



ST. CHARLES MESA COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER MASTER PLAN

PUEBLO COUNTY, COLORADO

MARCH 26 2024



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Photo of painting of Salt Creek by Pedro Romero in the Pueblo County Recreation Center

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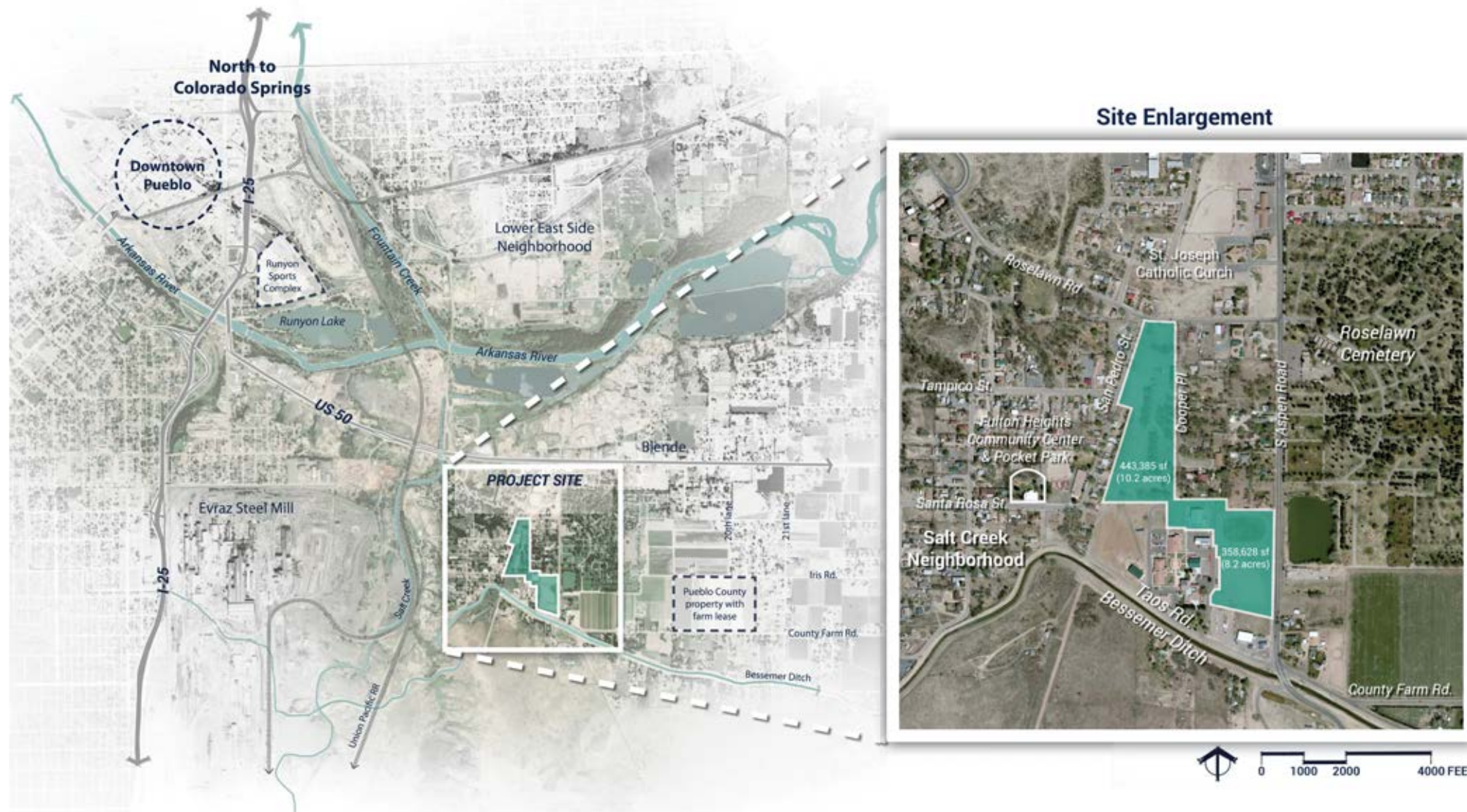
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this current planning and design process is to develop the collective vision and implementation plan for the entire property, with emphasis placed on providing Pueblo County and Mesa residents with recreational amenities.

PROJECT BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The St. Charles Mesa Community Recreation Center site is approximately 18.4 acres and located approximately 3 miles southeast of the downtown Pueblo within the unincorporated Salt Creek/Fulton Heights neighborhoods. The St. Charles Mesa Community Center project (now referred to the St. Charles Mesa Community Recreation Center) was approved in 2016 with a vote as part of the 1A package for Pueblo County. In 2022 the description on the Pueblo County website stated, "The development of a Community Center on the St. Charles Mesa requires further study and definition, including a community outreach process. The County acquired the Boy's (and Girl's) Ranch and is considering the use of this facility as the Community Center, however, community input is needed on the best location to serve the Mesa residents." The components listed included a 16,000 sf recreation center and a 50 meter pool. Since the original project was originally defined the concept of a pool was taken out of the program, and the focus became centered on a recreation center and park to serve Mesa residents as well as people who live in close proximity to the site.

In 2019, when Health Solutions was given the former Boys and Girls Ranch, Pueblo County acquired a gymnasium, parking lot, gravel running track, and ballfields to the east of the Health Solutions property, near the intersection of Aspen Road and Taos Road. The gymnasium and meeting rooms are currently operated as the Pueblo County Recreation Center. The county also obtained ownership of property to the northwest of the gymnasium parking lot between Health Solutions property, Cooper Place, Roselawn Road, and San Pedro Street resulting in a parcel that totals approximately 18.4 acres. The location map shows the context, location, and shape of the parcel.



Location Map

In 2021 a preliminary conceptual plan was developed by staff because CSU Pueblo County Extension Service (CSU Extension) expressed interest in using a portion of the property for their offices and programs. CSU Extension offices are currently in a downtown office building with high security that is not friendly to the public, and they have challenges consistently running their current assistance activities and programs (4H, agriculture, consumer and family science, natural resources, and horticulture) at the State Fair property because of conflicts during the time necessary to prepare for and conduct that event. The Mission of CSU Extension aligns strongly with the values of the Pueblo County Parks and Recreation Department – “to put knowledge to work”. This includes providing places and facilities for leisure-time pursuits, and activities and education that empower youth and adults to be healthy and successful throughout their lives.

The 2021 conceptual plan was not developed through a fully-vetted stakeholder process that included the neighborhood or other St. Charles Mesa or Pueblo County residents and interest groups so this planning process engaged them and other potential project partners, such as the Boys and Girls Club and Senior Resource Development Agency, who desire to provide programs and services in the recreation center, and neighboring Health Solutions, who can possibly assist with providing additional access to the site if feasible.

Since 2021, Pueblo County extended Cooper Place to establish access to the Pueblo County Recreation Center because there was not a road connection from S. Aspen Road. They also established the administrative office for Pueblo County's Parks and Recreation Division in a small, renovated house on Cooper Place. The county now desires to construct a regional parks maintenance facility for their supplies and equipment on the site because there are no other locations currently available on the Mesa and this park site and recreation center will be the largest property that they maintain anywhere in the county other than Runyon Sports Complex.



PLANNING PROCESS

In 2022 Pueblo County hired Logan Simpson, a multi-discipline landscape architecture and planning firm, to manage the planning process and develop a master plan that will guide the development of the project over many years as funding becomes available. Their team includes Perkins & Will (architecture), Matrix Design Group (civil and drainage engineering), Ballard*King (recreation center financial feasibility), and Ackerman Engineering (electrical and lighting).

The plan was developed over 27 months, a project website was created, and multiple forms of outreach to the public and project partners were employed.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

An ad hoc Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) was formed of agency and project partner representatives to provide feedback and guidance through the development of goals, alternatives, and preferred plan. Five virtual workshops were facilitated by the consulting team and key decision points in the process. Telephone interviews were conducted with all the project partners as well as the school district and City of Pueblo Parks and Recreation staff. The Pueblo County Board of County Commissioners endorsed the plan on March 26th 2024.

Three rounds of community engagement provided feedback through in-person meetings and online questionnaires. The meetings and questionnaires were advertised with flyers that were distributed via email to people in the Parks and Recreation Division database and to the schools, and the flyers were printed and posted at many locations on the Mesa. These tools increased awareness of the project, helped residents understand its scope and timeframe, and provided critical feedback to define the initial program elements to consider for the site and recreation center, solicit opinions on alternatives, and provide feedback on the preliminary preferred master plan and priorities for first phase investments. The results of the community engagement are contained in the appendix.



PLANNING CONTEXT AND AREA HISTORY

This section describes the characteristics of the Mesa and its residents, the need for parks and recreation facilities, and key historic events.

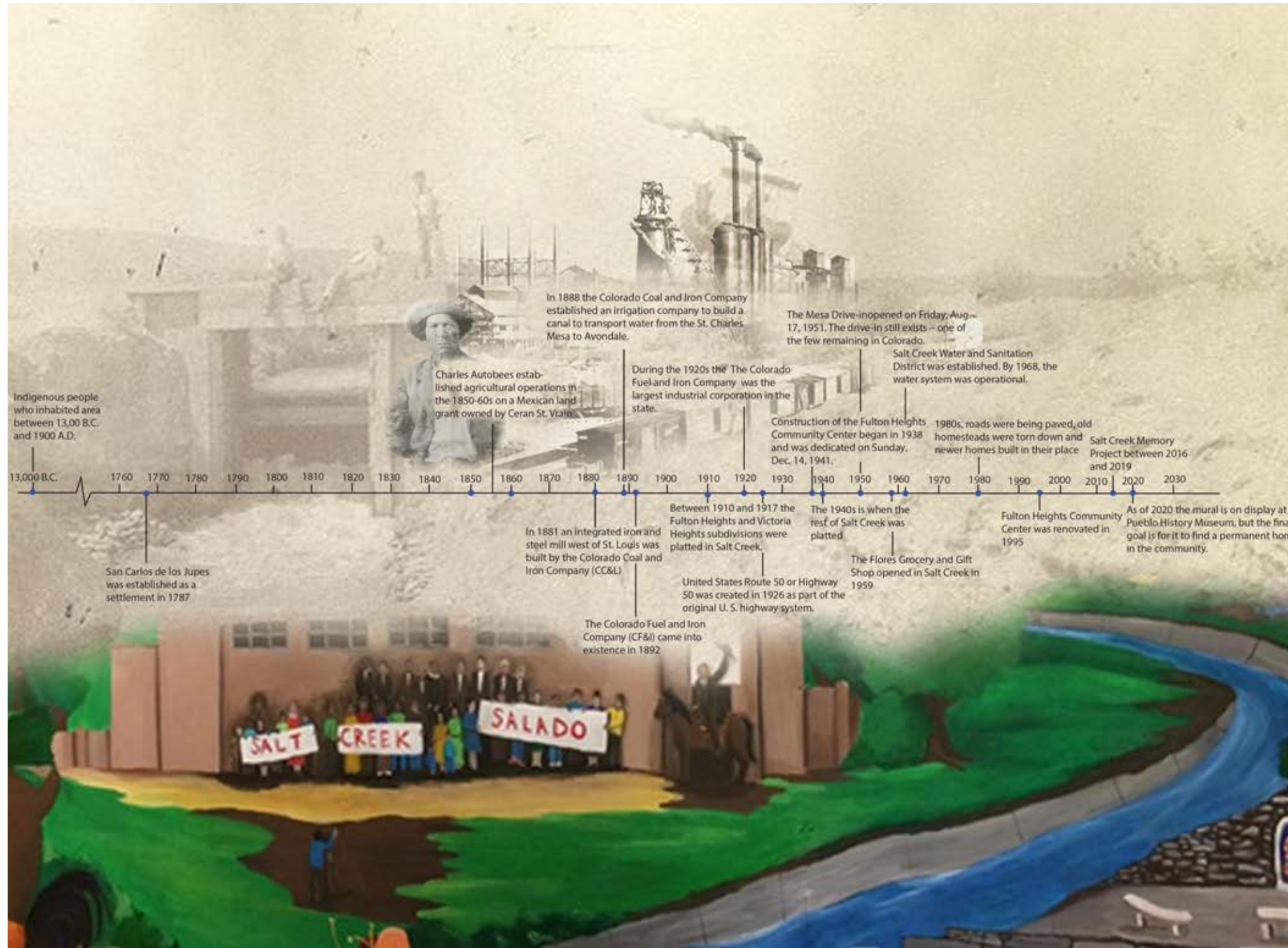
ST. CHARLES MESA GEOGRAPHY, POPULATION, AND DEMOGRAPHICS

St. Charles Mesa "the Mesa" is generally defined by the Union Pacific Railroad (formerly Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad) and Salt Creek to the west, Arkansas River to the north, Huerfano River to the southeast, and the Bessemer Ditch, which runs along the southern edge of extensive agricultural fields. A small residential development south of the Bessemer Ditch could also be considered on the Mesa. The aerial image to the left shows agricultural fields and three major drainages of the Mesa.

The Mesa has a mix of very large lot residential properties that range from 1 to 40 acres, as well as clusters of neighborhoods that are developed in densities similar to a city, with lots that range from 5,000 sf to 1 acre. It includes the unincorporated communities of Salt Creek, Blende, Vineland, and Avondale. In 2020 the population of the Mesa was 11,926 people, with the majority (8,477) living within 4 miles of the site (west of the St. Charles River). People of Latino or Hispanic descent comprised 33% of the residents on the Mesa and 53% in the 1,750 residents in the Salt Creek census tract, which surrounds the site and includes all residents within approximately 1 mile.



