Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Strategic Plan

February 2023
January 13, 2023

Denver Residents:

I am pleased to present to you Denver Parks and Recreation’s Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Strategic Plan, a 20-year vision and actionable plan to diversify our current recreation offerings and provide new and innovative ways to access the outdoors. Our goal is that all Denverites find a way to enjoy outdoor recreation and its many benefits so that they can live long, healthy, and happy lives.

We know that many people are attracted to Denver by the city’s role as a gateway to outdoor adventure. But participating in outdoor adventure is difficult for many who live here, whether it be the high cost of some of the activities, a lack of time, or simply not knowing where to begin. This plan guides how Denver Parks and Recreation (DPR) will respond to these barriers, with particular attention to traditionally under-resourced communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic changed many things about our lives, and this is certainly true when it comes to outdoor adventure. Nationally, more people are participating in outdoor adventure. DPR saw increased usage in our beloved urban and mountain parks. In 2019, DPR’s Outdoor Recreation programming served 14,000 residents. In 2022, that programming served more than 22,000 residents. This plan will help us respond to the increased demand for outdoor adventure by enhancing neighborhood park amenities, enabling us to meet residents where they live and provide opportunities that reflect how people want to recreate.

The plan challenges us to reach residents in a variety of ways, whether it’s providing access to different skill levels, rethinking how we provide programs, or offering exciting city-wide outdoor adventure hubs that elevate these popular activities in Denver and the region.

The implementation of the Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Strategic Plan has already begun! A number of our neighborhood and regional parks have recently been improved with adventure-inspired sport amenities, such as a bicycle pump track at Montbello Central Park and wavy walks at both City Park and Bible Park, which are great for young children to begin enjoying adventurous biking. Recently completed park master plans have also embraced opportunities for outdoor adventure, such as the incorporation of a mountain bike skills course at Bear Creek Park and enhanced features for wildlife observation at Heron Pond/Heller-Carpio-Sanguinette Park. We know this is only the beginning and look forward to continuing to integrate more adventure into our work.

Thank you to the many residents who participated in this planning process. We were blown away by your involvement, which included hearing from more than 6,000 Denverites. We hope that you continue to follow this plan and stay involved in the projects that energize you and your families and friends.

Sincerely,

Allegra “Happy” Haynes
Executive Director, Department of Parks and Recreation
City and County of Denver
# Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Master Plan

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Introduction

With more than 300 days of sunshine per year and the Rocky Mountains as its backyard, Denver is the perfect place to recreate in the outdoors. More than 700,000 people call Denver home, and more people are flocking to the Mile High City every year. In 2019, US News & World Report ranked Denver as the second-best place to live in the country. While there are many factors that contribute to Denver’s popularity, access to outdoor recreation remains at the top of the list.

Denver is uniquely situated to provide outdoor recreation. Historically, however, that opportunity has not been evenly shared. Ensuring access to the outdoors is available and welcoming for all Denverites is especially important now, as there has been a significant increase in demand for outdoor recreation in recent years. It remains now, more than ever, crucial for Denver to champion initiatives that equitably enhance outdoor adventure and alternative sports opportunities.

The primary intent of the Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Strategic Plan is to provide a road map for Denver Parks and Recreation (DPR) to enhance access to outdoor recreation through improvements to and expansion of the assets and programs already offered throughout Denver and the Denver Mountain Parks. The plan focuses on existing outdoor adventure infrastructure and programs, future enhancements to the system, and ways to support outdoor adventure programming through marketing and partnerships. For the purposes of this plan, programming refers to facilitated programs that are organized and require registration.

The Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Strategic Plan builds upon the vision in Denver’s Game Plan for a Healthy City. The Game Plan established a 20-year strategic framework for DPR to diversify current recreation offerings so that Denverites can live long, healthy, and happy lives. The Game Plan sets goals to create parks, gathering places, and activities that are easily accessed and equitable in every neighborhood. The plan lays out the need for enhanced access to parks and open space as critical in the face of population growth and climate change. The planning process revealed, and this resulting plan demonstrates, the need to approach access from a variety of understandings. This plan is not simply a list of future construction projects but presents a holistic vision for how the right complement of park amenities, large-scale attractions, new or expanded recreation programs, tailored communications, and innovative partnerships are essential to successfully improving access to outdoor adventure.

In line with Game Plan, this master plan is an opportunity to identify new and innovative approaches to connect people with the outdoors. Throughout the plan, emphasis and priority is given to increasing access for historically under-resourced communities.
Why Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports?

Outdoor adventure and alternative sports (OAAS) are defined throughout this plan as activities offered by municipal parks and recreation agencies that emphasize being in the great outdoors whether in the city or mountains. Outdoor adventure can be exhilarating or passive and provides unique challenges at various levels for different participants. These activities may or may not be organized or facilitated, and they do not represent team sports or traditional playgrounds. These activities have an experiential aspect. These activities also embody the quintessential Colorado outdoor experience.

DPR’s current outdoor recreation programs include popular year-round offerings from organized group hikes to guided snowshoe excursions. These programs are inclusive of all ages, providing youth, adult, and senior outdoor recreation opportunities. In 2022 alone, 21,984 Denverites enrolled in DPR’s outdoor recreation programs.

In recent years, demand for OAAS has been at an all-time high nationwide. A 2021 national survey by the Physical Activity Council shows that traditional sports participation has seen a 5 percent decline between 2016 and 2021, while outdoor sport participation has increased 5 percent in that same period. COVID-19 ushered in unprecedented traditional and nontraditional outdoor sport participation levels. Among many activities, roller skating and rollerblading are seeing a resurgence in popularity. Skate parks are similarly in higher demand. In Colorado, new climbers are being drawn to the sport, allowing for new climbing areas to develop, and an increasing demand for climbing gyms. Stand up paddle boarding is popular at local lakes and streams while river surfing is trendy at many Colorado whitewater waves.

As people continue to discover new ways to enjoy the outdoors, there is more demand for spaces meant to accommodate these outdoor adventure activities alongside traditional park activities. The 2021 Outdoor Participation Trends Report, commissioned by the Outdoor Foundation, revealed that in 2020, 53 percent of Americans ages 6 and over participated in outdoor recreation at least once, the highest participation rate on record. Remarkably, 7.1 million more Americans participated in outdoor recreation in 2020 than in the year prior.

Data source: 2021 Outdoor Participation Trends Report by Outdoor Foundation

Benefits of Outdoor Adventure

Outdoor adventure activities provide exciting alternatives to traditional fitness for people to get fresh air and enjoy the associated benefits of recreating outdoors.

Physical Health Benefits
Research shows that regular outdoor activity positively impacts physical wellness. OAAS can lower blood pressure, decrease chronic pain, and contribute to weight loss. Outdoor activity can also reduce the risk of diseases including diabetes, certain cancers, osteoporosis, and cardiovascular disease such as asthma. A 2009 study in the *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration* found a correlation between access to outdoor recreational spaces and a decrease in obesity based on physical activity levels.6 Outdoor adventure activities provide tremendous physical benefits by increasing activity levels through opportunities that many consider more fun than traditional exercise. Studies show that these healthy behaviors associated with outdoor adventure have the potential to become lifelong habits.9

Mental Health Benefits
There are numerous mental health benefits related to OAAS, which have been proven to boost mood, reduce stress, and fight anxiety and depression. Fifty-five percent of Americans report feelings of stress daily and spending just 20-30 minutes outside per day has been proven to reduce stress levels. Studies find that spending time in a natural setting improves both mood and self-esteem, and that people struggling with mental illness may experience significant increases in self-esteem and a reduction in depression symptoms after being active in nature.10 Outdoor adventure can also break down mental barriers and help ease newcomers into exercise habits. Unlike some traditional fitness regimens, outdoor adventure allows participants to focus on the activity and experience of being in nature. Overall, OAAS can leave individuals feeling mentally and physically rejuvenated.

Interpersonal Connections
OAAS enable people to unite with their communities and build strong bonds to other people and places. Increased access to OAAS supports strong community connections through group setting activities where it is necessary to interact and work together such as rock climbing and ropes courses. This leads to various interpersonal benefits including enhanced communication abilities and leadership skill development.11

Enhanced Stewardship
OAAS build connection to the natural world and improves people’s understanding of the environment, helping to foster stewardship and support for conservation efforts. Outdoor recreation participation studies have shown that these enhanced connections to nature through adventure activities create a sense of individual stewardship and environmental responsibility.12 Outdoor adventure activities are also an important tool for environmental education. Nature-based sports and activities have the potential to enhance pro-environmental behavior in the context of situated and experiential learning.13

Economic Benefits
OAAS provide economic benefits to Colorado. A study by Colorado Parks and Wildlife reported that outdoor recreation was responsible for 10 percent of Colorado’s GDP in 2017.14 Job creation is also an enormous benefit of increased investment in outdoor recreation. Outdoor recreation in Colorado creates nearly four times as many direct jobs as the oil and gas industry and the mining industry combined.15 An additional study by The Trust for Public Land found that for every $1 million invested in parks, trails, rivers, open spaces, recreation amenities, and wildlife, 17.2 jobs were created.16 The associated financial return of specific OAAS investments will require further studies, but capitalizing on the popularity of these activities can provide direct and indirect economic benefits for DPR, Denver, and Colorado, while creating jobs within the parks and recreation space.

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6. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3985517/
7. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6466442/
8. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3993816/
9. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6466442/#B3-ijerph-16-00937
16. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/59e905ce2278e7634ecf546c/t/5eb1b1d2f7d0b23e75c5a/1588705316681/GOCO-CTF_report_electronic_lores.pdf

12 13
Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports in Denver

Denver’s urban and mountain parks boast a variety of outdoor adventure activities for the city’s residents and millions of annual visitors. A diversity of natural resources and seasonal variations allow for participation in a wide range of OAAS. Colorado’s outstanding climate and features ensure people can participate year-round in the following categories:

- **Land activities:** Hiking, biking, climbing, and skating that take place on trails or urban settings, within the built environment, in the high peaks and on rock faces, or in natural landscapes
- **Water activities:** Stand-up paddleboarding, rafting, and kayaking that occur on lakes, creeks, pools, or rivers
- **Snow / ice activities:** Skiing, sledding, cross country skiing, and ice-skating activities that require snow or ice

See page 44 for complete list of outdoor adventure activities considered by this plan.

Existing OAAS Activities within Denver Urban and Mountain Parks

- 13% of parks offer snow activities
- 22% of parks offer OAAS activities
- 20% of parks offer water activities
- 45% of parks offer land activities

Existing DPR Programming and Partnerships

In 2022 Denver’s Outdoor Recreation programming served 21,984 residents and continues to expand its resources and programs. DPR provides extensive programming throughout the year, with a focus on land-and water-based activities from April through October and snow/ice-based activities from November through March. DPR also offers several programs that run year-round and involve multiple outdoor adventure activities. These include:

- Youth adventure programs
- Multi-day adventures
- Urban team building
- Environmental education
- Westwood gear library

Several organizations partner with DPR to help connect people with the outdoors and facilities managed and operated by DPR. These include national, state, and local organizations, nonprofits, and community groups.

Existing OAAS DPR Programming by Season

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APR</th>
<th>MAY</th>
<th>JUN</th>
<th>JUL</th>
<th>AUG</th>
<th>SEP</th>
<th>OCT</th>
<th>NOV</th>
<th>DEC</th>
<th>JAN</th>
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<th>MAR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Challenge Course</td>
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<td>Rock Climbing</td>
<td>Mountain Biking</td>
<td>Learn to Bike</td>
<td>Disc Golf</td>
<td>Camping</td>
<td>Kayaking</td>
<td>Canoeing</td>
<td>Stand Up Paddleboard</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skating</td>
<td>Snowboarding</td>
<td>Cross Country Skiing</td>
<td>Snowshoeing</td>
<td>Ice Skating</td>
<td>Ruby Hill Railyard</td>
<td>Echo Lake Events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Youth Adventure Programs
Multi-Day Colorado Adventures
Urban Teambuilding
Environmental Education
GOCO Generation Wild Programming
Gear Library
DPR System Facts

DPR has extensive resources including 30 recreation centers, more than 260 parks, and over 20,000 acres of urban and mountain parkland including off-street trails, parkways, and natural areas. The department provides thousands of programs and services annually and is considered one of the largest parks and recreation systems in the United States. DPR is unique from many other cities in having both an urban parks and a mountain parks system that position the city to create a model for OAAS in the Mountain West.

