



Planning Commission Meeting

441 3rd Street, Mead

June 17, 2026

Agenda

6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Regular Meeting

In accordance with the Town's policy adopted by the Board of Trustees on March 13, 2023 by Resolution No. 21-R-2023, the meeting link will be provided on the Town's website/designated posting place at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Z2aqr40JTBOoPZyNdtM0pA

1. Call to Order – Roll Call

Chair Karen Peterson
Chair Pro Tem William Jorgensen
Commissioner Charles Gehringer
Commissioner Chad Rademacher
Commissioner Timothy Corliss
Commissioner Alternate Ryan Sword
Commissioner Alternate Jean Bratcher

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

3. Review and Approve Agenda

4. Public Comment:

3 minute time limit. Comment is for any item on the agenda unless it is set for public hearing.

5. Approval of Minutes

a. Approval of Minutes - Regular Meeting May 20, 2026

6. Informational Items

a. Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails (PROST) Master Plan Presentation of the Adoption Draft

7. Staff Update

8. Adjournment

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Minutes

6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Regular Meeting

Chair Karen Peterson called the regular meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order – Roll Call

Present:

Chair Karen Peterson
Chair Pro Tem William Jorgensen
Commissioner Charles Gehringer
Commissioner Chad Rademacher
Commissioner Timothy Corliss
Commissioner Alternate Jean Bratcher

Absent:

Commissioner Alternate Ryan Sword — Excused

Also present:

Community Development Director Todd Bjerkaas; Town Planners Alex Ailey & Lauren Rice; Secretary Ana Bohl; Assistant Town Attorney Christine Fitch; Elyze Appelgate with Norris Design; Sam Sharp with Peak Development Group and Brad Haigh with Norris Design.

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

The assembly pledged allegiance to the flag.

3. Review and Approve Agenda

Commissioner Gehringer motioned to approve the agenda as written. Commissioner Jorgensen seconded the motion.

Ayes: Chair Peterson, Commissioner Gehringer, Commissioner Jorgensen, Commissioner Rademacher, Commissioner Corliss

Nays: None

Abstaining: None

Passed

4. Public Comment:

There were no public comments.

5. Approval of Minutes

- a. Approval of Minutes - Regular Meeting April 15, 2026

Commissioner Gehringer motioned to approval of Minutes - Regular Meeting April 15, 2026.
Commissioner Rademacher seconded the motion.
Ayes: Chair Peterson, Commissioner Gehringer, Commissioner Jorgensen, Commissioner Rademacher, Commissioner Corliss
Nays: None
Abstaining: None
Passed

6. Public Hearing

a. Ariet's Grove PUD

Chair Peterson opened the public hearing at 6:05 p.m.

Town Planner Alex Ailey started his presentation. Following his presentation, Elyse Appelgate with Norris Design proceeded with her presentation.

Chair Peterson opened public comment.

Mr. Thaine Hock with residence at 13522 WCR 7 expressed his concerns about the proposal, mainly regarding traffic issues.

Chair Peterson closed the public hearing at 6:39 p.m.

Commissioners discussed and asked questions.

Mr. Bjerkaas, Mr. Ailey, Ms. Appelgate, Ms. Fitch, Mr. Haigh, and Mr. Sharp participated in responding to questions and comments raised by the commissioners.

- i. **Resolution No. 04-PC-2026** — A Resolution of the Planning Commission of the Town of Mead, Colorado, Recommending Approval of a Zoning Designation of Multi-Family (RMF-14), General Commercial (GC), Single-Family Residential (RSF-4), and Agricultural (AG) with a Planned Unit Development (PUD) Overlay for the Property known as Ariet's Grove

Commissioner Gehringer motioned to approve **Resolution No. 04-PC-2026** — A Resolution of the Planning Commission of the Town of Mead, Colorado, Recommending Approval of a Zoning Designation of Multi-Family (RMF-14), General Commercial (GC), Single-Family Residential (RSF-4), and Agricultural (AG) with a Planned Unit Development (PUD) Overlay for the Property known as Ariet's Grove. Commissioner Jorgensen seconded the motion.

Ayes: Chair Peterson, Commissioner Gehringer, Commissioner Jorgensen, Commissioner Rademacher, Commissioner Corliss
Nays: None
Abstaining: None
Passed

Director Bjerkaas shared with the commissioners that the PROST Master Plan will be part of the next Planning Commission meeting on June 17th. Unfortunately, Taylor Broyhill with Logan Simpson will be attending remote that evening. Director Bjerkaas explained that he would rather have her in person for that presentation, and the alternate dates would be June 10th or June 24th. If those dates don't work, the meeting will remain on June 17th.

Director Bjerkaas will follow up with an email to confirm the Commissioners' preference and final decision.

Commissioners expressed interest in having additional topics included in the next meeting. Director Bjerkaas requested that any specific questions or topic requests be submitted via email.

7. Adjournment

Commissioner Jorgensen motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Gehringer seconded the motion.

Ayes: Chair Peterson, Commissioner Gehringer, Commissioner Jorgensen, Commissioner Rademacher, Commissioner Corliss

Nays: None

Abstaining: None

Passed

The Regular Meeting of the Town of Mead Planning Commission was adjourned at 7:22 p.m. on Wednesday, May 20th, 2026.

Karen Peterson, Chair

ATTEST:

Ana Bohl, Secretary

MEAD

IN MOTION

Parks, Recreation, Open Space, & Trails Plan



**Adoption Draft
June 2026**



Document Accessibility

Under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), local governments are prohibited from discriminating against individuals on the basis of disability in spaces of public accommodation. The Department of Justice (DOJ), which enforces the ADA, has interpreted this to include access to online technology. Further, under Colorado House Bill 21-1110, local governments must meet the statewide accessibility standards as of July 1, 2024.

The Town of Mead is dedicated to ensuring online accessibility for all users of Town Information and Communication Technology (“ICT”). In pursuit of this commitment, the Accessibility Plan has been formulated to identify and address online barriers that may impede accessibility for individuals with disabilities. The Town of Mead Accessibility Plan can be found online here: <https://www.townofmead.org/media/21831>.

The version of the *Mead in Motion* Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Plan that is available online via the Town of Mead website has been produced at WCAG 2.2 Level AA and therefore Section 508 compliant. If you face issues with accessibility of this document, please contact the Public Information Officer.



Acknowledgments

TOWN OF MEAD BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Trisha Harris, Mayor Pro-Tem
Brad Hagen, Trustee
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Herman Schranz, Trustee
Jeremiah R. Crane, Trustee

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Karen Peterson, Chair
William Jorgensen, Chair Pro-Tem
Chad Rademacher, Commissioner
Charles Gehringer, Commissioner
Timothy Corliss, Commissioner
Ryan Sword, Commissioner Alternate
Jean Bratcher, Commissioner Alternate

TOWN OF MEAD STAFF

Helen Migchelbrink, Town Manager
Todd Bjerkaas, Community Development Director
Alex Ailey, Planner II
Lauren Rice, Planner I
Erika Rasmussen, PE, Town Engineer and Public Works Director
Lorelei Nelson, Community Engagement Director
Dave Mathews, PE; Deputy Town Engineer
Bo Hurtado, Operations Manager
Kaitlyn Newbanks, Recreation Supervisor

Former Staff:

Jason Bradford, Community Development Director
Collin Mieras, Planner II
Jacey Wenger, Event and Media Specialist



CONSULTANT TEAMS

Logan Simpson

Taylor Broyhill, AICP; Associate Planner and Project Manager
Rachel Geoffrion, Assistant Project Manager and GIS Analyst
Dan Arseneau, PLA; Landscape Architect
Robin Adams, AICP; Planner and Code Specialist
Jeremy Call, Principal

Otak

Scott Belonger, P.E.; Trails and Multimodal Connectivity Lead
Patrick Lau, P.E.; Transportation Project Engineer

ETC Institute

Ryan Murray, Assistant Director of Community Research,
Statistically Valid Survey



SPECIAL THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING PARTNERS WHO CONTRIBUTED THEIR TIME, KNOWLEDGE, AND EXPERTISE TO ENSURE COORDINATION AND ALIGNMENT OF PROST PLANNING EFFORTS ACROSS THE REGION:

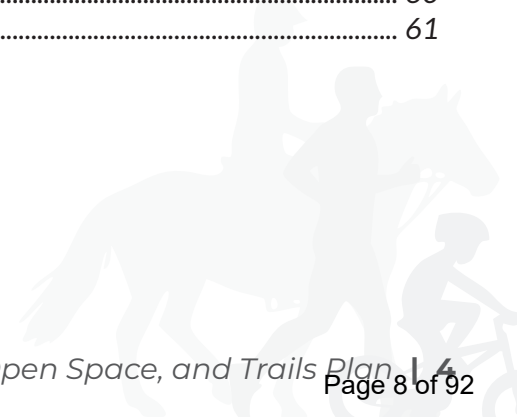
Keith Knoll, Town of Berthoud Public Works Operations Manager
Jerome Rouser, AICP, North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization (NFRMPO) Transportation Planner
Ryan Kragerud, St. Vrain Valley School District
Chuck Bradt, Town of Firestone Parks Division
Sarah Krejca, City of Longmont Senior Project Manager
Zac Wiebe, Larimer County Department of Natural Resources
Dale Rademacher, Ditch Company Board Member; former City of Longmont Public Works Director
Ike Falk, Omnitrax (Great Western Railway)
Ben Pedrett, Colorado Parks & Wildlife St. Vrain State Park Manager

Thank you, especially, to the **Mead community members** that participated in this planning process. Your input and direction were invaluable to the creation of this plan.

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Executive Summary

In 2025, the Town of Mead embarked on a long-range planning process to create a shared vision for the future of the Town’s parks, recreation, open space, and trails (PROST) system. This plan, titled *Mead in Motion*, updates and replaces the 2011 Open Space, Parks, and Trails Master Plan. This effort brings together the planning, development, implementation, and maintenance of the Town’s parks, recreation, trails, and open spaces to provide a guiding framework for the continued delivery of high quality services. This summary is a snapshot of key elements and recommendations.

Plan Goals

- Respond to Mead’s growing community needs through improvements and renovations to existing facilities.
- Meet Mead’s growing population and shifting community needs through new facilities and amenities as funding or new development allows.
- Improve local and regional trail connectivity.
- Strive for universal accessibility of all facilities.
- Prioritize environmentally and fiscally sustainable practices in facility design, maintenance, and upgrades.
- Conserve Open Space and agricultural lands as buffers between neighborhoods and adjacent towns.
- Provide programs and activities to serve the diverse needs of the Mead community.
- Expand program awareness and access to information through a variety of methods, to maximize program participation rates and use of the facilities.
- Scale operations and maintenance staff capacity proportionately with the addition of new PROST facilities and lands.
- Maintain and improve the standard of maintenance at all parks, trails, and open space areas.
- Strengthen and develop partnerships to maximize the available resources within the community for recreation facilities and activities.
- Create long-term financial stability while also planning for a growing system of park and open space facilities.

Mead PROST in 2025

The Town of Mead provides several PROST facilities and programs to meet residents’ recreation, health, and quality-of-life needs. The current system maintained by the Town of Mead includes nine parks, 19.7 acres of open space, 7.4 miles of trail, and a new Community Recreation Center. The system is supplemented by numerous Metropolitan District and Homeowners Association (HOA) parks, trails, and open spaces.



BY THE NUMBERS

94.4 _{ac}	Acres of Town owned and maintained parks
124.3 _{ac}	Total acres of all public parkland
200.4 _{ac}	Total acres of open space within Town limits
19.7 _{ac}	Acres of Town owned and maintained open space
7.4 _{mi}	Total miles of Town owned and maintained trails
14.5 _{mi}	Total miles of public trails
25	Annual events
5,000	Annual events attendees
75	Recreation programs offered annually
1,328	Annual recreation program participants

Community Engagement

Community engagement informed every phase of the project and took place in three (3) stages through in-person and online interactive activities.

The following major themes emerged consistently throughout the public engagement process and are reflected in the vision, goals, and actions of this Plan.

Regional Collaboration in Trails Planning.

Develop New Ideas for Funding.

Developers Should Pay their Way.

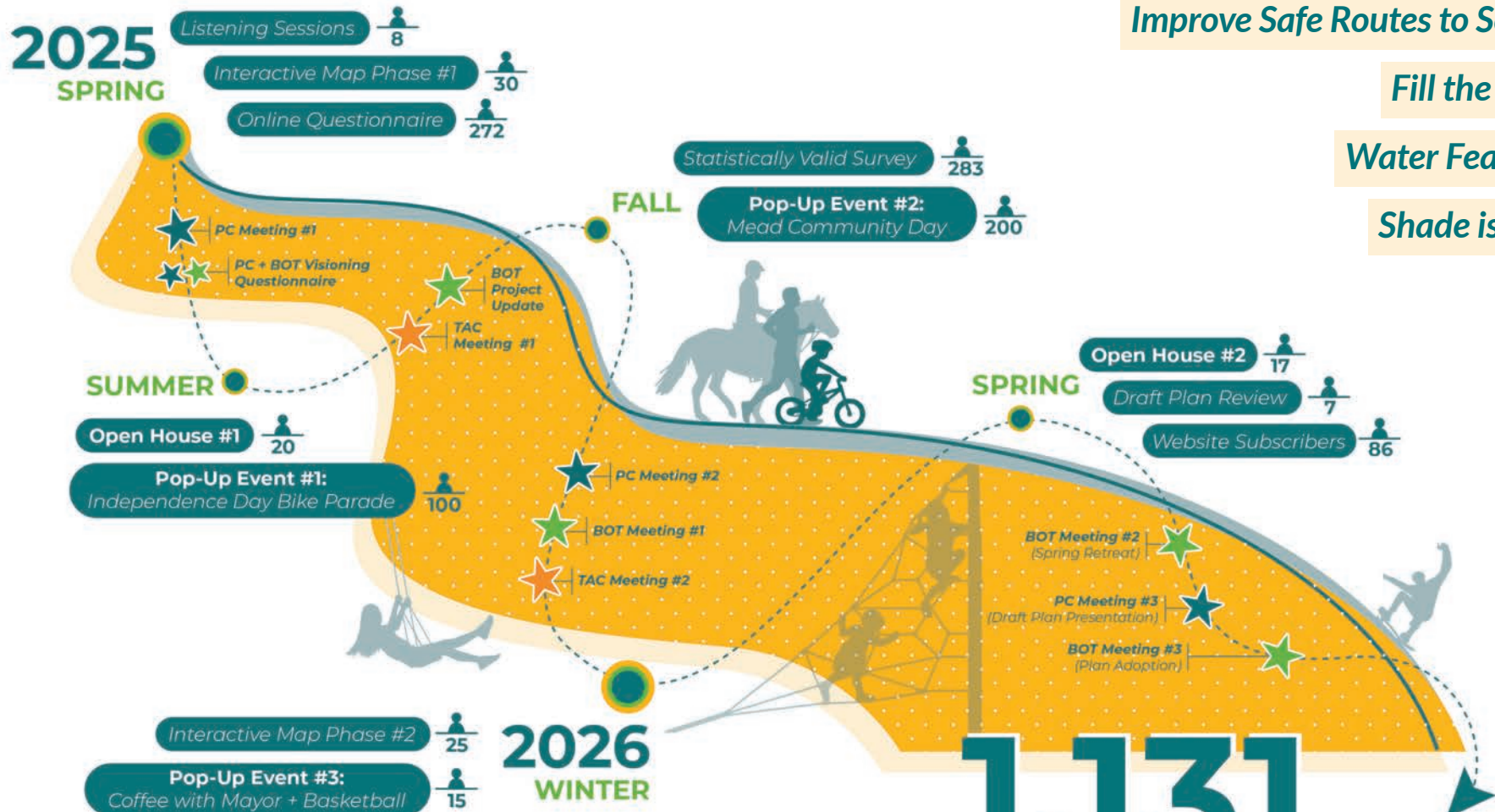
Open Space is Highly Valued by Residents.

Improve Safe Routes to School.

Fill the Gaps.

Water Features.

Shade is Cool.



1,131
total engagements

- # Number of Participants
- ★ Planning Commission (PC) Meetings
- ★ Board of Trustees (BOT) Meetings
- ★ Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meetings



Capital Development Scenarios

Mead in Motion identifies anticipated capital project costs for maintaining the existing PROST system as it is now through normal lifecycle replacement and proposes three capital development scenarios for new PROST projects.

The first capital development scenario focuses on **improving the existing system** through the addition of new amenities and site furnishings at existing parks while focusing capital spending on lifecycle replacement of existing PROST assets that will need to be addressed, regardless of the addition of any new amenities or facilities identified through this planning process.

The second scenario envisions an **expansion of the current system** with investments in entirely new amenities including new trails, and open space conservation.

The third scenario is fiscally unconstrained but can help provide policy guidance by illustrating **the ultimate goals of the PROST system** to meet current and emerging needs that represent significant growth in the scale of the system. The scenarios assume a ten-year time period (2026-2036).



Priority Projects and Actions

The highest priority projects and actions identified in the plan are presented in the list shown here. These results are not intended as the final recommendation on the sequence of developing new amenities. Rather, they should serve as a guidepost when making decisions on investment in PROST facilities and amenities. *Development of new amenities will largely be influenced by available funding, partnership opportunities, and other factors that may bring certain amenities forward as an opportunity before others.* This plan acknowledges that priorities can and should be re-evaluated annually as needs and opportunities shift. The project prioritization criteria equip staff, appointed and elected officials, and their community partners with a framework for reconsidering priorities each year as the Town develops its annual priorities and capital improvement planning.

HIGHEST PRIORITY ACTIONS/PROJECTS

Pursue ballot measure testing for a sales tax revenue bond to gauge voter preferences for tax percentage and specific uses that would be supported, including: indoor pool or aquatic facility, upgrades to existing parks, open space preservation, and trail system expansion.

Shade structure or additional trees at all Town-maintained parks (9)

Mead Elementary School Trail Connector at GWRR

Splashpad at Community Center

Waterfront Trail Connector to St. Vrain State Park

CR 32 Trail Crossing between Rangeview Estates and Sorrento

Establish a facility sponsorship and naming rights policy

CR 28 Trail underpass of I-25

Establish Open Space Program and Conserve 100 acres of land

.5 acre Off-leash Dog Area at existing park (1)



Chapter 1.
FOUNDATION





Background

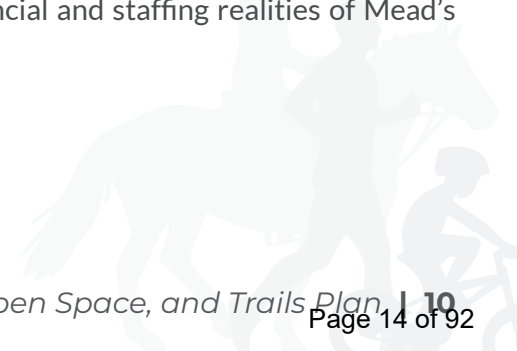
In 2025, the Town of Mead launched an effort to develop *Mead in Motion*, the Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails (PROST) Plan (the Plan) with funding from the federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program administered by the Colorado Department of Transportation. This plan updates the 2011 Open Space, Parks, and Trails Master Plan (2011 OSPT Plan) and brings together the services required to provide park development, open space preservation, recreation, trails, and system maintenance under one guiding framework.

Purpose and Need

PLANNING NEED

Since the last plan update in 2011, Mead has experienced significant growth and development, leading to increased demand for more trails, facilities, and recreation opportunities within the Town. It is anticipated that significant development pressure and rapid growth patterns will continue in Mead for many years. The increased demand and anticipated future growth and development of the Town necessitate a new Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Plan to ensure current and future Town residents have access to a robust network of multimodal and recreation opportunities. This Plan updates the proposed future location and programming of trails, parks, and open space within the Town of Mead's Planning Influence Area.

Mead's PROST system receives broad support from community members and elevates quality of life for the Town's residents. The continued maintenance of these existing assets and thoughtful development of new facilities are essential in continuing to provide these services to the community. The Town must ensure that expected rapid growth brings trail connectivity, new parks, and open space opportunities to all residents of Mead. This approach to growth and development of trails, parks, and open space must be balanced with the financial and staffing realities of Mead's developing PROST operations.



INFLUENTIAL PLANS

Other plans and studies influential to *Mead in Motion* include:

- Town of Mead Design Standards and Specifications for Trails (2021)
- Upper Front Range MPO 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (2025)
- North Front Range MPO Regional Active Transportation Plan (2021)
- Downtown Mead Improvement Plan (2010)
- Proposed and approved residential development plans
- CDOT I-25 Bridge Replacement and Mobility Hubs plans
- St. Vrain Valley School District Enrollment Report (2023-2024)
- Town of Berthoud Recreation Center and Parks Master Plans (2018)
- Town of Berthoud Open Space Plan (2021)
- Town of Berthoud Trails Master Plan (2022)
- Town of Firestone Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan (2020)
- City of Longmont Parks Recreation and Trails Master Plan (2014)
- City of Longmont Open Space Master Plan (2018)
- City of Longmont Transportation Master Plan (2025)

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

This PROST plan, *Mead in Motion*, builds upon guidance and strategies established in the 2011 OSPT Plan and the 2018 Town of Mead Comprehensive Plan, and complements broader regional trail and transportation plans. In August 2025, Town staff and the consultant team conducted a detailed audit of the 2011 OSPT Plan and the 2018 Comprehensive Plan's PROST recommendations to identify goals, objectives, strategies, and actions that are still relevant for the Town's PROST system and should be carried forward in the plan update. The plan audit revealed several notable accomplishments in the time since those plans were adopted, including:

- Planning, land acquisition, and construction of the Mead Community Center
- Connecting the Feather Ridge trail to Founders Park
- Expanding recreation program offerings
- Adding recreation and events staff
- Implementing recreation management software
- Formal agreements with PROST partners such as the school district and adjacent municipalities
- Offering adaptive recreation programming
- Establishing cost recovery targets for programs

The plan audit produced the following strategies that informed development of *Mead in Motion*:

- Streamline objectives and strategies
- Use maps, tables, and graphics to illustrate proposed improvements in place of extensive text
- Recommendations should be clear, yet flexible to meet shifting community needs and evolving technology
- Preserve the five-category organization of goals and actions

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Plan is to align the Town of Mead departments which offer PROST services with the needs of the community to continue providing quality services through prioritized recommendations grounded in data-driven analyses, an understanding of industry best practices, and public input.

- Update and refine the future vision for parks, open space, and trails, based on meaningful community engagement and an understanding of needs and priorities that have changed since previous planning efforts in Mead
- Continue maintaining and investing in existing facilities and amenities
- Identify strategic partnerships and funding opportunities both regionally and within Mead to meet community demand, provide high-quality experiences, and improve or expand the system incrementally
- Prioritize investments and capital projects, including tangible actions that Town of Mead staff can take to implement these projects



WHO WILL USE THE PLAN?

The success of *Mead in Motion* depends on its continued endorsement and implementation by those who helped shape the goals and recommendations.

Board of Trustees and Planning Commission

This plan serves as a strategic guide for the Board of Trustees and Planning Commission on decisions related to parks, open space, trails, and recreation. The goals and recommendations included should guide decisions across all areas of local governance as these services are essential contributors to the quality of life for Mead residents. The plan should be consulted to inform the annual budget and capital improvement plan, and as applicable to land use and development, economic development, transportation, and infrastructure decisions to capitalize on opportunities to advance the recommendations of this plan and to consider impacts to existing PROST assets and future goals.

