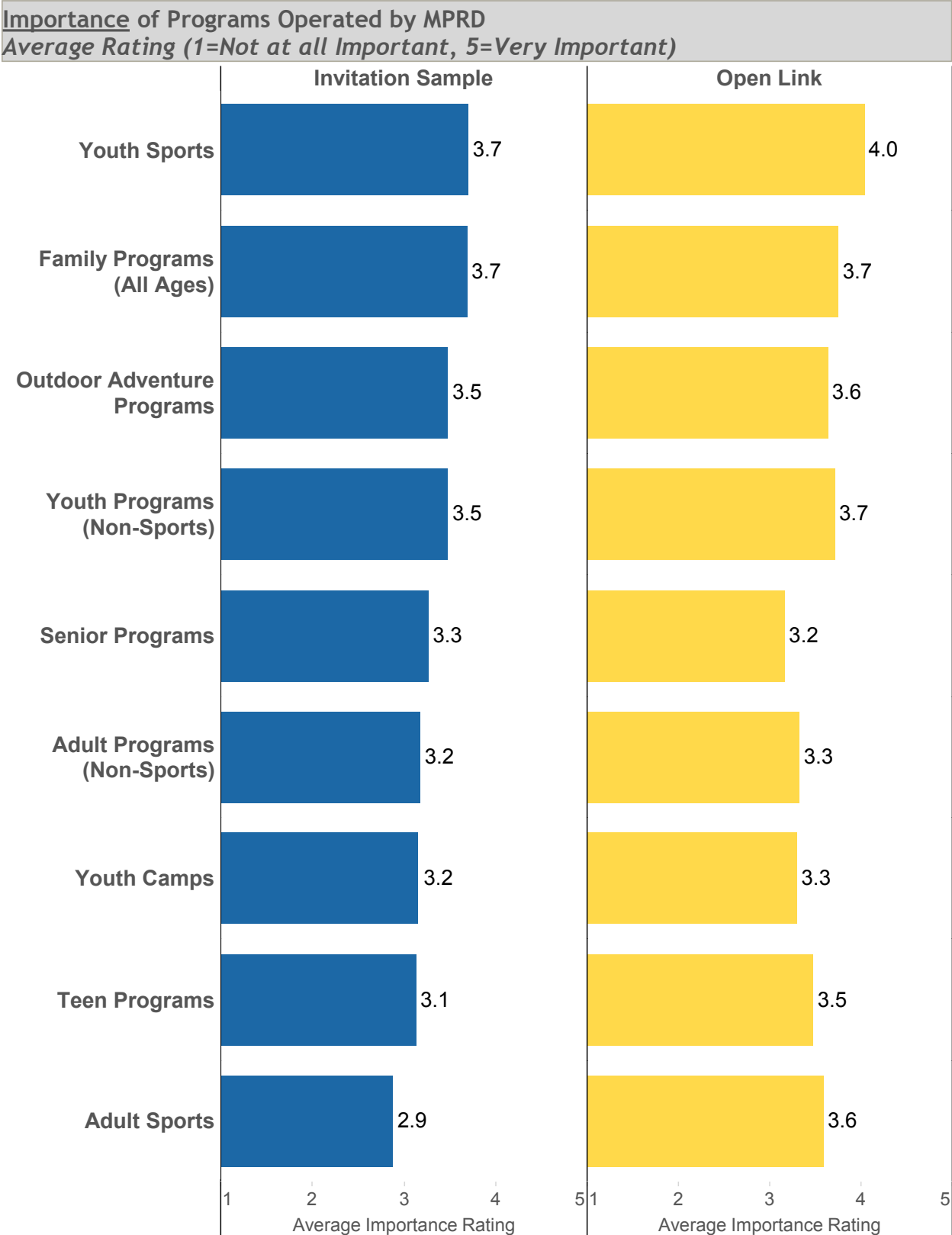


Figure 14: Importance of Programs Operated by MPRD – Average Rating



Degree to Which Household Needs are Met by Programs

Using the same list, respondents also rated the degree to which they feel their household's needs are met by current Meridian Parks and Recreation programs on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means "not at all" and 5 means "completely." Figure 15 illustrates the percentage of "4" and "5" ratings from invitation respondents (meaning that the respondent feels their household's needs are met) versus the percentage of "1" and "2" ratings (meaning the respondent does not feel their household's needs are met) and Figure 16 shows average ratings. Overall, respondents perceived their needs to be well met by all MPRD program offerings. All programs received the high average ratings and large shares of "4" or "5" responses from invitation respondents, including:

- Youth programs (average rating 3.7; 63 percent provided a 4 or 5 rating)
- Youth sports (3.7 average; 60 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Senior programs (3.7 average; 65 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Adult sports (3.7 average; 62 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Teen programs (3.6 average; 60 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Youth camps (3.6 average; 51 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Adult programs (3.6 average; 54 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Family programs (3.6 average; 57 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Outdoor adventure programs (3.4 average; 50 percent rated 4 or 5)

Invitation respondents were more likely to feel that their household needs are met than open link respondents for all of the listed programs. Notable differences between the invitation and open link samples occurred for youth programs, senior programs, adult sports, teen programs, youth camps, adult programs, family programs, and outdoor adventure programs, which all received considerably higher average ratings from invitation respondents.

Figure 15: Degree to Which Household Needs are Met by MPRD Programs – Percent Needs Met vs. Needs Unmet
Invitation Sample Only

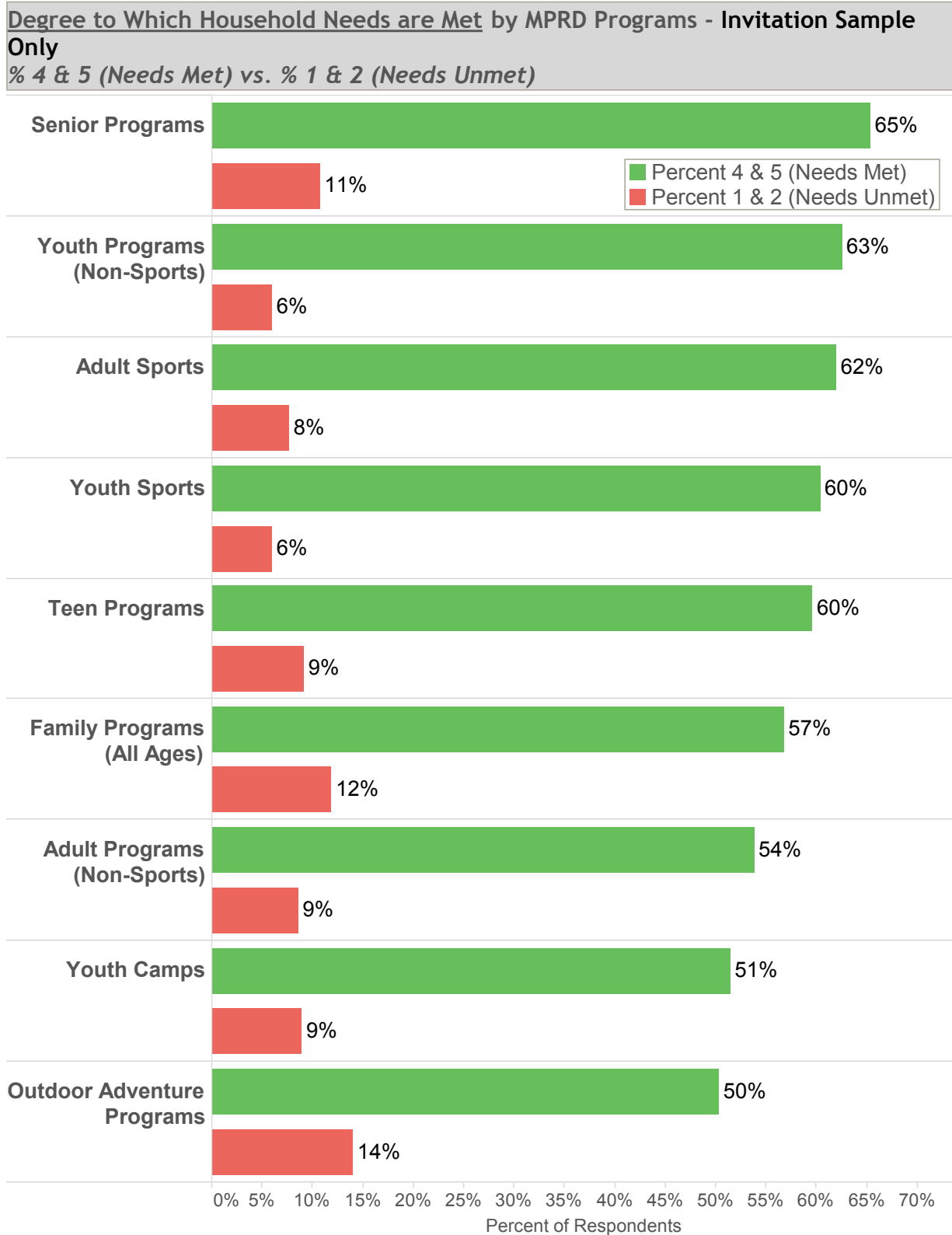
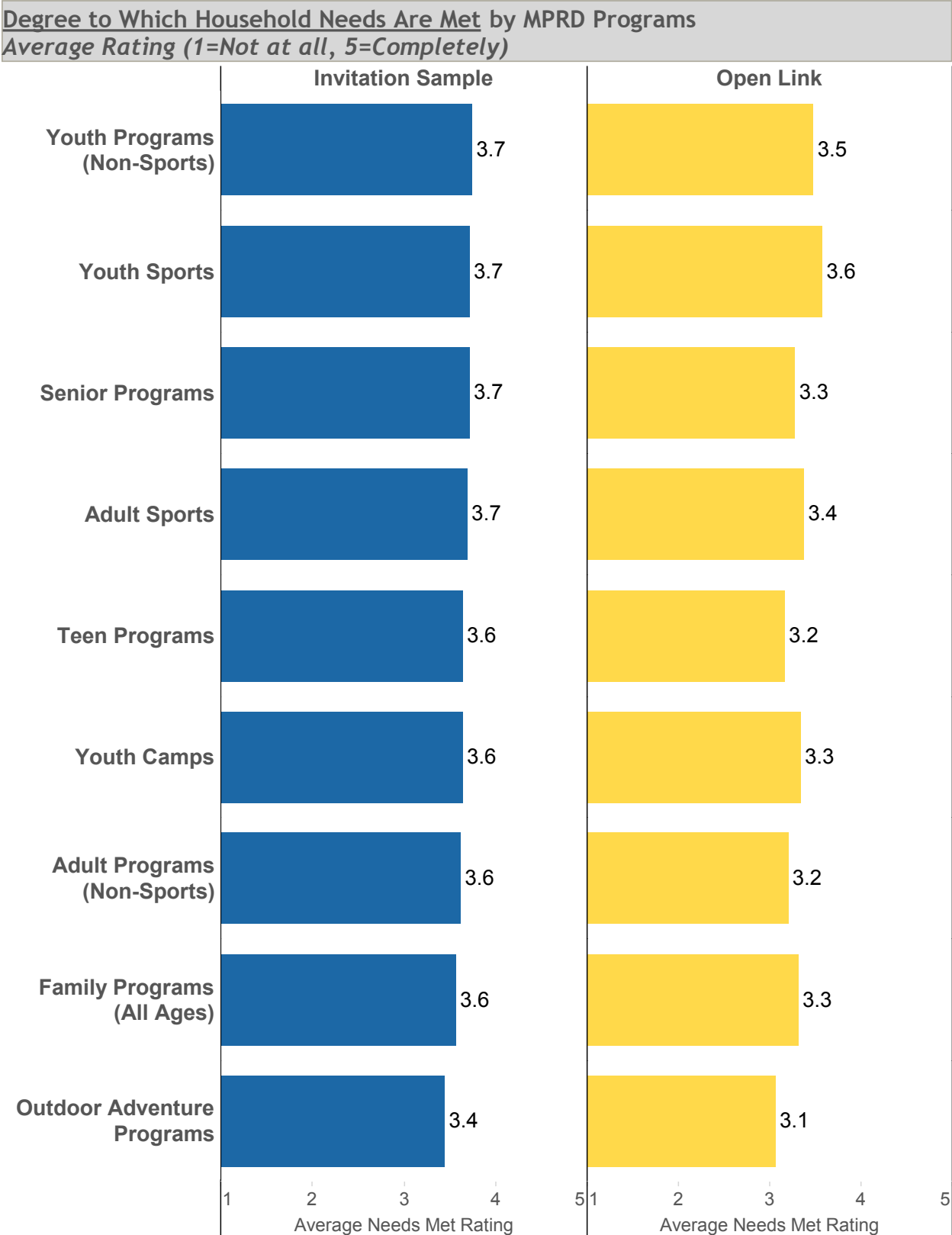


Figure 16: Degree to Which Household Needs are Met by MPRD Programs – Average Rating



Importance vs. Needs-Met Matrix – Current Programs

Another “Importance vs. Needs-Met” matrix allows a comparison of programs based on level of importance and degree to which household needs are being met. Scores are depicted in this matrix by using the mid-points for both questions to divide into four quadrants. The Importance scale midpoint was 3.3 (the median rating for importance across all programs); the Needs-Met midpoint was 3.6.

Programs in the upper right quadrant are considered to be highly important and are also adequately meeting the needs of respondent households. Though it is less critical to consider future enhancements for these programs, it is necessary to maintain them to keep community satisfaction high:

- Youth sports
- Youth programs

The upper left quadrant displays programs that are perceived as important but have a lower level of needs being met. Therefore, improvements to and monitoring of these programs may boost the degree to which community members feel their household needs are being met:

- Family programs
- Outdoor adventure programs

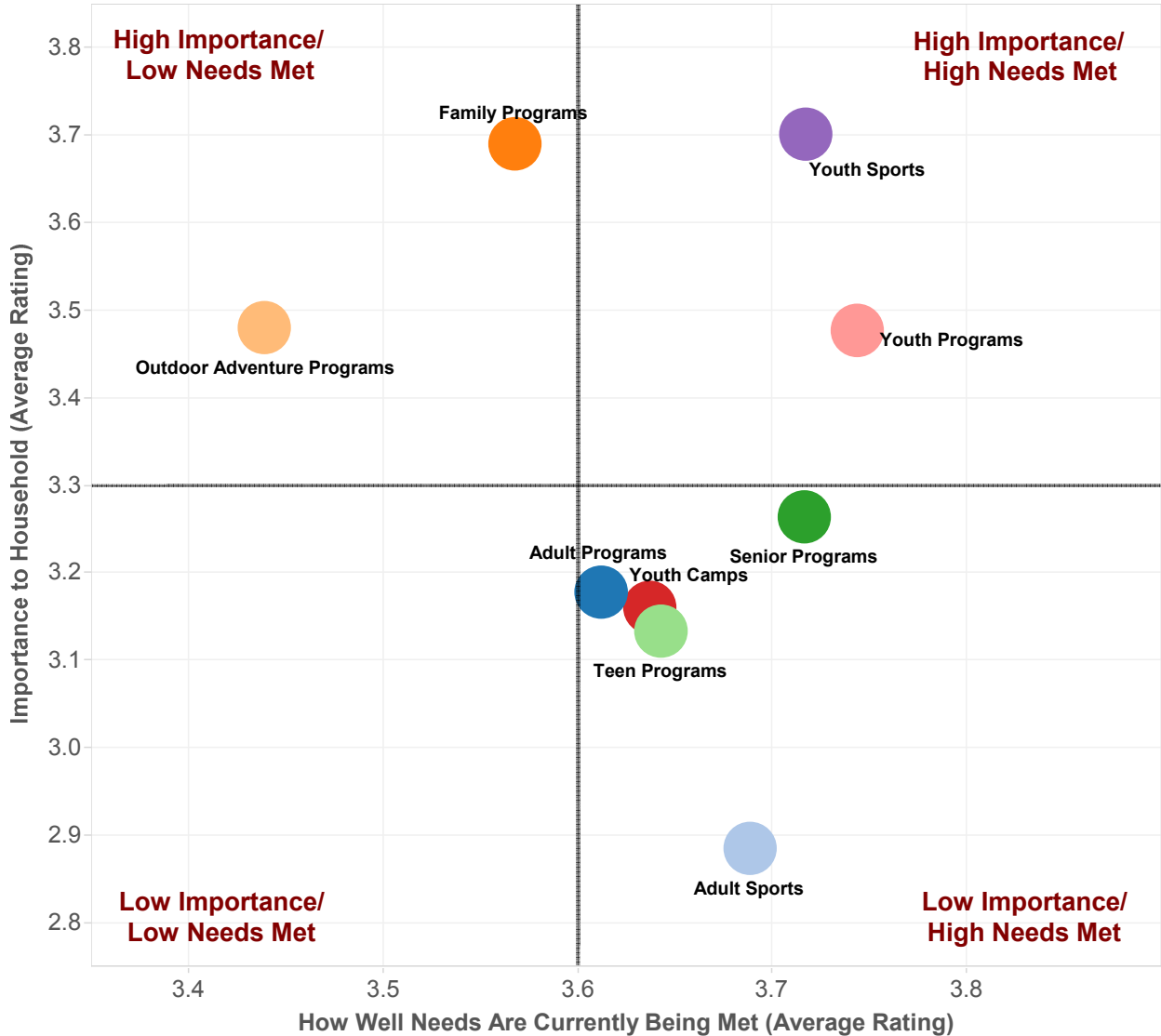
The programs located in the lower right quadrant are less important to households, but are currently meeting their needs well. Allocation of funding towards these programs may need to be reconsidered, as funds could potentially be better spent elsewhere:

- Senior programs
- Adult programs
- Youth camps
- Teen programs
- Adult sports

Finally, programs found in the lower left quadrant are amenities that are not meeting needs well, though they are not important to the majority of households in Meridian. These programs are considered “niche” amenities, as they are important to fewer members of the community. None of the programs evaluated by respondents fell into this category, which may make future planning and of parks and recreation resources easier.

Figure 17: Current Programs – Importance vs. Needs Met Matrix
Invitation Sample Only

Level of Importance vs. Needs Met for Current MPRD Programs - Invitation Sample Only



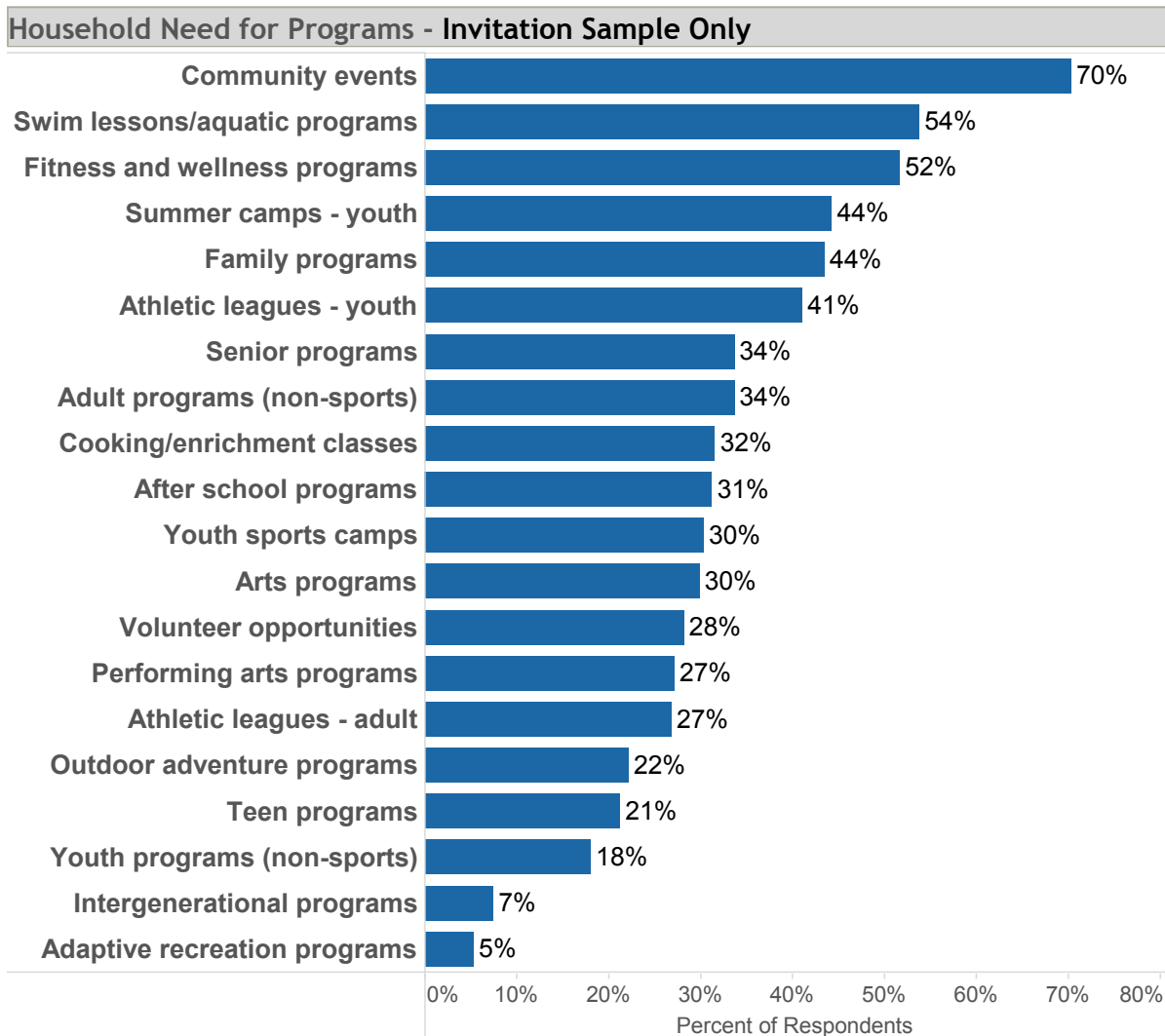
PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES, AND SPECIAL EVENTS

A series of questions was asked on the survey regarding parks and recreation programs and special events. From a list of twenty programs, respondents were asked to indicate the programs for which their household had a need. Then from the list of choices, they were asked to select up to three choices as top priorities to be added, expanded, or improved in Meridian.

Household Need for Programs

Seven in 10 invitation respondents reported a need for community events, by far the most important program need for households. Over half of invitation respondents also indicated a need for swim lessons/aquatic programs (54 percent) and fitness and wellness programs (52 percent).

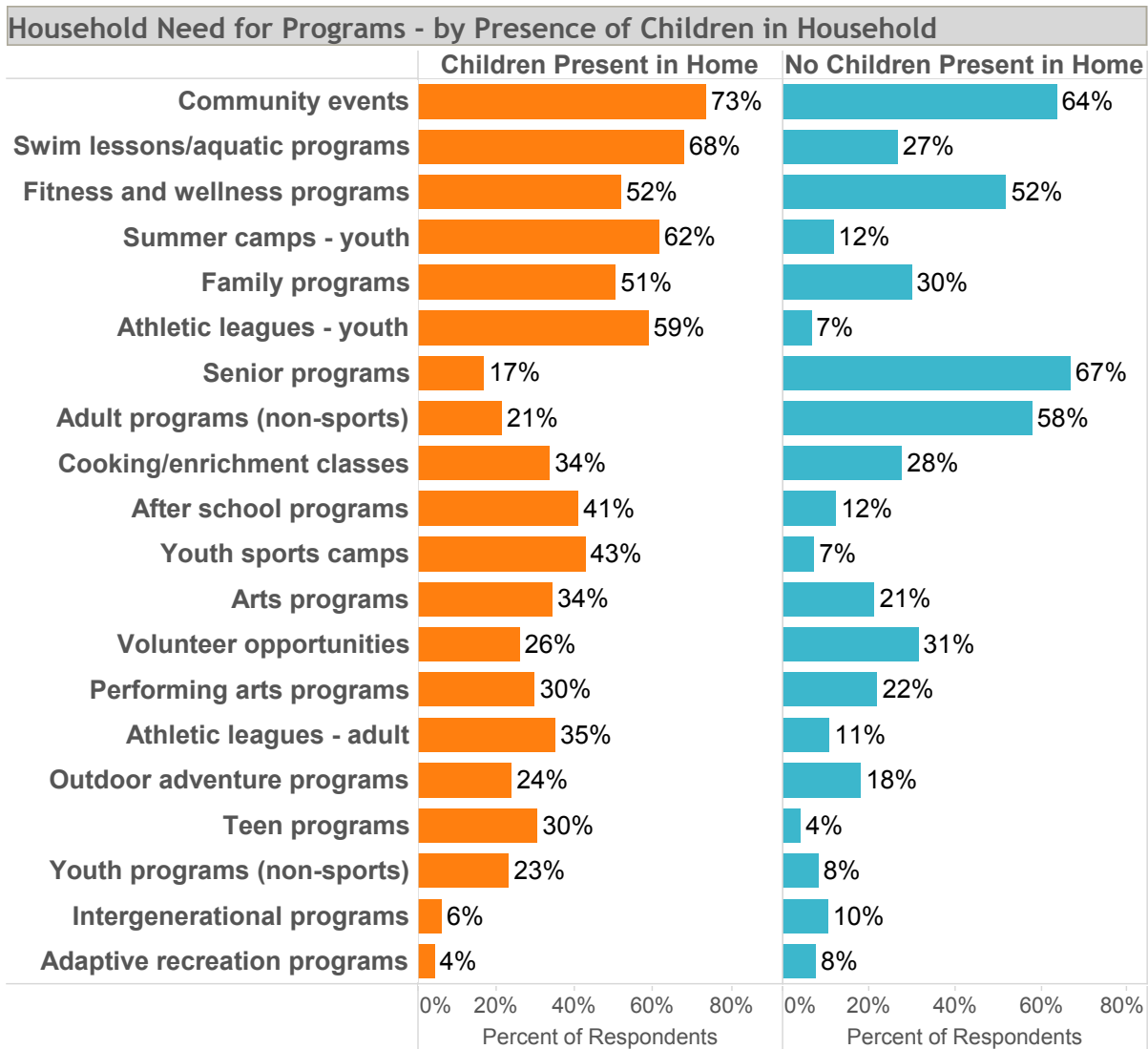
Figure 18: Household Need for Programs
Invitation Sample Only



Invitation responses were also analyzed by household profile (Figure 19 below):

Program Needs by Area. As might be expected, respondents with children at home were especially likely to indicate a need for community events, swim lessons/aquatic programs, youth summer camps, family programs, youth athletic leagues, cooking/enrichment classes, after school programs, youth sports camps, arts programs, performing arts programs, adult athletic leagues, outdoor adventure programs, teen programs, and youth programs. On the other hand, invitation respondents without children at home felt that their households had a greater need for senior programs, adult programs, and volunteer opportunities.

**Figure 19: Household Need for Programs by Household Status
Invitation Sample Only**



Most Important Program to Household

Using the same list of programs, respondents chose their first, second, and third priorities to be added, expanded, or improved in Meridian. Figure 20 illustrates the percentage of invitation respondents who selected each facility as their first, second, and third priority, ranked by the combined total to show prioritization of the program overall. As shown, the top program is community events, with 42 percent of invitation respondents selecting this as one of their top three priorities. Community events also received the highest share of respondents choosing it as their single most important priority (21 percent). Other top program priorities include fitness and wellness programs (31 percent), family programs (31 percent), swim lessons/aquatic programs (28 percent), youth athletic leagues (26 percent), and senior programs (19 percent).

Figure 20: Top Three Most Important Programs to Add, Expand, or Improve Invitation Sample Only

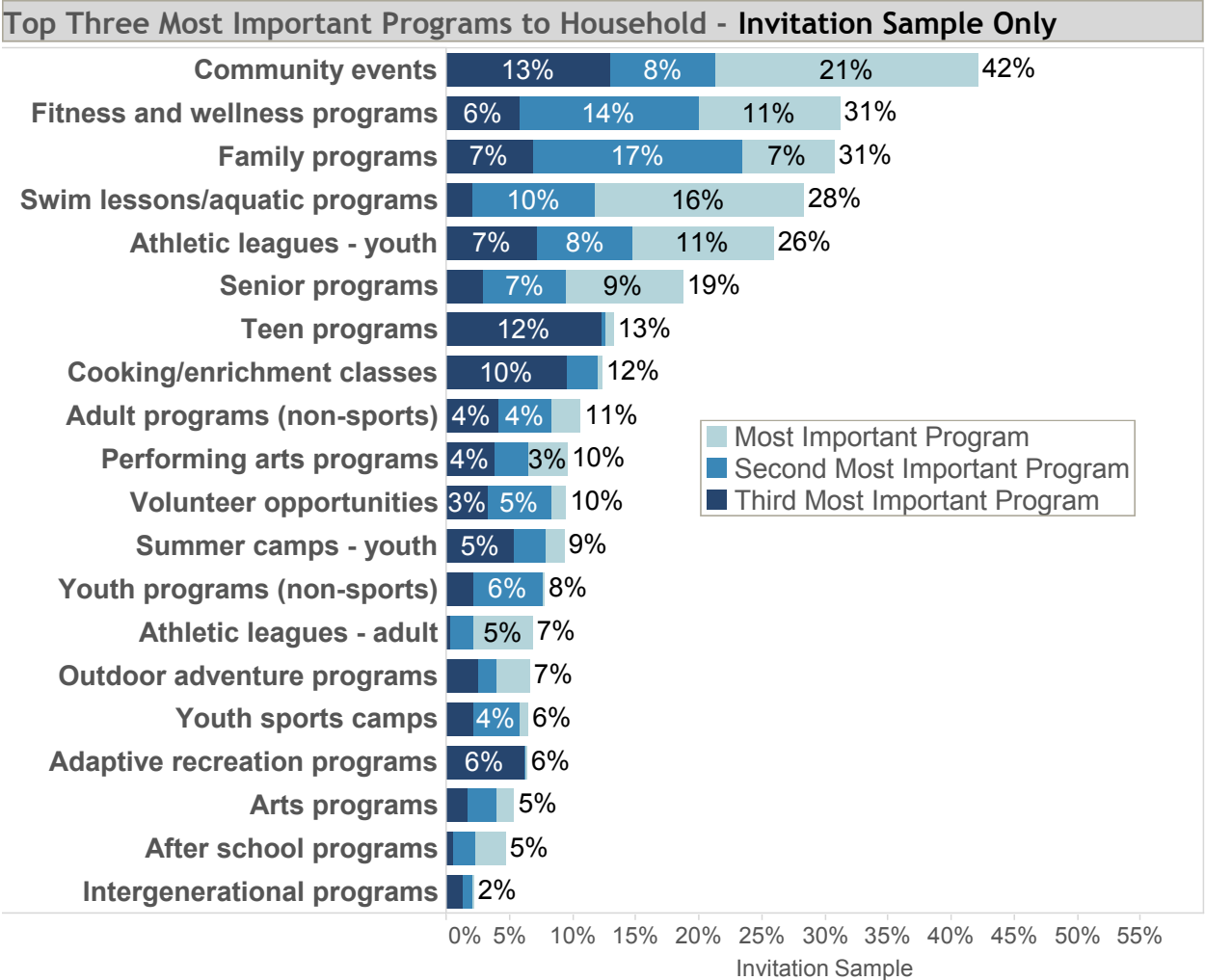
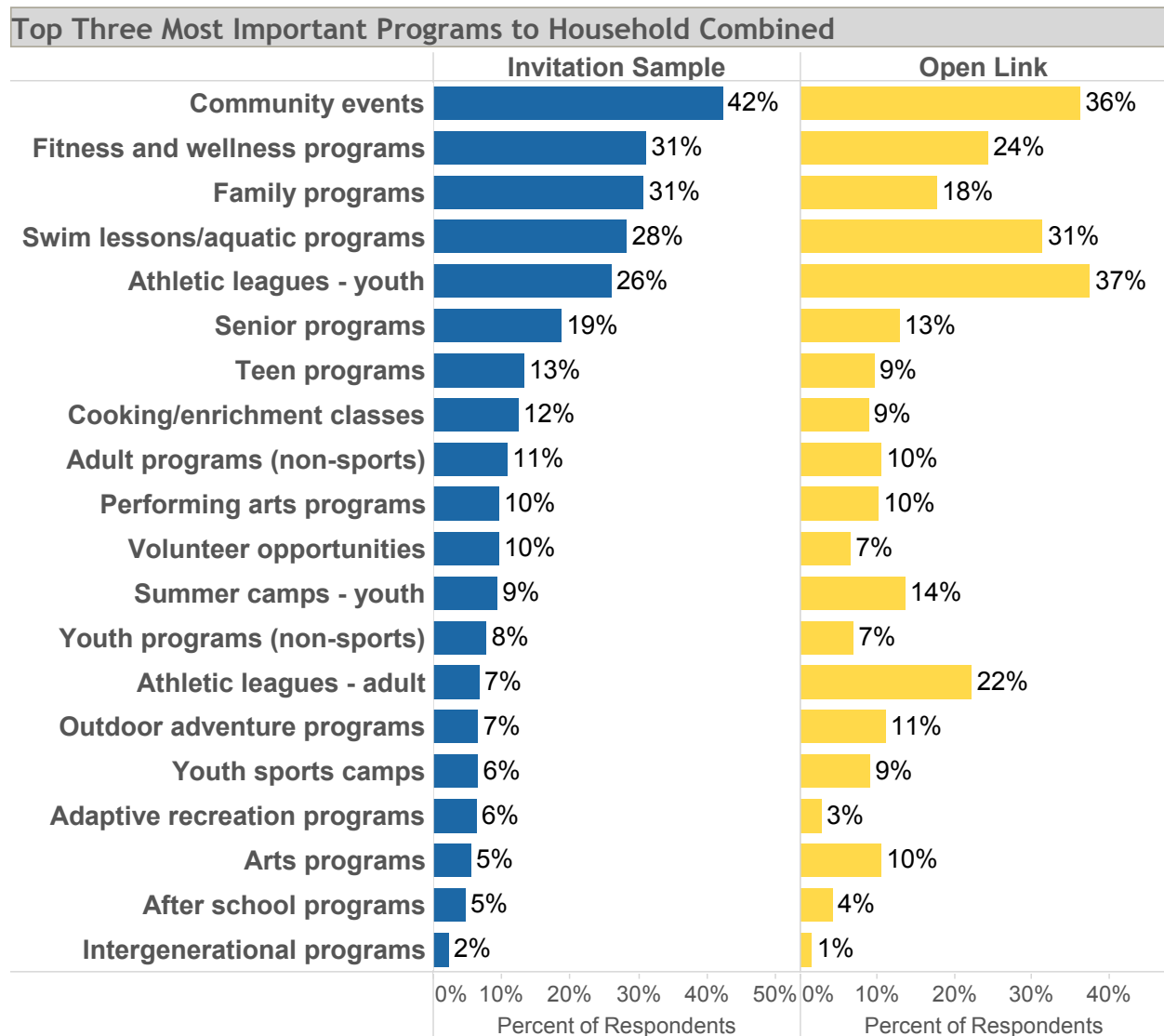


Figure 21 below shows the percentage of respondents who indicated the program was a first, second, or third priority overall, by survey sample. Program priorities vary somewhat between the invitation respondents and open link respondents. Invitation respondents were more likely to prioritize community events, fitness and wellness programs, family programs, and senior programs. Open link respondents placed higher priority on youth athletic leagues, youth summer camps, adult athletic leagues, and arts programs.