Urban Parks
The city’s urban park system encompasses over 260 urban parks spanning 6,000 acres and 5 designated natural areas. DPR classifies its urban parks into 12 different types. Of these 12 types, 3 are more likely to already include elements of outdoor adventure: regional parks, linear parks, and community parks.

- Regional Parks: Parks of 80 acres or greater that accommodate diverse uses. These parks are most likely connected to regional trails and often have access to natural resources such as rivers or lakes. Denver's regional parks are dispersed throughout the city and approximately 85 percent of regional parks already provide some variety of OAAS.
- Linear Parks: Parks that typically follow drainage ways or infrastructure, and include Greenway Park, the High Line Canal, Weir Gulch, Lakewood/Dry Creek Gulch and the recently completed 39th Avenue Greenway. Approximately 40 percent of linear parks currently provide a limited selection of OAAS or related programming.
- Community Parks: Parks that are typically smaller in size and provide fewer activities than regional parks. Approximately 30 percent of community parks offer OAAS.

Mountain Parks
Denver’s “backyard” - the Denver Mountain Parks system – covers more than 14,000 acres spread across five counties and a wide range of landscapes, ranging from 4,000 feet to 13,000 feet above sea level. Denver Mountain Parks include over 45 distinct parks, with over two dozen focused on conservation of dense forests, riparian areas, critical wildlife habitat, and watersheds. Over 15 mountain parks are publicly accessible with hiking and other low impact recreation encouraged. These parks, collectively, also offer extensive and diverse OAAS including individual and group programs.

Outdoor Adventure by the Numbers

- Nearly 20,000 acres of urban and mountain parkland
- Denver’s Outdoor Recreation programming served
- 260+ parks
- 21,984 residents in 2022
- 30 recreation centers
- 46 mountain parks spanning altitudes up to 13,000+ feet

Colorado’s outdoor recreation economy generates $37 billion in consumer spending annually and contributes to 511,000 direct jobs.
Planning Foundation

Equity
Equity in Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports

Recent studies highlight that despite overall national trends of increased participation, not everyone has equitable access to OAAS. The 2021 Outdoor Participation Trends Report\(^\text{17}\) indicated that the greatest participation in outdoor adventure was by affluent young to middle aged white males. The study found that 72 percent of 2020 outdoor recreation participants were white, unchanged from the year prior. Over the past three years, the Hispanic participation rate grew over 4 percent annually, Black participation increased just 1 percent annually and Asian participation fell 1 percent each year. Ethnic minority groups’ interest in OAAS and participation rates are growing yet Black, Hispanic, and Asian Americans remain underrepresented in these spaces. An additional 2018 national study by the Physical Activity Council\(^\text{18}\) revealed a stark contrast between low income (under $25,000/year) and high income (over $100,000/year) participants in terms of activity level. According to the study, 42.2 percent of low-income earners were inactive in the outdoors versus 18 percent of high-income earners.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that Denver is not immune to the nationwide outdoor adventure equity gap. While DPR does not have data regarding the ethnic background of participants in OAAS programs, a 2008 Denver Mountain Parks Marketing Support survey\(^\text{19}\) affirms that OAAS opportunities are inequitably distributed. Less than 2 percent of residents surveyed in the mountain parks were Black compared with an overall Denver population of 11 percent Black in 2008. Many people in historically under-resourced communities are participating in OAAS, but just as national trends suggest, they are doing so at a lesser rate than high income or white populations.

**DPR Equity Index**

Denver’s 2022 Equity Index identified neighborhoods of greater need where public efforts are being focused to combat a range of socioeconomic and public health concerns. DPR has similarly created a Parks and Recreation Equity Index for existing parks and level of investment in parks from 2009 to 2021. DPR’s 2022 Equity Index provides a visual representation of the neighborhoods with the greatest need for investment in parks.

The DPR Equity Index is evaluated using the following criteria:

- Park access
- Park investment
- Park acres
- Density
- Communities of color
- Youth
- Low income
- Health disparity indicators

The neighborhoods identified in the Equity Index are roughly in the shape of an “Inverted L” along the north and west areas of Denver. Prioritizing the “Inverted L” communities and gaps in physical access are integral to enhancing equitable access to outdoor adventure opportunities.

Beyond the availability of OAAS within the city, access to the Denver Mountain Parks has been inequitable. Many people living within the “Inverted L” lack the money needed for gear, the time required to research activities, and the ability to physically get to the mountains. One survey respondent wrote, “put adventure activities in places where people of color live,” indicating a clear support for increased access within “Inverted L” communities.

The Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Strategic Plan is one way that DPR can address the issues of equitable access to outdoor recreation head on. Using this plan as a framework, DPR can increase equitable access to a wide range of activities for a progression of skill levels, with the support needed to participate.
Recent Planning Context
Denver’s planning legacy has set the stage for the Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Strategic Plan. The Game Plan for a Healthy City and the Denver Mountain Parks Master Plan demonstrate DPR’s commitment to planning for an equitable future for Denver’s park system.

Denver Mountain Parks Master Plan (2008)
Created in 2008, the Denver Mountain Parks Master Plan is a strategic plan that examines the value of the mountain parks and proposes improvements to ensure a high-quality system. Equitable access to the Denver Mountain Parks has been a guiding principle for the system since the inception of the initial 1914 Olmsted Mountain Parks Plan. Several of the principles and goals in this plan support the creation and implementation of the Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Strategic Plan. These include “Refuge – Equity,” which states that all Denver residents, regardless of background, should have access to a mountain refuge, and “Wonder – Engagement,” which asserts that every Denver resident should have access to the wonder of nature in both the urban and mountain environments.

Game Plan for a Healthy City (2019)
The Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Strategic Plan follows the adoption of Game Plan for a Healthy City. The Game Plan cites “Limited Access to Nature” as one of the major challenges facing the city, bolstering the need for this plan. This plan aligns with Game Plan’s guiding principles: Every Drop, Every Person, Every Dollar, and Uniquely Denver.

The Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Strategic Plan also aligns with Game Plan’s pillars to create a healthy and vibrant city with happy residents. Those principles include:

- Adapt: Adapt to the changing climate and limited resources to maintain Denver Parks and Recreation spaces and services for generations.
- Connect: Protect the culture and nature that is uniquely Denver to ensure it is accessible for generations to come.
- Diversify: Seek to create parks and recreation services that embrace Denver’s uniqueness through programming, outreach, and communications.
- Re-Invest: Utilize existing and new resources for funding, partnerships and collaboration that is focused on equity throughout Denver.
- Grow: Expand Denver Parks and Recreation to meet Denver’s growth and evolving community.

Additionally, the Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Strategic Plan supports the following Game Plan strategies:

- Diversify parks and recreation services to include a broader range of activities to reach more potential park user groups.
- Grow the existing park system and access to recreation opportunities to meet the demands of a growing urban population.
- Connect to Denver’s unique natural and cultural heritage through Outdoor Recreation activities that celebrate Denver’s unique land, water, and snow as recreational amenities.
Overview of Process
Planning for the future of OAAS began in the summer of 2021 and continued through the fall of 2022.

The first phase of work included an exploration of DPR’s existing outdoor adventure system. Extensive research was done related to outdoor adventure trends and comparable peer cities. Methods included evaluating past parks and recreation planning efforts, analyzing current land, water, and snow/ice adventure activities offered in urban and mountain parks, compiling a needs assessment report, establishing a technical advisory committee, soliciting stakeholder feedback, and assembling an outdoor adventure peer cities and trends report.

The second phase, which started in the fall of 2021, included the first set of public engagement initiatives. The first two public meetings were conducted virtually. Two surveys were administered online as well. The first survey sought feedback around current use and future desires related to OAAS and existing barriers to access. The second survey further evaluated barriers to entry and the likelihood of participation in certain initiatives to mitigate these barriers, such as a low-cost shuttle to the mountain parks. The survey also sought feedback about specific activity type preferences. Participants were asked to rank several types of land activities according to their preferences, including archery, biking activities, challenge courses, disc golf, equestrian activities, rock climbing, skateboarding, urban bungee jumping, and zip lining. This community input directly influenced the development of project focus areas and strategies. This phase involved several stages of visioning and iterating with DPR leadership.

The last phase, which began in the spring of 2022, included the final set of public engagement initiatives. A final public meeting, also conducted virtually, helped the project team solidify the project focus areas, goals, and strategies. During this stage the implementation considerations were further refined, and partnership opportunities were identified.
What We Heard

The Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Strategic Plan’s robust outreach approach collected input from more than 6,000 diverse voices. The engagement process involved external stakeholders, department staff, and community members to identify key priorities and attitudes. Overall, stakeholders indicated strong support for increased access to outdoor adventure opportunities.

Engagement by the Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Meeting</th>
<th>294 attendees</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Meeting 1</td>
<td>105 English speakers, 17 Spanish speakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Meeting 2</td>
<td>98 English speakers, 21 Spanish speakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Meeting 3</td>
<td>46 English speakers, 7 Spanish speakers</td>
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<td>Surveys</td>
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<td>Survey 1</td>
<td>2,887</td>
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<td>Survey 2</td>
<td>3,331</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stakeholder Meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical Advisory Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parks &amp; Recreation Advisory Board</td>
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<td>DPR Stakeholders</td>
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<td>Westwood Family Nature Club</td>
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<td>Colorado Whitewater Board</td>
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<td>Mayor’s Youth Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Directly Reached</td>
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Social Media

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<th>Accounts Reached</th>
<th>Impressions</th>
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<td>31</td>
<td>65,872</td>
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Community Impressions:
The engagement efforts proved that there is strong public support for expanded OAAS in Denver. Overall impressions indicate that barriers to entry and lack of awareness around offered programming directly impact current participation levels, with lack of equipment cited as the primary barrier to participating in outdoor adventure. A clear desire emerged for a varied and progressive continuum of opportunities, from neighborhood activities to regional adventure attractions. Continued work with partners to deliver programming was an aspiration among many stakeholders. Additional impressions include a desire to prioritize investment in old infrastructure alongside building new. Several more detailed takeaways from the surveys and public meetings, including survey statistics and qualitative comments, have been integrated throughout the plan to support the various focus areas and strategies.
Access to OAAS is a critical cultural and recreational amenity for Denver, drawing national acclaim. These opportunities have historically been inequitably distributed and accessed.

To increase participation of diverse outdoor adventurers, DPR will provide a variety of outdoor opportunities for families and people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. This progressive continuum of activities will allow all Denverites to feel safe and confident engaging in outdoor activities while making these activities part of their everyday lives.

DPR must stay flexible and willing to adapt to trends as it remains committed to enhancing equitable access to outdoor adventure within Denver’s park system.
Approach

It became clear through community and stakeholder conversations that a comprehensive set of strategies at various scales must be in place to help people feel safe, comfortable, and welcome. Combining person-scale, neighborhood-scale, and system-scale strategies creates a holistic framework for adventure planning that leads to improved access for the greatest number of Denverites, especially in historically under-resourced communities.

Person Scale: Strategies that impact Denverites on an individual level. These are approaches that directly lower barriers to participation, including educational opportunities and access to gear.

Neighborhood Scale: This approach implements neighborhood-level improvements including increased programming and infrastructure in parks. This scale of initiative makes outdoor adventure opportunities part of everyday life.

City & Mountain Park Scale: Strategies that provide large-scale regional adventure opportunities. These interventions are likely to be singular in nature and providing access to them for all Denverites will be important to ensure equity in opportunity.

Progressive Programming

The concept of progressive programming aims to provide different levels of OAAS throughout Denver. Entry-level opportunities are important for developing skills and gaining confidence, and DPR can support these activities with instruction and equipment.

As an example, biking can be thought of along a continuum of skills and challenges, from learning basic bike handling and traffic safety, to adventuring on pump tracks, to biking on trails in the mountain parks. This continuum helps create appropriate, comfortable outdoor recreation spaces for all ages and abilities, fostering enjoyment and continued interest.
Focus Areas and Signature Projects

Four focus areas structure the plan recommendations. Within each focus area, goals and strategies address priorities specific to that topic.

**FOCUS AREA 1: Increased Participation**
Enhance and increase access to outdoor adventure activities, programs, infrastructure, and partnerships so that all Denver residents can participate in a variety of outdoor experiences.