Planning Area Context



HISTORY OF THE MESA AND SALT CREEK AREA

The history of the area provides a foundation on which to build a meaningful Community Recreation Center and park for the residents of the Mesa and Pueblo County. It can inform design solutions and elements to include on the site as well as provide an understanding of the diverse cultures and traditions of people who may use the park and facilities, many of whom have lived in this area for generations. The following is a summary of key historic events that influenced the plan through providing spaces for the stories to be told and design elements that respect the past and present cultures and traditions of residents.

The Mesa has a long history of occupation and settlement, starting with the Indigenous people who inhabited the area between 13,000 B.C. and 1900 A.D. Early cultures were early to late Folsom and people making parallel-flaked points, Archaic, Woodland, and Panhandle. Later tribes included Plains, Apache, Cheyenne, Ute, Arapaho, Comanche, Kiowa and Pawnee. Generally, the Kiowa and Comanche lived south of the Arkansas River after 1800 when other tribes pushed them south. Provisions of the 1865 Little Arkansas Treaty forced the Kiowa and Comanche to relinquish lands and the 1867 Medicine Lodge Treaty established a 2.8 million acre reservation in southwestern Oklahoma. Treaties were signed in 1867 and 1869 which resulted in the Southern Arapaho and Cheyenne tribes moving to west-central Oklahoma.

San Carlos de los Jupes was established as a settlement in 1787 for the Comanche who had been defeated at the Battle of Cuerno Verde in 1779. Spain provided workmen, tools, farming implements, livestock and seed. It is believed to have been located just west of the confluence of the Arkansas and St. Charles River. The site was abandoned within the year following the death of a member of the tribe. The St. Charles River, known in Spanish as the Rio San Carlos, may have been named for the settlement.

Settlement of the Mesa began in earnest after Charles Autobees established agricultural operations in the 1850-60s on a Mexican land grant owned by Ceran St. Vrain. This is the same time period when the City of Pueblo was founded and agricultural workers came from New Mexico for jobs. In the 1870s the community of Salt Creek became home for these workers and a post office was commissioned in 1880.

In 1881 the first, and only until World War II, integrated iron and steel mill west of St. Louis was built in on the south side of the Arkansas River, adjacent to Salt Creek, by the Colorado Coal and Iron Company (CC&I), employing 300-400 workers, many of whom lived in Salt Creek and the Mesa.

In 1888 the Colorado Coal and Iron Company created an irrigation company to build a canal to transport water from the St. Charles Mesa to Avondale. The head gate was on the Arkansas River west of Pueblo, and the Ditch emptied into the Huerfano River near Avondale. The company had 20,000 acres (more than 31 square miles) that could be cultivated. The ditch was completed in 1890. In 1894, the company was reorganized as the Bessemer Irrigating Ditch Co.

The Colorado Fuel and Iron Company (CF&I) was established in 1892 after a merger between the Colorado Coal and Iron Company and the Colorado Fuel Company. During the 1920s it was the largest industrial corporation in the state.

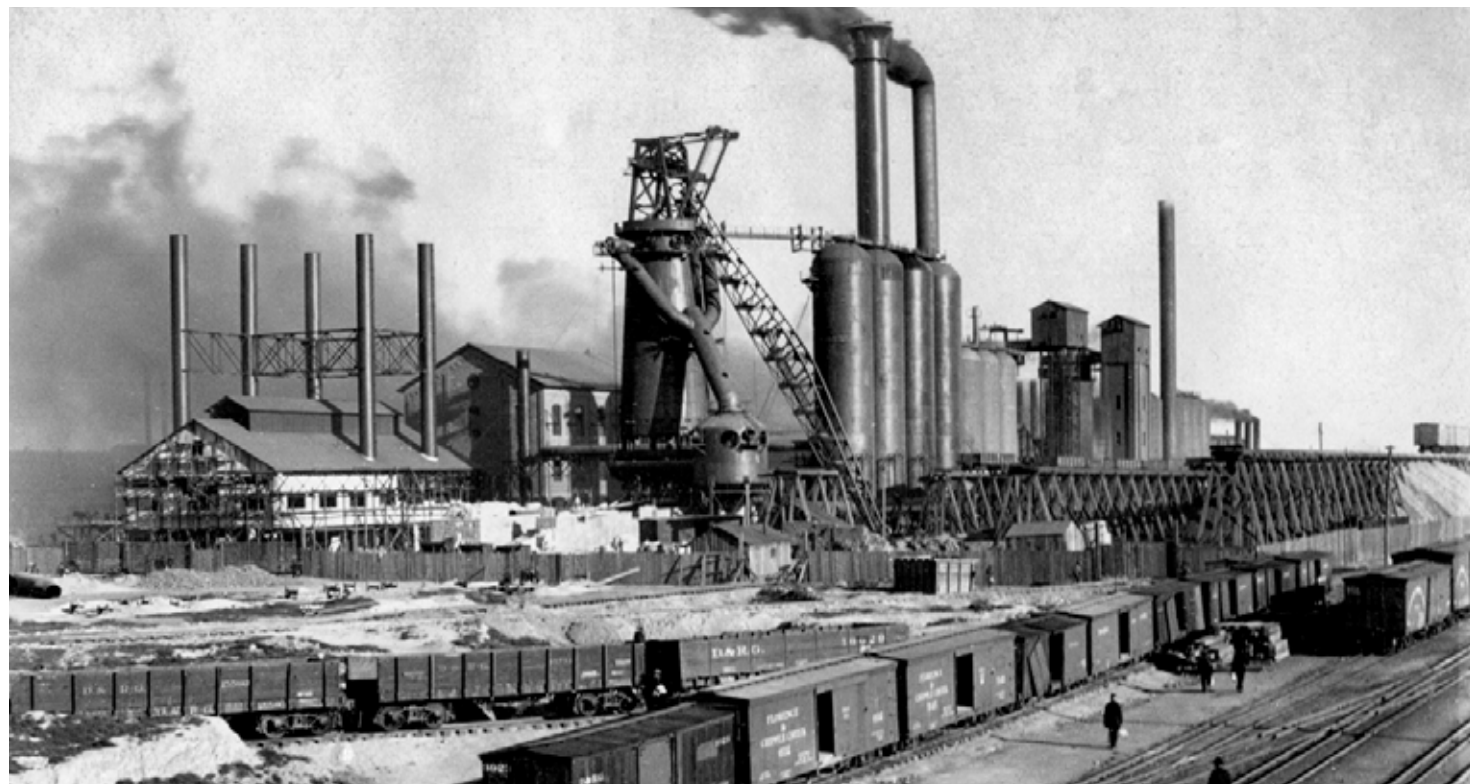
Between 1910 and 1917 the Fulton Heights and Victoria Heights subdivisions were platted in Salt Creek. During the 1920s farmers grew a variety of crops on the Mesa, including sugar beets, corn, and alfalfa. Immigrants from Mexico provided much of

the labor and many became residents on the Mesa. The sugar beets were loaded at railroad sidings in Salt Creek and Baxter. Because few families had telephones, farmers were notified that there were cars to be loaded by hoisting red flags on tall poles located at high points. United States Route 50, or US Highway 50, was created in 1926 as part of the original U. S. highway system.

On Feb. 22, 1933 the Club Recrativo Y Protectia Mutua (Recreational and Mutual Protection Club) or Y.M.P. was formed in Salt Creek to help residents support each other in time of sickness or death. The Fulton Heights Community Center, which is one block away from this site and managed by Pueblo County, was dedicated on Sunday, Dec. 14, 1941. The multi-purpose building was designed to host meetings, entertainment, and for a variety of sports, theatrical productions, and concerts. The 1,015 residents of Salt Creek helped erect the building with their own hands by making 8,000 adobe bricks. The gymnasium floor was small, only 60 x 40 feet, so it was not used for competitive or recreational basketball by older teens or adults. There was also a room for small games, offices, a stage, and two dressing and shower rooms.

The 1940s is when the rest of Salt Creek was platted as the Stanton and Vroman Subdivision and the Celestino Martino Subdivision. There was a concerted effort to assist the "squatters" in Salt Creek, Smelter Hill, and Pepper Sauce Bottoms gain title to the homes they had been living in for generations. In 1942 Rev. Charles J. Murray, assistant pastor at Mount Carmel Church, and a small group of parishioners voted to organize the Mount Carmel Credit Union to give loans to the residents.

By the mid-1950s, an estimated 600 families lived in Salt Creek, with an average of seven members each, and the population grew to about 4,200. Most households drew water from individual wells, or el ojito, and didn't have indoor plumbing or bathrooms. Oral history indicates that slag and other materials from the steel mill were dumped in the Salt Creek area making the water black. The Salt Creek Improvement Association became the driving force for bringing the community into the 20th century. In 1958, it was found that of the community's 61 wells, only five had safe drinking water. The Flores Grocery and Gift Shop, owned by Baudelio and his wife Flores, opened in Salt Creek in 1959. Their specialty was Mexican patent medicines and herbs. There were 12 grocery stores in Salt Creek at that time.



Colorado Fuel and Iron Company



The Mesa Drive-in, featuring 993 stalls and a playground for children, opened on Friday, Aug. 17, 1951. Admission for adults was 50 cents and children under age 12 were free. Opening night featured two color-films: "Texas Rangers" and Disney's "Ichabod and Mr. Toad." The cartoon was "The Three Little Pigs." The drive-in still exists – one of the few remaining in Colorado.





The Ojito in Salt Creek

In 1963 the Salt Creek Water and Sanitation District was established. Mt. Carmel Credit Union donated land and loaned the community the money to drill a well 1,500 ft. deep. By 1968, the water system was operational. Prior to that time, Salt Creek had no water system. Residents got their water from individual wells or from a natural spring called an ojito. The ojito was an informal gathering place, especially for the young people who were sent to haul the water for their mothers.

In time, water, sewer, natural gas and electricity utilities were brought into essentially every home. By the 1980s, roads were being paved, old homesteads were torn down and newer homes built in their place. Fulton Heights, the neighborhood school was closed, as the average age of the residents grew older.

The steel-market crash of 1982 led to the decline of CF&I. After going through several bankruptcies, the company was acquired by Oregon Steel Mills in 1993, and changed its name to Rocky Mountain Steel Mills. In January 2007, Rocky Mountain Steel Mills, along with the rest of Oregon Steel's holdings, were acquired by EVRAZ Group, a Russian steel corporation.

Fulton Heights Community Center was renovated in 1995, 54 years after it was constructed, and in 2006 exercise equipment was added. In 1996 a wishing well, statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and stone ojito were built just east of the original well.

The El Pueblo History Museum conducted the Salt Creek Memory Project between 2016 and 2019 which used oral histories of people who live in the neighborhood to gather the collective memory of Salt Creek. Most are from residents that come from families who have lived in the neighborhood for many generations. A local art instructor, Sophie Fernandez Healey, created a mural that brings together the stories from the Salt Creek community as a celebration of the neighborhood's history. As of 2020 the mural is on display at El Pueblo History Museum, but the final goal is for it to find a permanent home in the community.



Salt Creek resident and contributor to the Salt Creek Memory Project



Salt Creek Memory Project mural by Sophie Fernandez Healey

EXISTING CONDITIONS

This section describes existing and adjacent lands uses, adjacent roads and non-motorized access, structures, vegetation, and utilities.