Figure 21: Top Three Most Important Programs to Add, Expand, or Improve Combined



VALUES AND VISION

Top Areas Parks & Recreation Should Focus on Improving

Respondents were asked to identify three community issues that Meridian Parks and Recreation should focus on improving from a list of potential areas. From the list, respondents indicated their number one priority, number two priority, and number three priority. Figure 22 on the following page depicts the share of respondents who chose each of the items as their top, second, or third priority. Priorities are sorted by the total share of invitation respondents who chose each issue as one of their top three choices. As is shown below, invitation respondents indicated that the top community issue is pathway connectivity (44 percent selected this as one of their top three priorities). Pathway connectivity also had the highest percentage of respondents identifying it as their number one priority (33 percent). Other important community issues include promoting healthy/active lifestyles (33 percent), family-oriented activities (30 percent), maintenance of parks and facilities (25 percent), safety and security (25 percent), community-wide special events (25 percent), and aquatic facilities/programming (24 percent).

Figure 23 illustrates the share of respondents that selected each issue as their first, second, or third priority in aggregate, segmented by sample type. Prioritization of the listed community issues is somewhat different between the invitation and open link samples. Invitation respondents had a higher likelihood of prioritizing promoting healthy/active lifestyles, safety and security, and community-wide special events. Open link respondents more frequently prioritized pathway connectivity, developing new parks in under-served areas, and a balance of organized sports and passive park facilities.

Invitation responses to this question were also analyzed by area of residence (Figure 24) and household profile (Figure 25):

Top Three Community Issues by Area. Respondents living in Northeast Meridian were most likely to suggest as community issues promoting healthy/active lifestyles and safety and security, reflective of the older average respondent age in this area compared to other areas of the City. Northwest residents encouraged expanded classes/programs most frequently, while respondents located in the South area placed higher importance on maintenance of parks and facilities and developing new parks in under-served areas. These findings are consistent with the open-ended comments, from which emerge a number of respondents requesting additional parks and recreation facilities in the Southern part of Meridian.

Top Three Community Issues by Household Status. Respondents living in family households were more likely than those without children at home to promote pathway connectivity, promoting healthy/active lifestyles, family-oriented activities, and aquatic facilities/programming. Invitation respondents in non-family households saw a greater need for safety and security, land preservation/acquisition, accessibility, and public art and landscaped areas.

Figure 22: Top Three Areas MPRD Should Focus on Improving
Invitation Sample Only

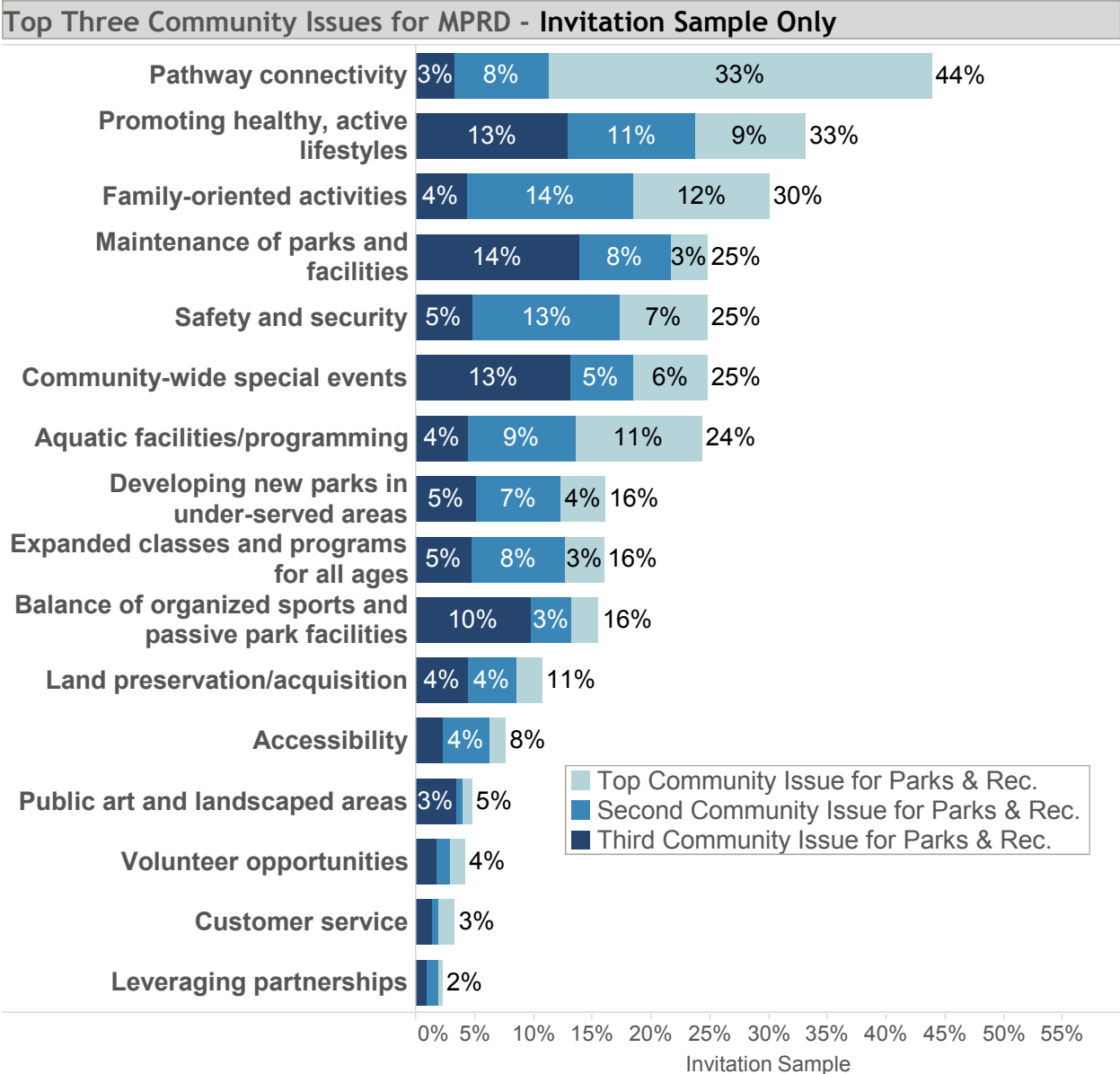


Figure 23: Top Three Areas MPRD Should Focus on Improving Combined Invitation Sample Only

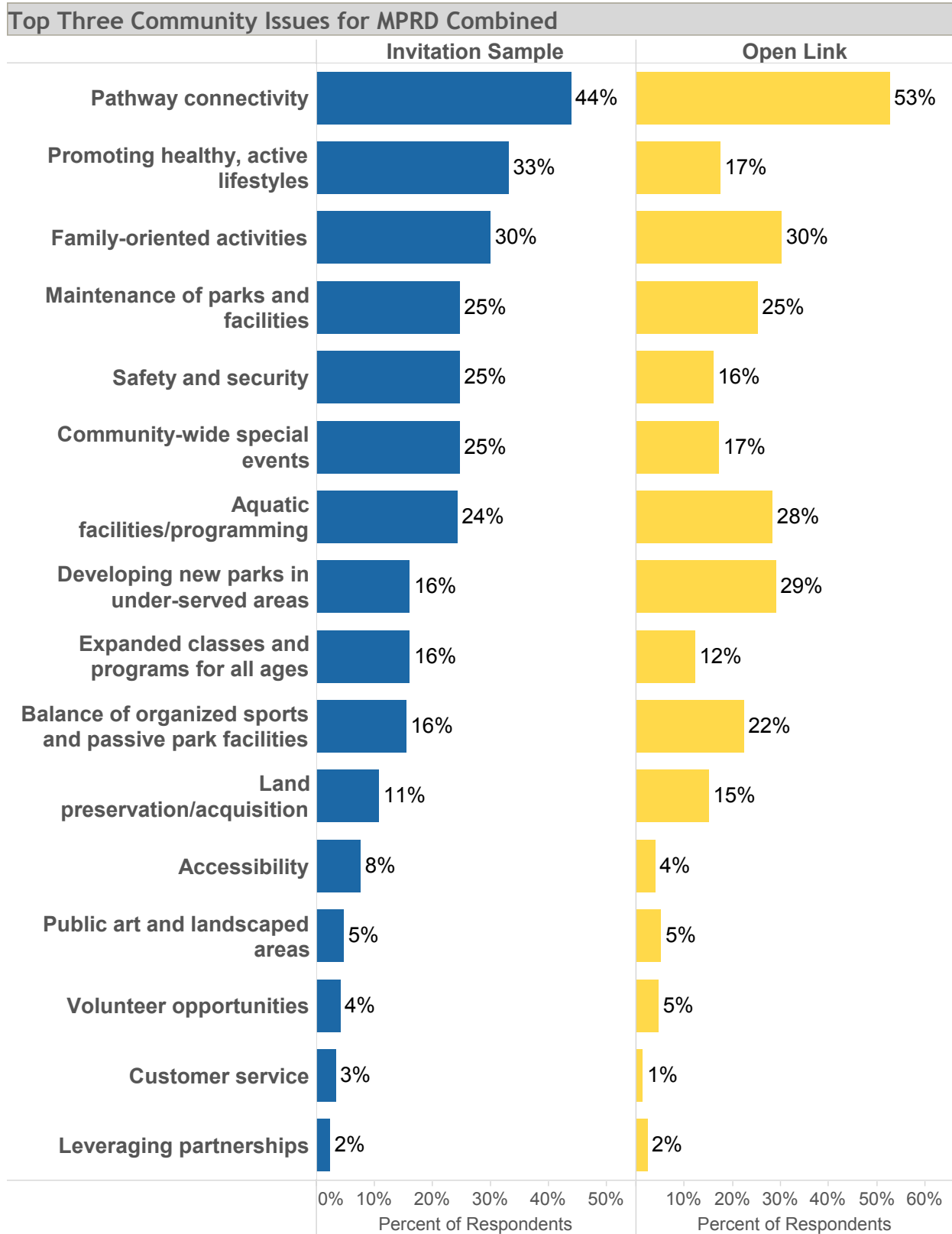


Figure 24: Top Three Areas MPRD Should Focus on Improving Combined by Area of Residence Invitation Sample Only

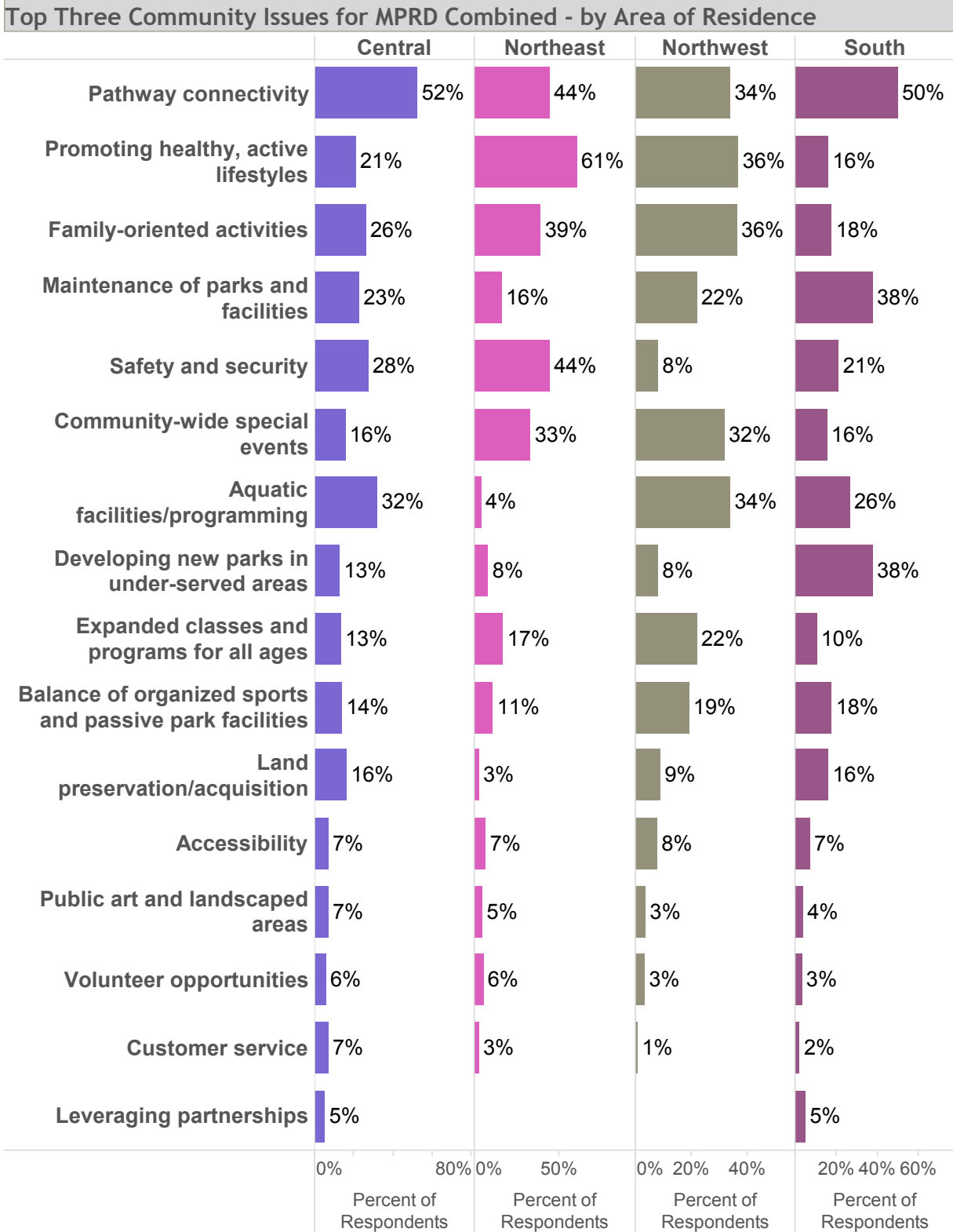
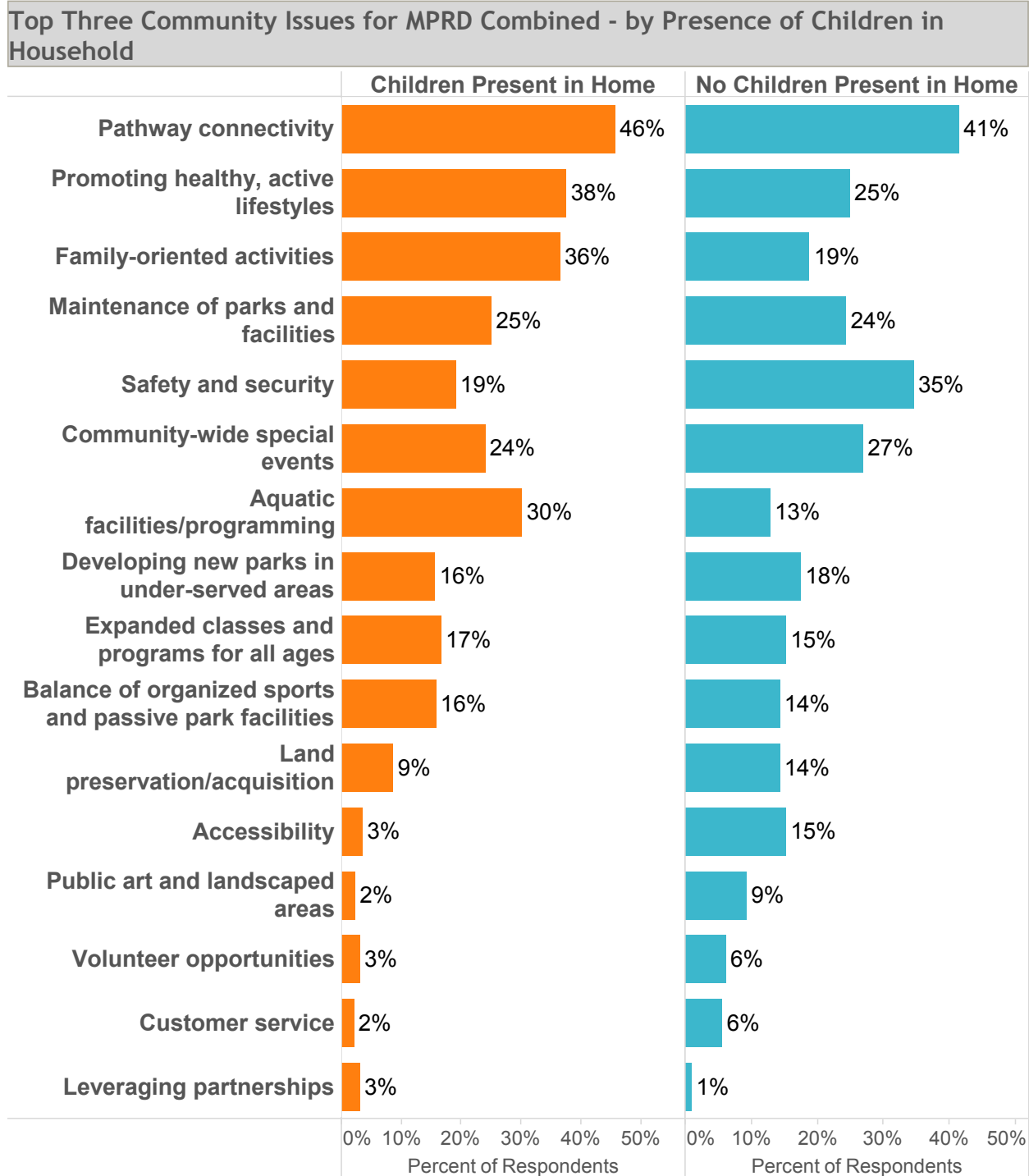


Figure 25: Top Three Areas MPRD Should Focus on Improving Combined by Household Status Invitation Sample Only

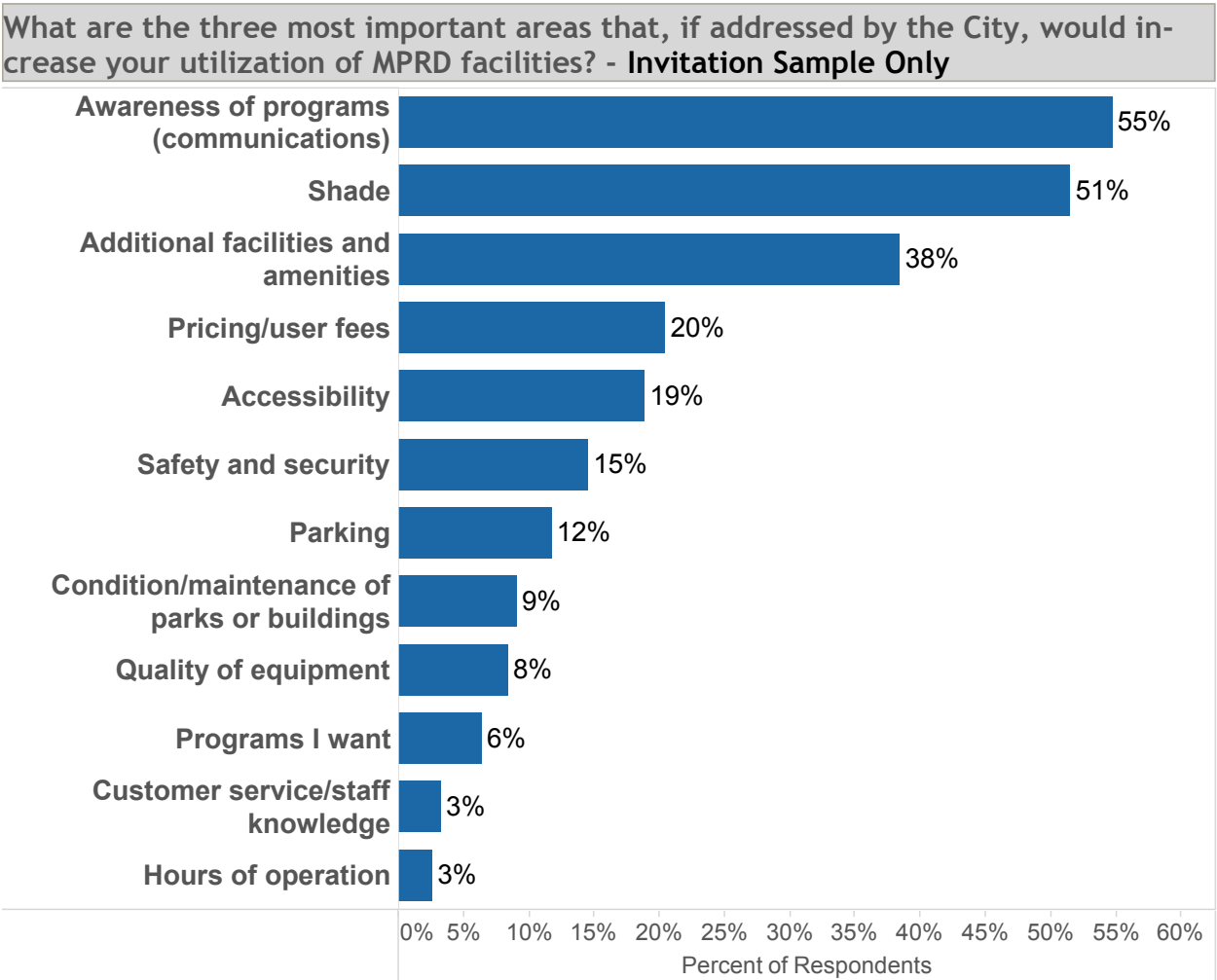


FUTURE FACILITIES, AMENITIES, AND SERVICES

Most Important Factors that Would Increase Use of Facilities

Respondents selected the three most important factors that, if addressed by the City of Meridian, would increase their use of parks and recreation facilities. Figure 26 below illustrates the invitation responses for this question. The top two areas were awareness of programs (55 percent) and shade (51 percent), followed by additional facilities and amenities (38 percent), pricing/user fees (20 percent), and accessibility (19 percent). Areas that drew only marginal support include customer service/staff knowledge and hours of operation (each 3 percent), indicating that these areas are lower priorities.

Figure 26: Three Areas that, if Addressed, Would Increase Your Use of MPRD Facilities
Invitation Sample Only



Respondents were provided a list of 26 potential future indoor and outdoor facilities and asked to rate the importance of each proposed facility as well as to select their top three priorities to be added, expanded, or improved in Meridian. This section discusses the findings from these two questions.

Importance of Adding/Expanding/Improving Future Facilities

On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means “not at all important” and 5 means “very important,” respondents rated the importance of the 26 potential future facilities. Figure 27 to follow depicts the percentage of respondents providing a “4” or “5” rating for each amenity (indicating they think the item is important) versus the percentage providing a “1” or “2” rating (indicating they do not think the item is important). The average importance rating for each item is shown in Figure 28. In general, most facilities were rated as highly important. The facilities that received the highest average ratings and largest share of respondents providing 4 or 5 ratings include:

- Indoor facilities
 - Indoor aquatics facility (average rating 3.8; 62 percent provided a 4 or 5 rating)
 - Community/recreation center (3.7 average; 62 percent rated 4 or 5)
 - Fieldhouse/gymnasium space (3.2 average; 38 percent rated 4 or 5)
 - Performing arts center (3.2 average; 36 percent rated 4 or 5)
 - Ice rink (3.0 average; 41 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Outdoor facilities
 - Pathways and trails (4.1 average; 78 percent rated 4 or 5)
 - Shade structures in parks (4.0 average; 78 percent rated 4 or 5)
 - Improved park amenities (3.8 average; 70 percent rated 4 or 5)
 - Playgrounds (3.7 average; 65 percent rated 4 or 5)
 - Lights for outdoor athletic facilities (3.4 average; 49 percent rated 4 or 5)
 - New parks (3.2 average; 33 percent rated 4 or 5)
 - Exercise stations along trails in parks (3.2 average; 39 percent rated 4 or 5)
 - Splash pads (3.1 average; 40 percent rated 4 or 5)
 - Outdoor athletic fields/courts (3.1 average; 31 percent rated 4 or 5)
 - Public art in the parks (3.1 average; 40 percent rated 4 or 5)
 - Fishing ponds (3.1 average; 42 percent rated 4 or 5)
 - Parking at recreational facilities (3.1 average; 28 percent rated 4 or 5)
 - Dog parks (3.0 average; 39 percent rated 4 or 5)

Items that received somewhat lower importance ratings include disc golf (average 2.6), pickleball courts (2.3), and a rodeo/equestrian facility (2.2). For each of these facilities, the percentage of respondents identifying the item as unimportant was greater than the percentage identifying it as important, indicating a substantially lesser need for these priorities.

Figure 28 examines the differences in average importance ratings between the two survey samples. Respondents in the invitation sample were more likely to prioritize an ice rink and fishing ponds. By contrast, open link respondents prioritized to a greater degree fieldhouse/gymnasium space, pathways and trails, lights for outdoor athletic facilities, new parks,

splash pads, outdoor athletic fields/courts, parking at recreational facilities, disc golf, and pickleball courts.

Figure 27: Importance of Adding/Expanding/Improving MPRD Facilities – Percent Important vs. Not Important Invitation Sample Only

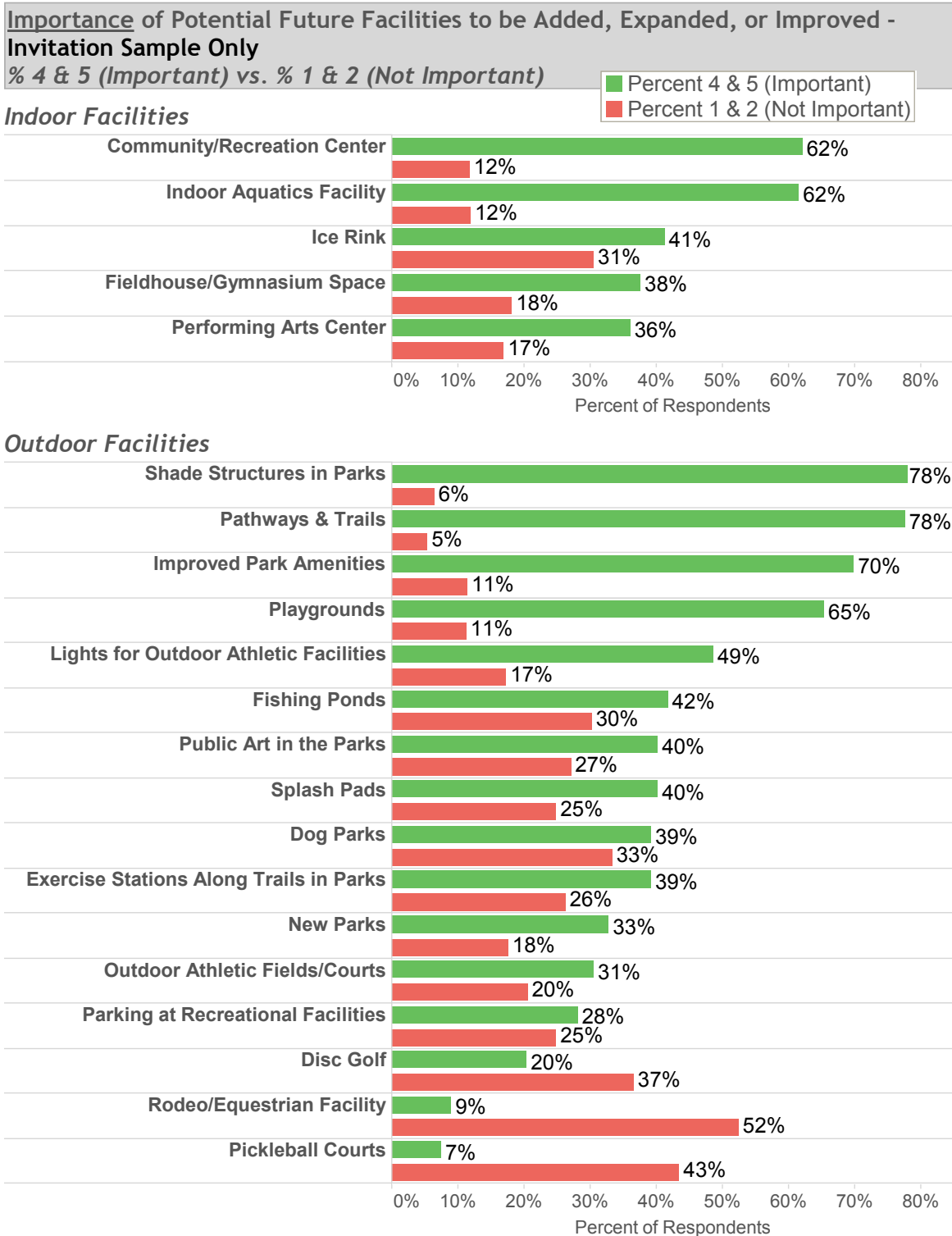
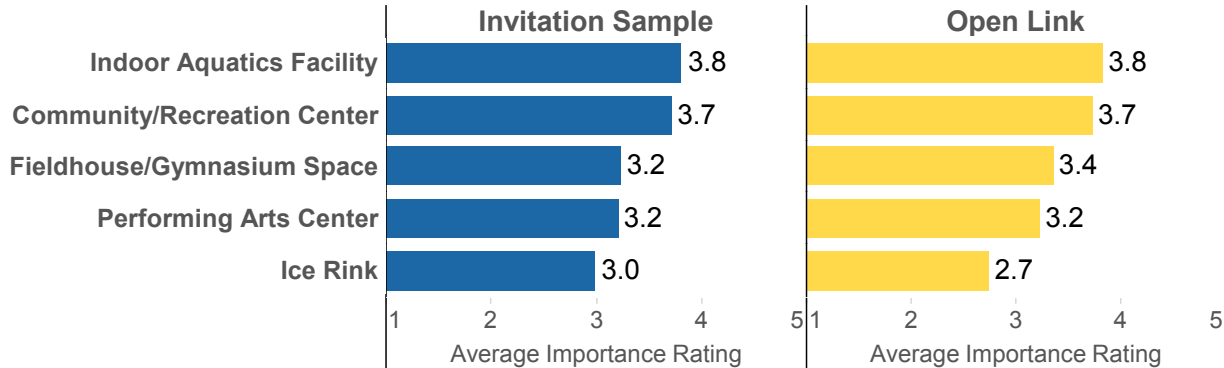


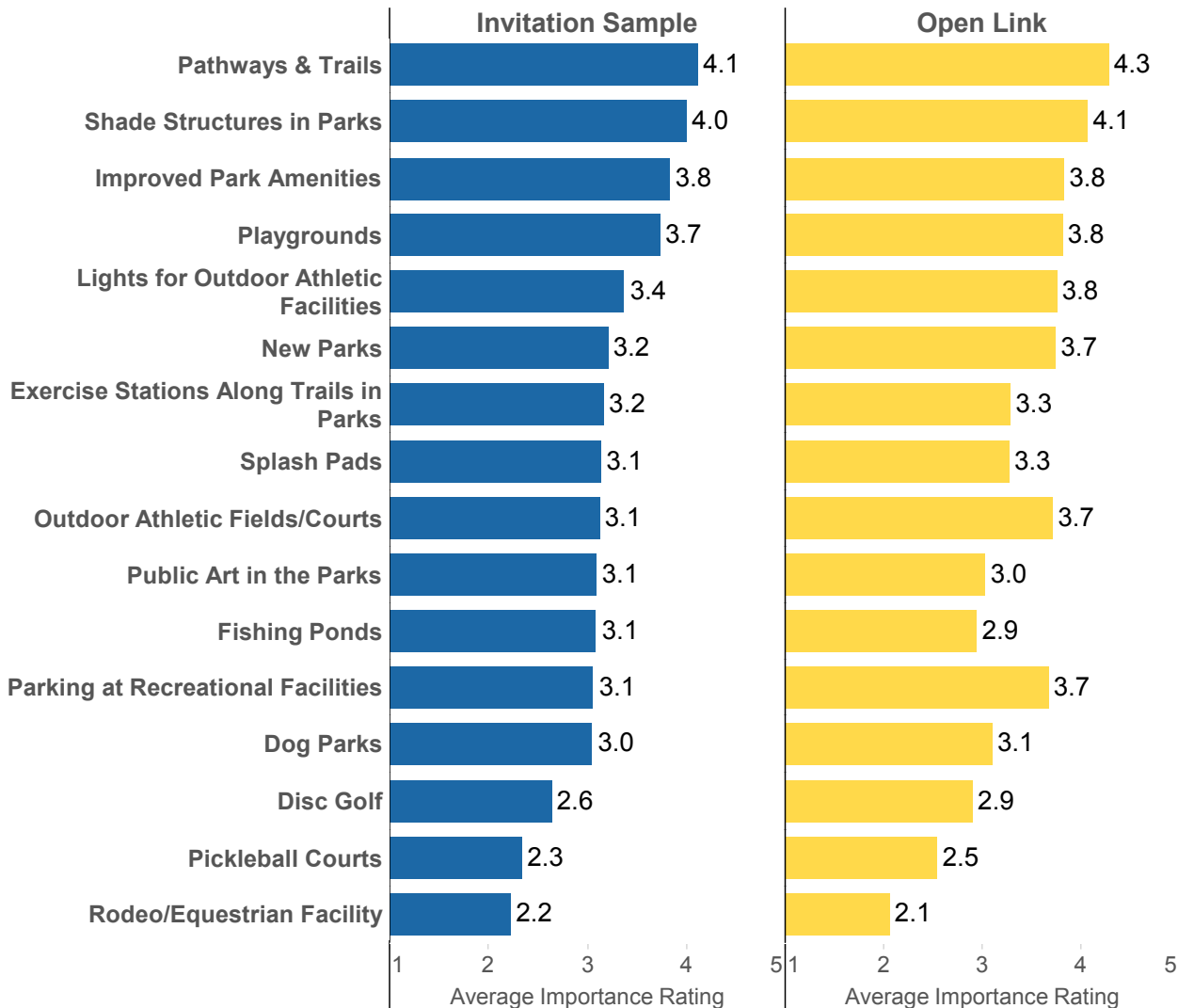
Figure 28: Importance of Adding/Expanding/Improving MPRD Facilities – Average Rating
Invitation Sample Only

**Importance of Potential Future Facilities to be Added, Expanded, or Improved
Average Rating (1=Not at all Important, 5=Very Important)**

Indoor



Outdoor



Top Priorities to Add, Expand, or Improve

Using the same list of facilities, respondents chose their priorities for most important future facilities to their households. Figure 29 illustrates the percentage of invitation respondents who selected each facility as their first, second, and third priority, ranked by the combined total to show prioritization of the potential facility overall. As displayed, pathways/trails is the top priority by far (49 percent of invitation respondents included this in their top three priorities). The facility with the highest percentage of respondents selecting it as their first most important priority is a community/recreation center (16 percent). Other top priorities include an indoor aquatics facility (33 percent), community/recreation center (26 percent), improved park amenities (22 percent), and shade structures in parks (22 percent).