Town Staff

Mead in Motion is a unifying guide for Town staff across multiple departments that provide or support parks, recreation, open space, and trails. This Plan should be used to help planning, prioritization, focus investment, and secure external funding for PROST projects in Mead. Town staff should reference the plan when preparing annual department budgets, developing annual capital improvements plan, and facilitating strategic partnerships.

Local Partner Organizations

The Town of Mead has enjoyed partnerships with various community groups and organizations, such as the St. Vrain Valley School District. This Plan establishes the importance of these groups continuing to play a key role in advancing goals and services for parks, open space, and trails.

The Development Community

Mead in Motion's goals and actions communicate the future PROST system facilities desired by the Town. The plan equips potential developers with the information necessary to formulate development proposals that are consistent with the shared vision set forth by the community and includes the desired and required PROST amenities that should be provided by the development.

The Mead Community

The future of parks, open space, and trails in Mead must have strong community support. Residents, elected and appointed officials, Town staff, and partner agencies must work collectively to strengthen and improve the PROST assets that are a source of community pride and cohesion.

Plan Organization: Overview of Chapters



CHAPTER 1: FOUNDATION

This chapter outlines the Plan's background, purpose, process, and a summary of the existing PROST system.



CHAPTER 2: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This chapter describes the phases of community engagement, participation, and key constituents and stakeholders who were essential in developing the Plan. It describes the engagement strategies and events held over the course of the planning period and briefly summarizes results.



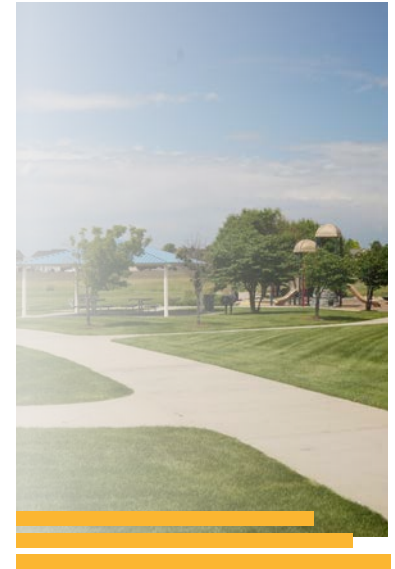
CHAPTER 3: NEEDS

This chapter provides a summary of the Needs Assessment process including a variety of analyses of Mead PROST Services. The chapter provides results of the Statistically Valid Survey, Population-Based Level of Service Analysis, Benchmark Community Analysis, Conservation Resource Analysis, and Parks and Open Space Walkability Analysis. The chapter offers specific recommendations of what and where to invest in PROST throughout Mead.



CHAPTER 4: RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter sets forth goals according to five categories encompassing PROST: infrastructure, operations, maintenance, services, and funding. This chapter explores the proposed system and key projects that will help the Town meet or exceed levels of service, balanced by an analysis of current and anticipated funding and staffing.



CHAPTER 5: IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter prioritizes projects and actions and provides implementation details including funding sources and instructions for plan maintenance.

Process and Timeline

The planning process was organized in three phases completed over a 16-month period.

Phase I: Understanding the Mead PROST System *March - September 2025*

Established an understanding of the system through data collection, defining existing conditions, and an assessment of the system based on understanding the history of and gaps in the system.

- Existing Plans, Reports, Studies Review
- Plan Audit
- Inventory of Existing PROST Facilities
- Park Facility Assessment
- Opportunities and Challenges Mapping
- Planning Context and Existing Conditions Report

Phase II: Needs Assessment *July - December 2025*

Determined community needs based on five detailed analyses to determine the “what” and the “where” of the Mead community’s PROST needs for improved quality or quantity of services and amenities.

- Statistically Valid Survey
- Benchmarking Study
- Population-based Level of Service Analysis
- 10- minute Walkability Analysis
- Conservation Resources Analysis

Phase III: Options and Recommendations *January - April 2026*

Identified goals and recommendations for parks, open space, trails, staffing, and funding for the next decade and beyond.

- New trails and crossings
- New open space and park locations
- New capital projects
- Agricultural open space preservation strategies
- Strategies to optimize the Land Use Code to advance PROST priorities
- Funding needs and strategies

State of the System

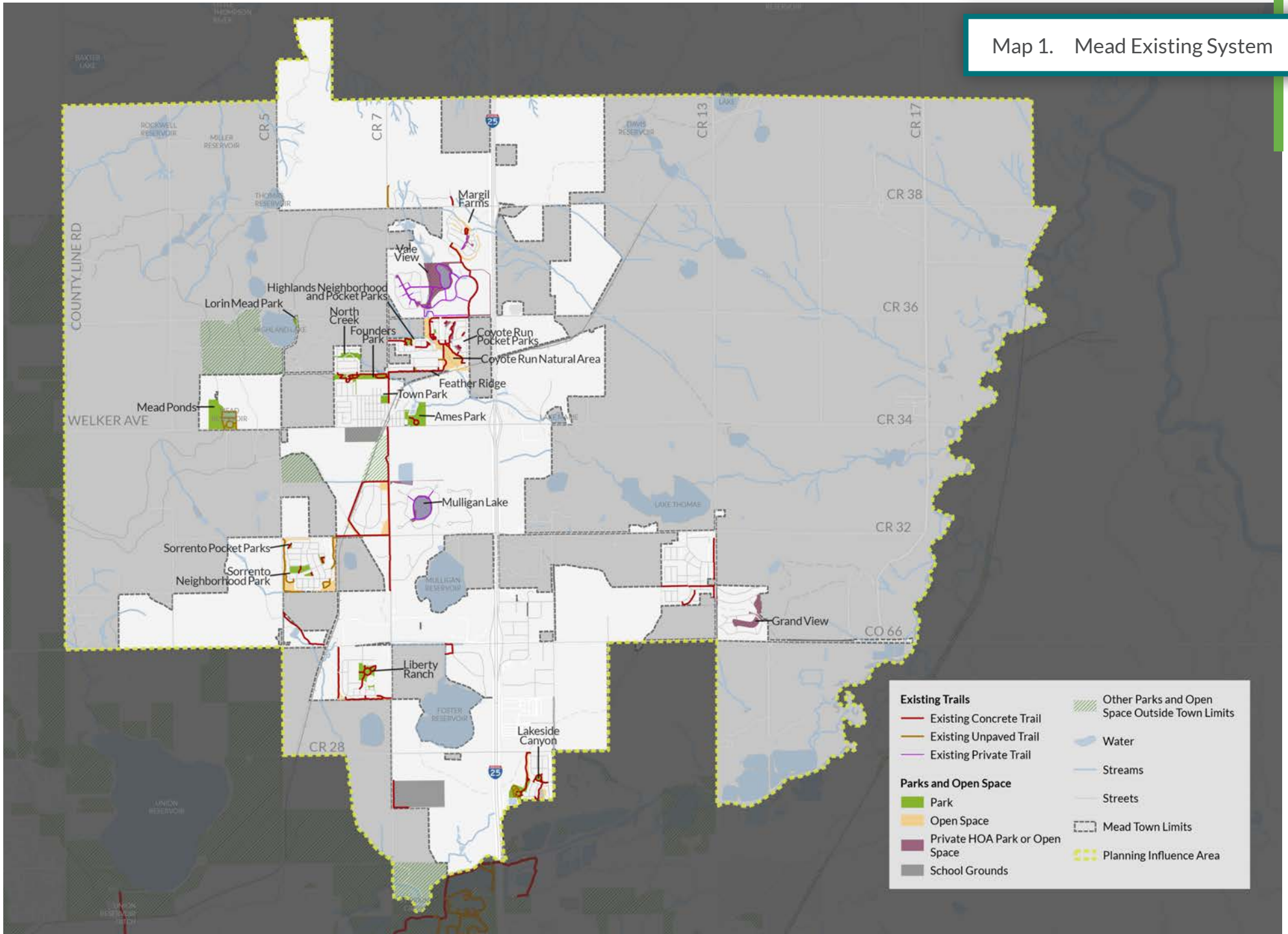
The Town of Mead provides several parks, recreation programs, and community events to meet residents’ recreation, health, and quality-of-life needs. The current PROST system maintained by the Town of Mead includes nine parks, 19.7 acres of open space, 7.4 miles of trail, and a new Community/Recreation Center. The system is supplemented by numerous Metropolitan District and Homeowners Association (HOA) parks, trails, and open spaces; many of which offer public access to their facilities. The Town’s recent growth has and will continue to expand the PROST system as development incorporates additional trails, parks, and open space into new neighborhoods in Mead.

The Town of Mead adopted its first Open Space, Parks, and Trails Plan in 2011. Since the adoption of that first system-wide plan, the Town has experienced significant growth and development, leading to increased demand for more trails, facilities, and recreation opportunities within the Town. See **Appendix A, Planning Context Report** for an extensive review of the forces and trends that have shaped and continue to shape Mead’s PROST System and services to date.

Despite providing a robust and growing park system, amenities, and recreation programs, the Town of Mead does not currently have a PROST department. Staff from multiple departments partner to deliver the exceptional services that the Mead community enjoys. Parks are maintained by the Public Works Department. Recreation programming, Town events, and facility rentals are managed by community engagement and event/media staff. The planning and development of new parks, trails, and open space is a collaborative effort between the Public Works Department and Town Engineer, and the Community Development Department.



Map 1. Mead Existing System



PARKS

Mead's current park system is dominated by neighborhood parks and pocket parks as a result of park construction primarily occurring as a component of residential developments over the past decade of growth. Approximately half of all public parks in Mead are owned and maintained by the Town and half are owned and maintained by the neighborhood HOA or metro district but are public parks that can be enjoyed by anyone in the community. In addition, there are several neighborhoods in Mead that own and maintain private parks exclusively for use by residents of that subdivision.

Mead has three larger parks that are owned by the Town and serve the broader community: Town Park, Ames Park, and Founders Park. These parks host numerous Townwide events each year. Community feedback conducted for this planning process expressed a desire for these parks to include more amenities and updated playgrounds.



OPEN SPACE

The Town of Mead defines Open Space broadly to include any land or water area with its surface open to the sky, which serves specific uses of providing park and recreation opportunities; conserving natural areas and environmental resources; structuring urban development form; and protecting areas of agricultural, archaeological, or historical significance; drainage ways, floodplains, natural areas, natural area buffer zones, wetlands, subsidence areas, trails, and agriculture preservation areas (Town of Mead Code Sec. 16-2-120). Similar to park and trail development, most open space is provided by residential developers as a requirement for approval. With the exception of the Coyote Run neighborhood, the land designated by developers to meet public open space requirements encompasses small and fragmented parcels often on the periphery of subdivisions or between lots that function as stormwater facilities and drainage areas.

While the Town does not currently have a formal open space program for land or easement acquisition, it did play an important role in supporting conservation of the 210-acre Litzenberger tract, located just outside of the Town boundary on the southwest side of Highland Lake. This conservation easement preserves scenic views of the mountains from Lorin Mead Park and restricts the land from future development, including recreation.



TRAILS

Mead's trail system serves the community as a localized network of connections, primarily within neighborhoods. Since the 2011 OSPT Plan was completed, 9.3 miles of trails have been added to the Mead system by the Town and as part of residential development, bringing total trail mileage to 14.5.

Short trail segments and networks internal to Mead's subdivisions offer recreation for those who have access to these trails from within the neighborhoods. Public access to these trails varies from subdivision to subdivision.



RECREATION PROGRAMS

Mead's recreation team provides an impressive variety of youth and adult athletics and programming including sports camps and leagues for Pre-K through 8th grade. Adult recreation opportunities including cornhole and basketball leagues, trips and excursions across the state, and a variety of programs and classes. As of 2026, recreation programming has a new home in the Mead Community Center which has expanded the Town's programming capacity.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Well-attended Town events in Mead are frequently hosted in Town Park, including concerts, movies, holiday parades, and community celebrations such as National Night Out and the Community Day celebration. Each year the Town hosts 25 events that draw attendees from across the county and adjacent communities. Approximately 5,000 annual attendees participate in these community-centered events which rate as one of the most highly valued PROST services that the Town provides.



By the Numbers

94.4 ac Acres of Town-owned and maintained parks

124.3 ac Total acres of all public parkland

200.4 ac Total acres of open space within Town limits

19.7 ac Acres of Town-owned and maintained open space

7.4 mi Total miles of Town-owned and maintained trails

14.5 mi Total miles of public trails

25 Annual events

5,000 Annual events attendees

75 Recreation programs offered annually

1,328 Annual recreation program participants

Facility Inventory and Assessment Summary

PARKS

The public park assessment completed as part of this planning process evaluated all eighteen parks that are open to general public, regardless of Town ownership or private ownership and maintenance. Parks were assessed for access and visibility conditions; the condition of site structures and amenities; condition of site furnishings; and condition of landscape and hardscape. The Town of Mead owns and maintains nine parks, totaling nearly 100 acres. Overall, Town parks are well maintained and cared for. The oldest park facilities in the system are likely approaching the end of their useful life now or within the next five years and will require replacement of existing amenities such as playgrounds, picnic tables, benches, and more. The Town has kept up with lifecycle replacement and repairs in existing parks resulting in little to no deferred maintenance.

While the Town's public parks are generally in very good condition, their smaller size and facilities are often inadequate to meet the needs of the Town's extensive youth sports programming or large community-wide events. Parking, equipment storage, electricity, and restrooms are needed to support these more intense park uses. See **Appendix D** for the complete record of the park assessment.

TRAILS

There are 14.5 miles of public trails within the Town of Mead. Approximately half of this mileage was constructed and is maintained by the Town and half is maintained by private HOA or metro districts. Like Mead's parks, the Town's public trails are relatively new and have been constructed within the last 15 years. As a result, paved and natural surface trails are generally in very good condition. The trails maintenance assessment conducted as part of the *Mead in Motion* process identified relatively few deficiencies in specific locations such as cracked concrete, low points or drainage deficiencies, vegetation encroachment, blind spots, and erosion. These occurrences were documented in a geodatabase that can serve as a starting point for an asset management system to track repairs and improvements over time. Private trails that are not open to the public were not assessed.

Opportunities and Challenges

Opportunities and challenges for Mead's PROST system were identified as a starting point for exploring potential recommendations in this Plan. The major opportunities and challenges are summarized below, and the complete list and associated map can be found in **Appendix B**.

MAJOR OPPORTUNITIES

1. County Road 7 (CR 7) improvements connecting Mead trails to St. Vrain State Park
2. Amenitizing large parks with water, parking, electricity, etc.
3. Colorado State Highway 66 (CO 66) widening and pedestrian underpass
4. Possible future splashpad at Community Center
5. Forthcoming Public Services Campus with library, ball fields, and parking

TOP CHALLENGES

6. I-25 crossings
7. Great Western Railway crossings
8. Limited water access and play opportunities
9. Lack of trail connectivity between parks and neighborhoods
10. Neighborhood parks lack parking to accommodate recreational programming



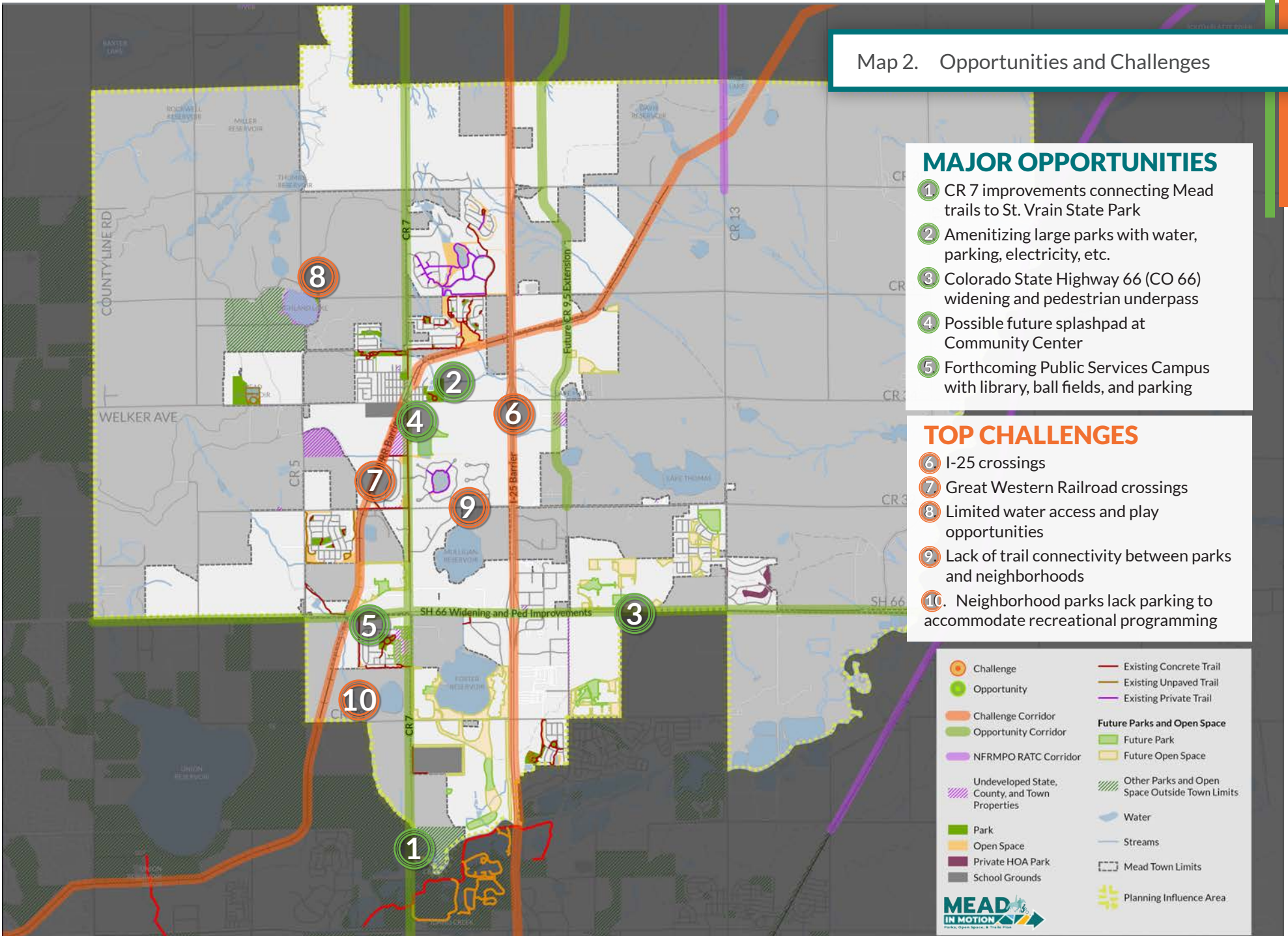
Map 2. Opportunities and Challenges

MAJOR OPPORTUNITIES

- ① CR 7 improvements connecting Mead trails to St. Vrain State Park
- ② Amenitizing large parks with water, parking, electricity, etc.
- ③ Colorado State Highway 66 (CO 66) widening and pedestrian underpass
- ④ Possible future splashpad at Community Center
- ⑤ Forthcoming Public Services Campus with library, ball fields, and parking

TOP CHALLENGES

- ⑥ I-25 crossings
- ⑦ Great Western Railroad crossings
- ⑧ Limited water access and play opportunities
- ⑨ Lack of trail connectivity between parks and neighborhoods
- ⑩ Neighborhood parks lack parking to accommodate recreational programming



Chapter 2.
**COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**





Engagement Timeline

Community engagement informed every phase of the project and took place in three (3) stages through in-person and online interactive activities.

Stage #1 – Vision and Needs

May – September 2025

This first outreach series introduced the project and posed initial questions to gauge community needs, preferences, challenges, and satisfaction with parks, open space, and trails in order to identify gaps in service and potential new trail connections.

Stage #2 – Big Ideas and Preliminary Recommendations

September – November 2025

The second phase of engagement served as an opportunity to present ideas and draft recommendations informed by community input collected in Phase 1, summarize the results of the Needs Assessment, seek feedback on the proposed trails, and understand priorities to ensure alignment with community values.

Stage #3 – Draft Plan Review

February 2026 – May 2026

The third stage of engagement provided an opportunity for the community to review and provide feedback on the draft plan. This phase included a Draft Plan open house, complemented with interactive online plan review.

Detailed community engagement results for the outreach discussed in this chapter can be found in Appendix C.



Engagement by the Numbers

2025
SPRING

- Listening Sessions 8
- Interactive Map Phase #1 30
- Online Questionnaire 272

FALL

- Statistically Valid Survey 283
- Pop-Up Event #2: Mead Community Day 200

SUMMER

- Open House #1 20
- Pop-Up Event #1: Independence Day Bike Parade 100

SPRING

- Open House #2 17
- Draft Plan Review 7
- Website Subscribers 86

2026
WINTER

- Interactive Map Phase #2 25
- Pop-Up Event #3: Coffee with Mayor + Basketball 15

1,131
total engagements

- Number of Participants
- Board of Trustees (BOT) Meetings
- Planning Commission (PC) Meetings
- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meetings

Key Stakeholders and Town Leadership

Planning Commission and Board of Trustees

The Town of Mead Planning Commission and Board of Trustees were engaged at key milestones throughout the planning process. This engagement took the form of a visioning questionnaire, one-on-one listening sessions or focus group discussion, and project updates and presentations that took place during their regular meetings.

Technical Advisory Committee

To support the planning effort, the project team convened a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) comprised of local and regional professionals and subject-matter experts from partner agencies in parks, trails, and open space.

The role of the TAC was to inform development of plan recommendations by advising the planning team on current and future parks, trails, or conservation efforts and initiatives that their organizations are spearheading, and identifying opportunities for partnership, collaboration, cost-sharing with the Town of



Mead to avoid duplication of services and to implement the eventual recommendations of the plan. Agencies invited to participate in the TAC included Larimer County, Weld County, Boulder County, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (St. Vrain State Park), City of Longmont, Town of Firestone, Town of Berthoud, Mead Chamber of Commerce, NFRMPO, Denver Regional Metropolitan Council of Governments (DRCOG), St. Vrain Valley School District, and Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT).

The first TAC meeting discussed opportunities for collaboration and partnership between the agencies represented and the Town of Mead in providing high quality parks, trails, and open space experiences for the broader regional community. The second TAC meeting engaged members to discuss the proposed trails map and recommendations for parks and open space. Finally, the TAC was invited to review and provide feedback on the draft plan.

Town Staff

As the frontline service providers for PROST in the Town of Mead, the lived experience and organizational knowledge of Town staff was a critical source of information for this planning process. At the beginning of the project, two focus groups were held with the communications and recreation team as well as the team of staff responsible for maintenance and operations of parks, trails, and open space. These discussions identified existing challenges, envisioned future PROST service delivery, and identified ideal outcomes for the *Mead in Motion* planning process.

In addition to the initial staff focus groups, Mead staff have shaped and guided plan development at every step of the process through project management and recurring coordination meetings that included representation from every department and division that is responsible for delivery of PROST services.

Engagement Strategies and Events

Engagement strategies used in the *Mead in Motion* process provided a framework for meaningful and inclusive community involvement early and frequently. The project team engaged the Mead community through a variety of methods including in-person and online opportunities. The following summarizes key engagement strategies throughout the planning process.

Online Engagement

MEAD IN MOTION WEBPAGE AND NEWSLETTER

The *Mead in Motion* website, MeadinMotion.com, was established as an online hub of information and a forum for residents to access online engagement opportunities and events and review plan materials. The page was regularly updated to share opportunities to participate, key findings, public outreach results, and draft project deliverables. It allowed community members to subscribe with their email – a feature that was used throughout the planning process to distribute e-newsletters with project updates and notification of new engagement opportunities.