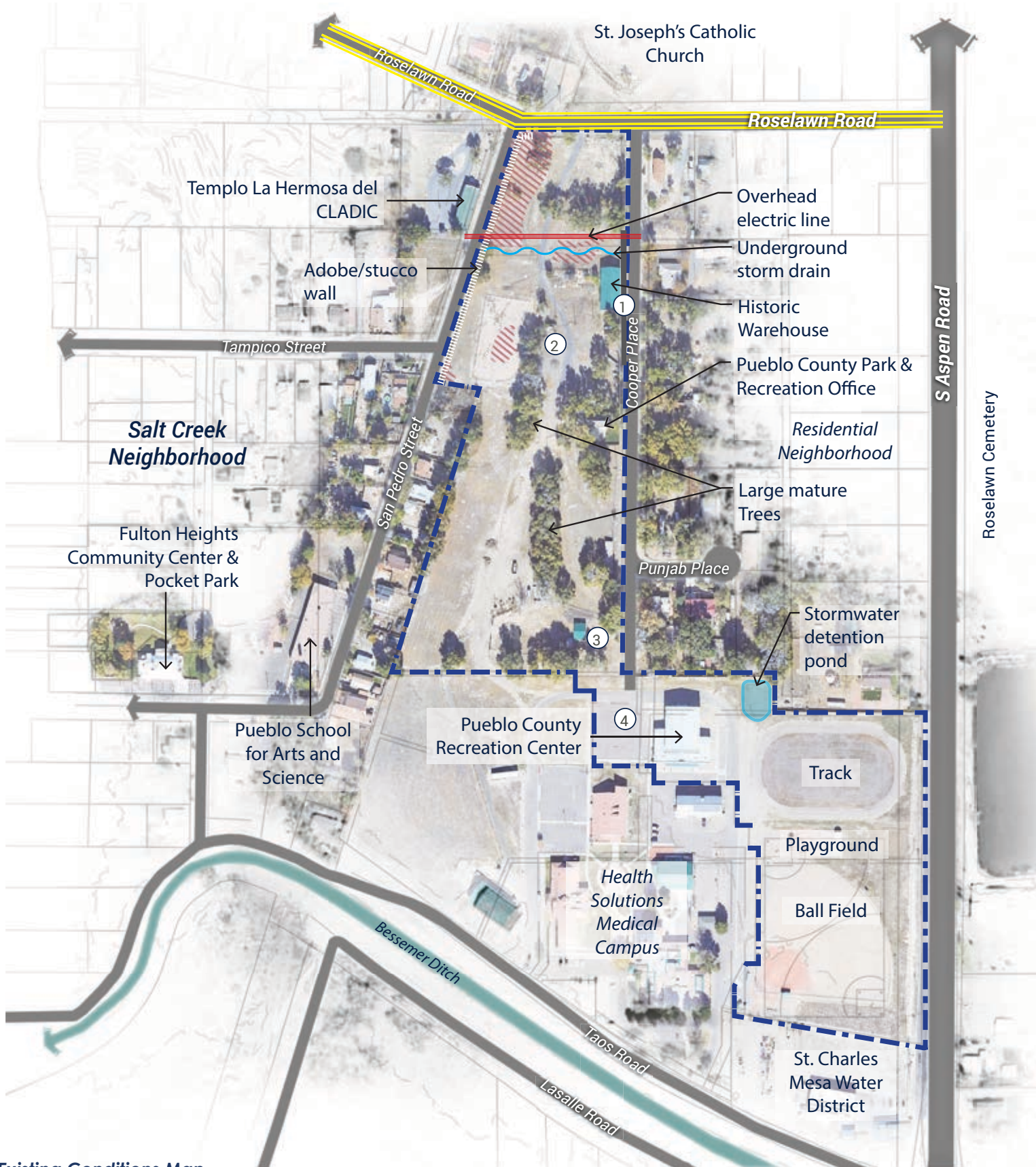
EXISTING AND ADJACENT LAND USES

The 18.4 acre site is uniquely shaped with two large sections that are connected at their corners at the end of Cooper Place. It contains the Pueblo County Recreation Center (primarily a gym) and sports fields that are gravel surfaced on the southwest parcel, and the Parks and Recreation Administration office, which is a renovated home, on the northwest parcel. Cooper Place was extended to provide access to the parking area associated with the Recreation Center. The northwest parcel has two other structures: a somewhat dilapidated metal-sided warehouse and a small metal shed. Portions of the warehouse are currently being used by the county for storage.

The northwest section is centered in a predominately residential area and consists of approximately 10.2 acres. It is bordered by Roselawn Road, San Pedro Street, and Cooper Place, with the Health Solutions medical campus to the south and a few residences that are immediate adjacent to the property on the west. The Health Solutions medical campus is secured with a six-foot tall black metal fence and wood fencing separates the site from the adjacent homes. Additional homes are across the street on the east side of Cooper Place, St. Joseph's Church property is across Roselawn Road to the north, and Templo La Hermosa, an historic church, is across San Pedro Street to the west. A charter school, Pueblo School for Arts and Sciences, is to the southwest on San Pedro Street and traffic from the school congests the adjacent streets weekday mornings and afternoons.

The historic Fulton Heights Community Center (FHCC), which is managed by the Pueblo County Parks and Recreation Division, is around the corner from the school, approximately one block to the west on Santa Rosa Street. Portions of the Fulton Heights Community Center structure is constructed of adobe bricks that were made by residents of the area. The metal portion of the structure is a unique engineering design that covers a small gym. It is a much-loved institution on the Mesa that hosts limited recreational programs and events. The FHCC currently contains a few pieces of fitness equipment, a kitchen, and a small 65' by 44' gym that is used in many ways. Groups frequently rent the facility for special events, funerals, reunions, or other activities and a few groups use the gym for volleyball and young children's basketball. The best recreational and community uses for this facility should be determined through this planning process and the new CRC should not duplicate those functions. Efficient operation, maintainainance, and management of both facilities is critical to their long-term financial sustainability.

The southeast portion of the site is 8.2 acres bordered by S. Aspen Street to the east, the Health Solution Medical campus to the west, St. Charles Mesa Water District to the south, and one residence to the north. Roselawn Cemetery and a few large residential properties are across South Aspen Street to the east.



Existing Conditions Map

The Bessemer Ditch runs diagonally 400' south of the property, which presents future opportunity for a non-vehicular trail parallel to the ditch that would connect people to this site across the entire Mesa. Pueblo County has shown a desired regional trail connection via Roselawn Road, which could extend through the site to the Bessemer Ditch. The county is also exploring the possibility of using water in the Bessemer Ditch to irrigate this site.

The two large parcels are connected at the end of Cooper Place at a pinch point, which will require a thoughtful solution to create stronger visual and circulation connections between the two portions of the site.

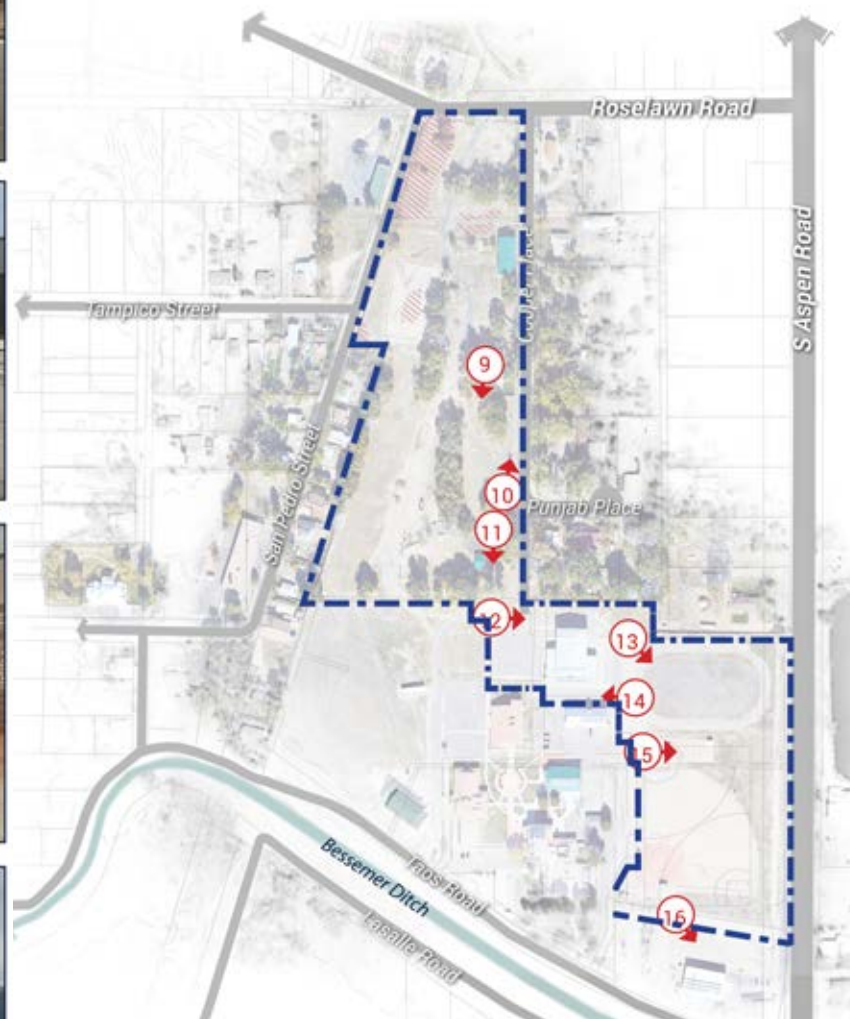
ADJACENT ROADS AND NON-MOTORIZED ACCESS

The site currently has limited vehicular access, with one official access point to the existing recreation center at the end of Cooper Place, a local, dead-end road that is 24 feet wide. It was recently improved with repaving and completion of curb and gutter. San Pedro Street is another local road that is 32 feet wide, which could accommodate two traffic lanes and parallel parking or bike lanes if the existing surface was restriped. Adding head-in parking would require moving the curb to increase the width of the road. As mentioned previously, San Pedro Street can be congested before and after school as parents drop off and pick up their children. A deteriorating low chicken wire and stucco wall exists in portions along San Pedro Street very near the curb hindering visibility into the site and prevent construction of a walk to accommodate pedestrians. It is not considered historic, having been constructed in the 1970s or 1980s, and should be considered for removal to provide visibility for security and to accommodate features such as walks, trails, parking, landscaping, or other public improvements.

Roselawn and Aspen Roads are higher volume and wider roads that provide vehicular connections through the area to other destinations on the Mesa. Roselawn Road is 38 feet wide with two lanes and striped bike lanes. Vehicular access to the old cattle sales facility, called La Venta, was primarily from Roselawn Road through the center of the site. Aspen Road is also 38 feet wide but instead of bike lanes it has a continuous center turn lane. Because there are no permitted vehicular access points on



Site Photo Locations



Site Photo Locations

Aspen Road, creating a new access will require a traffic study and meeting Pueblo County design standards to determine if modifications to Aspen Road are required for turning movements, such as a deceleration lane.

There are no pedestrian walks around or to the site. Sidewalks do not exist on any of the roads that are adjacent to the site and they exist only sporadically along the residential streets of the neighborhoods. Bicycles can approach the site via the bike lanes on Roselawn Road or using the local road system. Tampico Street ends at San Pedro Street near the edge of the park site providing a logical point for non-motorized access for residents who live to the west.

Bus service is provided by the Pueblo City Transit via the Highway 50 – West Route, which runs along Roselawn Road, San Pedro Street, and Santa Rosa Street. There is a designated stop at the corner of San Pedro Street and Roselawn Road at the northwest corner of the site; however, there is only a no-parking sign to designate the stop and there are no sidewalks that connect to it.

STRUCTURES AND SITE FEATURES

Pueblo County Recreation Center

The existing Recreation Center is a 12,850 gross square foot single story structure built in 2004. It is constructed of pre-engineered metal building structure with exterior cladding of colored load bearing CMU masonry and 2-coat stucco. Roofing is ribbed metal panels with blanket insulation below.

Program spaces include a full-court approximately 7,650 square foot multi-purpose gymnasium with portable bleachers and ceiling-mounted basketball standards, one multi-purpose group meeting/exercise room, a staff lounge/small meeting room, a conference room, rest room/locker rooms, storage, and support spaces. The gymnasium was recently upgraded with a new floor.

The building entry is located on the south side of the building and is protected with an exterior ribbed metal roof supported on steel columns. The entry has an asphalt pad in front, which used to be parking prior to the establishment of the Health Solutions property line and installation of a black iron security fence 30 feet away.

Generally, the exterior envelope appears to be in good shape and well maintained and no apparent settling was evident. Stucco appears to be in good shape with little visible cracking. High roof systems were not observed as part of this study. Interior finishes and equipment generally appear to be in good shape. A full code and accessibility review should be conducted if renovation or remodeling is considered. Some water intrusion is evident on the CMU north wall of the main Gymnasium (see Photo). Interior gymnasium wall and ceiling liner panels show some damage from use but are intact. Gymnasium lighting is suspended and surface mount type. Other interior lighting consists of upright fixtures in the conference room, with surface mounted or suspended tube fluorescent fixtures used in the majority of spaces.

Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems were not reviewed in detail for the scope of this study but warrant evaluation if the building is renovated. Remaining life span and potential future replacement costs should be considered with any significant remodel. With advancements in equipment since 2004, energy savings could be greatly enhanced by replacing mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems with newer energy and water efficient equipment and fixtures.

Generally, the building is aging but suitable for renovation and remodeling as it does not appear to have evident core and shell issues. Building additions should be separated from the existing pre-engineered structure with expansion materials.

Parking is located to the west of the building and a few spaces are on the west side, both of which do not have good relationships to the entry. Because of the configuration of the Health Solutions property and fencing, the only way to obtain vehicular access to the area west of the existing recreation center is via the road to the north of the building or from Aspen Road.



Site Photo Locations

Parks and Recreation Administrative Office

The Parks and Recreation administrative office is a recently renovated farmhouse, which has a small kitchen, reception counter, and two offices that were former bedrooms. Parking is located in a gravel lot to the west of the building. As the department grows with the administrative and operational demands of an expanded recreation center and community park the best use of the existing structure will need to be evaluated.

Former Livestock Sale Barn and Shed

This old metal warehouse includes storage, restrooms, and kitchen-like features. It was likely constructed in the 1950s or 1960s. The building does not meet current building codes and has undergone many different modifications over the years as evidenced by differences in the siding. Pueblo County is storing materials and some vehicles in the building and will continue to use it, though they plan to construct a new maintenance building adjacent to it. A small shed further south on Cooper Place is not used and is not in good condition.

Former Cattle Chute

When this project started, an old cattle chute that was used to weigh livestock was located centrally in the northwest portion of the site. It was likely constructed in the 1960s and was in very poor condition. It has since been demolished.

VEGETATION

Mature trees that are primarily Siberian Elms are dispersed throughout the site. These species are not native, short-lived, and weak-wooded. The trees are generally in poor condition, having never received irrigation and nearing the end of their lifespans, though they currently provide significant benefits by creating shaded areas. The trees could be pruned, irrigation added, and then selectively removed as required for site and safety improvements with new trees eventually planted to replace them that are more suitable for public parks.



Parks and Recreation administrative building and mature Siberian elms



Former cattle chute



Mature Siberian elms and overhead power lines



UTILITIES

Electric and Lighting

Power is distributed to and through the north park area, by the utility company, via existing power poles and overhead power lines. The overhead power lines include Primary Feeders (High Voltage 4 to 13.8kV), Secondary Service Feeders (120/240V) to the various homes and structures, and Secondary Street Lighting. The Primary appears to be three-phase running East to West, across the park site, from San Pedro Street to Cooper Place just north of the existing Parks Maintenance Building. There is a single-phase overhead branch running from the three-phase lines south along Cooper Place to Pun Jab Place where it turns and heads east. There are also single-phase branches running north and south along San Pedro Street. The existing internal site lighting (utility company arm mounted luminaires on wooden poles) is currently powered from some poles and overhead secondary feeders located within the park area. The overhead lines are visually distracting and can pose safety hazards within parks due to people intentionally or accidentally interacting with them by throwing objects that get tangled on them such as kites or hit the lines with balls and other objects.