Figure 29: Top Three Most Important Facilities to Add, Expand, or Improve Invitation Sample Only

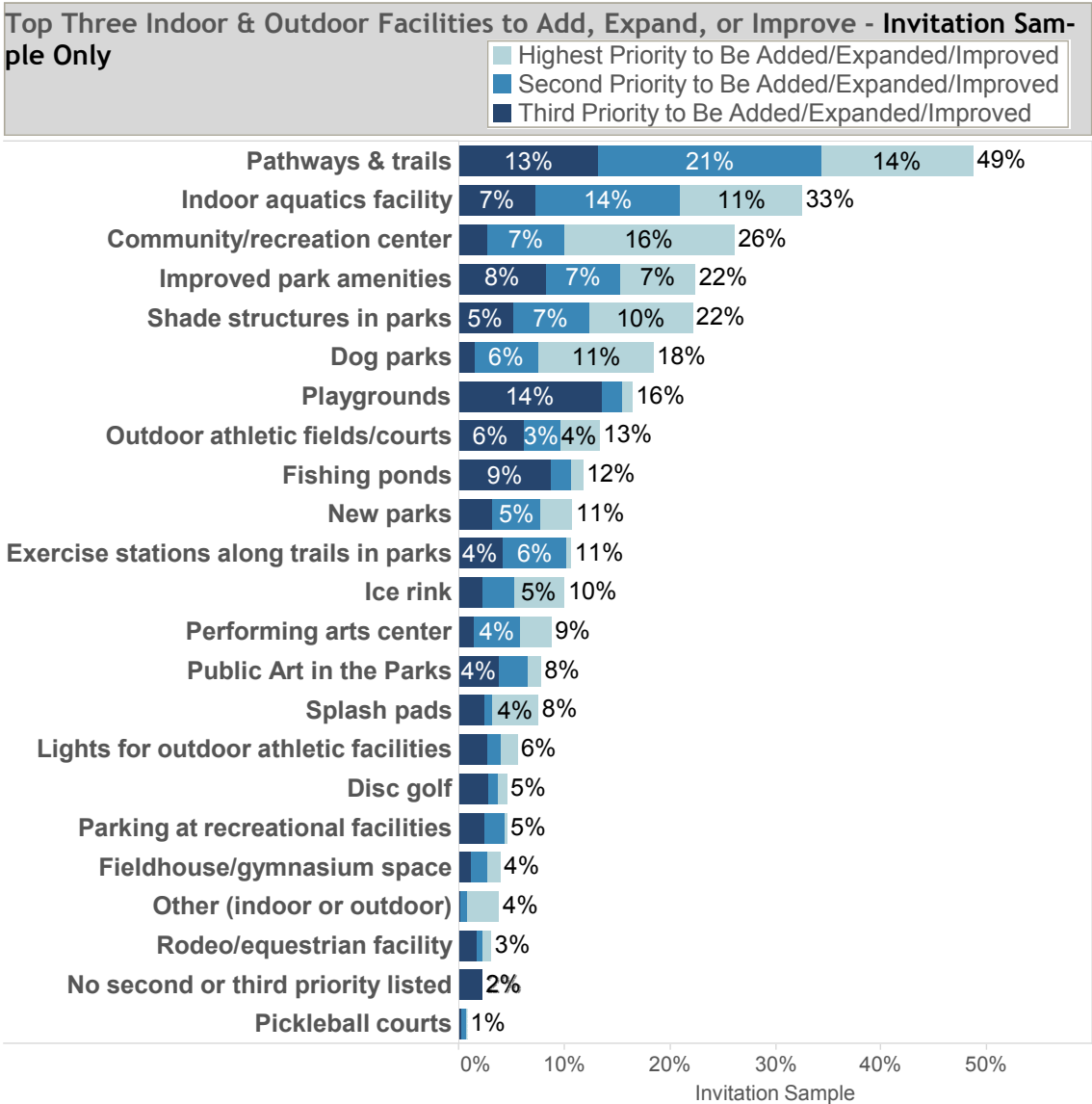
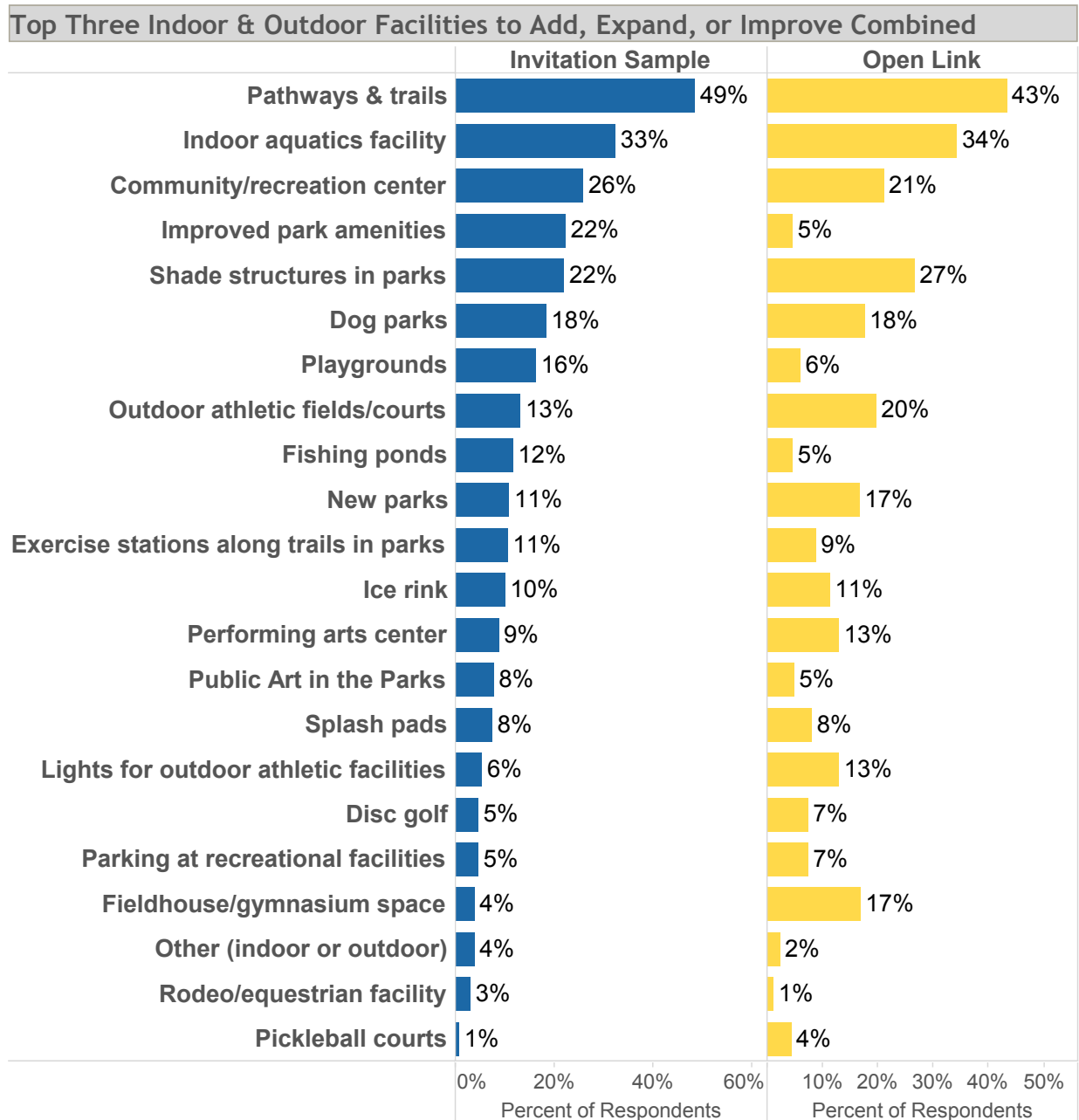


Figure 30 depicts the percentage of respondents who indicated the facility was a first, second, or third priority overall, by survey sample. Future priorities vary between each sample. Invitation respondents showed greater preference for prioritizing pathways/trails, a community/recreation center, improved park amenities, playgrounds, and fishing ponds; open link respondents were more likely to prioritize shade structures in parks, outdoor athletic fields/courts, new parks, lights for outdoor athletic facilities, and fieldhouse/gymnasium space.

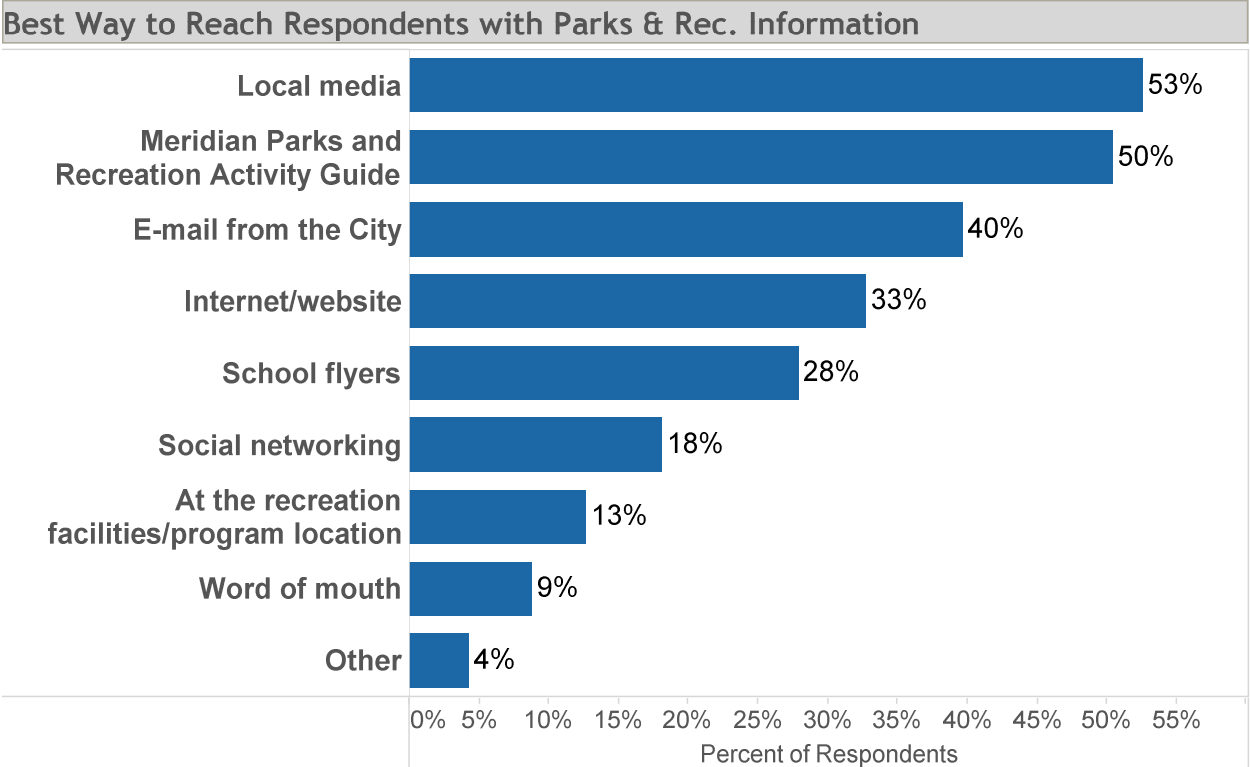
Figure 30: Top Three Most Important Facilities to Add, Expand, or Improve Combined



COMMUNICATION

A section of the survey had respondents indicate the best methods for reaching them with parks and recreation information. Roughly half of invitation respondents preferred to receive information via local media (53 percent) or the Meridian Parks and Recreation Activity Guide (50 percent). Smaller shares would like information through email from the City (40 percent), the website (33 percent), school flyers (28 percent), social networks (18 percent), at the recreation facilities or program location (13 percent), or via word of mouth (9 percent).

Figure 31: Current Methods of Receiving Information and Best Method for Reaching You
Invitation Sample Only



FINANCIAL CHOICES/FEES

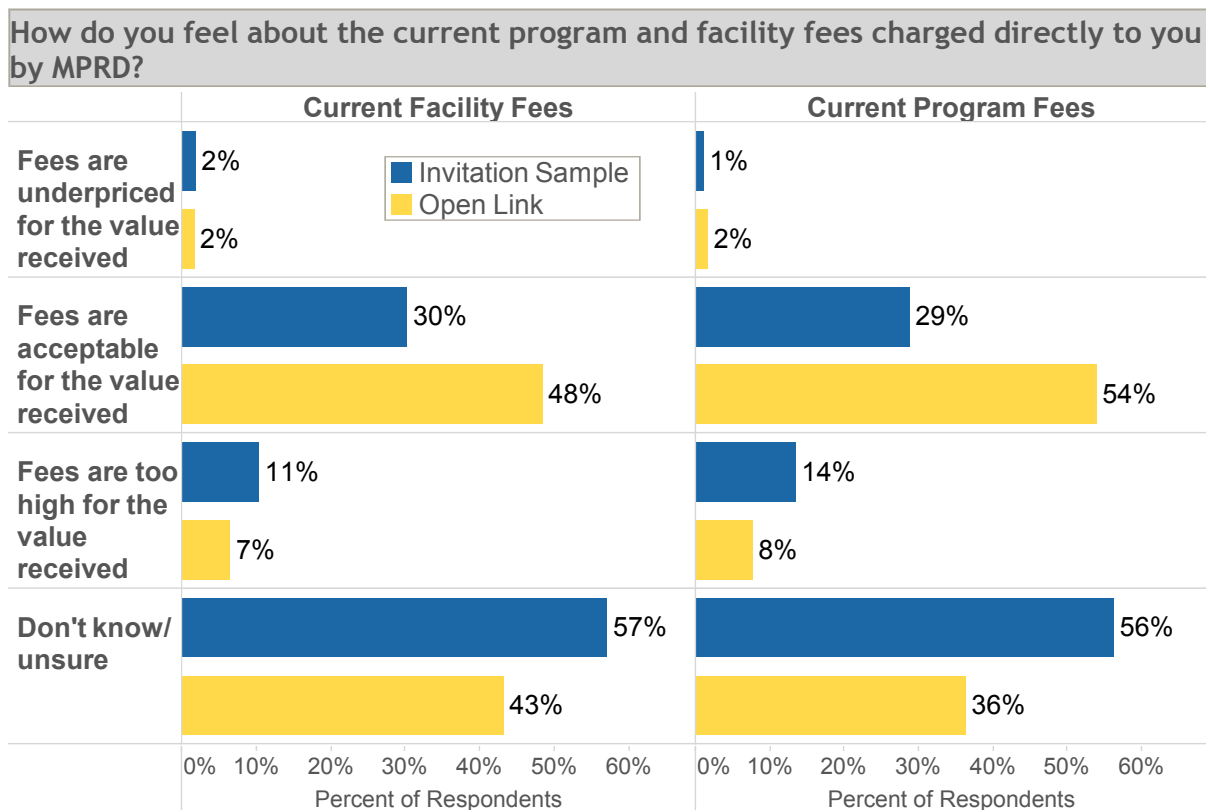
In a final section of the survey, respondents answered questions about their opinions on the financial aspects of their relationship with Meridian Parks and Recreation. These questions include an evaluation of current program and facility fees, the impact of potential fee increases on level of participation, and an allocation of future funding towards various amenities. The results from each of these questions are detailed below.

Current Fees

Facility Fees. Respondents were generally likely to indicate that current facility fees are reasonable, with 30 percent of invitation respondents and 48 percent of open link respondents feeling that fees are acceptable for the value received. Eleven percent of invitation respondents feel fees are too high, and only 2 percent said fees were underpriced. Fifty-seven percent were unsure.

Program Fees. Similarly, 29 percent of invitation respondents and 54 percent of open link respondents believe current program fees are reasonable. Fourteen percent of invitation sample respondents indicated that fees are too expensive and one percent said they are underpriced. Fifty-six percent didn't know.

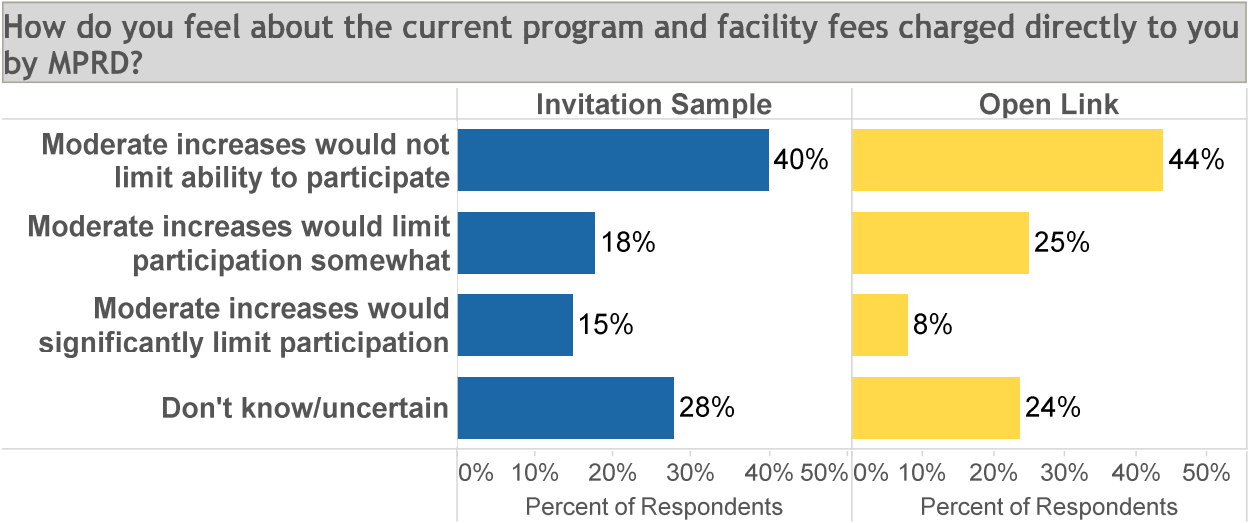
Figure 32: How do you feel about the current program and facility fees charged by MPRD?



Impact of Fee Increases

Respondents were asked what impact, if any, fee increases would have on their current level of participation in programs, services, or use of facilities. Among invitation respondents who did not answer “don’t know/uncertain”, most believed that moderate fee increases would not limit their ability to participate (40 percent). Similarly, among open link respondents who expressed an opinion on this question, 44 percent reported that increases would not limit their participation. Overall, these results indicate that moderate fee increases would not significantly limit current participation levels.

Figure 33: Potential Impact of Fee Increases on Current Level of Participation

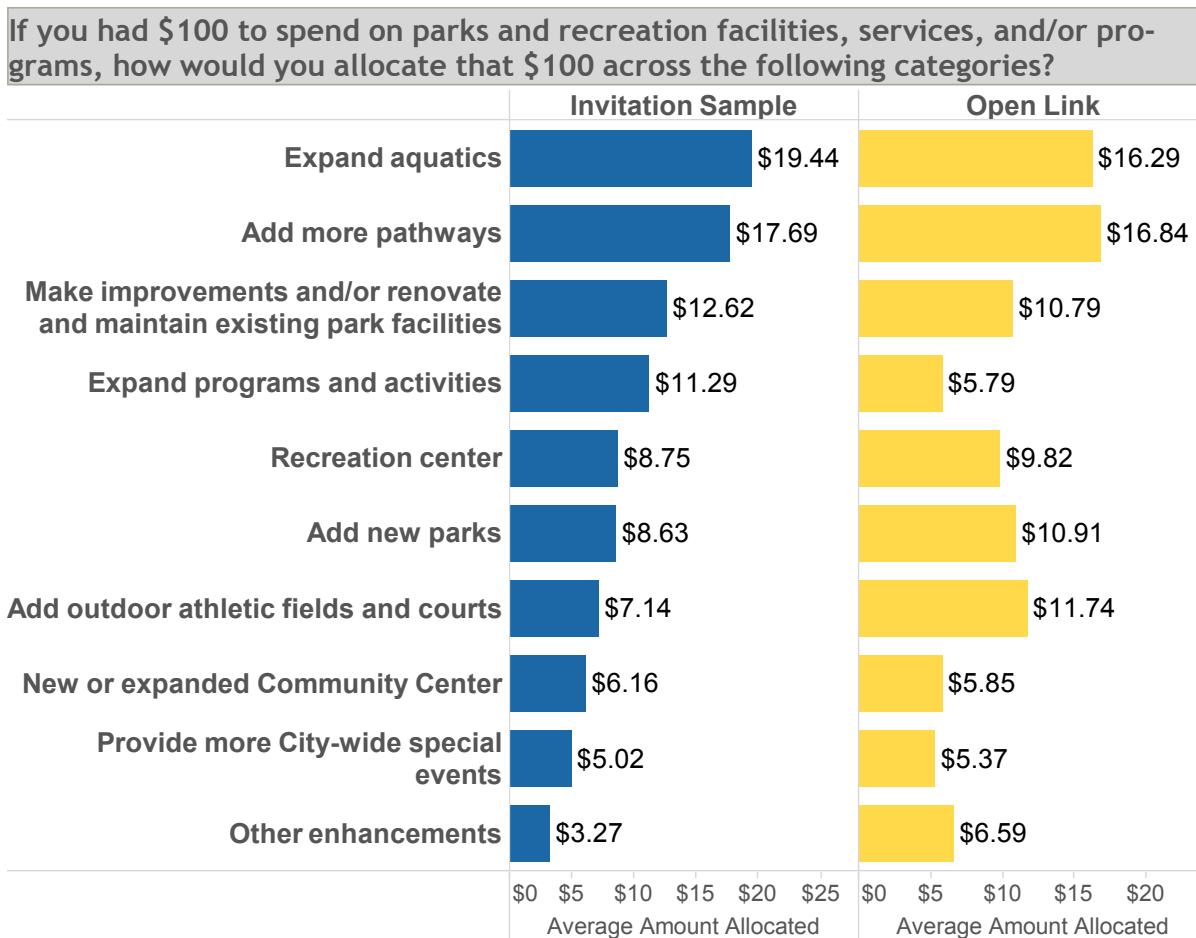


Allocation of Funding

Lastly, respondents were asked, “If you had \$100 to spend on parks and recreation facilities, services, and/or programs, how would you allocate that \$100 across the following categories?” and were provided with a list of nine potential categories for funding. Figure 34 to follow depicts the average amount allocated to each item by sample type. As shown, invitation respondents allocated funding most towards expanding aquatics (\$19.44 on average) and adding more pathways (\$17.69), followed by making improvements and/or renovating/maintaining existing park facilities (\$12.62) and expanding programs/activities (\$11.29). Items that received little funding include providing more City-wide special events (\$5.02) and a new or expanded Community Center (\$6.16).

When compared to open link respondents, invitation respondents on average designated more towards expanding aquatics and expanding programs/activities. Higher funding for adding new parks and adding outdoor athletic fields and courts was more common among open link respondents.

Figure 34: Allocation of Funding Towards Facilities/Services/Programs – Average Allocation Amount



ADDITIONAL OPEN-ENDED COMMENTS

At the end of the survey, respondents were offered an opportunity to provide any additional comments or suggestions to help Meridian Parks and Recreation better serve the needs of their household and of the community. Comments are provided under separate cover and should be read in entirety in order to grasp the full depth of respondents' opinions, but some common themes emerge from the responses:

Increase the availability and connectivity of pathways, trails, and bike lanes.

- *A bike path system would be nice*
- *Add a bike path along 10 Mile Creek. The city needs more bike trails that are off roads and away from traffic.*
- *Add more pedestrian walkways throughout the city that connect a neighborhood to the parks.*
- *Bike lanes are severely needed in our area of Meridian. My husband was trying to bike to work from our home. It only took 3 months and he was hit by a car in Meridian. Thankfully he only had minor injuries but I would love to see Meridian become more bike friendly.*
- *Connect pathways, improve bicycling paths/roadways*
- *I moved to this part of the world because of Boise greenbelt. I wish Meridian had some kind of connected bike path to allow bike travel.*
- *I would like to see the bike/walking paths connected together so you can ride from one part of the city to another and not have to ride on the streets*
- *I would love to have a greenbelt type of pathway that would allow me to bike or walk for miles without worrying about being hit by a car.*
- *I would love to see expanded pathways that would make going to the park a fun and healthy family activity. There are limited options for safe bike travel out of Central Meridian to these parks.*
- *It would be really nice to have more trail (paved/nonpaved) opportunities in Meridian for hiking/running/biking to avoid having to drive to the foothills.*
- *Pathways need to connect so there is at least 5 miles. I would like to have a pathway south of I-84. Some of the pathways (3 miles or more) need to be dirt or gravel so it is easier on the knees. Trails like the foothills or like at Lake Lowell would be great.*
- *Trails and connections to the main greenbelt would be good*

Build a new recreation or community center.

- *A full service YMCA would be great to have in South Meridian*
- *An all-inclusive recreation facility would be great. Something that is centrally located. We need a recreation center with the class/meeting rooms, but also the gym space.*
- *I think building a community recreation center should be top priority. This facility could be used not only for fitness and recreational but also community events and educational programs. Walking and bike trails could begin and end at this center.*
- *I really like the recreation facility Nampa built. We should follow suit. I like how Nampa offers PE classes and swim classes for homeschoolers. Meridian should as well.*
- *My family would love a rec center with a pool and gym so we could use it year around. I currently drive to Caldwell to use their rec center for art classes and swim classes!*
- *Really need a facility for adult indoor activities, for volleyball, basketball. After all we adults pay the money in taxes etc. for all these things.*
- *We have the saddest Community Center! This should be the number one priority. The a/c and furnace are a mess, it is too small, and is falling apart. We NEED a new Community Center- there are wonderful classes being offered. It is a waste to take them at a run down center!*
- *We need a recreation center, one that is central in Meridian.*

Expand aquatic facilities and swim program offerings.

- *Build a larger community pool more towards the west end of Meridian.*
- *It would be great to get a pool out in South Meridian. We have a few small neighborhood parks - some that are Meridian Parks run, but not enough.*
- *Meridian city Parks and Rec should be in charge of the swim team. More pools need to be built to accommodate swimmers.*
- *More aquatics by schools because they'd be in populated areas and all age groups could use them.*
- *Please consider another pool. There is only 1 outdoor pool for the whole of Meridian and it is in need of serious updates.*
- *The City of Meridian really needs more pools that are capable of having swim teams. The community pool is not capable of allowing all who would like to swim on teams swim in Meridian, many must swim in Nampa or Boise if they want swim team opportunities. The City also just needs more pools because the city is growing and not all people live in subdivision with pools.*

- *The Meridian pool is overcrowded. Their swim team is at capacity and even if you live a mile from the pool, there is not room on the Summer Recreational Swim Team. Meridian needs another outdoor pool. Families are driving to Fairmont, Borah and Hillcrest pool in the summer time. Though many neighborhoods have pools, they are not large enough for lap swimming or diving boards.*
- *We need more public swimming pools.*
- *We really need a pool on the west side of Meridian. The Y on Chinden is so far for this side. The Meridian pool has not been very accommodating for a swim team so the team has to turn away almost 100 swimmers/year. If you build another one even in addition to the Y, it would get used.*

Expand program offerings and times.

- *Add more culturally diverse programs. Add linguistic programs, i.e. Italian lessons, Spanish lessons, French lessons etc.*
- *Art and other non-athletic programs offered for adults needs to drastically be expanded.*
- *I love how Boise Aquatic League provides opportunities for swim lessons, swim team for anyone who needs/wants it. Meridian is so limited in aquatics - 1 team and it's always full. Lessons are a nightmare to sign up for - hours of waiting and poor management.*
- *I'd like to see more classes for people in a wider array of subjects. But I know people have to volunteer to teach and this takes time.*
- *My son went through Meridian schools and athletic activities. I coached several teams during that period. It was frustrating to have limited, restricted times available, in Boise, to teach kids soccer, swimming, baseball, running. Kids need structure, but also a sense of freedom and the space to explore and relate to their environment.*
- *Please add pottery classes for teens and adults!!*
- *Summertime activities for seniors*
- *We live in Meridian, but we find we use many more Boise City Rec programs. Maybe you could see what they're doing and 'partner' on some programs to benefit both communities.*

Open a dog park.

- *Dog park with pond*
- *Off-leash dog park*
- *PLEASE have new dog parks be mostly grassy areas with designated walking paths near perimeters. Large grassy area in middle so dogs can play fetch. Please don't use wood/bark as the material where dogs and/or people run/walk. Boise's wood/bark dog parks sucks. We need at least one dog park, preferably more. 1 south of I-84 would be great! Thanks!*
- *The dog park by Meridian PD is closed and no other is close by. My animals are family and socialization is just as important for them.*
- *Was disappointed to see the dog park close. City has been too long without one.*
- *We are an animal community, we need to have more dog parks. Look at Bend, OR, as an example of being a dog friendly community, and how it increases health & wellness.*
- *We don't have children. We don't use the parks. We would use a good dog park - we go to the Nampa dog park regularly.*
- *Would really love to see a fenced in off leash dog park in Meridian.*

Preserve and acquire more green space, while limiting development and setting impact fees.

- *I would like to see land NOT developed. Open, green, space - no houses/apartments, but open space, maybe walking paths/sort of like Albertson Park? I am willing to work on this. :)*
- *Natural areas are critical! Adding more pavement and structure is not helpful, and there needs to be an alternative to simply adding more parking at facilities - carpool, etc.*
- *Need more natural areas*
- *One concept that may be worth exploring is a naturalized park that could be treated more like an open spaces/natural trail/minimally resourced park area. It may be fun to have a natural reserve wherein the city focuses on using native grasses and plants that require less irrigation and management. Manmade ponds and/or hills could potentially make the area more welcoming, but I think having a natural focus in one park may be kind of a fun new idea to implement out here.*
- *Require new development to set aside and develop public parks. Either by land donations, fees or both.*
- *We need open space....land for animal use....to add peace and quiet to all areas....*

Keep up the good work.

- *Excellent work!*
- *I feel that the parks you have now are beautiful, well kept, and inviting for families for their children to play*
- *I think overall Meridian does a great job in this*
- *I really appreciate our beautiful parks and trails!! I look forward to using the Meridian Activity Guide to help plan summer activities. Please keep up the good work and thanks for all you do!*
- *Keep doing a good job!*
- *Keep up the good work!*
- *Loved the disc golf fall classic at Kleiner Park. Your web page shows many future bike routes which is excellent. Love movie night in Meridian.*
- *Overall, I think the parks that Meridian has are fantastic! I love that we don't have to go to Boise as much to enjoy outdoor activities, festivals, concerts, etc. The greenbelt is the main thing that takes us to Boise now. Good job!*
- *Parks and Recreation is the jewel to our City's crown. I hope that we can demonstrate our attention to sustainability throughout our development of facilities, amenities and operational practices.*
- *Thank you for all you provide!*
- *The city is doing a great job providing services to the community. We appreciate your efforts to continuing to improve.*
- *The parks are generally very nice*
- *We appreciate the parks we use for our family and grandchildren. There are clean bathrooms, great grass to sit on and close to home! We thank the maintenance crew for keeping trash picked up and containers availability. We are grateful to be living in Meridian. Thank you.*
- *We feel Meridian parks are A-1. Meridian Parks and Recreation is doing an outstanding job. We use the parks on average 2 times a week year round.*
- *We love living and playing in Meridian. Thank you for all that you do!*
- *We love Meridian and enjoy the park facilities.*
- *You are doing wonderful, we have a beautiful city*
- *You are making nice improvements, keep it going! Thanks.*
- *You have/are doing a great job. Thank you for the opportunity of having our input!*

Appendix D – Sample Sponsorship Policy

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Sample

XX

Parks & Recreation Department

Sponsorship Policy

Created for XX by:



211 N. Public Road, Suite 225

Lafayette, CO 80026

Phone: (303) 439-8369

Fax: (303) 664-5313

Info@GreenPlayLLC.com

www.GreenPlayLLC.com

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XX Parks & Recreation Department

Sponsorship Policy

Introduction

The following guidelines in this Sponsorship Policy have been specifically designed for the XX Parks & Recreation Department, while considering that these guidelines may be later adapted and implemented on a city-wide basis. Some assumptions regarding this policy are:

- Partnerships for recreation and parks facilities and program development may be pursued based on the XX Partnership Policy, encouraging the development of partnerships for the benefit of the city, its citizens, and potential partners. Sponsorships are one type of partnership, and one avenue of procurement for alternative funding resources. The Sponsorship Policy may evolve as the needs of new projects and other City departments are incorporated into its usage.
- Broad guidelines are offered in this policy primarily to delineate which types of sponsors and approval levels are currently acceptable for the XX Parks & Recreation Department.
- The policy should ensure that the definition of potential sponsors may include non-commercial community organizations (for example: YMCAs and Universities), but does not include a forum for non-commercial speech or advertising.
- Sponsorships are clearly defined and are different from advertisements. Advertisements are one type of benefit that may be offered to a sponsor in exchange for cash or in-kind sponsorship.
- The difference between sponsors and donors must be clarified, as some staff and the public often confuse and misuse these terms.

