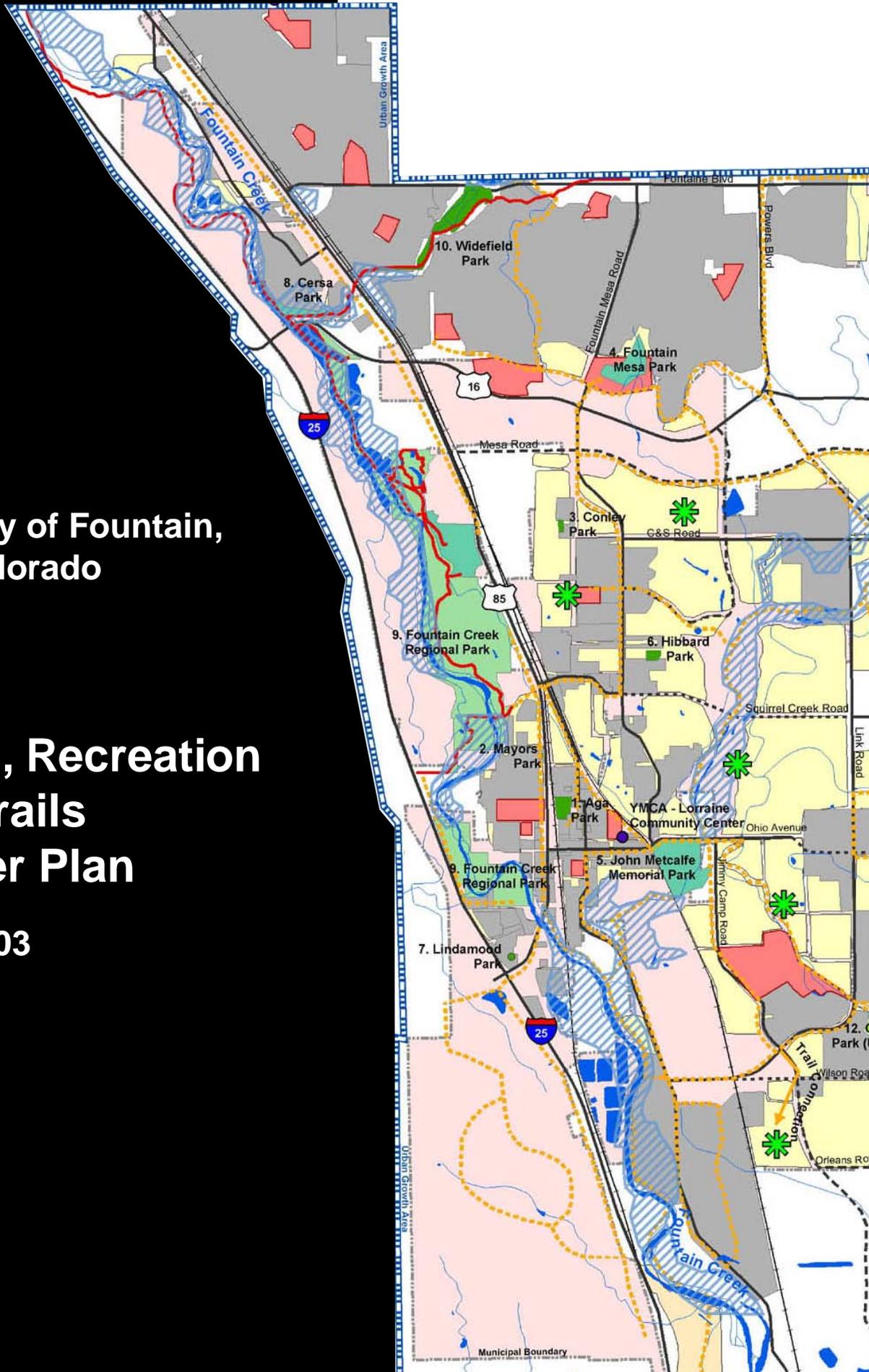




City of Fountain,
Colorado

Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan

May 2003



Plan Summary

In July 2002, the City of Fountain embarked on a planning process that would set the direction and priorities for providing parks, recreation and trails for existing and future residents through the year 2015. EDAW Inc., an international landscape architecture and planning firm with Colorado offices, was contracted to guide the development of the plan with specific focus on:

- Defining a comprehensive, City-wide parks system that is well connected by multi-purpose trails.
- Identifying specific recreational facility needs of current and future residents.
- Defining level-of-service standards, a classification system and general design criteria for parks.
- Identifying potential funding tools to implement the plan.

The plan was developed through a series of public meetings with the Park Advisory Board and City Council; a community-wide needs assessment, which included a comprehensive public opinion survey; and evaluation of the existing resources that are available to City residents. City Council adopted the plan in May 2003.

The plan is organized into five chapters: Introduction, Existing Resources, Issues and Needs, Recommendations and Implementation. The Master Plan for the community is located and described in Chapter Four – Recommendations. Key recommendations of the plan are:

- The City should provide 2 acres per 1,000 population of neighborhood parks and 5 acres per 1,000 population of community parks, and equitably distribute these throughout the community. Over the next 12 years, this will mean acquiring, developing and maintaining approximately 4 to 5 new neighborhood parks and 1 new community park. Funding for new parks, which are needed as a result of an increasing population, should largely be covered by development impact fees. If the homeowners in the Countryside neighborhood are willing to partner with the City, the park site that has remained undeveloped for years should be developed by the City as a public neighborhood park, meeting the needs of those existing residents.
- The City should strive to provide at least 50% of the trails that are part of the adopted 1996 Trails Plan. As a supplement to that document, this plan includes standards for trail design (detailed in Chapter Four) and includes requirements that should be incorporated into the City's subdivision ordinance for trail connections through developments to the primary trail system. Additional trail segments are conceptually identified to indicate the need to link new parks to the primary trail system.
- City residents overwhelmingly voiced a need for additional recreational opportunities in Fountain, especially for an outdoor swimming pool, youth activity center, recreation center, arts and crafts, roller hockey and trails. As the population increases, there will also be a need for additional outdoor and indoor recreational sport facilities such as soccer, football, softball, baseball, basketball and tennis. Fountain should either greatly expand its partnership with Fountain Valley YMCA, or preferably consider providing its own multi-purpose recreation center in the near future to meet some of these needs. Many other communities in Colorado of similar size have a public recreation center, and most provide recreation programs for their residents. In 2003-2004, a recreation committee should focus

on defining the detailed program, costs and funding strategies for a recreation center to assess its feasibility. The outdoor facilities that are recommended in this plan should also be discussed and ideally accommodated in the proposed community park, unless specific, long-term agreements are made with other providers in Fountain that ensure the facilities will always be available for programs for Fountain residents. Smaller, low-impact facilities and practice areas may be included in neighborhood parks.

The document that follows contains the methodology, background information and detailed recommendations of the plan.

Fountain Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan

Table of Contents

Plan Summary

Chapter One – Introduction

A. Introduction.....	1-1
B. Community Vision and Goals	1-2
C. Scope of the Plan	1-3

Chapter Two – Existing Resources

A. Existing Public Parks	2-1
B. Existing School District and Private/Non-Profit Recreation Facilities	2-3
C. Existing Trails	2-4
D. Existing Open Space	2-5
E. Environmental Considerations.....	2-5
Natural Communities.....	2-5
Development-Restricted Areas and Hazards.....	2-6

Chapter Three – Issues and Needs

A. Population and Demographic Characteristics	3-1
B. Community Survey	3-1
Survey Goals and Objectives.....	3-1
Methodology and Respondents' Characteristics.....	3-2
Key Findings	3-2
Conclusions.....	3-3
Participation in Activities	3-3
Where Residents Go for Recreation	3-3
Satisfaction Levels	3-4
Quantity of Parks and Recreational Facilities in Fountain.....	3-4
Support for Additional Taxes.....	3-7
Other Comments.....	3-8
C. National Trends	3-8
D. Recreation Program Participation and Needs	3-10
Youth Baseball Programs	3-10
Softball Programs.....	3-12
Basketball Programs	3-13
Volleyball Programs	3-14
Soccer Programs	3-15
Football Programs.....	3-17
Tennis Programs.....	3-17
Swimming Programs	3-18
Rodeo (Roping and Riding).....	3-18
In-Line Hockey Programs.....	3-19
Cheerleading Programs	3-19
E. Summary of Sport Facilities Needs and Recommended Levels of Service.....	3-20
F. Parkland Requirements to Meet Recreational Facility Needs	3-21

G. Existing and Future Parkland Needs.....	3-22
Neighborhood Parkland	3-22
Community Parkland.....	3-22
H. Trail Needs	3-23

Chapter Four – Recommendations

A. Parks	4-1
Park Classifications and Standards	4-1
Park Projects.....	4-3
B. Trails.....	4-4
Trail Classifications and Standards.....	4-4
Primary Multi-Purpose, Off-Street Trails	4-5
Secondary Multi-Purpose, Off-Street Trails.....	4-5
Proposed Trails	4-7
C. Other Proposed Recreational Facilities.....	4-7
D. Estimated Costs for Parks and Trails	4-7

Chapter Five – Implementation

A. Recommended Implementation Strategies and Sources of Funding	5-1
Sales Tax Increase	5-1
Development Impact Fees	5-1
Subdivision Ordinance Requirements.....	5-2
Conservation Trust Fund.....	5-3
Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Trust Fund	5-3
State Trails Program	5-3
Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21).....	5-3
State Historical Society Funds	5-3
B. Planning, Recreation Programming, Operations and Maintenance Considerations	5-3

List of Figures

Figure 4.1 Primary Multi-Purpose Off-Street Trail Cross-Section	4-5
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List of Tables

Table 2.1 Existing Parks Inventory	2-3
Table 2.2 Summary of Existing Recreational Facilities Available to Fountain Residents	2-4
Table 3.1 Family Members Who Participate in Activities.....	3-3
Table 3.2 Use of Fountain Valley YMCA for Recreational Activities.....	3-4
Table 3.3 Levels of Satisfaction.....	3-4
Table 3.4 Quantity of Recreational Facilities	3-5
Table 3.5 Quantity of Recreational Facilities According to Those with an Opinion.....	3-6
Table 3.6 Quantity of Recreational Facilities According to Those Who <u>Do Not</u> Use that Facility	3-6
Table 3.7 Quantity of Recreational Facilities According to Those Who Use that Facility	3-7
Table 3.8 General Level of Support for Taxes to Fund Specific Needs.....	3-7
Table 3.9 Level of Support for Tax Methods by People Who Support a Tax Increase For Additional Facilities.....	3-8
Table 3.10 Total National Participants by Activity – All Ages.....	3-9
Table 3.11 Total National "Frequent" Youth Participants.....	3-9
Table 3.12 Approximate Numbers of Participants in Baseball Programs in 2002	3-11

Table 3.13	Approximate Numbers of Participants in Softball Programs in 2002	3-13
Table 3.14	Approximate Numbers of Participants in Basketball Programs in 2002.....	3-14
Table 3.15	Approximate Numbers of Participants in Volleyball Programs in 2002.....	3-15
Table 3.16	Approximate Numbers of Participants in Soccer Programs in 2002	3-16
Table 3.17	Approximate Numbers of Participants in Football Programs in 2002	3-17
Table 3.18	Approximate Numbers of Participants in Tennis Programs in 2002	3-17
Table 3.19	Approximate Numbers of Participants in Swimming Programs in 2002.....	3-18
Table 3.20	General Numbers of Participants in Rodeo Activities	3-19
Table 3.21	Numbers of Participants in In-Line Hockey Programs in 2002	3-19
Table 3.22	Approximate Numbers of Participants in Cheerleading Programs in 2002.....	3-19
Table 3.23	Recreational Facility Needs	3-21
Table 3.24	Neighborhood Parkland Needs.....	3-22
Table 3.25	Community Parkland Needs	3-23
Table 4.1	Park Classifications and Standards	4-1
Table 4.2	Trail Design Standards	4-6
Table 4.3	Budgetary Master Plan Costs	4-8
Table 5.1	Estimated Sales Tax Revenue Amounts	5-1

List of Maps

Map 1	Regional Context	End of Chap. One
Map 2	Existing Parks, Trails Open Space and Recreational Facilities	End of Chap. Two
Map 3	Neighborhood and Mini-Parks – Service Areas	End of Chap. Two
Map 4	Community Parks – Service Areas	End of Chap. Two
Map 5	Environmental Considerations.....	End of Chap. Two
Map 6	Master Plan.....	End of Chap. Four

Chapter One – Introduction

A. Introduction

Fountain is located along the Colorado Front Range, 10 miles south of Colorado Springs, 30 miles north of Pueblo and within a 15-minute drive to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. Map 1, Regional Context, shows the City's location relative to neighboring communities, public lands and significant natural features. The City's close proximity to the Rocky Mountains provides dramatic views from almost every location in the City. Fountain also encompasses a diverse array of agricultural and natural areas, including riparian habitat along Fountain Creek and Jimmy Camp Creek, upland ranches and sandstone bluffs.

The Fountain town site, along the banks of Fountain Creek at its confluence with Jimmy Camp Creek, was chosen by early settlers in 1859¹. The site was familiar as a crossroads of the Cherokee and Old Santa Fe Trails, which served Native Americans, explorers, trappers and gold-seekers during the years preceding pioneer settlement.

Artifacts, bone fragments and historical accounts attest a long inhabitation by Native Americans in the Fountain vicinity, and many early structural influences resulted from the fear of Indian attack. The Lincoln Trading Post (nine miles south of Fountain on Wigwam Road) has long, thick grout walls, built not only as a house, but as a fortress against possible raiding parties. Fountain Stage Stop (313 South Main), originally built of adobe and later fancifully reconstructed, was built with a trap door in the front as a probable precaution against Indian attack.

Settlers in Fountain introduced a way of life unfamiliar to the fertile valley, replacing the seasonal encampment by bands of nomadic tribes like the Ute, Arapaho and Cheyenne. The nature of the landscape changed from the grazing land of cattle and uncultivated lands to irrigated agriculture and settlement.



The development of Fountain originated with hopes of recognition as the new state capital. In 1859, the first meeting called to organize a state government in the Pikes Peak region was held in Fountain. In 1888, Fountain vied for political prestige as the capital city. A delegation that planned to visit candidate towns never got closer than Colorado City due to a tremendous explosion caused by a railway accident in Fountain. The explosion destroyed Fountain's chances of becoming the new state capital.

Fountain was incorporated as a town in 1903, and remains one of the oldest incorporated towns in the Pikes Peak region. Fountain's development was ensured by its ability to serve the region as a centrally located supplier for area cowboys, ranchers, farmers and prospectors. Industries

¹ Fountain historical information can be found on http://www.ci.fountain.co.us/fountain_history.htm.

such as dairy farming, cattle-raising, truck farming, and fruit and vegetable production all thrive in the Valley. Fountain also prospered in the 1870's as a railhead shipping point for the area's cattle ranchers.

Fountain Creek itself was, and remains, a major determinant in the growth and evolution of the town. It supplies the town with a water source for irrigation and provides for wildlife and lush surroundings.

Fort Carson, located immediately west of Fountain, has also played a significant role in the City as a major employer of City residents. This Army base partners with Fountain School District #8 to provide quality educational facilities as well as the recreational facilities associated with the schools.

In 1999, Fountain received an award from the *New York Times* as America's "Millennium City." Fountain was chosen after a Queens College sociologist used Census Bureau statistics to find the one city in the country that best represented the population makeup of the U.S. In other words, Fountain is the most accurate representation of the American "melting pot." Because of its unique distinction, Fountain was featured in a special *New York Times Millennium Edition* on Sunday, December 5, 1999.

More recently, Fountain received the distinction of being one of ten "All American Cities" for 2002 by the National Civic League. Fountain was recognized in part for three projects that exemplified collaborative problem solving in the community: a comprehensive plan that addressed 50% growth issues; the Lorraine Education and Community Center; and several youth initiatives, including school district education improvements, D.A.R.E. and the Police Activities League. All American Cities are chosen for the ability of their citizens, businesses and governments to effectively address local issues and produce tangible results, thereby serving as models to other cities facing similar challenges.

Today, approximately 17,500 people call Fountain their home, and the City is expected to grow to a population of almost 30,000 by 2015. To meet the needs of existing and future residents, the City has developed this plan for parks, recreation and trails. This plan incorporates the recommendations adopted in the 1996 Trails Master Plan.