Power is distributed to the south park area, by the utility company, via existing power poles and overhead power lines running east to west along Taos Road. The overhead power lines include Primary Feeders (High Voltage 4 to 13.8kV), Secondary Service Feeders (120/240V) to the various homes and structures, and Secondary Street Lighting. The Primary along Taos Road appears to be three-phase. Power serving the various structures associated with the Health Solutions Learning Tree and the St Charles Mesa Recreation Center appears to be via underground Primary Distribution Feeders from Toas Road to several utility company pad-mounted transformers (Primary 13.8kV to Secondary 208Y/120V or 480Y/277V) around the site related to the various structures. The internal site lighting located on the south parcel consists of building mounted luminaires and customer owned (Health Solutions Learning Tree and the Pueblo County Recreation Center) pole mounted luminaires with underground branch circuiting connected to the customer electrical systems within the existing buildings.

Storm Drainage

A shallow underground storm drain flows from San Pedro Street to Cooper Place, which could be daylighted and used to collect stormwater on the site as well as provide a wetter microclimate for trees and shrubs to flourish. There is not a buried storm drain system around the northwestern portion of the site so all drainage must be handled on the surface and water quality treatment and detention included on the site. The southeastern portion of the site receives surface run-off from the St. Charles Mesa Water District site, which then combines with on-site run-off to a detention pond and storm drain inlet that connects to the system in Aspen Road. The southern portion of the site has erosion from the adjacent surface flows and deposition of gravel material from St. Charles Mesa Water District's unpaved storage yard, which should be mitigated. A small detention pond northeast of the Pueblo County Recreation Center receives water via surface flows from the recreation center roof and adjacent pavements. It does not have an outlet and relies on infiltration into the ground.

Water and Sanitary Sewer

Water and Sanitary Sewer are provided by the St. Charles Mesa Water and Sanitation District, with distribution mains located in S. Aspen, Cooper Place, San Pedro Street, and Roselawn Road. There is current capacity within the District, with recent improvements being provided within Cooper Place for serviceability. Future development will be required to extend a looping water main through the property for redundancy, water quality, and pressure and individual service lines for each facility. Sewer mains will be extended to the facilities and sized appropriately as needed. Fire hydrants are located within the public rights-of-way currently, and additional fire hydrants will be added to future development based on needs, building size, and emergency services review.



Shallow storm drainage on site



Overhead power lines and drainage



MASTER PLAN

This section contains the project goals, a summary of plan alternatives that were created for the site and Community Recreation Center building, and the preferred concepts for the site and major structures.



PROJECT GOALS

Goals that were defined by Pueblo County staff, and the consulting team, partners, public, and Advisory Committee guided the development of alternatives and the preferred plan and are listed below.

1. Provide a park and recreational facility for Pueblo County residents, with a focus on the needs of St. Charles Mesa residents and people in nearby neighborhoods.
2. Avoid duplication of programs and facilities between Pueblo County Parks and Recreation, City of Pueblo, and School District 70.
3. Enhance opportunities for non-profit sports clubs and other organizations to offer programs that are synergistic with the vision for this site.
4. Provide features and programs to be inclusive and welcoming for people of all ethnicities, incomes, ages, and abilities.
5. Provide places and facilities for self-directed fun as well as group programs.
6. Improve life-skills for youth and adults.
7. Incorporate elements and programs that can improve the health of people who use the site and facilities.
8. Develop the site to be compatible with adjacent land uses and the character of the neighborhood.
9. Design the project to celebrate history and strengthen the social fabric and culture of the area.
10. Provide educational facilities and features, and conduct programs related to agriculture, which is a critical industry on the St. Charles Mesa and throughout Pueblo County.
11. Create attractive, safe, and comfortable spaces and facilities.
12. Provide connections to and through the site for pedestrians, bicyclists, and people using other non-motorized transportation devices.
13. Create shared, multi-purpose facilities, outdoor spaces, and parking areas to maximize efficiency.
14. Design for year-round use.
15. Incorporate best practices of resilient and sustainable design, including financial considerations.
16. Design the site and facilities to be efficiently operated and maintained.
17. Welcome and define partnerships to assist with construction, long-term maintenance, operations, and program services.



ALTERNATIVES

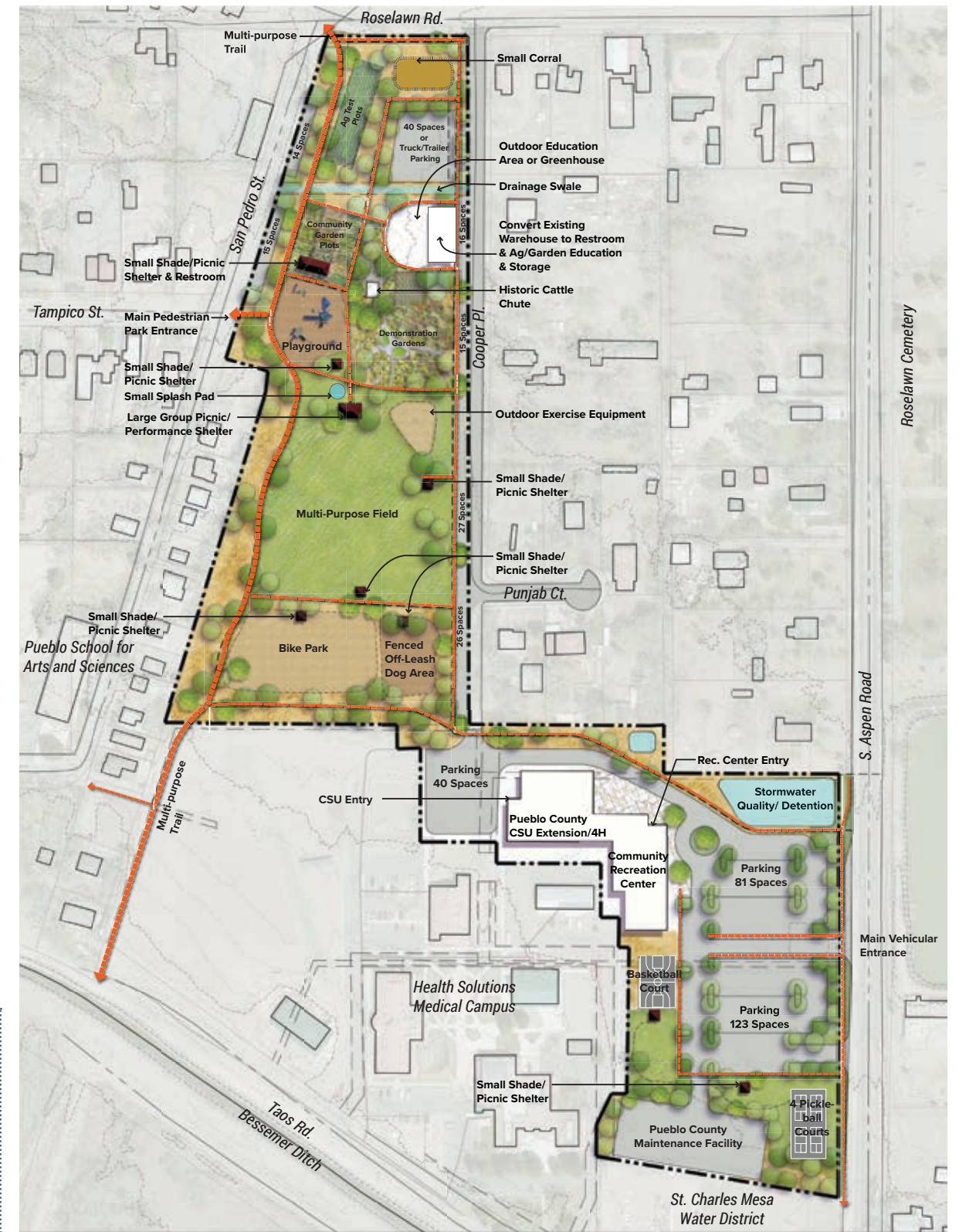
Two conceptual plans show alternative visions for long-range improvements to the St. Charles Mesa Community Recreation Center site. The conceptual plans represent visions that would be phased over many years as funding is obtained and after Pueblo County's and other project partners' capacity to operate and maintain the facilities is enhanced. Best ideas from these concepts and new ideas that have a high level of community support were combined into a preliminary preferred master plan for the site and structures. The Fulton Heights Community Center (FHCC) on Santa Rosa Street is an important historic structure that is treasured by the neighborhood and Mesa residents. It can continue to be used as a small gym for special events and other activities, like it has in the past. With a new fitness component in an expansion to the Pueblo County Recreation Center, the very small weight room in the FHCC could be repurposed for storage or other needs. It's kitchen can continue to be used for catered events.

The two alternative site concepts identify where elements could be located and various ways to provide indoor spaces for community and recreational activities. These concepts are based on initial feedback received from residents and project partners regarding their need for and level of enthusiasm for the components, which are similar on both alternatives. The major components that were considered in the alternatives included:

- Community Recreation Center (CRC), described in more detail below
- Multi-purpose turf areas for youth sports, festivals, picnicking, kite flying and unstructured play
- Group and small picnic shelters
- Play area
- Outdoor fitness equipment
- Outdoor pickleball courts
- Outdoor basketball courts
- Splash pad/water feature
- Bicycle skills park / pump track
- Bike and pedestrian trail connection from Roselawn Road to Aspen Road as part of the larger planned regional trail system

- Lighted and unlighted walking paths with benches and shade trees
- CSU Extension/4H Administrative Offices and indoor/outdoor areas for 4H classes such as dog training or other subjects
- Small corral/arena for 4H livestock classes, demonstration gardens, and agricultural test plots
- Community garden plots for public use
- Public off-leash dog park (deleted from the program due to lack of support)
- Pueblo County Parks Maintenance Facility
- On-street parking on San Pedro Street and Cooper Place
- Off-street parking that is accessed primarily from Aspen Road.

Concept A shows a new maintenance facility for the Pueblo County Parks and Recreation Division in the southern portion of the site, adjacent to the St. Charles Mesa Water District, which increases the available park and gardens space on the northwest portion between San Pedro Street and Cooper Place.



Concept A



The two concepts for indoor features in the CRC occupy the same building footprint, which includes the existing Pueblo County Recreation Center, expansion with new elements, and possibly a future addition of a gym and running track.

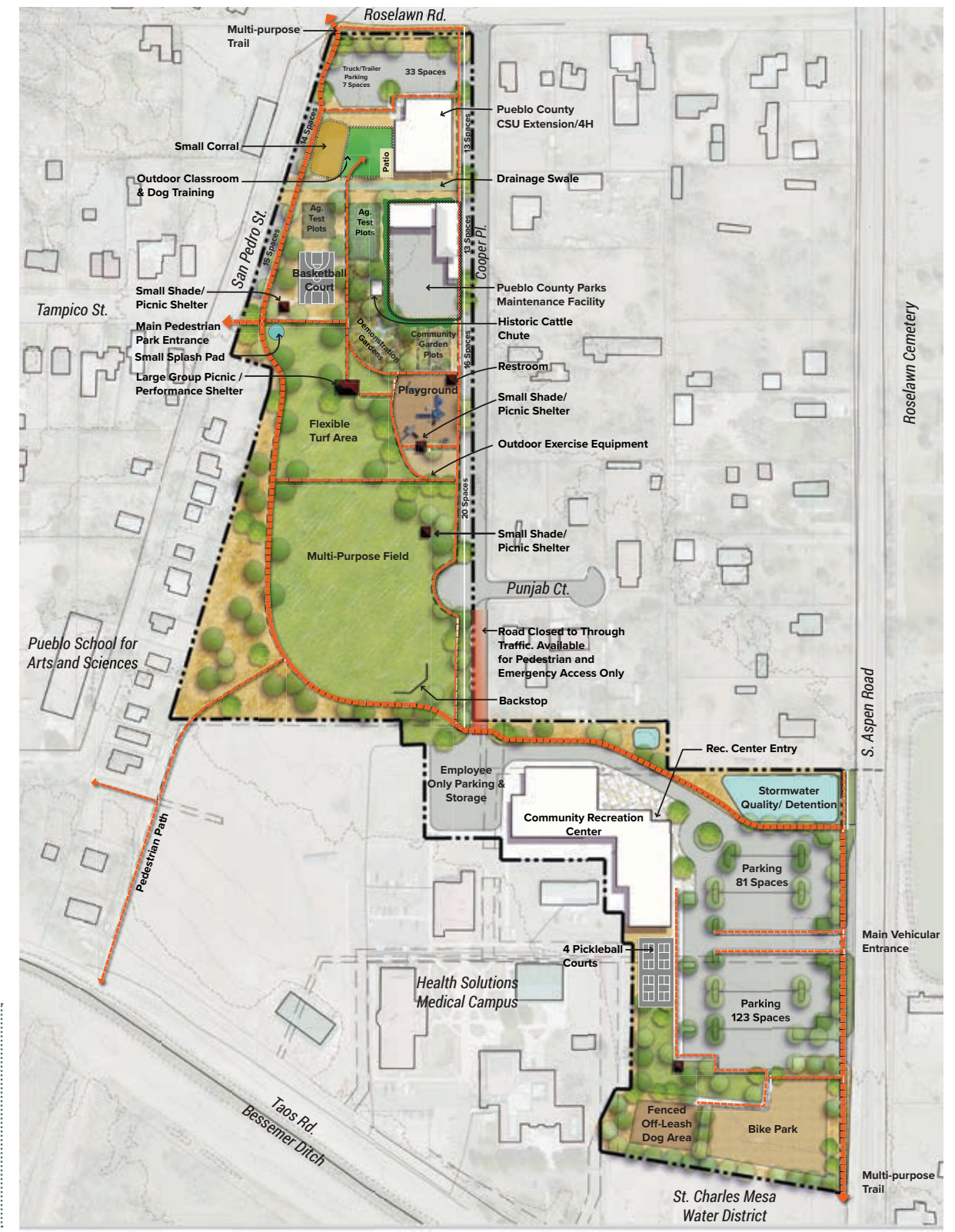
High priority components of the CRC include:

- multi-purpose gymnasium (basketball, volleyball, pickleball, etc.)
- running track (not feasible unless a new gym is constructed)
- community meeting rooms / event hall
- multi-purpose enrichment and craft classrooms to make things with equipment and supplies (e.g. “makers space” for arts, sewing, printing, pottery or other)
- teaching kitchen (cooking classes)
- youth/teen game & activities area
- multi-generational lounge and technology area
- fitness area with equipment
- group exercise studio
- administrative office space for Pueblo County Parks and Recreation Division

The Boys and Girls Club would establish a “clubhouse” in the CRC for after school programs. Some components of CSU Extension/4H could also be located at the CRC, maximizing the utilization of spaces within the center.