Structure

Part A of this document gives the **Sponsorship Policy**

Part B gives the **Levels of Sponsorship Tiers and Benefits**

Part C provides the vocabulary and **Glossary of Sponsorship Terms**

Part A.
Sponsorship Policy
XX Parks & Recreation Department

I. Purpose

In an effort to utilize and maximize the community's resources, it is in the best interest of the City's Parks & Recreation Department to create and enhance relationship-based sponsorships. This may be accomplished by providing local, regional, and national commercial businesses and non-profit groups a method for becoming involved with the many opportunities provided by the Parks & Recreation Department. The Department delivers quality, life-enriching activities to the broadest base of the community. This translates into exceptional visibility for sponsors and supporters. It is the goal of the Department to create relationships and partnerships with sponsors for the financial benefit of the Department.

Sponsorships vs. Donations

It is important to note that there is a difference between a sponsorship and a philanthropic donation. Basically, sponsorships are cash or in-kind products and services offered by sponsors with the clear expectation that an obligation is created. The recipient is obliged to return something of value to the sponsor. The value is typically public recognition and publicity or advertising highlighting the contribution of the sponsor and/or the sponsor's name, logo, message, products, or services. The Sponsor usually has clear marketing objectives that they are trying to achieve, including but not limited to the ability to drive sales directly based on the sponsorship, and/or quite often, the right to be the exclusive sponsor in a specific category of sales. The arrangement is typically consummated by a letter of agreement or contractual arrangement that details the particulars of the exchange.

In contrast, a donation comes with no restrictions on how the money or in-kind resources are used. This policy specifically addresses sponsorships, the agreements for the procurement of the resources, and the benefits provided in return for securing those resources. Since donations or gifts come with no restrictions or expected benefits for the donor, a policy is generally not needed.

II. Guidelines for Acceptable Sponsorships

Sponsors should be businesses, non-profit groups, or individuals that promote mutually beneficial relationships for the Parks & Recreation Department. All potentially sponsored properties (facilities, events, or programs) should be reviewed in terms of creating synergistic working relationships with regard to benefits, community contributions, knowledge, and political sensitivity. All sponsored properties should promote the goals and mission of the Parks & Recreation Department as follows:

NEED SPECIFIC MISSION STATEMENT

Sample XX Parks & Recreation Mission Statement:

NEED SPECIFIC GOALS

Sample Goals of the Park & Recreation Department:

III. Sponsorship Selection Criteria

A. Relationship of Sponsorship to Mission and Goals

The first major criterion is the appropriate relationship of a sponsorship to the above outlined Parks & Recreation Department's Mission and Goals. While objective analysis is ideal, the appropriateness of a relationship may sometimes be necessarily subjective. This policy addresses this necessity by including Approval Levels from various levels of City management staff and elected officials, outlined in **Section B**, to help assist with decisions involving larger amounts and benefits for sponsorship.

The following questions are the major guiding components of this policy and should be addressed prior to soliciting potential sponsors:

- Is the sponsorship reasonably related to the purpose of the facility or programs as exemplified by the Mission Statement and Goals of the Department?
- Will the sponsorship help generate more revenue and/or less cost per participant than the City can provide without it?
- What are the real costs, including staff time, for procuring the amount of cash or in-kind resources that come with the generation of the sponsorship?

Sponsorships which shall NOT be considered are those which:

- Promote environmental, work, or other practices that, if they took place in the City, would violate U.S. or state law (i.e., dumping of hazardous waste, exploitation of child labor, etc.), or promote drugs, alcohol, or tobacco, or that constitute violations of law.
- Duplicate or mimic the identity or programs of the Parks & Recreation Department or any of its divisions.

- Exploit participants or staff members of the Department.
- Offer benefits which may violate other accepted policies or the Sign Code. **DO YOU HAVE A SIGN CODE?**

B. Sponsorship Plan and Approval Levels

Each project or program that involves solicitation of Sponsors should, PRIOR to procurement, create a Sponsorship Plan specific to that project or program that is in line with the Sponsorship Levels given in **Part B**. This plan needs to be approved by the Management Team Members supervising the project and in accordance to City Partnership, Sponsorship, and Sign Code policies. In addition, each sponsorship will need separate approval if they exceed pre-specified limits. The Approval Levels are outlined below:

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Under \$1,000 | The program or project staff may approve this level of Agreement, with review by their supervising Management Team Member. |
| \$1,001 to \$10,000 | The Agreement needs approval of a Management Team Member. |
| \$10,001 to \$25,000 | The Agreement needs approval of the entire Senior Management Team and Department Director. |
| Over \$25,000 | The Agreement needs approval of the City Supervisor (the City Supervisor may recommend a City Council or Board of Trustees review). |

C. No Non-Commercial Forum is Permitted

This criterion deals with the commercial character of a sponsorship message. The City intends to create a limited forum, focused on advertisements incidental to commercial sponsorships of Parks & Recreation facilities and programs. While non-commercial community organizations or individuals may wish to sponsor Department activities or facilities for various reasons, no non-commercial speech is permitted in the limited forum created by this policy.

Advertisements incidental to commercial sponsorship must primarily propose a commercial transaction, either directly, through the text, or indirectly, through the association of the sponsor's name with the commercial transaction of purchasing the commercial goods or services which the sponsor sells.

The reasons for this portion of the Policy include:

- (1) The desirability of avoiding non-commercial proselytizing of a "captive audience" of event spectators and participants.
- (2) The constitutional prohibition on any view-point related decisions about permitted advertising coupled with the danger that the City and the Parks & Recreation Department would be associated with advertising anyway.

- (3) The desire of the City to maximize income from sponsorship, weighed against the likelihood that commercial sponsors would be dissuaded from using the same forum commonly used by persons wishing to communicate non-commercial messages, some of which could be offensive to the public.
- (4) The desire of the City to maintain a position of neutrality on political and religious issues.
- (5) In the case of religious advertising and political advertising, specific concerns about the danger of “excessive entanglement” with religion (and resultant constitutional violations) and the danger of election campaign law violations, respectively.

Guidelines for calculating the **Levels of Sponsorship Tiers and Benefits** are provided and outlined in **Part B**.

IV. Additional Guidelines for Implementation

A. Equitable Offerings

It is important that all sponsorships of equal levels across divisions within Parks & Recreation yield the same value of benefits for potential sponsors.

B. Sponsorship Contact Database

A designated staff person or representative of the Parks & Recreation Department will keep an updated list of all current sponsors, sponsored activities, and contacts related to sponsorship.

Purpose of Maintaining the Database:

- Limit duplicate solicitations of one sponsor
- Allow management to make decisions based on most appropriate solicitations and levels of benefits offered
- Keep a current list of all Department supporters and contacts
- Help provide leads for new sponsorships, if appropriate

For staff below Management Team level, access to the database will be limited to printouts of listings of names of sponsors and their sponsored events. This limited access will provide information to help limit duplicated solicitations, and will also protect existing sponsor relationships, while allowing the evaluation of future sponsorships to occur at a management level.

If a potential sponsor is already listed, staff should not pursue a sponsorship without researching the sponsor's history with the most recently sponsored division. If more than one division wishes to pursue sponsorship by the same company, the Management Team shall make a decision based on several variables, including but not limited to:

- History of sponsorship, relationships, and types of sponsorship needed.
- Amount of funding available.
- Best use of funding based on departmental priorities.

C. Sponsorship Committee

A committee consisting of the supervisors of each program using sponsorships and other management team designees shall meet twice per year to review the database, exchange current contract samples, and recommend adjusting benefit levels and policy as needed. Changes shall not take effect before approval by the Management Team.

Part B.

Levels of Sponsorship Tiers and Benefits

The following tiers are presented as a guideline for types of benefits that may be presented as opportunities for potential sponsors.

Each sponsorship will most likely need to be individually negotiated. One purpose for these guidelines is to create equity in exchanges across sponsorship arrangements. While for the sake of ease the examples given for levels are based on amount of sponsorship requested, the level of approval needed from City staff is really based on the amount of benefits exchanged for the resources. The levels of approval are necessary because the costs and values for different levels of benefits may vary, depending on the sponsorship. It is important to note that these values may be very different. Sponsors will not typically offer to contribute resources that cost them more than the value of resources that they will gain and, typically, seek at least a 2-1 return on their investment. Likewise, the City should not pursue sponsorships unless the total value the City receives is greater than its real costs.

A hierarchy of Sponsors for events, programs, or facilities with more than one sponsor is listed below from the highest level to the lowest. Not all Levels will necessarily be used in each Sponsorship Plan. Note that the hierarchy is not dependent on specific levels or amounts of sponsorship. Specific levels and amounts should be designed for each property before sponsorships are procured within the approved Sponsorship Plan. Complete definitions of terms are included in **Part C**.

Hierarchy of Sponsorship Levels (highest to lowest)

Parks and Recreation Department-Wide Sponsor ⇒
Facility/Park Title or Primary Sponsor ⇒
Event/Program Title or Primary Sponsor ⇒
Presenting Sponsor (Facility, Event, or Program) ⇒
Facility/Park Sponsor ⇒
Program/Event Sponsor ⇒ Media Sponsor ⇒ Official Supplier ⇒
Co-sponsor

This hierarchy will help decide the amounts to ask various sponsors for, and will determine what levels of benefits to provide. It is important to build flexibility and choice into each level so that sponsors can have the ability to choose options that will best fit their objectives. Note that the benefits listed under each level are examples of value. The listing does not mean that all of the benefits should be offered. It is a menu of options for possible benefits, depending on the circumstances. These are listed primarily as a guideline for **maximum** benefit values. It is recommended that each project create a project-specific Sponsorship Plan for approval in advance of Sponsorship procurement, based on the benefits available and the values specific to the project.

I. Sponsorship Assets and Related Benefits Inventory

***TO BE DETERMINED FOR EACH AGENCY BASED ON OFFERINGS
(PROPERTIES), VALUATION, AND DETERMINED BENEFITS***

***A tiered structure of actual values and approval levels should be
determined as part of a Sponsorship Plan.***

Part C.

Glossary of Sponsorship Terms

Activation

The marketing activity a company conducts to promote its sponsorship. Money spent on activation is over and above the rights fee paid to the sponsored property. Also known as leverage.

Advertising

The direct sale of print or some other types of City communication medium to provide access to a select target market.

Ambush Marketing

A promotional strategy whereby a non-sponsor attempts to capitalize on the popularity/prestige of a property by giving the false impression that it is a sponsor. Often employed by the competitors of a property's official sponsors.

Audio Mention

The mention of a sponsor during a TV or radio broadcast.

Business-to-Business Sponsorship

Programs intended to influence corporate purchase/awareness, as opposed to individual consumers.

Category Exclusivity

The right of a sponsor to be the only company within its product or service category associated with the sponsored property.

Cause Marketing

Promotional strategy that links a company's sales campaign directly to a non-profit organization. Generally includes an offer by the sponsor to make a donation to the cause with purchase of its product or service. Unlike philanthropy, money spent on cause marketing is a business expense, not a donation, and is expected to show a return on investment.

Co-sponsors

Sponsors of the same property.

CPM (Cost per Thousand)

The cost to deliver an ad message to a thousand people.

Cross-Promotions

A joint marketing effort conducted by two or more co-sponsors using the sponsored property as the central theme.

Donations

Cash or in-kind gifts that do not include any additional negotiated conditions in return. Synonyms: Philanthropy, Patronage.

Editorial Coverage

Exposure that is generated by media coverage of the sponsored property that includes mention of the sponsor.

Emblem

A graphic symbol unique to a property. Also called a mark.

Escalator

An annual percentage increase built into the sponsorship fee for multi-year contracts. Escalators are typically tied to inflation.

Exclusive Rights

A company pays a premium or provides economic benefit in exchange for the right to be the sole advertised provider, at the most competitive prices, of goods purchased by consumers within Parks & Recreation Department facilities and parks.

Fulfillment

The delivery of benefits promised to the sponsor in the contract.

Hospitality

Hosting key customers, clients, government officials, employees, and other VIPs at an event or facility. Usually involves tickets, parking, dining, and other amenities, often in a specially designated area, and may include interaction with athletes.

In-Kind Sponsorship

Payment (full or partial) of sponsorship fee in goods or services rather than cash.

Licensed Merchandise

Goods produced by a manufacturer (the licensee) who has obtained a license to produce and distribute the official Marks on products such as clothing and souvenirs.

Licensee

Manufacturer which has obtained a license to produce and distribute Licensed Merchandise.

Licensing

Right to use a property's logos and terminology on products for retail sale. Note: While a sponsor will typically receive the right to include a property's marks on its packaging and advertising, sponsors are not automatically licensees.

Mark

Any official visual representation of a property, including emblems and mascots.

Mascot

A graphic illustration of a character, usually a cartoon figure, used to promote the identity of a property.

Media Equivalencies

Measuring the exposure value of a sponsorship by adding up all the coverage it generated and calculating what it would have cost to buy a like amount of ad time or space in those outlets based on media rate cards.

Media Sponsor

TV and radio stations, print media, and outdoor advertising companies that provide either cash, or more frequently advertising time or space, to a property in exchange for official designation.

Municipal Marketing

Promotional strategy linking a company to community services and activities (sponsorship of parks and recreation programs, libraries, etc.)

Option to Renew

Contractual right to renew a sponsorship on specified terms.

Philanthropy

Support for a non-profit property where no commercial advantage is expected.
Synonym: Patronage.

Perimeter Advertising

Stationary advertising around the perimeter of an arena or event site, often reserved for sponsors.

Premiums

Souvenir merchandise, produced to promote a sponsor's involvement with a property (customized with the names/logos of the sponsor and the property).

Presenting Sponsor

The sponsor that has its name presented just below that of the sponsored property. In presenting arrangements, the event/facility name and the sponsor name are not fully integrated since the word(s) "presents" or "presented by" always come between them.

Primary Sponsor

The sponsor paying the largest fee and receiving the most prominent identification (Would be naming rights or title sponsor if sponsored property sold name or title).

Property

A unique, commercially exploitable entity (could be a facility, site, event, or program)
Synonyms: sponsee, rightsholder, seller.

Right of First Refusal

Contractual right granting a sponsor the right to match any offer the property receives during a specific period of time in the sponsor's product category.

Selling Rights

The ability of a sponsor to earn back some or all of its sponsorship fee selling its product or service to the property or its attendees or members.

Signage

Banners, billboards, electronic messages, decals, etc., displayed on-site and containing sponsors ID.

Sole Sponsor

A company that has paid to be the only sponsor of a property.

Sponsee

A property available for sponsorship.

Sponsor

An entity that pays a property for the right to promote itself and its products or services in association with the property.

Sponsor ID

Visual and audio recognition of sponsor in property's publications and advertising; public-address and on-air broadcast mentions.

Sponsorship

The relationship between a sponsor and a property, in which the sponsor pays a cash or in-kind fee in return for access to the commercial potential associated with the property.

Sponsorship Agency

A firm which specializes in advising on, managing, brokering, or organizing sponsored properties. The agency may be employed by either the sponsor or property.

Sponsorship Fee

Payment made by a sponsor to a property.

Sports Marketing

Promotional strategy linking a company to sports (sponsorship of competitions, teams, leagues, etc.).

Supplier

Official provider of goods or services in exchange for designated recognition. This level is below official sponsor, and the benefits provided are limited accordingly.

Title Sponsor

The sponsor that has its name incorporated into the name of the sponsored property.

Venue Marketing

Promotional strategy linking a sponsor to a physical site (sponsorship of stadiums, arenas, auditoriums, amphitheatres, racetracks, fairgrounds, etc.)

Web Sponsorship

The purchase (in cash or trade) of the right to utilize the commercial potential associated with a site on the World Wide Web, including integrated relationship building and branding.

Appendix E – Sample Partnership Policy

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Sample

Partnership Policy and Proposal Format

Created By:

GREENPLAY LLC

*The Leading Edge In Parks, Recreation
And Open Space Consulting*

www.greenplayllc.com

Phone: 303-439-8369

Email: info@greenplayllc.com

www.greenplayllc.com

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Sample Parks and Recreation Department Partnership Policy And Proposal Format

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I. Sample Parks and Recreation Department Partnership Policy

A. Purpose

This policy is designed to guide the process for XX Parks and Recreation Department in their desire to partner with private, non-profit, or other governmental entities for the development, design, construction, and operation of possibly partnered recreational facilities and/or programs that may occur on City property.

The XX Parks and Recreation Department would like to identify for-profit, non-profit, and governmental entities that are interested in proposing to partner with the City to develop recreational facilities and/or programs. A major component in exploring any potential partnership will be to identify additional collaborating partners that may help provide a synergistic working relationship in terms of resources, community contributions, knowledge, and political sensitivity. These partnerships should be mutually beneficial for all proposing partners including the City, and particularly beneficial for the citizens of the community.

This policy document is designed to:

- Provide essential background information.
- Provide parameters for gathering information regarding the needs and contributions of potential partners.
- Identify how the partnerships will benefit the Sample Parks and Recreation Department and the community.

Part Two: The “Proposed Partnership Outline Format,” provides a format that is intended to help guide Proposing Partners in creating a proposal for review by Sample Parks and Recreation Department staff.

B. Background and Assumptions

Partnerships are being used across the nation by governmental agencies in order to utilize additional resources for their community's benefit. Examples of partnerships abound, and encompass a broad spectrum of agreements and implementation. The most commonly described partnership is between a public and a private entity, but partnerships also occur between public entities and non-profit organizations and/or other governmental agencies.

Note on Privatization:

This application is specific for proposed partnering for new facilities or programs.

This information does not intend to address the issue of privatization, or transferring existing City functions to a non-City entity for improved efficiency and/or competitive cost concerns. An example of privatization would be a contract for a landscaping company to provide mowing services in a park. The City is always open to suggestions for improving services and cost savings through contractual arrangements. If you have an idea for privatization of current City functions, please call or outline your ideas in a letter for the City's consideration.

In order for partnerships to be successful, research has shown that the following elements should be in place prior to partnership procurement:

- There must be support for the concept and process of partnering from the very highest organizational level – i.e.: the Board or Trustees, a council, and/or department head.
- **The most successful agencies have high-ranking officials that believe that they owe it to their citizens to explore partnering opportunities whenever presented, those communities both solicit partners and consider partnering requests brought to them.**
- **It is very important to have a Partnership Policy in place before partner procurement begins. This allows the agency to be proactive rather than reactive when presented with a partnership opportunity. It also sets a “level playing field” for all potential partners, so that they can know and understand in advance the parameters and selection criteria for a proposed partnership.**
- A partnership policy and process should set development priorities and incorporate multiple points for go/no-go decisions.
- **The partnership creation process should be a public process, with both Partners and the Partnering Agency well aware in advance of the upcoming steps.**

C. Partnership Definition

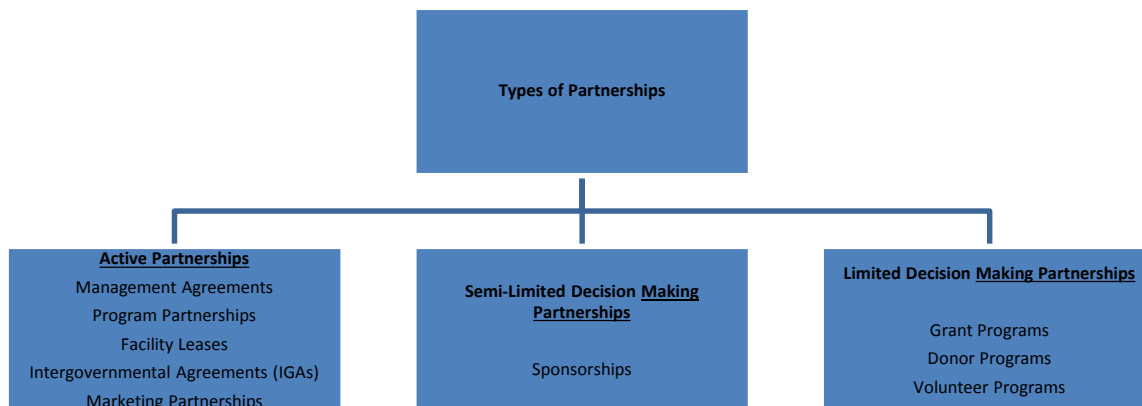
For purposes of this document and policy, a Proposed Partnership is defined as:

"An identified idea or concept involving Sample Parks and Recreation Department and for-profit, non-profit, and/or governmental entities, outlining the application of combined resources to develop facilities, programs, and/or amenities for the City and its citizens."

A partnership is a cooperative venture between two or more parties with a common goal, who combine complementary resources to establish a mutual direction or complete a mutually beneficial project. Partnerships can be facility-based or program-specific. The main goal for XX Parks and Recreation Department partnerships is enhancing public offerings to meet the mission and goals of the City. The XX Parks and Recreation Department is interested in promoting partnerships which involve cooperation among many partners, bringing resources together to accomplish goals in a synergistic manner. Proposals that incorporate such collaborative efforts will receive priority status.

Partnerships can accomplish tasks with limited resources, respond to compelling issues, encourage cooperative interaction and conflict resolution, involve outside interests, and serve as an education and outreach tool. Partnerships broaden ownership in various projects and increase public support for community recreation goals. Partners often have flexibility to obtain and invest resources/dollars on products or activities where municipal government may be limited.

Partnerships can take the form of (1) cash gifts and donor programs, (2) improved access to alternative funding, (3) property investments, (4) charitable trust funds, (5) labor, (6) materials, (7) equipment, (8) sponsorships, (9) technical skills and/or management skills, and other forms of value. The effective use of volunteers also can figure significantly into developing partnerships. Some partnerships involve active decision making, while in others, certain partners take a more passive role. The following schematic shows the types of possible partnerships discussed in this policy:



D. Possible Types of Active Partnerships

The XX Parks and Recreation Department is interested in promoting collaborative partnerships among multiple community organizations. Types of agreements for Proposed “Active” Partnerships may include leases, contracts, sponsorship agreements, marketing agreements, management agreements, joint-use agreements, inter-governmental agreements, or a combination of these. An innovative and mutually beneficial partnership that does not fit into any of the following categories may also be considered.

Proposed partnerships will be considered for facility, service, operations, and/or program development including associated needs, such as parking, paving, fencing, drainage systems, signage, outdoor restrooms, lighting, utility infrastructure, etc.

The following examples are provided only to illustrate possible types of partnerships. They are not necessarily examples that would be approved and/or implemented.

Examples of Public/Private Partnerships

- A private business seeing the need for more/different community fitness and wellness activities wants to build a facility on City land, negotiate a management contract, provide the needed programs, and make a profit.
- A private group interested in environmental conservation obtains a grant from a foundation to build an educational kiosk, providing all materials and labor, and is in need of a spot to place it.
- Several neighboring businesses see the need for a place for their employees to work out during the work day. They group together to fund initial facilities and an operating subsidy and give the facility to the City to operate for additional public users.
- A biking club wants to fund the building of a race course through a park. The races would be held one night per week, but otherwise the path would be open for public biking and in-line skating.
- A large corporate community relations office wants to provide a skatepark, but doesn't want to run it. They give a check to the City in exchange for publicizing their underwriting of the park's cost.
- A private restaurant operator sees the need for a concessions stand in a park and funds the building of one, operates it, and provides a share of revenue back to the City.
- A garden club wants land to build unique butterfly gardens. They will tend the gardens and just need a location and irrigation water.

Examples of Public/Non-Profit Partnerships

- A group of participants for a particular sport or hobby sees a need for more playing space and forms a non-profit entity to raise funds for a facility for their priority use that is open to the public during other hours.
- A non-profit baseball association needs fields for community programs and wants to obtain grants for the building of the fields. They would get priority use of the fields, which would be open for the City to schedule use during other times.
- A museum funds and constructs a new building, dedicating some space and time for community meetings and paying a portion of revenues to the City to lease its land.

Examples of Public/Public Partnerships

- Two governmental entities contribute financially to the development and construction of a recreational facility to serve residents of both entities. One entity, through an IGA, is responsible for the operation of the facility, while the other entity contributes operating subsidy through a formula based on population or some other appropriate factor.
- Two governmental public safety agencies see the need for more physical training space for their employees. They jointly build a gym adjacent to City facilities to share for their training during the day. The gyms would be open for the City to schedule for other users at night.
- A school district sees the need for a climbing wall for their athletes. The district funds the wall and subsidizes operating costs, and the City manages and maintains the wall to provide public use during non-school hours.
- A university needs meeting rooms. They fund a multi-use building on City land that can be used for City community programs at night.

E. Sponsorships

The XX Parks and Recreation Department is interested in actively procuring sponsorships for facilities and programs as one type of beneficial partnership. Please see the ***Sample Parks and Recreation Department Sponsorship Policy*** for more information.

F. Limited-Decision Making Partnerships: Donor, Volunteer, and Granting Programs

While this policy document focuses on the parameters for more active types of partnerships, the City is interested in, and will be happy to discuss, a proposal for any of these types of partnerships, and may create specific plans for such in the future.

G. Benefits of Partnerships with Sample Parks and Recreation Department

The City expects that any Proposed Partnership will have benefits for all involved parties. Some general expected benefits are:

Benefits for the City and the Community:

- Merging of resources to create a higher level of service and facility availability for community members.
- Making alternative funding sources available for public community amenities.
- Tapping into the dynamic and entrepreneurial traits of private industry.
- Delivering services and facilities more efficiently by allowing for collaborative business solutions to public organizational challenges.
- Meeting the needs of specific groups of users through the availability of land for development and community use.

Benefits for the Partners:

- Land and/or facility availability at a subsidized level for specific facility and/or program needs.
- Sharing of the risk with an established stable governmental entity.
- Becoming part of a larger network of support for management and promotion of facilities and programs.
- Availability of professional City recreation and planning experts to maximize the facilities and programs that may result.
- Availability of City staff facilitation to help streamline the planning and operational efforts.

II. The Partnering Process

The steps for creation of a partnership with the XX Parks and Recreation Department are as follows:

- A. XX Parks and Recreation Department will create a public notification process that will help inform any and all interested partners of the availability of partnerships with the City. This will be done through notification in area newspapers, listing in the brochure, or through any other notification method that is feasible.
- B. The proposing partner takes the first step to propose partnering with the City. To help in reviewing both the partnerships proposed, and the project to be developed in partnership, the City asks for a **Preliminary Proposal** according to a specific format as outlined in **Part Two - Proposed Partnership Outline Format**.
- C. If initial review of a Preliminary Proposal yields interest and appears to be mutually beneficial based on the City Mission and Goals, and the Selection Criteria, a City staff member or appointed representative will be assigned to work with potential partners.
- D. The City representative is available to answer questions related to the creation of an initial proposal, and after initial interest has been indicated, will work with the proposing partner to create a checklist of what actions need to take place next. Each project will have distinctive planning, design, review, and support issues. The City representative will facilitate the process of determining how the partnership will address these issues. This representative can also facilitate approvals and input from any involved City departments, providing guidance for the partners as to necessary steps.
- E. An additional focus at this point will be determining whether this project is appropriate for additional collaborative partnering, and whether this project should prompt the City to seek a **Request for Proposal (RFP)** from competing/collaborating organizations.

Request for Proposal (RFP) Trigger: In order to reduce concerns of unfair private competition, if a proposed project involves partnering with a private "for-profit" entity and a dollar amount greater than \$5,000, and the City has not already undergone a public process for solicitation of that particular type of partnership, the City will request Partnership Proposals from other interested private entities for identical and/or complementary facilities, programs, or services. A selection of appropriate partners will be part of the process.

- F. For most projects, a **Formal Proposal** from the partners for their desired development project will need to be presented for the City's official development review processes and approvals. The project may require approval by the Legal, Planning, Fire and Safety, Finance, and/or other City Departments, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Planning Board, The Board of Trustees, and/or the City Supervisor's Office, depending on project complexity and applicable City Charter provisions, ordinances or regulations. If these reviews are necessary, provision to reimburse the City for its costs incurred in having a representative facilitate the partnered project's passage through Development Review should be included in the partnership proposal.
- G. Depending on project complexity and anticipated benefits, responsibilities for all action points are negotiable, within the framework established by law, to ensure the most efficient and mutually beneficial outcome. Some projects may require that all technical and professional expertise and staff resources come from outside the City's staff, while some projects may proceed most efficiently if the City contributes staff resources to the partnership.
- H. The partnership must cover the costs the partnership incurs, regardless of how the partnered project is staffed, and reflect those costs in its project proposal and budget. The proposal for the partnered project should also discuss how staffing and expertise will be provided, and what documents will be produced. If City staff resources are to be used by the partnership, those costs should be allocated to the partnered project and charged to it.
- I. Specific **Partnership Agreements** appropriate to the project will be drafted jointly. There is no specifically prescribed format for **Partnership Agreements**, which may take any of several forms depending on what will accomplish the desired relationships among partners. The agreements may be in the form of:
- Lease Agreements
 - Management and/or Operating Agreements
 - Maintenance Agreements
 - Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs)
 - Or a combination of these and/or other appropriate agreements

Proposed partnership agreements might include oversight of the development of the partnership, concept plans and project master plans, environmental assessments, architectural designs, development and design review, project management, and construction documents, inspections, contracting, monitoring, etc. Provision to fund the costs and for reimbursing the City for its costs incurred in creating the partnership, facilitating the project's passage through the Development Review Processes, and completing the required documents should be considered.

- J. If all is approved, the Partnership begins. The City is committed to upholding its responsibilities to Partners from the initiation through the continuation of a partnership. Evaluation will be an integral component of all Partnerships. The agreements should outline who is responsible for evaluation and what types of measures will be used, and should detail what will occur should the evaluations reveal Partners are not meeting their Partnership obligations.

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III. The Partnership Evaluation Process

A. Mission Statements and Goals

All partnerships with Sample Parks and Recreation Department should be in accord with the City's and the Parks and Recreation Department's Mission and Goals to indicate how a proposed partnership for that Department would be preliminarily evaluated.

SAMPLE MISSION STATEMENT

The XX Parks and Recreation Department will provide a variety of parks, recreation facilities, and program experiences equitably throughout the community. Programs will be developed and maintained to the highest quality, ensuring a safe environment with exceptional service while developing a lifetime customer. Services will demonstrate a positive economic investment through partnerships with other service providers, both public and private, ensuring a high quality of life for citizens of XX.

***(Sample)* GOALS –**

- Promote physical and mental health and fitness
- Nourish the development of children and youth
- Help to build strong communities and neighborhoods
- Promote environmental stewardship
- Provide beautiful, safe, and functional parks and facilities that improve the lives of all citizens
- Preserve cultural and historic features within the City's parks and recreation systems
- Provide a work environment for the Parks & Recreation Department staff that encourages initiative, professional development, high morale, productivity, teamwork, innovation, and excellence in management

B. Other Considerations

1. Costs for the Proposal Approval Process

For most proposed partnerships, there will be considerable staff time spent on the review and approval process once a project passes the initial review stage. This time includes discussions with Proposing Partners, exploration of synergistic partnering opportunities, possible RFP processes, facilitation of the approval process, assistance in writing and negotiating agreements, contracting, etc. There may also be costs for construction and planning documents, design work, and related needs and development review processes mandated by City ordinances.

Successful Partnerships will take these costs into account and may plan for City recovery of some or all of these costs within the proposal framework. Some of these costs could be considered as construction expenses, reimbursed through a negotiated agreement once operations begin, or covered through some other creative means.

2. Land Use and/or Site Improvements

Some proposed partnerships may include facility and/or land use. Necessary site improvements cannot be automatically assumed. Costs and responsibility for these improvements should be considered in any Proposal. Some of the general and usual needs for public facilities that may not be included as City contributions and may need to be negotiated for a project include:

- Any facilities or non-existent infrastructure construction
- Roads or street improvements
- Maintenance to specified standards
- Staffing
- Parking
- Snow removal
- Lighting
- Outdoor restrooms
- Water fountains
- Complementary uses of the site
- Utility improvements (phone, cable, storm drainage, electricity, water, gas, sewer, etc.)
- Custodial services
- Trash removal

3. Need

The nature of provision of public services determines that certain activities will have a higher need than others. Some activities serve a relatively small number of users and have a high facility cost. Others serve a large number of users and are widely available from the private sector because they are profitable. The determination of need for facilities and programs is an ongoing discussion in public provision of programs and amenities. The project will be evaluated based on how the project fulfills a public need.

4. Funding

Only when a Partnership Proposal demonstrates high unmet needs and high benefits for City citizens, will the City consider contributing resources to a project. The City recommends that Proposing Partners consider sources of potential funding. The more successful partnerships will have funding secured in advance. In most cases, Proposing Partners should consider funding and cash flow for initial capital development, staffing, and ongoing operation and maintenance.

The details of approved and pending funding sources should be clearly identified in a proposal.

For many partners, especially small private user groups, non-profit groups, and governmental agencies, cash resources may be a limiting factor in the proposal. It may be a necessity for partners to utilize alternative funding sources for resources to complete a proposed project. Obtaining alternative funding often demands creativity, ingenuity, and persistence, but many forms of funding are available.

Alternative funding can come from many sources, e.g. Sponsorships, Grants, and Donor Programs. A local librarian and/or internet searches can help with foundation and grant resources. Developing a solid leadership team for a partnering organization will help find funding sources. In-kind contributions can, in some cases, add additional funding.

All plans for using alternative funding should be clearly identified. The City has an established Sponsorship Policy, and partnered projects will be expected to adhere to the Policy. This includes the necessity of having an Approved Sponsorship Plan in place prior to procurement of sponsorships for a Partnered Project.

C. Selection Criteria

In assessing a partnership opportunity to provide facilities and services, the City will consider (as appropriate) the following criteria. The Proposed Partnership Outline Format in Part Two provides a structure to use in creating a proposal. City staff and representatives will make an evaluation by attempting to answer each of the following Guiding Questions.

- How does the project align with the City and affected Department's Mission Statement and Goals?
- How does the proposed facility fit into the current City and the affected Department's Master Plan?
- How does the facility/program meet the needs of City residents?
- How will the project generate more revenue and/or less cost per participant than the City can provide with its own staff or facilities?
- What are the alternatives that currently exist, or have been considered, to serve the users identified in this project?
- How much of the existing need is now being met within the City borders and within adjacent cities?
- What is the number and demographic profile of participants who will be served?
- How can the proposing partner assure the City of the long-term stability of the proposed partnership, both for operations and for maintenance standards?
- How will the partnered project meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) requirements?
- How will the organization offer programs at reasonable and competitive costs for participants
- What are the overall benefits for both the City and the Proposing Partners?