VIRTUAL LISTENING SESSIONS

Held virtually from May 7th-16th, 2025, these sessions invited key stakeholders to discuss their vision for the future of PROST in Mead. The purpose of the listening sessions was to hear from local constituents with special expertise or insights relevant to the Town's future provision of parks, open space, and trails. Each of the eight individual stakeholders interviewed represented or held expert knowledge related to critical regional infrastructure or community groups, including representatives of HOAs and metro districts, developers, and ditch companies.

ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRES

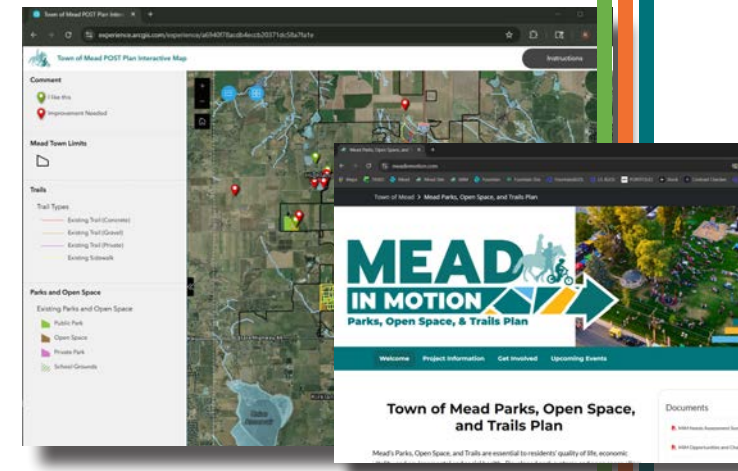
One community-wide online questionnaire was launched at the beginning of the process (June 2025) and was structured to gauge community perception and use patterns of the PROST system as it currently exists, identify and envision what may be desired for the future of Mead, and gauge support for different potential funding options. The questionnaire gathered 193 responses.

INTERACTIVE MAPS

Two online interactive maps invited Mead community members to share geolocated comments related to the project. The first interactive map asked participants to identify the existing parks, open space, and trail features that they supported, or that they saw a need for improvement. The second interactive map displayed the proposed trail system and invited users to communicate their support for new alignments or identify missing connections.

ONLINE PLAN REVIEW AND STORYMAP

The draft plan was provided for public review through an interactive online platform. This public platform allowed the community to comment, reply, and make suggestions for changes to documents that shaped the structure



of the final *Mead in Motion* Plan. In addition, a [Storymap](#) outlining the key findings and recommendations of the Plan provides a user-friendly high-level executive summary.

PLAN PROMOTION

Social Media

Engagement opportunities were promoted on social media through the Town's existing platforms on Facebook and Instagram. Curated posts directed the community to visit the project website, participate in questionnaires and interactive maps, and attend pop-up and open house events.

Mead Messenger

This existing community-wide newsletter was used as an official channel for sharing *Mead*

in Motion Plan engagement opportunities and process updates in coordination with the e-newsletters distributed through the project website and printed flyers and handouts.

In-Person Engagement

OPEN HOUSE EVENTS

Two community-wide open house events were held during the **Mead in Motion** Planning process to provide a formal in-person opportunity to engage with Plan content and planning staff members. The first was held in June 2025 to introduce the community to the planning process and solicit input on needs, preferences, challenges, and satisfaction with trails, parks, and open space in Mead. The second open house provided an opportunity for Draft Plan review in April 2026 at the Mead Community Center. This event encouraged attendees to review and discuss the Plan's recommendations.



POP-UP ENGAGEMENT

Throughout the first phase of engagement, the project team capitalized on opportunities for “pop-up” table engagement at already-occurring events with interactive engagement activities to increase awareness of the planning process and solicit feedback and direct community members to online engagement opportunities.

Independence Day Parade

The Independence Day Bicycle Parade, hosted by the Town of Mead, featured bike decorating and a bike parade around Town Park and Town Hall. The event had approximately 100 attendees, mostly representing families with younger kids from across the Town and surrounding area. The project team had a booth set up handing out prizes with informative posters, handouts, and invitations to engage with the questionnaire and interactive map.

Mead Community Day

Mead Community Day was hosted by the Town of Mead in September 2025 and offered a broad selection of vendors from the community, including the Town's own booth which highlighted the **Mead in Motion** Plan. The project team offered summaries of key themes heard so far, and highlights of Opportunities and Challenges.

Community Center Pop-Up

This event was hosted at the Community Center as an opportunity for community members to review the proposed trails map, explore the big ideas for the PROST Plan, and share feedback on project priorities with staff. This event encouraged engagement with the second online interactive map and captured input from attendees at Saturday-morning basketball games and the monthly “Coffee with the Mayor” event.



Other pop-up engagements

Meet, Greet, and Eat; Summer Cornhole League

Meet, Greet, and Eat events hosted by the Town of Mead were utilized at least twice throughout the planning process to promote **Mead in Motion** planning milestones and online engagement opportunities. The project team also attended the Summer Cornhole League as an opportunity for outreach with community members engaged in PROST programming. Open houses and online engagement were promoted during these in-person events over the summer of 2025.





Key Themes

The following major themes emerged consistently throughout the public engagement process and are reflected in the vision, goals, and actions of this Plan.

Regional Collaboration in Trails Planning. Emphasis on the importance of regional collaboration in trails planning to connect Mead to surrounding communities.

Develop New Ideas for Funding. Get creative with funding to access the best opportunities for advancing and enhancing Mead's PROST system.

Developers Should Pay their Way. Support for developers to pay their way and offer higher quality parks to the residents of Mead.

Fill the Gaps. A top priority for the community is the development of new trail connections, crossings, and filling in the gaps in the current trails system.

Water Features. Families envision an ideal park to include a water feature like a splashpad or pool and communicated strong demand for an indoor aquatic facility.

Shade is Cool. Shade from trees and other structures in parks and along trails is in high demand from residents.

Open Space is Highly Valued by Residents. Access to natural resources, mountain views and scenery, a location for trails, preserving agricultural heritage, and buffering Mead from the development of neighboring towns are highly-valued open space benefits.

Improve Safe Routes to School. Community members support the development of safer routes to Mead's schools with proposed off-street trail connections and improved crossings.

Chapter 3. **NEEDS**





PROST Needs Assessment

From June-October 2025, the *Mead in Motion* project team conducted a Needs Assessment of the Town’s PROST system. The Needs Assessment consisted of several detailed analyses to determine the “what” and the “where” of the Mead community’s PROST needs for improved quality or quantity of services and amenities.

To better understand what the community’s PROST needs are, the consultant team conducted a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS), a population-based Level of Service Analysis for parks and open space, and a benchmarking study against peer-city PROST agencies. Complete results of each analysis are available in **Appendix E**.

To understand geographic areas where PROST facilities, amenities, and programs are most needed, the consultant team conducted a Parks and Open Space Walkability Analysis and Conservation Resource Analysis. The results of all five analyses are highlighted in the following sections and conclude with a summary of key takeaways and implications for Town of Mead PROST service delivery.






What PROST Services are Needed?

Statistically Valid Survey

In August and September 2025, ETC Institute conducted a SVS to understand the needs and preferences of Mead residents for PROST services. Surveys were distributed via mail to all households within the Town of Mead's corporate boundaries. The survey was also promoted online. A total of 283 households completed the survey. The survey results are statistically valid, meaning they can be trusted as representative of all Mead residents. This ensures representation from residents who may not be typical parks and recreation users as well as representation that reflects the demographic composition of the Town. Other forms of public engagement are quite valuable; however, they rely on respondents who self-select their participation and may

include people who do not live in Mead. These respondents are typically people who already use the Town's parks, open space, and trails or have a vested interest in them. By contrast, the SVS reaches a broader, representative cross-section of Mead residents.

Notable SVS results identify opportunities for the Town to strategically direct its efforts and resources to better meet the needs of residents. Full results, including demographic data on survey respondents, are included in the complete SVS report found in **Appendix E**.



The SVS ensures representation from residents who may not be typical parks and recreation users and reflects the demographic composition of the Town.

PRIORITY INVESTMENT RATING

The Priority Investment Rating equally weighs (1) the importance that residents place on facilities and amenities and (2) how many residents have an unmet need for the facility or amenity. **Figure 1** shows the Priority Investment Rating for each of the 32 facilities and amenities assessed on the survey. Investment in the facilities or amenities identified as “High Priority” will have the greatest impact on the highest number of households in Mead. The importance of these facilities and amenities is underscored by the fact that 34% of respondents indicated that Mead parks lack the features they want to use.

Top 5 facility and amenity priorities for investment based on need and importance:

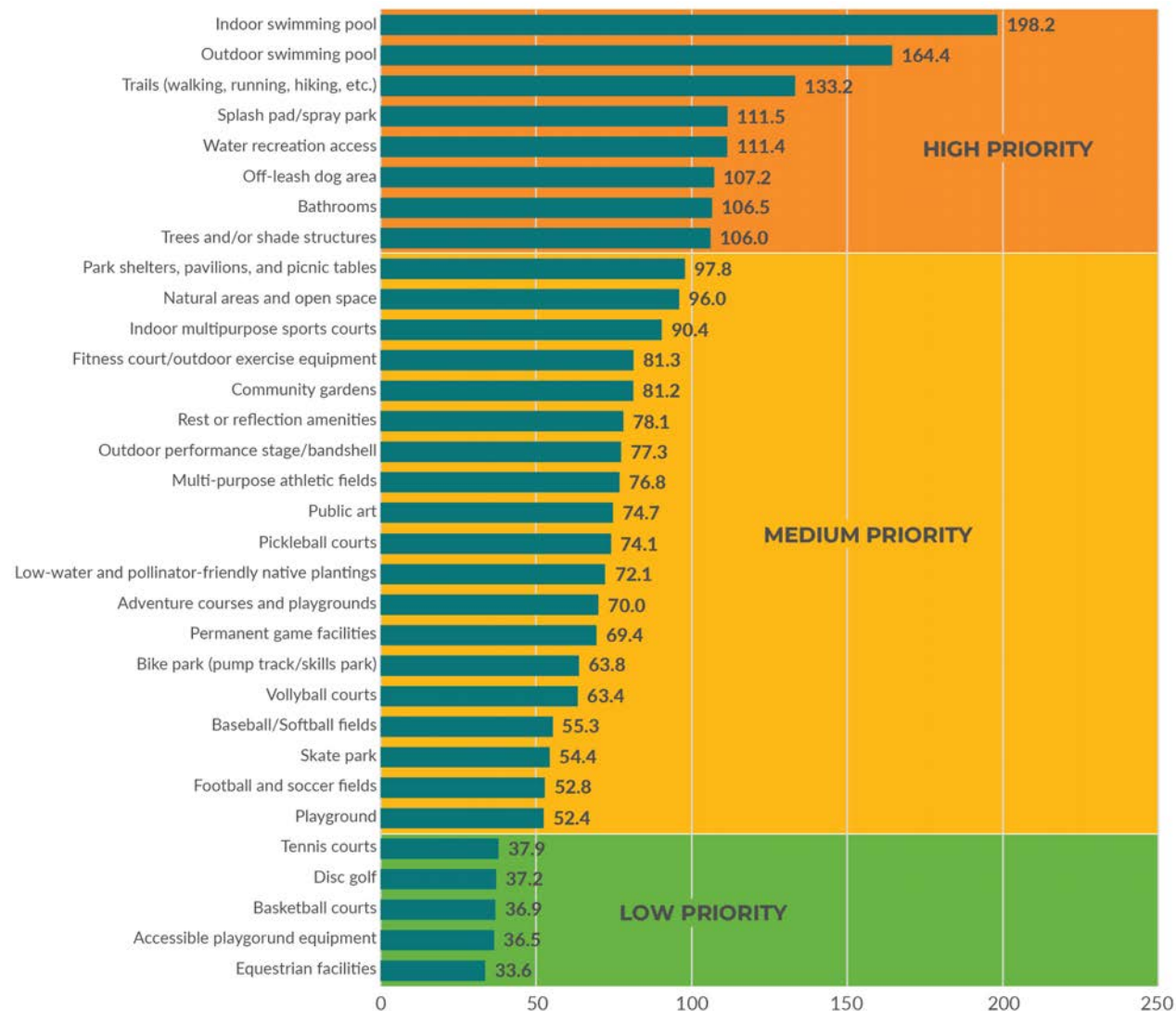
1. *Indoor swimming pool*
2. *Outdoor swimming pool*
3. *Trails*
4. *Splashpad/Spray park*
5. *Water recreation access (lakes, reservoirs, rivers)*

SUPPORTED FACILITY AND AMENITY ACTIONS

Nearly all proposed improvements and possible new facilities assessed on the survey were supported by at least 50 percent of respondents; however, the top four actions received over 70% of respondent support as shown in **Figure 2 on the next page**:

- Conserving open space and agricultural lands as buffers between neighborhoods and adjacent towns (82%)
- Expanding the trails system (73%)
- Building and maintaining an aquatic facility with indoor swimming pool (73%)
- Upgrades and new amenities at existing Town Parks (71%)

Figure 1. Top Priorities for Investment for Facilities/Amenities



A majority of survey respondents supported a voter-approved sales tax option as a public funding mechanism for an indoor aquatic facility and upgrades to existing parks.

SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC FUNDING MECHANISMS

Respondents were asked if they would support public funding in the form of a sales tax or property tax increase for the same facility and amenity actions. Results reported in **Figure 3** show that, as may be expected, support for public funding mechanisms for these actions drops below the levels of general support as indicated in the previous question. Some actions are less supported than others. Notably, respondents who indicated support for an indoor pool/aquatic facility and upgrades to existing parks are the most willing to support paying for these facilities and amenities with a voter-approved bond repaid through a dedicated sales tax. These are the only two actions that appear favorable to receive voter support for a sales tax revenue bond for funding.

The survey did not test levels of support for various sales tax percentages or specific ballot language. This type of testing is strongly advised if the Town desires to pursue a ballot measure to fund any new facilities or PROST improvements through a sales tax bond referendum.

Across all actions, property tax was not well supported as a funding mechanism for PROST facility and amenity improvements. However, 78% of survey respondents support the use of corporate sponsorship and naming rights to fund new facilities.

Figure 2. Support for the Following Actions the Town of Mead Could Take to Improve Parks, Recreation, Open Spaces, and Trails (by percentage of respondents)

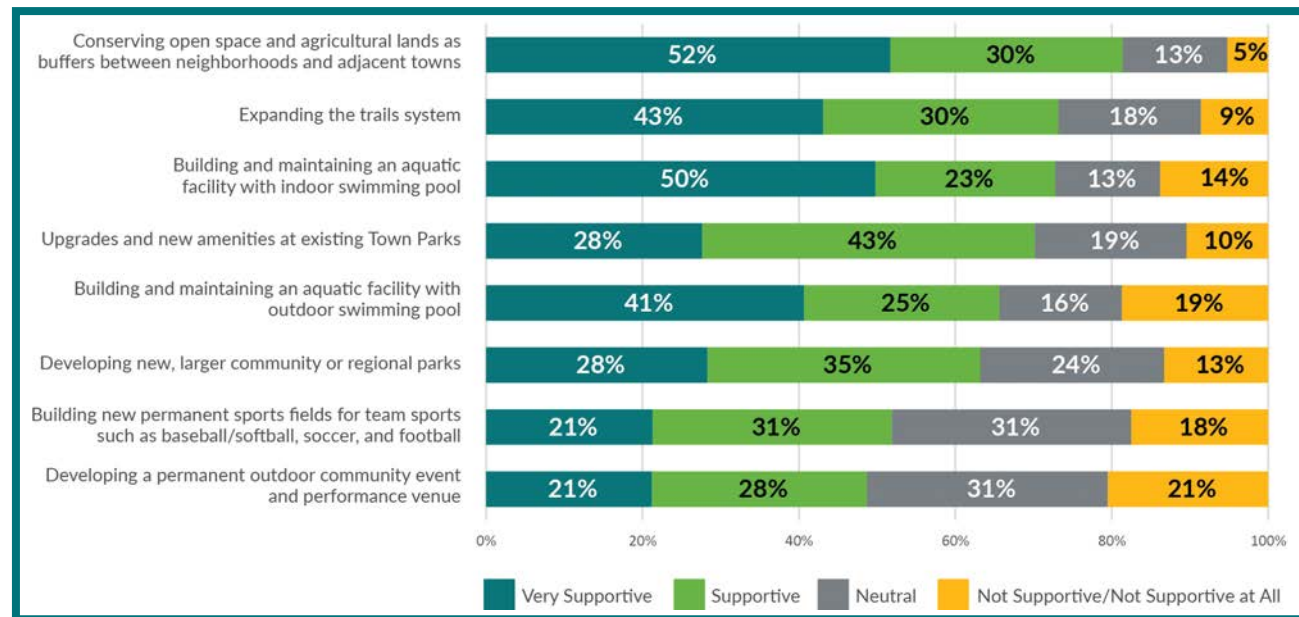
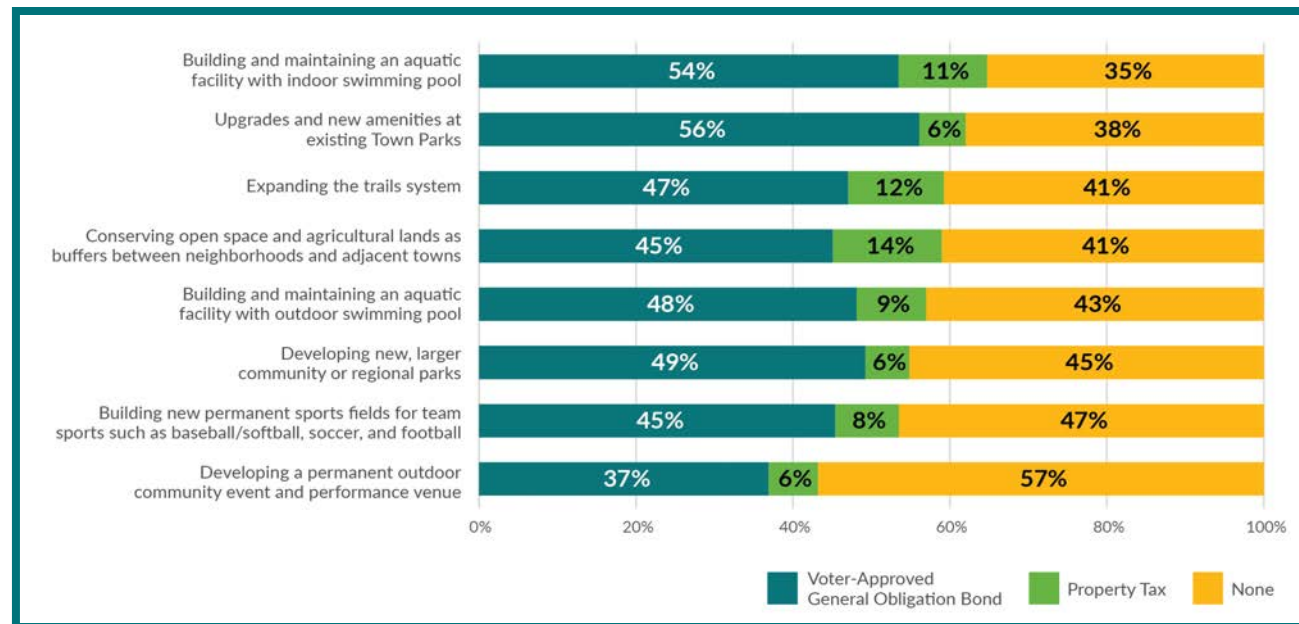


Figure 3. Funding Methods Respondents Would Most Support to Help Pay for Potential Improvements (by percentage of respondents)



Population-based Level of Service Analysis

PARK AND OPEN SPACE LANDS

Level of Service (LOS) guidelines are targets that define the quantity of parkland and open space relative to population. As the population increases, LOS standards should be reviewed and revised accordingly to provide a high level of service while remaining realistic and responsive to community values.

Figure 4 compares Mead’s current 2025 LOS for park and open space lands to 2011 LOS and 2038 LOS based on projected population growth and planned or platted parks and open space. The national median LOS for park and open space lands is also included for reference.



Figure 4. Mead Public Park and Open Space LOS Comparison

Year	Total Public Parks and Open Space Acres (incl. HOA and Metro District) ¹	Population within Town Limits	LOS (acres per 1000 residents)
2011 OSPT Master Plan ²	172	3,233	53.2
2025 Mead in Motion	224	6,735	33.3
2038 Projection ³	644	14,602	44.1
<u>2025 NRPA Median LOS</u>		< 20,000	12.9

¹ Parks and open space acres include all types of public-access lands including parcels that do not feature active recreation amenities and serve as open space areas or vacant parcels, courtyards around government buildings, green spaces and function as open spaces used for stormwater and drainage.

² The 2011 OSPT Plan reported LOS using Mead's Planning Influence Area (PIA) population. The calculation above was created using the 2011 population within Town limits as reported in the OSPT plan.

³ Comprehensive Plan medium projection assumed 6% population growth rate. 420 acres of new park and open space are expected to be created by planned/platted subdivisions within the planning horizon of this year.

Key Conclusions

- Mead’s current LOS for public park and open space lands far exceeds the median LOS acreage (12.9 acres per 1,000 residents) reported by National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) for jurisdictions with populations below 20,000.
- Mead's park land and open space dedication and development requirements for new public parks and open space have kept pace with population growth since the 2011 OSPT Master Plan. The Town should continue requiring new developments to provide public, amenitized parks and open space to keep pace with the Town's projected population growth.
- The 2018 Comprehensive Plan projected that Mead’s population will grow to 14,602, assuming a medium growth

rate of 6%. If the Town of Mead stopped requiring new development to provide parks and open space, it would still exceed the current NRPA national median LOS acreage despite the projected population growth in the next 13 years.

- Planned and platted subdivisions as of September 2025 are projected to add 420 acres of new parkland and open space. Assuming these lands provide public access, regardless of ownership and management status, public park and open space acreage will total 644 acres, further raising the Town’s LOS to 44 acres per 1,000 residents.
- Mead is projected to continue exceeding national park and open space population-based LOS standards for quantity of parkland relative to its population.

- If new developments continue to meet the need for quantity of parkland, this allows the Town to focus on the quality of amenities in public parks and improvements to existing Town-owned community parks and a future site for a new community or regional park.
- Maintenance staff capacity will need to increase proportionately with the addition of new Town-owned or managed parks.
- Mead provides the highest LOS for Neighborhood Parks, although LOS acreage for this category of parks has decreased by approximately one acre as the Town’s population has doubled since 2011. LOS for mini/pocket parks and community parks has increased over the past 14 years since the previous analysis was conducted. See **Figure 5** for details by park category.