Alternatives for the CRC varied regarding the future of the existing recreation center and gym. An indoor running track was identified as very high priority for residents, but this feature cannot be added to the existing gym. One option is to build a new, larger gym with a running track around its upper level and renovate the existing gym and ancillary spaces for other purposes, such as for CSU Extension/4H administrative offices, storage, and a large multi-purpose space for classes and events. Alternatively, the facility could remain a gym and be the primary program space for the Boys and Girls Club. A second floor could include spaces for fitness, teens, and a computer lab. The graphics to the left show initial ideas.

Concept B shows locating the maintenance facility for the Pueblo County Parks on Cooper Place. This creates space for other activities at the south end of the CRC parking lot while reducing the available area for parks, gardens, and CSU Extension/4H activities in the northwest portion of the site.



Concept B



Master Plan

MASTER PLAN

Alternatives were evaluated by the public, advisory committee, and staff, preferred elements identified, and Pueblo County staff determined that the maintenance facility will be located on Cooper Place. The consultant team then developed a detailed Master Plan that incorporates the preferred elements. The plan is organized around these features and locations:

- A park core area between the pedestrian entry on San Pedro Street and Cooper Place with shade-providing trees and benches, large playground, water play feature (mistlers to minimize water use and maintenance), shade arbors, restrooms, outdoor exercise equipment, picnic/shade shelters, and a group picnic pavilion that also can be used as a performance stage;
- a flexible multi-purpose grass area/field with a small backstop and an irrigation pond at the south end of the park site;
- a renovated and expanded Community Recreation Center (CRC) that wraps around the corner of the Health Solutions property and that has vehicular access from Aspen Road and Cooper Place;
- an outdoor basketball court and eight pickleball courts south of the CRC, with nearby shade structures, drinking water, and grass for relaxation;
- a bike skills course/pump track with shade structures south of the CRC parking lots and adjacent to the St. Charles Mesa Water District;
- paths and multi-purpose trail connections with seating plazas that are themed based on traditional edible plants that are suited to the Pueblo region and that are used by past and current Indigenous people and residents of New Mexican and Mexican heritage; and
- CSU Extension/4H and the Pueblo County Maintenance Facility being located at the northern end of the site and along the northern portion of Cooper Place, which makes it easier to develop these facilities separately from the phases associated with the park and CRC construction.

St. Charles Mesa Park and Community Recreation Center Character

This site is in an area that has a long history associated with Indigenous tribes, people of New Mexican and Mexican heritage, and families who survived on income from the steel mill or farms on the Mesa. Both industries are still important today on the Mesa and a new facility to manufacture long steel rails is currently being constructed, which will power production using solar-generated electricity. Site elements should be designed to reflect these influences and yet be contemporary in character to acknowledge their relevance to today. The plans and renderings show ideas how these influences can be interpreted into design solutions, but the detailed design of the features and structures will be explored and defined when the project proceeds to the next level of design.





Park Core Area

Park Core Area

The main entry is the Squash Blossom Plaza, a tribute to the squash plant, an important food source. The squash blossom is edible and is also one of the symbolic ornaments on Native American necklaces. A walk connects from the plaza to the Sunflower Plaza, another critical food source and agricultural product. Lining the walk are benches and shade trees placed in crusher fines paving that are stabilized with vegetable-based resin, creating a pastoral, comfortable, and accessible seating area, and place to watch people.

The focal point is the Sunflower Plaza, a community space for conversation and play. The plaza would have special paving to celebrate the sunflower and in its center is a group of colorful misting poles with fabric shade structures over them, which is also a fun place for kids of all ages to play in the mist and get

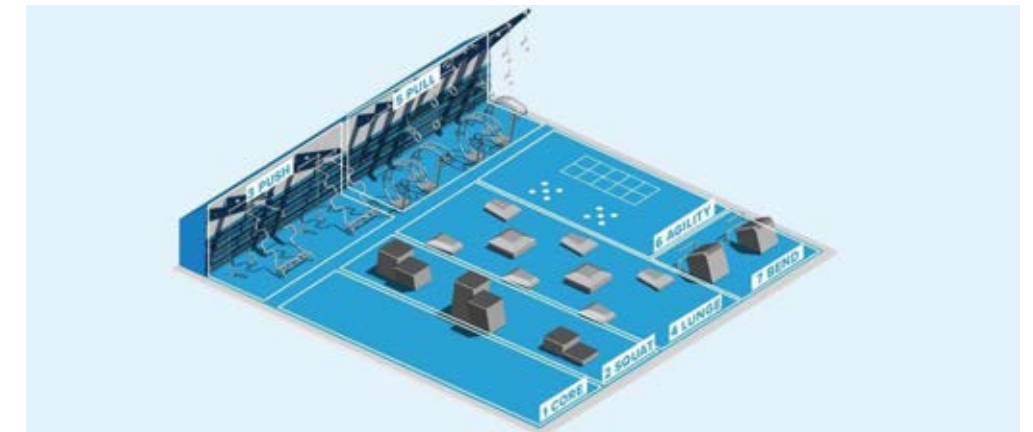
cool during hot days. The misters can be on a timer that cycles and shuts them off completely, or a user-activated switch, which both reduce water use. Surrounding the plaza are shade arbors and benches.

On either side of the main spine walk there is a restroom, outdoor exercise court, and large playground. The restroom should have at least 3-4 fixtures for men and women plus a family unit with the doors facing the street for surveillance. The exercise court can include several independent fitness and strength apparatus or be a premanufactured court that incorporates many activities into a small area. The surfacing should be a light color so it does not get hot in the summer sun.

The playground is approximately 8,000 square feet, which will accommodate many different play elements. It will be designed to be inclusive for children, teens, and adults of all abilities and incorporate elements that reflect the overall park theme of agriculture and multi-cultural heritage of Mesa residents.



Sunflower Plaza with Misting Poles, Shade Arbors, and Seating



Examples of a fitness court by The Fitness Court®, fitness equipment by Kompan®, and climbing apparatus by MoveStrong® (clockwise)

South of the Sunflower Plaza is the Group Pavilion. It is a large structure (approximately 24' x 50') that can function as a performance stage when festivals occur in the park. The Maize Plaza is located on the south side of the pavilion, which can have permanent benches as well as function as surfacing for temporary accessible seating during a performance.

Other Park Features

A multi-purpose grass field is located south of the Group Pavilion and can accommodate informal seating for performances, festivals, sports practices, and non-structured play and relaxation. Walks that are 10-feet wide run around its perimeter and will be lighted with dark-skies compliant fixtures for security and use in evenings after the sun sets. Additional shade shelters with picnic tables are shown along the walks.

Pedestrian entrances to the park from Cooper Place and in other strategic locations are celebrated with small plazas that have special paving marked with traditional edible/agricultural crops used by New Mexicans and other Latino and Native Americans and that are suited for the climate in Pueblo County. Seat walls around portions of the plaza could be constructed of adobe and topped with concrete or stone. Mesa residents could participate in creating the adobe bricks and assist with the construction of the wall, connecting them with the past, present, and future. Using earth products for walls and other natural materials are more sustainable methods of construction than other methods employed over the last 75 to 100 years and are becoming more popular and feasible again. As a note, the stucco wall that is falling apart along San Pedro is hollow with stucco over chicken wire. This method of construction is not recommended as it is not durable. That wall will be removed and the area graded to provide a more graceful relationship to the street, as well as improve security.

The list of plazas with edible plant graphics that are in the park and in special areas around the future CRC are:

- Squash Blossom (flor de calabaza)
- Sunflower (girasol)
- Hibiscus (hibisco)
- Corn (maiz)
- Bean (frijol)
- Tomatillo
- Chile
- Sweet Potato (batata)
- Agave (maguey)
- Prickly pear cactus (nopal)

A regional trail connection is planned from the northwest corner at Roselawn, parallel to San Pedro Street to the main pedestrian entry and beyond, then turning to the east at the south end of the multi-purpose field to the CRC. The trail can continue along the northern edge of the large parking lot and then south along Aspen Road to meet the future planned trail on the Bessemer Ditch. This regional trail should be a minimum of 12' wide to safely accommodate both bicyclists and walkers who are enjoying the park.

In the future, Pueblo County could possibly obtain water from the Bessemer Ditch to irrigate the landscape in the park, so an irrigation pond is shown at the south end of the park near the north property boundary of the Health Solutions Campus.



Southern Portion of the park



Group Pavilion/Performance Stage



Community Recreation Center Area

Community Recreation Center

The existing Community Recreation Center (CRC) is approximately 11,760 SF and will be fully renovated. The existing gym will continue to be used as a multi-purpose court and was recently upgraded with a new floor. The Boys and Girls Club can use the gym for after school programs. Additional storage will be provided next to the main gym floor. The spaces adjacent to the existing gym are proposed to be renovated to accommodate a new Teen Activity Center, Technology Lounge and refurbished locker room/changing spaces. The Technology Lounge will have flexible use for computer gaming or can be converted to a technology classroom for more formal computer-based learning. The Teen Activity Center is located off of a common lounge, providing dedicated space for activities geared toward teen interests, while providing visible connections directly to expanded seating and community gathering areas. Existing changing rooms and rest rooms will be refurbished, receiving new finishes and accessibility upgrades.



Community Recreation Center Entrance (potential future gym shown in the background)



A building addition of approximately 17,440 square feet is proposed to the east and southeast of the existing gym, with the main entrance to the facility located at its northeast corner. The addition wraps around the Health Solutions property, which allows for vehicular access from Cooper Place to a large parking lot east of the CRC. In addition to Pueblo County Parks and Recreation, the Senior Resource Center and CSU Extension/4H can operate programs out of this portion of the building as well as the existing gym. A gym that could accommodate an elevated running track could be added to the facility at the south end if desired in the future.

The CRC building addition features the following spaces:

- Main Entry Lobby with central control desk supported by Administration Offices
- Fitness Center featuring free weights, circuit weights, cardio equipment and plyometric/stretching areas.
- Group Exercise Studio suitable for multi-purpose large and small group exercise classes.
- Multi-Use Classroom for wet and dry programming including craft and art classes, parties, or other general programming.
- Multipurpose Event Hall featuring operable partitions to divide the space into separate meeting areas, with dedicated storage.
- Catering/Teaching Kitchen for classes and for support of the Multi-Purpose Meeting Hall.
- Public Rest Rooms including a private rest room.