- Hubs in Urban Parks and Mountain Parks - p.54
- Water Based Adventure - p.55
- Snow and Ice Activities - p.56
- Neighborhood Park Adventure Opportunities - p.57

**FOCUS AREA 2: Progressive and Inclusive Programming**
Implement progressive programming and create inclusive environments to better engage youth, families, and people of all ages and abilities by creating outdoor recreation opportunities for all backgrounds and levels of experience.

- Entry Level to Advanced Experience Continuum - p.60
- Welcoming and Safe Environments - p.61
- Gear Library - p.62

**FOCUS AREA 3: Access and Transportation**
Improve access and transportation to provide a wider range of experiences, with a specific focus on making the mountain parks, urban signature projects, and the outdoor adventure activity hubs more accessible.

- Improve Options, Ease, and Efficiency - p.66
- Multi-modal Transportation - p.67
- Overnight Experience - p.68

**FOCUS AREA 4: Communications and Education**
Expand marketing and communications for outdoor adventure activities and programs to inform and educate users on outdoor adventure within DPR’s system.

- Expand Outdoor Adventure Communications - p.72
- Reflective Communications - p.73
- Education - p.73
Signature Projects

Through the planning and community engagement process the following projects were identified as transformative, city and mountain park scale projects for the future of OAAS in Denver.

BMX Hub
A BMX activity hub will create space for both progressive programming and large-scale events and competitions.

Skate Hub
A skate activity hub will become a destination for Denver’s growing skateboarding population along with other complementary adventure activities.

Echo Lake Activity Center
Enhancements at Echo Lake Park will create an all-season destination for land, snow/ice, and water activities in the Denver Mountain Parks.

Denver Recreation, Sports and Outdoor Adventure Complex
A centrally located outdoor complex will provide urban rock climbing and challenge adventure opportunities.

South Platte River Hub
A series of adventure opportunities located along the South Platte River will create an urban water-based activity destination and celebrate the river.

Aerial Tram to Lookout Mountain
An aerial tram connecting Golden to the top of Lookout Mountain will become a regional attraction, enhancing access to adventure opportunities.
Focus Areas and Strategies

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74 Signature Projects
General Introduction

Plan Structure

The Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Strategic Plan is structured around four focus areas. Each focus area has strategies and sub-strategies that are all designed to increase access to OAAS. Each strategy represents either a person-, neighborhood-, or city and mountain park-scale approach to achieve the overall vision.

Explanation of Icons

Each focus area is presented with its associated strategies. The following information is included in addition to the focus areas and strategies:

- **Case Studies**: Case studies are indicated as callouts throughout the focus areas to illustrate local and national successful examples.
- **Scale of Strategy**: Each strategy is categorized as either a person (P), neighborhood (N), or city and mountain park scale (C) strategy. The scale of strategy is indicated with an icon.
- **Priority Strategy**: Each priority strategy is indicated with a star icon. Every priority strategy has been incorporated into the 5-year action plan, which can be found on page 90.
- **Partnership Opportunities**: Strategies that are prime opportunities for partnerships are indicated with an icon. More information about partnerships can be found on page 96.
Focus Areas and Strategies | Adventure Activity Background

Adventure Activity Background

Hub Concept

What is an OAAS Activity Hub?
An OAAS activity hub is a dynamic place at a Denver park that supports one or more adventure activities. These places are easily accessible and ideally located near transit. Every OAAS hub has some level of support through equipment, infrastructure, staff instruction, programming, and/or partnerships. OAAS activity hubs can be categorized as an urban OAAS hub (one located within the city) or a mountain OAAS hub (one located within Denver’s Mountain Park system).

An OAAS hub offers essential core spaces for Denverites to experience outdoor adventures while integrating operational efficiencies for DPR. These OAAS hubs provide key infrastructure like gear, programming, larger adventure elements, and transportation connections not traditionally associated with regional, linear, or community parks.

Existing Activity Hubs:

There are four existing parks within Denver that are considered activity hubs including Berkeley Lake Park, Sloan’s Lake Park, Garfield Lake Park, and Ruby Hill Park. Ruby Hill Park is the most complete hub, and additional interventions will ensure it is a model for other hubs. The other three need more focus to define their hub activities and will need investment in related infrastructure. These existing hubs are concentrated on the west side of Denver and provide good access to those residents living within a 10-minute drive or 20-minute bike ride service area. Future implementation should aim for all Denverites to live within a 10-minute drive or 20-minute bike ride of an OAAS activity hub.

Existing OAAS Activity Hub: Ruby Hill Park Denver, CO

Ruby Hill Park in west Denver is home to an extensive pump track, a circuit of rollers, banked turns, and features designed to be ridden completely by riders “pumping”, generating momentum by up and down body movements instead of pedaling. The park also features a terrain park in the winter months, providing easy urban access to skiers and snowboarders who enjoy challenging themselves with these features. Established in 2007, Ruby Hill Rail Yard was the country’s first free terrain park based in a city. This dynamic park is well-liked by the community, with survey respondents stating, “I love the Ruby Hill rail yard and I would love for more areas like those around town.”

Key Ruby Hill hub attributes:
» Supports one or more activities (skiing, snowboarding, and biking)
» Activated seasonally
» Easily accessible and near public transit
» Volunteers staff the rail yard
» Free rental gear at the rail yard
» Active partnership with Winter Park Resort for the rail yard

Legend
- Activity Hubs
- 20-minute Bike Ride
- 10-minute Drive
- Parks & Open Space

PHOTO BY DPR

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### Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Activities

A diverse set of activities fall under the umbrella of outdoor adventure and alternative sports. These activities vary from needing little physical space or infrastructure, such as parkour endeavors or bird watching, to requiring ample space and infrastructure, such as downhill skiing or disc golfing. Each opportunity necessitates individual evaluation prior to implementation, but the following table provides a rough guide to size requirements and key implementation considerations.

#### Recommendations by Activity Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Category</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Size Requirements</th>
<th>Potential for Revenue Generation</th>
<th>Implementation Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archery</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>2 - 5 acres</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Consider safety and size of location; operating staff may be needed. Could require additional facilities such as parking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biking - Trail Riding</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>5 - 50 acres</td>
<td>Appropriate in mountain and large urban parks. Utilize existing topography.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biking - Pump Track</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>&gt; 1 acre</td>
<td>Loop designed to minimize pedaling through “pumping” action.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biking - BMX Race</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>2 - 5 acres</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Competition level, covered and lighted, higher operating expense. Dedicated operations and maintenance staff needed. Would require additional facilities such as parking, restrooms, and areas to spectate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biking - Skills Course</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>0.5 - 1 acres</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Focus on urban riding skills &amp; safety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird Watching</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td>Focus on enhancing habitat within parks. Could consider small scale infrastructure such as interpretive signage or blinds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bungee Jumping</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>0.5 acres - 1.5 acres</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Opportunity within mountain parks, potential opportunity within urban parks. Staff needed. Opportunity to pair with other OAAS activities. Would require additional facilities for staging, parking, and entry space.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camping</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>varies</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Utilize existing mountain parks and consider creative camping options (teepees, treehouse, yurts, etc.). Operational staff may be needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge Course</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>1 - 2 acres</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Opportunity within mountain parks and urban parks. Opportunity to pair with other OAAS activities. Could require additional facilities such as parking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climbing - Bouldering</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5 acres</td>
<td>Standalone bouldering elements. Easy to integrate into neighborhood and community parks.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climbing - Roped (Indoor) Hub</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>1 - 2 acres</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Operational staff needed. Requires facility with supporting infrastructure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climbing - Roped (Outdoor) Hub</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>1 - 2 acres</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Operational staff needed. Requires locating with supporting natural features for climbing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disc Golf Course (Tournament Level)</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>18 - 36 acres</td>
<td>Tournament level course, 1-2 acres per hole for turney level, multiple configurations per hole.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Education</td>
<td>Land, Snow, Water</td>
<td>varies</td>
<td>Outdoor classrooms with amenities such as seating, bathrooms, and trails may be associated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equestrian</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>varies</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Utilize existing mountain parks, expand opportunity within urban parks or through partnership with neighboring park system. Operational staff may be needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Water</td>
<td>varies</td>
<td></td>
<td>Consider how to stock existing ponds and streams, monitor water quality, and provide ADA access to fishing sites. Opportunity to integrate with mountain parks and urban parks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gear library</td>
<td>Land, Snow, Water</td>
<td>varies</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Operational staff may be needed. Library will supply gear rentals, training, maintenance, and washing and storage facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geocaching</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Opportunity to integrate with mountain and urban parks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice Skating</td>
<td>Snow</td>
<td>0.5 - 1 acres</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Requires a conditioned ice surface. High operating expense. Optional synthetic ice surface may reduce operating expense. Operating staff may be needed. Could require additional facilities such as parking and restrooms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Play</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5 acres</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Integrate into neighborhood and community parks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninja Warrior Course</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>1 - 2 acres</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Opportunity to integrate with existing urban parks. Could require additional facilities such as parking and restrooms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nordic - Skiing</td>
<td>Snow</td>
<td>varies</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Opportunities within existing mountain and urban parks. Requires maintenance such as trail grooming and signage. Could require additional facilities such as parking and restrooms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nordic - Snowshoeing</td>
<td>Snow</td>
<td>varies</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Opportunities within existing mountain and urban parks. Requires maintenance such as trail grooming and signage. Could require additional facilities such as parking and restrooms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orienteering</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunities within existing mountain and urban parks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paddling - Canoe</td>
<td>Water</td>
<td>varies</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Potential to utilize lakes and ponds within existing mountain parks and urban parks. Requires water quality considerations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Category</th>
<th>Size Requirements</th>
<th>Potential for Revenue Generation</th>
<th>Implementation Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skiing &amp; Snowboarding - Downhill</td>
<td>Snow, varies</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Potential opportunities within existing mountain parks. Requires maintenance such as trail grooming and signage. Could require additional facilities such as parking, lighting, and restrooms. Operational staff will be needed. Moderate north slope clearings ideal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skiing &amp; Snowboarding - Freestyle Terrain Park</td>
<td>Snow, 1 - 5 acres</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Potential opportunities within existing mountain and urban parks. Requires maintenance such as snow management around key features. Could require additional facilities such as parking, lighting, and restrooms. Operational staff will be needed. Utilize existing Ruby Hill Urban Terrain Park as model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slackline</td>
<td>Land, &lt; 0.5 acres</td>
<td></td>
<td>Coordinate locations for this opportunity with Denver Office of the City Forester.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sledding / Snow Tubing Hill</td>
<td>Snow, varies</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Opportunities within existing mountain and urban parks. May require maintenance such as trail grooming and signage. Could require additional facilities such as parking and restrooms. Operational staff may be needed. Utilize existing Ruby Hill Urban Terrain Park as model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree Climbing</td>
<td>Land, &lt; 0.5 acres</td>
<td></td>
<td>Coordinate locations for this opportunity with Denver Office of the City Forester. Consider purpose-built structures to minimize damage to park trees. Integrate signage and educational elements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Via Ferrata - Urban or Mountain</td>
<td>Land, varies</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Utilize rocky terrain to leverage steel cabling and runs safely. Consider locating one in mountain parks and one in urban park location if terrain allows.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wavy Walk</td>
<td>Land, varies</td>
<td></td>
<td>Small scale pump track experience catered to beginners and younger kids.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watersports - Wake Surfing</td>
<td>Water, varies</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Opportunity to integrate with Denver Office of the City Forester. Safety and water quality considerations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wind Sports - Sail Windsurf &amp; Kite Board</td>
<td>Water, varies</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Opportunity to integrate with Denver Office of the City Forester. Partnership opportunity. Safety and water quality considerations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yurt / Winter Hut Trips</td>
<td>Land, Snow, 0.5 - 2 acres</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Utilize existing mountain parks. Operational staff may be needed for yurt / winter hut maintenance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zip Line</td>
<td>Land, 0.5 - 2 acres</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Opportunity within mountain parks, potential opportunity within urban parks. Operational staff needed. Opportunity to pair with other OAAS activities. Would require additional facilities for staging, parking, and entry space.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Neighborhood Park Priorities

The following land activities were presented to the community during the engagement process to understand specific neighborhood priorities. These nine activities were distilled down from the overall activity types identified as OAAS by the city based on survey responses.

**Neighborhood Park Priorities by Geographic Area**

Each of the nine geographic areas ranked these same five activities as their highest priority:

- Archery
- Biking
- Challenge course
- Rock climbing
- Zip line

*Survey results for water- and snow/ice-based activities may be requested from DPR. These survey results are not visually represented here, but were considered in developing the plan’s strategies. Land activities are participated in more frequently and offered year-round given Denver’s climate, thus the land-based activities are visualized and shared here.