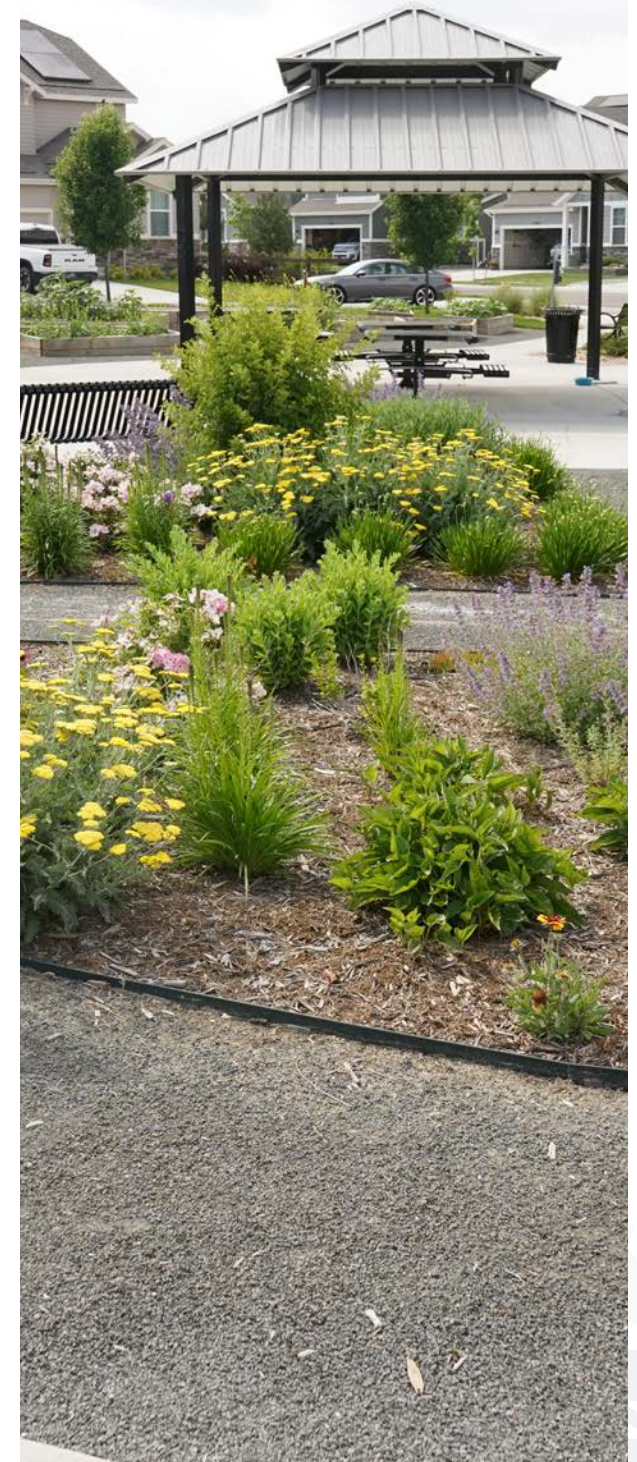
Figure 5. Mead Developed Public Park⁴ Level of Service (LOS) by Category⁵

Park Category	2025 Developed Public Parks Acres	2025 LOS (acres per 1000 residents)	2011 LOS (acres per 1000 residents)
Mini/Pocket Park ⁶	5.70	0.85	0.34
Neighborhood	40.35	5.99	7.06
Community	32.60	4.84	4.23

⁴ Developed parks that feature active recreation amenities or facilities and are open to the public, regardless of ownership/maintenance responsibility.

⁵ Level of Service is not calculated for Special Use Parks which serve a specialized purpose in response to a distinct community need or locational opportunity.

⁶ Defined in Town of Mead Code of Ordinances Sec. 16-2-120 as a ~1-acre park



Mead far exceeds the median number of miles provided by jurisdictions under 20,000 residents as reported by NRPA (2025).

TRAILS

Since the 2011 OSPT Master Plan was completed, 9.3 miles of trails have been added to the Mead system, bringing total trail mileage to 14.5 miles (paved and natural surface trails).

Currently Mead’s trails are functioning well for the current volume and modes of travel that it primarily serves (pedestrians and cyclists). Data reveals that the highest levels of pedestrian travel (run or walk) take place around Town Park, Founders Park, Feather Ridge Estates Trail, CR 7 Trail, Coyote Ridge trails, Vale View trails, and along CR 32 Trail from CR 7 to the Sorrento neighborhood trails. The majority of pedestrian trips, as measured in July 2025, originate and end the Coyote Ridge and Vale View neighborhoods, with an average duration of 39 minutes for the purpose of leisure or recreation.

The majority of bicycle trips that take place on trails, measured as of July 2025, originate and end at the Coyote Ridge and Vale View neighborhoods, with an average duration of 32 minutes for the purpose of leisure or recreational riding (Source: StravaMetro, August

2024-July 2025). These paved trails range from approximately 6 to 8 feet wide and adequately meet current demand for pedestrian and bicycle modes. While not expected, if future redevelopment of these neighborhoods results in higher density and an increased use of trails, trails that are currently 6 feet or narrower will need to be upgraded to widths of 8 to 12 feet to continue safely accommodating bidirectional multi-use travel.

Mead far exceeds the median number of miles provided by jurisdictions under 20,000 residents as reported by NRPA (2025), as illustrated in **Figure 6**. The system has continually expanded as new residential development takes place and is projected to continue growing with many miles of planned and platted trails to be constructed in new subdivisions. As this growth continues, Town residents and visitors would benefit from coordination with the [Colorado Trail Explorer](#) to provide a digital map of the Town's system.

Figure 6. Mead Public Trails LOS Comparison

Year	Total Miles of Public Trails (incl. HOA and Metro District)	Population within Town Limits
2011 OSPT Master Plan	5.2	3,233
2025 Mead in Motion	14.5	6,735
2025 NRPA Median LOS	4	< 20,000

Benchmark Communities Analysis

The goal of a Benchmark Analysis is to evaluate how Mead is positioned amongst regional peer agencies and national metrics. The analysis takes into account a combination of operating metrics including budgets, staffing levels, and asset inventories.

Overall, the benchmark analysis reveals that Mead offers a parks and recreation system that meets or exceeds NRPA benchmark medians for communities under 20,000 residents and is aligned with peer communities. Relatively high capital investment and average levels for operating expenses and FTEs reflect the Town's commitment to maintaining and growing the PROST system and the significant role that this system plays in providing high quality of life. The perspective gained through peer comparison is valuable in identifying areas for improvement and establishing strategic goals to pursue.

Methodology and Context

The agencies listed below were selected for benchmarking because they were communities of similar size in the Upper Front Range of Colorado, have a shared agricultural history that has transitioned to rapidly developing residential areas, and had similar socioeconomic characteristics as that of Mead. These benchmarked communities include the following:

- Town of Frederick, Colorado
- Town of Firestone, Colorado
- Town of Berthoud, Colorado
- Town of Windsor, Colorado
- Carbon Valley Parks and Recreation District (CVPRD), providing recreation



services to residents of Firestone, Frederick, Dacono, and surrounding rural areas.

While each of the agencies included in this analysis are high-performing PROST systems, it is important to note that each agency varies significantly in the size and scope of the parks and services they provide, making direct comparisons difficult. The power in this analysis is to identify areas where these agencies most excel, providing opportunities for further discussion to better understand the factors to their success. For example, several of the peer communities referenced in this analysis benefit from a dedicated tax revenue that directly supports PROST capital improvements and service delivery which is a notable contributor to their high rates of cost recovery.

Another important consideration is the presence of other providers within each community, including counties, HOAs, and

metro districts. Understanding this context helps Mead balance the need to grow with the constraints of fewer full-time equivalent (FTE) PROST staff and lower cost recovery than larger peer communities. Key takeaways emerge by examining the areas of greatest contrast, especially as they pertain to acres and miles per capita and in operational costs. Specific areas where Mead performs to an exceptional level include average capital investment per capita, annual volunteer hours, and annual number of community events.

When it comes to staffing and operating expenses, Mead ranks slightly below other benchmarked communities with the lowest total operating expenses, cost recovery, and lowest number of FTE. Continuing to invest in growing the PROST system would keep Mead on par with its peer communities.

The complete Benchmark Analysis Report can be found in **Appendix E**.



Where are PROST Services Needed?

Park and Open Space Walkability Analysis

A 10-minute walkability standard from residential areas to parks and open space is a common metric used nation-wide to assess access to parks and open space. This analysis identified a walkable network comprised of routes that provide safe pedestrian access to parks and open space via existing trails and sidewalks taking into consideration barriers such as arterial roads where formal crossings do not exist. The walkable network was mapped to Town of Mead parks and open space access points as well as public parks and open space maintained by HOAs or metro districts. As shown in **Map 3**, the results illustrate the areas of the Town where residents can access park or open space lands within a safe 10-minute, or half-mile, walk of their home. These areas are centered around residential developments with internal neighborhood and pocket parks as well as downtown Mead where Town Park, Founders Park, and Ames Park contribute to significant walkable park access.

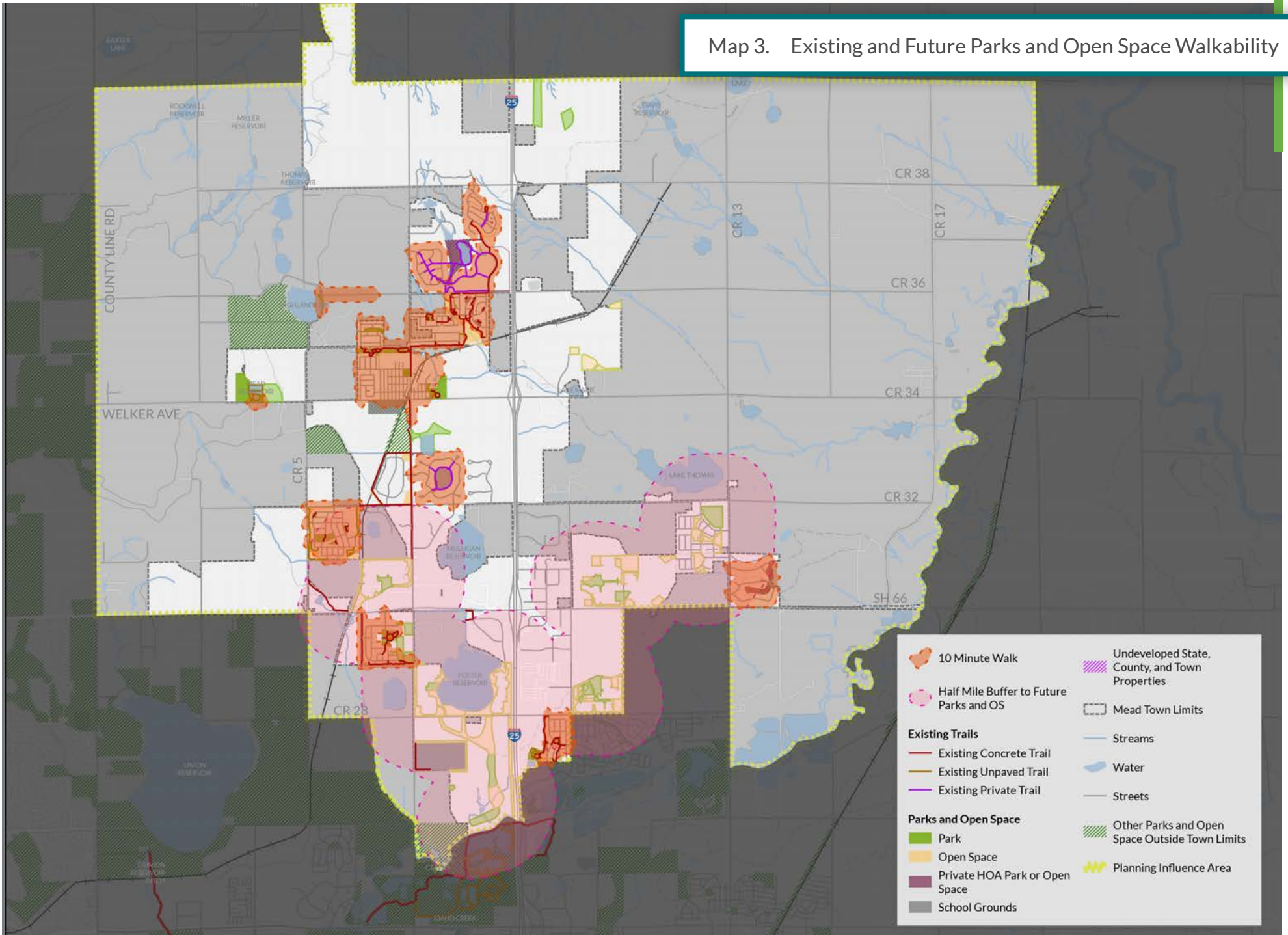
The analysis also considered future parks and open space walkability according to planned and platted park and open space lands that will be established as new residential developments are constructed in south Mead. Walkability in these areas is predicted using a half-mile buffer from the planned or platted park and open space lands since the new sidewalk and trail network in this area is not yet mapped and finalized.

PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- As long as parks, sidewalks, and trails are required in new developments as they currently are, new neighborhoods will continue to benefit from 10-minute walkability to parks and open space.
- The most significant factor for expanding access to parks in Mead is expanding the walkable network of sidewalks and trails between residential developments.
- Areas to monitor for parkland walkability needs if new residential developments are proposed include areas west of CR 5, east of I-25 and north of CR 32, and areas north of CR 38.

As long as parks, sidewalks, and trails are required in new developments as they currently are, new neighborhoods will continue to benefit from 10-minute walkability to parks and open space.

Map 3. Existing and Future Parks and Open Space Walkability





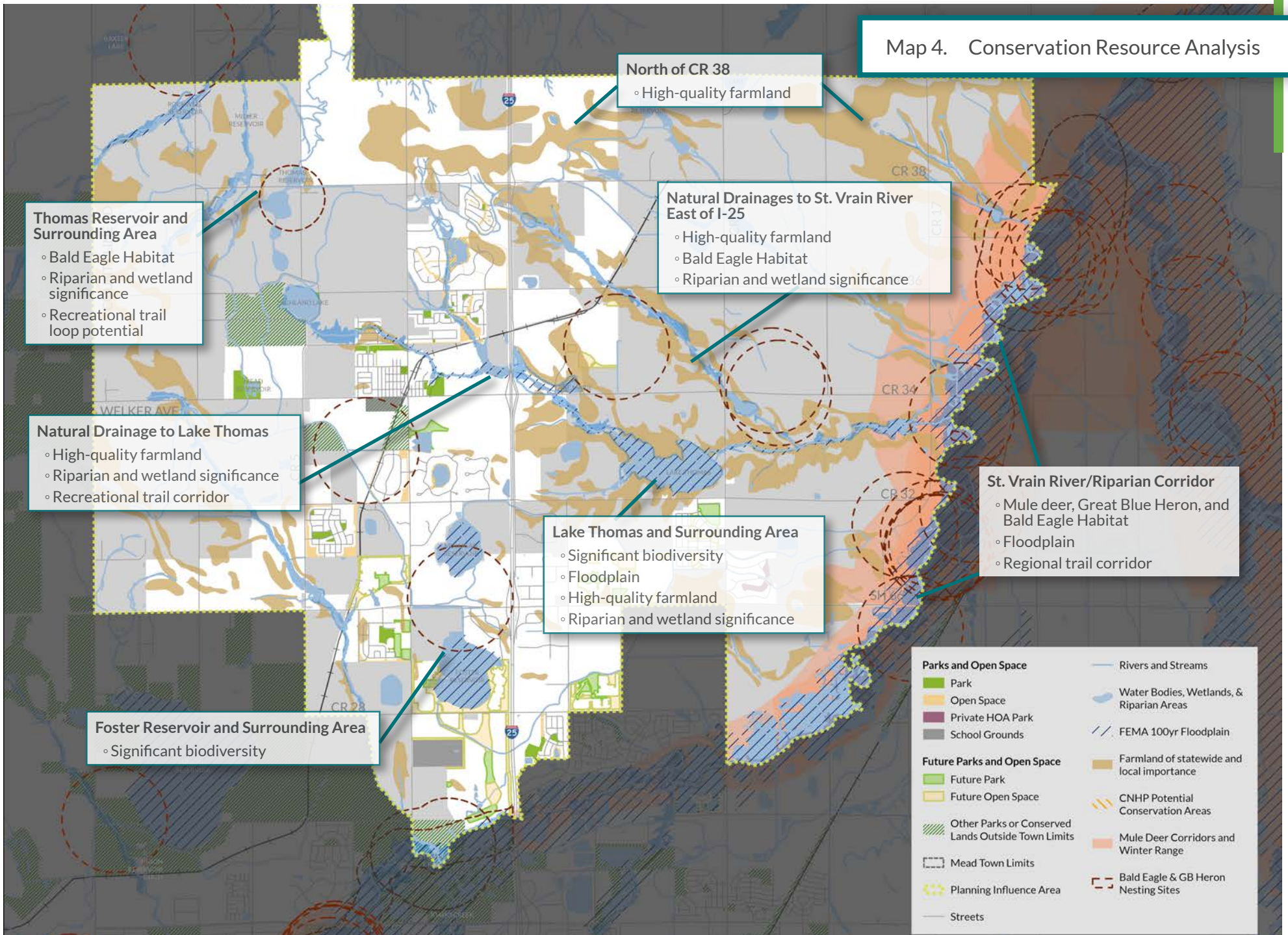
Conservation Resource Analysis

The consultant team conducted a high-level ecological resource assessment of natural resources within the Mead Planning Influence Area to identify high-impact conservation opportunities. This streamlined natural resource analysis examined multiple agency data sets from state and national sources to reveal high ecological value areas factoring in agricultural soil quality, wildlife habitat and corridors, wetland and riparian areas, potential for natural hazards, and presence of extractive resource activities. See **Appendix E** for more in-depth description of data sources and considerations of the analysis.

Shown in **Map 4**, the composite results illustrate where the most compelling locations for conservation are located based on the presence of natural features in and around Mead.



Map 4. Conservation Resource Analysis



Implications for PROST Service Delivery

The results of each of the five analyses are synthesized below to provide a concise list of considerations for PROST service delivery over the next 10+ years. It is important to note that these analyses present a data-driven approach to understanding community needs and preferences and should be supplemented by meaningful community and PROST participant input when considering specific projects or policy changes.

The Big Picture: What and Where to Prioritize

Swimming pool/aquatic facility

- Community preference for an indoor facility.

Upgrades and new amenities at existing Town-owned parks

- New park amenities should strive to include high-priority amenities as identified in the SVS Priority Investment Rating and through direct engagement with surrounding neighborhoods.

These facilities and amenities have the highest potential to be supported through a voter-approved sales tax.

Conserving open space and agricultural lands as buffers between neighborhoods/adjacent towns

Expanding the public trails system between residential neighborhoods

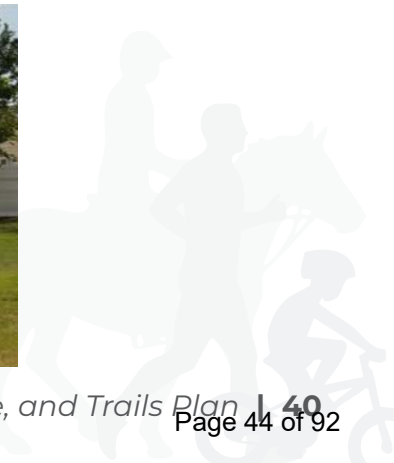
- These actions are highly supported by a majority of residents.
- If conserved, farmland of statewide and local importance north of CR 38 would protect prime agricultural land while preserving an open space buffer between Berthoud and Johnstown to the north.
- Open space conservation and trail system expansion between neighboring jurisdictions can take advantage of shared resources, increased competitiveness for grant funding, and economies of scale for construction.

Many priority areas for conservation are also identified as regional or recreational trail corridors.

Future Community Park Sites

- Continue to require new developments to meet the need for neighborhood parkland; this allows the Town to focus on the quality of amenities within existing Town-owned community parks and establishing a future site for a new community park in southeast Mead and eventually northeast Mead as the Town develops. New community parks should strive to expand capacity for high-demand sports programs and fields.

Scale maintenance staff capacity and operations proportionately with the addition of new PROST facilities and lands.



Chapter 4.

RECOMMENDATIONS





RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter identifies recommendations that will guide the Town of Mead to address needs identified in the previous chapter and ensure long-term stewardship of the Town's PROST system.

Recommendations presented in this chapter are informed by data-driven research, best planning practices, and the community values and aspirations that were conveyed through the public engagement process. Collectively, these strategies represent a wide range of tools, resources, and strategies necessary to address existing challenges, meet future demands, and realize preferred outcomes for the future of PROST in Mead.

Goals and Actions

The following goals help guide the Town's delivery and management of parks, open space, and trail facilities, services, and programming. Each goal is supported by specific actions that will position the Town to meet or make substantial progress toward achieving the goal and broader success of the PROST System. Further details on specific actions items are identified in the sections that follow, as well as in **Appendix L**.



FACILITIES AND AMENITIES

GOAL FA 1: Respond to Mead's growing community needs through improvements and renovations to existing facilities.

ACTIONS

- FA 1.1.** Develop or update Master Plans to improve parks such as Ames Park, Founders Park, and Town Park based on Needs Assessment results as well as input from surrounding neighborhoods to ensure facilities meet the most important recreational needs of an area.
- FA 1.2.** Ensure all parks include park identification/regulations signs.

- FA 1.3.** Ensure new park master plans and design for existing parks are informed by input from a surrounding neighborhood to best meet the needs of the park's users.
- FA 1.4.** Install bike racks at all Town parks near bicycle access points and trail access locations.
- FA 1.5.** Add water bottle fill stations at Ames, Founders, and Town Parks.

- FA 1.6.** Enhance park entrances with perennial and shrub plantings.
- FA 1.7.** Add security lighting at all Town parks and along trails, especially in low-visibility areas and near structures like bridges and shelters.
- FA 1.8.** Explore feasibility of using the natural waterway in Ames Park to create a water play destination.
- FA 1.9.** Construct permanent storage space for sports programming equipment at Founders Park to support athletic program practices and competitions.
- FA 1.10.** Develop a plan for installing trail amenities such as benches, shade structures, dog waste stations, trees, and trash receptacles along existing regional trails in the Town.

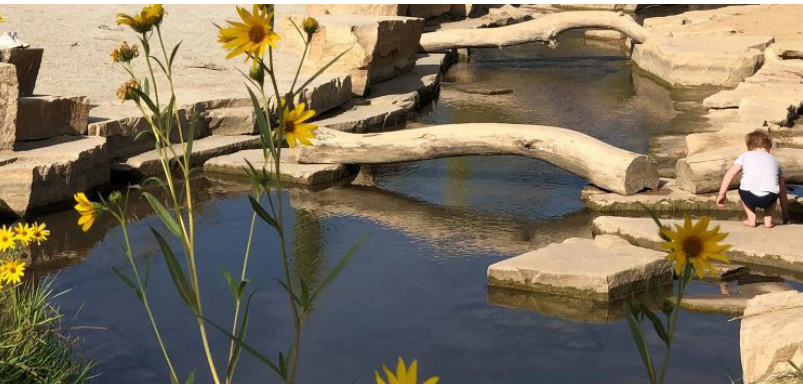
NATURAL WATER PLAY:

Twin Silo Park, Fort Collins

Fort Collins' Twin Silo park features a natural creek that traverses the south side of the park. During park construction, McClelland Creek was restored and modified in one section to provide a shallow water play experience without disrupting the creek's natural flow. This feature meets community demand for water access and nature-based exploration and play while elevating the relationship between the land, water, and people. Reworking the creek also provided soil that facilitated development of a BMX course and also provided

a cost-effective solution for the creation of natural landforms that provide sculpted overlooks and picnic spaces connected by the park's trails and creek crossings.

Photo and park design by Civitas.



GOAL FA 2: Meet Mead's growing population and shifting community needs through new facilities and amenities as funding or new development allows.