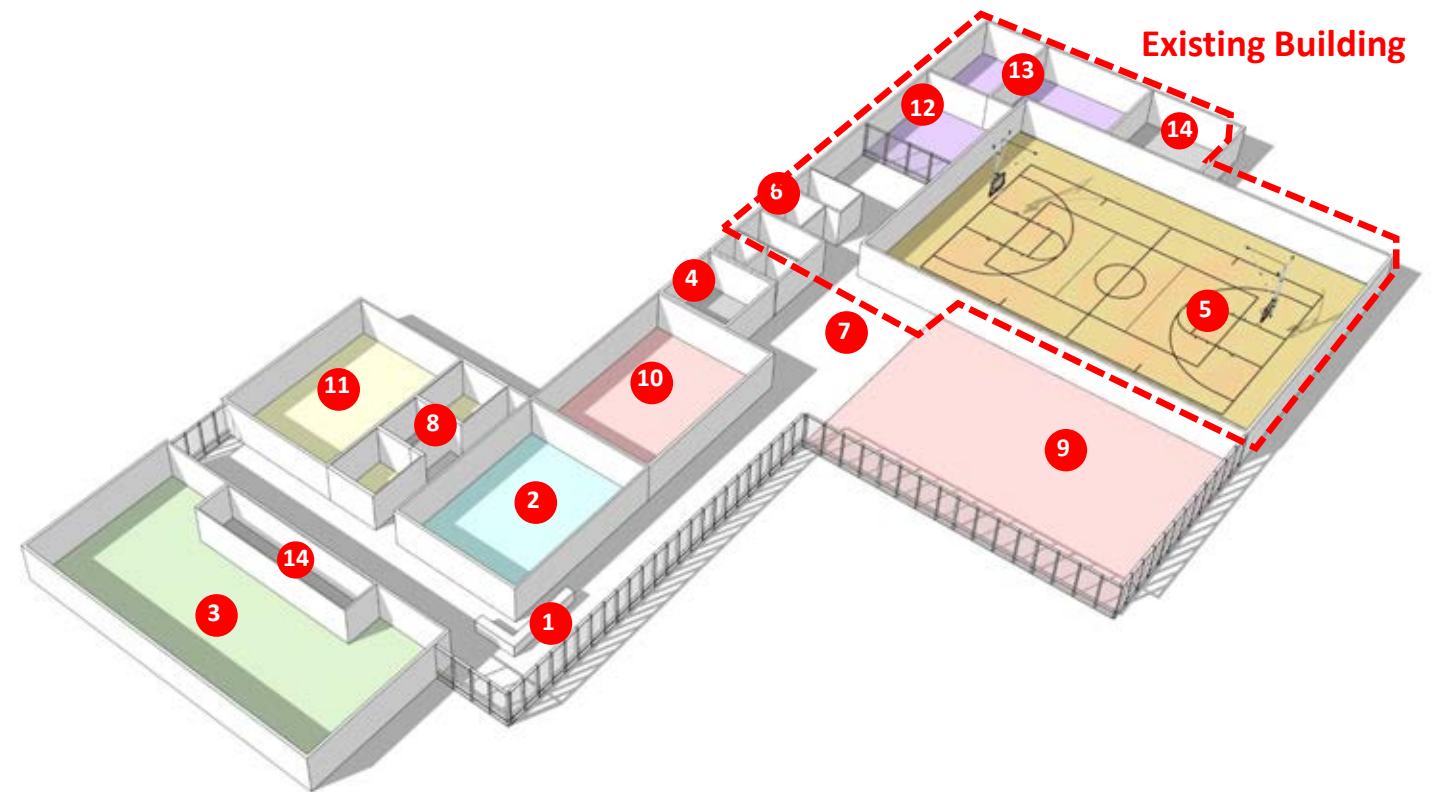
The table and conceptual floor plan to the right list the program elements for both renovated existing and new addition spaces:

Space Description	Approx Area (GSF)
Entry Lobby/Control Desk	3,800
Staff Offices	1,360
Multipurpose Meeting Hall	3,270
Catering/Teaching Kitchen	350
Gymnasium/Storage (Existing)	7,715
Change Rooms	320
Lounge Seating	1,500
Restrooms New 675 + Existing 250	925
Fitness Center	4,445
Group Exercise Studio	1,560
Multi-Use Classrooms/Stor	1,320
Teen Activity Center	1,240
Tech Lounge/Stor	630
Storage (General)	375
BOH	390
Total Proposed Area	29,200
Renovated Area	11,760
New Construction	17,440

Community Recreation Center Building Program

Plan Key:

1. Entry Lobby
2. Staff Offices
3. Multipurpose Meeting Hall
4. Catering/Teaching Kitchen
5. Gymnasium (Existing)
6. Change Rooms
7. Lounge Seating
8. Restrooms
9. Fitness Center
10. Group Exercise Studio
11. Multi-use Classrooms
12. Teen Activity Center
13. Tech lounge
14. Storage



Community Recreation Center Conceptual Floorplan





Sports Courts and Bike Park Area



Example Bike Park – Cliffs Bike Park, Cleveland Metroparks, Ohio

Road Improvements and Parking

Parking is on the street in 90-degree head-in spaces around the park. A total of 123 spaces are shown, which are divided into smaller sections with landscaped islands that are associated with the small entry plazas. Creating these spaces requires reconstructing the curb and gutter on San Pedro Street and Cooper Place, with the drainage along the flowline of the existing curb and gutter accommodated with a new drain pan that conveys the flows.

A roundabout drop-off is located near the main entrance of the CRC and can be accessed from either Aspen Road or Cooper Place. Parking for the CRC and sports courts is located between the sports courts and Aspen Road. Two hundred four (204) spaces are shown. A deceleration lane will be constructed on Aspen Road at the main entrance and long stacking distances for left-turning exiting vehicles is planned. A second vehicular access is located at the south end of the parking lot. Accessible spaces will be provided at strategic locations on the west and south ends of the parking lot.

Behind the CRC there is an existing parking lot for employees of the CRC, Senior Resource Development Agency, Boys and Girls Club, and Pueblo CSU Extension/4h. There is also space for storing equipment or supplies and a screened trash dumpster. The road connection between the end of Cooper Place and the parking in front of the CRC will need to be realigned slightly to facilitate the building footprint and turning maneuvers.

Sports Courts and Bike Park

A full-size basketball court is located south of the CRC. A mural wall will be a highly visible opportunity for art that supports the character of the park and CRC. The wall will also prevent basketballs from hitting the iron fence surrounding the Health Solutions campus and screen the buildings and parking areas beyond the fence. Eight pickleball courts can fit in the space south of the basketball court. Because noise associated with pickleball can disturb neighbors, this is an ideal location because it is more than 450 feet away from the nearest residence, which is across Aspen Road to the east.

A 14,000 square foot bike park for people of all ages and abilities is located between the parking lot and St. Charles Mesa Water District's gravel storage yard. This bike park could accommodate many types of wheeled devices if a pump track and other features were paved with asphalt, which is becoming more popular across the US. Paving portions of this area would also reduce maintenance associated with weed control and reduce wind erosion and dust migration.

Pueblo County Parks Maintenance Facility

The maintenance facility project includes retention of the existing warehouse and construction of a new building that is approximately 40' x 80'. The new structure is envisioned to be a prefabricated structure and have the character of a barn. The storage yard will be fenced with attractive security fencing and lights and will have shrubs around its perimeter to soften the fence line and screen views.



Pueblo County Parks Maintenance Facility Area

Pueblo CSU Extension/4H Elements

Pueblo CSU Extension/4H needs both indoor and outdoor spaces for their programs. A preliminary program and plan concept for a structure that could be built at the north end of the site near Roselawn was developed and is shown below. The shared spaces are located in the Community Recreation Center and special events could be conducted in the gym as well.

The area reserved for CSU Extension/4H is primarily on the north portion of the site, with the gardens located around the maintenance facility and along Cooper Place. This organization allows for construction of the park separately from the maintenance facility and Pueblo CSU Extension/4H project. It is assumed that the storm drainage swale daylighting and ecological restoration of that area would occur when the northern portion is constructed. The building footprint is shown on the Master Plan drawing as well as other spaces that can be constructed, programmed, and maintained by Pueblo CSU Extension/4H. These include parking areas for vehicles and trailers, a small corral for 4H classes, a multi-purpose grass area adjacent to the building for dog training and other classes, test plots for various agricultural crops, and xeriscape, horticultural, and pollinator demonstration gardens. A community garden area could also be provided for Pueblo County residents who do not have culinary gardens in their own yards or 4H participants.

New Construction	Area (GSF)
Lobby Spaces	750
Staff Offices	2,752
General Storage	1,500
Change Rooms	548
Multipurpose Meeting Hall	*shared
Catering/Teaching Kitchen	*shared
Multi-Use Workroom	2,690
Multi-Use Training Room/Classrooms (2)	1,600
Total Proposed Area	9,840

Pueblo CSU Extension/4H Building Program

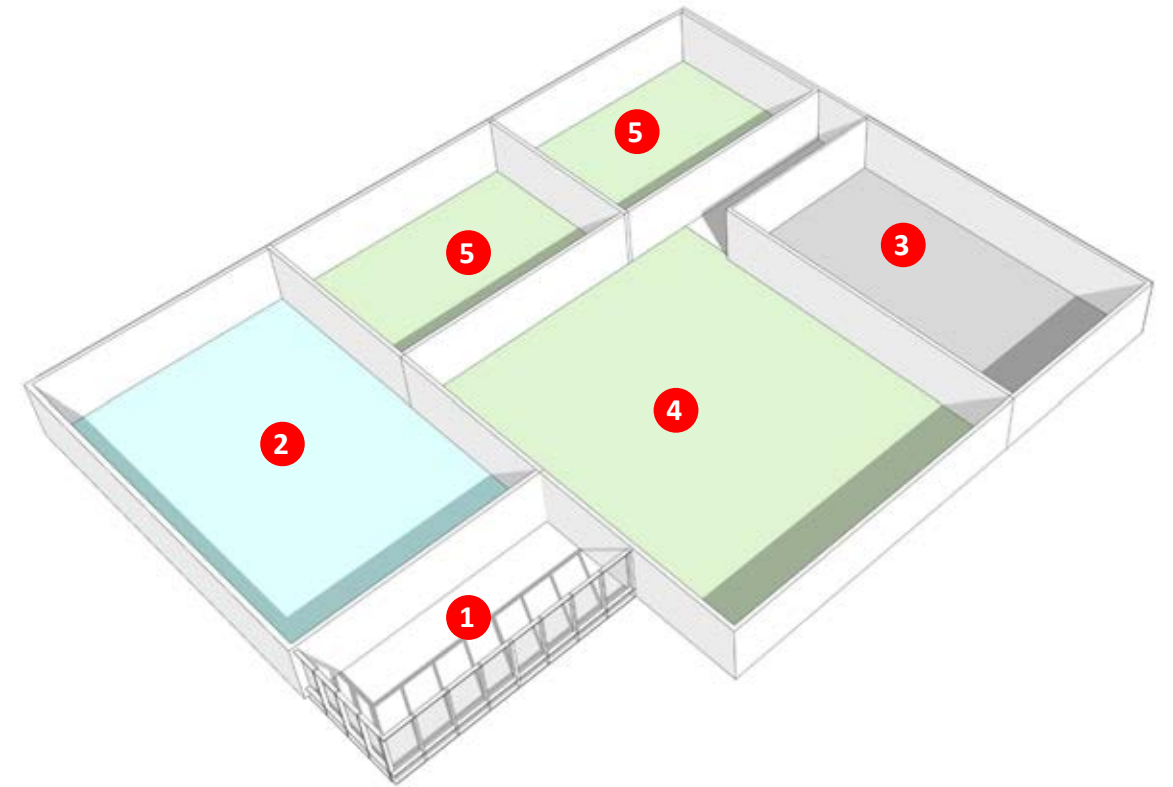


Pueblo CSU Extension/4H Areas

Plan Key:

Stand-Alone CSU Extension / 4H Building

1. Entry Lobby, Reception, RR
2. Staff Office & Support
3. Storage
4. Large Multipurpose Program Area
5. Multi-Use Training Rooms



Pueblo CSU Extension/4H Building Conceptual Floorplan

Landscape Concept

Turf grass is limited to areas that may receive heavy use, like near the playground, exercise area, and group pavilion. Native species will be used to restore a prairie landscape around the edges of the park because these areas will not receive foot traffic. Trees in the native areas will be irrigated to ensure that they thrive, providing much needed shade at the edges of walks, visual interest, and habitat for urban-tolerant wildlife. Drainage detention areas in the park can contain riparian species and wetlands, which help improve water quality.

Parking areas will have landscaped islands with trees to provide shade and break up large paved areas. In some areas these could be depressed in grade, using stormwater runoff for supplemental moisture to support tree growth. Shrub beds will be limited to key areas for focal points or screening to reduce maintenance associated with pruning and trash removal.

Water and Sanitary Sewer

With each phase of development water and sanitary sewer services will be extended to meet the requirements of the development. The site has two distinct areas: north and southeast. For construction within the northern portion, it is anticipated that a water main loop from Cooper Place to San Pedro Street will be necessary to provide delivery demands, water quality, redundancy, and fire protection needs. Sewer services will be direct from San Pedro Street to the restroom, and from Cooper Place to the CSU Extension/4H building and maintenance facility. The existing Pueblo County Parks and Recreation office building is already served with water and sewer, as is the existing old warehouse building. The Community Recreation Center (CRC) and other features on the southeast parcel will be served from South Aspen Road where a water line loop will be extended into the property and connect to the water main within Cooper Place. Service lines and fire hydrants will connect to this new internal loop line to meet the requirements of the expanded CRC and site features. Sewer service for the recreation center will require a main extension from S. Aspen Rd into the site, where a gravity flow pipe will be extended to the building.

Storm Drainage

Due to the divided configuration of the property, there are two isolated basins unique to each of the individual development sites. The northern parcel will consist mostly of landscape, park and existing roadway expansion for parking and roadway improvements. Imperviousness will be reduced with the design



Example of stormwater swale for runoff

of the area and various water quality structures, rain gardens, sediment basins, and other features are contemplated to be integrated within the landscaping to provide non-intrusive solutions that comply with Pueblo County drainage requirements. Stormwater will sheet flow to these facilities where they will be treated and discharge to the existing stormwater swale through the site. Improvements to the water quality will be a benefit to the site and community. Detention is not anticipated at this time due to the decrease in imperviousness, however a measure of detention can be integrated with the water quality facilities if required.

The southeast parcel will create a larger land impact with the development of a new building and parking lot, both of which increase imperviousness. Stormwater will surface drain to collection inlets, where it will be conveyed to a new water quality and detention facility at the NE corner of the site, adjacent to South Aspen Road. The new facility will accommodate detention requirements and replace the existing pond capacity, as well as provide structured water quality measures with access for maintenance as needed. The pond will outfall into the existing storm drain within South Aspen Road. A more detailed hydraulic analysis may be necessary for verification of the capacity of down-stream storm pipe to prevent the existing storm drains from surcharging. If required additional holding detention volume can be incorporated into the pond design to prevent negative impacts. Water quality measures (rain gardens, sand filters, etc.) within the parking lot are proposed to treat first flush and reduce

the water quality volume requirements within the proposed pond. The goal is to provide harmonious integration of storm water treatment with the site design so they are attractive landscape features that benefit from the concentration of water.