B. Community Vision and Goals

Fountain City Council adopted a Comprehensive Plan in 1999 that includes several principles and policies related to the provision of parks, recreation and trails:

These policies address business practices, economic vitality, infrastructure growth and redevelopment, public safety, environmental stewardship and natural resources, transportation and community amenities. All of these broad goals relate in some form to this plan – "green infrastructure" created by parks, open space and trails contributes to community form; preservation of natural resources and provision of amenities make a community a desirable place to live. The specific policies in the Comprehensive Plan that relate most directly are:

- *Continue to develop and maintain a parks and open space system that is linked together by a series of trails and sidewalks.*

- *Ensure that growth and development within the City of Fountain enhances the quality of life for present and future citizens, provides a positive impact on the tax base, and does not adversely affect community services or the natural environment.*
- *Maintain a balance between developed lands and Fountain's natural amenities.*
- *Preserve and enhance visual resources for the benefit of all City residents and visitors.*
- *Ensure that new and existing land uses do not harm the transportation system, the environment or visual quality of the community and surrounding lands.*
- *Preserve and improve significant features within the City such as creeks, floodplains and wetlands, and historic and architectural features.*
- *Provide for the safe and convenient circulation of motorists, cyclists and pedestrians throughout the City of Fountain.*
- *Preserve agricultural lands in and around the City of Fountain.*

Through this Comprehensive Plan, the City is truly making a statement about its commitment to parks, recreation and trails in the community.

C. Scope of the Plan

EDAW was retained by the City of Fountain to create this Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan, with specific focus on:

- Defining a comprehensive, City-wide parks system that is well connected by multi-purpose trails.
- Identifying specific recreational facility needs of current and future residents.
- Defining level-of-service standards, a classification system and general design criteria for parks.
- Identifying potential funding tools to implement the plan.

The plan was developed through a series of public meetings with the Park Advisory Board and represents the vision for the City through the year 2015. The plan should be revisited and updated periodically, ideally every five years, to ensure that it accurately reflects current and future needs and changing conditions, as well as to reestablish priorities within the community.

Chapter Two – Existing Resources

This chapter documents the parks, recreational facilities, trails and open space areas currently owned and maintained by the City of Fountain as well as those provided by others. Fountain owns and maintains a total of 6 parks that offer amenities such as picnic tables, playgrounds and ballfields. The types of amenities vary in each park (see Table 2.1). A few of Fountain's parks offer more unusual amenities, such as a climbing wall, a riding arena and a skateboard park. El Paso County owns and maintains 4 parks within Fountain's Urban Growth Area: one neighborhood park, one community park, one regional park and one open space area, part of which is outside the Urban Growth Area. There is also one undeveloped park site owned by Countryside Homeowner's Association.

Map 2, Existing Parks, Trails Open Space and Recreational Facilities, shows the location of various City, county, school district and other public or non-profit facilities and parkland.

A. Existing Public Parks

Fountain has a total of 120.65 developed acres of parkland. Of this, 5 sites (6.94 acres) are City-owned neighborhood or mini-parks. Two sites, Cersa Park (10 acres) and Widefield Park (17 acres), are neighborhood parks administered by El Paso County. Metcalfe and Fountain Mesa Park, which total 61.71 acres, are considered community parks and are City-owned. Fountain Creek Park (472 total acres; 25 acres developed with active park facilities) is a regional park provided by El Paso County. The County also administers the 920-acre Clear Spring Ranch Open Space, of which 453 undeveloped acres are in Fountain. One undeveloped park site (11 acres) is owned by the Countryside Homeowner's Association. Map 2 shows the locations of the various public and non-profit parks, recreational facilities and trails within the Fountain Urban Growth Area. Table 2.1 lists the inventory of parkland in the Fountain Urban Growth Area.

Mini-parks are generally 3 acres or less in size and serve residents within 0.25 mile. They are typically accessible via walkway or urban trail and are similar to neighborhood parks, except that they have only a few neighborhood park amenities due to their limited size.

Neighborhood parks are centrally located within the area they serve, and are often located adjacent to an elementary or junior high school. They are accessible to residential areas within a walking distance of 0.5 mile and are usually 5 to 12 acres in size. Neighborhood parks usually provide amenities such as paved multi-purpose areas for skating/court games, ADA accessible trails, picnic areas, playgrounds and on-street parking. Programmed sports activities at these parks should be limited to practices. Currently, the City of Fountain provides a level of service for neighborhood parks of 1.54 acres per 1,000 population, including portions of community parks that serve neighborhood park functions (see Chapter Three).

Community parks are usually 30 to 100 acres in size, accessible to residents within 1.5 miles and provide opportunities for community-wide activities. Facilities often combine the amenities of neighborhood parks (sports fields and courts, picnic shelters, etc.) with natural areas or other interesting elements, such as water features, festival spaces, forests or gardens. Ideally, a community park is accessible via a regional trail system. Currently, the City of Fountain provides a level of service for community parks of 4.6 acres per 1,000 population, when the developed portion of Fountain Creek Regional Park is included.

Regional parks are typically natural resource-based parks, located opportunistically to preserve highly valued landscapes and provide large-scale open space, natural areas and recreational facilities for the region. As such, there is not a recommended level of service standard for this type of park in Fountain. El Paso County provides regional parks for the Fountain and Colorado Springs areas, as well as in other locations throughout the county.

The service areas for mini, neighborhood and community parks were defined as circular regions surrounding each park. A radius of 0.25 mile was used for mini-parks and 0.5 mile for neighborhood parks, because these parks are intended to be easily accessible by pedestrians and bicyclists. The areas served by neighborhood-level parks did not include areas on the opposite side of major barriers to pedestrians and bicyclists, such as large roads and railroad corridors. Community parks were considered to serve as neighborhood parks for the residential areas immediately adjacent to them.

As shown on Map 3, there are several residential areas within Fountain that are not currently served by a neighborhood-level park. Areas not served by a neighborhood park should be targeted for strategically locating future parks. If this is not possible, access to nearby parks could potentially be improved by constructing grade-separated trail crossings of these major barriers.

Communities across the Colorado Front Range typically apply a 1 to 2-mile service radius for community parks to equitably distribute these facilities across their cities. A service radius of 1.5 miles was applied to community parks in Fountain, which is the same as that used by the City of Colorado Springs. Map 4 shows the service areas associated with community parks, including the developed portion of Fountain Creek Regional Park, which was considered to serve community park needs. As shown on the map, Fountain is relatively well served by community-level parks.

**Table 2.1
Existing Parks Inventory**

Park Name	Administration	Baseball/Softball Field	Basketball Court	Climbing Wall	Disc Golf Course	Fishing	Horseshoe Pit	Multiuse Field	Nature Center	Picnic Tables	Picnic Shelters	Playground	Restrooms	Riding Arena	Skateboard Park	Tennis Courts	Trails	Volleyball Court	Acreage (Developed)
Fountain Neighborhood / Mini Parks																			
Aga Park	City of Fountain	1*	1								1	Y	Y			1*			1.19
Mayors Park	City of Fountain																		0.25
Conley Park	City of Fountain																		1.00
Hibbard Park	City of Fountain			1							1						Y		4.00
Lindamood Park	City of Fountain		1								3	Y							0.50
Subtotal Developed Fountain Neighborhood Parks																			6.94
Other Neighborhood Parks																			
Widefield Park	El Paso County	1	1.5		1		2				Y		Y			1			17.00
Countryside Park (not developed)	Countryside Homeowners Assoc.																		11.00 ^U
Cersa Park	El Paso County						1						Y				Y		10.00
Subtotal Developed Other Neighborhood Parks																			27.00
Community Parks																			
Fountain Mesa Park	City of Fountain		1				1			2	Y	Y					Y		25.22
Metcalfe Park	City of Fountain	4(3*)	1							7		Y	1	1			Y		36.49
Subtotal Developed Fountain Community Parks																			61.71
Regional Parks																			
Fountain Creek	El Paso County				Y	Y	Y	Y	Y**		Y		Y				Y	Y	447 ^U 25 ^D
Clear Spring Ranch Open Space	El Paso County												Y				Y		920 ^U
Subtotal Regional Parks																			25.00
Total Developed Acreage																			120.65

* Indicates lighted field; ** 12 acres of multiuse fields – not used by any recreation provider in Fountain for games

^U Undeveloped parkland or open space, ^D Developed parkland

Table 2.1 also lists the specific recreational facilities that are located within each park. How the need for recreational facilities translates into the need for parkland is discussed in Chapter Three.

B. Existing School District and Private/Non-Profit Recreation Facilities

Fountain/Fort Carson School District #8 serves the majority of Fountain residents. It includes 6 elementary schools, 2 middle schools and 2 high schools.

Residents of the northern part of Fountain are served by two schools that are part of Widefield School District #3 – Janitell Junior High School and Mesa Ridge High School. Widefield is a special district in unincorporated El Paso County that operates schools and runs its own park and recreation department. This district overlaps portions of the City of Fountain and a significant portion of the northern area within the Urban Growth Area. The Widefield Community and Recreation Center, which includes 4 baseball/softball fields, a swimming pool, 4 tennis



courts and a soccer field, is located on Aspen Drive, just north of the Fountain Urban Growth Boundary. Many Fountain residents participate in programs and use the facilities provided by this special district. Sports programming provided by the Widefield Community Center uses the Janitell Junior High School gym for basketball and volleyball games; Janitell and Watson Junior High School gyms are used for basketball and volleyball practices. Other school facilities throughout District #3 are also used for practices and include baseball/softball fields, soccer fields and gymnasiums. Table 2.2 summarizes the facilities that are used for programmed sports events and other special purpose facilities within the Fountain area.

The Fountain Valley YMCA, located at Lorraine Community Center, provides some sports programming in addition to childcare, strength and conditioning equipment, and gymnasium space. The YMCA also offers swim lessons and open swim sessions at the School District #8 pool, located at Fountain/Fort Carson High School.

**Table 2.2
Summary of Existing Recreational Facilities Available to Fountain Residents**

Sport	Organization	Facilities	Owner of Facility	Number of Facilities
Baseball & Softball (Game Fields)	Fountain YMCA	Aga Park field	City of Fountain	1
	Widefield CC	Widefield CC fields	Widefield CC	1 ²
	Fountain Valley Youth Baseball	Metcalfe Park	City of Fountain	4
Total Baseball & Softball				6
Soccer & Football (Game Fields)	Fountain YMCA and PALS	Fountain Middle School	School District #8	1
	Mesa Elementary	Mesa Elementary School	School District #8	1
	Widefield CC	Widefield CC fields	Widefield CC	1 ²
Total Soccer & Football				3
Outdoor Basketball Courts	Self-directed	Aga Park	City of Fountain	1
	Self-directed	Fountain Mesa Park	City of Fountain	1
	Self-directed	Metcalfe Park	City of Fountain	1
	Self-directed	Lindamood Park	City of Fountain	1
	Self-directed	Widefield Park	El Paso County	1.5
Total Basketball Courts				5.5
Tennis Courts	Widefield CC	Widefield CC courts	Widefield CC	1 ²
Gyms (Game Courts)	Fountain YMCA	YMCA gym	YMCA	1
	Fountain YMCA	Jordahl Elementary School	School District #8	1
	Fountain YMCA	Aragon Elementary School	School District #8	1
	Mesa Elementary	Mesa Elementary School	School District #8	1
	Widefield CC	Janitell Junior High School	School District #3	1
Total Gyms				5
Swimming Pools	Fountain YMCA	Fountain/Fort Carson H.S. (indoor)	School District #8	1
	Widefield CC	Widefield CC Pool (indoor)	Widefield CC	1
Total Swimming				2
Inline Hockey	Fountain YMCA	Aragon Elementary Outdoor Court	School District #8	1
Rodeo	Fountain Riding & Roping Club	Metcalfe Park Arena	City of Fountain	1
Skateboarding	Self-directed	Metcalfe Park	City of Fountain	1

¹ Widefield Community Center

² 20% of game fields/courts based on proportion of use by Fountain residents

C. Existing Trails

The City currently has approximately 12.5 miles of primary, multi-purpose trails located within the Urban Growth Area. These trails are paved, typically 8 to 10 feet wide, and are intended to accommodate a variety of uses including biking, walking, jogging and in-line skating. The majority of the existing trail system is located along Fountain Creek and was constructed by El

Paso County. This trail is part of a regional and statewide system that will eventually link communities along the Front Range, from the southern to northern Colorado borders.

D. Existing Open Space

Currently, the City of Fountain does not own or have conservation easements on any open space lands. El Paso County has Clear Springs Ranch Open Space, a 920-acre area on Fountain Creek, of which 453 acres lies within Fountain's Urban Growth Area.

E. Environmental Considerations

Natural Communities

Remaining natural communities in the Fountain area are associated with riparian and wetland communities along Fountain Creek and Jimmy Camp Creek drainages, and small remnant upland grass communities. These natural communities are important to the areas' wildlife, act as natural buffers, provide a measure of ecological diversity and add aesthetic value. Map 5, Environmental Considerations, shows important habitat areas associated with these natural communities.

The natural riparian communities along Fountain and Jimmy Camp Creeks vary in width, from several hundred to several thousand feet wide. Both of these drainages are prone to overbank flooding, which promotes the establishment of new stands of plains cottonwood trees along their banks and on newly established sand bars. The riparian area of both creeks is dominated by plains cottonwoods, which have an understory of willows, various grasses and forbs. The natural habitat found along Fountain and Jimmy Camp Creeks is very important to a variety of wildlife species. Fountain Creek Regional Park Nature Center, located in the Fountain Creek corridor, is an important area for nesting great blue heron; currently, over 50 active nests have been established in the rookery. A variety of raptors, including red-tailed hawk and great horned owls also frequent the area. The abundant habitat supports a wide variety of passerine birds, including finches, cardinals, grosbeaks, warblers, vireos, woodpeckers and many others. Water birds, including diving and dabbling ducks and wading and shore birds are also found in the riparian areas. The area is also important to a variety of mammals. The Colorado Division of Wildlife has mapped much of the Fountain Creek corridor as a mule deer concentration area. Deer are drawn from the surrounding uplands to the riparian area for water, food, cover and thermal protection. As a result, approximately one mile of Interstate 25 has been determined to be a mule deer highway crossing danger zone. Other animals such as muskrat, red fox, raccoon, skunk and various small rodents also use riparian areas.

Natural wetland communities are also associated with the Fountain and Jimmy Camp Creek riparian areas, as well as along smaller tributaries associated with these drainages. Wetlands have not been specifically mapped, as the major wetlands correspond to the riparian corridors and the data is not available digitally. However, it should be noted that additional wetlands can be found around the margins of numerous small ponds and lakes and in areas with high water tables. National Wetland Inventory (NWI) mapping indicates that riverine, palustrine and lacustrine wetlands are scattered over wide parts of the growth management area. Dominant species in wetland areas include broad and narrow leaf cattail and a variety of sedges and rushes. Wetlands are important for providing habitat for a variety of mammal and bird species, attenuating flood flows, improving water quality, and helping to discharge or recharge ground water.

In the past, upland natural areas have been highly fragmented due to development. Historically, this area was dominated by mid-grass prairie species and primarily used for livestock grazing. Dominant species in the mid-grass prairies were sideoats grama, galleta, foxtail barley, western wheatgrass, bluebunch wheatgrass, little bluestem, New Mexico feathergrass, green needlegrass, and needle and thread. Mid-grass prairie communities are found in upland areas east of Fountain Creek and interspersed as patches along the Fountain and Jimmy Camp Creek riparian corridors. Along the western region of the Fountain area, primarily the area immediately adjacent to either side of Interstate 25, small remnants of short grass prairie may also exist. Species here would be dominated by buffalograss and blue grama. Grass prairie natural areas are important to several bird species, including mountain plover and burrowing owl. Upland natural areas also support communities of prairie dogs and can act as buffer to riparian areas. Map 5 shows the areas combined from two sources of data regarding upland grass areas – one identifies upland associated with major drainage basins, and another specifically maps the upland grass complex along the creeks themselves.

Development-Restricted Areas and Hazards

In Fountain, there are areas where development should not or cannot occur, resulting in potential opportunities for open space, parks and trails, as well as preservation of wildlife habitat. Map 5 shows steep slopes (over 20% slope) and the 100-year floodplain¹, both of which are not advisable for development. Other potential hazard areas, which may occur but are not documented in Fountain, are wildfire-prone areas, contaminated areas, ground subsidence and expansive soils.