This map can be utilized when designing recommendations for parks or programming within these areas to determine which activity could be an exciting opportunity for the community.
Neighborhood Park Priorities by Demographics

The top 5 activity priorities varied between different ages, ethnicities, and income levels. The following overall trends emerged:

- Higher income and white survey respondents listed rock climbing as their highest priority activity.
- Lower income, Hispanic, and Black survey respondents listed zip lining as their highest priority activity.
- Women were most excited about challenge course activities while men showed more enthusiasm about biking activities.
- Youth listed zip line, rock climbing, and archery as their most desired activities while adults listed rock climbing, challenge course, and biking activities as their most desired activities.
- Survey respondents from the ‘Inverted L’ communities listed rock climbing, zip lining, and challenge courses as their top 3 desired activities.

Priorities Based on Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth</th>
<th>Adults</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Zip Line" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Rock Climbing" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Rock Climbing" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Challenge Courses" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Archery" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Biking Activities" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Priorities Based on Race and Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>White or Caucasian</th>
<th>Black or African American</th>
<th>Hispanic or Latino</th>
<th>Asian or Asian American</th>
<th>American Indian or Alaska Native</th>
<th>Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Rock Climbing" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Zip Line" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Zip Line" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Rock Climbing" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Archery" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Archery" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Challenge Courses" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Challenge Courses" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Rock Climbing" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Archery" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Rock Climbing" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Zip Line" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Biking Activities" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Archery" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Archery" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Challenge Courses" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Challenge Courses" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Rock Climbing" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Priorities Based on Income Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Less than $25,000</th>
<th>$25,000 - $49,999</th>
<th>$50,000 - $74,999</th>
<th>$75,000 - $99,000</th>
<th>$100,000 - $149,999</th>
<th>$150,000 or more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Zip Line" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Zip Line" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Archery" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Rock Climbing" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Rock Climbing" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Rock Climbing" /></td>
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<td><img src="image2" alt="Archery" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Challenge Courses" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Biking Activities" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Archery" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Archery" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Challenge Courses" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Zip Line" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Biking Activities" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Challenge Courses" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FOCUS AREA 1:
Increased Participation

Throughout the public engagement process, respondents who identified as living in the “Inverted L” communities cited “lack of opportunities near my house” as the second most prevalent barrier to access outdoor adventure, “lack of gear” was the first. Additionally, many people expressed a preference for local and neighborhood outdoor adventure facilities.

The following goals aim to enhance the spectrum of available OAAS from including everyday adventure infrastructure in neighborhood parks to creating large-scale regional hubs offering dynamic programs. The goals and strategies within this focus area capture the wide variety of activity types that Denver residents are interested in gaining access to, including land, water, and snow/ice based activities. Eighty-six percent of survey respondents within the “Inverted L” either loved the hub concept or liked it but also wanted outdoor adventure activities in their neighborhood parks, indicating great community support for expanding DPR’s hubs to provide greater access to these neighborhoods.

RESPONDENTS FROM “INVERTED L” NEIGHBORHOODS thoughts on the hub concept

- I love it
- I like it but also want outdoor adventure activities in my neighborhood parks
- I’m not sure
- I don’t like it and would not visit the hubs

RESPONDENTS BASED ON RACE AND ETHNICITY thoughts on the hub concept

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Love it</th>
<th>I like it but also want outdoor adventure activities in my neighborhood parks</th>
<th>I’m not sure</th>
<th>I don’t like it and would not visit the hubs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White or Hispanic, Caucasian</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish Origin</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indians or Alaskan Native</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or Asian American</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survey #2 February / March 2022

An outdoor adventure hub is a location within larger city parks or mountain parks that supports multiple outdoor adventure activities with gear, instruction, and transportation. What are your thoughts on the hub concept?
Focus Areas and Strategies | Focus Area 1: Increased Participation

**Strategies:**

1. **Expand and implement hubs as locations within urban parks and mountain parks that support adventure activities.**

   1.1. Expand existing activity hubs within urban parks to enhance the support for OAAS.

   1.2. Implement OAAS activity hubs within urban and mountain parks.

      1.2.1. Implement 4 to 5 new OAAS activity hubs within urban parks in geographically dispersed locations throughout Denver. Prioritize locations in historically under-resourced communities and within central and east Denver that would fill the existing hub gaps. Locate operational infrastructure within the urban OAAS activity hubs. Certain urban OAAS hubs can operate as travel and equipment bases. Key operational infrastructure could include indoor/outdoor areas, administration and office spaces, vehicle yards, programming, gear libraries, knowledgeable staff, and information centers.

      1.2.2. Implement OAAS activity hubs within the Denver Mountain Parks. Certain mountain hubs should operate as travel and equipment bases. Key operational infrastructure could include programming, gear libraries, knowledgeable staff, and information centers.

      1.2.3. Ensure OAAS activity hubs throughout the Denver Mountain Parks are compatible with the historic character of the mountain parks.

      1.2.4. Ensure adaptive adventure, inclusivity, and accessibility are included throughout all urban and mountain park OAAS activity hubs, activities, and parks. Activities, equipment, facilities, and staff should be made available in support of people with disabilities.

2. **Provide water-based activities that are in harmony with and support the efforts of Denver’s water quality and resiliency goals.**

   2.1. Expand water-based opportunities within Denver’s urban parks.

      2.1.1. Allow non-motorized boating in Denver. Eliminate requirement for permits for non-motorized boating. With the exception of Heron Pond in the urban parks, study and implement the installation of formalized entry points, boat launches, eco-docks, or other suitable infrastructure to encourage hand-powered craft on all Denver lakes.

      2.1.2. Improve shoreline conditions at Denver’s lakes to enhance water-based activities.

      2.1.3. Continue to provide and expand passive water-based recreational opportunities.

      2.1.4. Establish fishing docks in additional Denver parks. Docks should be ADA accessible with inclusive interpretive signage and sustainable fishing practices.

   2.2. Expand water-based opportunities within the Denver Mountain Parks, particularly fishing and paddling.

   2.3. Support water quality improvement projects and policies to allow for enhanced water-based activities in Denver.

   2.4. Establish water-based activities within the South Platte River that balance the ecological function of the river.

      2.4.1. Add kayak course along the South Platte River once water quality improves.

      2.4.2. Formalize put-in and take-out points for floating, including ramps, signage, and amenities. Prioritize locations that are close to existing parking.

      2.4.3. Create surf wave experiences to enhance the growing trend of river surfing. Prioritize a prominent downtown location, such as the South Platte River adjacent to the future River Mile development.

   2.5. Provide education about public health risks related to poor water quality and water-based recreation. While water quality is a long-term city priority, safe recreation in poor water quality conditions is possible in the short term with proper precautions.

**WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS**

The Denver Department of Public Health and Environment, in partnership with other city agencies, is currently addressing water quality through various improvement efforts throughout the South Platte River, Cherry Creek, and all other streams and lakes in Denver. Current recommendations prohibit swimming in city streams or lakes. Improved water quality will allow for enhanced accessibility to fishing, hand-powered craft, and passive outdoor recreational activities.
3. Increase access to snow-and ice-based outdoor adventure opportunities.

3.1. Provide snow and ice activities within urban and mountain parks such as cross-country skiing and snowshoe loops, sledding and tubing hills, ice skating, skiing, and snowboarding, as location appropriate.

3.2. Consider offering curling at ice rinks and frozen lakes in the mountains in the winter for intergenerational opportunities.

3.3. Explore a multi-season facility providing ice rink activities in winter and other activities during warmer months, such as roller skating, roller hockey and other activities that can be played in a rink.

3.4. Explore policy updates for cross-country skiing, sledding, tubing, and snowshoeing within certain areas of golf courses.

CASE STUDY: THE PAVILION – BEND, OR

The Pavilion in Bend, Oregon, is a seasonal ice and year-round roller-sports facility. The Bend Parks and Recreation department operates The Pavilion, which supports ice activities including ice hockey, ice skating, and curling, and roller sports including roller skating, roller hockey, and a skatepark.

- Visitors can pay a single visit drop-in fee or buy a season pass.
- The facility is available for ice skating party and roller-skating party rentals.
- The Pavilion is supported by a rental shop and a café, providing revenue opportunities for the Bend Parks and Recreation department.
- The Pavilion hosts “Sunday Family Skate” nights and “Cheap Skates” sessions to provide more affordable rentals and enhance equitable access to ice activities.
- The Pavilion hosts year-round events to activate the space including a winter solstice celebration during the holidays.
- Facility activated in summer through recreation leagues and camps.
- Cost in 2021 for open skate ranged from $7-9 depending on age (kids 3 and under skate for free), with skate rentals for an additional $3. Cost for the “Sunday Family Skate” and “Cheap Skates” events were $6 and included the price of rentals.

4. Incorporate small-scale OAAS within neighborhood parks to promote inclusive participation, focusing on entry-level experiences.

4.1. Build entry-level outdoor adventure features into playgrounds, such as wavy walks and climbing boulders.

4.2. Incorporate outdoor adventure infrastructure into neighborhood parks such as skate features, pump tracks, slacklining, single track bike trails, BMX features, parkour, ninja warrior, challenge courses, bouldering, and more.

4.3. Build OAAS recommendations into all park-specific master plans.

4.4. Incorporate outdoor adventure activities into nature-based locations: incorporate nature into outdoor adventure sites. Focus on creating holistic experiences and opportunities to encounter the natural world.
FOCUS AREA 2: Progressive and Inclusive Programming

This focus area concentrates on decreasing barriers to outdoor adventure by implementing additional programming, creating more welcoming environments, and increasing access to equipment.

Denverites of a wide range of ages, ethnicities, and experiences expressed many types of outdoor adventure needs and interests. In addition to wanting a variety of activities, Denverites also need activities appropriate to their skill level and opportunities to grow. A teenager who is looking to advance from an intermediate to advanced skateboarder should feel just as welcomed as an elderly person hoping to try disc golf for the first time. One survey respondent wrote, “It would be nice to have a set of outdoor adventures geared to seniors.” People with disabilities should be prioritized as well. Another survey respondent stated, “My child is disabled, so clear communication about available accommodations, and/or special events designated for fully accommodating disabled people would matter for anything with danger or distance.” This level of adaptability and flexibility for people with different backgrounds and abilities will foster an inclusive outdoor recreation system throughout Denver.

Additionally, survey respondents cited “I don’t have equipment to participate” as the primary barrier to joining adventure activities. One survey respondent said, “We are lucky to live near a park with the biking ramps, and also close to a park with disc golf. Those two sports are super unapproachable to me. Don’t have the gear or know how.” Improving access to gear addresses this barrier and is an important step toward creating inclusive environments for outdoor recreation.
Strategies:

1. Provide support for a range of outdoor adventure activity skill levels, or continuum, including entry, intermediate, and advanced opportunities.

   Note: Refer to page 33 for explanation of the progressive programming concept.

   1.1. Provide programming for group, family, and intergenerational participation such that it allows for various ages and skill levels to participate in activities at the same location. Activities may be different and have variability on the progression of difficulty.

   1.2. Incorporate adaptive elements and/or design into new outdoor adventure opportunities.

   1.3. Focus entry-level outdoor adventure features, such as wavy walks and climbing boulders, in neighborhood parks.

   1.4. Develop opportunities for intermediate and advanced skill development in regional parks, hubs, and mountain parks. These opportunities could include more advanced climbing features, bike skills infrastructure, BMX, and more.

2. Create welcoming and comfortable environments to engage with OAAS, specifically for BIPOC and underrepresented populations.

   2.1. Create outdoor adventure clubs and/or partner with community organizations already working with affinity groups to reduce barriers for underrepresented groups.

   2.2. Increase BIPOC and underrepresented populations among staff, especially among trip leaders and instructors. Consider scholarships to encourage BIPOC individuals to participate in leadership programs.

   2.3. Explore the opportunity to create full-time positions that lead to stable career paths for instructors, cutting down on training time, and allowing instructors to build expertise in certain program areas.