Electric Service and Lighting

Based on the divided configuration of the property there will be two separate and distinct metered electrical services. One metered service will support the north park parcel and all associated park electrical items/systems. The north metered service is anticipated to be rated 400Amps at 208Y/120V (three phase since it appears that three phase is available just north of the existing maintenance building) and will be connected to the secondary terminals of a new utility company pad-mount electrical service transformer. The service transformer will be fed via a new underground primary feeder. The new electrical metered service equipment will consist of a Milbank Metered Commercial Pedestal with an integral branch circuit panelboard and space for lighting control equipment. All lighting and equipment within the park site will be fed via underground branch circuiting.

The second metered service will support the south park parcel and all associated park electrical items/systems. The south metered service is anticipated to be rated 400Amps at 208Y/120V (three phase since it appears that three phase is available at the existing building service transformers) and will be connected to the secondary terminals of a new utility company pad-mount electrical service transformer. The service transformer will be fed via a new underground primary feeder. The new electrical metered service equipment will consist of a Milbank Metered Commercial Pedestal with an integral branch circuit panelboard and space for lighting control equipment. All lighting and equipment within the park site will be fed via underground branch circuiting.

Alternatively, freestanding pedestrian and parking area lighting could be individual solar-powered luminaires.



Example of solar-powered luminaire

PHASING, OPERATIONS, AND MAINTENANCE

This section outlines potential phases for constructing the project, describes operational and staffing considerations, and includes estimates for annual operations and maintenance costs.

POTENTIAL PROJECT PHASES

Five potential project phases have been identified and budgetary costs defined for their design and construction.

- Priority Park Improvements (\$4.3 million)
- Complete Park Improvements (\$2.1 million)
- Community Recreation Center and Sports Facilities (\$38.6 million)
- Pueblo CSU Extension/4H Facilities (\$7.1 million)
- Pueblo County Parks Maintenance Facility (\$0.58 million)

Priority Park Improvements. Constructing a functional park area is high priority because the area is lacking basic park amenities and the cost of renovating and adding to the existing gym to create a multi-functional Community Recreation Center and developing the eastern portion of the site along Aspen Street is much higher than funding that could be available in the near term. A park area for the neighborhood and other Mesa residents can be created in the northeastern portion of the site, between San Pedro Street and Cooper Place, and should be highest priority. The estimated cost for infrastructure, on-street parking along San Pedro Street, and basic park features is approximately \$4.3 million and could include:

- » Squash Blossom entry plaza
- » On-street parking on San Pedro Street
- » A walking loop and pedestrian connection to the existing Pueblo County Recreation Center
- » Play area with a shade structure
- » Shade trees
- » Open turf play field and natural landscape around the edges of the park
- » Sunflower Plaza, misting feature, and shade arbors
- » Roadway lights on San Pedro and some pedestrian lights
- » Water, sewer, and electrical infrastructure for future elements
- » Additional lighting
- » Restroom
- » Exercise equipment court
- » Additional shelters, benches, trees, and landscaping
- » Areas around the park that are not funded for improvements should be restored with native vegetation to minimize erosion and dust and to provide visual interest and habitat for urban wildlife.

Complete Park Improvements. Finishing the park would include the group pavilion/performance stage and Maize Plaza, more extensive pedestrian lighting, the smaller entry plazas, and modifications to Cooper Place for on-street parking, including lighting and landscaping.

Community Recreation Center and Sports Facilities. This phase would at a minimum include the building renovation and expansions, outdoor plaza and entries, access from Aspen Road, parking areas, storm water and other infrastructure, landscaping, and completing the pedestrian, vehicular, and trail connections to the park area and south to the Bessemer Ditch. The bike park and sports courts at the edges could be separate sub phases and are good projects for specific grants and partnerships.

Pueblo CSU Extension/4H Facilities. The lead agency for funding and implementing this project is the Pueblo County CSU Extension Service. It includes the main building, outdoor use areas, corral, nearby on-street parking, landscaping, walk connections, and demonstration plots and gardens.

Pueblo County Parks Maintenance Facility. This project is currently under contract with a design-build contractor.



Community Recreation
Center and Sports
Facilities

Priority Park
Improvements

Complete Park
Improvements

CSU Extension / 4H
Facilities

Pueblo County Parks
Maintenance Facility



\$4.3 million

(play area, shelter, crusher fines walks, infrastructure, San Pedro parking, trees/landscape, restroom, shade arbors, misting poles, and landscape)

\$2.1 million

(Cooper Place parking, group pavilion, paved walks, trees, road and pedestrian lighting, and landscape)

\$38.6 million

(CRC, access road and parking, infrastructure, detention, basketball, pickleball, shelters, bike park)

\$7.2 million

(building, parking, outdoor program area, corral, walks, ag test plots, demonstration gardens, community gardens, and infrastructure)

\$0.58 million

(new 40'x80' structure and fenced yard)

Potential Park Phasing Options



COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Below are operational and staffing considerations and potential operational costs of the renovated and expanded Community Recreation Center proposed in the Master Plan.

Operating Hours and Fee Structure

Most facilities that contain fitness centers have an extended operational day and offer some type of membership to access the facility (variety of types), daily admission fees, and punch card options. It is important to note that these types of fees would be specific to the use of the fitness center and the gymnasium. Individuals that wanted to use other components of the facility and/or wanted to participate in programs would typically not require general admission fees or membership. Exercise and other programs would have fees specific to their type and duration.

Potential Operating Hours:

Monday-Friday	6:00A-9:00P
Saturday	7:00A-7:00P
Sunday	Noon-7:00P

These hours could contract and/or expand and could vary by season based on usage patterns.

Staffing

To operate a facility of this type it will require a variety of full-time and part-time positions. The following full-time positions are recommended based on this specific facility.

Full-Time Positions

- » Facility Manager – responsible for the full operation of the facility.
- » Fitness Coordinator – responsible for the fitness center operations, staffing of the fitness center, along with staffing and development of group exercise programs.
- » Sports & Competition Coordinator – responsible for youth and adult leagues and programming that uses the gymnasium, outdoor basketball courts, outdoor pickleball courts, and associated green space.
- » Program Coordinator – responsible for a wide variety of youth and adult programs that could be hosted in multi-purpose classrooms, teen activity center, tech lounge, and adjacent outdoor spaces.
- » Custodian (1) – there would be a dedicated custodian for the facility.

Part-Time Positions

- » Building Supervision – this position would work early morning and evening hours during the school year and provide general supervision of activities taking place in the facility. The hours of this position would expand to have a daytime focus on weekends and during summer months, when peak programming was taking place in the facility.
- » Front Desk/Control Point Attendant – this position would serve as a monitor for a control point with access to the fitness center and the gymnasium.
- » Custodial – the building would operate 90+ hours per week. As such, part-time custodial staff would supplement the work of the full-time custodian in the evening hours and through the weekends.
- » Maintenance – it is anticipated that minor maintenance responsibilities would be absorbed by other staff and supplemented with a variety of contracts dependent on facility needs over time.

Program Delivery

It is anticipated that the facility would use a tiered model of delivering programs to the community. In that tiered model there would be part-time staff instructors that were employees of the County for programs like summer camps, leagues, fitness classes, etc. The other tier to this model would be contract instruction. As programs became more sophisticated contract instructors would be used and revenue generation would be split 70/30 between the instructor and the County.

The following are types of programs that could be offered in the areas of the building.

Gymnasium

- Sport Programming
- Birthday Parties
- Leagues
- Rentals

Tech Lounge

- Continuing Education Classes
- Multi-Generational Classes
- ESL

Teen Activity Center

- Teen Focus Programming After School
- Senior Focused Programming During Day

Multipurpose Meeting Hall

- Rentals
- Group Exercise
- Civic Meetings
- Non-Profit Gatherings
- Youth, Adult, Senior Programming

Catering/Teaching Kitchen

- Support Rentals
- Healthy Cooking/Living Classes

Fitness Center

- Small Group Training
- Individual Training
- Self-Guided Exercise

Group Exercise Studio

- Group Exercise Classes
- Dance
- Meetings
- Rentals

Multi-Use Classrooms

- Multiple Program Options



Estimated Cost of Operations

With these assumptions, combined with the concept that the County is operating the facility, the estimated annual operating cost of the facility could be \$500,000-\$650,000 in 2023 dollars. Given the population of the County, income levels, and the concept of making this facility accessible to maximize participation within the neighborhood, the facility could potentially recover 15-20% of its operating costs for a total of \$75,000 to \$130,000, requiring income of \$425,000 to \$520,000 annually from other sources.

PARK OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Below are operational and staffing considerations and potential operational costs of a new park and sports facilities proposed in the Master Plan.

Operating Hours and Fee Structure

The official operating hours for the park will be 6 am to 9 pm. Parks do not generate significant revenue with facilities that are open for public use. It is anticipated that the individual small shade/picnic shelters will be free and available on a first come basis. The group pavilion, which has a capacity of 50 people, will be open and free to use except when it is reserved in advance. Fees for reserving large shelters vary across Colorado and typically range between \$75 and \$150 for 4 hours. Assuming that the group pavilion may be reserved 15 to 20 times during the year, it is estimated that between \$1,500 and \$2,000 in revenue may be generated annually. Some communities are charging to reserve use of pickleball courts because of the high demand. These fees can range between \$5 to \$10 per hour per court. To ensure that people of all income levels can participate, a fee is not recommended, and if charged, there should be a fee waiver for low-income residents.

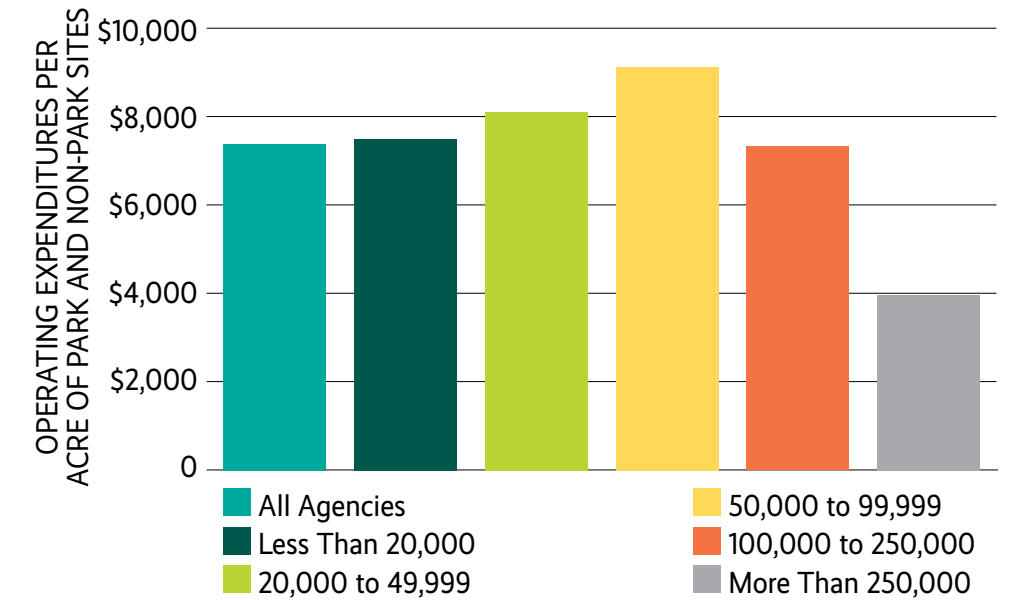
Program Delivery

Delivery of programs in the park and sports facilities can be accommodated through staff and paid instructors described previously for the Community Recreation Center.

Estimated Cost of Operations

To operate and maintain a facility of this type it will require additional staff, equipment, and materials. In 2023 the Pueblo County Parks and Recreation Division maintained approximately 200 acres of parkland with a budget of \$631,000, which is \$3,155 per acre. Based on this ratio, adding 12.5 acres of park and sports facilities would add a cost of approximately \$39,500 per year for this site. However, the sites that are currently maintained are basic and do not contain restrooms, outdoor exercise equipment, misting features, group picnic shelters, fenced courts, and several other amenities that are proposed for this park. Therefore, the cost per acre for maintenance of the St. Charles Mesa Park will be higher. The 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review report contains data on average operating expenditures for parks and non-park sites (such as recreation center grounds), shown to the right. Parks operations expenditures for the median quartile for agencies service populations less than 20,000 is \$7,495 and average of all agencies is \$7,388. Using \$7,400 per acre, the additional cost for operating and maintaining St. Charles Mesa Park would be \$92,500.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES PER ACRE OF PARK AND NON-PARK SITES (BY JURISDICTION POPULATION)

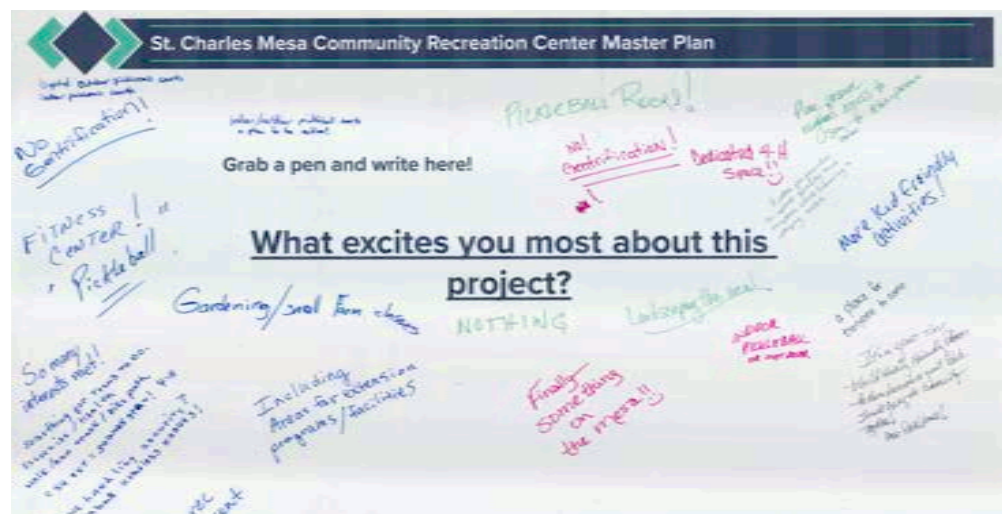


	All Agencies	Less Than 20,000	20,000 to 49,999	50,000 to 99,999	100,000 to 250,000	More Than 250,000
Median	\$7,388	\$7,495	\$8,106	\$9,108	\$7,323	\$3,970
Lower Quartile	\$3,521	\$3,692	\$4,250	\$5,434	\$3,082	\$1,601
Upper Quartile	\$17,668	\$23,506	\$20,047	\$20,564	\$14,045	\$10,629

[2023 NRPA Agency Review](#)



APPENDIX – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS



St. Charles Mesa Community Recreation Center Master Plan

Project Background | Participants

Take a minute to let us know what you think.