Map 5 shows the two major FEMA floodplains in the City: Fountain Creek and Jimmy Camp Creek. The Fountain Comprehensive Plan of 1999 states that the City should “Prohibit development within the 100-Year Flood Plain of Fountain and Jimmy Camp Creeks and continue the practice of integrating the Flood Plain areas of Fountain and Jimmy Camp Creeks with the County’s regional park and trail system.” Other smaller floodplains and storm water conveyance channels associated with secondary drainages have not been delineated by FEMA and are not shown. However, they too should be considered as opportunities for open space connections.

¹ FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Authority) 100-year floodplain.

Chapter Three – Issues and Needs

A. Population and Demographic Characteristics

In 2003, the City of Fountain had a population of 17,529¹. According to the City Planning Department, the City's population is expected to increase by almost 12,500 by 2015, resulting in a population of 29,769. This large increase in population over the next 12 years means that the City must be proactively planning for new parks, trails and recreational facilities to meet the needs of new residents in addition to the needs of existing residents.

Currently, the average household has 3.0 people, which is somewhat higher than the state average of 2.53, higher than the El Paso County average of 2.61, and higher than the Colorado Springs average of 2.50. This number is important when applying level-of-service standards for parkland (discussed later in this chapter) and calculating development fees, which is discussed in the chapter containing implementation tools.

The ethnic makeup of the community is mixed and representative of the U.S. as a whole. Whites comprise 75.1% of the population². A significant number of people (15.1%) are of Latino or Hispanic descent, with 7.2% claiming Mexico as their country of origin³. Blacks represent 8.7% of the population and Asians represent 2.0%³. The cultural diversity of the community should be acknowledged when planning for specific facilities in parks so that people of all cultures have the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors, individually or as part of a larger family or social group.

Approximately 37% of the population is under age 20, with 20% (3013 people) age 5 to 14 – the predominant age of children who are most active in programmed recreational sports leagues. Five percent (5%) of the total population in Fountain is age 65 or older. Twenty three percent (23%) are age 20 to 34 and 32% are age 35 to 60. Of course, people of all ages use city parks, trails and recreational facilities. Recent trends are that many young adults are participating in recreational team sports activities into their 20's and 30's as well. The reason that this is significant is that sports fields (e.g., baseball, softball, soccer, football, lacrosse) take the largest amount of space in parks, and communities need to plan adequately for these demands. The relationship between facility needs and acreage of parkland is discussed later in this chapter. Additionally, children and adults who live outside city limits near Fountain are also potential participants and users of community facilities. The population of the greater Fountain service area has not been officially determined.

B. Community Survey

The City of Fountain commissioned a telephone survey of Fountain residents regarding their perceptions, use patterns and priorities for recreational programs and facilities. The results from this survey are summarized in several sections of this chapter that follow.

Survey Goals and Objectives

The objectives of the survey were to determine:

¹ "Population, Housing, Employment and Employer Projection Years 2001-2010", the City of Fountain, 2001.

² "Census 2000", US Bureau of the Census.

- The degree to which Fountain residents participate in a variety of athletic activities.
- Whether people participate in these activities in Fountain or if they go elsewhere.
- Residents' level of satisfaction with the parks and recreational facilities in Fountain.
- If people feel additional recreational facilities are needed in Fountain.
- If Fountain residents would support a tax increase to fund the construction of new recreational facilities in Fountain.

Methodology and Respondents' Characteristics

Respondents were reached via telephone. The call list was generated from a random digit dial (RDD) because it is the most representative sampling process; an RDD sample includes people who have unlisted telephone numbers. In contrast, a listed sample includes only households with listed telephone numbers.

The survey was completed in September 2002. Respondents were screened so that all were residents of the City of Fountain, 18 years old or older and head of household. A total of 300 people were interviewed and were representative in age, ethnicity, household size and income of the residents of Fountain when compared to 2000 U.S. Census data. Seventy percent of the respondents were registered to vote and have lived in Fountain an average of 11.2 years. Fifty-four percent (54%) have children living at home. The sample of 300, which is approximately 5% of the households in Fountain, is considered statistically valid and has a margin of error of ± 5.7 . The survey was conducted by Left Brain Concepts, Inc., a Denver-based research and consulting firm.

Key Findings

- Participation in activities ranges from a high of 21% for swimming lessons to 3% for in-line hockey. With the exception of swimming and soccer, the majority of people leave the City of Fountain to engage in these activities.
- People are generally satisfied with the City of Fountain's parks in terms of the quality, maintenance and trail system. They are less satisfied with the programs at the YMCA. They are particularly dissatisfied with the fees at the YMCA.
- Interest in proposed new facilities in Fountain ranges from a high of 70% for an outdoor swimming pool to a low of 25% for softball/baseball fields. Support for new facilities is no stronger among those who would use the facilities than those who likely would not.
- People would support additional taxes to fund construction of new facilities. Support is strongest (65%) for a recreation center and a little lower (53%) for trails.
- Three-quarters of respondents are supportive of both a $\frac{1}{4}$ of 1% sales tax and a $\frac{1}{2}$ of 1% sales tax to construct recreational facilities in Fountain. They are less supportive of an increase in property taxes.
- Support for additional taxes is strongest among people who have children under the age of 18 living with them. It is weakest among people aged 60 and older.

Conclusions

- People overwhelmingly feel there are not enough recreational facilities in the City of Fountain; many people leave the City to participate in recreational activities.
- People are further supportive of tax increases to fund the construction of new facilities. Support for a ½ of 1% sales tax is as strong as support for a ¼ of 1% sales tax.
- Support for new recreational facilities is broad based; even those who do not participate in specific athletic activities feel there is an insufficient number of these facilities in Fountain.

Participation in Activities

Respondents were asked if they (or any person in their household) participate in various activities, and if they go to the Fountain Valley YMCA or another community to do the activity. This question was intended to find out how many people use the recreational facilities in the area and where they go to do that activity. Table 3.1 summarizes their responses.

Table 3.1
Family Members Who Participate in Activities

Activity	Yes	No
Swimming lessons	21%	79%
Basketball	17%	83%
Soccer club	14%	86%
Golf	12%	88%
Baseball	11%	89%
Football	11%	89%
Tennis	8%	92%
Softball	6%	94%
Hockey/ice skating	5%	96%
In-line hockey	3%	97%

Swimming lessons was the most popular activity, followed by basketball and soccer. As would be expected, people who have children under the age of 18 living with them are considerably more likely to have people in the household who participate in soccer, baseball, football, swimming lessons, softball, hockey/ice skating, basketball and in-line hockey. Those with household incomes greater than \$50,000 are more likely to participate in golf than those with lower incomes. In many communities, there are no differences in recreational activity patterns among ethnic groups. However in Fountain, people of color are more likely to participate in basketball than Anglos.

Fountain's participation numbers are significantly lower than those of the recently surveyed residents of the City of Colorado Springs. The reason for the lower participation levels in Fountain could be due to either the preferences of the residents, or lack of access to recreational facilities. The responses to other survey questions related to the quantity and willingness to pay for more recreational facilities leads one to believe that participation would increase if more facilities were available.

Where Residents Go For Recreation

Among those who said they or a household member participate in these activities, the following presents the percentages of people who use the Fountain Valley YMCA or other recreation providers.

Table 3.2
Use of the Fountain Valley YMCA for Recreational Activities

Activity	Fountain YMCA	Other
Swimming lessons	53%	48%
Basketball	36%	66%
Soccer club	58%	44%
Golf	0%	100%
Baseball	30%	70%
Football	29%	76%
Tennis	17%	83%
Softball	18%	82%
Hockey/ice skating	19%	81%
In-line hockey	22%	78%

Although the City relies heavily upon the Fountain Valley YMCA for recreational programs, the majority of residents rely on other providers for their needs, with the exception of swimming lessons and soccer club, which serves 50 to 60% of those participants.

Satisfaction Levels

Residents were asked how satisfied they are with various aspects of the City’s parks and recreation system. Table 3.3 lists their responses and indicates that a high percentage (81%-83%) are satisfied with the level of maintenance and overall quality of parks in Fountain. Approximately 1/3 of the respondents think the fees at the YMCA are too high and only 10% felt that the fees could be higher. People who have children under the age of 18 living with them are more likely than those who do not have children to feel the fees at the YMCA are too high.

Table 3.3
Levels of Satisfaction

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
I am satisfied with the maintenance in the City’s parks	83%	9%	8%
I am satisfied with the quality of the City’s parks	81%	10%	9%
I am satisfied with the City’s trail system	66%	22%	12%
I am satisfied with the recreational programs at YMCA	51%	39%	10%
Fees at YMCA for recreation programs are too high	31%	49%	20%
Fees at YMCA for recreation programs could be higher	9%	50%	41%

Quantity of Parks and Recreational Facilities in Fountain

Residents were asked if there are too many, enough or not enough of various facilities in the City. Table 3.4 summarizes their responses. Seventy percent (70%) of respondents indicated that Fountain does not have enough swimming pools. Other facilities that more than ½ of the respondents rated as "not enough" include recreation centers (57%), youth activity centers (55%), roller hockey rinks (53%), facilities for arts, crafts and similar programs (53%), and paved trails (51%). Women were more likely than men to feel that there are not enough outdoor swimming pools and recreation centers, and not enough facilities for arts, crafts and similar programs. People with children under the age of 18 living with them were more likely than those without children to feel there are not enough outdoor basketball courts, gyms, youth activity centers and roller hockey rinks.

Table 3.4
Quantity of Recreational Facilities

Facility	Too many	Enough	Not enough	No opinion
Outdoor swimming pools	0%	13%	70%	17%
Recreation centers	0%	27%	57%	16%
Youth activity centers	0%	19%	55%	26%
Roller hockey rinks	1%	13%	53%	33%
Arts and crafts facilities	1%	18%	53%	28%
Paved trails	1%	33%	51%	15%
Gyms	0%	27%	48%	25%
Senior centers	1%	15%	45%	39%
Natural surface trails	1%	33%	44%	22%
Playgrounds	0%	48%	42%	10%
Tennis courts	1%	19%	41%	39%
Skate parks	0%	36%	41%	23%
Passive use park areas	0%	51%	40%	9%
Wildlife/natural area	1%	47%	39%	13%
Outdoor basketball courts	0%	36%	36%	28%
Soccer/football/sports fields	1%	42%	34%	23%
Golf courses	3%	41%	33%	23%
Picnic facilities	1%	65%	31%	3%
Softball/baseball fields	1%	53%	25%	21%

Twenty people suggested other types of recreational facilities they would like to see added in Fountain. No facility was mentioned by more than two people.

When the data was analyzed to exclude those people who did not have an opinion, which focuses on those people who are assumed to know enough about the facilities to have an opinion, the results are similar, but other facility needs emerged as well. Table 3.5 shows that in addition to the above mentioned facilities, at least 50% of the respondents who had an opinion thought there should be more senior centers, tennis courts, gyms, natural surface trails, skate parks and outdoor basketball courts.

On January 27, 2003 in a community meeting concerning the comprehensive plan, numerous groups indicated the need for recreation and youth activities. This reinforced the survey results.

Table 3.5
Quantity of Recreational Facilities According to Those with an Opinion

Facility	Too many	Enough	Not enough
Outdoor swimming pools	0%	16%	84%
Roller hockey rinks	1%	19%	80%
Youth activity centers	0%	26%	74%
Arts and crafts facilities	1%	25%	74%
Senior centers	1%	25%	74%
Recreation centers	0%	32%	68%
Tennis courts	1%	32%	67%
Gyms	0%	36%	64%
Paved trails	1%	39%	60%
Natural surface trails	1%	43%	56%
Skate parks	0%	47%	53%
Outdoor basketball courts	0%	50%	50%
Playgrounds	0%	53%	47%
Passive use park areas	0%	57%	43%
Wildlife/natural area	1%	54%	45%
Soccer/football/sports fields	1%	54%	45%
Golf courses	3%	54%	43%
Picnic facilities	1%	67%	32%
Softball/baseball fields	1%	67%	32%

Interestingly, some people believed there should be more specific facilities even though they do not participate in that activity. Table 3.6 shows the level of support for additional facilities from members of the community who do not participate in those activities. The survey did not ask if the reason that these people do not participate in the activity is because there are not enough of those facilities.

Table 3.6
Quantity of Recreational Facilities According to Those Who Do Not Use that Facility

Facility	Not enough	Do not participate in...
Outdoor swimming pools	65%	Swimming lessons
Recreation centers	54%	Swimming lessons
Recreation centers	54%	Basketball
Roller hockey rinks	52%	In-line hockey
Tennis courts	40%	Tennis
Softball/baseball fields	24%	Softball
Softball/baseball fields	23%	Baseball
Outdoor basketball courts	30%	Basketball
Gyms	42%	Basketball
Soccer/football/sports fields	31%	Soccer
Soccer/football/sports fields	32%	Football
Skate parks	41%	In-line hockey
Golf courses	29%	Golf

Conversely, when the data was analyzed to sort out the opinions of people who actually participate in activities, the results were somewhat different. Table 3.7 illustrates that the perceived need for more roller hockey rinks, swimming pools, gyms, recreation centers, skate parks and outdoor basketball courts is very high according to people who use these types of facilities. Also, although some of the recreation providers indicated that additional ballfields and sports fields are needed (discussed in a later section), the participating public was somewhat

split on the need. Many of the participants, however, may not be aware of the larger community needs since their personal needs are being adequately accommodated.

Facilities like arts and crafts rooms, youth activity centers and senior centers could not be cross-tabulated in this fashion because they are not currently offered in Fountain, and specific activities that relate to these facilities were not listed on the question that addressed respondent activities.

Table 3.7
Quantity of Recreational Facilities According to Those Who Use that Facility

Facility	Not enough	Do participate in...
Roller hockey rinks	89%	In-line hockey
Outdoor swimming pools	88%	Swimming lessons
Recreation centers	76%	Basketball
Gyms	74%	Basketball
Recreation centers	70%	Swimming lessons
Skate parks	67%	In-line hockey
Outdoor basketball courts	66%	Basketball
Golf courses	61%	Golf
Soccer/football/sports fields	53%	Soccer
Soccer/football/sports fields	53%	Football
Tennis courts	50%	Tennis
Softball/baseball fields	41%	Softball
Softball/baseball fields	45%	Baseball

Support for Additional Taxes

Often people will say they would like more of something, but when it comes to paying for it their support may wane. In order to test if monetary support was likely, respondents were asked if they would “generally be supportive of additional taxes to fund additional facilities.” Table 3.8 summarizes the responses.

Table 3.8
General Level of Support for Taxes to Fund Specific Needs

Facility	Support additional taxes	Don't support additional taxes	Don't know
Recreation center	65%	30%	5%
Playgrounds	64%	32%	4%
General use public park	63%	34%	3%
Outdoor pool	62%	30%	8%
Sports facilities	58%	36%	6%
Natural open space	58%	38%	4%
Trails	53%	40%	7%

People 60 years old and older voiced less support for each of the seven types of needs than younger groups. Residents who have children under the age of 18 living with them are more supportive of additional taxes for sports facilities, playgrounds, a recreation center and an outdoor pool than those who do not have children living with them.

Nineteen people made suggestions for other types of recreational facilities for which they would support additional taxes. Only two types of facilities received more than two responses: an indoor swimming pool (4 mentions) and a wildlife observation area (3 mentions).

When people who were generally supportive of taxes were asked about specific levels and types of taxes, sales tax was the preferred method of generating the revenues. People 60 years old and older voiced less support for each of the three proposed taxes. The specific levels tested were:

1. A ¼ of 1% sales tax, which totals 2½ cents on a purchase of \$10.
2. A ½ of 1% sales tax, which totals 5 cents on a purchase of \$10.
3. A property tax increase of \$50 per year on a house valued at \$100,000.

Table 3.9 summarizes the results.