   2.4. Develop a workforce and/or mentorship program that focuses on recruitment, training, and hiring.

   2.5. Implement equity, diversity, and inclusion program facilitation training for DPR staff leading group programming.
CASE STUDY: GET OUTSIDE LEADVILLE!
COMMUNITY GEAR LIBRARY – LEADVILLE, CO

Get Outside Leadville! (GOL!) and Colorado Mountain College (CMC) partnered to create a gear library on the Leadville CMC campus. The gear library has been in operation since 2017 and moved to its permanent location on the Colorado Mountain College-Timberline campus in April 2021.

GOL! funded the gear library through a grant from the Great Outdoors Colorado’s Generation Wild initiative, a program which aims to connect underprivileged communities with outdoor recreation amenities.

The gear library is run by a small group of full-time staff and supported by CMC students filling part-time and intern roles. The library allows students in CMC’s two-year outdoor leadership program to get experience managing gear, run programming for the gear library, and gain confidence in the outdoor recreation industry.

» GOL! offers year-round programming in local schools, community programs, and school break camps.
» The gear library offers annual memberships rather than daily/weekly rental fees. This encourages the gear library to become more of a community resource than a rental shop.
» Cost for 2021 was $90 for an individual annual membership and $150 for a household annual membership. The costs are flexible for anyone experiencing financial hardships.
» The memberships are available to individuals living, working, or attending school in Lake County.
» GOL! is part of the national Outdoors Empowered Network, which provides better access and diversity in the outdoors by supporting gear libraries with outdoor leadership training programs. The network partners with gear makers and distributes equipment to gear libraries nationwide.

Focus Areas and Strategies | Focus Area 2: Progressive and Inclusive Programming

3. Expand opportunities for borrowing gear across the city and mountain parks with a focus on neighborhoods in the “Inverted L.”

3.1. Provide equitable access to gear libraries. Consider co-locating with outdoor adventure hubs and/or recreation centers.
3.1.1. Stock gear libraries with water, snow/ice, and land-based gear based on opportunities in nearby parks or hubs and community preferences.
3.1.2. Where possible, provide gear libraries with plumbing and electrical service to ensure their ability to wash gear and provide full services.
3.1.3. Provide pop-up gear libraries and programming. Mobile activity Recreation Rovers could change locations regularly, promoting equitable distribution of outdoor recreation opportunities and gear libraries. (see Focus Area #4, Strategy 1.8)

3.2. Provide gear-related educational sessions to teach people how to use and care for the gear.

3.3. Implement self-sufficient gear borrowing initiatives to cut back on staffing demands. Consider self-checkout systems for gear through a mobile app. Consider these systems for bike lockers, kayaks, and other outdoor gear.

CASE STUDY: PADL SELF SERVICE PADDLE BOARD RENTAL

PADL is a self-service paddle sport rental company that launched in Florida in 2019. PADL utilizes a mobile app to provide affordable and convenient gear rentals through self-service kiosks. The company claims to serve the same purpose for recreational experiences that scooter rentals do for mobility experiences. The app enhances access for everyone from beginners who are excited to try paddle sports for the first time to frequent paddlers who are looking for a more convenient way to access cumbersome paddle gear.

» The self-service kiosks securely store kayaks and stand-up paddleboards. These are typically located at high use public watersport parks.
» After users download the mobile app, they locate the gear at self-service kiosks.
» Once the user has the gear, the app tracks their ride statistics and charges by the hour.
» The PADL self-service kiosks are solar powered.
» In 2023 the cost for hourly rentals was $25 per hour. PADL memberships allow for unlimited access for $30 a month.
FOCUS AREA 3: Access and Transportation

Twenty-two percent of survey respondents indicated that a free or low-cost shuttle would provide the most support in getting them to Denver’s Mountain Park system, an incredible recreational amenity that remains hard to access for many. Increasing access to Denver’s urban park system and outdoor adventure activity hubs can be addressed through improved mobility and public transportation. DPR should pursue strategic local and regional partnerships with organizations well-versed in transportation systems and infrastructure. Additionally, encouraging the use of public transportation and providing shuttles helps to address limited parking and sensitive landscapes at many locations, especially in the Denver Mountain Parks.

Survey #2 February / March 2022
When asked “what would help the most in getting you to visit Denver’s Mountain Parks?”

overall 22% of respondents asked for

FREE / LOW COST SHUTTLE

Selected Free / Low Cost Shuttle as one of the main programs that would help them visit Denver’s Mountain Parks

Survey #2 February / March 2022
On a scale of 1-10, how likely would you be to utilize a low/no cost shuttle from a few recreation centers to the mountain parks?

- Overall Average 6.46

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood</th>
<th>Southwest</th>
<th>West</th>
<th>Northwest</th>
<th>North Central</th>
<th>East</th>
<th>Far Northeast</th>
<th>Central</th>
<th>South</th>
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<tr>
<td>Inverted L neighborhoods</td>
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<td>6.56</td>
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<td>Other neighborhoods</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Focus Areas and Strategies | Focus Area 3: Access and Transportation

Strategies:

1. Provide opportunities for affordable transportation, encouraging people to visit Denver’s urban park system and Denver’s Mountain Park system, especially existing and new hubs.

1.1. Offer a free or low-cost shuttle from recreation centers within the “Inverted L” to the Denver Mountain Parks to encourage more non-facilitated/non-programmed visits to the mountain parks. Include a safety education component for any shuttle dropping off people in mountain environments. Priority mountain parks for transportation include Echo Lake, Genesee, and Red Rocks.

1.2. Offer a free or low-cost shuttle between recreation centers and urban outdoor adventure activity hubs, prioritizing recreation centers in the “Inverted L.”

1.3. Continue to align DPR planning for facilities and infrastructure with Denver’s Department of Transportation and Infrastructure bike and pedestrian improvements, ensuring multi-modal access throughout the DPR system.

2. Promote multi-modal transportation options to improve access among outdoor adventure activity hubs.

2.1. Continue to align DPR planning for facilities and infrastructure with Denver’s Department of Transportation and Infrastructure bike and pedestrian improvements, ensuring multi-modal access throughout the DPR system.

2.2. Implement a mountain parks shuttle from the multi-modal hub at the terminus of RTD’s rail line in Golden, connecting to mountain parks. Consider aligning shuttle stops with the I-70 Corridor multi-use path and existing RTD bus stops.

2.3. Enhance first and last mile connections at RTD park and rides, including adding trails, bike lanes, and bikeshare or rideshare areas.

2.4. Provide rideshare stations with e-bikes and scooters at outdoor adventure activity hubs.

2.5. Partner with RTD to advertise the outdoor adventure hubs on buses, such as a banner campaign to let people know “this bus goes to Genesee” or “this bus goes to adventure.”

Note:
See page 79 for information about the Aerial Tram to Lookout Mountain, as this strategy is directly linked to this signature project.

CASE STUDY: JEFFCO PARTNERSHIP WITH LYFT

Jefferson County, Colorado, partnered with the rideshare app Lyft to provide affordable transportation to county trailheads. After an increase in demand for hiking and biking in the mountain parks due to the pandemic, Jefferson County Open Space experienced overcrowding at their trailheads and offered this service to incentivize visits.

» The rideshare program provided a $2.50 discount on customers’ fares to and from the trails. It also reduces parking demand at trailheads.

» The discount was activated by inputting a discount code in the “rewards” section of the app.

» The program launched as a pilot on June 28, 2021 and lasted until the end of 2021.
Focus Areas and Strategies | Focus Area 3: Access and Transportation

3. Increase access to overnight experiences within Denver Mountain Parks, offsetting travel-time barriers and enhancing outdoor adventure programs.

3.1. Secure city-owned lodging for overnight accommodations in or near mountain outdoor adventure activity hubs.

3.2. Create innovative, fun tent-camping alternatives within mountain park locations, such as teepees, treehouses, yurts, or hut stays. Consider locating at a mountain park hub.

3.3. Explore policy updates to allow for public drop-in camping and overnight backpacking in the Denver Mountain Parks.

CASE STUDY: TEXAS OUTDOOR FAMILY PROGRAM – STATE-WIDE

Texas Parks and Wildlife runs the Texas Outdoor Family Program which hosts affordable workshops at state parks to teach families camping skills.

- Each family or group of up to six people gets access to camping equipment including a tent, cots, lanterns, sleeping pads, and cooking supplies. Each family or group is responsible for their own bedding, personal items, and food.
- In 2022 a one-night workshop for each family or group up to six people cost $75 and a two-night workshop cost $95.
- Each workshop concentrates on a different activity type including kayaking, fishing, swimming, rock climbing, environmental education, and mountain biking.
- A pre-trip welcome packet provides education for participants before the workshop even begins.
FOCUS AREA 4: Communications and Education

This focus area addresses how and where DPR reaches Denverites and how DPR can provide educational resources related to outdoor adventure.

“I don’t know how to do the activities I would be interested in” was cited as one of the top three barriers for participating in OAAS by BIPOC survey respondents. Researching gear or where to recreate can be overwhelming and time-consuming as well. When asked “what would help the most in getting you to visit Denver’s Mountain Parks” nearly 40 percent of survey respondents answered, “knowing more about what activities are available.” One survey respondent wrote, “Que pasen la voz sobre los programas disponibles en nuestro idioma. (Spread the word about the programs available in our language.)” Innovating DPR’s communications and educational resources can help break down significant barriers to participation in outdoor adventure.

Survey #2 February / March 2022

When asked “what would help the most in getting you to visit Denver’s Mountain Parks?”

Almost 40% of the respondents said

Knowing more about what activities are available

Survey #2 February / March 2022

Preferred method of communication about DPR opportunities and outdoor adventure

- Email
- Social media - Instagram
- Social media - Facebook
- An app on my phone
- Email list (Nextdoor, RNO emails, etc.)
- DPR Activity Guide
- Digital boards / flyers at recreation center
- School announcements
- Staff at recreation centers
- Radio / TV advertisements
- Local newspapers
- Social - TikTok
- Other (please specify)

0 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80%
Focus Areas and Strategies | Focus Area 4: Communications and Education

Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Strategic Plan

**Strategies:**

1. Expand communications about outdoor adventure in Denver's park system.

   - **1.1.** Increase visibility and awareness of OAAS in urban parks and neighborhoods within the “Inverted L” through increased social media and local advertising at recreation centers, libraries, schools, and other community partners.

   - **1.2.** Expand communications, education, and awareness around the Denver Mountain Parks by encouraging activities in these locations through a seasonal promotion campaign.

   - **1.3.** Develop branding materials to enhance the identity of outdoor adventure within DPR.

   - **1.4.** Wrap DPR’s trailer and bus fleet with marketing information about OAAS.

   - **1.5.** Provide calendars on DPR’s website for outdoor recreation pop-ups and other drop-in activities.

   - **1.6.** Implement creative social media efforts to increase knowledge about OAAS. Prioritize a steady social media presence and include real time posts of photos and stories. Consider creating a standalone Denver Outdoor Adventure social media account.

   - **1.7.** Highlight non-programmed OAAS in the urban and mountain parks within the DPR Activity Guide.

   - **1.8.** Create a DPR Outfitter mobile unit (Recreation Rover) to provide mobile programming, gear lending, and outdoor adventure information. (see Focus Area #2, Strategy 3.1c)

   - **1.9.** Assess utilization of an existing platform to provide an interactive DPR Outfitter mobile app that includes DPR trail maps, outdoor adventure activity hub maps, mountain park trail maps, and more. The app should also include the level of experience required (beginner, intermediate, advanced), available activities, what to pack/bring, hours, and more information to increase the comfort level of participants.

2. Ensure communications efforts for OAAS are inclusive and reflective of the communities being served.

   - **2.1.** Establish marketing materials that reflect BIPOC communities; these should be multi-lingual, reflect the communities being served, and foster a sense of safety and comfort.

   - **2.2.** Promote OAAS within under-resourced communities by working with community partners and sharing information in a grassroots way.

3. Expand education related to OAAS.

   - **3.1.** Provide pre-adventure and pre-gear check-out workshops, in-person or via ‘how to’ videos, to educate users on safety and adventure activities, such as water safety, winter preparation, how to use common gear items, and more.

   - **3.2.** Expand communications around activities to include level of experience required, cost, equipment needed, risk management, and duration.

   - **3.3.** Enhance wayfinding for outdoor adventure: use existing or new maps, trail guides, or park signage to guide users to outdoor adventure amenities and hubs.

   - **3.4.** Include education about the natural environment, stewardship, water quality, Leave No Trace principles, and other important aspects of outdoor adventure in marketing and programming materials.