D. Additional Assistance

The XX Parks and Recreation Department is aware that the partnership process does entail a great deal of background work on the part of the Proposing Partner. The following list of resources may be helpful in preparing a proposal:

- **Courses are available through local colleges and universities to help organizations develop a business plan and/or operational pro-formas.**
- The Chamber of Commerce offers a variety of courses and assistance for business owners and for those contemplating starting new ventures.
- There are consultants who specialize in facilitating these types of partnerships. For one example, contact **GreenPlay LLC** at **303-439-8369** or **info@greenplayllc.com**.
- Reference Librarians at libraries and internet searches can be very helpful in identifying possible funding sources and partners, including grants, foundations, financing, etc.
- Relevant information including the ***City of XX Comprehensive Plan***, the ***Parks and Recreation Master Plan***, site maps, and other documents are available at the _____. These documents may be copied or reviewed, but may not be taken off-site.
- The XX Parks and Recreation Department Web Site (***www.XXXX.com***) has additional information.
- **If additional help or information is needed, please call 000-000-0000.**

Part Two

Sample Proposed Partnership Outline Format

Please provide as much information as possible in the following outline form.

I. Description of Proposing Organization:

- Name of Organization
- Years in Business
- Contact Name, Mailing Address, Physical Address, Phone, Fax, Email
- Purpose of Organization
- Services Provided/Member/User/Customer Profiles
- Accomplishments
- Legal Status

II. Decision Making Authority

Who is authorized to negotiate on behalf of the organization? Who or what group (i.e. Council/Commission/Board) is the final decision maker and can authorize the funding commitment? What is the timeframe for decision making?

Summary of Proposal (100 words or less)

What is being proposed in terms of capital development, and program needs?

III. Benefits to the Partnering Organization

Why is your organization interested in partnering with the XX Parks and Recreation Department? Please individually list and discuss the benefits (monetary and non-monetary) for your organization.

IV. Benefits to the Sample Parks and Recreation Department

Please individually list and discuss the benefits (monetary and non-monetary) for the XX Parks and Recreation Department and residents of the City.

V. Details (as currently known)

The following page lists a series of *Guiding Questions* to help you address details that can help outline the benefits of a possible partnership. Please try to answer as many as possible with currently known information. Please include what your organization proposes to provide and what is requested of XX Parks and Recreation Department. Please include (as known) initial plans for your concept, operations, projected costs and revenues, staffing, and/or any scheduling or maintenance needs, etc.

Guiding Questions

Meeting the Needs of our Community:

- In your experience, how does the project align with park and recreation goals?
- How does the proposed program or facility meet a need for City residents?
- Who will be the users? What is the projected number and profile of participants who will be served?
- What alternatives currently exist to serve the users identified in this project?
- How much of the existing need is now being met? What is the availability of similar programs elsewhere in the community?
- Do the programs provide opportunities for entry-level, intermediate, and/or expert skill levels?
- How does this project incorporate environmentally sustainable practices?

The Financial Aspect:

- Can the project generate more revenue and/or less cost per participant than the City can provide with its own staff or facilities? If not, why should the City partner on this project?
- Will your organization offer programs at reasonable and competitive costs for all participants? What are the anticipated prices for participants?
- What resources are expected to come from the Parks & Recreation Department?
- Will there be a monetary benefit for the City, and if so, how and how much?

Logistics:

- How much space do you need? What type of space?
- What is critical related to location?
- What is your proposed timeline?
- What are your projected hours of operations?
- What are your initial staffing projections?
- Are there any mutually-beneficial cooperative marketing benefits?
- What types of insurance will be needed and who will be responsible for acquiring and paying premiums on the policies?
- What is your organization's experience in providing this type of facility/program?
- How will your organization meet ADA and EEOC requirements?

Agreements and Evaluation:

- How, by whom, and at what intervals should the project be evaluated?
- How can you assure the City of long-term stability of your organization?
- What types and length of agreements should be used for this project?
- What types of “exit strategies” should we include?
- What should be done if the project does not meet the conditions of the original agreements?

Appendix F – GRASP[®] Methodology

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GRASP® Level of Service Analysis

A. Introduction

GRASP® is a unique toolset that allows service providers to identify gaps and prioritize improvements. For the parks and recreation field, this means that you can accurately target needs and develop effective strategies to address them.

- Provides more robust evidence for action than traditional master planning techniques
- Decisions are based on customizable demographics and other factors specific to YOUR community, rather than generalized standards
- The needs and desires of the public are incorporated into the process and reflected in the outcomes

The GRASP® methodology was developed collaboratively by GreenPlay, LLC, and Design Concepts, CLA, Inc. specifically to advance the state of the art in master planning for parks and recreation systems. It has been proven over the past 15 years on more than 100 plans representing many of the nation's top accredited and Gold Medal agencies. Recognizing the value that GRASP® has brought to parks and recreation planning, other firms have adopted similar methods. Meanwhile, we have continued to evolve our proprietary GRASP® methodology to remain at the forefront of innovation and expertise in the field. We are able to offer a much more detailed and refined picture of the level of service for the parks and recreation system in any community. GRASP® goes beyond the typical lands-and-features analysis to incorporate historical values, cultural arts, and other unique aspects of your system while taking into account the quality and condition of each asset.

B. Level of Service Analysis

Analysis of the existing parks, open space, trails, and recreation systems are often conducted in order to try and determine how the systems are serving the public. A Level of Service (LOS) has typically been defined in parks and recreation master plans as the capacity of the various components and facilities that make up the system to meet the needs of the public. This has traditionally been expressed in terms of the size or quantity of a given facility per unit of population.

Brief History of Level of Service Analysis

In order to help standardize parks and recreation planning, professionals and academics have long been looking for ways to benchmark and provide “national standards” for how much acreage and how many ballfields, pools, playgrounds, etc., a community *should* have. For example, in 1906 the fledgling “Playground Association of America” called for playground space equal to 30 square feet per child. In the 1970s and early 1980s, the first detailed published works on these topics began emerging (Gold, 1973, Lancaster, 1983). In time “rule of thumb” **capacity** ratios emerged with 10 acres of parklands per thousand population becoming the most widely accepted standard application. Other normative guides have also been cited as “traditional standards,” but have been less widely accepted. In 1983, Roger Lancaster compiled a book called, Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines, published by the National Park and Recreation Association (NRPA). In this publication, Mr. Lancaster centered on a recommendation “that a park system, at minimum, be composed of a core system of parklands, with a total of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed open space per 1,000 population.” (Lancaster, 1983, p. 56) The guidelines went further to make recommendations regarding an appropriate mix of park types, sizes, service areas, acreages, and standards regarding the number of available recreational facilities per thousand people. While the book was published by NRPA and the table of standards became widely

known as “the NRPA standards,” for Level of Service Analysis, **it is important to note that these standards were never formally adopted for use by NRPA.**

Since that time various publications have updated and expanded upon possible “standards”, several of which have also been published by NRPA. Many of these publications did benchmarking and other normative research to try and determine what an “average LOS” should be. Yet organizations such as the NRPA and the prestigious American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration have focused in recent years on accreditation standards for agencies which are less directed towards outputs, outcomes, and performance, and more focused on planning, organizational structure, and management processes. The following table gives some of the more commonly and historically used “capacity standards.”

Common Historically-Referenced LOS Capacity “Standards”

| Activity/ Facility | Recommended Space Requirements | Service Radius and Location Notes | Number of Units per Population |
|-------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Baseball Official | 3.0 to 3.85 acre minimum | ¼ to ½ mile Unlighted part of neighborhood complex; lighted fields part of community complex | 1 per 5,000; lighted 1 per 30,000 |
| Little League | 1.2 acre minimum | | |
| Basketball Youth | 2,400 – 3,036 vs. | ¼ to ½ mile Usually in school, recreation center, or church facility; safe walking or bike access; outdoor courts in neighborhood and community parks, plus active recreation areas in other park settings | 1 per 5,000 |
| High school | 5,040 – 7,280 s.f. | | |
| Football | Minimum 1.5 acres | 15 – 30 minute travel time Usually part of sports complex in community park or adjacent to school | 1 per 20,000 |
| Soccer | 1.7 to 2.1 acres | 1 to 2 miles Youth soccer on smaller fields adjacent to larger soccer fields or neighborhood parks | 1 per 10,000 |
| Softball | 1.5 to 2.0 acres | ¼ to ½ mile May also be used for youth baseball | 1 per 5,000 (if also used for youth baseball) |
| Swimming Pools | Varies on size of pool & amenities; usually ½ to 2-acre site | 15 – 30 minutes travel time Pools for general community use should be planned for teaching, competitive, and recreational purposes with enough depth (3.4m) to accommodate 1m to 3m diving boards; located in community park or school site | 1 per 20,000 (pools should accommodate 3% to 5% of total population at a time) |
| Tennis | Minimum of 7,200 s.f. single court area (2 acres per complex | ¼ to ½ mile Best in groups of 2 to 4 courts; located in neighborhood community park or near school site | 1 court per 2,000 |
| Volleyball | Minimum 4,000 s.f. | ½ to 1 mile Usually in school, recreation center or church facility; safe walking or bike access; outdoor courts in neighborhood and community parks, plus active recreation areas in other park settings | 1 court per 5,000 |
| Total land Acreage | | Various types of parks - mini, neighborhood, community, regional, conservation, etc. | 10 acres per 1,000 |

Sources:

David N. Ammons, *Municipal Benchmarks - Assessing Local Performance and Establishing Community Standards*, 2nd Ed., 2002

Roger A. Lancaster (Ed.), *Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines* (Alexandria, VA: National Recreation and Park Association, 1983), pp. 56-57.

James D. Mertes and James R. Hall, *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenways Guidelines*, (Alexandria, VA: National Recreation and Park Association, 1996), pp. 94-103.

In planning work it is important to realize that the above standards can be valuable when referenced as “norms” for capacity, but not necessarily as the target standards for which a community should strive. Every community is different, and there are various factors and details not addressed by the standards above, such as:

- What about quality and condition? What if there are multiple ballfields, but they haven’t been maintained in the last ten years?
- What if the agency is an urban land-locked community? What if the agency is a small town surrounded by open Federal lands?
- Does “developed acreage” include golf courses? What about indoor and passive facilities?
- What are the standards for skateparks? Ice Arenas? Public Art? Etc.?
- And many other questions....

C. GRASP® Component-Based Level of Service Analysis

In order to address these and other relevant questions, a new methodology for determining Level of Service was developed. Since 2001 GRASP® Component Based Level of Service Analysis has been applied in many communities across the nation to provide a better way of to measure and portray the service provided by parks and recreation systems. A component is an asset such as a playground, picnic shelter, court, field, indoor facility or other elements that allows a system to meet the recreational needs of a community. The GRASP® methodology focuses on these essential pieces and parts to glean and understanding of a system as a whole.

Primary research and development on this methodology was funded jointly by GreenPlay, LLC, a management consulting firm for parks, open space, and related agencies, Design Concepts, a landscape architecture and planning firm, and Geowest, a spatial information management firm. While a component based system can be utilized by anyone, the proprietary trademarked name for the process used by these three firms is **GRASP® (Geo-Referenced Amenities Standards Process)**.



For GRASP® analysis, the traditional idea of capacity based on acreage and asset quantity is only part of the LOS equation. Other factors are brought into consideration including *quality, condition, location, comfort, convenience, and ambience*. In a GRASP® analysis parks, trails,

open space, and other recreation amenities and properties are studied as part of an overall infrastructure for a community made up of various components such as playgrounds, ballfields, swimming pools, etc. This methodology is unique in that it values the context and setting of a component in addition to the characteristics of the component itself, based on the assumption that but an enhanced setting in proximity to a component enhances the value of the component.

The characteristics of components include:

- Quality** – The service provided by anything, whether it is a playground, soccer field, or swimming pool is determined in part by its quality. A playground with a variety of features, such as climbers, slides, and swings provides a higher degree of service than one with nothing but an old teeter-totter and some “monkey-bars.”
- Condition** – The condition of a component within the park system also affects the amount of service it provides. A playground in disrepair with unsafe equipment does not offer the same service as one in good condition. Similarly, a soccer field with a smooth surface of well-maintained grass certainly offers a higher degree of service than one that is full of weeds, ruts, and other hazards.
- Functionality** – Functionality is a measure of how well something serves its intended purpose, and is a result of its quality and condition.
- Location** – To receive service from something, you need to be able to get to it. Therefore, service is dependent upon proximity and access. All components are geographically located using GPS coordinates and GIS software.
- Comfort** – The service provided by a component is increased by having amenities. For example, outdoor components are often enhanced by attributes such as shade, seating, and a restroom nearby. Comfort enhances the experience of using a component.
- Convenience** – Convenience encourages people to use a component, which increases the amount of service that it offers. Easy access and the availability of trash receptacles, bike rack, or nearby parking are examples of conveniences that enhance the service provided by a component.
- Ambience** – Simple observation will prove that people are drawn to places that “feel” good. This includes a sense of safety and security, as well as pleasant surroundings, attractive views, and a sense of place. For example, a well-designed park is preferable to poorly-designed one, and this enhances the degree of service provided by the components within it.

Capacity is still part of the LOS analysis and the quantity of each component is recorded as well. By combining and analyzing the overlapping values of each component on a map, it is possible to measure the service provided by a parks and recreation system from a variety of perspectives and for any given location in a study area. Typically this begins with a decision on “**relevant components**” for the analysis, collection of an accurate inventory of those components, analysis and then the results are presented in a series of maps and tables that make up the analysis of the study area.

Data for Analysis and Making Justifiable Decisions

All of the data generated from the GRASP® evaluation is compiled into a digital database that is then available and owned by the agency for use in a variety of ways. In addition to determining LOS, the database can help keep track of facilities and programs, can be used to schedule maintenance or replacement of components, and can be used to project long-term capital and life-cycle costing needs. All portions of the information are in standard available software and can be produced in a variety of ways for future planning or sharing with the public.

It is important to note that GRASP® analysis not only provides accurate LOS and facility inventory information, but also works with and integrates with other tools to help agencies make decisions. It is relatively easy to maintain, updatable, and creates easily understood graphic depictions. Combined with a needs assessment, public and staff involvement, program, and financial assessment, GRASP® analysis allows an agency to make defensible recommendations on priorities for ongoing resource allocation, along with capital and operational funding.

D. Inventory Data Collection Process

A detailed inventory of relevant components for the project is conducted. The inventory locates and catalogues all of the relevant components for the project, and evaluates each one as to how well it was serving its intended function within the system. The planning team first prepares a preliminary list of existing components using aerial photography and the community's Geographic Information System (GIS). Components identified in the aerial photo are given GIS points and names according to a list of standard components.

Next, field visits are conducted by the consulting and project team staff to confirm the preliminary data and collect additional information. Additionally, indoor facilities are scored and for the purposes of this study, each relevant space is considered a component and is scored based on its intended function. During the field visits and evaluations, any missing relevant components are added to the data set, and each component is evaluated as to how well it meets expectations for its intended function. During the site visits the following information is collected:

- Component type and location
- Evaluation of component functionality
- Evaluation of comfort and convenience features
- Evaluation of park design and ambience
- Site photos and general comments

After the inventory is completed, it is given to the project team for final review and approval for accuracy.

E. Standardized Process for Scoring Components

Component Scoring

The approved inventory is the basis for the creation of values used in analysis. Each component received a functionality score that is related to the quality, condition, and ability of the space to meet operational and programming needs.

For the GRASP® process, the range of scores for each component is as follows:

- **Below Expectations (BE)** – The component does not meet the expectations of its intended primary function. Factors leading to this may include size, age, accessibility, or others. Each such component is given a score of **1** in the inventory.
- **Meeting Expectations (ME)** – The component meets expectations for its intended function. Such components are given scores of **2**.
- **Exceeding Expectations (EE)** – The component exceeds expectations, due to size, configuration, or unique qualities. Such components are given scores of **3**.
- If the feature exists but is not useable because it is unsafe, obsolete, or dysfunctional, it may be listed in the feature description, and assigned a **score of zero (0)**.

If a feature is used for multiple purposes, such as a softball field that is also used for T-Ball or youth soccer games, it is scored only once under the description that best fits the use that for which the component is designed.

Neighborhood and Community Scoring

Components are evaluated from two perspectives: first, the value of the component in serving the immediate neighborhood, and second, its value to the entire community.

Neighborhood Score

Each component is evaluated from the perspective of a resident that lives nearby. High scoring components are easily accessible to pedestrians in the neighborhood, are attractive for short and frequent visits, and are unobtrusive to the surrounding neighborhood. Components that do not have a high neighborhood score may not be located within walking distance of residents, may have “nuisance features” such as sports lighting, or may draw large crowds for which parking is not provided.

Community Score

Additionally each component is evaluated from the perspective of residents in the community as a whole. High scoring components in this category may be unique components within the parks and recreation system, have a broad draw from throughout the community, have the capacity and associated facilities for community-wide events, or are located in areas that are accessible only by car.

Indoor Components

Indoor components are generally thought to be accessible to the entire community, partially because it is often not financially feasible to provide indoor facilities at a walking distance from every distance from each residence. Additionally, indoor facilities often provide programs and facilities that are geared to the community as a whole, or in larger communities, are intended

for a region of the community. For these reasons, unless a detailed indoor analysis is completed, indoor facilities are given only one score.

Modifiers (Comfort and Convenience Features) Scoring

Outdoor Modifiers

Besides standard components, this inventory also evaluates features that provide comfort and convenience to the users. These are things that a user might not go to the parks specifically to use, but that may enhance the user's experience by making it a nicer place to be and include: drinking fountains, seating, BBQ grills, dog stations, security lighting, bike parking, restrooms, shade, connections to trails, park access, parking, picnic tables, and seasonal and ornamental plantings. These features are scored as listed above with the 1-3 system. In this case it is not important to get a count of the number or size of these components; instead the score should reflect the ability of the item to serve the park.

Indoor Modifiers

For indoor facilities, the comfort and convenience features change slightly to reflect the characteristics of the building. Building modifier categories include: site access, setting aesthetics, building entry function, building entry aesthetics, overall building condition, entry desk, office space, overall storage, and restrooms and/or locker rooms.

Activity and Sports Lighting

This modifier accounts for lighting that allows for component use in the evening/night hours and is applied to the quantity of the component as it affectively expands the capacity of the component. This modifier does not apply to security lighting.

Shade

Like Activity and Sports lighting, shade can be added to outdoor components to extend use beyond normal hours or seasons.

Design & Ambience Scoring

Using the same rating system that is used for components and modifiers, the quality of Design and Ambience is scored. Good design not only makes a place look nice, it makes it feel safe and pleasant, and encourages people to visit more often and stay longer

Trails and Greenways Scoring

Trails and/or greenways can be scored as independent parcels or as individual components within another parcel. The former type of trail receives its own set of scores for modifiers and design and ambience. The trail in the latter situation takes on the modifiers and design and ambience of the larger park in which it resides. Multi-use trails are assumed to consist of three components including one active component, one passive component, and the parcel itself. Because traveling the length of any given trail is time consuming, trail information is often collected with the aid of staff.

For the purposes of most studies, a list of trails is obtained to provide a reasonable dataset that offers some park and recreational value to the public. While no specific listing of components at each greenway or trail is generated, it is assumed that each greenway provides a value equivalent to three (3) components. Think of these as one active component (walking, running, biking, etc.), one passive

component (quiet contemplation along the trail), and one experiential component (observing nature, perhaps art and interpretive signage).

These three components and the parcel are assumed to be meeting the expectations (scores 2) of the community in the same way that park components meet expectations. The other parts to the GRASP® score relate to the comfort and design of the location, and are called modifiers. The aesthetic and recreational standards for greenways are typically similar to those for parks, so modifiers at greenways are generally assigned a value of meeting expectations (score 2). Multi-use trails that typically are adjacent to major roads are assumed to have less aesthetic and recreational standards and are therefore assigned a value of below expectations (score 1). The final component in the GRASP® score is the ownership modifier. This is a percentage that is applied to the score that relates to the general public's ability to access the facility.

This translates into the following formula for calculating the GRASP® score:

Trails or Greenway Scoring

(Component number + Parcel) x Component score x (Comfort x Design) x ownership = GRASP® score or
 $(3 + 1) \times 2 \times 2.2 \times 1 = 17.6$

Multi-Use Trail Scoring

(Component number + Parcel) x Component score x (Comfort x Design) x ownership = GRASP® score or
 $(3 + 1) \times 2 \times 1.1 \times 1 = 8.8$

In the GRASP® Perspectives t, that value is assigned to the location where each trail is found and buffered accordingly. This value also is included in computations for the GRASP® Indices that are calculated along with each Perspective.

Ownership Modifier

This modifier is generally weighted with a percentage that is applied to the GRASP® score after other modifiers have been applied. It accounts for access and control of components that are provided by alternative providers. For example, in most cases components that are owned and managed by schools are given a 50% weighted ownership modifier, which halves the GRASP® score to account for the limited access that the neighborhood has to school facilities (it's only open to the public outside of school hours).

F. Calculating GRASP® Functional Scores

Once the components are inventoried and scored, calculations can be made for any combination of components to derive average scores, scores per combinations of various components, scores per sub-areas, etc., depending on the key issues being studied and objectives for the project. These are very helpful for analyzing area comparisons and setting of target scores for component service and agency target standards.

For example, a total composite GRASP® score for each individual component is determined by using the following formula:

$$\text{(total component score) x (adjusted modifier score) x (design and ambiance score) x (ownership modifier) = Composite GRASP® Score}$$

These individual scores can be additively combined in various ways to examine service from various subsets of the agency's system.

G. GRASP® Perspectives and Target Threshold Scores

GRASP® scores are often used to create analysis maps to show how the study area is being served for parks and recreation benefits. These maps are called Perspectives, because each one provides a certain perspective on the way service is being provided. Types of Perspectives include heat maps, threshold maps, and composition maps, as well as others.

On heat maps, the numerical value of LOS available to a person at any given location is represented by an orange tone. Where the tone is darker, the available LOS is higher. Locations on the map with no orange tone (i.e a grey tone) have no service. Heat maps can be produced from any set of components in the inventory. For example, if the intent is to measure the relative LOS available for seniors, then a heat map can be generated using only those components in the inventory that relate to seniors.

Heat maps can be further analyzed to determine where the LOS on them falls above or below a certain threshold. The threshold may vary, and can be set to represent an assumed "target" value for LOS, or can be the median, average, or other value for the Perspective. On the threshold maps, colors are used to show whether any given location is above or below the threshold value.

The types of Perspectives used to analyze and depict the community's LOS will depend upon the key issues being studied.

Typical and Standard GRASP® Perspectives

Below are some types of Perspectives typically used to analyze service in an area.

Neighborhood Composite

This Perspective depicts service from a neighborhood point of view. Multiple buffers (or "catchment areas") are used to reflect multiple ways of travelling to reach components. The threshold for this Perspective is typically the value that results from being within 1/2 mile of 4 recreation components and one recreational trail.

Walkability (same as Neighborhood Composite but with only 1/2 mile buffers)

The threshold scores for this Perspective are normally the same as for the Neighborhood Composite.

Component-Specific Analysis

The threshold here is equivalent to being within 1/2 mile of the selected component, and assumes that the component, modifiers, and design and ambiance are meeting expectations.

Note: Aside from meeting a single goal, the mix of components also needs to be considered. For example, a home that is within 1/2 mile away from four tennis courts and no other amenities would meet the basic numeric standard, but not the intent of the standard. Component Specific Analyses can examine one single type of component or an array of types to analyze the mix of options available to residents.

H. GRASP® Project Technical Standards for GIS Data

The GRASP® Team utilizes the most up to date computer hardware and software to produce and enhance project-based GIS data. The following technical details are standard with all GRASP® Team projects.

- All GRASP® Team GIS workstations employ Microsoft® Windows® operating systems. All project files conform to PC-based architecture and extension naming standards.
- The GRASP® Team employs ESRI® ArcGIS™ 10.2 for all GIS applications. Final project GIS data is submitted to the client in Microsoft® Access™-based Geodatabase (*.mdb) Feature Class format and/or Shapefile (*.shp/*.dbf/*.shx) format. ArcMap™ Layer files (*.lyr) are submitted to ease client replication of all project map legend formats. The GRASP® Team will not resubmit original client source data that has not undergone enhancement.
- All final GIS datasets (deliverables) are submitted to the client using the geographic coordinate system(s) from the original client source data. The GRASP® team will assign a coordinate system that is most appropriate for the client location if the client does not require a predetermined standard coordinate system. Most GRASP® project data is submitted in State Plane Coordinates (Feet) with a NAD83/NAD83 HARN datum.
- All GRASP® Perspectives and Resource Maps (deliverables) are submitted to the client in standard PDF and JPEG formats. The project PDFs are high resolution, print-ready files for scalable print operations. Most project map-based PDFs are 300dpi, 24" x 36" images. The project JPEGs are lower resolution digital presentation-ready files for insertion into Microsoft® Office® productivity suite applications – MS Word®, MS Power Point®, etc. Most project map-based JPEGs are 300dpi 4"x6" images.

Project Deliverables and Future Use

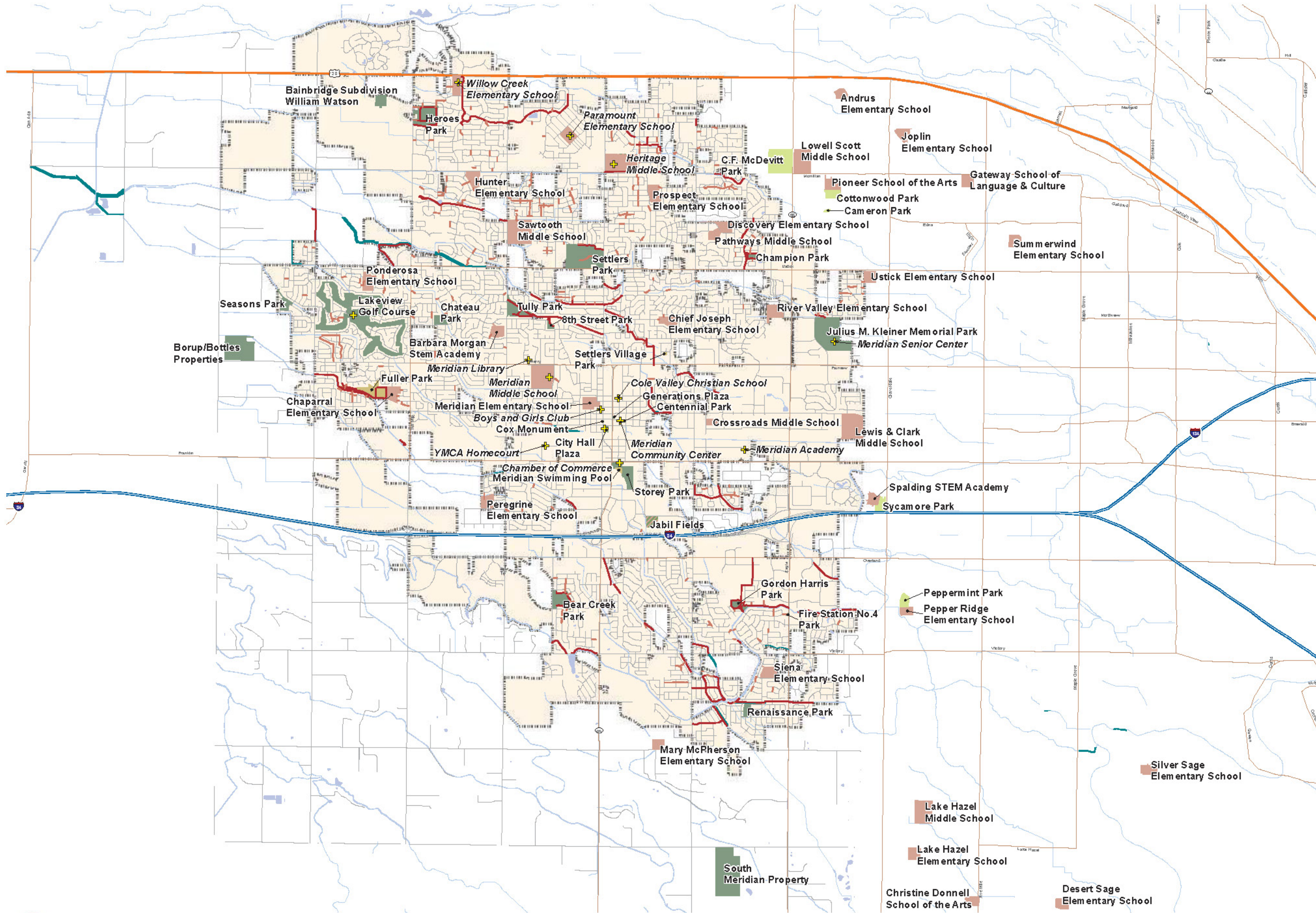
All information and deliverables are transmitted "as-is" to fulfill specific tasks identified in a scope of services for a contract. While these may be useful for other purposes, no warranties or other assurances are made that the deliverables are ready for such use. The database can be modified to add, change, or delete information as needed by personnel trained in use of these standard software applications. For example, if new parks or facilities are constructed, the components of these may be added to the database to keep it current. The database may also be queried in a variety of ways to produce tables, charts, or reports for use in operations, management, and planning or other agency tasks. Such modification, updating, reformatting, or other preparation for other purposes is the sole responsibility of the client.

Similarly, the database information can be used to prepare a variety of maps and analysis perspectives using GIS software. Such use by the client is beyond the scope of a single contract, and no warranties or assurances are made that the deliverables are ready or intended for such future use. If desired, the GRASP® Team can make such modifications, and/or prepare additional or updated maps or Perspectives upon request for a negotiated fee.