Table 3.9
Level of Support for Tax Methods by People Who Support a Tax Increase for Additional Facilities

Taxation Method	Yes	No
¼ of 1% sales tax	76%	24%
½ of 1% sales tax	74%	26%
Property tax of \$50 annually on \$100,000 house	54%	46%

Other Comments

Respondents were asked if they had additional comments about parks and recreation in Fountain. Two-thirds (62%) of the respondents did not have any additional comments for the City of Fountain. Those who did reiterated issues addressed on the survey, such as their support for additional facilities in Fountain, the types of facilities they would like to see, their support for additional taxes, and their interest in seeing activities and facilities geared towards children.

C. National Trends

In January 2000, the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association (SGMA) commissioned a mail survey of American households to determine what activities they participate in at least one time per year. A total of 14,891 completed mail surveys were received and responses balanced to reflect U.S. Census parameters for age, gender, race, household income and geographic region. The responses reflect people age 6 and above. The last few SGMA surveys have been more comprehensive than previous years, therefore benchmark data is not available for many of the categories.

As shown in Table 3.10, the most popular activity is walking, followed by biking, fishing, basketball, hiking and running/jogging. Many activities have seen a decline in total numbers over the past 12 years, including many of the organized team sports. However, two relatively new activities have made tremendous gains in popularity – in-line roller skating (which involves almost as many people as golf) and mountain biking (which is as popular as skateboarding). Data was not available by region, but it is likely that mountain biking involves a larger percentage of the population in this area than nationally.

Table 3.10
Total National Participants by Activity – All Ages

Activity	Percent Change Since 1987	1999 Participants (in 1,000's)
Recreational walking	Na	84,096
Recreational bicycling	Na	56,227
Fishing	- 7%	54,320
Basketball	+ 10%	39,368
Day hiking	Na	39,235
Fitness walking	+ 32%	35,976
Running/jogging	- 8%	34,047
Golf	+ 7%	28,216
In-line roller skating	+ 494%	27,865
Volleyball	- 33%	24,176
Softball	- 36%	19,766
Football	Na	18,717
Soccer	+ 14%	17,582
Horseback riding	Na	16,906
Tennis	- 21%	16,817
Roller skating (4 wheel)	- 54%	12,404
Baseball	- 20%	12,069
Mountain biking	+ 419%	7,849
Skateboarding	- 28%	7,807
Archery	- 19%	6,937
Artificial wall climbing	Na	4,817
BMX bicycling	Na	3,730

Sports Participation Trends 1999, American Sports Data, Inc. for SGMA, January 2000

According to a 1997 SGMA report³, the most popular sports for youth based on “frequent” participation are:

Table 3.11
Total National “Frequent” Youth Participants

	Number of Participants in U.S. (in 1,000's)
Basketball (25+ days /year)	12,803
Soccer (25+ days/year)	6,971
Baseball (25+days/year)	5,229
In-line skating (52+days/year)	3,591
Touch football (25+days/year)	3,590
Volleyball (25+days/year)	3,022
Running/jogging (100+days/year)	2,824
Slow-pitch softball (25+ days/year)	2,717
Tackle football (52+ days/year)	2,079
Fishing	2,021

Seven of the 10 most popular activities are team oriented; 8 of the 10 require specialized outdoor facilities. Since this study was conducted, interest in in-line skating and skateboarding has increased dramatically, as evidenced by the local demand for the skate facilities at Metcalfe Park.

³ Sporting Goods Manufacturer's Association, study conducted annually by American Sports Data, Inc. 1997.

D. Recreation Program Participation and Needs

To determine program usage, local interest groups were surveyed to determine how many participants they have enrolled in each program. The interest group surveys also included information regarding the quality of facilities, need for additional facilities, percentage of participants who are City residents, and standard facility sizes for each program when available. The City of Fountain does not have a formal recreational sports program; all programmed sports opportunities are primarily available from five organizations in the Fountain area: The Fountain Valley YMCA; Widefield Community and Recreation Center; Fountain Valley Youth Baseball Association (FVYB); the Police Activities League (PALS), and the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO).

Youth Baseball Programs

There is increasing demand for organized baseball for youth in Fountain. Table 3.12 shows participation levels in baseball leagues for these programs. The number of individual baseball players from Fountain participating in all programs was estimated between 520 and 574 for 2002, and according to the providers, is either steady or growing.

The Fountain Valley YMCA offers T-ball for ages 3-4 at Aga Park field.

Widefield Community and Recreation Center utilizes physical education fields at nine elementary schools and three junior high schools in Widefield School District #3 for practices, but plays all games at four fields at the community center, which is located just north of Fountain's Urban Growth Area on Aspen Drive. Nine schools in Widefield School District #3 are inside the Fountain Urban Growth Area, and two of those (Mesa Ridge High School and Janitell Junior High School) are inside the Fountain Municipal Boundary. About 20% of all youth participants in community center sports are Fountain residents. Participation in all leagues fluctuates by about 5 to 10% each year, but is basically steady. The Community Center noted that they need and could easily support several more small fields for T-ball, plus larger fields (minimum 275' centerfield) for baseball. Also, there is very high demand for the use of their fields by local church groups, etc. for sports activities that they cannot accommodate with their own facilities.

Fountain Valley Youth Baseball (FVYB) has an exclusive use agreement with the City of Fountain for the four fields at Metcalfe Park. Others wishing to use these fields during FVYB's season must get permission from FVYB coordinators. There is no rent paid to the City for the use of the Metcalfe fields. The City provides water, mowing and fertilizer, and in return, FVYB provides all maintenance and funds upgrades to the fields, including new fences, one of four new backstops, bleachers, a concession stand and dugouts in the past few years.

FVYB sponsors 1-2 state tournaments each year at Metcalfe, as well as 2-3 area tournaments. During tournaments, which can draw hundreds or thousands of people, parking can be a problem, particularly if a rodeo event is scheduled concurrently. The FVYB reports that many of the parking issues have been resolved recently by the addition of new parking areas at the park. Some of these areas were created by taking down existing fencing, which Fountain Riding and Roping Club regards as a safety issue, and wants to have replaced. It appears that parking will be an ongoing issue between these two organizations.

All FVYB games are played at Metcalfe Park, but practices take place at 20 fields in the community, including all elementary school fields, three high school fields and Aga Park. FVYB would like to add a girls' softball league and perhaps a coed 16-18 league this year; and is considering expanding their available fields by either building one additional field at Metcalfe, entering an exclusive use agreement for the lighted field at Aga Park, or using the three fields at Fountain/Fort Carson High School. FVYB has also been approached about financing another field at Fountain/Fort Carson, which they would then have preferred use of during their April – June season.

Table 3.12
Approximate Numbers of Participants in Baseball Programs in 2002

Youth T-Ball (Fountain YMCA) Coed Ages 3-4	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
30-60	Steady participation	N/A
Youth T-Ball (Widefield CC) Coed Age 5 Coed Ages 6-7	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
22-28*	Participation fluctuates up or down 5-10% each year	Centerfield max. 200', baseline 60', fence, skinned or turf infield
Youth Baseball, Coach-Pitched (Widefield CC) Boys Ages 8-9	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
22-28*	Participation fluctuates up or down 5-10% each year	Centerfield max. 200', baseline 60', fence, skinned or turf infield
Youth Baseball, Machine-Pitched (Widefield CC) Boys Ages 10-11	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
22-28*	Participation fluctuates up or down 5-10% each year	Centerfield 275', 10' fence, skinned baselines with turf infield
Youth Baseball, Player-Pitched (Widefield CC) Boys Ages 12-13 Boys Ages 14-15	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
22-28*	Participation fluctuates up or down 5-10% each year	Centerfield 300', 8' fence, skinned baselines with turf infield
Youth T-Ball (FVYB) Coed Ages 5-6	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
75	Increasing noticeably	Centerfield 200', 40' baseline, backstop min. 25', turf, fenced
Youth Baseball Coach-Pitched (FVYB) Coed Ages 7-8	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
75	Increasing noticeably	Centerfield 200', 40' baseline, 46' mound, backstop 26', turf, fenced

Table 3.12 continued

Minors Youth Baseball (FVYB) Coed Ages 9-10	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
80	Increasing noticeably	Centerfield 205', 60' baseline, 46' mound, backstop 26', turf, fenced
Majors Youth Baseball (FVYB) Coed Ages 11-12	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
72	Increasing noticeably	Centerfield 205', 70' baseline, 46' mound, backstop 26', turf, fenced
Seniors Youth Baseball (FVYB) Coed Ages 13-15	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
100	Increasing noticeably	Centerfield 340', 90' baseline, 50' mound, backstop 26', turf, fenced, lighted

**Numbers represent 20% of Widefield Community Center's programmed sports participation, which is estimated to be Fountain residents.*

Softball Programs

Table 3.13 shows participation levels in softball leagues for private programs. The number of individual softball players from Fountain was estimated to be between 186 and 309 for 2002.

Widefield Community and Recreation Center offers several levels of girls' softball plus adult men's, women's and coed teams. Participation in all leagues fluctuates by about 5 to 10% each year, but is basically steady. Approximately 20% of community center players are residents of Fountain (10-15% for adult leagues). Practices for all Widefield Community Center youth leagues utilize physical education fields at nine elementary schools and three junior high schools in Widefield School District #3, but all games are played on the community center's four fields. Adult leagues do not practice but only play games at the community center. The number of available fields is adequate for practice and play for community center leagues only; they indicated that they could expand their program if more fields were available. There is very high demand for the use of community center fields by local church groups, etc. for sports activities, which usually cannot be accommodated at those fields due to prior commitments to others.

Fountain Valley Youth Baseball (FVYB) is considering adding a girls' softball league for girls ages 9-15 in 2003 or 2004.

Table 3.13
Approximate Numbers of Participants in Softball Programs in 2002

Girls' Coach-Pitched (Widefield CC) Ages 8-9	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
22-28*	Participation fluctuates up or down 5-10% each year	Centerfield max. 200', baseline 60', fence, skinned or turf infield
Girls' Slow-Pitch (Widefield CC) Ages 10-12	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
22-28*	Participation fluctuates up or down 5-10% each year	Centerfield 275', 10' fence, skinned baselines with turf infield
Girls' Fast-Pitch (Widefield CC) Ages 13-15	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
22-28*	Participation fluctuates up or down 5-10% each year	Centerfield 300', 8' fence, skinned baselines with turf infield
Adult Softball (Widefield CC) Men's Women's Coed	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
120-225*	Participation fluctuates up or down 5-10% each year	2 fields with 300' centerfields, 8' fence, skinned adjustable baselines; 1 field with 275' centerfield, 10' fence, skinned adjustable baselines

**Numbers represent 20% of Widefield Community Center's programmed sports participation, which is estimated to be Fountain residents.*

Basketball Programs

There is fairly high demand for organized basketball leagues in Fountain. Table 3.14 shows participation levels in basketball leagues for private programs. The number of individual basketball players was estimated to be between 270 and 445 for 2002.

The Fountain Valley YMCA offers coed youth basketball for boys and girls ages 3-11 at indoor courts at the YMCA, Jordahl Elementary School and Aragon Elementary School. The YMCA noted that it would like to provide a program for older kids, teens and adults, but fees would be prohibitive. YMCA teams also play Fountain Police Activities League (PALS) teams.

PALS offers a coed youth basketball program at the YMCA gymnasium and play against teams from Fountain Valley YMCA. The PALS program is only two years old. Mesa Elementary School offers after-school basketball for boys and girls in 3rd-5th grade, for Mesa students only. This program has been in place for over 18 years; teams play only against each other. Facilities are kept in excellent condition.

Widefield Community and Recreation Center offers basketball leagues at two age levels. Practices are held at Janitell and Watson Junior High Schools (which are in Widefield School

District #3 but within Fountain Urban Growth Area), and games are played at Janitell Junior High School. Teams play only against other teams in the league.

Table 3.14
Approximate Numbers of Participants in Basketball Programs in 2002

Youth Basketball (Fountain YMCA) Coed – Ages 3-11	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
100-250	Steady participation levels	Standard high school courts (50' x 84')
Youth Basketball (Fountain PALS) Coed – Ages 7-14	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
15-20	New program (2 years old)	Standard high school courts (50' x 84')
Youth Basketball (Mesa Elementary) Coed – Ages 8-11	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
65	Steady participation levels	N/A
Youth Basketball (Widefield CC) Girls Ages 10-11 Girls Ages 12-13	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
40-50*	Steady participation levels	Standard high school courts (50' x 84')
Youth Basketball (Widefield CC) Boys Ages 10-11 Boys Ages 12-13	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
50-60*	Steady participation levels	Standard high school courts (50' x 84')

**Numbers represent 20% of Widefield Community Center's programmed sports participation, which is estimated to be Fountain residents.*

Volleyball Programs

Table 3.15 shows participation levels in volleyball leagues for private programs. The number of individual volleyball players was estimated to be between 205 and 290 in 2002.

Mesa Elementary School offers after-school volleyball during the school year for boys and girls in 3rd-5th grade, for Mesa students only. This program has been in place for over 18 years; teams play only against each other. Facilities are kept in excellent condition.

The Fountain Valley YMCA offers coed adult volleyball at a retired high school gymnasium.

Widefield Community and Recreation Center offers volleyball leagues for youth and adults. Practices are held at Janitell and Watson Junior High Schools, and games are played at Janitell Junior High School. Teams play only against other teams in the league.

Table 3.15
Approximate Numbers of Participants in Volleyball Programs in 2002

Youth Volleyball (Mesa Elementary) Coed - Ages 8-11	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
65	Steady participation levels	N/A
Youth Volleyball (Widefield CC) Coed – Ages 10-11	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
30	Steady participation levels	Standard courts (30' x 60') outdoors
Adult Volleyball (Fountain YMCA) Coed	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
30-75	Steady participation levels	Standard courts (30' x 60') outdoors
Adult Volleyball (Widefield CC) Men's Women's Coed	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
80-120	Steady participation levels	Standard courts (30' x 60') outdoors

**Numbers represent 20% of Widefield Community Center's programmed sports participation, which is estimated to be Fountain residents.*

Soccer Programs

The demand for soccer programs is higher than can be accommodated by available fields in Fountain. Table 3.16 shows participation levels in soccer leagues for private programs. The number of individual soccer players was estimated to be between 425 and 480 for 2002.

The Fountain Valley YMCA offers an indoor youth soccer league from April to May. Games are played at the YMCA gymnasium and at Jordahl and Aragon Elementary School gymnasiums. The YMCA also offers a fall league that plays on Fountain/Fort Carson Middle School fields. The YMCA gymnasium also hosts the Fountain PALS indoor soccer league and plays against PALS teams (usually only 1-2 teams per season). Fountain PALS also has an outdoor league, which practices at various City parks and plays games at Fountain/Fort Carson Middle School.

Mesa Elementary School offers after-school soccer during the fall school session for boys and girls in 3rd-5th grade, for Mesa students only. This program has been in place for over 18 years; teams play only against each other. Facilities are kept in excellent condition.

Widefield Community and Recreation Center offers spring and fall soccer leagues for youth. Practices are held at all nine elementary schools and three junior high schools in the Widefield School District #3, and games are played at the Community Center. The center has one dedicated 50 x 80 yard soccer field, and also marks off portions of other fields for game play. Teams play only against other teams in the league. The community center noted that demand

for soccer programs has been so high that they added a second season. They indicated they could expand their program and support with several more fields of 50 x 80 yard size.

The American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) is also active in Fountain, but no information on programming or participation could be obtained.

Table 3.16
Approximate Numbers of Participants in Soccer Programs in 2002

Youth Indoor Soccer (Fountain YMCA) Coed – Ages 3-11	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
50-75	Increasing participation	50 x 80 yard indoor 'field'
Youth Soccer (Fountain YMCA) Coed – Ages 3-11	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
50-75	Increasing participation	50 x 80 yard field
Youth Indoor Soccer (Fountain PALS) Coed – Ages 7-14	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
15-20	Increasing participation	50 x 80 yard indoor 'field'
Youth Soccer (Mesa Elementary) Coed – Ages 8-10	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
60	Increasing participation	40 x 50 yard field
Youth Fall Soccer (Coed) (Widefield CC) Kindergarten Ages 6-7 Ages 8-9	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
100*	Increasing or steady participation levels	50 x 80 yard field
Youth Spring Soccer (Coed) (Widefield CC) Kindergarten Ages 6-7 Ages 8-9 Ages 10-11	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
150*	Increasing or steady participation levels	50 x 80 yard field

**Numbers represent 20% of Widefield Community Center's programmed sports participation, which is estimated to be Fountain residents.*

Football Programs

Interest in football leagues appears to be strong in Fountain. Table 3.17 shows participation levels in football leagues for private programs. The number of individual football players was estimated to be between 125 and 180.