**CASE STUDY: GIRLS EARTH SKILLS**

The Wilsonville, Oregon, Parks and Recreation department hosts Girls Earth Skills, a set of workshops to teach girls survival wilderness skills while building confidence so that younger girls, age 9-13, can feel comfortable and confident in outdoor recreation spaces.

- This program operates as a week long summer camp.
- Works to build confidence so that younger girls, age 9-13, can feel comfortable and confident in outdoor recreation spaces.
- Wilderness skills such as shelter construction, fire building, tool and knife use, knots and ropes, navigation, and plant identification are taught.
Signature Projects

The public need and desire for regional attractions became clear throughout the collaborative planning and engagement process. The following opportunities, grouped into near-term and longer-term efforts, have been identified as marquee projects. Each project provides exciting programming at a variety of skill levels, optimizes resources, and enables operational and administrative efficiencies associated with clustering outdoor recreation opportunities. These projects present opportunities for partnerships and sponsorship; local, regional, and national events; tourism-related economic impacts; inspiration of, and engagement with, Denver’s youth; and a showcase of Game Plan for a Healthy City’s uniquely Denver guiding principle. These signature projects, in addition to the strategies for the Focus Areas, will help Denver achieve the overall vision of the Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Strategic Plan. Each project description includes considerations for implementation such as staffing, operations, partnerships, and potential for cost recovery. Three of the projects have been designated as potential near-term efforts that could start within 5 years; these projects include a timeline for what may be feasible to accomplish in this first phase of plan implementation. Moving forward, each project will require further study and a pro forma financial analysis for staffing and revenue opportunities, if applicable. While these endeavors will require significant cross-disciplinary efforts and investment, implementation of these projects complements and enhances the existing Denver parks and Denver Mountain Parks systems and positions Denver as the premier city for outdoor adventure.

BMX Hub (near-term)

What
A BMX activity hub will provide access to a BMX track and related infrastructure. The implementation of a formal race facility will create the potential to host events, generate revenue, and draw both regional and national interest, as a well-planned facility could host national tournament-level events. The hub will also include entry- and intermediate-level pump track opportunities to ensure a progressive level of programming at the site. The BMX hub will incorporate staff-supported instruction and access to gear rentals for participants.

Why
With biking activities consistently ranked in the top 5 activity choices throughout the engagement process, implementing a large-scale BMX hub in the short term would meet the public interest in increasing biking opportunities. Biking activities were the 2nd most popular choice for new activity hubs in the east, making east or far northeast Denver an ideal location. This location would also help fill some of the gaps between existing hubs.

Implementation Considerations

Staffing:
» Track operators to monitor the facilities’ daily operations and provide maintenance. Number of track operators dependent on the number of events and operational program.
» Tournaments, events, and instructional programming would require additional staffing.

Operations:
» Costs: medium to high

Partnerships:
» Potential to partner with USA BMX, the United States’ BMX sanctioning body
» Potential to partner with local groups and nonprofits to run youth BMX programming

Revenue Potential:
» Events and tournaments could garner medium or even high-cost recovery over direct costs.
» Similar national/regional destinations require annual memberships through USA BMX Tracks

Timeline
Within 5 years:
» Community engagement
» Site selection and land acquisition
» Entry-level pump track
» Entry-level to intermediate programming

Longer term:
» Formal race/events facility
» Revenue-generating events

Case Study: Cobb County BMX - Powder Springs, GA

Cobb County BMX in Powder Springs, Georgia, was implemented by the Cobb County Parks and Recreation Department in 2014. The track hosts numerous local race days and larger national competitions. Their mission is to provide a positive environment for young people to stay active. To participate in national races, competitors must be a USA BMX member, which had an annual cost of $45 in 2022. Youth programming run by an independent volunteer organization. According to a 2021 figure, the track construction budget was $1,200,000. The track serves a population of 741,000 (similar to Denver’s population of 711,400).
Focus Areas and Strategies | Signature Projects

**Skate Hub (near-term)**

**What**
A skate activity hub will provide access to skateboarding, roller skating, and other wheeled activities depending on site-specific attributes. This facility will function as a regional-level facility, drawing interest from both Denver skating fanatics and people from surrounding communities alike. The hub will support progressive levels of programming and infrastructure.

**Why**
According to the Sports & Fitness Industry Association’s 2021 State of the Industry Report, skateboarding is the fastest-growing sport in the US, increasing 34.2 percent in popularity year-over-year. This facility will complement the existing downtown Denver regional skatepark and support the growing popularity for skateboarding. Throughout the engagement process, southeast Denver emerged as one of the areas of Denver with the strongest public support for a skate hub.

**Implementation Considerations**

**Staffing:**
- Would likely not require operational staffing (in line with other Denver skatepark operations)
- Would likely be staffed during programming or events

**Operations:**
- Costs: Low for elements that are free and open to public use. Low/medium for events and programming

**Partnerships:**
- Potential to partner with local groups and nonprofits to run youth skateboarding programming and events
- Options for sponsorship with local skate shops and skateboard companies

**Revenue Potential:**
- Medium for events/programming

**Timeline**

**Within 5 years:**
- Community engagement
- Site selection and land acquisition
- Design of new features
- Potential commencement of construction

**Longer term:**
- Advanced programming, events, and competitions

---

**Echo Lake Activity Center (near-term)**

**What**
Echo Lake Park will become an all-season regional mountain parks adventure destination with an opportunity to cluster several activities. Refurbishment of the Echo Lake Lodge will allow for year-round administrative and programming opportunities. Snow-related offerings could include a tow rope for skiing and snowboarding, sledding, and snowshoeing. Hiking and walking paths, a zipline or other aerial adventures, and non-motorized water sports will provide land and water adventure opportunities. Water sport activities will be dependent on an assessment of the lake and its water quality. DPR should prioritize this hub for transportation access from Denver.

**Why**
Currently, only 12 percent of the urban and mountain parks offer snow and ice activities. A mountain outdoor adventure activity hub would increase the availability of both snow and ice activities as well as warmer season land and water activities. Pairing this hub with accessible transportation routes will increase the number of visitors from Denver, offering more opportunities for residents to engage in winter outdoor adventure, particularly as Denver’s urban parks see less snow and unpredictable availability for snow- and ice-based activities. Additional facilities, such as a zipline or other aerial adventures, could provide a regional draw and the potential to generate revenue.

**Implementation Considerations**

**Staffing:**
- Dependent on activity programming and maintenance requirements

**Operations:**
- Costs: low for open access spaces, hiking trails, or entry level activities; high for specialized activities and lodge. Full operational pro-forma recommended

**Partnerships:**
- Good partner and sponsorship potential

**Revenue Potential:**
- Lower for entry level and open access spaces
- High for specialized activities and lodge, to include the potential for group rentals

**Timeline**

**Within 5 years:**
- Community engagement
- Master Plan for entire site area
- Water assessment study
- Identify and establish snowshoeing and cross-country skiing routes
- Non-motorized water sport establishments
- Implement a gear library
- Echo Lake Lodge renovations

**Longer term:**
- Identify and establish primary transportation route from urban location(s)
- Install tow rope for skiing, snowboarding, and sledding hill
- Install zipline or other aerial adventures identified during community engagement and operational pro forma planning
South Platte River Hub (long-term)

What
The South Platte River Hub will create a series of adventure opportunities along the river. Assuming water quality is improved in alignment with Denver's resiliency priorities, this hub will celebrate outdoor recreation along the river. Dedicated put-in locations will be established. This project presents an opportunity to integrate kiosks or rental shacks for kayaks, stand-up paddleboards, or other related gear, along with lessons for use.

Why
The South Platte River is one of Denver's spectacular natural urban amenities, and one of the few opportunities for certain water-based activities in Denver. With careful coordination between recent and forthcoming downtown development and the work to improve the water quality and habitat of the South Platte River, there may be a unique opportunity to address the increased demand and interest for river activities such as surfing and stand-up paddleboarding.

Implementation Considerations

Staffing:
» Likely to require a mix of full-time and part-time staff members

Operations:
» Costs: high for specialized staffing and safety requirements

Partnerships:
» Potential to partner with local groups and nonprofits to provide programming
» Gear library could be partnered and/or sponsored from local outdoor retailers

Revenue Potential:
» Variety of pricing/cost recovery opportunities with many activities – entry level activities may be priced for lower cost recovery and equitable offerings. Higher cost recovery can be expected from specialized activities. Complex could be designed with rent able space for additional revenue potential

Aerial Tram to Lookout Mountain (long-term)

What
An aerial tram connecting Golden, Colorado, to the top of Lookout Mountain will provide opportunities for mountain biking and other activities at the summit. This iconic recreational tourist attraction will connect to Lookout Mountain Park and the Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave. There is potential to charge for one-way, round-trip, and seasonal passes, and to offer discount passes to Denver residents.

Why
An aerial tram to Lookout Mountain will enhance accessibility to mountain adventures such as hiking and biking, while providing an attractive and unique experience for visitors. Implementing the tram will also pay homage to the Lookout Mountain Funicular, a cable rail car constructed in 1911 that carried passengers up 2,740 feet along a 67 percent grade slope to the summit. Operating until 1916, the funicular allowed visitors to hike, picnic, and admire views of Golden and Denver.

Implementation Considerations*

Staffing:
» Require a mix of full-time and part-time staff if the tram operates daily

Operations:
» Costs: high

Partnerships:
» Could partner with a concessionaire and/or tourism operators
» Engagement and partnerships with Jefferson County, Golden, Lakewood and potential vendors will be necessary to realize this project

Revenue Potential:
» Very high

*Feasibility studies that would identify environmental, economic, and other considerations, including land ownership, have not been conducted.

Denver Recreation, Sports and Outdoor Adventure Complex

What
The Denver Recreation, Sports and Outdoor Adventure Complex will be an urban outdoor adventure activity hub with a focus on indoor/outdoor rock climbing and challenge course activities. Additional activities such as aerial adventure, rappelling, adventure climbing, and a zip line would provide both a progression of challenge as well as regional attraction and opportunities for group rentals. Access to a large-scale gear library will be a primary feature. The complex will be a place that supports outdoor adventure operations and administrative services and could potentially serve as a transportation hub for DPR-wide outdoor adventure programs.

Why
Challenge courses emerged as an overall public priority. Additionally, rock climbing was central Denver's most desired activity. Denver is currently lacking an urban, centrally-located outdoor adventure activity center and the Denver Recreation, Sports and Outdoor Adventure Complex provides a central hub of activity, operations, and information.

Implementation Considerations

Staffing:
» Likely to require a mix of full-time and part-time staff members

Operations:
» Costs: high for specialized staffing and safety requirements

Partnerships:
» Potential to partner with local groups and nonprofits to provide programming
» Gear library could be partnered and/or sponsored from local outdoor retailers

Revenue Potential:
» None/low for entry level or open access opportunities
» Low for lessons and gear rentals

Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Strategic Plan

Focus Areas and Strategies | Signature Projects

1911 Lookout Mountain Funicular

PHOTO BY VISIT ALBUQUERQUE

PHOTO BY GOLDEN HISTORY MUSEUM & PARK

PHOTO BY GOLDEN HISTORY MUSEUM & PARK

PHOTO BY VISIT ALBUQUERQUE
Implementation

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89 Moving Forward
The Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Strategic Plan includes a wide spectrum of ambitious recommendations. Realizing these collective goals and strategies will require collaboration, partnerships, and creative thinking. Implementation will also require substantial resources and sustained support over time including funding for capital improvements, operations, and maintenance. Although these interventions will require a significant financial commitment to be implemented in full, they will provide a multitude of benefits. The following section highlights proposed initial steps to advance the plan.

## 5-year Action Plan

The 5-year Action Plan is a framework that identifies specific actions, policies, and partnerships to tackle within the next 5 years. This action plan will ensure that the Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Strategic Plan leads to tangible outcomes in the short term. Each action is organized by focus area and identifies which strategy it supports, as well as scale.