ACTIONS

- FA 2.1.** Align future community and neighborhood park development with results of the Needs Assessment and input from surrounding neighborhoods to ensure facilities offer the most important, unmet recreational needs in a specific area.
- FA 2.2.** Ensure that new parks designed to host sports league practices and competitions are constructed with adequate parking facilities.
- FA 2.3.** Update park design and construction standards to include additional specifications on preferred park furnishings and materials to provide for consistency among Town parks and resistance to vandalism.
- FA 2.4.** Construct splashpad or spray park as planned at the Mead Community Center.
- FA 2.5.** Conduct a feasibility study with cost estimates for an indoor or outdoor aquatic facility.
- FA 2.6.** Plan for and develop a regional park on the east side of I-25 that can serve the rapidly growing population in southeastern Mead. This park should expand capacity for high-demand sports programs and fields.
- FA 2.7.** Revise the Land Use Code to update Park Classification definitions and standards and amenities according to the typologies identified later in this Plan and in **Appendix F**.
- FA 2.8.** Update references to the Mead Open Space Master Plan found in the Town Code of Ordinances to the Mead Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan.
- FA 2.9.** Revise park and open space land dedication requirements to utilize Level of Service targets based on the total population served by the park as a means for determining the required land acreage dedication necessary to meet defined LOS targets.
- FA 2.10.** Encourage or negotiate for fees-in-lieu of land dedication from nonresidential development to support park and open space system development.
- FA 2.11.** Eliminate Town Code Section 4-6-110 "Credits" and rely on the Town's Impact Fee Study as the controlling document for required fees and any possible credits.



GOAL FA 3: Improve local and regional trail connectivity.

ACTIONS

- FA 3.1.** Increase access and connectivity by pursuing development of Primary Proposed trails and crossings as shown in the Proposed Trails Map.
- FA 3.2.** Continue requiring developers to design and construct subdivisions with connectivity between adjacent parks, trails, open space, neighborhoods, and commercial destinations via trails.
- FA 3.3.** Update development code language to require that new trails be constructed with amenities such as benches, shade structures, dog waste stations, trees, and trash receptacles, allowing for flexibility in determining the types and frequency of amenities based on site context and anticipated need.
- FA 3.4.** Amend Town of Mead Municipal Code to require obligated entities (HOAs, Property Owners Associations (POAs), General Improvement Districts (GIDs), and Metro Districts) to maintain trail connections to a minimum standard and clearly defined maintenance expectations.
- FA 3.5.** Consider developing a trail wayfinding plan for consistent implementation of signs.
- FA 3.6.** Add trail network map kiosks at key points in Mead's trail network such as junctions and parks.

- FA 3.7.** Revise the Town's regulatory documents accordingly to reflect the trail and pathway typologies in this plan:
 - Town of Mead Design Standards and Construction Specifications Manual Section 802.
 - Land Use Code to use consistent terminology for trail and pathway facilities. Remove descriptions of facility design standards and specifications within the code and reference the Town of Mead Design Standards and Construction Specifications Manual as the authoritative document.
 - Update all references to "Mead Open Space Plan" to the Mead Parks, Open Space, and Trails Plan.
- FA 3.8.** Expand walkable network of sidewalks.
- FA 3.9.** Require that all new trails, regardless of ownership and maintenance responsibility, shall be located in a public-access easement.

- FA 3.10.** Facilitate development of grade-separated trail crossings of major arterial streets as identified on the Proposed Trails Map by amending the Land Use Code to require developers to contribute to planning, design, and construction costs for crossings. If a developer's property includes or is within a half-mile (.5 mile) radius of a proposed grade-separated crossing, they are required to:
 - a. Complete a feasibility study for the grade-separated crossing.
 - b. Develop preliminary designs.
 - c. Dedicate an easement to the Town based on preliminary design specifications.
 - d. Share construction costs according to tiered structure determined at the time development.
- FA 3.11.** Support major regional trail development along the St. Vrain River and north from Mead to the Little Thompson River as the primary connection to Berthoud.
- FA 3.12.** Continue pursuing partnership opportunities with Great Western Railway and local ditch companies to colocate trails with their infrastructure where identified on the Proposed Trails Map.





GOAL FA 4: Strive for universal accessibility of all facilities.

ACTIONS

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>FA 4.1. As existing parks are updated, retrofit facilities to expand accessibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Install accessible walkways and curb ramps where they do not already exist.● Add at least one adaptive play feature.● As playground equipment is updated, replace play area surfacing with material that meets ADA and safety requirements. | <p>FA 4.2. Require adaptive play elements, ADA-compliant walks and access, and picnic tables in all new parks regardless of who constructs and maintains the facilities.</p> |
|---|---|

GOAL FA 5: Prioritize environmentally and fiscally sustainable practices in facility design, maintenance, and upgrades.

ACTIONS

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>FA 5.1. When interior water fixtures are replaced or repaired in PROST facilities, install water-saving devices.</p> | <p>FA 5.4. Complete landscape conversions on park properties using the principles of xeriscape and low water-use native plants to reduce water use and keep irrigated turf only in areas that require turf for sports play.</p> |
| <p>FA 5.2. Minimize the use of pesticides, herbicides, and synthetic fertilizers on sports fields and vegetation in parks and facility grounds by using an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to control or eliminate pests while reducing pesticide exposure to people, animals, and the environment. Consider nutrient management and soil testing to reduce potential for chemical leaching and runoff.</p> | <p>FA 5.5. Establish standards for landscape maintenance including eradicating invasive species and facilitating the establishment of native habitats.</p> |
| <p>FA 5.3. Adhere to the requirements of Senate Bill 24-0051, which prohibits the installation of new non-functional turf (areas that are not used for sports or other activities that require turf) and artificial turf on Town properties and rights-of-ways (effective January 1, 2026).</p> | <p>FA 5.6. Replace lighting at end of lifecycle with solar-powered pedestrian, parking, and security lights.</p> |
| | <p>FA 5.7. Replace lighting at ball fields and other sports facilities with LED and other similar high efficiency light bulbs/fixtures.</p> |
| | <p>FA 5.8. Ensure that new facility construction is sensitive to the natural environment, maximizing views of adjacent natural landscapes to the extent possible while minimizing impact upon that landscape.</p> |



WHAT IS AN OPEN SPACE PROGRAM?

Establishing an “open space program” means that the Town of Mead becomes more actively involved in identifying locations, acquiring land or easements, and maintaining the natural or agricultural state of large tracts of land as protected in perpetuity from development as a means to buffer sprawl, provide passive recreation like trails, protect wildlife habitat, and preserve productive and culturally symbolic agricultural land as a representative element of the Town’s identity. The Town may play a variety of roles in administering an open space program: negotiating with private landowners, acquiring land by purchasing it outright (fee simple), or contributing funds to the purchase of a conservation easement that is held and managed by a land trust.

GOAL FA 6: Conserve Open Space and agricultural lands as buffers between neighborhoods and adjacent towns.

ACTIONS

- FA 6.1.** Establish an open space program that directs and organizes Town efforts by identifying lands for large scale open space and agricultural conservation and addresses open space maintenance and staffing needs.
- FA 6.2.** Revise Land Use Code to clearly differentiate between Open Space and Parks based on the intended function of the land. Add Open Space Typologies based on purpose/function as identified later in this plan and **Appendix F**. Update to code references the Mead Parks, Open Space, and Trails Plan.
- FA 6.3.** Update the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) to define two separate categories:
 - Parks and Recreation (developed properties)
 - Open Space (protected lands) as informed by the Conservation Resource Analysis Map.
- FA 6.4.** Update the Zoning Map and Land Use Code according to the FLUM by adding a corresponding Parks and Recreation Zone, and an Open Space Zone.
- FA 6.5.** Establish strategic partnerships with regional land trusts to advance open space conservation goals.

See Funding Goal 1, Action 3 (FN 1.3) and page 85 for a detailed discussion of new dedicated funding strategies for open space conservation.



PROGRAMS

GOAL PR 1: *Provide programs and activities to serve the diverse needs of the Mead community.*

ACTIONS

- PR 1.1.** Continue to evaluate program enrollment and community demand following each program cycle to ensure a diverse mix of offerings that serve a range of age groups, interests, and evolving community needs.
- PR 1.2.** Work to expand arts and cultural programming within Town parks through events, performances, and creative placemaking efforts that enrich community life and attract visitors to Mead.
- PR 1.3.** Explore partnerships with regional providers to expand access to aquatics programming, including swim instruction, for Mead residents while the Town evaluates the long-term feasibility of developing a community aquatic facility.
- PR 1.4.** Explore opportunities to develop inclusive and adaptive recreation programs that meet the needs of residents with learning and physical disabilities, while enhancing adaptability within current offerings.

GOAL PR 2: *Expand program awareness and access to information through a variety of methods, to maximize program participation rates and use of the facilities.*

ACTIONS

- PR 2.1.** Utilize targeted marketing and outreach strategies to ensure promotional materials reach both residents and non-residents according to the intended audience.
- PR 2.2.** Support or host events that position Mead facilities as destinations, stops, or venues, such as regional bike rides, running events, community fundraisers, cultural gatherings, or other special events.





OPERATIONS

GOAL OP 1: *Scale operations and maintenance staff capacity proportionately with the addition of new PROST facilities and lands.*

ACTIONS

OP 1.1. As the system expands and funding allows expand staff capacity according to the Capital Funding, Staffing, and Operations Analysis (**Appendix K**):

● **Near-term:**

- Hire an additional 2 FTEs to support specific recreational programming demands, dependent on the pace and scale of program expansion.
 - Adult Program development and delivery: 1 FTE
 - Adaptive/therapeutic Recreation: 1 FTE
- Continue the volunteer program for sports leagues and events.

● **Long-term:**

- Hire an additional 1 FTE to support community event planning and execution if new or more complex events are added to the annual schedule.
- Expand the Parks Maintenance Division of Public Works as the physical asset portfolio of PROST properties and facilities expands:
 - Hire an additional 1 Park Maintenance FTE when a new Town community park is constructed to support grounds

and facility maintenance of new amenities.

- Hire an additional 1.5 Trail Maintenance FTEs as the Primary Proposed Trail system is completed (approx. 23.1 miles of new paved trails).
- When the scale of the PROST system reaches the point in which it requires full-time dedicated administrative and parks and facilities maintenance staff, consider establishing a consolidated PROST Department with a director position to oversee department operations, capital planning, generate funding, and conduct future system-wide planning.



GOAL OP 2: Maintain and improve the standard of maintenance at all parks, trails, and open space areas.

ACTIONS

- OP 2.1.** Develop maintenance manuals and park operations manuals to plan for the right staffing levels, management practices and policies to help guide the expansion of services.
- OP 2.2.** Develop asset management program to track age, condition, and scheduled costs for lifecycle replacement of facilities and amenities which will inform annual capital improvements planning.



OP 2.3. Update Town Code to allow for taller native grasses that exceed the current height maximum in the Code; establish a standard operating procedure for mowing and management.

OP 2.4. Consider amending the Town Code to require privately owned and maintained parks to meet or exceed the maintenance standards of Town owned parks, allowing for code enforcement in cases of negligent park maintenance.

PARTNERSHIPS

GOAL PA 1: Strengthen and develop partnerships to maximize the available resources within the community for recreation facilities and activities.

ACTIONS

- PA 1.1.** Consider new opportunities as well as evaluate and renew existing MOUs, MOAs, and contracts between the Town and alternate providers and partners annually.
- PA 1.2.** Develop Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) for cost-sharing related to trails, facilities, and open space that span jurisdictional boundaries, especially with Town of Berthoud, City of Longmont, and Town of Firestone.
- PA 1.3.** Continue partnership with St. Vrain Valley School District for joint use of recreation facilities.
- PA 1.4.** Participate in and support PROST planning efforts for adjacent municipalities and land managers such as St. Vrain State Park and St. Vrain Valley School District.





FUNDING

GOAL FN 1: *Create long-term financial stability while also planning for a growing system of park and open space facilities.*

ACTIONS

FN 1.1. Continue to align and update impact fee at a level that supports the growing park and recreation needs of the community.

FN 1.2. Continue to track direct and indirect costs of all programs and annually update cost recovery targets for existing and new programs while aligning fees with the community's values and Town's goals for cost recovery.

FN 1.3. Pursue ballot measure testing for a sales tax revenue bond to gauge voter preferences for tax percentage and specific uses that would be supported, including: indoor pool or aquatic facility, upgrades to existing parks, and open space preservation.

FN 1.4. Continue and expand efforts to obtain grants, donations, and partnerships in coordination with partner organizations to help sustain resources, focusing specifically on state and federal grants.

FN 1.5. Establish a facility sponsorship and naming rights policy for funding new PROST facilities, major improvements to existing parks and sustained maintenance from private sector entities.





Park Typologies

The Town of Mead manages a variety of lands and facilities of varying sizes, uses, amenities, functions, and programming. A classification system of park and open space typologies is useful for inventory, planning, and asset management. A classification system can also serve as the basis for calculating existing and targeting proposed Levels of Service and helps identify staff maintenance needs. The classification system sets mutual expectations between the Town and the community regarding the look, function, and management of various types of facilities.

The sections below provide a general description of the park typologies with standards for scale, service area, access, and appropriate amenities for each type of park. The list of amenities is not intended to be prescriptive or exclusive. The amenities for any individual park should be determined through site planning that involves the community it is meant to serve. All facilities should be designed to serve multiple age groups and abilities.



Plaza

Definition/Function: A plaza is typically located in a mixed use, high-density residential, civic, or commercial area to serve as a gathering place. Plazas may range from very active places with adjacent complimentary uses such as restaurants and cafes, to quiet areas with only seating.

Minimum Standards: Predominantly paved or hardscape, Open-air spaces enclosed on two or more sides by buildings; Provides seating, planters; Trash/recycling receptacles; Bicycle parking within 20 ft. of plaza edge; Pedestrian and security lighting.

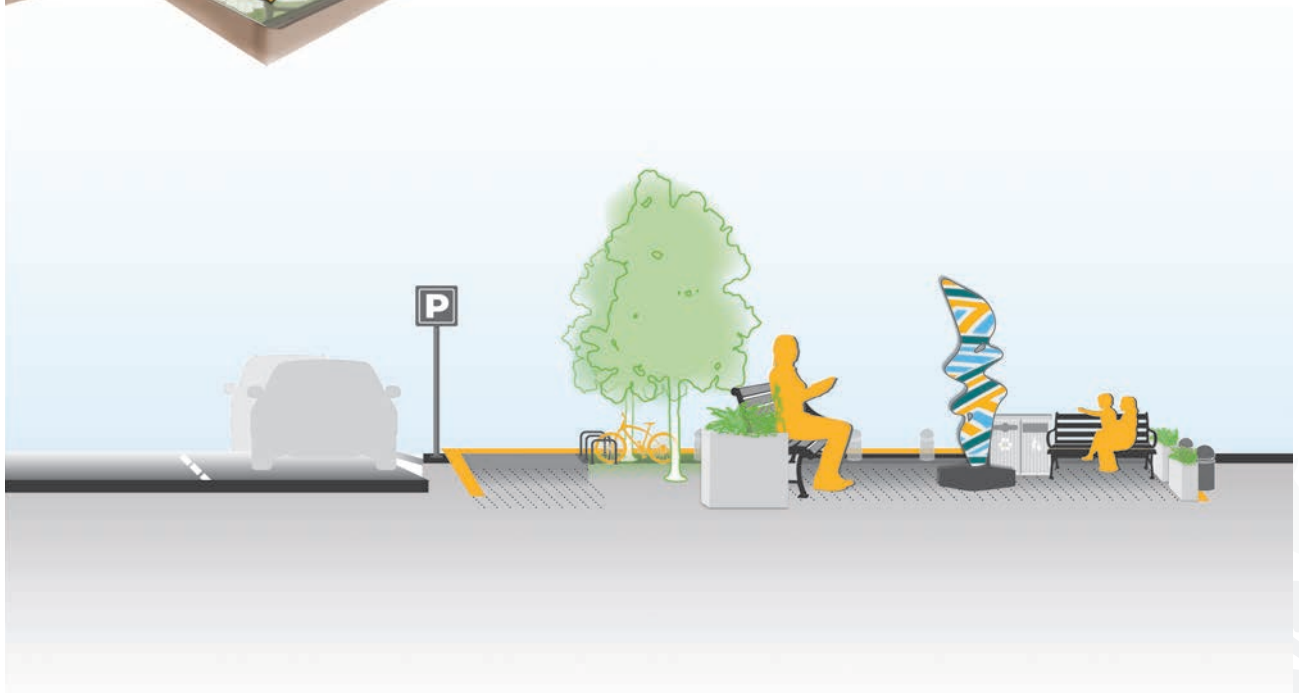
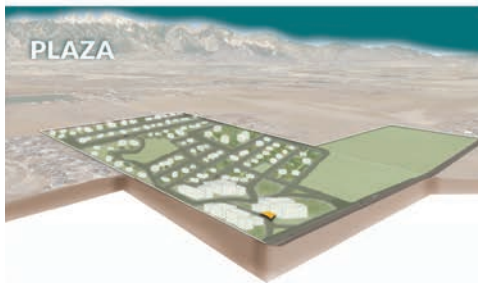
Service Area: Quarter-mile walk

Size: ~1,000 to 20,000 sq. ft. depending on function

Maintenance and Ownership: Project dependent

Additional Features: Public art, bicycle repair station, outdoor dining furnishings, interactive water feature; vendor area (farmers market, food vendors, artists), outdoor performance space, permanent game facilities and furnishings (e.g., chess, bocce court, ping pong table, cornhole boards, mini golf/putting hole). **Increase number and scale of amenities proportional to plaza size.**

Examples: N/A



Pocket Park

Definition/Function: Small green space; Primarily neighborhood social areas; Primarily passive recreational use with a limited number of small scale active uses.

Minimum Standards: Seating; Landscaping/ live ground cover; Trees and irrigation; Internal paved trail or pathway; Bicycle parking.

Service Area: Quarter-mile walk

Size: .5 to 2 acres

Maintenance and Ownership: Metro-district owned and maintained

Additional Features: Public art, playground equipment, community or demonstration garden, fitness stations, shade structure, picnic table shelter, permanent game facilities and furnishings (e.g., chess, bocce court, ping pong table, cornhole boards, mini golf/putting hole), tennis/pickleball or basketball court. **Increase number and scale of amenities proportional park size.**

Examples: Highlands-Chilton Park; Sorrento Pocket Park



Neighborhood Park

Definition/Function: Smaller parks that are close to residents; Within walking or biking distance of neighborhood homes; Fulfill passive and unprogrammed active recreation needs ("pick-up games"); Common area for neighbors of all ages to gather, socialize, and play.

Minimum Standards: Playgrounds with inclusive play features; Multi-purpose court and field; Passive recreational space; Picnic areas and seating; Trails or pathways; Bicycle parking; Trash/recycling receptacles; Park identification sign; On-street parking on at least two adjacent streets.

Service Area: Half-mile walk

Size: 5 to 8 acres



Maintenance and Ownership: Metro-district owned and maintained

Additional Features: Public art, off-leash dog area, community or demonstration garden, fitness stations, shade structure, permanent game facilities and furnishings (e.g., chess, bocce court, ping pong table, cornhole boards, mini

golf/putting hole, disc golf course); **Increase number and scale of amenities proportional to park size.**

Examples: Sorrento Park, Lakeside Canyon Central



Regional Park

Definition/Function: Accessed by two or more adjacent neighborhoods; Typically provide flexible spaces for passive use and group gathering; May also serve as the local neighborhood park for nearby residents; Easy access to arterial streets; Accessible from regional trails; Provides space for athletic facilities that can support league competition.

Minimum Standards: Group picnic pavilion(s); Passive recreation areas; Lighted sports fields and courts for league competition; Restroom Facilities; Dog park; Playgrounds with inclusive play features; trails; Bicycle parking; Trash/recycling receptacles; Water bottle fill stations; Pedestrian and security lighting; Off-street parking spaces calculated to serve specific programming needs.

Service Area: 1.5 miles

Size: 20 to 30 acres

Maintenance and Ownership: Town-owned and maintained for programming and use purposes

Additional Features: Public art, community or demonstration garden, fitness stations, interpretive signs (cultural, historical, environmental), skate park, performance space/amphitheater, splashpad, fitness stations, shade structures, permanent game facilities and furnishings (e.g., chess, bocce court, ping pong table, cornhole boards, mini golf/putting hole, disc golf course). **Increase number and scale of amenities proportional to park size.**

Examples: N/A



Special Use Park

Definition/Function: Covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward single-purpose use.

Minimum Standards: N/A; special purpose

Service Area: N/A; special purpose

Size: Varies based on use

Maintenance and Ownership: Project dependent

Additional Features: N/A; special purpose

Examples: Lorin Mead Park at Highland Lake; Lakeside Canyon Dog Park



Open Space Typologies

Three types of open space are identified in this section. Like the park typologies, the types of open space are defined by differences in context, function, features, scale, and visitor experience. Unlike parks, not all open space types are intended for unrestricted public access. Some open spaces prioritize agricultural use or habitat conservation as their primary purpose and may offer only limited public access or no access at all depending on the sensitivity of the resource.

Appendix F provides a quick-view matrix that summarizes both park and open space typologies.

Habitat Preservation

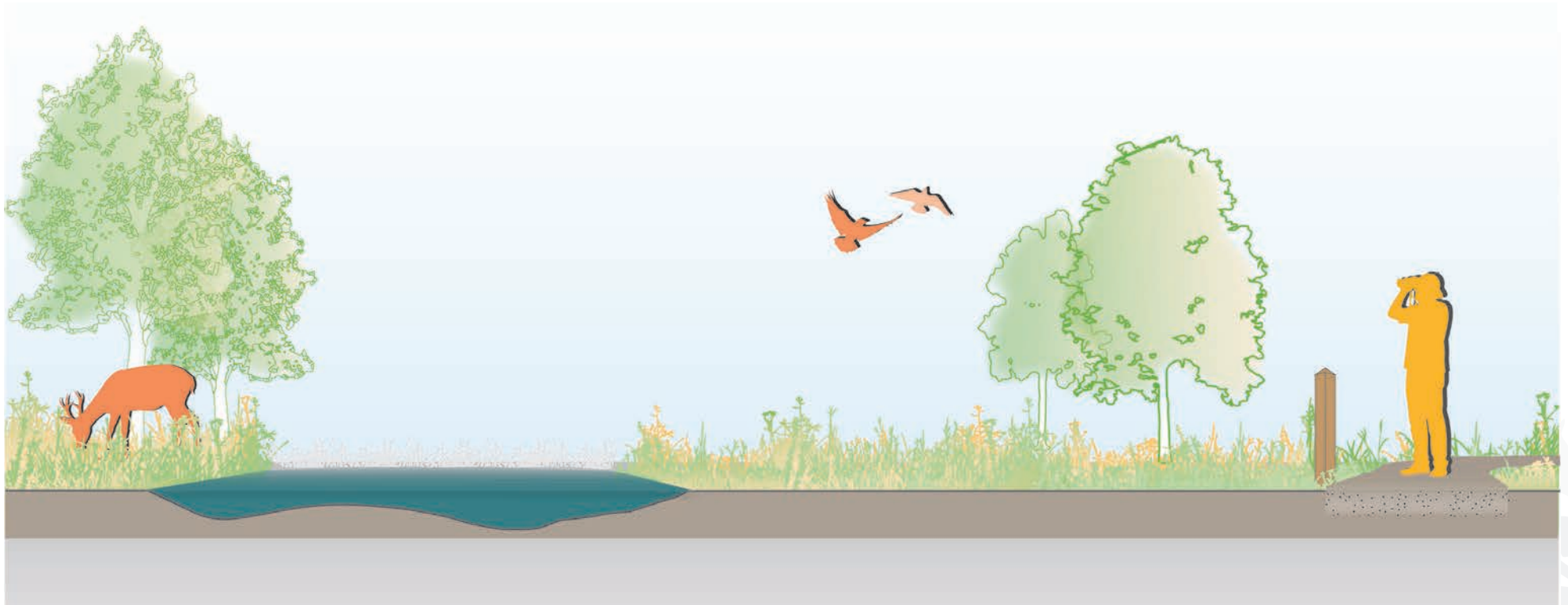
Function: Provides buffer between adjacent neighborhoods or municipalities; Preserves native landscapes and habitat; May allow passive recreation via trails, benches, and picnic tables; managed for natural resource protection.