The **GRASP®** name for the methodology for analysis is proprietary, but the component based process is generic and the software used is common and typical for most agencies. The data and information collected is owned and can be updated and managed by the agency for ongoing usage

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Appendix G – Level of Service Analysis Maps



Legend

- + Indoor Facility
- Meridian Property
- Bureau of Reclamation Property
- Boise Property
- Joint-Use School Property
- School Property
- WARD Property

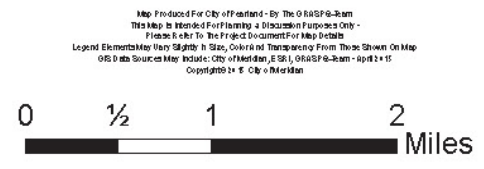
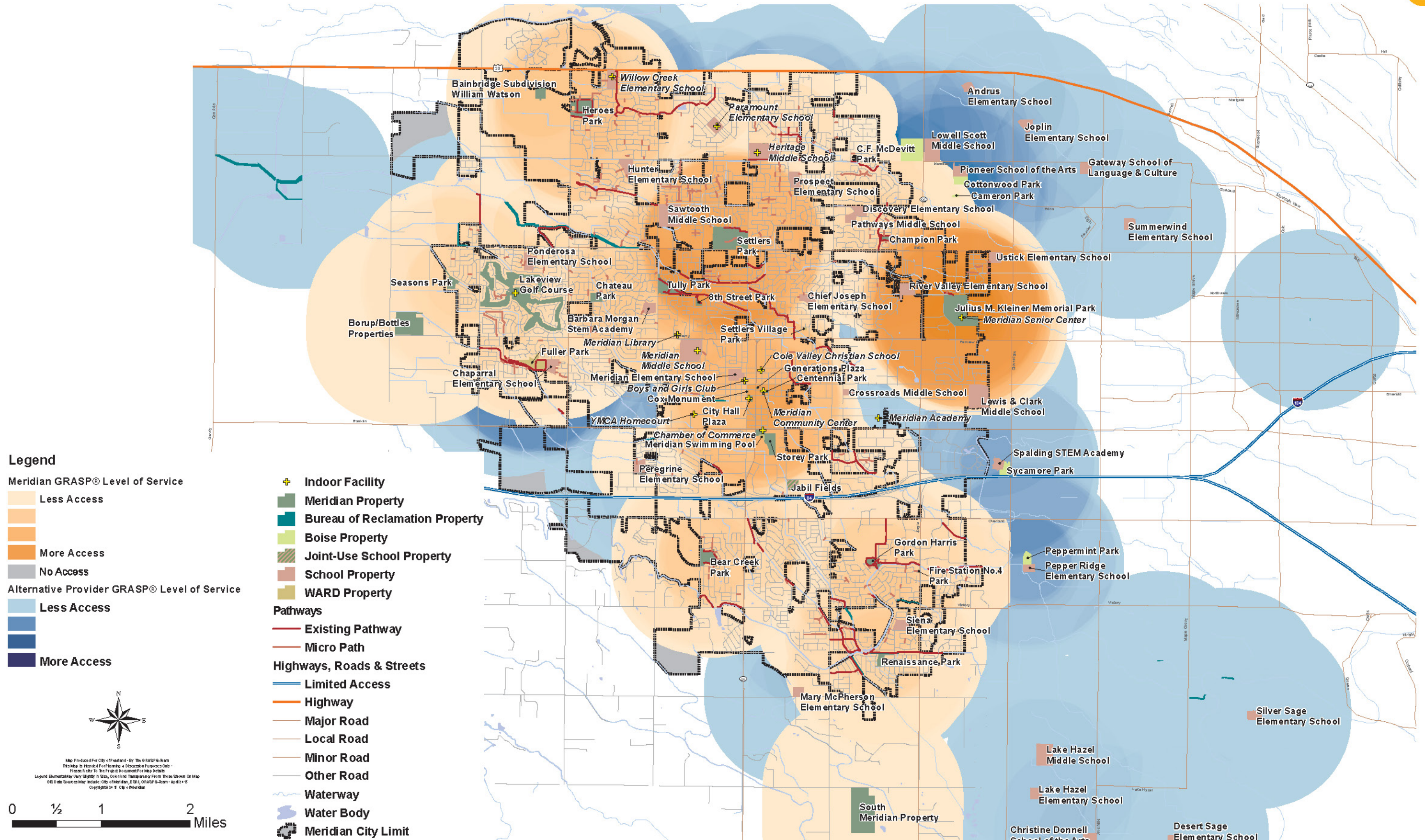
Pathways

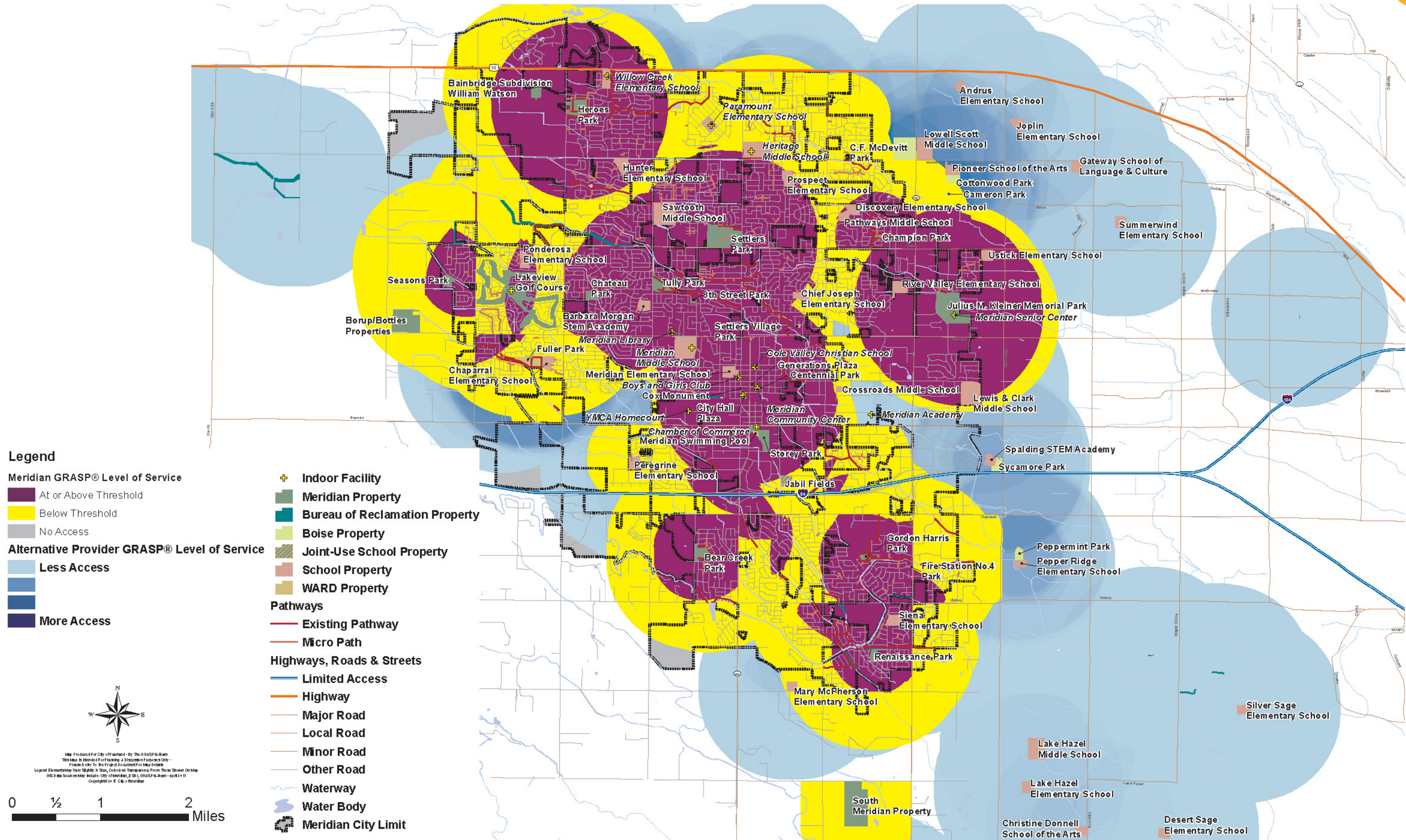
- Existing Pathway
- Micro Path

Highways, Roads & Streets

- Limited Access
- Highway
- Major Road
- Local Road
- Minor Road
- Other Road
- ~ Waterway
- Water Body
- Meridian City Limit

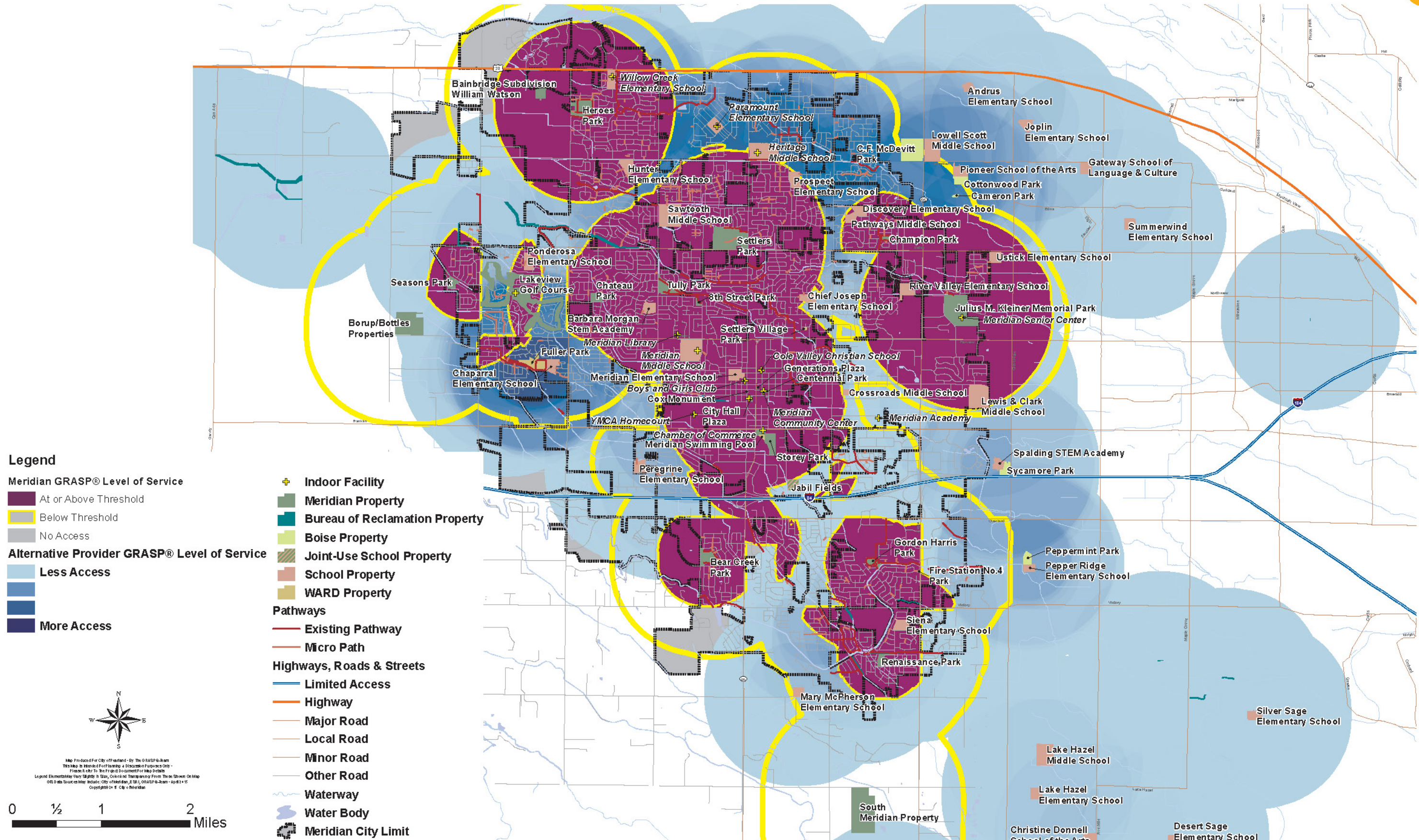
Map Prepared For City of Meridian - By The GRASP Team
 This Map is Intended For Planning & Discussion Purposes Only -
 Please Refer to The Project's Location For Map Details
 Legend Elements May Vary Slightly in Size, Color and Transparency From Those Shown On Map
 GRASP & SourceMap Inc. City of Meridian, ID 83401 GRASP Team - April 14, 2015
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Map Produced For City of Meridan - By The GRASP Team
 This Map is Intended For Planning & Discussion Purposes Only -
 Please Refer To The Project Document For Map Details
 Legend Elements May Vary Slightly In Size, Color or Transparency From Those Shown On Map
 GIS Data Sources May Include: City of Meridan, ESRI, GRASP Team - July 11, 15
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Legend

Meridan GRASP® Level of Service

- At or Above Threshold
- Below Threshold
- No Access

Alternative Provider GRASP® Level of Service

- Less Access
- More Access

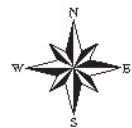
- Indoor Facility
- Meridan Property
- Bureau of Reclamation Property
- Boise Property
- Joint-Use School Property
- School Property
- WARD Property

Pathways

- Existing Pathway
- Micro Path

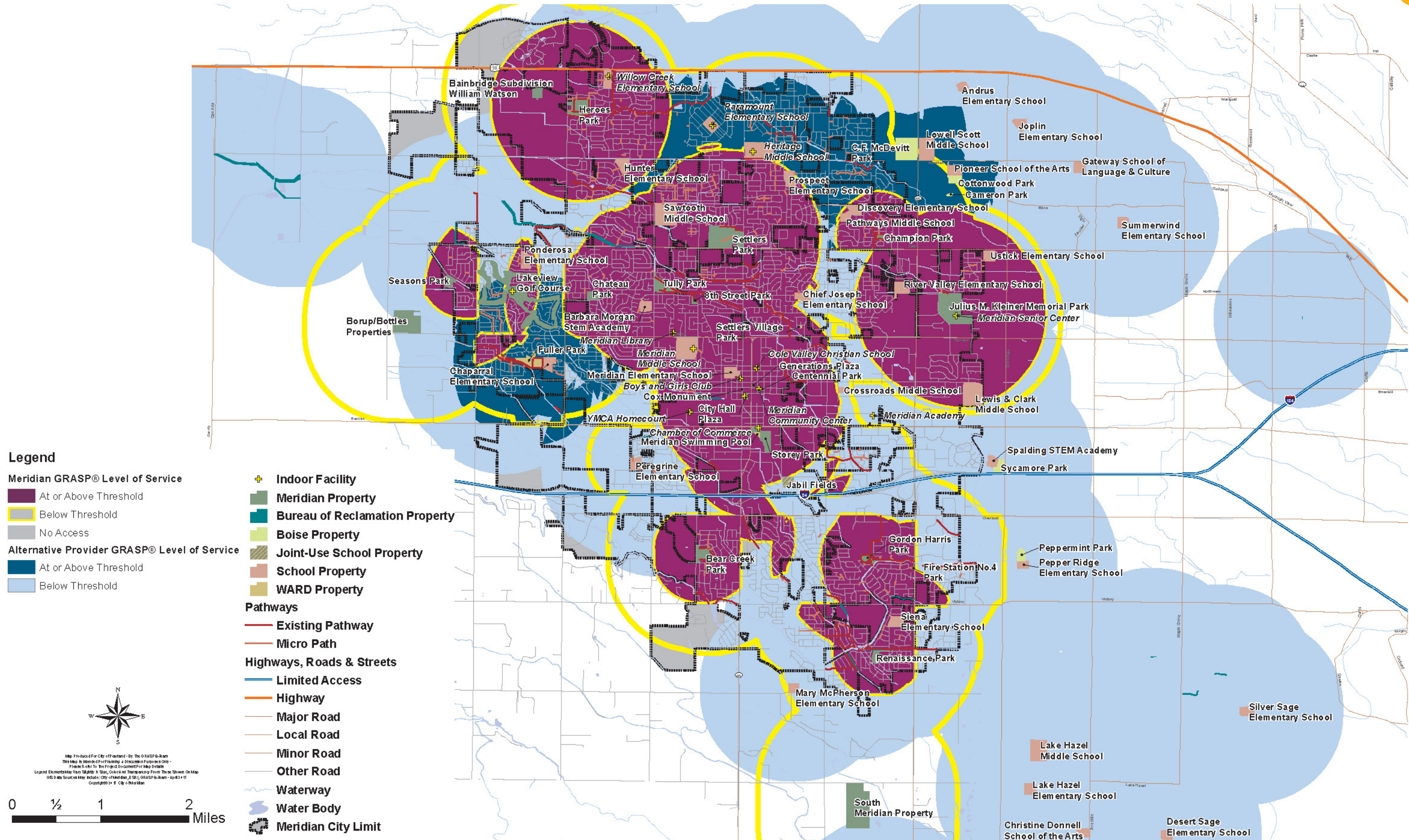
Highways, Roads & Streets

- Limited Access
- Highway
- Major Road
- Local Road
- Minor Road
- Other Road
- Waterway
- Water Body
- Meridan City Limit



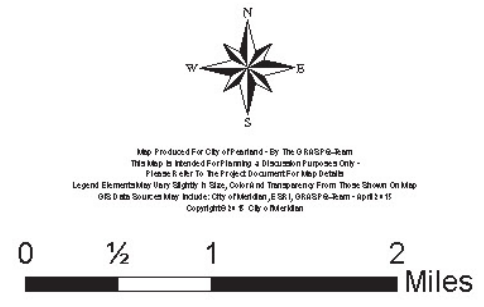
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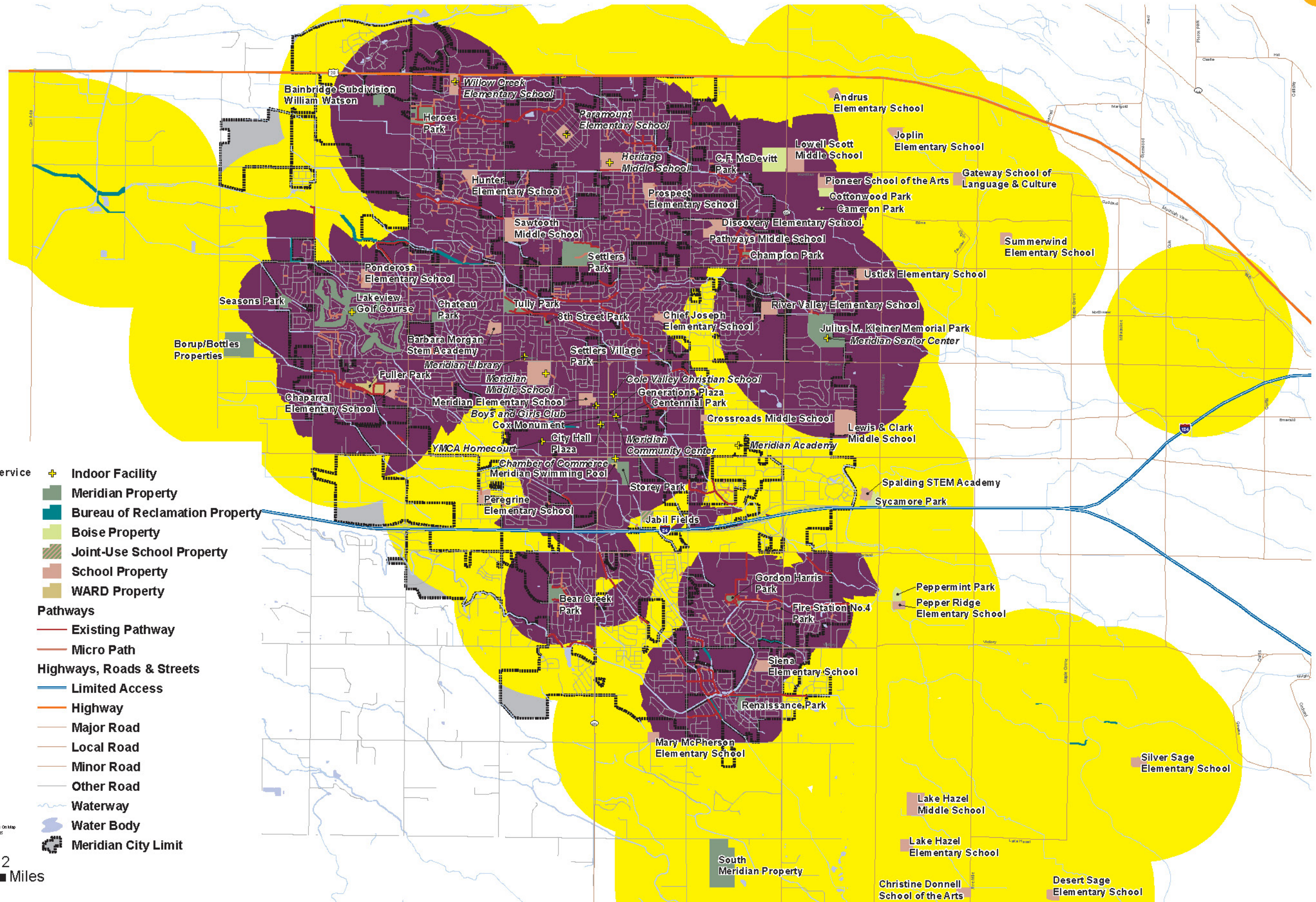




- Legend**
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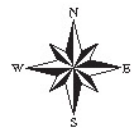
Pathways

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- Micro Path

Highways, Roads & Streets

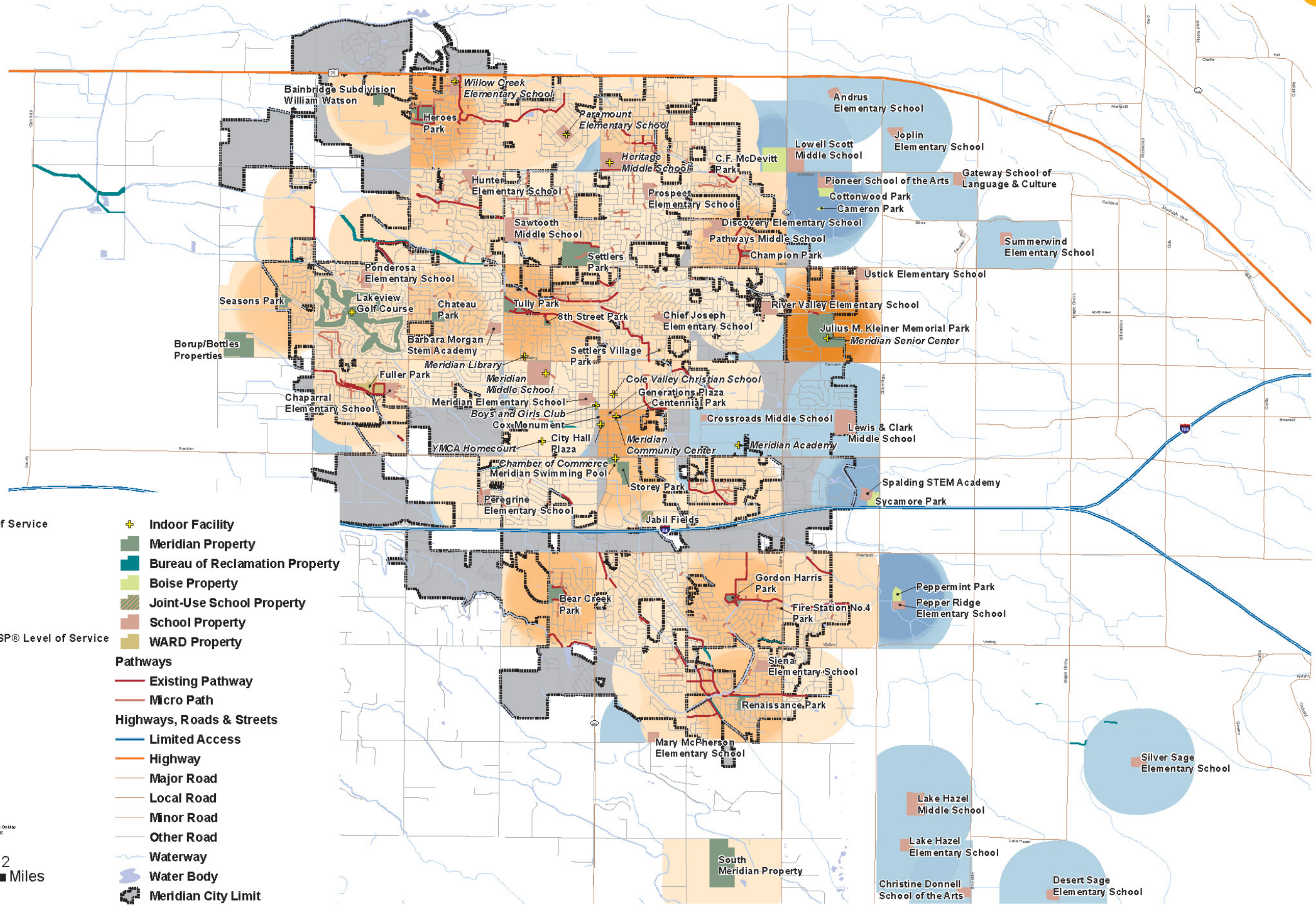
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Alternative Provider GRASP® Level of Service

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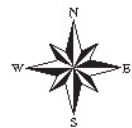
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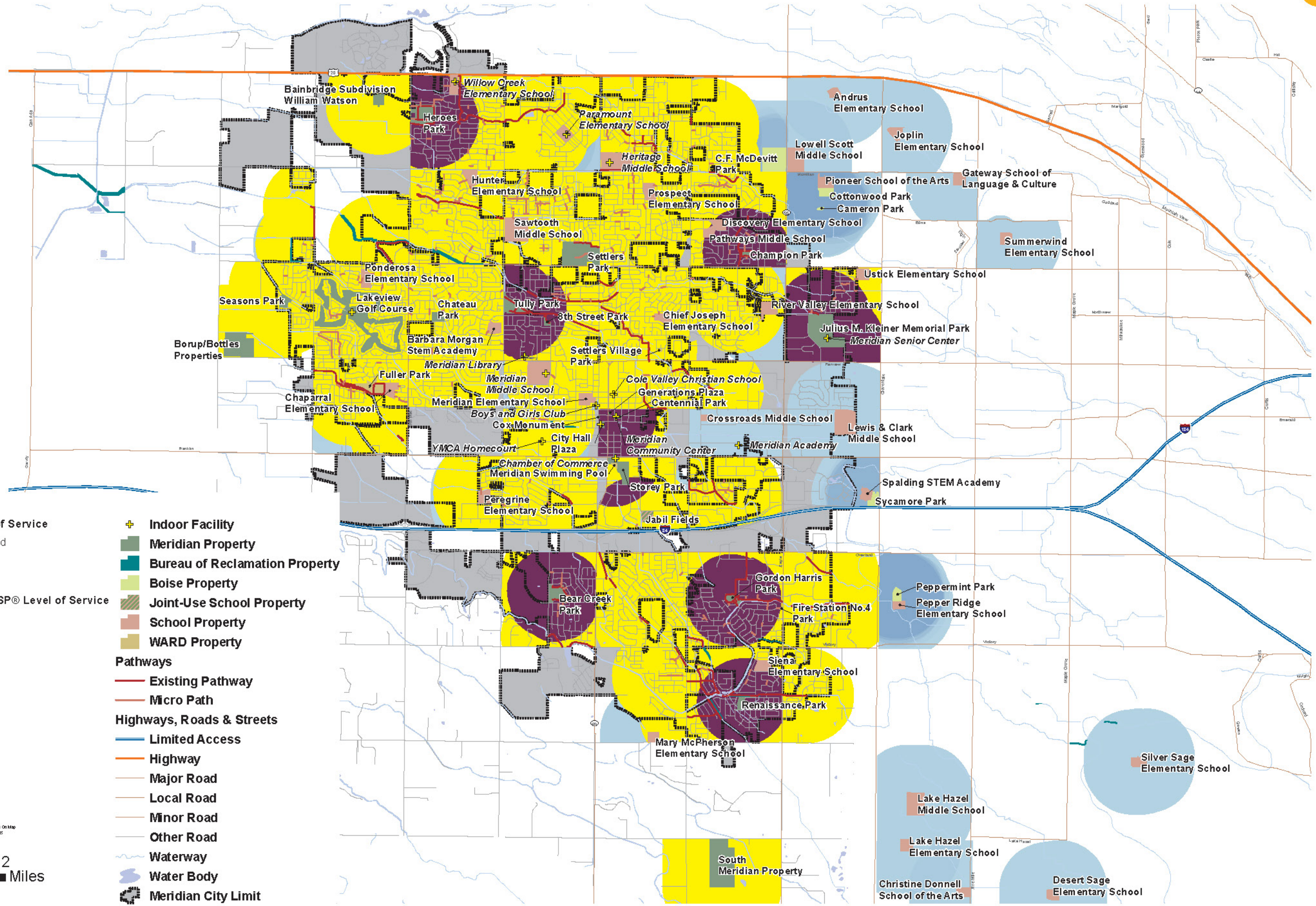
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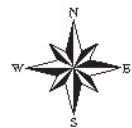
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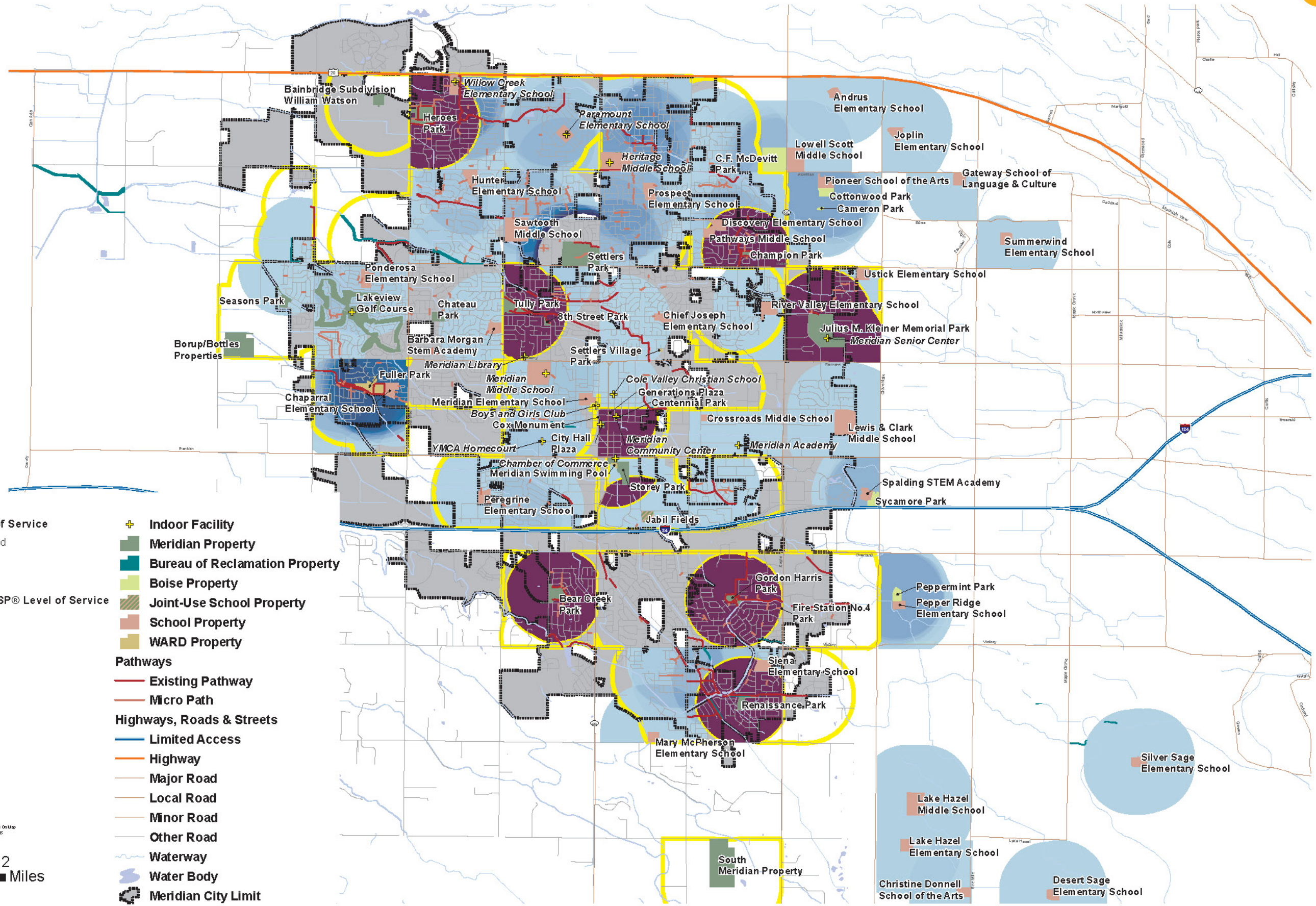
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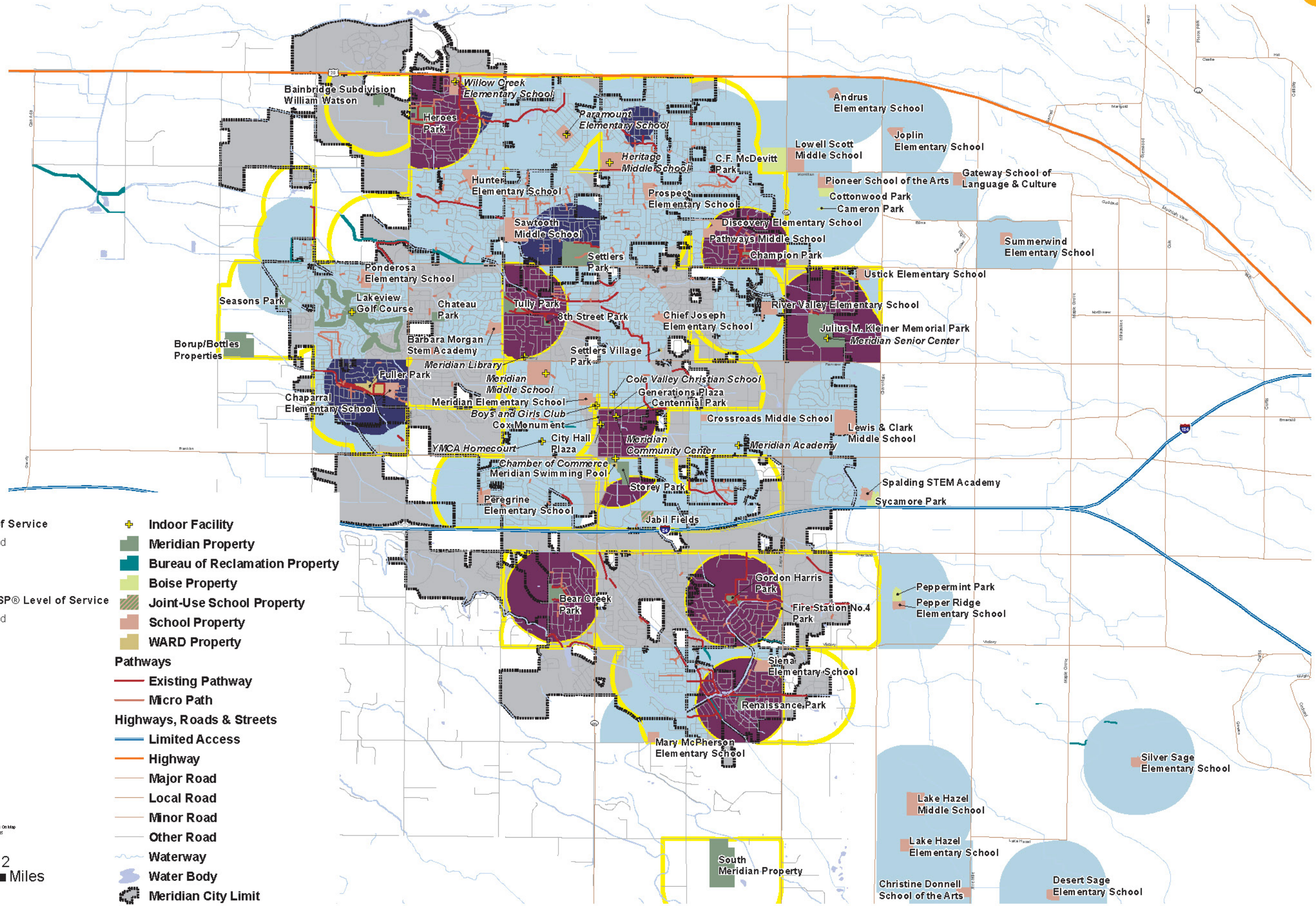
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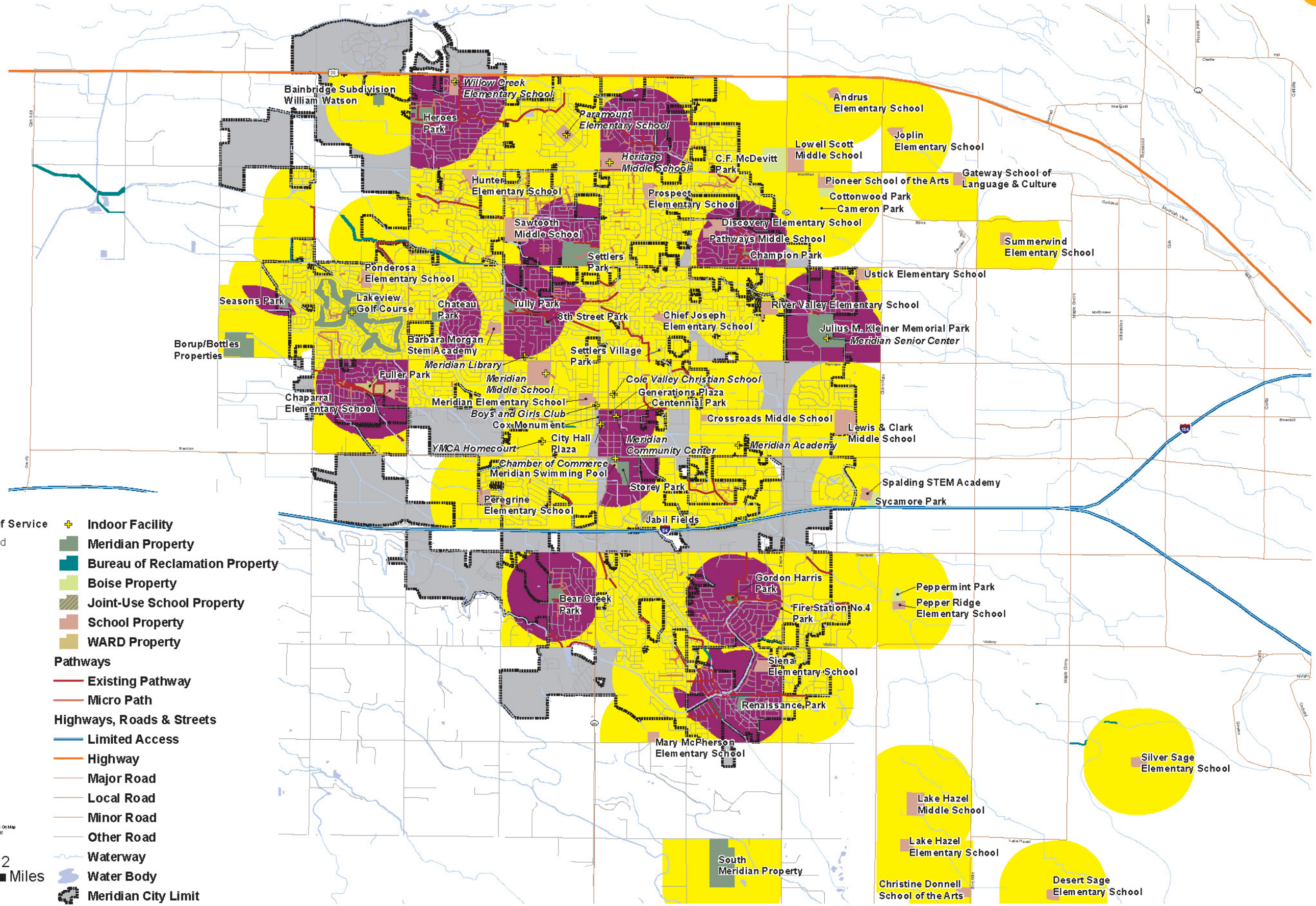
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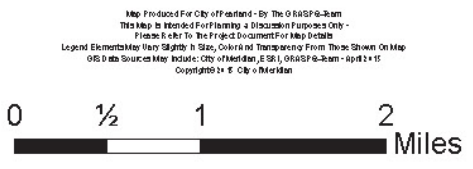
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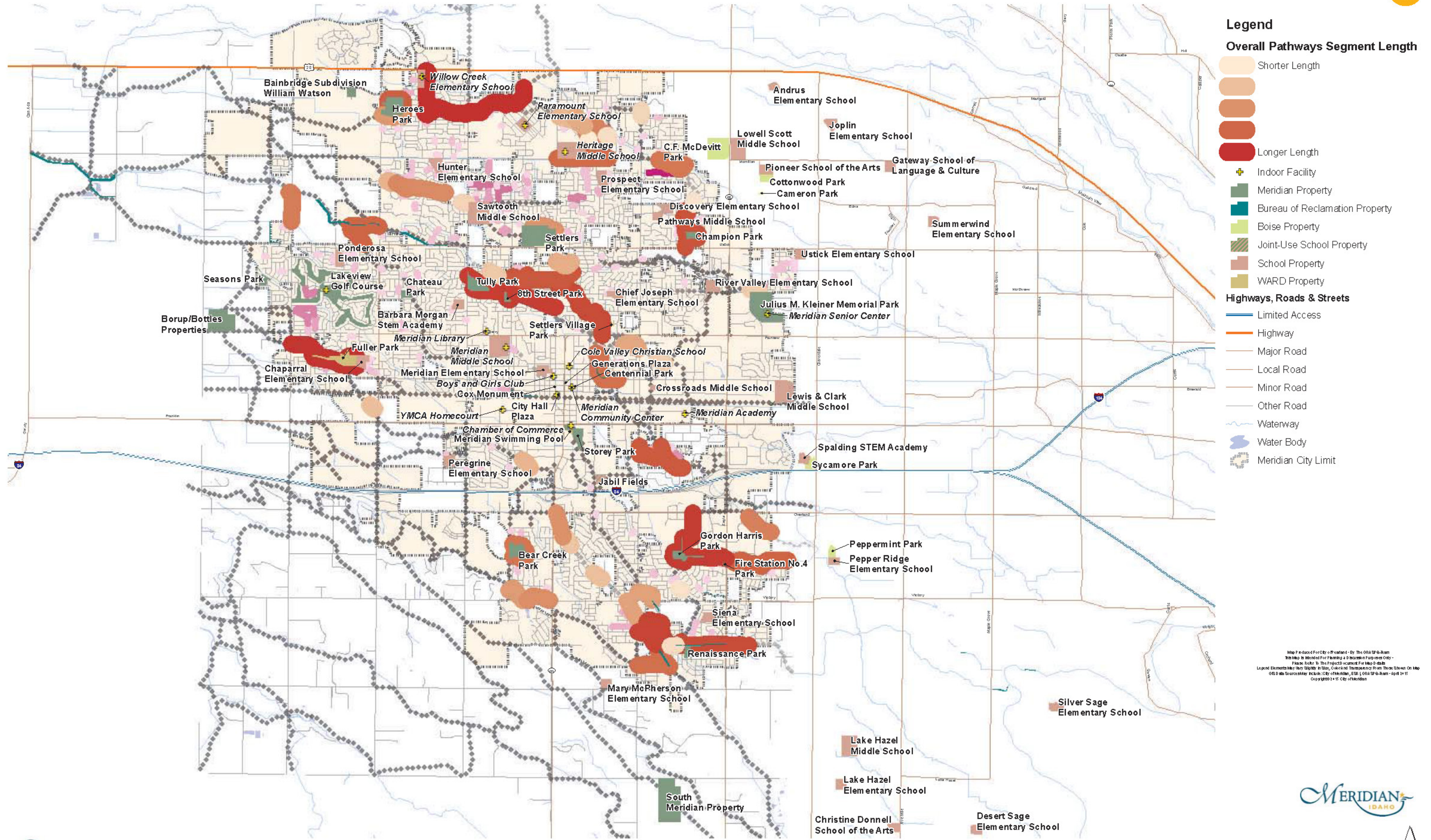