Widefield Community Center does not offer flag football but indicated there is a demand for it; they do not have enough fields available to offer it as part of their sports program. They noted that many community children have to go to Colorado Springs to play, but sometimes practice in Fountain parks.

Youth flag football is offered by the Fountain Valley YMCA and Fountain PALS, whose teams play against each other. Practices and games are held on Fountain/Fort Carson Middle School fields. Mesa Elementary offers flag football in the fall as an after-school activity for Mesa students only.

Table 3.17
Approximate Numbers of Participants in Football Programs in 2002

Youth Flag Football (Fountain YMCA) Coed – Ages 6-13	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
50-100	Steady participation	N/A
Youth Flag Football (Fountain PALS) Coed – Ages 7-14	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
15-20	Steady participation	100 yard length
Youth Flag Football (Mesa Elementary) Coed – Ages 8-10	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
60	Steady participation	Approximately 40 yards by 50 yards

Tennis Programs

Widefield Community and Recreation Center offers tennis lessons during the summer, taught by a tennis professional at the four courts at the Community Center. Table 3.18 shows participation levels in 2002.

Table 3.18
Numbers of Participants in Tennis Programs in 2002

Tennis Lessons (Widefield CC) Beginner Intermediate	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
20-30*	N/A	Standard courts (36' x 78')

**Numbers represent 20% of Widefield Community Center's programmed sports participation, which is estimated to be Fountain residents.*

Swimming Programs

Swimming programs are a very popular activity for Fountain youth, with more participants than any other youth program. Table 3.19 shows participation levels in the private swimming programs. The YMCA offers swim lessons and open swims at the School District #8 pool at Fountain/Fort Carson High School, while the Widefield Community Center has its own pool.

**Table 3.19
Approximate Numbers of Participants in Swimming Programs in 2002**

Youth Swim Lessons (Fountain YMCA) Ages 3-5 Ages 6-12	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
Approximately 500	Steady, higher in summer than in winter	25 yard, 8 lane indoor pool
Youth Swim Lessons & Open Swim (Widefield CC)	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
7500 individual visits or lessons by Fountain residents (lessons and open swim not differentiated)	Steady participation	25 yard, 6 lane indoor pool

Rodeo (Roping and Riding)

The Fountain Riding and Roping Club (FRRC), formed in the 1960's, relied upon volunteers and donations to build the original riding arena at Metcalfe Park. The arena was rebuilt in 1978-80 using volunteers and an El Paso County matching funds grant. FRRC has a long-term agreement with the City of Fountain, and provides general maintenance and upkeep of the arena and its grounds (the City provides water, electric and other specialized maintenance). The user agreement specifies that FRRC has primary use of the arena, but other groups can use it if an event is not scheduled. In 2002, FRRC received \$5,000 from the Parks Department to assist with improvements, which was used for painting and other work. In 2003, another \$5,000 was budgeted for the FRRC.

Practices typically draw 10-100 local residents, most of whom ride their horses to the arena, but summer competitive events can draw hundreds of participants from Colorado and neighboring states. Parking is seriously lacking, as participants in barrel racing events typically arrive from out of town with a 60' truck/trailer combination. The FRRC noted that there isn't enough parking at Metcalfe, even when baseball games are not occurring concurrently. Parking almost always spills out onto surrounding neighborhood streets. They note there is unused space southeast and southwest of the ballfields that could be used for parking.

Safety is also an issue, as unsupervised children occasionally wander into the arena/horse areas from the baseball fields. A fence between the arena and ballfields would be very helpful. There is some resentment among individual FRRC members who feel that the baseball teams have taken over the park (mostly Fountain Valley Youth Baseball).

Table 3.20 shows general participation levels in FRRC-sponsored programs.

**Table 3.20
General Numbers of Participants in Rodeo Activities**

Gymkhana (Games on Horseback) Coed – All ages	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
Typically 10-100 participants for weekly events (family groups)	Steady but affected by drought, economy, poor weather	150' x 300' arena, various layouts for different events
Jackpot Barrel Racing Coed – All ages	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
Typically 2 events/month, 50 racers per event	Steady but affected by drought, economy, poor weather	150' x 300' arena, various layouts for different events
Team Roping Coed – All ages	Recent Trends	Standard Facility Size
No events in 2002. Local practices typically draw 10-100 2-person teams	Steady but affected by drought, economy, poor weather	150' x 300' arena, various layouts for different events

In-line Hockey Programs

Table 3.21 shows participation levels in the Fountain Valley YMCA roller hockey league. There are no adult in-line hockey leagues in the community. Approximately 30 youth play at the outdoor court at Aragon Elementary School during the fall.

**Table 3.21
Numbers of Participants in In-line Hockey Programs in 2002**

Youth Roller Hockey (Fountain YMCA) Coed – Ages 6-17	Number of Participants	Standard Facility Size
30	Steady or increasing	N/A

Cheerleading Programs

Table 3.22 shows participation levels in the Fountain PALS cheerleading program, which takes place year-round at the YMCA gymnasium.

**Table 3.22
Approximate Numbers of Participants in Cheerleading Programs in 2002**

Cheerleading Coed – Ages 7-14	Number of Participants	Standard Facility Size
15-20	Steady	N/A

E. Summary of Sport Facilities Needs and Recommended Levels of Service

Table 3.23 lists the current level of service for various active recreational facilities that groups and individuals in Fountain use, as well as recommendations on standards for providing these facilities now and in the future. Ranges, which other communities in the Colorado Front Range provide for these facilities, are shown as a point of reference. These numbers also assume ongoing partnerships with the Widefield District, school districts and the YMCA, and that use of the current facilities by Fountain residents continues.

According to this analysis, by 2015 there will be a need for 4 to 5 more soccer/football fields, 1 or 2 more baseball/softball fields, 7 more tennis courts, 1 more in-line skating rink and 1 more skateboard park. These numbers closely correlate with the recreation provider interviews and the community survey. The space required to accommodate these facilities is discussed in the next section.

The need for additional gyms will be met, all or in part, by the construction of additional schools as the population grows. However, there may be a synergistic grouping of a gym with other community facilities that were identified as high priority in the community survey.

The need for an additional swimming pool should be discussed. According to standards in other communities, the City is adequately served. However, residents overwhelmingly stated that a swimming pool is a priority. Perhaps the type of swimming pool they desire is not currently being offered, such as an outdoor leisure pool with aquatic play elements. Special meetings with residents to discuss the perceived need and to define the type of swimming facility should be conducted.

Construction of an ice skating rink in the next 10 years is not advisable, as residents are able to use other facilities in the region and they are extremely expensive to construct and operate.

Community social and educational/skills development facilities geared towards seniors, youth and the general population should also be considered. Although there are no specific standards for these types of facilities, the community clearly desired them. A multi-purpose facility that includes several of the active recreation components mentioned above, plus rooms for senior events, youth gatherings and games, and crafts rooms should be considered.

**Table 3.23
Recreational Facility Needs**

Recreation Facility	2003 Level of Service* (Facilities per Population)	Typical Standard in other Communities**	Recommended Standard	Additional Facility Needs by 2015***
Soccer/Football Fields (n=3)	1:5,843	1:4,000 to 1:6,000	1:4,000	4-5
Baseball/Softball Fields (n=6)	1:2,922	1:4,000 to 1:7,000	1:4,000	1-2
Gymnasiums (n=5)	1:3,506	NA	1:3,500	2-3
Outdoor Basketball Courts (n=5.5)	1:3,187	1:3,000 to 1:10,000	1:3,000	4-5
Tennis Courts (n=3)	1:5,843	1:1,500 to 1:3,000	1:3,000	7
Skateboard Parks (n=1)	1:17,529	1:15,000 to 1:50,000	1:15,000	1
In-line Skating Rinks (n=1)	1:17,529	NA	1:15,000	1
Ice Skating Rinks (n=0)	1:17,529	1:50,000 to 1:100,000	1:100,000	0
Swimming Pools (n=2)	1:8,764	1:20,000 to 1:40,000	1:20,000	0-1

* 2003 Population 17,529

** EDAW Survey of Communities, 1999

*** 2015 Population 29,769

F. Parkland Requirements to Meet Recreational Facility Needs

Parkland will be required to construct these additional facilities. The largest facilities, ballfields and soccer/football fields, will require approximately 20 acres including parking. An estimated 5 to 10 acres would be required for a multi-purpose recreation center that included the components previously described. An additional 5 to 8 acres would be needed for in-line skating, skate park and tennis courts. In total, the area needed for these active sports facilities is approximately 30 to 38 acres. If these facilities are placed within a larger community park setting, the park would need to be about 60 to 76 acres (or approximately twice the acreage) based on a community park design that balances active programmed sports uses with other community facilities, such as amphitheaters, sculpture parks, free play meadows, water features and festival spaces. Some of the court facilities, such as tennis courts and outdoor basketball courts, may be placed in neighborhood parks as well.

G. Existing and Future Parkland Needs

Neighborhood Parkland

Currently the level of service for neighborhood parks in Fountain is 1.54 acres/1,000 population. This is based on 7.0 acres of developed neighborhood / mini parks, 20 acres of community parkland that serves local neighborhood needs (total 27.0 acres), and 17,529 people. This level of service is comparable to that of many communities along the Front Range, but is short of the neighborhood parkland standards that communities typically adopt. This plan recommends that the City of Fountain adopt a standard of 2.0 acres/1,000 population, which would provide a better distribution of parks throughout Fountain and areas for sports practices, playgrounds and other neighborhood amenities. This recommendation is discussed further in the next chapter. Table 3.24 calculates the Neighborhood Parkland need for the years 2003 and 2015 based on current levels of service and recommended standards.

**Table 3.24
Neighborhood Parkland Need**

	2003 Need Based on Recommended Level of Service (2 acres per 1,000 population) ⁴	2015 Need Based on Current Level of Service (1.54 acres per 1,000 population) ⁵	2015 Need Based on Recommended Level of Service (2 acres per 1,000 population)
Existing Developed Neighborhood Parkland	27.0 acres	27.0 acres	27.0 acres
Parkland Need According to Standard	35.1 acres	45.8 acres	59.5 acres
Additional Neighborhood Parkland Needed	8.1 acres	18.8 acres	32.5 acres
Number of New Neighborhood Parks	1	2 to 3	4 to 5

Based on 2.0 acres/1,000 population, each square mile that has approximately 750 to 1,000 residential units (2,000 to 3,000 population) will need a 6 to 8-acre park. Between now and 2015, that translates into 4 to 5 new neighborhood parks, depending on how the City develops and the level of service standard the City adopts. There is currently 1 undeveloped neighborhood park owned by a homeowners association that is approximately 11 acres. Other park sites would need to be acquired.

Community Parkland

Currently, the level of service for community parks in Fountain is 4.9 acres/1,000 population. This is based on 86.7 acres of parks and 17,529 people. This standard is achieved by including 25 acres of Fountain Creek Regional Park, which is used like a community park. The current level of service is similar to that offered in other communities. This plan recommends that the City adopt a standard of 5 acres/1,000 population, which is similar to standards that have been adopted in other Front Range communities⁶ and is adequate to meet the needs for active recreational sports facilities and other programmed and unprogrammed community activities.

⁴ Year 2003 Estimated Population 17,529

⁵ Year 2015 Estimated Population 29,769

⁶ EDAW Inc. database of Front Range Communities, 2000

This recommendation is discussed further in the next chapter. Table 3.25 calculates the Community Parkland need for 2003 and 2015 based on current and recommended standards.

**Table 3.25
Community Parkland Need**

	2003 Need Based on Recommended Level of Service (5 acres per 1,000 population) ⁷	2015 Need Based on Current Level of Service (4.9 acres per 1,000 population) ⁸	2015 Need Based on Recommended Level of Service (5 acres per 1,000 population)
Existing Developed Community Parkland	86.7 acres*	86.7 acres*	86.7 acres*
Parkland Need According to Standard	87.5 acres	145.9 acres	148.8 acres
Additional Community Parkland Needed	0.8 acres	59.2 acres	62.1 acres
Number of Community Parks	0	1	1

* Includes 25 acres of Fountain Creek Regional Park that serve community park needs.

Based on 5 acres/1,000 population, Fountain will need to acquire and develop approximately 62 acres of community parkland by 2015. This is similar to the analysis of parkland need, which was discussed in the previous section, of approximately 60 to 78 acres by 2015 based on constructing active recreational sports facilities in community parks. This parkland need can be translated into the need for acquisition and construction of 1 new community park in this time frame.

H. Trail Needs

Time and again when Colorado residents are surveyed, the most frequent activities in city parks, trails and open space systems are walking, nature observation, bicycling, picnicking and jogging.⁹ For example, in Arvada, 80% of residents surveyed walked/hiked on a trail system, 79% observed nature or walked in an open space area, and 66% bicycled on a trail system. Comparatively, 20 to 25% of residents played soccer, golf, softball, outdoor basketball or tennis. Colorado Springs' and Fort Collins' survey results show similar trends. Although the length of the survey conducted for this plan did not allow detailed questions regarding recreation activities, it is likely that a significant number of Fountain residents use trails. In fact, the survey indicated a high level of support for additional paved and unpaved trails.

⁷ Year 2003 Estimated Population 17,529

⁸ Year 2015 Estimated Population 29,769

⁹ EDAW, Inc.

Chapter Four – Recommendations of the Master Plan

A. Parks

Park Classifications and Standards

Classification standards define site and program requirements for parks. The value of these classifications and standards is to provide guidance in the development of various types of parks, and to promote the development of a parkland system that offers consistent service to City residents. This plan recommends the following classification of parkland as stated in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1
Park Classifications and Standards**

Classification	Desirable Acreage	Purpose/Function	Site Characteristics	Level of Service
Community Park	30-100 acres	Provides opportunities for community-wide activities and facilities. Should maintain a balance between programmed sports facilities and other community activity areas (such as urban forests, gardens, water features, performance areas, festival spaces, plazas, etc.), and have features that appeal to the broader community. No more than 50% of a community park should be developed as active, programmed sports area in order to preserve this balance. Community parks should generally be located to provide all residents access to a community park within 1.5 miles of their home. Community parks may also serve as the local neighborhood park for residential areas within 0.5 mile.	<p>Portions of the site should be relatively flat to accommodate fields and facility development. Special site features, such as streams, lakes, forests, rock outcrops, historic or archaeological sites and other interesting elements may add to the unique character of the park.</p> <p>Ideally, will have good access from a collector or arterial street.</p> <p>Direct access to regional trail system desirable.</p>	5.0 acres / 1,000 pop.

Table 4.1 continued

Classification	Desirable Acreage	Purpose/Function	Site Characteristics	Level of Service
Neighborhood Park	5-12 acres	<p>Provides nearby recreation and leisure opportunities within walking distance (0.5 mile) of residential areas. Should serve as a common area for neighbors of all ages to gather, socialize and play.</p> <p>Typically, would include a paved, multi-purpose area for court games/in-line skating or two tennis courts, a multi-purpose play field with backstop, play equipment, ADA accessible trails, and shaded areas for picnics and sitting within a landscaped setting that is a blend of full irrigation for active uses and xeriscape. Features such as interpretive signs, water bodies and areas of natural vegetation may also be included where appropriate. In most cases, programmed sports activities should be limited to practices. On-street parking is typically adequate, unless a rental picnic pavilion or other feature, which generates a large volume of automobile traffic that cannot be accommodated on the available street frontage, is included.</p> <p>School/Park facilities include many of the same neighborhood standards, except that school/parks should include: game fields (preferably two), off-street parking that is situated for school and park purposes, and a playground designed for age groups not served by school playgrounds.</p>	<p>Locate adjacent to elementary or junior high schools when possible.</p> <p>Centrally locate within area served.</p> <p>Accessible via walkway or urban trail.</p> <p>Portions of the site should be relatively flat to accommodate fields and facility development.</p>	2.0 acres / 1,000 pop.
Mini-Parks	3 or fewer acres	<p>Serves a neighborhood where opportunities for a larger park site are unavailable. Typically considered to serve residents within 0.25 mile of the park. Due to limited size, may only contain a few of the elements typical of a standard neighborhood park.</p>	<p>Similar to those required for neighborhood parks.</p>	<p>Not applicable. Part of neighborhood park standards.</p>
Special Purpose Parks	Varies	<p>Serves a singular or very focused community need, such as a horticulture center, environmental education center, working farm, performance area, urban plaza, equestrian center and civic park.</p>	<p>Varies</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>

Table 4.1 continued

Classification	Desirable Acreage	Purpose/Function	Site Characteristics	Level of Service
Regional Park	Varies	Provides facilities and recreational amenities intended to serve City residents as well as the surrounding region. As such, regional parks typically involve partnerships with several jurisdictions that come together to provide a service or benefit, which they cannot individually afford or which they can provide more economically through a partnership. Typically, regional parks contain a mix of active sports fields, open space and other amenities.	<p>Portions of the site should be relatively flat to accommodate fields and facility development. Special site features such as streams, lakes, forests, rock outcrops, historic or archaeological sites, and other interesting elements may add to the unique character of the park.</p> <p>Direct access from an arterial street.</p> <p>Direct access to regional trail system</p>	Not applicable, but some park acreage may be used to satisfy community park needs and therefore be calculated into the total community parkland available in the City.