Typical Features: Wildlife habitats; Scenic recreational experiences; Geological features; Trails; Native landscapes; Water bodies, riparian areas, floodplain, wetlands; May contain historic structures.

Public Use: Some public access provided for passive recreation, trail use, interpretive signs

Size: 25+ acres

Examples: Vale View lake and open space



Agricultural Preservation

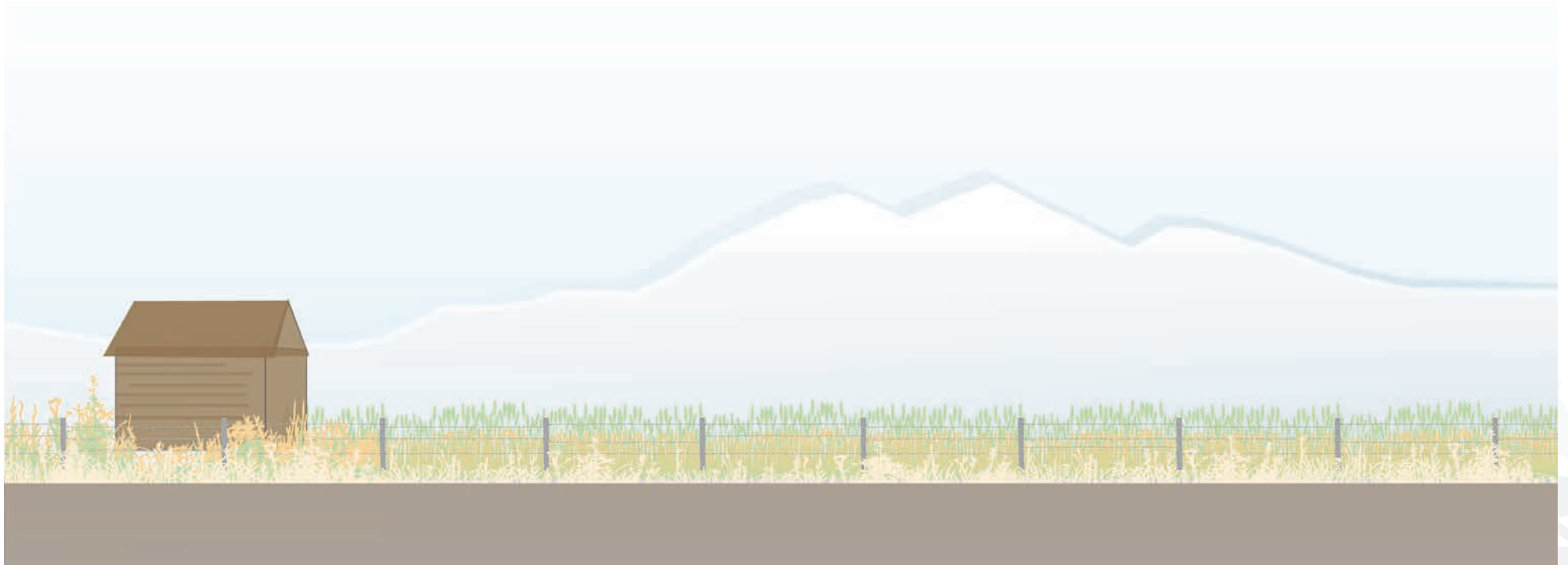
Function: Preserve agricultural lands and heritage, viewsheds; May serve as natural resource and wildlife corridors; In large scale or contiguous with other open space, can provide effective buffer between adjacent municipalities.

Typical Features: Actively managed irrigated cropland or rangeland held in a conservation easement; May contain historic structures.

Public Use: None or very limited to general public

Size: 25+ acres

Examples: Litzenberger Conservation Easement



Greenbelt / Natural Area

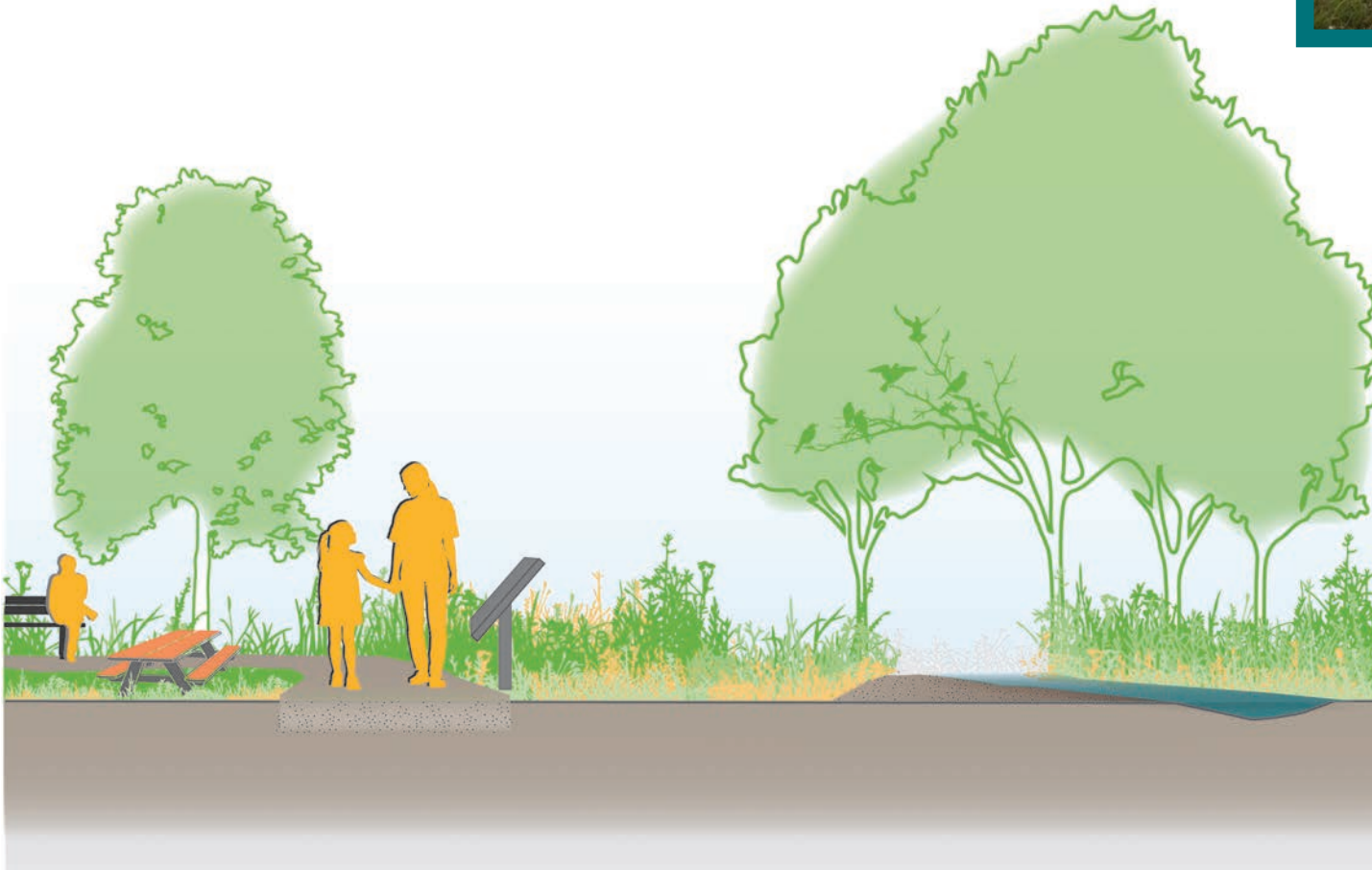
Function: Preserved and managed to sustain natural values in and surrounding residential development; Passive recreation activities and trails; Designated as open space; May serve as natural resource and wildlife corridors; Can serve as off-street connectors between neighborhoods and parks.

Typical Features: Waterways, riparian corridors, wetlands; Wildlife corridors; Trails with amenities such as benches, picnic tables, wayfinding or interpretive signs.

Public Use: Public access for passive recreation, trail use

Size: up to 25 acres

Examples: Coyote Run Natural Areas





PROST Recommendations Map

The PROST Recommendations Map (**Map 5**) provides a geographic visualization of the recommended system enhancements and opportunity areas identified in Chapters 2, 3, and 4, as well as the open space and parks that may be constructed as part of new residential development. This map is a planning tool to ensure that PROST infrastructure is built as the Town grows. The new parks, facilities, and improvements shown on this map range from highly conceptual to imminent trail construction. Together they present an aspirational picture of the future PROST System. Recommendations presented on the map include the following:

High Conservation Value Open Space. These areas highlight corridors identified in the Conservation Resource Analysis as locations offering high-impact conservation opportunities. See [Conservation Resource Analysis](#), [Open Space Typologies](#), and [Facilities and Amenities Goal FA 6](#) for more details.

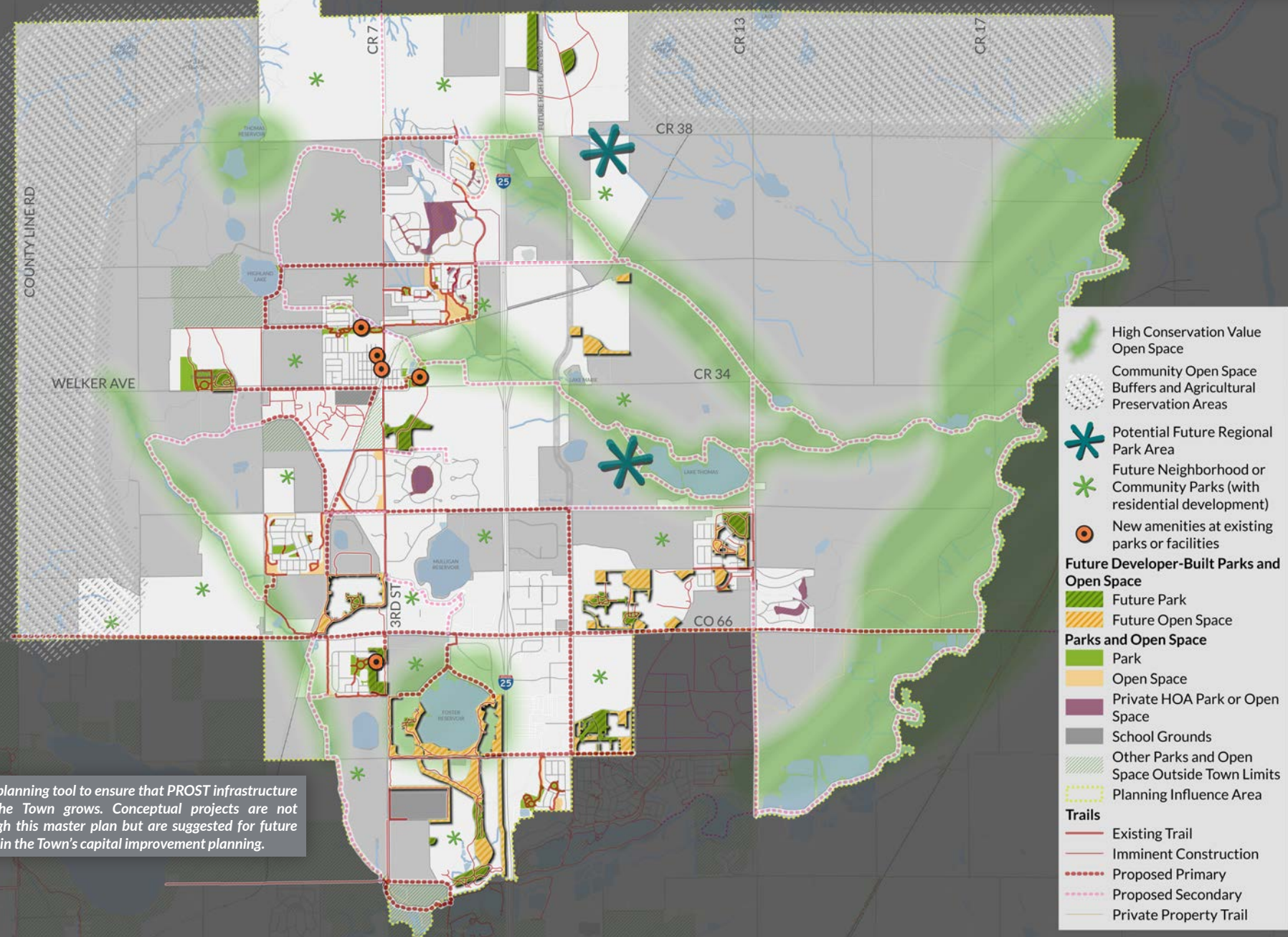
Community Open Space Buffers and Agricultural Preservation Areas. These areas identify open space which could be pursued for conservation as Agricultural Preservation and/or a Community Open Space Buffer. See [Open Space Typologies](#) and [Facilities and Amenities Goal FA 6](#) for more details.

Potential Future Regional Park Area. These points represent locations suitable for a future regional park in areas that are designated as parks and open space on the Town's Future Land Use Map. See [the Population-based Level of Service Analysis and Park and Open Space Walkability Analysis](#) results in Chapter 3 for details.

Future Neighborhood or Community Parks. These points illustrate locations of neighborhood or community parks expected to be constructed with future residential developments in areas consistent with the Future Land Use Map. Park locations are proposed to maintain a half-mile level of service consistent with the [Walkability Analysis](#) in Chapter 3. See [Facilities and Amenities Goal FA 2](#) and [Park Typologies](#) for more details.

New Amenities at Existing Parks or Facilities. These points identify locations of existing parks where the Plan recommends the addition of new amenities or facilities. See [Facilities and Amenities Goal FA 1](#) for more details.

Map 5. Parks and Open Space Recommendations



This map is a planning tool to ensure that PROST infrastructure is built as the Town grows. Conceptual projects are not funded through this master plan but are suggested for future consideration in the Town's capital improvement planning.

Trail Recommendations

Proposed Trails Map

The Proposed Trails Map (**Map 6**) identifies approximately 62 miles of new trails, represented by dashed lines. Proposed trails and trail features are conceptual. Exact alignments are subject to collaboration with private property owners, developers, ditch companies, or other partners as part of the design process and require additional detailed evaluation of existing site features prior to construction. This pre-construction work requires environmental inventory and assessment, including considerations for sensitive species and wildlife habitat; compliance with state and federal environmental regulations for minimizing impacts to waterways and managing land disturbance; compliance with Town of Mead code requirements; and alignment with adopted Transportation Plans.

SYSTEM OVERVIEW AND PHASING

Trails on the map are organized in the following categories:

Existing: Trails that are constructed and open for public use.

Private: Trails that are constructed for private use only and are not open to the public.

Imminent: Trails that are planned or platted by residential developments and are expected to be constructed within the next 3-6 years.

Primary Proposed (23.1 miles): Trails proposed as near-term projects have an implementation horizon of 10-20 years, assuming the Town's current pace of trail development. Many of these trails are likely to be constructed within the public road right-of-way, making them easier to implement and offering significant active transportation benefits. If Mead constructs 23.1 miles of Primary Proposed Trails, in addition to the existing 14.5 miles of public trails by 2038 when the Town's population is projected to reach 14,602, the trail level of service will be 2.6 miles per 1000 residents.

Secondary Proposed (38.9 miles): Trails that are proposed as long-term projects with an implementation horizon beyond 20 years, assuming the current pace of trail development. These trails offer more of a recreational experience, are located at the periphery of the Town's Planning Influence Area, and will require greater participation from private landowners.

FACILITIES AND FEATURES

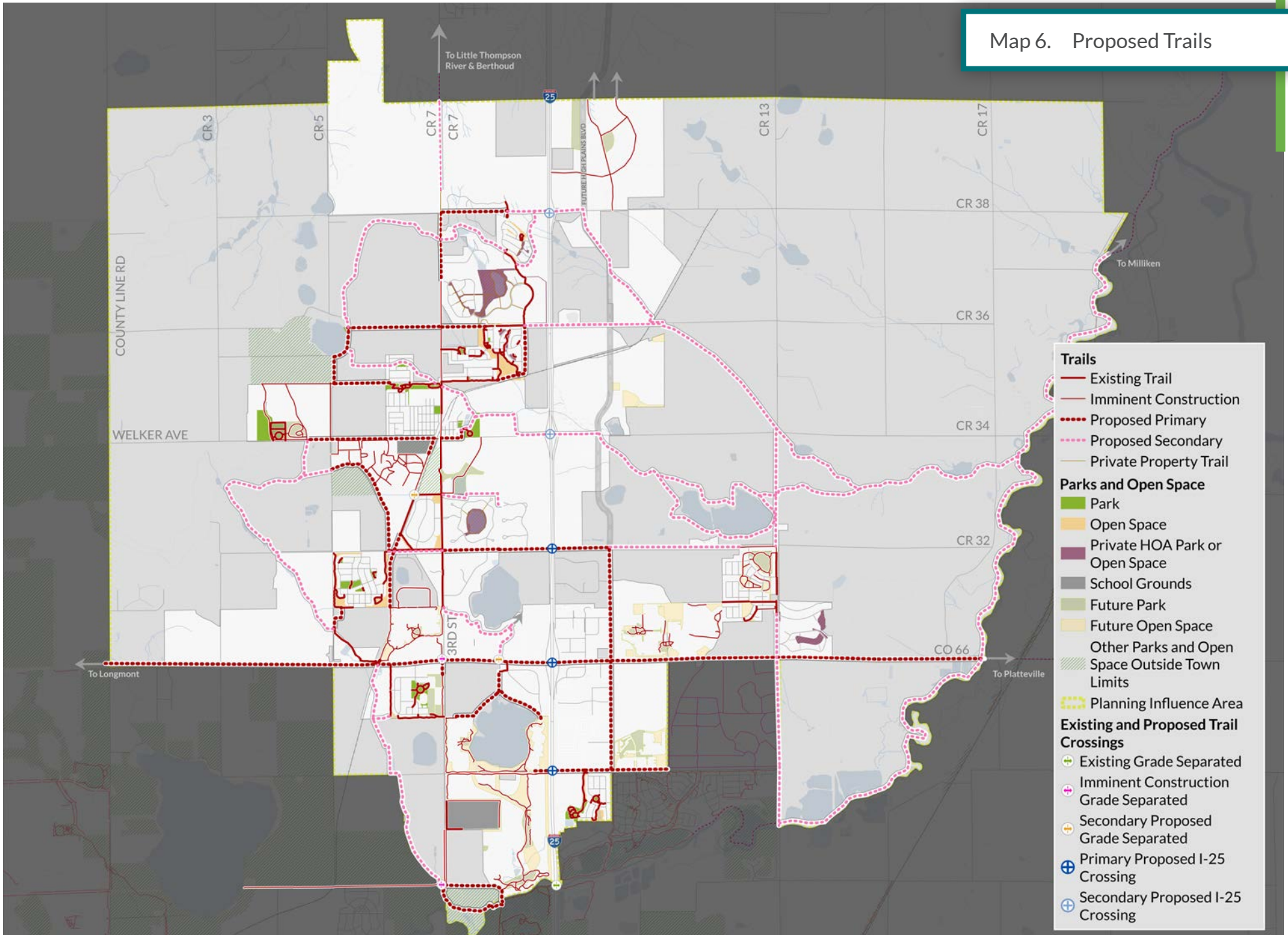
The map includes several types of reference data that illuminate how new trails fit into the context of the larger town-wide system comprised of existing and proposed park and open space facilities, and the target destinations for connectivity (schools, parks, open spaces).

The map also identifies locations of new at-grade and grade-separated crossings of roads and railroads. Crossings of I-25, a major barrier to trail connectivity, are specially identified due to their unique design requirements as part of a roadway interstate overpass or underpass. These crossings represent trail construction within the county road or state highway right-of-way and are not recommended as a separate grade-separated trail facility.

Recommendations are supported with conceptual visuals that demonstrate trail character or design feasibility at key locations.



Map 6. Proposed Trails



Trail Types

The project team reviewed and identified updates to existing design standards to ensure that new trail facilities will meet the needs of a growing population of trail users and a variety of modes. Recommendations include the definition of trail typologies, design specifications, grade-separated crossing standards, at-grade crossing standards, and more. Trail types along with a high-level summary of key recommendations are provided in the following sections. For more details, see **Appendix G** for the full report and recommendations.

This plan identifies the following multi-use trail types:



Regional Trail: a paved trail that connects Mead to neighboring communities, promoting long-distance travel and regional connectivity. They tend to be suitable for higher volumes of users and often have a higher mode share of bicyclists than other trail types. All of the Proposed Primary and Secondary Trails represent regional trails that significantly advance connectivity goals.

- Standard Width: 12 feet
- Corridor Width: 30 feet
- Lighting: At trailheads, access points, underpasses, crossings, bridges, and intersections
- Signs: Regulatory, wayfinding, interpretive, confidence markers



Local Trail: a trail that provides internal development circulation or connects residential neighborhoods and their internal open space areas with Regional Trails; includes paved paths within Town Parks and Open Spaces Local Trails primarily promote short-distance trips. They often support a lower mode share of long-range cyclists and serve lower volumes of users, generally originating from within the residential neighborhood.

- Standard Width: 8 feet
- Corridor Width: 20 feet
- Lighting: At trailheads, access points, underpasses, crossings, bridges, and intersections. May rely more on adjacent roadway lighting
- Signs: Regulatory, wayfinding, confidence markers



Natural Surface Trail: a natural surface or crushed, compacted gravel trail that provides for recreational trail use within a residential open space or park which may connect with Local or Regional Trails. These trails support recreational use and may be single-use directional trails for hiking or mountain biking only to prevent user conflicts if necessary.

- Standard Width: 3-6 feet
- Corridor Width: 8-10 feet
- Lighting: At trailheads and major access points
- Signs: Regulatory, wayfinding, confidence markers

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS

The design and construction standards included in this *Mead in Motion* Plan provide design and engineering guidance for trail implementation. These trail design standards refine previously identified Town standards and are consistent with national trail design best practices including resources identified below.

- American Association of State and Highway Transportation Officials Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, 5th Edition
- National Association of City Transportation Officials Urban Bikeway Design Guide , 3rd Edition
- Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, 11th Edition adopted by CDOT
- CDOT Pedestrian Crossing Installation Guide
- Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Evaluation of Safety, Design, and Operation of Shared-Use Paths
- Public Right of Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG)

The design guidelines specify trail widths for each trail type, materials, slope, design speed, sight distances, lighting, signage, fencing, and other specifications to ensure high quality trail construction that is consistent town-wide. They also provide guidance on centerline striping locations and mode separation. Design standards for each trail typology are detailed in **Appendix G**.

At-Grade Crossings

At-grade crossings occur when a trail crosses the surface of a roadway. The type of at-grade crossing varies throughout the Town and is determined at each location where a trail intersects with a roadway based on contextual factors such as volume of vehicular traffic, vehicle speeds, road width, and adjacent land uses and destinations.

Additionally, in locations of at-grade trail crossings, the width of the trail should remain consistent on both sides of the roadway rather than tapering down in a manner similar to a sidewalk as it approaches the roadway. This helps avoid conflicts between trail users when crossing. If a trail changes direction at an intersection, a landing area with a minimum width of the trail and a minimum length of 10 feet is recommended to provide additional comfort and allow a variety of users to maneuver at the location.