Legend

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| Meridian GRASP® Level of Service | Indoor Facility |
| At or Above Threshold | Meridian Property |
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| | Local Road |
| | Minor Road |
| | Other Road |
| | Waterway |
| | Water Body |
| | Meridian City Limit |





Legend

Overall Pathways Segment Length

- Shorter Length
- Medium Length
- Longer Length

- Indoor Facility
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Appendix H – Strategic Goals for Urban Forestry

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Strategic goals as identified in Section III, pp. 4-5 of the Urban Forestry chapter are included below, with additional detail, recommended action items, and estimated timeframe to complete.

Timeframe to complete is designated as:

- Short-term (up to 3 years)
- Mid-term (4-6 years)
- Long-term (7-10 years)

Goal 1: Define a Vision/Direction for Meridian Urban Forestry

| Objective 1.1: <i>Anticipate a change in leadership and facilitate a smooth leadership transition</i> | | |
|---|---|------------------------------|
| Actions | | Timeframe to Complete |
| 1.1.a | Define skill set of future City Arborist. | Short-Term |
| 1.1.b | Document existing data; current procedures and practices. | Short-Term |
| Objective 1.2: <i>Continue to provide a high level of service</i> | | |
| Actions | | Timeframe to Complete |
| 1.2.a | Retain a Certified Arborist on staff. | Ongoing |
| 1.2.b | Continue to respond to forestry-related calls from the community. | Ongoing |
| 1.2.c | Risk management to remain a top priority. | Ongoing – Mid-Term |
| 1.2.d | Review and comment on development applications relative to tree mitigation. | Ongoing |
| 1.2.e | Provide regular updates to Parks and Recreation Commission to share progress and successes (quarterly). | Ongoing |
| 1.2.f | Provide updates to Meridian Development Corporation on state of urban forest in downtown core (biannually). | Ongoing |

Goal 2: Strengthen Approach to Management of the Urban Forest

| Objective 2.1 <i>Use GIS data on existing urban forest as a primary management tool</i> | | |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| Actions | | Timeframe to Complete |
| 2.1.a | Complete GIS tree inventory. | Short-Term |
| 2.1.b | Provide additional staff training in Forestry-specific GIS program / Treeworks™ software to maximize effectiveness of this tool. | Mid-Term |

Goal 3: Evaluate Impacts of Projected Park System Expansion on Urban Forestry

| Objective 3.1: <i>Conduct annual assessment during the budget development process to determine staffing needs.</i> | | |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| Actions | | Timeframe to Complete |
| 3.1.a | Determine thresholds/triggers for hiring of staff that will allow Urban Forestry to maintain current level of service. | Short-Term |
| 3.1.b | Relate these thresholds/triggers to forest size(# of trees). | Short-Term |
| Objective 3.2: <i>Conduct annual assessment during the budget development process to determine maintenance equipment needs</i> | | |
| Actions | | Timeframe to Complete |
| 3.2.a | Assess need for replacement equipment. | Short-Term |
| 3.2.b | Assess need for any new equipment due to increase in volume or scope of in-house maintenance work. | Short-Term |

Goal 4: Guarantee the Present and Future Health of the Urban Forest

| Objective 4.1 <i>Ensure diversity</i> | | |
|---|---|------------------------------|
| Actions | | Timeframe to Complete |
| 4.1.a | Maintain diversity of tree species in urban forest. | Ongoing |
| 4.1.b | Maintain diversity of tree age in urban forest. | Ongoing |
| 4.1.c | Use GIS database as tool to manage for diversity. | Ongoing |
| Objective 4.2: <i>Implement standards for tree planting</i> | | |
| Actions | | Timeframe to Complete |
| 4.2.a | Adjust standards to achieve larger tree planting areas to ensure strong root growth, canopy development, and long life. | Ongoing |
| 4.2.b | Ensure proper planting techniques per ANSI standards. | Ongoing |
| 4.2.c | Institute guidelines for proper tree selection so that tree habit & culture are suited to planting location. | Ongoing |
| 4.2.d | Create and maintain an approved list of tree contractors. | Short-Term |

| Objective 4.3: <i>Anticipate pests and other potential threats to forest health so as to minimize future impacts</i> | | |
|--|---|------------------------------|
| Actions | | Timeframe to Complete |
| 4.3.a | Stay current with Urban Forestry trends, including the effects of climate change on the urban forest, by attending conferences and networking with other arborists. | Ongoing |
| 4.3.b | Provide close tracking and management of pests through GIS and other tools. | Mid-Term |
| 4.3.c | Institute chemical control programs as necessary. | Mid-Term |

Goal 5: Maintain and Promote the Kleiner Arboretum as a Community Asset

| Objective 5.1: <i>Develop strategic management plan</i> | | |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| Actions | | Timeframe to Complete |
| 5.1.a | Continue working with CWI horticulture student, with supplemental input from local experts, to complete this plan. | Short-Term |
| 5.1.b | Generate budget projections to fund future improvements and ongoing specialized maintenance. | Short-Term |
| 5.1.c | Form and solicit a community group to operate the Arboretum, similar to that of the community garden. | Mid-Term |
| Objective 5.2: <i>Celebrate and raise awareness of the arboretum as a community and regional resource</i> | | |
| Actions | | Timeframe to Complete |
| 5.2.a | Increase marketing and outreach efforts. | Short-Term |
| 5.2.b | Enhance signage and interpretation for more interactive visitor experience on multiple levels. | Mid-Long Term |
| 5.2.c | Partner with area colleges, universities, and K-12 schools to provide education and receive support. | Ongoing |
| Objective 5.3: <i>Provide higher-level, specialized maintenance</i> | | |
| Actions | | Timeframe to Complete |
| 5.3.a | Provide staff training, specific to arboretum needs. | Mid-Term |
| 5.3.b | Train volunteers as a maintenance resource. | Mid-Term |

Goal 6: Preserve Strong Relationship with the Community/ Seek Additional Opportunities for Education and Outreach

| Objective 6.1: <i>Involve City Arborist in public education and other forestry-related events</i> | | |
|---|---|------------------------------|
| Actions | | Timeframe to Complete |
| 6.1.a | Continue to respond to forestry-related calls from the community. | Ongoing |
| 6.1.b | Offer tree pruning classes, and others on related subject matter. | Mid-Term |
| 6.1.c | Partner with ACHD to work with Homeowners Associations to meet standards for tree limb height over sidewalks. | Mid-Term |
| 6.1.d | Remain a Tree City, USA. | Ongoing |

Goal 7: Revise City Policy as Necessary to Strengthen Urban Forestry

| Objective 7.1: <i>Periodically review and update forestry ordinance</i> | | |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| Actions | | Timeframe to Complete |
| 7.1.a | Update existing forestry ordinance to reflect changes to industry or national standards, including Terms, Definitions, Best Practices, or other changes as required to maintain current standards of practice. | Ongoing-Mid-Term |
| Objective 7.2: <i>Be a sustainability leader</i> | | |
| Actions | | Timeframe to Complete |
| 7.2.a | Consider revisions to City Ordinance to address relationship of urban street tree plantings to stormwater management and encourage use of Green Stormwater Infrastructure. | Short-Term |
| 7.2.b | Consider revisions to City Ordinance to reference existing plans or study data relative to street trees, stormwater, and/or other infrastructure. | Short-Term |

Goal 8: Continue to Offer and Develop Special Programs Related to Urban Forestry

| Objective 8.1: <i>Continue City Christmas Tree program</i> | | |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| Actions | | Timeframe to Complete |
| 8.1.a | Ensure adequate stock for Christmas Tree Program | Ongoing |
| 8.2.a | Provide temporary, accessible growing space for donated trees | Ongoing |
| Objective 8.2 <i>Support and develop new programs to enhance Meridian’s Urban Forest</i> | | |
| Actions | | Timeframe to Complete |
| 8.2.a | Continue current programs with Idaho Power, ACHD, MDC, and West Ada School District. | Ongoing |
| 8.2.b | When developing new programs, seek community support first, then follow through with City budgeting process to determine staffing impacts and necessary funding. | Mid- to Long-Term |

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Appendix I – Future Park Concept Plans

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SOUTH MERIDIAN REGIONAL PARK

77 ACRES

CONCEPT STATEMENT:

This park will be devoted to active recreation, similar to a Settlers Park, with theming and design elements that will reinforce a unique identity for a south Meridian regional park. A destination softball complex, illuminated for nighttime play and with the capacity to host area tournaments, will be part of this identity. Theming elements may include: planting design to evoke the native sageland area to the north (for non-irrigated turf areas), and also integrated art works to dovetail with local history and culture.

PROGRAM ELEMENTS:

- Diamond ball fields – 4 or 5. Sufficient to host tournament play.
- Fishing Pond/ Surface Irrigation Water Storage – Locate on north side. Size - approx. 1-2 acres.
- Restroom Buildings – 3
- 50-60 acres of turf grass -- estimated
- Parking 700-750 spaces – consider layout to minimize walking distance to amenities so as to preclude users from parking on area roadways. (Estimated parking requirements were increased during conceptual design process).
- Integrate drop-off zones with parking lots
- Primary vehicular access from north off Lake Hazel Road
- Potential for future roadway along east and south property lines. This would be ideal. Would likely also include streetside parallel parking.
- Rectangular ball-fields -- flexible, adaptable -- for soccer, lacrosse, other.
- Significant destination playground
- Minor splash pad – complementary to playground. Shall have a one-pass water system – no re-circ., waste to pond (needed adjacency). Shall be smaller than splash pad planned as part of nearby YMCA.
- Pathways – Provide hierarchy of, to include a loop within the park, plus other options for circulation and exercise. Consider including distance information for loops.
- Large Picnic Shelter – 1 shelter, 200-400 person capacity. Partitionable, if possible. Playground adjacency important.
- Small picnic shelters – 3 shelters, 20'x20' approx.
- Maintenance yard -- Fenced. With garage structure and material storage bins. ½-acre yard min.
- Dog area – off-leash, fenced. 1-2 acres; consider a completely nonliving surface with plenty of shade.
- Shade structures – located strategically, to maximize shade. Provide strong relationships to playgrounds, spectator areas, etc.

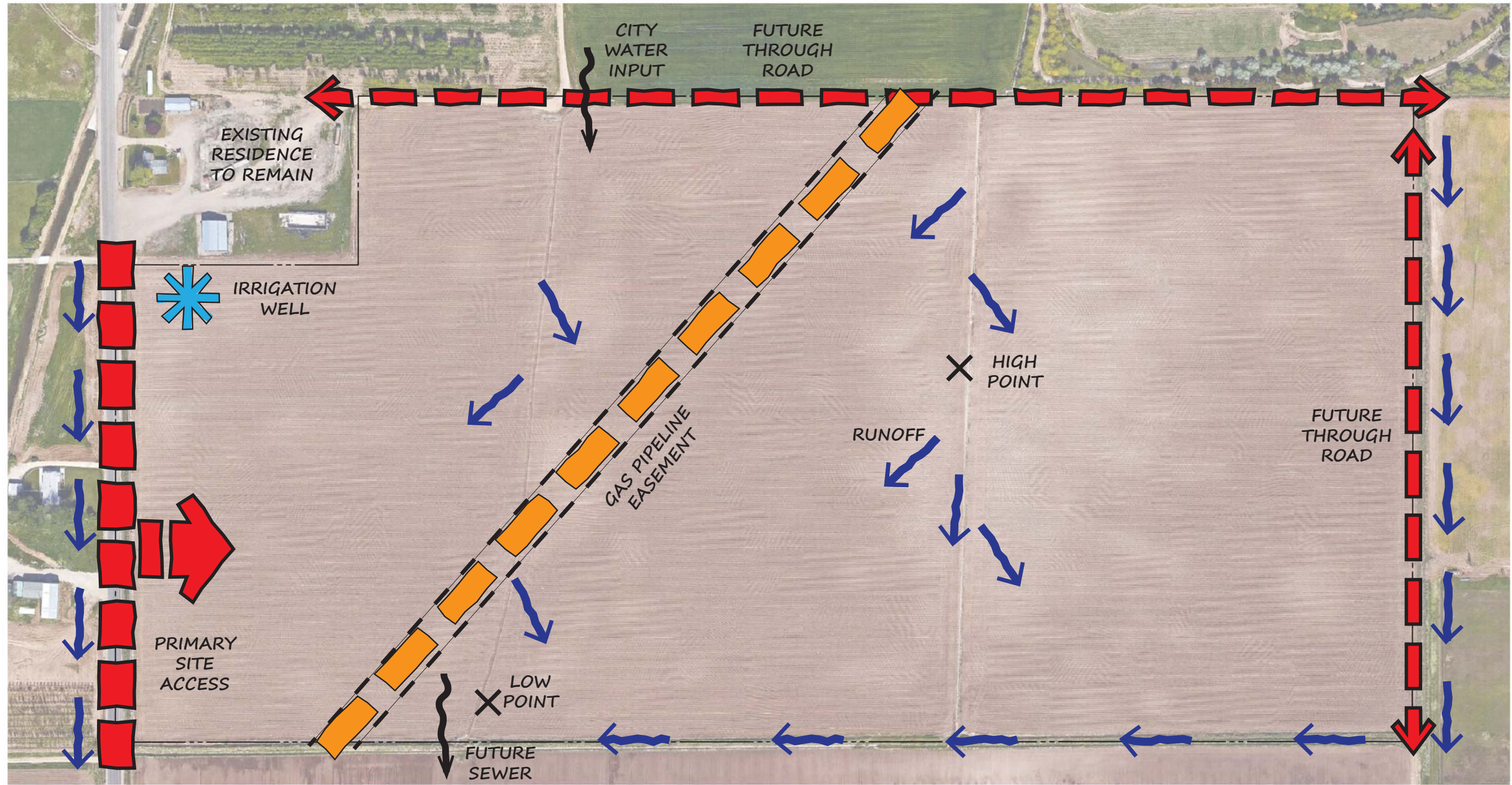
POSSIBLE PROGRAM ELEMENTS:

- Disc golf – this site could be an option for year-round disc golf course.
- Tennis Courts – If included, should be dual-use, and striped for pickle ball as well.
- Possibility of public works well site – would include small well/pump house

GENERAL NOTES/ OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- It is anticipated this property will be developed ahead of or in tandem with adjacent housing, to avoid complications of coming in later with a lighted softball complex.
- A septic system will be installed initially, with eventual tie-in to city sewer when development reaches the area.
- Irrigation well located at northeast part of site, near existing residence.
- Gas line – identified as the Pipeline Trail corridor – traverses site. Limitations as to what amenities may be located over this utility easement. No major excavation, no footings or foundations, hand-digging required.
- Nampa-Meridian Irrigation District
- Tom Roy/ IYSA – Potential partnership with Idaho Youth Soccer Association for ballfield development and use.
- City water – currently exists at LDS Church to the east. Will be routed from that general area.
- Irrigation Water info:

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| EXIST. SURFACE WATER = | 540 GPM – not continuous |
| <u>GROUNDWATER WELL =</u> | <u>750 GPM</u> |
| TOTAL | 1300 GPM – approximate |



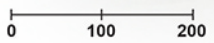
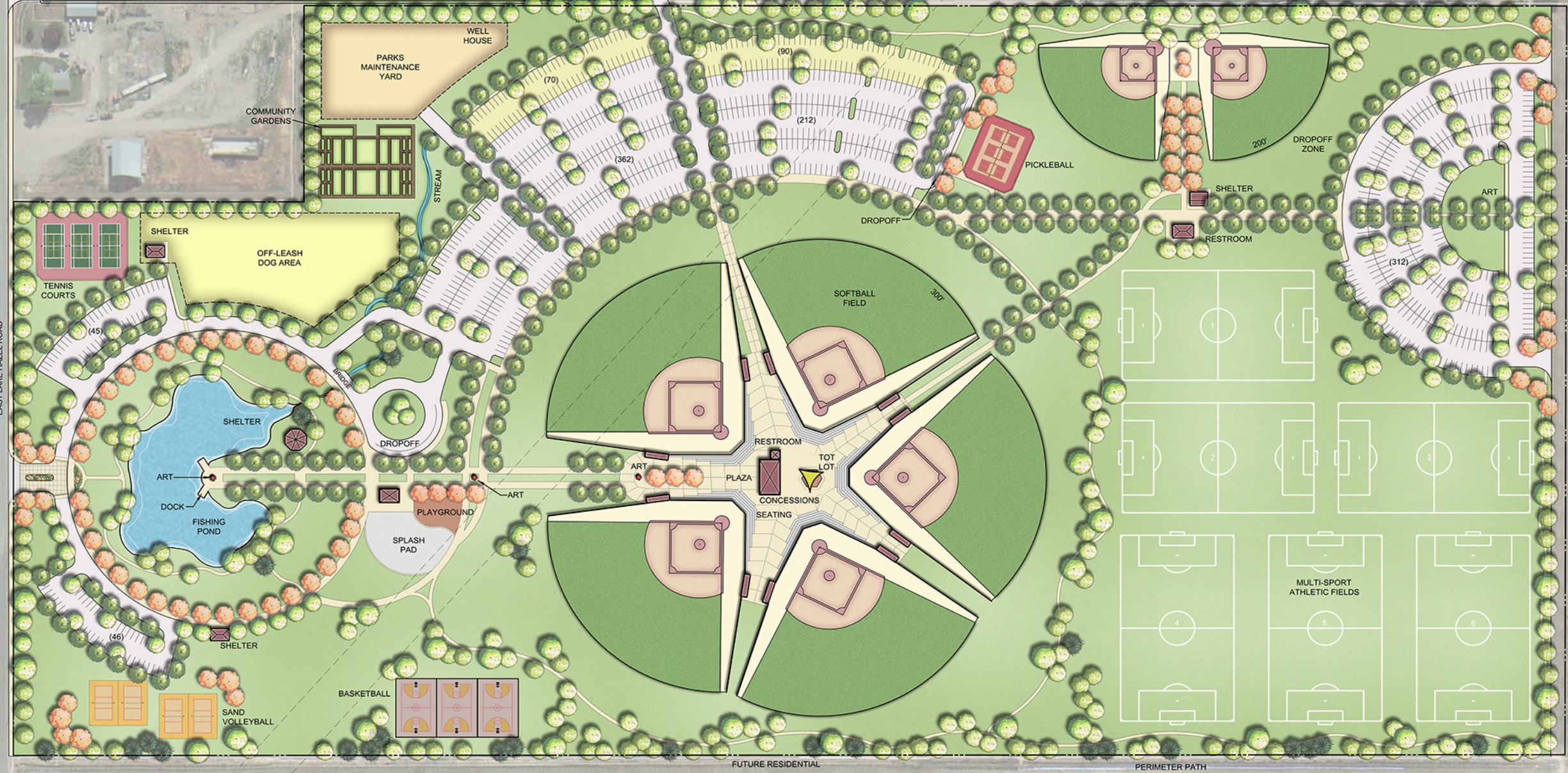
GENERAL NOTES:
 IRRIGATION WATER INFORMATION:
 Existing Surface Water = 540 GPM- not continuous
 Groundwater Well = 750 GPM
 Total = 1300 GPM- approximate



South Meridian Site
 Meridian Parks & Recreation
 Meridian, Idaho 83642

Site Inventory & Analysis





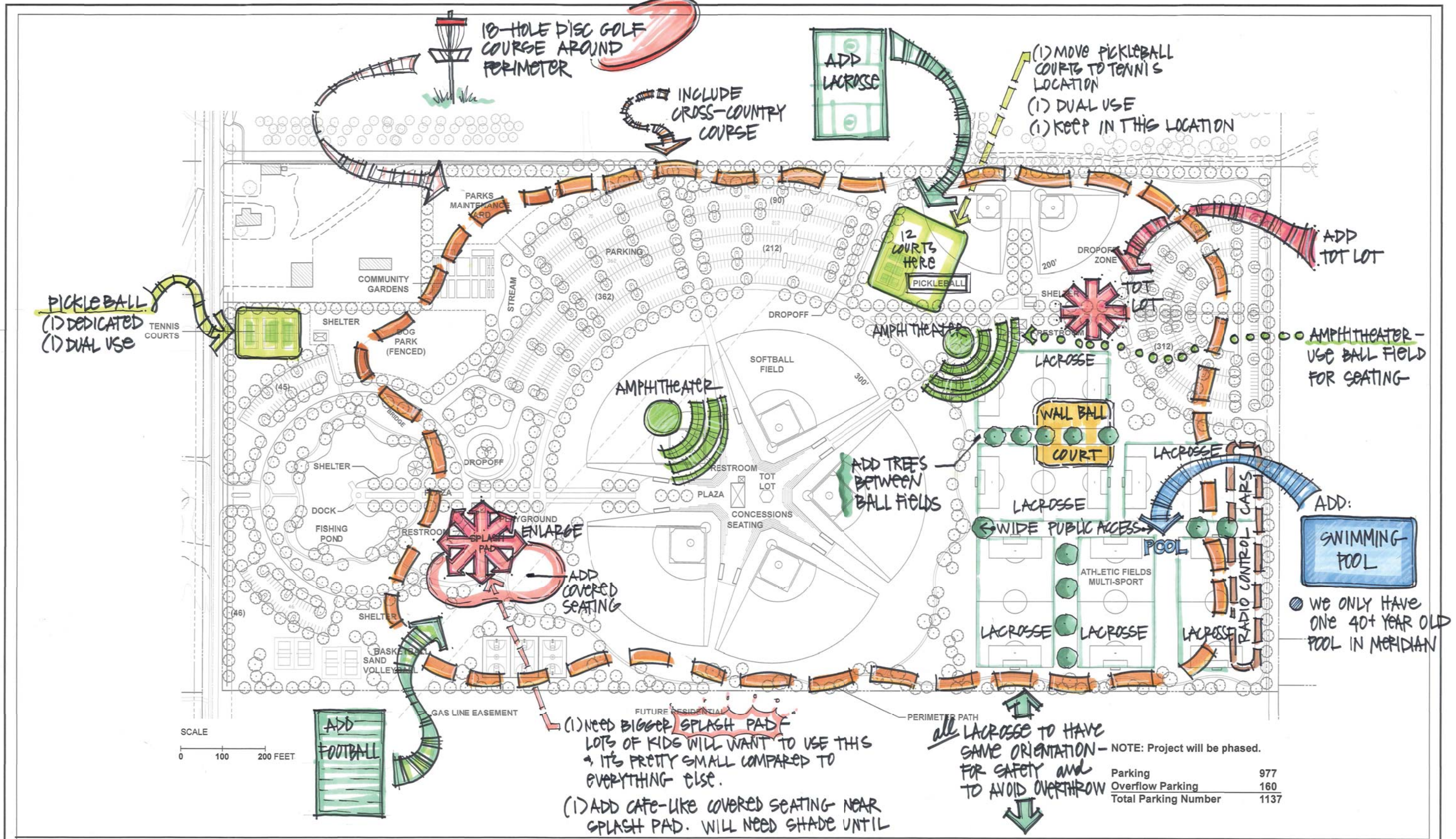
NOTE: Project will be phased.

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Parking | 977 |
| Overflow Parking | 160 |
| Total Parking Number | 1137 |


South Meridian Future Regional Park
 Meridian Parks & Recreation
 Meridian, Idaho 83642

Design Concept





South Meridian Future Regional Park
 Meridian Parks & Recreation
 Meridian, Idaho 83642

Summary of Public Comments

GREENPLAY LLC
 The Leading Edge In Parks, Recreation
 And Open Space Consulting



77-ACRE SOUTH MERIDIAN PROPERTY PUBLIC COMMENTS

| RECEIVED FROM | COMMENTS |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| M. Capell via email dated 7/1/15 | I wanted to say one thing that would be nice is if future parks all included tennis courts. The Treasure Valley has a high amount of people that play tennis per capita, and if you notice, most Boise parks have tennis courts. That is my 2 cents. If you have questions or want me to expand in that let me know. |
| J. Alderete via email dated 6/30/15 | I can't make it to the meeting, but I sure hope that tennis courts are part of the plans, as there aren't any on this side of town! |
| Anonymous email dated 6/30/15 | Provided the new park includes softball fields (as shown on the brochure) my firm will provide geotechnical consulting services at cost. I will need to invoice for items I pay for, such as drill rig or backhoe to excavate test pits, high end soils lab work, etc., but my time and my staff's time will be donated as needed. As a long time participant in your spring and fall softball seasons, it is nice to be able to give back. |
| M. Cox via phone message dated 7/7/15 | I hope to support pickleball in the planning of the park. |
| T. & K. Sauer via email dated 7/8/15 | For the new park, we would like to suggest that Pickleball Courts are added. It is a growing sport, and permanent courts would be an added attraction for Meridian residents. Please take this into consideration when planning the park. |
| D. Nicholls via email dated 7/10/15 | <p>I'm attaching a sketch map of the area of my concern (see below).</p> <p>There are two main points of access to the new South Meridian Park site: the intersections of Lake Hazel Road with both Eagle Road and Meridian Road (Highway 69). Both are undeveloped intersections that should be kept in mind in the planning stage.</p> <p>My biggest concern is the Lake Hazel/Eagle intersection. It's halfway up a bluff and now is just a four-way stop. That area is rapidly becoming a destination for group sports, what with the new YMCA complex near Eagle and Amity and the NOVA youth soccer complex near the Lake Hazel/Eagle intersection.</p> <p>The NE quadrant from Lake Hazel/Eagle was owned by the Turf Co. and the Hill family. The owners of the Turf Co. are youth soccer supporters and sold a parcel for the NOVA complex. That area is now prime for development, and the Turf Co. and the Hill family have sold their land to form the new Century Farm subdivision.</p> <p>The actual sod growing fields for the Turf Co. now lie on the SE quadrant of Vantage Point Lane and Eagle Road, and also to the south of Hubbard road in land adjacent to "Lake Hubbard". During soccer tournaments, games are played not just at the NOVA complex but also at two overflow sites: the Turf Co. growing fields as shown on my map. This causes</p> |

77-ACRE SOUTH MERIDIAN PROPERTY PUBLIC COMMENTS

extreme traffic congestion at the Lake Hazel/Eagle intersection. I'm pointing this out since you would not know about this unless you lived in the immediate area.

Consider the traffic impact of just the five softball fields in the new South Meridian Park. With 9 players per team and 2 teams per game times 5 fields....that's a minimum of 90 people showing up to play. With youth you may have 90 cars if a parent brings them in a car. Add in traffic from the other playing fields and you can see there will be a problem.

I'm pointing this out as an area resident who sees this situation unfold. I would suggest that you at Meridian P&R get your needs known to ACHD as early as possible. For example, you need a dedicated right turn lane coming off Eagle Road going westbound onto Lake Hazel Road.