Park Projects

Additional parks will need to be developed to meet existing and future needs of the approximately 12,500 new residents expected in Fountain by 2015. Neighborhood parks are shown in approximately every square mile that is planned for future residential development. Specifically, 1 neighborhood park is currently needed and a total of 4 to 5 will be needed in the next 10 to 12 years. Map 6, Master Plan, shows conceptual locations of parks to enhance service to existing neighborhoods and provide neighborhood-scale parks for proposed residential areas. The Master Plan map should be used as a guide to acquire these sites in advance of imminent development, wherever it is to occur, and develop these sites as needed.

Map 6 also shows the conceptual location for a new community park 60 to 70 acres in size. The area identified is east of the current city limits near Jimmy Camp Creek and a planned regional trail connection. Park development should avoid sensitive environmental areas along the creek, but can capitalize on the attractive natural environment the riparian area presents.

Presently, the City's Level of Services approximately meets the master plan criteria for community parks of 5.0 acres per 1,000 population. However, it falls slightly short of the recommended standard of 2.0 acres 1,000 population for neighborhood parks. A suggestion to meet this criteria is to partner with the Countryside Homeowners Association to develop and maintain the undeveloped Countryside park site (11 acres) as a City neighborhood park. The addition of this park would bring the existing level of neighborhood parks from 1.54 to 1.94 acres per 1,000 population. The development of this park as a public city park would be dependent on the willingness of the HOA of Countryside to donate the land, adequate funding for improvements through grants or other means, and additional maintenance funding to support the park. A goal would be to develop Countryside Park as a public neighborhood park by 2007.

B. Trails

Trail Classifications and Standards

This plan contains trail design guidelines and standards that are supplemental to those contained in the 1996 Trails Plan. These off-street trails are primarily recreational in nature, versus bike transportation corridors that are part of the higher speed, on-street bike lane system. Recreational trails may link to schools, public parks, recreational facilities and open space areas; to other neighborhoods; or to work or shopping destinations. The trail classifications and design standards presented in this section have been developed with consideration of the information provided in “Planning Trails with Wildlife in Mind – A Handbook for Trail Planners.”¹

The construction of a trail invariably results in some ecological impact. Whether it is vegetation that is removed in the process of building a trail or the creation of new ecological conditions prompting a shift in the composition of wildlife and plant species, biological diversity is impacted. Disturbance along a trail can also cause some wildlife species to abandon their nests, decline parental care, shorten feeding times and/or move away permanently. It is therefore imperative that trail corridors be designed from a regional perspective in an effort to balance the needs of the landscape and wildlife with that of recreational users.

With these thoughts in mind, the following design considerations are recommended:

- Minimize the zone of influence by reducing the width of the trail so that a balance is achieved between the development of a multi-use trail system and the preservation of wildlife habitat.
- Align a trail along or near an existing human-created ecological edge rather than bisecting undisturbed areas or large areas of wildlife habitat to minimize habitat fragmentation.
- Primary trails should be located within a greenway or minimum 50-foot easement to provide a scenic environment, and to provide adequate room for both a paved and non-paved trail where appropriate.
- Provide an adequate buffer, up to 100 feet, between trail development and wetland areas where feasible.
- Locate trails, where feasible, in scenic locations, but not within or immediately adjacent to sensitive vegetation or significant wildlife habitat.
- Minimize cut and fill slopes adjacent to the trail.
- Restrict the density of trails within and near high quality wildlife habitat areas.
- Select degraded areas with potential for restoration.
- All graded slopes should be revegetated and measures taken to control storm drainage, weed invasion and erosion.

¹ Colorado State Parks, September 1998.

- Revegetate upland areas disturbed by trail development, as appropriate, for continuity with the surrounding natural vegetation communities.

The following is a description of the two community trail types in Fountain with their respective design standards. All trails shall be designed and constructed to current ADA standards and City of Fountain construction specifications.

Primary Multi-Purpose, Off-Street Trails. Paved multi-purpose, off-street trails form the major trail spines through the City. They should accommodate a variety of trail users, including walkers, joggers, recreational bikers and sometimes, commuter bikers within the same trail corridor. The preferable location of these trails should be along drainageways or other linear features, connecting parks, open space areas, recreational facilities and major destination nodes. Environmentally sensitive areas should be avoided. Primary trails that must be located adjacent to roadways should incorporate a 50-foot easement where feasible and appropriate. A 3-foot wide, soft surface shoulder on one side of the trail should be provided for joggers and walkers who prefer a softer surface. Figure 4.1 illustrates the cross-section of a primary multi-purpose, off-street trail and includes trail widths, trail shoulders and clearance requirements. Table 4.2 lists the specific design standards for primary and secondary trails.

Secondary Multi-Purpose, Off-Street Trails. Secondary trail links should be provided through development areas to the primary trail system, as well as to parks and open space areas that are not on the primary system. These paved multi-purpose, off-street trails should be provided by the project developer and be an integral part of the circulation and open space system of the development. Like primary trails, the secondary trails should be located in an open space corridor and accommodate a variety of trail users, including walkers, joggers and bicyclists. Primary trails that must be located adjacent to roadways should incorporate a 30-foot easement where feasible and appropriate. Table 4.1 lists specific design requirements.

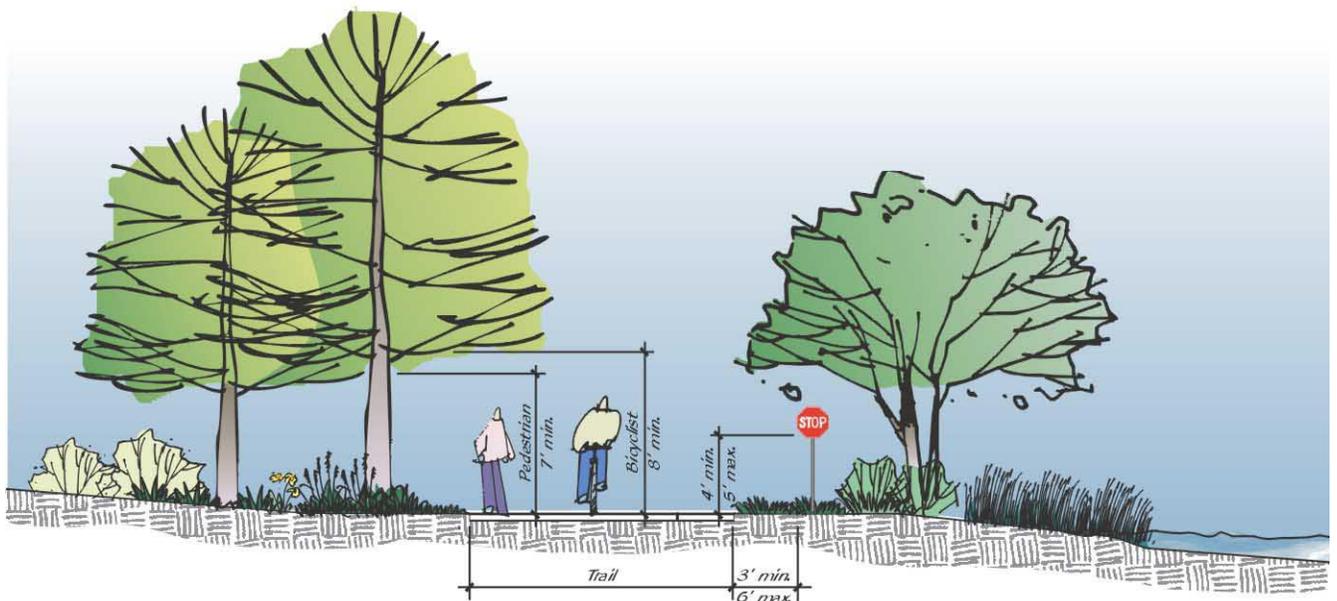


Figure 4.1. Primary Multi-Purpose Off-Street Trail Cross-Section

**Table 4.2
Trail Design Standards**

	Primary Multi-Purpose Off-Street Trails	Secondary Multi-Purpose Off-Street Trails
Definition	Trails for walking, jogging, skating, bicycling and other non-motorized uses that are part of the City of Fountain Primary Trail System, and that are constructed and maintained as part of the City's recreational facilities.	Trails for walking, jogging, skating, bicycling and other non-motorized uses that provide connections to the primary trail system, or to attractions, employment areas, shopping and services, and between neighborhoods. These trails shall be privately owned and maintained, and required as part of the City development process.
Right-of-Way	50 feet minimum width where feasible, designed as naturalized open space or parkland as determined by the City.	30 feet minimum width, designed as naturalized open space or parkland as determined by the City
Trail Width	10 feet.	8 feet.
Trail Surface	Concrete. No openings greater than ½ inch per ADA.	Concrete. No openings greater than ½ inch per ADA.
Parallel Trail Width	3 feet if present.	NA
Parallel Trail Surface	Crushed gravel if not used by equestrians. Natural surface if used by equestrians.	NA
Sight Distance	130 feet minimum. If unattainable, provide adequate signage.	90 feet minimum. If unattainable, provide adequate signage.
Grades	5% maximum preferred. In special circumstances, up to 8.33% may be allowed, not to exceed 200 feet in length.	5% maximum preferred. In special circumstances, up to 8.33% may be allowed, not to exceed 200 feet in length.
Cross Slope	1-2 % typical. 3% maximum.	1-2 % typical. 3% maximum.
Vertical Clearance	12 feet preferable, 10 feet minimum.	12 feet preferable, 10 feet minimum.
Shoulders	3 feet mowed and clear of hazards on each side of trail. Design for pruning and occasional mowing for 10 feet on each side of trail.	3 feet zone, clear of hazards either side.
Trail Centerline Radius	40 feet minimum at tight corners and switchbacks. 100 feet minimum elsewhere. Adequate signage where radius is shorter.	30 feet minimum at tight corners and switchbacks. 100 feet minimum elsewhere. Adequate signage where radius is shorter.
Radius at Intersections of Trails	15 feet to accommodate maintenance vehicles. 8 feet where vehicles are not anticipated.	8 feet minimum.
Separation from Roadway	20 feet minimum where feasible.	8 feet minimum where feasible.
Striping	4 inch wide, dashed white center lane striping. Yellow solid line where site distances prohibit safe passing.	None
Underpass Width	12 feet minimum. 14 feet preferable.	10 feet minimum. 12 feet preferable.
Bridges	10 feet minimum.	8 feet minimum.
Guardrails	Guardrails or fencing along steep drops within 5 feet of trail.	Guardrails or fencing along steep drops within 5 feet of trail.
Trail Markings and Signage	As needed for safety, regulations and as desired for interpretation and wayfinding. Designs to meet <i>Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)</i> standards and as recommended in <i>AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, 1999</i> .	As needed for safety, regulations and as desired for interpretation and wayfinding. Designs to meet <i>Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)</i> standards and as recommended in <i>AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, 1999</i> .
Amenities	Restrooms and drinking fountains/water jug fillers at strategic trailheads and as provided by nearby commercial uses. Benches, approximately 2 per mile. Trail markers, every 0.1 mile. Picnic tables as appropriate.	As appropriate.

Proposed Trails

This plan recommends acquisition of the right-of-way and construction of trails throughout the community and Urban Growth Area (UGA). Map 6 shows the location of existing and proposed Primary Multi-Purpose, Off-Street Trails as proposed in the 1996 Trails Plan. This entire system consists of approximately 32 miles of new trails, not including those planned by El Paso County along Fountain Creek. The locations of trails should be coordinated with El Paso County and adjacent municipalities to ensure that complete connections can be made. Priority should be placed on constructing the primary trail links to the regional trail system, especially along Jimmy Camp Creek. Trails along roadways should be constructed for those segments as part of the roadway improvement package.

It may not be feasible for the City to construct all 32 miles of the trail system in the next 10 to 12 years, but a reasonable goal is to reserve all the trail corridors within the anticipated development areas and construct at least half of the system (16 miles). If accomplished, the City would have a spine system from Fountain Creek along Jimmy Camp Creek to the future community park site (approximately 4 miles), and could provide the major connections north and south of this trail to existing and planned park sites. Constructing these trails would provide a level of service for City-constructed trails of 0.5 mile per 1,000 population. This level of service could be translated into a standard and used in calculating a development impact fee if desired. This implementation tool is discussed further in Chapter Five.

C. Other Proposed Recreational Facilities

Fountain should consider the construction of its own multi-purpose recreation center within the next 5 to 10 years. This center could accommodate a variety of recreational and leisure-time activities, including serving the senior population, providing a place for teens and youth to congregate, and serving the general population with indoor arts and crafts spaces, a gym and meeting spaces if needed. This plan does not attempt to develop a specific program or budgetary costs for such a facility, as this would require a focused effort. However, facilities constructed in other smaller towns have ranged in price from \$7 to \$15 million or more, depending on the scale of the project and whether or not a pool is part of the program.

D. Estimated Costs for Parks and Trails

The cost for trail and park construction varies widely, depending on the specific elements to be included in each park, the terrain, necessary road crossings and other physical features that require more extensive design solutions. For the purposes of assigning an order of magnitude cost to the master plan recommendations, we have assumed costs that are in order with the costs EDAW has experienced in designing and overseeing the construction of similar facilities. They are approximate and are intended to illustrate order of magnitude, not detail. Actual costs for land acquisition and development should be developed more specifically. Costs are in 2003 dollars and must be escalated yearly to compensate for inflation.

Chapter Five – Implementation

A. Recommended Implementation Strategies and Sources of Funding

Fountain currently uses multiple sources of funding and cooperative arrangements to finance its park acquisition, development, operations and maintenance activities, and to provide recreation facilities and programs. The City of Fountain General Fund, park land dedication or fees-in-lieu through the subdivision process, Colorado State Conservation Trust Fund and Great Outdoors Colorado grants provide funds while Widefield School District #8, Fountain Valley YMCA, Widefield Special District and El Paso County are partners in providing recreation programs and public use of their facilities. Additional strategies should be considered to meet the expressed needs of existing residents as well as the needs of future residents.

The following list of strategies and funding sources should be considered when developing a specific implementation plan for City projects and programs. The plan should include capital, operations and maintenance costs for existing parks as well as new projects.

Sales Tax Increase

According to the community survey, the residents of Fountain are likely to support up to a 0.5% sales tax increase for a multi-purpose recreation center that includes an outdoor pool, as well as additional parks and playgrounds. Fountain’s current municipal sales tax rate is 3.0%. Legally, the rate can increase another 1.0 to 4.0%. Net taxable sales for 2001 were \$130,108,179, using the State’s definition of taxable. The City collected about \$3.9 million in sales tax revenue (3.0% x \$130,108,179) in 2001.