Grade-Separated Crossings

The main barriers in the trail system are major roadways and railroads. These barriers may result in a significant amount of out-of-direction travel for trail users or undesired and unsafe social paths that are more direct. Grade-separated crossings provide critical trail links by joining areas separated by these barriers. Grade-separated crossings can be an overpass or underpass depending upon site constraints and desired user experience. The location of these crossings are identified on the Proposed Trails Map (**Map 6**).

Grade-separated road crossings provide a low-stress and safe trail experience. This Plan recommends evaluating a grade-separated crossing any time a trail crosses arterial roadways and even some collector roads with high daily vehicular traffic to improve conditions for vulnerable road users and provide a comfortable experience that encourages mode shift away from motor vehicle trips.

Grade-separated crossings require significant investment and require a detailed study of the site to determine feasibility. Grade-separated road crossings can also provide an indirect benefit by providing safe passage over or under roads for wildlife. Facility design and location should also take into consideration the potential impacts of groundwater disturbance and the ongoing requirement to monitor groundwater quality, including potential mitigation of contaminated groundwater pumped from underpasses. **Appendix G** provides design and decision guidance for at-grade crossings and grade-separated crossings.

Trail Focus Areas (3)

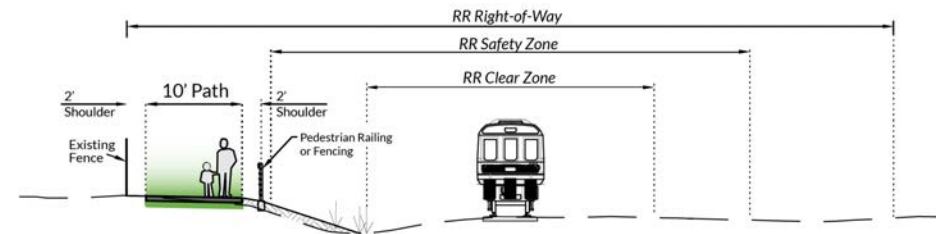
MEAD ELEMENTARY CONNECTOR AT GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY

Connecting Mead Elementary School along an existing fenceline, this proposed segment of 10' paved concrete trail follows parallel to the existing railroad tracks as they pass Welker Ave at 4th Street. This segment is intended to connect to a trail constructed with residential development just south of Mead Elementary School.

- The proposed trail is recommended to be located 2' off existing fence, meeting AASHTO clearance requirements.
- An existing fence is located 40' from centerline of tracks, allowing the trail to be located outside of the railroad safety zone throughout this segment.
- Railing or fencing is optional but preferred.

- Multiple agencies are involved in the ownership and management of this land but this is not expected to be a barrier to trail development. The railroad claims a prescriptive right of way in this location; however, the underlying owner appears to be the Colorado State Land Board and leased for use by the St. Vrain School District.

See **Appendix G** for a detailed sheet depicting this trail focus area.



C.R. 28 AND TRAIL UNDERPASS OF I-25

Providing connectivity across major roadways such as Interstate 25 was identified as a key goal in public engagement and needs assessments during this planning process. This trail underpass of I-25 along CR 28 is proposed as a 10' concrete alignment parallel to CR 28 with an expanded 6' lane for bicycle travel along the roadway under the existing I-25 overpass. Existing bridge foundations will not be impacted by this design.

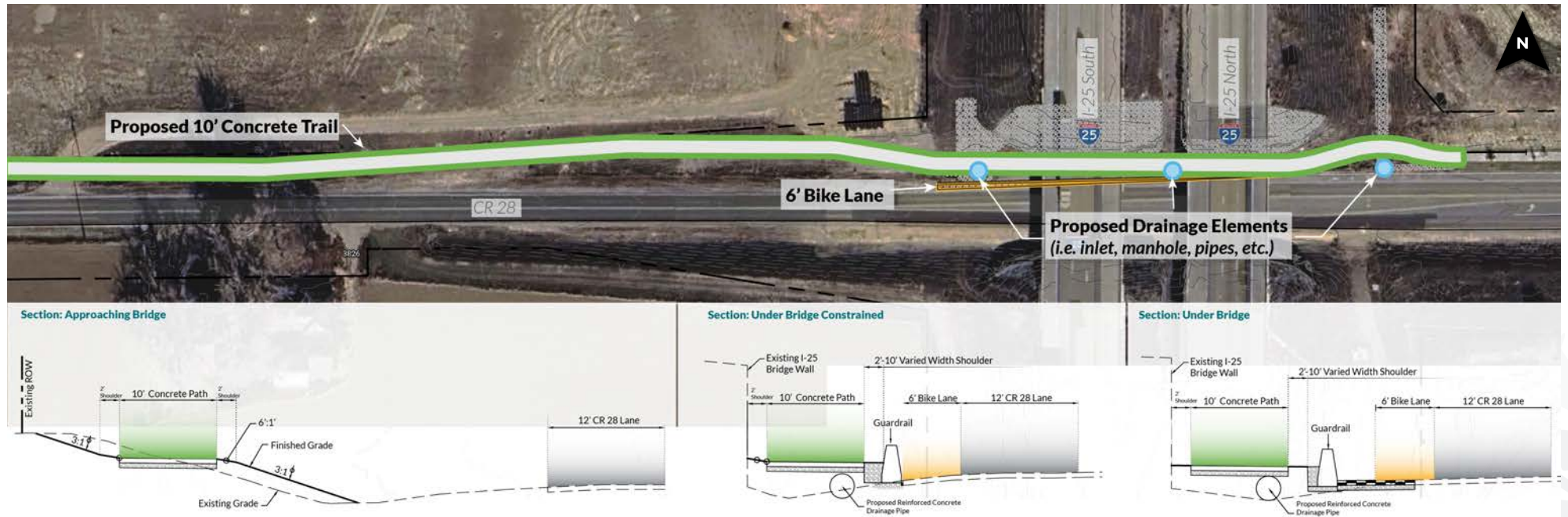
Design Details

- Concrete barrier provides safety and comfort for trail users while also retaining grade beneath the existing bridge.
- The proposed barrier also provides enough width to extend the existing 6' bike lane beneath the bridge to allow for future extension of the bike lane to the west.
- Guardrail also allows for a gravity storm sewer to be located beneath the trail to convey the drainage currently conveyed in the roadside ditch. Drainage inlets are required to collect off-site drainage from the north.

See **Appendix G** for a detailed sheet depicting this trail focus area.



Representative images from projects in Eagle and Aspen, Colorado.



CONNECTING RANGEVIEW AND SORRENTO ACROSS CR 32

This crossing provides safer connectivity for trail users across CR 32. The crossing would extend from the existing sidewalk at Sorrento to the proposed alignment of the Rangeview Trail. The proposed at-grade crossing includes:

- A pedestrian-actuated Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB) signal
- Painted roadway markers
- Raised pedestrian refuge island within the existing painted median with flexible delineators
- Bike and Ped Crossing Ahead warning signs
- Crosswalk Striping with shark teeth yield line
- Curb ramps with detectable warnings

A conceptual rendering of the proposed crossing is included below.





Operations and Staffing Recommendations

Operations and Maintenance Staff Capacity

Parks and facilities are currently maintained to a very high quality. To maintain this quality, staff capacity will need to scale accordingly as new amenities, facilities, and programs are developed according to plan recommendations and the proposed Plan Capital Development Scenarios.

The consultant team evaluated current staffing capacity alongside the depth and breadth of responsibility of staff to provide high-quality PROST experiences and maintain excellent customer service to the residents of Mead and its visitors. Staffing capacity was evaluated for three areas of focus:

1. Park and facility maintenance
2. Recreational programming
3. Administration and support services

Responsibility for providing PROST services and maintenance is shared between the Public Works, Community Engagement, and a new Community Center Department that includes all recreation and events programming. In 2025, Mead reported the lowest number of FTE employees that provide PROST service delivery (9.5 FTEs) as compared to peer agencies in neighboring communities (not including Community Center staff which began in late 2025). However, the Town reports a substantial number of annual volunteer hours – 2,307 total hours – that boost staff capacity to deliver the high-quality recreation programs, and events that contribute to Mead’s high quality of life. See **Figure 7** for a summary of Mead’s staffing levels.

Figure 7. Town Maintained Parks, Open Space, and Trail Maintenance Staffing Summary

Function	2025-2026 Quantity	Best Practice Staffing Level	Current Staffing Level (FTEs)
Open Space and Greenways	19.7 acres	1 FTE / 250 acres	1 FTE / 2.6 acres
Developed Parks	94.4 acres	1 FTE / 30 acres	1 FTE / 12.6 acres
Trails	6.6 miles	1 FTE / 20 miles	1 FTE / .9 miles

PARK AND FACILITY MAINTENANCE

In February 2026, meetings were held with recreation program and public works leadership as a follow-up to the park facilities assessment and discussion with parks maintenance staff conducted in June 2025. PROST maintenance is provided by a team of staff who are also responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of all public rights-of-way, median landscaping, and maintenance of landscaping at municipal facilities throughout the community.

Based on discussions with department and division leadership, the benchmark comparison to peer agencies, and an evaluation of staffing levels against best practice staffing per unit maintained (acre or trail mile), the maintenance division is currently adequately staffed. The FY2026 adopted budget includes funding for a new FTE position for a Public Works Operations Supervisor for Parks, bringing total parks maintenance staffing to 7.5 FTEs in 2026. This new FTE was with the completion of the new Community Center and the Gold Star Memorial at Founders Park; both of which have more specialized maintenance and landscape needs than other Town parks.

Mead's PROST system is relatively young, with most facilities being new or constructed within the last 15 years. Therefore, the Town has not accrued any significant backlog of deferred maintenance. However, as new parks, open space lands, and trails are added to the Town's system, maintenance staffing should be scaled according to the best practice staffing levels below so as to continue the attentive management of these assets.

ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Mead does not have a unified PROST department. Rather, Leadership for PROST service delivery is a collaborative effort between the Town Engineer/Public Works Director, Community Engagement Director/Public Information Officer, and Community Development Director. This team fluidly coordinates their departments to deliver a seamless PROST experience to the community. However, as the PROST system grows over the next two decades, interdepartmental coordination and efficiency will eventually benefit from the creation of PROST Department and Director position. A PROST director would serve as the dedicated point-person for all PROST services and importantly, as the "vision-keeper" responsible for advancing planning goals and stewarding coordinated and proactive PROST system expansion to serve Mead's growing population. Establishing a new department should be considered when the scale of the PROST system reaches the point at which it requires full-time dedicated administrative and maintenance staff.

While establishing a PROST Department and a director position is a long-term recommendation, increasing capacity for support services in the near-term can help improve the Town's ability to engage the community; expand communications and awareness of programs, events, and opportunities; and streamline overall process and project management. The 2025 SVS conducted for this planning effort revealed that 47% of respondents who do not participate in Mead PROST attribute their lack of participation to being unaware of the events, facilities, and programs available to them. This finding supports the new addition of a Communications Manager FTE position as established in the Town's FY2026 adopted budget. While the Communications Manager will serve all Town departments, this position will increase staff capacity for public outreach related to PROST services and events. Additionally, a new front desk/administrative support staff position that was added when the Community Center opened will increase the Town's capacity to pursue grants, support special projects, and contribute to implementation of this plan.



RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMING

The Town of Mead maintains a recreational program portfolio of 75 distinct offerings with over 1,300 participants annually. Mead's recreation team provides an impressive variety of youth and adult athletics and programming, including adaptive recreation. Prior to 2026, recreation programs are provided by three full-time recreation staff, 12 part-time staff, and many dedicated volunteers. With the opening of the new Community Center, indoor recreation programs now have a dedicated home in Mead and 3.65 additional FTEs have been added to staff the front desk and serve as after-school recreation assistants, bringing the total recreation and community center staffing to 6.65 FTEs in 2026. As a brand-new facility, Community Center programming is currently operating at 20% of capacity for 2026. The addition of new or additional programs, especially to meet community demand for adult programs and adaptive recreation, will require additional program coordination staff. Currently the Town's 75 different programs are organized

and managed by two FTEs responsible for recreation program coordination. The impressive quantity of programs offered by the Town is comparable in scale to the offerings of larger PROST agencies with 10-24 FTEs (NRPA 2025 Agency Performance Review data).

Additionally, in 2025 there were 33 community special events, including parades, concerts, and outdoor movies attended by over 5,000 participants annually. The events team is currently operating at capacity with the magnitude of this portfolio and the ability to stay aligned with evolving community priorities and demands. If the Town expands quantity or complexity of event offerings in the future in response to the growing resident population or local demand, an additional 1 FTE events specialist will need to be hired.

STAFFING RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

This plan recommends the following expansions to staff capacity as the PROST system expands:

Near-term:

- Hire an additional 2 FTEs to support specific recreational programming demands, dependent on the pace and scale of program expansion.
 - Adult Program development and delivery: 1 FTE
 - Adaptive/therapeutic Recreation: 1 FTE
- Continue the volunteer program for sports leagues and events.

Long-term:

- Hire an additional 1 FTE to support community event planning and execution if new or more complex events are added to the annual schedule.
- Expand the Parks Maintenance Division of Public Works as the physical asset portfolio of PROST properties and facilities expands:
 - Park Maintenance: 1 FTE when a new Town regional park is constructed to support grounds and facility maintenance of new amenities.
 - Trail Maintenance: 1.5 FTEs as the Primary Proposed Trail system is completed (approximately 23.1 miles of new paved trails).
- When the scale of the PROST system reaches the point in which it requires full-time dedicated administrative and parks and facilities maintenance staff, consider establishing a consolidated PROST Department with a director position to oversee department operations, capital planning, generate funding, and conduct future system-wide planning.



Chapter 5. **IMPLEMENTATION**



Funding Needs Analysis

System Cost

The financial sustainability of PROST can be understood by considering the total cost of system ownership, which includes the cost to construct, operate, maintain, and update PROST facilities.

Maintenance of current assets and their periodic lifecycle replacement must be balanced with new features and updates to existing parks and facilities, as well as the development of new parks and facilities to meet needs in underserved areas. Maintaining the current system without a dedicated sales tax revenue stream limits the Town's ability to provide new park amenities or construct new facilities. With limited funding, Mead spends less on PROST operations than nearly all peer communities that the Town was compared to as part of a benchmark analysis in 2025-2026.



OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

Operations and maintenance costs include the routine tasks required to keep parks, recreation, and trail facilities in operation and in good repair.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Capital improvements refers to lifecycle replacement, park and facility updates with new amenities, and new capital project construction.

Life Cycle Replacement

Lifecycle replacements encompass major repair or replacement of existing assets, safety improvements, and existing debt service obligations. Most lifecycle replacement improvements typically require one-time capital outlays and are not likely to increase annual operations and maintenance costs. In most cases, keeping up with lifecycle replacement can reduce annual operations and maintenance costs.

Updates and New Amenities

Periodically, the Town will invest in strategic updates or add new elements to existing parks and facilities in response to unmet needs in the community. Such improvements typically require a one-time capital expenditure and usually only slightly increase operating and maintenance costs.

New Construction

Capital projects to develop new parks and recreation facilities may include land acquisition, site planning, new infrastructure, and construction of new facilities. New parks and facilities significantly increase annual operations and maintenance costs.

Current Capital Improvement Funding Sources

Operations and maintenance are primarily funded through General Fund appropriations and recreation program fees. Capital improvements are typically funded through a combination of the sources described below.

PARK AND OPEN SPACE IMPACT FEES

The Park and Open Space Impact Fee was established to finance the capital costs of acquiring, establishing, upgrading, expanding, and constructing public facilities that are necessary to serve new residential development. **Figure 8** provides a summary of Park and Open Space Impact Fees collected from 2020 through 2025. The impact fees are a one-time fee paid by developers and must be used solely for acquiring, planning and designing, constructing, expanding or equipping public capital facilities to accommodate demand produced by new development. This source of revenue can only be used for new PROST facilities that have a useful life of more than five years, and cannot be used for routine operations, maintenance, or replacement. Fees are adjusted for inflation annually.

The Town’s current and anticipated rapid rate of growth, makes this funding stream a reliable source of revenue for future PROST facility development, such as the new Community Center that was primarily funded by impact fees.

CONSERVATION TRUST FUND

The Conservation Trust Fund (CTF) is a restricted-use fund that includes state-shared lottery proceeds and interest earnings. Uses of these funds are limited to parks, recreation, and open space purposes, including the acquisition, development, and maintenance of new conservation sites or for capital improvements or maintenance for recreational purposes on any public site. Funding received over the past six years by the Town of Mead from the CTF is summarized in **Figure 8**.

Figure 8. CTF Funding 2020-2025

Year	Park and Open Space Impact Fees Collected	CTF Funds Received
2020	\$569,080	\$17,517
2021	\$916,296	\$11,019
2022	\$284,618	\$64,323
2023	\$312,444	\$73,174
2024	\$311,444	\$76,898
2025	\$291,690	\$77,000
Total	\$2,685,572	\$319,931

PRIVATE DONATIONS AND FUNDRAISING

Private donations and fundraising contributions are typically provided by private individuals or companies, usually as one-time gifts in support of a specific program or capital project. This funding source is typically non-recurring and not reliable as an annual revenue stream.

GRANTS

The grant market has historically been very healthy in Colorado; however, grants are not a stable or predictable source of revenue. The Town of Mead historically pursues and has received funds from CDOT, Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), and even private foundations such as the United Way. Matching dollars are required for most federal grants and many state grants. Staff capacity for researching and writing grants is essential to the successful pursuit of this competitive funding source.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND

The Capital Improvement Fund is a Town-wide fund that accounts for the financial resources used to construct or acquire major capital assets. This fund can be used for PROST projects but is not solely dedicated to PROST capital improvements.

MUNICIPAL FACILITIES IMPACT FUND

The Municipal Facility Impact Fund is comprised of one-time impact fees paid by residential and commercial development to fund new public infrastructure needed to accommodate the increased demand for services generated by the new development. This is a Town-wide fund specifically for facilities and vehicles which can be used for PROST projects but is not solely dedicated to PROST capital projects. In recent years, this fund contributed to construction of the Mead Community Center.

PARKLAND DEDICATION FEES-IN-LIEU

The Town's municipal code requires new residential, commercial, and industrial development to meet parkland dedication standards or pay a fee-in-lieu of providing the required parks or "functional open space." The gross land area that is required for the park is determined by the zoning district. As density of the zoning district increases, so does the required percentage of land that must be dedicated and developed into parks or functional open space. Alternatively, the developer may pay a fee in lieu of land dedication; however, to date no developers have opted to pay the fee-in-lieu and therefore this source of funding has not materialized as a predictable revenue stream for PROST. Developers are opting to construct the required parks and functional open space themselves which helps achieve the goal of walkable park and open space access for all residential areas.

New commercial and industrial development are also currently required to dedicate 8% of gross acreage of the development area to park purposes, but many developers reject this requirement because their developments will not create new dwelling units or residents. In many instances this requirement has been waived entirely for new commercial and industrial development.

Regardless, this funding source is often unpredictable due to market forces in the real estate and residential development industries. In the future, if developers choose to pay fees-in-lieu of developing parks and open space, the Town will need to take a proactive role in acquiring future parkland well in advance of full build-out. See **Appendix H** for more details.

Capital Project Development Scenarios and Funding by Current Source (2026-2036)

The following sections summarize anticipated capital project costs for maintaining the existing PROST system as it is through normal lifecycle replacement and considering two capital development scenarios for new PROST projects. The first capital development scenario focuses on improving the existing system through the addition of new amenities and site furnishings at existing parks while focusing capital spending on lifecycle replacement of existing PROST assets that will need to be addressed, regardless of the addition of any new amenities or facilities identified through this planning process. The second scenario envisions an expansion of the current system with investments in entirely new amenities including new trails and open space conservation. Both scenarios are for a ten-year time period (2026-2036).

For details on new capital projects and estimated costs according to three possible capital development scenarios, see **Appendix J**.

LIFECYCLE REPLACEMENT: MAINTAINING THE EXISTING SYSTEM

The Town of Mead provides a number of parks, recreation programs, and community events to meet resident and visitor demand for recreation, outdoor access, and social experiences. Currently, the Town of Mead owns and maintains nine parks, an 11,500-square foot community center, 6.6 miles of paved trails, and nearly 20 acres of open space. Based on an asset inventory and lifecycle replacement analysis completed as part of this planning process, it is estimated that the value of Mead's PROST system assets is over \$30.5 million, not including land value. Much of this infrastructure that includes buildings, facilities, park grounds and infrastructure, and recreational amenities was developed within the last 10-15 years, and the Town has kept pace with necessary lifecycle replacements resulting in little-to-no deferred maintenance being carried over year to year. Over the next decade, approximately 30% of the existing PROST assets will reach the end of their useful life and require replacement. This amounts to a total cost for lifecycle replacement of existing assets estimated at \$9,113,060 over the next ten years (including an assumption that unit and material costs will rise over time). This scenario does not represent any significant change from the Town's current practice of maintaining the system and replacing facilities and amenities as they reach the end of their useful life each year.

For details on lifecycle replacement projects and estimated costs, see **Appendix I**.

'IMPROVING THE EXISTING SYSTEM' CAPITAL PROJECT SCENARIO

While the Town is well-positioned to continue addressing maintenance demands of the current system as part of its annual budget, several improvements to the existing system have been identified through public engagement, stakeholder interviews, existing park and trail assessments, a SVS, and a needs assessment that quantified community need and demand for PROST amenities.

The Improving the Existing System capital development scenario makes the most of existing resources and assets with the primary goal being for the Town to maintain high quality services with the facilities that are currently in place. This scenario emphasizes keeping up with current lifecycle replacement needs, standardizing amenities across the park system, accessibility upgrades, and making strategic investment in amenities that serve the broadest range of PROST users such as restrooms and water bottle fill stations at major parks, park signage, bicycle parking, and additional shade structures or trees. Addition of amenities identified in this capital development scenario typically do not require an expansion of operations or staffing but do increase the total asset value that the Town is responsible for maintaining.

Upgrades and new amenities at existing Town parks were supported by 71% of respondents to the SVS; with 62% of respondents indicating support for a sales tax revenue bond to help fund such improvements. The SVS also revealed that an off-leash dog area was a high priority for residents and is a facility that

could be accommodated at an existing Town park. Finally, this capital development scenario includes construction of a small permanent storage structure at Founders Park to support recreation programming and sports leagues. This is a significant need for recreation staff that would improve operational efficiency and program coordinators' ability to deliver athletic programming that is in high demand in Mead and the surrounding area.

Estimates of probable cost for each project are identified in **Figure 9** below. These are planning-level estimates based on recent projects in Mead,

nearby communities, or elsewhere in Colorado. Each project would need to be independently scoped and designed to determine actual costs for bid purposes.

These capital expenses, along with the new capital projects are combined in **Figure 10** to present total anticipated PROST capital expenses for the next ten years (2026-2036) if the Town pursues the Improving the Existing System scenario.

High-end estimates for Improving the Existing System projects were used to estimate total capital costs.