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<th>IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS</th>
<th>SUPPORTING STRATEGY</th>
<th>SCALE</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Focus Area #1: Increased Participation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>A 1.1 - Complete Ruby Hill hub with the addition of a tow rope or magic carpet.</td>
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<td>A 1.2 - Identify location and fund planning, design, and initial construction of a hub in North Central and/or NE Denver BMX hub.</td>
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<td>A 1.5 - Complete planning, design, and begin construction of the Echo Lake Activity Center.</td>
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<td>Action</td>
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<td>A 1.6 - Work with Resiliency Team to create a work plan that determines access points and structural and engineering needs on Denver lakes and the South Platte River. Study locations and coordinate with existing or forthcoming shoreline or construction projects.</td>
<td>3.1, 3.3, 3.4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 1.7 - Install up to 5 new formalized entry points, boat launches, and/or eco docks or other suitable infrastructure for hand powered craft at Sloan’s, Garfield, Washington, Parkfield and Berkeley parks. Partner to install self-checkout kayaks and SUPs.</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 1.8 - Work with DDPHE, DPR Operations, DPR Resiliency, and DPR Marketing and Communications to create a public education campaign about the opportunities, risks, and where to find information about water quality and water-based recreation.</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Person</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 1.9 - Pilot a Nordic skiing and snowshoeing course at Evergreen Lake Golf Course.</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>City / Mountain</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 1.10 - Formalize Nordic skiing and snowshoeing course at Bible Park along the High Line Canal trail.</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Action</td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS</th>
<th>SUPPORTING STRATEGY</th>
<th>SCALE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A 1.11 - Identify 2-3 existing and upcoming playground and/or park master plan design processes in which to incorporate entry-level outdoor adventure features into the planning and design process.</td>
<td>5.1, 5.2, 5.3</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 1.12 - Select site and identify funding mechanisms for the Denver Recreation, Sports and Outdoor Adventure Complex.</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>City / Mountain</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 1.13 - Provide safe opportunities for water-based recreational floating, tubing and swimming in Bear Creek in the Denver Mountain Parks.</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>City / Mountain</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P 1.1 - Evaluate DPR’s snow and ice activity policy at Evergreen Lake Golf Course.</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P 1.2 - Evaluate DPR’s snow and ice activity policy within the Denver urban parks and golf courses.</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>City / Mountain</td>
<td>Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P 1.3 - Evaluate DPR’s tree climbing and slacklining policy.</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>City / Mountain</td>
<td>Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS 1.1 - Establish partnerships with 1-2 nearby reservoirs to provide additional water-based programming.</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>City / Mountain</td>
<td>Partnerships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Focus Area #2: Progressive and Inclusive Programming**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS</th>
<th>SUPPORTING STRATEGY</th>
<th>SCALE</th>
<th>TYPE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A 2.1 - Pilot family/intergenerational programming among 2-4 of the more popular Outdoor Recreation programs, targeting community in the “inverted L.”</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Person</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 2.2 - Identify diversity training related to outdoor recreation, program facilitation, and providing inclusive spaces for BIPOC communities, individuals participating in adaptive recreation, and other underrepresented groups.</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>Person</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 2.3 - Identify a location, fund/seek funding, stock, and launch one new gear library.</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 2.4 - Identify funding for, plan, and implement the Recreation Rover as a mobile activity center.</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 2.5 - Pilot one self-sufficient gear borrowing system, such as a gear locker.</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS 2.1 - Establish partnership with one water-based organization to provide entry-level water opportunities in pools.</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS 2.2 - Establish partnerships to elevate Echo Lake Activity Center, with an emphasis on expanding entry-level and family/intergenerational programming.</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>City / Mountain</td>
<td>Partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS 2.3 - Determine partnership with at least one Colorado-based outdoor brand and others to stock gear libraries and provide adaptive gear.</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>City / Mountain</td>
<td>Partnerships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Funding**

Expanding access to OAAS will require DPR to creatively combine capital, maintenance, and human investments through a variety of possible funding avenues.

Accomplishing these projects will require dedicated funds to build, maintain, operate, staff, provide equipment, and replace infrastructure over time.

The funding recommendations include:

1. **Parks Legacy Fund**: Utilize Parks Legacy funding for expansion of outdoor recreation, to include staffing, equipment, and programs.

2. **Bonds**: Future bonds should be considered to pay for the larger signature projects and major investments in neighborhood parks.

3. **Outdoor Adventure Program**: DPR should investigate the creation of an Outdoor Adventure program area within its Planning, Design, and Construction division. This would entail having dedicated planning staff assigned to facilitate plan implementation, similar to the existing mountain parks, downtown parks, and resiliency programs. Duties would include managing outdoor adventure capital improvement program funding, coordinating planning with internal and external stakeholders, and tracking outdoor adventure national and local trends. It would also ensure that the dedicated staff have knowledge of contractors, specialized programs, and maintenance needs. The staff would guarantee that there is a seamless transition from outdoor adventure infrastructure planning and construction to park operations, maintenance, and recreation programming.

**Policies**

The strategies within this plan suggest the evaluation of existing policies, or creation of new policies, to support increased access to OAAS within Denver’s urban and mountain parks. The following existing policies include elements that are relevant to outdoor adventure and should be evaluated by DPR for adjustments to further support plan implementation:

1. **Corporate sponsorship policy**
2. **General partnership guidelines and policy**
3. **Golf course policy related to cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and sledding**
4. **Public drop-in camping and overnight backpacking in the Denver Mountain Parks**

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**Implementation | 5-year Action Plan**

**Focus Area #3: Access and Transportation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS</th>
<th>SUPPORTING STRATEGY</th>
<th>SCALE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A 3.1 - Work with RTD and DOTI to create a strategy and maps/wayfinding for improving and/or highlighting connections between RTD stops and key outdoor adventure locations and communities.</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 3.2 - Work with micromobility providers to establish designated stations/hubs for bikes and scooters at all new and existing outdoor adventure activity hubs.</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>City / Mountain</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 3.3 - Incorporate curated camping opportunities (tree houses, yurts, teepees) into at least one of the mountain park locations.</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>City / Mountain</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P 3.1 - Evaluate the potential for public drop-in camping and permitted overnight backpacking within the Denver Mountain Parks system.</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>City / Mountain</td>
<td>Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS 3.1 - Explore partnerships with rideshare companies to provide reduced costs for transportation to trailheads or other destinations in the mountain parks.</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>City / Mountain</td>
<td>Partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS 3.2 - Explore partnerships to support transportation needs to the mountain parks.</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>City / Mountain</td>
<td>Partnerships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Focus Area #4: Communications and Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS</th>
<th>SUPPORTING STRATEGY</th>
<th>SCALE</th>
<th>TYPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A 4.1 - Create and launch social media and traditional media outdoor adventure campaign in “Inverted L” communities.</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 4.2 - Launch calendars on DPR’s website for pop-up and drop-in outdoor adventure activities.</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>City / Mountain</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 4.3 - Add passive use outdoor adventure activities in the urban and mountain parks to the Activity Guide.</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>City / Mountain</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 4.4 - Plan, develop, and launch pre-adventure and pre-gear check out workshops, “how to” videos, and other resources to educate users on safety and adventure activities, such as water safety, winter preparation, how to pack for a hike, etc.</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Person</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 4.5 - Standardize information and communications around outdoor adventure activities to include level of experience required, cost, equipment needed, risk management, and activity duration.</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Person</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 4.6 - Wrap DPR’s trailer and bus fleet with marketing information about outdoor adventure activities.</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>City / Mountain</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS 4.1 - Establish equitable partnership on-call contracting and selection process.</td>
<td>Partnership 1.1</td>
<td>City / Mountain</td>
<td>Partnerships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:

Expansion of outdoor recreation opportunities, such as new facilities, staffing, operations, and maintenance costs must also be considered and approved through Denver’s Budget Management Office. The funding model for Denver Parks and Recreation, like most municipal parks agencies, does not include a dedicated fund for recreation. Through the planning process, one of the key themes heard was the need to reinvest in existing infrastructure before building new. A focus on existing facilities, deferred maintenance, and operations and staffing needs could go a long way toward providing improved, equitable access for outdoor adventure infrastructure and programming.
Partnerships

DPR currently utilizes a variety of partners to deliver outdoor recreation programming. Existing relationships include non-funded partners, funded partners, as well as those providing sponsorships or donations for goods, services, or funding that supports programming or infrastructure.

To deliver the depth of outdoor adventure programming and infrastructure outlined in the plan, a targeted approach to partnerships needs to be considered. The following strategies highlight that approach.

Strategies:

1. Create a Partnership On-Call contracting process and selection committee to create On-Call contracted vendors to deliver and expand programming opportunities in DPR parks. The process will be equitable, fair, wide-reaching, and aligned with DPR’s mission.
   1.1. Release the On-Call request for proposals on a cyclical basis or bi-annually.
   1.2. Clarify processes for non-profit, for profit, and small business partnering.

2. Secure additional partnerships to expand adaptive outdoor recreation offerings.
   2.1. Explore partnerships with organizations that concentrate on snow and ice adaptive recreation activities.
   2.2. Explore opportunities to partner with schools to ensure adaptive outdoor recreation offerings for youth.

3. Explore strategic partnerships for specialized OAAS locations.
   3.1. Establish partnerships with nearby reservoirs to provide additional water-based programming.
   3.2. Explore partnerships with organizations that utilize pools for entry-level water activities.
   3.3. Explore partnerships with whitewater organizations to provide more entry-level opportunities.
   3.4. Work with partners, such as whitewater rafting companies, to provide a discounted rate for DPR and provide more advanced outdoor adventure experiences.
   3.5. Establish partnerships that focus on fishing.
   3.6. Explore partnerships with groups focusing on lake stewardship.
   3.7. Explore partnerships to engage youth in lifestyle and action sports progression (i.e. snowboarding and skateboarding).
   3.8. Work with private ice arenas to supplement down season windows for simulated snow courses or mobile introductory skate.
   3.9. Evaluate partnerships to elevate Echo Lake Activity Center.

4. Explore partnership opportunities for education, job training, and gear.
   4.1. Explore opportunities for partners to provide job training, internships, and other forms of education and training after participants do a program (snow maker, rafting guide, etc.)
   4.2. Explore partners to outfit gear libraries and provide adaptive gear.
   4.3. Explore partners to provide technology (mobile app) for information on OAAS activities and education about them.
   4.4. Explore partnerships and companies to provide self-check-out stations for gear and the associated technology.

5. Secure partnerships for transportation.
   5.1. Explore partnerships with rideshare companies to provide reduced costs to transportation to trailheads or other destinations in the mountain parks.
   5.2. Identify organizations, counties, etc. with shuttle fleets to expand access to mountain parks and adventure opportunities.
   5.3. Explore funding partnerships for transportation, focusing on corporate sponsorships.

RIVERSPORT - OKLAHOMA CITY, OK

Riversport is an adventure park with an effective partnership model. One of the highly successful initiatives for Riversport was the establishment of a board comprised of diverse community leaders to provide ongoing guidance to program offerings with a focus on equitable service. The establishment of diversity and inclusion boards for organizations across the country has been an area of significant growth in recent years.

THE EDGE ZIP LINE AND CHALLENGE ADVENTURE PARK – CASTLE ROCK, CO

Castle Rock, CO is home to The Edge Zip Line and Adventures, an outdoor adventure center situated in the regional Philip S. Miller Park. The adventure park is operated through a public-private partnership between The EDGE recreation company and the Castle Rock Parks and Recreation Department. The adventure park works to provide opportunities for all ages and ability levels.

» The Edge offers a variety of activities including zip line, ninja course, and challenge course.
» The adventure park includes a continuum of ability levels from beginner to challenging.
» Revenue generating venture.
### Metrics

Implementing metrics to measure return on investment (ROI) and overall performance indicators will be crucial in measuring the overall success of the plan. Developing and tracking these metrics to capture usage will help DPR tell the story of these improvements over time.

DPR currently tracks park access, park acreage, and park investment but the metrics listed below should be explored and implemented as well to track the success of this plan. Where applicable, these should be tracked at the hubs, neighborhood park amenities, and within outdoor recreation programming.

Metrics to implement for tracking success and ROI:
- Number of users and visitors
- Repeat users and retention
- Visitor's average length of stay
- Number and types of different activities
- Number and types of policy changes and actions

All metrics should include an equity overlay where the data is examined citywide and compared to progress within the “Inverted L” and high need neighborhoods as identified in DPR’s Equity Index.

Additionally, qualitative surveys to track self-reports of satisfaction, quality of life improvements, and mental, emotional, and physical benefits of participation could help understand the benefits of this plan’s implementation. Nature dosing and impact studies could be implemented with local outdoor recreation and tourism departments at area universities.

### Moving Forward

The 2022 Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Strategic Plan lays out a plan to make the outdoors more accessible and inclusive through diversifying outdoor adventure opportunities in Denver’s urban and mountain parks. This vision includes a commitment to implementation.