Table 5.1
Estimated Sales Tax Revenue Amounts

ESTIMATED SALES TAX REVENUE AMOUNTS (USING 2001 DATA)	
If you want Fountain sales tax revenues to generate this much additional revenue per year:	The town’s sales tax would have to increase by:
\$100,000	0.07%
\$325,270	0.25%
\$650,540	0.50%
\$500,000	0.38%
\$1,000,000	0.77%

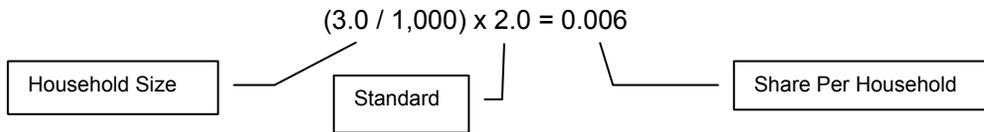
Coley Forrest, 2002

Development Impact Fees

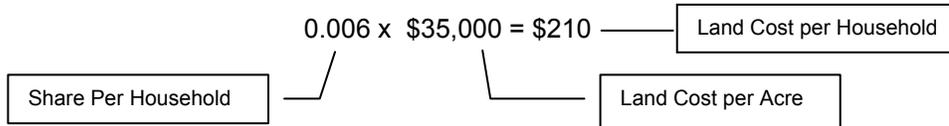
Although the City already has a parkland fee assessed on new development, the City should consider establishing an annually adjusted parkland fee that fully covers the cost of acquiring and developing both neighborhood and community parks. However, even if the parkland fee were adjusted tomorrow, these fees cannot be used to develop parks that are needed by current residents. Therefore, the City should also consider other funding mechanisms, such as sales tax; partnerships with the school district, sports associations or private developers; grants; and lottery proceeds.

A development impact fee should reflect the adopted level of service standard and cover the cost of acquiring and developing future parkland. A parkland fee can be calculated based on the following methodology:

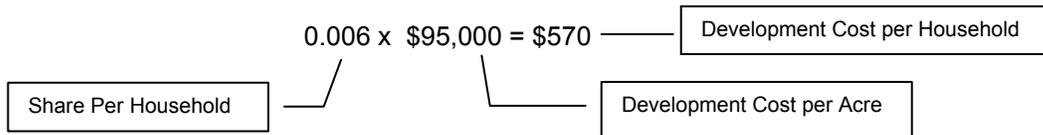
Parkland share per household is the product of average household size divided by the standard. For example, if the standard of 2 acres per 1,000 population for neighborhoods parks is used, the share per household would be:



This is then applied to land costs:



And also applied to parkland development costs:



Therefore, the total development impact for neighborhood parks would be \$780 per household. When the 5 acres per 1,000 population standard for community parks is applied to this formula, it results in an impact of \$2,100 per household. A lower household size would reduce the impact per household. The 2001 Comprehensive Plan used a future household size of 2.6, which would reduce the neighborhood park impact to \$676 and the community park impact to \$1,690.

It is recommended that adjustments to the development impact fees occur on a yearly basis per the present ordinance. However, due to the limitations of TABOR, it is not recommended to implement the full increase of the impact fee at one time. The immediate increase in fees would create adverse impact to the presently constrained budget. It is recommended that fees be increased over a six-year period to appropriate levels, reducing the impact to the budget. Land donations are not affected by TABOR and thus could impact the long term increases since land costs are included in the impact fee. If in the future a dedicated sales tax is created for recreation and parks, the impact fees would still be subject to TABOR unless an enterprise fund or a district is created.

There are at least three cities – Erie, Loveland and Greeley – that assess impact fees for other recreational facilities, including trails. This also remains an option for Fountain.

Subdivision Ordinance Requirements

Currently, there is no dedicated funding source for trail corridor acquisition and trail construction. The City should consider modifying its subdivision ordinance to require adjacent developments to dedicate the master planned trail corridors to the City, as well as provide the secondary trails as described in Chapter Four.

Conservation Trust Fund

This is a revenue source from the Colorado lottery. Funds are distributed annually by the State, based on population. Many other communities dedicate their annual Colorado Lottery funds to trail corridor acquisition and trail construction projects. Currently, the City receives approximately \$110,000 annually, which has historically been used for operations and some improvements to the parks.

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Trust Fund

This is a statewide pool of revenue from Colorado Lottery proceeds. Funds are available on a competitive grant basis for park and open space land acquisition and development, outdoor recreation, environmental education and capacity building. The City has recently received two grants for skateboard park improvements.

State Trails Program

Established in 1971, this program is funded with revenue from GOCO, TEA-21 Section 1112 Recreation Trails Program, and Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) registration fees. Funds are available for trails on a competitive basis. A 25 to 50% match is required. Since the State funding pool is relatively small, this resource is proposed for a small component of the trails system. The City has difficulty with current budget constraints and TABOR limitations making matching funds a challenge.

Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)

Section 1202, "Enhancement Grants," are available from the federal government through the Denver Regional Council of Governments on a competitive basis to fund bicycle transportation, wetlands improvements and historic preservation, among other things. These grants are a possible and supplemental source of revenue for some trail improvements. The City has difficulty with generating the matching funds to maximize the potential of this funding source.

State Historical Society Funds. A portion of state gaming revenues are transferred to the State Historical Fund and administered by the State Historic Society. Grants are available for projects of historic significance. Trail improvements that highlight the historic significance of Fountain Creek and Jimmy Creek should be considered.

B. Planning, Recreation Programming, Operations and Maintenance Considerations

As the City continues to grow, additional staff will be needed to plan, operate and maintain the new parks and facilities required to serve its new residents.

At the present time, the City operates and maintains the parks system through the Public Works Department. The Parks Division has 3 full-time and 6 part-time, summer-only staff (0.3 FTE¹ per employee) responsible for maintaining 69 developed acres of parkland. This works out to a ratio of one FTE per 14 acres of parkland. If the current staff to acres ratio of 1 person per 14 acres is continued, development of the approximately 95 acres of neighborhood and community

¹ FTE = full time equivalent staff

parkland would require 6 to 7 additional full-time maintenance staff positions. Additional staff could also be required to maintain additional open space areas and trails. The ability to increase staffing would be dependent on the budget for the parks department.

The City currently relies on other public and non-profit organizations to provide recreation programming for its residents. Although there are many different programs currently offered, residents clearly desire safe places for youth to congregate, additional arts and crafts opportunities, an outdoor swimming pool, a senior center and various other recreational facilities. Fountain needs to decide if the existing partnerships with other providers can expand to include additional responsibilities, or if the City needs to provide its own recreation department. Most other communities in the region that are smaller or of similar size to Fountain have their own recreation department, including Windsor, Erie, Carbondale, Commerce City, Berthoud and Evans, and many of these have a city-operated recreation/community center.

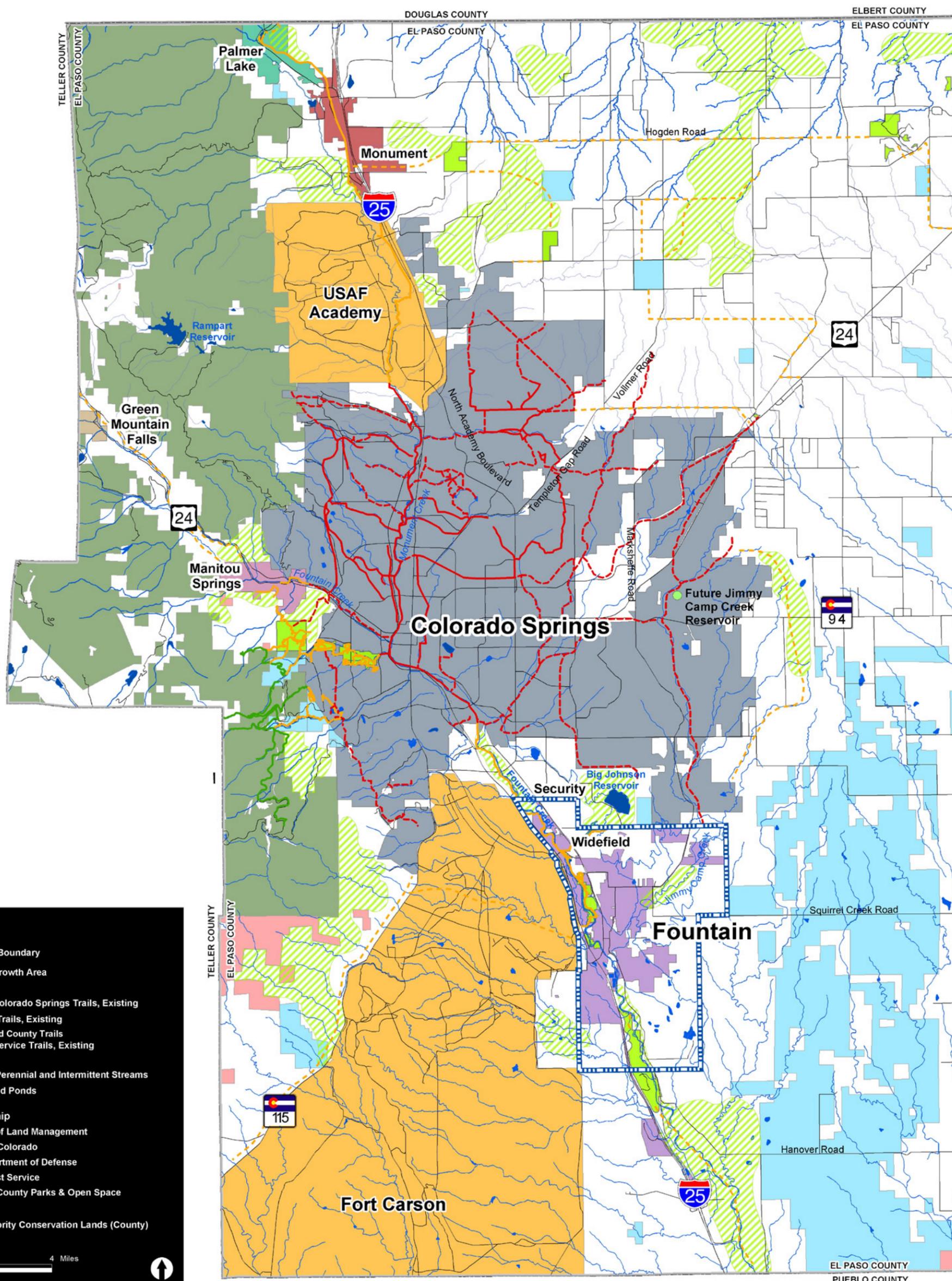
A recreation center requires significant citizen input to develop the vision and budget for the facility. The City should establish a recreation committee in the year 2003 that would proceed using this master plan as a guide. A goal of this committee is the definition of various program elements to be included in the facility, as well as its location, capital, operations and maintenance costs. This committee should also investigate financing options in more detail, which may include going to the voters in 2004 to approve a dedicated funding source.

If the City of Fountain begins to provide recreation programs, a user fee policy should be developed that defines the anticipated percentage of costs for operations and maintenance that should be recovered. The fee structure can vary by type of participant or type of program. Many models exist in communities along the Colorado Front Range.



CITY OF FOUNTAIN PARKS, RECREATION AND TRAILS MASTER PLAN

EDAW



Legend

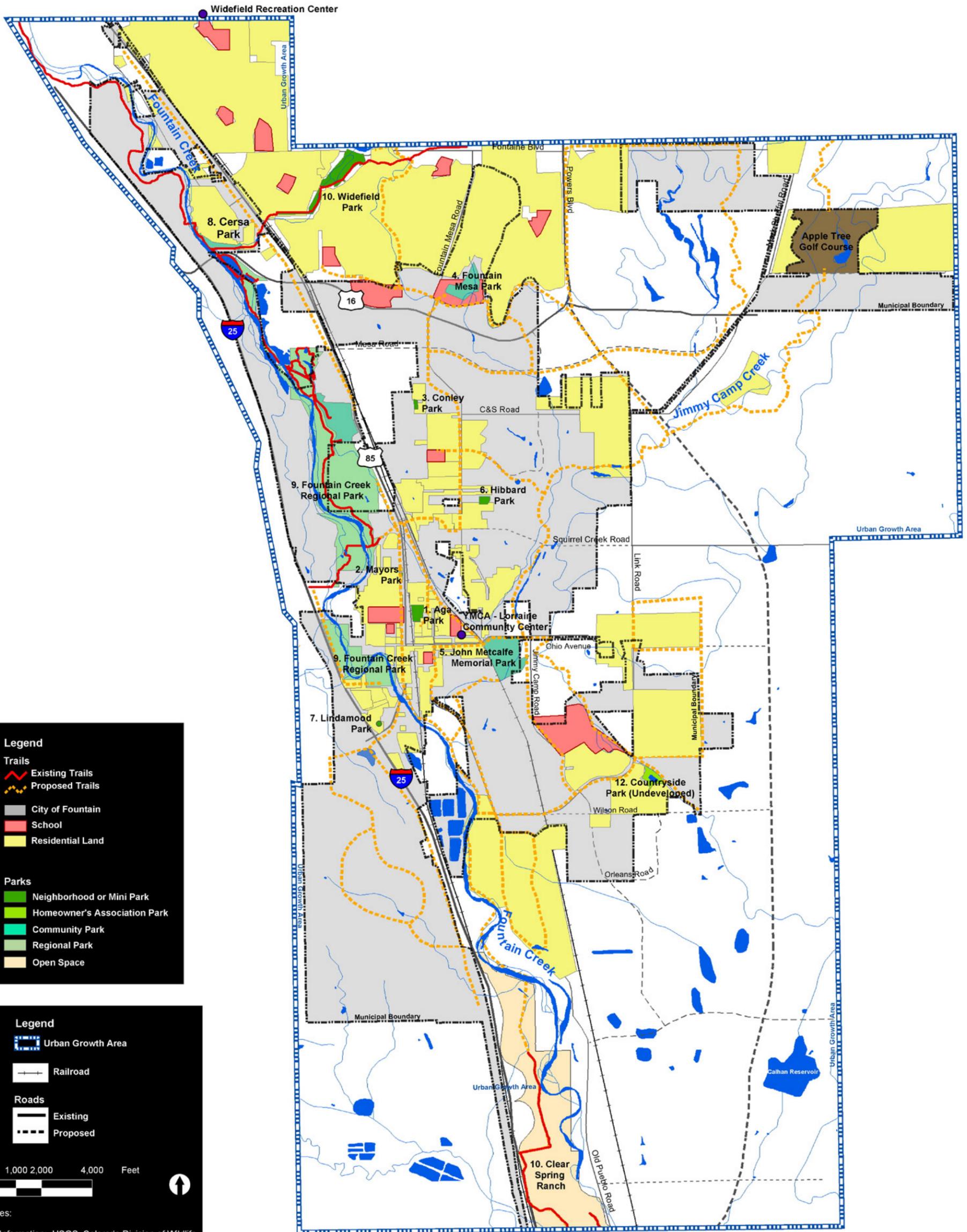
- County Boundary
- Urban Growth Area
- Trails**
 - City of Colorado Springs Trails, Existing
 - County Trails, Existing
 - Proposed County Trails
 - Forest Service Trails, Existing
- Streams**
 - Rivers, Perennial and Intermittent Streams
 - Lakes and Ponds
- Land Ownership**
 - Bureau of Land Management
 - State of Colorado
 - US Department of Defense
 - US Forest Service
 - El Paso County Parks & Open Space
 - High Priority Conservation Lands (County)

0 1 2 4 Miles

Sources:
 Base Information: USGS, Colorado Division of Wildlife
 Overlay Information: BLM, El Paso County Parks