Figure 9. 'Improving the Existing System' PROST Capital Expenses (2026-2036)

Capital Development Category	Project	Low Estimate	High Estimate
Improve the Existing System	ADA accessibility and adaptive play feature at all Town-maintained parks (9)	\$756,000	\$3,000,000
	Park Identification/Regulations Signs at Lower Founders Park and Mead Ponds (2)	\$25,120	\$25,120
	Bicycle racks at 7 Town parks	\$10,500	\$21,000
	Water bottle fill stations at Ames, Founders, and Town Parks (3)	\$10,500	\$13,500
	Small, permanent storage building for sports equipment at Founders Park (1)	\$5,000	\$10,000
	Shade structure or additional trees at all Town-maintained parks (9)	\$315,000	\$765,000
	0.5 acre Off-leash Dog Area at existing park (1)	\$51,200	\$224,000
Total Improvements		\$1,173,320	\$4,058,620

Figure 10. Total Future Projects - 'Improving the Existing System' Capital Scenario

Total Lifecycle Replacement Anticipated FY 2026-2036	Total New Capital Projects FY 2026-2036	Total Capital Costs 2026-2036
\$ 9,113,060	\$ 4,058,620	\$ 13,171,680



‘EXPANDING THE SYSTEM’ CAPITAL PROJECT SCENARIO

The capital projects identified in this scenario expand the existing PROST system through significant improvements to current parks or development of new facilities. This includes additions or new features at existing parks or recreation sites, such as the planned construction of a splashpad at the Mead Community center; expanding the portfolio of PROST sites and properties such as through a formal open space program; and addressing current gaps in service by strategically building new trail to connect neighborhoods with destinations. These projects have more significant costs associated with them and typically require additional capital and operational funding as well as staffing to maintain new facilities and PROST properties.

The Expanding the System scenario targets construction of seven miles of new regional trails constructed over the next decade. In the previous decade, Mead has added approximately 6.5 miles of public trail to its system, primarily through developer-required construction as residential neighborhoods have developed. This scenario envisions a slightly more assertive pace of trail construction with a focus on regional trails that connect neighborhoods and destinations. Trails are broadly supported by the community. Trails were rated as the third-highest priority in the SVS Priority Investment Rating and 73% of respondents were “supportive” or “very supportive” of expanding the trail system. This capital development scenario also recommends the installation of trail network maps at major Town parks which are necessary for navigation and user safety as the trail system expands

In addition to trail system investment, a second major expansion recommended in this capital development scenario is the establishment of a formal Town open space program. This concept has strong community support as evidenced by SVS results and input received at community engagement events. Conserving open space and agricultural lands as buffers between neighborhoods and adjacent towns was the most-supported action that the Town could take to improve PROST experiences. Open Space/Agricultural Land conservation was supported by 82% of survey respondents and emerged as a consistent theme throughout public outreach for this plan.

Establishing an “open space program” means that the Town of Mead becomes more actively involved in identifying locations, acquiring land or easements, and maintaining the natural or agricultural state of large tracts of land as protected in perpetuity from development as a means to buffer sprawl, provide passive recreation like trails, protect wildlife habitat, and preserve productive and culturally symbolic agricultural land as a representative element of the Town’s identity. The Town may play a variety of roles in administering an open space program: negotiating with private landowners, acquiring land by purchasing it outright (fee simple), acquiring conservation easements and directly managing them, or contributing funds to the purchase of a conservation easement that is held and managed by a land trust.

A conservation easement typically costs 30-60% less than purchasing land fee simple. The price of a conservation easement is specific to the property and varies based on factors such as current and historic land use and potential development value. This makes it difficult to develop general estimates for the cost of conservation easements. Therefore, the estimates provided in **Figure 11** provide a wide range of costs reflecting lower costs for conservation easements and the highest costs for fee simple purchase of undeveloped land in the Mead area (based on the price per acre of listed properties in January 2026).

Capital costs for new projects identified in **Figure 11** along with known lifecycle replacement costs are combined in **Figure 12** to present total anticipated PROST capital expenses for the next

ten years (2026-2036) if the Town pursues the Expanding the System scenario detailed in this section.

High-end estimates for Expanding the System projects were used to estimate total capital costs.

VISIONARY CAPITAL PROJECT SCENARIO

The Visionary Scenario is fiscally unconstrained but can help provide policy guidance by illustrating the ultimate goals of the PROST system to meet current and emerging needs that represent significant growth in the scale of the system. Visionary projects are often economic catalysts and can help distinguish Mead as a premier destination for high-quality parks and recreation. These projects are typically associated with the highest potential development costs, require longer time frames to implement, represent a significant expansion in staffing, and often require strategic partnerships for capital development. The Visionary Projects identified in this plan include: an indoor aquatic facility, 20-30 acre Regional Park east of I-25, 10 miles of Regional Trails, a trail grade-separated crossing of Great Western Railway, and 400 acres of open space preservation. Estimated costs for Visionary Projects can found in **Appendix J**.

Figure 11. 'Expanding the System' PROST Capital Expenses (2026-2036)

Capital Development Category	Project	Low Estimate	High Estimate
Expanding the System	Splashpad at Community Center	\$800,000	\$1,700,000
	7 miles of new regional trails and at-grade crossings	\$5,544,000	\$7,022,400
	Preserve 100 acres of agricultural or open space buffer (conservation easement support or acquisition)	\$1,500,000	\$3,700,000
	Trail network map kiosks at major Town Parks (5)	\$15,000	\$65,000
Total Expansions		\$7,859,000	\$12,487,400

Figure 12. Total Future Projects - 'Expanding the Existing System' Capital Scenario

Total Lifecycle Replacement Anticipated FY 2026-2036	Total New Capital Projects FY 2026-2036	Total Capital Costs 2026-2036
\$ 9,113,060	\$ 12,487,400	\$ 21,600,460

PROJECTED CAPITAL FUNDING 2026-2036

Figure 13 summarizes the projected capital funding by current sources to estimate funding that will be available for new capital projects and lifecycle replacement over the next 10 years. The funding estimates assume that revenue remains flat over the next decade and are based on an average of three years (2024, 2025, and 2026) multiplied by 10 to project total revenue over the next decade.

It should be noted that the Municipal Facilities Impact Fee Fund and the Capital Improvement Fund are not exclusively dedicated to PROST projects, therefore available capital for PROST capital expenditures may be less than the total projected amount.

Figure 13. Capital Funding Sources

Funding Strategy	Funding Description	Estimated Amount FY 2026 - 2036	Percentage of Funding
Park and Open Space Impact Fees	One time fee collected from residential developers specifically used by the Town to pay for new PROST infrastructure needed to meet the increased demand for services generated from the new development and residents.	\$ 2,940,543	14.4%
Conservation Trust Fund	This fund receives its money from the Town's share of State Lottery proceeds. This fund, like the Parks and Open Space Impact Fees, must be used for park acquisition, open space acquisition, PROST development, and maintenance of PROST capital improvements.	\$ 779,660	3.8%
Private Donations and Fundraising	Provided by private individuals or companies, usually as one-time gifts in support of a specific program or capital project.	\$ 180,000	0.9%
Grants	Competitive grants for PROST Projects from agencies like CDOT, GOCO, DOLA, private foundations, etc.	\$ 750,000	3.7%
Capital Improvement Fund*	Town-wide fund which can be used for PROST projects, but is not exclusively-dedicated to PROST capital projects.	\$ 10,611,363	51.9%
Municipal Facilities Impact Fee Fund*	Town-wide fund specifically for facilities and vehicles which can be used for PROST projects, but is not solely-dedicated to PROST capital projects.	\$ 5,193,047	25.4%
Dedication Fees-in-Lieu	Paid by developers in lieu of making the required park and open space land dedication as required by Town code.	\$ -	0.0%
TOTAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUNDING (through 2036)		\$ 20,454,613	100%

*These funding sources are not typically solely-dedicated to PROST projects.

Capital Funding Gap Analysis

Figures 14 and 15 compare capital project costs to projected capital funding to determine the funding “gap” between the estimated cost of capital improvements and the available funding from 2026 to 2036. The funding “gap” is presented for each of the capital project development scenarios previously described. Again, note that available funding for PROST capital expenditures from the Municipal Facilities Impact Fee Fund and the Capital Improvement Fund may be less than the total projected amount since these funds support projects across multiple departments.

‘IMPROVING THE EXISTING SYSTEM’ CAPITAL PROJECTS FUNDING GAP ANALYSIS

Mead’s projected revenues are adequate to fund anticipated lifecycle replacement costs of the current PROST system plus the new capital projects identified in the Improving the Existing System scenario.

Figure 14. 'Improving the Existing System' Capital Funding Gap

Projected Capital Funding through 2036	
Parks and OS Impact Fees	\$2,940,543
Conservation Trust (CT)	\$779,660
Private Donations and Fundraising	\$180,000
Grants	\$750,000
Capital Improvement Fund (CIF)	\$10,611,363
Municipal Facilities Impact Fee Fund	\$5,193,047
Dedication Fees-in-Lieu	\$0
TOTAL	\$20,454,613
Capital Funding Needs through 2036 - 'Improving the System' Plan Scenario	
Lifecycle Replacement	\$9,113,060
New Capital Projects (Mead in Motion CIP)	\$4,058,620
TOTAL	\$13,171,680
Capital Funding Gap	\$7,282,933

‘EXPANDING THE SYSTEM’ CAPITAL PROJECTS FUNDING GAP ANALYSIS

If the Town chooses to pursue capital projects identified in the Expand the System scenario, revenue from existing sources will need to increase, or *new revenue sources must be added to generate an additional \$1.15M to support the full cost of implementation of this scenario.*

Figure 15. 'Expanding the System' Capital Funding Gap

Projected Capital Funding through 2036	
Parks and OS Impact Fees	\$2,940,543
Conservation Trust (CT)	\$779,660
Private Donations and Fundraising	\$180,000
Grants	\$750,000
Capital Improvement Fund (CIF)	\$10,611,363
Municipal Facilities impact Fee Fund	\$5,193,047
Dedication Fees-in-Lieu	\$0
TOTAL	\$20,454,613
Capital Funding Needs through 2036 - 'Expanding the System' Plan Scenario	
Lifecycle Replacement	\$9,113,060
New Capital Projects (Mead in Motion CIP)	\$12,487,400
TOTAL	\$21,600,460
Capital Funding Gap	(\$1,145,847)



Funding and Revenue Strategies

Identifying new reliable and consistent funding sources is imperative for the future enhancement of Mead parks, open space, and recreation. It is important to expand and diversify the range of funding sources by securing new ones. Pursuing and successfully obtaining new funding sources can be time consuming, yet it can provide much-needed capital and operational funding when historic or typical funding channels inevitably change over time.

The following three categories of capital and operational funding sources are considered to be viable methods or PROST agencies across the Front Range:

Dedicated Funding. These funds (often in the form of various tax options) are appropriated or set aside for a limited purpose. This source of funding is especially important for establishing new park systems.

Earned Income. Revenue generated by fees, facility rentals, other sources where the agency is paid for services or what they provide will be evaluated to better understand cost recovery opportunities.

Financial Support. Funds acquired by applying for grants, philanthropic fundraising, corporations, as well as state and federal sources.

Several possible strategies in each of the categories previously described are explored below. The strategies identified are especially suited to the Town of Mead, and in some cases, the Town is already employing these methods and should continue to do so to advance PROST infrastructure and projects.

DEDICATED FUNDING SOURCES

Existing Strategies to Continue

Fee-in-Lieu of Park and Open Space Land Dedication. The Town's municipal code provides an option for a developer to pay a fee instead of dedicating land for a public park as required (see section 3.7 for details on this code provision). These fees are intended to fund the Town's acquisition of land and park construction, rather than the developer providing it. To date no developers have opted to pay the fee-in-lieu, therefore this source of funding has not materialized as a predictable revenue stream for PROST. Developers are choosing to construct the required parks and functional open space themselves, which has been successful in delivering the Town's current system of neighborhood and pocket parks. Regardless, this funding source is often unpredictable due to residential real estate and construction industry market forces. The Town should continue allowing a fee-in-lieu option but should not

rely on this for substantial revenue to develop PROST amenities or facilities.

Developer Impact Fees. The Town of Mead collects a one-time fee, called the Park and Open Space Impact Fee from residential developers that can only be used for new PROST facilities that have a useful life of more than five years, and cannot be used for routine operations, maintenance, or replacement.

Given the Town's current and anticipated rate of growth, this funding stream is a reliable source of revenue for future PROST facility development. The Town should update its impact fees every 4-8 years based on a detailed financial nexus study to ensure that the fees are sufficient to support the targeted level of service for providing community parks, while remaining defensible and proportionate to the impact generated by a new development.

General Improvement District (GID). GID is a special taxing district and financing tool that helps property owners, developers, and the Town collectively plan, fund, and implement public infrastructure improvements to their properties within the GID. The district is established by property owners through a petition and vote as required by Colorado law. GIDs are more commonly used for non-residential development as an alternative to a metropolitan service district. The GID raises money through an assessment on properties within the district, and has the power to acquire, install, construct, and maintain public improvements that collectively benefit the area. The Town of Mead adopted Ordinance #1016 in 2022 to govern the establishment of GIDs within Town boundaries and ensure that new GIDs assess a mill levy to support Town operations and administration associated with managing the GID. A GID does not have

to be specifically associated with the impact of new residents, it can include projects to accommodate the needs associated with newly developing or redeveloping areas. New GIDs in the Town of Mead can include the provision of PROST-related infrastructure where appropriate and may prove especially useful in advancing the active transportation and trail system of the Town.

New Strategies

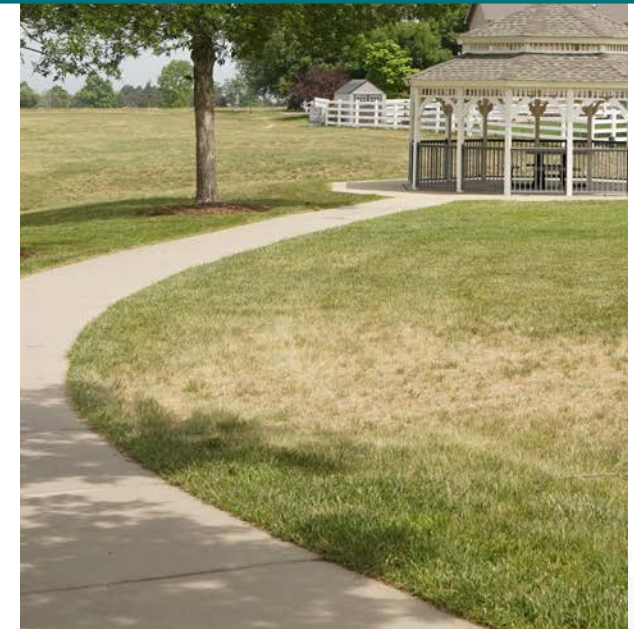
Special Option Sales Tax (Revenue Bond). In this strategy, revenue bonds are sold to investors and repaid with a sales tax that is dedicated specifically for repayment of the bonds. Issuing bonds allows a municipality to fund a project up front and begin planning, designing, and constructing projects prior to receiving all the sales tax revenues that will cover their costs. The sales tax that funds projects, as well as the ability to issue bonds for projects, must be approved via a ballot measure approved by voters. Many Colorado municipalities (including Berthoud, Windsor, and Frederick) rely heavily on voter-approved sales tax initiatives to fund improvements to existing park and recreational facilities, and acquisition and management of open space properties.

In response to a question on the SVS conducted in 2025, a majority of respondents indicated that they would support a voter-approved bond backed by a sales tax, especially for an aquatic facility (54%) and for new amenities at existing Town parks (56%). The survey did not test levels of support for various sales tax percentages or specific ballot language. This type of testing is strongly advised if the Town desires to pursue a ballot measure to fund any new facilities or PROST improvements through a sales tax bond referendum.

1-Cent Sales and Use Tax

A 1-cent sales tax would generate approximately \$2.6 million annually. In one year, this revenue could fund:

- **Splashpad** at the Community Center
- Purchase of 100 acres of agricultural or undeveloped land as **community buffer open space**
- Construction of 2.5 miles of **Regional Trail**



EARNED INCOME

Existing Strategies to Continue

User Fees. The Town currently charges user fees for programs and certain facilities to help offset operational costs of providing the service. These take the form of registration fees for programs, entrance fees for the Community Center, and reservation fees for park pavilions, picnic shelters, or meeting space inside the Community Center. A variety of fee structures may be employed the Town: resident versus nonresident rates, large groups, non-profit or school organizations, demand pricing (prime time rates), etc.

Vendor Permits and Fees. Permits and fees charged by the Town allow food vendors, artists, and businesses to sell their products at large events such as the Summer Block Party. This approach could be expanded to include other high-volume use days at parks during sports league tournaments or game days, especially those that are not located within walking distance to local restaurants or businesses. An alternative to a flat fee paid by the vendor, is a model in which the Town collects a percentage of total sales. This approach is responsive to the volume of sales and may encourage vendors to participate who have initial concerns about recouping the cost of a permit.



New Strategies

Capital Fee in addition to Facility User Fees.

A Capital Fee is added to the cost of a facility's entrance fee for revenue producing facilities, such as a golf course, aquatic center, or sports complex; to be used for debt service on the facility. The fee is removed after the debt is paid off. This strategy could be considered if the Town takes on debt in the future to construct a new revenue-generating facility or invest in a major upgrade to an existing facility like the Community Center.

Corporate Sponsorships. The Town could consider expanding the use of Corporate Sponsorships to support facilities beyond just large events, such as Mead Community Day. Corporate sponsors pay a determined sponsorship amount toward a facility, program series, or sports league in exchange for consistent name recognition of their sponsorship on all promotional and registration materials, team uniforms, etc.). To incorporate multiple sponsors, the Town can offer different sponsorship levels with the highest level being the "presenting" sponsor that contributes the greatest amount of funding and receives the greatest amount of promotional recognition in exchange.

Naming Rights. The sale of naming rights is used to help support capital and/or operational costs of major facilities in the community. Many cities and counties have been successful selling the naming rights for new buildings or renovation of existing buildings and parks for the development cost associated with the improvement. The use of both corporate sponsorships and naming rights were strongly supported by 78% of SVS respondents.

Advertising Sales. Advertising placement within PROST facilities or on PROST materials can be sold to businesses for marketing purposes. A useful metric for determining advertising value is the number of annual "impressions" of the brand or business based on the overall visitation to the facility, program registration, or event attendance. \$0.35 to \$0.75 per impression point on an annual basis is a common range for determining advertising value.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Existing Strategies to Continue

Grants. The grant market has historically been very healthy in Colorado; however, grants are not a stable or predictable source of revenue. The Town of Mead historically pursues and has been successful in securing grants from Colorado Department of Transportation, Great Outdoors Colorado, Department of Local Affairs, and even private foundations such as the United Way. Matching dollars are required for most federal grants and many state grants. Staff capacity for researching and writing grants are essential to the successful pursuit of this competitive funding source. While grants can serve as a catalyst funding source for projects, they require significant staff time to pursue and manage. Typically, the larger the grant, the greater the responsibilities for management and reporting to the funding agency.

Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA). IGAs or Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) are typically contractual relationships entered into between two or more local units of government and/or between a local unit of government and a non-profit organization for the joint usage/development of sports fields, regional parks, or other facilities. Currently, the Town of Mead maintains an IGA with St. Vrain Valley School District for shared use of recreation facilities and sites. This model could be expanded to adjacent municipalities or the county to cover shared responsibility for trails and open space lands that span jurisdictional boundaries and offer benefits to multiple communities.

New Strategies

Maintenance Endowment. Maintenance endowments are established to support replacement and repair costs of major facility assets (such as a trail system, sports court surfacing, or multipurpose field synthetic turf). A maintenance endowment can take the form of a special reserve fund of the municipality (such as the City of Loveland's Public Art Maintenance Endowment) or a fund held by the regional community foundation (such as the Yampa Valley Community Foundation that manages several maintenance funds for city-owned PROST facilities). In either scenario, the funds can receive contributions from multiple sources including the municipal budget and private donations.

Partnership with a Non-profit, Foundation, or "Friends" Group. These are organized fundraising and operational groups who raise money for individual signature parks, facilities, and events, or may generally raise funds to support park-related improvements, specific programs and support the development of new facilities. Friends groups strengthen community support and value for specific parks or facilities and leverage the work and scope of municipal services through stewardship, volunteer hours, fundraising, and advocacy.



Prioritization

Criteria

Town of Mead Staff and the consultant team considered four overarching categories of criteria when evaluating and determining each project, facility, or amenity:

Financial Viability. All projects should demonstrate financial viability prior to inception.

Immediate Need. Projects that address immediate health and safety needs, compliance, and deferred maintenance.

Benefit-driven. Projects that meet the parkland and amenity needs of the community, complete a partially-developed project, and/or serve as a potential catalyst for economic development.

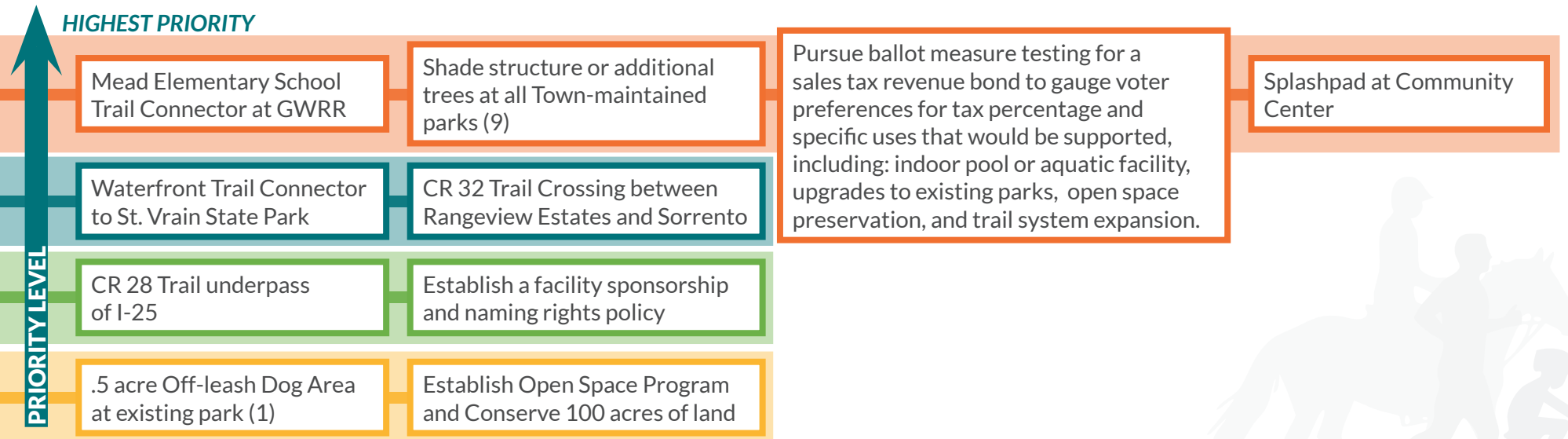
Opportunity-driven. Projects that leverage resources and offer partnership opportunities, are located on a significant site, and/or promote economic development opportunities.

For a full description of qualitative prioritization criteria, see **Appendix M**.

Results

The highest priority projects and actions identified in the plan are presented in the following section. These results are not intended as the final recommendation on the sequence of developing new amenities. Rather, they should serve as a guidepost when making decisions on investment in PROST facilities and amenities. Development of new amenities will largely be influenced by available funding, partnership opportunities, and other factors that may bring certain amenities forward as an opportunity before others. This plan acknowledges that priorities can and should be re-evaluated annually as needs and opportunities shift. The project prioritization criteria equip staff, appointed and elected officials, and their community partners with a framework for reconsidering priorities each year as the Town develops its annual priorities and capital improvement planning.

PRIORITY PROJECTS





Plan Maintenance

Planning for continued success of the Town's Parks, Open Space, and Trails is an ongoing practice. Town staff should review progress on plan implementation each year when developing the annual budget and capital improvement planning.

Staff should regularly monitor progress toward achieving the plan's goals and track implementation of specific actions each year. A full plan update should occur every 10 years to reflect completed actions, respond to new opportunities, identify solutions to unanticipated challenges, and keep current on innovation, public demand, and the emergence of new best-practices in PROST asset management.