77-ACRE SOUTH MERIDIAN PROPERTY PUBLIC COMMENTS

| | |
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| | |
| <p>M. Bertel via Comment Card dated 7/9/15</p> | <p>Like having the dog park. Love having a nice park in S. Meridian. Really like an outdoor green space to walk. Pathways and trails and get connected. Like lots of trees. Really like the way Meridian is developing with all the beautiful landscaping.</p> |

77-ACRE SOUTH MERIDIAN PROPERTY PUBLIC COMMENTS

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| T. Pinkert Branner via Comment Card dated 7/9/15 | I think this is a really beautifully designed park. I'd like to see a larger play area and splash pad for kids and some covered seating around the play area, so parents can watch their kids without overheating (trees will take several years to provide shade). |
| J. Moyer via Comment Card dated 7/9/15 | How does the Park's Department configure its irrigation? What is ratio of final irrigated landscape to original land area? Pocatello planned an amphitheater to generate some revenue to help off-set some expenses. |
| L. McMullan via Comment Card dated 7/9/15 | The need for more baseball and soccer fields is FAR less than the need for an outdoor community swimming pool. We'd rather see a pool! Meridian is desperately dry! |
| J. & P. Crotty via Comment Card dated 7/9/15 | Three restrooms seem quite inadequate for a park this size, especially if tournaments are expected to be played there. Parking will always be a challenge during tournaments also! |
| C. Hollister via Comment Card dated 7/9/15 | Radio control flying field would be a nice feature. |
| T. Donohue (Boise Area Pickleball Association) via Comment Card dated 7/9/15 | This design concept is very imaginative. We hope that the final design includes ten dedicated pickleball courts for the <u>fastest growing sport</u> in N. America. Our club incorporates people from 15 to 85 years young, shared equally by <u>males</u> and <u>females</u> . Excluding other PB groups in the area, BAPA has grown by 4 to 5 times in the last 4 years. The fenced "dog park" is 4 times larger than the pickleball courts! Is softball that big that 1/3 of the 77 acres is devoted to it? |
| J. Vargas via Comment Card dated 7/9/15 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Add more restrooms. 2. Not sure that 2 extra fields for Little League or Sr. Softball is enough to service the growing need. Might need 2-3 more. 3. Parking will always be a premium. Make sure the bulk of the softball/soccer parents/users have to park in the big lot or all the other lots will always be full and then no one will use the other amenities because they can't find a parking spot. Then over time the park will only be used for softball/soccer. |
| W. & T.L. Cays via Comment Card dated 7/9/15 | We would like to see some portion of the park designed to include cultural programs, such as music, outdoor stage events, etc. More like Kleiner Park bandshell! |
| B. Laws (MVHS Girls Lacrosse) via Comment Card dated 7/9/15 | I am very pleased to see a much needed park planned for south of the freeway. I am concerned with the overdue need for lacrosse field space. It appears that all other sports have been addressed in current parks. However, as the Statesman reported, lacrosse is the only youth sport growing in the U.S., and Idaho is the top ten state experiencing that growth. Lacrosse grew by 6% for youth sports; all other youth sports experienced declines between 2-5%. I want to see Meridian |

77-ACRE SOUTH MERIDIAN PROPERTY PUBLIC COMMENTS

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| | <p>planning with those numbers in mind.</p> <p>I suggest that the multi-use fields be developed in phase one. For the amount of development needed, it would be very financially feasible. Also, with the growth of lacrosse in youth sports, it would be good for the City to see how quickly those fields are needed on a year-round and regular basis.</p> <p>Beautiful park design.</p> |
| <p>Anonymous via Comment Card dated 7/9/15</p> | <p>Too much emphasis on softball as a whole. Would like to see more “passive” areas. For example, the splash pad—would love to see it be for older kids as well—or bigger. Can pickleball be played on tennis courts? Thanks!</p> |
| <p>K. Bair (West Ada School District) via Comment Card dated 7/9/15</p> | <p>Shade provided over play structures, such as sails to reduce heat during summer of metal structures, would be appreciated for increased use.</p> |
| <p>T. Leach (Boise Area Pickleball Association) via Comment Card dated 7/9/15</p> | <p>Need <u>more</u> pickleball courts. You can put 4 pickleball courts in the same space as 1 tennis court. So if we could have the same space as tennis footprint that could give us 12 courts. Three courts are not enough.</p> |
| <p>D. Drake (Idaho Senior Softball) via Comment Card dated 7/9/15</p> | <p>Would like to see a softball field for seniors and dedicated to veterans. Most players in the Idaho Senior Softball Association are vets.</p> <p>Hope that the senior field will be built early, since we are all over 60 and don’t know how much time we have left.</p> |

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WEST MERIDIAN REGIONAL PARK

47 ACRES

CONCEPT STATEMENT:

The Borup-Bottles property is envisioned as a community park with primarily active recreation facilities of a scope similar to Heroes Park. The recent needs assessment conducted as part of the Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Planning effort determined that rodeo facilities, while important to some, are not a priority for the City to provide and will not be included in this park. Theming elements, art, and other design materials for this park could focus on the agrarian/dairy heritage of the area that is representative of the "Old Meridian," much of which has been lost to new development in recent decades.

PROGRAM ELEMENTS:

- Fishing Pond/ Surface Irrigation Water Storage – Sized at 0.5-1 acres
- Restroom Buildings – (2)
- Parking -- 500+ spaces. Consider layout to minimize walking distance to amenities so as to preclude users from parking on area roadways
- Integrate drop-off zones with parking lots
- Vehicular access from the south off Cherry Lane per ACHD requirements
- Consider moving the residential access easement to the east.
- Potential for future roadway along east property line. Investigate this potential with ACHD. May also include streetside parallel parking.
- Dog area – off-leash, fenced. Approximately 1-2 acres in size. Consider layout with small dog area in center with large dog areas at either end that may be rotated for turf recovery. Explore options for a completely non-living surface with plenty of shade.
- Rectangular ball-fields -- flexible, adaptable -- for soccer, lacrosse, other.
- Maintenance yard. Fenced. With garage structure, asphalt paving storage bins. 1-acre max. size.
- Significant playground element. Destination.
- Pathways – Provide hierarchy of. Loop within park, plus other subsidiary options for circulation and exercise. Consider including distance information for loops.
- Provide bridge/ pedestrian connection to existing pathway north of canal
- Picnic Shelters – 3 Total – (2) 20'x20' and (1) 20'x30'
- Shade structures – strategic locations for, to maximize shade. Strong relationships to playgrounds, spectator areas, etc.

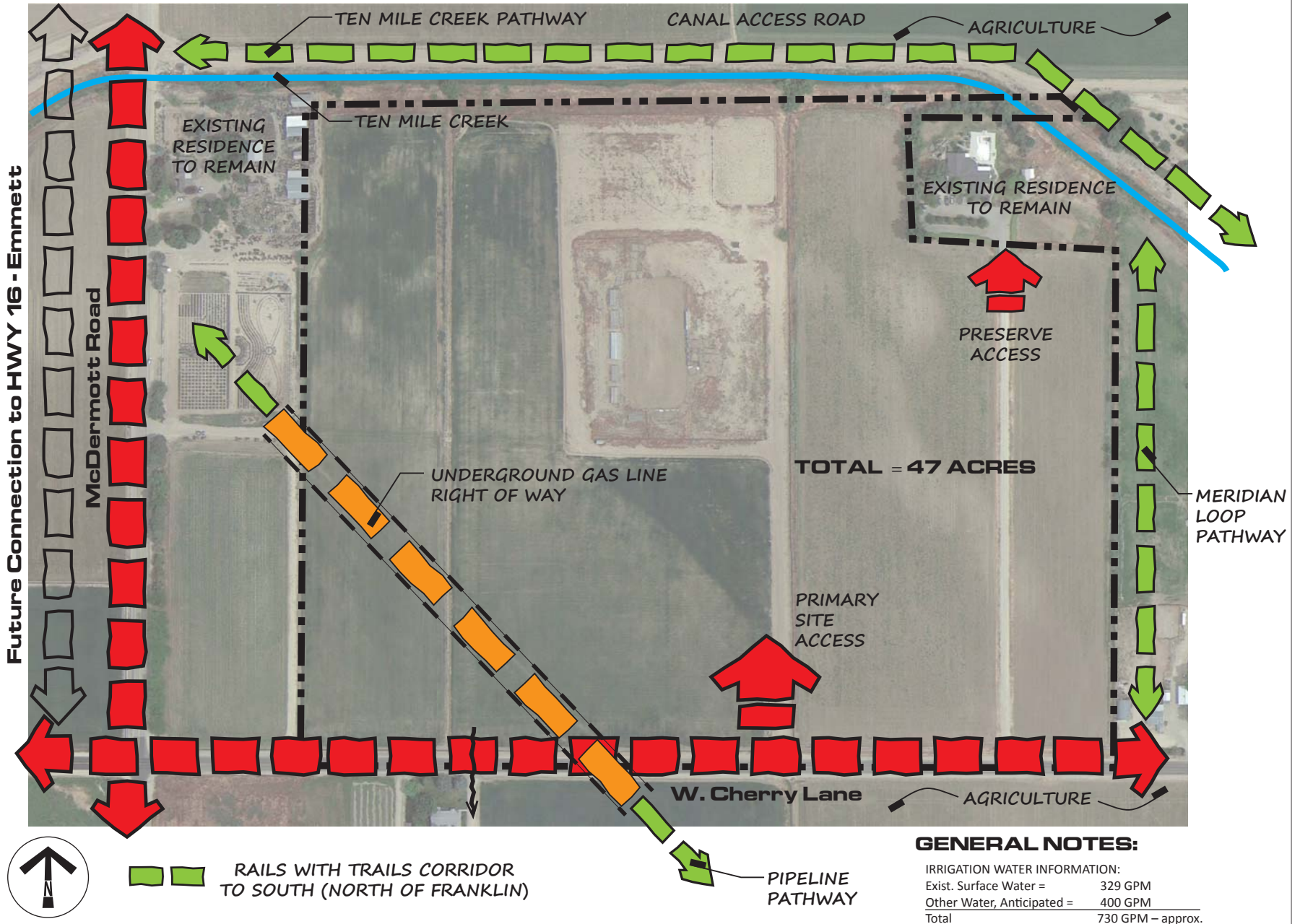
POSSIBLE PROGRAM ELEMENTS:

- Disc golf – this site could be an option for year-round disc golf course.
- Community Gardens – that might be integrated with maintenance yard, as in Kleiner Park.

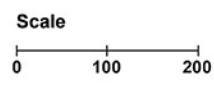
GENERAL NOTES/ OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

- As part of the purchase agreement, access to the existing residence to remain must be provided per this master plan. Could be a shared parking lot or access road.
- This site is not in the 10-yr CIP plan
- Could be developed with a septic system, initially, with eventual tie-in to city sewer when development reaches the area

- Gas line – identified as Pipeline pathway corridor – traverses part of the site. Limitations exist as to what amenities may be located over this utility easement.
- Nampa-Meridian Irrigation District
- Water rights for irrigation
 - EXIST. SURFACE WATER = 329 GPM
 - OTHER WATER, ANTICIPATED = 400 GPM
 - TOTAL 730 GPM – approximate



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NOTE: Project will be phased.

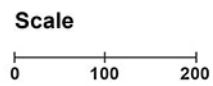
| | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Parking | 399 |
| Overflow Parking | 114 |
| Total Parking Number | 613 |



West Meridian Regional Park
 Meridian Parks & Recreation
 Meridian, Idaho 83642

Design Concept #1 - Softball Complex





NOTE: Project will be phased.
 Total Parking Number 604



West Meridian Regional Park
 Meridian Parks & Recreation
 Meridian, Idaho 83642

Design Concept #2 - Multi Sport



(#) Numbers in parentheses indicate how often a comment appeared on the plans provided at the public meeting.
 If no parentheses, comment appeared once.

SOFTBALL

- (2) DESIGNATE as 'VETERAN'S MEMORIAL SOFTBALL FIELD'
- (1) 60+ WOODBAT SOFTBALL TOURNAMENTS
- (1) REGIONAL SOFTBALL TOURNAMENTS

EXISTING EASEMENT TO FENCED R.O.W.

GOOD CONCEPT!

LIKE INTEGRATED SEATING!

ALTERNATE ACCESS

OPTION EXISTING DRIVEWAY TO DELETE 2ND CHERRY LANE ACCESS

DOG PARK

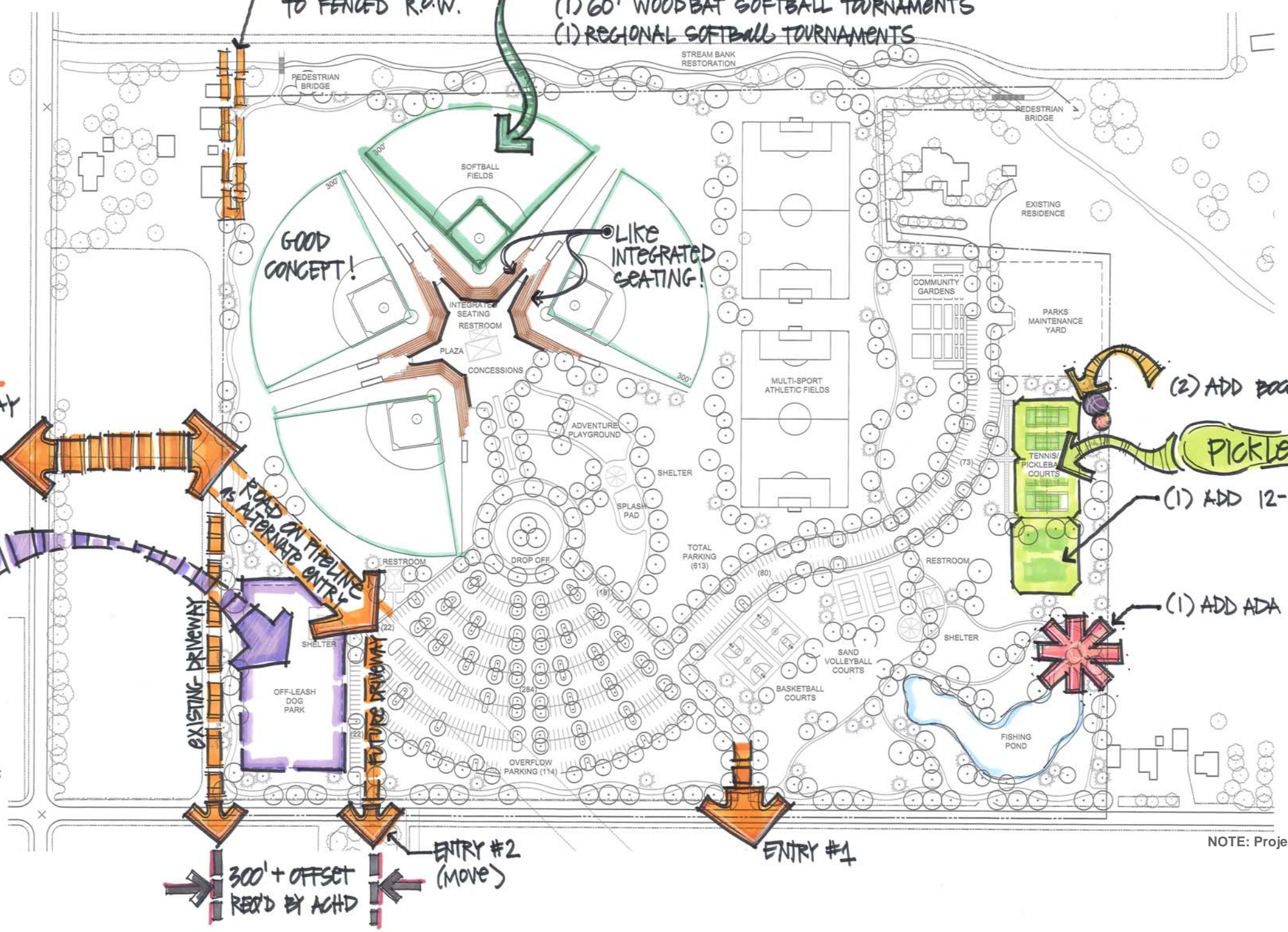
- (3) KEEP
- (1) 5-ACRE MINIMUM
- (1) PROVIDE FENCED AREA
- (1) REMOVE and ADD POND OR TENNIS COURTS
- (1) MOVE TO ANOTHER AREA OF THE PARK

(2) ADD BOOGE BALL COURTS

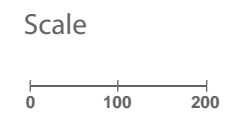
PICKLEBALL

(1) ADD 12-16 COURTS

(1) ADD ADA ACCESSIBLE AREA



NOTE: Project will be phased.



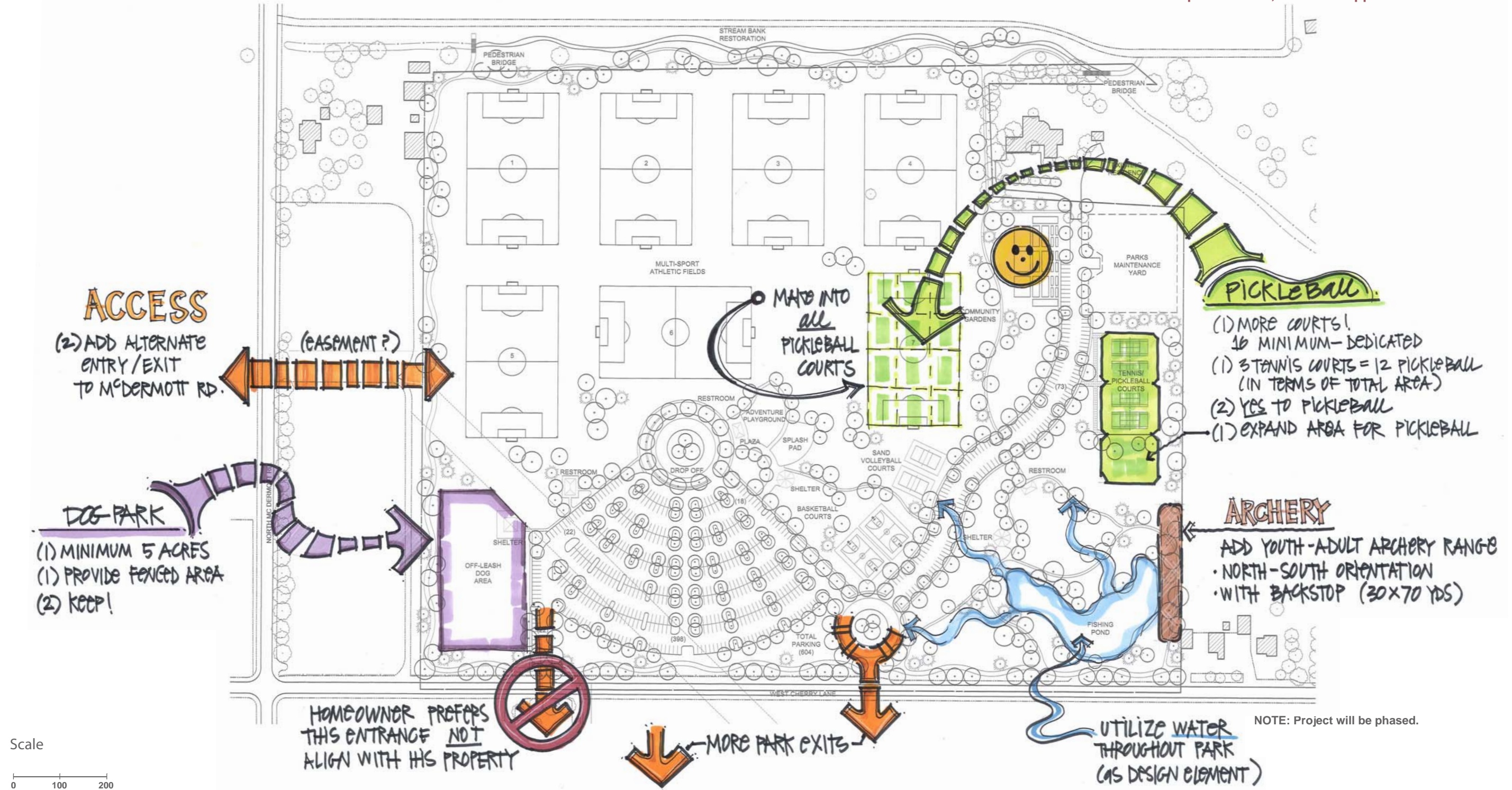
West Meridian Regional Park
 Meridian Parks & Recreation
 Meridian, Idaho 83642

Summary of Public Comments



(#) Numbers in parentheses indicate how often a comment appeared on the plans provided at the public meeting.

If no parentheses, comment appeared once.



47-ACRE WEST MERIDIAN PROPERTY PUBLIC COMMENTS

| RECEIVED FROM | COMMENTS |
|--|--|
| D. Farnham via email dated 7/21/15 | As a longtime, 4th Generation Idahoan/'Meridianite,' I am inquiring as to the possibility of adding an 'Outdoor Archery Range' at the new park that is proposed for McDermott and Cherry Lane Roads. I believe this would be a positive addition so local residents would not have to travel to Boise for archery practice and also to build or interest our youth into the sport. Actual space-wise would be small proportionally, and upkeep at a minimum. Maybe some volunteer work to get it started. I brought up this proposal/wish to the City a year or two ago and was told that there were not any plans set at that time. I sure hope this could be brought up or earmarked at this juncture and feel the timing is perfect. |
| A. Mehl via email dated 7/21/15 | I do like the plan of additional softball fields. How about 4? |
| R. & K. Poulin via email dated 8/11/15 | <p>The plan as shown in the presentation is simply just awesome. We live in the Castlebrook sub-division nearby. We would set our morning walk destination for the park each morning for sure if there was a way to get there on foot.</p> <p>My wife and I have no issue with anything we read in the presentation; however, if we were asked to vote on our preferred plan, we would probably vote for Concept #1 for the simple reason that it opens the park up to a wider audience than mostly soccer. However, we do realize that for large public venues, Concept #2 would probably work out better, but then, we already have a park with large venues in mind near The Village.</p> <p>The only wish we have is that the City/County move a little faster on the walking paths. We hope that, in our lifetime, we would have the ability to walk from the Franklin Christian Church to the new park using the path along the Ten-Mile Creek. That, to us, is just as important as the new park because it would encourage people to walk and promote a healthy lifestyle.</p> |
| T. Faubel via Comment Card dated 7/30/15 | <p>How about using North McDermott Road as an entrance, once it's redone?</p> <p>I just talked to the guy who owns the land at the southwest corner of the park/area. I think he might sell some of his land.</p> <p>The new McDermott Road will be ¼ mile west of where it is now.</p> <p>What about uses of the park during the winter months? Any plans for that?</p> |
| G. Huskey via Comment Card dated 7/30/15 | <p>Needs more shelters.</p> <p>Please be considerate of the needs of the existing homeowners in the area.</p> |
| D. Beehler (Meridian Lions) via Comment | Would like to see accommodations for the Meridian Lions Rodeo or assistance in relocation. |

47-ACRE WEST MERIDIAN PROPERTY PUBLIC COMMENTS

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| Card dated 7/30/15 | |
| R. Hagadone (Meridian Lions) via Comment Card dated 7/30/15 | I am disappointed that there is not a space for the rodeo grounds. We do make money, and this money goes to the people in the community. We donate to the Meridian Food Bank and provide community service to check the food and help organize the shelves. We also provide for eyeglasses and hearing devices for those who apply that have a limited income. |
| J. Bokenkamp via Comment Card dated 7/30/15 | <p>Excited to see Community Garden space in both concepts—curious about their design and size and vision.</p> <p>With the growth to the west in Meridian, would be nice to create another nice-sized dog park.</p> <p>Concerns about entrances/exits—I almost think I’d consider coming around to the left of the parking area and north of the dog park to come out on McDermott.</p> |
| B. Freeland via Comment Card dated 7/30/15 | Year-round aquatic facility. Handicap access for all facilities. #1 Concept seems to make more sense. Dog park with restrooms available nearby. |
| J. Frasier via Comment Card dated 7/30/15 | I live across Cherry Lane from one of your entrance and egress streets. I asked that they not do this, as people will be entering and exiting the park throughout the day and if fields are lighted into the night. I would like to be contacted within 30 days to see if anyone in Planning thinks this is a real concern. |
| M. Massett (MYAC) via Comment Card dated 7/30/15 | <p>Prefer Concept 2 – will attract various groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When games are finished at sport complexes, consider parking traffic in and out (other exits). • Consider residences trying to get home or out with traffic. • Open grass: for picnic/free space/sport jams (Frisbee). • Put big trees along trail/small trees nearing parking (roof damage). • Maintain park structure cleanliness. • Utilize waterways for attraction and function (hot weather cools air). • Hills. |
| S. Day via Comment Card dated 7/30/15 | <p>Thanks for the invitation to attend this meeting. I like the mix of active sports with pond/trails.</p> <p>I recommend a third exit for vehicles is added.</p> <p>I recommend including a hill area near sand volleyball courts (see Boise State sand courts).</p> <p>I’d prefer arranging parking so there are spaces in at least 3 sections vs. 1 large and strip.</p> <p>Sand volleyball is becoming “trendy”/popular (and competitive). So I like having those 2 courts in this concept.</p> |

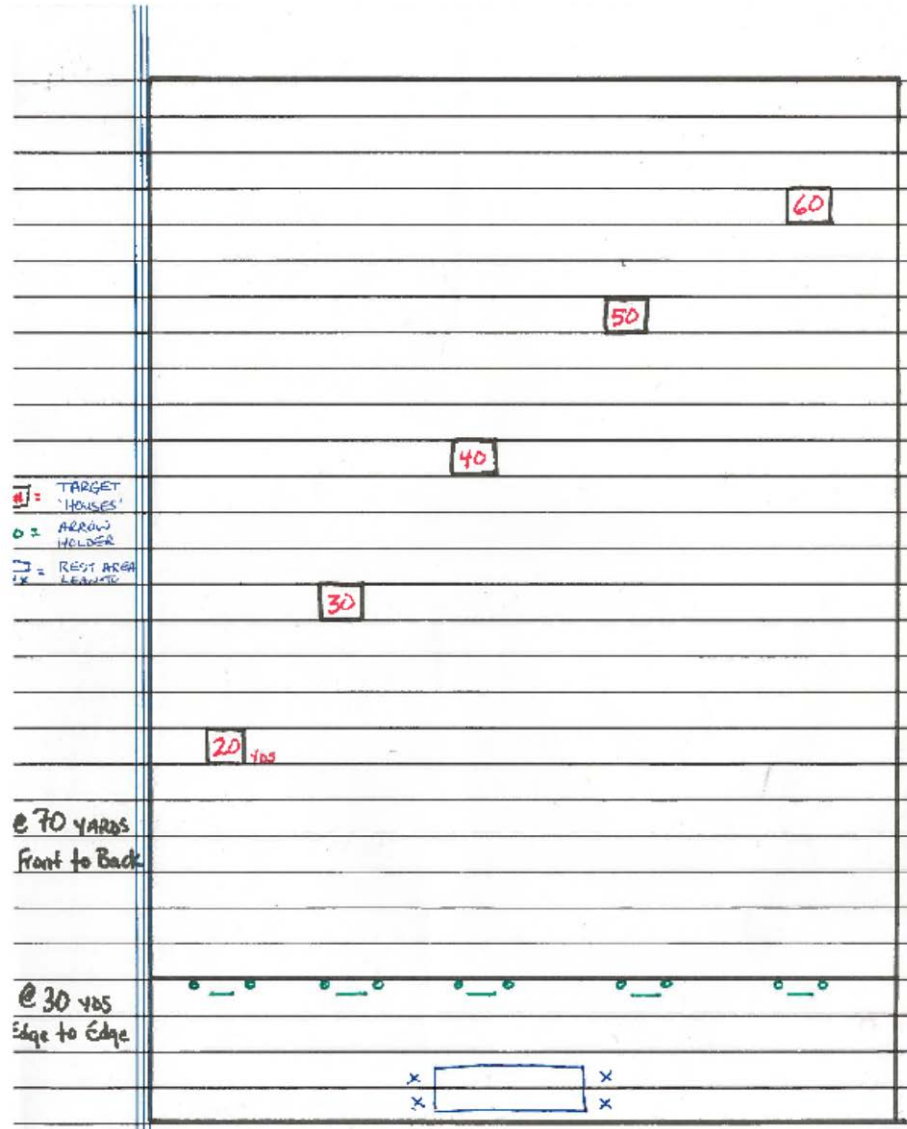
47-ACRE WEST MERIDIAN PROPERTY PUBLIC COMMENTS

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| | <p>Lacrosse is gaining in popularity; therefore, facilitating lacrosse fields makes some sense.</p> <p>I think a concept that includes an indoor ice rink would be great. Short-track speed skaters could train and race in a rink at this park. I'd think a concept with: 1) ice rink, 2) sand volleyball courts, 3) lacrosse/soccer fields, and 4) fishing pond sounds lovely.</p> |
| J. Lucker via Comment Card dated 7/30/15 | <p>60+ wood bat softball "Veterans Memorial Softball Field" Regional softball tournaments</p> <p>Time to fund a field for veterans who have given so much for our country.</p> |
| Anonymous via Comment Card dated 7/30/15 | <p>More pickleball courts—You can put 4 pickleball courts in the same footprint as 1 tennis court. So if you had 2 tennis courts and 8 pickleball courts, that would be awesome. Twelve would be even better!!!</p> |
| F. DePold via Comment Card dated 7/30/15 | <p>Love it. Personally I think the multiuse option will get more use. Also I think people would love to have exercise stations around the park.</p> <p>My only complaint is it's too far out.</p> |
| G. Mossett via Comment Card dated 7/30/15 | <p>Design Concept #2 would work better, since there is already a plethora of fields currently in Settlers Park. The multi-field option would work better, especially if there were to be a large lacrosse, soccer, football, etc. tournament taking place throughout the valley.</p> |
| J. Moyer via Comment Card dated 7/30/15 | <p>If a park is planned at McMillan and McDermott, why another park so close? If McDermott is the county line, are we building for Meridian or Nampa?</p> |
| M. Frasier via Comment Card dated 7/30/15 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move 2nd entrance. • Purchase property on McDermott for additional 10 acres and McDermott entrance. • Where will irrigation water come from for grass? • Where will "overflow" parking be? On Cherry Lane? Overflow to Settlers is on Ustick. • Speed limit on Cherry Lane? |
| D. Anderson via Comment Card dated 7/30/15 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will sports fields be lit at night? 2. What type of fence on the west? Security for pathway to help people jumping the fence. <p>I like all the trees. Thank you for removing the animal shelter.</p> |
| R. & B. Schumacher via | <p>Possibility of a Bocce Ball Court? Like the idea of a multi-use field, rather than totally dedicated to softball, but team use</p> |

47-ACRE WEST MERIDIAN PROPERTY PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|---|--|
| Comment Card dated 7/30/15 | may dictate otherwise. Looks like a wonderful first concept of a park! |
| D. Farnham via Comment Card dated 7/30/15 | I absolutely love the idea/concept of the softball complex. I would love even more for the addition of an outdoor field <u>archery range</u> similar to Fort Boise. I have forwarded a few emails on concepts, community enhancement, etc. and will include a 'very rough' drawing (see below) (and pictures on file from my phone). Thank you for listening to a LONGTIME (51 years) Idaho/Meridian resident. Appreciate any comments or listening from the City. |

47-ACRE WEST MERIDIAN PROPERTY PUBLIC COMMENTS



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MARGARET ALDAPE PARK

70 ACRES, APPROX.

CONCEPT STATEMENT

Margaret Aldape Park is envisioned as a natural, passive-use area unlike any other park in Meridian's park system. This is primarily due to its riverfront location and the unique opportunities for passive recreation – walking/hiking, picnicking, fishing, wildlife viewing, and non-motorized water sports such as kayaking and paddle-boarding -- that this landscape affords. Emphasis will be on the development of pedestrian trails to provide access to the site in a variety of seasons and corresponding water levels. There is also opportunity to enhance current wildlife habitat to sustain and promote the diverse species that live in and migrate through the park.

Determination of the final park boundary will be an iterative process that takes into account the final revised FEMA floodway boundary; need for park land outside the floodway that can provide parking, restrooms and other constructed support amenities; and priorities of the proposed adjacent residential development.

In terms of theming and identity, park design will take its cues from the Boise River, Basque culture and history, and elements of Aldape family history as may relate to paths and architectural elements, materials, place names, integrated art pieces, and other opportunities as they arise.

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Note: Final determination of the park program elements will be based on feedback from the donors, Sherrie and John Ewing, and their family.

- Margaret Pond – exists already on park site
- Provide a second pond that will provide boat access to the Boise River
- Restroom Building(s) – 2 desired. Must be outside of floodway and situated to comply with FEMA requirements for floodplain development. There will likely also be a need for above-ground portables in the further reaches of the property, proximate to river.
- Parking -- 500 spaces min., plus overflow
- Vehicular access from the south – through existing and proposed neighborhood developments. Secondary future access assumed.
- Maintenance yard – 1/2- acre minimum
- One large destination play structure, themed to match the park. In addition, a less-traditional play area with options for unstructured, task-oriented play that may be integrated with landforms, trees and canopy areas, or other.
- Limited acreage of irrigated turf grass. Irrigated turf areas shall be designed strategically so as to serve areas of higher use and pedestrian traffic.
- Pathways – Provide hierarchy of. Assume riverside pathway, pedestrian loops and options within park. General transition from primary paved loop to branches and offshoots of compacted gravel.
- Pathway structural elements such as boardwalks and bridges will be required to make the site [mostly] accessible during periods of high water
- Picnic Shelters (4) – 1 large shelter, 3 family size. Capitalize on opportunities for integration of Basque cultural element through theming and use of materials, interpretive signage.

- Area for Boise River ingress/egress to control and minimize negative impacts on erosion and riparian vegetation
- Kayak/ Canoe launching sites – at both ponds and river
- Provide a dock at Margaret Pond. Look into Fish and Game grants to fund these.
- Interpretive signs – Basque Culture, property history, wildlife – type, habitat, water cycle

POSSIBLE PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- Disc golf – consider potential for integration at this site.
- Potential Integration of water cycle interpretive exhibits
- Explore possibility of connecting pond to river for access via kayak, other non-motorized boats

GENERAL NOTES/ OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Understand and design for seasonal high water areas
- It is expected that there will be times during periods of high water when the site, or a portion of the park, is closed to public use for safety reasons
- Roadways and parking permitted in floodway. Limitations exist with regards to fill, or any modification that would reduce capacity of floodway area.
- Potential additional park land will be South of the riverfront portion of the park, comprised of a strip roughly 250' wide and running the length of the southern floodway boundary.
- Southern boundary is assumed for the preliminary design concept.
- Irrigation water rights to be applied for upon acquisition of property. Need to calculate anticipated irrigation water requirements.
- Research locations of any existing bald eagle nesting sites on or near the park site.

NOTES

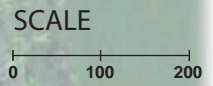
- THIS IS A PRELIMINARY CONCEPT, INTENDED TO SHOW POSSIBILITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE MARGARET ALDAPE PARK SITE.
- NO SURVEY DATA WAS AVAILABLE AT THE TIME THIS CONCEPT WAS PREPARED. BASE INFORMATION WAS COMPILED FROM EXISTING BOUNDARY DATA AND AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY.
- THIS PRELIMINARY CONCEPT HAS NOT YET BEEN PRESENTED IN A PUBLIC FORUM, AND DID NOT UNDERGO AN INDIVIDUAL PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS.
- ROADS AND PARKING AREAS MAY BE PAVED OR SURFACED WITH PERMEABLE PAVERS OR COMPACTED GRAVEL, TO BE DETERMINED.

PUBLIC ART

- ART WILL BE FOCUSED PRIMARILY ON ALDAPE FAMILY HISTORY, BASQUE CULTURAL HERITAGE, LOCAL WILDLIFE AND RELATED THEMES
- ART ELEMENTS WILL BE INTEGRATED WITH PARK ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES
- ART WILL BE PLACED SO AS TO CREATE A SENSE OF DISCOVERY FOR PARK VISITORS



DRAFT



Design Concept
Margaret Aldape Park
 Meridian Parks & Recreation
 Meridian, Idaho 83642



GREENPLAY LLC
 The Leading Edge In Parks, Recreation
 And Open Space Consulting