APRIL 2003

MAP 1. REGIONAL CONTEXT



Legend

- Urban Growth Area
- Railroad

Roads

- Existing
- Proposed

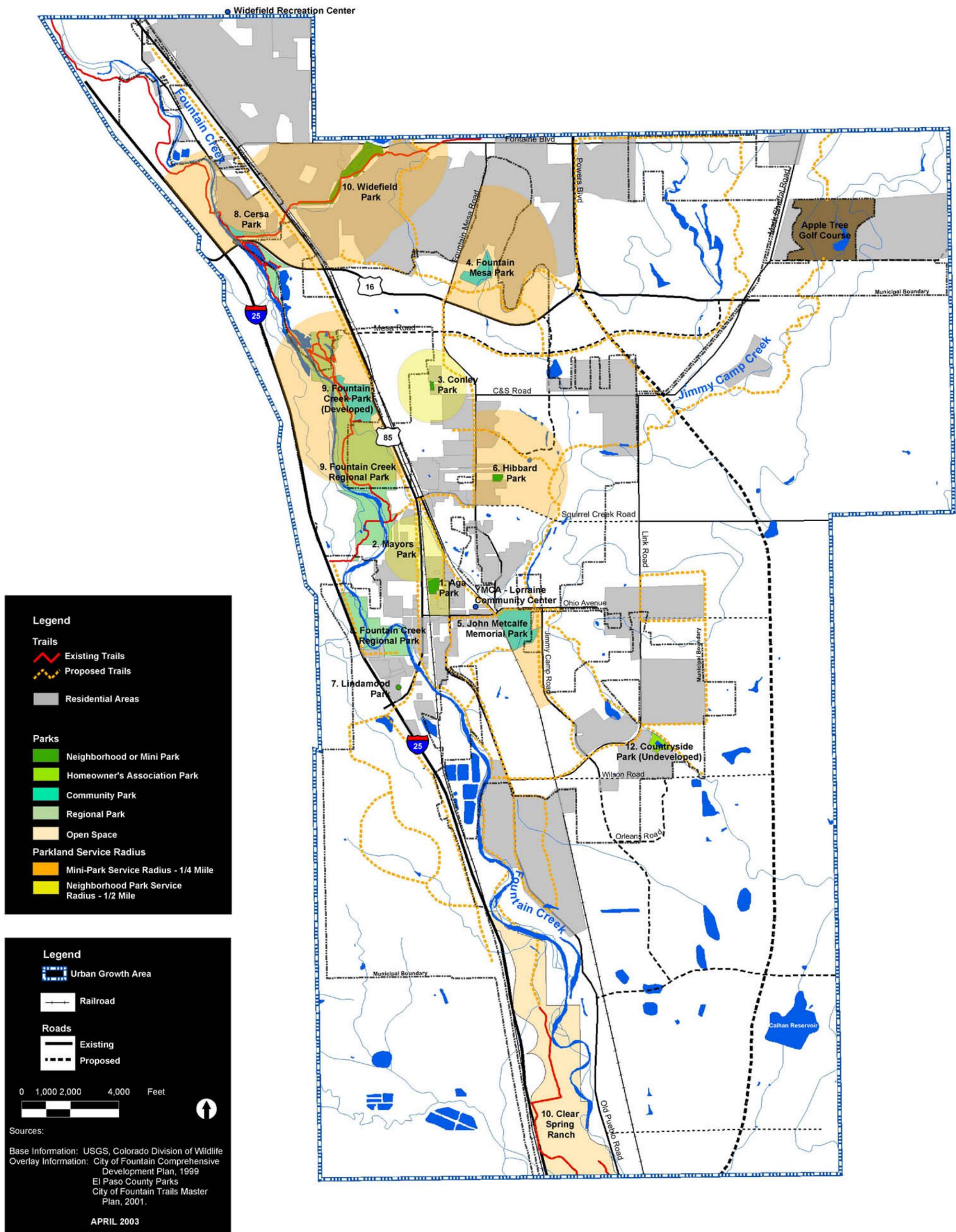
0 1,000 2,000 4,000 Feet

Sources:

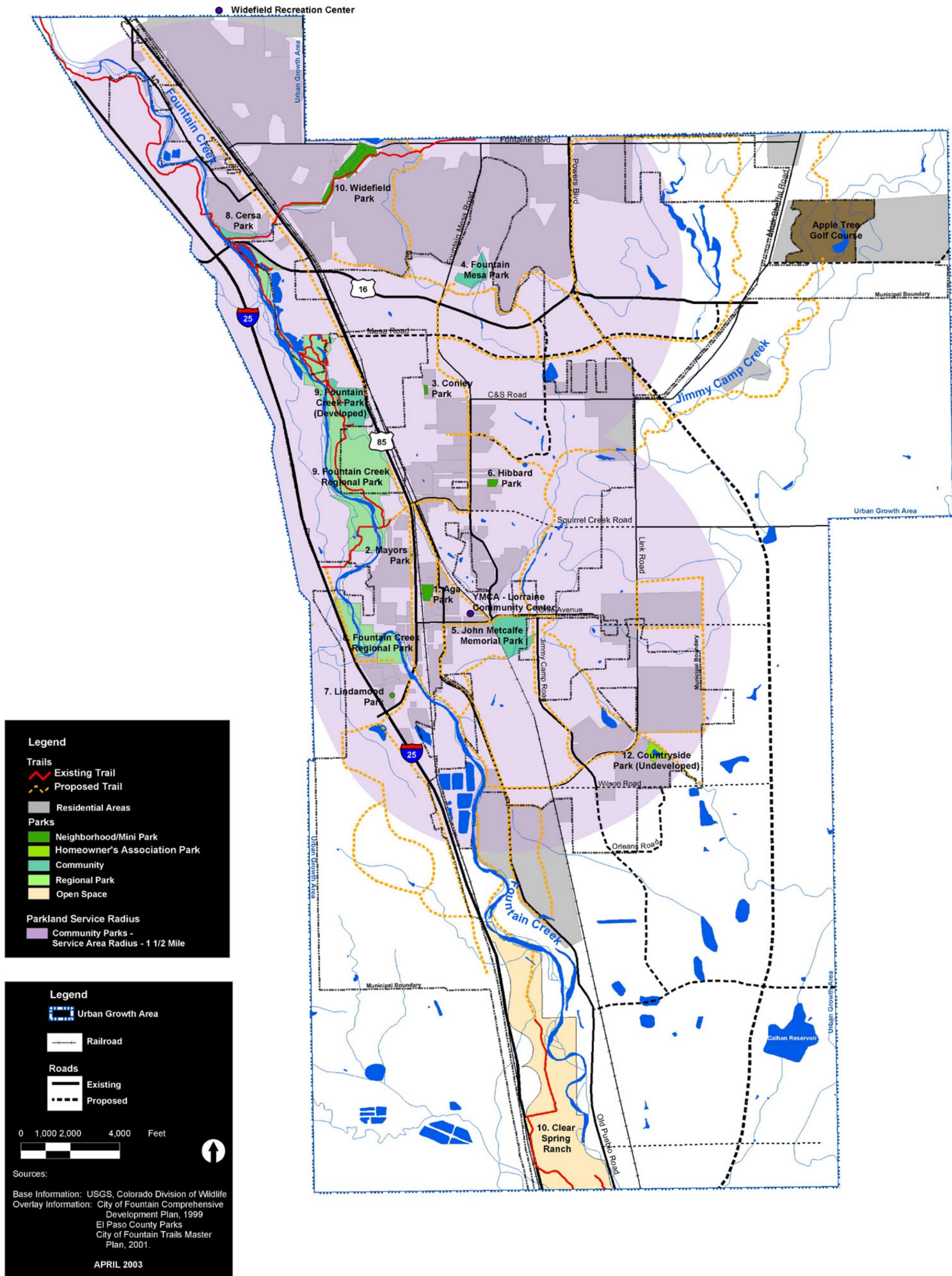
Base Information: USGS, Colorado Division of Wildlife
 Overlay Information: City of Fountain Comprehensive Development Plan, 1999
 El Paso County Parks
 City of Fountain Trails Master Plan, 2001.

APRIL 2003

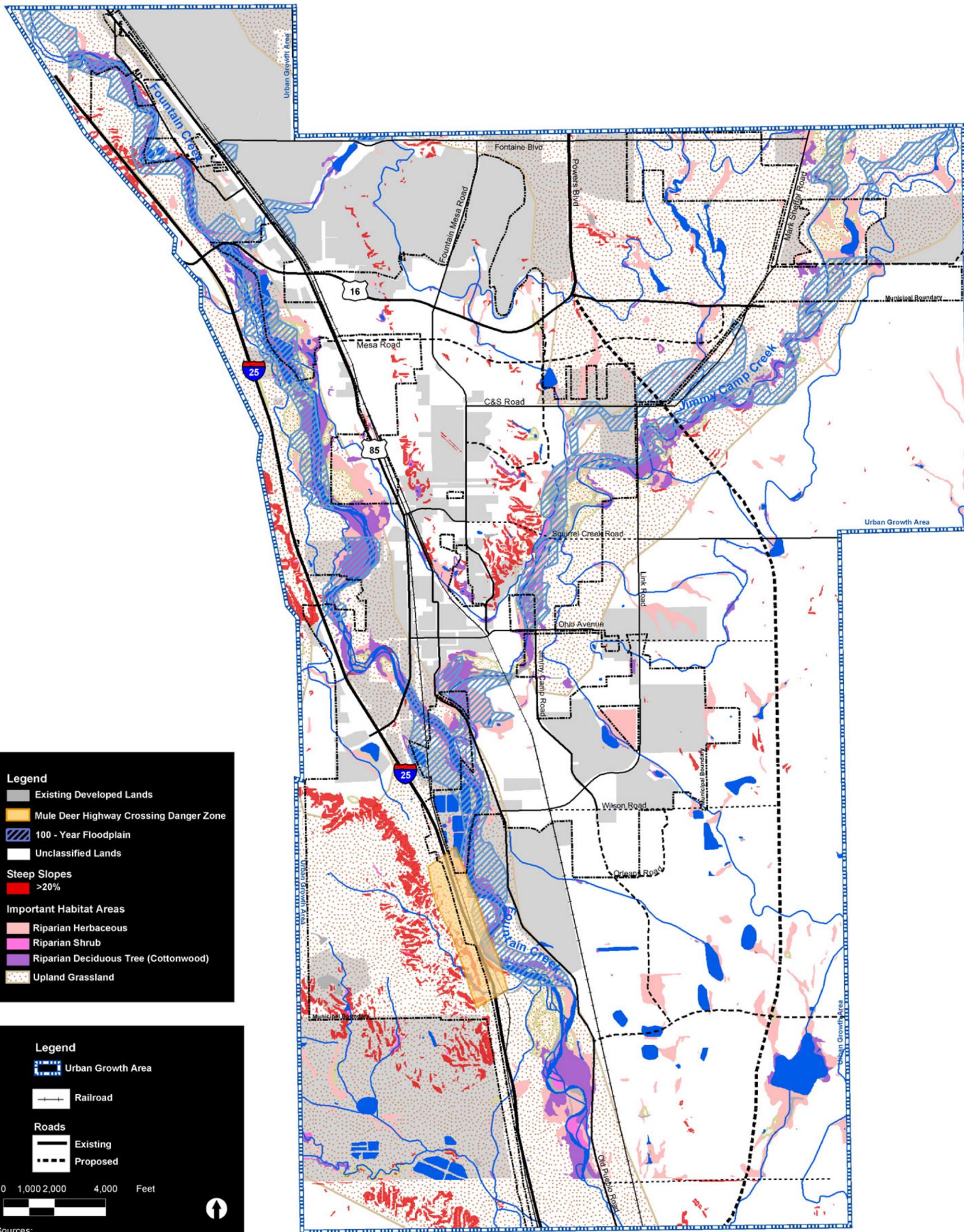
MAP 2. EXISTING PARKS, TRAILS, OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES



MAP 3. NEIGHBORHOOD/MINI PARKS - SERVICE AREAS



MAP 4. COMMUNITY PARKS - SERVICE AREAS



Legend

- Existing Developed Lands
- Mule Deer Highway Crossing Danger Zone
- 100 - Year Floodplain
- Unclassified Lands
- Steep Slopes >20%
- Important Habitat Areas
 - Riparian Herbaceous
 - Riparian Shrub
 - Riparian Deciduous Tree (Cottonwood)
 - Upland Grassland

Legend

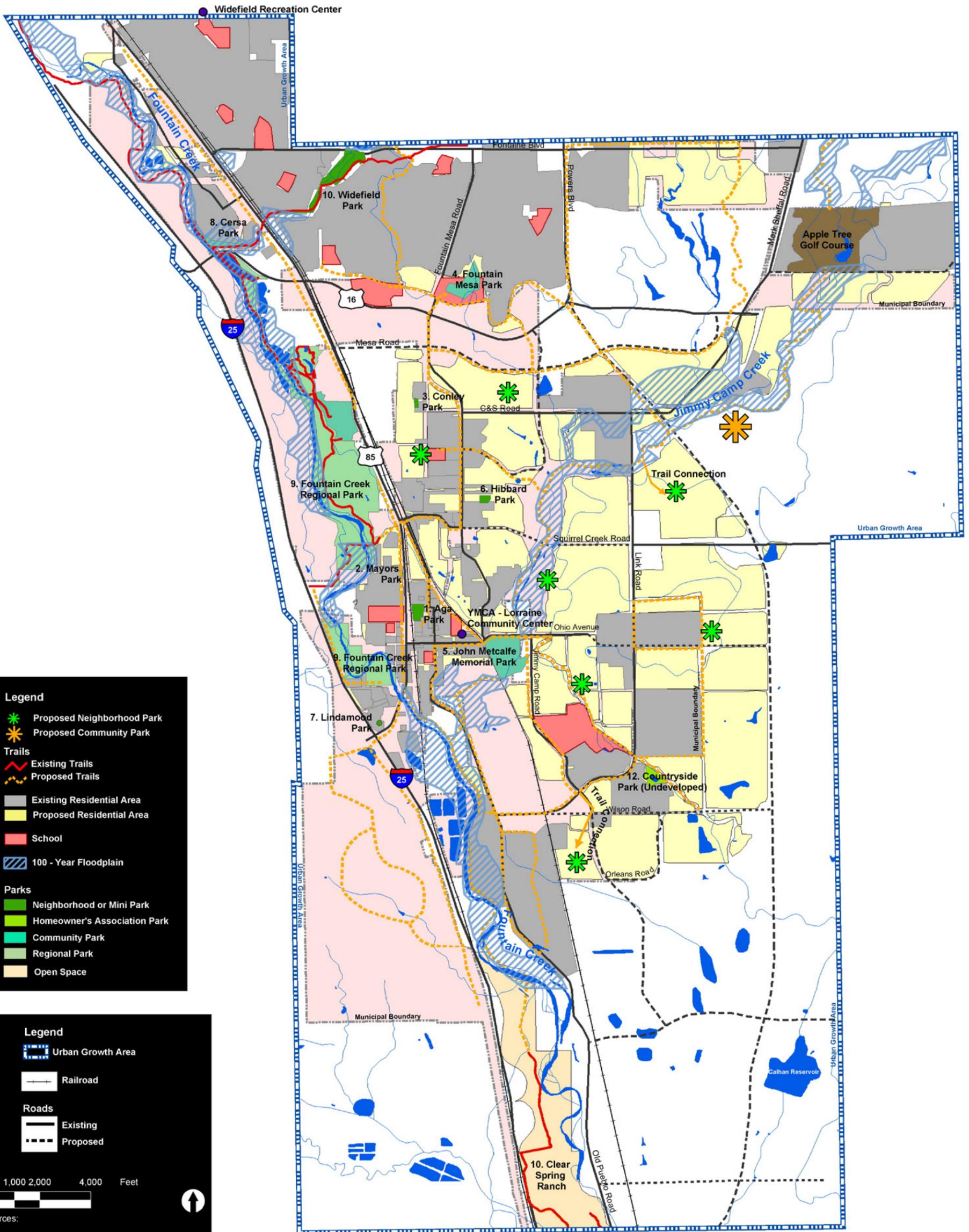
- Urban Growth Area
- Railroad
- Roads
 - Existing
 - Proposed

0 1,000 2,000 4,000 Feet

Sources:

Base Information: USGS, Colorado Division of Wildlife
 Overlay Information: City of Fountain Comprehensive Development Plan, 1999
 Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Colorado State University
 El Paso County Parks
 Natural Diversity Information Source (NDIS) Website

APRIL 2003



Legend

- Proposed Neighborhood Park (Green asterisk)
- Proposed Community Park (Yellow asterisk)
- Trails**
 - Existing Trails (Red line)
 - Proposed Trails (Orange dashed line)
- Existing Residential Area (Grey)
- Proposed Residential Area (Yellow)
- School (Red)
- 100 - Year Floodplain (Blue hatched)
- Parks**
 - Neighborhood or Mini Park (Light Green)
 - Homeowner's Association Park (Medium Green)
 - Community Park (Dark Green)
 - Regional Park (Light Green)
 - Open Space (Light Yellow)

Legend

- Urban Growth Area (Blue dashed line)
- Railroad (Black line with cross-ticks)
- Roads**
 - Existing (Solid black line)
 - Proposed (Dashed black line)

0 1,000 2,000 4,000 Feet

Sources:
 Base Information: USGS, Colorado Division of Wildlife
 Overlay Information: City of Fountain Comprehensive Development Plan, 1999
 El Paso County Parks
 City of Fountain Trails Master Plan, 2001.

APRIL 2003

MAP 6. MASTER PLAN