[Provide Feedback](#)

St. Charles Mesa Park and Community Recreation Center Character

This site is an area that has a long history associated with indigenous tribes, people of New Mexican and Mexican heritage, and families who purchased its acreage from the state and in turn on the basis of industry are still important today on the Mesa and in new facility to manufacture using solar cells is currently being constructed, which will power production using solar-generated electricity. The scenario should be designed to reflect these influences and set as contemporary to character to acknowledge their relevance to today. The plans and conceptual design should show these influences can be incorporated into design solutions, but the detailed design of the building and structure will be expected and defined when the project proceeds to the next level of design.

Sunflower Plaza

A project-specific website was developed and updated throughout the process with information, graphics, and a link to questionnaires for comments. Three rounds of community engagement provided feedback through in-person meetings and the online questionnaires. These tools increased awareness of the project, helped residents understand its scope and timeframe, and provided critical feedback to define the initial program elements to consider for the site and recreation center, solicit opinions on alternatives, and provide feedback on the preliminary preferred master plan and priorities for first phase investments.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ROUND #1 RESULTS

Public Meeting #1

The initial open house for the project was held at St. Joseph's church in October 2022 and had approximately 60 people attend. Stations with information on the project and project partners ringed the meeting room and attendees could ask questions regarding the project, express their ideas and concerns directly with staff and the consulting team, and complete the hard copies of the questionnaire. The opinions expressed at the meeting closely matched the compiled results of the first questionnaire.

Questionnaire #1

Questionnaire #1 had 142 respondents and was intended to assess the general level of support for a myriad of indoor and outdoor recreational features. A multi-purpose gym, running track, youth programs, fitness classes, and fitness equipment were the most favored indoor elements with 86% or more saying they were fantastic or okay ideas. Indoor pickleball/ tennis and other classes were endorsed by 73% or more of the respondents. Community wellness services and a computer lab were endorsed by a majority of respondents but there was more concern or dislike for these elements than the others listed.

Indoor Elements

Element	Fantastic	Okay	Total
Multi-Purpose Gym	75.6%	16.0%	91.6%
Youth/Teen Activities Area	67.2%	21.0%	88.2%
Indoor Walking/Running Track	64.7%	21.8%	86.5%
After School Programs (e.g. Boys and Girls Club)	63.9%	18.5%	82.4%
Fitness/Yoga/Dance Classes	63.3%	23.3%	86.6%
Fitness Equipment	61.7%	25.0%	86.7%
Indoor Pickleball / Tennis	57.1%	21.0%	78.1%
Gardening Classes	56.3%	23.5%	79.8%
Craft and Home Skills Classes	52.9%	25.2%	78.1%
Senior Lunches	48.3%	25.0%	73.3%
Pueblo County CSU Extension and 4H Classrooms and Offices	47.5%	25.4%	72.9%
Kitchen to Teach Cooking Healthy Meals and Food Preservation	47.1%	30.3%	77.4%
Community Meeting Rooms	43.2%	38.1%	81.3%
Community Wellness Services (e.g. Medical, Dentist, Counseling, Nutrition)*	37.0%	24.4%	61.4%
Computer Lab*	34.2	23.3%	57.5%

Note - Community Wellness Services and Computer Lab had the highest level of concern and questions.*

Support for outdoor elements was also strong with the highest level of support for walks, trails, flexible grass areas, places to sit, basketball, shade and picnic shelters, multi-purpose field, and areas for families and community events. Gardens of various types were supported by approximately three-fourths of the respondents and adventure skills/obstacle course, outdoor exercise equipment, and pickleball courts by about 70 percent. An outdoor classroom was also supported by 70 percent, but the number of people who think it is a fantastic idea was lower. Just because an element is not supported by 70 percent or more of the respondents does not mean that it should not be considered for inclusion in the design of the site. Alternatives that are prepared will further explore what may fit on the site and be compatible with other uses

Outdoor Elements

Element	Fantastic	Okay	Total
Loop Walk / Trails	70.5%	23.2%	93.7%
Playground	64.0%	24.7%	88.7%
Flexible Grass Area (Informal Play, Family Picnics, Lawn Games, etc.)	56.4%	31.8%	88.2%
Sitting Areas / Benches	56.3%	31.3%	87.6%
Basketball Court	54.5%	27.7%	82.2%
Small Shade / Picnic Shelters	53.6%	26.8%	80.4%
Large Group Picnic Shelters	53.1%	27.4%	80.5%
Multi-purpose Sports Field	50.0%	32.1%	82.1%
Area for Community Gatherings, Festivals, Celebrations	49.6%	26.5%	76.1%
Community Garden Plots for Public Use	48.6%	28.7%	77.3%
Horticultural & Agricultural Demonstration Gardens and Plots	47.8%	26.5%	74.3%
Family Games Area (Bocce Ball Court, Horseshoes Courts, Concrete Bean Bag Toss)	47.3%	34.8%	82.1%
Pickleball Courts	44.2%	23.9%	68.1%
Adventure Skills / Obstacle Course	43.8%	27.7%	71.5%
Outdoor Exercise Equipment	41.6%	29.2%	70.8%
Commissioned Art (Sculpture, Murals, Pavement/Wall Designs, Etc.)	37.2%	18.6%	55.8%
Skate/Wheeled Devices Park	36.6%	23.2%	59.8%
Archery Course	33.6%	27.4%	60.1%
Fenced Off-Leash Dog Play Area for Public Use	31.9%	25.7%	57.6%
Bike Skills Area or Pump Track	31.9%	25.7%	57.6%
Dog Training Area for 4H Classes	31.8%	34.8%	66.6%
Outdoor Classroom for 30-40 People	31.8%	39.1%	70.9%
Cultural History Education / Exhibits	28.3%	31.0%	59.3%
Small Multi-purpose Arena for 4H Horse Training and Livestock Classes	26.8%	34.8%	61.6%
Tennis Courts	24.1%	37.5%	61.6%
Futsal Court (Street Soccer)	23.0%	34.5%	57.5%

Maintenance Facility

A Pueblo County Parks Maintenance Facility had marginal support with 41.1 percent stating that it was a fantastic or okay idea and 9.8 percent stating they may support it but have questions or concerns. Thirty-six point six percent (36.6%) said they do not like it.

Comments

Open-ended comments centered around support for things for youth and multi-purpose amenities that would enhance the neighborhood and Mesa residents. Concerns were primarily focused on potential use by transient unhoused people, vandalism, graffiti, safety, perceptions that city of Pueblo youth are primary causes of concerning behaviors, potential gentrification and changing the character and culture of the neighborhood because of the improvements, and capital and program costs. Several people mentioned how great it would be to have a pool and others want to ensure that the indigenous community and culture is incorporated into the design and programs.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ROUND #2 RESULTS

Public Meeting #2

An interactive workshop was held in December 2022, which was attended by approximately 45 people. The meeting was structured as a workshop with breakout groups to provide feedback on two alternatives. Elements that were considered good ideas were documented and used later to develop the preferred plan.

Questionnaire #2

Seventy-six people submitted responses to questionnaire #2, which was one-half the number of responses of the first questionnaire. Fifty-two of the 76 respondents were Mesa residents: 45% live within unincorporated Pueblo County within 2 miles of the project site, and 30% live within unincorporated Pueblo County on the Mesa, further than 2 miles from the site. The survey reached people who had not participated previously. Seventy-four percent (74%) of respondents had not provided input at a meeting or online prior to this questionnaire #2.

This questionnaire explored how much people will use specific elements that were shown on the alternatives, and if they still supported the element if they would not personally use it. It also asked for opinions regarding which alternative they preferred and why they preferred it.

Support for outdoor elements was strong with the highest level of support for walks, trails, multi-purpose turf areas, children's play areas, seating, pickleball courts, large group picnic shelters and outdoor fitness equipment. Just because an element is in a lower percentage point does not mean that it should not be considered for inclusion in the design of the site because more than 76% of respondents thought all elements on the list were important.

Outdoor Elements

Element	Will use	Will not use but still important	Total who believe element is important
Walking Paths	85.9%	14.1%	100%
Multi-purpose Turf Area	64.6%	32.3%	96.9%
Children's Play Area	56.9%	38.5%	95.4%
Benches/Sitting Areas	81.3%	12.5%	93.8%
Pickleball courts	69.2%	24.6%	93.8%
Large Group Picnic Shelter	69.2%	24.6%	93.8%
Basketball Courts	56.3%	35.9%	92.2%
Outdoor Fitness Equipment	56.9%	27.7%	84.6%
Splash Pad	52.3%	32.3%	84.6%
Bicycle Skills Park/Pump Track	40.6%	42.2%	82.8%
Community Garden Plots	32.8%	46.9%	79.7%
Dog Park	52.4%	25.4%	77.8%
Horticultural Gardens	43.1%	33.8%	76.9%
Outdoor Game Tables	46.9%	29.7%	76.6%

A multi-purpose gym, community meeting rooms, fitness center, group exercise studio, and youth activities area were the most favored indoor elements with other elements not far behind. Interestingly, while a majority of respondents would not use a multi-generational lounge, 81% thought it was still important to provide.

Indoor Elements

Element	Will use	Will not use but still important	Total who believe element is important
Multi-Purpose Gym	79.4%	19.0%	98.4%
Community meeting room/Special event space	60.3%	36.5%	96.8%
Fitness Center & Equipment	73.0%	22.2%	95.2%
Group Exercise Studio	73.0%	20.6%	93.6%
Youth Activities Area (Games, Social Spaces)	50.8%	41.3%	92.1%
Indoor Running Track	54.0%	34.9%	88.9%
Enrichment Classrooms for Learning & Crafts	55.6%	31.7%	87.3%
Teaching Kitchen (Cooking, Classes)	57.1%	28.6%	85.7%
Multi-generational lounge with technology, printers, large TV screens, & wifi	38.1%	42.9%	81%

Maintenance Facility

A Pueblo County Parks Maintenance Facility had 90% percent of respondents stating that they did not have concerns with it being located on the project site. Comments regarding concerns included safety, lighting, and the belief that this could be located elsewhere.

Opinions Regarding the Alternatives

Thirty percent (30%) of respondents preferred Concept A, while 50% of respondents preferred Concept B. Twelve percent (12%) of respondents liked a combination of both A & B. Eight percent (8%) of respondents claimed neither were preferred.

Among those who preferred Concept A, respondents claimed they liked the bigger community gardens, 4H building, and bringing “county to the city.” Respondents generally liked Concept A layout.

Among those respondents in support for Concept B, the prevailing thought was that Concept B allowed for more “open area/field area.” Respondents also preferred the location of the pickleball courts, primarily due to their concern about the noise generated by pickleball.

Comments

Open-ended comments centered around support for the overall project and its improvement to the area. Many respondents also voiced a desire for a pool within the project site.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ROUND #3 RESULTS

Public Meeting #3

An interactive workshop was held January 16, 2024n and attended by approximately 25 people. The meeting was advertised via the email distribution list held by the Pueblo County Parks and Recreation Department and flyers were available in English and Spanish at the recreation facilities on the Mesa. A variable message sign on Aspen Street also advertised the meeting. The meeting included a presentation of the preferred master plan and proposed phasing and costs. Everyone in attendance was very supportive of the plan with a large majority who had specific interest in the pickleball courts and many who did not live on the Mesa. Everyone hoped that the county could find adequate funding to construct the initial phases of the project as soon as possible.

Questionnaire #3

Questionnaire #3 was publicized on the website and meeting flyers and was available online through January 2024. The poll included a simple question on the level of support for the preferred master plan as well as a comment box where people could write in their specific comments. Just 16 individuals completed the questionnaire (one completed it twice), which is significantly less than the first two questionnaires. One respondent lives within 2 miles of the site, three live on the Mesa further than 2 miles away, and the rest live in the City of Pueblo or other areas within unincorporated Pueblo County. Six of the 16 respondents had been involved in the planning process either at meetings or by filling out earlier questionnaires – 10 were new participants in the process.

The results of this questionnaire mirrored the comments received at public meeting #3, with most people expressing a high level of support for the master plan and a desire for pickleball courts. Several written comments included a request for restrooms close to the pickleball courts. One respondent is not happy with the amount of time that is currently allocated for pickleball in the gymnasium.