As a result of COVID-19, this plan was written at an unprecedented time, with an increased demand for outdoor amenities and programming. Even though the plan reflects the time, place, and situation of the City and County of Denver, it is intended to span 20 years and thus adapt to changes in the city’s leadership, economy, and population, as well as new trends in outdoor adventure. The plan’s successful implementation will rely on continued communications with both internal and external stakeholders. The project team will continue to move the plan forward with the 5-year actions outlined in this document, while also pursuing projects that lend themselves to partnership opportunities.

While implementation remains nimble, the overall goal remains: making the outdoors more accessible so Denverites can remain healthy, happy, and thriving.
Glossary
The following terms are defined in relation to the Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Strategic Plan:

**Archery:** The sport, practice, or skill of using a bow to shoot arrows. It is mainly a competitive sport and recreational activity.

**Backpacking:** The outdoor recreation of carrying gear on one’s back, while hiking for more than a day. It is often an extended journey and may involve camping outdoors.

**Biking - BMX:** BMX biking requires a different style of bike than either a road bike or mountain bike. BMX bikes are designed to be lighter and faster to provide an advantage on off-road tracks. There are several different forms of BMX, but the two that are recognized internationally are BMX Racing and BMX Freestyle.

**Biking - mountain:** Mountain biking is a sport of riding bicycles off-road, often over rough terrain, usually using specially designed mountain bikes. Mountain bikes share similarities with other bikes but incorporate features designed to enhance durability and performance in rough terrain. Mountain bikers ride on off-road trails such as singletrack, back-country roads, wider bike park trails, fire roads, and some advanced trails are designed with jumps, berms, and drop-offs to add excitement to the trail.

**Biking - road:** Road cycling is a sport or leisure activity that involves riding a bicycle on paved roadways. Considered to be the most traditional, popular, and purest form of bike riding. Includes the disciplines of riding, driving, and racing. Includes the disciplines of riding, driving, and racing. Includes the disciplines of riding, driving, and racing.

**Birdwatching:** The observing of birds, either as a recreational activity or as a form of citizen science. A birdwatcher may observe by using their naked eye, by using a visual enhancement device like binoculars or a telescope, by listening for bird sounds or by watching public webcams.

**Bungee jumping:** An activity that involves a person jumping from a great height while connected to a large elastic cord. A launching pad is usually erected on a tall structure such as a building or crane, a bridge across a deep ravine, or on a natural geographic feature such as a cliff.

**Camping:** An outdoor activity involving overnight stays away from home, either without shelter or using basic shelter such as a tent, or a recreational vehicle. Typically, participants leave developed areas to spend time outdoors in more natural ones in pursuit of activities providing them enjoyment or an educational experience. The night (or more) spent outdoors distinguishes camping from other forms of casting. The flies may resemble natural invertebrates, bait-fish, or other food organisms.

**Climbing - Bouldering:** Bouldering is a form of climbing that is performed on small rock formations or artificial rock walls without the use of ropes or harnesses. While bouldering can be done without any equipment, most climbers use climbing shoes to help secure footholds, chalk to keep their hands dry and to provide a firmer grip, and bouldering mats to prevent injuries from falls. Bouldering routes or “problems” are usually less than 20 ft tall.

**Climbing - Roped:** A sport in which participants climb up, across, or down natural rock formations or artificial rock walls. The goal is to reach the summit of a formation or the endpoint of a usually pre-defined route without falling. Knowledge of proper climbing techniques and the use of specialized climbing equipment is crucial for the safe completion of routes.

**Climbing - Via Ferrata:** A vertical or traversing route along rock or very steep terrain. Participants are led along the routes by trained guides. Easy to use safety systems including harnesses, carabiners, and cables securely connect people to the rock faces. Traditionally these courses are found in mountain settings, but urban Via Ferratas, like the one being implemented in Quarry Trails Metro Park in Columbus, Ohio, are gaining popularity.

**Denverite:** A native or inhabitant of Denver.

**Disc Golf:** A sport played much like golf except, instead of a ball and clubs, players use flying plastic discs. The sport was formalized in the 1970s and shares with golf the object of completing each hole in the fewest attempts (throws). A disc golf hole begins from a tee area and ends at a target, the most common of which is an elevated metal basket.

**DOTI:** Denver’s Department of Transportation and Infrastructure.

**DPR:** Denver Parks and Recreation.

**Environmental Education:** A process that allows individuals to explore environmental issues, engage in problem solving, and take action to improve the environment. As a result, individuals develop a deeper understanding of environmental issues and have the skills to make informed and responsible decisions.

**Equity:** A condition when everyone has the opportunity to thrive, reducing or eliminating persistent institutional biases and barriers based on race, ability, gender identity and sexual preference, age, the environment, and other factors.

**Fishing:** The activity of trying to catch fish. Fish are often caught as wildlife from the natural environments, but may also be caught from stocked bodies of water such as ponds, canals, park wetlands and reservoirs.

**Fishing - Fly Fishing:** An angling method that uses a light weight lure—called an artificial fly—to catch fish. The fly is cast using a fly rod, reel, and specialized weighted line. The light weight requires casting techniques significantly different from other forms of casting. The flies may resemble natural invertebrates, bait-fish, or other food organisms.

**Fishing - Ice Fishing:** The practice of catching fish with lines and fish hooks or spears through an opening in the ice on a frozen body of water. Ice fishing may be done in the open or in heated enclosures, some with bunks and amenities.

**Focus Areas:** High level aspirations and areas of focus for the plan.

**Gear Library:** Gear Libraries are curated collections of accessible outdoor equipment either rented for free or at a low cost. These libraries break down cost barriers and make it possible for people and groups of all backgrounds to get outdoors safely with the proper equipment.

**Geocaching:** An outdoor recreational activity, in which participants use a Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver or mobile device and other navigational techniques to hide and seek containers, called “geocaches” or “caches”, at specific locations marked by coordinates all over the world. It is considered a location-based game.

**Hiking:** A long, vigorous walk, usually on trails or footpaths in the countryside. Walking for pleasure developed in...
Outdoor Adventure and Alternative Sports Strategic Plan

Europe during the eighteenth century. Religious pilgrimages have existed much longer but they involve walking long distances for a spiritual purpose associated with specific religions.

Ice skating: The self-propulsion and gliding of a person across an ice surface, using metal-bladed ice skates. People skate for various reasons, including recreation, exercise, and competitive sports. Ice skating may be performed on naturally frozen bodies of water, such as ponds, lakes, canals, and rivers, and on man-made ice surfaces both indoors and outdoors.

Paddle Sports: This sport involves being on a body of water and participating in a sport that involves a paddling motion to propel a vessel. The most well-known types of Paddle Sports are kayaking and canoeing. However, there are many other popular paddle sports.

Paintball: A competitive team shooting sport in which players eliminate opponents from play by hitting them with round dye-filled capsules called paintballs that break upon impact. The sport is played for recreation and is also played at a formal sporting level with organized competition that involves major tournaments, professional teams, and players.

Parkour: An athletic training discipline in which practitioners attempt to get from point A to point B in the most fluid way possible, without assisting equipment and in the fastest and most efficient way possible. It includes running, climbing, swinging, vaulting, jumping, plyometrics, rolling, and quadrapedal movement—whatever is suitable for a given situation.

Programming: A facilitated program that is organized and requires registration.

Progression: The process of developing or moving gradually towards a more advanced state. In Outdoor Adventure, progression is key to improving skills and abilities in a safe and effective manner.

Roller Track: A circuit of rollers, banked turns and features designed to be ridden completely by riders “pumping”—generating momentum by up and down body movements, instead of pedaling or pushing. Pump tracks are relatively simple to use and cheap to construct and cater to a wide variety of rider skill levels. These larger than wavy tracks and cater to continuum from beginner to advanced.

River Tubing: An outdoor sport in which people ride inner tubes or inflated disks down a river. Depending on the conditions at the river, tubing can be a relaxing way to spend an afternoon, or it can be an invigorating adventure.

River Surfing: The sport of surfing either standing waves or tidal bores in rivers. It’s related to ocean surfing but surfboards are usually thicker and wider, similar to fish surfboards. In contrast to ocean waves, the force of the river’s current is used to keep afloat and ride the wave.

Rollerblading: A multi-disciplinary sport that can refer to a number of activities practiced using inline skates. The in-line design allows for greater speed and maneuverability than traditional roller skates. Inline skating is commonly referred to by the proprietary-eponym rollerblading, or blading, due to the popular brand of inline skates.

Roller-skating: The act of traveling on surfaces with roller skates. It is a recreational activity, sport, and form of transportation. Roller rinks and skate parks are built for roller skating, though it also takes place on streets, sidewalks, and bike paths. Sport roller skating includes speed skating, roller hockey, roller derby, figure skating and aggressive quad skating.

Roller-skat ing – rhythm skating: A type of skating where the skater performs regular and predictable movements in time with the music. This style of skating is used to create a smooth, fluid movement.

Skateboarding: An action sport, recreational activity and method of transportation that involves riding or performing tricks using a skateboard. Skateparks and skate spots are built for skateboarding, though it also takes place on streets, sidewalks, and bike paths.

Skil ing - alpine / downhill: Th e activity of sliding down snow-covered slopes on skis with fixed heel bindings, unlike other types of skiing (cross-country, Telemark, or ski jumping), which use skis with free-heel bindings. Whether for recreation or for sport, it is typically practiced at ski resorts, which provide such services as ski lifts, artificial snow making, snow grooming, restaurants, and ski patrol.

Skil ing - cross-country skiing: A form of skiing where skiers rely on their own locomotion to move across snow-covered terrain, rather than using ski lifts or other forms of assistance. Cross-country skiing is widely practiced as a sport and recreational activity. Variants of cross-country skiing are adapted to a range of terrain which span unimproved, sometimes mountainous terrain to groomed courses that are specifically designed for the sport.

Skil ing - nordic: The various types of skiing in which the toe of the ski boot is fixed to the binding in a manner that allows the heel to rise off the ski, unlike alpine skiing, where the boot is attached to the ski from toe to heel. Also known as cross-country skiing, it is a form of skiing where skiers rely on their own locomotion to move across snow-covered terrain, rather than using ski lifts or other forms of assistance.
**Tree climbing**: A recreational or functional activity consisting of ascending and moving around in the crown of trees. A rope, helmet, and harness can be used to increase the safety of the climber. Other equipment can also be used depending on the experience and skill of the tree climber.

**Under-resourced communities**: Areas in Denver that have been subject to environmental injustices, often comprised of racially diverse and lower income populations.

**Vision**: Big picture vision for DPR related to outdoor adventure and alternative sports, provides a direction for the entire master plan.

**Wakeboarding**: A water sport in which the rider, standing on board with foot bindings, is towed behind a motorboat across its wake and especially up off the crest to perform aerial maneuvers. A hallmark of wakeboarding is the attempted performance of midair tricks. Wakeboarding was developed from a combination of water skiing, snowboarding, and surfing techniques.

**Wavesurfing**: A water sport in which a rider trails behind a boat, riding the boat’s wake without being directly pulled by the boat. After getting up on the wake, typically by use of a tow rope, the wavesurfers will drop the rope, and ride the wave face below the wave’s peak in a fashion reminiscent of surfing.

**Windsurfing**: A wind propelled water sport that is a combination of sailing and surfing. Newer variants include windfoiling, kiteboarding and wingfoiling. Hydrofoil fins enable a person propelled by gravity to travel from the top to the bottom of the inclined cable by holding on to, or being attached to, the freely moving pulley. Its use is not confined to adventure sport, recreation, or tourism, although modern day usage tends to favor those meanings.

**Wavy Walk**: Wavy walks are smaller versions of pump tracks with a circuit of rollers and features designed to be ridden completely by riders “pumping”—generating momentum by up and down body movements, instead of pedaling or pushing. Wavy walks are more geared to beginners than full pump tracks.

**Yurt**: A portable, round tent covered in felt, skins, or canvas on a collapsible framework. They were traditionally used by nomads in Mongolia, Siberia, and Turkey. Modern day yurts provide portable shelter in remote areas for a variety of educational, hospitality and recreational uses.

**Zip-line**: A pulley suspended on a cable, usually made of stainless steel, mounted on a slope. It is designed to enable a person propelled by gravity to travel from the top to the bottom of the inclined cable by holding on to, or being attached to, the freely moving pulley. Its use is not confined to adventure sport, recreation, or tourism, although modern day usage tends to favor those meanings.